

ANNOTATIONS UPON THE HOLY BIBLE;

BY MATTHEW POOLE

VOLUME 2

JOB TO EZEKIEL

THE MORE DIFFICULT TERMS IN EACH VERSE ARE EXPLAINED, SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS RECONCILED, QUESTIONS AND DOUBTS RESOLVED, AND THE WHOLE TEXT OPENED.

They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading – Neh. viii. 8.

Understandest thou what thou readest? How can I, except some man should guide me? – Acts viii. 30,31.



MATTHEW POOLE
(1624-1679)

Matthew Poole was born in York in 1624. He graduated from Emmanuel College in Cambridge in 1645, and succeeded Anthony Tuckney in pasturing at St. Michael-le-Querne church. It was the only pastorate Poole ever held. A strict Presbyterian, he resigned his living rather than conform to the Act of Uniformity. At the suggestion of William Lloyd, who was to become Bishop of Worcester, Poole undertook his life's work, his *Synopsis*, which we know as his *Commentary on the Holy Bible*. He began this work in 1666 and labored at it for ten years.

Matthew Poole completed his *Synopsis Criticorum* (Synopsis of Interpreters) on the entire Bible in Latin. But he felt the need to supplement his magnum opus with a commentary on the Bible for English readers. He wrote his English Annotations on the Bible through Isaiah 58 before he died in Amsterdam. His friends decided to take up the remainder of the work and complete the English Annotations through Revelation. Following is a list of continuators.

John Jackson [Isaiah 59, 60]

John Collinges (1623-1691) [Isaiah 61-66; Jeremiah; Lamentations; Gospels; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; 1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon; Revelation]

Henry Hurst (1629-1690) [Ezekiel; Minor Prophets]

William Cooper [Daniel]

Peter Vinke (d. 1702) [Acts]

Richard Mayo (d. 1695) [Romans]

Edward Veale (d. 1708) [Ephesians; James; 1 and 2 Peter; Jude]

Richard Adams (c. 1626-1698) [Philippians; Colossians]

Matthew Barker (d. 1698) [1 and 2 Thessalonians]

Obadiah Hughes (d. 1704) [Hebrews]

John Howe (1630-1705) [1, 2, and 3 John]

THE BOOK OF JOB

Some things are to be premised in the general concerning this book before I come to the particulars.

1. That this was no fiction or parable, as some have dreamed, but a real history, which is sufficiently evident, both from the whole contexture of the book, wherein we have an exact and distinct account of the places, persons, and things here mentioned, with their several circumstances; and especially the succeeding penmen of Holy Scripture, who mention him as a real and eminent example of piety and patience, as **#Eze 14:14 Jas 5:11**.

2. That this is a canonical book of Scripture, which is manifest both from the style and matter of it, and from the tacit approbation given to it by Ezekiel and James, in the places now cited, and from that quotation taken from it as such, **#1Co 3:19**, and from the unanimous consent of the church, both of Jews and Christians, in all ages.

3. The time in which Job lived, and these things were said and done, most probably was before Moses, and in the days of the ancient patriarchs. This may be gathered,

1. From his long life, which, by comparing **#Job 1** with **#Job 42:16**, could not want much of two hundred years; whereas, after Moses, men's lives were far shorter, as is manifest.

2. From that considerable knowledge of God and of the true religion which then remained among divers Gentiles, which after Moses's time was in a manner quite extinguished.

3. From the sacrifices here commonly used; whereas, after the giving of the law, all sacrifices were confined to the place of the tabernacle or temple, to which even the Gentiles were to repair when they would sacrifice to God.

4. From the way of God's imparting his mind to the Gentiles at this time by dreams and visions, agreeably to God's method in those ancient times; whereas afterward those discoveries were withdrawn from the Gentiles, and appropriated to the people of Israel.

5. Because there is not the least mention in this book of the children of Israel, neither of their grievous afflictions in Egypt, nor of their glorious deliverance out of it, though nothing could have been more seasonable or suitable to the matter which is here discoursed between Job and his friends.

4. The penman of this book is not certainly known, nor is it material for us to know; for it being agreed who is the principal author, it is of no moment by what hand or pen he wrote it. But most probably it was either,

1. Job himself, who was most capable of giving this exact account; who as in his agony he wished that his words and carriage were written in a book, **#Job 19:23,24**, so possibly, when he was delivered from it, he satisfied his own and others' desires therein. Only what concerns his general character, **#Job 1:1**, and the time of his death, **#Job 42:16,17**, was added by another hand; the like small additions being made in other books of Scripture. Or,

2. Elihu, which may seem to be favoured by **#Job 32:15,16**. Or,

3. Moses, who when he was in the land of Midian, where he had opportunity of coming to the knowledge of this history and discourse, and considering that it might be very useful for the comfort and direction of God's Israel, who was now oppressed in Egypt, did by his own inclination, and the direction of God's Spirit, commit it to writing. And whereas the style seems to be unlike to that of Moses in his other writings, that is not strange, considering the differing nature of the books, this being almost all poetical, and the other merely historical, for the most part, or plain precepts or exhortations. And for the Arabic words here used, it must be remembered that Moses lived forty years in Midian, which was a part of Arabia, in which he must needs learn that language.

JOB CHAPTER 1

Job's country, and sincere holiness: his children; their feasts; and his religious care for them, **#Job 1:1-5**. Satan's appearance before God: God's character of Job, **#Job 1:6-8**. Satan imputeth Job's goodness to his prosperity; and so obtaineth leave to afflict him in

his goods, #**Job 1:9-12**. Job's oxen, sheep, camels, and servants destroyed, #**Job 1:13-17**. His sons and daughters perish, #**Job 1:18,19**. Job, with his mantle rent, head shaved, and upon the ground, worshippeth; blesseth God; sinneth not, #**Job 1:20-22**.

Ver. 1.

The land of Uz was either in Edom, called *the land of Uz*, #**La 4:21**, or in some part of Arabia, not far from the Chaldeans and Sabeans, as this chapter witnesseth; so called probably from Uz, one of Esau's posterity, #**Ge 36:28 Jer 25:20**.

That man was perfect; not legally or exactly, as he confesseth, #**Job 9:20**; but comparatively to such as were partial in their obedience to God's commands, and as to his sincere intentions, hearty affections, and constant and diligent endeavours to perform all his duties to God and men.

Upright, Heb. *right*; exact and regular in all his dealings with men; one of an unblamable conversation, doing to others as he would have others to deal with him.

One that feared God; one truly pious, and devoted to God's worship and service.

Eschewed evil, i.e. carefully avoiding all sin against God or men.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

Camels in these parts were very numerous, as is manifest from #**Jud 7:12 1Ch 5:21**, and from the plain testimonies of Aristotle and Pliny, and very useful, and proper both for carrying of burdens in these hot and dry countries, as being able to endure thirst much better than other creatures, and for service in war.

She-asses were preferred before he-asses, as serving for the same uses as they did, and for breeding and milk also; but he-asses also may be included in this expression, which is of the feminine gender, because the greatest part of them (from which the denomination is usually taken) were she-asses.

The greatest, i.e. one of the richest.

Of all the men of the east, to wit, that lived in those parts; such general expressions being commonly understood with such limitations.

Ver. 4.

His sons went and feasted, to testify and maintain their brotherly love.

Every one his day; not every day of the week and of the year; which would have been burdensome and tedious to them all, and gross luxury and epicurism, which holy Job would not have permitted; but each his appointed day, whether his birthday, or the first day of the month, or any other set time, it matters not.

Ver. 5.

When the days of their feasting were gone about; when each of them had had his turn, which peradventure came speedily, though not immediately one after another; and there was some considerable interval before their next feasting time.

Job sent and sanctified them, i.e. he exhorted and commanded them to sanctify themselves for the following work, to wit, by purifying themselves from all ceremonial and moral pollution, as the manner then was, #Ex 19:10, and by preparing themselves by true repentance for all their sins, and particularly such as they had committed in their time of feasting and jollity, and by fervent prayers to make their peace with God by sacrifice.

Rose up early in the morning; thereby showing his ardent zeal in God's service, and his impatience till God was reconciled to him and to his children.

It may be that my sons have sinned: his zeal for God's glory, and his true love to his children, made him jealous; for which he had cause enough from the corruption of man's nature, the frailty and folly of youth, the many temptations which attend upon feasting and jollity, and the easiness of sliding from lawful to forbidden delights.

And cursed God; not in the grossest manner and highest degree, which it is not probable either that they should do, now especially when they had no provocation to do it, as being surrounded with blessings and comforts which they were actually enjoying, and not

yet exercised with any affliction, or that Job should suspect it concerning them; but *despised* and *dishonoured* God; for both Hebrew and Greek words signifying cursing, are sometimes used to note only reviling, or detracting, or speaking evil, or setting light by a person. Thus what is called *cursing one's father or mother*, #Ex 21:17, is elsewhere called *setting light by them*, as #De 27:16 Eze 22:7. See also #2Pe 2:10 Jude 1:8, and many other places.

In their hearts; by slight and low thoughts of God, by neglecting or forgetting to give God the praise and glory of the mercies which by his favour they enjoyed, by taking more hearty delight in their feasts and jollity than in the service and fruition of God; for these and such-like distempers of heart are most usual in times of prosperity and jollity, as appears by common experience, and by the many Divine cautions we have against them, as #De 6:11,12 Ho 2:8, and elsewhere. And these miscarriages, though inward and secret, Job calls by such a hard name as usually signifies cursing, by way of aggravation of their sin, which peradventure they were too apt to slight as a small and trivial miscarriage.

This did Job continually, i.e. it was his constant course at the end of every feasting time.

Ver. 6.

There was a day, i.e. a certain time appointed by God.

The sons of God, i.e. the holy angels, so called #Job 38:7 Da 3:25,28, because of their creation by God, as Adam also was, #Lu 3:38, and for their great resemblance of him in power, and dignity, and holiness, and for their filial affection and obedience to him.

Before the Lord, i.e. before his throne, to receive his commands, and to give him an account of their negotiations. Compare #1Ki 22:19 Zec 4:14 Lu 1:19. But you must not think that these things were really done, and that Satan was mixed with the holy angels, or admitted into the presence of God in heaven, to maintain such discourses as this with the blessed God, or that he had formal commission and leave to do what follows; but it is only a parabolical representation of that great truth, that God by his wise

and holy providence doth govern all the actions of men and devils to his own ends; it being usual with the great God to condescend to our shallow capacities, and to express himself, as the Jews phrase it, in the language of the sons of men, i.e. in such manner as men use to speak and may understand.

Satan came also among them; being forced to come, and give up his account.

Ver. 7.

God being here represented as Judge, rightly begins with an inquiry, as the ground of his further proceedings, as he did **#Ge 3:9 4:9.**

From going to and fro in the earth; where by thy permission I range about, observing with great diligence all the dispositions and actions of men, and working in them and among them as far as I have liberty and opportunity.

Ver. 8.

Hast thou taken notice of him, and his spirit and carriage? and what hast thou to say against him?

Ver. 9.

i.e. Sincerely and freely, and out of pure love and respect to thee? No. It is policy, not piety, that makes him good; he doth not serve thee, but serveth himself of thee, and is a mere mercenary, serving thee for his own ends.

Ver. 10.

Made a hedge about him, i.e. defended him by thy special care and providence from all harms and inconveniencies; which is able to oblige and win persons of the worst tempers.

His house; his children and servants.

Ver. 11.

Put forth thine hand, to wit, in way of justice and severity, as that phrase is used, **#Isa 5:25 Eze 25:7,13,16.**

Touch, i.e. afflict or destroy, as this word is used, **#Ge 26:11 Ru 2:9 Ps 105:15 Zec 2:8.**

He will curse thee to thy face; he who is now so forward to serve and bless thee, will then openly and boldly blaspheme thy

name, and reproach thy providence, as unjust and unmerciful to him.

Ver. 12.

All that he hath is in thy power; I give thee full power and liberty to deal with his wife, children, servants, and all his estate, whatsoever thy wit or malice shall prompt thee to do.

Upon himself; his person, body or soul.

From the presence of the Lord, i.e. from that place where God was represented as specially present, being forward and greedy to do the mischief which he had permission to do.

Ver. 13.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 14.

i.e. Beside the oxen, therefore both were taken away together.

Ver. 15.

The Sabians; a people of Arabia, who led a wandering life, and lived by robbery and spoiling of others, as Strabo and other heathen writers note.

I only am escaped alone to tell thee; whom Satan spared no less maliciously than he destroyed the rest, that Job might have speedy and certain intelligence of his calamity.

Ver. 16.

While he was yet speaking; before he could have time to compose his disturbed mind, and to digest his former loss, or indeed to swallow his spittle, as he expresseth it, **#Job 7:19.**

The fire of God; a terrible flame of fire sent from God in an extraordinary manner, to intimate that both God and men were his enemies, and all things conspired to his ruin.

Is fallen from heaven, i.e. from the air, which is oft called heaven, as hath been noted again and again, whereof Satan is the prince, **#Eph 2:2.**

Ver. 17.

The Chaldeans, who also lived upon the spoil, as Xenophon and others observe.

Made out three bands, that they might come upon them several ways, and nothing might be able to escape them.

Ver. 18.

i.e. Feasting after their manner, and, as Job generally feared and suspected, sinning against God, **#Job 1:5**, which was a dreadful aggravation of the judgment.

Ver. 19.

From the wilderness; whence the fiercest winds came, as having most power in such open places. See **#Jer 4:11 13:24**.

Smote the four corners; in which the chief strength of the house did consist. It smote these either all together, or rather successively, one immediately after another, being possibly a whirlwind, which comes violently and suddenly, whirling about in a circle, and being driven about by the power of the devil, which is very great.

The young men; his sons in their youth, and his daughters also, as appears from the sequel.

Ver. 20.

Then Job arose from his seat, whereon he was sitting in a disconsolate posture.

Rent his mantle, to testify his deep sense of and just sorrow for the heavy hand of God upon him, and his humiliation of himself under his hand. See **#Ge 37:34**. *Shaved his head*, i.e. caused the hair of his head to be shaved or cut off, which was then a usual ceremony in mourning, of which see **#Ezr 9:3 Isa 15:2 22:12 Jer 7:29 41:5 Mic 1:16**.

Fell down upon the ground, in way of self-abhorrency, and humiliation, and supplication unto God.

And worshipped, to wit, God, who is expressed in the following verse, and who is the only object of religious worship. Instead of cursing God, which Satan said he would do, he adored him, and gave him the glory of his sovereignty, and of his justice, and of his goodness also, in this most severe dispensation.

Ver. 21.

I brought none of these things which I have now lost with me, when I came out of my mother's womb into the world but I received them from the hand and favour of that God who hath now required his own again. I still have all that substance wherewith I was born, and have lost only things without and beside myself.

Naked shall I return thither; I shall be as rich when I die as I was when I was born, and therefore have reason to be contented with my condition, which also is the common lot of all men.

Thither, i.e. into my mother's womb, which in the former clause is understood properly, but in this figuratively, of the earth, which is our common mother, as it is called by many authors, out of whose belly we were taken, and into which we must return again, **#Ge 3:19 Ec 12:7**. And as our mother's womb is called

the lower parts of the earth, #Ps 139:15, so it is not harsh if reciprocally the lower parts of the earth be called our mother's womb. Nor is it strange that the same phrase should be taken both properly and metaphorically in the same verse; for so it is **#Mt 8:22, let the dead spiritually bury the dead corporally**. See also **#Le 26:21,24 Ps 18:26, &c.**

The Lord hath taken away; he hath taken away nothing but his own, and what he so gave to me that he reserved the supreme dominion and disposal of in his own hand. So I have no cause to murmur or complain of him. Nor have I reason to fret and rage against the Chaldeans, and Sabeans, and other creatures, who were only God's instruments to execute his wise and holy counsel.

The name of the Lord, i.e. the Lord; God's name being often put for God himself, as **#Ps 44:5 48:10 Ps 72:18,19 Da 2:19,20**; as names are put for men, **#Ac 1:15 Re 3:4**. The sense is, I have no cause to quarrel with God, but much cause to bless and praise him that he did give me such blessings, and suffered me to enjoy them more and longer than I deserved; and that he hath vouchsafed to afflict me, which I greatly needed for my soul's good, and which I take as a token of his love and faithfulness to me, and therefore ministering more matter of comfort than grief to me; and that he hath left me the comfort of my wife, and yet is pleased to continue

to me the health of my body, and a composed mind, and a heart to submit to his good pleasure; and that he hath reserved and prepared such a felicity for me, whom no Chaldeans or Sabeans, no men nor devils, can take away from me; of which see **#Job 19:25**.

Ver. 22.

i.e. Under all these pressures; or, in all that he said or did upon these sad occasions;

Job sinned not, to wit, in such manner as the devil presaged that he would, and as is expressed in the following words. As Christ saith, **#Joh 9:3**, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*, to wit, so as you imagine, in an eminent or extraordinary degree. But both here and there human infirmities are excepted, of which Job oft acknowledgeth himself to be guilty. Nor was the question between God and Satan, whether Job had any sin in him, but whether he was a hypocrite, or would blaspheme God; which is here denied and disproved.

Nor charged God foolishly, Heb.

nor imputed folly to God, i.e. so far was he from blaspheming God, that he did not entertain any dishonourable thought of God, as if he had done any thing unworthy of his infinite wisdom, or justice, or goodness, but heartily approved of and acquiesced in his good pleasure, and in his righteous, though sharp, proceedings against him.

JOB CHAPTER 2

Satan's second appearance before God: Job's character continuing the same, condemneth Satan, **#Job 2:1-3**. Satan judgeth him not sufficiently tried, unless his body suffer; and so obtaineth leave to hurt his body, but not touch his life, **#Job 2:4-6**. Job, smote with boils, scrapeth himself, and sitteth down in ashes, **#Job 2:7,8**. His wife's folly; he reproveth her, acknowledging God's sovereignty and former mercies, **#Job 2:9,10**. His three friends, and their sorrow, **#Job 2:11-13**.

Ver. 1.

Again there was a day; another set time some convenient space after the former calamities. Of this and the two next verses **See Poole "Job 1:6", See Poole "Job 1:7", See Poole "Job 1:8"**.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

Still, notwithstanding all his trials and tribulations, and thy malicious suggestion to the contrary, he holdeth fast his integrity, i.e. he continues to be the same perfect and upright man which he was before. All thy endeavours to pull away his integrity have made him only to hold it the faster.

Thou movedst me, i.e. didst persuade me, and prevailed with me to do it. But this, as the rest of this representation, is not to be understood properly, as if God could be moved by any of his creatures to alter his purposes, which are all eternal and unchangeable, and especially by Satan, as if God would gratify him by granting his desires; but the design of these words is to signify, both the devil's restless malice in promoting man's misery, and God's permission of it for his own wise and holy ends.

Without cause, i.e. without any special provocation, whereby he, more than others, deserved such heavy punishments; which also Job himself oft allegeth for his justification, although he doth not deny himself to be a sinner, as is apparent from **#Job 7:20,21 9:2 13:23,26**; nor that sin deserves judgments. Or, without any such cause as thou didst allege, which was his hypocrisy. Or, *in vain*, as this word is used, **#Pr 1:17 Eze 6:10**, and elsewhere. So it is not referred to God's destroying him, but to Satan's moving God so to do. And so this place may be thus rendered exactly according to the Hebrew, and thou hast moved me to destroy him in vain, or without effect, or to no purpose, i.e. thou hast lost thy design and expectation therein, which was to take away his integrity, which in spite of all thy art and malice he still holdeth fast.

Ver. 4.

The design of these words is plain, which is to detract from Job, and to diminish that honour and praise which God gave to Job, by

pretending that he had done no more than the meanest men commonly do by the law of self-reservation. And it is as clear that this was a proverbial speech then in use, wherein if there be some difficulty to understand it at this distance of time, it is no more than the common lot of many other proverbs, the sense, and especially the grounds, whereof are frequently unknown to persons of other nations and after-times. Moreover, it is known that in those ancient times, though they had some money, yet the main of their estate lay in cattle, of which the skins were a considerable part, and their chief traffic lay in the exchange of one commodity for another; and, among other things, it cannot be questioned but that they did commonly exchange skins of one kind for skins of another sort, according to their several inclinations or occasions. So the meaning may be this, As men willingly and commonly give one skin in exchange for another skin, and one commodity for another. So (the Hebrew particle *vau* being oft so used as a note of comparison, as it is #Pr 17:3 25:3,23,25,27)

all that a man hath, his house, cattle, children, will he give, and that most willingly, for his life, i.e. to redeem or save his own life. Or rather thus,

skin for skin, might then be a proverb, like that of ours, *Body for body*, when one man is so far obliged for another. And we have some such expressions among us; as when we say of a man who doth some dangerous action, *His skin*, i.e. his body, *will pay for it*, i.e. it may cost him his life. And this proverb might be taken,

1. From sacrifices, in which there was *skin for skin*, i.e. the skin of a beast for, or instead of, the skin or body of the man, which deserved to be used as the beast was, and which was saved or preserved by the suffering of the beast, which was accepted by God instead of the man, and by which the man's sins were expiated. Or,

2. From hostages or ransoms, wherein one man was given for or instead of another. So now the sense may be this, Any man will give *skin for skin*, i.e. the skin, or body, or life of another, whether man or beast, to save his own;

yea, all that a man hath, whether goods or persons, such as Job hath lost,

will he give for his life. Job is not much hurt nor concerned so long as his own skin is whole and safe. Others thus, *Skin upon* (for so the Hebrew particle *behad* is sometimes used, as #2Ki 4:5 Am 9:10; as also the Greek particle *anti*, which answers to it, is understood #Joh 1:16, *grace for grace*, i.e. grace upon grace, or all kinds or degrees of grace) *skin, and all that a man hath*, (so all these words belong to the price which a man pays; now follows what he hath or expecteth to have for it,) will he give for his life, i.e. in exchange for his life, or to save his life. This also is a plausible interpretation, only it is not very probable that the same Hebrew particle *behad* should be used in two so differing senses in the same verse, in the former part to signify *upon*, (which if this sacred writer had meant, he would likely have expressed it rather by that other Hebrew particle *al*, which is commonly so used, than by this, which is so ambiguous, and seldom so taken, and otherwise used in this very verse,) and in the latter to signify *for*, or *instead of*. However the sense is plainly this, This is so far from being an evidence of Job's sincere and generous piety, that it is only an act of deeper hypocrisy and mere self-love; he is well enough contented with the loss of his estate, and children too, so long as he sleeps in a whole skin; and he is well pleased that thou wilt accept of all these as a sacrifice or ransom in his stead; and it is not true patience and humility which makes him seem to bear his crosses so submissively, as depth of policy, that by his feigned carriage he may appease thy wrath against him, and prevent those further plagues which, for his hypocrisy and other sins, of which he is conscious, he fears thou wilt otherwise bring upon his own carcass; as will plainly appear upon further trial.

Ver. 5.

Touch, i.e. smite him, not slightly, but to the quick, and to the bones and marrow, so as he may feel pain and anguish indeed, which is oft expressed by reaching to the bones, as #Ps 6:2 32:3 51:8.

Ver. 6.

Do not attempt to take away his life, which I will not suffer thee to do.

Ver. 7.

Like those inflicted upon the Egyptians, which are expressed by the same word, and threatened to apostate Israelites, **#De 28:27**, whereby he was made loathsome to himself and to his nearest relations, **#De 19:13,19**, and a visible monument of Divine displeasure, and filled with tiring and consuming pains in his body, and no less torment and anguish in his mind.

From the sole of his foot unto his crown; in all the outward parts of his body. His tongue he spared, that it might be capable of venting those blasphemies against God which he expected and desired.

Ver. 8.

He took him a potsherd; partly to allay the itch which his ulcers caused; and partly to squeeze out or take away that purulent matter which was under them, or flowed from them, and was the great cause of his torment. And this he did not with soft linen cloths, either because he had not now a sufficient quantity of them for so much use, or because therein he must have had the help of others, who abhorred to come near him, **#Job 19:13-15**; nor with his own hands or fingers, which were also ulcerous, and so unfit for that use; and besides he loathed to touch himself: but with potsherds, either because they were next at hand, and ready for his present use; or in token of his repentance and deep humiliation under God's heavy hand, which made him decline all things which favoured of tenderness and delicacy.

Among the ashes, Heb. *in dust or ashes*, as mourners used to do; of which see **#Job 42:6 Jon 3:6 Mt 11:21**.

Ver. 9.

The devil spared *his wife* with cruel intent to be the instrument of his temptations, and the aggravation of Job's misery, by unnatural unkindness to him, which is declared **#Job 19:17**, and elsewhere.

Dost thou still retain thine integrity? art thou yet so weak to persist in the practice of piety, when it is not only unprofitable to thee, but the chief occasion of all these thy insupportable miseries, and when God himself not only forsakes and leaves thee in this helpless and hopeless condition, but is turned to be thy greatest enemy?

Curse God, and die; seeing thy blessing of God availeth thee so little, it is time to change thy note, Curse God, and die, i.e. reproach him to his face, and tell him of his injustice and unkindness to thee, and that he loves his enemies, and hates his friends; and that will provoke him to take away thy life, and so end thy torments. Or, Curse God, though though die for it. But although this word sometimes signifies *cursing*, as **#Job 1:11 1Ki 21:10**, yet most properly and generally it signifies *blessing*; and so it may very well be understood here as a sarcastical or ironical expression, such as there are many in Scripture, as **#Ec 11:9 La 4:21**, and in all authors. And so the sense may be this, *Bless God, and die*; i.e. I see thou art set upon blessing of God; thou blessest God for giving, and thou blessest God for taking away, and thou art still blessing of God for thy loathsome and tormenting diseases, and he rewards thee accordingly, giving thee more and more of that kind of mercy for which thou blessest and praisest him. Go on therefore in this thy pious and generous course, and die as a fool dieth, and carry this reputation to thy grave, that thou hadst not common sense in thee to discern between good and evil, between thy friends and thy foes. Or rather, Awake out of this stupidity and lethargy, and give over this absurd and unreasonable practice; and as God gives thee no help nor comfort, let him lose thy praises and service. And this being her sense, it is not strange he reproveth her so sharply for it. And yet it seems hard to think that Job's wife should arrive at that height of impudence and impiety, as in plain terms to bid him curse God.

Ver. 10.

As one of the foolish women, i.e. like a rash, and inconsiderate, and weak person that dost not understand nor mind what thou sayest. Or, like a wicked and most profane person; for such are frequently called fools in Scripture, as **#Ps 14:1 74:18**, and everywhere in the Proverbs.

Shall we poor worms give laws to our supreme Lord and Governor, and oblige him always to bless and favour us, and never to afflict us? And shall not those great, and manifold, and long-continued mercies, which from time to time God hath freely and graciously given us, compensate for these short afflictions? Ought we not to bless God for those mercies which we did not

deserve, and contentedly to bear those corrections which we deserve and need, and (if it be not our own fault) may get much good by.

In all this did not Job sin with his lips, by any reflections upon God, by any impatient or unbecoming expressions.

Ver. 11.

They were persons then eminent for birth and quality, for wisdom and knowledge, and for the profession of the true religion, being probably of the posterity of Abraham, and akin to Job, and living in the same country with him.

Ver. 12.

Afar off, to wit, at some convenient distance from him; whom they found sitting upon the ground, either in the open air, or within his own house.

Knew him not; his countenance being so fearfully changed and disfigured by his boils.

Sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven; either upon the upper part of their heads, which look towards heaven; or cast it up into the air, so as it should fall upon their heads, as they did **#Ac 22:23**. See **#Jos 6:6 Ne 9:1 La 2:10**.

Ver. 13.

Sat down with him upon the ground, in the posture of mourners condoling with him.

Seven days and seven nights was the usual time of mourning for the dead, **#Ge 1:10 1Sa 31:13**, and therefore proper both for Job's children, who were dead, and for Job himself, who was in a manner dead whilst he lived. But we must not fancy that they continued in this place and posture so long together, which no laws of religion or civility required of them, and the necessities of nature could not bear; but only that they spent a great or the greatest part of that time in sitting with him, and silent mourning over him. And so such general expressions are frequently understood, as **#Lu 2:37 24:53 Ac 20:31**.

None spake a word to him; either,

1. About any thing. Or rather,

2. About his afflictions, and the causes of them. The reason of this silence was, partly the greatness of their grief for him, and their surprise and astonishment at his condition; partly, because they thought it convenient to give him some further time to vent his own sorrows; and partly, because as yet they knew not what to say to him: for though they had ever esteemed him to be a truly wise and godly man, and came with full purpose to comfort him; yet the prodigious greatness of his miseries, and that hand and displeasure of God which they manifestly perceived in them, made them at a stand, and to question Job's sincerity; so that they could not comfort him as they had intended, and yet were loth to grieve him with those convictions and reproofs which they thought he greatly needed. And here they stuck till Job gave them occasion to speak their minds.

JOB CHAPTER 3

Job curseth the day and services of his birth, **#Job 3:1-12**. The ease and honours of death, **#Job 3:13-19**. Life in anguish matter of complaint, **#Job 3:20-24**. What he feared is now come upon him, **#Job 3:25,26**.

Ver. 1.

He spake freely and boldly, as this phrase is used, **#Pr 31:8,9 Eph 6:19**, and elsewhere,

and cursed his day, to wit, his birthday, as is evident from **#Job 3:3**, which is called simply a man's *day*, **#Ho 7:5**; which also some others, through the same infirmity, and in the same circumstances, have cursed, as we see, **#Jer 20:14**. In vain do some men endeavour to excuse this and the following speeches of Job, who afterwards is reprov'd by God and severely accuseth himself for them, **#Job 38:2 40:4 42:3,6**. And yet he doth not proceed so far as to curse or blaspheme God, but makes the devil a liar in his prognostics. But although he doth not break forth into direct and downright reproaches of God, yet he makes secret and indirect reflections upon God's providence. His curse was sinful, both because it was vain, being applied to an unreasonable thing, which was not capable of blessing and cursing, and to a day that was past, and so out of the reach of all curses; and because it was applied to one of God's creatures, all which were and are in

themselves very good, and pronounced blessed by God; and so they are, if we do not turn them into curses; and because it casts a blame upon God for bringing that day, and for giving him that life which that day brought into the world. He pronounceth that day an unhappy, woeful, and cursed day, not in itself, but with respect to himself.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

Let the remembrance of that day be utterly lost; yea, I heartily wish that it had never been. Such wishes are apparently foolish and impatient, and yet have been sometimes forced from wise and good men in grievous distresses, not as if they expected any effect of them, but only to show their abhorrency of life, and to express the intolerableness of their grief, and to give some vent to their passions. In which it was said with joy and triumph, as happy tidings. Compare #Jer 20:15. Conceived; or rather, brought forth, as this word is used, #1Ch 4:17; for the time of conception is unknown commonly to women themselves, and doth not use to be reported among men, as this day is supposed to be.

Ver. 4.

I wish the sun had never risen upon that day to make it day, or, which is all one, that it had never been; and whensoever that day returns, I wish it may be black, and gloomy, and uncomfortable, and therefore execrable and odious to all men.

From above, i.e. from heaven; either,

1. By causing the light of the sun which is in heaven to shine upon it. So it agrees both with the foregoing and following branches of this verse. Or,

2. By blessing and favouring it, or by giving his blessings to men upon it. Let it be esteemed by all an unlucky and comfortless day. Or, Let not God require it, i. e. bring it again in its course, as other days return. In this sense God is said to require that which is past, #Ec 3:15. Compare #Job 3:3,6.

Ver. 5.

Darkness and the shadow of death, i.e. a black and dark shadow, like that of the place of the dead, which is a land of darkness, and where the *light is darkness*, as Job explains this very phrase, **#Job 10:21,22**; or so gross and palpable darkness, that by its horrors and damps may take away men's spirits and lives.

Stain it, i.e. take away its beauty and glory, and make it abominable, as a filthy thing. Or,

challenge it, i.e. take and keep the entire possession of it, so as the light may not have the least share in it.

Terrify it, to wit, the day, i.e. men in it. Let it be always observed as a frightful and dismal day.

Ver. 6.

Let darkness seize upon it, i. e. constant and extraordinary darkness, without the least glimmering of light from the moon or stars.

Joined unto the days of the year, i.e. reckoned as one, or a part of one, of them. The night is distinguished from the artificial day, but it is a part of the natural day, which consists of twenty-four hours. Or rather, *let it not rejoice among the days*, &c. Joy here, and terror, **#Job 3:5**, are poetically and figuratively ascribed to the day or night with respect to men, who either rejoice or are affrighted in it. Let it be a sad, and as it were a funeral, day.

Let it not come into the number of the months, i.e. to be one of those nights which go to the making up of the months.

Ver. 7.

Solitary, i.e. destitute of all society of men meeting and feasting together, which commonly was done at night, suppers being the most solemn meals among divers ancient nations. See **#Mr 6:21 Lu 14:16 Joh 12:2 Re 19:9,17**.

Let no joyful voice; neither of the bride and bridegroom, nor any that celebrate their nuptials, or any other merry solemnity.

Ver. 8.

That curse the day, i.e. their day, to wit, their birthday; for the pronoun is here omitted for the metre's sake; for this and the

following chapters are written in verse, as all grant. So the sense is, when their afflictions move them to curse their own birthday, let them remember mine also, and bestow some curses upon it. Or the day of their distress and trouble, which sometimes is called simply the day, as **#Ob 1:12**. Or the day of the birth or death of that person, whose funerals are celebrated by the hired mourners, who in their solemn lamentations used to curse the day that gave them such a person, whom they should so suddenly lose; and therefore it had been better never to have enjoyed him, and to curse the day in which he died as an unlucky and execrable day. Or, *the day*, i.e. the daylight; which to some persons is a hateful thing, and the object of their curses, namely, to lewd persons and thieves, to whom *the morning light is even as the shadow of death*, **#Job 24:17**; as also to persons oppressed with deep melancholy, as it is here implied, **#Job 3:20**. So the sense is this, They who use to curse the day only, but generally love and bless the night, yet let this night be as abominable and execrable to them as the day-time generally is.

Who are ready to raise up their mourning; who are brimful of sorrow, and always ready to pour out their cries, and tears, and complaints, and with them curses, as men in great passions frequently do; or, such mourning men, or mourning women, whose common employment it was, and who were hired to mourn, and therefore were always ready to do so upon funeral occasions; of which see **#2Ch 35:25 Jer 9:17,18,20 Eze 30:2 Joe 1:15 Am 5:16 Mt 9:23**. And this sense suits with the use of the last word in Hebrew writers, of which a plain and pertinent instance is given by the learned Mercer. But because that word is commonly used in another sense for the leviathan, both in this book and elsewhere in Scripture, as **#Ps 74:14 104:26 Isa 27:1**, and because this very phrase of *raising the leviathan* is used afterward, **#Job 41:25**, others render the words thus, *who are prepared or ready to raise the leviathan*. It is evident that the leviathan was a great and dreadful fish, or sea monster, though there be some disagreement about its kind or quality, and that the raising of or endeavouring to catch the leviathan was a dangerous and terrible work, as is plain from **#Job 41**. And therefore those seamen who have been generally noted for great swearers and cursers, especially when their passions of rage or fear are raised,

being now labouring to catch this sea monster, and finding themselves and their vessel in great danger from him, they fall to their old trade of swearing and cursing, and curse the day wherein they were born, and the day in which they ventured upon this most hazardous and terrible work. Others understand this *leviathan* mystically, as it is used #**Isa 27:1**, for the great enemy of God's church and people, called there also *the dragon*, to wit, the devil, whom the magicians both now do, and formerly did, use to raise with fearful curses and imprecations. Not as if Job did justify this practice, but only it is a rash and passionate wish, that they who pour forth so many curses undeservedly, would bestow their deserved curses upon this day.

Ver. 9.

Let the stars, which are the glory and beauty of the night, to render it amiable and delightful to men,

be covered with thick darkness, and that both in the evening twilight, as is here expressed, when the stars begin to arise and shine forth; and also in the further progress of the night, even till the morning begins to dawn, as the following words imply.

Let it look for light, but have none; let its darkness be aggravated with the disappointment of its hopes and expectations of light. He ascribes sense or reasoning to the night, by a poetical fiction usual in all writers.

The dawning of the day, Heb. *the eyelids of the day*, i.e. the morningstar, which ushers in the day, and the beginning, and consequently the progress, of the morning light, and the day following. Let this whole natural day, consisting of night and day, be blotted out of the catalogue of days, as he wished before.

Ver. 10.

Because it shut not up, to wit, the night or the day; to which those things are ascribed which were done by others in them, as is frequent in poetical writings, such as this is. Or, *he*, i.e. God; whom in modesty and reverence he forbears to name. Yet he doth not curse God for his birth, as the devil presaged, but only wisheth that the day of his birth might have manifest characters of a curse impressed upon it. *Shut not up the doors*; that it might either never have conceived me, or at least never have brought me forth.

Mother's; which word is here fitly supplied, both out of #**Job 1:21 31:18**, where it is expressed; and by comparing other places where it is necessarily to be understood, though *the womb* only be mentioned, as #**Job 10:19 Ps 58:3 Isa 48:8 Jer 1:5**.

Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes, because it did not keep me from entering into this miserable life, and seeing, i.e. feeling, or experiencing, (as that word is oft used,) those bitter sorrows under which I now groan.

Ver. 11.

From the womb, i.e. as soon as ever I was born, or come out of the womb. And the same thing is expressed in other words, which is an elegancy usual both in the Hebrew and in other languages.

Ver. 12.

Why did the knees prevent me? why did the midwife or nurse receive me, and lay me upon her knees, and did not suffer me to fall upon the bare ground, and there to lie, in a neglected and forlorn condition, till merciful death had taken me out of this miserable world, into which the cruel kindness of my mother and midwife hath betrayed me?

Why the breasts that I should suck? Why did the breasts prevent me, (which may be fitly understood out of the former member,) to wit, from perishing through hunger, or supply me, that *I should have what to suck?* Seeing my mother had not a miscarrying womb, but did unhappily bring me forth why had she not dry breasts? or why were there any breasts for me which I might suck? Thus Job most unthankfully and unworthily despiseth and traduceth these wonderful and singular mercies of God towards poor helpless infants, because of the present inconveniencies which he had by means of them.

Ver. 13.

Quiet; free from all those torments of my body and mind which now oppress me.

Ver. 14.

With kings; I had then been as happy as the proudest monarchs, who after all their great achievements and enjoyments go down into their graves, where I also should have been sweetly reposed.

Which built desolate places for themselves; which, to show their great wealth and power, or to leave behind them a glorious name, rebuilt ruined cities, or built new cities and palaces, and other monuments, in places where before there was mere solitude and wasteness.

Ver. 15.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 16.

Hidden; undiscerned and unregarded.

Untimely birth; born before the due time, and therefore extinct.

I had not been, to wit, in the land of the living, of which he here speaketh.

As infants which never saw light; being stifled and dead before they were born.

Ver. 17.

There, i.e. in the grave, which though not expressed, yet is clearly implied in the foregoing verses.

The wicked cease from troubling; the great oppressors and troublers of the world cease from all those vexations, rapines, and murders which here they procured.

There the weary be at rest; those who were here molested and tired out with their tyrannies, now quietly sleep with them, or by them.

Ver. 18.

The prisoners rest together, i.e. one as well as another; they who were kept in the strongest chains and closest prisons, and condemned to the most hard and miserable slavery, rest as well as those who were captives in much better circumstances. Or,

in like manner, (as this word oft signifies,) as those oppressors and oppressed do.

The oppressor, or, *exacter, or taskmaster,* who urgeth and forceth them by cruel threatenings and stripes to greater diligence in the works to which they are condemned. See #Ex 3:7 5:6,10,13. Job meddles not here with their eternal state after death, or the

sentence and judgment of God against wicked men, of which he speaks hereafter; but only speaks of their freedom from worldly troubles, which is the only matter of his complaint and present discourse.

Ver. 19.

The small and great, i.e. persons of all qualities and conditions, whether higher or lower.

Are there, in the same place and state, all those kinds of distinctions and differences being for ever abolished.

Ver. 20.

Heb. *Wherefore* (for what cause, or use, or good) *doth he* (i.e. God, though he forbear to name him, out of that holy fear and reverence which still he retained towards him) *give light?* either the light of the sun, which the living only behold, **#Ec 6:5 7:11**; or the light of life, as may seem both by the next words, and by comparing **#Ps 56:13**, and because death is off set forth by the name of darkness, as life by the name of light. These are strong expostulations with God, and quarrelling with his providence and with his blessings; but we must consider that Job was but a man, and a man of like passions and infirmities with other men, and now in grievous agonies, being not only under most violent, and yet continual, torments of body, but also under great disquietments of mind, and the deep sense of God's displeasure, and was also left to himself, that he might see what was in his heart, and that all succeeding ages might have in him an illustrious example of man's infirmity, and the necessity of God's grace to help them in time of need. And therefore it is no wonder if his passions boil up and break forth in some indecent and sinful expressions.

Unto the bitter in soul; unto such to whom life itself is very bitter and burdensome. Why doth he obtrude his favours upon those who abhor them?

Ver. 21.

i.e. Desire and pray for it with as much earnestness as men dig for treasure. But it is observable that Job durst not lay violent hands upon himself, nor do any thing to hasten or procure his death; but notwithstanding all his miseries and complaints, he was contented

to wait all the days of his appointed time, till his change came,
#Job 14:14.

Ver. 22.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 23.

Why is light given? these words are conveniently supplied out of **#Job 1:20**, where they are, all the following words hitherto being joined in construction and sense with them.

Whose way is hid, to wit, from him who knows not his *way*, i.e. which way to turn himself, what course to take to comfort himself in his miseries, or to get out of them; what method to use to please and reconcile that God who is so angry with him, seeing his sincere and exact piety, to which God is witness, doth not satisfy him; or what the end of these calamities will be.

Whom God hath hedged in; not with a hedge of defence, like that **#Job 1:10**, but of offence and restraint, i.e. whom God hath put as it were in prison or pound, or like cattle in grounds enclosed with a high and strong hedge, over or through which they cannot get; so that he can see no way nor possibility to escape, but all refuge fails him.

Ver. 24.

Before I eat, Heb. *before the face of my bread*, i.e. either when I am going to eat, or rather, all the time whilst I am eating, (for so this phrase is used **#Ps 72:5**, *before the face of the sun*, &c.; that is, as we translate it, *as long as the sun endureth*.) I fall into bitter passions of sighing and weeping; partly because my necessity and duty obligeth me to eat, and so to support this wretched life, which I long to lose; and principally because of my uninterrupted pains of body, and horrors of my mind, which mix themselves with my very meat, and do not afford me one quiet moment. Compare **#Ps 102:9**.

My roarings, i.e. my loud outcries, more befitting a lion than a man, which yet extremity of grief forceth from me. Compare **#Ps 22:1 32:3**.

Like the waters, i.e. with great abundance, and irresistible violence, and incessant continuance, as waters flow in a river, or when they break the banks, and overflow the ground.

Ver. 25.

This is another reason why he is weary of his life, and why he repents that ever he was born, because he never enjoyed any solid and secure comfort.

The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me. Heb. *I feared a fear*, (i.e. a danger or mischief in one kind or other, the act being here put for the object, as *joy* and *love* are oft put for the things rejoiced in, or loved, and here fear for the thing feared. Or, *I feared with fear*, i.e. *I feared greatly*,) *and it came*. Even in the time of my peace and prosperity I was full of fears, considering the variety of God's providences, the course and changeableness of this vain world, the infirmities and contingencies of human nature and life, God's justice, and the sinfulness of all mankind. And these fears of mine were not vain, but are justified by my present calamities. So that I have never enjoyed any sound tranquillity since I was born; and therefore it hath not been worth my while to live, since all my days have been evil, and full of vexation and torment, either by the fear of miseries, or by the sufferance of them.

Ver. 26.

The three expressions note the same thing, which also was signified in the next foregoing verse, to wit, that even in his prosperous days he never was secure or at rest from the torment of fear and anxiety. Others, I did not misbehave myself in prosperity, abusing it by presumption, and security, and voluptuousness, whereby I might have provoked God thus to afflict me; but I lived soberly and circumspectly, walking humbly with God, and working out my salvation with fear and trembling, little expecting that God would be so fierce an enemy against me.

Yet trouble came, Heb. *and trouble came*, as I feared it would. So between fear and calamity my whole life hath been miserable, and I had reason to repent of it.

JOB CHAPTER 4

Eliphaz speaketh, though it will grieve Job, #**Job 4:1,2**. Job had instructed and strengthened others in their sorrows, but now fainted himself, #**Job 4:3-5**. Eliphaz reproacheth him with his confidence in his uprightness, which he now suspecteth; for that God's judgments were not against the righteous, but the wicked, #**Job 4:6-11**. His fearful visions, #**Job 4:12-16**. The righteousness of God; the angels charged with folly; the vanity of man, #**Job 4:17-21**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Wilt thou be grieved? or, (without a note of interrogation,) *thou wilt be grieved*. Our words will undoubtedly vex thee, and not comfort thee, as we intended and desired to do. We must not use words of comfort, but of sharp reproof, which will be irksome to thee; and this makes me desire to be silent, if it were possible.

Who can withhold himself from speaking, when he hears such unreasonable and ungodly words coming from such a person as thou art, whereby thou dost accuse thy Maker, and reproach his providence, and contemn his blessings? No man who hath any respect to God, or love to thee, can forbear reproofing thee.

Ver. 3.

Thou hast instructed many; teaching them those lessons which thou hast not learned, and wilt not practise, to wit, patiently to bear afflictions, and to submit to God's will and providence in all things, which thou most shamefully refuseth to do.

Thou hast strengthened the weak hands, by administering supports and comforts and counsels to such as were unable to bear their burdens, or to do their duty.

Ver. 4.

Him that was falling; ready to sink under their pressures, or to fall from God, or into sin, (as that word is used, #**1Co 10:12 Ga 6:2**, and elsewhere,) through despondency and distrust of God's providence and promise, or through impatience.

The feeble knees; such as were weak-hearted, and fainting under their trials. See #Isa 35:3 Da 5:6 Heb 12:12.

Ver. 5.

Now it is come, i.e. the evil which thou didst fear, #Job 3:25, and which was come upon those whom thou didst so comfort.

Thou faintest; thou allowest in thyself what thou wouldst not bear in others. What in them was a vice, in thee, it seems, is become a virtue. Thou art wise for others, but not for thyself; a good physician to cure others, but not thyself; quick-sighted to see the faults of others, but blind to thine own.

It toucheth thee; it is now come to be thine own case.

Ver. 6.

So the sense is, We now plainly see what was the nature and complexion of thy fear of God, thy confidence in him, the uprightness of thy ways, and thy hope in God's mercy, which thou didst make show and boast of, and for which thou wast become so famous. Thy present carriage discovereth to thyself and others that it was but mere talk and appearance, and there was nothing sound and sincere in it. In thy prosperity it was easy to make a splendid profession of religion; but men are best known by affliction, and this now showeth of what metal thou art made; for now thou dost cast off thy fear of God, and all thy confidence and hope in him, and hast let go that integrity of thy ways which hitherto thou didst seem to hold fast; whereas true piety is uniform, and constant, and stedfast in all varieties of conditions, and under all trials and temptations. But this translation removes the *and* from its proper place, and changeth the order of the words, which is this in the Hebrew, *thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways*, which words may be restored to their own order, and with that variation our translation may stand, and this seems to be the true sense. And so here are four distinct questions, *Is not this thy fear? Is not this thy confidence? Is not this thy hope? Is not this the uprightness of thy ways?* But others make only two questions, and render the words either thus, *Is not (or rather, was not) thy fear (of God) thy confidence?* and *the uprightness of thy ways thy hope?* i.e. Did not thy fear of God, and *the integrity of thy life*, of which thou didst make such eminent profession, proceed only from the love of

thyself, and of this present world? and from thy *confidence and hope* that God would bless and prosper thee for it? For now when God withdraws his favour and blessings from thee, thy religion is vanished, and thou hast cast off all fear and reverence of God, as thy impious speeches show. Or thus, Would *not thy fear be thy confidence*, and the uprightness of thy ways thy hope? i.e. If thou hadst indeed that *fear* and integrity to which thou pretendest, it would give thee good ground of hope and confidence in the midst of all thy distresses, and thou wouldst not so faint and sink under thy calamities, as now thou dost, for want of a solid foundation of true piety. But both these translations, besides other inconveniences, stumble at the same stone, and pervert the order of the words in the Hebrew text, of which see before; which is not to be allowed without some kind of necessity, which is not in this case.

Ver. 7.

Give me one example hereof out of all thy experience or reading.

Who ever perished, i.e. was so utterly undone, as thou art, so miserably afflicted by such unparalleled and various judgments from God and men, all conspiring against thee?

Being innocent; who had not by his wickedness provoked so merciful a God to do that which is so unusual, and in some sort unpleasing to himself. Therefore thou art guilty of some great, though secret, crimes, and thy sin hath now found thee out, and hath brought down these stupendous plagues upon thee.

Where were the righteous cut off by the sickle of Divine vengeance before his time, which is like to be thy case? His judgment herein was rash and false, but not without some appearance of truth; for God had made many promises, not only of spiritual and eternal, but also of temporal, blessings, to all that should faithfully serve and obey him, which accordingly he did from time to time confer upon them, as we see by the examples of Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and doubtless many others which had lived in or before their days. And this was God's usual method under all the times of the Old Testament, as we see by the people of Israel, who were generally either in a happy and flourishing, or in an afflicted and miserable, state, according to

their obedience to God, or their apostacy from him. And therefore it is not strange that they fell into this mistake. But allowing for this mistake, and the consequence of it, his uncharitable opinion of Job, the method which he useth with Job is commendable, and to be imitated by others in their dealing with persons in sickness or affliction; for he doth not flatter him in his sins, nor immediately and unseasonably apply comforts to him, but endeavours to convince him of his sins, and to bring him to repentance, as the only regular way to his remedy.

Ver. 8.

As thou hast never seen any example of a righteous man cut off, so on the contrary I have seen many examples of wicked men cut off for their wickedness. Or, *As far as I have observed; or, But as I have seen or experienced.*

They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness; they that designedly and industriously work wickedness, first plotting and preparing themselves for it, and then continuing to pursue and execute it, as husbandmen first plough up and prepare the ground, and then cast in the seed. Compare **#Pr 22:8 Ho 10:13.**

Reap the same, i.e. *iniquity*, or such trouble or injury (for so also the Hebrew word avert signifies) as they cause to others. Or, the fruit of their iniquity, the just recompence and punishment of it, which is oft called sin or iniquity, as **#Ge 4:7 Nu 12:2 16:26 32:23.** Compare **#Ga 6:7,8.**

Ver. 9.

By the blast of God, to wit, *of his nostrils*, as it here follows, i.e. by his anger, which in men shows itself in the nostrils, by hot and frequent breathings there, and therefore by an anthropathy is ascribed to God; by a secret, and oft undiscerned, but mighty and powerful, judgment of God, by which they are blasted and blown away as chaff by the wind, as the phrase is, **#Ps 1.**

Ver. 10.

The voice of the fierce lion; *understand vanisheth, or perisheth*, out of **#Job 4:9;** or, is restrained, or suppressed, as may be gathered out of the following branch of this verse.

The teeth of the young lions are broken; which is true literally; the lions when taken having most commonly their teeth broken, as

ancient and modern writers relate. But this is here mystically meant of wicked and powerful tyrants, who are oft and fitly compared to *lions*, #Eze 32:2 38:13 2Ti 4:17, who though for a time they persecute and oppress other men, yet in due time they are restrained, and broken, and crushed in pieces by the mighty power of God appearing against them in some eminent judgments. Possibly he may secretly accuse Job, or his children, or both, that being persons of great wealth and power in those parts, they had wickedly abused it to ruin their neighbours, and therefore were justly cut off.

Ver. 11.

The old lion perisheth for lack of prey; because they cannot go abroad to seek it, and their young ones either cannot find or do not bring it to them. See #Ps 49:14,15 119:10.

Are scattered abroad; gone from their dens several ways to hunt for prey, and can find none.

Ver. 12.

Now, Heb. *and*, or *moreover*, I will further convince thee by a vision which I had relating to such matters as these. That here follows a relation of a vision is apparent from the punctual description of all its circumstances. To think as some do, that this was but a fiction and artifice which Eliphaz used, that his words might have more authority with Job, or that this was a diabolical delusion, seems to be both uncharitable and unreasonable, partly because Eliphaz, though under a mistake concerning Job's case, was doubtless a wise and good man, and therefore would not needlessly make himself a liar for Job's conviction; and partly from the matter of this vision, which is no way suitable to the nature or designs of the devil, but holy and agreeable to the Divine majesty and purity, and useful for men's instruction, and humiliation, and reformation. It was therefore a Divine vision, which in that age and state of the church, before the Holy Scriptures were written, was the usual way of God's discovery of his mind to those that sought to him.

A thing, Heb. *a word*, to wit, from God, as #Pr 13:13, a doctrine or message.

Was secretly brought to me, Heb. *was stolen, or brought by stealth into me*, i.e. privately and secretly, as the word of God used to come to the prophets, being spoken in their ear, as it was to Samuel, #1Sa 9:15; and the like to Moses, so as Pharaoh, though present, could not hear nor observe it, #Ex 11:1, with a low and still voice, a secret whisper. This is opposed to the more public delivery of God's word by the prophets to the people, which was done by crying aloud, #Isa 48:1.

Mine ear received, i.e. I heard.

A little thereof, or, a parcel thereof, i.e. of God's word; not of that particular word which God had now delivered to Eliphaz, which doubtless God would so speak, that he to whom he directed his speech might hear it all, and Eliphaz certainly would be as careful not to lose a syllable of it; but a parcel of God's word in general, which this indeed was. And withal, this may be a modest and humble expression, arising from a deep sense of his own infirmity, and the small measure of his knowledge of Divine things, whereof he knew only some little fragments and parcels, as Paul said, *We know but in part*, #1Co 13:9. As if he had said, Many, I doubt not, have more familiar acquaintance with God, and more full revelations from God, than I can pretend to, but a little of that treasure God hath been pleased to impart to me.

Ver. 13.

In thoughts; in the midst of my thoughts, or by reason of my thoughts, my perplexing thoughts. the word properly signifies a *branch*, and thence a thought, as #1Ki 18:21, which proceeds from the mind as branches from a tree, and a *perplexing thought*, which is entangled like the branches of a tree. These thoughts were the occasion of the following fear.

From the visions of the night: this may belong either to the *thoughts* last mentioned, or to the *fear* following; both which did arise

from the visions of the night, i.e. from the great importance and the terribleness of such visions, whereof probably he had had former experience, and now had an expectation of another of them, which God had raised and wrought in him, to prepare him the better for the reception of it. *Visions* differed from *dreams*

herein, that God imparted his mind to a man in dreams when he was asleep but in *visions* when they were awake. And these visions sometimes happened by day, as #Lu 1:22 Ac 10:17 Ac 26:19, but most frequently by night, whence we read of *vision* or *visions of the night*, as #Ge 46:2 Job 20:8 33:15. And such this was, which made it the more terrible.

When deep sleep falleth on men; in the dead of the night, when men usually are in a deep sleep; though Eliphaz was not now asleep, as appears from the nature of a vision, and from the following words.

Ver. 14.

Fear came upon me; either caused by the apparition following; or sent by God to humble him, and to prepare him for the more diligent attention to, reverent reception of; and ready compliance with, the Divine message.

Ver. 15.

Then, Heb. *and*, or *for*, as this particle is oft used. So this was the reason of the foregoing thoughts and fear.

A spirit; an angel in some visible shape, otherwise he could not have discerned it, nor would have been affrighted at it.

The hair of my flesh, i.e. of my body, as flesh is taken, #Ge 2:24 Ps 16:9 119:120.

Stood up, through that excessive horror caused by so glorious, unusual, and terrible a presence; which God used to excite in men upon such occasions, to convince them that it was not a vain imagination or illusion, but a real vision and revelation, and that from God.

Ver. 16.

It stood still; having passed by him to and again he made a stand, as one that had some business with him, and addressed himself to speak to him.

I could not discern the form thereof; to wit, exactly and distinctly, so as to know what or who it was.

An image was before mine eyes; I saw some corporal or visible resemblance, though in a confused manner.

There was silence: the spirit, which possibly had made some noise with his motion, now standing still made no noise; all other persons and things about me were silent, and I also kept in my voice and breath as much as I could, that I might distinctly hear what I perceived the spirit was speaking to me. In the Hebrew the words run thus, *silence and a voice* (i.e. a silent, or still, or low voice, by a very common figure, called *hendiadis*) *I heard*.

Ver. 17.

The sense is, Thou, O Job, dost presumptuously accuse God for dealing harshly and unrighteously with thee, in sending thee into the world upon such hard terms, and punishing all innocent and righteous man with such unparalleled severity; but consider things calmly within thyself; if God and thou come to a trial before any equal judge, canst thou think that thou wilt go away justified, and the great God shall be condemned? No righteous man will punish another without cause, or more than he deserves; and therefore if God do so with thee, as thy words imply, he is less just than a man; which is blasphemous and absurd to imagine.

Shall a man; a great and mighty man, as this word signifies, a man eminent for wisdom, or justice, or power, or any other perfections, such as thou art thought by thyself or others to be; who therefore might expect more favour than a poor miserable and contemptible man, which the word *enosch*, used in the former branch, signifies. So he anticipates this objection which Job might make.

Be more pure than his Maker? an unanswerable argument against Job. He made thee, and that for himself and his own glory, and therefore hath an unquestionable right to deal with thee, and dispose of thee, the work of his hands, as he sees fit. *Woe to him that striveth with his maker!* #Isa 45:9. Besides, he made man just and pure; if any man have any thing of justice or purity in him, it is derived from God, the undoubted and only fountain of it; and therefore it must necessarily be in God in a far more eminent degree.

Ver. 18.

Behold; this deserves thy serious consideration. These and the following words seem to be the words of Eliphaz, explaining the

former vision, and applying it to Job's case, and enforcing it by further arguments.

In his servants, i.e. in his angels, as appears both by the next words of this verse, where they are called by way of explication and restriction his angels; and by the next verse, where men are opposed to them. They are called *his servants* by way of eminency, that general name being here appropriated to the chief of the kind, as is very usual in all authors in like cases; and withal, to intimate that sovereign dominion which the great God hath over the glorious angels, and much more over men, by virtue whereof he hath an unquestionable authority to treat them according to his good pleasure. And these God is said to *put no trust in*, because he could not be confident that they, if left to themselves, and destitute of the succours of his power and grace, would continue to be loyal, and faithful, and serviceable to him, and would not revolt from him, as some of their brethren had done. And for this cause God was pleased, after some time of trial, to give some special and further grace, either by Christ or otherwise, whereby they should be infallibly confirmed in the state of grace and felicity.

His angels he charged with folly, or, *with vanity*, i.e. he discerned folly and vanity in the angelical natures when he had first made them; which although he saw and pronounced them, no less than the visible creatures, **#Ge 1**, to be very good in themselves, and free from the least degree or tincture of sin; yet, comparing them with himself, and considering them in themselves alone, he saw something of folly and vanity in their very natures, because they were creatures, and therefore subject to manifold changes; and, among others, to fall from God, or into sin, as it appeared by the sad experience of some of them. Seeing therefore the angels, which so far exceed mankind in wisdom, and strength, and purity, and justice, and all other perfections, do fall incomparably short of God in these things, it is most absurd, as well as impious, to think that man is more just or pure than God, as was said, **#Job 4:17**, and as thou, O Job, seemest to surmise. Others, nor (Heb. *and* not; the negative particle being repeated out of the former branch of the verse, as it is **#Ps 9:18 Pr 17:26**, and elsewhere) *in his angels*, in whom (both which particles are frequently understood, as hath been proved before) *he put light*, or

splendour, to wit, singular wisdom and purity, beyond what he put in man.

Ver. 19.

How much less, understand, *doth he put trust in them*, &c.! Or, *How much more*, understand, doth he charge folly on them, &c.! Either of these supplements are natural and easy, being fetched out of the former verse, and necessary to make the sense complete. The sense is, What strange presumption then is it, for a foolish and mortal man to pretend to a higher privilege than the angels do, to make himself more just than God, or to exalt himself above or against God, as thou dost! *On them*, i.e. on men, as it follows, who, though they have immortal spirits, yet those spirits dwell in mortal bodies, which are great debasements, and clogs, and encumbrances, and snares to them; and which are here called

houses, (because they are the receptacles of the soul, and the places of its settled and continual abode,) and

houses of clay, and *earthly houses*, #2Co 5:1; partly because they were made of *clay*, or *earth*, #Ge 2:7 1Co 15:47; and partly to note their great frailty and mutability; whereas the angels are free spirits, unconfined to such carcasses, and dwell in celestial, and glorious, and everlasting mansions.

Whose foundation is in the dust; whose *very foundation*, no less than the rest of the building, is

in the dust; who as they dwell in dust and clay, so they had their foundation or original from it, and they must return to it, #Ec 12:7; and, as to their bodies, lie down and sleep in it, #Da 12:2, as in his *long home*, #Ec 12:5, and the only continuing city which he hath in this world.

Which are crushed, Heb. *they crush them*, i.e. they are or will be crushed; the active verb used impersonally, as it is #Job 7:3 24:20 Pr 6:30 Lu 12:20.

Before the moth, i.e. sooner than a moth is crushed, which is easily done by a gentle touch of the finger. An hyperbolical expression. So the Hebrew word *liphne*, commonly signifying place, doth here note time, as it is used #Ge 27:7 29:26 36:31. Or, *at the face*, or *appearance*, of a moth. No creature is so weak and

contemptible but one time or other it may have the body of man in its power, as the worms, the moths' cousin-germans, have in the grave. But he instanceth in a *moth* rather than a worm, because it is the weaker of the two, and because it better agrees with the similitude of a house, in which moths commonly are more frequent, and powerful, and mischievous than worms. How then canst thou think, O Job, to contend with thy Maker, that must become a prey to such small and impotent creatures?

Ver. 20.

From morning to evening; either,

1. Speedily, between morning and evening, like the grass; they flourish in the morning, and in the evening are cut off, #Ps 90:5,6.

Or rather,

2. *All the day long*, as the phrase is, #2Co 11:25. There is not a moment wherein man is not sinking and drawing on towards death and corruption.

For ever; as to human appearance and the course of nature, as many such like passages are to be understood in this book; or in reference to this present. and worldly life, which when once lost is never recovered, #Job 16:22 Ps 39:13.

Without any regarding it, Heb. *without putting the heart to it*; the word heart being understood there, as also #Job 23:6 34:23 Isa 41:20, as may appear by comparing #1Sa 9:20 2Sa 18:3 Isa 41:22 57:1, where the same phrase is used, and the word *heart* expressed. The meaning is either,

1. Yet few or no men that survive them lay it to heart as they should do. Or,

2. They perish beside the expectation of all men, when both themselves and others thought their mountain was so strong that it could not be removed. Or rather,

3. This is so common a thing for all men, though never so high and great, to perish in this manner, that no man heeds it, but passeth it by as a general accident not worthy of observation. Otherwise, *no man procuring or furthering it*, Heb. *without any man's putting the hand to it*, i.e. they perish of themselves, without any violent hand.

Ver. 21.

Whatsoever is really or by common estimation excellent in men, all their natural, and moral, and civil accomplishments, as high birth, great riches, power, and wisdom, &c.; these are so far from preserving men from perishing, as one would think they should do, that they perish themselves, together with those houses of clay in which they are lodged.

Which is in them go away; or, *go away* (i.e. die and perish, as that phrase is oft used as **#Ge 15:15 Jos 23:14 Job 10:21 Ps 58:9 Ec 12:5 Mt 26:21**) *with*, (as *beth* is oft used) *them*; it doth not survive them.

Without wisdom: either,

1. Like fools. Wise men and fools die alike, **#Ec 2:16**. Or,
2. They never attain to perfect wisdom, to that wisdom which man once had, much less to that wisdom which is in God, which Job conceiveth he hath; otherwise he would not so boldly censure the counsels and works of God as unrighteous or unreasonable, because his human and narrow capacity cannot fully understand them. Moreover, as *folly* is oft put for unrighteousness and wickedness, so is wisdom for justice and goodness; which is so known, that it is needless to prove it; and so by wisdom here may be meant that perfect justice and purity which Job arrogated to himself, and which Eliphaz here denies to all men, **#Job 4:17**, &c.

JOB CHAPTER 5

Wrath foolish: the wicked miserable, **#Job 5:1-5**. Evil cometh not by chance; it is natural to our condition, **#Job 5:6,7**. This is our motive to prayer and trust in God, **#Job 5:8**; whose unsearchable power and wisdom are against the high and crafty, for the relief of the poor, **#Job 5:9-16**. Their happiness whom God correcteth, and God's gracious care of such, **#Job 5:17-27**.

Ver. 1.

Call now, i.e. invite, or make proclamation, as this word is oft used, as **#De 20:10 Jud 12:1 Jer 2:2 3:12 7:2**. Call them all as it were by their names; consult the whole catalogue of them all, which thou didst ever know or hear of.

If there be any, to wit, of the saints, as it follows.

That will answer thee, i.e. comply with thee, answer thy desires or expectations; try if there be any one saint that will defend or allow thee in these bold expostulations with God; or, as it is in the Hebrew,

if there be any that doth answer thee, i.e. whose opinion or disposition and carriage is answerable or like to thine. So *answering* is sometimes used, as **#Pr 27:19 Ec 10:19**. Thou wilt find many fools or wicked men, as it follows, **#Job 5:2**, to answer or imitate thee in their speeches and carriages, but not one of the saints like thee; which deserves thy serious consideration, and gives thee just cause to question thine integrity.

The saints; either,

1. The angels, who are sometimes called *saints*, as **#Job 15:15 Da 8:13 Zec 14:5**, because they are eminently and perfectly holy; or rather,

2. Holy men, as appears both from the word, which most commonly is so used, and from the opposition of the *foolish man* to these, **#Job 5:2**, and because the example of men was more proper and effectual for Job's conviction than of angels.

Wilt thou turn, or *look?* look about thee, view them all, and see if thou canst find one like thee.

Ver. 2.

Either,

1. The wrath of God; or rather,

2. A man's own wrath, fretting, and impatience, and indignation; which kills men, partly, naturally, as it preys upon a man's spirit, and wasteth him inwardly, and so hastens his death, of which see **#Pr 14:30 17:22**; partly, morally, as it prompts him to those rash, and furious, and wicked actions which may procure his death; and partly, meritoriously, as it provoketh God to cut him off, and to bring upon him those further and severe strokes which he mentions in the following words.

The foolish man; either,

1. The rash and inconsiderate man, who doth not ponder things impartially; but, like a man mad, rageth against God, and torments himself and all that hear him. Or,

2. The ungodly man, who is frequently called a *fool* in Scripture language, and who is here opposed to the saints, #**Job 5:1**.

Envy: he taxeth Job, who spoke with great envy at those that were never born, or were in their graves, #**Job 3:10,12**, &c.

The silly one; properly, the man who, for want of true wisdom, is soon deceived with false opinions, and appearances, and present things; which is thy case, O Job. The sense of the verse may be this, I perceive, O Job, that thou art full of envy at wicked men, who at present are, or seem to be, in a happier condition than thou; and of wrath against God, who denies thee that mercy, and loads thee with afflictions; and this shows thee to be a foolish and weak man. For those men, notwithstanding their present prosperity, are doomed to great and certain misery, as it here follows. And so this verse coheres with the following as well as the foregoing verses.

Ver. 3.

I have oft observed it in my experience. Having severely rebuked Job for his transports of passion and intemperate speeches against God, he now returns to his former argument, and proves that such dreadful and destructive judgments of God do not befall the righteous, but the wicked, as he observed, #**Job 4:7,8**. Withal, he answers an objection concerning the present and seeming prosperity of the wicked, which he confesseth that he himself had sometimes observed.

The foolish, i. e. the wicked man, who is quite destitute of true, i.e. of spiritual and heavenly, wisdom.

Taking root; not only prosperous for the present, but, as it seemed, from all secure for the future, being strongly fortified with power, and riches, and children too, so as there was no appearance nor danger of a change.

Suddenly; in a moment, besides and before mine, and his own, and all other men's expectation.

I cursed; either,

1. I judged that he was a cursed creature, notwithstanding all his prosperity; and I foresaw and foretold it by the rules of Scripture, or the direction of God's Spirit, that he would certainly sooner or later be stripped of all his blessings, and have God's curse fall heavily upon him. Or rather,

2. I saw and perceived, by the event which followed his prosperity, that he was a man accursed of God. For he speaks not in these words of what his estate constantly was, even in the midst of his happiness, though even then he was really accursed; but of what it was by a sudden change.

His habitation; or, as the Hebrew word signifies, *his pleasant or commodious habitation*; persons or things in it, or belonging to it, being comprehended in that word by a usual metonymy.

Ver. 4.

His children; whose greatness and happiness he designed in all his enterprises, supposing that his family was and would be established for ever.

Are far from safety, i.e. are exposed to great dangers and calamities in this life, and can neither preserve themselves, nor the great inheritance which their fathers got and left for them. Thus to be far from peace, **#La 3:17**, is to be involved in desperate troubles.

In the gate, i.e. in the place of judicature; to which they are brought for their offences, and where they will find severe judges, and few or no friends; partly because, being wickedly educated, and trusting to their own greatness, they were insolent and injurious to all their neighbours; and partly because those many persons whom their powerful fathers defrauded or oppressed do seek for justice, and the recovery of their rights, which they easily obtain against such persons as plainly declared by their actions that they neither feared God nor revered him, and therefore were hated by all sorts of men.

Neither is there any to deliver them; they can find no advocates nor assistants, who are either able or willing to help them; but, like Ishmael, *as their hand was formerly against every man*, so now *every man's hand is against them*.

Ver. 5.

Whose harvest, which they now justly and confidently expect to reap, after all their cost and labour for that end, but are sadly and suddenly disappointed; which is a great aggravation of their misery.

The hungry, i.e. the poor, whose necessities make them greedy and ravenous to eat it all up; and from whom he can never recover it, nor any thing in recompence of it.

Out of the thorns, i.e. out of the fields, notwithstanding the strong thorn hedges wherewith it is enclosed and fortified, and all other dangers or difficulties which may be in their way. They will take it, though they be scratched and wounded by the thorns about it. *The robbers*; so called from their long hair, which such persons nourished, either because of their wild and savage kind of life, which made them neglect the trimming of their hair and body; or that they might look more terribly, and so affright all those who should endeavour to oppose them. Or, *the thirsty*, as the word may signify from another root. And so it answers well to the hungry, in the former branch. *Swalloweth up greedily*, and so as there is no hope of recovering it.

Ver. 6.

Although, or *for*, or rather, *because*. So the following words may contain a reason why he should *seek unto God*, as he exhorts him, **#Job 5:8**. Or, *surely*, as that particle is oft used. And so it is a note of his proceeding to another argument.

Affliction, or *iniquity*, as this word oft signifies; and of this the following sentence is true. And so this first branch speaks of sin, and the next branch of trouble, which is the fruit of sin; and both sin and trouble are said to come from the same spring. But this word signifies also *affliction*, or *misery*, or *trouble*, as **#Ps 90:10 Pr 12:21**; which seems most proper here, both because it is so explained by the following words,

trouble; and again, *trouble*, **#Job 5:7**, the same thing being repeated in several words, as is usual in Holy Scripture; and because the great thing which troubled Job, and the chief matter of these discourses, was Job's afflictions, not his sins. *Cometh not forth of the dust*; it springs not up by chance, as herbs which grow

of their own accord out of the earth; or, it comes not from men or creatures here below; but it comes from a certain and a higher cause, even from God, and that for man's sins; and therefore thou shouldst seek to him for redress, as it follows, **#Job 5:8**.

Ver. 7.

i.e. He is so commonly exposed to many and various troubles, as if he were born to no other end. Affliction is become in some sort natural and proper to man, and it is, together with sin, transmitted from parents to children, as their most certain and constant inheritance; God having allotted this portion to mankind for their sins. And therefore thou takest a wrong course in complaining so bitterly of that which thou shouldst patiently bear, as the common lot of mankind; and thy right method is to seek unto God, who inflicts it, and who only can remove it.

As the sparks fly upward, i.e. as naturally and as generally *as the sparks of fire fly upward*, which do so universally and constantly. Heb. *and the sparks*, &c. But the particle *and* is oft used comparatively for *as*, as **#Job 12:11 14:11 34:3 Pr 25:21 Mr 9:49**.

Ver. 8.

If I were in thy condition; and therefore I would advise thee to the same course.

Seek unto God, to wit, by prayer, and humiliation, and submission, imploring his pardon, and favour, and help, and not repine at him, and accuse his providence, as thou dost.

Would I commit my cause, i.e. commend my afflicted condition to him by fervent prayer, and resign myself and all my concerns to him, and humbly hope for relief from him. Or, *propound my matters*, i.e. make known my afflictions and requests to him; or, put or dispose my words, i.e. pray to him, and pour out my complaints before him.

Ver. 9.

Here Eliphaz enters upon a discourse of the infinite perfection and greatness of God's nature and works; which he doth partly as an argument to enforce the exhortation to *seek and commit his cause to God*, **#Job 5:8**, because God was infinitely able, either to punish him yet far worse, if he continued to provoke him, or to

raise him from the dust, if he humbly addressed himself to him; and partly that by a true representation of God's excellency and glory, and of that vast disproportion which was between God and Job, he might both convince Job of his great sin in speaking so boldly and irreverently of him, and prevent his relapse into the same miscarriage.

Unsearchable; either such things as we may not boldly and curiously search into, #De 29:29 Ro 11:33 Col 2:18; or such as by searching we cannot find out, #Job 11:7; such as we cannot thoroughly understand, either the works themselves, or God's way and manner of doing them, or God's designs or ends in doing them. And therefore, O Job, thou art guilty of great impiety and folly to censure the ways and works of God as unreasonable, #Job 3:11,20, because thou dost not fully understand the nature and use of them.

Marvellous things; which (though common, as the following works are, and therefore neglected and despised, yet) are just matter of wonder even to the wisest men.

Ver. 10.

He beginneth with this ordinary and obvious work of God, in which he implies that there is something unsearchable and wonderful, as indeed there is in the rise of it from the earth, in the strange hanging of that heavy body in the air, and in the distribution of it as God sees fit, #Am 4:7; and how much more in the secret counsels and hidden paths of Divine Providence, which Job took the liberty to censure!

Waters; either fountains and rivers, which is another great and wonderful work of God; or rather, rain water, as the following words imply; the same thing being repeated in other words, after the manner.

Upon the fields, or, *upon all places abroad*, i.e. which have no covering to keep out the rain.

Ver. 11.

These words contain either,

1. A declaration of God's end in giving rain, which is to enrich those who were poor, or mourning for the drought, by sending rain, and making their lands fruitful; or rather,

2. Another example of God's great and wonderful works. And the infinitive verb is here put for the indicative, *he setteth up*, &c., which is very frequent in the Hebrew, as #Ps 56:13 Zec 3:4 12:10. He giveth this instance to comfort and encourage Job to seek to God, because he can raise him out of his greatest depths, and useth to raise others in the like condition.

That those which mourn may be exalted to safety, notwithstanding all the craft and power of their enemies.

Ver. 12.

Of the crafty; such as are cunning to work evil, and to cover it with fair pretences, as hypocrites use to do, and as Job's friends charged him with doing: God breaks the hopes and designs of such men; as he hath now blasted thy expectation, and taken away thy outward happiness, which was the thing thou didst design in taking up the profession of religion.

Their enterprise; or, *any thing*; or, *what is solid or substantial*; or, *wisdom*, i.e. their wise counsel or crafty design. They cannot execute their cunning contrivances.

Ver. 13.

The wise in their own craftiness; wicked men, who are wise to do evil, and wise in the opinion of the world, he not only deceiveth in their hopes and counsels, but turns them against themselves; as we see in Ahithophel, Haman, &c. *The froward*, or *perverse*, or *wrestlers*; such as wind and turn every way, as wrestlers do, and will leave no means untried to accomplish their counsels. *Is carried headlong*, i.e. is tumbled down and broken, and that by their own precipitation and haste. Their malice cannot have the patience to proceed wisely and leisurely against God's church and people, but makes them eager and venturous, and so to make more haste than good speed in their wicked designs.

Ver. 14.

i.e. In plain things they run into gross mistakes and errors, and commonly choose those counsels and courses which are worst for themselves.

Darkness oft notes misery, but here ignorance or error, as it is also used #**Job 12:25 37:19**, and elsewhere.

Grope, like blind men to find their way, not knowing what to do.

Ver. 15.

The poor, or *helpless*; who therefore flee to God for refuge.

From their mouth, or,

from the sword which cometh out of their mouth, i.e. from all their censures, slanders, threatenings, deceitful insinuations, false swearings of witnesses, unrighteous sentences of corrupt judges, whereby their good names, or estates, or lives may be exposed to the utmost hazards. And this is fitly opposed to the sword of the hand, implied in the next branch of the verse. Or, *from the sword by their mouths*, i.e. by those wicked men's own words against the godly, which God wonderfully overruleth to the working out of their deliverance.

Ver. 16.

So this poor man obtaineth what he in some measure hoped or expected from God, to whom he committed his cause; and other poor men will be encouraged by his example to place their hope in God.

Iniquity, i. e. wicked men; the abstract for the concrete, as *pride*, *deceit*, *injustice*, are put for proud, deceitful, and unrighteous men, #**Jer 13:9 2Pe 3:13**.

Stoppeth her mouth, i.e. they are silenced and confounded, being convicted of their own wickedness and folly, and finding that not only the poor are got out of their nets and snares, in which they thought that they had them fast, but also the oppressors themselves are insnared in them; and all this by sudden and unexpected means.

Ver. 17.

Behold; for what I am saying, though most true, will not be believed without serious consideration.

Happy is the man whom God correcteth, Heb. *blessednesses* (i.e. various and great happiness, as the plural number implies) belong to that man whom God rebukes, to wit, with strokes, #**Job**

33:16,19. Those afflictions are so far from making thee miserable, as thou complainest, that they are, and will be, if thou dost thy duty, the means of thy happiness: which, though a paradox to the world, is frequently affirmed in Holy Scripture; and the reason of it is plain, because they are pledges of God's love, which no man can buy too dear; and though bitter, yet necessary physic to purge out that sin which is deeply fixed in all men's natures, and thereby to prevent far greater, even infinite and eternal, miseries; without respect to which this proposition could not be true or tolerable. And therefore it plainly shows that good men in those ancient times of the Old Testament had the prospect, and belief, and hope of everlasting blessedness in heaven after this life.

Despise not thou, i.e. do not abhor it as a thing pernicious and intolerable, nor refuse it as a thing useless and unprofitable, nor slight it as a mean and unnecessary thing; but, on the contrary, prize it highly, as a favour and vouchsafement of God; for such negative expressions oft imply the contrary, as **#1Th 5:20 1Ti 4:12.** See **#Pr 10:2 17:21.**

Of the Almighty; or, *of the all-sufficient God*, who is able to support and comfort thee in thy troubles, and to deliver thee out of them, and to add more calamities to them, if thou art obstinate and incorrigible.

Ver. 18.

Bindeth up, to wit, the wounds, as good surgeons use to do when they have dressed them, in order to their healing. Compare **#Ps 147:3 Eze 34:4.** The sense is, Though he hath seen it fit to wound thee, yet he will not always grieve thee, but will in due time release thee from all thy miseries. Therefore despair not.

Ver. 19.

He shall deliver thee, to wit, if thou seekest to him by prayer and repentance.

Six, i.e. manifold or repeated; as *six* is used for many, **#Pr 6:16.**

There shall no evil touch thee, to wit, so as to undo or destroy thee, as touching is used, **#Jos 9:19 Heb 11:28 1Jo 5:18.** See also **#Ge 26:11,29 2Sa 14:10 Ps 105:15 Zec 2:8.** Thou shalt have a good issue out of all thy troubles, though they are both great and many.

Ver. 20.

In famine; which Job might be thought to fear, as being so poor that he needed his friends' contributions for his relief.

From death; from that terrible kind of death.

These things he utters with more confidence, partly because the rewards or punishments of this life were more constantly distributed to men in the Old Testament according to their good or bad behaviour than now they are; and partly because it was his particular opinion, that great afflictions were the constant fruits and certain evidences of a man's wickedness; and consequently, that great mercies and deliverances should infallibly follow upon true repentance and godliness.

Ver. 21.

Hid, i.e. protected, as in some secret and safe place.

From the scourge of the tongue, i.e. from false accusations and virulent slanders and reproaches, either by diverting their tongues to other persons or things, or by clearing thy integrity.

Neither shalt thou be afraid; thou shalt have no cause to fear it, because God will secure thee in it and from it.

When it cometh, to wit, upon others; near thee, or round about thee.

Ver. 22.

Thou shalt not only be *redeemed from famine*, #Job 5:20, and *not fear destruction*, #Job 5:21, but thou shalt laugh at them; not with a laughter of scorn and contempt, as this word is used, #Job 39:18 Ps 2:4 37:13; (for God's judgments are to be entertained with reverence and godly fear;) but with a laughter of joy and triumph, arising from his just security and confidence in God's watchful and gracious providence, which will either keep him from it or in it, or do him much good by it.

The beasts, i.e. the wild beasts, which were numerous and mischievous in those parts. See #De 28:26 1Sa 17:34 Jer 7:33.

Ver. 23.

Thou shalt be free from any annoyance by stones, either in thy walking or other postures, or in thy ploughing, as if they had made

an inviolable league with thee. Stones may be, and in these stony countries were, hurtful to men many ways; either by bruising or hurting their feet when they walked barefoot, as the manner then was; or by giving them occasion of stumbling, or slipping, and falling; or by falling upon a man from a rock, or higher ground, as sometimes it hath happened; or filling his grounds, so as to hinder his ploughing, and make his lands unfruitful. Nay, the stones shall not only cease to be hurtful, but they shall be useful and beneficial to thee; they shall, as it were, present themselves to thee when thou hast occasion, either to sling them at thine enemies, as then was usual, **#Jud 20:16 2Ch 26:14**, or to make fences to thy ground, or to build a house. This is a bold metaphor, but such are frequent, as in other authors, so also in Scripture, as **#Isa 28:15 Ho 2:18**.

The beasts of the field; either,

1. The wild beasts; and then this is an addition to the former privilege; they shall not hurt thee, **#Job 5:22**; nay, they shall befriend thee, as being at peace with thee, here, **#Job 5:23**. Or,
2. The tame beasts, who otherwise may be refractory and hurtful to a man, many having been killed by them.

Ver. 24.

Thou shalt know, by certain and constant experience,

that thy tabernacle, i.e. thy habitation, as it follows, including also the inhabitants, children, or friends and servants,

shall be in peace; shall enjoy great safety from all their enemies, and concord among themselves, and prosperity in all their concerns; all which are comprehended under the sweet name of

peace. Visit thy habitation, i.e. manage and order thy family, and all thy domestic affairs and worldly concerns, with care and diligence. *Visiting* is oft used for regarding or taking care of, as **#Ge 21:1 Ru 1:6 Ps 8:4 80:14**.

Shalt not sin; either by unrighteousness in thy dealings with thy family or others, or by neglecting God and his service in thy family, or by winking at any sin in thy domestics which thou canst hinder. But because he speaks not here of Job's duty, but of his

privilege, and that in outward and worldly things, it seems better rendered by others,

and thou shalt not err, or *miscarry*, or *miss thy way or mark*, as this very word is used below, #**Job 24:19 14:16 Jud 20:16**; thou shalt not be disappointed of thy hopes, or blasted in thy endeavours, but shalt succeed in them. Or, *and thou shalt not wander*, or *be a wanderer*, having no house in which to put his head, which Job might have some ground to fear; but thou shalt have a *habitation* of thy own, which thou shalt visit and manage as thou didst before.

Ver. 25.

Thou shalt know; partly by assurance from God's promises, and the impressions of his Spirit; and partly by experience in due time.

Thy seed shall be great; thy posterity, which God will give thee instead of those which thou hast lost, shall be high, and honourable, and powerful. Or, *shall be many*.

Thine offspring; which shall come out of thy own loins as branches out of a tree, as the word signifies. And this word seems added to the former to restrain and explain it, by showing that he did not speak of his spiritual seed, as Abraham's seed is in part understood, but of the fruit of his own body. *As the grass of the earth*; both for its plentiful increase, and for its flourishing greenness.

Ver. 26.

In a full age; in a mature and old, but vigorous, age, as the word implies. Thou shalt not be cut off by a hand of violence before thy time, as thy sons and other wicked men have been; but shalt die in a *good old age*, as did Abraham, #**Ge 25:8**, and Moses, #**De 34:7**.

As a shock of corn cometh in; *as a heap or stack of corn is brought in*, to wit, to the barn. Heb. *ascendeth*, or *riseth*; which word is very proper and usual in this case; for a stack of corn is said to rise, when by the addition of new heaps and handfuls it is raised to a higher pitch. Or, *is cut off*, as this same word is used, #**Ps 102:24**. *Cut me not off*, &c., Heb. *Make me not to ascend*; and thus it is fitly used both of the corn, which when it is cut up ascends, or is lifted up from the earth, on which it lay, and is advanced into stacks and high heaps, either in the barn or in the

field; and of man, who when he dies *his spirit goeth upward* to heaven, as is implied even there where in the person of an epicure it is questioned, #Ec 3:21.

In his season; in harvest, when the corn is ripe.

Ver. 27.

It is not my single opinion, but my brethren concur with me, as thou wilt hear from their own mouths. This is no rash or hasty conceit, but what we have learned by deep consideration and hard study, long experience and diligent observation, both of God's word, so far as he hath been pleased to reveal himself, and of the course and methods of his providence and dealing with men in the world.

Know thou it; for to us thou seemest by thy words and carriage to be wholly, or in a great part, ignorant of these things. *For thy good;* let the advantage which will come unto thee by following this counsel remove thy prejudice against it.

JOB CHAPTER 6

Job's answer: he wisheth his troubles were duly weighed, for then would his complaints appear just, #Job 6:1-7: prayeth for death; his hope in it, #Job 6:8-10. He is unable to bear up under his burden, #Job 6:11,12. He vindicateth himself against his friends, and reproveth them, #Job 6:13-30.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

My grief; either,

1. My calamity, as it follows, or the cause or matter of my grief; the act being put for the object, as is usual, *fear for the thing feared*, &c., and the same thing being here repeated in differing words. Or,

2. My sorrow; or, *my wrath*, or *rage*, as thou didst call it, #Job 5:2. So his wish is, that his *sorrow or wrath* were laid in one scale of the balances, and his

calamity in the other, that so it might be known whether his sorrow or wrath was greater than his misery, as was pretended.

Were thoroughly weighed; were fully understood and duly considered. Thy harsh rebukes and censures of my impatience, and hypocrisy, and wickedness, proceedeth from thy ignorance or insensibleness of my insupportable calamities. I desire no favour from thee. But oh that I had a just and equal judge, that would understand my case, and consider whether I have not just cause for such bitter complaints; or, at least, whether the greatness of my burden should not procure some allowance to my infirmity, if I should speak something indecently and unadvisedly, and protect me from such severe censures!

Laid in the balances together; either,

1. *Together with my grief;* or rather,

2. **Together** with any the most heavy thing to be put into the other scale, as with the sand, &c., as is expressed in the next verse; where also the particle *it*, being of the singular number, showeth that there was but one thing to be weighed with the sand.

Ver. 3.

It would be heavier, i.e. my grief or calamity,

than the sand of the sea, which is heavier than dry sand.

Swallowed up, as this verb is used, **#Pr 20:25 Ob 1:16.** My voice and spirit faileth me. So far am I from speaking too liberally of it, for which I am now accused, that I cannot find nor utter words sufficient to express my sorrow or misery; but my groanings are such as cannot be uttered, as is said in another case, **#Ro 8:26.** When I would express it, the words stick in my throat, and I am forced, as it were, to swallow them up.

Ver. 4.

Arrows; so he fitly calls his afflictions, because, like arrows, they came upon him swiftly and suddenly, one after another, and that from on high, and they wounded him deeply and deadly.

Of the Almighty; so he calls them, either generally, because all afflictions come from him; or particularly, because God's hand was in a singular manner eminent and visible in his miseries, **#Job**

1; or yet more especially, because they were immediately shot by God into his spirit, as it follows.

Are within me; besides those evils which are past, **#Job 1**, there are other miseries that are constant and fixed in me, the sharp pains of my body, and dismal horrors of my mind.

The poison whereof; implying that these arrows were more keen and pernicious than ordinary, as being dipped in God's wrath, as the barbarous nations then and since used to dip their arrows in poison, that they might not only pierce, but burn up and consume the vital parts.

Drinketh up my spirit, i.e. exhausteth and consumeth, either,

1. My vital spirits, together with my blood, the seat of them, and my heart, the spring of them, as poison useth to do. But I doubt the Hebrew word *ruach* is never used in that sense. Or,

2. My soul, which is commonly *the spirit*, my mind and conscience. So he tells them, that besides the miseries which they saw, he felt others, and far greater, though invisible, torments in his soul, which if they could see, they would have more pity for him. And in this sense this place is and may very well be otherwise rendered, *whose poison my spirit*

drinketh up, i.e. my soul sucks in the venom of those calamities, by apprehending and applying to itself the wrath of God manifested and conveyed by them.

The terrors of God; either,

1. Great terrors; or,

2. God's terrible judgments; or rather,

3. These terrors which God immediately works in my soul, either from the sense of his wrath accompanying my outward troubles, or from the sad expectation of longer and greater torments.

Set themselves in array; they are like a numerous and well-ordered army, under the conduct of an irresistible general, who designs and directs them to invade me on every side.

Ver. 5.

Thou wonderest that my disposition and carriage is so greatly altered from what it was, **#Job 4:3-5**, but thou mayst easily learn the reason of it from the brute beasts, the ass and ox, who when they have convenient and common food, are quiet and contented; but when they want that, they will resent it, and complain in their way by braying or lowing: see **#Jer 14:6**. And therefore my carriage is agreeable to those common principles of nature which are both in men and beasts, by which their disposition and deportment is generally suitable to their condition. It is no wonder that you complain not, who live in ease and prosperity; nor did I, when it was so with me; but if you felt what I feel, you would be as full of complaints as I am.

Ver. 6.

Can or do men use to eat unsavoury meats with delight, or without complaint? This is either,

1. A reflection upon Eliphaz's discourse, as unsavoury, which could not give him any conviction or satisfaction. But his censure of Eliphaz's speech begins not till **#Job 6:14**, and then it proceeds. Or rather,

2. A justification of Job's complaints (of which both the foregoing and following verses treat) by another argument. Men do commonly complain of their meat when it is but unsavoury, how much more when it is so bitter as mine is! which is implied here, and expressed in the next verse; where the sense here begun is completed, and this general proposition is accommodated to Job's condition.

In the white of an egg, Heb. *in the white of a yolk*, i.e. which encompasseth the yolk of an egg.

Ver. 7.

Heb. *As the sicknesses or sorrows of my meat*, i.e. as my sorrowful meat, which I am constrained to eat with grief of heart. The particle *as*, either,

1. Notes not the similitude, but the truth of the thing, as it is oft used, as hath been formerly noted and proved. So the sense is, that such meat as formerly he should have abhorred to touch, either for the quality of it, or for his tears or ulcerous matter which mixed

themselves with it, he was now forced by the necessities of nature, and his own poverty, to eat. Or,

2. Implies that the following words are not to be understood properly, but metaphorically. And so the sense may be this, Those grievous afflictions, which according to the principles and common inclinations of human nature I dreaded the very touch and thought of, they are now my daily, though sorrowful, bread; I am forced constantly to feed upon them; as other persons in great afflictions are said to be *fed with bread of tears*, #Ps 80:5, and to *eat ashes like bread*, #Ps 102:9. Others make this a censure of Eliphaz's words, as ungrateful and loathsome to him. But that sense seems neither to agree with the words of this verse, nor with its scope and coherence with the former, of which **See Poole "Job 6:6"**.

Ver. 8.

My request, i.e. the thing which I have so passionately desired, and, notwithstanding all your vain words and weak arguments, do still justly continue to desire, to wit, death, as is expressed #Job 6:9, and more largely #Job 3.

Ver. 9.

To destroy me; to end my days and calamities together. *That he would let loose his hand*; which is now as it were bound up or restrained from giving me that deadly blow which I desire. Oh that he would restrain himself and his hand no longer, but let it fall upon me with all its might, so as to

cut me off as it follows.

Ver. 10.

The thoughts of my approaching death would comfort me in all my sorrows. This would solace me more than life, with all that worldly safety, and glory, and happiness which thou hast advised me to seek unto God for.

I would harden myself in sorrow, i.e. I would bear up myself with more courage and patience under all my torments with the hopes of my death, and that blessedness into which I know I shall after death be admitted, as he more fully speaks, #Job 19:26,27, whereas now I pine away in lingering and hopeless miseries. Or, *I would burn* (i.e. I am content to burn) *in sorrow*. Or, *I would pray*

(as this word signifies in Hebrew writers; and *praying* may be here put for praising or worshipping of God, as it is frequently used in Scripture) *in, or for, my sorrow or pain*; then I would worship God, and say, Blessed be the Lord's name for these afflictions, as I did for the former, **#Job 1:20,21**.

Let him not spare; but let him use all severity against me, so far as to cut me off, and not suffer me to live any longer; which will seem to me a cruel kind of patience towards me.

Of the Holy One, i.e. of God, who is frequently called *the Holy One* in Scripture, as **#Isa 40:25 Isa 57:15 Hab 3:3**, and is so in a most eminent and peculiar manner. The sense is, Therefore I do not fear death, but desire it; and that not only to be freed from my present troubles, but also and especially to put me into the possession of the happiness of the next life; of which I am assured, because I have in good measure performed the conditions of that covenant upon which he hath promised it; for as for

the words of God, i.e. that light of sacred truths and precepts which he hath been pleased to impart to me,

I have not concealed them, neither from myself by shutting mine eyes against them, or suffering my prejudices, or passions, or worldly interests to blind my mind, lest I should see them, as you think I have done; nor from others; but as I myself have stedfastly believed them, and not wilfully and wickedly departed from them, so I have endeavoured to teach and commend them to others, and have not been ashamed nor afraid boldly to profess and preach the true religion in the midst of heathens who are round about me. And therefore I know that if God doth cut me off, it will be in mercy, and I shall be a gainer by it. Some translate and distinguish the verse thus. *Yet this is my comfort, (though, or when, I scorch with pain, and he, i.e. God, doth not spare me, but afflicts me most severely,) that I have not concealed the words of God, but have professed and practised them.*

Ver. 11.

My strength is so small and spent, that although I may linger a while in my torments, yet I cannot live long, and therefore it is vain and absurd for me to hope for such a restitution of my

strength and prosperity as thou hast promised to me, **#Job 5:22**, &c.; and therefore I justly pray that God would take away my life.

What is mine end? either,

1. What is the end or period of my miseries? when may I expect it? I see no end of them; I know not how long I may pine and linger in them. Therefore, Lord, take me speedily away. Or,

2. What is the end of my life? or what is death to me? It is not terrible, but comfortable, as he said, **#Job 6:10**. I need not those vain consolations which thou givest me of being kept from death, **#Job 6:20**, or having life continued and health restored. Death is not the matter of my fear, but of my desire.

That I should prolong my life, to wit, by my seeking to God for it, as thou advisest me, **#Job 5:8**. Why should I desire or endeavour the prolonging of my life? Or, *that I should lengthen out my desire*, to wit, of life, and those comforts of life which thou hast propounded to me. I desire not to live longer, though in the greatest splendour and prosperity, but to be dissolved, and to be with my God and Redeemer, **#Job 19:25**. The Hebrew word *nephesh*, here rendered *soul* or *life*, oft signifies *desire*, as **#Ge 23:8 De 23:24 Pr 23:2 Ec 6:9**.

Ver. 12.

I am not made of stone or brass, but of flesh and blood, as others are; and therefore I am utterly unable to endure these miseries longer, and can neither hope for nor desire any continuance of my life, or restoration of my former happiness, but only wish for that death which is the common refuge of all miserable persons, as I said, **#Job 3:17,18**.

Ver. 13.

Though I have no strength in my body, or outward man, yet I have some help and support within me, or in my inward man, even the conscience of my own innocency and piety, notwithstanding all your bitter accusations and censures, as if I had no integrity, **#Job 4:6**.

Is wisdom driven quite from me? If I have no strength in my body, have I therefore no wisdom or judgment left in my soul? Am I therefore unable to judge of the vanity of thy discourse, and

of the truth of my own case? Have I not common sense and discretion? Do not I know my own condition, and the nature and degree of my sufferings, better than thou dost? Am not I a better judge whether I have integrity or no than thou art? But this verse is rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words, *What if I have no help in me*, (i.e. if I cannot help myself, if my outward condition be helpless and hopeless, as I confess it is,)

is wisdom driven quite from me? Have I therefore lost my understanding and common reason? Cannot I judge whether it is more desirable for me to live or to die, whether I am a hypocrite or no, whether your words have truth and weight in them or no, whether you take the right method in dealing with me, whether you deal mercifully and sincerely with me, or no? Yet again, (because the construction and sense of these words is judged very difficult,) this verse may be joined with the following, and rendered thus, *What if there be no help in me*, (or, if I be not able to bear my miseries,) *and if counsel be driven from me*, so that I know not what to do, or how to help or ease myself? or, *and subsistence, or power of subsisting, be driven or taken away from me*, so that I can neither help myself out of my troubles, nor subsist under them? yet *to the afflicted pity should be showed, &c.*

Ver. 14.

To him that is afflicted, Heb. *to him that is melted or dissolved with afflictions*, or in the furnace of afflictions; that is, in extreme miseries; for such persons are said to be melted, as **#Ps 22:14 107:26 119:28 Na 2:10**.

From his friend: his friend, such as thou, O Eliphaz, pretendest to be to me, should show kindness, benignity, and compassion in his judgment of him, and carriage towards him, and not pass such unmerciful and heavy censures upon him, nor load him with reproaches.

But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty; but thou hast no love or pity for thy neighbour and friend; which is a plain evidence that thou art guilty of that which thou didst charge me with, even with the want of the fear of God; for didst thou truly fear God, thou couldst not, and durst not, be so unmerciful to thy

brother, both because God hath severely forbidden and condemned that disposition and carriage, and because God is able to punish thee for it, and mete unto thee the same hard measure which thou meetest to me. But this verse is and may be otherwise rendered, *Should a reproach* (for so the Hebrew *chesed* oft signifies) be laid *upon him that is afflicted by his friend*, even that *he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty?* Should my friend have fastened such a reproach upon me, than which none is worse, that I am an impious man, and destitute of the fear of God, #Job 4:6-8. This he mentions, as that which was most grievous and intolerable to him.

Ver. 15.

My brethren, i.e. my kinsmen or three friends; for though Eliphaz only had spoken, the other two showed their approbation of his discourse, or, at least, of that part of it which contained his censure of Job's person and state.

Have dealt deceitfully; under a pretence of friendship and kindness dealing unrighteously and unmercifully with me, and adding to these afflictions which they said they came to remove.

As the stream of brooks, which quickly vanish, and deceive the hopes of the thirsty traveller.

Ver. 16.

Which in winter, when the traveller neither needs nor desires it, are full of water, then congealed by the frost.

Wherein the snow is hid; either,

1. Under which the water, made of snow, which formerly fell, and afterwards was dissolved, lies hid. So he implies that he speaks not of those brooks which are fed by a constant spring, but of them which are filled by accidental and extraordinary falls of water, or snow melted, which run into them. Or,

2. Wherein there is abundance of snow mixed with or covered by the ice; or, *in which the snow covers itself*, i.e. where is snow upon snow; which gives the traveller hopes, that when he comes that way in summer, he shall find good store of water here for his refreshment.

Ver. 17.

When the weather grows milder, and the frost and snow is dissolved.

When it is hot; in the hot season of the year, when waters are most refreshing and necessary.

Out of their place; in which the traveller expected to find them to his comfort, but they are gone he knows not whither.

Ver. 18.

i.e. The course of those waters is changed, they are gone out of their channel, flowing hither and thither, till they be quite consumed; as it here follows.

Ver. 19.

The troops, as this word is used, #Ge 37:25 Isa 21:13. Heb. *the ways*, put for *the travellers in the ways*, by a usual metonymy. And so it must needs be meant here, and in the next clause, because the following verse, *They were confounded*, &c., plainly showeth that he here speaks of persons, not of senseless things. *Tema:* this place and

Sheba were both parts of the hot and dry country of Arabia, in which waters were very scarce, and therefore precious and desirable, especially to travellers, who by their motion, and the heat to which they were exposed, were more hot and thirsty than other men.

The companies; as before, *the troops*. And thus he speaks, because men did not there travel singly, as here we do, but in troops and companies, for their greater security against wild beasts and robbers, of which they had great store.

Ver. 20.

They were confounded, i.e. the troops and companies. Because they had hoped; they comforted themselves with the expectation of water there to quench their thirst.

Were ashamed; as having deceived themselves and others with vain and false hopes.

Ver. 21.

He gives the reason why he charged them with deceitfulness, and compared them to these deceitful brooks. *Nothing*, or, *as nothing*; the note of similitude being oft understood. Heb. *as not*, i.e. you are to me as if you had not been, or as if you had never come to me, for I have no benefit nor comfort from you and your discourse, but only an increase of my misery.

Ye see my casting down, and are afraid: when you come near to me, and perceive my great and manifold calamities, you stand as it were at a distance; you are shy of me, and afraid for yourselves, either lest my sores or breath should infect you; or lest some further plagues-should come upon me, wherein yourselves for my sake, or because you are in my company, should be involved; or lest I should be burdensome to you, and need and call for your charitable contribution to support myself and the small remainders of my poor family, or for your helping hand to assist and save me from mine enemies, who may possibly fall upon me in this place, as the Chaldeans and Sabeans did upon my servants and cattle elsewhere; which is implied in the next verses. So far are you from being true friends and comforts to me, as you would seem to be.

Ver. 22.

Did I say? or, *Is it because I said?* Is this, or what else is the reason why you are afraid of me, or alienated from me? *Bring unto me*; give me something for my support or relief. Did either my former covetousness or my present necessity make me troublesome or chargeable to you? Give a reward for me; either to the judge before whom I am brought and accused, that he may give a favourable sentence in my behalf; or to the enemy who hath taken me captive. Or, *give a gift for me*, i.e. for my use or need. Did I send for you to come and visit me for this end? nay, did you not come of your own accords. Why then are you thus unmerciful to me? Methinks you might at least have given me good and comfortable words, which is the easiest and cheapest part of a friend's work, when I desired and expected nothing else from you.

Ver. 23.

Deliver me by power and the force of your arms, as Abraham delivered Lot.

Redeem me by price, or ransom.

Ver. 24.

Teach me; instead of censuring and reproaching, instruct and convince me by solid arguments.

I will hold my tongue; I will patiently hear and gladly receive your counsels; or, I will be silent; I will neither contradict you, nor complain of my own griefs. Compare **#Job 40:4,5 Pr 30:32**.

Wherein I have erred, i.e. my mistakes and miscarriages.

Ver. 25.

Right words, i.e. the words of truth or solid arguments, have a marvellous power to convince and persuade a man; and if yours were such, I should readily yield to them.

Your arguing reprove; or, *your arguing argue*. There is no truth in your assertions, nor weight in your arguments, and therefore are they of no account or power with me.

Ver. 26.

Do ye imagine to reprove words? i.e. do you think that all your arguments are solid and unanswerable, and all my answers are but idle and empty words? Or do you think it is sufficient to cavil and quarrel with some of my words and expressions, without considering the merits of the cause, and the truth of my condition, or giving an allowance for human infirmity, or for my extreme misery, which may easily force from me some indecent expressions?

Of one that is desperate; of a poor miserable, hopeless, and helpless man; for the words of such persons are commonly neglected and despised, although there be truth and great weight in them. See **#Ec 9:16**. And such are generally thought to speak from deep passions and prejudices, more than from reason and judgment.

Which are as wind, i.e. which you esteem to be like the wind, vain and light, without solid substance, making a great noise with little sense, and to little purpose. But this last branch of the verse may be, and by many is, rendered otherwise, *and do ye imagine* (which is to be repeated out of the former clause, as is very usual in Scripture) *the words of one that is desperate to be but wind*, i.e.

empty and vain? Do you take me for a desperate and distracted man, that knows not or cares not what he saith, but only speaks what comes first into his mind and mouth? The *wind* is oft used to express vain words, as #**Job 15:2 Jer 5:13**; and vain things, #**Job 7:7 Pr 11:29**. Some render the whole verse thus, *Do you in your arguings think, or ought you to think, the discourses of a dejected, or desponding, or sorely afflicted man (such as I am) to be but words and wind*, i.e. vain and empty? as indeed the discourses of such persons use to be esteemed by such as are in a higher and more prosperous condition. But you should judge more impartially, and more mercifully. Possibly the verse may be rendered thus, *Do you think to reprove the speeches of a desperate, or dejected, or miserable man (such as I am, and you use me accordingly) with (the preposition being very frequently omitted and understood in the Hebrew tongue) words and with (for the Hebrew prefix *lamed* oft signifies *with*, as hath been formerly proved) wind?* You think any words or arguments will be strong enough against one in my circumstances. So it agrees with the foregoing verse.

Ver. 27.

Yea; your words are not only vain, and useless, and uncomfortable to me, but also grievous and pernicious.

Ye overwhelm, Heb. *you rush or throw yourselves* upon him. For words in *hiphil* are oft put reciprocally as Hebricians know. You fall upon him with all your might, and say all that you can devise to charge and grieve him. A metaphor from wild beasts, that fall upon their prey to hold it fast and devour it. You load him with censures and calumnies.

The fatherless, or, *the desolate*, i.e. me, who am deprived of all my dear children, and of all my estate; forsaken by my friends, and by my heavenly Father; which should have procured me your pity rather than your censure.

Ye dig a pit for your friend; or, *you feed or feast* (for so this Hebrew word is oft used, as #**2Sa 3:35 2Ki 6:23 Job 40:15**) *upon your friend*, i.e. you insult and triumph over me whom sometimes you owned for your friend.

Ver. 28.

Look upon me; be pleased either,

1. To look upon my countenance, if it betrays any fear or guilt, as if I spoke contrary to my own conscience. Or rather,
2. To consider me and my cause further and better than you have done, that you may give a more true and righteous judgment concerning it.

Is evident unto you; you will plainly discover it. A little further consideration and discourse will make it manifest, and I shall readily acknowledge it.

Ver. 29.

Turn from your former course of perverse judgment; lay aside passion and prejudice against me; let me beg your second thoughts and a serious review of my case.

Let it not be iniquity, to wit, in your thoughts or debates; I beg not your favour, but your justice; judge according to right, and do not conclude me to be wicked, because you see me to be miserable, as you have falsely and unjustly done. Or, *there shall be no iniquity*, to wit, in my words which I have spoken, and which I am further about to speak; which you will find upon the review.

In it, i.e. in this cause or matter between you and me; the relative without the antecedent, which is frequent in the Hebrew language. You will find the right to be on my side.

Ver. 30.

Consider again, and more thoroughly examine, if there be any untruth or iniquity in what I have already said, or shall further speak to you.

My taste. i.e. my judgment, which discerns and judgeth of words and actions as the taste or palate doth of meats.

Perverse things, i.e. false opinions or sinful expressions. I am not so bereft of common understanding, as not to be able to distinguish between good and evil; and therefore if I have uttered, or should utter, any perverse words, I should apprehend them to be so as well as you do.

JOB CHAPTER 7

Our times are like those of hirelings, restless and hopeless. Death desirable. His days are as a weaver's shuttle; his life is as wind; and he was consumed out of this world, and should appear in it no more, #**Job 7:1-10**. Therefore he will speak to God, #**Job 7:11,12**: is tired out and weary of life, #**Job 7:13-16**. Man unworthy of God's notice, #**Job 7:17-19**. He confesseth his sin, and prayeth for forgiveness, #**Job 7:20,21**.

Ver. 1.

Is there not a certain and short time limited by God wherein man shall live in this sinful, and vain, and miserable world, after which he shall live in a holier and happier place and state? and is it a crime in me to desire that God would give me some ease and respite for the present, and bring me to that blessed and joyful period?

Like the days of an hireling; whose time is limited and short, being but for a few years, #**Isa 16:14 21:16**, and sometimes but for days, #**Job 14:6 Mt 20:1,2**, and whose condition is full of toil and hardship.

Ver. 2.

The shadow, i.e. the sun-set, or the night, the time allotted for his rest and repose, #**Ps 104:23**. And why may not I also desire the time of my rest?

The reward of his work, Heb. *his work*; which is oft put for the reward of it, as #**Le 19:13 Isa 40:10 49:4**. Or, the end of his work.

Ver. 3.

This so respects not so much the desire and expectation of a hired servant, which is expressed #**Job 7:2**, as the ground and reason of it, which is plainly implied there, to wit, his hard toil and service, which makes him thirst after rest.

I am made to possess; God, by his sovereign power and providence, hath given me this as my lot and inheritance. *Months*; so he calls them rather than days, to note either the irksomeness and tediousness of his affliction, whereby every day seemed a month to him; or their length and continuance, which, as some infer from hence, had now been upon him some months.

Of vanity; empty and unsatisfying, or false and deceitful, not giving me that ease and rest which they promised me, and I expected.

Wearisome nights: he mentions nights, because that is the saddest time for sick and miserable persons; the darkness and solitude of the night being of themselves uncomfortable, and giving them more opportunity for solemn and sorrowful thoughts and reflections upon their own miseries.

Ver. 4.

When I lie down, to get some rest and sleep. *The night*, Heb. *the evening*; the part put for the whole, as it is **#Ge 1:5**.

To and fro; from side to side in the bed, as men in grievous pains of body or anxiety of mind use to be.

Unto the dawning of the day; so this Hebrew word is used also @**1Sa 30:17**; Ps 119:147.

Ver. 5.

Clothed, i.e. covered all over as with a garment.

With worms; which oft breed and break forth in divers parts of living bodies, as history and experience witnesseth, and which were easily bred out of Job's corrupted flesh and sores.

Clods of dust; either the dust of the earth upon which he lay, which his sores would quickly lick up; or the scabs of his sores, which by degrees mouldered away into dust.

My skin is broken, by ulcers breaking forth in all parts of it.

Ver. 6.

The time of my life hastens to a period; and therefore vain are those hopes which you give me of a restitution to my former prosperity in this world.

A weaver's shuttle, which passeth in a moment from one end of the web to the other.

Without hope, to wit, of enjoying any good day here.

Ver. 7.

He turneth his speech to God, as appears from **#Job 7:8,12,14**.

Wind, i.e. vain, **#Isa 47:13 Ho 8:7**; quickly passing away, so as never to come again, as is said, **#Ps 78:39**.

See good, i.e. enjoy (for so seeing is sometimes used, as **#Ps 34:12 Jer 17:6**) good, to wit, in this world, as my friends flatter me. Compare **#Job 14:12 19:26,27**.

Ver. 8.

Shall see me no more in this mortal state; I shall never return to this life again.

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not: either,

1. If thou dost but cast one angry look upon me, *I am not*, i.e. I am a dead man. So that phrase is used **#Ge 5:24 42:13 44:20 Ps 103 16 Jer 31:15**. Or,

2. *When thine eyes shall be upon me* (i.e. when thou shalt look for me to do me good, thou wilt find that) *I am not*, that I am dead and gone, and incapable of that bounty and goodness which thou givest to men in this world. Compare **#Job 7:21 Ps 10:15 Jer 50:20**.

Ver. 9.

The cloud is consumed; being dried up or dissolved by the heat of the sun.

Vanisheth away; never returneth again.

Shall come up no more, to live a natural, mortal life amongst men. For that he doth not deny a future life is manifest from **#Job 19:25**, &c.

Ver. 10.

He shall return no more, to enjoy his house and possessions again; he shall no more be seen and known in his former habitation and condition by his friends and neighbours. The

place put for the men of the place, as **#Job 8:18 20:9 Ps 37:10**.

Ver. 11.

Since my life is by the common condition of mankind so vain and short, and, when once lost, without all hopes of recovery, and withal extremely miserable, I will plead with God for pity and relief before I die; knowing that I must now speak, or else for ever

after hold my peace, as to requests of this nature. I will not smother my bitter anguish within my own breast, which will make it intolerable, but I will give it vent, and ease myself by pouring forth complaints, and expostulating with my God, who, as I hope, will hear and help me one way or other.

Ver. 12.

Am I so great, and powerful, and dangerous a creature, that thou needest to use extraordinary power and violence to rule and subdue me? Am I as fierce and unruly as the sea, which, if thou didst not set a watch over it, and bounds to it, would overwhelm the earth, and destroy mankind upon it? Or am I a vast and ungovernable sea monster, which, if thou didst not restrain it by thy powerful providence, would overturn ships, and destroy men in them, and devour all the lesser fishes? Have I behaved myself towards thee, or towards men, with such rage and violence, as to need such chains to be put upon me? Or is my strength so great as that of the sea, which can endure so many and long storms one after another, and yet can subsist under them and after them? or of a whale, that can laugh at darts and spears? as is said, **#Job 41:29**. No, Lord, thou knowest that I am but a poor weak creature, which thou canst crush with the least touch of thy finger, without these violent and unsupportable pains and miseries; and that I have not been so fierce and boisterous in my carriage as to need or deserve these extraordinary calamities.

That thou settest a watch over me; that thou shouldst guard and restrain me with such heavy and unexampled miseries, lest I should break into rebellion against thee, or into cruelty towards men.

Ver. 13.

By giving me sweet and quiet sleep, which may take off the sense of my torments for that while.

Ver. 14.

With sad and dreadful dreams, arising either from that melancholy humour which is now so fixed in me, and predominant over me, or from the devil's malice, who by thy permission disturbs me in this manner; so that I am afraid to go to sleep, and my remedy proves as bad as my disease.

Visions are the same thing with dreams; for there were not only day visions, which were offered to men's sight when they were awake; but also night visions, which were presented to men's fancy in their sleep and dreams. See #Ge 28:12 41:1,2 Da 2:1,31 4:5,10.

Ver. 15.

Chooseth; not simply and in itself, but comparatively, rather than such a wretched life.

Strangling; the most violent, so it be but a certain and sudden death.

Rather than my life, Heb. *than my bones*, i.e. than my body, formerly the soul's dear and desired companion; or than to be in the body, which commonly consists of skin, and flesh, and bones, but in Job was in a manner nothing but a bundle of boiles; for his skin was every where broken, and his flesh was quite consumed, as he oft complains, and his bones also were not free from pain and torment; for as Satan's commission reached to Job's *bones*, #Job 2:5, so doubtless his malice and wicked design would engage him to execute it to the utmost.

Ver. 16.

I loathe it, to wit, my life, last mentioned. I would not live always in this world if I might, no, not in prosperity, for even such a life is but vanity, much less in this extremity of misery. Or, *let me not live for ever*, lingering in this miserable manner, as if thou wouldst not suffer me to die, but hadst a design to perpetuate my torments. Or, *let me not live out mine age*, or the full time of my life, which by the course of nature I might do; for so the Hebrew word *olam* is oft used; but cut me off, and that speedily.

Let me alone, i.e. withdraw thy hand from me; either,

1. Thy supporting hand, which preserves my life, and suffer me to die; or rather,
2. Thy correcting hand, as this same phrase is used, 7:19.

My days are vanity; either,

1. My life is in itself, and in its best estate, a most vain, unsatisfying, uncertain thing; do not add this evil to it to make it miserable. Or,

2. My life is a vain, decaying, and perishing thing, it will of itself quickly vanish and depart, and doth not need to be forced from me by such exquisite torments.

Ver. 17.

What is there in that poor, mean, contemptible creature called man, *miserable man*, as this word signifies, which can induce or incline thee to take any notice of him, to show him such respect, or to make such account of him? Man is not worthy of thy favour, and he is below thy anger. It is too great a condescension to thee, and too great an honour for man, that thou wilt contend with him, and draw forth all thy forces against him, as if he were a fit match for thee; whereas men use to neglect and slight mean adversaries, and will not do them the honour to fight with them. Compare #1Sa 24:14. Therefore do not, O Lord, thus dishonour thyself, nor magnify me. I acknowledge that even thy corrections are mercies and honours; but, Lord, let me be no more so honoured.

Set thine heart upon him, i.e. have any regard to him, so far as to afflict him, which though it be grievous in itself, especially when it is aggravated as mine is, yet unto thy people it is a great mercy and blessing, as being highly necessary and useful to humble them, and purge them from sin, and prepare them for glory; as, on the contrary, those wicked men whom thou dost despise and hate, and design to destroy, thou dost forbear to punish or afflict them.

Ver. 18.

Visit him; to wit, punish or chasten him, as the word *to visit*, or *visiting*, is oft used, as #Ex 20:5 32:34 34:7. *Every morning*, i.e. every day. But he mentions the morning, either because that is the beginning of the day, and so is put synecdochically for the whole day, as the *evening*, #Job 7:4, is put for the whole night; or he speaks of God after the manner of men, who rest and sleep in the night, but in the morning rise and go about their business, and visit or inspect those persons and things which they have a respect for or care of.

Try him, i.e. afflict him, which is oft called trying, because it doth indeed try a man's faith, and patience, and perseverance. But this and the former verse may possibly be otherwise understood, not of afflictions, but of mercies. Having declared his loathing of life, and his passionate desire of death, and urged it with this consideration, that the *days* of his life were mere *vanity*, he now pursues it with this expostulation. What is man, that vain, foolish creature, that thou shouldst *magnify*, or *regard*, or *visit him*, (to wit, with thy mercy and blessings, of which those words are commonly used, i.e. that thou shouldst so far honour and regard him, as by thy visitation to preserve his spirit, or hold his soul in life,) and

try him? which God doth not only by afflictions, but also by prosperity and outward blessings, which commonly detect a man's hypocrisy, and discover that corruption which before lay hid in his heart. Therefore, O Lord, do not thus magnify and visit me with thy mercy, but take away my life.

Ver. 19.

How long will it be ere thou withdraw thy afflicting hand from me?

Till I swallow down my spittle, i.e. for a little time; or that I may have a breathing time: a proverbial expression, like that Spanish proverb, *I have not time or liberty to spit out my spittle*. Or this expression may have respect to Job's distempered and calamitous condition, wherewith he was so overwhelmed, that he either had not strength, or could not take heed, to spit out his spittle, as he should have done, but swallowed it down, as sick and melancholy persons often do.

Ver. 20.

I have sinned: although I am innocent and free from those crying sins, for which my friends suppose thou hast sent this uncommon judgment upon me; yet if thou be strict to mark what is amiss, I freely confess that I am a sinner, and therefore obnoxious to thy justice, and I humbly beg thy pardon for it, as it follows, **#Job 3:21**; and therefore accept of this confession.

What shall I do unto thee, to satisfy thy justice, or regain thy favour? I can do nothing to purchase or deserve it, and therefore

implore thy mercy to pardon my sins. *O thou preserver of men*; O thou who, as thou wast the Creator of man, delightest to be, and to be called, the Preserver and Saviour of men; and that waitest to be kind and gracious to men from day to day, as occasion requires; do not deal with me in a way contrary to thy own nature and name, and to the manner of thy dealing with all the rest of mankind. Otherwise, *O thou observer of men*; thou who dost exactly know and diligently observe all men's inward motions and outward actions; and therefore if thou shalt be severe to mark mine iniquities, as thou seemest to be, I have not what to say or do unto thee: compare #**Job 9:3,15,29 14:4**.

As a mark against thee; into which thou wilt shoot all the arrows of thy indignation.

I am a burden to myself, i.e. I am weary of myself, and of my life, being no way able to resist or endure the assaults of so potent an adversary.

Ver. 21.

Seeing thou art so gracious to others, so ready to preserve and pardon them, why may not I hope for the same favour from thee? If thou dost not speedily help me, it will be too late, I shall be dead, and so incapable of those blessings which thou usest to give to men in the land of the living. When thou shalt diligently seek for me, that thou mayst show favour to me, thou wilt find that I am dead and gone, and so wilt lose thy opportunity: help therefore speedily.

JOB CHAPTER 8

Bildad's reproof: Job's words said to be as wind: God just in all his ways, and in his dealings towards Job's children: if he would pray to God, and was indeed pure and upright, God would arise for him, #**Job 8:1-7**. For this he appealeth to the history of ancient times, which declare the bad end of the hypocrite, #**Job 8:8-19**, and the hope and joy of the upright, #**Job 8:20-22**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

i.e. Boisterous and violent, swelling and furious, opposing all persons and things that stand in thy way, not sparing either God or men.

Ver. 3.

God, Heb. *the mighty God*, as this word signifies; *the almighty or all-sufficient God*, as the next name of God here implies. These names are emphatically used, to prove that God cannot deal unjustly or falsely with men, because he hath no need of it, nor temptation to it, being self-sufficient for his own happiness, and being able by his own invincible power to do whatsoever pleaseth him; unless men will impudently say that God doth falsely for mere love to falsehood, without any necessity of it, or advantage to himself by it, than which nothing can be more absurd and ridiculous; for this makes him worse than the vilest of men, who act unjustly and falsely because they cannot otherwise accomplish their designs.

Pervert judgment, i.e. overthrow the course of justice in giving judgment, or judge unrighteously. No, this is inconsistent with God's nature, which is essentially and necessarily just, and with his office of Governor of the world, **#Ge 18:25**.

Ver. 4.

What though thou wast in a great measure innocent, thy children, upon whom a great part of these calamities fell, might be guilty of great sins; and therefore God is not unrighteous in these proceedings.

He hath cast them away, expelled, or cast them out, (to wit, out of the world, or out of his favour; as a man gives his wife a bill of divorce, of which this word is used,) *by means* (Heb. *by the hand*, which is oft so used) *of their wickedness*. Or, *hath left them in the hand of their sin*, to wit, to be punished by it and for it. Compare **#Nu 32:23**, *Your sin shall find you out*.

Ver. 5.

But, God hath spared thee, whom he might justly have destroyed with thy children, and thou art yet capable of his favour, if thou seek for it; and therefore cease from these causeless and unthankful complaints.

Seek unto God betimes, Heb. *rise early to seek him*, i.e. if thou wouldst seek him speedily, early, and diligently. See #**Job 5:8 7:18,21**. But this may be understood of the time past; and this verse being connected with the next, may be thus rendered and understood, *If thou hadst sought* (for the future tense in the Hebrew is oft put for the past) *unto God betimes*, (as thou didst seem to do, #**Job 1:5**) *and made supplication to the Almighty; if withal thou hadst been pure and upright*, i.e. if thy prayers had been accompanied with purity and uprightness of heart and life, they should have been heard and answered. But because thou didst regard iniquity in thy heart, therefore God would not hear and did not answer thy prayers, but answered thee with a curse instead of a blessing, as he useth to deal with hypocrites.

Ver. 6.

If thou wert in truth what thou pretendest, and hast been thought by others, to be,

pure and upright, i.e. of a sincere heart and blameless life towards God and men. But God's severe dealing with thee is an evident token, that notwithstanding all thy fair shows, thou art but a hypocrite and secret sinner. And this sense may seem to agree both with the same charge brought in against Job by Eliphaz, #**Job 4:6,7**, and with the following discourse, particularly with #**Job 8:13,20**. Or thus, *If thou wouldst be pure and upright*, i.e. if thou wouldst join reformation to thy supplication. And this sense may seem best to suit with the foregoing verse, according to the common translation.

Awake for thee, i.e. bestir himself to help thee, as being his faithful friend and servant, whom he could not in honour or justice forsake; whereas now he shows a deep sleep, and wholly neglects thee, and turneth a deaf ear to all thy prayers; which showeth what opinion he hath of thee.

The habitation, i.e. the concerns of thy house and family; a usual metonymy.

Of thy righteousness; either,

1. Which thou hast got and managed with righteousness; so he calls it by way of supposition; if it were so, God would prosper thee accordingly. But because thou dost not prosper, it gives us

cause to suspect that thou hast got thy estate by fraud and oppression. Or,

2. Which thou shalt now manage with justice, and not wrongfully, as thou hast done.

Ver. 7.

The sense is either,

1. Though thou hadst possessed but very little at first, yet God would have wonderfully blessed and increased thy estate; whereas now God hath brought thee down from a great estate almost to nothing; which is an evidence of his displeasure, and thy hypocrisy. Or,

2. Though the beginning of thy future fortunes, or though what thou hast left, be now very small, yet if thou dost repent and seek God, it shall vastly increase.

Ver. 8.

Of the former age, i.e. of our predecessors, who had the advantage of longer life and more experience, besides more frequent revelations from God, than we have; who also will be more impartial judges of this cause than we may be thought to be. Inform thyself from them by the instructions which they left, either in word or writing, what their opinion was about the manner of God's dealings with men.

Prepare thyself to the search of their fathers; do not slightly, but seriously and industriously, search the ancient records.

Ver. 9.

But of yesterday; but lately born, and therefore have but little knowledge and experience, as it follows.

Our days upon earth are a shadow: this is meant either,

1. Of their lives in particular, which were far shorter than the lives of their ancestors, the patriarchs, whose long lives gave them opportunity to know and see the course of God's providence towards good and bad men, and the differing ends and issues of their lives. Or,

2. Of men's lives in general; which being very short, men's observation reacheth but to very few events in comparison of

those which may be known by the records and testimony of all former ages.

Ver. 10.

Assuredly they will inform thee that it is as we say.

Out of their heart; not partially, but sincerely, speaking their inward thoughts; not rashly, but from deep consideration; not by hearsay from others, but their own knowledge and experience.

Ver. 11.

Without mire, i.e. if it be not in moist and miry ground. This and what follows he mentions as it were in the person of those ancients to whom he had referred him, of whom he saith that they would give him such instructions as these.

The flag; or, *the grass*; or, *the meadow*, as this word is used, **#Ge 41:2**, i.e. the grass of a meadow, But our translation seems the best, because it is compared with other herbs.

Ver. 12.

Yet in his greenness; whereby it promiseth long continuance.

Not cut down; though no man cut it down, it withereth of itself, and will save a man the labour of cutting or plucking it up. It gives not a man so much warning that he can cut it down in time, as other green herbs do, but suddenly withereth.

Before any other herb, i.e. sooner than other herbs, or in their presence, or they surviving; in which sense it seems to be said that Ishmael died *in the presence of his brethren*, **#Ge 25:18**; the rest of the herbs looking upon it, and admiring this sudden change. For actions of sense and understanding are oft ascribed to lifeless creatures, both in Scripture and other authors.

Ver. 13.

Of all that forget God, i.e. of wicked men, who are branded with this same character, **#Ps 9:17 50:22**; or hypocrites, as the next words explain it, who are described by their first and fundamental miscarriage, which is, that they *forget*, i.e. neglect, forsake, and despise, (for so this phrase is commonly understood, as **#De 6:12 8:11 32:18 Jer 2:32 23:27**) *God*, i.e. his presence, and commands, and worship, and providence; and therefore break forth into manifold sins. But by their paths he doth not understand the

course of their actions, or manner of their living; but the events which befall them, called their paths objectively, because they are the paths of God, or the methods of his providence, or manner of his dealing with them. Now this may be accommodated to the foregoing similitude in this manner: Such is the prosperity of wicked men, because it wants the solid foundation of their piety, and of God's promise and blessing consequent thereupon, it quickly vanisheth into nothing.

The hypocrite's hope shall perish, i.e. he shall lose what he hoped for (*hope* being oft put for its object,) even uninterrupted and abiding felicity, and with it all hope of restitution.

Ver. 14.

i.e. Whose wealth and outward glory, which is the matter of his *hope* and *trust*, shall be cut off, i.e. suddenly and violently taken away from him. *Whose hope shall be irksome or tedious to him*, by the succession of earnest expectation and great disappointment.

A spider's web; which though it be formed with great art and industry, and may do much mischief to others, yet is most slender and feeble, and easily swept down or pulled in pieces, and unable to defend the spider that made it. The application is obvious.

Ver. 15.

He, either the spider, or rather, the wicked man signified by it,

shall lean upon his house, i.e. he shall trust to the multitude and strength of his children and servants. and to his wealth, all which come under the name of a man's house in Scripture use.

It shall not stand, i.e. not be able to uphold itself, nor him that trusted to it.

He shall hold it fast; or, *he shall take fast hold of it*; not to uphold it, but to strengthen and uphold himself by it, as it is in the former branch.

Ver. 16.

He; either,

1. The perfect man, here understood out of **#Job 8:20**, where it is expressed; or rather,

2. The hypocrite, of whom he hath hitherto treated, to whom this and the following verses very well agree; whom he before compared to a rush, and then to a spider's web, and now to a tree, which is of a more solid substance, and more durable; as if he said, As some wicked men are quickly cut off in the very beginnings of their prosperity, so there are others who seem to be more firmly grounded, and yet they also at last come to ruin.

Is green, i.e. flourisheth in the world.

Before the sun; either,

1. Publicly, and in the view of all men, who observe it with admiration, and applause, and envy: compare #2Sa 12:12. Or rather,

2. Notwithstanding all the scorching heat of the sun, which quickly withers the rushes and herbs, of which he spake before, but doth only cherish and refresh the tree. And so doth many a wicked man secure himself, and thrive and prosper even in times of great danger and trouble, and in spite of all opposition.

His branch; or, *his branches*; the singular number for the plural; either,

1. Properly, and so this belongs to the description of a flourishing tree, by the spreading of its branches here, as by the depth of its root, #Job 8:17. Or,

2. Metaphorically, to wit, his children, which are here mentioned as additions, not only to his comfort, but also to his strength and safety.

In his garden; a place where it is defended from those injuries to which the trees of the field are subject from men and beasts, and where, besides the natural advantages common to all trees, it hath peculiar helps from the art and industry of men, by whom it is watered and assisted as need requires. So he supposeth this man to be placed in the most desirable circumstances.

Ver. 17.

About the heap, to wit, of stones, which word may be here understood out of the latter branch of the verse, as is very usual in

Scripture use. This circumstance of the tree is added to signify, either,

1. Its firmness and strength, that it was not in loose and sandy ground, which a violent wind might overthrow, but in solid and hard ground, within which were many stones, which its numerous and spreading roots embrace, folding and interweaving themselves severally about several stones. Or,

2. Its singular and extraordinary growth, in spite of all disadvantages and oppositions; that even stony ground, which is very prejudicial to trees, #Mt 13:5, doth not hinder its growth, but only add to its strength. So God and man seem to conspire, and all things concur, to secure and perpetuate this man's happiness. Some render the words, *His roots are wrapped, or folded, or spread about, or beside, a spring*, as the Hebrew *gal* sometimes signifies, as #Jos 15:19 So 4:12, i.e. a moist ground, which is much to its advantage: see #Ps 1:3 Jer 17:8. *Seeth he*, i.e. the tree whose roots he last mentioneth, reacheth thither, spreadeth himself so far, takes the advantage of that place for the strengthening of itself. *Seeing* is oft put for enjoying, and is frequently attributed to lifeless things, by a known figure, called *prosopopeia*. *The place*, Heb. *the house*, which is oft used for a place; as #2Sa 6:17 1Ki 8:6. Others render the words thus, *he looketh upon the house of stones*, i.e. made of stones for greater beauty and strength. He standeth proudly, and looketh boldly upon its owner's house, nigh unto which it is placed, even in his garden, as was said before.

Ver. 18.

If he; either God, who is the Saviour of good men, and the Destroyer of the wicked; or the owner; or any other man; for this is an indefinite speech, and may be taken passively and impersonally; which is very common in the holy text and language.

From his place, in which he was planted.

Then it, i.e. the place; to which denying him and seeing him are here ascribed figuratively, as we have oft seen.

I have not seen thee, i.e. I do not know nor remember that ever thou wast planted here. He shall be so utterly extirpated and

destroyed, that there shall be no footstep, nor name, nor memorial of him left there.

Ver. 19.

This is the joyful and happy issue of the flourishing course, state, and condition (which is frequently called a way) of this tree, or of the hypocrite, manifestly represented by it, and expressed **#Job 8:13**. It is a sarcasm or irony, and is to be understood contrariwise of his sad and unhappy end.

Out of the earth shall others grow, i.e. out of the same earth or place shall another tree grow; which could not be if there had been but a stump of it left, though under ground. So it notes the total extirpation of the tree, and of the hypocrite, that his person and all his children and family shall be utterly extinct, and so a stranger shall come into his place, and enjoy the fruit of his labours. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *and out of other ground they* (i.e. plants or trees, of which he is here speaking) *shall grow*, or others *shall grow*, or *plants shall grow*; the noun being contained in the verb. So the sense is, This tree shall be rooted up, and the very ground of it so cursed, that nothing shall grow or thrive in it; but other ground shall be fruitful, and other trees that stood round about it shall stand still and flourish in their places. His design in all this is to prove Job to be a hypocrite, because he meets with their lot, which is total destruction.

Ver. 20.

Heb. *God will not despise or reject*, i.e. he will not deny them his help, as appears by the opposite and following branch of the verse; he will not suffer them to be utterly lost. *Help*, i.e. deliver them out of their troubles. Hence it may seem that thou, O Job, art not a perfect or upright man, but an evil-doer. But this is certain, if for the future thy heart and way be not perfect, and thou dost not cease to do evil, thou wilt be utterly and irrecoverably lost; as, on the contrary, if thou dost repent and reform, he will help and deliver thee, and restore thee to thy former glory and happiness; which promise, though it be not here expressed, is sufficiently implied in the contrary threatening, as is evident from the following words, which plainly suppose it, and have a reference to

it; such ellipses of contraries being not unusual in Scripture, as we shall see hereafter, especially in the Book of the Proverbs.

Ver. 21.

And what I have said in general of all perfect men, shall be made good to thee, if thou be such a one; God will not forsake thee, nor desist from doing thee good,

till he fill, &c., i.e. God will give thee such abundant matter of rejoicing, that thy heart shall not be able to hold it, but it shall break out at thy mouth and lips.

Ver. 22.

They that hate thee, that rejoice in thy calamities, shall be wholly covered with shame, shall be utterly confounded, when they shall observe thee, whom they have despised and insulted over, to be so wonderfully and surprisingly restored to thy former or a greater felicity.

Of the wicked; either particularly of thy enemies, who dealt so unworthily and wickedly with thee; or more generally of all wicked men. Having showed what good God would do to the perfect man, he now declares the contrary portion of the wicked; and as he said that God would not help them, **#Job 8:20**, so here he adds, that God will bring not only them, but their house, i.e. their family and estate, to nought.

JOB CHAPTER 9

Job's answer: man cannot stand in judgment with God, because of his justice, wisdom, and power, which are unsearchable, **#Job 9:1-11**. All help or reason against God is vain; nor can we answer him; but must supplicate to our Judge, **#Job 9:12-15**. God's sovereignty, and our vileness before him, **#Job 9:16-21**. The godly are punished as well as the wicked by general calamities and wicked oppression, **#Job 9:22-24**. His time swift; his sorrows bitter: if wicked, he could not clear himself; nor would God hold him innocent, **#Job 9:25-31**; yet wisheth for a daysman, and a removal of Divine terror; then would he before God maintain his innocency, **#Job 9:32-35**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

I know it is so, to wit, as you say, that God is just in all his ways, that he doth ordinarily bless the righteous, and punish the wicked.

But how should man be just? Heb. *and how*, &c.? i.e. and I know that no man is absolutely just, or can defend his righteousness, if God be severe to mark what is amiss in him.

With God; either,

1. Being compared with God; or,
2. Before God, as the same phrase is taken, **#1Sa 2:26 Ps 130:3**, if he be brought before God's tribunal to debate the matter with him.

Ver. 3.

If God be pleased to contend (to wit, in judgment; debate or plead; for so this word is oft used, as **#Ho 2:2 4:1 Mic 6:1**; compare **#Isa 45:9**) with man.

One of a thousand; either to one accusation or argument among a thousand which God shall produce against him, or one time *of a thousand*. So far will he be from being able to maintain his own innocency against God, if God set himself against him as his adversary.

Ver. 4.

Wise in heart; either,

1. Really and profoundly wise; or,
2. Wise in his mind or understanding, which in Hebrew is oft called *the heart*, as **#Pr 2:10 6:32 Ho 4:11**, because the Hebrews make *the heart* the seat of the understanding, or of the reasonable soul. The sense is, He is infinitely wise, and so knows all things, and searcheth all men's hearts and ways, and discovers a multitude of sins which men's short-sighted eyes cannot see; and therefore can charge them with innumerable evils where they thought themselves innocent, and sees far more malignity than men could discern in their sins: and men cannot conceal any of their sins from him, nor cheat him, as they may other men, with

crafty devices and evasions; so that there is no contending with him.

Mighty in strength, i.e. omnipotent; and therefore if men contumaciously persist in contending with him after they are convicted and condemned, he can easily crush them. So that whether men contend with God by wisdom or by strength, (which are the two ways of one man's contending with another,) God will be conqueror.

Who hath hardened himself against him, i.e. obstinately contended with him? Or, *spoken hard things towards him*; quarrelling with him, opposing and reproaching God's providence towards him as hard and unjust. Compare **#Jude 1:15**.

Hath prospered, Heb. *hath been at peace*, i.e. hath not provoked God to his own destruction. A common figure, called *meiosis*, whereby more is understood than is expressed.

Ver. 5.

He proceedeth to give particular evidences of the Divine power and wisdom, which he mentioned **#Job 9:4**.

And they know not, i.e. suddenly and unexpectedly, ere they were aware of it. *They*, i.e. the mountains, to which he ascribes sense and knowledge figuratively, as hath been oft noted. *In his anger*; in token of his displeasure with men that lived upon them, or near them.

Ver. 6.

The earth, i.e. great portions of it, by earthquakes, or by removing islands, which sometimes hath been done.

The pillars thereof, i.e. the strength or the strongest parts of it, the mountains, yea, the deep and inward parts of it, which, like pillars, supported those parts which appear to our view, and yet have been discovered and overturned by earthquakes.

Ver. 7.

He speaks either,

1. Of that which God can do; or rather, (as he doth in the foregoing and following instances,)

2. Of what God actually doth; and that either,

1. Ordinarily; and so he gives laws to the sun that it shall not rise, but at such times, and to such places, and in such manner as he hath appointed; as that it shall rise constantly at its set time, and never disorderly; that it shall not rise for divers months together in some parts of the world, &c. Or rather,

2. Extraordinarily; (for of such works of God he discourseth in this place;) and so it may note either some stop given to the sun for a small season, like that in Joshua's time; which might have been, though it be not recorded; or some extraordinary tempest or dark season, wherein *the morning is made darkness*, as the phrase is, **#Am 4:13**; compare **#Am 5:8**; wherein the sun doth not at all appear, (as it was for many days together, **#Ac 27:20**) and consequently is to those places and persons as if he were not risen. For things in Scripture are oft said to *be*, or not to *be*, when they appear or disappear; of which some instances have been formerly given, and more we shall have hereafter, in their proper places. *Sealeth up the stars*, i.e. as it were, covereth and shutteth them up that they may not shine, as in dark and dismal tempests, like that now mentioned, **#Ac 27:20**, when *neither sun nor stars appeared for many days*.

Ver. 8.

Alone, i.e. by his own single power, without any other: help.

Spreadeth out the heavens: he spread them out like a curtain, **#Ps 104:1,2**; and he in a manner spreads them again every day, i.e. keeps them spread for the comfort and benefit of this lower world, and doth not roll and fold them up, as he will do in due time: see **#Isa 34:4 2Pe 3:10 Re 6:14**. Or, *boweth down the heavens*, as the same Hebrew verb is rendered, **#Ps 18:9**. So it is a further description of a black-and tempestuous season, wherein the heavens seem to be brought down and nearer to the earth.

Treadeth upon the waves of the sea, i.e. represseth and ruleth them when they rage and are tempestuous; for treading upon any thing signifies in Scripture use power and dominion over it; as **#De 33:29 Job 40:12 Ps 60:12 Ps 91:13 Lu 10:19**

Ver. 9.

Maketh; either,

1. Created them; or rather,

2. Ordereth and disposeth them, as the word *making* is sometimes used in Scripture; governeth their rising and setting, and all their influences.

Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south: these he names as stars or constellations of greatest note and eminency; for so they are both in Scripture and other authors, and such as have, or are thought to have, a special influence in raising storms and tempests; but under them lie seems to comprehend all the stars, which as they were created by God, so are under his government. Arcturus is a northern constellation, near that called the Bear, which riseth to us about the beginning of September, and by its rising produceth (as Pliny affirms) horrible storms and tempests. Orion is a more southerly constellation, that ariseth to us in December, and is noted by astronomers for raising fearful winds and tempests, both by sea and land. The Pleiades is a constellation not far from Orion, and near that called the Bull, which we call the Seven Stars: to us it riseth at the beginning of the spring, and by its rising causeth rains and tempests, and therefore is unwelcome to mariners at sea. *By the chambers (or inmost and secret chambers, as the word signifies) of the south,* he seems to understand those stars and constellations which are towards the southern pole, which are fitly called *inward chambers*, because they are for the most part hid and shut up (as chambers commonly are) from these parts of the world, and do not rise or appear to us till the beginning of summer, when they also raise southerly winds and tempests, as astronomers observe.

Ver. 10.

Which words were produced by Eliphaz, #**Job 5:9**, (where they are explained,) and are here repeated by Job, to show his agreement with him therein.

Ver. 11.

He goeth, i.e. he worketh by his providence in ways of mercy or judgment.

By me; or, *besides* or *before me*; in my presence.

I see him not; I see the effects, but I cannot understand the causes or grounds of his actions, for they are incomprehensible by me, or by any other men: for though he speaks only in his own

person, yet he means it of all men; that such is the weakness of men's understandings, that they cannot search out God's counsels and ways: see #Ac 17:27 Ro 11:33.

He passeth on also; he goeth from place to place, from one action to another. He speaks of God after the manner of men.

Ver. 12.

If he determine to take away from any man his children, or servants, or estate, as he hath done from me, who is able to restrain him from doing it? or who dare presume to reprove him for it? And therefore far be it from me to quarrel with God, whereof you untruly accuse me.

Ver. 13.

i.e. If God resolve not to withdraw his rod and stroke, the effect of his anger. Or without *if*, which is not in the Hebrew,

God will not withdraw his anger, i.e. not forbear to punish, neither because any man can overpower and restrain him, nor for fear lest he should rebuke him for proceeding to punish, as is implied by comparing this verse with the former.

The proud helpers, i.e. those men who shall undertake to uphold and defend him whom God intends to punish and destroy; who are fitly called *proud helpers*, because this is a most proud, and insolent, and presumptuous act, to oppose themselves to the Lord God Almighty, and to his counsels and courses: or, (as it is in the Hebrew,) *helpers of pride*, because they give assistance to that man who carries himself proudly and stoutly towards God under his correcting hand: or, (as some translate it,) *the helpers of Egypt*, or the Egyptian helpers, i.e. the most potent helpers; for Egypt was in Job's time a powerful and flourishing kingdom, and not far from Job's country. And the word *rahab*, here rendered *pride*, is elsewhere put for *Egypt*, as #Ps 87:4 Isa 51:9; and (as some take it) #Job 26:12.

Do stoop under him, i.e. shall fall and be crushed by him; and consequently they who are helped by him must fall with them.

Ver. 14.

Since no creature whatsoever can resist his power, and no man living can search out or comprehend his counsels and ways; how

can I, who am a poor, contemptible, dispirited creature, contend with him?

Answer him, i.e. answer his allegations and arguments produced against me.

Choose out my words to reason with him, Heb. *choose my words with* (or *before*, or *against*, as this particle is used, #**De 9:7 Ps 94:16 Pr 30:31**) him, i.e. shall I try whether God or I can choose fitter words, or stronger arguments? or shall I contend with him, and expect to get the better of him by using choice, and forcible, and elegant words, as one man doth with another?

Ver. 15.

Though I were righteous; though I had a most just cause, and were not conscious to myself of any sin.

Yet would I not answer, i.e. I durst not undertake to plead my cause against him, or maintain my integrity before him, because he knows me better than I know myself, and because I am wholly in his hands, and at his mercy.

I would make supplication to my Judge, to wit, that he would hear me meekly, and judge favourably of me and my cause, and not according to the rigours of his justice.

Ver. 16.

If I had called, i.e. prayed, as this word is commonly used, to wit, unto my Judge, for a favourable sentence, as he now said, and therefore it was needless here to mention the object of his calling or prayer.

Yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice; I could not believe that God had indeed granted my desire, though he had done it; because I am so infinitely below him, and obnoxious to him, and still full of the tokens of his displeasure; and therefore should conclude that it was but a pleasant dream or fancy, and not a real thing: compare #**Ps 126:1**.

Ver. 17.

This is the reason of his foregoing diffidence, that even when God seemed to answer him in words, yet the course of his actions towards him was of a quite contrary nature and tendency.

With a tempest; as with a tempest, i.e. unexpectedly, violently, and irrecoverably.

Without cause; not simply without any desert of his, or as if he had no sin in him, for he oft declares the contrary; but without any evident or special cause of such singular afflictions, i.e. any peculiar and extraordinary guilt, such as my friends charge me with.

Ver. 18.

My pains and miseries are continual, and I have not so much as a breathing time free from them. My afflictions are not only long and uninterrupted, but also exceeding sharp and violent, contrary to the common course of God's providence.

Ver. 19.

If my cause were to be decided by power,

lo, he is strong, i.e. stronger than I. If I would contend with him in a way of right, there is no superior judge that can summon him and me together, and appoint us a time of pleading before him, and oblige us both to stand to his sentence; and therefore I must be contented to sit down with the loss.

Ver. 20.

If I plead against God mine own righteousness and innocency, God is so infinitely wise and just, that he will find sufficient matter of condemnation from my own words, though spoken with all possible care and circumspection; or he will discover so much wickedness in me of which I was not aware, that I shall be forced to join with him in condemning myself.

If I say, I am perfect; if I were perfect in my own opinion; if I thought myself completely righteous and faultless, it, i.e. my own mouth, as he now said, or,

he, i.e. God, who is easily understood by comparing this with the former verses, where the same he is oft mentioned,

shall also prove me perverse.

Ver. 21.

i.e. Though God should acquit me in judgment, and pronounce me perfect or righteous,

yet would I not know, i.e. regard or value, (as that word is oft used,) *my soul*, i.e. my life; as the soul frequently signifies, as #Ge 19:17 Job 2:6 Joh 10:15,17; and as it is explained in the following branch, where *life* is put for soul, and despising for not knowing: and so the same thing is repeated in differing words, and the latter clause explains the former, which was more dark and doubtful, according to the usage of sacred Scripture. So the sense is, Though God should give sentence for me, yet I should be so overwhelmed with the dread and terror of the Divine Majesty, that I should be weary of my life. And therefore I abhor the thoughts of contending with my Maker, whereof you accuse me; and yet I have reason to be weary of my life, and to desire death. Or thus, *If I say, I am perfect*, as the very same Hebrew words are rendered, #Job 9:20, i.e. if I should think myself perfect,

yet I would not know, i.e. not acknowledge,

my soul; I could not own nor plead before God the perfection and integrity of my soul, but would only make supplication to my Judge, as he said, #Job 9:15, and flee to his grace and mercy; *I would abhor*, or *reject*, or *condemn my life*, i.e. my conversation. So the sense is, I would not insist upon nor trust to the integrity, either of my soul and heart, or of my life, so as to justify myself before the pure and piercing eyes of the all-seeing God.

Ver. 22.

In the other things which you have spoken of God's greatness, justice, &c., I do not contend with you, but this one thing I do and must affirm against you.

Therefore I said it; I did not utter it rashly, but upon deep consideration. God sends afflictions promiscuously upon good and bad men. Compare #Ps 73:2 Ec 9:2 Jer 12:1, &c.

Ver. 23.

If the scourge slay suddenly; either,

1. If some common and deadly judgment come upon a people, which destroys both good and bad. Or,
2. If God inflicts some grievous and unexpected stroke upon an innocent person, as it follows. *He will laugh at the trial of the innocent*; as he doth at the destruction of the wicked, #Ps 2:4. His

outward carriage is the same to both; he neglects the innocent, and seems not to answer their prayers, and suffers them to perish with others, as if he took pleasure in their ruin also. But withal, he intimates the matter and cause of his laughter or complacency which God takes in their afflictions, because to them they are but *trials* of their faith, and patience, and perseverance, which tends to God's honour, and their own eternal advantage.

Ver. 24.

The earth, i.e. the possession and dominion of men and things on earth.

Is given, to wit, by God, the great Lord and Disposer of it, by his providence.

Into the hand of the wicked; into their power. As good men are scourged, #Job 9:23, so the wicked are advanced and prospered, in this world.

He covereth the faces of the judges thereof, i.e. he blinds their eyes, that they cannot discern between truth and falsehood, justice and unrighteousness. He. Who? Either,

1. The wicked last mentioned, who either by power or by gifts corrupts the officers of justice. Or rather,

2. God, whom the pronoun he designed all along this chapter; who is oft said to *blind the minds* of men, which he doth not positively, by making them blind, but privatively, by withdrawing his own light, and leaving them to their own mistakes and lusts. Or by *judges* he may hear mean those who are worthy of that name, and duly administer that office; whose *faces* God may be said to cover, because he removeth them from their high places into obscurity, and covers them with contempt, and in a manner passeth a sentence of condemnation and destruction upon them; *covering of the face* being the usual posture of condemned persons, and of men in great misery; of which see #Es 7:8 Ps 44:15 Isa 22:17 Jer 14:4. So the sense of this verse is, God commonly advanceth wicked men into power and honour, and casteth down men of true worth and virtue from their seats. *If not*; if it be not as I say, if God do not these things. *Where, and who is he?* either,

1. Who will confute me by solid arguments? Or,
2. Who doth these things? Who but God doth dispose of the world in this manner?

Ver. 25.

What he had said of the calamities which God usually inflicted upon good men, he now exemplifieth in himself.

My days; the days, either of my prosperity; for the time of affliction is commonly described by the *night*; or rather, of my life, as the last clause showeth; for it were an absurd and contradictious speech to say that his prosperous days saw no good.

A post; who runs or rides upon swift horses.

They see no good; I enjoy no good in them. *Seeing* is oft put for experiencing either good or evil, #**Job 7:7 Ps 34:12 Joh 3:36 Joh 8:51**.

Ver. 26.

Swift ships, Heb. *ships of desire*; which make great haste, as if they longed for their desired haven, as it is called, #**Ps 107:30**. Or, ships of pleasure; which sail more swiftly than ships of great burden.

As the eagle; which generally flies most swiftly, #**De 28:49 Jer 4:13 La 4:19**, especially when its own hunger and the sight of its prey quickens its motion.

Ver. 27.

If I say; if I resolve within myself.

I will forget my complaints; I will cease complaining.

My heaviness, Heb. *mine anger*; wherewith Job was charged by his friends, #**Job 18:4**; my angry expressions. And comfort myself; I will endeavour to take comfort.

Ver. 28.

My sorrows; or, my pains and griefs. I find all such endeavours vain; for if my griefs be suspended for a little time, yet my fears continue.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent; I plainly perceive that my changing my note is to no purpose; for thou, O God, (to

whom he makes a sudden apostrophe, as he doth also #**Job 9:31**) wilt not clear my innocency, by removing those afflictions which make them judge me guilty of some peat crime. Words proceeding from great impatience and despair of relief.

Ver. 29.

Heb. *I shall be wicked, or guilty, to wit, before thee.* Whether I be holy or wicked, if I dispute with thee, I shall be found guilty. Or thus, *I shall be used like a wicked man,* and punished as such. So this is opposed to his *not being held innocent, #Job 9:28,* i.e. not being acquitted or exempt from punishment. Why then should I not indulge my griefs, but restrain them? Why should I comfort myself with vain hopes of deliverance, as thou advisest me, #**Job 8:6**; or seek to God, as I was directed, #**Job 5:8**, for that ease which I see he is resolved not to give me? Why should I trouble myself with clearing mine innocency, seeing God will still hold me guilty?

Ver. 30.

If I wash myself; either,

1. Really, by sanctification, cleansing my heart and life from all filthiness; or rather,
2. Declaratively or judicially, i.e. if I clear myself from all imputations, and fully prove my innocency before men.

With snow water, i.e. as men cleanse their bodies, and as under the law they purified themselves, with water, which he here calls *water of snow,* either because by its purity and brightness it resembled snow; or because in those dry countries, where fresh and pure water was scarce, snow water was much in use; or because that water might be much used among them in some of their ritual purifications, as coming down from heaven.

Ver. 31.

In the ditch, i.e. in miry and puddle water, whereby I shall become most filthy. But as Job's washing, so God's plunging him, &c., is not understood really, as if God would make him filthy; but only judicially, that God would prove him to be a most guilty and filthy creature, notwithstanding all the professions and evidences of his purity before men.

Mine own clothes shall abhor me, i.e. I shall be so altogether filthy, that my own clothes, if they had any sense in them, would abhor to touch me: a figure called *prosopopaeia*.

Ver. 32.

He is not a man, as I am; but one infinitely superior to me in majesty, and power, and wisdom, and justice.

That I should answer him; that I should presume to debate my cause with him, or answer his allegations against me.

That we should come together, face to face, to plead upon equal terms before a superior and indifferent judge.

Ver. 33.

Daysman; or, *a reprover*; or, *a judge* or *umpire*, whose office was to reprove the guilty person. *That might lay his hand upon us both*, i.e. use his power and authority to appoint the time and place of our meeting, to order and govern us in pleading, and to oblige us to stand to his decision. The

hand is oft put for power, and laying on the hand upon another was oftentimes an act and sign of superiority and dominion.

Ver. 34.

His fear; objectively so called, i.e. the fear and dread of him, of his majesty and justice. Let him not deal with me rigorously, according to his sovereign dominion and perfect justice, but according to his wonted grace and clemency.

Ver. 35.

i.e. I would speak freely for myself, being freed from the dread of his majesty, which takes away my spirit and courage, and stoppeth my mouth.

But it is not so with me, i.e. I am not free from his terror, and therefore cannot and dare not plead my cause boldly with him; and so have no thing else to do but to case myself by renewing my complaints; as he doth in the next words. Others thus, *but I am not so with myself*, i.e. I am in a manner beside myself, distracted with the terrors of God upon me. Or rather thus, *for I am not so with myself*, or in my own conscience, as I perceive I am in your eyes, to wit, a hypocrite and ungodly man. So this is a reason why he could speak to God without slavish fear, because he was

conscious to himself of his own integrity: I have a good conscience within myself, and therefore could use boldness in speaking to God, provided he would not deal with me in strict justice, but upon the terms of grace and mercy which he hath proposed to sinners, and with allowance to human infirmities.

JOB CHAPTER 10

His life a burden; his complaint that he could not see the cause or end of God's punishment: God delighteth not to oppress; nor was his innocence, though suspected by men, hid from God, **#Job 10 1-7**. He argueth that, being God's work, in his hands, receiving all from him, God would not destroy him, **#Job 10:8-13**. His sins expose him to God's wrath, which was terrible upon him, **#Job 10:14-17**; curseth his birth: death desirable to him, **#Job 10:18-22**.

Ver. 1.

So the sense is, My soul is weary of dwelling in this rotten and miserable carcass. Or, I am from my heart, or with my very soul, weary of my life; and therefore I may be excused if I complain. Or,

My soul is cut off while I live, i.e. I am dead whilst I live; I am in a manner buried alive.

I will leave my complaint upon myself: so the sense is, I will complain, and the burden or hazard of so doing I will take upon myself, and be willing to bear it; I must give my sorrows vent, *let come on me what will*, as he saith, **#Job 13:13**. But the words may be read interrogatively, *Shall I then* (or how *can I* then) leave my complaint (i.e. give over complaining) *within* or *concerning* (as the Hebrew *al* oft signifies) *myself*? Or they may be rendered thus, *I will strengthen* (as this verb signifies, **#Ne 3:8**) *my complaint against myself*; whereby he implies that he would not complain against God so as to accuse him of injustice, but only against himself, or against his own life; or, *concerning myself*, i.e. I must renew and increase my complaints, as God renews and increases my sorrows.

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul; my extreme misery forceth my complaints from me.

Ver. 2.

Do not condemn me; or, *Pronounce me not to be a wicked man*, as my friends do; neither deal with me as such, as I confess thou mightest do by thy sovereign power and in rigorous justice. O discover my integrity by removing this stroke, for which my friends so highly censure and condemn me.

Wherefore, i.e. for what ends and reasons, and for what sins? for I am not conscious to myself of any peculiar and eminent sins by which I have deserved to be made the most miserable of all mortals.

Ver. 3.

Dost thou take any pleasure in it? Hast thou any advantage or honour by it? Dost thou think it right and just, and becoming the Ruler of the world?

That thou shouldst oppress, by thy absolute and irresistible power, without any regard to that justice, and equity, and clemency by which thou usest to govern mankind.

That thou shouldst despise, i.e. show thy contempt of them, either by denying them common favour and protection, or by destroying them.

The work of thine hands, which every workman loves and maintains.

Shine upon the counsel of the wicked, i.e. by the methods of thy providence seem to favour the courses and practices of wicked men, to whom thou givest prosperity, and success, whilst thou frownest upon me and other good men. This may have reference either to Job's friends, whose ungodly censures God seemed to approve, by continuing Job's afflictions upon him; or to the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who had succeeded in their wicked attempts upon Job; but it seems to be more generally meant of wicked men.

Ver. 4.

Of flesh, i.e. of a man, who is called *flesh*, as #Ge 6:13 Isa 40:6.

Seest thou as man seeth? Man seeth outsides only, and judgeth by appearances, and is liable to many mistakes, and cannot search out secret faults without forcing men by cruel usage to accuse

themselves: but thou needest none of these arts; thou seest my heart and mine uprightness, which my friends do not see, who therefore are more excusable in charging me with hypocrisy: but thou knowest all things, thou needest not examine me by tortures, as thou now dost, **#Job 10:6**. *For thou knowest that I am not wicked*, as he saith, **#Job 10:7**, and therefore do not thou deal with me as if I were wicked.

Ver. 5.

Man's time is short and uncertain, and therefore he must improve his time whilst he hath it, and diligently search out the crimes of malefactors, and punish them whilst he may, lest by death he lose the opportunity of doing justice, and the criminal get out of his power. But it is not so with thee, thou art eternal and unchangeable, and seest at one view all men's hearts, and all their actions present and to come; and therefore thou dost not need to proceed with me in this manner, by making so long and so severe a scrutiny into my heart and life.

Ver. 6.

Keeping me so long as it were upon the rack to compel me to accuse myself, as men sometimes do.

Ver. 7.

I am not wicked, i.e. a hypocrite, or an ungodly man, as my friends account me; and therefore deal not with me as such.

There is none that can deliver out of thine hand: the sense is, either,

1. Thou dost not need to keep me fast in thy prison, lest I should make an escape, or any should rescue me out of thy hands, which none can do; therefore take off thy hand from me. Or,

2. If thou dost not help and deliver me, none else can do it; therefore do not thou fail me; which, considering God's merciful nature, is a good argument. If any man oppress another, he may have relief from thee, who art higher than his oppressor, **#Ec 5:8**; but thou art the supreme and uncontrollable Ruler of the world, and therefore thou must needs do right, **#Ge 18:25**; and therefore do not thou oppress me. **See Poole "Job 10:3"**. above, **#Job 10:4**.

Ver. 8.

Together round about, i.e. all of me; all the faculties of my soul, and all the parts of my body, which are now overspread with sores and ulcers; I am wholly thy creature and workmanship, made by thee and for thee.

Thou dost destroy me, or *swallow me up*, to wit, without cause, or any eminent provocation of mine; as if thou didst delight in doing and undoing, in making and then destroying thy creatures; which doth not become thy wisdom or goodness.

Ver. 9.

As the clay, i.e. of the clay; the note of similitude here expressing the truth of things, as it doth #**Joh 1:14**, and elsewhere, as hath been before observed. Or, as a potter maketh a vessel of the clay; and so this may note both the frailty of man's nature, which of itself decays and perisheth, and doth not need such violent shocks and storms to overthrow it; and the excellency of the Divine artifice, commended from the meanness of the materials out of which it was made; which is an argument why God should not destroy it.

Wilt thou bring me into dust again? wilt thou now causelessly and violently destroy thy own work? But the words are and may be read without an interrogation, and

thou wilt bring me into dust again, out of which I was made: I must die by the course of nature, and by the sentence of thy law; and therefore whilst I do live give me some ease and comfort.

Ver. 10.

Thus he modestly and accurately describes God's admirable work in making man out of a small and liquid, and as it were milky, substance, by degrees congealed and condensed into that exquisite frame of man's body.

Ver. 11.

Clothed me, i.e. covered my inward and more noble parts; which, as philosophers and physicians observe, are first formed. So he proceeds in describing man's formation gradually.

With bones and sinews; which are the stay and strength of the body; and some of them, as the skull and ribs, enclose and defend its vital and most noble parts.

Ver. 12.

Thou didst not only give me a curious body, but also a living and a reasonable soul: thou didst at first give me life, and then maintain it in me; both when I was in the womb, (which is a marvellous work of God,) and afterward, when I was unable to do any thing to preserve my own life.

Favour, or *benignity*, or *bounty*, or *mercy*, or *kindness*; which is here, as oft elsewhere, put for its fruits or effects. Thou didst not give a mere life, but many other favours necessary, or convenient, or belonging to it, such as nourishment by the breast, education, knowledge, and instruction, &c.

Thy visitation, i. e. the care of thy providence watching over me for my good, and visiting me in mercy; as God's *visiting* is understood, #Ex 4:31 Lu 1:78, though elsewhere it is an act of punishment.

My spirit, i.e. my soul or life, which is liable to manifold casualties and dangers, if God did not watch over us and guard us every day and moment. Thou hast hitherto done great things for me, given me life, and the blessings of life, and daily preservations and deliverances; and wilt thou now undo all that thou hast done? and shall I, who have been such an eminent monument of thy mercy, now be made a spectacle of thy vengeance, and that without cause?

Ver. 13.

This place may be understood either,

1. Of Job's present afflictions. So the sense is this, Yet in the midst of all those manifestations of thy grace and kindness to me, thou didst retain a secret purpose of changing thy course and carriage towards me, and of bringing these dreadful calamities upon me. Or rather,

2. Of his former mercies,

these things, to wit, last mentioned;

thou hast hid them in thy heart, i.e. thou dost exactly remember them, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 119:11 Lu 2:51**. So the argument is this, Let the remembrance of thy former great favours vouchsafed to me move thee to give me further blessings, and a speedy deliverance. For this is usual both with God and men, to choose and delight to do more good to those to whom they have done much good already; which is the ground of that known passage, **#Mt 13:12**. *To him that hath shall be given. With thee*, i.e. in thy mind and heart; thou hast not forgot it: so the same thing is here repeated in other words.

Ver. 14.

If I commit the least sin, (as who is there that liveth, and sinneth not?) thou dost not wink at or pass by my sins, as thou usually dost other men's, but dost severely and diligently observe them all, that thou mayst punish them: compare **#Job 14:16 31:4**.

Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity; I perceive thou art resolved to punish me with rigour, and that thou wilt not pardon, and pity, and help me: words of great impatience and distrust.

Ver. 15.

If I be wicked, i.e. an ungodly hypocrite, as my friends esteem me, then I am truly and extremely, and must be eternally, miserable.

Righteous, i.e. an upright and good man: so, whether good or bad, all comes to one; I have no relief.

Yet will I not lift up my head; or, yet *can I not*, &c; the future tense being used potentially; yet I have no comfort, nor confidence, or hopes of any good. *Lifting up the head or face* is oft mentioned as a sign of comfort and confidence, as **#Ps 3:3 Lu 21:28**; as, on the contrary, grief and shame are described by its dejection or casting down.

Confusion, or *reproach*, from my friends, and from others, **#Job 30:1**, &c., and from God too, who casts me off, and makes me contemptible. I have abundance of shame in the disappointment of all my hopes, and the continuance and aggravation of my misery, notwithstanding all my prayers to God to remove or mitigate it; and I am confounded within myself, not knowing what to say or do. Let my extremity move thee to pity and help me.

Ver. 16.

As a fierce lion; which hunteth after his prey with great eagerness, and when he overtakes it, falls upon it with great fury.

And again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me, Heb.

and thou returnest and showest thyself marvellous upon, or *in*, or *against me*. The lion tears its prey speedily, and so ends its torments; but thou renewest my calamities again and again, and makest my plagues wonderful, both for kind, and extremity, and continuance.

Ver. 17.

Thy witnesses, i.e. thy judgments, which are the witnesses and evidences, both of my sins, and of thy wrath. *Thy indignation*, i.e. my miseries, the effects of thine anger. These words are added to explain what he meant by renewing witnesses.

Changes and war; or, *changes and an army*; which may be a figure called *hendiadis*, for *the changes of an army*, i.e. many miseries succeeding one another, like companies of the soldiers of an army in battle; or *changes* may note the various kinds, and an army the great numbers, of his afflictions.

Ver. 18.

To wit, alive, i.e. that I had never been born alive.

Ver. 19.

I should have been, or, *Oh that I had been!* and so in the following branch,

Oh that I had been carried! For why should not these verbs of the future tense be so rendered here, as that **#Job 10:18** is, the reason being wholly the same?

Ver. 20.

My life is short, and of itself hastens apace to an end; there is no need that thou shouldst push it forward, or grudge me some ease for so small a moment.

Let me alone; or, *lay aside*, or *remove*, thy hand or anger from me.

Ver. 21.

To the place whence I shall not return into this world and life: see #**Job 7:9,10**.

Darkness and the shadow of death, i.e. a dark and dismal shade: See Poole "**Job 3:5**".

Ver. 22.

A land of darkness; either in things, without any succession of day and night, winter and summer; or among persons, where great and small are in the same condition, #**Job 3:19**.

Where the light is as darkness; where there is no difference between light and darkness, where the day is as dark as the night, where there is nothing but perpetual and uninterrupted darkness.

JOB CHAPTER 11

Zophar's reproof: Job's words too many, and false, even to mockery, in justifying himself, #**Job 11:1-4**. Should God speak, his wisdom, and justice, and all his perfections would appear infinitely greater than what Job conceived of them #**Job 11:5-10**. God knoweth man; seeth wickedness, and considereth it; but man is ignorant and foolish, and in vain pretendeth to wisdom, #**Job 11:11,12**. If Job would prepare his heart, and pray, and put away his sin, he should again lift up his head, and forget his misery, and his last days be brightest; but the wicked shall perish, #**Job 11:13-20**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Dost thou think to carry thy cause by thy long and tedious discourses, consisting of empty words, without weight or reason? Shall we by our silence seem to approve of thy errors? or shall we think thy cause the better, because thou usest more words than we do?

Ver. 3.

Thy lies, i.e. thy false opinions and assertions, both concerning thyself and thy own innocency, and concerning the counsels and

ways of God, make men hold their peace; as if thy arguments were unanswerable.

When thou mockest, both God, **#Job 10:3**, and us, and our friendly and faithful counsels, **#Job 6:14,15,25,26**,

shall no man make thee ashamed, by discovering thy errors and follies?

Ver. 4.

My doctrine, concerning God and his providence. *Pure*, i.e. true and certain.

I am clean in thine eyes; I am innocent before God; I have not sinned, either by my former actions, or by my present expressions. Thou standest wholly upon thy justification. But Zophar aggravates and perverts Job's words, for he did not deny that he was a sinner in God's sight, **#Job 7:20,21 9:2,3 10:14**, but only that he was a hypocrite or ungodly man, as they made him.

Ver. 5.

i.e. Plead with thee, according to thy desire, **#Job 9:32**, &c. He would soon put thee to silence and shame.

Ver. 6.

The secrets of wisdom, i.e. the unknown and unsearchable depths of God's wisdom and counsels in dealing with his creatures.

That they are double to that which is, i.e. that they are far more and greater (the word double being used indefinitely for manifold, or plentiful, as **#Isa 40:2 61:7 Jer 17:18 Zec 9:12**) than that which hath a being or existence, i.e. the secret wisdom of God is infinitely greater than that which is revealed to us by his word or works. The greatest part of what is known of God, is the least part of those perfections that are in him. And therefore thou dost rashly and foolishly in passing such a bold censure upon God's ways, and judging so harshly of his proceedings with thee, because thou dost not comprehend the reasons of them, and in judging thyself innocent, because thou dost not see thy sins; whereas the all-knowing God sees innumerable sins in thee, for which he may utterly destroy thee, though thou discernest them not. But the words are and must be rendered, either thus, *that* he hath *double*,

i.e. abundant, wisdom, for so this Hebrew word signifies, #**Job 6:13 12:16 Pr 2:7 3:21**; or,

that they are double to, or *in*, that *being or essence*, to wit, to God, of whom he is here speaking; or, *to the being*, i.e. to God, who calls himself by the name *I am*, #**Ex 3:14**, which signifies *being*; and who appropriates being to himself, #**Isa 45:18**, *I am, and there is none else besides me*; as elsewhere he is said to be the *only wise*, and *only Potentate*, and *only immortal being*, #**1Ti 1:17 6:15,16**. *God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth*, Heb. *God lends, or gives, or forgives, thee part of thine iniquity, or of thy punishment*; so far is he from dealing worse than thou deservest, as thou dost most falsely and wickedly accuse him.

Ver. 7.

Find out God, i.e. discover all the depths of his wisdom, and the reasons of all his actions.

Ver. 8.

Thou canst not measure the heights of the visible heavens, much less of the Divine perfections.

What canst thou do, to wit, to find him out?

What canst thou know, concerning him and his ways, which are far out of thy sight and reach?

Ver. 9.

Longer than the earth, from one end to the other.

Broader than the sea; which is called *the great and wide sea*, #**Ps 104:25**.

Ver. 10.

If he cut off, to wit, a person or a family. *Shut up in a prison*, or in the hands of an enemy. This *shutting up* is opposed to the opening of the prison doors, and to that enlargement which God is elsewhere said to give to men.

Gather together; either,

1. In a way of judgment, as a like word is used, #**Ps 26:9**, *Gather not my soul with sinners*. Or rather,

2. In a way of mercy, as this word is generally used in Scripture; this being every where promised by God to his people as an eminent mercy, that he would *gather* them *together*. So this is opposed to the former actions, and the sense of the place is, whether it pleaseth God to scatter a family, or to gather them together from their dispersions.

Who can hinder him from doing what he pleaseth and designeth with his own creatures? who can restrain him, either by giving law to him, or by force and power? or, *who can contradict or answer him*, or *object* against him, or *retort or return upon him*, i.e. charge him with injustice in such proceedings? which sense may seem to agree best both with the scope of the place and state of the question between him and Job; which was not whether any man could resist God's power, but whether he could question his justice; and with the following verse.

Ver. 11.

He knoweth vain men: though men know but little of God, and therefore are very unfit judges of all his counsels and actions; yet God knows man exactly, and his vanity, or *falsehood*, or *folly*, or rashness; for all these this word signifies. He knoweth that every man in the world is guilty of much vanity and folly, and therefore seeth sufficient reason for his severity against the best men, such as thou, O Job, fanciest thyself to be; and if thou wert so, thou hast no reason to wonder at or quarrel with his proceedings; and if thy quarrel be that he *shuts thee up*, or *cuts thee off*, when he *gathers others* under his wing and protection, whom thou thinkest or knowest to be worse than thyself, while thou dost impeach his justice, thou dost but betray thy own vanity and folly; for he knows both whom he chastiseth, and whom he spareth, and why he doth it, though he do not acquaint thee with the reasons of all his actions.

He seeth wickedness also; as he knoweth the vanity of all men, so he exactly perceiveth the wickedness of evil men, though it be covered with the veil of religion. He seeth thy evil heart, which discovers itself by such wicked and scandalous speeches against the justice and goodness of his providence, which gives him just cause to continue and increase thy miseries. Though thou art

partial, and flatterest thyself with a conceit of thy own integrity, yet he knoweth thy hypocrisy and wickedness.

Will he not then consider it? shall he only see it as an idle spectator, and not observe it as a judge, to requite and punish it?

Ver. 12.

Or, *Yet*, or *But*, *vain* or *empty man* (that foolish creature, that since the fall is void of all true wisdom and solid knowledge and judgment of the things of God) would be wise, i.e. pretends to be, and would be thought, wise, and able to pass a censure upon all God's ways and works. Or thus, *But vain man is foolish*, or *without heart*, i.e. without understanding, unable to judge aright of the ways and things of God. For a verb very like this and coming from the same root, signifies to *have one's heart taken away*, #**So 4:9**.

Though man be born; and *man is born*, i. e. he is by his birth such: this evil is now natural and hereditary, and therefore common to all men; and therefore it is not strange if Job partake of the common distemper.

Like a wild ass's colt, i.e. ignorant, and dull, and stupid, as to the knowledge of Divine things, and withal heady and untractable; and therefore very incompetent to judge of these high affairs.

Ver. 13.

O Job, thy business is not to quarrel with thy Maker, or his works, but to address thyself to him.

Prepare thine heart, to wit, to seek God, as it is expressed, #**2Ch 19:3 30:19 Ps 78:8**. *If thou prepare thy heart* by sincere repentance for all thy hard speeches of God, and sins against him, and with a pure and upright heart seek unto him; without which thy prayers will be in vain. Or,

If thou directest, or *rectifiest*, *thine heart*, turning thy bold contentions with God into humble and sincere supplications to him.

Stretch out thine hands, i.e. pray, which is here described by its usual gesture; as #**Job 15:25 Ps 88:9**.

Towards him, i.e. to God, as appears both from the nature of the thing, and from the context.

Ver. 14.

Either,

1. If thou hast in thine hand or possession any good, got by injury or oppression, as it seems they supposed that he had. Or,

2. More generally, If thou allowest thyself in any sinful practices. The *hand* is put for action, whereof it is the instrument.

Put it far away; keep thyself at a great distance, not only from such actions, but also from the very occasions and appearances of them.

Let not wickedness dwell, let it not have a quiet and settled abode, or allowance, in thy habitation, i.e. either in thyself, or in thy family; whose sins Job was obliged as far as he could to prevent or reform; as he had done, **#Job 1:5**. He saith

tabernacles, because anciently the habitations of great men consisted of several tents or tabernacles, as we see, **#Ge 24:67 31:33**.

Ver. 15.

Then shalt thou lift up thy face; which notes cheerfulness, and holy boldness and confidence; as a dejected countenance notes grief and shame. See **#Ge 4:5,6 2Sa 2:22 Job 22:26 Lu 21:28**.

Without spot; or, being *without spot*; so it is only an ellipsis of the verb substantive, which is most frequent. And this fitly follows as the ground of his confidence, because he should in this case have a clear and unspotted conscience, and a sense of his own innocency. Or, *without blemish*, as the word properly signifies, i.e. without any sense of guilt, or any shame consequent upon it, either from God or men. The ground of the expression is this, that when men's faces are spotted with dirt, they are ashamed to show them. And Job was charged by his friends as having many spots upon him, yea, such as were not the spots of God's children.

Stedfast; or, *firm*, or *fixed*; either,

1. As to his outward condition, which should be constantly prosperous. Or rather,

2. As to his mind, which should have strong and comfortable assurance of God's favour, and of his own safety and happiness. For this *steadfastness* is opposed unto that *fear* which is incident to wicked men; who, even when they are free from actual miseries, yet oftentimes are tormented with the dread of them.

Ver. 16.

Thou shalt be free from fear, because thy great and settled prosperity shall banish out of thy mind all those sad and irksome thoughts of thy former calamities, which naturally engender fears of the continuance or return of them. Persons blessed with eminent deliverances, and a happy settlement, are frequently said in Scripture to

forget their former sorrows, as **#Ge 41:51 Isa 54:4 Joh 16:21**; not that they simply forget them, but because they have no sad or frightful remembrance of them; for *remembering* and *forgetting* in Scripture do not simply note acts of the mind, but also affections and practices suitable to them, as is well known.

Remember it as waters that pass away; thou shalt remember them no more than men remember either a land-flood, which as it comes, so it goes away, suddenly, and leaves few or no footsteps or memorials behind it; or the waters of a river, which as soon as they are out of sight are out of mind, because of the new waters which immediately come in their stead.

Ver. 17.

Thine age, i.e. the remainder of thy life and time in this world.

Shall be clearer, Heb. *shall arise*. Men are said to fall into troubles, and to arise out of them.

Than the noon-day; or, *above the noon-day*, or above the sun at noon-day, when it is at its highest pitch, as well as in its greatest glory.

Thou shalt shine forth: light in Scripture commonly signifies prosperity and glory, as **#Es 8:16 Job 18:5,6 38:15 Pr 4:18**. Or, *if thou art in darkness*, as this word properly signifies, **#Job 10:22 Am 4:13**, i.e. if thou comest into any distress and trouble. *Shalt be as the morning*, i.e. that night of trouble shall certainly and speedily be followed with the morning of deliverance and

comfort, which, like the morning light, shall shine brighter and brighter until the perfect day.

Ver. 18.

i.e. Thy mind shall be quiet and free from terrors, because thou shalt have a firm and well-grounded hope and confidence in God's merciful and providential care of thee. Or, *thou shalt be confident that thou shalt have what thou hopest for*, the act, *hope*, being put for the object, as is very usual, i.e. thou shalt have assurance in and from God, that thy hopes shall not be disappointed, but fulfilled. This is opposed to that fear, **#Job 11:15**.

Thou shalt dig about thee; either to fix thy tents, which after the manner of the Arabians were removed from place to place for conveniency of pasturage for their cattle; or to find out water for thy cattle, as they did, **#Ge 26**; or to plough the ground, as he had done, **#Job 1:14**; or to make a fence about thy dwelling; for both the foregoing and following passages express his secure and safe condition.

In safety; free from dangers and the fear of them, because of God's fatherly providence watching over thee when thou canst not watch over thyself.

Ver. 19.

Desiring thy favour and friendship, because of thy great power, and riches, and eminent felicity: see **#Ge 26:26**, &c.

Ver. 20.

Fail; or *be consumed*; either with grief and fears for their sore calamities; or with long looking for what they shall never attain, as this phrase is taken, **#Ps 69:3 Jer 14:6 La 4:17**. And this shall be thy condition, O Job, if thou persistest in thine impiety.

They shall not escape; they shall never obtain deliverance out of their distresses, but shall perish in them.

As the giving up of the ghost, i.e. shall be as vain and desperate as the hope of life is in a man, when he is at the very point of death. Or, *as a puff of breath*, which is gone in a moment without all hopes of recovery.

JOB CHAPTER 12

Job's answer: his friends' self-conceit: the miserable always despised, though upright; the wicked prosper, #**Job 12:1-6**. God's power and providence is seen in his works, #**Job 12:7-11**. With the ancient is wisdom, but especially in God, and power: judges are fools, princes weak and mean, darkness light, before him, #**Job 12:12-22**; and whole nations are overruled by him, #**Job 12:23-25**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Ye are the people; you three, and you only, are *the people*, i.e. people of all people for eminency of wisdom, the only company of reasonable creatures; all others are but fools or beasts: you have engrossed all the reason of mankind; and each of you have as much wisdom as a whole people put together. It is an ironical expression, as the next verse showeth.

Wisdom shall die with you; all the wisdom and knowledge of Divine things which is in the world lives in you, and will die and be utterly lost when you die. This you think of yourselves; and this makes you so confidently and peremptorily deliver your opinions, and give laws to me and all mankind, and even to God himself.

Ver. 3.

An understanding, Heb. *a heart*; which is oft put for the *understanding*, as #**Job 34:34 Jer 5:21 Ac 8:22**; i.e. God hath given me also the knowledge and ability to judge of these matters.

I am not inferior to you in these things; which he speaketh, not in a way of vain-glorious boasting, but for the just and necessary vindication both of himself; and of that cause of God, which for the matter and substance of it he maintained rightly, as God himself attests, #**Job 42:7**.

Who knoweth not such things as these? the truth is, neither you nor I have any reason to be puffed up with our knowledge of these things; for the most foolish and barbarous nations know that God

is infinite in wisdom, and power, and justice. But this is not the question between you and me.

Ver. 4.

As one mocked of his neighbour, Heb. *I am a derision* (the infinitive being put for a noun, as is usual both in the Hebrew and other languages) *to my neighbour*, i.e. to these three, who have pretended and would be thought to be my friends and neighbours; whom therefore such carriage doth very ill become. Instead of supporting and comforting me, they make a sport and scorn of me.

Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him. This *who* belongs either,

1. To Job, who here declares his own practice in this case: When you mock me, I go to God with my complaints and prayers, and he hears me, though you will not. But this seems not to agree either with the context, or with other passages of Job; in which he constantly complains that God did not hear nor regard his prayers, nor pity and help him. Or,

2. To Job's friends; and so this is either,

1. An aggravation of their crime, that they should mock him who made a great profession of religion, who used duly to call upon God, and to receive answers from him, and therefore should have carried themselves more piously, and charitably, and compassionately towards their miserable brother. Or,

2. As the reason of their mockage of Job, because God, who neglected Job's prayers, heard theirs, and gave them those mercies for which they prayed; and therefore being themselves well and at ease, they were hard-hearted towards their poor afflicted brother, as the manner of men is. This seems to suit well with the following verse. Or,

3. As all argument against their scorning or slighting of him: God hears you when you pray, therefore you should turn your mocks of me into prayers for me; and you should pity me, whom God doth not hear when I pray; and as God hears you, so you should hear and comfort me, when I pour out my complaints to you. But these words may be brought in mimetically, as being some of their scoffing words: They say of me, *Let him call upon God, and God*

will hear him; for so they had suggested to Job, **#Job 5:8 8:5 11:13**. But this, saith Job, I take for a piece of mockery, and insulting over my miseries; for I know by sad experience, and they see the contrary, that though I call and cry again and again, yet God hath no regard to me.

The just, upright man is laughed to scorn, i.e. I, who, notwithstanding all their hard censures and reproaches, must and dare still own it, that through God's grace I am a just and upright man, am derided by them. This he repeats again, because it was very grievous and burdensome to him.

Ver. 5.

i.e. The just man last mentioned, who is upon the brink of the pit or grave, ready to fall into mischief, so as never to rise again in this world, which is my case, and the occasion of their scorn and contempt.

As a lamp despised, i.e. like a lamp or torch, which whilst it shines clearly and in a dark night is very useful and comfortable; but when it draws towards an end, and is nigh extinct, and in the light, is neglected and despised, as that which is unnecessary, and troublesome, and offensive. So the same man, who, when his feet stand fast in a prosperous condition, is magnified and adored by all, when his feet *slip* or *stumble*, as the phrase is **#Ps 94:18 Jer 13:16**, when he is in misery, is commonly forsaken and despised.

In the thought of him that is at ease, i.e. in the opinion of a man that lives in great ease and outward happiness, which generally makes persons to forget and despise those who are in affliction. But these words are a little otherwise rendered, and that agreeably to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, He (which is easily understood out of **#Job 12:4**, the just and upright man) is as *a torch despised in the opinion or thought* (as this or the like words coming from the same Hebrew root are used, **#Ps 146:4 Da 6:3 Jon 1:6**. Or, *because of the splendour*; for so this root and its derivatives elsewhere signify, as **#So 5:14 Jer 5:28 Eze 27:19**. And either of these significations agree well with the place. Or, *compared with the splendour* or greater lustre and glory) *of him that lives in tranquillity; he* (i.e. the just man) *is* (or, *because he is*;

for this may be the reason of the contempt) *ready to slip with his foot*, i.e. ready to perish.

Ver. 6.

The tabernacles of robbers prosper: thy opinion, delivered #Job 11:14, &c, is confuted by daily experience; which shows that the most wicked, and injurious, and impudent oppressors, tyrants, and robbers, are so far from meeting with those disappointments and miseries wherewith thou didst threaten them, that they commonly succeed in their cursed enterprises, and flourish in wealth and glory, and fill their houses with the goods of others which they violently took away; whereof the Chaldeans and Sabeans, #Job 1:15,17, are a present and pregnant evidence.

They that provoke God are secure; they whose common practice it is to despise and provoke God are confident and secure, live without danger or fear.

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly; so far is God from crushing such persons, that he seems to favour them with wonderful success, and by his special and more than common providence *puts into their hands* the opportunities which they seek, and the persons and goods of other more righteous men, which they lie in wait for.

Ver. 7.

They shall teach thee, to wit, objectively, i.e. if thou observest the beasts, and their properties, and actions, and events, from them thou mayst learn this lesson. What lesson? I answer, either,

1. That which was last mentioned, #Job 12:5. God's providence doth order things in the like manner among the very beasts, and fowls, and fishes; of which the most ravenous and mischievous fare the best, whilst those which are more harmless, and serviceable, and beneficial to men meet with the hardest usage. Or,

2. That which Zophar had uttered with so much pomp and gravity, #Job 11:7-9, concerning God's infinite wisdom; which, saith Job, thou needest not go into heaven or hell to know, but thou mayst learn it even from the beasts, &c.

Ver. 8.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 9.

In all these, or, *by all these*, brute creatures, that God by his power and wisdom hath created and ordered all this which is in them, or is done by and among them.

Ver. 10.

In whose hand, i.e. at whose absolute disposal, it is to give it, or take it away, when and how it seemeth good to him.

The soul; the life, or the soul the principle of life.

Of every living thing, i.e. of all unreasonable creatures, of which he spoke #Job 12:7, opposed to man in the last words.

The breath, or, *the spirit*, as that word is commonly used, i.e. the immortal soul; which is no less a creature, and in God's power to dispose of it, than the animal soul of unreasonable creatures.

Ver. 11.

As the mouth tasteth and thereby judgeth of meats, and as it liketh or disliketh, so it receiveth or rejecteth, what is put into it; so it is the office of the ear, or rather of the mind, which hears and receives the opinions and discourses of others by the ear, not rashly to approve or condemn every thing which it hears, but diligently and thoroughly to search and try whether it be true, and so to be embraced, or false, and to be rejected. Interpreters are much puzzled about the connexion and design of these words; but they seem to be either,

1. An apology for himself, why he did not comply with their opinion and all arguments, because they did not suit with his ear or mind; and though he had considered and tried them, he could not discern any weight in them. Or rather,

2. A reproof to his friends, that they did so hastily condemn his person and his doctrine without a strict and serious inquiry. Or,

3. A preface to his following discourse; whereby he invites them to hear and judge of his words and arguments more candidly and impartially; and not to scorn that he said because of his present poverty and misery, as men at ease used to do; nor to cast away

the good for any mixture of bad with it; but calmly to weigh and debate things, both within and among themselves, and with him, that they and he too might all agree in disallowing whatsoever should appear to be false, and owning of every truth.

Ver. 12.

These words contain a concession of what Bildad had said **#Job 8:8,9**, and a joining with him in that appeal; but withal, an intimation that this wisdom was but finite, and imperfect, and liable to many mistakes; and indeed mere ignorance and folly, if compared with the Divine wisdom, of which he speaks in the next and following verses. And therefore that antiquity which they pretended for their opinion ought not to be received against the oracles or truths of the eternal and most wise God.

Ver. 13.

With him, i.e. with God; the relative being put for the antecedent, which is easily and necessarily understood out of the scope of the place, and all the following verses.

Wisdom; perfect wisdom is only in him, and all wisdom in the world cometh from him, who giveth to old or young as it pleaseth him. The ancient are not wise without his gift and grace, and with that a younger man may be wiser *than the ancients*, as David was, **#Ps 119:100**.

Counsel and understanding; *counsel*, i.e. practical wisdom to guide all the affairs of the world; and *understanding*, or a speculative knowledge of all persons and things.

Ver. 14.

He breaketh down, to wit, houses, castles, cities, which God designeth to destroy utterly.

He shutteth up; if he will shut up a man in prison, or in any straits or troubles.

There can be no opening, without God's permission and providence.

Ver. 15.

He withholdeth the waters; which are reserved in the clouds, that they may not fall upon the earth.

They dry up, i.e. the waters upon the earth, ponds, and springs, and brooks, and rivers.

Ver. 16.

He doth the things here mentioned in the foregoing and succeeding verses, and that both powerfully, so as no creature can resist and hinder him, and wisely, so as none can prevent and overreach him. The same thing he had said before, **#Job 12:13**, but he repeats it here to prepare the way for the following events, which are eminent instances both of his power and wisdom.

Are his, i.e. from or by him, and wholly subject to his disposal. That one man deceiveth another, and that the other is deceived by him, either in Divine or civil and worldly things, (which seem to be principally intended here, by comparing the following verses,) this is from God, and by the conduct of his wise and powerful providence. God giveth to the deceiver more wit, and knowledge, and art, and withal opportunity, and all favourable circumstances for his deceit. He also gives less understanding to the deceived, and withdraws from him, either wholly or in part, that common light of discretion which is his free gift; and he may justly give, or take away, as he pleaseth, and leaves him to his own ignorance and error, pride and self-conceit, and to all those prejudices, passions, and lusts which commonly corrupt men's minds, and to the power and crafts of Satan, that grand deceiver. He governs the deceiver, and sets bounds to his deceits, to whom, and when, and how far they shall extend; as is manifest from **#De 13:1 1Ki 22:20 Isa 19:14 Eze 14:9 Mt 24:24 2Th 2:11 Re 20:3,8**. He also overrules all this to his own glory, and the accomplishment of his righteous designs of trying the good, and punishing wicked men, by giving them up to believe lies. Yet God is not the cause or author of any error or sin, but only the wise and holy governor and disposer of it.

Ver. 17.

The wise *counsellors* or statesmen, by whom the affairs of kings and kingdoms are ordered, *he leadeth* away as captives in triumph, being spoiled either of that wisdom which they had, or seemed or pretended to have; or of that power and dignity which they had enjoyed.

Maketh the judges fools; partly by discovering their folly, and partly by infatuating their minds, and turning their own counsels to their ruin; of which see #2Sa 15:31 17:14,23 Isa 19:11 1Co 1:19.

Ver. 18.

He looseth the bond of kings; either,

1. Passively, whereby they are bound. He freeth them from prison or restraint. Or rather,

2. Actively, that wherewith they bind their subjects to obedience, to wit, their power and authority, and that majesty which God stamps upon kings to keep their people in awe; all which God can, and oft doth, take away from them, and freeth the people from their bonds, when it pleaseth him; of which all histories give instances. See #Da 2:21.

With a girdle; either,

1. With a girdle of dignity and glory, which was put upon the loins of men in great honour and authority, as #Isa 11:5 22:21 Jer 13:1,2. So this member of the verse is opposite to the; former, and the sense of the whole is, he either casteth down kings or raiseth them up, as he pleaseth. But the Scripture no where mentions this girdle as one of the ornaments of kings. Or rather,

2. With a servile girdle; for seeing all, both the foregoing and succeeding passages, do evidently note acts of judgment or punishments inflicted upon them, it seems improper to understand this alone of an act of God's favour to them. So the sense is, he reduceth them into a mean and servile condition; which is thus expressed, because servants did use to gird up their garments, (which after the manner of those parts and time were loose and long,) that they might be fitter for attendance upon their masters; of which see #Lu 12:37 17:8. And so this is an amplification of the former sentence. He not only deposeth them from their thrones, but brings them into bondage and slavery.

Ver. 19.

Princes; so this word, which usually signifies priests, is oft used, as #Ge 41:45 47:22,26 Ex 2:16 2Sa 8:18, compared with #1Ch 18:17.

Ver. 20.

Removeth away the speech; either,

1. By taking away or restraining the gift of utterance from them, that they should not be able to express their thoughts with such clearness and power as they used to do; which God oft doth to wise and eloquent men. Or,

2. By bringing them into such straits and troubles that they know not what to say or advise. Or,

3. By taking away their understanding, which should suggest and direct their speech, as it here follows. Or,

4. By permitting them to betray their trust, and either not to speak when they should, or to speak otherwise than they should and to use their wit and rhetoric not to direct, but to deceive, and so destroy a prince.

Of the trusty, i.e. of those wise and eloquent counsellors that were, and for their great abilities might be, trusted by the greatest princes with all their affairs.

Ver. 21.

He poureth contempt upon princes, i.e. he makes them contemptible to their subjects and others.

Weakeneth, Heb. *he looseth the girdle*; which phrase signifies weakness, as #Isa 5:27; as the girding of the girdle notes strength and power, as #Isa 22:21 45:5; both these phrases being taken from the quality of their garments, which being loose and long, did disenable a man for travel or work.

Ver. 22.

Deep things out of darkness, i.e. the most secret and crafty counsels of princes, which are contrived and carried on in the dark.

Ver. 23.

What hitherto he said of princes, he now applies to nations and people, whom God doth either increase or diminish as he pleaseth.

He enlargeth the nations; he multiplies them, so that they are forced to send forth colonies into other lands.

Straiteneth them again; or, *leadeth them in, or bringeth them back*, into their own land, and confineth them there.

Ver. 24.

The heart; which signifies either,

1. Their courage, as **#Ps 76:12**; or rather,
2. Their wisdom and counsel, as **#Job 5:13 Isa 3:4**, as the following words show.

The chief; either for place and power, or for wisdom and conduct.

Causeth them to wander in a wilderness, i.e. fills them with confusion, and uncertainty, and perplexity of mind, so that they know not how to govern themselves or their people.

Ver. 25.

They grope, like men that cannot see their way.

In the dark without light; two phrases expressing the same thing, emphatically to express their profound darkness.

Like a drunken man, who reels hither and thither without any certainty. So they sometimes take one course, and sometimes another, as resolving to try all experiments, and indeed not knowing what to do.

JOB CHAPTER 13

Job's friends not wiser than he: he would reason with God; but they were liars, and talked deceitfully for God, who would search and reprove them for accepting persons, **#Job 13:1-10**. God's excellency, and they as ashes and clay, **#Job 13:11,12**. He is resolute, being in extreme misery, and having confidence in God, before whom he would speak, and God should save him; not so with a hypocrite, **#Job 13:13-16**. He ordereth his cause to plead with God; only desireth a removal of God's hand upon him, **#Job 13:17-22**. His request to know his sins and God's purpose, since God delighteth not in our misery, **#Job 13:23-28**.

Ver. 1.

All this which either you or I have discoursed concerning the infinite power and wisdom of God, I know, both by seeing it, i.e.

by my own observation and experience, and by *hearing* it from my ancestors; so that I did not need your tedious and impertinent discourses concerning those matters.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

According to thy wish, #**Job 11:5**, I had rather debate the matter with God than with you. I am not afraid of presenting my person and cause before him, who is a witness of my integrity, and would not deal so unmercifully with me as you do.

Ver. 4.

Forgers of lies, i.e. authors of false doctrine, to wit, that great afflictions are peculiar to hypocrites and wicked men.

Physicians of no value; unfaithful and unskilful; prescribing bad remedies, and misapplying good ones.

Ver. 5.

For then your ignorance and folly had been concealed, which is now manifest. Compare #**Pr 17:28**.

Ver. 6.

i.e. Attend to it, and consider it more seriously than you have done.

The pleadings of my lips, i.e. the arguments which I shall produce.

Ver. 7.

Will you utter falsehoods upon pretence of pleasing God, or of maintaining God's honour or justice? Doth he need such defences?

Ver. 8.

Will ye accept his person? not judging according to the right of the cause, but the quality of the person, as corrupt judges do.

Will ye contend, i.e. wrangle and quarrel with me, and cavil at my speeches, and pervert my meaning?

For God, i.e. that you may gratify him, or defend his rights.

Ver. 9.

Is it good? will it be to your credit and comfort?

Search you out, i.e. narrowly examine your hearts and discourses, whether you have uttered truth or falsehood, and whether your speeches proceed from true zeal for God, or from your own prejudices and passions, and from a desire to curry favour with him.

Do ye so mock him, to wit, by covering your uncharitableness and corrupt affections with pretences of piety, as if God could not discern your artifices; or by pleading his cause with weak and foolish arguments, which is a kind of mockery to him, and an injury to his cause; or by seeking to flatter him with false praises, as if he did distribute the things of this world with exact justice, prospering only the good, and severely afflicting none but wicked men?

Ver. 10.

i.e. Punish you; as this word is oft used, as hath been once and again observed.

Secretly; though it be concealed in your own breasts, and no eye see it; yea, though it be so close that your own minds and consciences, through ignorance, or inadvertency, or slothfulness, do not perceive it; yet He, who is greater than your consciences, sees and knows it.

Ver. 11.

His excellency; his infinite wisdom, which sees your secret falsehoods; and his justice and power, which can and will punish you for it.

Make you afraid of speaking rashly or falsely of his ways and counsels.

Ver. 12.

Your remembrances; either,

1. Actively, i.e. your memorials, or your discourses and arguments, by which you design to bring things to my remembrance. So he might possibly allude to that passage, **#Job 4:7. Remember, I pray thee, &c.** That and all your other mementos

are like unto ashes, i.e. contemptible and unprofitable, Heb. *are parables, or speeches, of dust, or ashes*. Or,

2. Passively; all that which is most excellent and memorable in you, your wealth, and dignity, and wit, and reputation, or whatsoever it is for which you expect or desire to be remembered, it is all but poor despicable dust and ashes. And therefore you have just reason to abhor yourselves, and to dread the Divine Majesty, as I now advised you.

Your bodies; though they be not full of sores and boils as mine is, yet they are but dust, and to dust they shall return as well as mine. Heb. *your backs*, which, being the strongest part of the body, is put for the whole body. Or, *your eminencies, or excellencies*, as this word most properly signifies, as Hebricians observe; so it answers to their memorables. All those things wherein you do, or think that you do, excel others, are but like eminencies, or lumps, or heaps of clay, vain and useless things, if compared with the excellencies of God. Or, *your heights*, i.e. your lofty discourses, are like clay, i.e. without solidity and strength.

Ver. 13.

Do not now interrupt me in my discourse; which peradventure he observed by their gestures some of them were now attempting.

That I may speak; that I may freely utter my whole mind.

Let come on me what will: for the event of my discourse with God, wherewith you threaten me, I am willing to submit myself to him, to do with me as he pleaseth; for I know he will not judge so severely and partially of me, or my words, as you do, but will accept what is good, and pass by any circumstantial defects in my person or speech, as knowing that I speak from an upright heart.

Ver. 14.

According to this translation the sense seems to be this, If you speak truth, and God punisheth none but wicked men, why doth he bring me (whom he knows to be no hypocrite, as you slander me) to that extremity of pain and misery, that I am almost constrained to tear and eat my own flesh, (which is mentioned as the character of men in great anguish, #Isa 9:20 49:26) and am ready to lay violent hands upon myself? Is it so great a crime to complain in this case, or at least to inquire into the cause of this

unwonted severity? But this sense seems not well to suit either with the foregoing or following verses, but to come in abruptly. Others therefore render the words thus,

Why should I take my flesh in my teeth, &c.? And so this may be either,

1. A reason of his ardent desire of liberty of speech, because he could hold his tongue no longer, but must needs tear himself to pieces, if he had not some vent for his grief. So this agrees well both with **#Job 13:13**, where he desired this freedom; and with **#Job 13:19**, where the same sense is expressed in plainer words. Or,

2. An antidote against despair. I perceive, O my friends, by your discourses, that you intend to drive me to utter despair, if I do not turn to God in another manner than yet I have done; which if it were true, I should certainly tear my flesh, and violently take away my own life; but I see no reason why I should give way to any such despair or desperate actions? And this also hath a good dependence upon the foregoing words, *let come on me what will*; (q.d. But I have no reason to fear such consequences as you suggest, nor to despair of a merciful audience and relief from God;) and a good connexion with those which follow, **#Job 13:15**, where he declares his hope and confidence in God. The phrase of having one's *life in his hand* notes a condition extremely dangerous, and almost desperate, as **#Jud 12:3 1Sa 19:5 28:21 Ps 119:109**.

Ver. 15.

Though God should yet more and more increase my torments, so that I could bear them no longer, but should perceive myself to be at the point of death, and without all hopes of recovery in this world.

Yet will I trust in him; or, *shall I not trust in him?* Should I despair? No, I will not. I know he is a just, and a faithful, and merciful God, and he knows that my heart is upright before him, and that I am no hypocrite.

But though I will trust in him, yet I will humbly expostulate the matter with him; *I will argue, or prove, or demonstrate my ways*, i.e. I will make a full free confession of the whole course of my

life, and I will boldly, though submissively, assert mine own integrity, which he also will, I doubt not, acknowledge. And what I have done amiss I will as freely confess, and make supplication to my Judge for the pardon of it.

Before him; before his tribunal; for I desire no other judge but him.

Ver. 16.

I rest assured that he will save me out of these miseries sooner or later, one way or other, if not with a temporal, yet with an eternal salvation after death; of which he speaks **#Job 19:25**, &c.

For; or *but*, as this particle commonly signifies; for this clause is put by way of opposition to the former, and the sense is, But if I were a hypocrite, as you allege, I durst not present myself before him to plead my cause with him, as now I desire to do, nor could I hope for any salvation from or with him in heaven.

Ver. 17.

This he desired before, **#Job 13:6**, and now repeateth, either because they manifested some neglect or dislike of his speech, and some desire to interrupt him; or because he now comes more closely to his business, the foregoing verses being mostly in way of preface to it.

My declaration, i.e. the words whereby I declare my mind.

Ver. 18.

I have ordered my cause, to wit, within myself. I have seriously and sincerely considered the state of my case, and what can be said either for me or against me, and am ready to plead my cause.

Justified, i.e. acquitted by God from that hypocrisy and wickedness wherewith you charge me, and declared a righteous and innocent person, human infirmities excepted.

Ver. 19.

Who is he that will plead with me? where is the man that will do it? nay, oh that God would do it! which here he implies, and presently expresseth.

I shall give up the ghost; my grief for God's heavy hand and find your bitter reproaches would break my heart, if I should not give it vent.

Ver. 20.

Which two he expresseth **#Job 13:21**. Then shall I boldly present myself and cause before thee.

Ver. 21.

i.e. Suspend my torments during the time of my pleading with thee, that my mind may be at liberty; and do not present thyself to me in terrible majesty, neither deal with me in rigorous justice; but hear me meekly, as one man heareth another, and plead with me upon those gracious terms wherewith thou usest to deal with mankind.

Ver. 22.

Then choose thy own method. Either do thou charge me with hypocrisy, or more than common guilt, and I will defend myself; or I will argue with thee concerning thy extraordinary severity towards me; and do thou show me the reasons of it. This proposal savoured of too great self-confidence, and of irreverence towards God; for which and suchlike speeches he is reproved by God, **#Job 38:2,3 40:2**.

Ver. 23.

That I am a sinner I confess; but that I am guilty of so many or such heinous crimes as my friends suppose I utterly deny; and if it be so, do thou, O Lord, discover it to my shame.

Make me to know my transgression and my sin, if peradventure my heart deceive me therein; for I am not conscious to myself of any enormous crime.

Ver. 24.

Hidest thou thy face, i.e. withdrawest thy favour and help which thou didst use to afford me; as this phrase is commonly used, as **#De 31:17 Ps 13:1 102:2, &c.**

Holdest me for thine enemy, i.e. dealest as sharply with me as if I were thy professed enemy.

Ver. 25.

Doth it become thy infinite and excellent majesty to use all thy might to crush such a poor, impotent, frail creature as I am, that can no more resist thy power than a leaf, or a little loose and dry straw can resist the fury of the wind or fire.

Ver. 26.

Thou writest, i.e. thou appointest or inflictest. A metaphor from princes or judges, who anciently used to write their sentence or decrees concerning persons or causes brought before them. See #Ps 149:9 Jer 22:30 Joh 19:22.

Bitter things, i.e. a terrible sentence, or most grievous punishments.

Makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth; thou dost now at once bring upon me the punishment of all my sins, not excepting those of my youth, which because of the folly and weakness of that age are usually excused or winked at, or at least but gently punished.

Ver. 27.

Thou encompassst me with thy judgments, that I may have no way or possibility to escape. When thou hast me fast in prison, thou makest a strict and diligent search into all the actions of my life, that thou mayst find matter to condemn me. Thou followest me close at the heels, either to observe my actions, or to pursue me with thy judgments, so that thou dost oft tread upon my heels, and leave the prints of thy footsteps upon them.

Ver. 28.

He; either,

1. Man, or Job, supposed to be God's adversary in this contest. So he speaks of himself in the third person, as is usual in this and other sacred books. So the sense is, *he*, i.e. this poor frail creature, this carcass or body of mine, which possibly he pointed at with his finger,

consumeth or pineth away, &c. So he mentions here the effect of God's severe proceedings against him, to wit, his consumption and utter destruction, which was making haste towards him. Or,

2. God, of whom he hitherto spoke in the second person, and now in the third person; such changes of persons being very frequent in poetical writings, such as this is. So he continueth the former discourse; and as before he mentioned God's severe inquiry into his ways, and sentence against him, so here he describes the consequence and dreadful execution of it upon him; he, i.e. God, *consumeth* (for the verb is active) me *as rottenness* consumeth that in which it is, or as a rotten thing is consumed, and as a moth which eateth a garment.

JOB CHAPTER 14

Man's natural misery, sin, and short life, our plea with God not to disturb us by his power, but suffer us to accomplish our appointed time, **#Job 14:1-6**. The other creatures decay and revive; but man, once dead, returneth not till the end of all things, **#Job 14:7-12**. He wisheth to be hid in the grave, in hopes of the resurrection, **#Job 14:13-15**; for that here God was strict in marking his iniquity, and prevailed against him, **#Job 14:16-20**. Man's misery with respect to his children, **#Job 14:21,22**.

Ver. 1.

That is born of a woman. This expression is here used, either,

1. To intimate the cause of man's misery, that he was born of a woman, a weak creature, **#1Pe 3:7**, and withal corrupt and sinful, and of that sex by which sin and calamity was brought into the world. See **#Job 15:14 Ge 3:17 1Ti 2:13,14**. Or,

2. To note the universality of the thing; every man, every mother's son, as we use to speak. Men's fathers are oftentimes unknown and uncertain, but their mothers are always definite and certain. One man was then to be born, and afterwards was born, without an earthly father, to wit, our Lord and Saviour Christ; but no man was ever born without a mother.

Of few days; a short-lived creature in himself, and therefore needs no violent hand to cut him off, because he withereth so soon of his own accord.

Full of trouble; and therefore a fitter object for Divine compassion, than for his fury or severity. He chiefly intendeth

himself; but he expresseth it thus generally, partly to relieve himself with the thoughts of the common calamities of mankind; and partly to move God with the consideration of the frailty and misery of human nature, and consequently of his condition.

Ver. 2.

He cometh forth out of his mother's womb, **#Job 1:21**.

Like a flower; which quickly groweth up and maketh a fair show, but soon withereth, or is cut down.

As a shadow; which being made by the sun, follows its motions, and is in perpetual variation, until at last it quite vanish and disappear.

Ver. 3.

Dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one; either,

1. To take thought or care about him. Or rather,
2. To observe all his ways, that thou mayst find cause of punishment. He is not a fit match for thee. It is below thee to contend with him, and to use thy infinite wisdom and power to crush him. This seems best to suit with the scope and context.

Bringest me into judgment with thee, i.e. pleadest with me by thy judgments, and thereby, in a manner, forcest me to plead with thee, without granting me those two necessary and favourable conditions, expressed **#Job 13:20,21**.

Ver. 4.

I do not say, *I am clean*, as Zophar pretendeth, **#Job 11:4**; but confess that I am a very unclean creature, and therefore liable to thy justice, if thou wilt deal rigorously with me; but remember that this is not my peculiar case, but the common lot of every man, who, coming from sinful parents, and being infected with original corruption, must unavoidably be unclean. Why then dost thou inflict such peculiar and extraordinary judgments upon me for that which is common to all men? And although my original corruption do not excuse my actual sins, yet I hope it may procure some mitigation to my punishments, and move thy Divine pity, which oft showeth itself upon such occasions. See **#Ge 8:21**.

Not one, i.e. no man can cleanse himself or any other from all sin. See #1Ki 8:46 Ps 14:3 Ec 7:21. This is the prerogative of thy grace, which therefore I humbly implore of thee.

Ver. 5.

His days; the days or (as it follows) months of his life. *Are determined*; are by thy sentence and decree limited to a certain period.

With thee, i.e. exactly known to thee, or in thy power and disposal. Thou hast appointed a certain end of his days, beyond which he cannot prolong his life; and therefore let this short life and unavoidable death suffice for man's punishment, and do not add further and sorer calamities.

Ver. 6.

Turn from him; withdraw thine afflicting hand from him.

That he may rest; that he may have some present comfort and ease. Or, *and let it cease*, to wit, the affliction, which is sufficiently implied. Others, *and let him cease*, to wit, to live, i.e. take away my life. But that seems not to agree with the following clause of this verse, nor with the succeeding verses.

Till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day; give him some respite till he finish his course, and come to the period of his life which thou hast allotted to him, as a man appoints a set time to a mercenary servant.

Ver. 7.

But man, though a far nobler creature, is in a much worse condition, and when once he loseth this present and worldly life, he never recovers it; therefore show some pity to him, and give him some comfort whilst he lives.

Ver. 8.

Wax old; begin to wither and decay.

And the stock die, to wit, in outward appearance.

Ver. 9.

Through the scent of water, i.e. by means of water. *Scent or smell* is figuratively ascribed to a tree.

Like a plant; like a tree newly planted.

Ver. 10.

Dieth, and wasteth away; his body by degrees rotting away; or, *and is cut off*, as this word is used, **#Ex 17:13 Isa 14:12.**

Where is he? i.e. he is nowhere; or, he is not, to wit, in this world, as that phrase is commonly used. See **#Job 3:16 7:8,21.**

Ver. 11.

This may be understood either,

1. By way of opposition, *the waters go or flow out of the sea*, and return thither again, **#Ec 1:7**; *and a lake or river sometimes decayeth, and drieth up*, but afterwards is recruited and replenished. *But man lieth, &c.*, as it follows. Or,

2. By way of resemblance; *As waters*, i.e. some portion of waters, fail from the sea, being either exhaled or drawn up by the sun, or received and sunk into the dry and thirsty earth, or overflowing its banks; *and as the flood, or a river, or a pond* (for the word signifies any considerable confluence of waters) in a great drought decayeth, and is dried up; in both which cases the selfsame waters never return to their former places; so it is with man. Or thus, *As when the waters fail from the sea*, i.e. when the sea forsakes the place into which it used to flow, the river, which was fed by it, **#Ec 1:7**, *decayeth and drieth up*, without all hopes of recovery; so man, when once the fountain of his radical moisture is dried up, dies, and never revives again.

Ver. 12.

Man lieth down, to wit, in his bed, the grave, or to sleep the sleep of death, as this phrase is used, **#Ge 46:30 De 31:6 2Sa 7:12 1Ki 1:21.**

Riseth not, to wit, to tills life; for he speaks not here of the life to come, nor of the resurrection of the belly after death by the Divine power; of his belief whereof he giveth sufficient evidences in divers places.

Till the heavens be no more, i.e. either,

1. Never; because the heavens, though they shall be changed in their qualities, yet shall never cease to be, as to the substance of them. And therefore everlasting and unchangeable things are

expressed by the duration of the heavens; of which see **#Ps 72:5,7,17 89:29,36,37 Mt 5:18 24:35**. Or,

2. Not until the time of the general resurrection, and the restitution of things, when these visible heavens shall pass away, and be no more, at least in the same form and manner as now they are; of which see **#Ps 102:26 Lu 21:33 2Pe 3:7,10 Re 21:1**.

Ver. 13.

In the grave; either,

1. In some dark vault under ground, such as good men hide themselves in times of persecution, **#Heb 11:38**. Lord, hide me in some hiding place from thy wrath, and all the intolerable effects of it, which are upon me; for I cannot be hid from thee, but by thee. Or,

2. In the grave, properly so called. Though I know life once lost is irrecoverable, yet I heartily desire death, rather than to continue in these torments. And if the next words and wish seem to suppose the continuance of his life, that is not strange; for he speaks like one almost distracted with his miseries, sometimes wishing one thing, sometimes another and the quite contrary, as such persons use to do. And these wishes may be understood disjunctively, I wish either that I were dead, or that God would give me life free from these torments. Or the place may be understood thus, I could wish, if it were possible, that I might lie in the grave for a time till these storms be blown over, and then be restored to a comfortable life.

That thou wouldest keep me secret; in some secret and safe place, under the shadow of thy wings and favour, that I may have some support and comfort from thee.

Until thy wrath be past; whilst I am oppressed with such grievous and various calamities; which he calls God's wrath, because they were, or seemed to be, the effects of his wrath.

A set time, to wit, to my sufferings, as thou hast done to my life, **#Job 14:5**.

Remember me, i.e. wherein thou wilt remember me, to wit, in mercy, or so as to deliver me; for it is well known that God is

frequently said to forget those whom he suffers to continue in misery, and to remember those whom he delivers out of it.

Ver. 14.

Shall he live again? i.e. he shall not, namely, in this world, as was said before. The affirmative question is equivalent to an absolute denial, as **#Ge 18:17 Ps 46:7 Jer 5:9**, and every where.

Seeing death puts an end to all men's hopes of any comfortable being here, because man once dead never returns to life, I will therefore wait on God, and hope for his favour whilst I live, and it is possible to enjoy it, and will continue waiting from time to time

until my change come, i.e. either,

1. Death, the great and last change; which is expressed by the root of this word, **#Job 10:17**. Or,

2. The change of my condition for the better, which you upon your terms encourage me to expect, and which I yet trust in God I shall enjoy; for this word properly signifies vicissitudes or changes in one's condition; and this seems to suit best with the following verse. And this change, or a comfortable life here, Job so heartily wisheth, not only from that love of life and comfort which is naturally implanted in all men, good and bad, and is not forbidden by God, which also was stronger in those Old Testament saints, when the discoveries of God's grace to sinners, and of eternal life, were much darker than now they are; but also because this would be an effectual vindication of his own integrity and good name, and of the honour of religion, both which did suffer some eclipse from Job's extreme calamities, as is evident from the discourses of his friends.

Ver. 15.

I trust there is a time coming when thou wilt grant me the mercy which now thou deniest me, to wit, a favourable hearing, when thou *wilt call* to me to speak for myself, and *I shall answer thee*; which I know will be to thy satisfaction and my comfort. Compare this with **#Job 13:22**, where the same words are used in this same sense. Or, *Thou shalt call me* out of the grave of my calamities, *and I shall answer thee*, and say, Here I am, raised out of the pit in which I was buried by thy powerful and gracious command. *To the work of thine hands*, i.e. to me, who am thy workmanship in

divers respects, from whom thou now seemest to have an aversion and abhorreny; but I doubt not thou wilt have a *desire*, i.e. show thy affection or good will to me; or a desire to look upon me, and to deliver me. Nor is it strange that Job, who lately was upon the brink of despair, doth now breathe out words of hope; such ebbings and flowings being usual, both with Job elsewhere, as **#Job 13:15,16**, and with David frequently in the Psalms, and with others of God's people.

Ver. 16.

For now; so this is a reason of his desire of death, **#Job 14:13**. Or rather, *But now*; for this seems to be added by way of opposition. I believe thou wilt pity and help me, but for the present it is far otherwise with me.

Thou, numberest my steps; thou makest a strict inquiry into all my actions, that thou mayst find out all mine errors, and punish them. Compare **#Job 13:27 31:4 34:1 Ps 56:6**.

Dost thou not watch over my sin, i.e. dost thou not watch for my haltings, or miscarriages, as if thou wast glad of an occasion to punish me? Or, *thou dost not delay the punishment of my sin*; for the same Hebrew word signifies both *sin* and its *punishments*.

Ver. 17.

Sealed up in a bag; as writings or other choice things, that they may be safely kept, and all of them brought forth upon occasion, and not one of them forgotten or lost. Compare **#De 32:44 Job 37:7 Ho 13:12**.

Thou sewest up mine iniquity, i.e. thou keepest all my sins in thy memory, and fastenest the guilt of them upon my conscience. Or, *thou addest to my sin*, one sin to another; the follies of my youth, **#Job 13:26**, to those of my riper years. Or, *thou addest to my punishment*, i.e. thou punishest me more than mine iniquities deserve, all things considered. For this sinful thought seems sometimes to have risen in Job's mind, as may be gathered from divers parts of this book; which therefore Zophar decries and disproves, **#Job 11:6**.

Ver. 18.

As when a great *mountain falls*, either by an earthquake or inundation of waters, or from any other cause, it *moulders away*

like a fading leaf, (as the Hebrew word signifies,) and never recovers its former height and stability; and as the rock, when by the violence of winds or earthquake, &c.

it is removed out of its place, and thrown down, is never readvanced; and as the waters by continual droppings, or violent and frequent assaults, *wear away*, or *break the stones to pieces*, so as they can never be made whole again; and *as thou wastest away*, to wit, by a great and violent inundation which thou sendest, *the things which grow out of the dust of the earth*, to wit, herbs, and fruits, and plants, which once washed away are irrecoverably lost, *and*, or *so*, (as this particle is oft used, i.e. in like manner, to wit, irrecoverably,) *thou destroyest the hope of man*; i.e. so when man dies, all hope of living again in this world is utterly lost: and this seems to be the plain meaning of these two verses. And as before he declared the hopelessness of man's restoration from death to this animal life, by way of opposition to such things as did rise in a manner from death to life, **#Job 14:7**, &c.; so now he declares it by way of similitude or resemblance to such things, as being once lost and gone are past all hopes of recovery.

Ver. 19.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 20.

When once thou takest away this life, it is gone for ever; for he speaks not here of man's future and eternal life in another world.

He passeth, i.e. he dieth, or is about to die. Man's death is oft called a *passage*, or a *going*, to intimate that it is not an annihilation, but only a translation of him into another place and state. His countenance; either,

1. His visage, which by death and its harbingers is quite transformed in colour and shape, as we see by daily experience.

Or,

2. The face and state of his affairs, as to worldly riches, and pleasures, and honours, all which he leaves behind him.

Sendest him away to his long home by death.

Ver. 21.

He knoweth it not; either,

1. Is ignorant of all such events; or,
2. Is not concerned nor affected with them. A dead or dying man minds not these things.

Ver. 22.

This is man's condition; he is miserable both when he dies, because he dies without hope of returning to life, as he had discoursed before; and (as he now adds) whilst he lives, *whilst his flesh is upon him, and his soul within him*; whilst the soul is clothed with or united to the body, he feels sharp

pain in his body, and bitter grief in his soul. Seeing therefore the state of man upon earth is so vain and unhappy every way, Lord, give me some comfort to sweeten my life, or take away my life from me.

JOB CHAPTER 15

Eliphaz's reproof: Job's knowledge and talk vain; he feareth not God, nor prayeth to him; but his own mouth uttered his iniquity, and should condemn him, **#Job 15:1-6**. Job not the wisest of men, **#Job 15:7,8**; nor wiser than they, who were elder than he, **#Job 15:9,10**. He despised the consolations of God, and turned away his spirit against him, **#Job 15:11-13**. The angels not clean in God's sight, much less man, **#Job 15:14-16**. A description of the ancients; their wisdom, and reports concerning destruction, and terrors on the wicked, and the causes of it, **#Job 15:17-35**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

A wise man; such as thou seemest and pretendest to be.

Vain knowledge, i.e. empty words, without any sense or solidity in them.

Fill his belly, i.e. satisfy his own mind and conscience, which being secret is compared to the inwards of the belly; as **#Job 32:19 Pr 20:27 22:18**.

With the east wind, i.e. with discourses which are not only flashy and unprofitable, and without any weight, but also boisterous and pernicious, both to himself and others; as the east wind was in those parts, #Ge 41:6 Ex 10:13 Ho 12:1.

Ver. 3.

Either to himself or others, but much hurt; which is implied by the contrary, as is usual.

Ver. 4.

Heb. *Thou makest void fear*, i.e. the fear of God, as the word is oft used

for the word of God; or piety and religion, which oft cometh under the name of fear. This may be understood either,

1. Of Job himself; that he cast off all reverence to God, by uttering such bold and reproachful expressions concerning God and his providence. Or,

2. With respect to others; that by his insolent and unworthy speeches of and carriage towards God, and by those false and pernicious principles which he had laid down; as that God dealt with men in way of absolute sovereignty, not of justice; and that he made no difference between good and bad in the course of his providence, but did equally prosper or afflict both of them; he did that which tended to the subversion of the fear and worship of God.

Restrainest prayer; as this Hebrew word signifies also, #Ps 102:1. Or, *meditation* or *speech*; which well agrees to prayer, which is accompanied with serious thoughts and expressions. The sense is, either,

1. Instead of humble and fervent prayer to God, which thy condition calleth for, thou breathest forth false and blasphemous speeches against him. Or,

2. Thou dost by thy words, and examples, and principles, as far as in thee lies, banish prayer out of the world, by making it useless and unprofitable to men.

Ver. 5.

i.e. Thy words discover the naughtiness of thy heart, and justify my charge against thee, *that thou castest off fear*, &c. Thou speakest wickedly, but craftily; thou coverest thy impious principles and passions with fair pretences of piety and respect to God, wherewith thou endeavourest to mock God, and deceive men.

Ver. 6.

My condemnation of thee is grounded upon thine own words.

Ver. 7.

Hast thou lived ever since the creation of the world, and treasured up the experiences of all ages in thy own breast, that thou speakest so arrogantly and magisterially, and with such contempt of other men? Art thou the most ancient and the wisest of all mortal men? Whom dost thou make thyself? *Before the hills*; before the earth was made and distinguished into mountains and valleys.

Ver. 8.

Hath God acquainted thee with all his secret counsels, whereby he governs the world, that thou dost pass so bold a censure upon all his designs and actions? Art thou the only wise man in the world, and we and all others but fools?

Ver. 9.

He retorts upon Job his own expressions, **#Job 12:3 13:2**.

Ver. 10.

With us, i.e. among us; either,

1. Some of us, who seem to have been very ancient from **#Job 32:7**. Or,

2. Some others with whom we have conversed, and who are of our opinion in this matter. And this they oppose to that passage of Job's, **#Job 12:12**.

Ver. 11.

Are those comforts, which we in the name, and according to the mind, and by the direction, of God have propounded to thee, upon condition of thy true repentance, **#Job 11:13,14**, &c., small and contemptible in thine eyes? Hast thou any secret and peculiar ground or way of comfort which is unknown to us, and to all other

men, except thyself; for which, or in comparison of which, thou despisest our consolations as mean and trivial? To pretend to this is vanity and impudence; and if thou hast not this, to despise and reject our comforts is horrible pride and stubbornness.

Ver. 12.

Why dost thou suffer thyself to be transported by the pride and lusts of thy heart to use such unworthy and unbecoming expressions, both concerning us, and concerning God and his providence.

What do thine eyes wink at, i.e. what dost thou aim at? What benefit dost thou expect from such words and carriage? So it is a metaphor from archers, who wink when they take their aim at a mark. Or, *why do thine eyes wink*, i.e. why dost thou look with such an angry, supercilious, and disdainful look, expressing both thy contempt of us, and thy rage against God? The eye is observed both by God and men, as the great discoverer of the heart; and *winking with the eye* is a note of a malicious mind, #Ps 35:9 Pr 6:13 10:10.

Ver. 13.

That, or for, or surely. Thy spirit, i.e. either thy breath, or thy rage, or thy soul; for all these the spirit signifies. Heb. *Thou makest thy spirit to return to*, or *to return again against*, that God from whom thou didst receive it.

Ver. 14.

What is man, Heb. *frail*, or *sick*, or *wretched man*? his mean original and corrupt nature showeth him to be unclean.

Which is born of a woman; from whom he derives infirmity, and corruption, and guilt, and the curse consequent upon it.

Righteous, to wit, in his own eyes, as thou, O Job, art.

Ver. 15.

In his saints, i.e. in his angels, as appears by comparing #Job 4:18, who are called his *saints* or *holy ones*, #De 33:2 Ps 103:20 Da 4:13,23 Mt 18:10 24:36; who though they were created holy, yet he could not be confident in them, nor they be confident in themselves that they would continue in their integrity if they were

left to themselves, and not upheld by God's special grace and assistance. See Poole "**Job 4:18**".

The heavens, Heb. *and the heavens*, i.e. either,

1. The heavens properly so called; which though they be free from those drossy mixtures which are and appear in heavenly bodies, yet are not absolutely pure, but have some spots and blemishes in them; as philosophers have discovered, and the all-seeing God knoweth. Compare #**Job 25:5**, where *the stars* are said *not to be pure*; unless *the stars* also there be metaphorically put for the angels, as they are #**Job 38:7**, and for other holy ministers of God, as #**Da 8:10 Re 1:16,20 12:1,4**.

2. The angels that dwell in heaven; heaven being oft put for its inhabitants; either for God, as #**Ps 73:9 Da 4:26 Lu 15:18,21**; or for the angels that dwell in heaven, as #**Ps 89:5 148:1,2**. So this is a repetition of the same thing in other words. And these are not *pure*, to wit, simply and perfectly, and comparatively to God; in which and such like respects God only is said to be *good*, and *wise*, and *immortal*. The angels are pure from corruption, but not from imperfection, nor from a possibility of sinning, if God should withdraw his help from them.

Ver. 16.

Who, besides his natural proneness to sin, hath contracted habits and customs of sinning, and sinneth as freely and easily, as greedily and delightfully, as frequently and abundantly, as men, especially in those hot countries, used to drink up water. But this did not Job; and therefore though the things delivered by him and the rest be true in the general, yet they commit a great error in misapplying them to Job, for which therefore they are afterwards reprov'd.

Ver. 17.

I will prove what I have affirmed, that such strokes as thine are peculiar to hypocrites and wicked men. I speak not by hearsay only, but from my own experience.

Ver. 18.

Wise men; who are most able to be witnesses and judges in these matters.

From their fathers, or *ancestors*; who diligently observed this, and carefully transmitted their own judgment and experience successively to their posterity.

Have not hid it; they judged it to be so certain and important a truth, that they would not conceal it in their own breasts, but made conscience of publishing it for the instruction and comfort of succeeding ages.

Ver. 19.

Unto whom alone the earth was given; either,

1. By the special and gracious gift of God; whereas wicked men invaded their parts of the earth, and took them away by force. Or,

2. By the choice and consent of the people, who for their great and known wisdom and virtue conferred this power and trust upon them. This he allegeth, partly to make their testimony more considerable, because these were not obscure, and mean, and foolish men, whose words are commonly despised, but the most worthy and famous men in their places and ages; and partly to contradict and confute what Job had said, #**Job 9:24**, that *the earth was given into the hand of the wicked*. By *the earth* he means either the dominion of the earth, to wit, of that part of the earth in or nigh which Job and his friends lived; or rather, the possession of the earth, i.e. of a great portion of worldly goods; or particularly, *the land*, or *that land*, (as the word properly signifies,) to wit, the land of Canaan, which was given by special gift unto Abraham, (from whom it seems most probable that both Job and his friends were descended,) and to Isaac, and to Jacob; who, though they met with some common and ordinary afflictions, yet enjoyed a great measure of comfort, and wealth, and honour, and power in the world, as the fruits of God's blessing, and of his covenant made with good men, whilst wicked men were exposed to manifold distresses and grievous calamities; all which those holy patriarchs diligently observed, and industriously imparted to their children, to encourage them to continue and proceed in the ways of true piety. But how was the earth or land given to them *alone*, as is here said?

Ans. Either,

1. Because Noah and his sons (of whom some understand these words) had the sole possession and dominion of the earth. Or,

2. Because Canaan was given to Abraham and to his seed alone; and some of Abraham's children had the dominion of, or an ample possession in, those parts where Job and his friends lived, who also seem to be in the number of them. Or,

3. Because they only had it either by God's special and gracious providence, or by the choice and approbation of the people; whereas wicked men took it by rapine and violence, without asking leave either from God or men.

No stranger, i.e. the enemy; for such are called strangers, both in Scripture, as **#Pr 5:10 Isa 1:7 Eze 11:9 28:10**, and in other authors. No person of a strange nation and disposition or religion.

Among them, i.e. through their land, as this phrase is used, **#Nu 20:18**, to wit, so as to molest, or disturb, or spoil them, as the Sabeans and Chaldeans did thee. God watched over those wise and holy men so carefully, that no enemy should invade them; and so he would have done over thee, if thou hadst been such a one.

Ver. 20.

Travaileth with pain, i.e. lives a life of care, and fear, and grief, by reason of God's wrath, and the torments of his own mind, and his manifold and dreadful outward calamities.

The number of his years is hidden, i.e. he knows not how short the time of his tyranny and life is, and therefore lives in continual fear of losing them. The number of a good man's years are also hid from him as well as they are from the wicked men; but to those this is a great torment and mischief; whereas it is not so to him. Or, *and a few years* (Heb. *a number of years*, put by a common hypallage for *years of number*; as few years are called, **#Job 16:22**, because they are soon numbered; *as men of number*, is put for a few men, **#Ge 34:30 De 4:27 33:6**) *are laid or treasured up*, i.e. are allotted to him by God's secret counsel; for God cuts off such men in the midst of their days. **#Ps 55:23**; whereas long life is promised, and commonly given, to righteous men.

To the oppressor, i.e. to the wicked man; but he names this one sort of them, the oppressors, partly, because he supposed Job to be guilty of this sin, **#Job 22:6**; partly, in opposition to what Job had affirmed of the safety and happiness of such persons, **#Job 12:6**; and partly, because such are most apt to expect and promise to themselves a longer and happier life than other men, because of their singular preservatives and advantages of life above other men.

Ver. 21.

Even when he feels no evil, he is tormented with perpetual fears and expectations of it from the sense of his own guilt, and of God's all-seeing eye and righteous judgment. See **#Le 26:36 De 28:65**.

Shall come upon him; or, *shall invade* and destroy him suddenly and unexpectedly; which is a great aggravation of it.

Ver. 22.

i.e. When he falls into trouble, he despairs of God's mercy, and of deliverance, by reason of his guilty conscience; which he speaks with particular reflection upon Job, who would receive no comfort nor matter of hope.

He is waited for of the sword, i.e. besides the calamity which is upon him, he is in constant expectation of further and greater miseries; for the sword is oft used for any grievous affliction, as **#Lu 2:35**.

Ver. 23.

His poverty is so great, that he is forced to wander hither and thither to seek for bread, and cannot find it. A just punishment for him that took away the bread and substance of others by violence.

He knoweth; he is assured of it from his own guilty conscience.

The day of darkness, i.e. the time of his total, and irrecoverable, and everlasting destruction.

Is ready at his hand, i.e. ready to seize upon him, or take him by the hand or shoulder like a serjeant to arrest him. The words may well be rendered, *was prepared by his hand*, i.e. by his works or actions; which being most commonly done with the hand, are oft called by that name, as **#Ex 14:31 Jud 9:16 Pr 10:4 12:24**. So the

sense is, He is conscious to himself that by his wicked life he hath prepared and stored up calamities and destruction for himself, and therefore he expected nothing less.

Ver. 24.

i.e. When trouble comes, instead of trusting, and hoping, and comforting himself in God, as good men do in such cases, as #1Sa 30:6, he is full of torment and dread of the issue of it, and concludes it will end in his utter ruin, as he hath great reason to do.

Ready to the battle; or, *prepared or furnished; or, disposed with his army round about him*, as this word seems to signify.

Ver. 25.

Now he gives the reason of all the forementioned calamities which befell him, which was his great wickedness in the time of his peace and prosperity.

He stretcheth out his hand against God, i.e. he commonly and customarily sinned against God with a high and out-stretched hand, i.e. boldly and presumptuously, as one that neither desired his favour, nor feared his anger.

Strengtheneth himself, i.e. he putteth his forces in array, as if he would fight with him.

Against the Almighty; which aggravates the madness of this poor contemptible worm that durst fight against the omnipotent God.

Ver. 26.

Runneth upon him, i.e. assaults him, or rusheth upon him with great swiftness and fury, as this phrase signifies, #Da 8:6. This *he* is either,

1. God, who was expressed twice in the last verse, and who is here produced as entering the lists and fighting with his daring adversary. Or rather,

2. The wicked man, of whom and whose sin and misery he speaks in the whole context, both before and after this; who in the last verse was introduced as preparing for the battle, and here as actually and impudently fighting with him.

Even on his neck; as a stout warrior, who cometh close to his adversary and grapples with him, and taketh him by the neck to throw him down. Compare #2Sa 2:16 Job 16:2. Or, *with his neck*. So it is a metaphor from a mad and raging bull, which runs upon his enemy with a hard and stiff neck.

Upon the thick bosses of his bucklers, i.e. even where his enemy is strongest; he is not discouraged with the enemies' thick, and strong, and eminent shields, but boldly ventures in upon them, and amongst them. Or, *with the thick bosses* (Heb. *the thickness and eminency*) of his shields, wherewith he invaded the enemy, that so he might both defend himself and offend his enemy; for the ancient shields were useful both ways, because they had a sharp iron or steel in the midst of them.

Ver. 27.

With his fatness: this is mentioned as the reason of his insolent carriage towards God, because he was fat, i.e. rich, and potent, and successful, as that expression signifies, #De 32:15 Ps 78:31 Jer 46:21. His great prosperity made him proud and secure, and regardless of God and men.

Maketh collops of fat on his flanks; his only care and study is to pamper and please himself, and obey his own mind and lusts, and in defence and pursuance of them he contends with God.

Ver. 28.

He dwelleth in desolate cities: these words may note either,

1. His tyranny and cruelty, whereby he makes the places of his abode and dominion desolate by his frequent murders, spoils, and oppressions, wherewith he destroyeth great numbers of his people, and forceth others to flee out of his reach. Or,

2. His pride, and power, and wealth; which enabled and engaged him to build desolate houses and cities for his own glory, and safety, and conveniency; of which See Poole "**Job 3:14**". Or,

3. His punishment and misery; that for his impiety towards God, and oppression of men, he was driven out of his dominions and possessions, and forced to flee into desolate places for safety and a habitation. This seems best to agree with the Hebrew words, which run thus, *But* (for so the particle *and* is commonly used, as

hath been oft said) *he shall dwell*, &c. And so this is fitly opposed to this last-mentioned prosperity, and is the beginning of the description of his misery, which is continued in the following verses.

Which are ready to become heaps; which were ready to fall, and to be turned into a heap of stones.

Ver. 29.

He shall not be rich, i. e. not abide rich, but shall become poor.

Neither shall his substance continue; what he had gotten shall be taken from him.

The perfection thereof, i.e. the perfection of his substance, or that complete estate and glory which he hath attained, shall not be continued to him and to his posterity. Or, *neither shall their perfection* (i.e. that prosperity, and wealth, and power wherein they placed their perfection or happiness) *spread itself*, or *be propagated* or *spread abroad*, but shall be diminished and taken away. It is a metaphor from a tree. Compare **#Job 8:16**.

Ver. 30.

He shall not depart out of darkness; his misery shall have no end.

The flame; God's anger and judgment upon him.

His branches; either,

1. His children; or,

2. Wealth, and power, and glory, wherewith he was encompassed, and adorned, and secured, as trees are with their branches.

Of his mouth, i.e. of God's mouth, as appears both by comparing this with **#Job 15:25**, where God is expressed as the adversary with whom this wicked wretch contendeth; and by the nature of the thing, and the whole context, all this man's calamities being manifestly the effects of God's anger; and by other places of Scripture, where the breath of God's mouth or lips are mentioned as that whereby he destroyeth wicked men; as **#Job 4:9 Isa 11:4 2Th 2:8**. And this expression intimates to us with how much facility God subdueth his enemies; he needs no arms or

instruments; his word, his blast, one act of his will, is more than sufficient to do it.

Shall he go away, Heb. *go back*, i.e. retreat and run away from God faster than he did run towards and upon him, #**Job 15:26**. So it is a continuation of the former metaphor of a battle or conflict between two persons.

Ver. 31.

In vanity, i.e. in the vain and deceitful things of this world, such as power, riches, honour, &c., of which, and of the loss of them, he had been largely discoursing; and now he subjoins a general caution to all men to take heed of running into the same error and mischief with the forementioned persons; and withal he secretly intimates Job's great sin, which was the cause of his ruin, to wit, his carnal confidence in those vain things, the wealth, and glory, and children which God had given him; from which crime he therefore vindicates himself hereafter. *For vanity*, i.e. disappointment and dissatisfaction, and the vanishing or loss of all their imaginary felicity; the same word vanity being elegantly repeated in another sense, as is usual in Scripture and all authors.

His recompence, Heb. *his exchange*; he shall exchange one vanity for another, a pleasing vanity for a vexatious vanity. But this verse is and may be rendered otherwise; the Hebrew particle *al* being here, as it is elsewhere, taken for a simple negation. Thus, *He that is deceived with vanity*, (i.e. with the vain things of this world, wherewith most men are deceived and bewitched,) *will not believe that vanity* (i.e. emptiness, and disappointment, and misery) *shall be his recompence*. And so this is an aggravation of his calamity, that it surprised him when he was confident and secure from all fears of such an event.

Ver. 32.

It shall be accomplished, to wit, that which was last mentioned, that *vanity should be his recompence*. Or, it, i.e. his branch, mentioned in the next clause of the verse, from which it is understood in this former clause, as is very usual in the Holy Scripture, *shall be consumed, or cut off*.

Before his time, i.e. when by the course of nature and common providence it might have continued and flourished much longer.

His branch; either,

1. His glory and prosperity. Or rather,

2. His children, by comparing **#Job 15:34**, where the desolation is said to fall upon all the congregation and tabernacles of these men; and so he reflects upon Job, who lost his children.

Shall not be green, i.e. shall not continue to flourish, as it had done.

Ver. 33.

He; either,

1. The wicked man, who by his sins is the author of his own ruin. Or,

2. God, who is easily understood, both from the matter and context.

Shall shake off, Heb. *shall take away by violence*.

His unripe grape, i. e. his fruit, his children, or other comforts, before their time.

As the vine, i.e. as the vine either itself droppeth, or rather loseth, its tender grapes, which are plucked off by a violent hand.

As the olive; which flourisheth much about the same time with the vine, and is commonly handled in the same manner.

Ver. 34.

The congregation, i.e. their children, and servants, and friends, and dependents.

Desolate, i.e. utterly destroyed. *Fire*, i.e. some eminent and terrible judgment of God, which is oft expressed by fire; as **#Isa 9:19 26:11**.

The tabernacles of bribery, i.e. which were either built or maintained by extortion and bribery, and suchlike unrighteous courses, whereof they thought Job guilty, **#Job 22:8**.

Ver. 35.

They conceive mischief, i.e. they devise and contrive injurious and pernicious enterprises against others.

Vanity, or iniquity, or injury, or trouble; either,

1. To others; they execute what they had contrived. Or,
2. To themselves; the mischief they designed for others falleth upon their own heads, and they reap what they sowed. *And their belly*, i.e. their inward parts, their hearts and minds. **See Poole "Job 15:2"**.

Prepareth deceit; either,

1. For others, whom they design to cheat; or,
2. For themselves, who whilst they seek to deceive others, shall find that they themselves are most deceived, as being deprived of all their desires and hopes wherewith they fed themselves, and cast into all those calamities which they thought to prevent by these artifices.

JOB CHAPTER 16

Job's answer: his friends increase his misery, **#Job 16:1-8**. His insulting enemies, **#Job 16:9-11**. God's power against him, **#Job 16:12-16**. His innocence should cry to heaven, where it was known: he wisheth to plead with God, **#Job 16:17-21**: Pleaseth himself with the prospect of death, **#Job 16:22**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

I have heard many such things; both from you, who do so odiously repeat the same things, and from divers others; for these things, though you pride and please yourselves in them, as if you had made some great and strange discoveries, are but vulgar and trivial.

Miserable comforters; instead of giving me those comforts which you pretend to do, **#Job 15:11**, and which my condition loudly calls for, you feed me with terrors, and censures, and scoffs.

Ver. 3.

When wilt thou put an end to these idle and impertinent discourses? He retorts upon him his charge against Job, **#Job 15:2,3**.

That thou answerest, to wit, so or in such manner, so censoriously, and opprobriously, and peremptorily. What secret grounds hast thou for thy confidence? Thy arguments are flashy and weak; if thou hast any stronger, produce them.

Ver. 4.

If your soul, i.e. your person, as #Ge 12:5.

I could heap up words against you, i.e. I could multiply accusations and reproaches against you, as you do against me.

Shake mine head at you; in way of derision, as this phrase is most commonly used; as #2Ki 19:21 Ps 22:7 Isa 37:22 Mt 27:39.

Ver. 5.

Strengthen you, i.e. direct, and support, and comfort you. My discourse should comfort you. The words *your grief* are here understood, either out of the foregoing clause, where they are implied; or out of the next verse, where they are expressed. Possibly the words may be thus rendered without any ellipsis, which is most natural, if the translation be true and suitable: *compassion* (for the Hebrew word *nid* comes from *nud*, which signifies to *condole*) should restrain or govern my lips, that they should avoid all speeches which may vex you, and speak only what may be to your comfort and benefit; whereas you let your tongues loose to speak whatsoever pleaseth you, or tormenteth me.

Ver. 6.

Though I speak to God by prayer, or to you in way of discourse, I find no relief. Job having reprov'd his friends for their unkind carriage towards him, and aggravated it by his resolutions to have dealt more friendly with them, if they had been in his case; now he returns to his main business, to describe and aggravate his miseries, if by any means he could move his friends to pity and help him.

What am I eased? or, what part or grain of my grief or *misery departeth from me*? I receive not one jot of ease. Neither speech nor silence do me any good.

Ver. 7.

But; or, *surely*, as this Hebrew particle most commonly signifies. *He*, i.e. God, as appears by the following words and verses.

Hath made me weary; either of complaining, or of my life.

Thou; he speaks in the second person to God, as in the former clause in the third person of God. Such change of persons are very usual in Scripture, and elsewhere.

Hast made desolate all my company; hast turned my society into desolation, by destroying my children and servants.

Ver. 8.

Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, by consuming all my fat and flesh.

Which is a witness against me; Heb. which is a witness of the reality, and greatness, and just cause of my sorrows. Or, which is *become* or *made a witness*, i.e. is produced by my friends as a witness of God's wrath, and of my hypocrisy and impiety.

Rising up in me, i.e. which is in me. Or, *rising up against me*, as witnesses use to rise and stand up against a guilty person to accuse him.

Beareth witness to my face; as witnesses are to accuse a person to his face, openly and evidently, so as any that look on my face may plainly discern it. But this clause may be rendered thus, *my leanness in my face* (i.e. which appears in my face, and causeth the wrinkles which are visible there) *riseth up against me*, and *beareth witness*, as before.

Ver. 9.

He teareth me in his wrath, Heb. *his wrath teareth me in pieces*, as a lion doth his prey.

Who hateth me, Heb. and *he hateth me*, i.e. he pursueth me with a deadly hatred and rage. Or, *and he is become mine enemy*; or, *he sets himself against me with all his might*; or, *he treats me like an implacable enemy*. *He gnasheth upon me with his teeth*; which is a gesture and sign of extreme anger and fury, as **#Ps 35:16 37:12 La 2:16**; as elsewhere of grievous pain, as **#Lu 13:28**.

Mine enemy; either,

1. God, who of a friend is now become my implacable enemy. Or,
2. Eliphaz, who deals with me more like an enemy than a friend.

Sharpeneth his eyes upon me, i.e. looks upon me with a fierce and sparkling eye, as enraged persons use to do.

Ver. 10.

They; the instruments of God's anger, my friends, as they are falsely called.

Gaped upon me with their mouth; opened their mouths wide against me; either,

1. To devour and destroy me; as a lion which falls upon his prey with open mouth, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 22:13,14**. And this they did aggravating and increasing his sorrows, whereby he was well-nigh overwhelmed. Or,
2. To scoff and deride me, as it follows, and as this phrase is most commonly used, as **#Ps 22:8 35:21**.

Reproachfully; or, *by reproach*; or in way of scorn and contempt; whereof such smiting was a sign, as **#1Ki 22:24 La 3:30 Mic 5:1**. The sign is here put for the thing signified; they despised and derided me.

They have gathered themselves together against me, i.e. they are come from several places, and met together here, not for me, or to comfort me, as they pretended, but really against me, or to torment and grieve me. Heb. *they have filled themselves*, &c. Either,

1. They have filled up their numbers, they are all *come against me*. Or,
2. They have filled their minds with evil opinions of me, and their hearts with courage and resolution to assault me, and their mouths with words and arguments against me. Compare **#Ec 8:11 Ac 5:3**.

Ver. 11.

To the ungodly; either,

1. To my friends, who act the part of the wicked, in censuring and condemning the righteous, whom God approveth, and in pleading for a false and wicked cause. Or rather,

2. To the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who were a most wicked people, living in gross contempt of God, and injuriousness to all sorts of men. For this best suits both with the first clause of the next verse, which showeth that he speaketh of Job's first afflictions, which befell him when he *was at ease*; and with Job's principal scope, which was to prove that both eminent prosperity and affliction did indifferently happen to good and bad men; and this was evident from this example, because holy Job was ruined, when these wicked people were most victorious and successful.

Ver. 12.

I lived in great peace and prosperity, which makes my present miseries more grievous to me; and therefore my complaints are excusable, and I deserve pity rather than reproach from my friends.

Broken me asunder; broken my spirit with the sense of his anger, and my body with loathsome ulcers, as also by destroying my children, a part of my own flesh or body.

Taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces; as a mighty man doth with some young stripling, when he wrestleth with him. *Set me up for his mark;* that he may shoot all his arrows into me, and that with delight, which archers have in that exercise.

Ver. 13.

His archers, i.e. his plagues or judgments, elsewhere compared to arrows, and here to archers.

He cleaveth my reins asunder with his arrows, i.e. he wounds me inwardly, and mortally, and incurably; which also is noted by pouring out the gall; such wounds being deadly.

Ver. 14.

My calamities have no interruption, but one immediately succeeds another, as it did **#Job 1**.

Like a giant, who falls upon his enemy with all his might, that he may overthrow and kill him.

Ver. 15.

i.e. I put on sackcloth sewed together, not upon my other garments, but next to my skin, as was done in great calamities; as **#2Ki 6:30**. So far am I from *stretching out my hands against God*,

whereof I am accused, **#Job 15:25**, that I have humbled myself deeply under his hand. I have willingly parted with all my wealth, and power, and glory, (as the horn oft signifies in Scripture, as **#Ps 75:5 132:17 Lu 1:69**) and been contented to lie in the dust, and to endure the contempt which God hath brought upon me.

Ver. 16.

i. e. A gross and terrible darkness. My sight is very dim and dark, as is usual in case of sore diseases, or excessive grief and weeping, **#La 2:11**; and especially in the approach of death: compare **#Ps 6:7 38:10 La 5:17**.

Ver. 17.

And all this is not come upon me for any injurious dealing with others by oppression, or deceit, or bribery, wherewith I am implicitly charged, **#Job 15:16,20,34**; but for other reasons known to God only, for I cannot discover them.

Also my prayer is pure; I do not cast off God's fear and service, as I am accused to do, **#Job 15:4**. I do still pray and worship God, and my prayer is accompanied with a sincere heart and undefiled conscience: see **#Ps 109:7 Pr 28:9 1Ti 2:8**. So that I have lived inoffensively towards God and towards men; and therefore your assertion is both uncharitable and false, that eminent afflictions are peculiar to ungodly men.

Ver. 18.

My blood, so called not actively, to wit, his own blood; but passively or objectively, i.e. the blood of others shed by him, and lying upon his conscience. The earth is said to cover that blood which lies undiscovered and unrevenged; of which **See Poole "Ge 4:10"**, **See Poole "Ge 4:11"**; **See Poole "Isa 26:21"**, But, saith Job, if I be guilty of destroying any one man by murder or oppression, as I am traduced, O Lord, let the earth disclose it; let it be brought to light, that I may suffer condign punishment for it.

My cry; either,

1. Passively, to wit, the cries and groans which I have forced from others by my oppressions; let those cries have no place to hide them. Or rather,

2. Actively, the cry of my complaints to men, or prayers to God; let them find no place in the ears or hearts of God or men, if this be true: or, *no place*, i.e. no regard, or no power or success; in which sense God's word is said not to have place in evil men, **#Joh 8:37**; and Esau not to

find place of repentance, #Heb 12:17, i.e. all his entreaties and tears could not prevail with his father to repent of and retract the blessing given from him to Jacob.

Ver. 19.

Besides the witness of men and of my own conscience, God is witness of my integrity.

Ver. 20.

My friends, who should defend me from the scorns and injuries of others,

scorn me; so this word is used **#Ps 119:51 Pr 3:34 19:28**. I pour forth my prayers and tears to God, that he would judge me according to my innocency, and plead my righteous cause against you.

Ver. 21.

Oh that either I or some faithful advocate might be admitted to plead any cause, either with God, or rather with you, before God's tribunal, God being witness and judge between us! But this verse is, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, otherwise translated and interpreted; either,

1. With respect to Christ, *And he* (i.e. God, last mentioned, to wit, God the Son, Christ Jesus) *will plead for a man* (i.e. for me, against whom you plead.) He modestly speaketh of himself in the third person, as is usual)

with God (to wit, with God the Father; and the Son of man (as Christ is oft called) *will plead for his friend, or companion, or neighbour*, i.e. for a man whom he hath taken into that relation to himself. It is plain that the mystery of man's redemption by Christ was known to the ancient patriarchs, as hath been oft noted before; and to Job among others, **#Job 19:25**. Or,

2. As the matter for which he prayed and cried to God, *That* (so the Hebrew *vau* is frequently used) *he* (i.e. God) *would plead*, or

judge, or give sentence for a man (i.e. for me, or in my cause) with, God, (i.e. with himself, the noun being put for the pronoun, as #Ge 2:20 4:15 Le 14:15,16, and elsewhere; or at his own tribunal, to which I have appealed,)

as a man pleadeth for his friend or neighbour with or before an earthly judge and tribunal. This seems most agreeable to the scope of the place, which was to maintain his own integrity against his friends before God.

Ver. 22.

i.e. To the state and place of the dead, whence men do not and cannot return to this life. The meaning is, My death hastens, and therefore I earnestly desire that the cause depending before God between me and my friends may be searched out and determined, that if I be guilty of these things whereof they accuse me, I may bear the shame and blame of it before all men; and if I be innocent, that I may live to see my own integrity and the credit of religion (which suffers upon this occasion) vindicated, that so I may die in peace with God, and may leave the savour of a good name behind me.

JOB CHAPTER 17

His miserable life; false friends; their punishment, #Job 17:1-5. His contempt, and sorrow, #Job 17:6,7. The righteous should be established, #Job 17:8,9; but he was given over to death, #Job 17:11-16.

Ver. 1.

My breath is corrupt, i.e. it stinks, as it doth in dying persons. Or, *my spirit is corrupted*, or spent, or lost, i.e. my vital spirits and natural powers are wasted; my soul is ready to leave the body.

My days are extinct; the lamp of my life is wasted, and upon the point of going out, and that in a snuff.

The graves, i.e. the grave; the plural number being put for the singular, as *sepulchres*, #2Ch 21:20, *cities*, #Jud 12:7, *asses*, #Zec 9:9, are put for one of each of these.

Are ready for me; open their mouths as ready to receive me. The sense and scope of this verse is the same with the former.

Ver. 2.

Do not my friends, instead of comforting, mock and abuse me, as if I had made use of religion only as a cloak to my wickedness? Heb. *If there be not mockers with me*, understand, let God do so or so to me. It is a form of an oath, which is defectively expressed, after the manner of the Hebrews. Assuredly I am in the midst of cruel mockers, which is a sore aggravation of my affliction. Thus he returns to what he had said **#Job 16:20**, and intimates the necessity and justice of his following appeal, which otherwise might be thought too bold.

Mine eye; either,

1. The eyes of my body. Do they not continue to provoke me to my face? Or rather,
2. The eye of my mind. Their provoking scoffs and reproaches do not only molest me in the day-time, when they are with me, but lodge with me in the night, and are continually in my thoughts, and break my sleep, and disturb me in dreams. And therefore if I be a little disordered, I may be excused.

Ver. 3.

He turneth his speech either to Eliphaz, who spoke last; or rather to God, as is evident from the matter and scope of the words, and from the next verse. These words contain either,

1. A humble desire to God that he would appoint him a surety, who should undertake for his friends; that they should refer the cause in difference between them to God or to some other person, who should determine the matter in God's name, and according to God's will; or that God would be his Surety, or appoint him a surety who should maintain his righteous cause against his opposers; for so this phrase is oft used, as **#Ps 119:121,122 Isa 38:14**. And some expound this, as they did **#Job 16:21**, of Christ Jesus, who was called *our Surety*, **#Heb 7:22**; *appoint, I pray thee, my Surety* (i.e. Christ, who is now) with thee, to plead my cause. Or rather,
2. An appeal from God unto God, or a kind of challenge or desire of debating his cause with God; which, though it savoureth of too much boldness and irreverence to God, yet seeing Job expresseth the same desire almost in the same manner, **#Job 9:33,34**, and is

sharply reprov'd by God for contending with him, #**Job 40:2**, I know no inconvenience of ascribing the same thing to him here. So the sense is, Because I am not able to deal with thee immediately, considering the dread of thy majesty, my only desire is, that thou wouldst deal with me upon fair and equal terms, as if thou wert a man like myself, and appoint some man who shall in thy name and stead determine the time and place for the trial of my cause with thee. And this suits well enough with the two following verses, because his friends were without understanding, #**Job 17:4**, and partial, #**Job 17:5**; therefore he desires to cease discoursing with them, and to debate his cause with God, who was just and impartial, and also would be favourable to him.

Strike hands with me, i.e. agree and promise, or be surety to me; whereof that was the usual gesture, #**Pr 6:1,2 17:18 22:26**.

Ver. 4.

Thou hast blinded the minds of my friends, that they can not see those truths which are most plain and evident to all men of sense and experience; therefore I desire a more wise and able judge.

Therefore shalt thou not exalt them, i.e. thou wilt not give them the victory over me in this contest, but wilt give sentence for me, and discharge them, and make them ashamed of their confidence in affirming falsehoods of thee, and punish them severely for their miscarriage. It is a usual figure, whereby much more is understood than is expressed.

Ver. 5.

Hereby Job chargeth them, either,

1. With flattering him with vain hopes, and promises of the return of his former prosperity, when he knew that his case was desperate. Or,

2. With flattering and befriending God, and giving a partial sentence out of respect to him; for which he reprov'd and condemn'd them before, #**Job 13:7-9**, where see the notes. Some render the words thus, *He that uttereth or declareth his mind or thoughts* (as this word signifies, #**Ps 139:2,17**) *with flattery*, or *to flatter* or deceive another.

The eyes of his children shall fail; he shall be severely punished, not only in his person, but even in his children, whose eyes shall fail with vain expectations of relief and deliverance out of those calamities which shall come upon them for this sin of their parents.

Ver. 6.

He, i.e. God, who is oft designed by this pronoun in this book.

A by-word, or *proverb*, or *common talk*. My calamities are so great and prodigious, that they fill all people with discourse, and are become proverbial to express extreme miseries. Compare #**Nu 21:27,28 De 28:37**.

And, or *but*, or *although*, as this particle is oft used.

Aforetime; so he aggravateth his present misery by the mention of his former prosperity. *Or, to their faces*, or *openly*. They do not only reproach me behind my back, but revile and mock me, and make a sport of my calamities, even to my face. *I was as a tabret*, i.e. I was the people's delight and darling, and matter of their praise, and entertained by them with applauses, and as it were with instruments of music. Or,

I am as a tabret, i.e. matter of sport and merriment to them.

Ver. 7.

By reason of sorrow; through excessive weeping and decay of spirits, which cause a dimness in the sight.

All my members are as a shadow; my body is so consumed, and my colour so wan and ghastly, that I look more like a ghost, or a shadow, than like a man.

Ver. 8.

Wise and good men, when they shall see and consider my calamities, will not be so forward to censure and condemn me as you are, but will rather stand and wonder at the depth and mysteriousness of God's counsels and judgments, which fall so heavily upon innocent men, while the worst of men prosper.

And the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite: *but, or yet*, (notwithstanding all these sufferings of good men and the astonishment which they cause,)

innocent (or religious persons shall be so far from joining their opinions, and counsels, and interests, with

hypocrites, or *profane men*, who thence take occasion to censure the afflicted person, and to reproach, and condemn, and desert the profession and practice of godliness, that they) will stir up themselves against them in holy indignation, and will oppose their wicked courses, and will prefer afflicted piety before prosperous iniquity.

Ver. 9.

Shall hold on his way, i.e. shall persist in that good way into which he hath entered, and not be turned from it by any afflictions which may befall himself or any other good men, nor by any contempt or reproach cast upon them by the ungodly by reason thereof.

He that hath clean hands, i.e. whose life and the course of his actions is holy and righteous; which is a sign that his heart also is pure and perfect.

Shall be stronger and stronger; shall not be shaken and discouraged by the grievous afflictions of the godly, nor by the bitter censures and reproaches of hypocrites or wicked men, cast upon them for that cause; but will be continued thereby, and made more constant and resolute in cleaving to God, and his ways and people, in spite of all difficulties and miseries.

Ver. 10.

Return, and come now, i.e. come now again, (as this phrase is oft used,) and renew the debate, as I see you are prepared and resolved to do, and I am ready to receive you. Or, return into yourselves, and consider my cause again; peradventure your second thoughts may be wiser.

One wise man, to wit, in this matter. None of you speak like wise or good men, but like rash and heady persons; you censure me as a rotten hypocrite, and misjudge of God's ways, and condemn the generation of God's children upon frivolous grounds.

Ver. 11.

My days; the days of my life. I am a lost and dying man, and therefore the hopes you give me of the bettering of my condition are vain and groundless.

My purposes; or, *my designs*, or

thoughts, to wit, which I had in my prosperous days, concerning myself and children, and the continuance of my happiness.

The thoughts of my heart, Heb. *the possessions of my heart*, i.e. those thoughts which in a great measure possessed my heart, which were most natural, and familiar, and delightful to me. All my thoughts, and designs, and hopes are disappointed, and come to nothing.

Ver. 12.

They; either,

1. My friends. Or,

2. My sorrows, of which he is here speaking. Or,

3. My thoughts, last mentioned. Possibly these words may be joined with them thus, *The thoughts of my heart change the night into day*.

Change the night into day; they do so incessantly pursue and disturb me, that I can no more rest and sleep in the dark and silent nights, than in the midst of the light and tumults of the day. Or,

they change the day into night, Heb. *they put the night for or instead of* (as the Hebrew *lamed* is elsewhere used) the day, i.e. they make the day as sad and dark as the night to me. So it seems best to agree with the following branch of the verse.

The light is short, i.e. the day-light, which oftentimes gives some little comfort and refreshment to men in misery, seems to be gone and fled as soon as it is begun.

Because of darkness, i.e. because of my grievous pains and torments, which follow me by day as well as by night.

Ver. 13.

If I wait; if I should give way to those hopes of my deliverance and restoration which you suggest to me.

The grave is mine house: I should be sadly disappointed; for I am upon the borders of the grave, which is the only house appointed for me, instead of that goodly house which you promise to me here upon condition of my repentance.

I have made my bed in darkness; I expect no other rest but in the dark grave, for which therefore I prepare myself.

Ver. 14.

To corruption, Heb. *to the pit* of corruption, the grave.

Thou art my father; I am near akin to thee, as being taken out of thee; and thou wilt receive and embrace me, and keep me in thy house, as parents do their children.

Thou art my mother, and my sister; because of the same original, and the most strict and intimate union and conjunction between me and the worms.

Ver. 15.

Where is now my hope? and what then is become of that hope which you advised me to entertain?

My hope, i.e. the fulfilling of my hope, or the happiness which you would have me expect; hope being put for the thing hoped for, as **#Pr 13:12 1Co 9:10**.

Who shall see it? no man shall see it: it shall never be.

Ver. 16.

They; either,

1. They that would see my hope, they must go into the grave to behold it. Or rather,

2. My hopes; of which he spoke in the singular number, **#Job 17:15**, which he here changeth into the plural, as is very usual in these poetical books.

To the bars of the pit, i.e. into the closest and innermost parts of the pit: my hopes are dying, and will be buried in my grave.

When our rest together is in the dust: so the sense is, when those spectators, together with myself, shall be in our graves. Heb. *seeing that* (as this Hebrew participle *im* oft signifies; or, *certainly*,

as it is used #Nu 17:13 Job 6:13, and elsewhere) our rest shall be *together in the dust*, i.e. I and my hopes shall be buried together.

JOB CHAPTER 18

Bildad' s reproof: Job' s words many: he despised his friends; he vexed himself; but in vain, #Job 18:1-4. The calamity of the wicked, #Job 18:5-21.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Ere ye; either,

1. You my brethren. Why do you not give over discoursing with Job, who is wholly transported with rage, and not fit to be discoursed with, at least until both you and he have better considered what to say? Or rather,

2. Thou, O Job, of whom he speaks here, as also #Job 18:3, in the plural number; either because there were some other person or persons present at this debate, who by their words or gestures showed themselves favourers of Job' s cause; or because it was a common idiom of the Eastern language to speak thus of one person, especially where he was one of eminency or authority. Job' s speeches were generally longer than his friends' , and they seemed very tedious to them.

Mark; consider the matter and our words better. Or, *inform us*, Heb. *make us to understand*. Seeing thou lookest upon us as ignorant and brutish men, as it follows, do thou instruct and inform us. Cease cavilling and railing, and produce thy strong reasons, that we may consider and answer them, or yield to them.

Ver. 3.

As beasts, i.e. ignorant, blockish, and stupid men, #Job 17:4,10.

Vile, Heb. *polluted*, or *unclean*, i.e. not fit to be conversed or discoursed with; or contemptible, as such things are.

In your sight; either,

1. To your faces, or in your own hearing. Or,

2. In thy sight or judgment, O Job; so he speaks of Job in the plural number, as he did #**Job 18:2**.

Ver. 4.

He teareth himself, i.e. Job, of whom he speaks in the third person for the second, as #**Job 12:4 16:7 Ob 1:3**. Or, *O thou that tearest thyself!* Thou complaineest of us for vexing thee with our speeches, when in truth thou art thy own greatest tormenter by thy own impatience and rage.

Shall the earth be forsaken, to wit, by God? Shall God give over the government of the earth, and men, and things in it, and suffer all things to fall out by chance, and promiscuously to good and bad men, without any regard to his truth, or wisdom, or justice? Shall God forbear to rule the world righteously, as he hath hitherto done, in favouring good men, and destroying the wicked?

For thee, i.e. for thy sake; or to prevent thy complaints and clamours.

Shall the rock be removed out of his place? shall the counsels of God, which are more firm and unmovable than rocks, and the whole course of his providence, be altered to comply with thy fancies or humours?

Ver. 5.

Yea; the thing is true and certain, notwithstanding thy dissatisfaction and opposition against it.

The light of the wicked shall be put out; all their glory and felicity shall perish.

The spark of his fire, i.e. their highest and brightest glory, which he calleth the spark, &c., because, like a spark, it shines briskly for a moment, but is quickly extinct.

Ver. 6.

In his tabernacle. i.e. in his family. *Instead* of his former splendour, both he and his shall fall into extremity of misery.

His candle shall be put out with him, i.e. his glory shall die with him, and not descend to his posterity, as he hoped and designed. Or,

his candle, which was with him, or shone upon him, shall be put out.

Ver. 7.

The steps of his strength, i.e. his strong steps, by a vulgar Hebraism. *By steps* he means his counsels, as the next branch explains it, his attempts and actions; and by *steps of strength*, such of them as seem to be most firm and settled, contrived with greatest strength of understanding, and carried on with great resolution and might.

Shall be straitened, i. e. shall be hindered and entangled. He shall be cast into great difficulties, and troubles, and perplexities, so that he shall not be able to proceed and to accomplish his enterprises, but shall find himself insnared by his own devices, as the next words declare it. This phrase is used also **#Pr 4:11,12**, and it is opposed to the enlarging of a man's way or steps, which signifies success and prosperity, as **#Ps 4:1 31:8**.

His own counsel shall cast him down; he shall be undone by his own contrivances; either because God will give him up to dangerous and destructive mistakes of his way, or because God will oppose him, and turn his own devices against him, which he can easily do by throwing in unexpected accidents.

Ver. 8.

By his own feet; by his own choice, and design, and actions.

He walketh upon a snare; and therefore must needs be entangled and destroyed.

Ver. 9.

Shall take the by the heel, i.e. take fast hold of him, so as to keep him in those distresses; and when he is insnared the robber shall come upon him, and take, and spoil, or kill him. Or,

the horrible or terrible man; the huntsman, that laid the snare for him. A metaphor from those who hunt for wild beasts, who first lay snares for them, and then seize upon them in the snares.

Ver. 10.

In the ground; where he doth not expect nor discern it. The former snare he laid for himself, but this was laid for him by another.

Ver. 11.

Terrors; both from men, and from God, and from his own unquiet mind and guilty conscience.

Shall drive him to his feet; shall force him to flee hither and thither, and he knows not whither, being secure and safe no where, but pursued by terrors from place to place.

Ver. 12.

His strength; either,

1. His children, which are, and are called, a man's strength, as #Ge 49:3 Ps 127:4,5. Or rather,

2. His wealth, and power, and prosperity. Hunger-bitten, or famished, i.e. utterly consumed.

Shall be ready at his side, i.e. shall follow him at the heels, as a most diligent servant, or constant companion.

Ver. 13.

The strength of his skin, Heb. *the bars*, or rather, the *branches of the skin*, i.e. either the veins and sinews, which branch out themselves through the skin as well as elsewhere; or the fat and flesh, which like bars support the skin, and adorn and beautify it, as branches do a tree; without which the skirt is shrivelled up and deformed.

The first-born of death, i.e. a most remarkable and terrible kind of death. The *first-born* was the chief of his brethren, and therefore this title is given to things eminent in their kind, as #Isa 14:30 Col 1:18 Heb 12:23 Re 1:5.

Ver. 14.

His confidence, i.e. all the matter of his confidence, his riches, children, &c.

Out of his tabernacle, i.e. out of his habitation.

It shall bring him, to wit, the loss of his confidence.

To the king of terrors; either,

1. Into extreme fears and horrors of mind. Or,

2. To death, which even Aristotle called *the most terrible of all terribles*. And this it will do, either because it will expose him to

his enemies, who will kill him; or because the sense of his disappointments, and losses, and dangers will oppress his spirits, and break his heart.

Ver. 15.

It, i.e. destruction, expressed **#Job 18:12**, and designed by this particle *it*, **#Job 18:13**, shall not come upon him and his for a season, for then there might be some hopes of recovery; but it shall fix his abode with him.

It is none of his: this may be added, either,

1. By way of correction, Did I say

his tabernacle? I must retract the expression; for in truth, it is none of his, it is become another man's. Or,

2. As a reason of the ruin of his tabernacle, because it is none of his own, but got from others by deceit or violence. But these words are and may be joined with the former, and both thus rendered, *A stranger* (Heb. one *that is not his*, that is not descended from him, and hath no relation to him)

shall dwell in his tabernacle, i.e. shall possess his house and goods.

Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation; it shall be utterly and prodigiously destroyed, as it were by fire and brimstone. He seems to allude both to the destruction of Sodom, upon which God did scatter brimstone and fire, which happened not long before these times, and could not be unknown to them, who lived near that place, and were diligent observers of God's works; and to the judgment which befell Job, **#Job 1:16**: when the stranger hath taken and rifled his dwelling, he shall forsake it as an accursed place, and shall burn it with fire and brimstone, that there may be no monument of so vile a person left upon the earth.

Ver. 16.

i.e. He shall be destroyed, both root and branch, i.e. both himself and his posterity. Compare **#Mal 4:1**.

Ver. 17.

Instead of that honour and renown which he designed to have, both whilst he lived, and after his death, he is not so much as remembered, unless it be with contempt and reproach.

Ver. 18.

He shall be driven, Heb. *they shall drive him*, i.e. his enemies, or those whom he hath oppressed; or they whom God shall appoint to do it, whether angels or men. Or it is an impersonal speech, and to be rendered passively, as it is also **#Job 7:3 Lu 12:20 16:9**.

From light into darkness; from a splendid and prosperous life to disgrace and misery, and to the grave, the land of darkness and forgetfulness, as the following words explain it.

Ver. 19.

But if any such survive, they shall be in the hands and power of strangers, or rather of their enemies.

Ver. 20.

At his day, i.e. at the day of his destruction, as the word day is used, **#Ps 37:13 137:7 Eze 21:25 Ob 1:12**. They shall be amazed at the suddenness, and dreadful, and prodigiousness of it, as Job's friends were at his calamities, **#Job 2:12,13**. They that went before, i.e. before the persons last mentioned; those who lived in the time and place where this judgment was inflicted.

Affrighted; or, *filled with horror*; partly through humanity and compassion, and partly for fear, lest the judgment should overtake them also.

Ver. 21.

i.e. Who doth not acknowledge, nor fear, nor serve God, as this phrase is used, **#1Sa 2:12 Ps 79:6 2Th 1:8**.

JOB CHAPTER 19

Job's answer: his friends' strangeness and reproaches vex him, **#Job 19:1-3**. He layeth before them his great misery to provoke their pity, **#Job 19:6-22**; wisheth his words might be recorded, **#Job 19:23,24**. His hope in his Redeemer and the resurrection, **#Job 19:25-27**. His friends should not reproach his integrity, for fear of like judgment, **#Job 19:28,29**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

With mere empty words, void of sense or argument; with your impertinent and unedifying discourses, and bitter reproaches, as it followeth.

Ver. 3.

These ten times, i.e. many times. A certain number for an uncertain. So this phrase is oft used, as **#Ge 31:7 Nu 14:22, &c.**

That ye make yourselves strange to me; that you carry yourselves like strangers to me, and are not concerned nor affected with my calamities, and condemn me as if you had never known my former piety and integrity.

Ver. 4.

If my opinion in this point be faulty and erroneous, as you pretend it is. Or, if I have sinned, (for sin is oft called error in Scripture,) and am therefore punished.

Mine error remaineth with myself; either,

1. It is likely to continue, I see no cause from your reasons to change my judgment. Or,
2. I suffer deeply for my sins, and therefore deserve your pity and help, rather than your reproaches, whereby you add affliction to the afflicted.

Ver. 5.

Magnify yourselves against me, i.e. use lofty, and imperious, and contemptuous speeches against me; or seek praise and honour from others, by your conquering or outreasoning of me.

My reproach; either,

1. Your reproaches of me; if your reproachful and censorious speeches must pass for solid arguments. Or,
2. My wickedness, which, if true, were just matter of reproach, and the cause of all my miseries. Or,
3. My contemptible and calamitous condition, for which you reproach and condemn me as a hypocrite and wicked man.

Ver. 6.

Know now; consider what I am now saying.

Hath overthrown me; hath grievously afflicted me in all kinds; therefore it ill becomes you to aggravate my miseries; and if my passions, hereby raised, have broken forth into some extravagant and unmeet expressions, I might expect your pity and favourable construction, and not such severe censures and reproaches. Heb. *God hath perverted me*, i.e. either my state or condition, as was now said, or my right and cause. He oppressteth me with power, and will not give me a fair hearing, as it follows, **#Job 19:7**. He giveth me very hard measure, and dealeth worse with me than I might in reason and justice expect from so wise and good a God. This is a harsh reflection upon God; but such passages have sometimes come from good men, when under sore afflictions and temptations, which was Job's case.

With his net, i.e. with afflictions on every side, so that I cannot escape, nor get any freedom to come to him and plead with him, as I desire.

Ver. 7.

I cry out, to wit, unto God by prayer or appeal.

Of wrong; that I am oppressed, either,

1. By my friends; or rather,
2. By God, who deals with me according to his sovereign power and exact and rigorous justice, and not with that equity and benignity which he showeth to the generality of men, and hath promised to good men, such as he knoweth me to be.

There is no judgment: God will not hear my cause, nor pass sentence; which I might reasonably expect from him; but he quite neglects me, and hath utterly forsaken me, and left me in the hands of the devil and wicked men. See the like complaints of other good men in the like case of desertion, **#Ps 13:2 22:2 88:15 La 3:8 Hab 1:2**.

Ver. 8.

That I cannot pass, i.e. so that I know not what to say or do, and can see no means nor possibility of getting out of my troubles.

He hath set darkness in my paths; so that I cannot discern my way, or what course I should take.

Ver. 9.

Of my glory, i.e. of my estate, and children, and authority, and all my comforts.

The crown, i.e. all my ornaments.

Ver. 10.

On every side, i.e. in all respects, and to all intents and purposes; my person, and family, and estate.

I am gone, i.e. I am a lost and dead man. *Going is oft put for dying,* as #Ge 15:2 Ps 39:13.

Mine hope, i.e. all my hopes of the present life, as he oft expresseth it; but not of the life to come, as appears from #Job 13:15,16 19:25, &c.

Like a tree; which being once plucked up by the roots, never groweth again.

Ver. 11.

He hath stirred up his wrath against me of his own accord, without any provocation of mine, human infirmity excepted.

He counteth me unto him as one of his enemies, i.e. he useth me as sharply as if I were an inveterate enemy of God and of all goodness, though he knoweth I am and have ever been a hearty lover and servant of him.

Ver. 12.

His troops, i.e. my afflictions, which are but God's instruments and soldiers marching under his conduct.

Raise up their way; either,

1. Cast a bank or trench round about me, as an army doth when they go to besiege a place. Or rather,

2. Make a causeway or raised path, as pioneers usually do in low and waterish grounds for the march of an army. God removes all impediments out of the way, and lays me open to all manner of mischief.

Ver. 13.

My brethren, i.e. my kindred and friends, who might and should have supported and comforted me in my distress.

Far from me; either,

1. In place; because they feared or disdained, or at least neglected, to visit or succour me. Or,

2. In their affections, which are far from me, when their bodies are present with me, as I find in you. But this also I ascribe to God; he hath alienated your hearts from me.

Ver. 14.

My kinsfolk have failed, to wit, to perform the offices of humanity and friendship which they owe to me.

Have forgotten me, i.e. neglect and disregard me as much as if they had quite forgotten me.

Ver. 15.

They that dwell in mine house, Heb. the sojourners of my house, i.e. such as had formerly sojourned with me, whether strangers, widows, and fatherless, whom by the law of charity and hospitality he entertained; or hired servants, who had for a good while their habitation and subsistence in his family.

My maids; who, by reason of their sex, commonly have and should have more tender and compassionate hearts than men. And therefore this is God's doing, who hath hardened their hearts against me.

Count me for a stranger; regard my commands and concerns no more than a stranger.

I am an alien in their sight; the same thing repeated, through vehemency of passion, because this lay very heavy upon him.

Ver. 16.

I called my servant, to do some servile office about me, for my case or relief, and he passed by as if he had been deaf, because he loathed and feared to come near to me; although to my commands I added humble and earnest desires.

With my mouth: either,

1. With gentle and moving speeches; or rather,
2. With my own mouth, and not by a proxy.

Ver. 17.

To my wife; who by reason of the stink of my breath and sores denied me her company.

For the children's sake of mine own body; by these pledges of our mutual and matrimonial tie and affection, the children which came out of my loins, and were begotten by me upon her body. But divers render the words thus, *and I entreated the children of my own body*, i.e. either some of Job's younger children, who by reason of their tender years were kept at home with their father, when their elder brethren and sisters were gone abroad to the feast; or some of his grandchildren by those grown sons and daughters; for such also oft come under the name of *children*. But this sense seems not so proper, partly because according to that translation here is mention only of Job's entreating them, but not a word of their denying his request; which is the only matter of his present complaint; and partly because according to the former translation it is a great and just aggravation of his wife's unkindness, and exactly answers to the foregoing verse, where the servant's perverseness is aggravated in the same manner, and by part of the same words.

Ver. 18.

Young children; or, *fools*; the most contemptible persons. I arose, to wit, from my seat, to show my respect to them, though they were my inferiors; to show my readiness to comply with that mean and low condition, into which God had now brought me. Or, *I stood up*; for so this word sometimes signifies. I did not disoblige or provoke them by any uncivil and uncomely carriage towards them, but was very courteous to them; and yet they make it their business to rail against me, as you also do.

Ver. 19.

My inward friends, Heb. *the men of my secret*; my intimates and confidants, to whom I imparted all my thoughts, and counsels, and concerns.

Whom I loved sincerely and fervently, which they so ill requite. He saith not, *they who loved me*; for their love, had it been true, would have continued in his affliction as well as in his prosperity.

Ver. 20.

My bone, i.e. my bones; the singular collectively put for the plural, as **#Job 2:5 Pr 15:30**.

Cleaveth to my skin, to wit, immediately, the fat and flesh next to the skin being consumed. The sense is, I am worn to skin and bone: see the same phrase **#Ps 102:5**.

And to my flesh; or, *as* (the particle *and* being often so used, as hath been observed before) *to my flesh*, i.e. either as formerly it clave to my flesh, or as near and as closely as it doth to these remainders of flesh which are left in my inward parts.

I am escaped with the skin of my teeth; I am scarce sound and whole and free from sores in any part of my skin, except that of my jaws, which holdeth and covereth the roots of my teeth. This being, as divers observe, the devil's policy, to leave his mouth untouched, that he might more freely express his mind, and vent his blasphemies against God, which he supposed sharp pain would force him to do, and which he knew would be of pernicious consequence not only to Job, but to others also.

Ver. 21.

O ye my friends; for such you have been, and still pretend to be; and therefore fulfil that relation; and if you will not help me, yet at least pity me.

Hath touched me, i.e. smitten or afflicted me sorely, as this word is oft used; as **#Job 1:11 Ps 104:32**.

Ver. 22.

As God; either,

1. As God doth; or rather,

2. As if you were gods, and not men; as if you had the same infinite knowledge which God hath, whereby you can search my heart, and know my hypocrisy; and the same sovereign and absolute authority, to say and do what you please with me, without giving any reason or account of it, which is indeed the

prerogative of the great God; but it belongs not to you, who are men, and therefore liable to mistake and misjudging, and such as must give all account to God of all their words and carriage towards their brethren, and particularly towards persons in affliction, and withal subject to the same diseases and calamities under which I groan; and therefore may need the pity which I expect from you.

With my flesh, i.e. with the consumption and torment of my whole body, but add to it the vexation of my spirit, by grievous reproaches and censures; but are like wolves or lions, that are not contented with devouring the flesh of their prey, but also break their bones.

Ver. 23.

My words; either,

1. The following and famous confession of his faith, **#Job 19:25**, &c. Or rather,

2. All his foregoing discourses with his friends, which he was so far from disowning or being ashamed of, that he was desirous that all ages should know, that they might judge between him and them, whose cause was better, and whose arguments were stronger.

Ver. 24.

An iron pen; of which also there is mention **#Jer 17:1**.

And lead; or, *or lead*; or, *with lead*; the particle *and* being oft so used, as **#Ge 4:20 Ex 1:6 Jer 22:7**. For this lead may be either,

1. The writing pen, which might be either of iron or of lead; for though lead be of itself too soft, yet there was an art of tempering lead with other metals to such a degree of hardness that it could pierce into a rock; as they did-also temper brass, so that they could make bows and swords of it. Or,

2. The writing table; for the ancients did use to write divers things in lead, as is well known. Or,

3. The writing ink, as I may call it; for they used to grave the letters in a stone with an iron tool, and then to fill up the cuts or

furrows made in the stone with lead, that the words might be more plainly seen and read.

Ver. 25.

This is the reason of his great confidence in the goodness of his cause, and his willingness to have the matter depending between him and his friends published and submitted to any trial, because he had a living and powerful Redeemer to plead his cause, and vindicate his person from all their severe censures, and to give sentence for him.

I know: I have no knowledge, nor confidence, nor hope of restitution to the prosperities of this life; yet this one thing I know, which is more comfortable and considerable, and therein I rejoice, though I be now a dying man, and in a desperate condition for this life.

My redeemer; in whom I have a particular interest, and he hath a particular care of me.

Quest. What redeemer and what deliverance doth Job speak of in this and the two following verses?

Answ. Some late interpreters understand this place metaphorically, of God's delivering Job out of his doleful and desperate condition, and restoring him to his former splendour and happiness in the world; it being a very usual thing in Scripture to call eminent dangers or calamities by the name of *death*, as **#Ps 22:15 88:4,5 Eze 37:11,12 2Co 11:23**; and great and glorious deliverances by the name of *quickenings* and *resurrection*, as **#Ps 71:20 Isa 26:19 Ro 11:15**. But the most interpreters, both ancient and modern, understand it of Christ, and of his resurrection, and of Job's resurrection to life by his power and favour; which seems most probable for many reasons.

1. From that known rule, that a proper and literal interpretation of Scripture is always to be preferred before the metaphorical, where it suits with the text and with other scriptures.

2. From the Hebrew word *goel*, here used; which although sometimes it be used of God absolutely, or essentially considered, yet it most properly agrees to Jesus Christ; for this word, as all Hebricians know, is primarily used of the next kinsman, whose

office it was to redeem by a price paid the sold or mortgaged estate of his deceased kinsman, **#Le 25:25**; and to revenge his death, **#Nu 35:12**; and to maintain his name and honour, by raising up seed to him, **#De 25:5**: all which most fitly agrees to Christ, who is our nearest Kinsman and *Brother*, **#Heb 2:11**, as having taken our nature upon him by incarnation; who also hath redeemed that everlasting inheritance which our first parents had utterly lost and sold by the price of his own blood; and hath revenged the death of mankind upon the great contriver of it, the devil, by destroying him and his kingdom; and hath taken a course to preserve our name, and honour, and persons to eternity. And if the places where God is called *Goel* in the Old Testament be examined, it will be found that either all or most of them may be, and some of them must be, understood of God the Son, or of Christ, as **#Ge 48:16 Isa 49:20**. See also **#Ps 74:2 Isa 41:14 44:16 49:7 52:3 63:16**.

3. Because Job was so far from such a firm confidence as he here professeth, that he had not the least degree of hope of any such glorious temporal restoration as his friends promised to him, as we have oft seen and observed in the former discourses, as **#Job 16:22 17:12,13**, &c. And therefore that *hope* which every *righteous* man *hath in his death*, **#Pr 14:32**, and which Job oft professeth that he had, must necessarily be fixed upon his happiness in the future life.

4. Because some of the following expressions cannot without wresting and violence be applied to a metaphorical resurrection, as we shall see in the sequel.

5. Because this is a more lofty and spiritual strain than any in Job's former discourses, and quite contrary to them. And as they generally savour of dejection and diffidence, and do either declare or increase his grief; so this puts him into another and much better temper. And therefore it is well observed, that after this time and these expressions we meet not with any such impatient or despairing passages as we had before; which shows that they had inspired him with new life and comfort.

6. Because this well agrees with other passages in this book; wherein Job declareth, that although he had no hope as to this life,

And the comforts thereof, yet he had a hope beyond death, which made him profess, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, #**Job 13:15**. *Trust in him*; for what? Surely for comfort and happiness. Where? Not in this life, for that he supposeth to be lost; therefore it must be in the next life. And this was one reason why he so vehemently desired death, because he knew it would bring him unto God and unto true felicity. And this his hope and confidence in God, and in his favour to him, Job opposeth to those foul and false aspersions which his friends had cast upon him, as if he had forsaken God, and cast off all fear of him, and hope in him.

Object

1. If this place had spoken of the resurrection of the body, some of the Hebrew' writers or commentators upon this place, who did believe that doctrine, would have understood it so, and have urged it against the Sadducees, which they did not.

Answ.

1. All the Jewish writers which are now extant lived and wrote since Christ's time, when the doctors of that people were very ignorant of many great truths, and of the plain meaning of many scriptures, and very corrupt in their principles as well as in their practices.

2. There was a manifest reason why they could not understand this text thus, because they believed that Job in his agonies did deny God's providence, and consequently the resurrection and the future judgment, which though it was a most uncharitable and false opinion, yet forced them to interpret this text another way.

Object.

2. How is it credible that Job, in those ancient times, and in that dark state of the church, should know these great mysteries of Christ's incarnation, and of the resurrection and life to come?

Answ. 1. The mystery of Christ's incarnation was revealed to Adam by that first and famous promise, that *the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head*, #**Ge 3:15**; which being the only foundation of all his hopes for the recovery and salvation of himself, and of all his posterity, he would doubtless carefully

and diligently teach and explain it, as need required, to those that descended from him.

2. That the ancient patriarchs and prophets were generally acquainted with these doctrines is undeniably evident from **#Heb 11 1Pe 1:9-12**.

3. Particularly Abraham, from whom Job is supposed to have descended, had the promise made to him, that Christ should come out of his loins, **#Ge 12:3**; and is said to have *seen, Christ's day, and rejoiced to see it*, **#Joh 8:56**, and had his hopes and desires fixed upon a divine and heavenly city and country, **#Heb 11:10,16**. And as Abraham knew and believed these things himself, so it is manifest that, he taught them to his children and servants, **#Ge 18:19**, and to his kindred and others, as he had occasion. And therefore it cannot seem strange that Job professeth his faith and hope in these things.

My redeemer liveth: I am a dying man, and my hopes are dying, but he liveth, and that for ever; and therefore though I die, yet he both can and will make me live again in due time, though not in this world, yet in the other, which is much better; and though I am now highly censured and condemned by my friends and others as a great dissembler and a secret sinner, whom God's hand hath found out; yet there is a day coming wherein my cause shall be pleaded, and my name and honour vindicated from all these reproaches, and my integrity brought to light.

He shall stand: I am falling and dying, but he shall stand firm, and unmovable, and victorious, in full power and authority; all which this word

stand signifies; and therefore he is able to make me stand in judgment, and to maintain my cause against all opposers. Or, *he shall arise*, as this verb most commonly signifies, i.e. either,

1. He shall exist, or be born, as this word is oft used; as **#Nu 32:14 De 29:22 Jud 2:10 1Ki 3:12 Mt 11:11**. And it notes Christ's incarnation, that although as he was God he was now and from all eternity in being, yet he should in due time be made man, and be born of a woman. Or,

2. He shall arise out of the dust; which had been more probable, if it had been in the text *from* or *out of*, as now it is upon, the earth or dust; for Christ's resurrection from the dead might be fitly mentioned here as the cause of Job's resurrection, which followeth.

At the latter day; either,

1. In the days of the Messiah, or of the gospel, which are oft called the

latter or *last days* or times; as **#Isa 2:2 Ho 3:5 Joe 2:28**, compared with **#Ac 2:17 1Ti 4:1 2Ti 3:1 Heb 1:1**. Or rather,

2. At the day of the general resurrection and judgment, which, as those holy patriarchs well knew and firmly believed, was to be at the end of the world, and which is called the *last day*, **#Joh 6:39,40,44,51 11:24 12:48 1Pe 1:5**; for this was the time when Job's resurrection, of which he speaketh here, was to be. Heb. *at the last*; by which word he plainly intimates that his hope was not of things present, and of worldly felicities, of which his friends had discoursed so much; but of another kind of, and a far greater, blessedness, which should accrue to him in after-times, long after he was dead and rotten. Or, *the last*; who is both the *first and the last*, **#Isa 44:6 Re 1:11**, who shall subdue and survive all his and his people's enemies, and after others the last enemy, death, **#1Co 15:26**, and then shall raise up his people and plead their cause, and vindicate them from all the calumnies and injuries which are put upon them, and conduct them to life and glory.

Upon the earth; the place upon which Christ shall appear and stand at the last day. Heb. *upon the dust*; in which his saints and members lie or sleep, whom he will raise out of it. And therefore he is fitly said to *stand upon the dust*, or the grave, or death, because then he will put that among other *enemies under his feet*; as it is expressed, **#1Co 15:25,26**. Some render the words thus, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, *the last*, or *at the last*, *he shall arise or stand up against* (for so this very phrase is used, **#Ge 4:8 Jud 9:18 Ps 44:3**) *the dust*, and fight with it, and rescue the bodies of the saints, which are held in it as prisoners, from its dominion and territories. Some understand this of God, that *he* should *stand last in the field*, as Conqueror of all his enemies. But

this neither agrees with the words, the Hebrew *aphar* signifying *dust*, and being never used of the field or place of battle; nor with Job's scope, which was to defend himself against his friends' accusations, and to comfort himself with his hopes and assurance of God's favour to be exhibited to him in due time; which end the words in that sense would by no means serve, because God might and would be Conqueror of all his enemies, though Job himself had been one of them, and though his cause had been bad, and his friends should with God have triumphed over him.

Ver. 26.

The style of this and other poetical books is concise and short, and therefore many words are to be understood in some places to complete the sense. The meaning of the place is this, Though my skin is now in a great measure consumed by sores, and the rest of it, together with this body, shall be devoured by the worms; which may seem to make my case quite desperate. Heb.

And though (which particle, as it is oft elsewhere, is here to be understood, as the opposition of the next branch showeth)

after my skin (which either now is, or suddenly will be, consumed by sores or worms) *they* (i.e. *the destroyers*, or *devourers*, as is implied in the verb; such impersonal speeches being usual in the Scripture; as **#Ge 1:26 Lu 12:20 16:9**, where the actions are expressed, but the persons or things acting are understood. And by the destroyers he most probably designs the worms, which do this work in the grave) *destroy*, or *cut off*, or *devour this*, i.e. all this which you see left of me, this which I now point to, all this which is contained within my skin, all my flesh and bones, *this* which I know not what to call, whether a living body, or a dead carcass, because it is between both; and therefore he did not say

this body, because it did scarce deserve that name.

Yet; for the particle *and* is oft used adversatively; or *then*, as it is oft rendered.

In my flesh, Heb. *out of my flesh*, or *with* (as the particle *mem* is used, **#So 1:2 3:9 Isa 57:8**) *my flesh*, i.e. *with eyes of flesh*, as Job himself calls them, **#Job 10:4**; or with bodily eyes; my flesh or body being raised from the grave, and restored and reunited to my

soul. And this is very fitly added, to show that he did not speak of a mental or spiritual, but of a corporeal vision, and that after his death.

Shall I see God; the same whom he called his *redeemer* #**Job 19:25**, i.e. Christ; of which see the note there; who being God-man, and having taken flesh, and appearing in his flesh or body with and for Job upon the earth, as was said #**Job 19:25**, might very well be seen with his bodily eyes. Nor is this understood of a simple *seeing* of him; for so even they that pierced him shall see him, #**Re 1:7**; but of seeing him with delight and comfort, as that word is oft understood, as #**Ge 48:11 Job 42:16 Ps 128:5 Isa 53:11**; of that glorious and beatifying vision of God which is promised to all God's people, #**Ps 16:11 17:15 Mt 5:8 1Co 13:12 1Jo 3:2**.

Ver. 27.

Whom I shall see, in manner before and after expressed. No wonder that he repeats it again, because the meditation of it was most sweet to him.

For myself, i.e. for my own comfort and benefit, as that phrase is oft used. Or, which is much of the same importance, on my behalf; to plead my cause, and vindicate me from all your reproaches.

Not another, to wit, for me, or in my stead. I shall not see God by another's eyes, but by my own, and by these selfsame eyes in this same body which now I have. Heb. *not a stranger*, i.e. this privilege shall be granted to me and to all other sincere servants of God, but not to strangers, i.e. to wicked men, who are oft called strangers, as #**Ps 18:44,45 54:3 Pr 21:8**, because they are estranged or alienated from God, and from his service and people. And if I were such a one, as you suppose me to be, I could never hope to enjoy that happiness.

Though my reins be consumed within me: this I do confidently expect and hope for, though at present my case seems desperate, my very inward parts being even consumed with grief; and though, as I have said, the grave and the worms will consume my whole body, not excepting the reins, which seem to be safest and furthest out of their reach. Or without

though, which is not in the Hebrew, *my reins are consumed within me*. So this may be a sudden and passionate ejaculation or exclamation, (such as we find **#Ge 49:18**, and oft in the Book of Psalms,) arising from the contemplation and confident expectation of this his unspeakable happiness, wherein he expreseth his vehement desire and longing for that blessed time and state. *The reins* are oft put for earnest desires or affections, whereof they are supposed to be the seat; as **#Job 38:36 Pr 23:16**. And men are oft in Scripture said to be

consumed or *eaten up*, or the like, by ardent affections; as **#Ps 69:9 84:2 119:81,82 Joh 2:17**.

Ver. 28.

But; or, *therefore*; because this is my case, and my faith and hope in God.

Ye should say: so the future is used potentially, as it is **#Ob 1:12**; and the sense is, it would become you; or, it is your duty upon this account to say. Or, *you will say*, i.e. either,

1. I hope you will say so, and that you will be more moderate in your censures and expressions concerning me, as being convinced and sweetened by this sincere and solemn profession of my faith and hope. Or,

2. Peradventure you will say, to wit, by way of excuse for yourselves.

Why persecute we him? so it is a correction of themselves. Seeing things are thus with him, we are blameworthy, that we have persecuted him with such bitter invectives, and we will do so no more. Or, *wherein* or *how* (for so that particle is sometimes used, as the learned observe) *do we persecute him*, as he chargeth us, **#Job 19:22**. He accuseth us falsely, and without cause given on our parts. So it is an apology for their hard speeches against him, which Job puts into their mouths as their exception to his charge, which he mentioned **#Job 19:22** and upon that occasion falls into a most serious and pathetic exclamation, **#Job 19:23,24**, and into a most solemn declaration of his faith in God his Redeemer, **#Job 19:25-27**; and after that digression he resumes the former matter, and here propounds an objection, to

which he gives a severe answer, which may seem to suit much better with this than with the former exposition.

Seeing the root of the matter is found in me. These words contain either,

1. A motive or reason why they should correct themselves for persecuting him, and desist from it; *because*, saith Job,

the root of the matter, or *word*, is in me. The *root* notes the occasion, or the foundation, or the truth and substance of a thing. And by this *matter* or word may be meant either,

1. That famous profession of his faith and confidence in God, **#Job 19:25-27**, which, saith he, I have not uttered vain-gloriously or hypocritically, but from my very heart, wherewith I believe what I have spoken with my mouth, as is said upon another occasion, **#Ro 10:9,10**. This word or faith is rooted in mine heart, as it should be, **#Mt 13:21 Col 2:7**. I am no hypocrite, as you asperse me, but an upright person, having a root of true religion in me; which therefore should allay your censures, and make you willing to bear with some circumstantial defects or mistakes in my discourses, or miscarriages, into which my passion and pain might transport me, and make you repent of your cruel usage of a truly good man. But although Job had this root in his heart, yet this was doubted of, and not discernible by, Job's friends, and therefore could be no argument to them. Possibly it might be better to understand by this *root of the word*, to wit, of God's word, which is oft called *the word*, by way of eminency, the foundations or fundamental truths of Divine doctrine which Job held; as appeared by this glorious confession, howsoever he might err in the matter of controversy with them; which being a difference in lesser things, they should mildly have borne with it, and not aggravated it and traduced him, as if thereby he had renounced God, and the very principles of religion, as they did. Or,

2. The word or thing under debate among them. So the sense may be this,

the root or truth of *the thing* debated by us is with me, i.e. is on my side. Your discourses and arguments have no truth nor solidity in them as mine have. You speak whatever cometh into your minds and mouths; but my discourses are rooted and grounded

upon sound knowledge and deep consideration. But this was no convincing answer; for they could easily retort the same thing upon him again, and their affirmation might seem as good as his; for it was only a begging of the thing in question. Or rather,

2. A defence of themselves, and of their former sharp and severe discourses, which Job called persecution, **#Job 19:22**. And having made a short, but vehement and important, digression, **#Job 19:23**, &c., he returns to the main question between them here; and the sense of this verse (with submission to better judgments) seems to me to be plainly this, *But ye will say*, i.e. I know will object against my charge, *how*, or *wherein*, or *why do we persecute him?* Why doth he charge us with so black a crime; *seeing*, or *for*, (as *vau* is oft used,) *the root*, i.e. the foundation, or cause, or occasion of the *word*, i.e. of those words or passages of ours which are so ill taken, or

of the matter, i.e. of the thing now debated among us, *is in me*; i.e. Job gives the occasion to it by his boisterous passions and wicked expressions against God, which we neither can nor ought to endure, but are to be sharply reprov'd. And so this verse contains their objection or apology, which Job puts into their mouths, to which he makes a sharp and suitable reply in the following verse.

Ver. 29.

Of the sword, i.e. of some considerable judgment to be inflicted on you, which is called the sword; as **#De 32:41**, and oft elsewhere. Do not please yourselves with such pretences and crafty evasions, as if the blame were wholly in me, not in you: God will not be mocked by you; he sees and will punish your most unrighteous and uncharitable judgment of me, and dealing with me.

Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword: for that *wrath* or *fury* which is in your hearts, and breaks out of your lips against me, doth deserve, and will certainly bring upon you, the *punishment* (Heb. *punishments* or *iniquities*; but *iniquity* is oft put for *punishment*)

of the sword, i.e. a dreadful judgment from God. Or without any supplement, except that which is generally understood,

for wrath (that sin of wrath or rage against a man, especially against one in affliction) is *an iniquity* (Heb. *iniquities*, the plural number being used by way of aggravation; as **#Ps 73:22**, and elsewhere: or, *of the iniquities*; the Hebrew prefix *mem* being here understood, as it is in many other places)

of the sword, i.e. one of those iniquities which use to be, or are fit to be, punished by the Sword, i.e. by some eminent judgment; as **#Job 31:11**, *an iniquity of the judges, is an iniquity to be punished by the judges*, as our translation hath it. *That ye may know*: the sense is either,

1. This admonition I now give you, that you may know it in time, and for your good, that you may seriously consider and prevent it.
Or,

2. This judgment will come upon you, that you may be taught by your own sad and costly experience what you would not learn without it. *That there is a judgment*, i.e. that there will be a time of judgment, when God will call men to an account for all their hard speeches and miscarriages, and particularly for their rash and uncharitable censures of their brethren, **#Mt 7:1 Ro 14:4 Jas 4:11**, either in this life, or at that last and dreadful day of the general resurrection (of which he spoke **#Job 19:25**, &c.) and judgment. God sees, and observes, and will judge all your words and actions, and therefore do not flatter yourselves with vain hopes of impunity.

JOB CHAPTER 20

Zophar's answer: the state and portion of the wicked, not withstanding for a time he may prosper and flourish.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Therefore; for this thy severe sentence and denunciation of God's judgments against us, **#Job 19:29**, which much more justly belongs to thyself and is actually executed upon thee; and because of thy reproaches, as it followeth, **#Job 20:3**.

My thoughts cause me to answer: I thought to have troubled myself and thee with no further discourses, considering how exceptionous and incorrigible thou art; but my thoughts or consideration of thy reproachful words force me to break silence, and to answer thee as the matter requires.

For this I make haste; I speak sooner than I intended, because I am not able to contain myself longer, and fear lest I should forget what is in my mind. Possibly he interrupted Job when he was proceeding further in his discourse; or he prevented some of his brethren who made an offer to speak.

Ver. 3.

I have heard from thy mouth. Or, *Shall I hear*, to wit, with patience, and without a reply? Who can endure it?

The check of my reproach, i.e. thy shameful and opprobrious reproofs of us, as if we and all thy friends were void of all humanity and natural affection towards them, and were haters, and cruel persecutors, and even devourers, of thee, #Job 19:19,22; and as if we were guilty of most heinous crimes, and might expect God's vengeance upon us.

The spirit, i.e. my soul or mind.

Of my understanding, or, *because of* (for so the Hebrew *mem oft* signifies)

my understanding i.e. out of, or because of, that certain knowledge which I have of this matter from study and experience; I have not spoken, and I shall not speak, out of ignorance, or prejudice, or passion and rage against Job, as he asperseth us, but only what I evidently know, and yet hope that I can and shall convince thee of.

Causeth me to answer, i.e. forceth me to speak. Or, *answereth for me*, i.e. either vindicates me against thy calumnies, or suggesteth an answer to me.

Ver. 4.

i.e. *This* which I am now about to say. How canst thou,

thou, I say, who pretendest to such an exact and universal knowledge of men and things, be ignorant of so notorious a thing,

which wicked men sensibly feel, and good men diligently observe, and all men are forced to acknowledge, one time or other?

Of old, i.e. from the experience of all former ages.

Since man was placed upon earth, i.e. since the world was made, and there were any men to observe God's government of it.

Ver. 5.

Is short, Heb. is *from near*, i.e. from or for a little time; they have not long enjoyed it, and it will shortly vanish.

The joy of the hypocrite: this he adds by way of reflection upon Job, who though he did clear himself from gross wickedness, yet might be guilty of deep hyprocrisy.

Ver. 6.

Though he be advanced to great dignity and authority in the world.

Ver. 7.

Like his own dung; which men cast away with contempt and abhorreny. Compare #1Ki 14:10 2Ki 9:37.

They which have seen him, with admiration at his felicity.

Where is he? i.e. he is no where to be found; he is utterly lost and gone.

Ver. 8.

As a dream; which for the present makes a great show and noise, and highly affects the fancy, but hath nothing solid nor permanent in it; for as soon as the man awakes all vanisheth, and the remembrance of it is quickly lost.

Shall not be found; the man will be utterly lost and gone, together with all his riches and glory.

As a vision of the night; which appears to a man in the night and in his sleep.

Ver. 9.

i.e. It shall not acknowledge nor contain him. A figure called *protopopaeia*, as #Job 7:10. Or, *neither shall it* (i.e. the eye last mentioned) *behold him any more in his place*.

Ver. 10.

Shall seek to please the poor; either,

1. To get some small relief from them in their extreme necessity.
Or rather,

2. Lest they should revenge themselves of them for the great and many injuries which their father did them, or seek to the magistrate for reparations.

His hands shall restore their goods, by the sentence of the judge, to whom the oppressed poor will appeal, notwithstanding all their entreaties and endeavours to dissuade them from so-doing.

Ver. 11.

His bones, i.e. his whole body, even the strongest parts of it, which may seem most remote from danger.

Of the sin of his youth, Heb. *of his youth*, i.e. of his youthful pleasures and lusts, by a metonymy of the subject. And this may be understood either,

1. Of the sins themselves, that he shall persevere in his youthful lusts even in old age, and shall die without repentance. Or rather,

2. Of the punishment of his sins, of which he is speaking both in the foregoing and following verses. He shall feel the sad effects of those sins in his riper years, as riotous sinners commonly do; and, as it follows, attended him to his grave. Or, *with his secret ways* or sins, as others render it; whereby he possibly intimates that Job, though he appeared righteous before others, yet was guilty of some secret wickedness, for which God was now reckoning with him.

Ver. 12.

In his mouth, i.e. to his taste, though it greatly please him for the present.

Though he hide it under his tongue; as an epicure doth a sweet morsel, which he is loth to swallow, and therefore keeps and rolls it about his mouth that he may longer enjoy the pleasure of it: though he be highly pleased with his lusts, and cleave to them in hearty love, and resolve to hold them fast, and improve them to the greatest delight and advantage.

Ver. 13.

Though he spare it, i.e. will not part with it; or gratify and obey it, instead of subduing and mortifying it.

Keep it still within his mouth, to suck out all the sweetness or benefit of it, though it be very delightful to him.

Ver. 14.

Turned into another nature or quality, from sweet to bitter.

The gall of asps, i.e. exceeding bitter and pernicious. Gall is most bitter; the gall of serpents is full of poison, which from thence is conveyed to their mouths by veins, as Pliny observes; and the poison of asps is most dangerous, and within a few hours kills without remedy.

Ver. 15.

He shall vomit them up again, i.e. be forced to restore them with great shame and torment, as gluttons sometimes do loathe, and with grief and pain cast up, that meat which they have eaten and swallowed down with much greediness and delight. If no man's hand can reach him, God shall find him out, and punish him severely.

Ver. 16.

That which he hath greedily and industriously sucked in as pleasant and wholesome nourishment, shall in the issue be as ungrateful and destructive to him as the

poison or *head* (for the Hebrew word signifies both, and the poison lies in the head)

of asps would be to one that sucketh it. The viper's tongue, together with its teeth, in which the poison lurks, which it conveys by biting a man.

Ver. 17.

Not see, i.e. not enjoy, as that word is oft used as **#Ps 106:5 Ec 2:1**.

The brooks of honey and butter; that abundant satisfaction and comfort, (oft signified by these or suchlike metaphors; as **#Ps 36:8 46:4 Isa 7:15,22 41:18**) either which he promised to himself from that great estate which he had got by deceit and oppression, or

which good men through God's blessing may and commonly do enjoy.

Ver. 18.

That which he laboured for, Heb. *labour*, i.e. the goods which were gotten with labour; either,

1. By the labour of others; or rather,

2. By his own labour; which may relate as well to the goods of others, which he got not without pains and difficulty; or to his own goods honestly gotten by the sweat of his brows. And this is an aggravation of his misery, that he was forced to restore not only other men's goods which were in his hands, but his own also, to make reparation for their damages.

Shall not swallow it down, to wit, so as to hold it; for otherwise he did swallow it, but withal did speedily vomit it up again, **#Job 20:15**, which was as if he had not swallowed it. He shall not possess it long, nor to any considerable purpose.

According to his substance shall the restitution be, i.e. he shall be forced to part with all his estate to make compensation for his wrongs done to others.

He shall not rejoice therein, i.e. he shall not enjoy what he hath gotten, because it shall be taken from him.

Ver. 19.

By his oppression he brought men to utter poverty, and then forsook or left them in that forlorn estate, affording no mercy nor help to them. Or, some he made poor by his oppression, and others that were poor he suffered to perish for want of that relief which he should and might have afforded them; which is a crying sin in God's sight, and one of those sins for which God destroyed Sodom, **#Eze 16:49**, and therefore fitly mentioned here as one of the sins for which God punished this wicked man. Or, *he oppresses and leaveth poor*, as Broughton renders it.

An house which he built not, i.e. which was none of his. Heb. *he hath violently taken away an house, and (or but) did not build (or repair, as building is oft used) it*, to wit, that house for his own use, i.e. he did not build or possess that house, as he intended to

do, but was cut off by God's hand before he could enjoy the fruit of his oppressions.

Ver. 20.

He shall not feel quietness in his belly, i.e. he shall have no peace nor satisfaction in his mind in all his gains, partly because of his perpetual fears and expectations of the wrath of God and man, which his guilty conscience knoweth that he deserves; and partly because they shall be speedily taken away from him. He still continueth the metaphor of a glutton, whose belly is not quiet until it hath vomited up that wherewith he had oppressed it.

Of that which he desired, i.e. any part of his good and desirable things, but he shall forfeit and lose them all.

Ver. 21.

None of his meat be left for his own future use; but he shall be stripped of all.

Therefore shall no man look for his goods; it being publicly known and observed that he was totally ruined, none of his kindred or friends shall trouble themselves to seek for any relics of his estate, as is usually done after men's deaths. But this verse is and may be rendered otherwise, *There shall none be left for his meat*, (i.e. he shall leave no heir who shall possess or enjoy his goods,) *because*, (for so the Hebrew particle *al-chen* is oft used; as #Ge 38:26 Nu 14:13 Ps 42:7 Jer 48:36) *none of his goods shall remain*, either for his heir or any other; all shall be utterly lost.

Ver. 22.

In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits; i.e. the height of prosperity and abundance he shall be distressed and tormented, either by the horrors of an unquiet mind and guilty conscience, which makes him every moment expect Divine vengeance to fall upon his head; or rather, because of the sudden and unexpected assault of other men combining against him, and spoiling all his goods, as it follows.

Every hand of the wicked, who lives by injury and the spoiling of others, and by God's providence are directed to fall upon him. Or, *of the labourer*, whose wages possibly he hath detained; or, *of such as are in trouble or misery*, as this word signifies, #Job 3:20, who may jointly invade him, either because their necessity tempts

and drives them to spoil others; or rather, because they were such as had been brought into their calamity by his oppressions, and therefore now take reparations from him.

Ver. 23.

When he is about to fill his belly, i.e. when he hath enough and abundance to satisfy all his appetites, and shall design to take the pleasure of all his gains, and to spend his days in epicurism and sensuality. *God*; who is oft understood in this book where he is not expressed; and so he is here, as appears from the following words, because there is no other person here expressed who was to inflict these evils upon him, and because they, are said to be *rained* down upon *him*; which implies their coming from Heaven, or from God. *The fury of his wrath*; some dreadful and destructive judgment.

Shall rain it upon him. This phrase notes both the author of his plagues, God, and the nature and quality of them, that they shall come upon him like rain, i.e. with great vehemency, and so as he cannot prevent or avoid it.

While he is eating; as it fell upon thy sons, #**Job 1:18,19**. Compare #**Ps 78:30,31**.

Ver. 24.

From the iron weapon, i.e. from the sword or spear; and so shall think himself out of danger.

The bow; an arrow shot out of a bow. A distant, place and unknown hand shall unexpectedly fall upon him; so that he shall only go from one danger to another.

Of steel; which is of great strength, and therefore sendeth forth the arrow with greater force. Compare #**Ps 18:34**. Or, *of brass*, as the word properly signifies; which the ancients did so temper and harden, that their bows were commonly made of it.

Shall strike him through, i.e. mortally wound him.

Ver. 25.

It is drawn; either,

1. A sword, which may be understood out of this Hebrew verb, which is for the most part used of that weapon, as #Nu 22:23,31 Jud 8:20, &c., and out of the following branch of the verse. Or,

2. The arrow last mentioned, which had entered into his body, and now was drawn out of it either by himself, or by some other person, as is frequent in that case, if peradventure he might be cured.

Out of the body; or, *out of his body*, i.e. the body of the wounded man; as appears both by the next clause of the verse, which is added to explain the former; where it is

out of his gall; and from the use of this Hebrew word, which signifies a man's body or carcass, as #Jud 14:8 1Sa 31:12 Isa 5:25 Na 3:3.

The glittering sword: the word properly signifies *lightning*, and thence a *glittering weapon*, the bright sword or spear, as #De 32:41 Eze 21:10,15 Na 3:3 Hab 3:11; whereby it is implied that he was doubly wounded; first, by the arrow, and then, to make more sure work, with the sword or spear thrust into him. But the word may as well signify *the bright and sharp point of an arrow*, of which he spoke hitherto; and having in the general said that it *came out of his body*, now he determines the part of the body, *the gall*; which showeth that the wound was both deep and deadly, as they are in that part. It is probable he mentions this in reference to the like expression of Job, #Job 16:13.

Cometh out of his gall; into which it had entered, and wherewith it was coloured.

Terrors are upon him, to wit, the terrors of death, because he perceived by the tincture of his gall upon the weapon that his wound was incurable; or horrors of conscience, because he cannot live, and dare not die.

Ver. 26.

All darkness, i.e. all sorts of miseries, both of soul, and body, and estate.

Shall be hid, or, is *hid*, or *laid up*, to wit, by God for him. This phrase may note, that though it be not actually upon him, yet it is

reserved and treasured up for him, and is kept as in a sure place, and shall infallibly overtake him.

In his secret places; either,

1. In his *hid treasures*, as this very word signifies, **#Ps 17:14**. He treasures up wealth, and with God's wrath and curse. Or,

2. In those places where he confidently hopes to hide and secure himself from all evils and enemies; yet even there God shall find him out. Or, *for*, or *instead of*, (or *with*, for both ways the prefix *lamed* is oft used,) *his hid treasures*.

A fire not blown, to wit, by man, but kindled by God himself, as that was, **#Job 1:16**. He thinks by his might and violence to secure himself from men, but God by his own immediate hand, or in some unknown and unexpected manner, will find him out. Some understand it of hell-fire; of which see **#Isa 30:33**.

With him that is left in his tabernacle, i.e. with his posterity or family, who shall inherit his curse as well as his estate.

Ver. 27.

The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, i.e. God shall be a swift witness against him by some extraordinary judgments: still he reflects upon Job's case, and the fire from heaven, **#Job 1**.

The earth i.e. all creatures upon earth shall conspire with God to destroy him.

Ver. 28.

The increase of his house; either,

1. His posterity; or rather,

2. His estate, got by the labour, and employed for the use, of his family.

Shall depart; shall be lost or taken away from him. See **#2Ki 20:17**.

His goods shall flow away like waters, to wit, swiftly and strongly, and so as to return no more.

The day of his wrath, i. e. of God's wrath, when God shall come to execute judgment upon him.

Ver. 29.

From God; who like a wise master of a feast gives to every man his proper portion, and as a just judge distributes to him according to his deserts.

The heritage appointed unto him by God, Heb. *the heritage* (i.e. the portion, as before; called here a heritage; partly to note the stability and assurance of it, that it is as firm as an inheritance to the right heir; and partly in opposition to that inheritance which he had gotten by fraud and violence) *of his word*; either,

1. Of God's word, i.e. which is allotted to him by the word or sentence of God. Or,

2. Of the wicked man's word, the reward of his speeches; which, like his actions, are and may well be presumed to be wicked and blasphemous, and many ways offensive to God: and he instanceth in his speeches rather than his actions, to meet with Job, who, though he had made some colourable excuses for his actions, yet was manifestly guilty of hard and sinful speeches against God, which he would hereby intimate that they were not such harmless and excusable things as Job pretended, as appeared by these severe judgments which they brought upon wicked men.

JOB CHAPTER 21

Job's reply: he complaineth not to man, in whose judgment he hath most reason to grieve; but exciteth their attention to convincing and amazing truths, **#Job 21:1-6**. The wicked prosper till in their pride they fear not God, **#Job 21:7-15**. Yet he purgeth himself from their counsel, and acknowledgement that often their destruction from God is manifest, at least in their children, **#Job 21:16-21**. God is righteous in both cases, and both are alike in their death, **#Job 21:22-26**. The wicked are indeed reserved for destruction, but who dareth now withstand them? and in the grave they are at rest, whither all others follow them, **#Job 21:27-34**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Or, *this shall be your consolations*, i.e. I shall accept of your patient and diligent attention to me, instead of all those consolations which you owed to me in this condition, and which I expected from you.

Ver. 3.

Suffer me that I may speak without such interruption as you have given me, **#Job 20:2**; and if I do not defend my cause with solid and convincing arguments, go on in your scoffs if you please.

Ver. 4.

To man; or, *of man*; for the prefix *lamed* commonly signifieth both *to* and *of*. And this question implies a denial, or that his complaint is not to or of man, to wit, only, but to or of God; as is here sufficiently implied, and oft elsewhere expressed by Job in this book. So the sense seems to be either,

1. This, I do not make my moan or complaint unto, or expect relief from, you, or from any men, but from God only; and therefore you have reason patiently to hear me when I am pouring forth my complaints to God. Or rather,

2. This, Do I only complain, or have I reason to complain, only of you and your unmerciful carriage to me; or of men who have dealt barbarously with me? **#Job 1 Job 30:1,9**, &c. Surely no; but, my complaint is of God, and of his hard and severe dealing with me. It is he who hath alienated my friends' affections from me, and stirred up mine enemies against me. And though it hath been my chief care and business to please and serve him, yet he hath also set himself against me, and shot all his arrows into me. And therefore my expostulation with him (which here follows, **#Job 21:7**) is the more reasonable; and if you will hear me calmly and patiently, you will find that I have cause of complaining. *If it were so*, i.e. if my complaint were only of man, I have cause to be troubled. Or, *if it be so*, i.e. if I do not complain of man, but of God, it is no wonder if my spirit be greatly oppressed; and you ought to allow me the liberty of easing my troubled mind, and modestly pleading my cause before God.

Be troubled, Heb. *be shortened*, or *straitened*, i.e. either grieved or vexed, as this word signifies, #Ex 6:9 Nu 21:4 Jud 10:16 16:16 The heart is enlarged by joy, and contracted by sorrow; as appears by philosophy and experience.

Ver. 5.

Consider what I am about to say concerning the wonderful prosperity of the worst of men, and the intolerable pressures of some good men, such as I have manifested and shall prove that I am, and it is able to fill you that are but spectators with astonishment and horror at the strange and mysterious course of Divine Providence herein; and therefore it is no wonder if I, who suffer such things from that God whom I have so faithfully served, am overwhelmed with the sense of it.

Lay your hand upon your mouth, i.e. be silent, as this phrase is oft used, as #Job 40:4 Pr 10:32 Mic 7:16; for shame forbear to vex me with your words: or, *you will lay*, &c.; the imperative being put for the future, as is usual. I am persuaded you will be silenced and convinced by what I shall say.

Ver. 6.

When I remember what I have partly observed and partly felt of these things. The very remembrance of what is past fills me with dread and horror.

Ver. 7.

He expostulates this matter partly with his friends, If things be as you say, how comes this to pass, &c? partly with God himself, Wherefore doth the righteous God distribute things so unequally?

The wicked live, to wit, long and happily; as *living* is oft taken, as #Le 18:5 1Sa 10:24 25:6 Ps 38:19; a painful and afflicted life being a kind of death, and oft so called, as #De 30:15,19 Pr 15:10 19:16 1Co 3:22 15:31.

Become old, to wit, in their prosperous estate.

Ver. 8.

Their seed; either,

1. The fruits of their ground; or rather,

2. Their children; as it is explained in the next branch of the verse, the words both here and there used being commonly so understood.

Their seed is established, i.e. they multiply and prosper greatly. In their sight; which is a great addition to their happiness.

Ver. 9.

They neither fear nor feel any disturbance.

Ver. 10.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 11.

Like a flock of sheep or goats, as the word signifies; in great numbers, and with sweet concord; which is a singular delight to them and to their parents.

Ver. 12.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 13.

In wealth; in good, i.e. in the enjoyment of all the good things of this life, without any mixture of evil. They do not die of a lingering and tormenting disease, as I now and many other good men die, but suddenly and sweetly, like lambs; as is usually said in such cases.

Ver. 14.

Therefore; because of their constant prosperity. Heb. *and*, or *yet*. Though God be so gracious to them, yet they say and do thus to him.

They say; sometimes in words, but commonly in their thoughts and affections, and the language of their lives: see #Ps 14:1 36:1,2 Mal 3:14,15 Tit 1:16.

We desire not the knowledge of thy laws,

much less the practice.

Ver. 15.

What excellency is there in him? and what advantage have we or can we expect from him?

Ver. 16.

Their good is not in their hand: this seems to be an answer to the foregoing question, and a confutation of that ungodly opinion and practice, #Job 21:14,15. Wicked men (saith he) have no reason to neglect and reject God because of their prosperity, for **their good**, i.e. all their wealth and felicity, is not

in their hand, i.e. it neither was obtained nor can be kept by their own might, but only by God's power and favour, upon whom they wholly depend for it. Or the sense is, Though they have riches, and power, and glory in their hands, yet **their** true and proper **good is not in their hand**, i.e. they are destitute of that in which their true happiness lies, to wit, in God's love and favour; and all the comforts which they enjoy are attended with God's wrath and curse, and therefore not to be envied by any man in his wits. *They say to God, Depart from us*, when indeed their true and only felicity consists in the enjoyment of him: compare #Ps 4:6,7.

The counsel of the wicked is far from me; therefore I am far from approving their opinion, or following their course, or enjoying their prosperity, or desiring to partake of their delicacies upon such terms.

Ver. 17.

How oft! this phrase notes either,

1. The rarity and seldomness of it. This. I confess, sometimes happens, but not oft. Or rather,

2. The frequency of it. I grant that this happens oft, though not constantly, as you affirm. And this seems best to agree both with the use of this phrase in Scripture, where it notes frequency, as #Ps 78:40 Mt 18:21 Lu 13:34, and never seldomness; and with the foregoing words, as a reason why *the counsel of the wicked was far from him*, because they oftentimes pay dear for it in this life, and always in the next life; and with the following verses, wherein he discourseth largely, not of the prosperity of the wicked, (as he should have done, if the sense of these words were this, that such were but seldom afflicted,) but of their calamities. *The candle*, or *lamp*, i. e. their glory and outward happiness; as #Job 8:6 2Sa 21:17 Ps 132:17.

God distributeth: God is manifestly understood out of the following words, this being God's work, and proceeding from God's anger.

Ver. 18.

i.e. Their destruction shall be speedy, and certain, and irrecoverable.

Ver. 19.

God layeth up, to wit, in his treasures, **#Ro 2:5.**

His iniquity, or rather, *the punishment of his iniquity*, i.e. he will punish him both in his person and in his posterity.

He shall know it, i.e. he shall live to see the destruction of his children.

Ver. 20.

His eyes shall see his destruction, i.e. he shall be destroyed;

as to see death, is to die, **#Ps 89:48 Heb 11:5;** and *to see affliction,* or *any kind of evil,* is to feel it **#Ps 90:15 La 3:1;** and *to see good,* is to enjoy it, **#Job 7:7 9:25 Ps 34:12.** Or this phrase may be emphatical, he shall foresee his ruin hastening towards him, and not be able to prevent or avoid it; he shall sensibly feel himself sinking and perishing; which aggravates his misery.

He shall drink; not sip or taste, but drink; which word commonly notes the abundance of the thing spoken of.

Ver. 21.

What pleasure hath he in his house after him? or, *for what desire, or care, or study hath he for or concerning* (as *beth* is oft used)

his house, i.e. his children? When he is dead and gone, he cares not what becomes of his children, as irreligion commonly makes men unnatural; he is not concerned nor affected with their felicity or misery. See **#Job 14:21.** And therefore God doth punish both him and his children whilst he lives, **#Job 21:19,20.** Or thus, What delight can he take in the thoughts of the glory and happiness of his posterity, when he finds that he is dying a violent and untimely death? So this is a further proof that this man is neither happy in himself, nor with reference to his posterity.

When the number of his months is cut off in the midst; when that number of months, which by his constitution and the course of nature he might have lived, is diminished and cut off by the hand of violence.

Ver. 22.

Knowledge, i.e. discretion, or how to govern the world. For so you do, whilst you tell him that he must not sorely afflict the godly, nor give the wicked much and long prosperity here.

He judgeth those that are high; either,

1. The highest persons, whether in earth, as the greatest kings; or in heaven, as the angels: he *judgeth them*, i.e. he exactly knows them, and accordingly gives sentence concerning them, as he sees fit; and therefore it is great folly and presumption in us to direct or correct his judgments. Or,

2. Those things that are high, and deep, and far out of our reach, as God's secret counsels and judgments are.

Ver. 23.

One, to wit, either,

1. One of these wicked men, of whose condition he is here speaking. Or,

2. Any one man, whether good or bad. In his full strength; in a state of perfect health, and strength, and prosperity; all which this phrase implies.

Ver. 24.

His breasts: the Hebrew word is not elsewhere used, and therefore it is diversely translated; either,

1. *Breasts*. But that seems very improper here, because men's breasts do not use to be filled with milk. Or,

2. *Milk-pails*. But their fulness is common, and no sign of eminent plenty, which is here designed. Besides, the following branch, which in Job and elsewhere frequently explains the former, implies that it signifies some part of man's body, as all the ancient interpreters render it; either the *sides*, as some of them have it; or the *bowels*, as others. But for the following *milk* they read *fat*; the

Hebrew letters being exactly the same in both words; and the Hebrews by the name of *milk* do oft understand fat.

His bones are moistened with marrow; which is opposed to the dryness of the bones, #**Job 30:30 Ps 102:3**, which is caused by old age, or grievous distempers or calamities.

Ver. 25.

Another; either,

1. Another wicked man. Or,

2. Any other man promiscuously considered, either good or bad. So hereby he shows how indifferently and alike God deals the concerns of this life to one and another, to good and bad. So he shows that there is a great variety in God's dispensations; that he distributes great prosperity to one, and great afflictions to another no worse than he, according to his wise but secret counsel.

In the bitterness of his soul, i.e. with heart-breaking pains and sorrows.

Never eateth with pleasure, i.e. hath no pleasure in his life, no, not so much as at meal-time, when men usually are most free and pleasant.

Ver. 26.

All these worldly differences are ended by death, and they lie in the grave without any distinction, till the time of general resurrection and judgment comes. So that no man can tell who is good, and who is bad, by any events which befall them in this life.

Ver. 27.

I know your thoughts; I perceive what you think, and will object, and say for your own defence.

The devices, or, *evil thoughts*; for so this word is oft used, as #**Pr 12:2 14:17 Job 24:8 Isa 32:7**.

Wrongfully imagine, or *wrest*, or *violently force*. For they strained both Job's words, and their own thoughts, which were biassed by their prejudice and passion against Job.

Against me; for I know very well that your discourses, though they be of wicked men in the general, yet are particularly levelled at me.

Ver. 28.

Ye say, to wit, in your minds. *Where is the house of the prince?* i.e. it is no where, it is lost and gone. This is spoken either,

1. Of Job, or his eldest son, whose house God had lately overthrown. Or rather,

2. In general of wicked princes or potentates, as the following answer showeth. So the meaning of the question is, that it was apparent from common observation, that eminent judgments, even in this life, were sooner or later the portion of all ungodly men.

Where are the dwelling-places of the wicked? which is added to limit the former expression, and to show that he spoke only of wicked princes.

Ver. 29.

These are the words, either,

1. Of Job's friends, who thus continue their former discourse by a second inquiry; or rather,

2. Of Job himself, who answers one question with another. You may learn this, which is the matter of our debate, to wit, that good men are oft afflicted, and that wicked men do commonly live and die in great prosperity, and are not punished in this world, even from

them that go by the way, i.e. either from travellers, who having seen and observed many persons, and places, and events, are more capable judges of this matter; or from any person that passeth along the high-way, from every one that you meet with. It is so vulgar and trivial a thing, that no man of common sense is ignorant of it.

Their tokens, i.e. the examples, or evidences, or signs of this truth, which they that go by the way can produce. They will show here and there in divers places the goodly houses, and castles, and other monuments of power and dignity which wicked potentates

have erected, and to this day do possess, and in which divers of them live and die. He alludes here to those

tokens which are set up in high-ways for the direction of those who travel in them.

Ver. 30.

That the wicked, &c. this is the thing which they might learn of passengers.

Reserved; or, *withheld*, or *kept back*, to wit, from falling into common calamities, though in truth he be not so much kept from evil as kept for evil; he is reserved from a less, that he may be swallowed up in a greater misery; as Pharaoh was kept from the other plagues, that he might be drowned in the sea.

They shall be brought: he speaketh of the same person; only the singular number is changed into the plural, possibly to intimate, that although for the present only some wicked men were punished, yet then all of them should suffer. *Shall be brought forth*, to wit, by the conduct of God's providence and justice, as malefactors are brought forth from prison to judgment and execution, though they be brought to it slowly, and by degrees, and with some kind of pomp and state, as this word signifies.

To the day of wrath; Heb. *to the day of wraths*, i.e. of special and extraordinary wrath; either to some terrible and desolating judgments, which God sometimes sends upon wicked princes or people; or to the day of the last and general judgment, which is called in Scripture the day of wrath; for the day of the general resurrection and judgment was not unknown to Job and his friends, as appears from **#Job 19:25**, &c, and other passages of this book.

Ver. 31.

His way, i.e. his wicked course and actions, and whither they lead him. His power and splendour is so great, that scarce any man dare reprove him for his sin, or show him his danger.

To his face, i.e. plainly, and whilst he lives, as the same phrase is used, **#De 7:10**.

Who shall repay him what he hath done? no man can bring him to an account or punishment.

Ver. 32.

Yet, Heb. *and*. The pomp of his death shall be suitable to the glory of his life.

Shall he be brought, with pomp and state, as the word signifies.

To the grave, Heb. *to the graves*, i.e. to an honourable and eminent grave; the plural number being oft used emphatically to note eminency, as **#Job 40:10 Pr 1:20 La 3:22**. He shall not die a violent, but a natural death, and shall lie in the bed of honour.

Shall remain in the tomb, Heb. *shall watch* (i.e. have a constant and fixed abode, as watchmen have in the watching-place) in the heap, i.e. in his grave, which is called a heap, either because the earth is there heaped up, or because it was adorned with some pyramid or other monument raised up to his honour. His body shall quietly rest in his grave or monument, where he shall be embalmed and preserved so entire and uncorrupted, that he might rather seem to be a living watchman, set there to guard the body, than to be a dead corpse.

Ver. 33.

Of the valley, i.e. of the grave, which is low and deep like a valley.

Shall be sweet unto him; he shall sweetly rest in his grave, free from all cares, and fears, and troubles, **#Job 3:17,18**.

Every man shall draw after him, Heb. *he shall draw every man after him*, to wit, into the grave; i.e. all that live after him, whether good or bad, shall follow him into the grave, i.e. shall die as he did. So he fares no worse herein than all mankind. He is figuratively said to draw them, because they come after him, as if they were drawn by his example.

Ver. 34.

Why then do you seek to comfort me with vain hopes of recovering my prosperity if I repent, seeing your grounds are manifestly false, and common experience showeth that good men are very oft in great tribulation, while the vilest of men thrive and prosper in the world?

JOB CHAPTER 22

Eliphaz's answer: man's righteousness profiteth not God; nor can God fear man, #Job 22:1-4. He chargeth Job's misery on his sins, #Job 22:5-11; which God beheld, and knew, nor could they be hid from him, #Job 22:12-14. The wicked, and their misery, #Job 22:15-17. If they prospered, he would not hold with them; but their destruction the righteous should laugh at, #Job 22:18-20. He exhorteth Job to know God and his law, and return to him: he should grow rich: God shall be his defence, his joy and confidence, #Job 22:21-26. If he would pray, God would hear; and his desire and purpose should stand, #Job 22:27-30.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Be profitable unto God, i.e. add any thing to his perfection or felicity, to wit, by his righteousness, as the next verse shows. Why then dost thou insist so much upon thy own righteousness, as if thou didst oblige God by it, or as if he could not without injury afflict thee? who supposeth thyself to be a righteous person, though indeed thou art not so, as he saith, #Job 22:5,6, &c.; but if thou wert really so, God is not thy debtor for it.

As; or, *because;* or, *but;* or, *yea* rather: so this latter clause is to be read without an interrogation, and the former with it.

He that is wise may be profitable to himself: a wise or good man (for these in Scripture use are one and the same) doth much good to himself; he promotes his own peace, and honour, and happiness by his goodness; and having so great a reward for his virtue, God is not indebted to him, but he is indebted to God for it.

Ver. 3.

Any pleasure, i.e. such a pleasure as he needs for his own ease and contentment, without which he could not be happy, as appears by the foregoing and following words; for otherwise God is oft said to delight in the good actions of his people, to wit, so far as to approve and accept them.

That thou makest thy ways perfect; that thy life is free from blemish, as thou pretendest, but falsely, as I shall show.

Ver. 4.

Will, or *doth*, or

would he reprove thee, i.e. punish thee? For this word is frequently used of real rebukes or chastisements, as hath been oft noted.

For fear of thee; because he is afraid, lest if he should let thee alone, thou wouldst grow too great and powerful for him, as princes oftentimes crush those subjects of whom they are afraid. Surely no. As thy righteousness cannot profit him, so thy wickedness can do him no hurt. Or, *for thy piety or religion*, which is commonly called by the name of *fear*. Doth he punish thee because thou fearest and servest him, as thou dost insinuate? No surely, but for thy sins, as it follows.

Will he enter with thee into judgment, and condemn thee? to wit, for the reason last mentioned, as appears from the Hebrew text, where the words lie thus, *Will he for fear of thee*

reprove thee, or

enter with thee into judgment?

Ver. 5.

Thy great sins are the true and only causes of thy misery. The words may very well be rendered thus, *Is not thy evil* (i.e. thy punishment or affliction, which is frequently expressed by this very word) *great, because* (the particle *and* being oft used causally, as it is #Ge 18:13 22:12 24:56 Isa 34:1 64:5)

thine iniquities are infinite? Are not thy calamities procured by and proportionable to thy sins? Thy own conscience tells thee they are so. And therefore thou hast no reason to accuse God, nor any person but thyself.

Ver. 6.

For thou hast taken, or, *surely thou hast taken*. He speaks thus by way of conjecture, or strong presumption. When I consider thy grievous and unusual calamities, I justly conclude thou art guilty of all or some of these following crimes; and do thou search thine own conscience, whether it be not so with thee.

From thy brother, i.e. either of thy neighbour, or of thy kinsman; which are both called by the name of *brother*. This is added to aggravate the offence.

For nought, i.e. without sufficient and justifiable cause; which he might do many ways; either by taking what he ought not to take, **#De 24:6**; or from whom he ought not, to wit, the poor, to whom he should give **#Pr 3:27** or when and in such manner as he ought not, of which **See Poole "De 24:10"**, **See Poole "De 24:11"**; or by keeping it longer than he should, as when the poor man's necessity requires it, or when the debt is satisfied, **#Eze 18:16**.

Stripped the naked of their clothing; either by taking their garment for a pledge, against the law, **#Ex 22:26**; or otherwise by robbing them of their rights, all other injuries being synecdochically comprehended under this.

Quest. How could he strip the naked?

Answ. He calls them *naked*, either,

1. Because they had but very few and mean clothes, such being oft called naked, as **#De 28:48 1Co 14:11 Jas 2:15**. Or,

2. From the effect, because though he did not find them naked, yet he made them so. The like phrases we have **#Isa 47:2**, *grind meal*, i.e. by grinding corn make it meal; **#Am 8:5**, *falsifying the deceitful balances*, i.e. by falsifying making true balances deceitful. And so here, *to strip the naked*, is by stripping them to make them naked.

Ver. 7.

Surely thou hast been so hard-hearted as to deny a cup of cold water to those that needed and desired it. Water was oftentimes scarce and precious in those hot countries, and was appropriated to particular persons, without whose leave other persons might not take it.

To the weary, i.e. to him who by reason of hard labour or travel is weary and thirsty. So this word is used **#Pr 25:25**.

From the hungry, to whom it was due by God's law, **#Pr 3:27**, which also was known to Job by the light of nature. Hereby he intimates the greatness of this sin of uncharitableness, by ranking

it with heinous crimes; whereas Job (as he thought) esteemed it but a small fault, if any.

Ver. 8.

Heb. *And, or but, the man of arm, or strength, or, power, to him was the earth, or the land.* i.e. he had the firm possession or free enjoyment of it: which is meant either,

1. Of Job, of whom he speaks invidiously in the third person. The mighty man Job possessed, and enlarged, and enjoyed his estate without any compassion to the poor. Or rather,

2. Of other rich and potent men, who had the earth or land, either.

1. By Job's judicial sentence, which was generally given in favour of the rich, and against the poor; or,

2. By Job's kindness and courtesy. The rich were always welcome to him, his house was open to them, his land was before them, when the poor were driven away from his house and territories.

The honourable man dwelt in it; either by thy sentence or permission he had a peaceable and sure possession of it. He repeateth the same thing in other words.

Ver. 9.

Widows, whose helpless estate called for thy pity, #Ex 22:22 De 24:17,19.

Away empty; either by denying them that relief which their poverty required, or that right which their cause deserved; or by spoiling them of their goods, because thou knewest them to be unable to oppose thee, or to right themselves.

The arms, i.e. all their supports, and comforts, and rights. A heinous sin, but falsely charged upon Job.

Ver. 10.

For these and the like crimes. The cause of thy ruin is not secret from God's sovereign power, and unsearchable judgments, (as thou pretendest,) but plain and manifest, even thy own crying sins.

Snares are round about thee; thou art encompassed with dangers and calamities.

Sudden fear: beside thy present miseries, thou art tormented with the dread and expectation of further and sorer judgments.

Ver. 11.

Darkness; either,

1. A darkness and confusion of mind so great that thou canst not discern the true cause and use of all thy sufferings. Or,

2. Grievous calamities, which are oft called darkness, which are such that thou canst see no way nor possibility of escaping. Either thou art troubled with fear of further evils, as it is said, **#Job 21:10**, or with the gross *darkness* of thy present state of misery.

Abundance of waters, i.e. plenty and variety of sore afflictions, which are frequently compared to waters, as **#Ps 18:16 66:12 Isa 43:2**.

Ver. 12.

Is not God in the height of heaven? Surely he is; and from that high tower *he looketh down upon men*, **#Ps 14:2**, to behold, and govern, and recompense all their actions, whether good or bad. And therefore, O Job, thou art grossly mistaken, in thinking that all things in this lower world are managed by chance, and without any regard to justice, or to just men, and not by the wise and holy providence of God; for this is the genuine consequence of thy great principle, that good men suffer as deeply as any others, whilst the vilest of men are exalted and flourish.

Behold the height of the stars, how high they are; yet God is far higher than they, and from thence can easily spy all men and things here below; as the highest places afford the best prospects.

Ver. 13.

And, or, *therefore*; from this true and certain principle thou drawest this false and wicked conclusion. Or, *yet*, notwithstanding this undeniable argument.

Thou sayest; thou reasonest thus within thyself, as it may seem by thy discourses.

How doth God know? i.e. God cannot discern, and therefore doth not mind things so far below him and distant from him.

Can he judge through the dark cloud, i.e. through those immense and innumerable clouds which lie between the heaven and the earth, although our eyes see but few of them?

Ver. 14.

His conversation and business and delight is in the higher and heavenly world, which is worthy of his care, but he will not disparage nor burden himself with the care of this contemptible spot of earth; which was the opinion of many heathen philosophers, and, as they fancied, was Job's opinion also.

Ver. 15.

Heb. *the way of antiquity*, i.e. of men living in ancient times, or former ages. By this way is here meant, either,

1. Their course or common practice; or,
2. Their end or success; as the

way is taken, **#1Sa 9:6,8**; and as death, which is, and is called, *the end of all men*, **#Ec 7:2**, is also called *the way of all the earth*, **#Jos 23:14 1Ki 2:2**.

Ver. 16.

Out of time, i.e. before their time; who died a violent and untimely death.

Whose foundation was overflown with a flood; who, together with their foundation, to wit, the earth, and all their supports and enjoyments in it, were destroyed by the general deluge; which doubtless was very well known to them, because they lived not long after it; and which was most proper for this argument. Or,

whose foundation, i.e. all their power, and riches, and policy, upon which they build all their hopes and happiness, *was like a flood poured forth*; which made a great show and noise for a time, but speedily vanished and came to nothing.

Ver. 17.

He reports Job's words, **#Job 21:14,15**, (where they are explained,) but to a contrary purpose. Job alleged them to show that they prospered notwithstanding their professed wickedness, and Eliphaz produceth them to show that they were cut off for it.

Ver. 18.

Yet it is true that for a time God did prosper them, as he did thee; which also was the aggravation of their sin, and that which hastened their ruin: but at last, and in due time, God cut them off in a tremendous and exemplary manner; as he will also do thee, if thou dost not repent.

But the counsel of the wicked is far from me; he repeats Job's words, #Job 21:16, not without reflection and some kind of derision. Thou didst say so, but without sufficient reason, and against thy own principle, that God carries himself indifferently towards good and bad; but I, who have observed God's terrible judgments upon wicked men, have much more reason to abhor their counsels which had so sad an issue.

Ver. 19.

The righteous see it; whom God oft spares in common calamities, and makes them to survive and see the destruction of the wicked; as Noah, Lot, &c.

Are glad; not that they insult over or rejoice in the ruin of any men, but because they delight in the vindication of God's honour, and justice, and holiness, which is conjoined with the destruction of his enemies, and which is and ought to be dearer to them than all the interests of men.

The innocent laugh them to scorn; they justly deride them, for their vain and yet strong confidences, which are now destroyed; and for their profane contempt of God and of his judgments, which now they feel; and for their deep and crafty counsels, which are now frustrated and turned against themselves.

Ver. 20.

Whereas; or, *when*; or, *seeing that*; or, *because*; for this Hebrew particle *im* is oft used for *chi*. And so the following words may contain the reason of the joy and laughter of the innocent, mentioned #Job 22:19, because when wicked men are destroyed, they are preserved; because

our substance, i.e. our souls, and bodies, and subsistence,

was now cut down. He should have said *their substance*, i.e. the substance of the righteous; but he changeth the person, and saith,

our substance; either as including himself in the number of righteous persons, and thereby intimating that he pleaded the common cause of all such, whilst Job pleaded the cause of the wicked, as is elsewhere observed; or because he would hereby thankfully acknowledge some eminent and particular preservation given to him amongst other righteous men; or because he and his brethren were of the same substance with and descended from the loins of them whom God had miraculously preserved, when others round about them were cut off; as God had done for Abraham and his posterity, of which race these are conceived to have been. And a like change both of person and number we find #Ho 12:4, *He found him* (i.e. Jacob) *in Beth-el, and there he spake with us*, i.e. with him, as representing us, and for all our good.

The remnant; all that was left undestroyed in the general calamity. Or, *their excellency*; all their desirable and delectable things. *Of them*, i.e. of those who are opposed to the righteous, and in whose destruction the righteous rejoiced.

The fire, to wit, of God's wrath: some dreadful judgment, either proper fire, possibly that which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, which such knowing and inquisitive persons could not be ignorant of, as a thing done near their times and places; or some other sore calamity; for such oft come under the name of *fire*. But this whole verse is and may be otherwise rendered, and that interrogatively. *Is not* (or rather, *was not*, the Hebrew prefix *he* being here understood, after the manner of the language, from #Job 22:15, where it is expressed) *our substance* (i.e. almost all our nature and kind) *cut off*, (almost all destroyed in the flood,) *and did not the fire consume a*

remnant of them, i.e. of mankind, and of ungodly men, in Sodom and Gomorrah?

Ver. 21.

With him, i.e. with God, as appears both from #Job 22:23, where he is expressed, and from the nature of the thing, there being no other way to happiness. Renew thy acquaintance and converse with God by prayer, which thou hast restrained, #Job 15:4. and repentance for all thy sins, and true humiliation under his hand, and hearty compliance with all his commands, and diligent care to

serve and enjoy him; and be no longer estranged from God, as thou now art.

Be at peace: this is either,

1. A promise, the imperative being put for the future of the indicative mood, *and so thou shalt have peace*, i.e. prosperity and happiness. Or rather,

2. A counsel or command; If God be an enemy to thee, as thou sayest he is, reconcile thyself to him by true repentance, and earnestly seek his favour and friendship, and do not provoke him further by thy false and wicked speeches of him, or by thy froward carriage to him: and whereas thou art full of unquietness and rage against God, learn to possess thy soul in patience, give over murmuring against him, and get a composed, and quiet, and submissive mind and heart; which is called *peace*, **#Jud 6:23 19:20 Isa 57:21**. Thus far is the command or exhortation; now followeth the promise.

Thereby, i.e. by following these counsels.

Good shall come unto thee; thou shalt be freed from all thy calamities, and enjoy all the happiness which thy heart can desire.

Ver. 22.

Take the law and rule whereby thou governest thy thoughts, and words, and whole life, not from profane heathens, whose opinion concerning God's providence thou hast embraced, nor from thy own vain imaginations or violent passions, which have led thee into thy present errors and miscarriages, but from God, and from his word, and from his law, which is written in thy own mind, and from the doctrines and instructions of the holy men of God, who are all of our mind in this matter.

Lay up his words in thine heart, i.e. do not only hear them with thine ears, but let them sink into thy heart being received there by hearty affection, and fixed by serious, and frequent, and practical consideration of them, **#Ps 119:11 Mt 13:9 Lu 2:19,51**.

Ver. 23.

To the Almighty; or, *home to the Almighty*; or, *so as to reach to the Almighty*, and be joined to him. The Hebrew phrase is extraordinary, and emphatical, and implies a thorough and

effectual turning not only from sin, (which a hypocrite may do in great part, at least for a time, upon carnal motives, and without any respect or love to God,) but also unto God, so as to love him, and cleave to him, and sincerely devote a man's self to his fear and service. And he expresseth it in this manner, because he thought Job to be a hypocrite, and therefore counselleth him to turn to God in another and better manner than he had done, to wit, with all his heart, and not feignedly.

Thou shalt be built up; God, who hath pulled thee down in thy estate, and honour, and children, will repair thy ruins, and give thee more children, which is oft called *building*; #Ge 16:2 Ex 1:21 Ru 4:11; and bless thee with prosperity and happiness, as *building* signifies, #Jer 42:10 31:4.

Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles: this may be either,

1. A condition, upon which God makes the following promises, If (which particle may be repeated out of the former part of the verse) *thou shalt put away, &c.*, i.e. if thou shalt effectually purge thyself and family from all sin, and keep thyself and them, as far as thou canst, from all appearances and occasions of sin, which is the duty of all, and the practice of true penitents; whereby he seems to reflect upon Job, as if he had been faulty and negligent in the government of himself or children, notwithstanding his sacrificing for them, #Job 1. Or rather,

2. A promise, because the conditions required had been expressed together, #Job 22:21,22, and in the beginning of this verse, after which he comes to the promises, and begins with this,

thou shalt be built up, and so proceeds to other promises; and therefore it seems not probable that he should return to the conditions again, and mix the conditions and promises together, which he hath so carefully separated in these verses. And so it is either,

1. A spiritual promise, If thou dost sincerely repent, God will give thee more grace effectually to reform thyself and family, according to that rule, *To him that hath shall be given.* Or,

2. A temporal promise,

Thou shalt put away iniquity, or *injury*, or *perverseness*, (i.e. either perverse and injurious men; or God's judgments, or the punishments of thy sins; as iniquity is very oft used,)

far from thy tabernacles, i.e. from all thy dwellings, and tents, and possessions; no hand of violence shall come near them, no evil plague shall come upon thy own habitation, or upon the habitations of thy children, as lately it did for thine and their sins.

Ver. 24.

Gold; solid or choice gold, as the word signifies.

As dust, i.e. in great abundance. Or, *upon the dust*, or ground; it shall be so plentiful, and therefore vile, that thou shalt not lock it up in chests and treasuries, but scatter it any where, and let it lie even upon the ground.

As the stones of the brook; as plentifully as if the places of gold were but so many pebble stones, which are to be found in and near every brook. Or, *for the stones*, i.e. instead of them. Or, *in the rock*, or *among the rocks*: gold shall be so abundant, that thou mayst lay it any where, even upon or among the rocks.

Ver. 25.

God by his special and watchful providence shall protect thee from all dangers and calamities. Heb.

thy defences, or *munitions*. One God shall keep thee as safely as many munitions.

Plenty of silver, Heb. *silver of strength*, i.e. which by God's blessing shall be thy defence, #Ec 7:12. Or, *silver of heights*, i.e. high and heaped up like a mountain.

Ver. 26.

For; — so this verse contains a reason why he might confidently expect all those former outward blessings, because he should have God's favour, which is the spring and foundation of them. Or, *surely*, or, *yea, moreover*; for this particle *chi* is sometimes used by way of aggravation, or amplification, as #Ge 45:26 1Sa 14:41 Isa 7:9 32:13. And this suits very well here; yea, God will do greater things than these for thee.

Thou shalt have thy delight in the Almighty; thou shalt find delight not only in these outward comforts, but also and especially in God, whose face shall shine upon thee; who shall give thee these things not in anger and wrath, as he doth to wicked men, but as pledges of his love and favour to thee, and of those greater and eternal blessings which he hath in store for thee; and accordingly thou shalt delight thyself in worshipping, enjoying, obeying, and serving God in and with all his mercies.

Shalt lift up thy face unto God, i.e. look up to him by meditation and prayer, not as now thou dost, with horror and grief, which is signified by a dejected countenance, #2Sa 2:22 Lu 18:13; but with cheerfulness and confidence, as this phrase oft notes, as #Lu 21:28. See Poole "Job 11:15".

Ver. 27.

Hear thee, i.e. answer thy prayers, and not disregard them, and hide himself from thee, as now he doth.

Thou shalt pay thy vows, i.e. thou shalt obtain those blessings for which thou didst make vows to God, and therefore, according to thy obligation, shalt pay thy vows to him. The antecedent is here supposed and understood out of the consequent.

Ver. 28.

Thy purposes and designs shall not be disappointed, but effected and ratified by God; which is a great satisfaction. In all thy counsels, and courses, and actions, God shall give thee the light of his direction and governance, and of comfort and success; and thou shalt not be in such a dark, and doubtful, and perplexed condition as now thou art.

Ver. 29.

When men are cast down, Heb. *When they* (i.e. they who do this work. It is an indefinite and impersonal speech, which is very common in the Hebrew language) *shall cast down or overthrow*; either,

1. Proud and wicked men, as may be guessed by the opposition of the humble and innocent, who should be saved, whilst these were destroyed. So the sense is, When there shall come a general calamity, which shall sweep away all the wicked round about them. Or,

2. Thee, or thine; which pronoun is oft understood. So the sense is, When through God's permission thou shalt be brought into some trouble, which God sees fit for thee.

Thou shalt say within thyself, with good assurance and confidence.

There is lifting up; or, There shall be lifting up, either,

1. For them; if they repent and humble themselves, they shall be preserved or restored. And this thou wilt assure them of from thy own experience. Or,

2. For thee and thine; God will deliver thee, when others are crushed and destroyed. *And;* or, *for;* this particule being oft put causally, as hath been formerly noted. So the following words contain a reason why he might confidently say, that there would be such a lifting up for a person so humbled.

He, i.e. God, unto whom only salvation belongeth, **#Ps 3:8.**

Shall save; either,

1. Eternally; or,

2. Temporally, to wit, from the evils here mentioned.

The humble person, Heb. *him that hath low or cast-down eyes;* which phrase may here note, either,

1. Humility and lowliness of mind and disposition, as pride is oft expressed by high or lofty looks, as **#Ps 18:27 101:5 131:1 Pr 6:17.** And so this is a tacit admonition and reproof for Job, whom for his confident justification of himself, and his contemptuous expressions and censures concerning them, they judged to Job guilty of intolerable pride of heart. Or,

2. Lowness of estate or condition, as **#Jas 1:10.** So it notes him whose eyes and countenance are dejected by reason of his great troubles and miseries; as, on the contrary, prosperity makes persons lift up their eyes and faces.

Ver. 30.

He, i.e. God, as **#Job 22:29,** whose prerogative it is to give deliverances.

Shall deliver, to wit, upon thy request, as the following clause showeth: God will hear thy prayers even for others, which is a great honour and comfort; and much more for thyself.

The island of the innocent; not only thyself, when thou shalt become innocent and pure, but for thy sake he will deliver the whole island (or country, that word being oft used not only for such lands or countries as were separated from Canaan by the sea, as is commonly observed, but also for such as were upon the same continent with it, as appears from **#Ge 10:5 Ps 72:10 97:1 Isa 41:5**) in which thou dwellest. Or, *the guilty*, or *him that is not innocent*; for the word here rendered *island* is sometimes used for *not*, in Scripture, as **#1Sa 4:21 Pr 31:4**. So the sense is, God will have so great a respect to thy innocency and purity, that for thy sake he will deliver those that belong to thee, or live with thee, or near thee, though in themselves they be sinful creatures, and ripe for destruction. See **#Ge 18:32**.

It is delivered, to wit, the island; or, *he*, i.e. the guilty person.

By the pureness of thine hands, i.e. by thy prayers proceeding from a pure heart and conscience. When thou shalt lift up pure hands to God in prayer, as it is expressed, **#1Ti 2:8**; whereby as he asserts the prevalency of the righteous man's prayers with God for mercy, both for himself and others; and by this argument he persuadeth Job to repentance; so withal he allegeth this as an argument or evidence that Job did not stretch out pure hands to God in prayer, as he pretended, because his prayers could not prevail for the preservation of himself or his children, and much less for others at a greater distance.

JOB CHAPTER 23

Job's reply: his desire to plead with God, **#Job 23:1-5**; who should not confound, but strengthen him, **#Job 23:6,7**. He cannot behold God's way; but he walked in the way of his law, **#Job 23:8-12**. God in his providences bringeth about what he had decreed: Job's trouble herein, **#Job 23:13-17**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

i.e. Even at this time, notwithstanding all your promises and pretended consolations, I find no ease or satisfaction in all your discourses; and therefore in this and the following chapters Job seldom applies his discourse to his friends, but only addresseth his speech to God, or bewaileth himself.

Is my complaint bitter, i.e. I do bitterly complain, and have just cause to do so. But this clause is and may be otherwise rendered, *Even still* (Heb. *at this day*) is my complaint called or accounted by you *rebellion* or *bitterness*, or the rage of an exasperated mind? Do you still pass such harsh censures upon me after all my declarations and solemn protestations of my innocency?

My stroke, Heb. *my hand*, passively, i.e. the hand or stroke of God upon me, as the same phrase is used, **#Ps 77:2**; and *mine arrow*, **#Job 34:6**.

Is heavier than my groaning, i.e. doth exceed all my complaints and expressions; so far are you mistaken, that think I complain more than I have cause. Some render the words thus, *my hands are heavy* (i.e. feeble and hanging down, as the phrase is, **#Heb 12:12**. My strength and spirit faileth) because of my groaning.

Ver. 3.

Where I might find him, to wit, God, as his friends well knew, and the thing itself showeth. Thou biddest me *acquaint myself with him*, **#Job 22:21**. I desire nothing more than his acquaintance and presence; but, alas, he hides his face from me that I cannot see him, nor come near him.

To his seat, i.e. to his throne or judgment-seat, to plead my cause before him, as it here follows, **#Job 22:4**, not upon terms of strict justice, but upon those terms of grace and mercy upon which God is pleased to deal with his sinful creatures: see before, **#Job 9:34,35 16:21 17:3**. And this my confidence may be some evidence that I am not such a gross hypocrite as you imagine me to be.

Ver. 4.

I would orderly declare the things which concern and prove the right of my cause; not only debating the controversy between my friends and me, concerning my sincerity or hypocrisy before God,

as a witness or judge; but also pleading with God as a party, and modestly inquiring whether he doth not deal more rigorously with me than I might reasonably expect, wherein I desire no other judge but himself.

Fill my mouth with arguments, to prove my innocency and sincerity towards God, and consequently that am severely used.

Ver. 5.

I long to know what he would say, either to prove me a hypocrite, or to justify his harsh proceedings against me; and if he should discover to me any secret and unknown sins, for which he contendeth with me, I should humble myself before him, and accept of the punishment of mine iniquity.

Ver. 6.

Will he oppress me with his sovereign and absolute power, as men do those whom they cannot fairly and justly conquer?

He would put strength in me; the word *strength*, or *power*, being fitly supplied out of the former branch of the verse, as is very usual in Scripture. He would not use his power against me, but for me; by enabling; me to plead my cause, and giving sentence according to that clemency and benignity, which according to his gracious covenant he useth towards his children. Or, *he would put* or *set* his heart (this very verb of *putting* or *setting* being elsewhere used in this defective manner for *putting* or *setting the heart*, as #**Job 7:17 Isa 41:10**, as it is fully expressed, #**Isa 57:1 Eze 40:4 44:5**) *upon* (the preposition *beth*, *in*, being sometimes used for *al*, *upon*, as #**Ne 2:12 Isa 21:13**) *me*, to wit, to hear me and all my reasons meekly, and to judge favourably, and to help and deliver me, as that and the like phrases commonly signify in Scripture use.

Ver. 7.

There; at that throne of grace, as it is called, #**Heb 4:16**, where God lays aside his majesty and power, and judgeth according to his wonted grace and clemency.

The righteous; such as I do and dare avow myself to be, to wit, in sincerity, though not in perfection. *Might dispute with him;* humbly and modestly propounding the grounds of their

confidence, and the evidences of their righteousness. *So*; upon such a fair and equal hearing.

From my judge; either,

1. From the severe censures of all corrupt and partial judges, such as you my friends are. Or rather,

2. From the damnatory sentence of God; for he is not only pleading before him, but also with him. He would give sentence for me, and against himself. This and some such expressions of Job cannot be excused from reverence towards God, and too great a confidence in himself; for which therefore God sharply reproveth him hereafter, and Job abhorreth himself.

Ver. 8.

I go forward, i.e. towards the east, which in Scripture is accounted the forepart of the world, as the Hebrew name of it signifies, because of the light of the sun, which ariseth there, and draweth the eye of men towards it.

He is not there, to wit, so as I would have him, as a judge to hear and determine my cause, of which he is here speaking; for otherwise he knew and believed that God was essentially present in all places.

Backward, i.e. towards the west; so also the north is called *the left hand*, and the south *the right hand*, #**Job 23:9**, because so they all are to a man who looks towards the east. He names all the several parts of the world, to show his eager desire and restless endeavours to find out God, and to present himself before him.

Ver. 9.

Where he doth work, to wit, in a special and peculiar manner, more than in other parts of the world; for so indeed God did work in those parts which were northward from Job, because there mankind (among whom God delights to be and to work) were most numerous, and most ingenious to discern God's works. There also was the seat of the Assyrian empire, which was eminent in Job's time, and afterwards of the other successive empires; in and by all which God did many great and glorious works. But this Hebrew word is by others, and that very properly and fitly, rendered *when*, or *whilst, he worketh*, to wit, in an

eminent manner. So this is added to aggravate Job's unhappiness. We may certainly find any man when and where he is working; but I, saith he, search for God even when and where he is working, and yet cannot find him out.

He hideth himself, to wit, *from me*; he withdraweth his favour, and will not afford me his presence and audience.

I cannot see him; either,

1. I cannot discern his counsels and ways, and the reasons of his severe dealings with me. Or rather,

2. He doth not appear to me as a judge, to examine my cause and arguments, but condemns me without hearing me.

Ver. 10.

But, though I cannot see him, yet my comfort is, that he seeth me and my heart, and all my actions. Or, *for*, as this particle commonly signifies. So this verse contains a reason why he so vehemently desired that he might plead his cause with or before God.

He knoweth the way that I take; he cannot be deceived nor blinded, either by the artifices of bold accusers or advocates, or by his own misapprehensions or passions, but he exactly knows the way that is *with me*, i.e. the disposition of my heart, and the whole course or manner of my life.

When he hath tried me; if he would examine me thoroughly, which above all things I desire.

I shall come forth as gold; which cometh out of the furnace pure from all dross. It would appear upon a fair hearing that I am free, though not from all sin, as he had confessed before, yet from that hypocrisy and those gross enormities wherewith my friends charge me.

Ver. 11.

My foot hath held, i.e. made a free and fixed choice, and taken fast hold of them; been firmly and strongly settled, and resolved to continue in them, as the word signifies.

His steps; either,

1. Actively, the steps or ways in which God himself walks; the paths of holiness, justice, mercy, &c., wherein *he walked with or after God*, as the phrase is, #Ge 5:24 2Ki 23:3, following his example. Or,

2. Passively, the steps or paths which God hath appointed men to walk in, as #Job 21:14.

His way have I kept, and not declined; the same thing with that in the former part of the verse, in different expressions.

Ver. 12.

Neither have I gone back, i.e. not turned aside to any crooked or sinful path or course of life, human infirmity excepted.

I have esteemed, Heb. *I have hid*, or laid it up, as men do their best treasures, or what they most love and value. The phrase notes a high estimation of it, a hearty affection to it, and a diligent care to preserve it.

My necessary food, or *my appointed food*, or *my daily portion*, i.e. that food or provision which is necessary for the support of my life, as this word is used, #Ge 47:22 Pr 30:8 31:15, which is more prized and desired than all the riches in the world.

Ver. 13.

He is in one mind, i.e. notwithstanding all these evidences of my sincere piety, and all my prayers to him, he still continues in the same mind and course of afflicting me. Or,

but he is, i.e. if he be, *against one*, or *against any man*, as that word is oft used, as he now setteth himself against me. Or, *but he is one*, the Hebrew prefix *beth* being here the note of a nominative case, as it is #Job 18:8 Ps 68:5 Ho 13:9, and elsewhere. So the sense is, But why do I waste words to no purpose? All my former constant integrity, and my present profession of it, gives me no case, he is still one and the same, constant, unchangeable in his purposes and counsels of proceeding against me. Or, he is alone, and there is none besides him who can either restrain, or advise, or move him.

Who can turn him? no man can change his counsels or course, or incline him to show favour to me. He is most absolute and free to

do what he pleaseth, and he dealeth with me accordingly, and not by those milder methods which he useth towards other men.

What his soul desireth, even that he doeth; he will not do what I please or desire, but only what pleaseth himself.

Ver. 14.

Or, *he will perfect or finish my appointed portion*, i.e. those calamities which he hath allotted to me for my portion, which as he hath begun to lay on me, so he is resolved to make a full end of them.

And many such things are with him; there are many such examples of God's proceeding with men in way of absolute sovereignty and severity, and his counsels and providences, though always just, yet are oft secret, and we cannot discern the reasonableness or equity of them, which is my case.

Ver. 15.

Therefore; in consideration of his glorious majesty, and sovereign and irresistible power, by which he can do whatsoever pleaseth him, without giving any account of his matters.

At his presence; when I present him to my thoughts. Or, when he appears or manifesteth himself to me. Or, *for fear or dread of him;* or, by reason of him.

Ver. 16.

Soft, or tender. He hath bruised, and broken, or melted it, so that I have no spirit, nor courage, nor strength in me, as this or the like phrase is used, **#De 20:3 Ps 39:11 Isa 7:4 Jer 51:46.**

Ver. 17.

Because I was not cut off; because God did not cut me off by death. *Before the darkness*, i.e. before these dark and dismal miseries came upon me. Or, *before the face*, or *by reason of the darkness*, i.e. that God hath not yet cut me off by these calamities, but prolonged my days under them, that he might increase my torment.

Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face; so that I might no longer see or feel my miseries, but might be taken out of them by my long-desired death. *Seeing* (and consequently having before one's face) is oft put for experiencing, for enjoying good,

or feeling evil, as **#Job 20:17 Ps 16:10**, &c. Or, *but he hath covered darkness*, to wit, death, which is so called **#Job 10:21,22**, and elsewhere, from my face, i.e. he will not allow me the favour to see death.

JOB CHAPTER 24

The practice and prosperity of the wicked, **#Job 24:1-16**. Their punishment and curse in the end, **#Job 24:17-25**.

Ver. 1.

The sense of the words according to this translation is this,

Why, (how comes it to pass,)

seeing times (i.e. the several times of every man's life, how long he shall live, or the fittest seasons and opportunities (which are oft called *times*, as **#Ge 24:11 Ps 31:15 119:126 Ac 1:6,7**) for every action, and particularly for the punishment of wicked men, about which the present controversy was)

are not hidden from or unknown to the almighty God, (i.e. seeing all times, and men that live, and things that are done, or to be done, in their times and seasons, are exactly known to God,)

do they that know him (i.e. who love and obey him, as that word is oft used, as, **#Ps 9:10 36:10 91:14**, or they who observe and regard his ways and works done in the world)

not see (whence is it that they cannot discern)

his (i.e. God's)

days, i.e. his times and seasons which he takes for the punishment of ungodly men? which if they were constant and fixed in this life, as you pretend they are, they would not be unknown to good men, to whom God useth to reveal his secrets, and they could not be unobserved by so many good men, who make it their business to mind and study the works of God, and especially the course and methods of his providence towards good and bad men. The times or days of God's executing judgments upon sinners are frequently called *the days of the Lord*, as **#Isa 2:12 13:6 Jer 46:10**; compare **#Job 20:28 Pr 6:34 Ac 2:20**; as the time of man's judging is called *man's day*, **#1Co 4:3**. But this verse is in part, and may

very agreeably to the Hebrew text be rendered and interpreted thus, *Why or how are not times* (i.e. the times and seasons appointed for the punishment of evil-doers, about which the dispute was) *hidden or reserved by or with God*, (i.e. kept as a secret in his own breast, and concealed from the knowledge of mankind. How can you say or think with any colour that these times are fixed and manifest to all men, and that sinners are constantly punished in this life, and that so notoriously that all good men see it, as was said, #**Job 22:15-19**) *seeing* (as the particle you is rendered, #**Job 19:28**; or *for*, as it is frequently used) *they that know him* (that give themselves to understand and consider his doings in the world, who of all men are most likely to know this, if it were true and certain) *do not see his days*, to wit, of punishing the wicked in this life? as was said before. And this he mentions as a fit preface to usher in the following discourse concerning the manifold wickedness of men, and withal their present impunity.

Ver. 2.

Some remove the landmarks; or, *they* (i.e. the wicked, of whom he here treats) *touch* (to wit, in an unlawful manner, and with evil design, as this word is oft used, as #**Ge 26:11,29 Ru 2:9**, so as to invade, or possess, or remove)

the landmarks, by which men's lands are discerned, and their properties secured; that so they may enlarge their own border by diminishing their neighbour; which is so horrid an act of injustice, that it hath not only been severely forbidden by God, #**De 19:14 27:17 Pr 22:28 23:10**, but also declared execrable by the heathens, among whom it was permitted to any man to kill him that did it.

Feed thereof; or, *feed them*. They do not hide or kill them, but openly feed them, either in their oppressed neighbour's ground, which, by taking away the landmarks, they have made their own, or in their own pastures, without any remorse, or shame, or fear of punishment, either from God or men.

Ver. 3.

The ass, either *the asses*, the singular number being used collectively. Or he saith *the ass*, to aggravate their sin, that they robbed him who had but one ass. Compare #1Sa 12:2-4.

The fatherless; whose helpless condition required their pity and mercy.

The widow's ox; thereby depriving her not only of the ox itself, but of all the benefit of its labours, by which she sustained her life.

For a pledge; contrary to God's law, first written in men's hearts, and afterwards in Holy Scripture, #Ex 22:26,27 De 24:6,10, &c.

Ver. 4.

Out of the way; either,

1. Out of the way of piety and justice. They engage them to take evil courses by their examples, or promises, or threatenings. Or,

2. Out of their right. Or,

3. Out of their course and way of living. Or rather, (as the word properly signifies, and as the next clause explains it,) out of the high-way; out of the path or place in which these wicked oppressors walk and range. They labour to keep out of their way and sight for fear of their further injuries and oppressions.

Hide themselves, for fear of these wicked tyrants and persecutors.

Together, for their mutual comfort and defence against those who should invade or disturb them there. Or, *alike*. Though some of the poor are more nearly related, or have been more serviceable to these oppressors, yet none of them can escape their rage and violence.

Ver. 5.

As wild asses; which are wild, and lawless, and unteachable, and fierce, and greedy of prey, or food, which they snatch out of the goods or labours of the husbandman; in all which they are fit emblems of these men. Or, *these wild men*; for so this word signifies, #Ge 16:12, as elsewhere *wild asses*. The particle *as* is not in the Hebrew. *In the desert*, which is the proper habitation of wild asses, #Jer 2:24. If this be understood of the wild men, he

placeth them in the *desert* and *wilderness*, either because they by their spoils and violences have destroyed or driven away the people, as is intimated, **#Job 24:4**, and thereby turned populous places into deserts; or because such places as have but few houses and inhabitants (which are oft so called, as **#Ge 21:20,21 Jos 15:61,62 1Ki 2:34 9:15 Isa 42:11 Mt 3:1**) are most fit for their robberies.

Go they; either,

1. The poor, whom they spoiled and drove away from their own former habitations into deserts, where they hid themselves, and wrought hard for a subsistence. Or rather,
2. The oppressors, who are more fitly compared to wild asses, and more truly said to seek for prey, than those poor oppressed persons mentioned **#Job 24:4**, and of whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following verses.

To their work, i.e. to spoil and rob, which is their constant work and trade.

The wilderness yieldeth food for them; they are so diligent and industrious in that work, that they will fetch food for them and theirs even out of desert places, in which the owners can very hardly subsist.

For their children, or *servants*; for the word signifies both *children* and *servants*, even the whole family.

Ver. 6.

They; either,

1. The poor, who are forced to gather in the corn and grapes of their wicked oppressors; or rather,
2. The oppressors, of whom he speaks **#Job 4:4,5,7**.

His corn, i.e. the corn of the wicked, as it is in the next clause. Or, *that which*

is not their own; as the LXX., and Chaldee, and Vulgar Latin translate it, reading the Hebrew as two distinct words: they reap other men's labours.

In the field, i.e. in the field of the right owner, from whom they take it. He notes their great power and boldness, that they did not come suddenly, and carry away their corn when it was laid up in the barns, or in heaps; but they proceeded leisurely, and staid to reap the corn, and by degrees carried it away, as it were in triumph, not fearing any interruption or hinderance either from God or man.

The vintage of the wicked; of such as themselves: so they promiscuously robbed all, even their own brethren in iniquity; whereby also he may intimate the righteous judgment of God in punishing one wicked man by another, and in depriving men of those goods which they had wickedly gotten. Or, *the wicked* (the singular number being used collectively for the plural, as is frequent; the oppressors)

gather the vintage, to wit, belonging to other men.

Ver. 7.

The naked, i.e. those whom they have made naked, whom they stripped of their garments and coverings; so far were they from exercising justice or charity towards them.

To lodge; to sleep in the night, which is the coldest season.

Without clothing; without bed-clothes to cover them: compare #De 24:13.

In the cold of the night of the winter season. This verse is and may fitly be rendered thus, *They cause men to lodge naked, because they have no clothing*, (i.e. because they leave them nothing wherewith they can clothe themselves,) and

no covering in the cold; they leave them neither raiment to wear in the day, nor a covering for the night.

Ver. 8.

They, i.e. the poor, being stripped of their raiment, and forced away from their houses.

With the showers of the mountains; with the rain water, which in great showers run down from the rocks or mountains into the caves or holes in the sides of them, to which they fled for shelter.

Embrace the rock, i.e. are glad when they can find a cavern or cleft of a rock in which they may have some protection against the injuries of the weather, and a hiding-place from the fury of their oppressors. Compare #La 4:5.

Ver. 9.

They; the wicked oppressors, as is manifest from the following words.

From the breast; either out of cruelty, not sparing poor infants, but killing them; or out of covetousness, and with design either to sell the mother, or to employ her in their work, to which they so strictly confine her, that they will not allow any of her time or strength for the suckling of her infant.

Take a pledge of the poor; of which See Poole "Job 22:6".

Ver. 10.

They cause him, the poor oppressed person, *to go naked without clothing*; leaving him nothing, or next to nothing, to cover him in the day-time, when he should go abroad to his labour to get his living, but cannot for want of clothes to cover his nakedness.

The sheaf from the hungry; that single sheaf which the poor man had got with the sweat of his brows to satisfy his hunger, they inhumanly take away, and add it to their own stores and full barns. Or, *they are hungry*; or they sent them away hungry; those words being repeated out of the former clause of the verse (as is most usual); which *took or carried the sheaf, or their sheaves*, i.e. which reaped and gathered in the rich man's corn, for which they received injuries instead of a just recompence for their labour; and that when God's liberality, and the bounty of the earth to them, invited and obliged them to kind and generous actions to others.

Ver. 11.

To wit, the poor man last mentioned.

Within their walls; either,

1. Within their own walls, i.e. in private and secret places, for fear of the oppressors. Or rather,

2. Within the walls of the rich oppressors, for their use and benefit; for the poor, alas! had no walls, nor houses, nor

oliveyards, nor vineyards left to them, but they were violently spoiled of and driven away from all those things, as was said in the foregoing verses.

Their wine-presses, i.e. the grapes in their wine-presses, by a metonymy of the thing containing for the thing contained.

Suffer thirst; because they are not permitted to quench their thirst out of the wine which they make, though their labor's both need and deserve refreshment.

Ver. 12.

Men groan under the burden of injuries and grievous oppressions.

From out of the city; not only in deserts or less inhabited places, where these tyrants have the greater opportunity and advantage to practise their villainies; but even in cities, where there is a face of order and government, and courts of justice, and a multitude of people to observe and restrain such actions; whereby they plainly declare that they neither fear God nor reverence man.

The soul of the wounded; either,

1. Properly, their soul sympathizing with the body, and being grieved for its insupportable miseries, crieth to God and men for help. Or rather,

2. The life or blood (which oft cometh under that name) of those who are there

wounded unto death, as this word properly signifies, #Eze 30:24, crieth aloud unto God for vengeance, #Ge 4:10 Re 6:9,10, whereby God might seem in some sort obliged to punish them; and yet he did not, as the next words declare.

Yet God layeth not folly to them: so the sense is, yet God doth not impute or lay to their charge this folly or wickedness, which in Scripture is commonly called *folly*; i.e. he takes no notice of these horrid oppressions, nor hears the cries of the oppressed, nor punishes the oppressors. Or, *yet God* (who seeth and permitteth all this) *disposeth*, or *ordereth*, or *doth*, (for all these things this Hebrew verb signifies,) *nothing which is absurd*, or *foolish*, or *unsavoury*, i.e. doth nothing in this permission and connivance unworthy of himself, or which a wise and considerate man cannot

relish or approve, or which is not in itself righteous and reasonable, though we do not always discern the reasonableness of it.

Ver. 13.

This is added as the general character of the persons before mentioned, and as a great aggravation of their wickedness, that they were not modest sinners, which were ashamed of their evil ways, and therefore sinned in the dark, and in secret, as some who here follow; but sinned impudently in the face of the sun, and in spite of all their light, as well the light of reason and conscience, which abhors and condemns their wicked actions, as the light of Divine revelation, which was then in good measure imparted to the church and people of God in this time, and shortly after was committed to writing; all which they set at defiance, sinning with manifest contempt of God, and of men, and of their own consciences.

They know not; either,

1. They do not desire or care to know them; they are willingly ignorant of them. Or,
2. They do not approve, nor love, nor choose them; as *knowing* frequently signifies in the Scripture use.

The ways thereof, i.e. of the light, or in such ways and courses as are agreeable to the light. Or, *in his ways*, i.e. in the ways of God, who is oft understood in this book where he is not expressed.

Nor abide in the paths thereof; if they do some good actions, yet they do not persevere in well-doing, they are not constant and fixed in a good course of life.

Ver. 14.

With the light; as soon as the light appears, using no less diligence in his wicked practices, than labourers do in their honest and daily employments.

Killeth the poor and needy; where he finds nothing to satisfy his covetousness, he exerciseth his cruelty.

Is as a thief, i.e. he is really a thief; the particle *as* being oft used to express, not the resemblance but the truth of the thing, as **#Nu**

11:1 De 9:10 Ho 4:4 Ho 5:10 Joh 1:14. In the night they rob men secretly and cunningly, as in the day-time they do it more openly and avowedly.

Ver. 15.

The eye of the adulterer, i.e. the adulterer; but he mentions his eye, because the eye discerns the difference between light and darkness.

The twilight, to wit, for the evening twilight, which is his opportunity.

Saying in his heart, comforting himself with the thoughts of secretness and impunity.

Disguiseth his face, Heb. *putteth his face in secret*; covers it with a vizard or cloak, that he may be undiscovered.

Ver. 16.

They dig; either,

1. The adulterer last mentioned; although such persons do not use nor need these violent courses to get into the house of the adulteress, but are commonly admitted upon milder and easier terms. Or,

2. The thief or robber, whose common practice this is, of whom he spoke **#Job 24:14**; and having on that occasion inserted the mention of the adulterer as one who acted his sin in the same manner as the night-thief did, he now returns to him again.

Which they had marked for themselves; the thief and his accomplices, designing by some secret mark the house of some rich man which they intended to rob, and the part of the house where they resolved to enter into it.

They know not the light, i.e. do not love nor like it, as **#Job 24:13**; but abhor it, as it follows.

Ver. 17.

As the shadow of death, i.e. terrible and hateful, because it both discovers them and hinders their practices. If they are brought to light or discovered, they are overwhelmed with deadly horrors and terrors. Or, as the words are, and may very agreeably to the

Hebrew be rendered thus: *but* (as the Hebrew particle commonly signifies)

they know (Heb. *he knoweth*, every one of them knoweth, i.e. approveth and loveth)

the terrors of the shadow of death, i.e. the grossest darkness of the night, which to other men is as terrible as the shadow of death, but to these men is most acceptable: so this clause is fitly opposed to the former; he hates the light, and he likes darkness.

Ver. 18.

In these words he describes either,

1. The wicked man's disposition and deportment, that such persons are *light* and frothy in their spirits, or *swift* or *hasty* to do evil, or *unstable* in their ways as the waters, or *upon the face of the waters*, i.e. like the foam, or froth, or any other light thing which swims upon the top of the waters. Or rather,

2. His miserable condition, of which he manifestly speaks in the next words, and in the two next verses. For though Job constantly affirms and maintains it against his friends, that many ungodly men do prosper and escape punishment in this life; yet withal he observes and asserts that God will certainly sooner or later punish them, and that he sometimes doth it here, cutting them off by cruel and untimely deaths, or otherwise inflicting some notable judgment upon them; of which he also speaks **#Job 21:17**, &c. So the sense is,

He is swift, i.e. he quickly putteth away with all his glory,

as the waters, which never stay in one place, but are always hasting and running away; or like a ship, or any other thing which swimmeth *upon the face of the waters*: though he seems to stand as firm and unmovable as a rock, and to have taken deep rooting in the earth, yet he is suddenly and unexpectedly removed and pulled up by the roots. *Their*; or, *his*; for he still speaks of the same person, though with a change of the number, which is most familiar in this book, and elsewhere in Scripture.

Portion, or *part*, i.e. his habitation and estate which he left behind him.

Is cursed in the earth; is really accursed by God, and is by all men who live near it, or observe it, pronounced accursed, because of the remarkable judgments of God upon it, and upon his posterity or family to which he left it, and from whom it is strangely and suddenly alienated.

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyard, i.e. he shall never more see or enjoy his vineyards, or other pleasant places and things, which seem to be comprehended under this particular.

Ver. 19.

As the snow, though it doth for a time lie upon the ground, yet at last is dissolved into water by the heat of the season, and that water quickly swallowed up by the earth when it is dry and thirsty; so ungodly sinners, though they live and prosper for a season, yet at last they shall go into the grave, which will consume them, together with all their hopes and comforts; their jolly life is attended with a sad, and oftentimes sudden and violent, death; not with such a death as the godly die, which perfects them and brings them to happiness, but with a consuming and never-dying death.

Ver. 20.

His mother that bare him in her womb, and much more the rest of his friends, shall seldom or never remember or mention him, to wit, with honour and comfort, but shall rather be afraid and ashamed to own their relation to one that lived such a vile and wretched life, and died such an accursed death. This he shall have instead of all that honour and renown which he thirsted and laboured for, and expected should perfume his name and memory. This proud and insolent tyrant that preyed upon all his neighbours, **#Job 24:2,3**, &c., shall himself become a prey and a sweet morsel to the contemptible worms.

He shall be no more remembered, to wit, with honour, or so as he desired and hoped; but his name shall rot, and scarce ever be mentioned but with infamy and execration.

Wickedness, i.e. the wicked man, of whom he is here treating; the abstract being put for the concrete, of which many instances have been formerly given;

shall be broken to pieces, or violently broken down, as the word signifies. He shall be utterly and irrecoverably destroyed. And this

expression plainly showeth first the former clauses are not to be understood of the sinner's happiness in an easy and comfortable death, but of his cursed and miserable end.

As a tree; which being once broken, either by its own weight, or by some violent wind, or by the hand of man, never groweth again.

Ver. 21.

He; either,

1. God, who is oft understood, who having cut off his person, and brought him to his grave, continues his judgments upon his wife or widow, and family. Or rather,

2. The oppressor, who is the principal subject of almost all that is said in this chapter; whose great and manifold wickedness Job described from **#Job 24:2-18**, where he proceeds to relate the judgments of God upon him for his sins; which having done, **#Job 24:18-20**, he here returns to the declaration of his further wickednesses, the cause of these judgments.

Evil entreateth; or *feedeth upon*, or *devoureth*, or breaketh in pieces; for all these the word signifieth, and all come to one and the same thing.

The barren that beareth not: barrenness was esteemed a curse and reproach; and so he added affliction to the afflicted, whom he should have pitied and helped; but because such had no children, and the widows no husbands, to defend or avenge their cause, he exercised cruelty upon them.

Doeth not good: either,

1. He did her much wrong and harm, it being usual in Scripture under such negative expressions to contain the affirmation of the contrary; as **#Ex 20:7 Pr 17:21 28:21**. And so this branch answers to the former, of *evil entreating*. Or,

2. He afforded her no help, or advice, or comfort in her distresses; and so he intimateth the greatness of omission sins, and that the common neglect or contempt of plain and positive duties, whether of piety to God, or of charity to men, is to be reckoned among high and heinous crimes.

Ver. 22.

He draweth, either into his net, as **#Ps 10:9**, or to his party, to assist and serve him in his enterprises.

The mighty; who are mighty in place, or wealth, or power; he practiseth upon these as well as upon the poor.

With his power; which being greater than theirs, he soon forceth them to comply with his desires and demands.

He riseth up, to wit, against any man, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 18:38 44:5**; when he sets himself against a man, and resolves to destroy him.

No man is sure of life, i.e. none of them whom he so opposeth can be secure or confident of holding his life, but all such give up themselves for lost men, as knowing they cannot resist his greater might: compare **#De 28:26**.

Ver. 23.

Heb. *He giveth to him to be in safety*, or all things necessary for his safety, &c. This verse is understood either,

1. Of the oppressor; if the oppressor give a man his hand or promise that he shall live in safety by him, or if the oppressed give gifts to the oppressor to purchase his quiet and safety, and, as it follows, he resteth upon that assurance given him;

yet his, i.e. the oppressor's,

eyes are upon their ways; he watcheth for their halting, and seeks for all occasions to quarrel with them, and to destroy them. Or rather,

2. Of God; and so the words are fitly rendered thus, *He*, i.e. God, *giveth or granteth to him*, i.e. to the oppressor, to be in safety, i.e. to live a quiet and comfortable life, *and he resteth secure, or he resteth or leaneth upon him*, i.e. upon God; his former experience of God's favour makes him confident of the continuance of it: so he is not only happy in his present enjoyments, but also in his freedom from distracting fears of future miseries; *and his*, i.e. God's, eyes

are upon their ways, i.e. God blesseth and prospereth him in all his undertakings, as this phrase most commonly signifies, as #De 11:12 Ezr 5:5 Ps 33:18. Or,

yet his eyes are upon their ways, i.e. although God giveth them such strange successes, this doth not proceed from his ignorance or regardlessness of their wicked actions; for he sees and observes them all, and will in due time punish them, though not always in this life, nor as soon as their sins are committed, but in such time and way as he in deep wisdom seeth most fit.

Ver. 24.

They live in honour and happiness, but not for ever, but only at best during this short and mortal life, which lasteth but for a very little time, and therefore their present happiness is not to be envied; nor is it any reproach to God's providence, which hath time enough to reckon with them hereafter.

Are gone, Heb. *are not*, to wit, in this world; they die.

Brought low; as low as their graves. Or, *after* (as the particle *vau* is elsewhere used, as hath been observed before) they have been brought low, to wit, by pining sickness, or other grievous judgments.

Out of the way, i.e. out of this world and way of living, by death. Or, *are restrained*, or *shut up*, to wit in the grave, the place of silence and impotency.

As all other; they can no more prevent or delay their death than the meanest men in the world. *Cut off* by death's sickle, or by a violent hand.

As the tops of the ears of corn, to wit, in his greatest height and maturity, when he is arrived at his perfect stature of worldly power and glory, then God cuts him off, and that suddenly and violently.

Ver. 25.

If it be not so now, to wit, as I have discoursed; if God doth not suffer wicked men to live long and prosperously in the world before he punisheth them; and if good men be not sometimes sorely afflicted there, if all things do not fall alike to all men in these matters.

JOB CHAPTER 25

Bildad's answer: God's majesty and purity is such as that man cannot be justified before God: before him the heavenly lights lose their lustre and purity.

Ver. 1.

Bildad answered, not to that which Job spoke last, but to that which stuck most in Bildad's mind, and which seemed most reprobable in all his discourses, to wit, his bold censure of God's proceedings with him, and his avowed and oft-repeated desire of disputing the matter with him.

Ver. 2.

Dominion, i.e. absolute and sovereign power over all persons and things, with whom to contend is both rebellion and madness.

Fear, actively understood, or *terror*, i.e. that which justly makes him dreadful to all men, and especially to all that shall undertake to dispute with him; awful majesty, infinite knowledge, whereby he knows men's hearts and ways far better than they know themselves, and sees much sin in them which themselves do not discover, and exact purity and justice, which renders him formidable to sinners.

Are with him; emphatically spoken; with him whom thou challengest; with him who is not lightly and irreverently to be named, much less to be contended with. And therefore it is thy duty to humble thyself for thy presumptuous words and carriage towards him, and quietly and modestly to submit thyself and thy cause to his pleasure.

He maketh peace in his high places. This clause, as well as the following verse, seems to be added to prove what he last said of God's dominion and dreadfulness; he keepeth and ruleth all persons and things in heaven in peace and harmony; and the order which he hath established among them. The angels, though they be very numerous, and differing in orders and ministries, do all own his sovereignty, and acquiesce in his pleasure, without any disputing and murmuring. The stars and heavenly bodies, though vast in their bulk, and various in their motions, yet exactly keep their courses and the order which God hath appointed them; and

therefore it is great folly and impudence to exempt thyself from God's jurisdiction, or to quarrel with the methods of God's dealings with thee.

Ver. 3.

Of his armies; of the angels, and stars, and other creatures, all which are his hosts, wholly submitting themselves to his will, to be and do what God would have them; and therefore how insolent and unreasonable a thing is it for thee to quarrel with him! He spoke before of God's making peace, and here he mentions the armies by which he keeps it.

Upon whom doth no his light arise? either,

1. Properly, his sun, which riseth upon all, **#Mt 5:45**. Or rather,
2. Metaphorically, all that is in men, which is or may be called *light*; the light of life, by which men subsist, and are kept out of the state of the dead, called *a land of darkness*, **#Job 10:22**; the light of reason and understanding, called. God's *candle*, **#Pr 20:27**, by which thou, O Job, art capable of arguing with God and with us; and all that peace, and prosperity, and comfort which thou ever didst enjoy, which oft comes under the name of light, as **#Es 8:15,16 Ps 97:11 Ps 112:4**; which being here called *light*, is, to continue the metaphor, most fitly said to arise upon men: all this is from God, and therefore is wholly at his disposal; he freely gave it all, and he may justly take it away, as thou thyself didst truly observe and confess, **#Job 1:21**, and consequently thou hast no reason to reproach God for disposing of his own as he pleaseth. Thou hast lost nothing which was thine own, and having no propriety, there is no foundation for any judicial contest with God.

Ver. 4.

Man: the word signifies man that is miserable, which supposeth him to be sinful; and that such a creature should quarrel with that dominion of God, to which the sinless, and happy, and glorious angels willingly submit, is most absurd and impious.

With God i.e. before God's tribunal, to which thou dost so boldly appeal. Thou mayst plead thy cause with thy fellow worms, as we are, and expect to be justified; but woe to thee if the great God undertake to plead his cause against thee! how severely and certainly wouldst thou then be condemned!

That is born of a woman, to wit, after the ordinary course; for otherwise Christ was born of a woman, but in a singular manner. This birth is alleged as an evidence of man's filthiness, **#Job 14:4 15:14 Ps 51:5**, and of his liableness to God's curse and wrath, **#Ge 3:16 Eph 2:2**, and consequently of his condemnation, opposite to the justification here mentioned, and confidently expected by Job in this contest.

Ver. 5.

The moon, though a bright and glorious creature, **#Job 31:26 So 6:10**, if compared with the splendour of the Divine majesty, is but as a dark and earthy lump, without any lustre or glory. He names the

moon and the

stars rather than the *sun*, because they many times are eclipsed or disappear even to our eyes, which is a plain evidence of their utter obscurity in respect of God's light; whereas the sun, though that also he obscure, if compared with God, yet it casts a constant and most clear light. Or by naming the *moon*, and thence proceeding to the stars, the sun is included between them.

The stars are not pure in his sight; he can discern many spots and blemishes in them which we cannot see; and in like manner he can discover those corruptions or sins in us which are unknown to our own conscience, which should make thee, O Job, tremble to appear before his tribunal.

Ver. 6.

A worm, to wit, mean, and vile, and impotent; proceeding from corruption, and returning to it; and withal filthy and loathsome, and so every way a very unfit person to appear before the high and holy God, and much more to contend with him. The same thing is repeated in other words; only for *miserable man* in the last branch he here puts *the son of any man*, of what degree or quality soever, to show that this is true even of the greatest and best of men.

JOB CHAPTER 26

Job's reply: this toucheth not Job, **#Job 26:1-4**; who acknowledgeth God's power and providence to be infinite and

unsearchable, of which we have but small knowledge #Job 26:5-14.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

How hast thou helped? thou hast helped egregiously. It is an ironical expression, implying the quite contrary, that he had not at all helped. See the like, #Ge 3:22 1Ki 18:27 1Co 4:8,10.

Him that is without power; either,

1. God, who it seems is weak and unwise, and needed so powerful and eloquent an advocate as thou art to maintain his fights and plead his cause. Or, rather,

2. Job himself: I am a poor helpless creature, my strength and spirits quite broken with the pains of my body and perplexities of my mind, whom nature, and humanity, and religion should have taught thee to support and comfort with a representation of the gracious nature and promises of God, and not to terrify and overwhelm me with displaying his sovereign majesty, the thoughts whereof are already so distractive and dreadful to me.

Ver. 3.

Him that hath no wisdom; either,

1. God: thou hast in effect undertaken to teach God how to govern the world. Or rather,

2. Me, whom you take to be a man void of understanding, #Job 11:2,3, whom therefore you should have instructed with wholesome counsels, instead of these impertinent discourses; and who indeed do want wisdom, being perfectly at a loss, and not knowing what to say or do.

The thing as it is, Heb. *essence*, the truth and substance of the thing in question between us; thou hast spoken the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and all t can be said in the matter. Or,

wisdom, as this word is used, #Pr 3:21. A most wise and profound discourse thou hast made, and much to the purpose: an ironical expression, as before.

Ver. 4.

For whose instruction hast thou uttered these things? For mine? Dost thou think me to be so ignorant, that I do not know that which the meanest persons are not unacquainted with, to wit, that God is incomparably greater and better than his creatures?

Whose spirit came from thee? so the sense is, Whom hast thou revived or comforted by this discourse? Not me surely. The spirit or breath of a man is in a manner suppressed and intercepted in deep sorrows and consternations, such as Job's were; and when he is cheered or refreshed, it finds vent and breathes out freely, as it did before. But I do not remember that ever this phrase is used in this sense; but, on the contrary, the giving or restoring of life is expressed by the coming in, and not by the going out, of spirit or breath, as appears from **#Ge 2:7 Eze 37:5,6,10**. The words therefore are and may be otherwise understood; either thus, *Whose spirit or inspiration* (as this word signifies, **#Job 32:8**)

came from thee? Who inspired thee with this profound discourse of thine? Was it by Divine inspiration, as thou wouldst have us to believe? or was it not a rash suggestion of thy own vain and foolish mind? Or thus, *Whose spirit went out* (to wit, of his body, by an ecstasy of admiration) for thee, by reason of thy discourse? I may be thought partial in my censure of it, but thou mayst perceive none of our friends here present admire it, except thyself. Or, To or for *whom* (the particle *eth* being here understood out of the former branch, as is usual among the Hebrews) *did breath go out from thee*, i.e. didst thou speak? For whose good, or to what end, didst thou speak this? God needed it not; I receive no edification or benefit by it.

Ver. 5.

Job having censured Bildad's discourse concerning God's dominion and power, as insignificant and impertinent to their question, he here proceedeth to show how little he needed his information in that point, and that he was able to instruct him in that doctrine, of which accordingly he gives divers proofs or instances. Here he showeth that the power and providence of God reacheth not only to the things which we see, but also to the invisible parts of the world; not only to the heavens above, and their inhabitants, and to men upon earth, of which Bildad

discoursed **#Job 25:2,3**, but also to such persons or things as are under the earth, or under the waters, which are under the earth; which are out of our sight and reach, and might be thought to be out of the ken or care of Divine Providence. This Hebrew word sometimes signifies giants, as **#De 2:11,20 3:13 1Ch 20:8**; whence it may be translated to other great and, as it were, gigantic creatures, and more commonly *dead men*, as **#Ps 88:11 Pr 2:18 9:18 21:16 Isa 14:9 Isa 26:14,19** whence it is supposed metaphorically to signify also *dead* or *lifeless* things; though there be no example of that use of the word elsewhere; and it may seem improper to call those things dead, which never had nor were capable of life. The next Hebrew word, or the verb, is primarily used of women with child, and signifies their *bringing forth* their young ones *with travail or grievous pains*, as **#Job 39:3 Ps 29:9 Isa 23:4 45:10**; and thence it signifies either to *form* or *bring forth*, as below, **#Job 26:13 Pr 26:10**; or to *grieve* or *mourn*, or to *be in pain*. Accordingly these words are diversely understood; either,

1. Of dead or lifeless things, such as amber, pearl, coral, metals, or other minerals, which are *formed or brought forth*, to wit, by the almighty power of God, *from under the waters*, i.e. either in the bottom of the sea, or within the earth, which is the lowest element, and in the Scripture and other authors spoken of as under the waters; this being observed as a remarkable work of God's providence, that the waters of the sea, which are higher than the earth, do not overwhelm it; *and* from under (which may be repeated out of the former clause of the verse, after the manner of the Hebrews)

the inhabitants thereof, i.e. either of the waters, which are fishes; or of the earth, which are men. Or rather,

2. Of the *giants* of the old world, which were men of great renown whilst they lived, **#Ge 6:4**, and the remembrance of them and of their exemplary destruction was now in some sort fresh and famous; who once carried themselves insolently towards God and men, but were quickly subdued by the Divine power, and drowned with a deluge, and now *mourn* or *groan* from under the waters, where they were buried, and from under the present inhabitants thereof, as before. Or,

3. Of vast and *gigantic fishes*, or *monsters* of the sea, who by God's infinite power were *formed* or *brought* forth under the waters with the other inhabitants thereof, to wit of the waters, the lesser fishes. Or,

4. Of *dead men*, and of the worst sort of them, such as died in their sins, and after death were condemned to further miseries; for of such this very word seems to be used, #Pr 2:18 9:18, who are here said to *mourn* or *groan from under the waters*, i.e. from the lower parts of the earth, or from under those subterranean seas of waters which are by Scripture and by philosophers supposed to be within and under the earth; of which see #De 8:7 Job 28:4,10 Ps 33:7; and from under

the inhabitants thereof, i.e. either of the waters, or of the earth, under which these waters are, or *with the other inhabitants thereof*, i.e. of that place under the waters, to wit, the apostate spirits. So the sense is, that God's dominion is over all men, yea, even the dead, and the worst of them, who though they would not own God nor his providence whilst they lived, yet now are forced to acknowledge and feel that power which they despised, and bitterly mourn under the sad effects of it in their subterranean and infernal habitations, of which the next verse speaks more plainly. And this sense seems to be favoured by the context and scope of the place, wherein Job begins his discourse of God's power and providence at the lowermost and hidden parts of the world, and thence proceeds to those parts which are higher and visible. Nor is it strange that Job speaks of these matters, seeing it is evident that Job, and others of the holy patriarchs and prophets of old, did know and believe the doctrine of the future life, and of its several recompences to good and bad men. Others understand this of the resurrection of the dead; *The dead shall be born* (as this word is used, #Ps 2:7 Pr 8:24,25, i.e. shall be raised, which is a kind of regeneration, or second birth, and is so called, #Mt 19:28 Ac 13:33)

from under the waters, (i.e. even those of them that lie in the waters, #Re 20:13, that were drowned and buried in the sea, and devoured by fishes, &c., whose case may seem to be most desperate, and therefore they only are here mentioned,) *and* (or

even, this particle being oft used expositively) the inhabitants thereof, i.e. those dead corpses which lie or have long lain there.

Ver. 6.

Hell, as this word is frequently used, as **#Job 11:8 Isa 57:9**, &c. And so it seems to be explained by the following word,

destruction, i.e. the place of destruction, which interpreters generally understand of hell, or the place of the damned. Others, *the grave*, the most secret and obscure places and things. *Is naked before him*, i.e. it is in his presence, and under his providence. So far am I from imagining that God cannot see through a dark cloud, as you traduced me, **#Job 22:13**, that I very well know that even hell itself, that place of utter darkness, is not hid from his sight.

Destruction, i.e. the place of destruction, as it is also used, **#Pr 15:11**, by a metonymy of the adjunct.

Hath no covering, to wit, such as to keep it out of his sight.

Ver. 7.

The north, i.e. the northern pole, or part of the heavens, which he particularly mentions, and puts for the whole visible heaven, because Job and his friends lived in a northern climate, and were acquainted only with that part of the heavens, the southern pole and parts near it being wholly unknown to them. The heavens are oft and fitly said to be *spread* or *stretched out* like a curtain or tent, to which they are resembled.

The empty place, to wit, the air, so called, not philosophically, as if it were wholly empty; but popularly, because it seems to be so, and is generally void of solid and visible bodies.

Upon nothing; upon its own centre, which is but an imaginary thing, and in truth nothing; or upon no props or pillars, but his own power and providence; which is justly celebrated as a wonderful work of God, both in Scripture and in heathen authors.

Ver. 8.

This also is a miraculous work of God, considering the nature of these waters, which are fluid and heavy, and pressing downward, especially being oftentimes there in great abundance; and withal, the quality of the clouds, which are thin and loose bodies of the same nature with fogs and mists upon the face of the earth, and

therefore of themselves utterly unable to bear that weight, and to keep up those waters from falling suddenly and violently upon the earth.

Ver. 9.

He holdeth back, i.e. to wit, from our view, that its lustre and glory should not reach us, and so dazzle our sight; he covereth it with a cloud, as the next words explain it. Or, *he holdeth fast*, or *binds together*, or *strengthens it*, that it may be able to bear that burden.

The face of his throne; either,

1. This lower air, which is as the face or open part of the heavens, which is often called God's throne, as **#Ps 11:4 Isa 66:1 Am 9:6**. Or,

2. The appearance or manifestation of the heaven of heavens, where he dwelleth, whose light and glory is too great for mortal eyes, which therefore by clouds and other ways he hides from us.

Ver. 10.

The waters, to wit, of the sea; for of the upper waters coming out of the clouds he spoke before.

With bounds; which are partly the rocks and shores, and principally God's appointment, made at the first creation, and renewed after the deluge, **#Ge 9:11,15**, that the waters should not overwhelm the earth: see **#Job 38:8,10,11 Ps 104:3 Jer 5:22**.

Until the day and night come to an end, i.e. unto the end of the world, for so long these vicissitudes of day and night are to continue, **#Ge 8:22 9:9 Jer 5:22 31:35,36**.

Ver. 11.

The pillars of heaven; either,

1. Those mountains which by their height and strength may seem to reach and support the heavens, as the poets said of Atlas; for this is a poetical book, and there are many poetical expressions in it. These tremble sometimes by force of earthquakes, or by God's glorious appearance in them, as Sinai did. Or,

2. Holy angels; but they are not subject either to trembling, or to God's rebuke. Or,

3. The heavenly bodies, as the sun, and moon, and stars, which as they may seem in some sort to support, so they do certainly adorn the heavens; and we know pillars are oft made, not to support, but only for ornament; as the two famous pillars of the temple, Jachin and Boaz, #1Ki 7:21. And these oftentimes seem to tremble and be astonished, as in eclipses or tempests, and terrible works of God in the air, by which they are frequently said to be affected and changed, because they seem so to us; and many things are spoken in Scripture according to appearance: see #Isa 13:10 24:23 Joe 2:10,31 Mt 24:29, &c.

At his reproof; either,

1. When God rebuketh them: for God is sometimes said in Scripture to rebuke the lifeless creatures; which is to be understood figuratively of the tokens of God's anger in them. Or,
2. When God reproveth not them, but men by them, manifesting his displeasure against sinful men by thunders, or earthquakes, or prodigious works.

Ver. 12.

He speaks either,

1. Of God's dividing the Red Sea for the Israelites to pass over; and consequently the Hebrew word *rahab*, which here follows, and is translated *pride*, or the *proud*, is meant of Egypt, which is oft called *Rahab*, as #Ps 87:4 89:10 Isa 51:9. But it seems most probable that that work was not yet done, and that Job lived long before Israel's coming out of Egypt. Or rather,
2. Of the common work of nature and providence in raising tempests, by which he breaketh or divideth the waves of the sea, by making deep furrows in it, and casting up part of the waters into the air, and splitting part of them upon the rocks and shores of the sea.

By his understanding, i.e. by his wise counsel and administration of things, so as may obtain his own glorious ends.

The proud; either,

1. The whale, which is called

king over all the children of pride, #Job 41:34, and which is sometimes by force of tempests cast upon the shore. Or rather,

2. The sea, which is fitly called *proud*, as its waves are called, **#Job 38:11**, because it is lofty, and fierce, and swelling, and unruly; which God is said to *smite* when he subdues and restrains its rage, and turns the storm into a calm.

Ver. 13.

By his spirit; either,

1. By his Divine virtue or power, which is sometimes called *his spirit*, as **#Zec 4:6 Mt 12:28**. Or,

2. By his Holy Spirit, to which the creation of the world is ascribed, **#Ge 1:2 Job 33:4 Ps 33:6**.

He hath garnished the heavens; adorned or beautified them with those glorious lights, the sun, and moon, and stars.

The crooked serpent; by which he understands either,

1. All the kinds of serpents, or fishes, or monsters of the sea. Or,

2. The most eminent of their kinds, particularly the whale, which may be here not unfitly mentioned (as it is afterwards more largely described) amongst the glorious works of God in this lower world; as the garnishing of the heavens was his noblest work in the superior visible parts of the world.

Or, 3. A heavenly constellation, called *the great dragon and serpent*, which being most eminent, as taking up a considerable part of the northern hemisphere, may well be put for all the rest of the constellations or stars wherewith the heavens are garnished. Thus he persisteth still in the same kind of God's works, and the latter branch explains the former. And this sense is the more probable, because Job was well acquainted with the doctrine of astronomy, and knew the nature and names of the stars and constellations, as appears also from **#Job 9:9 38:31**.

Ver. 14.

These are parts, or, *the extremities*, but small parcels, the outside and visible work. How glorious then are his visible and more inward perfections and operations!

Of his ways, i.e. of his works. *Of him*, i.e. of his power, and wisdom, and providence, and actions. The greatest part of what we see or know of him, is the least part of what we do not know, and of what is in him, or is done by him.

The thunder of his power; either,

1. Of his mighty and terrible thunder, which is oft mentioned as an eminent work of God; as **#Job 28:26 40:9 Ps 29:3 77:18**. Or,

2. Of his mighty power, which is aptly compared to thunder, in regard of its irresistible force, and the terror which it causeth to wicked men; this metaphor being used by others in like cases; as among the Grecians, who used to say of their vehement and powerful orators, that they did *thunder* and *lighten*; and in **#Mr 3:17**, where powerful preachers are called *sons of thunder*.

JOB CHAPTER 27

He will not renounce his integrity, **#Job 27:1-6**. The character of a hypocrite, and his misery, **#Job 27:7-10**. The portion and heritage of the wicked, **#Job 27:11-23**.

Ver. 1.

When he had waited a while to hear what his friends would reply, and perceived them to be silent. His parable; his grave and weighty, but withal dark and difficult, discourse, such as are oft called parables, as **#Nu 23:7 24:3-15 Ps 49:4 88:2 Pr 26:7**.

Ver. 2.

He confirms the truth and sincerity of his expressions by an oath, because he found them very hard to believe all his professions.

My judgment, or *my right*, or *my cause*, i.e. who, though he knows my integrity and piety towards him, yet doth not plead my cause against my friends, nor will admit me to plead my cause with him before them, as I have so oft and earnestly desired, nor doth deal with me according to those terms of grace and mercy wherewith he treateth other men and saints; but useth me with great rigour, and by his sovereign power punisheth me sorely, without discovering to me what singular cause I have given him to do so.

Ver. 3.

My breath; which is the constant companion and certain sign of life, both coming in with it, #Ge 2:7, and going out with it, #1Ki 17:17 Ps 144:4. Or, *my soul*, or *life*. *The spirit of God*; that spirit or soul which God breathed into me, #Ge 2:7, and preserveth in me. Or rather, *the breath of God*, i.e. which God breathed into me, which eminently appears in a man's nostrils.

Ver. 4.

I will speak nothing but the truth with all plainness and impartiality, neither defending myself and cause by vain and false professions of those virtues or graces which I know I have not; nor yet, in compliance with your desire and design, falsely accusing myself of those crimes wherewith you charge me, whereof I know myself to be innocent.

Ver. 5.

That I should justify you, i.e. your opinion and censure concerning me, as one convicted to be impious or hypocritical, by God's unusual and severe dealing with me.

I will not remove, to wit, declaratively, as real words are frequently understood; or by renouncing or denying my integrity, of which God and my own conscience bear me witness. I will not, to gratify you, say that I am a hypocrite, which I know to be false.

Ver. 6.

I hold fast, Heb. *I have held fast*, i.e., I have not only begun well, but continued in well-doing; which is a plain evidence that I am no hypocrite. Or, the past tense is put for the future, as is usual, *I will hold fast*, declaratively, as before, I will maintain it, that howsoever you calumniate me, I am a righteous person.

My heart, i.e. my conscience, as the heart is oft used, as #1Sa 24:5 25:31 Eze 14:5 1Jo 3:20,21.

Shall not reproach me; either,

1. With betraying my own cause and innocency, and speaking what I know to be false, to wit, that I am a hypocrite. Or,
2. For my former impiety or hypocrisy, wherewith you charge me.

So long as I live, Heb. *from*, or *for*, or *concerning my days*, i.e. the time of my life, whether past or to come. Or the course of my life; days or times being put here, as it is elsewhere, for actions done in them by a metonymy.

Ver. 7.

I am so far from loving and practising wickedness, whereof you accuse me, that I abhor the thoughts of it; and if I might and would wish to be revenged of mine enemy, I could wish him no greater mischief than to be a wicked man.

He that riseth up against me; either,

1. You my friends, who, instead of comforting me, are risen up to torment me. Or rather,
2. My worst enemies.

Ver. 8.

There is no reason why I should envy or desire the portion of wicked men; for though they oftentimes prosper in the world, as I have said, and seem to be great gainers, yet death, which hasteneth to all men, and to me especially, will show that they are far greater losers, and die in a most wretched and desperate condition; having no hope either of continuing in this life, which they chiefly desire, or of enjoying a better life, which they never regarded. But I have a firm and well-grounded hope, not of that temporal restitution which you promised me, but of a blessed immortality after death, and therefore am none of these hopeless hypocrites, as you account me. *Taketh away*; or, *expelleth*, or *plucketh up*; which notes violence, and that he died unwillingly; compare #**Lu 12:20**; when good men are said freely and cheerfully to give themselves or their souls unto God.

Ver. 9.

A hypocrite doth not pray to God with comfort, or any solid hope that God will hear him, as I know he will hear me, though not in the way which you think.

When trouble cometh upon him; when his guilty conscience will fly in his face, so as he dare not pray; and accuse him to God, so as God will not hear him.

Ver. 10.

Will he be able to delight and satisfy himself with God alone, and with his love and favour, when he hath no other matter of delight? This I now do, and this a hypocrite cannot do, because his heart is chiefly set upon the world; and when that fails him, his heart sinks, and the thoughts of God are unsavoury and troublesome to him. He may by his afflictions be driven to prayer: but if God doth not speedily answer him, he falls into despair, and neglect of God and of prayer; whereas I constantly continue in prayer, notwithstanding the grievousness and the long continuance of my calamities.

Ver. 11.

By the hand of God, i.e. by God's help and inspiration; as God is said to speak to the prophet *with* or *by a strong hand*, #Isa 8:11. I will not teach you my own vain conceits, but what God himself hath taught me. Or, *concerning* (as the prefix *beth* is oft used, as #Ex 12:43,44 Ps 63:6 87:3 Pr 4:11)

the hand of God, i.e. his counsel and providence in governing the world, or the manner of his dealing with men, and especially with wicked men, of whose portion he discourseth #Job 27:13,14, &c., showing how far the hand of God is either for them, or upon them, and against them.

That which is with the Almighty, i.e. what is in his breast or counsel, and how he executes his secret purposes concerning them; or the truth of God, the doctrine which he hath taught his church about these matters.

Ver. 12.

I speak no false or strange things, but what is known and confirmed by your own as well as others' experiences.

Why then are ye thus altogether vain, in maintaining such a foolish and false opinion against your own knowledge and experience? Why do you obstinately defend your opinion, and not comply with mine, for the truth of which I appeal to your own consciences?

Ver. 13.

This is the portion of a wicked man; that which is mentioned in the following verses; in which Job delivers either,

1. The opinion of his friends, in whose person he utters them, and afterwards declares his dissent from them. Or rather,

2. His own opinion, and how far he agreeth with them; for his sense differs but little from what Zophar said, **#Job 20:29**.

With God; either laid up with God, or in his counsel and appointment; or which he shall have from God, as the next words explain it.

Of oppressors; who are mighty, and fierce, and terrible, and mischievous to mankind, as this word implies, whom therefore men cannot destroy, but God will.

Ver. 14.

It is for the sword; that they may be cut off by the sword, either of war or of justice.

Shall not be satisfied with bread; shall be starved, or want necessaries. A figure called *meiosis*.

Ver. 15.

Those that remain of him; who survive and escape that sword and famine.

Shall be buried in death; either,

1. Shall die, and so be buried. Or,

2. Shall be buried as soon as ever they are dead, either because their relations or dependents feared lest they shored come to themselves again, and trouble them and others longer; or because they were not able to bestow any funeral pomp upon them, or thought them unworthy of it. Or,

3. Shall be in a manner utterly extinct in or by death; all their hope, and glory, and name, and memory (which they designed to perpetuate to all ages) shall be buried with them, and they shall never rise again to a blessed life: whereas a good man hath hope in his death, and leaves his good name alive and flourishing in the world, and rests in his grave in assurance of redemption from it, and of a glorious resurrection to a happy and eternal life.

His widows; for they had many wives, either to gratify their lust, or to increase and strengthen their family and interest.

Shall not weep; either because they durst not lament their death, which was entertained with public joy; or because they were overwhelmed and astonished with the greatness and strangeness of the calamity, and therefore could not weep; or because they also, as well as other persons, groaned under their tyranny and cruelty, and rejoiced in their deliverance from it.

Ver. 16.

i.e. In great abundance.

Ver. 17.

The just shall put it on; either because it shall be given to him by the judge to recompense those injuries which he received from that tyrant; or because the right of it is otherwise transferred upon him by Divine Providence.

The innocent shall divide the silver; either,

1. To the poor; he shall distribute that which the oppressor hoarded up and kept as wickedly as he got it. So this suits with **#Pr 28:8 Ec 2:26**. Or,

2. With others, or to himself; he shall have a share of it, when by the judge's sentence those ill-gotten goods shall be restored to the right owners.

Ver. 18.

As a moth; which settleth itself in a garment, but is quickly and unexpectedly brushed off, and dispossessed of its dwelling, and crushed to death.

That the keeper maketh; which the keeper of a garden or vineyard suddenly rears up in fruit time, and as quickly and easily pulls it down again. See **#Isa 1:8 La 2:6**.

Ver. 19.

Shall lie down; either,

1. To sleep; as this word is used, **#Ge 19:35 De 6:7**, &c. Or,

2. In death, of which it is used, **#2Sa 7:12**.

He shall not be gathered, to wit, in burial, of which this word is used, **#2Ki 22:20 Jer 8:2 25:33**. Instead of that honourable interment and burial with his fathers which he expected, he shall

be buried with the burial of an ass; his carcass shall lie like dung upon the earth.

He openeth his eyes so the sense is either,

1. He awaketh in the morning, promising to himself a happy day.

Or,

2. He looks about him for help and relief in his extremity. But the words are and may be rendered thus, *one openeth his eyes*, i.e. whilst a man can open his eyes, in a moment, or in the twinkling of an eye.

He is not; he is as if he had never been, dead and gone, and his family and name extinct with him.

Ver. 20.

Terrors take hold on him, from the sense of his approaching death or judgment.

As waters; either,

1. In abundance, one terror after another. Or,

2. Violently and irresistibly, as a river breaking its banks, or a deluge of waters bears down and overwhelms all that is before it.

A tempest stealeth him away in the night; God's wrath and judgment cometh upon him forcibly like a tempest, and withal secretly and unexpectedly, like a thief in the night.

Ver. 21.

The east wind, i.e. some violent and terrible judgment, fitly compared to the east wind, which in those parts was most vehement and furious, and withal pestilent and pernicious; of which see **#Ex 10:13 14:21 Ps 48:7 78:26 Ho 13:15 Jon 4:8**.

Carrieth him away, out of his place, as it follows, out of his stately palace, wherein he expected to dwell for ever; whence he shall be carried either by an enemy, that shall take him and carry him into captivity, or by death.

Ver. 22.

God shall cast upon him his darts or plagues, one after another.

And not spare, i.e. shall show no pity nor mercy to him, when he crieth to God for it.

He would fain flee out of his hand; he earnestly desires and endeavours by all ways possible to escape the judgments of God, but all in vain.

Ver. 23.

Men, who shall see and observe these things,

shall clap their hands; partly, in token of their joy at the removal of such a public pest and tyrant; and partly, by way of astonishment; and partly, in contempt, and scorn, or derision; all which this gesture signifies in Scripture use; of which see **#La 2:15 Eze 25:6 Na 3:19**.

Shall hiss him, in token of their amazement, detestation, and derision. See **#1Ki 9:8 2Ch 29:8 Jer 25:9 Mic 6:16**.

Out of his place; now that he is out of his place and power, which they durst not do whilst he was in his place. Or, the men of his place, that lived with him or near him, and daily felt the effects of his tyranny.

JOB CHAPTER 28

The power and wisdom of God in his works of nature, **#Job 28:1-11**. A knowledge and wisdom answering this is not found in man, nor to be bought or acquired, **#Job 28:12-21**. Death and destruction make their report of it, **#Job 28:22**. It is only in God, **#Job 28:23-27**. Man's wisdom is to fear God, **#Job 28:28**.

Ver. 1.

There is a vein for the silver; where it is hid by God, and found and fetched out by the art and industry of man. The connexion of this chapter with the former is difficult, and diversly apprehended; but this may seem to be the fairest account of it: Job having in the last chapter discoursed of God's various providences and carriages towards wicked men, and showed that God doth sometimes for a season give them wealth and prosperity, but afterwards calls them to a sad account, and punisheth them severely for their abuse of his mercies; and having formerly showed that God doth sometimes prosper the wicked all their days, so as they live and die without any visible token of God's displeasure against them, when, on the contrary, good men are

exercised with many and grievous calamities; and perceiving that his friends were, as men in all ages have been, scandalized at these methods of Divine Providence, and denied the thing, because they could not understand the reason of such unequal dispensations: in this chapter he declares that this is one of the depths and secrets of Divine Wisdom, not discoverable by any mortal man in this world; and that although men had some degree of wisdom whereby they could dig deep, and search out many hidden things, as the veins of silver, gold, &c., yet this was a wisdom of a higher nature, and out of man's reach. And hereby he secretly checks the arrogance and confidence of his friends, who, because they had some parts of wisdom, the knowledge of natural things, such as are here contained, and of human affairs, and of some Divine matters, therefore presumed to fathom the depths of God's wisdom and providence, and to judge of all God's ways and works by the scantling of their own narrow understandings. Possibly it may be connected thus: Job having been discoursing of the wonderful ways of God, both in the works of nature, #**Job 26:5-14**, and in his providential dispensations towards wicked men, #**Job 27:13-23** to the end, he here returns to the first branch of his discourse, and discovers more of God's wisdom and power in natural things. And this he doth partly, that by this manifestation of his singular skill in the ways and actions of God, he might vindicate himself from that contempt which they seemed to have of him, and oblige them to hear what he had further to say with more attention and consideration; and partly that by this representation of the manifold wisdom and power of God, they might be wrought to a greater reverence for God and for his works, and not presume to judge so rashly and boldly of them, and to condemn what they did not understand in them.

Where they fine it; or rather, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, which they, to wit, the refiners, *do fine*. For he speaks not here of the works of men and of art, but of God and of nature, as is manifest from the foregoing and following words.

Ver. 2.

Iron is taken out of the earth; being made of earth, concocted by the heat of the sun into that hardness, and by miners digged out of the earth.

Brass; or, *copper*.

Is molten out of the stone, wherewith it is mixed and incorporated in the earth, and by fire and the art of the metallist it is separated from it, and taken out of it, as Pliny observes, **#Job 34:1,10 36:27.**

Ver. 3.

He; either,

1. Man, the miner; or,
2. God, of whose works of nature he here speaks; or,
3. God as the chief author and director, and man as God's instrument in the work.

An end; or, *a bound*, how far the darkness shall reach, and how far the dark and hidden parts and treasures of the earth shall be searched, and discovered, and brought to light.

All perfection, i.e. metals and minerals, which are nothing else but earth concocted, and hardened, and brought to maturity and perfection. Or, *unto all perfection*, i.e. he perfectly and exactly searcheth them out; although the Hebrew *lamed* may be here only a note of the accusative case, as our translation takes it.

The stones; either gems and precious stones, which are called by this word, **#Pr 26:8;** or those stones out of which the metals forementioned are taken.

Of darkness, and the shadow of death; which lie hid in the dark and deadly shades and bowels of the earth.

Ver. 4.

This verse speaks either,

1. Of another great and remarkable work of God, whereby in some places either new rivers break forth, or old rivers break in upon the inhabitants, and drive them away; and in other places rivers or other waters are dried up, or derived into other channels or grounds, by which means these lands are rendered more useful and fruitful. Or rather,

2. Of an accident which commonly happens in mines, where, whilst men are digging, a flood of waters breaks in suddenly and violently upon them, and disturbs them in their work.

From the inhabitant, Heb.

from with the inhabitant, i.e. out of that part of the earth which the miners in a manner inhabit, or where they have their fixed abode, and for the most part dwell. Or, *so that there is no inhabitant or abider*, i.e. so that the miners dare continue there no longer, but are forced to come away.

Even the waters; which word is easily and fitly understood out of the foregoing word *flood*. Or without this supplement, *the flood* may be said to be forgotten, &c., that singular word being collectively taken, and so conveniently joined with this word of the plural number.

Forgotten of the foot, i.e. untrodden by the foot of man, such waters as men either never did pass over, by reason of their depth, cannot pass over; or such as though the miners at first for a while did pass over, yet now cannot, or dare not, do so any more. *Forgetfulness* is here ascribed to the foot, as it is to the hand, #Ps 137:5; and it is put for ignorance or unacquaintedness; as all sinners are said to forget God, though many of them never remembered nor minded him.

They are dried up, they are gone away from men; Heb.

they are dried up (or *drawn up*, to wit, by engines made for that purpose) from men, (i.e. from the miners, that they may not be hindered in their work. Or, *with* or *by men*, the prefix *mem* being oft put for *beth*, i.e. by the labour of men,) *they remove* or *vanish*, or pass away, and so the miners return to their work.

Ver. 5.

Out of it; out of the upper parts of the earth. Bread; bread-corn, or other food for man's use.

Under it; either,

1. Under the same earth, which either at the same time yields bread out of its upper, and fire out of its lower parts; or at several

times; that earth which once was fruitful becoming, by the disposition of Divine Providence, barren and sulphureous, &c. Or,

2. Under other parts of the earth.

Is turned up, i.e. is digged out and fetched up.

As it were fire; either gold and precious stones, which glitter and sparkle like fire; or coals, and brimstone, and other materials of fire.

Ver. 6.

The place of sapphires, i.e. of precious stones; the sapphire, as one of the most eminent, being put for all the rest. In some parts of the earth the sapphires are mixed with stones, and cut out of them and polished. Of this stone, see #Ex 24:10 So 5:14 La 4:7 Eze 1:26.

It hath, i.e. the earth containeth in or under it.

Dust of gold; which is a distinct thing from that gold which is found in the mass or lump, of which #Job 28:2; both sorts of gold being found in the earth.

Ver. 7.

A path, to wit, in the dark depths and bowels of the earth. *The vulture*; whose eye is very quick and strong, and which searcheth all places for its prey, but cannot reach to these places, which yet the wisdom of man by the direction of God's providence findeth out.

Ver. 8.

The lion's whelps, Heb. *the sons of pride*; a fit name for lions, which are lofty and stately creatures, despising both men and all other beasts that oppose them.

The fierce lion; which rangeth all places for prey, and findeth out the deepest dens and caves of the earth. The birds and beasts have oftentimes led men to such places as otherwise they should never have found out; but they could not lead men to these mines; but the finding out of them is a special gift of God, and an act of that wisdom which he hath put into man.

Ver. 9.

This and the two next verses are meant either,

1. Of other eminent and considerable works of God, who sometimes overturneth rocks, and produceth new rivers in unlikely places. Or rather,

2. Of the same work of mining and digging for gold, or other precious things of the earth, and of other effects of man's art and wisdom in that work. The miners resolve to break through all opposition, and by iron tools, or fire, or other ways, dig through the hardest rocks. He undermineth the very mountains to find out the metals lying at the bottom of them.

Ver. 10.

He maketh channels among the rocks to convey away that water which was breaking in upon him, and if not thus diverted, would have spoiled his work; of which **See Poole "Job 28:4"**. Having with great art and indefatigable industry broke through all difficulties, he at last arriveth at his end, and finds out those precious treasures which he sought for.

Ver. 11.

He restraineth

the floods, and as it were bindeth them to their good behaviour, that they may not overflow the mine; and those metals which did lie hid in the secret parts of the earth, he discovers to himself and others.

Ver. 12.

Wisdom, Heb. *that wisdom*; for here is an article which seems to be emphatical. The sense is, I confess that man hath one kind of wisdom in a great measure, to wit, to discover the works of nature, and to perform the operations of art; but as for that sublime and eminent wisdom, which consists in the exact knowledge of all God's counsels and ways, and of the several manners and reasons of his governing the world, and dealing with good and bad men, this is far above man's reach, and is the prerogative of God alone.

Where is the place of understanding? there is no vein for that upon the earth, as there is for gold or silver.

Ver. 13.

Man knoweth neither where to purchase it, nor how much it is worth, nor what to offer in exchange for it.

In the land of the living; amongst mortal men that live upon earth, but only amongst those blessed spirits that dwell above.

Ver. 14.

The depth, to wit, of the earth, because the sea here follows as a differing place. This is a very common figure, whereby speech is ascribed to dumb and senseless creatures. The meaning is, This is not to be found in any part of the land or sea, yea, though a man should dig or dive never so deep to find it, nor to be learned from any creatures; for though these discover the being, and power, and in part the wisdom of God, yet they do not instruct us in the methods and grounds of God's providential dispensations to good and evil men: these are secrets of wisdom reserved for God himself.

Ver. 15.

For gold; the choicest gold laid up in treasures, as the word signifies. *Weighed,* to wit, in the balance; for in those times money was paid by weight, not by tale. See #Ge 23:16 Jer 23:9,10.

Ver. 16.

The gold of Ophir was the best sort of gold. See Poole "1Ki 9:28", See Poole "Job 22:24". *Onyx,* or *sardonyx.* See Poole "Ex 28:20".

Ver. 17.

The crystal; or, *amber,* which in those parts was of very great price; or, *the diamond.* The Hebrew word is not elsewhere used, and it hath in it the signification of *purity,* or *clearness,* or *brightness.*

Jewels; or, *vessels;* wherein there is not only the excellency of the materials, but the curiosity of art, which renders the other much more valuable.

Ver. 18.

No mention shall be made; they are of no value, nor worthy to be named the same day with this, nor fit to be mentioned as a price or recompence wherewith to purchase this. *The price;* or, *the attraction,* or *acquisition;* or rather, *the extraction,* or *drawing forth.* For Job useth the word of art which was proper in the taking of

pearls, as the following word, rendered by our translators rubies, is understood by divers, both Hebrew and Christian interpreters, and amongst others by the late eminently learned Bochart, who proveth it by divers arguments. Now these pearls are and were taken by men that dived to the bottom of the sea, and *drew them out* thence, which is the very word which both Arabic and Latin authors use in the case; as indeed the same word is used of all fishermen, who are said to draw forth with their hook, or net, or otherwise, fishes, or any other thing for which they are fishing. Moreover this diving, as it produced great profit, so it was not without some danger and difficulty; for if they heedlessly put their fingers into the gaping shell, within which the pearl was, it speedily closed upon them, and put them to exquisite pain, to the loss of their finger, and sometimes of their life; which is a fit representation of the state of those persons who search after the knowledge of God's counsels and ways, and the grounds of them, who as when they modestly inquire into them, and truly discover them, they have infinite advantage and satisfaction therein; so if they pry into them too boldly, searching into those things which God hath concealed, and rashly judging of them above what they know, which Job judged to be his friends' case, they expose themselves to manifold snares and dangers. And this *extraction*, or *drawing forth*, is aptly used concerning this wisdom, which lying very deep and remote from the reach of ordinary men, is not to be obtained without diligent search and consideration. And so the place may be thus translated, *the extraction or drawing forth of wisdom is above that* (to wit, the extraction) of pearls.

Ver. 14.

The topaz; of which see #Ex 28:17 39:10.

Of Ethiopia, or, *of Arabia*; for *Cush* signifies both Ethiopia and Arabia; and the topaz was found in the Red Sea, which lay between both, and so might be ascribed to either.

Ver. 20.

Where this precious treasure lies, and whence a man may fetch it.

Ver. 21.

Of all living; of all men that live upon the earth.

From the fowls of the air: though they fly high, and can see far and well, yet they cannot discern this: men of the most raised understandings cannot discover it. It is to be found no where in this visible world, neither in the upper nor lower parts of it.

Ver. 22.

Destruction and death; either,

1. Men that are dead, and thereby freed from the encumbrance of their bodies, which depress their minds, and have more raised thoughts than men that live here. Or,

2. The grave, the place of the dead, to which these things are here ascribed, as they are to the *depths*, and to the *sea*, #**Job 28:14**, by a figure called *prosopopaeia*. If a man should search for this wisdom, either amongst living men, or amongst the dead, he could not find it; yea, though he should and might inquire of all men that formerly lived in the world, some of whom were persons of prodigious wit and learning, and of vast experience, as having lived nigh a thousand years, and made it their great business in that time to search out the depths of this Divine wisdom in the administration of the world.

We have heard the fame thereof; we know it only by slight and uncertain rumours, but not fully and perfectly.

Ver. 23.

God, i.e. God alone; as appears by the denial of it to all other things.

The way thereof; either the way how it is to be obtained; or rather, the methods or courses which it takes in the management of all affairs in the world, together with its grounds and ends in them.

The place thereof; where it dwells, which is only in his own breast and mind, and in the best of men but in part, and only as far as it pleaseth him to afford it.

Ver. 24.

He, and he only, knows it, because his providence, and that only, is infinite and universal, reaching to all places, and times, and things, past, present, and to come; whereas the most acute and knowing men have narrow understandings, and see but very few

things and small parcels of the works of God, and therefore are very unfit to pass a judgment upon them, because the wisdom, and justice, and beauty of God's works is not clearly nor fully seen till all the parts of them be laid together.

Ver. 25.

To make the weight for the winds; which of themselves are most light, and without any weight, and inconstant, and such as no creature can order or govern them: but God manageth them all by weight, appointing to every wind that blows its season, its proportion, its bounds and limits, when, and where, and how much, and how long each wind shall blow, and for what ends; whether for mercy, as to refresh men in hot seasons with its gentle gales, to cherish the fruits of the earth, to waft ships on the sea to their desired havens, &c.; or whether for judgment, as to corrupt the air, and thereby the bodies of men, and fruits of the earth, to blow down houses upon their inhabitants, as he was pleased to deal with my poor unhappy children. He only doth all these things, and he only knows why he doth them. He instanceth but in some few of God's works, and those which seem to be most trivial, and casual, and uncertain, that thereby he might more strongly imply and prove that God doth the same in other things which are more considerable, and are managed by more constant causes and certain methods; that he doth all things in the most exact order, and weight, and measure.

He weigheth: but it seems a very improper speech, *to weigh* things by measure; and therefore this word may more fitly be otherwise rendered, *he examineth*, or *disposeth*, or *fitteth*, or *directeth*, for so this verb is elsewhere used, as #1Sa 2:3 Ps 75:3 Pr 16:2 21:2.

The waters, to wit, the rain waters, as appears from the next verse, which God layeth up in his store-houses, or bottles, the clouds, and thence draws them forth, and sends them down upon the earth in such times and proportions as he thinks fit, and as may serve his several designs and ends.

By measure; for liquid things are examined by measure, as other things are by weight; and here is both weight and measure, to

signify with what exact and perfect wisdom God doth govern the world.

Ver. 26.

When he made; which was either from eternity, or at the first creation, when he settled that course and order which should afterwards be continued. Or, *when he maketh*: but our translation seems best to suit with the then in the next verse, where the sense is completed.

Decree for the rain; an appointment, and as it were a statute law, that it should fall upon the earth, and that in such times, and places, and proportions, and manner as he should think fit, either for *correction* or *for mercy*, as Elihu speaks, **#Job 37:13**. *A way*, or *path*, how it should get out of the thick cloud, in which it was shut up, and as it were imprisoned; or, *a course*, which should for the future be observed, as to the time, and measure, and ends, and other circumstances belonging to it.

Ver. 27.

Then; either from eternity, when he decreed what he would do, or when he first created them.

Did he see it, i.e. wisdom, which is the subject matter of the present discourse. This God saw not abroad, but within himself; he looked or reflected upon it in his own mind, as the rule by which he would proceed in the creation and government of all things, managing them in such ways and methods as were most agreeable to his own most wise and unsearchable counsels, which no human or created wit can reach or pierce into. Or, *he saw it*, so as to declare it, as it follows; so as to make it visible and manifest in some measure to his creatures. Or, *he saw it*, i.e. he enjoyed it, *seeing* being oft put for enjoying, as **#Ps 27:13 34:12 Ec 2:1 3:13**. Compare **#Pr 8:22**.

Declare it, i.e. he made it evident, he discovered his deep wisdom, which lay hid before in his own breast; or he laid the foundation of that discovery of it, which then was, or afterward should be, made to angels and men, as the *heavens* did in themselves declare the glory of God, **#Ps 19:1**, before there was such a creature as man to take notice of it, because the object was visible in itself, and not made so by the eye which afterwards

beheld it. Or, *did number* it, i.e. showed it as it were by number; not only in gross, but as it were by retail, in all the several works which he made.

He prepared it, i.e. he had it in readiness for the doing of all his works, as if he had been for a long time preparing materials for them. So it is a speech of God after the manner of men. Or, *he disposed it*, i.e. used or employed it in his works. Or, *he settled or established it*, i.e. he firmly purposed to do such and such things in such manner as he thought meet, and he established the order which he first made in the world, that it should continue in after-ages. Or, *he directed it*, and directed and ordered all things by it.

Searched it out; not properly; for so searching implies ignorance, and that a man is at a loss, and requires time and industry, all which is repugnant to the Divine reflections; but figuratively, as such expressions are oft used concerning God, i.e. he did and doth all things with that absolute and perfect wisdom, and he knoweth all his own counsels and actions, and the reasons of them, so exactly and perfectly, as if he had bestowed a long time in searching and judging to find them out. And this and the other acts mentioned in this verse are to be understood of God solely and exclusively, it being here, as it is oft elsewhere in this book, sufficiently implied, that this kind of Divine wisdom, which consists in the accurate knowledge of all God's counsels and works, is far above, out of man's reach. Man doth not see this wisdom but only so far as God is pleased to reveal it to him, and therefore he cannot

declare it to others; man did not *prepare*, nor *order*, nor *contrive* it, and therefore no wonder if he cannot *search it out*. And so this is most fitly connected with the following verse; for as here he tells us what wisdom is denied to man, so there he informeth us what is granted to him.

Ver. 28.

And; or rather, *but*; for this is added by way of opposition, to show that man's wisdom doth not lie in a curious inquiry into, or in an exact knowledge of, the secret paths of God's counsel and providence: but in things of another and of a lower nature.

Unto man; unto Adam at first, and in and with him to all his race and posterity.

He said, i.e. God spoke it, partly, and at first inwardly, to the mind of man, in which God wrote this with his own finger, and engraved it as a first principle for his direction; and partly afterwards by the holy patriarchs, and prophets, and other teachers of his church, whom God sent into the world to teach men true wisdom; which accordingly they did, not by acquainting the people with the secrets and intricacies of God's counsel and providence, but by declaring the revealed will of God, and instructing them in their duty towards God and men, making this their great, if not only, business, to make men wise unto salvation. See #De 4:6 29:29. *Behold*; which expression notes the great importance of this doctrine, and withal man's dulness and backwardness to apprehend and consider it, and man's proneness to place his wisdom in vain and curious speculations.

The fear of the Lord, i.e. true religion, and the right worship of God, both inward and outward, all which cometh under this name.

That is wisdom; in that only consists man's true wisdom, because that, and that only, is his duty, and his safety, and happiness, both for this life and for the next; and withal this is attainable, whereas the depths of God's ways are unknown and unsearchable to human or created capacities. *To depart from evil*, i.e. from sin, which is called *evil* eminently, as being the chief, if not the only, evil, and the cause of all other evils, and that which is constantly and immutably evil, whereas afflictions are frequently made good and highly beneficial. Religion consists of two branches, doing good and forsaking evil; the former is expressed in the former clause of this verse, and the latter in these words.

Is understanding; is the best kind of knowledge or wisdom to which man can attain in this life. The same thing is here twice expressed in several phrases. And the design of Job in this close of his discourse, is not only to show the mistake, and reprove the arrogance and boldness, of his friends, in prying into God's secrets, and passing such a rash censure upon him, and upon God's ways and carriage towards him; but also to vindicate

himself from the imputation of hypocrisy and profaneness, which they fastened upon him, by showing that he had ever esteemed it to be his best wisdom and true interest to fear God, and to depart from evil.

JOB CHAPTER 29

Job's former prosperity in God's favour, #**Job 29:1-5**. His honour and repute, #**Job 29:6-11**, for his charity, #**Job 29:12-16**, and punishing the wicked, #**Job 29:17**. His hope herein, #**Job 29:18**. His glory and honour repeated, #**Job 29:19-25**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

To wit, from all those miseries which now I feel. This he desires, not only for his own ease and comfort, but also for the vindication of his reputation, and of the honour of religion, which suffered by his means: for as his calamities were the only ground of all their hard speeches and censures of him, as a man forsaken and hated by God; so he rightly judged that this ground being removed, and his posterity restored, his friends would take it for a token of God's favour to him, and beget in them a milder and better opinion of him.

Ver. 3.

His candle, i.e. his favour and blessing, oft signified by the name *light*; as his displeasure and a state of affliction is frequently called darkness. *Upon my head*, or, *over my head*, to comfort and direct me. The ground of the expression is this, that lights used to be carried and set on high, that men may make the better use of them, as the sun for that end was placed above us.

I walked through darkness; I passed safely through many difficulties, and dangers, and common calamities, which befell others who lived round about me, and overcame those troubles which fell upon myself.

Ver. 4.

In the days of my youth, i.e. in my former and flourishing days, which he calls the

days of youth, because those are commonly the times of mirth and comfort, as old age is called *evil days*, #Ec 12:1; when there was a secret blessing of God upon me and my family, protecting, directing, and succeeding us in all our affairs, which the devil observed, #Job 1:10; whereas now there is a visible curse of God upon me and mine.

Ver. 5.

With me, i.e. on my side; whereas now he is against me, and hath forsaken me.

My children, or *servants*, or both; and therefore he useth this word, which comprehends both.

Ver. 6.

i.e. When I abounded in all sorts of blessings; which is oft signified by this or the like phrases, as #Ge 49:11 De 33:24 Job 20:17 Ps 81:16; when I had such numerous herds of cattle, and consequently such plenty of butter, that if I had needed it, or been pleased so to use it, I might have washed my feet with it; when not only fruitful fields, but even barren and rocky places, (such as that part of Arabia was where Job lived,) yielded me olive trees and oil in great plenty. See Poole "De 32:13".

Ver. 7.

When I went out from my dwelling to the gate, to wit, of the city, as the following words show; to the place of judicature, which was in the gates, as hath been oft observed.

Through the city; through that part of the city which was between my house and the gate. Or, *to the city*, i.e. the gate belonging to the city. So Job might live in the country adjoining to it.

When I prepared my seat; when I caused the seat of justice to be set for me. By this and divers other expressions it appears that Job was a magistrate or judge in his country. *In the street*, i.e. in that void and open place within or near the gate, where the people assembled for the administration of justice among them.

Ver. 8.

Hid themselves; either out of a profound reverence to my person and dignity, or out of a conscience of their own guilt or folly,

which they supposed I might either understand by information from others, or discover by their countenances or carriages in my presence, for which they knew I would reprove them, and bring them to shame, or other punishment.

Stood up, whilst I either passed by them, or as present with them. See #**Le 19:32 1Ki 2:19**. So great a veneration they had for my person, in regard of that wisdom, and justice, and faithfulness which they discerned in me, and in all my proceedings. And therefore they judged quite otherwise of me than you now do.

Ver. 9.

Refrained talking; either fearing that I should discern their weakness by their words; or desiring to hear my words and sentence, which they readily approved of, and fully assented to. Such an opinion had they of my wisdom, and did not think me such a foolish, erroneous, and impertinent person as you fancy or represent me to be.

Laid their hand on their mouth, in token both of their wonder at Job's wise speeches and sentences, and of their resolution to be silent. See #**Job 21:5 Pr 30:32**.

Ver. 10.

It lay as still as if it had done so, and they could not have spoken.

Ver. 11.

It blessed me, i.e. pronounced me to be a man blessed of God with eminent gifts and graces; or heartily prayed for God's blessing upon me, because of that wisdom and integrity which they saw in all my actions, and of the satisfaction which I gave to all, and the relief which I gave to the oppressed, by my righteous and equitable decrees in all causes which were brought before me.

When the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; when my appearance gave them occasion to speak of me, they gave testimony to my pious, and just, and blameless conversation. So far was I from being, or being thought to be, guilty of those crimes wherewith you charge me; of which see #**Job 22:9**.

Ver. 12.

I delivered from his potent oppressor. They did not honour me for my great wealth or power, but for my impartial justice and pity

to the afflicted, and courage in maintaining their cause and right against their mighty adversaries.

None to help him; none that would own or help them, partly because they were poor, and unable to recompense them for it; and partly because their enemies were great, and likely to crush both them and their helpers; which made Job's virtue more glorious.

Ver. 13.

The blessing, wherewith both he and others for his sake blessed me, and begged that God would bless me.

To perish; to lose his life or estate by the malice and tyranny of wicked men.

The widow's heart; who are the common objects of injuries and oppressions, because for the most part they are unable, either to offend those who molest them, or to defend themselves from their violence.

To sing for joy, for her great and unexpected deliverance.

Ver. 14.

It clothed me: as a garment covers the whole body, and is worn continually all the day long; so I was constantly just in the whole course of all my administrations, public and private, and never put off this garment out of a partial respect to myself, or to the persons of other men, as the manner of many judges is.

My judgment was as a robe and diadem; my judgments or decrees were so equal and righteous, that they never brought shame and reproach upon me, but always honour and great reputation.

Ver. 15.

Eyes, i.e. instead of eyes, to instruct, and direct, and assist.

To the blind; either,

1. Corporally. Or rather,

2. Spiritually; such as through ignorance or weakness were apt to mistake, and to be seduced or cheated by the craft and artifices of

evil-minded men. These I cautioned, and advised, and led into the right way.

Feet was I to the lame, i.e. ready to help him who was unable to help himself.

Ver. 16.

A father, i.e. had the care and bowels of a father to them.

The cause which I knew not; either,

1. Those which were not brought to my knowledge or tribunal, either through neglect, or because the injured persons durst not complain, I diligently inquired after. Or,

2. Those which were hard and difficult, and possibly were made so by the frauds or arts of the oppressors, or their advocates, which the poor injured person could not find out, I took pains to discover.

Ver. 17.

The jaws; or, *the jaw-bones*; or, *the grinders*, the sharpest and strongest teeth in the jaw, i.e. their power and violence wherewith they used to oppress others. It is a metaphor from wild beasts, which break their prey with their teeth. Compare **#Ps 3:7 57:4 58:6**.

Plucked the spoil out of his teeth, i.e. forced them to restore what they had violently and unjustly taken away.

Ver. 18.

Then I said, i.e. I persuaded myself, being thus strongly fortified with the conscience of my own universal integrity, and with the singular favour of God, and of all men. But although this was sometimes Job's opinion, yet at other times he was subject to fears, and expectation of changes, as appears from **#Job 3:25,26**.

I shall die in my nest; not a violent or untimely, but a natural, and peaceable, and seasonable death, sweetly expiring in my own bed and habitation, in the midst of my children and friends, leaving the precious perfume of a good name behind me, and a plentiful inheritance to all my posterity.

As the sand; which is innumerable. See **#Ge 22:17 41:49**.

Ver. 19.

I was continually watered by Divine favour and blessing, as a tree which is constantly supplied with moisture, both in its root and branches, and consequently must needs be fruitful and flourishing.

Ver. 20.

My glory was fresh; the reputation which I had gained by my just and virtuous life was not decaying, but growing, and every day augmented with the accession of new honours.

In me, Heb. *with me*.

My bow, i.e. my strength, which is signified by a bow, #Ge 49:24 1Sa 2:4, because in ancient times the bow and arrows were principal instruments of war.

Was renewed, Heb. *changed* itself, i.e. grew as it were a new bow, when other bows by much use grow weak and useless. Or, *changed* its strength, which word may be here understood, as it is expressed, #Isa 40:31, i.e. hath got new strength.

Ver. 21.

Expecting till I spoke, and silently listening to my counsel, which they were confident would be like the oracle of God, wise, and just, and good, and preferring it before their own judgment.

Ver. 22.

After my words they spake not again; either to confute them as false, or to add to them as lame and imperfect.

Dropped upon them, to wit, as the rain, as the next verse explains it, which when it comes down gently and droppingly upon the earth, is most acceptable and beneficial to it; not so when it comes in great and violent showers.

Ver. 23.

As for the rain; as the earth or the husbandman waiteth for the rain, to wit, the former rain, of which see #De 11:14, because the

latter rain is here opposed to it: see #Jas 5:7.

They opened their mouth to receive my words, and therewith to satisfy their thirst, as the dry and parched earth gapes or opens its mouth to receive the rain.

Ver. 24.

If I laughed on them, or sported or jested with them, i.e. carried myself familiarly and pleasantly with them.

They believed it not; it was so acceptable to them to see me well-pleased with them, that they could scarce believe their eyes and ears that it was so: compare **#Ge 45:26 Ps 126:1**.

The light of my countenance they cast not down; my familiarity did not breed contempt or presumption in them to say or do any thing that might grieve me, or make my countenance to fall, as it doth in case of shame or sorrow, **#Ge 4:5**. They were very cautious not to abuse my smiles, nor to give me any occasion to change my countenance or carriage towards them.

Ver. 25.

I chose out their way; they sought to me for my advice in all doubtful and difficult cases, and I chalked out their path, and directed them what methods they should take to accomplish their desires.

Sat, as a prince or judge, whilst they stood waiting for my counsel.

Chief, or *head*; as their head or ruler, and my mind and word was as a law or oracle to them.

As a king in the army, whose presence puts life, and courage, and joy into the whole army. And no less acceptable was my presence to them.

As one that comforteth the mourners; as I was able and ready to comfort any afflicted or sorrowful persons, so my consolations were always grateful and welcome to them. Or, when he, to wit, the king,

comforteth the mourners, i.e. his army, when they are under some great consternation or dejection, by reason of some great loss or danger, but are revived by the presence and speech of a wise and valiant king or general.

JOB CHAPTER 30

Job's honour is turned into contempt, **#Job 30:1-14**; his prosperity into calamity, fears, pains, despicableness, **#Job 30:15-19**; notwithstanding his prayer now, and his former charity, and hope, **#Job 30:20-26**. His great sorrow, **#Job 30:27-31**.

Ver. 1.

But now my condition is sadly changed for the worse.

They that are younger than I; whom both universal custom and the light of nature taught to reverence their elders and betters.

Have me in derision; make me the object of their contempt and scoffs: thus my glory is turned into shame.

I would have disdained; or rather, *I might have disdained*, i.e. whose condition was so mean and vile, that in the opinion and according to the custom of the world they were unworthy of such an employment.

To have set with the dogs of my flock; to be my shepherds, and the companions of my dogs which watch my flocks. Dogs are every where mentioned with contempt, as filthy, unprofitable, and accursed creatures; as **#2Sa 16:9 2Ki 8:13 Php 3:2 Re 22:15**.

Ver. 2.

Nor was it strange that I did, or would. or might refuse to take them into any of my meanest services, because they were utterly impotent, and therefore unserviceable.

In whom old age was perished; or, lost; either,

1. Because they never attain to it, but are consumed by their lusts or cut off for their wickedness by the just hand of God, or men, in the midst of their days. Or,

2. Because they had so wasted their strength and spirits by their evil courses, that when they came to old age, they were feeble and decrepit, and useless for any labour. Or,

3. Because they had not that prudence and experience which is proper and usual in that age, by which they might have been useful, if not for work, yet to oversee and direct others in their work. But the words may be thus rendered, *in whom vigorous age*

was perished, i.e. who were grown impotent for service. For the word here rendered *old age*, is used only here and #Job 5:26, where also it may be so rendered, *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a vigorous or mature age*, having the rigour of youth even in thine old age, and until thy death, as Moses had. And if this word do signify *old age*, yet it signifies not every, but only a flourishing and vigorous, old age; as the Hebrews note, and the word may seem to imply; whence the LXX. interpreters also render it *perfection*, to wit, of age, and of thee endowments belonging to age.

Ver. 3.

Want and famine, brought upon them either by their own sloth or wickedness, or by God's just judgment. Heb. *In want and famine*, which aggravates their following solitude. Although want commonly drives persons to places of resort and company for relief, yet they were so conscious of their own guilt, and contemptibleness, and hatefulness to all persons, that they shunned all company, and for fear or shame fled into and lived in desolate places.

Ver. 4.

Mallows; or, *purslain*, or *salt or bitter herbs*, as the word seems to import, which shows their extreme necessity.

By the bushes; or, by the shrubs, nigh unto which they grew; or, *with the barks of trees*, as the Vulgar Latin renders it.

Juniper roots: possibly the word may signify some other plant, for the Hebrews themselves are at a loss for the signification of the names of plants.

Ver. 5.

Giving one another warning of their danger from them.

Ver. 6.

As unworthy of human society, and for their beggary and dishonesty suspected and avoided of all men.

Ver. 7.

They brayed, like the wild asses, #Job 6:5, for hunger or thirst.

Under the nettles, which seem not proper for that use. This Hebrew word is used but twice in Scripture, and it is

acknowledged both by Jewish and Christian writers, that the signification of the Hebrew words which express plants, or beasts, or stones, &c. is very uncertain; and therefore this is by others, and may well be, understood of some kind of thorns; and so this is the same thing with the bushes in the former branch of the verse, under which they hid themselves, that they might not be discovered when they were sought out for justice.

Ver. 8.

Children of fools; either,

1. The genuine children of foolish parents; their children not only by birth, but by imitation; as they only are esteemed *the children of Abraham* who *do the works of Abraham*, #Joh 8:39. Or,

2. Fools, by a common Hebraism, as the *sons of men* are put for men, and the children of wisdom for wise men, &c.

Children of base men, Heb. *men without name*, i.e. without any degree of credit or reputation; as *men of name* is put for renowned persons, #Ge 6:4.

Viler than the earth, which we tread and spit upon, and are not willing to touch.

Ver. 9.

The matter of their song and derision. They now rejoice in my calamities, because formerly I used my authority to punish such vagrants and miscreants.

Ver. 10.

They flee far from me, in contempt of my person, and loathing of my sores.

Spare not to spit in my face; not literally, for they kept far from him, as he now said; but figuratively, i.e. they use all manner of contemptuous and reproachful expressions and carriages towards me, not only behind my back, but even to my face.

Ver. 11.

Because he, to wit, God, for it follows, *he afflicted me*, which was God's work.

Hath loosed my cord; either,

1. He hath slackened the string (as this word sometimes signifies) of my bow, and so rendered my bow and arrows useless, either to offend others, or to defend myself, i.e. he hath deprived me of my strength or defence: so this is opposed to that expression, **#Job 29:20**. Or,

2. He hath taken away from me that power and authority wherewith, as with a cord, I bound them to the good behaviour, and kept them within their bounds. The like expression is used in the same sense **#Job 15:18**.

Afflicted me: when they perceived that God, who had been my faithful friend, and constant defender, had forsaken me, and was become mine enemy, they presently took this advantage of showing their malice against me.

They have also let loose the bridle; they cast off all former restraints of law, or humanity, or modesty, and gave themselves full liberty to speak or act what they pleased against me. *Before me;* they durst now do those things before mine eyes, which formerly they trembled lest they should come to my ears.

Ver. 12.

Upon my right hand. This circumstance is noted, either because this was the place of adversaries or accusers in courts of justice, **#Ps 109:6 Zec 3:1**; or to show their boldness and contempt of him, that they durst oppose him even on that side where his chief strength lay.

Rise, to wit, in way of contempt and opposition, or to accuse and reproach me, as my friends now do; as one who by my great, but secret, wickedness have brought these miseries upon myself.

The youth, Heb. *young striplings*, who formerly hid themselves from my presence, **#Job 29:8**.

They push away my feet; either,

1. Properly, they trip up my heels Or rather,

2. Metaphorically, they endeavour utterly to overwhelm my goings, and to cast me down to the ground.

The ways, i.e. causeways, or banks; so it is a metaphor from soldiers, who raise or cast up banks against the city which they

besiege. Or, they raise up a level, or smooth the path by continual treading it; they prepare, and contrive, and use several methods to destroy me.

Of their destruction; either,

1. Passively; so the sense is, *they raise or heap upon me*, i.e. impute to me, *the ways*, i.e. the causes, *of their ruin*; they charge me to be the author of their ruin. Or rather,

2. Actively, of that destruction which they design and carry on against me; which best suits with the whole context, wherein Job is constantly represented as the patient, and wicked men as the agents.

Ver. 13.

As I am in great misery, so they endeavour to stop all my ways out of it, and to frustrate all my counsels and courses of obtaining relief or comfort. And although Job had no hopes of a temporal deliverance or restitution, yet he could not but observe and resent the malice of those who did their utmost to hinder it. Or the sense is, They pervert all my ways, putting perverse and false constructions upon them, censuring all my conscientious discharges of my duty to God and men, as nothing but craft and hypocrisy.

They set forward my calamity; increasing it by their bitter taunts, and invectives, and censures. Or, *they profit by, or are pleased and satisfied with, my calamity*. It doth them good at the heart to see me in misery.

They have no helper: this is added as an aggravation of their malice; they impudently persisted in their malicious designs against me, though none encouraged or assisted them therein. Or, even *they who had no helper*, who were themselves in a forlorn and miserable condition; and yet they could so far forget or overlook their own calamities as to take pleasure in mine.

Ver. 14.

As a wide breaking in of waters; as fiercely and violently as a river doth when a great breach is made in the bank which kept it in. Heb. *as at a wide breach*; as a besieging army, having made a breach in the walls of the city, do suddenly and forcibly rush into

it. *In the desolation*; or, *for* or *instead of a desolation*, i.e. that they might utterly destroy me, and make me desolate. Or, *in the waste place*, i. e. in that part of the bank or wall which was wasted or broken down.

They rolled themselves upon me; as the waters or soldiers come rolling or tumbling in at the breach.

Ver. 15.

Terrors, to wit, from God, who sets himself against me, and in some sort joins his forces with these miscreants.

Are turned upon me; are directed against me, to whom they seem not to belong, as being the portion of wicked men.

My soul, Heb. *my principal or excellent one*, i.e. my soul, which is fitly so called, as being the chief part of man; as it is called a man's glory, #Ge 49:6, and his *only one*, #Ps 22:20, and which is the proper seat and object of Divine terrors, as his body was of his outward pains and ulcers.

As the wind, i.e. speedily, vehemently, and irresistibly.

My welfare; all the happiness and comfort of any life.

As a cloud; which is quickly dissolved into rain, or dissipated by the sun, or driven away with the wind.

Ver. 16.

My soul is poured out; all the strength and powers of my soul are melted, and fainting, and dying away, through my continued and insupportable sorrows and calamities.

Upon me; or, *within me*, as this Hebrew particle is elsewhere used, as #Ps 42:5,6 Isa 26:9 Ho 11:8.

Ver. 17.

My bones are pierced: Heb. *It*, to wit, the terror or affliction last mentioned; or, *He*, i.e. God, *hath pierced my bones*. This is no slight and superficial, but a most deep wound, that reacheth to my very heart, and bones, and marrow. Nothing in me is so secret but it reacheth it, nothing so hard and solid but it feels the weight and burden of it.

In me, Heb. *from above me*, by an arrow shot from Heaven, whence my calamities come, and that in a singular and eminent manner. Or, *by that which is upon me*: the sores which are upon my skin, or outward flesh, do pierce and pain me even to the bones. For now he is come from describing the terrors of his mind, to express the torments of his body.

In the night season; when others do, and I should, receive some rest and refreshment.

My sinews; and the flesh of my body which covereth the sinews, and is mixed with them, and may seem to be synecdochically expressed by the sinews, which are the strength and support of the flesh. So he signifies that neither his bones nor his flesh resteth. Or, *and my veins or arteries*, which rest or move slowly when the mind and body are well composed; but in Job did move vehemently and restlessly, by reason of his great heat, and pain, and passion.

Ver. 18.

My disease is so strong and prevalent, that it breaks forth every where in my body, in such plenty of purulent and filthy matter, that it infects and discolours my very garments. Others, *By the great power of God*

my garment is changed. In both these translations the words, *of disease*, and *of God*, are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied by the translators. But the words are by some not untruly nor unfitly rendered thus, without any supplement, *With great force my garment is changed*; for so this verb is used, #1Ki 22:30. So the sense is, I cannot shift or put off my garment without great strength and difficulty; the reason whereof is rendered in the following words.

It bindeth me about; it cleaveth fast to me, being glued by that filthy matter issuing from my sores.

As the collar of my coat; as my collar girdeth in and cleaveth to my neck. He alludes to the fashion of the Eastern outward garments, which were seamless, and all of a piece, and had a straight mouth at the top, which was brought over the head, and contracted and fastened close about the neck.

Ver. 19.

He hath made me contemptible and filthy, and loathsome for my sores, my whole body being a kind of quagmire, in regard of the filth breaking forth in all its parts;

and I am become like dust and ashes, like one dead and turned to dust; more like a rotten carcass than a living man.

Ver. 20.

Thou dost not hear me, to wit, so as to answer or help me.

I stand up, or, *I stand*, to wit, before thee, i.e. I pray, as this phrase signifies, #Jer 15:1 18:20, this being a gesture of prayer, #Mt 6:5. And so the same thing is here repeated in other words, after the manner. Or, *I persist or persevere* in praying; I pray importunately and continually, as thou requirest.

Thou regardest me not; so the particle not is supplied out of the former clause. Or without the negation, *thou knowest* or *observest me*, and all my griefs and cries, and yet dost not pity nor help me, but rather takest pleasure in the contemplation of my calamities, as the following words imply. Or it may be taken interrogatively, *Dost thou regard me?* i.e. thou dost not.

Ver. 21.

Become cruel, Heb. *turned to be cruel*; as if thou hadst changed thy very nature, which is kind, and merciful, and gracious; and such thou hast been formerly in thy carriage to me; but now thou art grown severe, and rigorous, and inexorable.

Thou opposeth thyself against me; thy power wherewith I hoped and expected that thou wouldst have supported me under my troubles thou usest against me.

Ver. 22.

Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou dost not suffer me to rest or lie still for a moment, but disquietest me, and exposest me to all sorts of storms and calamities; so that I am like chaff or stubble lifted up to the wind, and violently tossed hither and thither in the air, without the least stop or hinderance.

To ride upon it, i.e. to be carried and hurried about by it. By this restlessness, and the vehemency of these winds, my body is almost consumed and wasted, and my heart is melted within me.

Ver. 23.

I see nothing will satisfy thee but my death, which thou art bringing upon me in a lingering and dismal manner.

To the house appointed for all living; to the grave, to which all living men are coming and hastening.

Ver. 24.

There is great variety and difficulty in the sense and connexion of these words. They may be joined either,

1. With the following verse, as describing Job's compassion to others in affliction, which by the principles of reason and religion should have procured him some pity from God and men in his affliction. And to that purpose the words are or may be translated thus: *But was not my prayers* for them (which words may be understood out of the following clause) *when he stretched out his hand?* (to wit, against them to destroy them;) *in his destruction or oppression* (understand it actively, i.e. when God was about to destroy any other man or men) was not (the negation being understood out of the former branch of the verse, as is usual) *my cry for them?* the feminine-gender being put for the masculine, as it is elsewhere; or *for these things*, the feminine being put for the neuter; that is, for those destructive calamities which were upon them. Or,

2. With the foregoing verse. And so these words contain either,

1. A consolation against the evil last mentioned: so the sense is, Though God will undoubtedly bring me to the grave by these torments, yet this comforts me, that *surely he will not stretch out his hand* (to wit, to afflict or punish me further, as this phrase is used, #Ex 3:20 Isa 9:12,13) *in the grave, though they*, i.e. the perishing persons, *cry or roar* (i.e. be sorely pained and tormented)

in his destruction, i.e. whilst God is destroying them. Or this last clause may be read interrogatively, *Is there any cry in his destruction?* When a man is cut off or destroyed by death, doth he then cry and complain? No, there is an end of all these miseries. Or rather,

2. A confirmation of what he last said. For the whole context shows that Job is not taking any comfort to himself, but rather aggravating his sufferings. I know, saith he, that I am a dead man, and my condition is desperate, for *surely he*, i.e. God, will *not stretch* out his hand (to wit, to save or rescue me, as this phrase is used, #Ps 18:17 144:7, compared with #Ac 4:30) *to* or *in the grave*, (i.e. to a dead man, such as I am in effect, having not only one foot, but in a manner both feet, in the grave, as being upon the very brink of the pit,) *though they cry* (to wit, unto God, i.e. though there be a great and a general cry and lamentation for him among his friends, or others, and an earnest desire of him, if possibly he might be restored to life again) in his destruction, i.e. when he is destroyed or dead; yet all these cries would be in vain.

Ver. 25.

Whence is it that neither God nor man show any compassion to me, but both conspire to afflict me, and increase my torments? Doth God now mete out to me the same measure which I meted out to others? Have I now judgment without mercy, because I afforded no mercy nor pity to others in misery? No, my conscience acquits me from this inhumanity. I did not slightly resent, but bitterly mourn and weep over others in their miseries; and therefore I had reason to expect more compassion than I find.

Was not my soul grieved for the poor, even for him who was not capable of requiting my kindness in case of his recovery? which shows that my sympathy was real, and not reigned, as it is in some who pretend great sorrow for the rich in their troubles, hoping thereby to insinuate themselves into their favour and friendship, and thereby to procure some advantage to themselves.

Ver. 26.

Instead of the return of the like pity to me, which I might justly challenge and expect whensoever I should stand in need of it, I meet with a sad disappointment, and my pity is recompensed with others' cruelty to me.

Ver. 27.

My inward parts boiled without ceasing. The bowels are the seat of passion and of compassion; and therefore this may be understood, either,

1. Of his compassionate and deep sense of others' miseries; which is oft expressed by bowels, as **#Isa 16:11 Col 3:12**, and elsewhere, of which he spoke **#Job 30:25**, to which he subjoins the contrary usage which he met with, **#Job 30:26**. And then, in this first part of **#Job 30:27**, he renews the mention of his compassion to others, and in the latter part he adds, by way of antithesis or opposition, that his mercy was requited with cruel afflictions. Or,

2. Of the grievousness of his troubles, which is sometimes expressed by the troubling or boiling of the bowels, or inward parts; as **#La 1:20**.

Prevented me, i.e. came upon me suddenly and unexpectedly, when I promised to myself peace and prosperity, as the usual recompence which God promiseth and giveth to such as fear and please him, as I have done.

Ver. 28.

I went, or, *I walked* hither and thither as I could. Or, *I converse* or *appear* among others.

Mourning without the sun; spending my days in mourning, without any sun-light or comfort; or so oppressed with sadness, that I did not care nor desire to see the light of the sun. Heb. *black not by the sun*. My very countenance is changed and become black, but not by the sun, which makes many other persons black, **#So 1:5,6**; but by the force of my disease and deep melancholy, which oftentimes makes a man's visage black and dismal. See **#Ps 119:83 La 5:10**. And this he repeats in plainer terms, **#Job 30:30**, as an eminent token of his excessive grief and misery.

I stood up; either because my disease and pain made me weary of other postures; or that others might take notice of me, and be moved with pity towards me.

I cried with a loud and direful clamour, through great and sudden anguish.

In the congregation; where prudence and modesty taught me to forbear it, if extreme necessity and misery had not forced me to it.

Ver. 29.

A brother, to wit, by imitation of their cries: persons of like qualities are oft called brethren, as **#Ge 49:5 Pr 18:9**.

To dragons; which howl and wail mournfully in the deserts, **#Mic 1:8**, either through hunger or thirst, or when he fights with and is beaten by the elephant. *To owls*; whose sad and mournful noises are known. Or, *ostriches*; which also is noted to make lamentable outcries.

Ver. 30.

My skin is black upon me; either by his dark-coloured scabs, wherewith his body was in a manner wholly overspread; or by grief, as before.

My bones are burned with heat; the effect of his fever and sorrow, which dried up all his moisture, and caused great inflammations and burning heats within him.

Ver. 31.

Either,

1. I have now nothing but bitter lamentations instead of my former expressions of joy. Or,

2. Those very things which formerly were occasions and instruments of my delight, do now renew and aggravate my sorrows.

JOB CHAPTER 31

He protesteth his continency and chastity; God's providence, presence, and judgments; his motives, **#Job 31:1-4**. His just dealings, **#Job 31:5-8**. Free from adultery, which ought to be punished by the magistrate, **#Job 31:9-12**. His just carriage to his servants, and the reason, **#Job 31:13-15**. His bounty to the poor, for fear of God, and his highness, **#Job 31:6-23**. Not covetous, nor idolatrous, which ought to be punished by the magistrate, **#Job 31:24-28**. Not revengeful, **#Job 31:29,30**. Hospitable to strangers, **#Job 31:31,32**. His repentance, **#Job 31:33**. He wisheth God would answer, and his words might be recorded, **#Job 31:35-37**. His imprecation against himself, if he spoke not the truth, **#Job 31:38-40**.

Ver. 1.

So far have I been from wallowing in the mire of uncleanness, or any gross wickedness, wherewith you charge me, that I have abstained even from the least occasions and appearances of evil, having made a solemn resolution within myself, and a solemn covenant and promise to God, that I would not wantonly or lustfully fix mine eyes or gaze upon a maid, lest mine eyes should affect my heart, and stir me up to further filthiness. Hereby we plainly see that that command of Christ. #Mt 5:29, was no new command peculiar to the gospel, as some would have it, but the very same which the law of God revealed in his word, and written in men's hearts by nature, imposed upon men in the times of the Old Testament. See also #2Pe 2:14 1Jo 2:16. *Should I think upon*, i.e. indulge myself in filthy and lustful thoughts? Seeing I was obliged, and accordingly took care, to guard mine eyes, I was upon the same reason obliged to restrain my imagination. Or, *why then should I consider*, or *contemplate*, or *look curiously*, or *thoughtfully*, or *diligently*? Since I had made such a covenant, why should I not keep it? *A maid*; which is emphatically added, to show that that circumstance which provokes the lust of others had no such power over him, and that he restrained himself from the very thoughts and desires of filthiness with such persons, wherewith the generality of men allowed themselves to commit gross fornication, as deeming it to be either none, or but a very little sin. Withal he insinuates with how much more caution he kept himself from uncleanness with any married person.

Ver. 2.

The reason of my continency and chastity was, the consideration of God's presence, and providence, and judgments.

What portion of God; what fruit or recompence might be expected from God for those who do such things? Nothing but destruction, as it follows, #Job 31:3. I considered, that though these practices might at first please me, yet they would be bitterness in the latter end. *From above*; an emphatical phrase, to note, that how secretly and slyly soever unchaste persons carry the matter, so as men cannot reprove or reproach them; yet there is one who stands upon a higher place, whence he hath the better

prospect, who seeth both when, and in what manner, and with what design they do these things.

Ver. 3.

Destruction is their portion, and a strange punishment, some extraordinary and dreadful judgment, which of right and course belongs to them, and only to such as they are, although it hath pleased God out of his sovereign power to inflict it upon me, who have lived in all good conscience before him. Heb. *an alienation or estrangement*, to wit, from God and from his favour. Had I been such a one, I neither could nor should have expected any kindness or mercy from God, as now I do.

Ver. 4.

i.e. All my counsels and courses. This is another reason why he was so circumspect and exact in restraining his thoughts, and senses, and whole man from sinful practices, because he knew that God would discern them, and therefore punish them, as he said, **#Job 31:3**.

Ver. 5.

Walked, i.e. conversed in the world, dealt with men.

With vanity, i.e. with lying, or falsehood, or hypocrisy, as this word is oft used, as **#Ps 4:2 12:3 36:3 Pr 30:8**, and as the next words explain it.

If my foot hath hasted to deceit; if when I have had any temptation or opportunity of enriching myself, by defrauding or wronging others, I have readily and greedily complied with it, as hypocrites (such as you account me) use to do, and have not rejected and abhorred it; for more is here understood than is expressed. The sense is imperfect, and supposeth an imprecation, which is either understood, after the manner of the Hebrews, or expressed in the next verse.

Ver. 6.

This is either,

1. An imprecation; or rather,

2. A submission to trial, as the following words show. The sense is, I am so far from being conscious to myself of any hypocrisy or secret wickedness, whereby I have brought these unusual

judgments upon myself, as you traduce me, that I desire nothing more than to have my heart and life weighed in just balances, and searched out by the all-seeing God.

That God may know, Heb. *and let him know* (i.e. let him acknowledge and show that he knoweth and approveth); or let him make known to my friends and others, who censure or condemn me. Or, *and he will know*, (i.e. upon search he will find out; which is spoken of God after the manner of men)

mine integrity. So this is an appeal to God to be witness of his sincerity, and to vindicate him from the imputation of hypocrisy.

Ver. 7.

If I have wittingly, and willingly, and customarily (as you accuse me) swerved from the way of truth and justice which God hath prescribed to me; for otherwise no man here is so just, but he sometimes takes a wrong step, **#Ec 7:20**. If I have let my heart loose to covet and seek after forbidden things, which mine eyes have seen; which may design either,

1. The lust of uncleanness; but of that he had spoken **#Job 31:1**, and reneweth the discourse **#Job 31:9**. Or rather,

2. The lust of covetousness, which is called the lust of the eyes, **#1Jo 2:16**, partly because it is oft caused by sight, as **#Jos 7:21**, and partly because oftentimes all the satisfaction it gives is to please the sight, **#Ec 5:11**. And this sin is most legible in the following punishment, **#Job 31:8**, where his loss answers to this evil gain. The phrase notes the common method and progress of sin, which is to enter by the eye to the heart, **#Ge 3:6 Nu 15:39 Ec 2:10 11:9**.

Any blot, or *blemish*, to wit, any unjust gain. If I have in my hands or possession any goods gotten from others by fraud or violence, which would be a great scandal and a blot to my reputation.

Ver. 8.

Let strangers enjoy the fruit of my labours, according to God's curse, **#Le 26:16 De 28:30**.

My offspring; as this word is used, **#Job 5:25 27:14**. Or rather, *my increase*, or *growths*, or *sprouts*, i.e. all my plants, and fruits, and improvements. For,

1. So the word properly signifies.
2. So this latter branch of the verse explains the former, as is most frequent in this and some other books of Scripture.
3. He had not now any children to be rooted out.

Ver. 9.

By a woman, to wit, by a strange woman, or rather by my neighbour's wife, as the next words limit it; for of a maid he spoke before, **#Job 31:1**, and this cannot be meant of his own wife. He saith, *by a woman*, i.e. either by gazing upon her beauty, so as to be enamoured with it, and to lust after her; or by her persuasions or allurements. Or, *concerning a woman*, i.e. concerning impure conversation with a forbidden woman. The phrase is very emphatical, taking from himself and others the vain excuses wherewith men use to palliate their sins, by pretending that they did not design the wickedness, but were merely drawn in and seduced by the strong enticements and provocations of others; all which Job supposeth, and yet nevertheless owns the great guilt of such practices even in that case, as well knowing that temptation to sin is no justification of it.

Laid wait at my neighbour's door; watching for a fit opportunity to defile his wife. Compare **#Pr 7 Pr 9**.

Ver. 10.

Let my wife grind unto another; either,

1. Let her be taken captive, and made a slave to grind in other men's mills; which was a sore and vile servitude, **#Ex 11:5 Jud 16:21 Isa 47:2 Mt 24:41**. Or rather,
2. Let her be defiled by another man, as the next words expound it, and as the Hebrews understand it, and as this very phrase is used by very ancient, both Greek and Latin, authors *of which see my Latin Synopsis on this place*. And this is to be cautiously understood, not as if Job desired or would permit a requital in the same kind, but only, that if in that case God should give up his wife to such a wickedness, he should acknowledge his justice in it,

and (though with abhorrency of the sin) accept of that punishment of it.

Let others bow down upon her; another modest expression of a filthy action; whereby the Holy Ghost gives us a pattern and a precept to avoid not only unclean actions, but also all immodest expressions.

Ver. 11.

To wit, adultery, whether committed by choice and design, or by the solicitation of the woman, **#Job 31:9**. Heb. *an iniquity of the judges*, i.e. which belongs to them to take cognizance of, and to punish, and that with death; and that not only by the law of Moses, **#De 22:22**, but even by the law of nature, as appears from the known laws and customs of heathen nations in that case. See also **#Ge 38:24**. This is opposed to those secret and lesser sins, which are only known to and punished by God.

Ver. 12.

For this sin would be as a secret but consuming fire, wasting my estate and reputation, and body and soul too, provoking God and enraging the husband, and bringing down some extraordinary vengeance upon me; and therefore the fear of God kept me from this and such-like wickedness.

All mine increase, i.e. all my estate: compare **#Pr 6:27**.

Ver. 13.

If I did despise the cause of my man-servant; if I used my power over him to overthrow him or his just rights. And seeing it is known that I was so just and kind to them, over whom I had such unlimited power, it is not probable that I should be guilty of such cruelty to others, as you impute to me.

When they contended with me; either for imposing heavier burdens than they could bear; or for not providing for them those supports which their nature and necessity required, or for any other plausible cause. I heard them patiently and indifferently, and did them right even against myself, if by any misinformation or passion I had done them any injury.

Ver. 14.

When God riseth up, to wit, to plead the cause of the oppressed against the oppressor, and to execute judgment, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 68:1 Zec 2:13**, and elsewhere. I used my servant like one who was also myself a servant, and had a Master in heaven, **#Col 4:1**, to whom I was to give an account of my carriage to my servant and to all men.

When he visiteth, i.e. when he shall call me to his tribunal, and severely examine all my actions, and particularly the cause between me and my servant, what apology shall I make for myself?

Ver. 15.

I considered that he was, though my servant, yet my fellow creature, made by the same God, and therefore one of God's subjects, whom I could not abuse without the injury of his supreme Lord.

Did not one fashion us in the womb, Heb. *did he not form us in one womb?* not in one individual womb, but in a womb of the same kind, in a human womb, with a body and soul of the same nature and quality, a reasonable and immortal creature, and made after God's image, no less than myself, to whom therefore I owed some respect for God's sake.

Ver. 16.

Withheld the poor from their desire, i.e. denied them what they desired of me, either in justice or from necessity; for he was not obliged to grant their vain or inordinate desires.

Caused the eyes of the widow to fail, to wit, with tedious expectation of my justice or charity. I durst neither deny nor delay my help when they required and needed it.

Ver. 17.

Eaten my morsel myself alone; without communicating part of my provisions or estate to the poor, as it follows.

The fatherless: this one kind of necessitous persons is put for all the rest.

Ver. 18.

From my youth; as soon as I was capable of managing my own affairs, and of doing good to others.

He was brought up with me, in my family, or at least under my care and protection.

As with a father, i.e. with all the diligence and tenderness of a father.

I have guided her, i.e. the widow, mentioned **#Job 31:16**, and commonly joined with the fatherless.

From my mother's womb, i.e. from my tender years; ever since I was capable of discerning good and evil, I have made conscience of this duty; and this my continuance in well-doing is a good evidence of my sincerity therein.

Ver. 19.

When it was in my power to clothe and arm them against cold and nakedness.

Ver. 20.

Blessed me, i.e. given him occasion to bless and praise me, and to pray to God to bless me for covering them; the loins being put synecdochically for the whole body: see the like expression **#De 24:13**, and compare **#Ge 4:10 Lu 16:9**.

With the fleece of my sheep; with clothing made of my wool.

Ver. 21.

To smite him with the fist of wickedness, as the phrase is, **#Isa 58:4**; to bring him to the judgment-seat, that under colour of justice I might take away his right, as powerful oppressors use to do, or any ways to threaten, injure, or crush him.

When I saw my help in the gate; when I understood my advantage against him, and that I could influence the judges to do what I pleased.

Ver. 22.

I am contented that that arm which hath been so wickedly employed may either rot off, or fall out of joint, and so be useless and burdensome to me.

Ver. 23.

I was so far from denying or questioning God's providence, wherewith you seem to charge me, that I always revered it; and when by reason of my great wealth, and power, and interest I had little reason to fear man, I stood in awe of God and of his judgments, and made it my care and business to please God. *His highness, or excellency, or majesty*, which is most glorious and terrible.

I could not endure; I found myself utterly unable either to oppose his power, or to bear his wrath, and therefore I durst not provoke him by any impiety or injustice.

Ver. 24.

My hope, i.e. the matter of my hope and trust, placing my chief joy and satisfaction in worldly wealth, expecting safety and happiness from it. Compare #Ps 62:10.

Ver. 25.

If I rejoiced, to wit, carnally and excessively, esteeming myself happy therein without God's love and favour; for otherwise it is not only lawful, but a duty and gift of God, moderately and thankfully to rejoice in the good things of this life; of which see #De 12:7 Ec 2:24-26 3:12,13 5:18,19.

Because mine hand had gotten much; ascribing my wealth to my own wit or industry, rather than to God's goodness and mercy. And these sins he the rather mentions, partly for his own vindication, lest it should be thought that God took away his estate because he had abused it to pride, or carnal confidence, or luxury, or the oppression of others, &c.; and partly for the instruction of mankind in succeeding generations, that they might take notice of the malignity and odiousness of these practices, which by most men are reputed either laudable or harmless, or at worst but light and trivial miscarriages.

Ver. 26.

If I beheld; not simply, nor only with admiration; (for it is a glorious work of God, which we ought to contemplate and admire;) but for the end here following, or so as to ascribe to it the honour peculiar to God.

The sun, Heb. *the light*, to wit, the sun, as appears by the opposition of the

moon following, which is called the light here, and **#Ge 1:16 Ps 136:7,8**, by way of eminency, because it is the great light, and the fountain of light to this visible world. And this is understood either,

1. Of Job's worldly glory or prosperity, which is oft compared to light in Scripture, as the contrary is to darkness. And so the sense of these and the following words is, If I reflected upon my wealth and glory with pride, and admiration, and satisfaction. But this he had now mentioned in plain and proper terms, **#Job 31:25**, and therefore it is not likely that he should now repeat the same thing in dark and metaphorical expressions. And although this be a great sin before God, yet this is not one of those sins which fall under the cognizance of human judges, as it here follows, **#Job 31:28**. Or rather,

2. Of the sun in the firmament; and so this place speaks of the idolatrous; worship of the host of heaven, and especially of the sun and moon, the most eminent and glorious of that number, which was the most ancient kind of idolatry, and was most frequent in the Eastern countries, in one of which Job lived.

When it shined, i.e. in its full strength and glory; for then it did most affect men's eyes and hearts with admiration at its beauty and benefits, and so move them to adore it. Or, *when it began to shine*, (the complete verb being used of the beginning of it, as *he reigned* is oft put for *he began to reign*.) i.e. at its first rising, which was a special and the chief time for its adoration. *Walking in brightness*; when it shines most clearly; or when it is at the full, for then especially did the idolaters worship it.

Ver. 27.

Secretly; in my inward thoughts or affections, whilst I made open profession of my adherence to God and to the true religion. *Enticed, or seduced, or deceived*, by its plausible and glorious appearance, which might easily cheat a credulous and inconsiderate person to believe that there was something of a divinity in it, and so induce him to worship it. This emphatical expression seems to be used with design to teach the world this

necessary and useful truth, that no mistake or error of mind would excuse the practice of idolatry. *Or my mouth*, Heb. *and my mouth*, which seems more proper here, because the secret error of the mind, without some such visible action and evidence as here follows, had not been punishable by the judges.

Kissed my hand, in token of worship; whereof this was a sign, whether given to men, as #Ge 41:40 Ps 2:12, or to idols, #1Ki 19:18 Ho 13:2. And when the idols were out of the reach of idolaters, that they could not kiss them, they used to kiss their hands, and, as it were, to throw kisses at them; of which we have many examples in heathen writers; of which see my Latin Synopsis on this place.

Ver. 28.

This also, no less than the other forementioned sins, adultery, oppression, &c.

By the judge, i.e. by the civil magistrate; who being advanced and protected by God, is obliged to maintain and vindicate his honour, and consequently to punish idolatry. And this did not cease to be his duty, although the magistrates of the world in Job's time were so far from this, that they themselves also were idolaters. Yet considering that both Job and his friends, who lived in his time and neighbourhood, were most probably the posterity or kindred of Abraham and his family, and by him or his instructed in the knowledge of the true God, and were also men of great power and authority in their places; it seems most likely that they did restrain and punish idolatry in their several jurisdictions, or at least in their own large and numerous families, where the masters anciently had power of life and death without control.

I should have denied God; not directly, (for nothing is more evident than this, that divers of the wiser heathens, who did worship the sun and moon, did yet acknowledge and adore the sovereign and supreme God over and above all,) but by consequence and construction, because this was to rob God of his prerogative, by giving to the creature that religious honour or worship which is peculiar to God.

That is above; who is above the sun and moon, not only in place, his glorious mansion and palace being far above all visible heavens, but also in power and dignity, or adorable excellency.

Ver. 29.

I was so far from malice and revenging myself of mine enemy, which is the common and allowed practice of ungodly men, that I did not so much as desire or delight in his ruin, when it was brought upon him by other hands. Compare **#Ex 23:4 Pr 24:17,18**. Whence we may judge whether the great duty of loving and forgiving our enemies be a peculiar precept of Christianity, or whether it be a natural and moral duty, and a part and act of that charity which now is, and ever was, the duty of one man to another in all ages.

Lifted up myself, Heb. *stirred up myself*, to rejoice and insult over his misery.

Ver. 30.

My mouth, Heb. *my palate*, which being one of the instruments of speech, is put for another, or for all the rest. The sense is, If any secret passion or desire of his hurt did arise in me, I forthwith suppressed it, and did not suffer it to grow and break forth into an imprecation of hurt to him.

Ver. 31.

The men of my tabernacle, i.e. my domestics and familiar friends, who were much conversant with me in my house, and were witnesses of my carriage to others, and of their carriages to me, and therefore best able to judge in the case.

Of his flesh; either,

1. *Of Job's flesh*, which is thought to be an expression either,

1. Of their fervent love to him, caused by his great tenderness and kindness to them. But his meek and gentle carriage to his servants he had expressed before in plain terms, **#Job 31:13**; and therefore it is not likely he would repeat it, at least in such an obscure and ambiguous phrase, as is no where used in this sense, and is used in a contrary sense, **#Job 19:22**. Or,

2. Of their hatred and rage against him, for the excessive trouble he put upon them in the entertainment of strangers, which follows,

#Job 31:32. But it is very improbable, either that so just and merciful a man as Job would put intolerable burdens upon his servants; or that some extraordinary trouble brought upon them by hospitality would inflame them to such a height of rage as this phrase implies, against so excellent and amiable a master. Or,

2. Of the flesh and other provisions made by Job for strangers: He feeds them liberally, but scarce alloweth us time to satisfy ourselves therewith; which also is very unlikely. Or rather,

3. Of the flesh of Job's enemy, of whom he last spoke, **#Job 31:29,30.** And so this is an amplification and further confirmation of Job's charitable disposition and carriage to his enemy, although his cause was so just, and the malice of his enemies was so notorious and unreasonable, that all who were daily conversant with him, and were witnesses of his and their mutual carriages, did condemn and abhor them for it, and were so concerned and zealous in Job's quarrel, that they protested they could eat their very flesh, and could not be satisfied without it. And yet notwithstanding all these provocations of others, he restrained both them and himself from executing vengeance upon them, as David afterwards did in a like case, **#1Sa 24:4 2Sa 16:9,10.**

We cannot be satisfied, to wit, without eating his flesh.

Ver. 32.

The stranger; or, *traveller* as it follows.

Did not lodge in the street; but in my house, according to the laws of hospitality, and the usage of those times, when there were no public inns provided for the conveniency of such persons: see **#Ge 18:3 19:2 Jud 19:15,21.**

Ver. 33.

This he adds to prevent or answer an objection. So the sense is, either,

1. And whereas amongst these and other virtues it may well be presumed that I had divers failings, as I do not now deny them, so I never covered them, but was forward to confess them to God or to men, as I had occasion. Or, (which I propose with submission to better judgments,)

2. If I used all this care and caution in my carriage towards strangers, and enemies, and others only as a cloak to any secret and subtle way of wickedness, such as you accuse me of, and did not seek to purge out all sin as in God's sight, but only to hide my sins from men, and to have the better opportunity for oppressing others, or indulging myself in any other close sin, under a colour, and with a reputation of justice and holiness. *As Adam*; either,

1. As Adam did in Paradise; which history is recorded by Moses, **#Ge 3:7**, &c., and was doubtless imparted by the godly patriarchs to their children before Moses's time. Or,

2. *Like a man*, or after the manner of men in their corrupt estate. Compare **#Ho 6:7**.

In my bosom; in my own breast, and from the sight of all men.

Ver. 34.

This verse either,

1. Contains new matter, and another argument or evidence of his integrity, taken from his courage and faithfulness in the discharge of his duty as a magistrate. The interrogation implies a denial; and so the sense is either,

1. This, *I did not for fear of a great multitude, or for any contempt, or reproach, or other inconvenience which might befall me from great and numerous families, or combinations of people, who were engaged for him who had an unrighteous cause, forbear to speak for the poor oppressed and injured person whom they all opposed, or deny to go out of the door of my house to plead his cause, as a timorous and man-pleasing judge would have done.*
Or,

2. This, *Though I could have terrified or violently oppressed*

a great multitude, because of my great power and interest, *yet did the most contemptible persons or families terrify me*, i.e. I was afraid to do them any injury, not for fear of them, as appears from the former clause, but for fear of God; *therefore I kept*

silence, and went not out of the door, i.e. I durst neither move tongue, nor hand, nor foot against them. Or,

2. It contains an amplification or confirmation of what he said, **#Job 31:33**; either thus, Did I cover or conceal my transgressions, because *I was afraid of the rage of the multitude, or of the contempt of families*, which would be brought upon me by the confession of my wickedness? *Did I therefore keep silence*, i.e. forbore to confess my sin, and not go out of my door; but keep at home as one in that case ashamed or afraid to be seen abroad? No, the fear of shame or contempt from men did not hinder me from giving glory to God by confessing my faults. Or rather thus, Did I therefore cover all my oppressions, and frauds, and other wickednesses (wherewith you tax me) with the mask of virtue and piety, and use all possible caution and cunning in my evil courses, *because I feared the great multitude*, (who were my friends and admirers, but in case of the discovery of my wickedness would have hated and persecuted me,) *or because the contempt of so many families* (whose favour and good opinion I needed or desired) *terrified me*? Then (as the particle *vau* is oft used, i. e. if that were really my case) *I should be silent*, (I should silently and patiently bear all the strokes of God, and all the reproaches of my friends,) *and not go out of the door of my house*, as one ashamed to show his face before men. But my condition being through God's mercy far otherwise, and my conscience bearing me witness of my integrity in these and many other things, I dare now lift up my head, and open my mouth to plead my cause, and I desire nothing more than a fair hearing; *Oh that one would hear me!* as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 35.

Oh that one would hear me! Oh that I might have my cause heard by any just and impartial judge!

That the Almighty would answer me, i.e. answer my desire herein; either by hearing me himself, or by appointing some indifferent person to judge whether I be such a hypocrite as my friends make me, or an upright person, and whether I have not cause to complain.

Mine adversary; whosoever he be that shall contend with me, or accuse me, God himself not excepted, nay, possibly being chiefly intended, though for reverence to him he forbore to express it. So

this is another of Job's irreverent and presumptuous expressions, for which he is so sharply reproofed afterwards.

Had written a book, i.e. had given me his charge written in a book or paper, as the manner was in judicial proceedings, that I might put in my answer into the court, which I am ready to do.

Ver. 36.

I would take it, i.e. that book containing my charge or accusation.

Upon my shoulder; as a trophy or badge of honour. I should not fear nor smother it, but glory in it, and make open show of it, as that which gave me the happy and long-desired occasion of vindicating myself, which I doubt not fully to do.

Ver. 37.

Unto him, i.e. to my judge, or adversary.

The number of my steps, i.e. the whole course of my life and actions, which I would exactly number to him, step by step, so far as I can remember. I would not answer his allegations against me, but furnish him with further matter of the same kind, and then answer all together.

As a prince, i.e. with undaunted courage, and confidence, and assurance of success, as being clearly conscious of my own sincerity; not like a self-condemned malefactor, as my friends suppose me to be.

Would I go near unto him, and not run away, or hide myself from my judge, as guilty persons desire to do.

Ver. 38.

To wit, to God for revenge, as the like phrase is used, **#Ge 4:10 Hab 2:11**, because I have gotten it from the right owners by fraud or violence, as my friends charge me, and as is implied in the next verse.

Ver. 39.

Without money; either without paying the price required by the right owner for the land, or by defrauding my workmen of the wages of their labours.

To lose their life; killing them, that so I might have undisturbed possession of it, as Ahab did Naboth.

Ver. 40.

To wit, in answer to his friends; for he speaks but little afterwards, and that is to God.

JOB CHAPTER 32

Elihu, Job's fourth friend, speaketh: he is angry with Job for justifying himself, and with his three friends for not satisfying, and yet condemning him, **#Job 32:1-5**. He excuseth his youth; but wisdom is from God, and not from age, **#Job 32:6-9**; therefore he speaketh, being full of matter, and his spirit constraining him, without accepting any man's person, **#Job 32:10-22**.

Ver. 1.

i.e. Was self-conceited, and obstinately resolved to justify himself both against God and men; therefore they give him over as incorrigible.

Ver. 2.

The Buzite; of the posterity of Buz, Nahor's son, **#Ge 22:21**.

Of the kindred of Ram, or *of Aram*; for *Ram* and *Aram* are used promiscuously: compare **#2Ki 8:28**, with **#2Ch 22:5 Ru 4:19 Mt 1:3**. Others, *of Abraham*, who as he was called *Abram*, possibly was at first called only *Ram*. His pedigree is thus particularly described, partly for his honour, because his speech declares him to be both a wise and a good man; and principally to evidence the truth of this history, which otherwise might seem to be but a poetical fiction.

He justified himself rather than God; he justified himself, not without reflection upon God, as dealing too severely with him, and denying him that hearing which he so passionately desired. He took more care to maintain his own innocency than God's glory.

Ver. 3.

They had found no answer to Job's allegations and arguments, as to the main cause.

Had condemned Job as a hypocrite or ungodly, man.

Ver. 4.

Elihu had waited with patience, as the word notes.

Till Job; add, *and his three friends*, as appears from the following words. It is a synecdoche, whereof instances have been given before.

They were elder than he; and therefore he expected more satisfaction from them, and gave them the precedency in the discourse; wherein he showed his prudence and modesty.

Ver. 5.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 6.

To wit, of discovering my weakness and folly, and of being thought forward and presumptuous.

Ver. 7.

Days, i.e. multitude of days, by comparing the next clause of the verse. Or men *of days*, i.e. of many days or years, old men.

Should speak, to wit, wisely and pertinently, as the next words limit it.

Should teach wisdom; should instruct us that are younger in the paths of wisdom, and concerning the wise counsels and ways of God, about which the present controversy lay.

Ver. 8.

But; or, *surely*; it must be confessed.

A spirit, to wit, which gives him understanding, as is easily and fitly gathered out of the last words of the verse. And this is to be understood either,

1. Of the human spirit, or reasonable soul, which is in every man. So the sense of the place is, Every man, as a man, whether old or young, hath a reasonable soul, by which he is able in some measure to discern between good and evil, and to judge of men's opinions and discourses; and therefore I also may venture to deliver my opinion. Or,

2. Of the Spirit of God; the latter clause being explicatory of the former, according to the manner. So the sense is, I expected a true

and full discovery of the truth in this controversy from persons of your years, wisdom, and experience. But upon second thoughts I consider that the knowledge of these deep and Divine mysteries is not to be had or expected from any man as such, though never so aged or wise; but only from God's Spirit, which alone knoweth the deep things of God. And this

Spirit he saith is

in man; not in every man, for the words are not universal, but indefinite, and *man* in this branch is no larger than them who receive Divine inspiration in the next branch. And so the sense is, God is pleased to give his Spirit unto mankind, unto men of all ages and qualities, as he pleaseth; and having given it in some measure to me, I may take the boldness to utter my thoughts.

The inspiration of the Almighty, i.e. God's Spirit, or the gracious gifts thereof breathed or infused into man's soul by God.

Understanding, to wit, in divine and spiritual matters, which are the matter of this debate and book.

Ver. 9.

Great men, i.e. men of eminency for age or learning, or dignity and power, such as Job's three friends seem to have been.

Judgment; what is just and right; or the judgment of God, and the methods and reasons of his administrations.

Ver. 10.

I said within myself, and now I say it with my mouth. *Hearken to me;* thou, Job, especially, who art more nearly concerned, (to whom therefore he speaketh in the singular number,) and thy friends with thee.

Ver. 11.

I waited with silence, and patience, and diligent attention; which therefore I now expect from you.

Your reasons; or, *reasonings*, Heb. *understandings*; or *mind's*; the depth and strength of your discourses, your most intelligent and forcible arguments against Job; I searched and examined them to the bottom.

Whilst ye searched out what to say; whilst you put your inventions upon the rack, and studied to find out all that could be said against him, and to furnish yourselves with the most convincing words and reasons.

Ver. 12.

By solid and satisfactory answers to his assertions and allegations.

Ver. 13.

Lest ye should say; it is a defective speech, and may be thus supplied: Thus it was, or God thus left you to your own weakness, and mistakes, and impertinent discourses, *lest ye should say*, &c., i.e. lest you should ascribe the conquering or silencing of Job to your own wisdom, age, and experience; or lest you should boastingly say, We have discovered and said all that can or need be said in the cause, the sum and substance of the thing, that which may fully and finally end the controversy, which is contained in the following words.

God thrusteth him down, not man: these are alleged by Elihu, in the person of Job's three friends, or as their words. The sense is, The stupendous judgments which are upon Job have not been brought upon him by man solely and originally, for then there might have been some ground for Job's complaints, there might have been injustice or cruelty in them; but immediately by the hand of God, of that God, who being omniscient, and just, and true, and merciful, would never have dealt thus hardly with Job if he were not a hypocrite, and guilty of some very gross, though secret, sins; which is the ground-work of our discourses. But, saith Elihu, this argument doth not satisfy me, and therefore bear with me if I seek for better.

Ver. 14.

I am not engaged in this discourse by any provoking words of Job, as you have been, which hath drawn forth your passions and biassed your judgments; but merely from zeal for the vindication of God's honour, and love to truth and justice, and a sincere desire to administer to Job matter both of conviction and of comfort. *With your words*, i.e. with such words or arguments as yours, either weak and impertinent, or fierce and opprobrious.

Ver. 15.

They, i.e. Job's three friends, of whom he speaks some times, in the second, and here in the third person, directing his speech to Job and the auditors of this disputation.

Were amazed; they stood mute, like persons amazed, not knowing what to reply to Job's arguments, and wondering at his bold and confident assertions of his integrity, and of his interest in God, under such sad and manifest tokens of God's just displeasure against him.

They answered no more, although Job gave them just occasion to reprove and confute him for his intemperate speeches and presumptuous and irreverent expressions concerning God.

Ver. 16.

Which he repeats as a strange and unreasonable thing, that they should be silent when they had such obligations to speak for the vindication both of God's justice, and of their own truth and reputation.

Ver. 17.

I will take my turn, and speak what they have omitted.

Ver. 18.

I am full of matter, i.e. I have many things to say in this cause.

The spirit within me; either my own spirit or soul, which is wholly dissatisfied with what hath been hitherto spoken, and clearly apprehends what may silence Job, and end the dispute; or God's Spirit, which he hath put in me; the Spirit of understanding, which hath discovered the truth of the matter to me; and the Spirit of zeal, which urgeth me to plead God's cause against Job.

Constraineth me; forceth me to speak. It is a metaphor from a man or woman whose belly is full with wind, or with a child, and is never at rest till it be emptied and eased of its burden.

Ver. 19.

My belly, i.e. my mind or heart, which is oft called a man's belly, as **#Job 15:35 Ps 40:8 Hab 3:16 Joh 7:38**.

As wine; as new wine pent up close in a bottle, as the following words explain it and determine it. The

wine is here put for the bottle in which it is, by a common metonymy.

New bottles, i.e. bottles of new wine, by the same general figure; for otherwise old bottles are most apt to burst, #**Mt 9:17**.

Ver. 20.

That I may be refreshed; that I may ease my mind of those thoughts which now oppress it.

I will open my lips and answer; I will not utter impertinent words, but solid answers, to Job's arguments.

Ver. 21.

Do not expect that I should out of fear or respect to any of you speak partially, but bear with my free and plain dealing with you all. As I shall not censure and reproach Job as a hypocrite or profane person, which you have done; so neither shall I flatter him, but faithfully reprove him for his exorbitant speeches of God.

Ver. 22.

I have neither skill nor will to flatter Job or any man so as to debauch my conscience, or corrupt the truth, or speak falsely for his sake. If I should be guilty of that sin, God would quickly and sorely punish me for it. Or without this supplement,

my Maker will quickly take me away, to wit, out of this world. I dare not flatter any man, because I consider I must shortly die and go to judgment, to give an account of all my words and actions.

JOB CHAPTER 33

He offereth himself in God's stead to reason with Job, #**Job 33:1-7**, who had too hard thoughts of God, who by his greatness giveth no account of his ways, #**Job 33:8-13**. God instructeth man by visions, #**Job 33:14-18**; by afflictions, #**Job 33:19-22**; by his ministry, #**Job 33:23-25**. When man prayeth and confesseth, God will be gracious, #**Job 33:26-28**. These are God's methods of instructing men, #**Job 33:29,30**.

Ver. 1.

Perceiving the error Job's friends, and that by their violent and opprobrious speeches they had exasperated Job's mind, and

thereby hindered the success of their discourses, he applies himself to him in milder ways, and treats him kindly, thereby to gain his attention and affection, that his words might have more acceptance with him.

Hearken to all my words; not only to what may please thee, but also to what may convince and reprove thee.

Ver. 2.

Now I have begun to speak, and intend with thy good leave to proceed in my discourse with thee.

In my mouth, Heb. *in or with my palate*; for both tongue and palate are instruments of speech; and, that a man should speak plainly and distinctly, (which he designed to do,) it is necessary that his tongue should oftentimes touch the palate or roof of the month.

Ver. 3.

I shall not speak passionately or partially, as one resolved to defend what I have once said, whether true or false; but from an honest mind, or what I verily believe to be true, and from a sincere desire to do thee good. I shall not speak my own fancies or devices, but only that which by diligent study and Divine inspiration I know to be true, and this I shall do plainly and clearly.

Ver. 4.

I am thy fellow creature, made by God's Spirit, #Ge 1:2, and quickened by that soul which God breathed into man, #Ge 2:7, and therefore fit and ready to discourse with thee upon even and equal terms, according to thy desire.

Ver. 5.

I shall allow thee all freedom of discourse; I cannot terrify thee, as God would: I shall not reproach thee, nor cavil at thee, as thy friends have done.

Stand up, to contend with me as thing adversary in this cause.

Ver. 6.

I will plead with thee in God's name and stead, and on his behalf, which thou hast oft wished that God would do upon equal terms, and laying aside his terrible majesty, &c. Or, *I am as thou art with*

or towards God, i.e. God's creature like thyself, as the next words explain it.

Ver. 7.

Which was the condition of that disputation which thou didst offer to undertake with God, **#Job 9:34 13:21**.

Ver. 8.

I shall not charge thee with hypocrisy, as thy friends do, which God only can discern; but with those words which I have heard from thee.

Ver. 9.

Not simply and absolutely none, for he oft confesseth himself to be a sinner, as **#Job 9:1,2**, &c.; Job 14:4; but no such transgression or iniquity as might give God just occasion to punish him so severely, as is implied in the next verse, where he blameth God for *finding occasions against him*, implying that he had given him none by his sins. And thus far Elihu's charge was just and true, and herein it differs from the charge of Job's three friends, who oft accuse him, and that in words much like these, for asserting his own righteousness and innocency; although they did it because they thought him a secret sinner and a hypocrite, whereas Elihu doth it upon other grounds, even because Job's justification of himself was accompanied with reflections upon God, as hath been said.

Ver. 10.

He picketh quarrels with me, and *watcheth over* and *searcheth after* all my errors and frailties, as Job said, **#Job 10:6 14:16,17**; severely marking what is amiss in me, that thence he may take occasion to punish me worse than mine iniquities deserve. Though I have endeavoured to be his friend and faithful servant all my days, yet he treats me like an enemy. This Job said **#Job 13:24 19:11**.

Ver. 11.

He narrowly pries into all my actions, that he may find matter for further severities against me.

Ver. 12.

I do not accuse thee of hypocrisy, nor rip up the former errors of thy life; but in this thou art unjust and much to blame, that thou

boapest so much of thine own integrity, and chargest God with rigorous dealing, and callest him to an account before thy tribunal, and offerest to dispute the matter with him.

That God is greater than man; not only in power and majesty, which thou acknowledgest, but also in justice, and wisdom, and goodness; and therefore thou dost very foolishly, and presumptuously, and wickedly in contending with him, and censuring his judgments: thou forgettest thy distance from him, and castest off that awe and reverence which thou shouldst constantly maintain towards thy sovereign Lord.

Ver. 13.

Why? upon what grounds and for what ends? What advantage dost thou expect from it?

Dost thou strive against him, to wit, in a judicial way? See #**Job 8:6.**

He giveth not account of any of his matters; he neither useth, nor is by any law obliged, to give an account to any of his creatures of the grounds and reasons of his judgments or dispensations, as being the supreme and absolute Governor of all persons and things, in whose will and pleasure it becometh all men to acquiesce. And therefore, O Job, thou exceedest all bounds of modesty, and humility, and reverence, and submission, which thou owest to thy Maker, in that thou presumest to demand a reason for his dealings with thee, and to quarrel with him for not giving it to thee at thy desire. Or, *he answereth not all his words*, i.e. he doth not say, or hath not said, all that he can to justify his actions, which he can do many more ways than we can imagine; but hath revealed so much of his will and ways to mankind as he hath thought meet, and as their narrow capacity can comprehend; as he declareth in the following verses.

Ver. 14.

For; or, *nevertheless*, as this particule is sometimes used. Although God doth not give men an account of his matters, yet he doth that for them which is much better, and which is sufficient for them.

God speaketh, to wit, unto men by way of instruction or admonition, as appears from the following verses.

Once, yea twice, again and again, or oftentimes, this number being sometimes put indefinitely, as below, **#Job 33:29 2Ki 6:10 Ps 62:11.** When one speaking doth not awaken men, God is graciously pleased to give them another admonition. So God, though he will not gratify men's curiosity in inquiring into his hidden judgments, yet he will supply their necessity, and acquaint them with their duty and interest so far as is fit, and they are concerned to know.

Yet man; which is easily and fitly understood here from the former branch of this verse, as being the person to whom God speaketh, as appears from the next verse. And such supplements are not unusual in the Hebrew language, and especially in these poetical books, where the style is very concise and short, and many things to be understood.

Perceiveth it not; through his inadvertency, or negligence, or dulness. Man therefore hath no reason to charge God as if he were deficient in his notices and manifestations of his will, but to accuse himself for not improving revealed things to his own advantage, but desiring rather to pry into God's secret counsels, which was Job's error.

Ver. 15.

In a dream: this he mentions, as the usual way of God's revealing his mind and will to men in those days, before God's word was committed to writing, as **#Ge 20:6 41:1,28.**

In a vision of the night: this is added by way of explication and limitation, to show that he speaks not of every dream, but of those Divine dreams in which God was pleased to vouchsafe some vision or representation of his will to the mind of a man.

When deep sleep falleth upon men; when men's senses are bound up, and their minds free from all distracting cares and business of the world, and wholly at leisure to receive Divine impressions.

In slumberings: this is added, because in this case the man is like one that slumbereth, or between sleeping and waking, or uncertain in which state he is, as Paul could not tell whether he was in the body, or out of the body, when he was in his ecstasy, **#2Co 12:1,2.**

Ver. 16.

i.e. He revealeth his will to the ears and hearts of men, as this phrase is used, #**Job 36:10 Ps 40:6 Isa 1:4**; and he imprinteth those instructions which he hath revealed to their ears upon their minds, that after they have heard and received them they do not let them slip, as men commonly do most things which they hear, whether from God or men, but do retain and hold them fast, and are fully satisfied and assured of the truth and importance of them. Or, *he sealeth their chastening*, or *correction*, for so this word signifies as well as instruction, i.e. he gives them assurance of his purpose of correcting them for their sins, if they do not prevent it by a speedy repentance. Or, *he sealeth it* (i.e. his word conveyed to their ears and minds) *with chastening them*, i.e. he gives them assurance of the truth and reality of his revelation by striking them with a sacred dread and horror, as was usual in such dreams or night visions, as we see #**Job 4:13,15**; which he did that they might remember it the better, and distinguish this from such vain dreams as are only the productions of man's fancy.

Ver. 17.

That he, i.e. God, who was expressed #**Job 33:14**, and designed by this pronoun he both in the foregoing and following verses.

From his purpose, i.e. from the execution of his purpose. Heb. from his *work*, i.e. from his evil work as the Chaldee and LXX. understand it; from sin, which is truly and fitly called man's work, because it hath its rise in and from him, and is his own proper work, and very agreeable to his nature in his present corrupt estate; as, on the contrary, all the good that is in man is God's proper and peculiar work, and is generally ascribed to him in Scripture. So this is noted as the design of God's giving man this warning, to keep him from executing that evil work which possibly he had designed to do; of which see examples, #**Ge 20:5,6 31:24**.

Hide pride, i.e. either,

1. To take it away, as God is said to *hide* sin, when he quite removes and forgives it, #**Ps 32:1**; and *sorrow* is said to be *hid*, #**Job 3:10**, when it never is nor was; and *understanding* is said to be *hid* when it *perisheth*, #**Isa 29:14**. And

pride is here mentioned as the root of those evil purposes or works last mentioned; which for the most part proceed from haughtiness of spirit, whereby men scorn to submit themselves and their wills and actions to God's authority, and presume to advance themselves above God, and resolve to follow their own wills and lusts in spite of God, and with contempt of him. Or *pride* may be here put for all matter or occasion of pride. And God by this means is said to

hide pride from man, because by these glorious and terrible representations of his Divine majesty to a man, he takes him off from the contemplation and admiration of his own excellency, which men are generally very prone to reflect upon, and brings him to a sight of his own nothingness and weakness, and to a sense of his dependence upon God, and to a humble and ready submission to his will and pleasure.

Ver. 18.

He keepeth back, to wit, by these gracious admonitions, whereby he leads them to repentance,

his soul; either the man, who is oft expressed by this part; or

his life, as the next branch explains it.

From the pit, i.e. from the grave, from death or destruction.

From perishing by the sword, i.e. by some dreadful judgment of God which was ready to fall upon him.

Ver. 19.

With pain, or *grief*; with some painful and dangerous diseases, or bodily distempers, which is the second way whereby God instructs men and excites them to repentance; which also was Job's case.

The multitude of his bones with strong pain; the pain pierceth his very bones, even all of them. Or, *even the strong multitude of his bones*, i.e. his bones, which are both many and strong. Or, according to another reading, *the contention of his bones* (i.e. the pain of his bones, whereby God contends with him) is strong. This also was Job's case, **#Job 30:17**.

Ver. 20.

His life, i.e. his soul, as the next clause explains it; or his appetite, which is a sign and an act of life.

Bread, i.e. common and necessary food.

Dainty meat; such as others do, and he formerly did, much desire and prize.

Ver. 21.

His flesh is consumed away, through pain and pining sickness.

That it cannot be seen; because there is none left to be seen; but he who before was fat and flourishing, is now become a mere skeleton.

That were not seen, formerly, because they were covered with flesh and fat. But this clause, is and may be rendered thus, *and his bones are broken, and are not seen*; which is to be metaphorically understood.

Ver. 22.

He seems to himself and others to be lost, and past all hopes of recovery; which he adds for Job's comfort in his desperate condition.

To the destroyers; to the instruments of death or destruction, whether it be angels, whom God sometimes useth in those cases; or devils, *who have the power of death*. #**Heb 2:14**; or diseases, which by God's appointment are ready to give the fatal blow.

Ver. 23.

A messenger; either,

1. An angel sent to him from heaven upon this errand; for the angels are ministering spirits, #**Ps 103:20 Heb 1:14**, and are, and especially in that time and state of the church were, frequently employed by God upon messages to men. But why then should he say *one of a thousand angels*, seeing any the meanest angel was very competent for this work? Or rather,

2. A prophet or teacher, for such are oft called by this name; as #**Jud 2:1 Mal 2:7 3:1 Re 1:20**, and such persons are appointed by God for, and are most commonly employed in, this work. *With him*; either,

1. With God to plead man's cause, and to pray to God for man. Or rather,

2. With man, who is expressed in the last clause of this verse, and of whom this same pronoun him is twice used in the next verse. Nor is it strange that the pronoun relative is put before the noun to which it belongs, but usual in the Hebrew language, as **#Ex 2:6 Pr 5:22 Pr 14:33**, and elsewhere. *An interpreter*; one whose office and work it is to declare the mind of God unto the sick man, and wherefore God contends with him, and what God would have him to do.

One among a thousand; a person rightly qualified for this great and hard work, such as there are but very few, scarce *one of a thousand*; which expression is used to denote the rarity and fewness of persons, **#Ec 7:28**. By which words he doth covertly reflect upon Job's three friends, and imply that they were not such persons, though they had undertaken to perform this office or work to Job; and withal, modestly intimates, that although he was in himself mean and inferior to all of them, (as he acknowledgeth,) yet he was selected by God for this work; which he saith not out of a desire of vain boasting of himself, but to dispose Job to a more diligent attention unto, and a more ready entertainment of his present discourses. *His uprightness*, or rectitude, or righteousness. *His*, i.e. either,

1. God's; to convince a man that God is just and right in all his dealings with him, though never so severe; of which Job was not yet convinced. Or rather,

2. Man's; to teach man his duty, or to direct him to the right way and method how he may please God, and procure that mercy and deliverance which he thirsts after; which is not by quarrelling with God, as Job did, but by a humble confession and hearty detestation and forsaking of his sins, and supplication to God for mercy in and through Christ the Redeemer, of whom Job spoke before. Or thus, to discover to man, that although he be afflicted, yet he is an upright and righteous person, and consequently in God's favour; about which good men oft doubt, and need the help of a skilful minister to satisfy them therein. But this seems not so well to suit Job's case, who was sufficiently and more than

enough persuaded of his own integrity, and needed no minister to preach that doctrine to him.

Ver. 24.

Then; in that case, or upon the sick man's knowledge and practice of his duty.

He; either,

1. The messenger or interpreter last mentioned, who is pitiful unto the sick man, and in companion to him doth all that he can for him, counselling and comforting him, and praying to God for his recovery in the following words,

Deliver him, &c. for the sake of that ransom which thou hast revealed and I have discovered to him. Or rather,

2. God, who is oft in this book designed by this particle *he*, or *him*; whose property and prerogative it is to be gracious unto man, and who alone can speak the following words with power and authority.

Is gracious unto him; pardoning his sins, and delivering him from his dangerous disease, and from death and from the hell which attends upon it.

And saith, to the angel or messenger.

Deliver him, to wit, ministerially and declaratively; in which sense the acts of forgiving sins, and reconciling sinners, and saving souls, are ascribed to God's ministers; as **#Joh 20:23 2Co 5:19,20 1Ti 4:16**. Declare to him that I have pardoned and will heal him.

I have found a ransom: although I might justly destroy him, and should do it, if I were severe to mark what is amiss in him; yet I will spare him, for I have found out an expedient and a way of ransoming and redeeming sinners from death, both temporal and eternal, which they by their sins have deserved, which is by the death of my Son, the Redeemer of the world, which shall be in the fulness of time, and with respect to which I will pardon this sick man, and others that shall repent and sue to me for mercy, as he hath done.

Ver. 25.

Fresher than a child's, i.e. more sound and tender. These joyful tidings delivered to him by God's messenger shall revive his spirit, and by degrees restore his former health and vigour.

To the days of his youth, i. e. to the same healthful and strong constitution of body which he had in his youth.

Ver. 26.

He; either,

1. The messenger; or rather,
2. The sick man.

Shall pray unto God; being engaged and encouraged to do so, either by the aforesaid gracious message, or by his miraculous recovery through God's goodness.

He will be favourable unto him, in hearing and answering his prayers, which before he seemed to neglect.

He shall see his face with joy; either,

1. God will look upon the man with a smiling or well-pleased countenance; whereas before he either hid his face from him, or frowned upon him. Or,
2. The man shall then be emboldened and encouraged to look God in the face with comfort and joy; which before he was, not without cause, afraid to do; but now he shall find that God is reconciled to him by the blessed effects of it, both in his body and in his conscience.

His righteousness, i.e. according to his righteousness, or the fruit of his righteousness; as on the contrary, iniquity is oft put for the punishment of iniquity. The sense is, he will deal with him as with one reconciled to him through the Mediator, and sincerely repenting of and turning from his former sins unto the serious practice of righteousness and true holiness, and therefore must needs be favourable to him, as he hath declared and engaged himself to be in such cases.

Ver. 27.

He looketh upon men; either,

1. The sick man shall look upon and converse with mankind, his friends, or others, as he did before, and shall say, (as the following word is and may be rendered,)

I have sinned, &c., i.e. he shall confess to them that God was not to be blamed, but that he, by his own sin and folly, did bring that evil upon himself. And then he shall acknowledge God's great goodness to him, and shall add what follows in the next verse, *He hath delivered my soul, &c., and my life, &c.*, as they render it. Or rather,

2. God diligently observes all mankind, and their several carriages, especially in sickness and distress.

If any say, I have sinned; if there be any man that sincerely saith thus, God hears it, and will pardon and heal him, as it follows.

Perverted that which was right; either,

1. I have judged perversely of the just and right ways of God, censuring his proceedings against me as too severe and rigorous, whereas in truth I only was to be blamed. Or,

2. I have perverted God's righteous law by bending it, and making it comply with my crooked ways; or, I have swerved from the right and good way of God's commands; or, I have made crooked paths. So he repeats in other words what he said in the former branch of the verse, *I have sinned. It profited me not;* I got no good by so doing, as I vainly promised myself; but I got much hurt by it, even diseases, and griefs, and extreme dangers. This was the just fruit of my sins. It is a meiosis, whereby less is said, and more is understood, of which we have seen many examples before.

Ver. 28.

He, i.e. God, whose work alone this is.

His soul; himself; or, as it follows,

his life. *His life:* See Poole "Job 33:18".

Shall see the light, i.e. shall enjoy, either,

1. Prosperity, which is oft called light, as darkness is put for affliction; or,

2. *The light of the living*, as it follows, **#Job 33:30**; the light of this world, i.e. his life, which was endangered, shall be restored and continued. This is opposed to his going down into the pit, in the former branch.

Ver. 29.

All these ways and methods doth God use to awaken, and convince, and save sinners.

Oftentimes with man; either severally, one way with one, and another way with another; or with the same man, trying several means one after another to bring him to repentance, and prepare him for deliverance.

Ver. 30.

i.e. That he may enjoy the light of life, and continue in the land of the living, out of which he was going.

Ver. 31.

Hold thy peace; attend to what I have further to say to thee with patience and silence.

Ver. 32.

If thou hast any thing to say for thy own justification, or in answer to the charge that I have already brought against thee.

I desire to justify thee, to wit, as far as may consist with truth and justice. I do not speak with evil design, or a bitter mind, or as one resolved to condemn thee whatsoever thou sayest, and I shall be glad to hear any thing from thee which may make for thy just vindication.

Ver. 33.

i.e. What thy wisdom and duty is in thy circumstances.

JOB CHAPTER 34

He accuseth Job for charging God with injustice, **#Job 34:1-9**. God, the almighty Disposer, Governor, and Judge of the world, cannot be unjust, **#Job 34:10-17**. It is not fit to say of kings and princes they are unjust, much less of God: his power over and

observance of man, who cannot hide from God, #**Job 34:18-22**. He exerciseth his power and justice over them, #**Job 34:23-30**. Man's duty under God's afflictions, #**Job 34:31,32**. He reproveth Job's words against God, #**Job 34:33-37**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

O ye wise men, who are here present, do you judge of the truth and reason of what I have said, and am further to say; for I am willing to submit all to the judgment of the truly wise.

Ver. 3.

i.e. Man's mind judgeth Of things spoken and heard.

The ear, the sense of discipline, is put for the mind, to which things are conveyed by it. See Poole "**Job 12:11**".

Ver. 4.

Judgment, i.e. justice and equity; judgment being oft synecdochically used for just judgment, as #**Job 8:3 19:7 32:9 Ps 37:28**. Let us not contend for victory, but only for truth and justice. This shall be my only care and business. Let us lay aside all prejudices and animosities, which I perceive have had too great an influence upon thee and thy friends, and impartially consider the naked truth and right of the cause. Let us know, i.e. let us discover or make it known one to another. What is good; who hath the best cause.

Ver. 5.

I am righteous; either,

1. I am perfectly righteous. But this Job did not say, but the contrary, #**Job 9:2,3 14:4**. Or,

2. I am a sincere person, no hypocrite, as my friends made me. But this Elihu doth not deny. Or,

3. I am so far righteous, and have been so holy and blameless in my life, that I have not deserved, nor had any reason to expect, such hard usage from God. And this Job had oft intimated, and Elihu doth justly blame him for it, that he blazoned his own

righteousness with tacit reflections upon God for dealing so severely with him.

God hath taken away my judgment; for so Job had said, **#Job 27:2**; i.e. he denies me that which is but just and equal, to give me a fair hearing, to suffer me to plead my cause with or before him, to show me the reasons of his contending with me, and what sins besides common infirmities I have been guilty of, whereby I have deserved such extraordinary judgments; which Elihu justly taxeth him with as a very irreverent and presumptuous expression.

Ver. 6.

Should I lie against my right? so Job had said in effect, **#Job 27:4-6**. Should I falsely accuse myself of such sins of which I am no way conscious to myself? Should I betray mine own cause, and deny my integrity, and say that I deserved worse than I have done?

Without transgression, i.e. without any great, or heinous, or crying sin, as this word commonly signifies, which might reasonably bring down such terrible judgments upon my head.

Ver. 7.

i.e. Abundantly and greedily; who doth so oft and so easily break forth into scornful and contemptuous expressions, not only against his friends, but in some sort even against God himself, whom he foolishly and insolently chargeth with dealing rigorously with him. The words may be thus read,

What man, being like Job, *would drink up?..?* That a wicked or foolish man should do thus is not strange; but that a man of such piety, gravity, wisdom, and authority as Job should be guilty of such a sin, this is wonderful.

Ver. 8.

Although I dare not say, as his three friends do, that he is a wicked man, yet in this matter he speaks and acts like one of them.

Ver. 9.

He hath said; not absolutely and in express terms, but by unforced consequence, and as concerning this life, and with reference to himself; because he said that good men were no less, nay, sometimes more, miserable here than the wicked, **#Job 9:22**

30:26, and that for his part he was no gainer as to this life by his piety, but a loser, and that God showed him no more kindness and compassion than he usually did to the vilest of men; which was a very unthankful and ungodly opinion and expression, seeing godliness hath the promise of this life as well as of that to come, and Job had such supports, and such assurances of his own uprightness, and of his future happiness, as he confesseth, as were and should have been accounted even for the present a greater comfort and profit than all which this world can afford.

That he should delight himself with God; that he should choose and delight to walk with God, and make it his chief care and business to please him, and to do his commandments; which is the true and proper character of a godly man.

Ver. 10.

Ye men of understanding; you who are present, and understand these things, do you judge between Job and me.

Far be it from God that he should do wickedness: this I must lay down as a principle, that the righteous and holy God neither doth nor can deal unjustly with Job, or with any man, as Job insinuates that God had dealt with him.

Ver. 11.

The work, i.e. the reward of his work, or according to his work. Job's afflictions, though great and sharp, are not undeserved, but justly inflicted upon him, both for his original corruption, and for many actual transgressions, which are manifest to God, though Job, through his partiality, may not see them. And Job's piety shall be recompensed, it may be, in this life, but undoubtedly in the next. And therefore piety is not unprofitable, as Job saith.

Ver. 12.

As Job hath wickedly affirmed. For the phrase, **See Poole "Job 8:3"**.

Ver. 13.

Over the earth, i.e. over the inhabitants of the earth, to rule them according to his laws, and to give an account to him of it. Who or where is his superior that made the world, and then delivered the government of it to God? There is no such person. God himself is the sole Creator, the absolute and supreme Lord and Governor, of

all the world, and therefore cannot do unjustly. The reason is, partly, because all unrighteousness is a transgression of some law, and God hath no law to bound him but his own nature and will; partly, because the Creator and Lord of the world must needs have all possible perfections in himself, and, amongst others, perfect justice, and must needs be free from all imperfections and obliquities, and therefore from injustice; and partly, because he is of himself all-sufficient, and independent upon all other persons, and able to do and procure whatsoever pleaseth him; and therefore as he hath no inclination, so he hath no temptation, to any unrighteous actions; this being generally the reason of all unrighteous actions in the world, because the persons who do them either are obliged to do it, to gratify some superior authority who commands them to do it, or else do want or desire something which they cannot justly obtain; for he is a monster, and not a man, who will take away any thing by injustice or violence which he may have by right.

Who hath disposed, or *committed*, to wit, to him, to be governed by him, in the name and for the use and service of his superior Lord, to whom he must give an account.

Ver. 14.

Upon man, Heb. *upon him*, i.e. man, as may seem probable from **#Job 34:11,15**, where *man* is expressed; and from the next clause of this verse, where he speaks of that

spirit and

breath which is in man. If his eye and heart be upon man, if he diligently and exactly observe him, and all his ways, and whatsoever is amiss in him, and, which follows upon it of course, resolve to punish him. Or, *if he set his heart against* (as this particle *el* is used, **#Am 7:15**, and elsewhere, as hath been noted before) *him*, to wit, to cut him off. *If he gather unto himself*; if it please him to gather to himself, to wit, by death, whereby God is said to take away men's breath, **#Ps 104:29**, and to *gather men's souls*, **#Ps 26:9**, and the *spirit* is said to return unto God, **#Ec 12:7**.

His spirit and his breath, i.e. that spirit and breath, or that living soul, that God breathed into man, **#Ge 2:7**, and gives to every man that cometh into the world.

Ver. 15.

All flesh, i.e. every man, who is called *flesh*, **#Ge 6:3,17 Isa 40:6**.

Together, or, *alike*, without any exception, be they great or mean, wise or foolish, good or bad; if God design to destroy them, they cannot withstand his power, but must needs perish by his stroke. The design of this and the foregoing verse is the same with that of **#Job 34:13**, See Poole "**Job 34:13**", namely, to declare God's absolute and uncontrollable sovereignty over all men, to dispose of them either to life or to death, as it pleaseth him, and consequently to show that Job had cause to be thankful to God, who had continued his life so long to him, which he might have taken away as soon as ever he had given it, and had no cause to complain of him, or to tax him with injustice for afflicting him, as he did.

Ver. 16.

As thou art a man of understanding, hear and consider what I say.

Ver. 17.

He that hateth right, i.e. that is unrighteous. But this he expresseth in a most emphatical manner, the reason and weight whereof seems to me to be this: If God be unjust, he is not so from fear of any superior, (as inferior magistrates do many unrighteous things against their consciences to please their prince or chief ruler, or to avoid his displeasure,) but merely from an intrinsical hatred of justice, or love of unrighteousness; which being most absurd to imagine concerning God, therefore he cannot possibly be unjust, or do any unjust action.

Govern; so this word, which properly signifies *to bind*, is fitly rendered by most interpreters; and so it is used **#Isa 3:7**, because governors have a power to bind their subjects by laws and penalties, and they are as it were the ligaments by which societies are bound and kept together, which without them would be dissolved and broken to pieces. Elihu's argument here is the same with that of Abraham's, **#Ge 18:25**, and that of St. Paul's, **#Ro 3:5,6**, If God *be unrighteous, how shall he judge or govern the*

world? And the argument is undeniable, If God were unjust, there would be nothing but injustice, and confusion, and mischief in the world; whereas we see there is a great deal of justice administered by rulers in the world, and all this must proceed from him who is the fountain and author of all justice, and rule, and authority. And as the psalmist saith, **#Ps 94:9**, *He that formed the eye, shall not he see?* so say I, He that makes men just, shall he be unjust? *Him that is most just*, i.e. God, who hath given so many clear and unquestionable evidences of his justice, in giving just and holy laws, in encouraging and rewarding very many righteous persons in this life, and inflicting dreadful and remarkable judgments upon tyrants and oppressors. Or, *him that is just and mighty*; for the next verse speaks of such, who were generally in those times more considerable for their power and authority than for their justice. So here is a double argument against Job's censures of God's justice. He is *just*, and therefore giveth thee no cause to condemn him; and withal *potent*, and therefore can punish thee yet far worse for so doing.

Ver. 18.

Thou art wicked; or, Thou art Belial, or a son of Belial. Though a king may really be unjust and wicked, yet their subjects neither may nor dare presume to call them so, **#Ex 22:28**. And therefore if some evil thought did arise in thee, yet how wast thou not afraid to utter such unworthy and almost blasphemous expressions against God?

Ver. 19.

To him that accepteth not the persons of princes, i.e. to God, who respecteth not the greatest princes, so as to do any unjust thing to gain their favour, or to avoid their anger, to whom princes and peasants are equally subject, and infinitely inferior; who therefore is free from all temptation to injustice, which commonly proceeds from respect of persons, **#Le 19:15**, and to whom therefore thou didst owe more reverence than thy words have expressed.

They all are the work of his hands; and therefore of equal worth and price with him, and equally subject to his power and pleasure.

Ver. 20.

In a moment; whensoever God doth but give the word, and send his summons for them.

Shall they, i. e. the rich and the prince, no less than the poor, must submit to the law of death, which God hath imposed upon all men, without exception, and they cannot charge God with injury therein.

The people; whole nations or people are no less subject to God's power than any particular persons; their numbers cannot secure them from God's hand.

Troubled, i.e. disturbed and terrified with those calamities which God shall bring upon them.

At midnight; suddenly, and when they are most secure.

Pass away; either,

1. Go into captivity, or run or flee away they know not whither for their lives. Or,
2. Perish or die, as he said before, and as this word is oft used, as **#Job 14:20 Ps 37:36 Ec 1:4**. So the same thing is said of the people, which in the first branch of the verse was said of the princes.

Taken away; either from their place or power, or out of this life.

Without hand; without any hand or help of man, by some secret and stupendous work and judgment of God; which he oft inflicts upon those who are out of the reach of men.

Ver. 21.

This is added as the reason of the judgments mentioned in the foregoing verse, God doth not afflict nor destroy either princes or people unjustly, no, nor out of his mere pleasure and absolute sovereignty, (to which Job seemed to impute his calamities,) but for their sins, which God sees exactly, although they use all possible arts and tricks to hide them from him. Therefore no man hath cause to complain of God, but of himself, for all that he may suffer in the world.

Ver. 22.

They may flatter themselves, or cheat others, by covering their wicked actions with plausible pretences and professions; but they cannot deceive God, nor keep their hearts and ways from his sight.

Ver. 23.

More than right; more or heavier punishments than they deserve, or than are proportionable to their sins, which he accurately observes, as was now said, and therefore can suit punishments to them.

That he should enter into judgment with God; thereby to give him any pretence or occasion of entering into judgment with him, or condemning his proceedings; for which there might seem to be some colour, if God did lay upon man more than right. And therefore thou, O Job, hadst no cause for thy complaints against God.

Ver. 24.

Mighty men without number; neither their greatness nor their numbers can secure them from the stroke of God's justice.

Set others in their stead, i.e. give away their power and dignity to others who shall come in their place.

Ver. 25.

i.e. Hence it appears that he knows all their evil works, because he judgeth them for them. God or men are oftentimes said in Scripture to know or do a thing, when they only manifest their knowing and doing of it. Or, *became*, &c., as this particle is used, **#Isa 26:14 61:7**. So this is subjoined as the ground or reason why he punisheth them, as is related both in the foregoing and in the following words, because he sees all their wicked designs and actions.

He overturneth them in the night, i.e. when they are at rest and secure; *at midnight*, as it is **#Job 34:20**. Or, *he turneth or bringeth upon them the night*, to wit, of calamity and tribulation, as the next words explain it, and as the words

night and *darkness* are oft used. Or, *he turneth the night*, to wit, into day, i.e. he knoweth all their deeds of darkness, and bringeth them to light. See above, **#Job 34:22**.

So that they are destroyed, Heb. *and* (or *then*, or *therefore*; for both these ways this particle is sometimes used) *they shall be destroyed, or broken to pieces.*

Ver. 26.

As wicked men, i.e. as he useth to smite wicked men, with a grievous and terrible stroke. Compare **#Isa 27:7**. Or, *for wicked men*; or, *because they are wicked men*, therefore he destroys them without any regard to their quality.

In the open sight of others; in public view, for their greater shame, and for the greater glory of God's justice, and for the greater terror of other oppressors, and comfort of the oppressed.

Ver. 27.

From him; from the God, whom they or their progenitors had owned; and his laws, which God hath written in the minds of all men, **#Ro 2:14,15**; and, it may be, from the practice of the true religion, which sometimes they professed;

Would not consider, or *understand*. They did not desire nor endeavour to know them, at least practically, or to any good purpose.

His ways; either,

1. God's providential ways. They did not lay to heart any of God's judgments inflicted upon such oppressors as themselves, which should have given them warning, but boldly persisted in the same wicked courses. Or,

2. His precepts; oft called his *ways*, because he hath appointed them for us to walk in. For these ways they were in a special manner obliged to consider and practise; and the next verse giveth us an instance of their backsliding from these ways.

Ver. 28.

So that they cause, Heb. *to bring*, &c., which is ambiguous, and may be read, either,

1. *That he*, i.e. God, *might bring*, &c. So this is a reason why God smote them, &c., as is said, **#Job 34:26**. Or,

2. **That they**, i.e. those wicked men, *might bring*, &c.; and so these words contain either,

1. A reason of what was last mentioned, to wit, why they would not consider nor walk in God's ways, because they were resolved to oppress the poor, and give them cause to cry unto God; which they neither could nor would have done, if they had thoroughly understood and considered God's ways. Or,

2. An evidence or instance of it, wherein it did appear that *they had turned back from God, &c. Unto him*, i.e. unto God, as the following words imply, it being God's work to *hear the cry* and plead the cause of the afflicted or oppressed. Others, *upon him*, or *upon them*, or *upon each of them*, to wit, of the oppressors; upon whom the cry of the oppressed is said to come, because the vengeance of God is by that cry brought down upon them.

He heareth the cry of the afflicted; he delivereth the oppressed by taking the oppressor away.

Ver. 29.

When he giveth quietness; either to the poor and oppressed persons last mentioned, or to any other person or people, as it follows.

Who then can make trouble? no man or creature can hinder God's design and work.

When he hideth his face, i.e. withdraws his favour and help from them, and thereby exposeth them to all oppressions or calamities.

Who then can behold him? i.e. who can look up to God with cheerfulness or confidence, to desire or expect his help? Or rather, *who then will look upon him, or regard him*, to wit, so as to pity or succour him? If God be against him, what man will or dare be for him? all men will forsake and oppose him, and so he will be utterly lost. For this *who* answers to the *who* in the former branch of the verse, and both of them speak of man and his act as opposed unto God and to his act. The case is the same in both: God can carry on his work, either of mercy or justice, as easily and as irresistibly upon a whole nation or people as upon one particular person.

Ver. 30.

Having said that God could and would carry on his own work and design effectually, whether against one man, or against a whole

people, he now proceeds to give a further instance of God's mighty power above and against the greatest monarchs, in whom their own and the people's strength seem to be united, yet all together cannot oppose God in his work. God when he pleaseth can and doth so order affairs,

that the hypocrite (i.e. *the profane wicked prince*, as one of the kings of Judah is called, #Eze 21:25; bad princes being called *hypocrites*, because they do commonly cover all their oppressions, and injuries, and impieties too, with the specious pretence of justice and the public good, and the discharge of their trust and duty) *may not reign*, (i.e. may not continue his reign and tyranny, that he may and shall by his sovereign power and omnipotent providence be deprived of his kingdom,)

lest the people be insnared, i.e. lest the people should be longer and more and more kept and held in the snares or fetters of tyranny and oppression, i.e. God doth this to free poor oppressed people from the snares which ungodly and unrighteous princes lay for them. Or, *that the people be not insnared any longer*, Heb. *that there be no snares of or for the people*. Or, *for the snares*, or *scandals*, or *sins* (which are oft so called) *of the people*. So the sense is, that such a wicked prince may not continue to reign over that people, although by their sins they had provoked God to give them such a prince, and to continue his power over them.

Ver. 31.

Certainly it is but fit and reasonable that man should say thus to his Maker and supreme Lord, and that instead of contending with God, he should submit to him. Or, (which comes to the same thing,) *But hath he said?* so the sense is, I have showed the absolute power which God hath over all his creatures, and that he may justly, and doth oftentimes severely, punish all sorts of men as he sees fit. And this Job should have applied to his own case. *But*, I appeal to all of you, *hath he*, i.e. Job, (who is the principal subject of this whole discourse, and to whom he now begins to direct his discourse,) said, that which here follows? which is a kind of form of confession or humiliation, which Elihu puts into Job's mouth, as fit to have been used by him. Nay, hath not his speech and carriage been of a directly contrary nature and tendency? Instead of humbling himself under God's hand, which

was his duty, hath he not been full of murmurings and complaints against God?

Unto God; unto one so much thy superior, so mighty and so righteous in all his ways; with such a one a weak and sinful creature (as thou art) should not presume to contest.

I have borne chastisement; or, *I do or shall bear it*, to wit, quietly and contentedly; I will bear the Lord's indignation, and accept of the punishment of my own iniquity, and not accuse God falsely and foolishly, as I have done.

I will not offend any more, Heb. *I will not corrupt*, to wit, myself or my ways; which is oft understood in like cases. Or, *I will take or demand no pledge*; for so this verb is oft used. So the sense may possibly be, I confess I have been too bold with God, in desiring that he would come with me into judgment, and that I could have a pledge or surety that he would do so; but I will no longer desire it, but submit myself wholly to him.

Ver. 32.

I will no longer maintain mine innocency, but from thy judgments I will conclude and have reason to believe that there are some secret sins in me, for which thou dost chastise me, and which I through mine ignorance or partiality cannot yet discover, and therefore do beg that thou wouldst by thy Spirit manifest them to me. If I have done iniquity, I will amend my former errors.

Ver. 33.

Having advised and directed Job how to behave himself, and what to say to God in his case, he now proceedeth to enforce his advice by solid arguments.

Should it (to wit, God's chastening of thee, about which the great controversy was)

be according to thy mind? Heb. *from with thee*, as thou wouldst have it? Shall thy opinion or affection give laws and measures to God that he shall afflict only such persons, and in such a manner and measure, and so long, as thou wouldst have him. Doth God need, or should he seek for, thy advice how to govern the world, and whom and when to reward or punish? Dost thou quarrel with

God, because he punisheth thee worse and longer than thou expectest or desirest?

He will recompence it, to wit, thy iniquity, expressed #**Job 34:32**. Whether thou art satisfied or offended with his proceedings, he regards not, as not being obliged to give thee an account of his matters, whether thou would refuse his punishments or accept of them. It is not I, nor thou, that must prescribe to God, but he will do what he pleaseth. Or, *but not I*, i.e. do thou refuse or choose as thou pleasest, and contend with God for doing with thee otherwise than according to thy opinion or good will; but so would not I do, if it were my case; and I can say nothing for this course which thou takest, and therefore do thou

speak what thou knowest, or what thou canst say for it, as it here follows. If thou cans, say any thing for this practice, here I am ready to hear thy defence, and to justify thee as far as I can truly and righteously do. But this verse is and may well be otherwise rendered, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, though still the sense will be the same, *Shall he*, i.e. God, *render or recompense it* (to wit, thy iniquity) *according to thy mind*, (i.e. no further than thou dost like and consent,) *because thou refusest?* (to wit, his chastisement. Is he obliged to forbear punishing thee because thou art not pleased with it? Shall not he dispense either favours or afflictions as he sees fit without thy consent?) *shalt thou choose, and not I?* (so Elihu speaks this in the name and person of God; such sudden changes of persons being not unusual in this book. Shalt thou, O Job, choose for me, and not I for myself?)

therefore speak what thou knowest. If this be thy opinion, speak what thou cans, in defence of it; and here am I ready to plead for God against thee. So here Elihu returns to speak in his own person.

Ver. 34.

I am content that any wise man should judge of my words, and let such consider what I say. Or, as others translate the place, *Men of understanding will speak for or with* (as the prefix *lamed* is sometimes used, as #**Ge 46:26 Nu 18:11 Job 17:5**) *me*, and

wise men will

hearken or *assent* unto me.

Ver. 35.

Without knowledge; foolishly and inconsiderately.

Ver. 36.

Either,

1. That he may be further tried by God, or exercised with afflictions, till he be thoroughly convinced or humbled. But it seems harsh that he should pray for the continuance or increase of Job's afflictions. Or rather,

2. That his words and cause which I am now debating may be examined and sifted, that you that are here present, or any other wise men, may consider and judge thereof, as he desired above,
#Job 34:2,10,34.

Unto the end, i.e. thoroughly and exactly, till the cause be brought to an issue. Or, *unto victory*, i.e. till judgment be brought forth unto victory.

Because of his answers; or, *concerning his answers, or replies, or discourses;* for answering is oft used in Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, for *speaking*. So he limits and changeth the state of the controversy: I do not meddle with Job's former life, nor charge him with hypocrisy, as his three friends have done; but I justly reprove him for his hard speeches against God, whereby he hath reproached his justice and goodness.

For wicked men, i.e. on their behalf, or for their use. He hath put arguments into their mouths against God and his providence. Or, *with or among wicked men;* as if he were one of them; or such answers as they use to make, which therefore are very unbecoming such a man as Job is, or pretends to be.

Ver. 37.

He sinned before, as other ways, so by impatience under his afflictions, which may be ascribed to human infirmity; but now he is grown obstinate and incorrigible, and instead of repenting and humbling himself for his sins, he excuseth them, and justifieth himself, and accuseth the blessed God. Or thus,

For otherwise, unless he be thoroughly tried and rebuked, *he will add rebellion unto his sin*; he will break forth into open rebellion against God, and (as it follows) *he will clap*, &c. For the Hebrew words are of the future tense, although such are oft rendered by the past tense.

He clappeth his hands, in token of joy and victory, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 47:1 98:8**; insulting and triumphing, not only over us, as if none of us were able to answer him, but in a sort over God himself, inasmuch as he hath again and again desired leave of God to debate his cause with or before him, and in that case did not doubt to maintain it, but could not obtain the favour or justice of a fair hearing.

Multiplieth his words against God: whereas the reverence which he oweth to God, and his infinite distance from him, should teach him to be very modest and sparing in his speeches of God, Job on the contrary poureth forth whole floods of bold and presumptuous expostulations with God, and reflections upon God's proceedings with him.

JOB CHAPTER 35

Our good or evil extendeth not to God, **#Job 35:1-7**, but to men on earth, who are hereby oppressed, and cry out, but not unto God, nor are delivered, **#Job 35:8-12**. He exhorteth to hope in God, though for the present he be angry, **#Job 35:13-16**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Canst thou in thy conscience, upon second thoughts, approve of what thou hast said? Not that Job said this in express terms, but he said those things from which this might seem to follow, as that God punished him more than he deserved or expected, all things considered; and that if he might be admitted to debate his cause with or before God, he did not doubt to carry it, and to obtain that ease and favour from God, which otherwise God would not afford him. But this charge against Job he proves in the next verse.

Ver. 3.

This verse contains the proof of the foregoing charges. Job had oft affirmed that he was, and still continued to be, righteous, though he had no present benefit by it, but much bitterness with it; and God was not kind to Job, notwithstanding all his former and present piety, but dealt with him as if he had been a most wicked man; which was in effect to say, that he was more righteous than God.

What advantage will it, to wit, his righteousness last mentioned, be unto thee, i.e. unto me; such changes of persons being very frequent in the Hebrew language.

If I be cleansed from my sin; or, *by the expiation of my sin*; for the same Hebrew word signifies both *to sin* and *to purge out or expiate sin*. Or, by it (to wit, by my righteousness) *more than by my sin*. So the sense is, I have no more present benefit by all my care to please and serve God, than wicked men have by their sins against him. God regards my cries no more than theirs, and shows no more kindness or pity to me than he doth to the most profligate wretches. But still remember Job speaks not here of the future life, wherein he knew he should have much advantage, as he professed before, but only of this present state.

Ver. 4.

Thy companions, i.e. those who are of thy opinion, or with whom thou dost associate thyself in those speeches and carriages; which seems to be meant not of Job's three friends, (as many understand it, for their opinions were contrary to Job's in this point,) but of *wicked men*, with whom Job is said to walk and go in company for this same opinion or assertion, **#Job 34:8,9**. And these men he here calls Job's companions, partly because they are very forward to harp upon the same string, and to accuse God and justify themselves upon all occasions; and partly that he might awaken Job to a more serious review of his former assertions, by representing to him whose cause he pleaded, and who were his confederates and colleagues in this opinion.

Ver. 5.

How much more is God, who is far above all heavens, higher than thou! And therefore God is out of the reach of all profit or loss by

thy actions. If thy goodness do not profit thee, it is certain it doth not profit him; and therefore doth not lay any obligation upon him to indulge or recompense thee for it, save only so far as he hath graciously obliged himself; and therefore thou canst not accuse him of injustice for afflicting thee, nor pretend that thou hast deserved better usage from him. And this infinite distance between God and thee should cause thee to think and speak more modestly and reverently of that glorious majesty.

Ver. 6.

Thy sins do him no hurt, and therefore thy righteousness brings him no benefit, as it follows.

Ver. 7.

He gaineth nothing by it, nor can indeed receive any good from thee, because all thy good comes from him. And therefore thou hast no reason to boast of nor to upbraid God with thy piety, which is much to thy advantage, but nothing to his.

Ver. 8.

If God were such a one as thou art, he might have benefit or hurt by thine actions; but being an infinite, independent, and self-sufficient Being, he is far exalted above all thy good or evil.

Ver. 9.

The multitude, or *greatness*. This verse is supposed to contain an argument to prove what he said **#Job 35:8**, that one man's wickedness may hurt another. But he rather seems to begin a new matter, and having answered one of Job's objections, to proceed to another, which may be either,

1. That which Job had oft complained of, that he cried to God, and God did not hear his cry; which Elihu answers by a parallel case of men crying out for oppression; whom yet God doth not hear nor help, and that for just reasons, which he leaves to Job to apply to himself. Or,

2. That which Job had alleged, **#Job 24:12**, and which might seem to reflect upon God's providence. This therefore Elihu repeats in this verse, and answereth in the following.

To cry; not only to murmur and complain, but to cry out by reason of sore oppression, and to cry to the oppressors or others

for pity and help. By reason of the arm of the mighty; because their oppressors are too strong for them.

Ver. 10.

None, i.e. few or none (for few are oft called and accounted as none, both in Scripture and other authors) of the great numbers of oppressed persons.

None saith, to wit, seriously or sincerely, and it may be not so much as in word and profession.

Where is God? they howl and cry out of men, and to men, but they seek not after God; they do not acknowledge him in all their ways; they praise him not for that ease, and liberty, and estate, and other mercies which God gave them; and by this unthankfulness they forfeit their mercies; and therefore if God suffer oppressors to take them away, they have no cause to complain of God, but only of themselves: they will not vouchsafe to pray to God seriously and fervently, either to continue or to restore their lost mercies; and therefore if God do not hear nor regard their brutish cries, arising only from a natural sense of their misery, it is not strange nor unjust.

My Maker; who alone made me, and whose power and providence preserveth me every day, and who only can protect and deliver me; all which were obligations upon them to praise God, and pray to him, and depend upon him, and aggravations of their gross neglect of God. Heb. *my Makers*, in the plural number; which being used not only here, but also **#Ec 12:1 Isa 44:5**, and that without any necessity, when it might as well have been put in the singular number, yea, though Elohim be plural, as it is **#Ge 1:1**, plainly implies a plurality of persons in the Divine essence, of which see on **#Ge 1:26**. Songs, i.e. matter of songs; great occasion to rejoice and praise God.

In the night; either,

1. Metaphorically taken, i.e. in the night of affliction; implying that they want not cause to bless God even in their afflictions. Or rather,

2. Properly, as this word is always used in Job, one place excepted, which is doubtful, to wit, #**Job 36:20**; which he may mention rather than the day, either because oppressed persons, who in the day time are cruelly used by their oppressors, are permitted to rest in the night; or because the hand and mercy of God is more manifest in the preservation, and rest, and sleep of the night, than in the blessings of the day, which are procured by man's industry; or because the day is the time of action, the night of contemplation, when we do and ought to remember God's mercies with thanksgiving: compare #**Ps 42:8 119:62**.

Ver. 11.

This is mentioned as a further aggravation of men's neglect of God in their misery. God hath given to men those gifts which he hath denied to beasts, reason and religion, wisdom to know God and themselves, and their obligations to God, and their dependence upon him. And therefore it ill becometh them to lie like brute creatures, roaring and crying out in their miseries, without taking any notice of God in way of prayer or praise; and if they do so, it is no wonder if God takes no notice of them.

Ver. 12.

There, or *then*, as this particle is used, #**Ps 14:5 Ec 3:17 Zep 1:14**; in that time or condition.

The pride of evil men; either

1. Of the oppressors. So this is the reason not of the last clause, why none answereth, but of the former, why they cry; the latter clause being therefore shut up within a parenthesis, and the words thus are to be transposed, as some place them,

There they cry, because of the pride of evil men, *but none giveth answer*; the reason whereof followeth in the next verse. Or rather,

2. Of the oppressed persons. And so there is no need of any parenthesis or transposition. And so these words contain one reason of the words immediately foregoing, which is most natural, and easy, and usual, to wit, why none giveth answer, i.e. why God doth not answer nor regard their cries, because of their *pride*, &c., because they are both *evil*, wicked and impenitent, and *proud*,

unhumbled for those sins for which God brought these miseries upon them, and unsubdued to the obedience of God.

Ver. 13.

Either,

1. Vain and light persons, that have no true wisdom or solid piety in them, but are wholly addicted to vain and worldly things, rejoicing immoderately when they have them, and crying out for want of them, as here they do. Or,

2. Vain cries, which proceed not from faith or piety, but only from self-love and a natural sense of their misery; which is common to them with brute beasts. The abstract is here put for the concrete, as *wickedness* is oft put for wicked men, and *pride* for proud persons, and the like.

Neither will the Almighty regard it: though God be able to help them, as this title of God implies, and though he be the Judge of the world, as the former name of God signifies, to whom therefore it belongs to right the oppressed against the oppressor, yet in this case he justly refuseth to help them.

Ver. 14.

Thou shalt not see him; or, *thou canst not see him*; the future tense of the indicative mood being oft put potentially; i.e. thou canst not have thy desire in appearing and pleading thy cause before him. So this is a new matter, and Elihu answers another objection of Job's, of which see **#Job 23:8,9**, and tells him that he is not to judge of God by present appearance; because though God may for a season hide his face, and delay to give him an answer, yet he will certainly do him right. *Before him*, i.e. before God, or in his presence, or at his tribunal, or in all his ways and administrations. And

judgment is put for justice or just judgment, as it is **#Job 8:3 Ps 37:28 99:4**, and oft elsewhere. So the sense is, God is and will show himself to be just in all his ways, and therefore thou dost wickedly in reflecting upon God's justice. Or, yet *judge* thyself

before him; instead of accusing God, condemn thyself, acknowledge thy sins, and then thou mayst hope for mercy. Compare **#1Co 11:31**.

Trust thou in him; instead of murmuring against him, put thy trust in him. Repent of what is past, and humble thyself under God's hand, and do not despond for the future, but wait upon God patiently in his way till deliverance come to thee; for it will certainly come if thou dost not hinder it.

Ver. 15.

Because it is not so, i.e. because Job doth not acknowledge God's justice and his own sins, and wait upon God in his way for mercy, according to the last advice given to him, **#Job 35:14.**

He, to wit, God, to whom this great work of visiting is ascribed every where in Scripture.

Hath visited in his anger, i.e. hath laid grievous afflictions upon him; all which is too little to bring Job to compliance with God.

He knoweth it not; Job is not sufficiently sensible of it, so as to be humbled under God's hand.

In great extremity; or, though (which particle is sometimes understood, of which examples have been before) *in great extremity*, or abundance, to wit, of afflictions. Though Job hath hitherto been and still is exercised with very sore calamities, yet they have not brought Job to the knowledge of God and of himself. But this verse is and may be rendered thus, *And now know that his (i.e. God's) anger hath visited thee little or nothing,* (to wit, in comparison of what thou hast deserved and mightest reasonably expect,) *neither hath he known* (i.e. judged or punished, as this word is used, **#Pr 10:9**, and elsewhere) *thee in or according to* (as the prefix *beth* is sometimes used) *the great abundance*, to wit, of thy sins. And therefore thy complaints against God are very unrighteous and unreasonable.

Ver. 16.

Therefore; hence it is manifest.

Open his mouth in vain, i.e. pour forth his complaints without any success, and gets no ease by them.

He multiplieth words without knowledge, thereby discovering his ignorance of God and of himself.

JOB CHAPTER 36

God is first in all his ways; towards the wicked, #Job 36:1-6, the godly, #Job 36:7-11, the hypocrite, #Job 36:12-14, the poor, #Job 36:15. Job's sins hindered God's salvation to him: he admonisheth him, #Job 36:16-21. God's power, and sovereignty, and all his perfections to be magnified, #Job 36:22-33.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Suffer me a little; give me thy patient attention but a little longer; and I

will show thee that I have not said all that can be said to justify God's proceedings against thee.

Ver. 3.

From afar, i.e. from remote times, and places, and things. I will not confine my discourse to thy particular case, but will justify God by declaring his great and glorious works of creation and providence, both in the heaven and earth, and the manner of his dealing with men in other parts and ages of the world; for these are the chief heads of the following discourse, and therefore the best comment upon this general expression.

I will acknowledge that which is true, that God is righteous. He adds the words,

my Maker, either,

1. As an argument or evidence of God's righteousness; partly, because it is not likely that God should be unjust to his own creatures, since even men are not only just, but kind, to their own works and relations; and partly, because the work of creation gave unto God an absolute right and power to dispose of Job as he saw fit, as the potter hath power over the clay, #Ro 9:21, and therefore there was no foundation for unrighteousness, nor any temptation upon God to do it; and partly, because man's Maker must needs be a being of all possible perfection, and therefore one of perfect righteousness. Or,

2. As a motive or obligation upon him to plead God's cause. I do not engage myself in this controversy out of a pragmatical or contentious humour, nor out of any prejudice or ill-will to thee, but merely from the sense of my duty to my blessed Creator. Withal he reflects upon Job as guilty of great folly and ingratitude in contending with him, in or by whom he lived, and moved, and had his being.

Ver. 4.

I will not speak any thing against my own conscience, nor against truth, either to flatter God, or to vex thee, as thou supposest thy other friends have done, #**Job 13:7**, and elsewhere.

He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. This is meant either,

1. Of God. Thou hast to do with a God of perfect knowledge, by whom all Shy words and actions. are weighed; and therefore hast need to be more wary and circumspect in thy expressions and behaviour. Or rather,

2. Of himself, as the former part of the verse is. And he speaketh of himself in the third person, for modesty's sake. He speaks not of absolute, but of comparative perfection. And whatsoever perfection of knowledge he had, he doth not ascribe it to himself, but to God's Spirit, #**Job 32:8**. And the meaning may be this, Thou hast not to do with a novice, but with one who hath accurately considered, and through God's grace doth fully understand, these matters; therefore hearken to me. But the word rendered

perfect signifieth also *sincere*, or *upright*, or *right*. And this may seem best to agree with the former clause, wherein he saith that he would not speak what he knew to be false; and now he adds, that he was and would be upright in the use of his knowledge, or in the delivery of his opinion in this matter, and not be biassed by any passion or prejudice, either to speak otherwise than he thought, or to judge otherwise than he should.

Ver. 5.

His greatness doth not make him (as it doth men) to scorn, or despise, or oppress the meanest. Though he may do what he

pleaseth, and none can hinder him, yet he will not use it to do any man wrong, as Job seemed to insinuate, #**Job 10:3 19:7 23:13**. His strength is guided by wisdom, and therefore cannot be employed to do any thing unbecoming God, or unjust to his creatures; for either of these is folly. Or,

in strength, or *virtue of heart*; for the *and* is not in the Hebrew. So the sense is, He is truly magnanimous, of a great and generous mind or heart, and therefore not unrighteous; for all injustice proceeds from littleness or weakness of heart. Truly great souls scorn unjust actions.

Ver. 6.

He preserveth not the life of the wicked, to wit, for ever; but will in his due time forsake them, and give them up to the destroyer. Or, *he doth not or will not preserve*, is put for *he will certainly and dreadfully destroy*, by the figure called *meiosis*, used #**Pr 17:21**, and oft elsewhere.

Giveth right to the poor; he doth uphold, and he certainly will in his time deliver, his poor oppressed ones from all their oppressors.

Ver. 7.

He never ceaseth to care for and watch over

the righteous, no, not when they are afflicted or persecuted, when he may seem to neglect them. Though they may be oppressed for a time, yet ofttimes he not only delivers them, but also raiseth them to the highest honour and happiness in this life; compare #**1Sa 2:8 Ps 113:7,8**; and their felicity is more stable and permanent than that of the wicked. Having mentioned the cause, that God *did establish them*; he now mentions the effect, that *they are* or *continue to be exalted*; they are not cast down from their dignity, as the wicked commonly are.

Ver. 8.

If through the vicissitude of worldly affairs, and the righteous judgment of God upon them for their sins, they be brought from their throne into a prison, as sometimes hath been done.

Ver. 9.

Their work, i.e. their evil works, as the next clause explains and limits it. By these afflictions he brings them to a sight of their sins and to repentance, which is the way and means of their recovery.

That they have exceeded; that they have greatly sinned by abusing their power and prosperity; which even good men are too prone to do.

Ver. 10.

i.e. He enableth and inclineth them to hearken to what God speaks by the rod, who would not hear in the time of their prosperity; like them **#Jer 22:21**.

To discipline; or, *to instruction*, i.e. to receive instruction; or, *to chastening*, i.e. to hear the rod, and who hath appointed it, as is said, **#Mic 6:9**.

Commandeth, either by his word or Spirit accompanying the affliction, and discovering the mind and will of God in this dispensation.

That they return from iniquity, which is the chief cause of their calamity.

Ver. 11.

If they obey God's admonition and command.

They shall spend their days in prosperity; they shall be restored to their former prosperity, and shall live and die in it. This he speaks according to the tenor of God's promises, especially in the Old Testament state of the church, and according to the common course and method of God's providence, which Elihu and other good men had observed.

Their years in pleasures; abounding in worldly comforts, and being enabled by God to rejoice in them, which is God's gift, **#Ec 3:13**, and delighting themselves in God's love and favour to them.

Ver. 12.

If they; the righteous, spoken of **#Job 35:7**, opposed to the hypocrites here following, **#Job 35:13**; for even good men may sometimes be disobedient to Divine admonitions, and may suffer deeply, yea, even death itself, for their folly: see **#1Co 11:30**.

Without knowledge; in or for their ignorance, or inadvertency, or folly. Or, *because they are without* knowledge; because they are foolish, or brutish, and will not learn the lessons which God so plainly teacheth them.

Ver. 13.

The hypocrites in heart; such as are truly void of that piety which they profess; whereby he either secretly insinuates that Job was such a one; or gives him this occasion to search himself whether he were not so; or rather, admonisheth him not to carry himself like such a one, as he had hitherto done, and for which he reproveth him, **#Job 34:8**.

Heap up wrath, i.e. by their impious and obstinate carriage in all conditions, they treasure up God's wrath against themselves.

They cry not unto God for help. They live in the gross neglect of God and of prayer.

When he bindeth them, to wit, with the cords of affliction, expressed **#Job 34:8**, which is mentioned as an aggravation of their wickedness; because even wicked men, if not profligately bad, will seek God in time of affliction, **#Ho 5:15**. Withal he secretly reflects upon Job as one that behaved himself like a wicked man, because though he cried out of God in way of complaint, yet he did not cry unto him by humble supplication.

Ver. 14.

They die in youth; they provoke God to cut them off before their time. Heb. *Their soul* (i.e. they themselves) *shall die in youth. Their life is;* or, *their life* shall die or be extinct; which verb is understood out of the former clause, after the manner of the Hebrews.

The unclean; or, *the filthy,* or *whoremongers,* or *sodomites;* to whose destruction (which happened not long before this time) he may seem to allude. The sense is, they shall die by some dreadful and exemplary stroke of Divine vengeance.

Ver. 15.

i.e. Causeth them to hear, and understand, and do the will of God; hearing being oft put *for obeying*. And this latter clause seems to

be added, to intimate that he will not deliver all afflicted persons, but only those whose ears he openeth to receive his counsels.

In oppression, i.e. in the time of their oppression. Or, *by oppression or tribulation*, as the means of opening their ears and hearts.

Ver. 16.

Even so, if thou hadst opened thine ear to God's counsels, and humbled thyself under his correcting hand, and sued to God for mercy,

would he have removed thee; as this verb is used, #2Ch 18:31. Or, *allured, or enticed, or persuaded thee*, as the word properly signifies; which possibly may here be emphatical, and may imply, as that Job had by his sins brought himself into these straits, so that God would have brought him out of them by the usual and regular way, to wit, by persuading him to turn from his sins, and humbly and earnestly to cry to God for mercy, which if he had complied with, God would have delivered him.

Out of the strait, Heb. *out of the mouth or jaws of tribulation*; which like a wild beast was read to swallow him up.

Into a broad place, i.e. into a state of ease and freedom.

Thy table; thy dishes, or the food in them.

Ver. 17.

The judgment; or, *the cause, or sentence*, as the word most properly signifieth. Thou hast fully pleaded their cause, and justified the hard and reproachful speeches which wicked men in their rage utter against God, condemning God and justifying themselves.

Judgment and justice take hold on thee; or, therefore (which is oft understood) *the sentence and judgment* (or, *the judicial sentence*, to wit, of the wicked now mentioned) shall take hold on thee. Thou hast maintained their cause against God, and God shall pass against thee their sentence, or the sentence of condemnation due to such wicked men.

Ver. 18.

Because there is wrath, to wit, conceived by God against thee. Because by thy pleading the cause of the wicked, thou hast deserved that God should give sentence against thee, as was now said, and hast provoked God's wrath against thee; therefore look to thyself, and reconcile thyself to God by true repentance whilst thou mayst, and before sentence be executed upon thee.

Beware: this is not in the Hebrew, but is necessarily to be understood to make up the sense, and is oft understood in the like cases, and that before this Hebrew particle *pen*, as **#Ge 3:22 11:4 42:4 Isa 36:8**. See the like also **#Mt 25:9 Ac 5:39**.

With his stroke; properly, with the stroke of his hand or foot. It is an allusion to men, who oft express their anger by clapping their hands, or stamping with their feet.

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee; for if once God's wrath take hold of thee, and sentence be executed upon thee before thou dost repent and humble thyself to thy judge, neither riches, nor friends, no, nor any person or thing in heaven and earth, can redeem thee; no ransom or price will be accepted for thee.

Ver. 19.

If thou couldst recover thy lost wealth or strength, or thy friends would employ theirs on thy behalf, neither could the one ransom thee, nor the other rescue thee.

Ver. 20.

Desire not the night; either,

1. Properly, that in it thou mayst find some ease or rest, as men usually do. But this Job did not much desire, for he complains that his nights were as restless as his days. Or rather,

2. Metaphorically, the night of death, which is called the night both in Scripture, as **#Joh 9:4**, and in other writers; and which Job had oft and earnestly desired, and even thirsted after, as this verb notes. See **#Job 7:15**. And this seems best to agree with the foregoing counsel, **#Job 36:18**, beware *lest he take thee away with his stroke*; for then, saith he, thou art irrecoverably lost and gone; and therefore take heed of thy foolish and oft-repeated

desire of death, lest God inflict it upon thee in great anger. *When*; or, by which; which words are oft understood in divers texts of Scripture. *People*; even whole nations and bodies of people, which are all God's creatures as well as thou, and yet are not spared by him, but cut off in wrath, and many of them sent from one death to another; take heed therefore thou be not added to the number.

Are cut off, Heb. are made to *ascend*, i.e. to vanish, or perish, or die, as this verb is oft used, as **#Job 18:16 Ps 102:24**.

In their place; in their several places where they are; or suddenly, before they can remove out of the place where the hand and stroke of God finds them; or in the place where they are settled and surrounded with all manner of comforts, and supports, and friends, all which could not prevent their being cut off. Possibly this phrase may allude to that expression of Job's, **#Job 29:18**, *I shall die in my nest*.

Ver. 21.

Regard not iniquity, or, *look not to it*, to wit, with an approving or coveting eye, as this word is used, **#Pr 23:31**. Thou hast chosen rather to quarrel with God, and censure his judgments, than humbly and quietly to submit to them, and to wait upon God by faith and prayer for deliverance in his time and way.

Ver. 22.

God exalteth; or, *is high*, or exalted; the active verb being taken intransitively; which is not unusual in the Hebrew tongue. This is a proper argument to force the foregoing counsels. God is omnipotent; and therefore can with great facility either punish thee far worse, if thou be obstinate and refractory; or deliver thee, if thou dost repent and return to him.

Who teacheth like him? he is also infinitely wise as well as powerful; and as none can work like him, so none can teach like him. Therefore do not presume to teach him how to govern the world, or to order thy affairs; but know that whatsoever he doth with thee, or with any other men, is best to be done. And therefore be willing to learn from him. Learn obedience by the things which thou sufferest from him; and do not follow thy own fancies or affections, but use the methods which God hath taught thee to get out of thy troubles, by submission, and prayer, and repentance.

The words may be rendered, *what lord is like him?* For the word *moreb* in the Chaldee dialect signifies a *lord*. This translation suits with the former clause of this verse; but ours agrees well enough with that, and is confirmed by the following verse.

Ver. 23.

His way, wherein he would walk, i.e. what courses and methods he should use in the administration of human affairs. If he had a superior Lord who gave him laws for his actions, he might be accountable to him, and questionable for what he did; but he is supreme, absolute, and uncontrollable, who hath no law to regulate him but his own holy nature and blessed will. And therefore how rash, and impudent, and absurd a thing is it for any man to censure his proceedings!

Thou hast wrought iniquity; thou hast swerved from the law and rule given to thee.

Ver. 24.

Remember; call to mind this thy duty, and take this matter into thy more serious thoughts, and it will prevent thy horrible mistakes and miscarriages.

That; so this Hebrew particle is used here, **#Job 36:10 3:12.**

His work; or, *his works*, the singular number being put for the plural, every work which he doth; do not condemn any of his providential works towards thee or others, but adore and glorify them, as done with admirable wisdom, and justice, and faithfulness.

Which men behold, to wit, with admiration and astonishment; which by their greatness and glory draw the eyes and minds of all men towards them; which deserve to be entertained with adoration and reverence of all men, not with censure and reproach.

Ver. 25.

May see it, to wit, his work, last mentioned. The power, and wisdom, and greatness of God is so manifest in all his works, that all who are not blind or stupid must needs see and acknowledge it.

Man may behold it afar off; the works of God are so great and conspicuous, that they may be seen at a great distance; whereas

little things cannot be seen, unless we be near them. This translation and interpretation seems better to agree with the context than that which is more common, *man doth behold it* (i.e. God's work or works)

afar off, i.e. they see them darkly and imperfectly, as things at a great distance, but not clearly and plainly, as things near at hand; and therefore they are so apt to mistake them, and misjudge of them.

Ver. 26.

God is great; infinite in majesty, and power, and wisdom, and all perfections, and therefore just in all his ways. We

know him not, to wit, perfectly. Though we see something of him in his works, as was now said, yet we see and know but little of him in comparison of that which is in him. He is incomprehensibly great in his essence and in his works, and therefore be not so rash, O Job, as to censure those ways of God which thou canst not fully understand. He is from everlasting to everlasting, eternal, as in his being, so in all his counsels; which therefore must be infinitely wise, and above the comprehension of short-lived men.

Ver. 27.

Having affirmed that God's works are incomprehensibly great and glorious, he now enters upon the proof of it; and he proveth it from the most common and visible works of nature and providence, which if thoroughly considered, are full of wonder, and past the reach of the greatest philosophers, who indeed speak of them only by guess, and by their innumerable disputations about them discover their ignorance in them. And hence he leaves it to Job to consider how incomparably more deep and unconceivable the secret counsels and judgments of God must needs be, and therefore how foolish and presumptuous a thing it was for him to judge and censure them.

He maketh small the drops of water, i.e. he orders matters so wisely and graciously, that the waters which are in the clouds do not fall down at once in spouts, or rivers, or seas; which would be both unprofitable and pernicious to the earth, and to mankind; but by degrees, and in drops; which is best for men's safety and

comfort, and for the refreshment of the earth. And this he observes as a wonderful work of God, without whose providence herein those waters might constantly or commonly fall in spouts, as sometimes part of them hath done.

They; either the waters, last mentioned; or the clouds, as it is expressed in the next verse; or the active verb is used impersonally, which is frequent in the Hebrew language, *they pour down rain*, for *the rain is poured down*.

Pour down; or, *melt* or *dissolve*; which word is borrowed from metallists, who dissolve metals with fire, and then pour them forth by degrees and in parcels; as the clouds are dissolved, and then poured forth in drops, as was now expressed.

According to the vapour thereof, i.e. according to the proportion of vapours which the heat of the sun hath drawn up from the earth or sea into the clouds. Or,

into the vapour thereof. So it notes that great work of God, by which the rain is first made of vapours, and afterwards resolved into vapours, or into the matter of succeeding vapours, by a constant rotation and reciprocation.

Ver. 28.

In such plenty as the necessities of the earth require; which also is a wonderful work of God.

Ver. 29.

Of the clouds; or rather, *of a cloud*, as it is in the Hebrew; whence it comes to pass that a small cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, doth suddenly spread over the whole heavens: how the clouds come to be suddenly gathered together, and so condensed as to bring forth thunder and lightning, which here follows.

The noise of his tabernacle, i.e. the thunder produced in the clouds, which are oft called God's *tent* or tabernacle, as **#Ps 18:1 104:3**, because there he oftentimes seems to dwell, and gives forth tokens of his powerful and glorious presence in those mighty works of thundering and lightning, wherewith men are frequently astonished and affrighted.

Ver. 30.

His light, i.e. the lightning; of which the whole context speaks, which is fitly called *God's light*, as it is called *God's lightning*, #Ps 144:6, because God only can light it.

Upon it, i.e. upon the cloud, which is in a manner the candlestick in which God sets up this light.

Covereth the bottom of the sea; the lightning spreads far and wide over all the parts of the sea, and pierceth deep, reaching even to the bottom of it, and spreading itself upon it, and so covering it like a gay and glorious garment, suddenly cast over and covering the body of a man or woman; or as God is said to *cover himself with light as with a garment*, #Ps 104:2.

Ver. 31.

By thunder and lightning he manifests his displeasure and executes his judgments against ungodly people or countries.

He giveth meat in abundance; or, and (which conjunction is oft understood) *he giveth meat*, &c., i.e. by the selfsame clouds he punisheth wicked men by thunder and lightning, and provideth for others by those plentiful showers which accompany them.

Ver. 32.

With clouds; with thick and black clouds spread over the whole heavens, as it is in times of great thunders and lightnings. Heb. *With hands*; either the clouds are so called for their resemblance to hands, #1Ki 18:4,1, as being hollow and spread abroad; or the meaning is, that God covereth the light as it were by the hollow of his hand, as a man sometimes covers the light of a candle.

The light; either the lightning, or rather the sun, which is fitly called light, #Job 31:26 Ps 136:7, as being the fountain of light.

Commandeth it not to shine; or, *giveth a charge concerning it*, to wit, that it shall be covered; or, *forbiddeth it*, as this Hebrew word, joined with this proposition, usually signifies, as #Ge 2:17 28:6 1Ki 2:43 11:11, and elsewhere, i.e. hindereth it, as it were by an express command or prohibition, from its usual and proper work, to wit, from shining.

That cometh betwixt; which God interposeth as a veil between the sun and earth; by which he doth, as it were, deliver his command or prohibition to the sun, that he should not shine.

Ver. 33.

The noise thereof, to wit. of or within the black or thick cloud, spoken of #**Job 36:32**. Or, *his*, i.e. God's, *noise*, to wit, the thunder, which is called *God's voice*, #**Ps 29:4,5**.

Showeth concerning it, to wit, the rain, which is the principal subject of these verses, of which he speaketh expressly #**Job 36:27,28**; and of its companions, the clouds, and thunder and lightning, in all the following verses. The sense is, The thunder gives notice of the approaching rain. And as the thunder, so *also the cattle*, showeth (which verb is, understood out of the foregoing clause, after the manner) *concerning the vapour*, i.e. concerning the coming of the rain; but he puts *vapour* for the rain, because divers cattle are very sagacious in this matter, and do not only perceive the rain when it is ready to fall, but foresee it at some distance by the vapours, which are drawn up by the sun in great abundance, and by divers motions and actions, give men timely notice of it, as hath been observed not only by husbandmen, but also by learned authors.

JOB CHAPTER 37

God's great works, lightning, thunder, snow, rain, winds, frosts, clouds, and his providences towards nations, whether for correction or mercy, call for reverence and fear, #**Job 37:1-14**; as also his unsearchable wisdom in them, #**Job 37:15-18**. We are ignorant, and cannot speak to God; but must fear him, who respecteth none, #**Job 37:19-24**.

Ver. 1.

At this also, of which I have already spoken, and am now to speak further, to wit, the thunder, which hath oftentimes made even atheists and other wicked men to tremble with a fear of horror, and good men to tremble with a fear of reverence, and a due dread of God's judgments.

Is moved out of his place; leaps and beats excessively, as if it would leap out of my body.

Ver. 2.

It seems not improbable, that whilst Elihu was speaking it thundered greatly, and that tempest was begun wherewith God ushered in his speech, as it here follows, **#Job 38:1**, and that this occasioned his return to that subject of which he had discoursed before, and his exhortation to them to mind it with deeper attention.

The noise of his voice; or, *his voice* (to wit, the thunder, which is called *a voice*, **#Ex 20:18**, and God's voice, **#Ps 29:4**) *with trembling*; because the thunder is an effect or evidence of God's mighty power, and oftentimes of his anger also. *The sound that goeth out of his mouth*; as the voice (and thunder is God's voice) goeth out of man's mouth. Or, that is produced by God's word or command, which is oft signified by his mouth.

Ver. 3.

He directeth it, to wit, his voice; which he shooteth or guideth like an arrow to the mark, so disposing it that it may do that work for which he sends it.

Under the whole heaven; far and wide through all the parts of this lower world.

Unto the ends of the earth; from one end of the heaven to the opposite end or part of the earth, as from east to west, **#Mt 24:27**.

Ver. 4.

After it a voice, i.e. after the lightning. For though the thunder be in order of nature before the lightning, yet the lightning is seen before the thunder is heard.

With the voice of his excellency, or, *with his excellent*, or *high*, or *lofted* voice, both loud and full of majesty and awfulness.

He will not stay; or, *delay*. Heb. *take them by the heel*, as Jacob did Esau in the womb, to delay or stop him from entering into the world before him. *Them*; either,

1. The lightnings spoken of in the beginning of the verse. But these do not stay till his voice be heard, but come before it. Or rather,

2. The rains and storms, of which he spoke before, and will speak again, #Job 37:6.

Ver. 5.

Marvellously; with a wonderful and terrible noise, and so as to produce many wonderful effects, as the breaking down of great and strong trees or buildings, the killing of men in a stupendous manner, &c.

Great things doeth he, even in the course of nature, and in visible things; which all men see, but scarce any can give the true and satisfactory reasons of them; for the greatest philosophers speak only by guess, and are greatly divided among themselves about them. And therefore it is not strange if the secret and deep counsels of Divine Providence be out of our reach; and it is great arrogancy in thee, O Job, to censure them, because thou dost not fully understand them.

Ver. 6.

By his powerful word and will the snow is made in the air, and falls upon the earth where and when he seeth fit.

The great rain of his strength, i.e. those great storms or showers of rain which come with great force and irresistible violence.

Ver. 7.

By these great snows and rains he drives men out of the fields, and seals or binds up their hands from all that work, and drives them home to their houses, and in a manner shuts them up there. See #Ge 7:16 Ex 9:19. Or, *by his hand or power* (i.e. by those powerful works of his hand here mentioned) *he sealeth, or shutteth up, or keepeth close every man,* to wit, in his house, as the beasts in their dens, #Job 37:8. *That all men may know his work;* that men being hindered from action and their own work, and so being idle and at perfect leisure, may fall to a serious contemplation of these and other great and glorious works of God. Or, *that he* (i.e. *every man*, as was now expressed)

may know (or *inquire into, or take an account of*) all his workmen; for which the proper season is when they are all hindered from their work, and brought together into the house.

Ver. 8.

Then, in great rains or deep snows, the beasts go into dens for shelter and comfort.

Ver. 9.

Out of the south, Heb. *out of the inner chamber*; as the southern part of the world is called, because in a great part it was and is hid and unknown to those who live in the northern hemisphere, in which Job's habitation lay. Or, *out of the chambers of the south*, as it is more largely expressed, **#Job 9:9**; for this is opposed to the north in the following clause.

The whirlwind; violent and stormy winds which in those parts most frequently came-out of the south, whence they are called *whirlwinds of the south*, **#Zec 9:14**. So also **#Isa 21:1**.

Cold, i.e. cold and freezing winds, which generally come from that quarter.

Ver. 10.

By the breath of God, i.e. by the word of God, as this very phrase is explained, **#Ps 33:6**; by his will or appointment, to which as the principal cause all these works are ascribed.

The breadth of the waters is straitened; the frost dries up the waters in great measure, and bringeth the remainder into a narrower compass, as we see.

Ver. 11.

By watering, to wit, the earth; by causing them first to receive and return, and then to pour forth abundance of water.

He wearieth the thick cloud, by filling and burdening them with much water, and making them to go long journeys to water remote parts, and at last to spend and empty themselves there; all which things make men weary; and therefore are here said to make the clouds weary by a common figure called *prosopopoeia*.

He scattereth his bright cloud: as for the white and lightsome clouds, (which are opposed to the thick and black clouds in the former clause,) *he scattereth* and *dissolveth them* by the wind or sun. Or, *he scattereth other clouds by his light*, i.e. by the beams of the sun. So he gathereth some, and scattereth others, as he pleaseth, causing either clear, or dark and rainy weather.

Ver. 12.

It is turned round about; the clouds (now mentioned) are carried about to this or that place.

By his counsels; not by chance, (though nothing seems to be more casual and uncertain than the motions of the clouds,) but by his order and governance.

That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them; either be dispersed and pass away without effect, to the disappointment of the husbandmen's hopes, or be dissolved in sweet and fruitful showers.

Ver. 13.

He causeth it to come, Heb. *he maketh it* (to wit, the cloud, or clouds, and the rain which is in it) *to find*, to wit, a path, or to find out the persons or place to which God intends either good or hurt by it.

For correction, Heb. *for a rod*, to scourge or correct men by immoderate showers. Or, for a tribe, or certain portion of land, which God intends particularly to punish in that kind.

For his land, i.e. for God's land, whereby he understands either,

1. The land which he favoureth, and where his servants live, such as Canaan was, which for that reason God blessed with rain, as is noted, **#De 11:12 Ps 68:9,10**. But in Job's time God's people were not in Canaan, but in Egypt, where little or no rain fell. Or,

2. The uninhabited or desert parts of the world, which may be called *God's land* peculiarly, because it is immediately and only under God's care, as being not regarded nor possessed by any man. For it is noted as a special act of God's providence, that he causeth rain to fall upon such places, **#Job 38:26,27**. Or,

3. *His earth*, as it may be rendered, to wit, the whole earth, which is said to be the *Lord's*, **#Ps 24:50:12**, and which may be here opposed to a *tribe*, or little part of the earth. And so this may note a general judgment by excessive rains inflicted upon the whole earth, and all its inhabitants, even the universal deluge, which then was in a manner of fresh memory, which came in a great measure out of the clouds. And thus these two first members speak of correction, and the last of mercy.

For mercy; for the comfort and benefit of mankind, by cooling and cleansing the air, and refreshing and improving all the fruits of the earth, and other ways.

Ver. 14.

If there be so much matter of wonder and adoration in the most obvious and sensible works of God, how wonderful must his deep and secret counsels and judgments be! And therefore it would better become thee humbly to admire, and quietly to submit to them, than to murmur or quarrel with them.

Ver. 15.

When God disposed them, to wit, the things before mentioned, the clouds, rain, snow, thunder and lightning, and other meteors. Did God ask counsel from thee to acquaint thee with his counsels in the producing and ordering of them, when, and where, and in what manner he should dispose them? God ordereth all these things not as it pleaseth thee, but as he thinks meet; and in like manner he disposeth of all human affairs, and of thine among the rest.

Caused the light of his cloud to shine; which may be understood either,

1. Of the light of the sun breaking through the clouds, when it is most glorious and comfortable. But though this light break through the clouds, yet it is very improper to call it *the light of the clouds*. Or,

2. The lightning, which is properly so called, as being produced by and in a cloud. Or,

3. The rainbow, which is a lightsome and glorious work of God, and therefore not likely to be omitted in this place, and which is seated in a cloud, which also may well be called God's cloud, because therein God puts *his bow*, as the rainbow is called, **#Ge 9:13.**

Ver. 16.

The balancings; how God doth as it were weigh and suspend the clouds in balances; so that although they are ponderous and flail of water, yet they are by his power kept up in the thin air from falling down upon us in spouts and floods, as sometimes they

have done, and generally would do, if not overruled by a higher Providence.

Which is perfect in knowledge; who exactly knows the weight. These are effects and evidences of his infinite power and knowledge.

Ver. 17.

How and why thy garments keep thee warm; of which as there are some natural causes, so it is certain that they are not sufficient to do it without God's blessing, as experience shows, #**Hag 1:6**.

The earth, i.e. the air about the earth.

By the south wind; which though sometimes it brings tempests, #**Job 37:9**, yet commonly it ushereth in hot weather, #**Lu 12:55**, as the north wind brings cold, #**Job 37:9**. Or, *from the south wind*, i.e. from the tempest, which was noted to come out of the south, #**Job 37:9**. Heb. *from* or

by the south, i.e. by the sun's coming into the southern parts, which makes the air quiet and warm.

Ver. 18.

Wast thou his co-worker or assistant in spreading out the sky like a tent or canopy over the earth? or canst thou spread out such another sky? Then indeed thou mayst with some colour pretend to be privy to his counsels, and to judge of his works.

Which is strong; which though it be very thin and transparent, yet is also firm, and compact, and stedfast, and of great force when it is pent up.

As a molten looking-glass, made of brass or steel, as the manner then was.

Ver. 19.

Unto him, i.e. unto God, either by way of apology for thee; or rather, by way of debate and disputation with him about his counsels and ways: about which we know not what to say, and therefore are willing to be taught by thee, who pretendest to such exquisite knowledge of these matters. So it is a reproof of his presumption and arrogance.

We cannot order our speech; we know neither with what words or matter, nor in what method and manner, to maintain discourse with him, or plead against him. The words our speech are easily understood out of the former clause of the verse.

By reason of darkness; both because of the darkness of the matter, God's counsels and ways being a great depth, and far out of our reach; and because of the darkness or blindness of our minds.

Ver. 20.

That I speak, Heb. *that I will speak*. Shall I send, or who dare carry, a challenge from me to God, or a message that I am ready and desirous to debate with him concerning his proceedings? This indeed thou hast done in effect, but far be such presumption from me.

If a man speak; if a man should be so bold and venturous to enter the lists with God.

He shall be swallowed up with the sense of God's infinite majesty and spotless purity.

Ver. 21.

And; or, *for*, as this particle is oft rendered; the following words containing a reason of those which go before.

Now: this particle is either,

1. A note of time, and so it intimates a sudden change which then was in the weather, which having been very dark, began now to clear up; or rather,

2. A note of inference to usher in the argument. *Men see not;* either,

1. Do not observe (as *seeing* is oft used) nor consider these glorious works of God; or,

2. Cannot behold, or at least not gaze upon it.

In the clouds; or, *in the skies;* for the Hebrew word signifies both clouds and skies. This is to be understood, either,

1. Of bright and lightsome clouds; or rather,

2. Of the sun, which is oft and emphatically called light, as was noted before, and here the bright light; which men oftentimes cannot behold, either when it is covered with a black and thick cloud; or when, as it follows, the sky is very clear, and consequently the sunshine is very bright. And therefore it is not strange if we cannot see God, who dwelleth in darkness, #**1Ki 8:12**, nor discern his counsels and ways, which are covered with great obscurity; and if we dare not approach to him, with whom is, as it here follows, terrible majesty; and if we presume to do so, we must needs be swallowed up, as was said, #**Job 37:20**.

But the wind passeth; or rather, *when* (as this particle is used) the wind passeth. Cleanseth them; earlier the clouds, i.e. cleanseth the air from them; or the skies, by driving away those clouds which darkened it.

Ver. 22.

Fair weather; or, *when* (which particle may well be understood out of, the foregoing verse; and so this may be a further description of the time when men cannot see or gaze upon the sun, namely, when) *fair weather*, &c. Heb. *gold*; either,

1. Properly. And so this may be noted as another wonderful work of God, that the choicest of metals, to wit, gold, should be found in and fetched out of the bowels of cold northern countries. Or,

2. Metaphorically, as this word is oft used of bright and shining things; as we read of *golden oil*, #**Zec 4:12**, and we call happy times *golden days*. And so bright and fair weather may well be called golden, because then the sun gilds the air and earth with its beams, which also are called by poets golden beams.

Out of the north, i.e. from the northern winds, which scatter the clouds, and clear the sky, #**Pr 25:23**.

With God is terrible majesty; and therefore we neither can nor may approach too near to him, nor speak presumptuously or irreverently to him, or of him. And so this is the application of what he had now said, that we could not see the sun, &c, much less God; and withal it is an epiphonema or conclusion of the whole foregoing discourse. Those glorious works of his which I have described, are testimonies of that great and terrible majesty

which is in him; which should cause us to fear and reverence him, and not to behave ourselves so insolently towards him, as Job hath done.

Ver. 23.

We cannot find him out, to wit, to perfection, as it is expressed, **#Job 11:7**. We cannot comprehend him; his being, power, wisdom, justice, and his counsels proceeding from them, are past our finding out; and therefore it is most absurd and intolerable that thou, O Job, presumest to censure what thou dost not understand.

He is excellent in power; and therefore as he doth not need any unrighteous action to advance himself, so he cannot do it, because all such things are acts and evidences of impotency or weakness.

In judgment, i.e. in the just and righteous administration of judgment, as this word is oft used, and as the thing itself and the following words plainly evince. And this he adds, to intimate that although God had indeed a power to crush Job, or any other man, yet he never did nor can exercise that power unjustly or tyrannically, as Job seemed to insinuate.

In plenty of justice; in great and perfect justice, such as no man can justly reproach.

He will not afflict, to wit, without just cause, and above measure; as it may and must be limited, both from the foregoing words, and from Job's complaint, which was of that very thing; and from the nature of the thing, because otherwise this proposition, that God

will not afflict, is not simply and universally true. Or these last words may be joined with the former; and so some render the place,

he is excellent in power, and, or but, or

yet, he will not afflict any man with judgment and much (i.e. too much)

justice, i.e. with extremity or rigour of justice.

Ver. 24.

Men do therefore fear him; for this cause, to wit, because of God's infinite and excellent perfections, and especially those

mentioned in the foregoing verse, *men do or should* (for the future tense is oft used potentially, as Hebricians know) *fear or reverence him*, and humbly submit to him, and not presume to quarrel or dispute with him, as thou, O Job, hast done.

He respecteth not, Heb. *he doth not*, or *will not behold*, to wit, with respect or approbation; he beholdeth them afar off with scorn and contempt.

Any that are wise of heart, i. e. such as are wise in their own eyes, that lean to their own understandings, and despise all other men in comparison of themselves, and scorn all their counsels; that are so puffed up with the opinion of their own wisdom, that they dare contend with their Maker, and presume to censure his counsels and actions; which he hereby intimates to be Job's fault, and to be the true reason why God did not respect nor regard him, nor his prayers and tears, as Job complained. And so this is also a tacit advice and exhortation to Job to be humble and little ill his own eyes, if ever he expected or desired any favour from God.

JOB CHAPTER 38

The Lord answers Job, **#Job 38:1-3**: declareth his works of creation; the foundation and the measures of the earth, **#Job 38:4-6**; the stars; the sea, and its bounds, **#Job 38:7-11**; the morning, and its light, **#Job 38:12-15**; the depth of the sea; the gates and shadow of death; the breadth of the earth, **#Job 38:16-18**; the place of light and darkness; the treasures of snow and hail for battle, **#Job 38:19-23**; the east wind, springs, and rain for the earth, **#Job 38:24-30**; the planets, ordinances of heaven, and their dominion on the earth; clouds and lightning, **#Job 38:31-35**. Wisdom and understanding in the heart of man, and in his works more than we can understand: he feedeth the lion and the raven, **#Job 38:36-41**.

Ver. 1.

Answered Job, i.e. began to debate the matter with him, as Job had desired.

Out of the whirlwind, i.e. out of a dark and thick cloud, from which he sent a terrible and tempestuous wind, as the harbinger of his presence. In this manner God appears and speaks to him,

partly, because this was his usual method in those times, as we see, #Ex 19:18 Nu 9:15,16; see also #1Ki 19:11 Eze 1:4; partly, to awaken Job and his friends to the more serious and reverent attention to his words; partly, to testify his displeasure, both against Job, and against his three friends; and partly, that all of them might be more deeply and thoroughly humbled and abused within themselves, and prepared the better to receive, and longer to retain, the instructions which God was about to give them.

Ver. 2.

Who is this? it is a question of admiration and reprehension, What and where is he that presumeth to talk at this rate? this language becomes not a creature, much less a professor of religion. The person here designed is not Elihu, who spoke last; but Job, who had spoken most, as is apparent from #Job 38:1, and from #Job 42:3, where Job takes the following reproof to himself, and from the following discourse, wherein God convinceth Job by divers of the same kind of arguments which Elihu had used against him.

That darkeneth counsel; either,

1. His own counsel, i.e. that expresseth his own mind darkly and doubtfully. But that was not Job's fault. He spake his mind too plainly and freely. Or rather,

2. God's counsel, which is called simply *counsel* by way of eminency, as *the word* and *the commandment* are oft put for *the word* and *command of God*. For the great matter of the dispute between Job and his friends was concerning God's counsel, and purpose, and providence in afflicting Job; which being a wise, and just, and glorious action of God, Job had endeavoured to obscure, and misrepresent, and censure. And God's decrees and judgments are frequently called his *counsels*, as #Ps 32:11 Pr 19:21 Isa 28:29 Ac 2:23.

By words; God doth not charge Job, as his three friends had done, with hypocrisy and wickedness in the course of life, nor with atheistical opinions of God or his providence, as some of the Hebrew writers do, but confines his reproof to his hard speeches.

Without knowledge; proceeding from ignorance, and mistake, and inconsiderateness; not from malice or rage against God, as his friends accused him.

Ver. 3.

Gird up now thy loins; as warriors then did for the battle. Prepare thyself for the combat with me, which thou hast oft desired. I accept of thy challenge, **#Job 13:22**, and elsewhere.

I will demand of thee; or, *I will ask thee questions*; which he doth in the following verses.

Ver. 4.

Then thou wast no where, thou hadst no being; thou art but of yesterday; and dost thou presume to judge of my eternal counsels? I made the world without thy help, and therefore can govern it without thy counsel, and I do not need thee to be the controller or censurer of my works.

When I laid the foundations of the earth; when I made the earth, which is as the foundation or lower part of the whole world, and settled it as firm and fast upon its own centre as if it had been built upon the surest foundations. But if thou art ignorant of these manifest and visible works, do. not pretend to the exact knowledge of my secret counsels and mysterious providences.

Ver. 5.

Who hath prescribed how long and broad and deep it should be?

Or who hath stretched the line, to wit, the measuring line, to regulate all its dimensions, so as might be most convenient both for beauty and use?

Ver. 6.

This strong and durable building hath no foundations but in God's power and word, which hath marvellously established it upon itself.

Or who laid the cornerstone thereof; by which the several walls and parts of the building are joined and fastened together, and in which, next to the foundations, the stability of any building does consist? The sense is, Who was it that did build this goodly fabric, and established it so firmly that it cannot be moved without a miracle?

Ver. 7.

The morning stars; either,

1. The stars properly so called, who are said to sing and praise God, objectively, because they give men ample occasion to do it in regard of their glorious light and stupendous motions, &c. Compare #Ps 19:1 148:1, &c. But,

1. These stars are not here the objects or matter, but the authors or instruments, of God's praises for the founding of the earth.

2. The stars were not created when the earth was founded, but upon the fourth day.

3. There is no satisfactory reason given why all the stars should be called

morning stars, especially when there is but one star known by that name. Or rather,

2. The sons of God, as it here follows, the latter clause of the verse being explicatory of the former, as is most frequent in this and some other books of Scripture, to wit, the angels, who may well be called *stars*, as even men of eminent note, and particularly ministers of God's word, are called, #Da 8:10 12:3 Re 1:16,20; and *morning stars*, because of their excellent lustre and glory, for which they are called *angels of light*, #2Co 11:14, and Christ for the same reason is called the *Morning Star*, #Re 22:16. *The sons of God*; the blessed angels; for man not being yet made, God had then no other sons; and these are called the sons of God, partly because they had their whole being from him, and partly because they were made partakers of his Divine and glorious image. And *all* these are said to join in this work of praising God, probably because none of the angels were as yet fallen from their first estate, though they did fall within a very little time after.

Shouted for joy; rejoiced in and blessed God for his works; whereby he intimates that they neither did advise or any way assist him in his works, nor dislike or censure any of his works, as Job had presumed to do with the works of his providence, which are not inferior to those of creation.

Ver. 8.

Who was it, thou or I, that did set bounds to the vast and raging ocean, and shut it up as it were with doors within its proper place and storehouse, that it might not overflow the earth; which without God's powerful restraint it would do? See **#Ps 33:7 104:9**. This sense seems most proper, and to be confirmed by the following verses.

When it brake forth, or, *after it had broken forth*, to wit, from the womb or bowels of the earth, within which the waters were for the most part contained, **#Ge 1:2**; compare **#2Pe 3:5**; and out of which they were by God's command brought forth into the proper place or channel which God had appointed for them.

Ver. 9.

When I covered it with vapours and clouds which arise out of the sea. and by God's appointment hover above it, and cover it like a garment.

Thick darkness, i. e. black and dark clouds, called *darkness* by a usual metonymy of the adjunct. So the same thing is repeated in other words, after the manner. Having compared the sea to a newborn infant, he continues in the same metaphor, and makes the clouds as swaddling-bands to keep the sea within its bounds; though indeed neither clouds, nor air, nor sands and shores can bound the sea, but it is God alone who doth it in and with these things.

Ver. 10.

Brake up for it my decreed place, i.e. made those valleys, or channels, and hollow places in the earth, which might serve for a cradle to receive and hold this great and goodly infant when it came out of the womb. See **#Ge 1:9,10 Ps 33:7**. Or, ordained or established my decree upon or concerning it. Set bars and doors, i.e. fixed its bounds as strongly as if they were fortified with bars and doors.

Ver. 11.

To wit, at the sand and shore of the sea, **#Jer 5:22**.

Thy proud waves; which rage and swell as if they would overwhelm all the earth.

Ver. 12.

The morning, i.e. the morning light, or the sun, which is the cause of it. Didst thou create the sun, and appoint the order and succession of day and night?

Since thy days; since thou wast born. This work was not done by thee, but by me, and that long before thou wast born.

To know his place; to observe the punctual time when, and the point of the heavens where, it should arise; which varies every day. Was this thy contrivance or mine?

Ver. 13.

That this morning light should in a moment spread itself over the face of the whole earth, from one end of the hemisphere to the other.

Shaken out of it, from the face of the earth. And this effect the morning light hath upon the wicked, partly because it discovers them, and drives them into their lurking holes; whereas the darkness hides them, and draws them forth, and gives them opportunity to execute their villanies without observation, **#Job 24:15-17**; and partly because it brings them to condign punishment, the morning being the most fit and the most usual time for executing judgment; of which see **#Ps 101:8 Jer 21:12**.

Ver. 14.

It, to wit, the earth, mentioned in the next foregoing verse.

Is turned; is transformed and changed in its shape and appearance.

To the seal, or, *by the seal*, which makes a beautiful or valuable impression upon that clay, which in itself hath no form, nor worth, nor comeliness in it. So the earth, which in the darkness of the night lies like a confused heap, without either form or beauty, when the light ariseth and shineth upon it, appears in excellent order and great glory.

They; either,

1. The inhabitants of the earth, and particularly the wicked, mentioned both in the foregoing and following verses. Or,

2. More generally, the men and things of the earth, whether natural, as living creatures, herbs, and trees, &c.; or artificial, as houses or other buildings.

Stand, i. e. present themselves to our view, for which that posture of standing is most convenient. Or, *consist*, or *abide*, or *are constituted*.

As a garment; wherewith the earth is in a manner clothed and adorned as with a garment; as the blessed God himself is said to *cover himself with light as with a garment*, #Ps 104:2.

Ver. 15.

And, or *but*; for the following words seem to be added by way of opposition to what went before. The earth, and the men, and the things in it have the comfort and benefit of the light, but so have not the wicked. *Their light*, i.e. their portion of light. That light which is enjoyed by others is withholden from them, either by their own choice, because they love and choose darkness rather than light; or by the judgment of God, or the magistrate, by whom they are cut off from *the light of the living*, as it is called, #Job 33:30, or at least deprived of their peace, and comfort, and prosperity, which frequently goes under the name of

light in Scripture, and may be so called here by an elegant allusion to the natural light of the sun mentioned before.

The high arms; their great strength, which they used tyrannically, to the oppression and crushing of others.

Ver. 16.

The springs, Heb. *the tears*, i.e. the several springs out of which the waters of the sea flow as tears do from the eyes. Hast thou found out the utmost depth and bottom of the sea, which in divers places could never be reached by the wisest mariner, or the longest cables? And how then canst thou fathom the depths of my counsels?

Ver. 17.

Hast thou seen, or dost thou perfectly know, the place and state of the dead, the depths and bowels of that earth in which the generality of dead men are buried, or the several ways and

methods of death, or the various states and conditions of men after death? And the same thing is repeated.

Ver. 18.

Dost thou exactly know the whole compass and all parts of the earth, and the state and quality of all countries, and of the men and things in them? Give me an answer to these questions, which is far more easy to do, than to answer me to many other questions which I could put to thee about my secret counsels and providences, and the reasons of my dealing with thee as I do.

Ver. 19.

The way; or rather, *the place*, as the next clause explains it, and the Hebrew phrase will bear.

Where light dwelleth, i.e. hath its constant and settled abode; for in the place where Job lived, and in most other parts of the inhabited world, it is like a traveller, that cometh and goeth continually every day. This may be referred either,

1. To the place under the two poles, where first the light, and then the darkness, continues for six months together. Or rather,

2. To the sun, the fountain of light. And as this is a poetical book, so this may be a poetical expression and question, Whither goes the sun, when it departs from this hemisphere? Where is the tabernacle and the chamber in which both sacred, as **#Ps 19:4,5**, and profane poets suppose the sun to rest? Dost thou know the place where the sun when it sets may be found, and whence thou canst fetch it back again. For it is to be carefully observed, that he speaks not here of a bare and simple knowledge of this matter, which was plain and easy to Job, and many others, who were not ignorant that the sun was the fountain of light, from whose approach light comes, and by whose departure darkness is caused; but of an operative knowledge, even such as could and did enable him to *take it to the bound thereof*, as it follows, **#Job 38:20**. And withal, he seems here to speak not only of the daily course and motion of the sun, and the vicissitude of day and night, but also and especially of the first production of the light, which was before Job was born, as is evident from **#Job 38:21**. And this makes the question more difficult and more considerable, the sense whereof may be this: Seeing there was a time when there

was nothing but gross and comfortless darkness upon the face of the earth, what way came light into the world? which was the place where light dwelt at that time, and whence it was fetched? and whence came that orderly constitution and constant succession of light and darkness? Was this thy work? or wast thou privy to it, or a counsellor or assistant in it? or was it not done by me alone long before thou hadst a being?

Ver. 20.

That thou shouldst take it, i.e. taking, bring or lead it, as this verb is oft used, as #Ex 25:2 Ps 68:29, compared with #Eph 4:11 1Ki 3:24 17:10 Ho 14:2. And many other such pregnant verbs there are in the Hebrew language, having the signification of two verbs included in one, And this it refers principally to the *light*, and secondarily to darkness, as the consequent of the other.

To the bound thereof, i.e. its whole course, from the place of its abode whence it is supposed to come, to the end of its journey which it is to go. Didst thou direct or guide the light or the sun, that he should at first take, and afterward constantly continue, in that course which now it holds; that it should go from east to west, and rise sometimes in one point or part of the heaven, and sometimes in another, and that its day's journey should be longer in one season of the year, and shorter in another? This regular and excellent course must needs be the effect of great wisdom. And whose wisdom was it? thine or mine?

That thou shouldst know, to wit, practically, so as to direct or lead it in the manner now expressed.

The paths to the house thereof; where thou mayst find it, and whence thou mayst fetch it.

Ver. 21.

An ironical question: If thou pretendest that thou knowest these things, and canst readily answer these questions, how comest thou by this knowledge? Was it from hence, because thou wast born when I made the world, and that first constitution of the light and darkness in that order and succession which continues to this day, and thereby hadst the opportunity of inspecting my works, and seeing whence the light came, and because thou hast gained this

knowledge by long experience, as having lived ever since the creation of the world until this time? whereas in truth thou art but *of yesterday, and knowest nothing*, as was said, **#Job 8:9**. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, *Dost or didst thou know*, either by thy own remembrance, or by the information of others,

that thou wast then born? (to wit, when I made the world. Or, *Didst thou know that thou shouldst then be born? then*, to wit, when thou wast born. Or, *Didst thou then know*, the two Hebrew particles being transplaced, as is not unusual in that language, *that thou shouldst be born?* How couldst thou know this, when thou hadst no being?) *and that the number of thy days should be great?* that thou shouldst live so long as thou hast lived? Thou couldst neither foreknow the time of thy birth, nor the length of thy life. Or, *and is the number of thy days great*, i.e. so great that it reacheth to the time of the world's creation?

Ver. 22.

Dost thou know where I have laid up those vast quantities of snow and hail which I draw forth when I see fit? Dost thou know the causes of them, and the way to produce them? But if thou art unacquainted with these treasures, it is intolerable presumption in thee to pretend that thou knowest those treasures of wisdom which lie hid in my own breast.

Ver. 23.

Which, i.e. which snow, and especially hail.

Against the time of trouble, i.e. when I intend to bring trouble or calamity upon any country or people for their sins, or for their trial. Or, *against the time of the enemy*, i.e. when I intend to punish mine or my people's enemies, and to fight against them with these weapons; of which see instances **#Ex 9:14 Jos 10:11**. Compare **#1Sa 7:10 Job 36:31 Isa 30:30**.

Ver. 24.

By what way; dost thou know all the causes, means, methods, and circumstances of this work of God? *Is the light parted or dispersed or distributed*, to wit, in the air, or upon the face of the earth? By

light he understands either,

1. The lightning, which breaks forth suddenly out of a cloud, and with strange swiftness disperseth itself, and fleeth from east to west, as is noted, #Mt 24:27. But this word *light* put by itself, and being understood properly, is constantly used in this book for the light of the sun, and never for the lightning; and where it is meant of the lightning, there is some other word added to it, as #Job 37:15, where it is called *the light of his cloud*. And besides, he speaks of the lightning in the next verse; which were superfluous, if it were here mentioned. Or rather,

2. Of the light of the sun, which is commonly called *light* without any other word added to it, as #Job 3:4,9,16 24:14 25:3, &c. And this light of the sun is variously parted or distributed in the world, shining in one place and time, when it doth not shine in another; or for a longer time, or with greater brightness, and power, and virtue, than it doth in another; all which are the effects of God's infinite wisdom and power, and such as were out of Job's reach to understand, or at least to effect.

Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth, i.e. which light *scattereth*, &c., i.e. raiseth, the east wind, and causeth it to blow hither and thither upon the earth. For as the sun is justly called by the poets and others *the father of the winds*, because he draws up those exhalations which give matter to the winds, and for other reasons; so in particular the east wind is oft observed to rise together with the sun, from which also it hath both its Latin and Greek name. But some make this a distinct question from the former, and render the words thus; and (repeat, *by which way*)

the east wind (under which all the other winds may be comprehended) scattereth itself upon the earth, i.e. whence the winds come, and whither they go, which is mentioned as a secret in nature, #Joh 3:8, and how it comes to pass that they blow in such several manners, and with such various and even contrary effects. Or thus, and by which way the *east wind scattereth* (to wit, the clouds, or other light things; for this is noted in Scripture to be a most vehement wind, and to scatter the clouds, #Ex 14:21 Jon 4:8)

upon the earth, i.e. whence it comes to pass that the east wind was so violent and furious. But the words may be rendered thus,

which (i.e. which light of the sun, or when it, to wit, this light) *scattereth itself* (as divers here render this word, that conjugation being often used reciprocally, as is confessed) from (the prefix *mem* being understood, as it is very frequently in the Hebrew text)

the east (for this Hebrew word doth not only signify the *eastern wind*, but also the *east*, or the eastern part of the heavens or earth, as #**Eze 40:19 42:16 Hab 1:9**, and in many other places; and *kedem*, the root of this word, is constantly so used) *upon* or *over the earth, all over the earth*. And this is justly mentioned as a wonderful work of God, that as soon as ever the sun ariseth, it parteth or scattereth its light in an instant from one end of the hemisphere to another. But this I propose with submission.

Ver. 25.

For the overflowing of waters; for the showers of rain which come down out of the clouds, orderly, moderately, and gradually, as if they were conveyed in pipes or channels; which, without the care of God's providence, would fall confusedly, and all together; and, instead of refreshing, would overwhelm the earth.

For the lightning of thunder, i.e. for that lightning which, breaking out of the cloud with violence, causeth thunder. Or, *for lightning and thunder*. Who opened a passage for them out of the cloud in which they were imprisoned? And these are here joined with the rain, because they are commonly accompanied with great showers of rain; which is here noted as a wonderful work of God, that fire and water should come out of the same cloud.

Ver. 26.

To cause it to rain; that the clouds being broken by lightning and thunder might pour down rain.

Wherein there is no man, to wit, to water those parts by art and industry, as is usual in cultivated and inhabited places; which makes this work of Divine Providence more necessary and more remarkable, in providing for the relief of the wild beasts, and plants, and other fruits of these forsaken lands, which otherwise would perish with drought.

Ver. 27.

To satisfy, by raining, not sparingly, but liberally and abundantly upon it.

To cause the bud of the tender herb to springforth; there being many excellent and useful herbs found in desert places, which otherwise would be utterly neglected and despised.

Ver. 28.

To wit, besides me. Is there any man upon earth than can beget or produce rain at his pleasure? No, this is my peculiar work. And therefore seeing thou knowest and canst do nothing as to the government of these ordinary effects of nature, how great presumption is it to arrogate to thyself the knowledge and management of the secret and mysterious affairs of my providence in the disposal of men!

Ver. 29.

What man either can produce them, or doth fully understand where or how they are engendered? For philosophers speak of these things only by guess, and the reasons which some assign for them are confuted by others; and so they will confute one another to the end of the world, and prove nothing solidly but their own ignorance and the reasonableness of these questions.

Ver. 30.

As with a stone, i.e. with ice as hard as a stone.

The face of the deep, i.e. the great sea, which is oft called *the deep*, as #Ge 7:11 Ps 107:24 Isa 51:10 63:13 2Co 11:25, which in some parts is frozen, which is a wonderful work of God.

Ver. 31.

Bind, i.e. restrain or hinder them. Canst thou bind or shut up the earth when they open it?

The sweet influences; or, *the delights*; because this constellation by its benign and opening influences brings in the spring, the herbs and flowers, and other delights of the earth.

Pleiades, called also the Seven Stars. Of this and the following constellation, see #Job 9:9.

The bands; by which it binds up the air and earth, by bringing storms of rain or hail, or frost and snow; and withal binds or seals the hands of workmen, as is noted, #Job 37:7.

Orion: this is another constellation, which riseth in November, and brings in winter. So the sense of the verse is, Thou canst not bind the earth when the one looseth or openeth it, nor loose or open it when the other binds or shutteth it up.

Ver. 32.

Canst thou bring forth to wit, into view? canst thou make him to arise and appear in thy hemisphere?

Mazzaroth; by which he designs either,

1. All the constellations, and especially the twelve sign of the zodiac; or rather
2. Some particular constellation, as all the rest here mentioned are understood. But whether this be that which is called *the chambers of the south*, #**Job 9:9**, or the Dog Star, or some other visible in Job's country, but not in ours we may be safely and contentedly ignorant, seeing even the Hebrew doctors are not agreed therein.

Arcturus; a northern constellation, of which See Poole "**Job 9:9**".

With his sons, to wit, the lesser stars which belong to it, and are placed round about it, and attend upon it, as children upon their parents.

Ver. 33.

Knowest thou? either,

1. Simply, and by speculation, dost thou understand them? Or,
2. Practically, or operatively, so as to establish or rule them, as the next clause implies.

The ordinances of heaven; the laws, which are firmly established concerning their order, motion, or rest and their powerful influences upon this lower world. Didst thou give these laws? or dost thou perfectly know them?

Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? canst manage and overrule their influences, that they shall bring such seasons and such weather as thou wouldst have?

Ver. 34.

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds; either thundering in them, or calling to them with a loud voice, commanding them to rain?

May cover thee, i.e. thy land, when it needs and requires rain.

Ver. 35.

Canst thou send at thy pleasure, and upon thy errand?

Here we are; an expression of servants, declaring their readiness to obey their masters' commands; of which **See Poole "Ge 22:1"** **See Poole "Isa 6:8"**.

Ver. 36.

In the inward parts, to wit, of a man. Compare **@Job 19:27 Ps 51:6**. Who gave thee that wit and understanding which thou hast, and which thou now usest so arrogantly and wickedly, to contend with me, and to censure my actions?

Who hath given understanding to the heart; so he limits the former general expression of the inward parts. The heart is made by the Hebrews the seat of the understanding, and is commonly put for it in Scripture.

Ver. 37.

Who can wisely search out and exactly find the number of the clouds? They are numberless, and filled with water, as the next clause implies.

Who can stay the bottles of heaven, to wit, the clouds? in which the rain is kept as in bottles, out of which God poureth it when he sees fit.

Ver. 38.

This verse containeth a description either,

1. Of a great drought, when the earth grows hard, and close, and compact; or
2. Of the condition of the earth presently after the fall of the rain, when the earth, which in time of drought was much of it dissolved into dust, is now by the rain cemented or united together. In either of these cases it is the work of God alone to keep the clouds from pouring down more rain upon the earth.

Ver. 39.

Is it by thy care and providence that the lions, who live in desert places, are furnished with necessary provisions? This is justly mentioned as another wonderful work of God.

Ver. 40.

When through age and infirmity they cannot range abroad for prey, as the young lions do; but lie still in their dens, as if they were expecting their food from God, from whom also they receive it.

To lie in wait; watching till some beast come that way upon which they may prey.

Ver. 41.

Having mentioned the noblest of brute creatures, he now mentions one of the most contemptible and loathsome, to show the care of God's providence over all creatures, both great and small; which is more remarkable in ravens, because,

1. They devour flesh, which it is not easy for them to find.
2. They are greedy, and eat very much.
3. They are generally neglected and forsaken by mankind.
4. Their young ones are so soon forsaken by their dams, that if God did not provide for them in a more than ordinary manner, they would be starved to death.

JOB CHAPTER 39

Of the wild goats and hinds, **#Job 39:1-4**; the wild ass, **#Job 39:5-8**; the unicorn, **#Job 39:9-12**; the peacock, stork, and ostrich, **#Job 39:13-18**; the horse, **#Job 39:19-25**; the hawk; the eagle, **#Job 39:26-30**. These creatures, not fully known to Job, or governed by him, are sufficient to convince him that he is no fit judge of the counsels of God.

Ver. 1.

Knowest thou the time, that thou mayst then go to them, and afford them thy help in their hard work?

The wild goats of the rock; which dwell in high and steep rocks, where no man can come. See **#1Sa 24:2 Ps 104:18**.

Bring forth; which they do with great difficulty, as is implied, #Ps 29:9, and noted by philosophers, wherein they have no assistance from men, but only from God.

When the hinds do calve; when God by his secret instinct directs them to a certain herb called *seseli*, which, as naturalists report, doth hasten and help forward their birth.

Ver. 2.

Dost thou exactly know when they did conceive, and when they will bring forth? which is more uncertain in these than in other creatures, because there fall out many accidents which cause them to bring forth before their time, as thunder, #Ps 29:9, and other like causes of sudden fear, which may be many and various in those desert places where they live.

Ver. 3.

They bow themselves; being taught by a Divine instinct to dispose themselves in such a posture as may be fittest for their safe and easy bringing forth.

They bring forth their young ones, to wit, with great pain, being almost torn or rent asunder with the birth, as the word signifies; or, without any of that help which tame beasts oft have.

Their sorrows, i.e. their young ones, and their sorrows together. Or, though (which particle is oft understood) *they remit* or *put away their sorrows*, i.e. though instead of cherishing and furthering their sorrows, which for their own ease and safety they should do, they foolishly hinder them, and so increase their own danger; yet by God's good providence to them they are enabled to bring forth, as was now said.

Ver. 4.

Are in good liking; or, *grow strong*, or *fat*; notwithstanding their great weakness caused by their hard entrance into the world.

With corn; which they find and feed upon in the fields. Or, as *with corn*, i.e. as if they were fed with corn; the particle as being oft deficient, and to be supplied. Or, *in the field*, as this word in the Chaldee or Syriac dialect signifies.

Return not unto them; finding sufficient provisions abroad by the care and conduct of God's providence.

Ver. 5.

Who hath sent out the wild ass free? who hath given him this disposition, that he loves freedom, and avoids and hates that subjection which other creatures quietly and contentedly endure?

Who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? which is not to be understood privatively, as if God took off the bands which men had put upon him; but negatively, that he keeps him from receiving the bands and submitting to the service of man. Who hath made him so untractable and unmanageable? Which is the more strange, because home-bred asses are so tame and tractable.

Ver. 6.

Who useth and loveth to dwell in desert lands, **#Jer 2:24 Ho 8:3,9.**

The barren land; called *barren*, not simply, for then he must be starved there; but comparatively, unmanaged, and therefore in a great measure unfruitful land.

Ver. 7.

He scorneth; either,

1. He feareth them not when they pursue him, because he is swift, and can easily escape them. Or,

2. He values them not, nor any provisions or advantages which he may have from them, but prefers a vagrant and solitary life in the wilderness before them. Or,

3. He disdains to submit himself to them, and resolutely maintains his own freedom.

The multitude of the city: he mentions the city rather than the country, partly because there is the greatest multitude of people to pursue, and overtake, and subject him; and partly because there is the greatest plenty of all things to invite him; the fruits of the country being laid up in cities in greatest abundance.

Neither regardeth, Heb. *heareth*, i.e. obeyeth. *Of the driver*, Heb. *of the taskmaster*, or *exactor* of labour, i.e. he will not be brought to receive his yoke, nor to do his drudgery, nor to answer to his cries or commands, as tame asses are forced to do.

Ver. 8.

The range of the mountains; that which he searcheth out or findeth in the mountains. He prefers that mean provision and hardship with his freedom, before the fattest pastures with servitude. Why so weak and harmless a creature as the wild ass should be untamable, when the most savage lions and tigers have been tamed, and how there comes to be so vast a difference between the tame and the wild ass, thou canst give no reason, but must refer it wholly to my good pleasure; to which also thou shouldst upon the same grounds refer all the various methods of my providence and dealings with thee, and with other men, and not so boldly censure what thou dost not understand.

Ver. 9.

It is much disputed among the learned, but is not needful to be known by others, whether there be or ever was such a creature as we call the unicorn; or whether this *reem*, which is the Hebrew name of it, be the *rhinoceros*, as some would have it; or a certain kind of wild goat, called *oryx*, which is very tall, and strong, and untractable; or one of that kind of wild oxen or bulls called *uri*; which may seem most probable, both from the description of this creature here and elsewhere in Scripture, which exactly agrees with its description given by other authors; and from the description of his work in this place, which must in all reason be agreeable to creatures of that general kind; and from the conjunction of this creature with bullocks in Scripture, #De 33:17; and especially #Isa 34:6,7, where having put *lambs*, and *goats*, and *rams* together, #Job 39:6, as creatures of the same or very like sort, he mentions *bullocks*, and *bulls*, and *reems*, #Job 39:7, as belonging to the same general sort of creatures. But this I shall not positively determine here. He that would know more, may see what the reverend and learned Mr. Caryl hath upon this text out of Boetius and others, and my Latin Synopsis on #Nu 23:22.

Be willing to serve thee; canst thou tame him, and bring him into subjection to thy command?

Abide by thy crib; will he suffer himself to be tied or confined there all night, and to be reserved to the work of the next day, as the oxen do? Surely no. And if thou canst not rule such a creature

as this, much less art thou able to govern the world, or to teach me how to govern it, which thou presumest to do.

Ver. 10.

In the furrow, i.e. in thy furrowed field, by a metonymy. Or, *to* or *for* (as the prefix *beth* is oft used, as **#Ge 11:4 Le 16:22 Job 24:5**)

the furrow, i.e. to make furrows, or to plough; for which work cattle use to be bound together, that they may be directed by the husbandman, and may make right furrows.

The valleys, to wit, the low grounds, which are most proper for and most employed in the work of ploughing.

After thee; under thy conduct, following thee step by step.

Ver. 11.

Wilt thou trust him, to wit, for the doing of these works, because he is very able for thy work? And wilt thou by thy power make him willing, or force him, to put forth and spend his strength in thy service?

Thy labour; either,

1. Thy work of ploughing and harrowing. Or rather,
2. The fruit of thy labour, or the goods gotten by thy labour, as this word is oft used, as **#De 28:33 Job 20:18 Ps 78:46 128:2 Joh 4:38**, to wit, the fruits of the earth procured by God's blessing upon thy industry.

To him; to be brought home by him into thy barns, as the next verse explains it.

Ver. 12.

Will bring home thy seed, Heb. *will return thy seed*; either,

1. By ploughing and harrowing thy land so well that it shall make a good return to thee for thy seed. Or rather,
2. By bringing into thy barn, as it follows, thy seed, i.e. the product of thy seed, or thy sheaves of corn, as this word is used, **#Hag 2:19**.

Ver. 13.

Gavest thou: the style of this book is very concise, and some verb is manifestly wanting to supply the sense; and this seems to be

fitly understood out of #Job 39:19, where it is expressed. *The goodly*; or, *triumphant*; that wherein it triumpheth or prideth itself. *Wings*, or *feathers*; Heb. *wing* or *feather*. The peacock's beauty lies in its tail; which may well enough be comprehended under this name, as it is confessed that the Latin word *ala*, which properly signifies a *wing*, is used by Martial and Claudian to express the peacock's tail.

The peacocks; or, as some render it, *to the ostrich*, whose wings are much more great and goodly than those of the peacock. And for the other word in the next clause, which is rendered

ostrich, they translate it another way; for that the Hebrew word *hasidah* doth not signify an *ostrich*, seems plain from the mention and description of that bird, #Ps 104:17 Jer 8:7 La 4:3 Zec 5:9, which doth not at all agree to the ostrich. And forasmuch as the following verses do evidently speak of the ostrich, and it is absurd to discourse of a bird which had not been so much as named, and consequently the name of it must be found in this verse, and there is no other word in this verse which bids so fair for it, it may seem probable that this word is not to be rendered the *peacock*, (though it be so taken by most,) but the *ostrich*. Nor is it likely that both the peacock and the ostrich should be crowded together into one verse, especially when all the following characters belong only to the latter of them. Add to this, that it is confessed, even by the Hebrew writers themselves, that there is a great uncertainty in the signification of the names of birds and beasts; and therefore it is not strange if many interpreters were mistaken in the signification of this word. Or

wings and feathers unto the ostrich: or, *or the wings or feathers of the stork* (or, *or*) *the ostrich*. Or, didst thou give (which may be repeated out of the former branch)

the wings and feathers to the stork? Or, *verily* (the particle *im* being oft used as a note of confirmation, as #Ps 59:16 63:7 Pr 3:34 23:18) it hath

wings and feathers like those of a *stork*; for so indeed they are, black and white like them. And this may be noted as a great and a remarkable work of God, that it should really have wings and feathers as other birds have, and particularly the stork, who comes

nearest to it in bulk and colour, although otherwise, by its vast bulk, it might seem to be a beast rather than a bird, as it is also called by Aristotle, and Pliny, and others.

Ver. 14.

Which, i.e. which ostrich; whose property this is noted to be by naturalists. Or, *but*; for this unnatural quality is opposed to the goodliness of her wings or feathers.

In the earth; in the place where she lays them; where she leaves them, either,

1. From care, lest she should crush and break them, if her vast body should sit upon them; or rather,
2. From forgetfulness, or carelessness, or unnaturalness, or folly; to which it is manifestly ascribed in the following verses.

Warmeth them in the dust; either,

1. Covering them with sand, that they may be warmed and hatched by that, together with the heat of the sun. But this is judged a fabulous report; for the Arabians, amongst whom this bird is most frequent and best known, affirm that such eggs do quickly perish and putrefy. Or rather,
2. Exposing them to the heat of the sun, which being excessive in those hot countries, doth and must needs quickly destroy or spoil them. And the ostrich is said to warm them, because her leaving them there is not only the occasion, but in some sort the cause, of the sun's warming them.

Ver. 15.

The feet, to wit, of wild beasts *as it follows* passing that way.

Ver. 16.

She is hardened; or, *he*, i.e. God, *hardens her*; or, *she hardeneth herself*. *Against her young ones*, i.e. against her eggs, which he calls her

young ones emphatically, to aggravate her fault and folly in destroying those eggs, which, if not neglected, would have been young ones.

As though they were not hers; as if they were laid by some other bird. Or, *that they may not be to her*, i.e. that they may be utterly lost and destroyed; or as if it were her design to destroy their very being.

Her labour, to wit, in laying her egg's, is wholly lost. *In vain*

without fear: this may be added as a further aggravation. She doth this, not because she is compelled to forsake her eggs for fear of men or beasts, but merely out of an unnatural carelessness. Or, she is *without fear*, or *for want of fear*, to wit, of a provident fear and care about them.

Ver. 17.

Because God hath not implanted in her that natural instinct, and providence, and affection, which he hath put into other birds and beasts towards their young. And yet no man presumes to reproach me for making this difference in my creatures. And as little reason hast thou to blame me for afflicting thee, when others not so bad as thou for the present go unpunished; because I have no less authority over thee than over them, and can dispose of all my creatures according to my good pleasure. The great folly of this bird is noted by Arabic writers, who best know her, and that not only for this property of forsaking her own eggs, but also for other things, as that she eats any thing which is offered to her, as iron, stones, glass, hot coals, &c., whereas other birds and beasts have so much sagacity, as to reject improper and unwholesome things; that being pursued by the hunter, she thinks herself safe and unseen by hiding her head in the sand; for which, and other such qualities, it is a proverb among the Arabians, *More foolish than an ostrich*.

Ver. 18.

She lifteth up herself on high, to flee from her pursuer; to which end she lifteth up her head and body, and spreads her wings.

She scorneth the horse and his rider she despiseth them in regard of her greater swiftness; for though she cannot fly because of her great bulk, being said to be as big as a new-born camel, yet by the aid of her wings she runs so fast that horsemen cannot reach her, as both Greek and other authors have noted.

Ver. 19.

Strength; either strength of body; or rather, courage and generous confidence, for which the horse is highly commended.

With thunder, i.e. with snorting and neighing; in the making of which nereid the neck, in regard of the throat, which is within it, and a part of it, is a principal instrument; which noise may not unfitly be called *thunder*, because of the great vehemency and rage wherewith it is attended, and the great terror which it causeth, especially in war and battle, of which see **#Jer 8:16**; and compare **#1Sa 12:17,18**, where this very term of *thundering* is ascribed to a far lower and less terrible noise. Nor is this, as some allege, an improper speech, because this thunder or neighing is rather clothed with the neck, as being within it, *than the neck with it*; for nothing is more common in Scripture than to say that men are *clothed with righteousness, humility*, and other graces, which yet are in strictness of speech within the man, and not he within them. But because this word in this form is not elsewhere extant, some render it otherwise, *with a mane*, with a thick, and full and deep mane, as the phrase of being clothed with it implies; for this is mentioned by all writers of horses as a notable mark of a generous horse; which therefore they conceive would not be omitted here, where so many several properties and excellencies are described. And the verb *raam*, whence this comes, in the Syriac language signifies not only *to thunder*, but also to *be high or lofty*; which fitly agrees to the mane, which is in the highest part of the horse.

Ver. 20.

As a grasshopper; which is easily affrighted, and chased away by the least noise of a man. Or, as divers others render the place, *Didst thou make him to move like a grasshopper*, skipping and leaping as he goes? So he describes the posture of a gallant and generous horse, who curvets, and pranceth, and as it were danceth as he walks.

The glory of his nostrils; that snorting, or sound, and smoke which cometh out of his nostrils, especially when he is enraged and engaged in battle, which is another note of a generous horse, and strikes a terror into his adversary. Or, *the vehemency*, or *majesty*, or *magnificence of his snorting*, or *snoring*, as this word is rendered, **#Jer 8:16**.

Ver. 21.

He paweth; or, *he diggeth*. Through courage and wantonness he cannot stand still, but is beating, as it were digging, up the earth with his feet.

In the valley: this he adds, partly because the ground being there more plain and smooth, he hath the better conveniency for his prancing and pawing with his feet, which in hilly and uneven ground he cannot so well do; and partly because battles use to be pitched in valleys, or low grounds, especially horse battles.

Rejoiceth in his strength; making semblance of great pride and complacency in it.

He goeth on to meet the armed men, with great readiness and undaunted courage.

Ver. 22.

At fear, i.e. at all instruments and objects of terror, as fear is oft used, as **#Pr 1:26 10:21**. He despiseth what other creatures dread.

From the sword; or, *because of the sword;* or, *for fear of the sword,* as this phrase is used, **#Isa 21:15 31:8 Jer 14:16 1:16**.

Ver. 23.

The quiver; or although *the quiver* &c. So this comes in as an aggravation of his courage, notwithstanding the just causes of fear which are mentioned in this verse. And the *quiver* is here put for the arrows contained in it, by a metonymy, very usual in this very case, and in all sorts of authors, which being shot against the horse and rider, make this rattling noise here mentioned.

The glittering spear and the shield; or rather, the *lance* or *javelin*. For that this was not a defensive, but an offensive weapon, seems plain, both from this place, where it is mentioned among such, and as an object of fear, which the shield is not, and from **#Jos 8:18 1Sa 17:45**, where it is so used.

Ver. 24.

The sense is either,

1. He is so earnest and eager upon the battle, that he rusheth into it with all speed; and runs over the ground so swiftly, that he might seem to have swallowed it tap. Or,

2. He is so full of war-like rage and fury, that he not only champs his bridle, but is ready to tear and devour the very ground on which he goes. And the phrase here used is not unusual, both in Arabic and in other authors; of which see my Latin Synopsis on this place.

He is so pleased with the approach of the battle, and the sound of the trumpet calling to it, that he could scarce believe his cars for gladness: compare #Ge 45:26 Lu 24:41. Or thus, *he cannot stand still*, or *firm*, (as this verb and Hie derivative from it is used, not only in the Chaldee and Syriac dialect, but also in the Hebrew, as #De 28:59 1Sa 2:35) *when the trumpet soundeth*; his rider can hardly keep him still, but he strives and longs to run to the fight.

Ver. 25.

Ha, ha; an expression of joy and alacrity, declared by his proud neighings; whereby he doth in some sort answer the sound of the trumpets, in way of scorn and challenge.

He smelleth, i.e. he perceiveth, as this phrase is used, #Jud 16:9.

Afar off; at some distance, either of place, or rather of time, as the word is most frequently used. He perceives by the motion of the soldiers, and the clattering of the arms, that the battle is at hand, which is very welcome to him.

The thunder of the captains; by which he understands, either the military orations which the captains make and deliver with a loud voice to animate their soldiers to the battle; or rather the loud and joyful clamour begun by the commanders, and followed by the soldiers, when they are ready to join battle, that thereby they may both daunt their enemies, and encourage themselves.

Ver. 26.

Doth the hawk fly in so singular a manner, so strongly and steadily, so constantly and unweariedly, so swiftly and speedily, so regularly and cunningly, to catch her prey, *by thy wisdom*; didst thou inspire her with that wisdom?

Stretch her wings toward the south; which she doth, either.

1. When she casts her old feathers, and gets new ones, which is furthered either by the warmth of southerly winds, or by the heat

of the sun, which was southward from Job's country, as it is from ours; whence it is, that as wild hawks do this by natural instinct, so the places which men build for the keeping of tame hawks are built towards the south. Or,

2. In or towards winter, when wild hawks fly into warmer countries, as being impatient of cold weather.

Ver. 27.

Mount up; fly directly upward, till she be out of thy sight; which no other bird can do.

On high; in the highest and inaccessible rocks. Compare #**Jer 49:16 Ob 1:4**.

Ver. 28.

Which she doth partly for the security of herself and her young; and partly that she may thence have the better prospect to discern her prey, as it followeth.

Ver. 29.

Her sight is exceeding sharp and strong, so that she is able to look upon the sun with open eyes, and to behold the smallest prey upon the earth or sea, when she is mounted out of our sight; which when she spies, she flies to it with incredible swiftness, even like an arrow out of a bow.

Ver. 30.

Blood; either of the prey which the eagle hath brought to her nest for them, or of that which themselves catch and kill, being betimes inured to this work by their dams. Naturalists note of the eagle, that she drinketh no water, but blood only.

Where the slain are; where any dead carcasses are, yea, or are like to be; for natural historians write of the eagles, that they can presage or smell a battle some days before it be fought. And although some writers affirm that there are divers eagles who do not feed upon carcasses, and will not meddle with them, yet that many eagles do feed on them is sufficiently evident, by the testimony both of Scripture, as #**Mt 24:28**, and of divers both ancient and later writers.

There is she, to wit, in an instant, flying thither with admirable celerity.

JOB CHAPTER 40

God's reproof of Job, **#Job 40:1,2**. He humbleth himself, **#Job 40:3-5**. God again declareth his righteousness, majesty, and the power of his wrath to abase the proud, **#Job 40:6-14**. A description of behemoth, **#Job 40:15-21**.

Ver. 1.

Having made a little pause to try what Job could answer to his questions, and Job being it seems astonished with God's rebukes, or expecting what God would further say, continued silent.

Ver. 2.

Shall Job, who presumed to contend with me in judgment, and to dispute the reasonableness and equity of my proceedings, give me instructions or directions how to manage my own affairs, and govern my creatures? He justly mentions his almightiness, as a convincing argument of his justice. For how can he be unjust to his creatures, who hath no obligation to them, and never did nor can receive any thing from them; and who hath an absolute, sovereign, and uncontrollable dominion over them; and who being infinitely and necessarily perfect, and all-sufficient within himself, can neither have any inclination to unrighteousness, which is an imperfection, nor any temptation to it from any need he hath of it to accomplish his designs, which he can do by his own omnipotence, or front any advantage accruing to him by it.

That reproveth God; that boldly censureth his ways or works; which thou hast done.

Let him answer it; let him answer my former and further questions at his peril.

Ver. 3.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 4.

I am vile, what am I, a mean and contemptible creature that should presume to contend with my Maker and Judge? I confess my fault and folly.

What shall I answer thee? I neither desire nor am able to dispute with thee. I will for the future bridle my tongue, and instead of contesting with thee, do here humbly and willingly submit myself to thee.

Ver. 5.

I will not answer, or *speak again*; answering being oft put for speaking. I will contend no more with thee.

Yea, twice, i.e. oftentimes, or again and again, the definite number being used indefinitely.

I will proceed no further in such bold and presumptuous expressions and accusations of thy providence towards me. Vain therefore are the excuses which some interpreters make for Job, as if he were faultless in his foregoing discourses, when both God chargeth him with faultiness therein, and Job himself confesseth it.

Ver. 6.

The whirlwind was renewed when God renewed his charge upon Job, whom he intended to humble more thoroughly than yet he had done. Both this and the next verse are repeated out of **#Job 38:1,3**, where they are explained.

Ver. 7.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 8.

Every word is emphatical,

Wilt (art thou resolved upon it)

thou (thou, Job, whom I took to be one of a better mind and temper; had it been a stranger or my enemy who had spoken thus of me, I could have borne it, but I cannot bear it from thee)

also (not only vindicate thyself, and thy own integrity, but also accuse me)

disannul (not only question and dispute, but even condemn, repeal, and make void, as if it were ungrounded and unjust)

my judgment, i.e. my sentence against thee, and my government and administration of human affairs? Wilt thou make me unrighteous, that thou mayst seem to be righteous?

Ver. 9.

Thou art infinitely short of God in power, and therefore in justice; for all his perfections are equal and infinite. Injustice is much more likely to be in thee, an impotent creature, than in the Almighty God; of which **See Poole "Job 40:2"**.

Canst thou thunder with a voice like him? therefore do not presume to contend with him.

Ver. 10.

Seeing thou makest thyself equal, yea, superior to me in justice, and consequently in power and majesty, take to thyself thy great power, come and sit in my throne, and display thy divine perfections in the sight of the world. These and the following are ironical expressions, to make Job more sensible of his distance from and subjection to God.

Ver. 11.

Inflict heavy judgements upon thine enemies, the Chaldeans and Sabeans, and others who have injured or provoked thee. Destroy him with an angry look, as I can do and delight to do with such persons.

Ver. 12.

Either,

1. Wheresoever they are. Or,
2. Where they are in their greatest strength and glory, and therefore are most secure and confident. Or,
3. Forthwith, upon the spot, that the quickness and immediateness of the strike may discover that it comes from a Divine hand.

Ver. 13.

Kill *every one* of them (as he said, **#Job 40:12**) at one blow, as I can do, and bring them all to their graves, that they may sleep in the dust, and never offend thee nor trouble others more.

Bind their faces, i.e. condemn or destroy them. He alludes to the manner of covering the faces of condemned persons, #Es 7:8, and of dead men, #Joh 11:44 20:7. See Poole "Job 9:21".

In secret; either in a secret place, bury them in their graves; or secretly, with a secret and invisible stroke, that it may appear it comes from the hand of a God.

Ver. 14.

i.e. That thou art mine equal, and mayst venture to contend with me. But since thou canst do none of these things, it behoves thee to submit to me, and to acquiesce in my dealings with thee.

Ver. 15.

That some particular beast is designed by this word is evident from #Job 40:15, and from the peculiar characters given to him, which are not common to all great beasts. But what it is is matter of some dispute amongst the learned. The generality of them are agreed that this is the elephant, and the following leviathan the whale; which being two of the goodliest and vastest creatures which God made, the one of the land, the other of the sea, and withal such to whom the description here given for the most part manifestly agrees, and the like is presumed concerning the rest, may seem to be here intended. And the difficulty of reconciling some few passages to them, may arise either from our ignorance of them, or from the different nature and qualities of creatures of the same general kind in divers parts. But some late and very learned men take the leviathan to be the crocodile, and the behemoth to be a creature called the hippopotamus, which may seem fitly to be joined with the crocodile, both being very well known to Job and his friends, as being frequent in the adjacent parts, both amphibious, living and preying both in the water and upon the land, and both being creatures of great bulk and strength. I shall not undertake to determine the controversy, but shall show how each part of the following description is or may be applied to them severally. And this being no point concerning faith or a good life, every one may take the more liberty to understand the place of one or other of them.

Which I made with thee; either,

1. Upon the earth, where thou art, whereas the leviathan is in the sea. Or,

2. As I made thee, for this Hebrew particle is oft used as a note of comparison, as #Job 9:26 Ps 143:7, and elsewhere; in the same manner, and upon the same day. Whereby he may intimate, that being equally the Creator and sovereign Lord, both of Job, and of this behemoth, he had equal right to dispose of them in such manner as he thought meet. Or, (*nigh*, as the particle oft signifies,) *unto thee*, i.e. in a place not far from thee, to wit, in the river Nile, where the hippopotamus, as well as the crocodile, doth principally abide. But although those creatures were now in the river, yet they were made elsewhere, even where the first man was made. *He eateth grass as an ox*: This is mentioned as a thing strange and remarkable, as indeed it is; either,

1. Of the elephant, in which God hath wisely and mercifully planted this disposition, that he should not prey upon other creatures, which if he had, being so strong and vast a creature, he must needs have been very pernicious to them, but feed upon grass as an ox doth. Or,

2. Of the hippopotamus; of whom historians relate that he comes out of the river upon the land to feed upon corn, and hay, or grass, as an ox doth, to whom also he is not unlike in the forth of his head and feet, and in the bigness of his body, whence the Italians call him the *sea ox*.

Ver. 16.

He hath strength answerable to his bulk, but this strength by God's wise and merciful providence is not an offensive strength, consisting in or put forth by horns or claws, as it is in ravenous creatures; but only defensive, and seated in his loins, as it is in other creatures, whereby he is rendered more serviceable to men by the carrying of vast burdens.

His force is in the navel of his belly; which though in the elephant it be weaker than his loins, whence the rhinoceros fighting with him aims at that part; yet hath a more than ordinary strength in it, as appears by the binding of the heaviest burdens under and about it. This also agrees to the hippopotamus in an

eminent degree, whose whole skin is noted by ancient writers to be harder than any other creature's, and almost impenetrable.

Ver. 17.

He moveth his tail; which though it be but short, both in the elephant and in the hippopotamus, yet when it is erected is exceeding stiff and strong. But this may be understood, either,

1. Of his generative part, which is oft called by that or the like name, which the following close of the verse may seem to favour. Or,

2. Of the elephant's trunk, which being so eminent and remarkable a part, would not probably be omitted in this description, to which these words very fitly agree, because of its admirable motion and strength. Nor is it strange that this is called his tail, because that word is oft used improperly for any end of a thing, as #**Isa 7:4**. See also #**De 25:18 28:13,44**.

The sinews of his stones: this may be noted, because the elephant's testicles do not hang down below the belly, as they do in other beasts, but are contained within his belly, where they are fastened by ligaments of extraordinary strength. Or, *the sinews of the terror thereof*, to wit, of the trunk last mentioned, under the name of the

tail, i.e. its terrible sinews are strongly and strangely wrapped together, that he can move it as he listeth with wonderful dexterity and strength. Or,

the sinews of his thighs, as the latter word oft signifies in the Arabic tongue, which is very near akin to the Hebrew. The thighs and feet of the hippopotamus are noted to be so sinewy and strong, that one of them is able to break or overturn a large boat.

Ver. 18.

His bones; under which title are comprehended his ribs (as the LXX here render it) and his teeth.

As strong pieces of brass, exceeding hard and strong, as they are in both these creature.

Ver. 19.

Of the ways of God, i.e. of God's works, to wit, of that sort, or among living and brute creatures. This is eminently and unquestionably true of the elephant, in regard of his vast bulk and strength, joined with great activity, and especially of his admirable sagacity and aptness to learn, and of his singular usefulness to mankind, his lord and master, and God's vicegerent in the world, and many other commendable qualities. And the hippopotamus also is in some sort, as others note, the chief, or one of the chief, of God's works, in regard of its great bulk, and strength, and sagacity, and the manner of his living, both in the water and upon the land. But it must be granted that the elephant doth exceed the hippopotamus in many things.

Though he be so strong and terrible, yet God can easily subdue and destroy him, either immediately, or by arming other creatures, as the rhinoceros, or dragon, or tiger, against him. Or, *he that made him hath applied or given to him his sword, or arms*, to wit, his trunk, which may not unfitly be called his sword, because thereby he doth both defend himself and offend his enemies. And this trunk of his being a thing very observable and admirable in him, and therefore not likely to be neglected in his description, if it were not intended by his *tail*, #Job 40:17, may seem to be designed in these words.

Ver. 20.

Though this creature be vastly great, and require much food, and no man careth for it; yet God provides for it out of his own stores, and makes even desert mountains to afford him sufficient sustenance. The hippopotamus also, though he live most in the water, fetched his food from the land, and from the mountains or hills, which are nigh unto the river Nile.

Where all the beasts of the field play; they not only feed securely, but sport themselves by him or with him, being taught by experience that he is gentle and harmless, and never preys upon them.

Ver. 21.

The elephant lies down to rest himself; and it is but fabulous which some writers affirm, that they have no joints in their legs,

and so cannot lie down, but sleep or rest themselves standing or leaning against a tree; which is denied and confuted by Aristotle in his History of Living Creatures, 2, 4. and by later writers. For the elephant, being a creature naturally hot, and living generally in hot countries, diligently seeks for and delights in shady and waterish places, as is noted by Aristotle, and after him by Pliny and Ælian.

Ver. 22.

Of the brook; or, *of Nilus*, of which this word is oft used in Scripture. And this seems to be the chief argument by which the learned Bochart proves this to be meant of the hippopotamus, whose constant residence is in or near the river of Nilus, or the willows that grow by it. But it is well alleged by our learned and judicious Caryl, that this word *Naal* is never used to express Nilus when it is put by itself, as here it is, but only where the word Egypt is added to it, as it is in all the places which Bochart produceth. And this very phrase,

the willows of the brook, is used of other brooks or rivers besides Nilus, as **#Le 23:40**: compare **#Isa 15:7**.

Ver. 23.

He drinketh up; or, *he snatcheth*, or *draweth*, or drinketh up as it were with force and violence, as the word signifies.

A river, i.e. a great quantity of water, hyperbolically called a river, as it is also **#Ps 78:16 105:41**. This may be fitly applied to the elephant, which because of its great bulk and vehement thirst drinks a great deal of water at one draught, as naturalists and historians have observed.

Hasteth not; he drinks not with fear and caution, and sparingly, as the dogs do at Nilus, for fear of the crocodile; but such is his courage and self-confidence, that he fears no enemy, either by water or by land, but drinketh securely and liberally.

He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth; he drinks as if he designed, or hoped, or desired to drink up the whole river. He mentions Jordan, either as a river well known in and nigh unto Job's land; or because possibly there were many elephants which used to drink at it; or as a river in some parts of it but small, which therefore might give more colour to the

hyperbole, and to the elephant's fancy or expectation, than a vaster river, such as Euphrates, would have done. Bochart expounds this also of the hippopotamus, which though he cannot swim, and may be drowned, as naturalists report, yet will continue securely under water at the bottom of Nilus for some days together; and he renders the verse thus, *Behold, if a river oppress or cover him, he fears not; he is confident or secure, though Jordan* (which is here put for any river) *should break forth or overflow above his mouth*, i.e. should overwhelm him. But the judgment of this I leave to the reader.

Ver. 24.

According to this translation the sense is this, *He taketh, or snatcheth, or draweth up* (as was now said, #**Job 40:23**)

it (to wit, the river Jordan) with his eyes, i.e. when he sees it, he trusteth that he can drink it all up; as we use to say, *The eye is bigger than the belly: his nose or snout pierceth, &c.*, i.e. he securely thrusteth his snout into the river, even to the bottom of it, to stir up the mud, because he delights to drink muddy water; and if there be any snares laid for other creatures, he breaks them to pieces. But this verse is otherwise translated by others. *Will or can any man take him in his eyes*, (i.e. openly, and by manifest force? Surely no. His force and strength is too great for man to resist or overcome; and therefore men are forced to use many wiles and engines to catch him; which is true both of the elephant and of the hippopotamus,) or *pierce his nose with snares or gins*? No. He may be taken by art and cunning, but not by violence.

JOB CHAPTER 41

God's kingly power and authority above all the children of pride seen in the leviathan.

Ver. 1.

Canst thou take him with a hook and a line, as anglers take ordinary fishes? Surely no.

Quest. What is this

leviathan?

Answ. This is granted on all hands, that it is a great and terrible monster, living in the sea or rivers, as behemoth is a land monster. It is the general and received opinion that it is the whale, which is unquestionably called the leviathan, #Ps 104:25,26; which having been discovered in the seas next bordering upon Arabia, probably was not unknown to Job, who was a very inquisitive person, and well studied in the works of God, as this book manifests. But some later and very learned interpreters conceive that it is the crocodile; which was very well known in Egypt, and all the parts adjacent to it. And this is evident, that the Hebrew *thannin* (which is parallel to this word *leviathan*, these two words being synonymous, and the one promiscuously used for the other, as appears from #Ps 74:13,14 Isa 27:1 Eze 32:2) is used of the crocodile, #Eze 29:3,4 32:2,3. But I shall not positively determine this controversy, but only show how far the text may be understood of both of them, and then submit it to the reader's judgment; this being a matter of no great moment, wherein Christians may vary without any hazard. Only this I will say, that whatever becomes of the behemoth of the former chapter, whether that be the elephant, or the hippopotamus, that doth not at all determine the sense of this leviathan; but leaves it indifferent to the whale or the crocodile, as the context shall determine, which I confess seems to me to favour the latter more than the former. To which may be added, that it seems more probable that God would speak of such creatures as were very well known to Job and his friends, as the crocodile was, than of such as it is very uncertain whether they were known in those parts, and in Job's time. This verse, noting either the impossibility, or rather the great and terrible difficulty, of taking this monster with his hook or line, or such-like instruments, may agree to either of them. For the whale there is no doubt; nor much doubt as to the crocodile; the taking whereof was generally esteemed by the ancients to be very difficult and perilous, whatsoever peculiar virtue or power from nature or art the Tentyritae had against them, as the Psylli were said to have against serpents. Some indeed object, that the last clause cannot agree to the crocodile, because that hath no tongue, as is affirmed by Aristotle, Pliny, and other ancient authors. But that is a mistake, and the ground of it is plain, because their

tongues are but small in proportion to their vast bodies, and withal fastened to their under jaws, as the selfsame authors note. And that the crocodile hath a tongue is positively affirmed by the said ancient authors, and by the Hebrew writers, and by the Arabians, to whom this creature was best known, and by later authors.

Ver. 2.

An hook, Heb. *a bulrush*, i.e. a hook like a bulrush, with its head hanging down, as is expressed, **#Isa 58:5**.

Into his nose, to hang him up by it for sale, or to carry him home for use, after thou hast drawn him out of the sea or river, of which he spake in the former verse.

With a thorn; or, with an iron hook or instrument as sharp as a thorn, wherewith thou usest to carry little fishes.

Ver. 3.

Doth he dread thine anger or power? or will he humbly and earnestly beg thy favour, that thou wouldst spare him, and not pursue him, or release him out of prison? It is a metaphor from men in distress and misery, who use these means to them to whose power they are subject.

Ver. 4.

A covenant, to wit, to do thee faithful service, as the next words explain it. Canst thou bring him into bondage, and force him to serve thee?

Ver. 5.

As with a bird; as children play with little birds kept in cages, or tied with strings, which they do at their pleasure, and without any fear?

For thy maidens; for thy little daughters; which he mentions rather than little sons, because such are most subject to fear.

Ver. 6.

Thy companions; thy friends or assistants in the taking of him.

Make a banquet of him, i.e. feed upon him. Or, *for him*, i.e. for joy that thou hast taken him.

Shall they part him among the merchants? as is usual in such cases, that all who are partners in the labour amid hazard may partake of the profit also, and divide the spoil.

Ver. 7.

This may be understood, either,

1. Of the whale. And whereas it is objected that the whales at this day are taken in this manner, and therefore this cannot be understood of them; it may be replied, both that this art and way of taking whales is a late invention, and was not known in Job's time; and that he doth not speak of the absolute impossibility, but of the great difficulty of taking them. Or,

2. Of the crocodile, whose skin is so hard that an iron or spear will not pierce it, as we shall see hereafter.

Ver. 8.

Lay thine hand upon him; either,

1. In a familiar and friendly manner, that thou mayst catch him by deceit, when thou canst not do it by force. Or rather,

2. In way of hostility, seize upon him and take him by a strong hand, if thou darest do so.

Remember the battle; but ere thou do attempt that, consider what thou art doing, and how hazardous thy enterprise is, and with whom and with what disadvantage thou art going to fight, and, as it follows, *do no more*, proceed no further, draw back thy hand, and be thankful for so great a deliverance. Or the verse may be rendered thus, If (which particle is oft understood) *thou* offerest or attemptest *to lay violent hands on him*, *thou wilt* have cause to *remember* (the imperative being put for the future, which is frequent in the Hebrew language) *the battle*, and *thou wilt do no more*; if thou dost escape, thou wilt never forget thy danger, nor attempt any thing of like nature for the time to come.

Ver. 9.

The hope of him; either,

1. Of the fish, i.e. the hope of taking or conquering him. Or rather,

2. Of the man who laid hands upon him, as hoping to take him by force, but in vain.

Shall not; the prefix *he* being put for *halo*, as it is oftentimes in the Hebrew text, as #Ge 27:36 1Sa 2:28 Jer 3:6 Jer 31:20 Eze 20:30.

Even at the sight of him; not only the fight, but the very sight of him is most frightful. Such is the sight of the whale to mariners, who fear the overturning of their vessel. And such is the sight of the crocodile, by which alone some have been affrighted out of their wits.

Ver. 10.

That dare stir him up, when he sleepeth or is quiet. None dare provoke him to the battle.

To stand before me; to contend with me his Creator, as thou, Job, dost, when one of my creatures is too hard for him.

Ver. 11.

Who hath prevented me, to wit, with offices or service done for me, by which he hath laid the first obligation upon me, for which I am indebted to him? Who can be beforehand with me in kindnesses, since not only the leviathan, but all men, and, as it follows, all things under heaven, are mine, made by my hand and enriched with all their endowments by my favour, without which, O Job, thou wouldst not have had either reason or such to use so perversely to reproach my providence. Having now said and largely proved that man could not contend with God in power, he now adds, that he cannot do it in justice, because God oweth him nothing, nor is any way obliged to him; which having briefly hinted to prevent an objection, he returns to his former argument, the description of the leviathan.

That I should repay him; that I should be engaged to requite his favours.

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine; created by my power and favour, and wholly in my possession, and at my dispose, and therefore cannot possibly prevent me, as was now said.

Ver. 12.

i.e. I will particularly speak of them. Here is a meiosis, as there is #Job 14:11 15:18, and oft elsewhere.

His parts, Heb. *His bars*, i.e. the members of his body, which are strong, like bars of iron.

His comely proportion, which is more amiable and admirable in so vast a bulk.

Ver. 13.

Discover, or, *uncover*, or take off from him.

The face of his garment; the upper or outward part of his garment, or the garment itself; the word face being oft redundant, as #Ge 1:2 23:3, and oft elsewhere. And by the garment is meant the skin, which covers the whole body, and may be taken off from the body like a garment. Who dare attempt to touch his very outward skin? much less dare any venture to approach him to give him a deep or deadly wound.

With his double bridle; to put it into his mouth, and lead him by it to thy stable and service, as thou dost by a horse. Or rather, (because he plainly seems to persist in describing the several parts of his body; of which he speaks both in the foregoing and following words,) *who can come within his double bridle*, to wit, his vast jaws, which have some resemblance to a double bridle; whence the Greeks call those parts of the face which reach to the jaws on both sides the bridles.

Ver. 14.

The doors of his face, to wit, his mouth. If it be open, none dare enter within it, as he now said; and here he adds, that if it be shut, none dare open it.

His teeth are terrible round about: this is true of some kinds of whales, though others are said to have either none, or no terrible teeth; but it is more eminently and unquestionably true of the crocodile, of which this very thing is observed by all authors who write of it.

Ver. 15.

He prides and pleaseth himself in his strong and mighty scales. Heb. *His strong shields* (i.e. scales) are *his pride*. Or, (as other, both ancient and modern, interpreters render it,) *his body*, (or *his back*, as this word is used, #Isa 38:17; which, if meant of the crocodile, is emphatical, because his scales and strength is in his

back, whereas his belly is very soft, and easily pierced) is *the strength of shields*, i.e. fortified with scales strong as shields. This is meant either,

1. Of the whale whose skin, though it be smooth and entire, and without scales, may be said to be as (which particle is oft understood) *strong shields*, because it is, as Galen reports, exceeding hard and strong, and almost impenetrable, and like a shield, especially then, when shields were made of leather; and so it is not only on the back, as in the crocodile, but also in the belly all over. Or,

2. Of the crocodile, which hath scales properly so called, and those most truly such as are here described, as all authors and eye-witnesses consent.

Shut up together as with a close seal; closely compacted together, as things that are fastened together by a seal.

Ver. 16.

Which plainly shows that the shields or scales are several; which agrees better to the crocodile than to the whale, whose skin is all one entire piece, unless there were a sort of whales having thick and strong scales, which some have affirmed, but is not yet known and proved.

Ver. 17.

It is exceeding difficult, and almost impossible by any power of art, to sever them one from another.

Ver. 18.

By his neesings; which may be understood either,

1. Of any commotion or agitation of the body, like that which is in neezing, as when the whale stirreth himself and casteth or shooteth up great spouts of water into the air by the pipes which God hath planted in his head for this use; which water being thin, and transparent, and illuminated by the sun-beams, casts forth a shining light. Or,

2. Of neezing properly so called, which the crocodile is said frequently to do, because it commonly turneth its eyes to the sun, as Strabo and others note; which when a man doth, he is apt to neeze.

Like the eyelids of the morning; to which they seem very fitly compared, because the eyes both of the whale and crocodile are dull and dark under the water; but as soon as they appear above water, they cast forth immediately a bright and clear light, though not like that of the sun at noon-day, which had been too great an hyperbole, yet like the morning light, suddenly breaking forth after the dark night.

Ver. 19.

i.e. His breathings and blowings are very hot, or flaming, as the following verses explain this. This also may seem better to agree to the crocodile, which breathes (as Aristotle affirms) like the hippopotamus, of which ancient authors affirm, *that his nostrils are very large, and he breathes forth a fiery smoke like that of a furnace*, than to the whale, which rather casts forth streams of water, as was noted before, than flames of fire, there being no such great heat observed in whales, nor, as far as I know, in any other fishes.

Ver. 20.

Heb. *pool*. So a great caldron is called, because it sends forth a great smoke, as a pool doth vapours; as in like manner the great brazen laver in the temple is called a sea, for the great quantity of water which it held.

Ver. 21.

An hyperbolic expression, noting only extraordinary heat.

Ver. 22.

His neck is exceeding strong. This is meant either

1. Of the whale, who though he hath no neck no more than other fishes have, yet he hath a part in some sort answerable to it, where the head and body are joined together. Or,

2. Of the crocodile, whom Aristotle, (who made it his business to search out the several natures and parts of all living creatures, and had all the helps and advantages which he desired to find them out,) and Scaliger, and others affirm to have a neck, though some deny it.

Sorrow is turned into joy before him, i.e. the approach of any enemy, which usually causeth fear and sorrow in others, fills him

with joy, as being desirous of nothing more than fighting. Or, *sorrow rejoiceth*, or *danceth*, or *triumpheth*, &c., i.e. is prevalent and victorious, and quickly invades and conquers all those men, or other creatures, which are in his way. Sorrow is his companion or harbinger, which attends upon him wheresoever he goes. This may be a poetical expression, like that of the poets, when they bring in anger and fear going along with or before Mars into the battle.

Ver. 23.

The flakes, or *parts*, which stick out, or hang loose, and are ready to fall from other fishes or creatures.

Of his flesh: the word *flesh* is used of fishes also, as #**Le 11:11** **1Co 15:39**.

They cannot, without difficulty,

be moved, to wit, out of their place, or from the other members of the body.

Ver. 24.

His heart; either,

1. That part of the body is most firm, and hard, and strong. Or,
2. His courage is invincible; he is void of fear for himself, and of compassion to others, which is oft called *hardness of heart*.

Hard as a piece of the nether millstone; which being to bear the weight of the upper, ought to be the harder and stronger of the two.

Ver. 25.

When he raiseth up himself; showing himself upon the top of the waters. Or, *because of his height*, or *greatness*, or *majesty*; for he is represented as a king, #**Job 41:31**. *The mighty*; even the stout-hearted mariners or passengers, who use to be above fear.

By reason of breakings; either,

1. Of the sea, caused by his motion, which dasheth the waves in pieces one against another. Or rather,

2. Of their mind and state; by reason of their great danger and distress; which is expressed by this very word, #Ps 60:2 Jon 2:4.

They purify themselves; either,

1. Naturally; that being, the usual effect of great terror. See #Eze 7:17. Or rather,

2. Morally, as this word is generally used. Those mariners who ordinarily live in a gross and general neglect of God, and of religion, are so affrighted with this imminent danger, that *they cry unto God in their trouble*, as is said in like case, #Ps 107:28, and endeavour to purge their consciences from the guilt of their sins, by confessing and seemingly forsaking of them, and to make their peace with God, and obtain his favour and help, by their vows, and promises, and prayers.

Ver. 26.

That layeth at him; that approacheth to him, and dare strike at him.

Cannot hold, Heb. *cannot stand*, i.e. either,

1. Cannot endure the stroke, but will be broken by it. Or rather,

2. Cannot abide or take hold of him, or be fixed in him; but is instantly beaten back by the excessive hardness of the skin, which cannot be pierced by it, as may be gathered from this and other passages before and after it. This also seems better to agree to the crocodile, whose skin no sword, nor dart, nor musket bullet (as others add) can pierce, than to the whale, whose skin is easily pierced, as experience showeth in our whales; except the whale here spoken of were of another kind, which is not impossible.

Nor the habergeon; or, breastplate. As offensive weapons cannot hurt him, so defensive weapons cannot secure a man from him. But men that go upon the design of taking either whales or crocodiles do not use to fortify themselves in that manner. Some therefore take this to be another offensive weapon, a kind of dart, as this word signifies in the Arabic language; which is but a dialect of the Hebrew, and from which the true signification of many Hebrew words must be gathered.

Ver. 27.

He neither fears nor feels the blows of the one more than of the other.

Ver. 28.

The arrow, Heb. *the son of the bow*; as it is elsewhere called *the son of the quiver*, #La 3:13; the quiver being as it were the mother or womb that bears it, and the bow as the father that begets it, or sendeth it forth.

Sling-stones; great stones cast out of slings, which have a great force and efficacy; of which see on #2Ch 26:14.

Are turned with him into stubble; hurt him no more than a blow with a little stubble.

Ver. 29.

So far is he from fearing it, and fleeing from it, that he scorns and defies it.

Ver. 30.

According to this translation the sense is, his skin is so hard and impenetrable, that the sharpest stones are as easy to him as the mire, and make no more impression upon him. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, as continuing the former sense, They (to wit, the arrows, darts, or stones cast at him) are or fall

under him, like (which particle is oft understood) *sharp shreds, or fragments of stones*;

he spreadeth sharp pointed things (to wit, the pieces of swords or darts which were flung at him, and broken upon him) upon the mire. The fragments of broken weapons lie as thick at the bottom of the water in the place of the fight as little stones do in the mire, or as they do in a field after some fierce and furious battle. Or thus, *With him* (or *for him*, i.e. for his defence) *are sharp stones*; he spreadeth himself like *an arrow or threshing instrument* (which is filled and fortified with iron)

in the mire or *mud* in the bottom of the water: so he doth not describe his resting-place, but rather his back, which he not unfitly compares to sharp stones or threshing instruments, because the darts or stones east at him pierce no more into him than they would do into them if they were thrown at them.

Ver. 31.

The deep; the deep waters, or the sea, which is called *the deep*, #Ps 107:24 Jon 2:3, as it is explained in the next clause.

To boil like a pot; to swell, and foam, and froth by his strong and vehement motion, as any liquor doth when it is boiled in a pot.

The sea; either the great sea, the proper place of the whale, #Ps 104:25; or the great river Nilus, which is called a *sea*, both in Scripture, as #Isa 11:15, and in other authors, (of which see my Latin Synopsis,) as Euphrates is called *the sea of Babylon*, #Isa 21:1 Jer 51:36; or lakes or pools, which are most frequently called seas, both in the Old and New Testament, as every one knows. And in such lakes the crocodiles are no less than in Nilus, as it is attested by Herodotus, and Strabo, and others.

Like a pot of ointment: this clause seems to be added very emphatically, to intimate that this leviathan causeth not only a vehement commotion, but also a great fragranciness in the sea or waters where it is; which, though it was not observed by the ancients, yet is unanimously affirmed by later authors upon their own knowledge and experience, that it casts a perfume like musk; of which see the names and words of the authors in my Latin Synopsis.

Ver. 32.

When he raiseth himself to the top of the waters, he doth as it were plough it up, and make large furrows, and causeth a white froth or foam upon the waters.

Ver. 33.

Upon earth; either,

1. Strictly so called, as it is distinguished from the sea or rivers. There is no land creature comparable to him for strength and courage. Or,

2. Largely taken. No creature equals him in all points. Or, *upon the dust*, as the word properly signifies, i.e. among the things that creep in the dust, among which this may in some sort be numbered for the shortness of its feet. But this were no great honour to it, to be the chief of creeping things; and therefore the

former translation seems more proper for the present design of magnifying this creature above all others.

Who is made without fear; fears no enemy, as being full of courage, and sensible of his own invincible strength. Or, so as he cannot be bruised or broken, by reason of his prodigious hardness, of which I have spoken before.

Ver. 34.

He doth not turn his back upon nor hide his face from the highest and proudest creatures, but looks upon them with a bold and undaunted countenance, as being without any fear of them, as was now said. He carries himself with princely majesty and courage towards the stoutest and loftiest creatures; which, though of far higher stature than himself, he striketh down with one stroke of his tail, as he commonly doth cows, and horses, and sometimes elephants.

JOB CHAPTER 42

Job's humiliation and repentance, **#Job 42:1-6**. God preferring Job's cause, reproveth his friends, for whom Job must intercede, and God will accept him, **#Job 42:7-9**. God magnifieth and blesseth Job, **#Job 42:10-15**. His age and death, **#Job 42:16,17**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Thou canst do; not only by power, (for that he always thought,) but also by right; about which he had in some sort doubted and disputed. It is a maxim in law, that a man can only do that which he hath a right to do.

Every thing; whatsoever it pleaseth thee to do with thy creatures.

No thought can be withholden from thee; he speaks either,

1. Of Job's thoughts. Thou knowest me and all my sinful and unworthy thoughts of thy providential dealings with me, though I was not able to see the evil of them. Or,

2. Of God's thoughts. Whatsoever thou thinkest or proposest to do thou canst or mayst do it; and neither I nor any of thy creatures can either restrain thee from it, or condemn thee for it, as I have boldly and wickedly presumed to do. So this last clause of the verse explains the former.

Ver. 3.

Who is he? i.e. what am I, that I should dare to do so? Ah silly audacious wretch that I am, that I should be guilty of such madness!

That hideth counsel without knowledge; which words are repeated out of **#Job 38:2**, where they are explained.

Therefore; because my mind was without knowledge, therefore my speech was ignorant and foolish. Or, being sensible of my ignorance and rashness, I think fit to make this humble and ingenuous confession.

Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not; I have spoken foolishly and unadvisedly of things far above my reach, even of God's infinite and sovereign majesty, and of his deep and unsearchable counsels and providence.

Ver. 4.

Hear and accept my humble and penitent confession and recantation.

I will demand of thee; or, and *inquire*, to wit, counsel or instruction, as a scholar doth of his master, as the following words note. I will no more saucily dispute the matter with thee, but beg information from thee. The words which God had uttered to Job by way of challenge, **#Job 38:3 40:7**, Job returns to him again in way of submission.

Ver. 5.

The knowledge which I had of thy Divine nature, and perfections, and counsels, was hitherto dark, and doubtful, and conjectural, being grounded chiefly, if not only, upon the instructions and reports of other men; but now it is clear and certain, as being immediately inspired into my mind by this thy glorious apparition and revelation, and by the operation of thy Holy Spirit; which

makes these things as certain and evident to me, as if I saw them with my bodily eyes.

Ver. 6.

I abhor, i.e. dislike, and detest, and loathe

myself, or *my former words and carriage*. One of these or some like supplement is necessary to complete the sense, and is clearly gathered from the following words.

In dust and ashes; sitting in dust and ashes; which hitherto I have done in token of my grief for my affliction; but now I desire and resolve to do in testimony of my penitence for my sins.

Ver. 7.

To Eliphaz the Temanite; as the eldest of the three, and because he spoke first, and by his evil example led the rest into the same mistakes and miscarriages.

Thy two friends, to wit, Bildad and Zophar, who are not excused, but severely reprov'd, although they, were drawn into the sin by Eliphaz's authority and influence. Elihu is not here reprov'd, because he dealt more justly and mercifully with Job, and did not condemn his person, but only rebuke his sinful expressions.

As my servant Job hath; either,

1. As Job hath now spoken: you have not acknowledged your errors as he hath done. Or rather,

2. As Job did in his discourses with you; which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, (as is manifest from God's censure upon Job for his hard and evil speeches of him,) but comparatively, because Job was not so much to be blamed as they; partly, because his opinion concerning the methods of God's providence, and the indifferency and promiscuousness of its dispensations towards good and bad men, was truer than theirs, which was that God did generally reward good men and punish sinners in this life; partly, because their misbelief of God's counsels and dealings with men was attended with horrid uncharitableness and cruelty towards Job, whom they wounded with bitter and injurious speeches, and condemned as a hypocrite, not only without sufficient evidence, as not being able to search

his heart, but upon false and frivolous grounds, to wit, his sore afflictions, and against many evidences of piety which Job had given; and partly, because Job's heavy pressures might easily cloud and darken his mind, and draw forth his impatience and passionate speeches; which although it did not wholly excuse Job, yet did certainly much extenuate his offences; whereas they were under no such temptations or provocations, either from God or from Job, but voluntarily broke forth into their hard, and severe, and untrue expressions concerning God's counsels and Job's conditions, thereby adding affliction to him whom God did sorely afflict, which was most unfriendly and inhuman.

Ver. 8.

Go to my servant Job; whom though you have censured and condemned as a hypocrite, I own for my faithful servant, human infirmity excepted.

Offer up by the hand of Job, whom I do hereby constitute your priest, to pray and sacrifice for you.

Him will I accept, to wit, on your behalf, as well as on his own.

Lest I deal with you after your folly; lest my wrath and just judgment take hold of you for your false and foolish speeches.

Ver. 9.

Did according as the Lord commanded them; showing their repentance by their submission to God, and to Job for God's sake, and by taking shame to themselves.

The Lord also accepted Job, both for his friends and for himself, as the next verse explains it.

Ver. 10.

Turned the captivity of Job, i.e. brought him out of that state of bondage in which he had been so long held by Satan and by his own Spirit, and out of all his distresses and miseries. Or, *returned Job's captivity*, i.e. the persons and things which had been taken from him; not the same which he had lost, but other equivalent to them, and that with advantage.

When he prayed for his friends; whereby he manifesteth his obedience to God, and his true love and charity to them, in being

so ready to forgive them, and heartily to pray for them; for which God would not let him lose his reward.

Also; an emphatical particle. He not only gave him as much as he lost, but double to it.

Ver. 11.

Then, when Job had humbled himself, and God was reconciled to Job, he quickly turned the hearts of his friends to favour him, according to #Pr 16:7; as during his impenitency, and for his trial and humiliation, he had alienated their hearts from him, of which Job so sadly complains.

His brethren and his sisters; largely so called, according to the Scripture use of these titles, to wit, his kindred distinguished from his other acquaintance.

Did eat bread with him, i.e. feasted with him, as that phrase is commonly used in Scripture, to congratulate with him for God's great and glorious favour already vouchsafed to him in so eminent a vision and revelation.

They bemoaned him; they declared the sense which they had of his calamities whilst they were upon him, although they had hitherto wanted opportunity to express it.

Over all the evil; or, *concerning all the evil*; which though it was bitter to endure when it was present, yet the remembrance of it revived in him by the discourses of his friends was very delightful, as is usual in such cases.

Every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold; partly to make up his former losses, and partly as a testimony of their honourable respect to him.

Ver. 12.

The Lord blessed Job, not only with spiritual, but also with temporal and earthly blessings.

Ver. 13.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 14.

Giving them such excellent names as signify their excellent beauty, of which see my Latin Synopsis.

Ver. 15.

Gave his daughters a share, and possibly an equal share, with his sons in his inheritance; which in so plentiful an estate he might easily do, especially to such amiable sisters, without the envy of their brethren; and which peradventure he did to oblige them to settle themselves amongst their brethren, and to marry into their own religious kindred, not to strangers, who in those times were generally swallowed up in the gulf of idolatry.

Ver. 16.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 17.

After God had turned his captivity, as is said #**Job 42:10**.

Old and full of days; by which length of his days it seems most probable that he lived before the times of Moses, when the days of human life were much shortened, as he complains.

END OF VOL. I.

BOOK OF PSALMS

THE ARGUMENT

The divine authority of this Book of PSALMS is so certain and evident, that it was never questioned in the church; which being fixed, it is of small moment that the penman of some of them is not now known; nor doth this any more lessen its authority, than it invalidates the decree of a prince, or an act of parliament, that it is not certain by whose pen it was drawn up. Most of them were composed by David, as is evident, both from the title of them, and from the express testimony of the New Testament concerning some of them; and that by the inspiration of God's Spirit, as appears both from the Divine matter and frame of them, and from **#2Sa 23:1 Mt 22:43 Ac 1:16 2:25**. But some of them were composed by other persons; by Moses, as **#Ps 90**, by Heman, and Ethan, and Asaph, as the title of the Psalms show; and by others after their times, whose names are not mentioned, as is manifest from **#Ps 126 Ps 127**. It is apparent that the Psalms were not written in the order in which they now lie; and they were put into this order either by Ezra, as the Hebrew doctors affirm, or by some other holy prophet or prophets. It is sufficient for us that the whole book is owned as canonical by our blessed Saviour, **#Lu 24:44**.

Psalms 1:1 PSALM 1

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was put first as a preface to all the rest, as a powerful persuasive to the diligent reading and serious study of the whole book and of the rest of the Holy Scripture, taken from that blessedness which attends upon the study and practice thereof.

The godly blessed, Psa_1:1. Their delight in God's law, Psa_1:2. Their fruitfulness, Psa_1:3. The wretched course and condition of the ungodly, Psa_1:4-6.

The Hebrew words are very emphatical, *Blessedness belongs to that man* , or, *Oh the blessedness of that man* Thrice blessed is

that man; who is here described negatively, and in the next verse positively.

That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, i.e. that doth not lead his life according to their counsel, or course, or manner of living; that doth not associate himself with them, nor follow their evil instigations or examples. *Walking* notes choice of it, and continuance or process in it; otherwise good men do sometimes step aside into an evil action. For the explaining of the phrase, see Gen_49:6 2Ch_22:3-5 Pro_1:15 **4:14** Mic_6:16.

Nor standeth; which notes a more settled abode, hardness, and obstinacy in it.

In the way, i.e. in their course or manner of conversation; in the practice of those things which they choose and use to do; which is called a man's way, Psa_5:8 **25:4** 2Pe_2:2,**15**.

Of sinners; emphatically so called here, as also Psa_26:9 Ecc_9:2 Mat_26:45 Luk_7:37 Joh_9:16,**31**, who give up themselves to the power and practice of sin, making it their great business and their delight.

Nor sitteth in the seat; which notes their association or incorporation of themselves with them; a constant and resolved perseverance in their wicked courses, with great content and security; and a great proficiency and eminency in the school of wickedness, and an ability and readiness to instruct others therein. *Of the scornful* ; of those who are not only diseased, but reject, despise, and scorn all remedies; who make a mock of sin, and of God's threatenings and judgments against sinners; who deride all wholesome reproofs and counsels, and make it their trade to scoff at goodness and good men. Divers have observed a gradation in this verse; the following clause still exceeding the former, for *standing* is more than *walking* , and *sitting* more than *standing* . And

the way or course may seem to be worse than the *counsel* or *design* , and the *seat* is worse than the *way* ; and *sinners* , in Scripture use, are worse than the *ungodly* , and the *scornful* are the worst of *sinners* . But I would not lay great stress upon such observations.

Psalms 1:2

In the law, i.e. in the study and practice of it, as appears from the context. The *law* of God may be here understood of the whole doctrine delivered by God to the church, consisting of doctrines, precepts, promises, and threatening, &c.; as it is taken Psa_37:1 **58:1** Isa_51:7 Joh_10:34; or more particularly of the preceptive part of it, which is commonly so called; and so this is noted as the peculiar character of a good man, that he delighteth himself not only in the promises, which a bad man may do, Mat_13:20, but even in the commands of God, Psa_112:1 **119:47 127 143** 1Jo_5:3, which are unwelcome and burdensome to a wicked man.

The word **meditate** implies a deep, and serious, and affectionate thoughtfulness about it: see Psa_19:14 **49:3** Pro_24:2 Isa_33:18.

Day and night; not seldom and slightly, as hypocrites do; but diligently, frequently, constantly, and upon all occasions.

Psalms 1:3

And, or *for* , as this particle is oft used, as Psa_60:12 Psa_108:13 Pro_4:17; this being the proof of that blessedness of a good man, which he had only asserted, Psa_1:1.

By the rivers, i.e. a river; the plural number being put for the singular, as it is Jud_12:7 Jon_1:5, and oft elsewhere.

In his season, i.e. in the time of fruit-bearing; which being applied to the good man, notes either,

1. His active goodness, that he seeketh and improveth all opportunities for the doing of good, exercising godliness, justice, temperance, charity, patience, &c., according to the several occasions offered to him. Or rather,
2. His certain prosperity and happiness, as may be gathered from the end of this verse, and the opposite state of the ungodly, Psa_1:4,**5**; that he shall have the fruit or benefit of his godly life in due time, or when it is expedient for him; possibly in this life, but assuredly in the next life.

His leaf also shall not wither; his happiness is not short and transitory, as all worldly felicity is; but fixed and everlasting, like those trees which are continually green and flourishing: or, and (like a tree) *whose leaf never withers. Whatsoever he doeth shall*

prosper ; all his actions shall be crowned with success, and a blessed end or effect: see Rom_8:28.

Psalms 1:4

The ungodly are not so; their condition is far differing from the former.

But are like the chaff; in regard either,

1. Of their sinful disposition. They are vain and frothy, unprofitable and hurtful, without any root of true and solid goodness, without any certain end or constant course, tossed to and fro with every wind of their own lusts or temptations. Or rather,

2. Of their wretched condition. They are restless and unquiet in their own minds and consciences; their seeming felicity, in which they please and pride themselves, hath no firm foundation, but quickly vanisheth and fleeth away, as chaff doth before the wind, and their end is to be burned: see Job_21:8 Psa_35:5 Mat_3:12.

Psalms 1:5

Therefore, to wit, because they are ungodly; or *because* , as this particle is sometimes used, as Gen_38:26 Num_10:31 **14:43** Psa_42:6; for this verse is added to enforce or prove what he said in the former.

Shall not stand, i.e. not subsist or endure the trial; or not be justified, or carry his cause, as this word is oft used; being opposed to falling, as Psa_18:38 **20:8** Mal_3:2 Luk_21:36 Rom_14:4 Eph_6:13.

In the judgment; either,

1. In the time of temporal calamities, when God shall arise to judge and punish them; for then the hearts of the wicked fail, and their consciences are filled with horror. Or,

2. In that great and general judgment of the whole world, called here

the judgment emphatically; in that solemn and general congregation of all mankind, as the next words express it. *In the congregation of the righteous* , i.e. In that society which shall

consist of none but righteous persons, or amongst the righteous ones on Christ's right hand, Mat_25:32.

Psalms 1:6

For; he now gives a reason of this great difference between the righteous and the ungodly, expressed in the foregoing verses.

The Lord knoweth; either,

1. Properly and speculatively; he searcheth and knoweth all their hearts and ways or actions; and therefore will preserve, prosper, and bless them; which may be gathered out of the following and opposite clause of this verse, and out of Psa_1:1,2. Or,

2. Practically and affectionately, as words of knowledge in Scripture do frequently imply affection, as Exo_1:8 Psa_31:7 **101:4** Hos_8:4 Amo_3:2. He approveth, loveth, and delighteth in them, and in the course of their lives, and therefore will recompense them; or, he careth for and directeth their actions to a blessed issue.

The way of the ungodly shall perish; all their wicked designs and courses shall come to nothing, and they shall perish with them.

Psalms 2:1 PSALM 2

THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Psalm was David, as is affirmed, Act_4:25. As for the matter or subject of it, it may seem to have some respect unto David, and to his advancement to and settlement in the throne of Judah and Israel; but the chief design and scope of it, and the primary intention of the Holy Ghost in it, was to describe the Messiah and his kingdom, as is manifest,

1. From express testimonies of the New Testament to that purpose, as Act_4:25 **13:33** Heb_1:5 **5:5**; and

2. From the consent of the ancient Hebrew writers, who did unanimously expound it so, as is confessed by their own brethren, particularly by Rabbi Solomon Jarchi upon this place; who hath this memorable passage, *Our doctors expounded this Psalm of the King Messiah, but that we may answer the heretics* (by which he

means the Christians, as all know) *it is expedient to interpret it of David 's person, as the words sound* ; which words, although they are left out of the latter editions of that book, either by the fraud of Jews, or carelessness or mistake of others, yet are extant in the ancient editions of it.

3. From divers passages of the Psalm, which do not agree to David, but to Christ only, the title of *Son*, of which see Heb_1:4,5, the extent of his kingdom, Psa_2:8, and Divine worship, Psa_2:11,12.

The kingdom of Christ, and the opposition of the heathen foretold, Psa_2:1-7. God giveth him the earth for his possession, Psa_2:8,9. He summons all the kings and judges of the earth to submit themselves to him, Psa_2:10-12.

Why? upon what provocation, or to what end or purpose?

The heathen, or, *Gentiles* ; who did so against David, as we see, 2Sa_5:6,17 1Ch_14:8, &c.; and against Christ, Luk_18:32 Act_4:25, &c.

And the people: this is either another expression of the same thing, as is usual in Scripture; or as the former word notes the Gentiles, so this may design the Jews or Israelites, who also combined against David, 2Sa_2:8, &c., and against Christ, Act_4:27, though they were all of one nation, and descended from one and the same mother, as this word signifies, and it is used Gen_25:23.

Imagine a vain thing; what they shall never be able to effect; and if they could, it would do them no good, as they fancy, but great hurt.

Psalms 2:2

The kings; either those mentioned 2Sa 5 2Sa 8; or rather Herod the Great, and the other Herod, and Pilate, and others with or after them.

Of the earth; so called in way of contempt, and to show their madness in opposing the God of heaven.

Set themselves: the word notes their firm purpose and professed hostility, and the combination of their counsels and forces.

Against the Lord; either directly and professedly; or indirectly and by consequence, because against his anointed, and against his counsel and command. *And* ; or, *that is* , as that particle is oft used; the latter clause explaining the former, and showing in what sense they fought against that God whom they pretended to own and worship.

Against his anointed; against such a king whom God hath chosen and exalted, and wonderfully accomplished and set up for his work and service, who therefore will certainly defend him against all his enemies.

Psalms 2:3

Their, i.e. the Lord's and his anointed's,

bands, which they design to put upon our necks, that they may bring us into subjection. They mean the laws of God, which the king would oblige them to observe, which though easy and pleasant in themselves and to good men, Mat_11:29,30 1Jo_5:3, yet are very grievous and burdensome to corrupt nature, and to men of wicked lives.

Cast away their cords from us; the same thing expressed with a little more emphasis. Let us not only break off their yoke, and the cords by which it is fastened upon us; but let us cast them far away, that they may never be recovered, and we may never be brought into bondage again.

Psalms 2:4

He that sitteth, as the Judge upon his tribunal, and as the King of the whole world upon his royal throne; who, without stirring from his place, can with one look or word destroy all his enemies.

In the heavens: this is opposed to their being and reigning upon earth, Psa_2:2, and is mentioned here, as it is in other places of Scripture, as an evidence both of God's clear and certain knowledge of all things that are done below, as is noted, Psa_11:4, and of his sovereign and irresistible power, as is hence gathered, Psa_115:3. See the preface to the Lord's prayer.

Shall laugh, i.e. shall both despise and deride them, and all their crafty devices, which he shall manifest to the world to be

ridiculous and contemptible follies. Compare 2Ki_19:21
Psa_37:13.

Psalms 2:5

Then; in the midst of all their plots and confidences of success.

Shall he speak to them in his wrath; he shall severely rebuke them, not so much verbally as really, by dreadful judgments. For God's *speaking* is oft put for his actions; and so here it is explained by *vexing* in the next branch. Or, he shall pronounce a terrible sentence against them.

Psalms 2:6

Yet; notwithstanding all their artifices and powerful combinations.

Have I set, Heb. *I have anointed* , i.e. designed, appointed, or constituted, as this word is commonly used in Scripture, as of priests, 1Ch_29:22, and of prophets, 1Ki_19:16,**19,20**; so also of kings, Jud_9:8,**15** 2Sa_2:4,**7 3:39** Eze_28:14.

My king, in a singular manner, who hath not his kingdom by succession from former kings, nor by election of the people, as other kings have, but by my special and extraordinary destination; and who ruleth in my stead, and according to my will, and for my service and glory.

Upon my holy hill of Zion, i.e. over my church and people. *Zion* properly and strictly taken was a hill on the north Part, of Jerusalem, Psa_48:2, where there was a strong fort which when David had taken he called it the city of David, 2Sa_5:7,**9**, and made it the head of his kingdom. But in a more large and improper sense it is frequently put for the city Jerusalem, Psa_48:12 **87:2 110:2**; and for the temple of Jerusalem, Psa_137:3 Isa_18:7 Jer_51:10, which was built upon the hill of Moriah, which was either a part of Mount Zion, or another hill adjoining to it; and for the church of the Jews, Psa_65:1 **69:35 97:8**; and for the Christian church, Heb_12:22 Rev_14:1. And by these things it is plain why *Zion* is here called *God 's holy hill* .

Psalms 2:7

I will declare, or *publish* , that all people concerned may take notice of it, and submit to it upon their peril. Publication or promulgation is essential to all laws or statutes.

The decree, or, *concerning the decree* , i.e. the will or pleasure and appointment of God concerning my advancement into the throne, and the submission and obedience which the people here following shall yield to me.

Thou art my Son; which though it may in some sort be said to or of David, who was in some respects the son of God, and begotten by him, as all believers are, Joh_1:12 1Jo_3:9 Jam_1:18; yet much more truly and properly belongs to Christ, who is commonly known by this title both in the Old and New Testament, as Pro_30:4 Hos_11:1 Mat_2:15 Mat_3:17 **4:3,6**, and oft elsewhere; and to whom this title is expressly appropriated by the Holy Ghost, who is the best interpreter of his own words, Act_13:33 Heb_1:5 **5:5**, and to whom alone the following passages belong.

This day have I begotten thee: this is also applied by some to David, and so *this day* is the day of his inauguration, when he might be said to be begotten by God, inasmuch as he was then raised and delivered from all his troubles and calamities, which were a kind of death, and brought forth and advanced to a new kind of life, of royal state and dignity; and so this was the birthday, though not of his person, yet of his kingdom, as the Roman emperors celebrated a double birthday; first the emperor's, when he was born, and then the empire's, when he was advanced to the empire. But this is but a lean, and far-fetched, and doubtful sense; and therefore not to be allowed by the laws of interpretation, when the words may be properly understood concerning Christ. And so this may be understood either,

1. Of his eternal generation.

This day ; from all eternity, which is well described by *this day* , because in eternity there is no succession, no *yesterday* , no *tomorrow* , but it is all as one continued day or moment, without change or flux; upon which account *one day* is said to be *with the Lord as long as a thousand years, and a thousand years as short as one day* , 2Pe_3:8. Or rather,

2. Of the manifestation of Christ's eternal sonship in time; which was done partly in his birth and life, when his being the Son of God was demonstrated by the testimony of the angel, Luk_1:32, and of God the Father, Mat_3:17 **17:5**, and by his own words and works; but principally in his resurrection, which seems to be here mainly intended, of which day this very place is expounded, Act_13:33; when Christ was in a most solemn manner *declared to be the Son of God with power* , Rom_1:4. And this day or time Christ might very well be said to be begotten by God the Father; partly, because the resurrection from the dead is in Scripture called a *regeneration* or second birth, Mat_19:28, as well it may, being a restitution of that very being which man received by his, first birth, and that by the peculiar and mighty power of God; partly, because in this respect Christ is called *the first begotten of the dead* , Rev_1:5; and partly, because of that common observation, that *things are oft said to be done in Scripture when they are only declared or manifested to be done* ; of which see instances, Gen_41:13 Jer_1:10 Eze_43:3, and elsewhere.

Psalms 2:8

Ask of me; claim or demand it of me, as thy right by my promise, and thy birth and purchase.

For thine inheritance; to be possessed and enjoyed by thee in a manner of an inheritance, to wit, constantly, surely, and perpetually.

The uttermost parts of the earth; either,

1. The whole land of Canaan, from one end of it to the other, as this phrase is used, Psa_61:2 **72:8**; which is but a very narrow sense, and that was but a very small kingdom, and no way agreeable to those magnificent expressions here used. Or rather,

2. The whole world, not only the Jewish nation, but the Gentiles also, as this phrase is almost universally used in the Old Testament, as Psa_19:4 **22:28 46:10 65:5** Isa_40:28 **45:22**, &c. And so these words declare the great amplitude of the kingdom of the Messiah.

Psalms 2:9

Thou shalt break them, i.e. those people that will not quietly submit to thee, shall be crushed and destroyed by thee.

With a rod of iron; with thy mighty power, which they shall never be able to resist.

Psalms 2:10

Be wise; understand your true interest. Now, whilst you have time and space for repentance and submission.

O ye kings; you and your people. But he speaks of and to kings only; partly, because they most needed the admonition, as presuming upon their own power and greatness, and thinking it below them to submit to him; partly, because their authority and example could do much with their people; and partly, to intimate the greatness of this monarch, and that he was *King of kings, and Lord of lords. Ye judges, or rulers, or governors*; the same called kings in the former branch.

Psalms 2:11

With fear, i.e. with reverence, and an awful sense of his great and glorious majesty, as very careful and diligent to please him, and afraid to offend him.

Rejoice; do not esteem his yoke your dishonour and grievance; but know that it is a greater glory and happiness to be the subjects of this King, than to be emperors of the greatest empire; and accordingly rejoice in it, and bless God for this inestimable grace and benefit.

With trembling: this is added to express the quality of this joy to which he calls them, and to distinguish it from that carnal and worldly rejoicing which is usually attended with security, and presumption, and licentiousness, and to warn them to take heed that they do not turn this grace of God into wantonness, nor slacken their dread of God's tremendous majesty, and of his terrible judgments, if they should hereafter revolt from him, or rebel against him; but, on the contrary, *work out their salvation with fear and trembling*, as it is prescribed, Phi_2:12: compare Mat_28:8.

Psalms 2:12

Kiss, in token of your subjection and adoration; whereof this was a sign among the Eastern nations, as is manifest both from Scripture, as 1Sa_10:1 1Ki_19:18 Hos_13:2, and from heathen authors. Submit to his person and government.

The Son, to wit, the Son of God, as appears from Psa_2:7, called here *the Son* , by way of eminency, and in a singular manner; which agrees much better to Christ than to David, who is never particularly called by this name.

And ye perish from the way, i.e. be taken out of the way by death or destruction; or, perish out of *the way* , i.e. by losing the right way, by taking wrong and evil courses, the end of which will be your certain and utter ruin; or, for the way, i.e. for your evil way or manner of living, for your perverse and foolish course of opposing my Son instead of submitting to him. Or, in (which particle is oft. understood) *the way* , i.e. in your wicked way or course, in the midst of your plots and rebellions against him; and so you will *die in your sins* , as it is expressed, Joh_8:24, which is a sad aggravation of their death, and therefore here fitly proposed as a powerful argument to dissuade them from such dangerous and destructive courses.

But a little, i.e. the least degree, of his anger is very terrible, much more the heat and height of it, caused by such a desperate provocation as this is. Or, *for his wrath will be kindled shortly* , or *suddenly* , or *within a very little time* , as this word is used, Psa_81:14 Son_3:4 Isa_26:20. His patience will not last always, but will shortly be turned into fury; and therefore take heed that you neither deny nor delay subjection to him, but speedily comply with his offers and commands before it be too late.

They that put their trust in him; who put themselves under his power and protection, believing in him, and expecting safety and happiness from him; which cannot with any colour be applied to David, who always dissuades all men from putting their trust in princes, or in any men or thing besides or below God, Psa_20:7 **44:6 62:6-8 118:8 146:3**, and every where; and therefore it would very ill have become him to invite others *to put their trust in him* . And he is pronounced *cursed that trusteth in man* , Jer_17:5. But Christ is every where propounded as an object of trust, not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old, as Isa_28:16; and therefore they are most truly and fitly said to be

blessed that put their trust in him. Under which sentence the contrary is implied, that they are most cursed and miserable

creatures that provoke and oppose him; and so cursed and miserable that David dreaded the very thoughts and mention of it, and therefore expresseth it by the contrary and blessed condition of his friends and subjects. And such-like significations of the miseries of sinners by the blessedness of others opposed to them we have Mat_23:39 Rev_14:13.

Psalms 3:1 PSALM 3

Composed by David, as this phrase implies, Psa_110:1, compared with Mat_22:43, and generally elsewhere. When he fled, or, after he had fled. Either this Psalm was composed in his flight, or the matter of it was then in his thoughts; which afterwards he digested into this form and order.

The psalmist complaineth of the multitude of his enemies, Psa_3:1,2; but comforteth himself with his confidence in and reliance on God, Psa_3:3-6; and the manifold experiences of his former assistance, Psa_3:7. He prayeth for his own and the church's salvation, Psa_3:8.

He might well say so; for almost all his people joined in the conspiracy.

Psalms 3:2

Of my soul, i.e. of me; the soul being commonly put for the person, as Isa_46:2 Amo_6:8, compared with Gen_22:16.

There is no help for him in God; God hath utterly forsaken him for his many crimes, and will never help him more.

Selah: this word is nowhere used but in this poetical Book of the Psalms, and in the song of Hab_3:3,9,13; which makes that opinion probable, that it was a musical note, directing the singer either to lift up his voice, or to make a short stop or pause, or to lengthen out the tune. But withal, it is generally placed at some remarkable passage; which gives occasion to think that it served also to quicken the attention or observation of the singer and hearer.

Psalms 3:3

For me, or *about me*, on every side, where also mine enemies are.

My glory; either,

1. The author of my princely glory and majesty. Thou didst first give it, and I doubt not thou wilt defend and restore it. Or,

2: The matter of my glorying. Thou hast formerly and frequently given, and wilt further give me occasion of glorying or boasting of thy power and favour to me.

The lifter up of my head; thou dost and wilt enable me to look up to thee with comfort and cheerfulness, and upon mine enemies with confidence; and thou wilt lift me out of the mire in which I now lie, and restore me to my former power and dignity from which I am fallen. For the phrase, see Gen_4:7 Job_11:15 Luk_18:13.

Psalms 3:4

With my voice; the witness of my faith and fervency of affections.

Out of his holy hill; either out of heaven, so called Psa_15:1: compare Isa_66:1. Or rather,

2. Out of the hill of Zion, where God was especially present, the ark being there at this time; towards which the saints then used to direct their prayers, and from thence God heard and answered and blessed them, Psa_128:5 **134:3**.

Psalms 3:5

I laid me down and slept, to wit, securely, casting all my cares and fears upon God, and relying upon his help. I awaked in due time and manner, after a sweet and undisturbed sleep.

Sustained me; or, *supported me*, as it were with his right hand, that I should not fall under my burden. He upheld my spirit, and person, and cause.

Psalms 3:6

So that I see no human way to escape.

Psalms 3:7

Arise; bestir thyself on my behalf, and be no longer as an idle spectator of my miseries.

O my God; who art mine by special relation and covenant, and I am thy son and thy servant; Lord, save thine own.

Thou hast smitten all mine enemies thou hast hitherto helped me, do not now leave me.

Upon the cheek-bone; which implies either contempt and reproach, as this phrase signifies, 1Ki_22:24 Mic_5:1 Joh_18:22 **19:3**; or the smartness and soreness of the blow, whereby, as the next clause explains it, their teeth were struck out; and so they did not only receive hurt themselves, but were disenabled from doing that mischief to others which they desired and were accustomed to do.

The teeth, i.e. their strength and the instruments of their cruelty. He compares them to wild beasts.

Psalms 3:8

I expect not salvation from my forces, but from thy power and favour alone.

Thy blessing is, or rather, let it be, (so he closeth with a prayer,)

upon thy people; either upon my friends and followers, who alone are thy people, the rest being rebels to thee as well as to me; or, upon all thy people Israel, to preserve my friends, to convince and convert mine enemies, and to save the body of the nation, which without thy mercy are likely by this civil war to be brought to utter ruin.

Psalms 4:1 PSALM 4

The chief musician; the master or director of the sacred musicians and music of the temple; of whom see 1Ch_6:31 **15:16,17 25:1,2** 2Ch_20:21 **34:12,13**. Heb. *To him that overcometh* , or *excelleth* , or *triumpheth* , to wit, in his profession of music.

On Neginoth; or, on stringed instruments, as this word is translated, Hab_3:19; for the Hebrew verb *niggen* , whence this is derived, signifies *to play with the hand* upon an instrument, 1Sa_16:23 **18:10**. This Psalm is, for the matter or substance of it, much like the former, and seems to have been made upon the same or some other like occasion, when he was distressed either

by Absalom, or by Saul, or by some other great and powerful enemies.

David prayeth for audience, Psa_4:1. He reproves the wicked, Psa_4:2. The privilege of the godly, and his faith in God, Psa_4:3. An exhortation to duty, Psa_4:4,5. The ungodly satisfied with earthly blessings, but the godly cannot be at rest without the favour of God, Psa_4:6-8.

O God of my righteousness; either the witness and defender of my righteous cause; or from whom I expect that righteous judgment and decision of my cause which I cannot obtain from mine enemies, who load me and my cause with manifold injuries and calumnies. Or, *O my righteous God* . Or, *O God of my mercy* ; which title is given to God elsewhere, as Psa_59:10,17; whereas this title, *O God of my righteousness* , is not given to God in any other place of Scripture. O God, to whose mercy I owe all that I have or hope for: which was a very fit and powerful argument in prayer, and very agreeable to the following words, in which there is an acknowledgment of God's former mercies, and a petition for mercy. And so this and other words in Hebrew and Greek, which properly signify *righteousness* , are oft used for *mercy* or *kindness* , as Isa_58:8 Psa_31:1 **36:10** 2Co_9:9, and in many other places.

Thou hast enlarged me, i.e. freed me from my former straits and troubles. So he urgeth God and strengtheneth his own faith with his former experiences.

Have mercy upon me; thou mayst justly destroy me for my many and great sins, and therefore I flee from thy justice to thy mercy, on which all my hopes are grounded.

Psalms 4:2

O ye sons of men, i.e. princes and potentates, as this Hebrew phrase seems and is thought to signify, who are engaged with Saul or Absalom against me.

Will ye turn my glory into shame? or, shall *my glory* be *for a shame* , i.e. be made by you matter of reproach and scorn? By his *glory* probably he means that high honour and royal majesty which God had either promised to him, or conferred upon him; wherein, when he was in great straits and dangers, they might possibly reproach him in some sort as this: Is this the man, whom

God so highly loves, and honours, and will exalt, who now flees from one mountain or cave to another, who runs away to the Philistines, whom his own son hath banished out of the land? Is this the effect of his glorying and boasting of God's favour and promises?

Love vanity, i.e. affect and pursue these courses and designs of opposing me and my kingdom, which you will certainly find to be vain, and to no purpose.

Leasing or, *lying* ; the same thing with vanity; these two words being promiscuously used, as Psa_62:9. Only this seems to add some emphasis, and to intimate the fair hopes and promising probabilities of success which they had, and which aggravate their disappointment. Or *by lying* he may design those horrid calumnies, which the partisans either of Saul or Absalom had raised against him, and which they joined with their other endeavours to make him odious to all the people, and so the better to effect his ruin.

Psalms 4:3

But know that you fight not against me, but against the Lord.

Hath set apart; or, *hath wonderfully separated me* ; hath rejected the other royal person and family, and hath called me by name, and chosen me out of all the tribes and families of Israel, and out of my father's family, though I was the youngest of them, and thought by Samuel and by my father to be most remote from this honour.

Him that is godly, i.e. me, whom though you traduce and censure, as if I were an egregious hypocrite and impostor, who only pretended religion for my own ambitious ends, God hath pronounced to be *a man after his own heart* , 1Sa_13:14; and that I am such in some good measure both my own conscience and the general course of my life bear me witness: which testimony David gives to himself, not out of a vain-glorious humour, but merely because he was constrained to it by the calumnies of his enemies, for his own just and necessary vindication. Or, *his favourite* , as this word oft signifies; him, whom he hath been pleased to choose and advance, not for any worth or merit of mine, but out of his free grace and kindness to me; who therefore will maintain the

work of his own hands and grace, although I cannot deny that I have been guilty of divers frailties and miscarriages, for which God might justly reject me, if he should deal with me according to the rigours of his justice.

For himself; either,

1. In his stead, or to be his vicegerent, as all kings are, and especially the kings of God's own people. Or rather,
2. For his own service and glory, to *fulfil* all his will, as it is expressed, Act_13:22; which may be spoken by way of opposition to Saul, who had no regard to God, nor to his will and glory, but minded only his own honour and advantage.

The Lord will hear when I call unto him; therefore I am assured that God will hear my prayers, and save me out of your hands.

Psalms 4:4

Tremble therefore and be afraid, if not of me, yet at least of God, who hath engaged himself in my cause or quarrel, and will be an adversary to my adversaries. Or, *be angry*, as this word is here rendered by all the ancient and some modern translators, and, as it is thought, by the apostle, Eph_4:26. Or, *are you angry*? for it may be taken interrogatively. Admit you be angry or displeased that God hath preferred me, an obscure person, and of a mean family, before so many noble and mighty men; *yet*, or *but*, (as it follows,)

sin not, i.e. do not so far indulge your anger as to break forth into murmuring against God, or rebellion against me; but seasonably suppress and mortify your unadvised and sinful passion, lest it break forth to your own ruin. This Hebrew word signifies in general a vehement *commotion of the mind or heart*, whether through grief, as 2Sa_18:33; or fear, as Exo_15:14 Deu_2:25; or anger, as Gen_45:24 2Ki_19:27, **28 Pr 29:9** Eze_16:42.

And sin not, by cherishing and prosecuting your anger and malice against me, and your rebellion against God's authority.

Commune with your own heart upon your bed; calmly and deeply consider these things in your own breasts in the silent night, when you are at leisure from the crowd of distracting

business, and free from the company of crafty and daubing parasites.

And be still; either,

1. As to your outward actions; for this verb oft signifies a cessation of actions, as Jos_10:13 Job_20:27. Proceed no further in your wicked speeches and contrivances against me. Or rather,

2. As to your inward passions. Compose your tumultuous minds; as this verb is used, Psa_37:7 **62:2 137:2**. Suppress your anger and rage, which though directed against me only, yet is indeed against God, and against his counsel and providence.

Psalms 4:5

Offer, to wit, unto God, that he may be reconciled to you, and may pardon all your murmurings and insurrections against him and against me. For it seems plain that this, as well as the former verse, is spoken not to David's friends and favourers, as some think, but to his enemies, even to those *sons of men*, Psa_4:2, to whom he directeth his speech, Psa_4:3, *but know*, and, Psa_4:4, *stand in awe* and here *offer: The sacrifices of righteousness*, i.e. righteous sacrifices; which requires that the persons offering them be righteous, and do righteous things, and offer them with an honest mind, and with faith (as it follows) and true repentance; without which he intimates that all their sacrifices were of no esteem with God, and would be wholly unprofitable to them. And withal, it is probable that he reflects upon the followers of Saul or of Absalom, who had the only place of sacrifice in their possession, whilst David was debarred of the opportunity of sacrificing, as he complains, 1Sa_26:19; and accordingly they gloried in their sacrifices, and upon that account promised themselves success against David, who was by God's providence deprived of the opportunities of reconciling and engaging God by sacrifices.

And put your trust in the Lord; and then, i.e. so doing, you may rely upon God, and confidently expect his assistance, which otherwise it is in vain for you to hope for. Withal, he seems to reflect upon his enemies, who trusted to an arm of flesh, to their own great numbers and power, and to intimate what his course was, to wit, to trust in the Lord.

Psalms 4:6

There be many; either,

1. Of my own followers, who are weary of waiting upon God, and ready to despair. Or rather,
2. Of mine enemies, and of the body of the people, who were either engaged against him, or at least unconcerned for him, and sought only their own case and advantage.

Who will show us, Heb. *make or give us to see* , i.e. to enjoy, as this phrase is frequently used, as Psa_27:13 **34:12** Ecc_2:1 **3:13**.

Any good, i.e. worldly good, as appears by the opposition of

the light of God's countenance to it in the next words, and by the explication of it of *corn and wine* in the next verse. i.e. Who will put an end to our present broils and troubles, and give us that tranquillity and outward happiness which is the only thing that we desire. Withal, he may seem to intimate the reason and motive which induced so many persons to take part against him, which was their eager desire of honour or worldly advantage, which they promised to themselves by appearing against David: see 1Sa_22:7.

Upon us, i.e. upon me and my friends. Give us assurance of thy love and favour to us, and evidence it to us by thy powerful and gracious assistance.

Psalms 4:7

Whatsoever thou shalt do with me for the future, as to my outward distresses and concernments, I have at present unspeakable pleasure and full satisfaction in the impressions and testimonies of thy love in and to my soul; whereby also I am encouraged with confidence to expect good success to my righteous cause.

Than in the time that their corn and their wine increased; than worldly persons have in the time of a plentiful harvest, which is a time of great rejoicing, Jud_9:27 Isa_9:3 Jer_48:33.

Psalms 4:8

Both: this word relates to the two following verbs; as soon as I am laid down, I will quietly compose myself to sleep; whereas many lie down upon their beds, and cannot sleep through distracting

cares or troubles. Or, *in like manner* , i.e. as they do who have abundance of corn and wine, of whom he last spoke, Luk_12:19. *In peace* ; either,

1. In outward peace or safety, as the next clause explains it. Or,
2. In inward peace or tranquillity of mind, as Luk_2:29, resting securely upon God's promises, and the conduct of his wise and gracious providence.

Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety; I owe not my safety to my own valour or wisdom, nor to the courage of my followers, but to thee only. Or, *thou, Lord, makest me to dwell alone in safety* ; either,

1. *Alone* , or apart from mine enemies: compare Deu_33:28. Or rather,
2. Though I be in a manner *alone* , i.e. forsaken and destitute of friends or helpers, as that word is used, Psa_112:7 Lam_1:1.

Psalms 5:1 PSALM 5

Nehiloth: this is no where else used in Scripture. It is generally and probably thought to be a term belonging to music, and to signify either some kind of tune, or rather an instrument, and particularly a wind-instrument, as Neginoth in the title of the last Psalm signified

stringed instruments.

This Psalm supposeth David to be in some great distress or trouble, either from Saul, or from Absalom, or some of their courtiers.

David earnestly beseecheth God to hear his prayer, Psa_5:1-3; and assureth himself of God's justice against his enemies, Psa_5:4-6. Professeth his faith in God, Psa_5:7, he prayeth him to guide his goings, Psa_5:8. He exclaims against his enemies' cruelty, Psa_5:9; and prayeth God to destroy them, Psa_5:10, but to preserve the godly, Psa_5:11,**12**.

i.e. My prayer, as the words foregoing and following show; which he calls his

meditation, to note that it was not a lip prayer only, but that it proceeded from and was accompanied with the deepest thoughts and most fervent affections of his soul.

Psalms 5:2

It is the part and duty of a king to answer the just and humble desires of his subjects. To thee alone will I direct all my prayers, and therefore from thee alone I expect succour and relief.

Psalms 5:3

In the morning; either,

1. Metaphorically, i.e. early, seasonably, in a time when thou wilt be found, and art ready to hear. Or,

2. Properly, every morning. *As soon as I awake , I am still with thee* , as he saith, Psa_139:18. The first thing that I do is to pray to thee, I neither neglect nor delay that work. But this is not spoken exclusively as to his other times of prayer, as appears from Psa_55:17; but only eminently, to show his constancy, diligence, and eagerness in the work.

My prayer; or, *mine eyes* ; which may be well understood out of the following word, which is usual in Scripture. Or, *it* , (so it is only a defect of the pronoun, which is most frequent,) to wit, my voice, last mentioned; or, which is equivalent, *my words* , which is also understood with this very verb, Job_33:5, and is expressed with it, Job_32:14. And the verb here and there used is very emphatical, and notes his great care and exactness so to

direct, or *order* , or *compose* himself and his prayers in such a manner as was most pleasing to God.

Will look up, to wit, unto thee (as he now said) for help. The word implies a confident, and withal a patient, expectation of relief, as Psa_130:6 Mic_7:7 Hab_2:1. See also Psa_145:15 Act_3:4.

Psalms 5:4

For; or, *but* ; or, *surely* .

In wickedness; or, *in wicked men* . Thou dost not approve of nor delight in them, or in their prayers, but dost *hate* and wilt *destroy* them, as it here follows: compare Pro_17:15. And this he saith

partly for the conviction and discouragement of his enemies, who were such; and partly for his own vindication, to show that he was not such a wicked man as they falsely and maliciously represented him.

Dwell with thee, i.e. have any friendship, or fellowship, or quiet abode with thee, as those that dwell together usually have one with another.

Psalms 5:5

The foolish; or, *the madmen*, as the word properly signifies, as Ecc_2:2,12 7:7 10:13 Isa_44:25, i.e. wicked men, as the next words explain it; who are indeed morally and really madmen, in fighting with the Lord God Almighty, and in exposing themselves to such dreadful hazards and mischiefs for such mean and momentary advantages. *In thy sight*; either in battle against thee, as this phrase is used, Deu_7:24 Jos_1:5 7:12; or in judgement at thy tribunal, of which see on Psa_1:5: compare 1Sa_6:20 Job_41:10.

All workers of iniquity, i.e. such as make sin their choice, design, and business, giving up themselves to the constant or customary practice of it. Compare Mat_7:23. Otherwise, in a general sense, there is no man that doth not sin or work iniquity, Ecc_7:20.

Psalms 5:6

Leasing; or, *lies*; that make it their business to raise and scatter calumnies and reproaches concerning me; as many did.

The bloody and deceitful man; those who design mischief against me or my friends under a pretence of kindness; of whom he oft speaks.

Psalms 5:7

I will come, to wit, with holy boldness and confidence, as becomes thy son and servant; whereas mine enemies cannot appear in thy presence with any comfort and safety, Psa_5:5.

Into thy house, to wit, the tabernacle; from which, though I be now excluded, through the malice and power of mine adversaries, yet thou wilt, I doubt not, restore me to my former opportunities

of coming thither to worship thee, which was my constant custom and chief joy.

In the multitude of thy mercy, or, *by thy great mercy* , i.e. trusting only to thy great mercy for admittance thither, and acceptance there. Or, *for* or *became of thy many mercies* to me, for which I will come to pay my thanks and service unto thee.

In thy fear; with a holy dread and reverence of thy majesty, and of thy house, and a due care to please thee in my religious worship, and in the whole course of my life; which he opposeth to the carelessness of his enemies, who came thither so rudely and presumptuously, and with the conscience of such wicked hearts and lives.

Toward thy holy temple; looking towards it, when I cannot come to it. Compare Dan_6:10. Or, *at thy holy temple* , i.e. the tabernacle, which is sometimes called by that name.

Psalms 5:8

Lead me; direct my heart, and counsels, and affairs, and all the course and actions of my life.

In thy righteousness; in thy righteous laws; which sometimes are called righteousness, as Psa_119:172 Mat_3:15. Or, *for* , or *because of* , or *according to thy righteousness* ; which is a phrase and argument frequently used in this Book of Psalms.

Because of mine enemies; either,

1. That I may give them no occasion of slandering me, or religion for my sake. Or rather,

2. Because they are most malicious and mischievous, and withal cunning and treacherous, as he describes them in the next verse, (which he useth as an argument to enforce this petition,) and they lay snares for me, and if thou dost not assist me, will be too hard for me, and will triumph over me; which will reflect dishonour upon thee also.

Thy way, i.e. the way wherein thou wouldst have me to walk, or the course which thou wouldst have me to take; for God's precepts or counsels are most commonly called his way.

Straight, or *plain* , or *smooth* , that I may clearly discern it, and readily walk in it, without mistake, or let, or stumbling, or offence. This was a needful request, because many good men are oft at a loss what their duty is in several circumstances. And God granted this request to David, as in many other things, so in this, that he should not cut off Saul when he had opportunity and instigation to do it, **1Sa 24 1Sa 26**, but that he should wait till God took him away.

Before my face; to my view and for my walk; for men walk forward, not backward.

Psalms 5:9

They speak one thing, and mean another, and under a pretence of kindness they seek my destruction; which makes it difficult for me to know how I should carry myself to them; wherein therefore I have begged thy direction.

Their throat; either,

1. Metonymically; their speech coming out of their throat, though smooth and subtle, yet is most pernicious. Or,
2. Properly; their throat and mouth are wide opened, ready to devour all that come within their reach. A metaphor from wild beasts gaping for the prey.

They flatter with their tongue; they make show of piety and friendship, that they may more easily deceive and destroy me.

Psalms 5:10

Destroy thou them, Heb. *Hold them guilty* , i.e. condemn and punish them. Or, *make them to offend* , to wit, in their counsels, as it follows; so as they may either be given up to bad and foolish counsels, or fail in the execution of their wise or crafty counsels. Or, *make them desolate* , as the word is used, Eze_6:6 Joe_1:18.

Let them fall by their own counsels i.e. make their counsels not only unsuccessful against me, but also destructive to themselves. Or, *from their &c.*, i.e. let them fall short of their aims and designs. Or, because of their counsels, which are ungodly and unjust, and so deserve destruction.

Cast them out; out of thy land, and from among thy people, whom they either infect or molest by their wicked courses. *In* , or *for* , or *because of* , as before.

Against thee; against thy authority and declared will concerning my advancement to the throne; which divers Israelites opposed against their own consciences. See 2Sa_3:8-10.

Psalms 5:11

Those that put their trust in thee; that dare rely upon thy word and promise when all human hopes and refuges fail; which was oft the case of David and his followers.

Rejoice; let them have cause of great joy from thy love and care of them, and because thou defendest them, as it follows.

Thy name, i.e. thy majesty, thy word, and worship, and glory; all which is called God's name in Scripture. David doth not confine his prayer to his party, but prays for all good men, though by their own mistakes, Or other men's artifices, some of them might now be in a state of opposition against him.

Psalms 5:12

i.e. Thou art resolved, and hast engaged thyself by promise and covenant, to bless them; and therefore my prayer for them is agreeable to thy will.

With favour; with thy love and gracious providence.

Wilt thou compass him as with a shield, i.e. keep him safe on every side.

Psalms 6:1 PSALM 6

Neginoth; of which See Poole "Psa_4:1".

Upon Sheminith; or, *upon the eighth* . It is thought to be the shrillest or loftiest note, as *alamoth* is the lowest; of which see 1Ch_15:20,21; and, as some add, *Muth-labben* , **Psa 9**\$, the mean. But all this is only conjecture; and the Jews themselves have no certain knowledge of their own ancient music, and of the signification of the terms belonging to it.

A Psalm of David: the occasion of the Psalm seems plainly to have been some grievous distress or disease of the body then upon

him, accompanied also with great trouble of conscience for his sins, whereby he had brought it upon himself.

David, being very weak and feeble, presenteth his misery before God, Psa_5:1-3; prayeth for his mercy and recovery, Psa_5:4-7; and being assured of a gracious hearing, triumphs over all his enemies, Psa_5:8-10.

Rebuke me not, i.e. do not chasten or correct me, as the next clause explains it, and as this word is frequently used, as Job_22:4 Psa_50:21 Isa_37:4 Rev_3:19.

In thine anger; with rigour or severity, as my sins deserve, but with gentleness and moderation, Jer_10:24 **46:28**, or so as it may not be the effect of thy strict justice or anger, but of thy mercy and faithfulness.

Neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure; the same thing repeated, after the manner.

Psalms 6:2

Have mercy upon me; I plead not my merit, but thy free mercy.

I am weak; or, *I languish* ; my body pines away and my spirit fails through my excessive pains or troubles.

Heal me, i.e. the distempers of my soul and body, of both which this word is used, Psa_41:4 **107:18,20**.

My bones are vexed; my torment is so deep and so general, that it reacheth and is very grievous even to my bones, though they are inward, and might seem to be out of the reach of it, and also strong and senseless, and therefore can best bear it. See the like expressions Job_4:14 **33:19** Psa_38:3 **51:8**.

Psalms 6:3

My soul is also sore vexed; partly by sympathy with my body; and partly with the burden of my sins, and the sense of thine anger, and my own danger and misery.

How long wilt thou suffer me to lie and languish in this condition? It is a figure called *aposiopesis* , very agreeable to men in pain or anguish, who use to cut their words short.

Psalms 6:4

Return unto me, from whom thou hast withdrawn thyself, and thy smiling countenance, and thy helping hand.

Deliver my soul, i.e. save me or my life, as the soul oft signifies, as Gen_9:5 **12:5** Job_36:4 Psa_33:19. David and other good men in those times were much afraid of death, partly because the manifestations of God's grace to his people were then more dark and doubtful, and partly because thereby they were deprived of all opportunities of advancing God's glory and kingdom in the world. Compare Isa_38:1-3.

Psalms 6:5

In death; amongst the dead; or in the grave, as it follows.

There is no remembrance of thee; to wit, by me David, consisting both of soul and body; and no such remembrance, to wit, in way of thankfulness and praise, as the next clause of the verse limits and explains it; which he might fear would be true, not only because he should not have occasion to praise God for this deliverance, but also because he was in grievous agonies of conscience, and under terrors of God's wrath, and his eternal damnation; which being oft incident to the saints of God under the New Testament, it is not strange if it were so also under the Old Testament. Besides he speaks of the remembrance or celebration of God's name and grace in the land of the living, to the enlargement and edification of God's church, and the propagation of true religion among men; which is not done in the other life, and was justly prized at so high a rate by David and other holy men, to whom therefore it must needs be a great grief to be forever deprived of such opportunities. For otherwise David very well knew, and firmly believed, that souls departed were not extinct, but did go to God, Ecc_12:7, and there remember, and adore, and enjoy God, though quite in another way than that of which he here speaks.

Psalms 6:6

All the night; he mentions this time, by way of aggravation of his misery, because that season, which is to others by God's appointment a time of rest, was to him very sad and doleful, whether from his disease, which then came upon him more

strongly, as it is usual; or from the opportunity which the solitude or silence of the night gave him to think of his own sins, or his enemies' perfidiousness and malice, or God's displeasure, or his future estate.

Make I my bed to swim, to wit, with tears. See the like hyperbole Jer_9:1 Lam_3:48,49.

I water my couch; or, *my bedstead* .

Psalms 6:7

Consumed; or, *grown dim or dull* , through plenty of salt tears which I shed; or through the decay of my spirits.

Because of grief, i.e. my grief arising from mine enemies, as the next clause interprets it, and from the consideration of their multitude, and rage, and falseness.

Psalms 6:8

Depart from me; I advise you for your own sakes to cease from opposing or molesting me, or insulting over me, or approaching to me with design of deceiving and betraying me; for all your labour will be lost.

All ye workers of iniquity; all you wicked enemies of mine.

The Lord hath heard, i.e. he will hear, the past time being put for the future, as is usual in prophetic passages, such as this was; David having received by the Spirit of God particular assurance that God would hear and deliver him.

The voice of my weeping, i.e. of my fervent prayers joined with my tears.

Psalms 6:9

The Lord hath heard, and therefore will hear, as it follows. He draws an argument from his former experience.

Psalms 6:10

Ashamed of their vain hopes and confidence of conquering and destroying me. Or, *they shall be ashamed* , because of their great and unexpected disappointment.

Let them return, to wit, from their wicked ways, from their hostile and malicious practices against me, and let them come and

submit to me, from whom they have revolted. Or, *let them turn back* , as it is expressed, Psa_56:9; let them be put to flight. Or, *let them be converted* , i.e. repent of their sins, and return to their obedience to me. Although it seems more probable, both from the foregoing and following words, that this *turning* or *returning* is rather *penal* than *penitential* . Or, *they shall turn* or *return* . Or this verb may be taken adverbially, and joined to the following verb, as it is frequently in other places, and both may be thus rendered, *let them* , or *they shall, be again ashamed* ; clothed, as it were, with double shame. *Suddenly* ; sooner than I could hope, or they did expect or believe.

Psalms 7:1 PSALM 7

Shiggaion: this seems to be the name of a certain kind either of song, or tune, or instrument, which then was very well known, but now is only matter of conjecture; wherewith I think it not fit to trouble the unlearned reader; and the learned may consult my Latin Synopsis.

Concerning the words; the false and slanderous reports raised or fomented by him. This was the occasion of this Psalm.

Of Cush; by which he designs either,

1. Saul; whom he thought it indecent to express by his proper name, for which he might at this time have divers reasons, and therefore he deciphers him enigmatically, which is not unusual in Holy Scripture; where Babylon is called *Sheshach* , Jer_25:26 **51:41**, and Rome is called *Egypt* , and *Sodom* , and *Babylon* in the Revelation; and John the Baptist is called *Elias* . And he might call him *Cush* . partly by a tacit allusion to his father's name Kish, and partly with respect to his black and wicked disposition planted and firmly rooted in him. Compare Jer_13:23 Amo_9:7. Or,

2. Some eminent and potent commander or courtier under Saul called *Cush* , though he be not elsewhere named; it being the lot of many other persons to be named but once in Scripture. And he is called the *Benjamite* , because he was one of that tribe, in which Saul put most confidence. See 1Sa_22:7.

The psalmist prayeth for deliverance from his persecuting enemies, Psa_7:1,2, and maketh a solemn profession of his innocency, Psa_7:3-7. By faith he seeth his defence, Psa_7:8-11, and the destruction of his enemies, Psa_7:12-17.

In thee do I put my trust; all my hope and confidence is in thy favour and faithfulness to make good thy promise made to me.

Psalms 7:2

Lest he, i.e. mine enemy, as it is expressed, Psa_7:4, even Saul, or any of his followers,

tear my soul out of my body; or destroy me and my life, as Psa_6:5.

Like a lion; to which he compares him both for power and cruelty, and withal intimates his own inability to oppose or escape his rage without God's almighty help.

While there is none to deliver; whilst I have no considerable force to defend myself, but am forced to flee to mountains, and caves, and woods for my safety.

Psalms 7:3

If I have done this, i.e. that which Cush and others falsely lay to my charge. If I design or have endeavoured to take away Saul's crown and life by violence, as Saul's courtiers maliciously reported, 1Sa_24:9,10 **26:19**.

In my hands, i.e. in my actions or carriage towards Saul. The *hand* is oft put for *actions*, whereof the hand is a great and common instrument, as Psa_78:42 **109:27** Jon_3:8. If I design or have attempted to lay violent hands upon Saul.

Psalms 7:4

Unto him that was at peace with me, i.e. to Saul, when he was peaceable and friendly towards me; for David was charged with evil designs against Saul before Saul broke out into open enmity against him.

Yea: this particle is here used by way of correction or opposition, as it is also Psa_2:6 Pro_6:16. So far have I been from doing this, that I have done the contrary.

I have delivered him, when it was in my power to destroy him, as 1Sa 24\$ **1Sa 26\$**.

Without cause; without any provocation on my part.

Psalms 7:5

I am contented, and wish that Saul may so persecute my life as to overtake it, and take it away. *Mine honour* ; either,

1. That honourable and royal estate to which I am chosen and designed. Or,

2. My reputation and memory. Or rather,

3. The same thing which he called his

soul and his *life* in the former branch of the verse, and here his *honour* ; it being very frequent to express one thing in several words or phrases in one verse. And so here may be observed a gradation. Let him,

1. Persist to *persecute it* ;

2. Take it ;

3. *Tread it down*, or destroy it; and,

4. *Lay it in the dust* , or bury it, to prevent all hopes of restitution.

Psalms 7:6

Arise in thine anger; oppose thy just anger to their causeless and sinful rage against me.

Lift up thyself, that thou mayst give them a deadly blow. A metaphor from men who arise and lift up themselves to do so. Heb.

be thou exalted; glorify thyself, and show thyself to be above them.

To the judgment that thou hast commanded; to execute that just and righteous sentence of Saul's deposition, and my advancement, which thou hast

commanded, i.e. appointed, (as that word is used, Psa_148:5 1Ki_17:4, and in this very case, 1Sa_13:14) and declared by thy holy prophet Samuel.

Psalms 7:7

The congregation of the people; either,

1. A great number of all sorts of people, who shall observe thy justice, and holiness, and goodness, in pleading my righteous cause against my cruel and implacable oppressor. Or rather,
2. The whole body of thy people Israel, to whom both these Hebrew words are commonly ascribed in Holy Scripture.

Compass thee about; they will, and I as their king and ruler in thy stead will, take care that they shall come from all parts and meet together to worship thee, which in Saul's time they have grossly neglected, and been permitted to neglect, and to offer to thee praises and sacrifices for thy favour to me, and for the manifold benefits which they shall enjoy by my means, and under any government.

For their sakes; or, *for its sake* , i.e. for the sake of thy congregation, which now is woefully dissipated and oppressed, and have in a great measure lost all administration of justice, and exercise of religion.

Return thou on high; or, *return to thy high place* , i.e. to thy tribunal, to sit there and judge my cause. An allusion to earthly tribunals, which generally are set up on high above the people, 1Ki_10:19.

Psalms 7:8

It belongs to thee to judge all persons and people, and to give sentence between them, especially when they appeal unto thee; which I now do. If I be guilty of those evil designs towards him, wherewith Cush and others charge me, do thou give sentence against me; but if I be just and innocent towards him, as thou knowest I am and have been. do thou plead my right.

Psalms 7:9

Let the malice of mine enemies cease, put a stop to their wicked practices, either by changing their hearts, or by tying their hands, or some other way; say to it, as thou dost to the sea, Hitherto hast thou gone, but thou shalt go no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Or,

The wickedness of the wicked shall have an end; not an end of perfection, which is to be accomplished; but all end of termination, it shall cease; and an end of destruction, it shall be rooted out. Or, *Let, I pray thee, wickedness consume the wicked*, i.e. those that are maliciously and incorrigibly such. And so this prayer is opposed to that following prayer for the just. And such prayers against some wicked men we find used by prophetic persons, which are not rashly to be drawn into precedent by ordinary persons.

Establish; or, *and thou wilt establish*, or *confirm*, or *uphold*; which is opposed to that coming to an end or consuming last mentioned.

The just; all just persons and causes, and mine in particular, which is so.

The righteous God trieth the heart and reins; and therefore he knows that I have not so much as a thought or a desire of that mischief which Cush and others report I am designing against Saul.

Psalms 7:10

My defence is of God, Heb. *My shield is upon God*; he doth as it were carry my shield before me. See 1Sa₁₇:7. He doth and will protect me against all mine enemies.

Which saveth the upright in heart; and therefore me, whom he knoweth to be sincere and honest in my carriage toward him and toward Saul.

Psalms 7:11

God judgeth, i.e. defendeth, or avengeth, or delivereth, as this word is oft used, as Deu₃₂:36 Psa₉:4 **10:18 26:1**, &c. *To judge* is properly to give sentence; which because it may be done either by absolving and acquitting from punishment, or by condemning and giving up to punishment, therefore it is sometimes used for the one and sometimes for the other, as the circumstances of the place determine it.

With the wicked; which though it may seem a bold supplement, yet is necessary, and easily fetched out of the next and following verses.

Every day; even then, when his providence seems to favour them and they are most secure and confident.

Psalms 7:12

If he, i.e. the wicked man last mentioned, either Cush or Saul, turn not from this wicked course of calumniating or persecuting me, *he*, i.e. God, who is often designed by this pronoun, being easily to be understood from the nature of the thing,

will whet his sword, i.e. will prepare, and hasten, and speedily execute his judgments upon him. Did I say, *he will do it*? nay,

he hath already done it; his sword is drawn, his bow is bent, and the arrows are prepared and ready to be shot.

Psalms 7:13

For him; either,

1. For or against the persecutor, as it follows. Or rather,
2. For himself, for his own use, to wit, to shoot against his enemies.

The instruments of death, i.e. arrows, or other deadly weapons.

He ordaineth, Heb. *maketh* or *worketh*, designeth or fitteth for his very use.

Against the persecutors; or, *against furious and wry persecutors*, as the word signifies, and as it is used, Gen_31:36 Psa_10:2 Lam_4:19.

Psalms 7:14

He, i.e. the wicked, as is undeniably manifest from the matter and context.

Conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood: this metaphor noteth his deep design, and continued course, and vigorous endeavours for the doing of mischief, and his restlessness and pain till he have accomplished it.

Psalms 7:15

Hath brought that evil upon himself which he intended against me; which may be understood either of Saul, who whilst he plotted against David's life ran into apparent hazard of losing his own, 1Sa 24\$ **1Sa 26**\$; or of some courtier or courtiers of Saul, in

whom this was evidently verified, although the history and memory of it be now lost.

Psalms 7:16

Which phrase may note whence this retribution should come, even from heaven, or from the righteous and remarkable judgment of God.

Psalms 7:17

According to his righteousness, declared and asserted by him in their exemplary punishment, and my seasonable and wonderful deliverance.

Psalms 8:1 PSALM 8

The same title is prefixed to Psa_81:1 **84:1**.

Gittith also is supposed to be the name of a tune, or song, or instrument so called, because it was either invented or much used in Gath. Some render it *for the wine-presses* and say it was to be sung at the time of vintage.

It is a great question among interpreters, whether this Psalm speak of man in general, and of the honour which God put upon him in his creation; or only of the man Christ Jesus. Possibly both may be reconciled and put together, and the controversy, if rightly stated, may be ended. For the scope and business of this Psalm seems plainly to be this, to display and celebrate the great love and kindness of God to mankind, not only in his creation, but also and especially in his redemption by Jesus Christ; whom, as he was man, he advanced to the honour and dominion here mentioned, that he might carry on that great and glorious work. So Christ is the principal subject of this Psalm, of whom it is interpreted, both by Christ himself, Mat_21:16, and by his holy apostle, 1Co_15:27 Heb_2:6,7.

David extolleth the majesty, power, and providence of God in the world, Psa_8:1-3; and his love and kindness to mankind, Psa_8:4,5, in giving him power over the earth, Psa_8:6,7, the air, and the sea, Psa_8:8,9.

Thy name, i.e. thy fame or glory, as it is explained in the next clause, and as *the name* commonly signifies, as Gen_6:4 Ecc_7:1

Phi_2:9. And this glory of God is most eminent in the gospel and the work of redemption.

In all the earth; not only in Israel, to which the name and knowledge of God was confined, Psa_76:1 **2 147:19**, but among all nations; which shows that this Psalm speaks of the Messias, and the times of the New Testament. See Isa_40:5 Mal_1:5, &c.

Who hast set thy glory above the heavens. What do I speak of *the earth* ? *thy glory or praise reacheth to the heavens* , and indeed above all the visible heavens, even to the heaven of heavens; where thy throne of glory is established, where the blessed angels celebrate thy praises, where Christ sitteth at thy right hand in glorious majesty, from whence he poureth down excellent gifts upon *babes* , &c., as it followeth.

Psalms 8:2

Babes and sucklings; either,

1. Properly such; for there is much of God's glory seen in infants, in their conception and strange progress from small and contemptible beginnings, in their preservation and nourishment in the dark cell of the womb, in their bringing forth and bringing up, in providing breasts and milk for them, and keeping them from innumerable dangers, from which they are utterly unable to keep themselves. But this, though it sets forth God's praise, yet how it stills the enemy and avenger seems not clear. Or rather,

2. Metaphorically so called, babes not so much in age and years, as in disposition and condition; weak, and foolish, and contemptible, and harmless persons, who are very frequently called babes or children, as 2Ch_13:7 Pro_1:4 Ecc_10:6 Isa_3:4 Mat_18:3 Eph_4:14, &c. For such are very unfit to grapple with an enemy; and therefore when such persons conquer the most powerful and malicious enemies, it must needs exceedingly confound and silence them, and mightily advance the glory of God; as indeed it did, when such mean and obscure persons as the apostles, and ministers, and disciples of Christ were, did maintain and propagate the gospel in spite of all the wit, and power, and rage of their enemies. See 1Co_1:25,**27-29**. And of such *babes* as these Christ himself expounds this place, Mat_21:16; of which more, God willing, upon that place.

Hast thou ordained strength; or, *thou hast founded* (or *confirmed* , or *established* , or *firmly settled* , or *fitted* , or *perfected* , as it is rendered by the LXX. and vulgar Latin here, and by St. Matthew, Mat_21:16, i.e. perfectly or firmly settled) *strength* ; by which he seems to understand either,

1. The celebration or praise of his strength or power, by comparing this with Mat_21:16; where it is rendered *praise* . So it is only a metonymy of the adjunct, which is most frequent in Scripture and all authors. And so the word *strength* seems to be taken Psa_29:1 **96:7**. Or,

2. A strong and mighty kingdom; the abstract being put for the concrete, than which nothing is more frequent; even the kingdom of Christ, or his gospel, which is oft called *the arm or power of God* , as Psa_110:2 Isa_53:1 1Co_1:18,**24**. And this kingdom being an everlasting, and invincible, and all conquering kingdom, Dan_2:44, it is no wonder it is here called *strength* . And this gospel or kingdom is here said to be founded or established, not by the hands or valiant actions of men of might, as other kingdoms are; but merely by *the mouths of babes* , &c., i.e. by the words and discourses of Christ's apostles and disciples; which is justly observed and celebrated here as a wonderful work of God.

That thou mightest still, i.e. silence, and confound, and conquer, either by convincing and converting them, or by destroying them.

The enemy; the enemies of God and of his people, the devil, the head of them, whose kingdom and power is abolished by this means, and all men who fight under his banner against God and Christ and his members. *The avenger* ; which title most truly and fitly agrees, first to the devil, who being sentenced by God to eternal flames, and conquered and tormented by Christ, maketh it his great business to revenge himself, which because he cannot do upon God and Christ, he endeavours to do it upon their servants and children; and next to all these men who are his vassals and espouse his quarrel; who also are provoked, and conceive, though falsely, that they are injured by the gospel, and by the preachers, professors, and practisers of it, and therefore seek to revenge themselves of them; whereof we have an eminent instance, Rev_11:10. Compare Heb_11:37.

Psalms 8:3

Thy heavens; thine by creation, as it follows.

Of thy fingers. i.e. of thy hand, as it is expressed, Psa_102:25; a part being here put for the whole; God's *hand and finger* being indifferently used to note his power, as Exo_8:19 Luk_11:20, &c. Though some conceive that by this phrase he intended to signify both with what facility God made this glorious work, even with a touch of his finger; and with what curious and exquisite- artifice he framed it; the fingers being much used in such works.

The moon and the stars: either the sun is included under this general title, or he omitted it because he made this Psalm by night, when the sun did not fall within his contemplation.

Which thou hast ordained, or *established* , or *directed* , or *disposed* , or *ordered* , i.e. placed in that excellent and unalterable order, and directed to all their several courses or motions.

Psalms 8:4

What, i.e. how mean and inconsiderable a thing is man, if compared with thy glorious Majesty, who art so infinite in power and wisdom, as thou hast showed in the frame of the heavens, &c. Man, Heb. *infirm* or *miserable* man; by which it is apparent that he speaks of man, not according to the state of his creation, but as fallen into a state of sin, and misery, and mortality.

Art mindful of him, i.e. carest for him, and conferrest such high favours upon him.

The son of man, Heb. *the son of Adam* , that great apostate from and rebel against God, the sinful son of a sinful father, his son by likeness of disposition and manners, no less than by procreation; all which tends to magnify the following mercy.

That thou visitest him; not in anger, as that word is sometimes used, but with thy grace and mercy, as it is taken, Gen_21:1 Exo_4:31 Psa_65:9 **106:4 144:3.**

Psalms 8:5

Thou hast in and through Christ mercifully and wonderfully restored man to his primitive and happy estate, in which he was but one remove below the angels; from which he was fallen by sin.

Hast crowned him, i.e. man, fallen and lost man; who is indeed actually crowned and restored to the glory and dominion here following, not in his own person, but in Christ his Head and Representative, who received this crown and dominion, not so much for himself, who did not need it, as for man's good and in his stead; which also he will in due time communicate unto all his members. And so the two differing expositions of this place concerning mankind and concerning Christ may be reconciled. For he speaks of that happy and honourable estate by God's favour conferred first upon Christ, of whom therefore this place is rightly expounded, Heb_2:6-8; and then by his hands upon mankind, even upon all that believe in him. And so this whole place compared with that may be thus paraphrased: What is man, that thou shouldst mind or Visit him by thy Son, whom thou hast sent into the world! who, that he might restore man to that happy and glorious estate, which was but a little below that of the angels, was pleased to take upon him man's miserable and mortal nature, and thereby to make himself (who was far above all angels, even their Lord and God) lower than the angels, mortal and miserable, for a little time; after which he was advanced to the highest honour, and to a universal dominion over all God's works, the angels not excepted.

Psalms 8:6

Thou didst give all power and all things into his hands, Mat_28:18
Joh_13:3.

Thou hast put all things, both in heaven, where are the angels mentioned Psa_8:5, and in the earth, air, and sea, as it follows; for nothing is excepted besides God, 1Co_15:25,27 **Heb 2:8**.

Under his feet, i.e. made them subject to him, as this phrase oft signifies. See Deu_33:3 Jud_5:27 Psa_18:38 **110:1**.

Psalms 8:7

All sheep and oxen; here is no perfect enumeration, but under these are comprehended all other beasts, and much more men and angels.

The beasts of the field, i.e. the wild beasts; which together with divers fowls and fishes were subject to Christ, and are governed and employed as it pleaseth him; although many of them be

without the reach and are not brought under the, power of any other man.

Psalms 8:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 8:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 9:1 PSALM 9

Muth-labben also seems to be another title of some song, or tune, or instrument; of which we must and may be content to be ignorant, as the Jewish doctors also are. Some render it, *upon the death of his son* , to wit, Absalom, or of one called *Labben* ; or, *of the middle man* , or *the man* that stood between the two armies, to wit, Goliath, who is so called in the Hebrew text, 1Sa_17:4. But none of these suit with the design and matter of the Psalm, which is more general, and relates to his former manifold dangers, and the deliverance which God had graciously given him out of them. And that of Goliath agrees not with Psa_9:14, where there is mention of praising God in Zion, which then and long after was in the hands of the Jebusites.

David resolveth to praise God, Psa_9:1,2, for executing judgment upon his enemies, Psa_9:3-8. God is a refuge to the oppressed, Psa_9:9,10. David calls the people of Israel to praise the Lord, Psa_9:11,12. He prayeth him to consider his trouble, Psa_9:13, that he might have cause to praise him, Psa_9:14. The heathen, by God's judgment, fall into the snare they made for others, Psa_9:15,16. The portion of the wicked that forget God, Psa_9:17. A promise of mercy to the needy and poor, Psa_9:18; and a prayer for judgment on the ungodly, Psa_9:19,20.

With my whole heart, i.e. with a sincere, and affectionate, and united heart. I will discourse in the general of thy manifold wonders wrought for me, and for thy church and people formerly. The particle

all is here, as it is oft elsewhere, taken in a restrained sense.

Psalms 9:2

In thee, i.e. in thy favour and help vouchsafed to me.

Psalms 9:3

When they are discomfited and put to flight, they shall not save themselves by flight, and reserve themselves to do further mischief, but shall stumble as it were at gall-traps by thee laid in their way, and shall be pursued, and overtaken, and cut off, upon thy appearance against them. One angry look of thine is able to confound and destroy them. Heb. *from thy face* , because thou didst march in the head of our armies, and against them. They could not stand before thee. So he ascribes the honour of his victories to God only, and to his presence and assistance.

Psalms 9:4

My right and my cause, i.e. my righteous cause against thine and mine enemies.

Thou satest in the throne; thou didst judge and give sentence for me.

Judging right, or, *O righteous Judge* , or, as *a just judge* .

Psalms 9:5

Rebuked, i.e. punished, as Psa_6:1; or destroyed, as it is explained in the next clause.

The heathen, to wit, the Philistines and other heathen nations, who did from time to time molest David, or the people of Israel.

Their name; either that fame and honour which they had gained by their former exploits, but now utterly lost by their shameful defeats; or their very memorial, as it fared with Analek.

Psalms 9:6

This is a sudden apostrophe to the enemies of God's people, Philistines, Amorites, or other nations, who had formerly made great havoc and waste among them.

Destructions are come to a perpetual end; thou hast destroyed the Israelitish nation utterly and irrecoverably, and, as it follows, their defenced cities, and their very name and memory, according to thy own desire. So it is a sarcasm or irony, a usual figure in Scripture and all authors, whereby the quite contrary is signified, to wit, that they were not only frustrated of their desires and hopes of destroying the Israelites, but were also subdued, and in a great part destroyed by them. Or this verse may be understood of the

great waste and ruin which God's enemies had brought upon Israel before this time; which is here remembered, to make the Israelites more thankful for their later or present deliverances. Or it may be taken as a prophecy of the future calamities which the enemies should by God's permission bring upon Israel, of which he speaks as of a thing past and done, after the manner of the prophets. But this place is otherwise rendered in the margin of our Bibles, and by divers others, *the destructions of the enemy* which may be understood either,

1. Actively, which they caused; or,
2. Passively, which they felt

are come to a perpetual end, or, are fully and finally completed. Thou hast destroyed cities ; either,

1. Thou, O God, who is oft understood and couched in a pronoun in this manner, thou hast destroyed their cities. Or rather,
2. Thou, O enemy; as may be gathered both from the foregoing clause, where it is so expressed; and from the next verse, where it follows by way of opposition to this, *But the Lord , &c. Their memorial is perished with them* ; the places and people are utterly extinct.

Psalms 9:7

Though cities and people may perish for ever, yet the Lord abides for ever; which is sufficient for the enemies' terror, and for the comfort of his church.

He hath prepared, or established, by his immutable purpose, and his irrevocable promise.

Psalms 9:8

The world; not you only, but all the enemies of his people, and all the men of the world.

Psalms 9:9

God will not only judge the world at the last day, and then give sentence for his people against their enemies, but even at present he will give them his protection.

Psalms 9:10

They that know, i.e. that thoroughly understand and duly consider. *Thy name* , i.e. thy nature and perfections, thy infinite power, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and goodness; which make a person a most fit and proper object for trust. *The name of God* is most frequently put for God, as he hath manifested himself in his word and works, as Deu_28:58 Psa_7:17 **20:1** Pro_18:10, &c.

Thou hast not forsaken; the experience of thy faithfulness to thy people in all ages is a just ground for their confidence.

Them that seek thee, i.e. that seek help and relief from thee by fervent prayer, mixed with faith, or trust in God, as is expressed in the former clause.

Psalms 9:11

Which dwelleth in Zion; whose special and gracious presence is there; for there was the ark at this time.

Among the people, i.e. to the heathen nations, that they also may be brought to the knowledge and worship of the true God.

Psalms 9:12

For blood, Heb. *bloods* ; the bloodshed or murder of his innocent and holy ones; which though he may connive at for a season, yet he will certainly call the authors of it to a very severe account, and avenge it upon them.

He remembereth them; either,

1. The humble, as it follows, or the oppressed, Psa_9:9, that trust in him, and seek to him, Psa_9:10, whom he seemed to have forgotten. Or,

2. *The bloods* last mentioned, for that noun and this pronoun are both of the masculine gender; and then *remembering* is put for revenging or punishing, as it is Deu_25:17, **19** Ne **6:14** Jer_14:10 **44:21**, and oft elsewhere.

The humble, or *meek* , as this word, which is used also Zec_9:9, is translated Mat_21:5, who do not, and cannot, and will not avenge themselves, but commit their cause to me, as the God to whom vengeance belongeth. Or, *afflicted or oppressed ones* .

Psalms 9:13

Consider my trouble, to wit, compassionately and effectually, so as to bring me out of it.

From the gates of death; from the brink or mouth of the grave, into which I was dropping, being as near death as a man is to the city that is come to the very gates of it. And so the phrase is used Psa_107:18 Isa_38:10, and in other authors *of whom see my Latin Synopsis* .

Gates elsewhere signify power and policy, because the gates of cities were places both of counsel and strength; but

the gates of death are never so taken in Scripture.

Psalms 9:14

In the gates, i.e. in the great assemblies, which were usually in the gates. Compare Pro_31:31 Isa_3:26. These gates he elegantly opposeth to the former, and declareth that if he be brought off them, he will go into these.

Of the daughter of Zion; either,

1. Of Jerusalem, so called also Isa_1:8 Zec_9:9, because at this time it was subject to Zion; which at this time was the seat of the king's palace, and of the ark. For cities or towns belonging or subject unto any metropolis are commonly called *its daughters* , as Jos_15:45 2Ch_13:19 Psa_48:11; as the chief cities are called *mothers* , as 2Sa_20:19 Gal_4:26. Or,

2. Of the people who live in, or belong to, or meet together for civil and religious matters in Zion. For cities are as it were mothers to their people, giving them birth and breeding, and therefore the people are commonly called their daughters. So the names of *the daughters of Egypt* , Jer_46:11, and *of Edom* , Lam_4:21,22, and *of Tyre* , Psa_45:12, and *of Babel* , Psa_137:8, and *of Jerusalem* , Lam_2:13,15 Mic 4:8, are put for the people of those places.

I will rejoice, to wit, with spiritual joy and thanksgiving; else it were no fit motive to be used to God in prayer.

Psalms 9:15

Fallen into that destruction which they designed to bring upon us.

Psalms 9:16

The Lord is known, or, *hath made himself known* , or famous even among his enemies, by his most wise counsels and wonderful works.

By the judgment which he executeth upon the wicked, as it followeth.

Higgaion is either a musical term, or a note of attention, a kind of *behold* , intimating that the matter deserves deep and frequent meditation, or consideration, as the word signifies.

Psalms 9:17

Into hell; either

1. Into the grave which is oft called *sheol* , into which they are said to be *turned* , or *to return* , because they were made of or taken out of the dust, Ecc_12:7. Or,

2. Into the place of eternal perdition; which also is sometimes called *sheol* , as Pro_15:24, and elsewhere. For he seems to speak here of those punishments which are peculiar to the wicked, whereas the grave is common to good and bad. And as, Psa_9:8, he seems to speak of the last and general judgment of all the world, so this verse may be understood of the general punishment of all *persons* and *nations* consequent upon it. And into this place wicked men may be said to be turned back, or to return; either,

1. Because it is their own proper place, Act_1:25, to which they belong, and from which they have their original and their wicked qualities, as being of their father the devil, Joh_8:44; in which respect the locusts (who are by all interpreters understood to be living men) are said to *come out of the bottomless pit* , Rev_9:2,3. Or,

2. Because they had set themselves as it were in battle array against God, and were beaten back and driven from his presence into their graves, and into hell itself.

All the nations; whom their great numbers and power cannot protect from God's wrath.

That forget God; that do not consider nor regard God, nor his precepts, nor his threatenings and judgments, but go on securely and presumptuously in their oppressive and wicked courses.

Psalms 9:18

The needy shall not alway be forgotten, though God for a time may seem to neglect or forget them, and suffer their enemies to triumph over them.

Shall not perish; which negative particle is fitly understood out of the former clause, as it is Psa_1:5 **44:18** Isa_23:4 **28:27,28**.

Psalms 9:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 9:20

Subdue their proud and insolent spirits, and strike them with terror, or with some terrible judgment. But men, Heb. *weak, and miserable, and mortal men*, and therefore altogether unable to oppose the omnipotent and eternal God. This he saith, because wicked men, when they are advanced to great power and majesty, are very prone to forget their own frailty, and to carry themselves as if they were gods. See Isa_31:3 Eze_30:7,8 **Da 5:21**.

Psalms 10:1 PSALM 10

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains David's complaint unto God against his malicious enemies, especially those of his own people, whose wicked and deceitful practices he here describes, and then commits his cause to God, and begs his help against them.

The psalmist complaineth of God's hiding himself, Psa_10:1; and of the outrage and pride of the wicked, Psa_10:2-5. The language, Psa_10:6,7, and malicious practice of the wicked, Psa_10:8-10, and their denying God's omniscience, Psa_10:11. David prayeth for remedy against and punishment upon, the wicked, Psa_10:12-15; and acknowledgeth God's mercy in hearing the oppressed, Psa_10:16-18.

Why standest thou afar off, like one that neither sees, nor hears, nor regards me, nor intendest any help for me?

Thyself, or, *thy face* , out of Psa_10:11, which did sometimes shine upon me; or, *thine eyes* , by comparing this with Pro_28:27 Isa_1:15.

In times of trouble, when I most need thy pity and succour. Do not add affliction to the afflicted.

Psalms 10:2

In his pride; through pride of heart; which makes him forget God, Psa_10:4, and despise the poor, and oppress others, either because they oppose or dislike his wicked courses, or that he may have more fuel for his pride or ambition. Or, *in his exaltation* . This is the use that he makes of that power and authority to which thou hast advanced him, to persecute those whom he should protect and cherish. He seems to point at Saul or his courtiers.

Doth persecute with great fervency and burning fury, as the word signifies.

The poor, to wit, me, who am through their tyranny poor, and destitute, and miserable, and therefore the more proper object for thy compassion, and others who favour my righteous cause.

Psalms 10:3

Boasteth, or glorieth, or praiseth, or pleaseth himself .

Of his heart's desire; or, *in* , or *concerning* , or *because of the desire* , or *concupiscence* , or *lust of his heart* , or *soul* ; which word is added to note the vehemency and fervency of it. He glorieth in his very lusts, which are his shame, Phi_3:19, and especially in the satisfaction of his desires, how wickedly soever he gets it.

Desire is oft put for the thing desired, as Psa_21:2 **78:29,30**.

And blesseth the covetous; and as he applaudeth himself, so he commends others that are greedy after and get abundance of gain, though it be done by fraud and violence, accounting such the only happy men. Or, *the covetous* (the same with the wicked enlarging his desire, as was now said) *blesseth* , or *applaudeth* , or *flattereth* himself in what he hath already gotten, and in the confident expectation of the continuance and increase of his worldly wealth and glory.

Whom the Lord abhorreth; so his judgment as well as practice is contrary to God's. Or rather, without any supplement, as it is in the margin, *he abhorreth* , or *despiseh* , or *provoketh the Lord* . He sets himself not only against men, but against God himself, as he declareth more fully in the next verse.

Psalms 10:4

Through the pride; by which he scorns to stoop to God, or to own any superior, and makes himself and his own lusts his only rule, and his last end, and is full of self-confidence, and a conceit of his own self-sufficiency and unchangeable felicity, as is hated, Psa_10:6.

Of his countenance; so called, because though pride be properly seated in the heart; whence it is called pride, or loftiness of heart, or spirit, as Psa_131:1 Pro_16:18 Ecc_7:8, &c.; yet it is manifested in the countenance, and therefore is oft described by lofty looks, as Psa_101:5 **131:1** Pro_6:17 **21:4 30:13**, &c.; which possibly was done purposely to meet with the excuses of proud persons, who when they are charged with pride for their looks, or gestures, or apparel, or the like, use to make this apology for themselves, that pride lies in the heart, and not in these outward things.

Will not seek after God, i.e. not seek or inquire into the mind and will of God, to order his life by it so as to please God, nor seek to him by prayer for his favour and blessing. But the words

after God are not in the Hebrew, and it is thought by some too great boldness to add them here. And therefore others omit it, and render the Hebrew words, *will not search* , or *consider* , to wit, his actions, which seems to be a more natural and, easy supplement: he will not trouble himself to inquire whether his actions be just or unjust, pleasing or offensive to God; but without any care or consideration rusheth into sin, and doth whatsoever seemeth right in his own eyes. But these and the former words are and may be, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, thus rendered without any supplement,

The wicked, through his pride, (for so this Hebrew word by itself signifies, Isa_5:16 **10:33**) *will not seek his* (i.e. God's, which is plain both from the foregoing and following words) *face* ,

which is a usual phrase in Scripture, as 2Ch_7:14 Psa_24:6 **27:8 105:4**, &c.

God is not in all his thoughts; he hath no serious thoughts of nor regard unto God, or his word, which ought to command him; or his threats and judgments, which should keep him in awe. Or,

all his thoughts are, *There is no God*, to wit, no such God as minds the affairs of the world, and the actions of men, and punisheth sinners. He was a deist, and owned a God, at least in words, but denied his providence.

Psalms 10:5

His ways are always grievous; his whole course and carriage is vexatious to all that are within his reach, but especially to the poor, who cannot right themselves; and to just and good men, whom he hateth and persecuteth. Or, *His ways*, i.e. his designs and enterprises, *at all times are prosperous, or successful, or do bring forth*; for this verb signifies, as the pains and trouble, so also the success and comfort, of child-bearing, or the bringing forth children, as Psa_29:9 Isa_54:1 Jer_4:31. And the accomplishment or disappointment of designs is frequently expressed by this metaphor; of which see 2Ki_19:23 Psa_7:14 Isa_59:4, &c. And this sense seems best to suit with the context.

Thy judgments; either,

1. Thy laws, which are oft called *judgments*. Or rather,
2. Thy threatenings denounced against and punishments inflicted upon sinners.

Are far above out of his sight; either,

1. He doth not feel them; thou removest them far from him; which indulgence of thine is the cause of his insolency. Or rather,
2. He doth not discern, nor regard, nor fear them, nor think of them, but goes on securely and resolvedly in his wicked courses. He hath not so much faith nor reason as to apprehend or consider them, but, like a brute beast, looks only downward to the earth, and minds not things above him. And thus it seems best to agree with the foregoing and following clauses. His devices succeed, and therefore he neither fears God's judgments, nor the power of

his enemies, but fancies his happiness to be unchangeable, as it follows, Psa_10:6.

He puffeth at them, i.e. he despiseth them, being confident that he can blow them away with a breath. This is a gesture of contempt or disdain, both in Scripture, as Psa_12:5 Mal_1:13, and in other authors, as in Plautus; where one speaks thus to a proud and bragging captain, *Thou hast blown away whole legions with thy breath, as leaves are blown away by a wind* .

Psalms 10:6

He hath said in his heart; he thinketh or persuadeth himself. I shall not be moved; or, removed, to wit, from my place and happy state.

For I shall never be in adversity; or, *because I am not in adversity* , therefore I never shall be in it. His present prosperity makes him secure for the future. Compare Rev_18:7. Or, *yea* , (for this particle sometimes hath no other signification or use but only to amplify or aggravate, as it is also taken 1Sa_15:20 **24:11**) I shall *never be in evil* . So the sense of the place is, I shall not only be kept from total ruin, or a removal from my place and estate, but I shall not meet with the least cross or trouble. For this *evil* is not the evil of sin, as some here understand it, in which he knew that he was, and was resolved, ever to continue; but the evil of punishment, which was the only thing that he feared or regarded.

Psalms 10:7

Of cursing; either,

1. Of oaths and blasphemies against God. Or,
2. Of reviling and execration of other men, especially those that are good; or those that stand in his way, and hinder his wicked designs. Or rather,
3. Of oaths and imprecations against himself, of which this word is used, Num_5:21 Deu_29:12,**21** Ne **10:29**; by which he endeavours to gain credit, and to make his neighbours secure, and so to make way for the

deceit and fraud which here follows. For this wretched man is represented both here, and in the succeeding verses, as one that doth not act with open violence and hostility, but with subtle and

secret artifices, using all cunning insinuations, and flatteries, and lies, and, among others, oaths, of which an atheistical politician said, that men were to be deceived with oaths, and children with rattles or toys.

Deceit and fraud; two words signifying the same thing, to note the greatness and frequency of his deceits. Or one word may signify the deceit lurking in his heart, and the other the manifestation of it in external frauds and stratagems.

Under his tongue; either,

1. In his heart, which is under the tongue. Or rather,
2. Under his fair and plausible speeches the

mischief here following is hid and covered. Withal he seems to allude to serpents, whose poison lies hidden under the tongue or within their teeth.

Mischief and vanity; or rather, *iniquity* , as this word is oft rendered, or *injury* , the vexation or oppression of other men, which he covers with these fair pretences.

Psalms 10:8

In the lurking places of the villages; not within the villages, which is not a fit place for lurking; but about them, in the ways bordering upon them, or leading to them, as robbers use to do.

In the secret places, that he may avoid the shame and punishment of men; which is the only thing that he fears.

Are privily set, Heb. *are hid* . The sense is either,

1. He winketh as men do when they shoot their arrows at a mark. Or rather,
2. He watcheth and looketh out of his lurking-place, to spy what passengers come that way. He alludes still to the practices of robbers.

Psalms 10:9

As a lion in his den, where he lurks and waits for prey.

He doth catch, or *snatch* , or *seize upon* , to wit, with violence, and to devour or destroy him.

When he draweth him; or, by *drawing him* ; or, *after he hath drawn him* . He layeth snares for him, and when he takes him, tears him in pieces.

Psalms 10:10

Like a lion, (for he continues the same metaphor,) which gathereth himself together, and lies close upon the ground, partly that he may not be discovered, and partly that he may more suddenly, and surely, and fiercely lay hold upon his prey. But for this translation, because this and is not in the Hebrew, and there is another and there prefixed to the first verb, some join that first verb to the end of the 10th verse, and render the place thus, *he catcheth the poor by drawing him into his net, and breaks him to pieces* , as that verb properly signifies. So there is only a defect of the pronoun, which is most frequent. And this makes the sense complete, which otherwise would be imperfect in that verse, and showeth us what he doth with his prey when he hath taken it. And this 10th verse begins very well with the next verb,

he humbleth himself; or, he stoops, or bends himself.

That the poor may fall; or, that *he may fall* (for this verb is sometimes taken actively, as Jos_11:7 Job_1:15) upon the poor; that having first crouched and lain down, and then of a sudden rising, he may leap and fall upon his prey, like a lion.

By his strong ones, i.e. by his strong members, his teeth or paws. So it is an ellipsis of the noun substantive; whereof we have examples, as 2Sa_21:16, *new* for a *new sword* ; and Psa_73:10, *full* for a *full cup* ; and Mat_10:42, *cold* for *cold water* .

Psalms 10:11

God hath forgotten, to wit, *the poor* , Psa_10:10; or the humble, which we are taught to supply out of Psa_10:12, where he saith, forget not the humble. He forgets and neglects all their oppressions and prayers, and doth not avenge their cause, as he hath said he would do; nor execute judgments upon their oppressors, as he hath sometimes done or been thought to do.

He hideth his face, lest he should see. He takes no notice of their sufferings, lest he should be engaged to help them. He will not encumber himself with the care of things done upon earth, but leaves it wholly to men to manage their affairs as they think fit.

He will never see it, to wit, the oppression of the poor, or the design of oppressors against them, which is the chief subject of the whole Psalm, and is particularly expressed Psa_10:10.

Psalms 10:12

Lift up thine hand, to rescue the poor, and to smite their oppressors with a hand stretched out and lifted up, that the blow maybe the greater: compare Exo_7:5 Isa_5:25 **9:12**, &c.

Forget not the humble; show by thy appearance for their vindication that thou dost remember and regard them.

Psalms 10:13

The sense is either,

1. What is the cause of his contempt of God? To which question the next words give an answer, Thy connivance makes him secure. Therefore show thyself. Or,

2. Why dost thou by giving them impunity suffer and occasion them to despise thee? Do so no longer. Which tacit desire he enforceth by representing their atheistical denial of God's providence.

Psalms 10:14

Thou hast seen it; or, *but thou hast seen it* , and therefore they are horribly mistaken, as they will find to their cost. *For* ; or, *surely* , as this particle is oft used, as Job_8:6 Psa_73:18.

Thou beholdest; not as an idle spectator, but with an eye of observation and vindication, as it follows. *Mischief and spite* , i.e. all the injurious and spiteful or malicious carriages of wicked men towards those who are more righteous than they.

To requite it with thy hand, Heb. *to give* (i.e. to restore or pay, the simple verb for the compound; which is usual in the Hebrew tongue) *it* (to wit, the mischief which they have done to others)

with thy hand, i.e. by thy own immediate and extraordinary providence, because the oppressed were destitute of all other succours. Or, *to put* (*giving* being oft used for *putting* , as hath been observed before) *it in or into thy hand* , that thou mayst have it always in thine eye, and under thy care and consideration, as the

like phrase is evidently used, Isa_49:16 Therefore thou dost not and canst not forget it, but wilt certainly require it.

Committeth himself; or, *his matters* or *cause* , i.e. the care of his person and righteous cause. Heb. *he leaveth* ; which word is used for committing to the trust of another, Gen_39:6 Job_39:14 Isa_10:3.

Of the fatherless, i.e. of such poor oppressed ones as have no friend nor helper; one kind of them being put for all the rest.

Psalms 10:15

Break thou; or, *Thou wilt break* . For it may be either a prayer or a prophecy.

The arm, i.e. his strength, the instrument of violence and mischief.

Seek out his wickedness; search for it so strictly, and punish these wicked atheists so severely.

Till thou find none, i.e. no such wickedness, to wit, undiscovered and unpunished, or indeed left in the world, or at least in the church; which might happen, because those wicked men here spoken of should be generally either convinced or rooted out, and the rest should be warned and reformed by their example, and so this *lewdness* should cease out of the land, as the phrase is, Eze_23:48. That is said *to be sought for* , and *not found* , which is utterly lost, as Job_20:7, **8 Psa 37:36 Rev_16:20 18:21**. And this phrase is used both of good men, whose sins are taken away by God's grace and mercy, pardoning and purging them away, and of wicked men in the sense above mentioned.

Psalms 10:16

The Lord is King; to whom it belongs to protect his subjects. Therefore thou wilt save the humble, and punish the oppressors.

For ever and ever; therefore his people's case is never desperate, seeing he ever lives and reigns to help them, and therefore he will help them in his time sooner or later.

The heathen; either,

1. Those impious Israelites who oppressed David and other good men, whom, although they were reputed Israelites by themselves

and others, yet he might call them heathens for their heathenish opinions of God and his providence, and for their ungodly and unrighteous lives. Compare Isa_1:9 Amo_9:7. Or,

2. The Canaanites, whom God as King of the world did expel or destroy, and gave their land to his people; by which great example he confirms his faith and hope for the future.

Out of his land, i.e. out of Canaan, which God calls his land, Lev_25:23, because he spied it out for them, Eze_20:6, and gave it to them, and fixed his presence and dwelling in it.

Psalms 10:17

Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; and therefore wilt still do it, being unchangeable and the same for ever.

Thou wilt prepare, or *direct* , or *fit* , by thy grace and good Spirit, either that they may so pray as thou wilt hear, or that they may be made fit to receive the mercies which they desire; which when they are, they shall have their prayers heard. Or, *thou wilt confirm* or *stablish* (as this verb is oft used) their heart, to bear their present pressures, and to wait upon and hope and trust in thee for deliverance, until thou seest fit to hear and help them:

Thou wilt cause thine ear to hear *in due time* , though for a season thou seemest to turn a deaf ear to them. But this and the foregoing verb may be taken as a prayer, future verbs being oft used imperatively; *prepare or stablish their hearts* , (by giving them support and assurance of help in the time of need, and then,) cause thine ear to hear.

Psalms 10:18

To judge, i.e. to defend them, and give sentence for them, and against their enemies, as this word is used, Deu_32:36 Psalms 7:8 **135:14**.

The man of the earth, i.e. earthly and mortal men, who are made of the dust, and must return to it, such as the oppressors of thy people are; who yet presume most audaciously and madly to contend with thee their Maker and Judge. Therefore it is time for thee to repress such insolency, and to show how unable they are to stand before thee.

May no more oppress, to wit, the fatherless last mentioned.

Psalms 11:1 PSALM 11

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David when he was persecuted by Saul, and forced to flee from place to place for safety.

David encourageth himself in God, Psa_11:1, against the wicked designs of his enemies, Psa_11:2,3. The providence and justice of God, Psa_11:4, to the righteous and wicked, Psa_11:5-7.

In the Lord, i.e. in his faithfulness, who hath promised, and will, I doubt not, give me the kingdom.

How say ye? either,

1. Ye my friends; who through diffidence and despondency advised him to this course. Or,

2. Ye my enemies; who said it scoffingly and insultingly. *How say ye ?* With what face or reason can you say thus to him, who hath the Lord God Almighty for his refuge?

To my soul, i.e. to me, as Psa_6:4 **7:2**.

Flee as a bird, suddenly and swiftly, and to some remote place, where thou mayst be out of Saul's reach. Feed not thyself with vain hopes of the kingdom, but consult for thy own safety, which thou canst not do without taking *the wings of a dove* , or some other bird, that thou mayst *flee away* out of the land, and *be at rest* , as thou sayest, Psa_55:6. Or, *Flee away, O thou bird* , thou little silly bird, lest the royal eagle seize upon thee.

To your mountain, i.e. to some of your mountains in Judah, and there hide thyself. But this was David's common practice; and therefore there was no need that any should advise him to it, or that he should reprove them for that advice. Or, from (which prefix is oft wanting, and to be understood, as Jos_10:13 2Sa_23:24)

your mountain i.e. from *the mountain or mountainous country of Judah* , as it is called, Jos_20:7; the mountain being frequently put for a mountainous country, as Num_13:29 **23:7** Jos_9:1 **10:6,40**, and oft elsewhere. Or, *from your mountains* , in which thou and thy companions use to hide yourselves. Flee into some foreign

land, where you may be safe. For this was the design of David's enemies, as he complains, 1Sa_26:19; and afterward, when David was under sore temptations, it was his practice once or twice.

Psalms 11:2

For lo: these are the words, either,

1. Of David's friends or enemies, confirming their former advice; which might suit with it, if that was the counsel of his friends; but not if it was (as it seems to have been) the counsel of his enemies; for these would never have called themselves

wicked, nor David and his men

upright in heart. Or rather,

2. Of David himself; who having directed his speech to his enemies, Psa_11:1, now turns it to God, and pours out before him his complaints against his enemies, as his usual course is in this book. They do not only speak scornfully of me, as I have said, but, O Lord, they act against me with all their might and malice.

They make ready their arrow upon the string; they lay designs for my destruction, and they make all things ready to execute them.

Privily; out of their lurking holes: compare Psa_10:8,9 64:5. For as some of his enemies did openly oppose him, so others did secretly undermine him, and with pretences of friendship seek to betray him.

At the upright in heart; at me and my followers, who have manifested our integrity both towards God and towards Saul, whom I have faithfully served and Spared when I could have taken away his life.

Psalms 11:3

If; or, *for* ; or, when.

The foundations, i.e. piety, and justice, and fidelity, and mercy, which are the *pillars* or *foundations* of a state or kingdom, as they are called, Psa_75:2,3 82:5; by which they are established, Pro_29:14, and which Saul and his courtiers had manifestly violated and overthrown in persecuting David and his friends. The

sense is, There is nothing in public administrations but disorder and oppression, and right can take no place.

What can the righteous do? the condition of all righteous men (whom thou hast engaged thyself to protect and deliver) will be desperate; which will not be for thine honour. Heb. *what hath the righteous done* ? As for me and my friends, upon whom all the blame is laid, what have we poor, but righteous, persons (for such thou thou knowest us to be) done? namely, to cause all these calumnies and persecutions, or to occasion all these commotions and disturbances of public peace and justice. It is easy to slander us, but let them prove their accusations by any one of our actions.

Psalms 11:4

The Lord, to whom I appeal from men's unjust tribunals, is in his holy temple; either,

1. In his tabernacle, which is sometimes called his temple, as 1Sa_1:9 3:3 Psa_18:6 48:9 68:29, where he resides to hear the prayers and appeals of all his people. Or,

2. **In heaven**, as it is explained in the next clause; which is also called God's *temple* , Mic_1:2 Rev_7:15, and which seems to be most emphatical here; for God's being in heaven is oft mentioned as an evidence of his glorious majesty, of his sovereign power and dominion over all men and things, and of his accurate inspection into all men and their actions here below, which from that high tower he can easily behold, as it here follows.

The Lord's throne; where he sits to examine all causes, and to judge all men, and to give forth righteous sentences according to every man's works; which is my great comfort and joy.

His eyes behold, his eye-lids try, the children of men, i.e. he doth exactly and thoroughly discern all men, and all that is in men, their most inward and secret actions, Psa_7:9. And therefore he sees and will reward my innocency, notwithstanding all the reproaches and calumnies of mine enemies; and withal he sees all their secret, and subtle, and malicious designs against me through all their cunning pretences, and withal discover and defeat them.

Psalms 11:5

The Lord trieth the righteous; either,

1. He examines them, and knows them to be righteous, and consequently approveth, and loveth, and will preserve and bless them; which may be gathered from the contrary condition of the wicked, whom God is supposed to try, though that be not expressed, and upon trial finds them to be wicked, and therefore hates and punisheth them, as it follows. The like ellipsis of a whole sentence, see on Psa_1:6. Or,

2. He trieth and exerciseth them and their graces by afflictions, or he corrects them for their sins; which is oft called trying, as Psa_66:10 Zec_13:9 Jam_1:12 1Pe_4:12. So this is spoken by way of concession, and to remove the offence which some men might take at David, whose person and cause they might be apt to condemn because of his troubles. Therefore he saith, God *tries*, i.e. chastens, even righteous persons; yet still he loves them, and therefore will in due time deliver them. But as for the wicked, let not them rejoice in my trials, for far worse things are appointed for them; God hates them, and will severely punish them.

Him that loveth violence; by which character he describes and brands his enemies, and aggravates their malice, because they chose and practised violence against him, not for any need which they had of it, (for David was a most peaceable and harmless man, and neither pretended nor endeavoured to do any more than to defend himself, and that, as far as was possible, without the offence or injury of any other man,) but merely from their love to injustice and violence, and their implacable hatred against goodness and good men.

His soul hateth; he hateth with or from his soul, i.e. inwardly and ardently.

Psalms 11:6

He shall rain; which notes their original to be extraordinary, and from God's hand; and withal, that they should come plentifully, swiftly, and suddenly, violently and unavoidably, as rain commonly doth fall from heaven.

Snares, i.e. grievous plagues or judgments, which are called *snares* here, as also Job_18:9,10 22:10 Isa_8:14 24:17,18; partly because wicked men are oftentimes surprised with them when they least expect them, Luk_21:35; and partly because they cannot

escape them, nor get out of them, but are held fast and destroyed by them.

Fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest, i.e. dreadful judgments, so called metaphorically, and by allusion to the destruction of Sodom and other places by these means. But this he seems to speak not so much of present and temporal calamities, as of their future and eternal punishments, because he manifestly speaks of those miseries which are peculiar to wicked men; whereas David knew very well, both by his own experience, and by the history of Job, and of Israel's bondage in Egypt, that *all things here came alike to all men*, good or bad, Ecc_9:2, and that wicked men had many times a greater share of worldly prosperity than God's own people; as David acknowledgeth and complaineth of it, **Psa 73**\$.

This shall be the portion of their cup; this is their portion, and as it were the meat and drink appointed to them by God. This shall certainly and unavoidably be their state or condition; which is oft called a man's *part* or *portion*, as Psa_16:5 **63:10 75:8** Mat_24:51. He alludes to the ancient custom of masters of families, or of feasts, who used to distribute the several portions of meat to their domestics or guests.

Psalms 11:7

This is given as the reason why God hateth and punisheth wicked men so dreadfully, because he loves righteousness, and therefore must needs hate wickedness and punish wicked men. Or, *but*, as this particle is oft rendered; for this seems to be added by way of opposition to what he now said concerning the state of wicked men.

His countenance doth behold the upright; to wit, with an eye of approbation, and true and tender affection, and watchful and gracious providence; which is oft signified by God's *beholding* or *looking* upon men, as Exo_2:25 Ezr_5:5 Psa_25:18 **33:18 34:15**, &c.: as, on the contrary, God is oft said to hide or turn away his face or eyes from wicked men.

Psalms 12:1 PSALM 12

The same title is prefixed to **Psa 6**. This Psalm was composed in the time and upon the occasion of Saul's ill government, and his persecution of David, and other good men who favoured him.

David, being destitute of human comfort, craveth help of God, Psa_12:1. He exclaims against flattering and deceitful tongues, Psa_12:2; and comforteth himself with God's judgment on them, Psa_12:3,4; and assureth himself of his tried mercies to the needy, Psa_12:5-8.

Help; or, save me and other good men from the subtlety and rage of wicked men. Saul will not help us, and other men cannot help; therefore it is a fit season for thee to help.

The godly; or, *kind* , or *merciful* , as this word is oft used, as Psa_30:5 **31:24 86:2:** q.d. I and my friends are sorely and causelessly persecuted, banished from our homes and friends, and, which is worst of all, from God's sanctuary, and yet few or none pity us; all mercy and humanity is lost.

The faithful fail; men have lost not only serious piety, but even common honesty, in their words and dealings with men.

Psalms 12:2

Vanity; or, *falsehood* , which is a vain thing, and wants the solidity of truth.

With a double heart; pretending one heart, and that they speak from a kind and upright heart, when they really have another, even a cruel and deceitful heart.

Psalms 12:3

Or *great things* , or *great words* , either bragging or threatening what they will do, and what great things they will effect, to wit, by their tongues, as they themselves explain it in the next verse, which they will use so cunningly and powerfully, that they shall not need to use their hands, or strike a stroke.

Psalms 12:4

With our tongue will we prevail, by raising and spreading slanders and evil reports concerning him, whereby both Saul will be highly and implacably enraged against David, and the hearts of

the people alienated from him; which was indeed a very likely way to prevail against, him, and that by their tongues only.

Our lips are our own, i.e. at our own dispose to speak what we please.

Who is lord over us; who can control or restrain us? This was not the language of their mouths, for they were Israelites, that owned a God above them, and they were subjects of Saul; but the language of their actions. Scripture oft tells us not only what men do actually say, but what they would say if they durst, or what their actions mean, as Psa_94:7 Mal_1:12 **13 2:17**. They take as great a liberty in their speech as if they believed there was no God or man superior to them; because neither the fear of God, nor the reverence of men, can keep them from speaking whatsoever they please, or what they suppose makes for their interest.

Psalms 12:5

For the oppression of the poor; oppressed by Saul through the instigation and artifices of his fawning courtiers.

Now; speedily, sooner than they imagine or expect. *From him that puffeth at him* , i.e. from him that despiseth him, and hopeth to destroy him with a puff of breath, or a parcel of words. See this phrase Psa_10:5. Only there it is construed with *beth* , and here with *lamed* ; which may make some difference. And the supplement in our translation may seem to be large, and not necessary. And the place is and may be otherwise rendered according to the Hebrew, without any such large supplement,

I will set him (to wit, the needy last mentioned; so it is an ellipsis of the pronoun, which is most frequent)

in safety: *he* (to wit, the Lord, mentioned before) shall speak (as this verb signifies, Pro_6:19 **14:5 19:5,9**, i.e. shall speak comfortably, by a synecdoche; or shall speak plainly, as this verb is used, Pro_12:17 Hab_2:3) to him, i.e. to the needy here mentioned. Or, *he* , i.e. God, *shall speak* (to wit, in his wrath, as it is expressed, Psa_2:5) to him, who is the cause of his oppression, of whom he speaks Psa_12:3,4. Or, *shall puff at him* , as he used to do at his enemies, Psa_10:5.

Psalms 12:6

Pure; or, *sincere* ; without the least mixture of vanity or falsehood; and therefore shall infallibly be fulfilled. This he seems to add to answer an objection which might arise in some men's minds concerning what was last said. You tell us, *The, Lord saith, I will set him in safety* , &c.; but saying and doing are two things. They are so indeed in men, who oft speak rashly what they cannot perform, and deceitfully what they never intend: but all God's words are pure from all manner of dross; from all folly, or fraud, or uncertainty; he is holy and true in all his doctrines, threatenings, predictions, and promises.

Tried in a furnace of earth, i.e. made of such earth or clay as was proper for and then usual in that work. See 1Ki_7:46.

Psalms 12:7

Thou shalt keep them; either,

1. The poor and needy, Psa_12:5, from the crafts and malice of this crooked and perverse generation of men, and for ever. Or,
2. Thy words or promises last mentioned, Psa_12:6. These thou wilt observe and keep (as these two verbs commonly signify) both now, and

from this generation for ever, i.e. Thou wilt not only keep thy promise to me in preserving me, and advancing me to the throne, but also to my posterity from generation to generation.

Psalms 12:8

The wicked walk on every side; which phrase may note,

1. Their great numbers; they fill all places.
2. Their freedom and safety; they are not restrained nor punished, but go about boldly and securely whither they please.
3. Their proficiency and success, which is sometimes signified by this verb, as Gen_26:13 1Sa_2:21 Isa_40:31. They grow worse and worse, and prosper in and by their wickedness.
4. Their incessant and unwearied industry in doing mischief to good men. Compare 1Pe_5:8. And this is very fitly here added, as another argument to prevail with God to arise to help his poor people who are oppressed by wicked men.

The vilest men, Heb. *vilenesses* , i.e. all manner of wickedness, lying and slandering, profaneness; oppression, cruelty, and the like; or, vile persons, the abstract being put for the concrete, which is frequent, *as pride* , Psa_36:11, for a proud man, and many such like; both comes to one, vile persons and vile practices were both advanced and encouraged through Saul's misgovernment, whereby all the foundations were destroyed, as he complained, Psa_11:3. The Hebrew word *zolel* (whence this *zuloth* comes) signifies first *a glutton* or *drunkard* , as Deu_21:20 Pro_23:21, and thence any *vile person* , as Jer_15:19 Lam_1:11.

Psalms 13:1 PSALM 13

The occasion of this Psalm was David's deep and long-continued distresses, from which he prays for deliverance.

David complaineth to God of his delay to help, Psa_13:1, and the enemies' triumph, Psa_13:2. He, praying for preventing grace, Psa_13:3,4 professeth his trust in God, Psa_13:5, and boasteth of Divine mercy, Psa_13:6.

How long wilt thou forget, i.e. neglect or disregard, *me* ? for ever
I

how long wilt thou withdraw thy favour and assistance?

Psalms 13:2

How long shall I be in such perplexities and anxieties of mind, not knowing what course to take, nor how to get out of my troubles?

Psalms 13:3

Lighten mine eyes; either,

1. Because I find my counsel insufficient, Psa_13:2, do thou enlighten my mind, and guide me by thy counsel and Spirit into the right way of obtaining thy mercy and help. So this phrase is used Psa_19:8 Eph_1:18. Or,

2. Do thou revive, and comfort, and deliver me from the darkness of death, which is ready to come upon me and to close mine eyes. Nothing is more common than to express great dangers and calamities by darkness, and great comforts and deliverances by

light , as Job_15:22 **17:13 30:26**, and by an enlightening of the eyes, as Ezr_9:8. Compare Pro_15:30 **29:13**.

Lest I sleep the sleep of death, i.e. lest I sink under my burden and die; for death is oft called a *sleep* in Scripture, as Job_3:13 **14:12** Psa_76:5 Joh_11:11.

Psalms 13:4

I have prevailed against him, to wit, by my art or strength; which will reflect dishonour upon thee, as if thou wept either unfaithful and unmindful of thy promises, or unable to make them good. Therefore repress this their arrogance and blasphemy, and maintain thine own honour.

When I am moved; or, *stumble* , or *fall* , to wit, into mischief.

Psalms 13:5

Neither their threats and brags, nor my own dangers, shall shake my confidence in thy mercy promised to me.

Psalms 13:6

Either,

1. In giving me that support and assurance of his favour which for the present I enjoy. Or,

2. In giving me that mercy which he hath freely promised me; it being a common thing for David and other prophets to speak of future deliverances as if they were already come, that so they may signify both the infallible certainty of the thing, and their firm assurance thereof. But the words may be rendered, *when he shall have*

dealt bountifully with me. This verb properly signifies to *requite* , or *reward* , (as it may be taken here, for there is a *reward of grace* as well as *of debt* , Rom_4:4) but here it signifies a free and bountiful giving, as it doth also Psa_119:17 **142:7**.

Psalms 14:1 PSALM 14

The design of this Psalm is to describe and bewail the terrible wickedness and corruption of mankind, and especially of ungodly men, and of his own enemies.

David showeth the atheism and corruption of men, Psa_14:1-3. He convinceth the wicked by the light of conscience, Psa_14:4-6; and longeth for the salvation of God, Psa_14:7.

The fool, i.e. the wicked man; for such are commonly and justly called fools every where in Scripture, and that purposely to meet with their false, yet, common, conceit of themselves, as if they were the only wise men, and all others were fools.

In his heart, i.e. in his secret thoughts, or within himself, being afraid and ashamed to utter it with his mouth. Not that it was his fixed and constant opinion and judgment, but this he saith by construction, because he heartily wisheth there were no God, and lives as if there were none. So this text may be explained by comparing it with Psa_36:1 Tit_1:16. *There is no God* : he denies not God's being or existence, but only his providence. He saith not, *There is no Jehovah* , which name of God notes his being; but no Elohim, which expresseth God as the Judge and Governor of the world, who observes and recompenseth all the actions of all men according to their several qualities.

They are corrupt, Heb. *they have corrupted* , to wit, themselves, or their ways, as this word commonly signifies. Their great and wilful wickedness is alleged as a ground of their atheism or infidelity.

There is none, to wit, of the fools here described,

that doeth good; none of their actions are really and thoroughly good or pleasing to God; for if some of them be materially good, as when they do an act of justice or charity, yet they are poisoned with bad principles or ends, not being performed by them out of a good conscience, and serious care to please God, for then they would do one good action as well as another, but in hypocrisy, or with vain-glory, or some sinister and unworthy design.

Psalms 14:2

The Lord looked down from heaven, to search out the truth. God knoweth all things without any inquiry; but this is a figure called anthropopathia, whereby Scripture oft speaks of God after the manner of men.

Upon the children of men; upon the whole body of the Israelitish nation, and upon the generality of mankind under heaven; for he speaks of all except his *people* , and the righteous ones, who are here opposed to these, Psa_14:4,5.

That did understand, and seek God; that did truly know God, to wit, so as to love, and fear, and trust, and obey him, (for all these are frequently signified in Scripture by this expression of *knowing God*) and that did diligently seek him, i.e. study his mind and will, that they might do it, and seek his grace and favour.

Psalms 14:3

Gone aside, to wit, from God, whom they should have sought, Psa_14:2, and from the rule which he hath given them, and by which they sometimes professed and seemed to govern themselves. Or, *are grown sour* , as this word signifies, Hos_4:18. And so this is a metaphor from corrupted drinks, as the next is taken from rotten meat.

Filthy, Heb. *stinking* i.e. loathsome and abominable to God, and to all wise and sober men.

Psalms 14:4

Have the workers of iniquity lost their wits? have they neither religion nor common discretion? either of which would teach them not to make themselves so hateful to the all-seeing and almighty God, and to all men. The words may be rendered thus, *Do not all the workers of iniquity know it ?* So it is only an ellipsis of the pronoun, which is frequent, as I have showed before. Are they not conscious to themselves of the truth of what I say? I dare appeal to their own consciences. But this I propound with submission.

Who eat up; or, *they eat up* , i.e. devour and destroy, as this word signifies, Deu_7:16 Pro_30:14 Jer_1:17 Nah_3:15.

My people, i.e. the poor and godly Israelites, of whom he principally speaks; whom he calleth my people. Either,

1. God's people, as they were in many respects; or rather,
2. David's people; for David speaks both these words, and all the rest of this Psalm, in his own name and person. And David might well call them *his people* , either because they were his friends

and favourers; or because he being anointed their king, they were consequently his people; or because he was now actually their king, and so they were actually his people; for some conceive that this Psalm was made in the time and upon the occasion of Absalom's rebellion.

As they eat bread, i.e. with as little regret or remorse, and with as much greediness, and delight, and constancy too, as they use to eat their meat. The particle *as* is here understood, as it is Psa_125:2 Pro_26:9, and in many other places.

Call not upon the Lord; they are guilty not only of gross injustice, and oppression towards men, but also of horrid impiety and contempt of God, whose providence they deny, and whose worship they wholly neglect and despise.

Psalms 14:5

There, i.e. in the place, or upon the spot, where they practised these insolences, God struck them with a panic fear. Or, *then*, i.e. in the height of their tyranny and prosperous impiety, when they seemed to have no cause for it. An adverb of place for an adverb of time, of which there want not examples in Scripture and other authors, as hath been noted before. Or, *thence*, as this particle is rendered, Gen_2:10 **49:24** Isa_65:20; i.e. from that time; or for that cause, as some take it, and it may be taken, Job_35:12 Psa_36:12, i.e. for this their contempt of God and manifest injury to men.

In great fear, from their own guilty consciences, and the just expectation of Divine vengeance. Heb. *they feared with fear*, i.e. vehemently, *where there was no cause of fear*, as is here implied, (for they are now supposed to be in a state of power and tyranny,) as is expressed in the parallel place, Psa_53:5. Or, *they shall be greatly afraid*, the past tense being put for the future prophetically.

For; for they remembered what a potent adversary they had, and therefore had cause enough to fear. Or, *but*, as this particle is taken, Gen_45:8 Psa_37:20 Ecc_2:10 **6:2**. So he describes the contrary and safe condition of the righteous. Or, *when*, as it signifies, and so it answers to the *then* in the beginning of the

verse, when God shall once appear for his people, a dreadful horror shall seize upon their wicked enemies.

In the generation of the righteous, i.e. among them, with his gracious and powerful presence to defend them, and to fight against their enemies. Or, *God is for* , &c., as the Hebrew *beth* oft signifies, that is, God is on their side, and therefore their enemies have great cause to tremble.

Psalms 14:6

Shamed, i.e. desired and endeavoured to bring it to shame, or disappoint it. Compare Psa_6:10. Or, *ye have reproached or derided* it, as a foolish thing.

The counsel of the poor, i.e. the cause which he hath taken to defend himself, which is not by lying, and, flattery, and violence, and all manner of wickedness, which is your counsel and usual practice, but by trusting in God, and keeping his way, and calling upon his name.

Because; this was the ground of their contempt and scorn, that he lived by faith in God's promise and providence. Or, *but* , as in the foregoing verse. So there seems to be an elegant and fit opposition. You reproach them, but God will own and protect them, and justify their counsel which you deride.

Psalms 14:7

Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! These words directly and immediately concern the deliverance of the people of Israel out of that sinful and deplorable estate in which they now were; which having described in the body of the Psalm, he concludes, after his manner, with a prayer to God to hear and help them *out of Zion* , where the ark then was, whence God used to hear and answer his people's prayers. But ultimately and principally they design a further, even the spiritual, redemption and salvation of all God's Israel by the Messias, as may appear by divers considerations:

1. That the ancient Jews did thus understand it, and among others Jonathan's Targum or Paraphrase on the Bible expound it thus; *I do not expect Gideon 's salvation, which was but corporeal, nor that of Samson Ñbut the salvation of the Messias* . With whom agrees the Targum of Jerusalem.

2. That the doctrine of Israel's redemption or salvation by Christ was very well known, as to other ancient patriarchs, Joh_8:56 1Pe_1:10-12, so particularly to David, of whom it is expressly said that he *knew* and *foresaw* this mystery, Act_2:30,**31**, in whose Book of Psalms there are divers and very distinct and clear prophecies of it, as we have in part seen upon **Psa 2 Psa 8**, and shall see more fully and evidently hereafter.

3. That David and other holy prophets, in the midst of their sad thoughts, and fears, and troubles, did usually comfort themselves with the promise and expectation of the Messias, by whom, and by whom alone, they should receive that plenary salvation for which they groaned; of which it is thought we have one instance, Gen_49:18; but we have many unquestionable instances in the prophecy of Isaiah, as Isa_7:14 **9:6**, &c. And this course might be the more seasonable for David, because he speaks here of his troubles after he was settled in his kingdom, (as may be gathered from the mention of Zion, where the ark was not till that time,) and possibly of the sad and sinful state of his kingdom during Absalom's rebellion; and therefore finding himself so strangely disappointed of that peace and happiness which he confidently expected when once he came to the kingdom, and wisely and justly presaging that his children and the following generations of Israelites for the same causes were likely to meet with the same or greater calamities than this, he wearieth himself with the expression of his belief and desire of the coming of the Messias to save his people.

4. To this also suits the mention of Zion, because the prophets knew and foretold that the Messias or Deliverer should first come to Zion, and should set up his throne there, and from thence send forth his laws and edicts to the Gentile world; as is positively affirmed, Psa_2:6 **110:2** Isa_2:3 **59:20**, compared with Rom_11:26, and in many other places.

5. The following words agree only to this time, wherein he speaks of bringing back the captivity of his people with the universal joy of all Jacob and Israel; which cannot agree to David's time, wherein there was no such captivity of the people, but only a civil war and mutual slaughter, which is quite another thing; nor to the time of Israel's return from Babylon, when there was no such

return of all Israel, but only of Judah and Benjamin, and some few of the other tribes, and the joy which the returning Israelites then had was but low, and mixed with many fears, and dangers, and reproaches, as we see in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And therefore they must belong to the times of the Messias, by whom this promise was fulfilled to the true Israel of God, who were brought back from that most real and dreadful, though spiritual, captivity of sin and Satan, as is declared, Luk_4:18 Eph_4:8, and shall be literally accomplished to the natural seed of Jacob or Israel according to the expectation and belief of all the Jews in their several ages, and of most Christian writers.

The captivity of his people, i.e. his captive people; *captivity* being oft put for *captives*, as Deu_21:10 **30:3** Psa_126:1,4. Or, his people from captivity, of which see the former note. *Jacob*, i.e. the seed or children of Jacob, as Aaron is named for his sons, 1Ch_12:27 **27:17**, and David for his sons, and the like.

Psalms 15:1 PSALM 15

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion and time of composing this Psalm is uncertain; but the scope of it is plain, which is to give the character of a holy and happy man, and to describe the way to true blessedness; wherein this is observable, that he is wholly silent as to the ceremonial or ritual observations of the law; not that he doth disown them, or allow the neglect of them, as is manifest from David's constant practice, and from many other passages; but that he might undeceive the hypocritical Israelites, who laid too great a stress upon those things, as the diligent performance thereof would excuse their wicked lives, which error almost all the prophets do observe and condemn in them; and that he might inform the church of that and all succeeding ages, that the substance of religion did consist in the practice of true holiness and righteousness.

David describeth a citizen of Zion, Psa_15:1, i.e. he is pure in heart, Psa_15:2; governeth his tongue, Psa_15:3; contemns a vile person, but honours him that fears God, Psa_15:4. He is no usurer, Psa_15:5.

O thou who art the sovereign Lord of this holy hill and tabernacle, to whom it belongs to give laws to it, and to admit or reject persons as thou seest fit, I beg of thee the resolution of this important question. And he proposeth this question to God, that the answer coming from him may have the greater authority and influence upon men's consciences.

Who shall abide, Heb. *sojourn* , to wit, so as to dwell, as it is explained in the next clause; unless this clause be meant of sojourning in the church here, and the next of dwelling in heaven hereafter. Who shall enter thither and abide there, with thy good leave and liking?

In thy tabernacle, i.e. in thy church; either,

1. Militant. Who is a true and will be a persevering member of this church? Or,
2. Triumphant, or in heaven; which is called the true tabernacle, not made with man's hands, Heb_8:2 **9:11** Rev_21:3.

In thy holy hill, to wit, of Zion, so called Psa_2:6, which is oft put for the church and for heaven. Who shall so dwell in thy church here as to dwell with thee for ever hereafter in heaven?

Psalms 15:2

Uprightly, or *perfectly* , or *sincerely* , without guile or hypocrisy, loving, worshipping, and serving God, and loving his neighbour, not in word and show only, but in truth and reality; and this constantly, and in the whole course of his life, as *walking* implies.

Worketh righteousness; maketh it his work and business to do justly, i.e. to give to every one his due, first to God, and then to men; for the words are general, and not restrained to either.

Speaketh the truth in his heart; his words and professions to God and men agree with and proceed from the thoughts and purposes of his heart.

Psalms 15:3

He doth not take away or diminish his neighbour's good name, either by denying him his due praises, or by laying any thing to his charge falsely, or without sufficient cause and evidence;

nor doeth evil, i.e. any hurt or injury, to his neighbour, i.e. to any man; as is evident,

1. From the nature of this precept, which reacheth to all, it being plain and certain that, both by laws of nature and of Moses, it was not lawful to do evil to any man, except where God the Sovereign commanded it, as he did to the Canaanites and Amalekites.

2. From the Scripture usage of this word neighbour, which frequently signifies every man, though a stranger or a heathen, as appears from Gen_29:4 Exo_20:10,17 **Le 18:20 19:15**, &c.; Pro_25:8,9 **Lu 10:20**, &c.; Mat_5:43,44. And he useth this word neighbour, because he who is strictly so is most within our reach, and most liable to the injuries which one man doth to another.

Nor taketh up, to wit, *into his lips or mouth* , which is understood here, as also Exo_20:7 Job_4:2, and fully expressed Psa_16:4 **50:16**, i.e. doth not raise it, though that may seem to be included in the first clause, *that backbiteth not* ; or doth not spread and propagate it; which men are too prone and ready to do, and which makes that a public which before was but a private injury and mischief. Or, *nor taketh or receiveth* , i.e. entertaineth it cheerfully and greedily, as men usually do such things, and easily believeth it without sufficient reason. See Exo_23:1 Lev_19:16. Or, *nor beareth or endureth* , as this phrase signifies, Psa_69:7 Eze_36:15. He doth not suffer another to defame him without some rebuke or signification of his dislike, Pro_25:23.

Psalms 15:4

In whose eyes, i.e. in whose judgment and estimation,

a vile person, i.e. one, that deserves contempt, an ungodly or wicked man, as appears from the next clause, where he that feareth God is opposed to him,

is contemned or *despised* , notwithstanding all his wealth, and glory, and greatness. He doth not admire his person, nor envy his condition, nor court him with flatteries, nor value his company and conversation, nor approve of or comply with his courses; but he thinks meanly of him; he judgeth him a most miserable man, and a great object of pity; he abhors his wicked practices, and labours to make such ways contemptible and hateful to all men as far as it lies in his power. But this contempt of wicked men must

be so managed as not to cause a contempt of just authority, which if it be lodged in a wicked hand, doth challenge not only obedience, but also honour and reverence; as is manifest from the precepts and examples of Christ and of his apostles, who charge this upon the Christians every where, although the magistrates of those times were unquestionably vile and wicked men. See Act_23:5 Ro 13\$ 1Pe_5:13, &c. He honoureth, i.e. he highly esteemeth and heartily loveth them, and showeth great respect and kindness to them, though they be mean and obscure as to their worldly condition, and though they may differ from him in some opinions or practices of lesser moment. He that sweareth, to wit, a promissory oath, engaging himself by solemn oath to do something which may be beneficial to his neighbour.

To his own hurt, i.e. to his own damage or prejudice. As if a man solemnly swear by the name of the great God, that he will sell him such an estate at a price below the full worth, or that he will give a poor man such a sum of money, which when afterwards he comes to review and consider, he finds it very inconvenient and burdensome to him, where he is tempted to break his oath.

Changeth not, to wit, his purpose or course, but continues firm and resolved to perform his promise, and sacrificeth his interest and profit to his conscience, and the reverence of God and of an oath. See Eze_17:18,19.

Psalms 15:5

He that putteth not out his money to usury, in such manner as is contrary to God's law; of which see in Exo_22:25 Lev_25:36,37.

Nor taketh reward, or a bribe, from him who hath a bad cause; that he may either condemn the innocent, or acquit the guilty; both which God abhorreth.

He that doth these things here enumerated, and such things as naturally and necessarily flow from them, or are akin to them, and joined with them, he shall constantly persevere in God's church here; and though he may be shaken, and stagger and fall, yet he shall never wholly and finally be removed or fall away from it, nor from that happiness which was proposed and promised to him,

but shall abide with God here, and go to him when he dies, and be for ever with the Lord.

Psalms 16:1 PSALM 16

Divers render this word *Michtam*, a *golden Psalm*, because of the preciousness and excellency of the matter of it; for it treats of Christ's death and resurrection. But because this title is prefixed to Psa_56:1 **57:1 58:1 59:1 60:1**, wherein there is no such peculiar excellency, it may seem rather to be a title belonging to the music or the song, which, with the rest, is now lost and unknown. It is a great question among expositors, in whose name and person he speaketh this Psalm, whether his own or Christ's. It seems hard to exclude David's person, to whom almost the whole Psalm properly and literally belongs, and to whom some parts of it do more conveniently belong than to Christ. And some parts of it do peculiarly belong to Christ, of whom it is expounded by the two great apostles, Peter and Paul, Act_2:25 **13:35**. And yet it seems probable by the contexture of the Psalm, and the coherence of the several verses together, that the whole Psalm speaks of one and the same person. But because David was a mixed person, being both a member and an eminent type of Christ, he may without any inconvenience be thought to speak of himself sometimes in the one and sometimes in the other capacity, to pass from the one to the other. And therefore having spoken of himself as a believer or member of Christ in the former part of the Psalm, he proceeds to consider himself as a type of Christ; and having Christ in his eye, and being inspired by the Holy Ghost with the knowledge and contemplation of Christ's passion and resurrection, towards the close of the Psalm he speaks such things, as though they might be accommodated to himself in a very imperfect, obscure, and improper sense, yet could not truly, literally, and properly, fully and completely, belong to any but to Christ, to whom therefore they are justly appropriated in the New Testament.

David, distusting his own merit, and hating idolatry, fleeth to God for preservation, Psa_16:1-4. He showeth the hope in life and death, Psa_16:5-9, of the resurrection and everlasting life Psa_16:10,**11**.

Preserve me from all mine enemies.

In thee do I put my trust; therefore thou art in honour and by promise obliged not to deceive my trust.

Psalms 16:2

O my soul; which words are fitly understood; for it is manifest he speaks to one person of another. And it is usual with David to turn his speech to his soul, as Psa_42:6 **43:5**.

Thou hast said; thou hast oftentimes avowed and professed it, and dost still persist to do so.

Thou art my Lord, by creation, and preservation, and otherwise; to whom I owe all service and obedience upon that account.

My goodness; whatsoever piety, or virtue, or goodness is in me, or is done by me.

Extendeth not to thee, i.e. doth not add any thing to thy felicity; for thou dost not need me nor my service, nor art capable of any advantage from it. Or, is *not for thee* , as this word is used, Gen_16:5 2Sa_1:26, i.e. for thy use or benefit. Or, *is not upon thee* , i.e. it lays no obligation upon thee, as this very word is taken, Jud_19:20 Psa_56:12 Eze_45:17. All comes to the same thing. The sense is, God is all-sufficient and infinitely happy, and the author of all the good that is in or is done by any of his creatures; and therefore cannot prevent nor oblige God any further than he is graciously pleased to oblige himself. Thus he renounceth all opinion of merit; and though he urged his trust in God, as a motive to persuade God to preserve him, Psa_16:1, yet he here declares that he did not do it, as thinking that God was indebted to him for it.

Psalms 16:3

But, i.e. but my goodness extendeth, which is easily understood out of the former verse; from which also there may be fetched another supplement; *O my soul, thou hast said, to the saints* , &c.

To the saints that are in the earth, i.e. to those holy and righteous persons that live upon earth with me; to these only or principally my goodness is extended. Because I cannot reach thee, I endeavour to pay a singular respect, and love, and kindness to all saints for thy sake, whose friends and servants they are, and whose image they bear. This may seem more properly to agree to

David than to Christ, whose goodness was principally designed for and imparted to sinners, and did not find men saints, but make them so; nor was it confined to them that lived with him upon the earth, but extended to all the believers of all ages before and after him.

To the excellent, or, *the magnificent* , or *mighty* , or *honourable* , to wit, the saints, as he now called them, whom, because they were mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, he honours with their just titles; and by appropriating them to the saints, he sufficiently intimates that all other men, how great soever, are but ignoble and *vile persons* , as he had called them, Psa_15:4.

In whom is all my delight, i.e. whose company and conversation is most pleasant and desirable to me. Compare Psa_119:63.

Psalms 16:4

That hasten after another god; or, that present or end too (as this verb signifies, Exo_22:16) another god, to wit, with oblations, as it follows. God is not expressed in the Hebrew text, but seems fitly and necessarily to be understood, because of the following offerings, which are made to none that is not either really or by reputation a god. The sense is, Idolaters, notwithstanding all their zeal or cost about their idols, gain nothing to themselves but abundance of sorrow and misery. This he mentioneth partly as one reason why he would have no fellowship with them in their idolatrous worship, which he adds in this verse; and partly that by this comparison he might illustrate and commend his own happiness, in having the Lord for his portion, of which he speaks, Psa_16:5,6. Or thus, Let their sorrows be multiplied, &c. Having showed his great respect and affection to the saints and excellent servants of the true God, he now declares what an abhorrency he had for those that forsake the true God, and worship idols; to whom he wisheth increase of their sorrows, whereby they may either be awakened and converted to the Lord again, or may be cut off, if they be impenitent and incorrigible.

Drinkofferings; under which he comprehends all their offerings, the reason being for substance the same in all; but he mentions these particularly, because of a special corruption in them above their other sacrifices, to wit, that the very matter of them was

unlawful, as we shall see; which also might serve both to convince and deter those Israelites which hearkened after idolatry, and made no conscience of maintaining communion with idolaters, which was the case of many of them in Saul's time; and to justify himself for his detestation of them, . and of all fellowship with them. Of blood; in which the Gentiles used (as divers learned men have observed) to offer, and sometimes to drink part of the blood of their sacrifices, whether of beasts or of men, as either of them were sacrificed; which must needs be very hateful to God, because he had so severely forbidden the drinking of blood to his people, either at their sacrifices, or in their common food.

Nor take up their names, i.e. of those other gods mentioned before. I abhor the very name and memory of them. Not that he thought it unlawful to name these idols, which is frequently done by holy prophets, but to express the odiousness of the thing by his loathing of the very name and shadow of them. Compare Exo_23:3 Deu_12:3 Hos_2:16,17 **Eph 5:3**. Or the sense is, I will not swear by them; for taking up one's name is used for swearing, Exo_20:7.

Psalms 16:5

Of mine inheritance, or, *of my division* , i.e. of that inheritance which God hath mercifully divided or distributed to me, and which I by his grace have chosen for myself. I envy not the vast riches and glory of idolaters, but do heartily rejoice in God as my portion, and desire no better nor no other felicity. God, who hath suffered other nations to walk in their own idolatrous ways, hath granted this favour to me, to know and worship him, the only true God. And as other nations have chosen and do adhere to their false gods, so have I chosen God, and will cleave to him.

And of my cup; the same thing repeated in other words. *The portion of my cup* , is the portion which is put into my cup, as the ancient manner was in feasts, where each had his portion of meat and of wine allotted to him. See Psa_11:6. The cup oft denotes a man's portion or condition, as Mat_20:22 **26:39**.

Thou maintainest my lot, i.e. my inheritance divided to me by lot, as the custom then was, Jos_18:11 Jud_1:3: q.d. As thou hast given me an excellent lot, having planted me among thine own

people, and in that place which thou hast chosen for thy dwelling and worship, so, I doubt not, thou wilt uphold and preserve me there, in spite of all the malicious designs of mine enemies that seek to drive me hence.

Psalms 16:6

The lines, i.e. my portion, which was measured with lines. Compare Jos_17:5 Deu_32:9.

In pleasant places; in a sweet land flowing with milk and honey, and, above all, blessed with the presence, and knowledge, and service of the true God.

Psalms 16:7

Who hath given me counsel, Heb. *consulted for me* , i.e. by his wise and gracious counsel hath provided so good an heritage for me, and withal inspired that counsel and wisdom into me, by which I have chosen the Lord for my portion, and am so fully satisfied with him.

My reins, i.e. my inward thoughts and affections, (which are commonly signified by *the reins* , as Psa_7:9 **26:2 73:21 139:13** Jer_11:20 **12:2 17:10**) being inspired and moved by the Holy Spirit.

Instruct me, i. e. direct me what course to take, how to please and serve God, and to put my whole trust and confidence in him, as it follows.

In the night seasons; not only in the day time, but also in the night, when others are asleep, but my mind is working upon God, and the things of God, and improving the silence, and leisure, and solitude of the night to holy meditations, and the exciting of my affections towards God.

Psalms 16:8

i.e. I have always presented him to my mind as my rule and scope, as my witness and judge, as my patron and protector, in the discharge of my office, and in all my actions. Hitherto David seems to have spoken in his own person, and with special respect to himself; but now he seems to have been transported by a higher, inspiration of the Spirit of prophecy, and to be carried above himself, and to have an eye to the man Christ Jesus, who is

and was the end of the law, and the great scope of all the prophets, and to speak of himself only as a type of Christ, and with more special respect unto Christ, in whom this and the following verses were much more truly and fully accomplished than in himself. Christ as man did always set his Father's will and glory before him, as he himself oft declareth, especially in St. John's Gospel.

He is at my right hand, to wit, to strengthen me, (for the right hand is the chief seat of a man's strength, and, instrument of action,) to protect, assist, and comfort me, as this phrase signifies, Psa_119:31 **90:5**. And this assistance of God was necessary to Christ as man.

I shall not be moved, or, *removed*, either from the discharge of my duty, or from the attainment of that glory and happiness which is prepared for me. Though the archers shoot grievously at me, and both men and devils seek my destruction, and God sets himself against me as an enemy, withdrawing his favour from me, and filling me with deadly sorrows, through the sense of his anger; yet I do not despair, but am assured that God will deliver me out of all my distresses.

Psalms 16:9

Therefore; upon this ground and confidence. My heart; the proper seat of joy, and of all the affections.

My glory; either,

1. My soul, which is indeed the glory of a man. Or rather,

2. My tongue, which also is a man's glory and privilege above all other living creatures, and the instrument of glorifying both God and man; and which is oft called a man's *glory*, as Gen_49:6 Psa_30:12 **57:8 108:1 149:5**. And so this very word is translated Act_2:26. And thus the distinction between *heart*, and *glory*, and

flesh is more certain and evident. *Rejoiceth*; or, *exulteth*, i.e. declares or expresseth my inward joy. For this verb signifies not so much internal joy, as the outward and visible demonstrations of it in words or gestures and carriage.

My flesh shall rest, i.e. my body shall quietly and sweetly rest in the grave, to which I am hastening.

In hope, i.e. in confident assurance of its incorruption there, and of its resurrection to a blessed and immortal life, as it is explained, Psa_16:10,11. The flesh or body is in itself but a dead and senseless lump of clay, yet *hope* is here ascribed to it figuratively, as it is to the brute creatures, Rom_8:19, because there is matter and foundation for such hope, if it were capable of it, the good promised and expected being certainly future.

Psalms 16:10

My soul, i.e. my person, as this word is every where used by a synecdoche of the part, and then the person by another synecdoche of the whole is put for the body. *The soul* is oft put for the body; either for the living body, as Psa_35:3 **105:18**, or for the carcass or dead body, as it is taken Lev_19:28 **21:1** Num_5:2 **6:6,9,11 9:10 19:11,13**; and so it is interpreted in this very place, as it is produced, Act_2:29, &c.; Act_13:36,37.

In hell, i.e. in the grave or state of the dead, as appears,

1. From the Hebrew word *scheol* , which is very frequently so understood, as is undeniably evident from Gen_42:38 Num_16:30 Job_14:13 compared with Job_17:13 Psa_18:5 **30:3 141:7** Ecc_9:10 Eze_32:21,27 **Jon 2:2**, and many other places.

2. From the following clause of this verse.

3. From Ac 2\$ 13\$, where it is so expounded and applied. *Thine Holy One* , i.e. me thy holy Son, whom thou hast sanctified and sent into the world: It is peculiar to Christ to be called *the Holy One of God* , Mar_1:24 Luk_4:34. *To see corruption* , or *rottenness* , i.e. to be corrupted or putrefied in the grave, as the bodies of others are. *Seeing* is oft put for perceiving by experience; in which sense men are said to *see good* , Psa_34:12, and *to see death* , or the grave, Psa_89:48 Luk_2:26 Joh_8:51, and *to see sleep* , Ecc_8:16. And the Hebrew word *shochath* , though sometimes by a metonymy it signifies the pit or *place of corruption* , yet properly and generally it signifies *corruption* or *perdition* , as Job_17:14 **33:18,30 Psa 35:7 55:23** Jon_2:6, and is so rendered by the seventy Jewish interpreters, Psa_107:20 Pro_28:10 Jer_13:4 **15:3** Lam_4:20 Eze_19:4 **21:31**. And so it must be understood here, although some of the Jews, to avoid the force of this argument, render it *the pit* . But in that sense it is not

true; for whether it be meant of David, as they say, or of Christ, it is confessed that both of them did see the pit, i.e. were laid in the grave. And therefore it must necessarily be taken in the other sense now mentioned; and so it is properly and literally true in Christ alone, although it may in a lower and metaphorical sense be applied to David, who had a just and well-grounded confidence, that although God might bring him into great dangers and distresses, which are called *the sorrows of death* , and *the pains of hell* , Psa_116:3; yet God would not leave him to perish in or by them.

Psalms 16:11

Thou wilt show me, i.e. give me an exact and experimental knowledge of it, for my own comfort, and the benefit of my people.

The path of life, i.e. the way that leadeth to life; not to a temporal and mortal life here, for he is supposed to be dead and buried, Psa_16:10; but to an endless, and immortal, and blessed life after death in the presence of God, as it followeth; the way to which is by the resurrection of the body. So the sense is, Thou wilt raise me from the grave, and conduct me to the place and state of everlasting felicity.

In thy presence, Heb. *with* or *before thy face* , i.e. in that heavenly paradise, where thou art graciously and gloriously present, where thou dost clearly and fully discover thy face, and the light of thy countenance; whereas in this life thou hidest thy face, and shewest us only thy back parts, and we are in a state of absence from thee, and see thee only through a glass darkly, and enjoy thee but in part.

Fulness of joy, i.e. full and perfect joy and satisfaction, which it is in vain to expect in this life, and is only to be found in the sight of thee. See Exo_33:14 Psa_17:5 Mat_5:8 1Jo_3:2.

At thy right hand; which he mentions as a place of greatest honour, as this was, Gen_48:13, &c.; 1Ki_2:19 Psa_45:9, and the place where the elect and saints are placed at the last day, Mat_25:33, &c.; and lastly, at the place where Christ himself is said to sit, Psa_110:1 Mat_26:64 Col_3:1 Heb_1:3.

Pleasures for evermore; everlasting delights in the contemplation and fruition of God.

Psalms 17:1 PSALM 17

David being now grievously persecuted and distressed by Saul and other enemies, and being also bespattered with many calumnies, he appeals to the heart-searching God, makes a solemn protestation of his integrity, earnestly begs of God protection and deliverances; and being made weary of this life by his pressing and manifold calamities, he comforts himself with the contemplation and hope of a happier life.

David, in confidence of his integrity, Psa_17:1-6, prayeth to God for defence against his enemies, Psa_17:7-9. He showeth their pride, craft, and eagerness to make a prey of the innocent, Psa_17:10-12; and prayeth against them in confidence of his hope, Psa_17:13-15.

The right, Heb. *righteousness* , i.e. me, who, notwithstanding all their accusations and slanders, am righteous. Or, my righteous cause; do thou take notice of it, and give sentence for me. Or, my righteous prayer. I desire nothing that is unreasonable or unjust, but that thou wouldst judge righteously between me and mine enemies, and vindicate thine own honour and faithfulness in making good thy promise to me; which thy righteousness obliges thee to do.

My cry, i.e. my fervent prayer attended with strong cries.

Not out of feigned lips, Heb. *not with deceitful lips* , which speak one thing, when my heart knoweth and designeth another. And this profession of his sincerity in his words doth fitly make way for his solemn appeal to God in the following verses.

Psalms 17:2

My sentence, Heb. *my right or judgment* , i.e. judgment in my cause, or on my behalf.

From thy presence, i.e. from thee, and from thy tribunal, to which I bring my cause. Do not suspend or delay it, but speedily examine my cause and give sentence in it.

Things that are equal, or *right* . For though I desire and need thy grace and favour in many other respects, yet I beg only thy justice in this cause between me and them.

Psalms 17:3

Proved, or *searched* , or *tried it* , by many and sore temptations and afflictions, whereby the sincerity or hypocrisy of men's hearts are easily and commonly discovered, and especially by thy all-seeing eye. And that is my great comfort, that thou art witness of my innocency.

Thou hast visited me; thou hast made an inspection and inquiry into my heart.

In the night; either,

1. Metaphorically, i.e. in the time of trouble. Or,
2. Properly; when men's minds being freed from the encumbrance and distraction of business, and from the presence and society of men, (which either lays a restraint upon them, or tempts them to use dissimulation,) do act most vigorously and freely, either upon good or evil, according to their several inclinations.

Thou hast tried me, accurately and severely, as goldsmiths do metals.

Shalt find nothing, i.e. nothing of unrighteousness. Heb. *shalt not find* , to wit, that whereof mine enemies accuse me, namely, hypocrisy towards thee, and evil design against Saul, covered under fair pretences, as they allege. So this general phrase is to be limited from the context, as other generals most frequently are. For he was so far from thinking himself sinless, that he often acknowledgeth his many and great sins, and particularly, that *if God should enter into judgment with him, and be severe to mark iniquities, no living man could be justified, or stand before him* , Psa_130:3 **143:2**.

I am purposed, or, *I have resolved* upon deliberation, as the word implies, that my mouth shall not transgress; I am so far from practising against Saul's life, as they charge me, that I will not wrong him so much as in a word. Some join these words with the next foregoing, and render the place thus, That which *I have thought, my mouth shall not transgress* , or rather, *hath not*

transgressed , i.e. my thoughts and words always agree together. I abhor falsehood and dissimulation.

Psalms 17:4

Concerning the works of men: concerning my care and caution about my words, I have now spoken, Psa_17:3, now I may say the like concerning my works. As for the works which men generally practise. Or, *because of* (as the prefix *lamed* is oft used, as Gen_2:23 Num_16:34 Jer_4:31 **22:10 23:9**)

the works of men. So the sense may be this, Observing and considering the quality of the works of the men of this age, with whom I converse, or of all mankind, some few excepted; considering, I say, how wicked, and unreasonable, and pernicious they are, not only to others, but also to themselves; I was resolved to take more care in the ordering of my own actions.

By the word of thy lips, i.e. by the help of thy blessed word, and the excellent rules, promises, and threatenings thereof, which by deep and frequent meditation I have hid and fixed in mine heart, as the best antidote against sin and temptation, Psa_119:9,**11**.

I have kept; so the same verb is used with the like supplement Jos_6:18, which also is in a manner included in the verb. Or, *I have observed* , to wit, so as to avoid them.

The paths, or *ways* , i.e. the customs and practices, or the imitation of them; as may be gathered from the next verse, where he prays to be kept in God's *paths* , which are opposed to these paths.

Of the destroyer; or, of *the violent man* ; such as Saul and his courtiers and soldiers have showed themselves toward me. Although their rage and violence against me might have tempted me to have repaid them in their own coin, yet I forbore it, and spared both others and Saul himself, when his life was at my mercy, 1Sa 24\$ 26\$; and this I did in obedience to thy word, which required me to honour and preserve the Lord's anointed.

Psalms 17:5

As by thy word and grace thou hast hitherto kept me from the paths of evil men, and led me into thy paths; so, I pray thee, enable me by the same means to persevere in thy ways, and in

mine abhorrency of wicked courses, that I may not fall into that sin of revenging myself upon Saul, to which I may be more and more tempted; nor into any other sin, whereby thou mayst be provoked, or men may be offended, and religion disgraced.

Psalms 17:6

I have called upon thee; it hath been, and still is, and shall be my constant course to apply myself to thee for assistance and for deliverance.

For thou wilt hear me, O God; for though thou mayst delay for a season, I am well assured that thou wilt hear and answer me.

Psalms 17:7

Thy marvellous loving-kindness, to wit, in preserving and delivering me; which, if thou dost, I must ever acknowledge it to be an act of kindness, or free grace, or undeserved bounty, yea, and of marvellous kindness, because of my extreme and pressing dangers, out of which nothing but a wonder of God's mercy and power can save me.

By thy right hand, i. e. by thy great power.

In thee, or, *in it* , i.e. in thy right hand, as was now expressed.

From those that rise up against them; or, *because of* (as the Hebrew prefix *mem* oft signifies, as Psa_12:6, and elsewhere) *those exalt themselves* , (as this word signifies, Job_20:27 **27:7** Psa_49:1) not only against me, but against thee, who hast engaged and declared thyself for me. So this prayer is like that Psa_66:7, *Let not the rebellious exalt themselves* . But this place is otherwise translated in the margin of our Bibles, with which divers others, both ancient and later interpreters, agree, and that more agreeably to the order of the words in the Hebrew text,

O thou that savest (or *usest to save*)

them which trust in thee (or, as the Hebrew word may be properly rendered without any supplement, *believers*) *from those that rise up against thy right hand* , i.e. either against thy mighty power, which thou hast already showed in my wonderful preservation; or against thy counsel (which is called God's *hand* , Act_4:28) and revealed will concerning my advancement to the kingdom, which divers of these men did knowingly oppose, as

may be gathered from 2Sa_3:9,10. Or, *against* the man (which word is oft understood, whereof examples have been given, and more we shall have in this book) *of thy right hand* , as David is called, Psa_80:17. According to this translation his prayer is enforced with a double motive, to wit, his trust in God, and his enemies' opposition against God.

Psalms 17:8

The apple of the eye; which God hath marvellously fenced on every side, and men use their utmost care and diligence to keep.

Under the shadow of thy Wings; as a hen doth her chickens.

Psalms 17:9

From the wicked; or, *because of the wicked. From my deadly enemies* ; Heb. *from those who are mine enemies in* , or *for* , or *against my* (which pronoun is easily supplied out of the foregoing word, where it is expressed) *soul or life* , i.e. whom nothing but my blood and life will satisfy.

Who compass me about; which shows both their extreme malice and his great danger.

Psalms 17:10

They live in great splendour and prosperity, whilst I am exercised with many and sore troubles. The like phrase we have Job_15:27 Psa_73:7.

They speak proudly; not only against us, whom they scorn, but even against God himself, whom they despise, boasting of their own power, and what great things they will certainly effect against me.

Psalms 17:11

In our steps, i. e. in all our ways. We go from place to place, to rocks, and caves, and woods; but wheresoever we go they are at hand, and ready to surround us; of which see an example, 1Sa_23:26.

They have set their eyes, to wit, upon or against us, i.e. they have discovered us, and keep their eyes fixed upon us, that we may not escape, or as designing to shoot at us.

Bowing down to the earth, i. e. couching and casting themselves down upon the earth, that they may not be discovered, and so may watch the fittest opportunity to surprise us; which sense is favoured by the next verse, and by comparing Psa_10:10. Otherwise, *to cast us down to the earth* .

Psalms 17:12

Like a lion that is greedy of his prey; when he is hungry, and therefore cruel. See Psa_7:2 **10:8-10**.

Psalms 17:13

Disappoint him, Heb. *prevent his face* , i.e. go forth against him, and meet and face him in battle, as enemies use to do. Or, prevent the execution of his mischievous designs against me; stop him in his attempt, and give him the first blow.

Which is thy sword; or, thy hand, as it follows, Psa_17:14, i.e. thy instrument to execute vengeance upon thine enemies, or to chastise and exercise thy people; for which reason the Assyrian is called God's *rod* , Isa_10:5, as being ordained for correction, Hab_1:12. The sense is, Do not punish me by this rod; let me fall into thy hands, and not into the hands of wicked men, 2Sa_24:14. Or, by (which preposition is understood Psa_2:12, and oft elsewhere) *thy sword* , i.e. by thy power.

Psalms 17:14

Which are thy hand, wherewith thou dost correct me.

Men of the world, i. e. who prosper in and set their hearts upon this vain and transitory world, and neither have, nor choose, or desire any other portion or felicity, as it follows.

Whose belly, i.e. mind or appetite, as that word is used, Job_20:20 Pro_20:30.

With thy hid treasure, i.e. not only with common mercies, as food and raiment; but with thy choicest and most precious good things, such as men use to hide or keep in their treasures, with extraordinary wealth and glory, and all the delights and of the present life.

They are full of children; when many of the faithful servants are barren, these are blessed with a numerous posterity. Or, *their children are filled or satisfied* as well as their parents. There is

abundantly enough, both for them and for their children, and to spare for their children's children, as it follows.

Psalms 17:15

I do not envy this their felicity, but my hopes and happiness are of another nature. I do not place my portion in earthly and temporal treasures, as they do, but in *beholding God's face*, i.e. in the enjoyment of God's presence and favour; which is indeed enjoyed in part in this life, but not fully and to satisfaction, or which David here speaks, as appears from the last clause of this verse; *the sight of God and of his face* being frequently spoken of, both the Old and New Testament, as a privilege denied even to the saints in this life, and peculiar to the next life, as is manifest from Exo_33:20 Jud_13:22 Mat_5:8 1Co_13:12 2Co_3:18 1Jo_3:2.

In righteousness; with the comfort of a good conscience, bearing me witness that, notwithstanding all the calumnies and censures of mine enemies, I have been and am upright and righteous in the course of my life, both towards thee and towards all men; which testimony will enable me to look God in the face with boldness, when mine enemies, being conscious to themselves of gross and manifold unrighteousness towards thee, and me, and others, will be afraid to appear in thy presence.

I shall be satisfied: I am now greatly distressed and dissatisfied, and mine enemies are filled and satisfied with good things; but my turn will come, the time is coming wherein I shall be abundantly satisfied, to wit, with beholding thy face, which is to me more comfortable and satisfactory than all the possessions of this world.

When I awake; either,

1. When I shall be delivered from my present distresses and calamities. But these never are in Scripture, nor indeed can fitly be, called by the name of *sleep*, which is every where spoken of as a state of rest and quietness; as Psa_127:2 Joh_11:12,13; and consequently deliverance from them cannot be compared to awaking. Or rather,

2. When I shall arise from the dead; for *death* is very frequently called *sleep*, both in Scripture, as 1Ki_1:21 Isa_26:19 Jer_51:39,57 **Da 12:2** Joh_11:11,13, and in other authors; and consequently resurrection from the dead is justly and fitly called

an awaking, as it is Job_14:12 Dan_12:2 Joh_11:11. And since the doctrine of the resurrection of the just to a blessed and endless life was not unknown to the holy men of God in the Old Testament, as it were very easy to prove, nor to David in particular, as appears from Psa_16:10,**11**, and from divers other passages, it cannot be imagined but David would support and comfort himself in his greatest agonies with the consideration thereof, this being incomparably the most weighty and effectual argument and ground of comfort which he could possibly use. And this also best suits with the context; for David is here opposing his hopes and portion to that of his enemies; and having noted, not without a secret reflection and reproach upon them for it, that their portion was in this life, Psa_17:14, it was most consonant to the place and to the thing itself, that he should seek and have his happiness in the future life.

With thy likeness, or *image* ; by which may be understood either,

1. Christ, the Son of God, who was known to David and other prophets, as is evident, and that under the name of the Son of God, Psa_2:7,**12 Pr 30:4** Hos_11:1, compared with Mat_2:15, who being exactly like to his Father, might most fitly be called his *likeness* or *image* , as he is, Heb_1:3. Or,

2. The image of God stamped upon his glorified soul; which must needs afford him infinite delight and satisfaction. Or,

3. God himself, or the face of God mentioned in the former clause, and explained, here by another phrase, as is very usual in these writings. And this interpretation may receive strength from Num_12:8, where *beholding the similitude of the Lord* is evidently the same thing which is elsewhere called *seeing his face* ; and from Heb_10:1, where *the image* doth not note the likeness or representation, but the truth and existence of the thing.

Psalms 18:1 PSALM 18

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm, with some few and small variations, is written **2Sa 22**. It was composed by David towards the end of his reign and life upon the occasion here mentioned.

The servant of the Lord; who esteemeth it a greater honour to be thy servant, than to be king of Israel, and who doth entirely devote himself to thy service and glory.

In the day that the Lord delivered him, i.e. after the death of Saul, and the conquest of all his succeeding enemies, and his own firm establishment in his kingdom.

David professeth his love to God, Psa_18:1, and his confidence in his attributes, Psa_18:2. He praises God for deliverance out of trouble, Psa_18:3-5. His experience of God's hearing him in an awful manner, Psa_18:6-31. He acknowledgeth God's help against his enemies, Psa_18:32-50.

Most affectionately and with my whole soul; as the Hebrew word signifies. I can return thee no better thing for all thy favours than my love and heart, which I pray thee to accept. By *loving* him he understands not only his inward affection, but also all the outward expressions and testimonies of it, praising, and glorifying, and serving of him.

O Lord, my strength; from whom alone I have received all my strength, and success, and settlement, and in whom alone I trust, as it follows, Psa_18:2.

Psalms 18:2

My rock; to which I flee for refuge, as the Israelites did to their rocks. See Jud_6:2 1Sa_13:6.

The horn; by which I have both defended myself, and subdued mine enemies. It is a metaphor from those beasts whose strength lies in their horns. The *horn* is oft put for *power*, as Psa_92:10 Amo_6:13, and elsewhere.

Psalms 18:3

Or, *I did call* *Ñand was saved*. For the future tense is commonly used for that which is past. And this seems best to agree with the whole context, which is to praise God for mercies already received.

Psalms 18:4

The sorrows of death, i.e. dangerous and deadly troubles. Or, *the bands or cords of death*, which had almost seized me, and was putting its bands upon me. Compare Psa_73:4.

The floods of ungodly men; their great multitudes, and strength, and violent assaults, breaking in upon me like a flood.

Psalms 18:5

Of hell; or, *of the grave* , which brought me to the brink of the grave.

Prevented me; had almost taken hold of me, ere I was aware of my danger.

Psalms 18:6

Out of his temple; either, 1. Out of his sanctuary; whence he promised to hear and answer the prayers of his people, which are either made there or directed thither. Or,

2. Out of his heavenly habitation, which is oft called his temple:
See Poole "Psa_11:4".

Psalms 18:7

Then God appeared on my behalf in a miraculous and glorious manner, and with the great terror and confusion of all mine enemies, which is here compared to an earthquake. The earthquake was so deep and violent, that it overthrew whole mountains by the roots; whereby he designs his lofty and potent enemies; such being oft compared to mountains, as Psa_46:2,**3 144:5** Isa_41:15, &c.

Psalms 18:8

Smoke out of his nostrils; as is usual in persons transported with great anger and rage. He manifested his great displeasure against my adversaries.

Coals were kindled by it; which notes the fervency, constancy, and efficacy of his anger.

Psalms 18:9

He bowed the heavens, by producing thick and dark clouds, by which the heavens seem to come down to the earth.

Came down; not by change of place, but by the manifestation of his presence and power on my behalf.

Psalms 18:10

Upon a cherub; or, *upon the cherubims* , by an enallage of number; that is, upon the angels, who are so called, Gen_3:24

Heb_9:5, who are also called God's *chariots* , Psa_68:17, upon which he is said to sit and ride; all which is not to be understood grossly, but only to note God's using of the ministry of angels in raising such storms and tempests as are here described.

Upon the wings of the wind; as swiftly as the wind. He came to my rescue with all speed.

Psalms 18:11

His secret place; or, *his hiding-place* ; i.e. he covered himself with dark clouds, from hence he secretly shot at his enemies, as it follows.

Dark waters, i.e. watery vapours and thick clouds, as the next words expound these.

Psalms 18:12

At his glorious and powerful appearance

his thick clouds passed away, i.e. vanished, (as this word is oft taken, as Psa_90:5,6 Isa 29:5 Hab_3:10) being dissolved into showers of hail-stones, &c.

Psalms 18:13

The Lord also thundered, to wit, against my adversaries. *Thunder* is a sign of God's anger, 1Sa_2:10 **7:10**.

His voice, i.e. thunder, oft so called. The same thing expressed in other words.

Psalms 18:14

His arrows, to wit, *lightnings* , as it is explained in the next clause.

Scattered them, to wit, mine enemies; which is sufficiently understood from Psa_18:3,**17**, and from the whole context.

Psalms 18:15

By mighty and terrible earthquakes, which overturned the earth, and made its lower parts uppermost and visible.

Psalms 18:16

He sent angels, or assistance otherwise.

Psalms 18:17

From them that wanted neither malice nor power.

Psalms 18:18

They were too cunning for me, and had almost surprised me; but they could not prevent thee.

Psalms 18:19

He brought me forth out of my straits and difficulties, out of the little caves in which I was shut up and imprisoned.

Into a large place; into a state of freedom, and plenty, and comfort.

Because he delighted in me, or loved me, or had a good will to me, as this phrase commonly signifies; whereby he ascribes all his mercies and blessings to God's good pleasure and free grace, as the first spring of them; which he thought fit to premise, lest the following expressions should seem to favour of boasting of his own merits, which he oft disclaims.

Psalms 18:20

As I had a just cause, and made it my care and business to deal righteously with God, and with Saul, and all others; so God (who hath engaged himself by his promise to succour and reward them that are such) was graciously pleased to own me, and to plead my cause against my unrighteous enemies. And because I would not deliver myself from straits and miseries by unrighteous means, namely, by killing Saul, as I was advised to do, God was pleased to deliver me in a more honourable and effectual manner.

The cleanness of my hands, i.e. the innocency of my actions and carriage towards Saul, from whose blood I kept my hands pure.

Psalms 18:21

I have observed and obeyed his precepts, and made mine own will, and passions, and interest stoop to them. And I have not knowingly and wilfully forsaken God, and broken his laws, as wicked men do; which he adds by way of correction and explication, lest the former or following clauses should be interpreted as a profession of such a perfect and sinless righteousness, whereby he might in strict justice be justified by and before God, which he elsewhere utterly disowns, Psa_130:3 **143:2**, and which David, especially towards the end of his days, (when this Psalm was composed, as the title shows,) could not pretend to without great arrogance and falsehood, as having been

guilty of those great sins of murder and adultery, and many other errors, as he confesseth, Psa_19:12, and oft elsewhere.

Psalms 18:22

Before me, i.e. before the eyes of my mind; I diligently studied and considered them, that I might govern my whole life by them.

From me, i.e. out of my view, as ungodly men do; who like not to retain God nor his word in their hearts or thoughts.

Psalms 18:23

I did not pretend religion before men for my own ends, but did approve my heart and ways to the all-seeing God.

And I kept myself from mine iniquity, i.e. from that sin which I was most inclined or tempted to; either,

1. From my hereditary and natural corruption, so far that it should not have dominion over me, nor break forth into any presumptuous or scandalous sins. Or rather,

2. From the sin of killing Saul, which might be called *his sin*, because this might seem most agreeable and desirable to him, both as a man and as a soldier, and as anointed to be king, as being a likely way both to revenge, and to preserve, and to advance himself; to which also he might seem to be both invited by the fair opportunity which Providence had put into his hand, 1Sa_24:4 **26:8**, and necessitated by Saul's implacable malice, and his own perpetual and extreme dangers and distresses; and to which he was so strongly tempted by his own followers, in the place now quoted.

Psalms 18:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 18:25

Upright, or *sincere*, to wit, in performing what thou hast promised to such persons, this being a great part or act of sincerity, when one's deeds and words, or professions, agree together; as, on the contrary, for those that deal hypocritically and wickedly with thee, thou wilt make them to know thy breach of promise, as it is expressed, Num_14:34. The sense of the verse is, Thou metest to every one the same measure which he meteth out to others, and givest to him the fruit of his own doings, and

therefore thou wilt perform mercy and truth to those who are merciful and true to others, as through thy mercy I have been.

Psalms 18:26

Pure; free from the least mixture or appearance of unrighteousness, or unfaithfulness, or unkindness; or simply and sincerely, such as thou usest and hast promised to be to them that are such; for

purity is oft put for *sincerity* .

Froward, or *perverse* , i.e. thou wilt cross him, and walk contrary to him, as thou hast threatened, Lev_26:23,24. See also Pro_3:34. Man's *perverseness* here is moral and sinful, but God's *perverseness* is judicial and penal.

Psalms 18:27

The afflicted people; such as I and my poor followers were.

High looks, i.e. proud persons, who discover the pride of their hearts by their haughty looks and carriages, Psa_101:5 Pro_6:17, such as mine enemies were.

Psalms 18:28

Or, *thou dost light* , or *hast lighted, my candle* , i.e. given me safety, and comfort, and prosperity, and glory, and posterity also; all which are oft signified by a *candle* or a *light* , as Est_8:16 Job_21:17 **29:3** Psa_97:11 **132:17**, &c.

Psalms 18:29

By thee I have broken through the armed troops of mine enemies. I have sealed the walls of their strongest cities and castles, and so taken them.

Psalms 18:30

His way is perfect; his counsel and providence, though it may sometimes be dark and hard to be understood, yet is always wise and just, and every way perfect or unbecomable.

The word of the Lord is tried; the truth of God's promises is certain, and approved by innumerable experiences, and mine among the rest.

Psalms 18:31

It must needs be as I have said, because our Lord is the only God, and therefore there is none, neither God nor creature, that can hinder him from accomplishing his own word and work, or from defending those that trust him: he is unchangeable and invincible. Or this is an amplification, As God is what I have now described him to be, so he only is such, and there is no other God or Rock in which they may safely trust.

Psalms 18:32

That girdeth me with strength; that gives me strength both of mind and body for battle. It is a metaphor taken either from a military girdle, or from a common girdle, wherewith their loose garments were girt about them, whereby they were rendered fitter for any action.

Perfect, i.e. perfectly plain and smooth, and clear from impediments, as pioneers use to prepare the way for the march of an army. He guided me in all my counsels and enterprises, so that I neither miss my way, nor stumble in it, nor come short of my end.

Psalms 18:33

Like hinds' feet, i.e. most swift and nimble. As he made me wise in counsel and contrivance, (which he elsewhere saith,) so he made me speedy and expeditious in the execution; which are the two great excellencies of a captain. He gave me great agility, either to flee and escape from mine enemies, when prudence required it; or to pursue them, when I saw occasion.

Setteth me, Heb. *maketh me to stand*, i.e. either he placeth me in safe and strong places, out of the reach of mine enemies; or he confirms and establisheth me in that high and honourable estate into which he hath advanced me, and gives me wisdom to improve my victories.

Psalms 18:34

To him I owe all that military skill, or strength, or courage which I have. My strength is sufficient, not only to bend

a bow of steel, but to break it.

Psalms 18:35

The shield of thy salvation; thy safeguard and protection, which hath been to me like a shield to defend me.

Holden me up; kept me from falling into those snares and mischiefs which mine enemies designed, and I feared.

Thy gentleness, or

meekness, as this word signifies, Num_12:3 Psa_10:17 **45:4** Zep_2:3, i.e. thy clemency, whereby thou hast pardoned my sins, which might otherwise have undone me, and mitigated thy corrections which I have deserved; thy grace and benignity, which thou hast freely showed to me and for me.

Psalms 18:36

Thou hast enlarged my steps; which before were straitened and confined to a little compass, and entangled with the narrowness and difficulty of the way. *Thou hast set my feet in a large room* , Psa_31:8 **118:5**, i.e. thou hast brought me out of all my straits and difficulties into a state of freedom and safety.

Slip, or *stumble* , as they are apt to do in narrow and uneven ways.

Psalms 18:37

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 18:38

i.e. Cast down to the ground, so as I may tread upon their necks, after the manner of conquerors, Deu_33:29 Jos_10:24.

Psalms 18:39

He repeats what he had said Psa_18:32, lest he should seem to arrogate to himself his great achievements and victories mentioned Psa_18:37,**38**, and that he might give God the whole praise and glory of them.

Psalms 18:40

Either,

1. That I might smite or behead them. Or,

2. That I might put my yoke upon their necks, or bring them into subjection. Or rather thus, *Thou hast made them turn their backs to me* , i.e. flee away from me; for so this very phrase is used and

rendered, Exo_23:27 Jos_7:8,12, and elsewhere. So far are they mistaken, that say this Hebrew word *oreph* is only used for the neck, and not for the *back* . *That I might destroy them* ; that I might have opportunity to destroy them.

Psalms 18:41

He speaks of his Israelitish enemies, who in their distresses prayed to God for help against him.

Psalms 18:42

Or, *rid them away* , as dirt is usually swept or carried out of houses or streets. Or, *tread them down* , or *bruise them* , as men do dirt when they walk in the streets.

Psalms 18:43

From the strivings of the people; from contentions, and seditions, and tumults of my own people under Saul, and Ishbosheth, and Absalom.

The head of the heathen; of the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, and others.

Whom I have not known; whom I had no acquaintance with, nor relation to, no, not by thy promise or grant; even barbarous and remote nations.

Psalms 18:44

As soon as they hear of me; either,

1. At the fame of my name and victorious arms. Or,
2. At the first tidings of my coming towards them. Or rather,
3. As soon as they understand my will and pleasure, they shall instantly comply with it.

Submit themselves unto me, Heb. *shall lie unto me* , i.e. shall submit themselves to me not willingly and cheerfully, as they will pretend, but only out of fear, and by constraint; by which it appears that this is spoken with reference to David, and not (as some would have it) to Christ, because Christ's people are a willing people, Psa_110:3, and those whom he conquers do freely obey him.

Psalms 18:45

Shall fade away, i.e. shall wither and decay in their hopes and strength.

Be afraid, i.e. shall come trembling; one verb being put for two, as Psa_22:21, *thou hast heard me* , i.e. having delivered me; and Psa_42:1, *panteth* , i.e. panting hasteneth; and in many other places.

Out of their close places; out of their strong holds, where they shall lurk and keep themselves for fear of me, and whence they dare not stir without trembling. Or, *for* (as the particle mere is oft used)

their close places, i.e. lest I should assault and take them.

Psalms 18:46

He and he only is the true living God, and he hath manifested himself to be for my comfort, and for the confusion of mine enemies, when other gods are dead and impotent idols. Or, *Let the Lord live* . So it is a joyful and thankful acclamation, spoken after the manner of earthly princes.

Blessed be my rock; let him have all blessing and praise, for he is worthy of it.

Psalms 18:47

That avengeth me; that executed vengeance both by me against malicious enemies, and for me against Saul, of whom I would not avenge myself.

Psalms 18:48

Above those that rise up against me; above their malice and power.

From the violent man; from Saul, whom for honour's sake he forbears to mention.

Psalms 18:49

Among the heathen; or, among the Gentiles or nations; i.e. either,

1. In the great congregations, consisting of the Israelites of all tribes; of whom this very word is used, Jos_3:17 **4:1** Eze_2:3, and elsewhere, as hath been noted before. Or,

2. In the presence of those Gentiles, who resorted to Jerusalem in great numbers, or before others of them, who are either subject to me, or confederate with me, as I have occasion of speaking or writing to any of them. But this was but an uncertain and inconsiderable business. And therefore David is here transported beyond himself, even to his seed for ever, as it is expressed Psa_18:50, and speaks this in special relation to Christ, who was to be his Seed, and of whom he was an eminent type, and by whom alone this was done to any purpose. And therefore this is justly applied to him, and to his preaching to and calling of the Gentiles, Rom_15:9.

Psalms 18:50

To his king; to the king whom God himself chose, and anointed, or constituted.

To his seed; to all his posterity, and especially to the Messiah, who is called David's Seed, Act_13:23 Rom_1:3; and his *Son* , Psa_89:27 **90:1**, compared with Mat_22:42; and *the Seed* by way of eminency, Gal_3:16; and *God 's Anointed* and King, Psa_2:2.

Psalms 19:1 PSALM 19

THE ARGUMENT

The design of this Psalm is to adore and magnify the name of God, for the discovery of his wisdom, and power, and goodness, both by his great and glorious works of creation and providence, and especially by his word and the Holy Scripture; which he prefers before the former.

The heavens declare the glory of God, Psa_19:1. So do night and day, Psa_19:2,3, and the sun, Psa_19:4-6. The perfection, purity, and extent of God's law; its effects, Psa_19:7-12. He prayeth against presumptuous sins, Psa_19:13.

The heavens; these visible heavens, so vast and spacious, richly adorned with stars, so various and admirable in their course or station, so useful and powerful in their influences.

Declare; not properly, but objectively, as *the earth* , and *trees* , and *stars* are said to speak, Job_12:8 **38:7** Isa_55:12; they demonstrate or make it evident and undeniable to all men of sense

or reason; they are as a most legible book, wherein even he that runs may read it.

The glory of God, i.e. his glorious being or existence, *his eternal power and Godhead* , as it is particularly expressed, Rom_1:20; his infinite wisdom and goodness; all which are so visible in them, that it is ridiculous to deny or doubt of them, as it is esteemed ridiculous to think of far meaner works of art, as a house or a book, &c., that they were made without an artist, or without a hand.

The firmament; or, *the expansion* , i.e. all this vast space extended from the earth to the highest heavens, with all its goodly furniture, the same thing which he called *heavens*.

Showeth his handywork; the excellency of the work discovers who was the author of it, that it did not come by chance, nor spring of itself, but was made by the Lord God Almighty.

Psalms 19:2

Day unto day; or rather, *after* (as the Hebrew *lamed* oft signifies, as Exo_16:1 **29:38** 2Ch_30:21 Psa_96:2) *day* ; for the day doth not utter this to the day, but to us upon the day. The sense is either,

1. That orderly, and constant, and useful succession of days and nights one after another declare this. But of the course of the sun, the effect whereof this succession is, he speaks Psa_19:5. Or rather,

2. Every day and night renews or repeats these documents and demonstrations of God's glory. He that neglects them one day, may learn them the next day.

Uttereth, or, *poureth forth* , to wit, constantly, and abundantly, and forcibly, as a fountain doth water, as this Hebrew verb signifies.

Speech; or *the word* , or *discourse* , to wit, concerning God. It hath as it were a tongue to speak the praises of its Maker, i.e. it gives men occasion to magnify and adore him.

Showeth knowledge, i. e. gives us a clear and certain knowledge or discovery of God their author.

Psalms 19:3

Or, *understood* , as the verb oft signifies, as Gen_11:7 **42:23** 2Ki_18:26 1Co_14:2; for the *hearing* of it would have been insignificant without the understanding of it, in which the force of the argument lies. The sense is, There are divers nations in the world, which have several languages, so that one cannot discourse with or be understood by another; but the heavens are such a universal and admirable teacher, that they can speak to all people under them, and be clearly understood by all. *No nation* , or *people* , saith that wise and learned heathen, Tully, *is so barbarous and sottish, as, when they look up to the heavens, not to perceive that there is a God, or to imagine that those things are the effect of blind chance, which are made with such wonderful art and wisdom, that it requires extraordinary art to understand their excellent orders and course* . But this verse is by divers learned men otherwise translated, not without an elegant gradation, as some observe. *They have no speech nor word, nor is any voice or heard in or from them*. Then follow the next verse by way of opposition, yet *their line* , &c. Or thus, *They have no speech nor words* , (which is supposed to be here said by way of prolepsis, to soften and explain his former expressions of the heavens, *declaring and speaking* ,) yet (or, but *without* them) their voice is heard or understood.

Psalms 19:4

Their line; either,

1. Their admirable structure made exactly, and as it were by line: see Job_38:5 Zec_1:16. Or,

2. *Their lines* , the singular number being put for the plural, for the line answereth to the words in the next clause. And by *line* or *lines* he may understand their writing, as this very word is taken, Isa_28:10, which is made up of several lines. And this expression may seem to be very fit and proper, because the heavens do not teach men audibly, or by speaking to their ears, but visibly, by propounding things to their eyes, which is done in lines or writongs.

Is gone out, i.e. is spread abroad or drawn forth.

Through all the earth; so as to be seen and read by all the inhabitants of the earth.

Their words, i.e. their magnificent structure, and their exquisite order, and most regular course, by which they declare their author, no less than if they used many words or long discourses to that purpose, or no less than men discover their minds by their words. See more concerning this verse upon Rom_10:18, where it is applied to the preaching of the gospel by the apostles in the several parts of the world.

A tabernacle; which is a movable habitation, and therefore fitly applied to the sun, which is here described to be in constant and perpetual motion, Psa_19:5,6.

For the sun; which being the most illustrious and useful of all the heavenly bodies, is here particularly mentioned.

Psalms 19:5

As a bridegroom; gloriously adorned with light as with a beautiful garment, and smiling upon the lower world with a pleasant countenance.

Coming out of his chamber; in which he is poetically supposed to have rested all night, and thence to break forth as it were on a sudden, as both sacred and profane poets represent the matter.

As a strong man; who being conscious and confident of his own strength, and promising to himself victory and the glory which attends it, sets upon his work with great pleasure.

Psalms 19:6

His course is constant from east to west, and thence to the east again. There is no part of the earth which doth not one time or other feel the comfort and benefit of its light and heat.

Psalms 19:7

The law of the Lord, i.e. the doctrine delivered by God to his church, whether by Moses or by other prophets, and holy men of God after him; for the title of *law* is given not only to the ten commandments, or the moral law, as it is Rom_2:23,25,27 3:31, but also to the whole word of God, as Psa_1:2 119:70 &c.; Jer_8:8 Mal_2:6; to the Psalms, as Joh_10:34 15:25, compared with Psa_82:6 35:19; and to the writings of the prophets,

1Co_14:21, compared with Isa_28:11; yea, even to the gospel itself, as Isa_2:3 **42:4 5:4,7 Ro 3:27 Gal_2:21**. And in this general sense it must be here understood, because the effects here following do not flow from one, but from all the parts of it, precepts, and counsels, and threatenings, and promises, and God's gracious covenant made with man therein revealed. Having discoursed hitherto of the glory of God shining forth in and demonstrated by the visible heavens, and the heavenly bodies, he now proceeds to another demonstration of God's glory, which he compares with and prefers before the former; which he doth partly, to prevent that excessive admiration of the splendour and beauty of the sun and stars, by the contemplation whereof the heathens were brought to adore them, an error which the Israelites were not free from the danger of, Deu_4:19; partly, to make the Israelites sensible of their singular obligations to God, who, besides that common light and influence of the heavenly bodies, had given them a peculiar and a more necessary and beneficial light; and partly, to awaken and provoke the Gentiles (into whose hands these Psalms might come) to the study and love of God's law, by representing those excellent advantages which they no less than the Jews might obtain by it.

Perfect; without fault or defect, fully and completely discovering both the nature and will of God, and the whole duty and business of man, whom and how he is to worship and serve, what he is to believe and practise, and whatsoever is necessary to his present and eternal happiness; wherein there seems to be a secret reflection upon the former and natural discovery of God by his works of creation, as that which is defective and insufficient for the great and glorious ends here following, which although it did declare so much of God's being and nature as left all men without excuse, Rom_1:20, yet did not fully nor clearly manifest the mind and will of God, nor direct and bring men to eternal salvation. *Converting*, to wit, from the errors of mind and conversation, in which men without this light do generally wander and perish, unto God, from whom all men are naturally revolted. Or, *comforting* or *reviving*, as this word is used, Rth_4:15 Psa_23:3 Lam_1:11, **16**. Heb. *restoring or bringing back the soul*, which was drooping and even going out of the body, through grievous troubles of the outward man, and terrors of the mind and conscience.

The testimony of the Lord, i.e. his law, so called because it is a witness between God and man, what God requires of man, and what upon the performance of that condition he will do for man. *Is sure*, Heb. *faithful or true*, which is most excellent, and proper, and necessary in a witness. It will not mislead or deceive any man that trusteth to it or followeth it; but will certainly and infallibly bring him to happiness.

Making wise unto salvation, as is expressed, 2Ti_3:15; which is the only true wisdom.

The simple: this is added either,

1. By way of commendation, or as a qualification of the person whom God's word will make wise; he must be humble, and foolish, and little in his own eyes, and willing to be taught: see Mat_11:25 1Co_1:25, &c. For God resisteth the proud and scornful, and will not give this wisdom to them. Or rather,

2. By way of contempt, which seems most agreeable both to the use of the words, Pro_1:4 **9:6 14:15 22:3**, and to the scope of the place, which is to set forth the excellency and efficacy of God's law in the general, without any restriction to this or that sort of men. So it may note the weak and foolish, even persons of the lowest capacities, and such as are apt to mistake and are easily seduced, as the word implies. And yet these, if they will hearken to the instructions of God's word, shall become wise, when those who *profess themselves wise* shall, by leaning to their own understanding, and despising or neglecting the directions of God's word, *become and prove themselves to be fools*, Rom_1:22. But this is not spoken exclusively, as if no men of better abilities were thus made wise; but by way of amplification, to show the usefulness of God's word to men of all sorts and sizes.

Psalms 19:8

Statutes, another word signifying the same thing with law and testimonies, are right; both in themselves, as being free from crookedness or error; and in their effect, as guiding and directing men in the right and ready way to eternal happiness: which also reflects upon that knowledge of divine things, which men have by the light of nature and works of God, or by the doctrines of the philosophers or others, that wanted or neglected the light of God's

word wherein there is a great deal of darkness, and uncertainty, and error, and danger. *Rejoicing the heart* ; partly by that clear and certain knowledge of divine things which it gives, for *knowledge is pleasant to the soul* , Pro_2:10; and partly by the discoveries of God's love and grace to sinful men, in offers and promises of mercy therein contained. *The commandment of the Lord* , i.e. all his commands. *Is pure* ; without the least mixture of error, or injustice, or deceit; which cannot be said of human laws. *Enlightening the eyes* , to wit, of the mind, with an evident and complete manifestation of God's will and man's duty; both which the works of nature and all the writings of men discover but darkly and imperfectly.

Psalms 19:9

The fear of the Lord; by which he understands not the grace of God's fear, as this phrase is commonly taken; nor the whole worship of God, as it is taken Psa_34:9,**11 Mt 15:9**; but the law and word of God, which is the only thing that is here commended, and which is meant by all the other parallel titles of his *testimony* , and *statutes* , and *commandments* , and *judgments* , and consequently by this of his *fear* , which is as it were hemmed in within them. And this may well be so called by a usual metonymy, because it is both the object, and the rule, and the cause of this grace of holy fear, as God himself is called fear for the like reason, Gen_31:53, and in the Hebrew, Psa_76:1. *Clean* , i.e. sincere, not adulterated with any mixture of vanity, or falsehood, or vice; not requiring nor allowing any uncleanness or wickedness, as the religion of the Gentiles did.

Enduring for ever; constant and unchangeable, the same for substance in all the ages of the church and the world: which is most true, both of the moral law, and of the doctrine of God's grace and mercy to sinful and miserable man; which two are the principal parts of that law, of which he here speaks, as is evident from the whole context. For as for the difference between the Old and the New Testament, that lies only in circumstantial, and ceremonial, or ritual things, which are not here intended; and that alteration also was foretold in the Old Testament, and consequently the accomplishment of it did not destroy, but confirm, the certainty and constancy of God's word. This also is

opposed to human laws, wherein there are and ought to be manifold changes, according to the difference of times, and people, and circumstances.

The judgments of the Lord, i.e. God's laws, frequently called his *judgments*, because they are the declarations of his righteous will, and as it were his legal or judicial sentence by which he expects that men should govern themselves, and by which he will judge them at the last day.

Psalms 19:10

Than much fine gold; than gold of the best quality, and in the greatest quantity.

Sweeter also than honey; which was most sweet in those Eastern countries.

The honeycomb; than that honey which the bees have most diligently wrought in their combs, and which freely flows from them; which is sweeter than the rest.

Psalms 19:11

Thy servant; I thy servant, though a king and a prophet, and of some repute for wisdom and knowledge, yet I am daily taught by them.

Warned, or, *enlightened*, as Dan_12:3; or clearly admonished, as this word signifies, Exo_18:20 2Ki_6:10 Ecc_4:13 Eze_3:17, &c.; Eze_33:3,9. It is a faithful and excellent monitor to show me my duty in all conditions and to preserve me from falling into sin, and danger, and mischief.

In keeping of them; to those that make it their great design and care to conform their whole lives to them. For he speaks not of a legal and perfect keeping of them, which no man attaineth to in this life, Ecc_7:20 Gal_3:10-12 1Jo_1:8; but of doing it in an evangelical sense, with the allowances which God through Christ makes for human infirmities. *There is great reward in this life*, and especially in the next.

Psalms 19:12

Who can understand? this may be here added, either,

1. As a further proof of the excellency and necessity of God's law, because men's errors are so many and hard to be discovered and prevented, that they indispensably need such a friend and counsellor as the law is, to give them the true knowledge of themselves and of their sins. Or,

2. As a just and sorrowful censure of himself, upon the consideration of the exact purity of God's law, and the comparing of his life with it. Thy law, O Lord, is holy, and just, and good. But I am a poor sinful wretch, falling infinitely short of it, and condemned by it. Or,

3. As a signification of the insufficiency of God's law, strictly so called, for the healing and saving of men's souls, and of the necessity of further supplies of the gospel and grace of God; whereby the eyes of their minds may be enlightened to see that light which shines in God's law, and their hearts may be renewed to yield universal obedience to it, for which therefore he prays in the following words. And withal, he implies that he did not expect that *reward* which he last mentioned as a just recompence to his obedience, which he confesseth to need a pardon more than to deserve a reward, but only as an effect of God's grace and goodness.

His errors; either,

1. His sins of ignorance, of which this word is used, Lev_4:2,22,27 Ec 5:6. Or rather,

2. His sins in general, (which afterwards he divides into *secret* and *presumptuous sins* ,) or all deviations from God's law, which are thus called, 1Sa_26:21 Psa_119:67,118 Heb 9:7 Jam_5:20. The sense is, I cannot comprehend the numbers, or the several kinds, or all the heinous aggravations of my sins.

Cleanse thou me; both by justification, or the pardon of my sins, through the blood of thy Son, which is to be shed for me; and by sanctification through thy Holy Spirit, co-working in and with thy word, to the further renovation of my heart and life for these are the two ways of cleansing sinners most frequently mentioned both in the Old and New Testament: though the first may seem to be principally, if not only, intended, because he speaks of his past sins, which could be cleansed no other way but by remission.

From secret faults, i.e. from the guilt of such sins as were secret, either,

1. From others; such as none knows but God and my own conscience: or,

2. From myself; such as I never observed, or did not discern the evil of. Pardon my unknown sins, of which I never repented particularly, as I should have done.

Psalms 19:13

Keep back, or restrain, or withdraw; which word is emphatical, and signifies man's natural and great proneness even to the worst of sins, and the necessity of God's grace, as a bridle, to keep men from rushing upon them. Having begged pardon for his former errors, he now begs grace to keep him from relapses for the time to come.

From presumptuous sins; from known and evident sins, such as are committed against knowledge and deliberation with design, and resolution, and eagerness, with resistance against the checks of conscience, and the motions of God's Spirit, and with contempt both of God's commands and judgments, and so with pride and insolency, which this word signifies. See Exo_21:14. And such a sin was that of David's in the matter of Uriah, to which he seems to have an eye, and prayeth to be kept from such miscarriages.

Let them not have dominion over me; if I be at any time tempted to any such sins, Lord, let them not prevail over me; and if I do fall into them, let me speedily rise again, and not willingly give up myself to the customary practice of them.

Then shall I be upright; that will be an evidence of my sincerity, and I shall have this comfort, that although I am not absolutely perfect, but encompassed with many infirmities, yet I am an upright person, and such as thou wilt accept.

I shall be innocent; thou wilt hold me for innocent. Or, *I shall be cleansed*, or *kept pure*, as this word primarily signifies.

From the great transgression, i.e. from the guilt of such presumptuous sins, which are indeed very great transgressions, and such as, if accompanied with obstinacy and impenitency, thou wilt not pardon. But as for other sins of ignorance or infirmity,

thou wilt graciously remit them for thy covenant's sake, made with me in and through thy Christ. Otherwise, *from much transgression*, or from innumerable sins, which usually follow the commission of one presumptuous sin, as David found by his own sad experience.

Psalms 19:14

Having prayed that God would keep him from sinful actions, he now prays that God would govern and sanctify his words and thoughts, wherein he had many ways offended, as he here implies, and oft in this book confesseth and bewaileth. And this he the rather doth, because this caution was very necessary to preserve him from presumptuous sins, which have their first rise in the thoughts, and thence proceed to words and expressions, before they break forth into actions.

Be acceptable in thy sight, i.e. be really good and holy, and so well-pleasing to thee.

My strength: O thou who hast hitherto strengthened me, both against my temporal and spiritual enemies, and whose gracious powerful assistance is absolutely necessary to keep me from my own corrupt inclinations, and from all temptations to sinful thoughts, and words, and actions.

My redeemer: this expression seems to be added emphatically, and with special respect to Christ, who was certainly much in David's eyes, to whom alone this word *Goel* can here properly belong, as may appear **See Poole "Job_19:25"**, to which I refer the reader, and by whose blood and Spirit alone David could and did expect the blessings and graces for which he here prayeth.

Psalms 20:1 PSALM 20

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a prayer to be used by the people, both now on the behalf of king David, when he was undertaking some great expedition, going forth, as is supposed, against the Ammonites and Syrians, **2Sa 10**, or some other potent enemies, and hereafter in like cases.

The church prayeth God to hear and defend the king, Psa_20:1; and for a blessing on all his designs, Psa_20:2-6; and showeth wherein the confidence of some is; but theirs is in God, Psa_20:7-9.

In the day of trouble; in this time of war and danger.

Name of the God of Jacob, i.e. God himself; for names are oft put for persons, as Num_26:53 Act_1:15 **4:12**; and *the name of God* for God, as Deu_28:58 Neh_9:5 Psa_44:8,**20 Pr 18:10**, and oft elsewhere. He calls him the

God of Jacob, or Israel, partly to distinguish him from false gods; and partly as an argument to enforce the prayer, because God had made a league or covenant with Jacob and his posterity, who are called by the name of

Jacob, Psa_147:19,**20 Isa 44:2**, and whose cause David was now pleading against their enemies.

Psalms 20:2

From the sanctuary; either,

1. From heaven, as it is expressed, Psa_20:6. Or rather,
2. From the tabernacle in Zion, as it is explained in the next words, where the ark then was; toward which the Israelites directed their prayers, and from which God heard and answered them.

Psalms 20:3

Remember, to wit, with acceptance, as it follows.

Thy offerings; offered either by thee at thy entrance upon this expedition; or by us thy people on thy behalf, or by thine appointment.

Accept, Heb. *turn to ashes* , by fire sent from heaven in token of his acceptance, as was usual; of which see Lev_9:24 1Ki_18:38.

Psalms 20:4

According to thine own heart, i.e. that good success which thy heart desires.

All thy counsels; thy present design for God, and for his and thy people.

Psalms 20:5

We will rejoice: hereby they show their confidence in God, and their assurance of the victory.

In the name of our God, i.e. to the honour of God, as the Conqueror.

We will set up our banners, in way of triumph; which among other ways was celebrated by the setting up of banners or trophies.

Psalms 20:6

We are already sure of victory, by the consideration of God's power, and faithfulness, and love to David, and to his people. They speak as one person, because they were united and unanimous in this prayer.

Saveth, i.e. will certainly save.

His anointed; our lord and king.

with the saving strength of his right hand: this shows how God will hear him, even by saving him with a strong hand.

Psalms 20:7

Some trust; or, *remember* ; which may better be applied out of the next clause.

We will remember; or, *make mention of* , to wit, so as to boast of it, or trust in it; for such things men oft remember or mention.

Psalms 20:8

They are brought down from their horses and chariots, to which they trusted. Heb. *They bowed down* , as being unable to stand longer, because of their mortal wounds. Compare Jud_5:27.

But we stand firmly upon our legs, and keep the field, as conquerors use to do.

Psalms 20:9

Either,

1. David. So the sense is, O Lord, preserve and assist the king, that when we are distressed and cry to him for help, he may be able and ready to help us. Or,

2. God, the supreme Monarch, the King of kings, and in a peculiar manner the King of Israel, hear and answer us, when we pray for

our king and people. And for the change of persons in this verse, nothing is more common. Or,

3. Christ, called

the King both in the Old and New Testament. But this verse is by divers learned men rendered thus, *Lord, save the king; he* (i.e. the Lord)

will hear us (or, *let him hear us* ; for the future tense is oft put imperatively)

when we cry or *call* upon him. And this version is very agreeable to the Hebrew text. For whereas the only ground of the other translation is, that the Hebrew accent called *athnach* is put under the word *save* , which is supposed to stop the sense there, it is sufficiently evident that *athnach* doth not always make such a distinction in these poetical books, as appears from Psa_11:5 **17:10 19:4 22:31**, and therefore this may seem to be the better version.

Psalms 21:1 PSALM 21

The subject of this Psalm is the same with the former, both being made for the people's use, concerning the king; only the prayers there used are here turned into praises for the blessings received in answer to their prayers. And as David was an illustrious type of Christ, so in many of these expressions he may seem to look beyond himself unto Christ, in whom they are more properly and fully accomplished, and of whom divers of the ancient Hebrew doctors understand it.

David, out of a sense of God's answering his prayers for all he asked, professeth his joy and gladness in him, Psa_21:1-6. His confidence for further success, Psa_21:7; that God will find out and consume his enemies, Psa_21:8-12. He prayeth that God would exalt his strength, that he might praise his power, Psa_21:13.

In thy strength conferred upon him, and put forth by thee on his behalf against his enemies.

Psalms 21:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 21:3

Preventest him; or, *didst prevent him* ; crowning him with manifold blessings, both more and sooner than he either desired or expected; surprising him with the gift of the kingdom, and with many happy successes.

With the blessing of goodness, i. e. with excellent blessings. Or, *with abundance* (as this word both in Hebrew and Greek is sometimes used, as Psa_84:6 Rom_15:29 2Co_9:5,6) *of good* .

A crown of pure gold either,

1. In token of victory. Or rather,
2. As an ensign of royal majesty conferred upon him.

Psalms 21:4

He asked only the preservation of that short and mortal life, which was oft exposed to utmost perils.

For ever and ever; either,

1. In his posterity, in whom parents are commonly said to live. Thou gavest the kingdom not only to himself for a season, as thou didst to Saul; but to him and to his seed for ever. Or rather,
2. In his person; for this *giving* answers to David's *asking* . And the thing which David asked of God was not the kingdom, (wherein God had prevented his prayers, and granted what David durst not have presumed to ask,) but only *life* , or the saving and prolonging of his life, which his enemies designed to take away. Thou gavest him a long life and reign here, and after that thou didst translate him to thy heavenly kingdom, to live with thee for ever. But this was more eminently fulfilled in Christ, who asked of his Father *life* , or *to be saved from death* , Heb_5:7, though with submission to his will. But his Father, though he saw it fit and necessary to take away his temporal life, yet he instantly gave him another, and that far more noble, instead of it, even the perfect possession of an everlasting and most glorious life, both in his soul and body, at his right hand.

Psalms 21:5

His glory; his fame or renown in the world. *In thy salvation* ; by reason of those great and glorious deliverances which thou hast wrought both for him and by him.

Hast thou laid upon him; or, *fitted to him, or upon him* , as the Hebrew verb signifies; or, *made it adequate to him* . Thou hast given him a large and noble soul, very capable of and fit for that high and honourable estate to which thou hast advanced him, and thou hast given him honour and power suitable to so excellent a person, and to such rich endowments.

Psalms 21:6

Thou hast made him most blessed, Heb. *thou hast set* (or, *made* , as this verb is used, Psa_40:5 **89:42 91:9** Lam_3:45) him blessings; i.e. either,

1. The author or instrument of manifold blessings to the world, and especially to thy people; which David was in a good measure, but Christ much more truly and eminently. Although this may not seem very suitable to the context, which only speaks of the blessing conferred by God upon this king, and not at all of the blessings flowing from him to others. Or,

2. The great example of all blessings, whom the Israelites in all ages shall propound to themselves, in all their forms and pronunciations of blessings. They shall say, *God make thee as blessed as this king* , either David or the Messiah; compare Gen_12:2 **48:20**; or rather *most blessed* , as we translate it; the abstract form and the plural number being here used emphatically, as they commonly are, as Eze_34:26 Psa_5:10 **19:10 35:6**, to note a man in whom all sorts of blessings are united and met together, filled with blessings, and as it were a man of blessings, made up altogether of blessings, as Christ upon a like reason was called *a man of sorrows* , Isa_53:3. And possibly the word man may be understood here, as it is in many other places, as I have showed before, and the place rendered thus, *thou hast made him a man of blessings. Forever* ; of which See Poole "Psa_21:4".

With thy countenance, to wit, smiling upon him, as it must necessarily be understood from the foregoing words, i.e. by thy

grace and favour manifested and imparted to his soul, and by the effects of it in saving him from all his enemies and calamities.

Psalms 21:7

Or *removed* , from his kingdom, as Saul was.

Psalms 21:8

When they seek to hide themselves or flee away from thee, shall discover, and overtake, and destroy them. Or, *shall be sufficient* (as this verb sometimes signifies, as Num_11:22 Jud_21:14) *for all thine enemies* , to wit, to conquer them; thou shalt need no foreign succours to help thee.

Psalms 21:9

Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven; or, *thou shalt put them* , (as the Hebrew word properly signifies,) *as it were* , into (so there is only an ellipsis of the preposition *beth* , which is most frequent) *a fiery oven* , i.e. like wood, which when it is cast in there, is quickly consumed.

Shall swallow them up, i.e. destroy them, as this phrase is oft used, as 2Sa_20:19,20 **Psa 56:1,2 Pr 1:12.**

Psalms 21:10

Their fruit; either,

1. The fruit of their labours. Or rather,
2. Their seed or children, as it is explained in the next branch, oft called a man's *fruit* , as Deu_28:4 Psa_127:3 **132:11** Lam_2:20. God will take away both root and branch, the parents and all that wicked race.

Psalms 21:11

Against thee, i.e. against God, not directly, but by consequence, because it was against David, whom God had anointed, and against the Lord's people, whose injuries God takes as done to himself, Zec_2:8.

To perform; such supplements are usual after this verb, as Exo_8:18 Psa_101:5 **139:6** Isa_1:13. Or, for which

they were unable or insufficient. Or, but *they did not prevail* , as this verb signifies, Psa_13:4 **129:2.** This clause seems to be added to teach us this great and necessary lesson, that men are justly

punished by God for their wicked intentions, although they be hindered from the execution of them, contrary to what some Jewish doctors and others have taught.

Psalms 21:12

Turn their back, i.e. flee away at the first sight of thee, whereby also they will be a fit mark for thine arrows. Or, *thou shalt set them as a butt* to shoot at, as the like phrase is used, Deu_7:10 Job_7:20 **16:12**. *Against the face of them* ; or, *against them* , the word

face being oft redundant.

Psalms 21:13

In thine own strength; by thy own power, or by the manifestation thereof, whereby thou wilt have the whole glory of the work.

Psalms 22:1 PSALM 22

THE ARGUMENT

That question mentioned Act_8:34, is very proper here. *Of whom speaketh the prophet this (Psalm)? of himself, or of some other man?* It is confessed that David was a type of Christ, and that many Psalms, or passages of the Psalms, though properly and literally understood of David, yet had a further and mystical reference to Christ, in whom they were accomplished. But there are some other Psalms, or passages in the Psalms, as also some chapters or passages in other prophets, especially in Isaiah, who lived not very long after David, which either by those sacred penmen, or at least by the Holy Ghost inspiring them, which is one and the same thing, were directly, primarily, and immediately intended for, and are properly and literally to be understood of, the Messiah; though withal there may be some respect and allusion to the state of the penman himself, who being a type of Christ, it is not strange if there be many resemblances between them. And this seems to be the state of this Psalm, which is understood of the Messiah by the Hebrew doctors themselves, and by Christ himself, and by his apostles, as we shall see. And there are many passages in it, which are most literally accomplished in him, and cannot in a tolerable sense be understood of any other, as we shall see in the

particular verses. And therefore I doubt not that David, though he had an eye to his own condition in divers passages here used, yet was carried forth by the Spirit of prophecy beyond himself, and unto Christ, to whom alone it truly and fully agrees.

Aijeleth Shahar ; or, *the hind of the morning* , to note that the person here designed was like a hind, comely and meek, and every way lovely, but withal persecuted by wicked men, and that oftentimes is *in the morning* , when she comes out of her lurking and lodging place, and when the hunters use to go abroad to their work. Or this was the title of some musical instrument, or tune, or song, which was usually sung in the morning.

The prophet, as a type of Christ, complaineth that God had forsaken him, Psa_22:1, and heard not his prayers, Psa_22:2. He showeth that he heard his fathers, and delivered them, Psa_22:3-5; but owns himself a worm, Psa_22:6, and the reproach of men, Psa_22:7. He showeth the language of the enemy against him; yet his trust is in God, Psa_22:8-21. He calleth all Israel to praise him, Psa_22:22-25. He showeth the happiness of the meek, Psa_22:26; and of all the Gentiles, Psa_22:27-31.

My God; whom, notwithstanding thy forsaking me, I heartily love, and in whom I trust; who art my Friend and Father, though now thou frownest upon me.

My God; the repetition notes the depth of his distress, which made him cry so earnestly, and the strugglings of his faith with his fears and sorrows.

Why hast thou forsaken me, i.e. left me in the hands of malicious men, withdrawn the light of thy countenance, and the supports and comforts of thy Spirit from me, and filled me with the terrors of thy wrath, so that I am ready to sink under my burden? This was in part verified in David, but much more fully in Christ, who applies these words to himself, Mat_27:46.

From the words of my roaring, i.e. from regarding, or pitying, or answering my strong prayers, and lamentable outcries, forced from me by my intolerable distresses and miseries.

Psalms 22:2

i.e. I continue praying day and night without intermission. Or thus, *I have no silence* , i.e. no quietness or rest, as this word signifies, Jud_18:9; in which respect also the sea and waves thereof are said to *be silent* , i.e. still and quiet, Psa_107:29 Mar_4:39. And so this last clause answers to and expounds the former, *thou hearest not* , which is most usual in this book.

Psalms 22:3

Thou art holy, i. e just and true in all thy ways, and therefore hearing prayers, and keeping thy covenant; a true lover of holiness, and of all holy men. This he adds, either,

1. To aggravate his misery, that such a God should neglect and forsake him. Or rather,
2. To strengthen his faith, and to enforce his prayers, and prevail with God, for the honour of his holy name, to hear and help him.

That inhabitest the praises of Israel; either,

1. That dwellest in thy tabernacle and ark, which is called Israel's glory, 1Sa_4:21, and the place *where God was praised* , Isa_64:11. Or,
2. That receivest and rightly possessest the praises of Israel, whom the people are perpetually praising for one mercy or another; and therefore I trust I also shall have occasion to praise thee. But because this Hebrew verb, when it is used transitively, and is taken for *inhabiting* , is generally, as far as I have observed, construed with a preposition, which here it is not, this verse may seem to be better rendered thus, as it is by divers learned men, *But thou abidest* , or *perseverest* , or *continuest to be* (as this verb is used, Psa_9:7 **55:19 102:12**)

holy, (notwithstanding thy present neglect of my prayers and miseries,) *O the praises* , or, *O thou who art the praises* , (or, and *the praises* , i.e. the great cause and object of the *praises* .) *of Israel* , i. e whom Israel solemnly and usually praised, Deu_10:21 Jer_17:14.

Psalms 22:4

This he adds for the reasons mentioned in the first note, Psa_22:3.

Psalms 22:5

i.e. Not disappointed of that for which they prayed and hoped.

Psalms 22:6

Our fathers were honoured by thee and by others, because of thy appearance for their defence and deliverance; but I am treated like a worm, i.e. neglected and despised, both by thee, who dost not afford me help, and by the men of my age and nation, as it follows. For the phrase, see Job_25:6 Isa_41:14.

Despised of the people; not only of the great men, but also of the common people; which doth not so truly agree to David (who, though he was hated and persecuted by Saul and his courtiers, was honoured and beloved by the body of the people) as to Christ: compare Isa_53:2,3.

Psalms 22:7

Laugh me to scorn; instead of pitying or helping, deride me, and insult over me; such is their inhumanity.

They shoot out the lip; they gape with their mouths, and put forth their tongues, in mockery. See Job_16:10 Isa_57:4.

They shake the head; another posture of scoffers. See Job_16:4 Psa_44:14 Isa_37:22. This and the next verse are applied to Christ, Mat_27:39,43.

Saying: this supplement is very usual, and here it is necessary, because the next words are the expressions of his insulting enemies.

Psalms 22:8

He trusted on the Lord; he rolled himself

upon the Lord; where they seem to scoff not only at the thing, but at the expression. Their sense is, He pretended that he did wholly lean, and rest himself, and cast his cares upon God, and quietly and confidently commit all his affairs to his providence, assuring himself of a happy issue from him.

That he would deliver him; or, without any supplement, *let him deliver him*, as it follows, though the Hebrew words be differing. And so the same thing is twice repeated, to show both the vehemency of their hatred, and their confidence of success against

him. They thought his case desperate, and past all hope and remedy.

Seeing he delighted in him, as he useth to allege and boast, but how vainly the event now showeth.

Psalms 22:9

This is noted as an effect of God's wonderful and gracious providence. And although this be a mercy which God grants to all mankind, yet it may well be alleged here, partly in way of gratitude for this great, though common, mercy; nothing being more reasonable and usual than for David and other holy men to praise God for such blessings; and partly as an argument to encourage himself to expect and to prevail with God, to grant him the deliverance which now he desires, because he had formerly delivered him; this being a very common argument: see 1Sa_17:37 2Co_1:10. But this is applicable to Christ in a singular manner, not as a late learned writer takes it, that God separated him from the womb, but that God did *bring him out* (as the word properly signifies)

of the womb, to wit, immediately and by himself, and without the help of any man, by the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, which made him there, or else he could never have been brought thence.

Thou didst make me hope, or trust, i.e. thou didst give me sufficient ground for hope and trust, if I had then been capable of acting that grace, because of thy wonderful and watchful care over me in that weak and helpless state; which was eminently true of Christ, whom God so miraculously preserved and provided for in his infancy; the history whereof we read **Mt 2**. It is not strange that *hope* is figuratively ascribed to infants, seeing even the brute creatures are said to *hope*, Rom_8:20, and to *wait* and *cry to God*, Psa_145:15 **147:9**.

When I was upon my mother's breasts, i.e. when I was a sucking child; which may be properly understood.

Psalms 22:10

I was like one forsaken by his parent, and cast wholly upon thy providence. I had no father upon earth, and my mother was poor and helpless.

Psalms 22:11

Be not far from me, to wit, as to affection and succour.

Trouble is near at hand, and ready to swallow me up; and therefore if thou dost not speedily deliver me, it will be too late; which is an argument that David oft useth, as Psa_6:5 **88:11**, &c.

There is none to help; thy help therefore will be the more seasonable, because it is most necessary, and thou wilt have the more of glory by it, because it will appear that it is thy work alone.

Psalms 22:12

Bulls; wicked, and violent, and potent enemies; for such are so called, Eze_39:18 Amo_4:1.

Strong bulls of Bashan, i.e. fat and lusty, as the cattle there bred were, Deu_3:13 **32:14**, and therefore fierce and furious.

Psalms 22:13

Partly to affright me, and principally to tear and devour me, as the following metaphor explains it. Otherwise it might be understood of their crying out with loud and earnest voices, that he might be condemned and put to death.

Psalms 22:14

I am poured out like water; my heart faileth, my spirits are spent and gone like water, which once spilt can never be recovered; my very flesh is melted within me, and I am become as weak as water. See the like phrase Jos_7:5, and compare 2Sa_14:14 Job_14:11.

All my bones are out of joint; I am as weak and unable to move or help myself, and withal as full of torment, as if I were upon a rack, and all my bones were disjointed. Or, *all my bones are separated*, one from another; as they were in some sort in Christ, by the stretching of his body upon the cross.

My heart; the seat of life, and fountain which supplies spirits and vigour to the whole body.

Is like wax; melted, as it follows, through fear and overwhelming grief: compare Psa_68:2 **97:5**.

Psalms 22:15

I have in a manner no more radical moisture left in me than is in a dry potsherd.

My tongue cleaveth to my jaws, through that excessive thirst and drought. See Joh_19:20.

Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; partly by thy providence delivering me into the power of mine enemies, and partly by thy terrors in my mind and soul.

Psalms 22:16

He calls his enemies

dogs for their vileness and filthiness, for their insatiable greediness and implacable fury and fierceness against him. He explains what he means by *dogs* , even wicked men, who are oft so called, not some few of them singly, but the whole *company* or *congregation* of them; whereby may be noted either their great numbers, or their consulting and conspiring together, as it were, in a lawful assembly; which was most literally and eminently fulfilled in Christ.

They pierced my hands and my feet: these words cannot with any probability be applied to David, nor to the attempts of his enemies upon him; for their design was not to torment his hands or feet, but to take away his life. And if it be pretended that it is to be understood of him in a metaphorical sense, it must be considered, that it is so uncouth and unusual a metaphor, that those who are of this mind cannot produce any one example of this metaphor, either in Scripture or in other authors; nor are they able to make any tolerable sense of it, but are forced to wrest and strain the words. But what need is there of such forced metaphors, when this was most properly and literally verified in Christ, whose hands and feet were really pierced and nailed to the cross, according to the manner of the Roman crucifixions, to whom therefore this is applied in the New Testament. See Mat_27:35 Mar_15:24 Luk_23:33 Joh_19:18,**23,37**.

Psalms 22:17

I may tell all my bones; partly through my leanness, caused by excessive grief, which is much more credible of Christ than of David; and partly by my being stretched out upon the cross.

They look and stare upon me, to wit, with delight and complacency in my calamities, as this phrase is used, Psa_35:21 **37:34 54:7 59:10** Oba_1:12. Compare Luk_23:35.

Psalms 22:18

This also cannot be applied to David without an uncouth and strained metaphor, but was literally fulfilled in Christ, Mat_27:35 Joh_19:24.

Psalms 22:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 22:20

From the sword, i.e. from the rage and violence of mine enemies, as the next clause explains it, and as the sword is oft taken in Scripture. See Jer_25:16,**27,29 Eze 38:21**.

My darling, Heb. *my one* , or *only one* , to wit, *his soul* , as he now said; which he so calls, either because it was very dear to him; or rather, because it was left alone, and destitute of friends and helpers; for so this word is used, Psa_25:16 **35:17**.

From the power, Heb. *the hand* ; which is oft put for power, and in that sense is ascribed to *a flame* , Isa_47:14, and to *evil* , Hab_2:9.

Psalms 22:21

The lion; either the devil, that raging and roaring lion, who did many ways assault and annoy him; or his lionlike enemies.

Heard me, i.e. answered and delivered me.

Unicorn; a strong, and fierce, and untamable wild beast; though the learned are not agreed about the kind of it. See of it Deu_33:17 Job_39:9,**10 Psa 92:10** Isa_34:7, and my Latin Synopsis on Num_23:22. For it is not worth while to trouble the unlearned reader with such disputes.

Psalms 22:22

I will declare, i.e. publish or celebrate it; when thou hast delivered me, thou shalt have the glory of it, as now thy honour is eclipsed by my calamities.

Thy name, i.e. that power, and faithfulness, and goodness, and those perfections which thou hast manifested on my behalf.

My brethren; the same whom he calls the *congregation* in the next clause, and *the seed of Jacob and Israel* in the next verse; which also doth not so fitly agree to David, who never to my remembrance gives this title to any but such as were near akin to him, as it doth to Christ, who extendeth this name to all his disciples and believers, Mat_12:48,**49 25:40 28:10**, and to whom this very text is applied, Heb_2:11,**12**. Not only privately, but even in the public congregation.

Psalms 22:23

Praise him; partly for my sake, and chiefly for your own benefit received by my deliverance.

All ye the seed of Israel: the two universal particles seem to intimate that he speaks not only of the carnal, but also of the spiritual seed; which also is more than probable, by comparing this with Psa_22:27,**28**.

Psalms 22:24

He hath not despised: I was despised by the people, Psa_22:6, but not by God.

Nor abhorred, i.e. he did not turn away his face from it, as men do from things which they abhor, but looked upon it with compassion.

Neither hath he hid his face from him, to wit, for ever; for he did so for a time; but now, saith he, he hath lift up upon me the light of his countenance.

Psalms 22:25

In the great congregation; either in the general assemblies of the Israelites at their solemn feasts; or in the universal church, made up of Jews and Gentiles, as the following verses explain it.

My vows, i.e. those praises and services which in my distress I vowed to return unto thee when thou didst deliver me.

Psalms 22:26

The meek, i.e. faithful or godly persons, who are frequently called meek ones, as Psa_25:9 **76:9 149:4** Isa_11:4 **61:1** Zep_2:3, because the grace of God doth soften and sweeten the hearts of sinners, and subdues their pride, and passion, and rebellion against God, and their fierceness towards men. Or, *the poor*, as this word

is oft rendered; which seems well to suit this place, partly, because these are opposed to the *fat* ones upon earth, Psa_22:29; partly, because the following *eating* and *satisfaction* may seem most proper and acceptable to such as were in want; partly, because here is an allusion to the legal feasts, made of the remainders of the sacrifices, in which the poor had a share; and partly, because this well agrees to the time of Christ's coming, when the body of the Jewish nation were a poor and afflicted people, and the poor especially *did receive the gospel* , Mat_11:5.

Eat and be satisfied; which is mentioned as a great blessing, Joe_2:26, as it is threatened as a grievous curse that men should eat and not be satisfied, Lev_26:26 Mic_6:14. But because it was comparatively a poor and mean thing to have one's belly filled and satisfied with that food which perisheth and passeth away presently after it is received, this magnificent promise is doubtless to be understood spiritually, of those spiritual blessings, that grace, and peace, and comfort, and full satisfaction, which all believing and pious souls have in the sense of God's love, and the pardon of their sins, and in the influences of God's Spirit into their souls. *That seek him* ; that seek his favour; or that inquire after him, and labour to know and discern him; wherein possibly the Spirit of God may intimate to us the necessity of seeking, and the difficulty of finding or discovering God, when he shall appear in the flesh, and in the form of a servant; which was likely to hide him from the eyes of the carnal and careless Jews, and not to be discerned but by those that were studious and inquisitive concerning the mind of God revealed in the Scriptures concerning that matter.

Your heart, i.e. their; for he speaks of the same persons still, though there be a change from the third to the second person, as is usual in these poetical and prophetical books of Scripture.

Shall live, i.e. shall be greatly refreshed and comforted; life being oft put for a happy and comfortable life, as 1Ki_1:25 Psa_34:12; in which respect Jacob's heart or *spirit* is said to have revived, Gen_45:27; as, on the contrary, Nabal's heart was said to have *died within him* , 1Sa_25:37, when it was oppressed with great sadness.

For ever; your comfort shall not be short and transitory, as worldly comforts are, but everlasting.

Psalms 22:27

All the ends of the world, i.e. all nations, from one end of the world to the other. So this is an evident prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of God and Christ by thy gospel, and consequently a clear proof that this Psalm doth directly and immediately speak of Christ; to whom alone, and not to David, this and divers other passages of it do manifestly belong.

Shall remember: it is not particularly expressed what they should remember, because there were several things that should and would be remembered by them, which were likely to occasion their turning to the Lord. They shall remember their former and manifold wickedness with grief, and shame, and fear; and particularly their sin and folly in worshipping dead and impotent idols that never did nor could do them either good or hurt. They shall remember that God who did make lively impressions upon their minds, which yet they had in great measure blotted out and forgotten, but now by the preaching of the gospel they shall be revived. They shall remember their great and manifold obligations to God, which they had quite forgotten; his patience and goodness in sparing them so long in the midst of all their impieties, and in revealing his gospel to them, and giving his Son for them. They shall remember the gracious words and glorious works of Christ, and what he did and suffered for them; which possibly divers of them had been eye and ear witnesses of in Judea, (although, with the unbelieving Jews, they despised and misconstrued them,) and others had heard the fame and tidings of them.

Unto the Lord; unto the only true God, and unto Jesus Christ, to whom this name of Jehovah is oftentimes ascribed in Scripture.

All the kindreds, Heb. *all the families* ; which is not to be understood strictly of every particular person and family, but of all sorts and of great numbers of them; as such universal phrases are very frequently taken in Scripture.

Psalms 22:28

This is added as a reason why the Gentiles should be converted, because God is not only the God and Lord of the Jews, but also of

the Gentiles, and of all nations, Rom_3:29,**30**. And therefore though for a time he thought fit to confine his kingdom to Israel, yet he had resolved in due time to enlarge his kingdom, and to set up his throne and government in the Gentile world, which were no less created and redeemed by him than the Jews. Compare Zec_13:2 **14:9**.

Psalms 22:29

All, i.e. many of them, as the word all is oft used, as Psa_72:11 Mat_3:5 **17:11** Luk_6:26 Joh_3:26 2Ti_3:9.

They that be fat upon earth, i.e. kings and princes, and the great men of the world, who are oft described by this metaphor, as Psa_78:31 Isa_10:16; compare Job_15:27 Psa_17:10 **73:7**; whose conversion to Christ is also foretold in other places, as Psa_45:12 **72:10,11 Isa 60:3,5,10** 1Ti_2:1,2Ki_21:24. These are opposed to the poor and miserable part of the world, of whom he speaks in the next words, as also Psa_22:26, where see the first note. So the sense of the place is, that both poor and rich should embrace the gospel. But the Syriac interpreter renders these words otherwise, *the hungry of the earth* . And another, to the same purpose, *those that are turned to ashes* (for which I should rather say, *they that lie down in ashes* , which is a usual description of poor, afflicted, and humbled persons) *on the ground* ; for the first Hebrew word, rendered *fat* , with the change but of one point, signifies *ashes* .

Shall eat, and be satisfied, as it was more fully expressed, Psa_22:26; shall feed upon the Bread of life, Christ and all his benefits.

And worship: this is added to explain the word, and to show what kind of eating he spoke of not of a carnal, but of a spiritual feast.

They that go down to the dust; they that languish and draw nigh to death, through poverty, or misery, or anguish of mind and conscience; for such are oft said to *go down into* or *to sit in the dust* , as Job_30:19 Psa_44:25 **113:7** Isa_29:4 **47:1**. These may be opposed to the *fat ones* mentioned in the first clause of the verse. *None can keep alive his own soul* : this may seem to be a further description of the same persons, and an aggravation of their miserable condition, from this circumstance, that it was not in their power to help themselves; their soul was going down to the

dust, as he said in the last foregoing clause, and now he adds that none of them could stop it, or keep himself alive; so that their case was wholly desperate as to themselves; and this drove them out of themselves to seek relief from God, and to receive Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation gladly. Heb. *and* he who (the pronoun relative being here understood, as it is in very many places) *doth not or cannot quicken or enliven his own soul*, i.e. himself, as the soul is oft taken; and *quicken* may be put either for nourishing, as Isa_7:21, or for *comforting*, as here, Psa_22:26, or *preserving life*, whether temporal or spiritual and eternal, as Gen_19:19 Eze_13:19 **18:27**. But these words are and may be rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, and the scope of the place. Having said that all nations should

bow before him, i.e. before Christ and unto Christ, whom they should own as their Lord and Saviour, he now adds these words, either,

1. As a reason why they did receive him, or believe in him, because (for so the particle *vau* is frequently rendered, as 1Ki_1:21 **18:3,4** Psa **60:12** Isa_16:2 **64:5**, and oft elsewhere) *he did not keep alive his own soul*, as he could easily have done, by his Divine power, in spite of all that his enemies could do, but freely gave himself to death for them. Because he laid down his life for sinners, which the Father had commanded him, and he had promised to do, therefore God loved him, Joh_10:17,**18**, and glorified him, and performed his promise made to him upon that condition, that if *he did make his soul an offering for sin*, he should see his seed, &c., Isa_53:10. Or,

2. As an amplification or commendation of the faith of the Gentiles in coming and bowing to Christ, *although* (for so also the Hebrew *vau* is often used, as Psa_99:8 Pro_26:24 Ecc_9:16) *he did not keep alive his own soul*, but laid down his own life, and suffered himself to be killed by wicked men; which was one principal reason why the Jews would not believe on him, as is noted, Mat_27:40,**42,43**, and therefore was a just commendation to the Gentiles, that, notwithstanding this great stumbling-block, believed on him. But this I propose with submission. Only it may be observed that this last clause of the verse in the Hebrew is in the singular number, and therefore more likely to belong to *him*,

immediately going before it, which is of the same number, than to the other preceding clauses, which are all expressed in the plural number. And though I know enallage of numbers be very usual, yet they are not to be supposed without necessity.

Psalms 22:30

Christ shall not want a seed or posterity, Heb_2:13; for though the Jewish nation should generally reject and forsake him, which may seem to be here implied, Christ shall have many disciples or followers, and the Gentiles shall come in their stead. Compare this promise with that, he shall see his seed, Isa_53:10. Or, their

seed, i.e. the seed of the Gentile worshippers last mentioned. Christian religion shall not be the business of one age, but, as the Gentiles shall believe in Christ, so shall their posterity in succeeding generations; this being God's usual method, to take children into covenant with their parents, of which see Deu_10:15 **30:19** Psa_69:36 Isa_43:5 **44:3**. And as when the Jews refused Christ, their children were cast out of the covenant with them; so when the Gentiles embraced the gospel covenant, their children were admitted with them.

It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation; that believing seed shall be reputed, both by God and men, *the generation* , or *children* , or *people* of the Lord, as the Jews formerly were. But upon the Jews' contempt of Christ and the gospel, the Gentiles shall come in their stead, and enjoy their titles and privileges. Compare this place with Psa_87:5.

Psalms 22:31

They; either the converts and worshippers, ver. Psa_22:27,**29**; or their seed last mentioned, Psa_22:30. Or this may be indefinitely spoken, as such verbs are oft used,

they shall come, i.e. some or other shall come, and do the work here mentioned, to wit, the apostles and ministers of the gospel. *Shall come* , to wit, from Judea and Jerusalem (from whence the gospel was first to go forth) to the Gentile world, to the several parts whereof the apostles went upon this errand.

His righteousness; God's righteousness; either,

1. His wonderful grace and mercy to mankind, in giving them Christ and the gospel; for righteousness is oft put for mercy or kindness, as hath been noted again and again. Or,

2. That righteousness which God hath appointed for the justification of sinners, called *the righteousness of faith* , Rom_3:21,22 **Php 3:9**, which the Jews were ignorant of, and would not submit to, Rom_10:3, but the Gentiles joyfully embraced. Or,

3. His truth or faithfulness, (which is very frequently and fitly called righteousness,) in the performance of those exceeding great and precious promises made and recorded in the Old Testament, and especially those two concerning the sending of the Messias, and concerning the calling of the Gentiles.

That shall be born; either,

1. Spiritually, i.e. born again; for regeneration is oft called a birth; as Psa_87:4,5 **Joh 1:13** 1Pe_1:23, and a creation, Psa_102:18. Or rather,

2. Naturally, i.e. unto succeeding generations; whereby David gives us a key to understand this Psalm, and teacheth us that he speaks not here of himself, or of the occurrences of his times, but of things which were to be done in after-ages, even of the spreading of the gospel among the Gentiles, in the time of the New Testament.

That he hath done this, i.e. they shall declare that this is the work of God, and not of man, and carried on by his only power in the world, against all the wit and force of men. Or rather, *because* (this being added as a proof or demonstration of that *righteousness* of God now mentioned) *he* (i.e. the Lord, plainly understood here, and expressed in the foregoing verse) *hath done* or *wrought it* , to wit, his righteousness; i.e. he hath executed with his hand what he spake with his mouth; he hath demonstrated the truth of his promises by his actions, and by the accomplishment of them.

Psalms 23:1 PSALM 23

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm gives us some general discovery of the time of its writing; which was when David was delivered out of his distresses, and quietly settled in his kingdom.

A Psalm of David.

David describeth his own happiness, Psa_23:1, both in temporal, Psa_23:2, and in spiritual things, Psa_23:3-5. His confidence in God's mercy, and vows to dwell in his house for ever, Psa_23:6.

He hath showed himself to be so by his gracious providences towards me and for me; and he hath taken upon him that office and relation to me by his entering into covenant with me, whereby he hath engaged himself to rule, and feed, and preserve, and heal me, and do all which shepherds do, or are obliged to do, to their flocks; which David very well understood, and had doubtless carefully performed his duty to his sheep; and therefore he strengthens his faith by this consideration, that God was his Shepherd; and as God was a much better Shepherd than he or any man could be, so he might confidently expect more than ordinary benefits from his conduct. *I shall not want*, to wit, any thing which is really necessary for me, either for this life or for the next. But foolish man may think many things to be necessary for him, which the all-wise God knoweth to be not only unnecessary, but hurtful, and therefore mercifully denies what men ignorantly desire to their hurt.

Psalms 23:2

To lie down; to rest and repose myself at noon, as the manner was in those hot countries. See Son_1:7 Isa_13:20 Eze_34:15.

In green pastures; where there is both delight and plenty of provisions.

He leadeth me, lest I should wander and perish. Heb. *he leadeth me sweetly and gently*, accommodating himself to mine infirmities, as shepherds do to their sheep, Gen_33:13 Isa_40:11 **49:10.**

Beside; or, *to*; the particle *al* being oft put for *el*, as Gen_1:30 **16:7.**

The still waters; quiet and gentle waters, either put into watering-troughs, or running in small and shallow channels; which are

opposed to great rivers, which both affright the sheep with their noise, and expose them to the danger of being carried away by their swift and violent streams whilst they are drinking at them.

Psalms 23:3

He restoreth, Heb. *he bringeth it back* ; either,

1. From its errors or wandering; or,
2. Into the body, out of which it was even departing and fainting away. He reviveth or comforteth me. Compare Rth_4:15 1Sa_30:12 Lam_1:11.

In the paths of righteousness; in straight, and plain, and safe paths, where the sheep is neither hurt, nor wearied, nor in danger of wandering. By his word he directs me to the right ways of truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and by his Spirit he inclines and enables me to choose them, and to continue to walk in them.

For his name's sake; not for any worth in me, but merely for the demonstration and glory of his justice, and faithfulness, and goodness.

Psalms 23:4

Through the valley of the shadow of death; through a dark and dismal valley, full of terrors and dangers, as this phrase signifies, Job_24:17 Psa_44:19 **107:10,14 Jer 2:6**.

I will fear no evil; I will not give way to my fears, but confidently rely upon God.

Thy rod and thy staff; two words noting the same thing, and both designing God's pastoral care over him, expressed by the sign and instrument of it.

They comfort me; the consideration thereof supports me under all my fears and distresses.

Psalms 23:5

Thou furnishest me with plenty and variety of provisions and comforts,

mine enemies seeing, and envying, and fretting at it, but not being able to hinder it.

With oil; or, *ointment* , as the Syriac and Arabic interpreters render it; with aromatical ointments, which were then used at great feasts, Psa_92:10 Amo_6:6 Mat_6:17 Luk_7:38. The sense is, Thy comforts delight my soul: compare Psa_45:7.

My cup runneth over; thou hast given me a very plentiful portion, signified by the cup given to the guests by the master of the feast.

Psalms 23:6

Goodness and mercy, i.e. God's favour, and the blessed and comfortable effects and benefits of it.

Shall follow me; by which emphatical expression he signifies God's admirable freeness and readiness to do good to his people, and his preventing them with blessings.

All the days of my life; which he justly concludes from the former instances of God's favour to him because of the unchangeableness of God's nature, and the stability of his covenant and promises. Whereas I have formerly been driven from God's house, I rest assured that I shall now constantly enjoy that blessed privilege of serving and enjoying God in his sanctuary, which I prize more than all my dominions

Psalms 24:1 PSALM 24

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is generally and probably thought to have been composed by David, upon that solemn occasion of brining the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the tabernacle which David had built for it, **2Sa 6**; wherein he hath a further prospect, even to the temple, which he earnestly desired and intended to build, and which he knew would be built by his son. And when this was done, and the ark brought into it, this Psalm was to be sung, and indeed to this time it seems chiefly directed. For David's Psalms were not only used by himself upon the first occasions for which he made them, but they were committed to the prefects of sacred music, for the use of the church in all succeeding times. And being a prophet, he speaks, as the prophets used, of things to come as if they were already present, and turns

his speech to the temple and its gates, as if they were now built. Moreover, because the tabernacle, and temple, and ark were manifest types of Christ, and of his church, and of the place and state of heavenly glory, David extended his thoughts to them also, or at least the Holy Ghost designed to comprehend them under these typical expressions.

David acknowledgeth God's sovereignty over the world, Psa_24:1,2. A description of the persons that shall be of his spiritual kingdom, Psa_24:3,4. Their blessing, Psa_24:5,6. An exhortation to receive it, Psa_24:7-9. Who the King of glory is, Psa_24:10.

The fulness thereof; all the creatures, and especially the inhabitants wherewith it is replenished. God's general dominion over and interest in all persons and places seems to be here premised and asserted, either,

1. To show his right to choose any nation whom he pleased to be his peculiar people; which privilege being conferred upon the Israelites, was a great stumbling-block to the heathen nations. Or,
2. To set forth the singular kindness and mercy of God to Israel, who chose them out of all the nations of the world to be near to him, and to have special acquaintance with him, although otherwise he had no other relation to them than what he had to all mankind, to wit, that of a Creator and Governor. Or,
3. To demonstrate the excellency of the Jewish worship and religion above all others, because the God whom they served was the God, and Maker of the whole world, when the gods of the Gentiles were sorry idols, and esteemed by themselves to be but local and confined deities.

Psalms 24:2

Justly have I said that *the earth is the Lord 's* , for he made it, and laid the foundation of it, and that in a wonderful manner. By the

seas and floods he means the whole collection of waters, as well the sea and rivers running into it, as that great abyss of waters which is contained in the bowels of the earth, of which see Gen_7:11 **49:25** 2Pe_3:5. This is here mentioned as an evidence of God's wise, and powerful, and gracious providence, that he

hath built so vast a building upon so weak a foundation as the waters are, Mic_6:2; and that although the waters are lighter than the earth, and therefore are naturally inclined to be above it, as they were at first; yet God hath so far overruled the inclinations of nature, that the waters shall as it were deny themselves, and run down into channels and caverns of the earth, that so the earth may be a convenient habitation for men and beasts. See Gen_1:9 Exo_20:4 Psa_104:6.

Psalms 24:3

The hill of the Lord, to wit, Zion or Moriah, the place of God's sanctuary and special presence. This is here subjoined, either,

1. By way of opposition; though God is the God of the whole world, yet he is in a peculiar manner the God of Israel, and to be worshipped no where but in their holy place. Or,

2. As an inference. Having asserted and proved God's authority and dominion over all mankind, and consequently their obligations to serve and worship him, he now proposeth a most necessary and important question, especially in those times, when all nations except Israel were under deep ignorance and errors herein, namely, where, and how, and by whom God will be served, and his favour and blessing may be enjoyed? The place is here described, and the qualification of the persons in the following verses.

Who shall stand, to wit, to minister before him, as this word is commonly used with respect either to men, as 1Ki_1:2, compared with 1Ki_10:8 Dan_1:5,19; or to God, as Deu_10:8 **18:7** Dan_7:10 Zec_3:4.

Standing is the posture of ministers or servants. So the sense is, Who shall serve God, to wit, with God's acceptation, and to his own advantage?

In his holy place; in the place which he hath sanctified for his service.

Psalms 24:4

Whose actions and conversations are holy and unblamable. It is here very observable, that the character of a right and acceptable worshipper of God is not taken from his nation and relation to

Abraham, nor from all those costly and laborious rites and ceremonies of the law, in which the generality of the Israelites pleased themselves, but in moral and spiritual duties, which most of them grossly neglected.

A pure heart; purged from hypocrisy and inward filthiness, and careful to approve itself to God as well as to men, ordering a man's very thoughts and affections according to God's word. This is fitly added, because a man may keep his hands clean in good measure upon mere worldly motives, or with an evil design, or without any respect to God.

Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity; either,

1. Who doth not worship idols, which are oft called vanities in Scripture. Or,

2. Who doth not swear vainly or falsely, the phrase here being much the same with that in the third commandment, of *taking God's name in vain*. But that seems to be a quite differing phrase, and the *name of God* there mentioned determines the sense of that general phrase to oaths, which without that addition, or something equivalent, is never to my knowledge used in Scripture in that sense. Nor do all those learned men who so expound this place give one instance of that signification of this phrase. And for their other argument for that sense, that this clause is conjoined with the next by the conjunction *vau*, and therefore is to be explained by it, it seems to have no weight, because the same conjunction joyns the two first characterstogether, and yet it is confessed that *cleanhands* and a *pureheart* are two distinct and very differing things. Or rather,

3. Who doth not immoderately value and affect, or ardently desire, (as this very phrase of *lifting up the soul* doth oft signify, as Deu_24:15 Psa_25:1 Jer_22:27 **44:14** Eze_24:25 Hos_4:8) the vain things of this present life and world, such as honours, riches, pleasures, and the like, which are oft called *vain things or vanities* in Scripture, as Psa_4:2 **119:37** Ecc_1:2 **12:8**. And this is very fitly mentioned as a character of a truly goodman, because hereby he is distinguished from all ungodly men whatsoever, whose inseparable property this is, both in the Old and New Testament, noted to be, to *love vanity*, and to set their hearts chiefly upon the

good things of this life, such as corn and wine, Psa_4:2,6,7; and to have their portion in this life , Psa_17:14; and to mind earthly things , Phi_3:19; and to be friends of the world , Jam_4:4; and to love the world, and the things of the world , 1Jo_2:15. Whereas good men are every where described to be such as make God their portion , Psa_16:5; and prize and desire his favour and service infinitely more than all the enjoyments of this life, yea, even than life itself, Job_23:12 Psa_4:6,7 63:3 119:72; and such as are weaned from earthly things, Psa_131:1,2; and have their affections set on things above, not on things of the earth , Col_3:2; and lay not up their treasure in earth, but in heaven, Mat_6:19,20; all which is directly opposite to this *lifting up the soul to vanity . Deceitfully* , Heb. *unto or with deceit* , i.e. falsely, or with a purpose of deceiving or injuring others thereby. Under this negative the contrary affirmative is included, that he is one who, when he is called to swear, doth *swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness* , Jer_4:2.

Psalms 24:5

The blessing, i.e. the blessings which God hath promised to his church and people, to wit, *grace and glory, and all other good things* , as they are summed up, Psa_84:11. He and he only shall be truly blessed. *From the Lord* ; which is added significantly, by way of opposition to the blessings which men received, either from the priests or from other men, which were oftentimes given unto unworthy persons, and in that case were without any effect or benefit; whereas God's blessings are given only to good men, and are always effectual for their good.

Righteousness, i.e. the blessed fruit or reward of his righteousness, as the *work* is oft put for the reward of it, as Lev_19:13 Job_7:2 Psa_109:20. Or, kindness or mercy, and those benefits which flow from it, which are oft called by the name of *righteousness* , as Jud_5:11 1Sa_12:7 Psa_48:10 112:9.

Psalms 24:6

The generation; the true progeny which God regards; whereby he reflects upon them, who boasted and trusted to their carnal generation or descent from Jacob.

That seek him, to wit, God, mentioned in the end of Psa_24:5, or his face, as it is more fully expressed in the next clause; i.e. that make it their care and study to know him, and his mind and will, and to please and serve him, as this phrase is usually understood.

Thy face, i.e. his face, by a familiar change of the person; of which many instances have been already noted; and *his face*, i. e. his grace and favour, which is oft called God's face, as Gen_4:14 Exo_33:14, **15 Psa 16:11 27:2 44:3**. And so this phrase is used 2Ch_7:14 Psa_27:8 Hos_5:15. *O Jacob*; so the sense is, that seek the true church, here called *Jacob*; that desire the knowledge of it, and conversation with it; in which sense many are said to seek Solomon's face, as the phrase is in the Hebrew, 1Ki_10:24 2Ch_9:23, and the harlot to *seek* her lover's *face*, Pro_7:15. And so this is by some expounded of the Gentiles, who inquired after the true church, and finding it in Jacob, were desirous to become proselytes, and to join themselves to the church of Jacob or Israel. But it must be remembered that the psalmist is not here speaking of the calling of the Gentiles, but only of the character or qualification of the true Jacobites or Israelites, who cannot conveniently be said *to seek the face of Jacob*, i.e. their own. And the phrase of *seeking the face of Jacob*, or *of the church*, is nowhere used in Scripture. Or, as it is in the margin, *O God of Jacob*. But that seems to be too large a supplement. Or, this is *Jacob*, the pronoun this being easily understood out of the beginning of the verse. Or, the generation (which may in the same manner be supplied) of Jacob, Jacob being here put not for the person, but for the posterity of Jacob, as it is Gen_49:7 Num_23:7, **10, 23 Deu 32:9** Psa_14:7; or for the church or people of God, which is oft called *Jacob* or *Israel* as Isa_14:1 **41:8 44:1, 5, 21**, &c. So the sense is, This and this only is the true Jacob or Israel, or church of God, and all others are so only in name and title, although they be descended lineally from him. Or, in *Jacob*, the particle *in* being here understood, as it is in Psa_2:12 **17:12**, and in many other places. So the sense of the place is, This is the true generation of them that seek God's face in Jacob, i.e. either in Jacob's land or sanctuary, the only place where God was to be sought; or among the Jacobites or Israelites; by which he insinuates what is expressed Rom_9:6, that *all are not Israel that are of Israel*, and that all were not Israelites indeed that were sprung from Jacob, but

only those of them who were such as he described, Psa_24:4. Compare Joh_1:47 Rom_2:28,29.

Psalms 24:7

The question was put, Who shall ascend into God's hill and holy place? Psa_24:3; to which answer hath been given, and the persons described, Psa_24:4-6. But because there still were impediments in the way, and there were

gates and *doors* to this holy place, to shut out those who would ascend thither, therefore he poetically speaks to those *gates* to open and let in the King of glory, who would make way for his subjects and followers. Here is a representation of a triumphant entrance of a king into his royal city and palace; for which the gates use to be enlarged, or at least wide opened. He speaks here of the *gates* and *doors* , either,

1. Of his royal city of *Zion* , through which the ark was at this time to be brought to the tabernacle, which David had built for it, called *everlasting* , either from the solidity and durableness of the matter, or from David's desires and hopes that God would make them such in some sort, because he *loved the gates of Zion* , Psa_87:2. Or rather,

2. Of the temple, which by faith and the Spirit of prophecy he beheld as already built, and accordingly addresseth his speech to it, whose *doors* he calls *everlasting* , not so much because they were made of strong and durable materials, as in opposition of those of the tabernacle, which were removed from place to place, whereas the temple and its doors were constantly fixed in one place; and if the sins of Israel did not hinder, were to abide there for ever, i.e.: as long as the Mosaical dispensation was to last, or until the coming of the Messiah, as that phrase is very commonly taken in the Old Testament. These gates he bids *lift up their heads* , or tops, either by allusion to those gates which have a portcullis at the top of them, which may be let down or taken up, and accordingly makes the entrance either higher or lower; or that by this figurative address to the gates he might signify the duty of the people to make their gates higher and wider, to give their king a more magnificent entrance. But though this be the literal sense of the place, yet there is also a mystical sense of it, and that too

designed by the Holy Ghost. And as the temple was undoubtedly a type of Christ, and of his church, and of heaven itself; so this place may also contain a representation, either of Christ's entrance into his church, or into the hearts of his faithful people, who are here commanded to set open their hearts and souls, which are not unfitly called *everlasting doors* , for his reception; or of his ascension into heaven, where the saints or angels are poetically introduced as preparing the way, and opening the heavenly gates, to receive their Lord and King, returning to his royal habitation with triumph and glory. Compare Psa_47:5 68:25 Act_2:33 Eph_4:8.

The King of glory ; the glorious King Jehovah, who dwelt in the temple and between the cherubims; or the Messiah, the King of Israel, and of his church, called the *King* or *Lord of glory* , 1Co_2:8 Jam_2:1, both for that glory which is inherent in him, and that which is purchased by him for his members.

Psalms 24:8

This seems to be a prolepsis, or removal of an objection. You will say, What is the cause of this imperious call? and why or for whom must those gates be opened in so solemn and extraordinary a manner?

The Lord strong and mighty: this contains an answer to the question; He is no ordinary person, no meaner and no other than Jehovah, who hath given so many proofs of his almightiness, who hath subdued all his enemies, and is now returned in triumph. Here is in this and the foregoing verse a sacred dialogue between several persons. And some suppose that the sacred musicians, which attended upon the service of the ark and tabernacle, and were doubtless employed in this solemnity, 2Sa_5:5, were divided into two choirs, whereof one spake the former, and the other the latter verse.

Psalms 24:9

The same verse is repeated again, partly to shame and awaken the dulness of mankind, who are so hardly brought to a serious preparation for such solemnities; and partly to signify the great worth and importance of the matter, contained under these expressions.

Psalms 24:10

Under whose command are all the hosts of heaven and earth, angels and men, and ah other creatures.

Psalms 25:1 PSALM 25

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been composed when David was under some straits and pressures, when his outward afflictions were accompanied with inward horrors of conscience for his sins, by which he had forfeited God's favour, and procured these calamities to himself.

David, being distressed by his enemies, taketh his refuge in God, Psa_25:1-6; prayeth for the remission of the sins of his youth, Psa_25:1-7. He showeth the goodness of the Lord to the meek, to such as keep his covenant, to such as fear him, Psa_25:8-15. He prayeth for help in affliction, Psa_25:16-18; and against his enemies, Psa_25:19-21; and to redeem his church from trouble, Psa_25:22.

i.e. I direct my desires and prayers (which are expressed by this phrase, Psa_24:4 Jer_22:27 Lam_3:41) with hope or expectation of a gracious answer, which also it implies, Deu_24:15.

Psalms 25:2

Ashamed, i.e. disappointed of my hope, which will be reproachful to me, not without reflection upon thee, of whose power and faithfulness I have made my boast.

Psalms 25:3

Let none that wait on thee be ashamed, with me and for me; for if I be frustrated, all that trust in thee will be discouraged and upbraided with my example.

Let them be ashamed; blast their wicked designs and hopes.

Which transgress, or *prevaricate*, or *deal perfidiously* with me, violating their faith given to me.

Without a cause; without any provocation of mine, or without any sufficient reason.

Psalms 25:4

Thy ways, i.e. the way of thy precepts, which I ought to do in my circumstances and difficulties; by what methods I may obtain thy favour and help. Whatsoever thou dost with me as to other things, grant me this favour, teach me my duty, and cause me to keep close to it, notwithstanding all temptations to the contrary.

Psalms 25:5

In thy truth, i.e. in the true and right way prescribed in thy word, which is oft called truth, as Psa_119:30 Joh_8:45, **46 16:13**, &c. Or, *by* or *because of thy truth*, i.e. because thou art faithful, do thou lead or guide me as thou hast promised to do.

The God of my salvation, i.e. who hast saved me formerly, and hast engaged to save me, and from whom alone I expect salvation.

Psalms 25:6

O consider thy own merciful nature, and thy former manifold favours vouchsafed to me, and to other miserable sinners, and do like thyself. Thou hast been gracious to such as I am from the beginning of the world to this day, and to me in particular from my very infancy, as he oft acknowledgeth in this book; yea, from all eternity thou hast had a good will to me, and therefore do not now desist and desert me.

Psalms 25:7

Remember not, so as to lay to my charge, the sins committed in my young and tender years, Ecc_11:9, **10** which God frequently puntsbeth in riper age, Job_13:26 Jer_3:25, and therefore he now prays that God would not deal so with him.

Nor my transgressions; my succeeding or other sins, which either have been acted by me, or may be imputed to me. Being a sinner, I have nothing to plead for myself but thy free mercy and goodness, which I now implore.

Psalms 25:8

Good, i.e. bountiful and gracious to sinners, ready to do good, and delighting in it.

Upright, or, *right*, i.e. holy and true, sincere in making promises, and in all his declarations and offers of mercy to sinners, and faithful in fulfilling them. Being such a one, he will not be

wanting to such poor sinners as I am, but will guide them by his word, and Spirit, and gracious providence into the way of life and peace. By

sinners he doth not understand all that are so; not such as are obstinate, and proud, and scornful, whom God hath declared that he will not teach nor direct, but will leave them to the errors and lusts of their own hearts, and will blind and harden them to their ruin, as is often expressed in Scripture; but only such as, being truly sensible of their sins, do humbly and earnestly seek God for his grace and mercy, or such as are meek, as the next verse explains it; for these he will not fail to assist and relieve.

Psalms 25:9

The meek, i.e. the humble and lowly, such as meekly submit themselves to God's hand and word, and are willing and desirous to be directed and governed by him.

In judgment, i.e. in the paths of judgment; or in the right way wherein they should walk, as the next clause explains this; or by the rule of his word, which is oft called *his judgment* , or *judgments* . Or, *with judgment* , i.e. with a wise and provident care, and a due regard to all their circumstances. See Jer_10:24 1Co_10:13.

His way; either God's way, which God prescribes; or his own way, in which he ought to walk.

Psalms 25:10

All the dealings of God with them, yea, even those that are afflictive and grievous to the flesh, are done in kindness and faithfulness to them, as being very necessary for them, and tending to their great advantage.

His covenant, i.e. the laws or conditions required of them by his covenant; or, as it follows, his testimonies, i.e. his precepts, which are the testimonies or witnesses of God's will, and of man's duty.

Psalms 25:11

For thy name's sake, i.e. for the honour of thy goodness and truth, which is concerned herein.

For it is great; and therefore none but such a God can pardon it, and nothing but thy own name can move thee to do it; and the

pardoning of it will well become so great and good a God, and will tend much to the illustration of thy glory, as the greatness and desperateness of the disease advanceth the honour and praise of the physician. Or this may be urged, not as an argument to move God, but as the reason that moved him to pray so earnestly, and that for God's name's sake. Or, *though* (as this particle is oft rendered, as Exo_34:9 Psa_41:4, and elsewhere) *it be great* . Possibly he speaks of his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. Or, *for* or *though it be much* or *manifold* ; for the Hebrew word signifies both *great* and *much* .

Psalms 25:12

What man is he, i.e. whosoever he be, whether Jew or Gentile, whether more innocent, or a greater sinner, which is my case.

That he shall choose, i.e. which God appointeth or approveth. Or, which *he* , i.e. such person, should choose; for the future tense is oft put potentially, and so as to express a man's duty, as Gen_20:9 Mal_1:6 **2:7**.

Psalms 25:13

Shall dwell, Heb. *shall lodge* , i.e. continue, as this word signifies, Job_17:2 Pro_19:23. It notes the constancy and stability of his happiness, both whilst he lives, and when he is dead; which the next clause seems to suppose.

At ease, Heb. *in good* , i.e. in the possession and enjoyment of the true good.

The earth, or, *the land* , to wit, Canaan; which was promised and given, as an earnest of the whole covenant of grace, and all its promises, and therefore is synecdochically put for all of them. The sense is, his seed shall be blessed.

Psalms 25:14

The secret of the Lord; either,

1. His word and counsel, to direct and guide them in the right way, which he oft mentions here as a singular blessing, Psa_25:8,**9,12**, to show them their duty in all conditions, and the way to their eternal salvation. And so this may seem to be explained by the following words,

he will show them his covenant. And this, though it was revealed, yet might be called a secret, because of the many and deep mysteries in it, and because it is said to be hid from many of them to whom it was revealed, Mat_11:25 2Co_3:13-15 **4:3**; and it is not to be understood to any purpose without the illumination of their minds by God's Spirit, as is manifest from Psa_119:18,**19**, and many other places of Scripture. Or rather,

2. His love and favour, which is called his *secret* , Job_29:4 Pro_3:32, and that very fitly, because it is known to none but him that enjoyeth it, Pro_14:10 Rev_2:17. Or his gracious and fatherly providence, which is here said to be *with them* ; or, as it is in the Hebrew, *towards them* , taking care of them, and working for them; even then when God seems to frown upon them.

He will show them his covenant, or, *and he will make them to know* (for the infinitive is here thought to be put for the future tense of the indicative, as it is Ecc_3:14,**15,18 Ho 9:13 12:3**)

his covenant, i.e. he will make them clearly to understand it, both its duties or conditions, and its blessings or privileges; neither of which ungodly men rightly understand. Or, he will make them to know it by experience, or by God's making it good to them; as, on the contrary, God threatens to make ungodly men to *know his breach of promise* , Num_14:34. Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and his covenant* (is, i.e. he hath engaged himself by his promise or covenant) *to make them know it* , to wit, his secret, i.e. that he will manifest either his word or his favour to them.

Psalms 25:15

i.e. My trust is in him, my expectation of relief is from him only, and he will deliver me out of all my temptations and tribulations.

Psalms 25:16

Turn thee unto me; turn thy face and favour to me, O thou who now hast turned thy back upon me, and forsaken me.

I am desolate; destitute of all other hopes and succours; persecuted by mine enemies, and forsaken by the most of my friends; as he was in Absalom's rebellion.

Psalms 25:17

The troubles of my heart; my outward troubles are accompanied with grievous torments of my mind and heart for my sins, which have procured them, and thy great displeasure manifested in them.

Psalms 25:18

Look upon with compassion, as Exo_3:7,8 Psa 31:7 106:44.

My sins; the procuring and continuing causes of my trouble.

Psalms 25:19

Consider, Heb. *look upon* , as Psa_25:18, to wit, with a revengeful eye, as Exo_14:24 1Ch_12:17 Psa_104:32. For this general expression of *looking upon* is taken several ways in Scripture, and is to be determined by the context.

Cruel, Heb. *violent or injurious* , either without any cause given by me; or without any bounds, or in an implacable manner.

Psalms 25:20

My soul, i.e. myself or my life, as that word is commonly taken; for his soul was out of his enemies' reach, who could only *kill his body* , Luk_12:4.

Psalms 25:21

Though I have greatly offended thee, yet remember that I have dealt honestly and sincerely with mine enemies, whilst they have dealt falsely and injuriously with me; and therefore judge between them and me, and deal with me according to the righteousness of my cause, and carriage towards them.

Psalms 25:22

If thou wilt not pity and help me, yet spare thy people. who suffer for my sake, and in my sufferings.

Psalms 26:1 PSALM 26

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was certainly made by David when he was in distress, and particularly when he was falsely accused and defamed by his adversaries, as he frequently was by Saul and his courtiers; and therefore for his vindication he makes a solemn appeal to God,

and a protestation of his own innocency, to which he was forced by their clamours and reproaches.

David declareth his integrity and innocency, Psa_26:1-3. His hatred to the congregation of the wicked, Psa_26:4,5. He publisheth God's works, Psa_26:7; loves to dwell in his house, Psa_26:8. He prays for deliverance from his enemies, Psa_26:9,10, and promises thankfulness to God, Psa_26:11,12.

Judge me, i.e. plead my cause, or give sentence for me; as this phrase is commonly used, as Psa_10:18 **43:1 72:4** Isa_1:17. I can obtain no right from men. The supreme and subordinate magistrates are mine implacable and resolved enemies. Do thou therefore do me justice against them,

for I have walked in mine integrity; though they accuse me of many crimes, they can prove none of them, and thou and mine own conscience, and theirs too, are witnesses for me, that my carriage towards them hath been innocent and unblamable. I have committed my cause and affairs to thee, as to a just Judge and merciful Father, and my hope and trust is fixed upon thee alone; therefore thou wilt not deceive my trust, but will uphold me against all mine enemies; for thou hast promised to save those that trust in thee. Or, that

I shall not slide or *fall*. So this declares the matter of his trust.

Psalms 26:2

Because it is possible that I may deceive myself, and be partial in my cause, or at least mine enemies will so judge of me, I appeal to thee, O thou Judge of hearts, and beg that thou wouldst search and try me by such ways and means as thou seest fit, and make me known to myself, and to the world, and convince mine enemies of mine integrity.

Psalms 26:3

I dare appeal to thee with this confidence, because thou knowest that I have a true and deep sense of thy loving-kindness to me upon mine heart, by which I have been obliged, and in a manner constrained, to love and obey thee, and in all things to approve any heart and ways to thee, and to abstain from all such evil practices as mine enemies charge me with, whereby I should have forfeited thy loving-kindness, which I prize more than life,

Psa_63:3, and exposed myself to thy just displeasure. My experience of and trust in thy goodness doth fully satisfy and support me, that I neither do nor need to use any indirect or irregular courses for my relief.

In thy truth, i.e. according to thy word, which is oft called truth, as Psa_119:142, **151**Jo_17:17, **19**; believing its promises, and observing its precepts and directions; and not according to the course of the world, as it follows.

Psalms 26:4

I have not sat, i.e. chosen or used to converse with them; for sitting is a posture of ease and of continuance. I have been so far from an approbation or imitation of their wicked courses, (wherewith mine enemies reproach me,) that I have avoided even their company; and if accidentally I came into it, yet I would not abide in it.

With vain persons, i.e. with liars, or false and deceitful persons, as the next clause explains it. And *vanity* is very frequently put for falsehood or lying.

Neither will I go in; into their company, or with design to join in their counsels or courses, as the same word is used, Jos_23:7. And conversation is oft expressed by *going out and coming in* .

With dissemblers, Heb. *with such as hide themselves* , covering their crafty and wicked designs with fair pretences. I abhor such persons and practices, though I am accused to be such a one.

Psalms 26:5

The congregation of evil-doers; either,

1. Their whole rank or society. I have an antipathy against all such persons, without any exception. Or,
2. To meet and join with them in their assemblies and consultations, or sit with them, as it follows.

Psalms 26:6

In innocency, or, *with integrity* , or with a pure heart and conscience. I will not do as my hypocritical enemies do, who content themselves with those outward washings of their hands or

bodies prescribed in the law, Exo_29:4 &c.; Deu_21:6 Heb_9:10, whilst their hearts and lives are filthy and abominable; but

I will wash, or *I have washed, my hands* , and withal purged my heart and conscience from dead works. Compare Isa_1:15 **16** 1Ti_2:8.

Compass thine altar, i.e. approach to thine altar with my sacrifices; which I could not do with any comfort or confidence, if I were conscious to myself of those crimes whereof mine enemies accuse me. By the phrase *Of compassing the altar* , either,

1. He alludes to some Levitical custom of going about the altar, as the priests did in the oblation of their sacrifices, and the people, especially those of them who were most devout and zealous, who possibly moved from place to place, but still within their own court, that they might discern what was done on the several sides of the altar, and so be the more affected with it. Or rather,

2. He implies that he would offer many sacrifices together, which would employ the priests round about the altar; and so he is said to *compass* it, because the priests did it in his name, and upon his account, as persons are very oft said in Scripture to *offer* those sacrifices which the priests offer for them.

Psalms 26:7

Publish, or, *proclaim* , to wit,

thy wondrous works, as it here follows.

With the voice of thanksgiving; accompanying my sacrifices with my own solemn thanksgivings and songs of praise.

Psalms 26:8

The habitation of thy house, i.e. thy sanctuary and worship; which is an evidence of my piety to thee, as I have given many proofs of my justice and integrity towards men. Nothing is more grievous to me than to be hindered from seeing and serving thee there.

Thine honour; or, *thy glory* ; either,

1. The ark so called, 1Sa_4:22 Psa_78:61. Or

2. Thy glorious and gracious presence, or the manifestation of thy glory, or of thy glorious power, and faithfulness, and goodness.

Psalms 26:9

My soul, i.e. my life, as it is explained in the next clause. Do not bind me up in the same bundle, nor put me into the same accursed and miserable condition, with them. Seeing I have had so great an antipathy against them in the whole course of my life, Psa_26:4,5, let me not die their death; as Balaam on the contrary desired

to die the death of the righteous, Num_23:10. And seeing I have loved thy house and worship, and endeavoured to serve thee acceptably, not only with ceremonial cleanness, but with moral purity of heart and life, Psa_26:6-8, do not deal with me as thou wilt with those that are filled with ungodliness and unrighteousness; do not destroy me with them, *the righteous with the wicked* , Gen_18:23, but save me in the common calamity, as thou hast promised and used to do in like cases. The Hebrew word *asaph* , rendered *gathering* , is oft put for *taking away* , as Gen_30:23 Isa_4:1 Jer_8:13 **16:5**, and that by destruction and death, as 1Sa_15:6 Isa_57:1 Jer_8:13 Eze_34:29 Hos_4:3. The ground of which phrase may be either, because by death men's souls or spirits are gathered and returned to God, Ecc_12:7, who had dispersed them all the world over; or because the several sorts of men, good and bad, which live here together promiscuously, are there severed, and all of one sort of them gathered together *unto their fathers* or *peoples* , as it is expressed, Gen_15:15 Num_20:24 2Ki_22:20: compare Heb_12:23.

With sinners; profligate and obstinate sinners, as the following words describe them, such being oft called sinners by way of eminency, as 1Sa_15:18 Psa_1:1 **104:35** Isa_1:28 **33:14**.

Psalms 26:10

In whose hands is mischief; who not only imagine mischief in their hearts, but persist in it, and execute it with their hands.

Their right hand; which should be stretched out to execute justice, and punish offenders.

Psalms 26:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 26:12

In an even place, Heb. *in rectitude* , or

in a right, or straight, or plain, or even place; which may be understood either,

1. Civilly, or in regard of his outward condition. So this is opposed to the slippery places, in which wicked men are said to be, Psa_35:6 **73:18** Jer_23:12; and the sense is, I stand upon a sure and solid foundation, where I fear no fall, nor to be overthrown by the assaults of mine enemies, being under the protection of God's promise, and his almighty and watchful providence. Or,

2. Morally, or in regard of his conversation. So the sense is, I do and will persist or continue (which is oft signified by *standing* , as Psa_1:1) in my plain, and righteous, and straight course of life, not using those frauds, and wicked arts, and perverse and crooked paths, which mine enemies choose and walk in, or whereof they do falsely accuse me. And so this is the same thing for substance with his

walking in his integrity, expressed in the foregoing verse, as also Psa_26:1.

In the congregations will I bless the Lord; I will not only privately acknowledge, but publicly, and in the assemblies of thy people, celebrate thy praises, both for thy grace enabling and inclining me to choose, and love, and persevere in the ways of holiness and righteousness, and for thy protection hitherto afforded to me in the midst of all my dangers and troubles, and for that well-grounded assurance which thou hast given me, of thy favour, and of thy future deliverance.

Psalms 27:1 PSALM 27

THE ARGUMENT

It is apparent from the body of this Psalm, that David was not yet fully delivered from the trouble which his enemies gave him, both by their slanders and other ways. But whether it belong to that history which is recorded 2Sa_21:15-17, as the Jews conceive,

whom some others follow, is wholly uncertain, and not necessary for us to know.

David declareth that God is his only comfort and confidence in all danger, Psa_27:1-3. His hearty desire to be in the house of God, Psa_27:4. The advantage of it, Psa_24:5,6. He prayeth for the light of God's face, and his salvation, Psa_27:7-12; and from experience others to wait upon him, Psa_27:13,14.

My light, i.e. my counsellor in all my difficulties, and my comforter and deliverer in all my distresses.

The strength of my life, i.e. the supporter and preserver of my life.

Psalms 27:2

To eat up my flesh; greedy to devour me at one morsel. Compare Job_19:22 **31:31**.

Psalms 27:3

In that which I have now said, that God is my light, &c., Psa_27:1, and in the experience of his favour and protection, Psa_27:2.

Psalms 27:4

Though I am exercised with many troubles, there is but one thing that I am very solicitous for, or desirous of, and that is not victory and triumphs over all mine enemies, assured peace and settlement in my throne, the wealth, and pleasure, and glory of enlarging or ruling my empire: or if I have any desire to any of those things, it is chiefly that I may not be disturbed in or driven from the sanctuary and worship of God as I have been, but may have opportunity of constant attendance upon God; that there I may exercise and delight myself in the contemplation of thy amiable and glorious majesty, and of the infinite wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, grace, and mercy, and other perfections, which though hid in a great measure from the world, are clearly manifested in thy church and ordinances. *To inquire* ; or, *diligently to seek* ; either God's face and favour; or his mind and will, and my own duty; or

the Lord's beauty, last mentioned, which is discovered more or less, as men are diligent or negligent in seeking or inquiring into it.

In his temple, i.e. in his tabernacle; which he here and elsewhere calls his

temple, because it was the same thing for substance; and because his thoughts and affections did constantly and eagerly run out upon the temple; and since he was not permitted to build the thing, he would at least take occasion to solace himself with the name, and thereby to enter his protest of his earnest desire to build it, if God had seen it fit.

Psalms 27:5

He shall hide me; or, *hath hid me* ; or, *useth to hide me* . Justly do I prize the house and service of God so highly, both because I have such vast obligations to him for his former protection and favours, and because all my hope, and confidence, and security depends upon him.

In the secret of his tabernacle; in his tabernacle, into which mine enemies cannot come; and in a secret place in it, where, if they come, they cannot find me. Or, as it were (for the note of similitude is oft understood)

in the secret of his tabernacle, i. e. in as safe a place as the holy of holies, which is called God's *secret* , Eze_7:22, where none might come but the high priest, and he but one day in a year. He alludes to the ancient custom of offenders, who used to flee to the tabernacle or altar, where they esteemed themselves safe, 1Ki_2:28.

Upon a rock; a place high and inaccessible, strong and impregnable.

Psalms 27:6

Mine head shall be lifted up above mine enemies; he will advance me above them, and give me a complete victory over them.

Sacrifices of joy, or *of shouting* or *resounding* , i.e. of thanksgiving; which were accompanied with the sound of trumpets and other instruments, Num_10:10 1Ch_16:41,**42 Psa 33:3.**

Psalms 27:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 27:8

When thou saidst; either by thy word, commanding and inviting me so to do; or by thy Spirit, directing and inclining me to it.

Seek ye my face, i.e. seek my presence, and favour, and help, by fervent and faithful prayer.

My heart said unto thee; my heart readily and thankfully complied with the motion; and upon the encouragement of this command, or invitation and promise couched in it, I resolved I would do so, and do so at this time. But this verse is a little otherwise rendered by divers learned men. And the words lie in another order in the Hebrew text, which runs thus:

To thee my heart said, Thou hast said, (which verb may well be understood here, as it is also 1Ki_20:34, and as divers other verbs are understood in the sacred text, as Lev_24:8 2Sa_18:12 **23:17**, compared with 1Ch_11:19, and in many other places; which is not strange in so concise and short a language as the Hebrew is,)

Seek ye my face (this is thy great command, so oft and so vehemently urged, as containing the very substance and foundation of all true piety).

Thy face, Lord, I will seek; I cheerfully do and will obey thy command therein. Or the verse may be thus translated without any supplement, which, where it can be done, is confessedly the best way of translation: *Concerning thee* (as the particle *lamed* is oft used; or, *for* or *instead of thee* , as it is unquestionably used, Gen_11:3 Exo_13:16 Pro_21:18, i.e. in thy name and words, and according to thy mind)

my heart said, (to wit, to or within myself, as the word *said* is frequently taken, i.e. I seriously consider within myself this following command of thine oft inculcated in thy word, and press it upon my own conscience,)

Seek ye my face. Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Thou commandest it, and I will obey thee therein.

Psalms 27:9

Hide not thy face; which I in obedience to thy command am now seeking.

Put not thy servant away, to wit, from thy face or presence, or from the place of thy worship, from which he either now was or formerly had been driven. Two ways God and he might be parted; either by God's departure or withdrawing from him, which he might do even in the place of his worship; or by God's putting him away from his presence. Against the first he seems to direct his prayer in the first clause, and against the latter in this.

Psalms 27:10

Forsake me; or, *leave me* ; as being unable to help me, and rather a burden than a help to me; for which reason David desired them to leave him, and disposed of them in another place, **1Sa 22**\$. Or his father and mother were now dead. Or by his *father* and *mother* he may signify his near relations and friends, which forsook him in the time of trouble, as men usually do. Or the words may be rendered, *though my father and mother should forsake me* . *Then* ; or, *yet* , as the Hebrew *vau* frequently signifies.

Will take me up; or, *will receive me* , to wit, to himself, as this verb is used, Jos_20:4 Jud_19:15 Mat_23:37.

Psalms 27:11

Thy way, i.e. what course I shall take to please thee, and to discharge my duty, and to save myself from ruin.

A plain path; of which See Poole "Psa_26:12", where the Hebrew words are the same.

Because of mine enemies; that I may neither open their mouths against me or religion by my miscarriages, nor fall into their hands by my folly, nor give them any occasion of triumphing over me.

Psalms 27:12

The will, or *lust* , or *desire* , Heb. *soul* ; which is so taken, Psa_41:2 **78:18** Eze_16:27.

Such as breathe out cruelty; he presseth his request upon the quality of his enemies, who were both false and cruel, and in both respects hateful to God and men.

Psalms 27:13

I had fainted: these words are added to complete the sense; for the speech is abrupt and imperfect, as is very usual, not only in the

Holy Scripture, but in many other authors, in all vehement passions or commotions of mind, such as David was in at this time. Having declared what perfidious and cruel enemies did now assault and encompass him, he now subjoins what impression the thoughts thereof made upon him, and speaks like one that wanted words to express how sad and desperate his condition would have been, if he had not been supported by faith in God's promises.

To see the goodness of the Lord; to enjoy (which is oft expressed by seeing) the mercy which God hath promised me.

In the land of the living, i.e. in this world, which is oft so called, as Job_28:13 Psa_52:5 **116:9 142:5** Isa_38:11 **53:8** Jer_11:9 Eze_32:32, and is opposed to the grave, which is the place of the dead. And David was thus earnestly desirous of this mercy in this life, not because he placed his portion in these things, which he so solemnly disclaims, Psa_17:14, but because the truth and glory of God were highly concerned in making good the promise of the kingdom made to him.

Psalms 27:14

Wait on the Lord, O my soul; to which he now turneth his speech; as he frequently doth in this book.

He shall strengthen thine heart; he will uphold thee, and keep thee from fainting and sinking under thy burdens.

Psalms 28:1 PSALM 28

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to be made upon the same occasion with the former, and is mixed, as many others of his Psalms are, of hopes and fears, of prayers and praises.

David prayeth earnestly for himself, Psa_28:1,2, that he might not be led away with the wicked, Psa_28:3,4. The reason of his prayer, Psa_28:5. He blesseth God for hearing him, Psa_28:6-8; and prayeth for the people, Psa_28:9.

Be not silent; be not deaf to my prayers, nor dumb as, to thy answers to them: lest I be in the like or same condition with them

that go down into the pit, i.e. a lost creature; as I shall certainly be, if thou dost not succour me.

Psalms 28:2

i.e. Towards the holy of holies, which is so called, 1Ki_6:23, compared with 2Ch_3:10: compare also 1Ki_6:5 **8:6**, because there the ark was; from whence God gave oracular answers to his people; and to which they accordingly directed their prayers, not only when they drew near to it, but when they were at a distance from it, as Dan_6:10.

Psalms 28:3

Draw me not away with the wicked: the sense is, either,

1. Do not suffer me to be drawn away by their counsel or example to imitate their evil courses. For God is oft said to do that which he doth not effect, but only permit and order, as 2Sa_12:12. Or,

2. Do not draw me into the same snares and mischief with them; do not drag me, as thou dost or wilt do all these malefactors, to execution and destruction. Let me not die the death of the wicked. Compare Psa_26:9. Thus *drawing* is used for drawing to death, Job_21:33 Eze_32:20. This seems best to suit with the following context, wherein he imprecateth and foretelleth that destruction upon his enemies which he deprecated for himself.

Mischief is in their heart; which are hypocritical and perfidious persons, whilst I, through thy grace, am upright and sincere. Seeing then I am so unlike them in disposition and practice, let me not be made like them in their ruin.

Psalms 28:4

David useth these imprecations, partly, to vindicate himself from the slanders of his enemies, who reported him to be as wicked as they were, only more close and cunning therein; which, if he had been, he had bitterly cursed himself; which it could not reasonably be presumed that he would do; partly, from his great and long experience of their implacable and incorrigible malignity, not only against him, but against God, and his declared will, and against all truly good men, and that covered with pretences of piety to God, and of peaceableness towards their neighbours, Psa_28:3, which made their wickedness more inexcusable and detestable; partly, by the instinct and direction of God's Spirit, by whose inspiration he

uttered this as well as the rest of the Psalm; and partly, that hereby he might provoke them to repentance; for this curse belongs only to those who shall obstinately persist in their wicked courses. Add to all this, that as verbs of the imperative mood are oft used by the Hebrews for futures, so these may not be proper imprecations, but predictions of their destruction.

Psalms 28:5

The works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, i.e. the providential works of God, both for and towards his church and people in general; the serious observation whereof would have made them afraid of opposing them, and desirous to join themselves with them; and for and towards me in particular, concerning whose succession to the kingdom God hath so expressly declared his mind and will, and to whom he hath given so many and such wonderful preservations, that they who will not acknowledge it, but continue to oppose it, may well be presumed to be guilty of rebellion against God's will, and of the contempt of his providence.

He shall destroy them, and not build them up, i.e. destroy them utterly and irrecoverably, because they wilfully shut their eyes against the light of God's word and works.

Psalms 28:6

He speaks of it as past, either because God had in part heard and answered him already, or because God assured him by his Spirit that he had heard and accepted his prayers, and would assuredly answer him in due time.

Psalms 28:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 28:8

Their strength, i.e. the strength of his people, mentioned in the next verse; the relative being put before the antecedent, which is left to be gathered out of the following matter, as it is Num_24:17 Psa_87:1. Or, *his strength* ; for the Hebrew affix *mo* , which commonly is plural, is sometimes taken singularly; of which see my Latin Synopsis here, and on Isa_53:8. And *his* , i.e. of his anointed, as the next clause explains it. Or the words may be thus

rendered, *Strength is or belongs to thee Lord* . Heb. *The Lord, strength is his* , or *to him* . It is a Hebrew pleonasm.

The saving strength, Heb. *the strength of the preservations, or deliverances, or victories, or salvations* , i.e. he by whose strength alone he hath got these victories, &c.

Of his anointed, i.e. of me, whom he hath anointed to be king, whom therefore he will defend; he speaks of himself in the third person, which is usual in the Hebrew tongue.

Psalms 28:9

Thine inheritance; Israel, for whom I pray; partly because thou hast in some sort committed them to my charge, and partly because Saul did not take due care of them.

Lift them up; raise them out of their low and afflicted condition, in which they are, by reason of Saul's weakness and neglect, and by the prevailing power of the Philistines, and advance them to a state of safety and honour, and that not for a season, but with constancy and perpetuity, as it follows.

Psalms 29:1 PSALM 29

THE ARGUMENT

It is supposed that this Psalm was made upon the occasion of some terrible tempest of thunder and rain; which God might possibly send in the time of battle to assist David, and discomfit his enemies; as he had done formerly upon like occasions. It contains an admonition to the potentates of the earth, and especially to those who bordered upon the land of Israel, that they would own and worship the true God; which he presseth from the great majesty and power of Israel's God above all other gods, and particularly from that great and glorious instance thereof in thunder; which hath struck the proudest monarchs with the dread of that God, whom at other times they despised.

David exhorteth the mighty of this world to give glory to God, Psa_29:1,2; who manifesteth his power by thunder, lightning, and other creatures, \$Psa_29:3-10. He showeth God's protection and blessing of his people, \$Psa_29:11.

O ye mighty; ye potentates and rulers of the earth. To these he addresseth his speech; partly because they are most apt to forget and contemn God, and insolently to assume a kind of deity to themselves; and partly because their conviction and conversion was likely to have a great and powerful influence upon their people.

Give unto the Lord, by a humble and thankful acknowledgment of it; for otherwise we can give nothing to God.

Glory and strength, i.e. *the glory of his strength* , or power, which is the attribute set forth in this Psalm; or, *his glorious strength* .

Psalms 29:2

The glory due unto his name, i.e. the honour which he deserves; which is to prefer him before all other gods, and to forsake all others, and to own him as the Almighty, and the only true God.

In the beauty of holiness; or, *of the sanctuary* , which is commonly called by this name; in his holy and beautiful house, as it is called, Isa_64:11, the only place where he will receive worship. So he exhorts them to turn proselytes to the Jewish religion; which was their duty and interest.

Psalms 29:3

The voice of the Lord, i.e. thunder, as is manifest from the next clause, and the following effects; which is oft called the Lord's voice, as Exo_9:23,28,29 Job 37:4,5 Psa 18:14 46:6. Upon the waters; either,

1. **Upon the seas;** where its noise spreads far and wide, and is very terrible. But the following verses speak of the effects of it upon the earth only. Or rather,

2. Above in the clouds, which are called waters, Gen_1:7 Psa_18:11, because they are of a watery substance. And this circumstance is considerable here, to magnify the Divine power, which displayeth itself in those high places, which are far above the reach of all earthly potentates, and from whence he can easily and unavoidably smite all that dwell upon the earth, and will not submit to him. Upon many waters, i.e. upon the clouds, in which

there are vast treasures of water, and upon which God is said to sit or ride, Psa_18:10,**11 104:3**.

Psalms 29:4

Is an evident proof of God's glorious majesty.

Psalms 29:5

By thunder-bolts; which have oft thrown down trees and towers.

Lebanon; a place famous for strong and lofty cedars. See 2Ch_2:8 Son_3:9 **5:15**.

Psalms 29:6

He maketh them; the cedars last mentioned; which being broken by the thunder, the parts of them are suddenly and violently hurled about hither and thither.

Sirion; a high mountain beyond Jordan joining to Lebanon; of which see Deu_3:9 **4:48**. Lebanon and Sirion are here understood, either,

1. Properly; and so they are said to *skip* or *leap* , both here and Psa_114:4, by a poetical hyperbole, very usual both in Scripture and other authors; which is so known, that it is needless to give any instances of it. Or,

2. Metonymically for the trees or people of them, *as the wilderness* , Psa_29:8, may seem to be taken; and *as the earth* , by the same figure, is frequently put for the people which dwell in it.

Unicorn, Heb. *reem* ; of which see **See Poole** "Num_23:22 Psa_22:21".

Psalms 29:7

Divideth, Heb. *heweth out* , i.e. it breaketh out of the clouds, and thereby makes way for the lightnings, which are suddenly dispersed over the face of the earth.

Psalms 29:8

The wilderness, i.e. either the trees, or rather the beasts of the wilderness, by a metonymy, as before, Psa_29:6. Compare this with the next verse.

Kadesh; which he mentions as an eminent wilderness, vast and terrible, and well known to the Israelites, Num_20:1,**16**, and

wherein possibly they had seen and observed some such effects of thunder as are here mentioned.

Psalms 29:9

Maketh the hinds to calve, through the terror which it causeth, which hastens the birth in these and other places: see 1Sa_4:19. He nameth the

hinds, because they bring forth their young with difficulty, Job_39:1,2.

Discovereth, Heb. *maketh bare* ; either of its trees, which it either breaks or strips off their leaves; or of the beasts, which it forceth to run into their dens.

And in his temple; or, *but* . Having showed the terrible effects of God's power in other places, he now shows the blessed privilege of God's people, that are praising and glorifying God, and receiving the comfortable influences of his grace in his temple, when the rest of the world are trembling under the tokens of his displeasure; by which he secretly invites and persuades the Gentiles, for their own safety and comfort, to own the true God and to worship him in his sanctuary, as he did exhort them, Psa_29:2. Or, *therefore* , i.e. because of these and such-like discoveries of God's excellent majesty and power, his people fear, and praise, and adore him in his temple.

Psalms 29:10

He moderateth and ruleth (which is oft signified by sitting, this being the posture of a judge, or ruler; of which see Psa_9:7-9 **47:8** Joe_3:12) the most abundant and violent inundations of waters, which sometimes fall from the clouds upon the earth; where they would do much mischief if God did not prevent it. And these are here fitly mentioned, as being many times the companions of great thunders. And this may be alleged as another reason why God's people did praise and worship him in his temple, because as he sendeth terrible tempests, and thunders, and floods, so he also restrains and overrules them. But most interpreters refer this to Noah's flood, to whom the word here used is elsewhere appropriated. And so the words may be rendered, *The Lord did sit upon* , or *at, the flood* in Noah's time, when it is probable those vehement rains were accompanied with terrible thunders. And so

having spoken of the manifestation of God's power in storms and tempests in general, he takes an occasion to run back to that ancient and most dreadful example of that kind, in which the Divine power was most eminently seen. And having mentioned that instance, he adds, that as God showed himself to be the King and the Judge of the world at that time, so he doth still sit, and will sit, as

King for ever, sending such tempests when it pleaseth him. And therefore his people have great reason to worship and serve him.

Psalms 29:11

The Lord will give strength, to support and preserve them in the most dreadful tempests, and consequently in all other dangers, and against all their enemies.

The Lord will bless his people with peace, though now he sees fit to exercise them with some troubles.

Psalms 30:1 PSALM 30

A Psalm and Song ; or, A Psalm of Song ; i.e. either,

1. A Psalm to be sung with the voice to an instrument. Or,
2. A Psalm of joy and praise; for so this is. And this Hebrew word *schir* may be here taken not simply for a song, but for a *joyful song* , as it is Gen_31:27 Exo_15:1 Psa_33:3 **42:8** Pro_25:20 Isa_30:29 Amo_8:3,**10**. At the dedication of the house of David; either,

1. At the dedication of the temple, called the house, or that house, eminently and emphatically. So the Chaldee paraphrast and the Hebrew doctors understand it. And then the last words, *of David* , are to be joined with the first, *a Psalm and Song* . But this seems not probable, because the temple was not built by David, nor in his days, although he might prescribe a Psalm to be used afterwards upon that occasion. Or,

2. At the dedication of David's house, which was built, 2Sa_5:11, and doubtless was dedicated, as God had commanded. See Deu_20:5 Neh_12:27. Or,

3. At the second dedication of David's house, after it had been polluted by Absalom and his concubines. But there is no law of God for any re-dedication of houses in such cases, nor any evidence that David did so. And indeed it seems strange, if this Psalm was made upon this occasion, or upon any of these dedications here mentioned, that there should not be one line in it suitable to that occasion. Others therefore make these words,

the dedication of the house, not to note the matter of this *Psalm* or *Song* ; but either,

1. The name of the tune to which this song was sung, which was the same that David used at the dedication of his house; and so this gives us a reason why the word *Song* is added to that of *Psalm* , and why this Psalm was called *the Song of the dedication* . Or,

2. The time when it was sung; which was at the dedication of David's house. For such dedications were performed in a very solemn manner, with divers rites and prayers, and praises to God, as the nature of that business required. And it seems probable from the matter of this Psalm, compared with the title, that David had about this time been delivered from some eminent distresses, and particularly from some dangerous sickness; for which he here gives thanks to God, taking advantage of this public and solemn occasion.

The psalmist praiseth God for deliverance out of great danger, Psa_30:1-3; and exhorteth others to do the same, Psa_30:4,5. He acknowledgeth to God that his prayer was heard, and him-self girded with gladness, Psa_30:6-11. He will give thanks to God for ever, Psa_30:12.

Lifted me up; or, *drawn up* , to wit, out of the deep pit, or waters; to which great dangers and afflictions are frequently compared.

To rejoice over me; which they both desired and confidently expected an occasion to do.

Psalms 30:2

i.e. Delivered me from the fears and troubles of my mind, which are oft compared to diseases, and from very dangerous distempers of my body.

Psalms 30:3

Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; my deliverance is a kind of resurrection from the grave, upon the very brink whereof I was.

Thou hast kept me alive: this he adds to explain the former phrase, which was ambiguous.

To the pit, i.e. into the grave, which is oft called *the pit* , as Psa_28:1 **69:15 88:4** Isa_38:17.

Psalms 30:4

Or, *at the mention* , &c.; when you call to mind, or when others celebrate, as I do, this day, the holiness of God's nature; which he demonstrates by his works, by his faithfulness, care, and kindness towards his holy ones.

Psalms 30:5

His anger endureth but a moment; commonly the afflictions which he sends upon his people are short, and last but for a few moments of their lives.

In his favour is life; or, *life* , i.e. our whole life, *is in his favour* , i.e. he heapeth his favours upon them, for the greatest part of their present lives, and in the next life, which endures for ever; of which the Chaldee paraphrast expounds this place. And indeed without the consideration of eternal life, the difference between the duration of the afflictions and of the happiness of God's people, were neither so evident nor considerable as David here makes it.

Life is oft put for a long and happy time, as Psa_34:12 **133:3** Pro_3:2; and for an eternal and immortal duration, 2Ti_1:10 Jam_1:12. And in civil affairs estates for life are opposed to those that are but for a short time.

Joy cometh in the morning, i.e. it comes speedily and in due season.

Psalms 30:6

I thought myself past all danger of further changes, forgetting my own frailty, and the uncertainty of all worldly things.

Psalms 30:7

Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou hast so firmly settled me in my kingdom; which he calls his

mountain, partly because kingdoms are usually called mountains in prophetic writings, as Psa_46:3,4 **Isa 2:2** Jer_51:25 Dan_2:34,**35,44,45**; and partly with respect to Mount Zion, where he built his royal palace, the dedication whereof is mentioned in the title of the Psalm.

Thou didst hide thy face, i.e. withdraw thy favour and help, and I was quickly brought into such distresses of body, and anxiety of mind, that I saw the vanity of all my carnal confidences.

Psalms 30:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 30:9

What profit is there, to wit, unto thee? as the latter part of the verse explains it. What wilt thou gain by it?

In my blood, i.e. in my violent death, as *blood* is frequently used, as Gen_37:26 Num_35:33 Jos_20:3 1Sa_25:26,**33 Mt 27:6**.

When I go down to the pit; when I die. **See Poole "Psa_30:3"**. Shall they that are dead, or gone down into the dust, celebrate thy faithfulness and goodness in the land of the living? Or shall my dust or dead corpse praise thee? No, Lord, shouldst thou cut me off in the beginning of my reign, thy name would lose the praises which many will return to thee for my life, and be exposed to reproaches, as if thou hadst not kept thy word with me; and I should lose those opportunities of praising thy name, and serving my generations, which I prize above my life.

Psalms 30:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 30:11

Having related his prayer, he now declares the gracious answer which God gave him.

Put off my sackcloth, i.e. given me occasion to put off that sackcloth, which they used to wear in times of mourning. See Est_4:1 Psa_35:13 Isa_32:11 Joe_1:13.

With gladness; either with garments of gladness or rejoicing; or with joy, as with a garment surrounding me on every side; as he is for the like reason said to be *girded with strength* , Psa_18:32.

Psalms 30:12

My glory; my soul; or rather, my tongue, to which both singing and silence most properly belong. **See Poole "Psa_7:5"; See Poole "Psa_16:9".**

Psalms 31:1 PSALM 31

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed either when David was in great distress, or afterwards, in remembrance thereof, and of God's singular goodness in delivering him out of it, whence it is mixed of prayer and praises, of hopes and fears. But what those particular troubles were which David here speaks, is only matter of conjecture, and therefore I shall rather omit than confidently determine.

David prayeth for preservation, according to his confidence which he putteth in God, Psa_31:1-6, that he might rejoice in his mercy, Psa_31:7,8. He declareth what he suffered from his enemies and friends, Psa_31:9-13; but magnifieth the care and tenderness of God, Psa_31:14-18; and praiseth him for his goodness to himself and to the faithful, Psa_31:19-24.

Let me never be ashamed, to wit, of my confidence in thy promises.

In thy righteousness, i.e. by or for; or, according to thy faithfulness and goodness; both which come oft under the name of righteousness.

Psalms 31:2

Deliver me speedily, because of the greatness and urgency of my danger, which is even ready to swallow me up.

Psalms 31:3

For thy name's sake; for the glory of thy name, i.e. of thy power, and truth, and mercy to thy miserable servant.

Lead me, and guide me; two words expressing the same thing with more emphasis. Direct me clearly and continually in a right and safe path; for without thy conduct I can neither discern the right way, or continue in it.

Psalms 31:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 31:5

Into thine hand, i.e. to thy care and custody,

I commit my spirit, i.e. my soul or life, called a man's spirit, as Ecc_3:21 **12:7**, &c. Either,

1. To receive it; for my case is almost desperate, and I am ready to give up the ghost. Or,

2. To preserve it from the plots and malice of mine enemies.

Thou hast redeemed me; thou hast delivered me formerly in great dangers, and therefore I willingly and cheerfully commit myself to thee for the future.

O Lord God of truth; who hast showed thyself to be so to me, in making good thy promises.

Psalms 31:6

I have hated them; their very persons, not simply, but for their wickedness. Compare Psa_139:21,**22**.

That regard, Heb. *that observe* , to wit, with respect to them, dependence upon them, or expectation of any good from them.

Lying vanities; or, *most vain vanities* ; such as are foolish, and deceitful, and fruitless. By which he understands, either,

1. All human or carnal helps, any arm of flesh; for he that trusteth therein is pronounced cursed, Jer_17:5, and therefore is hateful. Or,

2. Idols, which are oft called *vanities* , as Deu_32:21 Jer_2:5 **8:19**, &c. Or,

3. Curious arts, and all sorts of divinations by stars, or the notions or inwards of living creatures, or by the dead; which practices were common and prevalent among those Eastern people, and by their example were too rife among the Israelites also, Isa_2:6, of

whom he here speaks; for the Gentiles that observed these vanities he rather pitied than hated; but the Israelites that did so were apostates from God, and professed enemies to him and his laws, and therefore were the proper objects of just hatred.

Psalms 31:7

Thou hast known, i.e. loved me, and cared for me; for words of knowledge commonly imply affection.

Psalms 31:8

Hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; whereof I was in great and imminent danger, if thou hadst not delivered me. See 1Sa_23:7.

Thou hast made way for me to escape, when I was encompassed by them, and set me at liberty.

Psalms 31:9

With grief; with continual weeping. See Poole "Psa_6:7".

My soul; my sorrows are not counterfeit or slight, but inward and hearty; my mind is oppressed, my heart is ready to sink under my burden.

My belly, i.e. my bowels contained in my belly; which are the seat of the affections, and fountains of support and nourishment to the whole body. Thus the whole man, both soul and body, inside and outside, are consumed.

Psalms 31:10

My life, i.e. the time of my life, as the next clause explains it.

Because of mine iniquity; either through my deep and just sense of my sins, which have provoked God to afflict me in this manner; or for the punishment of mine iniquity, as this word is frequently used.

My bones, in which my chief strength lies.

Are consumed; the juice and marrow of them being almost dried up with excessive grief.

Psalms 31:11

A reproach, i.e. the matter of their reproaches and scorns. This, said they, is David, anointed to be king of Israel, a goodly

monarch indeed, forsaken by God and men, and in a perishing and desperate condition; he pretends great piety to God, and loyalty to Saul, but in truth he is a great impostor, and a traitor and rebel to his king. Especially among my neighbours; which aggravates their sin, and his misery, partly because they were obliged by the laws of neighbourhood to perform all friendly offices to him; and partly because they were daily witnesses of his integrity, and therefore sinned against their own knowledge. A fear; or, a terror. They were afraid to give me any countenance or assistance, or to be seen in my company; being warned by Ahimelech's punishment for it, **1Sa 22**.

Fled from me; either loathing me as a monster of men, and an unlucky spectacle, and such a villain as mine enemies represented me, and they believed me to be; or to prevent their own danger and ruin, which might be occasioned by it.

Psalms 31:12

Whatsoever good service I have done to the king, or kingdom, or to any particular persons, neighbours, friends, or others, which sometimes they have acknowledged and highly commended, is now quite forgotten by all of them; or, at least, they carry themselves to me as if it were so.

As a dead man; whose name and memory is quite lost within a few days. See Psa_88:12 Ecc_9:5.

Like a broken vessel, made of earth; which is irreparable, and useless, and therefore despised by all.

Psalms 31:13

I have heard, partly with my own ears, and partly by the information of others.

The slander of many, who reproach and defame me as a turbulent and seditious person, an enemy to the public peace, a conspirator against the king's life or dignity.

Fear, i.e. just cause of fear, even of the loss of my life, as appears from the next clause.

They devised to take away, to wit, unjustly and violently; as this word is used, Gen_34:2 **24:11**.

Psalms 31:14

Mine by paternal relation, and care, and affection, and by thy promise or covenant made with me.

Psalms 31:15

My times; either,

1. The time of my life, how long I shall live. Or,
2. My opportunities or fit seasons for working out my deliverance. Or rather,
3. *All the affairs and events of my life* ; for time is oft put for things done or accidents happening in time, as 1Ch_29:30 Job_11:17 Psa_37:18 Ecc_9:11 Dan_2:21 Act_17:26.

Are in thy hand, i.e. are wholly in thy power, to dispose and order as thou seest fit, and not at all in mine enemies' power, who can do nothing against me, unless it be given them from above.

Psalms 31:16

Manifest thy love and favour to me, by answering my prayers, and saving me from all mine enemies.

Psalms 31:17

I have called upon thee; and therefore thy honour will be eclipsed in my disappointment, as if thou didst not hear prayers, nor keep promise, nor make any difference between good and bad men.

Let the wicked be ashamed; frustrated in their wicked designs and carnal confidences. Seeing they are implacable in their malice and rage against innocent and good men, do thou cut them off by thy just judgment; and since either the righteous or the wicked must be cut off, let destruction fall upon them, who most deserve it.

Psalms 31:18

Lying lips; slanderous tongues. Be put to silence, either by thy vindication and discovery of my integrity; or by some eminent judgment, which may either convince them, or cut them off.

Grievous things, Heb. *hard words* , or *things* , the singular number being put for the plural. Of this expression, see 1Sa_2:3 Psa_60:3 **94:4 Jude 15**. He means such as were grievous, and

hard to be borne, as bitter calumnies, cruel mockings, terrible threatenings, and the like.

Proudly and contemptuously; with great arrogancy, and confidence of success, and contempt of me and mine, whom they look upon as few in number, and impotent and fugitives, and such whom they can blow away with a breath.

Against the righteous; against us, whom thou knowest to be righteous, notwithstanding all their false accusations; and therefore for thy love to righteousness save us, and silence our unjust enemies.

Psalms 31:19

How great is thy goodness! no words can express the greatness of thy love and blessings. Laid up, or hidden, to wit, with thyself, or in thy own breast. The word is very emphatical, and removes an objection of ungodly men, taken from the present calamities of good men. His favour, it is true, is not always manifested to or for them but it is laid up for them in his treasure, whence it shall be drawn forth when they need it, and he sees it fit.

Thou hast wrought; or, *hast prepared*, as Exo_15:17. Or, *wilt work*; the past time being put for the future, to note the certainty of it, as is common in the prophetic writings.

Before the sons of men, i.e. publicly. and in the view of the world, their very enemies seeing, and admiring, and envying it, but not being able to hinder it.

Psalms 31:20

In the secret of thy presence; or as in the secret of thy presence either,

1. As if they were in thy presence-chamber, where thine own eye and hand guardeth them from all the assaults of their enemies; called his secret, partly because the greatest part of the world are strangers to God and his presence; and partly because it is a safe and secure place, such as secret and unknown places are. Or,

2. As if they were

in the secret of God's tabernacle, as it is called, Psa_27:5, the place of God's special presence, where none might enter save the high priest. Or,

3. With thy secret favour and providence, which works mightily, yet secretly, for them, and saves them by hidden and unknown methods. This is opposed to those caves, or other obscure and unsafe places, where David was forced to hide himself.

From the pride of man; from their vain-glorious boasts and threats, and from their bold and insolent attempts.

In a pavilion; or, *as in thy pavilion* , or *tabernacle* ; and so this clause explains the former, and the pronoun *thy* is here easily and aptly understood out of the foregoing branch.

From the strife of tongues, i.e. from the mischief of contentious and slanderous tongues.

Psalms 31:21

To wit, in Keilah; where God wonderfully preserved me; of which see 1Sa_23:7. Others, as

in a strong city. He hath kept me as safe in woods and caves, as if I had been in a fenced city.

Psalms 31:22

In my haste, i.e. in my hasty flight from Saul, when he and his men had almost encompassed me, 1Sa_23:26, which happened presently after his deliverance in and from the strong city of Keilah. Or, *in my fear* , or trembling, when my passion took away my consideration, and weakened my faith.

Cut off from before thine eyes, i.e. cast out of thy sight, and out of the care of thy gracious providence; my case is desperate. Or, cut off whilst thou lookest on, and dost not pity nor help me.

Thou heardest the voice of my supplications; my fears were quickly confuted by thy gracious answer to my prayers.

Psalms 31:23

The Lord preserveth the faithful; or, *keepeth faithfulness* , or *faithfulnesses* , i.e. is faithful in fulfilling his promises; or rather, the faithful, who is opposed to the proud doer in the next clause of the verse.

Plentifully, Heb. *with* (for so the Hebrew *al* sometimes signifies) abundance.

The proud doer; the enemies and persecutors of God's faithful ones before mentioned, whom he calls here *proud doers*, because of their rebellion against God's will, and their contempt of his threatenings and judgments, and their most insolent and contemptuous carriage towards his people; all which proceeds from the pride of their heart, Psa_10:4.

Psalms 31:24

Be of good courage; or, *be strong in the Lord*, and by confidence in his promises, which will not fail you; as I have found by experience.

Psalms 32:1 PSALM 32

Maschil; or, an instructor. This Psalm is most fitly so called, because it was composed for the information of the church, in that most important doctrine, concerning the way to true blessedness.

They are blessed whose sins are forgiven, Psa_32:1,2. Confession of sins giveth ease to the conscience, Psa_32:3-7. God's promise to them that trust in him, Psa_32:8-11.

I did indeed say that they, and they only, were blessed, that did

not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, & c., but *did delight in and meditate on God's law*, Psa_1:1,2. And it is true, this is the only way to blessedness. But if inquiry be made into the cause of man's blessedness, we must seek that elsewhere. All men having sinned and made themselves guilty before God, and fallen short of the glory of God, and of that happiness which was conferred upon their first parents, now there is no way to recover this lost felicity, but by seeking and obtaining the favour of God, and the pardon of our sins; which is the very doctrine of the gospel; to the confirmation whereof this text is justly alleged, Rom_4:6,7. Our sins are debts, and they need forgiving; they are filthy and abominable in God's sight, and need covering.

Psalms 32:2

Whom God doth not charge with the guilt of his sins, as he might justly do, but graciously accepts and pardons him in Christ, and deals with him as if he had not sinned.

In whose spirit there is no guile; who freely confesseth all his sins without dissembling and concealing of them; which may seem to be the main thing here intended, by comparing this with the following verses; and who is sincere in his professions of repentance, turning from sin to God with all his heart, and not feignedly.

Psalms 32:3

When I kept silence, to wit, from a full and open confession of my sins, as appears from Psa_32:5, and from pouring out my soul to God in serious and fervent prayers for pardon and peace. Whilst I concealed my sins, or smothered my fears, and, stifled the workings of my own conscience.

My bones waxed old; my spirits failed, and the strength of my body decayed:

Through my roaring all the day long; because of the continual horrors of my conscience, and sense of God's wrath, wherewith I was as yet rather oppressed and overwhelmed, than brought to thorough repentance.

Psalms 32:4

Thy hand; thy afflicting hand bringing my sins to remembrance, and filling me with thy terrors for them. My very radical moisture was in a manner dried up, and wasted through excessive fears and sorrows.

Psalms 32:5

At last I took up a full resolution, that I would no longer daily nor deal deceitfully with God, nor vainly seek to hide my sins from the all-seeing God, but that I would openly and candidly confess and bewail all my sins with all their aggravations, and humbly implore the pardon of them.

The iniquity of my sin, i.e. the guilt of my sin. Or, *Thou didst take away the punishment* (as this Hebrew word oft signifies) *of my sin* ; or, *my exceeding sinful sin* ; two words signifying the

same thing, being here put together by way of aggravation, according to the manner of the Hebrews.

Psalms 32:6

For this, i.e. upon the encouragement of my example, and thy great mercy vouchsafed to me, in answer to my humble confession and supplication.

In a time when thou mayest be found, Heb. *in the time of finding thee* ; the pronoun *thee* being easily and fitly repeated out of the next foregoing clause, i.e. *while he may be found* , as it is expressed, Isa_55:6, or while he is near, Psa_69:13, in an acceptable and seasonable time, while God continues to offer grace and mercy to sinners, *before the decree bring forth* , Zep_2:2, and sentence be passed or executed upon them. By which clause he seems to intimate the difference between the godly, who pray and cry earnestly to God for mercy in its season; and the wicked, who will do so when it is too late, and the season is lost. In the floods of great waters, i.e. in the time of great calamities, which are frequently compared to great waters. They shall not come nigh unto him, to wit, so as to overwhelm or hurt him. Or God will set him in a high and safe place, out of the reach of them, as he provided an ark for Noah when the deluge came; to which peradventure he alludes in this place.

Psalms 32:7

i.e. With such great deliverances on all sides, as will give just occasion to sing forth thy praises.

Psalms 32:8

This and the next verse are the words, either,

1. Of God; whom David brings in as returning this answer to his prayers, and the profession of his trust in God. Or rather,

2. Of David himself; who having received singular favours from God, and having declared what the godly would do upon that occasion, Psa_32:6, he now undertakes to instruct the wicked what they should do; which he doth, partly to express his thankfulness to God for delivering himself, and his zeal to advance the honour and service of God in the world; partly, as an act of justice, that he might make some amends to those whom he had injured, and provoke them to repentance, whom by his sins he

had scandalized, and either drawn to sin, or encouraged and hardened in sin, which he was obliged and did promise to do upon this or the like occasion, Psa_51:13; and partly, for the discharge of his office and duty, as he was both a king and a prophet, and a good man; in all which capacities he was obliged to endeavour the conversion and salvation of sinners.

Thee; thee, O sinner, whosoever thou art, who hast no understanding, but art a wicked man, as the two following verses explain it. He speaks this to the generality of impenitent sinners, as the next verse shows, which begins in the plural number, *Be not ye* , &c.; only he expresseth it here singularly, as appealing and applying himself particularly to the conscience of every individual person, which he thought the most effectual way of proceeding, as he had found in himself, when Nathan applied his indefinite discourse to him, saying, *Thou art the man* .

In the way which thou shalt go, i.e. in which thou oughtest to walk; the future tense oft noting a man's duty, as Gen_20:9 Mal_1:6.

I will guide thee with mine eye; I will lend thee the eyes of my mind. Or, I will be to thee *instead of eyes* , as the phrase is, Num_10:31, to advise, and direct, and caution thee; which I am able to do, not only by those gifts and graces which God hath given me, but also from my own experience. I will guide thee as the rider doth his horse, to which the person to be guided is compared, Psa_32:9; or as a master doth his scholar; or as a guide doth him who knoweth not the right way. Or the words may be thus rendered, *I will give thee counsel, mine eye shall be upon thee* , as it is more fully expressed, Gen_44:21 Jer_24:6 **40:4**, i.e. I will watch over thee, and instruct or admonish thee, as I have occasion.

Psalms 32:9

Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule; be not such brutish and sottish creatures as I have been, not having reason or grace to govern yourselves, nor hearkening to the counsels and admonitions of others. *Lest they come near unto thee* ; lest they should come too near to thee, so as to bite or kick thee. But neither is this the common practice of horses or mules, of which

he seems to speak; nor is this the proper use of a bit or bridle, to keep them from so doing; but rather to bring them nearer to the rider for his use, and to keep them under his conduct and power, from whom they are otherwise apt to run away. The words therefore are and may be otherwise rendered, *because they do not or will not come near unto thee*, to wit, for thy service, unless they be forced to it by a bit or bridle. And so all the ancient translators understand it.

Psalms 32:10

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; this is an argument to enforce the foregoing admonition; if any men will be refractory and unruly, God hath many ways to curb and chastise them, and bring them to his will.

He that trusteth in the Lord; who relies upon his providence and promise for his preservation and deliverance, and commits himself to God's care and conduct, waiting upon him in his way, and not turning aside to crooked or sinful paths for safety or satisfaction.

Psalms 32:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 33:1 PSALM 33

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a celebration of God for his great and glorious works, both of creation and providence.

God is to be praised by reason of his goodness, Psa_33:1-5; of his power, Psa_33:6-11; and of his providence, Psa_33:12-15. And they that fear him shall find mercy and rejoice in him, Psa_33:16-22.

Rejoice in the Lord; let his excellency discovered in his works be the matter of your joy and praise.

Praise is comely for the upright; it well becomes them to exercise themselves in this work of praising and blessing of God; partly because they have such singular and abundant obligations and occasions to do so; and partly because they will praise God worthily and heartily, and with due reverence and thankfulness, as

God requires, and deserves to be praised; whereas ungodly men do indeed disparage and pollute the holy name of God, while they pretend to praise it, and therefore God rejects their praises and prayers. See Psa_50:16 **119:7** Pro_28:9.

Psalms 33:2

He mentions these instruments, because they were used in the public worship and praises of God in the tabernacle.

Psalms 33:3

A **new song**; either,

1. Newly composed. As God gives you fresh occasions, so do not you content yourselves with the old songs or psalms, made by the holy men of God, but make new ones suited to the occasions. But neither had all the righteous, to whom he speaks, Psa_33:1, the gift of composing songs, nor was it of any necessity or importance that they should make new songs to praise God, at least for the works here mentioned, when there were so many made by David, and other holy prophets, for the use of God's church and people, when they had any such occasion. Or,

2. Renewed, or repeated, or sung again; in which sense Job saith his *glory* was *new* , or *fresh in him* , Job_29:20, i.e. renewed or continued from day to day; and the command of love is called new, Joh_13:34, because it was renewed and reinforced by Christ. So this song is here called new, not so much from the matter, as from the singing of it; because it was sung afresh, or again.

Psalms 33:4

All God's counsels and commands, either contained in the Scriptures, or given forth in his providence, for the government of the world, are wise, and just, and good, without deceit or defect: and all his works of providence agree with his word, and are no other than the accomplishment of his promises or threatenings, or other declarations of his mind and will in his word, although sometimes for a season they may seem contrary to it.

Psalms 33:5

Judgment, i.e. just judgment, by a figure called *hendiadis* , as Jer_22:3. Or *justice* relates to the sentence, and judgment to the execution of it. He not only doth justice to all men, as was implied, Psa_33:4, but, which is more, he loves it, and delights in

it. The goodness of the Lord; he not only doth no man wrong, but he is very kind and merciful to all men in the world, to whom he gives many favours and invitations to his love and service. See Mat_5:45 Act_14:17 Rom_1:20,**21**.

Psalms 33:6

By the word of the Lord; either,

1. By the hypostatical Word, Christ, who is oft called God's *Word*, even by the Chaldee paraphrast; as also Joh_1:1-3, where he is said to be that *Word* by whom all things were made. So that which is here spoken more darkly and doubtedly, according to that state of the church, is more clearly declared in the New Testament. Or,

2. By his will or command, as this very phrase is here used, Psa_33:4, and as it seems to be explained, Psa_33:9. And so it hath a great emphasis in it, that God made this admirable structure of the heavens, and all its glorious stars, not with great pains and time, and help of many artists and instruments, as men do far meaner works, but with one single word; which is much to the glory of the Creator.

All the host of them; the angels; or the stars: **See Poole** "Gen_2:1".

By the breath of his mouth; either,

1. By the Holy Ghost, so called Job_33:4. And so here are all the persons of the Trinity, Jehovah the Father, and the Word, and the Spirit; to each of which this work of creation is elsewhere ascribed, as was noted on Gen_1:26. Or,

2. By his word, as it was expressed in the last clause, which is so called Isa_11:4 2Th_2:8.

Psalms 33:7

He gathereth; or, *gathered*; for he speaks of the first creation, when this was done, **Ge 1**.

As an heap; by which expression he brings to our minds this great work of God, that the sea, which is lighter and higher than earth, is yet confined within its bounds, that it might not overflow the earth.

In storehouses; either in the clouds, or in the bowels of the earth; whence he can draw them forth when he sees fit.

Psalms 33:8

All the earth; all the people of the earth, as the next clause expounds this; not only Jews, but Gentiles, who equally enjoy the benefit of this great and glorious work of God.

Psalms 33:9

It was done; the work here mentioned, Psa_33:6,7.

Stood fast; or, *stood forth* , as a servant at his master's command; or, *was* or *did exist* .

Psalms 33:10

Of the heathen; or, *of the nations* ; though nations combine themselves and their counsels together, yet he defeats them when he pleaseth. Thus he passeth from the work of creation to the works of providence, and from the instances of his power in senseless and unreasonable creatures, to manifest his power in overruling the thoughts, and wills: and actions of all men, whether single or united.

Psalms 33:11

All his purposes and designs, and especially those which concern his chosen people, of whom he speaks in the next verse, are always successful and irresistible.

Psalms 33:12

Seeing the Lord is so great and glorious in wisdom, and power, and goodness, as hath been hitherto said, as they must needs be very miserable who are strangers or enemies to him; so thrice happy is that people of Israel, who, though they be despised by the Gentiles, are chosen by this Almighty God, to be his peculiar portion, and friends, and servants.

Psalms 33:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 33:14

Although he hath a special relation to Israel, yet he hath a general care and inspection over all mankind, all whose hearts and ways he discerns and observes.

Psalms 33:15

Fashioneth, or *fashioned* , or *made* , or *formeth* . For this may relate either,

1. To the work of creation. So he proves what he said Psa_33:13,14, that God beheld all men, because he made them; yea, even their hearts, the most secret piece of them. Or,

2. To the works of his providence. Having said that God sees and observes all men, he now adds that he rules and governs them; yea, even their hearts, which are most masterless and unmanageable, and yet he frameth and disposeth and inclineth them, this way or that, according to the counsel of his will: see Exo_34:24 Psa_105:25.

Alike; or, *equally* , one as well as another; whether they be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, princes or peasants; all are alike subject to his jurisdiction.

All their works, both outward and inward; all the workings of their minds and affections, and all their endeavours and actions.

Psalms 33:16

King; he instanceth in these, as the most potent and uncontrollable persons in the world, and most confident of themselves and least sensible of their dependence upon God; by which he strongly proves his general proposition, of God's powerful providence over all men.

By the multitude of an host; but only by God's providence, who disposeth of victory and success as he pleaseth, and that frequently to the weakest and most foolish side, Ecc_9:11.

Psalms 33:17

An horse; though he be strong, Job_39:19, &c., and *fit for battle* , Pro_21:31; or for flight, if need requires. And so this is put for all warlike provisions; of which horses were and are a very considerable part.

A vain thing, Heb. *a lie* , because it promiseth that help and safety which it cannot give.

Psalms 33:18

Whosoever therefore would have safety and deliverance, must seek and expect it only from the watchful eye and almighty hand and mercy of God.

Them that fear him; these are the chief objects of his care and favour.

Them that hope in his mercies; that place their hope, and trust, and happiness not in any creature, but only in God, and in his mercy and blessings. The conjunction and order of these two qualifications of the person whom God careth for is observable here, they must be such as *fear God* , and so make conscience of keeping his commands, Ecc_12:13, and then they may and must hope in or rely upon his mercy for their safety and happiness.

Psalms 33:19

Their soul, i.e. their life, when he sees it to be expedient for them: sometimes it is better for them to die than to live, as both good and bad men have declared; and when it is so, it is known to God, but not to us. And therefore the constant accomplishment of this and the like promises in a literal sense is not to be expected, nor simply desired, but with submission to God's wise and gracious will.

Psalms 33:20

The help of us Israelites, to whom he hath made many promises and glorious discoveries of his goodness.

Psalms 33:21

For; or, *therefore* ; for this seems to be an inference either from the foregoing or from the following sentence.

Psalms 33:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 34:1 PSALM 34

A Psalm made upon that occasion, though not at that time.

His behaviour; or, *his habit* or *posture* , or his *reason* , as this word is taken, 1Sa_25:33 Psa_119:66 Pro_11:22. When he counterfeited madness. Wherein, whether he sinned or not, is

matter of dispute; but this is undoubted, that God's favour and his deliverance at that time was very remarkable, and deserved this solemn acknowledgment.

Abimelech, called *Achish* , 1Sa_21:10. But Abimelech seems to have been the common name of the kings of the Philistines, Gen_20:2 **26:1**, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptians, and Caesar of the Romans.

David praiseth God, Psa_34:1,2, and exhorteth others thereto from his own experience of God's kindness, Psa_34:3-7. He showeth that they are blessed who trust in God, Psa_34:8-10. He exhorteth others to learn to fear him, Psa_34:11, and showeth the way to happiness, Psa_34:12-14. The privileges of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, Psa_34:15-22.

I will never forget to bless God for this miraculous deliverance.

Psalms 34:2

My soul shall glory in this, that I have so powerful and so gracious a Lord and Master. The

humble; or, the *meek* , i.e. the godly, oft called in Scripture by that title; and particularly my friends and favourers in Israel, whom he thus calls in opposition to his proud and furious adversaries in Saul's court and camp.

Be glad; both for their love to me and to the public good of Israel, which they know that I design and seek above all things; and for the comfort and benefit of my example to them in like straits and difficulties.

Psalms 34:3

Join your praises with mine, O all ye humble ones.

Together; not in place, for David was now banished from the place of God's public worship, but in affection and work: let our souls meet, and let our praises meet in the ears of the all-hearing God. Or, *alike* , i.e. with equal zeal and fervency; let none be willing to be outstripped by another.

Psalms 34:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 34:5

They looked; the humble, Psa_34:2; or they that fear him, Psa_34:7, when they were in distress. Or it is an indefinite expression.

Unto him; either,

1. *Unto the Lord* , expressed Psa_34:4, i.e. they sought and expected help from him. Or rather,

2. Unto *this poor man* , as it follows, Psa_34:6, or unto David. So he speaks of himself in the third person, which is usual. So the sense is, when I was delivered, Psa_34:4, men looked upon me with wonder and astonishment, as one saved in a prodigious manner.

Lightened, i.e. comforted and encouraged by my example. But these and the foregoing words are by the ancient interpreters read imperatively, as an exhortation to others, to whom he oft addresseth his speech, as Psa_34:3,**8,9,11**.

Look unto him, (with an eye of faith and prayer,) *and be ye enlightened* , i.e. take comfort in the expectation of mercy from him. And then the last words they render thus, *and your* , Heb. *their* , (but the change of persons is very frequent in this book,) *fear shall not be ashamed. Their faces were not ashamed* ; they were not disappointed of their hope, but found relief, as I did.

Psalms 34:6

i.e. David, of whom they that *looked* , &c., Psa_34:5, spake these words.

Psalms 34:7

The angel, i.e. the angels; the singular number being put for the plural, as it is Psa_78:45 **105:33,40**; for it is both improper and unusual to ascribe

encamping, and that round about all good men, to one created angel. And we find many angels employed in this work, Gen_32:1,**2** 2Ki_6:17.

Encampeth round about them; guardeth them from dangers on every side; to which work they are appointed by God, Heb_1:14.

Psalms 34:8

Taste, i.e. consider it seriously, and thoroughly, and affectionately; make trial of it by your own and others' experiences. This is opposed to those slight and vanishing thoughts which men have of it.

Good, i.e. merciful and gracious, to wit, to all his people.

Psalms 34:9

i.e. Reverence and serve him, and trust in him; for fear is commonly put for all the parts of God's worship.

Psalms 34:10

The young lions; either,

1. Properly: see Job_4:11. Or,

2. Metaphorically so called, the great potentates of the earth, who are oft so called, as Jer_2:15 Eze_38:13 Nah_2:13.

Shall not want any good thing, which is necessary and truly good for them, all circumstances considered; of which God alone is a competent judge. And therefore although God doth usually take a special care to supply the wants of good men, and hath oft done it by extraordinary ways, when ordinary have failed, yet sometimes he knows, and it is certainly true, that wants and crosses are more needful and useful to them than bread, and in such cases it is a greater mercy of God to deny them supplies than to grant them.

Psalms 34:11

Ye children ; whom I love as mine own children, and who own me as your civil father, your prince; see 2Ki_5:13; and as your spiritual father, a prophet; for the disciples of the prophets were called their *sons* , 2Ki_2:3. *The fear of the Lord* , i.e. the true and principal way of worshipping and serving God with his acceptance, and to your own salvation.

Psalms 34:12

Desireth, to wit, seriously and in good earnest, so as to be willing to use any endeavours which shall be prescribed to him: for otherwise the question were needless; for there is no man but desires it, at least coldly and faintly.

Life; a long and happy life, begun in this world, and continued for ever in the next. And thus *life* is oft used, as Psa_16:11 **30:5**.

Loveth many days, that he may see good, Heb. *loveth days to see* (i.e. in which he may see, i.e. enjoy) *good*, to wit, prosperity or happiness.

Psalms 34:13

From evil; from all manner of evil-speaking, from all opprobrious, injurious, false, and deceitful speeches; which, though men commonly use to ease and gratify their own minds, or to compass their designs, do frequently fall upon their own heads, by provoking both God and men against them.

Guile; or guileful words, contrary to thy intentions, and with a purpose of deceiving men by them.

Psalms 34:14

Depart from evil, i.e. from all sin, and especially from all wicked and injurious acts and practices against thy neighbour.

Do good; be ready to perform all good and friendly offices to all men, as thou hast opportunity.

Seek peace; study by all means possible to live peaceably and quietly with all men, avoiding grudges, debates, dissensions, strifes, and enmities.

Pursue it; do not only embrace it gladly when it is offered, but follow hard after it when it seems to flee away from thee, and use all possible endeavours, by fair words, by condescensions, and by the mediation or assistance of others, to recover it, and to compose all differences which may arise between thee and others. It is here observable, that whereas he said he would teach them *the fear of the Lord*, Psa_34:11, the lessons he teacheth them, Psa_34:13,14, are only such as concern men. Not that he meant to exclude duties of piety towards God, which he every where enjoineth and presseth as most necessary, but only to teach us what is oft inculcated both in the Old and New Testament, that sincere religion towards God is always accompanied with a conscientious discharge of our duties to men; and to convince the hypocritical Israelites, and particularly his adversaries, that so long as it was their daily course and practice to speak and act all manner of evil

against him, and other good men, all their pretences to religion were but vain.

Psalms 34:15

This is added to prove his last assertion, to wit, that the practice of these duties, Psa_34:13,14, is the true and best, and indeed the only, way to see that good proposed and promised Psa_34:12; both because such righteous persons, howsoever they may meet with affronts and injuries from men, are under the special care and favour of God, in this verse; and those who do the evils there forbidden shall find to their cost that God is their enemy, Psa_34:16.

Psalms 34:16

The face of the Lord, i.e. his anger, oft called his *face* , as Lev_17:10 **20:5** Jer_44:11 Lam_4:16, because anger discovers itself in the face.

Them that do evil, i.e. whose common course, and study, arid business it is to do evil; for else *there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not* , Ecc_7:20. *To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth* ; utterly to deprive both them and their children of that worldly happiness, which is the only thing that they desire, and seek by their wicked courses.

Psalms 34:17

Heb. *They cry*, to wit, the righteous, as is manifest both from the nature of the thing, and from Psa_34:15, where they are so called, and with which this verse is to be continued, the 16th verse coming in by way of parenthesis, as is very usual in many places of Scripture.

Psalms 34:18

Nigh; ready to hear and succour them; though by the severe course of his providence towards them he seems to themselves and others to stand afar off, as David complains, Psa_10:1.

Such as be of a contrite spirit; by which he understands either,

1. Those whose spirits are oppressed, and even broken, with the greatness of their calamities. But this may be, and frequently is, the lot of wicked men. And therefore in this sense, and to such persons, this proposition and promise is not true. Or rather,

2. Those whose hearts or spirits are truly and deeply humbled under the hand of God, and the sense of their sins, and God's displeasure for them, which was David's case, Psa_6:1, &c.: Psa_32:3,4, whose proud and self-willed hearts are subdued and made obedient to God's will, and submissive to his providence; for to all such, and to such only, this promise is verified.

Psalms 34:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 34:20

All his bones, i.e. all the parts and members of their bodies, which are synecdochically expressed by the bones, which are the stay and strength of the rest. God will not suffer any mischief to befall him; though he may be oft afflicted, yet he shall not be destroyed. But these words, though they are here spoken of the righteous men in general, of whom they are true in a metaphorical sense; yet they had a further meaning in them, being designed by the Spirit of God (which dictated to David, not only the matter, but the very words and expressions) to signify a great mystery, that none of Christ's bones should be broken; to which purpose they are alleged, Joh_19:36.

Psalms 34:21

Evil; either,

1. The evil of sin. His own wickedness, though designed against others, shall destroy himself. Or,

2. The evil of misery. When the afflictions of good men shall have a happy issue, theirs shall end in their total and final destruction.

That hate the righteous; that persecute them, and plot their ruin; which is an evidence that they hate them, whatsoever they may pretend to the contrary.

Psalms 34:22

i.e. Their lives or their persons, from the malicious designs of all their enemies, and from desolation or utter ruin, as it follows.

Psalms 35:1 PSALM 35

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was penned by David when he was slandered and persecuted by Saul and his stewards, as is manifest from the whole body of it.

David prayeth for his own safety, Psa_35:1,2, and his enemies' destruction, Psa_35:3-10; showeth their falsehood, and unthankfulness, and malice, Psa_35:11-21. He prayeth for their confussion, Psa_35:22-26; but for the preservation and joy of the godly, Psa_35:27,28.

Seeing I am unable to right myself and the magistrates refuse to do me justice, be thou my Patron and Protector.

Psalms 35:2

Take hold of shield and buckler; therewith to cover and defend me. Compare Psa_91:4 Pro_2:7.

Psalms 35:3

The spear; thy offensive weapons. He alludes to the practice of soldiers in battle.

The way, in which they are marching directly and furiously against me. But divers interpreters, both Hebrews and others, take this Hebrew word for a noun, and render it a *sword* ; or, as the word may signify, *a close weapon* ; for the psalmist here representing God as a man of war, and accordingly furnishing him with other weapons, it seems not probable that he would omit this weapon, which was most constantly and universally used.

Say unto my soul, i.e. unto me; either,

1. By thy Spirit assuring me of it; or,
2. By thy providence effecting it; for God's *saying* or *speaking* is oft meant of his doing, because his word is sufficient for the doing of whatsoever he pleaseth.

Psalms 35:4

Confounded, i.e. frustrated in their wicked designs and hopes against me. Concerning this, and the like, and following imprecations, which may seem strange and severe, it must be considered,

1. That they did not proceed from any passionate or revengeful spirit in David towards his enemies, (from which how free he was,

appears not only from his own words here, Psa_35:12-14, but from the whole course of his life, and the frequent instances mentioned in his history of his meek and merciful carriage to his enemies when they were in his power,) but from his zeal for God, and for piety and justice, to which they showed themselves to be constant and implacable adversaries, and by the direction of the prophetic Spirit of God wherewith he was endued, which Spirit did exactly know the condition of his enemies, and that those against whom they are levelled were hardened and incurable.

2. That they contain nothing but a prayer to God, that he would accomplish his own threatenings, and execute his own law of retaliation, of *eye for eye, and tooth for tooth*, and so bring upon them the evils which they designed against him; which also was of great and good use, both to glorify God's justice, and to warn and reform other sinners by the terror of their example.

3. That they may be taken only for predictions, as hath been observed before upon the like occasion. *Turned back*; either,

1. Stopped or hindered in the execution of their wicked design. Or rather,

2. (which is more suitable to the context) discomfited and put to flight, as this phrase is frequently used, as Psa_9:3 **70:2 78:9** Isa_42:17 Jer_46:5,**21**.

Psalms 35:5

As chaff before the wind, i.e. dispersed and chased from place to place, finding rest and safety no where.

The angel of the Lord; whom God useth to defend his people, and to destroy their enemies.

Psalms 35:6

Their way, by which they flee, being chased, as was now said.

Dark and slippery; so as they can neither discern the right path, nor be able to stand in it, and much less to run away, especially from so swift a persecutor as an angel, whereby they must unavoidably fall into their enemies' hands, and be destroyed.

Psalms 35:7

Out of mere malice, without any injury or provocation on my part, and without any necessity on their parts. They are no common, but the worst of enemies; and therefore I may justly pray against them, as I do. These expressions aggravate their sins, and signify that their persecution of him was not the effect of a sudden passion, but of a deep and habitual hatred and malice, and of an evil design, carried on in a constant and continued course with deliberation, and cunning, and deceit, and that against his soul or life; for nothing less would satisfy them.

Psalms 35:8

Upon him, i.e. upon each of thine and mine implacable enemies, of whom he hath hitherto spoken.

Psalms 35:9

In the Lord; in and for his glory and service, which shall be advanced by this means, and for his favour to me, otherwise I am far from rejoicing in their calamities.

Psalms 35:10

All my bones, i.e. my whole body, by a synecdoche, as Psa_34:20, as well as my soul, mentioned Psa_35:9. I will glorify thee, both with my soul and with my body.

Shall say: speech is ascribed to the bones figuratively, as elsewhere they are said to fear and to rejoice, Psa_6:2 **51:8**, and as the loins are said to bless, Job_31:20. If they could speak, they would express thy praises, because having been dried up with sorrow, they are now refreshed by thy mercy.

Psalms 35:11

They accused me to Saul of treachery and designs against his crown and life, and other crimes whereof I was wholly innocent and ignorant.

Psalms 35:12

For good; for the good offices which did to divers of them when I had favour and power in Saul's court and camp.

To the spoiling of my soul, i.e. to the stripping of my person of all my comforts and hopes, and of my life itself.

Psalms 35:13

Sick; or in any other great misery.

Sackcloth; which was the habit of mourners, Gen_37:34
Mat_11:21 Rev_11:3.

I humbled my soul, Heb. *I afflicted my soul* , (of which phrase see Lev_16:29,**31 23:27,32**, &c.,) partly with fasting, and partly with compassion and fervent prayers for them. *And my prayer returned into mine own bosom* : according to this translation the sense may be this, *and* , or *but* , or *although* my fastings and prayers did them no good, neither abated their malice, nor prevailed with God for them, so far as I desired, but returned to me without success, like a gift sent to an uncivil person, who disdainfully rejects it, and returns it to the giver. But,

1. This is not true, that his prayers returned empty to him, and did them no good, for they prevailed with God for their recovery, as appears by the following verses.

2. This doth not seem to suit well with the context; for both in the foregoing and following words he is only describing what he did for them, and not what the effects of it were, which he describes in the succeeding verses. Others therefore render the words otherwise; either,

1. Thus, *and my prayer in my bosom returned* , i.e. I did daily and frequently repeat my prayers for them, and that not only in public, when I joined with others in a fast-day appointed for them, which might be done in policy or for ostentation; but also in secret, between God and my own soul, and that with a sincere and hearty affection: for what is done secretly and affectionately, is said to be done *in the bosom* , Num_11:12 Psa_89:50 Pro_21:14, although indeed there is in those places another proposition; which may possibly alter the case. Or,

2. (which seems the truest sense) *And as for my prayer* , (to wit, which I joined with my fasting on their behalf,) *let it return* (nothing being more frequent than for future verbs to be put imperatively)

into my own bosom; i.e. if any shall think or say that my fasting for them was but counterfeit or politic, and that I did not pray for

them, but rather against them, as I do in this Psalm, and that under all this show I secretly wished their death or destruction; my earnest desire is, that the all-seeing and heart-searching God would grant unto me, when I come into their circumstances, the same things which I begged for them, whether good or evil. And this sense agrees with the common use of this phrase in Scripture, where whatsoever is repaid to any man is said to be *rendered into his bosom* , as Psa_79:2 Isa_65:6,7 **Jer 32:18** Luk_6:38, as elsewhere it is said to *return upon his head* .

Psalms 35:14

I behaved myself, Heb. *I walked* ; either to him, to visit and comfort him; or about the streets, whither my occasions led me. Though walking is oft put for a man's carriage or conversation.

I bowed down; went hanging down my head, as mourners used to do, Isa_58:5.

Mother; he mentions the *mother* rather than the *father* , either because her tender affection, and care, and kindness to him had more won upon his heart, and made him more sensible of the loss; or because, through the depravation of man's nature, children are many times less sensible of their father's loss or death, because it is compensated with some advantage to themselves; which doth not usually happen upon the mother's death. Some render it, *as a mourning mother* , for the loss of her son. But this doth not seem to suit so well with the order of the Hebrew words.

Psalms 35:15

In mine adversity, Heb. *in my halting* , i.e. when I was in great danger of falling into mischief; when I had any sickness, or ill success in my affairs, and was almost lost; for such are said to halt, Mic_4:6,7 **Zep 3:19**. See also Psa_38:17 Jer_20:10.

Gathered themselves together, to wit, *against me* , as it is expressed in the next clause; either because they were so full of joy at the tidings, that they could not contain it in their own breasts, but sought to communicate it to others; or that they might insult over me, and please and recreate themselves and one another with discourses about it; or that they might consult how to improve the advantage which they now had against me, to my utter destruction. *The objects* ; or, *vile persons* ; either for the

meanness of their condition, of for their wickedness, for which they were worthy to be beaten, as the phrase is, Deu_25:2; where the Hebrew word is of the same root with this. Or, *the lame* , as this very word is rendered, 2Sa_4:4 **9:3**, to wit, *of their feet* , as it is there expressed. The cripples that could not walk without trouble and pain, were as forward as any to go to these meetings upon this occasion.

I knew it not: this may be added to express either their hypocrisy and pretences of respect and affection to him, by reason whereof he had no suspicion of them, nor of any such practices of theirs; or his own danger, that he did not know, and therefore could not prevent, their plots and conspiracies against him. Heb. *and I knew not* ; which is by others, and well may be, rendered thus, *even they whom I knew not* , they whom I was so far from provoking by any injury, that I never saw their faces, nor heard of their names.

Tear me, i.e. my good name, with scoffs, and calumnies, and reproaches, and curses.

Ceased not, Heb. *were not silent* , i.e. did thus unweariedly and continually.

Psalms 35:16

Hypocritical, or *profane* , as this word signifies, Job_8:13 **13:16 15:34 17:8**, and, as some add, in all other places.

Mockers; whose common practice it is to scoff at and deride others, and me in particular.

In feasts; or, *of or for a cake* ; or, *a morsel of bread* , as this word signifies, 1Ki_17:12, **13 19:6**; by which he further shows what vile and worthless persons these were, that would

transgress for a morsel of bread, as it is said, Pro_28:21. They made themselves buffoons and jesters, and accustomed themselves to mock and deride David, that thereby they might gain admittance to the acquaintance and tables of great men, where they might fill their bellies; which was all that they sought for, or got by it.

They gnashed upon me with their teeth; they used all expressions of rage and hatred against me, among which this was

one, Job_16:9 Lam_2:16. This they did to curry favour with my great and potent adversaries.

Psalms 35:17

Look on, like an idle spectator, without affording me any pity or help. *My darling* , to wit,

my soul, as it is in the former clause. Heb. *my only one* ; which is now left alone and forsaken by my friends, and hath none to trust to but God. **See Poole "Psa_22:20"**.

Psalms 35:18

When I shall be restored to the liberty of the public assemblies and solemn feasts.

Psalms 35:19

Wink with their eye, i.e. mock me, or insult over me, as this phrase signifies, Pro_6:13 **10:10**.

Psalms 35:20

They are enemies to all peaceable counsels; they breathe out nothing but threatenings and war. They use not only open violence, but deceit, and subtle artifices, against me and my followers, who desire nothing more than to live quietly and peaceably under Saul's government.

Psalms 35:21

They opened their mouth wide against me; either,

1. To devour me. It is a metaphor taken from wild beasts, when they come within reach of their prey. Or;

2. To pour forth whole floods of scoffs, and slanders, and contumelies. *Aha, aha* ; an expression of joy and triumph. **See Poole "Job_39:25 Psa_40:15"**. *Hath seen it* , Heb. *hath seen* , to wit, what we have long desired and hoped for. See the same or like ellipsis Psa_54:7 **59:10 112:8**.

Psalms 35:22

As they say they have seen, so my comfort is, thou also hast seen, and dost observe all their plots and threats, and all my distresses and calamities, which I suffer for thy sake.

Keep not silence; or, *be not deaf* , to wit, to my prayers. The same word signifies both *to be silent* and *to be deaf* . See Poole "Psa_28:1".

Be not far from me; do not withdraw thy favour and help from me.

Psalms 35:23

At last undertake to plead my cause against mine adversaries.

Psalms 35:24

Thy righteousness; whereby thou usest and lovest to defend the innocent, and to punish their oppressors.

Psalms 35:25

Ah, so would we have it; Heb. *Aha, our soul* , i.e. Oh our soul crieth, *Aha* ; an expression of mirth, as before, Psa_35:21. Or, *Aha* , we have our wish or desire, as the *soul* is taken, Psa_41:2. David is now as low as we could wish him.

Psalms 35:26

As they gathered themselves together to deride and oppose me, so do thou gather them together to destroy them. Or, *in like manner* , one as well as another; let the proud and great ones of them be disappointed and ashamed as well as the meanest among them.

Themselves; the same ellipsis we have Psa_38:16 **55:12** Jer_48:26. Or, *their mouth* , as it is expressed, Oba_1:12. So Eze_35:13. That extol themselves and their power, and look upon me with scorn and contempt.

Psalms 35:27

That favour my righteous cause; that wish well to it, although they want either strength or courage to plead it.

Magnified, i.e. exalted and praised for his righteousness, and truth, and goodness manifested in my deliverance. Mine enemies' great design is to *magnify themselves* , Psa_35:26, but my chief desire is that God may be magnified.

Psalms 35:28

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 36:1 PSALM 36

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David when he was persecuted by Saul and his courtiers; upon which occasion he enlargeth his thoughts further, and contemplates the sad state and condition of the world and of the church at that time, in which wickedness of all sorts greatly abounded, and seemed to prosper; and withal, he declares the great felicity and safety of God's people, and gives an account of their supports and comforts, under the sense of these public disorders and mischiefs.

i.e. One wholly and resolvedly devoted to the service of God, both in my public and private capacity. This title is, as I remember, but twice used in this book, Psa_18:1, (of which see there,) and in this Psalm, where it seems to be prefixed as a public protestation of his resolution to cleave unto the Lord in this time of general corruption, of which he is now going to speak.

David showeth the grievous state of the wicked, Psa_36:1-4; the excellency of God's mercy, Psa_36:5-9; and prayeth for favour to the children of God, Psa_36:10-12.

When I consider the great and manifold transgressions of ungodly men, I conclude within myself that they have cast off all fear, and sense, and serious belief of the Divine Majesty.

Psalms 36:2

For; so this is the proof of that assertion, Psa_36:1. Or, *although* ; and so it is an anticipation of an objection against it.

He flattereth himself in his own eyes; he deceiveth himself with vain and false persuasions, either,

1. Concerning God, that he doth not see or mind his sins, or that he will not punish them. Or,

2. Concerning himself and his sins; either that they are not sins, which a mind bribed by passion and interest can easily believe; or that they are but small and venial sins; or that they will be

excused, if not justified by honest intentions, or by outward professions and exercises of religion, or by some good actions, wherewith he thinks to make some compensation for them, or some other way. Otherwise thus, *he flattereth him* (i.e. God) *in his eyes* , i.e. openly and publicly makes a show of religion, as if he designed to deceive or mock God, whilst inwardly and secretly he is projecting wickedness. But it seems better to understand the last word reciprocally of *his own eyes* , as the same word is used in the end of the foregoing verse.

Until his iniquity be found to be hateful, i.e. until God by some dreadful judgment undeceive him, and *find* , i.e. discover or make him and others to find and feel by experience, that it is a sin, and a very hateful one too. Or, *until his abominable iniquity be found out* , i.e. punished, as the same word and phrase is used, Num_32:23, *Your sin shall find you out* , i.e. bring you to condign punishment. In the Hebrew it is, *to find out his iniquity to hate* . But active verbs are oft taken passively, of which there are plain instances, Jos_2:5 Est_6:6 Psa_32:9 **51:6**, compared with Rom_3:4 Psa_119:4; and so here, *to find* , is put for *to be found* ; and *to hate* , for *to be hated* , or *to be hateful* .

Psalms 36:3

Are iniquity and deceit, i.e. are wicked and deceitful. Once he had some shadows or degrees of wisdom, and sometimes did some things that were good in their kind; but now he hath not so much as the appearance of it, and is become an open apostate from that which once he professed.

Psalms 36:4

He deviseth mischief upon his bed; which notes that he doth it,

1. Constantly and unweariedly, preferring it before his own rest.
2. Earnestly and seriously, when his mind is freed from all outward distractions, and wholly at leisure to attend that business about which it is employed: compare Psa_4:4.
3. Freely, from his own inclination, when none are present to provoke him to it.

He setteth himself; he doth not repent of his wicked devices, but resolutely proceeds to execute them, and persists therein.

That is not good, i.e. which is very bad, as this phrase is used, 1Sa_2:24 Pro_20:23 **24:23**, and elsewhere.

He abhorreth not evil: though he sometimes pretends remorse, and desists from his violent practices against me, as Saul did; yet he doth not truly repent of nor abhor his sin, and therefore is ready to return to it, when any occasion offers itself.

Psalms 36:5

Though this be the disposition and carriage of mine enemies towards me, and therefore I can expect no good from them, yet thou, O Lord, blessed be thy name, art of another temper; they are cruel and perfidious and unrighteous, but thou art infinite in *mercy* , and *faithfulness* , and *righteousness* , and *loving-kindness* , as it here follows; and therefore though I despair of them, yet I trust in thee, as other men do for these reasons, Psa_36:7.

Is in the heavens; or, *is unto* (as the prefix *beth* oft signifies, as Gen_11:4, and elsewhere, and as it is here explained in the following clause)

the heavens. As it is on the earth, of which there was no question, so it reacheth thence to the heavens, i.e. it is infinite and incomprehensible.

Thy faithfulness; the truth both of thy threatenings against thine and mine enemies, and of thy promises made to me and other good men.

Reacheth unto the clouds, i.e. is far above our reach, greater and higher than we can apprehend it.

Psalms 36:6

Thy righteousness, in all thy counsels and ways in the government of the world, is like the great mountains; either,

1. Stedfast and unmovable. Or,
2. Eminent and conspicuous to all men. Or rather,
3. Very high and out of our reach; for so it agrees best with the foregoing and following expressions.

Thy judgments, i.e. thy executions of thy counsels, or thy administrations of the affairs of the world, and of thy church,

are a great deep, i.e. unsearchable. as the ocean is in some parts. The worst of men, yea, lad the brute beasts, have experience of thy care and kindness, and therefore I have no reason to doubt of it.

Psalms 36:7

Thy loving-kindness; or, *thy mercy* ; for it is the same word which is used and so rendered, Psa_36:5. The sense is, Though all thine attributes now reckoned, and the rest of them, be excellent and glorious, yet above all thy mercy is most

excellent or *precious* and amiable, as being most necessary and beneficial unto us, poor sinful, miserable men.

Put their trust under the shadow of thy wings, i.e. cheerfully commit themselves to thy care and kindness, notwithstanding their own sinfulness, and the rage and power of their adversaries, against all which thy mercy is a sufficient security.

Psalms 36:8

They, i. e. those children of men who trust in thee, as he now said, **shall be abundantly satisfied**; though now they are straitened, oppressed, and persecuted, yet they shall not only be protected and supported for the present, but in due time shall have all their wants and desires fully satisfied. Heb.

shall be made drunk, i.e. shall be as it were overwhelmed with the plenty of it, which they shall no more be able to comprehend than a drunken man is able perfectly to understand and judge of things; and shall be free, as drunken men also are, from all cares and fears, either of not obtaining it, or of losing it.

With the fatness of thy house; with those rich and delightful provisions which thou hast prepared for them in thy habitation, i.e. either,

1. In the tabernacle, where they used to feast upon the remainders of the sacrifices; to which also he seems here to allude. Or rather,
2. In heaven; which is called God's house, both in Scripture, as Joh_14:2, and in divers ancient heathen authors. For the expressions here used are too magnificent to be bestowed upon those feasts, or indeed upon any of the enjoyments of this life, and

do ill become him, who professedly disowns the having of his *portion in this life* , and declares his expectation of happiness in the next life, Psa_17:14,**15**. And seeing it is apparent from **Heb 11**, and from many other scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, that both David, and Job, and Abraham, and the rest of the holy patriarchs and prophets, had a firm belief and hope of the future life, and their felicity therein; it seems most reasonable to understand all those passages of David and the other prophets of it, which naturally, and without any force, may be so understood; of which number certainly this verse and the following is one.

Drink: before they had *fatness* , i.e. fat meats; and now *drink* , to note the completeness of their feast.

Of the river; which notes both their plenty, and their constancy and perpetuity.

Of thy pleasures; which thou preparest, and which thou enjoyest; whence it is called the joy of the Lord, Mat_25:21. Or this notes their great eminency; for things most excellent in their kinds are entitled to God, as the goodliest cedars, mountains, &c., are called *cedars of God* , *mountains of God* , &c.

Psalms 36:9

With thee, i.e. in thy power to give it, and in thy presence to be enjoyed.

The fountain; which notes,

1. Causality. It is in God as in a fountain, and from him is derived to us.
2. Abundance.
3. Excellency. Water is sweetest in the fountain; and fountains were rare and highly prized in those hot countries.

Of life; of that glorious, and blessed, and endless life, which alone is worthy of the name of life; this life being only a passage to death, and a theatre of great and manifold calamities. Although it be true, that God is the fountain both of natural and spiritual life.

In thy light; in the light of thy countenance or glorious presence, which then shall be fully manifested unto us, when we shall see

thee clearly, and face to face, and not through a glass, and darkly, as we now see, 1Co_13:12: compare Psa_17:15.

See, i.e. enjoy, as seeing frequently signifies; of which see on Psa_34:12. *Light; the light of life* , as it is called, Joh_8:12. *Light* in this branch being the same thing with *life* in the former, i.e. joy, and comfort, and happiness, which is oft signified by light, as the contrary is by *darkness* . See Job_29:3 Psa_27:1 Isa_9:2. There we shall have pure light without any mixture of darkness. The word *light* is elegantly repeated in another signification; in the former clause it is light discovering, in this, light discovered or enjoyed.

Psalms 36:10

Continue; as this word signifies, Psa_85:5 Ecc_2:3 Jer_31:3. As thou hast begun, so continue the manifestation and exhibition of it, both in this life, and to the next. Or, *extend* , or *draw forth* . Let it not be like a fountain sealed, but let it be drawn forth for their comfort. *Know thee* , i.e. sincerely love thee, as it is explained in the next clause; for *knowing* implies affection, as Psa_9:10, and oft elsewhere.

Thy righteousness; which will appear in giving them that protection and assistance which thou art by thy nature inclined, and by thy promise engaged, to give them.

Psalms 36:11

Of pride, i. e. of my proud and insolent enemies; the abstract being put for the concrete, as Jer_50:31, **32**: so also Pro_12:27 **13:6**.

Against me; or, *upon me* , to wit, so as to overthrow or remove me, as it is in the next clause. *Remove me* ; either,

1. From my trust in thee, or obedience to thee. Or,
2. From my place and station; from the land of my nativity, and the place of thy worship. Or, *shake me*, or *cast me down* , i.e. subdue and destroy me.

Psalms 36:12

There, where they come against me, and hope to ruin me. He seems as it were to point at the place with his finger, as if it were

already done, and he could tell all the circumstances of it. Or, *then*, i.e. when they thought all sure, and me irrecoverably lost.

Fallen, i.e. they shall certainly and suddenly fall; which the prophets use to express in the time past.

Psalms 37:1 PSALM 37

THE ARGUMENT

The design of this Psalm is to defend the providence of God, and to satisfy the minds of men in that great question, concerning the seeming inequality of God's dispensations, in afflicting good men, and giving prosperity to the worst of men; and to instruct God's people how to demean themselves in their present condition, and what supports and comforts they have in it.

The psalmist persuadeth to patience and confidence in God, Psa_37:1-8; and showeth the different state of the godly and wicked in all their dealings, Psa_37:9-40.

Fret not thyself, give not way to immoderate grief, or anger, or impatience,

because of evil-doers; because they prosper in their wicked enterprises, whilst thou art sorely afflicted.

Neither be thou envious, esteeming them happy, and secretly wishing that thou wert in their condition.

Psalms 37:2

For their happiness, the matter of thy envy, is but shortlived.

Psalms 37:3

Trust in the Lord; depend upon God's providence and promise for thy protection and sustentation, for their infidelity is the root of their wickedness.

Do good; continue in the practice of that which is good and well-pleasing to God.

So shalt thou dwell in the land, i.e. upon this condition shalt dwell safely and quietly in Canaan; as God had oft promised. In the Hebrew it is, *dwell in the land*, as if, it were a command to abide in Canaan when troubles come, and not to flee to the

Philistines or other heathens for shelter, as he had foolishly done. But it is rather a promise, by comparing this with Psa_37:27,29; such promises being oft expressed by imperative verbs put for futures, as Gen_12:2 **42:18** Psa_128:6 Amo_5:4.

Verily thou shalt be fed, Heb. *thou shalt be fed* (i.e. every way provided for) *in truth* , i.e. truly or assuredly; or with or by faith, as this word signifies, i. e. by thy trusting in the Lord; *thou shalt live by thy faith* , as is said, Hab_2:4.

Psalms 37:4

Delight thyself in the Lord; in his favour and service, and in the study of his word and promises.

The desires of thine heart, i.e. thy just desires, or whatsoever is truly desirable and good for thee; which limitation is necessarily to be understood, both from divers places of Scripture, and from the nature of the things; for it is unreasonable to imagine that God would engage himself to grant their sinful and inordinate desires, and it would also be a curse to them to have them granted.

Psalms 37:5

Thy way, i.e. all thy cares and business, thy desires and necessities. Commend them to God by fervent prayer, referring them to his good will, and expecting a happy issue of all from him.

He shall bring it to pass, Heb. *he shall do* , or *work* , to wit, for thee, or what is fit to be done, or what thou desirest in the sense given on Psa_37:4.

Psalms 37:6

He shall bring forth thy righteousness to the view of the world; from which it hath hitherto seemed to be hid or eclipsed by reproaches, and by grievous calamities, which most men are apt to mistake for tokens and punishments of great wickedness.

As the light; it shall be as visible to men as the light of the sun, and that at noon-day, as it is in the next branch. So effectually will he plead thy cause.

Judgment; the same thing with *righteousness* , as this word is used here below, Psa_37:28 **99:4**, and oft elsewhere.

Psalms 37:7

Rest in the Lord, Heb. *Be silent unto* , or *for* , or *because of the Lord* , i.e. do not murmur nor repine at his dealings, but silently and quietly submit to his will, and adore his judgments, and, as it follows, wait for his help. This advice and command is pressed again and again, to teach us how hard it is to learn and practise this lesson.

In his way, i.e. in his evil way, as it is limited in the following words.

Psalms 37:8

Cease from anger; either against the sinner for his success; or against God for so disposing of things, as Jonah Was, Jon_4:1.

To do evil; or, *at least so far as to do evil*. If any such anger or grief do secretly arise in thee, take care that it do not transport thee, either to reproach or distrust God's providence, or to the dislike of his ways, or to an approbation or imitation of the wicked practices of those men in hopes of the same success.

Psalms 37:9

Shall be cut off, to wit, from the earth, by comparing this with the next clause, and with Psa_34:16. Their end shall certainly be most miserable.

Shall inherit the earth, according to God's promise oft made to such; which also for the most part was literally fulfilled in that state of the church; and if it was not, it was fulfilled with far greater advantage in spiritual and eternal blessings.

Psalms 37:10

Their time and prosperity is very short, and therefore no matter of envy.

Shall not be, to wit, in the land of the living. He shall be dead and gone, as this phrase is commonly taken.

Diligently consider his place; industriously seeking to find him.

It shall not be, i.e. his place, and estate, and glory shall be gone. Or, *he shall not be* , as before.

Psalms 37:11

The meek, i.e. the godly, who are frequently thus called, as Psa_22:26 **149:4**; those who patiently bear God's afflicting hand, and meekly pass by injuries from ungodly men. The abundance of peace; partly of outward peace and prosperity, which God in his due time will give them; and principally of inward peace and satisfaction of mind, in the sense of God's favour, and the assurance of his own endless happiness.

Psalms 37:12

Out of malice and rage. **See Poole "Psa_35:16"**.

Psalms 37:13

Shall laugh at him, i.e. shall despise and deride all their hopes and endeavours against the good, as most vain and foolish.

His day; either,

1. God's day, which is a usual phrase, as Isa_2:12 **13:9**. Or,
2. His own day, as 1Sa_26:10 Eze_21:25,**29**. Both signify the same thing, the day appointed by God for his punishment or destruction, as Isa_9:4 Jer_50:27.

Psalms 37:14

They are furnished with all sorts of arms, and are ready to give the deadly blow.

Such as be of upright conversation; such against whom they have no quarrel for any injury they have done them, but only for their integrity and righteousness, or because they are better than themselves, and will not comply with their wicked counsels and courses.

Psalms 37:15

God will not only defend the upright from their mischievous designs, but will make them to fall upon their own heads.

Psalms 37:16

Because he hath it with many great and glorious advantages, with God's favour and blessings, with great serenity, and satisfaction of his own mind, which is infinitely more desirable and comfortable than all earthly possessions; *with the consolations of God's Spirit, and the assurance of everlasting felicity*; whilst wicked men's

riches are loaded with many encumbrances, with the wrath and curse of God, the torment of their own consciences and passions, and the dreadful expectation of an after-reckoning, and of endless miseries.

Psalms 37:17

This is a proof of what he said Psa_37:16. For what the wicked have shall suddenly be lost and gone, but God will maintain the righteous in their happy estate.

Psalms 37:18

Knoweth; observeth with singular care and affection

The days of the upright, i.e. their condition, and all things which do or may befall them, their dangers and fears, and suffering from ungodly men; and therefore will watch over them, and preserve them from all the designs and attempts of their enemies.

Days, or *years* , or *times* are oft put for things done or events happening in them, as Deu_32:7 Psa_31:15 **77:5 143:5** Isa_63:11.

Their inheritance shall be for ever; to them and their seed for ever: compare Psa_37:29. And when they die, their inheritance is not lost, but exchanged for one infinitely better.

Psalms 37:19

They shall not be ashamed, for the disappointment of their hopes, but their hopes and desires shall be satisfied, as it follows.

Psalms 37:20

Fat of lambs, which in an instant melteth before the fire. *Consume into smoke* , i.e. utterly and irrecoverably,

Psalms 37:21

The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; either through covetousness and injustice; or rather, because of that great penury into which God shall bring him; whilst the righteous is not only provided sufficiently for himself, but hath abundance and to spare for others. For he is here comparing the wicked and the righteous, not so much in their virtues or moral qualities, as in their outward conditions, which also appears from the following verse, which gives the reason of this.

Psalms 37:22

Of him, i.e. of the Lord, as appears both from Psa_37:20, where he is named, and from the nature of the thing, this being God's prerogative to bless or to curse men. And this he mentions, both as the foundation, and as the proof of the certainty of their future happiness.

Psalms 37:23

Of a good man, or, *of that man* , to wit, the righteous or blessed man, expressed Psa_37:21,22.

Ordered, or *directed* , or *disposed* , i.e. so governed as to attain the end and happy issue at which he aims. Or, *strengthened* , or *established* , so as he shall not stumble nor fall into mischief; for still he seems to be describing, not their virtue, but their felicity.

And he delighteth in his way; or, *and he favoureth his way* , i.e. succeeds and prospers his counsels and enterprises.

Psalms 37:24

Fall; either,

1. Into sin, as this word is used, Jer_8:4 1Co_10:12; or rather,
2. Into distress or trouble, as Mic_7:8.

Not be utterly cast down, i.e. not totally nor irrecoverably ruined.

Psalms 37:25

This assertion seems to be contradicted by many experiences; nor can it be denied, that both good men and their children have sometimes been reduced to great want.

Quest. How then is this true?

Answ.

1. Some render the last clause thus, *nor* (did I ever see)

his seed, (to wit, forsaken, as was now said,) though

begging bread. So the sense is, I have seen him brought to beggary, yet even then God did not forsake him. But this sense agrees not with the context nor scope, which is to show the plenty and prosperity where with God blesseth him.

2. This is to be understood of the seed of the righteous treading in their fathers' steps, from which if they degenerate, they lose all their privileges, as many places of Scripture witness.

3. Some few exceptions do not destroy the truth of a general proposition.

4. These temporal promises were more express and particular to the Jews in the times of the Old Testament, than to Christians in the New, and therefore were more literally fulfilled.

5. He speaks not of any kind of wanting, or desiring, or receiving relief from others, for so David himself did, 1Sa_21:3 **25:8**; but of the customary practice and trade of begging, which was threatened as a curse to the disobedient, Deu 28\$ Psa_109:10.

6. *Not begging* , to wit, in vain; or so as to be *forsaken* , as was now expressed, and may very well be here understood; or so as to be sustained or relieved by others.

7. David speaks only of his own experience, which if since that time it be contradicted by other men's experiences, it is no more than what happens in all the concernments of human life.

Psalms 37:26

He is so far from begging from others, that he hath ability as well as inclination to give or lend to others, as need requires.

His seed is blessed, not only with spiritual, but with temporal blessings. So far shall he be from wasting his estate, and undoing himself and family by his bounty and charity, as covetous worldlings objected or feared.

Psalms 37:27

Having therefore these glorious promises and privileges, let no man do any evil or unjust thing to enrich or secure himself, nor abstain from pious and charitable actions for fear of undoing himself by them; but let every man live in the conscionable discharge of all his duties to God and men, committing himself and all his affairs to God's fatherly care and providence, and confidently expecting his blessing thereupon.

Dwell, i.e. *thou shalt dwell* , as before, Psa_37:3, to wit, in the land, as is expressed, Psa_37:3, and afterwards in heaven.

For evermore; either properly; or for a long time, of which that word is oft used.

Psalms 37:28

Judgment, i.e. just judgment, or righteousness, as that word is oft taken, as hath been showed again and again; either,

1. In himself, i.e. he loveth to execute judgment upon the wicked, and for the righteous; which he doth in the manner expressed in this Psalm. Or,

2. In the righteous themselves, whose justice, and piety, and charity he sees and loves, and will reward it.

His saints; or, *his favourites* ; or, *they to whom he hath a good will* ; or, *his bountiful ones* , who exercise benignity and charity to others.

Psalms 37:29

Inherit the land: See Poole "Psa_37:3".

Dwell therein for ever: See Poole "Psa_37:18".

Psalms 37:30

Speaketh; and that freely, and customarily, and from his heart, as the next verse shows. Having showed in divers verses God's singular care over and respect to the righteous, he proceeds to give a character of them, and withal to assign one reason of the great difference of God's dealings with them and with other men. *Wisdom and judgment* ; either,

1. For the manner of it, with wisdom and judgment. Or rather,

2. For the matter of it, heavenly wisdom, and God's judgment, or word, or law, as it follows, Psa_37:31. When the discourses of other men are either wicked, or vain and useless, his are serious, and edifying, and pious, concerning the word and ways of God.

Psalms 37:31

According to God's command, Deu_6:6, and promise, Heb_8:10. His thoughts, and meditations, and affections are fixed upon it. He doth not talk religiously in design, or with ostentation, but out of the abundance of his heart, Mat_12:35.

None of his steps shall slide: this passage describes either,

1. His safety, consequent upon his piety; God will uphold and preserve him from falling into that mischief which wicked men plot against him. Or rather,

2. His virtue or piety; which is evidenced by his words, Psa_37:30, by his heart, in the former part of this verse, and by his actions, in these words. *His steps or goings* (i.e. his actions) *shall not* (or rather, *do not* ; for this verb, though future, may and should be rendered by the present, as futures frequently are in the Hebrew language, and as the two foregoing future verbs are rendered, Psa_37:30) *slide* , or *slip* , or *swerve* , to wit, from the rule, or from God's law; which is to be understood as that passage, Psa_99:3, *They do no iniquity* , and some such expressions, not simply and absolutely, as if all good men were sinless; which is abundantly confuted, both by many scriptures and by universal experience; but comparatively, and in respect of his design, and course, or custom. His conversation is ordinarily regular and unblamable. He not only begins well, but constantly perseveres in God's ways, and will not be drawn to forsake God and religion upon any terms.

Psalms 37:32

Watcheth, to find out a fit season or occasion to destroy him.

Psalms 37:33

Not leave him in his hand, i.e. not give him up to his power and rage.

Nor condemn him, i.e. nor give his consent to the sentence of condemnation, which the wicked have pronounced against him, but will justify him, and vindicate his innocency and deliver him; for such negatives do oft imply the contrary affirmatives; as God's *not holding a man guiltless* commonly implies that he will severely punish him.

Psalms 37:34

Wait on the Lord; seeking and trusting to him, and to him only, for help and deliverance.

Keep his way; continue in the practice of thy duty, or in those ways which God hath prescribed to thee in his word, and do not use indirect and irregular means to deliver thyself.

Thou shalt see it; thou shalt not only escape the destruction which they design for thee, but shalt live to see their ruin.

Psalms 37:35

In great power, or *formidable* ; not only himself out of danger, as it seemed, but terrible to others.

And spreading himself; and therefore firmly and deeply rooted.

Like a green bay tree, which is continually green and flourishing, yea, even in the winter season. Or, *like a green tree in its own native soil* , where trees flourish much better than when they are transplanted into another soil.

Psalms 37:36

He was gone in an instant, like a tree blasted and blown down, or cut off and rooted out, and carried away in a moment. There was no monument nor remainder of him left.

Psalms 37:37

Though he may meet with troubles in his way, yet all shall end well with him; he shall be happy at last.

Psalms 37:38

Together; or, *alike* , one as well as another; all, without any exception or respect of persons.

The end of the wicked shall be cut off, i. e. he shall be cut off at last, or in the end. His prosperity shall end in destruction. Or, *the posterity* (as this word signifies, Psa_109:13 Jer_31:17 Eze_23:25 Dan_11:4) *of the wicked* , &c.

Psalms 37:39

The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; and therefore it shall certainly come to them.

Psalms 37:40

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 38:1 PSALM 39

THE ARGUMENT

This is reckoned one of David's penitential Psalms. It was composed upon occasion of some sore disease, or grievous

calamity; which he rightly judged to be inflicted upon him for his sins.

Either,

1. To God, that by this humble and mournful prayer he might prevail with God to remember and pity him; for now he seemed quite to have forgotten him. Or,

2. To himself, that by reviewing this Psalm afterwards he might call to mind his former danger and misery, and God's wonderful mercy in delivering him from them; which we are very apt to forget; and that others also might remember and consider what God had done to him, first in chastening, and then in restoring him, and might make use of his example for their benefit.

David, being visited with sickness, rehearseth his woeful condition, Psa_38:1-3, by reason of his sins, Psa_38:4-8; prayeth for forgiveness, help, and favour, Psa_38:9,10. He lays before God the unfaithfulness of his friends, Psa_38:11-18, and the cruelty of his enemies, Psa_38:19-22.

I confess I both deserve chastisement and need it, and therefore I desire not that thou wouldst remove it, but only moderate it. See the same expression Psa_6:1.

Psalms 38:2

Thine arrows, i.e. thy judgments inflicted upon my outward and inward man, oft compared to arrows, as Deu_32:23 Psa_7:13 **45:5 91:5**.

Presseth me sore; or, *comes down upon me* ; as when a strong man lifts up his hand and weapon, that it may fall down with greater violence, and make the deeper wound.

Psalms 38:3

My disease or grief hath seized upon all the parts of my body, my very bones not excepted, so that my bed can give me no rest;

because of my sin, which hath provoked thee to deal, thus severely with me.

Psalms 38:4

Mine iniquities; or, *the punishment of mine iniquities* , as this word is frequently used; which best agrees both with the

foregoing and following verses, and with the metaphor here used; which in other places of Scripture is generally applied to afflictions, and not to sins.

Gone over my head, like deep waters, wherewith I am overwhelmed and almost drowned, Psa_42:7 **69:2 124:4,5**.

Psalms 38:5

The bruises and sores caused by my disease are not only painful, but loathsome to myself and to others.

Foolishness, i.e. sin, which really is, and is commonly called, *folly*, as Psa_69:5 Pro_13:16 **14:17 15:2**, &c.

Psalms 38:6

Troubled, Heb. *distorted*, or *depressed*; or, as it is expressed by another word, signifying the same thing,

bowed down, to wit, in my body, as diseased persons commonly are, and withal dejected in my mind. *I go mourning*, Heb. *in black*, the sign of mourning, which may here signify the thing, as signs oft do. When for my ease I rise out of my bed and walk, or rather creep about in my chamber, I do it with a sad heart and dejected countenance. Or if he did walk further, his disease had some intervals and mitigations. Or *going* may be here meant of his languishing, or going towards the grave, as this same word is used, Gen_15:2, compared with Gen_25:32 Jos_23:14.

Psalms 38:7

Or, *with filthiness*; or, *with scorching heat*. The disease might be some burning fever, being also malignant or pestilential, either burning inwardly, or breaking forth outwardly in carbuncles or boils. It is true, this and the other expressions may be taken figuratively, of some grievous calamity; but we should not forsake the proper and the literal sense of the words without necessity, which seems not to be in this place.

Psalms 38:8

Roared, like a bear or a lion, through extreme pain and misery.

By reason of the disquietness of my heart; for the great anxiety and torment of my mind, caused by the deep sense of my sins, and of God's wrath, and of the sad issue of my disease; which being added to my bodily pains, makes them more intolerable.

Psalms 38:9

I do not utter all these complaints, nor roar out, that thou mayst hear and know them, for thou hearest and knowest even my lowest groans; yea, mine inward desires, and all my necessities. And therefore, I pray thee, pity and deliver me, as I trust thou wilt do.

Psalms 38:10

Panteth; or, *goes round* ; wanders hither and thither, as the word signifies; is perplexed and tossed with many and various thoughts, not knowing what to do, nor whither to go. Mine eyes are grown dim; either through grief and tears, as @Psa_6:7; or through weakness, as 1Sa_14:28,29.

Psalms 38:11

Either through neglect, and contempt, or disdain of me; or through delicacy and abhorrency from loathsome and sadding spectacles; or through fear of infection, or some other inconveniences.

Psalms 38:12

Lay snares for me; that if my disease do not kill me, they may destroy me some other way.

Imagine deceits; they design mischief, but cover it with fair pretences.

Psalms 38:13

I carried myself towards them as if I had no ears to hear what they said either to me or for me, nor a tongue to answer or reprove them for their reproaches and calumnies; which he did not for, want of just answers to them, but to testify his humiliation for his sins, and his patient submission to and acceptation of the punishment which he had brought upon himself; of which see an instance, 2Sa_16:10-12; wherein also he was an eminent type of Christ, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, 1Pe_2:23.

Psalms 38:14

Or *arguments* , to convince or confute them, or to defend myself.

Psalms 38:15

I bore their carriage silently and patiently, because I hoped and knew that thou wouldst answer for me, and plead my cause better

than myself; which I would not prevent by my impatience, and avenging myself. Or, *but in thee*

do I hope, i.e. though friends forsake me, and mine enemies plot and practise against me, yet I do not despair, because I have thee on my side.

Psalms 38:16

I said, to wit, in my heart and prayers; I used this argument, which I knew was prevalent.

Rejoice over me in my destruction, which also will reflect upon thee; who hast undertaken to defend and save me, and for whose sake I suffer so much from these wicked men, Psa_38:20.

When my foot slippeth; when I fall either into any gross sin, or into any misery, or into both, as I have now done.

They magnify themselves against me; they triumph in the accomplishment of their designs or desires.

Psalms 38:17

Ready to halt; just falling into utter destruction; see Jer_20:10; and therefore if thou dost not help me speedily, it will be too late.

My sorrow is continually before me; I am deeply and constantly sensible of thy just hand, and of my sins, the cause of it; wherewith I shall be overwhelmed, if thou dost not prevent it.

Psalms 38:18

Declare mine iniquity; either to thee; or publicly to the world, because my sin hath been public and scandalous.

I will be sorry, Heb. *I will be* (or, *I am* ; futures being oft so taken) *solicitous* or *anxious* ; full of grief for what is past, and of cares and fears for the future; partly lest I should relapse into the same folly upon new temptations; and partly lest thou shouldst cut me off for my sins. Therefore pity, and pardon, and save me.

For my sin; or, *by reason of my sin* , or upon that occasion.

Psalms 38:19

Lively, Heb. *living* , i.e. thriving, or flourishing, or prosperous, as life is used, Psa_22:26 **34:12**, and elsewhere.

Psalms 38:20

They render evil for good; they hate and persecute me, not only without any injury or provocation on my part, but as it were in requital of the good which I have done to them.

Because I follow the thing that good is; because I love and diligently practise justice and godliness, which they hate, and which they take to be a reproach to them, and which I did exercise, as I had opportunity, in the punishment of such as they are. Compare Joh_15:19 1Jo_3:12.

Psalms 38:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 38:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 39:1 PSALM 39

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was written by David when his mind was much discomposed and disquieted with the contemplation of the prosperity of sinners, and the afflictions of the godly; which being exemplified in himself and in his enemies, he speaks of the case not in general, but as in his own person.

Jeduthun; one of the three chief masters of the sacred music; of whom see 1Ch_16:41,42 2Ch_5:12.

David taketh care of his thoughts, words, and works, Psa_39:1-3. He considereth the brevity and vanity of man's life, Psa_39:4-6; puts his hope in God, Psa_39:7; prayeth for the forgiveness of his sins, Psa_39:8-11, and for favour in his pilgrimage, Psa_39:12,13.

I said; I fully resolved. *To my ways* , i.e. to order all my actions aright, and particularly to govern my tongue, which is very hard to do, and especially under these provocations.

That I sin not with my tongue; that if any evil thoughts or passions do arise in me, I will endeavour to suppress and mortify them, and not suffer them to boil and break forth into sinful and scandalous reflections upon God and his providence, as they usually do upon such occasions.

As with a bridle, i. e. with all possible care and diligence. The phrase implies the great difficulty of ruling the tongue.

Before me; either,

1. In my presence. Or rather,

2. In my thoughts, as the same phrase is understood, Psa_51:3, i.e. whilst I consider the flourishing estate of wicked men.

Psalms 39:2

I was dumb with silence; I was so long and so obstinately silent, that I seemed to myself and to others to be dumb. Two words put together expressing the same thing, to aggravate or increase it. Or, *I was dumb with quietness*, i.e. not out of sullenness, but with submissiveness to God's dispensations, which is oft noted by silence.

I held my peace, even from good; I forbore to speak what I justly might upon that occasion, lest the flood-gates of speech being once opened, and speech stirring up my passion, I should by degrees break forth into some indecent and sinful expressions, to the dishonour of God, the wounding of mine own conscience, and the offence of others. or this may be a proverbial speech, signifying strict silence; like that Gen_31:29, *Speak to him neither good nor bad*, i.e. nothing at all, to wit, about that matter, to persuade him to return.

My sorrow was stirred; my silence did not assuage my grief, but increase it, as it naturally and commonly doth.

Psalms 39:3

Musing, i.e. considering in my own thoughts the great wickedness and successfulness of mine enemies, and other wicked men; and withal mine own and other good news integrity, attended with great troubles and miseries in this life.

The fire burned; my thoughts kindled my passions. *Then spake I with my tongue*, to wit, such words as I had purposed not to speak, Psa_39:1; rash and impatient words: either,

1. Some words not here expressed; which having uttered to men, he turneth his speech to God, Psa_39:4. Or,

2. Those which here follow.

Psalms 39:4

This verse contains either,

1. A correction of himself for his impatient motions or speeches, and his retirement to God for relief under these perplexing and saddening thoughts. Or,
2. A declaration of the words which he spake.

Make me to know; either,

1. Practically, so as to prepare for it. Or,
2. Experimentally, as words *of knowledge* are oft used. And so this is a secret desire of death, that he might be free from such torments as made his life a burden to him. Or,
3. By revelation; that I may have some prospect or foreknowledge when my calamities will be ended; which argued impatience, and an unwillingness to wait long for deliverance.

My end, i.e. the end of my life, as is evident from the following words.

What it is; how long or short it is, or the utmost extent or period of the days of my life.

How frail I am; or, *how long* (or, *how little*, for the word may be and is by divers interpreters taken both ways) *time I have or shall continue* here.

Psalms 39:5

As an handbreadth, which is one of the least measures, i.e. very short. These and the following words are either,

1. A continuance of his complaint, that although his days were of themselves very short, yet God seemed to grudge him their natural length, and threatened to make them shorter, and to cut him off before his time. Or rather,
2. A consolation, and correction of his last words, as if he said, Why am I so greedy to know the end of my life, seeing I do already know this, that my life cannot last very long, and therefore if my troubles be sharp, they will be but short?

Nothing; next to nothing for substance and for continuance.

Before thee, i.e. in thy judgment, and therefore in truth and reality; or, if compared with thee, and with thy everlasting duration: compare Psa_90:4 2Pe_3:8.

Every man, prince or peasant, wise or fools, good or bad.

At his best state; Heb. *though settled or established* ; when he stands fastest, and likely to continue longest, in regard of his health and strength, and all possible means whereby life may be secured, supported, or prolonged.

Altogether vanity; all that he is or hath is as light, and vain, and unstable as vanity itself; there is nothing but vanity and uncertainty in all his outward enjoyments, in the constitution of his body, yea, in the very temper and endowments of his mind: by which general condition of all mankind he endeavours to quiet and compose his mind to bear the common lot.

Psalms 39:6

Walketh, i. e. passeth the course of his life; or goeth about busily and restlessly, hither and thither, as this verb in this conjugation signifies, and as the next verb more plainly expresseth.

In a vain show, Heb. *in a shadow or image* , i.e. in an imaginary rather than a real life; in the pursuit of vain imaginations, in which there is nothing solid or satisfactory. Or, as some read it, *like a shadow* , to which man's life is compared, Job_14:2. Man and his life, and all his happiness in this world, are rather appearances, and representations, and dreams, than truths and realities.

Disquieted; or, *troubled* ; Heb. *they make a noise* , or *bustling* , or *tumult* , with unwearied industry seeking for riches, as it follows, and troubling and vexing both themselves and others in the pursuit of them, as this word implies.

In vain; to no purpose; or without any real or considerable benefit to him or his.

He heapeth up; for his own use, and for his posterity after him.

Who shall gather them; whether his children, or strangers, or enemies, shall possess and enjoy them.

Psalms 39:7

Seeing this life and all its enjoyments are so vain and short to all men, and especially to me, I will never expect nor seek for happiness here from these vanities; I will compose myself patiently and contentedly to bear both my own afflictions, and the prosperity and glory of ungodly men, for both are vanishing and transitory things, and I will seek for happiness no where but in the love and favour of God, in serving and glorifying him here, and in the hope or confident expectation of enjoying him hereafter; and in the mean time, of receiving from him those supplies and assistances which my present condition calls for.

Psalms 39:8

Deliver me from all my transgressions; that I may not be disappointed of my hopes of enjoying thee and thy favour, which is the only thing that I desire, pardon all my sins, which stand like a thick cloud between thee and me, and fill me with fears about my condition both here and hereafter.

Make me not the reproach; let not their prosperity and my misery give them occasion to deride and reproach me for my serving of thee, and trusting in thee, to so little purpose or advantage.

Of the foolish, i.e. of wicked men, who though they profess and think themselves to be wise, yet indeed are fools, as is manifest from their eager pursuit of fruitless vanities, Psa_39:6, and from their gross neglect of God, and of his service, who only is able to make them happy.

Psalms 39:9

I opened not my mouth, to wit, in way of murmuring or repining against thee, or thy providence, as I promised I would be, Psa_39:1. For though when I looked only to instruments, I was discomposed, and did at last speak a foolish word; yet when I did recollect myself, and looked up to thee, the First Cause and Sovereign Disposer of this and all other things, I returned to my former silence.

Thou didst it. What? Either,

1. and particularly, Absalom's rebellion; wherein I acknowledge thy just hand in punishing my sins. Or,

2. and more generally, Whatsoever is done in these matters; all the events which befall all men, whether good or bad; the afflictions of the one, and the prosperity of the other; all which are the effects of thy counsel and providence, in which all men ought to acquiesce.

Psalms 39:10

But although I may not, I will not, open my mouth to complain of thee, yet I may open it to complain and pray to thee, that thou wouldst take off the judgment which thou hast inflicted upon me.

I am consumed; help me, therefore, before I be utterly and irrecoverably lost.

Psalms 39:11

With rebukes, i. e. with punishment, which is oft so called. See Psa_6:1 76:6.

Dost correct man for iniquity, i. e. dost punish him as his iniquity deserves. *His beauty*, Heb. *his desire*, i.e. his desirable things, as this word signifies, Lam_1:11 Dan_9:23 **10:3,11,19**. His comeliness, strength, wealth, and prosperity, and all his present excellencies or felicities.

Like a moth; either,

1. Passively, as a moth is quickly and easily crushed to pieces with a touch as this phrase is used, Job_4:19. Or,

2. Actively as a moth consumeth a garment, as it is Job_13:28 Isa_1:9; to which God compareth himself and his judgments, secretly and insensibly consuming a people, Isa_51:8 Hos_5:12.

Every man is vanity; and this confirms what I said Psa_39:5, that every man is vanity; which though men in the height of their prosperity will not believe, yet when God contendeth with them by his judgments, they are forced to acknowledge it.

Psalms 39:12

At my tears, joined with my prayers, Heb_5:7.

I am a stranger: though I be not only a native, but either anointed or actually king of this land; yet in truth I am but a stranger, both in regard of my very uncertain and short continuance here, where I am only in my journey or passage to my real and long home,

which is in the other world; and in respect of the many wants, and hardships, and contempts, and injuries to which I am exposed, as men usually are in strange lands. And therefore I greatly need and desire thy pity and help, O thou who art the patron of strangers, whom thou hast commended to our care and kindness, Exo_12:48 Lev_19:33 **25:35**, &c. *With thee* ; either,

1. In thy sight or judgment, and therefore truly. We are apt to flatter ourselves, and can hardly believe that we are but strangers here, where we seem to have settled habitations; and possessions, but thou knowest the truth of the business, that we are really such. Or,

2. In thy land or territory, in which I sojourn only by thy leave and favour, and during thy pleasure, as this whole phrase is used, Lev_25:23, whence these words are taken, as also Lev_25:35 **36,39,40,45,47**, where that branch of it, with thee, is so meant. And withal this phrase, both here and Lev_25:23, may have a further emphasis in it, implying that every Israelite, and particularly David himself, in respect of men, were the proprietors or owners of their portions, of which no other man might deprive or dispossess them, and therefore David's enemies had done wrongfully in banishing him from his and from the Lord's inheritance; but yet in respect of God they were but strangers, and God was the only Proprietor of it.

As all my fathers were; both in thy judgment, expressed Lev_25:23, and in their own opinion, Heb_11:13, &c; upon which account thou didst take a special care of them, and therefore do so to me also.

Psalms 39:13

Spare me; or, *cease from me* , i.e. from afflicting me; do not destroy me. My life at best is but short and miserable, as I have said, and thou knowest; sufficient for it is the evil thereof: do not add affliction to the afflicted.

That I may recover strength, both in my outward and inward man, both which are much weakened and oppressed. Or, *that I may be refreshed* , or *comforted* , eased of the burden of my sins, and thy terrors consequent upon them, and better prepared for a comfortable and happy dissolution.

Before I go hence, Heb. *before I go* , to wit, unto the grave, as this phrase is used, Gen_15:2 **25:32**; or *the way of all the earth* , as the phrase is completed, Jos_23:14; or *whence I shall not return* , as it is Job_10:21; or, which is all one, into that place and state in which I shall not be, to wit, amongst the living, or in this world, as this phrase is frequently used, both in Scripture, as Gen_5:24 **37:30 42:36**, and in heathen authors; of which see my Latin Synopsis.

Psalms 40:1 PSALM 40

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is a celebration of God's great goodness and mercy vouchsafed unto him and all his people. It is certain and evident that David speaks some things in this Book of Psalms in his own name and person, and some things ill the name and person of Christ, or whom he was an eminent type; and that sometimes he speaks in both these capacities in the same Psalm, as hath been noted before. And this seems to be the condition of this Psalm; wherein there are some passages which cannot belong to Christ, as Psa_40:13, and some which do not properly belong to David, or to that time and state of the church, but only to Christ, and to the times of the New Testament, as Psa_40:6,7.

David by his own experience showeth the benefit of trusting in God, Psa_40:1-5. Christ's obedience and sacrifice, Psa_40:6-10. His sufferings for sin; his fervent prayer, Psa_40:11-17.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 40:2

I waited patiently, Heb. *in waiting I waited* ; which doubling of the word notes that he waited diligently and earnestly, patiently and perseveringly, until God should please to help him. *He inclined* , or, *bowed* , to wit, *himself* , as this very word is rendered, Jud_16:30; or, *his ear* , as it is more fully expressed, Psa_17:6 **31:2**. Such ellipses or defects are frequent in Scripture, as Psa_3:6 **10:1** Ecc_6:3 **7:15**.

Out of an horrible pit; or, *out of a sounding pit* so called either from the clamours of men or beasts falling into it; or from the

many waters which fall down into it, not without a great noise. I was not only upon the brink, but in the very bottom of the pit, i.e. in desperate dangers and calamities, as this phrase signifies, Psa_18:16 **69:1,2**.

Out of the miry clay; in which my feet stuck fast.

Upon a rock; a place of strength and safety.

My goings, or, *my steps* , i.e. kept me from stumbling or falling into mischief.

Psalms 40:3

He hath put a new song in my mouth; partly by giving me new matter or occasion for a song; and partly by inspiring me with the very words of it.

Shall see it, i.e. shall observe God's wonderful mercies vouchsafed to me.

And fear, i.e. shall stand in awe of that God, who by this instance they see to have so great power, either to save or to destroy, and tremble at his judgments, and give him that reverence, and worship, and obedience which he requires. Yet their fear shall not drive them from God, or bring them into despair, but shall draw them to God, and be attended with trusting in God.

Psalms 40:4

His trust, i.e. his only trust or refuge, as appears from the following words: q.d. I said, many *shall trust in the Lord* ; and they shall not be losers by it, nor disappointed of their hope, but they are and shall be blessed.

Respecteth not. Heb. *looketh not towards* , to wit, with love and delight, and desire to imitate them; or with confidence and expectation of relief from thence, as this phrase is oft used, as Psa_25:15 **69:3 121:1 141:8**, and as the opposition of this clause to the foregoing seems to imply.

The proud or, *the mighty* , i.e. the great and proud potentates of the world, to whom most men are apt to look and trust, and in whom the psalmist forbids us to put our trust, Psa_146:3.

Such as turn aside, to wit, from God, in whom alone they ought to trust.

To lies, i.e. to lying vanities, such as worldly power, and wisdom, and riches, and all other earthly things or persons in which men are prone to trust; which are called *lies* here, and Psa_4:2 **62:9** Mic_1:14, and elsewhere, because they promise more than they can perform. See also Psa_7:14 **119:18** Hos_10:13 **12:1**.

Psalms 40:5

Thy wonderful works; for which I and the rest of thy people, included in the pronoun plural us, have abundant cause to praise thee, and to trust in thee, as was said, Psa_40:3; and by which it will appear that he that trusteth in thee is in a most blessed and safe condition, as he said, Psa_40:4. And this verse, wherein he passeth from the singular number to the plural, may seem to be interposed as a wall of partition, between that which David speaks in his own person, and that which he speaks in the person of the Messias, in the following verses.

Thy thoughts, i.e. thy gracious counsels or contrivances.

To us-ward, i.e. to me and to the rest of thy people, with whom David oft joins himself in this book. But these words may be, and are by some, joined to the following words, and the place thus rendered: It is *not with us* , or *in our power* , i.e. it passeth our skill, (and reach,) to order or to reckon them up in order unto thee, because indeed they are innumerable, and therefore cannot be digested into any order.

If I would declare; so the particle *if* or *when* is wanting, and to be supplied here, as it is Psa_39:11, and in many other places. Heb. *yet I will declare and speak* , to wit, some part of them; which accordingly he doth in the following verses.

They are more than can be numbered; although I am not able to express or reckon them all.

Psalms 40:6

These words may in an improper sense belong to the person and time of David; when God might be said not to *desire or require* legal sacrifices comparatively, as negative expressions are frequently understood, as Mat_9:13 1Co_1:17, and in this very case of sacrifices, as Psa_51:16 Jer_7:22,**23** Ho **6:6**. So the sense is, Thou didst desire obedience more or rather than sacrifices, as was said, 1Sa_15:22. But in a proper and literal and full sense

they belong only to the person and times of the Messiah, in whose name David uttereth these words. And so the sense of the place is, God did *not desire or require* them for the satisfaction of his own justice, and the expiation of men's sins, which could not possibly be done by the blood of bulls or goats, as is said, Heb_10:4-6; but only by the blood of Christ, which was typified by them, and which Christ came into the world to shed, in pursuance of his Father's will, as it here follows, Psa_40:7,8. So here is a prediction concerning the cessation and abolition of the legal sacrifices, and the substitution of a better instead of them.

Mine ears hast thou opened, Heb. *bored* . The sense is either,

1. Whereas many men have no ears to hear, as is implied, Rev_2:7,11,17, or stop their ears, as Psa_58:4 Zec_7:11, thou hast given me open ears to hear and obey thy precepts, as this phrase is used, Isa_1:5, although indeed there is another verb in that text, which much alters the case. Or,

2. I have wholly devoted myself to thy perpetual service, and thou hast accepted of me as such, and signified so much by the *boring of mine ears* , according to the law and custom in that case, Exo_21:5,6 Deu 15:17. And whereas only one ear was then bored, and here it is *ears* , this may be either an ensilage of the plural number for the singular, whereof divers instances have been given; or else it may be so expressed emphatically, to intimate that Christ was more strictly obliged to a more universal obedience, not only active, to which the legal servants were bound, but passive also, to be obedient even unto the death, to which they were not obliged. The seventy Jewish interpreters, whom the apostle follows, Heb_10:5, translate these words, *a body hast thou prepared me* ; wherein though the words differ, the sense is the same; for the ears suppose a *body* to whom they belong, and the *preparing* of a body implies the preparing Or disposing of the ears, and the obligation of the person for whom a body was prepared to serve him who prepared it; which the boring of the ear signifies.

Psalms 40:7

Then, when I understood and considered thy mind and will therein, expressed Psa_40:6.

Said I; either within myself, by a firm purpose; or unto thee by way of promise or engagement.

Lo, I come. He may seem to speak like a servant, answering to the call of his master, and signifying his readiness to obey him; in which sense it may be accommodated to David. But the servant's answer is usually expressed in Scripture by another phrase, *Here am I*, and never to my remembrance in these words. Besides, this phrase in that sense seems not to be proper in this place, but rather, *Lo, I hear*, which best suits with the foregoing words, *mine ears hast thou opened*. But these words do most literally and truly belong to Christ, and the sense is this: Seeing thou requirest a better sacrifice than those of the law, lo, I do offer myself *to come*; and I will in due time *come*, to wit, *from heaven*, or *in the flesh*, or *into the world*, as this phrase is more fully expressed and explained in divers places of Scripture, and particularly Heb_10:5, where this place is explained and applied to Christ.

The two words *volume* and *book* are indifferently used

of any writing, and both words seem here to express the same thing, as may appear by comparing Jer 36\$, where we have the very same words; and what is called the *roll* or *volume of a book*, Jer_36:2,4, is called simply *a roll* or *volume*, Jer_36:6,20,21, and *the book*, Jer_36:10,13; it being usual with the Hebrews to join two words together in like manner, of which we have an instance here above, Psa_40:2, *miry clay*, Heb. *clay of mire*. Now this *volume of the book*, is meant, either,

1. Of the book of predestination, in which Christ was written, as being foreordained before the foundation of the world, 1Pe_1:20. But that is a secret book, not to be read by any man living, and therefore not fitly alleged as an evidence in this matter. Or,

2. Of a legal instrument, wherein the contract was drawn between God and him, wherein he did oblige himself to serve God, and to execute his will in all things; it being the manner of the Hebrews to write their contracts in a little *volume or book*. But,

1. We read of no such usage among the Hebrew in the contracts between master and servant, but only of the boring of the

servant's ear, Exo_21:6. So the foundation of this allusion is destroyed.

2. At least there was no such contract written between God and him. And if it be said that he only speaks thus by way of allusion, that is but a supposition without ground. And when the words may be properly understood as they sound, of a thing really done, why should we forsake the plain sense without necessity?

3. The phrase here used doth not agree to this sense; for then he should have said, *I am written in the volume of the book*, i.e. in the catalogue of thy servants; for in that case the persons or their names are constantly said to be *written*, as Exo_32:32, **33** **Psa 69:28** Dan_12:1 Luk_10:20 Heb_12:23 Rev_13:8 **20:15 21:27**, and not any thing to be written of them, as it is here. Or,

3. Of the Holy Scriptures; in which something indeed was written concerning David; namely, that he was *a man after God's own heart*, 1Sa_13:14. But it must be remembered that those books were not written till after David's death, in whose time here was no other book of Scripture extant but the five books of Moses, unless you will except the book of Job. And therefore this is meant of the law of Moses, which is commonly and emphatically called *the book*, and was made up in the form of a roll or volume, as the Hebrew books generally were. See Eze_3:1-3 Zec_5:1, **2 Lu 4:17,20**. And so this place manifestly points to Christ, and must necessarily be understood of him, and of him only, concerning whom much is said in the books of Moses, as is evident from Luk_24:27, **44 Joh 5:46** Act_3:22 **26:22 28:23**. And this sense being plain, and natural, and unforced, and exactly agreeing both with the words and with the truth of the thing, and with the belief of all Christians, I see no reason why I may not acquiesce in it.

Psalms 40:8

I delight to do thy will. This, though in a general sense it may be true of David and of all God's people, yet if it be compared with the foregoing verse, and with the explication thereof in the New Testament, (in which those mysteries which were darkly and doubtfully expressed in the Old Testament are fully and clearly revealed,) must be appropriated to Christ, of whom it is eminently true, and is here observed as an act of heroic obedience, that he

not only resolved to do, but delighted in doing, the will of God, or what God had commanded him and he had promised to do, which was to die, and that a most shameful, and painful, and cursed death. See Luk_12:50 Joh_10:18 Heb_10:9,10.

Thy law is within my heart, i.e. I do not only hear and understand it, but I receive it with heartiest love and affection, delighting both to meditate of it, and to yield obedience to it.

Psalms 40:9

Righteousness, to wit, *thy righteousness*, as it is expressed in the next verse, i.e. thy faithfulness, as it is there explained; or righteousness properly so called; for both were fully declared and demonstrated in Christ, the former in sending him into the world according to his promise, Act_13:23, and the latter in inflicting death upon him for man's sin, Rom_3:25,26. *In the great congregation*; in the most public and solemn assemblies; not only to the Jews, but also to all other nations; to whom Christ preached by his apostles, as is observed, Eph_2:17.

I have not refrained my lips, to wit, from preaching it, out of sloth, or fear, or self love, but have preached it publicly, and even to the face of mine enemies, though I knew my preaching would cost me my life.

Thou knowest; I call thee to witness the truth of what I say.

Psalms 40:10

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I had it there, Psa_40:8, but I did not smother or shut it up there, but spread it abroad for thy glory, and the good of the world; which thou hast wrought both for me and by me.

Psalms 40:11

This prayer is uttered by David, either,

1. In the person of Christ; to whom it may agree. Or,
2. In his own person. Having been transported and carried forth by the Spirit of God to the contemplation and commemoration of the great mystery of the Messiah, of whom he was an illustrious type, now he seems to be led back by the same Spirit to the consideration of himself and his own particular case.

Psalms 40:12

Mine iniquities; either,

1. The punishment of mine iniquities, as Gen_4:13 1Sa_28:10 Psa_31:10. Or,

2. The iniquities themselves. This phrase cannot be understood of Christ. For although our sins are said to be *laid upon Christ* , **Isa 53**, and upon that account he is said to be made sin for us, 2Co_5:21; yet the Scripture every where represents him as one that never knew nor did any sin, as in that place, and 1Pe_2:22, and elsewhere; and even when his punishment is described, yet it is expressly noted, that he did not suffer for himself, or for his own sins, but only for us, and for our sins, as Isa_53:4,5 **Da 9:26** 1Pe_2:24. And therefore it is not probable that the Holy Ghost would use such an expression concerning the sinless Christ of God, as is never used in Scripture, but either of a man's own sins, or of the punishment deserved by his own sins.

Have taken hold upon me: men's sins are figuratively said to follow them, 1Ti_5:24, and to find them out, Num_32:23, and here *to take hold of them* , as a serjeant takes hold of a man whom he arrests.

To look up unto God or men, with any comfort and confidence; I am ashamed and confounded, by reason of my numberless sins. Or, *so that I was not able to see* ; either because he was as it were drowned or overwhelmed with his sins; or because his eyes did fail or were consumed through grief, as he complains, Psa_6:7 **38:10**. Or he means that he could not foresee them; the simple verb being put for the compound, as it is frequently among the Hebrews. They came upon him unawares, and therefore were the more grievous to him. *They* , to wit, *mine iniquities* here mentioned, properly so called; for God's people are more apt to aggravate their sins than the punishments of them. See Ezr_9:13,14.

Psalms 40:13

Deliver me from my sins, and the punishments due to them.

Psalms 40:14

Let them be ashamed, for the disappointment of their hopes and designs.

My soul, i.e. my life, as Exo_4:9 1Sa_20:1.

Psalms 40:15

Desolate, or *amazed* , or *dismayed* , or *overthrown* : of such imprecations I have spoken before.

Their shame, i.e. their sinful and shameful actions, as *shame* is put for a shameful idol, Hos_9:10, and as fear is oft put for the evil feared.

Psalms 40:16

Such as love thy salvation; either,

1. Such as desire and rejoice in the salvation and deliverance which thou givest to me and to others of thy people, which was a great eye-sore and grief to the wicked. Or,

2. Such as expect and seek for their salvation and happiness not from idols, nor from their wicked courses, nor from any creatures, as other men do, but from thee only, and gladly accept and embrace that salvation which thou hast promised, together with the conditions required to it, to wit, faith and repentance. Or,

3. Such as love thy Messias, upon whom both David's and other holy prophets' and saints' thoughts and affections were much fixed, as is evident from many places of Scripture, as Joh_8:58 Act_2:30,**31** 1Pe_1:10,**11**; who is called *the desire of all nations* , Hag_2:7, and *the glory and consolation of Israel* , Luk_2:25,**32**, yea, and by the very title here used, God's *salvation* , Isa_62:11 Luk_2:30; whose appearance or coming the godly of all ages did love and long for; and of whom David had so lately and clearly spoken, Psa_40:6,**7**, &c.; all which considered, this cannot seem a forced or very far-fetched interpretation. *The Lord be magnified* : let them have continual occasion to magnify God for his mercies vouchsafed to them.

Psalms 40:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 41:1 PSALM 41

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion of this Psalm was manifestly some sore disease or affliction which God had inflicted upon David, and which gave his enemies opportunity to discover their hatred and malice against him.

David showeth God's care of the poor, Psa_41:1-3. He confesseth his sins, and complaineth of his enemies' treachery, Psa_41:4-9; but fleeth to God for succour, Psa_41:10-13.

That considereth; or, *that carries himself wisely and prudently with or towards him*, not rashly and foolishly censures and condemns him, as my pretended friends dealt with me, Psa_41:8; nor insulteth over him, which is a foolish as well as wicked thing; but considereth that it may be his own case, and therefore pitieth and helpeth him; which is the likeliest way to obtain the like pity for himself in his trouble.

The poor; or rather, *the weak , or sick , or languishing person ,* as may be gathered by comparing this with Psa_41:3, where the mercy which he is supposed to have afforded to him is returned upon himself, and with Psa_41:8.

The Lord will deliver him; either,

1. The poor afflicted man. Though his enemies conclude his case to be desperate, Psa_41:8, God will confute them, and deliver him. Or,
2. The considerer of the poor, of whom also this same pronoun him is confessedly meant, Psa_41:2,3. And so it is a promise of recompence, the wise and merciful man shall find mercy.

Psalms 41:2

Keep him alive, Heb. *quicken him* , i.e. revive and restore him. Either he will preserve him from trouble; or if God see trouble necessary or fit for him, and therefore suffer him to fall into it, he will raise him out of it.

Unto the will of his enemies, i.e. to destruction, which they earnestly desire and endeavour to procure.

Psalms 41:3

Either,

1. Change or overturn his bed of sickness; which is done when a man is restored to health. Or rather,

2. Give him ease and comfort, which sick men receive by the help of those who turn and stir their whole bed, to make it soft and easy for them; for the words foregoing and following these suppose him to be and continue in a state of sickness. Thus the Lord elsewhere compares himself to a servant, waiting upon his people at table, Luk_12:37; as here, to one that makes their bed; metaphors implying strange condescension.

Psalms 41:4

My soul, i.e. either,

1. Myself, to wit, my body. So it is a double synecdoche. And *the soul* is so taken Psa_16:10. Or,

2. My soul properly so called; which is said to be *healed*, when it is pardoned and purged, as 2Ch_30:20 Isa_53:5, compared with 1Pe_2:24 Mat_13:15, compared with Mar_4:12 Jam_5:16. So he strikes at the root of his misery, and prays for the removal of the sin of his soul, as the cause of the disease of his body.

For I have sinned against thee: this may be added, either,

1. As a reason or motive to God; Grant this request, *for I have sinned*, and therefore thy grace in healing me will be more glorious and admirable. Or, for I acknowledge that I have sinned; for the act is oft put for the declaration of it, as Exo_33:13 Psa_51:5. Or,

2. As a reason moving him thus to pray, *I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul*; and great reason I had to say so, for I have sinned against thee.

Psalms 41:5

Speak evil of me; vent their ill wishes against me, in the following words.

Psalms 41:6

To see me; to visit me in my sickness, according to the custom.

He speaketh vanity, or *falsehood* ; pretending sympathy with me, and friendship to me, whilst they plot mischief in their hearts against me.

His heart gathereth iniquity to itself; even when he is with me, and pretends hearty affection to me, his heart cannot forbear its customary practice of meditating and devising mischief against me; for which he watcheth and seeketh for all occasions from my speeches, or carriage, or the circumstances of my condition, which he observes.

He telleth it, partly to delight his companions, and partly to encourage them to and direct them in their malicious designs against me.

Psalms 41:7

Whisper together against me, i.e. secretly defame me, and closely plot against me.

Psalms 41:8

An evil disease, Heb. *a word or thing of Belial* , i.e. either,

1. Some wicked calumny which they had raised, and which stuck close to him. Or,
2. His great wickedness, whereof this is a sign. Or rather,
3. This sore disease or mischief; either sent upon him in way of vengeance for his horrid crimes; or such as God useth to inflict upon the sons of Belial, to show that he is in truth such a one, whatsoever he pretends to the contrary.

He shall rise up no more; seeing God hath begun to punish him, he will make an end of him.

Psalms 41:9

Mine own familiar friend; he means either Ahithophel, or some other perfidious counsellor or courtier, who was a type of Judas, to whom therefore it is applied, Joh_13:18, as David was a type of Christ in being thus betrayed. So these words were literally fulfilled in David, and yet the Holy Ghost, which dictated them, looked further in them, even to Christ and Judas, in whom they received a further and fuller accomplishment.

Hath lifted up his heel; a phrase implying injury, joined with insolency and contempt; taken from an unruly horse, which kicks at him that owns and feeds him.

Psalms 41:10

Be merciful unto me: they censure me grievously, and conclude my case to be desperate; but, Lord, do thou vindicate me, and confute them.

That I may requite them; or, *and I will requite them*, i.e. punish them for their malicious, and perfidious, and wicked practices; which, being now a magistrate, he was obliged to revenge, Rom_13:4; although when he was a private person, he was so far from revenging evil, that he rendered good for it, as we see, Psa_35:12,13, and elsewhere.

Psalms 41:11

Thou favourest me; bearest a good will to me, and art resolved to make good thy promises to me, and wilt plead my righteous cause against them.

Because mine enemy doth not triumph over me; because hitherto thou hast helped and supported me, and prolonged my days to the disappointment of their hopes and designed triumphs. This mercy I thankfully receive as a token of further mercy. Compare 1Sa_17:37 2Co_1:9,10.

Psalms 41:12

In mine integrity; as I have kept my integrity, so thou hast kept me in and with it. Or, *for mine integrity*; because thou hast seen my innocency, notwithstanding all the calumnies of mine enemies; and thou hast promised and usest to afford thy protection to the innocent and upright.

Settest me before thy face for ever; or, *hast confirmed or established me in thy presence* (i.e. either under thine eye and special care; or to minister unto thee, not only in thy temple, but as a king over thy people, or in that land, where thou art peculiarly present) *for ever*; either,

1. Properly; and so this was done to David, either in his own person, partly here, and partly in the next *life*; or in regard of his posterity, in whom the kingdom was established for ever. Or,

2. For my whole life, or for a long time, as that phrase is commonly used.

Psalms 41:13

From everlasting, and to everlasting; or, *from age to age* , as long as the world lasts, and to all eternity. *Amen* signifies a hearty assent and approbation, and withal an earnest desire and confidence, of the thing to which it is annexed. And as the Psalms are divided into five books, so each of them is closed with this word; the first here, the second **Psa 72**, the third **Psa 89**, the fourth **Psa 106**, the last in the end of **Psa 150**: the doubling of the word shows the fervency of his spirit in this work of praising God.

Psalms 42:1 PSALM 42

THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Psalm is uncertain. as not being named in the title. It was composed either,

1. By David, when he was banished from the house of God, either by Saul's tyranny, or by Absalom's rebellion; or,
2. By the sons of Korah, in the time of the captivity of Babylon; whence some read the words of the title of this Psalm, *Maschil of the sons of Korah* . But this is not usual in this book, to name the author of a Psalm so obscurely and indefinitely; for the sons of Korah were a numerous company. and it is not likely that either all or divers of them did join in the inditing of this and the following Psalms so called. Nor is there any one Psalm where the author is named. but he is one certain and single person. And therefore it seems more probable that David penned this, as it is confessed he did some other Psalms which have not his name in the title.

Who were an eminent order of. singers in the house of God; of whom see 1Ch_6:33 **9:19 26:1**.

The psalmist being deprived of God's service, ardently desires to be in his house again, Psa_42:1-4; rouseth up his soul unto a firm hope and confidence in God, Psa_42:5-9. His enemies reproach him, Psa_42:10. His faith in God, Psa_42:11.

The hart is naturally hot and thirsty. And this thirst is increased, partly by its dwelling in desert and dry places, to which it retireth for fear of men and wild beasts; and partly by its long and violent running, when it is pursued by the hunters; and some add, by eating of serpents.

After thee; after the enjoyment of thee in thy sanctuary, as it appears from Psa_42:4.

Psalms 42:2

Thirst is more vehement than hunger, and more impatient of dissatisfaction.

For the living God: this he mentions as a just cause of his thirst. He did not thirst after vain, useless idols, but after the only true and living God, who was

his life, and the length of his days, as is said, Deu_30:20, and without whose presence and favour David accounted himself for a dead and lost man, Psa_143:7.

Appear before God; in the place of his special presence and public worship. See Exo_23:15 **25:30**. What is called before the Lord, 1Ch_13:10, is before or with the ark, 2Sa_6:7.

Psalms 42:3

My tears have been my meat; which notes both the great abundance and constant course of his tears, and the secret satisfaction and ease which he found in giving vent to his passion this way. Possibly his tears and grief took away his appetite, and so were to him instead of food.

Where is thy God, of whom thou hast so often boasted, as of one so able and ready to help all that trust in him and call upon him, and particularly as one engaged to time by many great and special promises? He is gone and departed from thee, and no where to be found of thee. He is either unable or unwilling to help thee, or regardless of thee.

Psalms 42:4

These things; either,

1. Which follow, to wit, my former freedom. Or rather,

2. Last mentioned, my banishment from God's presence, and mine enemies' scoffs and triumphs upon that occasion.

I pour out my soul: this phrase notes either,

1. His fervent prayer, as it is taken, 1Sa_1:15 Psa_62:8. Or,

2. His bitter sorrows, whereby his very heart was almost melted or dissolved, and his spirits spent, and he was ready to faint away; as it is used Job_30:16 Lam_2:12. Compare Psa_22:14. Or rather,

3. Both together; that he breathed out his sorrows and sad complaints unto God by fervent prayers. *In me* , i.e. within my own breast, between God and my own soul; not openly, lest mine enemies should turn it into matter of rejoicing and insulting over me.

I had gone, to wit, in the way to Jerusalem. And my sorrow was increased by the remembrance of my former enjoyments. Compare Lam_1:7.

With the multitude; according to the custom, and in the company of Israelites, who went thither in great numbers. Compare Psa_84:6,7.

I went with them; or, *I led them* , encouraging them by my presence and forwardness.

That kept holyday; or, *that kept the feast* , to wit, the three solemn festival solemnities, which they kept holy unto the Lord.

Psalms 42:5

Why art thou cast down with excessive sorrow and despair?

For the help of his countenance, Heb. *for the salvations of his face* , i.e. for those supports, deliverances, and comforts which I doubt not I shall ere long enjoy, both in his presence and sanctuary, to which he will restore me, and from his presence, and the light of his countenance, which he will graciously afford to me.

Psalms 42:6

That I may revive my drooping spirits, I will consider thy infinite mercy, and power, and faithfulness, and thy gracious presence in

the sanctuary, from whence thou dost hear and answer all those that call upon thee, in all the parts of the land.

From the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar, i.e. from all the places and parts of the land to which I shall be driven; whether from the parts about or beyond Jordan on the east: or, the *Hermonim* , i.e. either the people inhabiting Hermon; or the mountain of Hermon, which was in the northern parts, Num_34:7 Deu_3:8 Psa_89:12, here called *Hermonim* , in the plural number, because of its great largeness, and many tops and parts of it, which are called by several names: or,

the hill Mizar; a hill so called, though not mentioned elsewhere, which is supposed to have been in the southern parts of the land; but peradventure it was in the east and beyond Jordan; and David might mention these places, because when he was banished by Absalom, he had been successively at all of them, and in all of them had remembered God, and directed his prayer to him.

Psalms 42:7

Deep calleth unto deep, i.e. one affliction comes immediately after another, as if it were called for and invited by the former; which he expresseth by a metaphor taken either,

1. From the old flood, when *the upper deep* , or *abyss of waters* , (in the clouds,) called *the lower deep* , or *abyss of waters in the sea and rivers* , that both might unite their forces together to drown the world. And thus the Chaldee understands it. Or,

2. From the sea, when its waves rage, and it is full of deep furrows, into which ships and passengers sink down, and then rise and sink again, successively and continually. But these tempests are caused in the sea by God's mighty winds, rather than by his water-spouts. Or,

3. From violent and successive showers of rain; which frequently come down from heaven, as it were, at the noise or call of God's *water-spouts* , to wit, the clouds; which by their rattling noises and terrible thunders do in a manner invite and call forth the showers which are contained in their bowels.

All thy waves and thy billows; thou hast sent one sharp trial or affliction upon me after another.

Are gone over me, i.e. are gone over my head, as this same verb is used, Psa_38:4. They do not lightly sprinkle me, but almost overwhelm me.

Psalms 42:8

Will command i.e. will effectually procure or confer upon me, as this verb is used, Lev_25:21 Psa_7:6, &c. The verb is future, but some render it by the time past,

the Lord hath commanded; making this rehearsal of his former experiences of God's goodness his argument to support himself, and to prevail with God in prayer; which may seem to suit best with the foregoing and following verses. But we must remember that David's hopes and fears were strangely mixed, and his expressions of them are commonly interwoven in the same Psalm, and sometimes in one and the same verse, as it is here, Psa_42:5,11. And therefore there is no necessity of departing from the proper signification of the verb.

His loving-kindness, i.e. his blessings, the effects of his loving-kindness, which God is oft said to command, as Deu_28:8 Psa_133:3.

And in the night; both day and night, i.e. continually.

His song shall be with me, i.e. I shall have constant matter of singing and praising God for his loving-kindness.

My prayer shall be unto the God; and therefore I will boldly and believingly direct my prayers to him, of whose readiness to hear and help me I have had such ample experience.

The God of my life; the giver and preserver of my life from time to time.

Psalms 42:9

I will say unto God; I will expostulate the case with him.

My rock; who hath formerly been a sure refuge to me.

Why hast thou forgotten me? why dost thou now seem quite to forget and neglect me? Why go I mourning? why dost thou leave me in this mournful state, and not succour me speedily?

Psalms 42:10

In my bones, or *in my body* , the bones being oft put for the *body* , whereof they are a very considerable part. Or, as a sword, which pierceth and cutteth my flesh even to the bones, and cutteth or breaketh the very bones also. So painful and vexatious are their reproaches.

Where is thy God? of which See Poole "Psa_42:3".

Psalms 42:11

The health of my countenance, Heb. *the salvations of my face* i.e. either,

1. Which are present and manifest, being before my face. Or,
2. Which will make my face to shine, and my countenance cheerful, which supposeth the gladness of the heart, and the bettering of his condition. Or,
3. Of his person; *as the face* sometimes signifies, as 2Sa_17:11 Isa_3:15. As also the Greek word signifying *face* , is very frequently put for the person, whereof the face is an eminent part. *My God* : as he formerly was, so he still is, and ever will be, and will suddenly show himself to be, my God, although for a season he may hide his face, or withdraw his help from me.

Psalms 43:1 PSALM 43

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been composed by the same author, and upon the same occasion with the former.

David, praying against his fierce and crafty enemies, Psa_43:1; and to be restored to the temple, Psa_43:2,3; promiseth to serve God joyfully, Psa_43:4. He encourageth his soul to trust in God, Psa_43:5.

Judge me; or, *judge or give sentence* for me, as this phrase is used, Psa_26:1, and elsewhere.

Ungodly, or *unmerciful* , i.e. cruel or inhuman; for it is a meiosis. Nation; so he calls the company of his enemies for their great numbers, and because they were the far greatest part, and almost the whole body of the nation.

Deceitful and unjust; who covereth his wicked designs with fair and false pretences; which sort of men are hateful to thee, and to all good men.

Man; either Saul; or rather, Ahithophel or Absalom. For he speaks of *the holy hill* of Zion, Psa_43:3, which was not so till after Saul's time. Or *man* may be put collectively for the men of that time.

Psalms 43:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 43:3

Send out, i.e. actually impart and discover them; for at present thou seemest to conceal and withhold them from me.

Thy light and thy truth, i.e. thy favour, or the light of thy countenance, and the truth of thy promises made to me; as God's mercy and truth oft go together, as 2Sa_15:20 Psa_61:7 Psa_89:14, &c. Or this may be a figure called *hendiaduo*, whereby *light and truth* is put either for *the light of God's truth*; or rather, for true light, the illumination of God's Spirit, and the direction of providence, his gracious whereby he might be led (as it follows) in the right way, which would bring him to God's holy hill.

Unto thy holy hill, to wit, of Zion, the place of God's presence and worship.

To thy tabernacles, i.e. tabernacle; which he calls *tabernacles*, either,

1. Because there were now two tabernacles, one at Zion, where the ark was; and another at Gibeon, 1Ch_16:37,**39**. Although he here seems to speak but of one of them, even of that which was upon God's holy hill. Or,

2. Because of the several parts of it, the most holy, and the holy place, and the church. These indeed were in that of Gibeon, but not in that of Zion. Or rather,

3. By a mere enallage of the number, the plural for the singular; which is frequent, as in other words, so in those which belong to this matter, as *tabernacles*, Psa_46:4, and *sanctuaries*,

Lev_26:31 Psa_73:17, &c.; Psa_74:7 Jer_51:51. Nay, the most holy place, though but one simple part, is by the Greeks called *holies* . So in other authors, we read the *rivers of Nilus* , of that one river; and *right hands* , for one right hand; and many like phrases.

Psalms 43:4

Then will I go unto the altar of God, to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving for my deliverance.

My exceeding joy; the principal author and matter of all my joy and comfort.

Psalms 43:5

No notes from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 44:1 PSALM 44

THE ARGUMENT

There is no certainty, either concerning the author or the particular occasion of this Psalm. This is evident, that it was composed with respect unto the calamitous condition of the church and people of Israel, whom it supposeth to be in a state of captivity and persecution. But whether it was made by David, who foresaw and foretold by the Spirit of God their future captivity, and framed this for their use in that estate, or by some other holy man of God, when they were actually in this condition, is not determined, nor necessary to know for the understanding of it.

The church commemorates past mercies, Psa_44:1,2. The arm of God, not the sword of Israel, put them in possession of the land, Psa_44:3. Their trust is in God, not in their bow, Psa_44:4-8. They complain of divers troubles, Psa_44:9-16. They profess their integrity, Psa_44:17-22. A fervent prayer for help, Psa_44:23-26.

What work thou didst in their days: they allege their former experience, as encouragements to their faith, and motives to God to continue to be gracious to them.

Psalms 44:2

The heathen; the Canaanites.

Plantedst them, to wit, our fathers, easily understood both from the matter, and from Psa_44:1, where they are expressed; the pronoun being referred unto the remoter antecedent, as it is Gen_10:12 **19:13** Psa_18:5, and oft elsewhere.

Cast them out: so *them* must be *the people*, or heathens. But because the comparing of this branch of the verse with the former, *plantedst them*, to which this answers, and with the following *they*, makes it more than probable that this *them* belongs to the fathers, this is to be otherwise rendered; either,

1. Thus, *send them out*, to wit, free or manumitted out of Egypt, of which this same verb is used, Exo_5:1 **12:33**. And then the foregoing *people* are the Egyptians, not the Canaanites; which yet seems not to agree with the foregoing and following passages both which speak of the Canaanites only; nor with the order of the words in this verse, it being improper to mention their coming out of Egypt, after their being planted in Canaan. Or rather,

2. Thus, *make them send or shoot forth*, to wit, *branches*, as it is more fully expressed, Psa_80:11 Eze_17:6, where this verb is used. And this most naturally and properly follows upon and after their planting mentioned in the former clause.

Psalms 44:3

By their own sword, i.e. by their arms or valour.

The light of thy countenance, i.e. thy favour, as the next words explain it; thy gracious and glorious presence, which went along with us.

Psalms 44:4

My King; Jacob's or Israel's King, in a peculiar manner. The whole people speak like one man, as being united together in one body.

Command, i.e. effectually procure by thy commanding word.

Psalms 44:5

Push down, Heb. smite with the horn, i.e. subdue and destroy. The phrase is taken from Deu_33:17, and is borrowed from horned beasts. Compare 1Ki_22:11.

Through thy name, i.e. by the help of thy power.

Psalms 44:6

But I will trust in thee only, as the next verse implies; and therefore do not frustrate my hope and confidence fixed upon thee.

Psalms 44:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 44:8

In God we boast, as in a most sure rock, and our only refuge.

Psalms 44:9

Thou hast cast us off; but now thy countenance and course is quite changed to us.

Put us to shame; made us ashamed of our boasting, and trust in thee, which we have oft professed to the face of our enemies.

Goest not forth with our armies, to lead them, and fight for them, as this phrase signifies, Jud_4:14 1Sa_8:20. He seems to allude to God's marching with and before the Israelites in the wilderness, and afterwards, as occasion was offered. Compare Psa_68:7.

Psalms 44:10

Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy, by withdrawing thy help and our courage, according to thy threatenings, Lev_26:36.

Spoil for themselves, i.e. take away our estates to their own use, and for their only benefit, not in compliance with thy will, which was to punish us for our sins, nor for thy service and glory. They minded nothing but their own advantage.

Psalms 44:11

Those of us who were not slain are carried into captivity, and dispersed in several places.

Psalms 44:12

For nought; for a thing of nought. Or, *without money* , and *without price* , as it is said, Isa_55:1; for a very small, or for no price; for a pair of shoes, as we read, Amo_2:6.

Dost not increase thy wealth by their price; thou hast not advanced thy honour and service thereby; for thy enemies do not serve thee more and better than thy people, nor yet so much.

Psalms 44:13

They contemn our persons, and sport themselves in our miseries.

Psalms 44:14

A by-word, or *a proverb* . They used to say proverbially, *More despicable or miserable than an Israelite* .

A shaking of the head; a gesture of scorn and insultation. See Poole "Psa_22:7".

Psalms 44:15

Before me; before the eyes of my mind and body too. They vilify me, not only behind my back, but even before my face.

The shame of my face hath covered me, i.e. I am filled with shame of my face on every side, being ashamed to show my face in any place or company.

Psalms 44:16

That reproacheth and blasphemeth; that doth not only reproach me, which I could better bear; but blaspheme God and our religion for our sakes, which is intolerable to me.

The enemy and avenger; who executeth both God's and his own vengeance upon me, persecuting me with a despitiful hatred, and with great cruelty.

Psalms 44:17

Although we cannot excuse ourselves from many other sins for which thou hast justly punished us, yet this we must say for ourselves, that through thy grace we have kept ourselves from apostacy and idolatry, notwithstanding all the examples and provocations, rewards proposed and promised, or punishments threatened to induce us thereunto; which we hope thou wilt graciously consider, and not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear.

Psalms 44:18

Is not turned back, to wit, from thee, or thy worship and service, unto idols, as it follows, Psa_44:20.

Neither have our steps declined from thy way: because it is easy and ordinary falsely to pretend sincerity of heart, which men cannot discern nor confute, they prove it from the unblamableness of their lives and actions.

Psalms 44:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 44:20

In the place : or rather *into* , as others render it; which seems much more emphatical. And so this verb may be rendered, *thou hast humbled* , or *brought us down* , as all the ancients rendered it. Or this is a pregnant verb, as they call them, or one verb put for two; of which there are many instances, as hath been showed. So it may be rendered, *thou hast sore broken us* , casting us *into* ; or, *thou hast by sore breaking brought us into* . By inflicting upon us one breach after another, thou hast at last brought us to this pass. *The place of dragons* ; which signifies a place extremely desolate, such as dragons love, Isa_13:21, **22 34:13 35:7**, and therefore full of horror, and danger, and mischief. Thou hast thrown us among people as fierce and: cruel as dragons. *With the shadow of death* , i.e. with deadly horrors and miseries. **See Poole "Job_3:5"; See Poole "Psa_23:4"**.

The name of God, i.e. either God himself; or his worship and service; which we have denied that we have done, Psa_44:17.

Stretched out our hands, in way of prayer or adoration, whereof this is a gesture, Exo_9:29 1Ki_8:22 Psa_143:6.

Psalms 44:21

We appeal to the heart-searching God, concerning the sincerity of this profession of ours.

Psalms 44:22

Yea; or, *but* . We do not suffer for our apostacy, but because we will not apostatize from thee.

For thy sake; because we are thy people, and continue constantly and resolutely in the profession and practice of thy worship, which they abhor, and from which they seek to draw or drive us.

Psalms 44:23

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 44:24

Hidest thou thy face, i.e. dost not regard our miseries, nor affordest us any pity or help.

Forgettest our affliction and our oppression, when we have not forgotten thee. This seems not well to become thy faithfulness and goodness.

Psalms 44:25

Our soul, i.e. either our lives or persons; or rather bodies, as it is explained in the next clause, and as the soul is oft taken by a synecdoche, as Num_11:6 Psa_16:10 **106:15**, &c.

To the dust; either to the ground, where we lie prostrate at our enemies' feet, or to the grave.

Our belly cleaveth unto the earth; we are not only thrown down to the earth, but we lie there like dead carcasses fixed to it, without any ability or hope of rising again.

Psalms 44:26

We mentioned our sincerity and constancy in thy worship only as an argument to move thee to pity, and not as a ground of our trust and confidence, or as if we merited deliverance by it; but that we expect and implore only upon the account of thine own free and rich mercy.

Psalms 45:1 PSALM 45

THE ARGUMENT

The subject matter of this Psalm is by the consent both of Jewish and Christian, ancient and modern, interpreters agreed to be the Messiah, and his marriage with the church of God; of which it treats either,

1. Remotely, under the type of Solomon and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, of which it is to be primarily and literally understood, and then immediately and ultimately of Christ. Or rather,

2. Immediately and directly; although the words be so ordered, that they carry a manifest allusion either to that or some other

royal marriage; which seems more than probable from the following arguments:

1. From the great congruity of the matter and style of this Psalm with that of the book of Canticles; whereof this seems to be a kind of abridgement.
2. From the magnificent preface, Psa_45:1, which seems too sublime and spiritual for such carnal and earthly matters.
3. And especially from the matter of the Psalm. For there are many things which do not agree to Solomon; such as the warlike posture and exploits, Psa_45:3-5, and the title of God, Psa_45:6, which is appropriated to Christ, and affirmed to be incommunicable to any mere creature, Heb_1:8. compared with Psa_45:6, and that numerous posterity, and the amplitude of their dominion, Psa_45:16, and divers other passages, as we shall see in the progress.

To the chief musician upon Shoshannim; which title is also prefixed to **Psa 119**, and with some small addition, **Psa 130**, and with a little variation, **Psa 60**. It seems to be the name of a song or tune, or instrument of music. It properly signifies lilies or roses; which some apply to the subject of the Psalm, because those flowers were used in garlands, or otherwise in nuptial solemnities, and because Christ calls himself the lily and the rose, Son_2:1.

A Song of loves, to wit, of Christ and his church. Or, of the beloved ones, to wit, the virgins, who waited upon the bride, as some men did upon the bridegroom, who thence were called his friends, Joh_3:29; in whose name and person this Psalm may seem to be uttered.

The psalmist singeth of the beauty of Christ above that of the children of men, Psa_45:1,2; of his terribleness and conquest over his enemies, Psa_45:3-5; of his everlasting throne, and unction above his fellows, Psa_45:6-9. The church is invited to forsake her father's house, that Christ might delight in her, Psa_45:10-12. Her glory and excellency by his graces, which shall be remembered and praised for ever, Psa_45:13-17.

My heart; I am about to utter not vain, or rash, or foolish, or false words, but such as proceed from my very heart, and most serious thoughts, and cordial affections.

Is inditing, Heb. *boileth* , or *bubbleth up* , like water in a pot over the fire. This phrase notes that the workings of his heart in this matter were frequent and abundant, fervent and vehement, free and cheerful, and withal kindled by God's grace, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

A good matter; either,

1. Pleasant or delightful, and fit for the nuptial solemnity here expressed; as a feast day is sometimes called a *good day* . Or,
2. Excellent, as this word is oft used, as Num_24:5 Deu_8:12; or, holy and spiritual, as it is most commonly used. This is no vain, or carnal, or wanton love song, but sublime and heavenly, and full of majesty, as is manifest from the body of this Psalm.

Which I have made; which I by Divine inspiration have composed.

Touching the king; or rather, *to the king* ; for to him he addresseth his speech in the following verses; and this Hebrew prefix *lamed* generally signifies *to* , though sometimes it be rendered *of* , or *concerning* . *The pen* ; or, *as the pen* ; whereby he intimates that he was only the pen or instrument in uttering this song, and that it had another and a higher original, to wit, the Spirit of God, by whose hand this pen was guided and managed.

Of a ready writer; whereby he understands either,

1. God's Spirit, who writ or spoke this by the pen or mouth of the psalmist; or,
2. Himself; whom he so calls, not out of vain ostentation, or self-commendation, but to teach us that this song was not the effect of his own deep and serious study, but did freely flow into him by Divine inspiration, and did as freely and readily flow from him.

Psalms 45:2

Fairer, or, *more beautiful* , i.e. lovely and amiable. He speaks not here so much of this outward beauty, which, though it be an ornament both to a bridegroom and to a king, yet is not very

considerable in either, nor is much admired or applauded by wise men, as of the inward and glorious endowments of his mind or soul, such as wisdom, and righteousness, and meekness, &c., as the particulars of this beauty are declared, Psa_45:4,7. *Than the children of men* ; than all other men: which is most true of Christ, but not of Solomon; whom many have excelled, if not in wisdom, yet in holiness and righteousness, which is the chief part of this beauty, and most celebrated in this Psalm.

Grace is poured into thy lips; God hath plentifully poured into thy mind and tongue the gift of speaking with admirable grace, i.e. most wisely and eloquently, and therefore most acceptably, so as to find grace with and work grace in thy hearers. This was in the same sort true of Solomon, but far more eminently and effectually in Christ; of which see Isa_50:4 Luk_4:22 Joh_7:46. The former clause noted his inward perfections, and this signifies his ability and readiness to communicate them to others.

Therefore; which notes not the meritorious cause, for that beauty and grace now mentioned are declared to be the free gifts of God, and were the effects, and not the causes, of God's blessing him; but rather the final cause, or the end for which God endowed him with those excellent qualifications; and so the sense of the place is, Because God hath so eminently adorned and qualified thee for rule, therefore he hath trusted and blessed thee with an everlasting kingdom. Or, *because* , as this particule is used, Gen_38:26 Psa_42:6, and elsewhere. And so God's blessing him with such solid and everlasting blessings, is noted as the cause of this singular beauty and grace here expressed.

Psalms 45:3

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh; either,

1. As an ensign of royal majesty. But that is usually and much better expressed in Scripture *by putting a crown upon his head* . Or rather,

2. As an instrument for war and battle, to smite his enemies, as it is declared, Psa_45:4,5. And the *sword* is here put synecdochically for all his arms, as it is in many other places, as appears from Psa_45:5, where we read also of his arrows. And this sword of the Messiah is nothing else but the word of God

coming out of his mouth; which is fitly compared to a sword, as may appear from Isa_49:2 Eph_6:17 Heb_4:12 Rev_1:16, which is elsewhere called *the rod of his mouth* , Isa_11:4, and *the rod of his power* , Psa_110:2.

With thy glory and thy majesty; or, which is thy glory and thy majesty; or, magnificence or beauty; for these words are joined with the sword, by way of apposition; which sword or word is the great instrument of maintaining and propagating thy honour, and glory, and kingdom.

Psalms 45:4

In thy majesty; being thus gloriously or magnificently girt and armed. *Ride prosperously* ; march on speedily (which is signified by riding) and successfully against thine enemies, i.e. thou shalt do so, as it is in the last clause,

shall teach thee. So imperatives are oft put for futures, and predictions are expressed in the form of commands or exhortations.

Because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; or, *because of thy truth* , &c., i.e. because thou art worthy of this dominion and success; for thou neither didst obtain nor wilt manage thy kingdom by deceit or violence and unrighteousness, as the princes of the earth frequently do, but with truth and faithfulness, with meekness and gentleness towards thy people, and to all that shall submit to thee; with impartial justice and equity, whereby thy throne will be established, Pro_16:12 **20:28**. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, word for word, *upon the word of truth* , &c.; which may seem best to suit with the foregoing words, which according to the Hebrew are, *prosper thou, ride thou* , and then immediately follows, *upon the Word of truth* , &c., to wit, the gospel; which is oft called truth, as Joh_8:32 Col_1:5, &c., and *the word of truth* , Eph_1:13; and may no less truly be called the word of meekness, because it is not delivered with terror, as the law was at Sinai, but meekly and sweetly by Christ, and by his ministers, Mat_21:5 2Ti_2:25; and *the word of righteousness* , because it brings in everlasting righteousness, Dan_9:24, and strongly obligeth and exciteth all men to the practice of righteousness and holiness. And so the gospel is compared to a horse or chariot, upon which Christ

is said to ride, when the gospel is preached, and carried about from place to place, Rev_19:11. And this may be here added, to show the great difference between the kingdoms of the world, that are managed with outward pomp and glory, and the kingdom of Christ, which is a spiritual kingdom, and, like a spouse, Psa_45:13, all glorious within, as consisting in spiritual virtues and graces, truth, meekness, and righteousness. Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things, i.e. thou shalt do great and glorious exploits, which shall be grievous and terrible to thine enemies, as the next verse explains it, and this not by great forces, and the assistance of others, but by thine own single power; compare Isa_63:3; which doth by no means agree to Solomon, who was a man of peace, and not engaged in any martial actions against his enemies; and if he had done any thing considerable in that kind, he could not do it by his own right hand, but by the help of his soldiers. But this doth excellently agree to the Messias, and to him only.

Object. The things which were done by the Messias at his first coming were rather comfortable than terrible.

Ans. They were indeed comfortable to all good men, but withal they were terrible to the ungodly, and particularly to the body of the Jewish nation, to whom Christ was a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, and an occasion of their utter destruction. And upon that and other accounts, not only Christ's second, but even his first coming, is represented as dreadful, as Joe_2:30 Mal_3:2, and elsewhere. For the phrase, *thy right hand shall teach thee*, it is not to be taken properly, for so he taught his hand, and not his hand him; but the meaning is, that his hand should show him, i.e. discover and work before him; for verbal words are oft understood really; as *calling* is put for *being*, as Isa_1:26 **9:6**; so teaching or showing is put for doing, as Psa_16:11 **60:3**.

Psalms 45:5

Thine arrows; the same thing for substance with *the sword*, Psa_45:3, both noting the instruments by which he conquers his enemies; which is no other than his word, which is sharp and powerful, and pierceth the hearts of men, Heb_4:12; which also first wounds sinners, and then heals them; and which is *for the fall as well as for the rising of many*, Luk_2:34, and *for judgment as*

well as for mercy, Joh_9:39; to some a savour of death, and to others a savour of life, 2Co_2:16; and therefore is fitly compared to arrows; which title is sometimes given to words, as Psa_64:3, and frequently to God's plagues or judgments, Deu_32:23 Psa_18:14 **64:7**, such as the word becomes to ungodly men by their own fault. And these metaphorical weapons are oft ascribed to Christ, who hath a bow, Rev_6:2, and *weapons of warfare* , 2Co_10:4, and whose mouth God is said to *make a sword* and an arrow, Isa_49:2.

Of the king's enemies, i.e. of thine enemies; the third person being put for the second, as is usual in prophetic writings; which here may seem to have some emphasis, as describing the persons against whom he shot his arrows, and the reason why he did so, because they were the enemies of his kingdom, and *would not have him to reign over them* , Luk_19:27.

The people fall under thee; either as slain by thine arrows; or as prostrate at thy feet, after the manner of conquered persons, Psa_18:38 **20:8**. According to this and many other translations the words are transplac'd, which in the Hebrew lie thus, *Thine arrows are sharp* , whereby *the people do fall under thee, in the heart* (i. e. in the midst, which is oft called the heart, as Exo_15:8 Deu_4:11. And so it may be here; for the army, as such, hath no heart, properly so called. And so this is fitly alleged, as a proof of the sharpness and force of his arrows, that they not only wound those who march in the front, but even those who are in the midst of the army, where they may seem secure, and out of-their reach) *of the king 's enemies* . But the middle words may be, and are by many, included within a parenthesis, and so they may agree with our translation thus, *Thine arrows are sharp* (for *the people fall under thee* , which is an evidence of their sharpness) *in the heart* (or, *against the heart* ; or, *piercing into the heart* ; which is an easy and usual ellipsis) of the king's enemies.

Psalms 45:6

O God: it is most evident that the speech is still continued to the same person, whom he calls *King* , Psa_45:1,**11**, and here

God; which change of the title was very expedient, and in some sort necessary, to give us a true understanding of this Psalm, and

to assure us that he doth not speak of Solomon, (to whom neither these, nor the foregoing, nor the following words agree, because his reign was peaceable and short, and stained with many and great iniquities,) but a far greater King, even of the Messias, who is not only a man, but also *the mighty God*, as he is called, Isa_9:6, and as the apostle solidly proves from this place, Heb_1:8. For though the name of *Elohim*, or *God*, be sometimes given in Scripture to some creatures, yet in those cases it is always clogged with some diminishing expression, signifying that they are only made or called gods, and that only for a certain time and purpose, as is manifest from Exo_4:16 **7:1** Psa_82:6; and it is no where put simply and absolutely for any person, but him, who is *God blessed for ever*, Rom_9:5. *Is for ever and ever*, to wit, properly and in thine own person, in which as he lives for ever, so he must necessarily reign for ever; whereas David, whose throne is said to be established for ever, 2Sa_7:16, was a mortal man, and therefore that promise was not intended of, nor could be fulfilled in, his person, without including his posterity. And as he here gives to the Messias the name of *God*, which was never given to David nor Solomon, so he ascribes an everlasting kingdom to him in such a sense as it was never given to them. So Dan_2:44 **7:14**.

The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre; it is not strange that thy throne is not liable to the same uncertainties and casualties with the thrones of earthly princes, because their sceptres are commonly managed with great injustice and manifold iniquities, which lay the foundation of their overthrow; whereas thou rulest with exact righteousness and equity, whereby thy throne is established, Pro_16:12.

Psalms 45:7

Thou dost not only do that which is good, and avoid that which is evil; which even bad princes and men may do, and sometimes actually do, for politic or prudential reasons; but thou dost this sincerely, and from an inward principle, even from a true love to God, and goodness, and from an implacable hatred against all wickedness. *Therefore*; so this particle is commonly used. And so it denoteth, either,

1. The reward of Christ's righteous administration of his kingdom. So the sense is, Because thou hast given so many and great proofs

of thy love to righteousness, and of thy hatred of sin, and that not only by the constant course of thy life, but also by thy death and passion, therefore God hath raised and exalted thee far above all men and angels, to a state of joy and endless glory at his right hand; which is fitly expressed by the

oil of gladness. For *anointing* doth not always signify the conferring of inward gifts or endowments, but sometimes only notes the designation or inauguration of a person to some high dignity or employment, as Eze_28:14, and elsewhere. Or,

2. The final cause or end of Christ's unction. So the sense is, To that end, i.e. that thou mightest love righteousness, and hate wickedness, and govern thyself and thy kingdom accordingly, God *hath anointed thee* , &c., i.e. hath endowed thee with all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, Act_10:38, in an eminent and peculiar manner, to the comfort and refreshment of thine own and all thy people's hearts; and hath solemnly called thee to be the Priest and Prophet and King of all his people. But the former sense seems to be the truest, and is for substance the same thing which is said in other words, Phi_2:8-10.

God, thy God, according to thy human nature, Joh_20:17, though in respect of thy Divine nature thou art his *fellow* , Zec_13:7, and his *equal* , Phil. it. 6, and one with him, Joh_10:30. *The oil of gladness* ; so called here, as also Isa_61:3; partly because it not only makes the countenance fresh and pleasant, Psa_104:15, but also *rejoiceth the heart* , Pro_27:9; and partly because it was a token of gladness, and used in feasts and other solemn occasions of rejoicing; of which see Psa_23:5 Dan_10:3 Amo_6:6.

Above thy fellows, i.e. above all them who partake with thee in this unction; either,

1. Above all that ever were anointed for priests, or prophets, or kings. Or,

2. Above all believers, who also have received this same unction, 1Jo_2:20,27, and are made *priests and kings unto God* , Rev_1:6.

Psalms 45:8

With myrrh, and aloes, and cassia they used to perfume their garments: see Gen_27:27. This may denote those glorious and

sweet-smelling virtues, which as they were treasured up inwardly in Christ's heart, so did they manifest themselves outwardly and visibly, and give forth a grateful smell in the whole course of his life and actions; his doctrine also was a sweet savour unto God and men, 2Co_2:14,15.

Out of the ivory palaces; which may be referred, either,

1. To the garments, which were usually kept in, and now upon this extraordinary solemnity were brought out of, palaces, or houses, or wardrobes of ivory; so called here, as also Amo_3:15, not because they were wholly made of ivory, but because they were adorned or covered here and there with it. Or rather,

2. To the king himself, who is here supposed to reside in his ivory palaces; and his garments are so fragrant, that they do not only perfume the whole palaces in which he is, but the sweet savour thereof is perceived by those that pass by them, or are at some distance from them; all which is poetically said, and with a manifest allusion to Solomon's glorious garments and palaces. By these *ivory palaces* he may mean either,

1. His human nature, in which Christ *dwelt, as in a tabernacle* , as the Greek word signifies, Joh_1:14; in which all these fragrant virtues were, and from whence they were diffused every where. Indeed the body is called *a temple* , Joh_2:19, and a *house* or *tabernacle* , 2Co_5:1,2, and so it might be called *a palace* . But why it should be called palaces, and that of ivory, seems not so plain. Or rather,

2. Those glorious and heavenly mansions, Joh_14:2, which may not unfitly be called *ivory palaces* , as elsewhere in the same figurative manner they are said to be made of or adorned with *gold and precious stones* , Rev_21:1 **8,19**; from which mansions Christ came into the world, Joh_3:13, and into which Christ went, and where he settled his abode, after he went out of the world, Joh_13:1 Act_1:11, and from whence Christ poured forth all the fragrant gifts and graces of his Spirit into the world and church, Act_2:33. Although there is no necessity to strain every particular circumstance in such poetical descriptions, nor to find out some particular thing in Christ to which it agrees; for some expressions may be used only as ornaments in such cases, as they are in

parables; and it may suffice to know and say, that the glories and excellencies of the King Christ are described by such things in which earthly potentates do place their glory.

Whereby; or, *from which* ; either,

1. From which place or palaces. Or rather,

2. From which thing, i.e. from the sweet smell of thy garments out of those ivory palaces, or from the effusion of the gifts and graces of thy Spirit from thy Father's right hand in heaven; which as it is a great blessing and comfort to those who receive them, so doth it rejoice the heart of Christ, both as it is a demonstration of his own power and glory, and as it is the happy instrument of doing much good in the world, and of bringing souls to God, which is Christ's great work and delight.

They have made thee glad, i.e. thou art made glad; such phrases being oft used indefinitely and impersonally, as Luk_15:32, and in many other places.

Psalms 45:9

Among thy honourable women, i.e. amongst them that attend upon thy spouse, as the manner was in nuptial solemnities; as men attended upon the bridegroom, whence they were called *friends* , Joh_3:29. In reference to Christ, as the spouse or queen is the church in general, so these honourable women are particular believers, who are daily added to the church, Act_2:47, and submit themselves to it. And although the church is made up of particular believers, yet she is distinguished from them, for the decency of the parable, as the whole is oft distinguished by our minds from the parts of which it consists, and as the daughters of Jerusalem are distinguished from the spouse in the book of the Canticles, though the spouse be wholly made up of them. And these believers may be said to be *kings' daughters* , either because amongst others many persons of royal or princely races did embrace the faith, as was prophesied of them, Isa_49:7 **60:10,11**, &c., or because they are in a spiritual sense kings unto God, Rev_1:6.

Upon thy right hand; the most honourable place next to the king's. See 1Ki_2:9 Mat_26:64. *Did stand* ; which is the posture of a servant; to show that as she is a queen, she is also his subject

to serve and obey him. Or, *is placed* , or *seated* ; which seems more agreeable to the person of a queen, 1Ki_2:19, and of a spouse at the nuptial solemnity.

In gold of Ophir; clothed in the richest garments made of the choicest gold; by which he designs the graces wherewith the church is accomplished.

Psalms 45:10

Hearken: these words are spoken, either,

1. In the person of the attendants upon the bride or bridegroom.
Or,
2. Of the bridegroom. Or rather,
3. By the prophet himself; who having hitherto spoken to the bridegroom, or king, now addresseth his speech to the bride, or queen.

O daughter: so he calls her, partly in token of his respect and affection to her, and partly because she is supposed to be young and beautiful; and therefore the prophet speaks like an eider and graver person, and as her spiritual father and counsellor.

Consider, and incline thine ear: he useth several words, signifying the same thing, to show his serious and vehement desire of her good, and the great importance and difficulty of practicing the following counsel.

Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; not simply, but comparatively, so far as they oppose or hinder the discharge of thy duty to thy husband; or so far as they are corrupted in doctrine, or worship, or practice. He alludes to the law of matrimony, Gen_2:24, and to what Solomon did say, or should have said, to Pharaoh's daughter, to wean her from the idolatry and other vices of her father's house. But this, as well as the rest of the Psalm, respects Christ, and is a seasonable and necessary advice and command to all persons that desire to come to Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, that they would cast off all their inveterate errors and prejudices, all those superstitious, or idolatrous, or wicked opinions or practices, which they had received by long and ancient, and therefore venerable, tradition from their fathers, and entirely give up themselves to Christ to be

instructed by him, and to receive his doctrine, though it would seem new to them. And by these words he seems to intimate, and tacitly to foretell, that not only the superstitious inventions and traditions of men, but even the legal worship appointed by Moses, and delivered to them from their parents successively for many generations, should be relinquished by the believing Jews, and abolished by Christ's coming.

Psalms 45:11

So doing thou shalt be amiable and acceptable to thy Husband; which will abundantly recompense thee for the loss of thy father's house.

He is thy Lord; as he is thy Husband, and also as he is thy King and God, as he was called, Psa_45:6. And this is added as a reason, not of the last words, why the King would desire her beauty, but of the advice given to her, Psa_45:10.

Worship thou him; by which he implies that her Husband was no mere man, but God also, and therefore might be adored without any violation of that known and immutable precept of worshipping God only.

Psalms 45:12

The daughter of Tyre, i.e. the people or citizens of Tyre; as *the daughter of Zion*, or Jerusalem, or Babel, &c., are put for their inhabitants, 2Ki_19:21 Psa_137:8 Zec_9:9. He mentioneth the Tyrians, partly because they did give presents to Solomon, 1Ki_5:1, &c., to whom here is a continued allusion through the whole Psalm; and partly because they among others, and before many others, were to be converted to Christ, as they were. See Mat_11:21,22 Mr 3:8 7:24 Act_21:3-5. But they are here put synecdochically for all the Gentiles, whom that city fitly represents, as being *the mart of the nations*, as she is called, Isa_23:3. And being a very rich and proud, and therefore a self-conceited and a stiffnecked people, their *merchants being princes*, Isa_23:8 they may in a particular manner represent all those great and proud princes and stubborn people of the Gentile world, which should be subdued to Christ by the preaching of the gospel.

With a gift; partly to testify their homage, which was done by gifts or presents, as appears from 1Sa_10:27 2Sa_8:2, &c.; and

partly to procure thine, and consequently thy husband's, favour, as it here follows.

The rich among the people of other nations.

Psalms 45:13

The king's daughter, i.e. the spouse; so called, either because she was the daughter of one king, and the wife of another; or because the spouse or wife is sometimes called the husband's daughter; partly because she is supposed to be younger than he; and partly because of that respect and subjection which she oweth to him, and that fatherly care and affection which he oweth to her. See 2Sa_12:3 Jer_3:4. So the bridegroom calls his *spouse* his *sister*, Son_4:9. Thus Livia, the wife of Augustus, is called his *sister* in ancient coins.

Within; either,

1. Even in her retiring chambers in the king's palace, and not only when she showeth herself abroad. Or rather,

2. In her mind and soul, or in spiritual endowments, the excellent virtues and graces wherewith she is accomplished. For,

1. This is opposed to her outward clothing.

2. This being so great and so necessary a qualification of a worthy spouse, it is not likely it should be omitted in her description and commendation, especially when the bridegroom is commended for his inward accomplishments as well as for his outward glory, Psa_45:4,7

3. The church is this bride, as hath been said and proved before, whose true and chief beauty is inward and spiritual, and not consisting in outward pomp and glory.

Her clothing is of wrought gold; her inward perfections do not rest within her, but break forth into virtuous and honourable actions, wherewith she is adorned in the view of the world. This suits well with the style of the Holy Scriptures, wherein the saints are oft said to be clothed with virtues and virtuous actions. See Psa_132:9 1Pe_5:5.

Psalms 45:14

He alludes to the custom of conducting the bride to the bridegroom's house.

Her companions, i.e. her bridesmaids attending upon her, called her *honourable women* , Psa_45:9, **See Poole** "Psa_45:9", and here

virgins, because of their spiritual purity and chastity, 2Co_11:2.

Psalms 45:15

Full of joy for the glory and felicity of the bride and bridegroom, and for the comfort and benefit which redoundeth to themselves from it.

Psalms 45:16

Having directed his speech to the bride, he now returns to the bridegroom, as may be gathered both from the Hebrew words, which are of the masculine gender; and from the next verse, which unquestionably belongs unto him; yet so that he supposeth the bride to be concerned and partaker with him in the privilege here mentioned, and the children to be common to them both. And therefore this verse and Psalm cannot be understood of Solomon, and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, because he had no children by her, and but very few by all his wives and concubines; and his children were so far from exceeding their parents in the largeness of their dominions, or being made princes in al the earth, as is here said, that they enjoyed but a small part of their father's dominions, and that with many tribulations, and but for a short time. But this was most truly and fully accomplished in Christ; who instead of his fathers of the Jewish nation; from whom he descended, and by whom he was forsaken and rejected, (which here seems to be implied, and elsewhere is expressly affirmed,) had a numerous posterity of Gentile Christians of all the nations of the earth, which here and elsewhere are called princes and kings, because of their great power with God and with men, because they subdued a very great part of the world to the obedience of Christ, and ruled them in his name and stead.

Psalms 45:17

As he began the Psalm with the celebration of the king's praises, so now he endeth with it, and adds this important circumstance,

that this nuptial song should not only serve for the present solemnity, as others of that kind do, but that it should be remembered and sung in all successive generations; which plainly showeth that it was not composed upon such a slight and transitory occasion as that of Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, which was soon forgotten, and the Israelites had little cause to remember it with any satisfaction; but upon that great and glorious and everlasting marriage between Christ and his church, of which this is most properly and literally verified.

Psalms 46:1 PSALM 46

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion of this Psalm is thought to be that happy success, and settlement, and peace which God granted to the people of Israel in David's time, and by his means, **2Sa 8**

The confidence and safe condition of the church under God's care, Psa_46:1-5; manifested in his wonderful deliverance from her enemies, Psa_46:6-9. He exhorteth all to consider it, to the magnifying his name, Psa_46:10,**11**.

God is our refuge, i.e. he hath now manifested himself to be so by the course of his providence.

A very present; or, *a sufficient*, as this word is sometimes used, as Jos_17:16 Zec_10:10.

Psalms 46:2

Though there should be nothing but shakings, and confusions, and desolations in all the nations round about us; which are oft expressed by such metaphors, as Jer_51:25 Hag_2:21,**22 Rev 6:14**.

Psalms 46:3

Though the sea be very tempestuous, and its waters (by which a multitude of people is oft signified, as Rev_17:1,**15**) rage, to Wit, against us, as appears from the following verses. Though its raging waves assault mighty princes and kingdoms, and make them shake and be ready to fall down.

Psalms 46:4

He either speaks of, or at least alludes to, the river of Kidron, 2Sa_15:23 Joh_18:1, and its two streams or rivulets flowing from it, Gihon and Shiloah, 2Ch_32:30 Isa_8:6, which being small and contemptible, or still or gentle waters, are not unfitly opposed to the vast and unruly waters of the sea. He insinuates the weak condition of God's church as to outward advantages, that they had not one sea to oppose to another, but only a small river; which though in itself despicable, yet was sufficient to refresh and defend them in spite of all their enemies. And as the *sea and waters* thereof, Psa_46:2,3, are to be understood metaphorically, as all agree, so also in all probability are this river and streams; which therefore may design the gracious presence, and assistance, and blessing of be Lord, (which is very frequently described under the name of *waters* , as Isa_11:9 **12:3** Zec_14:8, &c..) or the Lord himself, who is expressly said to be unto the city of Zion, for its defence, *a place of broad rivers and streams* , Isa_33:20,21, which probably alludes to this text, or at least explains it.

Shall make glad, i.e. shall not barely defend it from utter ruin, but preserve it from danger, and give great occasion for rejoicing and thanksgiving.

The city of God, i.e. Zion or Jerusalem, so called also @Psa_48:1 Isa_60:14.

Of the tabernacles, i.e. of the tabernacle, the plural number for the singular, as Psa_43:3; the place where God's holy tabernacle is settled.

Psalms 46:5

Heb. as soon as the morning appeareth, i.e. speedily, after a short night of affliction; compare Psa_30:5; and seasonably, when the danger is greatest, and the enemies prepare to make the assault; which is commonly done in the morning.

Psalms 46:6

The heathen raged, to wit, against God, and against his people.

He uttered his voice; either he thundered, or he spake to them in his wrath, as is said, Psa_2:5.

The earth melted; the inhabitants of the earth who were combined against Zion were dispirited and consumed.

Psalms 46:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 46:8

i.e. Among those people of the earth who were neighbouring and vexatious to God's people, and therefore were cut off by David, and their lands and cities in great part wasted.

Psalms 46:9

He hath ended our wars, and settled us in a firm and well-grounded peace.

The end of the earth, or *of this land* , to wit, of Israel; from one end of it to the other.

He speaks of the bows, and spears, and chariots of their enemies; for he preserved those which belonged to his people.

Psalms 46:10

He speaks either,

1. To the Israelites,

Be still, i.e. Do you henceforth silently and quietly wait upon me without fear or diffidence. Or rather,

2. *To the heathen* , who had *raged* , Psa_46:6; and therefore now he seasonably admonisheth them *to be still* , and to stir no more against God's people.

I am God, the only true and almighty God; and your gods are but dumb and impotent idols. I will be exalted, i.e. I will make myself glorious by my great and wonderful works.

Psalms 46:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 47:1 PSALM 47

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm may seem to have been composed upon the occasion of that great solemnity of carrying the ark from the house of

Obed-edom into the city of Zion; of which see 2Sa 6\$ 1Ch 13\$ **1Ch 16\$**. But as Zion was a type of the church, and the ark a type of Christ; so this hath a further reference, even to Christ's ascension into heaven, and, as consequent thereunto, to the spreading of his kingdom in all the parts and nations of the world; which is the chief scope and design of the psalmist. or at least of the Holy Ghost, in this Psalm; as will plainly appear from the words and matter of it.

The church is exhorted to praise God, who subdueth her enemies, Psa_47:1-3, and giveth her an excellent inheritance, Psa_47:4-7. A promise of calling and gathering the Gentiles, Psa_47:8,9.

All ye people; either,

1. All the tribes of Israel; for the several tribes are sometimes called several *people* . See Jud_5:14 Eze_2:3 Act_4:27. Or,
2. All nations, not only Jews, but Gentiles; for all of them either had or might have benefit by the ark, upon their addresses to God there, and especially by Christ and his ascension.

Shout unto God, in the worship and unto the glory of the God of Israel.

Psalms 47:2

Most high is terrible; or, is *most high* (in himself, above all gods) and (which conjunction is off understood) *terrible* , to all his enemies.

A great King over all the earth; the universal Monarch of the whole world, and not of Israel only.

Psalms 47:3

Or, *he shall lead like sheep* ; or, *bring into the fold* ; as divers render the word, by comparing Isa_5:17 Mic_2:12. He seems to speak of such a subjugation of them, as was for the good of the people subdued, because this is matter of rejoicing to them, Psa_47:1; which is true both of these people whom David subdued, who thereby had opportunities, obligations, and encouragements to own and worship the true God, which was the only way to their true and lasting happiness; and especially of those Gentiles who were subdued to Christ by the preaching of the gospel. The Gentile converts were in some sort brought under the

Jews, because they were subjected to Christ, and to his apostles, and to the primitive church, which were Jews. Or the psalmist may speak this in the name of the whole church, which then were Israelites only, but afterwards were made up of Jews and Gentiles, unto which all particular believers were to submit themselves in and for the Lord.

Psalms 47:4

He shall choose, i.e. he will appoint and bestow upon us. This verb of the future tense may seem to agree well with the Gentiles, because this blessing was not now present, but future, and so the sense designed by the Holy Ghost may be this: Though at present we are wicked and wretched creatures, and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, yet there is a time coming wherein God will choose or take us into the number of his children by gracious adoption. But futures are variously rendered; and accordingly the vulgar Latin, Syriac, and Arabic render this word. *He hath chosen*. The Chaldee renders this and the following words, *He will take pleasure in us, so as to give us our inheritance. Our inheritance*; either the land of Canaan; or heaven, which was typified by that land; or rather, God himself, who is called his people's *portion* or *inheritance*, as Psa_16:5 **73:26**, and elsewhere, or the presence, and worship, and blessing of God. This God had chosen for the Israelites, and resolved to choose or set apart for the Gentiles. *The excellency*, or *glory*; wherein Jacob gloried and excelled all other people. See Eze_24:21 Amo_6:8 **8:7**.

Of Jacob; either,

1. Of the person of Jacob; who, though he never had the possession of the land of Canaan, yet had the Lord, and his presence and blessing, for his inheritance. Or rather,
2. Of the people of Jacob or Israel, who are frequently called Jacob, as Num_23:7, **10,23 Psa 14:7 44:4**, &c., for these did actually enjoy the promised inheritance of Canaan, and the presence of God in his sanctuary.

Whom he loved: this he adds, partly as the reason why he chose such a noble inheritance for them, not for any peculiar worth in them more than in other people, but only for his free love to them, as he declareth, Deu_7:7, **8 9:5**; and partly as an evidence of the

excellency of this inheritance, because it was chosen for his beloved people.

Psalms 47:5

God is gone up: this is meant literally of the ark, wherein God was present, which went or was carried up to the hill of Zion, where the tabernacle was erected for it, and afterwards to the hill of Moriah into the temple; which solemnity was accompanied with the shouts and acclamations of the people, and with the sound of trumpets: but mystically it respects Christ's ascension into heaven, as may be gathered by comparing this with Eph_4:8, where the like words uttered concerning the ark upon the same occasion, Psa_68:18, are directly applied to Christ's ascension.

Psalms 47:6

These words are repeated four times in this verse, to show how vehemently desirous the psalmist was that God might have his due praise and glory; and of how great necessity and importance it was to men to perform this great, though much neglected, duty.

Unto our King; for so he is in a special manner.

Psalms 47:7

The King of all the earth; not only ours, as I now said, but also of all the nations of the world; and therefore he may well require, and doth highly deserve, all our praises.

With understanding; not rashly, or formally and carelessly, but seriously, considering the greatness of this King whom you praise, and what abundant cause you have to praise and admire him; which is an intimation that the matter of this Psalm is more sublime and important than ordinary.

Psalms 47:8

Over the heathen, i.e. over all heathen nations, as being *the King of all the earth*, Psa_47:7; which was not true in David's time, but; was fulfilled by Christ.

God sitteth upon the throne, to wit, as Judge and King, exercising dominion, or *reigning*, as he now said; this being only another expression of the same thing. And this *holy throne* is either,

1. The ark, upon which God was said to sit to govern the Israelites. Or rather,

2. Heaven; which is oft called God's

throne, Psa_11:4 Isa_66:1, whence God is said to behold and to rule all nations; of which general dominion of God he here speaks. And here Christ sits at his Father's right hand for that purpose.

Psalms 47:9

The princes of the people; either,

1. The heads of the tribes of Israel, who were gathered together to the tabernacle or temple upon solemn feasts. Or rather,

2. **The princes** (or *the voluntary or willing ones* , as this word is rendered, Psa_110:3) of the Gentiles, who are here known by the name of the people, Psa_47:1,3, who were divided in their principles, and interests, and religions, but are now united and gathered together unto Christ, laying their sceptres at his feet, and jointly owning and promoting his worship and service. So he speaks of the conversion of the Gentiles; although he mentions only their princes, because their conversion might seem to be most difficult in sundry respects, and therefore that being affirmed, the conversion of their people with or after them might very reasonably be supposed.

The people of the God of Abraham; so he explains the former clause, and shows what people he spoke of; and it is observable, he doth not say the *people of Abraham* , lest this should be appropriated to the Israelites; but

the people of the God of Abraham, i.e. which worship the God of Abraham, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. So this is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles; which also is intimated by the name here used, which is not his old and first name, Abram, but his new name, Abraham, given to him to signify that he should be *the father of many nations* , Gen_17:5. Or these words with the former may be, and are by divers learned interpreters, rendered thus: *The princes of the people* (i.e. of the Gentiles) *are* (i.e. shall be, as is usual in prophetic style) gathered unto which particle is sometimes understood, as Psa_5:8 Jer_26:10 Hos_2:14 *the people of the God of Abraham* , i.e. unto

the Jews, and so both Jews and Gentiles shall be united in one religion; and so God *shall reign over the heathen* , and be *King of all the earth* , as is here said, Psa_47:7,8, and *all people shall clap their hands* for joy, as it is Psa_47:1.

The shields of the earth; either,

1. The protection of the people of all the earth. Or rather,
2. Their princes or rulers, who are fitly called *shields* , Hos_4:18, because by their office they are or should be the common parents and protectors of all their people, to defend them from all oppressions and injuries. These, saith he, *are the Lord 's* , i.e. at his disposal, or subject to his dominion, both as to their hearts and kingdoms. And so this is here conveniently added, as the reason of that great and improbable event, foretold in the foregoing words, that the princes of the people (which of all others were the most lofty, and wilful, and incorrigible) should join and subject themselves to the Lord, and to his church.

He is greatly exalted; by this means God shall be greatly glorified, and appear to be far above all the princes of the world, and above all other gods.

Psalms 48:1 PSALM 48

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed upon the occasion of some eminent deliverance vouchsafed by God to the city of Jerusalem from some potent enemy and dreadful danger; either that in Jehoshaphat's time, **2Ch 20**§, or that under Hezekiah, **2Ki 18**§, **19**§; in both which times there were holy prophets, by some of whom this Psalm might be made.

A Song and Psalm ; of which see **See Poole** "Psa_30:1", which hath the same title.

The prophet describeth the glory and excellency of the church, Psa_48:1-3, preserved from her potent enemies, Psa_48:4-8 for which God is glorified, Psa_48:9,**10**, and the faithful invited to take notice of its beauty and firmness, to transmit it to following generations, Psa_48:11-14.

In the city of our God; in Jerusalem, which he hath chosen for his dwelling-place.

In the mountain of his holiness, i.e. in his holy mountain; either Zion, where the ark and tabernacle was; or rather Moriah, where the temple now was. Although both of them are supposed by some to be but one mountain, having two tops; and it is certain that both are frequently called by one name, to wit, Zion.

Psalms 48:2

The joy of the whole earth: Jerusalem may be so called here, as it is also Lam_2:15, not actually, as if all people did rejoice in it, or for it; but,

1. Fundamentally or causally, because here was very great cause or ground or rejoicing for the Gentile world, if they had understood themselves, or their true interest; because here God was graciously present and ready to hear and answer the just desires and prayers, not only of the Israelites, but of any stranger, of what nation soever, according to Solomon's prayer, 1Ki_8:41, &c.; and here the Gentiles might find that God, whom like blind men they groped for, as the Greek phrase implies, Act_17:27; and here they might be informed of the nature and properties, as also of the mind and will, of the almighty and everlasting God, of which they were so grossly ignorant, and of that Messiah who was *the desire* of (and consequently matter of great joy unto) all nations, Hag_2:7. And,

2. Prophetically, because the joyful doctrine of the gospel was to go from thence unto all nations; of which see Isa_2:2,3 Mic 4:1,2. Yet these words may be and are by others rendered and understood thus, *the joy of the* , or *this* , (for here is an emphatical article,) *whole land* .

On the sides of the north, i.e. which is on the northern part of Jerusalem. But because Josephus and some others affirm that Mount Zion stood southward from Jerusalem, this clause possibly may be added to signify that Zion is not here to be understood strictly and properly for that mountain, or part of the mountain so called, but for that other mountain, or part of the same mountain upon which the temple was built, which was strictly called Moriah, but is here called Zion, because that name was far better

known in Scripture, as being oft put for the temple, as Psa_137:3 Isa_18:7 Jer_51:10 Lam_5:18, and for the whole city, and for the church of God, in a multitude of places of Scripture.

The city of the great King, i.e. the city of God, as it was now called, Psa_48:1, who justly calls himself *a great King* , Mal_1:14, as being *King of kings* , and *Lord of lords* , Rev_19:16.

Psalms 48:3

God is known to his people by sensible and long experience, and to all neighbouring nations by their own observation.

In her palaces, i. e. in the habitations, or to the inhabitants of that city. Possibly he may here point at the king's palace and the temple, which was the palace of the King of heaven; which two palaces God did in a singular manner protect, and by protecting them he protected the whole city and people.

For a refuge; under whose shadow we are more safe and secure, than other cities are with their great rivers and impregnable fortifications.

Psalms 48:4

Either those kings confederate against Jehoshaphat, **2Ch 20**; or the Assyrian princes, whom they vain-gloriously called

kings, Isa_10:8.

They passed by, in their march towards Jerusalem. Or, *they passed away* , i.e. departed without the success which they desired and confidently expected.

Psalms 48:5

They saw it; they did only look upon it, but *not come into it, nor shoot an arrow there, Ñnor cast a bank against it* , as is said upon this or the like occasion, 2Ki_19:32.

So they marvelled, not so much at the structure or strength of the city, as at the wonderful works wrought by God on their behalf.

They were troubled and hasted away: see 2Ki_19:35.

Psalms 48:6

Partly at the tidings of Tirhakah's coming against them, 2Ki_19:9, and partly for that terrible slaughter of their army there, 2Ki_19:35.

Psalms 48:7

This is not reported as a matter of fact, for we read of no ships in those expeditions to which this Psalm relates, nor did any ships come near Jerusalem, because that was at a great distance from the sea, and from any navigable river running into the sea; but only added by way of illustration or allusion. The sense is, Thou didst no less violently and suddenly destroy these proud and raging enemies of Jerusalem, than sometimes thou destroyest the ships at sea with a fierce and vehement wind, such as the eastern winds were in those parts, Exo_14:21 Job_27:21 Jer_18:17 Eze_27:26. The words are and may be rendered thus, *Thou didst break* them as (such ellipses of the pronoun, and of the note of similitude, being very frequent; as I have again and again showed) *the ships of the sea* (for Tarshish, though properly the name of a maritime place in Cilicia, Eze_27:25 Jon_1:3, is usually put for the sea, as 1Ki_10:22 2Ch_9:21 Psa_72:10 Isa_2:16 Jer_10:9) are broken

with an east wind. Albeit the enemies of Jerusalem, which are compared to the raging waters of the sea in Psa_46:2,3, may as fitly be compared to ships upon the sea.

Psalms 48:8

The predictions of the prophets, either 2Ch_20:14, or 2Ki_19:20, &c., have been verified by the events. Or, we have had late and fresh experiences of such wonderful works of God, as before we only heard of by the report of our fathers. From this miraculous deliverance we plainly see that God hath a singular love to it, and care of it, and therefore will defend her in all succeeding ages against all her enemies. And so God would have done, if Jerusalem had not forsaken God, and forfeited his favour and protection.

Psalms 48:9

It hath been the matter of our serious and deep meditation, when we have been worshipping there in thy temple. For when the

priests were offering incense or sacrifice, the religious people exercised themselves in holy meditation or secret prayer to God, as may be gathered from Luk_1:10, and many other places of Scripture, and from the nature of the thing. Or, *we have silently or patiently waited for* , as some ancient and other interpreters render it.

Psalms 48:10

For this and such-like glorious actions thou art praised and acknowledged, and evidently proved to be such a one as thou hast affirmed thyself to be in thy word, *God almighty, or all-sufficient, the Lord of hosts, the King of thy church and people, and a strong Tower to all that trust in thee* , and all other things which thou art called in Scripture. Thy name is not an empty title, but is filled up with honourable and praiseworthy works, answerable to it.

Full of righteousness, i.e. of righteous actions; by which thou discoverest thy justice and holiness in destroying the wicked and incorrigible enemies of thy people, and in fulfilling thy promises made to thy church.

Psalms 48:11

Mount Zion; synecdochically put for Jerusalem. *The daughters of Judah* , i.e. the other and lesser cities and towns or villages (i.e. all the people) of Judah; for such are commonly called daughters in respect of the mother city, to which they are subjects: see Jos_15:45 **17:16** Psa_45:12 **137:8**. He mentions Judah only, and not all Israel; partly because they were more immediately and eminently concerned in Jerusalem's deliverance; and principally because ten of the tribes of Israel were now cut off from Jerusalem, and from the kingdom of David's house, and possibly carried away captive, 2Ki_18:9-11.

Because of thy judgments upon thine and their enemies; at which they were glad, not simply, but because it was highly conducive to God's honour, and to the preservation and enlargement of God's church in the world.

Psalms 48:12

He speaketh, either,

1. To the enemies, as triumphing over them. Or rather,

2. To the people of that city and kingdom, who had been eye-witnesses of this glorious work of God, as appears from the following verses. He bids them *mark well her towers, bulwarks, and palaces*, here, and Psa_48:13, not with vain ostentation, or carnal confidence, for he had said that God only was their refuge, Psa_48:3; but with thankfulness to God, when they should find upon inquiry, that not one of them was demolished or any way defaced by so potent an enemy.

Psalms 48:13

Consider; or, *exalt*, or *admire*, *Tell it to the generation following*, that they may be excited to continue their praises to God for this mercy, by which they hold and enjoy all their blessings, and to trust in God in the like difficulties for the future.

Psalms 48:14

This God; who hath done this great work.

Even unto death, i.e. whilst we have a being. Birth and life, and the several ages of life and death, are oft ascribed to churches and commonwealths, both in Scripture and in other authors. This promise was made to the old and earthly Jerusalem, upon condition of their obedience, wherein they failing so grossly, lost the benefit of it, but it is absolutely made good to the new and heavenly Jerusalem, the church of Christ.

Psalms 49:1 PSALM 49

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is penned upon the same occasion with **Psa 39 Psa 73**, to wit, upon the contemplation of the afflictions of God's people and of the prosperity and glory of ungodly men The design is to justify God's providence in this dark dispensation, and to show that, all things being considered, good men have no cause for immoderate dejection of spirit, nor wicked men for glorying in their present felicities.

The psalmist having stirred up all men to attention, Psa_49:1-5, showeth their vain trust in riches, Psa_49:6-14; and the contrary trust of the faithful in God, Psa_49:15; exhorteth them not to fear

the prosperity of the wicked, for it cannot deliver him from the grave, Psa_49:16-20.

All ye people, Heb. *all people* ; Jews or Gentiles; for all are concerned in this matter, as being apt to stumble and murmur at it.

Psalms 49:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 49:3

It concerns you diligently to attend to me, for I am about to speak not of vulgar and trivial things, or such as come suddenly into my mind, and rush as hastily out of my mouth, but of such things as are the result of my most serious and considerate thoughts, and such as, if you observe them and lay them to heart, will make you truly wise, and keep you from those errors, and follies, and mischiefs, which the generality of mankind, for want of a right understanding, do run into.

Psalms 49:4

I will incline mine ear: this is another argument to persuade them to hearken to him: I will hearken what God by his Spirit speaks to me, and that and nothing else will I now speak to you; and therefore it is well worth your hearing. I also shall join with you in attending to it, that whilst I teach you, I myself may learn the same lesson. For as ministers now teach themselves whilst they teach others, so the holy prophets did oftentimes search into and study to find out the meaning of their own prophecies, as appears plainly from 1Pe_1:10,11. The phrase is thought to be taken from the musicians, who lay their ear close to the instrument when they tune it, and by their ear try how the voice and instrument agree.

To a parable; which properly is a figurative and allegorical speech, but is oft more largely taken for any excellent, and important, and withal dark or difficult, doctrine or sentence: see Num_23:7 **24:3,15** **Psa 78:2**, compared with Mat_13:35.

I will open, i.e. I will not smother it in my own breast, but publish it to the world.

My dark saying; so he justly calls the following discourse, because the thing in question is and ever hath been thought difficult and hard to be understood.

Psalms 49:5

He speaks in his own person, because he had now said that he would *incline his ear*, Psa_49:4, i.e. learn and practise what he was teaching others; but his meaning is more general, that there is no sufficient cause why he or any good man should *fear*; which is to be understood of excessive or immoderate and prevailing fear, causing dejection or despondency, or distrust of God's providence and goodness, or discontent with his condition; in which sense men are bid not to fear, Gen_1:19 Mat_28:5, compared with Mar_16:6. Thus Gen_45:5, *Be not grieved*, to wit, inordinately; for otherwise they ought, and he would have had them to grieve for their sin. Thus *to lead a man into temptation*, Mat_6:13, is *to suffer* him to be overcome by it, by comparing 1Co_10:13. And the object or cause of this forbidden fear is double; the one, the afflictions of good men, here following; the other, the prosperity of the ungodly, as it is declared Psa_49:16, and of which he begins to treat in the very next verse, and continues the discourse of it to the end of the Psalm.

In the days of evil; either,

1. Of sin; when iniquity of all sorts abounds; which is many ways grievous and vexatious to every good man. Or,
2. Of misery; in times of great distress and calamity, either public or private, when wicked men flourish, (of which he speaks in all the rest of the Psalm,) and good men are oppressed and persecuted.

The iniquity of my heels; by which he understands either,

1. His afflictions; which he might justly call the punishment of his sinful actions; for *iniquity* is commonly put for the punishment of it, and the heels are put for a man's footsteps, and metaphorically for one's ways or actions, as Psa_56:6 **89:51**. Or,

2.

The iniquity, i.e. the violent and injurious designs and practices of his ungodly and malicious enemies, who, as he here saith,

did compass him about; whereby he notes their prosperous success against him, and his being endangered and vexed by them, as this phrase implies, Job_16:13 Psa_17:9,**11 22:12 140:9**

Hab_1:4; and withal their intention and endeavour to vex and persecute and destroy him, as this phrase is used, Psa_17:9 **22:12,16**, and in many other places. This sense is favoured both by the Syriac and Arabic interpreters; whereof the former renders the words thus, *the iniquity of mine enemies hath compassed me* , and the latter thus, *when mine enemies shall compass me about* ; and by the main scope of the Psalm, which is to comfort himself and other good men against that great scandal of the prosperity of the wicked, and the oppressions and miseries of the righteous. But all the difficulty is why or how he calls this *the iniquity of his heels* . For the clearing whereof, it is humbly proposed to consideration, that this genitive case, *of my heels* , seems to note not the efficient or meritorious cause of this iniquity, or punishment of it, but the object about which this iniquity is exercised; as nouns in the genitive case are frequently taken. Thus *the spoil of the poor* , Isa_3:14, is not that spoil which was made by them, but upon them; and *the violence of the children of Judah* , as it is in the Hebrew text, Joe_3:19, is that which was done against them, as we truly translate it. See also Dan_4:27 Mat_10:1 Act_4:9. In like manner here,

the iniquity of my heels, is the iniquity wherewith they compass and seek to trip up my heels; for we shall find David oft speaking of the malicious practices of his enemies, with respect to his *heels* , *feet* , or *steps* . So he tells us *they pierced his hands and feet* , Psa_22:16, they *compassed* , and *marked* , and *prepared a net for his steps* , Psa_17:11 **56:6 57:6**; as Jeremiah also complains of his enemies, that they hid *snare for his feet* , Jer_18:22. And therefore it is not strange that the iniquity of his enemies is here noted to be exercised about his *heels* or *footsteps* as this word signifies; either because they did malignantly observe all his steps or ways, that they might find occasion to load him with reproaches in order to his ruin; or because they purposed to trip up his heels, or *to overthrow his goings* , as he complains, Psa_140:4. Besides, the words may be rendered, *the iniquity of my supplanters* ; for the Hebrew word rendered *heels* may be, and is by some learned interpreters taken for a participle of that verb, which signifies *to supplant* or trip up the heels, or circumvent, from whence Jacob had his name And this character fitly agrees to David's enemies,

who were not only most malicious, but also very deceitful and treacherous, as he every where complains.

Psalms 49:6

As that which can and will secure them from God's judgments, and from the calamities of human life. The psalmist having said that he and other good men had no sufficient cause of fear from their present sufferings from ungodly men, now he proceeds, on the contrary, to show that his ungodly enemies had no reason to be secure and confident because of their present riches and prosperous success.

Psalms 49:7

Redeem, to wit, from death, as appears from Psa_49:9,**10** &c.; neither from the first death, nor from the second, which he points at Psa_49:14,**19**.

His brother; whom he would do his utmost to preserve in life; and consequently not himself. But he seems to mention *his brother* rather than himself, because when his brother is sick, he being in health hath the full command and free use of all his wealth, and strength, and wit, and all other means of redeeming his brother; which he hath not, when he himself is dangerously or desperately sick.

Nor give to God; the only Lord of life. and the Judge who hath passed upon him the sentence of death.

Psalms 49:8

Of their soul, i.e. of their life, as soul is commonly used.

Is precious, i.e. rare, as the word is used, 1Sa_3:1 Dan_2:11, hard to be obtained. But he doth not call it simply impossible, because Christ hath purchased this privilege for his true disciples, that in some sense they shall not see death, Joh_8:51.

It ceaseth for ever, i.e. it is never to be accomplished, to wit, by any mere man, for himself or for his brother.

Psalms 49:9

Or, *the pit*, or *the grave*, i.e. not die, as that phrase is oft used, as has been noted before.

Psalms 49:10

He seeth; an impersonal expression. Every man sees and knows it; it is visible and evident, both from reason and from universal experience, that all men die, without any difference between wise and fools, good and bad. *To others* ; he saith not, to sons or kindred; but indefinitely, *to others* because he is wholly uncertain to whom he shall leave him, to friends, or strangers, or enemies; which he mentions as a great vanity in riches. They neither can save him from death, nor will accompany him in and after death, and after his death will be disposed he knows not how nor to whom.

Psalms 49:11

Their inward thought is; though they are ashamed to express it, yet it is their secret opinion, and hope, and wish.

Their houses; either,

1. Their posterity, oft called men's *houses* 2Sa_7:11, &c.; Psa_113:9 **115:12**. Or,

2. Their mansion houses, as it is explained in the next clause, which also serve for this purpose, to preserve a man name for ever.

Shall continue for ever; not to them in their own persons, but to them and theirs in succeeding generations, as it follows.

They call their lands after their own names; fondly dreaming by this means to immortalize their names and memories.

Psalms 49:12

Notwithstanding all these fine fancies and devices

man being in honour, living in all the splendour and glory above mentioned,

abideth not. The Hebrew word properly signifies *to lodge for a night* , as Gen_32:21 Jud_19:10; and thence to abide for a long or considerable time, as Psa_25:13 **55:7** Pro_15:31. All his dreams of perpetuating his name and estate shall vanish and be confuted by experience.

That perish, i.e. that are utterly lost and extinct. So he is in reference to all his wealth and honour, of which he here speaks.

Psalms 49:13

This their way, i.e. their counsel and contrivance to immortalize themselves.

Is their folly; though to themselves and some others it seem to be wisdom, yet in truth it is apparent folly and madness. For they neither obtain that immortal name which they seek and hope for; nor, if they do, doth it yield them any comfort or benefit. Their sayings, Heb. *their mouth*, i.e. their counsels and suggestions, which they gave them concerning these matters. The *mouth* is oft put for the words which come out of it, as Num_35:30 Job_7:11.

Psalms 49:14

Like sheep; which for a season are fed in large and sweet pastures, but at the owner's pleasure are put together in close and comfortless folds, and led away to the slaughter, not knowing nor considering whither they are going.

In the grave; or, *in hell*; for the Hebrew word signifies both.

Death shall feed on them; the first death shall consume their bodies in the grave, and the second death shall devour their souls.

The upright; good men, whom here they oppressed and abused at their pleasure.

In the morning; either,

1. Suddenly, or within a very little time, as this phrase is oft used, as Psa_30:5 **46:5 101:8 113:8**. Or,

2. In the day of general judgment, and the resurrection of the dead. For death being called the night, Joh_9:4, and *sleep* in many places, that day is fitly compared to the morning, when men awake out of sleep, and enter upon that everlasting day. But whether this or the former be the true meaning of the phrase, it is sufficiently evident the thing here spoken of is not done in this life, but in the next; for,

1. This proposition and privilege being general, and common to all upright persons, is not verified here, it being the lot of many good men to be oppressed and killed by the wicked, as is manifest both from Scripture, as Psa_44:22 Ecc_8:14 **9:2**, and from the experience of all ages of the church.

2. This dominion of the just over the wicked happens after the wicked are *laid in their grave* , as is here expressed, and consequently supposeth their future life and resurrection; for when one person rules over another, both are supposed to exist or have a being. Nor is there any argument against this sense, but from a vain and absurd conceit which some men have entertained, that the saints in the Old Testament had no firm belief nor expectation of the recompences of the life to come; which is against evident reason, and against many clear places of the Old Testament that cannot without force be wrested to any other sense, and against the express testimony of the New Testament concerning them, **Heb 11**, and in many other places.

Their beauty; or, *their form* or, *their figure* , or *image* ; all which come to one, and seems to intimate that all their glory and felicity had in this life was rather imaginary than real, and indeed but a *shadow* , as it is called, **Ecc_6:12 8:13**.

Shall consume, Heb. *is to consume* , or *to be consumed* , i.e. shall be consumed; the infinitive verb being here put for the future, as it is **Psa_32:8 Zec_3:4 12:10**.

From their dwelling i.e. they shall be hurried from their large, and stately, and pleasant mansions, into a close and dark grave. But those words are by divers interpreters rendered otherwise, and that peradventure more truly and fitly to this purpose, word for word,

the grave (or rather *hell* , as before and this word *sheol* is confessedly oft used in the Old Testament, but no where more conveniently than here) shall be *a dwelling* , or *for a dwelling*, *unto him* , or *them* , or *every one of them* ; which in the prophet's phrase is called *dwelling with everlasting burnings* , **Isa_33:14**, and in the phrase of the New Testament, *to be cast into* and abide in *the lake of fire and brimstone* , **Rev_20:10**.

Psalms 49:15

Though no man can find out a ransom to redeem himself or his brother, yet God can and will redeem me.

My soul; either properly; or myself or life; for all comes to one.

Of the grave; or, *of hell* ; for he speaks of that sheol in which the wicked are left. The grave shall not have power to retain me, but shall be forced to give me up into my Father's hands; and hell shall have no power to seize upon me.

He shall receive me, or *take me* , out of this vain, mortal, and miserable life, unto himself, or into heaven, as this phrase is used, Gen_5:24 Psa_73:24 Act_7:59.

Psalms 49:16

Afraid, i.e. discouraged or dejected. The prosperity of the sinners is oft matter of fear and dread to good men; partly because it enables them to do more mischief; and partly because it shakes their faith in God's providence and promises, and is apt to engender suspicions in men's minds, as if God did not regard the actions and affairs of men, and made no difference between the good and the bad, and consequently all religion were vain and unprofitable. See Psa_73:12,13.

Psalms 49:17

For as he will shortly die, so all his wealth, and power, and glory will die with him, and thou wilt have no cause either to envy or fear him.

Psalms 49:18

He blessed his soul, i.e. he applauded himself as a wise and happy man: compare Luk_12:19.

Men will praise thee: and as he pleaseth and flattereth himself, so he meets with parasites that applaud and flatter him for their own advantage. For he still speaks of the same man, as is manifest from the foregoing and following words, though there be a sudden change of the third into the second person; which is most frequent in these books.

When thou doest well to thyself; when thou dost indulge and please thyself, and advance thy own worldly interest. For the name of *good* in Scripture is oft ascribed unto the pleasures and profits of this life, as Job_21:13 Psa_4:6 Ecc_2:24 **4:8 11:9.**

Psalms 49:19

Now he returns again to the third person. Such sudden and repeated changes are frequent in this book.

To the generation of his fathers, i.e. to the grave and hell, where he shall meet with his wicked parents, who by their counsel and example led him into his evil courses; as the godly also are said to be *gathered to their fathers* , Gen_15:15 Deu_32:50 Jud_2:10.

Never see, i.e. never enjoy, as *seeing* is oft taken.

Light; neither *the light of the living* , as it is called, Job_33:30 Psa_56:13; or of this life, to which they shall never return; nor of the next life to which they shall never be admitted, but they shall be cast into utter darkness, Mat_8:12.

Psalms 49:20

Understandeth not, i.e. hath not true wisdom, to know and consider what he is, and what his true business and interest in this world is, and what use he should make of his life, and of all his riches, and honour, and power, and whither he is going, and what course to take for the attainmerit of true and lasting happiness.

Is like the beasts that perish; though he hath the outward shape of a man, yet in truth he is a beast, or a brutish, stupid, and unreasonable creature, and he shall perish like a *brute beast made to be destroyed* , 2Pe_2:12.

Psalms 50:1 PSALM 50

THE ARGUMENT

The design of this Psalm is, partly, to reprove and protest against the common miscarriages of many professors of religion, who satisfied their own consciences, and fancied that they pleased God, with their external and ceremonial performances, notwithstanding their gross neglect of those more necessary and fundamental duties of piety, and justice, and charity; partly, to instruct men concerning the nature of the true and acceptable worship of God; and partly, to prepare the Israelites for, and tacitly warn them of, that change which would be made in the outward form and way of God's worship under and by the Messias, and of the abolition of the legal sacrifices, which God did not appoint for his own need, nor for his people's perpetual use.

Asaph was not only the chief of the sacred singers, **1Ch 15 1Ch 16** 1Ch_25:2, but also a prophet, 1Ch_25:1, and a composer of some Psalms, as it is apparent from 2Ch_29:30, and therefore, as is most probable, of those that go under his name.

God cometh with great majesty into his church, Psa_50:1-4, and gathereth together his saints, Psa_50:5,6; testifieth he has no pleasure in ceremonies, Psa_50:7-13, but in sincerity of obedience, Psa_50:14,15; threateneth the wicked for contemning his word, Psa_50:16-22, and showeth who it is that glorifieth him, Psa_50:23.

i.e. All the inhabitants of the earth, from one end to the other; whom he here summons to be witnesses of his proceedings in this solemn judgment between him and his people, which is here poetically represented; for here is a tribunal erected, the judge coming to it, the witnesses and delinquents summoned, and at last the sentence given, and cause determined.

Psalms 50:2

The place where he was supposed to reside, and where he would now sit in judgment; or from whence he would come to a more public and conspicuous place, where all the world might see and hear the transactions.

The perfection of beauty; the most beautiful and amiable place of the whole world, because of the presence, and worship, and blessing of God, which was there, and there only. God hath shined, i.e. hath appeared or manifested himself in a glorious manner, as judges do when they come to the judgment-seat.

Psalms 50:3

Our God: these words are used here, as they are also Heb_12:29, emphatically. The prophet speaks this in the person of the Israelites and worshippers of God, whereof he was one, and thereby takes off their fond pretence, as if because God was *their God*, in covenant with them, and nearly related to them by Abraham his friend for ever, he would bear with their miscarriages, and would not deal so severely with them as some fancied; which also was their conceit, Jer_7:4, &c.; Mat_3:9,10. No, saith he, though he be our God, yet he will come to execute judgment upon us.

Shall come; either,

1. From heaven, his dwelling-place, to Zion, to sit in judgment there. Or,

2. Out of Zion to some other place, as was said on Psa_50:2.

And shall not keep silence: so the sense is, he will no longer forbear or connive at the hypocrisy and profaneness of the professors of the true religion, but will now speak to them in his wrath, and will effectually reprove and chastise them. But because the psalmist is not now describing what God did or would say against them, which he doth below, Psa_50:7, &c., but as yet continues in his description of the preparation or coming of the Judge to his throne, it seems more proper to translate the words, as some do, *he will not cease*, (for this verb signifies not only a cessation from speech, but from motion or action, as it doth 2Sa_19:11 Psa_83:1 Isa_42:14,15) i.e. not neglect or delay to come. So here is the same thing expressed, both affirmatively and negatively, (as is frequent in Scripture, whereof divers instances have been formerly given,) for the greater assurance of the truth of the thing.

It shall be very tempestuous round about him: this is a further description of that terrible majesty wherewith God clothed himself when he came to his tribunal, in token of that just severity which, he would use in his proceedings with them. He alludes to the manner of God's appearance at Sinai, **Exo 19**, and intimates to them, that although Zion was a place of grace and blessing to all true Israelites, yet God would be as dreadful there to the hypocrites among them, as ever he was at Sinai. See Isa_33:14.

Psalms 50:4

Either to *heaven and earth* themselves, and so it is a figure called *prosopopoeia*; or to the inhabitants of them, all angels and men, whom he calls in for witnesses and judges of the equity of his present proceedings. Compare Deu_4:26 Deu_31:28 **32:1**. That he may judge his people, to wit, in their presence and hearing.

Psalms 50:5

O ye angels, summon and fetch them to my tribunal; which is poetically spoken; not as if they were actually to do so, but only to

continue the metaphor and representation of the judgment here mentioned.

My saints; the delinquents, the Israelites, whom he calls *saints* ; partly, because they were all by profession a *holy people* , as they are called, Deu_14:2; partly, by an irony, intimating how unworthy they were of that name; and partly, as an argument or evidence against them, because God had chosen and separated them from all the nations of the earth, to be a holy and peculiar people to himself, and they also had solemnly and frequently consecrated and devoted themselves to God, and to his faithful service; all which did greatly aggravate their present apostacy.

Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice, i.e. which have entered into covenant with me, and have ratified that covenant with me by sacrifice, not only in their parents, Exo_24:4, &c., but also in their own persons from time to time, even as oft as they offer sacrifices to me. This clause seems to be added here, to acquaint them with the proper nature, use, and end of sacrifices, which were principally appointed to be signs and seals of the covenant made between God and his people; and consequently to convince them of their great mistake and wickedness in trusting to their outward sacrifices, when they neglect the very life and soul of them, which was the keeping of their covenant with God; and withal to diminish that overweening conceit which they had of sacrifices, and to prepare the way for the abolition of them, as being only necessary to confirm the covenant; which being once for all confirmed by the blood of Christ, they might without any inconvenience be laid aside and abrogated.

Psalms 50:6

The heavens shall declare his righteousness; which they were called to witness, Psa_50:4. So was the earth also. But here he mentions the heavens only, as I humbly conceive, because they were the most impartial and considerable witness in the case; for men upon earth might be false witnesses, either through ignorance and mistake, or through prejudice, and partiality, and passion: but the angels understand things more thoroughly and certainly, and are so exactly pure and sinless, that they neither can nor will tell a lie for God; and therefore their testimony is more valuable. Or the meaning is, that God would convince the people of his

righteousness, and of their own wickedness, by terrible thunders and lightnings, and storms, or other dreadful signs wrought by him in the heaven or the air; by which he did convince his people in two like cases, Deu_5:22,23, &c.; 1Sa_12:17-19.

God is Judge himself; in his own person, or immediately. God will not now reprove them, or contend with them, by his priests or prophets, with whom they may easily strive, as they used to do, but he will do it in an immediate and extraordinary manner from heaven; and therefore they shall be forced to acknowledge his righteousness, and their own unrighteousness; as they must needs do, when the contest is between them and that God who is the great Judge of the world, and cannot possibly do any unrighteous thing, Job_34:13 Rom_3:6, who exactly knows all their hearts and works, and cannot be deceived nor contradicted.

Psalms 50:7

Having brought in God as coming to judgment with them, he now gives an account of the process and of the sentence of the Judge, whose words are contained in this and the following verses.

I will testify against thee; I will plead with thee, and declare my charge or indictment against thee.

Even thy God; not only in general, as thou art my creature, but in a special manner, by many singular favours and obligations, and by that solemn covenant made at Sinai; whereby I avouched thee to be my peculiar people, and thou didst avouch me to be thy God, Deu_26:17,18.

Psalms 50:8

I do not charge thee, or at least this is not the principal matter of my charge, that thou hast neglected sacrifices which thou shouldst have offered; for although thou hast many times omitted thy duty in that kind, yet I have greater things than these to charge thee with.

To have been; or, *they have been* . I confess thou hast been frequent in that work, and hast laid too great a stress upon it, and satisfied thy conscience with it, as if thereby thou hadst made me amends for the errors of thy life.

Psalms 50:9

But be not so vain and foolish as to imagine that thou dost lay any obligations upon me by thy sacrifices; or that I required them because I had need of them, or took any pleasure in them for themselves, or for my own satisfaction by them.

Psalms 50:10

I would command or dispose them at my pleasure, without thy leave or assistance, even the cattle which feed upon innumerable hills, or in valleys and fields.

Psalms 50:11

I know where they are, and whence I can easily fetch them when I think good.

The fowls of the mountains; not only tame and domestic fowls, but even such as are wild and fly up and down upon mountains; which though out of man's reach, are at God's command.

Psalms 50:12

If I wanted or desired any thing, as I do not, being the all-sufficient God,

I would not tell thee, that thou mightest supply my wants.

The fulness thereof, i.e. all those creatures wherewith it is replenished.

Psalms 50:13

If I did want anything, hast thou such carnal and gross conceptions of me, that I need or delight in the blood of brute creature.

Psalms 50:14

If thou wouldst know what sacrifices I most prize, and indispensably require, in the first place, it is that of thankfulness and praise proportionable to my great, and glorious, and numberless favours; which doth not consist barely in verbal acknowledgments, but proceeds from a heart truly and deeply affected with God's mercies, and is accompanied with such a course of life as is gratified or well-pleasing to God; all which is plainly comprehended in

thanksgiving, as that duty is explained in other Scriptures.

Thy vows; either,

1. Ceremonial vows, the sacrifices which thou hast vowed to God.
Or rather,

2. Moral vows; for the things here mentioned are directly opposed unto sacrifices, and preferred before them; for having disparaged, and in some sort rejected,

their sacrifices and burnt-offerings, Psa_50:8, it is not likely that he should have a better opinion of, or value for, their vowed sacrifices; which were of an inferior sort. He seems therefore to understand those substantial vows, and promises, and covenants, which were the very soul of their sacrifices, and to which their sacrifices were but appurtenances and seals, as was noted above, on Psa_50:5, whereby they did *avouch the Lord to be their God, and to walk in his ways*, &c., as it is expressed, Deu_26:17, and engaged themselves to love, and serve, and obey the Lord according to that solemn vow and covenant which they entered into at Sinai, Exo_24:3,7,8, which they oft renewed, and indeed did implicitly repeat in all their sacrifices, which were appointed for this very end, to confirm this covenant.

Psalms 50:15

And make conscience of that great duty of constant and fervent prayer to me; which is an acknowledgment of thy subjection to me, and of thy trust and dependence upon me, and therefore is pleasing to me.

In the day of trouble; when trouble comes, do not avoid it by sinful shifts, not' trust to creatures for relief, as hypocrites generally do, but give glory to me, by relying upon my promises, and expect help from me by hearty and unfeigned prayer.

Thou shalt glorify me: this is mentioned, either,

1. As a privilege; thou shalt have occasion to praise and glorify me for thy deliverance. Or,

2. As a further duty; thou shalt give me the glory of thy deliverance by praising me for it, and improving it to my service and glory.

Psalms 50:16

Unto the wicked, i.e. the same ungodly and hypocritical professors whom he calleth saints, Psa_50:5, in regard of their profession, and here wicked in respect of their practice, and the truth of the thing. God saith: he told them what he would not reprove them for, Psa_50:8, and why, Psa_50:9,**10**, &c.; now he tells them for what he did reprove and condemn them, even for a vain and false profession of religion. With what confidence darest thou make mention of or boast of God's grade and favour vouchsafed unto time, in giving thee such a covenant and statutes, pretending to embrace them, and to give up thyself to the observation of them? This concerns not only the teachers, (of whom some understand these words,) but all the Israelites in general; of whom he rather seems to speak.

Psalms 50:17

Seeing thy practice contradicts thy profession, and makes thee a notorious and impudent liar. Though *with thy mouth thou showest much love* (as is said of them, Eze_33:31) to my statutes and counsels, yet in truth thou hatest them, as they are curbs to thy beloved lusts, and instruments of thy just condemnation, and a manifest reproach to thy conversation. Or,

seeing thou hatest reproof, as this word is oft rendered. And this, above all other parts of God's word, is most hateful to ungodly men, Pro_9:8 Pro_12:1 **15:10,12 Am 5:10**. And therefore this is fitly alleged as an evidence of their wickedness.

Castest my words behind thee; as men do things which they abhor or despise.

Psalms 50:18

Sawest; or, *didst observe*, or *consider*; when he came into thy presence and company, and thou didst understand and consider his ways, and his success and impunity, and he invited thee to a participation of his profit.

Thou consentedst with him; or, as many render it, *then didst run with him*; thou didst readily and greedily associate thyself with him in his unrighteous courses. Thou didst yield to his motions, and that with great complacency and diligence.

Partaker with adulterers, by joining with them in their lewd and filthy practices.

Psalms 50:19

Thou givest, Heb. *thou sendest forth* , to wit, free; for the word is used of men's dismissing their wives or their servants, whom they left to their freedom. Thou hast an unbridled tongue, and castest off all restraints of God's law, and of thy own conscience, and givest thy tongue liberty to speak what thou pleasest, though it be offensive and dishonourable to God, and injurious to thy neighbour, or to thy own soul; which is justly produced as an evidence of their hypocrisy.

To evil; either to sinful or mischievous speeches.

Frameth deceit, i.e. uttereth lies or fair words, wherewith to circumvent those who deal with them.

Psalms 50:20

Thou dost not only speak evil in a sudden passion, or upon some great provocation, but this is thy constant and deliberate practice and business, which thou dost pursue with great facility and complacency; all which this phrase implies.

Thy brother; strictly so called, as the next clause explains it; which is a great aggravation of the sin, and a proof of his inveterate and obstinate wickedness.

Thou slanderest; takest away his good name, which is better than all riches; yea, than life itself; which is contrary to my express and oft-repeated commands.

Psalms 50:21

I kept silence; I did not express my displeasure against thee in such grievous judgments as thou didst deserve. Or, *I was deaf* ; I carried myself like one that did not hear thy sinful speeches, nor see or take any notice of thy wicked actions. And thou didst misconstrue and abuse this my patience and long-suffering, as if it had proceeded from my ignorance, or regardlessness, or approbation of thy evil courses, which I seemed by my connivance to justify or allow, and thereupon didst grow more audacious and impudent in sin. See Ecc_11:9 Isa_26:10 Rom_2:4,5.

I will reprove thee, not with verbal, but real reproofs, i.e. by severe punishments, as this word is used, Job_13:10 Psa_6:1 **38:1 39:11**, and oft elsewhere. I will quickly undeceive and convince thee of the contrary to thy cost.

Set them in order before thine eyes; I will bring to thy remembrance, and lay upon thy conscience, all thy sins, in full number and in their order, with all their circumstances; and thou shalt then see and know that I diligently observed and hated them all, and that none of them shall go unpunished.

Psalms 50:22

Ye that forget God; ye hypocritical and ungodly Israelites, who have *forgotten* (as Moses foretold you would do, Deu_32:18) *the God that formed you*, and made you his people, and forgotten his mercies and judgments, by which you should have been instructed, and the covenant which you made with him, and by which you stand obliged to him.

Lest I tear you in pieces; lest my patience be turned into fury, and I proceed to take vengeance on you.

And there be none to deliver; or, *for* (as the Hebrew particle is oft rendered) *there is none that can or will deliver you*. None can rescue you from the power of mine anger.

Psalms 50:23

Praise; or, *thanksgiving* as this word is rendered, Psa_50:14. **See Poole "Psa_50:14"**.

Glorifieth me; he and he only gives me the honour that I require and prize, and not he who loads my altar with a multitude of sacrifices; whereby you vainly and falsely conceit that you please and glorify me, although in the mean time you live in the gross neglect of the more important duties of piety, and justice, and charity; whereas in truth you greatly dishonour me, and my worship and service, by your infamous lives.

That ordereth his conversation aright, Heb. *that composeth or disposeth* the way or manner of *his* (which pronoun is frequently understood) life, i.e. that lives orderly, and according to rule; for sinners are said to walk disorderly, 2Th_3:6,7,11, and by chance, as it is in the Hebrew text, Lev_26:21,23, which is opposed to

order; and the Scripture owns no order but what God prescribes or approves; and therefore this word

aright is justly added in our translation.

Will I show, Heb. *I will make him to see* , i.e. to enjoy, as that verb is oft used, as we have showed again and again.

The salvation of God, i.e. my salvation; that true and everlasting happiness which I have prepared for all my faithful friends and servants, and for them only. So false is that position of some of the Jewish rabbins, that *every Israelite hath a portion in the world to come* .

Psalms 51:1 PSALM 51

To the chief musician ; to be sung by him and other sacred musicians publicly in the temple through all ages; that his repentance might be as manifest and public as his crime and scandal was. *When Nathan the prophet came unto him* : after his conscience was awakened by Nathan's words, **2Sa 12**, and Nathan was gone, David falls very seriously upon the practice of sincere repentance, and digested his meditations into this Psalm.

David prayeth to God for the remission of his original and actual sins, Psa_51:1,2, whereof he maketh a deep confession, Psa_51:3-5; and for the renovation of his Holy Spirit, to support himself and instruct others, Psa_51:6-14; promising him also unfeigned and sincere thankfulness, Psa_51:15-17; with a prayer for the good of the whole church, Psa_51:18,19.

Have mercy upon me; pity, and help, and answer me, in the desires I am now spreading before thee.

According to thy loving-kindness: I pretend to no merit, but humbly implore thy free grace and mercy. Thy mercies are infinite, and therefore sufficient for my relief, and such indeed do I need.

Blot out; either,

1. Out of my conscience and soul, where it hath left a stain and filthy character. Or,

2. Out of thy book of remembrance and accounts, in which all men's sins are written, and out of Which all men shall be judged hereafter, Rev_20:12; which is spoken of God after the manner of men. **See Poole "Isa_43:25"; See Poole "Isa_44:22"**.

Psalms 51:2

Wash me thoroughly, Heb. *multiply to wash me* ; by which phrase he implies the greatness of his guilt, and the insufficiency of all legal washings, and the absolute necessity of some other and better thing to wash him, even of God's grace, and the blood of Christ; which as *Abraham* saw by faith, Joh_8:56, so did David, as is sufficiently evident (allowing for the darkness of the dispensation and expressions of the Old Testament) from divers passages of the Psalms, of which I have spoken in their proper places; and his earnest and passionate desire of pardon, which he desires above all other things; wherein he showeth himself to be a true penitent, because his chief care and desire was to obtain God's favour, and the forgiveness of his sins, and not the prevention of those external sore judgments which God by Nathan threatened to bring upon him and his house, 2Sa_12:10,**11**, about which here is not one word in this Psalm; whereas the cares and desires of hypocrites chiefly are bent towards worldly things, as we see in Cain, Gen_4:13,**16,17**, and Saul, 1Sa_15:30, and others, Hos_7:14.

Psalms 51:3

I acknowledge, with grief and shame, and abhorrency of myself and of my sins; which hitherto I have dissembled and covered. And being thus truly penitent, I hope and beg that I may find mercy with thee.

My transgressions; for it was not a single, but a complicated wickedness, adultery, murder, injustice, perfidiousness; and frequent repetition of and long and stupid continuance in abominable filthiness, and that with public scandal.

My sin is ever before me; that which I had cast behind my back is now constantly in my view, and fixed in my thoughts and memory.

Psalms 51:4

Against thee, thee only; which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, because he had unquestionably sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah and many others, who were either injured by it, or scandalized at it; but comparatively. So the sense is this, Though I have sinned against my own body and conscience, and against others; yet nothing is more grievous and terrible to me, than to consider that I have sinned against thee; partly upon a general account, because this is the chief malignity and sinfulness of sin, that it offends and injures the glorious and blessed God; and partly upon particular reasons, because I set thee at defiance, and having used all wicked arts to conceal my sins from men, and being free from fear of punishment from them, I went on boldly in sin, casting off all reverence to thy holy and omniscient Majesty, and all dread of thy judgments, and because I sinned against thee, to whom I had such numerous and peculiar and eminent obligations, as thy prophet Nathan truly suggested to me, 2Sa_12:7,8.

In thy sight; with gross contempt of God, whom I well knew to be a spectator of my most secret actions.

That thou mightest be justified; the particle that is not taken causally or intentionally, as if this was David's design, but eventually, as it is Exo_11:9 Psa_30:12 Hos_8:4. This will be the fruit or consequent of my sin, that whatsoever severities thou shalt use towards me and mine, it will be no blemish to thy benignity, or righteousness, or fidelity, but the blame of all will rest upon my head as I desire it may, and thy justice will be glorified by all men.

When thou speakest, Heb. *in thy words* , i.e. in all thy threatenings denounced against me by Nathan, and in any further sentence which thou shalt see fit to pass upon me.

When thou judgest; when thou dost plead or contend with me, or execute thy sentence or judgment upon me. Or, when thou art judged, as it is rendered Rom_3:4, for the word may be taken passively as well as actively; when any man shall presume to censure time, as not keeping thy covenant and mercy promised to David.

Psalms 51:5

This verse is both by Jewish and Christian, by ancient and later, interpreters, generally and most truly understood of original sin; which he here mentions as an aggravation of his crime: and the sense of the place is this, Nor is this the only sin which I have reason to acknowledge and bewail before thee; for this filthy stream leads me to a corrupt fountain; and upon a serious review of my heart and life I find that I am guilty of innumerable other sins, and that this heinous crime, though drawn forth by external temptations, yet was indeed the proper fruit of my own filthy and vile nature, which, without the restraints of thy providence or grace, ever was, and still is like to be, inclinable and ready to commit these and ten thousand other sins, as occasion offers itself; for which contrariety of my very nature to thine, thou mayst justly loathe and condemn me; and for which I humbly beg thy pardon and grace.

Conceive me, Heb. *warm or cherish me* in the womb, before I was

shapen or *formed* there.

Psalms 51:6

Thou desirest; or, *delightest in* ; or, *requirest* ; Heb. *willest*. Truth either,

1. Sincerity in confessing my sins; which therefore I have now acknowledged, though hitherto I have practised much falsehood and dissimulation in endeavouring to conceal them from men. Or rather,

2. Integrity or uprightness of heart; which seem to be here opposed to that iniquity mentioned in the last verse, in which he was, and all men are, framed and born. And this may seem to be added, partly as a proof or aggravation of the sinfulness of original corruption, because it is contrary to the holy nature and will of God, which requireth not only unblamableness in men's actions, but also universal innocency and rectitude of their minds and hearts; and partly as an aggravation of his actual sin, wherein he had used such gross deceit and treachery.

In the hidden part, i.e. in the heart, called *the hidden man of the heart* , 1Pe_3:4, and *the secret part* , Rom_2:16, which in the former branch he called the reins or inward parts.

Thou shalt make me to know: so he declares his hope that God would pardon and cure his folly, which he had discovered, and make him wiser for the future. But this seems not to suit well with the context, which runs wholly in another strain. The word therefore is and may be rendered otherwise, *thou hast made me to know* . So this is another aggravation of his sin, that it was committed against that wisdom and knowledge, which God had not only revealed to him outwardly in his word, but also inwardly by his Spirit, writing it in his heart, according to his promise, Jer_31:33. Or thus, *do thou make me to know* ; the future verb being here taken imperatively, and as a prayer; as the following futures are here translated, Psa_51:7,8. Having now said, for the aggravation of his sin, that God did *desire or require truth in the inward parts* , he takes that occasion to break forth into prayer, which also he continues in the following verses. Only as he prays there for justification or pardon of sin, so here he prays for renovation or sanctification. So his meaning is this, *therefore* (as the particle and is oft used, as hath been showed) *in the hidden part do thou make me to know wisdom* . Or thus, *thou wouldst have me know* ; for futures are oft taken potentially, as Psa_118:6 Mat_12:25, compared with Mar_3:24, and elsewhere. And verbs which signify *making* or *causing* are sometimes understood only of the will or command; as Jeroboam is said to *make Israel to sin* , 1Ki_14:16, because he commanded them to do so, Hos_5:11. This I propose with submission; but if this sense be admitted, the last clause of the verse answers very well to the former, as it doth in the foregoing and following verses, and every where in these books: for this, *thou wouldst have me know* , answers to that, *thou wilt or desirest* ; and *in the hidden part* , answers to that in *the inward parts* ; and *wisdom* is the same thing for substance with truth, only called by another name. *Wisdom* , i.e. true piety and integrity, which is called wisdom, Job_28:28 Psa_111:10, and in many other texts, as sin on the contrary is commonly called, as it really is, *folly* . And to *know wisdom* is here meant of *knowing it* practically and experimentally, so as to approve, and love, and

practise it; as words of knowledge are most frequently taken in Scripture, and in other authors.

Psalms 51:7

With hyssop; or, as *with hyssop* ; the note of similitude being frequently understood. As lepers and other unclean persons are by thy appointment purified by the use of hyssop and other things, Lev_14:6 Num_19:6; so do thou cleanse me, a most leprous and polluted creature, by thy grace, and by the virtue of that blood of Christ, which is signified by those ceremonial usages.

Psalms 51:8

Send me glad tidings of thy reconciliation to me, and by thy Spirit seal the pardon of my sins to my conscience, which will fill me with joy, that mine heart, which hath been sorely wounded and terrified by thy dreadful message sent by Nathan, and by the dismal sentence of thy law denounced against such sinners as I am, now by this occasion brought home to my conscience, may be revived and comforted by the manifestation of thy favour to my soul.

Psalms 51:9

Do not look upon them with an eye of indignation and revenge, but forget and forgive them. See Psa_51:1.

Psalms 51:10

Create in me a clean heart; seeing I have not only defiled myself by these actual sins, but also have a most filthy heart, corrupted even from my birth, Psa_51:5, which nothing but God's almighty and creating power can purify, do thou effectually work in me a holy frame of heart, whereby both my inward filth may be purged away, and I may be prevented from falling into such actual and scandalous sins.

Renew that good temper which before this apostacy I had in some measure, be pleased graciously to restore it to me with advantage.

Right, Heb. *firm* , or *constant* , or *steadfast* , that I may not be so easily shaken and cast down by temptation, as I have been, but that my resolution may be more fixed and unmovable.

Spirit; temper or disposition of soul or spirit; as the word spirit is very frequently used in Scripture.

Within me, Heb. *in my inward parts* . He wisely strikes at the root and cause of all sinful actions.

Psalms 51:11

From thy presence, i.e. from thy favour, and care, and gracious communion with thee.

Thy Holy Spirit; thy sanctifying Spirit, by which alone I can have acquaintance and fellowship with thee.

Psalms 51:12

The joy of thy salvation; the comfortable sense of thy saving grace and help, promised and vouchsafed to me, both for my present and everlasting salvation. *Uphold me* ; a weak and frail creature, never able to stand against corruption and temptation without thy powerful and gracious succours.

Free; or, *ingenuous* , or *liberal* , or *princely* ; which he seems to oppose to his own base, and illiberal; and disingenuous, and servile spirit, which he had discovered in his wicked and unworthy practices; and desires a better spirit of God, which may free him from the bondage of sin, and enable and incline him freely, and cheerfully, and constantly to run the way of God's precepts. See Exo_35:21 Psa_110:3 Rom_8:15,16 2Co_3:17.

Psalms 51:13

Thy ways; either,

1. Thy will and their duty, and the way to their eternal happiness; or rather,

2. The manner of thy dealing with sinners; whom thou dost so severely chastise for their sins, and yet so graciously receive to mercy upon their repentance; both which I will show them in my own example, which I will declare unto them, although I shall therewith publish my own shame; which I shall most willingly bear, that I may in some measure repair the injury which I have done to thee and others by my public and scandalous crimes.

Sinners shall be converted unto thee; and I persuade myself that my endeavours shall not want success; and that either thy justice or severity, or thy goodness and clemency, will bring them to repentance.

Psalms 51:14

From blood-guiltiness, Heb. *from bloods* , because he had been the cause of the death, not only of Uriah, but of others of the Lord's people with him, 2Sa_11:17.

Thy righteousness; either,

1. Thy faithfulness in making good thy promises; or rather,
2. Thy clemency and goodness, as that word is frequently used.

Psalms 51:15

Open thou my lips; which are shut with shame, and grief, and horror. Restore unto me the opportunity, and ability, and liberty which formerly I had of speaking to thee with freedom, and boldness, and familiarity, as this phrase signifies, Eze_3:27 24:27 Eph_6:19,20.

Psalms 51:16

Thou desirest not sacrifice; which is not to be understood absolutely, and universally, as appears from Psa_51:19, but comparatively, of which **See Poole** "Psa_40:6", and with particular respect to David's crimes of murder and adultery, which were not to be expiated by any sacrifice, but by the law of God were to be punished with death. Thou requirest more and better sacrifices, which here follow.

Else would I give it; else I should have spared no cost in that kind.

Psalms 51:17

The sacrifices: this is instead of or of more value than many sacrifices.

Of God; which God in such cases as mine requires, and will accept; in which sense we read of *the work of God* , Joh_6:28.

A broken and a contrite heart, i.e. a heart deeply afflicted and grieved for sin, humbled under the sense of God's displeasure, and earnestly seeking and willing to accept of reconciliation with God upon any terms. See Isa_57:15 **61:1 66:2** Mat_11:28. This is opposed to that *hard* or *stony heart* , of which we read so oft, which signifies a heart insensible of the burden of sin, stubborn and rebellious against God, imminent and incorrigible.

Thou wilt not despise, i.e. thou dost highly approve; as such negative phrases oft signify, as hath been formerly proved.

Psalms 51:18

In thy good pleasure; or, *for* or *according* to (for the Hebrew prefix *beth* is frequently used both those ways) *thy good grace* , or *favour* , or *pleasure* , i.e. thy free and rich mercy, and thy gracious purpose and promise made to and concerning Zion, of which see Psa_132:14, and do not repent of it, nor retract it, as I have given thee cause to do. Unto Zion; synecdochically put for Jerusalem, as the next clause explains it, and both put for the whole people of Israel and church of God; whom I have highly scandalized and injured already, and exposed to the danger of utter destruction, which thou mightest inflict upon them for the sins of their king, as thou usest to do in like cases.

Build thou the walls of Jerusalem; perfect the walls and buildings of that city, and especially let the temple be built and established in this city, notwithstanding its pollution by my sins, which I pray thee to purge away.

Psalms 51:19

Then; when thou hast granted my humble requests expressed in the former verses, when thou hast renewed, and pardoned, and comforted me, and restored thy favour unto thy people and this city.

The sacrifices; which now for our sins thou mayst justly reject and abhor.

Of righteousness; which I and my people, being justified and reconciled to thee, shall offer with sincere and penitent hearts. These are opposed to the sacrifices of the wicked, which God abhors, Pro_15:8 Isa_1:11, &c.

Then shall they offer, i.e. they who by thy appointment are to do that work, the priests in the name and on the behalf of thy people.

Bullocks; the best and costliest sacrifices, and that in great numbers, in testimony of their gratitude to God, for thy great favour in pardoning mine and their sins, and preventing that total ruin which we had reason to expect and fear upon that account.

Psalms 52:1 PSALM 52

Doeg the Edomite; so called, either,

1. Because he was born or bred in Edom. Or,
2. From his treacherous and bloody disposition; for which the Edomites are infamous in Scripture; as the Israelites are called Sodom and Gomorrah, Isa_1:10.

David reproveth the insolency of Doeg, Psa_52:1-4; prophesieth his destruction, Psa_52:5. The righteous rejoice at it, Psa_52:6. He showeth the Strength and hope of this wicked man, Psa_52:7; but placeth his own confidence and trust in God, and praiseth him, Psa_52:8,9.

Why boastest thou thyself, as if thou hadst done a great exploit, which none else durst undertake; and thereby established the crown upon Saul's head, and thyself in his favour; and broken all David's designs, by striking a terror into all his favourers by this sad example?

O mighty man! he speak ironically. O valiant captain! O glorious action! to kill a few weak and unarmed persons in the king's presence, and under the protection of his guards! Surely thy name will be famous to all ages for such heroical courage.

The goodness of God endureth continually; God's love and favour to his people, and in particular to me, is not fading and inconstant, but everlasting and unchangeable, and therefore not to be hindered or defeated by any wicked designs or practices. And therefore though he hath permitted thee, and may do others, to rage for a season, yet he will defend, and in due time deliver, his people.

Psalms 52:2

Deviseth i.e. expresseth what thy wicked mind had devised. Thus *skilfulness* is ascribed to those hands which are governed by a skilful or prudent man, Psa_78:72. This word implies that Doeg's words were not uttered rashly and unadvisedly, but with premeditated malice, and a mischievous design, which he waited for an opportunity to execute; and therefore he readily took the first occasion which offered itself.

Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully; wherewith a man pretending only to shave off the hair, doth suddenly and unexpectedly cut the throat. So Doeg pretended only to vindicate himself from the imputation of disloyalty, 1Sa_22:8, but really intended to expose the priests, who were friends to David, to the king's fury and cruelty.

Psalms 52:3

Evil and

good may be here taken, either,

1. Morally; Thou lovest wickedness and not goodness; for so comparative passages are oft meant, as Psa_118:8, *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man*, i.e. It is good to trust God, but it is not good to trust man; for this is absolutely forbidden, Psa_146:3 Jer_17:5. Or,

2. Physically. Thou lovest to speak or act to the hurt and ruin of others, rather than to their benefit. Thou mightest, without any danger to thyself, have been silent concerning Ahimelech's fact, or have put a favourable construction upon it; but thou hast chosen rather to misrepresent and aggravate it. He saith,

thou lovest, to imply that he did this not by any constraint or necessity, but by choice, and with complacency, and out of a love to mischief.

Lying, whereof Doeg was guilty, partly in reporting that *he* (i.e. Ahimelech) *inquired of the Lord for him*, (David,) 1Sa_22:10, which he did not, **1Sa 21**\$, where all that history is recorded; and partly in putting a false interpretation upon what he did, in *giving him victuals and a sword*, as if he had done it knowingly, and in conspiracy with David, and against Saul, as appears by comparing Doeg's answer with Saul's inquiry, 1Sa_22:7,8.

Righteousness, i.e. the whole and naked truth, without any such lying or malicious comment upon it, which was but an act of justice due from thee to any man, and much more on the behalf of so innocent and sacred a person.

Psalms 52:4

Devouring words, such as might swallow up and destroy a whole family at once.

Psalms 52:5

Likewise, i.e. totally and unavoidably, as thou didst destroy the priests.

Pluck thee, i.e. violently, and irresistibly, and suddenly remove thee, as the Hebrew word signifies.

Out of thy dwelling-place; from thy house and lands, and all the wages of thy unrighteousness. Or, *out of* his (i.e. the Lord's) tabernacle; in which thou didst seek and take the matter of thy slanders, and from which thou didst cut off the Lord's priests. Therefore God shall excommunicate thee from his presence, and from the society of the faithful.

Root thee out; though thou seemest to have taken very deep rooting, and to be the more firmly settled for this barbarous cruelty, yet God shall pluck thee up by the very roots, and destroy thee both root and branch.

Out of the land of the living; out of this world, as the phrase is taken, Isa_53:8 Eze_32:32, and elsewhere; which was very terrible to him, who had all his portion in this world.

Psalms 52:6

The righteous shall see, to wit, thy remarkable downfall, and consequently shall survive thee in spite of all thy power and malice against them.

Fear; both reverence God's just judgment upon thee, and be afraid of provoking God to send like judgment upon them.

Shall laugh at him; not taking pleasure in his ruin as such, but only in the glory of God's justice vindicated thereby, Rev_18:20, and deriding their vain and carnal confidence in their wicked courses.

Psalms 52:7

The man: these are the triumphant words of the righteous. This is the great and famous man, take special notice of him, and of his doleful end.

That made not God his strength that trusted and feared Saul more than God, and was willing to purchase Saul's favour with God's displeasure.

Trusted in the abundance of his riches; thought himself secure in his great and growing wealth, without God's protection or blessing.

Psalms 52:8

I am like a green olive tree; when Doeg and his brethren shall wither and perish, I, who have made God my refuge, I, whom he despised and persecuted, and thought to be in a desperate condition, shall be established and flourish.

In the house of God; either,

1. In God's church, or among his people. Or,

2. In God's tabernacle, from which Doeg shall be plucked away, Psa_52:5, and from which I am now banished by the tyranny and malice of this man, and his confederates; but, I doubt not, I shall be restored to it, and *dwell in it all the days of my life* , which is the one thing that I desire, Psa_27:4.

Psalms 52:9

Because thou hast done it, i.e. destroyed Doeg, and all mine and thine implacable enemies, and established me in the throne, and in thy house; of which I am no less assured than if it were already done.

I will wait on thy name; I will continue in thy way, placing my whole trust and confidence in thy power, and goodness, and faithfulness, all which are called God's name, and not turn aside to any crooked paths for my deliverance, as others do, Psa_125:5.

Before thy saints, i.e. in the eyes of thy saints. They, whose judgments only are to be valued, approve of this practice, of trusting God and keeping his way, as the wisest and safest course, and have ever found it so to be by their own experience, however Doeg and his accomplices account it mere folly, and the ready way to ruin. But the last words of this clause may very conveniently be joined with the former clause, thus,

I will wait upon thy name before thy saints; which seems best to suit with the first clause, *I will praise thee* ; which surely was meant of praising God publicly, or before the saints; and then it follows conveniently. And in the mean time

I will wait on thy name, *in the presence of thy saints* , who shall plainly see that I do so by the whole course of my life. And those words,

for it is good, may be enclosed within a parenthesis, as is very usual in Scripture, and may be referred, either to God's name, *for thy name is good* ; or to *wait on it, for it is good to wait upon it* .

Psalms 53:1 PSALM 53

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm, some few words excepted, is wholly the same with **Psa 14**, and therefore the reader must resort thither for the interpretation of it. And it is repeated, partly because the matter of it is so important and necessary to be known and considered; and partly because there arose some new and suitable occasion which made David sing it a second time, and that with some small alterations. And the compiler or compilers of David's Psalms had so great a reverence for their composer, whom they knew to be guided by Divine inspiration, that they would not lose any of his fragments, and therefore repeated this Psalm with the variations which he had made.

Mahalath seems to be the name of a musical instrument, or tune; wherein, as in the rest of them, it is better to confess our ignorance, as the Hebrew doctors themselves do, than to give way to vain and groundless conjectures about them.

David describeth the atheism and corruption of men, &c. See **Psa 10 Psa 14**.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 53:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 53:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 53:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 53:5

Where no fear was, i.e. where there was no great nor sufficient cause of fear. See Lev_26:36 Deu_28:65 Job_15:21 Pro_28:1. They who designed to secure themselves from all fear and danger by their contempt of God, and by the persecution of good men, and by other wicked courses, were by those means filled with the terrors which they sought to avoid.

Hath scattered the bones; hath not only broken their *bones*, i.e. their strength and force, which is oft noted by the bones, as Psa_6:2 **31:10 51:8**, but also dispersed them hither and thither, so as there is no hopes of a reunion and restoration.

Against thee, i.e. against my people, expressed, Psa_53:4, or Israel, or Zion, as it is in the next verse.

Thou, O Zion, or Jerusalem, which they besiege,

hast put them to shame, for the great and strange disappointment of their hopes and confidence. It was a great reproach to them, for such numerous and mighty forces to be baffled and conquered by those whom they thought to swallow up at a morsel.

Despised them; or, *rejected them*; cursed them. Therefore it is no wonder if they could not stand before thee.

Psalms 53:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 54:1 PSALM 54

Of which he speaks **1Sa 23**, when they did seek to betray him a second time.

The psalmist, complaining of his oppressors, prayeth for God's protection; and for the righteous punishment of his enemies, Psa_54:1-3. Placing his hope in God's help, Psa_54:4,5, he promiseth a free sacrifice of thanksgiving to him, Psa_54:6,7.

By thy name, i. e. by thy own strength, as the next words explain it, because I have no other refuge. Or, *for thy name*, i.e. for thy own glory, which is concerned in my deliverance.

Judge me, i.e. judge or give sentence for me, or plead my cause, as this phrase is oft taken, as we have seen.

Psalms 54:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 54:3

Strangers; the Ziphites, whom, though Israelites, he calls *strangers*, in regard of their barbarous and perfidious disposition and carriage towards him, by which they showed themselves to be estranged from God, as the wicked are said to be, Psa_58:3, and from the commonwealth of Israel, and from all the laws of piety and humanity; for which causes he calls such persons heathens, Psa_59:5, and elsewhere.

They have not set God before them; they cast off all regard to thy presence and authority, and all fear of thy judgments.

Psalms 54:4

Behold; consider it, and see the vanity of all your wicked practices against me.

The Lord is with them that uphold my soul; he fights for them, and on my behalf, and therefore against all mine enemies.

Psalms 54:5

In thy truth; or, *for* or *according to thy truth*; whereby thou art engaged to fulfil thy promises made to me, and thy threatenings denounced against thine and mine implacable enemies.

Psalms 54:6

Freely sacrifice; not by constraint, as many do, because they are obliged to it, and cannot neglect it without shame and inconvenience to themselves; but with a willing and cheerful mind, which thou lovest in and above all sacrifices.

It; either thy name; or rather, to praise thy name;

is good, i.e. an act of justice, and piety, and gratitude.

Psalms 54:7

He speaks of it as a thing already done, either to express his assurance of it, or because this Psalm was made after it was done.

His desire; or, *thy vengeance*; which may be understood out of Psa_54:5. But there is no necessity of any supplement. The words in the Hebrew run thus,

mine eye hath looked upon mine enemies; either with delight, as this phrase signifies, Psa_22:17 **27:4**, and elsewhere; or without fear or shame. I shall not be afraid to look them in the face, having God on my side.

Psalms 55:1 PSALM 55

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was certainly composed by David, when he was greatly distressed and persecuted, either by Saul, or rather by Absalom, and betrayed by some pretended or former friend.

David, being surrounded and surprised with danger and distress, complaineth to God, Psa_55:1-8, prayeth for the frustrating the practice of his cruel and false enemies, Psa_55:9-15, and strengtheneth himself with God's protection, Psa_55:16-18, and his enemies' utter destruction, Psa_55:19-23.

Turn not away thy face and ear, as one resolved not to hear nor help.

Psalms 55:2

For my misery is very great, and forceth tears and bitter cries from me.

Psalms 55:3

The voice of the enemy, i.e. their clamours, and threats, and slanders, and insolent boastings; all which are hateful to thee, as well as injurious to me.

They cast iniquity upon me: the sense is, either,

1. They make me the great object of their wicked, and injurious, and mischievous practices; or,
2. They lay many crimes to my charge falsely, as if by my wickedness I was the cause of all my calamities.

They hate me; their anger and rage against me is no sudden and transitory passion, but is boiled up into malice and hatred.

Psalms 55:4

My heart is sore pained within me; with pains like those of a travailing woman, as the word signifies. My heart, which hath

commonly supported me in my distresses, is now ready to sink within me; therefore, Lord, pity and help me.

The terrors of death; either deadly terrors, such as seize upon men in the agonies of death; or fear of death; which is the more grievous to me, because my death will reflect dishonour upon thee, and bring many miseries upon the people.

Psalms 55:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 55:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 55:7

Like a dove ; which being fearful, and pursued by birds of prey, flies away, and that very swiftly and far, and into solitary places, where it hides and secures itself in the holes of the rocks, or in some other secret and safe place; all which fitly represents David's present disposition and desire. *And be at rest* ; or, *that I might* , or *where I might, be at rest* , or *dwell* , in some settled and safe place, and be delivered from those uncertainties and wanderings to which I am now exposed.

In the wilderness; where I might be free from the company, and rage, and treachery of my wicked enemies, who are worse than the wild beasts of the wilderness.

Psalms 55:8

From the force and fury of mine enemies, which now highly threaten me.

Psalms 55:9

Divide their tongues, i.e. destroy them by dividing.

Their tongues, i.e. their speech, as thou didst at Babel, **Ge 11;** their votes, and opinions, and counsels; which was eminently done among Absalom's followers, **2Sa 17.**

I have seen; or, *I do see* or *perceive* , by certain and general report. Violence and strife in the city; that injustice, and fraud, and oppression, and contention bear rule there, instead of that public justice and peace which I established and maintained in it. In the city; either,

1. In Keilah, where David thought to abide, **1Sa 23**, Or,
2. In Gibeah, where Saul had his abode. Or rather,
3. In Jerusalem; which is called the city by way of eminency; and which in Absalom's time was the chief seat of rebellion, and a mere sink of all sins. And this circumstance is noted as an aggravation of their wickedness, that it was committed in that city, where the throne and seat of public justice was settled; and where God was in a special manner present and worshipped; and where they had great opportunities, both for the knowledge and practice of their several duties.

Psalms 55:10

They, i.e. the violence and strife last mentioned, Psa_55:9, go about it; do encompass it, and are as it were the garrison by which they design to defend it.

Upon the walls thereof; in the more outward parts, as also in the very midst of it, as it follows. So that all parts were horribly corrupted.

Psalms 55:11

The places of buying and selling, and of public and common conversation. So their sins were both universal and impudent.

Psalms 55:12

Not an enemy; either,

1. Not an open and professed enemy; or rather,
2. Not an old and inveterate enemy, as may be gathered from the following description.

I could have borne it with more patience, because I could expect nothing else from such persons.

Hated me with a manifest or old hatred.

I would have hid myself from him; I could and should easily have prevented or avoided the effects of his hatred.

Psalms 55:13

Mine equal; not in power and dignity, which could not be, but in reputation for his deep wisdom and excellent conduct, and the great influence which he had upon me, and upon all my people.

My guide; whose counsel I highly prized, and constantly sought and followed: all which agrees very well to Ahithophel. See 2Sa_15:12,**31 16:23**.

Psalms 55:14

We took sweet counsel together; I imparted my secret thoughts and designs to him with great delight and satisfaction.

We walked unto the house of God; we agreed no less in exercises of piety, than in acts of state and policy. *In company* ; or, *in comfort* , or *with consent* ; as all the ancients render it. He seemed as forward in religion as I.

Psalms 55:15

Them, i.e. him and all such false-hearted wretches, that pretended religion with wicked design, and now have manifestly apostatized, both from the profession and practice of it, and fallen into all manner of wickedness; for such are the vilest of men, and most obnoxious to the curse of God.

Into hell; or, *into the grave* ; cut them off by a sudden and violent death, as thou didst those Num_16:32. But these imprecations used by inspired persons in extraordinary cases is no precedent for our imitation.

Their dwellings; or, *where they sojourn* . They carry their wickedness along with them from place to place, and leave the impressions and effects of it wheresoever they come.

Among them, Heb. *in their inwards* . Wickedness is deeply rooted in their hearts, and it breaks forth in all their houses and actions.

Psalms 55:16

Whilst he destroys them. As they and I differ in the courses of our lives, so shall we in our ends.

Psalms 55:17

The three stated times of prayer amongst the Jews. See Dan_6:10 Act_3:1 **10:3,9,30**.

Psalms 55:18

He hath delivered my soul: either this is an argument whereby he encourageth himself now to trust God, because of former

deliverances; or *lie* speaks of a future deliverance as a thing done, because of the certainty of it.

In peace; or, *into peace* . He hath restored me from the state of war to my former peace and tranquillity.

For there were many with me; for there were more with me than against me; even the holy angels, whom God employed to defend and deliver me. See 2Ki_6:16 Psa_34:7 **57:3**.

3. Or, *for* (or rather *though* , as this particle is oft rendered) there were many with me, or about me, or against me, as this particle is rendered, Psa_85:3 **94:16**, and in other places. So he speaks here of his enemies; which seems best to suit with the context; for of them he speaks implicitly in the foregoing words, and expressly in the following.

Psalms 55:19

God shall hear; either,

1. My prayers against them, mentioned Psa_55:15. Or,
2. Their reproaches, Psa_55:12; their deceitful and treacherous speeches, Psa_55:21. He said God would *hear his voice* , Psa_55:17; now he adds that God will hear his enemies' voice also, of which he spake Psa_55:3.

Afflict them; or, *testify against them* , or *give an answer to them* ; not in words, but really, and by dreadful punishments, as this word signifies, Eze_14:4; which seems best to agree with the next foregoing word, *God will hear and answer them. He that abideth of old* , Heb. *he that inhabiteth antiquity* or *eternity* ; who is eternal, and therefore unchangeable and almighty; and consequently, as he ever was, so he still is and will be, ready to defend his people, and to destroy their enemies; and none can prevent nor hinder-him in either of those designs.

No changes; either,

1. For the better; because they do not repent nor turn from their sins. But then the next clause must be rendered, as it is in the Hebrew, *and not fear God* . Or rather,
2. For the worse; for of such destructive changes this word, when applied to persons. is generally used in Scripture, as Job_10:17

Job_14:14, &c., because they meet with no crosses nor disappointments, and hitherto all their counsels succeed well, and the people flow in to them unanimously; as it was in the beginning and progress of Absalom's rebellion.

They fear not God; their prosperous success makes them go on securely and obstinately in their wicked courses, without any regard to God, or dread of his judgments; there being nothing which more hardens men's hearts, and makes them presumptuous and incorrigible, than uninterrupted prosperity. See Psa_30:6 Pro_1:32 Jer_22:21.

Psalms 55:20

He, i.e. they, the persons last mentioned. Before the singular number, Psa_55:13,**14**, was suddenly changed into the plural, Psa_55:15, that the punishment might reach not him only, but his partners, in those treacherous and treasonable actions; and here is as sudden a change from the plural into the singular, and he returns to that person who was the chief contriver and promoter of this rebellion under Absalom, even to Ahithophel, of whom he spoke Psa_55:13; and though he doth not excuse the rest, as we have seen, yet he lays the chief blame upon him, and here he adds new aggravations of his treason.

Hath put forth his hands, in way of force or violence, as this phrase is used, Gen_37:22 1Sa_26:9 Neh_13:21 Act_12:1.

Against such as be at peace with him; against me, who gave him no provocation nor disturbance, but lived in great peace, and security, and friendship with him.

Hath broken his covenant; all those solemn obligations by which he was tied to me, both as his king and as his friend.

Psalms 55:21

He covered his treasonable and bloody design with fair and flattering speeches.

Drawn swords; pernicious in their design and consequences.

Psalms 55:22

Thy burden, or *portion*, Heb. *gift*; whatsoever affliction God giveth or sendeth to thee; for even the sufferings of good men are called God's gifts in Scripture, Phi_1:29 Joh_18:11. So it is a

synecdochical expression. Or, whatsoever gift thou desirest from him. Although the following words of the verse seem to restrain it to afflictions. The sense is, All thy affairs, and crosses, and cares, and fears, lay them upon the shoulders of the Almighty by faith and prayer, with a confident expectation of a good issue. He directeth this speech to himself, or his own soul, as he oft doth in this book, and withal to all good men in like circumstances. *To be moved*, i.e. to be removed, to wit, from his sure and happy estate. Or, which agrees as well with the Hebrew,

he shall not suffer the righteous to be moved, or *fall for ever*, as he doth wicked men; though he may for a season suffer them to be shaken, yet he will not suffer them to be utterly overwhelmed.

Psalms 55:23

Shalt bring them down; my wicked enemies, of whom I have hitherto spoken.

Bloody and

deceitful men; that colour their cruel intentions with specious and deceitful pretences; which are most hateful to God and all men.

Shall not live out half their days; not half of what others live, and they by the course of nature might live; but shall be cut off by God's just judgment, by an untimely and violent death.

But I will trust in thee; and in this confidence I will quietly and patiently wait upon thee, for their downfall, and for my deliverance.

Psalms 56:1 PSALM 56

Jonath-elem-reehokim is supposed to be the name of a song; but many render it, as the words signify, *concerning the dumb dove afar off*; all which agrees very well to David in his present circumstances. He calls himself a *dove* for his innocency, and folly (which is ascribed to the dove, Hos_7:11) in casting himself into this snare; and for his vexation and persecution by his enemies, those birds of prey; and for his sad and mournful posture. *Silent* he was, and it was his prudence so to be in this place and condition; and he was in a place remote enough from his father's house, and from God's sanctuary, where his heart was.

When the Philistines took him in Gath; when being chased by Saul's restless malice, he had put himself into the hands and power of the Philistines at Gath; where when he was the following meditations came into his mind, which after his escape he digested into this order and Psalm.

David, praying to God, complaineth of his sufferings, and magnifieth his word, Psa_56:1-10; is confident of God's fulfilling it, and promiseth to praise him for it, Psa_56:11-13.

Man, i.e. men, weak and miserable men, as the word signifies, whom thou canst crush in an instant; Saul and his courtiers, who have driven me hither; and now Achish and the Philistines, who have oft sought my ruin, which now they have opportunity to effect.

Would swallow me up; like wild and ravenous beasts, rather than men. Heb. *hath swallowed me up* . The thing is begun, and in a manner done, if thou dost not miraculously prevent it.

Psalms 56:2

Mine enemies, Heb. *my observers* , that narrowly look to all my paths, and watch for my haltings, and for an opportunity to destroy me.

Many that fight against me: they trust to their great numbers, wherein they know themselves to be much superior to me.

O thou Most High; who from thine high place beholdest all their plots, and canst most easily disturb and blast them.

Psalms 56:3

When I have the greater cause of fear, I will rely upon thy providence and promise for my deliverance.

Psalms 56:4

In God I will praise his word: the sense is, either,

1. I will praise or boast in the Lord's word, or the Lord for his word. Or,

2. *With* or *by the Lord* (i.e. by his favour or help) I will praise his word. Or rather,

3. This, as I humbly conceive: There are many things to be praised and celebrated in God, his power and wisdom, &c.; but amongst all, and above all, I shall at this time praise him for his word, which he hath magnified above all his name, as is said, Psa_138:2, even for his promises of protection and deliverance made to his people in all their exigencies, and particularly and especially for that promise of the kingdom made to me; for which I will now praise him, because I am as sure of its accomplishment as if I had it already in mine hand.

Flesh; infirm and mortal men, altogether unable to oppose thy infinite Majesty; called *flesh* by way of contempt, as Psa_78:39 Isa_31:3 Jer_17:5.

Psalms 56:5

They wrest my words; they misconstrue and pervert my most innocent expressions, and turn them into matter of calumny, wherewith they may incense Saul against me. Or, *they perplex my affairs* . All their thoughts are against me for evil; it is their whole study to do me mischief.

Psalms 56:6

They gather themselves together; after they have severally employed their thoughts against me, they meet together to compare their thoughts, and to put them in execution.

They hide themselves; they lurk secretly, either that they may pry into all my most private actions, or that they may surprise me with mischief unawares. Compare Psa_10:8 Pro_1:11.

They mark my steps, i.e. all my goings and doings, that they may find some occasion to reproach or entangle, and so destroy me.

My soul, or *life* , to wit, to take it away from me.

Psalms 56:7

Shall they escape by iniquity? shall they secure themselves by such injurious and malicious practices, whereby they do not only vex me, but provoke and despise thee? Shall they have success instead of the punishments which thou hast threatened, and they have deserved? God forbid. But the words may be read without an interrogation,

By their iniquity they hope to escape; or, they do escape at present; but, Lord, do not suffer them thus to escape.

Cast down: this is opposed to their present exaltation and triumphs over poor David, and to their hopes and confidence of safety and success.

The people, i.e. these people of whom I am speaking, to wit, my malicious and wicked enemies, as well those followers of Saul, as these Philistines, amongst whom I now am.

Psalms 56:8

My wanderings: here I have been hunted from place to place, and am now driven hither.

Put my tears into thy bottle; regard, and remember, and pity them.

Are they not in thy book? but why do I pray to God to do that which I am well assured he is of himself inclined to do, and hath already done?

Psalms 56:9

When I have no other arms or force, which is my present case, my prayers shall be sufficient to overthrow mine enemies.

Psalms 56:10

What I have already engaged to do, Psa_56:4, that I do again and again promise to do, and I cannot sufficiently praise thy goodness in making promises, and thy faithfulness in keeping them.

Psalms 56:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 56:12

As I have prayed to thee, and am assured that thou wilt deliver me; so in confidence thereof I have made vows to express my gratitude to thee, and I acknowledge myself obliged and do resolve to perform them.

Psalms 56:13

From death; which my enemies designed, and my extreme dangers threatened. I am confident that thou wilt deliver, because of thy promises, and my former experience.

That I may walk before God, i.e. that I may please, and serve, and glorify thee, as this phrase implies, Gen_5:24, compared with Heb_11:5, as also Gen_6:9 **17:1** 1Sa_2:30; which is the great end for which I desire life.

In the light of the living: either,

1. In heaven. Or rather,
2. In this life, which is here opposed to the death last mentioned, as it is Job_33:30, which is called *light* , Job_3:20, as death is called *darkness* , Job_10:21,**22**, and oft elsewhere, and which is expressed by beholding the light and the sun, Ecc_11:7.

Psalms 57:1 PSALM 57

Al-taschith signifies *destroy not* ; which some think to be a preface containing the sum of the Psalm, and reminding David of his great distress, in which he then was; which obliged him to make fervent prayers to God that he would not destroy him, nor give him up into the hands of his enemies, who always designed and desired to destroy him, and now seemed to have a fair opportunity to do it.

The cave; either,

1. That of Adullam, 1Sa_22:1; or,
2. That of En-gedi, 1Sa_24:1.

The psalmist in prayer fleeth to God for protection and favour in his dangerous condition, Psa_57:1-5; describeth the wicked projects of his enemies, Psa_57:6, and encourageth himself from God's mercy to praise him, Psa_57:7-11.

Be merciful unto me: the repetition implies both the greatness of his danger, and the fervency of his spirit in this request, and withal that his whole trust and hope was in God's mercy. In the shadow of thy wings, i.e. of thy protection; to which alone I trust, and not to the shadow of this dark cave, in which I now hide myself. These calamities; or, the time of these calamities, which I know will shortly have an end.

Psalms 57:2

Heb. *that performeth* (or *perfecteth* , or *finisheth* , as this word is rendered, Psa_138:8, i.e. will certainly perform or finish) for, or towards, or concerning me. He doth not express what he performeth, or perfecteth, or fulfilleth, but leaveth it to be understood, as being easy to be understood.

He performeth, or *perfecteth* , to wit, all that he hath promised; engageth himself to perform what he hath begun to do, or what is yet to be performed; it being usual in the Hebrew language to understand a verbal noun after the verb. He implies that God is not like men, who make large promises, but either through inability, or carelessness, or unfaithfulness, do not perform them, but will certainly be as good as his word.

Psalms 57:3

He shall send, either,

1. His angels, as Dan_3:28. Or,
2. His help. Or,
3. His hand; which is understood after this verb, 2Sa_6:6, by comparing 1Ch_13:9, where it is expressed. Or rather,
4. His mercy and his truth as it here follows, where also this verb is repeated before those words. Save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up, i.e. from that shameful destruction which they design to bring upon me. Or rather, as it is rendered in the margin of our Bible, and by many others, and as it is in the Hebrew, *he hath reproached* (i.e. he will certainly put to shame or reproach) him that would swallow me up, by disappointing his expectation, and delivering me from his rage.

Shall send forth his mercy and his truth, i.e. shall discover them by their proper fruits, to wit, by affording his gracious help in pursuance of his promises.

Psalms 57:4

I live in the midst of a generation of fierce and bloody men; which both in Scripture and other authors are oft called lions.

I lie, I have my abode and conversation, even among (which particle is easily borrowed out of the foregoing clause)

them that are set on fire, to wit, of or *from hell* , as is fully expressed, Jam_3:6; who are mere fire-brands and incendiaries, that are continually breathing out their wrath and threatenings, and incensing Saul against me. The sons of men; whereby he explains what he meant by lions, and tells us they were beasts in the shape of men.

Teeth; which may be considered, either,

1. As instruments of destruction, as they are in lions. Or rather,
2. As instruments of speech, as they are in men; for it here follows by way of explication, as the manner is, and their tongue. And both seem to signify their wicked and pernicious calumnies, of which he every where complains, and particularly in the history to which this Psalm seems to relate, 1Sa_24:10, and by which they designed to promote his destruction.

Are spears and arrows, i.e. they grievously wound my name, and are devised to do me mischief.

Psalms 57:5

Be thou exalted; glorify thy power, and goodness, and justice, and faithfulness by my deliverance, all which are exposed to censure and reproach, whilst thou sufferest ungodly wretches to oppress and triumph over the innocent and righteous, that put their trust in thee.

Above the heavens, i.e. higher than the heavens, or to the highest degree possible; or above all the false gods which are supposed to reside in heaven.

Above all the earth, i.e. above all men upon earth, some whereof do now audaciously lift up themselves against thee, and above thee. Or, *through* (as the Hebrew particle is commonly rendered, and it is no new thing to have the same word or particle diversely taken in the same verse, as hath been formerly showed) *the whole earth* ; not only amongst thine own people, but so that the heathens shall be forced to acknowledge and admire thy glorious deeds.

Psalms 57:6

Is bowed down; or, *was bowed down* : I was even ready to fall and perish. Or, mine heart was oppressed, and almost overwhelmed.

Before me, Heb. *before my face* ; not in my sight, for that would have been in vain, Pro_1:17; but in my way, where they thought I would go. They are fallen themselves: this was fulfilled in Saul, who by pursuing fell into his hands, 1Sa_24:4.

Psalms 57:7

Fixed, or *established* , in a full assurance of thy merciful help. It was ready to sink with fear, or *bowed down* , Psa_57:6; but now I have through thy grace conquered my fears, and am fixed in a stedfast belief of thy promises. Or, *is prepared* , to wit, to sing and give praise, as it follows.

Psalms 57:8

My glory; either,

1. My soul; or rather,

2. My tongue, the instrument of singing, which he was now about to do, Psa_57:7,9.

I myself will awake early; I will rouse up and employ all the powers of my soul and body to set forth God's praises.

Psalms 57:9

Among the people; in the great congregations; amongst the Israelites of all tribes, who are called by this name, Deu_33:19, and amongst the heathens, as I shall have occasion, as he often had.

Psalms 57:10

i.e. Is most evident, and greatly exalted.

Psalms 57:11

See Poole "Psa_57:5".

Psalms 58:1 PSALM 58

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed, as very many others were, upon the occasion of those wicked calumnies, and unjust censures and sentences, which were passed upon him by Saul and his courtiers.

David, reproving wicked judges, describeth their nature, Psa_58:1-5; and prayeth God to punish and destroy them, Psa_58:6-9, for his own glory, and the joy of the righteous, Psa_58:10,11.

Do ye indeed speak righteousness? the question implies a denial. You censure me freely, without any regard to truth or justice.

Congregation: the word signifies a band or company of men, and seems to point at Saul's judges and counsellors; who met together to consult what they should do against David, and probably passed a sentence upon him, as guilty of treason and rebellion.

Sons of men; so he calls them, either,

1. In contempt and opposition to the sons of God, or good men.
Or,

2. By way of admonition, to mind them that they also were men, and must give an account to God for all their hard speeches and unrighteous decrees against him.

Psalms 58:2

In heart; or, *with your heart* ; with free choice and consent, and not only by constraint, and out of compliance with Saul.

Ye weigh the violence of your hands; or, you weigh violence or injustice with your hands. The phrase of *weighing* hath respect to their office, which was to administer justice, which is usually expressed by a pair of balances. So he intimates that they did great wrong under the pretence and with the formalities of justice; and whilst they scented exactly to weigh and consider the true and fit proportion between the actions and the recompences allotted to them, they turned the scale; and partly to curry favour with Saul, and partly from their own malice against David, pronounced an unjust sentence against him. In the earth; or, in this land, where God is present, and where you have righteous laws to govern you, and you profess better things.

Psalms 58:3

Estranged, to wit, from God, Eph_4:18, and from all goodness.

From the womb; either,

1. Hyperbolically; even from their tender years. Or,

2. Strictly and properly. So the sense is, No wonder they act so unrighteously, for their very natures and principles are corrupt, even from their birth; they are the wicked offspring of sinful parents. And this hereditary and native corruption, though too common to all men, he particularly ascribes to these men; either because their immediate parents were such as did not only convey a corrupt nature to them, but greatly improved it by wicked counsel and example; or because they themselves had improved that stock of original corruption, and instead of mortifying it, had made it their great design and constant business to gratify and obey it.

They go astray, by actual sins, the fruit of their original sin, as soon as they be born; from their childhood, as soon as ever they were capable of the exercise of reason, and the practice of sinning.

Psalms 58:4

Their poison, their virulent and malicious disposition, is like the poison of a serpent; partly in itself, being natural, and inveterate, and incurable; and partly in its most pernicious effects.

Psalms 58:5

This similitude doth neither justify the practice of charming, which, in the very word here used, is condemned, Deu_18:11, no more than those which are drawn from the unjust steward, Luk_16:1, &c.; Luk_18:2, &c., and from a *thief*, Rev_16:15; nor yet affirm the truth of what is reported concerning the asps or adders, which are said to lay one ear close to the ground, and to cover the other with their tail, that so they may avoid the danger of enchantment; but only was taken from the common opinion, which he poetically mentions to this purpose: As they commonly say of the asps or adders, &c., such really are these men; deaf to all my counsels, and to the dictates of their own consciences, and to the voice of God's law. And yet of the

charming or *enchanting* of serpents, mention is made both in other places of Scripture, as Ecc_10:11 Jer_8:17, and in all sorts of authors, ancient and modern, Hebrew, and Arabic, and Greek, and Latin *of which see my Latin Synopsis* . And particularly the Arabic writers (to whom these creatures were best known) name some sorts of serpents, among which the adder is one, which they call *deaf* , not because they are dull of hearing, but, as one of them expressly saith, because they will not be charmed.

Psalms 58:6

Their teeth; their power and instruments of doing mischief. He mentions teeth, partly because the adder's poison lies in its teeth; and partly to make way for the following metaphor.

The great teeth, called *the grinders* ; which are more sharp and strong than the rest, and more used in breaking and tearing what they are about to eat.

Psalms 58:7

As waters which run continually; as waters arising from melted snow, or great showers, or some other extraordinary cause, which at first run with great force and noise, and throw down all that stands in their way, but are suddenly gone, and run away and vanish, and return no more.

When he bendeth his bow, to wit, any or every one of mine enemies, as appears from the foregoing and following words.

Is cut in pieces, i.e. like arrows broken asunder whilst a man shoots, which can do no hurt.

Psalms 58:8

Which melteth; Which thrusts forth, and seems to threaten with its horns, but is quickly dissolved; for when it goes out of its shell, it spends its vital moisture, until by degrees it waste away and perish.

The untimely birth of a woman; which endeavouring violently and unseasonably to break forth from the womb, is choked in the attempt, and doth not live to see the light of the sun.

Psalms 58:9

Feel the thorns, i.e. the heat of the fire kindled by the thorns put under them for that purpose; before your pots can be thoroughly heated.

Take them away, to wit, mine enemies; whose sudden destruction he describes under this similitude.

As with a whirlwind, i.e. violently and irresistibly.

Both living, and in his wrath, Heb. *as living* (i.e. alive, as he did Korah, **Num 16**, the particle *as* being here not a note of similitude, but of truth or asseveration as it is Joh_1:14, and oft elsewhere, as hath been noted) as in (which preposition is frequently understood)

wrath, i.e. as a man moved with great wrath destroys his enemy without mercy, and is ready to devour him alive, if it were possible; or, *both that which is raw*, (as the Hebrew word *chai* signifies, Lev_13:16 1Sa_2:15, to wit, the raw flesh, which is supposed to be put into the pot that it may be boiled,) and *the burning fire*. There is indeed great variety of construction and interpretation of these Hebrew words, which is not strange, especially considering the conciseness of the Hebrew language, and that this is a proverbial speech; nor is it of any great importance, because it is not in any great point of faith, and because the sense of it is agreed, the only difference being about the manner and ground of the phrase. The learned reader may see more upon this place in my Latin Synopsis.

Psalms 58:10

The vengeance, i.e. the vengeance of God upon his implacable enemies; not simply for himself, but for the blessed effects of it, the vindication of God's honour, and the deliverance of himself and of all good men.

He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, i.e. there shall be so great a slaughter of his enemies, that he might, if he so pleased, wash his feet in their blood. See the same or like expressions, Psa_68:23 Isa_63:3 Rev_14:20.

Psalms 58:11

And these administrations of God's providence shall be so evident and convincing, that not only good men shall be sensible thereof, but any man that sees them, yea, even such as were apt to dispute or doubt of God's providence, shall upon this eminent occasion break forth into such exclamations as this: Now I see that religion is not a vain and unprofitable thing, and that there is a God who doth now observe and govern, and, when he sees fit, judgeth the inhabitants of the earth, and will hereafter judge the whole world in righteousness, and recompense every man according to his works.

Psalms 59:1 PSALM 59

THE ARGUMENT

The matter and design of this Psalm is the same in general and for substance with the former, to wit, a declaration of the cruelty and treachery of his enemies; and a prayer to God to deliver him out of their hands.

David, in danger, prayeth unto God for deliverance from his enemies, Psa_59:1,2, relating his own innocency and their cruelty, Psa_59:3. He trusteth in God, and prayeth against them, Psa_59:4-15; promiseth thankfulness to God for being his defence and refuge, Psa_59:16,17.

He chiefly understands Saul, but speaks in the plural number, out of, reverence to his king, and that he might, as far as he could in truth, derive the envy and hatred of these odious practices upon those that were about him; as he doth 1Sa_26:19, and elsewhere.

Psalms 59:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 59:3

Without any provocation or cause given them by me. I am a sinner before thee, O Lord, but I have done them no injury.

Psalms 59:4

They run to and fro, first to receive Saul's commands and then to execute them with all speed and diligence.

Prepare themselves; or, *dispose themselves* , here and there round about my house, that they may catch me when I go out of it.

To help me, Heb. *to meet me* , as I come abroad and to conduct me away with safety.

Psalms 59:5

The God of Israel; a God in covenant with all true Israelites, whom thou hast promised to protect and bless. *The heathen* ; or, *these heathens* , or *Gentiles* ; who though they are called and accounted Israelites by their birth, yet in truth, and in their dispositions and manners, are mere heathens and barbarians; in which respect such men are elsewhere called strangers, Psa_54:3, *men of Sodom and Gomorrah* , Isa_1:10, and as *Ethiopians* , Amo_9:7; as among us ungodly Christians are oft called *Jews* , or *Turks* or *heathens* .

Be not merciful; for indeed thou canst not with thine honour, nor according to thy word, be merciful to any such incorrigible offenders.

Wicked transgressors; or, perfidious transgressors; such as persecute me, and other good men, out of malice, and against their own consciences, which tell them that I am innocent, and with pretences of friendship. He might well pray so vehemently against such, not only for his own preservation, but for the just and necessary vindication of God's honour, and for the public good of mankind, whose common interest it was that such vile miscreants should be taken out of the way.

Psalms 59:6

They return at evening, after they have been busy all day, either in plotting against me, or in hunting after me. In the evening, when they should compose themselves to rest, they return to their old trade of watching for me which they did at this time all the night long, 1Sa_19:11.

They make a noise like a dog; either when he is hungry and pursuing his prey, and howls for meat; or when he is enraged, and grins and snarls where he cannot or dare not bite. And go round about the city: when they did not find him in his own house, they sought for him in other houses and parts of the city, where they supposed him to lurk.

Psalms 59:7

They belch out; or, *they pour forth* , (to wit, words, for what else should come out of the mouth? even sharp and bitter words, as the next clause explains it,) abundantly and vehemently, as a fountain doth waters, as this word signifies. See Pro_15:28 Jer_6:7.

Swords, i.e. words as keen and mischievous as swords, as Psa_55:21 **57:4.**

Who, say they, doth hear? David doth not hear us, either to discover, and so to prevent our plots; Or to punish us for them; and God either doth not hear or not regard what we say and do against David; and therefore we may speak and act what we think fit.

Psalms 59:8

Disappoint their high confidences and hopeful designs, and then deride them, and make them ridiculous and contemptible to others.

Psalms 59:9

His strength, i.e. Saul's strength; because he is too strong for me. Or rather, *O my strength* , as it is Psa_59:17. And all those ancient and venerable translators, the LXX., and Chaldee, and vulgar Latin, render it *my strength* . In the Hebrew it is his strength, i.e. David's. For David speaks of himself in the third person, as he oft doth. And such sudden changes of persons are usual, both in these poetical books (as hath been noted before) and elsewhere, as Dan_9:4 Mic_1:2.

Psalms 59:10

The God of my mercy, i.e. the giver of all that mercy and comfort which I either have, or hope for. Heb. *of his mercy* . But here also there is (as appears by comparing this with Psa_59:17) a change of the person, as there was in the foregoing verse.

Shall prevent me, to wit, with the blessings of goodness, as it is more fully expressed, Psa_21:3. *Thou shalt help me* , and that seasonably, before it be too late, and sooner than I expect.

My desire in their disappointment and overthrow, as it follows; which was very desirable to David, no less for the public good, than for his own safety and happiness.

Psalms 59:11

Slay them not, to wit, suddenly, or at once.

My people; my countrymen; or those over whom thou hast appointed me to be governor in due time. Forget their former danger, and thy glorious mercy in delivering them, and their own duty to thee for it. Hereby it most plainly appears that David, in these and the like imprecations against his enemies, was not moved thereunto by his private malice, or desire of revenge, but by the respect which he had to God's honour and the general good of his people.

Scatter them, Heb. *make them to wander* . As they wandered about the city and country to do me mischief, Psa_59:6, so let their punishment be agreeable to their sin; let them wander from place to place, to wit, for meat, as it is expressed, Psa_59:15, that they may carry the tokens of thy justice and their own shame to all places where they come.

Bring them down from that power and dignity in which thou hast set them, which they do so wickedly abuse; and from the height of their carnal hopes and confidences of success against me.

Psalms 59:12

For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lip; for their ungodly, and injurious, and pernicious speeches, of which he speaks Psa_59:7, and in many other places.

Let them be taken, as in a snare, in order to their ruin. Let thy judgments overtake them. In their pride; for their proud and insolent speeches against thee, Psa_59:7. *For cursing and lying* ; for their execrations and lying reports, which they have raised or spread abroad concerning me. *Which they speak* ; which they are ready to utter upon all occasions.

Psalms 59:13

Consume them by degrees, and after thou hast made them to wander about, Psa_59:11.

That they may not be, to wit, in the land of the living, any more; as this phrase is frequently understood, whereof divers instances have been given.

Let them know experimentally, and to their cost, that God ruleth over and above them; that though Saul be king, yet God is his superior in power and authority, and all things among us shall be disposed, not as it pleaseth Saul, which his parasites are always suggesting to him, but as God will; and therefore I shall be preserved, and in fit time crowned, in spite of all that Saul or his forces can do against me.

In Jacob; in the land and over the people of Israel, whose king and governor he is in a peculiar manner.

Unto; or, and *into* ; the contraction *and* being oft understood, as hath been noted before. These words may be referred, either,

1. To God's ruling; let them know that God ruleth, not only in Jacob, but also to the ends of the earth. Or,

2. To men's knowing; *let them* , or *let men, know, even to the ends of the earth, that God ruleth in Jacob* ; let thy judgments be so manifest and dreadful in the destruction of thy wicked enemies, that not only Israelites, but even the remote nations of the world, may see it, and acknowledge thy power and providence in it.

The ends of the earth; either of this land; or rather, of the world. The sense is, That by those eminent and extraordinary discoveries of thy power, and wisdom, and justice it may be evident, both to them and to all that hear of it, that thou art no puny, or inferior, or topical god, like the gods of heathens, whose government is confined to a narrow compass; but the high and mighty God, and the great Ruler of the whole world.

Psalms 59:14

What was their sin and their choice to do with evil design, let it be their punishment to do it by constraint, and for meat, as it follows, Psa_59:15.

Psalms 59:15

Wander up and down for meat, to get a livelihood. *And grudge if they be not satisfied* : when their bodies are hungry, let their minds be discontented. Or, as others render the words, *and lodge* , or *be forced to lodge, all night, when they are not satisfied* . Let them go to their rest with an empty stomach.

Psalms 59:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 59:17

Unto thee, i.e. to thy honour; or rather, *of or concerning thee* , as that particle is sometimes used.

Psalms 60:1 PSALM 60

Shushan-eduth: this, like the rest, seems to be the name of an instrument, or song, or tune, then well known, but now quite unknown and forgotten; it may be and is by some rendered, *the lily or rose of thy testimony or oracle* ; but why it was so called is a matter of mere conjecture, and of small importance to us to know. To teach, to wit, in an eminent manner; or for the special instruction of God's church and people in some points of great moment; as, concerning the grievous calamities to which God's church and people were obnoxious, Psa_60:1-3, and concerning the certainty of God's promises, and of their deliverance out of them, upon condition of their faith and obedience; which doctrines were of great moment, especially to the Israelites, who were, and were likely to be, exercised in the same manner, and with the same variety and vicissitudes of condition, under which their ancestors had been. Or whereas other songs were to be learned only by the Levites, or by some of them, this possibly was one of them, which the people also were to be taught, and were to sing upon occasion, because of the public and general concernment which they all had in the matter herein contained.

Aram-naharaim; or, *the Syrians* (so called from Aram, the son of Shem, Gen_10:22) *of the two rivers, or of Mesopotamia* , the country between those two great and famous rivers, Tigris and Euphrates. *Aram-zobah* , or, *the Syrians of Zobah* , part of Syria so called, 2Sa_8:5,12.

This report seems not to agree with the histories to which this Psalm is supposed to relate, 2Sa_8:13 1Ch_18:12, neither in the persons slain, who are Edomites 1Ch_18:12, but Syrians here, and 2Sa_8:13; nor in their numbers, which are here only twelve thousand, and there eighteen thousand; nor in the persons to whom this victory is ascribed, who is Joab here, David 2Sa_8:13,

and Abishai 1Ch_18:12. But these difficulties may easily be resolved by these considerations:

1. That David being king, and Joab lord-general of all his forces, and Abishai his lieutenant-general as to a considerable part of his army, the same victory may well be ascribed to any or every one of them; as it is usually done in like cases in the Roman and Grecian histories.
2. That the Edomites and Syrians were united in this war.
3. That twelve thousand might be slain in the pitched battle, and the rest by the pursuers in their flight.
4. That these several places may speak of several fights. See more of this business **See Poole** "2Sa_8:13".

The psalmist, complaining of former sad judgments, Psa_60:1-3, acknowledgeth God's present mercy, Psa_60:4. Comforting himself in the promises, he prayeth for help, and therein trusteth, Psa_60:5-12.

Cast us off; or, rejected or forsaken us, as to thy gracious and powerful presence, not only in the time of the judges, but also during Saul's reign.

Scattered us, Heb. *broken us* ; partly by that dreadful overthrow by the Philistines, **1Sa 31**, and partly by the civil war in our own bowels, between me and Ishbosheth.

Psalms 60:2

Made the earth to tremble; a poetical and hyperbolical expression, signifying great and dreadful changes among the people, as Hag_2:7, compared with Heb_12:26,27. See also 1Sa_14:15.

Heal the breaches thereof; reconcile all those differences which our civil wars have made among us.

Psalms 60:3

Thou hast showed, Heb. *made them to see* , i.e. to experience or feel, as seeing is oft put, as Psa_49:10, and oft elsewhere. Thou hast filled us with no less horror and trembling, than men intoxicated with strong and stupefying drink, which they are forced to drink. Compare Isa_51:17,21.

Psalms 60:4

Thou hast given; either,

1. Formerly. As thou hast sometimes afflicted thy people, so at other times thou hast delivered them. Or rather,
2. Now lately by and under me.

A banner; which is a sign and instrument,

1. Of union. This people, who were lately divided and under several banners, thou hast now gathered together and united under one banner, to wit, under my government.
2. Of battle. Thou hast given us an army and power to oppose our enemies. We had our banner to set against theirs.
3. Of triumph. We have not lost our banner, but gained theirs, and brought it away in triumph: compare Psa_20:5.

To them that feared thee; or, *for or on the behalf of them that feared thee* . An emphatical passage, implying that God gave so great a blessing to the people of Israel, for the sake of those few sincere Israelites which were among them.

Because of the truth; not for any merit of ours, but to show thy faithfulness in making good thy promises which thou hast made, both to me, concerning the establishing of this kingdom to me and to my seed for ever, and to thy people in general, whom thou hast frequently promised to hear and help when they call upon thee in times of trouble.

Psalms 60:5

Thy beloved people, last mentioned.

Psalms 60:6

God hath spoken: having prayed that God would save and hear him, he now intimates that God had done it already, and had prevented his prayers, and *had spoken* to him and of him, about the stablishing of his throne.

In his holiness; or, *in the sanctuary or holy place* , to which David used to resort to ask counsel, and from whence God usually gave out his oracles. Or rather, *by his holiness* , as this very word is rendered, Psa_89:35, which carries the form of an oath, and

implies that God did not simply speak, but *swore by his holiness* as it is there expressed. *I will rejoice* ; therefore I will turn my prayers into praises and rejoicings for what God had already done, and, as I am assured, will further do, on my behalf.

I will divide; or, *distribute* ; which supposeth possession and dominion. *Shechem* ; a place within Jordan, in Mount Ephraim. See Gen_33:18 Jos_20:7.

Succoth; a place without Jordan. See Gen_33:17 Jos_13:27. He mentions Shechem and Succoth, either synecdochically for all the land of Canaan within and without Jordan, which, having been formerly divided between him and Ishbosheth, was now entirely in his possession; or because these two places had been in Ishbosheth's hands, and possibly were extraordinarily devoted to Saul's house, and utterly averse from David; or for some other reason now unknown.

Psalms 60:7

Gilead; all their land beyond Jordan, which was possessed by Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, Num_32:29, **39, 40 Deu 3:10**, &c.; Jos_13:25, &c.

Manasseh; the other half of that tribe within Jordan.

Mine head; either,

1. Mine horns, wherewith I shall push mine enemies, according to Moses's prophecy of that tribe, Deu_33:17. Or,

2. *The keeper of mine head* , as Achish spake 1Sa_28:2. A chief part of my strength, either to offend mine enemies, or to defend myself. For this tribe was very numerous, and valiant, and rich. See Gen_48:19 Deu_33:17 Psa_78:9.

Judah is my lawgiver; the chief seat of my throne and kingdom, and of the inferior *thrones of judgment* , Psa_112:5; the tribe to which the royal sceptre and lawgiver are appropriated by God's appointment, Gen_49:10.

Psalms 60:8

Moab is my wash-pot, in which I shall wash my feet. I shall bring them into the lowest degree of servitude, and make them contemptible and miserable. See 2Sa_8:2.

Over Edom, an old, and proud, and insolent, and cruel enemy of Israel,

will I cast out my shoe, i.e. I will use them like slaves; either holding forth my shoes, that they may pluck them off; or throwing my shoes at them, either in anger or contempt, as the manner of many masters was and is in such cases. Or, *I will take possession of them* ; which was done by treading upon their land. Or, *I will tread upon their necks* ; as they did in like case, Jos_10:24. But these notions suit not with this phrase of *casting* or *throwing* the shoe.

Philistia, triumph thou because of me; or, *over me* , as thou didst in former years use to triumph and insult over the poor Israelites. It is an ironical expression, signifying that her triumphs were come to an end.

Psalms 60:9

Who will bring me? None can do it but God, as he declareth in the following verses.

Into the strong city, i.e. the cities; the singular number for the plural, which is usual. Having beaten his enemies out of the field, and into their strong cities, from whence they hoped to renew the war, he desires God's assistance, whereby he may take their strong holds, and so secure himself from further attempts against him.

Into Edom; which was a high and rocky country, Oba_1:3, fortified by nature as well as by art, and therefore not to be invaded and subdued without a Divine hand.

Psalms 60:10

To wit, in former times, but now hast graciously returned to us. He brings to his own and people's minds their former calamities, that they may be more thankful for present mercies and deliverance.

Psalms 60:11

Though I have some reputation for valour and conduct, and though my people are very numerous, and now united under me, yet all this will avail little or nothing without thy almighty help.

Psalms 60:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 61:1 PSALM 61

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion of this Psalm was some great distress of David's, either by Saul or by Absalom, though it might be composed some time after it was past.

David, in great danger, fleeth to God for deliverance, upon experience of his former love, Psa_60:1-3, promising him perpetual service for hearing his prayers, Psa_60:4,5; and assuring himself a long life, he voweth thankfulness, Psa_60:6-8.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 61:2

Of the earth; or rather, *of the land* ; to which David was driven by the tyranny of his enemies.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I; convey me into some high and secure fortress, which I could not reach without thy succour, and where mine enemies cannot come at me. He alludes to their custom of securing themselves in rocks, 1Sa_13:6.

Psalms 61:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 61:4

I shall, I doubt not, be restored to the tabernacle from which I am now banished, and, according to the desire of my heart, worship and enjoy thee there all my days. In the mean time, whilst I am in danger and trouble, I will cast myself upon thy protection with full confidence.

Psalms 61:5

My vows; my fervent prayers, attended with many vows and promises, as was usual, especially in cases of great danger or difficulty, Gen_28:20 Jud_11:30,31. Thou hast allotted me my portion with and amongst them that fear and worship thee, who are the

excellent ones, in whom is all my delight; and upon that account I must acknowledge it to thy praise, that *the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places* ; yea, I have a goodly heritage, Psa_16:3,6. Thou hast granted me this singular mercy, to live in God's land, and to enjoy his presence and favour, and to worship in his tabernacle; which is the heritage that I and all that fear thee prize and desire above all things in the world.

Psalms 61:6

The king's life, i.e. my life. He calls himself king, either,

1. Because he was actually king, though Absalom usurped the throne; or,
2. Because he was designed and anointed to be king; and by calling himself

king, he supports himself under his present straits, and declares his confidence in God's promise of the kingdom to him. Yet we must not think that David did commonly and publicly call or own himself to be king, which had neither been true nor convenient for his affairs; but this Psalm either was not composed whilst Saul lived, or at least was penned only for his private use and comfort, and not

committed to the chief musician; which indeed it could not be till David had the kingdom, and the inspection of the sacred music and service of the tabernacle.

His years, i.e. the years of my life and reign.

As many generations; as long as if I had a lease of it for many ages. Thus he speaks, partly because his kingdom was not like Saul's, a matter of one age, expiring with his life, but established to him and his heirs for ever; and partly because Christ, his Son and Heir, should actually and in his own person possess the kingdom for ever.

Psalms 61:7

He shall abide, or sit, to wit, in the throne, Jer_13:13.

Before God; living and ruling as in God's presence, and serving God with his royal power, and worshipping him in his tabernacle.

Prepare, or *order* , or *appoint* , as this word signifies, Jon_1:17 **4:6**.

Mercy and truth; either,

1. The graces of *mercy* or *compassion* , and *truth* or *faithfulness* ; which are the great supporters of thrones, Pro_20:28 **29:14**. Or rather,

2. Thy mercy and truth, i.e. the effects of them; thy truth in giving me those mercies which thou hast promised to me, and thy mercy in giving me such further blessings as I need and thou seest fit to give me.

Psalms 61:8

That so I may pay unto thee those services and sacrifices which I vowed to thee when I was in trouble.

Psalms 62:1 PSALM 62

This Psalm was made in a time of great danger and distress, or at least with respect to it, as is manifest from Psa_62:3,4.

To Jeduthun, a famous musician; of whom see 1Ch_9:16 **16:42**. Heb. *upon Jeduthun* ; which might be the name of a musical instrument or tune, invented by that Jeduthun, and therefore called by his name.

David testifieth his safety and quietness in God, to the discouragement of his enemies, Psa_62:1-7, but to the encouragement of the godly, Psa_62:8. No trust to be put in man, or worldly things; but in God, Psa_62:9,**10**, to whom power, mercy, and justice belong, Psa_62:11,**12**.

Truly, or *surely* . This is my certain and fixed resolution. Or, *nevertheless* , as this particle is oft rendered. So the beginning of this Psalm is abrupt, as it is in some and hard conflict, which David had within himself, as he often had, what course he should take to get out of his trouble.

Waiteth, Heb. *is silent* , as it is also Psa_37:7, i.e. silently. quietly, and patiently looks up to God for deliverance, and that in his time and way without murmuring or despair, or using indirect and sinful practices.

From him cometh my salvation; I have no hope of deliverance but from and by him.

Psalms 62:2

Though I may be shaken, yet I shall not be overthrown. Compare Psa_37:24 2Co_4:9.

Psalms 62:3

Ye, mine enemies, to whom now he turneth his speech.

Against a man, i.e. against me, a man like yourselves, whom common humanity obligeth you to pity; a single man, who is no fit match for you; a poor, contemptible, miserable, and impotent creature, as the word

man is oft used, as Psa_9:20 **82:7**, &c., a *dead dog* , or a *flea* , or a *partridge* , as upon the same account he calleth himself, 1Sa_24:14 **26:20**, whom you cannot thus pursue without reflecting disparagement upon yourselves, as he there saith. *Ye shall be slain all of you* ; the mischief which you design for me shall fall upon your own heads. And accordingly Saul and the generality of these men were slain, **1Sa 31**.

As a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence, i.e. as suddenly and easily overthrown as these are.

Psalms 62:4

Him, to wit, the man mentioned Psa_62:3, i.e. himself; of whom he continues to speak in the third person.

From his excellency; from the hopes and attainment of that royal dignity, to which God hath designed and anointed me.

In lies; in secret slanders and execrations, covered with flatteries and fair speeches, as it here follows.

Psalms 62:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 62:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 62:7

In God, Heb. *upon or with God* . It depends upon him and his favour and help.

My glory; either,

1. The manner of my glorying. Or,
2. That honour which I either have or hope for.

Psalms 62:8

Trust in him at all times, ye people; by my example be encouraged, and learn to trust God.

Pour out your heart before him, i.e. make known all the desires, and cares, and griefs of your hearts to him freely and frequently, with confident expectation of obtaining what you want or desire from him.

Psalms 62:9

Vanity, i.e. most vain, impotent, and helpless creatures in themselves. This he delivers as a reason or argument to enforce his foregoing exhortation; *trust in God*, because there is no other person or thing to which you can safely trust.

A lie, because they promise much, and raise men's expectations upon consideration of their great power and dignity, but are not able to perform, and generally deceive those who trust in them; in which respect *lying* is ascribed to *a fountain*, Jer_15:18, to *wine*, Hos_9:2, to *the olive*, Hab_3:17, when they do not give what they promise.

Psalms 62:10

Trust not in oppression; as you may not trust any other men, so neither must you trust to yourselves, nor to your own wit, or industry, or courage, by which you may oppress others, and so think to secure and enrich yourselves.

Become not vain; lifting up and feeding yourselves with vain hopes, and expectations of safety and felicity, from those riches which you take from others by robbery or violence.

Set not your heart upon them; so as to please yourselves immoderately in them, to place your hope, and trust, and chief joy in them, or to grow proud and insolent because of them.

Psalms 62:11

Twice, i.e. frequently, as Job_33:14, both immediately, as at Sinai, and by his holy prophets from time to time.

That power belongeth unto God; that power is God's prerogative; and consequently all creatures, either against or without him, are poor impotent things, to which no man can trust without certain disappointment, and God alone is fit to be trusted.

Psalms 62:12

Belongeth mercy, or *benignity* , or readiness to do good. Thou art no less willing than able to defend and preserve all that put their trust in thee.

For; or, *therefore* ; for the following words seem to be either a reason or proof of, or an inference from, the two foregoing properties of God, *power and mercy* . God is almighty, therefore he can easily subdue and destroy all his and mine ungodly enemies, and recompense unto them all their malicious and wicked practices. He is also mild and merciful, and therefore will pardon good men's failings, and graciously reward me and others of his people according to our integrity.

According to his work; according to the nature and quality, though not according to the proportion, of their works, whether they be good or bad. And this, as he is obliged to do by his holy nature, and by that respect which he oweth to his own glory, so he is able to do it, being omnipotent, and willing to do it to the godly, (which was the only thing that might be doubted, because of their manifold and great corruptions, and imperfections, and miscarriages,) because he is merciful and gracious.

Psalms 63:1 PSALM 63

Where he hid himself from Saul, 1Sa_22:5 **23:14,15 26:1,2**

David in the wilderness, complaining bitterly of his banishment from God's house, thirsteth and longeth for it, Psa_63:1-3. His manner of blessing God. His experience, hope, and delight in God, Psa_63:4-8. Comforteth himself that his enemies shall be destroyed, and that he shall be in safety, Psa_63:9-11.

My God; in covenant with me.

Early, Heb.

in the morning; which implies the doing it with greatest diligence and speed, taking the first and the best time for it, as Job_8:5 Psa_78:34 Pro_1:28.

Thirsteth for thee, i.e. for the presence and enjoyment of thee in thy house and ordinances, as the next verse declareth it.

Longeth; or, *languisheth* , or *pineth away* . The desire of my soul after thee is so vehement and insatiable, that my very body feels the effects of it, as it commonly doth of all great passions.

A dry and thirsty land, where no water is; so called, either,

1. Metaphorically; in a land where I want the refreshing waters of the sanctuary. Or,

2. Properly; I thirst not so much for water (which yet I greatly want) as for thee.

Psalms 63:2

To see, i.e. to enjoy, as seeing is oft taken.

Thy power and thy glory; either,

1. The ark, which is called God's strength and glory, 1Sa_4:21 1Ch_16:11 Psa_78:61. Or rather,

2. The powerful and glorious effects and evidences of thy gracious presence there.

So as I have seen thee; whereof I have formerly had great and comfortable experience; which makes me more sensible of my present loss, and more thirsty after these enjoyments.

Psalms 63:3

This is the reason of the foregoing thirst after God.

Thy loving-kindness, i.e. the discoveries and influences of thy grace and favour, which thou usually impartest to thy people in the sanctuary.

Is better than life; is more durable, and comfortable, and satisfactory than the present life, with all imaginable advantages belonging to it.

My lips shall praise thee, both for my former taste and experiences of this truth, and for the assurance of my restitution to the same blessed enjoyments.

Psalms 63:4

Thus, i.e. so as I have done and now do. Or, upon that occasion, when I shall be restored. Or, for this reason, being so sensible of the sweetness of thy favour. Or, *certainly* ; for this particle is sometimes used as a note of asseveration, as it is Psa_127:2 Isa_16:6.

I will lift up my hands towards thee in heaven, in prayers and praises.

In thy name; according to thy command. Or, with confidence in thy name.

Psalms 63:5

When thou shalt fulfil my earnest desire of enjoying thee in the sanctuary; though now in my exile I groan and pine away for want of that mercy.

Psalms 63:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 63:7

Remember thee: in the mean time, whilst I cannot enjoy thee, I will quiet and comfort myself with the thoughts and remembrance of thy kindness to me. *Upon my bed* , Heb. *upon my beds* , implying that he was frequently forced to change his bed and lodging, being driven from place to place. *In the night watches* ; in the several seasons of the night, which was divided into three or four watches; of which see Exo_14:24 Jud_7:19 Mar_13:35. When others sleep securely, my sleep is interrupted by my perplexity and grief for my absence from thy house, and when I awake my thoughts are fixed upon thee, &c.

I will rejoice; I will rest securely and joyfully in thy protection.

Psalms 63:8

Followeth hard after thee, i.e. pursueth thee eagerly, diligently, and resolvedly, and as it were step by step, when thou seemest to run away from me; which is the emphasis of this Hebrew word.

My soul and spirit cleaveth to thee, as this verb signifies, Gen_2:24 Jer_13:11, when my body is absent from thy sanctuary.

Upholdeth me: I do not lose my labour in following hard after thee; for though I am not, yet restored to the enjoyment of thy presence in thy house, yet I have present supports from thee, whereby my spirit is kept from fainting under my manifold pressures, and is enabled with faith and patience to wait upon thee, till thou seest fit to deliver me.

Psalms 63:9

To destroy it, i.e. to take away my life.

Into the lower parts of the earth; either,

1. Into hell. Or rather,

2. Into their grave, as this phrase is used, Eze_31:14,**18**. But how is this true, when they are supposed to be devoured by foxes, Psa_63:10? **Answ.** This may be understood, either,

1. Of divers persons. Some of their slain might be buried, and others lie unburied. Or,

2. Of the same persons; they did go into the earth, but not immediately, but were first devoured of foxes, and the remainders of them were buried, as is frequently done in such cases. Or this phrase may note not so much the place as the state of the dead; this being universally said of those that die, whether they are buried or unburied, that they *return to the earth or dust*, Job_1:21 Ecc_12:7.

Psalms 63:10

They shall fall by the sword, i.e. die in battle, as David foretold, 1Sa_26:10, and as was accomplished in Saul and his followers, who were David's greatest enemies, **1Sa 31**.

They shall be a portion for foxes; their carcasses shall be unburied upon the earth, and thereby become a prey to wild and ravenous creatures, and especially to foxes, which were in those parts in great abundance and which did and do feed not only upon fruits, Son_2:15, but also upon flesh, as experience showeth. Besides, some very learned men think that the word rendered *foxes* is more general, and comprehends, besides foxes, another

sort of creatures, like unto them called *thoes* , which were very numerous in this country; of which **See Poole** "Jud_15:4".

Psalms 63:11

The king; I, who am already anointed king, and who shall be actually king, when these mine enemies are fallen by the sword. He speaks of himself in the third person, either out of modesty or out of prudence, because it was ambiguous, and might be understood either of himself or of Saul, whereby, he might avoid the envy of the expression, if this Psalm was composed before he was king. *That sweareth by him* ; either,

1. By the king; by whom they sometimes did swear, as \Gen_42:15 2Sa_15:21. But they did also swear by some other persons, of eminent place and authority, though under the king, as 1Sa_1:26 **20:3**. Nor is it likely that the psalmist would justify those kinds of oaths; this practice of swearing by one's name being accounted a part of that worship which is proper to God, both in the Old and New Testament. If this were meant of the king, it might better be rendered, *that sweareth it* , (for so the particle *beth* is sometimes used) *him* , as subjects used to swear homage to their prince. So the sense is, all those that shall own me for their king. Or,

2. By God, who was last mentioned, that sweareth by the name of God, to wit, *in truth, and judgment, and righteousness* , as it is expressed, Jer_4:2, i.e. every sincere servant and worshipper of God; swearing being oft put for the whole worship of God, whereof it is a considerable part, and swearers by God for worshippers of him, as Isa_19:18 **45:23**, compared with Rom_14:11 Isa_65:16. *Shall glory* ; shall rejoice in my deliverance and exaltation, both for their respect to the honour and service of God, which I shall advance, and for the benefits which all good men and the whole kingdom shall feel by my government; whereas in Saul's time the vilest men were exalted, and good men oppressed and persecuted, and the whole kingdom groaned under his tyranny.

That speak lies; that now make it their business to invent or spread lying and slanderous reports concerning me and others of God's people.

Shall be stopped; I shall severely restrain and punish such wicked practices.

Psalms 64:1 PSALM 64

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm plainly declares that it was made in a time when David was greatly distressed and reproached; which he was both under Saul, and in the time of Absalom's rebellion.

The psalmist complaining of his enemies, and describing their crafty and wicked practices, prayeth unto God for guard and deliverance, Psa_64:1-6; foretelleth also their utter ruin, to the honour of God, and joy of the righteous, Psa_64:7-10.

From fear, i.e. from danger; the act or passion of *fear* being oft put for its object, *danger* , as Psa_14:5 1Pe_3:14, and oft elsewhere.

Psalms 64:2

From the secret counsel, i.e. from the ill effects of their plots against me.

Psalms 64:3

Bend their bows to shoot their arrows; of which phrase See **Poole** "Psa_58:7". *Bitter words* ; slanderous and pernicious speeches against me.

Psalms 64:4

In secret; lying in ambush, or hiding themselves in secret places, as fowlers commonly do.

The perfect; or, *upright* man; i.e. at me, who in spite of all their calumnies dare avow that my heart is perfect with God, and that I am blameless as to them, having given them no just provocation.

Suddenly; at the very first opportunity.

Fear not; neither men, because they conceal it from them, as appears from the foregoing and following words; nor God, whose judgments they despise.

Psalms 64:5

They encourage themselves, Heb. *they strengthen or fortify themselves*, by firm resolutions, by assured confidence of success, by uniting their counsels and forces together, and by mutual encouragements and exhortations.

Who shall see them? their snares are so secretly laid that David cannot discern, and therefore not avoid them.

Psalms 64:6

They search out iniquities; they study diligently and constantly to find out either matter, which they may lay to my charge, or new ways and means of doing me mischief.

They accomplish a diligent search; they have long and accurately searched, till at last they have ripened and perfected their thoughts, and found out a very cunning and deep plot. Or, they say, *We have accomplished* our accurate search. By long searching we have at last found what we desired. *The heart is deep*; mine enemies are not only cruel and malicious, but also very cunning, both to contrive and conceal, and to execute their plots.

Psalms 64:7

God shall shoot at them; though I can neither search out or prevent their subtle devices, yet God can and will certainly do it.

Suddenly; shortly and unexpectedly.

Psalms 64:8

The mischief of their hard speeches, and threats, and crafty counsels against me shall be turned against themselves.

Shall flee away; partly through abhorrency of them, and partly through fear of being involved in their destruction.

Psalms 64:9

All men, i.e. the greater number of those who shall see these events.

The work of God, i.e. this admirable work of Divine power, and wisdom, and faithfulness.

Wisely consider of his doing; learning wisdom by their folly and misery, and avoiding those evil courses which brought them to ruin.

Psalms 64:10

In the Lord; or, *for the Lord* , i.e. not out of malice or ill will to the persons of their enemies, but for the honour of God, which by this means is fully vindicated and greatly advanced.

Shall glory, to wit, in God, as their sure Rock and all-sufficient Portion.

Psalms 65:1 PSALM 65

THE ARGUMENT

The design of this Psalm seems to be to declare the great and glorious work of Divine Providence, both towards his church and the land of his people, and towards the rest of mankind.

David praiseth God for spiritual blessings, as hearing prayer, and purging away sin, Psa_65:1-3, and for the blessedness of those that dwell in his courts, Psa_65:4; and also for temporal blessings, as governing the world, and the abundance of all worldly enjoyments, Psa_65:5-13.

Waiteth, Heb. *is silent* , or *silence* , i.e. quietly waits, as this phrase is used also Psa_62:1. And *praise* may be here put for the person or persons who use to praise God upon all occasions, and who are now prepared and ready to do so; as *deceit* is put for a deceitful man, as Pro_12:24, and sin for the sinner, Pro_13:6, and *dreams for dreamers* , Jer_27:9. So the meaning may seem to be this, God's people patiently and believingly wait for an opportunity to offer their praises to God; for at present they seem to be in some straits, as divers passages of this Psalm do intimate. *In Zion* : though all the people of the world have great cause to praise thee, yet none pay thee this tribute, but thy people *in Zion* ; and they indeed have really peculiar and eminent obligations and occasions to perform this duty.

Unto thee shall the vow be performed; all the thank-offerings which thy people vowed unto thee in the time of their danger shall be faithfully paid, to wit,

in Zion; which is to be repeated out of the first clause of the verse.

Psalms 65:2

That hearest prayer; that usest and delightest to hear and answer the prayers of thy people in Zion; which he justly mentions as one of the chiefest of God's favours and privileges vouchsafed to his church.

All flesh, i.e. men of all sorts and nations, who were allured by this and other singular benefits to join themselves to the Jewish church, according to Solomon's prediction, 1Ki_8:41-43. Withal this may be a tacit prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles.

Psalms 65:3

Iniquities prevail against me; they are a burden too heavy for me, as he complains, Psa_38:4. They are so many and great, that for them thou mightest justly reject my prayers, and destroy my person. But this is another glorious privilege granted to thy people, and that, in answer to their prayers, thou dost graciously pardon and purge away their sins.

Psalms 65:4

Thou choosest, out of the lump of mankind, to be one of thy peculiar people.

Causest, i.e. permittest and commandest, and by the disposal of thy providence, and the influences of thy grace, procurest and orderest.

To approach unto thee; to draw near to God in his house and ordinances by prayer and praises, and other acts of acquaintance and communion with him.

In thy courts; in the courts of thy house. He mentioneth courts, because the people were permitted to go no further into God's house.

Shall be satisfied; for they only get that solid satisfaction which all men desire, but no other persons or people can find elsewhere.

With the goodness of thy house; with the spiritual and everlasting blessings there conferred upon thy people, the grace, and favour, and fellowship of God, remission of sins, renovation

of heart and life, the knowledge of God, and of ourselves, and of our duty and true interest, joy, and peace, and well-grounded hopes or assurance of eternal life; in comparison whereof all the enjoyments of this world are but dross and dung.

Psalms 65:5

By terrible things; or, *in a terrible manner* , i.e. so as to strike thy people with a holy awe and reverence of thee and of thy judgments, and thine enemies with dread and horror. Or, *in a wonderful manner* , as this word is rendered in the Chaldee, Deu_10:21; *things wonderful* and *terrible* being put together, as expressing the same thing, Psa_106:22. *In righteousness* , i.e. by virtue of thy justice, or faithfulness, or goodness; whereby thou art inclined and engaged to help thy people when they are in distress, and resort unto thee by prayer. Wilt thou answer us; thou wilt graciously answer and grant our prayers and desires.

The confidence, i.e. the only object of a safe and undeceiving confidence; for there is no other person or thing in the world that any man living can trust to without fear and certainty of disappointment. Or, thou art the stay and support of all mankind, by thy powerful and gracious providence, Psa_104:27 Act_17:28 Heb_1:3. Others refer this to the calling of the Gentiles. But that seems not to suit with the following verses, which manifestly speak of God's general providence. *Of all the ends of the earth* ; not only of thy people Israel, but of all persons and nations, even as far as to the end of the earth, or of this vast continent in which we live.

Upon the sea; or, in the sea, i.e. in the islands of the sea, which are here distinguished from the continent; and under those two heads are comprehended all the inhabitants of the world.

Psalms 65:6

Settest fast the mountains; that they are not overthrown by floods, or winds, or earthquakes, or other natural or violent causes; which stability they have only from God's providence, which sustains all persons and all things.

Being girded with power; this our God being able to do it, and that with one single word.

Psalms 65:7

The noise of their waves, when the sea is tempestuous, and threatens to swallow up ships and men that are in it, or to overflow the earth. And the tumult of the people; and as he stills the natural, so also he quiets the metaphorical seas, tumultuous and unruly people; for multitudes of people are oft called seas in prophetic writings, as Isa_17:12,**13 Jer 51:42 Rev_17:15**.

Psalms 65:8

The uttermost parts, to wit, *of the earth* , which is added to this word, Psa_65:5.

Thy tokens, or *signs* ; either,

1. At the sun, and moon, and stars, which are called signs, Gen_1:14. But these are not matter of terror, but of delight to men; and the commonness and constancy of their courses makes most men neither fear nor much regard them. Or,

2. At the great and terrible judgments which God inflicts upon wicked men, and particularly upon the enemies of his people. Or rather,

3. At those terrible thunders, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and comets, or other strange meteors or works of God in the air; for he is here speaking of the natural works of God.

The outgoings of the morning and evening; by which he understands, either,

1. The east, from whence the morning, or the sun, the cause of it, goeth forth, as it is expressed, Psa_19:6; and the west, from whence the evening or night is poetically supposed to come forth. So the meaning is, that God gives all the people of the world, from east to west, occasion to rejoice in the effects of his bounty and goodness to them. But if the psalmist had meant this, it is not probable that he would have expressed it in such a dark and doubtful phrase, which is never used in that sense; but rather by those known and usual expressions, *from east to west* , or, *from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof* , which phrase he useth Psa_1:1 **113:3**. Or rather,

2. The successive courses of the morning and evening; or of the sun and moon, which go forth at those times, thereby making the

morning and evening; both which are said to rejoice poetically, because they give men occasion of rejoicing, which the sun or the morning doth, because it gives them opportunity for the despatch of business, and for the enjoyment of manifold recreations and delights; and the moon or evening doth so, because it invites men to that rest and sleep which is both refreshing and necessary for them. Thus this whole verse speaks of the natural works of God; the former clause of such as are extraordinary and terrible, the latter of such as are ordinary and delightful.

Psalms 65:9

Visitest, to wit, in mercy, or with thy favour, as this word is oft used.

The earth; the whole earth, which is full of thy bounty. So he continues to declare the general providence of God to all men and people. Or rather *the land*, or this land, for here is an emphatical article. And so he comes from God's general providence over all places and nations, to his particular and special providence over his people in the land of Canaan, whereof he gives one eminent and considerable instance, to wit. his giving them rain and fruitful seasons, and that after a time of drought and scarcity, to which it is not improbably supposed that this Psalm relates. And this may be the particular occasion for which the psalmist said that *praise waited for God in Zion*, Psa_65:1. *Waterest it* : this is added to determine and explain the former general word, or to show how or wherein God visited it.

With the river of God; either,

1. With the rivers which God hath made in the several parts of the earth, to make it moist and fruitful; although the fertility of the greatest part of the earth doth not depend so much upon the rivers below, as upon the rains from above. Or,

2. With the river Jordan, which sometimes overflowed its banks. But that overflow reached only to a small part of the land. Or rather,

3. With showers of rain, which he very significantly calls a *river* for their plenty, and the *river of God*, i.e. of God's immediate making and providing when he sees fit; which is opposed both to those little rivulets or channels which husbandmen or gardeners

cut for the watering of their grounds; and to those greater rivers which run with a constant course, and by their little channels derived from them, or by their overflows, do water and enrich the earth, as Nilus did Egypt; to which these words may seem to have a special reference, especially if they be compared with Deu_11:10-12, &c.

Thou preparest; by this means thou preparest the earth for bringing forth corn, and ripenest the corn in the earth. *Preparest them* ; for them, to wit, the inhabitants of the earth or land here mentioned, for their use and benefit.

Provided for it; or, *disposed* , or *ordered* , or *prepared* it, to wit, the earth, which without this would be hard and barren.

Psalms 65:10

Thou settlest, to wit, in that condition which is fit for fruit. Or, *thou bringest down* ; for the rain dissolves the high and hard clods of earth. When all is done, the fruitfulness of the earth must not be ascribed to the rain or sun, or any second causes, but to thy blessing alone.

Psalms 65:11

Thou, by thy powerful goodness, dost enrich and adorn all the seasons of the year with their proper fruits and blessings.

Thy paths; the clouds, upon which God is frequently said to walk or ride, as Job_36:28 **38:26,27** **Psa 104:3** Nah_1:3; which sense is favoured by the next verse, where these paths are said to *drop* , &c.

Drop fatness; make the earth fat and fruitful.

Psalms 65:12

They, God's paths,

drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; which, though neglected by men, are furnished by God with food for wild beasts, which, being his creatures, he careth for by this means.

The little hills; the hills of Canaan, which for the generality of them were but small, if compared with the great and high mountains in divers parts of the world. He mentions

the hills, because these being most dry and parched with the sun, most need and are most refreshed with the rain.

Rejoice on every side; as being moistened and satisfied with rain in all parts and sides of them.

Psalms 65:13

This is added as the effect of these comfortable rains, that they fill the pastures with grass for cattle, and the valleys (which he mentions as the most fruitful places, though he doth not exclude the rest) with corn for the use of man.

They shout for joy, they also sing, i.e. they are abundantly satisfied with thy goodness, and in their manner sing forth the praises and declare the goodness of their Creator and Benefactor. Compare Psa_147:8. Such passions or actions as these are oft figuratively ascribed to lifeless creatures, both in sacred and profane poetical writings; which are said to rejoice or mourn, &c, when their condition is such as calls for rejoicing or mourning, and would cause them to do so, if they were capable of such actions

Psalms 66:1 PSALM 66

THE ARGUMENT

The author and time of the composing of this Psalm are uncertain. This is manifest, and sufficient for our understanding of it. That it was made upon the occasion of some great and glorious deliverance afforded to the Israelites, after and out of some grievous and general calamity, and, as some not improbably conceive, that out of Babylon.

The prophet exhorteth all to praise God for his wonderful works, Psa_66:1-8, especially for delivering his church out of all trouble, Psa_66:9-12. He promiseth unto God thanksgiving, and to pay the vows he made in trouble, Psa_66:13-15; calling to others to see God's goodness to his soul, blesseth him for it, Psa_66:16-20.

Ye people of all nations, who have seen the wonderful power, and wisdom, and fidelity, and goodness of God in our deliverance, it becomes you to acknowledge it with admiration and rejoicing. Or,

all the land, or *this land* . But the former sense is more probable from Psa_66:4, where this word is so used. And it is very proper in this place, and usual in other places of Scriptures, to invite the Gentile world to the contemplation and celebration of God's works to and for his people. See Deu_32:43 1Ch_16:23,24.

Psalms 66:2

i.e. Praise him in an extraordinary and eminent degree, so as he may have much glory from you.

Psalms 66:3

How terrible art thou in thy works! To wit to thine enemies, as it follows. *Submit themselves unto thee* , Heb. *lie unto thee* , i.e. profess subjection to thee, not sincerely and freely, but by constraint, and out of a servile fear.

Psalms 66:4

Many people of divers nations shall be so affected with thy stupendous works, that they shall worship and praise thee for them, and all people shall do so, and shall have just cause to do so; and the time will come when all nations will actually do so, to wit, in the days of the Messias.

Psalms 66:5

See the works of God; consider them wisely and seriously, for God's glory, and for your own good.

Toward the children of men; to all his enemies; whom he calls the children of men, partly in way of contempt, to show how unable they are either to avoid or resist the great God; and partly in opposition to his own people, who are frequently called the children of God.

Psalms 66:6

The flood, or river, to wit, Jordan. *We* , i.e. our nation, or our ancestors, in whose loins we then were, and the benefit of which ancient deliverance we at this day enjoy. See the like expressions Psa_81:5 Hos_12:4. The whole people of Israel are oft considered as one body, continued through all succeeding generations, united in the bond of the same covenant and worship, and in the possession of the same promises, and privileges, and blessings, and acted by one and the same spirit; and therefore several and contrary things may reasonably be ascribed to them, in regard of

their several parts and ages, and what was done in one age may be imputed to another by virtue of their strict conjunction with the same body.

Psalms 66:7

The same power which God had and put forth for his people in ancient time, he still hath in as great vigour as ever, and is not at all weakened by age, and is as able and ready to act for them now as ever he was; which he hath showed by this late and glorious instance.

His eyes behold the nations; he sees all their secret and subtle devices, and can and will defeat them, when he sees fit.

Let not the rebellious exalt themselves; lift up their hands against God, or against his people. Or, *the rebellious* (i.e. those people which rebel against this almighty God and his laws) *shall not exalt themselves*, as they vainly hope and design to do; but shall be brought down and destroyed, as is hereby implied.

Psalms 66:8

Ye people of other nations, that have served or yet do serve other gods.

Psalms 66:9

Which holdeth our soul in life; who by a succession of miracles of mercy hath kept us alive in the midst of a thousand deaths, to which we were exposed, and hath restored us to life, when we were like dead men, and dry bones scattered at the mouth of the grave.

To be moved, to wit, so as to fall into mischief and utter ruin, as our enemies designed.

Psalms 66:10

For, or *yet*, or *nevertheless*. Though thou hast hitherto helped us, and now delivered us, yet for a season thou hast sorely afflicted us.

Tried us, as silver is tried, i.e. severely, as if it were in a burning furnace; and with a design to try our sincerity, and to purge out the dross, or the wicked, from among us.

Psalms 66:11

Thou broughtest us into the net which our enemies laid for us, and which could never have taken or held us but by the permission and disposal of thy providence, which gave us into their hands.

Psalms 66:12

Men; weak, and mortal, and miserable men, as the word signifies, no better nor stronger than we, if thou hadst not given them power over us.

To ride over our heads; to ride upon our shoulders. By thy permission they have used us like slaves, yea, like beasts, to carry their persons or burdens. Compare Isa_51:23.

Through fire and through water, i.e. through various and dangerous trials and calamities. See Psa_32:6 **69:2** Eze_15:7 **30:8**.

Into a wealthy place, Heb. *into a moist or well-watered place* ; such as Canaan was, both in a proper sense and figuratively, as being replenished with Divine graces and blessings.

Psalms 66:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 66:14

Hitherto he spoke in the plural number, but now he begins to speak in the singular number; but still the speech is continued of the same person or persons; only sometimes the whole body speaks, and sometimes one man speaks in the name of all the rest.

Psalms 66:15

With the incense of rams; with the fat of rams, which in these peace-offerings was burnt upon the altar, and so vanished into smoke like incense, and which is no less pleasing to God than incense.

Psalms 66:16

All ye that fear God; whether Israelites, or Gentiles proselyted to them. Let every Israelite take notice of what God hath done for the nation in general, and let the Gentiles observe God's goodness to the children of Israel.

What he hath done for my soul; which he hath held in life, as he said, Psa_66:16, in the greatest dangers of death.

Psalms 66:17

With my mouth; with a loud voice and great fervency: or it is a pleonasm, as Psa_44:1, *We have heard with our ears. Extolled*, i.e. praised by me, to wit, for answering my prayers.

Psalms 66:18

If I regard, Heb. *if I have or had seen, or looked upon*, to wit, with approbation and affection, as Job_31:26 Hab_1:13. Men look upon what they like, and turn away their face from what they loathe or hate.

Iniquity; any sin whatsoever, and especially idolatry, which is oft expressed by this word, to which the Israelites were very prone, and to which they had most powerful temptations from the examples, and counsels, and promises, and threats of the idolaters, in whose land and power they had been. And so this is a purgation of themselves from that crime, somewhat like that Psa_44:20,**21**, and in general from those gross and reigning sins whereof they had been guilty formerly.

In my heart; if my heart was false to God, and did cleave to idols or to any wickedness, although I might for some prudential reasons forbear the gross and outward acts. Compare Psa_44:17,**18**. If I had been guilty of that hypocrisy wherewith mine enemies charged me, and had been a secret favourer of wickedness when I pretended great piety. Or, If I did not cry unto God with my heart, but only howled for corn and wine, &c.; and whilst I cried to God with my tongue, my heart was set upon sin, or I desired only that which I resolved in my heart to spend upon my lusts.

Will not hear me; or, *would not have heard me*; as divers learned interpreters translate it; the future being put potentially, as is usual among the Hebrews. For God heareth not sinners, Joh_9:31, nor hypocrites, Job_27:8,**9 Pr 15:29**.

Psalms 66:19

Which is a public vindication and a Divine testimony of my integrity against all my false accusers.

Psalms 66:20

Turned away, or *rejected* , or *removed* , to wit, from his sight and audience, but hath received and granted it.

His mercy: though he had now asserted his own innocency and sincere piety, yet he imputeth not God's hearing of his prayers to that, but solely unto God's grace and mercy.

Psalms 67:1 PSALM 67

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a prayer for the church of Israel, as also for the Gentile world, whose conversion he prophetically describes.

The church prayeth for the enlargement of the kingdom of God, Psa_67:1,2, to the joy of the nations, Psa_67:3-5; and for the increase of spiritual and temporal blessings, Psa_67:6,7.

Unto us, thy people of Israel. As thou hast hid thy face and favour from us, so now do thou manifest it to us. For the phrase, Num_6:25,26 **Psa 31:16**.

Psalms 67:2

Nor do we desire this mercy only for our comfort, but also for the advancement of thy glory, and the propagation of the true religion among all nations, who by the contemplation of thy gracious and wonderful works to and for us will be induced to love and serve thee, and to list themselves among thy people. By God's way he understands, either,

1. That way wherein God walks; or the manner of his dealing with his people: How gracious and bountiful a Master thou art to all thy servants! Or rather,

2. That way wherein God requires men to walk, the way of God's precepts, the way of truth, or the true religion; as the *way* or *ways of the Lord* are frequently taken, Gen_17:19 Jud_2:22 Psa_18:21 Psa_119:1 Act_18:25,26, &c.; the same which in the next clause is called his

saving health, Heb. *salvation* ; and both together signify the way of salvation, which the psalmist desires may be known among all nations; which was expected by the ancient and godly Jews at the

coming of the Messiah, who is called *the way* , Joh_14:6, and God's salvation, Luk_2:30. And so the sense of the place is this, Deal so graciously with thy people Israel, that thereby the Gentile world may at last be allured to join themselves with them, and to embrace their religion and Messiah; according to that famous prophecy, Zec_8:23, *In those days ten men out of all nations shall take hold of the skirt of a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you .*

Psalms 67:3

O hasten that time, when all the Gentiles shall forsake their dumb idols, and serve and praise thee the living God, as they will have abundant cause to do.

Psalms 67:4

Be glad and sing for joy, for thy transcendent mercy to them, in rescuing them from the vanities and damnable errors of their fathers, and in bringing them to the knowledge of the true God, and of eternal life.

Shalt judge, i.e. rule and govern them, as it is explained in the next clause, and as this phrase is used.

Righteously; which is the great commendation of any government, and the greatest argument and encouragement to the Gentiles to put themselves under it; the rather, because they had found the misery of living under the unrighteous and tyrannical government of the devil, and of their idolatrous and heathenish rulers.

Govern, Heb. *lead* , to wit, gently, as a shepherd doth his sheep; and not rule them with rigour, as other lords had done.

Psalms 67:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 67:6

When the people of the earth shall be converted to the worship and service of the true God, God will take away his curse from the earth, and cause it to yield them abundance of all sorts of fruits; under which one blessing promised under the law to them that obey God, all other blessings both temporal and spiritual are comprehended, as is very usual in the Old Testament.

Our own God; he who is Israel's God in a peculiar manner, by that everlasting covenant which he hath made with us.

Psalms 67:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 68:1 PSALM 68

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion of this Psalm seems to have been David's translation of the ark to Zion, which was managed with great solemnity and devotion, and celebrated with some Psalms, and this among the rest. For the first words are the very same which Moses appointed for such occasions, Num_10:35, and the following verses pursue the same matter with the first. Thence he falls into a description of some of the excellent properties and glorious works of the God to whom this ark belonged. But because David very well knew that both himself and the ark were types of Christ, and that the church and people of Israel were a type of the catholic church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, and that the legal administrations and actions were types of those of the gospel, he therefore, by the Spirit of prophecy, looked through and beyond the present actions and types, unto the great mysteries of Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven, and of the special privileges of the Christian church, and of the conversion of the Gentiles unto God, and therefore intermixeth some passages which directly and immediately belong to these things, although the words be so ordered that they carry a manifest allusion to the present actions, and may in some sort be applied to them, though in a more obscure and improper and secondary sense. Nor is it at all strange that in the same Psalm there is such a mixture of things, whereof some belong only to the actions or events of that time, and some only to Christ and the gospel times, if it be considered that the psalmist in himself doth frequently express divers, and those contrary, passions and dispositions, as hope and fear, &c., in the same Psalm, and sometimes in the same verse, and especially that the sacred penmen in the composition of these writings were men wholly inspired, and governed, and moved by the Holy Ghost, 2Pe_1:21, by whom they were variously transported, as he saw fit, and sometimes carried away to speak of the highest mysteries of

the gospel, even such things as they themselves did not fully understand, as appears from 1Pe_1:10,11.

At the removing of the ark, David exhorteth to praise the Lord, Psa_68:1-5, for his wonderful power and love in delivering his people out of Egypt, Psa_68:6; leading them through the wilderness, Psa_68:7-11; subduing their enemies, Psa_68:12; and choosing Zion for his habitation, Psa_68:13-18. He blesseth God for his judgments on the church 's enemies, Psa_68:19-21; for his promises to his people, Psa_68:22-29; and for his threats to the cruel, Psa_68:30. The kingdoms of the earth are called to sing to the Lord, whose power and majesty is heard in the heavens, and whose strength and excellency is over Israel, Psa_68:31-35.

Let God arise ; oh that God would arise from his seat, and bestir himself and go forth to fight with his enemies! who, if he do so, will easily and suddenly be scattered. Or, *God will arise* . And so the other verbs following may be rendered, as being of the future tense, *shall be scattered* , *shall flee* , &c. Although the futures are frequently rendered imperatively; and so they are truly rendered Num_10:35, whence this verse is taken. *Hate him* . All God's enemies are here said to hate God, not directly and formally, for there are few such persons, but because they hate his laws and government, and his people and image, and because they fight against him and his, which is justly taken for an evidence of hatred.

Psalms 68:2

As smoke is driven away; as smoke at first mounts high and fills a great space of air, but speedily vanisheth into air, or is dispersed with the wind.

Psalms 68:3

For God's gracious appearance on their behalf, and for his settled presence with them.

Psalms 68:4

Extol him, by praising him; of which this verb is used, Pro_4:8. Or rather, *raise up or prepare the way for him* ; for so this word is commonly used, as Isa_57:14 **57:10**, and elsewhere. And this doubtless they did for this solemnity of bringing the ark to Zion. Compare Isa_40:3. That rideth upon the heavens; which phrase is

used below, Psa_68:33, though in differing words. Or, *that did ride in the desert* , where the ark was carried, and God marched along with it in the cloudy pillar. Or, *that now rideth* as (which particle is frequently understood) *in the desert* , i.e. that is now carried from place to place as it was in the desert. The word here rendered *heavens* doth generally signify the desert or plain fields, as Num_33:48,50 36:13 Jos_5:10 2Sa_4:7 Isa_40:3, compared with Luk_3:4.

By his name Jah; whereby he is known and distinguished from all false gods; for *Jah* is generally conceived to be an abbreviature of the name Jehovah, which the heathens pronounced *Jao* .

Before him; before the ark, where he is present, as David himself is said, *to dance before the Lord* upon this occasion, 2Sa_6:14.

Psalms 68:5

He now enters upon some of the matters or reasons for which God is to be extolled; whereof this is one, that he is the patron of such as are injured and oppressed, and have not power to help themselves.

In his holy habitation; either in his tabernacle, or in heaven. Though he dwells there, yet the eyes of his fatherly providence and care run to and fro to help his people when they are distressed.

Psalms 68:6

Setteth the solitary in families; such as were single and solitary he blesseth with a wife and children, as he did Abraham. *Houses* are oft put for posterity, as Exo_1:21 Rth_4:11 2Sa_7:11.

Bringeth out those which are bound with chains; he setteth captives and prisoners at liberty, as he did the Israelites, &c.

The rebellious; those who rebel against God, as the Egyptians did.

Dwell in a dry land; are deprived of all true comfort, and plagued with manifold calamities.

Psalms 68:7

In the cloudy pillar, as their Captain leading them out of Egypt.

Psalms 68:8

The earth; either,

1. Metonymically, the inhabitants of those parts of the earth, by comparing Exo_15:14. Or,
2. Properly, by comparing Psa_114:5-7. There was a great earthquake, as a token of God's dreadful presence.

Dropped, i.e. poured down great showers, which accompanied those mighty thunders, as usually it doth. Was moved; or, dropped; which may be repeated out, of the former clause; was even melted or dissolved with fear. It is a poetical representation of the terribleness of God's appearance.

Psalms 68:9

Send a plentiful rain; either,

1. In the wilderness; where they oft wanted water, and were by God's extraordinary care supplied with it. Or rather,
2. In the land of Canaan, which he calls God's inheritance in the next words; as also Exo_15:17, and in many other places of Scripture; in which God's people are said to dwell in the next verse, of which, and the things done in it, lie speaks in the following verses, and which, being destitute of those constant supplies from the overflowings of a great river which Egypt enjoyed, God took a special care to supply with rain as occasion required; of which see Deu_11:10,**11**.

Confirm; or, *stablish* , or *support* , or *sustain* .

Thine inheritance; either thy people; or rather thy land, as was now said. Weary; dry and thirsty, and parched with excessive heat, and ready to faint for want of rain: compare Psa_63:1.

Psalms 68:10

Thy congregation; thy people of Israel, who are all united in one body under thee, their Head and Governor. For though this word commonly signifies *living creatures* , yet sometimes it signifies a company of men, as here below, Psa_68:31, and 2Sa_23:13, compared with 1Ch_11:15 Psa_74:19. Or the proper signification of the word may be retained, and it may be rendered *thy flock* ; for God oft compares himself to a *shepherd* , and his people to sheep,

and particularly he is said *to have led his people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron* , Psa_77:20, to wit, in the wilderness; and consequently he may be here said to have brought his sheep into and made them to dwell in Canaan, as in a green and good pasture, as God speaks of his people under this very metaphor, Psa_23:2.

Prepared; or, *prepared it* ; which pronoun is oft understood, and here most easily out of the foregoing clause of this verse, where it is expressed. *Prepared it* , to wit, this land, for the use of thy people; which God did many ways; partly by designing it for them, and expelling the old inhabitants to make way for them; and partly by furnishing it with all sorts of provisions, both for necessity. and delight, and making it fruitful by his special blessing, in giving rain in its proper seasons.

Of thy goodness; by thy free and singular goodness; which may be referred both to the cause of this preparation, God did it not for their righteousness or worthiness, but out of his mere mercy, as God oft telleth them; and to the manner and measure of it, God did wonderfully increase the fruits of it, that it might suffice for the supply of such a numerous people; which without his extraordinary blessing it would not do, as appears by the state of that land at this day, as it is reported by travellers and eye-witnesses of it.

For the poor, to wit, for thy people of Israel, whom he here calls poor, partly to repress that pride and arrogance to which they are exceeding prone, and to mind them of the dependence upon God for all that they have and hope for; and partly because they really were, when God undertook the conduct of them into Canaan, a very poor and beggarly people, and so they would have still been, if God had not provided for them in a singular manner.

Psalms 68:11

Gave the word, i.e. the matter of the word or discourse here following. He put this triumphant song into their mouths; he gave his people all those successes and victories which are here celebrated. Or, *gave the matter or thing* which was published.

Great was the company of those that published it: the works of God on the behalf of his people were so glorious and wonderful,

that all sorts of persons, both men and women, that heard of them, broke forth into songs of praise to God for them. The Hebrew word is of the feminine gender, because it was the manner of the Hebrews, that when the men returned victorious from the battle, the women went out to meet them with songs of triumph, Psa_68:25 Exo_15:20 Jud_11:34 1Sa_18:6.

Psalms 68:12

Kings of armies; the kings of Canaan and other nations which came forth against the Israelites, accompanied with great and numerous armies.

The spoil was so much, that there was enough, not only for the proper use of those who took it, but also to be divided to their wives and children when they came home. This verse and that which follows may be taken, either,

1. For the triumphant song sung by those publishers mentioned Psa_68:11. Or,

2. For the words of David, continuing the relation of the victories granted by God to Israel ever their enemies.

Psalms 68:13

Though ye, ye Israelites, to whom he now turneth his speech,

have lien among the pots; like scullions, that commonly lie down in the kitchen among the pots or hearthstones, whereby they are very much discoloured and deformed; which is fitly opposed to the following beauty. Though you have been filled with affliction and contempt.

Shall ye be; or, *ye have been* ; which may seem more suitable to the context, both foregoing and following, wherein he doth not speak prophetically of things to come, but historically of things past. So the sense of the verse is, Though you have formerly been exposed to great servitude, and reproach, and misery, to wit, in Egypt, yet since that time God hath changed your condition greatly for the better.

As the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold; beautiful and glorious, like the feathers of a dove, which according to the variety of its postures, and of the light shining upon it, look like silver or gold.

Psalms 68:14

In it; in Canaan, at the coming of the Israelites thither. The land was as white as Mount Salmon is with the snow, which falls and lies for a long time upon it; which is opposed to the native obscurity of that mountain by the many shady trees which were there, Jud_9:48. But because there is nothing certain, either concerning the great height of this mountain, or concerning its snow, as we do read of snow of Lebanon, Jer_18:14, other interpreters, both Hebrew and Christian, and the Chaldee among the rest, take this word Salmon for a common, and not a proper name, signifying *darkness* or a *shadow*, as the root from whence it comes unquestionably signifies. Nor is it strange if this word be no where else taken in that sense but here, because that is the lot of many Hebrew words, or of some significations of them, that they are to be found but in one text of Scripture. This being granted, the words are or may be rendered thus, *it was snow-white*, or *thou madest it snow-white in darkness*, or, as the Chaldee renders this word, in the shadow of death, i.e. thou didst cause light to shine out of darkness. When the state of thy people, and of the land of Canaan which thou hadst given to them, was dark and dismal or bloody, by reason of the wars raised against them by the Canaanitish kings, thou didst quickly change it; and whereas it was red like scarlet or crimson, thou madest it whiter than snow.

Psalms 68:15

The hill of God, i.e. *of Zion*, the seat of God's ark.

As the hill of Bashan; equal to it, to wit, in height, as the next clause explains it; which yet is not to be understood of an external and visible height, for Zion was a low and little hill, and Bashan a very high hill; but of its spiritual height, or exaltation, in regard of the glorious privileges of God's presence, and worship, and blessing conferred upon it, in which respect *the mountain of the Lord 's house is said to be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills*, Isa_2:2.

Psalms 68:16

Why leap ye? why do you triumph and boast of your height, and look upon poor Zion with scorn and contempt, as an obscure and inconsiderable hill, if compared with you? He speaks to the hills by a usual figure called *prosopopaeia*. This hill, though

despicable in your eyes, is precious and honourable in God's eyes, and chosen by him for his settled and perpetual residence. For though the ark was removed from this particular place, in which it was now to be placed, to the hill of Moriah, upon which the temple was built, yet it must be remembered that Zion and Moriah stood one near to the other, being both in Jerusalem, and are by some said to have been but two tops of one and the same hill.

Psalms 68:17

The chariots of God, i.e. the hosts or armies (whereof chariots were a great and eminent part in those times and places) which attend upon God to do his pleasure, and to fight for him and for his people.

Twenty thousand, i.e. an innumerable company; a certain number being put for an uncertain, as Psa_3:6 **91:7**, and in many other places.

The Lord is among them; here is not only the presence of the angels, but of the great and blessed God himself. And here the psalmist seems to be transported by the prophetic spirit, from the narration of those external successes and victories of which he had been speaking in the former part of the Psalm, unto the prediction of higher and more glorious things, even of the coming of the Messiah, and of the happy and transcendent privileges and blessings accruing to mankind by it, described in the next verse. And the connexion of this new matter with the former is sufficiently evident. For having preferred Zion before other hills, Psa_68:15,**16**, he now proves its excellency by an invincible argument, because this is the place to which the Lord of hosts himself, the Messiah, God manifested in the flesh, was to come, as is manifest from Psa_2:6 **90:2** Isa_2:3 **28:16**, compared with 1Pe_2:6 Isa_59:20, compared with Rom_11:26, and many other places of Scripture. And when he did come into the world, he was attended with a multitude of holy angels, which celebrated his birth, Luk_2:13,**14**.

As in Sinai, in the holy place; God is no less gloriously, though less terribly, present here than he was in Sinai, when the great God, attended with thousands of his angels, solemnly appeared there to deliver the law. Heb. *Sinai is in the sanctuary*, or *holy*

place ; which is a poetical and a very emphatical expression, and very pertinent to this place. For having advanced Zion above all other hills, he now equals it to that venerable hill of Sinai, which the Divine Majesty honoured with his glorious presence. Here, saith he, you have in some sort Mount Sinai itself, to wit, all the glories and privileges of it, the presence of Jehovah attended with his angels, and the same law and covenant, yea, and a greater privilege than Sinai had, to wit, the Lord Jehovah descending from heaven into a human body, as appears by his ascending thither again, which the next verse describes, and visibly coming into his own temple, as it was prophesied concerning him, Mal_3:1.

Psalms 68:18

Thou hast ascended on high; having spoken of the Lord, and of his presence upon earth, he now turneth his speech to him, as is most usual in this book. And the contents of this verse do not agree to the present occasion of carrying the ark to Zion, but have a manifest reference to Christ, and to his ascension into heaven, in whom, and in whom alone, they are literally and fully accomplished, and to whom therefore they are ascribed, Eph_4:8. Although the expressions here used are borrowed from the ancient custom of princes, or generals of armies, who, after some glorious achievements and victories, used to go up into their royal cities in triumphant chariots, being attended by their captive enemies, and afterward to distribute divers gifts to their soldiers and subjects, and sometimes to do some acts of grace and clemency even to their rebels and enemies, and to receive them into the number of his own people.

Captivity; either,

1. Those who did formerly take thy people captives. Or rather,
2. Those whom thou hast taken captive, as this word is most commonly used, as Num_21:1 Deu_21:10 Jud_5:12, &c. So *poverty* is put for the poor, 2Ki_24:14. This is meant of death, and sin, and the devil, and all the enemies of Christ and of his people, whom Christ led in triumph, having *spoiled them* , and *making a show of them openly* , as it is expressed, Col_2:15.

Thou hast received gifts; though as thou art God thou art incapable of receiving any thing more than thou hast, yet according to thy manhood thou hast received from God all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and all those gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit which are necessary either to the perfection of thy nature, or to the discharge of thine office, or to the service and good of thy church and people. *For men* : not for thyself, for thou didst not need them, having the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in thee bodily, Col_2:9; but for the sons of men, or which thou mightest give unto men; whence for *receiving for men* , the apostle justly saith gave unto men, Eph_4:8, because he received them for no other end but to give them, and in such cases *receiving* or *taking* is oft put for *giving* , or for *taking* and *giving* , as Exo_25:2 Jud_14:2 1Ki_3:24 **17:10**, &c.

For the rebellious also: nor didst thou only receive gifts for and give them to thy friends and people, as the manner of other conquerors is, but also to thy most stubborn and rebellious enemies, whether Jews or Gentiles, who resolved to *break thy bands asunder, and to cast away thy cords from them* as is said, Psa_2:3; and *would not have thee to reign over them* , Luk_19:14; who crucified him, and put him to open shame; and yet to these, as well as others, thou didst give those saving gifts and graces, as we read, **Ac 2**, and elsewhere.

That the Lord God might dwell among them; that having received such gifts, and thereby being made fit habitations for God, he who as man is ascended into the highest heavens, might as God come down to them, and dwell with them, not only in and by his ordinances, in which he is present, but also by his Spirit dwelling in their hearts by faith. Or, *that they might dwell with the Lord God* ; the particle *with* being either understood, as it is in many places, or being contained in the Hebrew verb *shacan* , which, as some Hebrew critics observe, signifies not only to dwell, but to *dwell* with another; of which the learned may see many instances in Forsterus's Hebrew Lexicon. So the sense is, that they who were estranged and at a distance from God, and enemies to him, might draw near to him, and dwell with him both here and in heaven.

Psalms 68:19

Who daily loadeth us with benefits; and besides that great and glorious blessing of his ascension which once he wrought for us, he is daily conferring new favours upon us. Heb. *who layeth load upon us* ; which may be understood either,

1. Of the burden of afflictions, for which God's people have cause to bless God upon many accounts. Or rather,
2. Of mercies and favours, which is more agreeable to the context; wherewith in common speech men are said to be loaded by another when they receive them from him in great abundance.

The God of our salvation; the only Author and Finisher both of our present and of our eternal salvation.

Psalms 68:20

Belong, i.e. they are only in his hand and power to dispose them as he pleaseth.

The issues, Heb. *the outgoings* or *evasions* , escapes or deliverances, as a Greek word of the same signification is used, 1Co_10:13. *From death* ; or, *in* (as the Hebrew lamed is used, Psa_16:10 **31:17**) *death* , i.e. the most deadly dangers, yea, even death itself, in and from which God through Christ delivers his people.

Psalms 68:21

The head; either,

1. The political head, their ruler or rulers, the devil or other wicked Christians. Or rather,
2. The natural head, as appears from the following expression, added to explain this, and

the hairy scalp; and he speaks of the heads or hairy scalps not of one, but of all his enemies; the singular number being put for the plural, than which nothing is more frequent. *The hairy scalp* , i.e. his most fierce and terrible enemies. For in ancient times many people used to wear long and shaggy hair, that their looks might be more terrible to their enemies.

Of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses; of those who persist in their enmity and rebellion against him; whereby he

opens a door of hope and mercy to his very enemies, if they return and submit themselves to him.

Psalms 68:22

The Lord said; either within himself, he purposed or he promised; for so he had done by divers of his prophets, though not in the same words which are here used, yet to the same purpose.

I will bring again from Bashan; I will repeat my ancient favours, and give my people as great deliverances as I formerly did, when I saved them from that great giant Og king of Bashan, who came out against them with all his forces, Deu_3:1; whom I delivered into their hand, as it there follows; which deliverance is oft mentioned in succeeding scriptures as one of the most eminent.

From the depths of the sea; from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, and from the Red Sea itself, through which I brought them with honour and safety, when it overwhelmed their enemies.

Psalms 68:23

And as it was at the Red Sea and at Bashan before, so yet again thine enemies shall be slain in such great numbers, that thou mayst wade in their blood, and thy dogs lick it up in the field.

Psalms 68:24

They have seen: it is an indefinite expression; men saw and observed it, thy people to their comfort, and thine enemies with terror and astonishment.

Thy goings; either,

1. How thou didst march before them through the Red Sea and the wilderness, even until thou didst bring them into Canaan, and afterward, as occasion was, and how thou didst subdue their enemies before them. Or rather,

2. The procession of the ark to Zion, the solemnity whereof is particularly described in the following verses.

In the sanctuary; or, *in holiness* ; for it was not a light and carnal, but a holy pomp; or, *in the holy place* ; as the ark, in and with which God is supposed to go, might very fitly and truly be called. Or *into the sanctuary* , or holy tabernacle, prepared for it; whither the ark was now going.

Psalms 68:25

The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; of which see 2Sa_6:15 1Ch_13:8. Playing with timbrels, according to the usage of those times. See **Exo 15**, &c.

Psalms 68:26

Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by many others, ye that are *of or from the fountain of Israel, or Jacob* , i.e. all ye people of Israel, who are called the

fountain of Jacob, Deu_33:28, and said to *come forth out of the waters of Judah* , Isa_48:1, and consequently of *Jacob or Israel* . See also Pro_5:18 Isa_51:1. And this sense seems to be confirmed by the following verse, wherein this fountain is distributed into its several streams, the tribes of Israel. But these words may be and are by some joined with the former, either thus, *Bless Ñthe Lord for the fountain of Israel* , i.e. for that *fountain* which God hath *opened to Israel* for the purging away of *sin and uncleanness* , as it is expressed Zec_13:1, even the blood and Spirit of Christ. and all those spiritual blessings which God confers upon his people in his sanctuary, and by his ordinances; which are oft compared to waters, as Isa_12:3 Eze_47:1; and to a *fountain or well* , as Joe_3:18 Joh_4:14. See also Pro_14:27 Jer_2:13. Or thus, *Bless Ñthe Lord who is of the fountain of Israel* , i.e. who though he be the most high God, yet according to the flesh is descended from Israel, as is noted, Rom_9:5. But the first sense seems most natural and easy.

Psalms 68:27

There is present in this solemn pomp of carrying the ark to Zion, under the conduct of David their king,

little Benjamin. That tribe is called *little* , partly because it was the youngest, as being descended from Jacob's youngest son Benjamin; and principally because it was exceedingly diminished, and almost extinguished, under the judges, **Jud 20 Jud 21**. He mentions this tribe, partly because they were nearest unto Judah, and to the place whither the ark was going; and partly to note their reconciliation and submission to David, against whom they had stood out with more obstinacy than any other tribe, as having been

so long used to govern, and loth to part with the regal dignity which was by God's appointment first seated among them.

With their ruler; with the prince of their tribe, who marched in the head of them. Heb. *the ruler*, i.e. the tribe which had lately swayed the sceptre, but now submitted themselves to David, and waited upon him in this expedition. But the first sense seems the truest, because *the princes* of all the following tribes are here mentioned.

Their council; their counsellors; or rather, their company, as it is in the margin, the people of that tribe who waited upon them in that action; which may seem to be here noted, to intimate that though the princes only of the following tribes be yet the people are comprehended under them, and were present with them in that solemnity. *Zebulun and Naphtali* : he mentions these tribes, either,

1. Because they excelled in learning and knowledge, as is gathered from Gen_49:21 Deu_33:19 Jud_5:14. Or,

2. Because they were more hearty and forward in complying with David and in his service than the rest, as may seem from the great number of them which came from the ends of the land to David in Hebron, 1Ch_12:33,34. Or,

3. Because they lived in the remotest parts of the land of Canaan. And so by naming two of the nearest tribes, and two of the furthest, he leaves it to be understood that the other tribes also did come upon this occasion, as is manifest from 2Sa_6:15,19 1Ch_13:2,5,6,8 15:3,28.

Psalms 68:28

Having spoken of Israel, and of their several tribes, Psa_68:26,27, he now directeth his speech to them.

Hath commanded, i.e. hath ordained or effectually procured, as this word is oft used, as Lev_25:21 Deu_28:8 Psa_42:8 44:4.

Thy strength; all that strength and power which thou hast put forth at any time in fighting with thine enemies, and which is now greatly increased by the re-collection and union of all the tribes under one head, which is the work of God himself, without whom all the differences and animosities which had for many years been among them could never have been composed and quieted. Seeing

therefore all our strength is in thee and from thee alone, we pray unto thee for the continuance and increase of our strength, and that thou wouldst proceed to finish that good work which thou hast begun among us, by preserving, and confirming, and perpetuating this blessed union, and by giving us a more full and universal deliverance from our enemies.

Psalms 68:29

Thy temple; either,

1. The old tabernacle which then was; which is oft called by this name. But that was now at Gibeon, not at Jerusalem. Or rather,

2. The temple which Solomon should build, which David knew should be *very magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries*, as he saith, 1Ch_22:5; and such as would command esteem and reverence even from heathenish princes and people, and that not only for its most splendid and glorious structure, but especially for the wonderful works of the God of that temple wrought by him on the behalf of his people, and in answer to the prayers made in the temple; of which see 1Ki_8:41-43.

Kings; kings of the Gentiles; which was done in part in the times of Solomon and Hezekiah, 1Ki_10:11,**24,25** 2Ch_32:23, and afterwards by others; but more fully when the Lord Christ was come into his temple, according to that prophecy, Mal_3:1, and had built a better temple instead of it, even the Christian church, to which the kings and nations of the earth were to flow in great abundance, according to the tenor of many prophecies in the Old Testament.

Psalms 68:30

Rebuke, to wit, really; humble and chastise those that will not bring presents to thee, as the kings did, Psa_68:29, till they see their error and submit themselves, as it here follows.

The company; so this word signifies here above, Psa_68:11 2Sa_23:11 Psa_74:19. Or, *the beast*, or *wild beast*, as this word is elsewhere used, i.e. the beasts; the singular being put for the plural: so the sense is the same.

Spear-men, Heb. *of the reed*, i.e. that use spears or arrows; which may be called *reeds*, either because in length and form they

resemble *reeds* , or because anciently they were made of reeds. And this sense seems favoured by the last words of this verse, in which he explains this and the other metaphors of warriors. Or the *reed* may be taken properly; and by *the beast of the reed* he may understand the king of Egypt, who then was a very potent and a most idolatrous king, and a great and old enemy to the true religion, and to the people of Israel, whom therefore he desires God to rebuke and humble, that he may acknowledge the true God, which is foretold that he shall do, Psa_68:31. As for this enigmatical designation of this king, that is agreeable enough both to the usage of the prophets in such cases, and to the rules of prudence; and upon the same account the prophet Jeremiah, threatening destruction against Babylon, calls it enigmatically *Sheshach* , Jer_25:26 **51:41**, and St. Paul calls Nero *the lion* , 2Ti_4:17. But then this one king, being eminent in his kind, is by a usual synecdoche put for all of them which were enemies to God's people.

Bulls; by which he doubtless understands men of war, as the following words expound it; the great, and potent, and fierce, and furious adversaries of God, and of his church, as this word is used, Psa_22:12 Isa_34:7. And consequently

the calves must be their people or soldiers depending upon them, and joining with them in these acts of hostility against thine Israel.

Submit himself with pieces of silver: this he adds as a limitation of his request; Rebuke them, O Lord, not to utter destruction, but only till they be humbled and submit themselves, and in token thereof bring pieces of silver for presents, as was foretold, Psa_68:29. For *submit himself* , it is in the Hebrew *cast himself down* , or *offer himself to be trod upon* . But because this supplement may seem too large, and not necessary, the words are and may be rendered otherwise, *that tread upon* , or *walk proudly in* or *with, fragments* or *pieces of silver* , wherewith eminent captains used to adorn themselves and their very horses. And so this belongs to the *bulls and calves* , whose pride, and wealth, and power is described in this manner. *Scatter thou* , Heb. *he hath scattered* , i.e. he will certainly scatter, according to the prophetic style. So this may contain an answer, or his assurance of an answer, to his prayer: I prayed, *Rebuke the company* , &c.,

and God hath heard my prayer, and I doubt not will rebuke or scatter them.

That delight in war; that without any necessity or provocation, and merely out of a love to mischief and spoil, make war upon others, and upon us particularly. Now that thou hast given thy people rest, and settled the ark in its place, O Lord, rebuke all our malicious and bloody enemies, and give us assured peace, that we may worship the Lord without disturbance. And withal David may seem to utter this for his own vindication. It is true, O Lord, I have been a man of war, and therefore have lost the honour of building the temple, and am now forced to lodge the ark in a mean tabernacle, which I have erected for it; but this thou knowest, that I have not undertaken any of my wars out of wantonness, or ambition, or love to war and mischief, but only by constraint and necessity, for the just defence of myself and of thy people; and therefore do not lay my wars to my charge.

Psalms 68:31

Egypt, Ethiopia: he names only these, as the great and ancient enemies of God, and of his people, and as a most wicked, and idolatrous, and incorrigible sort of men; see Jer_13:23 Amo_9:7; but by them he synecdochically understands all other nations and people of the like character.

Stretch out her hands unto God; either in way of humble supplication and submission, begging mercy of him; or to offer up the presents expressed, Psa_68:29. But this prophecy, as also the next verse, evidently belongs to the times of the Messiah, when the Gentiles were to be brought in to the knowledge and worship of the true God; with the thoughts and hopes whereof David oft comforteth himself in that confined and afflicted state of the church in his time.

Psalms 68:32

Not only Egypt and Ethiopia, but other kingdoms and nations also, who shall partake of the same grace with them.

Psalms 68:33

Upon the heavens; upon the highest heavens, as Deu_10:14, his truest and best sanctuary; by which expressions he prevents all mean and carnal conceptions of God, as if he were confined to the

ark or tabernacle, and lifteth up the minds, both of Jews and Gentiles, to heaven, and representeth God as dwelling there in infinite glory and majesty, and from thence looking down upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and ruling them by his almighty power, and therefore most fit to be owned and received by all kings and kingdoms, as their Lord and Governor.

Of old, i.e. from the very beginning of the world; whereas the ark was only some hundred years old. Or,

which are everlasting; for this Hebrew word answers to *olam*, which looks not only backward to time past; but forward to the future, of which this word is by divers understood, Deu_33:15. This is also opposed to the condition of the ark, and tabernacle, and temple; all which, as David by the Spirit of prophecy well knew, would be abolished and dissolved.

A mighty voice; by which he understands, either,

1. The thunder, called God's *voice*, Psa_29:3, and elsewhere. Or rather,

2. *His word*, to wit, the gospel, published by Christ and by his apostles, assisted by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; which might well be called God's *voice*, and that a *mighty voice*, because it produced such great and wonderful effects, as are here above mentioned, in converting all the kings and kingdoms of the earth.

Psalms 68:34

Ascribe ye strength unto God; acknowledge that he is mighty and able to do whatsoever he pleaseth for his people, or against his and their enemies.

His excellency; his excellent power and goodness.

Is over Israel; dwells among them, and is employed for them, as occasion requires. He is indeed the universal Lord of the whole heaven and earth, but in a special and excellent manner he is the God of Israel.

In the clouds; or, *in the heavens*, He hath two dwellings and thrones, the one in his church and people, and the other in heaven. See Isa_57:15.

Psalms 68:35

Terrible; or, *venerable* ; deservedly to be both revered and feared.

Holy places; or, *sanctuaries* . He useth the plural number; either,

1. Of the sanctuary in Zion, because the tabernacle and temple consisted of three parts; the court, the holy place, and the holy of holies. Or rather,

2. With respect to that twofold sanctuary here mentioned, one in Zion, and the other in heaven. And out of both these holy places God appeared, and put forth such acts of his power as might justly terrify his enemies.

God giveth strength and power unto his people; the strength which the kingdom of Israel now hath, is not to be ascribed to my valour or conduct, nor to the courage or numbers of the people, nor to that happy union now made, and established among all the tribes, but only to the might and grace of God.

Psalms 69:1 PSALM 69

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm of David consists of his complaints and fervent prayers, and comfortable predictions of his deliverance, and of the ruin of his enemies. But the condition of this Psalm is like that of divers others, wherein although the matter or substance of it agree in some sort to David, yet there are some singular passages, which he delivers with a particular respect unto Christ, of whom he was an eminent type, and upon whom his thoughts were much and often fixed, and of whom they are more fitly and fully understood; and therefore they are justly applied to him in the New Testament, as we shall see.

David (as a type of Christ) complaineth of his heavy and manifold afflictions, Psa_69:1-12; fervently prayeth for help and deliverance, Psa_69:13-21; giveth over his enemies to, destruction, Psa_69:22-29; and praiseth God in confidence of being accepted, Psa_69:30-34, and Zion saved, Psa_69:35,**36**.

Waters, i.e. tribulations, which are oft expressed by *waters* ; as hath been observed.

Unto my soul, i.e. to my vital parts; so that I am ready to be choked with them. My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.

Psalms 69:2

In deep mire, Heb. *in the mire of the deep waters* . I am not in the shallows, or nigh the bank, but in the middle and deepest parts, and in the very mire, which is at the bottom of the waters.

No standing; no firm and sure footing, but I sink in deeper and deeper, and, without thy speedy and almighty help, shall be overwhelmed and destroyed.

Psalms 69:3

I am weary of my crying; I have prayed and cried to God long and fervently, and yet God seems to neglect and forsake me.

My throat is dried with loud and frequent cries.

Mine eyes fail with looking to God for that assistance which he hath promised, and I confidently expected, but in vain.

Psalms 69:4

Without a cause; without any injury or occasion given them by me.

Restored that which I took not away; either because they unjustly and violently forced me to it, or because I was willing to do it to my own wrong for peace sake. By this one kind of wrong he understands all those injuries and violences which they practised against him.

Psalms 69:5

This is added, either,

1. As a proof of his innocency, which he had now asserted by way of appeal to God. Do thou, O Lord, judge between me and them, whether I be guilty of those rallies and sins which they lay to my charge. And such appeals indeed David useth, Psa_7:3,4, and elsewhere; but then they are delivered in form of a supposition, and not a positive assertion, as this is. Or rather,

2. As an exception to what he last said. But, O Lord, although I have been innocent to mine enemies, and have given them no cause to hate or persecute me, as they do; yet I must confess I am guilty of many sins and follies against thee, and have given thee just cause to punish me, and to give me up into their hands, and to deny or delay thine help unto me. By foolishness he means sin, as he explains it, which is commonly so called in Scripture; or by his **foolishness** he means lesser sins, committed through ignorance or inconsiderateness, and by sins those of a grosser nature.

Psalms 69:6

Them that wait on thee, i.e. thy godly people, who rely upon thy promises which thou hast made to all thine in general, and to me in a special manner, wherein they also are concerned.

Ashamed, i.e. frustrated of their just hopes; which will make them ashamed, either to look upon God, or to look upon their enemies, when they shall reproach them for their confidence in God.

For my sake; either,

1. For the sake of my sins last mentioned; let not all good men suffer for my sins. Or,

2. Because of my sad disappointments. For if they see me rejected and forsaken of God, whom they have esteemed a great example of faith, and prayer, and all virtue and piety, they will be exceedingly discouraged by this example; which will tend much to thy dishonour and disservice.

Psalms 69:7

For thy sake; for my trust in thy promise, and obedience to thy commands, and zeal for thy glory, and against all wickedness; all which they turn into matter of derision and reproach.

My face; in which man's majesty and glory is most evident, which I am in a manner ashamed to show amongst men.

Psalms 69:8

My nearest kinsmen estranged themselves from me; partly out of fear, lest they should be involved in my sufferings; and chiefly out of dislike of his piety and excessive zeal in religion, as it here follows.

Psalms 69:9

For: this is the reason of that alienation of my brethren and others from me, because there is a vast difference and contrariety in our tempers. They mind not the concerns of God and of religion, but are wholly intent upon wealth, and honour, and worldly greatness.

The zeal of thine house; that fervent passion which I have for thy house, and service, and glory, and people.

Eaten me up; exhausted and wasted my natural moisture and vital spirits, which is oft effected by grief and anger, and fervent love and desire; of which passions zeal is composed.

That reproached thee: that speak contemptuously or wickedly of thy name, or providence, or truth, or worship and service. Fallen upon me; either,

1. By imputation. They reflect upon me, because I am engaged in the defence of thy cause and glory, which wicked men oppose and despise, and therefore must needs suffer in it, and with it. Or,

2. By choice and affection. I have been as deeply affected with thy reproaches as with mine own. This whole verse, though truly belonging to David, yet was also directed by him, at least by the Spirit of God in him, to a higher use, to represent the disposition and condition of Christ, in whom this was more truly and fully accomplished than in David; to whom therefore it is applied in the New Testament, the first part of it, Joh_2:17, and the latter, Rom_15:3.

Psalms 69:10

Wept for their impiety and reproaches which they cast upon God and godliness.

Chastened; which word is here understood out of Psa_35:13; as it is also in 2Ch_10:11,14, out of 1Ki_12:11, where it is expressed.

My soul; either my body, or myself; the soul being oft used both ways. That was to my reproach; they derided me for my piety and devotion, and for my faith in God's promises, and hopes of assistance from him.

Psalms 69:11

My garment; wearing it next to my skin, in token of my humiliation and hearty sorrow, as the manner then was in days of fasting.

A proverb to them; they used my name proverbially of any person whom they thought vainly and foolishly religious.

Psalms 69:12

They that sit in the gate; either,

1. Vain and idle persons, that spend their time in the gates and markets, in which there used to be a confluence of people. Or rather,

2. The judges and magistrates, who *used to sit* (which was their posture, Exo_18:14 Pro_20:8, &c.) *in the gates* of cities, the usual places of judicature; for David oft complains of his hard usage from these men, as Psa_58:1,2 **119:23**, and elsewhere; which was the more grievous, because these, who were obliged by their office to protect and right him, did join with others in reproaching and oppressing him.

Of the drunkards; of the scum of the people; of all lewd and debauched persons. Thus both-high and low conspired against him.

Psalms 69:13

But my prayer is unto thee; but whilst they scoff I will pray, and not be driven from God, and from my prayers and other duties, by all their reproaches or other discouragements.

In an acceptable time, Heb. *in a time of acceptance* , or *grace* , or *thy good will* , or *good pleasure* . These words may be joined, either,

1. With the following words, by way of limitation: *Hear me in thy accepted time* , i.e. I do not limit thee to a day or time, but when thou seest fit hear and help me. Or rather,

2. With the foregoing, as an argument to enforce his prayer: *I pray in a time of grace or acceptance* ; I seek thee when thou mayest be found, as Psa_32:6 Isa_55:6; *in a good day* , as they said, 1Sa_25:8, in the day of grace and mercy, in a time of great

trouble, which is the proper season for prayer, Psa_50:15; and whilst I have thee engaged to me by promises, which thy honour and truth oblige thee to perform, I come not too late, and therefore do thou hear me.

In the truth of thy salvation; or, *for or according to thy saving truth or faithfulness* ; whereby thou art obliged to grant unto me that salvation which thou hast graciously promised.

Psalms 69:14

Them that hate me; whereby he explains his meaning in these metaphors of mire, and waters, and deep, and pit.

Psalms 69:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 69:16

Is good, i.e. is eminently and unspeakably good; the positive degree being put for the superlative, as it is Luk_1:28 1Co_12:23, &c. It is most ready to communicate itself to indigent and miserable creatures.

Psalms 69:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 69:18

Draw nigh unto my soul, to support and relieve it, O thou who seemest to be departed far away from me.

Because of mine enemies; partly because they persecute it, and greedily seek to destroy it; and partly because they are thine as well as mine enemies, and if they succeed, will triumph not only over me, but in some sort over thee, and over religion.

Psalms 69:19

Thou hast known my reproach, & c.; thou seest how much of it I suffer, and that for thy sake; as he said, Psa_69:7.

Are all before thee; thou knowest them thoroughly, and all their injurious and wicked devices and implacable malice against me, and all their impiety and contempt of thee; for which they deserve to be utterly and speedily destroyed.

Psalms 69:20

Hath broken my heart: for reproach is most grievous to the most generous and noble souls; and besides, this was the highest degree and the worst kind of reproach, being cast upon him for God's sake, and upon God also for his sake.

None, i.e. few or none, as that word is frequently used, both in sacred and profane writers. For whether you understand it of David, or of Christ, there were some who pitied both of them.

Psalms 69:21

Gall, or *poison* , or *bitter herbs* , Hos_10:4. See Deu_29:18 Jer_9:15 Lam_3:19. Instead of giving me that pity and comfort which my condition required, they barbarously added to my afflictions. These things were metaphorically fulfilled in David, but properly and literally in Christ, the description of whose sufferings was principally intended here by the Holy Ghost, who therefore directed David's pen to these words, and possibly informed him that this should be accomplished in Christ; which may not seem improbable to him that considers the following imprecations, which are so many and so severe, that they may seem to exceed the bounds of justice and charity, if they be applied to David's enemies, as a recompence for their injuries done to him; whereas they most deservedly and fitly belong to the enemies and murderers of Christ.

Psalms 69:22

These and the following words, which are expressed in the form of imprecations, are thought by divers to be and that the imperatives are put for the as sometimes they are. And accordingly they translate the words thus, *Their table shall become a snare* , But if they be imprecations, here was sufficient cause for them. And besides, it is apparent that they were not the dictates of human passion, but of Divine inspiration, from a just zeal for God's glory, as hath been before.

Their table, i.e. their food, and all their for necessity or delight, either for body or soul; curses here following are spiritual and eternal as temporal. And so this may comprehend their sacrifices and other legal ordinances, and the word of God; all to the Jews through their own default a great occasion of stumbling at Christ.

And this punishment in their table exactly answers to their sin in giving Christ *gall* for his meat, Psa_69:21. *Become a snare before them* , Heb. *before them* (i.e. their table or meat, which is set

before them, which is the usual expression in this case, as Gen_18:8 2Ki_6:22) *become a snare* , i.e. the occasion or instrument of their destruction. It is a metaphor taken from birds or fishes, that are commonly ensnared and taken with their baits.

And that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap; Heb. *and as for their great peace* , (which the plural number seems to import, all that tranquillity and prosperity which they do or may enjoy,) let it be *a trap* ; or, *and their peace offerings* (which sacrifices may be here mentioned, because the offerers did partake of them, and feast upon them; and so this agrees with the *table* expressed in the former clause) *a trap* . And so they were to the unbelieving Jews, whose false conceit of the everlastingness of the Mosaical dispensation was one cause of their rejection of Christ. Or thus, *and for recompences* , (i.e. an abundant compensation of all their injuries,) and *for a trap* . For thus it is rendered by divers, both ancient and modern, interpreters, and, which is more considerable, by the apostle, Rom_11:9.

Psalms 69:23

Their eyes; not the eyes of their bodies, (for so this was not accomplished in David's nor in Christ's enemies,) but of their minds, that they may not discern God's truth, nor their own duty, nor the way of peace and salvation. Punish them in their own kind; as they shut their eyes and would not see, so do thou judicially blind them. This was threatened and inflicted upon the Jews, Isa_6:10 Joh_12:39,40.

Their loins: this also belongs to the loins of their minds or souls; of which we read Luk_12:35 1Pe_1:13. The loins of the body are the seat of strength, and the great instrument of bodily motions and actions; which being applied to the mind, the sense may be, either,

1. Take away their courage and alacrity, and give them up to pusillanimity, and terror, and despair; or rather,

2. Take away their strength and ability for spiritual actions. In the former branch, he wisheth that they may not be able to see or choose their way; and here, that they may not be able to walk in it, nor to execute the good counsels which others may give them. As, on the other side, when God gives men strength, they are able not only to walk, but to run in the ways of God, Psa_119:32 Son_1:4 Isa_40:31.

Psalms 69:24

In such other ways and judgments as thou shalt think fit.

Psalms 69:25

Their habitation, Heb. *their palace* , as this word signifies, Gen_25:16 Num_31:10 Son_8:9. Either,

1. Their temple, in which they place their glory and safety. Or rather,

2. and more generally, Their strongest and most magnificent buildings and houses, in which they dwelt, as it follows in the next clause, which explains this.

None; either,

1. None of their posterity. Destroy them both root and branch. Or,

2. None at all. Let the places be accounted execrable and dreadful.

Psalms 69:26

Smitten; which is an act of barbarous cruelty and inhuman malice. They talk; reproaching them with and insulting and triumphing in their calamities.

Psalms 69:27

Add iniquity to their iniquity; give them up to their own vain minds and vile lusts, and to a reprobate sense, and take off all the restraints of thy grace and providence, and expose them to the temptations of the world and of the devil, that so they may grow worse and worse, and at last may fill up the measure of their sins; as is said, Mat_12:32: compare Rom_1:28,29. Or, *Add punishment to their punishment* ; as this word is oft taken. Send one judgment upon them after another, without ceasing. Let them not

come into thy righteousness; let them never partake of thy righteousness, i.e. either,

1. Of thy faithfulness, in making good thy promises to them. Or,

2. Of thy mercy and goodness. Or rather,

3. Of thy righteousness, properly so called, of that everlasting righteousness which the Messiah shall bring into the world, Dan_9:24, which is called the *righteousness of God* , Rom_1:17 Phi_3:9, &c., which is said to be *witnessed by the law and the prophets* , Rom_3:21, by and for which God doth justify or pardon sinners, and accept them in Christ as righteous persons. For this was the righteousness which the Jews rejected to their own ruin, Rom_10:3, according to this prediction. Thus as the first branch of the verse maketh or supposeth them guilty of many sins, so this excludes them from the only remedy, the remission of their sins. And that justifying rather than sanctifying righteousness is here meant seems most probable from the phrase, which seems to be a judicial phrase, as we read of *coming or entering into judgment* , Job_22:4 **34:23**, and *into condemnation* , Joh_5:24, opposite unto which is this phrase, *of coming into justification* ; or, which is all one, *into thy righteousness* .

Psalms 69:28

Of the living; or, *of life* : either,

1. Of this life. Out of the number of living men; which anciently used to be written in catalogues, out of which the names of those who died were blotted. Or rather,

2. Of eternal life, as both Jewish and Christian interpreters commonly understand it; which agrees best,

1. To the use of this phrase in Scripture; for in this sense men are said to be *written in the book* , Dan_12:1, or *in God 's book* , Exo_32:32, or *in the book of life* , Phi_4:3 Rev_3:5 **13:8 17:8 20:12 21:27**.

2. To the last clause of the verse, which explains it of that book, wherein none but

the righteous are written; whereas this life, and that attended with health and prosperity, is promiscuously given to and taken from good and bad men.

3. To the quality of the persons of whom this is said; which are the malicious enemies of God, and of his people, and the murderers of the Lord of glory, who shall be punished with eternal death. In this book men may be said to be written, either,

1. In reality, by God's election or predestination. Or,

2. In appearance, when a man is called by God to the profession and practice of the true religion, and into covenant with himself, and professeth to comply with it; and so is *written in the writing of the house of Israel*, which is said of all that are in the assembly of God's people, Eze_13:9, and so seems to others, and it may be to himself, to be really written in the book of life. And when a man renounceth this profession and religion, he may be said to be

blotted out of that book, because his apostacy makes it evident that he was not written in it, as he seemed to be. For this is a known and approved rule for the understanding of many texts of Scripture, that things are oft said to be done when they only seem to be done, and are not really done; as he is said to *find his life*, . Mat_10:39, who falsely imagined that he did find it, when in truth he lost it; and to *have*, Mat_13:12, who only *seemed to have*, as it is explained in the parallel place, Luk_8:18; and to *live*, Rom_7:9, when he vainly conceited himself to be alive. And in like manner men may be said to be *written in* or *blotted out* of this book, when they seem to be so by the course of their lives and actions. But that this *blotting out* is not meant properly and positively, is clear from the last branch of this verse; which, after the manner of these books, expounds the former, wherein this doubtful phrase is explained by one which is evident and unquestionable, even by his *not* being *written* in it; for it is impossible that a man's name should be properly blotted out of that book in which it was never written. The sense of the verse seems to be this, Let their wickedness be so notorious, and the tokens of God's wrath upon them so manifest, that all men may discern that they are blotted out; that is, that they never were written in the book of life, in which the righteous are written.

With the righteous, i.e. in the book of life, in which all righteous or holy persons, and only they, are written; whereby it may appear that whatsoever show or profession they once made, yet they neither are nor were truly righteous persons.

Psalms 69:29

Out of the reach of mine enemies; or, lift me out of the deep waters, and the mire, in which I was sinking, Psa_69:14.

Psalms 69:30

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 69:31

This sincere and hearty sacrifice of praise is and shall be more grateful to God than the most glorious legal sacrifices, for so such moral services ever were, 1Sa_15:22 Hos_6:6, and such sacrifices shall be accepted when those legal ones shall be abolished.

That hath horns and hoofs: this is added as a description and commendation of the sacrifice, or bullock, which he supposeth to be of the best sort, both tender and mature, as it is when the horns bud forth, and the hoofs grow hard.

Psalms 69:32

Be glad; those pious persons who are grieved for my calamities shall have occasion to rejoice, and they will heartily rejoice in my deliverance and exaltation.

Shall live, or *be revived*, to wit, with joy, which were dejected, and in a manner dead with sorrow. Compare Gen_45:27 Psa_22:26 **109:21**.

Psalms 69:33

Those who are in prison, or any straits and afflictions for his sake; which is my case, Psa_69:7.

Psalms 69:34

The heaven and earth; either,

1. Angels and men. Or rather,

2. The heaven and earth themselves, as in the next branch,

the seas, and every thing that moveth therein: all which by a usual figure he invites to praise God, as he doth elsewhere, because they all give men occasion to praise God.

Psalms 69:35

Zion; the city of Zion or Jerusalem; and his church and people, which are frequently expressed under that title.

They; the *humble and poor* , Psa_69:32,**33**, or *his servants* , as is explained in the following verse.

Dwell there; in the literal Canaan for a long time, and in the heavenly Canaan for ever.

Psalms 69:36

Their posterity shall flourish after them, and partake of the same happiness with them.

Psalms 70:1 PSALM 70

THE ARGUMENT

The contents of this Psalm are almost all to be found Psa_40:13, &c. Nor is it strange that they are here repeated, because the same or like occasions were oft repeated; and David's returning distresses might well make him sometimes repeat the same words. And as these things were joined with many other passages in **Psa 40**, so they are distinctly repeated, as a form of prayer, which himself or others might use in such a condition. What is necessary for the understanding of this Psalm, the reader may find **See Poole** "Psa_40:1", etc.

David prayeth to God for speedy help, to the shame of his enemies, Psa_70:1-3, the joy of the godly, and the magnifying of his name, Psa_70:4,**5**.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 70:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 70:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 70:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 70:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:1 PSALM 71

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm plainly showeth that it was written in a time of David's great distress, and his old age, mentioned Psa_71:9 and Psa_71:18 which proves that it belongs not to Saul's time, but rather to the time of Absalom's rebellion, which happened in his old age.

The psalmist, in confidence of his faith, and in experience of past favours, prayeth unto God to deliver him, but consume his enemies, Psa_71:1-13; promising constancy of hope in him, Psa_71:14-16; praying for his persevering strength and power, Psa_71:17,**18**; acknowledgeth his troubles to be from God, Psa_71:19-21; Promiseth thankfulness to him for his deliverance, Psa_71:22-24.

This verse and the next are taken out of Psa_31:1,**2**.

Psalms 71:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:3

Commandment; by which he understands God's purpose and promise, and his providence watching to execute them; all which are as certain and powerful as a command.

Psalms 71:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:6

From the womb, i.e. from the time when I came out of the womb.

My mother's bowels, i.e. out of her womb; which he justly mentions as a great and wonderful, though a common and neglected, work of God's power and goodness.

Psalms 71:7

A wonder, or *prodigy* ; either,

1. Of mercy, for the wonderful protections and deliverances which God hath given me. Or rather,

2. Of judgment, for my many and sore calamities, as appears from the next words. They wondered both at the calamities themselves which befell me; which were great, and various, and strange; and that they should befall me, one who have made it the chief care and business of my life to please, and serve, and glorify God; and one whom God hath owned in so eminent a degree, and crowned with such a constant succession of blessings and deliverances from time to time. That such a man should be forsaken by so gracious a God; and persecuted even to death by his own son, whom he had so tenderly loved; and deserted by the body of his own people, who had generally expressed so great an opinion of him and affection to him, and had so many obligations to him, and such singular benefits by his wise, and just, and pious government; this was indeed cause of wonder.

But thou art my strong refuge; but although men desert me, and look askew at me, God is a sure refuge to me.

Psalms 71:8

Give me occasion to multiply my praises to thee, for delivering me out of my present distress.

Psalms 71:9

When I am most feeble, and most need thy help, and one who is grown old in thy service.

Psalms 71:10

Lay wait for my soul, or *watch it* , that they may find occasion to destroy it, and that it may not escape their hands.

Psalms 71:11

God hath forsaken him, for his adultery, and murder, and other wickednesses, and therefore we shall certainly prevail against him.

Psalms 71:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:14

For which I know thou wilt yet give me abundant occasion.

Psalms 71:15

i.e. Of thy salvations and mercies vouchsafed to me, which being innumerable, oblige me the more to celebrate thy praises.

Psalms 71:16

I will not sit down in despair, but *I will go on* or proceed in my business courageously and cheerfully, in making necessary provisions for my own defence; relying only upon thy strength, and not upon my own military preparations.

Make mention; partly to praise and celebrate it, and partly to support and comfort myself with the remembrance of it.

Of thy righteousness; either,

1. Of thy mercy and goodness. Or rather,
2. Of thy faithfulness in making good all thy promises to me, as this word is commonly used in this book. *Of thine only*; not of my subjects' and friends', who are false and perfidious to thee and to me; nor of my own; for I have been most unfaithful to thee, and have broken my covenant with thee.

Psalms 71:17

Taught me; partly by thy word and Spirit, convincing and assuring me; and partly by my own experience *of thy righteousness* last mentioned, the wondrous effects whereof I have received and declared from time to time, as it here follows.

Psalms 71:18

Thy strength; either,

1. This further act or instance of thy strength. Or rather,
2. Thy great power, which will more eminently appear in this than it hath done in former deliverances, as my danger is now greater, because this is a civil war, and the generality of mine own people

are engaged against me, and my forces are very inconsiderable to theirs, and without thy help my case is desperate.

To every one that is to come, i.e. to all succeeding generations, to whom I will leave a lasting monument of this glorious example of all-sufficiency, such as this Psalm is.

Psalms 71:19

Very high, i.e. most eminent and evident, as high things are.

Psalms 71:20

i.e. From the grave; for I was like one dead and buried, and past all hope of deliverance, without thy almighty assistance.

Psalms 71:21

I am assured that thou wilt not only restore to me that royal majesty which my son hath invaded, but also increase my honour and power.

Psalms 71:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:23

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 71:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 72:1 PSALM 72

THE ARGUMENT

That this Psalm was made by David is evident from Psa_72:20, and that it was made with respect to Solomon is no less certain from the very title of it: and that David, or at least the Holy Ghost, which dictated this Psalm, did look beyond Solomon, and unto the Messiah, of whom Solomon was an illustrious and unquestionable type, seems as manifest from divers passages of this Psalm, which do not agree to Solomon, nor to any other king but the Messiah, and from the confession of the Jewish doctors themselves, who so understand it. It must therefore be acknowledged, that, as many others are, this Psalm is also a mixed Psalm, belonging to Solomon in part, and obscurely and imperfectly, but unto Christ more clearly and fully; divers expressions being designedly so

ordered, that the reader might be led by them to the contemplation of Christ and of his kingdom upon this occasion; which was the more necessary, for the support and comfort of God's true Israel, because the Spirit of God foresaw Solomon's dreadful apostacy, and the great miscarriages and calamities of his successors, and of the kingdom under their hands, and therefore was pleased to fortify their hearts with that glorious condition which they should certainly enjoy under the Messiah, who should certainly come.

David, praying for Solomon, showeth the blessed and glorious state of his kingdom (as typifying Christ's) in its duration, Psa_72:1-7, largeness, Psa_72:8-11, and graciousness, Psa_72:12-17; and concludeth all with a hearty thanksgiving, Psa_72:18-20.

The king; Solomon, who was now anointed king, his father yet living, 1Ki_1:39. And this Psalm may seem to be made for that great and solemn occasion.

Thy judgments, i.e. either,

1. Thy statutes and precepts, which are oft called God's *judgments*; which as thou hast given already in thy book, so give them to him a second and a better way, by writing them upon his heart, or by giving him a solid knowledge of them, and a hearty love and obedience to them. Or rather,

2. Thy manner of government or administration, which is oft called *judgment*, as Psa_94:15 Isa_28:6, &c.; that he may follow thy example in governing thy people, as thou governest them, to wit, in

righteousness, as it follows. He saith *judgments*, in the plural number, because though the office of judging and ruling was but one, yet there were divers parts, and branches, and acts-of it; as to acquit the innocent, to condemn the guilty, &c.; in all which he begs that Solomon may be directed to do as God doth, or would have him to do in such cases.

Thy righteousness; that grace of righteousness which is a part of thine image, and is absolutely necessary for good government.

Psalms 72:2

He shall judge, to wit, if thou givest him what I have desired. And by this prediction he doth tacitly admonish him of, and oblige

him to, the performance of his duty herein. Or, *Let him judge* ; the future being put for the imperative, as hath been oft observed. So it is a prayer.

Thy people; for they are thine more than his; and therefore he must not govern them according to his own will and pleasure, but according to the rules of thy word, and for thy service and glory.

Thy poor; or, *thy afflicted or oppressed ones* , for such are *thine* in a special manner; thou art their Judge and Patron, Psa_68:5, and hast commanded all thy people, and especially kings and magistrates, to take a singular care of them, because they have few or no friends.

Psalms 72:3

He mentioneth the

mountains and

hills, as bringing forth this blessed fruit; either because such places are usually barren, and therefore this was an evidence of extraordinary fruitfulness, and a special blessing of God; or because they are dangerous to passengers, in regard of the robbers and wild beasts, which commonly abide there; whereby it is implied that other places should do so too, and that it should be common and universal.

Peace; all manner of prosperity and felicity, which the Hebrews frequently express by that word.

Psalms 72:4

Judge, i.e. vindicate them from their potent oppressors, as *judging* is used, Psa_43:1, and oft elsewhere.

The children of the needy; whom the rich peradventure did seize upon for bondmen, upon some pretence or other.

Psalms 72:5

Fear; or, *reverence* , or *worship* , as this word is used, Isa_29:13, compared with Mat_15:9, and elsewhere. *Thee* ; either,

1. Thee, O king, to whom he suddenly turneth his speech. And so this is hyperbolically true of Solomon, but truly and literally of Christ. Or rather,

2. Thee, O God, of whom he had spoken before, and that in the second person, Psa_72:1,2, as it is here; whereas he never speaks of the king in the whole Psalm in the second person, but constantly in the third. And so the sense is, This shall be another blessed fruit of this righteous government, that together with peace true religion shall be established, and that

throughout all generations, as it here follows; which was begun in Solomon's days, and continued, though not without interruption, in the time of his successors, the kings of Judah, and afterwards until Christ, in and by whom this prediction and promise was most fully accomplished.

As long as the sun and moon endure, Heb. *with the sun and before the moon* , i.e. whilst they continue in the heavens. Others expound it thus, both day and night, as the *twelve tribes* are said to *serve God* , Act_26:7. But the former interpretation seems more probable, by comparing this verse with Psa_72:17.

Psalms 72:6

Come down, to wit, by the influences of his government upon his people under him. But this phrase doth much better agree to Christ, who was yet to come, and who did come down from heaven, and brought or sent down from heaven his doctrine, which is oft compared to rain, and the sweet and powerful influences of his Spirit.

Rain upon the mown grass; which it both refresheth and improveth, or causeth to grow and flourish, and therefore was very acceptable, especially in Canaan, where rain was more scarce and more necessary than in many other places, because of the scorching heat, and the natural dryness of the soil, and the want of rivers to overflow or water the land.

Psalms 72:7

Shall the righteous flourish; as the wicked shall be discountenanced and punished, so good men shall be encouraged, and advanced, and multiplied.

So long as the moon endureth, i.e. as long as time and the world shall last; which neither was nor could be true of Solomon, who lived not long, and the peace of whose kingdom was sadly disturbed, and in a manner wholly lost, presently after his death,

but was undoubtedly and eminently accomplished in Christ, who brought peace upon earth, Luk_2:14, and left it as his legacy to his disciples, Joh_14:27.

Psalms 72:8

From sea to sea; either,

1. From the Dead Sea or the Lake of Sodom, or from the Red Sea, to the Midland Sea; for so far did Solomon's dominion extend: but so did David's also; and therefore in that respect Solomon hath not that pre-eminence which this promise plainly seems to give him above his predecessors. Or,

2. More generally from one sea to another, or in all the parts of the habitable world. So it was truly and fully accomplished in Christ, and in him only.

The river, to wit, Euphrates, which was the eastern border of the kingdom of Canaan allotted by God, Exo_23:31 Num_34:3, but enjoyed only by David and Solomon, and afterwards by Christ; of whose kingdom this may be here mentioned, as one of the borders; partly because the kingdom of Christ is here described under the type and shadow of Solomon's kingdom, whose bound this was; and partly because though Christ's kingdom did for a time extend itself beyond Euphrates, yet the chief part, and almost the whole body of it, both did and doth lie on this side of it; and things do generally receive their denomination from the greatest part.

The ends of the earth; either,

1. Of the land of Canaan. Or,

2. Of the world.

Psalms 72:9

In the wilderness; in solitary places; even rude and barbarous people, who lived without order and government among themselves; of which sort great numbers submitted to Christ, and received the gospel.

Shall lick the dust, i.e. shall prostrate themselves to the ground, in token of reverence and subjection, as the custom of the Eastern people was. See Isa_49:23 Mic_7:17.

Psalms 72:10

Of Tarshish and of the isles; or, *of the sea* (as Tarshish is understood, 1Ki_22:48 Psa_48:7) *and* (or, that is; for that conjunction is oft used exegetically) *of the isles* , i.e. of remote countries, to which they used to go from Canaan by sea; all which are frequently called *isles* in Scripture, as hath been noted before. The kings that rule by sea (where Solomon had no great power) or by land.

Sheba and Seba; two Arabian countries; unless the one be Arabia, and the other Ethiopia beyond Egypt.

Psalms 72:11

Which cannot be said of Solomon with any truth or colour, but was unquestionably verified in Christ; of whom therefore this must be understood. For what is said 1Ki_4:21, that *Solomon reigned over all kingdoms* , is there limited to them that reigned *from the river unto Egypt* ; whereas the expressions here are unlimited and universal.

Psalms 72:12

The fame of his just and merciful government shall induce multitudes either to put themselves under him, or to show great respect and reverence to him.

Psalms 72:13

The souls, properly so called; this being Christ's proper work to save souls; or, the lives, which oppressors shall endeavour to take away.

Psalms 72:14

Deceit and violence; the two ways whereby the souls or lives of men are usually destroyed.

Precious shall their blood be in his sight; he will not be prodigal of the lives of his subjects, casting them away merely to gratify his own revenge, or covetousness, or insatiable desire of enlarging his empire, as earthly kings commonly do, but, like a true father of his people, will tenderly preserve them, and severely avenge their blood upon those who shall shed it.

Psalms 72:15

He shall live, to wit, long and prosperously, as Solomon did; yea, eternally, as Christ did. Other kings must lose both their lives and kingdoms; but this King, whom Solomon typified, shall live for ever, and his kingdom shall have no end.

Of the gold of Sheba; as a present, or tribute. This was done to Solomon, 1Ki_10:15, and to Christ, Mat_2:11, and afterwards as need required. Although such expressions as these, being used of Christ and his kingdom, are commonly understood in a spiritual sense.

Prayer shall be made for him; his subjects shall be obliged and excited by his righteous and happy government to pray heartily and frequently for him; either,

1. For Solomon. Or,

2. For Christ; not so much for his person, which needed not their prayers, as for the protection and propagation of his kingdom, and gospel, and interest in the world.

Psalms 72:16

An handful of corn; which intimates the small beginnings of this kingdom; and therefore doth not agree to Solomon, whose kingdom was in a manner as large at the beginning of his reign as at the end; but it exactly agrees to Christ and his kingdom, Mat_13:31,32.

In the earth; sown in the earth.

Upon the top of the mountains; in the most barren grounds; and therefore this was an evidence of extraordinary and prodigious fertility.

Shake like Lebanon; it shall yield such abundance of corn, that the ears, being thick, and high, and full of corn, shall, when they are shaken with the wind, make a noise not unlike that which the tops of the trees of Lebanon sometimes make upon the like occasion; which expressions, as well as many others of the like nature in the prophets, being applied to Christ, are to be understood in a spiritual sense, of the great and happy success of the preaching of the gospel.

They of the city; the citizens of Jerusalem, which are here synecdochically put for the subjects of this kingdom.

Shall flourish like grass of the earth; shall both increase in number, that there may be mouths to receive the meat provided, and enjoy great prosperity and happiness.

Psalms 72:17

His name; the honour and renown of his eminent wisdom, and justice, and goodness; which agrees but very obscurely; and imperfectly to Solomon, who stained the glory of his reign by his prodigious luxury and oppression, and apostacy from God, into which he fell in the latter part of his days.

Shall be continued; or, *shall be propagated or transmitted* to his children; which suits much better to Christ, from whom we are called Christians, than to Solomon.

As long as the sun, Heb. *before the sun* ; either,

1. Publicly, and in the face of the sun. Or,
2. Perpetually; as a constant and inseparable companion of the sun; as long as the sun itself shall continue. **See Poole** "Psa_72:5".

Be blessed in him; either,

1. As a pattern of blessedness. When any man shall wish well to a king, he shall say, The Lord make thee like Solomon. **See Poole** "Gen_22:18". Or rather,
2. As the cause of it, by and through his merits and mediation.

Psalms 72:18

Who hath given to his people such a glorious and excellent king and governor, and such wonderful blessings as they do and shall enjoy under his government.

Psalms 72:19

Heb. *the whole earth shall be filled with his glory* . For this may be either a prayer for or a prophecy of the spreading of the true religion in the Gentile world; which evidently relates to Christ and his kingdom.

Psalms 72:20

This Psalm is called the last of David's Psalms; (which are called prayers, because they consist very much of prayers;) either,

1. The last of that part or book of the Psalms, which reached from the beginning of the Psalms hitherto, whereof the far greatest number were composed by David, and all of them digested into this order; the rest of which follow, being collected by some other holy man or men of God after David's death, and composed part by David, and part by other prophets. Or rather,

2. The last Psalm which David composed; for this was done but a little before his death, of which see the first note on this Psalm.

Psalms 73:1 PSALM 73

THE ARGUMENT

The subject of this Psalm is the same with **Psa 77**, concerning the promiscuous carriage of God's providence towards good and bad men

Or, *for Asaph*, the famous musician, to whom divers of David's Psalms were committed, as **Psa 1**, &c. But because Asaph was not only a skilfull musician, but also was divinely inspired, and the author of some Psalms, as is manifest from 2Ch_29:30, and the style of this Psalm may seem to be something differing from that of David, it may be thought not improbable that Asaph was the author or penman of it.

The prophet under temptation by reason of wicked men's prosperity, Psa_73:1-12. His diffidence thereupon, Psa_73:13-16. His way to overcome such temptations, i.e. the knowledge of God's purpose in destroying the wicked, Psa_73:17-20, and that the faithful might be contented alone with God, and communion with him, Psa_73:21-28.

Truly; or, *nevertheless*. The beginning is abrupt and sufficiently intimates that he had a great conflict within himself about this matter, and that many doubts and objections were raised in his mind concerning it. But at last he breaks forth like the sun out of a cloud, and having by God's grace silenced and conquered his scruples, he lays down this following conclusion.

God is good to Israel; though he may sometimes seem negligent of, and harsh and severe to, his people, yet, if all things be considered, it is most certain, and another day will be made manifest, that God is really and superlatively *good*, i.e. most kind and bountiful, and a true friend to them, and that they are most happy in him, and have no reason to envy sinners their present and seeming felicity.

To such as are of a clean heart; to all true Israelites, who love God with their whole heart, and serve him in spirit, and truth, and uprightness. See Joh_4:23 Rom_2:28,29. So this clause limits the former, and takes off a great part of the force of the objection, even all that concerns the calamities which befell the profane or false-hearted Israelites, which were vastly the greatest number of that people.

Psalms 73:2

Yet I must acknowledge this with grief and shame concerning myself; notwithstanding all my knowledge of this truth, and my own experience and observation of God's gracious dealings with me, and other good men,

my feet were almost gone; my faith in God's promises and providence was almost overthrown by the three of this temptation; and I was almost ready to repent of my piety, Psa_73:13, and to follow the example of ungodly men.

Had well nigh slipped, Heb. *were almost poured forth*, like water upon the ground, which is unstable, and runs hither and thither, with great disorder and uncertainty, till it be irrecoverably lost. So was I almost transported by my own unruly passions into unworthy thoughts of God, and a sinful course of life.

Psalms 73:3

I grudged and murmured at it, and had a secret desire to partake of their delicacies.

Psalms 73:4

There are no bands in their death; they are not dragged to death, neither by the hand and sentence of the magistrate, which yet they deserve; nor by any lingering and grievous torments of mind or body, which is the case of many good men; but they enjoy a sweet and quiet death, dropping into the grave, like ripe

fruit from the tree, without ally violence used to them. Compare Job_5:26 **21:13**.

But their strength is firm, Heb. *and their strength is fat* , i.e. sound and good; the best of any thing being called *fat* in Scripture, as Gen_41:2 Dan_1:15. And in their lifetime they have great ease, and health, and content, till they expire like a lamp, merely for want of moisture.

Psalms 73:5

Either,

1. As good men frequently are. Or
2. As men generally are. They do by a secret and favourable providence of God escape even common calamities.

Psalms 73:6

Pride compasseth them about as a chain: this phrase notes both the extent of their pride, which appears on every side of them, in their countenances, discourses, gestures, &c, and their glorying in it. The like may be said of the next phrase.

Psalms 73:7

Their eyes stand out with fatness; as they do in some fat persons, though not in others. The meaning is, they live in great plenty and prosperity, as the next clause explains it.

Psalms 73:8

They are corrupt; or, *dissolved* in pleasure. Or, *they corrupt* themselves.

Speak wickedly concerning oppression; wickedly boasting of their oppressions; either of what they have done, or of what they intend to do, in that kind.

They speak loftily; arrogantly presuming upon their own strength, and despising both God and men.

Psalms 73:9

Against the heavens, i.e. against God, blaspheming his name, denying or deriding his providence, reviling his saints and servants.

Walketh through the earth; using all manner of liberty, introducing and reproaching all sorts of persons, not caring whom they displease or hurt by it.

Psalms 73:10

His people; either,

1. The people of those wicked blasphemers; all their children, and servants, and friends, encouraged by their example. Or rather,

2. The people of God, who is oft understood under the pronoun relative *he* or *his* , though he be not expressed, as Psa_105:19 Isa_30:23. See the like Psa_87:1 Son_1:2. But then as God's *people are of two sorts* , some that are so really and sincerely, and others that are so only in profession and show, in which sense the whole body of the Israelitish nation, yea, even the wicked among them, are called his

people, as Psa_81:11 Isa_1:3 Jer_2:11, &c.; so this may be understood, either,

1. Of those true Israelites, Psa_73:1. Even the godly were startled and stumbled at this, as David was, **Psa 37**, and Jeremiah, **Jer 12** But although they might have some murmuring thoughts about this matter, it seems not probable that they would either give way to such thoughts, or break forth into such expressions, as are here ascribed to them, Psa_73:11; nor are such things to be imputed to them without necessity; nor did either David or Jeremiah in their conflicts utter any thing of this nature. Or rather,

2. Of the carnal, hypocritical Israelites, who perceiving the impunity and prosperity of these ungodly wretches, were easily drawn to the approbation and imitation of their courses. And this may seem most suitable to the context; for the description of the condition, and carriage, and words of these ungodly men, which begins Psa_73:4, seems to be continued to Psa_73:13; then follows the psalmist's reflection and consideration upon the whole matter, from Psa_73:13 to the end.

Return hither, or, *turn hither* , i.e. to this wicked company, or to their course.

Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them: *waters* , in Scripture, do oftentimes signify afflictions, and as oft comforts and mercies. So the sense may be, either,

1. And whilst the wicked prosper, God doth wring out waters out of the cup of tribulation, and causeth his holy ones to drink them up: compare Psa_75:8 **80:5** Isa_51:17 Jer_25:15, &c. Or rather,

2. And those hypocritical Israelites find themselves gainers by their apostacy, and they partake of the same prosperity with their leaders, and God seems to give them a full cup of consolation, and to pour forth his mercies upon them in such abundance, as if he would wring or squeeze out all his blessings out of his stores to bestow upon them. And meeting with such success to their wickedness, it is not strange if they put that question, Psa_73:11.

Psalms 73:11

They; either,

1. The godly. Or rather,

2. Those wicked ones, whose words and actions he hath been hitherto describing, or the people confederate with them. For these and such-like opinions are oft ascribed to the wicked in Scripture, but never, as far as I know; to any good man. And Job, though he used many intemperate speeches, and though some such expressions as this were charged upon him by his friends, as Job_22:13, yet he utterly disowned them. *Is there knowledge in the Most High ?* seeing these cursed and impudent blasphemers of God, and enemies of all goodness, are crowned with so many blessings, how is it credible that there is a God who sees and orders the affairs of this lower world? for if God did know these things, certainly he neither could nor would suffer them to be thus managed.

Psalms 73:12

These are the ungodly; this is their condition and carriage in it. These seem to be the words of the psalmist, summing up the matter, and preparing his passage to the other part of the Psalm.

Psalms 73:13

Hence I was sometimes tempted to think that religion was a vain and unprofitable thing, at least as to the happiness of this life,

which yet God had promised as a reward to piety. True religion is here fitly and fully described by its two principal parts and works, the cleansing of the heart from sinful lusts and passions, and of the hands, or outward man, from a course of sinful actions, And although it be God's work to cleanse the heart, yet he saith,

I have cleansed it, because every good man doth co-operate with God's grace in cleansing it. Compare 2Co_6:1 **7:1**.

Washed my hands in innocency, i.e. kept my hands (the great instruments of action, and consequently the rest of the members of my body) innocent and pure from evil practices. I have washed my hands, not only ceremonially with water, wherewith hypocrites satisfy themselves, but also morally, or with the waters of God's grace and Spirit, innocency or purity.

Psalms 73:14

Whilst their ungodliness hath been attended with constant prosperity, my piety hath been exercised with continual afflictions.

Psalms 73:15

I will speak thus; I will give sentence for the ungodly in this manner.

I should offend against the generation of thy children, by grieving, and discouraging, and condemning them, and by tempting them to revolt from God and godliness. But because the Hebrew verb *bagad* in this sense is always, so far as I have observed, construed with the preposition *beth*, which is not here, and is constantly put before that preposition and word which it governs, and not after, as here it is, I rather join with them who render the place thus; which is more agreeable to the words and order of the text; *Behold the generation of thy children*, (or, *Behold*, these are *the generation of thy children*, as appears by thy fatherly care of and indulgence and kindness to them, whilst thou dost at present seem to treat them like bastards who are more truly called thy children, dealing roughly and severely with them,) *I shall* (or rather, *should*, to wit, in speaking so) transgress, or prevaricate, speak against the truth, and against my own conscience, which assureth me that these are the haters of God, and hated and cursed by him.

Psalms 73:16

To know this; to find out the reason of this mysterious course of thy providence.

It was too painful for me; I was gruelled with the difficulty.

Psalms 73:17

Till I consulted with the oracle, or word of God. He alludes to the practice of those times, which was, in dark and difficult cases, to resort to God's sanctuary, and the oracle in it, for satisfaction.

Then understood I their end; there I learned that their posterity was short, and would quickly have an end, and that a most dismal and terrible one; that their fair morn would be followed with a black and dreadful evening, and an everlasting night.

Psalms 73:18

Their happiness hath no firm foundation; it was very unstable, like a man's standing in very slippery ground. The same hand which raised them will cast them down into the pit of utter destruction.

Psalms 73:19

Their fall is wonderful, both for its soreness and for its suddenness.

Consumed with terrors; either, with the horrors of their own minds; or rather, with God's dreadful judgments unexpectedly seizing upon them.

Psalms 73:20

Their happiness is like that in a dream, wherein a man seems to be highly pleased and transported with ravishing delights, but when he awakes he finds himself deceived and unsatisfied. *Awake* , i.e. stirrest up thyself to punish them. Or rather, *when they shall awake* out of the pleasant dream of this vain, sinful life by death, and the torments following it. For this seems to agree best with the metaphor here before mentioned. And the Hebrew words being only these, in awaking, may be applied either to God or to them, as the context directs.

Despise their image; not so much really, for so God ever did despise it, in the height of all their glory; but declaratively, things being oft said to be done in Scripture when they appear, or are manifested; as hath been more than once noted. Thou shalt pour

contempt upon them; make them despicable, both to themselves and to all others; and raise them to shame and everlasting contempt, as is said, Dan_12:2.

Their image, i. e. all their felicity and glory, which as indeed it ever was, so now it shall be evidently discerned to be, no real or substantial and solid thing, but a mere image, or shadow, or vain show, which can neither abide with them, nor yield satisfaction to them. See Psa_39:6 Act_25:23, where what is rendered pomp, in the Greek signifies a mere fancy or imagination, 1Co_7:31.

Psalms 73:21

Thus; so as I have above expressed; for this particle so taken, doth not belong to what he had now wisely and piously said in the next foregoing verses, but to what he had unadvisedly spoken in the former verses, as is evident from the following verse. Or, *nevertheless* , as this particle is oft used. Although I knew very well that the prosperity of sinners would have a sudden and dismal end, yet I was so foolish as to be grieved at it.

I was pricked in my reins; was heartily and deeply wounded with disquieting thoughts, and tormenting passions, envy, and sorrow, and anger.

Psalms 73:22

As a beast. Heb. *beasts* , which may signify a great beast; a most stupid and sottish creature, like one not only void of grace, but of reason too; for reason itself, especially assisted by the Holy Scriptures, did sufficiently discover that, all things considered, I had no sufficient cause to envy the prosperity of wicked men. I minded only present things, as the brutes do. and did not consider things to come, as reasonable creatures do, and ought to do.

Before thee; in thy sight or judgment, and therefore in truth, Rom_2:2, howsoever I seemed to myself or others to have some degree of reason and discretion.

Psalms 73:23

Nevertheless; notwithstanding all my temptations, and my gross folly in yielding to them.

I am continually with thee; either,

1. In a way of duty. Yet I did not depart from thee, nor from thy ways; but did at last conquer them, and firmly cleave unto thee by faith. Or rather,

2. In a way of mercy and favour, of which he speaks in the next clause of this and in the following verse. Although I gave thee just cause to cast me off, yet thou didst continue thy gracious presence with me, and thy care and kindness to me. And this phrase, with thee, seems to have some emphasis in it, as being opposed to the other *with thee*, Psa_73:22. I was a beast with thee, such was my folly and wickedness; and yet I was in favour with thee, such was thy goodness: thou didst pardon and cure it.

Thou hast holden me by my right hand, that my faith might not fail, and I might not be overthrown by this or any other temptations.

Psalms 73:24

Thou shalt guide me: as thou hast kept me hitherto in all my trials, so I am assured thou wilt lead me still into right paths, and keep me from wandering or straying from thee, or falling into mischief.

With thy counsel; partly, by thy gracious providence, executing thy purpose of mercy to me, and watching over me; partly, by thy word, which thou wilt open mine eyes to understand, as Psa_119:18; and principally, by thy Holy Spirit, sanctifying and directing me in the whole course of my life.

Receive me to glory; either,

1. Advance me to honour here. Or rather,

2. Translate me to everlasting glory in heaven. For,

1. Thus God doth for his people most constantly and certainly, whilst all the occurrences of the present life do happen indifferently to good and bad; which was the common observation of Job, and David, and Solomon, and other holy men of God in Scripture.

2. This is far more considerable than the former, and the more satisfactory relief against the present prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of good men.

3. This future glory is that mystery which was to be learned only in God's sanctuary, Psa_73:17.

4. As the destruction of the wicked, mentioned Psa_73:18-20, looks beyond this life, so doth the glory of God's people.

Psalms 73:25

Whom have I in heaven, or *in earth* ? as it follows. There is no other person nor thing in the world from which I can seek or hope for happiness, or which I am willing to accept as my portion. Let sinners have an earthly prosperity, I am satisfied with thee, and with thy favour. Since thou givest me support and conduct here, and carriest me safe from hence to eternal glory, what do I need more? or what can I desire more?

But thee; which words must necessarily be understood here from the next clause, where they are expressed.

Psalms 73:26

In myself, I confess I am a poor weak creature, and my body and spirit may fail and be ready to faint under such temptations and tribulations as these, and I know I shall shortly return to the dust, out of which I was taken. But though I have no strength in myself; I have it in God, my never-failing refuge, to whom I will trust whilst I live, and who will be my portion to eternity.

Psalms 73:27

They that are far from thee; they that forsake thee and thy ways, preferring the prosperity of this present evil world before thy love, and favour, and service; they who estrange themselves from the love, and life, and acquaintance of God; that *say to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways* , as they did, Job_21:14.

Thou hast destroyed; thou will certainly and dreadfully destroy them.

Them that go a whoring from thee; those who having professed subjection to thee, shall afterwards revolt from thee, and sell themselves to work wickedness; which is called *whoredom* in Scripture. For none are more hateful to God, than willful and wicked apostates from the principles and practice of the true religion, which once they owned.

Psalms 73:28

But whatsoever they do, I am abundantly satisfied that it is, as my duty, so my interest and happiness, to cleave unto thee, by faith, and love, and obedience, and diligent attendance upon all thine ordinances.

I have put my trust in the Lord God; I depend upon him alone for all my comfort and felicity.

That I may declare all thy works; from which I know I shall have this benefit, that I shall have many and great occasions to declare God's acts of mercy and kindness to me.

Psalms 74:1 PSALM 74

i.e. Composed by Asaph; either,

1. By that famous Asaph who flourished in David's time, and by the Spirit of God foresaw and foretold the things here mentioned. But the clear, and exact, and particular, and most pathetic description of the thing here expressed, looks much more like a narrative of what is past than a prophecy of what is to come; which usually is delivered more darkly. Besides, such a prophecy of the destruction of the temple before it was built would have been a great discouragement to the building of it, and would probably have been taken notice of by Solomon in his prayer for it, when it was newly built. Or,

2. By some of his posterity, who is called by their father's name, *Asaph*, as the children of Israel are frequently called Jacob, or Israel, and David's successors David; as hath been noted. Or,

3. By some other person of that name, though of another family; who then was a man of renown, though now his memory be lost. Or this may be rendered *for Asaph*, i.e. for his posterity; and it might be said by some other holy man of God. But the former seems more probable. This is evident, that this Psalm speaks of the destruction of the temple, and of Jerusalem, and of God's people, by the Chaldeans; though some think it looks further, even to the pollution of the temple by Antiochus; although the things said to be done, Psa_74:6-8, agree much better to the former, and were not done by Antiochus.

The church complaineth of the desolation which the enemies had made in the temple and synagogue, Psa_74:1-9; prayeth God to help by his great power, Psa_74:10-17, against the reproach and blasphemy of the enemies, Psa_74:18. He prayeth for God's beloved and covenanted ones, Psa_74:19-23.

Why hast thou cast us of for ever, so as to leave us no visible hopes of restitution?

Thine anger; or, *thy nose* ; a metaphor from a man who in a great rage sends forth fumes out of his nostrils.

Against the sheep of thy pasture; against thy chosen and peculiar people.

Psalms 74:2

Remember; show by thine actions that thou hast not utterly forgotten and forsaken them.

Thy congregation; thy church or people. *Purchased* ; or, *redeemed* , as it follows; or, *bought* , as it is Deu_32:6; or, *procured* , though without price, as this word is used, Rth_4:9,10.

Of old; when thou broughtest them out of Egypt, and formedst them into a commonwealth, and gavest them laws, and didst enter into covenant with them at Sinai.

The rod of thine inheritance; that people which thou hast measured out as it were by rod, to be thy portion or inheritance, as they are called also Deu_32:6 See also Psa_16:5,6 Jer 10:16. Or, *the tribe* (as this word commonly signifies)

of thine inheritance, i.e. the tribe of Judah, which thou hast in a special manner chosen for thine inheritance, and for the seat of the kingdom, and for the birth of the Messiah. And thus here is an elegant gradation from the general to particulars; first the *congregation* , consisting of all the tribes; then the *tribe* of Judah; and lastly,

Mount Zion. Nor is it strange that he mentions this tribe particularly, because the calamity and captivity here remembered did principally befall this tribe and Benjamin, which was united with it and subject to it, and the most that returned were of this tribe; for the generality of the other tubes were long before

dispersed into other lands, and continue in their captivity to this day. Mount Zion; which is oft put for the temple, or the hill of Moriah, on which it was built.

Psalms 74:3

Lift up thy feet, i.e. come speedily for our rescue, and do not sit or stand still, as hitherto thou seemest to do.

Unto the perpetual desolations; or rather, because of (as this prefix oft signifies) *the perpetual desolations* . So it is a powerful motive to God, to come to their help, because otherwise our destruction is everlasting and irrecoverable.

In the sanctuary; or, *against thy sanctuary* ; of which see Psa_74:7.

Psalms 74:4

Roar, i.e. make loud outcries; either from their rage and fury against the conquered and captivated Israelites now in their power; or rather, in way of triumph for their success and victory.

In the midst of thy congregations; in the places where thy people used to assemble together for thy worship; whereby they designed to insult not only over us, but over thee also, as if their gods had been too strong for thee.

Signs; or, *trophies* , or monuments of their victories obtained over God, and over his people, as conquerors used to do in like cases.

Psalms 74:5

So the meaning is this, The temple was so noble a structure, that it was a great honour to any man to be employed in the meanest part of the work, though it were but in cutting down the trees of Lebanon. And this translation may seem to be favoured by the opposition in the next verse, *But now* , &c. But others understand the words thus translated in another sense, that every one of the enemies got renown accordingly as they showed most barbarous rage in destroying *the thick wood work* (which in the next verse is called *the carved work*) of the temple. But this seems not to suit well with the opposition between this work and that of the next verse, which is ushered in by *but now* . The words therefore may be (and in part are by some) rendered thus, *It is known* , (or *manifest* , Heb. *It will be known* ; it will be published to all

posterity, as matter of astonishment and admiration,) that, *as one lifteth up his axe* (Heb. *axes* , the plural number for the singular, as it is elsewhere)

upon thick trees, to cut them down. This is the first part of the similitude, called the *protasis* ; then follows the latter part of it, called the *apodosis* , in the next verse. (Heb. *and* ; which is sometimes put for a note of similitude, as in that passage of the Lord's prayer, Mat_6:10, *as it is in heaven* ; and oft in the book of the Proverbs) now (for though this Psalm was composed after the thing was done, yet he speaks of it as if it were now in doing, as the manner of the sacred writers frequently is, that it may be more lively represented to men's minds) *they break down the carved works* , &c. The meaning is, they neither regard the sacredness of the place, nor the exquisite curiosity and art of the work, but cut it down as indifferently and rashly as men cut down the thick and entangled boughs of the trees of the forest.

Psalms 74:6

See Poole "Psa_74:5".

Axes and hammers: it hath been ingeniously observed that these two words are not Hebrew, but Chaldee or Syriac words, to point out the time when this was done, even when the Chaldeans brought in their language together with their arms among the Israelites.

Psalms 74:7

First they polluted it, and then they burnt it, and broke it in pieces.

Psalms 74:8

Destroy them together, root and branch, one as well as another, or all at once. So they desired, and many of them intended, although afterwards, it seems, they changed their counsel, and carried some away captives, and left others to manage the land.

All the synagogues of God in the land, i.e. all the public places wherein the Jews used to meet together to worship God *every sabbath day* , as is noted, Act_13:27, and upon other occasions. That the Jews had such synagogues is manifest, both from these and other places of Scripture; and from the testimony of the Hebrew doctors, and other ancient and learned writers, who affirm it, and particularly of Jerusalem, in which they say there were

above four hundred synagogues; and from the nature and necessity of the thing; for seeing it is undeniable that they did worship God publicly, in every sabbath, and other holy times, even then when they neither did nor could go up to Jerusalem, both conscience and prudence must needs direct them to appoint convenient places for that purpose.

Psalms 74:9

Our signs, i.e. those tokens of God's gracious presence which we and our ancestors formerly used to enjoy; either,

1. Miracles wrought for us, which are called

signs, Psa_78:43 **135:9**. Or,

2. The ordinances of God, the temple, and ark, and sacrifices, and solemn feasts, all which were signs between God and his people.

Any prophet: either,

1. Any teacher. We have few or no teachers left to us. Or,

2. Any extraordinary prophet, who can foretell things to come, as the next words explain it. For as for Ezekiel and Jeremiah, they might be dead when this Psalm was composed; and Daniel was involved in civil affairs, and did not teach the people as a prophet; and the prophetic Spirit which sometimes came upon him, and made those great discoveries to him which we read in his book, might possibly at this time suspend his influences. Besides, it is not unusual in Scripture, to say that there is none of a sort of persons or things, when there is a very great scarcity of them. But others make this their great argument, that this Psalm speaks of that persecution in the time of Antiochus, when indeed there was no prophet at all.

How long; either,

1. How long their captivity should continue; for though seventy years were determined, yet there might arise doubts among them, as there now are among us, whence they were to be computed, which might make their end uncertain. Or,

2. How long they should lie under reproach, as it follows, Psa_74:10, which they really did, and might foresee that they should, even after the expiration of their captivity, Neh_1:3.

Psalms 74:10

Reproach; understand here thy name, which is expressed in the next clause of the verse, by saying that thou art either unkind to thy people, or unfaithful in thy covenant, or unable to deliver thine out of their miseries.

Psalms 74:11

Why withdrawest thou thy hand? why dost thou suspend or forbear the exercise of that power, which thou hast so oft put forth on the behalf of thy people?

Pluck it out of thy bosom, in which thou now seemest to hide it, as idle persons use to do, Pro_19:24 **26:15.** Bestir thyself on the behalf of thy people.

Psalms 74:12

My King, in a singular manner: it belongs therefore to thine office to protect and save me.

In the midst of the earth; in the view of the world; so saving thy people so eminently and gloriously, that all people round about them observed and admired it.

Psalms 74:13

The dragons; or, *the crocodiles* . He means Pharaoh and all his mighty men, who were like these beasts in strength and cruelty.

The waters, to wit, of the sea, where they were drowned.

Psalms 74:14

The heads, i.e. the head; called *heads* , partly for the greatness of this beast, as that great monster is called *beasts* , Job_40:20, for the same reason; and partly for the several heads or princes who were and acted under his influence.

Leviathan; Pharaoh.

To the people inhabiting the wilderness, Heb. *to the people in or of the desert* ; either,

1. To the Israelites then in the wilderness, to whom the destruction of Pharaoh and his host was *meat* , i.e. matter of great support and refreshment. Or,

2. To those savage people to whom they were *meat* , because they lived upon fishes, and might eat those very fishes which had devoured Pharaoh's host in the bottom of the sea. Or rather,

3. To those ravenous birds and beasts of the desert, which after their manner fed and feasted themselves upon the carcasses of the Egyptians, who were cast upon the sea-shore, Exo_14:30, which were properly and immediately *meat* unto them. And when words can be taken properly, we ought to prefer that before the metaphorical sense, as is agreed by interpreters. And this was a very suitable punishment for this proud and insolent people, that they who were so haughty, that they would not own nor submit to the Lord himself, Exo_5:2, should be devoured by these contemptible creatures, which was a great reproach, 1Sa_17:44,46, and oft threatened by God as a grievous curse, as Deu_28:26 Jer_7:33 16:4, &c. Neither let any think it strange that the name of

people is given to these creatures, for it is given to conies, grasshoppers, pismires, &c., both in Scripture, as Pro_30:25,26 **Joe 1:6**, and in Homer, and other ancient profane writers. Nay, here is an elegancy in the expression; for these creatures are significantly called the people of the wilderness, because they are the only people that inhabited it, this being *a wilderness wherein was no man* , as is said, Job_38:26.

Psalms 74:15

Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood, i.e. thou didst by cleaving the rock make a fountain in it, and a flood or stream to flow from it, for the refreshment of thy people in those dry deserts. The phrase is like that Isa_47:2, *grind meal* , i.e. by grinding the corn make meal.

Mighty rivers; either,

1. Jordan, which was then more mighty than ordinarily, as having overflowed all his banks, and therefore may be called *rivers* , because it was now equivalent to two or three such rivers; or it is only an ensilage of the plural number for the singular, whereof I have given many instances formerly. Or rather,

2. Both Jordan and the Red Sea; for the sea itself, yea, a greater sea than that, is called a river, Jon_2:3; for the Hebrew word is the

same which is here used, though there it be rendered floods. And the same title is expressly given to the sea by Homer and other ancient writers. To these the ancient Chaldee interpreter addeth the rivers of Amen and Jabbok, in or about which some extraordinary work was wrought, yea, something which was like God's work at the Red Sea, as may seem by the conjunction of these together, Num_21:14.

Psalms 74:16

It is not strange nor incredible that thou hast done these great and wonderful works, for thou hast made the heavenly bodies, and the vicissitudes of day and night, depending upon them, which is a far greater work.

Prepared; or rather, *established* , as this word oft signifies; not only created, but settled in a constant and orderly course.

The light; either,

1. That primitive light, Gen_1:3, which afterwards was condensed and gathered into the sun. Or rather,

2. The moon, as divers, both ancient and modern, interpreters understand it, called here *the light* , to wit, *the lesser luminary* or light; wherein there is either a synecdoche of the general for the particular, or an ellipsis of the adjective, both which figures are very usual. And that the lesser light is here meant, may seem probable, both because it is opposed to the greater light, the sun here following; and because this is to rule the night, as the sun is to rule the day, Gen_1:16; and so this clause answereth to and explains the former, wherein both *day* and *night* are mentioned.

Psalms 74:17

Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast fixed the bounds, both of the habitable world in general; so as the seas, though they do encompass and assault them, yet they shall never be able to remove them; and of all the countries and people upon earth, whom thou hast confined to such bounds as thou seest fit. And as this clause of the verse showeth God's power and government over all places, so the next clause displays his dominion over all times and seasons; and both together are, fitly alleged as a motive to God, that he would at this time take care of

his poor people, and restore them to their ancient land and borders, in which he had been pleased to set them.

Psalms 74:18

Though we deserve to be forgotten and destroyed, yet remember thyself, and do not suffer thine and our enemies to reproach and blaspheme the name of that great and glorious God, the Creator and sovereign Lord of the whole world, whom they ought always to reverence and adore.

The foolish people; who, though they think themselves and are thought by others to be wise, yet in truth are fools, and herein show their stupendous folly, that they vilify and provoke that God whose powerful anger they can neither resist, nor escape, nor endure.

Psalms 74:19

The soul, i.e. the life. Thou hast delivered thy people into captivity; do not deliver them to death, nor suffer their enemies utterly to destroy them.

Of thy turtle-dove, i.e. of thy church, which is fitly compared to a turtle-dove, because of the great resemblance of their dispositions and conditions, being simple, and harmless, and meek, and faithful, and mournful, and exposed to manifold injuries, and unable to defend itself from them.

Unto the multitude of the wicked; or, to the wild beast, as this word oft signifies; or, *to the troop*, to wit, of her enemies.

Psalms 74:20

Have respect unto the covenant made with Abraham, whereby thou didst give the land of Canaan to him, and to his seed for ever; and thou didst further promise, that if thy people were carried captive into strange lands and did there humble themselves, and pray and turn unto thee, thou wouldst mercifully restore them, 1Ki_8:46-50: do thou therefore now restore us to that pleasant and lightsome land which thou hast given to us.

The dark places of the earth, i.e. this dark and dismal land in which we live, wherein there is nothing but ignorance and confusion, and all the works of darkness; of which the psalmist speaks in general terms, out of a principle of prudence, because

the particular designation of the place was unnecessary, and might have been of ill consequence.

Are full of the habitations of cruelty; here is nothing but injustice, and oppression, and tyranny, under which we groan in all the parts of this great empire, where we have our abode.

Psalms 74:21

Return ashamed from thee, and from the throne of thy grace, to which they make their resort in this their distressed condition.

Psalms 74:22

Plead thine own cause; maintain thy honour, and worship, and service against those that reproach thee, as it here follows, and was noted before, Psa_74:10,**18**. As we are reviled and persecuted for thy sake, so thou art injured in all our wrongs.

Psalms 74:23

The voice; their insulting and reproachful expressions against time, as well as against us.

The tumult, i.e. the tumultuous noise of the loud clamours.

Increaseseth, Heb. *ascendeth* , to wit, into heaven, being either directed thither by them; their mouth being set against heaven, as theirs was, Psa_73:9; or at least being perceived there by God, whose ears were pierced with the loud cry of their sins. See Gen_4:10 **18:20**. Or *ascending* may be here put for increasing, as it is Isa_55:13 Jer_46:7. So the sense is, They grow worse and worse, encouraging and hardening themselves in their wicked courses by their continual success and prosperity, and by thy patience extended to them.

Psalms 75:1 PSALM 75

Of Asaph; as the author. Or, *to* or *for* Asaph; which may be put by way of opposition to the foregoing and general expression,

to the chief Musician, which is here limited to and explained of Asaph. As Psa_62:1, having said *to the chief Musician* , he adds *to Jeduthun* ; and then follows the author, *David* . This Psalm was either composed by David, or by Asaph in David's name and person, as it is not unusual for poets to bring in princes speaking

in their poems. It seems to relate to the time when David had entered upon, but not got full possession of, the kingdom.

The psalmist, praising God for his wondrous works, promiseth to judge uprightly, Psa_75:1-3. Rebuking the proud and foolish with God's providence, Psa_75:4-8, pulleth them down, but exalteth the righteous, Psa_75:9,10.

Do we give thanks; I, in my own and in my people's name.

Thy name, i.e. thyself; or thy power. Is near; is present with us, and most ready to help us when we cry unto thee, as this phrase is taken, Psa_34:18 **145:18**. Thou art not departed from us; thou dost not now stand afar off, as once thou didst, Psa_10:1.

Thy wondrous works, wrought on my behalf, and for the good of thy people.

Psalms 75:2

When I shall receive the congregation, to wit, the whole congregation, or body of thy people, to wit, all the tribes; which are now distracted and disordered by a civil war, which is a great hinderance to the administration of justice. Or, *when I shall receive or obtain the appointment*, i.e. what God hath appointed and promised to me, to wit, the full and firm possession of the kingdom; or, the time or place appointed by God for that work. Some make these and the following passages the words of God concerning his church or people; which seems not probable; partly because he speaks of God in the third person, as one distinct from him that speaks these words, Psa_75:7,8; and partly because it is evident that one and the same person speaks from hence to the end of the Psalm, and the ninth verse cannot be spoken by God.

I will judge uprightly; I will not use my power tyrannically and wickedly, as Saul did, and as most other princes do; but holily and righteously, for the good of my people.

Psalms 75:3

Dissolved; or, *melted*, consumed or destroyed; partly by the ill government of Saul and Ish-bosheth, and the great officers of state and war under them; and partly by intestine divisions and wars.

I bear up the pillars of it: howsoever I am traduced by mine enemies as the great disturber of the land, I must do myself this

right, to affirm that, under God, I do support and establish it, by maintaining religion and justice, and by setting us good magistrates, and encouraging good ministers, and good men, which are indeed the pillars of a nation.

Psalms 75:4

I said, with authority and command; I charged them.

The fools, i.e. *the wicked* , as that is explained in the next clause.

Deal not foolishly; desist from your impious and injurious practices, which shall not now go unpunished, as they have done.

Lift not up the horn; do not carry yourselves either arrogantly, boasting of your own strength, or scornfully and maliciously towards me or others of God's people.

Psalms 75:5

Lift not up your horn on high; a metaphor from untamed and stiff-necked oxen, which will not bow their heads to receive the yoke, but lift up their heads and horns to avoid it. Or, *against the High* , i.e. against God, who is mentioned under this same title, Psa_56:2, though there it be rendered *Most High* . Speak not, to wit, against me and my government.

With a stiff neck; with pride and contempt of my person, and with rebellion against God's will declared concerning my advancement, of which you are not ignorant. See 2Sa_3:17,**18**.

Psalms 75:6

For though you envy and oppose my advancement, because I was but a poor shepherd, and of a mean family; yet you ought to know and consider what is notorious and visible in the world, that the dignities and sceptres of the world are not always disposed according to human expectations and probabilities, but by God's sovereign will and providence, as it follows. It is true, men that expect preferment have their eyes fixed upon the great persons of the world, who are thought to have the ^Ôdisposition of them in their hands, and according to their several inclinations or interests; some look eastward, others westward, and others southward, expecting assistance from some of these quarters; but all in vain.

Psalms 75:7

The judge, to wit, the righteous Judge, and supreme Lord and Governor of all the kingdoms of the world, giving them to whomsoever he pleaseth. It is he who hath rejected Saul and his family, and put me in his stead. And who art thou that disputest with God, and resistest his declared will?

Psalms 75:8

This verse is added, either,

1. As a reason or confirmation of the assertion, Psa_75:7, and to show that God in removing one king to make way for another did not proceed in a way of absolute sovereignty, which yet he might have done, but in a way of justice and equity. Or,

2. As another argument to enforce his advice given Psa_75:4,5, which he had now pressed by one argument, Psa_75:6,7. God is here compared to the master of a feast, who then used to distribute portions of meats or drinks to the several guests as he thought fit.

A cup, in Scripture, is sometimes taken in a good sense, for God's blessings, as Psa_16:5 **23:5**; and sometimes, and more frequently, in a bad sense, for God's vengeance and judgments, as Psa_11:6 Isa_51:22 Jer_49:12 Mat_20:23, &c.; and so it is here understood, as the following words show. *The wine is red* ; such as the best wine of Judea was, Deu_32:14 Pro_23:31; and so strong, and heady, and intoxicating. Or, *is troubled* ; as the word more properly signifies, and is rendered by divers; which may note its newness, when it is in fermentation, not yet cleared nor settled, and so more intoxicating. So he expresseth the power and fierceness of God's wrath and judgments. *It is full of mixture* : the wine is mingled, not with water, as was usual in those hot countries, Pro_9:5, but with spices, as Son_8:2; or rather, strengthening and intoxicating ingredients, which drunkards used, Isa_5:22. *He poureth out of the same* , to wit, to the children of men; promiscuously to good and bad; whereby he removes the scandal which his enemies might take from those troubles which God saw fit to inflict upon David and his followers. *The dregs thereof* ; the worst and most dreadful part of those tribulations. *Of the earth* ; or, *of the land* , to wit, of Canaan, of which he spoke Psa_75:3. *Shall wring them out* ; which expression may imply,

either that they shall be forced to squeeze out the worst for their own drinking, or that this dreadful draught was prepared for them and brought upon them by their own choice and wickedness.

Psalms 75:9

Declare, to wit, this great and glorious work of God, or the praises due unto God for it, as the next words imply.

Psalms 75:10

The horns of the wicked; their honour and power, which they made an instrument of mischief to oppress good men. A metaphor from horned and mischievous beasts.

I will cut off, when I shall be advanced to the throne, and have power and authority to do what now I can only desire and pray for.

The horns of the righteous shall be exalted; good men shall be encouraged and promoted, and intrusted with the management of all public affairs, which will be a great blessing to all my people.

Psalms 76:1 PSALM 76

Or, *for Asaph* . Either it was composed by the prophet Asaph; or composed by David, or some other holy prophet of God, and committed to Asaph, or to his posterity; it being usual to put the parent's name for his children, of which I have formerly given divers instances. The special. and immediate occasion of this Psalm was unquestionably some eminent deliverance vouchsafed by God to his people of Israel, and especially to Jerusalem, which the psalmist thought fit to celebrate; but which and when it was is both needless to inquire, and hard to determine.

A declaration of God's majesty and gracious presence in his church, Psa_76:1-5. At his rebuke the enemy spoils, and by his arm the meek are saved, Psa_76:6-10. An exhortation to serve him with reverence, Psa_76:11,12.

God's people do not worship an unknown God, as the Athenians did, Act_17:23, but one who hath made himself known, not only by his word and ordinances, but also by the glorious effects of his wisdom and power on their behalf, and against their potent and malicious enemies.

Is great, i.e. famous and renowned, and greatly to be praised and admired.

Psalms 76:2

In Salem; in Jerusalem, which was anciently called *Salem*, Gen_14:18 Heb_7:1.

Zion; largely so called, as it includes Moriah, an adjoining hill, or another branch of the same hill.

Psalms 76:3

There, i.e. in Judah, or at or near Jerusalem.

The arrows, Heb. *the sparks*; the sparkling arrows, bright and shining, swift and piercing, like sparks of fire. *The bow, the shield, and the sword*; both offensive and defensive weapons, so as they could neither hurt God's people, nor save themselves from ruin.

The battle; the force and fury of the battle, and all the power of the army, which was put in battle-array.

Psalms 76:4

Thou, O God; to whom he directeth his speech here, as also Psa_76:6-8.

Than the mountains of prey; either,

1. Than the greatest kings and emperors of the earth, which in prophetic writings are oft compared to mountains, as Psa_46:2,3 **Isa 41:15** Jer_51:25 Hab_3:6. And they are called mountains of prey, because then they generally were established by tyranny, and maintained by preying upon their own subjects, or other inferior kingdoms. Or,

2. (which amounts to the same thing) Than the most powerful enemies of thy people, upon whom they used and now desired and expected to prey; such persons being oft expressed by the name of mountains, as Psa_144:5 Zec_4:7, &c.

Psalms 76:5

Are spoiled of all that glory and advantage which they either had already gotten, or further expected, from the success of their present expedition, which they promised to themselves. They became a prey to those upon whom they hoped to prey.

Their sleep; even a perpetual sleep, as Jer_51:39,57, or *the sleep of death* , Psa_13:3; called *their sleep emphatically* , as being peculiar to them and such-like men, and not that sleep which is common to the good and bad. Their death he seems to call *sleep* , because they were slain in the night, when they had composed themselves to rest and sleep, and so passed insensibly from one sleep to another. For it is thought by many that this Psalm was composed upon the occasion of that prodigious slaughter of the Assyrians in Judah, 2Ki_19:35. *None have found their hands* ; they had no more strength in or use of their hands against the destroying angel, than they who have no hands.

Psalms 76:6

The chariot and horse; the men who rode upon and fought from chariots and horses, who fight with most advantage, and usually have most courage; and much more unable were their footmen to resist or avoid the stroke.

Psalms 76:7

Stand in thy sight, to wit, to contend with thee. *Standing* is here opposed to flight or failing before the enemy. See Jos_7:12 Dan_8:4.

Psalms 76:8

Thou didst execute judgment upon thine enemies by an angel sent from heaven; which is said to be heard, either because that was accompanied with terrible thunders and earthquakes, which was not unusual in the descent of an angel, as Mat_28:2, and elsewhere; or because the fame of it was quickly spread abroad in the land, and in the world. The effect of this terrible judgment was, that the rest of the world were afraid to invade or disturb the land and people of Israel, and chose rather to sit still in their own territories.

Psalms 76:9

When God arose to judgement; when God, who for a season had sat still, began to bestir and show himself against his enemies. Or, *after God had risen* , &c. Or, *because God did arise* , &c.

To save all the meek of the earth; to save all the godly persons (who are oft called meek ones, as hath been noted again and

again) in Israel, for whose sakes God wrought this great deliverance, which reached to all the people of the land.

Psalms 76:10

The wrath of man shall praise thee; the blasphemous speeches and furious attempts of thine enemies shall serve thy glory, and cause thy people and others to praise and magnify thee for that admirable wisdom, and power, and faithfulness, and goodness which thou shalt discover upon that occasion.

The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain; thou shalt prevent and disappoint the succeeding malicious designs of thine enemies, who will meditate revenge for those shameful and terrible overthrows. Or,

the remainder of wrath thou shalt gird thyself with, i.e. put it on as an ornament, which the girdle was; thou shalt adorn thyself with it, as a conqueror doth with the spoils of his enemies.

Psalms 76:11

Vow a sacrifice of thanksgiving; either at this time, for this wonderful deliverance; or hereafter, in all your future straits and troubles. Let this experience encourage you to make such vows to God with confidence of success. But when God hath accepted your vows, and given you the desired deliverance, forget not to pay your vows.

All that be round about him; either,

1. All the tribes of Israel, who have the benefit of this mercy. Or rather,
2. All the neighbouring nations on every side, to whom the fame of this mighty work of God shall come, I advise them for the future, if they love themselves, to cease from all hostilities against God or his people, and to submit themselves to the God of Israel.

Him that ought to be feared; whom though they do not love, yet they see and feel that they have great reason to fear and to seek his favour.

Psalms 76:12

Cut off; as men do their grapes in time of vintage, as the Hebrew verb implies, to wit, suddenly, violently, and irresistibly. This is

all which they shall get by opposing him, and therefore it is their wisdom to bring presents to him.

The spirit of princes; either,

1 Their courage. Or rather,

2. Their breath and life, as he did in the Assyrian army.

Psalms 77:1 PSALM 77

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed upon the occasion of some sore and long calamity of God's people; either the Babylonish captivity, or some other.

Either that Asaph who lived and prophesied in David's time; or one of his successors long after him, called, as was usual, by his progenitor's name.

The prophet showeth what great striving and combat (though by prayer and watching) he had with diffidence, Psa_77:1-9. By the consideration of God's wonderful works and former mercies, he is raised and strengthened, Psa_77:10-20.

This verse seems to contain the sum of the whole Psalm, consisting of two parts, to wit, his earnest cry to God in his deep distress; and God's gracious return to his prayers, by supporting him under them, and giving him assurance of a good issue out of them; of both which he speaks more distinctly and particularly, of the first from Psa_77:2-10, of the latter thence to the end.

Psalms 77:2

My sore ran: *the hand* in the Hebrew tongue, and Scripture use, is oft put for a blow or stroke given by the hand. Heb. *My hand* , or *hands* , (the singular number being frequently put for the plural,)

flowed or poured forth, i.e. spread abroad to God in prayer. This phrase he useth rather than were stretched out, which is frequent in like cases, to imply that his case was low and almost desperate, his spirits and strength quite gone, so that he was not able to stretch them out, as he had done.

In the night; which to others was a time of rest and quietness, but to me of torment.

My soul refused to be comforted; I rejected all those consolations which either my friends or my own mind suggested to me.

Psalms 77:3

Yea, the thoughts of God, and of his infinite power, and truth, and goodness, which used to be very sweet and comfortable to me, were now matter of terror and trouble, because they were all engaged against me, and God himself, my only friend, was now very angry with me, and become mine enemy.

I complained unto God in prayer.

My spirit was overwhelmed; so far was I from finding relief by my complaints, that they increased my misery.

Psalms 77:4

Thou holdest mine eyes waking, by those sharp and continual griefs, and those perplexing and tormenting thoughts and cares, which from time to time thou stirrest up in me.

I am so troubled that I cannot speak; the greatness of my sorrows stupifies my mind, and makes me both lifeless and unable to speak; nor can any words sufficiently express the extremity of my misery.

Psalms 77:5

I have considered, if by that means I could get any comfort, the days of old, i.e. the mighty works of God done for his people in former times.

Days are put for events done in them, as Psa_37:13 **137:7**
Oba_1:12 Mic_7:4.

Psalms 77:6

I call to remembrance my song in the night, the many and great mercies and favours of God vouchsafed by him to me, and to his people, which have obliged me to adore him, and sing his praises not only in the day, the time appointed for that work. but also by night, as oft as they come into my mind.

My spirit made diligent search, what should be the cause of this strange and vast alteration, and how these sore calamities could come from the hand of so gracious and merciful a God as ours is, and what might be expected as to their continuance or removal.

Psalms 77:7

Will the Lord cast off his peculiar and chosen people? This doth not seem to agree either with God's nature, or with that everlasting covenant which he hath made with them.

Psalms 77:8

Are all the stores of his mercy quite spent? Doth he now cease to be what he hath stiled himself, the Lord gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness? Will he never more make good those gracious promises upon which he hath commanded us to hope?

Psalms 77:9

Hath God forgotten to be gracious, because he hath so long disused it?

Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies, so as they can never flow forth, no, not to his own people?

Psalms 77:10

I said; I thus answered these objections.

This is my infirmity; these suspicions of God's faithfulness and goodness proceed from the weakness of my faith, and from the mistake of a diseased mind.

But I will remember; which words may be understood out of the following verse, as other words frequently are in like cases.

The years of the right hand of the Most High; the years wherein God hath done great and glorious works, which are oft ascribed to God's right hand, as Psa_17:7 **20:6 45:4 118:15**. But the word rendered *years* doth also signify *changing*, and accordingly this verse is by other learned interpreters, and may well be, rendered otherwise, without any such supplement as is in our translation, thus, And I said,

This is my affliction or grievance, (the sum of all, and the chief cause of my trouble and anxiety, is this,)

the change of the right hand of the Most High; that right hand which formerly hath done such great and wonderful things for his people, is at this time not only hid in God's bosom, and not drawn forth for their defence, but is also stretched forth against them, and is the principal cause of all our present miseries. I could bear the malice and rage of our enemies, from whom we could not expect better things, but that our gracious and covenanted God should forsake and persecute his own people, this is that which makes it intolerable.

Psalms 77:11

And yet upon second and serious thoughts of what God had formerly done for his people, many times far above their expectations, I will take comfort in remembrance of them, because God is still the same that he was in power, and goodness, and love to his people, and therefore will pity and help us in this present calamity, as he hath oft done in others of the same nature.

Psalms 77:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 77:13

Thy way, i.e. thy doings, or the course of thy providence, which is oft called God's way; the various methods and causes of thy dealings with thy people.

In the sanctuary; is there contained and declared. As the prosperity of wicked men, so also the grievous calamities of God's people, are great riddles and stumbling-blocks to the ignorant and ungodly world; but a full and satisfactory resolution of them may be had from God's sanctuary, as is observed in the former case by this same Asaph, Psa_73:16,17, and here in the latter. Or, is in *holiness*. So the sense is, God is holy, and just, and true in all his works; yea, even in his judgments upon his own people, as will evidently appear from the issue of them.

Who is so great a God as our God? And although our God at present suspends his power, and doth not put it forth to deliver his people out of the hands of their idolatrous enemies, who thence take occasion to blaspheme his name, and to exalt their idol gods above him; yet he is still infinitely superior in power, both to them

and to their gods, and can and will in his due time rescue his people from them.

Psalms 77:14

By the mighty effects of it here following.

Psalms 77:15

Redeemed thy people, to wit, out of Egypt, after a long and hard bondage; which he here mentions to strengthen his faith in their present captivity.

Jacob and Joseph; whom he mentions, partly, as a most eminent portion of the sons of Jacob, branched forth into two numerous tribes; partly, because the sons of Joseph were born in Egypt, which Jacob's other sons were not; and partly, because he laid the foundation of that redemption by bringing them into Egypt, and preserving and *nourishing* Jacob and his sons there, as a little child is nourished, as it is expressed in the Hebrew text, Gen_47:12; in which respect he was a second father to them, and they might well be called his sons; without whose care (to speak humanly) there had been no such redemption, nor people to be redeemed.

Psalms 77:16

The waters saw thee; they felt the visible effects of thy powerful presence.

They were afraid; and stood still, as men or beasts astonished commonly do.

Psalms 77:17

The clouds poured out water, when the Israelites passed over the sea; in respect whereof the Israelites are said to have been *baptized in the cloud* (i.e. sprinkled with water poured forth from the clouds) *and in the sea* , 1Co_10:2.

Thine arrows; either hail-stones, or rather lightnings or thunderbolts, which are called Gods *arrows* , Psa_18:14 **144:6**.

Psalms 77:18

This tempest is not particularly recorded in its proper place, yet it may well be gathered from what is said Exo_14:24,**25**, and is in effect acknowledged by Josephus in his history. And this is no new thing in Scripture, for some circumstances of history omitted

in the first and properest places to be supplied in following passages; whereof instances have been already given.

Psalms 77:19

Is in the sea; or rather was at that time; thou didst walk and lead thy people in untrodden paths.

Are not known, because the waters suddenly returned and covered them.

Psalms 77:20

Thou leddest thy people; first through the sea, and afterwards through the vast howling wilderness to Canaan.

Like a flock; with singular care and tenderness, as a shepherd doth his sheep. And therefore I hope thou wilt take care of thy poor dispersed and distressed flock, and bring them once again into their own land.

Psalms 78:1 PSALM 78

THE ARGUMENT

The scope of this Psalm is plainly expressed Psa_78:6-8, and is this, that the Israelites might learn to hope and trust in God, and steadfastly to keep his laws and covenant; which great lesson he presseth upon them, from the sad effects of the contrary practices in their forefathers, of which he gives a brief yet full account in a recapitulation of the most remarkable passages in the history of their church and nation.

An exhortation to attend to and instruct others in the word and works of the Lord, Psa_78:1-8. A rehearsal of God's love and long-suffering to the unbelieving and obstinate Israelites, Psa_78:9-11, in their journey out of Egypt to the land of Canaan, Psa_78:12-65. Rejecting the rest of the tribes, he chooseth Zion for a place of worship, and David to the kingdom, Psa_78:67-72.

My people: if Asaph was the composer of this Psalm, he might well call the Israelites *his people*, not only as he was their prophet and teacher, but also because they were of the same country and parentage with him; upon which account this very phrase of *my*

people is used of them, not only by queen Esther, Est_7:3,4, but also by the Shunammitish woman, 2Ki_4:13.

My law, i.e. the doctrine which I am about to deliver to you, concerning your duty, and the danger of neglecting it.

Psalms 78:2

Open my mouth, speak to you with all freedom and plainness, in a parable; uttering divers and weighty sentences (for such are oft called

parables in Scripture) or passages of great moment for your instruction and advantage.

Dark sayings; so he calls the following passages, not because the words and sentences are in themselves hard to be understood, for they are generally historical and easy, but because the things contained in them, concerning God's transcendent goodness to an unworthy people, and their unparalleled ingratitude for and abuse of such eminent favours, and their stupid ignorance and insensibleness under such excellent and constant teachings of God's word and works, are indeed prodigious and hard to be believed.

Of old; of things done in ancient times, and in a great measure worn out of men's minds.

Psalms 78:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:4

The praises, i.e. his glorious and praiseworthy actions, as the following words explain it.

Psalms 78:5

He established: this is justly put in the first place, as the chief of all the following mercies, and the foundation both of their temporal and of their eternal felicity.

A testimony, i.e. his *law*, as it is called in the next clause; which is very oft called a *testimony*, because it is a witness between God and men, declaring both the duties which God expects from man, and the promises and blessings which man in the performance of his duty may expect from God.

In Jacob, peculiarly; for no other nation enjoyed this privilege, as is more fully expressed, Psa_147:19,20. Which testimony or law God revealed to them, not for their own private use, but for the benefit of all their posterity, whom their parents were obliged to teach, Deu_6:7, and all their children to hear, and read, and study; by which we may see how contrary to the mind of God that foolish and wicked assertion is, that ignorance is the mother of devotion.

Psalms 78:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:7

That they might set their hope in God; that by the consideration of God's gracious promises, and wonderful works wrought by God for his. people, they might be encouraged to trust in him.

Psalms 78:8

That set not their heart aright; who though they outwardly and seemingly complied with the forms of worship which God had prescribed, yet

did not direct or prepare their hearts to the obedience and service of God.

Whose spirit was not stedfast with God; who quickly discovered their hypocrisy by their apostacy from God, and from the religion which they had professed.

Psalms 78:9

The children of Ephraim: this passage concerns, either,

1. The tribe of Ephraim, and some exploit of theirs, wherein they met with this disaster; whether it were that mentioned 1Ch_7:21, or some other not particularly related in any other place of Scripture. For we must not think that all the actions and events of the several tribes are recorded in Scripture, but only some of the most memorable ones. Or,
2. The ten tribes, who are very frequently called *Ephraim* , because that tribe was the chief of them, and the seat of the kingdom. And so this is referred by some to the captivity of the ten tribes, 2Ki 17, although the historical references of this Psalm seem not to go beyond David's time. Or rather,

3. All the tribes and people of Israel, who are sometimes designed by the name of *Ephraim* , as Jer_31:9,**18,20 Zec 10:7**; as well they might be, because of the eminency of this tribe, out of which came Joshua their first governor in Canaan, and in which the ark of God continued for a long time, and whose people were both most numerous and most valiant; and therefore they are fitly named for all, to show that this slaughter was not made amongst them for any defect of power or courage in them, but merely from God's just judgment upon them for their sins here following. And that *Ephraim* is here put for all Israel seems to be evident from the following verses, wherein the sins upon which this overthrow is charged are manifestly the sins of all the children of Israel, and they who are here called Ephraim, are called *Jacob and Israel* , Psa_78:21. And so this passage is by divers learned interpreters referred unto that dreadful overthrow related **1Sa 4**; wherein they did not stand to fight, but turned their backs and fled, as is there expressed, which though it reached all Israel, yet Ephraim is particularly named, because as the ark, so the fight, was in that tribe; and therefore it may be presumed that the Ephraimites were a very considerable part of that Israelitish army. And the psalmist having related this amazing providence and judgment of God upon his own people, he falls into a large discourse of the causes of it, to wit, the great, and manifold, and continual sins of that and the former generations; which having prosecuted from hence to Psa_78:60, he there returns to this history, and relates the sad consequences of that disaster, to wit, the captivity of the ark, and God's forsaking of Shiloh and Ephraim, and removing thence to the tribe of Judah and Mount Zion, the reason of which change of place he designed to give in the relation of this passage.

Bows; which includes arrows; and these being then the chiefest and most common weapons, are put for all other arms.

Psalms 78:10

Their disobedience was accompanied with obstinacy and contempt of God's laws.

Psalms 78:11

Forgot; not historically, but practically. They did not so remember them, as to love, and serve, and trust that God of whose infinite power and goodness they had such ample experience.

Words of knowledge, such as knowing, remembering, &c., in Scripture use frequently comprehend affection and practice, as hath been oft observed.

Psalms 78:12

In the field, i.e. in the territory or jurisdiction, not excluding the city itself. In the like sense we read of *the field of Edom, and of Moab*, Gen_32:3 **36:35** Num_21:20.

Zoan; an ancient, and eminent, and the royal city of Egypt. See Num_13:22 Isa_19:11 **30:4**.

Psalms 78:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:14

A cloud; which was very comfortable, both for a shadow from the scorching heat of the climate and season, and for a companion and director in their journey.

Psalms 78:15

Rocks; he useth the plural number, because it was twice done; once in Rephidim, Exo_17:6, and again in Kadesh, Num_20:1,**11**.

The great depths; in great abundance.

Psalms 78:16

Which did miraculously follow them in all their travails even to the borders of Canaan. See Deu_9:21 Psa_105:41 1Co_10:4.

Psalms 78:17

Where they had such strong and singular obligations to obedience, both from the great things which God had then and there done for them, and from their dependence upon God's favour and help for their safety and subsistence. This was a great aggravation of their sin and folly.

Psalms 78:18

Tempted; desired a trial and proof of God's power, as the next verse plainly showeth. See Num_11:4.

For their lust; not for their necessary subsistence, for which they had manna, but out of an inordinate and luxurious appetite.

Psalms 78:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:20

The waters gushed out; which, all things consider seems not so wonderful, since fountains of water something break forth unexpectedly from or through rocks. But it is far more difficult to give us bread and flesh, which we know not whether he can do. Or at least we have just cause to doubt of his good will to us, who hath made a a penurious provision for us, and denies us these common blessings of bread and flesh, which he gives to the was of men.

Psalms 78:21

A fire was kindled; either properly, as it was Num_11:1; or figuratively, the fire of God's anger, as it follows.

Psalms 78:22

That he both could and would save them from the famine and destruction which they feared.

Psalms 78:23

Which he compares to a granary or store-house, where God keeps the key, and either shuts or opens the doors it, either gives or withholds provisions, as he sees fit.

Psalms 78:24

Which was made in heaven, or the air, and sent down thence to the earth.

Psalms 78:25

Angels' food; manna, so called, either,

1. Because was made by the ministry of angels. Or rather,
2. Because of its excellency, such food as might befit the angels they could cat food, and such as hath some resemblance with the blessed angels in regard of its heavenly origin; its pure and spirituous substance, its rigour and efficacy preserving and nourishing those who used it according God's appointment. Or this place may be translated as is in the margin, *every one did eat the bread of the mighty* i.e. even the common Israelites fed upon as delicious as the greatest nobles and princes used to do.

Sent them meat to the full; which may belong, either,

1. To the flesh mentioned in the following verses, which God gave them even to satiety or gluttony, which he threatened to do, Num_11:18-20. Or rather,

2. To the manna, of which he is here speaking, which he gave them in such plenty, that their desire of other food could not proceed from their necessity, but merely from wantonness and lust.

Psalms 78:26

Either he brought in first an eastern, and afterwards a southern wind, or the wind was south-east; from which quarter these quails might come as well as from the west, where their more common abode is; this work being confessedly miraculous.

Psalms 78:27

Feathered fowls, Heb. *winged fowl* ; which is noted to show that it was a supernatural work, whereby God took away from them the use of their wings, and made them to fall into the hands of the Israelites.

Psalms 78:28

Of their camp, Heb. *of his camp* ; either Israel's camp, or God's camp; for seeing Israel was God's people, and he dwelt among them, their camp was his camp.

Psalms 78:29

What they desired both for quality and quantity.

Psalms 78:30

The sense is either,

1. Whilst their greedy appetite yet continued, and was not fully satisfied, before, they began to loathe it, as they did afterwards, Num_11:20. Or,

2. Before they were deprived or destitute of their desired food, which they enjoyed it, and were still feeding upon it, as the next clause explains this. God's patience did not wait upon them till that food was spent, but fell upon them instantly.

Psalms 78:31

The fattest of them; the most healthy and strong, who probably were most desirous of this food, and fed most eagerly upon it, and grew fatter by it, and least suspected their own danger.

Psalms 78:32

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:33

In vanity; in tedious and fruitless marches hither and thither, sometimes forward, and sometimes backward, which they knew would never bring them in their own persons to their promised and much-desired land.

In trouble; in manifold diseases, dangers, perplexities, and horrors of their own minds and consciences.

Psalms 78:34

They sought him; they prayed to him to deliver them from their deadly dangers; which even Pharaoh frequently did.

They returned, to wit, from their idols, unto the outward worship of God; or being moved with fear, they ceased for the present from their grossly wicked courses, which they might easily do without a dram of true repentance or hearty conversion to God.

Inquired early after God; speedily and earnestly sought to God for ease, and safety, and comfort, as wicked men in such cases frequently do.

Psalms 78:35

They considered that God, and God alone, had preserved them in all their former exigences, and that he only could now help them, and not those idols or creatures which they had preferred before him; and therefore being driven by absolute necessity, they fled to him for relief.

Psalms 78:36

They made glorious but false professions and protestations of their sincere resolutions of future obedience, if God would spare them.

Psalms 78:37

All their confessions and petitions were but hypocritical and forced, and did not proceed from an upright heart truly grieved for

their former offences, and firmly resolved to turn unto the Lord. They discovered their hypocrisy by their apostacy from God as soon as their danger was past.

Psalms 78:38

Forgave their iniquity; not simply and absolutely, for so it is undeniably certain from the Holy Scriptures that God pardons none but true penitents, such as these were not; but respectively, and so far as not to destroy them at that time, which he threatened, and was about to do, as the next words limit and explain it. He remitted their punishment, for

iniquity is oft put for the punishment of it. Heb. *he expiated their iniquity* . He accepted of their atonement, or of their professed repentance, so far as to compensate it with a removal of this outward and present affliction; as he did also to wicked Ahab upon his hypocritical humiliation, 1Ki_21:29. And this God doth for the encouragement of all true penitents, who may hence learn how much greater and better recompences they may expect and shall receive from God.

Did not stir up all his wrath; but set bounds to it; and though he chastened them, yet he would not utterly destroy them, as they deserved.

Psalms 78:39

Flesh; which here notes either,

1. The corruption of their natures, which was perpetually inclining them to sin, and consequently exposing them to God's wrath, which must needs have consumed them utterly and speedily, if God had let loose his anger upon them. See the same argument used to a like purpose Gen_8:21. Or rather,

2. The frailty or infirmity of their natures, as the next clause interprets this; which is such, that if I should not restrain my wrath, I should quickly cut off the body of this wicked people, and their children with them, whom I have promised to carry into Canaan, Num_14:31.

A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again; that are quickly cut off; and when once they are dead, they never return to this life.

Psalms 78:40

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:41

They limited either,

1. God's power, as above, Psa_78:19,**20**. Or,

2. God's will, directing and prescribing to him what to do, and when, and in what manner, and murmuring at him if he did not always grant their particular and various desires.

Psalms 78:42

His hand; the great and glorious works of his hand on their behalf.

Nor the day; nor that remarkable and never to be forgotten day, that *self-same day* , as it is called, Exo_12:41, which God had fixed four hundred years before, Gen_15:13, in which God delivered them from their greatest enemy, the tyrant Pharaoh.

Psalms 78:43

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:44

The several branches and streams of the river Nilus, and those many rivulets which they brought from it.

Psalms 78:45

Devoured them; or, *destroyed them* ; which they might do by their cruel and numerous stings, for these flies were doubtless extraordinary in their nature and quantity, and poisonous and hurtful qualities. And the like is to be thought concerning the frogs here following, which also might destroy the people by infecting the air with their stink, and corrupting their meats and drinks.

Psalms 78:46

The herbs and grains which were come up by their care and diligent labour.

Psalms 78:47

Sycamore trees; or, *wild fig trees* , which were there in great plenty. Under these and the vines all other trees are

comprehended. And this hail and frost did destroy the fruits of the trees, and sometimes the trees themselves.

Psalms 78:48

He gave up, Heb. *he shut up* , as in a prison, that they could not escape them.

Psalms 78:49

Indignation and trouble; other most grievous plagues, which were mixed with and were the effects of his anger and wrath; whereby their miseries were greatly aggravated, and distinguished from the afflictions which God sent upon the Israelites in Egypt, which were only fatherly chastisements, and the effects of God's love and occasions of their deliverance.

By sending evil angels, Heb. *the sending* (or the operation or effects) *of evil angels* , or *of the angels* or *messengers of evil things* ; either of the angels whom God employed in producing these plagues; or of Moses and Aaron, who were to the Egyptians messengers of evil, and by whom these judgments were sent to and inflicted upon them.

Psalms 78:50

He made a way, Heb. *He weighed a path or causeway* , i.e. he made a most smooth, and even, and exact path, as if he had done it by weight and measure, that so his anger might pass swiftly and freely without interruption. The phrase also seems to note the wisdom and justice of God in weighing out their plagues proportionably to their sins, and exercising great severity towards them answerably to their great and barbarous cruelty towards his people.

He spared not their soul from death, i.e. he punished them with death or killing plagues, as the next words explain it.

Their life; or, *their beasts* . So he speaks of the murrain among their cattle. But our translation seems better to agree with the next foregoing and following passages, which plainly speak of the death of persons.

Psalms 78:51

The chief of their strength; another expression noting the first-born, who are so called, Gen_49:3.

Of Ham; of the Egyptians, the posterity of Ham, Gen_10:6; which title he there gives them, to intimate that they were the cursed children of a cursed parent, Ham, Gen_9:25, and therefore were proper objects for Divine wrath and vengeance.

Psalms 78:52

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:53

They feared not. But it is said that *they were sore afraid* , Exo_14:10.

Ans. 1. They were afraid at first, but after Moses had encouraged them they grew bold and secure; one evidence whereof was, that they confidently went into the middle of the sea, and passed between the vast heaps of water which were on both sides of them.

2. The meaning may be that they had no just cause to fear; for men are oft said to do not only what they actually do, but also what they ought to do, as Mal_1:6 **2:7**, &c.

Psalms 78:54

Of his sanctuary; or, *of his holiness* , or his holy place i.e. the land of Canaan, which is so called, Ezc_9:8 Zec_2:12, &c., as being separated by God from all other lands for his people and service, and sanctified by his presence and dwelling in it.

This mountain; either,

1. The mountain upon which the tabernacle or temple stood. Or rather,

2. The mountainous country of Canaan, which called a land of hills and valleys, Deu_11:11. And the word mountain is oft used in Scripture for a mountainous country, as Gen_36:8 Deu_1:7 Jos_11:21.

Psalms 78:55

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:56

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:57

Which either breaketh when it is drawn, or shooteth awry, and frustrateth the archer's design and expectation So when they pretended, and both God and men expected, obedience and gratitude to their great Benefactor, they behaved themselves undutifully and unfaithfully towards him.

Psalms 78:58

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:59

Heard, i.e. perceived or understood, as *hearing* is oft used, as Gen_11:7 **41:15**, &c. It is spoken of God after the manner of men.

Psalms 78:60

The tabernacle of Shiloh; which then was placed in Shiloh, from whence, as the Israelites fetched the ark, so God withdrew himself.

Which he placed among men; whereby he insinuates both God's wonderful condescension and favour to such worthless and wretched creatures, and their stupendous folly and wickedness in despising and sinning away so glorious a privilege.

Psalms 78:61

His strength, to wit, the ark, called God's strength, 1Ch_16:11, *and the ark of his strength*, Psa_132:8, because it was the sign and pledge of his strength or power put forth on his people's behalf.

His glory; so the ark is called, as being the monument and seat of God's glorious presence, and an instrument of his glorious works.

The enemy; namely, the Philistines; of which see **1Sa 4**.

Psalms 78:62

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:63

Because the young men who should have married them were slain. Heb. *were not praised*, to wit, with marriage songs, which was usual at marriage solemnities among the Jews, as appears from Jer_7:34 **16:9 25:10**.

Psalms 78:64

Their priests, Hophni and Phinehas, and others.

No lamentation; no funeral solemnities; either because they were prevented by their own death, as the wife of Phinehas was, or disturbed by the invasion of the enemy; or so overwhelmed with the sense of the public calamity, that the resentment of their private losses was swallowed up by it. See Job_27:15 Eze_24:23.

Psalms 78:65

Awaked as one out of sleep; for God, by giving up not only his people, but his ark, to the contempt and insolency of the Philistines, might seem to be asleep, and insensible of his own honour and interest, till by a sudden and unexpected blow he convinced his enemies of the contrary.

Shouteth by reason of wine; whose spirit and courage is revived and inflamed by a liberal draught of generous wine; which comparison is no more injurious to the Divine Majesty than that of a *thief 's coming in the night* , to which Christ's second coming is compared, 1Th_5:2.

Psalms 78:66

Smote his enemies in the hinder part, with the disease of the emerods, which was both painful and shameful. He caused them to perpetuate their own reproach by sending back the ark of God with their golden emerods, the lasting monuments of their shame.

Psalms 78:67

Moreover; and as he smote his enemies for their sins, so he punished his own people for the same cause.

He refused the tabernacle of Joseph; either,

1. He rejected the kingdom of the ten tribes, whereof Ephraim was the head. But this Psalm reacheth not so far as the erection of that kingdom. Or rather,

2. He would not have his ark to abide longer in the tabernacle of Shiloh, which was in the tribe of Joseph or Ephraim: see 1Sa_6:12 **7:1,2 Jer 7:12,14 26:6,9.**

And chose not the tribe of Ephraim; the same thing repeated in other words, after the manner.

Psalms 78:68

Chose the tribe of Judah; either,

1. For the seat of the kingdom. Or rather,
2. For the seat of the ark and of God's worship.

Object. Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos_18:28.

Answ. 1. It was so in part, and part of it was in Judah, as appears from Jos_15:63; to which tribe Zion belonged by special reason, because David the head of that tribe conquered and took it.

2. Benjamin, after the division of the two kingdoms, was incorporated with Judah, and is oft comprehended under the name of Judah.

Psalms 78:69

His sanctuary; the temple of Solomon.

High palaces; magnificent and glorious.

Established for ever; not now to be removed from place to place, as the tabernacle was, but as a fixed place for the ark's perpetual residence, unless the people by their apostasy should cause its removal.

Psalms 78:70

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 78:71

Following the ewes great with young; by which employment he was inured to that care, and diligence, and self-denial which is necessary in a king or governor; and instructed to rule his people with all gentleness and tenderness.

Psalms 78:72

He commends David for the two necessary ingredients of a good prince.

1. **Integrity;** whereby he sincerely sought the good and welfare of his people, avoiding and abhorring those counsels and courses which were contrary thereunto.
2. **Skilfulness;** whereby he managed all the public affairs with singular prudence; which is here ascribed to his hands, not because it was seated in them, but because it was acted and

discovered by them, and appeared in all his actions or administrations.

Psalms 79:1 PSALM 79

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was doubtless composed upon the sad occasion of the destruction of Judea and Jerusalem, either by Antiochus, or rather by the Chaldeans; as may be gathered from /**APC 1Ma 7:16,17**, where, in the relation of the persecution of Antiochus, the second and third verses of this Psalm are cited.

The psalmist, complaining of the desolation and ruin of Jerusalem, Psa_79:1-4, expostulateth with God about his long anger and jealousy, Psa_79:5-7; entreateth for the forgiveness of their sins, and speedy help and mercy, Psa_79:8-12, to the everlasting praise of his name, Psa_79:13.

Are come, as invaders and conquerors. Into thine inheritance; into Canaan and Judea, which thou didst choose for thine inheritance. Defied, by entering into it, and touching and carrying away its holy vessels, and shedding blood in it, and burning of it. Heaps, made of the ruins of those goodly houses which they burned, or threw down.

Psalms 79:2

Of thy servants ; either,

1. Of thy faithful and holy servants, whom they used as cruelly as the worst of the people. Or,
2. Of the Jews, whom, though the generality of them were very wicked, he calleth God's servants and saints, because they were all such by profession, and some of them were really such; and the Chaldeans did never know nor regard those that were so, but promiscuously destroyed all that came in their way. *Given to be meat unto the fowls of heaven* , by casting them out like dung upon the face of the earth, and not suffering any to bury them.

Psalms 79:3

Like water; plentifully and contemptuously, valuing it no more than common water.

None to bury them, because their friends, who should have done it, were either slain or fled, or were not permitted, or durst not undertake, to perform that office to them.

Psalms 79:4

We, who were their terror and scourge, are now neither feared nor pitied, but become the matter of their scoffs and reproaches. See Psa_80:6 **137:7** Eze_35:2,**12**, &c.

Psalms 79:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 79:6

Though we confess that we have deserved thy wrath, yet the heathen, by whom thou hast scourged us, deserve it much more, as being guilty of far greater impieties than we, living in gross ignorance and contempt of God and of his worship; and therefore we pray transfer thy wrath from us to them.

Psalms 79:7

Jacob; the posterity of Jacob, whom thou didst love, and with whom and his seed thou madest a sure and everlasting covenant; whereby thou didst engage thyself to be *an enemy to their enemies* , Exo_23:22. Besides, thou hatest cruelty, especially when the wicked devour those who are more righteous than themselves, Hab_1:13.

Psalms 79:8

Former iniquities; the sins committed by our forefathers, and by us, who have filled up the measure of their sins, for which we confess thou hast most righteously brought this desolating judgment upon us.

Thy tender mercies; upon which all our confidence is fixed; for merit and righteousness we have none. See Dan_9:7,**9**.

Prevent us; prevent our utter extirpation, which we have deserved, and have great reason to expect.

Brought very low; past the hopes of all human help, and therefore the glory of our deliverance will be wholly thine.

Psalms 79:9

O God of our salvation; from whom we have oft received, and from whom alone we now expect, salvation.

Thy name; which is now obscured by the insolency and blasphemy of thine enemies, who ascribe this conquest to their idols, and triumph over thee no less than over thy people, as one unable to deliver them out of their hands. See Dan_3:15.

Psalms 79:10

Their God; he whom they served, and of whom they boasted. He is lost and gone, or grown impotent or idle.

Let him be known among the heathen, by the execution of his judgments upon them, according to Psa_9:16.

In our sight; that we may live to see it, and praise thy name for it.

Psalms 79:11

Of the prisoner; of thy poor people now in prison, or, at least, in captivity.

Those that are appointed to die, Heb. *the children of death* , i.e. which were either designed to death, or in manifest danger of it, as being wholly in the power of their cruel and barbarous enemies.

Psalms 79:12

Sevenfold, i.e. either,

1. Abundantly, as this phrase notes, Isa_65:6,7 Jer 32:18 Luk_6:38. Or,

2. Sensibly, so as it may come home to them, and fall heavily upon them in their own persons. Reproached thee, as impotent, or unfaithful, or unmerciful to his own people. So they intimate that this desire did not proceed from a revengeful mind, but from a due sense of God's favour.

Psalms 79:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 80:1 PSALM 80

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed either,

1. Upon the same occasion with the former, to wit, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, as most conceive; which yet seems not probable, because here is no mention of the temple, nor of Jerusalem, as there is in the foregoing Psalm; nor of the tribe of Judah, which was most concerned in that desolation; but of Joseph, Psa_80:1, and of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, which were carried captive long before that time; nor do the expressions of this Psalm import such a desolating judgment as those of the former do. Or,

2. Upon occasion of the captivity of the ten tribes, as some others think. But why then is Benjamin named, which is none of that number, nor went into captivity with them, but was joined with Judah? Or,

3. Upon occasion of some other calamity or calamities which befell the tribes of Israel after their division into two kingdoms, and before the captivity and destruction of either of them; in which time all the evils mentioned in this Psalm bid befall them, sometimes in one tribe or part, and sometimes an another, as is manifest from their history.

Shoshannim-Eduth seems to be the name of a musical instrument; though many separate the latter part of the word from the former, and expound Eduth, a testimony, or witness between God and his people, of his relation to them, and of their dependence upon him.

The psalmist bemoaneth the miseries and sad condition of the church, Psa_80:1-7; that God's past manifold mercies are changed into desolating judgments, Psa_80:8-13. He prayeth for deliverance out of them, with a promise of that fulness, Psa_80:14-19.

O Shepherd of Israel; thou who hast undertaken to feed and govern thy people of Israel, as a shepherd doth his flock, now perform thine office, and rescue thy flock from those grievous wolves which devour and destroy them.

That leadest; or didst lead formerly, though now thou hast forsaken them.

Joseph, i.e. the children of Joseph, or of Israel, as he now said, this clause being but a repetition, the former in other words. Compare Psa_77:15. And the name of Joseph, the most eminent of the patriarchs both for his dignity and piety, and the right of primogeniture transferred upon him from Reuben, 1Ch_5:1, is elsewhere put for all the ten tribes, as Eze_37:6, **19 Am 5:6, 15 6:6 Zec_10:6**; and for all the tribes, as Psa_81:5 Oba_1:18.

Between the cherubims; which were the mercy-seat above the ark; by which title he prudently and piously minds the ten tribes of their revolt from God, and of the vanity of their superstitious addresses to their calves at Dan and Beth-el, and of the necessity of their returning to the true worship of God before the ark at Jerusalem, if they desired or expected any relief from him. And by this title it seems more than probable that this Psalm was not made upon occasion of the Babylonish captivity, in and after which time there was no ark nor cherubims, nor do I remember that Daniel or any prophets did then apply themselves to God by that title. See **Da 9**\$. Shine forth out of the clouds, wherein thou seemest to hide thyself. Show forth thy power and goodness to and for thy poor oppressed people in the face of thine and their enemies.

Psalms 80:2

i.e. Before all the tribes of Israel; for whom he mentions only these three tribes, either,

1. Because of their special relation to Joseph here named, Psa_80:1; Ephraim and Manasseh being his sons, and Benjamin his brother both by his father and mother. Or,

2. Because these were eminent tribes:

Ephraim, the head of the kingdom of the ten tribes;

Manasseh was planted and powerful on both sides of Jordan; and Benjamin, because the greatest part of Jerusalem and the temple was in its lot. Or,

3. With respect and allusion to the ancient situation of the tabernacle in the wilderness, where these tribes were placed on the west side of the tabernacle, Num_2:18, &c., in which the ark was, which consequently was before them. So the sense is, O thou who

didst of old go forth before these tribes, &c., do so again at this time. Or,

4. Because these tribes had a greater share of the calamities here designed than others; which might be very true, though it be not expressed in the sacred history, in which we have only the substance of things, and such circumstances are commonly omitted.

Stir up thy strength; which seems now to be asleep, or idle and useless.

Psalms 80:3

Turn us again; either,

1. To our former quiet and flourishing estate; or,
2. To thyself, from whom Ephraim and Manasseh with the rest of the ten tribes have apostatized. See the like prayer of Elijah for them, 1Ki_18:37.

Psalms 80:4

Thou art so far from answering our prayers whereby we seek to appease thee, that by thy continuance and increase of our miseries thou seemest to be the more incensed against us by them.

Psalms 80:5

With the bread of tears; either with tears instead of bread, which they either want, or cannot eat because their grief hath taken away their appetites; or with tears as frequent and constant as their eating it. See the like phrase Psa_42:3.

Psalms 80:6

A strife, i.e. the object or matter of their strife or contention; either,

1. They strive one with another who shrill do us most mischief, or take our spoils to themselves; or,
2. They are perpetually quarrelling with us, and seeking occasions against us. Our neighbours, who used and ought to live peaceably and kindly with us. Laugh among themselves; insult over us, and take pleasure in our miseries.

Psalms 80:7

Ver.7. **No** text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 80:8

A vine; to which the Israel or church of God is oft compared; as Isa_5:2 Jer_2:21 Eze_17:6 Mat_21:32.

Out of Egypt; he alludes to the custom of transplanting trees for their more advantageous growth.

The heathen; the nations of Canaan.

Psalms 80:9

Thou preparedst room; or, didst purge or cleanse the soil; taking out stones or sticks, or other roots or plants, which might hinder its growth or fruitfulness. Thou didst root out those idolatrous and wicked nations which might either corrupt or destroy them.

Didst cause it to take deep root; thou gavest them a firm settlement in that land.

Psalms 80:10

They grew so numerous, that they filled not only the fruitful valleys, but even the barren mountains.

Goodly cedars; far differing from ordinary vines, whose boughs are weak and small, and creep upon the walls or ground.

Psalms 80:11

They possessed or subdued the whole land from the midland sea to the river Euphrates; which were the bounds allotted to them by God, Gen_15:18.

Psalms 80:12

Broken down her hedges; taken away thy protection, which was to them for walls and bulwarks.

Pluck her; pluck up her grapes and boughs, and strike at her very root.

Psalms 80:13

The wood; where boars use to lodge, as it is noted by many authors; by which he understands their fierce and furious enemies.

Psalms 80:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 80:15

The vineyard; or, *the root* , or *stock* , or *plant* , as others render it. Thy right hand hath planted; which thou hast planted or fixed with thy might and power; whereof the right hand is both a sign or symbol and an instrument. *The branch* , Heb. *the son* , i.e. either,

1. The son of man, as it is more fully expressed, Psa_80:17. Or rather,

2. The branch; for as yet he continues the metaphor; which is called the son, to wit, of the root or stock mentioned in the former clause, as the branches are called *daughters* in the Hebrew text, Gen_49:22.

Thou madest strong; either,

1. By supporting it with stakes or walls, upon which the vine groweth up or rather,

2. By causing it to grow in bulk and thickness, and consequently in strength. *For thyself* ; for thy own especial delight, and service, and honor.

Psalms 80:16

It is burned with fire, to wit, thy vineyard or branch.

They perish; thy people of Israel, signified by the vine. So now he passeth from the metaphor to the thing designed by it.

At the rebuke of thy countenance; through the effects of thine anger, without which their enemies could do them no hurt.

Psalms 80:17

Upon the man, to protect and strengthen him.

Of thy right hand; whom thy right hand planted, Psa_80:15; whom thou hast loved and respected even as thy right hand, which is very dear to us, Mat_5:30 **18:8**; compare Zec_13:7; thy Benjamin, whom he mentioned

Psa_80:2, to whose name he seems to allude, which signifies

the son of the right hand, i.e. a dearly beloved son, as Benjamin was to Jacob. *Son of man* : by man, or son of man, he understands either,

1. The Messias, oft called in Scripture *the Son of man* : let him come, and let his kingdom be established, and so thine Israel shall be saved and delivered out of all its troubles. Or,

2. The royal family, the house of David, in whose safety and welfare. the happiness of the whole nation was wrapt up. Or rather,

3. The people of Israel, who are oft spoken of as one person, as God's *son and first-born* , Exo_4:22, and here as one vine. And seeing all the foregoing complaints have been concerning the calamities of the people of Israel, it seems most reasonable to understand this prayer to be made for them; the rather, because the following clause here applied to the man and son of man,

who thou madest strong for thyself, is used of the root or branch of the vine, Psa_80:15.

Psalms 80:18

This glorious favour of thine shall oblige us to love and serve thee, and trust in thee so long as we have a being, and no more to revolt from thee to idolatry or wickedness, as we have too oft done.

Quicken us; revive and restore us to our former tranquillity and happiness.

Psalms 80:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 81:1 PSALM 81

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been made for the use of the church in solemn feasts; particularly either upon every first day of the month, or upon the first day of the seventh month, which was celebrated with more solemn blast of trumpets, Lev_23:24 Num_29:1; because that month was more sacred than others by reason of the concurrence of divers religious solemnities in it.

Gittith; of which title **See Poole "Psa_8:1"**.

An exhortation to a solemn praising of God , Psa_81:1-3; which he requireth for his manifold mercies and deliverances, Psa_81:4-

7; and, exhorting to obedience, and the worshipping of him the true God, Psa_81:8-10, complaineth of their disobedience, which tended to their own hurt and affliction, Psa_81:11-16.

Our strength; who is all our refuge and safeguard against all our enemies.

Psalms 81:2

All which instruments were then prescribed and used in their solemn meetings.

Psalms 81:3

The new moon; which was a sacred and festival time, as appears from Num_10:10 **28:11,14** 2Ki_4:23 Isa_66:23. But this may be understood either,

1. Generally of every new moon. Or rather,
2. Specially of that new moon, as the word may be rendered, which begun the seventh month; as may be gathered both from the following words, and by comparing this place with Lev_23:24 Num_29:1, where this very day is called *a day of blowing of trumpets* . In the time appointed, on our solemn feast day; or, for the day or time of our solemn festivity; whereby may be understood either,
 1. The day of the new moon, on which the trumpets were blown for the celebration of that solemn time. Or,
 2. The seventh month, which that new moon did introduce or begin, and in which, besides other solemnities, they kept the feast of tabernacles, which the Hebrew doctors call *the feast* by way of eminency, and Josephus affirms to have been the most sacred and the chief of all the Jewish feasts.

Psalms 81:4

For this is no human device, but an appointment and command of the great God, and your Lord.

Psalms 81:5

This he ordained, to wit, the blowing of trumpets. *In Joseph* ; among the posterity of Joseph, to wit, the people of Israel, as is evident both from the foregoing verse, where they are called Israel, and from the following words in this verse, where they are

described by their coming out of Egypt, which was common to all the tribes of Israel, who are sometimes called by the name of Joseph, of which see on Psa_80:1.

For a testimony; either,

1. For a law, which is oft called a testimony. Or rather,
2. For a witness and memorial of that glorious deliverance mentioned in the following words. For,
 1. That this was a *statute* and law be had expressed, Psa_81:4, which it is not likely that he would here repeat, especially in a more dark and doubtful phrase.
 2. He seems to declare the end of that law, which was to be a testimony.

When he, to wit, God, *he who ordained*, as was now said, *went out*, as a captain at the head or on the behalf of his people, through the land of Egypt, to execute his judgments upon that land or people. Or, *against*, &c., to destroy it. Or, *out of it*, as both ancient and other interpreters render this participle *al*, which is elsewhere put for *meal*, and *meal* is put for *min*, *from or out of*, as is manifest by comparing 2Ki_21:8 with 2Ch_33:8. So this text notes the time when this and the other feasts were instituted; which was at or presently after their coming out of Egypt, even at Sinai.

Where I; i.e. my progenitors; for all the successive generations of Israel make one body, and are sometimes spoken of as one person; heard a language that I understood not; either,

1. The language of God himself speaking from heaven at Sinai, which was strange and terrible to me. Or rather,
2. The Egyptian language, which at first was very ungrateful and unknown to the Israelites, Gen_42:23, and probably continued so for some considerable time, because they were much separated both in place and conversation from the Egyptians, through Joseph's pious and prudent design. This exposition is confirmed from Psa_114:1, where this very thing is mentioned as an aggravation of their misery; and from other places of Scripture,

where this is spoken of as a curse and plague, to be with a people of strange language, as Deu_28:49 Jer_5:15.

Psalms 81:6

I delivered him from burdensome slavery. *Pots* ; as this word is taken, 1Sa_2:14 2Ch_35:13. Or, *baskets* , as it signifies, 2Ki_10:7 Jer_24:2. In the general, it seems to note all those vessels wherein they carried water, straw, lime, bricks, &c.

Psalms 81:7

Thou calledst in trouble; at the Red Sea, Exo_14:10-12.

In the secret place of thunder; from the dark and cloudy pillar, whence I thundered and fought against the Egyptians. See Exo_13:21 **14:19,24**. Others refer this to the thunder at Sinai. But at that time they were

not in trouble, but in a safe and glorious condition.

Psalms 81:8

I will testify unto thee, concerning my will and thy duty. I will give thee statutes and judgments, in the execution of which thou mayst live and be happy for ever. This God did presently after he brought them from Meribah, even at Sinai.

Psalms 81:9

Thou shalt renounce all false gods and worship, and worship me only.

Psalms 81:10

Open thy mouth wide; either,

1. To pray for mercies. Ask freely, and abundantly, and boldly, (as this phrase oft signifies,) whatsoever you need, or in reason can desire. Or,

2. To receive the mercies which I am ready to give you.

I will fill it; I will give or grant them all, upon condition of your obedience.

Psalms 81:11

Or, did not assent to me, or *acquiesce in me* , or *obey me* , or my commands.

Psalms 81:12

Upon their obstinate and oft-repeated rebellions and rejections of my grace and mercy offered to them, I withdrew all the restraints of my providence, and my Holy Spirit, and grace from them, and wholly left them to follow their own vain and foolish imaginations and wicked lusts.

They walked in their own counsels; they practised those things, both in common conversation and in religious worship, which were most agreeable, not to my commands or counsels, but to their own fancies and inclinations, as appeared in the golden calf and many other things.

Psalms 81:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 81:14

Those remainders of the Canaanites whom now for their unbelief and apostacy I have left in the land to be snares and plagues to them.

Psalms 81:15

The haters of the Lord; all the haters and enemies of God's people, as the neighbouring nations were; whom he calls *haters of God* , partly because they hated the Israelites for God's sake, and for the singularity of their religious worship, as the heathen oft declared; and partly to show the strict league and union which was betwixt God and them, by virtue whereof God had declared all their friends and enemies to be his own, which was a great aggravation of their wickedness.

Should have submitted themselves unto him; should have professed and owned their subjection to him. For the phrase, **See Poole** "Psa_18:44". *Their time* , i.e. Israel's time; the relative belonging to the remoter antecedent; as it is in many other places of Scripture, whereof I have formerly given instances. By their time he means either,

1. Their happy time, as *life* is oft put for a happy life or State, as Psa_34:12 **49:18** Deu_4:1 **5:33**, &c. Or,

2. The duration of their commonwealth. Endured for ever, i.e. lasted for a very long time; whereas now their latter and doleful end is hastening towards them.

Psalms 81:16

With honey; either,

1. Metaphorically, with all pleasant and precious fruits, and with all delights, as all necessities may be expressed under the name of wheat. Or rather,

2. Properly; this land of Canaan being commended for its excellent and plentiful honey; and the bees there did oft-times harbour and make their honey in the holes of rocks and such-like places, from which it flowed down upon the ground. See Deu_32:13 1Sa_14:25,26.

Psalms 82:1 PSALM 82

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains an admonition, either,

1. To the chief rulers of Israel, whether judges or kings, or their great council called the Sanhedrim. Or rather,

2. To all the rulers of the several nations of the world, to whom this word might come; as may be gathered, partly from the expressions here used, which are general, and not peculiar to the governors of Israel, and therefore not rashly and unnecessarily to be restrained; and partly from the last verse, where he mentions the whole earth and all nations as concerned in the contents of this Psalm.

The psalmist, exhorting and expostulating with the judges, Psa_82:1-4, reproveth their want of judgment and negligence, Psa_82:5-7, and prayeth the Lord to judge, Psa_82:8.

Standeth, as a judge, diligently to observe all that is said or done there; and to give sentence accordingly. The judge sits when he heareth causes, but standeth up when he giveth sentence. Or standing doth not note the posture, but only the being or presence of a person, as Isa_11:10 Dan_11:20 Joh_3:29; whence this

Hebrew word is by some learned interpreters rendered *is present* , and by others, *presideth* , as this word is used, 1Sa_19:20 **22:9**.

Of the mighty; or, *of the gods* , as it is explained and expressed in the next clause; the singular number being here, as it is frequently elsewhere, put for the plural. By *gods* , or the *mighty* , he understands kings, or other chief rulers, who are so called, because they have their power and commission from God, and act as his deputies, in his name and stead, and must give an account to him of all their actions. And by their congregation he understands not a convention or assembly of such persons which seldom meet together, but either,

1. All congregations or assemblies of people in which magistrates sit to execute justice. Or,
2. All persons whatsoever of this high and sacred order or number; for the Hebrew word here rendered

congregation doth not always signify an assembly of persons met together in one place, but sometimes notes all the particular persons of or belonging to such a sort and body of men, though dispersed in divers places, as Psa_26:5, *I have hated the congregation of evil-doers* , i.e. all evil-doers; Pro_21:16, he *shall remain in the congregation of the dead* , i.e. shall be one of that number and state. See also Jos_22:20 Psa_74:19. Some render it as it is in the Hebrew, in the congregation of God, in his own congregation, the noun being put for the pronoun, as is usual in the Hebrew text, i.e. in the conventions or tribunals of princes or rulers, which he rightly calls his, because their authority is wholly derived from him. But the former exposition seems more agreeable, both to the following words, and to the scope and whole body of the Psalm. *Judgeth* ; accurately observeth all their carriages, and passeth sentence upon them accordingly. *Gods* , i.e. judges and magistrates, who are called *gods* , below, Psa_82:6 Exo_12:12 **12:28**, compared with Act_23:5 Psa_138:1, and of whom this is expounded, Joh_10:34,**35**.

Psalms 82:2

The psalmist speaketh to them in God's name, and reproves them for their continued and resolved unrighteousness in their public administrations.

Accept the persons, by overlooking the merits of the cause, and giving sentence according to your respect or affection to the person.

Psalms 82:3

Defend the poor and fatherless; so far as justly you may; as this clause must be limited, by comparing this with Lev_19:15.

Do justice to, Heb. *justify* , to wit, when his cause is just, and he is oppressed by a potent adversary.

Psalms 82:4

These he recommends to the special care and protection of magistrates, because such are commonly neglected and crushed by men in higher place and power, and they are unable to right themselves.

Psalms 82:5

They, the magistrates, of whom this Psalm treats,

know not, to wit, the truth and right of the cause, nor the duty of their place. Men are oft said in Scripture *not to know* what they do not love and practise.

Neither will they understand: this their ignorance is wilful and afflicted; they will not search out the truth, and they shut their eyes lest they should see what they would not.

They walk on; they persist and proceed; it is not one rash and transient action, but their constant course.

In darkness; either,

1. In ignorance; or,

2. In their sinful and unrighteous courses, as darkness is taken, Eph_4:17,18 5:8 1Jo_1:6; being blinded by their corrupt affections and interests, Exo_23:8.

All the foundations of the earth are out of course: this corruption of the supreme rulers doth flow from them to their inferior officers and members, and manifestly tends to the dissolution of all civil societies, partly by subverting that order and honesty by which they are supported, and partly by provoking

God the Governor of the world to destroy them for their wickedness.

Psalms 82:6

I have said, Ye are gods; I have given you my name and power to rule your people in my stead.

All of you; not only the rulers of Israel, but of all other nations; *for all powers are ordained by God* , Rom_13:1.

Children of the Most High; representing my person, and bearing both my name and lively characters of my majesty and authority, as children bear the name and image of their parents.

Psalms 82:7

But ye shall die: but let not this make you insolent and secure; for though you are gods by name and office, yet still you are mortal men, you must die and give up your account to me your superior Lord and Governor; and you shall die and fall by the hands of my justice, if you persist in your unjust and ungodly courses.

Like men; or, *like ordinary men* , as the Hebrew word *adam* sometimes signifies, as it doth Psa_49:2. If it be objected, that there *adam* is opposed to *ish* , which notes persons of a higher rank; in like manner it is here opposed to the same sort of men, who are here called *gods* .

And fall like one of the princes: so the sense is, You (who are esteemed by yourselves and others gods upon earth) *shall fall* (or *die* , as he said in the former branch; *falling* being oft put for dying, with this addition, that it notes not an ordinary, but a violent and judicial death, as Exo_19:21 Jer_39:18 Hos_5:5)

like one (or, *like other* , or *other 's* , as this very word is rendered, Jud_16:7,11, which also is expounded there, Jud_16:17, *like every* , or *any*) *of the princes* , i.e. as other unrighteous or tyrannical rulers have done in all foregoing ages, and still do, your eyes seeing it; even in like manner shall you, to whom now I speak, fall and perish, if you do not learn by their examples. But these words are by some late learned interpreters translated otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words and accents, *And you, O ye princes* , (or, *you that are princes* , before called *gods* .) *shall fall like one* , or *like every* , or *any* , of them, i.e. of the ordinary men

last mentioned. So there is only an ellipsis of the pronoun, which is frequent in the Hebrew language. Or, *shall fall together*, as this word is translated, Ezr_2:64 **3:9**; or *alike*, as it is rendered Ecc_11:6, *in like manner*, to wit, as ordinary men do. Your godhead shall be taken away from you, and your death shall show you to be but mortal men, as others are.

Psalms 82:8

Seeing the state of the world is so universally corrupt and desperate, and thy vicegerents betray their trust, and oppress and ruin the nations of the earth, whom they were appointed to preserve, do thou therefore, O God, take the sword of justice into thine own hand, and maintain the cause and rights of the oppressed against their potent oppressors, and let truth and justice be established in all the parts of the earth. For as thou wast the Creator, so thou still art the supreme and unquestionable Lord, and Possessor, and Ruler of all nations, and therefore do thou protect and rescue them from all those who invade thine and their rights. And although at present thou seemest in some sort to confine thy care to Israel, and to neglect other nations; yet there is a time coming when thou wilt bring all nations to the knowledge of thyself, and the obedience of thy laws, and govern them by thy Son and Spirit, which thou wilt send into the world for that purpose. Do thou therefore preserve them in the mean time till that blessed day cometh, and hasten the coming of it.

Psalms 83:1 PSALM 83

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion of the Psalm is manifest from the body of it, and it seems to have been a dangerous attempt and conspiracy. of divers neighbouring nations against Israel or Judah. Probably it was that which is mentioned **2Ch 20**, wherein all the people here mentioned might be engaged, though all of them be not there expressed; this being usual in the sacred historians, for the latter to record some passages which the former omitted. Or it may belong to some other history. Or it may have a more general respect unto the several enterprises and combinations of all these people against them, some at one time, and some at another.

The church's complaint to God of her enemies' conspiracies, Psa_83:1-8. Her prayer against oppressors, Psa_83:9-15, that God would fill them with shame, and make them know that he alone is Jehovah, Psa_83:16-18.

Keep not thou silence; plead for us, not by words, but by thine actions.

Hold not thy peace; or, *be not deaf* , to our prayers, and to the blasphemies of thine and our enemies.

Be not still, i.e. inactive and unconcerned for us.

Psalms 83:2

Thine enemies; they are not only enemies to us thy people, but also to thy will, and name, and glory.

Make a tumult; or, *make a tumultuous noise* , both with their tongues reproaching thee and threatening us, and with their arms.

Have lift up the head; are grown potent, and insolent, and scornful.

Psalms 83:3

i.e. Thy people of Israel, as it is explained in the foregoing words, and in the next verse; who are called God's hidden or secret ones, to intimate the singular care and respect which God hath to them, as to his peculiar treasure, as they are called, Exo_19:5 Psa_135:4, whom he will hide and preserve in the secret of his presence, and under the shadow of his wings; and withal, to note their folly in seeking the destruction of those whom God was engaged and resolved to protect.

Psalms 83:4

Whereby they showed both their implacable rage and malice, and their great assurance of success.

Psalms 83:5

They have laid aside all their private quarrels and animosities, and agreed together against thee.

Psalms 83:6

The tabernacles, put for the people dwelling in them, as Job_12:6 Pro_14:11 Hab_3:7.

Edom; called *the children of Seir* , **2Ch 20**. *The Ishmaelites* ; some of the posterity of Ishmael, called by their father's name, as others of them are supposed by divers to be called

Hagarenes, from their grandmother Hagar. See 1Ch_5:10,20.

Psalms 83:7

Gebal; either,

1. The Giblites or Gebalites, dwelling near Zidon, of whom 1Ki_5:18 Eze_27:9. Or,

2. An Arabian people, so called by ancient writers, dwelling in the southern border of Canaan, where most of the people here mentioned had their abode. Yet some of these were in the northern parts, and not far from the other Gebal, as some of the Philistines and the Tyrians.

Psalms 83:8

Is joined with them in their counsels, and possibly with some of their forces, though not so openly and powerfully as afterwards.

The children of Lot; Moab and Ammon, who were the principal parties in that war, **2Ch 20**, called here the children of Lot, to intimate their horrible degeneration from their pious progenitors.

Psalms 83:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 83:10

Which perished at En-dor: either,

1. The Midianites. Or rather,

2. Jabin and Sisera, who were overthrown near Taanach and Megiddo, Jud_5:19, nigh unto which places was this En-dor, as appears from Jos_17:11.

They became as dung for the earth; they were trodden under foot, and their carcasses left unburied. Compare 2Ki_9:37 Jer_8:2 **16:4**.

Psalms 83:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 83:12

The houses of God; the houses and lands of the Israelites, which their God, as they pretend, gave them in Canaan, to which they have no rightful title; for that we see was formerly objected by the Ammonites, Jud_11:13, who were a chief party in this war. So they seem to call them houses of God, by way of irony and derision.

Psalms 83:13

Whereas they promise to themselves a sure and firm possession in our land, let them be like

a wheel, or *a round ball* , which being once tumbled down from the top of a hill, runs down with great force and swiftness, and stays not till it comes to the bottom, and there also is very unstable, and soon removed.

Psalms 83:14

The mountains; understand by a metonymy the woods or forests upon the mountains, which in those hot countries, when they had once taken fire, either by lightning, or by the design of men, or by any accident, did burn with great speed and irresistible violence.

Psalms 83:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 83:16

That being disappointed of their hopes, and discerning the impotency of their idols, they may own and worship thee as the only true God.

Psalms 83:17

But those of them that will not humble themselves before thee, let them be utterly destroyed.

Psalms 83:18

That men may know, or *that they may know* , to wit, by costly experience, even by their own ruin, what they would not know by information for their own good, *that thou art the Most High* , the most high God, and the God not only of his people Israel, as the heathen fancied, and as their gods were confined to their particular and several territories, but the God and Governor of all the nations and parts of the earth.

Psalms 84:1 PSALM 84

THE ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm seems to have been David, partly because it is ascribed to no other, and partly because it is most agreeable to his style and condition, and the occasion of it, his banishment or absence from the place of God's worship; either,

1. In Saul's time, which suits not with Psa_84:7, for then the tabernacle was not in Zion. Or rather,
2. During Absalom's rebellion.

The prophet, commending the sanctuary, Psa_84:1, longeth for communion with it, Psa_84:2,3; showeth the blessed state and condition of such as dwell therein, Psa_84:4-7; prayeth to be restored unto it, Psa_84:8,9; preferreth one day therein before a thousand elsewhere, Psa_84:10. What the Lord is to them that trust in him, Psa_84:11,12.

Thy tabernacle, called *tabernacles* , either

1. Because it consisted of several parts; or,
2. To note its excellency; as *behemoth* , or *beasts* , is put for one eminent beast, Job_40:15, and *wisdoms* for excellent wisdom, Pro_1:20.

Psalms 84:2

Fainteth, or, *is consumed* , with grief for want of them, and with vehement desire to enjoy them, and with the deferring and disappointment of his hopes. See Pro_13:12.

For the courts; to enter into the outward court with the people, and to see what is done by the priests in the inner court, and to join with them in their religious exercises.

My heart and my flesh crieth out with a doleful cry, of which this word is used also Lam_2:19, which elsewhere and commonly signifies a joyful shout. The sense is, my soul and body are pained; or the passion of my heart maketh my tongue cry out.

Psalms 84:3

The sparrow hath found an house, i.e. a habitation, to wit, a nest, as it here followeth.

Even thine altar; or, *nigh* (as this Hebrew particle *eth* is elsewhere used, and as it is rendered by the Septuagint and the Chaldee, Jud_4:11) *thine altar* , Heb. *altars* , that of burnt-offerings, and the other of incense; at or near which these birds might well and truly be said to have their nests, because they were either in some part of the tabernacle or temple in which the altars were, or in some buildings belonging, or near at least, to it.

Psalms 84:4

They that constantly or frequently resort to and abide in thy house; either the priests and Levites, who kept continual watch there; or other devout Jews who were there perpetually, as Anna, Luk_2:37. For they are continually employed in that blessed and glorious work of praising and serving thee in the place which thou hast appointed for that end.

Psalms 84:5

Whose strength is in thee; who trusteth in thee as his only strength, and refuge, and portion. Or, *who hath strength in* (or rather *for* , as the Hebrew prefix *beth* is frequently used, as hath been noted again and again) *thee* , i.e. who hath (or who useth; for *having* is sometimes put for *using* ; of which see Mat_13:12 1Co_7:2) ability of body and mind for thee, and for thy service; or for that journey which here he seems to insinuate, and in the following words and verses he particularly describes. For it must be considered that all the males of Israel were obliged to come to the tabernacle or temple thrice in a year, Exo_34:23,24, and that some of them lived at a great distance, and consequently were to take a long and troublesome journey, which also might at some times and places be accompanied with hazards and other inconveniences; and therefore such as wanted either courage or bodily strength might be discouraged or hindered from undertaking it, and from the enjoyment of God in his solemn and public worship; which though in some cases it might not be their sin, yet surely it was a great affliction and infelicity; and consequently it was a blessed thing to be freed from those impediments, as the psalmist here observes.

In whose heart are the ways of them, i.e. of these men; for though man be thee singular number, it is understood collectively of all that sort or company of men. But these words, *of them* , are

not in the Hebrew, and, as some learned men have observed, seem to disturb or darken the sense. Others therefore seem to render the words better and more agreeably to the Hebrew text,

in whose heart are thy (which pronoun is oft understood)

ways, to wit, those ways which lead to thy house; or, *the ways*, so called emphatically, or by way of eminency, *the ways of* (or, *to*) *Zion*, as they are called Lam_1:4, as is evident from Psa_84:7. So the meaning is, Blessed are they whose thoughts and affections are much and strongly fixed upon the highways, and their journeys to Zion, who have both strength of body, as is said in the former branch, and readiness of heart, as is here added, to go to Zion; which are the two qualifications requisite for their journey. Blessed are they whose hearts are set upon Zion and their journeys thither; that are continually, or from time to time, stirring up and bespeaking themselves and others, as they did, Jer_31:6, *Arise ye, let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God*. As when a man's heart is knit in true friendship to one that lives at some distance from him, he is oft thinking with great desire and delight of the place where he dwelleth, and of the way leading to it.

Psalms 84:6

Passing; or, *being used to pass*; for he seems not to speak of one particular act, but of a common course or custom.

Baca; a place, so called, which some Jewish and other writers affirm to have been a very dry place, and therefore incommodious for travellers in those hot countries, and in hot seasons; which place may be here mentioned not exclusively to other ways and passages, for this highway being but one, and on one side of Jerusalem, could not be a general way for all the Israelites thither, but synecdochically for all places of like nature, which made their journey to Jerusalem unpleasant or inconvenient. But their zeal for God's service did easily overcome this and other difficulties. Or, *the valley of tears*, as this valley might be called, for the trouble or vexation which travellers found there by reason of drought, or otherwise. A well, or *wells*, i.e. they dig divers little pits or wells in it for their relief. This trouble they willingly undertook rather than to neglect the opportunity of going up to Jerusalem at their solemn times. And possibly they did this, not only for themselves,

but for the benefit of other travellers who came after them; whereby they showed both their piety and charity.

The rain also filleth the pools; God recompenseth their diligence in making pits, or little pools, or cisterns with his blessing, sending rain wherewith they may be filled, and the thirsty travellers refreshed. Possibly the words may be thus rendered, which is more agreeable to the order of the Hebrew text, *yea* , or *also* , (and so the Hebrew particle *gam* hath that emphasis which, as some learned interpreters observe, is not given to it in other translations; they do not only make little pits or wells, as it was now said, but also,) *pools* or *cisterns* (for this Hebrew word is by the learned rendered both ways) which (so the relative particle is to be understood, as it is very frequently in many texts of Scripture) *the rain filleth* , or *may fill* , i.e. which may receive and keep the rain which God sendeth for the refreshment of these travellers, whose great numbers made the provision of water more necessary. But it is not necessary to understand this and the foregoing clause of what these passengers did for their own use, as they travelled through this or such, like places; but it may be meant of what pious persons did before that time, who, having their hearts set upon God's house, and the pathways leading to it, as was said, Psa_84:5, and being desirous to advance the worship of God, and to encourage the people to come to Jerusalem, endeavoured to make those ways (some parts whereof were very incommodious) easy and convenient; and particularly, because those Eastern countries were hot and dry, and springs of water were scarce there, as we may learn from Gen_26:15 Jud_1:15, and many other passages of sacred Scripture and other authors, which was a great annoyance to travellers, they made these pits and pools or cisterns in such places where they were most necessary, and through which great numbers of people passed in their journey to the house of God.

Psalms 84:7

They go from strength to strength; the farther they travel onward in that way, instead of being faint and weary, as travellers in such cases use to be, they grow stronger and stronger, being greatly refreshed with the comfortable end of their journey, expressed in the following words. Or, *They go from company to*

company . For they used to travel in troops or companies for many reasons, and some companies were before others, accordingly as they were nearer to the place of worship, or more diligent or expeditious in their travel. And such as were most zealous would use their utmost endeavours to outstrip others, and to overtake one company of travellers after another, that so they might come with the first unto God in Zion.

Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God: this is here added as the blessed design and fruit of their long and tedious journey, as that which put life into them, and made them bear all inconveniences with great cheerfulness, they are all graciously admitted into the presence of God in Zion. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, until every one of them *appear before the God of gods in Zion* ; or, *the God of gods shall be seen (or useth to appear , or manifest himself* ; for the future tense oft notes the continuance of the action) *in Zion* ; which is mentioned in the close as the reason of that affection and industry which is described in the foregoing passages.

Psalms 84:8

O Lord God of hosts, who canst easily remove and subdue those enemies of mine who banish and keep me from the place of thy worship,

hear my prayer, in restoring me to thy house and service; which is my chief desire, Psa_84:2,3.

Psalms 84:9

Look upon the face; do not turn away thine eyes from him, as men do from those whom they hate or despise, but cast a favourable eye towards him. By *face* he means either his person, the word *face* being oft redundant, as it is Gen_43:3, or his state and condition.

Of thine anointed: either,

1. Of Christ, whose proper name is *the Messiah* , or *the Anointed* . So the meaning may be, Lord, I deserve not one good look from thee, because by my great wickedness I have procured thy just displeasure, and this banishment; but look upon thy Christ, whose coming and meritorious passion, though future to us, is present to thee, and for his sake look upon me. Or,

2. Of me, who, though a vile sinner, am thine anointed king, 2Sa_12:7 **23:1**.

Psalms 84:10

A thousand; understand *elsewhere* ; which is necessary to complete the sense: or, *in the tents of wickedness* ; which may be supplied out of the next clause. Such ellipses are usual in Scripture, as Psa_91:7, *at thy side* , i.e. left side; Pro_19:1, &c.

Door-keeper; which was generally held a mean and contemptible office, and belonged to the common Levites, 1Ch_9:19 **26:1**, and therefore might seem very dishonourable for David.

Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness; than to live in the greatest glory, and plenty, and pleasure; which is ordinarily the lot of wicked men, as David observed before, Psa_17:14 **73:6,7**, and elsewhere.

Psalms 84:11

A sun, to enlighten, and quicken, and direct, and comfort all his people; whereas they that live without God in the world *walk in darkness, and know not whither they go* , as is said, Joh_12:35.

Shield, to save his people from all their enemies, and from those dreadful and deadly miseries which attend all other men.

Grace; his favour and friendship, which is better than life, Psa_63:3, and all the blessed fruits of it.

Glory; not the vain-glory and splendour of this world, of which David would not have spoken so magnificently, because upon all occasions he expresseth a great contempt of those things; but the honour which comes from God here, and that eternal and ineffable glory laid up for God's people in the future world.

No good thing; nothing that is truly good in itself, and which is good for them; for sometimes afflictions, which are evil in themselves, are good and necessary, and highly advantageous to good men; and the good things of this world would do them much hurt; which is verified by frequent experiments.

Them that walk uprightly; that worship God sincerely, and order their conversations aright; which clause David seems to me to add designedly to prevent or remove an objection against what

he had now said, which might be taken from his own case, whereby it appeared that God was no such sun or shield to him, but exposed him to great and sore calamities; which being certain and evident, David here assigns the true reason of it, which was not from any defect in God's goodness and sufficiency, but only from his own gross miscarriages, whereby he had clouded this sun, and cast away this shield, and forfeited these privileges by departing from his integrity.

Psalms 84:12

Who, though he be deprived of the opportunity of paying that outward worship to thee which is appropriated to thy house, yet giveth thee that inward worship which is more valuable in thy account, and placeth his chief trust, and hope, and happiness in thee alone.

Psalms 85:1 PSALM 85

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is thought to have been made after the people's return from the Babylonish captivity, wherein he partly gives God thanks for that glorious deliverance, and partly implores God's mercy in completing that work, and rescuing his people from the relics of their bondage, and from the vexation which they had by their neighbours after they were returned to Canaan.

The psalmist, out of the experience of former mercies, prayeth for the continuance of them, Psa_85:1-7; resolveth to wait on the Lord: and hear what he will speak, Psa_85:8. His confidence in his goodness, mercy, and truth, Psa_85:9-13.

Unto thy land, i.e. unto thy people, in removing the sad effects of thy displeasure.

The captivity; the captives, as the word is used, Psa_14:7 **68:18**, and elsewhere.

Psalms 85:2

So as not to impute it to them, or to continue the punishment which thou didst inflict upon them for it.

Psalms 85:3

All thy wrath; those calamities which were the effects of thy just wrath conceived against us.

Psalms 85:4

Turn us; either,

1. Convert us. As thou hast brought back our bodies to thy land, so bring back our hearts to thyself, from whom many of them to this day are alienated. Or rather,

2. Restore us to our former tranquillity, and free us from the troubles which we yet groan under from our malicious neighbours and enemies; for this best suits with the following clause of the verse, which commonly explains the former.

Cause thine anger toward us to cease; he prudently endeavours to take away the root and cause of their continued miseries, to wit, God's anger procured by their sins.

Psalms 85:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 85:6

Thou hast once revived us in bringing us out of captivity, give us a second reviving in bringing home the rest of our brethren, and in rebuking and restraining the remainder of our enemies' wrath.

Psalms 85:7

Show us thy mercy, i.e. grant it to us, as the next words explain it, and as showing signifies, Psa_4:6; so also Psa_60:3 **71:20**. Or, manifest thy secret purpose of mercy to us by thy providential dispensations.

Psalms 85:8

I will hear, i.e. diligently observe. And the psalmist, by declaring what he would do, teacheth all the Israelites what they ought to do. Or he speaks in the name of all the people of God.

What God the Lord will speak; either by his prophets or messengers; or by the works of his providence, for that also hath a voice. What answer God will give to these my prayers. For I am assured, from God's gracious nature and declared will and promise, that he will give an answer of peace.

And to his saints; which clause seems to be added by way of explication and restriction, to show that this glorious privilege did not belong to all that were called God's *people*, but only to those that were truly and really such, even *to his saints or holy ones. To folly*, i.e. to sin, which in Scripture is commonly called

folly. This is added as a necessary caution; but when God shall speak peace to his people, let them not grow wanton and secure, nor return to their former wicked courses; which if they do, they will provoke God to repent of his kindness to them, and to inflict further and sorer judgments upon them. Others render the place, *and they will not, or that they may not, return to folly*. But the particle *al* being prohibitive, our translation seems to be better.

Psalms 85:9

His salvation; that complete salvation and deliverance for which all the Israel of God do pray and wait, even the redemption of Israel by the Messiah; of which not only Christian, but even Jewish, writers understand this place; and to which the following passages do most properly and perfectly belong. And the psalmist might well say of this salvation that it was nigh, because the seventy weeks determined by Daniel for this work, Dan_9:24, were now begun, this Psalm being written after Daniel's time.

Them that fear him; the true Israel of God, even all those that love and fear him; by which words he both excludes all hypocritical Israelites from this salvation, and tacitly assigns it to all that fear God, whether Jews or Gentiles. And when that salvation shall come, we shall be freed from all that scorn and contempt under which we now groan, and shall recover our ancient glory; and the glorious presence of God, the most eminent tokens whereof we have now utterly lost; and the God of glory himself, even Christ, who is called the brightness of his Father's glory, Heb_1:3; compare Joh_1:14; and the glory of Israel, Luk_2:32; shall come and visibly dwell in this now despised land.

Psalms 85:10

This is to be understood, either,

1. Of these graces or virtues in men. So the sense is, When that *blessed* time shall come, those virtues which now seem to be

banished from human societies shall be restored, and there shall be a happy conjunction of *mercy* , or benignity; *truth* , or veracity; **righteousness**, or faithfulness; and peace, or peaceableness and concord. Or rather,

2. Of the blessings of God, of which the whole context speaks. And the sense is, That great work of redemption by Christ shall clearly manifest and demonstrate God's mercy in redeeming his people of Israel, and in the calling and conversion of the Gentiles; his

truth, in fulfilling that great promise of the sending of his Son, which is the foundation of all the rest; his *righteousness* , in punishing sin or unrighteousness in his Son, and in conferring righteousness upon guilty and lost creatures; and his peace, or reconciliation to sinners, and that peace of conscience which attends upon it.

Kissed each other; as friends use to do when they meet. See Exo_4:27 **18:7**. So this is another expression of the same thing.

Psalms 85:11

Truth shall spring out of the earth; either,

1. Truth among men, which shall be so common amongst all men, as if it grew out of the earth. Or rather,

2. The truth or faithfulness of God; which is most truly and fitly said to spring out of the earth, partly because it had long been hid and buried, like

a root in a dry ground, without any hopes of a reviving; from whence yet God made it to grow, as is noted, Isa_53:2; and partly because Christ, who is the truth, Joh_14:6, and a minister of the circumcision (i.e. of the circumcised, or of the Jews)

for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, was born upon the earth of a virgin's womb.

Righteousness shall look down from heaven; even God's justice, which was offended with men, shall then be satisfied, and shall through Christ look down upon sinful men with a reconciled and smiling countenance.

Psalms 85:12

That which is good, i.e. all that is good in itself and for us, all spiritual and temporal blessings.

Psalms 85:13

Go before him, as his harbinger or attendant. He shall work and fulfil all righteousness, he shall glorify and satisfy the righteousness of God, and shall advance the practice of righteousness and holiness among men.

Shall set us in the way of his steps, i.e. shall cause us to walk in those righteous ways wherein he walketh, and which he hath prescribed to us. But this *us* is not in the Hebrew, and may seem too liberal a supplement. And the words may be, and are by almost all other interpreters, rendered otherwise, *he* (i.e. God) *shall set* (which may note his stability and constancy in so doing) it (to wit, *righteousness* last mentioned) *in the way of his steps*, i.e. in the way wherein he walketh. So the sense of this last clause is the same for substance with the former, as is very usual in this book; righteousness in that clause goes before him, and in this it goes along with him.

Psalms 86:1 PSALM 86

When he was in some deep distress, either from Saul, or by Absalom, or upon some other occasion.

David strengtheneth himself in prayer by the truth of his religion, Psa_86:1-4, and by God's goodness and his readiness to hear, Psa_86:5-10; desireth the continuance of his grace, Psa_86:11-13. Complaining of his proud enemies, he entreateth for some token of his love, to their shame and confusion, Psa_86:14-17.

Forsaken and persecuted by men, and utterly unable to save myself, and therefore a very proper object for thy power and goodness to work upon.

Psalms 86:2

I am holy; sanctified in some measure by thy grace, and sincerely devoted to thy service. This David speaks, not in a way of vain ostentation, but partly as a powerful argument to move God to hear his prayers, because he was one of that sort of men to whom

God had engaged himself by his promise and covenant; and partly by way of just and necessary vindication of himself from the censures of his enemies, who represented him to the world as a gross dissembler, and secretly a very wicked man; concerning which he here makes a solemn appeal to God, desiring audience and help from God upon no other terms than upon this supposition, that he was a holy man; which, by the way, savoureth of no more arrogancy than when he elsewhere professeth his great love to and longing after God, his sincere obedience to all God's commands, and his hatred of every false way, and the like.

My God, by thy covenant and my own choice.

That trusteth in thee; whereby thou seemest obliged in honour and by promise to help me.

Psalms 86:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 86:4

The expression notes fervent desire joined with hope or expectation, as appears by comparing Deu_24:15 Jer_22:27.

Psalms 86:5

Herewith he relieveth himself under the sense of his guilt, whereby he had brought his present calamities upon himself.

Them that call upon thee, to wit, in truth, as it is explained Psa_145:18, or with an upright heart; for if a man regard iniquity in his heart, God will not hear him, Psa_66:18.

Psalms 86:6

He repeats and multiplies his requests, both to ease his own troubled mind, and to prevail with God, who is well-pleased with his people's importunity in prayer. See Luk_18:1, &c.

Psalms 86:7

Whereof I have assurance both from the benignity of thy nature, and from the truth and certainty of thy promises, and from my own and others' experiences in former times.

Psalms 86:8

There is none like unto thee, either for power or readiness to hear and answer prayers. I am not now calling upon a deaf and

impotent idol, for then I might cry my heart out, and all in vain, as they did, 1Ki_18:26; &c, but upon the Almighty and most gracious God.

Psalms 86:9

So true is that which I have now said of thee, Psa_86:8, that the time is coming when all the nations of the earth shall acknowledge it, and, forsaking their impotent idol, shall worship thee alone; which being a work of thy power and grace, clearly proves that no God is like to thee and no works like thine. And those words,

whom thou hast made, are added to prevent or remove objections concerning the insuperable difficulty and incredibility of this work. The God, saith he, that made them can easily convince and convert them to himself.

Psalms 86:10

Doest wondrous things: this is added as a reason either why the nations should own the true God, because they should see his wonderful works; or why that great work, Psa_86:9, was not incredible, but should certainly be accomplished.

Art God alone; and all thee idols of the heathen are no gods, but vanities; as the Gentiles themselves shall see and acknowledge.

Psalms 86:11

Thy way; wherein thou wouldst have me to walk. As thou hast taught me by thy word, so also by thy Spirit enlighten my mind, that I may clearly discern thy will and my duty in all conditions and circumstances.

In thy truth; in the way of thy precepts, which are true and *right in all things*, as he saith, Psa_119:128, and the only true rule of thy worship, and the only true way to man's happiness.

Unite my heart, engage and knit my whole heart to thyself and service, and deliver me from inconstancy and wavering, that I may not at any time, nor in the least degree, be withdrawn from thee, either to any corrupt worship, or to the love and pursuit of the lusts or vanities of this present evil world.

Psalms 86:12

Either,

1. If thou grantest my request, Psa_86:11; or,
2. Because thou hast done what is expressed Psa_86:13.

Psalms 86:13

My soul; my person or life, as in the next verse.

From the lowest hell; either,

1. From hell properly so called. Or rather,
2. From extreme and desperate dangers and miseries, by comparing this with Deu_32:22, and with Psa_88:6. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest* (the same word in the Hebrew which is here) *pit* ; where by the *pit* he means, as is evident and confessed, *the grave* , which is commonly called *sheol* , the word here used.

Psalms 86:14

They have no reverence nor regard for thee, neither for thy word, which hath conferred the kingdom upon me; nor for thine all-seeing eye, which beholds all their wicked devices and practices against me; nor for thy justice, which will undoubtedly bring their mischief upon their own heads.

Psalms 86:15

To wit, to thy people, and to me in particular; and therefore thou wilt forget and forgive my manifold sins, for which thou mightest justly reject me, and make me to know thy breach of promise; and therefore thou wilt save me from my cruel enemies.

Psalms 86:16

Give thy strength, to assist, support, and save me. Me, who by thy gracious providence was born not of heathen, but of Israelitish parents, and therefore was in covenant with thee from my birth, and whose mother was thy faithful servant, and did entirely devote me to thy service.

Psalms 86:17

Vouchsafe unto me some evident and eminent token of lay good will to me, for the conviction of mine enemies, and mine own comfort.

Psalms 87:1 PSALM 87

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was doubtless composed after the building of the temple; and, as learned men think, and it seems probable, when the people were newly returned out of Babylon, and laboured under many discouragements about the return of most of their brethren, and the difficulties which they met with in the rebuilding of their temple and city.

The prophet speaketh of the nature and glory of the endureth and God's love to it, Psa_87:1-3; of the increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof, Psa_87:4-7.

His foundation: whose foundation? Either,

1. The foundation, i.e. the argument or matter, of this Psalm or Song. So these words are thought to be a part of the title, the words lying thus in the Hebrew text,

For the sons of Korah, a Psalm or Song whose foundation is in the Holy mountains. But,

1. The Hebrew word rendered *foundation* is no where used in that sense.

2. There is no example of any such like title in the Book of the Psalms. Or rather,

2. Of the city or temple of God, of which he speaks in the following verses. And whereas the beginning is somewhat abrupt, which seems to be the only ground of the foregoing exposition, that is no unusual thing in Scripture, and the pronoun relative, such as this is, is often put without any foregoing antecedent, and the antecedent is to be fetched out of the following words or verses, as Num_24:17, *I shall see him* , or *it* , to wit, the star, which follows afterward; Psa_105:19, *his word* , i.e. the Lord's; Pro_7:8, to her house, i.e. the harlot's, mentioned Pro_7:10; and especially Son_1:2, *let him kiss* , to wit, my beloved, who is there understood, but not expressed till Pro_7:14. And the ground of that abrupt and imperfect speech there seems to be the same with this here; for as the church was there in deep meditation and a great passion about her beloved, which caused that abruptness of speech, which is usual in such cases, so the psalmist's thoughts were strongly fixed upon the temple and city of God; and therefore this relative his had a certain antecedent in his thoughts,

though not in his words. The word *foundations* may possibly be emphatical, because this Psalm might probably be composed when the foundations of the second temple were newly laid, and the old men who had seen the glory of the former house were dejected at the sight of this, of which see Ezr_3:11,12. And so the meaning of this passage may be this, Be not discouraged, O ye Jews, that your temple is not yet erected and built, but only the foundations of it laid, and those too are mean and obscure in comparison of the magnificence of your former temple; but take comfort in this, that your temple hath its foundations laid, and those sure and firm; sure in themselves, because they are not laid in the sand, nor in boggy or fenny grounds, but in the mountains; and sure by Divine establishment, because those mountains are holy, consecrated to God, and therefore maintained and established by him. Or he may use this word foundations in opposition to the tabernacle, which was movable, and without foundations, to note the stability and perpetuity of this building.

In the holy mountains; or, *among or within the holy mountains*, to wit, in Jerusalem, which was encompassed with mountains, Psa_125:2, and in which were two famous mountains, to wit, Zion and Moriah. Or the plural number is here put for the singular, whereof we have seen examples formerly; and *mountains* are put for *the mountain*; either for Mount Moriah, upon which the temple stood; or for Mount Zion, which is mentioned in the next verse; which is often taken in a large and comprehensive sense, so as to include Moriah, in which sense the temple is said to be in Zion, Psa_74:2 **76:2** Isa_8:18.

Psalms 87:2

The gates, i.e. the city gates, being oft put for cities, as Deu_15:7 **16:5** Psa_9:14.

Of Zion; largely so called, as was now said, to wit, of Jerusalem, which was built upon and near Mount Zion. He saith Zion rather than Jerusalem, to intimate that he loved Jerusalem for Zion's sake, or for the temple, which is oft said to be in Zion; which place he loved and chose for his peculiar dwelling-place.

More than all the dwellings of Jacob; more than all other places of the land of Canaan in which the Israelites dwelt. For although

the tabernacle was for a season in some other parts of the land, yet the temple, the place of God's fixed residence, was no where but in this city.

Psalms 87:3

O Jerusalem, though thou and thy temple are yet in some sort in your ruins, and desolate and contemptible not only to thine enemies, but also in the eyes of thine own people, yet comfort thyself with these great and glorious things foretold concerning thee in the holy prophets, as Isa_62:1,7 **65:18**, &c.; Isa_66:10, &c.; Zec_1:14, &c.; Zec_2:4,**12 8:3**, &c. Zec_12:2, &c. Among other things, it was foretold that *the glory of the latter house should be greater than of the former* , Hag_2:9. All which prophecies are to be understood, as this place also is, of a spiritual and evangelical glory accruing to Jerusalem; as by the birth and presence of Christ in it, so also by the accession of all people and nations to it, of which he speaks in the next verse.

Psalms 87:4

I will make mention, i.e. I will reckon or account them in the number of my children and subjects.

Rahab, i.e. Egypt, so called, Psa_89:10 Isa_51:9, but whether from its pride, or natural strength, or figure, or shape, is not material.

And Babylon: under these two and Philistia, the old and constant enemies of Israel, he seems to understand all the keenest enemies of the Israel or church of God, who shall now be not only reconciled, but united to them; which also was foretold under the similitude *of the wolf 's dwelling with the lamb* , &c., Isa_11:6. *To them* ; or, *with* or *among* them, as the prefix *lamed* is frequently used.

That know me, to wit, truly, clearly, affectionately, and practically, so as to love, serve, and obey me, as this phrase is very frequently used in Scripture. And upon this account, not only heathens, but wicked Israelites, are said not *to know God* , as 1Sa_2:12, and oft elsewhere.

Behold; take notice of it as a thing new, and strange, and comfortable.

Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; the nations on every side of them; for Tyrus was on the north, Ethiopia or Arabia (for that seems rather to be meant by Cush, as hath been before observed) on the south, those nearest to them, and those more remote from them, that lived in the *uttermost parts of the earth* , as this very land is called, Mat_12:42. This man was born there; or, saying, *This man*, &c., for this cohereth with the first words thus, *I will make mention of Rahab* , &c., saying, *This man* (i.e. these men or people now mentioned, the singular number put collectively for the plural; and the Scripture oft speaks of a nation as of one man, as Psa_25:22 **130:8**) *was born there* , or *in her* , as it is expressed, Psa_87:5, to wit, in Zion; born by adoption and regeneration. See Joh_1:12 **3:3,7 Ga 3:26 4:26** 1Pe_1:23. The Gentiles shall be ingrafted into the Jewish church, and into all their privileges.

Psalms 87:5

Of Zion, i.e. of Jerusalem, or the church of God. *It shall be said* ; it shall be mentioned by God, as was said, Psa_87:4, and it shall be observed and acknowledged by men, as a great and wonderful work of God.

This and that man, i.e. men of this and that nation, i.e. of every nation, indifferently, Jews or Gentiles, according to that prediction, that Egypt, and Assyria, and Israel should be all joined together, and blessed and owned by God for his people, Isa_19:24,**25**. Heb. *Man and man* , i.e. every man, or all sorts of men, without difference of nations; as this very phrase *man and man* , Lev_17:10,**13**, is rendered *every* or *whatsoever man* ; and as by *day and day* is meant *every day* , or from day to day, Est_1:1,**4 Psa 61:8**. *And the Highest himself shall establish her* : and this shall not be a sudden and transient, but a lasting work; Zion shall continue in its strength and fertility because the Almighty God is her Founder and Protector, and will finish the work which he hath begun.

Psalms 87:6

The people; or, *his people* . So it is only a defect of the pronoun *his* , which is very frequent, and easily understood out of the foregoing word,

the Lord. The sense is, when God, the Maker and Governor of this city, shall take a survey of all his citizens and subjects. It is an allusion to princes or governors of cities that use to write and keep a register of all their people. Hence holy then and true Israelites are said to be written *among the living in Jerusalem* , Isa_4:3; or, *in the writing of the house of Israel* , Eze_13:9.

Psalms 87:7

There shall be great rejoicing and praising God, both with vocal and instrumental music, for this glorious and stupendous work of the conversion of the Gentiles. He describes evangelical worship by legal phrases and customs, as the prophets frequently do.

In thee, i.e. in Zion, or the church. These words may be here added as the burden or matter of the song, which these singers are supposed to have sung; and that either,

1. In their own names, and in the name of all the Zionites or people of God. So the sense is, All our desires and delights are in thee, all the springs of mercy, grace, and glory flow to us only in and through thee; for springs or fountains are oft put for all precious or desirable things, as Psa_36:9 Isa_12:3 Hos_13:15. Or,

2. In God's name, whose words were frequently sung by the singers in the Old Testament. And so the sense is, All the springs or fountains of good things, or of my blessings are in Zion, or in the church, out of which no true blessings are to be expected or found. And this sense seems best to suit with the phrase, *my springs* ; partly because it seems more proper to call them God's springs, who is the author and giver of them, than men's springs, who are only the receivers of them; and partly because this is more agreeable to the phrase and usage of Scripture, which every where ascribes and appropriates them to God.

Psalms 88:1 PSALM 88

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed upon a particular occasion, to wit, Heman's deep distress and dejection of mind almost to despair. But though this was the occasion of it, it is of more general use, for the instruction and consolation of all good men when they

come into such despondencies, and therefore was by the direction of God's Spirit made public, and committed to the sons of Korah.

Mahalath seems to be the name of the tune or instrument, as **Psa 53**.

Leannoth may be either the latter part of the proper name of the tune or instrument; or an appellative name, and so divers take it, and render it, to sing, or to be sung, to wit, alternately or by turns.

Heman; probably the same person who was famous in David's time, both for his skill in music, and for general wisdom; of whom see 1Ki_4:31 1Ch_6:33.

The Ezrahite; as Ethan also is called, 1Ki_4:31.

The psalmist declares his former practice of prayer to God Psa_88:1; beggeth present audience, Psa_88:2; acquainteth the Lord with his misery and frailty, Psa_88:3,4, which he suffereth by God's wrath, and his friends forsaking him, Psa_88:5-8. His mourning and expostulation, Psa_88:9-18.

Who hast so often saved me from former distresses, and, I hope, wilt do so at this time.

Psalms 88:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 88:3

My soul, properly so called; for that he was under great troubles of mind from a sense of God's wrath and departure from him, is evident from Psa_88:14-16.

Psalms 88:4

I am given up by my friends and acquaintance for a lost man.

Psalms 88:5

Free among the dead; well nigh discharged from the warfare of the present life, and entered as a member into the society of the dead; as Israelitish servants, when they were made flee, were thereby made denizens of the commonwealth of Israel. I expect no other freedom from my miseries but that which death gives, as Job_3:17,18.

Whom thou rememberest no more; whom thou seemest wholly to neglect and to bury in oblivion; for he speaks of these matters not as they are in truth, for he knew very well that forgetfulness was not incident to God, and that God did remember all the dead, and would call them to an account, but only as to sense and appearance, and the opinion of the world, and the state and things of this life.

From thy hand; from the care and conduct of thy providence, which is to be understood as the former clause. Or, *by thy hand* . But our translation seems better to agree both with the foregoing branch, which it explains and improves, and with the order of the words; for it seems improper, after he had represented the persons as dead, and in their graves, to add that they

are cut off, to wit, by death.

Psalms 88:6

Either, first, in the grave; the same thing being expressed in divers words; or, secondly, in hopeless and remediless calamities.

Psalms 88:7

Thy wrath; either, first, the sense of thy wrath; or rather, secondly, the effects of it; as the next clause explains this.

With all thy waves; with thy judgments, breaking in furiously upon me like the waves of the sea.

Psalms 88:8

I am so sad a spectacle of thy vengeance that my friends avoid and detest me, lest by conversing with me they should either be filled with terrors, which men naturally abhor, or be made partakers of my guilt or plagues.

I am shut up; either in the pit or deep, mentioned Psa_88:6, or in my own house or chamber, being afraid or ashamed to go abroad.

Psalms 88:9

Understand, *without effect* ; for thou dost not hear nor answer me.

Psalms 88:10

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead, to wit, in raising them to live again in this world? as it is in the next clause. I know that

thou wilt not. And therefore now hear and help me, or it will be too late.

Praise thee, to wit, amongst mortal men in this world.

Psalms 88:11

I am not without hopes that thou hast a true kindness for me, and wilt faithfully perform thy gracious promises made to me, and to all that love thee and call upon thee in truth. But then this must be done speedily, or I shall be utterly incapable of such a mercy.

Psalms 88:12

In the dark; in the grave, which is called *the land of darkness* , Job_10:21,22.

In the land of forgetfulness; in the grave; so called, either, first, Actively, because there men forget and neglect all the concerns of this life, being indeed but dead carcasses without any sense or remembrance. Or rather, secondly, Passively, because there men are forgotten not only by men, as is noted, Job_24:20 Psa_31:12, but by God himself, as he complained, Psa_88:5.

Psalms 88:13

i.e. Early, come to thee, before the ordinary time of morning prayer, or before the dawning of the day, or the rising of the sun. The sense is, Though I have hitherto got no answer to my prayers, yet I will not give over praying nor hoping for an answer.

Psalms 88:14

This proceeding seems not to agree with the benignity of thy nature, nor with the manner of thy dealing with thy people.

Psalms 88:15

From my youth up; my whole life hath been filled with a succession of deadly calamities. O Lord, take some pity upon me, and let me have a little breathing space before I die.

I suffer thy terrors upon my mind and conscience, which do accompany and aggravate my outward miseries.

Psalms 88:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 88:17

As the waters of the sea encompass him which is in the midst and bottom of it.

Psalms 88:18

See Poole "Psa_88:8".

Psalms 89:1 PSALM 89

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm manifestly treats of the declining and calamitous time and state of the house and kingdom of David, either, first, in Rehoboam's reign, as a late judicious interpreter conceives; to which those expressions, Psa_89:40-42, do not agree; or rather, secondly, in or about the time of the Babylonish captivity.

Either, first, he who is mentioned 1Ki_4:31. And then the Psalm is prophetic of things to come; which yet, after the manner of the prophets, he represents as present. And this prophetic Psalm might be left upon record as a cordial for David's family in their future distresses, which Ethan by the Spirit of prophecy foresaw. Or, secondly, Some other person of the same name, and inspired by the same Spirit, Who had lived in the times of which the psalmist here speaketh.

The psalmist praiseth God for making and keeping covenant with David and his seed, Psa_89:1-4; for his great power and care over his church, Psa_89:5-18; for his favours to the kingdom of David, Psa_89:19-22. The destruction of his enemies, Psa_89:23. The faithfulness of God to them in covenant with him, Psa_89:24-37. Complaining of contrary events, Psa_89:38-45, he expostulateth with, prayeth unto, and blesseth the Lord, Psa_89:46-52.

Intending to discourse of the doleful estate of David's family and of his kingdom, he preface this, partly lest the following complaints of present miseries should argue ingratitude for former mercies. *Thy faithfulness* ; whatsoever hath befallen or shall befall David's house, or any other, it proceeded not from thy unfaithfulness, but from some other causes.

Psalms 89:2

I have said within myself. I have been assured in my own mind.

Mercy shall be built up for ever: as thou hast laid a sure foundation of mercy to David's family, by that everlasting covenant which thou hast made and established with it; so I concluded that thou wouldst carry on the same project of mercy towards it; that thou wouldst build it up, and not destroy it.

Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens: so the sense may be this. Thou sittest in the heavens, and there thou didst make this everlasting and unchangeable decree and covenant concerning David and his house, and from thence thou beholdest and orderest all the affairs of this lower world, and therefore, I doubt not, thou wilt so order these matters as to accomplish thine own counsel and word. But thee Hebrew words are by some others, and may very well be, translated thus, *with* (as the Hebrew prefix *beth* is oft rendered) *the very heavens* , i.e. as firmly and durably as the heavens themselves; as with the sun, in the Hebrew text, Psa_72:5, is by most interpreters rendered, *as long as the sun endureth* , as our translation hath it. And so this phrase in the last branch of this verse answers to for ever in the former; as it is also in the foregoing verse, and so in Psa_89:4; in both which verses *for ever* in the first clause is explained thus in the latter, *to all generations* .

Psalms 89:3

With my chosen; with David, whom I have chosen to the kingdom.

Psalms 89:4

I will perpetuate the kingdom to thy posterity; which was promised upon condition, and was literally and fully accomplished in Christ, who was of the seed of David.

Psalms 89:5

The heavens, i.e. the inhabitants of heaven, the holy angels, as Job_15:15; who clearly discern and constantly adore thy mercy and faithfulness, when men upon earth are filled with doubts and perplexities about it.

Thy faithfulness also; understand, *shall be praised* , out of the foregoing clause; which supplements are most usual in Scripture, as hath been already showed by divers instances.

In the congregation of the saints; either, first, Of thy saints upon earth in their public assemblies; who always acknowledge and celebrate thy truth, although they cannot always discern the footsteps of it. Or rather, secondly, Of the angels of heaven, of whom he speaks in the foregoing clause; who are oft called *saints* or *holy ones* , as Deu_33:2 Job_15:15 Dan_4:13,**17 8:13**.

Psalms 89:6

Among the sons of the mighty; either, first, among the potentates of the earth; or rather, secondly, among the highest angels; who well may and needs must admire and adore thee, because thou art incomparably and infinitely more excellent than they.

Psalms 89:7

God is greatly to be feared; with a fear of reverence; for dread and terror have no place in those blessed mansions and holy spirits.

In the assembly of the saints; to the whole society of angels, called saints, as Psa_89:5.

Them that are about him; the angels, which are always in his presence, and encompass his throne.

Psalms 89:8

Who is a strong Lord like unto thee? who is equal to thee in power, or, as it follows, in faithfulness?

To thy faithfulness round about thee, Heb. *and thy faithfulness is round about thee* , like a girdle adorning and encompassing thee. It appeareth in all thy paths and actions, in thy words and works.

Psalms 89:9

Giving commands and setting bounds to its waves when they are most impetuous and unruly.

Psalms 89:10

Rahab; Egypt, as Psa_87:4. As one that is slain; thou didst wound them not slightly, but unto death. See Exo_14:15.

Psalms 89:11

The fulness thereof; all the creatures wherewith it is replenished, as Psa_24:1 **50:12**.

Thou hast founded them; they are all thy creatures, and therefore wholly subject to thy power and pleasure; and therefore all the monarchs and kingdoms of the earth cannot hinder thee from making good thy promise to the house and kingdom of David.

Psalms 89:12

The north and the south; the northern and southern parts of the world, yea, even the remotest ends thereof; though not yet known to us, were made and are ruled by thee. Or possibly he may understand the northern and southern empires, and people of the world, who have from time to time annoyed and disturbed the kingdom of David and of Israel, of which this Psalm principally treats, such as Syria, Chaldea, and Assyria; which in Scripture phrase are called *the north*, in reference to that kingdom; and Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Arabia, which are southward from it. These, saith he, are all thy creatures, and none of them can withstand thee, if thou wilt undertake to deliver thy people. But this I only propose with submission.

Tabor and Hermon; two eminent mountains in the land of Canaan; Tabor in the west and within Jordan, Hermon on the east and without Jordan; by which he may understand either, first, The western and eastern parts of the world; and so all the four parts of the world are contained in this verse. But this may seem an uncouth and incongruous description of the east and west, partly because the north and the south here mentioned are not those parts of the land of Canaan, but of the world with respect to it; and therefore the east and west should in reason have been so too; and partly because these places were not so situated in Canaan, for Tabor was not in the west part of Canaan, but rather in the middle space between the sea and Jordan; and Hermon was not so much on the east as on the north, being indeed the northern border of the land without Jordan. Or, secondly, The several parts of the land of Canaan, both within Jordan, where Mount Tabor is; and without it, where Hermon lies. And the mountains may be named rather than the valleys, because when their fertility is expressed, the fertility of the valleys is more strongly supposed.

Shall rejoice, i.e. shall be fruitful and prosperous, and so give their inhabitants cause to rejoice. Joy and singing are oft ascribed to mountains and fields, &c., in a poetical strain.

In thy name; in or by thy favour, and the fruits thereof.

Psalms 89:13

Thy hand; either thy left hand, because thy right hand seems to be opposed to it; or thy right hand, as it is limited and explained in the next clause.

High is; or, *is* or *shall be exalted* , or *lifted up* . That strength of thy hand hath been, or shall be, put forth for thy people, as occasion requireth.

Psalms 89:14

Justice and judgment, i.e. just judgment, or justice in judging, as Jer_9:24 **22:3**. A common figure, called *hendiaduo* . *The habitation* ; or, *the basis* or *foundation* , as this word is used Eze_2:68 **3:3** Psa_97:2 **104:5**; the groundwork of all his proceedings, and the stability of his throne and government. For God could not be the Judge and Ruler of the world if he did not right, Gen_18:25: compare Pro_16:12. The sense and scope of this verse may be this, Though thy present dispensations, in breaking thy covenant with David, and in suffering his posterity and thine own people to be devoured by such as are much more wicked than they, be a great deep and secret, yet I rest satisfied that they are just. In like manner the prophet fortifies himself under the like thoughts, Jer_12:1.

Shall go before thy face, as thy harbingers and companions, wheresoever thou goest. Thou art neither unmerciful nor unfaithful in any of thy dealings.

Psalms 89:15

The psalmist, intending to describe the doleful estate of the royal family and kingdom of Israel, aggravates it by the consideration of their former felicity.

That know the joyful sound, i.e. who enjoy the presence of God and his ordinances, and the tokens of his grace and mercy to them, to which they were called and invited by the sound of trumpets, which upon that only reason was very pleasant and grateful to the Israelites. See Num_10:9,**10**. So the sign is put for the thing signified, as is manifest, both from the following clause of the verse, and because otherwise the hearing of the outward sound of trumpets could never make them blessed.

Walk in the light of thy countenance; they live under the comfortable influences of thy grace and favour; whereof at present we are bereaved.

Psalms 89:16

In thy name; in the knowledge and remembrance of thy name, i.e. of thy infinite power and goodness, revealed and imparted to them.

In thy righteousness; whereby thou art both inclined and in some sort engaged to hear the prayers of thy people, and to save them from all their enemies.

Psalms 89:17

All that strength in which they do or may glory is not their own, but is a mere vouchsafement of thy grace, and to thee alone belongs the glory of all their valiant achievements.

Our horn shall be exalted, i.e. our power and honour, which now lies in the dust, shall be raised and recovered.

Psalms 89:18

This verse gives a reason of the psalmist's confidence that their horn would be exalted.

The Holy One of Israel is our King; having therefore so potent a Friend, we have no reason to despair of our restitution to our former felicity. Or, as the words may well be, and are by divers, rendered, *Of or from the Lord* is or was *our shield*, (to wit, our king, as it is explained in the next branch of the verse, compared with Psa_47:9) *and of or from the Holy One of Israel*, i.e. the Lord, who is oft so called, is or was *our king*. He gave us our king and royal family at first, and therefore he can easily restore it when he sees it fit.

Psalms 89:19

Then, i.e. of old; for this particle is sometimes put indefinitely. Or, then, when thou didst set David in the throne.

In vision; which then was the usual way by which God spake to the prophets, Num_12:6.

To thy holy one: to thy holy prophets; the singular number being put for the plural; especially to Samuel and Nathan; for part of the

following message was delivered to the former, and part to the latter. *I have laid help* ; I have provided help and relief for my people, which I have put into safe hands.

Upon one that is mighty; upon a person of singular courage and wisdom, and every way fit for so great a charge.

One chosen out of the people; one whom I have picked and chosen out of all the people, as the fittest for the kingly office, one enriched with eminent gifts and graces, &c.

Psalms 89:20

I have found: this is spoken of God figuratively after the manner of men, to imply the great scarcity of such persons, and the difficulty of finding them out.

With my holy oil; both. with material oil, 1Sa_16:13 2Sa_5:3, and with the gifts and graces of my Holy Spirit, which are oft signified by oil or unction, as Psa_45:7, compared with Heb_1:9 Isa_61:3 1Jo_2:20,27.

Psalms 89:21

With whom my hand shall be established, i.e. constantly abide to protect and assist him.

Psalms 89:22

Not exact upon him; not conquer him, or make him tributary. Or, shall not deceive or circumvent him, as this word is used, Gen_3:13 2Ki_18:29.

Afflict him, to wit, so as to overthrow or destroy him.

Psalms 89:23

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 89:24

Faithfulness, in making good all my promises to him, and mercy, in doing more for him than I have promised, or in pardoning his sins, for which I might justly make him to know my breach of promise.

In my name; by my favour and help.

Psalms 89:25

I will set his hand, i.e. establish his power and dominion.

In the sea; the midland sea.

The rivers, to wit, Euphrates, called rivers in the plural number, as Nilus also is, Isa_18:1 Eze_29:3,4, in regard of divers branches of it, and rivers which flow into it. So here is a description of the uttermost bounds of the Promised Land, Exo_23:31 Num_34:3, to which the Israelitish power was extended by David and Solomon.

Psalms 89:26

He shall find me to be a true and a kind Father to him, and shall familiarly and confidently make his addresses to me as such, for all necessary supplies and assistances, which parents willingly afford to their children, as need requires.

Psalms 89:27

As he calls me Father, Psa_89:26, so I will make him my son, yea, my first-born, who had divers privileges above other sons. This and the following passage in some sort agree to David, who may well be called God's

first-born, as all the people of Israel are, Exo_4:22; and so is Ephraim, Jer_31:9. Nor can I see fit wholly to exclude David here, of whom all the foregoing and following verses may, and some of them must be, understood. But this is more fully and properly accomplished in Christ, and seems to be ascribed to David here as a type of Christ, and that our minds might be led through David to him whom David represented, even to the Messias, to whom alone this doth strictly and literally belong.

Higher than the kings of the earth: this also was in some sort accomplished in David, partly because he had a greater power and dominion than any of the neighbouring kings, yea, than any other kings of his age, and in those parts of the world, except the Assyrian monarch; nor is the expression here universal, but indefinite, and if it had been said *higher than all the kings*, yet even such universal expressions admit of some limitation or exception, as is manifest and confessed: and partly because David had many privileges, wherein he did excel all other kings of the earth of his age without exception; which probably he did in the honour and renown which he got by his military achievements, and by that wisdom and justice wherewith he managed all his dominions; but certainly he did in this, that he was a king chosen

and advanced by the immediate order and appointment of God himself, that he was set over God's own peculiar and beloved people, that he was intrusted with the care and patronage of the true religion and the worship of God in the world, and especially that he was not only an eminent type, but also the progenitor of the Messiah, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, and God blessed for ever.

Psalms 89:28

My mercy, declared and promised to him and his seed, as it here follows. My covenant; of which see 2Sa_7:12,**13**, &c.

Psalms 89:29

To endure for ever, i.e. to sit upon the throne for ever, as the next words explain it. This was accomplished only in Christ, the eternal King of the church, and of the world, who was of David's seed according to the flesh.

As the days of heaven, i.e. for ever, as he now said; as long as the world shall have a being. It shall be as unchangeable and durable as the heavens themselves, which are of an incorruptible nature. See the like expression Deu_11:21 Jer_31:35,**36**.

Psalms 89:30

Of this and the two next verses, **See Poole "2Sa_7:14"**, **See Poole "2Sa_7:15"**.

Psalms 89:31

By this variety of expressions he implies that God will pardon not only their lesser, but even their greater sins.

Psalms 89:32

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 89:33

My loving-kindness; my mercy promised to David.

Psalms 89:34

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 89:35

Here he gives some reasons why he would not break his covenant with David, though he should have just cause to do so, and though he had upon such just cause broke his covenant made with others;

first, Because this covenant was confirmed by his oath, which adds not only more solemnity, but more stability and certainty to it, as is evident from Heb_6:17, wherein he showeth that God addeth an oath to his promise or covenant to make and prove it to be immutable; and from Heb_7:20, &c., where he proveth the priesthood of Melchisedec to be unchangeable, because it was confirmed by an oath. And though judgments simply threatened have not always been executed, but sometimes were prevented, yet those comminations which were confirmed by oath were thereby rendered and declared to be irrevocable, as we see, Num_14:28-30 Jer_44:26. Secondly, Because this is said to be sworn

once, which word and phrase sometimes implies the completeness, certainty, and irrevocableness of the thing said or done, as Pro_28:18, *shall fall at once*. Thus Christ is said to have died or suffered once, Rom_6:10 Heb_9:26,28. Thirdly, Because God sware by his

holiness; in or by which God is but seldom read to speak or swear, and when he is, it constantly adds more weight and confirmation to the speech, as Psa_60:6 **108:7** Amo_4:2.

Psalms 89:36

In respect of perpetual duration, as appears both from the foregoing words, and from the following verse.

Psalms 89:37

Whereby he understands, either, first, The moon, last mentioned, to which this clause may be added rather than to the sun, to imply that as the moon, though subject to eclipses and frequent and manifold changes, yet doth constantly and perpetually remain in heaven, as a witness of my *covenant of the night*, as it is called, Jer_33:20; so shall the house and kingdom of David continue for ever, notwithstanding all the changes and calamities which it may undergo. Or, secondly, The rainbow, which though in itself it be unstable and transient, and doth but seldom appear, which learned men object against this opinion, yet in Scripture is mentioned as God's faithful and perpetual witness, being called *a token of God's everlasting covenant between God and every living creature for perpetual generations*, Gen_9:12,16. And although it do not

always appear to us, neither do the sun or moon do so, yet its appearances are doubtless very frequent in one or other part of the world, and will be repeated from time to time to the end of the world. Add to this, that the word here rendered *heaven*, may as well be rendered *the cloud* or *clouds*, as it is used Deu_33:26 Job_35:5 **36:28** Psa_18:12 **77:17 78:23** Pro_3:20 Isa_45:8. And so the place being thus translated, *and as the faithful witness in the cloud* or *clouds*, doth plainly point us to the rainbow.

Psalms 89:38

Having hitherto declared the certainty of God's promises, he now proceeds to show the unsuitableness of the present dispensations of God's providence thereunto, and humbly expostulates with God about it. *Thine anointed*; that person and family which thou hast invested with the kingdom.

Psalms 89:39

Made void the covenant; which seems contrary to thy word given Psa_89:34.

Of thy servant, i.e. made with him.

Profaned his crown, by exposing that sacred person, and family, and kingdom to contempt, and giving his sceptre and power into the hands of the uncircumcised.

Psalms 89:40

All his hedges; all the means of his protection and safety.

Psalms 89:41

An object of their scorn and reproach. Is this the anointed of the Lord? Is this the everlasting family and kingdom?

Psalms 89:42

Thou hast given them courage, and power, and success.

Psalms 89:43

Turned the edge of his sword; so that he can neither offend his enemies, nor defend himself.

Not made him to stand, but to flee and fall before his enemies; for more is understood than what is expressed.

Psalms 89:44

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 89:45

The youthful and flourishing estate of David's kingdom was very short, and reached not beyond his next successor, and it hath been languishing by degrees till this time, when it seems to be dead and buried.

Psalms 89:46

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 89:47

My time, i.e. our time, the time of our king and kingdom, in whose name the psalmist puts up this petition, and about whom he was much more solicitous than about himself, as is evident, both from the following verses, and from the whole body of the Psalm. The sense seems to be this, Our king, and all his people, and I among the rest, are shortlived and perishing creatures, that of themselves and according to the course of nature must shortly die; and therefore there is no need that thou shouldst add further afflictions to sweep them away before their time.

Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? wherefore hast thou made us and our king (and consequently all other men, whose condition is in nothing better than ours, and in respect of thy grace and mercy is much worse than ours) in vain, or to so little purpose? Didst thou raise us and him, establish us for thy people, settle the crown upon David and his seed for ever by a solemn and unchangeable covenant, erect a magnificent and glorious temple, and vouchsafe so many and great promises and privileges, and all this but for a few years, that our crown and glory should be taken from us within a little time after it was put upon our heads; that our kingdom should be broken almost as soon as it was firmly established; that thy worship should be so soon corrupted, and thy temple quickly robbed, and not long after frequently abused, and polluted, and wasted, and now at last utterly demolished? It is not strange that such considerations as these did fill the psalmist's mind with amazement, and sad and perplexing thoughts. Nor doth the psalmist accuse or upbraid God herewith, but only useth it as an argument to move God to repair and restore their decayed state, that they might live to praise, and serve, and glorify him, and not be such useless and insignificant creatures as now they were in this forlorn estate of things, and as they should be if they should

go into the place and state of the dead before the restitution of their broken state and kingdom.

Psalms 89:48

All men at their best estate are mortal and miserable, kings and people must unavoidably die by the condition of their natures; and therefore, Lord, do not increase our affliction, which of itself is more than enough; neither proceed in these violent courses upon us, who, without such severity, must perish of and from ourselves.

Psalms 89:49

Hast thou forgotten or repented of all that mercy and kindness which thou hast promised and sworn, and sometimes performed, unto David and his family and kingdom?

Psalms 89:50

I, i.e. we thy servants, as he now said; our king and his people; of whom he speaks as of one person, as is very usual in Holy Scripture. Or the psalmist showeth how particularly and passionately he resented those reproaches which were cast upon their king and kingdom, as if they were east upon himself.

Bear in my bosom: this phrase may denote either, first, the multitude of these reproaches, things being said to be given or received into a man's bosom, which are given or received in great plenty, as Isa_65:6 Luk_6:38; or, secondly, their grievousness, that they pierced him to the very heart, which is sometimes called *the bosom*, as Ecc_7:9. *Of all the mighty people*; of the great potentates and princes of the world, who now reproached the house of David with their vain and confident boasting of the everlastingness of their kingdom, which was now in a desperate and lost condition. Or, *all the reproaches of many people*.

Psalms 89:51

Or, *of thy Messiah*; by whom he seems to understand either, first, the kings of Judah, the singular number being put for the plural; and by their *footsteps* may be meant either their ways or actions, and the sad consequences thereof; or the traces or memorials of their ancient splendour and dominion, wherewith they now upbraid them: or rather, secondly, the Messiah, most properly and eminently so called; of whom not only many Christians, but the Chaldee paraphrast and the Hebrew doctors, understand this place.

And this suits very well, both with the singular number here used, which points at one particular and eminent person anointed by God to be the king of his people, and with the matter and occasion of this Psalm. For it was universally believed by the Jews, that the Messiah should come of the seed of David, and that by him the ancient glory and power of David's house should be revived and vastly increased. And this coming of the Messiah the Jews did continually expect for a long time together before he did come, and supported themselves therewith under all their calamities; all which being well known to many of the heathens, they reproached the Jews with the vanity of this belief and expectation. And by *the footsteps* of the Messiah he may understand his coming, as by the *feet* or *footsteps* of ministers, Isa_52:7, their coming and bringing the gospel with them is understood.

Psalms 89:52

Let thine enemies reproach thee, and thy promises concerning the sending of the Messiah, and the deliverance of thy people by his hand; I do and will heartily bless and praise thee for them, and encourage myself with them, not doubting but thou wilt consider and take away all our reproaches, and in thine own due time (which is the best) send him who is the consolation and expectation of Israel, and the desire of all nations.

Psalms 90:1 PSALM 90

Who, considering that terrible but righteous sentence of God concerning the cutting off all that sinful generation in the wilderness, of which see **Num 14**, takes that occasion to publish these meditations concerning mans mortality and misery in this life, which might be useful both to that and to all succeeding generations.

Moses, setting forth the eternity and providence of God, Psa_90:1:2, describeth the misery and shortness of man's life, Psa_90:3-11; prayeth for wisdom to number his days, Psa_90:12; and for the knowledge and sensible experience of God's good providence, Psa_90:13-17.

Although we and our fathers, for some generations, have had no certain and fixed habitation, but have been *strangers in a land that*

was not ours , and *afflicted for four hundred years* , according to thy prediction, Gen_15:13; and although we now are, and have been for some time, and still are like to continue, in, a vast howling wilderness, having no houses but dwelling in tents, and wandering from place to place, we know not whither; yet thou, O Lord, hast fully supplied this want, and hast been instead of and better than a dwelling-place to us, by thy watchful and gracious providence over us in all places and exigencies. And this is a very proper preface to this Psalm, to intimate that all the following miseries were not to be imputed to God, but unto themselves, who by their own sins had brought these mischiefs upon themselves.

Psalms 90:2

The mountains ; which he mentions as the most fixed and stable part of the earth. *Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world* , i.e. from eternity; which is frequently described in this manner, as Pro_8:25,26 **Joh 17:24** Eph_1:4, because there was nothing before the creation of the world but eternity. And thus the words here following do explain it. And this eternity of God is here mentioned, partly that men by the contemplation thereof might be wrought to a deeper sense of their own frailty and nothingness, which is the foundation of humility and of all true piety, and to a greater reverence and admiration of the Divine Majesty; and partly for the comfort of God's people, who notwithstanding all their present miseries have a sure and everlasting refuge and portion. *Thou art God* ; or, *thou art the strong God* . Thou hast thy power and all thy perfections, not by degrees, as men have theirs, but from all eternity. Or, *thou art or wast, O God* .

Psalms 90:3

But as for man, his case is far otherwise, his time is short; and though he was made by thee a happy creature, and should have been immortal, yet upon and for his sin thou didst make him mortal and miserable.

Sayest, or, *didst say* , i.e. pronounce that sad sentence here following,

Return, O men, to the dust, out of which you were taken, Gen_3:19 Psa_146:4 Ecc_12:7.

Psalms 90:4

A thousand years, if we should now live so long, as some of our progenitors well nigh did. As he compared man's duration with God's in respect of its beginning, Psa_90:2, so here he compareth them in respect of the end or continuance.

In thy sight; in thy account, and therefore in truth; which is opposed to the partial and false judgment of men, who think time long because they do not understand eternity; or in comparison of thy endless duration.

When it is past; which is emphatically added; because time seems long when it is to come, but when it is past, and men look backward upon it, it seems very short and contemptible, and men value one hour to come more than a thousand years which are past.

A watch, which lasted but for three or four hours; for the night was anciently divided into three or four watches. See Jud_7:19 Mar_6:48 **13:35** Luk_12:38.

In the night; which also hath its weight; for the silence and slumbers of the night make time seem shorter than it doth in the day.

Psalms 90:5

Them, i.e. mankind, of whom he spake, Psa_90:8.

As with a flood; unexpectedly, violently and irresistibly, universally, without exception or distinction.

As a sleep; short and vain, as sleep is, and not minded till it be past. Or like a dream, when a man sleepeth, wherein there may be some real pleasure, but never any satisfaction; or some real trouble, but very inconsiderable, and seldom or never pernicious. Even such an idle and insignificant thing is human life considered in itself, without respect to a future state, in which there is but a mere shadow or dream of felicity, only the calamities attending upon it are more real and weighty.

Which groweth up, Heb. *which is changed* , either, first, for the worse, *which passeth away* , as some render the word; which having generally affirmed here, he may seem more particularly to explain in the next verse: or rather, secondly, for the better, as this

word is sometimes used, as Job_14:7 Isa_40:31, which sprouteth out of the earth, and groweth more apparent, and green, and flourishing. And this interpretation is confirmed from the next verse, where this same word is used in this sense; where also

the morning is again mentioned, and that as the time, not of its decay, but of its flourishing.

Psalms 90:6

The whole space of man's life is compared to one day, and his prosperity is confined to a part of that day, and ended in the close of it.

Psalms 90:7

We; either,

1. We men; or rather,
2. We Israelites in this wilderness.

Consumed; either naturally, by the frame of our bodies; or violently, by extraordinary judgments. Thou dost not suffer us to live so long as we might by the course of nature.

Thine anger, caused by our sinful state and lives.

Psalms 90:8

Thou dost not now cover, or blot out, or pass by our sins, as thou hast usually done to thy people; but thou dost diligently search them out, and accurately observe them, as a severe but righteous Judge, and art now calling us to an account for them.

Our secret sins thou dost not only punish us for our notorious and scandalous sins, which thine honour may seem to oblige thee to do, but even for our secret lusts, the murmuring, and unbelief, and apostacy, and idolatry of our hearts; which though hid from the eyes of men, thou hast set before thine eyes, and brought them to light by thy judgments.

Psalms 90:9

Are passed away; or, *turn away themselves or their face* from us. They do not continue with us, but quickly turn their backs upon us, and leave us.

As a tale that is told; which may a little affect us for the present, but is quickly ended and gone out of mind, Or, *as a word* , as Job_37:2, which in an instant is gone, and that irrevocably. Or, *as a thought* , or a *sigh* , or a *breath* ; all which come to one sense.

Psalms 90:10

The days of our years; either,

1. Of the Israelites in the desert, who being twenty years old, and some, thirty, some forty, some fifty years old, when they came out of Egypt, and dying in the wilderness, as all of that age did, Num_14:29, a great number of them doubtless died in their seventieth or eightieth year, as is here implied. Or rather,

2. Of the generality of mankind, and the Israelites no less than others, in that and all following ages, some few persons excepted, amongst whom were Moses, and Caleb, and Joshua, who lived a hundred and twenty years; which is therefore noted of them as a thing singular and extraordinary. This sense suits best with the following words, and with the scope of Moses; which was to represent the vain and transitory condition of men in this life, and how much mankind was now sunk below their ancestors, who commonly lived many hundreds of years; and that the Israelites, though God's peculiar people, and endowed with many privileges, yet in this were no better than other men; all which may be considered, either as an argument to move God to pity and spare them, or as a motive to awaken and quicken the Israelites to serious preparations for death, by comparing this with Psa_90:12.

Threescore years and ten; Which time the ancient heathen writers also fixed as the usual space of men's lives.

By reason of strength, i.e. by the strength of their natural constitution; which is the true and common cause of longer life.

Their strength; their strongest and most vigorous old age. Or, *their excellency* , or *pride* ; that old age which is their glory, and in which men do commonly glory.

Labour and sorrow; filled with troubles and griefs from the infirmities of age, the approach of death, and the contingencies of human life.

It, either our age or our strength,

is soon cut off; it doth not now decline by many degrees and slow steps, as it doth in our young and flourishing age, but decayeth apace, and suddenly flieth away.

We fly away; we do not now go to death, as we do from our very birth, nor run, but fly swiftly away like a bird, as this word signifies.

Psalms 90:11

Who knoweth? few or none sufficiently apprehend it, or stedfastly believe it, or duly consider it, or are rightly affected with it. For all these things are comprehended under this word *knoweth* .

The power of thine anger; the greatness, and force, and dreadful effects of thine anger conceived against the sons of men, and in particular against thine own people, for their miscarriages.

According to thy fear, i.e. according to the fear of thee; as *my fear* is put for *the fear of me* , Mal_1:6, and *his knowledge* for *the knowledge of him* , Isa_53:11. According to that fear or dread which sinful men have of a just and holy God. These fears of the Deity are not vain bugbears, and the effects of ignorance and folly or superstition, as heathens and atheists have sometimes said, but are just, and built upon solid grounds, and justified by the terrible effects of thy wrath upon mankind.

So is thy wrath; it bears full proportion to it, nay, indeed, doth far exceed it. It cannot be said of God's wrath, which is said of death, that the fear of it is worse than the thing itself. But this verse is by many, both ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *Who knoweth the power of thine anger, and thy wrath according to thy fear ?* i.e. either,

1. According to the fear of thee, or so as thou art to be feared, or answerably to thy terrible displeasure against sin and sinners. Or,

Psalms 90:12

So teach us, by thy Spirit and grace, as thou hast already taught us by thy word. Or, *teach us rightly* (as this word is used, Num_27:7 2Ki_7:9)

to number, & c., as it follows. *To number our days* ; to consider the shortness and miseries of this life, and the certainty and speediness of death, and the causes and consequences thereof.

That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom; that we may heartily devote ourselves to the study and practice of true wisdom, which is nothing else but piety, or the fear of God. And why so? Not that the Israelites might thereby procure a revocation of that peremptory sentence of death passed upon all that generation; nor that other men might hereby prevent their death, both which he very well knew to be impossible; but that men might arm and prepare themselves for death, and for their great account after death, and might make sure of the happiness of the future life; of which this text is a plain and pregnant proof.

Psalms 90:13

Return, O Lord, to us in mercy; for thou seemest to have forsaken us and cast us off.

How long; understand, wilt thou be angry ; or, will it be ere thou return to us ?

Concerning thy servants; i.e. of thy severe proceedings against us, and change thy course and carriage to us.

Psalms 90:14

Early; speedily or seasonably, before we be utterly consumed.

Psalms 90:15

Our afflictions have been sharp and long, let not our prosperity be small and short.

Psalms 90:16

Let that great and glorious work of giving thy people a complete deliverance, which thou hast long since designed and promised, be at last accomplished and manifested unto us, and in the sight of the world.

Psalms 90:17

The beauty of the Lord, i.e. his favourable countenance, and gracious influence, and glorious presence.

Upon us; or, *in us* . Do not only work for us, but in us. And because the glorious work of thy hands is hindered by the evil

works of our hands, be thou pleased by thy Holy Spirit to direct or establish (for this Hebrew word signifies both)

the works of our hands, that we may cease to do evil, and learn to do well, and turn and constantly cleave unto thee, and not revolt and draw back from thee, as we have frequently done to our own undoing.

Psalms 91:1 PSALM 91

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm is uncertain. The occasion of it seems to have been that great pestilence recorded **2Sa 24**

The psalmist representeth the state of the godly, Psa_91:1,2. Their safety, and place of habitation, Psa_91:3-10. Comfortable promises of God's preserving them, Psa_91:11, of his support and salvation, Psa_91:12-16.

The secret place; or, *hiding-place* . He that makes God his habitation and refuge, as he is called below, Psa_91:9, resorting to him, and relying upon him in his dangers and difficulties, shall not be disappointed of his hope, but shall find a quiet and safe repose under the Divine protection. A

shadow in Scripture phrase commonly signifies protection. See Gen_19:8 Jud_9:15 Psa_17:8, &c.

Psalms 91:2

Upon that ground I will confidently commit myself and all my affairs to God.

Psalms 91:3

O thou believing, pious soul, who after my example shalt make God thy refuge, thou shalt partake of the same privilege which I enjoy.

He shall deliver thee from the pestilence, which like a fowler's snare taketh men suddenly and unexpectedly, and holdeth them fast, and commonly delivers them up to death.

Psalms 91:4

His truth; whereby he is obliged to fulfil all his gracious promises, and, amongst the rest, that of protection in dangers.

Psalms 91:5

By night, when evil accidents are most terrible and least avoidable.

The arrow; the pestilence, or any such common and destructive calamity; for such are frequently called God's arrows, as Dent. Deu_32:23, **La 3:12,13**, &c.

By day, which is the time for shooting of arrows. The sense of the verse is, He shall be kept from secret and open mischiefs at all times.

Psalms 91:6

This verse explains the former, and showeth what that terror and arrow signifies.

That walketh; that spreadeth, or maketh progress.

In darkness; either invisibly, so as we can neither foresee nor prevent it; or rather, by night, as Psa_91:5.

That wasteth at noon-day; that like a bold enemy assaults us openly, and though discovered cannot be resisted.

Psalms 91:7

At thy side; *at thy left side*, because this is opposed to the *right side* here following. See the like ellipsis Num_9:16 Psa_84:11.

It shall not come nigh thee: this and such-like promises are not to be understood absolutely and universally, as if no truly good man could be cut off by the plague or other common calamities, which is confitted both by other plain texts of Scripture, and by unquestionable experience; but with due limitations and conditions, either on man's part, as if there be a defect in his faith or obedience; or on God's part, when God sees that death is more for his good than life, as it apparently is when righteous men axe taken away from the evil to come, as is said, Isa_57:1; in which case, though God doth not give the thing promised, yet he giveth a far greater mercy instead of it, and so fulfils his promise in the best sense, and with most advantage. As, if one man should solemnly promise to another to give him his daily food every day, he not only might, but ought, notwithstanding this promise, to deny and withdraw this food, when his body is so distempered,

that in the judgment of the wisest physicians the taking of his food would evidently endanger his life.

Psalms 91:8

Thou shalt behold, without any terror or danger to thyself, and with a delightful and thankful reflection upon God's goodness to thee. The reward of the wicked; the just recompence of their sins, or the vengeance of God upon them.

Psalms 91:9

Or, as the words lie in the Hebrew, and others render them, *Because thou, O Lord, are my refuge, thou*, O my soul, (which is easily understood out of the foregoing words, and to which David oft suddenly turneth his speech,) *hast made the Most High thine habitation*; which is the only ground and reason of that safety last mentioned. As for the variation of persons, that he sometimes speaketh to and of others, and sometimes to and of himself, nothing is more frequent in this book; nor doth it make any alteration in the sense.

Psalms 91:10

To wit, so as to destroy thee, as the next verse limits and expounds it. For surely this promise is not made to all that dwell nigh to his children and servants, who may possibly be wicked men, and so strangers from God's covenant and promises. How far this secures his own person, **See Poole "Psa_91:7"**.

Psalms 91:11

His angels; those blessed, and powerful, and watchful spirits whom God hath appointed to mind the affairs of this lower world, and to take care of the heirs of salvation, Heb_1:14.

In all thy ways; in the whole course of thy life, and in all thy lawful undertakings.

Psalms 91:12

Shall bear thee up in their hands; sustain or uphold thee in thy goings, as we do a child or a weakly man, especially in uneven or dangerous paths. Or, shall carry thee aloft, as upon eagles' wings, when it shall be needful for thee.

Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone; so as to hurt thy foot, or to cause thee to fall.

Psalms 91:13

The lion shall lie prostrate at thy feet, and thou shalt securely put thy feet upon his neck, as the Israelites did upon the necks of the Canaanitish kings, Jos_10:24.

The dragon; by which he synecdochically understands all pernicious creatures, though never so strong, and fierce, and subtle, and all sorts of enemies.

Psalms 91:14

This and the two following verses are the words of God, whom the psalmist here, as oft elsewhere, introduceth as giving an account of the reasons of God's singular care of all believing or pious persons.

I will deliver him; I will abundantly recompense his love with my favour and blessing.

On high; in a high and safe place, where no evil can reach him.

Hath known my name, with a true and saving knowledge, so as to love me and put his trust in me. God's *name* is here put for God himself, as it is also Deu_28:58 Psa_20:1 **105:1**.

Psalms 91:15

He shall call upon me, to wit, in trouble, which is expressed in the following clause. As he knoweth and loveth me, so he will offer up sincere and fervent prayers to me upon all occasions.

I will be with him in trouble, to keep him from sinking under his burden.

Psalms 91:16

With long life will I satisfy him; either in this world, when it is expedient for my service, and for his benefit; or, at least, in the next world, where he shall live to eternity in the blissful sight and enjoyment of God in glory.

Show him my salvation, either here or hereafter.

Psalms 92:1 PSALM 92

To be sung upon the weekly sabbath; to which the matter of this Psalm very well agrees. For it celebrates the works of God, both that first and great work of creation, and that succeeding and no

less wonderful work of his providence, by which he upholds and governs all his creatures, and especially that by which he ruleth all sorts of men, both good and bad, and that by which he preserveth and manageth his church and people.

The prophet exhorteth to praise God, Psa_92:1-3, for his great works, Psa_92:4,5. His judgments on the wicked, Psa_92:6-9. Gracious promises to the righteous, Psa_92:10-12. They shall be fruitful, Psa_92:13-15.

It is a good work, and a just debt to God.

Psalms 92:2

To adore and celebrate thy goodness and truth continually, and especially at those two solemn times of morning and evening, which on every day, and especially upon the sabbath day, were devoted to the worship and service of God.

Psalms 92:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 92:4

Which thou didst create by thine almighty power, and dost still govern with infinite wisdom; one instance whereof we have in the following verses.

Psalms 92:5

Thy thoughts; thy counsels and methods in the government of the world and of thy church.

Psalms 92:6

A brutish man; who cannot or doth not seriously consider things, whose mind is corrupted by his sensual and brutish appetites; who is led by sense, and not by reason and faith.

This; the depth of God's counsels and works mentioned Psa_92:5, or that particular work of God described Psa_92:7.

Psalms 92:7

Their present worldly prosperity is a presage and occasion of their utter and eternal ruin.

Psalms 92:8

So this verse is added by way of opposition to the former, *They shall perish* , but thou shalt endure, as is said in a like comparison,

Psa_102:26; they flourish for a season, but thou rulest for ever to judge and punish them. Or, *for* (as this Hebrew particle is not seldom used, whereof instances have been formerly given)

thou, Lord, art, & c. So this verse gives a reason of the former, as well the first branch of it, why God suffers the wicked to flourish so long, because he is not like man, of short and uncertain continuance here, to whom a little time is long and tedious, who therefore impatiently expects the time of vengeance, and fears lest the offender should escape it; whereas God is unchangeable and everlasting, and therefore long-suffering without any inconvenience, and the longest time of the prosperity of the wicked is but short and inconsiderable in his eyes, *a thousand years being in his sight but as yesterday when it is past*, Psa_90:4, and they can never escape out of his hands; as also of the latter branch of the verse, why the wicked shall be destroyed for ever, because God lives and reigns for ever to execute that just sentence of everlasting punishment which he hath pronounced against them.

Psalms 92:9

He represents their destruction as present, and as certain, which the repetition of the words implies.

Psalms 92:10

But as for me and other righteous persons, (of whom he saith the same thing Psa_92:12) we shall be advanced to the height of honour, and true and lasting felicity.

Unicorn; of which See Poole "Deu_33:17".

I shall be anointed; I shall have great cause of rejoicing and testifying my joy by anointing myself, as the manner was in feasts and all joyful solemnities.

Fresh oil; sweet and uncorrupted.

Psalms 92:11

My desire, to wit, in the ruin of thine and mine incorrigible enemies.

Shall hear; what I do not see myself, I shall understand by the certain reports of others.

Psalms 92:12

Like the palm tree; which is constantly green, and flourishing, and fruitful, Son_7:8, and growing even when it is pressed down; and so is a fit emblem of a just man's person and condition. See Rev_7:9.

Like a cedar; which spreads itself wide, and grows very high and strong, and is very durable, and in some sort incorruptible.

Psalms 92:13

Those that be planted; whom God by his gracious providence and Holy Spirit hath planted or fixed there.

In the house of the Lord, i.e. in its courts, which are a part of the house, and oft come under that name in Scripture. And by this house he means the church of God, whereof all just persons are real and living members.

The courts; which he mentions rather than the house, because he speaks not here of the priests, but of all just men, who were permitted to come no further than into the courts.

Psalms 92:14

When their natural strength decayeth, it shall be renewed; their last days shall be their best days, wherein as they shall grow in grace, so they shall increase in comfort and blessedness.

Psalms 92:15

This glorious work of God in compensating the short prosperity of the wicked with everlasting punishments, and of exchanging the momentary afflictions of the just with eternal glory and happiness, doth clearly demonstrate that God is just and blameless in all the dispensations of his providence in the world.

Psalms 93:1 PSALM 93

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains an assertion or declaration of God's sovereign and universal dominion in and over the whole world; which is here set forth, partly for the comfort of God's church and people against all the assaults of their numerous and potent adversaries; and partly to give an intimation and assurance of the

accomplishment of that great promise of the kingdom of the Messias, which was not to be confined to the Israelites, but to be extended to all the nations of the earth; which, though wonderful in our eyes, the supreme and almighty Ruler of the world could easily effect. This and the six following Psalms, according to the opinion of the Hebrew doctors, belong to the times of the Messias.

A description of the majesty, Psa_93:1, and power of God, Psa_93:2-4. The certainty of God's word, and necessity of holiness in God's house, Psa_93:5.

The Lord reigneth: he is the King and Governor, not only of Israel, but of the whole world, as the last clause of the verse expounds it; and accordingly he will in his due time set up his empire over all nations, in the hands of his Son the Messias.

Is clothed with strength: that majesty and strength which he always had in himself, he now hath, and will shortly much more show it forth in the eyes of all people. The effect of God's government of the world shall be this, that he will order and overrule all the confusions, and divisions, and hostilities in the world, so as they shall end in an orderly, peaceable, and happy settlement, and in the erection of that kingdom of the Messias which can never be moved.

Psalms 93:2

And this kingdom of thine is no new or upstart kingdom, as it may seem to the ignorant world, but the most ancient of all kingdoms, being from everlasting to everlasting, although it was not always equally manifested in the world.

Psalms 93:3

The floods; the enemies of thy kingdom, who are oft compared to floods for their numbers, force, rage, &c. See Isa_8:7,8 17:12,13 Jer 46:7,8. They have both by their words and actions made opposition against it.

Psalms 93:4

The King of heaven is too strong for all earthly potentates, and will subdue them under his feet.

Psalms 93:5

Thy testimonies, i.e. thy words; either,

1. Thy precepts, which are commonly called God's *testimonies* . And so having spoken of God's kingdom, he now showeth that the laws of that kingdom are just, and true, and holy; which is a singular commendation of it. Or,

2. Thy promises, as may be gathered from the following words,

are sure, or *true* , or *faithful* ; which attribute properly belongs, and every where in Scripture is ascribed, to promises rather than to precepts. And the promises no less than the precepts are God's *testimonies* , or the witnesses or declarations of his mind and will to mankind. And he seems here to speak of those great and precious promises concerning the erection and establishment of his kingdom in the world by the Messiah; which, saith he, are infallibly true, and shall certainly be accomplished in thy time.

Holiness becometh thine house: this is to be understood, either,

1. Of God's church or people, who are sometimes called God's house, and whose business and delight is in God's house and service there performed. So the sense is, It becometh thy people to be holy in all their approaches to thee, and worshippings of thee. Or rather,

2. Of God himself who dwelt in his house, from whence he gave forth his oracles, and where all his testimonies were kept upon record. This seems better to suit with the context, the business of this Psalm being rather to describe the dominion of God than the duty of his people. And so the sense seems to be this, Holiness is the constant ornament and glory of thy house. Or it becometh thee who dwellest in thy house to be holy in all thy words and actions; and therefore thy testimonies are very sure, and thou wilt undoubtedly fulfil all thy promises. For holiness seems to be here taken for God's faithfulness, as it is Psa_60:6 **89:35**; or, which comes to the same thing, for his justice or righteousness, whereby he is obliged to make good all his promises, as that word is very commonly used.

Psalms 94:1 PSALM 94

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm plainly declares the occasion of it to be the oppressions and persecutions of God's people by wicked and cruel tyrants and enemies, against whom he prays for the Divine aid.

The psalmist, calling to God for justice, Psa_94:1-4, complaineth of tyranny and impiety, Psa_94:5-7; teacheth fools God's providence, Psa_94:8-11; showeth the blessed effects of affliction, Psa_94:12,**13**; and a promise of his presence with the afflicted, Psa_94:14,**15**. He is their support, Psa_94:16-23.

As thou art the supreme Judge of the world, the Patron and Protector of the righteous, and the declared enemy of all wickedness and wicked men.

Psalms 94:2

Lift up thyself; either,

1. Ascend thy tribunal to pronounce the sentence. Or,
2. Arise from thy seat, and bestir thyself to punish thy proud enemies, as it here follows.

Psalms 94:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 94:4

Utter; or, *pour forth* freely, constantly, abundantly, as a fountain doth waters, as this Hebrew word signifies.

Hard things; grievous, and insolent, and intolerable words against thee and thy people; blasphemous, malicious, contemptuous, and minatory words.

Boast themselves; boast of their invincible power, and prosperous success in their wicked designs.

Psalms 94:5

Those righteous persons whom thou hast chosen for thy portion or inheritance.

Psalms 94:6

Whom common humanity obliged them to spare, and pity, and relieve.

Psalms 94:7

Their impunity and prosperity in their impious and barbarous practices make them ready to doubt of or to deny the providence of God in the government of his church and of the world. *The God of Jacob* ; so they call him sarcastically; he who taketh that name to himself, but hath no regard to his people, but gives up his Jacob to the spoil, and to the rage of their enemies.

Psalms 94:8

You who, though you think yourselves the wisest of men, yet in truth are the most brutish of all people; for the Hebrews oft express their superlatives in this manner, as Pro_30:30 Son_1:8, &c. You that have only the shape, but not the understanding, of a man in you.

Psalms 94:9

Planted: the word is very emphatical, signifying the excellent structure of the ear, or the several organs or instruments belonging to the sense of hearing, and the exact position and firm settlement of all those parts in their proper places; which is justly admired by all that understand it.

Shall he not hear? he must necessarily hear. The truth of the inference depends upon that evident and undeniable principle in reason, that nothing can give to another that which it hath not either formally or more eminently in itself, and that no effect can exceed the virtue of its cause.

Formed; by which word he seems to intimate the accurate and most curious workmanship of the eye, which is observed by all that write upon that subject.

Psalms 94:10

He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? He who, when he pleaseth, can and doth punish the Gentiles or nations of the world, is he not able to punish you for your wicked speeches and actions? Or, *He that instructeth* or *teacheth* (as this word signifies, Pro_9:7 Isa_8:11, &c.) *the nations* , (not only the Jews, but all other people, all mankind, as this clause is explained by the next, *he that teacheth man knowledge.*) *shall not he correct or reprove* ? and therefore must not he discern and know all your hard speeches and wicked actions? Thus the consequent seems to

be put for the antecedent, as is frequent in Scripture, and that not without emphasis, to imply that God does not know their sins with a simple or speculative knowledge, but so as to proceed upon that knowledge to judge and punish them.

He that teacheth man knowledge, by giving him understanding, and the knowledge of many excellent things by the light of nature, *shall not he know ?* to wit, men's thoughts, of which see Psa_94:11; and their words and actions, of which he spoke Psa_94:6,7. These words are not in the Hebrew text, but are easily understood out of the foregoing clause. And the like defects we find elsewhere, as 2Sa_5:8, compared with 1Ch_11:6, especially in vehement commotions of the mind, when a man's passion stops his speech, as it is here, and Psa_6:3, and in other authors.

Psalms 94:11

This is an answer to the foregoing question, *shall not he know ?* Yes, he *knoweth* all things, yea, even the most secret things, as the thoughts of men; and in particular your atheistical thoughts, and much more doth he know your wicked practices, which you said he did not see, Psa_94:6,7. And he knows that they are generally vain and foolish, and that whilst you mock God and applaud yourselves in such thoughts, you do not relieve, but only delude yourselves with them.

Psalms 94:12

And whereas these ungodly persons esteem themselves the only happy men, and conclude thy people to be of all men the most miserable, because of the manifold persecutions and afflictions which they commonly suffer, and upon this account dispute against thy providence, so far is their opinion from the truth, that the contrary is most certain, that as their prosperity is a real mischief to them, so those afflictions of good men which are accompanied with Divine instructions are great and true blessings to them, themselves being judges.

Psalms 94:13

For their present and short troubles prepare them for, and lead them to, true rest and blessedness, whilst the seeming felicities of the wicked make way for those tremendous judgments which God hath prepared for them.

Psalms 94:14

Though God may for a time correct his, people, yet he will not utterly destroy them, as he will their enemies, but will in his time put an end to all their calamities.

Psalms 94:15

But although the world is now full of unrighteous judgments, and even God himself seems not to judge and administer things justly, because he suffers his people to be oppressed, and the wicked to triumph over them, yet the state or things shall be otherwise ordered, God will declare himself to be a righteous Judge, and will advance and establish justice in the earth, and especially among his people.

Follow it, to wit, just judgment restored; they will all approve of it, and imitate this justice of God in all their actions, whereas *the wicked will still do wickedly*, as is said. Dan_12:10, and in a land and state *of uprightness will deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord*, as it is Isa_26:10. Otherwise, *shall follow him*, to wit, *the Lord*, expressed Psa_94:14, whose act is to bring judgment to justice. Whilst the wicked forsake God, these will cleave to him, as being confident that, howsoever he may suffer them to be oppressed for a season, yet he will in due time plead their cause, and bring forth their righteousness.

Psalms 94:16

To defend and help me. I looked hither and thither, and called to my friends for their help, saying,

Who will, & c.? but none of them appeared, but God alone helped me, as he saith in the next verse.

Psalms 94:17

In the place of silence, to wit, the grave. Compare Job_3:17,18 **Psa 88:12 115:17**.

Psalms 94:18

My foot slippeth; I am now upon the point of falling into mischief and utter destruction.

Psalms 94:19

In the multitude of my thoughts; whilst my heart was filled with *various and perplexing thoughts* , as this Hebrew word signifies, and tormented with cares and fears about my future state.

Thy comforts; thy promises contained in thy word, and set home by thy Spirit upon my soul, and the remembrance of my former experiences of thy care and kindness to me. Compare Psa_119:50,76.

Psalms 94:20

Wilt thou take part with the unrighteous powers of the world, who oppress thy people? It is true, they partake of thy name, being called gods, Psa_82:1, but I know thou wilt not afford them thy protection and patronage, but wilt manifest thy justice and displeasure against them. This seems to have been one of those comfortable thoughts wherewith the psalmist delighted his soul, as he now said.

Which frameth mischief; who devise wicked devices, and lay heavy burdens upon men that are more righteous than themselves.

By a law; either by virtue of those unrighteous decrees which they have made in form of laws; or by false pretences of law. Or, *against law* ; against all right, and the laws both of God and men.

Psalms 94:21

Against the soul; against the life, as the soul commonly signifies, and as the next clause explains it. They are not satisfied with the spoil of their estates, but do also thirst after their lives.

Condemn the innocent blood; they shed the blood of those innocent persons whom they have wickedly condemned. *Innocent blood* is here put for the blood or life of an innocent person, as it is also 1Sa_19:5 Mat_27:4.

Psalms 94:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 94:23

Their own iniquity, i.e. the fruit and punishment of their sins.

In their own wickedness; either in the midst of their sins; or by their own wicked devices, the mischief whereof he will cause to fall upon their own heads.

The Lord our God; the God of Jacob, of whom they said that he did *not see nor regard* them, but now they find the contrary proved to their cost.

Psalms 95:1 PSALM 95

THE ARGUMENT

The author of this Psalm was David, as is affirmed, Heb_4:7; and although this Psalm be delivered in general terms, as an invitation to mankind to yield unto the true God that praise, and worship, and obedience which he requireth and deserveth, yet it hath a special reference to the days of the Messiah; of which Christians have no great reason to doubt, seeing it is so understood by the Hebrew doctors themselves; as also by the apostle, Heb_3:7, &c., and especially Heb_4:3-9, where he not only expounds it of those times, but proves that it cannot be meant of the former times and state of the church.

An exhortation to praise God, Psa_95:1,2, for his great power, goodness, and tenderness to his people, Psa_95:3-7. A caution against hardness of heart, Psa_95:8,9. It grieves the Lord, Psa_95:10. God's threatening against it confirmed with an oath, Psa_95:11.

He speaks to the Israelites, whose backwardness to this work in the times of the gospel was foreseen by the Spirit of God, which dictated this Psalm.

Psalms 95:2

His presence; which he will then afford us in a singular manner, in his Son the Messiah, in and by whom he will be visibly present with the sons of men.

Psalms 95:3

Above all that are accounted and called

gods, angels, and earthly potentates, and especially the false gods of the heathens, which upon Christ's coming into the world were

struck dumb, and could no more deliver their oracles, as Plutarch and other heathens observed, with admiration, nor deceive the world, but were forced to give place to the true God, and to the knowledge and worship of him alone, which was propagated among all nations by the gospel.

Psalms 95:4

In his hand; under his government.

The deep places; those parts which are far out of men's sight and reach, and much more those that are at men's disposal.

The strength of the hills; the strongest or highest mountains are under his feet, and at his disposal. The sense of the verse is, All the parts of the earth, whether high or low, are subject to his power and providence, and therefore it is not strange if all the nations of the earth be brought to the acknowledgment of him, and if the Gentiles receive his gospel.

Psalms 95:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 95:6

By which expressions he teacheth that even in gospel times God is to be glorified and worshipped, as well with the members of our bodies, as with the faculties of our souls.

Psalms 95:7

Our God, in a peculiar manner; and therefore it will be most unreasonable and abominable for us to forsake him, when the Gentiles submit to his law. *The people of his pasture* ; whom he feedeth and keepeth in his own proper pasture, or in the land which he hath appropriated to himself.

The sheep of his hand; which are under his special care and conduct, or government; which is oft expressed by the hand, as Num_4:28 **31:49** Jud_9:29.

Today, i.e. forthwith or presently, as this word is used, Deu_4:4,**8** **27:9** Jos_22:16,**18**, &c. Or, *this day* ; in this solemn day of grace, or of the gospel, which the psalmist speaks of as present, according to the manner of the prophets. And this word, though belonging to the following clause, as appears from Heb_3:7, may seem to be thus placed, to show that it had some respect to the

foregoing words also. For the sense of the place may be this, We (Jews) are or shall be *the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand* ; God will still own us for his people *this day* , i.e. in the days of the Messiah, if *this day* or in that time we shall hear his voice. Otherwise God will reject us, and receive the Gentiles in our stead.

If ye will hear his voice; if you will hearken to his call, and obey his further commands; which may be added as a necessary caution and admonition to the Israelites, that they might understand and consider that God's presence and favour was not absolutely, necessarily, and everlastingly fixed to them, as they were very apt to believe, but was suspended upon the condition of their continued obedience, which if they violated they should be rejected, and the Gentiles performing it should be received to his mercy. And this clause may be connected either,

1. With the former words, as the condition of their interest in God as their God, as was now said. Or,

2. With the following verse; If you are willing to hearken to God's call delivered by his Son, take the following counsel.

Psalms 95:8

Harden not your heart, by wilful disobedience and obstinate unbelief, rebelling against the light, and resisting the Holy Ghost, and his clear discoveries of the truth of the gospel.

As in the provocation; as you did in that bold and wicked contest with God in the wilderness. Or,

as in Meribah, which was the proper name of the place where that happened, and which also was called *Massah* , as is evident from Exo_17:7 Deu_33:8.

As in the day of temptation; in the day in which you tempted me. Or, as in *the day of Massah* , i.e. when you were at Massah.

Psalms 95:9

When; or, *in which place* ; which may belong either to Meribah and Massah, or to the wilderness last mentioned. Or, *surely* , as this word is oft used in Scripture, as hath been observed once and again.

And saw; or, *although* or *after that they saw* or *had seen* ; which is added as a just and great aggravation of their unbelief, after such a sensible and evident experience of God's power and goodness to them.

My works; both my works of mercy, which gave them abundant cause to trust me; and my works of justice, for which they had reason to fear and please me. Heb. *my work* , to wit, that great and stupendous work of bringing my people out of Egypt with a strong hand, and of conducting them safely through the Red Sea into the wilderness, and of destroying the Egyptians. For not many more of God's great works were done before they came to Meribah.

Psalms 95:10

With this generation; or rather, with that generation which then lived, who were your ancestors.

Do err in their heart; they do not only sin through infirmity, and the violence and surprisal of temptations, but their hearts are insincere and inconstant, and given to backsliding, and therefore there is no hopes of their amendment. Compare Psa_78:8.

They have not known; or, *they do not know* , to wit, with a practical and useful knowledge, as that word commonly notes in Scripture. They did not rightly understand, nor duly consider, nor seriously lay to heart; they remain ignorant after all my teachings and discoveries of myself to them.

My ways; either,

1. My laws or statutes, which are frequently called God's ways. Or rather,

2. My works, as it is expressed, Psa_95:9, which also are commonly so called. They did not know nor consider and remember those great things which I had wrought for them and among them.

Psalms 95:11

Being full of just wrath against them, I passed an irreversible sentence, and confirmed it by an oath; of which we read **Num 14**.

Into my rest; into the Promised Land, which is called the rest, Deu_12:9. See also 1Ch_23:25 Psa_132:14. And this history the

psalmist propounds to the men of his age, not as a matter of mere speculation, but as an instruction for all after-ages, and particularly for those Israelites who should live in the times of the Messiah, that they should *take heed of falling after the same example of unbelief*, as the apostle infers from this place, Heb_4:11.

Psalms 96:1 PSALM 96

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed by David upon occasion, or at the time, of the bringing of the ark of God into the tabernacle which David had prepared for it in Zion, as may be gathered by comparing it with 1Ch_16:7,23,24, &c., where almost the whole Psalm is to be found, But as the ark was an evident type of the Messiah, which David very well knew, as hath been oft noted before; so David's thoughts, or at least the design of God's Spirit, which indited this Psalm, was extended beyond and above it, even to the times of the Messiah, and to his glorious and universal kingdom, in which not the Jews only, but the heathen nations also, should worship the true God, and kiss his Son the Messiah.

All the inhabitants of the earth and sea are called to praise the Lord for his great honour and majesty, Psa_96:1-7; for his wise governing the world, Psa_96:8-10. Heaven and earth are called to rejoice before him for his righteous judgment, Psa_96:11-13.

A new song, upon this new and great occasion; not the removal of the ark, wherein there was nothing new but an inconsiderable circumstance of place, and that not yet fixed; but the coming of the Messiah, and the confirming of the new covenant by his blood, and the calling of the Gentiles.

All the earth; all the nations of the earth, who shall then partake of those great blessings and privileges which are now peculiar to Israel.

Psalms 96:2

His salvation; that great work of the redemption and salvation of the world by the Messiah.

Psalms 96:3

You who shall be called out of all the heathen nations to the knowledge of God and Christ, publish this glorious and wonderful work amongst all the heathen nations to whom you belong or may come.

Psalms 96:4

The gods of the nations, as the next verse expounds it.

Psalms 96:5

Idols; or, *nothings* , as they are called, 1Co_8:4 **10:19**; or, *vain things* , as the word signifies, and is translated by others. The sense is, Though they have usurped the name and place of the Divine Majesty, yet they have nothing of his nature or power in them.

Psalms 96:6

Before him, i.e. in his presence, like beams shot out from his face, who is the Sun of righteousness. There is an unconceivable glory and majesty in his countenance, and in the place of his presence.

In his sanctuary; or, *in his holy place* ; where he records his name and affords his presence. There are the manifestations of God's power and grace, or goodness, and all his perfections.

Psalms 96:7

O ye kindreds of the people; or, *O ye families of the people of the world* . And the word *families* may be understood either,

1. Strictly and properly; and so it may be intimated that this great blessing of salvation by Christ should not be imparted to whole nations, but only to some persons taken out of every people and nation, as it is expressed, Rev_5:9. Or,

2. More largely for nations, as it is taken, Gen_12:3 Jer_25:9 Zec_14:18; and so it may be implied that not only some few of the heathen people should be brought to the acknowledgment and worship of the true God, as was usual in the times of the Old Testament, but that whole nations should come in to the church of God together.

Give unto the Lord; ascribe to him, or acknowledge to be in him.

Psalms 96:8

Into the courts of his house. But under this one part of worship he comprehends the whole worship of God; and he speaks of the worship of the New Testament under the expressions of legal worship, as the prophets elsewhere do, as Mat_1:11, and elsewhere.

Psalms 96:9

In the beauty of holiness; either in the holy place which he shall appoint to that end; or clothed with all those holy ornaments, those gifts and graces, which are necessary and required in God's worship.

Psalms 96:10

Say among the heathen: you converted Gentiles, declare this to those who yet remain in the darkness of heathenism.

That the Lord reigneth; that God hath now set up his throne and kingdom in the world. And as that kingdom shall never be destroyed, but shall stand for ever, as is said, Dan_2:44; so the nations of the world shall by the means of it enjoy an established and lasting peace; which is every where mentioned as one of the blessings which the Messiah shall give to the world, as Psa_72:3,7 **Isa 9:6,7 66:12** Mic_5:5 Zec_9:10.

He shall judge the people righteously; he shall not abuse his invincible power and established dominion to the oppression of his people, as other princes frequently do, but shall govern them by the rules of justice and equity, which is the only foundation of a true and solid peace. See Isa_32:17.

Psalms 96:11

It is a figure called *prosopopoeia* , whereby he signifies the great felicity of those times, which shall be such that even those lifeless creatures would testify their joy and thankfulness for it, if they were in a capacity so to do.

Psalms 96:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 96:13

Before the Lord; at the presence and approach of their Lord and Maker.

To judge the earth; to take to himself that power and authority which belongs to him, to set up his throne and dominion among all the nations of the earth.

With his truth; or, *in his faithfulness* , i.e. so as he hath promised to do. He will certainly and abundantly fulfil all God's promises made to his people.

Psalms 97:1 PSALM 97

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have both the same author and the same scope with the former. And although the psalmist might take occasion to pen it from those signal manifestations of God's power and righteousness on his behalf, and against his enemies, yet he had a further aim in it, even at the coming of the Messiah, which he here describes. And whereas there are two comings of Christ plainly distinguished in the New Testament, these are but confusedly mentioned in the Old Testament; and the prophets sometimes speak of his first coming in words and phrases which seem more properly to agree to the second, as Mal_3:1,2 4:1,2. But whatsoever the psalmist designed or understood, this is certain, that the Holy Ghost meant the last clause of Psa_97:7 of Christ, as is affirmed, Heb_1:6, and therefore it is more than probable that all the rest of the Psalm is to be understood of him, and of his coming and kingdom.

A description of the majesty of God's kingdom, Psa_97:1-6. The church rejoiceth at his justice and judgment upon idolaters, Psa_97:7-9, with an exhortation to godliness and spiritual rejoicing, Psa_97:10-12.

The Lord reigneth; See Poole "Psa_96:10".

The multitude of isles; the Gentile nations, as this word, being used Isa_42:4, is expounded Mat_12:21, even those which are most remote from Judea, (then the only seat of God's people and worship,) from which they were divided by the sea, or to which they usually went by sea; such places being commonly called

isles in Scripture, as Gen_10:5 Isa_11:11 **66:19**; which being mentioned, because there might be some doubt about them, it is

sufficiently implied that those countries which were nearer to them should unquestionably partake of the same privilege.

Psalms 97:2

Clouds and darkness are round about him; a dark cloud doth encompass him; wherein he seems to allude to that dark cloud in which God did anciently so often manifest his presence for the comfort of his saints, and for the terror and punishment of evil-doers. The design of these words is to describe either,

1. The depth and unsearchableness of God's judgments. Or,
2. The obscurity of Christ's coming, that the Divine Majesty did veil himself with flesh, and came not with that outward splendour which the Jews expected. Or rather,
3. The terror of his presence and coming to his enemies, of which he manifestly speaks in the following verses; and of which the prophets frequently speak when they make mention of his coming, as Joe_2:31, **32 Mal 4:1.**

Righteousness and judgment, i.e. righteous judgment, or righteousness in judgment. *The habitation* ; or, *the foundation* , or *establishment* ; for the throne is established (and the Hebrew verb there is the same from whence this word here comes) by righteousness, Pro_16:12. All his decrees and administrations are grounded upon and managed with righteousness.

Psalms 97:3

This fire, and lightning, and earthquake, and the sad effects of them, mentioned here, and Psa_97:4, **5**, signify those dreadful judgments of God which should be inflicted upon the Jews and others for their refusal and contempt of the Messiah; which was foretold in the Old Testament, and accomplished in the New Testament.

Psalms 97:4

His lightnings enlightened the world: this phrase signifies not so much illumination as terror and judgments, as appears both from the following words, and from the constant use of the phrase in that sense, as Psa_18:14 **144:6**, &c.

Psalms 97:5

The hills; the strongest and loftiest parts of the earth; whereby he may understand the great potentates of the world who set themselves against the Messias.

The Lord of the whole earth; whose dominion shall not then be confined in Canaan, as now in a manner it is, but shall be enlarged over the whole earth.

Psalms 97:6

The heavens; either,

1. The thunders, and lightnings, and tempests sent from heaven to plead his righteous cause against his enemies. Or,

2. The angels, yea, God himself from heaven, who gave manifest testimony to the righteousness of the Messias.

All the people see his glory; both Jews and Gentiles shall see and feel the glorious effects of his coming.

Psalms 97:7

Confounded be all they; let them be ashamed of their former folly herein, and be thereby brought to detest and forsake them; and those who will obstinately persist in their impiety and idolatry, let them be brought to confusion. Or, *they shall be confounded* ; for this may be a prediction, and not an imprecation.

All ye gods; all you whom the Gentiles have made the objects of their worship, and who are capable of giving him worship; which two qualifications agree principally, if not solely, to the angels of God, whom the heathens manifestly worshipped in their images as an inferior sort of gods, of whom therefore this text is expounded, Heb_1:6.

Psalms 97:8

Zion; thy people dwelling in Zion, or Jerusalem, and Judah, to whom Christ came, and among whom the gospel was first preached. Or, thy church and people, who both in the prophetic writings are oft called *Zion* . Heard the fame of thy judgments, as the following words declare; the ruin of idolatry and the setting up the kingdom of the Messias in the world.

The daughters of Judah; particular churches, or rather persons, members of Zion.

Rejoiced; not that they took pleasure in the ruin of others, but because that made way for the advancement of God's glory and Christ's kingdom in the world.

Psalms 97:9

As thou always wert so in truth, so thou hast now proved and declared thyself to be such in the eyes of the whole world, by subduing them under thy feet.

Psalms 97:10

Ye that love the Lord; O all you who love and worship the true God and his anointed, and rejoice in the establishment of his kingdom.

Hate evil; show your love to him by your abhorrence of all idolatry, which is sometimes called *evil or sin* by way of eminency, and of all other wickedness. And although you that love the Lord Christ and his kingdom will meet with many troubles and persecutions, yet be not discouraged, for he will preserve you in troubles, and in his time deliver you out of them all.

Psalms 97:11

Light, i.e. joy and felicity, as this word is used, Est_8:16 Psa_112:4, and oft elsewhere.

Is sown; is prepared or laid up for them, and shall in due time be reaped by them, possibly in this life, but undoubtedly in the next. And therefore bear your afflictions for Christ with patience and cheerfulness.

Psalms 97:12

In consideration of his holy and righteous nature and government, or of his faithfulness in making good that great promise of sending the Messiah into the world; for holiness is sometimes taken for faithfulness, which is one part or branch of it.

Psalms 98:1 PSALM 98

THE ARGUMENT

The matter and scope of this Psalm is the same with the former, and is an evident prediction of the coming of the Messiah, and of the blessed effects thereof.

The psalmist exhorteth Jews, Gentiles, and all the creatures to praise God for his truth and salvation.

God by his own only power hath overcome all difficulties and enemies, and hath in spite of all set Christ upon his throne, and propagated his kingdom in the world.

Psalms 98:2

His salvation; the redemption or salvation of the world by the Messiah; which was hitherto reserved as a secret among the Jews, yea, was not thoroughly known and believed by the most of the Jews themselves.

His righteousness; either his faithfulness in accomplishing this great promise of sending the Messiah; or his goodness and mercy, oft called by this Hebrew word; or the righteousness of God or of Christ revealed in the gospel.

Psalms 98:3

He hath now actually given that mercy which he had promised to the Israelites.

All the ends of the earth; all the inhabitants of the earth, from one end to another.

Have seen, i.e. enjoyed it, as this word is oft used, as hath been proved again and again.

Psalms 98:4

Because you all do now partake of the same privileges with the Jews, join with them in worshipping and praising of God.

Psalms 98:5

The worship of the New Testament is here described in phrases taken from the rites of the old, as Psa_92:3, and oft elsewhere.

Psalms 98:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 98:7

The fulness thereof; all those creatures wherewith it is replenished, which by a poetical strain are invited to praise God. **See Poole "Psa_96:11", See Poole "Psa_96:12", See Poole "Psa_96:13".**

Psalms 98:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 98:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 99:1 PSALM 99

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is supposed to be David's, and the matter of it seems to suit to his time and the state of affairs which then was; although as David was a type of Christ, so this Psalm may look beyond David unto the Messias. But it doth not speak so fully nor clearly of the Messias as the foregoing Psalms do.

The psalmist setteth forth the weighty power of God in Zion, Psa_99:1,2. God's holiness a reason for our praising him, Psa_99:3, Equity and righteousness executed in Jacob, Psa_99:4. The church exhorted by the example of their forefathers, Psa_99:5-8, to praise and magnify him in his holy hill, Psa_99:9.

The people, to wit such are are enemies to God and to his people. Between the cherubims; upon the ark. See 1Sa_4:4. He is present with his people to protect them, and to punish their enemies. The earth; the people of the earth, by comparing this clause with the former. Be moved, to wit, with fear and trembling, as in the former clause.

Psalms 99:2

The Lord is great in Zion: in the Hebrew text the words lie in this order, *The Lord in Zion* (i.e. which dwelleth in Zion, as is said, Psa_9:11 Isa_8:18 Joe_3:21) is great.

Above all people; above all the people of the earth, of whom he spake Psa_99:1, who shall exalt themselves against him.

Psalms 99:3

Them, to wit, *all people* , last mentioned.

For it is holy; for it is not only great, but holy, and therefore most praise-worthy.

Psalms 99:4

The King's strength also loveth judgment; though his dominion be absolute and uncontrollable, and his power irresistible, yet he doth not abuse it to tyranny and oppression, as the princes of the world commonly do, but tempers and manageth it with righteousness; and not only doth judge justly, but, which is more, loves to do so. *The King 's strength* is by a known Hebraism put for the strong or powerful King.

Establish equity, to wit, in all thy proceedings. Equity is thy constant and stable course. In Jacob; amongst thine own people; who, when they do amiss, he punisheth no less than other people, as he notes below, Psa_99:8, whereby he showeth that he is no respecter of persons, but a righteous and impartial Judge to all sorts of men.

Psalms 99:5

At his footstool; before the ark, which is so called,

1Ch_28:2 Psa_132:7.

For he is holy; or rather, for *it* , to wit, the ark, is *holy* ; it is consecrated to be a pledge of God's presence, and the only place of God's public worship.

Psalms 99:6

He presseth them to perform the duty of praising and worshipping God by the examples of three eminent persons who practised this duty, and that with happy success. He reckoneth Moses among the priests not without cause, partly because before the institution of the priesthood he executed that office, Exo_24:6 **Num 7**; and partly because he oft interceded to God for the people; which was a very considerable part of the priest's work. See Num_6:23, &c.; Joe_2:17. *That call upon his name* ; who used frequently and solemnly to intercede with God on the behalf of the people. So the general expression is here used synecdoehically for this particular kind of prayer; such synecdoches being very frequent in Scripture.

He answered them; Moses, **Exo 32**, and elsewhere; Aaron, **Num 16**, 1Sa_7:9 **12:19**: compare Jer_15:1.

Psalms 99:7

Unto them, i.e. to some of them; for the expression is only indefinite, and therefore doth not necessarily reach to all of them: to Moses frequently; to Aaron, Exo_19:24 **33:9-11** Num_12:5; and for Samuel, he answered him, if not by words, yet really and by his actions, thundering against the Philistines, 1Sa_7:9, &c, which supposeth a cloud, if not a cloudy pillar.

They kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them: this is added, not only for their commendation, but for the instruction of the Israelites, to teach them that God will not hear the prayers of them who do not keep his commandments.

Psalms 99:8

Answeredst them; the intercessors before mentioned. Forgavest them; either,

1. Moses and Aaron, who did sin, and whose sins God did pardon, yet so that he did punish them with exclusion from the land of Canaan; of which see Num_20:12 Deu_32:50,**51**. Or rather,

2. The people for whom they prayed; which, though not expressed, may be easily understood from the following words, and from the histories to which these words relate. For this forgiving was evidently the effect of God's answering the prayers of the persons above mentioned. And therefore as their prayers recorded in Scripture were not for the pardon of their own sins, but for the pardon of the people's sins; so this forgiveness granted was for the sins of the people. And whereas the people are not here mentioned, it must be remembered that in Scripture the relative is frequently put without the antecedent, as it is Num_7:89 Psa_114:2 Pro_14:26.

Though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions: this clause limits and explains the former. Thou didst forgive the sins of the people, not absolutely and universally, for thou didst punish them severely, but so far as not to inflict that total and final destruction upon them which they deserved, and thou hadst threatened. See Exo_32:10,**14,34**.

Psalms 99:9

At his holy hill; either in Zion; or in his church typified by it, and oft called Zion.

Psalms 100:1 PSALM 100

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been composed for the use of the Israelites in their thank-offerings, or upon other solemn occasions of praising God, as the title speaks; but withal it hath a further prospect, even to the days of the Messiah, as some of the Hebrew doctors acknowledge, and to the calling of the Gentiles, whom he invites to join with them in the praises of God their Lord and Maker.

An exhortation to praise God joyfully, Psa_100:1,2, for his greatness, power, Psa_100:3,4, goodness, and faithfulness to his church, Psa_100:5.

Make a joyful noise; partly with voices and songs of rejoicing and thanksgiving; and partly with musical instruments, as the manner then was.

All ye lands; all the inhabitants of the earth. Or, *all the land*, i.e. all the people of Israel dwelling in this land. Although his invitation seems to be more general, extending also to the Gentiles, of whom many even in those days joined themselves to the church of God.

Psalms 100:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 100:3

It is he that hath made us; both by creation, and by adoption and regeneration, whereby he made us his people, which also is called a creation or making, as Deu_32:6 Isa_29:23 **43:7** Eph_2:10.

And not we ourselves; therefore we owe him homage and service, and him only, and not other gods, who made us not.

Psalms 100:4

Enter into his gates; the gates of his courts; for the people might enter no further, and the courts had walls and gates as well as the house.

Psalms 100:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 101:1 PSALM 101

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed by David between times of God's promising the kingdom to him and his actual and plenary possession of it, as appears both from Psa_101:2, and from the contexture of the Psalm, wherein he speaks not of his present practice, but of his purpose for the future, and solemnly declares his resolution, and obligeth himself to these things when he shall be in a capacity to put them in execution.

David maketh a vow to praise the Lord, Psa_101:1; to walk perfectly for an example, Psa_101:2 to destroy all the wicked, Psa_101:3-5; and to delight in the faithful of the land, Psa_101:6-8.

Of mercy and judgment; either,

1. Of God towards me: of God's mercy towards me, and of his just judgments upon mine enemies. Or,

2. Of mine towards my people; I will in my song declare my obligation and full purpose to execute mercy and judgment in my dominion; which are the two pillars of government; of which he speaks in the, following verses. Interpreters are much divided which to choose. Possibly both may be joined together, and the sense may be this, I will praise thee, O Lord, as for all other excellencies, so particularly for those two royal perfections of *mercy* and *justice*, or *judgment*, which thou hast so eminently discovered in the government of the world and of thy people Israel; and I will make it my care and business to imitate and follow thee, as in other things, so especially in those virtues which are so necessary for discharge of my trust and the good government of thy and my people.

Psalms 101:2

I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way; I will manage all my affairs with wisdom and integrity; which are two chief qualifications requisite for all men, Mat_10:16 and most necessary in princes.

O when wilt thou come unto me? O when wilt thou give me the kingdom which hast promised me, that so I may be capable of executing these good purposes, both for my own comfort, and for the benefit of thy people? Or without an interrogative, as this particle is used, Exo_20:24, *when thou shalt come to me* , to wit, in the performance of that promise to me. He speaks not exclusively, as if he would not walk wisely and righteously in the mean time, but emphatically, that he would continue to do so when he was advanced to the kingdom, and that he would not suffer himself to be corrupted by his royal power and dignity, as the princes of the world commonly were. Withal, he may intimate now he could not do as he desired, and that by the necessity of his affairs he was forced to make use of such men as he did not like, and to wink at those miscarriages which it was not now in his power to reform. God is oft said in Scripture to *come* to men when he fulfils a promise to them or confers a favour or blessing upon them, as Gen_10:3:10 Exo_20:24 Psa_80:2 Isa_35:4, &c.

Within my house; in my own court and family, as well as in my public administrations; knowing how great an influence the example of my private conversation will have upon my people, either to reform or corrupt them.

With a perfect heart: this clause adds weight to the former; I will not only walk in a perfect or right way, (which a man may do for politic reasons, or with evil design,) but I will do so with an upright and honest heart, which is most acceptable to God.

Psalms 101:3

Before mine eyes, to wit, to look upon it with deliberation and design, or with desire and delight, as this phrase here and elsewhere implies. If any ungodly or unjust thing shall be suggested to me, whatsoever specious pretences it may be covered with, as reason of state or worldly advantage, I will cast it out of

my mind and thoughts, it, horreny; so far will I be from putting it in execution.

That turn aside from God, and from his laws.

It shall cleave to me, to wit, such work, or the contagion of such examples. I will neither imitate nor endure such works, nor such workers.

Psalms 101:4

A froward heart; a man of a corrupt mind and wicked life, such as other princes choose and prefer, as being suitable to themselves, and to their wicked designs.

Shall depart from me; shall be turned out of my court, lest they should tempt me, or infect the rest of my family, or be injurious or scandalous to my people. I will not know, i.e. not own nor countenance.

Psalms 101:5

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour; such as by secret and false informations and accusations of others seek to gain my favour, and to advance themselves by the ruin of others; which are the common pests of courts and kingdoms.

An high look and a proud heart: these he mentions, because pride is the common plague of courts, and the fountain of many enormities in courtiers; it makes them imperious and insolent towards the poor oppressed subjects that resort to them for relief; it inclines them to those counsels and courses, not which are best for the public good, but which are most for their own honour and advantage; it makes them oppressive and injurious to others, that they may have wherewith to satisfy their own lusts.

Psalms 101:6

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful; either,

1. To find them out. Or,
2. To favour or encourage them, as this phrase is oft used, as Psa_34:15 Jer_39:12 **40:4**. *The faithful* ; men of truth, justice, and integrity, who will be faithful, first to God, and then to me and to my people.

Dwell with me; or, *to sit* , or *abide* , or *converse* with me, in my house, and counsels, and public administrations.

In a perfect way; in the way of God's precepts, which are pure and perfect.

He shall serve me in domestic and public employments.

Psalms 101:7

He that worketh deceit; he who shall use any frauds, or cheats, or subtle artifices to abuse or wrong any of my people; which David's courtiers were more likely to endeavour, because he would not permit any open violence.

He that telleth lies; he that shall abuse me with lies, as courtiers usually do their princes, either to defend and excuse the guilty, or to betray the innocent.

Shall not tarry in my sight; I will certainly and immediately banish him from my presence.

Psalms 101:8

Early; speedily, and without delay, as soon as I arise in the morning, or as soon as I am seated in the throne, that so I may both prevent all that mischief which otherwise they might do, and hinder the infection of others by their evil example, and discourage and deter all my subjects from the like practices. Heb. *in the mornings* , i.e. every morning, as the same phrase is used also, Job_7:18 Psa_73:14 Isa_33:2. The morning was the time allotted for the exercise of judgment. See Jer_21:12.

From the city of the Lord; either,

1. From Jerusalem, which, though now in the hands of the Jebusites, he looks upon by an eye of faith as if he had it in possession; which he designed for the chief and royal city of his kingdom, and for the seat of the ark and worship of God. And therefore this place above all others was to be purged and preserved from wickedness and wicked men. Or,

2. From the whole nation or commonwealth of Israel; for David did intend and was obliged to reform, not only that one city, but his whole kingdom, which also may come under the name of a *city* , as being combined and united under one government; for

which reason the name of *city* is given both to the whole church of Christ, Isa_26:1 Heb_12:22 Rev_20:9 and to the great anti-church, the kingdom of mystical Babylon, Rev_11:8,**17:18**.

Psalms 102:1 PSALM 102

This Psalm contains a form of prayer and expostulation with God, composed for the use of all true Israelites, in the name and behalf of their mother the church of Israel. It seems to have been composed in the time of their captivity, and near the end of it, Psa_102:13,**14**. But as the literal Jerusalem was a type of the spiritual, or of the church of God and of Christ, and the rebuilding of the former a type of the reviving and edification of the latter; so the psalmist looks through that mercy of the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the temple to the further progress and to the end and perfection of that work, which was in the coming of the Messiah, by whom it was to be completed, and by whom the Gentiles were to be brought to the knowledge and worship of the true God.

The church prayeth for audience, Psa_102:1,**2**; and maketh a grievous complaint of her heavy afflictions, Psa_102:3-11; comforteth herself in the eternal mercy of God, **Psa 102:12-17**; which is to be recorded for future generations, Psa_102:18. Deliverance from the Babylonian captivity and the restoration of Jerusalem predicted, **Psa 102:19-28**.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 102:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 102:3

Like smoke; which passeth away in obscurity, and swiftly, and irrecoverably. Or, *into smoke* ; as wood or any combustible matter put into the fire wasteth away in smoke and ashes.

My bones; the most strong and solid parts of my body, which seemed safest from the fire.

Are burnt as an hearth; either as an hearth is heated or burnt up by the coals which are laid upon it; or as the hearth, being so heated, burns up that which is put upon it.

Psalms 102:4

Like grass; which is smitten and withered by the heat of the sun, either whilst it stands, or after it is cut down.

I forget to eat my bread, because my mind is wholly swallowed up with the contemplation of my own miseries.

Psalms 102:5

My flesh being quite consumed with excessive sorrows.

Psalms 102:6

Pelican; or, *bittern* , as the same word is translated, Isa_34:11 Zep_2:14. It is a solitary and mournful bird, as also the owl here following is.

Psalms 102:7

A sparrow which hath lost its mate , and then is very sad and solitary, as some report; although that be uncertain and improbable. But this Hebrew word doth not only signify a sparrow, but in general *any bird* , as Lev_14:4 Deu_14:11 Dan_4:12,**14,21**. And so it may here design any one or more sort of birds which used to sit alone, watching and mourning upon house-tops.

Psalms 102:8

Or, and *being mad or enraged at or against me, they swear against me* ; they swear they will do me yet more mischief: or, they swear by me; they make use of my name and misery in their forms of swearing and imprecation; as when they would express their malicious and mischievous intentions against another, they swear that they will use him or make him as miserable as a Jew. See the like expressions Num_5:21 Isa_65:15 Jer_29:22.

Psalms 102:9

For; so this verse gives a reason either of his great sadness, expressed Psa_102:6,**7**, or why they swore by him in the sense last given. Or, *surely* , as this particle is oft used. Or, *therefore* , because of those bitter reproaches last mentioned. *I have eaten ashes like bread* : the sense is, Dust and ashes are as constant and familiar to me as the eating of my bread; I cover my head with them; I sit, yea, lie down and roll myself in them, as mourners oft did, 2Sa_13:19 Job_2:8,**12 16:15** Isa_47:1 Mic_1:10; by which means the ashes might easily be mingled with their meat, as tears

were with their drink in the next clause. Mingled my drink with weeping; he alludes to the custom of mingling their wine with water.

Psalms 102:10

Because of thine indignation and thy wrath; because I do not only conflict with men, but with the Almighty God, and with his anger.

For thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down; as a man lifts up a person or thing as high as he can, that he may cast it down to the ground with greater force. Or he aggravates his present reproach and misery by the consideration of that great honour and happiness to which God had formerly advanced him, as Job did, **Job 29 Job 30**, and the church, Lam_1:7.

Psalms 102:11

My days; my hopes, and comforts, and happiness; *days* being oft put for happy days, or a happy state, as Psa_37:18 Lam_5:21, as elsewhere they are put more generally for the events which happen in those days; in both which cases it is a metonymy of the adjunct.

That declineth; or, that is extended or stretched out to its utmost length, as it is when the sun is setting, when it speedily and totally vanisheth. And just so the hopes of our restitution, which sometimes we have, are quickly cut off and disappointed.

Psalms 102:12

But this is my comfort, although we die and our hopes vanish, yet our God is everlasting and unchangeable, and therefore invincible by all his and our enemies, constant in his counsels and purposes of mercy to his church, stedfast and faithful in the performance of all his promises; and therefore he both can and will deliver his people.

Thy remembrance; either,

1. The fame and memory of thy wonderful works. Or rather,
2. Thy name, Jehovah, mentioned in the former clause, which is called by this very word, God's

remembrance or *memorial* , and that unto all generations, Exo_3:15. Thus this clause exactly answers to the former; and both of them describe the eternity of God's existence, whereby the psalmist relieves and supports himself under the consideration of his own and his people's frailty and vanity.

Psalms 102:13

Upon Zion; upon Jerusalem, or thy church and people.

The set time; the end of those seventy years which thou hast fixed; of which see Jer_25:12 **29:10** Dan_9:2.

Psalms 102:14

Thy people value the dust and rubbish of the holy city more than all the palaces of the earth, and passionately desire that it may be rebuilt.

Psalms 102:15

Which was in some sort fulfilled when the rebuilding of the temple and city of God was carried on and finished through so many and great difficulties and oppositions, to the admiration, envy, and terror of their enemies, as we read, Neh_6:16; compare Psa_126:2; but much more truly and fully in building of the spiritual Jerusalem by Christ, unto whom the Gentiles were gathered, and the princes of the world paid their acknowledgments.

Psalms 102:16

His glorious power, and wisdom, and goodness shall be manifested to all the world.

Psalms 102:17

Of the destitute, i.e. of his poor forsaken, despised people in Babylon.

Not despise, i.e. will accept and answer.

Psalms 102:18

This shall be written; this wonderful deliverance shall not be lost nor forgotten, but carefully recorded by thy people. *For the generation to come* ; for the instruction and encouragement of all succeeding generations. The singular number put for the plural, as is ordinary.

The people which shall be created; which may be understood, either,

1. Of the Jews which should be restored, who were in a manner dead and buried in the grave, and mere dry bones, Isa_26:19 **Eze 37**; and therefore their restoration might well be called a creation; or, as it is elsewhere, a resurrection. Or,

2. Of the Gentiles who should be converted, whose conversion is frequently, and might very justly, be called a second creation. See Isa_43:1,**7,15 65:18** Eph_2:10,**15**.

Psalms 102:19

He hath looked down, to wit, upon us, not like an idle spectator, but with an eye of pity and relief, as the next verse declares.

From the height of his sanctuary; from his higher or upper sanctuary, to wit, heaven, as the next clause explains it, which is called God's high and holy *place* , Isa_57:15.

Psalms 102:20

To release his poor captives out of Babylon, and, which is more, from the chains and fetters of sin and Satan, and from eternal destruction.

Psalms 102:21

That they being delivered might publish and celebrate the name and praises of God in his church.

Psalms 102:22

When the Gentiles shall gather themselves to the Jews, and join with them in the praise and worship of the true God, and of the Messiah. This verse seems to be added to intimate, that although the psalmist in this Psalm respects the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, yet he had a further design and a principal respect unto that greater and more general deliverance of his church and people by the Messiah.

Psalms 102:23

He, to wit, God, to whom he ascribes these calamities, Psa_102:10; to whom therefore he addresseth himself for relief.

In the way; either,

1. In the midst of our expectations. Whilst we are expecting the accomplishment of thy promise, either of bringing us out of Babylon, or of sending the Messias, we faint, and one of us perish after another, and our hope is like the giving up of the ghost. Or rather,

2. In the midst of the course of our lives; which sense is confirmed,

1. From the following clause; which, after the manner, explains the former,

he shortened my days; as also from the next verse, where he begs relief from God against this misery in these words, *take me not away in the midst of my days* .

2. From the use of this word way, which is used for the course of a man's life, Psa_2:12, and (which comes to the same thing) for the course of a journey, as it is opposed to the end of the journey, Gen_24:27 Exo_23:20, and elsewhere; the life of man being oft compared to a journeying or travelling, and death to his journey's end. And the psalmist here speaks (as other sacred writers do elsewhere, and as all sorts of writers frequently do) of the whole commonwealth as of one man, and of its continuance as of the life of one man. And so this seems to be the matter of his complaint and humble expostulation with God: O Lord, thou didst choose us out of all the world to be thy peculiar people, and didst plant us in Canaan, and cause a glorious temple to be built to thy name, to be the only place of thy public and solemn worship in the world, and didst make great and glorious promises, that thine *eyes* and *heart* should be upon it perpetually, 1Ki_9:3, and that thy people should be planted in thy land, so as not to be moved any more or afflicted, as they had been in the days of the judges, 2Sa_7:10,11; from whence we promised to ourselves a long and settled prosperity. But, alas, how soon were our hopes blasted! not long after the beginning of our settlement, in Rehoboam's time, and so successively in the course of our affairs under the following kings, till at last thou didst give us up to ruin and desolation, as at this day. And this he doth not allege to accuse God, or excuse himself or his people, but only that he might move the Divine Majesty to show them some pity, considering the shortness of their days, and

his own eternity, as he pursues the argument in the following verses. *My days* ; the days of my life, or of my prosperous state, as above, Psa_102:1; for adversity is a kind of death, and is frequently so called.

Psalms 102:24

Take me not away; do not wholly cut off and destroy thy people of Israel. In the midst of my days; before they come to a full age and stature, and to the plenary possession of thy promises, and especially of that great and fundamental promise of the Messiah, in and by whom alone their happiness is to be completed, and until whose coming thy church is in its nonage; of which see Gal_4:1-4. Possibly the psalmist (whom some learned interpreters suppose to be Daniel) may have respect to that prophecy, Dan_9:24,25, which probably was published before this time; for this time was almost precisely the midst of the days between the building of the material temple by Solomon, and the building of the spiritual temple, or the church, by the Messiah; there being about a thousand years distance between those two periods, whereof seventy prophetic weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, were yet to come. And so he prays that God would not root them out in this Babylonish captivity, but would graciously restore them to their own land, and preserve them as a church and nation there until the coming of the Messiah.

Thy years are throughout all generations: though we successively die and perish, yet thou art the everlasting and unchangeable God, and therefore art and wilt ever be able to deliver thy people, and faithful in performing all thy promises; and therefore we beseech thee to pity our frail and languishing state, and give us a more settled and lasting felicity than yet we have enjoyed; and therefore we trust that thy people shall *continue and be established before thee* , as he saith, Psa_102:28, because as thou art the everlasting God, so thou hast made an everlasting covenant with them, Psa_105:10 Isa_55:3 Jer_32:40, to be their God for ever, and therefore thou wilt not now forsake or reject us.

Psalms 102:25

The eternity of God looks both backward and forward, it is both without beginning and without end. The former is affirmed and illustrated Psa_102:24,26,27, the latter is clearly implied in this

verse. Thou hadst a being before the creation of the world, when there was nothing but eternity, but the earth and heavens had a beginning given them by thy almighty power.

Psalms 102:26

They shall perish; either,

1. As to the substance of them, which shall be annihilated. Or,
2. As to their present nature and use: see Isa_65:17 **66:22** 2Pe_3:7,**10,11**. The heavens and the earth, although they be the most permanent of all visible beings, and their continuance is oft mentioned to signify the stability and immutability of things, yet if compared with thee are as nothing; they had a beginning, and shall have an end.

Wax old, i.e. decay and perish.

Like a garment which is worn out and laid aside, and exchanged for another. And so shall this present frame of heaven and earth be.

Psalms 102:27

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 102:28

Though the heavens and the earth perish, and though we thy servants *pine away in our iniquities*, according to thy righteous sentence and threatening, Lev_26:39, and die in captivity; yet by virtue of thy eternal and unchangeable nature and covenant, we rest assured that our children, and their children after them, shall enjoy the promised mercies, a happy restitution to and settlement in their own land, and the presence of our and their Messias, whom, being not to come till after four hundred and ninety years, we shall not live to see. The expression here used is general, not without design, partly to show that this promised blessing belongs to the Jews not upon the account of any carnal relation to Abraham, but as they are and continue to be God's servants, from whom, if they revolt, they lose this and all their other privileges; and partly to imply that it belongs to all God's faithful servants, and to their children, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, of whose conversion he spoke, Psa_102:22.

Before thee; in the place of thy gracious presence; either here in thy church, or hereafter in heaven, from which we are now banished. And this phrase further intimates that their happiness did not consist in the enjoyment of the outward blessings of the land of Canaan, but in the presence and fruition of God there, which he mentions as the top and upshot of all his desires and their felicities.

Psalms 103:1 PSALM 103

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a thankful commemoration and celebration of God's mercies to the psalmist himself, and to the people of Israel, and to all good men.

David stirreth up himself to bless God, Psa_103:1,2; who forgiveth his sins, Psa_103:3, redeemeth and satisfieth his soul, Psa_103:4,5; for other manifold mercies to himself and the church, Psa_103:6-14. He considereth the frailty of man, Psa_103:15,16; and showeth God's everlasting mercy to his covenanted ones, **Psa 103:17-19**. He exhorteth all creatures to praise him, **Psa 103:20-22**.

Let all my thoughts and affections be engaged, and united, and stirred up to the highest pitch in and for this work.

Psalms 103:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 103:3

Either,

1. Spiritual diseases, lusts or corruptions, which he subdues and purgeth out by his grace; as this phrase is used, Psa_41:4 Isa_6:10 **53:5**. Or,

2. Corporal diseases or miseries, of which this word is used, 2Ch_21:18,19 Jer 14:18 16:4.

Psalms 103:4

From destruction, both temporal and eternal; from deadly dangers and miseries.

Crowneth thee, i.e. encompasseth and adorneth thee, as a crown doth.

Psalms 103:5

Who satisfieth all thy just desires and necessities.

Like the eagle's; either,

1. As the eagle reneweth her youth by casting all her old feathers, and getting new ones, whereby it seems to grow young again. But this, being common to all birds, would not have been appropriated to the eagle. Or rather,

2. Like the youth of an eagle. As the eagle lives long in great strength and vigour, so that the

old age of an eagle is used proverbially for a lively and vigorous old age; so this is a promise of a long and comfortable life.

Psalms 103:6

Which being a singular perfection, and that wherein most of the princes of the world were and are defective, is justly celebrated in God.

Psalms 103:7

His ways; either,

1. His laws, which are oft called God's ways. Or,

2. The manner and methods of his dealings with men, and especially with his people, called in the next clause his

acts; his merciful and gracious nature and providence, which is particularly called God's way, Exo_33:13, compared with Psa_103:18,**19**, and with Exo_34:6,**7**, and which is here described in the following verses.

His acts; his marvellous and gracious works.

Psalms 103:8

Slow to anger; not speedily punishing sinners, but patiently waiting for their repentance.

Psalms 103:9

He will not always chide, or *contend*, by his judgments with sinners, but is ready to be reconciled to them, to wit, upon their

true repentance, as is manifest from innumerable texts, and from the whole scope and design of Scripture.

Anger; which word is understood here, as also Lev_19:18 Jer_3:5 Nah_1:2, as is evident from the thing itself, and from the former clause. The Hebrew is a concise language, and there are many such ellipses in it, as 2Sa_6:6, compared with Exo_9:9; and 1Ch_18:6, compared with 2Sa_8:6 Psa_3:7 Ecc_7:15.

Psalms 103:10

He hath punished us less than our iniquities have deserved, as was confessed, Ezr_9:13.

Psalms 103:11

So much above their deserts and expectations, and above the mercy which one man showeth to another.

Toward them that fear them; which clause he adds here, as also Psa_103:17,18, to prevent men's mistakes and abuses of God's mercy, and to dash the vain hopes of impenitent sinners in God's mercy.

Psalms 103:12

The guilt of our sins from our persons and consciences. The sense is, He hath fully pardoned them, so as never to remember them more, as he promiseth, Jer_31:34 Heb_10:17.

Psalms 103:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 103:14

Our frame; either,

1. The corruption of our natures; which God is pleased sometimes to make an argument to pity and spare men, as Gen_8:21. So the sense is, He considereth that great and constant propension to evil which is naturally in all mankind, and that therefore if he should deal severely with us, he should immediately destroy us all. So this clause contains one motive of God's pity, and the next another. Or rather,

2. The weakness and mortality of our natures, and the frailty and misery of our condition, as it seems to be explained in the following clause, that we are but dust. So the sense is, He

considereth that if he should let loose his hand upon us, and pour forth all his wrath, we should be suddenly and irrecoverably destroyed, and therefore he spareth us.

Psalms 103:15

A flower of the field; which is more exposed to winds and other violences than the flowers of the garden, which are secured by the art and care of the gardener.

Psalms 103:16

A blasting or stormy wind bloweth upon it, and there is no more any appearance nor remembrance of it in the place where it stood and flourished.

Psalms 103:17

But though we quickly decay and perish, yet God's mercy to us doth not die with us; but as it was from eternity exercised in gracious purposes, so it will be continued unto eternity in that future and endless life.

Upon them that fear him: see before on Psa_103:11. *His righteousness* ; either his faithfulness, or (that this branch may answer to the former) his mercy or benignity; this word being frequently used in both these senses, as hath been proved before. But it is here called righteousness, to intimate that God's kindness to the posterity of his people is not only an act of his goodness, but also a discharge of his obligation under which he put himself to them, as elsewhere, so Exo_20:6, to which this place seems to relate. Hence it is called mercy to Abraham and *truth to Jacob* , Mic_7:20.

Psalms 103:18

To such as keep his covenant; to them that perform the condition of God's covenant, that sincerely love and obey him. Such restrictions are oft added, as in the general to overthrow the presumptuous hopes of ungodly men, so particularly to admonish the Israelites not to rest too much upon the privileges of their parents, or the covenant made with them, nor to expect any benefit by it, but upon condition of their continuance in God's covenant.

That remember his commandments to do them; that have them much in their thoughts, and practise them in the course of their lives.

Psalms 103:19

Prepared; or rather, *established* . Having celebrated God's mercy to his people, he now praiseth him for his excellent majesty and universal dominion.

His throne in the heavens which notes the eminency, glory, power, stability, and, in changeableness of God's kingdom.

Over all; over all creatures both in heaven and in earth.

Psalms 103:20

Angels; which, though glorious creatures, are but his ministers and messengers, as the word signifies. And inviting the angels to bless God, he quickens men to the same duty, as having more dependence upon God, and, obligation to him. That excel in strength; of which see evidence 2Ki_19:35. You are freed from the impentencies and infirmities of mankind.

That do his commandments; that live in a universal, constant, and perfect obedience to all God's commands, which the best of men through the infirmity of the flesh do frequently violate.

Harkening unto the voice of his word; that diligently wait for God's commands or errands, and execute them with all cheerfulness and readiness.

Psalms 103:21

All ye his hosts; ye angels; to whom he still continues his address, and whom he more particularly describes by the name of hosts, a title oft given to the angels, as Gen_32:2 1Ki_22:19 2Ch_18:18 Luk_2:13 Rev_19:14, in regard of their vast numbers, mighty power, unanimous concurrence, and exquisite order. In the former verse the expression was indefinite and general, *ye his angels* , here it is universal and yet particular,

all ye his hosts. He seems to apply himself to the several orders of angels, of whom see Eph_3:10 Col_1:16, and to each individual angel.

Ye ministers: this Hebrew word is commonly used of the highest and most honourable sort of servants.

That do his pleasure; whose constant business and delight it is to execute the will and commands of God.

Psalms 103:22

All his works in all places of his dominion; all creatures, both in heaven and earth, according to your several capacities.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; which thou hast special and abundant reason to do. Thus he ends the Psalm with the same words wherewith he began it.

Psalms 104:1 PSALM 104

THE ARGUMENT.

As the next foregoing Psalm treats of the special favours of God to his church and people, so this declares and celebrates the wonderful and gracious works of God to all mankind in the creation of this visible world, and in the wise and powerful disposition of all things therein to man's use and comfort.

The prophet, stirring up himself to praise God for his power manifested in the creation, Psa_104:1-6, his wonderful wisdom and power in governing of all hinge, Psa_104:7-32, voweth perpetually to praise him, Psa_104:33,**34**, and curseth the unthankfulness of the wicked, Psa_104:35.

Thou art very great, as in thy own nature and perfections, so also in the glory of thy works.

Clothed; surrounded and adorned.

With honour and majesty; with honourable majesty.

Psalms 104:2

Coverest, or *adornest* , or *clothest*. *With light* ; either,

1. With that light which no man can approach unto, as it is called 1Ti_6:16, wherewith therefore he may well be said to be covered or hid from the eyes of mortal men. Or rather,

2. With that first-created light, Gen_1:3, which the psalmist fitly puts in the first place, as being the first of God's visible works.

Like a curtain; the use whereof it hath, partly in reference to that glorious mansion of the blessed God and his holy angels, which these visible heavens (far above which it is, Eph_4:10) do veil and

cover; and partly in reference to the earth, which they enclose and protect.

Psalms 104:3

In the waters; in the waters above the heavens, as they are called, Gen_1:7; or, in the clouds, as it is explained in the next clause, in which he many times resides and rides, and manifests his presence. Who manageth and employeth the clouds and winds in his service.

Psalms 104:4

Who maketh his angels spirits, i.e. of a spiritual or incorporeal nature, that they might be fitter for their employments. Or, *who maketh his angels winds* , as this last word most commonly signifies, i.e. who made them like the winds, powerful, and active, and nimble in executing God's pleasure. Or, who useth and governeth those glorious creatures at his pleasure, even as he commands the senseless winds. A

flaming fire; or, like *a flaming fire* ; the note of similitude being here understood, as it is Gen_49:9 Deu_32:22 Psa_11:1, and oft elsewhere; to which he compares the angels for their irresistible force, and great agility and fervency in the execution of God's commands. Or the sense is, Who sometimes clotheth his angels with subtile bodies of wind, or air, or of fire, as he sees fit. And the angels may not unfitly be mentioned in this place amongst and in the close of those works of God which were done in the heavens, of which he hath hitherto spoken, Psa_104:2,3 because they were made at the same time when the heavens were made, and for the same uses and purposes, and because they are commonly employed by God in managing the clouds, and winds, and meteors, to accomplish God's designs by them. But this verse is otherwise rendered, both by Jewish and some Christian interpreters, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, He maketh the winds his angels, and *the flame* or *flames of fire* (i.e. the lightning and thunder, and other fiery meteors in the air)

his ministers; he maketh use of them no less than of the holy angels, and oftentimes for the same purposes, and they do as certainly and readily obey all his commands as the blessed angels themselves do. This interpretation may seem most agreeable to the

scope of the Psalm, and to the context, wherein he is speaking of the evil works of God. The only difficulty is, that this seems to invalidate the allegation and argument of the apostle, who expounds it of the angels, Heb_1:7. But indeed it doth not; for (to say nothing of other solutions given by other men) when the psalmist saith that God *maketh* or useth *the winds as his angels* , &c., he plainly signifies that the angels are God's ministers or servants, no less than the winds; and that is sufficient to justify the apostle's argument, and to prove the pre-eminency of Christ above the angels; which is the apostle's design in that place.

Psalms 104:5

He hath founded or established the earth upon its own basis or foundations , i.e. upon itself, or its own weight, whereby it stands as fast and unmovable, as if it were built upon the strongest foundations imaginable; which is a stupendous work of Divine power and wisdom. *That it should not be removed out of its proper place* , which is the lowest part of the world.

For ever; as long as the world continues.

Psalms 104:6

Thou coveredst it with the deep; either,

1. In the general deluge. Or rather,
2. In the first creation, as we read, Gen_1:2,9; of which the psalmist is here speaking.

The waters stood above the mountains; the mountains were not made by the deluge, as some have thought, who for that reason understand this verse of the said deluge, for it is apparent they were before it, Gen_7:19, and most probably were in the first creation, because this variety of mountains and valleys is both ornamental and useful to the world.

Psalms 104:7

At thy rebuke; upon thy severe command, Gen_1:9; which he calls a *rebuke* , to imply that there was something in that state of things which might seem to need reproof and correction, even that confusion of earth and water together, which therefore God amended in his second day's work.

They fled; they immediately went to the place which God had allotted to them. *Of thy thunder* ; of thy sovereign command, which as they could not but hear, so they durst not disobey. He ascribes sense and reason to inanimate creatures by a figure called *prosopopoeia* .

Psalms 104:8

In that first division of the waters from the earth, some part of them by God's command, contrary to their own nature, went upwards, and became springs in the mountains, and the greatest part went downwards to the channels made for them. Others, both ancient and later interpreters, read the words thus, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend* ; when the waters were separated, part of the earth went upward, and made the mountains; and part went downward, and made the valleys or low grounds. But our translation seems the best, as being most agreeable to the context, because he speaks of the waters both in the foregoing and following verses.

Unto the place which thou hast founded for them; unto their proper channels and receptacles which God provided for them.

Psalms 104:9

A bound; even the sand of the sea-shore, as it is expressed, Jer_5:22, which, though in itself contemptible, and a very poor defence to the earth against that swelling and raging element, yet by God's almighty power and gracious providence is made sufficient for that purpose; which is noted as a wonderful work of God, Job_38:8, &c.

The earth, to wit, the whole earth, as it did in the beginning of the creation. This was God's appointment, and the course of nature settled by him. But when men transgressed their bounds, all the laws of God and men, it is not strange if the waters also transgressed their bounds, and once again overwhelmed the earth in the general deluge.

Psalms 104:10

The springs, and the rivers which come from them.

The hills; wherewith God hath shut in the rivers where he saw fit, that they might not overflow the land.

Psalms 104:11

Which he mentions, partly because they are dry and thirsty creatures; and partly because they live in dry and desolate wildernesses, and are neither ruled nor regarded by men, and are most stupid creatures, and yet are plentifully provided for by the care and bounty of Divine Providence.

Psalms 104:12

By them; either upon the waters, where many fowls have their common abode; or in the ground nigh unto them; or in the trees, which commonly grow by the banks of rivers.

Which sing among the branches; which, being delighted and refreshed by the waters, send forth their pleasant notes.

Psalms 104:13

He watereth the hills; which most need moisture, and have least of it in them.

From his chambers; from the clouds, as above, Psa_104:3.

The earth is satisfied; by this means all the parts of the earth, the mountains as well as the valleys, are made fruitful.

With the fruit of thy works; with the effects of those sweet showers, which he calls God's *works*, because he alone can and doth give them, as is noted, Jer_10:13 **14:22**.

Psalms 104:14

Herb for the service of man; both for delight, and for necessity, either as food or physic. And this God doth; he watereth the earth, that thereby it may be prepared or disposed for the production of necessary provisions for beasts and for men, *that so he* (to wit, God)

may bring forth food out of the earth, which without this blessing of God the earth would never yield.

Psalms 104:15

Wine; he also bringeth out of the earth the vines which yield wine.

Oil to make his face to shine: he alludes to the custom of those times and places, which was upon solemn and festival occasions to anoint their faces with oil. See Psa_23:5. But these words with

the former are by divers learned interpreters rendered otherwise, which seems more agreeable to the order and contexture of the Hebrew text,

And (he giveth) *wine that maketh glad the heart of man, to make* (or, *that he may make* , i.e. that thereby he may also make) *his face to shine more than oil* , i.e. more than it shineth when it is anointed with oil; or, as *with oil* . So he speaks only of the wine, which he commends from two qualities, that it makes the heart cheerful, and the countenance pleasant.

Bread, i.e. bread corn, by a metonymy.

Which strengtheneth man's heart; which hath a singular faculty to preserve or renew our strength and rigour; whence it is called *the staff of life* .

Psalms 104:16

The trees of the Lord, i.e. which the Lord hath planted, as the next clause expounds this; which came up and grew. and thrive not by man's art and industry, but merely by the care of God's providence.

Are full of sap, Heb. *are or shall be satisfied* , to wit, with the rain, of whose good effects he is yet speaking.

The cedars of Lebanon; yea, even the tallest and largest cedars, such as these were, are supported and nourished by it.

Psalms 104:17

The stork; which make their nests not only in the tops of houses, but also in the field and in high trees, as Varro and others have noted.

The fir trees; which also are trees of great height and bigness; and which, being here said to afford the storks a house, are thereby supposed to be preserved and nourished by the rain water.

Psalms 104:18

So he passeth from the rain to other works of God's providence, as that God hath made suitable and sufficient provision for the security of these creatures against their persecutors. Although this verse also may have a reference to the former work, and the

barren and rocky hills may be mentioned as receiving benefit by the rain, and it may be thus rendered, And

the high hills, (understand, *are satisfied* , which is expressed Psa_104:16, and may very well be carried hither) which (that particle being frequently understood) are

a refuge for wild goats, and *the rocks* (understand out of the former branch, according to the usual manner, *which are a refuge*) for the conies; or, as others translate this word, for the *mountain mice* .

Psalms 104:19

For seasons; to measure and distinguish the times, both months, and, amongst many nations, years also; as also the seasons of divers natural events, as of the ebbing and flowing of the waters, and of the humours in man's body; and other seasons for sacred and civil affairs, which were commonly regulated by the moon, not only amongst the Jews, but among heathens also. **See Poole** "Gen_1:14".

His going down, to wit, the time and place in which he is to set every day of the year, which, though varied from day to day, yet he so regularly and exactly observes, as if he had the understanding of a man or angel to guide him in obeying the laws of his Creator. See Job_38:12. What is here expressed concerning his setting is necessarily supposed concerning his rising also; but he mentions only his setting, as most agreeable to the context, because that did usher in the rising of the moon, of which he now spake, and the entrance of the night, of which he speaks in the next words.

Psalms 104:20

Darkness; which succeeds the light by virtue of thy decree and established order.

Creep forth, to look out for prey, which in the day time they dare not do for fear of men. So by this vicissitude of day and night God hath wisely and mercifully provided both for men, that they may follow their day labours without danger from wild beasts, and for the beasts, that they may procure a subsistence.

Psalms 104:21

The young lions; which can no more subsist without Divine Providence than those which are most old and decrepit.

Roar after their prey; they roar when they come within sight and reach of their prey, as naturalists observe; whereby this place may be reconciled with Amo_3:4.

Seek their meat from God: this is a figurative and poetical expression: their roaring is a kind of natural prayer to God for relief, as the cries of infants are a kind of prayers to their mothers for the breast. And this is justly noted as an act of God's special providence, because the lions are very ravenous, and need much prey, and also are dull in their scent, and so difficultly find it, and slow in their motion, and unable to reach it; and therefore God hath provided another creature, of quicker sense and motion, which is usually confederate with them, and procures prey for them, partaking of it with or after them.

Psalms 104:22

Or rather, *they retire or betake themselves* ; for the lions do not commonly go in companies to one place, but severally, each to his own den.

Psalms 104:23

With security and confidence, knowing the nature and custom of wild beasts, that they hide themselves by day.

Psalms 104:24

Of excellent and comfortable things, which are the effects of thy bounty and power.

Psalms 104:25

Creeping: this word is common to all creatures that move without feet, touching with their belly the element in which they move, whether they creep upon the earth or swim in the sea.

Psalms 104:26

That leviathan; either the whale or the crocodile; of which **See Poole "Job_40:1"**, **See Poole "Job_41:1"**; who being of such vast strength and absolute dominion in the sea, tumbles in it with great security, and sports himself with other creatures, which he taketh and devoureth at his pleasure.

Psalms 104:27

These all, both beasts and fishes,

wait upon thee, expect supplies only from thy providence; which is said of them figuratively, and with an allusion to the manner of tame beasts and fowls, which commonly look after and wait upon those persons who bring their food to them.

In due season; when it is necessary or convenient for them; by which expression he intimates the moderation of the beasts in their desires of food, and tacitly reproves the intemperance of men who feed themselves in season and out of season.

Psalms 104:28

Whatsoever they receive is from thy bounty and gift.

Thou openest thine hand; thou providest plentifully for them; as this phrase implies, Deu_15:1: compare Pro_31:20.

Psalms 104:29

Thou hidest thy face, when thou withdrawest or suspendest the favour and care of thy providence.

Troubled; dejected and distressed.

Takest away; so this word is used, Hos_4:3 Zep_1:2, and elsewhere.

To their dust; to the earth, from whence they had their first original.

Psalms 104:30

Thy spirit; either,

1. That spirit by which they live, which is called *the spirit of a beast* , Ecc_3:21, which is called *their breath or spirit* , (for the word is the same there and here,) Psa_104:29, and here may be called *God 's spirit* , because it was given and preserved by him. Or rather,

2. Thy quickening spirit; for here seems to be an opposition between *their spirit* , Psa_104:29, and *thy spirit here* , and this latter is mentioned as the creating or productive cause of the former. And this may be understood either,

1. Of the Holy Ghost; to whom, no less than to the Father and the Son, the work of creation is ascribed, Job_33:4 Psa_33:6. Or rather,

2. That quickening power of God by which he produceth life in the creatures from time to time. For he speaks not here of the first creation, but of the continued and repeated production of living creatures.

They are created; either,

1. The same living creatures which were languishing and dying are strangely revived and restored; which may not unfitly be called a *creation*, as that word is sometimes used, because it is in a manner the giving of a new life and being to a creature. Or,

Psalms 104:31

So the sense is, Thus God doth and will advance the glory of his wisdom, and power, and goodness in upholding and continuing the works of his hands from generation to generation, and he doth and will take pleasure both in the preservation and blessing of his works, as also in his reflection upon these works of his providence, as he did rest and delight himself in the contemplation of his works of creation, as is noted, Gen_1:31 **2:2,3**. But the words are by divers, and, it may seem, more agreeably to the Hebrew text, rendered thus, *Let* (for the first word is of the imperative mood) *the glory of the Lord endure for ever, and let the Lord have joy (or, then shall the Lord rejoice) in his works*. So this is added as a convenient doxology or thanksgiving after the commemoration of his great and gracious works; and the sense may be this, Seeing therefore God hath enriched the earth and us with so many fruits of his bounty, let it be our constant desire and endeavour that God may be perpetually served and glorified in and by them, and that God may be no more grieved at the remembrance of his kindness to us, as he was, Gen_6:5,6, and thereby be again provoked to destroy us, but may take pleasure in beholding and cherishing of his own workmanship.

Psalms 104:32

This is a further illustration of God's powerful providence over all the creatures, and their dependence upon him; as when he affords his favour to creatures, they live and thrive, so one the contrary

one angry look or touch of his upon the hills or earth makes them tremble and smoke, as once Sinai did when God appeared in it. And this consideration he may possibly suggest to enforce the foregoing exhortation of glorifying God, because if we do not give him the glory due to his name, he call quickly right himself, and destroy us and all his works.

Psalms 104:33

But whatsoever others do, I will not fail to give God his glory and due praises.

Psalms 104:34

My meditation; or, *my speech* , or *discourse* ; my praising of God, mentioned Psa_104:33. *Of him* ; concerning the glory of his works.

Shall be sweet; either,

1. To God; he will graciously accept it; praise being his most acceptable sacrifice, as is affirmed, Psa_69:30,**31**. Or rather,
2. To myself, as may be gathered from the next clause. He implies that he shall not only do this work, which a man may do unwillingly, or by constraint, but that he will do it cheerfully, and with delight; which is most pleasing to God.

I will be glad in the Lord; I will rejoice in the contemplation of God's works, and in praising him for them.

Psalms 104:35

But as for those ungodly creatures who do not regard the works of the Lord, which is noted as a most grievous sin, and punished with a grievous imprecation, like this, Psa_27:4,**5**, nor give him the glory due to his name, but dishonour God, and abuse his creatures, and thereby provoke God to destroy the earth, and the men and things which are upon it, it is my prayer for thine honour, and for the safeguard of all mankind, that those sinners who obstinately and resolutely continue in this practice of dishonouring and disobeying their Creator, may be taken out of this world, that they may no longer infect it, nor procure its total destruction. Or it may be a prediction delivered in the form of an imprecation, as hath been noted before in like cases. But thou, O my soul, come not into this wretched society, but employ thyself in this great work of

blessing and praising God; and it is my desire and hope that others will follow my example.

Psalms 105:1 PSALM 105

THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Psalm was David, as is manifest from 1Ch_16:8, &c. It is a thanksgiving to God for his mercies to his people of Israel.

An exhortation to praise God, and to remember his works and wonders, Psa_105:1-6. The story of God's promises to and providences over Abraham, Psa_105:7-15, Joseph, **Psa 105:16-22**, and Jacob in Egypt, **Psa 105:23-25**; over Moses delivering the Israelites, **Psa 105:26-36**; and over them whom he fed in the wilderness, and planted in Canaan, **Psa 105:37-45**.

Call upon his name or, *proclaim his name* , i.e. the fame and glory of his works, as it follows.

Among his people; each of you amongst his and your people, or even among the heathens, as you have opportunity.

Psalms 105:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:3

Glory ye in his holy name; glory in the God whom you serve, as the only true God, and one of infinite power and goodness.

That seek the Lord; that seek his face or presence, as it follows, his acquaintance and favour, above all the world.

Psalms 105:4

The Lord, and his strength, i.e. by a figure called *hendiaduo* , the Lord in his strength, to wit, in his sanctuary, or before the ark, which is called God's strength, Psa_63:2 **78:61**, and the ark of his strength, Psa_132:8.

His face, i.e. his gracious presence in his sanctuary, and the blessed fruits of it. See on Psa_27:8.

Psalms 105:5

Either,

1. The laws delivered from his mouth. Or rather,
2. The plagues or punishments (as this same word is used here, Psa_105:7, and every where) which he brought upon Egypt by his mere word or command, as is oft noted in the history of them in Exodus.

Psalms 105:6

Children of Jacob; to whom he restrains the former more general expression, because these were the only branch of Abraham's seed to whom the following covenant and blessings belong.

Psalms 105:7

Either,

1. The fame of his judgments upon the Egyptians is spread over the face of the earth. Or,
2. God executes his judgments upon all nations and people; which may be here noted as a foil to magnify God's grace to them who were the monuments of his mercy, when all the world besides them fell under his just severity.

Psalms 105:8

He hath remembered, practically, so as to perform it; as that word is frequently used in Scripture.

The word; the word of promise, or the covenant, as is explained both in the foregoing and following words. And so the word is taken Jud_13:12 Luk_1:38.

Commanded, i.e. established, or ordained, or appointed, as this word is oft taken, as Psa_68:28 **71:3 133:3** Isa_13:3 **23:11**. To a thousand generations; to all generations; a certain number being put for an uncertain. He seems to allude to that passage, Exo_20:6.

Psalms 105:9

Wherewith he ratified the covenant with Isaac, Gen_26:3.

Psalms 105:10

For a law; either that it might be as firm and irrevocable, as a law; or that it might have the use and force of a law towards God, because God did hereby put himself under an obligation of making it good in regard of his own truth and righteousness.

Psalms 105:11

The portion assigned to you by lot and the designation of Divine Providence. **See Poole "Deu_32:9"; See Poole "Psa_16:6"**.

Psalms 105:12

A few men in number, Heb. *men of number* , i.e. few, who could easily be numbered,

very few, as the next words explain it.

Psalms 105:13

Both in Canaan, where there were seven nations, Deu_7:1, and in Egypt, &c.

Psalms 105:14

Both verbally, and really, by his judgments. See Gen_12:17 **20:3**.

Psalms 105:15

Touch not; hurt not, as this word is used of these very persons, Gen_26:11, **29**, and elsewhere.

Mine anointed; my prophets, as the next words explain it, to wit, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, as is evident; who are called God's *anointed* , because they were eminently blessed of God, and consecrated to be his peculiar people, and to be kings and priests in their families, and replenished with the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, in respect whereof many persons are said to be anointed in Scripture who never had any material oil applied to them, as Psa_45:7 Isa_61:1 2Co_1:21. And they are called

prophets, because God did familiarly converse with them, and revealed his mind and will to them, and by them to others; and because they were instructors or teachers of others in the true religion. See Gen_18:19 **20:7**.

Psalms 105:16

He called for, i.e. he effectually procured, as this word is used, 2Ki_8:1 Isa_47:1, **5 56:7 Rom_4:17**.

The whole staff of bread, i.e. bread, which is the staff or support of our animal lives. See Lev_26:26 Psa_104:15 Eze_4:16.

Psalms 105:17

He sent, by the direction of his secret providence.

Psalms 105:18

Heb. *his soul came into iron* ; which seems to be added emphatically to aggravate his imprisonment, and to show how grievous it was to his very soul, which must needs sympathize with his body, and moreover was greatly vexed to consider both the great injury which was done to him, and yet the foul and public scandal which lay upon him.

Psalms 105:19

The time; till which time his eminent prudence, and innocence, and piety gave him no relief.

His word; either,

1. Joseph's word, or his prophecy concerning the chief butler and baker; which is said to *come* when it was fulfilled, as that word is used, Jud_13:12,17 Eze 24:24, and elsewhere. But the event confutes this; for Joseph was not delivered at that time, but two years after it, Gen_41:1. Or rather,

2.

The word of the Lord, as it follows; the pronoun relative being here put before the substantive, to which it belongs, as it is also Exo_2:6 Job_33:20 Pro_5:22 **14:13**. He seems to speak of that word or revelation which *came* first to Pharaoh in a dream, Gen_41:1,2, &c.; and then to Joseph concerning the interpretation of it. Psa_105:15,16. For the word of the Lord is said to *come* , not only when it comes to pass, but also and most commonly when it is first revealed, as Jer_7:1 **11:1 18:1**; and God is said to come when he doth reveal it, as Gen_20:3 **31:24**.

Tried him; either,

1. Tried his sincerity and constancy. But that was not done by God's word, but by his rod. Or rather,

2. Discovered him, to wit, unto Pharaoh and his courtiers, how innocent, and holy, and knowing a person he was; or *purged* him from those calumnies which were cast upon him, and so prepared the way for his release, which here follows, Psa_105:20. This verse may well be rendered thus,

Until the time that his word came , even the word of the Lord , which tried him ; such ellipses being most usual in the Hebrew text.

Psalms 105:20

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:21

Heb. *of all his possession* , i.e. of his whole kingdom.

Psalms 105:22

To bind his princes by his commands, and if they were refractory, to punish them.

Teach his senators; his wisest counsellors, whom he commanded to receive instructions from Joseph upon all occasions.

Psalms 105:23

Israel; Jacob in his person, and with his children. *Of Ham* , i.e. Egypt, so called here, also Psa_78:5 **106:22**; from that cursed Ham, Gen_9:22, who was the father of Mizraim, or the Egyptians, Gen_10:6. And the psalmist seems to call it by this name, to intimate that they were the people of God's curse, and thereby to caution the Israelites against returning to that land, which they were particularly forbidden to do, Deu_17:16.

Psalms 105:24

Not really, but according to their enemies' apprehensions and expressions, Exo_1:9. Or, *more numerous* , as this word is elsewhere used. So this latter branch answers to the former. And this was true; for though they were not simply more in number than the Egyptians, yet they multiplied much faster.

Psalms 105:25

He turned their heart to hate his people; not by putting this wicked hatred into them, which is not consistent either with the holiness of God's nature, or with the truth of his word, and which was altogether unnecessary, because they had that and all other wickedness in them by nature; but partly, by withdrawing the common gifts and operations of his Spirit, and all other restraints and hinderances to it, and wholly leaving them to their own mistakes, and passions, and corrupt affections, which of their own accord were ready to take that course; partly, by ordering the

affairs of his people in such manner as might give them occasion of hatred; and partly, by directing and governing that hatred, which was wholly in and from themselves, so as it should fall upon the Israelites rather than upon other people.

To deal subtilly with his servants; to destroy them by crafty devices; of which see Exo_1:11, &c.

Psalms 105:26

To be the companion and interpreter of Moses in this expedition, of which see Exo_3:10 **4:12**, &c. This clause he adds, to show that Aaron was no less called and chosen by God to this work than Moses, which otherwise was not so evident from the history; or this clause may belong to both Moses and Aaron.

Psalms 105:27

His signs, Heb. *the words of his signs* ; an emphatical expression. First they boldly declared the word and will of God concerning the several plagues, and then they actually inflicted them.

Psalms 105:28

Either,

1. The darkness and other plagues; which obeyed God's word, and instantly came at God's call. So this may be a reflection upon the Egyptians, that those brutish or unreasonable creatures were more obedient to the will and command of God than they were. Thus diseases are said to *come* or *go* at God's command, Mat_8:8. Or rather,

2. Moses and Aaron, mentioned Psa_105:26, and called *they* , Psa_105:27, whose obedience in denouncing and inflicting these plagues, and especially that plague of darkness, is noted and commended here as an act of great faith and fortitude, because they inflicted that plague after Pharaoh had threatened them, Exo_10:10; as the obedience of their parents is commended as a great act of faith, because they preserved and hid their son contrary to the express command of the king of Egypt.

Psalms 105:29

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:30

Their land; their country; for otherwise they were produced by their rivers, Exo_8:3.

In the chambers; which entered into

the chambers. Of their kings; of Pharaoh and his sons, and his chief nobles and governors of provinces under him; for such persons are oft called kings in Scripture, Jud_1:7 1Ki_20:1,**12 Isa 19:2.**

Psalms 105:31

Or, borders, i.e. in all their land, even to the utmost ends or borders of it.

Psalms 105:32

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:33

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:34

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:35

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:36

To wit, their first-born, as it is in the first clause, who are so called, Gen_49:3 Psa_78:51, *and the beginning of their strength* , Deu_21:17.

Psalms 105:37

Feeble person; diseased or unable for his journey; which in so vast a body, and in a time of such mortality as it had been in Egypt, and in a people which had been so long and so dreadfully oppressed as the Israelites were, was wonderful; but they all journeyed on foot, Exo_12:37.

Psalms 105:38

Of them, i.e. of the Israelites, lest God for their sakes should destroy them.

Psalms 105:39

For a covering, to protect them from the heat of the sun, which in that hot and open country had otherwise been intolerable to them, especially in so long a journey.

Psalms 105:40

He speaks of the first giving of quails, Exo_16:13, which God gave them as a refreshment, notwithstanding their sin in desiring them, which he graciously pardoned; and not of that second giving of quails, which God gave them in judgment, **Num 11**, and therefore would not have been numbered here amongst God's favours vouchsafed to them. With the bread of heaven; with manna which came out of the air, which is commonly called heaven.

Psalms 105:41

They flowed in channels which God provided for them, and followed the Israelite's in their march, as is noted, 1Co_10:4. Hence they complained no more of want of water till they came to Kadesh, **Num 20**, which was many years after this time.

Psalms 105:42

Or rather, *with* (as this particle is oft used)

Abraham; made with or to Abraham.

Psalms 105:43

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 105:44

The fruits of their labour, their cities, vineyards, olive, yards, &c.

Psalms 105:45

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:1 PSALM 106

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was unquestionably composed in the time of the Israelites' captivity and dispersion, as is manifest from Psa_106:47, but whether it was that of Babylon, or some other of a later date, is neither easy nor necessary to determine.

The psalmist exhorteth to praise God, Psa_106:1-3; prayeth for the remission of his sin, Psa_106:4-6. The story of the Israelites' rebellion, and of God's mercy, in their journey from Egypt to Canaan, rehearsed, Psa_106:7-46; concluding with prayer and praise unto the Lord, Psa_106:47,**48**.

He deserves our praises, notwithstanding all our sufferings, which are not to be imputed to him, for he is gracious and merciful, but only to our own sins.

Psalms 106:2

i.e. His praiseworthy actions, by a usual metonymy.

Psalms 106:3

That keep judgment; that observe and practise what is just and right towards God and men; which in the next clause he calls

doing righteousness. At all times; in adversity as well as in prosperity. And this clause may belong either,

1. To the last foregoing words, *that doeth righteousness at all times* , constantly and perpetually; or rather,

2. To the first words, *they are blessed at all times* , even in the day of their calamity, which therefore ought not to hinder us from this great and just duty of praising God. And so this verse coheres with the former.

Psalms 106:4

Remember me; or, *us* ; for he speaks here in the name and on the behalf of the whole nation, as is evident from Psa_106:6,**7,47**, of which he oft speaks as of one person.

With the favour that thou bearest unto thy people; with those favours and blessings which thou dost usually and peculiarly give to thy people; such as the pardon of all our sins, by which we have procured our present miseries, and a complete deliverance, and that improved to thy praise and glory, as well as to our own comfort, as is clearly implied, Psa_106:47. Visit me with thy salvation; give me that salvation or deliverance which thou hast promised, and which none but thou canst give.

Psalms 106:5

See, i.e. enjoy, as the next clause explains it, and as this word is frequently used.

Of thy chosen; of thy chosen people; which thou usest to give to thine elect, or to such as are Israelites indeed.

That I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation; with such joy as thou hast formerly afforded unto thy beloved nation or people.

That I may glory; that we may have occasion to glory in God's goodness to. wards us. With thine inheritance; either in the congregation of thy people, that we thy people may jointly and solemnly praise thy name; or, as thy people, who are commonly called God's inheritance, in former ages have frequently done, for the partake with is sometimes used as a note of comparison, as it is in the very next verse, and Job_9:26 Ecc_2:16 **7:11**.

Psalms 106:6

With our fathers; as our fathers did, and have not been made wiser or better by their examples, as we should have been.

Psalms 106:7

Understood not; or, *considered not*, to wit, so as to be rightly affected with them, to give thee that love, and praise, and trust, and obedience which they deserved and required.

Even at the Red Sea; when those wonders of thy power and goodness in Egypt were but newly done, and fresh in memory.

Psalms 106:8

For his name's sake; that he might glorify his name, and vindicate it from the blasphemous reproaches which the Egyptians and others would have cast upon it, if they had been destroyed. This argument was urged by Moses, Num_14:13, &c.

Psalms 106:9

As securely as if they had walked upon the dry land.

Psalms 106:10

Of him that hated them; of Pharaoh, who pursued them with cruel rage and hatred.

Psalms 106:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:13

Soon; even within three days, Exo_15:22,23.

They waited not for his counsel; they did not wait patiently and believingly upon God for supplies from his hand, in such manner and time as he in his own counsel had appointed and thought fit.

Psalms 106:14

Lusted exceedingly, to wit, for flesh, as the next verse showeth.

Psalms 106:15

Either into their persons; or rather, their bodies, which are oft understood by this word; of which see the notes upon Psa_16:10. So their inordinate desire of pleasing and pampering their bodies was the occasion of destroying them; whilst God denied his blessing, which alone makes food able to nourish us, and inflicted his curse, which made their food as destructive as poison to them.

Psalms 106:16

So called here, not so much for his inherent holiness, whereof Moses had a greater share, but because he was consecrated or set apart by God for that sacred office of the priesthood, in which respect all the priests are said to be *holy* , Lev_21:6-8. Hereby he intimates that their envy and rebellion was not only against Aaron, but against God himself.

Psalms 106:17

Dathan, with his company, which is sufficiently understood out of the following clause, and out of the history, **Num 16**.

Psalms 106:18

In their company; in their associates or confederates, those *wicked men* , as he calls them in the next clause, to wit, Korah and his company, who were *consumed by a fire from the Lord* , Num_16:35, compared with Psa_106:1,2,16-19.

Psalms 106:19

When they were but very lately brought out of Egypt by such wonderful power and goodness of God, and had seen the dreadful plagues of God upon the Egyptian idolaters, and upon their idols too, as is noted, Num_33:4, and when the law of God was but

newly delivered to them in such a solemn and tremendous manner, and the most high God was yet present, and delivering further precepts to Moses for their benefit upon the top of that very mount. This greatly aggravated their sin.

Psalms 106:20

Changed, as far as in them lay, and in respect of their worship.

Their glory; their God, who was indeed their glory; for they had this just occasion of triumphing and glorying over all the nations of the world; that whereas all other nations worshipped stocks and stones, or the heavenly bodies, or dead men, they only worshipped the living and true God, who was present and in covenant with them, and with them only.

Into the similitude of an ox; into the golden image of an ox or calf.

That eateth grass; which is so far from feeding his people, as the true God did the Israelites, that he must be fed by them. And yet the image of such a creature was preferred by them, before the all-sufficient and ever-blessed God, which was an evidence of their horrid contempt of God, and also of their prodigious folly and stupidity.

Psalms 106:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:23

He said; he declared his intention in express words, as Exo_32:10, and elsewhere.

In the breach: God had made a hedge or wall about them; but they had made a gap or breach in it by their sins, at which the Lord, who was now justly become their enemy, might enter to destroy them; which he had certainly done, if Moses by his prevailing intercession had not hindered him. See Deu_9:12 **10:10**. It is a metaphor from a besieged city, where the enemy endeavours to make a breach in the walls, and thereby to enter into the city; which he will do, unless some valiant champion stand in the gap to oppose him.

Psalms 106:24

Despised; preferring Egypt and the former bondage before it, Num_14:3,4, and not thinking it worthy of a little hazard and difficulty in taking the possession of it.

The pleasant land, Canaan; which was so not only in truth, Deu_11:11,12 Jer 3:19 Eze_20:6, but even by the relation of those spies who discouraged them from entering into it.

His word, i.e. his promise of giving them the land, and subduing all their enemies before them; which they knew by late and manifold experience that God was both able and willing to do.

Psalms 106:25

To God's command, which was, that they should boldly and confidently enter into it.

Psalms 106:26

He lifted up his hand; he swore, as this phrase is commonly used, as Gen_14:22 Deu_32:40 Neh_9:15 Rev_10:5,6: of this dreadful and irrevocable sentence and oath of God, see **Num 14**.

Psalms 106:27

To overthrow their seed; he swore also (though not at the same time) that he would punish their sins, not only in their persons, but also in their posterity. See Exo_20:5 **32:34** Lev_26:33. Others refer this to the same oath and history, **Num 14**, because God intended at first to destroy both parents and children, even the whole nation, Psa_106:12,15, though afterwards upon Moses's intercession he limited the judgment to that generation. But that destruction threatened was by the *pestilence*, Psa_106:12, not, as here, by captivity and banishment. Besides, God said that, Psa_106:11, but he did not swear it, but the oath came afterward, Psa_106:21.

Psalms 106:28

They joined themselves, to wit, in worship, whereby they had a union and communion with him, as God's people have with God in acts of his worship. And this phrase seems also to note their carnal copulation with

the daughters of Moab in the temple, or to the honour of Baal-peor.

The sacrifices of the dead; which were offered to idols, which he calls dead, in opposition to the true and living God, and by way of contempt, and to note the sottishness of idolaters, who worshipped lifeless things, as stocks and stones, or dead men. And some learned men conceive that this is spoken with particular regard to Baal-peor, or *the lord of Peor* , a place so called, who had been a person of great eminency in those parts, and therefore was worshipped, according to the custom of the heathens, after his death, by sacrifices and feasts appointed for his honour and memory.

Psalms 106:29

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:30

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:31

And although that action of his might seem harsh, and rash, and irregular, as being done by a private person and a priest, and as allowing the delinquents no space for repentance, it was accepted and rewarded by God as an act of justice and piety agreeable to his mind, and proceeding from a sincere zeal for God's honour, and for the good of God's people; and God gave him a public testimony of his approbation to be recorded to all generations, and the priesthood to be continued to him and his in all succeeding generations, of all which see **Num 25**.

Psalms 106:32

Or, *because of them* , upon occasion of their unbelief and murmuring, whereby he was provoked to speak unadvisedly, as it here follows.

Psalms 106:33

He spake unadvisedly: so this word is thought to signify, Lev_5:4 Pro_12:18. Or, *he spake* , as the word commonly signifies. Not that it was in itself a sin to speak, but because he spake when he should have been silent; or *he spake* to the people, when God commanded him only to speak to the rock, Num_20:8-10; or, *he spake* , to wit, the provocation of his spirit, or such words as were agreeable to it, and might be expected from it. He mentions not here what Moses spake, because that was fully

known from the history, and because he would throw a veil over Moses's infirmity, and rather imply than express his fault.

Psalms 106:34

Concerning whom, i.e. concerning whose destruction or rather, *which thing* to wit, to destroy those Canaanitish nations; for in the Hebrew there is nothing but *asher* , which signifies only either *whom* or *which* .

Psalms 106:35

Mingled in their habits and negotiations, as also in marriages.

Psalms 106:36

Which idols were an occasion of their falling both into further and greater sins, as it follows, Psa_106:37,**38**; and into utter ruin, as this phrase also notes, Exo_23:33 Jud_2:12, &c.

Psalms 106:37

Of which heathenish practice, **See Poole "Lev_18:21"**.

Unto devils; by which expression he informeth them that they did not worship God, as they pretended and sometimes designed, but devils in their idols; and that those spirits which were supposed by the heathen idolaters to inhabit in their images, and which they worshipped in them, were not gods or good spirits, as they imagined, but evil spirits or devils. See Lev_17:7 Deu_32:17 1Co_10:20 Rev_9:20.

Psalms 106:38

Innocent blood; the blood of their children, who, though sinners before God, yet were innocent as to them, from any crime deserving such barbarous usage from them.

Psalms 106:39

Committed spiritual whoredom, by worshipping those idols which were but human inventions, and that in such an unnatural and bloody manner, as they had devised.

Psalms 106:40

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:41

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:42

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:43

Provoked him with their counsel, by forsaking God's counsel and the way which he had appointed, and following after their own inventions and evil inclinations, as charged them, Psa_106:39. See the like Num_15:30.

Psalms 106:44

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 106:45

His covenant; the covenant made with their father which, notwithstanding their horrible violation of it. made good unto them, and in consideration thereof delivered them.

Repented; changed his course and dealing with them, as penitent persons usually do. **See Poole** "Gen_6:6".

Psalms 106:46

By changing their opinions of them, and inclining their hearts towards them, which he had alienated from them **See Poole** "Psa_105:25".

Psalms 106:47

Save us, O Lord our God: O thou who hast so often pardoned and saved us, notwithstanding our former and manifold provocations, be thou pleased once more to deliver us.

In thy praise; in thy praiseworthy work wrought for us;

praise being put for actions worthy of praise, as it is here, above, Psa_106:2 1Ch_16:35 Psa_9:14 Phi_4:8, and oft elsewhere.

Psalms 106:48

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:1 PSALM 107

THE ARGUMENT

The most of the Psalms have a peculiar respect unto the church or people of God, or to some eminent members thereof; but there are some few Psalms which have a more general respect to all

nations, of which number this is one; wherein the psalmist discourseth of the merciful providence of God towards all mankind, and of his readiness to help them in all their distresses, some few particular instances whereof he mentioneth, and leaveth the rest to be understood, there being the same reason of all. But withal he takes notice also of God's judgments upon wicked persons and people. And by this representation of God's mercies and judgments, he invites all nations to an acknowledgment of the true God, to praise him for his favours, and to tremble at his judgments, which is their just duty and reasonable service.

An exhortation to the redeemed to praise and celebrate the Lord, and to observe his manifold providences, Psa_107:1-3; to strangers and captives, Psa_107:4-16; to sick, and sea-men, **Psa 107:17-32**; and to all others, commending them that carefully observe this, **Psa 107:33-43**.

This whole verse occurs also Psa_106:1; only there the address is made to the Israelites, and here to all mankind.

Psalms 107:2

The redeemed of the Lord; all they whom God hath redeemed, as it is expressed in the next clause, or delivered from all the following calamities.

Say so, to wit, that *the Lord is good* , &c., as it is Psa_107:1.

Of the enemy; of such as had taken them captives, either in battle, or in their travels, to which they were led by their own inclinations, or by their necessary occasions.

Psalms 107:3

Bringing them into their own land, out of the several quarters of the world into which they had been carried.

From the south, Heb. *from the sea* ; which in Scripture commonly notes the west, because the great midland sea was on the west of Canaan; but here, as it appears from the opposition of this to the

north, it notes the south, so called from the Red Sea, which was on the south, and which is sometimes called *the sea* , simply and without addition, as Psa_72:8 **114:3**.

Psalms 107:4

They wandered in the wilderness; mistaking their way, which they might easily do in the vast and sandy deserts of Arabia.

No city to dwell in; or rather, *no city or town inhabited* , where they might refresh themselves, as travellers used to do; for they did not go into the wilderness to seek for a city or habitation there, but only intended to pass through it, as appears by the context, and by the nature of the thing.

Psalms 107:5

Partly for want of necessary provisions, and partly through anguish of spirit.

Psalms 107:6

Unto the Lord, Heb. *unto Jehovah* , to the true God. For the heathens, of whom he speaks, had many of them some knowledge of the true God, and did in their manner worship him with and in their idols; and especially in their distresses, when they discovered the impotency of their idols, they did direct their prayer immediately to the true God, of which there are many instances of heathen writers.

He delivered them out of their distresses, in answer to their prayers, which he did not because their prayers were acceptable to him, but partly, out of the benignity and compassionateness of his nature to all his creatures; partly, to encourage and preserve the use of prayer and religion among the Gentiles, and to oblige them to a more diligent search after the knowledge of the true God, and of his worship; and partly, to give his own people assurance of his great readiness to hear and answer all those prayers which with upright hearts they offered to him according to his word.

Psalms 107:7

Led them forth out of the wilderness, where they had lost their way, Psa_107:4.

A city of habitation: See Poole "Psa_107:4".

Psalms 107:8

Oh that men would praise! Heb. *Let them praise* . Or, *They shall praise* , i.e. they are highly obliged to praise.

To the children of men; not only to his peculiar people, but to all mankind, to whom he is very kind and bountiful.

Psalms 107:9

The longing; either the thirsty, opposed to the hungry here following; or the hungry, as this general phrase is limited and expounded in the next clause.

With goodness; with the fruits of his goodness; *with good things* , Psa_103:5; with food and gladness, Act_14:17; with that good which they wanted and desired.

Psalms 107:10

In darkness and in the shadow of death; in a disconsolate and forlorn condition, in dark prisons or dungeons.

In affliction and iron; with afflicting or grievous irons. Or, *in the cords of affliction* , as they are called, Job_36:8, and particularly in iron fetters.

Psalms 107:11

Against the words of God; against God's commands, made known either,

1. By his written word delivered to the Jews, of which the Gentiles were not ignorant, which therefore they should have diligently inquired after and searched into, as the queen of Sheba came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and as divers of the heathens travelled into very remote parts to gain a more perfect knowledge of the arts and sciences; which will justly be laid to their charge, and condemn them for their neglect of that Divine wisdom which was treasured up in the Holy Scriptures. Or,

2. By the prophets, who sometimes were sent to the Gentiles. Or,

3. By the law and light of nature, and by its interpreters, their wise and learned philosophers, who delivered many excellent rules and precepts of piety and virtue, which were sufficient, though not for their salvation without Christ, yet for the conduct of their lives in a great measure, and to leave them without excuse for their gross disobedience thereunto.

Psalms 107:12

Their heart; the pride, and rebellion, and obstinacy of their hearts.

With labour; or, *with trouble* or *troubles* . They fell into their enemy's hands, and into hopeless and remediless miseries.

Psalms 107:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:16

He restored them to liberty in spite of all impediments and oppositions.

Psalms 107:17

Fools, i.e. wicked men, whom he calls *fools* , because of the mischiefs which through their own folly they bring upon themselves.

Because of their transgression, Heb. *because of the way of their transgression* , i.e. their custom and course of sinning, as the word *way* is used, Psa_1:1 Pro_2:12. They did not fall into sin once or twice, as good men may do, but it was their usual practice, and therefore they are justly punished.

Afflicted with wasting sickness, as appears from Psa_107:18,**20**. Compare Job_33:19, &c.; Psa_39:11, &c.

Psalms 107:18

Their soul ; either themselves with all their soul; or their appetite, as the soul is taken, Job_33:20 Isa_29:8. *Abhorreth all manner of meat* ; which is a Usual effect of great sickness. *They draw near unto the gates of death* ; they are sick well nigh unto death.

Psalms 107:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:20

His word; his command, or his blessing, which came with power.

Psalms 107:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:22

Sacrifices of thanksgiving; either properly so called; or praises and thanksgivings to God, which in Scripture are called sacrifices, because they are no less acceptable to God than costly sacrifices.

Psalms 107:23

Go down to the sea; he saith *go down* , either because the sea or the shore of it is commonly lower than their habitations from whence they come, or than the natural or artificial banks which are raised to prevent the inundation of the waters; or because the sea is lower than the earth, as may be gathered from the rivers which run down into it.

Do business; whose occupation lies there, either as merchants or as mariners.

Psalms 107:24

His wonderful works, either,

1. Of creation, fishes of various kinds and shapes, and some of prodigious greatness, which are unknown to other men. Or,
2. Of providence, in raising and laying storms, of which he speaks in the following verses

Psalms 107:25

The winds and storms come not by chance, but by the disposition of Divine Providence.

Psalms 107:26

To the depths; towards the bottom of the sea.

Because of trouble; through the perplexity of their minds, and fear of sudden and violent death.

Psalms 107:27

Stagger like a drunken man; not so much from the giddiness of their heads, which is not usual in persons accustomed to the sea, as through the violent and various motions of the sea and the ship.

Psalms 107:28

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:29

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:30

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:31

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 107:32

In the congregation of the people; not only in their own hearts and families, but even in public assemblies, and before all persons, as they have opportunity.

In the assembly of the elders; the magistrates or rulers; who are here opposed to the people. The sense is, Let them not be ashamed nor afraid to speak of God's wonderful works and praises before the greatest of men, as mean persons commonly are. Compare Psa_119:46. Or he mentions the elders particularly, because they were most apt to neglect and forget God, and to exalt themselves above and against him; and therefore it was meet and necessary that they should be acquainted with the almighty power and universal providence and dominion of God, that they themselves might learn subjection and reverence to God, and might promote it among their people.

Psalms 107:33

Rivers; either,

1. Properly so called; which he can divert or dry up when he pleaseth, as sometimes he hath done. Or rather,

2. Those grounds which are well watered, and therefore very fruitful, as the next verse explains this. And so

the water-springs, here and Psa_107:35, and *the standing water* , **Psa 107 35,** are taken.

Into a wilderness; into a dry ground, as it follows, which is like a parched and barren wilderness.

Psalms 107:34

Into barrenness, Heb. *into saltness* , which procures barrenness. See Deu_29:23 Jud_9:45.

For the wickedness of them that dwell therein; he doth not inflict these judgments by choice, or without cause, but for the punishment of sin in some, and the prevention of it in others.

Psalms 107:35

Into a standing water; into a well-watered and fruitful land.

Psalms 107:36

The hungry; poor people; who could not provide for themselves, or were banished from their own land by potent oppressors, and were driven into wildernesses, like them Job_30:3, which God in pity to them made fruitful.

Psalms 107:37

May yield, Heb. and *they shall make or procure* from their fields and vineyards.

Fruits of increase; such fruits as they use to produce.

Psalms 107:38

Preserves them from abortion and deadly diseases, and on the contrary causeth them to increase, as he said in the former branch, which is here repeated in other words, after the sane manner.

Psalms 107:39

They, these poor men, who, when they are exalted and blessed by God, kick at him, and grow insolent and secure, as the returner of men is,

are minished and brought low; are by God's just judgment diminished in their numbers and in their blessings.

Through oppression, affliction, and sorrow; or, *through wicked oppression*, (by the tyranny of others, whom God sends to spoil them of their abused riches,) *and by other griefs* or grievous calamities which God inflicts.

Psalms 107:40

He poureth contempt upon princes; those who were honourable and adored like gods by their people, and terrible to all their enemies, he renders them despicable to their own subjects, and to other nations; and this he doth suddenly, abundantly, and unavoidably, as this phrase of *pouring it out upon* them seems to

imply. *To wander in the wilderness, where there is no way ;* either,

1. He giveth them up to foolish and pernicious counsels, by which they are exposed to contempt, and brought to their wit's end, not knowing what course to take. Or,

2. He banished them from their own courts and kingdoms, and forced them to flee into desolate wildernesses for shelter and subsistence.

Psalms 107:41

Yet setteth he the poor on high: and whilst he bringeth down great potentates, at the same time he advanceth those who were obscure and contemptible. Like a flock, which increase very much in a little time.

Psalms 107:42

Shall see it; or rather, *these things* , as it is expressed in the next verse. They shall diligently observe these wonderful works of God's mercy and justice.

Rejoice; not only in the mercies of God vouchsafed to them and to other persons in want and misery, but also in God's judgments upon his implacable enemies, which afford matter of rejoicing to good men, as hath been once and again declared in this book, both for the honour which God hath by them, and for the sins and calamities of others, which by this means are prevented. *Iniquity* , i.e. unrighteous or ungodly men, the abstract being put for the concrete, as *faithfulnesses for the faithful* , Psa_12:1, and pride for the proud, Psa_36:11. *Shall stop her mouth* ; shall be put to silence. So this or the like phrase is used, Jud_18:19 Job_5:16 **21:5 29:9**. They who used to *speak loftily and wickedly* , and to set their mouth against the heavens, as they did, Psa_73:8,9, to reproach God and his providence, as either negligent or unrighteous in the management of the world, shall now be forced to acknowledge his power and justice in those judgments which he hath brought upon them.

Psalms 107:43

Whoso is wise, and will observe these things; or, *who* (for the Hebrew particle *mi* is interrogative) *is wise ? for* (as the conjunctive particle is frequently used) *he will observe these*

things . All who are truly wise will consider all these events, and lay them to heart, as being very useful for their own instruction.

Even they, or *each of them* , all such wise and considering persons,

shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord; will see and acknowledge that God is kind or *good to all* , and that *his tender mercies are over all his works* , as it is said, Psa_145:9, and singularly kind and gracious to all wise and godly men.

Psalms 108:1 PSALM 108

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is almost word for word taken out of two foregoing Psalms, the first five verses out of Psa_57:7-11, and the rest out of Psa_60:5, &c., to which the reader must resort for the explication of it. This only is observable, that the psalmist designing to take the body of this Psalm out of **Psa 60**, doth industriously lay aside that mournful preface, Psa_60:1-4, and borrows one more pleasant out of **Psa 57**. The reason of which change is supposed to be this, that **Psa 60** was composed in the time of his danger and distress, and the latter after his deliverance.

David rouseth up himself to praise the Lord, Psa_108:1-4; praying also for assistance, being fully assured of it, against his enemies, Psa_108:5-13.

Either,

1. With my heart or soul, which is fixed for that work, as he said in the former branch. Or rather,
2. With my tongue, which is called a man's *glory* , Psa_16:9, compared with Act_2:26. So the first branch describes the fixedness of his heart, to which this adds the expressions of his mouth.

Psalms 108:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:10

This he repeats in this place, either because, though the enemies were defeated and subdued, yet there was some strong city or cities which were not yet taken; or in way of thankful commemoration of God's goodness in answering his former requests, as if he had said, I remember this day, to thy glory and my own comfort, my former straits and dangers, which made mine cry out, *Who will bring me , &c.?*

Psalms 108:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 108:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 109:1 PSALM 109

THE ARGUMENT

It is sufficiently evident from the body of this Psalm, that it was composed by David when he was in a state of persecution, either by Saul or by Absalom; and that amongst and above all the rest of his enemies he takes very particular notice of, and breaks forth into vehement expressions of anger against one particular person

which whether it were Doeg or Ahithophel is not certain, nor at all necessary to know. But as David was, and very well knew himself to be, a type of Christ, and consequently his enemies did typify or represent the enemies of Christ, and this particular adversary of his did represent some singular and eminent enemy of Christ, which though David might not, yet the Spirit of God which indited this Psalm did, know to be Judas, and accordingly directed all these bitter invectives and imprecations against him, who deserved and received far worse punishments for his monstrous wickedness than all which are here mentioned. And that he was the person principally aimed at in this Psalm, will seem very probable to him who considers David's mild and merciful temper even towards his enemies, which he both professed in words in this very book, as Psa_35:12,14, and practised in deeds, as 2Sa_16:10,11 19:22,23, and withal the severity of these imprecations, reaching not only to the persons of his enemies but to their children, who yet by the law of God were not to suffer for their parents' sins, Deu_24:16.

David, complaining of his false accusers, who requited him evil for good, devoteth them and their children to all misery and oblivion, Psa_109:1-15, because of their unmercifulness and cruelty, **Psa 109:16-20**; showeth his great affliction, prayeth for deliverance, and promiseth thankfulness, **Psa 109:21-31**.

Hold not thy peace; do not neglect me, but take notice of my extreme danger and misery, and deliver me, which thou canst do by the speaking of one word. *O God of my praise* ; the author and matter of all my praises; who hast given me continual occasion to praise thee, whom I have used to praise, and will praise whilst I live; do not therefore now give me occasion to turn my praises into lamentations.

Psalms 109:2

Of the deceitful; of those who add hypocrisy and perfidiousness to their malice.

Are opened; they speak freely, boldly, and publicly, without any fear or shame.

Against me; or, *to or with me* , as this particle commonly signifies.

With a lying tongue; either,

1. With calumnies, or false and malicious reports. Or,
2. With deep dissimulation and professions of friendship and kindness.

Psalms 109:3

Words of hatred; which, though covered with specious pretences, proceeded from deep malice and hatred, and were designed to work my destruction.

Without a cause; without any just provocation given them by me.

Psalms 109:4

For my love they are my adversaries; they requite my love and good will with enmity and mischief, as it is explained, Psa_109:5.

But I give myself unto prayer, Heb. *but I prayer* , i.e. I am a man of prayer, or I betake myself to prayer. Thus *I peace* is put for *I am for peace* , as we render it, Psa_120:7; and thy bread for the men of thy bread, or that eat thy bread, **Ob 7**. The sense is, Whilst they reproach and curse me, I pray either,

1. For them, as he did, Psa_35:13; or,
2. For myself: I did not render unto them evil for evil, but quietly committed myself and my cause to God by prayer, desiring him to plead my cause against them; and I had no other refuge.

Psalms 109:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 109:6

A wicked man, Heb. *the wicked* ; which may be understood either,

1. Of some wicked tyrant, which may rule him with rigour and cruelty. Or,
2. Of Satan, who is mentioned in the next clause. Let him be delivered over to Satan, to be acted and ruled by him at his pleasure. *Over him* ; either,

1. All mine enemies; for the singular number is sometimes used in like manner. Or rather,

2. One particular enemy, who was worse than any of the rest, more implacable and inexcusable, whom he thought not fit to express by name, nor was it in the least necessary to do so, because he was. speaking to God, who knew his thoughts, and whom he meant.

Stand at his right hand; either,

1. To molest and vex him, and hinder him in all his affairs; for the right hand is the great instrument of action. Or rather,

2. To accuse him; for this was the place and posture of accusers in the Jewish courts. And as for his condemnation, which is the consequence of this accusation, that follows in the next verse.

Psalms 109:7

When he shall be judged; when he shall be called to an account, and his cause examined before thy tribunal.

Let his prayer become sin, i.e. be turned into sin, or be imputed to him as his sin, or be as unavailable with God for his relief as his sins. When he makes supplication to his Judge, as Job speaks, Job_9:15, for pity and pardon, let him be the more provoked and enraged by it.

Psalms 109:8

Let his days be few; the days of his life. Let him die an untimely death.

His office, made void by his death. He also implies that his enemy was a man of power and reputation.

Psalms 109:9

Fatherless; whilst they are but children, and so unable to provide for themselves.

A widow; either made a widow by his death; or constantly a widow; all persons abhorring her who was related to so vile a miscreant.

Psalms 109:10

Vagabonds; having no certain place of abode; which is a grievous curse in itself, Gen_4:12,14 Isa 16:2.

And beg; this increaseth their misery.

Desolate places; into which they are fled for fear and shame, as not daring to show their faces amongst men.

Psalms 109:11

Extortioner; or, *usurer* , or *creditor* . *Catch* , Heb. *insnare* , which is an emphatical expression, i.e. take away not only by oppression and violence, but also by cheats and cunning artifices, whereby such persons entangle, and so ruin their debtors.

The strangers; who have no right to his goods, and will use no pity nor measure in spoiling him.

His labour; all the fruits of his labours.

Psalms 109:12

Let him and his be unpitied and hated as the public enemies of mankind.

Psalms 109:13

In the generation following, Heb. *in another generation* ; either in the third generation, or in the second, or that which next followed the generation of his fathers. So in this clause he limits the time of that destruction which he imprecates or foretells in the former.

Psalms 109:14

Be remembered against him, or punished in him, as God hath threatened to deal with great delinquents, Exo_20:5.

Psalms 109:15

Let them, the sins of his parents last mentioned, be before Lord; in God's sight and memory, to provoke God them: let them not be covered or pardoned.

Psalms 109:16

Remembered not his duty to God, and his obligation to me my former kindness, expressed Psa_109:4,5.

The poor and needy man; myself, who was desolate and miserable, whose required pity, and not additions of cruelty.

The broken in heart; whose spirit was grieved, and even broken the burden of his calamities.

Psalms 109:17

Cursing; either,

1. Cursed or sinful courses. Or rather,

2. To curse others, as appears from the blessing here opposed to it, and from the next verse; to wish and to procure to others, and especially to me.

In blessing; in and promoting the welfare of others, which indeed an eye-sore and torment to him.

Psalms 109:18

A garment; which a man wears constantly, and that as

Like water; which when a man drinks, goes bowels, and searcheth all the inwards of his belly.

Like oil; which is more piercing than water, and being applied to outward parts, reacheth even to the bones and marrow

Psalms 109:19

Which cleaves closer and faster to a man than a garment, than the Eastern garments did, which were large and loose.

Psalms 109:20

Of mine adversaries; of those who were confederate with that arch enemy in his wicked enterprise.

Against my soul; with design to take away my life.

Psalms 109:21

Do thou for me, to wit, what I desire, which he expressing the next clause. Or, *do thou act for me* ; be not or still, but stir up thyself to work on my behalf.

For my name's sake; for the glory of thy faithfulness, which highly concerned in giving me the deliverance which thou hast promised to me.

Thy mercy is good, i.e. gracious, ready to do good to all, but especially to those that and fear thee. *As sin* is said to be *sinful* , **Ro 7**, so God's mercy may be said to be merciful, to wit, in degree, and above the mercy of all the creatures

Psalms 109:22

I am poor and needy; and therefore a very proper object for thy pity and help. I am wounded not slightly, but to the very heart with soul-piercing sorrows.

Psalms 109:23

I am gone, Heb. *I am made to go* ; either,

1. From place to place; which was David's case, when he was persecuted by Saul and by Absalom; and Christ's case upon earth, where he had no certain place

where to lay his head: Mat_8:20. Or,

2. Into the grave, as this phrase is used, 1Ch_17:11 Psa_58:8, and oft elsewhere. Declineth; towards the evening, when, the sun setting, it vanisheth instantly, and irrecoverably, until the sun rise again, which it never will do to me in this world, when once I am gone out of it.

As the locust; which of itself is unstable, continually skipping from place to place, and is easily driven away with every wind; so am I exposed to perpetual and successive changes within myself, and to a thousand violences and mischiefs from other persons and things.

Psalms 109:24

Through fasting; either with voluntary fasts, to which the frequency and long continuance of my calamities obliged me; or with forced fasts, sometimes through want of necessary provisions, but most commonly from that loathing of meat, which was occasioned by his excessive sorrows and terrors. **See Poole** "Psa_58:8".

Of fatness; or, for want of fatness. See the like Hebrew phrases Gen_18:26 Jer_48:45 Lam_4:9.

Psalms 109:25

Instead of that pity which either religion or humanity should have taught them to a man in extreme misery, they loaded me with reproaches and scorns.

Shaked their heads; a gesture of contempt and derision; of which see Job_16:4 Psa_22:7.

Psalms 109:26

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 109:27

Know; being convinced of the eminency, and singularity, and strangeness of the work.

Psalms 109:28

Let them curse; I can patiently bear their curses, as being causeless, and fully compensated by thy blessing. Or, *they do and will curse* , I expect nothing else from them.

Arise, i.e. bestir themselves against me. Both God and men are oft said to arise when they enter upon any undertaking, as Jos_24:9 Jud_8:21 2Ch_13:6 **21:4**, &c.

Psalms 109:29

For the disappointment of their wicked hopes and designs, and for that unexpected destruction which they have brought upon themselves.

Psalms 109:30

For that deliverance which I confidently expect.

Among the multitude; or, *among the mighty* , or *great men* , as this word sometimes signifies. Compare Psa_119:46.

Psalms 109:31

At the right hand of the poor, to defend him from his adversary, who stood in that place to accuse him, and to procure his condemnation and destruction. **See Poole "Psa_109:6"**.

That condemn his soul; that pass a sentence of death upon him.

Psalms 110:1 PSALM 110

THE ARGUMENT

That the penman of this Psalm was not Eliezer, Abraham's servant, who writ it upon the occasion of Abraham's victory over those kings, **Ge 14**, (as some of the later Jews have devised, out of opposition to Christianity,) nor any other person but David, is manifest from the title of the Psalm, which is a part of the sacred text. That this Psalm belongs to the Messiah is abundantly evident, both from the express testimony of the New Testament,

Act_2:34 1Co_15:25 Heb_1:13 **10:13**, and from the consent of the ancient Hebrew doctors, manifested implicitly in Mat_22:44, and expressly from their own mouths. Of which see my Latin Synopsis upon this place; and from the matter of the Psalm, which can by no means or arts be made to agree to David, who was not *David 's lord nor a priest* , much less *a priest forever* , or *after the order of Melchisedek* , the priesthood of Aaron being in David's time in use and force, and in the hands of another person and family. And whereas divers other Psalms, though principally directed to and to be understood of the Messiah, yet in some sort may be understood concerning David also, or at least took their rise and occasion from David, or from something relating to him, this Psalm is directly, and immediately, and solely to be understood concerning the Messiah; the Spirit of God wisely so ordering this matter, that it might be a most express and convincing testimony against the unbelieving Jews concerning the true Messiah, and concerning the nature and quality of his kingdom.

Written by David, as is manifest both from this title, which being given to this, as well as to many other Psalms, whereof David is confessed to be the author, either proves this to be David's, or proves none of them to be so; and from Mat_22:43,**44 Mr 12:36**, where also David is said to have spoken this Psalm in or by the Spirit of God, or by Divine inspiration.

An account of the calling the kingdom of Christ, Psa_110:1-3; of his everlasting priesthood, Psa_110:4; of his mighty conquest over his enemies, Psa_110:5,**6**; and of his sufferings and triumph, Psa_110:7.

The Lord; God the Father, the first person in the Trinity, to whom accordingly the original of all things, and especially of the work of man's redemption by Christ, is ascribed.

Said; decreed or appointed it from eternity, and in due time published this decree, as is noted, Psa_2:7, and actually executed it; which he did when he raised up Christ from the dead, and brought him into his heavenly mansion.

Unto my Lord; unto his Son the Messias, whom David designedly calls his Lord, to admonish the Jews and the whole

church, that although he was his son according to the flesh, or his human nature, Act_2:34 Rom_1:3, yet he had a higher nature and original, and was also his *Lord* , as being by nature God blessed for ever, and consequently *Lord of all things* , as he is called, Act_10:36; and by office, as he was God-man, the Lord and King of the whole church, and of all the world for the church's sake. And this was a necessary provision, to prevent that scandal which the Holy Ghost foresaw the Jews and others would be apt to take at the meanness of Christ's appearance in the flesh. The Hebrew word *Adon* is one of God's titles, signifying his *power and authority or lordship* over all things, and therefore is most fitly given to the Messias, to whom God hath delegated all his power in the world, Mat_28:18.

Sit thou at my right hand: thou who hast for many years been veiled with infirm and mortal flesh, despised, and rejected, and trampled upon by men, and persecuted unto the death, do thou now take to thyself thy great and just power; thou hast done thy work upon earth, now take thy rest, and the possession of that sovereign kingdom and glory which by right belongeth to thee: do thou rule with me with equal power and majesty, as thou art God; and with an authority and honour far above all creatures, such as is next to mine, as thou art man; as this phrase is expounded in other places. See Mar_16:19 Luk_22:69 1Co_15:25 Heb_1:3,**13 8:1 10:12,13 Eph 1:20**, &c. It is a metaphor from the custom of earthly princes, who place those persons whom they honour most at their right hand; of which see 1Ki_2:19 Psa_45:9 Mat_20:21. *Sitting* is put for *reigning* , 1Ki_3:6, compared with 2Ch_1:8, and withal notes the continuance of the reign, 1Co_15:25.

Until doth not necessarily note the end or expiration of his kingdom at that time; for in other places it notes only the continuance of things till such time, without excluding the time following, as is evident from Gen_28:15 Psa_112:8 Mat_1:25. So here it may signify that his kingdom should continue so long, even in the midst of his enemies, and in spite of all their power and malice, which was the only thing which was liable to any doubt; for that he should continue to reign after the conquest and utter ruin of all his enemies was out of all question. And yet this is a word of limitation, in regard of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ,

in respect of which Christ rules with a delegated power, as his Father's viceroy, and with the use of outward means, and instruments, and ordinances, &c., for that manner of administration shall cease; which also seems to be intimated by this word, as it is expounded 1Co_15:25.

I make, by my almighty power communicated to thee as God by eternal generation, and vouchsafed to thee as Mediator, to enable thee to the full discharge of thine office.

Thine enemies; which also are the enemies of thy church; all persecutors and ungodly men, who *will not have* Christ to rule over them, Luk_19:14; sin, and death, and the devil, 1Co_15:26.

Thy footstool; thy slaves and vassals to be put to the meanest and basest services, as this phrase implies, 1Ki_5:3 Psa_18:39 **91:13**; being taken from the manner of Eastern princes, who used to tread upon the necks of their conquered enemies, as we read, Jos_10:24 Jud_1:7. And long after those times Sapoors the Persian emperor trod upon Valerian emperor of the Romans, and Tamerlane used to tread upon Bajazet the Turkish emperor, whom he kept in an iron cage for that purpose.

Psalms 110:2

Send; or, *send forth*, into the world. *The rod of thy strength*; thy strong or powerful rod, by a usual Hebraism. And the rod is put for his sceptre, or kingly power, as it is Isa_10:24 Jer_48:17 Eze_7:10, **11 19:11,12**. But as the kingdom of Christ is not carnal, or of this world, Joh_18:36, but spiritual; so this rod or sceptre is nothing else but his word published by himself, or by his apostles and ministers, and accompanied with his Spirit, by which the Messias did his great exploits, and set up and established his kingdom, converting some of his enemies, and confounding and destroying others of them, by that same instrument, as is manifest by comparing Isa_2:3 **11:4** Mic_4:2 2Co_10:4 2Th_2:8. Hence this word is called *the word of the kingdom*, Mat_13:19, and *the power of God*, Rom_1:16. David having spoken of the Messias, Psa_110:1, now turneth his speech to him. *Out of Zion*; from Jerusalem, which is frequently understood by the name of Zion, which was an eminent and venerable part of it, as Psa_48:13 **87:2 102:13,16**, &c.; where the sceptre of the Messias was first to be

established according to the predictions of the prophets, Psa_2:6,8 48:3 Isa_2:3, &c.; to which the event exactly answered, Luk_24:47 Act_1:4 2:1,2, &c.; and from whence it was to be sent forth into all the parts and kingdoms of the world, to bring in the Gentiles, which also the prophets had foretold, as Isa_2:3, and in divers of the foregoing Psalms, as hath been already frequently observed and proved.

Rule thou; thou shalt rule; the imperative being here put for the future, as it is Gen_12:12 Psa_37:27, and oft elsewhere. For this is not a command, but a prediction or a promise that he shall rule; which he doth partly by his grace, converting some, and so ruling their hearts by his word and Spirit, and subduing their lusts in them, and their external enemies for them; and partly by his powerful providence, whereby he defends his church and people, and subdues and punisheth all their adversaries.

In the midst of thine enemies; who shall see it, and do what they can to oppose thy dominion, but shall never be able to hinder it, but shall split themselves against it.

Psalms 110:3

Thy people; thy subjects.

Shall be willing, Heb. *willingnesses* , i.e. most willing, as such plural words are frequently used, as Psa_5:10 21:7. Or, *free-will offerings* , as the word properly signifies; whereby he may intimate the difference between the worship of the Old Testament and that of the New. They shall offer and present unto thee as their King and Lord, not oxen, or sheep, or goats, as they did under the law, but themselves, their souls and' bodies, as living sacrifices, as they are called, Rom_12:1, and as free-will offerings, *giving up themselves to the Lord* , 2Co_8:5, to live to him, and to die and be offered for him. The sense is, Thou shalt have friends and subjects as well as enemies, and thy subjects shall not yield thee a forced and feigned obedience, as those who are subject to or conquered by earthly princes frequently do, of which see on Psa_18:44,45, but shall most willingly, and readily, and cheerfully obey all thy commands, without any dispute, or delay, or reservation; and they shall not need to be pressed to thy

service, but shall voluntarily list themselves and fight under thy banner against all thy enemies.

In the day of thy power; when thou shalt take into thy hands *the rod of thy strength* , as it is called, Psa_110:2, and set up thy kingdom in the world, and put forth thy mighty power in the preaching of thy word, and winning souls to thyself by it. Or, *in the day of thine army* , or forces; when thou shalt raise thine army, consisting of apostles, and other preachers and professors of the gospel, and shalt send them forth to conquer the world unto thyself.

In the beauties of holiness; adorned with the beautiful and glorious robes of righteousness and true holiness, wherewith all new men or true Christians are clothed, Eph_4:24; compare Rev_19:5,14; with various gifts and graces of God's Spirit, which are beautiful in the eyes of God and of all good men. The last clause noted the inward disposition, the willingness, of Christ's subjects, and this notes their outward habit and deportment; wherein there seems to be an allusion either,

1. To the beautiful and glorious garments of the Levitical priests, all Christians being *priests unto God* , Rev_1:6 1Pe_2:5,9. Or,

2. To the military robes wherewith soldiers are furnished and adorned, all Christians being soldiers in the Christian warfare. But the words are and may well be rendered thus, *in the beauties or glories of the sanctuary* , i.e. by a usual Hebraism, in the beautiful and glorious sanctuary, which is called the *holy and beautiful house* , Isa_64:11; either in the temple at Jerusalem, which was honoured with Christ's presence, whereby it excelled the glory of the first house, according to **Hag 2 9**, in which both Christ and the apostles preached, and by their preaching made many of these willing people; or in Jerusalem, which is oft called the holy place or city, by the same word which is here rendered sanctuary; or in the church of God and of Christ, which was the antitype of the old sanctuary or temple, as is evident from **1Co 3 16,17** **2Co_6:16** **Heb_3:6** **1 Pet. it. 5**. And this place may be mentioned as the place either where Christ's people are made willing, and show their willingness, or where Christ exerciseth and manifesteth that power last mentioned. *From the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew*

of thy youth . This place is judged the most difficult and obscure of any in this whole book. The words are diversly rendered and understood. They are to be understood either,

1. Of Christ himself; and that in respect either,

1. Of his Divine and eternal generation, which may be called

the dew of his youth or birth, and which he may be said to have had from the womb of the morning, before the first morning or light was created, or brought out of its womb; that is, before the world was, which is a common description of eternity in Scripture. Or,

2. Of his human nature and birth; and so the words may be thus rendered, *from the womb of the morning* (or, as it is rendered by divers others, *from the womb, from the morning* , i.e. from thy very first birth) *thou hast or hadst the dew of thy youth* , i.e. those eminent blessings and graces wherewith thou wast enriched, or thy youth or childhood was like the dew, precious and acceptable. Or rather,

2. Of Christ's subjects or people, of whom he evidently spoke in the former part of the verse, wherewith these words are joined. And it seems not probable that the psalmist, after he had discoursed of Christ's advancement to his kingdom, and his administration of it, and success in it, both as to his enemies and friends, would run back to his birth, either Divine or human, both which were evidently and necessarily supposed in what he had already said of him. But then these words may be read either,

1. Separately, as two distinct clauses, as they seem to be taken by our English translators, and by the colon which they placed in the middle. And so the first clause belongs to the foregoing words, as noting the time when *the people should be willing* , which having declared more generally in those words,

in the day of thy power, he now describes more particularly and exactly, that they should be so even from the morning, or in a poetical strain, which is very suitable to this book, *from the womb of the morning* , to wit, of that day of his power, i.e. from the very beginning of Christ's entrance upon his kingdom, which was after his resurrection and ascension into heaven, and from the very first

preaching of the gospel after that time, when multitudes were made Christ's willing people by the preaching of the apostles, as we read, **Ac 2 Ac 3 Ac 4 Ac 5**, &c. And for the second clause, it is to be understood thus, *thou hast* , or, as it is in the Hebrew, *to thee is, the dew of thy youth* , or *of thy childhood* ; for the word *jeled* , from which this is derived, signifies sometimes *young man* , and sometimes a *child* or *infant* . By *youth* or *childhood* , he here seems to understand those young men or children which shall be born to the Messiah, who are called his *children* , Heb_2:13, and *his seed* , Isa_53:10, wherein possibly there might be an allusion to this *dew* . Thus the abstract is here put for the concrete, which is very frequent in the Hebrew tongue, as *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* are put for the circumcised and the uncircumcised, &c. And even in the Latin tongue this very word *youth* is oft used for *a young man* , or for *a company* of young men. By *the dew of youth* he means *youth* or young men like *dew* , the note of similitude being oft understood. And this progeny of Christ is compared to the dew, partly because of their great multitude, being, like drops of dew, innumerable, and covering the whole face of the earth; see **2Sa 17 12**; and partly because of the strange manner of their generation, which, like that of the dew, is done suddenly and secretly, and not perceived till it be accomplished, and to the admiration of those that behold it; of which see **Isa 49 21**. Or,

2. Jointly, as one entire sentence, *the dew of thy youth* (i.e. thy posterity, which is like the dew, as was noted and explained before) is as the dew (which may very well be understood out of the foregoing clause, as the word *feet* is understood in like manner, Psa_18:33, *He maketh my feet like hinds ' feet) of or from the womb of the morning* ; it is like the *morning dew* , as it is called both in Scripture, as Hos_5:4, and in other authors. Nor is it strange that a womb is ascribed to the morning, seeing we read of *the womb of the sea* , and of the womb of the ice and frost, Job_38:8,**28,29**.

Psalms 110:4

Hath sworn; which he did not in the Aaronical priesthood, Heb_7:21, but did it here, partly because the thing was new and strange, and might seem incredible, because God had already

erected another, and that *an everlasting priesthood* , Num_25:13, and given it to Aaron and his posterity for ever, and therefore this needed all possible assurance; and partly that his priesthood might be established upon better promises, as is said, Heb_8:6, and made sure and irrevocable, and such that God neither could nor would repent of it, as it follows.

Thou art, to wit, by my order and constitution; thou shalt be so, and I do hereby make thee so.

A Priest, as well as a King. Those offices which were divided before between two families, are both united and invested in thee, both being absolutely necessary for the discharge of thine office, and for the establishment of thy kingdom, which is of another kind than the kingdoms of the world, spiritual and heavenly, and therefore needs such a King as is also a minister of holy things. This word plainly discovers that this Psalm cannot be understood of David, as some of the Jews would have it, but only of the Messiah. And although this word *cohen* be sometimes used of a prince or great person in the state, as the Jews object, yet it cannot be so understood here, partly, because it signifies a priest in Gen_14:18, from whence this expression is borrowed; partly, because that word is never used of a sovereign prince or king, (such as the Jews confess the Messiahs to be,) but only of inferior princes or ministers of state, as Gen_41:45 2Sa_8:18; partly, because such an inconsiderable assertion would never have been ushered in by so solemn an oath, especially after far greater things had been said of him in the same kind, Psa_110:1-3 and partly, because the Messiah is called a *Priest* , Zec_6:13; compare Jer_23:21 **35:15,18**. *For ever* ; not to be interrupted or translated to another person, as the priesthood of Aaron was upon the death of the priest, but to be continued to thee for ever.

After the order of Melchizedek, or, *after the manner* , &c.; so as he was a priest and also a king, and both without any successor and without end, in the sense intended, Heb_7:3.

Psalms 110:5

The Lord; either,

1. God the Father, whose words and oath he last mentioned, Psa_110:4. So this is an apostrophe of the psalmist to Christ, Thy

God and Father is at thy right hand, to wit, to defend and assist thee, as that phrase is used, Psa_16:8 **109:31**, and elsewhere. See Poole "Psa_110:1".

And he, to wit, God the Father,

shall strike, & c., as it follows. Although this latter clause may belong to the Messias; and as in the former he spake to him, so in this he speaketh of him; such changes of persons being very frequent in this book. Or,

2. God the Son, or

the Lord, who is at thy right hand, as was said before, Psa_110:1,

shall strike, & c. So this is an apostrophe to God the Father concerning his Son. This seems best to agree with the following verses; for it is evident that it is the same person

who strikes through kings, and judgeth among the heathen, and *fillet* , &c. And so this whole verse, and those which follow, speak of one person, which seems most probable.

Shall strike through kings shall mortally wound and destroy all those kings and potentates who are obstinate enemies to him and to his church.

In the day of his wrath; in the day of battle, when he shall contend with them, and pour forth the floods of his wrath upon them.

Psalms 110:6

Shall judge; either,

1. Conquer and govern them; or rather,

2. Condemn and punish them, as it is explained in the following clauses, and as this word is used, Gen_15:14 Rom_2:1,2 1Pe_4:6, and elsewhere.

The places; or, the place of battle, which is necessarily supposed in the fight, and therefore may very well be understood. *Dead bodies of his enemies* , slain by his hand, and lying in the field in great numbers and heaps, and that unburied, to their greater infamy.

Shall wound the heads, Heb. *the head* ; which may be understood, either,

1. Of some one person and eminent adversary of Christ, and of his kingdom; either the devil, by comparing this with Gen_3:15 Heb_2:14, who was indeed the head or ruler of many countries, and indeed of all nations, except that of Israel; or the Roman empire, which was the great enemy and obstructor of Christ's kingdom, and therefore was to be destroyed by him, as is declared, Dan_2:44, **45 7:7**, &c.; or the great antichrist, or the beast after which the whole world wondered, Rev_13:3, which Christ will destroy, as we read, 2Th_2:8, and in divers places of St. John's Revelation. Or,

2. Of all those heads or princes which opposed him; the singular number *head* being here put collectively for *heads* , as is very usual in the Hebrew tongue and text; and so the meaning is, that none of Christ's enemies, though never so many or great, and their empire be never so large and potent, shall be able to withstand his force, or escape out of his hand; and that he shall not only destroy the common soldiers, but also their greatest commanders and princes, who in such cases do frequently make their escape. But this and the other like passages, both here and in the prophets, are not to be understood grossly and carnally, but spiritually, according to the nature of Christ's kingdom, the weapons of Christ's warfare, by which he accomplished his great works, being spiritual; and therefore such must be his battles and judgments, as is evident from many other scriptures, although these also are followed many times with temporal plagues.

Psalms 110:7

He shall drink of the brook in the way: this may be understood either,

1. Properly, to express the fervency and diligence of the Messiah in the prosecution of his business; who having routed and destroyed the main body of his enemies' forces, pursues those that fled with such eagerness, that he will not lose any time in refreshing himself, as might seem necessary after such hot and hard service, but will content himself with drinking a little water out of the brook which he finds in his way, that being a little

refreshed therewith he may proceed with more rigour and efficacy in his work. And so this place alludes to the history of Gideon's three hundred men, who only lapped a little of the water; of whom see **Jud 7**. Or,

2. Metaphorically, to express the humiliation and passion of the Messiah, and thereby to prevent a great mistake which might arise in men's minds concerning him, from the great successes and victories here ascribed to him, which might induce them to think that the Messiah should be exempted from all sufferings, and be crowned with constant and perpetual triumphs. To confute this conceit, he intimates here that the Messiah, before he should obtain that power and glory mentioned in the foregoing verses, should have a large portion of afflictions in the way to it, or whilst he was in the way or course of his life, before he came to his end or rest, and to that honour of sitting at his Father's right hand. *Waters* in Scripture do very frequently signify afflictions or sufferings, as *Psa_42:7*, &c. *To drink* of them, signifies to feel or bear them, as *Isa_51:17 Jer_25:15 49:12 Mat_20:22*; and in this case it may note Christ's willing submission to them.

A brook or *river* of water is oft used in Scripture to express a great abundance, either of comforts, as *Psa_36:8*, or of tribulations, *Psa_18:4 124:4*; and therefore may be more fitly used in this place than a cup, by which the afflictions of other men are commonly expressed, to intimate that the sufferings of the Messiah were unspeakably more and heavier than the sufferings of other men, and that he should drink up not a small cup, but the whole river or sea of his Father's wrath due to our sins.

Therefore, which word may note either the effect or the consequent of his sufferings,

shall he lift up the head, i.e. shall be delivered from all his sorrows and sufferings, and exalted to great glory, and joy, and felicity, as this phrase usually signifies, as *Psa_3:3 27:6 Jer_52:31*, and oft elsewhere; as, on the contrary, to *hang down the head*, is a signification of great grief and shame, as *Lam_2:10*.

Psalms 111:1 PSALM 111

THE ARGUMENT

The excellency of this Psalm appears, as from other things, so from the psalmist's care to digest the several parcels of it into an exact order, according to the order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, that it might be better fixed in the memories of those who read it. It is a short, yet full, commemoration of God's works.

The psalmist by his own example exhorteth all men to praise God, Psa_111:1; rehearseth his glorious and wonderful works, Psa_111:2-4; his keeping covenant with them that fear him, Psa_111:5-9; whose fear is the beginning of wisdom, Psa_111:10.

Of the upright; of the sincere worshippers of God, of the Israel of God, as this very word is explained, Num_23:10; where they who are called Israel in one clause, are called *righteous* or *upright* in the next. And this title he gives to the assembly or congregation of Israelites, partly, because many of them were such, and he was obliged in charity to judge all of them to be so, of whom he had no evidence to the contrary; partly, because upright persons do most exercise and delight themselves in this duty of praising God; and hypocrites, though sometimes they give themselves to prayer, yet are very apt to neglect the duty of thanksgiving; partly, because this duty of *praise* is most *comely for the upright*, Psa_33:1; and partly, because David's heart was most united to the sincere Israelites, and his desire was, as far as he could, to associate himself with such in the worship and service of God.

Psalms 111:2

The works of the Lord; either,

1. The works of creation ; or rather,
2. The works of his providence in the world, and especially in and for his church and people, of which he speaks in the rest of the Psalm.

Are great, for the infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness manifested in them. Sought out; highly valued and regarded, as this very word and phrase is used, Deu_11:12 Isa_62:12; or frequently called to mind, and diligently meditated upon, when others either never regarded them, or instantly forget them: or, *found out*, as this word is taken, Isa_65:1; the antecedent being put for the consequent, which is frequent in Scripture, as Rom_12:2, where *proving* or *trying* (for so the Greek word there

signifies) is put for approving, which follows after it. And *found out* , i.e. truly and thoroughly understood, both as to the nature of them, and God's counsels and ends in them; whereas the works of God are oftentimes not apprehended or minded, or are mistaken and misconstrued, by ungodly men.

Of all them that have pleasure therein; of all them who take delight in observing and considering the works of God.

Psalms 111:3

His work; either all his works, of which **See Poole "Psa_111:2"**; or that eminent branch of those works, his providence towards his people, as it is expressed afterwards

Honourable and glorious; becoming the Divine Majesty, and bringing glory to him from all that observe and consider it.

His righteousness; his justice or faithfulness in performing his word.

Endureth for ever; hath always been, and will still be, evident to his people in all generations, and in all conditions, even when he afflicts them, and seems to deal most severely, and to break his promise with them.

Psalms 111:4

To be remembered; either,

1. By those memorials which he hath left of them in his word; or rather,
2. By their own wonderful nature, and the lasting effects and benefits flowing from them, which are such as cannot easily be forgotten.

Is gracious and full of compassion towards his people, as appears from his works and carriage towards us, in sparing, and pardoning, and restoring, and preserving us when we have deserved to be utterly destroyed.

Psalms 111:5

Meat; which includes all necessary provisions for their being and well-being. The word signifies *spoil* , and so may relate to the spoil of the Egyptians granted by God to the Israelites; but it is sometimes used for *food* , as Pro_31:15 Mal_3:10.

Unto them that fear him; to the Israelites, the only people in the world which feared and worshipped the true God according to his will; and especially to those among them that truly feared God, and, for their sakes, to the body of that nation, as well in the wilderness, as in their following straits and miseries.

He will ever be mindful; or, *he hath ever been* ; for both in the first branch of this verse, and in the foregoing and following verses, he is speaking of the former works of God. So the future tense is put for the past, as it is frequently, and as on the contrary the past tense is put for the future.

Of his covenant, which he made with Abraham and with his seed forever; whereby he obliged himself to be their God, and to provide all necessaries for them.

Psalms 111:6

He hath showed, not only by words, but by his actions.

The power of his works; his mighty power in his works, and especially in that which here follows.

The heritage of the heathen; the land of Canaan, which had been possessed and inherited by the heathens.

Psalms 111:7

The works of his hands; all that he doth, either on the behalf of his people, or against his or their enemies; of both which sorts of works he spoke in the foregoing verse.

Are verity and judgment; are exactly agreeable to his word or promises, and to the rules of justice. All his commandments; either,

1. His laws given to the Israelites, especially the moral law considered with its sanction, the promises made to the observers of it, and the threatenings denounced against transgressors. Or,

2. His works, as it is in the first clause, called his *commands* , because they were done by virtue of his decree, and by his power and authority; as in like manner God is said to *command* those blessings which he purposeth to give, and doth effectually procure, as Deu_28:8 Psa_42:8 **68:28 133:3**, and to command

those creatures which he moveth and acteth as he pleaseth, as 1Ki_17:4 Mat_8:27.

Are sure, or *faithful* , or *certain* ; constant and unchangeable, as his laws are, being grounded upon the immutable rules of justice or equity; infallible and irresistible, as his counsels and ways are.

Psalms 111:8

They stand fast, Heb. *they are established* upon the sure foundations of truth and uprightness, as it follows.

Are done; constituted or ordered.

Psalms 111:9

Redemption; that deliverance out of Egypt, which was a type and pledge of that greater and higher redemption by Christ.

Commanded, i.e. appointed or established firmly by his power and authority. And so this word is oft used, as Psa_33:9 **42:8 105:31,34**. See **Poole** "Psa_111:7", the ground of which signification may be taken from hence, that the command of a sufficient authority concerning any thing doth commonly establish and effect it. *For ever* ; through all successive generations of his people to the end of the world; for the covenant is the same for substance in all, and differed only in circumstances.

Holy and reverend; terrible to his enemies, and venerable in his people's eyes, and holy in all his dealings with all men.

Psalms 111:10

The fear of the Lord; piety or true religion, which consists in the fear or worship and service of God.

Is the beginning of wisdom; is the only foundation of and introduction to all true wisdom. Or, *is the chief part of wisdom* ; those things which are most excellent in their kinds being oft said to be *first* , to wit; in dignity, as Num_24:20 Deu_18:4, &c., and in other authors. And *the first command* , Mar_12:28, is called *the greatest command* , Mat_22:36.

That do his commandments, Heb. *that do them* , to wit, God's commands, or the things which the fear of God requireth.

Psalms 112:1 PSALM 112

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm containeth a description of a good man's gracious disposition and carriage; as also of his blessed condition, even in this life as well as in the next.

The blessedness of them that fear the Lord in this life, and in that to come, Psa_112:1-9; for which the wicked envy them, and are grieved, Psa_112:10.

The fear of God, as it is man's only wisdom, Psa_111:10, so it is his only way to true happiness.

That delighteth greatly in his commandments; who makes it his chief delight, care, and business to study and obey God's commandments. He intimates that zeal and fervency in God's service is essential to true piety.

Psalms 112:2

The generation, i.e. the posterity, as this word is oft used, as Lev_23:43 Num_9:10, &c., called *his seed* in the former branch.

Psalms 112:3

Shall be in his house; possessed by him whilst he lives, and continued in his family after his death.

His righteousness, i.e. the fruit or reward of his righteousness, which is God's blessing upon his estate; for the work is oft put for the reward of it, as in the Hebrew, Lev_19:13 Job_7:2 Psa_109:20. And

righteousness may be here taken for his bounty or charity, as it is below, Psa_112:9, and as this Hebrew word is frequently taken.

Psalms 112:4

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness; and although he is subject to the troubles and calamities of this life, as others are, yet God will give him support and comfort in them, and a happy issue out of them, whereas the wicked sink under their burdens, and their present miseries usher in their eternal destruction.

He; either,

1. God. And so this is added as a reason why God causeth light to shine to the upright out of darkness, because the Lord is gracious, &c. Or rather,

2. The good or upright man, of whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following words. So this is either,

1. A reason why God dealeth thus with good men; it is not from a partial and fond affection to them, but because they are such persons to whom God hath engaged himself by promise and covenant to bless them, they are

gracious, & c. Or,

2. As an effect of their affliction and deliverance out of it; thereby they learn to be more merciful, and compassionate, and just, or bountiful to others in want and misery.

Psalms 112:5

Showeth favour, and lendeth; giveth freely to some, and kindly lendeth to others, according to the variety of their conditions.

Guide his affairs; maintain and manage his estate or domestic affairs.

With discretion, Heb. *with judgment* ; so as is fit and meet, and as God requires, not getting his estate unjustly, nor casting it away prodigally or wickedly, nor yet withholding it uncharitably from such as need it.

Psalms 112:6

Shall not be moved for ever; though he may for a season be afflicted, yet he shall not be utterly and eternally destroyed, as wicked men shall. Shall be in everlasting remembrance; though whilst he lives he may be exposed to the censures, and slanders, and contradictions of sinners, yet after death his memory will be precious and honourable, both with God and with all men, his very enemies not excepted.

Psalms 112:7

Of evil tidings; at the report of approaching calamities and judgments of God, at which the wicked are so dismayed and affrighted.

Trusting in the Lord; casting all his care upon God, and securely relying upon his providence and promise.

Psalms 112:8

And although his enemies be many, and mighty, and terrible, yet he shall confidently and cheerfully wait upon God, until he see their ruin and his own deliverance and safety.

Psalms 112:9

Dispersed, to wit, his goods, and that freely and liberally, to several persons, as occasion is offered, as this word implies.

His righteousness, i.e. his liberality, as this word is used, Pro_10:2 **11:4** Dan_4:27 2Co_9:9,**10**, &c.; or the reward of it, as before, Psa_112:3.

Endureth for ever; either,

1. His charity is not a transient or occasional act, but his constant course, of which he is not weary, but perseveres in it to the end of his life. Or,

2. What he gives is not lost nor cast away, as covetous or ungodly men judge of alms, but indeed is the only part of his estate, which will abide with him unto all eternity.

His horn shall be exalted with honour; though he may be reproached by ungodly men, yet his innocency shall be cleared, and his name and honour gloriously exalted.

Psalms 112:10

Be grieved at the felicity of good men, partly, from envy at the happiness of others; partly, from his peculiar hatred of all godly men; and partly, because it is a plain testimony of God's justice and providence, and therefore a certain presage of his own ruin. The desire; his desire either of the misery of good men, or of his own constant prosperity and happiness in the world.

Psalms 113:1 PSALM 113

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is a declaration of God's powerful and universal providence towards all men, and especially towards his afflicted people.

An exhortation for all men to praise the Lord, for his excellency and greatness, Psa_113:1-5; for his condescension to the poor and humble-minded, Psa_113:6-9.

Ye servants of the Lord; ye Levites, who are peculiarly devoted to this solemn work, who sometimes are called God's servants in a special sense, and all you faithful souls.

Psalms 113:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 113:3

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same; from one end of the world to the other; from east to west, which he mentions rather than from north to south, because those parts of the world were at this time much uninhabited and unknown.

The Lord's name is to be praised, for his glorious works of creation and providence, the benefit of which all nations enjoy; and for his gracious purpose and promise of bringing in all nations to the knowledge of his truth by the Messias.

Psalms 113:4

High above all nations; superior to all princes and bodies of people in the world.

His glory above the heavens: whereas the glory of earthly monarchs is confined to this lower world, and to small pittances of it, the glory of God doth not only fill the earth, but heaven too, where it is celebrated by thousands and myriads of blessed angels, yea, it is far higher than heaven, being infinite and incomprehensible.

Psalms 113:5

To wit, far above all heavens, as was now said, being exalted as in place, so in power and dignity, above all persons and things, visible and invisible.

Psalms 113:6

Who is so high, that it is a wonderful vouchsafement and condescension in him to take any notice or care of his holy and heavenly host, and much more of sinful and miserable men upon earth, which yet he is pleased to do.

Psalms 113:7

He raiseth up the poor; yea, he stoops so low as to regard and advance those whom all men, and even their own brethren, slight and despise.

Out of the dust; from a most contemptible and miserable condition. Beggars and mourners used to lie in the dust, or, as it follows, upon the dunghill, 1Sa_2:8 Lam_4:5.

Psalms 113:8

Set him with princes; in equal honour and power with them, as he did Joseph, David, and others.

The princes of his people; which in God's account and in truth are far more honourable and happy than the princes of heathen and barbarous nations, because their subjects are more noble, and they have God's special presence and providence among them.

Psalms 113:9

To keep house, Heb. *to dwell in a house or family*, or amongst children, to wit, coming out of her own womb, as is clearly implied by the opposition of this to her barrenness. And the word

house is oft put for children, as Exo_1:21 Rth_4:11 Psa_115:10,12. And so it is explained in the next clause.

Psalms 114:1 PSALM 114

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is a solemn commemoration of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt; and probably it was to be sung, amongst others, at the celebration of the passover.

The psalmist, rehearsing God's delivering the Israelites out of Egypt, exhorteth all creatures to praise him.

Which was a great aggravation of their captivity and misery. Compare Jer_5:15.

Psalms 114:2

Judah, or *Israel*, as it is explained in the next clause; one tribe being put for all; which is a common synecdoche. Judah he mentions as the chief of all the tribes, not only in number and power, but also in dignity, in which the kingdom was to be seated,

Gen_49:10, &c., as at this time it actually was, and from which the Messiah was to spring. *His* , i.e. God's, which is easily understood from the whole context, and from the nature of the thing.

Sanctuary; or, *holiness; the people of God 's holiness* , as they are called, Isa_63:18; or, *his holy people* , as Deu_26:19 Dan_8:24; sanctified or set apart from all the nations of the world to be his peculiar people and possession. His dominion, in a peculiar manner, to be governed by his laws, and honoured with his special presence and favour.

Psalms 114:3

Saw it, to wit, this glorious work of God in bringing his people out of Egypt.

Psalms 114:4

Horeb and Sinai, two tops of one mountain, and other neighbouring hills or mountains. Compare Exo_19:18 Psa_68:8 Hab_3:6,**10**.

Psalms 114:5

What was the cause of this unusual motion? Such speeches directed to senseless creatures are very frequent, both in Scripture and in other authors, and especially in poetical writings, such as this is.

Psalms 114:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 114:7

But why do I ask these questions? Ye mountains did no more than what was just and fit at the approach and appearance of the great God; yea, the whole earth hath reason to tremble and quake upon such occasions.

Psalms 114:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 115:1 PSALM 115

THE ARGUMENT

The occasion of this Psalm was to manifest some eminent danger or distress of the people of Israel from some idolatrous nations; but whether it was that mentioned **2Ch 20**, or what other, is but matter of conjecture, and not worth our inquiry.

The church prayeth to God to keep them, for his glorious name, Psa_115:1-3, from the vanity of idol worship, Psa_115:4-8; exhorteth to confidence in him, being assured of his blessing, Psa_115:9-17. They resolve for ever to praise the Lord, Psa_115:18.

As we entreat thy favour and aid, and that thou wouldst work gloriously on our behalf to bring us out of our present straits and extremities; so we do not desire this out of a vain-glorious humour, as usually men do in such cases, that we may get renown by the conquest of our proud and mighty enemies, but that thy honour may be vindicated from all their contempts and blasphemies; and if thou wilt deliver us, we will not arrogate the praise and glory of it to our own worth or valour, but only to thy mercy and truth.

Psalms 115:2

Wherefore should the heathen say? why dost thou suffer them, or give them any colour or occasion, to say or think so, by conniving at their wickedness, and by giving thy people into their hands?

Where is now their God? he is no where; he is lost, or at a loss, either unable, or unwilling, or not at leisure to save them.

Their God; who hath undertaken to be their God and Saviour, and whom they only worship, and of whom they use to boast and insult over us and over our gods.

Psalms 115:3

Our God; whom, notwithstanding your reproaches, we are not ashamed to own for our God.

Is in the heavens; although he have no visible shape nor bodily presence with us here upon earth, as your idols have, which is a certain proof of their baseness and weakness, yet he hath a certain and a glorious place where he resideth, even the highest heavens, where he is clothed with infinite power and majesty, and from

whence he beholdeth and governeth this lower world, and all that is in it. *He hath done whatsoever he pleased* ; or,

he doth, & c. By his only will and pleasure all things were at first made, and are still disposed, and without this nothing cometh to pass. And therefore all your insolences, and injuries, and successes against us do not come from an invincible power in you or in your idols, nor from any defect of strength or goodness in our God, but only from hence, that it pleased him for many wise and good reasons to afflict us, and to give you prosperity for a time.

Psalms 115:4

Thus glorious and powerful is our God, O ye heathens, of whom you so boldly ask who and where he is; but as for your gods or idols, they have no power nor worth in them but what is taken from their materials. As their matter is wholly from the earth, so their form or figure they have from the art of man; and therefore they should rather, if it were possible, worship man, as their creator and lord, than be worshipped by him.

Psalms 115:5

For although the blind heathen are by their idolatrous priests made to believe otherwise concerning their idols, in regard of the spirits which they pretend to dwell in them, yet this is the truth of the matter, and confirmed by long and constant experience, that they are but vain and senseless things; they can neither

speak in answer to your prayers of inquiries, nor see what you do or what you want, nor *hear* your petitions, nor *smell* your incenses and sacrifices, nor *handle* or use their hands, either to take any thing from you, or to give any filing to you: nor so much as mutter, or give the least signification of their apprehension of your condition and concerns.

Psalms 115:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 115:7

Speak, or *mutter* , or *make a noise* , as this word signifies, Isa_10:14. They are so far from speaking with their throat and other instruments of speech as men do, that they cannot make

such an inarticulate and senseless sound with them as the beasts do.

Psalms 115:8

They that make them; or, *they that observe or worship them* . For the psalmist's quarrel was not so much with those few artists who formed the images, as with all the adorers of them. And the word here rendered *make* doth sometimes signify to *worship* , as some understand it, not without probability, Exo_32:35, because they made (i.e. worshipped) *the calf which Aaron made* , and as in other languages words answering to this do signify, as hath been oft observed by learned men; and it oft signifies to observe; as when men are said to make (as it is in the Hebrew) *the sabbath* , Deu_5:15, and the release, and the passover, and the feast of weeks, as Deu_15:1 **16:1,10**.

Are like unto them: this is a sharp reflection, either,

1. Upon the idols, whose highest preferment it is to be made like unto man, a mortal, weak, and miserable creature, infinitely inferior to the true God. Or,
2. To the makers or worshippers of them, who by this absurd and foolish action show that they are as ignorant, and stupid, and void of all sense and reason as their images.

Psalms 115:9

O Israel, do not thou follow the example of these brutish idolaters, but serve the Lord only.

Their help; who trust in God, as he now required. Or

their is put for *your* by a change of persons, which is most frequent in Scripture, and especially in these books.

Psalms 115:10

You priests and Levites proceeding from Aaron, or related to him, who have special reason and many obligations to do it, who have a more distinct knowledge of God, which is the foundation of trust, Psa_9:10, and who are to be both instructors of and examples to the people in this as well as in other duties.

Psalms 115:11

All and every one of you who worship the true God, not only Aaronites and Israelites, but even Gentile proselytes, who are said to *come to trust under the wings of the God of Israel* , Rth_2:12. And such there were many at this time in the church of Israel, whom therefore he fitly invites to trust God, because he is no less their than the Israelites' help and shield, as it follows.

Psalms 115:12

Hath been mindful of us in our former straits and calamities, and therefore we trust he will still

bless us, & c. as it follows. Or, *is or will be mindful of us* . Though he hath chastened us sore, yet he hath not yet cast us out of the care of his providence.

Psalms 115:13

Either in age or condition, of whatsoever quality, high and low, rich and poor; for he is no respecter of persons.

Psalms 115:14

Shall increase you in number, notwithstanding all the attempts of your enemies to diminish and destroy you. Or, *shall add to you* , to wit, further and greater blessings.

Psalms 115:15

Who therefore can bless you indeed in spite of all your enemies curses and oppositions; and not of an impotent idol, that can do you neither good nor hurt.

Psalms 115:16

Are the Lord's, to wit, in a peculiar manner, where he dwelleth in that light and glory to which no man can approach, and whence he beholdeth and disposeth all persons and things upon earth.

But the earth hath he given to the children of men, for their habitation, possession, and use. But these words may be and are thus rendered by others, *and the earth* which (which particle is very oft understood) *he hath given* , &c. And then as the foregoing verse declared that God was the Creator of heaven and earth, Psa_115:15, so this asserts that he is also their Lord and Governor, to dispose of all men and things as he pleaseth.

Psalms 115:17

The dead; such as we shall suddenly be, if thou dost not succour us.

Into silence; into the place of silence, the grave.

Psalms 115:18

But we will bless the Lord; but we hope for better things, that notwithstanding our present and urgent danger, yet thou wilt deliver us, and so give us occasion to bless thy name; whereby thou wilt have the praise and glory of our deliverance.

Psalms 116:1 PSALM 116

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a solemn thanksgiving to God for a glorious deliverance from grievous and dangerous calamities; as also from great perplexities and terrors of mind arising from the sense of God's displeasure.

The psalmist professeth his love to God for his manifold mercies in delivering him out of great straits and dangers, Psa_116:8; promising to walk holily, prayeth for his future protection, studieth and promiseth to be thanked, Psa_116:9-19.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 116:2

Heb. *in my days* ; as long as I have a day to live, as this phrase is used, 2Ki_20:19 Isa_39:8. Compare Job_27:6.

Psalms 116:3

The sorrows of death; dangerous and deadly calamities, as bitter as death. Or, the cords of death.

Of hell; or, of the grave; or, of death; either killing pains, or such agonies and horrors as dying persons use to feel within themselves.

Gat hold upon me, Heb. found me, i.e. surprised me. Having been long pursuing me, at last they overtook me, and seized upon me, and I gave up myself for lost.

Psalms 116:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 116:5

Gracious is the Lord: this he mentions either,

1. As that which he found by experience in answer to his prayers; or,
2. As the argument by which he encouraged himself to pray.

And righteous; therefore he will maintain me and my just cause against my unrighteous oppressors, and perform his promises, and save those who faithfully serve him and put their trust in him.

Psalms 116:6

The simple; sincere and plain-hearted persons, who dare not use those frauds and crafty and wicked artifices in saving themselves or destroying their enemies, but wait upon God with honest hearts in his way and for his time of deliverance; which was the case of David, who, though he had the prospect and the promise of the kingdom, yet would not make haste to it by indirect courses, as by cutting off Saul, when he had great provocation and fair opportunity to do it; of which see **1Sa 24 1Sa 26**. Such persons he calls *simple* or *foolish*, as this word is commonly rendered, not because they are really so, but because the world esteems them so.

Psalms 116:7

Unto thy rest; unto that tranquillity of mind and cheerful confidence in God's promises and providence which thou didst once enjoy.

Psalms 116:8

My soul; myself.

From falling, to wit, into mischief, and the pit of destruction.

Psalms 116:9

I will walk before the Lord; or, *I shall walk*, &c. This is either,

1. The psalmist's promise to God in requital of the favour last mentioned; I will therefore please God, as this phrase is used, Gen_5:24, compared with Heb_11:5 Gen_17:1. I will devote myself to the worship and service of God. Or,

2. His thankful acknowledgment of God's further favour. Though I be now banished from the place of thy presence and worship, yet I assure myself that I shall be restored to it, and shall spend my days in thy house and service, which is the one thing that I desired above all other things, Psa_27:4.

In the land of the living; amongst living men of this world. See Poole "Psa_27:13".

Psalms 116:10

I believed, to wit, God's promise of deliverance and of the kingdom made to me by Samuel, which I was confident he would perform in spite of discouragements and difficulties.

Therefore have I spoken: so these words are translated, as by others, so by the apostle, 2Co_4:13. *I have spoken* ; either,

1. What I have now said, Psa_116:9; or,

2. What I have uttered to others concerning God's promises made to me; which I was not ashamed nor afraid to publish when I had occasion, because I was fully persuaded that God would make them good.

I was greatly afflicted; or, when *I was* , &c.; or, although *I was* , &c.; such particles being very frequently understood. The sense is, And this I did even in the midst of many and sore afflictions.

Psalms 116:11

I said; yet once I confess I spake very unadvisedly. *In my haste* ; through hastiness and precipitation of my mind, for want of due consideration, as the same phrase is used, Psa_31:22. Or, *in my terror* or *amazement* , when I was discomposed and distracted with the greatness of my troubles.

All men are liars: the sense is either,

1. All men, yea, even my former friends and companions, prove deceitful and perfidious, all human help faileth me; so that my case is desperate, if God do not help me. Or,

2. All men, God's own prophets not excepted, are liable to mistakes by the condition of their nature, as they are men, and therefore may easily deceive others; and this might be the case of Samuel in his promise of the kingdom to me. Thus he questions

the truth of God's promises, yet so as he doth not strike directly at God, but only reflects upon the instrument.

Psalms 116:12

Yet notwithstanding all my dangers and my distrust of God too, God hath conferred so many and great blessings upon me, that I can never make sufficient returns to him for them.

Psalms 116:13

I will take the cup of salvation; I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, as this phrase seems to be explained below, Psa_116:17, where the latter clause of the verse is the same with that which here follows. The phrase is taken from the common practice of the Jews in their thank-offerings, in which a feast was made of the remainders of the sacrifices, and the offerers, together with the priests, did eat and drink before the Lord, and, amongst other rites, the master of the feast took a cup of wine into his hand, and solemnly blessed God for it, and for the mercy which was then acknowledged, and then gave it to all the guests, who drunk successively of it; see 1Ch_16:2,3; to which custom it is supposed that our blessed Saviour alludes in the institution of the cup, which also is called *the cup of blessing*, 1Co_10:16, which is in effect the same with the cup of salvation. This metaphor of a *cup* is used both of afflictions, as Psa_11:6 **75:8**, and of comforts, as Psa_23:5 Jer_16:7.

Call upon the name of the Lord; or, publish or preach in or of the name of the Lord, i.e. his gracious nature, and the great things which he hath done for me. For he speaks of praise rather than of prayer, as appears both from the former clause, and by comparing Psa_116:17.

Psalms 116:14

My vows; the praises and sacrifices which I vowed to God in the time of my distress.

In the presence of all his people; that they who heard my vows, or understood them by the report of others, might be witnesses of my payment of them, and not be scandalized by my unfaithfulness in that matter.

Psalms 116:15

He sets a high price upon it; he will not readily grant it to those that greedily seek it; and if any son of violence procure it, he will make him, pay very dearly for it; and when the saints suffer it for God's sake, as they frequently do, it is a most acceptable sacrifice to God, and highly esteemed by him. Thus *the blood* of God's people is said to be precious in his sight, Psa_72:14. And, in the same sense, the life of a man is said to be *precious in his eyes* who spareth and preserveth it, as 1Sa_26:21 2Ki_1:13. God's people are precious in his eyes, both living and dying; for whether they live, they live unto the Lord; or whether they die, they die unto the Lord, Rom_14:8.

Psalms 116:16

I am thy servant: this is either,

1. An argument used in prayer, It becometh thee to protect and save thy own servants, as every good master doth; or rather,
2. A thankful acknowledgment of his great obligations to God, whereby he was in duty bound to be the Lord's faithful and perpetual servant. For this suits best with the context.

The son of thine handmaid; either,

1. The son of a mother who was devoted and did devote me to thy service. Or,
2. Like one born in thy house of one of thy servants, and so thine by a most strict and double obligation.

Thou hast loosed my bonds; thou hast rescued me from mine enemies, whose captive and vassal I was, and therefore hast a just right and title to me and to my service.

Psalms 116:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 116:18

And as I said before, so I now repeat my promise, for the greater assurance, and to lay the stricter obligation upon myself.

Psalms 116:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 117:1 PSALM 117

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, as appears both from the matter of it, and from Rom_15:11, where it is quoted to that purpose.

An exhortation to all nations to praise God for his mercy and truth's sake.

Acknowledge the true God, and serve him only, and cast away all your idols.

Psalms 117:2

Toward us; either,

1. Towards us Jews, to whom he hath given those peculiar privileges which he hath denied to all other nations. But this may seem an improper argument to move the Gentiles to praise God for his mercies to others from which they were excluded. Or,

2. Towards all of us, all the children of Abraham, whether carnal or spiritual, who were to be incorporated together, and made one body and one fold by and under the Messias, Joh_10:16 Eph_2:14, which mystery seems to be insinuated by this manner of expression.

Psalms 118:1 PSALM 118

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm most probably was composed by David, when the civil wars between the houses of Saul and David were ended, and David was newly settled in the kingdom of all Israel, and had newly brought up the ark of God to his royal city, But though this was the occasion, yet David, or at least the Spirit of God, which indited this Psalm, had a further reach and higher design in it, and especially in the latter part of it, which was to carry the reader's thoughts beyond the type to the antitype, the Messias and his kingdom, who was chiefly intended in it; which is apparent both from the testimonies produced out of it to that purpose in the New Testament, as Mat_21:9,42 Mr 12:10,11 Ac 4:11, &c.; and from the consent of the Hebrew doctors, both ancient and modern; one

evidence whereof is, that in their prayers for their Messiah they use some part of this Psalm; and from the matter itself, as we shall see hereafter. The form of this Psalm may seem to be dramatical, and several parts of it are spoken in the name of several persons, yet so that the distinction of the persons and their several passages is not expressed, but left to the observation of the intelligent and diligent reader, as it is in the book of the Song of Solomon, and in some part of Ecclesiastes, and in many profane writers. David speaks in his own name from the beginning to verse 22, and from thence to verse 25 in the name of the people, and thence to verse 27 in the name of the priests, and then concludes in his own name.

The psalmist exhorteth all the godly to praise the Lord, who had been merciful to them, Psa_118:1-4. By his own experience showeth how good it is to trust in the Lord, who had delivered him from his enemies, Psa_118:5-18. Under the type of the psalmist, the coming of Christ, whom the chief of the people refuse, is expressed and blessed, **Psa 118:19-29**.

O give thanks; all sorts of persons, which are particularly expressed in the three next verses, as they are mentioned in like manner and order Psa_115:9-11, **See Poole "Psa_115:9", See Poole "Psa_115:10", See Poole "Psa_115:11"**

Psalms 118:2

Israel, after the flesh, all the tribes and people of Israel, except the Levites.

Psalms 118:3

The priests and Levites, who were greatly discouraged and oppressed in Saul's time, and shall receive great benefits by my government.

Psalms 118:4

The Gentile proselytes, whereof there were in David's time, and were likely to be, greater numbers than formerly had been.

Psalms 118:5

Set me; which verb is tacitly included in the former, and is easily understood out of Psa_31:8, where the full phrase is expressed, and from the following word. See the like examples in the Hebrew text, Gen_12:15 Psa_22:21, &c.

Psalms 118:6

A frail and impotent creature in himself, and much more when he is opposed to the Almighty God.

Psalms 118:7

The Lord taketh my part with them that help me; he is one of the number of my helpers, and enables them to defend me.

Psalms 118:8

As mine adversaries do in their own numbers, and in their great confederates.

Psalms 118:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 118:10

All nations compassed me about; the neighbouring and heathen nations, Philistines, Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, &c., who were stirred up, partly, by the overthrows which David had given some of them; partly, by their jealousy at David's growing greatness and fear for themselves; and partly, by their hatred against the true religion.

Psalms 118:11

They compassed me about; the repetition implies their frequency and fervency in this action, and their confidence of success.

Psalms 118:12

Like bees; in great numbers, and with great and potent fury, and to their own ruin, as bees do when they fly about a man, and leave their stings in him.

They are quenched: so this word is used Job_6:17 **18:5,6 21:17**. Or, as the LXX. and Chaldee render it, *they burnt or flamed*, i.e. raged against me like fire, as it follows. And this is supposed to be one of those Hebrew verbs, which have not only divers, but contrary significations.

As the fire of thorns; which flameth out terribly, and makes a crackling noise, and burneth fiercely, but quickly spends itself without any considerable or lasting effect.

For; or, *but*, as this very particle is frequently used, and here twice in this very phrase, Psa_118:10,11. So as the former part of

the verse notes their hostile attempt, this notes their ill success and utter ruin. Here is an inversion of words in this last clause, which is not unusual in the Hebrew text. Although these words may be, and are by a learned man of our own, rendered as they lie in the Hebrew, I trust (which word may easily be understood out of Psa_118:8,9)

in the name of the Lord, *therefore* (for so the Hebrew *chi* is oft rendered, and is so taken by the Chaldee in this place)

I shall destroy them, or *cut them off*.

Psalms 118:13

Thou, O mine enemy, and the head of all mine enemies. Possibly he understandeth Saul, whom for honour's sake he forbears to name; or some other chief commander of his enemies. Or the singular word is here put collectively for all his enemies.

Psalms 118:14

My strength and song; the author of my strength, and therefore the just object of my song and praise. My salvation, i.e. my Saviour.

Psalms 118:15

The voice of rejoicing and salvation, of rejoicing and thanksgiving for the salvation and deliverance which God hath wrought for me, is in the tabernacles of the righteous; partly because they clearly saw God's hand in the work, and therefore took pleasure in it; and partly because all good men suffered great inconveniences under Saul's government, as David complains in divers of the foregoing Psalms, and expected and received singular benefits by David's advancement, both in their civil and religious concernments.

The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly: these are the words of that song of joy and praise now mentioned.

Psalms 118:16

Is exalted; hath appeared evidently, and wrought powerfully and gloriously on my behalf.

Psalms 118:17

I shall not die, to wit, so soon as mine enemies desire, nor by their sword, as they hope and endeavour.

Declare the works of the Lord; one branch whereof is the total destruction of mine enemies. He implies that he did not desire life, nor should employ it, as his enemies did theirs, but for the service and glory of God.

Psalms 118:18

Hath chastened me sore by the hands of mine enemies, whom God used to that very purpose for my greater good, and their own greater and surer ruin and confusion.

Psalms 118:19

Open to me, O ye porters, appointed by God for this work. Or it is a figurative and poetical manner of expression, whereby he speaks to the gates themselves, as if they had sense and understanding. Or by saying *open*, he implies that they had been long shut against him in Saul's time. *The gates of righteousness*, to wit, the gates of the Lord's tabernacle, the proper and usual place of the solemn performance of the duty here following, which he calleth

the gates of righteousness, partly, in opposition to *the gates of death*, of which he speaks implicitly Psa_118:18, and expressly Psa_9:13 **107:18**, which may be called the gates of sin or unrighteousness, because death is the wages of sin; partly, because there the rule of righteousness was kept and taught, and the sacrifices of righteousness (as they are called, Psa_4:5) were offered, and divers other exercises of righteousness or of God's service were performed; and partly, because those gates were to be opened to all righteous persons, (such as David had oft professed and proved himself to be, upon which account he claims this as his just privilege,) and only to such, for the unclean and unrighteous were to be shut and kept out by the porters, 2Ch_23:19: compare Isa_26:2.

Psalms 118:20

These may be the words either,

1. Of the Levites, the porters returning this answer to the foregoing question: This is the gate of the Lord which thou seekest, and which shall be opened to thee according to thy desire, and thy just privilege, for then art one of those righteous ones to whom this of right belongs. Or,

2. Of David himself, who stands as it were pausing and contemplating before he makes his entrance: This, this is that holy and blessed gate, which I so long and earnestly thirsted for in my banishment, and which is now very beautiful in my sight, into which I will enter, and all other righteous persons by my example and encouragement. But as David was a type of Christ and the temple of heaven, so this place hath a further prospect than David, and relates to Christ's ascending into heaven, and opening the gates of that blessed temple, both for himself, and for all righteous men or believers.

Psalms 118:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 118:22

The commonwealth of Israel and the church of God are here and elsewhere in Scripture compared to a building, wherein as the people are the stones and the matter, so the princes and rulers are the builders, whose office it was to erect, and support, and improve the building, and to use their wisdom and power in choosing fit materials for the several parts and purposes of the building, and in the rejection of what was unprofitable and inconvenient. And these master-builders rejected David as an obscure, and treacherous, and rebellious person, fit to be not only laid aside and thrown away, but also to be crushed to pieces. And so their successors rejected Christ as an enemy to Moses, a friend to sinners, and a blasphemer against God, and therefore deserving death and damnation.

The head stone of the corner; the chief stone in the whole building, by which the several parts of the building are upheld and firmly united and kept together. Thus David united all the tribes and families of Israel, who had been miserably distracted and divided by the civil wars between the houses of Saul and David. And thus Christ united Jews and Gentiles together, as is observed, Eph_2:14, &c. And although David alludeth to himself and his own condition, yet it is not to be doubted but that having the prophetic Spirit, by which he foresaw the coming of Christ, and his ill usage from the Jews, of which he speaks very particularly **Psa 22**, and elsewhere; and having his thoughts much taken up with Christ and the event of his kingdom, of which he speaks in

divers of his Psalms, he had his eye principally fixed upon him in these and the following expressions. And therefore this place is justly expounded of Christ in the New Testament, as Mar_12:10 Act_4:11 Rom_9:32 Eph_2:20 1Pe_2:6, compared with Isa_28:16. And to him indeed the words agree much more properly and fully than to David.

Psalms 118:23

This; this strange event; the feminine gender being put for the neuter, as it is in other places of Scripture.

The Lord's doing; peculiarly an effect of his omnipotent wisdom; done not only without the help of man, but against all the artifices and forces of men.

Psalms 118:24

Made; either created, or exalted and glorified, as this word is used, 1Sa_12:6, or sanctified by his glorious presence and work, and by his appointment, as a time or season never to be forgotten, but to be observed with great thankfulness and rejoicing, as it follows.

Psalms 118:25

I beseech thee; or, *we beseech thee* ; for the Hebrew words may be rendered either way. These seem to be the words of the Levites, to whom he spake Psa_118:19; or of the people, using these joyful acclamations or prayers to God for the preservation of their king and kingdom. This also is interpreted of and was applied to Christ, even by the Jews themselves, Mar_11:9 Joh_12:13.

Psalms 118:26

Blessed be he; we earnestly pray that God would bless his person and government, and all his enterprises. *That cometh* , to wit, unto us, from whom he was long banished; or unto the throne; or from his Father into the world; the Messiah, who is known by the name of him *that cometh* or *was to come* , as Mat_11:3 **21:9** Luk_7:20 **13:35** Joh_12:13, and of whom this very word is used, Gen_49:10 Isa_35:4. He who is about to come, or will certainly come. *In the name of the Lord* ; by command and commission from him, and for his service and glory.

We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord; we who are the Lord's ministers, attending upon him in his house, and appointed to bless in his name, Num_6:23 Deu_10:8, do pray for, and in God's name pronounce, his blessing upon thee. So these are the words of the priests.

Psalms 118:27

God is the Lord; God hath proved himself to be the Lord Jehovah by the accomplishment of his promises. **See Poole** "Exo_6:3". Or, *the Lord or Jehovah is God* , as it was said upon another solemn occasion and appearance of God, 1Ki_18:39; or, *is the mighty God* , as this name of God signifies, and as he showed himself to be by this his mighty and wonderful work. *Which hath showed us light* ; who hath caused light to shine out of darkness; who hath scattered our thick and dark clouds, and put us into a state of peace, and comfort, and safety, and happiness; all which are frequently signified by *light* in the Holy Scripture. Or, who hath discovered, and will in due time send, the Messias, who is called *the light of the Gentiles* , or *of the world* , or *of men* , Isa_42:6 Joh_1:4 **8:12 12:35,46**, and by whom he will more clearly and fully reveal his whole mind and will to us, and tell us all things, as the Jews expected, Joh_4:25, who also will enlighten our dark minds by his Spirit.

Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar: these words, as well as those which go before them in this verse, and those which follow after them, Psa_118:28, may be the words of David unto the priests, who had now blessed him in God's name, Psa_118:26. And this blessing of God which you wish me, God hath already given me; and therefore in way of gratitude I will offer sacrifices to him, which do you, O ye priests, according to your office, *bind to the hems of the altar* ; of which see Exo_27:2; which horns are supposed by divers learned men to be made for this very use, that the beasts should be bound and killed there. And this may seem probable from Exo_29:11, **12 Le 4:7**, &c., where we read that the beasts were to be killed *by the door of the tabernacle* , which was very near the altar of burnt-offerings, and then immediately part of their blood was to be *put upon the horns* of the altar, and the rest *poured out at the bottom of it* . Although these words may be thus rendered, *Bind* and bring (one

pregnant word being put for two, as above, Psa_118:5, and in many other places of Scripture) *the sacrifice with cords unto the horns of the altar* , that it may be killed beside it, and its blood put upon the horns, after the manner. So they may be David's words to his servants to go and bring one of his beasts to be offered to God in his name.

Psalms 118:28

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 118:29

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:1 PSALM 119

THE ARGUMENT

The author of this Psalm was David; which I know none that deny, and of which there is no just reason to doubt. The scope and design of it is manifest, to commend the serious and diligent study, and the stedfast belief and the constant practice of God's word, as incomparably the best counsellor and comforter in the world, and as the only way to true blessedness. And this he confirmeth by his own example, which he proposeth to them for their imitation; and he declareth the great and frequent experience which he had of its admirable sweetness and manifold benefits in all conditions, and especially in the times of his distresses. And because it was a hard thing rightly to understand this word in all its parts, and harder to put it in practice, he therefore intermixeth many prayers to God for his help therein, thereby directing and encouraging others to take the same course. And because this Psalm was very large, and the matter of it of greatest importance, the psalmist thought fit to divide it into two and twenty several parts, according to the number of the Hebrew letters, that so he might both prevent tediousness, and fix it in the memory. It is further observable that the word of God is here diversely called by the names of *law, statutes, precepts or commandments, judgments, ordinances, righteousness, testimonies, way, and word* ; by which variety he designed to express the nature and the great perfection and manifold parts and uses of God's word: which is called his *word* , as proceeding from his mouth, and revealed by

him to us; his *way* , as prescribed by him for us to walk in; his law, as binding us to obedience, his *statutes* , as declaring his authority and power of giving us laws, his *precepts* , as declaring and directing our duty; his *ordinances* , as ordained and appointed by him; his *righteousness* , as exactly agreeable to God's righteous nature and will; his *judgments* , as proceeding from the great Judge of the world, and being his judicial sentence to which all men must submit; and his *testimonies* , as it contains the witnesses of God's mind and will, and of man's duty. And there are very few of these 176 verses contained in this Psalm, in which one or other of these titles is not found.

This Psalm contains the commendation of God's word; David's love to it; a prayer for grace to carry himself according to it; with an account of God's law, institutions, commandments, testimonies, precepts, word, promises, ways, judgments, name, righteousness, truth, &c.; with a prayer for help and assistance.

ALEPH.

The undefiled; or, *the perfect* or *sincere* , as this word properly and most frequently signifies; such whose hearts and course of life agree with their profession.

In the way; either,

1. In their way or course of life, which in Scripture is oft called a man's way; or,
2. In the way of the Lord, as it seems to be explained by the next clause.

Who walk in the law of the Lord; who order their lives according to the rule of God's law or word.

Psalms 119:2

That keep, in mind and heart, that carefully and diligently observe,

his testimonies; his precepts. For the reason of this and the other titles of God's word, see the argument or preface to this Psalm.

That seek him, to wit, the Lord, expressed Psa_119:1, that seek his presence, and favour, and acquaintance.

With the whole heart; sincerely, industriously, and fervently, above all other things. This is opposed to hypocrisy, and sloth, and lukewarmness in religion.

Psalms 119:3

Do no iniquity; or, *are not workers of iniquity* , i.e. do not knowingly, and resolvedly, and industriously, and customarily continue in sinful courses. So this phrase is understood Job_31:3 **34:8** Psa_5:5 **6:8** **125:5** Pro_10:29 Luk_13:27; otherwise *there is not a just man upon earth that sinneth not* , Ecc_7:20.

They walk: this is their constant practice, and the general course of their lives, which is commonly signified by walking, as Psa_1:1, and every where.

In his ways; in the paths which God hath prescribed to them.

Psalms 119:4

Nor is it strange that thy people do so exactly and diligently observe and practise thy precepts, because they are commanded so to do by thee their sovereign Lord.

Psalms 119:5

My desires answer thy commands.

Directed, or *established* , to wit, by thy grace and Holy Spirit; for the direction of God's word he had already.

Psalms 119:6

Then shall I not be ashamed; either of my actions, or of my profession of religion, or of my hope and confidence in thy favour. When sinners shall be ashamed both here, Rom_6:21, and hereafter, Dan_12:2, I, having the conscience of mine own integrity, shall lift up my head with courage and *boldness* , both before men, when they either accuse or persecute me, and before God *in the day of judgment* , as it is said, 1Jo_4:17.

Respect; a due and true respect, which implies high valuation, hearty affection, diligent study, and common practice.

Unto all thy commandments; so as not to be partial in my obedience, not to allow myself in the practice of any known sin, or in the neglect of any known duty.

Psalms 119:7

Praise thee, i.e. worship thee; one eminent duty of God's worship being put for all, as is frequent in Scripture.

With uprightness of heart; or, *with a right mind or heart* ; in a right manner, so as may be acceptable to thee, and beneficial to myself.

When I shall have learned thy righteous judgments; when by thy good Spirit I shall be more fully instructed in the meaning of thy word; which is the only rule of thy worship; for want of a sound knowledge whereof many persons run into superstitious or erroneous practices.

Psalms 119:8

I will keep thy statutes; it is my full purpose to do so, whatsoever it cost me.

Forsake me not utterly; not totally and finally; for then I shall fall into the foulest sins and greatest mischief. Not that he was contented to be forsaken in the least degree, but this he more especially deprecates, as he had great reason to do.

Psalms 119:9

BETH

Young man; or, any man. But he names the

young man, because such are commonly void of wisdom and experience, heady and wilful, and impatient of admonition, full of violent passions and strong lusts, and exposed to many and great temptations.

Cleanse his way; reform his life, or purge himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

By taking heed thereto according to thy word; by a diligent and circumspect watch over himself, and the examination and regulation of all his actions by the rules of thy word.

Psalms 119:10

Deny me not thy grace and assistance, which I have so sincerely and earnestly desired, and laboured to obtain.

Let me not wander, Heb. *do not make me to wander* , to wit, by leading me into temptation, by withdrawing thy grace, which is necessary to keep me from wandering.

Psalms 119:11

I have not contented myself with bare hearing or reading thy word, but have received it in the love of it, have diligently pondered it, and laid it up in my mind and memory like a choice treasure, to be ready upon all occasions, to counsel, or comfort, or quicken, or caution me, as need requires; that by a diligent and affectionate consideration of thy precepts, and promises, and threatenings, I might be kept from sinful courses, against which these are the best antidote.

Psalms 119:12

Blessed art thou; thou art infinitely blessed, and most worthy of all blessing and praise, and therefore do thou bless me in teaching me, as it follows. Or, *Blessed be thou* . I bless and praise thee for that great blessing of thy word, Psa_119:11.

Teach me thy statutes, both to know and to practise them better.

Psalms 119:13

If thou wilt teach me, I will teach others, as I have already done; and so thou shalt have glory, and others benefit by it.

Psalms 119:14

In the way of thy testimonies; in the study and practice of them.

Psalms 119:15

I will diligently and seriously consider the nature, and design, and extent of thy precepts, and especially so far as they concern my own duty.

Have respect unto thy ways; or, *look unto them* , as workmen constantly and carefully look to their rule to guide themselves by it.

Psalms 119:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:17

GIMEL

Deal bountifully; I plead no merit, but only thy free grace and rich mercy.

That I may live; safely and comfortably, in spite of all the attempts of mine enemies to take away my life.

And keep thy word: I do not desire life that I may satisfy my own lusts, but that I may spend it in thy service.

Psalms 119:18

Open thou mine eyes; enlighten my mind by the light of thy Holy Spirit, and dispel all ignorance and error.

Wondrous things out of thy law; those great and marvellous depths of Divine wisdom and goodness, and those profound mysteries of Christ and of God's grace to mankind, and of that future and everlasting state, which are contained in God's law, and which were not to be known but by divine illumination, Mat_16:17 1Co_2:11,**14** 2Co_3:14 **4:4,6 Eph 1:17**, especially in the times of the Old Testament.

Psalms 119:19

Stranger, or *sojourner* . I am not here as in my home, but as a pilgrim travelling homeward in a strange land; which calls for thy pity and help. That law of nature, which thou hast planted in all men's minds, teacheth them to show humanity to strangers, and to direct travellers; much more may this be expected from thee.

Thy commandments; which are my chief support and guide in my pilgrimage.

Psalms 119:20

Breaketh; fainteth, as it frequently doth, when a thing vehemently desired is denied or delayed. Compare Pro_13:12.

Unto thy judgments; to a more sound knowledge and serious practice of them.

Psalms 119:21

Hast rebuked, or *dost rebuke* , i.e. severely punish and destroy. And therefore I justly long for thy judgments, as for the love which I have to them, so for fear of those terrible judgments which thou sendest upon the despisers of them.

The proud; obstinate and presumptuous sinners, who sin with a high hand, and with contempt of God, and of his laws, and of his judgment; all which is the effect of pride.

That are cursed; that have the curse of God upon them, and upon all which they have or do; which is the depth of misery.

Do err; or, *wander* ; knowingly, and wilfully, and maliciously, as proud sinners use to do.

Psalms 119:22

Reproach, which I suffer unjustly and for thy sake, as he elsewhere complains.

I have kept thy testimonies, and therefore I am innocent from those crimes for which they censure and reproach me. Or, and therefore thou wilt maintain mine honour and interest according to thy promise made to such as keep thy testimonies, and I beg with some confidence that thou wilt do it.

Psalms 119:23

Did sit and speak; did speak against me continually, (for sitting notes continuance,) and when they sat upon their seats of judicature, and when they sat together in companies, entertaining one another with discourses.

Did meditate in thy statutes; all their contumelies and reproaches did not discourage nor divert me from the study, belief, and practice of thy word.

Psalms 119:24

My delight; my chief comfort under all their censures and persecutions.

My counsellors, to teach me how to carry myself under them.

Psalms 119:25

DALETH

My soul cleaveth unto the dust; I am in evident danger of present death, through the rage and power of mine enemies; I am like one laid in the grave, without all hopes of recovery. So this phrase is used Psa_22:15.

Quicken thou me; preserve my life, or revive me and raise me out of the dust by thy almighty power.

According to thy word; according to thy promise.

Psalms 119:26

My ways; my sins, in way of confession; and all my cares, and fears, and troubles, and concerns, in way of humble petition to thee, as appears from God's answer.

Psalms 119:27

Make me to understand, more thoroughly and more practically, the way of thy precepts; either,

1. The full mind and meaning of thy precepts, which are exceeding broad, as he saith afterwards; or,
2. The way wherein I may walk according to thy precepts; how to demean myself in all the varieties of my condition, and in all my affairs and actions, so as is most agreeable to thy precepts.

Thy wondrous works; even the wonders of the law mentioned before, Psa_119:18.

Psalms 119:28

Melteth, like wax before the fire; it hath no strength nor consistency left in it, but consumeth or pineth away.

For heaviness; through grief, partly for my extreme danger and misery; and principally for my sins, and thy wrath and terrors following upon them.

Strengthen thou me, that so I may bear my burdens patiently and cheerfully, and vanquish all my temptations.

Psalms 119:29

The way of lying; or, *of falsehood* ; either,

1. The practice of lying, and dissembling, and cheating, which is so rife in Saul's court, and in the courts of most princes; but, Lord, let it not be so in my courts. Or rather,
2. Every false way of doctrine or worship; for to this way he opposeth God's law in the next clause. And he justly prayeth to God to keep him from apostacy, heresy, idolatry, and superstition, because his own corrupt nature of itself and without God's grace

was prone to these errors, and not only heathens, but many Israelites, did frequently fall into them.

Grant me thy law graciously; vouchsafe unto me an accurate knowledge and firm belief of thy word, and that I may constantly attend and adhere to it, and govern myself by it in all things.

Psalms 119:30

I have chosen the way of truth, to wit, thy word or law, for my portion, and the rule of my worship and whole life.

Laid before me; or, set before me, as the phrase is fully expressed, Psa_16:8, as a delightful object, or as a mark to aim at, or as a rule to direct me.

Psalms 119:31

I have stuck unto thy testimonies; I have resolutely persisted in the practice of thy precepts, in spite of all temptations, reproaches, persecutions, and discouragements, to which I was exposed in and for so doing.

Put me not to shame; either,

1. By giving me over to apostacy or transgression, which will bring shame; or rather,
2. By the disappointment of my hopes and confidence in those promises of the blessings of this life. as well as of the next, which thou hast made to the obedient, of which I have made in boast.

Psalms 119:32

I will run the way of thy commandments, I will obey thy precepts with all readiness, fervency, and diligence,

when thou shalt enlarge my heart: either,

1. When thou shalt bring me out of my present straits or distresses. This in deed is called *enlarging* , as Psa_4:1 **18:36**, but never, to my remembrance, the enlarging of the heart. Or rather,
2. When thou shalt replenish my heart with more wisdom and love to and delight in thee and thy law; for this *enlargement of heart* in Scripture is ascribed to wisdom, 1Ki_4:29, and love, 2Co_6:11, and joy, Isa_60:5; when thou shalt knock off those fetters of remaining corruption, and give me a more noble and generous

disposition towards thee, and stablish me *with thy free spirit* , as it is expressed, Psa_51:12. Thus David both owns his duty, and asserts the absolute necessity of God's grace to the performance of it.

Psalms 119:33

HE

Or, *that I may keep it* , &c. That I may persevere; for apostacy proceeds from the want of a good understanding.

Psalms 119:34

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:35

Make me to go, by directing my mind into the right way, by inclining my will, and strengthening my resolution.

For therein do I delight: forsake not him who delighteth in the: and in thy service; and as thou hast wrought in me to will work in me also to do.

Psalms 119:36

Unto thy testimonies; to the love and practice of them.

Not to covetousness; not to the inordinate love and desire of riches: which particular lust he mentions, partly, be cause this lust is most spreading and universal, and there is scarce any man who doth not desire riches either for the love of riches, or upon pretence of necessity, or for the service of pride or luxury, or some other lust; partly, because, this lust is most opposite to God's testimonies, and doth most commonly hinder men from receiving God's word, and from profiting by it; see Mat_13:22 Luk_16:2 and partly, because this lust is most pernicious, as being the root of all evil, 1Ti_6:10, and is most mischievous in princes and governors, such as David was, and therefore in a special manner forbidden to them, Exo_18:21.

Psalms 119:37

Vanity; the vain things and lusts of this present evil world, such as riches, honours, pleasures; from beholding them, to wit, with admiration and inordinate affection; for such a sight of the eyes doth usually affect the heart, and stir up men's lusts and passions; of which see Num_15:39 Job_31:1 Pro_4:25 **23:5,6 Mt 5:28**

Quicken thou me in thy way; as I desire that I may be dull and dead in afflictions to worldly vanities; so, Lord, make me lively, and vigorous, and fervent in thy work and service.

Psalms 119:38

Confirm and perform thy promises, as concerning the kingdom, so also for the giving of gracious assistances, directions and comforts to those that fear thee, of which number I am one.

Psalms 119:39

Turn away my reproach; either,

1. For the shameful disappointment of my hopes and confident boastings concerning the truth and certainty of thy promises; or,

2. For my manifold failings, and particularly for that shameful matter about Uriah and Bathsheba; or,

3. For my instability in or apostacy from thy ways; which in respect of mine own weakness and folly I have great cause to fear.

For thy judgments are good: this may be a reason either,

1. Why he prayed and hoped that God would turn away reproach from him, because God's word and statutes were good, and therefore it was not fit for any to suffer reproach in and for his diligent observation of them; or,

2. Why he feared reproach, because he had, and feared he might hereafter, transgress those judgments or statutes of God which were, and he very well knew to be, good, i.e. just, and holy, and excellent, and therefore it was a shameful thing to violate them.

Psalms 119:40

After thy precepts; after a more solid knowledge and constant performance of thy precepts.

Quicken me; do thou preserve and maintain both my natural and spiritual life.

In thy righteousness; according to thy justice or faithfulness, which obligeth thee to make good thy promises.

Psalms 119:41

VAU

Let promised mercies be performed to me.

Psalms 119:42

That reproacheth me; that chargeth me with folly for my piety and trust in thy promises.

For I trust in thy word; or, *because I trust* , &c. This was the matter of their reproach.

Psalms 119:43

Do not deal so with me, that I shall be altogether ashamed to mention thy word, which I have so often affirmed to be a word of truth and infallible certainty, of which I have often made my boast.

In thy judgments; either in thy word and promises, or in thy judicial administrations and government of the world, which as it is matter of terror to the wicked, so it is matter of comfort and hope to me.

Psalms 119:44

So shall I be obliged and encouraged to the constant and perpetual study and observation of thy laws.

Psalms 119:45

I will walk at liberty; or, *I shall walk at large* , as it is in the margin; I shall be delivered from all my present straits, both of the outward and inward man, and enjoy great freedom and comfort in thy ways.

Psalms 119:46

Before kings; who commonly entertain all godly discourses with scorn and contempt.

Psalms 119:47

Whereas other princes place their delight in the glories and vanities of this world, and the study and practice of religion is generally irksome and loathsome to them, thy law shall be my chief delight and recreation.

Psalms 119:48

Lift up; to lay hold upon them, to receive and embrace thy precepts and promises by faith and love, and cheerfully and vigorously to put them in practice; for as the *hanging down of the hands* is a gesture of sloth and listlessness, as 2Ch₁₅:7, and

elsewhere; so *the lifting up of the hands* is the posture of a man entering upon action, as Gen_41:44 2Sa_20:21.

I will meditate in thy statutes; my deepest thoughts, as well as my hands, shall be exercised in them.

Psalms 119:49

ZAIN

The word; thy promises.

Caused me to hope, by thy command requiring it of me, and by thy grace working it in me.

Psalms 119:50

This, to wit, thy word, as is evident both from the foregoing and following words.

Hath quickened me; hath preserved my life in manifold dangers, and hath revived and cheered my spirit.

Psalms 119:51

Greatly in derision, for my godliness and trust in thy word, as the following words imply.

Psalms 119:52

Thy judgments of old; thy former and ancient dispensations to the children of men in punishing the ungodly, and protecting and delivering thy faithful servants, whose experience is my encouragement.

Psalms 119:53

Horror; a mixed passion made up of indignation at their persons as sinful, and abhorrency of their sins, and dread and sorrow at the consideration of the judgments of God coming upon them.

Because of the wicked that forsake thy law; for the dishonour which they bring to God, the scandal and mischief to others, and their own certain ruin.

Psalms 119:54

My songs; the matter of my songs, my delight and recreation.

In the house of my pilgrimage; either,

1. In this present world, which I do not own for my home, wherein I am a stranger and pilgrim, as all my fathers were, Psa_39:12: compare Gen_47:9. Or,

2. In mine exile, and in the wildernesses and other places where I have been oft forced to wander, when I was banished from all my friends, and from the place of thy worship, and had no other support or comfort but the remembrance of thy statutes.

Psalms 119:55

Thy name; thy holy nature and attributes, thy blessed word, and thy wonderful works; all which come under the title of God's name.

In the night, when darkness causeth fear in others, I took pleasure in remembering thee; and when others abandon all business, and wholly give themselves up to rest and sleep, my thoughts and affections were working towards thee.

And have kept thy law; this was the fruit of my serious remembrance of thee.

Psalms 119:56

This I had, this comfortable and profitable remembrance and contemplation of thy name and statutes, of which he spoke Psa_119:54,55, because I kept thy precepts; which if I had wilfully and wickedly broken, the remembrance of these things would have been sad and frightful to me, as now it is comfortable, because I kept them.

Psalms 119:57

CHETH

Whereas other men place their portion and happiness in worldly things, I have chosen thee for my portion and chief treasure, as he said, Psa_16:5 **73:26**, and thou hast an all-sufficient and an excellent portion for me.

I have said; I have not only purposed it in my own heart, but have professed and owned it before others, and I do not repent of it.

Psalms 119:58

Thy favour; thy gracious presence and merciful assistance, as it follows.

Psalms 119:59

I seriously considered both my former counsels and courses, that I might be humbled for my past errors, and might now amend them, and my duty in all my future actions. And finding that my feet had too often swerved from thy rule, I turned them to it. And although the ways of sinful pleasure and advantage were presented to my mind, yet I rejected them, and turned myself wholly to thy ways.

Psalms 119:60

Being fully convinced of the necessity and excellency of obedience, I presently resolved upon it, and immediately put it in execution.

Psalms 119:61

Robbed me; or, *made a prey of me* ; done me many injuries for my respect to thy law.

Psalms 119:62

I will rise out of my bed to praise thee in a solemn manner; not being contented with those short ejaculations which he might have used lying in his bed. Thy righteous judgments, i.e. laws, which are so useful to direct and comfort me.

Psalms 119:63

Not excepting the poorest and meanest, whose society other princes disdain.

Psalms 119:64

Thou dost satisfy the just desires and necessities of all men and all creatures with the fruits of thy goodness. The generality of other men chiefly desire the blessings of this life; but, Lord, give me thy spiritual blessings, the saving knowledge, love, and practice of thy law.

Psalms 119:65

TETH

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:66

Good judgment; whereby I may rightly discern between truth and falsehood, good and evil, between the mind of God and my own or others' inventions; that so I may be kept from those mistakes and errors in which many are involved, that I may truly

judge what thy law requires or permits, and what it forbids. Heb. *the goodness of taste* , an experimental sense and relish of divine things. Compare Psa_34:8.

Knowledge; a spiritual and experimental knowledge. And judgment, or taste, and knowledge may, by a usual figure called *hendiadis* , be put for *judicious* , or solid, or practical knowledge.

I have believed thy commandments; I have believed the Divine authority of them, and the truth and certainty of those promises and threatenings which thou hast annexed to them.

Psalms 119:67

I went astray, as men generally do in their prosperity. See Deu_32:15 Psa_73:4-6, &c.; Pro_1:32 Jer_22:21.

Psalms 119:68

Thou art good; gracious and bountiful in thy nature.

And doest good to all men, both good and bad, Mat_5:45, and in all things, yea, even when thou afflictest.

Teach me thy statutes; which is the good that I desire above all things.

Psalms 119:69

Forged a lie; a slander, charging me with hypocrisy towards God, and rebellion against my prince.

But I will keep thy precepts; my practice shall confute their calumnies.

Psalms 119:70

Their heart is as fat as grease; the sense is either,

1. They are stupid, and insensible, and past feeling, not affected either with the terrors or comforts of God's word. So the like phrase is used Isa_6:10, compared with Joh_12:40. Or,

2. They prosper exceedingly, and are even glutted with the wealth and comforts of this life.

But I delight in thy law; but I do not envy them their jollity, and I have as much delight in God's law as they have in worldly things.

Psalms 119:71

Good; necessary, and greatly beneficial. He repeats what in effect he said before, Psa_119:67, partly to intimate the certainty and importance of this truth, and partly because it is a great paradox to worldly men, who generally esteem afflictions to be evil, yea, the worst of evils.

Psalms 119:72

Not only thy promises, but even thy precepts, which are so unpleasant and hard to ungodly men, to me they are more desirable and more needful and profitable, because they do not only give me abundant satisfaction and comfort in this life, but also they conduct me with safety and delight unto that eternal and most blessed life, where gold and silver bear no price.

Psalms 119:73

JOD

I am thy creature, and therefore obliged to serve and obey thee with all my might; which that I may do aright I beg thy instruction or assistance. Or, thou hast made me once, make me a second time, and renew thy decayed image in me, that I may know and serve thee better; and that as I was made by thee, so I may be guided by thy grace to serve and glorify my Creator.

Psalms 119:74

Will be glad; partly for my sake, of whose innocency and piety they are convinced, and therefore sympathize with me; and partly for their own sakes, both for the encouragement they have by my example to trust in God, and for the manifold benefits, both spiritual and temporal, which they expect from my government.

See me, to wit, alive and in safety, notwithstanding all the force and malice of mine enemies, and advanced to the kingdom.

I have hoped in thy word; in thy promise, and have not been disappointed of my hope, which is a great confirmation of their faith and hope in God, that, they shall obtain all the good things which God hath promised them.

Psalms 119:75

I know by the convictions of my own conscience, and by experience.

Thy judgments, i.e. thy corrections, as the next clause explains this.

In faithfulness; in pursuance of thy promises, and in order to my good, that by my afflictions thou mightest purge me from those sins which might provoke thy wrath against me, and prepare me for a better administration, and more lasting and comfortable enjoyment of my kingdom.

Psalms 119:76

Yet in judgment remember mercy, and give me that comfort and assistance in, and that deliverance out of, my troubles which thou hast promised me.

Psalms 119:77

That I may live; that I may be preserved from that violent and untimely death which mine enemies design to bring upon me.

For thy law is my delight; I humbly beg and expect thy protection, because I am thy faithful servant.

Psalms 119:78

They dealt perversely with me, Heb. *they have perverted me* ; either by their calumnies, whereby they have put false and perverse constructions upon all my words and actions; or by endeavouring to overthrow and destroy me, or to turn me out of the way of thy precepts. But all their wicked attempts against me shall never drive me from the study, and love, and practice of thy precepts.

Psalms 119:79

Turn unto me; either,

1. Turn their eyes to me as a spectacle of God's wonderful mercy; or rather,

2. Turn their hearts and affections to me, which have been alienated from me, either by the artifices and calumnies of my adversaries, or by my sore and long distresses, which made them prone to think that either I had deceived them with false pretences, or that God for my sins had utterly forsaken me; which doubtless was a very grievous burden to David, who had a far greater esteem and affection for such persons than for all other men, and desired above all things to stand right in their opinions.

Known, i.e. loved and practised them; as words of knowledge are oft used.

Psalms 119:80

Sound, Heb. *perfect* , or *entire* , that I may love and obey them sincerely, constantly, and universally.

That I be not ashamed, to wit, for my sins, which are the only just causes of shame, and for the disappointment of my hopes following upon them.

Psalms 119:81

CAPH

Fainteth, with longing desire, and earnest expectation, and hope deferred, and hitherto disappointed.

Psalms 119:82

Mine eyes fail, with looking hither and thither, and to thee for help.

Psalms 119:83

In the smoke; hung up in a smoking chimney. My natural moisture is dried and burnt up; I am withered, and deformed, and despised, and my case grows worse and worse every day.

Psalms 119:84

The days; either,

1. The days of my life, as the word *days* is commonly used, Gen_6:3 Job_7:1,6 **Psa 39:5,6**. I have but a little while to live in the world, give me some respite before I die, and help me speedily, otherwise it will be too late. Or rather,

2. The days of my misery, as the next clause implies, and as *days* are taken, Psa_37:13 **116:2**, and elsewhere. *How long* , Lord, shall my miseries last? for ever?

Psalms 119:85

Have digged pits for me; have sought to destroy me by deceit and treachery, as well as by violence.

Which; either,

1. Which men have no respect to thy law, which forbids such things. Or rather,

2. Which thing, to wit, to dig pits for me, an innocent and just man, is not agreeable to thy law, but directly contrary to it.

Psalms 119:86

Are faithful; they are in themselves most just and true, and they require justice and faithfulness from men, promising many blessings to those that perform it, and severely forbid all fraud and falseness, threatening grievous punishments to those that use it; and such promises and threatenings are true, and shall certainly be executed.

Psalms 119:87

They had almost consumed me upon earth, as to my present life and all my happiness upon earth; whereby he implies that his immortal soul and eternal happiness in heaven, of which he speaks, Psa_16:11 **17:15**, and elsewhere, was safe, and out of their reach.

Psalms 119:88

Heb. *and I will keep* . I will testify my gratitude to thee by my obedience.

Psalms 119:89

LAMED

Although many things happen upon earth which seem contrary to thy word, and at which men take occasion to question the truth of thy word, yet in heaven it is sure and certainly true.

In heaven; either,

1. With thee in thy heavenly habitation, or in thy breast; as thy nature is unchangeable, so thy word is infallible. Or rather,

2. In the heavenly bodies, which are not subject to those changes and decays which are in this lower world, but constantly continue the same in their substance, and order, and courses, and this by virtue of that word of God by which they were made and established in this manner; and therefore God's word delivered to his people upon earth, which is of the same nature, must needs be of equal certainty and stability. This sense best suits with the following verses, and with other scriptures, wherein the certainty of God's word is set forth by comparing it with the stability of the heaven and the earth, as Mat_5:18, and elsewhere.

Psalms 119:90

Every age gives fresh proofs of the truth of thy word.

The earth abideth in that place and state in which thou didst establish it. See Ecc_1:4.

Psalms 119:91

They continue; the heaven and the earth last mentioned.

According to thine ordinances; as thou hast appointed, and by virtue of thine appointment.

All are thy servants; all things are subject to thy power and pleasure, and none can resist thy will or word.

Psalms 119:92

Then; at the very instant; I could not have outlived one stroke of thine afflicting hand.

Psalms 119:93

Revived and cheered me, when my heart was ready to sink and die within me.

Psalms 119:94

I am thine by creation and redemption, and manifold obligations, as also by my own choice and designation. I have devoted myself to thy service, and committed myself to thy care.

Psalms 119:95

As my best comforters, and counsellors, and defenders against all the assaults and designs of mine enemies.

Psalms 119:96

I have seen an end of all perfection; I have observed by my experience that the greatest and most perfect accomplishments and enjoyments in this world, the greatest glory, and riches, and power, and wisdom, are too narrow and shortlived to make men happy.

Thy commandment; thy word; one part of it being synecdochically put for the whole.

Broad, or *large* , both for extent and for continuance; it is useful to all persons in all times and conditions, and for all purposes, to inform, direct, quicken, comfort, sanctify, and save men; it is of

everlasting truth and efficacy; it will never deceive nor forsake those who trust to it, as all worldly things will, but will make men happy both here and for ever.

Psalms 119:97

MEM

O how love I thy law! O Lord, thou knowest it, and to thee I appeal herein against all the censures and calumnies of mine enemies to the contrary.

Psalms 119:98

Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, because by that means I have thy wisdom to guide me, and thy power engaged to protect and save me; which is a more certain and effectual way to obtain my desires and ends than all the policy and craft of mine enemies is to hinder them, as I have found by experience. They are ever with me; they are continually before mine eyes, as a rule by which to govern all my actions, whereby I am kept from splitting upon those rocks whereby others are ruined.

Psalms 119:99

Understanding: he speaks not here of notional, but of spiritual, and practical, and experimental knowledge.

Than all my teachers; than all or most (for that general word is oft so understood) of those who taught me formerly, or of the public teachers in Saul's time; which probably were for the generality of them neither so knowing nor so good as they should have been.

My meditations; the matter of my constant and most diligent study.

Psalms 119:100

Ver. 100. By which reason he intimates that the practice of religion is the best way to understand it, and that men's vicious hearts and lives are the greatest hinderances of all true and solid knowledge of it.

Psalms 119:101

Ver. 101. **Evil way;** or, *way of evil* ; which either is evil, or leads to it; sin, and the temptations or occasions of sin.

That, I might keep thy word; I did this not for any carnal reasons, as some men abstain from divers sins for their credit or advantage, but out of pure respect to thy word.

Psalms 119:102

Ver. 102. To wit, by thy blessed Spirit, illuminating my mind, and working upon my heart, which other teachers cannot do.

Psalms 119:103

Ver. 103. The study and obedience of thy words yields me more satisfaction and delight than any worldly men find in their sensual pleasures.

Psalms 119:104

Ver. 104. **Understanding;** true, and useful and powerful knowledge.

Therefore; because that discovers to me, as the wickedness, so the folly and mischief of such practices.

Every false way; every thing which is contrary to that rule of truth and right, all false doctrine and worship, and all sinful or vicious courses.

Psalms 119:105

NUN

Ver. 105. To direct me in all my doubts and difficulties, to preserve from sin and misery, both which oft come under the name of darkness, and to comfort me in all my fears and distresses.

Psalms 119:106

Ver. 106. **I have sworn;** obliged myself by serious purpose and solemn vow, or by a formal oath, which was not unusual amongst God's people, as 2Ch_15:15 Neh_10:29.

Will perform it; I do not repent of it, but by God's grace I will fulfil it.

Psalms 119:107

Ver. 107. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:108

Ver. 108. The free-will offerings of my mouth; either,

1. Those which I have promised with my mouth, though I am not now in a capacity of performing my promises, as being banished from thy house. Or rather,

2. The sacrifices of prayer and praises, which I do freely and frequently offer unto thee; which are called *sacrifices* , as Psa_50:14, and *calves of our lips* , Hos_14:2.

Psalms 119:109

Ver. 109. **In my hand**; exposed to perpetual and extreme danger, as any precious and frail thing is which a man carrieth openly in his hand, whence it may easily fall or be snatched away by a violent hand. See the same or like phrase, Jud_12:3 1Sa_19:5 Job_13:14.

Psalms 119:110

Ver. 110. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:111

Ver. 111. I have chosen them for my chief portion, from which I will never part.

Psalms 119:112

Ver. 112. As I prayed to thee to incline mine heart to them, above Psa_119:36, so I did not neglect my duty, but cheerfully complied with the motions of thy Spirit, and yielded up my mind and heart to the study and practice of them.

Psalms 119:113

SAMECH

Ver. 113. **Thoughts** -this word signifies thoughts, Job_4:13 **20:2**, or opinions, 1Ki_18:21; which being indifferent to good and evil, is here taken in an evil sense, for vain *thoughts* , as we render it, or for thoughts, or opinions, or devices of men differing from or opposite to God's law, as may be gathered from the next clause, where God's law is opposed to these, and as some both Jewish and Christian expositors understand it. Nor is it unusual in the Hebrew text for one and the same word to be taken both in a good and an ill sense in several places; whereof we have one instance in a word of the same signification with this, *mezimmah* , which signifies a *thought* , and is sometimes taken in a good sense, as Pro_1:4 **3:8 8:12 13:16** Jer_51:11; but elsewhere in a bad sense,

as Job_21:27 Psa_10:2,4 Pr 12:2 14:17. The like hath been observed concerning another Hebrew word of the same or near signification, *hormah* which is taken in a good sense, Pro_1:4 13:16, &c., and in an ill sense, as Exo_21:14 Jos_9:4 Job_5:13. And the like may be said concerning this word also. But the ancient interpreters understand this word not of things, but of persons, and so it may be understood of men that think evil, that devise wicked devices, or that have false and evil opinions, opposite to God's law, or tending to seduce men from it.

Psalms 119:114

Ver. 114. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:115

Ver. 115. And therefore will avoid your society and conversation, lest I should be hindered from that which is good, and drawn to sin by your evil counsel or example.

Psalms 119:116

Ver. 116. Or, *because of my hope*, or *confidence* in thy promises, of the certainty whereof I have oft made my boast before others.

Psalms 119:117

Ver. 117. And being freed from those distractions and diversions which my pressing dangers occasion, I will wholly devote myself to the study and practice of thy blessed word.

Psalms 119:118

Ver. 118. All their crafty and deceitful devices, by which they design to insnare and ruin me, and other good men, shall deceive them and their own expectations, and bring that destruction upon themselves which they design for others.

Psalms 119:119

Ver. 119. **Thou puttest away;** thou removest them from thy presence, and from the society of thy people, and from the land of the living.

Like dross; which, though for a season it be mixed with gold or silver, is not only separated from it as a useless and contemptible thing, but also is utterly consumed by fire.

Therefore I love thy testimonies; because they are the best preservatives against wickedness, and against those dreadful

punishments attending upon it, of which he professeth his fear in the next verse.

Psalms 119:120

Ver. 120. The observation of thy terrible judgments against ungodly men, and the conscience of my own infirmity and manifold sins, makes me fear lest thou shouldst punish me also, as thou mightest justly do, if thou shouldst be strict to mark what is amiss in me; or lest I should partake with them in their sins, and consequently in their plagues.

Psalms 119:121

AIN

Ver. 121. **Judgment and justice**, i.e. just judgment, as Ecc_5:8, to wit, towards mine oppressors, whom I have no way injured.

Psalms 119:122

Ver. 122. Do thou undertake and plead my cause against all mine enemies, as a surety rescues the poor persecuted debtor from the hands of a severe creditor.

For good; for my safety and comfort.

Psalms 119:123

Ver. 123. For the performance of thy righteous, or faithful, or merciful word or promise.

Psalms 119:124

Ver. 124. Not according to strict justice, nor according to my sins.

Psalms 119:125

Ver. 125. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:126

Ver. 126. **It is time;** it is high time, or a fit season. *To work* ; to put forth thy power for the vindication of thy own name and cause, and for the restraint and punishment of evildoers.

They, to wit, mine oppressors, or the wicked; whom it was needless to express, both because they had been lately and frequently mentioned before, and partly because it was evident from the following words.

Have made void thy law; or, *abrogated thy law* ; have professedly and openly cast off its authority, resolvedly preferring their own wills and lusts before it, trampled upon thy plain commands, and despised both thy promises and thy threatenings. They have not only sinned through ignorance and infirmity, but presumptuously and. maliciously.

Psalms 119:127

Ver. 127. Partly, because it is one evidence of their excellency, that they are disliked by the vilest of men; partly, out of a just indignation and opposition against my sworn enemies; and partly, because the great and general apostacy of others makes this duty more necessary to prevent their own and other men's relapses.

Psalms 119:128

Ver. 128. **Therefore,** for the reasons now mentioned, I do not make void all thy precepts, as they did, Psa_119:126, nor yet am I partial in my approbation of them, as others are, who reject all such as are opposite to their lusts and interests; but I approve all of them without any exception, and that not only in my judgment, but in my heart and life, as appears by that hatred of sin which is opposed to it in the next clause.

Psalms 119:129

PE

Ver. 129. **Wonderful;** in regard of the deep and wonderful mysteries, and most excellent counsels and directions, far exceeding all the rules of the greatest philosophers, and the exceeding great and precious promises of God contained in them. This is the reason of his high estimation of them, expressed in the last verse.

Psalms 119:130

Ver. 130. **The entrance of thy words;** the very beginnings and rudiments of them; the first discoveries of those sacred mysteries; and much more the depths of them, in which their chief excellency consists. Or, as others both ancient and later interpreters render the place, *The opening of thy words* ; by which may be understood, either,

1. The opening of men's minds by the word of God; but that seems to be the same thing with *giving light* , which here follows; or,

2. The opening or declaration of God's mind made in and by his word.

Unto the simple; to the most ignorant and unlearned persons, who are but willing to learn.

Psalms 119:131

Ver. 131. I thirst after thy precepts, and pursue them eagerly, as it were with open mouth, ready and greedy to receive them. It is a metaphor from one that makes great haste after another, whereby he is forced to pant and to open his mouth for air to refresh himself.

Psalms 119:132

Ver. 132. **Look thou upon me,** to wit, favourably, as the next clause explains it, and as this phrase is commonly used; whereby also he implies that God at present did hide his face and favour from him.

As thou usest to do unto those that love thy name; as thou hast done in all former ages. Do not deny me the common privilege of all the faithful.

Psalms 119:133

Ver. 133. **Order my steps;** by thy grace direct and govern all my motions and actions.

In thy word; in the way prescribed in thy word; or, *by thy word* . Let thy Spirit accompany thy word, and ingraft it within me, so that I may be guided and ruled by it. And although I have evil inclinations and affections within me, let them not bear sway in me, nor withdraw me from the course of obedience.

Psalms 119:134

Ver. 134. As he prayed against the inward impediment of his obedience, Psa_119:133, so here he prayeth against an external impediment of it, and a common temptation to sin.

Psalms 119:135

Ver. 135. Look upon me with a pleased and favourable countenance. Compare Num_6:25 Pro_16:15.

Psalms 119:136

Ver. 136. **Rivers of waters;** plentiful and perpetual tears, witnesses of my deep sorrow for God's dishonour and displeasure, and for the miseries which sinners bring upon themselves and others. They, to wit, the wicked, as before, Psa_119:126, who were not worthy to be mentioned; for this pronoun is oft used in way of contempt, as Luk_14:24 **19:27** Joh_7:11 **8:10** Act_16:36.

Psalms 119:137

TZADDI

Ver. 137. **Righteous art thou,** by thine essence and nature, and therefore it is impossible that thou shouldst be unjust in any of thy laws or providences.

Psalms 119:138

Ver. 138. But this verse is otherwise rendered by all the ancient interpreters, and by divers others, and that more agreeably to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, *Thou hast commanded righteousness* , even

thy testimonies (or, *the righteousness of thy testimonies* ; or, *thy righteous testimonies* , by a common Hebraism; or rather, *righteousness* in or by *thy testimonies* ; nothing being more frequent than the ellipsis of the prefix *beth* , which signifies *in* or *by*) *and truth* , (or, *and true* , thy righteous and true testimonies; although the other seems to be the better translation,) *earnestly* . So the sense is, Thou hast strictly and severely, under the highest obligations and penalties, commanded in thy word that men should be just and true in all their actions. And this agrees very well with the next foregoing verse, wherein he affirmed that God is righteous, and doth righteous things; and then here he adds that he requires righteousness and truth from all men.

Psalms 119:139

Ver. 139. **Hath consumed me;** I am tormented and cut to the heart with grief and anger at it.

Have forgotten thy words, i.e. despise and disobey them; which in Scripture use is oft called a forgetting of them, as the remembering of them is oft put for loving and practising them.

Psalms 119:140

Ver. 140. **Very pure**; without the least mixture of any falsehood or sin, both which are frequent in the words or precepts of men.

Therefore; because of that exact purity and holiness of it, for which very reason ungodly men either despise or hate it.

Psalms 119:141

Ver. 141. **Small**; or, *a little one* ; not for age, but in respect of my condition in the world; mean and obscure.

Psalms 119:142

Ver. 142. **An everlasting righteousness**; constant and unchangeable, the same in all ages and places, and to all persons, of eternal truth and justice, never to be dispensed with, nor to be made void.

The truth; nothing but truth; or as true as truth itself.

Psalms 119:143

Ver. 143. Outward troubles and anguish of spirit, or great anguish or distress.

Psalms 119:144

Ver. 144. I shall be kept from those sins which deserve and bring death.

Psalms 119:145

KOPH

Ver. 145. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:146

Ver. 146. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:147

Ver. 147. **The dawning of the morning**, Heb. *the twilight* , to wit, of the morning, by comparing Psa_88:13. And so this word is used 1Sa_30:17.

Psalms 119:148

Ver. 148. **The night watches**, Heb. *the watches* ; which were kept only by night. And these watches were then three, as hath been more than once observed. And this is not to be understood of the first watch, which was at the beginning of the night, for the prevention thereof was very easy, and frequent, and inconsiderable; but of the *middle watch* , as it is called, Jud_7:19, which was set in the middle of the night; and especially of the *morning watch* , as it is called, Exo_14:24, which was set some hours before the dawning of the day; and so this is an aggravation and addition to what he said Psa_119:147.

Psalms 119:149

Ver. 149. According to thy word, which is oft called God's judgment; or, according to thy custom or manner of dealing with me and with others of thy people; as this word is taken above, Psa_119:132.

Psalms 119:150

Ver. 150. **They draw nigh**, to wit, to me, or against me, as Psa_27:2; they are at hand, and ready to seize upon me.

They are far from thy law; they cast away far from them all thoughts of and respect to thy law, which forbids such wicked practices.

Psalms 119:151

Ver. 151. **Thou art near** to me. Thou art as ready and present to succour me as they are to molest me.

Thy commandments; considered with the promises and threatenings, which are frequently annexed to them. Or, the promises, as this word seems to be used, Psa_111:7, and elsewhere in this Psalm. And God is said to *command* not only his precepts, or the observation thereof, but also his covenant, Psa_105:8 **111:9**, which is a collection or body of the promises; and his loving-kindness, Psa_42:8, which is the fountain of the promises; and his blessing, Psa_133:3, which is the fruit of his promises; and deliverances, Psa_44:4, which are the things promised. And therefore it is not strange if he promises be sometimes called commandments.

Psalms 119:152

Ver. 152. **Known of old**, by my own long experience, ever since I arrived at any knowledge in those matters.

That thou hast founded them for ever; that thou hast established them upon sure and everlasting foundations.

Psalms 119:153

RESH

Ver. 153. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:154

Ver. 154. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:155

Ver. 155. And therefore, on the contrary, I trust that thou wilt save me because I do seek them. My wicked enemies shall certainly be destroyed, by which means I shall be delivered.

Psalms 119:156

Ver. 156. According to the manner of thy administrations towards thy people, as Psa_119:149.

Psalms 119:157

Ver. 157. Though they tempt me to do so, and persecute me because I will not do it.

Psalms 119:158

Ver. 158. I observed and considered their ungodly courses.

Psalms 119:159

Ver. 159. **I love thy precepts;** which was the cause of my grief for their violation of them.

Psalms 119:160

Ver. 160. **From the beginning;** either from the beginning of the world, or ever since thou hast revealed thy mind by thy word to the sons of men; all thy words have been found to be true and certain, and so they will be to the end of the world, as is implied in the next clause. Or, as it is in the margin, *the beginning* (or, as others render it, *the sum* , as this very word is used, Exo_30:12 Num_26:2 **31:26**, to wit, the whole of it, there is not the least part of it which is not so) *of thy word is true* .

Psalms 119:161

SCHIN

Ver. 161. **Princes;** who had power to do it, and who ought to have used their authority to protect me, whom they knew to be innocent and injured.

But my heart standeth in awe of thy word; but I feared thine offence and displeasure more than their wrath.

Psalms 119:162

Ver. 162. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:163

Ver. 163. **Lying;** or, *falsehood* ; either,

1. In my speech and actions; all hypocrisy and deceit, which is the common practice of mine enemies, and of all godless politicians: or,

2. In doctrine and worship, as this word seems to be used, Psa_119:29, because both there and here it is opposed to God's law.

Psalms 119:164

Ver. 164. **Seven times;** many times; that definite number being oft taken indefinitely, as Lev_26:28, and elsewhere.

Psalms 119:165

Ver. 165. **Great peace;** either outward prosperity and happiness, which God in his law hath expressly promised to good men; or at least inward peace, satisfaction and tranquility of mind, arising from the sense of God's love to them and watchful care over them in all the concerns of this life and of the next.

Have they, Heb. is *to them* , or shall be to them; for the verb being not expressed, it may be understood either way. Although they may meet with some disturbance, yet their end shall be peace, as is said, Psa_37:37.

Nothing shall offend them, Heb. *they shall have no stumbling-block* , to wit, such at which they shall stumble and fall into mischief and utter ruin, as ungodly men have, before whom God doth oft lay stumbling-blocks, or occasions of sin and destruction,

as it is affirmed by God himself, Jer_6:21 Eze_3:20 Rom_9:33, out of Isa_8:14.

Psalms 119:166

Ver. 166. Thus performing the condition which thou hast required, I justly and confidently hope for thy mercy promised.

Psalms 119:167

Ver. 167. I have not only obeyed thy commands, which a hypocrite may sometimes and in part do for worldly ends, but I have done it with my very soul, and from a hearty love to them.

Psalms 119:168

Ver. 168. **For**, or *because, all my ways are before thee* . This is added either,

1. As the reason or motive of his obedience, which was the consideration of God's omniscience, and his desire to approve himself and his ways to God; or,

2. As a proof and evidence of it. Whereas this and all his former professions of his piety were charged by his enemies with deep hypocrisy, and might seem to savour of pride and vainglory, here in the close of them he makes a solemn appeal to that God who knew his heart and all his ways, and whether these things were not true and real; which if they were not, he tacitly imprecates God's judgment upon himself.

Psalms 119:169

TAU

Ver. 169. **Near before thee**; which at present thou seemest to *shut out* , as the church complained, Lam_3:8.

Understanding; whereby I may both know and perform my duty in all particulars.

Psalms 119:170

Ver. 170. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:171

Ver. 171. No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 119:172

Ver. 172. **Shall speak**, Heb. *shall pour forth* , freely and abundantly, like a fountain. Of thy word; in praise of it, for its righteousness, as it here follows, its truth, and purity, and other excellencies.

Thy commandments; even those which to men of corrupted minds seem harsh and unjust.

Psalms 119:173

Ver. 173. For my guide and companion, and chief joy and treasure.

Psalms 119:174

Ver. 174. For thy salvation; either,

1. For deliverance from my present straits and calamities, that I may serve thee with more freedom, and may glorify thy name in a more solemn and public manner; or,

2. That thou wouldst completely save me, not only from my outward pressures, but also from my sins, from my dulness and deadness in thy service, from all inclinations and temptations to apostacy and impiety, and from my other indispositions and corruptions, against which he prayeth in divers parts of this Psalm; and that at last thou wouldst crown me with eternal salvation in thy kingdom, which it is apparent that David did believe and expect, and hath been already proved from divers passages of this book.

Psalms 119:175

Ver. 175. Either,

1. Thy providential dispensation, whereby thou judgest and rulest the world, punishing the wicked, and protecting and delivering the godly. Or,

2. Thy word or testimonies, as this word most commonly signifies in this Psalm, which are the only ground of my hope in thy help.

Psalms 119:176

Ver. 176. I have gone astray like a lost sheep: this is meant either,

1. Of sinful errors. I have too often swerved from the path of thy precepts through mine own infirmity, or the power of temptation. Or,

2. Of penal errors. I have been banished by the power and tyranny of mine enemies from all my friends and relations, and, which is far worse, from the place of thy worship and presence, and forced to wander hither and thither, hiding myself in mountains, and caves, and woods, exposed to a thousand snares and dangers.

Seek thy servant, as the shepherd doth his wandering sheep, and bring me back into thy fold.

Psalms 120:1 PSALM 120

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been composed, either,

1. By David in the time of his persecution by Saul, when he was exposed both to the swords and to the calumnies of his enemies; of which two evils he complains in this Psalm; or,

2. By some other holy prophet in a time of the church's persecution.

Or, *of ascents*, as others render it, and as the word properly signifies. This title is given to this and to the fourteen following Psalms; concerning the reason whereof there are divers conjectures, the chief of which are these: either,

1. Because of the excellent matter of them, as eminent persons are called men of high degree, 1Ch_17:17. For in them are contained, as learned men have observed, many doctrines or instructions of great use and importance, and those delivered with extraordinary brevity and elegance. Or,

2. Because they were sung upon the fifteen degrees of stairs of the temple, which the Jewish writers mention; or, at least, upon some high place. Or,

3. Because they were sung with a very loud voice. Or,

4. Because they were sung by the Jews when they returned from Babylon and went up to Jerusalem; which some judge the more

probable, because it suits with the order of these Psalms; whereof the first was to be used by them when they were preparing for their departure, and suffered delays in it from the calumnies of their enemies; the second, in their journey; the third, upon their arrival at Jerusalem; the fourth, after the building of the city and temple, &c. And although one of these Psalms is ascribed to David, and another to Solomon, yet they also, as well as the rest, might be applied to this use; and so might this Psalm also, though David first composed it upon another occasion. Or,

5. From something which was peculiar in them, either in the poetry or the manner of singing them. But these things being now lost and unknown, not only to Christians, but even to the Jews themselves, we must be contentedly ignorant of this as well as of most other titles of the Psalms; and the rather, because they do not at all concern the matter, nor are they necessary to the understanding of them.

David prayeth against lying lips and deceitful tongues, Psa_120:1-4, and complaineth that his habitation was unavoidably among wicked and unpeaceable men, Psa_120:5-7.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 120:2

From lying lips; from the unjust censures and malicious slanders of mine enemies, who traduce me as an egregious hypocrite, as a rebel and traitor.

From a deceitful tongue; which covereth mischievous designs with pretences of kindness.

Psalms 120:3

What shall be given unto thee, whosoever thou art who art guilty of these practices? He applies himself severally to the consciences of every one of them. Or he designs Doeg or some other person in Saul's court eminent for this wickedness. The sense may be this, It is true, thou dost me some mischief; but what benefit dost thou get by it, if all thy accounts be cast up? For although thou mayst thereby obtain some favour and advantage from Saul, yet thou wilt assuredly bring upon thyself the curse and vengeance of God; and then thou wilt be no gainer by the bargain. And to do mischief

to another without benefit to thyself, is an inhuman and diabolical wickedness.

Psalms 120:4

So this verse contains an answer to the question **Psa 120 3**, and declares the slanderer's recompence; which is the wrath and vengeance of the mighty God, which in Scripture, and particularly in this book, is oft compared to at. rows, as Psa_7:13,**14**, &c, and here to *arrows of the mighty*, i.e. shot by the hands of a strong man; and to coals, Psa_140:10, and here to

coals of juniper, which being kindled burn very fiercely, and retain their heat for a long time. And the psalmist may possibly express it in these words, to show, the suitableness of the punishment to the sin; as thy tongue shoots arrows, (for so calumnies are called, Psa_57:4 **64:3**) and kindles coals, so thou shalt bring God's arrows and coals kindled by the fire of his wrath upon thyself. But according to the other translation, which is in the margin, this is a further declaration of the sin of calumny. Though, all things considered, it doth thee no good, yet it doth others much hurt, to whom it is like sharp arrows, &c.

Psalms 120:5

Mesech and

Kedar are two sorts of people, oft mentioned in Scripture, and reckoned amongst the heathen and barbarous nations. But their nurses are not here to be understood properly, (for we do not read that either David or the Israelites in the Babylonish captivity dwelt in their lands,) but only metaphorically, as the ungodly Israelites are called Sodom and Gomorrah, Isa_1:10, and Amorites and Hittithes, Eze_16:3,**45**, and as in common speech among us, men of an evil character are called Turks or Jews. And so he explains himself in the next verse by this description of them, him or them that hated peace, although David sought peace with them, Psa_120:7. And so he speaks either,

1. Of the Philistines, among whom he sojourned for a time. But he did not seek peace with them, but sought their ruin, as the event showed; nor did they wage war against him, whilst he lived peaceably among them. Or rather,

2. The courtiers and soldiers of Saul, and the generality of the Israelites, who, to curry favour with Saul, sought David's ruin, and that many times by treachery and pretences of friendship; of which he oft complains in this book; whom as he elsewhere calls *heathen* , as Psa_9:5 **59:5**, it is not strange if he compares them here to the savage Arabians. And amongst such persons David was oft forced to sojourn in Saul's time, and with them he sought peace by all ways possible; but they hated peace, and the more he pursued peace, the more eagerly did they prosecute the war, as it here follows.

Psalms 120:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 120:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 121:1 PSALM 121

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm sufficiently showeth that the psalmist was conflicting with great difficulties and oppositions, and looking hither and thither for help, as men in such cases use to do, and then turning his eyes to God and his providence, and encouraging himself by God's promises made to his people.

The psalmist showeth that the great safety of the godly is from the Lord, Psa_121:1-5, who keepeth them in their outgoings and incomings from all evil, Psa_121:6-8.

Unto the hills; either to Zion and Moriah, which are called *the holy mountains* , Psa_87:1; or rather,

2. To the hills in general, whereof there were many in the land of Canaan, and upon which the forces, which he hoped would come to his aid, might be seen at a great distance.

Cometh; or, *may come* ; Heb. *will come* .

Psalms 121:2

From God alone, and therefore to him alone will I turn mine eyes.

Psalms 121:3

He speaketh as it were from God to himself, but withal to the encouragement of his followers and of all good men.

To be moved, to wit, so as fall into mischief.

Will not slumber; will not overlook nor neglect any thing which is necessary for thy preservation.

Psalms 121:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 121:5

Thy shade; both to refresh thee and keep thee from the burning heat of the sun, as it is expressed in the next verse, and to protect thee by his power from all thine enemies; for which reason God is oft called a *shadow* in Scripture.

Upon thy right hand; partly to uphold thy right hand, which is the chief instrument of action; and partly to defend thee in that place where thine enemies oppose thee; of which on Psa_109:6. And compare Psa_16:8 **109:31**.

Psalms 121:6

The sun shall not smite thee with excessive heat,

nor the moon with that cold and moisture which comes into the air by it and with it. Intemperate heats and colds are the two springs of many diseases. He alludes both to the conditions of soldiers or travellers, who are exposed to the open air by day and by night, and also to the cloudy pillar which defended the Israelites both by day and by night. The sense is, He shall protect thee from all evils both by day and night.

Psalms 121:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 121:8

Shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in; shall guard and assist thee in all thy expeditions, and affairs, and actions, either at home or abroad. So this phrase is used Num_27:17 Deu_28:6.

Psalms 122:1 PSALM 122

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been written by David for the use of the people when they came up to Jerusalem to the solemn feasts.

David professeth his joy when he went into the house of the Lord, Psa_122:1-5; prayeth for the welfare, prosperity, and peace of it, Psa_122:6-9.

Let us go; exhorting one another to it, as Deu_33:19. Or, *We will go* . The sense is, It delighteth me much to hear that the people, who had so long lived in the neglect or contempt of God's worship, were now ready and forward in it.

Psalms 122:2

Our feet shall stand; thither we shall come, and there we shall make our abode during the times of solemn worship.

Within thy gates, O Jerusalem; in that city where the ark is now fixed. We shall wander no more from place to place, as the ark was removed.

Psalms 122:3

Partly in its buildings, which are not dispersed, as they are in villages, nor divided into two cities, as it was before, but united and enlarged, 1Ch_11:7,8; and principally in its government and religion, which was distinct and opposite, before David took the fort of Zion from the Jebusites.

Psalms 122:4

The tribes; not some few pious people of each tribe, as in Saul's time and under the judges, but whole tribes; nor only one or two of the tribes, as it was during the late civil wars, but all the twelve tribes.

The tribes of the Lord; whom God hath chosen to be his people, and whom he hath invited and required to resort thither.

Unto the testimony of Israel; unto the ark, which is oft called *the testimony* , as Exo_16:34 Lev_16:13 **24:3 Num 17:, 1**, and more fully the ark of the testimony, as Exo_26:33,34, and elsewhere; because of the tables of the covenant laid up in it, which are called God's testimony, and the tables of the testimony, as Exo_25:16 **31:18**, &c. And this may well be called the *testimony of* or *to Israel* , because it was given by God to them and for their good. Or, by or according *to the testimony of Israel* , i.e. God's

command given to Israel, which may be alleged here as the reason which moved them to this journey.

To give thanks unto the name of the Lord; to worship God; this one eminent part and action thereof being put for all the rest.

Psalms 122:5

This is added as another reason inviting and obliging them to go up to Jerusalem, and as another commendation of this city.

Thrones of judgment; the supreme courts of justice for ecclesiastical, and especially for civil affairs, as the next clause explains it.

The thrones of the house of David; the royal throne allotted by God to David and to his posterity for ever, and the inferior seats of justice established by and under his authority. See 2Ch_19:8-10.

Psalms 122:6

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; in whose prosperity both your civil and your religious privileges are deeply concerned. They shall prosper; or, let them prosper; the future being taken imperatively, as is very frequent. The Lord grant them prosperity and all happiness.

Psalms 122:7

Within thy walls; in all thy dwellings.

Within thy palaces; especially in the court and the dwellings of the princes and rulers, whose welfare is a public blessing to all the people.

Psalms 122:8

And this I desire not only nor chiefly for my own security, and for the glory of mine empire, but for the sake of all my fellow citizens, and of all the Israelites, whom, though my subjects, I must own for my brethren and companions in the chief privileges and blessings enjoyed at Jerusalem.

Psalms 122:9

The house of the Lord our God; which is now fixed in this city.

Psalms 123:1 PSALM 123

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a description of the great agony and distress of God's people, and of their carriage under it.

The godly profess their patient trusting and confidence in God, Psa_123:1,2; and withal earnestly pray to be delivered from the contempt of the proud, Psa_123:3,4.

Unto thee only, because all other persons either cannot or will not help me.

Psalms 123:2

Look unto the hand of their masters; either,

1. For supply of their wants, which comes from their masters' hand; or,

2. For pity, the hand being the instrument whereby masters commonly correct their servants, and looking to the hand may express the posture of one supplicating for mercy; or rather,

3. For help and defence against their oppressors. For servants were unable to defend themselves, and were not allowed to wear defensive weapons, but expected and had protection kern their masters in case of injury. For this phrase of *having one 's eyes towards another* , both in this and other sacred books, constantly notes expectation and desire of help from them, as Psa_25:15 **69:3** Isa_17:7 Eze_23:27, and oft elsewhere. And the phrase of God's *having mercy* upon another, doth most commonly signify that act or effect of his mercy in helping and delivering him.

Until that he have mercy upon us; until he graciously help and save us.

Psalms 123:3

With opprobrious words and injuries.

Psalms 123:4

With the scornful and contemptuous carriage of thine and our enemies, who live in great ease and glory, whilst we, thy people, are overwhelmed with manifold calamities.

Psalms 124:1 PSALM 124

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed by David in the name, and for the use of all the church and people of Israel, as a thanksgiving for their deliverance from some eminent danger or dangers from proud and potent enemies. Many such they had in David's time; but which of them is here intended is hard to determine, and not worth the inquiry.

The church setteth forth God's mercy for a miraculous deliverance, out of the apparent danger of powerful enemies, Psa_124:1-5, and blesseth him for it Psa_124:6-8.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 124:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 124:3

They had swallowed us up quick; they had speedily and utterly destroyed us, as Korah, &c. were, **Num 16.**

Psalms 124:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 124:5

Our enemies, compared to

proud waters, for their great multitude, and swelling rage, and mighty force.

Psalms 124:6

A metaphor from wild beasts, which tear and devour their prey with their teeth.

Psalms 124:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 124:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 125:1 PSALM 125

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was designed for the consolation and encouragement of God's church and people in all ages, against all the plots and malice of their enemies.

The steadfastness of such as trust in God, Psa_125:1-3. A prayer for the godly to do them good, and against the ungodly to destroy them, Psa_125:4,5.

Removed, or, *overthrown* , by any winds or storms; partly because of its own greatness and strength; and partly because of the Divine protection afforded to it.

Psalms 125:2

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem; by which it was defended both from stormy winds and from the assaults of its enemies.

Psalms 125:3

The rod of the wicked; the power and authority of cruel tyrants.

Shall not rest; not continue for ever, nor too long.

Upon the lot of the righteous; upon the habitations and persons of good men.

Lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity; lest through human frailty and the great weight or long continuance of their troubles they should be driven to impatience, or to despair, or to use indirect and sinful courses to relieve themselves.

Psalms 125:4

As thou hast promised to keep thy people from evil, Psa_125:3, be pleased also to vouchsafe unto them those blessings which are good for them. Or thus, having declared God's tender care of his people, and his promise made to them, he now prayeth for the execution of the said promises.

Psalms 125:5

But those hypocrites, who either through fear of the rod, mentioned Psa_125:3, or for other considerations, shall turn aside from the ways of God, which for a time they professed and seemed to own, unto sinful courses, whom he opposeth to the *upright* , Psa_125:4, *the Lord shall lead them forth* , to wit, unto punishment, as malefactors are commonly led to the place of execution.

With the workers of iniquity; with the most obstinate and profligate sinners, of whose plagues they shall certainly partake, as they did of their sins.

Upon Israel; upon the true Israel of God.

Psalms 126:1 PSALM 126

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed by Ezra, or some other man of God, at the return of Israel from Babylon.

The church, celebrating and praising God for her return out of the Babylonian captivity, Psa_126:1-3, prayeth him to perfect his work, and foretelleth the good success thereof, Psa_126:4-6.

Turned again the captivity of Zion, i.e. brought the captive Israelites out of Babylon into their own land.

We were like them that dream; we were so surprised and astonished with the report of such a favour, that we could not believe our own eyes and ears, but thought it to be but a dream or delusion of our own fancies; as is usual in matters of great joy, as Gen_45:26 Luk_24:11 Act_12:9.

Psalms 126:2

They did and well might wonder at it, that a heathen emperor should of his own mere motion show so much kindness to so hateful and despicable a people as the Jews were.

Psalms 126:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 126:4

Turn again our captivity; as thou hast brought us home, bring home also the rest of our brethren, who, are dispersed and yet remain captives in Babylon, or in any other parts of the world. As the streams in the south; as thou art eased sometimes to send floods of water into dry and barren grounds, such as the southern parts of Canaan and the parts adjacent were; which is an act of thy great power and goodness; and no less will this reduction of thy people be, and no less shall we rejoice in it, and bless God for it.

Psalms 126:5

This is an argument wherewith he presseth the foregoing prayer, Psa_126:4, taken from the common course of God's providence towards men of all nations, to whom he affords vicissitudes of sorrow and comfort; and particularly towards husbandmen, who though oftentimes they sow their *seed-corn* with care, and fear, and sorrow, yet afterwards for the most part meet with a joyful harvest. And therefore we hope thou wilt not deny this favour to thine own people. And as thou hast in some good measure granted it to us, so we pray thee grant it to our brethren, who are yet exercised with hard labours and griefs, that they and we together may at last obtain that blessed and full harvest which we still pray and hope for.

Psalms 126:6

He that goeth forth; the husbandman that goeth out into his field, and walketh hither and thither to scatter his seed, as the manner is.

Weepeth, for fear of the loss of his seed, and of a bad harvest.

Precious seed; seed-corn when it is scarce and dear. Or, *the basket of seed* as it is rendered in our margin, as also by the Chaldee paraphrast, and some others.

Shall doubtless come, Heb. *coming shall come* ; which manner of expression may note either the certainty of the thing, or the frequency and customariness of it. This verse is only an amplification of the former.

Psalms 127:1 PSALM 127

Or rather, *of Solomon* , as this particle is generally used in this book. Nor is there any thing in this Psalm which gives us just ground to question whether Solomon was the author of it or no.

No success in city or family without God's blessing and protection, Psa_127:2. Good children are his gifts, Psa_127:3,4. Their happiness that have them, Psa_127:5.

Build the house, i.e. assist and bless those that build the house; either an artificial house, the temple, or the royal palace, or any of those numerous structures which Solomon raised; or a natural or civil home, a family, or a state, or kingdom.

They labour in vain that build it; they will never bring it to perfection, nor have any comfort in it.

Psalms 127:2

He directs his speech to the persons forementioned, *the builders or watchmen* , of both which sorts there are many that use the following course. *To rise up early, to sit late* ; to use constant and unwearied diligence, from the very dawning of the day unto the dark night, that so you may accomplish your designs.

To eat the bread of sorrows; to eat the bread which you get by excessive and grievous pains. So, to wit, by his blessing, which, though not expressed, is sufficiently understood out of the former verse, where it is twice expressed. As therefore he saith it is in vain for them to build or watch, if God do not give his blessing and assistance, Psa_127:1; so here he adds that it is in vain to be diligent in their labours and callings, understand, without God's blessing; for so, i.e. not singly by their industry, but by his blessing upon their labours. But the Hebrew word rendered *so* may be and is by others rendered *when* , or *whereas* , or *since* ; by others, *rightly* , or *well* , when it is convenient and needful for them; by others, *certainly* ; the sleep which they have is undoubtedly from God's blessing, without which all possible endeavours would never procure it. *He* ; the Lord, expressed in the former and in the following verses.

Giveth, to wit, freely, without that immoderate toiling and drudgery wherewith others pursue it.

His beloved; his people, who though hated and maligned by men, are beloved of God, over whom his providence watcheth in a special manner. In this expression he seems to allude to the name of Jedidiah, which was given to Solomon, and signifies *the beloved of the Lord* , 2Sa_12:25.

Sleep; a quiet rest, both of body and mind, which many of those greedy worldlings cannot enjoy, as is observed, Ecc_5:20.

Psalms 127:3

Children; which he mentions here, partly because they are the chief of all these blessings, and partly because all the forementioned toil and labour is in a great measure and most commonly undertaken for their sakes.

Are an heritage of the Lord; they come not from the power of nature, and from a man's conversation with his wife, or with a multitude of wives or concubines, which Solomon had, but only from God's blessing; even as an inheritance is not the fruit of a man's own labour, but the gift of his father, or rather the gift of God, both enabling and inclining his father to give it to him.

His reward; not a reward of debt merited by good men, but a reward of grace, of which we read Rom_4:4, which God gives them graciously, as Jacob acknowledgeth of his children, Gen_33:5. And although God give children and other outward comforts to ungodly men in the way of common providence, yet he gives them only to his people as favours, and in the way of promise and covenant.

Psalms 127:4

In the hand of a mighty man; when they are shot out of a bow by a man of great strength against his enemy, which are of great use and power, both to offend the enemy, and to defend himself.

Children of the youth; children begotten in youth, as a husband or wife married in their youth are called a husband or wife of youth, Pro_5:18 Isa_54:6 Joe_1:8, and as a son begotten in old age is called a son of old age, Gen_37:3. And these he prefers before other children in this point, partly because such are commonly more strong and vigorous than others; and partly because they live longest with their parents, and to their comfort and support, whereas children born in old age seldom come to any maturity of years before their parents' death.

Psalms 127:5

That hath his quiver full of them; who hath a numerous issue; which as it is a great blessing in itself, so Solomon's want of it made it more valuable in his eyes.

They shall not be ashamed; such parents fear not the reproach of barrenness, which was grievous, especially among the Jews; of which see Luk_1:25; nor any other shame from their enemies.

They shall speak with the enemies in the gate; they shall courageously plead their cause in courts of judicature, which were in the gates, Deu_21:19 **25:7**, not fearing to be crushed by the

might of their adversaries, as weak and helpless persons frequently are.

Psalms 128:1 PSALM 128

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a description of the blessedness of good men.

The psalmist showeth the happy state of such as fear God, in his labour, Psa_128:1,2, wife, and children, Psa_128:3, He shall also see the good of Jerusalem, and peace upon Israel, Psa_128:4-6.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 128:2

Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands; thy labour shall not be vain and fruitless, and the fruit of thy labours shall not be taken away from thee, and possessed by others, as God threatened to the disobedient, **Deu 28**, but enjoyed by thyself with comfort and satisfaction.

Well with thee, both in this world and in the world to come, as even the Chaldee paraphrast explains these words.

Psalms 128:3

As a fruitful vine; like the vine for fruitfulness; or like that sort of vines known by this name for its eminent fruitfulness, as some trees amongst us are for the same reason called *the great bearers*. *By the sides of thine house*, where the vines are commonly planted for support and other advantages; which being applied to the wife, may signify either,

1. The wife's duty to abide at home, Tit_2:5, as the harlot is deciphered by her gadding abroad, Pro_7:11,12. Or rather,
2. The legitimacy of the children, which are begotten at home by the husband, and not abroad by strangers.

Like olive plants, numerous, growing and flourishing, good both for ornament and manifold uses, as olive trees are.

Round about thy table; where they shall sit at meat with thee, for thy comfort and safety.

Psalms 128:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 128:5

Out of Zion; from the ark in Zion, and with those spiritual and everlasting blessings which are to be had no where but in Zion, and from the God who dwelleth in Zion, and with all other mercies which thou shalt ask of God in Zion.

The good of Jerusalem; the prosperity of that city to which thou belongest, and which is the only seat of God's special presence, and of his worship, whose felicity therefore is very delightful to every good man, and upon whose peace the peace and safety of every member of it depends, as every seaman is concerned in the safety of the ship in which he is.

Psalms 128:6

Not only upon Jerusalem, and the parts adjacent, but upon all the tribes and people of Israel.

Psalms 129:1 PSALM 129

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains a joyful and thankful remembrance of the church's former and manifold calamities from barbarous enemies, and of God's wonderful mercy in delivering them out of their hands.

The various manifold afflictions of the church described, but delivered out of all, Psa_129:1-4. The haters thereof cursed, and devoted to judgment, Psa_129:5-8.

They; mine enemies or oppressors; which is easily understood, both from the nature of the thing, and from Psa_129:3, where they are expressed under the name of *ploughers* .

From my youth; from the time that I was a people, when I was in Egypt and came out of it, which is called the time of Israel's youth, Jer_2:2 Eze_23:3.

Psalms 129:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 129:3

Ploughed upon my back; they have not only thrown me down, and trod me under foot, but have cruelly tormented me, wounded and mangled me, and had no more pity upon me than the ploughman hath upon the earth which he cuts up at his pleasure. He saith,

upon my back, either because they did literally scourge the captives upon their backs with such *CORDS* as are mentioned Psa_129:4, although we do not read that the Israelitish captives were thus used by any of their enemies; or by way of allusion to that usage, which made a sort of furrows in their backs, upon which they used to lay on their strokes.

They made long their furrows; they oft repeated their injuries and prolonged my torments.

Psalms 129:4

Righteous; faithful or merciful, as that word is frequently used.

Cut asunder the cords wherewith the plough was drawn; by which means they were stopped in their course. So he persists in the same metaphor of a plough. By these

cords he understands all their plots and endeavours.

Psalms 129:5

Forced to retreat with shame and disappointment.

Psalms 129:6

The house-tops there were flat, and therefore more capable of grass or green corn growing between the stones than ours are.

Which withereth afore it groweth up; which having no deep root, never comes to maturity. And so all their designs shall be abortive, and never come to perfection.

Psalms 129:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 129:8

Which was a usual salutation given by passengers to reapers, as Rth_2:4. So the meaning is, It never continues till the harvest comes.

Psalms 130:1 PSALM 130

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed by the prophet when he was conflicting with horrors of his conscience for the guilt of his sins, and imploring God's mercy and pardon.

The psalmist being troubled for and acknowledging his sins, professeth his hope in God, Psa_130:1-6, and exhorteth Israel to hope also in him, Psa_130:7,8.

Being overwhelmed with deep distresses and terrors, and ready to despair.

Psalms 130:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 130:3

Mark iniquities; observe them accurately, and punish them severely, as they deserve. *Who shall stand in thy presence*, or at thy tribunal? No man can acquit himself, or escape the sentence of condemnation, because all men are sinners, Ecc_7:20 Jam_3:2. *To stand* is a judicial phrase, and notes a man's being absolved or justified, upon an equal trial, as Psa_1:5 Rom_14:4, where it is opposed to falling.

Psalms 130:4

There is forgiveness with thee; thou art able and ready to forgive repenting sinners.

That thou mayest be feared; not with a slavish, but with a child-like fear and reverence. This grace and mercy of thine is the foundation of all religion and worship of thee in the world, without which men would desperately proceed on in their impious courses without any thought of repentance.

Psalms 130:5

I wait for the Lord, that he would manifest his favour to me in the pardon of my sins.

In his word; wherein he hath declared his merciful nature, Exo_34:6,7, and his gracious purpose and promises for the pardoning of sinners.

Psalms 130:6

Whether soldiers that keep the night watches in an army or city, or the priests or Levites who did so in the temple; who being wearied with hard service and want of convenient rest, diligently look for and fervently desire the morning, when they may be discharged. Compare Psa_119:148.

Psalms 130:7

Let Israel; every true Israelite, by the encouragement of mine example.

Plenteous redemption; abundantly sufficient for all persons who shall accept it upon God's terms, and for the remission of all sins; and therefore here is good ground of hope for all contrite and returning sinners.

Psalms 130:8

He shall redeem; the Lord, either God the Father by his Son, or God the Son by his own blood.

Israel; all true Israelites, whether of the carnal or spiritual seed.

From all his iniquities; from the guilt and punishment of all their sins.

Psalms 131:1 PSALM 131

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David during Saul's persecution. when he was charged with boundless ambition, and a greedy affectation of the royal throne, and that he sought it by wicked practices against Saul's life and dignity. And for his own just vindication he is forced to publish his own integrity, and to declare that as the right of the kingdom was not sought or coveted by him, but freely conferred upon him by the unexpected and undesired favour of God; so that he had no thought or design to invade the throne before his time, but was willing to stay God's leisure for it, and in the mean time was resolved to behave himself towards Saul as became a faithful subject, seeking nothing but to preserve his own life from the rage of unrighteous and bloody men.

David testifieth his humility, Psa_131:1,2, and exhorteth Israel to trust in the Lord, Psa_131:3.

Is not haughty; or, *lifted up* , with that pride whereof I am accused, as thou the Searcher of all hearts knowest.

Nor mine eyes lofty; which is a sign and effect of pride, Pro_6:17
21:4.

Neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me; Heb. *neither have I walked in great matters* , &c. It neither is nor hath been my course to attempt or arrogate any thing to myself above my degree and private capacity, or to affect worldly glory or domination.

Psalms 131:2

When my mind was provoked to irregular practices, either by my own corrupt heart, or by Saul's implacable rage and tyranny, or by the solicitation of any of my followers, as **1Sa 24,1Sa 26**, I restrained and subdued all such evil motions.

As a child that is weaned of his mother, either,

1. As void of all that ambition and malice wherewith I am charged as a child newly weaned; or rather,
2. As wholly depending upon God's providence for the way and time of bringing me to the kingdom, as the poor helpless infant, when it is deprived of its natural and accustomed food, the mother's milk, takes no care to provide for itself, but wholly relies upon its mother's care and providence for its support.

Psalms 131:3

Let all Israelites learn by my example to commit themselves to God in well-doing, and to fix all their hope and trust upon him alone.

Psalms 132:1 PSALM 132

THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Psalm was either,

1. David, when God had graciously declared his acceptance of David's desire to build a house for God. and his purpose of establishing the kingdom to David and his seed for ever: or,

2. Solomon, as may be gathered from the whole matter of the Psalm, which seems better to agree to him than to David; and particularly from Psa_132:8-10, compared with 2Ch_6:41,42, where we have the same words with no great alteration.

David in prayer commendeth unto God the care he had for the ark, Psa_132:1-7; with his prayer over it, Psa_132:8-10. A rehearsal of God's oath and promises of the everlasting kingdom of Christ, **Psa 132:11-18**.

Remember David; either,

1. Thy covenant made with David; or rather,

2. David's eminent piety and zeal for thy service, amplified by the following clause.

All his afflictions; all his sufferings for thy sake, all the solicitude of his mind, all his hard and wearisome labours for thy service and glory, and for provisions towards the building of thy temple, and for the establishment of thy people in peace and tranquillity, that so way might be made for that great work.

Psalms 132:2

He made a solemn vow, and confirmed it with an oath; which he undoubtedly did, although no mention be made of it **2Sa 7**. Thus many historical passages which were omitted in their proper places, are afterwards recorded upon other occasions; of which examples have been formerly noted.

Of Jacob; of Israel; Jacob and Israel are frequently put for their posterity; as hath been frequently observed.

Psalms 132:3

This and the following clauses are not to be understood strictly and properly, as if he would never come into his house or bed till this was done, which is confuted by the history, 2Sa_11:2; but figuratively as an hyperbolical expression, such as are usual both in Scripture and in all other authors, to signify his passionate desire of doing this work, which was so earnest, that neither his

house, nor bed, nor sleep could give him any content till this work was done, or in some forwardness.

Psalms 132:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 132:5

Until I find out a place for the Lord; either,

1. Until I can understand from God what place he hath chosen for his house to be built in. Or rather,

2. Until I have fitted or raised a house in which the ark may be put;

a habitation, as this is explained both in the next clause, and in Psa_132:7 Act_7:46. For this, and not the former, was the matter both of David's desire, and-of God's answer delivered by Nathan, **2Sa 7**.

Psalms 132:6

We heard of it; of the place or habitation for the Lord last mentioned.

At Ephratah; either,

1. In Bethlehem, which is called Ephratah, Gen_35:19 **48:7** Mic_5:2. So the sense is either this, We heard a rumour at Bethlehem among David's relations, that the ark should be removed to a new place, and that David had pitched upon it; or this, We heard that Bethlehem would be the place for it, because it was the city of David. Or rather,

2. In the tribe of Ephraim, which was called also *Ephratah* or *Ephrathah* , as is manifest, because the men of Ephraim were called *Ephrathites* , as Jud_12:5, in the Hebrew text, though in the English it be *Ephraimite* . So Jeroboam is called an *Ephrathite* , 1Ki_11:26. So the sense is, We heard it from our fathers, that the ancient place of it was Shiloh, which was in the land of Ephraim; whereby he covertly intimates that God rejected and forsook that place, and *chose not the tribe of Ephraim* , as it is said, Psa_78:67, that so he might make way for Zion, which was the place chosen by God for it, as it follows here, Psa_132:13.

We found it; afterwards we found it elsewhere.

In the fields of the wood, i.e. in a field, or in one of the fields of the wood; for that little spot of ground in which the tabernacle or temple was built was not likely to be in several fields. Thus Jephthah was buried *in the cities of Gilead* , Jud_12:7, i.e. in one of them. This is meant either,

1. Of the Mount Moriah, which might possibly be called the field of the wood, as being anciently a place full of wood, Gen_22:13, or *of the threshing-floor of Araunah* , of which see 2Sa_24:18, which before the building of the temple is said to have been a woody place. Or rather,

2. Of Kirjath-jearim, which signifies *a city of woods* , in the field or territory whereof the ark was seated for twenty years, as we read, 1Sa_7:1,2. And from this place it was removed to Zion, 2Sa_6:1, &c.

Psalms 132:7

We will go; seeing the ark is now fixed in a certain place, we will go to it more generally and constantly than formerly we did.

Into his tabernacles; into his tabernacle or temple, the plural number put for the singular, as Psa_43:3 **46:4**, &c.

At his footstool; either the temple; or rather the ark, so called 1Ch_28:2 Lam_2:1, because God is oft said to sit between the cherubims, which were above the ark.

Psalms 132:8

Arise, i.e. arise and come. One word put for two, as Gen_43:33, *marvelled* (i.e. marvelled looking) *one at another* ; and Gen_43:34, *he took messes* , i.e. *he took and sent messes* , as our translation renders it. And this word is very proper in this place, because it was to be used by God's appointment when the ark was to be removed from one place to another, Num_10:35, as now it was from the tabernacle in Zion to the temple in Moriah, upon which occasion this and the two following verses were used by Solomon, 2Ch_6:41,**42**.

Into thy rest; into thy resting-place, the temple, so called Isa_66:1, where thou hast now a fixed habitation.

The ark of thy strength; the seat of thy powerful and glorious presence, from whence thou dost put forth and manifest thy strength on the behalf of thy people when they desire and need it.

Psalms 132:9

With righteousness; not only with those outward sacerdotal garments of glory and beauty which thou hast appointed for them, but especially with those inward ornaments of righteousness and true holiness, that so their persons and services may be accepted by thee, both for themselves and for all thy people, and they may be clothed with salvation, as it is expressed here below, Psa_132:16 2Ch_6:41, which is the effect or consequent of the former clothing. Let thy saints shout for joy; let all thy people have cause of rejoicing in the tokens of thy goodness; which they eminently had at the dedication of the temple, as is noted, 1Ki_8:66.

Psalms 132:10

For thy servant David's sake; in regard of thy singular kindness and promises vouchsafed to David, as this is explained in the following verses. And this verse makes it more than probable that David was not the penman of this Psalm, who never used to beg mercies from God for his own sake, but constantly for *his name's sake* , and *for the sake of his truth, mercy, goodness, or righteousness* , as will be evident to any one that reads this book.

Turn not away the face; cast me not out of thy presence, do not reject or deny my request, as this phrase is expounded, 1Ki_2:16. Of thine anointed; of me, whom thou hast anointed to be king over thy people. He speaks of himself in the third person, as is usual.

Psalms 132:11

Sworn in truth; not falsely or deceitfully, as men sometimes do, but sincerely and faithfully, what he will inviolably observe and fulfil, as the next clause expounds this.

Of the fruit of thy body; some of thy posterity.

Psalms 132:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 132:13

Zion; not strictly, but largely taken; either for the whole mountain, whereof Zion and Moriah were two parts or tops; or for Jerusalem, which was in a great part built upon Mount Zion, whence it is oft called *Zion* , as hath been noted again and again. For he speaks here of that place which he chose to be his rest *for ever* , as it follows, Psa_132:14, which unquestionably was the temple; whence also it appears that this Psalm was not written by David, nor before the building of the temple.

Psalms 132:14

I will no more wander to several places as I have done, but here I have fixed my abode.

Psalms 132:15

I will plentifully provide for Jerusalem, and all that live in her or resort to her for worship; nor shall they seek my face in vain.

Psalms 132:16

With salvation; with my saving graces and blessings; *with righteousness* , as thou didst desire, Psa_132:9; and moreover, with that protection and benediction which by my promise belongs to righteous persons.

Psalms 132:17

There; in Jerusalem, the seat of the kingdom, and, which is no small advantage to that family, the only place of my presence and worship in the world.

The horn of David to bud; his power and glory to flourish and increase, and to be propagated to his posterity.

A lamp; a successor or succession to continue for ever in his family, as this phrase is expounded, 1Ki_11:36 **15:4**; and particularly one eminent and glorious light, to wit, the Messiah, who shall come out of his loins, and revive and vastly enlarge his kingdom.

Psalms 132:18

Clothe with shame; for the shameful and unexpected disappointment of all their vain hopes and wicked designs.

Upon himself; upon him and his posterity, which are nothing else but a man's self multiplied.

Psalms 133:1 PSALM 133

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David upon the happy occasion of the ending of the civil war between the two houses of Saul and David; in which, having felt the sad effects of discord and division, both the king and people were more sensible of the great blessing of reconciliation and unity.

David extolleth the benefit and excellency of the unity and brotherly communion of the faithful.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is! you have been harassed by a civil war, take notice of this blessed change with thankfulness to God for it.

For brethren; for us, who are brethren, not only by nature and blood, but also by combination in one and the same commonwealth, and by the profession of the same religion.

Psalms 133:2

It is no less grateful and refreshing than that oil which was plentifully poured forth upon Aaron's head at the time of his consecration to the priestly office, which was exceeding pleasant, not only for the extraordinary fragrantcy of it, but because by this, together with the other rites prescribed, he was initiated into that sacred office, which was so acceptable to God, and so comfortable and beneficial to the people, as being the happy instrument of making atonement to God for them, and of procuring and maintaining their peace with God, upon which all their happiness of this life and of the next depends.

Skirts; or, *skirt* ; for the Hebrew word is of the singular number. Not to the lower skirt or bottom of his sacerdotal garment, for that the sacred oil was poured forth in so great plenty is not probable, nor was it necessary or convenient; but to the upper skirt of it, or the mouth of it, as this Hebrew word properly signifies; or to the collar of his upper priestly garment, which the ointment falling upon his beard might easily reach.

Psalms 133:3

It is no less grateful than the dew is which falls upon that great and goodly hill of

Hermon, whereby it is both refreshed and made fruitful. And as the dew which falleth

upon the mountains of Zion, i.e. either upon the several parts and ridges or tops of that mountain, whereof one was peculiarly called

Zion, and another

Moriah; or upon the mountains which are round about Jerusalem, Psa_125:2, which is oft called *Zion*, as Psa_132:13. And these may be opposed to Hermon, which was remote and beyond Jordan. But peradventure (which yet I propose with all submission) this dew is not to be taken literally, for the falling of the dew availed very little to the refreshment or improvement of the hills of Zion and Moriah, especially as now they were filled with buildings; but allegorically, for the favour or blessing of God, which is frequently called and compared to the dew, as Pro_19:12 Isa_18:4 Hos_14:5 Mic_5:7. And thus it may seem to be explained in the following clause; and so the sense of the place is this, It is as desirable as the natural dew which falls upon Mount Hermon, nay, which is more, as that blessed and heavenly dew of God's ordinances and graces which he hath commanded to fall upon the mountains of Zion; i.e. either upon Mount Zion; the plural number being put for the singular, as it is Psa_132:7, and oft elsewhere, as I have observed in several places; or upon the mountains of Zion and Moriah, and others which are round about Jerusalem, as was now said. And if it seem strange that the dew should be taken literally in the first clause, and mystically in the next, we have a like instance Mat_8:22, *Let the dead (spiritually) bury the dead (naturally)*. For : he now gives the reason either why this unity is so good a thing; or why the dew descending upon Zion, to which that is compared, is so desirable. And so upon this occasion he slides into the commendation of Zion's felicity, as the sacred writers frequently do upon other like occasions. *There* ; either,

1. Where brethren live in peace and unity; or rather,

2. In Zion last mentioned. *Commandeth the blessing* ; ordained, promised, conferred, and established his blessing, to wit, all manner of blessedness for his people that sincerely worship him in that place. *Life* , to wit, a happy and pleasant life; for to live in misery is accounted and oft called death, both in Scripture and in other authors.

Psalms 134:1 PSALM 134

THE ARGUMENT

The form of this Psalm seems to be dramatical. In the two first verses the psalmist speaks in the name of some eminent person, either the king or chief priests, exhorting and requiring all the priests and Levites to perform the duties of their place and calling; and in the last verse in the name of the priests and Levites, returning him thanks for his good advice.

The priests and Levites are exhorted to bless the Lord in his sanctuary.

Behold, bless ye the Lord; do not stand there like statues, dumb and idle, but employ your hearts and tongues in singing forth the praises of the Lord.

Ye servants of the Lord; peculiarly so called, priests and Levites, who are set apart to the service of God and of the sanctuary, as the next clause restrains this general expression. By night; not only by day, but also and especially by night, when their watch was more necessary. See Exo_27:21 Lev_8:35 1Sa_3:3. As you watch by night when others sleep, so do you utter the praises of God when others are silent.

Stand, i.e. serve or minister, as this word is used, Deu_10:8 **18:7**, and oft elsewhere. House; which word includes both the temple and courts belonging to it, as hath been noted before.

Psalms 134:2

Lift up your hands unto God in prayer and praises, thus expressing and exciting your inward devotion. In the sanctuary; in that holy house of God Where you stand, Psa_134:1. Or, in or with holiness, lift up your hands, as it is prescribed, 1Ti_2:8. Do not

content yourselves with lifting up your hands, but see that this be done with pure and holy hearts.

Psalms 134:3

Thee; either,

1. Thee, whosoever thou art, who dost faithfully perform the duty here commanded. Or,

2. Thee, O king, or priest, who dost engage and encourage us in this blessed work.

Out of Zion; where God dwells, and from whence he heareth the prayers of his people, and giveth them the blessings which they desire and need.

Psalms 135:1 PSALM 135

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm contains an exhortation to all the Israelites, and especially to the priests and Levites, to praise God for his great and wonderful works; some particulars whereof are here recorded.

The servants of the Lord are exhorted to praise him, for his mercy to Israel, by his might and power, Psa_135:1-7; for his judgments on Egypt and other nations, Psa_135:8-14. The vanity of idols, and those that trust in them, **Psa 135:15-18**. The house of Aaron and Levi are exhorted to bless God, **Psa 135:19-21**.

Ye priests and Levites, as **Psa 134 1**.

Psalms 135:2

Either in the temple or the inner court, which were appropriated to the priests and Levites; or in the outward court, which was for the people. See 2Ch_4:9.

Psalms 135:3

Is good; bountiful and gracious, especially to you, and therefore he justly expects and deserves your praises.

Is pleasant; the work itself of singing praises to God is pleasant, as it is more fully expressed, Psa_147:1.

Psalms 135:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:5

Above all that are called

gods, or worshipped as gods by the heathen people. And therefore seeing they commonly praise and extol their idols, it becometh you not to be silent as to the praises of your God.

Psalms 135:6

Whatsoever the Lord pleased, either in, the creation or government of them,

that did he in heaven and in earth; his power and jurisdiction is universal, and not like that of the heathen gods, which is confined to their several countries.

In the seas, and all deep places; in the visible seas, and in those invisible depths, both of earth, and of the waters which are contained in the bowels of the earth.

Psalms 135:7

The vapours; which are the matter of clouds and rain.

From the ends of the earth; either,

1. From the sea, the common source of vapours, 1Ki_18:44 Amo_5:8; wherewith both the earth in general, and several particular countries, are terminated or bounded: or rather,

2. From all parts of the earth, from one end to another; as the borders of a land are commonly put for the whole land, from one border to another, as Psa_105:31,**33 147:14**, and oft elsewhere. For in this sense this phrase is generally used in Scripture, as Job_28:24 **38:13** Psa_19:4,**6 48:10**, and every where.

He maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth water even out of the fire; he maketh thick clouds, which being broken produce lightnings, and so are dissolved into showers of rain. So the lightnings are both a sign, and in some sort the cause of rain. Or, he maketh lightnings with (as this particle is used, Gen_46:26 Psa_89:4 **119:56,98**) rain, i.e. he causeth both of them to come out of the same cloud.

Out of his treasures; out of those secret places where he reserves them, and whence he bringeth them, as he sees fit. Thus we read of *treasures of snow and hail* , Job_38:22; not that they

are formally laid up in any certain places, but to signify that God hath them as much at his disposal, as any man hath that which he hath laid up in his stores.

Psalms 135:8

From the general works of nature, he comes to God's special works of providence towards his people.

Psalms 135:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:13

These wonderful works of thine shall never be forgotten. The land which thou gavest us, Psa_135:12, and which we yet enjoy, is an everlasting monument of thy power and goodness, and an obligation and encouragement to trust in thee in all our present or future difficulties.

Psalms 135:14

Will judge his people; will in due time plead the cause of his people, or give judgment for them, as this phrase is used, Deu_32:36 Jer_5:28 **22:16.**

He will repent himself concerning his servants; he will recall that severe sentence which for their sins he had passed upon them, and be reconciled to them.

Psalms 135:15

Of this and the following verses, **See Poole "Psa_115:4", See Poole "Psa_115:5", &c.**

Psalms 135:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:20

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 135:21

Blessed be the Lord out of Zion; by the assemblies of his people in Zion or Jerusalem.

Which dwelleth at Jerusalem: this clause may be added either to distinguish the true God from the gods which were worshipped in other places and countries; or as a reason why they should bless God, because he had blessed and honoured that place with his gracious and glorious presence.

Psalms 136:1 PSALM 136

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm is the same with the former, only it is a little more fitted to the use and service of the temple, by the continued repetition of that solemn clause, For thy mercy endures for ever, which was much used by the sacred singers. See 2Ch_7:3 **20:21**.

The psalmist exhorteth all to praise God, for his power and wisdom in creating and governing the world, Psa_136:1-9; for delivering the Israelites out of Egypt, and bringing them to the Promised Land, **Psa 136:10-26**.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:2

The God of gods; who is infinitely superior to all that are called gods, whether angels, or princes, or idols.

Psalms 136:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:4

Him who alone; he and none else. Or, he without the help of any other person or thing; whereas no other being can do any thing alone or without his help.

Psalms 136:5

By wisdom, to wit, by eminent and admirable wisdom, far exceeding the capacity of all human or angelical creatures.

Psalms 136:6

Stretched out the earth above the waters; of which See Poole "Gen_1:9"; See Poole "Psa_24:2".

Psalms 136:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:8

The sun to rule by day; of which phrase and the like in the next verse, See Poole "Gen_1:16".

Psalms 136:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:14

To pass through the midst of it, to wit, without fear or danger, by comparing this with the next verse.

Psalms 136:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:16

Through the wilderness; through that vast howling wilderness, where there was neither way nor provision; through which none but the Almighty God could have safely conducted them.

Psalms 136:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:20

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:22

Israel his servant; he speaks of all that people as of one man, because they were united together in one body, in the worship of one and the same God. Thus God calleth them all *his first-born* , Exo_4:22.

Psalms 136:23

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 136:25

To all flesh; either to all mankind, or to all living creatures. For which God deserves great praises, which the psalmist by his example teacheth us to render to God for them, because those who are most concerned either cannot or do not perform this duty.

Psalms 136:26

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 137:1 PSALM 137

THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Psalm is uncertain; the occasion of it was unquestionably the consideration of the Babylonish captivity; and it seems to have been composed either during the time of that captivity, or presently after their deliverance out of it.

The sad complaint of the Jews in captivity, Psa_137:1-3. Of the scoffing of their enemies, yet their constancy to remember Jerusalem, Psa_137:4-6. Judgments imprecated upon Edom and Babylon, Psa_137:7-9.

Rivers of Babylon; either,

1. Of the city of Babylon, and then the river is Euphrates, here called rivers for its greatness, and by a common enallage of the plural for the singular, as Tigris also is, Nah_2:6, yea, and Jordan, Psa_74:15. Or,

2. Of the territory of Babylon, in which there were many rivers, as Euphrates, which also was divided into several streams or rivulets; and Tigris and others. Here they were either by the appointment of their lords for the making or repairing of the works beside the river; or by choice, retiring themselves thither from the noise and observation of their enemies, as they had opportunity, that they might disburden their oppressed minds before the Lord.

We sat down; the usual posture of mourners, Ezc_9:4, &c.; Job_2:13 Isa_47:1,5.

When we remembered Zion; either,

1. Our former enjoyments in Zion, which greatly aggravated their present misery, Lam_1:7. Or,

2. Zion's present desolations and pollutions.

Psalms 137:2

These are, not without great probability, supposed to be the words of some holy Levites, who had been accustomed to music, both vocal and instrumental, in the service of the temple. *Harp*s are here put by a synecdoche for all instruments of music. It is further to be observed, that although the harp was used by the Grecians in mourning, yet it was used by the Hebrews in rejoicing, as is manifest from Gen_31:27 2Ch_20:27,28 Psa 43:4, &c. This passage is to be understood either,

1. Figuratively, signifying only that they abandoned all signs and means of comfort; or rather,

2. Properly, as the following songs are, which the Babylonians required them to sing to their harps. And these harps they might either,

1. Bring from Jerusalem, which they might desire to do to preserve those sacred utensils, and their enemies might either permit or command them to do for their own delight: or,

2. Procure in Babylon, that they might sometimes solace themselves with the practice of some of the temple music, which they desired and intended to do; but when they came to the trial, they were not able to do it, and therefore laid them by. *Upon the willows* ; which commonly grow upon the banks of rivers, as they did by Euphrates in such plenty, that from thence it is called the brook of willows, Isa_15:7.

Psalms 137:3

Such songs as you used to sing in the temple at Zion; which they required either out of curiosity, or to delight their ears, or rather by way of scoffing and insultation over them, and their temple and religion.

Psalms 137:4

The Lord's song; those songs which were appointed by God, and to be sung only to his honour and in his service. *In a strange land* ; when we are banished from our own temple and land, and amongst those who are strangers and enemies to God and to his worship. So we should prostitute and profane God's ordinances. And this answer they either expressed to their enemies, or kept in their own breasts when they refused to comply with their desire.

Psalms 137:5

If I forget thee; if I do not retain a deep and sorrowful sense of thy ruin and misery, or if I indulge myself in mirth and jollity, as if I had forgotten thee.

Right hand; the chief instrument of playing upon musical instruments and of other actions.

Forget her cunning, i.e. lose its skill of playing. In the Hebrew it is only *forget* , without expressing what, to intimate the extent and generality of this wish; Let it forget or be disenabled not only for playing, but for every action in which it was formerly used.

Psalms 137:6

Remember thee with affection and sympathy, so as to damp my joys.

Cleave to the roof of my mouth; be made incapable of singing, or speaking, or moving, as it is in some diseases. Compare Job_29:10 Psa_22:15. If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy; if I do not value and desire Jerusalem's prosperity more than all other delights, and consequently if Jerusalem's misery doth not so deeply affect me as to hinder my delight in all other things.

Psalms 137:7

Remember, O Lord, so as to punish them,

the children of Edom, our constant and inveterate enemies, who had no regard either to consanguinity or humanity.

In the day; in the time of its calamity or destruction, which is oft called a day, as Job_18:20 Psa_37:13 Eze_30:9 Hos_1:11 **Ob 12.**

Who said to the Babylonians, whom they assisted and provoked against Jerusalem; of which see Lam_4:21 Eze_25:12 **Ob 11-14.**

Psalms 137:8

Daughter of Babylon; by which he understands the city and empire of Babylon, and the people thereof.

Who art to be destroyed; who art by God's righteous and irrevocable sentence devoted to certain destruction.

Happy shall he be; as being God's instrument to vindicate his honour, and execute his just judgments, and fulfil his counsel and word; which Cyrus was to his own great glory and advantage, as appears both from sacred and profane history.

That rewardeth thee as thou hast served us; that shall use thee with equal cruelty.

Psalms 137:9

As thou didst use our little ones. So this was but a just retaliation foretold here, as also Isa_13:6.

Psalms 138:1 PSALM 138

THE ARGUMENT

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving to God for those great deliverances which he had granted to David from Saul and other enemies; by the remembrance whereof David encourageth himself to trust in God in all his future difficulties.

David praiseth God for his goodness and truth showed to him, and foretelleth that the kings of this earth shall also praise him, Psa_138:1-6, and professeth the fruit of his trusting in God in the midst of troubles, Psa_138:7,8.

Either,

1. Before the angels, who were represented by the cherubims upon the ark, who are called gods, Psa_8:5 **97:7**, compared with Heb_1:6 **2:7**, who also are present in the congregations of God's people, 1Co_11:10. Or rather,

2. Before kings and princes, by comparing this with Psa_138:4, *All kings* (provoked by my example) *shall praise thee* ; and with Psa_119:46, *I will speak of thy testimonies before kings* . And these are most commonly called gods in Scripture, as Exo_21:6 **22:9,28**, compared with Deu_19:17. Besides, David mentions this as something singular and extraordinary, and designed by him; whereas the doing of this before the angels is common to all, and is unavoidably necessary.

Psalms 138:2

Toward thy holy temple, where the ark was. He saith

toward it, because he was not permitted to enter into it.

For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name; for thou hast glorified thy word or promise, or thy faithfulness in fulfilling thy promises unto me, more than any other of thy glorious perfections by which thou art known. Not that one of God's attributes is really and in itself more great or glorious than another, or can be made so, but because one may be more celebrated and admired by men than another, as here God's gracious promise made to David, and the wonderful accomplishment thereof in spite of all those difficulties which stood in the way, and which seemed to men to be insuperable, was at this time more observed and admired than any other of his attributes or actions. But here we must remember, that amongst

the rest of the promises made to David, one was that the Messiah should come out of his loins, and that those parts of the promised mercies which David had actually received were pledges to assure him that he should receive the rest in due time, and especially that great and eminent word of promise concerning the Messiah, which might well be said to be magnified above all God's name.

Psalms 138:3

The last clause limits and explains the former, how God answered him so speedily, not by giving him the thing which he desired in that very instant, but by giving him inward support and patience to wait God's time, and to bear all his troubles cheerfully in the mean time, which was a singular mercy, and indeed greater than the actual donation of any temporal blessing.

Psalms 138:4

Either,

1. All neighbouring kings; or,
2. The generality of kings and princes upon earth. And so this is a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, which seems to be confirmed by the next verse, which expresseth their extraordinary joy; and an eminent advancement of God's glory, which agrees much better to this great occasion, than to that of David's exaltation to the throne, wherein the other kings of the earth were not much concerned.

The words of thy mouth; either,

1. Thy promises declared unto them by me; or,
2. The gospel preached among them.

Psalms 138:5

In the ways of the Lord; or, *of* , or *for* , or *because of the ways of the Lord* , i.e. his wonderful counsel and gracious providences towards themselves and others.

Great is the glory; or, *great* shall be the glory. At that time the worship and glory of God shall not be confined to one small land, as now it is, but shall be extended to all the parts of the world.

Psalms 138:6

Unto the lowly; unto such as are mean and obscure in the world; to me, a poor contemptible shepherd, whom he hath preferred before great princes, and to such as are little in their own eyes.

But the proud he knoweth afar off; but for the great men of the world, who are lifted up in pride, he looks upon them as they do upon others, with scorn and contempt, and at a great distance, as disdainingly to admit them into his presence. But the words may be, and by divers interpreters are, rendered otherwise, *And he who is high* , or *the lofty one from afar* , (i.e. from his high and holy place, even the highest heavens, where he dwells, notwithstanding that distance,) *doth know them* , or *will own them* . So this is the repetition of the former sentence, as is very usual in this book. And this seems best to suit, as with the foregoing, so also with the following words, and thus all will be understood of one and the same sort of persons.

Psalms 138:7

Walk in the midst of trouble, i.e. be encompassed with dangers.

Thou wilt revive me; thou wilt cheer my spirit, and preserve my life.

Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand; put forth thy almighty power, to oppose and restrain their rage, and to save me from them, as it follows.

Psalms 138:8

Will perfect that which concerneth me; will finish that great work of my deliverance and advancement, which he hath undertaken and carried on hitherto.

Endureth for ever; it is not inconstant and changeable, as men's affections are, but everlasting. And this may be either a proof of the fort, going assertion, *the Lord will perfect* , &c. or an argument to enforce the following petition, therefore

forsake not, & c. *Forsake not, or leave not* , or *do not desist from or give over* . *The works of thine own hands* ; the work of my salvation, which is thus far advanced, not by any human help, but by thine own extraordinary power and providence, and therefore it is not for thine honour to desert it at last. This he calls works in

regard of the many and various parts and actions which concurred to this work.

Psalms 139:1 PSALM 139

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is esteemed by the Hebrews the most excellent in the whole book. The matter of it is noble and sublime, and so is the style. The occasion of it seems to have been those heavy censures and reproaches wherewith David was loaded by his enemies, who branded him for a notorious hypocrite and imposter, that pretended religion only for the covering and promoting his own ambitious and wicked designs against his lawful king, whose life and crown he sought to take away. Against these he comforteth himself with the consideration of God's omniscience, to whom he appeals as the only proper judge of the integrity of his heart.

David magnifieth the all-seeing providence of God, Psa_139:1-16; his great and tender mercies to him before he had a being in the world, Psa_139:17,**18**; abhorreth all converse with wicked men, **Psa 139:19-22**; prayeth for and testifieth his sincerity, Psa_139:23,**24**.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 139:2

Known me, i.e. known me exactly, as men do those things which they diligently search out.

My downsitting and mine uprising; all my postures and motions, my actions and my cessations from action.

My thought; all my secret counsels and designs.

Afar off; before they are perfectly formed in my mind. Thou knowest what my thoughts will be in such and such circumstances long before I know it, yea, from all eternity.

Psalms 139:3

Thou compassest my path; thou watchest me on every side, and therefore discernest every step which I take. It is a metaphor either from huntsmen watching all the motions and lurking-places of

wild beasts, that they may catch them; or from soldiers besieging their enemies in a city, and setting watches round about them.

My lying down; me, when I lie down in my bed, where men oft contrive what they execute in the day time.

Psalms 139:4

Thou knowest what I speak, and with what design and disposition of mind. Or rather, as others render it, and which is more admirable, *When there is not a word* , &c. Thou knowest what I intend to speak, either in prayer to thee, or in conversation with men, when I have not yet uttered one word of it.

Psalms 139:5

Thou hast beset me behind and before, with thine all-seeing and all-disposing providence.

And laid thine hand upon me; thou keepest me, as it were, with a strong hand, in thy sight and under thy power.

Psalms 139:6

I am so far from equalling thy knowledge, that I cannot apprehend it, in what manner thou dost so perfectly know all things, even such as are most secret, and have yet no being, and seem to depend upon many casualties and uncertainties.

Psalms 139:7

From thy spirit; either,

1. From the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity: or,
2. From thee, who art a Spirit, and therefore canst penetrate into the most secret parts: or,
3. From thy mind or understanding, of which he is here speaking, as this word seems to be taken, Isa_40:13, compared with Rom_11:34; for what there is called *the spirit of the Lord* , is here called the mind of the Lord. And as the Spirit of God is oft used in Scripture for its gifts and graces, so the spirit of God in this place may be put for that knowledge which is an attribute or action of God.

From thy presence; a man can go to no place which is out of thy sight.

Psalms 139:8

If I make my bed in hell; if I should or could repose and hide myself in the grave, or in the lowest parts of the earth, which are at the farthest distance from heaven.

Psalms 139:9

If I should flee as swiftly from thy presence as the morning light doth, which in an instant scattereth itself from east to west; for the sea being the western border of Canaan, is oft put for the west in Scripture. And *wings* are poetically ascribed to the morning or morning light here, as they are elsewhere to the sun, as Mal_4:2, and to the winds, as Psa_18:10 **104:3**, and to other things of eminent swiftness.

Psalms 139:10

I could neither go thither without thy conduct, nor subsist there without thy powerful support, and much less could I go out of thy sight; for a man may see many things which, are out of his power.

Psalms 139:11

Shall be as clear and manifest to God as the light itself.

Psalms 139:12

Shineth, or *enlighteneth* , as this word is used, Psa_19:8 Pro_29:13, &c.; discovereth me and all mine actions.

The darkness and the light are both alike to thee: this is repeated so oft to reprove and confute the ridiculous conceits of many ungodly men, who flatter themselves with hopes of secrecy and impunity for those sins which they commit in the dark. See Isa_29:15.

Psalms 139:13

Thou hast possessed; or, *thou dost possess* ; thou dwellest in them, thou art the Owner and Governor of them, and therefore must needs know them. Or,

thou hast formed, as some of the ancients and others render it.

My reins; the most inward and hidden part of the body, supposed also to be the seat of men's lusts and passions.

Thou hast covered me; either,

1. With that covering called the after-birth, wherein the infant is wrapped and preserved in the womb by the wonderful care of Divine Providence. Or,

2. With skin and flesh, as it is expressed, Job_10:11.

Psalms 139:14

I am fearfully and wonderfully made; thy infinite power and wisdom, manifested in the rare and curious structure of man's body, doth fill me with wonder and astonishment, and with the dread of thy majesty.

Marvellous are thy works; both in the lesser world, man, and in the greater.

My soul knoweth right well; I am well assured, both by thy word, and by the contemplation and study of thy works, to which I have much addicted myself, that they are wonderful, although I do not so accurately understand all the particulars of them as I would do.

Psalms 139:15

My substance; or, *My bone* , as the LXX. and others render the word. And *bone* may be here taken collectively for bones, as is usual in such words, or for the whole fabric of the bones And the bones may be very fitly mentioned here, because they are inward and invisible, as being covered with skin, and flesh, and sinews. Or the *bones* may be put synecdochically for the whole body, as being the most substantial part of it, as they are Psa_35:10.

In secret; in the dark vault of my mother's womb.

Curiously wrought, Heb. *embroidered* ; exquisitely composed of bones, and muscles, and sinews, and veins, and arteries, and other parts, all framed with such wonderful skill, that even heathens, upon the contemplation of all the parts of man's body, and how excellently they were framed, both for beauty and use, have broken forth into pangs of admiration and adoration of the Creator of man, as Galen particularly did.

In the lowest parts of the earth; or, as it were *in the lowest parts of the earth* . So there is only an ellipsis of the note of similitude, which is very frequent in Scripture, as hath been often said and proved. In a place as secret and remote from human eyes as the

lowest parts of the earth are, to wit, in my mother's womb. And so what is said in the former clause is repeated in this in other words.

Psalms 139:16

Yet being unperfect; when I was a mere embryo, a rude and shapeless lump, when I was first conceived.

In thy book; in thy counsel and providence, by which thou didst contrive and effect this great work, and all the parts of it, according to that model which thou hadst appointed. This is a metaphor taken from workmen, who when they are to make some curious structure, they first draw a rude draught or delineation of it, by which they govern themselves in the building of it.

All my members; all the several parts of my substance.

When in continuance were fashioned; which in due time and by degrees were formed into bones, fleshy sinews, &c. Or, as it is in the margin, what days (and the days in which) *they were or should be fashioned* ; by what steps, in what order and time, each part of the body should receive its proper form. This also was written or appointed by God.

When as yet there was none of them, Heb. *and not one of them* ; understand either yet was, as it is in our translation; or, was lacking, to wit, in thy book. All my parts without exception were written by thee. But then these words are not to be joined with those immediately foregoing, but with the former, and the words are to be read thus, in thy book all my members *were written* , (which in *continuance were fashioned* ,) when as yet, &c.

Psalms 139:17

Thy thoughts: *thy* is taken either,

1. Passively, my thoughts of thee; or rather,
2. Actively, *thy thoughts* , counsels, or contrivances on my behalf, which are admirable and amiable in mine eyes. Thou didst not only form me at first, but ever since my conception and birth thy thoughts have been employed for me, in preserving and providing for me, and blessing of me.

How great is the sum of them! thy gracious designs and providences towards me are numberless, as it follows.

Psalms 139:18

To wit, by my thoughts and meditations. Thy wonderful counsels and works on my behalf come constantly into my mind, not only in the day time, but even in the night season, which is commonly devoted to rest and sleep; whensoever I awake, either in the night or in the morning. These are my last thoughts when I lie down, and my first when I rise.

Psalms 139:19

Surely thou wilt slay the wicked: and as thou hast precious and gracious thoughts towards me, and all that love and fear thee; so thou hast other kinds of thoughts and purposes towards wicked men, such as thou knowest mine enemies to be, even to destroy them utterly.

Depart from me therefore; I renounce your friendship and society. I will not partake with you in your sins, lest I should also partake of your plagues.

Ye bloody men, Heb. *ye men of blood* ; either,

1. Passively, deserving death, or *guilty of blood* , or *of death* , as the phrase is, Num_35:27,**31 Mt 26:66**. Or rather,

2. Actively, blood-thirsty, or shedders of blood, as this phrase is generally taken, as 2Sa_16:8 Psa_26:9 **55:23 59:2**. Having called them *wicked men* in general, he now gives a particular account of their wickedness; they were unjust and cruel towards men, and withal profane and impious towards God, as he tells us in the next verse.

Psalms 139:20

They speak against thee wickedly, by profane scoffs, and a professed denial or contempt of thine omniscience and providence. Or,

they speak of thee in or unto wickedness; they make use of religion to cover or further their wicked designs. But our translation is more favoured by the context, which speaks of God's open and professed enemies.

And thine enemies take thy name in vain; or, according to the order of the Hebrew words, and take thy name in vain, and are

thine enemies, or haters of thee, as it follows Psa_139:21. These words,

thy name, are understood here, as also Isa_3:7, out of Exo_20:7, where they are expressed. They abuse thy blessed name with hellish oaths, and perjuries, and blasphemies.

Psalms 139:21

I appeal to thee, the omnipresent and omniscient God, whether I do not perfectly hate them so far as they are enemies to God and goodness.

That rise up against thee, in open hostility and rebellion against thine authority.

Psalms 139:22

I am no less grieved with their enmity against thee, than if they directed it against myself.

Psalms 139:23

And whether I do not speak this from my very heart, do thou judge, who art the Searcher of hearts, and deal with me accordingly.

Psalms 139:24

Wicked way in me, Heb. *way of trouble or grief* ; any course of life which is grievous, either,

1. To myself, as all sin is to the sinner sooner or later: or,
2. To others; as I am accused of causing much trouble and designing mischief to the king and kingdom.

In the way everlasting; in the right and good way, which is lasting, and leads to everlasting life; whereas the way of wickedness, to which this is opposed, will *perish* , as is said, Psa_1:6, and bring men into utter destruction. Or, as others render it, *in the old way* , which is the good way, as it is called Jer_6:16; in the way of righteousness and holiness, which may well be called the old way, because it was from the beginning of the world written in man's heart, whereas wickedness is of a later date. Possibly it may be rendered, in thy way (the ellipsis of the pronoun being very frequent, as hath been noted and proved before; or, *in the way* , to wit, the way of God, which is oft called

emphatically *the way* , as Psa_25:8 **119:1** Pro_23:19 **29:27**, and which is sufficiently understood from its opposition to *the wicked way* in the former clause) *for ever* , or as long as I live, as this Hebrew word *olam* without any prefix to it is used, Job_41:4 Psa_21:4 **45:7**, and elsewhere. But this with submission.

Psalms 140:1 PSALM 140

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm was composed by David upon occasion of those slanderous and reproachful speeches and treacherous dealings which David had from his enemies in Saul's time, of which we have an account in the history.

The psalmist prayeth for deliverance and safety from wicked men, Psa_140:1-7, for judgment upon them, Psa_140:8-11, and comforteth himself with an assurance of God's righteousness, Psa_140:12,**13**.

Either Saul or Doeg, or some other malicious enemy, or rather enemies; the word man being taken collectively for men, as appears from the next verse, where he speaks of this man in the plural number.

Psalms 140:2

To execute those bloody enterprises which they had devised in the first clause of this verse.

Psalms 140:3

They have sharpened their tongues; their malicious hearts stirred up their tongues to utter vile slanders against me. *Like a serpent* ; either whetting their tongues, as serpents are said to whet theirs when they are about to bite; or rather, using words as sharp and piercing as the sting of a serpent.

Psalms 140:4

Whose design and full resolution it is, if thou dost not prevent it, *to overthrow my goings* , or my feet or footsteps, i.e. to throw me down to the ground, to defeat all my hopes and counsels, and bring me to ruin.

Psalms 140:5

The proud; my insolent enemies, who despise me for my meanness, and exalt themselves against thee.

By the wayside; in which I used to walk.

Psalms 140:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 140:7

With thy powerful protection, as with a helmet or shield.

Psalms 140:8

His wicked device; which is to destroy me.

Exalt themselves; not only against me, but against thee also, as if by their power and policy they had frustrated thy design and promise made to me.

Psalms 140:9

The head; or, *heads* ; the singular number put for the plural, as is frequent. By which he understands either,

1. Their politic heads, their chiefs or ringleaders, who were most malicious, and by whom all the rest were supported and stirred up: or,

2. Their proper and natural heads, as this word is used Psa_140:7; and this covering of their heads here is opposed to the covering of David's head there.

Let the mischief of their own lips cover them; let the mischief which by their calumnies they design against me fall upon themselves.

Psalms 140:10

Burning coals; Divine vengeance, which is compared to coals of fire, as Psa_18:12, and elsewhere.

Rise not up again; either to my danger, or their own comfort.

Psalms 140:11

An evil speaker; such as slander me and other innocent persons, to exasperate princes against us.

Evil; either the evil of punishment; or, which comes to the same thing, the evil of sin, their own wickedness, which shall recoil upon themselves.

Psalms 140:12

I know, both by God's word, which hath promised it, and by my own experience of it in the course of God's providence.

Psalms 140:13

Shall give thanks unto thy name; shall have occasion to praise thee for their deliverance.

Shall dwell in thy presence; shall constantly enjoy thy gracious and powerful presence and assistance.

Psalms 141:1 PSALM 141

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm also must he referred to the time of David's persecution by Saul. It is a humble prayer that God would deliver him from the rage and malice of his enemies, and from those sins to which he might be inclined or provoked upon that occasion.

David prayeth that he might be heard and comforted, Psa_141:1,2; that his service might be sincere, Psa_141:3-6, and his life safe from the snares of his adversaries, Psa_141:7-10.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 141:2

Be set forth before thee, Heb. *be directed to thy face* . Let it not be lost, but let it come unto thee and find audience.

As incense; owned and accepted by thee no less than the increase, which by thy command, Exo_30:7, &c., is offered upon thine altar, from which I am now banished, and so disabled to offer it there, and therefore I trust thou will accept my prayer instead of it. *The lifting up of my hands* ; my prayer made with hands lifted up, which was the usual gesture. See Job_11:13 Psa_63:4 **88:9**, &c.

As the evening sacrifice; which was offered every evening, Exo_29:39, &c.; which he mentions either,

1. By way of opposition to the incense which was offered in the morning: or,

2. Synecdochically, so as to include the morning sacrifice, and all the sacrifices of the day, of which this was the close; such synecdoches being most frequent, as hath been already observed: or,

3. Because the evening sacrifice was more solemn than the morning, and was attended with more company and more prayers; whence the ninth hour, which was the time of this sacrifice, is called the hour of prayer, Act_3:1.

Psalms 141:3

That I may not through mine own infirmity, and the great provocations of mine enemies, break forth into any unadvised speeches, or any expressions of impatience, or distrust, or envy, or malice, &c.

My lips, which are the door of my mouth whence words come forth.

Psalms 141:4

Incline not; suffer it not to be inclined or led aside, either by my own errors or lusts, or by the temptations of the world or of the devil. Thus God is frequently said to *harden men 's hearts* , not positively, for he can do no evil, nor tempt any man to it, Jam_1:3; but privatively, by denying softening grace.

My heart; keep me not only from wicked speeches, Psa_141:3, but from all evil motions of my heart, which otherwise will draw me to many evil speeches and actions.

To practice wicked works with men that work iniquity; either,

1. To join with them in their sinful courses; or,

2. To do wickedly, as they do.

Let me not eat of their dainties; let me never enjoy or desire worldly comforts upon such terms as they do, to wit, with God's wrath and curse, as instruments of wickedness, and of my own eternal destruction. My afflictions are more desirable than such prosperity. Let none of their sweet morsels, the pleasures or

advantages which they gain by their wickedness, tempt me to approve of or imitate their ways.

Psalms 141:5

Smite me, to wit, with his tongue by reproofs, as the next clause explains it, which are called *wounds* , Pro_27:6. As I pray unto thee that thou wouldst keep me from sinful practices, so I beg it of all just men, that if I do transgress, or if by the arts and slanders of mine enemies any of them are made to believe that I am guilty of evil designs against Saul, or of any other wickedness, that they would freely admonish and reprove me for it. And their reproofs shall please me better than the dainties of the wicked last mentioned, Psa_114:4.

It shall be a kindness; I shall be so far from being offended with it as an act of enmity or ill will, as they may suspect, that I shall esteem it an act and sign of true friendship.

It shall be an excellent oil; or, it shall be as *the oil of the head* , as it is in the Hebrew, i.e. which is poured upon the head, as the manner was in great feasts and solemnities.

Not break my head; not Inert or disturb it, but, on the contrary, shall heal and greatly refresh and delight it; which is here understood by a known figure called *meiosis* , whereby more is intended than is expressed, as Pro_17:21, and oft elsewhere.

In their calamities; either,

1. In the calamities of those righteous persons who reprov'd and censur'd him. So this is an evidence of what he last said, that he should take their reproofs for a kindness, because when they came into such calamities as those wherein he was involved, as all righteous men must expect sufferings at one time or other, he would not insult over them, nor censure them, but pity them, and pray for them. Or,

2. In the calamities of his enemies, of which he speaks in the next words. And so this may be added as a reason why he did so freely offer himself to the righteous to be reprov'd by them, if he or his cause were so bad as his enemies made them, because he was well assur'd that he was sincere and his cause good, and that God would bring him out of all his calamities, and bring his enemies

into such calamities that they should need and desire his prayers, which also he would willingly grant to them; and then all good men would be fully satisfied of the justice of his person and cause.

Psalms 141:6

Their judges; the chief of mine enemies, their governors civil and military.

Are overthrown; or, *shall be overthrown* , or cast down headlong by thine exemplary vengeance. Or, as others, were left free, unhurt by me, when it was in my power to destroy them; of which see 1Sa 24\$ 26\$ to which histories this place is by divers learned interpreters thought to allude. And then by *their judges* he means Saul, although he thought not fit distinctly to mention him, but only to intimate him in an obscure and general way.

In stony places, Heb. *in the hands or by the sides of the rock* ; which may relate either,

1. To the rocky nature of those places in which Saul fell into David's hands. See 1Sa_24:2. Or,

2. To the ancient manner of punishing malefactors, which was by throwing them down from the tops of rocks; of which see 2Ch_25:12. Or,

3. To aggravate their overthrow; for falls in stony places are, as most easy and frequent, so also most mischievous.

They shall hear my words, for they are sweet: then *they* ; either the judges, who will be wise too late; or the people spared by my favour, when others were overthrown and warned by that fearful example; *will hear my words* , i.e. hearken to my counsels and offers, which now they despise, and then they, my words, *will be sweet* and acceptable to them, which now they reject. Others thus, *then they did hear my words that they were sweet* ; then they acknowledged that my words and carriage towards Saul were full of meekness and gentleness, and that I was not so false and malicious as they had represented me to be.

Psalms 141:7

Our bones; my bones, and the bones of my friends and followers. Our skin and flesh is in a manner consumed, and there is nothing

left of us but a company of dead and dry belles; whereby he intimates that their condition was desperate. Compare Eze_37:11.

Are scattered at the grave's mouth; either,

1. Literally and properly. So barbarously cruel were our enemies, that they not only killed us, but left our carcasses unburied, by which means our flesh and sinews, &c. were consumed or torn in pieces by wild beasts, and our bones dispersed ripen the time of the earth, our common grave; or if any of my followers were dead and buried, they pulled their bones out of the grave, and scattered them about. Or rather,

2. Metaphorically. So the sense is, Our case is almost as hopeless as of those who are dead, and whose bones are scattered in several places.

As when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth; as much neglected and despised by them as the chips which a carpenter makes when he is cutting wood, which he will not stoop to take up. Or rather, as the LXX., and Chaldee, and Syriac understand it, and as it is in the Hebrew, *as when one* (to wit, the husbandman) cutteth and cleaveth the earth, or *in the earth*, which he teareth without any mercy.

Psalms 141:8

Or, *naked*, as this word signifies, Psa_137:7, and Aaron is said to have *made the people naked*, Exo_32:25, i.e. deprived of thy favour and protection. Or, *do not pour out my soul*, to wit, unto death, as this word is used, Isa_53:12.

Psalms 141:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 141:10

Into their own nets, Heb. *into his nets*; either into God's nets, the relative being put without the antecedent, as is usual in such cases, where it is easily understood; or, each

into his own nets, to wit, the mischiefs which he designs against me.

Withal, or, *together*, to wit, with my followers; or, in like manner, as I have done formerly. But this word may seem to be

more fitly joined to the foregoing clause, to which it is next placed in the Hebrew, and the verse may be and is by divers, both ancient and later translators, thus rendered, *Let the wicked fall* (or, *the wicked shall fall*) into their own nets together, (altogether, or alike, one as well as another, Saul himself not excepted, whom though I dare not destroy, God will judge,)

whilst that I escape; am preserved from that common calamity in which mine enemies shall perish; which was verified by the event. For David was strangely kept out of harm's way when Saul and others of David's enemies were cut off by the Philistines, **1Sa 31**.

Psalms 142:1 PSALM 142

Either that of Adullam, **1Sa 22**, or that of En-gedi, **1Sa 24**. There he meditated this Psalm, which afterwards he more accurately composed and committed to writing.

David, finding help no where in his straits and afflictions, Psa_142:1-4, crieth and comforteth himself in prayer to God, Psa_142:6,7.

With my voice; either,

1. With the voice of my soul. But so this addition would be superfluous, and much more the repetition of it, because that is necessarily implied in the former word,

I cried, and in the following, *I make my supplication* . Or rather,

2. With my corporeal voice, which the fervour of my soul forced me to use, when I could not do it without some danger, the enemy being at the mouth of the cave. And so this addition is emphatical, and therefore is repeated. But it is probable that David spoke with a low voice; and that he might do so without very great danger, is manifest from that discourse which passed between David and his men, even when Saul was entered into the cave, 1Sa_24:4-7.

Psalms 142:2

I poured out; I did it fully, and fervently, and confidently.

Psalms 142:3

Thou knewest, to wit, practically, so as to direct me to it.

My path; what paths I should choose whereby I might escape Saul, when I fled hither and thither in deserts, and mountains, and woods; and which way I should get out of his hands when he and all his men were at the cave's mouth, which passed my skill.

Wherein I walked; wherein I used to walk, or they supposed that I would walk.

Psalms 142:4

Right hand; the place where the patron or assistant used to stand. See Psa_16:8 **109:31 121:5**.

No man, to wit, in Saul's court or camp; none of my former acquaintance, and friends. and relations.

Know me; own me, or show any respect or kindness to me.

For my soul; or, *for my life* , to wit, to preserve it; but they all conspired to take it away; which is here implied.

Psalms 142:5

Thou only art both my refuge to defend me from all evil, and

my portion to supply me with all the good which I need and desire.

In the land of the living; even in this life, wherein I doubt not to see God's goodness, as he said, Psa_27:13.

Psalms 142:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 142:7

Bring my soul out of prison; bring me safe out of this cave, wherein I am imprisoned, and set me at perfect liberty.

Shall compass me about; shall flock to me from all parts, partly out of curiosity to see such a spectacle and miracle of God's power and mercy; and partly to rejoice and bless God with me and for me, and for all the benefits which they expect from my government.

Psalms 143:1 PSALM 143

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm is much of the same nature with the former, and seems to have been composed much about the same time, and upon the like occasion. This is the last of those which are called penitential Psalms, the former being **Psa 6 Psa 32 Psa 38 Psa 51 Psa 102 Psa 130.**

The psalmist prayeth that God in faithfulness would hear him, and not enter into Judgment with him, Psa_143:1,2; complaineth of his persecuting enemies, Psa_143:3,4; praying also for speedy deliverance; instruction in God's ways, and the destruction of his enemies, Psa_143:5-12.

Whereby thou art inclined and engaged to favour righteous persons and just causes.

Psalms 143:2

But when I appeal to thy righteousness, I do it only with respect to mine enemies, whose cause as well as their persons is worse than mine, but not in reference to thee, as if I could absolutely justify myself upon a severe trial at the tribunal of thy justice; for if thou shouldst rigorously examine all the passages of my heart and life, I dread the thoughts and consequences of it.

Be justified, to wit, upon terms of strict justice, without thy indulgence and infinite mercy.

Psalms 143:3

This is not a reason of what he last said, Psa_143:2, but an argument to enforce his petition delivered Psa_143:1, and repeated Psa_143:7, &c. For though I am not faultless, if thou shouldst make an exact search into me, yet mine enemies are more culpable and highly unjust, and therefore I hope for thy help against them, from thy justice as well as mercy.

My soul, i.e. my life; for nothing less will satisfy him.

He hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath beaten me down to the ground, where I lie struggling for life.

He hath made me to dwell in darkness; he hath forced me to have mine abode in dark vaults and caves, where I am out of sight and memory, and in as forlorn and hopeless a condition in the eye of man as those that have lain long rotting in the grave.

Psalms 143:4

My spirit overwhelmed within me. See Poole "Psa_61:2" See Poole "Psa_142:3".

Is desolate; deprived of all hope and comfort. Or, is astonished.

Psalms 143:5

I remember the days of old, i.e. what thou hast done for thy servants in former times; which he mentions either,

1. As matter of terror, to consider how unlike God now was unto himself and to his former dealings; or,

2. As matter of support from former experience, because God was still the same. Either way it drives him to his prayers, which here follow.

Psalms 143:6

I stretch forth my hands unto thee; I pray to thee fervently. See Poole "Psa_141:2".

Thirsteth after thee; after thy favour and help.

As a thirsty land, to wit, thirsteth for rain.

Psalms 143:7

That are dead and buried, of whom there is no hope.

Psalms 143:8

In the morning, i.e. early, as this phrase is taken, Psa_90:14, and elsewhere; seasonably and speedily.

Wherein I should walk; so as to please thee, and to secure myself.

Psalms 143:9

Without whose care these caves and rocks can give me no protection.

Psalms 143:10

To do thy will; to continue in faithful obedience to thee, notwithstanding all temptations to the contrary.

Thy spirit is good, lead me; or rather, as it is exactly in the Hebrew, and as many both ancient and modern translators render it,

let thy good Spirit lead me. Leave me not to my own blind and vain mind, or corrupt affections, neither give me up to the evil spirit, as thou didst Saul, but conduct me in all my ways by thy good, i.e. gracious and holy, *Spirit. Into the land of uprightness* ; or, *in plain or even land, or ground* ; in a straight and smooth path, that I may not stumble nor fall, either into sin or mischief. This is opposed to the crooked and rugged ways, in which sinners are said to walk. See Psa_125:5 Pro_2:15 Isa_40:4.

Psalms 143:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 143:12

Of thy mercy; out of thy mercy to me, whose life they seek.

Psalms 144:1 PSALM 144

THE ARGUMENT

The matter of this Psalm is partly gratulatory for mercies received, and partly petitionary for further blessings. It seems to have been composed after Saul's death, and in the beginning of David's reign, when he was exposed to many perils, both from his own rebellions subjects, and from the Philistines and other foreign enemies, yet so that he had a good prospect and assurance of a more complete and established felicity.

David, blesseth God for his mercy to him in his wars and government, confesseth his own and man's nothingness, Psa_144:1-4; prayeth that he would deliver him from his powerful enemies, Psa_144:5-8, and promiseth to praise him, Psa_144:9-11. The happiness of that kingdom whose God is the Lord, **Psa 144:12-15.**

Who has given me that skill in military conduct, and that dexterity in the management of my weapons, which was wholly unsuitable to and much above my education and former course of life.

Psalms 144:2

My goodness; or, *my mercy* ; or, the *God of my mercy* , as God is called, Psa_59:10,17; the name of God being easily understood from the foregoing verse. Or, he who is exceeding good or merciful to me, as good as goodness itself; the abstract being put

for the concrete, as it is frequently in speeches of God, who is called *wisdom, truth, goodness*, &c.; and, sometimes of men, as Psa_12:1 Pro_10:29, where *faithfulness and uprightness* are put for *faithful and upright men*.

Who subdueth my people under me; who has disposed my people's hearts to receive and obey me as their king.

Psalms 144:3

Lord, what is man he aggravates God's goodness to him, expressed Psa_144:2, by the consideration of his own meanness. Though I am king over my people, yet, alas, I am but a man. a base, sinful, mortal, and miserable creature; if compared with thee, less than nothing and vanity.

Takest knowledge of him, i.e. hast any care and kindness for him, as words of knowledge commonly imply in Scripture.

Makest account of him; the same thing repeated in other words.

Psalms 144:4

Man is like, in his nature and continuance in the world,

to vanity, or *to a vapour or a breath*, as Isa_57:13, which is gone in an instant.

That passeth away; or, that declineth, as Psa_102:11 **109:23;** that groweth less and less, till it be quite out of sight, and lost.

Psalms 144:5

Come down, to help me, before it be too late, remembering what a frail and perishing creature I am.

And they shall smoke; or, that they may smoke; or, and let them smoke, as Sinai did at thy glorious appearance, Exo_19:18. This is a figurative and poetical description of God's coming to take vengeance upon his enemies, which is continued in the next verse.

Psalms 144:6

Thy thunderbolts, which oft accompany the lightnings and thunder.

Psalms 144:7

Either of the heathen nations, which envy and hate me; or of the rebellious Israelites, who, though they profess themselves to be

the Lord's people, yet in truth and for their carriage to me are like the barbarous heathens.

Psalms 144:8

Vanity; either,

1. Vain brags and threatenings, which shall come to nothing; or,
2. Vain and deceitful promises, or professions, or friendship. Their right hand; here mentioned either,
 1. As it is used in swearing, to note their perjury; or rather,
 2. As an instrument of action. Is a right hand of falsehood; deceiving either,
 1. Themselves, by being unable to do what they designed; or,
 2. Others, by not giving them that help which they promised to them.

Psalms 144:9

When thou hast granted this request of mine, Psa_144:7,8, which I know assuredly thou wilt do.

Psalms 144:10

Kings are not preserved by their own power or prudence, but by God's special providence, which for the public good of the world watcheth over them.

Psalms 144:11

And upon these accounts grant me the mercy which I desired before, and now again do repeat.

Psalms 144:12

This mercy I beg, not only for my own sake, but for the sake of thy people, that thine and our enemies being subdued, and peace established in the land, thy people may enjoy those blessings which thou hast promised to them; and particularly,

that our sons, which are the strength, and safety, and hopes of a nation, may be like plants, flourishing and thriving, and growing in height and strength, as plants do in their youth, and they only; for when they grow old, they wither and decay.

Our daughters; upon whom the hope of posterity depends.

As corner-stones, polished after the similitude of palace; strong and beautiful, and adorned with all the ornaments belonging to their sex.

Psalms 144:13

So as they may fill our streets, being brought in thither for food to the towns and cities. Or, *in our folds or stables* , as the Chaldee and others render it; or, as the LXX. and others, *in their* (or rather, *in our* , as it is in the Hebrew) *outlets or outgoings* , i.e. in the fields, where they abide.

Psalms 144:14

To labour, Heb. *laden* , either with flesh and fat, as many understand it; or, as others, with young; but then the foregoing word is not to be rendered

oxen, but *cows* , as the same word and in the same masculine gender is used Deu_7:13. And so this agrees best with the former prayer for the sheep, Psa_144:13, and he wisheth the same blessing of fruitfulness both for greater and smaller cattle.

No breaking in, to wit, of enemies invading the land, or assaulting our cities, and making breaches in their walls.

Nor going out, to wit, of our people; either out of the towns and cities, to fight with an invading enemy; or out of the land into captivity.

No complaining; or, *no outcry* , or *howling* , for any sad tidings, or public grievances or calamities.

Psalms 144:15

This is a correction of the last sentence. This is a very desirable estate; but the true and chief happiness of our Israel doth not consist in these things, which are common to others with us, but in this peculiar privilege, that the true and blessed God is our God by covenant and special relation.

Psalms 145:1 PSALM 145

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm and the rest which follow to the end are wholly laudatory, setting forth the praises of God. The excellency of this

Psalm appears not only from the opinion of the Hebrew writers, but also from the care which the psalmist took to digest it into such accurate and alphabetical order, that it might be more easily fixed in the mind and memory of the reader.

David magnifieth God for his greatness and terrible acts, Psa_145:1-7; for his goodness and everlasting kingdom, Psa_145:8-13; for his care and providence over all, **Psa 145:14-16**; and for his saving mercies to them that fear him, **Psa 145:17-21**.

O King; or, *the King* , by way of eminency; the King of kings, the God by whom kings reign, and to whom I and all other kings owe subjection and obedience.

Psalms 145:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 145:3

His greatness, in his being, majesty, and glory, and all perfections.

Psalms 145:4

The people that live in one age shall relate them to their posterity, and so successively in all ages.

Psalms 145:5

The glorious honour of thy majesty: here are divers words heaped together, to intimate that no words were sufficient to express it.

Psalms 145:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 145:7

The memory of thy great goodness; the memorials of thy kindness to thy people, thy never to be forgotten blessings.

Psalms 145:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 145:9

Is good to all; not to Israel only, but to all mankind, whose hearts he fills with food and gladness, as it is said, Act_14:17; yea, to all

his creatures, as it is in the next clause, to beasts as well as men. See Psa_136:25 **147:9**.

Psalms 145:10

All thy works shall praise thee; objectively, they give men and angels just occasion to praise thee.

Psalms 145:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 145:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 145:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 145:14

Upholdeth all; either,

1. All that look up to him for help: or,
2. All that are upheld; whose support is not from themselves, nor from other men, but only from God's' powerful and good providence.

Psalms 145:15

The eyes of all living creatures wait upon thee; expect and receive their supplies wholly from thy bounty. Expectation is here figuratively ascribed to brute creatures, as Psa_104:27 Rom_8:22.

In due season; when they need it.

Psalms 145:16

Or, as divers render it, and which is more agreeable to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, thou satisfiest every living thing with thy favour or good-will, i.e. with the fruits of thy bounty; the pronoun *thy* being easily and fitly understood out of the foregoing clause.

Psalms 145:17

Holy; or rather, merciful, as this word most commonly signifies. There is a mixture of mercy in the most severe and terrible works of God in this life, *judgment without mercy* being reserved for the next life, Jam_2:13 Rev_14:10.

Psalms 145:18

Is nigh unto all them, to answer their prayers for relief,
that call upon him in truth; sincerely, or with an upright heart,
trusting to him, and waiting upon him in his way.

Psalms 145:19

Fulfil the desire, so far as it is agreeable to his own will, and
convenient for their good; not inordinate desires, which God
commonly denies to his people in mercy, and granteth to his
enemies in anger.

Psalms 145:20

Frequently in this world, but infallibly in the next.

Psalms 145:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 146:1 PSALM 146

THE ARGUMENT

The design of this Psalm is to persuade men to trust in God, and in
him alone.

The psalmist voweth perpetual praises to God, Psa_146:1,2; and
exhorteth that none put their trust in man, Psa_146:3,4, but in
God, in regard of his power, faithfulness, and everlasting
government, Psa_146:5-10.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 146:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 146:3

In princes; in men of greatest wealth and power, in whose favour
men are very prone to trust.

In whom there is no help; who are utterly unable frequently to
give you that help which they promise, and you expect.

Psalms 146:4

He returneth, in his body, Ecc_12:7,

to his earth; to that earth from which all mankind, princes not excepted, had their original.

In that very day, as soon as ever he is dead, his thoughts perish; all his designs and endeavours, either for himself or for others.

Psalms 146:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 146:6

Both because he liveth for ever to fulfil his promises, and because he is eternally and unchangeably faithful.

Psalms 146:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 146:8

The eyes of the blind; either,

1. The eyes of their mind, which he enlightens and directs in doubtful and difficult causes; or,

2. Their bodily eyes, which he did abundantly by his Son Jesus Christ.

Loveth the righteous, even when he doth afflict them, which also he doth out of love, Heb_12:6.

Psalms 146:9

He overthroweth their goings, as the phrase is, Psa_140:4. He maketh them to lose their way; he not only frustrateth their plots and enterprises but turneth them against themselves. This and all the foregoing sentences are so many arguments to encourage all good men to trust in God in all their straits and afflictions.

Psalms 146:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 147:1 PSALM 147

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm may seem, from Psa_147:2,13, to have been composed by some holy prophet after the return of Israel from the Babylonish captivity. It containeth an ample celebration of God's praises, both for common mercies and for special favors.

The prophet exhorteth the people to praise God for his care over his church, Psa_147:1-14; his wisdom and government over all, **Psa 147:15-18**; and for his salvation to the faith, Psa_147:19,20.

It is good; it is acceptable to God, and greatly comfortable and beneficial to ourselves.

Psalms 147:2

Build up Jerusalem; it is the Lord's own doing, and not man's.

The outcasts; or, *the banished* , who were carried captives out of their own land, and dispersed in divers strange countries.

Psalms 147:3

The broken in heart, either with the sense of their sins, or with their sorrows and grievous calamities. He seems to speak peculiarly of the captive Israelites now returned.

Psalms 147:4

He telleth the number of the stars, which no man can do, Gen_22:17. For those thousand and twenty-five which astrononers number, are only such as are most distinctly visible to the eye, and most considerable for their influences.

He calleth them all by their names: this signifies,

1. That He exactly knows them as we do those whom we can call by name; he is able to give distinct names to each of them, because he accurately understands their several natures and operations.

2. That he hath a sovereign power over them, as men have over their children, or servants, or soldiers, whom they can call by name; that he appointeth and governeth all their motions and influences to the fulfilling of his own pleasure and purposes.

Psalms 147:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 147:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 147:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 147:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 147:9

Which he mentions, partly, because they were most contemptible, especially to the Jews, to whom they were unclean and forbidden for food; partly, because they are greedy and voracious; and partly, because they are not only neglected by men, but also forsaken by their dams as soon as ever they can fly, and so are wholly left to the care and keeping of Divine Providence.

Psalms 147:10

As if he needed either the one or the other for the accomplishment of his designs.

Psalms 147:11

That believingly and patiently expect and seek relief and happiness from God alone, and from his mere grace and mercy, and not from any creature, nor from their own merits.

Psalms 147:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 147:13

Thy strength consists not in thy walls, and gates, and bars, but in his protection.

Psalms 147:14

In thy borders; in all thy land, even to its utmost borders, which are most liable to the incursion of enemies.

Psalms 147:15

His commandment; which is sufficient without any instruments to execute whatsoever pleaseth him, either in works of nature or of providence. His word runneth very swiftly; the thing is done without delay or difficulty.

Psalms 147:16

Snow like wool; not only in colour, and shape, and softness, but also in use, keeping the fruits of the earth warm.

Hoar-frost like ashes; in colour and smallness of parts, as also in its burning quality.

Psalms 147:17

His ice; either,

1. Pieces of ice, which God may be said to

cast forth, or *to cast down* , because he sendeth it, and oftentimes suddenly; or,

2. Great hailstones, which are of an icy nature and substance, and which are very properly

cast forth or cast down out of the clouds, and that like morsels or fragments, the particles being congealed in them.

His cold; the cold which he sometimes sends into the air is so sharp, that it would be intolerable, if men did not defend themselves from it by houses, clothes, fire, &c.

Psalms 147:18

His wind; the southern or some other warm wind sent with commission to dissolve the ice.

The waters flow; the rivers return to their course which before were bound up by, or tuned into, ice.

Psalms 147:19

He showeth his word; he fully declared his mind and will by revelation and in his word.

Unto Jacob; to the children of Jacob or Israel, and to them alone, as it follows.

Psalms 147:20

He left all others to their own native darkness and blindness, and to those dim discoveries of God and of themselves which they had from the light of nature.

Psalms 148:1 PSALM 148

THE ARGUMENT.

The nature of this Psalm is for substance the same with the former, containing an invitation to all the creatures to praise God for his manifold blessings.

The psalmist exhorteth all celestial and terrestrial creatures, especially man, to praise God for his favour and mercy to his church.

From the heavens; all the host of heaven, which he particularly expresseth in the following verses.

In the heights; in those high and heavenly places.

Psalms 148:2

He inviteth the angels here, and the senseless creatures afterward, to praise God; not as if the former needed, or the latter were capable of, his exhortation, but only by a poetical rapture; the design whereof is, that men by this means might be more provoked to this duty. The angels are called

hosts, here and 1Ki_22:19, for their vast numbers, exquisite order, and perfect subjection to their General, the Lord of hosts.

Psalms 148:3

Sun and moon; you which are adored by the blind heathens for gods, you are but his creatures, and therefore were obliged, if you were capable, to worship and praise him for your glorious light and powerful influences.

Psalms 148:4

Ye heavens of heavens; ye highest and most glorious heavens, the place of God's throne and glorious presence, as this phrase is used, Deu_10:14 1Ki_8:27 Neh_9:6 Psa_115:16. Or, ye starry heavens, which also may well be so called, because they are above the air, which is oft. called heaven in Scripture.

Ye waters that be above the heavens; ye clouds, which are above a part of the heavens; of which **See Poole** "Gen_1:7".

Psalms 148:5

They owe their being wholly to God's good will.

Psalms 148:6

Stablished them for ever and ever; either absolutely, as to the substance of them, or at least to the end of the world. He hath made them constant and incorruptible, not changeable and perishing, as the things of the lower world are.

Made a decree; either concerning their several courses and influences; or rather, for their continuance for ever; which best agrees with the foregoing and following words.

Which shall not pass; which decree shall never be made void.

Psalms 148:7

Either,

1. Dragons and serpents, which abide in the deep caverns and holes of the earth; or,

2. Whales or other sea-monsters, which dwell in the depths of the sea, which are oft called by this name, as Job_7:12 Eze_29:3, and elsewhere, as the word here rendered

deeps is most commonly used concerning the sea.

Psalms 148:8

Fire; lightnings and other fire-works of the air.

Vapours, or fumes; hot exhalations, as the word properly signifies, as cold exhalations are comprehended under the title of snow. And both of them, arising from the earth, are here fitly mentioned as belonging to it.

Fulfilling his word; executing his commands, either for the comfort and refreshment, or for the punishment, of the inhabitants of the earth.

Psalms 148:9

Admirable for your height, and strength, and use, though not for your fruit.

Psalms 148:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 148:11

Kings of the earth; who, though you are called *gods* , and adored like gods by your subjects, yet are but men, and the creatures and subjects of this sovereign Lord, to whom you owe both your being, and all your power and dignity.

Psalms 148:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 148:13

Not so much in place as in excellency, above all the glories which are in earth and in heaven.

Psalms 148:14

Exalteth the horn of his people, to wit, above the horns of all the people in the world, in respect of their spiritual and eternal privileges, as it here follows.

The horn in Scripture doth commonly note strength, victory, glory, and felicity, as Deu_33:17, and everywhere.

The praise; either,

1. *He is the praise* , as God is called, Deu_10:21, to wit, the God of their praise, as Psa_119:1, the chiefest object and matter of it: or,

2. Which is *the praise* ; which work of God in exalting their horn is their glory, and maketh them praiseworthy, or obligeth and provoketh them in a singular manner to perform this great duty of praising God, which is so generally neglected by others. *Near unto him* , by special relation, and friendship, and covenant, and by familiar intercourses; God manifesting his face and favour to them, and they frequently and solemnly approaching into his presence, and worshipping him at his footstool.

Psalms 149:1 PSALM 149

THE ARGUMENT

The scope and design of this Psalm is to stir up and encourage God's people to praise him; either,

1. For their deliverance out of Babylon, and the promises which God had given them of the perfection of that work, and of the enlargement of their power and dominion in the world; or rather,

2. For the establishment of the kingdom of Israel in David's hands, and for that safety, and glory, and victory over their enemies which they expected by that means. But withal, the psalmist, or the Spirit of God, which dictated this Psalm to him, had a further prospect, even to the Messiah, of whom David was a type, and who was to succeed David in the throne, and to bring

that kingdom to its highest perfection. And so divers of the Jewish doctors understand this Psalm.

An exhortation to praise God for his love to his people, Psa_149:1-4 and for enabling them by his power to overcome their enemies, Psa_149:5-9.

A new song, for these new mercies conferred upon us, denied to former times.

Psalms 149:2

That made him; that made them not only his creatures, but, which is unspeakably greater, his people; or, that advanced and adorned them with singular privileges, as this word is used, 1Sa_12:6, and elsewhere.

Be joyful in their King; David and his posterity, and especially the chief of all of them, the Messiah. Let them rejoice and bless God that they have so potent, so wise, and so just a king.

Psalms 149:3

According to the usage of that time and dispensation.

Psalms 149:4

Taketh pleasure in his people; he loveth them above all people, and rejoiceth over them to do them good.

He will beautify, Heb. *adorn* or *glorify* ; make them amiable and honourable in the eyes of the world, who now hate and despise them.

The meek, or *humble* , to wit, his people, as he now said, who are oft in Scripture described by that character, because all true Israelites are such, and all Israelites profess and ought to be such. Or, *the afflicted* , as that word is oft used in Scripture, which hath been observed before; his poor afflicted and oppressed people, to whom the following salvation is most needful and acceptable.

With salvation; both temporal, in delivering them from, and setting them above, all their enemies; and afterwards, with everlasting salvation and glory.

Psalms 149:5

Be joyful in glory, for the honour which God putteth upon them.

Sing aloud upon their beds; either,

1. For their safe and sweet repose and peace, which is signified by resting in beds, Isa_57:2; or,

2. By night as well as by day, even in the time devoted to rest and sleep, which they shall borrow to praise God for his eminent and extraordinary blessings, as David frequently did upon such occasions.

Psalms 149:6

In their mouth, Heb. *in their throat* ; which signifies vocal praise, and that with a loud voice.

A two-edged sword in their hand; not only to defend themselves from their enemies, but, as it follows, to revenge themselves upon them.

Psalms 149:7

For all their cruelties and injuries towards God's people. This was literally accomplished by David upon the Philistines, Ammonites, Syrians, and other neighbouring nations and princes, which were bitter enemies to God's people. And the same thing was done afterward in the Christian world, when God raised up Christian princes, who did by the help of the Christians, fighting with and under them, severely revenge the blood of the martyred Christians upon their cruel persecutors and tyrants in divers ages. It may also be understood of the spiritual plagues which Christ by the hand or ministry of his apostles and ministers did inflict upon the hearts and consciences of his incorrigible enemies, who by God's word and ordinances were either tormented or hardened to their destruction. Yea, it may have a respect unto the last day of judgment, in which the saints shall judge the world, 1Co_6:2, which will be a most dreadful execution of this vengeance, &c.

Psalms 149:8

See Poole "Psa_149:7".

Psalms 149:9

The judgment written; appointed and declared in the Holy Scripture, as Deu_12:32 **29:19 32:41-43**, and elsewhere. This is added to show that they do not this work to satisfy their own malicious or revengeful inclinations, but in obedience to God's

command, and only in such manner as God hath allowed in his word.

This honour have all his saints; the honour of these actions belongs to all the saints, for whose sakes God appointed this in his word, and afterwards executed it by his providence.

Psalms 150:1 PSALM 150

THE ARGUMENT

This Psalm agrees much with the former, and is an invitation to all men to praise God, and especially to the Levites, or those of them who were appointed to this work, as may be gathered both from the place in which they are to praise him, which is, according to our translation, in his sanctuary, Psa_150:1, and from that great variety of instruments here mentioned, all which were frequently used in their temple service, and seldom elsewhere.

An exhortation to praise the holiness, power, and kindness of God, with all sorts of, musical instruments.

In his sanctuary; in his *temple* , where this work was to be performed constantly and solemnly. Or, who dwelleth *in his sanctuary* . So it describeth and limiteth the object of their praises. Or, *for* (as this particule is used in the next verse) *his sanctuary* , for this great favour of placing his sanctuary and dwelling-place amongst men.

In the firmament of his power; in his heavenly mansion, there let the blessed angels praise him. Or, who dwelleth *in the firmament* , or *spreading forth of his power* , to wit, in the heavens, which were stretched out by his great power, and in which are the most glorious testimonies of his infinite power. Or, *for the firmament* , &c.; for that glorious and astonishing piece of his workmanship.

Psalms 150:2

As his infinite majesty deserves to be praised.

Psalms 150:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 150:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 150:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Psalms 150:6

Every thing that hath breath; every living creature in heaven and in earth, Rev_5:13, according to their several capabilities, some objectively, others actively, as was noted before.

THE PROVERBS

The penman of this book is expressed in the title, Solomon, who was famous for his proverbs, of which he spoke three thousand, as it is recorded, #1Ki 4:32, the most eminent and useful of them being doubtless collected in this book. And that the greatest part of this book was composed by Solomon doth sufficiently appear, because that part of it which was collected and composed by other hands is so plainly distinguished from the foregoing part, #Pr 25:1. The nine first chapters contain a preface or introduction to the book, or an exhortation to true wisdom; and all the following chapters contain the precepts of wisdom called proverbs; wherein we are not to expect that order and coherence which is in many other books of Scripture.

Proverbs 1:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 1

The use of the proverbs, Pro_1:1-6. An exhortation to fear God, and believe his word, Pro_1:7. The glory of those children that obey the instruction of their parents, Pro_1:8,**9**. A caution against yielding to enticing sinners, Pro_1:10. The contrivance, Pro_1:11,**12**, arguments, and invitation of these sinners, Pro_1:13,**14**. Reasons against complying with them, Pro_1:15-19. Wisdom's call to repentance, Pro_1:20-22. Her promise, Pro_1:23. Her complaints and threatenings, Pro_1:24-30. The fruit of sin, Pro_1:31,**32**. Peace to the penitent, Pro_1:33.

Proverbs are ancient, and wise, and short sayings in common use; whereof some are plain and easy, others are intricate and obscure.

Of Solomon; proceeding from Solomon, and most of them digested by him into this book. See the preface.

Proverbs 1:2

To know; written to help men to know thoroughly and practically.

Wisdom; both human wisdom, to conduct our affairs in this life, which divers of the following proverbs do; and especially Divine wisdom, which Solomon chiefly designed; or to make men wise to know their duty, and to save their souls.

Instruction; the counsels and instructions delivered, either by God or by men, in order to the attainment of wisdom.

Words of understanding; either,

1. Which are the effects of a good understanding; or,
2. Which teach a man true understanding, whereby to discern between truth and error, between good and evil, to choose the former, and to refuse the latter.

Proverbs 1:3

To receive the instruction; willingly to receive the counsels of others, which is a good step to wisdom, and a part of it.

Of wisdom; such as is wise, and tends to make men wise and prudent. This is opposed to *the instruction of fools* and *folly*, of which Pro_16:22 **19:27**. For folly or wickedness hath its school, and multitudes of scholars, that are very apt to learn its lessons.

Justice, and judgment, and equity; which teach men just judgment or equity, to wit, their whole duty, both to God and to others, and to themselves. These three words seem to signify the same thing, and are heaped together to note either the necessity of the precept, or the exactness and diligence which is required in the practice of it.

Proverbs 1:4

Subtilty; or rather,

prudence, as this word is used, Pro_3:21 **5:2 8:5,12**, which elsewhere is taken in an evil sense for *craft* or *subtilty*.

The simple; such as want wisdom, and are easily deceived by others, and therefore most need this blessing.

The young man, which wants both experience and self-government.

Proverbs 1:5

Will hear; is not self-conceited, as fools are, but willing to learn from others; and therefore will attend to the following instructions.

Will increase learning; and thereby will gain this great benefit, to grow in knowledge and wisdom. This he adds to show that this

book is useful and necessary, not only to the simple, but also to the most wise and knowing persons.

Unto wise counsels; not to deep speculations, but practical consideration; to the art of governing himself or others well and prudently.

Proverbs 1:6

The interpretation, i.e. the interpretation of a proverb, by a figure called *hendiaduo*, or the meaning and use of the wise sayings of God, or of men; to know this practically, and for his direction and benefit; for practice is the great design of this book. Dark sayings; such as are hard to be understood by inconsiderate and ungodly men, but to be found out by diligent and humble inquiry.

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord; reverence and obedience to God, or his worship and service, as this word is commonly used.

The beginning; either the foundation, or the top, and perfection, or chief point, without which all other knowledge is vain and useless.

Fools; wicked men, called *fools* through this whole book; such as do not fear God.

Despise wisdom and instruction; are so far from attaining true wisdom, that they despise it, and all the means of getting it; which fully proves what he now said, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Proverbs 1:8

My son; he speaks to his scholars with paternal authority and affection, to make them more attentive and obedient. Teachers among the Hebrews and others were commonly called

fathers, and their scholars their sons. The instruction of thy father; his good and wholesome counsels, but not such as are contrary to God's law, Pro_19:27. The law of thy mother; those pious instructions which thy mother instilled into thee in thy tender years. See Pro_31:1 2Ti_1:5 **3:14,15**. This he adds, because children, when grown up, are very prone to slight their mother's advice, because of the infirmity of their sex, and because they

have not that dependence upon and expectation from their mothers which they have from their fathers.

Proverbs 1:9

This will make thee amiable and honourable in the sight of God and of men; whereas the forsaking of those good counsels will make thee contemptible.

Proverbs 1:10

Sinners; eminently so called, as Gen_13:13 Psa_1:1 **26:9**; such as sell themselves to work all manner of wickedness; particularly thieves, and robbers, and murderers, as appears from the next verses, as also oppressors and cheaters, by comparing this with Pro_1:19.

Proverbs 1:11

Come with us; we are numerous, and strong, and sociable.

Let us lay wait for blood; to shed blood. He expresseth not their words, which would rather affright than inveigle a young novice; but the true nature and consequence of the action, and what lies at the bottom of their specious pretences.

Lurk privily; so we shall neither be prevented before, nor discovered and punished afterward.

The innocent; harmless travellers, who are more careless and secure, and unprovided for opposition, than such villains as themselves.

Without cause; though they have not provoked us, nor deserved this usage from us. This Solomon adds to discover their malignity and baseness, and so deter the young man from association with them.

Proverbs 1:12

As the grave; which speedily covers and consumes dead bodies. See Psa_55:15 **124:3**. We shall do our work quickly, easily, and without fear of discovery.

Into the pit; into some deep pit, into which a traveller falls unawares, and is utterly lost, and never discovered.

Proverbs 1:13

As our danger is little, so our profit will be great.

Proverbs 1:14

Cast in thy lot among us, i.e. put in thy money into our stock. Or rather,

thou shalt cast thy lot amongst us, i.e. thou shalt have a share with us, and that equally and by lot, although thou art but a novice, and we veterans. This agrees best with their design, which was to allure him by the promise of advantage.

Let us all have one purse; or,

we will have, & c. One purse shall receive all our profits, and furnish us with all expenses. So we shall live with great facility and true friendship.

Proverbs 1:15

Walk not thou in the way with them; avoid their courses and their conversation, and company.

Refrain thy foot from their path; when thou hast any thought, or inclination, or temptation to follow their counsels or examples, suppress it, and restrain thyself as it were by force and violence, as the word implies.

Proverbs 1:16

Their feet run; they make haste, as it follows, without considering what they are doing.

To evil; to do evil to others, as was expressed Pro_1:11,12, which also will bring evil upon themselves.

To shed blood; to shed innocent blood; which is an inhuman and dangerous practice.

Proverbs 1:17

The design of these words is to set forth the folly of these men by the similitude of a bird, which yet is very variously applied and understood by divers interpreters. But I shall not confound the reader with the rehearsal of them. This clause, in vain, upon the understanding whereof the whole depends, may be understood, either,

1. In respect of the fowler. So the sense is, The fowler who spreads his net in the sight of the bird loseth his labour, because the bird, perceiving the danger, will not be tempted to come to the

bait, but flees away from it. *But* , or *yet* , these (as the first words of the next verse may well be, and by the Chaldee translator are, rendered) are more foolish than the silly birds; and though they are not ignorant of the danger and mischief which these evil courses will bring upon themselves, which I have here represented, yet they will not take warning, but madly rush upon their own ruin. Or,

2. In respect of the bird. So the sense is, The silly bird, although it see the spreading of the net, yet is not at all instructed and cautioned by it, but through the greediness of the bait rusheth upon it, and is taken by it. And these men are not one jot wiser, but albeit they know and find that by these practices they expose themselves to the justice of the magistrate, and to the vengeance of God, the sad effects whereof they daily see in the destruction of their brethren in iniquity, yet they will boldly and madly run themselves into the same miseries. Both ways the sense comes to the same,

Proverbs 1:18

And, or *but* , or *yet* , or *so* ; for all these ways this particle is used; which is more fully expressed in the next verse.

They lay wait for their own blood; the destruction which they design to others falls upon themselves. Their blood answers to their feet, Pro_1:16, and belongs to the same persons.

Proverbs 1:19

So, as is expressed both in the foregoing and following words,

are the ways; the actions and courses, which are so in the tendency and event of them.

That is greedy of gain; that seeks gain by unrighteous and wicked practices. *Which* ; either *which greediness* ; or rather, *which gain* , by comparing the last words.

Taketh away the lives of the owners thereof; brings sudden and violent death upon those who had made themselves masters and possessors of such gain.

Proverbs 1:20

Having expressed the counsels and invitations of folly and of wicked men, he now declareth the voice of wisdom. By the name

of wisdom or wisdoms he seems to understand the wisdom or counsel of God revealed to the sons of men by his word. Which he calls *wisdoms* here, as also Pro_9:1, either to note the excellency of this wisdom beyond all other, as the greatest and chief of beasts is called behemoth or beasts, Job_40:15; or because it consisteth of a multitude of wise precepts; or because it hath been delivered to mankind at sundry times, and in divers manners, and by many persons, prophets and apostles, and especially by the Son of God, who is called *the wisdom of God* , Luk_11:49. And this wisdom is said to cry with a loud voice, to intimate both God's earnestness in inviting sinners to repentance, and their inexcusableness if they do not hear such loud cries. *Without* , or *abroad* , or *in the streets or open places* , as many others render it, and as it is in the next clause. Not in corners and privily, as seducers persuade men to error or wickedness, being afraid of the light, but openly and publicly before all the world.

Proverbs 1:21

The chief place of concourse; where there is probability of most success.

The opening of the gates; where magistrates sit in judgment, and people are assembled. So it crieth both to the wise and to the unwise, as Paul preached, Rom_1:14.

In the city; not only in the gate, but in every part of the city. Or, *in the cities* , the singular number being put for the plural.

Proverbs 1:22

Ye simple ones; ye ignorant, and easy, and credulous persons, who are so soon cheated by the world and the devil, and do not understand your own interest.

Love simplicity; being unwilling to part with it, or to be made wiser. *Scorners* ; that scoff at all religion, and contemn the word and faithful ministers of God.

Fools; wilful and wicked fools, as Pro_17:10 **26:4**.

Proverbs 1:23

Turn ye from your evil courses unto me.

At my reproof; upon this admonition here given to you. *I will pour out* ; if you will do so, I will freely and abundantly impart unto you.

My spirit; either my mind, as spirit is taken, Psa_77:6 Pro_29:11; or the gifts and graces of my Spirit, which he hath promised to such persons, Luk_11:13 Joh_4:14 **7:39**.

I will make known my words unto you; by my Spirit I will cause you truly and savingly to understand my word, which is hid from others, 2Co_4:3

Proverbs 1:24

I have called, by my ministers, and by my judgments upon you or others, and by the motions of my Spirit and your own consciences. *Stretched out my hand* ; offering grace and mercy to you, and earnestly inviting you to accept of it. Lest through your deafness or distance from me you should not hear, I have beckoned to you with my hand, which this phrase signifies, Isa_13:2 **65:2**.

No man regarded; few or none complied with it.

Proverbs 1:25

Set at nought, or *despised* , or *made void* ; resisted its power and authority.

My counsel: either,

1. My design of doing sinners good, which you have made of none effect to yourselves. Or,
2. My commands and counsels, which suits better with the next clause.

Proverbs 1:26

As you have scoffed at me and my ways,

I also will laugh at your calamity, i.e. destroy you without pity, and take pleasure therein. Compare Rev_18:20.

Your fear; the misery which you do or should fear. The act for the object, as Isa_8:12, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 1:27

As desolation; as some desolating sword or judgment, which quickly overruns a whole country.

As a whirlwind; which instantly spreadeth itself from place to place with great and irresistible violence, and doing much mischief.

Proverbs 1:28

Early; or, *in the morning* , as the word properly signifies, and is here rendered by others, as soon as their calamity comes; or rather, with great diligence and fervency, as this phrase commonly signifies.

They shall not find me, because they do not seek me by choice and with sincerity, but only by constraint, and that they may be freed from their miseries.

Proverbs 1:29

Hated knowledge, to wit, the practical knowledge of God, and of their duty to him, as it is explained in the following clause.

Did not choose; not heartily approve of it and love it, but only made some show of it.

Proverbs 1:30

They would none of my counsel; they refused to be guided by my counsels or precepts.

Proverbs 1:31

They shall eat of the fruit of their own way; they shall receive punishments answerable to their sins.

With their own devices; with the fruits or effects of their wicked devices. What was sweet in their mouths shall be bitter in their bellies, and that destruction which they have plotted against others shall fall upon themselves.

Proverbs 1:32

Turning away, to wit, from God, and from his counsels and reproofs; so this is opposed to *hearkening unto God* , Pro_1:33. Or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *the ease or rest* , the peace or tranquillity, as it seems to be explained in the next clause.

Shall destroy them; it commonly proves the occasion of their ruin, by making them presumptuous, and secure, and worldly, and proud, and forgetful of God and of their own eternal happiness,

whereby they provoke God's wrath, and bring upon themselves swift and certain destruction. Thus he meets with the common objection against the fear of God, taken from the present impunity and prosperity of ungodly men.

Proverbs 1:33

Safely; or *securely* , or *confidently* ; resting himself upon the conscience of his own integrity, and upon the promises and favour of God.

From fear of evil; from sinful and tormenting cares and fears. And as a wicked man's mind is oft full of anxiety in the midst of all his outward prosperity and glory, so the mind of a good man is filled with peace and joy, even when his outward man is exposed to many troubles.

Proverbs 2:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 2

Solomon exhorteth his son to get Wisdom, Pro_2:1-4; telleth him the benefit he shall receive thereby, Pro_2:5-10, and the evils which he should avoid, Pro_2:11,**12**. The wicked man's ways are described, Pro_2:13-20. A habitation promised the righteous, Pro_2:21. The end of the wicked miserable, Pro_2:22.

These words are spoken by Solomon, either,

1. In the name of wisdom, as before; or rather,
2. In his own name. *Hide my commandments with thee* ; lay them up in thy mind and heart with care, as men do their choicest treasures.

Proverbs 2:2

Give thyself to the study of it with affection and diligence.

Proverbs 2:3

If thou criest, to wit, unto God, the only giver of it, Pro_2:5, Heb. *if thou callest* ; invitest it to come unto thee; earnestly desirest its conduct.

Proverbs 2:4

With the same unwearied diligence, and earnest desire, and patient expectation under all delays, disappointments, and difficulties,

which worldlings use in the purchase of riches, or in digging in mines of silver.

Proverbs 2:5

Understand more perfectly and profitably; for that very seeking and searching after it, Pro_2:4, supposed some understanding.

The fear of the Lord; which is the beginning of this wisdom, Pro_1:7.

Proverbs 2:6

Giveth wisdom, Heb. *will give* ; hath promised to give it, to wit, to those that so seek it; whereby he also teacheth them not to ascribe any wisdom which they may obtain unto their own wit and industry, but only unto God's favour and blessing. *Out of his mouth* from his word, or appointment, and good will; *as the word of God* is taken, Deu_8:3.

Proverbs 2:7

Sound wisdom, Heb. *essence or substance* ; either,

1. Solid and true felicity, opposed to the vain enjoyments of this world, which are said to have no substance or being, Pro_23:5. Or,
2. True and substantial wisdom, which is satisfactory and everlasting, opposed to worldly wisdom, which is but an empty shadow of wisdom, and perisheth with us.

A buckler to them, to protect and save them from that mischief and ruin which shall befall all wicked men.

Proverbs 2:8

He keepeth the paths of judgment; he guardeth and guideth the paths or ways, i.e. the counsels and actions, of good men, as the next clause explains this, which are called

paths of judgment, or *righteous paths* ; *judgment* being here put for *righteousness* , as it is in Psa_99:4, and oft elsewhere. And *keeping of paths* may be put for keeping them in their paths, so as they shall neither swerve from them, nor stumble and fall in them. *And preserve the way of his saints* ; the same thing repeated in other words.

Proverbs 2:9

Then ; when thou hast done thy part, expressed Pro_2:1-3, &c., and God in answer to thy desires hath given thee wisdom, Pro_2:6; or when it is with thee, as it follows, Pro_2:10. *Righteousness, and judgment, and equity* ; all the parts of thy duty to man, as well as the fear of God, Pro_2:5, which contains all duties to God. These three words are used here, as also Pro_1:3, to signify the same thing. *Every good path* ; the practice of all virtues and graces.

Proverbs 2:10

When wisdom entereth into thine heart; when thou dost truly love it, and passionately desire it, and hide its precepts in thy heart, according to Psa_119:11.

Proverbs 2:11

From wicked courses, and the mischiefs which attend upon them; as is particularly expressed in the following verses.

Proverbs 2:12

From the way of the evil man; from following his counsel or example, which others for want of wisdom commonly do.

That speaketh froward things; with design to corrupt thy mind, and entice thee to evil principles or practices.

Proverbs 2:13

The paths of uprightness; the way of God's precepts.

Of darkness, i.e. of sin, which is oft called darkness, as Rom_13:12, &c.; Eph_5:11, because it comes from darkness, ignorance, and error, and loves darkness and hates light, and leads to utter darkness.

Proverbs 2:14

Who rejoice to do evil; seeking and embracing occasions of sin with diligence and greediness, and pleasing themselves both in the practice and remembrance of sin; whereas upright men abhor and watch against all occasions of sin beforehand, and mourn bitterly for it afterwards.

Delight in the frowardness of the wicked; not only in their own sins, but in the sins of other wicked men, which shows a greater malignity of mind and love to sin. See Rom_1:32.

Proverbs 2:15

Whose ways are crooked, or, *who make their ways crooked*, i.e. whose course of life swerves from the right and straight way of God's law.

Proverbs 2:16

From the strange woman; from the adulteress or whore; called strange, partly because such persons were commonly heathens, or are supposed to be such by reason of that severe law against these practices in Israelitish women, Deu_23:17, or are justly reputed heathens, as being degenerate Israelites, which are oft called strangers, as hath been noted in the Book of the Psalms; and partly because conversation with such persons is forbidden to men; as those Israelites which were not Levites are called strangers, Num_1:51, in respect of the holy things which they were prohibited to touch; and forbidden fire is called *strange fire*, Num_3:4.

Which flattereth with her words; which useth all arts and ways to allure men to unchaste actions; one kind being put for all the rest.

Proverbs 2:17

The guide of her youth, to wit, her husband, whom she took to be her guide and governor, and that in her youth: which circumstance is added to aggravate her sin and shame, because love is commonly most sincere and fervent between a husband and wife of youth, as they are for that reason emphatically called, Pro_5:18 Isa_54:6 Joe_1:8 Mal_2:14,15.

Forgetteth, i.e. violateth or breaketh, as that word is commonly used in a practical sense.

The covenant of her God; the marriage covenant; so called, partly because God is the author and institutor of that society and mutual obligation; and partly because God is called to be the witness and judge of that solemn promise and covenant, and the avenger of the transgression of it.

Proverbs 2:18

Her house inclineth unto death, conversation with her (which was most free and usual in her own house) is the ready and certain way to death, which it brings many ways; by wasting a man's vital

spirits, and shortening his life; by exposing him to many and dangerous diseases, which physicians have declared and proved to be the effects of inordinate lust; as also to the fury of jealous husbands or friends, and sometimes to the sword of civil justice, and undoubtedly, without repentance, to God's wrath and the second death. This is here mentioned as one great privilege and blessed fruit of wisdom, to be delivered from this evil.

Unto the dead; or, as the Chaldee and some others render it, *unto the giants*, to wit, those rebellious giants, Gen_6:4; or, as others, *unto the damned*, or *unto hell*. See for this word Job_7:9 Psa_88:11 Pro_9:18 **21:16**.

Proverbs 2:19

None; few or none; an hyperbolical expression, used Isa_64:7.

That go unto her; that go to her house, or that lie with her, as this phrase is used, Gen_16:4 **30:4** Jos_2:13.

Return again, from her and from this wickedness, unto God. Adulterers and whoremongers are very rarely brought to repentance, but are generally hardened by the power and deceitfulness of that lust, and by God's just judgment, peculiarly inflicted upon such persons, Heb_13:4. He alludes to the nature of corporal death, from which no man can without a miracle return to this life.

Of the paths of life; of those courses which lead to true and eternal life.

Proverbs 2:20

This depends upon Pro_2:11, and is mentioned as another happy fruit of wisdom, the former being declared from Pro_2:12 to this verse.

Walk in the way of good men; follow the counsels and examples of the godly; whereby he intimates that it is not sufficient to abstain from evil company and practices, but that we must choose the conversation of good men.

Proverbs 2:21

Shall have a peaceable and comfortable abode in the land of Canaan, which also is a type of their everlasting felicity. See Psa_37:3,**9,18,29**.

Proverbs 2:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 3:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 3

Solomon exhorteth his son to obedience, Pro_3:1-4. To faith, Pro_3:5,6, and trust in God; the benefits that they shall receive thereby, Pro_3:7,8. To honour God with our estates, Pro_3:9. The advantage in so doing, Pro_3:10. To patience under God's chastisements, Pro_3:11. A reason for it, Pro_3:12. The happiness of him that findeth wisdom, Pro_3:13. Wisdom set out, with the benefits that attend her, Pro_3:14-18. The effects, Pro_3:19,20. Another exhortation to perform our duty, Pro_3:21-27. To charitableness, Pro_3:28. To avoid strife, Pro_3:29,30. Against envy, Pro_3:31. The misery of the wicked, and blessings of the just, Pro_3:32-35.

My law; my doctrine or counsel; or the law of God, which might be called his law, as the gospel is called Paul's gospel, 2Th_2:8, because delivered by him.

Keep my commandments, by diligent meditation and hearty affection.

Proverbs 3:2

God will add these blessings which he hath promised to the obedient, Deu_8:18 **30:20** 1Ti_4:8.

Proverbs 3:3

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: either,

1. God's mercy and truth. So it is a promise, God's mercy and truth shall not forsake thee. Or rather,
2. That mercy and truth which is man's duty. So it is a precept; which seems most probable, both from the form of the Hebrew phrase, and from the following words of this verse, which are plainly preceptive, and from the promise annexed to the performance of this precept in the next verse.

Mercy and

truth are frequently joined together, as they are in God, as Psa_25:10 **57:3**, &c., or in men, as Pro_16:6 **20:28** Hos_4:1, and

here. *Mercy* notes all that benignity, clemency, charity, and readiness to do good freely to others; truth or faithfulness respects all those duties which we owe to God or man, to which we have special obligation from the rules of justice.

Bind them about thy neck, like a chain, wherewith persons adorn their necks, as it is expressed, Pro_1:9; which is fastened there, and not easily lost, which also is continually in one's view.

Upon the table of thine heart: either,

1. Upon those tablets which the Jews are said to have worn upon their breasts, which are always in sight. So he alludes to Deu_6:8. Or,

2. In thy mind and heart, in which all God commands are to be received and engraven, as is oft required in this book, and every where. So the table of the heart seems to be opposed to the tables of stone in which God's law was written, as it is Jer_31:33 2Co_3:3.

Proverbs 3:4

Find favour, i.e. obtain acceptance, or be gracious and amiable to them.

Good understanding; whereby to know thy duty, and to discern between good and evil. The serious practice of religion is an excellent mean to get a solid understanding of it; as, on the contrary, a vicious life doth exceedingly debase and darken the mind, and keep men from the knowledge of truth, which not only Scripture, but even heathen philosophers, have oft observed. Others render it, *good success* ; which seems not to suit well with the following words.

In the sight of God; grace or favour with God, and that understanding which is good in God's sight, i.e. truly and really; as a truly good man is called good before God, in the Hebrew, Ecc_7:26.

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord; wholly and securely rely upon God's promises and providence for help and relief in all thine affairs and dangers.

Lean not unto thine own understanding; think not to accomplish thy designs by the strength of thine own wit without God's blessing. Under this one kind of carnal confidence, which is most frequent and most plausible, he understands and forbids all other confidences in bodily strength, wealth, friends, &c.

Proverbs 3:6

Ways; designs and undertakings for the things of this life or of the next.

Acknowledge him, Heb. *know him* , to wit, practically; or, *own him* ; his wisdom, in following his counsels; his power and goodness, in expecting success from him; his sovereignty, in managing all thy affairs so as to please and glorify him.

Direct thy paths; assist and bless all thine endeavours, and keep thee from the paths of sin and destruction.

Proverbs 3:7

Be not wise in thine own eyes; be not puffed up with vain conceit of thine own wisdom, as if that were sufficient for the conduct of all thine affairs without direction or assistance from God, or without the advice of others.

Fear the Lord: this he adds, because the reverence and dread of the Divine Majesty will make a man, when he compareth himself with God, little and vile in his own eyes. Reverence God's wisdom, and thou wilt despise thine own.

Proverbs 3:8

To thy navel, i.e. to thy body, which is signified by the navel, which is a noble and useful part of the body, by which the infant receives nourishment in the womb, and which is the ligament or bond by which the bowels, a principal part of the body, are united together and preserved.

Marrow is the nourishment and strength of the bones, and a great preserver and prolonger of life, as the decay of it is a chief cause of the weakness, and dryness, and decay of the body. The sense of the verse is, This wisdom or fear of God is not only useful to the salvation of the soul, but also to the health and welfare of the body, both as it prevents those diseases and distempers which are oft procured by sinful lusts and passions, and as it giveth us an

interest in all God's promises, and putteth us under the care of his special providence.

Proverbs 3:9

With thy substance; or, *with thy riches* . Lay out thy estate not only to please and advance thyself or family, but also to glorify God; which is done by the payment of all those offerings and dues which God hath required; by giving according to thy abilities whatsoever is necessary for the support and advancement of God's worship and service in the world; by free and liberal contributions to those whom God hath made his deputies, and, as I may say, the receivers of his rents, to wit, faithful ministers and good Christians, and all others who need and require thy help. The performance of these duties is here called an *honouring of God* , partly because that word is sometimes used for *giving of gifts* , as 1Ti_5:17, and elsewhere; and partly because it is, a testimony of our respects to God, of our obedience to him as our sovereign Lord, and that in hard and costly duties, of our thankfulness to him as our chief Benefactor and Donor of all that we have, and of our belief of his promises made to the faithful practisers of this duty; which if they were believed, the most covetous persons would be the most charitable.

With the first-fruits; or, with *the chief* , or *best* , or *first* , which answers to the first-fruits under the law.

Proverbs 3:10

This is not the way to diminish thy estate, as covetous and profane persons allege, but rather to increase it.

Shall burst out; shall be so filled, that they would burst out, if not carefully prevented.

Proverbs 3:11

Despise not the chastening of the Lord; either,

1. By making light of it, or not being duly affected with it; and so this is one extreme opposed to the other in the next clause. Or rather,

2. By accounting it an unnecessary, and useless, and troublesome thing; but rather esteem it as a privilege and favour from God, and a benefit to thyself; for such negatives do oft imply the contrary

affirmatives by a common figure called *meiosis* , as Pro_17:21, and oft elsewhere. And this sense seems to agree better both with the following clause, which repeats the same thing with some aggravation, after the manner; and with the reason used to enforce this and the following command, Pro_3:12, which concerns not such as are insensible, but rather such as had too deep a sense of the evil of affliction.

Neither be weary of his correction; neither esteem it tedious and intolerable, but endure it with patience and cheerfulness.

Proverbs 3:12

Afflictions are not infelicities, but benefits and comforts, because their are testimonies of God's love, which is infinitely more desirable than any evil can be terrible. They show God's purpose, and desire, and care to purge us from our sins, and to make us fit for his presence and kingdom. This and the former verse seem to be here inserted in the midst of his commendations of wisdom, to remove an objection against the excellency and happiness of wise or pious men, taken from those many calamities to which such persons are frequently exposed, the reason of which providence he here giveth.

Proverbs 3:13

Happy is the man, notwithstanding all his afflictions, that findeth wisdom; which supposeth his diligent searching for it, expressed Pro_3:4.

That getteth, Heb. *that draweth out* ; which expression implies two things:

1. That man hath it not naturally in himself, but must have it from another, even from God and his word.
2. That men should labour for it, as those do that dig and draw forth metals out of the earth.

Proverbs 3:14

It is more necessary and advantageous, because it is so, not only for this short life, but also to the future and everlasting life, in which gold and silver bear no price.

Proverbs 3:15

For true worth and usefulness.

Proverbs 3:16

Wisdom is here represented as a great and generous princess distributing gifts to her subjects. She giveth them *long life* , &c., unless when she foresees that these things would prove snares and mischiefs to them, as they very frequently do to others.

Proverbs 3:17

Are ways of pleasantness; are exceedingly delightful, to wit, to those who know them and walk in them; whose judgment is certainly to be preferred before the contrary opinion of ungodly men, who are grossly ignorant of them, and professed enemies to them.

Are peace; procure a blessed tranquillity in a man's mind and conscience, prosperity in his undertakings, and eternal rest with God in glory.

Proverbs 3:18

She is a tree of life; she is a certain pledge and mean of everlasting life and happiness. He alludes to that *tree of life* , Gen_2:9 **3:22**; which if eaten by man in Paradise before his fall, should have perpetually preserved him in life, and health, and rigour; and intimates that this is the only restorer of that life which we have lost by sin.

That lay hold upon her; that eagerly pursue after her, and when they overtake her do greedily and gladly apprehend and embrace her, as the Hebrew word signifies.

That retaineth her; that holdeth her fast, and is constantly resolved not to forsake her.

Proverbs 3:19

By wisdom; either,

1. By Christ, the co-essential and co-eternal Wisdom of God the Father. Or,

2. By that Divine perfection of wisdom, which is the fountain of that wisdom that is in man, which Solomon hath hitherto commended; and therefore the commendation of that wisdom tends to the commendation of this, which is a stream flowing from it.

Hath founded the earth; hath fixed it in the lowest part of the world.

Established the heavens, or *fitted* or *ordered* them; framed them in that exquisite order which now they have,

Proverbs 3:20

The depths are broken up; that great abyss or depth of waters, which was mixed with and contained in the bowels of the earth, did break forth into fountains and rivers for the use of men and beasts; which is justly remembered here as an illustrious effect of God's wisdom, by which the earth was made habitable, and the waters serviceable.

The dew; under which the rain is comprehended, as being of the same nature and use.

Proverbs 3:21

Them, to wit,

wisdom and discretion; of which he hath hitherto discoursed, and which are expressed in the end of this verse, and may be referred hither by a figure called trajection; and the words may be put into this order, *let not sound wisdom and discretion depart from thine eyes*, but keep them diligently. The like trajections are found in other texts of Scripture.

From thine eyes, i.e. from the eyes of thy mind. Constantly and seriously meditate upon them, and upon those excellent precepts and rules which proceed from them.

Proverbs 3:22

Unto thy soul; either,

1. To thee or thy person. They shall prolong and perpetuate thy life, and make it life indeed, to wit, pleasant and happy; whereas a miserable life is reputed a kind of death, and is oft so called. Or, to thy soul, properly so called. They shall quicken, and delight, and save thy soul.

Grace to thy neck; like a beautiful chain or ornament about thy neck, as above, Pro_3:3 **1:9**.

Proverbs 3:23

Walk in thy way; manage all thy employments and concerns.

Safely, or *securely* , or *confidently* , without danger or fear; casting thy care upon God in the discharge of thy duty.

Shall not stumble at those stumbling-blocks and temptations at which heedless sinners commonly stumble and fall. Thou shalt thereby be kept from falling into sin, and that mischief which generally attends upon it.

Proverbs 3:24

Free from distracting cares and terrors, which oftentimes haunt sinners even in their sleep, because thy mind shall be composed and serene through the sense of God's favour and providence, and the conscience of thine own integrity.

Proverbs 3:25

Be not afraid, i.e. thou shalt not be afraid. For that it is a promise, seems most probable from the context; only it is for greater emphasis delivered in the form of a precept; I allow thee and require thee not to be afraid, which is both thy duty and privilege.

Of sudden fear; for sudden and unexpected evils are most frightful and grievous. And *fear* is here put for the evils feared, as Pro_1:26,27, and oft elsewhere. The desolation of the wicked; either,

1. Actively, which they bring upon thee. Or, rather

2. Passively, which befalls them, when the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, as it is expressed, Isa_26:21; and thou mayst be apt to fear lest thou shouldst be involved in the common calamity; but fear not, for God will then hide thee in his chambers, as he promised, Isa_26:20.

Proverbs 3:26

Thy confidence; a sufficient and sure ground of confidence to thee.

From being taken, in the snares either of sin or of mischief.

Proverbs 3:27

Withhold not good; do not deny it, but readily and cheerfully impart it, which is implied in the contrary, as above, Pro_3:11, and oft in this book, as we shall see. *Good* ; any thing which is

good; either spiritually, as counsel, comfort, reproof, &c.; or civilly, the good things of the present life, as *good* is taken, Psa_4:6, called *this world 's good* , 1Jo_3:17.

From them to whom it is due, Heb. *from the lords or owners of it* ; from those who have any kind of right to it; either,

1. By the law of justice and equity, prescribed both by the natural and written laws of God, and by the civil laws of men. So this place commands the payment of just debts, and the restitution of things either found or committed to our trust, or taken from others by fraud or violence. Or,

2. (which seems to be chiefly intended by comparing this with the next verse, though the former is not to be excluded,) By that great and sovereign law of love or charity, which God hath written in the hearts of men by nature, and frequently and severely enjoined in his word, whereby every man is obliged according to his ability and opportunity, to pity and relieve such as are in real want or misery; who in that case are here called the owners of our goods, not in respect of men, as if men in want might seize upon the riches of others, but in respect of God, who is the sovereign Lord and only true Proprietary of all men's estates, who giveth them when and to whom he pleaseth, and who doth not give away his right, nor make men absolute lords of them to dispose them as they will, but only allows them the use and comfort of them upon such conditions, and with such reservations and rent charges, as I may call them, as he hath appointed, whereof this is one, that men should readily and freely communicate them to other men who need and require their help. And such actions, though they be acts of charity and bounty to men, yet, as to God, they are acts of righteousness, as they are called, Pro_11:18 2Co_9:9, and in many other places.

To do it; either,

1. To withhold it. Or,

2. To do good. And this clause may be added, either,

1. As a limitation, to intimate that God expects from men according to what they have, and not according to what they have not, as is said, 2Co_8:12. Or,

2. As an argument to persuade them to partake the present season to perform this duty, when they are capable of so doing, because by the changes of this world, and the course of Divine providence, they may be disenabled from the performance of this great and necessary duty, and then they will be without excuse.

Proverbs 3:28

The former verse forbade the denial, and this forbids the delay of this duty.

Unto thy neighbour; unto any man, as the word neighbor is commonly used in Scripture, as hath been oft proved.

I will give, to wit, what is thy due, in manner before expressed, or what thou needest; for this word is generally used concerning free or charitable gifts, and not concerning due debts.

Proverbs 3:29

Devise not evil; any thing injurious or hurtful. Having commanded doing of good, Pro_3:27,28, he here forbids doing or designing any evil.

Dwelleth securely by thee; relying upon thine integrity: do not therefore betray thy trust, which is hateful even to heathens.

Proverbs 3:30

Strive not; either by words before the magistrate; or otherwise by thine actions.

Without cause; without just and necessary cause.

If he have done thee no harm; whereby he clearly implies that in case of injury a man may by all lawful means defend himself.

Proverbs 3:31

Envy thou not the oppressor, for his impunity and success in his wicked designs, and the wealth which he gains by his unrighteous practices.

Choose none of his ways; for what men envy in others they seek to obtain for themselves.

Proverbs 3:32

The froward; or, *perverse*, who walketh in crooked or sinful paths, as the oppressor last mentioned; opposed to the upright

man, who is called *right* or *straight* , as Deu_32:4 Pro_29:27. *Is abomination to the Lord* ; God hates him, and therefore sooner or later he must needs be extremely and eternally miserable.

His secret is with the righteous; they are God's friends and favourites, to whom he familiarly imparts, as men use to do to their friends, his mind and counsels, or his secret favours and comforts, to which other men are strangers. Compare Psa_25:14 Joh_15:15 Rev_2:17.

Proverbs 3:33

In the house of the wicked; not only upon his own person, but also upon his posterity, and upon all his domestical concerns.

Proverbs 3:34

He scorneth, he will expose to scorn and contempt, the scorners; proud and insolent sinners, who *make a mock at sin* , Pro_14:9, and at God and religion also, and despise all counsels and means of amendment. Compare Psa_1:1 Pro_1:22.

He giveth grace, to wit, favour, both with himself and with men, as this word and phrase is used, Exo_3:21 **11:3 12:36** Ecc_9:11 Luk_2:52

Proverbs 3:35

Shall inherit glory; shall enjoy it not only for a season, as wicked men oftentimes do, but as an inheritance, constantly, and to perpetuity.

Shame shall be the promotion of fools; instead of that glory which they greedily seek, they shall meet with nothing but ignominy. Or, as it is in the margin, *shame exalteth or lifteth up fools* , i.e. it makes them manifest and notorious, as this very word is used Pro_14:29. Or, as the words lie in the Hebrew text *fools* take or carry away (as this word is here rendered by divers both ancient and modern translators, and as it is used Lev_6:10,**15**, and oft elsewhere) *shame* , to wit, as his proper portion or inheritance; which is here very fitly opposed to the portion or inheritance of the just. And although the verb be singular, yet it agrees well enough with the noun plural, because this is taken distributively, such constructions being very usual in the Hebrew text.

Proverbs 4:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 4

Solomon showeth the excellency of his doctrine, Pro_4:1-4. His counsel to get wisdom, Pro_4:5,6, and understanding, Pro_4:7. The honour which cometh thereby, Pro_4:8,9. The good effects of it, Pro_4:10-12. He dehorts from the paths of the wicked, by the evil consequences thereof, Pro_4:13-19; and exhorteth to keep several precepts for the better government of himself, Pro_4:20; concerning his eyes, Pro_4:21,22, his heart, Pro_4:23, his mouth, Pro_4:24, and his feet, Pro_4:25-27.

Of a father; of me your teacher, who have paternal authority over you, and affection to you.

Proverbs 4:2

Good doctrine; not vain, or foolish, or false, or pernicious counsels, but such as are true and profitable.

My law; God's law or commands, delivered to you by my mouth.
See Poole "Pro_3:1".

Proverbs 4:3

My father's son, in a special manner; his best beloved son, and designed to be his successor in the throne.

Tender; young and tender in years, and capable of any impressions, and tenderly educated.

Only beloved, Heb. *only* , or *the only son* ; or rather, because Bathsheba seems to have had other sons, 1Ch_3:5, *as an only son* , as dearly beloved as an only son; in which sense this title is given to Isaac, Gen_22:2,12,16, though he had another son, and to others. And all these circumstances are mentioned to show the necessity and great benefit of wholesome instruction, which his royal parents would not neglect, no, not in his tender years, and thereby to prepare and excite them by his example to receive instruction.

Proverbs 4:4

Said unto me: the following verses, at least as far as the 10th verse, are propounded as the words of David, that the name of so great a king and holy a prophet might add the more authority and efficacy to his counsels.

And live, i.e. thou shalt live. It is a promise in the form of a command, as Pro_3:25.

Proverbs 4:5

From the belief and practice of my word.

Proverbs 4:6

Love her; he intimates that it is not enough to do what is good, which may sometimes proceed from worldly or sinful motives, but that we must have a sincere and fervent more and more unto the perfect day; just men do daily love to it.

Proverbs 4:7

The principal thing; the most excellent of all possessions.

With all; even with the price of all, though it cost thee the loss of all which thou hast. Or, *or among all* . Whilst you labour for other things, do not neglect this.

Proverbs 4:8

Exalt her; let her have thine highest esteem and affection.

To honour, both with God and men; which Solomon knew by experience.

Proverbs 4:9

An ornament of grace, i.e. an acceptable or beautiful ornament, such as they used to put upon their heads.

Proverbs 4:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 4:11

In the way of wisdom; either

1. Which procureth wisdom. Or,
2. Which wisdom directeth thee to walk in.

Proverbs 4:12

Thy steps shall not be straitened; thou shalt manage thine affairs with great facility, and safety, and success. It is a metaphor from those who walk in a strait and uneven path, where they are apt to stumble and fall.

Not stumble; not miscarry.

Proverbs 4:13

The conductor, and preserver, and comfort of thy life.

Proverbs 4:14

Enter not into the path of the wicked; avoid their courses and company.

Go not; do not proceed further. If thou hast unadvisedly entered into it, do not persist in it, but get thee speedily out of it.

Proverbs 4:15

Avoid it, pass not by it; keep at a great distance from it. Compare Job_22:23 Pro_5:8.

Turn from it; shun all occasions of sin.

Proverbs 4:16

They sleep not; they cannot compose themselves to sleep with quietness and satisfaction to their own minds. To fall into their own snares, either into sin or into mischief.

Proverbs 4:17

They eat the bread of wickedness: the sense is either,

1. Wickedness is as necessary and as pleasant to them as their bread; which suits well with the former verse. Or,
2. They live wholly upon what they get by wicked courses; which gives the reason of what he last said, why they could not sleep without prey.

The wine of violence, i.e. gotten by violence. See on the former clause.

Proverbs 4:18

The path of the just is as the shining light; the common course of their lives or actions is pure and spotless, clear and certain, safe and comfortable, as light is.

That shineth more and more unto the perfect day; just men do daily more and more grow in knowledge, and grace, and consolation, until all be perfected and swallowed up in glory.

Proverbs 4:19

As darkness; full of gross ignorance and error, of uncertainty and confusion, of wickedness, of danger and misery; all which come

under the name of *darkness* in Scripture use, and suit well with the context.

Stumble, Heb. *shall stumble* . Though they are always in danger, yet they are always secure, and do not discern their danger, nor the cause, or manner, or time of their ruin, till they be surprised with it.

Proverbs 4:20

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 4:21

Heartily love them, and stedfastly retain them,

Proverbs 4:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 4:23

Thy heart; thy mind and thoughts, and especially the will and affections, which are the more immediate and effectual cause of all men's actions.

Out of it are the issues of life; from thence proceed all the actions, as of the natural, so of the spiritual life, which lead to eternal life and happiness; as, on the contrary, all evil actions tending to death spring from thence, which is here implied.

Proverbs 4:24

All sorts of sinful words, which proceed from and discover an evil heart.

Proverbs 4:25

Direct all thine actions by a good intention, to a right end, and keep thy mind fixed upon that way which leads to it, and neither look nor turn aside to the right hand nor to the left, as it follows, Pro_4:27.

Proverbs 4:26

Ponder the path of thy feet; consider thine actions before thou doest them, and see that they agree with the rule.

Let all thy ways be established; let thine actions be uniformly and constantly good in spite of all temptations to the contrary. Or, *let thy ways be directed or disposed aright* , as this Hebrew word signifies. Or, *thy ways shall be established* . So this is a promise to

confirm the foregoing precept. If thou dost ponder them, thou mayst expect God's blessing and good success in them.

Proverbs 4:27

Fly all extremes, and neither add to God's commands, nor take from them.

Proverbs 5:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 5

An exhortation to the study of wisdom, Pro_5:1,2. To shun the company of strange women, Pro_5:3-5. The mischief of whoredom and riots, Pro_5:14. In a married estate exhorted to chastity in that state, and to rejoice with the wife of his youth, Pro_5:15-19. God's pondering our ways an argument to close with the exhortation, Pro_5:20,21. The miserable end of the wicked, Pro_5:22,23.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 5:2

Regard, or, *keep*, i.e. hold fast, as it is in the next clause. *Discretion*; spiritual wisdom for the conduct of thy life, as this word is used Pro_1:4, and elsewhere in this book.

That thy lips may keep knowledge; that by wise and pious discourses thou mayst preserve and improve thy wisdom for thine own and others' good.

Proverbs 5:3

It concerns thee to get and to use discretion, that thou mayst be able to resist and repel those manifold temptations to which thou art exposed.

Drop as an honeycomb; her words and discourses are sweet, and charming, and prevalent.

Proverbs 5:4

Her design, and the effect of that lewdness to which she enticeth men, is the sinner's destruction.

Proverbs 5:5

Her feet; her course or manner of life.

Proverbs 5:6

Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, to prevent thy serious consideration of the way and manner of rescuing thyself from this deadly course of life.

Movable; various and changeable. She transforms herself into several shapes, to accommodate herself to the humours of her lovers, and hath a thousand arts and deceits to ensnare them, and hold them fast.

Thou canst not know them; thou canst not discover all her subtle practices, and much less deliver thyself from them.

Proverbs 5:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 5:8

Lest thine eyes affect thine heart, and her allurements prevail over thee.

Proverbs 5:9

Thine honour; thy dignity and reputation, the strength and rigour of thy body and mind, which is an honour to a man, and which are commonly wasted by adulterous practices.

Unto others; unto whores, and their husbands, and children, and friends.

Thy years; the flower of thine age, thy youthful years.

Unto the cruel; to the harlot, who though she pretends ardent love and kindness to thee, yet in truth is one of the most cruel creatures in the world, wasting thy estate and, body without the least pity, and then casting thee off with scorn. and contempt; and when her interest requires it, taking away thy very life, of which there are innumerable examples, and damning thy soul for ever.

Proverbs 5:10

Strangers; not only the strange women themselves, but bawds, panders, and other adulterers, who are in league with them.

Thy labours; wealth gotten by thy labours.

Proverbs 5:11

Thou mourn at the last; bitterly bewail thy own madness and misery when it is too late.

Thy flesh and thy body; thy flesh, even thy body; the particle and being put expositively.

Consumed by those manifold diseases which filthy and inordinate lusts bring upon the body, of which physicians give a very large and sad catalogue, and the bodies of many adulterers give full proof.

Proverbs 5:12

How have I hated instruction! oh what a mad beast have I been, to hate and slight the fair warnings which were given me, and against mine own knowledge, to run headlong into this pit of destruction! which are not the words of a true penitent mourning for and turning from his sin, but only of a man who is grieved for the sad effects of his delightful lusts, and tormented with the horror of his own guilty conscience.

My heart despised reproof; I did with my whole heart abhor all admonitions.

Proverbs 5:13

Of my teachers; of my parents, and friends, and ministers, who faithfully and seasonably informed me of those mischiefs and miseries which now I feel.

Proverbs 5:14

I was almost in all evil. Oh what a miserable man am I! There is scarce any misery, in respect of estate, or body, or soul, into which I am not already plunged. The words also are and may well be rendered thus, *In a moment I am come into all evil* . In how little a time, and for what short and momentary pleasures, am I now come into extreme and remediless misery!

In the midst of the congregation and assembly: I, who designed and expected to enjoy my lusts with secrecy and impunity, am now made a public example and shameful spectacle to all men, and that in the congregation of Israel, where I was taught better things, and where such actions are most infamous and hateful.

Proverbs 5:15

This metaphor contained here, and Pro_5:16-18, is to be understood either,

1. Of the free and lawful use of a man's estate, both for his own comfort, and for the good of others. Or rather,

2. Of the honest use of matrimony, as the proper remedy against these filthy practices. This best suits with the whole context, both foregoing and following; and thus it is explained in the end of Pro_5:18. So the sense is, Content thyself with those delights which God alloweth thee, with the sober use of the marriage bed. Why shouldst thou ramble hither and thither, trespassing against God and men, to steal their waters, which thou mightest freely take out of thine own cistern or well. The ground of the metaphor is this, that waters were scarce and precious in those countries, and therefore men used to make cisterns and wells for their own private use. And the same metaphor of

waters, and of *a pit* , or *well* , is applied to things of this nature elsewhere, as Pro_23:27 Isa_48:1 **51:1**.

Proverbs 5:16

Thy fountains; thy children proceeding from thy wife, called *thy fountain* , Pro_5:18, and from thyself, as the Israelites are said to come from the fountain of Israel, Deu_33:28 Psa_68:26. Compare Isa_51:1. And fountains are here put for rivers flowing from them, as it is explained in the next clause, and as it is Psa_104:10, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect. And this title may be the more fitly given to children, because as they are rivers in respect of their parents, so when they grow up, they also become fountains to their children.

Be dispersed abroad; they shall be multiplied, and in due time appear abroad in the world to thy comfort and honour, and for the good of others; whereas whores are commonly barren, and men are ashamed to own the children of whoredom.

Proverbs 5:17

Hereby thou mayst be secured, that thou dost not father and leave thine estate to other men's children; whereas the parents of harlots' children are common or uncertain.

Proverbs 5:18

Thy fountain; thy wife, as the next clause explains it.

Be blessed; she shall be blessed with children; for barrenness was esteemed a curse and reproach, especially among the Israelites. Or rather, she shall be a blessing and a comfort to thee, as it follows, and not a curse and a snare, as a harlot will be.

Rejoice with the wife; seek not to harlots for that delight which God alloweth thee to take with thy wife. So here he explains the foregoing metaphor, and applies it to his present design.

Of thy youth; which thou didst marry in her and thine own youthful days, with whom therefore in all reason and justice thou art still to satisfy thyself, even when she is old. Or he mentions *youth*, because that is the season in which men are most prone to unclean practices, against which men are commonly fortified by the infirmities of old age.

Proverbs 5:19

As the loving hind, or, *as the beloved hind*, Heb. *the hind of loves*; as amiable and delightful as the hinds are, either,

1. To their males, the harts; or,
2. To princes and great men, who used to make them tame and familiar, and to take great delight in them, as hath been noted by many writers; of which see my Latin Synopsis.

Her breasts, i.e. her loves and embraces, expressed by lying between the breasts, Son_1:13; Compare Eze_23:3,**8,21**.

At all times; at all convenient times; for that there may be excess in the use of the marriage bed is manifest, not only from many scriptures, but from the light of nature, and the consent of wise and sober heathens, who have laid restraints upon men in this particular. A man may be drunk with his own wine, and intemperate with his own wife. Or, in all ages and conditions. Do not only love her when she is young and beautiful, but also when she is old and deformed.

Be thou ravished; love her fervently. It is an hyperbolical expression.

Proverbs 5:20

Why wilt thou destroy and damn thyself for those delights which thou mayst enjoy without sin or danger?

Proverbs 5:21

Before the eyes of the Lord; God sees all thy filthy actions, though done with all possible cunning and secrecy. He taketh an exact account of all their doings, that he may recompense them according to the kinds, degrees, numbers, and aggravations of all their unchaste actions.

Proverbs 5:22

In vain doth he think to disentangle himself from his lusts by repenting when he grows in years, and to escape punishments; for he is in perfect bondage to his lusts, and is neither able nor willing to set himself at liberty; and if he do escape the rage of a jealous husband, and the sentence of the magistrate, yet he shall be infallibly overtaken by the righteous judgment of God.

Proverbs 5:23

Without instruction; because he neglected instruction. Or, *without correction or amendment* . He shall die in his sins, and not repent of them, as he designed and hoped to do before his death.

In the greatness of his folly; through his stupendous folly, whereby he cheated himself with hopes of repentance or impunity, and exposed himself to endless torments for the momentary pleasures of sinful lusts.

Go astray from God, and from the way of life, and from eternal salvation.

Proverbs 6:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 6

A dehortation against suretiship, Pro_6:1. The danger of it, Pro_6:2; and the way of delivery, Pro_6:3-5. Sluggards reprov'd by a similitude of the ant, Pro_6:6-11. The carriage of the wicked described, Pro_6:12-14; and his sudden ruin, Pro_6:15. Of seven things which are displeasing to God, Pro_6:16-19. The benefits of keeping the commandments, Pro_6:20-24. The mischief of adultery, Pro_6:25. Its evil consequences, Pro_6:26-35.

Surety, to wit, rashly, without considering for whom or how far thou dost oblige thyself, or how thou shalt discharge the debt, if occasion require it. Otherwise suretiship in some cases may be not only lawful, but an act of justice, and prudence, and charity. See Gen_42:37 **43:9** Phm_1:19. Or, *to* (as this prefix most commonly signifies) *a friend*. *Stricken thy hand* ; obliged thyself by giving thy hand, or joining thy hands with another man's, as the custom then was in such cases; of which see Job_17:3 Pro_17:18 **22:26**. *With a stranger* ; with the creditor, whom he calls a stranger, because the usurers in Israel, who lent money to others for their necessary occasions, upon condition of paying use for it, were either heathens, or were reputed as bad as heathens, because this practice was forbidden by God's law, Deu_23:9. Or, *to* or *for a stranger* ; for here is the same prefix which is rendered for in the former clause. And so he may imply, that whether a man be surety to or for a friend, or to or for a stranger, the case and course to be used is much of the same kind.

Proverbs 6:2

Thy freedom is lost, and thou art now in bondage to another.

Proverbs 6:3

Into the hand; into the power.

Of thy friend; either,

1. Of the creditor, who possibly may be also thy friend; yet take the following course with him, and much more if he be a stranger.
Or,

2. Of the debtor, for whom, as being thy friend, thou didst become surety; whereby thou art not only in the creditor's power to exact payment, but also in the debtor's power, by his neglect or unfaithfulness, to expose thee to the payment of the debt. And this may seem best to agree both with Pro_6:1, where *friend* is taken in that sense, and is distinguished from the creditor, who is called *a stranger* , and with the words here following; for this *humbling of himself* was not likely to have much power with a stranger and a griping usurer; but it might probably prevail with his friend, either to take effectual care to pay the debt, or at least to discharge him from the obligation, or to secure him against it some other way.

Humble thyself, Heb. *offer thyself to be trodden upon* , or *throw thyself down at his feet* . As thou hast made thyself his servant, bear the fruits of thine own folly, and humbly and earnestly implore his patience and clemency.

And make sure thy friend; or, *and prevail with thy friend* ; strive to win him by thine incessant and earnest solicitations. Or, *honour* or *magnify thy friend* , which is fitly and properly opposed to, and indeed is in some good measure done by, the humbling a man's self before him.

Proverbs 6:4

To wit, until thou hast taken care for the discharge of this obligation. Be not secure, nor negligent, nor dilatory in this matter.

Proverbs 6:5

With all possible expedition, as the roe runs swiftly away.

Proverbs 6:6

This is another distinct precept; and it is for the most part as needless to seek, as hard to find, coherence in the proverbs and counsels of this book.

Her ways; her actions and manner of living, especially her diligence and providence, which are the things commended in her, Pro_6:7,8; of which naturalists give many instances, as that the ants watch the fittest seasons for all things, that they provide most plentifully against the time of famine, that they never hinder, but always assist, one another in their work, and unite their force together to carry away such things as are too large or heavy for one of them; that they prepare fit cells or repositories for their corn in the ground, and such as the rain cannot easily reach; and if through excessive rain their corn be wet, they bring it forth to be dried; that they bite off the ends of the grains of corn that they may not grow, &c.

Proverbs 6:7

Which might direct them in or quicken them to the work, as the bees have their kings, and many other creatures have their leaders. This heightens their commendation.

Proverbs 6:8

When they come forth in great numbers, as in winter they stir not out of their holes.

Proverbs 6:9

How long wilt thou sleep? when the ants are watchful and labour, not only in the day time, but even by night, when the moon shineth.

Proverbs 6:10

This he speaks in the person of the sluggard, refusing to arise, and requiring more sleep, that so he might express the disposition and common practice of such persons.

Folding of the hands is the gesture of men composing themselves to sleep.

Proverbs 6:11

As one that travaileth, swiftly and unexpectedly. As an armed man, irresistibly or unavoidably.

Proverbs 6:12

He showeth the haughtiness of his heart by the wickedness of his talk and discourses, to which he doth accustom himself, as walking implies.

Proverbs 6:13

He vents his wickedness, as by his speech, so also by his gestures, whereby he secretly signifies what he is afraid or ashamed to express openly to his accomplices, his intentions or desires of some evil towards another person; which having in the general declared by the motion of his eyes or feet, he points out the particular person by his fingers.

Proverbs 6:14

Frowardness; perverse or wicked thoughts and desires.

He soweth discord; either out of malice against others, or out of a base design of improving it to his own advantage.

Proverbs 6:15

Heb. *and there* shall be *no healing* ; no prevention of it beforehand, nor recovery afterward.

Proverbs 6:16

Hate, to wit, above many other sins, which have a worse name in the world.

Proverbs 6:17

A proud look; pride of heart, which commonly discovers itself by a man's looks and gestures. See Psa_101:5 **131:1** Pro_30:13.

A lying tongue; he that accustometh himself to lying and deceit in his common conversation.

Proverbs 6:18

An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations; he whose practice it is to design and contrive wickedness.

Feet that be swift in running to mischief; such as greedily and readily execute their wicked designs, without any restraint or delay.

Proverbs 6:19

That speaketh lies, to wit, in judgment; whereby this differs from the former lying, Pro_6:17. *Brethren* ; dear relations or friends.

Proverbs 6:20

Keep thy father's commandment, so far as it is not contrary to God's command.

Forsake not the law of thy mother, whom children are too apt to despise. See Pro_1:8.

Proverbs 6:21

Bind them continually upon thine heart; constantly remember and duly consider them.

Tie them about thy neck: see on Pro_1:9 **3:3**.

Proverbs 6:22

It, the law of God, which thy parents have taught thee, and pressed upon thee,

shall lead thee; direct thee how to order all thy steps and actions.

It shall talk with thee; it shall give thee counsel and comfort.

Proverbs 6:23

Is a lamp; it enlightens thy dark mind, and clearly discovers to thee the plain and right way.

Reproofs of instruction; wise and instructive reproofs or admonitions.

The way to life; both to preserve and prolong this life, and to procure eternal life to those that obey them.

Proverbs 6:24

This is mentioned as a great commendation of God's word, because neither worldly discretion, nor civil education, nor moral precepts, nor any other considerations, are sufficient preservatives against this lust, as is manifest from daily experience.

Proverbs 6:25

Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; do not give way to, nor delight thyself with, unchaste thoughts or affections. Compare Mat_5:28.

With her eyelids; either with her beauty, which consists much in the eyes; or rather, with her amours and wanton glances.

Proverbs 6:26

To a piece of bread; to extreme poverty, so as to want and be forced to beg his bread. *Hunt for the precious life* ; to take away a man's life; either by consuming his body and spirits, and so shortening his days; or more directly and strictly, when she hath any great provocation to it, or any prospect of considerable advantage by it. Or, *for the precious soul* , which she corrupteth and destroyeth. But I prefer the former sense.

Proverbs 6:27

The question implies a denial; he cannot escape burning. No more can he who burns in lust avoid destruction.

Proverbs 6:28

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 6:29

That goeth in to his neighbour's wife; that lieth with her, as the phrase signifies, Gen_19:31 **29:21,23**, &c. *Toucheth her* , i.e. hath carnal knowledge of her, as this word is used, Gen_20:6 1Co_7:1, and in Terence, and other writers.

Shall not be innocent; shall be punished as a malefactor, either by God or man.

Proverbs 6:30

Despise, i.e. abhor or reproach him, but rather pity and pardon him, who is urged by mere necessity to these practices.

Proverbs 6:31

He shall restore seven-fold.

Quest. How doth this agree with God's law, which required only that he should restore double, or at most fourfold, or fivefold? Exo_22:1:4.

Answ. 1. The number of *seven* may be here put indefinitely for many times, as it is Gen_4:24 Lev_26:28, and in many other places.

2. Some think that as thefts were multiplied, so the punishment of it was increased, in Solomon's time; or, at least, that it was the practice of some nations to require this sevenfold restitution.

3. He speaks not of that restitution which the law required, but of that which either the wronged person being potent might force the thief to make, or which the thief would willingly give rather than be exposed to public shame; as appears by the following clause, wherein he adds to this sevenfold restitution

all his substance, which no law of God or man required. See Poole "Exo_22:4".

Proverbs 6:32

Lacketh understanding; is a brutish and silly man, who madly rusheth upon these filthy courses, without any sense or consideration of the horrid shame and certain destruction which attends upon them.

Destroyeth his own soul, or *life* ; is guilty of self-murder and of soul-murder.

Proverbs 6:33

A wound; civil or corporal punishment from the magistrate, or rather from the woman's husband, as it follows.

His reproach shall not be wiped away; although it be forgiven by God, yet the reproach and scandal of it remains.

Proverbs 6:34

Is the rage of a man; it inflames a man with rage and fury against the adulterer.

In the day of vengeance; when he hath an opportunity to avenge himself upon the delinquent.

Proverbs 6:35

He will accept of no other recompence for the injury beneath thy life.

Proverbs 7:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 7

Solomon again persuadeth to keep his laws, and delight in wisdom, Pro_7:1-5. A young man void of understanding is insnared by a harlot, Pro_7:6-9. A description of a harlot, Pro_7:10,**11**, from her practice, Pro_7:12,**13**. Of her subtlety, Pro_7:14-20; by which she gained compliance to her desire, Pro_7:21,**22**. The danger of it, set forth under the similitude of a bird, Pro_7:23. He craveth their attention, Pro_7:24; and dehortheth from uncleanness, Pro_7:25-27.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 7:2

And live, i.e. thou shalt live. A promise in the form of a command, as Pro_3:25.

As the apple of thine eye; with all possible care and diligence, as men guard that part from all dangers, yea, even from the least mote. The eye is a most noble and necessary, and therefore highly esteemed and beloved, part of the body, and the apple thereof is the most honourable, and beautiful, and useful part of that part, and it is a most tender part, easily hurt, or destroyed, and therefore needs to be diligently watched.

Proverbs 7:3

Bind them upon thy fingers; as a ring which is put upon them, and is continually in a man's eye. Constantly remember them, and meditate upon them.

Write them upon the table of thine heart; fix them in thy mind and affection. See Poole "Pro_3:3".

Proverbs 7:4

When other foolish young men seek wanton mistresses, whom they frequently call

sisters or

kinswomen, let wisdom be thy mistress; acquaint and delight thyself with her, and let her have the command of thy heart, and the conduct of thy life.

Proverbs 7:5

This privilege Solomon doth so oft inculcate, either because he found in himself the great power and besotting nature of lustful inclinations: or because he observed these vices to abound more in his time, in which peace and prosperity made way for luxury and uncleanness.

Proverbs 7:6

This is either an historical relation, or rather a parabolical representation of that which frequently happened.

Proverbs 7:7

Whose strength and heat made him most subject to lustful impressions, and who wanted judgment and experience as well as grace to keep him from such courses.

Proverbs 7:8

Passing through the street; idle and careless.

Near her corner; near the corner of the street in which her house stood; such places being most convenient for that wicked purpose, as giving opportunity either for the discovery of passengers in several streets, or for the escape of such as might be in danger of being taken in her house. Compare Pro_7:12.

He went the way to her house; not with intention to act gross filthiness with her, as may be gathered from the following passages, but to gratify his curiosity, and to understand the manner of such persons, and to please himself with the sight of her, or discourse of her.

Proverbs 7:9

In the evening; when the day labour being ended, he was at leisure for any thing; and when such strumpets used to walk abroad for prey.

In the black and dark night; when it begun to be black and dark.

Proverbs 7:10

With the attire of an harlot; with a habit and carriage agreeable to her quality and design.

Subtle, or *wary* , or *reserved* , as she showed in her following discourse; wherein she proposeth all things which might invite him, and conceals whatsoever might discourage him.

Proverbs 7:11

Loud, or *clamorous* , or full of talk, which served her design.

Stubborn; rebellious against God, and against her husband, and incorrigible by all admonitions of ministers or friends.

Her feet abide not in her house; she minds not her business, which lies at home, but gives up herself wholly to idleness and pleasure, which she seeks abroad with other men.

Proverbs 7:12

Without; standing or waiting without or nigh the door of her house.

In the streets; in places of resort.

At every corner; at the corners of the streets, where she might either conceal or discover herself, as she saw fit.

Proverbs 7:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 7:14

I have paid my peace-offerings which I had vowed; whereby she signifies, either,

1. That she was no common harlot, but one of good repute for religion. Or rather,
2. That she had plentiful and excellent provisions at her house for his entertainment. For the peace-offerings were to be of the best flesh, Lev_22:21, and a considerable part of these offerings fell to

the offerers' share, wherewith they used to feast themselves and their friends; see Lev_2:3, &c.; Lev_7:31, &c.; Lev_19:6, &c.; Lev_22:30, &c.; whereas the burnt-offerings were wholly consumed, and the flesh of the sin-offerings and trespass-offerings belonged to the priest.

Proverbs 7:15

Diligently to seek thy face; as not being able to take any pleasure in my feast without thy company.

I have found thee, by a happy providence of God complying with my desires.

Proverbs 7:16

She designs to inflame his lust by the mention of the bed, and by its ornaments and perfumes.

Proverbs 7:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 7:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 7:19

The goodman; whom she doth not call her husband, lest the mention of that name should awaken his conscience or discretion.

Proverbs 7:20

He hath taken a bag of money with him; which is an evidence that he designs to go far, and to stay a considerable time.

And will come home at the day appointed; so that we need not fear any surprisal.

Proverbs 7:21

With her much fair speech; which implies that her alluring words were more effectual with him than her impudent kisses, which possibly had a little alienated his mind from her.

She caused him to yield; whereby he signifies that no provocation to sin is a sufficient excuse for sin.

She forced him; she prevailed over him; which argues that there was some reluctancy in his judgment or conscience against it.

Proverbs 7:22

Straightway; without delay and consideration.

As an ox to the slaughter; either being drawn and driven to it; or going to it securely, as if it were going to a good pasture.

As a fool to the correction of the stocks; or, which is more agreeable to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, *as one in fetters* , or bound with fetters, *to the correction of a fool* , i.e. to receive such correction or punishment as belongs to fools; which may imply either,

1. That he hath no more sense of the shame and mischief which he is bringing upon himself than a fool. Or,
2. That he can no more resist the temptation, nor avoid the danger, than a man fast tied with chains or fetters can free himself, although his be a moral and voluntary, and not a natural impotency.

Proverbs 7:23

His liver, i.e. his vital parts, whereof the liver is one. Till his life be lost, as it is explained in the next clause.

Knoweth not; which may be referred either to a foolish and inconsiderate young man; or to the silly bird to which he is compared, which comes to the same thing.

Proverbs 7:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 7:25

Decline to her ways; either to the paths which lead to her house, or to her manner of living.

Proverbs 7:26

Strong men; men that excel others, either,

1. In bodily strength, upon which they presume, which yet is wasted, and by degrees ruined, by these courses. Or,
2. In wisdom, and fortitude, and resolution; whereby he implies how much more necessary it is for a weak and foolish young man to use all possible care and diligence to avoid this mischief.

Proverbs 7:27

To hell; or; *to the grave* ; for the word is used in both senses; and this sense seems better to agree both with the foregoing and following words. Although, without repentance, hell will certainly be their portion, and their first death will be followed by the second.

Proverbs 8:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 8

Wisdom's fame, call, and exhortation, Pro_8:1-9. Her excellency, nature, and hatred of evil, Pro_8:10-13. Her power, Pro_8:14-16; and love to the godly, Pro_8:17. Her riches, Pro_8:18,**19**. Her eternity, Pro_8:20-30. Her delight in the children of men, Pro_8:31. An exhortation to true wisdom, Pro_8:32,**33**; and the blessedness of them that are truly wise, Pro_8:34,**35**. The fruits of sin, Pro_8:36.

It is a great question what this wisdom is, of which Solomon discourseth so largely and profoundly in this chapter. Some understand it of that attribute or perfection of the Divine nature which is called wisdom, whereby God perfectly knoweth all things, and maketh known to men what he judgeth necessary or expedient for them to know. Others understand it of the second person in the Godhead, the Son of God, who is called *the Wisdom of God* , Luk_11:49. And it cannot fairly be denied that some passages do best agree to the former, and others to the latter opinion. Possibly both may be joined together, and the chapter may be understood of Christ, considered partly in his personal capacity, and partly in regard of his office, which was to impart the mind and will of God to mankind, which he did,

1. By revealing it to and writing it upon the mind of man at his first creation; for it was Christ who then gave being, and life, and light to mankind, as is undeniably evident from Joh_1:1-4, &c.

2. By publishing it unto the holy patriarchs and prophets in the time of the Old Testament; for it was Christ who spake and discovered things to them from time to time, as is manifest from 1Pe_1:11 **3:18-20**, and from many other scriptures, both of the Old Testament, as I have formerly noted in their proper places, and in the New Testament, as we shall see hereafter.

3. By declaring it from his own mouth, and by his apostles and ministers under the gospel.

Put forth her voice; clearly and audibly instruct men how to avoid those fleshly lusts. He opposeth the inviting words of wisdom to the seducing speeches of the harlot.

Proverbs 8:2

In the top of high places, where she may be best seen and heard; not in corners and in the dark, as the harlot did. In the places of the paths; where many paths meet, where there is a great concourse, and where travellers may need direction.

Proverbs 8:3

At the gates; the places of judgment, and of the confluence of people. At the entry of the city, to invite passengers at their first coming, and to conduct them to her house.

At the coming in at the doors, to wit, of her house, as the harlot stood at her door to invite lovers:

Proverbs 8:4

To all men without exception, even to the meanest, who are thus called, Psa_49:2.

Proverbs 8:5

Ye simple; who want knowledge and experience, and are easily deceived.

Ye fools; wilful and obstinate sinners.

Proverbs 8:6

Of excellent things, Heb. *of princely things* , worthy of princes to learn and practise them; or such as excel common things as much as princes do ordinary persons.

Proverbs 8:7

Shall speak, Heb. *shall meditate* , i.e. shall speak not rashly and hastily, but what I have well considered and digested.

Is an abomination to my lips: I hate to speak it; therefore you may be assured that I shall not deceive you.

Proverbs 8:8

All the words of my mouth; all my precepts, promises, threatenings, &c.

Nothing froward or perverse in them; not the least mixture of vanity, or error, or folly in them, as there is in the words of the wisest philosophers, &c.

Proverbs 8:9

Plain; evident and clear to their minds; or, right, just and good.

To him that understandeth; either to him who with an honest mind applies himself to the study of them in the diligent use of all the means appointed by God to that end; or to him whose mind God hath enlightened by his Spirit, though they seem otherwise to ignorant and carnal-minded men.

That find knowledge; that are truly wise and discerning persons, and taught of God.

Proverbs 8:10

And not silver, i.e. rather than silver, as such negative expressions are understood, Gen_45:8 Exo_16:8 Jer_7:22 **16:14,15**, and in many other places. Though withal he seems to intimate the inconsistency of these two studies and designs, and the great hinderance which the love of riches gives to the study of wisdom.

Proverbs 8:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 8:12

Dwell with prudence; I do not content myself with high speculations, but my inseparable companion is prudence, to govern all my own actions, and to direct the actions of others, by good counsels. This he saith, because some persons have much wit and knowledge, and nothing of discretion.

Find out knowledge, i.e. I know them as clearly and certainly as if I had found them out by diligent searching. Or, *I find out*, is put for I help men to find out, as the Spirit is said to intercede, Rom_8:26, when it helpeth us to do so.

Of witty inventions; of all ingenious designs and contrivances for the service and glory of God, and for the good of ourselves and others. But why may it not be rendered, *of wicked devices* , as this very word is translated, Pro_12:2 **14:17 24:8**? For surely this is one great work of prudence, to discover, and so avoid, all evil counsels or devices, and the effects of them. But this I propose with submission, because I have not the concurrence of any interpreter in this exposition.

Proverbs 8:13

The fear of the Lord; which he had before noted to be the beginning of wisdom, Pro_1:7.

Is to hate evil; it consists in a careful abstinence from all sin, and that not from carnal or prudential motives, but from a true dislike and hatred of it.

Pride; which he mentions first, as that which is most hateful to God, and most opposite to true wisdom and to the fear of God, which constantly produce humility.

The evil way; all wicked actions, especially sinful custom: and courses.

The froward mouth; false doctrines, and bad counsels and deceits.

Proverbs 8:14

Sound wisdom: all solid, and substantial, and useful, yea essential wisdom, is natural and essential to me, for the word properly signifies *essence* .

I am understanding, or, my nature and essence, as was now said. Or, I am the author of understanding; as Joh_17:3. *This is life eternal* , i.e. this is the cause or means of it. *I have strength* courage and resolution to execute all my counsels, and to conquer all difficulties.

Proverbs 8:15

By me kings reign: either,

1. They get their kingdom by mine appointment and providence. Or rather,

2. They rule their kingdoms wisely, and justly, and happily, by my counsel and assistance; for this best suits with the next clause.

And princes decree justice: their injustice or wickedness is from themselves, but all the just and good thing: which they do they owe to my conduct.

Proverbs 8:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 8:17

I love them that love me; I do not despise their love though it be but a small and inconsiderable thing to me but I kindly accept it, and will recompense it with my love and favour.

That seek me early, i.e. with sincere affection, and great diligence, and above all other persons or things in the world; which he mentions as the effect and evidence of their love; for otherwise all men pretend to love God.

Proverbs 8:18

Which he mentions here, either,

1. As the best and surest way to get and to keep riches; for estates unjustly gotten quickly vanish, as is manifest both from Scripture and from common observation. Or,

2. To signify that this wisdom gives both worldly and spiritual or heavenly blessings together to its followers, whereas God gives riches alone to ungodly men, and they are to expect no other portion.

Proverbs 8:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 8:20

Keeping at an equal distance from both extremes, and from the very borders of them; which is called a

putting away iniquity far from us, Job_22:23.

Proverbs 8:21

Substance; substantial, and true, and satisfying happiness; which is here opposed to all worldly enjoyments which are said not to be, Pro_23:5; which are but mere shadows and dreams of felicity.

Proverbs 8:22

Possessed me, as his Son by eternal generation, who was from eternity with him, as is said, Joh_14:10; and *in him* , as he also was in me, Joh_14:10.

In the beginning; yea, and before the beginning, as it is largely expressed in the following verses.

Of his way; either,

1. Of his counsels or decrees. Or rather,
2. Of his works of creation, as it follows.

Proverbs 8:23

Set up, Heb. *anointed* ; ordained or constituted to be the person by whom the Father resolved to do all his works, first to create, and then to uphold, and govern, and judge, and afterwards to redeem and save the world; all which works are particularly ascribed to the Son of God, as is manifest from Joh_1:1, &c.; Col_1:16,17 **Heb 1:3**, and many other places, as we may see hereafter in their several places.

From the beginning; before which there was nothing but a vast eternity.

Or ever the earth was; which he mentions, because this, together with the heaven, was the first of God's visible works.

Proverbs 8:24

No depths; no abyss or deep waters, either mixed with the earth, as they were at first, or separated from it.

Brought forth; begotten of my Father's essence.

Proverbs 8:25

Settled; or, *fixed* by their roots in the earth.

Proverbs 8:26

The earth, i.e. the dry land, called *earth* after it was separated from the waters, Gen_1:10.

The fields; the plain and open parts of the earth, distinguished from the mountains and hills, and the valleys enclosed between them.

The highest part; or, *the first part* , or *beginning* ; or, *the best part* , Heb. *the head* ; that which exceeds other parts in riches or fruitfulness; which he seems to distinguish from the common fields.

Of the dust of the world; of this lower part of the world, which consisteth of dust.

Proverbs 8:27

I was there, not as an idle spectator, but as a co-worker with my Father.

Of the depth, i.e. of that great and deep abyss of water and earth mixed together, which is called both *earth* and *water* , and the deep, Gen_1:2. When he made this lower world round, or in the form of a globe, agreeable to the form of the upper world.

Proverbs 8:28

Established, Heb. *strengthened* , by his word and decree, which alone upholds the clouds in the air, which of themselves are thin and weak bodies, and would quickly be dissolved or dispersed. When he strengthened the fountains; when he shut up the several fountains in the cavities of the earth, and kept them there as it were by a strong hand for the use of mankind.

Of the deep; which have their original from the deep, either from the sea, or from the abyss of waters in the bowels of the earth.

Proverbs 8:29

His decree; or, *his bound or limits* , to wit, those parts of the earth which border upon it.

Not pass his commandment, i.e. not overflow the earth.

Appointed, or *laid, the foundations of the earth* ; either,

1. The centre of the earth; or,
2. The earth itself, which is the foundation of the world; or rather,
3. The firm standing of the earth upon its foundations, notwithstanding all the assaults which the waters of the sea or within the earth make against it; which is a singular work of God's providence.

Proverbs 8:30

By him; conversant with him, and united to him, as was said before.

As one brought up with him; as one tenderly and dearly beloved by him.

Rejoicing always before him; he and I had constant, and intimate, and sweet converse together.

Proverbs 8:31

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; in contemplating the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God in the making and ordering of all his creatures, and of man especially.

My delights were with the sons of men, to uphold them by my power and providence, to reveal myself and my Father's mind and will to them from age to age, to assume their nature, and to redeem and save them, which I would not do for the fallen angels.

Proverbs 8:32

Now therefore; seeing I have such a true love to you, and seeing I am so thoroughly acquainted with my Father's mind, and so excellently qualified to be your Counsellor and Ruler.

Proverbs 8:33

Or, *do not make it void* or unprofitable to you by your own sloth or wilfulness.

Proverbs 8:34

As servants, and clients, and others wait at the doors of princes or persons of eminency for place, or power, or wisdom, that they may be admitted to speak or converse with them.

Proverbs 8:35

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 8:36

He that sinneth against me, by the neglect or contempt of or rebellion against my commands,

wrongeth his own soul; is guilty of self-murder and of soul-murder.

They that hate me, i.e. who reject and disobey my counsels, and live wickedly, which in God's account is a hating of him, as is here implied and elsewhere, as Exo_20:5 Deu_7:10 **32:41**.

Love death; not directly or intentionally, but by consequence, because they love those practices which they know will bring certain destruction upon them.

Proverbs 9:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 9

Wisdom's call to her people unto blessed communion and fellowship with herself, set out under a similitude of making a feast, Pro_9:1. Her preparation, Pro_9:2, and invitation, Pro_9:3-5. She dehortheth from evil company, Pro_9:6. Her counsel concerning reproof and instruction, Pro_9:7-9. A description of the fear of God, Pro_9:10, with the benefits thereof, Pro_9:11,**12**. The nature of a foolish woman, Pro_9:13-15. Her invitation, Pro_9:16, and arguments to insnare the simple, Pro_9:17. The miserable state of them that are deceived by her, Pro_9:18.

Hath builded her house, for the reception and entertainment of her guests, as appears from the following passages. This house is opposed to the harlot's house, mentioned Pro_7:8; and it is to be understood, either,

1. Of the heavenly house, or the palace of glory; or rather,
2. Of the church, which Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, hath erected and established in the world, in which this following feast is made, which is called God's *house* , 1Ti_3:15 Heb_3:3,**4**.

Seven, i.e. many pillars; whereby is intimated both the beauty and the stability of the church. *Pillars* ; prophets, and apostles, and ministers of holy things, which in Scripture are called pillars, as Gal_2:9, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 9:2

Hath killed her beasts, i.e. made provision for the guests; which is meant of the ordinances, gifts, graces, comforts, and eternal felicities which God doth offer and give to men in and by the church.

Hath mingled her wine; either,

1. With spices, to make it strong and delightful, this mixed wine being mentioned as the best, Pro_23:29,30. Or,

2. With water, as they used to do in those hot countries, partly for refreshment, and partly for wholesomeness; whereby also may be intimated that wisdom teacheth us temperance in the use of our comforts. Hath also furnished her table with all necessaries, and now waits for the guests.

Proverbs 9:3

Her maidens; her servants, to invite the guests; ministers of the word, whom he calls maidens, partly for the decency of the parable; for wisdom being compared to a great princess, was fit to be attended upon by maidens; and partly to show that God by his word did work sweetly, though strongly, and did allure and draw rather than drive sinners to repentance.

Upon the highest places: either upon the tops of the houses, which were flat; or rather, from such high seats as those from which judges delivered their sentences, and officers made proclamations, for the conveniency of the people's better hearing.

Proverbs 9:4

Simple; ignorant, and weak, and subject to delusion, and willing to learn; to show that wisdom rejects those scholars who are proud and self-conceited.

Understanding, Heb. *heart* , which signifies understanding, Jer_5:21 Hos_7:11.

Proverbs 9:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 9:6

The foolish, i.e. the wicked, and their courses and society: you must either forsake them or me, for we are irreconcilable enemies.

In the way of understanding; which leads to it, and is prescribed by it.

Proverbs 9:7

He that reproveth a scorner: the connexion may be conceived thus, Having invited the simple, he forbids the invitation of scorners; or thus, He showeth who he meant by the *foolish* ,

Pro_9:6, even scorers and wicked men, as they are here called; and he presseth his last advice of forsaking them, because there was no good, but hurt, to be got by conversation with them.

Getteth to himself shame; partly from the scorer, who will revile and deride him; and partly from others, because he is frustrated in his design and hope, and by his imprudence hath brought an inconvenience upon himself.

A blot; a censure or reproach.

Proverbs 9:8

Reprove not a scorer; an obstinate and incorrigible sinner, who scornfully rejects and despiseth the means of amendment. Thus physicians deny physic to persons in desperate condition.

Lest he hate thee; whereby thou wilt not only expose thyself without necessity to his malice and rage, but also make thyself utterly incapable of doing him that good which possibly thou mightest do by other more prudent and proper means.

Rebuke a wise man; who is opposed to the scorer, to intimate that scorers, howsoever they are thought by themselves or others to be witty or wise, yet in God's account, and in truth, are fools.

He will love thee; both for that faithfulness and charity which he perceiveth in thee, and for that benefit which he receiveth from thee.

Proverbs 9:9

Give instruction: in the Hebrew it is only *give* ; for as receiving is put for learning, Pro_1:3, so *giving* is put for *teaching* , both in Scripture and in other authors; of which see my Latin Synopsis.

A just man; called *a wise man* in the former branch, to intimate that good men are the only wise men.

Proverbs 9:10

Of the holy; either,

1. Of holy men, whether such as all saints learn, or rather such as the holy men of God, the servants of this wisdom, teach from God's word; or rather,

2. Of holy things, the Hebrew word being here taken in the neuter gender, as it is Num_5:17, and elsewhere; for this seems best to answer to

the fear of the Lord in the other branch.

Is understanding; is the only true, and necessary, and useful knowledge.

Proverbs 9:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 9:12

Thou shalt be wise for thyself; thou dost not profit me, but thyself by it; I advise thee for thine own good.

Thou alone shalt bear it; the blame and mischief of it falls wholly upon thee, not upon me, or my word, or ministers who have warned thee.

Proverbs 9:13

A foolish woman; by which he understands, either,

1. Folly, which is opposite to that wisdom of which he hath been so long discoursing; and so it may include all wickedness, either in principle, as idolatry, heresy, &c., or in practice. Or,

2. The harlot; which, with submission, seems most probable to me, partly because all the following description exactly agrees to her, especially what is said Pro_9:17, as also Pro_9:18, which in effect was said of the harlot before, Pro_2:18 **5:5**; and partly because such transitions from discoursing of wisdom, to a discourse of harlots, are frequent in Solomon, as we have seen, Pro_2:16 **5:3 7:5**.

Is clamorous; speaks loudly, that she may be heard; and vehemently, that persons might be moved by her persuasions.

Knoweth nothing; to wit, aright, nothing that is good, nothing for her good, though she be subtle in little artifices for her own wicked ends.

Proverbs 9:14

Which notes her idleness and impudence, and diligence in watching for occasions of sin.

Proverbs 9:15

Who were going innocently and directly about their business without any unchaste design; for others needed none of those invitations or offers, but went to her of their own accord. And besides, such lewd persons take a greater pleasure in corrupting the innocent.

Proverbs 9:16

Simple; which title is not given to them by her, for such a reproach would not have allured them, but driven them away; but by Solomon, who represents the matter of her invitation in his own words, that he might discover the truth of the business, and thereby dissuade and deter those whom she invited.

Proverbs 9:17

Stolen waters; by which he understandeth, either,

1. Idolatry, or other wickednesses, which in Solomon's time before his fall were publicly forbidden and punished, but privately practised; or rather,

2. Adultery.

Are sweet; partly, from the difficulty of obtaining them; partly, from the art which men use in contriving such secret sins; and partly, because the very prohibition renders it more grateful to corrupt nature.

Proverbs 9:18

Knoweth not, i.e. he doth not consider it seriously, whereby he proveth his folly.

Proverbs 10:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 10

From this chapter to the five and twentieth, are sundry observations of moral virtues, and their contrary vices, with excellent rules for the government of our conversation.

The proverbs of Solomon, properly so called; for the foregoing chapters, though they had this title in the beginning of them, yet in truth were only a preface or preparation to them, containing a general exhortation to the study and exercise of wisdom, to stir up the minds of men to the greater attention and regard to all its precepts, whereof some here follow; of which in general these

things are fit to be observed, to help us in the understanding of them:

1. That these sentences are generally distinct and independent, having no coherence one with another, as many other parts of Scripture have.
2. That such sentences being very short, as their nature requires, more is understood in them than is expressed, and the causes are commonly to be gathered from the effects, and the effects from the causes, and one opposite from another, as we shall see.
3. That they are delivered by way of comparison and opposition, which for the most part is between virtue and vice, but sometimes is between two virtues, or two vices.

A wise son, i.e. prudent, and especially virtuous and godly, as this word is commonly meant in this book, and in many other scriptures.

A glad father; and a glad mother too; for both parents are to be understood in both branches, as is evident from the nature of the thing, which affects both of them, and from parallel places, as Pro_17:25 **30:17**, although one only be expressed in each branch, for the greater elegancy.

The heaviness of his mother; the occasion of her great sorrow, which is decently ascribed to the mothers rather than to the fathers, because their passions are most vehement, and make deepest impression in them.

Proverbs 10:2

Treasures of wickedness: either,

1. All worldly treasures and riches, which are called the mammon of unrighteousness, Luk_16:9, of which see the reasons there; to which righteousness or holiness, which are spiritual and heavenly riches, may be fitly opposed. Or,
2. Such treasures as are got by any sort of unjust or wicked practices.

Profit nothing; they do the possessor no good, but, which is implied from the opposite member, much hurt; they do not only not deliver him from death, but oft expose him to it; either from

men, who take away his life that they may enjoy his wealth; or from God, who shortens his days, and makes his death more terrible, as being attended with guilt, and with the second death.

Righteousness: either,

1. True holiness of heart and life. Or,
2. Justice and equity in the getting of riches, or an estate honestly obtained, which may be fitly opposed to treasures of wickedness. Or,
3. A liberal and charitable use of riches, which is oft called righteousness, as Psa_112:9 Dan_4:27 2Co_9:10, &c., and is indeed but an act of justice, of which see on Pro_3:27, which also is conveniently opposed to an unjust getting of riches; and so this contains a great paradox, yet a certain truth, that the charitable laying out of money is more profitable to men than an unjust and covetous laying it up.

From death; oftentimes from temporal death, because men generally love, and honour, and will assist such persons in cases of danger, and God gives them the blessing of a long life; and always from eternal death, when such charity proceeds from a sincere and honest mind, and a good conscience.

Proverbs 10:3

Will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish; will preserve them from famine, according to his promises, Psa_34:10, and elsewhere, which, as other temporal promises, is not to be understood simply and universally, but with this limitation, except this be necessary for God's glory, which in all reason should overrule the creatures' good, and for their own greater benefit. For, to say nothing of eternal felicities which follow every good man's death, it is certainly in some times and eases a less evil for men to be killed with famine, than to survive to see and feel those miseries which are coming upon them, and upon the land where they live.

The substance, as this word is used, Psa_52:7, or *the wickedness*, i.e. the wealth gotten by wickedness; as righteousness, Pro_10:2, is by divers understood of an estate got with righteousness.

Of the wicked; who by that means shall be exposed to want and famine.

Proverbs 10:4

With a slack hand; negligently and slothfully, as appears from the diligence opposed to it in the next branch, and from the use of this word in this sense, Pro_12:24,27 **19:15** Jer_48:10. Heb. *with a deceitful hand* ; so called, partly because it seems and pretends to do something, when in truth it doth nothing; and partly because such persons usually endeavour to maintain themselves by deceit and wickedness, which they cannot or will not do by honest labour and diligence.

Maketh rich; not by itself, nor necessarily, as is manifest from experience, and is noted, Ecc_9:11, but through God's blessing, which commonly is given to such, by comparing this verse with Pro_10:22, here following.

Proverbs 10:5

He that gathereth the fruits of his field in summer; in harvest, as it follows, which is a part of summer. He that watcheth for and improveth the proper seasons and opportunities of doing good to himself, and to others.

That causeth shame; both to himself for his folly, and that poverty and misery caused by it; and to his parents, to whose negligent or evil education such things are oft, and sometimes justly, imputed.

Proverbs 10:6

Blessings are upon the head of the just; all sorts of blessings are wished to them by men, and conferred upon them by God. He saith, *upon their head* , either to show that these blessings come from above; and that openly, in the sight of the world, so that he can confidently speak of them to God's praise, and to his own comfort and honour; or because blessings were commonly pronounced by men with this ceremony, by laying their hands upon the head of the party blessed.

Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked; *violence* (either,

1. Their own violence or injustice, which may be here put for the fruit or punishment of it, as iniquity is oft put for the punishment of iniquity. Or,

2. Violence, or the violent, and injurious, and mischievous practices of others against them, deserved by their own violence committed against others, and inflicted upon them by the curse and righteous judgment of God) shall cover the mouth of the wicked, i.e. shall fall upon them. This phrase of covering their mouth is used, either,

1. With allusion to the ancient custom of covering the mouths and faces of condemned malefactors; of which see Est_7:8 Job_9:24. Or,

2. To signify that the curse and judgment of God upon them should be so manifestly just, that their mouths should be stopped, and they not be able to speak a word against God, or for themselves. Or,

3. To intimate that God's judgment upon them should be public and evident to all that behold them, as any covering put upon a man's mouth or face is, as for the same reason the blessings of the just were said to be upon their heads. And *the mouth* may be put for the *face* or *countenance*, by a synecdoche. But this clause is otherwise rendered by divers learned interpreters, *the mouth of the wicked covereth* (i.e. concealeth or smothereth within itself, and doth not utter that) *violence* or *injury*, which he meditateth in his heart, and designeth to do to others, and therefore shall be accursed and miserable. But this suits not so well with the former clause, wherein *the blessings of the just* are not meant actively, of those blessings which they wish or give to others, but passively, of those blessings which others wish or give to them; and consequently this violence is not understood of that which they do to others, but of that which is done to them by others.

Proverbs 10:7

Is blessed, i.e. honourable and acceptable to those who mention them. Compare Job_31:20 Psa_62:5.

Shall rot; shall perish, and be cursed and detestable amongst men, shall stink above ground.

Proverbs 10:8

Will receive commandments; is ready to hear and obey the counsels and precepts of God, and of men, by which means he shall stand fast and live.

A prating fool; one who is slow to hear and swift to speak, who, instead of receiving good admonitions, cavils and disputes against them. In the Hebrew he is called a fool of lips, either because he discovers the folly of his heart by his lips, and thereby exposeth himself to the mischief here following; or because he is without heart, as is said of Ephraim, Hos_7:11, or his heart is little worth, as is said here, Pro_10:20; or because he speaks rashly, without any consideration. Or it may be rendered, *a fool by his lips*, i.e. by his foolish and wicked speeches, contrary to the commands of God, by talking much and ill, when it is more comely and necessary for him to hear and receive instruction from others.

Shall fall, to wit, into mischief; or, be punished, as the word is used, Hos_4:14; or, *be beaten*, as below, Pro_10:10.

Proverbs 10:9

He that walketh uprightly; who is sincere, and just, and faithful in his dealings with God and with men.

Surely; or, *securely*, or *confidently*, as the word properly signifies, and is here rendered by all the ancient interpreters, and by most of the others; quietly resting upon God's favour and gracious providence for his protection, and being supported by the testimony of a good conscience, and therefore not fearing nor caring who knows or observes his actions, which he endeavours to approve both to God and to men.

That perverteth his ways; that walks perversely, or frowardly, or in crooked and sinful paths; that dealeth hypocritically and deceitfully with God, or with men, using all possible crafts to conceal his wickedness.

Shall be known; his wickedness shall be publicly discovered, and so he shall be exposed to all that shame and punishment which his sins deserve, and which he thought by his cunning practices to avoid.

Proverbs 10:10

That winketh with the eye; that secretly and cunningly designs mischiefs against others, as this phrase is used, Psa_35:19 Pro_6:13.

Causeth sorrow to others, and afterwards to himself.

But; or, *and*, as it is in the Hebrew; for vice is not here opposed to virtue, as it is in many other proverbs, but one vice is compared with another.

A prating fool; who is so far from such deceits, that he runs into the other extreme, and *uttereth all his mind*, as is said of the fool, Pro_29:11, and thereby speaks many things offensive to others, and mischievous to himself.

Proverbs 10:11

A well of life; continually sending forth waters of life, or such good and wholesome words as are very refreshing and useful, both to themselves and others, for the preserving of their natural life, and for the promoting of their spiritual and eternal life. We have the same phrase Psa_36:9. Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked; the same words were used before, Pro_10:6, where see the notes; and they may be understood in the same sense here, and the opposition of this clause to the former may be conceived thus: As the mouth of a good man speaketh those things which are good and beneficial to himself and others, so the mouth of the wicked uttereth violence, or injury, or things injurious to others. which at last fall upon himself. But it is no new thing for the same words and phrases to be taken in different senses in the same chapter, and sometimes in the same verse, as Mat_8:22, and elsewhere; and therefore these words may here be, and are by many, translated and interpreted thus, *the mouth of the wicked covereth* (i.e. concealeth) *violence* or *mischief*, which he plotteth against others. And so here is a double opposition between the righteous and the wicked; first in the contrary effects, the former causeth life, the latter mischief and death; and secondly in the manner of producing them, the righteous doth it by uttering his words, and the wicked doth it by concealing his mind.

Proverbs 10:12

Hatred stirreth up strifes upon every slight occasion, by filling men with suspicions and surmises, whereby they imagine faults where there are none, and aggravate every small offence.

Love covereth all sins; either doth not severely observe, or doth willingly forget and forgive, the offences or injuries of others, and so preventeth contention and mischief.

Proverbs 10:13

Wisdom is found; his wisdom showeth itself in his prudent speeches, by which he escapeth that rod which fools meet with, and gaineth that reputation and advantage to himself which fools lose.

A rod is for the back of him, he may expect rebukes and punishments from God and men, that is void of understanding; which he showeth by his foolish words.

Proverbs 10:14

Wise men lay up, to wit, in their minds and memories, to be brought forth thence upon fit occasions,

knowledge; whereby they may be enabled to speak both what and when it is seasonable, for their own or others' good.

The mouth of the foolish is near destruction; fools are more forward to lay out than to lay up, and for want of knowledge speak much and foolishly, whereby they frequently bring destruction upon themselves

Proverbs 10:15

Is his strong city; either,

1. Really, as *money is* called *a defence* , Ecc_7:12, because it oftentimes redeems a man from dangers and calamities. Or,

2. *In his own conceit* , as it is explained, and fully expressed, Pro_18:11. It makes him secure and confident.

The destruction; it is the cause of their ruin. Or, *the contrition* , or *the terror* , or consternation, as others, both ancient and modern, render it. Their poverty takes away their spirit and courage, and fills them with fear and despair.

Proverbs 10:16

The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: either,

1. The design of his labour is only this, that he may have wherewith to live honestly, without sinful shifts. Or,

2. The fruit or effect of his labour or industry (as this word *labour* is most commonly understood, and this best answers to the following clause, where fruit is put instead of this *labour*) is the preservation and prolongation of this life, and the obtaining of eternal life, to which an honest and conscientious diligence in men's worldly callings doth in some manner contribute. The fruit of the wicked, the fruit of all their labours and endeavours, to sin; tendeth to sin, serves only for fuel to men's pride, and luxury, and worldliness, and by that means oft causeth temporal, and always, without repentance, eternal death.

Proverbs 10:17

The way of life; which leadeth to life and blessedness. That keepeth instruction; that observeth and obeyeth the wholesome counsels of God, and of good men.

Erreth, to wit, from the way of life, or into the ways of sin, and so of death; Heb. *leadeth into error* , or *seduceth* , to wit, himself, as appears by the opposition of this to the former clause; he wittingly and willingly exposeth himself to temptation and wickedness, because he rejecteth that admonition which is a proper preservative from it.

Proverbs 10:18

With lying lips; with flattering words and false pretences of friendship.

And he, Heb. *he* , i. e both of them, one no less than the other. So he condemneth two opposite vices, secret hatred and manifest slander.

Is a fool, because a sinner, and because the mischief of these things will fall upon himself.

Proverbs 10:19

Men that love and commonly use much talking, do frequently run into many miscarriages, because such persons, for the most part,

want wisdom to order their words aright, Ecc_5:3, and speak hastily, without care and consideration.

That refraineth his lips; that forbeareth to utter what cometh into his mind, before he hath weighed whether it be true and fit to be spoken or not.

Proverbs 10:20

As choice silver; of great worth and use, bringing credit to himself, and much benefit to others.

The heart, and consequently the tongue, which speaketh *out of the abundance of the heart*, Mat_12:34.

Proverbs 10:21

Feed many, by their wise and pious discourses, counsels, and comforts, which are so many evidences of their wisdom.

Die for want of wisdom; they have not wisdom to feed or preserve themselves, much less to feed others.

Proverbs 10:22

Riches are not got by wisdom or diligence, but only by God's favour and blessing.

He addeth no sorrow with it, i.e. with that blessing which gives riches, but gives them content and comfort in their riches, which is a singular gift and blessing of God, of which see Ecc_2:24,**26 3:13 5:18,19**; whereas the riches which wicked men get are attended with God's curse, with many discontents, with tormenting cares and fears, with horrors of conscience, and with the just dread of a sad account to God for them.

Proverbs 10:23

As sport; he doth it with ease and delight, and without any shame, or remorse, or fear.

To do mischief or, as others, *to work wickedness*; yea, great and premeditated wickedness, as the Hebrew word properly signifies.

Hath wisdom; whereby he is kept from committing wickedness, and especially from sporting himself with it. But this clause is by divers learned interpreters rendered thus, and so is wisdom to a man of understanding, it is a sport or pleasure to him to practise

wisdom or piety; which translation makes the opposition more evident.

Proverbs 10:24

The fear; the evils which he feareth, or hath cause to fear, as fear is oft taken.

Shall be granted; God will not only prevent the mischiefs which they fear, but grant them the good things which they desire.

Proverbs 10:25

As the whirlwind passeth; which is suddenly gone, though with great noise and violence.

So is the wicked no more; his power and felicity is lost in an instant.

Is an everlasting foundation; or, hath *an everlasting* , &c. His hope and happiness is built upon a sure and unmovable foundation.

Proverbs 10:26

As vinegar to the teeth; Which by its cold and sharpness it offends.

So is the sluggard; unserviceable and vexatious.

Proverbs 10:27

Prolongeth days; partly because it gives them a title to the promise of long life, as well as to other promises; partly because it gladdeth the heart, which doth good like a medicine, Pro_17:22, and preserves a man from those wicked practices which tend to the shortening of the days.

Proverbs 10:28

Shall be gladness; though at present it be mixed with doubts, and fears, and disappointments, yet at last it shall be accomplished, and turned into enjoyment.

Shall perish; shall be utterly frustrated, and so end in sorrow.

Proverbs 10:29

The way of the Lord; either,

1. The way or course of God's providence in the government of the world. Or rather,

2. The way of God's precepts, as God's way or ways are most commonly understood in Scripture, or walking in God's ways; for this is opposed to working iniquity in the next clause.

Is strength; gives strength, i.e. either courage and confidence, or support and protection from that destruction here following.

Destruction, or *terror*, or

consternation, as the word properly signifies, and many render it. The design of this verse is to show that piety is the only true policy.

Proverbs 10:30

The righteous shall never be removed; they shall live long and happily here, when this is most expedient for them, and eternally in heaven.

The wicked shall not inhabit the earth; they shall not have so much as a long and quiet abode upon earth, unless where this is a curse and mischief to them, and much less shall they have any possession in heaven.

Proverbs 10:31

Bringeth forth, freely, and abundantly, and constantly, as the earth or a tree bring forth their proper fruit, as the word properly signifies.

Wisdom; wise counsels, by which he directeth and secureth himself and others.

Shall be cut out, because it bringeth forth not wisdom, but folly and wickedness.

Proverbs 10:32

Know, to wit, practically, so as to consider and speak. Knowledge is here ascribed to the *lips*, as it is to the hands Psa_78:72, because they are conducted by knowledge and wisdom.

What is acceptable to God and good men, or what is truly worthy of acceptance; for this is opposed to what is *froward* or wicked in the next clause.

Proverbs 11:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 11

A false balance, the use of all false weights and measures in commerce,

is abomination, i.e. highly abominable, as the abstract signifies; which is opposed to the false opinion of men, who account it a fineness of wit, or, at worst, but a trivial fault.

To the Lord; partly because this wickedness is acted under a colour of justice; and partly because it is destructive to human society, and especially to the poor, whose patron the Lord owneth himself to be.

Proverbs 11:2

When pride cometh, then cometh shame; pride, as it is the effect of folly, so it bringeth a man to contempt and destruction, such persons being commonly hated both by God and by all men.

With the lowly is wisdom; whereby they are kept from those foolish and wicked actions which expose men to shame.

Proverbs 11:3

The integrity of the upright, their sincere obedience to God's laws,

shall guide them; shall keep them from crooked and dangerous courses, and lead them in a right and safe way.

The perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them; those wicked devices by which they design and expect to secure themselves, shall be the instrument of their destruction.

Proverbs 11:4

In the day of wrath; in the time of God's judgments, when he is executing wrath and vengeance upon sinners.

Righteousness, or *mercy*, as this word is oft rendered; or charity to the poor, which is fitly opposed to riches laid up in store.

Delivereth from death; it moveth God to deliver them oftentimes from temporal calamities, and always from eternal death, where such actions are done from a right principle.

Proverbs 11:5

Shall direct his way; shall bring all his designs and endeavours to a happy issue, by comparing this clause with the next.

Proverbs 11:6

Shall deliver them from many snares and dangers.

Proverbs 11:7

His expectation shall perish; all his hope and felicity, which he placed wholly in earthly things, is lost and gone with him.

The hope of unjust men; so it is a repetition of the same thing in other words. Or, as divers render it, *the hope* of their *strengths*, i.e. which they place in their carnal strengths, their riches, children, friends, &c. So this is added by way of aggravation.

Proverbs 11:8

Is by God's providence brought into the same miseries, which either he designed against the righteous, or had formerly inflicted upon the righteous, and now lately removed from them.

Proverbs 11:9

With his mouth; by his corrupt communication, whereby he endeavours to draw him to error or wickedness.

Through knowledge, to wit, of God, and of his word, which makes men wise, and discovers, and so prevents, the frauds of deceivers.

Be delivered from the infection of the hypocrite's evil and crafty counsel.

Proverbs 11:10

When it goeth well with the righteous, when such men are encouraged and advanced into places of power and trust, the city rejoiceth; the citizens or subjects of that government rejoice, because they confidently expect justice and tranquillity, and many other benefits, by their administration of public affairs.

There is shouting; a common rejoicing, partly for the just vengeance of God upon them who have been the instruments of so much mischief; and partly for their deliverance from such public grievances and burdens of the land.

Proverbs 11:11

By the blessing of the upright, where with they bless the city, to wit, by their sincere prayers, and wise and wholesome counsels.

By the mouth of the wicked; by their curses, and oaths, and blasphemies, and wicked and pernicious counsels, whereby they both provoke God, and mislead men to their own ruin.

Proverbs 11:12

Despiseth his neighbour; which contempt he showeth, either,

1. By contemptuous or reproachful expressions of him; or,
2. By not asking or not regarding his advice, but trusting wholly to his own understanding.

Holdeth his peace; either,

1. He forbeareth all such expressions against his neighbour. Or,
2. He silently and patiently bears these reproaches from his neighbour, and doth not render one reproach for another; wherein he showeth true wisdom. Or,
3. He desireth and hearkeneth to the counsels of others. Any of these ways the opposition is sufficiently evident.

Proverbs 11:13

A tale-bearer, or, *he that goeth about* (from one place or person to another, as the manner of such is) *telling tales*, making it his business to scatter reports, revealeth secrets; this tattling humour is so prevalent with him, that he cannot forbear to publish, either his neighbour's secret faults, or such things as were committed to his trust with a charge of secrecy.

He that is of a faithful spirit, that hath a sincere, and constant, and faithful mind, which both can and will govern his tongue,

concealeth the matter, so far as he can lawfully do.

Proverbs 11:14

No counsel; or, *no wise counsel*, as the word properly signifies, as Job_37:12 Pro_1:5.

In the multitude of counsellors, to wit, of wise and good counsellors, for such will employ and unite their counsels together for the public good.

Proverbs 11:15

A stranger; whose condition he doth not thoroughly understand, and therefore knows not his own danger.

Suretiship; of which See Poole "Pro_6:1".

Proverbs 11:16

A gracious woman, Heb. a *woman of grace and favour* , i.e. one who by her meekness, and modesty, and prudence, and other virtues, renders herself acceptable and amiable to God and to men.

Retaineth honour, or *holdeth fast her honour* or good reputation, with no less care and resolution than strong men do riches, as it here follows.

And strong men retain riches; or, *as strong men* , &c.; for so this conjunction is oft used in this book, of which we have seen some, and may afterwards see more instances.

Proverbs 11:17

To his own soul, i.e. to himself, because his liberality shall turn to his own infinite advantage, both in this life and in the next. Cruel; hard-hearted and uncharitable to others.

His own flesh; either,

1. His own children or kindred, who are commonly expressed by this very word, for whose sakes he is thus covetous and uncharitable, that he may hoard it up for them; but they, saith the wise man, shall have nothing but trouble and vexation, and God's curse with it. Or,

2. Himself, denominated here from his flesh or body, as in the former branch from his soul. But he may seem to mention his flesh rather than his soul, to intimate that the mischiefs of his covetousness shall not only fall upon his soul, which he despiseth, but upon his flesh or outward man, which is the only thing that he feareth.

Proverbs 11:18

A deceitful work; a work which will deceive his expectation of that good for which he worketh.

That soweth; that worketh it with constancy, and diligence, and hope of recompence, as they do who sow in seed-time.

Righteousness; good works, acts of piety towards God, and charity to men.

Proverbs 11:19

That pursueth evil; who are not overtaken by sin, as a good man may be, Gal_6:1, but studiously design it, and follow after the occasions of it earnestly, and greedily, and industriously.

Proverbs 11:20

They that are of a froward heart; hypocrites, as appears from the opposition of these to the *upright* in the next clause; whose hearts are false to God, and contrary to their own professions.

Are abomination to the Lord; though by their cunning artifices they may deceive men, and gain their good opinion and favour, yet God sees their naughty hearts, and hateth them.

In their way; in the course of their lives and actions. By which changing of the phrase from *heart* in the first clause, to way here, he intimates that the sincerity and hypocrisy of men's hearts are discovered and to be judged by their conversations.

Proverbs 11:21

Though hand join in hand; though they are fortified against God's judgments by a numerous issue, and kindred, and friends, and by mutual strong combinations or confederacies. Shall not be unpunished; they shall be punished even in their own persons, as well as in their posterity. They shall not be able either totally to prevent God's judgment, or to delay it from coming in their days.

The seed of the righteous, not only their persons, but their children, shall be delivered, without any such auxiliaries, by God's special providence.

Proverbs 11:22

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout; which would not adorn the swine, but only be disparaged itself. It was the custom of some of the Jews to wear jewels upon their noses, and some of their neighbours wore them in their noses.

Which is without discretion; which disgraceth the beauty of her body by a foolish and filthy soul.

Proverbs 11:23

The desire; either,

1. Properly so called. So the sense is, His desires are generally and constantly to do good to men, as wicked men's designs are to do hurt, and to execute wrath and hatred against them. Or rather,

2. The object, or event, or effect of their desire, as appears from the next clause, where

expectation is clearly put for the object or event of it. And the sense of the proverb seems to be this, The desires and expectations of the righteous shall end in their good and happiness, but the desires and expectations of wicked men shall be sadly disappointed, and end in the wrath of God and their utter ruin.

Proverbs 11:24

That scattereth; that giveth liberally of his goods to the poor; for so this Hebrew word is used, Psa_112:9, He hath dispersed, which is explained in the following words, he hath given to the poor.

Increaseth, through God's secret blessing upon his estate.

More than is meet, Heb. *from what is right or just*, i.e. what by the law of God, and the rules of general justice, he is obliged to give; of which see Pro_3:27.

It tendeth to poverty; by God's providence secretly blasting his estate, either in his own or his children's hands, as it very frequently befalls covetous wretches.

Proverbs 11:25

The liberal soul, Heb. *the soul of blessing*; that man who is a blessing to others, who blesseth them, i.e. doeth good to them, as blessing is oft used for a gift, as Gen_33:11 1Sa_25:27 2Co_9:5.

Shall be made fat; shall be greatly enriched, both with temporal and spiritual blessings.

He that watereth shall be watered also himself possibly it is a metaphor from a fountain, which when it poureth forth its waters is instantly filled again, whereas if it be stopped it groweth empty, and the water seeketh another course. Others render it, *he shall be*

a rain , i.e. he shall receive such liberal supplies from God, that he shall be able to pour forth showers of good things upon others.

Proverbs 11:26

Withholdeth corn, in a time of scarcity, when others need and desire it.

Blessing; the blessing of God, which the people shall heartily beg for him.

That selleth it upon reasonable terms.

Proverbs 11:27

He that diligently seeketh, which is opposed to those who content themselves with lazy desires, or cold and careless endeavours, good, to do good to all men, as he hath opportunity,

procureth favour with God and men.

He that seeketh mischief, to do any mischief or injury to others,

it shall come unto him; it shall be requited either by men's malice and revenge, or by God's just judgment.

Proverbs 11:28

He that trusteth in his riches, as his chief portion, and felicity, and ground of safety,

shall fall, as a withered leaf, by comparing this clause with the latter.

The righteous, who maketh God alone, and not riches, his trust,

shall flourish as a branch, to wit, a green and flourishing branch.

Proverbs 11:29

He that troubleth his own house; he who bringeth trouble and misery upon himself and children, either,

1. By carelessness, slothfulness, improvidence, prodigality, or any wickedness, whereby he consumeth his estate. So this *troubling* of his house may be opposed to a man's *building of his house* , Jer_29:28. Or,

2. By covetous desires and restless endeavours to heap up riches, whereby he greatly tires and troubles both himself and all his

family with excessive cares and labours, which is called *coveting an evil covetousness to his house* , Hab_2:9.

Shall inherit the wind; shall be as unable to keep and enjoy what he gets as a man is to hold the wind in his fist, or to feed and satisfy himself with it; he shall be brought to poverty.

The fool shall be servant to the wise of heart; by which means such a troublesome fool shall through his extreme necessity be forced even to sell himself to such as are wiser.

Proverbs 11:30

The fruit of the righteous, i.e. which he produceth; his discourses and his whole conversation.

Is a tree of life; is like the fruit of the tree of life; is a great preserver of his life, and a procurer of eternal life, not only to himself, but to others also.

He that winneth souls, Heb. *that catcheth souls* , as a fowler doth birds; that maketh it his design and business, and useth all his skill and diligence, to gain souls to God, and to pluck them out of the snare of the devil.

Is wise; showeth himself to be a truly wise and good man. But this clause is and may be rendered thus, *and he that is wise* (the same with the *righteous* in the former clause) *winneth souls* , or brings them to life. So this clause agrees very well with the former.

Proverbs 11:31

The righteous shall be recompensed, i.e. punished for his sins, as appears from the next clause; the general word being here used of this one particular, by a synecdoche. *In the earth* ; whereby he intimates that all his sufferings are confined to this world, which is an unspeakable felicity.

Much more, they shall be punished more certainly and more severely, either in this life or in the next,

the wicked and the sinner; those who make sin their great study, and daily and most delightful exercise. Compare this verse with 1Pe_4:18, which is a good comment upon it.

Proverbs 12:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 12

Instruction; admonition or reproof, as appears from the next clause, which is a singular means of getting true and sound knowledge.

Loveth knowledge; showeth that he is a true lover of knowledge, because he is willing to purchase it upon such unwelcome terms, as reproofs are generally esteemed.

Is brutish; discovereth himself to be a most foolish and stupid creature, because he is an enemy to himself and to his own happiness.

Proverbs 12:2

Obtaineth favour; whereby he is and shall be acquitted and justified.

A man of wicked devices, who designeth and industriously committeth wickedness, will he condemn, when he standeth in judgment, howsoever he may for the present justify himself, and deceive others into a good opinion of him.

Proverbs 12:3

By wickedness; by any sinful courses by which he useth to secure or stablish himself; whereby he implies that he shall be rooted up.

Shall not be moved, to wit, out of its place. He shall stand fast, and flourish, like a well-rooted tree.

Proverbs 12:4

A crown; a singular ornament and matter of his glorying and joy.

That maketh ashamed; that by her folly or wickedness bringeth shame to herself and to her husband. As rottenness in his bones; loathsome, and vexatious, and pernicious.

Proverbs 12:5

The thoughts of the righteous are right; his constant purpose is to deal justly and truly with God and with men.

The counsels of the wicked are deceit; his great care and contrivance is to wrong and deceive others by fair pretences and cunning artifices.

Proverbs 12:6

Are to lie in wait for blood; are designed and ordered to entrap or deceive others, and to destroy them.

Shall deliver them, to wit, from those that lie in wait for them; which it doth, either,

1. By prayer to God for their deliverance; or,
2. By pacifying the wicked with soft and gentle answers, or by diverting them from their evil course by their good counsels and admonitions; or,
3. By pleading their righteous cause in a judicial or other way.

Proverbs 12:7

Are not; both they and their families shall suddenly perish. The house; the family or posterity.

Proverbs 12:8

A man shall be commended, to wit, by wise and good men, according to his wisdom; more or less according to the degree of wisdom which his discourses and actions discover to be in him.

He that is of a perverse heart, which he showeth by his wicked words and conversation, shall be despised by God and all wise men.

Proverbs 12:9

That is despised; that liveth in a mean and obscure condition in the world, for such are commonly despised by men of a higher rank.

Hath a servant; hath but one servant. Or rather, *is servant to himself*; hath none to wait upon him or work for him but himself, that getteth bread by his own labours.

Is better, is happier, than he that honoureth himself, that glorieth in his high birth or gay attire, and lacketh bread, wants necessaries for his own sustenance.

Proverbs 12:10

Regardeth the life of his beast, which is employed in his service; he will not destroy it either by labours beyond its strength, or by

denying to it necessary food or rest, or by any other way; and much more will he be pitiful to his own servants, and to poor men.

The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel; there is much cruelty mixed even with their most merciful actions, when they pretend or intend to show mercy. Heb. *the bowels of the* , &c.; those very bowels, which in others are the seat of pity, in him are hardened and shut up, and only stir him up to cruelty. Instead of that mercy which is natural to other men, he hath nothing but cruelty. Their

mercies are here said to be

cruel, as

the foolishness and weakness of God are said to be *wise and strong* , 1Co_1:25.

Proverbs 12:11

That tilleth his land; that employeth his time and strength in an honest calling.

That followeth vain persons; that useth their society and idle course of living.

Is void of understanding; shall through his own folly want bread.

Proverbs 12:12

The wicked desireth the net of evil men; he approveth and useth those cunning and deceitful arts, which wicked men use like nets to insnare other men, and to take their goods to themselves. Or, *he desireth the fortress of wicked men* , or *of wickedness* , i.e. he seeks to fortify and stablish himself by wicked practices.

The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit; that justice and piety in which he is rooted, and which is the root of his actions, doth of itself, without the aid of any indirect and sinful courses, yield him sufficient fruit, both for his own need, and to do good to others. But because the word *fruit* is not in the Hebrew, and may seem to be too great a supplement, it is and may be rendered thus, *the root of the righteous giveth it* , to wit, that fortress or security which others seek in wickedness.

Proverbs 12:13

The wicked is snared, i.e. brought into trouble,

by the transgression of his lips, by his wicked speeches against God and men. The just shall come out of trouble, to wit, by his wise, and holy, and inoffensive speeches, whereby he pacifieth men, and gaineth God's favour and protection.

Proverbs 12:14

By the fruit of his mouth; by his pious and profitable discourses.

Of a man's hands, i.e. of his works and actions, of which the hand is the great instrument; whereby also may be implied that God will not regard nor recompense good works, unless they be accompanied with a good conversation.

Shall be rendered unto him, to wit, by God, to whom the work of retribution belongs.

Proverbs 12:15

The way of a fool, the counsel and course which his own mind suggests to him in ordering of his affairs,

is right in his own eyes; highly pleaseth him, so that he neglects and despiseth the opinions and advices of others.

He that hearkeneth unto counsel; that distrusteth his own judgment, and seeketh counsel from others.

Proverbs 12:16

Is presently known, by his rash words and indecent actions, whereby he exposeth himself to shame.

Covereth shame; either,

1. The shame, or reproach, or injury done to him by others, which he concealeth and beareth with patience, and passeth by, as his duty and interest obligeth him to do. Or,

2. His own shame, to which the folly of rash anger would have betrayed him.

Proverbs 12:17

He that speaketh truth, Heb.

He that will speak truth, i.e. he who accustometh himself to speak truth in common conversation; for the future tense in the Hebrew tongue oft notes a continued act or habit.

Showeth forth righteousness, to wit, as a witness in public judgment; he will speak nothing but what is true and just; you may depend upon his testimony.

But a false witness deceit; he who useth himself to lying in his common talk will use falsehood and deceit in judgment.

Proverbs 12:18

Speaketh like the piercings of a sword, hurtful and pernicious words, whereby they either corrupt men's minds and manners, or scandalize them, or injure them in their reputation, estate, or life, or otherwise.

The tongue of the wise is health; his speech, both in judgment and in common discourse, is sound and wholesome in itself, and tending to the comfort and benefit of others.

Proverbs 12:19

The speaker of truth is constant, and always agreeable to himself, and his words, the more and longer they are tried, the more doth the truth of them appear; whereas liars, though they may make a fair show for a season, yet are easily and quickly convicted of falsehood.

Proverbs 12:20

Deceit; either,

1. Towards others, whom they design to deceive, and then to destroy, whilst good counsellors bring safety and joy to others. Or rather,

2. To themselves. So the sense of the verse is, They whose hearts devise mischief against others shall be deceived in their hopes, and bring that trouble upon themselves which they design against others; but they who by good counsels labour to promote the peace and happiness of others, shall reap the comfort and benefit of it to themselves.

Proverbs 12:21

No evil; either,

1. Of sin; or rather,

2. Of suffering or mischief, as the next clause explains this. No such evil shall befall them as doth commonly befall the wicked,

who are filled, or overwhelmed, and utterly destroyed by it; whereas good men are supported under their troubles, and shall be delivered out of them, and receive much benefit by them.

Proverbs 12:22

That deal truly; that speak and act sincerely and truly. He implies, that although lying lips alone are sufficient to purchase God's hatred, yet truth in a man's speech is not sufficient to procure God's favour, unless there be also truth and justice in his actions.

Proverbs 12:23

Concealeth knowledge; he doth not vain-gloriously and unseasonably utter what he knows, but keeps it in his breast till he hath a fit occasion to bring it forth for God's glory, and the good of others.

Proclaimeth foolishness; whilst he makes ostentation of his knowledge, he betrays his ignorance and folly. Compare Ecc_10:3.

Proverbs 12:24

Shall bear rule; shall procure wealth and power.

The slothful, Heb. *the deceitful* . So he calls the slothful, because deceit and idleness are commonly companions, and such men seek to gain by fraud what they either cannot or will not get by honest labour. Compare Pro_10:4.

Proverbs 12:25

A compassionate or encouraging word from a friend or minister.

Proverbs 12:26

More excellent; either,

1. In his temper and disposition, more just, and generous, and public-spirited, and merciful, &c. Or,
2. In his condition, more happy, notwithstanding all his sufferings and the contrary opinion of the world concerning them.

Than his neighbour; than any other men.

Seduceth them, Heb. *maketh them to err or wander* , to lose that excellency or happiness which they had promised to themselves in and by their wicked practices.

Proverbs 12:27

The slothful man; or, the deceitful man, as Pro_12:24, who seeks to enrich himself by fraudulent and unjust practices.

Roasteth not that which he took in hunting; doth not enjoy the fruit of his labours or devices, either because he doth not labour, and so hath nothing to waste or enjoy; or because God oftentimes deprives him either of such ill-gotten goods, or at least of a quiet and comfortable fruition of them.

Is precious; yields him great comfort and satisfaction, partly because it abides with him, and partly because he hath God's favour and blessing with it.

Proverbs 12:28

The practice of justice and godliness, though it expose a man to some dangers and inconveniences in the world, yet it will certainly lead him to life and happiness, whereas the end of all wicked courses is death and destruction.

Proverbs 13:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 13

Heareth; which word is understood out of the next clause, as is frequent in the Hebrew text.

Instruction; or, rebuke or reproof.

Heareth not rebuke; he hateth reproof, either from his father or from any other man.

Proverbs 13:2

Shall eat good; shall receive much comfort, and credit, and benefit to himself.

By the fruit of his mouth; by his wise and profitable discourses.

The soul, i.e. the person, as the soul is oft used.

The transgressors; who transgress with their lips, as this general phrase may be restrained from the former clause.

Shall eat violence; shall have that violence and injury returned upon themselves, which they have offered to others in word or deed.

Proverbs 13:3

He that keepeth his mouth, to wit, to the opening of it; who speaks sparingly, and with due care and caution;

keepeth his life; prevents many sins and mischiefs which others run into. *He that openeth wide his lips* , that takes liberty to speak every thing which pleaseth him, or cometh into his mind, shall have destruction, from God or men.

Proverbs 13:4

Hath nothing, because he contenteth himself with lazy desires without diligent endeavours.

Shall be made fat; he shall be enriched with the fruit of his own labours.

Proverbs 13:5

Hateth lying, both in himself and in other men, whereby he getteth that good name which is like a precious ointment.

A wicked man; who accustometh himself to lying, as may be gathered from the foregoing words.

Cometh to shame; makes himself contemptible and hateful to all that know him; there being scarce any reproach which men more impatiently endure, and severely revenge, than that of being called or accounted a liar.

Proverbs 13:6

Keepeth him; either from sin, or from that overthrow which befalls sinners, in the next clause.

The sinner, Heb. *the man of sin* , who giveth up himself to wicked courses.

Proverbs 13:7

Some men who have little or nothing pretend to have great riches, and carry themselves accordingly; either out of pride and vanity, or with a design to gain reputation with others whom they intend to defraud. Some rich men seem and profess themselves to be very poor, that they may preserve and increase their estates, by

concealing them from those who would either desire a share in them, or take them away by deceit or violence.

Proverbs 13:8

This verse sets forth, either,

1. The several advantages of riches and poverty. Riches enable a man to redeem his life when it is in greatest danger, and poverty preserves a man from those rebukes and injuries which endanger and oft destroy the rich. Or,

2. The convenience of poverty above riches. Riches frequently expose men to the peril of losing their lives by false accusers, or thieves, or tyrants, which they are forced to redeem with the loss of their riches; whereas poverty commonly secures men not only from such kinds of death, but even from rebukes and injuries; partly because such persons are cautious that they may not offend or provoke others; and partly because their persons and actions are neglected and slighted, and they are esteemed objects of pity.

Proverbs 13:9

The light; the prosperity or happiness, which is oft called a *light or lamp* in Scripture, and other authors.

Rejoiceth; shineth with a pleasant and constant brightness and glory; for this is opposed to the putting out in the next clause. *Rejoicing* is here ascribed to the light, as it is to the sun, Psa_19:5, both metaphorically, because they would rejoice in it if they were capable of any such passions; and metonymically, because they refresh and cheer men's spirits. So mountains and trees are said to rejoice, Psa_65:12 **96:12**.

The lamp of the wicked shall be put out; their felicity shall have a sudden and a dismal end.

Proverbs 13:10

Only by pride cometh contention; which is not to be understood exclusively as to all other causes; for contentions oft spring from ignorance, or mistake, or covetousness, or other passions: but eminently, because as pride bloweth up those coals of contention which other lusts kindle, so oftentimes pride alone, without any other cause, stirreth up strife; which it doth by making a man self-

conceited in his opinions, and obstinate in his resolutions, and impatient of any opposition, and many other ways.

With the well-advised, who are not governed by their own passions, but by prudent consideration, and the good counsel of others, *is wisdom* ; which teacheth them to avoid and abhor all contention.

Proverbs 13:11

By vanity; by vain, or deceitful, or wicked practices. *Shall be diminished* , because the curse of God attends upon it.

By labour; by diligence in an honest calling.

Proverbs 13:12

Hope deferred; delays in obtaining that good which a man passionately desireth and hopeth for.

The desire; the good desired and expected; acts being oft put for the objects,

It is a tree of life; it is most sweet, and satisfactory, and reviving.

Proverbs 13:13

Despiseth; disobeyeth it wilfully and presumptuously. *The word* ; the word of God, which is called the word by way of eminency, Deu_30:14, compared with Rom_10:18 1Th_5:17, and elsewhere.

Shall be destroyed, except he repent, and return to his obedience.

That feareth the commandment; that hath a reverence to its authority, and is afraid to violate it.

Proverbs 13:14

The law; the doctrine, instruction, or counsel; as the word law is frequently understood in Scripture.

Of the wise; of holy men, who are commonly called wise, as sinners are called fools, in this book.

Proverbs 13:15

Good understanding; discovering itself by a man's holy and righteous practices and ways, as appears from the opposition of

the way of transgressors to it; and as words of understanding in this and other books of Scripture commonly include practice.

Giveth favour; maketh a man acceptable both to God and men.

The way; the carriage or manner of conversation.

Is hard; or, *rough*, as this very word is used, Deu_21:4; offensive and hateful to God and men, as rough ways are to a traveller; fierce, and intractable, and incorrigible.

Proverbs 13:16

Dealeth, Heb. *acteth*, or

doth, manageth all his affairs, with knowledge; considerately and discreetly.

Layeth open his folly, by his heady and foolish actions.

Proverbs 13:17

A wicked messenger, who is unfaithful in the execution of that which is committed to his charge, as appears by the opposite clause,

falleth into mischief; shall not escape punishment from God, or from them who sent him.

Is health; or, *wholesome*; procureth safety and benefit, as to his master, so also to himself.

Proverbs 13:18

Instruction; whereby he might have been kept from destructive and dishonourable courses.

He that regardeth reproof, that considers it seriously, receiveth it kindly, and reformeth himself by it, shall be honoured, and enriched, which is implied from the former branch. Not that it is so always, but commonly, and when God sees it good for a man. Or if he do not always gain riches, he shall certainly have honour both from God and men.

Proverbs 13:19

The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul; the satisfaction of a man's desires by the enjoyment of the things desired is very acceptable to him; which may be taken either,

1. Of the desire of fools, which may be understood out of the next clause. So the sense of the verse is, It is sweet to sinners to indulge and satisfy their desires, which are wholly carnal and

sinful, and for that reason they love sin, and hate the thoughts of leaving it, because their desires are wholly and fully set upon it. Or,

2. Of good desires, or of the desires of wise and good men, as the LXX., and Chaldee, and Syriac, and Arabic interpreters understand it, by the opposition of

fools in the next clause. So the sense may be this. The desires of good men are set upon what is good, and they rejoice when they attain to it, and are grieved when they fall short of it; but the desires of the wicked are set upon sin, and it is a pleasure to them to commit it, and an abomination to them to be hindered from it. Or rather,

3. Of desires in general. Whatsoever men do earnestly desire, the enjoyment of it is very sweet and grateful to them; and therefore sinners rejoice in the pursuit and satisfaction of their sinful lusts, and abhor all restraint and mortification of them. For this is certain and confessed, that many things are understood in these short proverbial speeches which are not expressed.

But; or, *and*, as this particle properly signifies; or, *therefore*, as it is frequently used.

Proverbs 13:20

Walketh; commonly converseth and associateth himself.

Shall be wise; shall learn wisdom and goodness, both from their counsels and examples. The design of this proverb is to show the wonderful influence which a man's society hath upon him, either to save, or to corrupt and destroy him.

Proverbs 13:21

Evil; evil of punishment proportionable to their evil of sin, as appears from the next clause.

Pursueth; and sooner or later shall certainly overtake them, albeit they please themselves with hopes of impunity.

Sinners; obstinate and incorrigible sinners.

Good; God's blessings and true happiness.

Proverbs 13:22

Is by God's powerful providence oftentimes translated to good men of another family, who will be more faithful stewards of it.

Proverbs 13:23

Much food is in the tillage of the poor; poor and mean persons, by their diligent labours in tillage or other employments, and God's blessing upon them, oftentimes grow rich.

Destroyed; or, *consumed*, to wit, in his estate, brought to poverty.

For want of judgment; either,

1. For want of discretion and convenient care and diligence in tilling his land, and in managing his affairs, which he neglects himself, and leaves to the care of others; whereas poor men are forced by their necessities to look to their own concerns, and to use their utmost diligence in them. Or rather,

2. By injustice, as this phrase is used, Pro_16:8 Jer_17:11 **22:13** Eze_22:29. Nor do I find it in any other scripture. By his frauds, rapines, and oppressions, and other unjust and wicked practices, whereby he seeks to enrich himself, as refusing and scorning to get an estate by honest labours. So this agrees with what is said Pro_13:11.

Proverbs 13:24

He that spareth, Heb. *withholdeth* it from his son when it is due to him,

his rod, that correction which his son's fault requires, and he as a father is required to give him,

hateth his son; not directly and properly in regard of his affection, but consequently, and in respect of the event. His fond affection is as pernicious to him as his or another man's hatred could be.

Chasteneth him betimes; either,

1. In his tender years, as soon as he is capable of it. Or,

2. Speedily, before he be hardened and inveterate in sin. God's favour and blessing gives the righteous man a competent estate,

and a heart to use it, and comfort and satisfaction in it; whereas wicked men commonly want either all these blessings, or some of them.

Proverbs 13:25

God's favour and blessing gives the righteous man a competent estate, and a heart to use it, and comfort and satisfaction in it; whereas wicked men commonly want either all these blessings, or some of them.

Proverbs 14:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 14

He speaks of the woman not to exclude the man, of whom this is no less true, but because the women, especially in those times, were very industrious in managing their husbands' estates; of which see **Pr 31**.

Buildeth her house; maintaineth and improveth her family and estate, as this phrase is used, Exo_1:21 2Sa_7:11 Psa_127:1.

Plucketh it down with her hands; either by her idleness and not using her hands, or by her foolish and sinful courses.

Proverbs 14:2

That walketh in his uprightness; whose conversation is sincerely pious and righteous. The design of this proverb and verse is to show that God doth, and men may, judge of men's outward professions and inward dispositions by the common course of their lives.

Despiseth him; plainly declares that he doth not fear God, but despise him, and his commands and threatenings.

Proverbs 14:3

A rod of pride: their proud and insolent speeches, as they are like a rod, offensive and injurious to others, so they make a rod for their own hacks, by provoking God and man against them; which sense seems most probable, both from the opposite clause, and by comparing this place with Pro_10:13 **26:3**. For this phrase,

the rod of pride, it may be compared with other like phrases, as *the foot of pride*, Psa_36:11, *the scourge of the tongue*, Job_5:21, and *the rod of the mouth*, Isa_11:4.

Shall preserve them, from that rod.

Proverbs 14:4

The crib is clean; the barn or stable is empty of food for cattle, and much more for man, whose food is more scarce and dear. In the same sense *cleanness of teeth* is put for famine, Amo_4:6.

By the strength of the ox; by their labours, or by diligence in husbandry, which then was principally managed by oxen.

Proverbs 14:5

Will not lie, to wit, in common discourse and conversation, whereby he showeth his love to truth, and giveth assurance that when he is called to be a witness, he will be true and faithful.

But a false witness will utter lies; or, as the words lie in the Hebrew, *and* or *but* he that

will utter lies (that accustometh himself to lying) is or will be a false witness, when occasion requires it. Having debauched his conscience by daily lying, he is thereby prepared and disposed to false witness-bearing. Compare Pro_12:17.

Proverbs 14:6

A scorner; a proud, self-conceited, and profane person.

Findeth it not, because he doth not seek it aright, to wit, sincerely, and earnestly, and seasonably, and in a constant and diligent use of all the means which God hath appointed to that end, and with an honest intention of employing his knowledge to the service of God, and the furtherance of his practice of religion.

Knowledge is easy unto him, is plain and easily attained by him,

that understandeth; that knoweth and is deeply sensible of his own want of knowledge, and of the great worth and necessity of knowledge, which will make him use all possible means to it, and, among other ways, pray earnestly to God for it. Or, that is honest and pious; for words of knowledge are oft understood practically, especially in this book.

Proverbs 14:7

Avoid the company and conversation of ungodly men, when they break forth into foolish or wicked discourses, lest thou either be infected by them, or seem to approve of them.

Proverbs 14:8

The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way; it consists not in vain speculations, nor in a curious prying into other men's matters, nor in cunning arts of deceiving others; but in a diligent study of his own duty, and of the way to true and eternal happiness.

The folly of fools is deceit; the wit of ungodly men, which, though they account their wisdom, is really their folly, is employed only in finding out ways of overreaching and deceiving others, and themselves too.

Proverbs 14:9

Fools, wicked men, as appears from their opposition to the righteous in the next clause,

make a mock at sin; please and support themselves with their own and other men's sins, which is a high offence and provocation to God and men. Or, as others render it, *excuse or cover sin* ; sin against God or men, and then justify or extenuate their sins, which is to double the injury. Possibly this clause may be thus rendered, *Sin deludes or makes a mock of fools* , or sinners, i.e. exposeth them to shame and contempt, which is fitly opposed to *favour* in the next clause. And thus two ancient and learned interpreters, Aquila and Theodotion, render it. And this suits exactly with the Hebrew words, whereas in the other translation the noun and verb governed by it are of diverse numbers, which, though sometimes it be allowed, yet is not to be supposed without necessity. But this I submit to the learned and judicious.

Among the righteous, who are so far from making a mock of sin, or excusing it, that they do not allow themselves to commit it,

there is favour; they find favour both with God and men, as this very word thus generally expressed is used, Pro_11:27, because they make conscience of ordering their lives so that they offend neither God nor men; or if they offend either, they heartily repent of it; so far are they from excusing it, or pleasing themselves with it. Or, there is *good will* , as the word properly and usually is taken; they have a real love, and are ready to do all offices of

kindness one to another, and therefore neither sin against others, nor rejoice in the sins of others.

Proverbs 14:10

The sense of the verse is this, The inward griefs and joys of men's hearts, though sometimes they may be guessed at by outward signs, yet are not certainly known to any but a man's self. Compare 1Co_2:11. The scope of the parable may be to keep men from murmuring under their own troubles, or envying other men's happiness.

A stranger, any other person without or besides a man's self, doth not intermeddle with his joy; doth not partake of it, nor understand it.

Proverbs 14:11

The house; their dwelling and family.

The tabernacle; which is a weak, and poor, and unstable thing, soon reared up, and soon taken down, and is here opposed to the large, and strong, and magnificent house of wicked men.

Proverbs 14:12

There are some evil actions or courses which men may think to be lawful and good, either through gross and affected ignorance, or through partiality or self-flattery, or through want of necessary diligence in examining them by the rule of God's will or word; all which are culpable causes of the mistake, and therefore do not excuse the error: but the event showeth that they were sinful and destructive.

Proverbs 14:13

The outward signs of joy are commonly mixed with or end in real and hearty sorrow. The design of the proverb is to declare the vanity of all worldly joys and comforts, and to teach men moderation in them, and to persuade us to seek for more solid and durable joys.

Proverbs 14:14

The backslider in heart; he who departeth from God and from the way of his precepts with all his heart, which implies the doing it upon deliberation, with free choice, and full purpose, and customary practice, as ungodly men commonly do, and is opposed

to the slips of human frailty; for otherwise every sin is a revolt from God.

With his own ways; with the fruit of his ways or doings, the punishment of his sins.

From himself, i.e. from his ways, as appears by the opposition; from the pious temper of his own heart, which cleaveth to the Lord, when the hearts of sinners forsake him; and from the holy and righteous course of his life, from which he shall receive unspeakable comfort and satisfaction both here and hereafter to all eternity.

Proverbs 14:15

The simple, either the harmless man, or rather a foolish man, because he is opposed to the prudent, *believeth every word* ; is easily deceived with the smooth words and fair pretences of false and deceitful men.

To his going; either,

1. To his own going, as this is generally understood; he ordereth his conversation and dealings in the world with due circumspection, not considering so much what other men say as what he ought to do. Or,

2. To the going of the deceiver, whose the word in the former clause is supposed to be. So the sense is, He judgeth of men's words and professions by their conversation; which is a good rule,

Proverbs 14:16

Feareth; trembleth at God's judgments, when they are either inflicted or threatened.

From evil; from sin, which is the procuring cause of all calamities.

Rageth; fretteth against God, or is enraged against his messengers who bring the threatening, or disquieteth himself in vain or, *transgresseth* , as this verb in its simple form and first conjugation commonly signifies; or, *goeth on in sin constantly* and resolutely, according to the emphasis which this conjugation commonly adds to the simple verb. And this is most fitly opposed to

departing from evil; as being

confident is opposed to *fearing* . Is *confident* ; secure and insensible of his danger till God's judgments overtake him.

Proverbs 14:17

Dealeth foolishly; his passion hurries him into many rash and foolish speeches and actions.

A man of wicked devices, one who suppresseth his passion, but designeth and meditateth revenge, watching for the fittest methods and opportunities of executing it,

is hated, both by God and men, as being most deeply malicious, and like the devil, and most dangerous and pernicious to human society; whereas men that are soon angry give a man warning, and are quickly pacified, and therefore pitied and pardoned.

Proverbs 14:18

Inherit folly; they possess it as their inheritance or portion, holding it fast, improving it, delighting and glorying in it. In like manner David took God's

testimonies for his heritage, Psa_119:111, where the word is the same; withal he may imply that folly is natural and hereditary to them.

Are crowned with knowledge; they place their honour and happiness in a sound, and practical, and saving knowledge of God, and of their own duty, and therefore earnestly pursue after it, and heartily embrace it.

Proverbs 14:19

Bow before the good; giving honour to them, and supplicating their favour and help, either for supply of their wants, as being brought low for their sins, or for counsel or comfort, or for their prayers to God for them.

At the gates; as clients, and petitioners, and beggars use to wait at the doors and houses of great and potent men. The sense is, Good men shall have the pre-eminency over the wicked, oftentimes in this life, when God sees it expedient, but assuredly in the next life.

Proverbs 14:20

Is hated, i.e. despised and abandoned, as hateful persons and things are.

His own neighbour; strictly so called, who is nearest to him, either by habitation or by relation, and therefore most obliged to love and help him.

Proverbs 14:21

That despiseth his neighbour; that doth not pity and relieve the poor, as this is explained in the next clause; the word *neighbour* being here generally taken for any man, as it is most commonly used in Scripture; which not relieving him proceeds from a contempt of his person.

Sinneth; and therefore shall be punished for his inhumanity, which is opposed to his being happy in the next clause.

That hath mercy; that showeth his compassion by his bounty and relief.

Happy is he; he doth a worthy action, and shall be blessed in his deed.

Proverbs 14:22

Do they not err? they do certainly err from the right way, and mistake their mark, and shall miss of that advantage and felicity which they promise to themselves by such practices.

That devise; that do not only commit it, but make it their design, and study, and business; that are artists or masters in it, as the word signifies.

Evil; either,

1. Mischief to men. Or,

2. Any kind of wickedness against God or men; for the expression is general; and this seems best to agree to the following clause.

Mercy and truth; either,

1. From men; men shall deal truly and kindly with them, partly because such men by their carriage obliged them to do so, and partly because God inclineth their hearts to it. Or,

2. From God, to whom these two properties are jointly ascribed in divers places of Scripture.

That devise good; that designedly and industriously apply themselves to the doing of all good offices to God and men.

Proverbs 14:23

Diligent labour is the ready way to riches, but idle talking, wherein too many spend most of their precious time, will bring a man to poverty.

Proverbs 14:24

The crown of the wise is their riches; they are a singular advantage and ornament to them, partly as they make their wisdom more regarded, when the poor man's wisdom is despised, Ecc_9:16; and partly as they give a man great opportunity to discover and exercise his wisdom or virtue by laying out his riches to the honour and service of God, and to the great and manifold good of the world; which also highly tends to his own glory and happiness.

But the foolishness of fools is folly; but as for rich fools, for to them the general word is to be restrained from the opposite clause, their folly is not cured, but made worse and more manifest by their riches. Their riches find them fools, and leave them fools; they are not a crown, but a reproach to them, and an occasion of their greater contempt. For the phrase, we have the like in the Hebrew text, 1Sa_1:21. *The child Samuel was a child* . It is an elegant figure called *antanaclasis* , used in all authors.

Proverbs 14:25

Delivereth souls, i.e. persons, to wit, such as are innocent, from the mischief of false accusations, by declaring the truth, which is sufficient for their vindication. *Speaketh lies* , to the injury and destruction of the innocent; which is easily understood out of the former clause, and from the practice of false witnesses.

Proverbs 14:26

Strong confidence; a sure ground of confidence; or a strong refuge, as the next clause explains it.

His children; either,

1. God's children. Or,
2. The children of them that fear God, who are sufficiently understood out of the former clause.

Proverbs 14:27

To preserve men from deadly and destructive courses.

Proverbs 14:28

Is the king's honour, because it is an evidence of his wise and good government. Under *honour* he here comprehends also strength and safety, (as appears from the opposite clause,) which depend much upon a prince's reputation. And *honour* may be here put for strength, as strength is put for honour or glory, Psa_8:29:1 96:7.

Proverbs 14:29

Is of great understanding; showeth great and true wisdom in conquering his sinful and shameful passions.

Exalteth, Heb. *lifteth up* , like a banner; makes it known and visible to all men.

Proverbs 14:30

A sound heart; free from envy and such-like inordinate passions, which are commonly called the diseases of the soul, not only in sacred, but even in heathen writers. Or, as others render it, *a healing heart* ; mild, and merciful, and kind to others, which is opposed to envy.

Is the life of the flesh; procureth and maintaineth the health and rigour of the whole body. But envy the rottenness of the bones; it wasteth the spirits, and consumeth even the strongest and most inward parts of the body.

Proverbs 14:31

He that oppresseth the poor; that useth him hardly, as the Syriac renders it; that withholdeth from him that which is his due, either by the rules of strict justice, or by the great law of charity, of which see Pro_3:27, and so it is opposed to having mercy in the next clause.

Reproacheth his Maker; whose image the poor man bears, which might challenge respect, Job_31:15; by whose counsel and providence he is made poor, 1Sa_2:7 Pro_22:2, and who hath declared himself to be their protector and avenger.

He that honoureth him, his image, and works, and laws,

hath mercy on the poor; doth not only forbear oppressing or injuring of him, but affords him his pity and help.

Proverbs 14:32

Driven away, to wit, in his death, as is gathered from the opposite clause; driven away from God's favour and presence, and from the society of the just, and from all his hopes of happiness, both in this life and in the next. This expression notes that this is done suddenly, violently, and irresistibly, as the smoke or chaff are driven away by a strong wind.

In his wickedness, or, for his wickedness, Heb. *in his evil*, which may be understood of the evil of punishment; in the day of his calamity, when he shall flee to God for help.

Hath hope of deliverance from it, or of great and everlasting advantage by it.

In his death; in his greatest dangers and distresses, yea, even in death itself, which therefore he can receive with comfort and confidence.

Proverbs 14:33

Resteth; is laid up and hid there, and not vainly nor rashly uttered by him, but only upon necessary or fit occasions.

In the midst, i.e. in the heart, which is expressed by this very word, Psa_64:6, and elsewhere. That folly which is there instead of wisdom; or, that small degree of wisdom or knowledge which they have.

Is made known; they will publish it in all times and companies, without any consideration or discretion.

Proverbs 14:34

Exalteth a nation; maketh it honourable in the eyes of God, and of all other nations, as it did the ancient Romans.

A reproach to any people; brings contempt and ruin upon them by provoking both God and men against them.

Proverbs 14:35

Both to himself, by his foolish management of the king's affairs committed to him; and to the king, who made so foolish a choice of a servant.

Proverbs 15:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 15

A soft, mild or gentle, answer, which may imply a foregoing charge or accusation, although the word is and may be rendered *speech or discourse*, turneth away wrath from the speaker.

Grievous words, fierce and vexatious replies or speeches, stir up anger; kindle it, and cause it to flame forth.

Proverbs 15:2

Useth knowledge aright; expressing what he knows prudently and gracefully; taking due care both what, and when, and to whom, and in what manner he speaks.

Poureth out, plentifully, continually, promiscuously, and vehemently, as a fountain doth waters, as this word signifies.

Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the Lord; his knowledge and providence.

The evil; who are first mentioned, because they either doubt of or deny God's providence.

Proverbs 15:4

A wholesome tongue, which uttereth sound, and comfortable, and useful counsels, is a tree of life; is greatly useful to preserve the present life, and to promote the spiritual and eternal life, both of the speaker and hearers.

Perverseness therein, all sorts of false or corrupt speeches,

is a breach in the spirit; disturbs and wounds, and oftentimes corrupts and destroys, the spirits or souls, both of the speaker and hearers.

Proverbs 15:5

A fool despiseth, doth not regard nor obey, which is an evidence of contempt,

his father's instruction; who hath both love to him, and authority over him; which greatly aggravates his folly.

Reproof; the reproof of any person whatsoever, and much more of a father.

Proverbs 15:6

House, or *family* ; whereby he implies that it is not only enjoyed by him, but also left to his posterity.

In the revenues of the wicked is trouble: though he may obtain great revenues, yet they are attended with much trouble and vexation; either because they are strangely blasted and taken from them, or because they are imbittered to them by their own insatiable desires, or tormenting cares and fears, or the horrors of their guilty consciences, or by divers other ways.

Proverbs 15:7

Disperse knowledge; freely communicate to others what they know, as they have opportunity.

Doeth not so; either because he hath no knowledge to disperse, or because he hath not a heart to perform his duty, or to do good to others. Or, as others render it, and as the last Hebrew word is rendered, Gen_42:34, and elsewhere, is *not right* ; or the place may be rendered, *the heart of the foolish* (understand out of the former clause, as is very usual, *disperseth by his lips*) that which is not right; foolish and corrupt discourse, which is fitly opposed to knowledge.

Proverbs 15:8

The sacrifice; all the religious services, yea, the best and most costly of them; one kind being put for all the rest.

The prayer; the cheapest and meanest services.

Proverbs 15:9

The way; the conversation or course of life. This verse seems to contain a reason of the foregoing. God hates wicked men's religious performances, because they are accompanied with ungodly lives, and they pull down with one hand what they build up with another.

That followeth after righteousness; that earnestly desires, and constantly and diligently endeavours, to be holy and righteous in the course of his life, although he doth not attain to that perfect righteousness which he thirsts after.

Proverbs 15:10

Correction is grievous; he hateth reproof, because it is a reproach to him, and because it strikes at that sin which he loveth.

The way; God's way, emphatically called the way here, as also Psa_119:1 **139:24** Pro_2:13.

Shall die, i.e. be destroyed, both here and, for ever; which is a more grievous thing than a harsh reproof.

Proverbs 15:11

Destruction; put for the place of destruction, by a usual metonymy; the place and state of the damned, of which men know nothing but by Divine revelation.

The hearts; whose thoughts and affections, though they lie deep, discover themselves by outward signs and actions.

Proverbs 15:12

Loveth not, i.e. hateth and avoideth it; for more is here understood than is expressed, as it is Pro_11:21 **12:3**, and elsewhere.

Neither will he go unto, seek their company and conversation, as his duty and interest obligeth him, the wise, i.e. the godly, because he knows they who are so indeed will make conscience of reproving him.

Proverbs 15:13

The spirit; either,

1. His vital spirits. Or rather,
2. His courage and rigour, the decay whereof showeth itself in his countenance, as is implied from the former clause.

Proverbs 15:14

Their hearts are set upon wickedness, which is meat and drink to them.

Proverbs 15:15

Of the afflicted; of the troubled in mind or heart, as this general expression may very fitly be restrained from the following clause.

Are evil; tedious and uncomfortable; he takes no content in any time or thing.

Of a merry heart, Heb. *of a good heart* , i.e. composed, and quiet, and contented.

Hath a continual feast; hath constant satisfaction and delight in all conditions, yea, even in affliction.

Proverbs 15:16

The fear of the Lord, which gives a man tranquillity and comfort in what he hath.

Trouble; tumultuous lusts and passions, vexatious cares and fears, horrors of conscience, and expectation of God's curse and judgment, which riches gotten without God's fear do commonly produce.

Proverbs 15:17

Love; true friendship and kindness between those that eat together.

Proverbs 15:18

Stirreth up strife, because he is very apt both to give and to take all occasions of contention.

Proverbs 15:19

The way of the slothful man, the way in which he doth or ought to walk, any good work which he pretends or desires to undertake,

is as an hedge of thorns; as a way hedged up with thorns, as it is expressed, Hos_2:6, troublesome and perplexed, and full, of such difficulties as he despaireth, and therefore never striveth, to overcome.

The way of the righteous, who is always diligent in his calling, which is one branch of righteousness, and therefore is fitly opposed to *the slothful* , who is joined with the wicked, Mat_25:26, and censured as such both in Scripture and heathen authors, because idleness is both in itself a sin, and it leads the way to many other wickednesses.

Is made plain; is easy and pleasant to him, notwithstanding all his discouragements and difficulties.

Proverbs 15:20

Maketh a glad father, by giving him that honour and obedience which he oweth to him.

Despiseth his mother; whereby he maketh her sad. See Poole "Pro_10:1", where we have the same proverb.

Proverbs 15:21

Is joy; he doth not only work wickedness, but taketh pleasure in it.

Walketh uprightly, Heb. *directeth* or *maketh straight his going*, i.e. ordereth all his actions by the rule of God's word, and delighteth in so doing, which is understood from the opposite clause.

Proverbs 15:22

Without counsel, when men do not seek or will not receive advice from others in weighty affairs,

purposes are disappointed; their designs are ill managed, and succeed accordingly.

In the multitude of counsellors, i.e. of wise and good counsellors, for such only deserve that name,

they are established, i.e. accomplished and brought to a good issue.

Proverbs 15:23

By the answer, i.e. by a wise or good and seasonable answer or advice, as is manifest, both from the opposite clause, and from the nature of the thing, because it is manifest and undeniable, that a foolish answer can be no credit nor comfort to the answerer. Thus above, Pro_15:10, the way is put for God's way; and such synecdoches are frequent in Scripture.

A word spoken in due season, counsel or comfort given to another in fit time and manner,

how good is it! it is highly acceptable and useful.

Proverbs 15:24

The way of life is above to the wise; the way or course which a wise man taketh to preserve and obtain life, is to place his heart, and treasure, and conversation in things above, and to manage all his affairs in this world with due respect and subserviency to the happiness of a better life.

From hell beneath; or, *from the lowermost hell* ; not *from the grave* , as this word is elsewhere used, for no wisdom can prevent that; but from hell properly so called, as this word is elsewhere used, as hath been formerly observed.

Proverbs 15:25

Of the proud; of the most mighty oppressors, who conceit themselves to be unmovably fixed.

The border; either,

1. The estate, *the border* being oft used for the land within the borders, as Psa_105:31,**33**, and elsewhere. Or,

2. The border by which lands were then bounded and distinguished, which those proud persons endeavoured to remove contrary to God's law, Deu_19:14 **27:17**.

Proverbs 15:26

The thoughts of the wicked; and much more their words, which express their thoughts; for *thoughts are* said to be free, and wicked men are seldom and but little concerned for the sins of their thoughts.

The words of the pure, which discover and proceed from their thoughts, Mat_15:19.

Pleasant; acceptable to God, which is opposed to abomination to him.

Proverbs 15:27

He that is greedy of gain, that seeketh wealth by unjust courses, as appears from the opposite clause,

troubleth his own house; bringeth God's curse and destruction upon himself and his family, whom he designed to enrich and establish.

That hateth; who refuseth them not with dissimulation, nor only from prudential reasons, but from a hearty abhorrency of all unrighteousness. *Gifts* , i.e. bribes given to corrupt judgment. See Exo_18:21 **23:8** Deu_16:19.

Shall live; shall preserve himself and (which is understood out of the former clause) his family from ruin.

Proverbs 15:28

Studieth to answer; he answers or speaks considerately and conscientiously, and therefore profitably, or to the use and edification of the hearers.

The mouth, not the heart; for he is without heart in Scripture account, and he rashly speaks what comes into his mouth, without the direction of his heart or conscience.

Evil things; foolish, and unprofitable, and hurtful speeches.

Proverbs 15:29

Is far from the wicked, to wit, when they pray to him, as the next clause explains, and therefore doth not hear nor regard them, as he is said to be

nigh to the righteous, Psa_34:18 **145:18.** But this farness or nearness respecteth not God's essence, which is every where, but his gracious and helpful presence.

Proverbs 15:30

The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart; the light which we see with our eyes, and by the help of which we see many other pleasant objects, is a great comfort and refreshment. Compare Ecc_11:7, *Truly the light is sweet*, and a *pleasant* thing it is *for the eyes to behold the sun*; which is a good comment upon this place.

A good report; either,

1. Glad tidings. Or rather,
2. A good name, which is a more lasting thing, and makes deeper impression.

Maketh the bones fat; not only cheereth a man for the present, but gives him such solid and stable comfort as doth both revive his soul, and give health and rigour to his body. So he compares two senses together, seeing and hearing, with respect to their several objects, and prefers the latter before the former.

Proverbs 15:31

The ear that heareth; the man that hearkeneth to it, and delights in it.

The reproof of life; that reproof and good counsel which leads to life.

Abideth among the wise, Heb. *shall* or *will abide* , & c. Either,

1. He will thereby be made wise, and be esteemed one of that number. Or rather,

2. He seeketh and delighteth in the company and conversation of the wise, by whom he may be admonished; as, on the contrary, fools, who hate reproof, do avoid and abhor the society of wise men and reprovers, Amo_5:10.

Proverbs 15:32

Despiseth his own soul; which hereby he exposeth to the danger of utter destruction, whereby he shows his folly.

Getteth understanding; whereby he saveth his soul. Heb. *possesseth an heart* , which the Hebrews make the seat of wisdom.

Proverbs 15:33

Is the instruction of wisdom; doth instruct men in or lead them to true wisdom; whence it is said to be the beginning of wisdom, Pro_1:7 **9:10**.

Before honour is humility, i. e. it is the ready way to honour, both from God and from men. *Humility* ; whereby men submit to God, and yield to men, which gains them love and respect; whereas pride procures them hatred and contempt from God and men.

Proverbs 16:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 16

Men can neither think nor speak wisely and well of themselves, or without Divine assistance. Or, as many others, both ancient and modern interpreters, render the verse,

The preparations, or *dispositions, or orderings of the heart are in or from a man* ; (i.e. a man may consider and contrive in his own thoughts what he wills or designs to speak; which is spoken by way of concession, yet not excluding man's dependence upon God therein, which is evident both from many plain texts of Scripture, and from undeniable reason;) but the

answer or *speech* (as this word is oft used)

of the tongue is from the Lord. Men cannot express their own thoughts without God's leave and help, and their tongues are oft overruled by God to speak what was besides and above their own thoughts, as he did Balaam, **Num 23**, and Caiaphas, Joh_11:49-51.

Proverbs 16:2

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; many men can easily flatter and deceive themselves into a good opinion of themselves, and of their own actions, though they be sinful. See below, Pro_16:25, and compare 1Co_4:4.

The Lord weigheth, i.e. exactly knoweth, as men do the things which they weigh and examine, the spirits; the hearts of men, from which both men's actions, and the goodness and badness of them, in a great measure, proceed; their ends and intentions, their dispositions and affections, which are hid not only from others, but oftentimes from a man's self; whereby he is unfit to judge in his own cause, and easily mistaken, if he do not use great diligence and fidelity. In this last clause he intimates the reason why men deceive themselves in judging of their state and actions, because they do not search their own hearts.

Proverbs 16:3

Commit thy works unto the Lord, Heb. *Roll* , &c., as a man rolls a burden to another, which is too heavy for himself, imploring his help. Refer all thy actions and concerns to God, and to his glory, as the end of them, and in the discharge of thy own duty depend upon God's providence for assistance and success.

Thy thoughts shall be established; thy honest desires and designs shall be brought to a happy issue one way or other.

Proverbs 16:4

Hath made; or, *hath wrought* or *doth work* ; for the Hebrews express the present as well as the past thee by this tense: he ordereth or disposeth; for this may be understood either of the works of creation or of providence.

All things, and especially all men, for himself; for his own service and glory; for the discovery and illustration of his own wisdom,

power, goodness, truth, justice, and his other most glorious perfections.

The wicked, wilful and impenitent sinners,

for the day of evil; for the thee of punishment, as this phrase is used, Psa_49:5 Jer_17:18, and elsewhere; of which the Scripture frequently speaks, both to warn sinners of their danger, and to satisfy the minds of them which are amazed and disquieted with the consideration of the present impunity and felicity of wicked men. Men make themselves wicked, and God therefore makes them miserable.

Proverbs 16:5

That is proud in heart, though he dissemble it in his outward carriage and countenance, as Psa_10:4. In whose heart pride rules.

Though hand join in hand; though they have many friends and assistants. See the same phrase Pro_11:21.

Proverbs 16:6

By mercy and truth; either,

1. By God's mercy or grace, and by his truth in performing his promises made to sinners in Christ. Or,

2. By men's mercy and truth, as those very words are jointly used, Pro_3:3 **20:28**, and elsewhere; and as, in the following clause, the fear of the Lord is a grace or disposition in men; by a merciful, and just, and faithful frame of heart and course of life; which are here opposed to sacrifices, as mercy is, Hos_6:6, by which the hypocritical Jews expected to obtain the expiation of their sins.

Iniquity is purged, not meritoriously, but instrumentally, as they qualify a man to offer up acceptable prayers to God for the pardon of his sins, and to receive and apply to himself that pardon which Christ by his blood hath purchased for all sincere believers, who are filled with mercy, and truth, and other graces.

By the fear of the Lord; by a filial reverence or respect unto God, and by a holy fear of offending God, and by a dread of God's judgments;

men depart from evil; they are kept from abusing pardoning mercy, and from returning to folly or wickedness. So he showeth

that justification and sanctification are constant and inseparable companions.

Proverbs 16:7

By disposing their hearts to kindness towards him.

Proverbs 16:8

This was in effect said before, Pro_15:16, and is here repeated, partly because of the great importance and usefulness of this truth, and partly because men are very hardly brought to a serious belief of it.

Proverbs 16:9

Deviseth his way; considers and proposeth to himself what he will do.

Directeth his steps; overruleth and disposeth all their designs and actions as he pleaseth, and not as they list.

Proverbs 16:10

A divine sentence, Heb. *divination* , which is sometimes taken in a good sense for prudence, as it is Isa_3:2. A great sagacity and piercing judgment to discern dubious and difficult cases.

Is; or, *should be* ; for the verb is wanting in the Hebrew, and this may be supplied as well as *is* . And he seems not so much to speak of the matter of fact, as if it were thus in all kings, which is notoriously and confessedly untrue, as of the duty of kings, in whom wisdom is a necessary qualification. For thus the two following proverbs concerning kings, Pro_16:12,13, must be understood, otherwise they are repugnant to common experience.

Of the king; either,

1. Of wise kings, who only are worthy of that name and office; *king* being here put for a *wise king* , as a *name* is put for a good name, and a woman for a good woman, Ecc_7:28; and then this is true in fact, as it was in David. 2Sa_14:17, and in Solomon, 1Ki_3:28. Or,

2. Of kings in general, in the sense before given; for seeing the word is generally expressed without any limitation, both here and Pro_16:12,13, it may seem presumption to confine it to those few kings which are or were wise and good.

Transgresseth not; or, *shall or should not transgress* , or go beyond the bounds of religion and justice.

Proverbs 16:11

Are the Lord's; are God's work, as it follows; made by his direction and appointment, so as no man can corrupt or alter them without violating God's rights and authority, and incurring his displeasure.

The weights, Heb. *the stones* , which they then used as weights. See Poole "Pro_11:1".

Proverbs 16:12

It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness; they should not only abstain from all wicked practices, but abhor them both in their own persons, and in all their servants and subjects. It is too plain that he speaks not of the common practice, but of the duty of kings, as on Pro_16:10. And such affirmative expressions are oft used in Scripture to express men's duty only, as 1Co_6:19, *your body is* (i.e. should be) *the temple* , &c.; and 1Co_7:32, *careth* , &c. i.e. ought to care.

The throne is established by righteousness; and (which is implied) weakened, and sometimes overthrown by unrighteousness; and therefore this is necessary for their own security and happiness.

Proverbs 16:13

All wise and good kings do, and all kings should, delight in employing such counsellors, judges, and officers under them, as are just and faithful in their counsels, and sentences, and actions, because such bring great honour and advantage to them.

Proverbs 16:14

Is as messengers of death; is as terrible as if many messengers were sent to denounce the sentence of death, and to execute it.

Will pacify it; will use all prudent and lawful means to pacify it.

Proverbs 16:15

In the light of the king's countenance is life; his favour and smiling countenance is most sweet and refreshing, especially to him that was under a sentence of death, Pro_16:14.

His favour is as a cloud of the latter rain; as acceptable as those clouds which bring the latter rain, whereby the fruits are filled and ripened a little before the harvest; of which see Deu_11:14 Job_29:23 Jam_5:7.

Proverbs 16:16

How much better! it is inexpressibly and unconceivably better, as this phrase implies, Psa_31:19 **36:7 92:5**, &c.

Is it to get wisdom than gold, because it brings a man more certain, and complete, and lasting comfort and advantage.

Proverbs 16:17

The highway of the upright, their common road, in which they constantly purpose, and desire, and customarily use to walk, although sometimes through frailty or temptation they slip into the by-paths of sin, is to depart from evil; from the evil of sin, and consequently from the evil of punishment.

He that keepeth his way, that takes heed to walk in that highway, preserveth his soul from that mischief which befalls those that walk in the crooked paths of wickedness.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goeth before destruction; it is commonly a forerunner and cause of men's ruin, because it highly provokes both God and men.

Proverbs 16:19

Who will spoil and rob others to maintain their own pomp and luxury.

Proverbs 16:20

He that handleth a matter wisely; he who orders his affairs with discretion. Or, as others, both ancient and later interpreters, take it, *he that understandeth or attendeth to the word* , to wit, the word of God, which is called absolutely *the word* , Pro_13:13, and elsewhere, making that the rule of his actions.

Shall find good; shall obtain happy success.

Who so trusteth in the Lord; who doth not trust to his prudence or diligence, but to God's providence and blessings. Or, who mixeth God's word with faith, as the phrase is, Heb_4:2.

Happy is he; he shall not only find some good, but shall certainly attain to true happiness.

Proverbs 16:21

The wise in heart shall be called prudent: the sense is either,

1. He who hath wisdom or sound knowledge in his heart, will show it by his prudence in ordering his actions. Or rather,
2. He who is truly wise, or prudent, or intelligent (all which words most commonly signify one and the same thing, both in this and in other books of Scripture) shall be so called or accounted by others.

The sweetness of the lips; eloquence added to wisdom; the faculty of expressing a man's mind fitly, and freely, and acceptably.

Increaseth learning; both in himself, for whilst a man teacheth others he improveth himself; and especially in others, who by this means are induced to hear and receive his good instructions. Wisdom gets a man repute with others, but this faculty of right speaking makes a wise man more instrumental to do good to others.

Proverbs 16:22

Is a well-spring of life, is continually suggesting wholesome and saving instructions,

unto him that hath it; and to others also, as is understood from the following clause. The instruction of fools is folly; their most grave and serious counsels are foolish.

Proverbs 16:23

Teacheth his mouth; directeth him what, and when, and how to speak, and keepeth him from speaking rashly and foolishly.

Addeth learning to his lips, i.e. enableth him to speak learnedly and wisely. Or, *increaseth learning* (in himself and others) by (as this Hebrew particle oft signifies, and is by some rendered here) *his lips*, i.e. by his wise speeches; that this may agree with the latter clause of Pro_16:21, where this same phrase is used.

Proverbs 16:24

Pleasant words; the discourses of the wise last mentioned, Pro_16:23, which yield both profit and delight; their wholesome counsels and refreshing comforts.

To the bones; to the body, synecdochically expressed by the bones, the strongest and greatest parts of it, and the supporters of the rest.

Proverbs 16:25

This whole verse was delivered before, Pro_14:12, and is here repeated, partly for its great importance and usefulness to prevent that self-deceit which is so common and dangerous; and partly to keep men from leaning too much to their own understanding, and to oblige them to seek and receive the good counsels of wise and holy men.

Proverbs 16:26

For himself; for his own use and benefit. The scope of the proverb is to commend and press diligence in a man's calling, and to condemn idleness.

Craveth it of him, Heb. *boweth to him* , as a suppliant; beggeth him to labour, that it may have something to put into it for its own comfort, and for the nourishment of the whole body.

Proverbs 16:27

Diggeth up evil; inventeth or designeth mischief to others, and prosecuteth his evil designs with great and constant industry.

In his lips there is as a burning fire; as his thoughts, so also his words are very vexatious and pernicious; his tongue is set on fire of hell, and sets himself and others on fire by lies and slanders, and other provoking speeches.

Proverbs 16:28

A froward man; or, *perverse man* , who perverteth his words and ways; who pleaseth not God, and is contrary to men, as was said of the Jews, 1Th_2:15.

Soweth strife, by whispering such things as may provoke one against another.

A whisperer, who secretly carries tales from one to another, publishing those evil words and actions which they should conceal, and detracting from their good actions, and perverting such as are innocent with their false constructions.

Chief friends, Heb. *a chief friend* ; the singular number put for the plural, as is frequent in the Hebrew text.

Proverbs 16:29

A violent man, Heb. *a man of violence* , i.e. devoted to violent and injurious courses,

enticeth his neighbour into a confederacy with him in his wicked practices, as it follows.

That is not good, i.e. that is very sinful, as this phrase is used, Pro_17:26 **18:5**, and oft elsewhere.

Proverbs 16:30

Shutteth his eyes, that his thoughts may be more free and intent to contrive mischief.

Moving his lips; which is the gesture, either,

1. Of one whose thoughts are deeply engaged. Or,
2. Of one that speaketh or maketh signs to others to assist him in executing that wickedness which he hath contrived.

Proverbs 16:31

A crown of glory; a great honour and ornament, as it is a singular blessing of God, a token of great experience and prudence, as it comes nearest to God, who is called

the Ancient of days, Dan_7:9. *If it be found in the way of righteousness* ; if it be accompanied with true piety, otherwise *an old sinner is accursed* , Isa_65:20. Heb. *it shall be found* , &c. This is a privilege promised to righteous persons, Exo_20:12 Pro_3:16 **4:22**; whereas ungodly men *shall not live out half their days* , Psa_55:23.

Proverbs 16:32

He that is slow to anger, not apt to revenge, but ready to forgive injuries,

is better than the mighty, because he is more like to God, more wise to foresee and to prevent mischief, both to himself and others, which oft cometh from rash anger, of a more gallant and generous spirit, and more valiant and victorious, as it follows. This is opposed to the perverse judgment of the world, who esteem such persons pusillanimous and cowardly.

That ruleth his spirit; that subdueth his passions; for his victory is the more glorious, because he fights with the stronger enemy; he conquers by his own, and not by other men's hands, and he gets a greater glory and advantage to himself, and that without the injury and ruin of others, wherewith the conquests of cities are commonly attended.

Proverbs 16:33

The lot is cast into the lap; as the ancient practice was in dividing inheritances, and deciding doubtful things, of which see Num_26:55 Jos_7:16 1Sa_10:20,21 **14:41,42 Pr 1:14** Act_1:26.

The whole disposing thereof is of the Lord; the event, though casual to men, is directed and determined by God's counsel and providence.

Proverbs 17:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 17

Of sacrifices ; of the remainders of sacrifices, of which they used to make feasts; of which **See Poole "Pro_7:14"**. Or, *of slain* beasts, as that word is used, Gen_31:54, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 17:2

Shall have rule over a son that causeth shame; either as being by his father appointed tutor or guardian to his son; or being by his wisdom advanced to that estate and dignity which the other possibly hath lost by his folly.

Shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren; partly as a just recompence for his faithful service, as Gen_15:2,3, &c., and partly as an obligation to him to take care of his children.

Proverbs 17:3

The hearts of men cannot be searched and known by any human art, but by God only.

Proverbs 17:4

A wicked doer, or, a malicious or mischievous man, whose practice and delight it is to bring trouble to others,

giveth heed to false lips, Heb. *to lips of iniquity*, to any wicked counsels or speeches, to false accusations and calumnies, which give him occasion and encouragement to do mischief.

A liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue; he who accustometh himself to false and wicked speaking delighteth in the like speeches of other men. This proverb contains a comparison between an evil-doer and an evil-speaker, and showeth their agreement in the same sinful practice of being greedy to hear false and wicked speeches.

Proverbs 17:5

Mocketh the poor; derideth or reproacheth him with or for his poverty.

His Maker; God, who by his providence made him poor. See the same assertion Pro_14:31.

At calamities; at the miseries of other men.

Proverbs 17:6

The crown of old men; their honour and happiness, because they are in themselves blessings of God, and testimonies of God's favour, although sometimes they may become the shame of their father's house.

Their fathers; namely, such fathers as are wise and godly, as is evident from the nature of the thing, for wicked parents bring infamy upon their children.

Proverbs 17:7

Excellent speech; either,

1. Discourse of high and excellent things far above his capacity.
Or,
2. Lofty or eloquent speech, which fools oft affect, Or,
3. Virtuous and godly discourse.

A fool; either properly so called; or, as this word is most commonly used in this book, a wicked man, whose actions give the lie to his expressions.

Proverbs 17:8

As a precious stone; pleasant and acceptable, and withal dazzleth his eyes.

Of him that hath it, Heb. *of the lord or owner of it* ; either,

1. Of the giver; or rather,
2. Of the receiver of it, who by the giver is made lord of it; for to his eyes it was exposed, that he might discern the beauty and worth of it, and thereby be allured to do what was desired, which accordingly he did, as it here follows.

Whithersoever it turneth; to whomsoever it is presented. But this, as also many other proverbs, are to be understood of the common course or effect with most men, but not universally of all men.

Proverbs 17:9

That covereth a transgression; that concealeth, as far as he may, other men's faults against himself, or against their friends.

Seeketh, i.e. findeth or obtaineth, as this word is used here below, Pro_17:19 **11:27**.

Love; either

1. To himself. Or rather,
2. To the transgressor or offending friend; he maintains love among friends, as it may be explained from the opposite clause.

That repeateth; that publisheth and spreadeth it abroad; that recalls it to mind after it was past and forgotten.

A matter; or, *the matter* last mentioned, to wit, the transgression.

Separateth very friends; either,

1. He alienateth his friend from himself. Or rather,
2. He raiseth jealousies and dissensions among friends. This phrase we had before, Pro_16:28.

Proverbs 17:10

Is more effectual for his reformation.

Proverbs 17:11

An evil man seeketh only rebellion; it is the constant study and business of wicked men to rebel, either,

1. Against men in authority. But this is not universally true, for many most wicked persons are not guilty of that sin. Or rather,

2. Against God. For,

1. Thus it is true of all wicked men.

2. This word is used of rebellion against God, Deu_31:27 Eze_2:5,6 3:9, &c.

3. This word being put alone, without any addition of the object, seems most probably to be meant of the highest and worst kind of rebellion, according to the common rule of interpretation in such cases. *A cruel messenger* ; or, *a cruel angel* ; the angel of death, the devil, or some bloody men employed by God to avenge his quarrel; or some dreadful punishment; it being very usual in Scripture to represent things under the notion of persons, as **Ro 8**, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 17:12

Robbed of her whelps, when she is most cruel and fierce.

In his folly; in the heat of his lust or passion, because the danger is greater, all things considered, and more unavoidable.

Proverbs 17:13

From his person and family, because such a man is most hateful to God and to all mankind; God will punish him, and men will not pity nor relieve him.

Proverbs 17:14

Leteth out water, by cutting the bank of a river, in which case the water quickly widens the breach, and breaks in with irresistible violence and fury, and causeth great mischief and destruction.

Leave off contention, before it be meddled with; avoid the occasions and prevent the beginnings of contention.

Proverbs 17:15

That justifieth; that acquitteth him as innocent by a judicial sentence, or otherwise approveth or commendeth his evil practices; by which we may easily understand what it is to condemn the just.

Proverbs 17:16

Wherefore? the question implies that it is unworthily placed, and that it is to no purpose or benefit of the possessor.

A price; possessions or riches, as all the ancient translators render it, of which this word is used, Isa_55:1, and elsewhere, under which all opportunities and abilities of getting it are comprehended.

To get wisdom; for the obtaining whereof rich men have many and great advantages above others.

No heart to it; neither common discretion to discern the worth of wisdom, and his advantage to get it; nor any sincere desire to get it; for the heart is commonly used in Scripture both for the understanding, and for the will and affections.

Proverbs 17:17

A friend, a sincere and hearty friend, loveth at all times, not only in prosperity, but also in adversity, when false friends forsake us.

A brother, who is so not only by name and blood, but by brotherly affection,

is born for adversity; was sent into the world for this among other ends, that he might comfort and relieve his brother in his adversity. So this proverb compareth a friend with a brother, and showeth that a friend doth that freely, and by choice, which a brother doth by the force and obligations of nature. But this last clause may be, and is by divers, otherwise rendered, and he (to wit, the friend) *is born a brother* (or, *becomes or is made a brother* , i.e. puts on brotherly affection, as if he had received a second birth, and was born his brother; such expressions being not unusual, both in Scripture and in other authors) in or against the time of adversity. So the sense is, He is a friend at all times, but in adversity he is more than all ordinary friend, even a brother.

Proverbs 17:18

Striketh hands, in token of his becoming surety; of which phrase, and of the thing itself, see on Pro_6:1 **11:15**. His friend: the friend here is either,

1. Before and to the creditor. Or rather,

2. Before, and with, and for the debtor, for whom, as being his friend, he becomes surety, as the manner of friends is. See on Pro_6:3. And this proverb is fitly placed after that, Pro_17:17, to intimate, that although the laws of friendship oblige us to love and help our friends in trouble as far as we are able, yet they do not oblige us to become surety for them rashly, and above what we are able to pay, for by that means we make ourselves unable to do good either to them, or to others, or to ourselves.

Proverbs 17:19

He loveth transgression that loveth strife, because contention is in itself a sin, and is commonly accompanied or followed with many sins, as detraction, malice, hatred, pride, &c.

His gate; either,

1. His mouth, i.e. who speaketh loftily; for we read of *the gate* or *doors* of one's mouth in Mic_7:5. and elsewhere; but then the word *mouth* or *tongue* is added to determine the sense: but the mouth is no where called the gate, simply or absolutely. Or,

2. The gate of his house that maketh it, and consequently his house, lofty and magnificent, beyond what befits his quality, which being an evidence and effect of pride and haughtiness of spirit, is here mentioned for all the rest. So the sense is, He who carries himself loftily and scornfully.

Seeketh destruction; he seeks those things which will expose him to destruction, because he maketh himself odious both to God and men. Or, findeth destruction; seeking being put for finding or procuring, as above, Pro_17:9.

Proverbs 17:20

He that hath a froward heart, whose heart is not plain and upright, but false towards God or men,

findeth no good; shall not get that advantage by his dissimulation which he intends and expects, but shall fall into mischief, as is implied from the opposite clause.

He that hath a perverse tongue; that speaks deceitfully or wickedly. So here is a comparison between an evil heart and an evil tongue, and, the ill effects of both of them.

Proverbs 17:21

A fool; not a natural, but a wilful fool, or a wicked son.

The father; and consequently the mother also.

Hath no joy, which parents usually have in the birth of a child, and especially of a son; but hath great cause of sorrow, the contrary being implied in this and such-like expressions, as in Scripture, as Pro_10:2, &c., so also in profane authors; whose words see in my Latin Synopsis.

Proverbs 17:22

A merry heart; cheerfulness of soul, especially that which is solid, and ariseth from the witness of a good conscience.

Doeth good, even to the body; it contributes very much to the restoration or preservation of bodily health and rigour, as physicians observe, and experience showeth.

Broken; sad and dejected.

Drieth the bones; wasteth the marrow of the bones, and the moisture and strength of the body.

Proverbs 17:23

A wicked man, whether judge or witness.

Out of the bosom; in secret, as this phrase is expounded, Pro_21:14, being privily conveyed from the bosom of the giver into his own bosom.

To pervert the ways of judgment; to give or procure an unjust sentence.

Proverbs 17:24

Before him; or, *in* (as the particle *beth* is used, Deu_2:7, and is here rendered by divers interpreters) the face or countenance. The sense is either,

1. His wisdom appears even in his gestures and looks, which are modest, and composed, and grave. Or,

2. Wisdom is before him, or in his sight, as the mark at which he aims, or as the rule by which he constantly walketh and ordereth all his steps, from time to time minding his present duty and business. The steps of a fool are in the ends of the earth: the sense of this clause also is either,

1. His folly appears in his light, and unsteady, and disorderly carriage and looks. Or,

2. His mind is wavering and unsettled; he neither proposeth a right and certain end to himself, nor is he constant in the use of fit means to attain it; he neglects his present business and true interest, and wanders hither and thither in the pursuit of earthly vanities, minding most those things which are remotest from him, and least concern him.

Proverbs 17:25

This he said before, Pro_15:20, and elsewhere; but he here repeats it as a point of great moment and constant use, and as a powerful motive to oblige both children to carry themselves wisely and dutifully to their parents, as they would not be thought to be unnatural or inhuman, and parents to educate their children prudently and religiously, at least for their own comfort, if not for the public good.

Proverbs 17:26

Also: this particle seems to have relation to the next foregoing proverb, to imply that it is a very evil thing for children to cause grief to their parents, as it is also to do what here follows.

To punish the just; for parents, or princes, or rulers, to whom alone this power belongs, to punish innocent and good men;

is not good; is highly evil and abominable, as is implied. See above, Pro_17:20 **16:29 17:10**, &c.

Nor to strike princes for equity; nor to smite magistrates, either with the hand or tongue, for the execution of justice, as condemned persons are apt to do. Or, as some learned interpreters render it, *nor for princes to strike* any man for equity, or for doing his duty, or what is just. So this clause best agrees with the

former. Besides, it belongs to princes or ms, strafes to punish or strike.

Proverbs 17:27

Spareth, Heb. *restraineth* , as at other times, so especially when he is provoked to passion, in which case fools utter all their mind. An excellent spirit; which he showeth by commanding his passions, and bridling himself from hasty and unadvised speeches. Or, as others render it, is of a cool spirit, calm and moderate, not easily provoked; humble, as the Chaldee renders it; *patient* or *long-suffering* , as the LXX. and Arabic interpreters render the words. Or, as others, *sparing* (Heb. *precious* , which is put for rare or scarce, 1Sa_3:1 Pro_25:17 Isa_13:12) *of his breath* , i.e. of his speech, as this very word is used, Pro_29:11 Isa_11:4, compared with 2Th_2:8.

Proverbs 17:28

Is counted wise, because he is sensible of his own folly, and therefore forbears to speak, lest he should discover it; which is a great point of true wisdom.

Proverbs 18:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 18

According to this interpretation the sense is,

Through desire (of it, to wit of wisdom, which is easily understood out of the end of the verse; such ellipses being frequent in Scripture)

a man, having separated himself, (being sequestered from the company, and noise, and business of the world, betaking himself to retirement and solitude, as men do that apply themselves to any serious study.)

seeketh and

intermeddleth with all wisdom, i.e. useth all diligence, that he may search and find out all solid knowledge and true wisdom. And this earnest desire and endeavour to get true wisdom within a man's self is fitly opposed to the fool's contempt of wisdom, or to his desire of it, not for use and benefit, but only for vain ostentation, which is expressed in the next verse, although coherence is little regarded by interpreters in the several verses

and proverbs of this book. But this verse is otherwise rendered in the margin of our English Bible, and by divers others, *He that separateth himself*, (either,

1. From his friend; or rather,

2. From other men; who affects singularity, is wedded to his own opinion, and through self-conceit despiseth the opinions and conversation of others,) seeketh according to his desire, (seeketh to gratify his own inclinations and affections, and chooseth those opinions which most comply with them,) and *intermeddleth* (for this word is used in a bad sense, Pro_17:14 **20:3**, and it is not found elsewhere, save in this place) in every business, as proud and singular persons are commonly pragmatical, delighting to find faults in others, that they may get some reputation to themselves by it. Heb. *in every thing that is* ; thrusting themselves into the actions and affairs of other men. Or, as this last clause is and may be rendered, and *contendeth* (Heb. *mingleth himself* ; for words of that signification are commonly used for *contending* or *fighting* , as Deu_2:5,**9,19** Isa **36:8** Dan_11:10) *with* or *against* (for the Hebrew prefix *beth* oft signifies *against*) *all reason or wisdom* ; whatsoever any man speaketh against his opinion and desire, though it be never so reasonable and evident, he rejecteth it, and obstinately maintains his own opinion.

Proverbs 18:2

In understanding; in getting sound and saving knowledge, either by his own study, or by the instructions of wise and good men.

But that his heart may discover itself. Heb. *but* (his delight is) *in the discovery of his own heart* , i.e. in uttering that folly and wickedness which is in his heart; being more forward to speak than to hear, which is one badge of a fool.

Proverbs 18:3

When the wicked cometh into any place or company,

then cometh also contempt; either,

1. Passively; he is justly contemned and reproached by those who converse with him. Or rather,

2. Actively; he despiseth and scorneth all instruction and reproof, neither fearing God nor reverencing man; for he seems here to note his sin rather than his punishment.

And with ignominy reproach; and he doth not only contemn others in his heart, but showeth his contempt of them by ignominious and reproachful expressions and carriages.

Proverbs 18:4

A man's, i.e. a wise man's, as the next clause explains this; who is worthy of the name and hath the understanding of a man in him. This Hebrew word oftentimes notes an eminent or excellent person, and therefore is opposed to Adam, which designs any ordinary man.

As deep waters; full of deep wisdom.

The well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook; that wisdom which is in his heart is continually pouring forth wise and good counsels.

Proverbs 18:5

It is not good, i.e. it is a most wicked and hateful thing. **See Poole** "Pro_17:15,26.

To accept the person; to favour his unrighteous cause.

Proverbs 18:6

A fool's lips enter into contention; a fool by his rash and wicked speeches provoketh others to quarrel with him, and, as it follows, to strike him.

His mouth calleth for strokes; procureth strokes to himself.

Proverbs 18:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 18:8

The words of a tale-bearer, who privily slandereth his neighbour,

are as wounds; deeply wound the reputation, and afterwards the heart, of the slandered person. Compare Pro_12:18. Or, as others render the word, are

as smooth or flattering, i.e. they really are so; the particle as being oft used to express the truth of the thing, as hath been noted before. See also Joh_1:14. They are softer than oil, as is said, Psa_55:21. For slanderers use to cover and usher in their calumnies with pretences or kindness and compassion to them whom they traduce.

They go down into the innermost parts of the belly; they wound mortally, piercing to the heart, which is oft meant by the belly; as Job_15:35 **32:19**, &c.

Proverbs 18:9

They are alike; though they take several paths, yet both come to one end, even to extreme want and poverty.

Proverbs 18:10

The name of the Lord, i.e. the Lord, as he hath revealed himself in his works, and especially in his word by his promises, and the declarations of his infinite perfections, and of his good will to his people.

Is a strong tower; is sufficient for our protection in case of the greatest dangers.

The righteous; which limitation he adds to beat down the vain confidences of those men, who though they live in a gross neglect and contempt of God, will expect salvation from him.

Proverbs 18:11

He trusts to his wealth, as that which will either enable him to resist his enemy, or at least purchase his favour.

Proverbs 18:12

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; pride is a cause and presage of ruin, as is noted, Pro_16:18. *Is* ; or, *goeth* . This clause we had Pro_15:33.

Proverbs 18:13

Before he heareth it; before he hath fully heard and considered what another is speaking about it.

It is folly and shame; it is a shameful folly, though he seek the reputation of a wise man by it, as if he could readily and

thoroughly understand all that another hath said before he hath uttered it.

Proverbs 18:14

The spirit, i.e. the soul, to wit, which is unwounded, as appears by the opposite branch of the verse; which is vigorous and cheerful, supported by the sense of God's love, and the conscience of its own integrity, and the prospect of its present peace and future happiness.

Will sustain his infirmity; will easily support him under any bodily or outward troubles, as God's people have oft found by experience.

Wounded; dejected with the sense of its own guilt and misery.

Who can bear? it is most grievous and intolerable without Divine assistance.

Proverbs 18:15

The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge, by employing his thoughts and studies upon it.

The ear of the wise getteth knowledge, by a greedy and diligent attention to those from whom he may learn it.

Proverbs 18:16

Maketh room for him; procures him free access to great men. Heb. *enlargeth him*, as this very phrase is rendered, Psa_4:1, and elsewhere; freeth him from straits and oppressions.

Bringeth him before great men; gets him favour and free conversation with them.

Proverbs 18:17

He that is first in his own cause, he that first pleadeth his cause, **seemeth just**, both to himself and to the judge or court, by his fair pretences.

His neighbour cometh, to contend with him in judgment and to plead his cause,

and searcheth him; examineth the truth and weight of his allegations, and disproveth them, and detecteth his weakness. Or,

discovers him ; for seeking or searching are oft put for *finding* , as Pro_17:9,19, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 18:18

Causeth contentions to cease, by determining the matters in difference.

Parteth; maketh a partition, giveth to every one what is right or meet, by the disposition of Divine Providence.

Between the mighty; so it doth also between mean persons, but he mentions the mighty because they are most prone to contention, and most fierce and intractable in it, and most capable of doing great mischief to themselves and others by it, and therefore they most need this remedy.

Proverbs 18:19

Offended, to wit, by his brother's unkindness or injury.

Is harder to be won; or, *is stronger* , which is sufficiently understood by the mention of a strong city, to which he is compared; such ellipses being frequent in the Hebrew, as hath been noted before.

Than a strong city; which is hardly to be conquered.

Like the bars of a castle; which are very strong, and not to be broken, and make the castle strong, and hardly to be won. The truth of this assertion is confirmed by the testimony of Aristotle and other learned authors, who affirm the same fixing; and the reason of it is evident, because the nearness of the relation greatly heightens the provocation, and love abused frequently turns to extreme hatred.

Proverbs 18:20

Wise and edifying discourses tend to the comfort and satisfaction of the speaker, as well as to the good of the hearers.

Proverbs 18:21

Are in the power of the tongue; are brought upon men by the good or bad use of their tongues.

That love it; either,

1. The tongue; that love and use much talking, which is oft censured as a sin, and a cause of mischief. See Pro_10:19 Jam_1:19. Or,

2. The use of their tongue in either of those ways, which are plainly supposed in the former clause of the verse: they who do not only speak well, which a wicked man may sometimes do; or speak ill, which a good man may possibly do; but do love, and therefore accustom themselves, to speak well or ill.

Shall eat the fruit thereof; shall receive either good or evil, according to the quality of their speeches.

Proverbs 18:22

A wife; either,

1. Simply a wife; for a wife, though she be not the best of her kind, is to be esteemed a blessing, being useful both for society of life, Gen_2:18, and for the mitigation of a man's cares and troubles, and for the prevention of sins. Or,

2. Good wife; one that deserves the name and performs the duty of that relation; a wise and worthy wife, as this word may seem to imply, being deduced from the Hebrew word *isch*, which sometimes notes a man of eminency. And this limitation and explication of the word may be gathered both from the following commendations, which would hardly be given to a bad wife, and from the usage of Scripture, in which this ellipsis is frequent, as a *path* or *way* is put for a *good path* or *way*, Psa_119:1 Pro_15:10, *an answer* for a *good answer*, Pro_15:23, *a king* for a *good king*, Pro_16:10 **29:4**, a *name* for a *good name*, Pro_22:1 Ecc_7:1, &c.

A good thing; a singular blessing.

Obtaineth favour of the Lord; obtaineth her not by his own wit, or art, or diligence, but by God's good providence towards him, which ordereth that and all other events as it pleaseth him.

Proverbs 18:23

Useth entreaties; humbly begs the favour of rich men, as his necessities and occasions require it.

Answereth roughly; speaketh proudly and scornfully, either to the poor, or to others that converse with him, being puffed up with a conceit of his riches, and of his self-sufficiency.

Proverbs 18:24

A man that hath friends, Heb. *a man of friends* ; either,

1. Who desires the friendship of others. Or,
2. Who professeth friendship to others.

That sticketh closer to him that desires and needs his help; who is more hearty in the performance of all friendly offices.

Proverbs 19:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 19

That walketh in his integrity; who is upright in his words and actions.

That is perverse in his lips; that useth to speak wickedly, which proceeds from a wicked heart, and is usually attended with an evil life.

Is a fool; is a hypocrite, or a wicked man, for this is opposed to the upright man in the former clause; yea, though he be rich, which is implied from the same clause.

Proverbs 19:2

The soul; which is the principal cause and director of all men's actions.

Without knowledge; without wisdom or prudence to discern his way, and what and how he ought to act in his several cases and concernments.

It is not good; it is very evil and pernicious.

That hasteth with his feet; that rashly and headily rusheth into actions without serious consideration. So two vices are here censured, the want of knowledge, and the neglect or disuse of knowledge in a man's actions.

Proverbs 19:3

Perverteth his way; either.

1. Enticeth him to sin. Or rather,

2. Crosseth and blasteth his designs and enterprises, and brings losses and miseries upon him. *His heart fretteth against the Lord* ; he ascribes his unhappiness not to his own sin and folly, which is the true cause of it, but to God and his providence, against which he unjustly murmurs.

Proverbs 19:4

Is disowned and forsaken by those who are most obliged to help him.

Proverbs 19:5

Shall not be unpunished; though he escape the observation and punishment of men, yet he shall not avoid the judgment of God.

That speaketh lies; that accustometh himself to lying, either in judgment or in common conversation.

Proverbs 19:6

Of the prince; or, as others, *of the liberal or bountiful man* ; which comes to the same thing, for kings were anciently called benefactors, Luk_22:25.

A friend; not sincerely, as daily experience shows, but in show or profession, or in the outward expressions of it, whereby they may oblige him.

Proverbs 19:7

Brethren; his nearest and dearest relations, who are oft called brethren in Scripture, by a common synecdoche.

Hate him, i.e. despise and shun him, as men do any thing which they hate, and as the following words explain it.

His friends; his former companions, who in his prosperity professed friendship to him.

He pursueth them with words, earnestly imploring their pity; or, *he urgeth* (Heb. *pursueth*) their words, i.e. allegeth their former promises and professions of friendship. Or, without any supplement, *he seeketh words* , as the preacher sought to find out acceptable words, Ecc_12:10, wherewith he might prevail or move them to pity.

They are wanting to him, Heb. *they are not* ; either,

1. His friends are not, to wit, what they pretended to be, friends to him. Or,
2. Their words are vain, and without effect; there is no reality in them.

Proverbs 19:8

Loveth his own soul, or *loveth himself*, because he procures great good to his soul, or to himself, as it follows; as sinners, on the contrary, are said to *hate their souls*, Pro_29:24, because they bring mischief upon them. That keepeth understanding; that observeth and carefully practiseth its precepts, as that phrase is commonly used.

Shall find good; shall have great benefit by it, both for his conduct in this life, and for his happiness in the next.

Proverbs 19:9

This was said before, Pro_19:5, and seems to be here repeated, either for its great use and weight in human society, and to show how much God abhors such practices; or to show the pernicious effects of this sin, and consequently of all other sins, one eminent kind being put for all the rest, and this in opposition to the good effects of wisdom or piety, which he declared in the foregoing verse.

Proverbs 19:10

Delight, to live in pleasure, and plenty, and outward glory,

is not seemly for a fool; it doth not become him, nor suit with him; partly because prosperity corrupts even wise men, and makes fools mad; and partly because it gives him more opportunity to discover his folly, and to do mischief both to himself and others. He implies that a rod or punishment is fitter for him than pleasure, as is noted, Pro_10:13 **26:3**.

A servant; who is of a servile condition and disposition, not much differing from a fool; who is a servant to his lusts, and wholly unfit to rule other men.

Over princes, i.e. over men of better quality than himself; for servants are commonly ignorant, and when they are advanced, they grow insolent, and presumptuous, and intolerable.

Proverbs 19:11

This is opposed to the perverse judgment of worldly men, who account it folly and stupidity not quickly to resent a provocation, and a dishonour and reproach not to revenge it.

Proverbs 19:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 19:13

Are like rain continually dropping upon a house, which by degrees marreth the house and household stuff, and driveth the inhabitants out of it. He compareth her to a

continual dropping, because of that inseparable union and necessary cohabitation of husband and wife together, notwithstanding such contentions.

Proverbs 19:14

Is vouchsafed to a man by the singular providence of God, who is the only searcher and ruler of hearts, exactly discerning who are prudent or pious, in which even wise men's judgments are commonly mistaken, and inclining the minds and hearts of persons one towards another.

Proverbs 19:15

Casteth into a deep sleep; maketh a man careless and, negligent, and like one asleep in his business, whereby he cometh to want, as it follows.

Proverbs 19:16

The commandment; the commands of God, called by way of eminence the commandment, as the word is oft used emphatically for the word of God, as hath been noted before. fore. His ways; either,

1. His own ways, by not taking heed to his ways, so as to order his conversation aright. Or,
2. The ways of God, who is understood in the former clause.

Proverbs 19:17

Lendeth unto the Lord; who takes what is done to them as done to himself, because it is done to them whom God, as to this particular, hath put in his own stead, to be his receivers, and

whom God hath in a peculiar manner commended to the care and charity of all other men.

Proverbs 19:18

While there is hope; before custom in sin, and thy indulgence, hath made him hard-hearted and incorrigible.

Let not thy soul spare, forbear not to give him due and necessary correction,

for his crying, which oft stirs up a foolish and pernicious pity in parents towards them. This word, with some small difference in the points, is used in this sense Isa_24:11. Or, as it is in the margin, *to his destruction* , intimating that this is a cruel pity, and a likely way to expose him to that death threatened to stubborn sons, Deu_21:18,21. But this clause is, and may be, rendered otherwise, *yet or but do not lift up thy soul* (which signifies a vehement desire, Deu_24:15 Psa_25:1 Jer_44:14; let not thy passion or eager desire of chastening him transport thee so far as) *to cause him to die* , i.e. use moderation in this work.

Proverbs 19:19

A man of great wrath; or, he *who is of great wrath* , of strong passions; which may be understood either,

1. More particularly, of a son of such a temper, who is very impatient of correction, and breaks forth into violent passions upon that occasion; and then the following words contain the parent's duty, which is to take care to punish him, because if he spare him that thee for his passion, he must do so again and again, the same cause returning upon him, and so must wholly forbear to chasten him. Or,

2. More generally, of any man of a fierce and furious temper and carriage; and then the next words declare only the event, by his great and repeated provocations he will bring punishment upon himself, either from God or men.

If thou deliver him; if either a parent, or another person provoked by him, forbear to punish him. He turneth his speech to the party, as is usual in Scripture and in other authors.

Thou must do it again, Heb. *thou must add* , to wit, to deliver him again and again, as oft as he shall offend; or, thou wilt add or increase, to wit, his wrath, which thou shouldst subdue.

Proverbs 19:20

Before thy death come; which he adds not exclusively, as if he ought not to be wish before, but emphatically, to show that how foolishly soever he had spent his former and younger years, it highly concerned him to be wise before it was too late, or before death came.

Proverbs 19:21

There are many devices in a man's heart; understand out of the opposite clause, which shall not stand, but be disappointed.

The counsel of the Lord; his eternal, and unchangeable, and most wise decree, which oftentimes contradicts, and always overrules, the designs and purposes of men.

Shall stand, i.e. be certainly fulfilled, as this phrase is used, Jer_44:28,29, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 19:22

The desire of a man; either,

1. Of any or every man. All men desire, and it is desirable, to be in a capacity of being kind and bountiful to others, whereby they gain love and honour, and many other great advantages. Or,

2. Of the poor man, expressed in the next clause. The hearty will or desire of being kind or liberal to others in necessity is all the kindness which a poor man can show, and is accepted by God, and should be owned by men as a real kindness. Compare 2Co_8:12. Or,

3. Of the rich man, as may be gathered from the opposition of this man to the poor man in the following clause; such ellipses being very common in this book, as hath been noted again and again. So the sense may be this, There be a sort of rich men all whose kindness and charity consists in good desires and well wishes to persons in misery, *saying to them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, but not giving them those things which are needful, as it is expressed* , **Jas 2]** 6. And this sense seems to agree very well

with the following clause. But being singular in this exposition, I submit it to the judicious reader.

A poor man, who is not able to give what he desires to do,

is better than a liar; than a rich man, who feeds the poor with good words and fair promises, but doth not perform what he pretends and is able to do.

Proverbs 19:23

Shall abide satisfied; shall want nothing, and shall be fully contented with God's favour and blessing.

With evil; with any destructive affliction.

Proverbs 19:24

Hideth his hand in his bosom; either to keep it warm in cold weather; or to give it rest, being loth to oppress it with the labour of any action. It is a sarcastical hyperbole.

Will not so much as bring it to his mouth again, to wit, to feed himself; he expects that the meat should drop into his mouth.

Proverbs 19:25

Smite a scorner; an obstinate and impudent transgressor, who rejects and scorns all admonitions, and therefore is to be taught with blows.

The simple; who sin through ignorance, and imprudence, and infirmity, being possibly drawn to sin by the scorner's evil counsel or example.

He will understand knowledge; a verbal reproof will be more effectual for his reformation than the severest punishments will be to a scorner.

Proverbs 19:26

Wasteth his father, i.e. his father's estate, by unjust or riotous courses.

Chaseth away his mother; causeth her to avoid and abhor his presence and society, and to go from the house where he is. *Bringeth reproach* ; both to himself, and to his parents and family. But this verse may very well be rendered otherwise, the last words

being made the subjects of the proposition, as is usual in Scripture;

A son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach, (upon himself and his friends by wicked ways,) *wasteth his father 's* (estate, and health, and comfort) *and chaseth or driveth away his mother* . These are the effects of his wickedness.

Proverbs 19:27

If thou hast formerly, yet do not now any longer hearken to those false doctrines or evil counsels which tend to withdraw thee from the belief or practice of God's holy word.

Proverbs 19:28

Scorneth judgment; hath no reverence to the place of justice, nor to the presence of God there, nor to that sacred and solemn work of executing judgment, but in spite of all gives in a false testimony.

Devoureth iniquity; uttereth with as great greediness, and delight, and ease, as they swallow down delicious meats and drinks. Compare Job_15:16.

Proverbs 19:29

Prepared, either by men, or at least by God; although they: be deferred for a thee, yet they are treasured up for them, and shall infallibly be inflicted upon them.

Proverbs 20:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 20

Wine is a mocker; wine immoderately drunk makes men mockers or scoffers at God and men. Compare Hos_7:5.

Strong drink is raging; makes men full of rage and passion.

Is not wise; is a fool, or a madman, because he depriveth himself of the use of his reason.

Proverbs 20:2

The fear of a king, passively taken, the terror which the wrath of a king causeth, by comparing this with Pro_19:12.

Sinneth against his own soul; exposeth himself to manifest danger of death.

Proverbs 20:3

To cease from strife; either to prevent it, or, if it be begun, to put an end to it; which, although proud and profane persons esteem dishonourable to them, is indeed their glory, because it is an evidence of their great wisdom and power over their passions, and of their respect and obedience to their sovereign Lord, in which their honour and happiness consists.

Will be meddling, to wit, with matters of strife; he is always ready to begin strife, and obstinate in the continuance of it.

Proverbs 20:4

By reason of the cold of the ploughing season, which is in autumn and towards winter. He hates and avoids all laborious and difficult work, although his own necessity and interest oblige him to it.

And have nothing; and not obtain an alms; not in that time of plenty and bounty, because men's hearts are justly hardened against that man who by his own sloth and wilfulness hath brought himself to want.

Proverbs 20:5

Counsel; either,

1. Wisdom or ability to give good counsel; or,
2. Designs or purposes of doing something of moment; for this word is frequently used in both senses, but the last seems fittest here.

Is like deep water; either,

1. Is there in great abundance; or,
2. Is secret and hard to be discovered.

Will draw it out, by prudent questions and discourses, and a diligent observation of his words and actions.

Proverbs 20:6

Most men are forward to profess religion, and speak of their own good deeds; but a faithful man, one who is indeed what he seemeth and professeth himself to be,

who can find? there are but few such to be found.

Proverbs 20:7

The just man walketh in his integrity; he proveth himself to be so not only by his profession, of which he spoke in the former verse, but by his sincere and unblamable conversation. His children are blessed after him, by virtue of that covenant which God hath made with such men, which is not confined to their persons, but entaileth blessings upon their posterity.

Proverbs 20:8

A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment; that makes it his great care and business to execute judgment and justice among his people, especially if he do this in his own person, as was usual in ancient times, and sees things with his own eyes. As for the phrase, the sign or gesture is here put for the thing signified by it.

Scattereth away all evil, effectually punisheth and suppresseth all wickedness, *with his eyes* ; with his very looks, or by his diligent inspection into affairs.

Proverbs 20:9

Who can say? no man living upon earth can say this truly and sincerely. Compare 1Ki_8:46 Job_14:4 **15:14** Ecc_7:20 1Jo_1:8. *I am pure from my sin* ; I am perfectly free from all guilt and filth of sin in my heart and life.

Proverbs 20:10

Divers weights and divers measures; one greater and true for public show, and one lesser and false for private use, when they had an opportunity of deceiving.

Proverbs 20:11

Even a child is known by his doings; young children discover their inclinations or dispositions even by their childish speeches and carriage, as not having yet learnt the art of dissembling.

Whether his work be pure; or rather, *will be pure* ; for it is not expressed in the Hebrew, and therefore may be either way supplied. The sense is, The future disposition and conversation of a man may very probably be conjectured from his childish manners.

Proverbs 20:12

It is God alone who gives us our senses and natural faculties, and the use and exercise of them, and especially a power of employing them aright to see and observe the works of God, and to hear and receive his word and all wholesome instructions; whence he leaves it to us to gather, that God doth exactly see and hear all men's words and actions, though it be never so secret. He names

the eye and

ear, because these are the two senses by which instructions are conveyed to *the mind* ; but under them he seems to comprehend all other senses and powers of soul or body, by a synecdoche.

Proverbs 20:13

Love not sleep, i.e. immoderate sleep, or sloth, or idleness. Take sleep because necessity requires it, not from any love to it.

Open thine eyes; awake out of sleep, shake off sloth, and betake thyself to thy employment with diligence and rigour.

Proverbs 20:14

It is naught; the commodity is but of little worth. Saith the buyer, to wit, to the seller; he discommends it, that he may bring down the price of it.

Gone his way, with the commodity purchased.

He boasteth that by his wit he hath overreached the seller, and got a great advantage to himself. This he notes as a common but reprobable practice.

Proverbs 20:15

There is gold, to wit, in the world, in divers men's hands, by whom it is highly prized.

But the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel; but wise speeches proceeding from an understanding or honest heart are of far greater worth and use, both to him that uttereth them, and to those that receive and improve them to their own benefit.

Proverbs 20:16

Take his garment, to wit, as a pledge, without which he ought not to be trusted, because by this action he showeth himself to be a fool, and he taketh the ready way to beggary.

Object. This precept contradicts that law which forbade the taking of a garment for a pledge, Exo_22:26.

Answ. It doth not contradict it, for the cases vastly differ; for that law concerned only the poor, who were forced to borrow for their own necessity, and therefore deserve pity; whereas this teacheth only those who are or would be thought rich and sufficient security for others, and who borrow not for their own need, but for a mere stranger, for which folly they deserve to be severely punished. Besides, this may be only a prediction, though it be delivered in the form of a precept, as many predictions are; and so shows what may be expected by him that is guilty of such folly, even that he shall be stripped of his garments and other necessaries. *For a stranger* ; for a foreigner, or a person unknown to him. *Take a pledge of him* that is surety; which words are to be understood out of the foregoing clause. *For a strange woman* ; for a harlot, who is so called, Pro_2:16, and elsewhere.

Proverbs 20:17

Bread of deceit; gain or pleasure procured by unrighteous courses.

His mouth shall be filled with gravel; it shall be bitter and pernicious at last, like gritty bread, which offends the teeth and stomach. It will certainly bring upon him the horrors of a guilty conscience, and the wrath and judgments of the Almighty God.

Proverbs 20:18

Every purpose is established by counsel; the way to bring our purposes and desires to a good effect, is to manage them with serious consideration and good advice. *And* ; or, *therefore* . This is necessary in every common undertaking, and much more in a thing of such high importance as war is.

Proverbs 20:19

He that goeth about as a tale-bearer revealeth secrets; he that delighteth in and accustometh himself to the practice of spreading tales or evil reports, will not forbear to publish the greatest secrets which are committed to his trust. Or, as others render it, and as the words lie in the Hebrew text,

He that revealeth secrets, (contrary to his promise or the trust reposed in him, you may by that token be assured that,)

he doth and will go about as a tale-bearer. He who divulgeth secrets cannot or will not forbear to publish other things, and so is not fit to be trusted with any thing.

Therefore, to prevent that mischief Heb. *and* . So the following sentence is not inferred from the former, but only added to it.

Meddle not with him, avoid frequent and familiar society and conversation with him, *that flattereth with his lips* ; by which artifice he seeks to gain thy affections, and to fish out all thy secrets, which he may impart to others, whom he may oblige hereby, and so render his company more acceptable.

Proverbs 20:20

Or his mother, Heb. *and his mother* ; which is used for *or* , Exo_12:5 Lev_6:3, and elsewhere.

His lamp; his comfort and happiness, his name and memory, which are oft compared in Scripture to

a lamp or light; shall be put out in obscure darkness; shall utterly perish; he shall die childless, and with ignominy.

Proverbs 20:21

An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; an estate sometimes is got suddenly, in the very beginning of a man's labours for it; in which case it may be presumed that some indirect and unrighteous courses were used for the getting of it, because riches are very seldom given by God, or gotten by men, without men's diligence. But this, as well as many other proverbs, are to be understood of the common course, although it admit of some exceptions. For sometimes merchants or others get great estates speedily by one happy voyage, or by some other prosperous event. This translation follows the Hebrew marginal reading, but according to the textual reading it may be thus rendered and understood; *An inheritance gotten in the beginning* (to wit, of a man's endeavours) *is abominable* , to wit, *unto God* , being supposed to be unjustly gotten, as was now said.

The end thereof shall not be blessed; at last it shall be cursed and wither by God's just judgment.

Proverbs 20:22

Say not thou in thy heart; give not way to any such evil thoughts or purposes.

Wait on the Lord, to whom it belongs to execute vengeance, and to deliver his people from all their enemies.

Proverbs 20:23

Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; of which See Poole "Pro_20:10".

Is not good; is very wicked and hateful to God and men.

Proverbs 20:24

Man's goings, all men's purposes and actions,

are of the Lord; are ordered and overruled by God's wise and powerful providence to accomplish his own counsel and good pleasure, and not what men list or intend.

His own way; either,

1. What course he ought to take; which he cannot know without God's direction and assistance: compare Pro_16:9 Jer_10:23. Or,

2. What is the issue of his designs will be, whether they shall succeed or be disappointed; the way being taken for the end or event to which it leads, as it is in many other places. The scope of the proverb is to show that all the events of human life are neither ordered nor foreseen by man's, but only by God's providence, and therefore men should only mind the doing of their duty, and then quietly depend upon God for a good issue to their endeavours.

Proverbs 20:25

It is a snare; it brings guilt and God's curse and vengeance upon him.

That which is holy, i.e. those meats or drinks which were devoted or consecrated to God; under which one kind he comprehends and forbids all alienation of sacred or dedicated things from God to a man's private use or benefit; of which see Lev_27:9 Deu_23:21 Mal_3:8,9 Ac 5:1, &c.

After vows to make inquiry; after a man hath made vows to consider whether he can possibly or may lawfully keep them, and

to invent or inquire of others all ways possible to break his vow, and to satisfy or deceive his conscience in so doing; which inquiry is justly censured as a sin and snare, because it is an evidence of a covetous or irreligious mind, and is the ready way and first step towards the open violation of it.

Proverbs 20:26

A wise king, who seriously minds his duty and his true interest,

scattereth the wicked; breaks their companies and confederacies, and forceth them to flee several ways for their own safety; driveth them from his presence, and from the society of honest men, as the chaff is by the husbandman separated from the corn, and driven away by the wind, of which this Hebrew word is commonly used, and to which the next clause hath some reference.

Bringeth the wheel over them, as the cart-wheel was anciently turned over the sheaves to beat the corn out of them, Isa_28:27,28. He punisheth them severely, as their offences deserve. This or such-like punishments were not unusual among the Eastern nations, as we may gather from 2Sa_8:2 **12:31** Amo_1:3.

Proverbs 20:27

The spirit, i.e. the reasonable soul.

Is the candle; is a clear and glorious light set up in man for his information and direction.

Of the Lord; so called, partly because it comes from God in a more immediate and peculiar manner than the body doth, Ecc_12:7; and partly because it is in God's stead to observe and judge all a man's actions.

Searching all the inward parts of the belly; discerning not only his outward actions, which are visible to others, but his most inward and secret thoughts and affections, which no other man can see, 1Co_2:11. The *belly* is here put for the *heart*, as it is frequently. The soul can reflect upon and judge of its own dispositions and actions; which plainly showeth that the heart is not so deceitful, but that a man by diligent study of it, and the use of the means appointed by God, may arrive at a certain knowledge of its state and condition, in reference to God and to salvation.

Proverbs 20:28

Mercy; clemency to offenders, and bounty to worthy and to indigent persons; and truth; faithfulness in keeping his word and promises inviolably; preserve the king, because they engage God to guard him, and gain him the reverence and affections of his people, which is a king's greatest safety and happiness.

Mercy is again mentioned, to show that although it be an act of grace, and therefore in some sort free, yet princes are obliged to it, both by their duty and by their interest, because it is a singular means of their preservation.

Proverbs 20:29

The glory of young men; that wherein they glory as their privilege above old men.

The beauty of old men is the grey head, i.e. their old age, expressed by the outward sign of it, wherein they glory as their peculiar privilege, as a testimony of their piety and God's blessing, and as a token of their great experience and wisdom. The design of this proverb is to declare the several advantages of several ages, and the mutual need they have one of another, and thereby to engage them to mutual love and assistance, and to friendly converse, and to make every one contented with his own age and condition, and not to envy nor yet despise his brother, or the difference of their ages, as is very usual among men.

Proverbs 20:30

The blueness of a wound, grievous wounds, which make men black and blue, or severe punishments,

cleanseth away evil; are the most effectual means to reclaim a wicked man, and to purge out his corruption.

So do stripes, Heb. *and stripes* , which answer to the *wounds* in the former clause,

the inward parts of the belly; either,

1. Which pierce even to the inward parts of the belly; and so we are to understand out of the former branch, *cleanse away evil* . Or,
2. They cleanse the inward parts of the belly, i.e. of the heart. So this is an addition to the former clause, and the sense of the whole

is, Grievous wounds or stripes do cleanse not only the outward man, by keeping it from evil actions, but even the inward man, by expelling or subduing vile affections; which is mentioned as a great and blessed benefit of afflictions.

Proverbs 21:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 21

The king's heart; his very inward purposes and inclinations, which seem to be most in a man's own power, and out of the reach of all others, and much more his tongue and hand, and all his outward actions. He names *kings* not to exclude other men, but because they are more arbitrary and uncontrollable than other men.

As the rivers of water; which husbandmen or gardeners can draw by little channels into the adjacent grounds as they please, and as their occasions require.

He turneth it; directeth and boweth, partly by suggesting those things to their minds which have a commanding influence upon their wills; and partly by a direct and immediate motion of their wills and affections, which being God's creatures must needs be as subject to his power and pleasure as either men's minds or bodies are, and which he moves sweetly and suitably to their own nature, though strongly and effectually.

Withersoever he will; so as they shall fulfil his counsels and designs, either of mercy or of correction to themselves, or to their people.

Proverbs 21:2

This was said Pro_16:2, where it is explained, and is here repeated, either for the great importance and usefulness of it, or because he perceived that the Israelites were very prone to self-deceit.

Proverbs 21:3

Justice and judgment; the conscientious performance of all our duties to men.

Than sacrifice; than the most costly outward services offered to God, joined with the neglect of our moral duties to God or men. The same thing is affirmed 1Sa_15:22 Hos_6:6 Mic_6:7.

Proverbs 21:4

An high look; one gesture or sign of pride put for all the rest, Pro_6:17.

A proud heart; pride lurking and reigning in the heart, though it do not discover itself to men by outward actions, but be disguised with a show of humility, it is frequently.

The ploughing; either,

1. Strictly and properly so called: even their civil or natural actions, which in themselves are lawful and good, are made sinful, as they are managed by ungodly men, without any regard to the service and glory of God, which ought to be the great end of all our actions, 1Co_10:31, and with a design of serving their own wicked lusts by it. Or,

2. Metaphorically, their designs and endeavours, which are said to be *sin*, because they are wholly and fully set upon sin, and they make sin their trade or business, which is called *ploughing wickedness*, Job_4:8. But all the ancient interpreters, and divers others, render the word *the lamp* or *light*, as this Hebrew word, even thus pointed, is rendered, 1Ki_11:36 **15:4** 2Ki_8:19 2Ch_21:7; and *the lamp of the wicked* is a phrase used in this book, Pro_13:9 **24:20**, as also Job_21:17; whereas *the ploughing of the wicked* is a phrase not elsewhere used. And this seems best to agree with the context, for by their lamp he seems to understand all their pomp and glory, that worldly greatness and prosperity, which is the fuel of their pride, and therefore is most fitly joined with it. *Is sin*; it is by them turned into sin, and made the occasion of much wickedness. The whole verse may be thus rendered, *An high look and a proud heart*, which is *the light or glory of the wicked*, (i.e. wherein they glory, esteeming it magnanimity or gallantry of spirit,) *is sin*, i.e. is a great and grievous sin. And in this manner the learned Mercer renders the verse, save only that he translates the Hebrew word *nir*, *the ploughing*.

Proverbs 21:5

The diligent, who carefully and industriously prosecutes what he hath wisely contrived and resolved.

That is hasty; who manageth his affairs rashly, without due consideration.

Only to want; is likely to bring himself to poverty.

Proverbs 21:6

By a lying tongue; by false witness-hearing, or by any other false or deceitful words or actions, whereby many men get riches.

Is a vanity tossed to and fro; is like the chaff or smoke driven away by the wind; it is neither satisfactory nor durable, but quickly vanisheth away, as hath been frequently observed of estates ill gotten.

That seek death; not designedly, but eventually, that take those courses which will bring death or destruction upon them or theirs.

Proverbs 21:7

The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; the injury which they do to others shall either by God or men be returned upon their own heads. They refuse to do judgment; they wilfully and obstinately give up themselves to unrighteous practices.

Proverbs 21:8

The way of man; the course of his life. *Of man* ; of every man; of man by nature and in his corrupt estate; of a wicked or impure man, to whom the pure is opposed in the next clause.

Strange; estranged from God and from man's primitive integrity, and from the rule of his actions, reason and Scripture; in which respects wicked men are called *strangers* , Psa_54:3 Eze_44:7, and elsewhere.

But as for the pure, his work is right; but he whose heart is pure and upright, his conversation is agreeable to it.

Proverbs 21:9

To dwell, to wit, alone in quietness, as appears from the opposite clause.

Of the house-top; of the roof of the house, which in those countries was flat and plain, and habitable, but was exposed to all the injuries of the weather. In a

wide house; or, in a common house; or, a house of society, where husband and wife live together, or which is capable of many friends or companies.

Proverbs 21:10

The soul of the wicked desireth evil; his heart is fully and earnestly set in him, as it is expressed, Ecc_8:11, to do evil, to work wickedness, to do mischief to others, to satisfy his own lusts, though it be with injury of others.

His neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes, if he either dissuade him from his wickedness, or stand in the way of his lusts. He spares neither friend nor foe.

Proverbs 21:11

The simple; the honest or plain-hearted man, as Pro_19:25, where this whole verse for the substance of it is contained and explained.

Instructed; or, *prospers* , as this word is used, Pro_17:8, and elsewhere. So the sense of the verse is, The simple learn wisdom, both from the punishment of wicked men, and from the prosperity of good men.

Proverbs 21:12

Wisely considereth the house of the wicked; he looketh through its present power and glory (which dazzleth the eyes of others) unto that ruin to which it is designed. But, or now, or that, this being the thing which he wisely considereth,

God overthroweth, or will overthrow in his due time, though for a season he bear with them.

Proverbs 21:13

Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, when they cry out by reason of oppression or want, and beg relief from him, he also shall cry himself unto God or men, in his straits which God will bring upon him.

Proverbs 21:14

A gift, to a person offended and angry with us, as the following words show.

In secret; which makes it more acceptable; for gifts openly given savour of ostentation in the giver, and cause some shame or contempt to the receiver.

In the bosom; secretly conveyed into his bosom. See Poole "Pro_17:8", See Poole "Pro_18:16".

Proverbs 21:15

It is joy to the just: the sense is either,

1. He is highly pleased and delighted with it. Or,
2. He reapeth much comfort and benefit by it, which is opposed to the following destruction: *joy* is put for matter or *cause of joy* .

To do judgment; to do what is just or good, for this is opposed to *working of iniquity* .

Destruction; or, as others render it, *terror* or *horror* , opposite to joy.

Proverbs 21:16

The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding; that forsaketh the rule of God's word, and walketh after his own lusts; **shall remain in the congregation of the dead;** shall, without repentance, be condemned to eternal death or damnation.

Proverbs 21:17

He that loveth pleasure, that gives up himself to the pursuit and enjoyment of sensual and immoderate pleasures,

shall be a poor man; takes the ready course to poverty.

Wine and oil are put for all delicious fare and luxurious feasting; for wine and oil were much used in feasts in those parts.

Proverbs 21:18

The wicked shall be brought into those troubles which were either threatened by God or designed by wicked men against the righteous, and by that means, as by a ransom, the righteous shall be delivered. Thus Achan was a ransom for Israel, Jos_7:26, and Haman for Mordecai.

Proverbs 21:19

Than, understand, *in a wide house* , as it is expressed above, Pro_21:9, and as the opposition here requires.

Proverbs 21:20

Wise men lay up all necessary and desirable treasures for their own use, and for their children and families.

Oil is particularly mentioned, partly because that was a considerable part of their wealth and treasures in those countries,

of which see Deu_7:13 **28:40,51** **Jud 9:9** Mic_5:15, &c.; and partly to show that his providence reached not only to necessities, but even to matters of just and lawful delight.

Proverbs 21:21

That followeth after; that fervently desires, and diligently and constantly endeavours, to attain to them, for such shall and will certainly obtain them.

Righteousness and mercy; living in the constant exercise of these virtues.

Findeth; shall obtain from God what is right and due to him; either from God, by virtue of his gracious promise; or from men, whose hearts God will dispose to deal justly and kindly with him.

Proverbs 21:22

A wise man sealeth the city of the mighty; wisdom and policy is oftentimes more considerable and powerful than strength.

The strength of the confidence thereof; the strongest forts, to which the citizens trust most for their defence.

Proverbs 21:23

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue from offensive and provoking speeches, keepeth his soul, his person, from troubles; which a licentious and abusive tongue frequently brings upon a man.

Proverbs 21:24

Proud and haughty scorner is his name; instead of that respect and glory which he seeks by such courses, he shall be branded with the title and imputation of an arrogant and scornful person, which is most contemptible and hateful to mankind.

Who dealeth in proud wrath; who in the conduct of his affairs and dealings in the world is not governed by reason and justice, but by his own pride and passions.

Proverbs 21:25

Killeth him; either,

1. Tormenteth him almost to death, whilst he passionately desires that which he sees he shall not enjoy, and will not take pains to procure. Or,

2. Expositeth him to extreme want, and so to death, or to such wicked courses, for the supply of his wants, as bring him to an untimely death.

Proverbs 21:26

He coveteth; the slothful man, mentioned in the last verse. But because the verses in this book are for the most part independent one upon another, this clause is and may be otherwise rendered, There is that *coveteth* , &c.; or, the wicked (which may be understood from the opposition of the *righteous* in the next clause) *coveteth* , &c.

All the day long; spends his whole time in vain and lazy desires, but will not labour to get any thing, either to use himself, or to give to others.

The righteous giveth and spareth not; by God's blessing upon his industry he procures enough, not only for his own support, but also for the liberal relief of others.

Proverbs 21:27

The sacrifice; all the most glorious and costly services which they offer to God.

Is abomination; God rejects and abhors them, because they are offered by such men and in such manner as God justly abhors.

When; or, *because* , as all the ancient translators render it, the Hebrew particle *aph* being expletive; or, *even because* ; so the following clause gives the reason of the former proposition.

With a wicked mind; with a hypocritical and impenitent heart, or with a bad design, not in obedience to God's command, and with respect to his honour and service; but either to cover, or countenance, or promote some wicked intention or course, which notwithstanding all his professions of religion he is resolved to prosecute.

Proverbs 21:28

A false witness, Heb. *a witness of lies* ; one who is forward to swear or speak false things, or such things as he hath not heard nor learned from others, nor seen, but devised in his own heart.

Shall perish; shall be severely punished, either by God or men, and shall be confounded and silenced, because none will for the future regard or credit his testimony. The man that heareth; he who hears before he speaks, and witnesseth nothing but what he hath heard or seen, and knows to be true.

Speaketh constantly; doth not contradict himself, but always affirmeth the same thing. Or, as most other interpreters render the words, *speaketh* (or, *may speak* , dare speak freely and boldly) *for ever* ; when liars are cut off, he lives, and is in a capacity of speaking and bearing witness again and again, as occasion requires, as long as he lives, and his testimony will be received.

Proverbs 21:29

Hardeneth his face; continueth in evil courses with obstinacy and impudence, in spite of all the commands of God, or counsels of men.

He directeth his way; he ordereth his steps aright; and if at any time, he goeth awry, he doth not add rebellion to his sin, nor persist in his error, but considereth his ways, and turneth his feet to God's testimonies, as David did, Psa_119:59. Or, *considereth his way* , remembering with grief and shame what he hath done, and taking better heed to himself for the future.

Proverbs 21:30

Which can prevail against the counsel and will of God.

Proverbs 21:31

The horse; under which particular all warlike provisions are comprehended.

Safety is of the Lord; the success of the battle depends not upon any human strength or art, but merely upon God's providence, who gives the victory when and to whom he pleaseth, and oftentimes to those that have least reason to expect it. Compare Ecc_9:11.

Proverbs 22:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 22

A good name, Heb. *name put for good name* , as Ecc_7:1, the word *good* being easily understood out of the next clause, in

which it is expressed in the Hebrew text. A good reputation amongst wise and good men.

Is rather to be chosen than great riches; partly, because it is a most special blessing from God, being appropriated to worthy persons, whereas God commonly throws away riches upon the basest of men; partly, because it gives a man that tranquillity and satisfaction of mind, and that content and comfort in his condition, which no riches can purchase; and partly, because as it is commonly an evidence of a man's virtue and piety, so it is accompanied with God's love and favour, whereas riches are oft given by God in wrath, and to the hurt of the owner.

Loving favour; or, *good grace or favour* ; a good report among men, especially among good men, and that hearty love and kindness which attends upon it.

Proverbs 22:2

The rich and poor meet together; either,

1. In a way of hostility or opposition, as this word is sometimes used; the rich contemning and oppressing the poor, and the poor envying and purloining from the rich; and so the following words are a reason why that hostility should cease. Or,

2. In the way of mutual converse; they live together, and need one another.

The Lord is the Maker of them all; not only as they are men, but also as they are poor or rich, which difference comes wholly from God's providence; they have one common Creator, and Lord, and Judge, and the one cannot despise nor grudge at the other without a reflection upon God.

Proverbs 22:3

The evil; the calamity or judgment of God threatened and approaching.

Hideh himself; retireth to his strong tower, mentioned Pro_18:10; by prayer and repentance putteth himself under the protection of the Almighty. Compare Isa_26:20.

Pass on in their former road and course of sin, carelessly and securely, as travellers do in a road where they apprehend no danger.

Proverbs 22:4

By humility; or, *because of humility* ; or, as many others render it, *the reward of humility* ; that reward which God hath graciously promised and will give to humility; which is a grace of great price in God's eyes. See Isa_57:15 Jam_4:6.

The fear of the Lord; by which he distinguisheth true and Christian humility from counterfeit and moral humility, because that ariseth from a deep sense of God's greatness, and purity, and perfection, compared with our meanness, and filthiness and manifold imperfections, whereas this is quite of another nature, and from other grounds.

Life; the comforts of this life, and the happiness of the next, both which are promised to godliness, 1Th_4:8.

Proverbs 22:5

Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward; the wicked by their evil courses expose themselves to many dangers and occasions both of sin and mischief.

He that doth keep his soul, that taketh heed to himself, and to his actions, and to the saving of his life and soul,

shall be far from them; either,

1. Will avoid the society of such froward persons. Or,
2. Shall by that circumspection preserve himself from those *thorns* , &c., with which the pronoun them agrees in number.

Proverbs 22:6

Train up, or, *initiate or instruct, a child in the way he should go* , Heb. *in or according to his way* , i.e. either,

1. According to his capacity. Or rather,
2. In that course or manner of life which thou wouldst have him choose and follow. Or, as one learned man renders it, *in the beginning of his way* , i.e. in his tender years, as soon as he is capable of instruction. Heb. *in the mouth* , &c. *The mouth* is oft

put for the beginning or entrance of any place, as Gen_29:2 Jos_10:18 Pro_8:3 Dan_6:17. *Will not depart from it* , to wit, not easily and ordinarily. The impressions made in childish years will remain, as hath been observed by all sorts of learned writers. But this, as many proverbs of like nature, are not to be understood as if they were universally and necessarily true, which experience confutes, but because it is so for the most part, except some extraordinary cause hinder it.

Proverbs 22:7

Ruleth over the poor, to wit, with rigour and tyranny, taking advantage of his necessities.

Is servant to the lender; is at his mercy, and therefore forced to comply with his pleasure. The design of the proverb is partly to correct this miscarriage of the rich, and partly to oblige all men to diligence, whereby they may deliver themselves from this servitude.

Proverbs 22:8

He that soweth iniquity, or *unrighteousness* , whose common practice it is to wrong or oppress others,

shall reap vanity; or, *trouble* or *misery* , as this word is commonly used, and as divers here render it. The mischief which he hath done to others shall be returned to him by God's righteous sentence.

The rod of his anger shall fail; that power which he used with fury and cruelty shall be taken away from him.

Proverbs 22:9

He that hath a bountiful eye, Heb. *a good eye* , he who looks upon the wants and miseries of others with compassion and kindness, as this phrase is used, Mat_20:15; as *an evil eye* is put for one that beholds others with envy and unmercifulness, Deu_15:9 Pro_23:6 **28:22**

Shall be blessed, both by God and men.

Proverbs 22:10

Cast out of your society, avoid conversation with, the scorner; who neither fears God, nor reverences man, but scorns all admonitions, and minds only the pleasing of himself, and the

gratifying of his own lusts, which is the chief cause of most contentions.

Strife and reproach; wherewith he loads those that either oppose or admonish him.

Proverbs 22:11

That loveth pureness of heart; who is plain-hearted or sincere, and abhors dissimulation. For the grace of his lips; for those gracious speeches which naturally and commonly flow from a pure heart. Or, and (understand, *loveth*, out of the former clause) *grace of his lips*; whose discourse is gracious and sincere.

The king shall be his friend; the greatest men will, or should, desire and highly prize the acquaintance and advice of such persons, rather than of dissemblers and flatterers, wherewith they are most commonly pestered.

Proverbs 22:12

The eyes of the Lord preserve, God by the watchful eye of his providence maintains and defends,

knowledge, to wit, men of knowledge; the abstract being put for the concrete, as *pride* is put for *a proud man*, Psa_36:11, *deceit for the deceitful*, as Pro_12:17: so here *knowledge* for knowing and good men, such as the last verse spoke of, whose hearts are pure, and speeches gracious; not only the king shall be their friend, as he said there, but God also, which he adds here,

The words; their false and flattering speeches, whereby they designed and expected to gain the favour and friendship of great men, which are opposed to the sincere and gracious speeches of good men, implied in the first cause of this verse, and expressed in the foregoing verse; or, as others render it, and the word is very commonly used, the matters; all his counsels, hopes, enterprises, and concerns.

Proverbs 22:13

Saith, allegeth as his excuse to them who upbraid him with idleness, or persuade him to diligence,

There is a lion without; there are extreme dangers and invincible difficulties in my way.

I shall be slain, by that lion, or some other way.

In the streets; which is added to show the ridiculousness of his excuse; for lions abide in the woods or fields, not in the streets of towns or cities.

Proverbs 22:14

The mouth; her fair and flattering speeches, wherewith she enticeth him to gross filthiness, as it is noted, Pro_7:21.

A deep pit; into which it is easy to fall, but hard, if not impossible, to get out of it. It is a rare thing for any person, once entered into the course of whoredom, sincerely to repent of it, and turn from it. See Pro_2:19.

That is abhorred of the Lord, to wit, in a high and singular manner; who by his former impieties, and contempt of God and of his grace, hath provoked God to leave and loathe him, and to punish one sin with another; for otherwise all sinners, as such, are abhorred by God.

Proverbs 22:15

Is bound; is fixed and settled there, as being born with him, and rooted in his very nature, and not plucked up without great difficulty and diligence.

The rod of correction shall drive it far from him; the smart of punishment makes him weary of his sin, and watchful against it.

Proverbs 22:16

That giveth to the rich; that vainly and prodigally casts away his estate upon those who do not need it, or gives it to them with evil design, as that they may assist him in oppressing the poor, or at least not hinder him in it.

Proverbs 22:17

Of the wise; of wise and holy men of God.

Apply thine heart; thirst after it, and give of thyself to the diligent study of it.

My knowledge; the knowledge of God, and of thy several duties, which I am here delivering to thee.

Proverbs 22:18

If thou keep them, the words of the wise, within thee, Heb. *in thy belly* . i.e. in thine heart, which implies receiving them in love, and retaining them in mind and memory.

Be fitted; be fitly expressed; or, be *disposed* or *ordered* . The sense is, When thou hast got them into thine heart, thou wilt be able and ready to discourse pertinently and profitably of them.

Proverbs 22:19

That knowing God, and his word and promises, thou mayst cheerfully and confidently trust in him, which is the only way to thy safety and happiness.

Proverbs 22:20

Excellent things; or, *princely things* , as they are called, Pro_8:6, the great things of God's law, as Hos_8:12.

In counsels and knowledge; consisting of counsels to direct thy practice, and *knowledge* to inform and enrich thy mind. Or by that known figure *hendiadis* , *in counsels of knowledge* , i.e. in good counsels, which proceed from sound knowledge, and make a man knowing and wise, which are opposed to the counsels of the wicked, Pro_12:5, which are without knowledge.

Proverbs 22:21

That I may make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that I may teach thee, not false, or vain, or uncertain things, as the teachers of the heathen nations do, but the true and infallible oracles of God.

That thou mightest answer the words of truth; that being instructed by me, thou mayst be able to give true, and solid, and satisfactory answers.

To them that send unto thee, to wit, for thine advice in great and difficult matters. Or, *to those that send thee* , i.e. that employ the in any business of moment, whereof they expect an account from thee.

Proverbs 22:22

Because he is poor: this may be mentioned, either,

1. As a motive to this robbery, because he was unable to resist him, or to revenge himself upon him. Do not take advantage of his poverty. Or,

2. As an argument against it, because he is a fitter object for thy pity and charity, than for thy injustice or cruelty. It is base and inhuman to crush such a person.

In the gate; in the place of judgment, or under pretence of justice, and much less in other ways, where there is no colour of justice.

Proverbs 22:23

Will plead their cause; which he hath in a peculiar manner undertaken to do.

Spoil the soul; take away not only their goods, but their lives too; so fully will he recompense their wickedness to them.

Proverbs 22:24

Into his company; not converse frequently and familiarly with him, as friends use to do.

Proverbs 22:25

Lest thou learn his ways; lest thou be infected by his example, or provoked by this passion to return the like to him.

A snare; either,

1. A mischief, which is oft the effect of unbridled rage. Or,

2. An occasion of sin; either by drawing thee to an imitation or requital of his rage; or by tempting thee to unfaithfulness in performing the great office of a friend, to wit, admonition or reproof, which, by reason of his furious temper, thou either canst not or wilt not do.

Proverbs 22:26

To wit, rashly, or unnecessarily.

Proverbs 22:27

Why wilt thou put thyself into the hands of such a man, who will exact the debt from thee without any compassion? For though God did not allow this practice, covetous creditors would frequently do it.

Proverbs 22:28

Landmark, whereby the lands of several possessors were distinguished and divided. Do not enrich thyself with the injury of other men; do not invade the rights of others.

Proverbs 22:29

Diligent; or, *expeditious*, as the word properly signifies; one of quick despatch, vigorous and speedy in executing what hath been well and wisely contrived.

He shall stand before kings; he is fit to be employed in the affairs of the greatest princes.

Proverbs 23:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 23

When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, when thou art invited to a feast with a great man,

consider diligently what is before thee; either

1. What person or persons. Or rather,
2. What things; what plenty and variety of meats and drinks, by which thou mayst easily be tempted to excess, and by that means induced to use such speeches or carriages as may be unfit for thee, or many ways hurtful to thee.

Proverbs 23:2

Put a knife to thy throat; restrain and moderate thine appetite, as if a knife or some other thing stuck in thy throat, and hindered thee from swallowing what thou didst desire; or as if a man stood with a knife at thy throat ready to kill thee, if thou didst transgress; or though it be as irksome to thee to do so as if thou hadst a knife put to thy throat. So this is to be understood metaphorically, as that phrase of

cutting off the right hand, & c., Mat_5:29,30. Or, *For thou dost* (or, *lest thou shouldst*, as the Syriac interpreter renders it; or, otherwise thou wilt or shouldst) put a knife to thy throat. So the sense is, When thou goest to their feasts, thou dost expose thyself to great and manifest hazards, to thy own intemperance, and to all its dangerous consequences, and to the ill effects of other men's intemperance.

Given to appetite; prone to excess in eating and drinking.

Proverbs 23:3

Either because they do not yield thee that satisfaction which thou didst expect from them, but rather load thee with ill humours, and the seeds of divers diseases; or because they are not provided for thee with sincerity and good will, but with some evil design upon thee, either to discover and betray thee, or to enslave thee. **See Poole "Pro_23:6,7"**.

Proverbs 23:4

Labour not, Heb. *Do not weary thyself with immoderate cares and labours* , as many covetous men do.

From thine own wisdom; from that carnal wisdom which is natural to man in his corrupt estate, which persuades men to believe that it is their interest to use all possible means to get riches, and that the happiness of their lives consists in the abundance of their possessions, directly contrary to the assertion of our blessed Lord, Luk_12:15.

Proverbs 23:5

Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that, i.e. look upon it with earnestness and greedy desire, employing the eyes of thy mind and body about it.

Which is not; which hath no solid and settled being; which is ours to have, but not to hold; which is always upon the wing, and oftentimes gone in the twinkling of an eye, so that the owner is frequently at a loss, and cannot tell whether he hath his estate, or whether he hath lost it.

They fly away as an eagle, swiftly, strongly, and irrevocably. We quickly lose the sight and possession of them. Their flying away from us is elegantly opposed to our eyes being set, or, as it is in the Hebrew, flying upon them, in the beginning of the verse.

Proverbs 23:6

Of him that hath an evil eye; of the envious or covetous man, who secretly grudgeth thee the meat which he sets before thee, as this phrase is used, Pro_28:22 Mat_20:15; as, on the contrary, a liberal man is said to have a *good eye* , Pro_22:9.

Proverbs 23:7

As he thinketh in his heart, so is he: you are not to judge of him by his words, for so he professeth kindness, as it follows; but by the constant temper of his mind, which he hath fully discovered to all that know him by the course of his life.

His heart is not with thee; he hath no sincere kindness to thee, but inwardly grudgeth thee that which he outwardly offers to thee.

Proverbs 23:8

When thou perceivest his churlish disposition and carriage, his meat will be loathsome to thee, and thou wilt wish either that thou hadst never eaten it, or that thou couldst vomit it up again.

Thy sweet words; thy pleasant discourse, wherewith thou didst adorn his table, and design both to delight and profit him, is lost, and of no effect to him, and thou wilt be ready to repent of it.

Proverbs 23:9

Speak not in the ears of a fool; cast not away good counsels upon obstinate and incorrigible sinners. We have the same advice given Mat_7:6.

He will despise the wisdom of thy words; he will scornfully reject thy wise and good admonitions.

Proverbs 23:10

Either to take away their goods; or rather, to possess their lands, as this phrase is used, 2Sa_5:6.

Proverbs 23:11

Their redeemer, Heb. *their near kinsman*, to whom it belongs to avenge their wrongs, and to recover and maintain their rights, of which see Lev_25:25 Num_35:12. Thus God is pleased to call himself, to show how much he concerns himself for the relief of oppressed and helpless persons.

Proverbs 23:12

Apply thine heart unto instruction; content not thyself with outward hearing or reading of it, but affectionately receive it into thine heart, and lay it up there as choice treasure.

Proverbs 23:13

It is a likely mean to prevent their corruption, and the destruction which commonly follows it, as the next verse explains this.

Proverbs 23:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 23:15

In the good success of my counsels, and in thy piety and happiness, which is as truly desirable and pleasant to me as my own.

Proverbs 23:16

I shall rejoice not only in show and profession, but inwardly, and with all my soul.

Proverbs 23:17

Let not thine heart envy sinners; let not the consideration of their present impunity and prosperity stir thee up, either to envy them, or to approve and imitate their evil courses.

Be thou in the fear of the Lord; reverence the presence of the Divine Majesty, and dread his power and justice, and those judgments which he hath prepared for sinners, and thou wilt see no cause to envy, but rather to pity them.

All the day long; not only when thou art in trouble, but in all times and conditions.

Proverbs 23:18

An end; an expected and happy end for such as fear God, which was required, Pro_23:17. Or,

a reward, as this Hebrew word is rendered, Pro_24:20.

Thine expectation shall not be cut off; thou shalt certainly enjoy that good which thou expectest, as the wicked shall lose that happiness which they enjoy.

Proverbs 23:19

Be wise; rest not in hearing, but see that thou growest wiser and better by it.

Guide thine heart; order the whole course of thine affections and actions.

In the way; in God's way, oft called the way, as hath been observed before.

Proverbs 23:20

Avoid their conversation and company, lest thou be either infected or injured by them.

Proverbs 23:21

Drowsiness; immoderate sleep and idleness, which is a ready a way to poverty as gluttony or drunkenness is.

Proverbs 23:22

That begat thee; and therefore desires and seeks thy good in all his counsels.

When she is old; when the infirmity of age is added to that of her sex, which is apt to breed contempt.

Proverbs 23:23

Buy the truth; purchase it upon any terms, spare no pains nor cost to get it. *The truth* ; the true and saving knowledge of God's mind and will concerning your salvation, and the way that leads to it.

Sell it not; do not forget it nor forsake it for any worldly advantages, as ungodly men frequently do.

Understanding; whereby you may love and practise the truth known and received.

Proverbs 23:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 23:25

Thy father and thy mother shall be glad; he repeateth this again, as a powerful argument to prevail with all children that are not void of natural affection, to labour to be wise and good, that so they may glad the hearts of their parents, to whom they have such high and indelible obligations.

She that bare thee with so great pain and hazard, and brought thee up with such tender care, whom thou canst not better requite.

Proverbs 23:26

Give me thine heart; receive my counsels with thy whole heart. Solomon speaking in God's name and cause, requires the heart to be given to him.

Let thine eyes observe, let thy mind seriously and practically consider, my ways; either,

1. The ways in which I have walked, my evil practices; take warning by my sad example. Or,

2. The ways which I prescribe to you; as the apostles called the gospel which they preached their gospel, 1Th_1:5 2Th_2:8.

Proverbs 23:27

A deep ditch; in which a man is in evident danger of perdition, and out of which it is exceeding difficult to escape.

Proverbs 23:28

Lieth in wait as for a prey; watching all opportunities of insnaring young men to their destruction.

Increaseth the transgressors among men; she is the cause of innumerable sins against God, and against the marriage-bed, against the soul and body too, and by her wicked example and arts involveth many persons in the guilt of her sins.

Proverbs 23:29

From the sin of lust he proceeds to that of drunkenness, which doth frequently accompany it.

Babbling the sin of much and impertinent talking; or, *tumultuous noise or clamour*, which is usual among drunkards. See Pro_20:1.

Without cause; upon every slight occasion, which men inflamed with wine are very apt to take.

Proverbs 23:30

Either mixed with water, or with other ingredients, to make it strong and delicious. Heb. *mixture*; mixed drinks of several sorts suited to their palates.

Proverbs 23:31

Look not thou upon the wine earnestly, so as to inflame thine appetite towards it; in which sense men are forbidden to look upon a woman, Job_31:1 Mat_5:28.

When it is red; which was the colour of the best wines in that country, which therefore are called blood, Gen_49:11 Deu_32:14; and such were used by them in the passover.

When it moveth itself aright; when it sparkleth and frisketh, and seems to smile upon a man.

Proverbs 23:32

It hurts the body in many respects, impairs the rigour of the mind, wastes the estate and reputation, wounds the conscience, and, without repentance, will destroy the soul.

Proverbs 23:33

Behold, with evil intent, or lustfully, which is the effect of drinking much wine, as is noted in Scripture, Gen_19:31, **35 Ho 4:18**, and other authors.

Thine heart shall utter perverse things; thine heart, which, when thou hadst the use of thy wit, concealed, will then discover its wickedness by filthy and perverse speeches.

Proverbs 23:34

That lieth down to sleep, of which that word is frequently used, **in the midst of the sea**; in a ship in the midst of the sea. This phrase notes the temper and condition of the drunkard, the giddiness of his brain, the unquietness of his mind, and especially his extreme danger joined with great security.

The top of a mast; the worst part of the ship, both for its perpetual tossings, and for the hazard of him that sleeps on it.

Proverbs 23:35

They have stricken me; I cannot deny that I exposed myself by my drunkenness to manifold abuses and injuries.

I was not sick; I was not then sensible of it, neither do I now find any great hurt by it; it was but the effect of a present frolic, at which I have no cause to be much troubled.

When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again; at present I find some inconvenience, and my condition requires sleep to settle myself, and when I am composed and refreshed, I purpose to return to my former course. But that which Solomon here expresseth, seems rather to be the language of their hearts or lives than of their tongues. Compare Pro_1:11.

Proverbs 24:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 24

Their company or manner of life.

Proverbs 24:2

Studieth destruction; how they may oppress and destroy others, which yet at last falls upon their own heads.

Proverbs 24:3

There is no need that thou shouldst raise thyself and family by ruining others, as the manner of wicked men is, which thou mayst more easily and effectually do by wisdom, and the fear of God.

Proverbs 24:4

Knowledge; which in Scripture phrase includes the love and practice of that which we know.

Proverbs 24:5

Is strong; is courageous and resolute, and able by wisdom to do greater things than others can accomplish by their own strength.

Proverbs 24:6

War is better managed by wisdom than by strength. So this proves what he said in the last verse.

Proverbs 24:7

Wisdom is too high for a fool; either,

1. Really, it is above his reach or capacity. Or,

2. In his opinion; he judgeth it too hard for him, he despairs of attaining it, he pretends the impossibility of it, because he will not put himself to the charge or trouble of getting it; as, on the contrary, *wisdom* is said to be easy *to him that understandeth*, Pro_14:6, because he seriously giveth his mind to it, and therefore easily and certainly attains to it.

For a fool; for a wilful fool, or a wicked man, whose lusts enfeeble and darken his mind, and make it incapable of wisdom.

He openeth not his mouth in the gate; either,

1. He can say nothing for himself when he is accused before the magistrate, for which he gives frequent occasion. Or,

2. He knows not how to speak acceptably and profitably in the public assembly among wise men.

Proverbs 24:8

Heb. *a master of mischief* . The sense is, Though he cover his wicked devices with fair pretences, and would be better esteemed, yet he shall be noted and branded with that infamy which is due to him.

Proverbs 24:9

The thought of foolishness is sin; the very inward thought or contrivance of evil, of which he spake Pro_24:8, even before it break forth into action, it is a sin in God's sight, and it is hateful to God. Or

foolishness is put for foolish or wicked men, by comparing this with the next clause where the scorner is opposed to it. So the sense is, All the thoughts of wicked men are only evil, and that continually, as is said of man in his corrupt estate, Gen_6:5, and therefore abominable to God.

The scorner; he who not only deviseth and practiseth wickedness, but obstinately persists in it, and rejects all admonitions against it.

Is an abomination to men; is abominable not only to God, as all sinners are, but to all sober men.

Proverbs 24:10

If thou faint; if thou art impatient, and unable to bear sufferings; if thy resolution flag, and thou givest way to despondency or dejection of mind. *Is small* , Heb. *is narrow* ; it lives in a little compass; it is as strait as thy condition is; for there is an elegant allusion in the Hebrew words. The sense is, This is a sign that thou hast but little Christian strength or courage, for that is best known by adversity.

Proverbs 24:11

To deliver them, when it is in thy power to do it lawfully.

Drawn unto death, to wit, unjustly, or by the violence of lawless men.

That are ready to be slain; that are in present danger of death or destruction.

Proverbs 24:12

We knew it not; I was ignorant either of his innocency, or of his extreme danger, or of my power to relieve him.

Consider it; that this is only a frivolous excuse, and that the true reason of thy neglect was thy want of true love to thy brother, whose life thou wast by the law of God and of nature obliged to preserve, and thy sinful self-love, and a carnal fear of some mischief or trouble which might befall thee in the discharge of thy duty.

He that keepeth thy soul; God, who is the preserver of men, Job_7:20, who daily doth, and who only can, keep thee both in and from the greatest dangers. And this favour of God may be here mentioned, partly, as a strong obligation upon him to preserve him who is made after God's image, and whom God hath commanded him to love and preserve; partly, as an encouragement to the performance of his duty herein from the consideration of God's special care and watchfulness over those that do their duty; and partly, to intimate to them the danger of the neglect of this duty, whereby they will forfeit God's protection over themselves, and expose themselves to manifold dangers and calamities. Or, as others render it, and as the Hebrew verb is frequently used, *he that observeth thy soul*, that seeth all the secret thoughts and inward motions of the heart; which exposition is favoured both by the following words, doth not he know it? which agrees better to God's observing than to his preserving a man's soul; and by the former clause, to which this translation doth more exactly answer, the same thing being here repeated in other words, after the manner of these sacred writers.

Shall not he render to every man according to his works? God will certainly deal with thee as thou hast dealt with him, either

rewarding thy performance of this duty, or punishing thy neglect of it.

Proverbs 24:13

This is not a command, but a concession, and is here expressed only to illustrate the following verse. Honey in those parts was excellent, and a usual and an acceptable food. See Deu_8:8 Jud_14:18 1Sa_14:25.

Proverbs 24:14

When thou hast found it; whereby he implies that there is indeed some difficulty and trouble in the pursuit of wisdom, but that it is abundantly compensated with the sweetness and advantage of it when a man arrives at it.

Then there shall be a reward, Heb. *and* or *also there is a reward*. It is not only as good as honey, sweet for the present, but it is infinitely better, bringing a sure and everlasting reward with it.

Proverbs 24:15

Lay not wait; do him no injury, either by subtle and secret devices, or, as it follows, by manifest violence.

Against the dwelling of the righteous; against his person, or family, or possession.

Proverbs 24:16

Falleth; either,

1. Into sin. Or, rather,

2. Into calamities, of which he evidently speaks, both in the foregoing verse, and in the opposite and following branch of this verse, and so this word is used in the next verse, and Psa_37:24 Isa_24:20 Jer_25:27 Amo_8:14 Mic_7:8, &c. And so this is fitly alleged as a just reason to dissuade wicked men from their unjust attempts against righteous men, because they should not succeed in them; and although they might by God's permission bring them into some distress for a time, yet God would deliver them out of their hands, and they should be disappointed of their hopes.

Seven times, i.e. frequently.

Into mischief; into unavoidable and irrecoverable destruction, oftentimes in this life, and infallibly in the next.

Proverbs 24:17

Falleth, to wit, into mischief, as in the former verse. Please not thyself in his destruction; which plainly shows that the love of our enemies is a precept of the old law as well as of the gospel. See Exo_23:4,5.

Proverbs 24:18

Understand, *upon thee* , which is implied in the Hebrew phrase, such defects being usual in that concise language, Psa_84:11 Pro_19:1, and oft elsewhere. This consideration strikes at the root of that sinful and inhuman disposition, which is an expectation of safety or advantage to himself by his enemy's downfall, which, saith he, by this very mean thou shalt lose, for thine enemy shall be raised, and thy danger greatly increased, by thy provoking both God and him against thee.

Proverbs 24:19

Fret not thyself; which translation of the word is confirmed by the parallel word in the following clause.

Because of evil men; for their present impunity and good success.

Proverbs 24:20

There shall be no reward to the evil man; all his hopes and happiness shall quickly and eternally perish, and he shall have the share in those solid felicities and blessed recompences of a better life which thou shalt enjoy; therefore thou hast no reason to envy him.

The candle of the wicked shall be put out; all their comfort and glory shall cease.

Proverbs 24:21

Fear thou the Lord and the king; honour and obey both God and the king, and all in authority. He puts God before the king, because God is to be served in the first place, and our obedience is to be given, to kings only in subordination to God, and not in those things which are contrary to the will and command of God, as is manifest both from plain Scripture, as Act_5:29, and from the judgment and practice of wise and sober heathens.

Meddle not with them, Heb. *mix not thyself with them* , either in their counsels and practices, or in familiar conversation, that are

given to change; that love or use changes; that are unstable in their obedience to God or to the king, and are prone to rebellion against either of them. Those men that wickedly forsake God, and break his laws, are said to change their God, Jer_2:11, and to

change God's judgments and ordinances, Isa_24:5 Eze_5:6.

Proverbs 24:22

Who knoweth? who can conceive how sore and sudden it will be?

The ruin of them both; of them that fear not God, and of them that fear not the king, for they have two potent and terrible enemies; and therefore if they will not obey them out of conscience, as their duty binds them, yet they should do it at least for their own sakes, and for fear of those severe punishments which they will certainly inflict upon rebels.

Proverbs 24:23

These things also, these proverbs or counsels here following to the end of the chapter, no less than those hitherto mentioned,

belong to the wise; are worthy of the consideration, and fit for the use, of them who are or would be wise; for only such are capable of understanding and improving these proverbs, as was noted, Pro_1:5-7, and elsewhere. To have respect of persons in judgment; for judges to determine controversies partially, according to the quality of the persons, and not according to the merits of the cause.

Proverbs 24:24

He that saith, to wit, publicly, and in judgment, as he now said, and as appears by the publicness of the curse following upon it, for people or nations do neither observe nor hate every man who saith thus privately.

Thou art righteous, that justify wicked men in their unrighteous courses.

Nations shall abhor him, partly for the grossness and odiousness of the crime, and partly for the great and general mischief which such practices bring to civil societies.

Proverbs 24:25

That rebuke him; that publicly and judicially rebuke and condemn the wicked.

Delight; the peace of a good conscience, and the comfort of a good name.

A good blessing; which the people shall wish, and by their prayers obtain, from God for them; which is fitly opposed to *the people's curse* in the last verse.

Proverbs 24:26

Every man shall kiss his lips, shall highly respect and love him, of which kissing was a sign,

that giveth a right answer; who being called to speak, either as a judge, or witness, or otherwise, in weighty matters, speaks pertinently, and plainly, and truly, to the conviction and satisfaction of the hearers.

Proverbs 24:27

This is a domestical precept, requiring both industry and prudence in the management of a man's concerns, that he take care in the first place to furnish himself with cattle and the fruits of the field, which are necessary for his subsistence, and after that he may procure such things as are for ornament and comfort, such as the building of a convenient house is.

Proverbs 24:28

Be not a witness against thy neighbour, either in judgment or in private conversation, without cause; rashly or falsely, without just and sufficient cause.

Deceive not neither thy neighbour, to whom thou hast made a show of friendship, nor the judge, nor any other bearers, with false information. Or this clause forbids flattering him to his face, as the former forbids slandering him behind his back.

Proverbs 24:29

Say not within thyself; give not way to any such thoughts or passions.

I will render to the man according to his work; I will repay him all his calumnies and injuries.

Proverbs 24:30

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 24:31

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 24:32

I learned wisdom by his folly, and by his gross idleness was provoked to greater care and diligence.

Proverbs 24:33

See this and the following verse in Pro_6:10,**11**.

Proverbs 24:34

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 25:1 **PROVERBS Chapters 25**

Observations about kings, Pro_25:1-7. A caution against contentions, Pro_25:8; against revealing of secrets, Pro_25:9. The reason of this caution, Pro_25:10; with divers other rules, Pro_25:11-28.

These, which are contained in this and the following chapters.

The men of Hezekiah; certain persons appointed by Hezekiah for that work, whether prophets, as Isaiah, Hosea, or Micah, who lived in his days, or some others, it is neither evident nor material. Most of them are political precepts, and such as in a special manner concerned Hezekiah and other princes to know, for the conduct of their house and kingdom.

Copied out; either out of other books or writings of Solomon, concerning natural or civil things, of which we read 1Ki_4:32; or out of the historical records which were then extant concerning Solomon's speeches and actions in the history of the kings of Judah, which is oft mentioned in Holy Scripture.

Proverbs 25:2

It is the glory of God; it is agreeable to the nature and highly conducing to the honour of God, because it is a testimony of his infinite wisdom and knowledge, of his absolute power and sovereignty, and of his other incomprehensible perfections.

To conceal a thing; to keep his counsels and the reasons of his actions in his own breast, that he needs not to impart them to any

other for their advice and assistance, as being self-sufficient both for the contrivance and execution of whatsoever pleaseth him, and accountable to none for any of his matters.

But the honour of kings is; but kings must not affect to be like God in this respect, because they are creatures, and therefore ignorant and insufficient, and accountable to a higher authority;

to search out a matter; in the conduct of their great affairs, not to lean to their own understandings, nor to be wedded to their own wills, but to communicate their counsels to others, that so they may search and find out the true and right way, and to be ready to give a satisfactory account of the justice and reasonableness of them, as occasion shall require.

Proverbs 25:3

The heaven for height, and the earth for depth; as no man upon earth can exactly discover the height of heaven, or the depth of earth, or discern what is contained in them.

The heart of kings is unsearchable; though wise kings will search out other men and things, yet their inward thoughts and purposes are hardly discoverable, partly because every man's heart lies out of the sight of others, and partly because it is the practice of kings industriously to conceal their intentions.

Proverbs 25:4

Then, and not till then, it is fit for that use.

Proverbs 25:5

From before the king; from his court and councils.

Shall be established, by removing them who by their wicked counsels and practices provoked God's displeasure against the king, and blasted his reputation, and alienated the hearts of his people from him.

Established in righteousness, by such impartial execution of justice.

Proverbs 25:6

Put not forth thyself, Heb. *Do not magnify or glorify thyself*, by vaunting speech or carriage, but, which is implied, carry thyself

humbly and modestly, which is most pleasing to kings, and most becoming and safe for them.

Stand not in the place of great men; do not affect nor use frequent and familiar society with greater persons than thyself, whereby thou mayst easily involve thyself in much guilt, and expose thyself to envy or contempt, and to many other inconveniences.

Proverbs 25:7

For better it is, it is more for thy credit and comfort,

that it be said unto thee, by some public officer, or by the king himself. *Whom thine eyes have seen* ; into whose presence and acquaintance thou hast so boldly intruded thyself, who as before he observed thy impudence, so now he sees and suffers this public disgrace to be cast upon thee.

Proverbs 25:8

Go not forth hastily, without necessary cause and due consideration, to strive, either judicially or otherwise.

Put thee to shame, for thy folly in undertaking what thou wast not able to accomplish, and for thy injustice in charging him wrongfully.

Proverbs 25:9

Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; if thou hast any quarrel with him, first try to compose it by private discourse with him. Compare Mat_5:25 **18:15** Luk_12:58.

Discover not a secret; any secret. Let no heat of contention provoke thee to divulge any of his secret counsels committed to thy trust, or to reproach him with any of his secret faults, as is usual in lawsuits and other contentions. Or, *the secret* ; any secret difference between thee and him, which therefore is fittest to be ended secretly between you, and not to be imparted to any other.

Proverbs 25:10

Put thee to shame; reproach thee for thy gross violation of the laws of prudence, and justice, and charity, and friendship therein.

And thine infamy turn not away; and that disgrace which thou didst design against another fall and be fastened upon thyself.

Proverbs 25:11

A word fitly spoken, for the matter, and season, and other circumstances of it,

is like apples of gold in pictures of silver, which it seems was usual in those times, and was grateful to the eye for the beauty and variety both of the colours and figures, the golden apples appearing through net-work of silver, or being engraven or portrayed upon tablets of silver.

Proverbs 25:12

As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold; highly acceptable, and a great ornament, and not an offence and dishonour, as fools esteem it;

so is a wise reprovor, that reproves an offender faithfully; yet prudently, in the fittest manner and season.

Upon an obedient ear; to a man that hearkens to it, and is instructed and reformed by it.

Proverbs 25:13

As the cold of snow; either,

1. As drink cooled with ice or snow, as was and is usual in hot countries. Or,
2. As a cool air, such as is in snowy seasons. Or,
3. As drink which is as cold as snow.

He refresheth the soul of his masters, with a true account and speedy despatch of those important affairs which were committed to him.

Proverbs 25:14

Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, pretending that he hath given, or promising that he will give, a man those gifts, which he neither hath given, nor intendeth to give him,

is like clouds and wind without rain; like empty clouds carried about with wind, and not affording that rain which by their appearance they promise.

Proverbs 25:15

By long forbearing, by patient submission and expectation,

is a prince persuaded, or *pacified* , whereas his rage is increased by opposition. Compare Ecc_10:4.

A soft tongue, a mild and humble answer,

breaketh the bone; softeneth a heart which is as hard as bone or stone. He alludes to those oils which sink through the flesh to the very bone. See Psa_109:18.

Proverbs 25:16

Honey in those parts was oft found in woods or fields, as Jud_14:8, &c.; 1Sa_14:25. By *honey* he understands, not only all delicious meats, but all present and worldly delights, which we are here taught to use with moderation. Honey excessively taken disposeth a man to vomiting.

Proverbs 25:17

Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house, visit him not too frequently nor unseasonably, lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee, as men are apt to loathe those meats of which they surfeit, as was now observed, Pro_25:16.

Proverbs 25:18

Is as cruel and pernicious to him as any instrument of death. The design of the proverb is to show the wickedness of slander, and that a false witness is in some respect as bad as a murderer.

Proverbs 25:19

It is not only deceitful, but hurtful, as a broken tooth though it make show of helping, yet is not only unhelpful to a man for chewing his meat, but also troublesome and painful; and as a foot out of joint doth not help, but hinder and pain, him that attempts to walk upon it.

Proverbs 25:20

In cold weather, when it is most seasonable and necessary.

As vinegar upon nitre, which dissolves the nitre, and makes it useless and ineffectual.

So is he, he is no less absurd and impertinent,

that singeth songs to an heavy heart; whose grief is not relieved, but increased by it, as common experience showeth, and divers learned authors have observed.

Proverbs 25:21

By bread and water he understands all things necessary for his subsistence.

Proverbs 25:22

For, understand, in so doing, which words are expressed Rom_12:20, where this text is quoted,

thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head; either,

1. In a bad sense, thou shalt hereby aggravate his sin, and occasion a more speedy and grievous vengeance from God, which, like fire from heaven, shall fall upon his head and consume him. Not that he persuades him to do a kindness with an evil intent, with an expectation, or desire, or design of bringing God's wrath upon him; but only he foretells what would happen, and dissuades him from taking vengeance, and provokes him to kindness instead of it, because vengeance is God's peculiar work, which he will certainly inflict upon such persons; which argument is used to that very purpose by St. Paul, Rom_12:19. Or,

2. In a good sense, thou shalt melt him into repentance, and inflame him with love and kindness to thee for so unexpected and undeserved a favour; he shall be as heartily grieved and tormented with the thoughts of his vile and wicked carriage to thee, as a man would be that had burning coals of fire heaped upon his head. But if these coals of fire do not melt him, but still he hardens his heart against thee, they will consume him. Thus either by the one or by the other way thou shalt be secured and delivered from him. The metaphor may seem to be taken from founders, who melt the hardest metals by heaping coals of fire upon them. And *the head* may be here mentioned rather than any other part, because in Scripture phrase both blessings and curses are said to fall upon men's heads, i.e. upon them, heads being frequently put for persons.

The Lord shall reward thee; thy charity to him shall be fully recompensed to thee, if not by him, yet by God, which is far better.

Proverbs 25:23

An angry countenance in the hearer, who by his countenance showeth his dislike of such persons and practices.

A backbiting tongue, Heb. *a secret tongue* , which privily slandereth his neighbour, as it is expressed, Psa_101:5, and as the manner of backbiters is. But this verse is otherwise rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *the north wind bringeth forth* (as this verb properly and most frequently signifies, and as it is rendered by all the ancient interpreters, and by many others) *rain* (which it doth in Judea, because the sea lies northward as well as westward from it, as also in Africa, as Aristotle observes, though it drive away rain in countries of another situation):

so doth a backbiting tongue (cause)

an angry countenance; it causeth much anger and mischief; both to the person slandered, and to the slanderer, and to other persons who may be concerned with or for either of them, as is manifest from common experience.

Proverbs 25:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 25:25

Because it comes thither more rarely and difficultly after it hath been long expected and earnestly desired; all which circumstances make it more acceptable.

Proverbs 25:26

Falling down; either,

1. Into sin. So the sense is, When a just man is either allured or terrified into any sinful practice before wicked men, or into any base and servile compliance with their lusts, he who by his excellent counsels was like a fountain or *well of life* , as his mouth is called, Pro_10:11, sending forth refreshing streams for the benefit of many, is now corrupted and rendered unserviceable. Or rather,

2. Into misery, of which kind of falling this word is constantly used, and never to my remembrance of falling into sin. And so the sense is this, When righteous men are oppressed and devoured by the wicked, the state of that commonwealth is as deplorable, as if the public fountains, from whence all the people fetch their water, were corrupted, and it is a sign that the fountains of justice are poisoned.

Proverbs 25:27

Not good, to wit, for the health of the body.

For men; which words are easily understood, both out of the foregoing clause, where the honey is supposed to be eaten by men, and out of the following words, which are evidently meant of them.

To search their own glory; industriously to seek for honour and applause from men.

Is not glory; is not only sinful, but shameful also, and a sign of a vain and mean spirit. The negative particle *not* is here understood out of the former part of the verse, as it is Psa_1:5 **9:18**.

Proverbs 25:28

Over his own spirit; over his passions, and especially his anger, Which is signified by this word, Pro_16:2 Ecc_10:4.

Is like a city that is broken down, and without walls; exposeth himself to manifold dangers and mischiefs.

Proverbs 26:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 26

Rules how to carry it towards fools, Pro_26:1-12. The slothful man described, Pro_26:13-16. The character of a contentious man, and of a busybody, and tale-bearer, Pro_26:17-23. The evil of hypocrisy and lying, Pro_26:24-28.

As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest; unbecoming and unseasonable.

So honour is not seemly for a fool, because he neither deserves it, nor knows how to use it, but his folly is both increased and publicly manifested by it.

Proverbs 26:2

By wandering from place to place; by its perpetual restlessness it secures itself from the fowler, that he cannot shoot at it, nor spread his net over it.

Shall not come, to wit, upon the innocent person, but he shall escape from it like a bird, &c.

Proverbs 26:3

A bridle was very proper and usual for an ass, when they rode upon it, (as the Jews most commonly did,) though not to restrain him from running away, which is the principal use of it in horses, yet that the rider might rule and guide him, which was very necessary for that stupid creature. Although the ancient interpreters render it a *goad*, or spur, or something of the like nature and use.

A rod for the fool's back; which is most proper and necessary for him. Not words, but blows, must make him better.

Proverbs 26:4

How can these contrary rules be reconciled, *answer him not*, and *answer him*?

Ans. Easily, by considering the difference of persons, and times, and places, and other circumstances, and of the manner of answering. And such seemingly contradictory precepts are not only used by, but are esteemed elegant in, other authors.

Answer him not, when he is incorrigible, or when he is inflamed with passion or wine, &c., or when it is not necessary, nor likely to do him good.

Answer him, when he is capable of receiving good by it, or when it is necessary for the glory of God, or for the discharge of a man's duty, or for the good of others.

According to his folly; so as to imitate his folly, by such passionate, or reproachful, or foolish speeches as he useth to thee.

Be like unto him; show thyself to be as great a fool as he.

Proverbs 26:5

According to his folly; so as his folly needs and requires, convincing him strongly, reproofing him sharply, exposing him to just shame, and correcting him with a rod, when he deserves it, and thou hast a just power to use it.

Lest he be wise in his own conceit; lest thy silence make him arrogant and presumptuous, as if his words were unanswerable.

Proverbs 26:6

He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool, he that employeth a fool upon any important errand or business which is too hard for him,

cutteth off the feet, to wit, of his messenger; he bids one go that wants legs; he sends one who wants that discretion, which is as necessary for that employment as legs are for going.

Drinketh damage; he bringeth upon himself abundance of loss and mischief, not only spoiling that business about which he sends him, but making himself contemptible to the person to whom he sends him, and to others with him, as if he had not common prudence to choose a fit messenger, and giving occasion, by the folly of his messenger, to further misunderstandings, and jealousies, and inconveniences. For the phrase, we may observe that drinking in Scripture frequently notes the plentiful doing or receiving of any thing, as they who multiply sins are said to drink iniquity like water, Job_15:16 **34:7**; and they who are greatly afflicted are commonly said to drink the cup.

Proverbs 26:7

The legs of the lame are not equal, Heb. As (which note of similitude is plainly understood from the particle so in the following clause) *the legs of the lame are lifted up* , to wit, in going, or rather in dancing, which is done with great inequality and uncomeliness.

So is a parable in the mouth of fools; no less absurd and indecent are wise and pious speeches from a foolish and ungodly man, whose actions grossly contradict them, whereby he makes them contemptible, and himself ridiculous.

Proverbs 26:8

As he that bindeth a stone in a sling; whereby he hinders his own design of throwing the stone out of it; or, who fastens it there only for a season, that he may speedily and violently throw it away. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by many others, *As he that putteth a precious stone* (Heb. *a stone* , which is oft emphatically used for a precious stone, both in Scripture, as Exo_39:10 1Ch_29:8, and elsewhere, and also in other authors) *in an heap of stones* , where it is obscured and lost.

So is he that giveth honour to a fool; no less absurd is he that giveth to a fool that honour and praise which he is not capable either of receiving, or retaining, or using aright, but it is quite wasted upon him, and doth him more hurt than good.

Proverbs 26:9

As a thorn is in a drunkard 's hand, which he cannot hold and manage cautiously, but employeth to his own and others' hurt,

so is a parable in the mouth of fools; as improper and unprofitable, and, by accident, hurtful to himself and others. **See Poole "Pro_26:7"**.

Proverbs 26:10

God, who is oft called

great, as Psa_86:10 **135:5,** &c., and is described by the name of

the Most High, as Psa_9:2 **21:7,** &c., who created all things, and therefore observeth and governeth all men and things, will certainly give that recompence which is meet for and deserved by *fools and transgressors* , i.e. by such as sin either through ignorance and heedlessness, or wilfully and wickedly. Or, as it is the margin, *A great man* (a prince or potentate, who are called by this title, Est_1:8 Dan_1:3, &c.) *grieveth* (as this word is used, Isa_51:9 **53:5,** and elsewhere) all, (to wit, all that are subject to him, or all that stand in his way) he hireth (as this word most commonly signifies) the fools, he hireth also transgressors. So the sense is, It is the manner of many princes to vex and oppress their subjects, which because they cannot do by themselves alone, they hire others, both fools, who do not know or consider what they do, and transgressors, who are ready to execute all their commands, right or wrong, that they may be their instruments in that work.

Proverbs 26:11

As a dog returneth to his vomit, to lick up that which he had lately vomited, forgetting how burdensome and vexatious it was to him,

so a fool returneth to his folly; such like is the impudence and madness of sinners, who having smarted for their sins, and been forced to forsake them for a time, do afterwards return to the commission of them.

Proverbs 26:12

A man wise in his own conceit; who, being a fool, thinks himself wise, and therefore scorneth the counsels of others.

There is more hope of a fool; of doing good to one who is a fool, and sensible of his folly, and ready to receive instruction.

Proverbs 26:13

To excuse his idleness, and keeping himself at home. **See Poole** "Pro_22:13".

Proverbs 26:14

Turneth upon his hinges; moving hither and thither upon them, but not removing one jot from its place.

Proverbs 26:15

He will not take the least pains for the most necessary things.

Proverbs 26:16

Is wiser in his own conceit, because by his idleness he avoids those troubles and dangers to which other men by their activity expose themselves, forgetting in the mean time what reproach and loss, and how much greater mischiefs, both here and hereafter, are brought upon him by his slothfulness.

That can render a reason, to wit, a satisfactory reason, of all their actions, i.e. who are truly wise men.

Proverbs 26:17

He that passeth by; who is going upon the way, and about his business. But this word is by some referred to the last clause, is like

one that taketh a dog by the ears as he is passing by him, without any thought of doing him harm; which agrees very well both with the order of the words in the Hebrew text, and with the matter of the other clause, to which this similitude is referred.

Belonging not to him; in which he is not concerned, nor any way obliged to meddle.

Is like one that taketh a dog by the ears; exposeth himself to great and needless hazards, as a man that causelessly provoketh a mastiff dog against himself.

Proverbs 26:18

As a madman, *as one that feigneth himself mad* , that under that pretence he may do mischief with impunity,

who casteth fire-brands, to hurt his neighbour's person, or to consume his house or goods.

Death; any instruments of death.

Proverbs 26:19

That wrongs him under a false pretence of kindness and familiarity.

Proverbs 26:20

Tale-bearer, to carry such reports from one to another as may provoke them to mutual rage and strife.

Proverbs 26:21

Heb. *A man of contentions* , that loveth and giveth him self up to contentions.

Proverbs 26:22

This was delivered before, Pro_18:8, and is here repeated, as being a point of great concernment to the peace and welfare of all societies, and fit to be oft and earnestly pressed upon the consciences of men, because of their great and general proneness to this sin.

Proverbs 26:23

Burning; either,

1. With love. Words delivered with show of true and fervent affection. Or rather,

2. With malice or hatred. A slanderous or evil tongue; for this word is constantly used in a bad sense, and notes the heat of rage and persecution.

Like a potsherd covered with silver dross; such a tongue and heart are of no real worth, although sometimes they make a show of it, as dross doth of silver.

Proverbs 26:24

Dissembleth, or, carrieth himself like another man; pretends love and kindness; which sense seems to agree best both with the next clause of this verse, and with the two following verses,

Proverbs 26:25

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 26:26

Covered by deceit; with false professions of love. Showed before the whole congregation; instead of that secrecy and impunity, which by this art he designed and promised to himself, he shall be brought to public shame and punishment.

Proverbs 26:27

Whoso diggeth a pit, that another may fall into it. It is a metaphor from hunters, who used to dig deep pits, and then to cover them slightly with earth, that wild beasts passing that way might fall into them, and sometimes in the heat of pursuit fell into them themselves.

That rolleth a stone, to wit, up the hill, with design to do mischief to some person or thing with it.

Proverbs 26:28

Hateth those that are afflicted by it, because by his calumnies he hath made them his enemies.

A flattering mouth; which, though it be more smooth and plausible than a slandering mouth, yet is in truth no less pernicious, betraying others either to sin, or to danger and mischief.

Proverbs 27:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 27

Counsel against self-conceitedness, Pro_27:1,2. The evil effects of envy, Pro_27:4. The praises of a faithful friend, Pro_27:5-10. The different fruits of prudence and folly, Pro_27:11,12. Sundry rules and cautions, Pro_27:13-21.

Of tomorrow; of any good thing which thou purposeth to do or hopest to receive to-morrow, or hereafter; the thee being here put metonymically for things done or had in the thee, as Deu_4:32 Ecc_2:23. The same caution is given Jam_4:13, &c.

What a day may bring forth; what may happen in the space of one day, which may hinder thy designs or expectations. The day is said to bring forth what God by his almighty power and providence doth either cause or suffer to be brought forth or done in it.

Proverbs 27:2

Except it be really necessary, either for thy own just vindication, or for the honour of God, or for the edification of others, in which cases this hath been allowed and practised by wise and virtuous men, as particularly by St. Paul, 2Co_11:12.

Proverbs 27:3

Heavier; more grievous and intolerable, as being without cause, without measure, and without end.

Proverbs 27:4

Envy is worse than both of them, partly, because it is more unjust and unreasonable, as not caused by any provocation, as wrath and anger are, but only proceeding from a malignity of mind, whereby a man is grieved for another man's happiness, in which he should rejoice; partly, because it is more deeply rooted and implacable, whereas the other passions are commonly allayed; and partly, because it is more secret and undiscernible, and therefore the mischievous effects of it are hardly avoidable; whereas wrath and anger discover themselves, and so forewarn and forearm a man against the danger.

Proverbs 27:5

Open rebuke, Heb. *which is manifested or discovered*, either,

1. Publicly and before others, when it is needful; in which case, though it put a man to some shame, yet it doth him good. Or,
2. Privately, and to the offender's time, a plain and downright reproof.

Better; more desirable and beneficial.

Secret love; which lies hid in the heart, and doth not show itself by friendly actions, and particularly by free and faithful reproof, which is a principal end and benefit of friendship.

Proverbs 27:6

Faithful are the wounds; they proceed from an upright, and truly loving, and faithful soul, and really promote the good of the person reprov'd. *The wounds* ; the sharpest reproofs, which for the present wound his spirit and reputation.

The kisses; all the fair speeches and outward professions of friendship.

Are deceitful; or, *are to be deprecated* ; are perfidious and pernicious, and such things as one may pray to God to be delivered from them. Or, *are forced* , like things which are procured with great difficulty, and many entreaties.

Proverbs 27:7

The full soul, a man whose appetite or desire (which is oft expressed in Scripture by the name of soul) is fully satisfied,

loatheth an honey-comb, the most delicious meats. The design of this proverb is to show the inconvenience that oftentimes attends upon plenty, and the advantage of poverty, that the rich might learn moderation, and the poor content.

Proverbs 27:8

That wandereth from her nest; that flies very much abroad from place to place, whereby she is exposed to all the arts of fowlers, and to birds of prey, from which she is safe whilst she keeps her nest.

That wandereth from his place; that through vanity or lightness changeth the place of his abode, or his calling and course of life, the ill effects whereof have been frequently observed and noted, even in vulgar proverbs, as when we say, *A rolling stone gathers no moss* .

Proverbs 27:9

Rejoice the heart, by increasing and comforting the spirits. No less grateful and pleasant is the company and conversation of a true friend, in respect of his good and faithful counsel, which comes from his very heart and soul, and contains his most inward and serious thoughts, whereas deceitful persons give such counsels, not as they think to be best, but as most serve their lusts or designs.

Proverbs 27:10

Thy father's friend, of whose friendship thou hast had long experience.

Neither go into thy brother's house, to wit, for comfort and relief, and so as to forsake or neglect thy friend for him.

Better is a neighbour; the friend mentioned in the beginning of the verse, who hath showed himself to be a true and a good neighbour.

That is near; either,

1. In place by cohabitation. Or rather,
2. In affection, in which respect God is oft said to be near to the righteous, and far from the wicked.

Proverbs 27:11

For being the father of a wicked son, as if I had either deserved him as a curse from God, or made him so by my example, or by the neglect of his education. See Eze_16:44 1Th_3:4.

Proverbs 27:12

This was delivered Pro_22:3, and is here repeated to enforce the foregoing exhortation, by representing the great advantage of wisdom.

Proverbs 27:13

Possibly this is here repeated as a part of the father's counsel to his son, begun Pro_27:11, to avoid rash suretiship, to which young men are most prone, and by which they are exposed in the beginning of their days to many sins and miseries, which they carry with them to their graves.

Proverbs 27:14

He that blesseth his friend, that saluteth, or praiseth, and applaudeth him to his face, as the manner of flatterers is,

with a loud voice, that both he and others may be sure to take notice of it;

rising early in the morning to perform this office, to show his great forwardness, and diligence, and zeal in his service, which

was the custom of the Romans afterward, and possibly of some of the Jews at this time;

it shall be counted a curse to him his friend will value this kind of blessing no more than a curse, because it plainly discovers a base design, and is a high reflection upon him, as if he either did not understand such gross and palpable flattery, or were so ridiculously vain-glorious as to be pleased with it.

Proverbs 27:15

Are equally troublesome, the first not suffering a man to go abroad with comfort, the latter not permitting him to stay at home with quietness.

Proverbs 27:16

Whosoever hideth her, i.e. attempts to smother or bridle her passion, that it may not break forth to her shame, and to his own discomfort and reproach,

hideth the wind; undertakes that which is impossible.

The ointment of his right hand; which being the great instrument of action, by its much stirring diffuseth the savour of it.

Proverbs 27:17

Iron cutting tools are made bright, and sharp, and fit for use by rubbing them against the file, or some other iron. So a man, who being alone is sad, and dull, and unactive, by the company and conversation of his friend is greatly refreshed, his very wits are sharpened, and his spirit revived, and he is both fitted for and provoked to action.

The countenance is here put for the mind or spirit, whose temper or disposition is commonly visible in men's countenances.

Proverbs 27:18

He mentions the fig tree, because they abounded in Canaan, and were more valued and regarded than other trees.

He that waiteth on his master, that serves him faithfully, prudently, and diligently,

shall be honoured; shall receive that respect and recompence which he deserves.

Proverbs 27:19

The sense is either,

1. As the image of a man's face in the water answers to his natural face who looks into it; or, as in water one man's face is like another's, the difference of men's faces being not there visible: so one man resembles another, either in the temper of his mind or body, in which many men are alike one to another; or in the corruption of his nature, in which all are alike. Or,

2. As a man may see his own face if he look into the water, which is nature's looking-glass, or into any other looking glass; so a man may discern his own heart, if he look into those glasses whereby it discovers itself; if he examine his thoughts and inclinations, together with the general course of his actions. Or,

3. As the face of a man standing by the waters is visible not only to himself, but to others, by the shadow or image of it in the waters; so the heart of a man is in some measure discernible, not only to himself, but to others also, who observe his disposition and carriage.

Proverbs 27:20

Hell and destruction are never full; the grave devours all the bodies which are put into it, and is always ready to receive and devour more and more without end.

The eyes, i.e. the desires, which work and discover themselves by the eyes, 1Jo_2:16, and other senses; for otherwise the eyes in themselves are neither capable of satisfaction nor of dissatisfaction.

Proverbs 27:21

As the fining pot for silver; is appointed and used for the trial of silver, and the detection and separation of the dross from it.

So is a man to his praise; or, *according to his praise* . The sense is, So a man is known by his praises; either,

1. By the quality of those who praise and applaud him; and as they are good or bad, so is he thought to be. Or,

2. By his carriage under praises; as he carries himself either humbly and modestly with thankfulness to God, and a due sense

of his own infirmities, which is the case and temper of a good man; or ambitiously and vain-gloriously, taking to himself the honour which he should give to God, as ungodly men generally do in that case.

Proverbs 27:22

Not a natural, but a moral and wilful fool, who by long continuance in sin is hardened and stupefied, and so incorrigible under all the means of amendment.

Proverbs 27:23

To know the state of thy flocks; that thou mayst preserve and improve what thou hast, and take care that thine expenses may not exceed thine incomes.

Flocks and herds are here put for all riches and possessions, because anciently they were the chief part of a man's riches.

Look well, Heb. *set thine heart* . Trust not wholly to thy servants, as many do, that they may give up themselves wholly to ease and pleasure; but make rise of thine own eyes and reason for the conduct of thine affairs, lest thou come to ruin, as many have done by this very means.

Proverbs 27:24

Riches; or, *treasure* . The sense is, What thou dost now possess, or hast laid up, will not last always, but will soon be spent, if thou dost not take care to preserve and improve it.

The crown; by which he understands a condition of the greatest honour and plenty. If a man had the wealth of a kingdom, without provident care and due diligence it would quickly be brought to nothing. Hence the greatest kings have minded husbandry, as Solomon, Uzziah, and others.

Proverbs 27:25

The hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, in their proper seasons. These things may be here mentioned, either,

1. As the matter of his diligence. Take care that thy hay and grass may be well managed, and seasonably gathered, for the use of thy cattle. Or rather,

2. As another argument and encouragement to diligence, because God invites thee to it by the plentiful provisions wherewith he hath enriched the earth for thy sake. Thou needest not compass sea and land for them, for God puts them into thy hand, if thou wilt but receive them.

Herbs of the mountains, even the most barren parts afford thee their help,

are gathered; or, *are to be gathered* , as such passive verbs are oft used; they are ripe and ready for the gathering. So this clause suits best with the former.

Proverbs 27:26

The lambs are for thy clothing; by their wool and skins, either used to clothe thyself with or sold to purchase all manner of clothing for thyself and family.

The goats are the price of the field; by the sale whereof thou mayst either pay the rent of the field which thou hirest, or purchase fields or lands for thyself. Either *goats* are put for all cattle, or he mentions *goats* , because these might better be spared and sold than sheep, which brought a more certain and constant profit to the owner.

Proverbs 27:27

Goats' milk enough for thy food; or, if thou chooseth rather to keep than to sell thy goats, the milk of them will serve thee for food to thyself, and to thy family. In ancient times men used a plain and simple diet, and neither knew nor used that curiosity and luxury in it which after-ages invented.

For thy maidens; who are named, because this nourishment was more proper for the weaker sex, whereas men required a stronger diet.

Proverbs 28:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 28

The character of the righteous and of the wicked, with the blessed fruits of integrity, and evil effects of sin, Pro_28:11-12. The evil of concealing and blessedness of confessing sin, Pro_28:13. The evil of oppression and violence, the benefit of industry and faithfulness, with sundry other observations, Pro_28:15-28.

The wicked flee when no man pursueth, because the conscience of their own guilt puts them into a continual expectation and dread of God's judgments.

The righteous are bold; are courageous and resolute, having the witness of a good conscience, and the assurance of Divine favour and protection, and the supports and consolations of the Holy Ghost.

Proverbs 28:2

Many are the princes thereof; either,

1. Together, contending for supremacy. Or rather,
2. Successively, as appears from the following clause. Their princes are soon cut off, and other persons, and oftentimes persons of other families, come in their stead, which is justly threatened as a curse, because such frequent changes are seldom for the better, and commonly for the worse, and are frequently attended with blood and slaughter, with the change and subversion of laws, with heavy taxes and charges, with the ruin of many families, and with many other mischiefs.

By a man of understanding and knowledge; by a wise and good man; which may be understood either,

1. Collectively, for

men of understanding, & c., as it is rendered in the margin. i.e. when the men or people of a land are wise and good. Or rather,

2. Singularly; and that either,

1. Of a wise and righteous prince, who by the good government of himself, and his family, and kingdom, by punishing and preventing the transgressions of the people, turns away God's wrath, and saves himself and people. Or,

2. Of any other man of eminent wisdom or piety, who prevents this judgment, either by his good counsels given to the prince and people, and entertained by them, or by his intercession to God; for God hath sometimes spared a people for the sake of one man, as he did Zoar for Lot, Gen_19:20,21. and the Israelites for Moses, Psa_106:23.

The state thereof shall be prolonged; the land shall enjoy its former state and tranquillity, and the life of their good prince shall be prolonged.

Proverbs 28:3

When a poor man being advanced into a place of authority, abuseth it to oppress those that are poor and unable to resist him, he is like a violent rain or flood, which washeth away the very seeds which are in the earth, and spoileth the corn and fruits which are upon it. He is the worst of all oppressors, because as he is of a base mind, which also is made much worse by a sudden change and elevation into a high condition; so his own necessities inflame his desires, and make him greedy to take all, yea, even the small, advantages of enriching himself; which the ancients expressed by the similitude of an empty horseleech, which sucketh much more strongly than that which is already filled; and of a dry sponge, which licks up far more water than that which was wet before.

Proverbs 28:4

They that forsake the law, that live in the contempt of and disobedience to God's law,

praise the wicked; honour their persons, contrary to Psa_15:4; freely and familiarly associate themselves with them, and approve of their sinful courses; all which proceeds from their great likeness to them.

Contend with them; are so far from praising or applauding them, that they severely rebuke them, and to the utmost of their power oppose them in their wicked enterprises.

Proverbs 28:5

Understand not, because their minds are naturally blind, and are further blinded by their own prejudices and passions, and by the god of this world, who rules in and over them.

Judgment, i.e. what is just and right; what is their duty in all cases and conditions, as *judgment* is frequently understood.

That seek the Lord, by diligent study of his word, and by fervent prayers to him for advice. All things which are necessary to be known by them, either for the discharge of all their present duties to God and men, or for their everlasting happiness.

Proverbs 28:6

Better; in a much safer and happier condition.

In his ways, Heb. *in two ways* ; halting between two ways, pretending to virtue, but practising vice; or covering his wicked designs with good pretences; or sometimes erring on one hand, and sometimes on the other, as wicked men commonly do.

Proverbs 28:7

Is a wise son; and consequently a credit and comfort to his father, as hath been oft noted before.

Is a companion of riotous men; which is both a manifest violation of God's law, which forbids this society, and is the ready way to a total and final apostacy from God, and from his law.

Shameth his father, because he is a foolish son.

Proverbs 28:8

By usury and unjust gain, Heb. *by usury and* (or, *or*) increase, i.e. by any kind of usury, whereby the poor are oppressed, as is implied from the opposite clause; or by any unrighteous practices. See more of these words and of this thing on Exo_22:25 Lev_25:35, **36 Psa 15:5** Eze_18:8.

Shall gather it for him that will pity the poor; it shall not long continue with him or his, but shall by God's righteous and powerful providence be disposed into more just and merciful hands.

Proverbs 28:9

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, that obstinately refuseth to yield audience or obedience to God's commands, even his prayer shall be abomination to God, whose law he despised. God will abhor and reject his person, and all his services.

Proverbs 28:10

Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way; that by evil counsel, or example, or artifice draws them into such practices as expose them to great danger and mischief.

The upright shall have good things in possession; shall by God's good providence towards him, both keep the good of which

the wicked seeks to deprive him, and escape that mischief which he plotteth against him.

Proverbs 28:11

Is wise in his own conceit; thinks himself to be wise when he is not, being puffed up with the opinion of his riches, which also he imputes to his own wisdom, and with the admirations and applauses of flatterers, which commonly attend upon them.

Searcheth him out; knoweth him better than he knoweth himself; and, looking through all his pomp and vain show, he sees him to be what indeed he is, a foolish and miserable man, notwithstanding all his riches, and discovers the folly of his words and actions.

Proverbs 28:12

When righteous men do rejoice, are encouraged and promoted to places of trust and power, there is great glory in that commonwealth. The state of that kingdom is honourable, and comfortable, and safe, so as good men can show their faces with courage and confidence.

When the wicked rise, are advanced to honour and authority,

a man is hidden; the state of that nation is so shameful and dangerous, that wise and good men, who only are worthy of the name of men, withdraw themselves, or run into corners and obscure places; partly out of grief and shame to behold the wickedness which is publicly and impudently committed; and partly to avoid the rage and injuries of wicked oppressors, and the judgments of God, which commonly follow such persons and their confederates in sin. Or, as others, both ancient and later interpreters, render it, *a man is sought out*. Sober and good men, who had retired themselves, are searched for, and brought forth like sheep to the slaughter, as being most suspected, and hated, and feared by bloody tyrants.

Proverbs 28:13

That covereth his sins; that doth not confess them (as appears by the opposite clause) to God, and to men too, when occasion requires it; that being convinced or admonished of his sins, either justifieth, or denieth, or excuseth them.

Shall not prosper; shall not succeed in his design of avoiding punishment by the concealment of his sins; shall not find mercy, as is implied from the next clause. Whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, by hearty dislike and hatred of all his sins, and by a resolved cessation from a sinful course of life. This is added, to show, that although the dissembling or hiding one's sins is sufficient for his damnation, yet mere confession without forsaking of sin is not sufficient for salvation.

Shall have mercy, both from God, who hath promised, and from men, who are ready to grant pardon and favour to such persons.

Proverbs 28:14

Happy is the man, because he shall thereby avoid that mischief which befalls fearless sinners, which is expressed in the next clause, and procure that eternal salvation which they lose.

That feareth, to wit, the offence and judgments of God; who having confessed and forsaken his sins, as was now said, is afraid to return to them again, and careful to avoid them, and all occasions of them.

Always; in all times, companies, and conditions; not only in the time of great trouble, when even hypocrites will in some sort be afraid of sinning, but in times of outward peace and prosperity.

That hardeneth his heart; that goeth on obstinately and securely in sinful courses, casting off due reverence to God, and just fear of his threatenings and judgments.

Proverbs 28:15

The lion and

bear are always cruel and greedy in their natures, and especially when they are hungry and want prey, in which case the lions roar, Psa_104:21 Isa_31:4, and bears range about for it.

So is a wicked ruler; instead of being a nursing father, and a faithful and tender shepherd, as he ought to be, he is a cruel and insatiable oppressor and devourer of them:

Over the poor people; whom he particularly mentions, either to note his policy in oppressing them only who were unable to withstand him, or to revenge themselves of him; or to aggravate

his sin in devouring them, whom the laws of God and common humanity bound him to relieve and protect; or to express the effect of his ill government, in making his people poor by his frauds and rapines.

Proverbs 28:16

The tyranny or oppression of a prince, though by some accounted wisdom, is in truth a manifest act and sign of great folly, because it alienateth from him the hearts of his people, in which his honour, and safety, and riches consist, and oftentimes causeth the shortening of his days, either from God, who cuts him off by some sudden judgment, or from men, who are injured by him, and exasperated against him.

Covetousness is the chief cause of all oppressions and unjust practices.

Shall prolong his days, by God's favour, the peace and satisfaction of his own mind, and the hearty love of his people, which makes them careful to preserve his life by their fervent prayers to God for him, by willingly hazarding their own estates and lives for him, when occasion requires it, and by all other possible means.

Proverbs 28:17

A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person, that sheddeth any man's blood, or taketh away his life unjustly,

shall flee to the pit; shall speedily be destroyed, being pursued by Divine vengeance, and the horrors of a guilty conscience, and the avengers of blood.

Let no man stay him: so it is a prohibition that no man should endeavour to save the life of a wilful murderer, either by intercession, or by offering satisfaction, or any other way; of which see Gen_9:6 Exo_21:14 Num_35:31. Or, as the ancient and many other interpreters render it, *no man shall stay him* ; none shall desire or endeavour to save him from his deserved punishment; he shall die without pity, being an object of public hatred.

Proverbs 28:18

Shall be saved, to wit, from destruction, because God hath undertaken and promised to protect him.

In his ways, Heb. *in two ways* , of which phrase see above on Pro_28:6.

Shall fall at once; once for all, so as he shall not need a second thrust, 1Sa_26:8, and so as he shall never rise more. Or, *in one* , to wit, of his ways. Though he hath various ways and arts to secure himself, yet none of them shall save him, but he shall perish in one or other of them, and shall be given up by God to the mistake of his way, that he shall choose that course which will be most pernicious to him.

Proverbs 28:19

That followeth after vain persons; choosing their company, and imitating their example; who gives up himself to vanity and idleness, and so is fitly opposed to the diligent man in the former clause.

Proverbs 28:20

A faithful man, Heb. *a man of truth* , or *truths* , who deals truly and justly in all his bargains and transactions with men.

That maketh haste; more than God alloweth him; that taketh the nearest and readiest way to riches, whether it be right or wrong; that is unfaithful and unjust in his dealings.

Shall not be innocent; shall not obtain the blessings which he seeks, but shall bring curses and miseries upon him instead of them.

Proverbs 28:21

When a man hath once vitiated his conscience, and accustomed himself to take bribes, a very small advantage will make him sell justice, and his own soul into the bargain. The design of the proverb is to warn men to take heed of the beginnings of that sin, and consequently of other sins.

Proverbs 28:22

Hath an evil eye; is uncharitable to persons in want, envious towards those who get any thing besides him, and covetous or greedy of getting riches by all ways possible, whether just or

unjust. Thus *an evil eye is taken* , Pro_23:6 Mat_20:15, as a *good eye* notes the contrary disposition, Pro_22:9.

That poverty shall come upon him; and consequently that he shall need the pity and help of others, which he cannot expect either from God or men, who hath so hardened himself against others in misery.

Proverbs 28:23

Afterwards; when he comes calmly to consider the fidelity of the reprover, and the benefit coming to himself by the reproof, and withal the baseness and mischief of flattery.

Proverbs 28:24

Saith in his heart, supposing that he hath a right to his father's goods.

Is the companion of a destroyer; either,

1. He hereby showeth that he is fallen into such wicked society, from whom he hath such counsel or example. Or,

2. He is no less guilty than a thief who robs and destroys men upon the highway; he is a thief and robber, because he hath no right to the actual possession of his father's goods before his death, or without his consent.

Proverbs 28:25

He that is of a proud heart, whose property it is to overvalue himself, and to trust to himself and his own wit, or wealth, or strength, stirreth up strife, because he makes it his great business to advance and please himself, and hateth and opposeth all that stand in his way, and despiseth other men, and is very jealous of his honour, and impatient of the least slighting, or affront, or injury, and indulgeth his own passions; and therefore shall not be fat, but lean and miserable, as is implied from the opposite clause.

That putteth his trust in the Lord; which is mentioned as a plain and certain evidence of a humble man, who is mean and vile in his own eyes, and therefore trusts not to himself, but to God only, making God's will, and not his own will, and passion, and interest, the rule of all his actions, and can easily deny himself, and yield to others, all which are excellent preventives of strife.

Shall be made fat; shall live happily and comfortably, because he avoids that strife which make men's lives miserable.

Proverbs 28:26

He that trusteth in his own heart; who trusts to his own wit, neglecting or slighting the advice of others, and the counsel of God himself.

Is a fool; and shall receive the fruit of his folly, to wit, destruction.

Whoso walketh wisely, distrusting his own judgment, and seeking the advice of others, and especially of God, as all truly wise men do, he shall be delivered from those dangers and mischiefs which fools bring upon themselves; whereby he showeth himself to be a wise man.

Proverbs 28:27

Shall not lack; shall not impoverish himself by it, as covetous men imagine or pretend; but shall be enriched, which is implied.

That hideth his eyes, lest he should see poor and miserable men, and thereby be moved to pity or obliged to relieve them. So he cunningly avoids the beginnings, and occasions, and provocations to charity; teaching us to use the same caution against sin.

Shall have many a curse; partly from the poor, whose curses, being not causeless, shall come upon him, and partly from God, who will curse his very blessings, and bring him to extreme want and misery.

Proverbs 28:28

Men hide themselves; men, i.e. righteous men, as appears from the following clause, are ashamed and afraid to appear publicly; of which See Poole "Pro_28:12".

The righteous increase; they who were righteous do now again appear in public, and being advanced to that power which the wicked rulers have lost, they use their authority to encourage and promote righteousness, and to punish unrighteousness, whereby the number of wicked men is diminished, and the righteous are multiplied.

Proverbs 29:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 29

The excellency of wisdom, with rules for government, Pro_29:1-14. The parents' duty to correct their children, Pro_29:15-17. The misery of them that know not God's law, Pro_29:18. Of anger, pride, thieving, cowardice, and corruption, Pro_29:19-26. The godly and wicked an abomination to each other, Pro_29:27.

Hardeneth his neck; is incorrigible, and obstinately persists in those sins for which he is reproved.

Without remedy, *utterly and irrecoverably* .

Proverbs 29:2

In authority; which interpretation is confirmed from the opposite clause. The Hebrew word signifies to increase either in number, or in dignity and power.

The people rejoice, for the blessed effects of their good government.

The people mourn, both for the oppressions and mischiefs which they feel, and for the dreadful judgments of God which they justly fear.

Proverbs 29:3

Loveth wisdom; and therefore hateth and escheweth all folly and wickedness.

Keepeth company with harlots; whereby he plainly discovers himself to want wisdom; of which see Pro_7:7, &c.

Spendeth his substance; whereby he not only ruineth himself, but also grieveth his father, as is implied from the opposite clause.

Proverbs 29:4

By judgment; by the free and impartial exercise of justice.

He that receiveth gifts, Heb. *a man* (for he would not vouchsafe to call him a king, as being unworthy of that name and office) *of oblations or gifts* , i.e. whose delight and common practice it is to take bribes, and sell justice.

Proverbs 29:5

A man that flattereth his neighbour, that praiseth or applaudeth another in a sinful state or course, spreadeth a net for his feet; kills

him under a pretence of kindness; is an occasion of his sin, and consequently of destruction, which possibly he may design to accomplish by that means.

Proverbs 29:6

There is a snare; his sin will bring him to dreadful horrors and certain ruin.

Doth sing and rejoice, because he hath sweet peace in his own conscience, and assurance of present safety and eternal happiness.

Proverbs 29:7

The righteous, whether magistrate, or any private person concerned to know it, and capable of helping him in it,

considereth the cause of the poor; his poverty neither hinders him from taking pains to examine it, nor from a righteous determination of it.

Regardeth not to know it; will not put himself to the trouble of searching it out, either because it yields him no profit, or because he resolves to give away his right.

Proverbs 29:8

Bring a city into a snare; expose it to God's wrath and to destruction by their self-conceit and wilfulness, by their wicked counsels and courses, whereby they seduce and infect the generality of the people, by their contempt of God, of his just laws and righteous judgments, and of the opinions and advice, of wise men.

Wise men, who do not scorn, but hearken to the counsels of God and of prudent men, turn away wrath; the wrath of God or of men, who were enraged against it.

Proverbs 29:9

If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man; either judicially or otherwise debating any matter with him, endeavouring to convince him of any error;

whether he, the wise man, rageth (or is angry) or laugheth, i.e. whether he deal sharply and severely with him, rebuking him for his folly, or mildly and pleasantly smiling at it,

there is no rest, no end or fruit of the debate, the fool will not be satisfied nor convinced. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *he* (to wit, the fool last named, to whom the following carriages may seem more fitly to agree) *both rageth and laugheth* , (he will not yield nor be convinced, but persists in his folly, which he discovers sometimes by his furious and unbridled passions, and sometimes by foolish laughter and scorning,) *and there*

is no rest; he will never be quieted.

Proverbs 29:10

Hate the upright, and consequently seek their ruin, as is implied from the following clause.

Seek his soul; either,

1. To require his soul or life at the hands of those who have taken it away. Or,
2. To preserve it from those who attempt to take it away, as this phrase is taken, Psa_142:4, though commonly it signify to seek to destroy it.

Proverbs 29:11

All his mind; all at once, unnecessarily and unseasonably, without reservation or caution.

Till afterwards; till he have fit occasion to express it.

Proverbs 29:12

If a ruler hearken to lies, delight in flatteries or calumnies, or any lying words or deceitful and wicked practices,

all his servants are wicked; partly because he chooseth only such for his service; and partly because they are either corrupted by his example, or engaged by their place and interest to please him, and comply with his base lusts.

Proverbs 29:13

The deceitful man, Heb. *the man of deceits* , or of *usuries* , i.e. who hath enriched himself by such practices,

meet together; converse together, and one needeth the other, as Pro_22:2.

The Lord lighteneth both their eyes; either their bodily eyes with the light of the sun, which promiscuously shines upon both; or the eyes of their minds with the light of reason and grace, which he indifferently gives to them; and therefore the one should not envy nor despise the other, but be ready to do good one to another, as God doth good to both.

Proverbs 29:14

Judgeth the poor, and the rich too; but he names

the poor, because these are most oppressed and injured by others, and least regarded by princes, and yet committed to their more special care by the King of kings.

Proverbs 29:15

The rod and reproof; correction and instruction going together.

Left to himself; suffered to follow his own will or lusts without restraint and chastening. *His mother* , and father too; but he names only *the mother* , either because her indulgence oft spoils the child, or because children commonly stand in least awe of their mothers, and abuse the weakness of their sex, and tenderness of their natures.

Proverbs 29:16

Are multiplied; or rather, are advanced, because this is opposed to their

falling in the next clause; and so this Hebrew word is taken above, Pro_29:2.

Transgression increaseth; sin and sinners abound and grow impudent by impunity, and the example and encouragement of such rulers.

Their fall; the destruction of such transgressors in due time.

Proverbs 29:17

Rest; satisfaction to thy mind, and comfort in his amendment.

Proverbs 29:18

No vision, i.e. no prophecy, for the prophets were anciently called seers, 1Sa_9:9, i.e. no public preaching of God's law or word, (as appears by the opposite clause,) which is called *prophecy* ,

Rom_12:6 1Co_14:1, &c., where the people are destitute of the means of instruction.

The people perish, because they want the only means of salvation. Or, *is made naked* ; stripped of their best ornaments, God's favour and protection, as this word is taken, Exo_32:25.

He that keepeth the law: this he saith rather than

he that hath vision, which the laws of opposition might seem to require, to teach us that, although the want of God's word be sufficient for men's destruction, yet the having, and hearing, or reading of it is not sufficient for their salvation, except they also keep or obey it.

Proverbs 29:19

A servant, who is so not only ill condition, but also in the temper of his mind, disingenuous, perverse, and stubborn,

will not be corrected by words; by mere words without blows. Compare Pro_19:29.

Though he understand, though he know thy mind and words, and his own duty,

he will not answer; either by words, expressing his readiness; or by deeds, speedily and cheerfully performing thy commands; but will neglect his duty, pretending that he did not hear or understand thee.

Proverbs 29:20

In his words; or rather, *in his business* , who is rash and heady in the management of his affairs.

There is more hope of a fool, who is sensible of his folly, and willing to hearken to the advice of others, as this word is used, Pro_26:12, though commonly it be meant of a wilful and wicked fool;

than of him, because he is self-confident, and neither considers things seriously within himself, nor seeks counsel from the wise.

Proverbs 29:21

He that delicately bringeth up his servant, allowing him too much freedom, and familiarity, and delicious fare, shall have him

become his son; will find him at last grow insolent and presumptuous, and forgetful of his servile condition.

Proverbs 29:22

Is by his passion easily transported into grievous and manifold sins against God, and others, and himself, as swearing, and cursing, and violence, yea, sometimes even to murder.

Proverbs 29:23

Shall bring him low, because both God and man conspire against him, and abhor him.

Honour shall uphold the humble in spirit; or, as others render it, without any difference in the sense,

the humble in spirit shall hold their honour, shall be honoured by God and men. Thus honour, like a shadow, flees from them that pursue it, and follows them who flee from it.

Proverbs 29:24

Whoso is partner with a thief, by receiving a share of the stolen goods upon condition of his concealment of the theft,

hateth his own soul; he carrieth himself towards it as if he hated it; he woundeth and destroyeth it.

He heareth cursing; he heareth the voice of swearing, as is said, Lev_5:1; the oath given to him by a judge adjuring him and other suspected persons to give information concerning it; and

betrayeth it not; which he is bound to do, both by virtue of his oath, and for the public good, which ought to be preferred before all private contracts or friendships.

Proverbs 29:25

The fear of man, inordinate fear of harm or mischief from men, which is fitly opposed to trust in God, because it comes from a distrust of God's promise and providence,

bringeth a snare; is an occasion of many sins, and of great danger, both of injuries from men, and of sore punishments from God.

Putteth his trust in the Lord; keeping God's way, and securely relying upon God to protect him from the designs and rage of wicked men.

Proverbs 29:26

Seek the ruler's favour: men study to please and engage their rulers by their obliging carriage, and humble petitions, and all other means, supposing that to be the only way to procure either right or favour from them, as they need or desire it.

Every man's judgment, the decision of his cause, and the success of all his endeavours,

cometh from the Lord; dependeth wholly upon God, who ruleth and inclineth their minds and hearts as it pleaseth him, Pro_21:1.

Proverbs 29:27

Is an abomination to the just, because such men, as such, are hated by God, and haters of and enemies unto God and all goodness, and public plagues to the church and state in which they live; and therefore he who loves these must needs hate them, as true friends hate those who are enemies to their friends.

Is abomination to the wicked; of which See Poole "Pro_29:10".

Proverbs 30:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 30

Agur's prophecy, Pro_30:1; wherein he acknowledgeth his own ignorance, Pro_30:2,3. The purity of God's word, with the happiness of them that trust in him, Pro_30:5. He dehorts from adding to the Scriptures, by the danger of it, Pro_30:6. The two points of his prayer, with their reason, Pro_30:7-9. Four wicked generations, Pro_30:10-14. Four things insatiable, Pro_30:15,16. Parents not to be despised, Pro_30:17. Four things hard to be known, Pro_30:18,19. The way of an adulterous woman, Pro_30:20. Four things intolerable, Pro_30:21-23. Four things little, but wise, Pro_30:24-28. Four things stately, Pro_30:29-31.

Agur the son of Jakeh; a person so called, as appears from the designation of his own and his father's name, who lived either in Solomon's time, or rather afterwards, and was famous in his generation for wisdom, and piety, and prophecy; and therefore his proverbs were thought fit to be added to those of Solomon, either

by those men of Hezekiah, mentioned Pro_25:1, or by some other. But that this should be meant of Solomon may easily be supposed, but cannot be proved; nor is it probable, as being contrary both to the style of the whole chapter, and to the matter of some part of it, as Pro_30:7-9, which agrees not to Solomon; and to the laws of good interpretation, one of which is, that all words should be taken in their most natural and proper sense, when there is no evidence nor necessity of understanding them improperly and figuratively, which is the present case.

The prophecy; the prophetic instruction; for as the prophets were public preachers as well as foretellers of things to come, so their sermons, no less than their predictions, are commonly called their *prophecies*.

Unto Ithiel and Ucal; two friends, or disciples, and contemporaries of Agur, called by those names, who having a great and just opinion of his wisdom, desired his instructions. Others, *concerning Ithiel and Ucal* ; which they understand of Christ, called

Ithiel, which signifies *God with me* , and answers to *Immanuel* , which is *God with us* ; and

Ucal, which signifies *power* or *prevalency* . But if he had meant this of Christ, why should he design him such obscure and ambiguous names, as if he would not be understood? Why did he not call him by the name of *Shiloh* or *Messiah* , or some other Scripture title belonging and ascribed to him? Besides, this interpretation agrees not with the contents of this chapter, wherein there is only a short and occasional mention of Christ, but the chapter consists in a manner wholly of counsels and sentences of a quite other kind.

Proverbs 30:2

You come to me with a great opinion of my wisdom, and you expect that I should inform and instruct you in all things, yea, even in the greatest mysteries: but you are much mistaken in me; I am as ignorant and foolish as other men generally are, yea, more than many others; which he utters either,

1. From a deep sense of the common corruption of human nature, and of the blindness of men's minds in things concerning God and

their own duty, and of the necessity of instruction from God's word, and of illumination from his Spirit, without which they can never understand these matters. Or,

2. From a modest and humble apprehension of his own ignorance, which hath extorted such-like expressions even from heathen philosophers; whence Pythagoras rejected the title of a wise man when it was ascribed to him; and Socrates, though reputed the wisest man of his age, professed that he *knew nothing but this, that he knew nothing* .

Proverbs 30:3

I neither learned wisdom; I have not been taught in the schools of wisdom, as the sons of prophets were, but must own myself to be an unlearned man, as the prophet Amos was, Amo_7:14,**15**. Or, I have not learned it, neither by my own understanding and study, nor by the help of other men.

Of the holy; either,

1. Of the holy angels, who are called holy by way of eminency, as Deu_33:2 Job_15:15 Dan_4:13,**17,23 8:13**. But it was vain to deny that angelical knowledge to be in him, which no man imagined to be in him, and which was not in Adam fix the state of innocency. Or,

2. Of the holy prophets. So the sense is, I have not such Divine inspirations as prophets strictly so called have received, whereby I should be enabled to know or explain those great mysteries wherein you desire information from me. Or,

3. Of holy things, of the mind and will of God concerning man's salvation, and the way which leads to it; not that he denieth that he had any knowledge of these things, but only a full, and comprehensive, and perfect knowledge, which they falsely supposed to be in him.

Proverbs 30:4

Who? what mere man? None at all; and therefore I may truly say, that I have not that which no mortal man ever yet had.

Hath ascended up into heaven; there to learn the mind of God who dwells there, and that wisdom which is from above.

Or descended; or rather, *and descended* , to teach men below what he had learned above. The meaning of the place is, No man can fully know and teach us these things unless he hath been in heaven, and sent down from thence to the earth to that end; whence our Saviour Christ justly applies these words to himself, Joh_3:13, and appropriates this work of declaring God's nature and will to men to himself, upon this account, that he alone was in his Father's bosom, Joh_1:18.

Hath gathered the wind in his fists, to hold them in, or let them out, and rule them at his pleasure. Where is there a man that can do this? And none but he who made and governs all the creatures can know and teach these things. *The waters* ; those above in the clouds, and those below, the sea, which God keeps as it were *within doors* , and in a *garment* and *swaddling-band* , as it is expressed, Job_38:8,9; and the waters which he shuts up in the bowels of the earth.

All the ends of the earth; the whole earth, from one end to another, which God upholdeth in the air by the word of his power, and secureth from the rage of the sea, by the banks and shores wherewith he hath begirt it for that purpose.

What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? The sense is either,

1. Seeing it is apparent that no man hath this power, and consequently this knowledge, but that this is the prerogative of the great God, declare, if thou art able, his name, i.e. his nature and perfections, and the eternal generation and the perfections of his Son. Or rather,

2. If thou thinkest there be any such man who can do these things, I challenge thee to produce his name; or if he be long since dead, and gone out of the world, the name of any of his posterity that can assure us that their progenitor was such a person; which because thou canst not do, I must conclude that none can thoroughly understand this matter but the blessed God, and his Son Christ, and they to whom God shall reveal it by Christ.

Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God is pure; and therefore you, Ithiel and Ucal, must not expect the full knowledge of Divine mysteries from me,

nor from any man, but from the word of God, which is a certain rule, both of your belief and practice, because every part and parcel of it is holy, and true, and good, and there is not the least mixture of falsehood and folly in it, as there is in all the words and writings of men.

That put their trust in him; which supposeth their knowledge of him by his word, Psa_9:10; and contains their reliance upon his promises, joined with obedience to his commands.

Proverbs 30:6

And as the word of God is pure, do not thou corrupt or abuse it, by adding to it thine own or other men's inventions and opinions, and delivering or receiving of them in the name and as the words of God. He here forbids only adding to it, not diminishing from it, which yet is equally forbidden, Deu_4:2 **12:32**, because the Israelites then and always were, and others are, more prone to add than to diminish, because it is more easy to add under colour of interpreting, and because it is more agreeable to the humour of mankind, which is much delighted with its own inventions, as the experience of all ages showeth. *Lest he reprove thee by words or deeds* ; by discovering thy folly, and bringing thee to deserved shame and punishment.

Proverbs 30:7

Have I required; I do earnestly and especially desire *Deny me them not before I die* , Heb.

withhold them not from me before I die, i.e. whilst I live, as things of great and continual necessity for thy honour and service, and my own good.

Proverbs 30:8

Remove far from me; from my heart, and from the course of my life. This is the first of Agur's petitions.

Vanity; either,

1. All vain and false opinions concerning God, or the things of God; all unbelief, idolatry, or misbelief. Or,
2. All vanity of heart and life; a vain conversation, an affectation of the vain things of this world, as riches, pleasures, or honours,

the bewitching power and sad effects whereof he had observed in others, and feared in himself, as the following request implies.

Lies; all falsehood and deceit in my words and carriage towards God or men.

Give me neither poverty nor riches: this is his second request, which may seem to have some reference to the former, poverty being commonly the occasion and temptation to the sin of lying, and riches being the great occasions and enticements to vanity. Thus, as his first petition was against the sins themselves, so this latter is against the occasions of them.

Food convenient for me; moderate, and suitable both to my natural necessities, and to that estate and condition of life in which thou hast put me, and to that work and service which thou hast for me to do. And this mediocrity of estate is so amiable, that it hath been oft desired by wise heathens, as more eligible than a state of the greatest plenty and glory.

Proverbs 30:9

Deny thee, by trusting to riches, which is a denial of God, Job_31:24-28, by unthankfulness for and abuse of his mercies, and by rebellion against him, and divers other courses and common practices of rich men, whereby God is denied in truth and in works, even when he is owned in words and in show.

Who is the Lord, that I should obey or serve him? I do not need him, I can live of my own without him. Lest by degrees I should arrive at downright atheism or infidelity, which is most incident to rich and great men, as is manifest from experience.

Take the name of my God in vain; use false oaths, either to vindictate myself when I am suspected or accused of theft, and my oath is required according to the law, Exo_22:8-11, or to gratify others for filthy lucre, as poor men frequently do.

Proverbs 30:10

Accuse not a servant, to wit, maliciously, rashly, or without just and sufficient cause; for otherwise, in some cases, this may be not only lawful, but a duty, as when a servant lives wickedly, or robs his master, or the like,

A servant; whose condition is in itself mean and miserable, and therefore thou shouldst not make it worse without great and apparent necessity.

Curse thee; desire God to curse and punish thee, which though it may be sinful in him, yet being deserved by thee, thou hast reason to fear and expect.

Be found guilty by God, who is ready to plead the cause of the afflicted, and upon strict search shall find thee guilty, and punish thee accordingly.

Proverbs 30:11

A generation; a sort of men, abominable both to God and men; which is implied concerning these and the following kinds of sinners, Pro_30:12-14.

Their father, and mother too, as it follows; ungrateful and unnatural monsters.

Proverbs 30:12

Who not only pretend to others, but conceit within themselves, that they are truly religious persons, when they live in the course of wickedness.

Proverbs 30:13

Who are proud and insolent, advancing themselves, and despising all others in comparison of themselves, and showing the pride of their hearts in their countenances and carriages.

Proverbs 30:14

Extortioners, and cruel oppressors, who grind the faces of the poor.

Proverbs 30:15

The horseleech, an insatiable creature, sucking blood till it be ready to burst,

hath two daughters; which are either,

1. The two forks into which her tongue is divided, and wherewith she sucks: but those who have more accurately observed and described the frame of that creature tell us that they have no tongue, and that they suck either by three little teeth, or several parts of the mouth gathered and compressed together. Or rather,

2. The following things, which resemble the horse leech in its insatiableness; nothing being more ordinary than to call those persons or things *the sons* or *daughters* of those whose examples they imitate. And whereas it is objected, that they are not only two, but *three*, yea, *four*, as is said in the next clause, the answer is easy, that though he begin with two, yet he proceeds from thence to three, and four, all which are said to be the daughters of the horseleech, if the words be rendered commodiously, and as they are in the Hebrew, as we shall presently see.

Crying, Give, give; never filled, and always craving, and ready to receive more and more.

There are three things; or, yea, (which may be understood in this, as it is in our translation of the next clause,) *they* (to wit, the daughters of the horseleech) are three; that are never satisfied; which is added partly to explain the former clause,

Give, give, and to show the cause of that excessive desire of more, because they were not contented with what they had; and partly to give the reason why he calls them *the daughters of the horseleech*. *Yea, four things say not*; or, yea, *they* (the daughters forementioned) are *four*, which *say not*.

Proverbs 30:16

The barren womb; for as the Israelitish women did generally and vehemently desire many children, for divers reasons elsewhere mentioned; so those who were barren amongst them were most eager in those desires, as we see in Rachel, Gen_30:1, and as in all other cases persons most prize and thirst after those good things which they want.

The earth; which when it is dry thirsts for rain, and in a little time sucks up great quantities of water, and gapes for more.

The fire; which continually burns as long as there is any combustible matter left for it.

Proverbs 30:17

The eye that mocketh at his father; he that scorneth or derideth his parents, though it be but with a look or gesture, and much more when he breaks out into opprobrious words and actions.

The ravens of the valley shall pick it out; he shall die an unnatural, and untimely, and ignominious death, and after death shall lie unburied, and so be exposed to the birds and beasts of prey, and, amongst others, to the crows or ravens, who use to feed upon dead carcasses, and particularly to pick out their eyes, as is noted by all sorts of writers; of which see my Latin Synopsis. He saith, the ravens of the valley, either because they most delight in valleys, or with a particular respect unto that valley near Jerusalem, which was called the valley of dead bodies, Jer_31:40, from the carcasses cast out there, to which therefore the ravens resorted in great numbers, according to their manner or, as others render, the ravens of the brooks, because they are of a hot and dry temper, and therefore delight in places adjacent to the brooks of water.

The young eagle; which also preyeth upon dead carcasses and especially upon their eyes, as the ravens do, the reason being the same in both, whether it be the softness of that part which makes it more easy to them to take, or from the pleasant taste of it.

Proverbs 30:18

The way whereof I cannot trace or find out.

Proverbs 30:19

The way of an eagle in the air; either,

1. The manner of her flight, which is exceeding high, and swift, and strong. Or rather,
2. The way or part of the air through which she passeth, without leaving any print or sign in it, which though it be true of all birds, yet is here attributed to the eagle, of whom this is more true, because she flies out of sight, where neither her body nor any sign of it can be discerned.

The way of a serpent upon a rock; where she leaves no impression, nor slime, nor token where she was, as she doth in softer bodies, and as birds leave their feathers there.

The way of a ship in the midst of the sea; which though at present it make a furrow, yet is speedily closed again. The way of a man with a maid; either,

1. The various methods and artifices which young men use to entice or persuade young virgins, either to honest love and marriage, or to unlawful lust and uncleanness. Or rather,

2. The impure conversation of a man with one who goeth under the name of a maid, but is not so in truth, which is managed with so much secrecy and cunning that it can very hardly be discovered; which exposition agrees best with the foregoing similitudes referred to it, and with the following verse.

Proverbs 30:20

Such, so secret and undiscernible,

is the way of an adulterous woman; of her who, though she be called and accounted a *maid* yet in truth is an adulteress: not a common strumpet, for of such the following words are not true, but one that secretly lives in the sin of adultery or fornication.

She eateth, to wit, *the bread of deceit in secret* , by which is understood the act of filthiness, Pro_9:17 **20:17**, which such persons do as greedily desire, and as delightfully feed upon, as hungry persons do upon bread. Thus chastely doth the Holy Ghost express the most filthy actions, to teach us to avoid all immodest and obscene speeches as well as actions.

Wipeth her mouth, as a child doth when it hath eaten some forbidden food, and would not be discovered.

Saith, I have done no wickedness; denies the fact, and avoweth her innocency.

Proverbs 30:21

The earth is disquieted; either,

1. The earth itself trembleth and is moved; so it is an hyperbole. Or rather,

2. The inhabitants of the earth. They do by their insolence and impudence cause great and dreadful disturbances in the places where they live.

Which it cannot bear; which are intolerable in human societies.

Proverbs 30:22

When he reigneth; when he is advanced to great power and dignity; for such a one is ignorant and unfit for his place, and therefore commits many errors; he is poor, and therefore an insatiable oppressor, according to Pro_28:3; he is proud and imperious, and being maligned and hated by others, he is provoked to hate them, and to be injurious and cruel to them.

A fool, a conceited and wilful fool, or all obstinately wicked man, **when he is filled with meat;** either,

1. When he is gluttoned with meat or drink, which dulls men's reason, and heats their blood, and stirs them up to many insolencies. Or rather,

2. When he abounds in wealth, which in that case is like a sword in a madman's hand, being an instrument and occasion of innumerable wickednesses and mischiefs, as appears from common experience.

Proverbs 30:23

Odious; proud, and perverse, and full of hateful and offensive qualities.

When she is married; for then she displayeth and exerciseth all those ill humours, which before for her own ends she concealed; then she is puffed up, and imperious, and becomes intolerable to her own family, and to her relations and neighbours.

That is heir to her mistress; that possesseth her estate, either by the gift of her mistress, into whose favour she had insinuated herself by her cunning and officious carriage; or rather by the marriage of her master, which great and sudden change transports her beside herself, and makes her insufferably proud, and scornful, and injurious to all that converse with her.

Proverbs 30:24

Comparatively to other brute creatures. They act very wisely and providently, not from any reason which they have, but by the direction of Divine Providence, which secretly guides them to do those things for their own preservation which are most agreeable to the rules of wisdom. The design of this observation is either,

1. To commend wisdom to us, and to teach us to imitate the providence of these creatures, as we are provoked to imitate their diligence, Pro_6:6. Or,

2. To keep us from being proudly conceited of our own wisdom, because we are either equalled or exceeded therein by the unreasonable creatures in the wise conduct of their affairs. Or,

3. To direct us to whom to resort for wisdom when we want and desire it, even to that God who is able to inspire wisdom even into the brute creatures.

Proverbs 30:25

People; which title is oft given to the unreasonable creatures, both in Scripture, as Joe_1:6 **2:2**, and in Homer, and Virgil, and divers other authors.

They prepare their meat in the summer; of which See Poole "Pro_30:6", See Poole "Pro_30:7", See Poole "Pro_30:8".

Proverbs 30:26

In rocky ground, or in the holes of rocks, for their safety against their too potent enemies.

Proverbs 30:27

Have no king to rule and order them.

By bands; in great numbers, and in several companies, and in exact order, as is observed in Scripture, as Jud_6:5 **7:12** Joe_1:6 **2:7**, and by other writers.

Proverbs 30:28

The spider taketh hold of the thread which she spins out of her own bowels with her hands; with her legs, which he calls hands, because they serve her for the same purpose, to do her work, to weave her web, and to catch gnats or flies, &c.

Is in kings' palaces; is not only in poor cottages, but many times in palaces also, where she makes a shift to keep her abode, notwithstanding all the care and pains which is taken to sweep and cleanse it.

Proverbs 30:29

That walk decently, and with great alacrity and courage; which are here commended to us to imitate in the management of our affairs.

Proverbs 30:30

He doth not flee from his pursuers, whether men or beasts, but walketh away with a slow and majestic pace, as is observed by Aristotle, and many others.

Proverbs 30:31

A greyhound, called in Hebrew, *girt in the lions* ; either because its loins are slender, and as it were girt up into a little compass, and tight or well trussed up: or because of its great agility and swiftness; for the girding of the loins was used for expedition in going or working. Or, as it is rendered by others *a horse* , to wit, a war-horse, having his armour girt about him, and marching to the battle, which he doth with great majesty and courage, as God himself observes at large, Job_39:19, &c.

An he-goat; which marcheth in the head of the flock in grave and stately manner, conducting them with great courage and resolution, and being ready to fight for them, either with beasts or men that oppose him; whence great captains are oft compared to he-goats, as Isa_14:9 **Jer 18 Da 8:5,21 Zec 10:3**.

A king, against whom there is no rising up; a mighty and victorious king, whose power none can withstand, who therefore goeth hither and thither, and proceedeth in his affairs with invincible courage and majesty. But this place, with the variation of one Hebrew point, reading *ammo* for *immo* , may be rendered, as a very learned man observes, a king, and his people with him; a king when he hath the hearts and hands of his people going along with him in his undertakings.

Proverbs 30:32

In lifting up thyself; either,

1. By rebellion or sedition against the king last mentioned. Or,
2. By anger or wrath, of which he speaks in the next verse. But this verse hath no necessary dependence either upon the foregoing or following verse. Or,
3. Through thy pride, which makes men carry themselves very foolishly, and scornfully, and injuriously, and is the root of contention, as was observed, Pro_13:10.

Thought evil, i.e. designed any mischief or injury against thy neighbour.

Lay thine hand upon thy mouth, to wit, to shut it. Be silent, as this phrase is used, Job_21:5 **29:9**. Restrain thyself, do not speak one word, much less do any thing tending to the accomplishment of it; do not open thy mouth to justify or excuse it, but silently and seriously consider the evil of it, and repent of it, and do so no more.

Proverbs 30:33

The forcing of wrath; the stirring up of wrath, either,

1. In a man's self towards others, by giving way to passion, or by fixing his thoughts upon those things which may inflame it. Or,
2. In others by reproaches, injuries, or any other provocations.

Bringeth forth strife; is the cause of many quarrels, and much mischief among men.

Proverbs 31:1 PROVERBS CHAPTER 31

Lemuel's lesson concerning chastity and temperance, Pro_31:1-5. The proper use of wine, Pro_31:6,**7**. An exhortation to righteous judgment, Pro_31:8,**9**. A description of a virtuous wife, Pro_31:10, with her husband's confidence in her, Pro_31:11. Her work and careful provision for her household, Pro_31:12-20. Their furniture and clothing, Pro_31:21,**22**. The properties and praise of a good wife, Pro_31:23-29. The vanity of beauty; the good are to be praised, Pro_31:30,**31**.

Of king Lemuel, i.e. of Solomon, by the general consent both of Jewish and Christian writers; to whom this name doth very fitly agree, for it signifies one *of or from God*, or *belonging to God*; and such a one was Solomon eminently, being given by God to David and Bathsheba, as a pledge of his reconciliation to them after their repentance; of whom it is expressly said that *the Lord loved him*, 2Sa_12:24, and who was by God himself appointed to succeed David in the kingdom. Possibly his mother gave this name to mind him of his great obligations to God, and of the justice and necessity of his devoting himself unto God's service and glory.

The prophecy; so called, either,

1. More especially, because she did either by natural sagacity, or by Divine inspiration, foresee Solomon's danger, and what sins he was most likely to be either inclined or tempted to commit; and therefore thought fit to give him these precautions, Or,

2. More generally, as all godly discourses or counsels are called prophecies; of which see on Pro_30:1, and elsewhere.

His mother, Bathsheba, who having truly repented of her adultery, did not only avoid it in herself for the future, but seriously endeavoured to prevent that and such-like sins in others, and especially in Solomon, whom the remembrance of her sin might possibly provoke to an imitation of her example. But when she gave him these instructions is but matter of conjecture. Probably it was either,

1. When she first discerned his inclinations to those sins of which she here warns him, to which she saw he was like to have many and strong provocations. Or,

2. After he was made king, and had more plainly discovered his proneness to these excesses, although he had not yet broken forth into those scandalous enormities into which he afterwards fell.

Proverbs 31:2

What? a short speech, arguing her great passion for him; what dost thou do? or, what words shall I take? what counsels shall I give thee? My heart is full, I must give it vent; but where shall I begin?

The son of my womb; my son, not by adoption, but whom I bare in my womb, and brought forth with great pain, and brought up with tender care; and therefore it is my duty to give thee admonitions, and thine to receive them; and what I speak is from sincere and fervent affection to thee, which I trust thou wilt not despise.

The son of my vows; on whose behalf I have made many prayers, and sacrifices, and solemn vows to God; whom I have, as far as in me lay, devoted to the work, and service, and glory of God.

Proverbs 31:3

Thy strength; the rigour of thy mind and body, which is greatly impaired by inordinate lusts, as all physicians agree, and frequent experience showeth.

Thy ways; thy conversation or course of life.

To that which destroyeth kings; the same thing repeated in other words, as is very usual in these books; to the immoderate love of women, which is most destructive to kings and kingdoms, as was well known to Solomon by the example of his father David, and by many other sad instances left upon record in all histories.

Proverbs 31:4

To drink wine, to wit, to drunkenness or excess, as the next verse explains it.

Proverbs 31:5

Forget the law; the laws of God, by which they are to govern themselves and their kingdoms.

Pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted; which may easily be done by a drunken judge, because drunkenness deprives a man of the use of reason; by which alone men can distinguish between right and wrong, and withal stirs up those passions which incline him both to precipitation and partiality.

Proverbs 31:6

Unto him; which is to be understood comparatively, to him rather than to kings, partly because he needs a liberal draught of it more than kings do; and principally because if it proceed to excess, in him it is only a private inconvenience, but in kings it is a public mischief and grievance.

Ready to perish; sorely afflicted and overwhelmed with sorrow, as it is explained in the following words; for such need a cordial.

Proverbs 31:7

For wine, moderately used, allayeth men's cares and fears, and cheereth their spirits, Psa_104:15.

Proverbs 31:8

Open thy mouth, speak freely and impartially, as becomes a king and judge to do, for the dumb; for such as cannot speak in their

own cause, either through ignorance and infirmity, or because of the dread of their more potent adversaries, or of the majesty of the king sitting in judgment.

Such as are appointed to destruction; who without such succour from the judge are like to be utterly ruined, whom therefore both justice and charity oblige thee to preserve.

Proverbs 31:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Proverbs 31:10

A virtuous woman, whom he may take to wife. Such a person is hardly to be found. Compare Ecc_7:28. And here he lays down several characters or qualifications of an excellent wife, which are here delivered in alphabetical order, each verse beginning with a several and the succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet; which method is used in some, and but in a few places of Scripture, to oblige us to the more diligent consideration and careful remembrance of them, as things of more than ordinary importance. And such this matter is, partly because the good or bad education even of private families, which depends much upon the mother's qualifications, hath a mighty influence upon the welfare or misery of commonwealths; and partly because the right education of royal families is in itself a very public blessing, and therefore it is the interest and happiness of whole kingdoms that their kings should have virtuous and pious wives.

Proverbs 31:11

Doth safely trust in her, for the prudent and faithful management of all his domestic affairs, which are committed to her care.

So that he shall have no need of spoil; the sense is either,

1. He shall want no necessary provisions for his family, which are sometimes called spoil, or prey, as below, Pro_31:15 Psa_111:5 Luk_11:22. Or,

2. He shall not need to use indirect and unlawful courses to get wealth, by cheating or oppressing his subjects or others, as princes have oft done to maintain the luxury of their wives, and as Solomon himself afterwards did, of which see on 1Ki_12:4,**10,11**, because all shall be abundantly supplied to him by her providence.

Proverbs 31:12

She will improve, and not waste his estate.

Proverbs 31:13

She seeketh wool and flax, that she may find employment for her servants, and not suffer them to spend all their time unprofitably in ease and idleness.

Worketh willingly with her hands; she encourageth them to work by her example; which was a common practice among princesses in those first and purest ages of the world. Not that it is the duty of kings and queens to use manual or mechanical operations, but that it is the duty of all persons, the greatest not excepted, to improve all their talents, and particularly their time, which is one of the noblest of them, one way or other to the service of that God to whom they must give an account, and to the good of that community to which they are related and obliged.

Proverbs 31:14

By the sale of her homespun commodities she purchaseth the choicest goods which come from far countries.

Proverbs 31:15

While it is yet night; early in the morning, to redeem thee.

Giveth meat; distributeth all her necessary provisions.

A portion; either,

1. Of work, which she allots to them. Or rather,

2. Of provisions for them; for so this word is used, Gen_47:22 Lev_10:13, **14 Pr 30:8**, and no where, to my remembrance, of an allotment of work. And so this clause agrees best with the former, expressing the same thing in other words, according to the manner.

Proverbs 31:16

She considereth a field; whether it be fit for her use, and of a reasonable price, and how she may purchase it. This excludes the rashness, as her proceeding to

buy it excludes the inconstancy, which is oft incident to that sex.

With the fruit of her hands, with the effects of her diligence,

she planteth a vineyard; she improveth the land to the best advantage.

Proverbs 31:17

She girdeth her loins with strength; she useth great diligence and expedition in her employment; for which end men in those times used to gird up their long and loose garments about their loins.

Strengtheneth her arms; putteth forth her utmost strength in her business.

Proverbs 31:18

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; she finds great comfort and good success in her labours.

Her candle goeth not out by night; which is not to be taken strictly, but only signifies her unwearied care and industry, which is oft expressed by labouring *day and night* , or *continually* .

Proverbs 31:19

By her own example she provoketh her servants to labour. And although in these later and more delicate and luxurious times, such mean employments are grown out of fashion among great persons, yet they were not so in former ages, neither in other countries, nor in this land; whence all women unmarried are to this day called in the language of our law *spinsters* .

Proverbs 31:20

To relieve their necessities. Her designs are generous and noble; for she labours not only to supply her own and her household necessities, or to support her own state, much less to feed her pride and luxury, but that she may have wherewith to supply the wants of others who crave or need her assistance; which also procures God's blessing upon her husband, and children, and whole family, to whom, by this means, she brings both honour and advantage.

Proverbs 31:21

She is not afraid of the snow, or of any injuries of the weather.

All her household are clothed with scarlet; she hath provided enough, not only for their necessity and defence against cold and other inconveniences, which is here supposed, but also for their

delight and ornament; so that not only herself, and husband, and children, but some of the better rank of her servants, wear scarlet; which was more cheap and familiar in those times and countries than now it is with us. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by divers others, *are clothed with double garments* , which is necessary and customary in cold seasons.

Proverbs 31:22

Coverings of tapestry, for the furniture of her house.

Silk and purple, which was very agreeable to her high quality, though it doth not justify that luxury in attire which is now usual among persons of far lower ranks, both for wealth and dignity.

Proverbs 31:23

Known; observed and respected, not only for his own worth, but for his wife's sake; not only for those rich ornaments which by her care and diligence she provides for him, which others of his brethren, by reason of their wives' sloth or luxury, are not able to procure, but also for his wisdom in choosing, and his happiness in enjoying, so excellent a wife, by whose prudent care, in the management of his domestic concerns, he hath perfect freedom wholly to attend upon public affairs.

Sitteth among the elders of the land, in counsel or judgment.

Proverbs 31:24

Curiously wrought of linen, and gold, or other precious materials, Jer_13:1 Dan_10:5, which in those parts were used both by men, 2Sa_20:8, and by women, Isa_3:24 Son_7:1.

Proverbs 31:25

Strength; not strength of body, which is no ornament of that sex, save only as she preserves her health and strength by sobriety and exercise, which other men waste by intemperance and idleness; but strength of mind, magnanimity, courage, resolution, activity.

Honour; either,

1. Her prudent, and pious, and amiable behaviour, in which true honour principally consists. Or,
2. That good name and honourable esteem which she hath gained amongst all that know her by her virtuous disposition and carriage.

Her clothing; these, and not her rich garments mentioned before, are her great ornament and glory.

She shall rejoice in thee to come: the sense is either,

1. In her old age she reaps the comfort and benefit of her youthful labours, Or rather,

2. She lives in constant tranquillity of mind, and a confident and cheerful expectation of all future events, how calamitous soever, partly because she hath laid in provisions for a rainy day, and chiefly because she hath the comfortable remembrance of a well-spent life, and, which follows thereupon, a just confidence in God's gracious providence and promises made to such persons.

Proverbs 31:26

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; she is neither sullenly silent, nor full of vain and impertinent talk, as many women are, but speaks directly and piously, as occasion offereth itself.

In her tongue is the law of kindness; her speeches are not froward and provoking, as those of foolish women frequently are, but most obliging and amiable, as being guided by wisdom and grace, and not by inordinate lusts and passions. And this practice is called

a law in her tongue, because it is constant and customary, and proceeds from an inward and powerful principle of true wisdom, which in a manner necessitates and constrains her to discourse like herself, so that in a moral sense she cannot speak otherwise, unless she offer violence to herself, or the nature of the thing require sharp and severe expressions.

Proverbs 31:27

She looketh well to the ways of her household; she diligently observeth the management and progress of her domestic business, and the whole carriage and conversation of her children and servants; whereby also he intimates that she spends not her time in gadding abroad to other houses, and idle discourses about the concerns of other persons, as the manner of many women is, but is wholly intent upon her own house and proper business.

Eateth not the bread of idleness; that which is got by idleness, or without labour.

Proverbs 31:28

Her children; whose testimony is the more considerable, because they have been constant eye-witnesses of her whole carriage, and therefore must have seen her misdemeanours, if there had been any, as well as her virtues.

Arise up; either,

1. In token of reverence to her, which agrees not to the following clause, wherein the same phrase is understood concerning her husband. Or rather,

2. That they may seriously and industriously apply themselves to the work of setting forth her praises, as this phrase is used, Gen_37:25 Exo_2:17, and oft elsewhere. For sitting being commonly the posture of idleness, men that set about any work are said to rise in order thereunto.

Call her blessed, both for her own excellency, and for many happy fruits which they have gathered from her wise and godly education.

He praiseth her, in the following words.

Proverbs 31:29

Daughters; daughters of men, i.e. women, so called also Gen_34:1 Eze_30:18.

Thou excellest them all: he esteems it but just that his praises should bear proportion to her real and manifold perfections.

Proverbs 31:30

Favour; comeliness; or, as the next clause explains it, beauty, which commonly gives women favour or acceptation with those who behold them. These are the words either,

1. Of her husband, continuing to praise her. Or,

2. Of Bathsheba, giving the sum of what she had said in few words.

Is deceitful; partly, because it gives a false representation of the person, being oftentimes a cover to a most deformed soul, and to many evil and hateful qualities; partly, because it doth not give a man that content and satisfaction which at first view he promised

to himself from it; and partly, because it is soon lost, not only by death, but by many diseases and contingencies.

That feareth the Lord; which character is here mentioned either,

1. As the crown of all her perfections. Or,
2. As a key to understand the foregoing passage of that wisdom, and fidelity, and diligence, which proceeded from or is accompanied with the fear of God.

Proverbs 31:31

Give her of the fruit of her hands; it is but just and fit that she should enjoy those benefits and praises which her excellent labours deserve.

Let her own works praise her; give her the praises which her own works may challenge. If men be silent, the lasting effects of her prudence and diligence will loudly trumpet forth her praises.

In the gates; in the most public and solemn assemblies.

ECCLESIASTES;

OR, The Preacher

THREE things in general are to be noted concerning this book:

1. The author of it, who was Solomon, as is manifest both from the common consent of Jewish and Christian writers, and from the express words of the first verse. Nor can any thing be opposed to it but bold and groundless conjectures. That he wrote it in his old age is more than probable from divers passages in it, as, that he did it after his buildings, **#Ec 2:4**, which yet took up twenty years of his life, **#1Ki 9:10**, and after some considerable enjoyment of them, and planting of gardens and orchards, and reaping the fruit of them, **#Ec 2:5,6**, and after long and much consideration and experience of all those methods in which men expected to find happiness, and after he had been deeply plunged in impure and inordinate loves, **#Ec 7:27**, &c., and from many other places, which may be observed by any diligent reader. And so this book was written by him as a public testimony of his repentance and detestation of all those vain and wicked courses to which he had addicted himself; wherein he followed the example of his father David, who after his sad fall penned the 51st Psalm. And the truth of this opinion may be confirmed by that expression, **#2Ch 11:17**, they walked in the way of David and Solomon, i.e. wherein they walked both before their falls, and after their repentance.

2. The form or method of it. For whereas there are some passages in it which may seem offensive and impious, for which some few persons have suspected its authority, it must be considered that it is in part dramatical, as was said before of the Book of Proverbs, and that Solomon speaks some and most things in his own name, but some other things in the names and according to the opinions of those worldly and ungodly men, as is undeniably manifest, both from the scope and design of the book, as it is expressed both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, and from his serious and large disputation against those wicked principles and courses. And this way of writing is not unusual amongst both sacred and profane writers.

3. The design and business of it, which is to describe man's true happiness, and the way leading to it; which he doth both negatively, asserting and proving that it is not to be found either in secular wisdom,

or in sensual pleasures, or in worldly greatness and glory, or in abundance of riches, or in a vain profession of religion; and positively, showing that it is to be had only by the fear of God, and obedience to his laws, which alone can give a man a contented and cheerful enjoyment of his present comforts, and assurance of his future and everlasting happiness.

Ecclesiastes 1:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 1

All is vanity; our labour great and unprofitable, Ecc_1:1-3. The whole course of things is always going and returning, Ecc_1:4-7. Nothing in nature is satisfied, Ecc_1:8. Nothing new; old things are forgot, Ecc_1:9-11. The search after wisdom is itself a vain labour; cannot supply our natural wants, nor satisfy our desires; but increaseth sorrow: all this the Preacher found out by experience, Ecc_1:12-18.

The Preacher; who was not only a king, but also a teacher of God's people, which he did both by words, upon some solemn occasions, and by writings; who having sinned grievously and scandalously in the eyes of all the world, justly thought himself obliged to preach or publish his true repentance for all his folly and wickedness, and to give public warning and wholesome counsels to all persons to avoid those rocks upon which he had split. The Hebrew properly signifies either *gathering* or *gathered* ; and so it signifies either,

1. A preacher, as it is commonly rendered, whose office it is to gather in souls unto God or his church. Or,

2. A penitent or convert, or one gathered or brought back by true repentance to God, and to his church, from which he had so wickedly revolted. *King of Jerusalem* : this is added partly as a description of the person or author of this book, Solomon, who was the only man that was both

son of David, properly so called, *and king of Jerusalem* ; and partly as an aggravation of his sin, because he was *the son of David* , a wise and godly father, who had given him both excellent counsel, and, for his general course, a good example: and for the evil example which he gave him in the matter of Uriah, that also, considered with his hearty and effectual repentance for it, and the dreadful punishments of it upon his person and family, was a fair warning and most powerful instruction to him to learn by his father's example, and because he was

a king, not by birth, for he was not David's eldest son, but by the special favour and designation of that God whom he had now so ill requited, and that in Jerusalem, a holy city, the place of God's special presence, and of his worship, where he had daily opportunities to know and obligations to practise better things, which place he had defiled by his horrid sins, and thereby made it, and all God's people, and the true religion, and the name of the blessed God, odious and contemptible amongst all the nations round about him.

Ecclesiastes 1:2

Vanity of vanities; not only vain, but vanity in the abstract, which notes extreme vanity, especially where the word is thus doubled; as *a king of kings* is the chief of kings, and a servant of servants is the vilest of servants, and a song of songs is a most excellent song.

Saith the Preacher, upon deep consideration and long experience, and by Divine inspiration. This verse contains the general proposition, which he intends particularly to demonstrate in the whole following book.

All, all worldly things, and all men's designs, and studies, and works about them, *is vanity* ; not in themselves, for so they are God's creatures, and therefore good and really useful in their kinds; but in reference to men, and to that happiness which men seek and confidently expect to find in them. So they are unquestionably *vain* , because they are not what they seem to be, and perform not what they promise, content and satisfaction, but instead of that are commonly the causes or occasions of innumerable cares, and fears, and sorrows, and mischiefs; and because they are altogether unsuitable to the noble mind or soul of man, both in nature or quality, and in duration, as being unstable and perishing things. And this vanity of them is here repeated again and again; partly, because it was most deeply fixed and perpetually present in Solomon's thoughts; partly, to show the unquestionable certainty and vast importance of this truth; and partly, that he might more thoroughly awaken the dull and stupid minds of men to the consideration of it, and might wean men's hearts from those things upon which he knew they excessively doted.

Ecclesiastes 1:3

What profit? or, as others render it, *What remainder* ? What real and abiding benefit hath a man by it? None at all. All is unprofitable, as to

the attainment of that happiness which Solomon here is, and all men in the world are, inquiring after.

His labour, Heb.

his toilsome labour, both of body and mind, in the pursuit of riches, or pleasures, or other earthly things.

Which he taketh under the sun; in all sublunary or worldly matters, which are usually transacted in the day time, or by the light of the sun. By this restriction he implies that that profit and happiness which in vain is sought for in this lower world, is really and only to be found in heavenly places and things.

Ecclesiastes 1:4

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: men continue but for one, and that a short age, and then they leave all their possessions to the succeeding age; and therefore they cannot be happy here, because happiness must needs be unchangeable and eternal; or else the perpetual fear and certain knowledge of the approaching loss of all these things will rob a man of all solid contentment in them.

The earth abideth for ever, i.e. through all successive generations of men; and therefore man in this respect is more mutable and miserable than the very earth upon which he stands; and which, together with all the glories and comforts which he enjoyed in it, he leaveth behind him to be possessed by others.

Ecclesiastes 1:5

The sun is in perpetual motion, sometimes arising, and sometimes setting, and then arising again, and so constantly repeating its courses in all succeeding days, and years, and ages; and the like he observes concerning the winds and rivers, Ecc_1:6,7. And the design of these similitudes seems to be, either,

1. That by representing the constant changes and restless motions of these particular things he might intimate that it is so with all other earthly things; and therefore no man can expect satisfaction from them.
Or,

2. That by comparing the sun, and wind, and rivers, as, Ecc_1:4, he compared the earth with man, he might show that man, considered as mortal, is in a more unhappy condition than these things, because when the earth abides, man goes; and when the sun sets, he riseth again; and

so the wind and rivers return to their former place and state, but man, when once he dies, he never returns again to this life; of which comparison see Job_14:7,12. Or,

3. To show the vanity of all worldly things, and that man's mind can never be satisfied with them, because there is nothing in the world but a constant repetition of the same things, which is so irksome a thing, that the consideration thereof hath made some persons weary of their lives; and there is no new thing under the sun, as is added in the foot of the account, Ecc_1:9, which seems to me to be given as a key to understand the meaning of the foregoing passages. And this is manifest and certain from experience, that the things of this world are so narrow, and the mind of man so vast, that there must be something new to satisfy the mind; and even delightful things, by too frequent repetition or long continuance, are so far from yielding satisfaction, that they grow tedious and troublesome.

Ecclesiastes 1:6

The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; the wind also sometimes blows from one quarter of the world, and sometimes from another; all of them being synecdochically comprehended under these two eminent quarters. But because this word, the *wind*, is not expressed in the Hebrew, but is only borrowed or understood from the latter clause of the verse, this first clause is by other judicious interpreters understood of the sun, of whom he last spake; the words being thus rendered according to the Hebrew, *He* (the sun) *goeth towards the south*, (which he doth one half of the year,) and turneth about unto the north, which he doth the other half. And so here is the whole motion of the sun towards the four quarters of the world particularly described; his daily motion from east to, west, and back again, Ecc_1:5; and his yearly motion from north to south, between the signs of Cancer and Capricorn.

The wind returneth again according to his circuits: this clause is by all understood of the wind, which is fitly mentioned immediately after the sun, because it hath its rise from the sun, who is therefore called *the father of winds*, and the winds do usually rise with the sun, and are laid when he sets. But then it is rendered thus, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, *the wind goeth continually whirling or compassing about, and he returneth again to his circuits*, being sometimes in one, and

sometimes in another quarter, and successively returning to the same quarters in which he had formerly been.

Ecclesiastes 1:7

Is not full, to wit, to the brink, or so as to overflow the earth, which might be expected from such vast accessions to it; whereby also he intimates the emptiness and dissatisfaction of men's minds, not withstanding all the abundance of creature-comforts.

Unto the place from whence the rivers come; either,

1. Unto the sea, from whence they are supposed to return into their proper channels, and then, as it is expressed, thither (i.e. into the sea) they return again. Or,

2. Unto their springs or fountains, to which the waters return by secret passages of the earth, as is manifest from the Caspian Sea, and reasonably supposed in other places. Or rather,

3. Unto the earth in general, from whence they come or How into the sea, and to which they return again by the reflux of the sea. For he seems to speak of the visible and constant motion of the waters, both to the sea and from it, and then to it again in a perpetual reciprocation; which agrees best with the former similitudes, Ecc_1:5,6.

Ecclesiastes 1:8

All things, not only the sun, and winds, and rivers, which I have mentioned, but all other creatures, *are full of labour* ; both subjectively, as they are in continual restlessness and change, never abiding in the same state or place; and efficiently, as they cause great and sore labour to men, in getting, and keeping, and enjoying of them, yea, even in the study of them, as is noted hereafter.

Man cannot utter it; the labour is inexpressibly and unconceivably great.

The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing; as there are many things in the world troublesome and vexatious to men's senses and minds, so even those things which are comfortable and acceptable to them are not satisfactory, but men are constantly desiring some longer continuance or fuller enjoyment of them, or variety in them, and they never say, It is enough, I desire no more. *The eye* and *ear* are here synecdochically put for all the senses, because these are most spiritual and refined, most curious and inquisitive, most

capable of receiving satisfaction, because they are exercised with more ease and pleasure than the other senses, whose satisfactions are oft attended with greater weariness and manifold dangers and inconveniences.

Ecclesiastes 1:9

There is nothing in the world but a continued and tiresome repetition of the same things. The nature and course of the beings and affairs of the world, and the tempers of men's minds, are generally the same that they ever were and shall ever be; and therefore because no man ever yet received satisfaction from any worldly things, it is a vain and foolish thing for any person hereafter to expect it.

No new thing, to wit, in the nature of things, which might give us hopes of attaining that satisfaction which things have not hitherto afforded. For otherwise this doth not restrain the God of nature, who hath frequently done, and still can do, new and miraculous works, and who can and doth discover to particular persons new inventions, when it pleaseth him.

Ecclesiastes 1:10

For the proof hereof I appeal to the consciences and experiences of all men. It hath been already of old thee; the same things have been said and done before, though possibly we did not know it.

Ecclesiastes 1:11

There is no remembrance of former things: this seems to be added to prevent this objection, There are many new inventions and enjoyments unknown to former ages. To this he answers, This objection is grounded only upon our ignorance of ancient times and things, which is very great, and which if we did exactly know or remember, we should easily find parallels to all present occurrences in former ages. The latter clause tends both to illustrate and confirm the former. The sense is, There are many thousands of remarkable speeches and actions done in this and the following ages, which neither are, nor ever will be, put into the public records or histories, and consequently they must unavoidably be forgotten and lost unto succeeding ages; and therefore it is just and reasonable to believe the same concerning former ages, seeing the same causes are most likely to produce the same effects.

Ecclesiastes 1:12

This verse is a preface to the following discourse, that by the consideration of the quality of the speaker they might be induced to give more attention and respect to his words. Having asserted the vanity of all things in the general, he now comes to prove his assertion in all those particulars wherein men commonly seek, and with greatest probability expect to find true happiness. He begins with secular wisdom. And to show how competent a judge he was of this matter, he lays down his character, that he was the

Preacher, which implies eminent knowledge and ability to teach others; or, *the convert*, who had learned by dear-bought experience what he now taught them; and a king, who therefore had all imaginable opportunities and advantages for the attainment of happiness, and particularly for the getting of wisdom, by consulting all sorts of books and men, by trying all manner of experiments, and many other ways; and no ordinary king, but

king over Israel, God's own and only beloved people, a wise and a happy people, Deu_4:6,7 33:29, whose king he was by God's special and gracious appointment, and furnished by God with singular wisdom for the discharge of that great trust; and whose royal palace and abode was in Jerusalem, where were the house of God, and the most wise and learned of the priests attending upon it, and the seats of justice, and colleges or assemblies of the wisest men of their nation; of which see 2Ki_22:14 1Ch_25:8, &c.; Psa_122:5: all which helps concurring together in him, which very rarely do in any other men, makes the argument drawn from his experience more convincing and undeniable.

Ecclesiastes 1:13

I gave my heart, which phrase notes his serious and fixed purpose, his great industry and alacrity in it,

to seek and search out, to seek diligently and accurately, by wisdom, wisely, or by the help of that wisdom wherewith God had endowed me, concerning all things that are done under heaven; *concerning all the works of God and men in this lower world*; the works of nature, and their causes, effects, properties, and operations; the works of Divine providence, and God's counsels and ends in them; the work and depths of human policy in the conduct of personal, and domestical, and public affairs.

This sore travail, this difficult and toilsome work of searching out these things,

hath God given to the sons of man; God hath inflicted this as a just punishment upon man for his eating of the tree of knowledge, that instead of that sweet and perfect knowledge which God had freely infused into man at his first creation, he should now grope after some small parcels or fragments of it, and those too not to be gotten without the sweat of his brows and brains.

To be exercised therewith; to employ themselves in the painful study of these things, which now is both their duty and their punishment. Or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by many others, *to afflict them in or by it*, to chastise their former curiosity, and to give them matter of continual humiliation and vexation. And therefore knowledge is so far from making men happy, that it exposeth them to trouble and infelicity.

Ecclesiastes 1:14

I have seen, i.e. diligently observed, and in great measure understood.

Behold; for it was a great surprise to me, and therefore may seem strange to you.

All is vanity and vexation of spirit; and not only unsatisfying, but also troublesome, and an affliction or breaking to a man's spirit or mind. Or, as others, both ancient and modern translators, render it, *a feeding upon wind*, as these very words, save only that there is the verb from which this noun seems most probably deduced, are rendered, Hos_12:1, where also it signifies a fruitless or lost labour, and a disappointment of their hopes and desires of satisfaction. And so this is a repetition of the same thing in other words, according to the manner of these books.

Ecclesiastes 1:15

That which is crooked cannot be made straight; all our knowledge serves only to discover our diseases and miseries, but is oft itself utterly insufficient to heal or remove them; it cannot rectify those confusions and disorders which are either in our own hearts and lives, or in the men and things of the world.

That which is wanting, to wit, in our knowledge, and in order to man's complete satisfaction and felicity, cannot be numbered; we know

little of what we should or might know, or did know in the state of innocency, or shall know in the future life.

Ecclesiastes 1:16

I communed with mine own heart; I considered within myself in what condition I was, and what degrees of knowledge I had gained, and whether it was not my ignorance that made me unable to rectify those errors, and supply those wants, and wiser men could do it, though I could not.

I am come to great estate, Heb. *I am grown great* , to wit, in wisdom; or, *I have magnified* , or *greatly enlarged* . *Have gotten* , Heb. *have added* . As I had a large stock of wisdom infused into me by God, 1Ki_3:12 4:29, so I have greatly improved it by conversation, and study, and experience.

More wisdom than all they that have been before me, whether governors, or priests, or private persons; which was no vain boast, but a known and confessed truth, and profession hereof was necessary to demonstrate his assertion.

In Jerusalem; which was then the most eminent place in the world for wisdom and knowledge.

Had great experience, Heb. *had seen much* ; which intimates that his knowledge was clear, and certain, and experimental, as that is which we have from our own eyesight.

Wisdom and knowledge; two words signifying the same thing, as may be gathered from Ecc_1:18, and from the promiscuous use of them in this book, and in the Proverbs, and elsewhere, and implying all manner of knowledge, Divine or human, speculative or practical, political or philosophical.

Ecclesiastes 1:17

I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly, that I might thoroughly understand the nature and difference of truth and error, of virtue and vice, all things being best understood by contraries, and might discern if there were any opinion or practice amongst men which would give him full satisfaction.

Vexation of spirit; or, *feeding upon wind* , as Ecc_1:14.

Ecclesiastes 1:18

Grief, or *indignation* , or displeasure within himself, and against his present condition.

Increaseth sorrow; which he doth many ways, partly, because he gets his knowledge with hard and wearisome labour, both of mind and body, with the consumption of his spirits, and shortening and embitterment of his life; partly, because he is oft deceived with knowledge falsely so called, and oft mistakes errors for truths, and is perplexed with manifold doubts, from which ignorant men are wholly free; partly, because he foresees, and consequently feels, the terror of many miseries which are or are likely to come to pass, which are unobserved by less knowing persons, and which possibly never happen; partly, because he hath the clearer prospect into, and quicker sense of, his own ignorance, and infirmities, and disorders, and withal how vain and ineffectual all his knowledge is for the prevention or removal of them; and partly, because his knowledge is very imperfect and unsatisfying, yet increasing his thirst after more knowledge, and consequently after more dissatisfaction, because instead of that just honour, and delight, and advantage which he expects from it, he meets with nothing but envy, and opposition, and contempt, because his knowledge quickly fades and dies with him, and then leaves him in no better, and possibly in a much worse, condition than the meanest and most unlearned man in the world.

Ecclesiastes 2:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 2

Pleasure and mirth also vanity, Ecc_2:1,**2**; whether in wine, or buildings and gardens, or servants, or cattle, or silver and gold, or music, Ecc_2:3-8. This the Preacher searched out and found, and none need try after him, Ecc_2:9-12. Wisdom excelleth folly, Ecc_2:13,**14**; but the like event is to both, and both are forgotten; therefore is wisdom also vanity, and life hateful, Ecc_2:15-17. Not labour they know not for whom, but the fool enjoyeth the wise man's pains: this rendered his toil irksome, that he reaped no fruit, and yet his days were travail and grief, Ecc_2:18-23. There is nothing better than to enjoy contentedly what God giveth us; and this also is of God, who giveth travail to the sinner, Ecc_2:24-26.

I said in mine heart; being disappointed of my hopes from knowledge, I resolved in my own mind to try another course.

I will prove thee, O my soul, I will try whether I cannot make thee happy, with mirth; by allowing to myself the free enjoyment of the present and sensible delights of human life.

Enjoy pleasure; take thy fill of pleasure, and expect satisfaction thence.

Is vanity; is vain, and unable to make men happy, because sensible pleasures are mean and unsuitable to the noble and heaven-born soul of man, and if excessively used, apter to cloy and glut men than to satisfy them, and are frequently mixed with, and most commonly end in, bitterness, as being the great instruments and occasions of sin, and of all its fatal consequences.

Ecclesiastes 2:2

I said of laughter; of excessive mirth, which discovers itself by immoderate laughter, and other outward gestures.

It is mad; this is an act and sign of madness, more fit for fools, who know nothing, than for wise men, at least in this sin fill, and dangerous, and deplorable state of mankind, which calls for seriousness and sorrow from all considerate persons, in which case it is like the laughter of one in a frenzy; and none but a fool or madman can take satisfaction in such light and frothy pleasures, or expect happiness from them.

What doeth it? What good doeth it? or how can it make men happy? I challenge all the epicures in the world to give me a solid and satisfactory answer.

Ecclesiastes 2:3

To give myself unto wine; to relax and gratify my flesh with delicious meats and drinks, synecdochically expressed by *wine* here, as also Pro_9:2 Son_2:4, &c., as necessary food is by bread, Amo_7:12, compared with Amo_8:2.

Yet acquainting my heart with wisdom; yet resolving to use my wisdom; either,

1. To set bounds to my pleasures. Or rather,
2. That I might try whether I could not arrive at satisfaction, by mixing wine and wisdom together, by using wine to sweeten and allay the toils of wisdom, and wisdom to prevent that destruction which many bring upon themselves by intemperate pleasures whilst they seek for

satisfaction, that so I might have the comfort without the danger and mischief of pleasures.

To lay hold on folly; to pursue and addict myself to carnal pleasures, which was my folly.

Till I might see, & c.; till by trying several methods I might find out the true way to contentment and satisfaction, during this mortal life.

Ecclesiastes 2:4

I made me great works; magnificent works for my honour and delight.

I built me houses; of which see 1Ki_7:1, &c.; 1Ki_9:15, &c. I planted me vineyards: see Son_8:11.

Ecclesiastes 2:5

I made me gardens, Heb. *paradises* , or gardens of pleasure.

I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits, mixing pleasure and profit together.

Ecclesiastes 2:6

I made me pools of water, because the rain there fell but seldom.

The wood that bringeth forth trees; the nurseries of young trees newly planted in the orchards, which for the multitude of them were like a wood or forest.

Ecclesiastes 2:7

Born in my house, of my bond-servants, which therefore were a part of my possessions: see 1Ki_10:8 Ezr_2:55.

Ecclesiastes 2:8

The peculiar treasure of kings; either,

1. Vast riches, answerable to the state of a king. Or,

2. The greatest jewels and rarities of other kings, which they gave to me either as a tribute, or by way of present; of which see 1Ki_4:21 **9:11 10:2,10.**

Of the provinces; which were imposed upon or presented by all the provinces of my dominions.

Women singers; whose voices were more sweet than the men's.

And the delights of the sons of men; either,

1. All other delightful things. Or,
2. That in which men generally delight, to wit, musical instruments, as it follows.

Ecclesiastes 2:9

I was great, in riches, and power, and glory.

Also my wisdom remained with me; as yet I was not wholly besotted and seduced from God by these things, as I was afterwards; I still had the use of my reason, whereby I was capable of searching after and finding satisfaction, if it was to be had in those things.

Ecclesiastes 2:10

Whatsoever mine eyes desired; whatsoever was grateful to my senses, or my heart desired. He ascribes desire to the eyes, because the sight of the eyes is the usual and powerful incentive of desires; of which see Jos_7:21 Job_31:1 Mat_5:28.

I kept not from them; I denied myself nothing, at least of lawful delights, but went to the very utmost bounds of them; which was the occasion of his falling afterward into sinful pleasures. I withheld not my heart from any joy; as my heart was vehemently set upon pleasure, so I did not resist or curb it therein, but made all possible provisions to gratify it.

My heart rejoiced in all my labour; I had the comfort of all my labours, and was not hindered from the free and full enjoyment of them by sickness or war, or any other calamities occurrent.

This was my portion of all my labour; this present and temporary enjoyment of them was all the benefit which I could expect or receive from all my labours, so that I made the best of them. I had a heart to use them, which many men through covetousness have not; and I tasted the sweetness of them, which many others cannot do; and therefore if any man could arrive at happiness by this means, I had done it.

Ecclesiastes 2:11

I made a serious review of my former works and labours, and considered whether I had obtained that satisfaction in them which I designed and expected;

and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit; I found myself suddenly disappointed and wholly dissatisfied in this course.

There was no profit; the pleasure was past and gone, and I was never the better for it, but as empty as before, and had nothing left but sorrowful reflections upon it.

Ecclesiastes 2:12

I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly; of which see Ecc_1:7. Being frustrated of my hopes in pleasure, I returned to a second and more serious consideration of my first choice, to see whether there was not more satisfaction to be gotten from wisdom, than what I discovered at my first view.

What can the man do, to find out the truth in this matter, to discover the utmost satisfaction which was possibly to be found in pleasures? So this is added as a reason why he gave over the thoughts of pleasures, and directed them to another object, and why he so confidently asserted their vanity from his own particular experience, because he had made the best of them, and it was a vain thing for any private man to expect that from them which could not be found by a king, and such a king, who had so much wisdom to invent, and such vast riches to pursue and enjoy, all imaginary delights, and who had made it his design and business to search this to the bottom. That cometh after the

king; that succeeds me in this inquiry. That which hath been already done; as by others in former times, so especially by myself. They can make no new discoveries as to this point.

Ecclesiastes 2:13

Then I saw; or, *yet I saw* ; for this is added to prevent an Objection or mistake.

Wisdom excelleth folly; although wisdom is not sufficient to make men truly and perfectly happy, yet it is of a far greater use and excellency than vain pleasures, or any other follies.

As far as light excelleth darkness, i.e. vastly and unspeakably. Light is very pleasant and comfortable, and withal of great necessity and singular use to discover the differences of persons and things, to prevent mistakes and dangers, and to direct all a man's paths in the right way; whereas darkness is in itself doleful, and leads men into innumerable confusions, and errors, and miseries.

Ecclesiastes 2:14

Are in his head; in their proper place, and therefore they can see, which they could not do if they were out of his head. He hath the use of his eyes and reason, and sees his way, and orders all his affairs with discretion, and foresees, and so avoids, many dangers and mischiefs. Walketh in darkness; manageth his affairs ignorantly, rashly, and foolishly, whereby he showeth that his eyes are not in his head, but in his heels, or, as it is expressed, Pro_17:24, *in the ends of the earth* . And ; or, *yet* ; notwithstanding this excellency of wisdom above folly for our conduct in the matters of this life, yet at last they both come to one end.

One event happeneth to them all; both are subject to the same calamities, and to death itself, which utterly takes away all difference between them.

Ecclesiastes 2:15

Why was I then more wise? what benefit have I by my wisdom? or, to what purpose did I desire and take so much pains for wisdom?

Ecclesiastes 2:16

There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; their name and memory, though it may flourish for a season among some men, yet it will not last for ever, but will in a little time be worn out; as we see in most of the wise men of former ages, whose very names, together with all their monuments, are utterly lost, as hath been oft observed and bewailed by learned writers in several ages.

As the fool; he must die as certainly as the fool, and after death be as little remembered and honoured.

Ecclesiastes 2:17

I hated life; my life, though accompanied with so much honour, and pleasure, and wisdom, was a burden to me, and I was apt to wish either that I had never been born, or that I might speedily die.

The work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me; all human designs and works are so far from yielding me that satisfaction which I expected, that the consideration of them increaseth my discontent.

Ecclesiastes 2:18

I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; all these riches and buildings, and other fruits of my labour, were the matter of

my repentance, and aggravations of my misery, because I must, and that everlastingly, part with them, and leave them all behind me.

Ecclesiastes 2:19

A fool; who will undo all that I have done, and turn the effects of my wisdom into instruments of his folly, and occasions of ruin. Some think he had such an opinion of Rehoboam.

Ecclesiastes 2:20

I gave myself up to despondency, and despair of ever reaping that satisfaction which I promised to myself.

Ecclesiastes 2:21

Whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; who useth great industry, and prudence, and justice too, in the management of his affairs, and therefore might as confidently expect God's blessing, and the comfort of his labours, as any other man.

That hath not laboured therein, so as I have done; who hath spent his days in sloth and folly.

A great evil; a great disorder in itself, and a great disgrace to this world, and a great torment to a considering mind.

Ecclesiastes 2:22

What comfort or benefit remains to any man after this short and frail life is once ended? or, what advantage hath he by all his labours above him who never laboured, and yet enjoyeth all the fruits of his labours?

Ecclesiastes 2:23

For all his days are sorrows; or, *though all his days were sorrows*, i.e. full of sorrows. For this seems added to aggravate the evil mentioned in the foregoing verse. Though he took great and unwearied pains all his days, yet after death he hath no more benefit by it than another man hath.

His travail grief; the toils of his body are, or were, accompanied with the vexations of his mind.

Taketh not rest in the night; either because his mind is distracted, or his sleep broken, with perplexing cares and fears.

Ecclesiastes 2:24

There is nothing better for a man; or, Is there *any thing better for a man*? which implies that there is nothing better, to wit, for man's

present comfort and satisfaction; this is the chief, and indeed the only, considerable benefit of his labours.

That he should make his soul enjoy good; that he should thankfully take, and freely and cheerfully enjoy, the comforts which God gives him.

That it was from the hand of God; that this also is a singular gift of God, and not to be procured by a man's own wisdom or diligence.

Ecclesiastes 2:25

Who can more freely and fully enjoy the comforts of this life than I did? This verse is added to confirm what he said in the foregoing verse from his own experience, which was the more considerable, because no man ever was a more capable judge of these matters, none could either have more creature-comforts, or more addict himself to the enjoyment of them, or to improve them to better advantage, than he did; and therefore he could best tell what was the greatest good to be found in them, and whether they were able of themselves, without God's special gift, to yield a man satisfaction.

Who else can hasten hereunto, to wit, to the procuring and enjoying of them? who can pursue them with more diligence, or obtain them with more speed and readiness, or embrace them with more greediness and alacrity?

Ecclesiastes 2:26

That is good in his sight; who not only seems to be good to men, as many bad men do, but is really and sincerely good. Or, *who pleaseth him*, as this phrase is rendered, Ecc_7:26, and oft elsewhere; whereby he seems to intimate the reason why he found no more comfort in his labours, because his ways had been very displeasing to God, and therefore God justly denied him that gift. Wisdom and knowledge, to direct him how to use his comforts aright, that so they may be blessings, and not snares and curses to him.

Joy; a thankful and contented mind with his portion.

He giveth travail, to gather and to heap up; he giveth him up to insatiable desires, and wearisome labours, to little or no purpose.

That he may give to him that is good before God; that he may have no comfort in them, but leave them to others, yea, to such as he least

expected or desired, to good and virtuous men, into whose hands his estate falls by the wise and all-disposing providence of God.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 3

Every thing hath its time; in which, to enjoy it, and therewith do good to others, is our good, Ecc_3:1-13. God doth all according to his decree that we should fear him, and there is nothing new, Ecc_3:14,**15**. The vanity of unjust judgment; God is the great Judge of all, Ecc_3:16,**17**; and he will make men know that they are here but as brute beasts, Ecc_3:18-22.

A season; a certain thee appointed by God for its being and continuance, which no human wit or providence can prevent or alter. And by virtue of this appointment or decree of God, all the vicissitudes and changes which happen in the world, whether comforts or calamities, do come to pass; which is here added, partly, to prove what he last said, Ecc_2:24,**26**, that both the free and comfortable enjoyment of the creatures which some have, and the crosses and vexations which others have with them, are from the hand and counsel of God; partly, to prove the principal proposition of the book, that all things below are vain, and happiness is not to be found in them, because of their great uncertainty, and mutability, and transitoriness, and because they are so much out of the reach and power of men, and wholly in the disposal of another, to wit, God, who doth either give or take them away, either sweeten or embitter them, as it pleaseth him; and partly, to bring the minds of men into a quiet and cheerful dependence upon God's providence, and submission to his will, and a state of preparation for all events.

To every purpose, or *will* , or *desire* , to wit, of man; to all men's designs. attempts, and businesses. Not only natural, but even the free and voluntary actions of men, are ordered and disposed by God to accomplish his own purpose. But it must be considered, that he doth not here speak of a thee allowed by God, wherein all the following things may lawfully be done, which is wholly besides his scope and business; but only of a thee fixed by God, in which they would or should be done.

Ecclesiastes 3:2

A time to die; a certain period unknown to man, but fixed by God, in which a man must unavoidably die; of which see Job_14:5 Joh_13:1.

A time to plant; wherein God inclines a man's heart to planting.

Ecclesiastes 3:3

A time to kill; when a man shall die a violent death, either by chance, as Exo_21:13, or by the sentence of the magistrate, or by the hands of murderers.

A time to heal; when he who seemed to be mortally wounded shall be healed and restored.

A time to break down; when houses shall be demolished, either by the fancy of the owner, or by the rage of other men, or otherwise.

Ecclesiastes 3:4

A time to weep; when men shall have just occasion for weeping and mourning.

Ecclesiastes 3:5

A time to cast away stones; which were brought together in order to the building of a wall or house, but are now cast away, either because the man who gathered them hath changed his mind, and desists from his project, or by other causes or accidents.

A time to embrace; when persons shall enter into friendship, and perform all friendly offices one to another.

A time to refrain from embracing; either through alienation of affections, or grievous calamities. See Joe_2:16 1Co_7:5

Ecclesiastes 3:6

A time to lose; when men shall lose their estates, either by God's providence, or by their own choice.

A time to cast away; when a man shall cast away his goods voluntarily, as in a storm to save his life, as Jon_1:5 Act_27:18,19; or out of love and obedience to God, as Mat_10:37,39 Heb 10:34.

Ecclesiastes 3:7

A time to rend; when men shall rend their garments, as they did in great and sudden griefs, as Gen_37:29 Joe_2:13.

A time to keep silence; wherein men will or shall be silent, either through grief, as Job_2:12,13, or by sickness or weakness, or because God denies a man ability to utter his mind.

Ecclesiastes 3:8

A time to love; when God will stir up the affection of love, or give occasion for the exercise or discovery of it to others.

Ecclesiastes 3:9

Seeing then all actions and events in the world are out of man's power, and no man can at any time do or enjoy any thing at his pleasure, but only what and when God pleaseth, as hath been now shown in many particulars, and it is as true and certain in all others, hence it follows that all men's labours, of themselves, and without God's help and blessing, are unprofitable, and utterly insufficient to make them happy.

Ecclesiastes 3:10

I have seen, I have diligently observed and considered upon this occasion,

the travail, or *the occupation* or *business* , men's various employments, and the differing successes of them,

which God hath given to the sons of men; either,

1. Which God hath imposed upon men as their duty; and therefore men must labour, although it brings them no profit, as was now said. Or,

2. Which God hath inflicted upon mankind as a just punishment for their sins; to which therefore men ought quietly to submit.

To be exercised in it; that hereby they might have constant matter of exercise for their diligence, and patience, and submission to God's will and providence, and for all other graces. Or, *that they might be afflicted or humbled therewith* , as the same phrase is rendered by divers, Ecc_1:13.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: this seems to be added as an apology for God's providence, notwithstanding all the contrary events and confusions which are in the world.

He (i.e. *God* , expressed in the last clause of the verse)

hath made (or *doth make* or *do* , by his providence in the government of the world)

every thing (which he doth either immediately, or by the ministry of men or other creatures, for God worketh in and with all his creatures in all their actions, as is agreed by divines and philosophers)

beautiful (decently and conveniently, so that, all things considered, it could not have been done better) *in his time* ; in the time which he had appointed, or which he saw most proper and fit for it; or, *in its time* or *season* , when it was most fit to be done. Many events seem to men's shallow and perverse judgments, at least for a time, to be very irregular and unbecoming, as when wicked men prosper in their impious and unrighteous enterprises, and good men are sorely oppressed and afflicted, and that for righteousness' sake; but when men shall come thoroughly to understand God's works, and the whole frame and contexture of them, and to see the end of them, they will then say that all things were done most wisely and most seasonably; whereof we have eminent instances in Joseph, and David, and Mordecai, and the Jews of his time.

He hath set the world in their heart, i.e. in the hearts of men, as the following words show, where man is expressed. The sense is either,

1. Although all God's works are beautiful, yet men do not discern the beauty of them, because the world is in their hearts; their minds are so busied and distracted with the thoughts, and cares, and love, and business of this world, that they have neither leisure nor heart seriously to study God's works. But this inordinate love of the present world comes from man's own corruption, and not from God; and therefore it seems harsh to impute it to God, and improbable that Solomon would have phrased it thus, that *God hath set or put the world* i.e. worldly lusts, in men's *hearts* . Or,

2. As God's works are beautiful in themselves, so men are capable of discerning the beauty of them, because God hath set the world in men's hearts; he hath exposed the world, and all his dispensations in the world, unto the view of men's minds; both because he hath wrought his works so evidently and publicly, that men might easily observe them; and because he hath given men reason whereby they may discover the wisdom and beauty of all God's works, if they diligently apply themselves to the study of them.

So that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end: so this is another reason why men do not discern

the beauty of God's works, because they do not see the whole frame or course of them from the beginning to the end, but only some small parcels or fragments of them; the eminent works of God being oft begun in one age, and finished in another. Or, yet *so that* , &c. or, *except that* (as this phrase properly signifies, and is elsewhere used) *no man can find out* , &c. Thus it is an exception to the next foregoing clause, and the sense is, It is true God hath put the world into men's hearts, or made them capable of observing all events and dispensations of God in the world; but this is to be understood with a limitation, because there are some more mysterious works of God which no man can fully understand, because he cannot search them out through or from the beginning to the end.

Ecclesiastes 3:12

I know, by clear reason, and my own long and certain experience,

that there is no good, no other satisfaction or felicity which a man can enjoy, in them, in creatures or worldly enjoyments. *To do good* ; either,

1. To himself, as it is fully expressed, Psa_49:18. Or,
2. To others; to employ them in acts of charity and liberality towards others. Or,
3. Towards God; to use them, and to live in the fear of God, which is necessary to the happiness of this as well as of the other life.

Ecclesiastes 3:13

That every man should eat and drink, i.e. hath power or a heart to use what God hath given him, as it is expressed, Ecc_6:2.

It is the gift of God; of which See Poole "Ecc_2:24".

Ecclesiastes 3:14

Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; all God's counsels or decrees are eternal and unchangeable, and his providence works effectually, so as men cannot resist or hinder it.

Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; men can neither do any thing besides or against God's counsel and providence, nor hinder any work or act of it.

That men should fear before him; not that men should make this an occasion of despair, or idleness, or dissoluteness, as some abuse this doctrine, but that, by the consideration of his sovereign and irresistible

power in the disposal of all persons and things as pleaseth him, men should learn to trust in him, to submit to him, to fear to offend or rebel against him, and more carefully and industriously to study to please him.

Ecclesiastes 3:15

That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; things past, present, and to come, are all of the same nature, and all ordered in the same manner by one constant counsel and settled course in all parts and ages of the world. There is a continual return of the same motions and influences of the heavenly bodies, of the same seasons of the year, and a constant succession of new generations of men and beasts, but all of the same quality. The same thing in substance was said before, Ecc_1:9.

Requireth, i.e. reneweth, as this word is used, Job_3:4.

That which is past; that time and those things which are irrecoverably gone in themselves, but are as it were recalled, because others of the same kind arise and come in their stead. Heb. *that which is driven away* with a mighty, force, as time present is violently thrust away by that which comes after it.

Ecclesiastes 3:16

This is mentioned, either,

1. As another vanity, to wit, the vanity of honour and power, which is so oft an instrument of injustice and oppression. Or rather,
2. As another argument of the vanity of worldly things, or a hinderance of that comfort which men expect in this life, because they are oppressed by their rulers.

I saw; I perceived it by information from others, and by my own observation.

The place of judgment; in the thrones of princes and tribunals of magistrates, where judgment should be duly executed.

Wickedness was there; judgment was perverted, the guilty acquitted, and the innocent condemned.

The place of righteousness; in which righteousness should be found and should dwell, if it were banished from all other places.

Ecclesiastes 3:17

I said in mine heart, mine heart was sorely grieved at this disorder, but I quieted it with this consideration,

God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; absolving and saving the just, and condemning the wicked.

A time, fixed by God's unalterable decree. He implies, that as this life is the sinner's time in which he doth whatsoever seemeth good in his own eyes, so God will have his time to reckon with them, and rectify all these disorders.

There; in the presence or at the judgment-seat of God; which is easily understood out of the foregoing words, the relative being put for the antecedent, as it is Num_7:89 Est_9:25 Job_1:21 Psa_14:5 **114:2**. Or it may be rendered then, as this particle is used, Psa_14:5 Hos_2:15, and as it is usual in other authors for adverbs of place to be put for adverbs of time.

For every purpose, and for every work; for the examining and judging, not only all men's practices or open actions, but also all their secret thoughts and purposes; all the evil which they either did, or designed, or desired, or endeavoured to do. The design of this verse is partly to strike a terror into oppressing potentates, and partly to satisfy the doubts and support the spirits of good men, who are oppressed in this life.

Ecclesiastes 3:18

I said in my heart; and further I considered with myself.

Concerning the estate of the sons of men; concerning their condition and deportment in this present world.

That God might manifest them; God suffers these horrible disorders among men, expressed Ecc_3:16, that he might discover men to themselves, and by permitting these actions show what strange creatures they are, and what vile hearts they have, which men would not otherwise understand or believe. See 2Ki_8:13,14.

That they themselves are beasts, Heb. *that they are beasts to themselves* ; either,

1. One to another, devouring and destroying one another. Or,

2. In their own judgment, or themselves being judges; that although God made them men or reasonable creatures, yet they have made themselves beasts by their brutish practices; and that men, considered only with respect unto the present life, which is the only thing valued and regarded by most men, and the vanity whereof is the principal subject of this book, are as vain and miserable creatures as the beasts themselves, the great differences between men and beasts being such as respect the other life. For men seem here to be called beasts in both these respects, and the latter he prosecutes more largely in the following verses.

Ecclesiastes 3:19

Befalleth beasts; they are subject to the same diseases, pains, and casualties.

So dieth the other; as certainly, and no less painfully.

One breath; one breath of life, which is in their nostrils; one and the same living soul, by which the beasts perform the same vital and animal operations. For he speaks not here of man's rational and immortal spirit, nor of the future life.

A man hath no pre-eminence above a beast, in respect of the present life and sensible things. Nay, the beasts have quicker senses than men, and therefore enjoy more pleasure in those things, and that with less dangers and mischief, than men do.

Ecclesiastes 3:20

All go unto one place; to the earth, as it is expressed, Ecc_3:21, out of which they were both taken.

All turn to dust again; which is meant only of their bodies, as it is explained, Ecc_12:7.

Ecclesiastes 3:21

It might be objected, that the conditions of men and beasts are vastly differing, because man's spirit goeth upward to God, Ecc_12:7, but the spirit of a beast goeth downward, together with its body, and perisheth with it. To this he answers, *Who knoweth this ?* which is not to be understood as if no man did know it, or as if the thing were utterly uncertain and unknown, for he knew it, and positively affirms it, Ecc_12:7; but that few know it; as the same manner of expression is understood, Pro_31:10, *Who can find ?* Isa_53:1, *Who hath believed ?*

&c.; which note the scarcity or difficulty, but not the nullity or impossibility of the thing. Besides, he seems here to speak not so much of a speculative as of a practical knowledge, as such words are most commonly used. Who considers or regards this, or layeth it to heart? True it is, there is such a difference, which also is known and believed by wise and good men; but the generality of mankind never mind it; their hearts are wholly set upon this life, and upon present and sensible things, and they place all their hopes and happiness in them, and take no thought nor care for the things of the future and invisible world. And as to them with whom Solomon hath to do in this matter, the argument is strong and good, being, as logicians call it, an argument to the man; and there is no considerable difference between sensual men and beasts, because their affections are set upon the same objects, and both of them are partakers of the same sensual satisfactions, and subject to the same sensual pains and miseries, and their hopes and felicity perish together, to wit, at death, and therefore such men are no more happy than the beasts that perish. Others understand it thus, *Who knoweth this* ? to wit, by sense or experience, or merely by his own reason, or without the help of Divine revelation. But, with the leave of so many worthy interpreters, and with submission to better judgments, the former seems to be the truer sense.

Ecclesiastes 3:22

There is nothing better, to wit, for a man's present satisfaction, and the happiness of this life, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; that he comfortably enjoy what God hath given him, and not disquiet himself with cares about future events. He seems to speak this, not in the person of an epicure, but as his own judgment, which also he declareth, Ecc_2:24 **5:18,19 8:15**.

That is his portion; this is the benefit of his labours; he hath no more than he useth, for what he leaveth behind him is not his, but another man's.

Who shall bring him to see what shall be after him? when once he is dead he shall never return into this life to see into whose hands his estate falls, and how it is either used or abused; nor is he at all concerned in those matters.

Ecclesiastes 4:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 4

The vanity of oppression, by reason of which the dead and the unborn are better than the living, Ecc_4:1-3. Of envy, sloth, quarrel, Ecc_4:4-6. Of covetousness and selfishness, Ecc_4:7,**8**. The advantage of society and friendship, Ecc_4:9-12. The poor better than foolish kings, Ecc_4:13. He is advanced, whilst one born king is made poor, Ecc_4:14. The people never contented, but rejoicing in changes, Ecc_4:15,**16**.

I considered again more seriously

all the oppressions that are done under the sun, whether by supreme magistrates or judges, of which he spake Ecc_3:16, or by any other potent persons.

They had no comforter; none afforded them either pity or succour, either out of a selfish and barbarous disposition, or for fear of exposing themselves thereby to the same injuries.

There was power, both in themselves, and because most men were ready to join with the strongest and safest side. So they were utterly unable to deliver themselves, and, as it follows, none else could or would do it.

They had no comforter; which is repeated as an argument both of the great inhumanity of men towards others in calamity, and of the extreme misery of oppressed persons.

Ecclesiastes 4:2

I praised; I judged them more happy, or less miserable; which he seems to deliver not only as the judgment of the flesh, or of the sense, or of men in misery, as this is commonly understood, but as his own judgment. For this is most true and certain, that setting aside the advantage which this life gives him for the concerns of the future life, which Solomon doth not meddle with in the present debate, and considering the uncertainty, and vanity, and manifold vexations of mind, and outward calamities of the present life, a wise man would not account it worth his while to live, and would choose death rather than life. *The dead which are already dead* ; those which are quite dead; who possibly are here opposed to them that, in respect of their deplorable and desperate condition, are even whilst they live called dead men, Isa_26:19, and said to *die daily* , 1Co_15:31.

The living which are yet alive; which languish under their pressures, of whom we can only say, as we use to speak of dying men, They are alive, and that is all.

Ecclesiastes 4:3

Which hath not yet been; who was never born. How this is true, see on the foregoing verse.

Not seen, i.e. not felt; for as *seeing good* is put for enjoying it, Ecc_2:24, so seeing evil is put for suffering it, as hath been more than once observed.

Ecclesiastes 4:4

Every right work; all the worthy designs and complete works of wise and virtuous men.

Is envied of his neighbour; instead of that honour and recompence which he deserves, he meets with nothing but envy and obloquy, and many evil fruits thereof.

Ecclesiastes 4:5

Foldeth his hands together; is careless and idle, which is the signification of this gesture, Pro_6:10 **19:24 26:15**. Perceiving that diligence is attended with envy, Ecc_4:4, he, like a fool, runs into the other extreme.

Eateth his own flesh; wasteth his substance, and bringeth himself to poverty, whereby his very flesh pineth away for want of bread, and he is reduced to skin and bone; and if he have any flesh left, he is ready to eat it through extremity of hunger.

Ecclesiastes 4:6

These are the words, either,

1. Of the sluggard making this apology for his idleness, that his little with ease, is better than great riches got with much trouble. Or,
2. Of Solomon, who elsewhere speaks to the same purpose, as Pro_15:16, **17 17:1**, and here proposeth it as a good antidote against the vanity of immoderate cares and labours for worldly goods, against which he industriously directs his speeches in divers places of this book; and particularly as a seasonable precaution against the sin of covetousness, of which he speaks in the following passage.

Ecclesiastes 4:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ecclesiastes 4:8

One alone; either,

1. Who lives by himself, as grudging that any ether should partake of his provisions. Or rather,

2. Who hath none but himself to care and labour for, as the next words explain it.

He hath neither child nor brother, to whom he may leave his vast estate.

Yet is there no end of all his labour; he lives in perpetual restlessness and excessive toils.

His eye, i.e. his covetous mind or desire, fitly expressed by *the eye* , partly because that is the incentive of this sin, Jos_7:21; and partly because he hath no good by his riches, saving the beholding of them with his eyes, as it is affirmed, Ecc_5:11, compared with Ecc_2:10 1Jo_2:16. Neither saith he, within himself; he considers nothing but how he may get more and more. For whom do I labour? having no posterity nor kindred to enjoy it, as was now said. Shall I take all this pains for a stranger, possibly for an enemy, who will reap the fruit of all my labours? *Bereave my soul of good* ; deity myself those comforts and conveniencies which God hath allowed unto me.

A sore travail; a dreadful judgment and misery as well as a great sin.

Ecclesiastes 4:9

Two, who live together in any kind of society, and join their powers together in any enterprises; which he opposeth to that humour of the covetous man, who desired to live alone, as was now said.

A good reward for their labour; both have great benefit by such combinations and conjunctions of their counsels and abilities, whereby they do exceedingly support, and encourage, and strengthen one another, and effect many things which neither of them alone could do.

Ecclesiastes 4:10

They; one of them, the plural being put for the singular, as Jon_1:5 Mat_21:7 1Ti_2:15. Or both of them successively.

Fall, in any kind, into any mistakes and errors, or sins, or dangers and distresses.

Will lift up his fellow; hold him up if he be falling, or raise him up if he be fallen.

Ecclesiastes 4:11

They have heat; they will be sooner warm in a cold bed and cold season.

How can one be warm alone? not so soon nor so thoroughly.

Ecclesiastes 4:12

Against him; against either of them.

A threefold cord is not quickly broken; if a man have not only one, but two or more friends, he is so much the safer and the happier.

Ecclesiastes 4:13

Better; more happy. Now he proceeds to another vanity, even that of honour and power, and of the highest places.

A poor child; who is doubly contemptible, both for his age, and for his poverty.

An old king; venerable both for his age and gravity, and for his royal dignity. So that the comparison is made with the greatest disadvantage that may be.

Who will no more be admonished; who hath neither wisdom to govern himself, nor to receive the counsels or admonitions of wiser men, but is foolish, and wilful, and incorrigible.

Ecclesiastes 4:14

Out of prison, into which he was cast for his poverty and debt, he, the poor and wise child,

cometh to reign; is oftentimes advanced by his wisdom to the highest power and dignity; which was the case of Joseph, and Mordecai, and many others.

He that is born in his kingdom, that old king, who was born of the royal race, and had possessed his kingdom for a long time,

becometh poor; is deprived of his kingdom, either by the rebellion of his subjects provoked by his folly, or by the power of some other and wiser prince.

Ecclesiastes 4:15

I considered all the living; the general disposition or humour of common people in all kingdoms, that they are fickle and inconstant, weary of their old governors, and desirous of changes.

Which walk under the sun: this is a periphrasis, or description of living and mortal men, like that Ecc_7:11, that see the sun.

With the second child: these words may be joined either,

1. With those *which walk* , or, that they walk under the sun, (i.e. upon the earth,) *with the second child* , i.e. follow, and favour, and worship him as the rising sun, upon whom the eyes and hopes of most people are fixed. Or,

2. With the first words,

I considered all the living which walk under the sun, i.e. the temper of all subjects or people, together

with the condition of the second child; which may be understood either,

1. In general, of a king's *child* , or son and heir, who is called *second* , in respect of his father, whose successor he is to be. Or,

2. That wise and poor child mentioned Ecc_4:13, who is said to *come to reign* , Ecc_4:14, and may well be called *the second* to the old and foolish king *who became poor* , Ecc_4:15, being deposed from his kingdom, whom he succeeds, being put in his place either by the humour of the people, or by some higher power.

Stand up, i.e. arise to reign, as that phrase signifies, Dan_8:22,23 11:2,3,7,20,21.

Ecclesiastes 4:16

There is no end of all the people: the sense is either,

1. The people which have this humour are without end, or innumerable, as this phrase signifies, Job_22:5 Isa_2:7 9:7. Or,

2. This humour of the common people hath no end, but passeth from one generation to another; they ever were, and are, and will be unstable and restless, and given to change; which sense the following words seem to favour.

Before them; either,

1. Before the two kings above mentioned, the father and the son, or the predecessor and successor. All those who stood or desired to stand in their presence, and waited upon them, as this phrase is used, 2Sa_16:19 1Ki_10:8. Or rather,

2. Before the present generation of subjects, who earnestly desired and promoted the change of government here expressed; for these are evidently opposed to *them that come after*, which all interpreters understand of the people, not of the kings. And so here are three generations of people noted, the authors of the present change, and their parents, and their children, and all are observed to have the same inclinations in these matters.

Shall not rejoice in him; they shall be as weary of the successor, though a wise and worthy prince, as their parents were of his foolish predecessor; the reason whereof is partly from that itch of novelty and curiosity which is natural and common to mankind, and partly from their vain and foolish hopes of advantage from such changes.

Ecclesiastes 5:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 5

Vanities in divine matters, Ecc_5:1-7. In murmuring and repining, Ecc_5:8. In riches and covetousness. Ecc_5:9,**10**; for riches rob men of ease, Ecc_5:11,**12**, procure their death, Ecc_5:13, fly away, Ecc_5:14, cannot be carried with them into the grave, Ecc_5:15-17. A contented life best: this is the gift of God, Ecc_5:18-20.

The seven first verses of this chapter are inserted partly as the only effectual remedy against all the foregoing vanities, and partly as a caution to take heed of bringing vanity into the service of God, or of worshipping God vainly and foolishly.

Keep thy foot; the feet of thy soul, which are the thoughts and affections, by which men go to God, and walk or converse with him. Make straight steps. See that your hearts be purged from sin, and prepared and furnished with all graces or necessary qualifications, as good intention, reverence, humility, &c. It is a metaphor from one that walketh in a very slippery path, in which there needs more than ordinary care to keep him from falling.

The house of God; the place of God's solemn and public worship, whether the temple or synagogue.

Be more ready, Heb. *more near* , more forward and inclinable. Prefer this duty before the following.

To hear; to hearken to and obey God's word, there read and preached by the priests or prophets; for hearing is very frequently put in Scripture for obeying.

The sacrifice of fools; such as foolish and wicked men use to offer, who vainly think to please God with the multitude and costliness of their sacrifices without true piety or obedience.

They consider not that they do evil; they are not sensible of the great sinfulness of such thoughts and practices, but, like fools, think they do God good service; which is implied, as is usual in such expressions.

Ecclesiastes 5:2

Be not rash with thy mouth; speak not without good understanding and due consideration.

Let not thine heart be hasty; do not give way to every sudden motion of thine heart, nor suffer it to break out of thy lips till thou hast well weighed it.

To utter any thing before God; either,

1. In prayers directed to him. Or,
2. In solemn vows and promises made in God's presence; which were very much in use in those times, and of which he speaks in the following verses, where he presseth us to pay our vows when we have made them, as here he seems to caution us in making them.

God is in heaven; is a God of infinite majesty, not to be despised or abused; of infinite holiness, not to be polluted or offended; of infinite knowledge. observing all our words and carriages, not to be deceived.

Thou upon earth; thou art a poor earth-worm, infinitely below him, and therefore shouldst stand in awe of him, and fear to offend him.

Let thy words be few; either

1. In prayer. Use not vain repetitions nor multitude of words in prayer, as if they were necessary to inform God of thy state, or to prevail with God to grant thy requests, or as if thou shouldst certainly be heard upon that very account, as Christ also cautions us, Mat_6:7. For otherwise it is not unlawful, nay, sometimes it is a duty, to use long prayers, and

consequently many words, and to repeat the same words in prayer, as is manifest from Neh_9:3 Dan_9:18,19 Mt 26:44 Luk_6:12, and many other places. Or,

2. In vowing. Be not too prodigal in making more vows and promises than thou art either able or willing and resolved to perform, remembering that God looks down from heaven, and heareth all thy vows, and expects a punctual accomplishment of them. **See Poole "Ecc_5:3"**.

Ecclesiastes 5:3

When men's minds are distracted and oppressed with too much business in the day, they dream of it in the night.

A fool's voice is known; it discovers the man to be a foolish, and rash, and inconsiderate man.

By multitude of words; either,

1. In prayer. Or,

2. In vowing, i.e. by making many rash vows, of which he speaks in Ecc_5:4-6, and then returns to the mention of *multitude of dreams and many words* , Ecc_5:7, which verse may be a comment upon this, and which makes it probable that both that and this verse are to be understood of vows rather than of prayers.

Ecclesiastes 5:4

A vow; which is a solemn promise, whereby a man binds himself to do something which is in his power to do.

Defer not to pay it; perform it whilst the sense of thine obligation is fresh and strong upon thee, lest either thou seem to repent of thy promises, or lest delays end in denials and resolutions of non-performance. See Num_30:2 Deu_23:21 Psa_66:13,14 66:11.

In fools; in hypocritical and perfidious persons, who, when they are in distress, make liberal vows, and when the danger is past, neglect and break them; whom he calls *fools* , partly because it is the highest folly to despise and provoke, to think to mock and deceive, the all-seeing and almighty God; and partly in opposition to the contrary opinion of such persons, who think they deal wisely and cunningly in serving themselves of God, by getting the advantage or deliverance which they desire by making such vows, and yet avoiding the inconvenience and

charge of payment when once the work is done, whereas nothing is more impious or ridiculous than such an imagination.

Ecclesiastes 5:5

That thou shouldest not vow; for this was no sin, because men are free to make such vows, or not to make them, as they think fit. See Num_30:3, &c.; Deu_23:22 Act_5:4. But having vowed we cannot forbear payment of them without sin.

Ecclesiastes 5:6

Suffer not thy mouth, by uttering any rash or foolish vow.

Thy flesh, i. e. thyself, the word flesh being oft put for the whole man, as Gen_6:12 Isa_40:5 Rom_3:20, &c. And it seems to have some emphasis here, and to intimate either,

1. That such vows were made upon fleshly or carnal, and not upon spiritual and religious motives. Or rather,
2. That *the flesh* or corrupt nature of man, which is oft called *flesh*, was exceeding prone to set itself at ease and liberty from such bonds, and to neglect the chargeable duties of religion.

The angel; either,

1. The blessed angels, the singular number being put for the plural, who are present in the public assemblies in which these vows were generally paid, Psa_66:13, where they observe both the matter and manner of men's religious performances, as appears from 1Co_11:10, who as they rejoice in the conversion of a sinner, Luk_15:10, so are displeased with the sins of men, and especially such as are committed in or against the worship of God. Or,
2. Christ, who in the Old Testament is frequently called an *angel*, as hath been oft noted before, and the *Angel of the covenant*, Mal_3:1 because even then he acted as God's messenger, appearing and speaking to the patriarchs and prophets in his Father's name, as a prosignification of his future incarnation, and who is and was in a special manner present in all religious assemblies; and being omniscient and omnipresent, exactly knew and observed all the vows which men made, and whether they did perform or violate them. Or rather,

3. The priest or minister of holy things, who was to require of the people the payment of their vows, to whom all sacrifices for sins of ignorance or errors about vows or other things were to be brought, Lev_5:4,5. For such persons are oft called *angels* , or, as this Hebrew word is commonly rendered, *messengers* , as Job_33:23 Mal_2:7 Rev_1:20. And this title seems to be given to the priest here, not without some emphasis, because the vow made to God was paid to the priest as one standing and acting in God's name and stead, and it belonged to the priest, as God's angel or ambassador, to discharge persons from their vows when there was just occasion so to do.

That it was an error; I did foolishly and unadvisedly in making such a vow, and therefore I hope God will excuse me, and instead of that which I had vowed, accept of a sacrifice for my ignorance, according to the law for sins of ignorance, Lev_4:2 **5:15** Num_15:26.

Wherefore should God be angry, why wilt thou provoke God to anger, at thy voice? either,

1. At the vows which thou hast hastily uttered with thy mouth, as he said above. Or rather,
2. At these frivolous excuses, wherewith thou deludest thy own conscience, and vainly imaginest that thou canst deceive God himself.

Destroy the work of thine hands; blast all thy contrivances, and labours, and estate gotten by thy labours, and particularly that work or enterprise for the success whereof thou didst make these vows, which being, as thou thinkest, finished, thou refusest to pay thy vows; but know that God can quickly undo that which thou hast done, and plentifully repay thine indignities and injuries offered to him into thine own bosom.

Ecclesiastes 5:7

There is a great deal of vanity and folly, as in

multitude of dreams, which for the most part are vain and insignificant, so also *in many words* , i.e. in making many vows, whereby a man is exposed to many snares and temptations.

Fear thou God; fear the offence and wrath of God, and therefore be sparing in making vows, and just in performing them; whereby he implies that this rashness in vowing, and slackness in performing vows,

proceed from the want of a just reverence and dread of the Divine Majesty, who is immediately concerned in these matters.

Ecclesiastes 5:8

Here is an account of another vanity, and a sovereign antidote against it.

Marvel not, as if it were inconsistent with God's wisdom, and justice, and truth to suffer such disorders, or a just cause for any man to throw off that fear and service of God which I have now commended to thee.

He that is higher than the highest, the most high God, who is infinitely above the greatest of men, and therefore, if he saw meet, could crush them in an instant,

regardeth, not like an idle spectator, but like a judge, who diligently observes and records all these miscarriages, and will so effectually punish them, that neither they shall have any cause of triumph in their former successes, nor good men to be grieved at the remembrance of them.

There be higher than they; either,

1. The high and holy angels, who are employed by God in the government of kings and kingdoms, as we read in the Book of Daniel, and elsewhere, and for the defence of God's people, Psa_34:7 **91:11** Heb_1:14. Or,

2. God; and so it is an emphatical repetition of the same thing, which is frequent in Scripture; there is *a higher than they* . Or, as the words are by others fitly rendered, *the Most High* (for plural words are oft understood of God singularly) *is above them* , and therefore can control them, and will certainly call them to an account.

Ecclesiastes 5:9

The profit of the earth, the fruits procured from the earth by the skill and labour of the husbandman, is for all; are necessary and beneficial to all men whatsoever. The wise man, after some interruption, returns to his former subject, to discourse of the vanity of great riches, one argument or evidence whereof he seems to mention in this verse, to wit, that the poor labourer enjoyeth the fruits of the earth as well as the greatest monarch, and that the richest man in the world depends as much upon them as the poorest.

Is served by the field; is supported by the fruits of the field; or, as many others render it, *serves* or *is a servant to the field*, depends upon it, is obliged to see that his fields be tilled and dressed, that he may have subsistence for himself, and for his servants and subjects.

Ecclesiastes 5:10

The greatest treasures of silver do not satisfy the covetous possessor of it; partly because his mind is insatiable, and his desires are increased by and with gains; partly because silver of itself cannot satisfy his natural desires and necessities as the fruits of the field can do, and the miserable wretch grudgeth to part with his silver, though it be to purchase things needful and convenient for him.

That loveth abundance; or, that loveth it (to wit, silver) in abundance; that desires and lays up great treasures.

Ecclesiastes 5:11

They are increased that eat them; they require and are more commonly attended with a numerous company of servants, and friends, and retinues to consume them; which is a great torment to a covetous man, of whom he here speaks.

What good is there to the owners thereof? what benefit hath he above others, who feed upon his provisions, and enjoy the same comforts which he doth, without his fears, and cares, and troubles about them?

The beholding of them with their eyes; either,

1. With a reflection upon his propriety in them. Or,
2. With unlimited freedom. He can go and look upon his bags or chests of silver as long and as oft as he pleaseth, whereas other men are seldom admitted to that prospect, and see only some few of the fruits or purchases of it.

Ecclesiastes 5:12

Is sweet; because he is free from those cares and fears, wherewith the minds of rich men are oft distracted, and their sleep disturbed.

Whether he eat little, then his weariness disposeth him to sleep, or much, in which case his healthful constitution and laborious course of life prevents those crudities and indigestions which oftentimes break the sleep of rich men.

The abundance, Heb. *the fulness* , either,

1. Of his diet, which commonly discomposeth their stomachs, and hinders their rest; or,

2. Of wealth, which is commonly attended with many perplexing cares, which disquiet men both by day and by night. The Hebrew word is used in Scripture both ways, and possibly it is thus generally expressed to include both significations.

Ecclesiastes 5:13

Because they frequently are the instruments and occasions both of their present and eternal destruction, as they feed their pride or luxury, or other hurtful lusts, which waste the body, and shorten the life, and damn the soul; and as they are great temptations to tyrants or thieves, yea, sometimes to relations, or servants, or others, to take away their lives, that they may get their riches.

Ecclesiastes 5:14

But, or *for* , or *or* , or *moreover* ; for this particle is so rendered by divers others, both here and in other places of Scripture.

Those riches perish: if they be kept, it is to the owner's hurt; and if not, they are lost to his grief.

By evil travail; by some wicked practices, either his own, or of other men; or by some secret hand of God cursing all his enterprises.

There is nothing in his hand; either,

1. In the father's power to leave to his son, for whose sake he underwent all those hard labours; which is a great aggravation of his grief and misery. Or,

2. In the son's possession after his father's death.

Ecclesiastes 5:15

Return to go into the womb or belly of the earth, the common mother of all mankind. **See Poole "Job_1:21"**, **See Poole "Ecc_12:7"**. And *return to go* , is put for *return and go* ; and *going* is here put for *dying* , as Job_16:22 Psal_39:13. This is another vanity: if his estate be neither lost, nor kept to his hurt, but enjoyed by him with safety and comfort all his days, yet when he dies he must leave it behind him, and cannot carry one handful of it with him into another world.

Ecclesiastes 5:16

This also, which I have last mentioned and shall now repeat. *For the wind* ; for riches, which are empty and unsatisfying, uncertain and transitory, fleeing away swiftly and strongly, Pro_23:5, which no man can hold or stay in its course, all which are the properties of the wind. Compare Pro_11:29 Hos_12:1.

Ecclesiastes 5:17

All his days, to wit, of his life,

also he eateth in darkness; he hath no comfort in his estate, but even when he eats, when other men relax their minds, and use freedom and cheerfulness, he doth it with anxiety and discontent, as grudging even at his own necessary expenses, and tormenting himself with cares about getting, and disposing, and keeping his estate.

He hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness; when he falls sick, and presageth or feareth his death, he is filled with rage, because he is cut off before he hath accomplished his designs, and because he must leave that wealth and world in which all his hopes and happiness lie, and must go to give up a doleful account to his Judge of all his actions and acquisitions.

Ecclesiastes 5:18

That which I have seen, i.e. learned by study and experience.

Good and comely; good or comfortable to man's self, and comely or amiable in the eyes of other men, as penuriousness is base and dishonourable.

His portion, to wit, of worldly goods; for he hath another and a better portion in heaven. This liberty is given to him by God, and this is the best advantage, as to this life, which he can make of them.

Ecclesiastes 5:19

Hath given him power, Heb. *hath given him the dominion* ; who is the lord and master of his estate, not a slave to it. Of this and the former verse, **See Poole "Ecc_2:24"**; **See Poole "Ecc_3:12"**, **See Poole "Ecc_3:13"**. *To take his portion to his own use* , to use what God hath given him.

Ecclesiastes 5:20

He shall not much remember; so as to disquiet or vex himself therewith.

The days; either,

1. The troubles; days being here put for evil or sad days, by a usual synecdoche, as Job_18:20 Psa_137:7 **Ob 12 Mic 7:4.** Or,

2. The time in general; which is irksome and tedious to men oppressed with discontent or misery, who usually reckon every hour or minute that passeth, and have their minds and thoughts constantly fixed upon the vanity and uncertainty of this life, upon the afflictions which they have already endured and may further expect; whereas to men of contented and cheerful minds the time is short and sweet, and passeth over them before they are aware of it, and they enjoy their present comforts without perplexing themselves about former or future events.

Answereth him; answereth, either,

1. His labours with success, as money is said to *answer all things* , Ecc_10:19, because it is equivalent to all, and able to purchase all things. Or,

2. His desires. In the joy of his heart; in giving him that solid joy and comfort of his labours which his heart expected and desired.

Ecclesiastes 6:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 6

The vanity of riches without use, Ecc_6:1,2. Of children and old age without competent wealth; their obscurity is worse than not to have been, Ecc_6:3-6. All labour is for necessities of life, which one getteth as well as another, Ecc_6:7,8. It is good for us to enjoy what we have, and not to desire what we have not; for our portion is appointed its; and we ourselves are vain; and other things do but increase our vanity, Ecc_6:9-12.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ecclesiastes 6:2

Wealth; all sorts of riches, as gold and silver, cattle and lands, &c.

Of all that he desireth; which he doth or can reasonably desire.

Giveth him not power to eat; either because they are suddenly taken away from him by the hand and curse of God, and given to others; or because God gives him up to a base and covetous mind, which is both a sin and a place. *Thereof* , i.e. any considerable part of it; whereas the

stranger eateth not thereof, but it, i.e. all of it; devoureth it all in an instant.

Ecclesiastes 6:3

An hundred children, i.e. very many children, to whom he intends to leave his estate.

Live many years; which is the chief thing that he desires, and which giveth him opportunity of increasing his estate vastly.

The days; he saith days, because the years of men's life are but few.

Be not filled with good; hath not a contented mind and comfortable enjoyment of his estate whilst he lives. *Have no burial* ; and if after his death he hath either none, or a mean and dishonourable burial, because his sordid and covetous carriage made him hateful and contemptible to all persons, his children and heirs not excepted, and he was by all sorts of men thought unworthy of any testimonies of honour, either in his life or after his death. Thus he describes a man who lives miserably, and dies ignominiously.

An untimely birth; which as it never enjoyed the comforts, so it never felt the calamities, of this life, which are far more considerable than its comforts, at least to a man that denied himself the comforts, and plunged himself into the toils and vexations, of this life.

Ecclesiastes 6:4

For; or rather, *although* , as this particle is frequently rendered. For this verse seems to contain not so much a reason of what he last said, *that an untimely birth is better than he* , as an answer to an exception which might be made against it. Although all that is here said be true of the abortive, yet it is better than he. *He* ; either,

1. The covetous man. Or rather,
2. The abortive; of whom alone, and not of the former, that passage is true, he hath not seen the sun, Ecc_6:5. *Cometh in* ; into the world, this word being oft put for a man's being born, as Job_1:21 Ecc_5:15. *With vanity* ; or, *in vain* , to no purpose; without any comfort or benefit by it, which also is in a great measure the case of the covetous wretch.

Departeth in darkness; dieth obscurely, without any observation or regard of men.

Shall be covered with darkness; shall be speedily and utterly forgotten; whereas the name of such wicked men shall rot, and be remembered to their shame.

Ecclesiastes 6:5

He hath not seen the sun; he never beheld the light, and therefore it is not grievous to him to want it; whereas the covetous man saw that light was very pleasant, and therefore the loss of it was irksome to him.

Nor known any thing; hath had no knowledge, sense, or experience of any thing, whether good or evil.

Hath more rest, because he is perfectly free from all those encumbrances and vexatious to which the covetous man is long exposed.

Ecclesiastes 6:6

Live a thousand years twice told; wherein he seems to have a privilege above an untimely birth. *Hath he seen no good* ; he hath enjoyed little or no comfort in it, and therefore long life is rather a curse and mischief than a blessing or advantage to him.

Do not all, whether born out of and before their time, or in due time, whether their lives be long or short,

go to one place; to the grave. And so after a little time all are alike as to this life, of which he here speaks; and as to the other life, his condition is infinitely worse than that of an untimely birth.

Ecclesiastes 6:7

For his mouth; for meat to put into his mouth, that he may get food; and as bread is oft put for all food, so food is put for all necessary provisions for this life, as Pro_30:8, and elsewhere; whereof this is the chief, for which a man will sell his house and lands, yea, the very garments upon his back.

Is not filled: although all that a man can go: by his labours is but necessary food, which the meanest sort of men commonly enjoy, as is observed in the next verse; yet such is the vanity of this world, and the folly of mankind, that men are insatiable in their desires, and restless in their endeavours, after more and more, and never say they have enough.

Ecclesiastes 6:8

The fool, to wit, in these matters. Both are equally subject to the same calamities, and partakers of the same comforts of this life.

Before the living, to wit, before the poor, that doth not know this; which words are easily understood by comparing this clause with the former. And such defects are usual, both in Scripture and other authors, as hath been formerly noted, by a figure which the learned call *anantapodoton* . And by this phrase, that knoweth, &c., he means such a poor man who is ingenious and industrious; who is fit for service and business, and knows how to carry himself towards rich men, so as to deserve and gain their favour, and to procure a livelihood.

Ecclesiastes 6:9

The sight of the eyes, i.e. the comfortable enjoyment of what a man hath; for seeing is oft put for enjoying, as Psa_34:12 Ecc_2:1 **3:13**, &c.

The wandering of the desire; restless and insatiable desires of what a man hath not, wherewith covetous rich men are perpetually haunted and tormented.

This, this wandering of the desire wherein most men indulge themselves,

is also vanity and vexation of spirit; is not the way to satisfaction, as they imagine, but to vexation.

Ecclesiastes 6:10

This verse is added either as a proof of what he last said concerning the vanity and wandering of insatiable desires, or as a timber instance of the vanity of all things in this life.

That which hath been (or, *is* , for the Hebrew verb) may be rendered either way, to wit, man considered with all his endowments and enjoyments, whether he be wise or foolish, rich or poor; man, who is the chief of all visible and sublunary beings, for whom they all were made) *is named already* , to wit, by God, who, presently after his creation, gave him the following name, to signify what his nature and condition was or would be. Heb. *What is that which hath been* , or *is* , it is, or *hath been named already* . Others understand it thus, All the several conditions which men have had or shall have in the world, riches or poverty, &c., are already named, i.e. appointed or determined by God's unchangeable counsel and invincible providence. But though

this be true, it seems not to suit so well with the following clause as the other interpretation doth.

It is known that it is man; this is certain and manifest, that that being which makes all this noise and stir in the world, howsoever magnified by themselves, and sometimes adored by flatterers, and howsoever differenced from or advanced above others, by wisdom, or riches, or the like, is but a man, i.e. a mean earthly mortal and miserable creature, as his very name signifies, which God gave him for this very end, that he might be always sensible of his vain, and base, and miserable estate in this world, and therefore never expect satisfaction or happiness in it.

With him that is mightier than he, i.e. with Almighty God, with whom men are very apt to contend upon every slight occasion, and against whom they are ready to murmur for this vanity, and mortality, and misery of mankind, although they brought it upon themselves by their own sins. So this is seasonably added to prevent the abuse of the foregoing passage.

Ecclesiastes 6:11

This seems to be added as a conclusion of the disputation managed in all the foregoing chapters,

Seeing not only man is a vain creature in himself, as hath been now said, but *there are also many other things* in the world, *which* instead of removing or diminishing, as might be expected, do but *increase* this *vanity*, as wisdom, pleasure, power, wealth, and the like, the vanity of all which hath been fully and particularly declared. Seeing even the good things of this life bring so much toil, and cares, and fears, &c. with them.

What is man the better, to wit, by all that he can either desire or enjoy here? Hence it is evident that all these things cannot make him happy, but that he must seek for happiness elsewhere.

Ecclesiastes 6:12

Who knoweth what is good for man? no man certainly knows what is best for him here, whether to be high or low, rich or poor, because those great things which men generally desire and pursue are very frequently the occasions of men's utter ruin, as hath been noted again and again in this book.

Vain life; life itself, which is the foundation of all men's comforts and enjoyments here, is a vain, and uncertain, and transitory thing, and therefore all things which depend upon it must needs be so too.

A shadow; which, whilst it abides, hath nothing real, and solid, or substantial in it, and doth speedily pass away, and leaves no sign behind it. And as no man can be happy with these things whilst he liveth and enjoyeth them, so he can have no content in leaving them to others, because he knoweth not either who shall possess them, or how the future owners will use or abuse them, or what mischief they may do by them, either to others, or even to themselves.

Ecclesiastes 7:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 7

A good name desirable; and the house of mourning and rebuke better than songs and laughter, Ecc_7:1-6. Exhortations to patience and perseverance, Ecc_7:7-10. Wisdom and money a defence, Ecc_7:11,**12**. God's providence should render its contented: our duty both in prosperity and adversity, Ecc_7:13,**14**. Prudence and the fear of God necessary in this world, Ecc_7:15-18. The praise of wisdom, Ecc_7:19. All men are sinners, Ecc_7:20. Other men's opinions of thee not too much to be minded: the motive thereto, Ecc_7:21,**22**. The Preacher's experience thereof, Ecc_7:23-25. An evil woman more bitter than death, Ecc_7:26-28. God created man good, Ecc_7:29.

Having largely discoursed of the vanity of all worldly things, and now said in the foregoing verse that no man knew what was best for him, he now proceeds to prescribe some remedies against these vanities, and to direct men to the right method of obtaining that felicity which is not to be expected or found in this world.

A good name; a good and well-grounded report from wise and worthy persons. Heb. *a name* , which is put for a good name by a synecdoche, that only being worthy to be called a name, because evil and worthless men quickly lose their name and memory. Thus *a wife* is put for a good wife, Pro_18:22, and *a day* for *a good day* , Luk_19:42,**44**.

Precious ointment; which was very fragrant, and acceptable, and useful, and of great price, especially in those countries. See Deu_33:24 Psa_92:10 **133:2** Isa_39:2.

The day of death, to wit, of a good man, or one who hath left a good name behind him, which is easily understood both from the former

clause, and from the nature of the thing; for to a wicked man this day is far worse, and most terrible. Yet if this passage be delivered with respect only to this life, and abstracting from the future life, as many other passages in this book are to be understood, then this may be true in general of all men, and is the consequent of all the former discourse. Seeing this life is so full of vanity, and vexation, and misery, it is a more desirable thing for a man to go out of it, than to come into it; which is the more considerable note, because it is contrary to the opinion and practice of almost all mankind, to celebrate their own or children's birth-days with solemn feasts and rejoicings, and their deaths with all expressions of sorrow.

Ecclesiastes 7:2

The house of mourning; where mourners meet together to celebrate the funerals of a deceased friend. *That*, to wit, death, the cause of that mourning,

is the end of all men; it brings men to the serious consideration of their last end, which is their greatest wisdom and interest.

Will lay it to his heart; will be seriously affected with it, and awakened to prepare for it; whereas feasting is commonly attended with mirth, and levity, and manifold temptations, and indisposeth men's minds to spiritual and heavenly thoughts. Hence it is evident that those passages of this book which may seem to favour a sensual and voluptuous life, are not spoken by Solomon in his own name, or as his opinion, but in the person of an epicure.

Ecclesiastes 7:3

Sorrow; either for sin, or any outward troubles.

The sadness of the countenance; which is seated in the heart, but manifested in the countenance.

Made better; more weaned from the lusts and vanities of this world, by which most men are ensnared and destroyed, and more quickened to seek after and embrace that true and everlasting happiness which God offers to them in his word.

Ecclesiastes 7:4

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, even when their bodies are absent. They are constantly, or very frequently, meditating upon sad and serious firings, such as death and judgment, the vanity of

this life, and the reality and eternity of the next, because they know that these thoughts, though they be not grateful to the sensual part, yet they are absolutely necessary, and highly profitable, and most comfortable in the end, which every wise man most regards.

The heart of fools is in the house of mirth; their minds and affections are wholly set upon feasting and jollity, because, like fools and brutish creatures, they regard only their present delight, and mind not how dearly they must pay for them.

Ecclesiastes 7:5

The rebuke of the wise, though it causeth some grief, yet frequently brings great benefit, even reformation and salvation, both from temporal and from eternal destruction, both which are the portion of impenitent sinners.

The song; the flatteries, or other merry discourses, which are as pleasant to corrupt nature, as songs or music.

Ecclesiastes 7:6

The crackling of thorns, which for a time make a great noise and blaze, but presently waste themselves, and go out without any considerable effect upon the meat in the pot.

So; so vanishing and fruitless.

Ecclesiastes 7:7

Oppression; either,

1. Active. When a wise man falls into the practice of this sin of oppressing others, he is besotted by it, and by the vast riches which he by his great wit gets by it. Or rather,

2. Passive. When a wise man is oppressed by foolish and wicked men, it makes him fret and rage, and speak or act like a madman; for the wisest men are most sensible of indignities and injuries, whereas fools are stupid, and do not much lay them to heart.

A gift, a bribe given to a wise man,

destroyeth the heart; deprives him of the use of his understanding, which is oft called the heart, as Exo_23:8 Deu_16:19 Hos_4:8, or makes him mad, as was said in the former clause. So this verse discovers two ways whereby a wise man may be made mad, by suffering oppression from others, or by receiving bribes to oppress

others. And this also is an argument of the vanity of worldly wisdom, that it is so easily corrupted and lost, and so it serves the main design of this book.

Ecclesiastes 7:8

If this verse relates to that next foregoing, it is an argument to keep men's minds from being disordered, either by oppression or bribery, because the end of those practices will show, that he who oppresseth another doth himself most hurt by it, and that he who taketh bribes is no gainer by them. But if this be independent upon the former, as divers other verses here are, it is a general and useful observation, that the good or evil of things is better known by their end than by their beginning; which is true both in evil counsels and courses, which are pleasant at first, but at last bring destruction; and in all noble enterprises, in the studies of learning, and in the practice of virtue and godliness, where the beginnings are difficult and troublesome, but in the progress and conclusion they are most easy and comfortable; and it is not sufficient to begin well, unless we persevere to the end, which crowns all.

The patient in spirit, who quietly waits for the end and issue of things, and is willing to bear hardships and inconveniences in the mean time,

is better than the proud; which he puts instead of *hasty or impatient*, which the opposition might seem to require, partly because pride is the chief cause of impatience, Pro_13:10, and makes men unable to bear any thing either from God or from men whereas humility makes men sensible of their own unworthiness, and that they deserve, at least from God, all the indignities and injuries which they suffer from men by God's permission, and therefore patient under them; and partly to correct the vulgar error of proud men, who think highly of themselves, and trample all others, especially such as are meek and patient, under their feet.

Ecclesiastes 7:9

Be not angry with any man without due consideration, and just and necessary cause; for otherwise anger is sometimes lawful, and sometimes a duty.

Resteth; hath its settled and quiet abode, is their constant companion, ever at hand upon all occasions, whereas wise men resist, and mortify, and banish it.

In the bosom; in the heart, the proper seat of the passions.

Ecclesiastes 7:10

Say not thou, to wit, by way of impatient expostulation and complaint against God, either for permitting such disorders in the world, or for bringing thee into the world in such an evil time and state of things. Otherwise a man may say this by way of prudent and pious inquiry, that by searching out the cause he may, as far as it is in his power, apply remedies to make them better.

Better; either,

1. Less sinful. Or rather,

2. More quiet and comfortable. For this, and not the former, is the cause of most men's murmurings against God's providence. And this is an argument of a mind discontented and unthankful for the many mercies which men commonly enjoy even in evil times, and impatient under God's hand.

Thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this; this question showeth thy great folly in contending with thy Creator, and the sovereign Lord and Governor of all things, in opposing thy shallow wit to his unsearchable wisdom, and thy will to his will.

Ecclesiastes 7:11

Good, i.e. very good; the positive being put for the superlative, as it is frequently in the Hebrew text. When wisdom and riches meet in one man, it is a happy conjunction; for wisdom without riches is commonly contemned, Ecc_9:16, and wants opportunities and instruments of discovering itself, and of doing that good in the world which it is both able and willing to do; and riches without wisdom are like a sword in a madman's hand, an occasion of much sin and mischief, both to himself and others.

By it there is profit; by wisdom joined with riches there comes great benefit; Heb. *and it is an excellency*, or *privilege*, or *advantage*.

To them that see the sun, i.e. to mortal men; not only to a man's self, but many others who live with him in this world; whereby he intimates that riches bear no price and have no use in the other world.

Ecclesiastes 7:12

Is a defence, Heb. *is a shadow* ; which in Scripture use notes both protection and refreshment. And thus far wisdom and money agree. But herein knowledge or wisdom (which commonly signifies the same thing) excels riches, that whereas riches frequently expose men to death or destruction, true wisdom doth oftentimes preserve a man from temporal, and always from eternal ruin.

Ecclesiastes 7:13

The work of God; not of creation, but of providence; his wise, and just, and powerful government of all events in the world, which is proposed as the last and best remedy against all murmurings and sinful disquietments of mind, under the sense of the great and many disorders which happen in the world, as is implied, Ecc_7:10, against which wisdom is prescribed as one remedy, Ecc_7:11,12, and now here is another.

Who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? no man can withstand, or correct, or alter any of God's works; and therefore all self-tormenting frettings and discontents at the injuries of men, or calamities of times, are not only sinful, but also vain and fruitless. This reason implies that there is a hand or work of God in all men's actions, either effecting them if they be good, or permitting them if they be bad, and ordering and overruling them, whether they be good or bad. And God is here said to make things crooked, as he is said *to make the hearts of sinners fat or hard* , Isa_6:10, and elsewhere, not positively, but privatively, because he denies or withdraws from men that wisdom or grace which should make them straight.

Ecclesiastes 7:14

Be joyful; enjoy God's favours with cheerfulness and thankfulness.

Consider, to wit, God's work, which is easily understood out of the foregoing verse. Consider that it is God's hand, and therefore submit to it; humble thyself under his hand, be sensible of it, and duly affected with it; consider also why God sends it, for what sins, and with what design. This is a proper season for serious consideration, whereas prosperity relaxeth the mind, and calls it forth to outward things. But this clause may be, and is by some, rendered thus, *and look for a day of adversity* . In prosperity rejoice with trembling, and so as to expect a change.

God also hath set the one over against the other; God hath wisely ordained these vicissitudes that prosperity and adversity should succeed one another in the course of men's lives. *After him* ; either,

1. After man himself, or, as it may be rendered, *after it* , i.e. after his present condition, whether it be prosperous or afflictive. So the sense is, that no man might be able to foresee or find out what shall certainly befall him afterwards, and therefore might live in a constant dependence upon God, and might neither despair in trouble, nor be secure or presumptuous in prosperity, because of the frequent and sudden changes from one to the other. Or,

2. After God, that no man might come after God, and review his works, and find any fault in them, or pretend that he could have managed things better, because this mixture of prosperity and adversity is most convenient both for the glory of God's wisdom, and justice, and goodness and for the benefit of mankind, who have all absolute need of this vicissitude, lest they should be either corrupted and ruined by perpetual prosperity, as many have been, or overwhelmed with uninterrupted adversity.

Ecclesiastes 7:15

All things; all sorts of events, both such as have been already mentioned, and such as I am about to declare. In the days my vanity; since I have come into this vain and transitory life.

In his righteousness; either,

1. Notwithstanding his righteousness; whom his righteousness doth not deliver in common calamities, Eze_21:3,4 33:12. Or,

2. For his righteousness, which exposeth him to the envy, and hatred, and rage of persecutors or wicked men. *In* is sometimes used for *for* ; but it is not so taken in the next clause, which answers to this, and therefore the former seems to be the truer interpretation. *In his wickedness* ; notwithstanding all his wickedness, whereby he provokes and deserves the justice both of God and men, who yet, for many wise and just reasons, is permitted to live long unpunished and secure.

Ecclesiastes 7:16

This verse and the next have a manifest reference to Ecc_7:15, being two inferences drawn from the two clauses of the observation there recorded. And this verse was delivered by Solomon, either,

1. In the name and person of an ungodly man, who taketh occasion to dissuade men from the practice of righteousness and true wisdom, because of the danger which attends it, and is expressed in the middle of the former, and the end of this verse. Therefore, saith he, it is not good to be more nice than wise, take heed of strictness, zeal, and forwardness in religion. And then the next verse contains an antidote to this poisonous suggestion; yea, rather, saith he, be not wicked or foolish over-much; for that will not preserve thee, as thou mayst imagine from the last clause of Ecc_7:15, but will occasion and hasten thy ruin. But seeing these words are very capable of another sense, and there is no proof or evidence of this sense in them, as there is in all other places where Solomon speaks in the person of an epicure, this interpretation may seem to be dangerous, and liable to misconstruction. Or,

2. In his own person. And so these words are a caution to prevent, as far as may be, that destruction which oft attends upon righteous men, as was observed, Ecc_7:15.

Be not righteous over-much; either,

1. By being too severe in observing, censuring, and punishing the faults of others beyond the rules of equity, without giving any allowance for human infirmity, extraordinary temptations, the state of times, and other circumstances. Or,

2. By being more just than God requires, either laying those yokes and burdens upon a man's self or others which God hath not imposed upon him, and which are too heavy for him, of which see on Mat_23:4, or condemning or avoiding those things as sinful which God hath not forbidden, which really is superstition, but is here called righteousness abusively, because it is so in appearance, and in the opinion of such persons. So he gives them the name, but by adding

over-much, denies the thing, because righteousness, as well as other virtues, avoids both the extremes, the excess as well as the deficit. Or,

3. By an imprudent and unseasonable ostentation or exercise of righteousness where it is not necessary, as if a protestant travelling in a popish country should publicly profess his religion to all whom he meets with, or when a man casts the pearl of reproof before swine, against that caution, Mat_7:6. So this is a precept that men should

manage their zeal with godly wisdom, and with condescension to others, as far as may be. But this is not to be understood, either,

1. Of such prudence as keeps a man from the practice of his duty, but only of that prudence which directs him in ordering the time, manner, and other circumstances of it. Or,

2. As if men could be too good, or too holy, since the strictest holiness which any man in this life can arrive at falls far short both of the rule of God's word, and of those examples of God and Christ, and the holy angels, which are propounded in Scripture for our imitation.

Neither make thyself over-wise; be not wise in thine own conceit, nor above what is written, 1Co_4:6, nor above what is meet; which he here implieth to be the cause of being righteous over-much.

Why shouldest thou destroy thyself? for thereby thou wilt unnecessarily expose thyself to danger and mischief.

Ecclesiastes 7:17

Be not over-much wicked; do not take occasion, either from the impunity of sinners, Ecc_7:15, or from the prohibition of excessive righteousness, to run into the contrary extreme, the defect of righteousness, or to give up thyself to the practice of all manner of wickedness, as the manner of many men is, Ecc_8:11. But this is not to be understood as if he allowed a lower degree of wickedness, no more than that prohibition of *not letting the sun go down upon a man 's wrath* , Eph_4:26, permits him to keep his wrath all the day long; and no more than the condemnation of *excess of riot* , and of *abominable idolatries* , 1Pe_4:3,4, doth justify any kind of rioting or idolatry.

Neither be thou foolish; which he adds to show that such sinners, howsoever they esteem themselves wise, yet in truth are egregious fools, as the following words prove.

Die before thy time; either by the justice of the magistrate, or by the vengeance of God. For though I said that sometimes a wicked man prolongeth his days, &c., Ecc_7:15, yet commonly such persons are cut off, and thou hast sufficient reason to expect and fear it.

Ecclesiastes 7:18

Take hold of, embrace and practise, *this* ; this counsel last given, Ecc_7:17.

Also from this; from that foregoing advice, Ecc_7:16. It is good to avoid both those extremes.

Withdraw not thine hand from the practice of it.

He that feareth God, who ordereth his actions so as to please God, and keep his commands, and walk by the rule of his word, shall come forth of them all; shall be delivered from both these, and from all other extremes, and from all the evil consequences of them. The word *all* is sometimes put for both, as being used of two only, as Ecc_2:14.

Ecclesiastes 7:19

Wisdom; true wisdom, which is always joined with the fear of God, and which teacheth a man to keep close to the rule of his duty, without turning either to the right hand or to the left.

Strengtheneth the wise; supporteth him in and secureth him against troubles and dangers.

Ten, i.e. many, uniting the forces together.

Ecclesiastes 7:20

For; so this is a reason either,

1. Of the foregoing counsels, Ecc_7:10-18, the 19th verse being interposed only as a proof of the last clause of Ecc_7:18. Or,

2. To show the necessity and advantage of that wisdom commended Ecc_7:19, because all men are very prone to folly and sin, and therefore need that wisdom which is from above to direct and keep them from it. But this particle may be, and elsewhere is, commonly rendered yet; and so the sense is, Although wisdom doth exceedingly strengthen a man, yet it doth not so strengthen him, as if it would keep him from falling into all sin. Or, *because* ; or, *seeing that* ; and so this relates to the following verse, Seeing all men sin, we should be ready to pardon the offences of others against us, either by word or deed. Or, *surely* ; and so it is an entire sentence, such as there are many in this book.

There is not a just man upon earth, whereby he manifestly implies that the just in heaven are perfect and sinless, that doeth good, and sinneth not; who is universally and perfectly good, and free from all sin.

Ecclesiastes 7:21

Take no heed; do not severely observe nor strictly search into them, nor listen to hear them, as many persons out of curiosity use to do.

Unto all words that are spoken, to wit, concerning thee, or against thee. Under this one kind of offences of the tongue, which are most frequent, he seems to understand all injuries which we suffer from others, and adviseth us that we do not too rigidly examine them, nor too deeply resent them, but rather neglect and forget them.

Lest thou hear thy servant curse thee; which will vex and grieve thee, and may provoke thee to vengeance and cruelty against him.

Ecclesiastes 7:22

Heart; mind or conscience, as that word is frequently used.

Hast cursed others; either upon some great provocation and sudden passion, or possibly upon a mere mistake, or false report; in which case thou hast both needed and desired the forbearance and forgiveness of others, and therefore by the rules of justice, as well as of piety and clarity, thou art obliged to deal likewise with others.

Ecclesiastes 7:23

All this, or *all these things* , of which I have here discoursed,

have I proved, I have diligently examined and found all this to be true, by wisdom; by the help of that singular wisdom which God had given me.

I said, I will be wise; I determined within myself that I would by all possible means seek to attain perfection of wisdom, and I persuaded myself that I should attain to it.

But it was far from me; I found myself greatly disappointed, and the more I knew, the more I saw mine own folly and misery.

Ecclesiastes 7:24

No human wit can attain to perfect wisdom, or to the exact knowledge of God's counsels and-works, and the reasons of them, because they are unsearchably deep, and far above our sight; some of them being long since past, and therefore, utterly unknown to us, and others yet to come, which we cannot foreknow.

Ecclesiastes 7:25

I applied mine heart; I was not discouraged, but provoked by the difficulty of the work to undertake it; which is an argument of a great and generous soul.

To know, and to search, and to seek out; he useth three words signifying the same thing, to intimate his vehement desire and vigorous and unwearied endeavour after it.

The reason of things, both of God's various providences, and of the differing and contrary counsels and courses of men.

To know the wickedness of folly, that I might clearly and fully understand the great evil of sin, and all that wickedness and folly or madness which is bound up in the hearts of all men by nature, and which discovers itself in the course of their lives.

Ecclesiastes 7:26

I find, by my own sad experience; which Solomon here records, partly as an instance of that folly and madness which he expressed in general, Ecc_7:25, and partly as a testimony of his true repentance for his foul miscarriages, for which he was willing to take shame to himself, not only from the present, but from all succeeding generations.

More bitter; more vexatious and pernicious, as producing those horrors of conscience, those reproaches, and diseases, and other plagues, both temporal and spiritual, from God, which are far worse than simple death and, after all these, everlasting destruction.

The woman, the strange woman, of whom he speaks so much in the Proverbs,

whose heart is snares and nets; who being subtle of heart, Pro_7:10, is full of crafty devices to ensnare men; and her hands, either by gifts, or rather by lascivious actions, as bands; wherewith she holds them fast in cruel bondage; so that they have neither power nor will to forsake her, notwithstanding all the dangers and mischiefs which they know do attend upon such practices.

Whoso pleaseth God, Heb. *he that is good before God* ; either,

1. Whom God loves and favours. Or rather,
2. Who is good sincerely, or in the judgment of God, who cannot be deceived, whereas hypocrites are frequently good in the eyes or

opinions of men; which sense seems to be confirmed from the opposition of

the sinner to him, both here and Ecc_2:26. Hereby he intimates that neither a good temper of mind, nor great discretion, nor good education and instruction, nor any other thing, except God's grace, is a sufficient preservative from the dominion of this lust.

Shall escape from her; shall be prevented from falling into that sin; or if by surprisal or strong temptation he be drawn to it, he shall be recovered out of it by true repentance. *The sinner* ; the wilful and obstinate sinner, who gives himself up to the common practice of this or other sins; he who is a sinner before the Lord, as the Sodomites are called, Gen_13:13, who is fitly opposed to him that is good before God; he in whom there is not a dram of true goodness; for otherwise all men are sinners, as was said, Ecc_7:20.

Shall be taken by her; shall be entangled and kept fast in her chains, as is implied, because this is opposed to *escaping from her* .

Ecclesiastes 7:27

Behold; it is a strange thing, and worthy of your serious observation.

The preacher; or, *the penitent* , who speaks what he hath learned, both by deep, study and costly experience.

Counting one by one; considering things or persons very exactly and distinctly, one after another; and not only in general and confusedly, in which case a man may very easily be mistaken; and comparing them together, whereby I was enabled to make the truer judgment of them.

To find out the account, that I might make a true and just estimate in this matter. Or, as it is in the margin:, and was rendered Ecc_7:25, *the reason* , to wit, of that which I am about to say. I considered the persons severally and critically, that from thence I might understand the reason of the thing.

Ecclesiastes 7:28

My soul seeketh; it seemed so wonderful to me, that I suspected I had not made a sufficient inquiry, and therefore I returned to search again with more earnestness and accurateness.

I find not; that it was so he found out, as he now said, Ecc_7:27 but the whole truth and reason of the thing he could not find out.

One man; one worthy of the name of a man; a wise and virtuous man. Man is put for a worthy or good man, as *name* is put for *a good name* , above, Ecc_7:1, and *wife* for *a good wife* , as was noted before.

Among a thousand, with whom I have conversed. He is supposed to mention this number in allusion to his thousand wives and concubines, as they are numbered by parcels, 1Ki_11:3.

A woman; one worthy of that name; one who is not a dishonour to her kind and sex, who is not brutish in her disposition and conversation.

Among all those in that thousand whom I have taken into intimate society with myself; whereby he also passeth a severe censure upon himself that he had associated himself with such persons, and not with the virtuous women, which doubtless there were in his time, as appears from **Pr 31**. It is not Solomon's design to disparage this sex, nor to make a general comparison between men and women in all places and ages, but only to suggest his own experience concerning it.

Ecclesiastes 7:29

This only have I found; though I could not find out all the streams of wickedness, and their infinite windings and turnings in the world, yet I have discovered the fountain of it, to wit, original sin, and the corruption of nature, which is both in men and women.

God hath made man, God made our first parents, Adam and Eve, *upright* , Heb. *right* , without any imperfection or corruption, conformable to his nature and will, which is the rule of right, after his own likeness, understanding, and holy, and every way good.

They, our first parents, and after them their posterity treading in their steps,

have sought out many inventions; were not contented with their present state, but aimed at higher things, and studied new ways of making themselves more wise and happy than God had made them, and readily hearkened to the suggestions of the devil to that end. And we their sinful and wretched children, after their example, are still prone to forsake the certain rule of God's word, and the true way to happiness, and to seek new methods and inventions of attaining to it, even such as Solomon hath discoursed of in this book.

Ecclesiastes 8:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 8

Kings to be greatly respected, Ecc_8:1-5. Our times uncertain; death not to be resisted, Ecc_8:6-8. An evil magistrate buried and forgot, Ecc_8:9,**10**. Men hardened in sin, because not presently punished; but they shall not escape, but it shall go ill with them, Ecc_8:11-13; as it doth also sometimes with the righteous, whilst the wicked prosper, Ecc_8:14. Mirth therefore, and a contented enjoyment of God's gifts, preferable to immoderate care and search, Ecc_8:15. God's work herein past finding out, Ecc_8:16,**17**.

Who is as the wise man? who is to be compared with a wise man? He is incomparably the most excellent man in the world. Or rather, who is truly wise? the particle *as* being here not a note of similitude, but of reality, as it is Joh_1:14, and in many other places, as hath been noted. There are very few or no truly wise men in this world. This seems best to agree with the next clause, which is not, *who is as he that knoweth* , but *who knoweth* , &c.

Who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? how few are there who understand the reasons of things, and can rightly expound the word and works of God, and instruct and satisfy himself and others in all the doubtful and difficult cases of human actions!

A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine; maketh a man illustrious and venerable, cheerful, and mild, and amiable in his carriage to others. *The face* is put for the mind or inward frame, because the mind discovers itself in the countenance.

The boldness of his face; the roughness or fierceness, the pride or impudence of his disposition, as this phrase is used, Deu_28:50 Pro_7:13 **21:29** Dan_8:23; shall be changed into gentleness and humility.

Ecclesiastes 8:2

I counsel thee; which verb is necessarily understood to make the sense full and complete. See the like defects of speech, Psa_120:7 Isa_5:9, &c.

To keep the king's commandment; observe and obey all his commands; which is not to be understood universally, as if the king should have commanded them to deny or blaspheme God, or to worship idols, in which case every Christian man who reads and

believes the Bible must needs confess that the Israelites especially were obliged to obey God rather than man, but only of such commands as are not contrary to the will of God.

In regard of the oath of God; either,

1. Because of that oath which thou hast taken to keep all God's laws, whereof this of obedience to superiors is one; or,

2. Because of that covenant or oath of fealty and allegiance whereby thou hast engaged thyself to him, of which see 1Ch₁₁:3 **29:24** Eze₁₇:16,**18**. Though this may also be understood, and is by some learned interpreters taken, as a limitation of their obedience to kings, the words being thus rendered, as the Hebrew will very well bear, *but according to the word of the oath of God* ; obey the king's commands, with this caution, that they be agreeable and not contrary to the laws of God, which thou art obliged by thy own and by thy parents' oaths oft renewed to observe in the first place.

Ecclesiastes 8:3

To go out of his sight, Heb. *to go from his face or presence* , to wit, in dislike, or in discontent, withdrawing thyself from thy king's service or obedience, as malcontents use to do; for this will both provoke him, and lead thee by degrees into sedition or rebellion.

Stand not in an evil thing; if thou hast offended him, persist not in it, but humbly acknowledge thine offence, and beg his pardon and favour.

He doeth whatsoever pleaseth him; his power is uncontrollable in his dominions, and therefore thou canst neither resist nor avoid his fury.

Ecclesiastes 8:4

There is power; whatsoever he commandeth he wants not power nor instruments to execute it, and therefore can easily punish thee as he pleaseth.

Who may say? Heb. *who shall say* ? Who will presume or dare to say so? He doth not affirm that it is unlawful to say so, for Samuel said so to Saul, **1Sa 15**, and Nathan to David, **2Sa 12**, and several other prophets to the kings of Judah and Israel, but only that it is difficult and dangerous.

Ecclesiastes 8:5

The commandment; either,

1. Of the king, of which he hath hitherto spoken. Or,

2. Of God; for *the word* , or commandments, or *law* are oft used emphatically for the word, *law* , or *command of God* , as hath been formerly and frequently observed, and the commandment is put for the commandments, as is very usual. And so Solomon passeth from his former to a new subject.

Shall feel no evil thing; shall be delivered from those mischiefs which befall the disobedient.

Both time and judgment; both when, and how far, and in what manner he may or must keep the commands of the king or God. For the word here rendered judgment doth signify *right* , as Deu_21:17, as also *a cause* or *controversy* , as Num_27:5, and the manner or rule of actions, as Jud_13:12. The sense is, A wise man knows both what he ought to do, and what are the fittest seasons for doing it, which he seeketh and embraceth.

Ecclesiastes 8:6

There is time and judgment; there is a fit way and season for the happy accomplishment of every business which a man designeth or undertaketh to do, which is known to God, but for the most part hidden from man, as is implied and may be gathered from the following words. **See Poole "Ecc_3:1"**.

Therefore; because there are very few who have that wisdom which is necessary to discern this, as was now said, Ecc_9:5, and most men do by their ignorance and loss of opportunities deprive themselves of many advantages, and expose themselves to manifold miseries.

Ecclesiastes 8:7

Men are generally ignorant of all future events, and of the success of their endeavours, and therefore their minds are greatly disquieted, and their expectations frequently disappointed, and they fall into many mistakes and miscarriages, which they could and would prevent if they did foresee the issues of things.

Who can tell him? no wise man, no astrologer or other artist, can discover this.

Ecclesiastes 8:8

The spirit, i.e. the soul of man, which is oft called a spirit, as Job_7:7 **10:12** Psa_78:39 **104:29**, &c.

To retain the spirit; to keep it in the body beyond the time which God hath allotted to it. This is added as another evidence of man's misery.

In the day; or, against the day, i.e. to avoid or delay that day.

There is no discharge, as there is in other wars, when soldiers either are dismissed from the service, or escape by flight or otherwise. *In that war* ; in that fatal conflict between life and death, between nature and the disease, when a man is struggling with death, though to no purpose, for death shall always be conqueror.

Neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it; and although wicked men, who most fear death, use all possible means, whether good or bad, to free themselves from this deadly blow, yet they shall not escape it.

Ecclesiastes 8:9

All this; all these things before mentioned.

Applied my heart unto every work; I have been a diligent observer of all actions and events.

There is a time wherein one man ruleth over another; there are some kings who use their power tyrannically and wickedly, whereby they do not only oppress their people, but hurt themselves, by bringing the vengeance of God and men upon their own heads; which is here noted, partly for the terror of tyrants, and partly for the caution and comfort of subjects groaning under those heavy pressures which they are not able to remove, that they may forbear unlawful or rebellious courses, and quietly commit themselves and their cause to God, who judgeth righteously, and who both can and will call the greatest monarchs to a sad account for all their impious and unrighteous courses.

Ecclesiastes 8:10

And so, in like manner, or such another vanity or disorder, I saw the wicked; wicked princes or rulers, as the next clause limits this.

Buried; die quietly in their beds, and afterward be buried with state and pomp, whereas in truth they deserved an untimely end, and no other than the burial of an ass.

Who had come and gone; who had administered public justice and government, which is frequently signified by the phrase of coming in

and *going out before the people* , as Num_27:17 Deu_31:2. The seventy Jewish interpreters, whom some others follow, render the word, *they were praised* , applauded and adored, by the variation of one letter in the Hebrew word, which also is very like that letter which is in the text.

The place of the holy; by which he understands either,

1. The holy city Jerusalem, or the Holy Land, where Israel dwelt; which may be added to aggravate the wickedness of such persons, from the obligations, and counsels, and examples which they had to do better things. Or,

2. The seat of majesty and judgment, which may well be called the place or seat of the Holy, i.e. of God, who is called the Holy One, Hab_3:3, and oft elsewhere, who is in a special manner present in and president over those places, whose work, and for whom, and in whose name and stead, magistrates act, who therefore are called gods; of all which see Exo_22:28 Deu_1:17 1Ch_29:23 Psa_82:1, &c. And the throne or tribunal seems to be so called here, to aggravate their wickedness, who being sacred persons, and advanced by God into so high and sacred a place, betrayed so great a trust, and both practised and encouraged that wickedness which by their office they were obliged to suppress and punish. *They were forgotten* ; whereas they designed to spread and perpetuate their names and memories to succeeding ages, Psa_49:11. *Where they had so done* , i.e. come to and go from the place of the holy; where they lived in great splendour, and were buried with great magnificence; which might have kept up their remembrance at least in that place. *This is also vanity* ; that men should so earnestly thirst after and please themselves with worldly greatness and glory, which is so soon extinct, and the very memory of it quickly worn out of the minds of men.

Ecclesiastes 8:11

Sentence against an evil work; or, the decree, &c. God's determinate counsel or sentence for the punishment of tyrants and all evil-doers.

Therefore; because God's forbearance makes them presumptuous and secure, and confident of impunity.

Is fully set, Heb. *is filled* , is carried on with full sail, as the LXX. understand it, like a ship with a strong and violent wind; or, is bold or presumptuous, as the same phrase is understood, Est_7:5 Act_5:3.

Ecclesiastes 8:12

An hundred times; frequently and innumerably.

His days; the time of his life and prosperity.

It shall be well with them that fear God; whereby he implies, both that good men might for a time suffer grievous things from such wicked tyrants, and that it should be very ill with the wicked, which is manifest from the contrary course and condition of good and bad men, and which is expressed in the following words: compare Psa_2:12. *Before him* ; or, at *his presence* ; who stand in awe of God, and forbear and fear to sin out of a sincere respect and reverence to God.

Ecclesiastes 8:13

It shall not be well, i.e. it shall go very ill with him; great miseries are prepared for him; which is a figure oft used in Scripture, as hath been formerly and frequently observed.

Neither shall he prolong his days, to wit, very long, or for ever, as he desireth.

As a shadow; his life, though it may be or seem to be long, yet in truth is but a mere shadow, which will quickly vanish and disappear, and be as if it never had been; and many times, like a shadow, when it is longest, it is nearest to abolition.

Because he feareth not before God; this is the punishment of his wickedness, and his casting off the fear and service of God. For although the lives of good men upon earth are short, as well as the lives of the wicked, yet their days are not like a shadow, because they are prolonged far beyond this mortal state, even to all eternity, and death itself doth but open the way for them to an endless life.

Ecclesiastes 8:14

Which is done; either by wicked potentates, who do commonly advance unworthy men, and oppress persons of greatest virtue and merit; or by God's providence, who sees it fit for many weighty reasons so to manage the affairs of the present world.

Unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, i.e. the merit of their work; the work being oft put for the recompence given or belonging to it, as Lev_19:13 Job_7:2 Psa_109:20. The sense is, who meets with such hard usage as the worst of men deserve.

To whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous; who, instead of those just and dreadful punishments which they deserve by the laws of God and men, receive those encouragements and rewards which are due to virtuous and worthy men.

This also is vanity; this is a very unreasonable and foolish thing, if it be considered without respect unto another life, as it is here, where Solomon is discoursing of the vanity of the present life, and of the impossibility of finding satisfaction and happiness in it.

Ecclesiastes 8:15

This he speaks, either,

1. In the person of a sensual man. Things being so, as was related, Ecc_8:14, it is best to give a man's self up to eating and drinking, and all manner of carnal delights. Or,

2. In his own name and person. Upon these considerations I concluded that it was most advisable for a man not to perplex and torment himself with the thoughts of the seeming inequality of Divine Providence, and of the great disorders which are in the world, or with cares and fears about future events, or with infinite and insatiable desires of worldly things; but quietly, and cheerfully, and thankfully to enjoy the comforts which God gives him. **See Poole "Ecc_2:24 3:12,13.**

That shall abide with him of his labour; this is the best advantage which he can make of this world's goods as to the present life.

Ecclesiastes 8:16

I applied mine heart to know wisdom: this he seems to add as the reason of that judgment which he had now passed, Ecc_8:15, because he had diligently studied wherein man's wisdom did consist, and had observed the restlessness of men's minds and bodies in other courses.

To see the business; either,

1. To find out the work of God, as the next verse may seem to explain it, and all the mysteries of God's providence in the government of this present and lower world. Or,

2. To observe men's various designs and employments, and their toilsome and unwearied businesses or labours about worldly things; which sense seems best to agree, both with the use of this Hebrew word, which is constantly used in this sense in all the places of

Scripture where it is, which are Ecc_1:13 **2:23,26 3:10 4:8 5:3,14 8:16**, and never concerning the works of God; and with the foregoing and following words, as we shall see. *There is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes* : the sense of the words thus translated and pointed seems to be this, There is a certain man, whom it is needless to name, (which is a modest designation of himself, like that of St. Paul, 2Co_12:2, *I knew a man in Christ* , &c.,) who studied those matters day and night, and therefore is very capable of passing a judgment about them. But, with submission, there seems to be no need of a parenthesis to cut off these words from the former, with whom they have a fit connexion. For having now mentioned the *business which is done* , or which man doeth, upon earth, he further adds, as an evidence of man's eagerness in pursuing his business, *for even by day and by night he* (to wit, the busy man, which is easily understood from the foregoing clause) *seeth not sleep with his eyes* , i.e. he grudgeth himself even necessary refreshments, and disquiets himself with endless cares and labours, the fruit whereof he doth but little enjoy; and therefore it is better *to eat and drink* , &c., as I now said, Ecc_8:15. As for the phrase of *seeing sleep* , it is a figurative expression used in other authors, and is like that of seeing death, Psa_89:48.

Ecclesiastes 8:17

Then, Heb. *and* , or *moreover* , I beheld all the work of God; I considered the counsels and ways of God, and the various methods of his providence towards good and bad men, and the reasons of them.

A man cannot find out; no man, though never so wise, and inquisitive, and studious, as it follows, is able fully and perfectly to understand these things; and therefore it is best for man not to perplex himself with endless and fruitless inquiries about these matters, but quietly to submit to God's will and providence, and to live in the fear of God, and the comfortable enjoyment of his blessings.

Ecclesiastes 9:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 9

All things in the hand of God: his love or hatred not visible in them; but the like happeneth to good and bad in this life, and in death they know nothing hereof, and are themselves forgotten, Ecc_9:1-6. It is best therefore for a man to enjoy the gifts of God with cheerfulness, Ecc_9:7-9; to be diligent in his calling, Ecc_9:10, and leave the issue to God, Ecc_9:11,12. The praise of wisdom, Ecc_9:13-18.

For; or, *therefore* , as the seventy interpreters render it.

All this; all that I have said concerning the methods of Divine Providence towards good and bad men.

To declare all this; to make this evident, first to myself, and then to others, as occasion required.

The righteous and the wise; whom he mentions not exclusively, as if wicked men were not in God's hand, for the next clause relates both to good and bad men; but eminently, because by the course of God's providence towards them they might seem to be quite neglected and forsaken by God.

Their works; either efficiently, all their actions and employments; or objectively, all things done to them, all events which befall them.

Are in the hand of God; are subject to his power, and governed by his providence, as this phrase is used Pro_21:1 Joh_3:35, compared with Mat_28:18. And therefore although we cannot fully understand the reasons of all God's works, as he now said, Ecc_8:17, yet because they are done by his unerring hand, we may be assured that they are done both righteously and justly, and that no man hath cause to murmur at the prosperity of the wicked, or at the calamities of good men.

No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; no man can judge by their present and outward conditions or dispensations of God's providence whether God loves or hates them, for whom he loves he chastens, and permitteth those whom he hates to prosper in the world. And this translation and interpretation agreeth well with the following verse. But I must confess it differs from almost all other, both ancient and modern, translations. And these words with the foregoing clause are translated otherwise, and that word for word according to the Hebrew, *the righteous, and the wise , and their works, are in the hand of God; also love and hatred* (understand out of the foregoing clause, *are in God 's hand* . And this may be meant either,

1. Of God's love and hatred, which he disposeth when, and to whom, and in what manner he pleaseth. Or,

2. Of, men's love and hatred, *also their love and their hatred* , the pronoun *their* being repeated out of the former clause, as is frequent in Scripture. And so the sense is, that not only men's works, as he now said, but even their inward passions or affections, which seem to be

most in their own power, are as much in God's disposal as their outward actions. Then follows the last clause in the same order in which the words lie in the Hebrew text): *no man knoweth all* , or *any thing* , which is before him. Which I thus understand, whereas all men, and all their affections, and actions, and the events of them, are perfectly known to God, and disposed by him, men know nothing, no, not such things as are most plain, and easy, and familiar to them, and can neither foresee the plainest things, nor dispose of the smallest things as they please; but all things are wholly ordered and overruled by God's providence, not as men imagine or desire, but as he sees fit.

Ecclesiastes 9:2

All things come alike to all; the good and evil things of this world do equally happen to good and bad men.

The clean; either,

1. Morally clean or holy men. Or,
2. Legally, who made conscience of keeping himself pure from all legal defilements, according to the law then in force, and consequently from all other sins upon the same ground.

That sacrificeth; that worshippeth God sincerely, though it be to his cost. *As is the good* , so is the sinner, as to all outward things.

That sweareth, to wit, customarily, unnecessarily, rashly, without due consideration and reverence, or falsely and wickedly. For otherwise that some swearing was then allowed, and in some cases required, none do or can deny.

That feareth an oath; who is afraid of offending God, or abusing his name, by vain, or rash, or false oaths.

Ecclesiastes 9:3

An evil; a great trouble and temptation to a considerate and good man.

The heart of the sons of men, of wicked men, such as the generality of mankind are,

is full of evil; either,

1. Of grief upon this occasion. Or rather,
2. Of wickedness, as appears from the next clause, and by comparing this place with Ecc_8:11.

Madness is in their heart; upon this account they go on madly and desperately in evil courses, without any fear of an after-reckoning.

After that they go to the dead; after all their mad and wicked pranks in the whole course of their life, they die in the same manner as the best men do. So hitherto there is no difference. For Solomon here forbears the consideration of the future life. Only he seems to intimate, that as the madness, so the happiness of the wicked is ended by death, which is more fully expressed in the following words.

Ecclesiastes 9:4

That is joined to all the living; that continueth in the land and society of living men. Or, according to the reading of the Hebrew text,

that is chosen or allotted to life, whom God hath appointed yet to live in the world, when he hath appointed that many others shall die; or who are *written among the living*, as the phrase is, Isa_4:3, which is borrowed from the custom of cities, where men are first chosen, and then enrolled citizens.

There is hope; he hath not only some comfort for the present, but also hopes of further and greater happiness in this world, which men are very prone to entertain and cherish in themselves. Yea, they may have the hopes of a better life, if they improve their opportunities. But he seems to confine himself here to the present life.

Better, i.e. much happier, as to the comforts and privileges of this world, though in other respects death be better than life, as was said, Ecc_7:1.

Ecclesiastes 9:5

The living know that they shall die; whereby they are taught to improve life, whilst they have it, to their greatest comfort and advantage.

The dead know not anything, to wit, of the actions and events in this world, as this is limited in the end of the next verse. Compare Job_14:21 Isa_13:16.

A reward; the reward or fruit of their labours in this world, which is utterly lost as to them, and enjoyed by others. See Ecc_2:21. For otherwise, that there are future rewards after death, is asserted by Solomon elsewhere, as we have seen, and shall hereafter see.

Is forgotten, to wit, amongst living men, and even in those places where they had lived in great power and glory; as was noted, Ecc_8:10.

Ecclesiastes 9:6

They neither love, nor hate, nor envy any person or thing in this world, but are now altogether unconcerned in all things done under the sun.

In any thing that is done under the sun; in any worldly thing; by which limitation he sufficiently insinuates his belief of their portion in the other world.

Ecclesiastes 9:7

Go thy way, make this use of what I have said,

eat thy bread; thine own, the fruit of thy own labours, not what thou takest unjustly from others. *Bread* ; necessary and convenient food; by which he excludes excess.

With a merry heart; cheerfully and thankfully enjoy thy comforts, avoiding all distracting care and grief for the occurrences of this world.

God now accepteth thy works; is gracious to thee, hath blessed thy labours with success, and alloweth thee a comfortable enjoyment of his blessings.

Ecclesiastes 9:8

Always; in all convenient times and circumstances; for there are times of mourning, Ecc_3:4 **7:2**: compare Pro_5:19.

White; decent, and splendid, as far as is suitable to the condition. The Eastern people of the best sort used white garments, especially in times of rejoicing, as Est_8:15: compare Rev_3:4,**5 6:11**. But by this whiteness of garments, he understands a pleasant and cheerful conversation.

Let thy head lack no ointment; which upon joyful occasions was poured upon men's heads, Amo_6:6 Luk_7:46 Joh_12:3.

Ecclesiastes 9:9

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest; so he limits him to lawful delights; whereby it is evident that Solomon doth not speak this in the person of an epicure, as some understand it.

Of the life of thy vanity; of this vain and frail life; which expression he industriously useth to moderate men's affections even towards

lawful pleasures, and to mind them of their duty and interest in making sure of a better life, and more solid comforts.

Thy portion, allowed to thee by God, and the best part of worldly enjoyments, in this life; by which addition he is again admonishing him of seeking another portion in the future life.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, what thou hast opportunity and ability to do in the duties of thy calling, and in order to thy comfort and benefit,

do it with thy might; with unwearied diligence, and vigour, and expedition; whereby he again discovers that he doth not persuade men to an idle and sensual life, but only to a sober enjoyment of his comforts in God's fear, and with an industrious prosecution of his vocation.

There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave; thou canst neither design nor act any thing there tending to thy own comfort or advantage; therefore slip not thine only season.

Ecclesiastes 9:11

I returned, and saw: this may have some respect to the foregoing verse; for having pressed men to labour with all their might, he now adds, by way of caution, that yet they must not be confident of their own strength, as if they were sure of success by it, but in all, above all, to look up to God for his blessing, without which all their endeavours will be in vain. But it seems chiefly to be added, either,

1. As another instance of the liberty and power of God's providence in the disposal of human affairs, of which he spoke above, Ecc_9:1-3. Or,
2. As another of the vanities of this present life.

The race; either ability to run, or success and victory in running.

The battle; the victory in battle.

Men of understanding; who yet are most likely to get and to keep riches.

Favour; good acceptance and love from men.

Men of skill; who know how to manage themselves and all affairs, whereby they are necessary and serviceable to others, and therefore most likely to find favour in their eyes.

Time and chance happeneth to them all; there are some times or seasons unknown and casual to men, but certain and determined by God, in which alone he will give men success.

Ecclesiastes 9:12

His time, to wit, the time of his death, or of some other sore distress which God is bringing upon him; which is opposed to the time of success mentioned in the foregoing verse, and man is said to be ignorant both of the one and of the other.

That are taken in an evil net; that whilst they are sporting and feeding themselves, are suddenly and unexpectedly ensnared to their ruin.

When it falleth suddenly upon them; when they are most careless and secure.

Ecclesiastes 9:13

This wisdom have I seen; I have observed this among many other instances and effects of wisdom; which he seems to add for the commendation of wisdom, notwithstanding its insufficiency for man's safety and happiness without God's blessing.

It seemed great unto me; I judged it very praiseworthy, though others despised it, as it follows.

Ecclesiastes 9:14

It matters not whether this was a real history, or only a parable to represent the common practices of men in such cases.

Ecclesiastes 9:15

He was soon neglected, and his great service so far from being recompensed according to its merit, that both it and he were quite forgotten; which may be noted as another great vanity.

Ecclesiastes 9:16

Wisdom is better than strength, as was manifest in the foregoing instance.

The poor man's wisdom is despised, because men are generally vain and foolish, and have a greater value for outward ornaments than for true worth.

Ecclesiastes 9:17

Wise men, though poor, as may be gathered both from the foregoing relation, and because he is opposed to the *ruling fool* in the next clause, *are heard*, to wit, by wise men; or *should be heard*, as such words are oft taken, as Mal_1:6, and elsewhere; for that they were not always actually heard, he declared in the last words of the foregoing verse.

In quiet; uttered with a modest and low voice, to which the following cry is opposed.

The cry, the clamorous and senseless discourses, of him that ruleth among fools; of a rich and potent, but foolish man, who hath some influence upon fools, like himself, but is justly neglected, and his words disregarded, by wise men.

Ecclesiastes 9:18

Than weapons of war; than armed power.

Sinner; a wicked fool; by which expression and opposition of a sinner to a wise man he gives us a key to understand his meaning in divers places of his books, that by wisdom he means true piety, and by folly wickedness; and withal, showeth that sin, as it is the greatest folly, so it is more pernicious to men than mere folly properly so called.

Destroyeth much good; by his wicked counsels and courses brings much damage and mischief, both to himself and others.

Ecclesiastes10:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 10

Observations on wisdom and folly, Ecc_10:1-3. Of rulers, Ecc_10:4-7. Of wrong and injustice, Ecc_10:8-10. Of talkativeness, imprudence, and its mischiefs, Ecc_10:11-15. Kings hurtful and desirable, Ecc_10:16,**17**. Of sloth, Ecc_10:18. Feasts, Ecc_10:19. The king must not be cursed, Ecc_10:20.

Dead flies falling into it, and abiding and being putrefied in it, especially in those countries, where there were more filthy and venomous flies, and where the ointments were more pure, and where the air was more hot, than in these parts.

So doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour; which comes to pass, partly because all the actions, and consequently the follies, of such men are most diligently observed, and soonest discerned, and tossed about in the mouths of men, whereas

fools and all their carriages are generally disregarded; and partly because of that envious and malicious disposition of men's minds, which makes them quick-sighted to discover, and glad to hear and forward to declare, the faults of such as by their greater eminency did outshine and obscure them.

Ecclesiastes10:2

A wise man's heart, i.e. his understanding or wisdom,

is at his right hand; is always present with him, and ready to direct him in all his actions. He manageth all his affairs prudently and piously. He mentions the right hand, because that is the chief and most common instrument of actions, which by most men are done with more strength, and expedition, and orderliness, and comeliness by their right hand than by their left.

A fool's heart at his left; his understanding and knowledge serves him only for idle speculation and vain ostentation, but is not at all useful or effectual to govern his affections and actions. He acts preposterously and foolishly, like one without heart, as it follows.

Ecclesiastes10:3

Walketh by the way; not only in great undertakings, but in his daily conversation with men, in his looks, and gestures, and common talk.

His wisdom faileth him; or, *he wants a heart* ; as if he had said, Did I say, his heart is at his left hand? I must recall it, for in truth he hath no heart in him.

He saith to every one that he is a fool; he publicly discovers his folly to all that meet him, or converse with him.

Ecclesiastes10:4

The spirit; the passion or wrath, as is manifest from the following words, which is oft called spirit, as Jud_8:3 2Ch_21:16 Pro_25:28 Ecc_7:9.

Leave not thy place, to wit, in anger or discontent. Withdraw not thyself rashly and hastily from his presence and service, according to the advice, Ecc_8:3. Continue in a diligent and faithful discharge of thy duty, as becomes a subject; do not return anger for anger, but modestly and humbly submit thyself to him.

Yielding, Heb. *healing* ; a gentle and submissive carriage, which is of a healing nature; whereas pride and passion do exasperate and widen the breach already made. *Pacifieth* , Heb. *maketh them to rest or cease* ; preventeth or removeth them.

Great offences, Heb. *great sins* ; either,

1. Such sins as the offended ruler might commit in the prosecution of his wrath against thee. Or rather,
2. Such as possibly thou hast committed against him, for which he is incensed against thee; or the greatest offences or injuries that one man commits against another, and much more those slight miscarriages of thine towards the ruler. Let not therefore a false opinion concerning his unreconcilableness to thee make thee desperate, and draw thee into rebellion.

Ecclesiastes10:5

I have observed another great vanity and misdemeanour amongst men.

As an error which proceedeth from the ruler; so the sense is, like those errors which rulers commonly commit. Or rather, which is *indeed an error proceeding from the ruler* ; for the following miscarriage must needs come from those who have power of conferring honour and power, &c. So the Hebrew *caph* is not a note of likeness, but of reality, as it is Jud_13:23 Neh_7:2 Hos_4:4 **5:10**, and oft elsewhere.

Ecclesiastes10:6

Folly is set in great dignity; foolish and unworthy persons are frequently advanced by the favour or humour of princes into places of highest trust and dignity, which is a great reproach and mischief to the prince, and a sore calamity to all his people. *The rich* ; wise and worthy men, as is evident, because these are opposed to fools in the former clause; such as are rich in endowments of mind. The ground of the expression may be this, that rich men are capable of all the advantages of men or books for the attainment of wisdom, and therefore are supposed to be wise in some measure.

Sit in low place; neglected and despised, or removed from those high places to which their merits had raised them.

Ecclesiastes10:7

Servants; men of a servile condition and disposition, who are altogether unfit for places of dignity.

Upon horses; riding upon horses, as a badge of their dignity, as Est_6:8,9 Jer 17:25 Eze_23:23.

Princes walking as servants upon the earth, which was the case of his own father, 2Sa_15:30.

Ecclesiastes10:8

He that diggeth a pit with this design, that another may unawares fall into it,

shall fall into it; shall through God's just judgment be destroyed by his own wicked devices.

Breaketh an hedge; whereby another man's fields, or vineyards, or orchards are distinguished and fenced, that he may either enter upon them, and take away their fruits, or by that means enlarge his own adjoining fields. Possibly he may have a particular respect unto magistrates or rulers, whom God hath hedged or fenced in, both with his own institution of magistracy, and with his laws, strictly requiring obedience from their subjects; and so he notes the danger of rising and rebelling against them.

A serpent, which oft lurks in hedges, and bites those who come within its reach.

Ecclesiastes10:9

Whoso removeth stones; either,

1. The stones which belong to others, and limit or distinguish their grounds, of which see Deu_27:17. Or,

2. Great stones too heavy for them; which rashly attempt things too high and hard for them; which seems better to agree with the following clause than the former interpretation doth.

Shall be hurt therewith; may easily receive hurt by the stones falling unexpectedly and violently upon him.

He that cleaveth wood, with an iron instrument, as the manner is, he being unskilful in that art. Possibly he designs a man who causeth discord and mischief among friends, or in a family, or kingdom.

Shall be endangered thereby; may peradventure cut himself.

Ecclesiastes10:10

The iron, to wit, the axe whereby he cut the wood, in the former verse, which by the danger there mentioned may be supposed to be sharp; but now, saith he, if it happen to be blunt.

Put to more strength; which is necessary to make it cut.

But wisdom is profitable to direct, Heb. *and wisdom* , &c. And as wisdom instructs a man in the smallest matters, as in this very matter of cutting of wood, where it teaches him in this case to use his utmost strength; so it is useful for a man's direction in all his great and weighty affairs. And so he insensibly slides into the commendation of wisdom, and the censure of folly, which is the principal design and business of this chapter.

Ecclesiastes10:11

Without enchantment; if not seasonably prevented by the art and care of the charmer; which practice he doth not justify, but only mention by way of resemblance. See on Psa_58:5.

A babbler, Heb. *a master of the tongue* ; which may be understood, either,

1. Of the detractor or slanderer, who like a serpent bites secretly; who may be so called, because he takes liberty to use his tongue as he lists, without any regard either to the offence of God, or to the injury of others; like them who said, *Our lips are our own* ; who is lord over us? But I do not see either why this phrase should be limited to the detractor, which equally belongs to all abusers of the tongue in any other way; or how this particular vice of detraction comes to be inserted here among things of a quite differing nature. Or,

2. Of an eloquent person, who may well be called *a master of the tongue* , or *of speech* , nothing being more usual in the Hebrew, than to call a man master of that which he excels in, or hath a full and free power to use. And this clause is and may be rendered thus, *And there is no excellency or profit to the master of the tongue* , i.e. the most eloquent person, who doth not understand and in due time use the charmer's art, cannot by all his eloquence afterward hinder the biting of the serpent, or mischievous effects of it; and so this agrees with the

principal scope of the chapter, which is to show the necessity and usefulness of wisdom, and the mischief of folly.

Ecclesiastes10:12

Gracious, Heb. *grace* ; as profitable, so also acceptable to others, procuring him favour with those who hear him.

Will swallow up himself; his discourses are ungracious and offensive to others, and therefore pernicious to himself.

Ecclesiastes10:13

All his talk from the beginning to the end is foolish and mischievous, and the more he talks, the more doth his folly appear; he proceeds from evil to worse, and adds wilfulness to his weakness, and never desists till he hath done mischief to himself or to others.

Ecclesiastes10:14

Full of words; either,

1. Talkative. Or,

2. Forward to promise and brag what he will do, which is the common practice of foolish men; he is a man of words, as we use to say. *Who can tell him* ? these words contain either,

1. A inimical representation of his folly in using vain repetitions of the same words, such as those,

a man cannot tell, & c., and *who can tell*, &c . Or,

2. A confutation of folly in promising or boasting of things which are wholly out of his power; for what shall be no man can either himself foreknow, or learn it from others.

Ecclesiastes10:15

Fools discover their folly, as by their words, of which he hath hitherto spoken, so also by their actions, and by their endless and fruitless endeavours after things which are too high and hard for them. For he is ignorant of those things which are most easy and most necessary for him, as of the way to the great city whither he is going, or obliged by his business to go, which being a great and beaten road, is known even to children and natural fools.

Ecclesiastes10:16

A child; either,

1. In age. Or,

2. (which is more agreeable to the following clause) In childish qualities, as ignorance, inexperience, injudiciousness, rashness, frowardness, fickleness, or wilfulness, and the like, in which sense this word is used, 2Ch_13:7, compared with 1Ki_14:21 Isa_3:4,**12** 1Co_14:20 Eph_4:14.

Thy princes eat; give up themselves to eating and drinking excessively and intemperately, as it is explained in the next verse. In the morning; the fittest time for God's service, and for the despatch of weighty affairs, and for sitting in judgment, Psa_101:8 Jer_21:12. Which circumstance is added as a plain evidence of men that wholly devote themselves to vanity and luxury; which must needs occasion gross neglect of the great concerns of the kingdom, the oppression of the people to support such extravagancies, and a woeful and general corruption of the people by their example, and otherwise; which makes him say, *Woe* to that people!

Ecclesiastes10:17

The son of nobles; not so much by birth, as even the worst of kings commonly are, and have been, as by their noble and worthy dispositions, and endowments, and carriages; for such a one is opposed to the child in the former verse. *Sons of nobles* are put for noble persons, as *the sons of men* for *men* , and *the sons of physicians* for *physicians* .

Eat in due season; so as may further, and not hinder, their main business.

For strength; to refresh and strengthen their natures, that they may be fit for action and business.

Not for drunkenness; not only nor chiefly to please their palates, and indulge themselves in sensuality.

Ecclesiastes10:18

That house which is neglected by its owner, and not repaired, must needs come to ruin; whereby he intimates that the sloth and carelessness of princes in the management of public affairs, which is a

usual attendant upon that luxury of which he hath now discoursed, is most destructive, both to themselves and to their people.

Ecclesiastes10:19

The design and effect of feasting and drinking wine is, that men may exhilarate their minds with the society of their friends, and with the use of the creatures.

Money answereth all things; it procures not only meat and drink for feasting, but for all other things; as the heavens are said to answer the earth, when they give it those showers which it desires and needs to make it fruitful, Hos_2:21. And this clause seems to be added as an aggravation of the sin and folly of luxury, because princes do thereby waste that money and treasure which is so highly necessary for the support and preservation of themselves, and of their kingdoms, and are forced to squeeze money out of their people by oppressive, and dishonourable, and dangerous practices, that they may have more to spend in riotous courses.

Ecclesiastes10:20

Curse not the king. Having spoken of the miscarriages of kings, he now gives a caution to their subjects, that they should not thence take occasion to speak irreverently or contemptuously of them, or wish or design any evil against their persons or government; for though vices may be condemned, wheresoever they are, yet both reverence and obedience are due to magistrates, as they are God's vicegerents and ordinances, notwithstanding their vices, as is manifest from Rom_13:1, &c.; 1Pe_2:13, &c.

In thy thought; in the most secret manner, by giving way to such thoughts or affections; for these will very probably break forth into such words and practices. *Curse not the rich* ; the princes or governors under the king, who are commonly rich; or any other rich men, who can oppress or punish thee by their wealth, as well as kings can do it by their power.

In thy bed-chamber, where thy wife or servant may hear thee, and afterwards through folly or passion discover it to thy ruin.

A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter; the king will hear of it by unknown and unsuspected hands, as if a bird had chanted to be at the window when

thou didst speak the words, and did hear them, and carry the report of it unto the king. It is a proverbial expression, as when we say, *Hedges have ears*, and, *The walls will speak*. Hence kings are said to have long ears.

Ecclesiastes 11:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 11

Liberality to the poor commended. We know not what we may come to: God giveth rain plentifully; and our time of doing good is short: not too much regarding difficulties: the providence of God is full of mysterious events; which must quicken us to duty and diligence, Ecc_11:1-6. Life sweet; but the days of death shall be many, Ecc_11:7,8. Young men are exhorted in the midst of their delights to think of the day of judgment, Ecc_11:9,10.

Cast thy bread upon the waters. Solomon having discovered divers vanities, and amongst others the vanity of heaping up riches, he now teacheth us that it is our interest as well as duty, not so much to lay them up, as to lay them out in pious and charitable uses; and having taught us the true and best use of worldly things, for our present comfort and benefit, which is to enjoy them with a cheerful and contented mind, he now directs us to the best improvement of them, for our future and greater advantage; and having acquainted us with our duty towards our superiors, he now directs us in our carriage towards our inferiors, and especially to such of them as are poor. The sense of these words is either,

1. *Cast thy seed* (which is here called bread, as it is also Job_28:5 Isa_28:28, and elsewhere) beside (for so the Hebrew particle *al* is oft used) the waters, i.e. either by the river's side, or in moist and waterish grounds, which usually are very fruitful. Or,

2.

Cast (freely and liberally bestow)

thy bread (i.e. thy money or provisions, which are oft signified by the name of *bread*. By saying *thy bread*, he cautions us that we give away only that which is our own, and not that which is another's; as they do who give either what they get from others by fraud or power, or what they owe to others, and are unable to pay, and so exercise charity to the hinderance of justice, or of the payment of their just debts)

upon the waters, i.e. upon those poor creatures upon whom, by reason of their unthankfulness or inability to make any returns to thee, it may seem to be as utterly lost as the seed which a man casts into the sea or river. This sense agrees much better,

1. With the words; for he doth not barely mention

the waters, (for then the particle *al* might have been translated *beside* ,) but *the face* , i.e. the surface or top, *of the waters* , in which and such-like cases *al* constantly signifies *upon* .

2. With the design and scope of the place, which is to persuade men to be liberal and charitable, notwithstanding the discouragements which they meet with in so doing, of which see the next clause, and the next verse.

Thou shalt find it; it shall not be lost, as covetous men, or thine own corrupt heart, may suggest, but it shall certainly be restored unto thee, either by God or by men, and that with great honour and advantage. This is added to prevent an objection, and to quicken us to the duty enjoined.

After many days; not immediately, but in due time, and when you least expect it. So you must be content to wait for it with patience, as the husbandman doth for the fruits of the earth.

Ecclesiastes 11:2

Give a portion; a part of thy estate or provisions. He alludes to the ancient custom, whereby the master of the feast did distribute several parts to each guest, and withal sent portions to the poor; of which custom see 2Sa_6:19 Neh_8:10,12 Es 9:22.

To seven, and also to eight; to as many as thou art able; a certain number for an uncertain, as Mic_5:5, and oft elsewhere.

Thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth; great calamities may come, whereby thou mayst be brought to poverty, and so both utterly lose that blessed opportunity of doing good, which now thou hast in thine hands, whereby thou mayst gain unspeakable honour, and comfort, and advantage to thyself, and moreover need the charity of others, which thou mayst comfortably expect, either from men, or at least from the powerful providence of God, disposing the hearts of men to pity and help thee, if thou hast been kind and merciful to others; as,

on the contrary, they can expect no mercy from God or men, who have showed no mercy to others. Thus he not only answers, but retorts, the argument by which the covetous man excuseth his uncharitableness, because he must lay up against a rainy day.

Ecclesiastes11:3

If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: learn, O man, the practice of liberality from the very lifeless creatures, from the clouds; which when they are filled with water, do not hoard it up, or keep it to themselves, but plentifully pour it forth for the refreshment both of the fruitful field and of the barren wilderness.

In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be: these words contain either,

1. An argument to persuade men to charity, because they must shortly fall or die, and then all opportunity of being charitable will be lost, and they must expect certainly and eternally to reap whatsoever they have sown, whether it hath been mercy or unmercifulness. Or rather,
2. An answer to a common objection against it, because we are not certain whether the person who desires our charity doth really need it, or be worthy of it. To this he answers, As a tree when it falls, either by the violence of the wind, or being cut down by its owner's order, it is not considerable whether it falls southward or northward, for there it lies ready for the master's use; so thy charity, though it may possibly be misapplied by thee, or abused by the receiver, yet being conscientiously given by thee, it shall assuredly return to thee, and thou shalt reap the fruit of it.

Ecclesiastes11:4

He who neglects or delays the necessary works of sowing and reaping, because the weather is not exactly suitable to his desires, may possibly lose his harvest; whereby he intimates what is easily understood out of the foregoing verses, that men will never do good here, which is expressed by sowing, Psa_112:9 2Co_9:6, and consequently not receive good hereafter, Which is called *reaping*, Gal_6:7,8, if they be discouraged and hindered from it by every doubt or difficulty, such as covetous worldlings object to themselves, that others either do not want their charity, or with abuse it, that they may possibly need it hereafter.

Ecclesiastes11:5

Of the spirit; of the spirit or soul of man, how it first comes into the body of the child in the womb, whether from God by creation, or from the parents by propagation; nor how it is united with and so fixed in the body, that it cannot get out of it when it would; nor how and whither it goes out of the body; all which things are great mysteries. Others translate it, *of the wind, whence it cometh* , and whither it goeth, as is observed Joh_3:8, or how violently it will blow, or how long it will last. But the former translation seems to agree better with the following clause.

The bones, i.e. the whole body, which is elsewhere signified by the bones, as Psa_34:20 **35:10**, because they are a principal part, and the very foundation and support, of the body. Grow in the womb; how it comes to pass that one and the same small quantity of seed should diversify itself into skin, and flesh, and sinews, and veins, and bones, and entrails, or how it receiveth nourishment and growth.

The works of God; what God is doing, and will do with thee and others; the counsels and methods of God's providence in the future time of thy life, what evil God will send upon the earth, Ecc_11:2, or what weather he will send, of which Ecc_11:4, how long or how little a while God will continue thy life or estate, and how soon God will call thee to an account. These and many other future events thou canst not foresee, and therefore thy wisdom and duty is to cast off all distracting cares and distrustful fears about them, and cheerfully to commit thyself, and all thy affairs, into the hand of God in well doing.

Ecclesiastes 11:6

In the morning, and in the evening; early and late, in all seasons and occasions; do it speedily and continually, be not weary of it. *Sow thy seed* ; do all good works, and especially that of almsgiving, as sowing is understood, 2Co_9:6 Gal_6:7.

Withhold not thine hand from working or giving.

Whether shall prosper; which shall prosper most, as the next clause explains it; the positive degree being put for the comparative, or the superlative, which is not unusual in the Hebrew text. Which shall best answer thine end, or do most good to others, or which shall tend most to the comfort of thy great and last account; for thy morning alms may possibly be given to an unworthy person, or to one who did not need it, and will abuse it, and thy evening alms may fall upon a person of

eminent worth, yea, upon an angel in human shape, which is remembered as a motive to hospitality, Heb_13:2, or upon one in extreme necessity, who might possibly have perished both in soul and body, if thou hadst not comforted and relieved him: or one time thou mayst give with more sincere intention, and with more tender compassion, than another time, and so one will be more right and more acceptable to God than the other.

Alike good; equally successful to the receiver, or to the giver.

Ecclesiastes 11:7

It cannot be denied that this present life (which is called *light*, Job_3:20 **33:30** Psa_56:13, and which is expressed synecdochically, by seeing the sun, Ecc_6:5 **7:11**) is in itself a great blessing, and very desirable; but it is not perpetual nor satisfactory; which is here implied and expressed in the next verse.

Ecclesiastes 11:8

Live many years; which is a privilege granted but to few persons comparatively.

And rejoice in them all; and suppose he enjoy all the comforts, and escape all the embitterments, of human life, all his days; which also is a great rarity.

Let him remember, it is his duty and interest seriously to consider, the days of darkness; of death, or of the state of the dead, which is oft expressed by darkness, as Job_10:21 Psa_88:12, &c., and here is opposed to the foregoing *light*.

They shall be many, i.e. far more than the days of this short life, especially if to the time of lying in the grave be added that greater and utter darkness which is reserved for impenitent sinners, and which is everlasting, Mat_22:13 **25:30** 2Pe_2:17 Jud_1:13. And this is added for the caution of mankind, that they may not rejoice excessively in, nor content themselves with, the happiness of the present life, but may seek for something more durable, and more satisfactory.

All that cometh; all things which befall any man belonging only to this life, whether they be comfortable or vexatious, they are but vain and inconsiderable, because they are short and transitory.

Ecclesiastes 11:9

This verse is to be understood either,

1. As a serious advice to this purpose, Seeing life is short and transitory, improve it to the best advantage, take comfort in it whilst you may, only do it with moderation, and the fear of God. Or rather,

2. As an ironical concession, such as are usual both in Scripture, as 1Ki_18:27 **22:15** Eze_28:3,4 Mt **26:45**, and in other authors; for this agrees much better with the context, and with the expressions here used. And so the sense is, I foresee what evil use some men will make of what I have now said. Things being thus, *let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die* ; as they also reasoned, 1Co_15:32.

O young man; he speaks to young men particularly, because they have both the greatest ability and the strongest inclinations to pursue sensual pleasures, and are most impatient either of restraint or admonition.

Let thy heart cheer thee; indulge thy frolic and jolly humour, and take thy fill of delights.

Walk in the way of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; whatsoever thine eye or heart lusteth after, deny it not to them; as this phrase is taken. Num_15:39, nor is it ever used in a good sense. Compare Job_31:7 Psa_81:12 Jer_18:12 2Pe_2:14 1Jo_2:16. *But know thou* ; but in the midst of thy feastings and jollity it will become thee, if thou art a reasonable creature, to consider thy reckoning, and whether thou dost not purchase thy gold too dear.

For all these things, for all thy follies and sinful lusts, which thou slightest as tricks of youth,

God will bring thee into judgment; will force thee to appear before his judgment-seat, to give a serious account of all thy youthful and exorbitant courses, and to receive that sentence which thy own conscience will then say thou dost justly deserve. And if thou likest thy sensuality upon these terms, much good may it do thee; I do not envy thee, nor desire to partake of thy delicates.

Ecclesiastes 11:10

Sorrow, i.e. sensual and disorderly lusts, which he elegantly and emphatically calls sorrow, with respect to the foregoing words, to intimate, that although such practices do at present gratify and delight men's senses and vain minds, yet they will shortly and certainly bring a

man to intolerable and eternal sorrows, which it is thy wisdom to prevent. *Sorrow* ; or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *anger* ; a passion to which men are most prone in the heat of youth; whereby he may understand either anger against him for this sharp admonition; or rather against God, who hath laid such severe restraints upon them, and threatens such punishments to them for following their own natural inclinations. So the sense is, Do not quarrel with thy Judge, but submit and make thy peace with him by declaring war against all thy sins.

Evil; all evil concupiscences or lusts, which though now they seem good to thee, will another day appear to be very evil and bitter things.

From thy flesh; from thy bodily members; which he mentions not exclusively, as if he would allow them their spiritual evils; but emphatically, because young men, to whom he is here speaking, are most given to fleshly or bodily lusts.

Childhood and youth are vanity, i.e. most vain, either,

1. In their temper and dispositions. Young men are frothy, and foolish, and inconsiderate, whereby they run into manifold dangers, and therefore they shall do well to hearken to the counsels of those who by their greater wisdom and experience are more capable judges of these matters. Or,

2. In their condition. The time of youth is vanishing and transitory, and old age and death will speedily come, against which every man in his wits will take care to lay in solid provisions and comforts.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 12

Early piety recommended before old age come on and death be near: old age described, and death, Ecc_12:1-7. The conclusion: all is vanity, Ecc_12:8. The preacher's end in this book, Ecc_12:9-12. The sum of all learning, experience, and happiness is to fear God, and keep his commandments, because God will bring all to judgment, Ecc_12:13,**14**.

Remember, to wit, practically, or so as to fear, and love, and faithfully serve and worship him, which when men do not they are said to forget God, Psa_9:17 **106:21**, and in many other places.

Thy Creator; the first author and continual preserver of thy life and being, and of all the perfections and enjoyments which accompany it, to

whom thou hast the highest and strongest obligations to do so, and upon whom thou hast a constant and necessary dependence, and therefore to forget him is most unnatural, and inhuman, and disingenuous.

In the days of thy youth; for then thou art most able to do it, and thou owest the best of thy time and strength to God; then thou hast opportunity to do it, and thou mayst not live to old age; then it will be most acceptable to God, and most comfortable to thyself, as the best evidence of thy sincerity, and the best provision for old age and death; and then it is most necessary for the conquering those impetuous lusts and passions which drown so many thousands of young men in perdition, both in this life and in that to come.

The evil days; the time of old age, which is evil, i.e. burdensome and calamitous in itself, and far more grievous and terrible when it is loaded with the sad remembrance of a man's youthful follies and lusts, and with the dreadful prospect of approaching death and judgment, which makes him see that he cannot live, and yet dare not die, and with the consideration and experience of the hardness of his heart, which in that age is rarely brought to true repentance, and so generally expires either in vain presumption, or in hellish desperation.

I have no pleasure in them; my life is now bitter and burdensome to me, and worse than death; which is frequently the condition of old age.

Ecclesiastes 12:2

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars be not darkened, Heb. *While the sun, and the light, and the moon*, &c. That clause, *and the light*, seems to be added to signify that he speaks of the darkening of the sun, and moon, and stars, not in themselves, or in their own bodies, but only in respect of that light which they afford to men. And therefore the same clause which is expressed after the sun, is to be understood after the moon and stars, as is very usual in Scripture in like cases. And those expressions are to be understood either,

1. Literally, of the dim-sightedness of old men, by reason whereof the light of the sun, &c. seems dark to them; which seems not to agree with the context, partly because the dimness of their sight is expressed in the next verse, and partly because both his and the following verses are wholly allegorical. Or rather,

2. Figuratively, and that either,

1. Of the outward parts of the body, and especially of the face, the beauty of the countenance, the lightsome and pleasant complexion of the cheeks, the liveliness of the eyes, which are compared to the sun, and moon, and stars, and which are obscured in old age, as the Chaldee paraphrast understands it. Or,

2. Of the inward parts of the mind, the understanding, fancy, memory, which may not unfitly be resembled to the sun, and moon, and stars, and all which are sensibly decayed in most old men. For it may seem improbable that Solomon in his description of the infirmities of old age should omit the decays of the most noble part of man, which are commonly incident to old age. And yet, with submission to those worthy persons who think otherwise, it seems not necessary that he should here speak of those inward decays, partly, because they are not so general in old men as the decays of the body are; partly, because he here directeth his speech to sensual men, who are more affected with corporal than with intellectual maladies; and partly, because both the foregoing and following passages concern the state of men's bodies, and their outward condition. Or rather,

3. Of external things, and of the great change of their joy and prosperity, which they had in their youthful time, into sorrow and manifold calamities, which are usually the companions of old age; for this interpretation seems best to agree both with the foregoing verse, in which he describes the miseries of old age, and with the following clause, which is added to explain and determine those otherwise ambiguous expressions; and with the Scripture use of this phrase, which is the best key for the understanding of Scripture; for a state of comfort and happiness is oft described by the light of the sun, &c., as Jud_5:31 2Sa_23:4 Isa_30:26 **60:20**, and a time and state of great trouble is set forth by the darkening of the light of the sun, &c., as Isa_13:9, &c.; Isa_24:23 Joe_2:10 **3:15** Mat_24:29, and oft elsewhere.

Nor the clouds return after the rain: this phrase notes a perpetual succession and reciprocation of rain, and clouds bringing rain, and then rain and clouds again, and so without end; whereby he expresseth either,

1. The rheums or defluations which do abundantly and incessantly flow in and from old men, for want of natural heat and strength to prevent or remove them. Or rather,

2. The continual vicissitude of infirmities, diseases, and griefs in old men, one deep calling upon another, and one affliction beginning at the end of another; whereas in young men after rain the clouds are dispersed, and fair weather succeeds.

Ecclesiastes12:3

The keepers of the house, i.e. of the body, which is oft and fitly compared to a house, as Job_4:19 Psa_119:54 2Co_5:1; whose *keepers* here are either,

1. The ribs and bones into which they are fastened, which are the guardians of the inward and vital parts, which also are much weakened and shaken by old age. Or rather,

2. The hands and arms, which are man's best instruments to defend his body from the assaults of men or beasts, and which in a special manner are subject to this trembling, by paralytical or other like distempers, that are most incident to old men.

The strong men; either the back, or the thighs and legs, in which the main strength of the body doth consist, which in old men are very feeble, and unable both for the support of the body and for motion.

The grinders; the teeth, those especially which are commonly so called, because they grind the meat which we eat.

Cease, to wit, to perform their office,

because they are few, Heb. *because they are diminished* , either,

1. In strength. Or,

2. In number; being here one, and there another, and not united together, and one directly against another, and consequently unfit for their work.

Those that look out of the windows; the eyes. By windows he understands either,

1. The holes in which the eyes are fixed, Zec_14:12. Or,

2. The eye-lids, which, like windows, are either opened or shut. Or,

3. Those humours and coats of the eyes noted by anatomists, which are the chief instruments by which the eye sees.

Ecclesiastes 12:4

The doors be shut in the streets; or, *towards the streets* ; which lead into the streets. This is understood either,

1. Literally; because men, when they are very old, keep much at home, and have neither strength nor inclination to go abroad. Or rather,

2. Allegorically, as all the other clauses are understood. And so *the doors* are either,

1. The outward senses, which, as doors, let in outward objects to the soul. Or rather,

2. The mouth, or the two lips, here expressed by a word of the dual number, which are oft called a *door* , both in Scripture, as Psa_141:3 Mic_7:5, and in other authors, which, like a door, open or shut the way which leads into the streets or common passages of the body, such as the gullet, and stomach, and all the bowels, as also the windpipe and lungs; which also are principal instruments both of speaking and eating. And these are said to be *shut* , not simply and absolutely, as if they did never eat, or drink, or speak; but comparatively, because men in extreme old age grow dull and listless, having little or no appetite to eat, and are very much indisposed for discourse, and speak but seldom.

When the sound of the grinding is low; or, because the sound, &c. So this may be added, not as a new symptom of old age, but only as the reason of the foregoing symptom. The sense is, When or because the teeth, called the grinders, Ecc_12:3, are loose and few, whereby both his speech is low, and the noise which he makes in eating is but small. And this is one great cause of his indisposedness both to eating and to speaking. Some understand this of concoction, which after a sort doth grind the meat in the stomach, and in the other parts appointed by God for that work. But that is transacted inwardly, and without all noise or sound.

He shall rise up, to wit, from his bed, being weary with lying, and unable to get sleep,

at the voice of the bird; either,

1. Upon the smallest noise; which doth not consist with that deafness incident to old men, and described in the next words. Or rather,

2. As soon as the birds begin to chirp, which is early in the morning, whereas children and young men can lie and sleep long in the morning.

The daughters of music; all those senses or parts of the body which are employed in music and song, as well those which make it, as the parts of and within the mouth, as those which receive it, to wit, the ears.

Shall be brought low; shall be cast down from their former excellency; they are become incapable either of making music, or of delighting in it.

Ecclesiastes 12:5

They shall be afraid; the passion of fear is observed to be most incident to old men, of which divers reasons may be given.

Of that which is high; either,

1. Of high things, lest they should fall upon them. Or rather,

2. Of high places, of going up hills or stairs, which is very irksome to them, because of their weakness, and weariness, and giddiness, and danger, or dread of falling. And this clause, together with the next, may be rendered thus, and that agreeably to the Hebrew text,

Also they shall be afraid and terrified (two words expressing the same thing, which is very frequent in the Hebrew) *of that which is high in the way*. When they walk abroad, they will dread to go up any high or steep places.

And fears shall be in the way, lest as they are walking, they should stumble, or fall, or be thrust down, or some infirmity or mischief should befall them.

The almond tree shall flourish; their heads shall be as full of grey hairs as the almond tree is of white flowers. Such metaphors are not unusual in other authors. Hence Sophocles calls a grey or hoary head *flowery*, and again, *covered with white flowers*.

The grasshopper shall be a burden, if it doth accidentally hop up and rest upon them. They cannot endure the least burden, being indeed a burden to themselves. But the words may be, and are by others, rendered, *the locust* (as the ancient interpreters and many others render

it; or, as ours and some others, *the grasshopper* , which comes to the same thing; for these two sorts of insects are much of the same nature and shape) *shall be a burden to itself* . And by the *locust* or *grasshopper* may be understood, either,

1. The old man himself, who bears some resemblance to it; in shape, by reason of the bones sticking out; in the constitution of the body, which is dry and withering; and in the legs and arms, which are slender, the flesh being consumed. Or,

2. The back, which fitly follows after the head, upon which the almond tree flourished, in which the strength of the body lay, and which formerly was able to bear great burdens, but now, through its weakness and crookedness, is a burden too heavy for itself. And some of the Jewish and other interpreters understand this word, which others render *locust* or *grasshopper* , to be some part of the body, either the *backbone* , or *the head of the thigh bone* , or *the ankle-bone* , any of which may well be said to be heavy or burdensome to itself, when it moves slowly and listlessly, and not without difficulty and trouble. *Desire* , to wit, of meats, and drinks, and music, and other carnal delights, which are vehemently desired by men in the heat of their youth, but are unsavoury to old men; of which see an instance 2Sa_19:35. It is true, the former expressions are metaphorical, but the two next following are proper, and to be understood literally; and so may this clause also.

Man goeth, is travelling towards it, and every day nearer to it than other,

to his long home; from this place of his pilgrimage into the grave, from whence he must never return into this world, and into the state and place of the future life, which is unchangeable and everlasting.

The mourners; either such as were hired to that end, of whom **See Poole "Jer_9:17"**; **See Poole "Mat_9:23"**, **See Poole "Mat_11:17"**, or true mourners, near relations, and dear friends, accompany the dead corpse through the streets to the grave.

Ecclesiastes12:6

This verse is to be understood either,

1. literally, of the ornaments of life, such as chains, and jewels, and vessels of gold and silver, and of the instruments by which the necessary provisions and supports of life are conveyed to us, such as

fountains of water, and pitchers, &c.; which may be said to be loosed or broken, because they are neglected as useless things to the dead man. Or rather,

2. Allegorically, of those inward parts of man's body which are the chief instruments of life, or sense and motion, and of the vital or animal operations, whether such from which they first proceed, or in which they are first elaborated and contained, which may fitly be compared to a *bowl*, and *fountain*, or *cistern*; or such by which they are derived or conveyed to the several parts of the body, which are very conveniently designed by the *cord*, and *pitcher*, and *wheel*; all which are truly said to be *loosed* or *broken*, i.e. dissolved, or become useless and insufficient for the performance of their several functions. This in the general. But it seems most probable that Solomon, who was so profound a philosopher, and doubtless had an accurate knowledge of all the parts of man's body, and their several offices and operations, doth by these several expressions describe so many particular parts and offices. By

the silver cord, it is generally and most probably conceived that he understands the pith or marrow of the back-bone, which comes from the brain, and thence goeth down to the very lowest end of the back-bone, together with the nerves and sinews, which, as anatomists observe, are nothing else but the production and continuation of the marrow. And this is most aptly compared to a *cord*, both for its figure, which is very long and round, and for its use, which is to draw and move the parts of the body; and to silver, both for its excellency and colour, which is white and bright, even in a dead, and much more in a living body. And this may properly be said to be

loosed, or *dissolved*, or *broken*, or *removed*, as others render the word, the sense of all these translations being the same, because it is relaxed, or obstructed, or otherwise disenabled for its proper service. And answerably hereunto, by the

golden bowl he understands the membranes of the brain, and especially that innermost membrane which is called by anatomists *the pious mother*, because it doth with a motherly care defend the brain, and assist and govern its actions, which insinuates itself into all the parts of the brain, following it in its various windings and turnings, keeping each parcel of it in its proper place, and distinguishing and dividing one

part from another, to prevent disorder and mischief. This is not unfitly called a *bowl* , partly because it is round, and partly because it receives and contains in it all the substance of the brain; and a *golden bowl*, partly, for its great preciousness and usefulness; partly, for its ductility, being drawn out into a great thinness or fineness, as gold is capable of being drawn forth into thinner plates than other metals can bear; and partly, for its colour, which is somewhat yellow, and comes nearer to that of gold than any other part of the body doth. And this is well said to be

broken, as for the reason above noted, so because upon the approach of death it is commonly shrivelled up, and many times broken. And as these two former clauses concern the brain and the animal powers, so the two following clauses of this verse respect the spring and seat of the vital powers and operations, and of the blood, the great instrument thereof, which hath been commonly conceived, and consequently is here understood, to be the liver, but more truly and certainly is the heart, which is now known and confessed to be the source of the blood. And so Solomon here describes the chief organs or vessels appointed for the production, and distribution, and circulation of the blood in man's body. For although the doctrine of the circulation of the blood hath lain hid and unknown for very many generations together, and therefore the honour of the invention of it is justly ascribed to a famous physician of our country, yet it is not improbably supposed by some that it was well known to Solomon, although after his times it was lost, as doubtless many other things were, which he wrote concerning plants, and other things. According to this notion

the fountain here is the right ventricle of the heart, which is now acknowledged to be the spring of life, and of the vital spirits, and the pitcher is the veins which convey the blood from it to other parts, and especially that arterious vein, as anatomists call it, by which it is transmitted to the lungs, and thence to the left ventricle of the heart, where it is better elaborated, and then by the pulse thrust out into the great artery, called *arteria aorta* , and by its branches dispersed into all the parts of the body, to give them life and vigour, which being done, the residue of the blood is carried back by the veins into the right ventricle of the heart, whence it is disposed, as hath been now mentioned, and so runs in a perpetual round, unless it be obstructed by some disorder in the body. And the

cistern is the left ventricle of the heart, and the

wheel seems to be the great artery which is joined to it, which is very fitly so called, because it is the first and great instrument of this rotation or circulation of the blood, which by its pulse is forcibly thrust out into all the parts of the body, whence by various windings and turnings it returns thither again, and so is sent again upon the same journey, which in like manner it performs again and again, as long as life and health continue; and when any of these parts are disenabled for the discharge of their offices, then are they fitly said to be broken. The

pitcher may be said to be

broken at the fountain, when the veins do not return the blood to the heart, but suffer it to stand still and cool within them, whence comes that coldness of the outward parts, which is a near forerunner of death. And the wheel may be said to be

broken at the cistern, when the great arteries do not perform their office of conveying the blood lute the left ventricle of the heart, and of thrusting it out thence into the lesser arteries, whence comes that ceasing of the pulse, which is a certain sign of approaching death.

Ecclesiastes12:7

The dust; the body, called *dust* , both for its original, which was from the dust, and to signify its vile and corruptible nature, Job_4:19 **30:19** Psa_103:14.

Return to the earth as it was; whence it was first taken. He alludes to that passage, Gen_3:19. *The spirit* ; the soul of man, frequently so called, as Gen_2:7 Psa_31:5, &c., because it is of a spiritual or immaterial nature.

Return unto God; into his presence, and before his tribunal, that there it may be sentenced to its everlasting habitations, either to abide with God for ever, if it be approved by him, or otherwise to be eternally shut out from his presence and favour.

Who gave it, to wit, in a peculiar manner, by his creating power: for in a general sense *God giveth to every seed his own belly* , 1Co_15:38; hence he is called *the Father of spirits* , Heb_12:9.

Ecclesiastes12:8

This sentence, wherewith he began this book, he here repeateth in the end of it partly as that which he had proved in all the foregoing discourse, and partly as that which naturally and necessarily followed from both the branches of the assertion now laid down, Ecc_12:7.

Ecclesiastes12:9

The preacher was wise; which he affirmeth not out of vain ostentation, but partly to procure the more credit and acceptance to his doctrine and, counsel here delivered; and partly to declare his repentance for his former follies, and God's great mercy in restoring his wisdom to him.

Taught the people knowledge; as God gave him this wisdom, that he might be a teacher of others, so he used it to that end; therefore despise not his counsel.

He gave good heed; he did not rashly and foolishly utter whatsoever came into his mind or mouth, but seriously pondered both his matter and words.

Sought out; both by the exercise of his own mind, and by reading and learning from others.

Set in order; or, *directed* or *fitted* . He selected such as were most useful.

Many proverbs; excellent and wise sayings, which are oft called proverbs, as was noted before upon the Book of Proverbs.

Ecclesiastes12:10

Acceptable words, Heb. *desirable* or *delightful* , worthy of all acceptation, such as would minister comfort and profit so the hearers or readers.

Written by the preacher in this and his other books.

Upright, Heb. *right* or *straight* , agreeable to the mind or will of God, which is the rule of right, not crooked or perverse.

Words of truth; not fables cunningly devised to deceive the simple, but true and certain doctrines, which commend themselves to men's own consciences or reasons; wholesome and edifying counsels.

Ecclesiastes12:11

The words of the wise; not of secularly or politically wise men, but of the spiritually wise and holy men of God; of which, and not of the former, this whole context treats.

As goads, and as nails, piercing into men's dull minds and hard hearts, and quickening and provoking them to the practice of all their duties.

Fastened; which do not only amuse and startle men for the present, as the wise and grave counsels of moral philosophers frequently do, but make powerful and abiding impressions in them; which is the peculiar effect of God's word.

By the masters of assemblies; by the teachers of God's church and people, whether prophets or others, appointed by God for that work.

Which are given from one shepherd; from God, or from Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd and Teacher of the church in all ages, by whose Spirit the ancient prophets, as well as other succeeding teachers, were inspired and taught, Jer_3:15 1Pe_1:11 2Pe_1:21. And this clause seems to be added partly as the reason of that admirable harmony and agreement which is amongst all the men of God in all ages and places, because they are all taught by one Master, and guided by the same hand; and partly to oblige us to the greater attention and reverence to all their doctrines and counsels, which we are to receive as the word of God, and not of men only, as it is said, 1Th_2:13.

Ecclesiastes12:12

By these; by these wise men, and their words or writings, of which he spoke in the foregoing verse.

Be admonished; take your instructions from them, for their words are right and true, as he said, Ecc_12:10, whereas the words of other men are false, or at best doubtful.

Of making many books there is no end; I could easily write many books and large volumes upon these matters, but that were an endless and needless work, seeing things necessary to be known and done lie in a little compass, as he informs us in the next verse.

Much study; the reading of many books written by learned philosophers about these things; which it is more than probable were then extant, though since lost, which also Solomon, being so curious

and inquisitive a person, would in all likelihood procure anti peruse as far as he hail opportunity.

Is a weariness to the flesh; it wasteth a man's strength and spirits, and yet (which is implied) doth not satisfy the mind, nor sufficiently recompense the trouble and inconvenience to which man is exposed by it.

Ecclesiastes12:13

The conclusion of the whole matter; the sum and substance of all that hath been said or written by wise men, so far as it is necessary for us to know.

Fear God; which is synecdoically put here, as it is very frequently in Scripture, for all the inward worship of God, reverence, and love, and trust, and a devotedness of heart to serve and please God, and a loathness to offend him, and an aptness to tremble at his word and judgments.

Keep his commandments: this is fitly added as a necessary effect and certain evidence of the fear, of God. Make conscience of practising whatsoever God requires, how costly, or troublesome, or dangerous soever it be.

The whole duty; in the Hebrew it is only, *the whole* ; it is his whole work and business, his whole perfection and happiness, it is the sum of what he need either know, or do, or enjoy.

Ecclesiastes12:14

For God shall bring every work into judgment: this is added either,

1. As a reason of what he last said,

this is the whole of man, because all men must give an account to God of all their works, and this alone will enable them to do that with joy, and not with grief. Or,

2. As another argument to press the foregoing exhortation, Fear God, and keep his commandments, for you must be called to judgment about it, &c.

With every secret thing; not only outward and visible actions, but even inward and secret thoughts.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Before I come to the explication of this book, some things must be premised concerning it.

1. That it was of Divine inspiration is so clear and certain, that, as Jewish writers note, none ever questioned it, although some doubted of some other of Solomon's writings. And the same arguments which prove the divinity of other books are found here, such as the quality of the penman, who was confessedly a man inspired by God; the excellency and usefulness of the matter; the sacred and sublime majesty of the style, and the singular efficacy of it upon the hearts of sober and serious persons, who read it with due preparation; and those other characters which are commonly known, and therefore it is needless here to enumerate.

2. The form of this book is dramatical, wherein several parts or parcels of it are uttered by or in the name of several persons, which are chiefly four, the bridegroom and the bride, and the friends or companions of the one and of the other. Nor is it declared what or when each of them speak, but that is secretly couched, and is left to the observation of the prudent reader, as is usual in writings of this nature.

3. The design of the book in general is to describe the passionate loves and happy marriage of two persons, and their mutual satisfaction therein, and the blessed fruits and effects thereof. But then it is not to be understood carnally, concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, as some have fancied, although the occasion of this love and marriage may be taken from that, or rather he makes an allusion to that; but spiritually, concerning God, or Christ, and his church and people. This is sufficiently evident from the descriptions of this bridegroom and bride, which are such as could not with any decency be used or meant concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, as when he is brought in like a country shepherd, **#So 1:7**, and is called his bride's brother, **#So 5:2**, and when he gives such high and excessive commendations to himself, as we shall see, and when she is made the *keeper of vineyards and of sheep*, **#So 1:6,8**, and is said to be smitten and abused by the watchmen, **#So 5:7**, and said to be *terrible as an*

army, **#So 6:4**, and to be like Pharaoh's horses, and to *have a head like Carmel, a nose like a tower, eyes like fishpools, teeth like a flock of sheep*, &c., **#So 7:4,5**. And there are many such-like expressions and descriptions, which being applied to them, are absurd and monstrous. Hence it follows that this book is to be understood mystically or allegorically, concerning that spiritual love and marriage which is between God, or Christ, and his church, or every believing soul. And this will be more than probable to any man who shall consider the following particulars.

1. That the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament are full of mystical and allegorical passages; which being known and confessed, it is needless to prove.

2. That the doctrine of Christ, or the Messias, and of his being the Head, and Husband, and Saviour of God's church or people, was well known, at least to the prophets, and the wise and pious Israelites, in the time of the Old Testament; whereof we have many manifest and unquestionable evidences, not only in the New Testament, but in the writings of Moses, in the Books of Psalms and Proverbs, and in the prophets, as hath been noted in part, and will, God assisting, be further observed in the proper places.

3. That God compares himself to a bridegroom, and his church to a bride, **#Isa 62:5**, and calls and owns himself the *Husband* of his people, **#Isa 54:5 Ho 2:16,19,20**. In which places, by comparing these. with many other texts of Scripture, by God, or the Lord, is meant Christ, the second person in the Godhead, who then was to come down, and since did come from heaven to earth, for the consummation of that eternal project of marriage between God and his people; which also is fully confirmed by the writings of the New Testament which were designed for the explication of the Old, in which Christ is expressly declared to be the Bridegroom or Husband of his church, an **#Mt 9:15 22:2 Joh 3:29 2Co 11:2 Eph 5:23 Re 19:7 21:2 22:17** 4. That **#Ps 45**, which is a kind of abridgement: of this book, although it had its rise from or alludes to the marriage between Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, was written concerning the Messias, as all interpreters, both Christian and Jewish, agree, and concerning the mystical marriage between Christ and his church; of which see my notes upon that Psalm. From these considerations, and many others which might be

suggested, and which will offer themselves to our thoughts from several passages of it, it is sufficiently manifest, that the main scope and business of this book is to describe the mutual love, union, and communion which is between Christ and his church in the various conditions to which it is liable in this world, as in the state of weakness, and desertion, and persecution from foolish shepherds, and the like, #So 1:6,7 3:1-4 5:2,7, &c. Moreover it is to be considered, that Solomon doth here vary his speech, sometimes speaking of the church in general, as one person or body; and sometimes of the particular members of it, or of several believers, both of such as really and sincerely are so, or such as profess to be so, and of their various dispositions and conditions. And hence comes the difference of persons here mentioned, the mother or spouse, and the children or daughters of Jerusalem, sixty queens, and eighty concubines; some that are strangers to the bridegroom, and some that are well acquainted with him, &c. These things being premised will give great light to the several passages of this book.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 1

A description of the earnest longing of the church after Christ, #So 1:1-4. A confession of her deformity; prayeth for direction. #So 1:5-7. Christ's direction and command, #So 1:8. He showeth his love to her both for her strength and comeliness, #So 1:9,10, and giveth her gracious promises, #So 1:11. The church's commendation of Christ both for the sweetness of fellowship with him, and the excellency of ordinances, #So 1:12-17.

Ver. 1.

The song of songs; the most excellent of all songs, whether composed by profane or sacred authors, by Solomon or by any other. So this Hebrew phrase is understood in other cases, as *the holy of holies* signifies the most holy; and the highest King is called *King of kings*; and there are multitudes of such instances, as hath been oft observed. And so this might well be called, whether you consider the author of it, who was a great prince, and the wisest of all mortal men, the two Adams only excepted; or the subject of it, which is not Solomon, but *a greater than Solomon*, even Christ, and his marriage with the church, as hath been noted;

or the matter of it, which is most lofty and mysterious, containing in it the greatest and noblest of all the mysteries contained either in the Old or the New Testament; most pious and pathetic, breathing forth the hottest flames of love between Christ and his people; most sweet, and comfortable, and useful to all that read it with serious and Christian eyes. Nor is it the worse because profane and wanton wits abuse it, and endeavour to fasten their absurd and filthy senses upon some passages in it. The truth is, this book requires a sober and pious, not a lascivious and foolish reader; for which reason some of the ancient Hebrews advised young men to forbear the reading of it, till they were thirty years old.

Which is Solomon's; which was composed by Solomon; but whether before his fall, or after his repentance, is not easy to determine, nor necessity to be known.

Ver. 2.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. The beginning of this book is abrupt, and may seem disorderly; but is very suitable to and usual in writings of this nature, wherein things are not related in an historical and exquisite order, but that which was first done is brought in as it were accidentally after many other passages; as we see in Homer, and Virgil, and in the Greek and Latin comedians. These are the words of the spouse, as all acknowledge, wherein she breatheth forth her passionate love to the Bridegroom, whom she doth not name, but only intimate by the pronoun relative *him*, which is here put without and for the antecedent, as **#Ps 87:1 114:2 Joh 20:15**; which manner of expression she useth, because it was needless to name him, as being so well known to the person or persons to whom she speaks, and being the only person who was continually in her thoughts and speeches. By *kisses*, which were the usual tokens of love and good will, she means nothing else but the communications and manifestations of his love and favour to her, as the following clause explains this; his graces and comforts breathed into her from the mouth and Spirit of Christ.

Thy love: this sudden change of the person is frequent, especially in such pathetic discourses. First she speaks of him as absent,

and at a distance, but speedily grows into more acquaintance with him, and by ardent desire in faith embraceth him as present.

Than wine; than the most delicious meats or drinks, or than all sensual delights, this one kind being synecdochically put for all the rest, as it is **#Es 5:6 Job 1:13 Pr 9:2 Ec 2:3**.

Ver. 3.

Because of the savour of thy good ointments; because of those excellent gifts and graces of God's Spirit wherewith thou art replenished, and which flow from thee upon thy members,

Thy name; either,

1. Thou thyself;

names being oft put for persons, as **#Ac 1:15 Re 3:4**. Or rather,

2. Thy fame or report, the very mention of thee, and all those things by which thou makest thyself known to men, thy word, and particularly thine offers and promises of pardon and salvation made to sinners, and all thy works, both ordinary and miraculous, especially that great work of redemption.

Is as ointment poured forth; most lovely, and acceptable, and refreshing.

The virgins, called *the companions* of the bride, **#Ps 45:14**, particular believers, who are called virgins, **#2Co 11:2 Re 14:4**, who have their senses exercised to perceive this sweetness and fulness of Christ.

Ver. 4.

Draw me; by thy grace and Holy Spirit effectually inclining my heart to come unto thee, as this phrase implies, **#Jer 31:3 Ho 11:4 Joh 6:44,45**. As thou hast outwardly called and invited me, so do thou inwardly move me, who am naturally averse and backward to follow thee.

We; both I thy spouse, and the virgins my companions. And this change of numbers teaches us that the spouse in this book is one great body, consisting of many members, of whom therefore he speaks sometimes in the singular, and sometimes in the plural number.

Will run after thee; will follow thee readily, and cheerfully, and swiftly; which is opposed to her former sluggishness and listlessness. We will not receive thy grace in vain, but will improve it, and co-operate with it, and stir up all our strength to serve and obey thee.

The king; Christ, my Husband and Lord, the King of his church, as he is oft called, the King of kings, &c.

Hath brought me, Heb. *hath caused me to come*, by drawing me as I desired. He hath answered my prayer.

Into his chambers, where I may most freely and familiarly converse with him, and enjoy him. He hath taken me into intimate communion with himself. These

chambers seem to note either,

1. Those heavenly mansions into which believers are sometimes said to be brought, even in this life, as **#Eph 2:6**, because they have a lively faith, and a well-grounded hope and assurance, and some comfortable foretastes of that blessed state. Or rather,

2. Those places and conditions upon earth in which they enjoy the special favour and fellowship of God in Christ, as the public assemblies, in which Christ is in a peculiar manner present, **#Mt 18:20**, where his word and ordinances are dispensed, and where he poureth forth his Spirit and blessings, and speaks great peace, and gives forth his loves unto his people. Yea, even the private closets wherein believers enjoy much of Christ, by prayer, and praise, and reading, and meditation, are such chambers also; for it is not the place, but the state, or privilege, which is here signified, and which is considerable.

In thee; or, *for thee*; in or for thy love and favour to us, which is the principal cause of our joy.

Remember, or *commemorate*, or *celebrate*. This shall be the matter of our thoughts and discourses.

The upright; those chaste and sincere virgins mentioned **#So 1:3**, who are here opposed to hypocritical professors.

Ver. 5.

I am black. It might be objected, Who art thou, that thou shouldst have or pretend to such a royal Bridegroom, and such honours and favours? To this the church answers, I confess, as to myself and outward appearance in the eyes of the world, I have not that pomp and beauty which men admire, but am black, contemptible and deformed, both for my own infirmities and disorders, and for the scandals of some of my own members, and for the reproaches and persecutions of worldly men. She alludes to the complexion of Pharaoh's daughter, who was black.

But comely; yet I am glorious within, **#Ps 45:13**, and comely, through the beauty which my Husband hath put upon me, by his graces and blessings conferred upon me, such as justification and sanctification, &c.

Daughters of Jerusalem; by which she understands particular believers, whose *mother* Jerusalem is called, **#Ga 4:26**, who had joined themselves to her, especially young converts and weak Christians, who were startled and offended at the contemplation of her blackness.

Of Kedar, i.e. of the wild Arabians, the posterity of Kedar, **#Ge 25:13**, who dwelt in tents, which were black and uncomely, both in themselves, and by the injuries of the weather, to which they were constantly exposed.

As the curtains of Solomon; as the hangings wherewith Solomon's house was furnished, which none can doubt that they were most beautiful and glorious. So these two last clauses answer to the two first, and that in the same order in which they lie.

Ver. 6.

Look not upon me, with wonder and disdain, because of my blackness, as it follows.

Because the sun hath looked upon me: my blackness is not essential, and inseparable, but chiefly caused by the scorching beams of the sun, i.e. of sore persecutions and tribulations, which by God's permission have befallen me, which are represented by the sun, **#Mt 13:6,21**.

My mother's children; false brethren, who pretend that the church is their mother, with their actions demonstrate that God, the Husband of the church, is not their Father; hypocritical professors, who are, and ever were, the keenest enemies to the true church and people of God, **#Isa 66:5 Ga 4:29**; false teachers, and their followers, who, by their corrupt doctrines, and divisions, and contentions which they raise, bring great mischief to the church. See **#2Co 11:26 Ga 2:4**.

Were angry with me; or, fought against me, as the ancients render it, and so marred my beauty.

They made me keeper of the vineyards, i.e. of their vineyards, for to these she opposeth her own, in the next clause. Having prevailed against me, they used me like a slave, putting me upon the most dishonourable and troublesome services, such as the keeping of the vineyards was esteemed, **#2Ki 25:12 Isa 61:5 Mt 20:1-7**.

Mine own vineyard have I not kept; they gave me such a full and constant employment in their drudging work about their vineyards, that they left me no time to mind my own; they hindered me from doing my own duty, and from minding my own concerns; and therefore it is no wonder if in this posture and condition I be uncomely, and scorched by the sun. But because churches or societies of professors of religion, whether good or bad, are oft called *vineyards*, as **#De 32:32 Ps 80:8 Isa 5:1,2,7**, this and the foregoing clause may be thus understood, that they endeavored to seduce and corrupt the church with false doctrines, and superstitious or idolatrous worship, and to oblige her to countenance and maintain them, and thereby disturbed and hindered her from her proper work, which was the propagation and advancement of the true doctrine and worship in particular assemblies and persons belonging, or to be brought in, to her.

Ver. 7.

Whom my soul loveth, notwithstanding all these discouragements mid afflictions which I suffer for thy sake, and for my love to thee. Being reproached and persecuted by others, I flee to thee, O my only refuge and joy, and I beg direction and help from thee.

Where thou feedest, understand, thy flock, as **#Ge 29:7 37:16**. Seeing false teachers and churches bear thy name, **#Mr 13:21,22**, and thy true church sometimes lies hid, **#Re 12:14**, discover to me which is thy true church, and which are those assemblies and people where thou art present, and where thine ordinances are dispensed in purity and power, and where thou dost and wilt *command the blessing, even life for evermore*, as it is expressed, **#Ps 133:3**, that I may join myself to them. This is the request of particular believers. For it must be minded, as that which will be useful to explain really difficulties in this book, that the church in this book is sometimes considered, and speaketh, or is spoken of, as one entire body, and sometimes with respect unto and in the name of her particular members, and that promiscuously; and in which of these capacities each place is to be understood is left to the prudent and diligent reader to gather out of the words and context.

At noon; in the heat of the day, when the shepherds in those hot countries used to carry their flocks into shady places; whereby he means the time of hot persecution, when it is hard to find and discover the true church, partly because she is deformed by it, and partly because she is obscured and driven into the wilderness, as is said, **#Re 12:14**.

Be as one, i.e. be really one, the particle *as* being here a note of truth, as it is in many other places. Why wilt thou by withdrawing thyself from me, and denying thy direction to me, suffer me, or give occasion to me, to be such a one?

One that turneth aside; or, *a wanderer*, or *vagabond*, like a neglected and forlorn creature, exposed both to censure and danger, from both which it belongs to thee, my Husband, to protect and save me. *By*, or *about*, or *towards*, as this particle is elsewhere used, the flocks of thy companions; the assemblies of corrupt and false teachers and worshippers, by which I am like to be insnared, if thou dost forsake me. These he calls Christ's *companions*, partly because they profess the name of Christ, and their conjunction with him in God's worship; and partly because they set themselves up in Christ's stead, and usurp his power in delivering and imposing their own laws and doctrines upon men's

consciences, and behave themselves like his equals or companions, not as becometh his subjects.

Ver. 8.

If thou know not, to wit, where I feed my sheep. For this is Christ's answer to his spouse or people.

O thou fairest among women; though thou art black in thine own and others' eyes, yet thou art very beautiful and amiable to me, as being washed white in my blood, and beautified with my gifts and graces.

Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock; observe and follow the paths which my sheep had trodden before thee, of my faithful servants, Abraham and others, whose examples are propounded for our imitation, **#Ro 4:12 Heb 6:12**. For the church in all ages is one and the same, and there is but one way for the substance in which all the saints from the beginning to the end of the world do walk, *Christ being yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever*, **#Heb 13:8**, and *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, **#Re 13:8**.

Feed thy kids; take care for the feeding or teaching of all, and especially of young and weak Christians, who do and shall associate themselves to thee, whom the Holy Ghost calls *lambs*, **#Joh 21:15,16**, as here *kids*. For although grown and wanton goats are commonly used in Scripture in a bad sense, yet the kids of the goats do sometimes note believers, as **#Isa 11:6**, and *kids* were among those sacrifices which represented Christ, **#Heb 9:12-14**. *Beside the shepherds' tents*; under the conduct, and according to the instruction, of my faithful shepherds, or pastors; first and chiefly those who have gone before thee, the prophets and apostles, and after, and in subordination to them, and to their writings, others whom I shall raise from time to time to feed my people with wisdom and understanding.

Ver. 9.

I have compared thee, Heb. *I have made thee like*; which may be understood either,

1. Verbally, by comparing. Or,

2. Really, by making a real resemblance in quality or condition. *To a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots*; either,

1. For comeliness; for a horse is a very stately and beautiful creature, and the Egyptian horses were preferred before others, **#1Ki 10:28 Isa 31:1**, and Pharaoh's own chariot horses were doubtless the best of their kind. Or,

2. For excellent order and usefulness, as those horses did equally and orderly draw the chariot, and carried Pharaoh with ease and speed whither he designed to go. Or rather,

3. For strength and courage, to overcome all thine enemies. For horses are famous for that property, **#Job 39:21**, &c. And the strength of the battle was then thought to consist very much in horses, **#Pr 21:31**, and chariots, and especially in a company or multitude of them. And the church in this book is represented not only as fair and beautiful, but also as terrible to her enemies, **#So 6:10**. Compare **#Re 19:11,14**.

Ver. 10.

Rows of jewels; which being fastened to the heads of brides, used to hang down upon and to adorn their cheeks, according to the manner in those times. He mentions the cheeks as the chief seat of beauty; and he intimates that the church's beauty is not natural, nor from herself, but from the jewels wherewith Christ adorns her.

Thy neck; which is mentioned as another visible part and seat of beauty, **#Ho 10:11**. But to accommodate every part and ornament named in this book to some particular thing in the church, seems to have more of curiosity and artifice than of solidity and use.

Chains of gold; whereby, as well as by the rows of jewels, he may seem to design all those persons and things wherewith the church is made beautiful in the eyes of God and of men; such as excellent ministers, and saints, righteous laws, holy ordinances, and the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, all which are given by God to the church, and are her best ornaments.

Ver. 11.

We; I thy Bridegroom, with the cooperation of my Father, and of the Holy Spirit. Such plural expressions are sometimes used in

Scripture concerning one God, to note the plurality of persons in one Divine essence, as hath been noted upon #Ge 1:26, and elsewhere.

Borders of gold with studs of silver; beautiful and honourable ornaments, such as those #So 1:10. Variety of expressions are used to signify the various kinds and improvements of the gifts and graces which are bestowed by Christ upon the church. The phrase here used may be compared with that of

apples of gold in pictures of silver, #Pr 25:11.

Ver. 12.

The King, my royal Husband,

sitteth at his table; either,

1. With the spirits of just men and blessed angels in heavenly glory, to which Christ was advanced after his sufferings, and from which he poureth down his Spirit upon his people. Or rather,

2. With me in his gospel and ordinances, in which Christ entertaineth his people, and is in a special, and gracious, and glorious manner present with them, #Mt 18:20 28:20, which also is oft represented in Scripture under the motion of a feast or banquet, of which see #Pr 9:1-3,5 Isa 25:6 Mt 8:11 22:2 1Co 10:21.

My spikenard; the graces of his Spirit conferred upon me, and drawn forth by his powerful presence, which is here compared to those sweet ointments which the master of the feast caused to be poured out upon the beads of the guests, of which see #Mr 14:3 Lu 7:38, in which ointments spikenard was a chief ingredient, #Joh 12:2,3.

Sendeth forth the smell thereof; which notes the exercise and manifestation of her graces, which is a sweet-smelling savour in the nostrils of her Husband, and of her companions.

Ver. 13.

A bundle of myrrh; or, *a bag of myrrh*; in which there was a considerable quantity of the gum which droppeth from the myrrh tree. Myrrh is bitter to the taste, but sweet to the smell, and

therefore was ever reckoned amongst the best perfumes. See **#Ex 30:23 Ps 45:8 Joh 19:39**.

Is my Beloved unto me; he is most precious and comfortable to me, and the author of my sweet smell last mentioned.

Betwixt my breasts; in the place where bundles or bags of myrrh or other perfumes hang down, being fastened about their necks, which yet were taken away and laid aside by night. But the church intimates that she will not part with Christ, neither day nor night. Or this phrase may note the church's intimate union with and hearty affection unto Christ.

Ver. 14.

Camphire; or, *cypress*, as others render it. It was an odoriferous plant growing in vineyards, and some think that it was a most pleasant kind of vine, like that which bears muscatel grapes; yea, some very learned men understand it of that plant which dropped balm, which grew in or near the place here specified, as is affirmed not only by the Jews, but also by pagan writers, as Diodorus and Trogius. Nor are we concerned to know which or what it was; it being confessed and evident, that it was some pleasant and grateful plant, and that it sets forth that great delight which the church hath in the enjoyment of Christ.

En-gedi; a pleasant and well-watered place in the tribe of Judah, **#Jos 15:62 Eze 47:10**, where there were many pleasant plants, whence it was called Hazazontamar, **#2Ch 20:2**.

Ver. 15.

Behold, thou art fair: this is the speech of Christ. The words are doubled, partly to note the certainty of the thing, notwithstanding her mean and modest opinion of herself; and partly to manifest his high esteem and fervent affection for her, and to assure her that, notwithstanding all her infirmities, he was very well pleased with her.

Thou hast doves' eyes; which are,

1. Comely and pleasant.

2. Modest and humble, not lofty, as the looks of some other creatures are.

3. Mild and harmless, not fierce and fiery, not looking and watching for prey, as the eyes of ravenous birds are.

4. Chaste and faithful, looking only to their mates; so that *if any of them cast a lustful eye upon another, her companions are enraged against her, and quickly tear her in pieces*; as some natural historians write. And such are the church's eyes said to be. And by *the eyes* he seems to design partly her looks and outward behaviour or conversation, and partly and chiefly the inward disposition of her mind, which is commonly discovered, and in Scripture is oft signified, by the eye; in which sense we read of an evil eye, #Pr 23:6 Mt 6:23, of a bountiful eye, #Pr 22:9, of a single eye, #Lu 11:34, of a proud or lofty look, all which signify such tempers of men's minds.

Ver. 16.

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved. The church here again speaks, and retorts Christ's words upon himself: If I am fair, it is only by thy grace and favourable acceptation; thou, and thou only, art fair indeed, thy beauty is exquisite and perfect.

Pleasant; as thou art beautiful in thyself, so thou art amiable and pleasant in thy condescension to me, and converse with me, in communicating thy blessed counsels, and graces, and comforts to me. *Our bed*; either,

1. Upon which we sit at meat, as the manner then was, #Es 1:5,6 Eze 23:41. Or rather,

2. Upon which we lie, our nuptial bed; for the union and communion between Christ and his church is here represented under the notion of marriage. And accordingly the bed seems to denote the place or places where the church enjoyeth sweet fellowship with Christ, by his Spirit accompanying his ordinances, and imparting his merits, and graces, and comforts to her.

Is green; is pleasant, as that colour is to the eye; is prepared for us, being adorned with green garlands, or boughs and herbs, as the manner seems to have been with country brides, such as the spouse in this book is represented to be. Or, as others, both ancient and later interpreters, render it, *is flourishing*, i.e. fruitful. So it is a happy presage, that the church should not be barren, but bring forth many children to Christ; of which see #Isa 54:1, &c. By

these and the following words the church invites Christ to her bed and house, where she may freely and fully enjoy spiritual communion with him.

Ver. 17.

The beams of our house are cedar; not only strong and incorruptible, but also fragrant and delightful. Though I am in myself but a mean and rustic person, yet the house to which I invite thee, and where thou and I shall dwell together, is, by thy favour, built with cedar; whereby is here signified the stability of God's church upon earth, which is called *God's house*, #1Ti 3:15, and the firmness and sureness of God's word and promises.

Rafters; the lesser beams. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by others, *galleries*, wherein we may walk.

Of fir; or, as the ancients and others render it, *of cypress*, which was used in buildings, which also was strong and fragrant, and therefore suits well with cedars.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 2

The excellency of the majesty of Christ, #So 2:1, and of his church, #So 2:2. The benefits which the church receives from him, #So 2:3. Christ's love to his church, #So 2:4. The church sick of love; her prayer for help, #So 2:5. His ears for her in this condition, #So 2:6. The hope and calling of the church, #So 2:10-13. Christ's care of the church, #So 2:14,15. The profession of the church; her faith and hope, #So 2:16,17.

Ver. 1.

These are the words either,

1. Of the spouse, continuing her discourse. Or rather,
2. Of the bridegroom, drawing forth the church's affections to him. He compares himself to the rose and lily, for fragrantcy and beauty. Nor is it in the least degree indecent that Christ should thus commend himself, partly because his excellency is so transcendently great, that he is free from all suspicion of vanity and self-flattery; and partly because it is suitable to the style of such writings, and to the present design of recommending himself to the affection of his spouse. He mentions the rose of Sharon,

which was a very fruitful place, as is evident from **#1Ch 27:29 Isa 33:9 65:10**, and famous for roses, as may seem probable from **#Isa 35:1,2**. Or, as others translate it, *the rose of the field*, which may note that Christ is not only pleasant and beautiful, but free and communicative, offering himself to all that come to him. The

lily is a beautiful and glorious creature, **#Mt 6:29**, especially to one who beholds it through a magnifying glass. He saith,

the lily of the valleys, because they grew and flourished best in such low and waterish grounds.

Ver. 2.

As the lily among thorns; compared with thorns, which it unspeakably exceeds in glory and beauty;

so is my love among the daughters; so far, and much more, doth my church or people excel all other assemblies or people. The title of *daughter* is oft given to whole nations; whence we read of the *daughter of Babylon*, and of *Egypt*, and of *Edom*, &c., **#Isa 47:1 Jer 46:11 La 4:21**. These are Christ's words, to which the spouse makes the following reply. And it is observable here, that as Christ is here represented as a shepherd, and the spouse as a country virgin, so the similitudes here used are agreeable to that estate.

Ver. 3.

As the apple tree, whose fruit is very pleasant and wholesome, **among the trees of the wood**, which are either barren, or bear ungrateful and worthless fruit.

I sat down under his shadow; being weary and heavy laden with manifold sins and troubles, inward and outward, I confidently reposed myself under his protection, (which is commonly signified by a shadow, as **#Isa 4:6 25:4**, &c.,) and by him was defended from the scorching heat of God's wrath and from the curse of his fiery law, and from the mischief or hurt of all sorts of distresses. *His fruit*; the benefits which I received by him, the clear, and full, and certain knowledge of God's will, and the way of salvation, adoption, and remission of sins, faith and repentance, and all manner of grace, and assurance of glory. Thus he was to me both *a sun and a shield*, as is said, **#Ps 84:11**.

Ver. 4.

Banqueting-house, Heb. *house of wine*, or, by a common synecdoche, of feasting. By which he understands the places in which, or the means and instruments by which, believers receive the graces and blessings of Christ, to wit, the Holy Scriptures, ministers, and public assemblies, and all Christ's institutions.

His banner over me; or, *to* or *towards me*; by the lifting up or displaying whereof I was invited and encouraged to come in to him, and to list myself under him, as soldiers are by the lifting up of a banner or ensign, of which see **#Isa 11:10 49:22**.

Was love; the love of Christ crucified, which, like a banner, is displayed in the gospel, whereby sinners are drawn and engaged to come to Christ: see **#Joh 3:14 12:32 2Co 5:14**. The motto or device of Christ's banner was not like those of other great generals, a lion, or leopard, or eagle, but love, by which alone Christ made all his conquests.

Ver. 5.

Stay me; or, *support me*; keep me from sinking or fainting. The spouse speaks this to her bridemaids, *the daughters of Jerusalem*, as it is expressed, **#So 2:7**, or to the servants or friends of the Bridegroom there waiting, and to the Bridegroom himself; as a person ready to faint cries to any or all that are near to him or her for help.

With flagons; with wine, which is a good cordial, **#Ps 104:15 Pr 31:6,7**, and which was there present, **#So 2:4**. *Flagons* are here, and **#1Ch 16:3**, put for *flagons of wine*, as it is fully expressed, **#Ho 3:1**, or for the wine contained in them, as the cup is put for wine, **#Lu 22:20**, by a common metonymy.

Comfort me with apples; with odoriferous apples, such as pomegranates, or the like, the smell whereof was grateful and useful to persons ready to faint. By these metaphors understand the application of the promises, and the comfortable and quickening influences of the Spirit.

I am sick of love; either,

1. With transports of joy, which sometimes causes a fainting of the spirits, as **#Ge 45:26 1Ki 10:5**. Or,

2. With grief for his departure from her, of which we read #So 3:1,2, or for fear of it. Or rather,

3. With ardent desire of a stricter union, and clearer discoveries of his love, and perfect and uninterrupted communion with him in glory. That sickness is sometimes the effect of love hath been oft observed by physicians.

Ver. 6.

Is under my head, as a pillow for me to rest upon. No sooner did I cry out for help, but he was at hand to succour me, and did manifest his tender care and dear love to me.

Ver. 7.

This verse is spoken either,

1. By the Bridegroom, who having reposed the sick church in his arms, chargeth them not to disturb her *till she please*, as the last clause in this case must be rendered. Or rather,

2. By the bride, as may be gathered,

1. From the connexion, because both the foregoing and following words are hers.

2. Because it was more decent for the bride than for the Bridegroom to give this charge to the bridemaids,

the daughters of Jerusalem; and therefore in all places in this book where they are mentioned the person speaking to them is the bride, and not the Bridegroom, and particularly #So 3:5 8:4, where this verse is repeated, and is confessedly and evidently spoken by the spouse. *Daughters of Jerusalem;* my bridemaids, friends, and members, over whom I have authority.

By the hinds; either,

1. By the kindness you have to those pretty and amiable creatures, as

you would not injure nor disturb them, nor drive them away, but please yourselves with the sight of them, as shepherds and country damsels commonly do. Or,

2. By the example of those creatures, which are pleasant and loving in

their carriage towards one another. *Of the field*; which have their usual abode in the fields. *That ye stir not up, nor awake*; that you do not disturb nor offend him by your miscarriages, but permit him and me to enjoy a quiet repose. Do nothing to grieve him, or molest me. *My love*; my dearly beloved, called *love* emphatically, to express her great passion for him. So love is used #So 7:6, and in other authors. *Till he please*, i.e. never, as this word *until*, in such like phrases, is commonly used, as #Ge 28:15 2Sa 6:23 Isa 22:14. For neither can sin ever please him, nor can the church bear it that Christ should ever be offended, or that her sweet fellowship with him should be interrupted.

Ver. 8.

The voice of my Beloved! methinks I hear his voice. The spouse being now refreshed and revived with Christ's presence, awakes out of sleep, and breaks forth into this joyful exclamation. Christ's voice is nothing else but the word of grace revealed outwardly in the gospel, or the evangelical passages of the Old Testament, and inwardly to the heart of the spouse by the Spirit of God.

Behold, he cometh; either,

1. He is coming, or will shortly come, into the world; which Solomon and the rest of the Old Testament prophets and saints did earnestly desire and confidently expect. Or,

2. He is coming to me for my support and comfort.

Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills; he saith *leaping and skipping*, to note that Christ came readily and swiftly, with great desire and pleasure; and he adds,

upon the mountains and hills, either with respect to Mount Zion or Jerusalem, in and from which Christ first discovered himself; or to signify Christ's fixed resolution to come, in spite of all discouragements and difficulties which stood in his way; or to show that his coming was manifest and visible to the eye of her faith. Or in this phrase he may have a respect to the roes and harts here following.

Ver. 9.

Like a roe or a young hart; either,

1. In loveliness. Or rather,

2. In swiftness, by comparing this verse with the former. The swiftness of roes is noted #2Sa 2:18 1Ch 12:8. He is coming to me with all speed, and will not tarry a moment beyond the appointed and proper season.

He standeth behind our wall; and whilst he doth for wise and just reasons forbear to come, he is not far from us. Though he be not yet come into the door of our house, yet he stands behind the wall of our house, and is always at hand, to give me that succour and comfort which I do or may need or desire. Both this and the following phrases seem to note the obscure and imperfect manner and degree of Christ's manifesting himself to his people, either,

1. Under the law, in comparison of his discoveries in the gospel. Or,

2. In this life, in comparison of what he will do in the future life.

He looketh forth, from his high and heavenly palace, towards me, to watch over me, and refresh me with the prospect of his favour.

At the window: this phrase, and that,

through the lattice, intimate that the church doth indeed see Christ, but, *as through a glass, darkly*, as it is said even of gospel revelations, #1Co 13:12, and was much more true of legal administrations.

Ver. 10.

My Beloved spake; invited and called me outwardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit.

Rise up; shake off sloth and security, and disentangle thyself more fully from all the snares of this world, and of thy own lusts, that thou mayst be more ready to come to me, and more fit for my embraces.

Come away unto me, and with me; follow me fully, serve me more perfectly, labour for a nearer union and more satisfying communion with me.

Ver. 11.

The winter; which made the ways in some sort unpassable, and so might seem to hinder or affright thee from coming to me. This

winter, and the following

rain, may be understood either,

1. Of worldly tribulations, which he intimates to be past and gone, to wit, so far that they shall not destroy nor hurt the church, but, on the contrary, do her much good, both by multiplying her members, and increasing her graces; and promoting her eternal happiness. Or rather,

2. Of spiritual troubles arising in the minds and consciences of sinners, from a deep sense of the guilt of sin, the justice and wrath of God, the sentence and curse of the law; all which made them afraid to come unto God, and desirous, if possible, to run away from him. But, saith Christ, I have removed this great impediment, God is ready to be reconciled, and therefore cast off all discouragements and excuses, and come unto me.

Ver. 12.

The flowers appear on the earth: this and the following clauses are here alleged as evidences of the spring time, which in the mystical and principal sense seems to signify the day of grace, or the glad tidings of salvation proposed to sinners in the time of the law, by types, and shadows, and promises, but much more clearly and fully in the gospel, and all the discoveries and communications of God's grace to mankind in holy ordinances, in the gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed unto and appearing in believers, as buds and blossoms do in the spring time.

The time of the singing of birds; when birds sing most freely and sweetly, as they do in the spring. Or, as the ancient translator's render it, of *cutting* or *cropping*, not trees, which agrees not with that season, but the flowers, last mentioned, for nosegays, or other uses.

The turtle; which changeth its place according to the season, as is observed. #Jer 8:7, and by all other writers, who affirm that it disappears in winter, and appears in the spring, as some other birds also do; but this seems particularly to be mentioned, because it doth not only give notice of the spring, but also doth aptly represent the Spirit of God, which even the Chaldee paraphrast understands by this *turtle*, which appeared in the shape of a dove,

and which worketh a dove-like meekness, and chastity, and faithfulness in believers.

In our land; in *Immanuel's land*, as Canaan is called, #**Isa 8:8**, in the church.

Ver. 13.

Green figs; which it shooteth forth as soon as it doth leaves, in the spring time, #**Mt 24:32**.

A good smell; which, though not strong, is pleasant and grateful, and given by it in the progress of the spring.

Come away: these words are here repeated, to show both the church's infirmity and indisposition, which needs so many calls and arguments to press so necessary and advantageous a duty; and Christ's tender compassion to her weakness, and fervent desire of converse with her.

Ver. 14.

My dove; so the church is called, partly for her dove-like temper and disposition, because she is chaste, and mild, and harmless, &c.; and partly for her dove-like condition, because she is weak, and exposed to persecution, and given to mourning, as doves are, #**Isa 38:14 59:11 Eze 7:16**, and subject to many fears, and therefore forced to hide herself in rocks, as it follows, *in the clefts of the rock*; where she hid herself, either,

1. For fear of her enemies, whom to avoid she puts herself into the protection of the Almighty. Or,

2. Out of modesty, and a humble sense of her own deformities and, infirmities, which makes her endeavour to hide herself even from her Beloved, as ashamed to appear, in his presence, which is frequently the case of God's people, especially after falls into sin. And this sense seems to be favoured by the following words, in which Christ relieveth her against such discouraging thoughts.

In the secret places of the stairs; in the holes of craggy and broken rocks, which resemble stairs. So the same thing is here repeated in other words.

Let me see thy countenance; be not afraid nor ashamed to appear before me; come boldly into my presence, and acquaint thyself with me.

Thy voice; thy prayers and praises.

Sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely; thy person and services are accepted by me, and are amiable in my sight.

Ver. 15.

The Bridegroom gives this charge to his bridemen or friends, whose office it is to attend upon him, and to observe his commands; by whom he understands those magistrates and ministers to whom, under Christ, the custody of the vineyards, to wit, the churches, principally belong. These he commands to take the

foxes, i.e. to restrain them from doing this mischief.

Us, Heb. *for us*, i.e. at our instance, and for our common good, as this spoiling of the vines was injurious and grievous to them both.

The foxes; the disturbers of the vineyard, or the church; seducers or false teachers, who are fitly compared to *foxes* here, and **#Eze 13:4**, partly to distinguish them from great tyrants and persecutors, who are compared to *wild boars*, or other *wild beasts*, **#Ps 80:13**, as to *lions*, **#2Ti 4:17**; and partly for their fox-like qualities and actions, because they are very crafty and deceitful, **#2Co 11:13,14 Eph 4:14**, and very mischievous also, **#Eze 34:2,3 2Ti 4:17 Tit 1:10,11 2Pe 2:2**. He mentions *foxes*, because these abounded in that country, as is manifest from **#Jud 15:4 Ps 63:10 La 5:18**, &c., but under them he comprehends all noxious creatures, upon the same reason.

The little foxes: this he adds, not as if the great foxes were excused or exempted, but for more abundant caution, to teach the church to prevent errors and heresies in the beginnings of them, before they spread and grow strong and incurable.

That spoil the vines, which foxes do many ways, as those who write of them have observed, by gnawing and breaking the little branches and leaves, and the bark, by digging holes in the vineyards, and so spoiling the roots, by eating the grapes, and other ways.

Have tender grapes; which gives us hopes of a good vintage, and which are easily spoiled, if great care be not used to prevent it.

Ver. 16.

My Beloved is mine, and I am his: these are the words of the bride, who having come to him upon his gracious invitation, now maketh her boast of him, and of that intimate union and communion which was between them.

He feedeth among the lilies; either,

1. He feedeth his flock in sweet and lovely pastures, where there is not only herbage to feed them, but lilies to delight them. Or rather,

2. He feedeth himself, i.e. he abideth and refresheth himself amongst his faithful people, which are compared to lilies, above, **#So 2:2**, and **#Ho 14:5**, as Christ also is here, **#So 2:1**.

Ver. 17.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away; until the morning of that great and blessed day of the general resurrection and judgment, when all the shadows, not only of ignorance, and sin, and calamity, but even of all ordinances and outward administrations, shall cease, and make way for the immediate enjoyment of my Beloved. And this clause may be joined either,

1. With the foregoing words; and so the sense is, Christ doth and will abide with his church as long as this life and world lasts; which agrees with Christ's promises of being with his church to the end of the world, **#Mt 28:20**. But neither that nor this place imply that Christ will then forsake his people, but only secures God's people against that which was the chief, if not only, matter of their fear, to wit, lest Christ should leave them, and cast them off in this life, which, if he did not, they were assured that hereafter they should be

ever with the Lord, #1Th 4:17. For it is well known, and hath been oft observed already, that the word *until* doth not always exclude the time to come. Or,

2. With the following words,

Turn thou, my Beloved, until the day break, &c.

Turn; return to me. For although Christ had come to her, and she had gladly received and embraced him, yet he was gone again, as is here implied, and evidently appears from the next following verse; which sudden change is very agreeable both to the nature and method of such dramatical writings and amatorious transactions, and to the state of God's people in this world, where they are subject to frequent changes and vicissitudes of Christ's withdrawing from them, and returning to them again.

Like a roe or a young hart, in swiftness; make haste to help me, for I am ready to faint.

Bether; a place in the Land of Promise, possibly the same called *Bithron*, #2Sa 2:29, where it seems those creatures were in great abundance, or where they were commonly hunted, and so being pursued, they made all possible haste to escape.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 3

The church seeking Christ, #So 3:1-3. Her great joy; she findeth him, #So 3:4. Her charge to the daughters of Jerusalem not to awake her Beloved, #So 3:5. The manner of Christ's coming out of the wilderness, #So 3:6. His bed, guard, and chariot, #So 3:7-9. Its maker, matter, and furniture, #So 3:10. An invitation of the faithful to the kingdom of glory, #So 3:11.

Ver. 1.

By night on my bed; either,

1. In a time of tribulation, which is commonly signified by the night, and sometimes by a bed, as #Re 2:22. Or,
2. When I expected to find him; for the husband who by his occasions is oft forced to be absent from his wife in the day time, but at night returns to her, and beds with her. Or,
3. When others compose themselves to rest and sleep, my thoughts were troubled and my affections were working towards him, and I was very desirous to enjoy him.

I sought him; I sought for Christ's gracious and powerful presence, in and by the word, and prayer, and meditation. *I sought*

him: this repetition notes her perseverance and unweariedness in seeking him.

But I found him not; for he had withdrawn himself and the manifestations of his love from me, either because I had not sought him diligently, or because I had abused his favour, or to try and exercise my faith, and patience, and love, and other graces.

Ver. 2.

I will rise now; I will immediately apply myself to seek him, without whom my bed can give me no rest nor comfort.

The city; the city of God, the church, in which Christ resides.

In the streets, and in the broad ways: not finding him in private prayer and meditation, I sought him in the places of public assemblies and ordinances; for the people frequently met together in the streets, not only for civil, but for religious ends, #2Ch 32:6 Ne 8:1,3,16 Pr 1:20,21 Lu 13:26.

I found him not; he saw fit still to delay the discoveries of his grace, partly, to chastise my former folly; partly, to try my sincerity and constancy; and partly, that he might be more welcome when he came to me.

Ver. 3.

The watchmen; the ministers of Christ, and rulers of the church, who are oft called watchmen, as #Isa 62:6 Eze 3:17, and elsewhere.

That go about the city, to prevent disorders and dangers by night.

Found me, whilst they walked round about the city, according to their duty.

To whom I said, without either fear or shame, as being transported and wholly swallowed up with love,

Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? she doth not name him, because she thought it needless, as supposing that a person of such transcendent excellency could not be unknown to men in that public capacity. Their answer is not mentioned, either because they gave her no answer, at least no satisfactory answer, or because by their silence she gathered that they were unable or unwilling to inform her; and being eager in the pursuit of her

Beloved, she would not lose time in impertinent discourses with them.

Ver. 4.

I found him; Christ met me, and manifested his love to me, according to his promise made to those that seek him constantly and diligently, **#Pr 8:17 Mt 7:7, &c.**

I held him, and would not let him go, being taught by my late experience how doleful a thing it was to lose him, and how hard it was to find and recover him when he was lost.

Until I had brought him into my mother's house, that there I might entertain and embrace him, and gain my mother's consent, and so proceed to the consummation of the marriage. She saith her

mother's rather than her *father's* house, because the men and the women had several and separated apartments in the house. For the mystical meaning, which is the principal sense intended in this book, as the spouse here, and in many other places of this book, signifies particular believers, so her mother is the universal church, or the true Jerusalem, which hath its rise from above, *which is the mother of us all*, **#Ga 4:26**, in which Christ and believers are united, and have sweet communion together in holy ordinances, into which believers are said to bring Christ by faith and prayer, and the preparation of their hearts for him, whereby they invite and in some sort engage Christ to go with them into the public assemblies, and there to give them his loves, although otherwise it is Christ who properly brings believers into the church. But all particulars in allegorical scriptures are not to be strictly urged, as all learned interpreters agree, many being added only for the decency of the allegory.

Her that conceived me; Christ is as it were the father that begets, and the church the mother that conceiveth and bringeth forth, believers.

Ver. 5.

This verse is repeated from **#So 2:7**, where it is explained. The spouse exhorts herself and all her fellow members to be very circumspect, lest by any unkind or provoking carriage they should give Christ any cause to depart from them. He is supposed to

allude to the custom of awakening the bridegroom and bride by songs and musical instruments.

Ver. 6.

Who is this? the persons speaking seem to be the daughters of Jerusalem, who, upon occasion of the bride's speech to them, make this reply; or the friends of the Bridegroom. The person spoken of is the spouse or bride.

That cometh out of the wilderness; from the country, which, in comparison of cities, is oft called a wilderness, as **#Isa 42:11 Lu 1:80 3:2**, and elsewhere, from whence we little expected to see so beautiful and glorious a bride to come, such persons being usually bred in courts or noble cities. This phrase implies that believers were, and were to be, called out of the world, which for its barrenness, and disorder, and replenishment with wild beasts, may fitly be compared to a wilderness; and not only out of the Holy Land, which was as the garden of God, but also out of the Gentile world, which in prophetic writings is frequently described under the notion of a

wilderness, as **#Isa 35:1 43:19,20**. Withal he seems to allude to the people of Israel, which to the wonder and astonishment of all those parts came up out of the wilderness into Canaan.

Pillars of smoke; to which the church may not unfitly be compared, partly for its excellent order and comely proportions; partly, for its direct and constant motion towards heaven; and partly, to imply that though she was really and inwardly glorious, yet she was outwardly obscure and despicable in the eyes of the world. Possibly the words may rendered thus, *as with* (which particle is very frequently understood, as hath been showed in divers foregoing texts)

pillars, or *a pillar*, (for the plural number is oft put for the singular,)

of smoke. And so the sense may be either,

1. Being conducted out of the wilderness as by a pillar of smoke going before them, as the Israelites were led through the wilderness to Canaan by *a pillar of cloud and fire*, Ex 13:21,22. Or rather,

2. Attended with many prayers and praises, and other holy performances, which are perpetually ascending from her and offered by her unto God. So he alludes to those pillars of smoke which all the day long ascended from those numerous sacrifices which were offered in the temple, which also was a type of the prayers of the saints offered by Christ unto his Father, as may be gathered from **#Re 8:3-5**. But this I only propose.

Perfumed: this doth not belong to the *pillars*, as appears by the difference of the numbers in the Hebrew words, *the pillars* being plural, and this word singular; but to the person, to wit, the spouse, who is said to be thus perfumed, partly, for her good name or renown, which is compared to perfumes, **#Ec 7:1**; partly, for her excellent virtues and religious services, which are pleasant and acceptable to God, and to angels, and to men; and partly, for the merits and graces of Christ, which are a sweet savour to God, **#Eph 5:2**, and wherewith she is enriched and beautified.

Powders of the merchant; which are fetched by the merchants from Arabia, or other remote parts of the world, for the use of perfuming.

Ver. 7.

Behold his bed: these are the words either,

1. Of the bridemen, who spake **#So 3:6**, and here continue their speech, and from the admiration of the bride proceed to the admiration of the Bridegroom. Or,

2. Of the spouse, who being admired by the bridemen, turns their eyes and thoughts to the Bridegroom, and directs them to the study of his excellencies, and intimates that all her comfort and safety is from him. The *bed*, the place of rest and conjugal converse, seems to denote the church, which is comely through Christ's beauty, and safe by his protection, in which Christ is glorified, and believers enjoy sweet fellowship with him, both here in the church militant, and especially hereafter in the church triumphant.

Which is Solomon's; which is the bed, not of an ordinary man, but of a great King, whom Solomon represents or typifies, and who is greater than Solomon. Nor is it hard to understand the Messiah under the name of Solomon, his type and progenitor,

seeing he is, upon the same reason, called David, #Jer 30:9 Eze 34:23, and elsewhere, especially considering that this whole book is by the confession both of Jewish and Christian interpreters to be mystically understood.

Threescore, i.e. very many, the certain number being put for an uncertain, as is frequent.

The valiant of Israel; he alludes to Solomon's guard, or watchmen, whereby he designs all those creatures, whether angels, princes, ministers, or others, whose ministry God useth for the protection of his church.

Ver. 8.

Hath his sword upon his thigh; is prepared and ready to fight, as this phrase notes, #Ex 32:27 Ps 45:3. *Because of fear in the night;* to prevent those dangers and mischiefs which are most frequent and most dreadful in the night season.

The night may note either,

1. The time of tribulation, temptation, or desertion. Or,
2. The whole time of this life, which may well be called night, in respect of that ignorance, and error, and other kinds of darkness wherewith it is attended, as the future life is compared to a day, this life being the only time wherein such a guard is necessary.

Ver. 9.

A chariot, in which the royal Bridegroom and bride might ride together in state, as the manner was in the nuptial solemnities of such persons. By this *chariot* he seems to understand the word of Christ dispensed by his ministers in the church, whereby both Christ is exalted and rides triumphantly in the world, conquering his enemies, and subduing the world to the obedience of the gospel, and all believers are carried with safety and comfort through this present evil world, into those blessed mansions of heavenly glory.

Of the wood of Lebanon, i.e. of cedars, for which Lebanon was famous; which wood, being incorruptible, doth fitly signify *the word of the gospel, which endureth forever*, #1Pe 1:25, and is called the everlasting gospel, #Re 14:6, in opposition to the legal

institutions, which were to continue only until the time of reformation, as we read #**Heb 9:10**.

Ver. 10.

The pillars thereof; whereby the chariot is either supported or adorned; which may signify either,

1. Ministers, who are called *pillars*, #**Ga 2:9**, and that of silver, because they are, or should be, pure and precious, like silver. Or,

2. The firmness and certainty of Christ's word, both of his doctrines and promises, which also are *pure as silver*, #**Ps 12:6**. Although there is no necessity that either this or the following particulars should be distinctly applied to several things in or about the gospel; but this in the general may suffice, that as all these particulars are added to show the perfection and beauty of the chariot, so they do imply that Christ's word is every way amiable, and perfect, and able to make the man of God perfect. *The bottom;* either,

1. The couch or seat, which was made of or covered with cloth of gold. Or,

2. The under and lower part, which was at least covered with pure gold. Whereby he may seem to understand the foundation of the word and promises, which is either God's covenant, or Christ's mediation, in whom all the promises are yea and amen.

The covering; either,

1. The curtains, whereby persons in the chariot are covered or hid from the sight of the people. Or rather,

2. The uppermost part of it, either in the outside or the inside of it. Some render the word, *the seat or seats. Of purple*; which represents Christ's blood, which is our propitiatory or covering to shelter us from God's wrath.

The midst; the inward parts, especially those between the upper and lower parts, which have been already mentioned.

Paved, covered and adorned,

with love; with beautiful and lovely ornaments, such as curious embroidery, enriched with gold and precious stones; *love* being

here put for lovely objects, as fear is oft put for terrible things, as hath been oft noted. Whereby we may understand the love of Christ to the sons of men, or his lovely life, and death, and resurrection, &c.; which is the most amiable part and matter of the word or gospel.

For the daughters of Jerusalem; for their delight and comfort, who are all concerned and bear a part in this marriage.

Ver. 11.

Go forth; the bride, to wit, the church, bids particular believers *go forth* to see this sight; whereby is implied that Christians must go out of the world, to wit, in affection, and out of themselves, by denying themselves, and putting off the old man, their corrupt nature, if they desire to see and enjoy Christ.

Daughters of Zion; the same with daughters of Jerusalem; for Zion and Jerusalem are oftentimes promiscuously used in Scripture.

Behold king Solomon; looking in and through him upon the Messias, who is the *King of peace*, and of whom Solomon was an illustrious type.

The crown wherewith his mother crowned him; which being applied to Solomon, may design either,

1. The crown royal, wherewith his mother, Bathsheba, is said to have *crowned him*, because Solomon was crowned by David's order upon her suggestion, and by virtue of his promise confirmed by an oath to her, **#1Ki 1:16**, &c. Or,

2. That garland or crown which was usually worn in nuptial solemnities, as may be gathered from **#Eze 16:12**, and is expressly affirmed by divers ancient writers. But being applied to Christ, it notes that honour and glory which was given to him, which though principally done by his Father, yet is here ascribed to his mother, i.e. to the universal church, or congregation of believers, which in respect of his humanity may be called his mother, partly because he was born in and of her, and one of her members, and therefore was subject to her institutions, whence she is represented as a woman in travail, bringing forth a man child, to wit, Christ, **#Re 12:1-5**; and partly because in a spiritual sense she is said to conceive and bring forth Christ in particular

believers, #Ga 4:19. And this mother may be said to crown Christ, both because it is the great design and business of the church to advance Christ's honour in the world, and because she brings forth believers, whom Christ esteems as his *crown and glory*, as God calls them, #Isa 62:3. *In the day of his espousals*; when the church is betrothed or married to him, #Jer 2:2 Ho 2:19 2Co 11:2; which is done when the covenant is made or confirmed between them, or when faithful persons are converted and united to Christ, and more completely when they are received by Christ into his more full and immediate fellowship in the kingdom of glory.

In the day of the gladness of his heart; when he rejoineth over his bride, as the phrase is used, #Isa 62:5. So this is the same thing expressed in other words. The conversion and salvation of sinners is the joy of Christ, as appears from #Isa 53:11 Lu 15:32, and many other places of Scripture.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 4

Christ commendeth his church for her beauty, #So 4:1-7. He calleth her to go with him, #So 4:8, manifesting his love and affection for her, #So 4:9. A further commendation of her, #So 4:10-15. She prayeth for the effectual operation of his Holy Spirit on her to make her fruitful, #So 4:16.

Ver. 1.

These and the following words are evidently spoken by the Bridegroom to and concerning his spouse.

Thou art fair, not in thyself, but by my beauty, being clothed with my righteousness, and adorned with all the graces of my Spirit, which I acknowledge to be in thee.

Thou art fair; he repeats it, both to confirm the truth of his assertion, and to show the sincerity and fervency of his affection to her.

Thou hast dove's eyes; thou art harmless, chaste, &c., as appears by thine eyes, which commonly discover the temper of the mind or person. See more of this phrase #So 1:15. And whereas the beauty of the spouse is here described in her several parts, we

need not labour much about the application of each particular to some distinct member or grace of the church, this being the chief design of this description of a bride which is beautiful in all points, to show that completeness and absolute perfection which the church hath in part received, and shall more fully receive from Christ in the future life. Yet because the church is a body, consisting of divers members, and enriched with variety of gifts and graces, I know no reason but the several parts of this description may have a more special regard to one or other of them. And so her *eyes* may here note, either,

1. Her teachers, who are *instead of eyes* to her, as the phrase is, #Nu 10:31, whence they are called seers and guides, &c. Or,
2. The disposition of her mind or heart, which is compared to the eye, #Mt 6:22,23, and is oft discerned in the eye.

Within thy locks; which being decently composed, make the eyes appear more amiable: withal this intimates the modesty of her looks; her eyes are not wanton, and wandering, or lofty, but sober, and humble, and confined within their proper bounds, looking directly upon her husband, not looking asquint upon other lovers, nor minding other Gods or Christs. If the *eyes* signify teachers, the *locks* may note the people assembled together to hear their teachers, to whom they are a great ornament when they thrive by his teaching.

Thy hair; the hair of thine head, which is a great ornament to the female sex, #1Co 11:15. This *hair* may signify either,

1. The inward thoughts and meditations; or rather,
2. The outward conversation and visible fruits of holiness, which do greatly adorn the professors and profession of religion, as hair doth the head, as is implied, #1Ti 2:9,10 1Pe 3:3-5.

As a flock of goats; which are comely and orderly in going, #Pr 30:29,31, and afford a goodly prospect. Or rather, *as* the hair (which word is here to be understood, as appears both from the comparison itself, and from divers places where goats are put for goats' hair, as it is in the Hebrew text, #Ex 25:4 26:7 35:26) of a *flock of goats*, which in these parts was of extraordinary length, and thickness, and softness, and comeliness, and much more like

to the hair of a man or woman than the hair of our goats is, as is evident both from Scripture, as **#Ge 27:16 1Sa 19:13**; and from the testimony of other ancient writers, as Apulcius, Martial, &c.

That appear from Mount Gilead; that feeding there, or coming down thence, or going up thither, show themselves evidently to those who stand below it, or near them. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by others, *that eat, or graze of, or upon*. He mentions it as a very fruitful place, and fit for the breeding of all sorts of cattle, as is manifest from **#Nu 32:1 Jer 1 19 Mic 7:14**; and especially of goats, partly because it was a hilly and woody, country, and partly because it abounded with resinous, and oily, and gummy trees, as appears from **#Ge 37:25 Jer 8:22 46:11**, wherewith the goats are much delighted, as Dioscorides observes. And some affirm that the hair of these goats was commonly of a yellow colour, as may seem probable from **#1Sa 19:13,16**, compared with **#1Sa 16:12**, and from **#So 7:5**; which also was in ancient times esteemed a beauty in men or women, as the learned know.

Ver. 2.

Thy teeth are like a flock, numerous, and placed in due order, of sheep; which is here fitly supplied out of **#So 6:6**, where it is expressed.

Even shorn; smooth and even, as also clean and white, whereas unshorn sheep retain much filth in their wool, even after their washing.

Every one bear twins; which seems to note the two rows of teeth, like twins, one directly answering to the other; which is a great part of the beauty or comeliness belonging to the teeth. Nor let any wonder to hear of sheep bearing twins; for that there were many such in the Eastern countries is apparent, not only from Holy Scripture, but also from the express testimony of Aristotle, and other ancient writers.

None is barren among them; not one tooth is lacking. By the teeth some understand the teachers, which may be compared to teeth, because they prepare, and as it were chew, spiritual food for the people, and to such teeth as are here described for their great number and excellent order, and for that purity and fruitfulness

which is required of them. Others understand some gracious qualification or action of the faithful, either their faith, which is compared to eating, **#Joh 6:41**, &c., and elsewhere; which also purifies the heart and life, and produceth good works in abundance; or their meditation or study of God, and of his word, whereby, like the clean beasts under the law, they chew the cud; which also much promotes their purity and fertility. But, as I said on the first verse, there is no need of a distinct application of every particular, as it is in parables, where many things are added for decency, which belong not to the main scope, and therefore are neglected in the interpretation of them. The scope of this place is only to set forth the church's perfection and beauty by the resemblance of a beautiful woman, and one part of beauty consists in the colour and order of the teeth.

Ver. 3.

Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet; fine, and smooth, and soft, and round, and red, in which the beauty of the lips consisteth. *Thy speech is comely*; which is added, partly as another ingredient of an amiable person, and partly to explain the foregoing metaphor. The communication or discourse of believers is edifying, and comfortable, and acceptable to God and to serious men. Compare **#Ps 45:2 Col 4:6**. *Thy temples*; under which doubtless he comprehends the cheeks, which are joined to them, and in which a great part of beauty lies, which therefore would not have been omitted in this description.

Like a piece of a pomegranate; in which there is a lovely mixture of red and white. This may note both the church's beauty and her modesty, which showeth itself by blushes in those parts when she hath fallen into any sin, as the highest believers in this world sometimes do.

Within thy locks; a further evidence both of beauty and modesty. See on **#So 4:1**.

Ver. 4.

Thy neck: this may seem to represent the grace of faith, by which we are united to Christ, as the body is to the head by the neck, and through which Christians receive their spiritual food, and consequently their strength and ability for action.

Is like the tower of David; round, and smooth, and white, long, and straight, and upright, firm, and strong; and moreover, adorned with chains of gold or pearl, or the like ornaments; all which things, as they set forth the beauty of the neck, so they may signify the various excellencies and uses of faith. By this *tower* he understands either,

1. The strong hold of Zion, of which see **#2Sa 5:7**. Or rather,
2. Some other tower built by David, when he repaired, and enlarged, and fortified his royal city, **#1Ch 11:8**, and used by him as an armoury. See **#Ne 3:19,25-27**.

A thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men; either,

1. Such as are fit and reserved for the use of mighty men. Or,
2. Such as had been used either by themselves, or by their enemies, from whom they took them by force, and were hung up there as trophies or monuments of victory; which is added, to show that the church is not only beautiful and glorious, but also strong and victorious over all her enemies, and to intimate the great power and exploits of faith, of which read **#Heb 11**, and which is compared to a shield, **#Eph 6:16**.

A thousand is here put indefinitely for a great number.

Ver. 5.

Thy two breasts; another part in which beauty consists, **#Eze 16:7**. By which some understand the two testaments, or the two sacraments; but these are rather Christ's than the church's breasts. Others, the church's fervent love to Christ, and to all the saints, for the breasts signify love, **#Pr 5:9 So 1:13**. Others, her fruitfulness, both in good works, and in bringing up children unto Christ, like a nurse with her breasts. But the following similitude seemeth not to respect the use of the breasts, or the love which is signified or manifested by them, but their comeliness. And therefore this is generally to be understood of the church's beauty in all parts, as hath been said.

Among the lilies, i.e. in the fields where lilies grew, as is evident, both from **#Mt 6:28**, where they are called the lilies of the field, and from other scriptures, and from the testimony of other writers. The *lilies* being white and swelling, and the roes of a reddish

colour, and their bodies being hid from sight by the lilies, their heads only appearing above them, bear some resemblance to the red nipples appearing in the top of the lily white breasts. But we must remember that this book is a sacred pastoral, and the Bridegroom is represented as a shepherd, and the bride as a country maid; and therefore such similitudes are used as are agreeable to persons of that quality, and such are usual in profane writers of this kind, as the learned have observed. They are compared to

roes for their loveliness, of which see **#Pr 5:19**; to *young* ones for their smallness, which in breasts is a beauty; to twins for their exact likeness.

Ver. 6.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away: these words are uttered by the bride, **#So 2:17**, and here returned by the Bridegroom, as an answer to that request. And this place may be understood either,

1. Of the day of the gospel, when all legal shadows shall vanish; or,
2. Of the day of glory, or of the general resurrection, when all manner of shadows and ordinances shall cease; till which time either the spouse feeds among lilies, as was now said, **#So 2:5**, or the Bridegroom *gets* him to the mountains, &c., as it follows. For the words are by most joined with the foregoing, and by some with the following clause.

To the mountain of myrrh, and to the kill of frankincense; either,

1. To the temple at Jerusalem, which is oft and fitly expressed by the name of a mountain or hill, because it was built upon a mountain, and which may be called a mountain of myrrh and frankincense, because of the abundance of myrrh and frankincense which was there used and offered; in which place the church was to feed, and Christ would continue his presence, until the dawning of the gospel day. Or,
2. To my church upon earth, which was typified by the mountain of Moriah, and the temple upon it, and which in prophetic

writings is called a mountain, as **#Isa 2:2,3 Mic 4:1,2**, and elsewhere; and which may well be called

a mountain of myrrh and frankincense, both for the acceptable services which are there offered to God, and for the precious gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, which are of a sweet-smelling savour to God and men, and which there, and there only, are poured forth. Thus Christ directs his bride, to wit, particular believers, where they may find and enjoy him, namely, in his church and ordinances.

Ver. 7.

Thou art all fair; it is needless to mention the several beauties of all thy parts, for, in one word, thou art wholly beautiful; and it may be said more truly of thee than it was of Absalom, **#2Sa 14:25**, that from the sole of thy foot to the crown of thy head there is no blemish in thee.

There is no spot in thee; which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, as if the people of God were really perfect, and free from all sin; but either,

1. Comparatively, no such spot or blemish as is in wicked men, or as is inconsistent with true grace, of which Moses speaks, **#De 32:5**. Or,

2. In regard of God's gracious acceptance, in which respect he is said *not to behold iniquity in Jacob*, **#Nu 23:21**. God doth not look upon them with a severe eye, as they are in themselves, but in and through Christ, in whom he accepts them as if they were perfect, partly because it is their chief design, desire, and endeavour to be so, and partly because Christ hath undertaken to make them so, **#Eph 5:25,27**, and they shall one day be such.

Ver. 8.

Come with me unto the mountains of myrrh, &c., mentioned **#So 4:6**,

from Lebanon, a known mountain in the north of Canaan, which is sometimes mentioned as a pleasant and glorious place, as **#So 5:15 Isa 35:2 Ho 14:6**, &c., in regard of its goodly cedars; and sometimes as a barren wilderness, as **#Isa 29:17**, and seat of wild beasts, as **#2Ki 14:9**, &c. Which latter sense seems more

agreeable, both to the opposition which is here tacitly made between this mountain and the mountain of myrrh, and to the quality of the other mountains here joined with Lebanon, and to the last clause of the verse. *My spouse*; this is the first time that Christ gives her this name, which he now doth, both to encourage and oblige her to go with him. *Look* to the place to which I invite thee to go, which from those high mountains thou mayst easily behold, the sight of which will certainly inflame thee with desire to go thither. He alludes to Moses's beholding the Promised Land from Mount Pisgah.

Amana; not that Amana which divided Syria from Cilicia, which was too remote from these parts, but another of that name, not far from Lebanon.

Shenir and

Hermon may be the names of two tops of the same mountain, as Horeb and Sinai seem to have been. Or, *Shenir* or (the copulative *and* being put disjunctively for *or*, as it is in many places, which have been observed before)

Hermon, for this mountain is called both *Shenir* and *Hermon*, #De 3:9, and the latter name, *Hermon*, may be added to the former, as being better known to the Israelites.

From the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards; from these or other such-like mountains, which are inhabited by lions and leopards; which seems to be added as an argument to move the spouse to go with him, because the places where now she was were not only barren, but also dangerous, as being the habitations of tyrants and persecutors, and wild or savage people, who are oft described by the names of wild beasts, whose natures they have, and whose practices they imitate.

Ver. 9.

Thou hast ravished my heart; I am overcome with thy beauty, and therefore am so desirous of thy company.

My sister; so he calls her, partly because both he and she had one and the same father, to wit, God, yea, and mother too, being both at this time born in and of the commonwealth and church of Israel; and partly to show the greatness of his love to her, which is

such, as cannot be sufficiently expressed by any one relation, but must borrow the perfections and affections of all to describe it.

With one of thine eyes; with one glance of one of thine eyes: by which phrase he intimates the modesty and humility of the church, which was ashamed or afraid to look fully and directly upon the Bridegroom with both her eyes; and withal alludes to the ancient custom of virgins, who used to cover their faces with a veil, and to look out only with one of their eyes for the direction of their steps. By this *one* eye he seems to mean that fundamental grace of faith, by which Christians look upon Christ, and discern his beauty, and which is precious in the sight of God and of Christ.

With one chain of thy neck; with one of those other graces and perfections wherewith thou art adorned. How then should I be ravished if thou didst discover both thine eyes, and thy whole countenance, and all thy excellent gifts and graces!

Ver. 10.

How fair, how amiable and acceptable to me, is thy love! I do not disdain thy love, as I might do, but take it kindly, and prize it highly.

How much better is thy love than wine! of which See Poole "So 1:2", See Poole "So 1:4".

Of thine ointments; of the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, wherewith thou art anointed. Compare #Isa 61:1 1Jo 2:20,27.

Ver. 11.

Thy lips drop as the honey-comb; thy speeches both to me in prayer and praises, and to men for their edification, are highly acceptable to me.

Honey and milk; words more sweet and comfortable than honey or milk.

Under thy tongue; by which phrase he may possibly intimate that her words were not uttered in hypocrisy, or with evil design, as many fair and smooth speeches are, but proceed from her very heart, which is under her tongue, as mischief is said to be under his tongue, #Ps 10:7, who devised it in his heart. The smell of thy garments; of that righteousness wherewith I have clothed and

adorned thee. Christ and the graces of the Spirit are oft, compared to garments, as **#Ro 13:14 Eph 4:24 1Pe 5:5**.

The smell of Lebanon; which is also mentioned and commended **#Ho 14:6**, which must needs be very sweet and grateful in regard of the great numbers of sweet-smelling spices and trees which grew in that mountain.

Ver. 12.

A garden, for order and beauty, for pleasant walks, and flowers, and fruits.

Enclosed; either,

1. Defended by the care of my providence; or,
2. Reserved for my proper use. She will not admit of other lovers, either false teachers or worldly lusts, but keeps herself close for me. She is chaste, and pure, and modest, as virgins are or should be.

A spring; either,

1. For others, sending forth the wholesome streams of saving doctrine, for the refreshing, and healing, and cleansing of those who receive it. Or,
2. Within herself, being well watered, i.e. replenished with spiritual graces and blessings, which are frequently compared to waters, both in the Old and New Testament, as **#Isa 44:3 Joh 4:10 7:38**, for which the church is compared to *a watered garden*, or a *spring of water*, **#Isa 58:11**.

Shut up; either,

1. To preserve it from all pollution or injury; or,
2. To reserve it for the use and service of its owner, for which reason springs were shut up in those countries where water was scarce and precious, as **#Ge 29:3**.

A fountain sealed; the same thing is here repeated in other words.

Ver. 13.

Thy plants, the plants of thy garden, believers which are planted in thee,

are an orchard; are like the plants or fruits of an orchard, which are pleasant to the eye, and delicious to the taste or smell, such as are here mentioned in the following words; whereby he signifies the variety and excellency of gifts and graces in the several members of the church.

Spikenard; which he mentions both here with *camphire* or *cypress*, and in the next verse with *saffron*, because it is mixed with both these, and being so mixed, yieldeth the more grateful smell.

Ver. 14.

Trees of frankincense; such trees as produce frankincense. Or, as others, both ancient and modern, render it, *trees of Lebanon*; such sweet-smelling trees and plants as grew in Lebanon, of which **See Poole "So 4:11"**.

Ver. 15.

These are the words either,

1. Of the bride, who returns this answer to the Bridegroom. Thou callest me a fountain, but in truth thou only art that fountain from whence I derive all my streams of comfort; or rather,

2. Of the Bridegroom, who hath hitherto been speaking to and of the church, and still continues his speech. He seems to add this by way of correction to or exposition of what he said, **#So 1:12**. Though my spouse be in some sort a fountain shut up or sealed, yet that is not so to be understood as if she kept her waters to herself, for she is like a fountain or well of living or running water, which floweth into gardens, and maketh the flowers and plants to grow and flourish. The church conveyeth those waters of life which she receiveth from Christ unto particular believers and congregations.

Streams from Lebanon; like those sweet and refreshing rivers which flow down from Mount Lebanon, of which Jordan is one.

Ver. 16.

Awake; or, *arise*; either,

1. To be gone, as being commonly hurtful to plants and gardens; or rather,

2. To come, as the next clause explains it. For both the north wind and the south wind have their several uses in gardens; the former to purge and cool the air, and to bring fair weather; the latter to warm and moisten the earth, and cherish the plants. And these winds may signify the several dispensations either of God's providence, or rather of his Spirit, which is compared to the wind, **#Joh 3:8**, whereby the following effects are produced.

My garden: this verse is spoken; by the spouse, as appears from the last clause of it. And she calls the garden both *hers* and *his*, because of that oneness which is between them, **#So 2:16**, whereby they have a common interest one in another's person and concerns.

That the spices thereof may flow out; that my graces may be exercised to thy glory, the edification of others, and my own comfort.

Let my Beloved come into his garden, let Christ afford his gracious presence more and more to his church, and eat his pleasant fruit; and let him delight himself in that service and glory which is given to him, both by the religious worship and by the holy conversations of his people.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 5

Christ answereth the church's invitation, and showeth her the delight he took in her fruit, **#So 5:1**. She acknowledges her negligence to Christ in not opening the door, **#So 5:2-6**. Of the harsh usage she met with, **#So 5:7**. She tells the daughters of Jerusalem she is sick of love to Christ. **#So 5:8**. Their question concerning him, **#So 5:9**. A description of Christ by his graces, **#So 5:10-15**, in whom she boasteth, **#So 5:16**.

Ver. 1.

I am come into my garden: this is the Bridegroom's answer to her request, delivered in the next foregoing words.

I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine, with my milk; I have eaten of my pleasant fruits, as thou didst desire. I have taken notice of, and delight in, the service and obedience of my people.

Friends; the friends of the Bridegroom; whereby he understands either,

1. The holy angels and glorified saints, who in a sublime and spiritual sense may be said to eat and drink in heaven, the happiness whereof is frequently represented under the name and notion of a feast. Or rather,

2. Believers or members of the church militant upon earth, who by the argument of Christ's gracious presence with them, and acceptance of their works signified in the last words, are here invited and encouraged with great freedom and cheerfulness to eat and drink their spiritual food, to feed upon God's holy word and sacraments, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, who here gives them a hearty welcome to this feast.

Ver. 2.

I sleep, Heb. *I was asleep*, i.e. I was dull, and sluggish, and insensible of his kind expressions and offers of grace.

But my heart waketh; yet in my very sleep my thoughts were running upon my Beloved, as is not unusual in such cases, which at last awakened me. Thus she implies the conflict which was between the flesh and the Spirit, and the Spirit's victory in the combat.

It is the voice of my Beloved; between sleeping and waking I fancied that I heard his voice.

That knocketh, by his word, and providence, and Spirit, at the door of mine heart, desirous that I would receive him by faith and love. Compare #Re 3:20. Saying,

Open to me; inviting me to accept of his gracious offers, and to let him in to my soul.

My sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: this heap of kind compellations signifies Christ's sincere and fervent affection to his people, notwithstanding her manifold imperfections and infirmities. The title of

dove signifies her chastity and constant faithfulness to her Husband, for which doves are famous. How she is undefiled, See Poole "So 4:7".

My head is filled with dew, whilst I wait without thy door. He alludes to the custom of lovers, which oft and willingly suffer such inconveniences for their hopes and desires of enjoying their beloved, and signifies his sufferings for the church's good.

The drops of the night; the dew which falls in the end of the night, or towards the morning, whence it is called *morning dew*, #Ho 6:4.

Ver. 3.

I have put off my coat, my day clothes, as persons use to do when they go to rest.

How shall I put it on? it is inconvenient and troublesome to do it at this time. Thus she tacitly reflects upon the Bridegroom for coming to her so unseasonably, and giving her such disturbance, and puts him off to another time, and excuseth her non-admission of him by her present indisposition, and the difficulty of the thing required of her.

I have washed my feet; which the Eastern people commonly did when they went to bed, partly to cool their feet, and partly to cleanse them from that dust and sweat which they had contracted in the day time by labour and travel, as being used to go barefoot.

Ver. 4.

My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door; he assayed to open the door. When his word would not prevail, his Spirit, which is called the finger of God, #Lu 11:20, compared with #Mt 12:28, wrought inwardly upon my conscience, and affected mine heart. My bowels were moved for him, with compassion for him and his sufferings, and with affection to him; for both these ways is this phrase off used, as #Job 37:1 Php 2:1,2, &c.

Ver. 5.

I rose up to open to my Beloved; I repented of my former drowsiness and neglect, and went forth to receive him.

My hands dropped with myrrh, i.e. with oil or ointment made of myrrh, which either,

1. She had taken out of her own stock to prepare herself for the entertainment of the Bridegroom; or rather,

2. Dropped from the Bridegroom's hand upon the door in great abundance, when he put it into the hole of the door, #So 5:4, and consequently upon her hands and fingers when she touched the door to open it. By which she signifies that Christ, though he withdrew himself from her, yet left a sweet savour behind him, infusing into her, and stirring up in her, the graces of the Spirit, such as repentance, which is bitter as myrrh, earnest desire after Christ, &c.

With sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock, Heb. *with myrrh passing or flowing upon the handles of the lock*, which place the Bridegroom had touched when he attempted to open it.

Ver. 6.

Withdrawn himself; denied me his gracious and comfortable presence, as a just punishment for my former neglect and folly.

And was gone; either she repeats the same thing to show how deeply she was affected with it; or this is added to imply that he had not only stepped aside, but was quite gone away.

My soul failed, Heb. *went out of me*. I fainted and was ready to die away through excessive passion, as this phrase is used, #Ge 35:18 42:28, and elsewhere.

When he spake; or, for what he spoke; for those endearing expressions related #So 5:2, which then I did not heed, but this sad occasion brings them to my remembrance; as oftentimes that word which is ineffectual when it is preached, is afterwards brought to a man's mind, and, produceth blessed effects.

I sought him by diligent inquiry and importunate prayer. He gave me no answer; that so he might both chastise her folly, and quicken her desires, and prepare the way for a more hearty welcome, and his longer abode with her.

Ver. 7.

The watchmen that went about the city; the governors of the church, as #So 3:3, who, though by their place and office they be obliged, to comfort and protect the faithful, do frequently discourage and oppress them, as they manifestly did both in the days of Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and the other holy prophets, and in the time of Christ and his apostles, and in divers other ages.

They wounded me with bitter calumnies and persecutions.

The keepers of the walls; the same with the watchmen, whose office is to keep the gates and walls of the city.

Took away my veil; which was an ornament of her sex, **#Isa 3:23**, and a badge of her modesty, **#Ge 24:65**, or an ensign of her relation and subjection to Christ, **#Ge 20:16 1Co 11:5**. And so the taking of this veil away signifies their contemptuous and injurious usage of her, their endeavours to blast her reputation, and to represent and treat her as a common and impudent prostitute, and as one that had no relation to Christ.

Ver. 8.

Daughters of Jerusalem; of whom **See Poole "So 1:5"**, **See Poole "So 2:7"**. The church having passed the watchmen, and patiently borne, and in a manner forgotten, their injuries, proceeds in the pursuit of her Beloved, and inquires of every particular believer or professor whom she meets concerning him.

That I am sick of love; that I am ready to faint for want of his presence, and the tokens of his favour. Use all your interest and importunity with him on my behalf.

Ver. 9.

What is thy Beloved more than another beloved? wherein doth he excel them? which professors of religion might ask, because they were ignorant of Christ's excellency; and true believers might ask it, that they might be more fully informed of it, and might give the spouse occasion to discourse of that subject which was very grateful to them.

O thou fairest among women; whose beauty may command the respects and affections of the most worthy persons; and therefore we conclude it must be some person of transcendent excellency with whom thou art so highly enamoured.

Ver. 10.

White and ruddy; which two colours rightly mixed together make a face beautiful. Or the *white* may note his pure and spotless innocency, and the brightness of his glory and majesty, and the ruddy colour may intimate his bloody passion, which made him amiable both to God and men.

The chiefest, Heb. *the standard-bearer*; for such are usually persons of great eminency, both for stature, and courage, and dignity.

Among ten thousand; among all persons, angels or men. A certain number is put for an uncertain. There are other kings, and priests, and prophets, but none to be compared with him.

Ver. 11.

His head is as the most fine gold; it shines like gold, not in respect of the hair, which is black, as it followeth, but by reason of his crown of pure gold upon his head, **#Re 14:14**; whereby she implies that her Bridegroom was a King, which she declared above, **#So 5:11**.

His locks; in which a part of man's beauty consists. I shall not trouble my reader with a distinct application of this and the following particulars unto some special part or excellency of Christ, because such things are mere conjectures without any solid grounds, and the only design of this description seems to be this, to set forth the beauty of Christ under the notion of a most complete and amiable person, in whom there is no defect nor blemish, from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet.

Black as a raven; which is mentioned, partly because this was esteemed a beauty, and partly because it was an evidence of his youth and rigour, as grey hairs are characters of age and infirmity, **#Ho 7:9**.

Ver. 12.

His eyes are as the eyes of doves, lovely and pleasant, chaste and innocent.

By the rivers of waters; where they delight to abide, and wherewith they bathe themselves, and wash their eyes; where also their eyes are most lively and beautiful, both by the reflection of the waters, and from that pleasure which they take in such places.

Washed with milk; which may belong either,

1. To the eyes, which are supposed to be washed with water, as white and pure as milk; or,

2. To the doves, which are intimated to be of a milk-white colour, which in those parts was most esteemed, which colour also made the eyes appear more lovely.

Fitly set; neither sinking into the head, nor standing out too much, but in a moderate and comely situation. Heb. *sitting in fulness*; which may note a full and competently large eye, which is esteemed one beauty of the eye.

Ver. 13.

His cheeks; his face or countenance, an eminent part whereof is the cheeks, in which the beauty or deformity of a face doth much consist.

As a bed; which being higher than other parts of the garden, fitly represents the cheeks, which are higher than other parts of the face.

Of spices; not of dry spices, for they are not in beds; but of aromatical flowers, which delight both the eye with a pleasant prospect, and the smell with their fragrancy. This may also signify the down or hair upon the Bridegroom's cheeks, which is the evidence of his mature and vigorous age, and may denote that Christ's sweetness and gentleness is accompanied with majesty, and gravity, and just severity.

Sweet flowers: this may be added to explain the former phrase. Or,

towers of perfumes, i.e. boxes in which perfumes were put, which by their height or form had some resemblance to a turret.

His lips like lilies; beautiful and pleasant. Or this is meant of that sort of lilies which were of a red or purple colour, as ancient writers affirm, and so signify the grateful colour of the lips. This may note that grace which was poured into Christ's lips, and which flowed from them in sweet and excellent discourses.

Dropping sweet smelling myrrh; not only graceful to the eye, as lilies are, but also fragrant to the smell.

Ver. 14.

His hands; the instruments of action and of distribution, which may design the actions of Christ, and particularly his distributing gifts and graces to his members.

As gold rings set with the beryl; beautiful and precious, and richly adorned, as it were with gold rings set with precious stones.

His belly; which seems to be here used, either,

1. Metonymically for the bowels, which are contained in the belly. Or rather,

2. Synecdochically, for the whole body, reaching from the neck, to the bottom of the belly, which is distinguished from the face and the joints, which are described in the other clauses. For he speaks here of those parts which are visible to the eye. And thus here is a complete description of Christ's beauty in all parts, from his head to his feet.

As bright ivory overlaid with sapphires; of a pure and bright white colour, intermixed with blue veins; for some sapphires are of a bright blue colour.

Ver. 15.

His legs; the instruments of local motion, and the supporters of the body.

As pillars of marble; white, and straight, and well shaped, and strong; which may note the firmness and stability of Christ's kingdom in spite of all opposition.

Set upon sockets of fine gold; which add both beauty and strength to them. These may note his feet compared to gold, either for their great price and worth, or for their singular brightness, for which they are compared to *fine brass*, #Re 1:15; or, as others, for his golden shoes, wherewith they were covered or adorned, as the spouse is commended from her shoes, #So 7:1.

His countenance, Heb. *his aspect or appearance*; his form or person, as this Hebrew word is elsewhere used.

As Lebanon, in respect of its cedars, as the next words explain it, to wit, tall, and upright, and stately, and withal pleasant to the eye.

Ver. 16.

His mouth is most sweet, which was said before in other words, **#So 5:13**, and is here justly repeated, because it was a principal part of Christ's beauty, and the chief instrument of the spouse's comfort and happiness, which wholly depends upon his sweet and excellent speeches, his holy precepts and gracious offers and promises contained in the gospel. He is altogether lovely; not to run out into more particulars, in one word, there is no part of him which is not exquisitely beautiful.

This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem, and therefore you have no cause to wonder or to blame me if I am transported with love to so excellent a personage.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 6

An inquiry after Christ, **#So 6:1**. The church's answer, **#So 5:2**. The church confesseth her faith in Christ, **#So 6:3**. Christ showeth the graces of his church, **#So 6:4**, and the beauty of several parts, **#So 6:5-10**. He acquaints her where he had been, and what he had been doing, **#So 6:11**; and discovers his affection to her, **#So 6:12**; with an invitation of her to return to him again, **#So 6:13**.

Ver. 1.

These are the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, last mentioned, whom this full and pathetic description of the Bridegroom's excellency had inflamed with love to him.

Whither is thy Beloved turned aside, to wit, from thee, as thy words imply, **#So 6:6,8**; where dost thou use to look for him, and to find him, when thou hast lost him? O thou who art well acquainted with all the places both of his usual abode, and of his diversion, inform us who are ignorant of them. That we may seek him with thee; we ask not with any evil design, but only because we desire an interest in him.

Ver. 2.

The spouse had hitherto been at a loss for her Beloved, but having diligently sought him, and inflamed both her own and others' affections with love to him by her just commendations, now at last she meets with a gracious answer from God, directing her where

to find him, which also comes very seasonably, not only for her own relief and comfort, but also for the benefit of others, who inquired after him. The

garden seems to signify the church catholic, and *the gardens*, as it follows here, as also the beds, may note the particular assemblies of the faithful, in which Christ affordeth his presence and his blessing.

Beds of spices; in which the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, which are fitly compared to spices or aromatical flowers, do appear and grow.

To feed; to refresh and delight himself, or to gather the flowers and fruits of it, as men use to do in their gardens.

To gather lilies; which may note either,

1. Particular believers, whom Christ gathereth to himself in his church, who are compared to lilies, **#So 2:2**. Or,

2. The prayers and praises tendered to him by his people in the public congregations, and all their gracious dispositions and actions.

Ver. 3.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 4.

Thou art beautiful, O my love: these are the words of Christ, who had now again manifested himself to his church; whereby he declares, that though he had for a season hid his face from her, yet still he retained a sincere and fervent affection to her, and that, notwithstanding her manifold infirmities, she was yet beautiful in his eyes.

Tirzah; a very pleasant city, as its very name signifies, and therefore made the royal seat of the kings of Israel; of which see **#1Ki 14:17 15:31,33 16:6**, &c.

Comely as Jerusalem; which was beautiful, both for its situation, **#Ps 48:2**, and for its goodly buildings, especially the temple. See **#La 2:15**.

Terrible; either,

1. To strangers, whom by her grave and, majestic looks and carriage she affrights from rude or bold attempts, whereas some women invite others to familiarity with them by their loose and wanton carriage. Or,

2. To her enemies, whom God will certainly destroy.

Ver. 5.

Turn away thine eyes from me, for I can scarce bear the lustre of them. It is a poetical and amatorious expression, signifying how beautiful the church was in Christ's eyes, and how passionately he loved her.

Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead: this clause, and the whole following verse, are repeated from **#So 4:1,2**. And this repetition is not vain nor absurd, but very agreeable to the nature of a pastoral and song of love, as being an effect and testimony of vehement affection, and besides it confirms what was said before, and showeth that the church's miscarriages, and Christ's desertion of her upon it, had not made him change his opinion of her, or affection to her.

Ver. 6.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 7.

This is also repeated from **#So 4:3**.

Ver. 8.

Threescore queens, and fourscore concubines; a certain number for an uncertain. The sense seems to be this, There are many beautiful queens and concubines in the world, in the courts of princes, and particularly in Solomon's court; but none of them is to be compared with my spouse, and my heart is set upon none of them, but only upon my spouse, as the following verse declareth. Or *the queens and concubines* may note the particular congregations which are called by Christ's name, and the virgins may signify the particular believers or professors; all which do make up one catholic church, as it follows. **See Poole "Ps 45:10"**, **See Poole "Ps 45:14"**, **See Poole "Ps 45:15"**. *Virgins*; either,

1. Which wait upon the queens and concubines. Or,

2. Which were reserved as a nursery, out of which queens and concubines were to be taken.

Ver. 9.

Is but one; the only beloved of my soul, my only spouse, in comparison of whom I despise all others.

She is the only one of her mother; of Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all, #Ga 4:26. Or if this seem to confound the mother and daughter, the words may be thus rendered,

she is the only one of her mother, i.e. she is as dear and as precious to me as only children use to be to their parents, and especially to their mothers. So there is only a defect of the note of similitude, which is frequently understood, as hath been formerly noted and proved by undeniable instances.

Daughters, called *virgins*, #So 6:8.

They praised her; as more beautiful and worthy than themselves, which was so evident that they were forced to confess it.

Ver. 10.

These are the words, either,

1. Of the Bridegroom; or,

2. of the queens and concubines last mentioned, as praising of her. And they are either words of inquiry, or rather of admiration and commendation:

Who, i.e. what manner of person, is this? how excellent and glorious! and so this pronoun who is understood #Ps 24:8 Mr 4:41, compared with #Mt 8:27.

As the morning; as the morning light, which coming after the darkness of the night is very pleasant and amiable, which also suddenly spreadeth itself from the east to the west.

Fair as the moon, to wit, when it is full and *walking in brightness*, as the phrase is, #Job 31:26. But withal he seems to intimate that the church, like the moon, may have her eclipse, and be in darkness for a time.

Clear as the sun; without any such spots or dark specks as are in the moon; which is to be understood in the same sense that she is said to be without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, **#Eph 5:27**, which she is partly by God's gracious acceptance of her as such in Christ, and through his righteousness; and partly because she shall be such in the future life.

Terrible as an army with banners: see **#So 6:4**.

Ver. 11.

I went down, to wit, when I went away from thee. So this is an account of the reason of his former departure from her. Or, *I am come down* to visit thee, *my garden*, **#So 4:12**. Either way these are the words of the Bridegroom.

Into the garden of nuts; in which nuts and other fruits are planted. By *nuts* may be meant, either,

1. Ordinary nuts; and so this is supposed to intimate the mean and contemptible condition of the church in her outward estate, and that her sweetness is all inward and spiritual. Or,

2. Aromatical nuts, to wit, nutmegs; and so this notes how acceptable the church and her productions are to Christ.

The valley; which being low, and well watered, is most fruitful.

To see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded; what beginnings or appearances there were of good fruits or works among believers; whether their practices answered their professions.

Ver. 12.

Or ever I was aware; I was surprised with a sudden and vehement desire of enjoying my spouse; which is to be understood figuratively, and so as to agree with the majesty and omniscience of Christ.

My soul made me; I made myself; which may signify Christ's activity in stirring up his affections to the church: or, I was made; for the active phrase is oft understood passively, and the soul is commonly put for the person.

Like the chariots of Ammi-nadib; eager in my desire and swift in my motion towards the church. Ammi-nadib is supposed to be

some eminent charioteer then well known, and famous for his speed in driving chariots. But this clause with the former is otherwise rendered, both in the margin and by others, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words, *my soul set me on the chariots of my willing* (or, as others, *noble or princely*) *people*, i.e. which mine and the bride's friends had prepared to bring me to the bride with more expedition, into which I ascended with all my soul, as longing to come to my bride.

Ver. 13.

Return: Christ recalls his spouse, who as when Christ was gone she pursued after him, so now when Christ was coming or come to her, she was ready to wander and go astray from him, according to the common and corrupt disposition and custom of mankind; and therefore he seeks to stop or to reclaim her, and to oblige her to return to her first love, and to repent more thoroughly than she had yet done. *Return:* this word is here repeated four times, to signify both Christ's passionate love to her, and earnest desire of her return, and her backwardness to it, which made so many calls necessary.

Shulamite: this title signifies either,

1. One born in or belonging to Jerusalem, called also Salem, **#Ps 76:2**. Or,
2. The wife of Solomon, thus called after her husband's name: see **#Isa 4:1**. And as Christ is called by the name of Solomon, **#So 3:7,9,11**, so the church is fitly described by the title of Solomon's wife.

That we may look upon thee; that I and my companions and friends may contemplate thy beauty.

What will ye see? but what do you my friends expect to discover in her? Christ proposeth the question, that he may give the following answer, and that they should take special notice of this as a very remarkable thing in her.

The company, whereby he intimates that this one and only spouse was made up of the whole multitude of believers, of two armies; either,

1. Opposite one against the other; and so this may note the conflict between the flesh and Spirit which is in all the faithful in this life. Or,

2. Confederate together; and so this may signify either,

1. The re-collection and union of Jews and Gentiles which shall one

day be under Christ as their common Head, **#Eph 2:15**. Or,

2. The safety and strength of the church, which is compared to an army

with banners, above, **#So 6:4,10**, and here to a numerous host distributed into two armies; wherein also there may be an allusion to that story, **#Ge 32:1**, where this very word, here rendered two armies, is used.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 7

A further description of the church' s graces, **#So 7:1-7**. This design to visit the church, with the blessed effect thereof, **#So 7:8,9**. She professeth her faith and desire, **#So 7:10**. She inviteth him to communion with her, **#So 7:11**. The end thereof, **#So 7:12,13**.

The Bridegroom, who spake the last words, here continueth his speech, and breaks forth into an elegant and particular description and commendation of the spouse, partly from the parts of her body, and partly from her ornaments; in which the same thing is to be observed which was noted concerning her description of the Bridegroom, that there is no necessity of a distinct application of every parcel of it, the design being only this, to describe the beauty and glory of the church under the representation of a beautiful and noble woman. This also is observable, that in the description of Christ she begins at the head, and so goeth downward, **#So 5:11**, &c., but Christ in the description of the spouse proceedeth from the feet upwards.

Ver. 1.

Feet being the chief instrument of our motion from place to place, is oft used metonymically for the motion itself, and so may here

signify either the inward motions, the workings of the affections, or the outward motions, the steps or actions of the life, both which are right and amiable in believers.

Shoes were anciently evidences of a free and comfortable state, whereas slaves and mourners use to go barefoot, #2Sa 15:30 Isa 20:4, which also in women of high quality were adorned with gold and other ornaments; of which see #Isa 3:18. These may also signify that the feet of believers should be *shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*, #Eph 6:15. *Prince's daughter*, both by birth, being born of God, and by disposition and deportment agreeable to that quality.

The joints of thy thighs; either,

1. The hollow place in which the hip or thigh-bone moveth and turneth itself; or rather,

2. The hip or thighbone which moveth there; for this is more fitly compared to a jewel well set. Some understand this of some ornaments worn by women upon those parts; for the word rendered *joints* may signify *girdles*, or any ornament which encompasseth any part of the body, and the same words which signify *thighs* are both in Hebrew and other languages sometimes used concerning the *legs*; which being admitted, this might seem to be understood of the bride's garters, about her legs, which not unfitly follows the shoes upon her feet last mentioned. But this sense seems not to suit so well with the following comparison as the former doth.

Like jewels, *the work of the hands of a cunning workman*; like jewels orderly and excellently set by a skillful artist. So this signifies the uprightness and decency of her going, which depends very much upon the right situation of the hip or thigh-bone, which when it is dislocated or disordered causeth a lameness or uncomeliness in going; whereby he understands the orderliness and amiableness of her conversation.

Ver. 2.

Thy navel is like a round goblet, to which it is not unfitly compared, because it is of a round form, and hollow, and hath windings and circlings in it,

which wanteth not liquor; thy navel is not only comely, but fruitful. For the navel is the proper instrument of nourishing the child or children which are in the womb. And so this seems to signify the church's fruitfulness, partly in herself, in cherishing and improving all the graces and good motions of God's Spirit within her; and principally in reference to those many children which she bears and feeds in her womb with the wholesome liquor of God's ordinances. Thy belly, in which thy children are for a time contained and fed, is like a heap of wheat, i.e. of wheat corn, round and swelling, as it is in women with child, and full of nourishment, not only of liquor, as was last said, but also of meat, which may note the various provisions which Christ hath laid up in his church according to the several capacities of her children, milk for babes, and stronger meat for those who are grown up. Set about with lilies; not for defence, which the church doth not need, having the strong God for her Protector, but for ornament and beauty; whereby is implied that she is not only fruitful, but beautiful, and that her children are not only numerous and well fed, but also comely and delightful to the eye, as lilies are, and withal pure and innocent, in which respect both Christ and the church are compared to lilies, **#So 2:1,2**.

Ver. 3.

Which is repeated from **#So 4:5**, where it is explained.

Ver. 4.

Thy neck, of which See Poole "So 4:4",

is as a tower of ivory, clear, and smooth, and long, and straight, and erected.

Thine eyes, See Poole "So 1:15"; See Poole "So 4:1",

like the fishpools, full, and clear, and quiet, and pleasant. Possibly here were two fish-pools, which being conveniently seated in a large field, might bear some resemblance to the eyes placed in the head.

Heshbon; a pleasant and well-watered city, beyond Jordan, as we may guess from **#Nu 32**, where doubtless there were some eminent and well-known fish-pools, as further appears by the exact description of the particular place here following, in which they were.

Thy nose; the instrument of smelling, and discerning between pleasant and loathsome things; which may signify the church's sagacity in discerning between good and evil;

is as the tower of Lebanon; which though it be not elsewhere mentioned, was in all probability built by Solomon in the mountain of Lebanon, which was the northern border of the land of Israel towards Damascus, and therefore a very fit place for a watch-tower. To this tower her nose is compared, not for its greatness, but for its comely and convenient proportions, and beautiful aspect, which doubtless were in this as well as in the rest of Solomon's buildings.

Which looketh toward Damascus; which words seem to be added to distinguish this from another tower or building in or near to Jerusalem, which was called the house of the forest of Lebanon, #1Ki 7:2.

Ver. 5.

Thine head, which may signify the church's mind or understanding, which is seated in the head,

upon thee, which is upon thee, or above the rest of thy body,

is like Carmel, eminent and pleasant to the eye, and fruitful as Mount Carmel was, as hath been formerly noted; which may note that her mind was adorned and replenished with knowledge and other excellent gifts of the Holy Ghost. Or, as others render it, *like crimson* or *purple*, which is called *Carmel*, #2Ch 2:7 3:14, because those fishes out of which they had their purple were taken in the sea bordering upon Mount Carmel. And so the same thing is repeated in the next clause in other words.

Like purple; which colour was anciently much esteemed and commended, as by sacred, so also by profane writers.

The king is held in the galleries; in which he walketh, and having once espied thee, is captivated by thee, and unable or unwilling either to depart or to take off his eyes from thee, as if he were fast bound and chained to thee. The *galleries* may note either the ordinances, or rather the churches, in which Christ walketh, #Re 2:1, in which Christ and believers converse together.

Ver. 6.

How fair and how pleasant art thou? it were infinite to reckon up all the particulars of thy beauty; in one word, thou art universally amiable beyond expression.

For delights; for those various lovely features which are in thee, and for the great and manifold delights which are or may be enjoyed in conversing with thee.

Ver. 7.

Like to a palm tree, tall and straight, or upright, as a tree. And he seems to mention the palm tree rather than any other, partly because it grows more directly upward than other trees; and partly because it is constantly green and flourishing, and groweth upward in spite of all pressures, and therefore was used in festival solemnities, #Le 23:40 Joh 12:13, and was a symbol of victory, #Re 7:9; in all which respects it fitly represents the state of believers.

Clusters, large, and round, and full of juice. See Poole "So 7:3". This particular is added as an evidence of her maturity and married estate, and of her fruitfulness.

Grapes; which word may easily be supplied out of the next verse. Although the fruit of the palm tree also is said to grow in clusters.

Ver. 8.

I said within myself, I resolved,

I will go up to the palm tree; I will climb up, that so I may

take hold, as it follows, of the boughs, which do not grow out of the sides, as in other trees, but only at the top of it.

I will take hold of the boughs thereof, partly to prune and dress them, and partly to gather the fruit; whereby is signified Christ's care of his church, and his delight in her.

Of thy nose; of thy breath; which is oft called *the breath of* or *in* a man's nostrils, #Ge 7:22 Isa 2:22 La 4:20.

Like apples; either,

1. Common apples, which sometimes yield a very pleasant smell.
Or,

2. Odoriferous apples. **See Poole "So 2:5"**.

Ver. 9.

The roof of thy mouth; either,

1. Thy speech, the palate being one of the principal instruments of speech; or rather,

2. Thy taste, whereof the palate or roof of the mouth is the most proper and principal instrument, **#Job 34:3**. But then this is not to be understood actively of her taste, but passively of the taste or relish which her Beloved had of her; as in the foregoing clause, *the smell of her nose* was not meant subjectively or actively of that sense of smelling which was seated in her nose, but objectively or passively of the breath of her nostrils, which was sweet to the smell of her Beloved.

Like the best wine, grateful and refreshing. For my beloved; either,

1. For thee my beloved, who reapest the comfort and benefit of that pleasure which I take in time; or,

2. For me thy Beloved, or, according to thy usual expression,

for my Beloved; which words Christ takes as it were out of her mouth, and repeats them emphatically; which agrees very well to the style and usage of these dramatical and amaropious writings. And this clause further intimates the church's loyalty or faithfulness to Christ, that she reserves herself and all her loves for Christ alone.

That goeth down sweetly; whereas bad wine either goeth down slowly and tediously, or is not permitted to go down at all; Heb. *that walketh directly*; or, that moveth itself aright; which is given as the character of good wine, **#Pr 23:31**.

Causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak; causing the most dull, and stupid, and sleepy-headed persons to speak, and that fluently and eloquently, which is a common effect of good wine.

Ver. 10.

This and the following verses contain the words of the bride, in answer to the Bridegroom's most endearing expressions delivered in the foregoing verses.

His desire is toward me; I perceive, and am fully satisfied, that he heartily loves me. It is my duty to have my desire towards him as my Husband, according to God's sentence, **#Ge 3:16**, but it is a wonderful condescension in him, that his desire is towards me.

Ver. 11.

Let us go forth into the field; that being retired from the crowd, we may more freely and sweetly converse together, and may observe the state of the fruits of the earth. In the villages; in one of the villages, as cities is put for one of the cities, **#Jud 12:7**.

Ver. 12.

Let us get up early: the church having offended and lost her Beloved by her former laziness, now doubles her diligence, and discovers how earnestly she was set upon the following work.

To the vineyards; to particular congregations. See **#So 6:11 Isa 5:1**.

Let us see if the vines flourish &c.; let us inquire into the success of our labours, what souls are brought in and built up, how they prosper and grow in grace, whether they abound in good works, &c.

There will I give thee my loves; there I will discover the sincerity and fervency of my affections to thee, and maintain communion with thee in thy holy ordinances.

Ver. 13.

Mandrakes: this Hebrew word is used **#Ge 30:14,15**, and the signification of it is very much doubted and disputed by interpreters; of which see my Latin Synopsis on that place. But this is certain, that the word signifies sweet and pleasant flowers; and therefore if it be understood of mandrakes, they were of another sort than ours, as it is no unusual thing for flowers of the same kind in several climates to have very differing natures and qualities.

At our gates; either,

1. Growing there upon the walls, or in gardens, or orchards, near the door of our dwellinghouse. Or rather,

2. Brought thither by divers persons to congratulate and adorn our nuptials, or laid up for our entertainment, as may be gathered from the nature of the fruits, which were not only new, and growing, but also *old*, and laid up, as it here follows.

Fruits new and old; fruits of this year and of the former, that the variety might delight; which seems to be spiritually meant of the various fruits and operations of the Spirit and degrees of grace in several believers.

Which I have laid up for thee; which have been produced by my ministry for thy service and glory.

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER 8

The church expresseth her desire of familiarity with Christ, **#So 8:1**, by the entertainment she would make him, **#So 8:2,3**. She charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to disturb her. Beloved, **#So 8:4**. A commendation of the church for her faith in Christ, **#So 8:5**. She prayeth for full assurance of his love; her invincible desire, **#So 8:6**; which is insatiable, **#So 8:7**. The calling of the Gentiles, with their intent, and her condition, **#So 8:8-13**. Christ's coming prayed for, **#So 8:14**.

Ver. 1.

Oh that thou wert as my brother, most intimate, and free, and familiar with me, as brethren and sisters commonly are,

that sucked the breasts of my mother! that came out of the same womb, and sucked the same breasts, and consequently were brother and sister by father and mother too; for such are most dear to one another. See **#Ge 43:29 De 13:6**. Heb. *sucking the breasts*, &c.; so she wisheth that he were as a little sucking brother, with whom she might innocently and inoffensively delight herself, as sister: do with such a brother. The church here expresseth her passionate desire of a stricter union and closer communion with Christ than yet she had attained. And in particular these may be the breathings of the ancient Jewish church after Christ's

incarnation, whereby he was to be their brother, **#Ro 8:29 Heb 2:11,12**, and a sucking infant.

Without; in the open streets; I might then express my affections to thee, and kiss thee openly, without any scandal or contempt. Or, *without*, i.e. come forth from the Father's bosom into the world, **#Joh 16:28**.

I would kiss thee; I would demonstrate my reverence, and subjection, and affection to thee, of all which kissing was a token in those times and places, as hath been oft observed in divers foregoing texts.

Yet I should not be despised; then should I not be ashamed or censured, as if I had done an indecent or immodest action, because such expressions of love are usual amongst persons so nearly and dearly related.

Ver. 2.

Bring thee, with joy and triumph, as the bridegroom was usually brought to the bride's house. See **#Ps 45:14,15**.

Into my mother's house; either,

1. My mother's-in-law, my husband's mother, as the custom was, **#Ge 24:61 Jud 12:9**. Or,

2. My own mother's, to show her extraordinary respect and affection to him. In the mystical sense both come to one; for the universal church was in some sort both his and her mother.

Who would instruct me, to wit, how I should behave myself towards thee. Or, *where she did instruct or educate me*.

I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate; I would give thee the best entertainment which the house affords. My gifts and graces should all be employed to serve and glorify thee.

Ver. 3.

The same expressions are used **#So 2:6**. The sense is, He would not despise me for my forwardness in showing my affections to him, as men commonly do in like cases, but would kindly accept of my love, and return love for it.

Ver. 4.

This verse is here repeated again, from **#So 2:7 3:5**, See Poole "2:7", See Poole "So 3:5".

Ver. 5.

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness? These Words are repeated from **#So 3:6**, See Poole "So 3:6". This and the next clause are the words either,

1. Of the daughters of Jerusalem, or the friends of the bride and Bridegroom, admiring and congratulating this happy conjunction. Or,

2. Of the Bridegroom, who proposeth the question, that he may give the answer here following.

Leaning upon her Beloved; which implies both great freedom and familiarity, and fervent affection, and dependence upon him. If these be the Bridegroom's words, he speaketh of himself in the third person, which is usual in the Hebrew language.

I raised thee up, when thou wast fallen, and laid low, and wert dead in trespasses, and in the depth of misery I revived thee.

Under the apple tree; under my own shadow; for she had compared him to an apple tree, and declared that under the shadow of the tree she had both delight and fruit, **#So 2:3**, which is the same thing with this raising up.

There thy mother brought thee forth; under that tree either the universal or the primitive church did conceive and bring thee forth.

Ver. 6.

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: these are undoubtedly the words of the bride. The sense is, Let thy mind and thy heart be constantly set upon me, let me be engraven upon the tables of thine heart. He seems to allude to the engraven tablets which are frequently worn upon the breast, and to the signet on a man's arm or hand, which men prize at a more than ordinary rate, as appears from **#Jer 22:24 Hag 2:23**, and which are continually in their sight.

For love, my love to thee, from whence this desire proceeds,

is strong as death; which conquers every living thing, and cannot be resisted nor vanquished.

Jealousy, or *zeal*; my ardent love to thee, which also fills me with fears and jealousies, lest thou shouldst bestow thine affections upon others, and cool in thy love to me, or withdraw thy love from me; for true believers are subject to these passions.

Cruel, Heb. *hard; grievous and terrible*, and sometimes ready to overwhelm me, and swallow me up; and therefore have pity upon me, and do not leave me.

Are coals of fire; it burns and melts my heart like fire.

Ver. 7.

It is the nature of love in general, and of my love to thee, that it cannot be taken off, neither by terrors and afflictions, which are commonly signified in Scripture by *waters* and *floods*, #Ps 32:6 52:7, and elsewhere; not by temptations and allurements. Nothing but the presences and favour of the beloved person can quiet and satisfy it. And therefore do not put me off with other things, but give me thyself, without whom, and in comparison of whom, I despise all other persons and things.

Ver. 8.

These are manifestly the words of the bride, still continuing her speech. The present church, which was that of the Jews, speaks of another future church, which was to consist of the Gentiles, which she calls

little, because she was the younger sister, and then scarce had a being; and she calls her her

sister, partly because she was so in the purpose of God, their common Father, though at present she was a stranger to him; and partly to intimate that the Gentile church should be admitted to the participation of the same privileges with that of the Jews.

She hath no breasts; no grown and full breasts, as virgins have when they are ripe for marriage, #Eze 16:7. This signifies the present doleful estate of the Gentiles, which as yet were not grown up into a church estate, and wanted the milk or food of life, as for itself so also for its members.

What shall we do for our sister? teach us to know and perform our duty to them, which is to embrace them with sincere and fervent affections, to promote their coming in to Christ, and to rejoice in it, and not to envy it, and murmur at it, as the Jews did in the days of Christ and of his apostles.

In the day when she shall be spoken for, to wit, for bringing her into the state of matrimony; when Christ and his apostles, and others, the first ministers of the gospel, who were members of the Jewish church, did speak and act for the conversion of the Gentiles.

Ver. 9.

This seems to be Christ's answer to the foregoing question of the Jewish church concerning their sister church of the Gentiles, for which they were very solicitous. Christ therefore engageth himself to take care of her, and to provide for her, as the matter doth require, and as suits best with her condition. If the Gentiles, when they are converted, shall be like a

wall, strong and firm in faith, stedfast against all assaults and temptations, for a *wall* in Scripture use signifies strength, #**Isa 26:1 Jer 15:20,** and elsewhere,

we, my Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost, as the principal builders, and my ministers as workers with and under us,

will build upon her a palace of silver; will add more strength and beauty to her, will enlarge and adorn her, make her more amiable in mine eyes, and more visible and glorious in the eyes of the world.

And if she be as a door, which is weaker than a wall, and where the enemy doth or may break in upon her; if she be weak in faith, and sometimes overcome by the tempter, yet we will not therefore reject and forsake her, but

we will enclose, or (as many others render the word) *strengthen, or fortify, her with boards of cedar,* which are not only beautiful, but also strong and durable. If she be sincere, and open the door of her heart to me, though she be weak, I will come in to her, and make her stronger.

Ver. 10.

These seem to be the words of the Jewish church to Christ: O Lord, by thy grace I am what thou wouldst have my sister to be, a wall, and therefore do humbly beg and hope that, according to thy promise to her in that case, thou wilt build upon me a palace of silver.

My breasts like towers; which stand out from and above the wall, and are an ornament and defence to it. Of the church's breasts, see before, **#So 4:5 7:3,7.**

Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour; when by his grace I was made a wall, he was well-pleased with me, and with his own workmanship in me.

Ver. 11.

Baal-hamon; a place not far from Jerusalem, where Solomon had, as it seems, a noble vineyard.

Every one was to bring a thousand pieces of silver; whereby he signifies both the vast extent of the vineyard, which required so many keepers, and its singular fertility, which afforded so great a rent.

Ver. 12.

My vineyard; my church, which is oft compared to a vineyard, and is here opposed to Solomon's vineyard. It is much doubted and disputed whether this verse be spoken by Christ or by the spouse; the first clause seems to agree best to the former, and the following clause to the latter. Possibly the difficulty may be reconciled by ascribing the first clause to Christ, and the latter to the spouse; such interlocutions being familiar in this book, and in other writings of this kind. *Which is mine:* this repetition is not idle, but very emphatical, to show that Christ had a more eminent and special title to his vineyard, the church, than Solomon had to his vineyard, because it was purchased not by his money, but by his blood, and because it was his, not only for the short time of this present life, as Solomon's was, but to all eternity.

Is before me; is under my own eye and care, and is not wholly committed to the care and management of others, as Solomon's was: *I the Lord do keep it night and day,* as we read, **#Isa 27:3. I am with it to the end of the world, #Mt 28:20.**

Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand: these are the church's return to Christ, who is here called Solomon, as he was **#So 3:9,11**, as elsewhere he is called David. Dost thou, O Christ, keep thine own vineyard, which Solomon did not? Then surely it is meet that thou shouldst receive, and thou shalt receive, as large a revenue from thy vineyard as he did from his.

Those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred; though the chief revenue belongeth and is justly given to thee, yet thy ministers who serve thee in thy vineyard shall have, and are allowed by thee to receive, some encouragement for their service. See **#1Co 9:7**.

Ver. 13.

Thou that dwellest: the Hebrew word is of the feminine gender, which plainly showeth that Christ speaks here to his spouse, being about to depart from her for a season, as the next verse showeth.

In the gardens; not in the wilderness of the world, for believers are chosen or *called out of the world*, **#Joh 15:19**; but in the church, the garden of God, which God hath fenced and appropriated to himself. He saith *gardens*, because of the many particular congregations into which the church is divided.

The companions, the friends of the bride and Bridegroom,

hearken to thy voice; diligently observe all thy words and carriages towards me, and all the transactions between thee and me.

Cause me to hear it; when I am gone from thee, let me hear thy prayers, and praises, and the preaching of my gospel in the world.

Ver. 14.

Seeing we must part for a time, make haste, O my beloved Bridegroom, and speedily finish the work which thou hast to do in the world, that so thou mayst take me to thyself, that I may live in thine everlasting embraces. The words of this verse are borrowed from **#So 2:17**. where they are explained.

ISAIAH

THE ARGUMENT

THE teachers of the ancient church were of two sorts:

1. Ordinary, the priests and Levites.
2. Extraordinary, the prophets. These were immediately called by God, and inspired, as with other singular gifts and graces, so particularly with a supernatural knowledge of Divine mysteries, and of future things, and invested by God with an authority superior not only to the ordinary teachers of the church, but in some sort even to the civil powers of the nation. These holy prophets, whose writings are contained in the sacred Scripture, are sixteen. Of these Isaiah is first in place, and, as may seem probable, in time also. But undoubtedly he was contemporary with Hosea, whom others suppose to have been before him. Compare **#Isa 1:1**, with **#Ho 1:1**. The Jews tell us that he was of the blood royal of Judah, which is uncertain. But undoubtedly he was the prince of all the prophets, whether we consider the great extent and variety of his prophecies, the excellency and sublimity of those mysteries which were revealed to him and by him, the majesty and elegancy of his style, or the incomparable liveliness and power of his sermons. He doth so evidently and fully describe the person, and offices, and sufferings, and kingdom of Christ, that some of the ancients called him the fifth evangelist. And it is observed, that there are more testimonies and quotations in the New Testament taken out of Isaiah than out of all the other prophets.

Isaiah 1:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 1

Judah's sins, Isa_1:1-4; her judgments, Isa_1:5-9; her worship is rejected, Isa_1:10-15. Exhortations to repentance; promises of grace and mercy; threatenings of sore judgments; and complaints by reason of their backsliding, Isa_1:16-31.

The vision, or, *the visions* ; the word being here collectively used, as it Isa_22:1 1Sa_3:1. The sense is, This is the book of the visions or prophecies. As prophets were called seers, 1Sa_9:9, so

prophecies are called visions, because they were as clearly and certainly represented to the prophets' minds as bodily objects are to men's eyes.

Amoz; either the brother of Amaziah king of Judah, as the Hebrew writers fancy; or rather, some other person then well known.

Saw, i.e. foresaw and foretold. But he speaks, after the manner of the prophets, of things to come as if they were either past or present.

Concerning Judah and Jerusalem; principally, but not exclusively. For he prophesieth also concerning Egypt and Babylon, and divers other countries; which yet he doth with respect to Judah.

In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; in the time of their reign; whence it may be gathered that Isaiah exercised his prophetic office above fifty years together: see **2Ki 15 2Ki 16**.

Isaiah 1:2

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: he directeth his speech to these senseless creatures, that thereby he might more awaken and affect the Israelites, whom he hereby proclaimeth to be so dull and stupid that they were past hearing, and therefore gives them over as desperate; and calleth in the whole creation Of God to bear witness against them.

The Lord hath spoken: this is his plea against them, of the equity whereof he is willing that all the creatures should be judges.

I have nourished and brought up children; I first made them a people, and until this time I have sustained and blessed them above all other nations.

Isaiah 1:3

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; the most stupid brute beasts acknowledge and obey their Lord and Benefactor, as experience showeth.

Israel doth not know, to wit, me, their Owner and Master, which is easily and necessarily understood out of the former clause.

Knowing is here taken practically, as it is usually in Scripture, and includes reverence and obedience.

Isaiah 1:4

Ah: this particle implies both his wonder, and anger, and grief, and shame that they were such.

Laden with iniquity, Heb. *of heaviness of iniquity* , i.e. of heavy or great sins; for *heavy* is commonly put for *great* or *grievous* , as Isa_21:15 **30:27**. Laden not with the sense of sin, as Mat_11:28, but with the guilt and bondage of sin.

A seed of evil-doers; the children of wicked parents, whose guilt they inherit, and whose evil example they follow.

That are corrupters, Heb. *that corrupt* , to wit, themselves, or their ways, or others by their counsel and example. Or, *that destroy* themselves and their land by their wickedness.

They have forsaken the Lord, not in profession, but in practice and reality, neglecting or corrupting his worship, refusing his yoke and conduct. They have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger; they have lived as if it were their great design and business to provoke him.

They are gone away backward; instead of proceeding forward, and growing in grace, which was their duty, they are all fallen from their former professions, and grown worse and worse, and have impudently turned their backs upon me.

Isaiah 1:5

Why should ye be stricken any more? it is to no purpose to seek to reclaim you by one chastisement after another; and therefore I will utterly forsake and destroy you at once.

Ye will revolt more and more; I see you are incorrigible, and turn even your afflictions into sin.

The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; your disease is mortal, as being in the most noble and vital parts, the very head and heart of the body politic, from whence the plague is derived to all the other members, as it follows. And this is to be understood either,

1. Of their sins; or rather,

2. Of their miseries. Which best suits,

1. With the foregoing words, this being added as a reason why it was in vain to strike them any more, or to expect any amendment that way, because he had stricken them already, and that very terribly, even in their head and heart, whose wounds are most dangerous, and yet they were not at all better for it.

2. With Isa_1:7,8, where this metaphor is so explained.

Isaiah 1:6

From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; you have been all of you punished, from the highest to the lowest, from the worst to the best.

They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment; I have suffered you to lie under your maladies for a time, without applying any remedies, to try whether the length and continuance of your affliction might not work that cure which the strength of it could not do, but all in vain.

Isaiah 1:7

All this and what follows was verified in the days of king Ahaz, **2Ch 28**, in whose time, and upon which occasion, this prophecy seems to have been delivered, as more exactly agreeing with that time than with any other. If any object, that this being the first of his prophecies, must rather belong to the days of Uzziah, they must take notice, and it is agreed by interpreters, and it is undeniably true, that the prophecies of Isaiah, as also of the other prophets, are not set down in the same order in which they were delivered, but oftentimes the latter are put before the former.

In your presence; which your eyes shall see to torment you, when there is no power in your hands to deliver you.

As overthrown by strangers, Heb, *as the overthrow of strangers*, i.e. which strangers bring upon a land which is not theirs, nor likely to continue in their hands, and therefore they spare no persons that come in their way, and they spoil and destroy all things, which is not usually done in wars between persons of the same or of a neighbour nation.

Isaiah 1:8

The daughter of Zion, i.e. Zion, or Jerusalem; for these two names are promiscuously used of the same place; the name of *daughter* being frequently given to cities or countries. Thus *the daughter of Babylon* is put for Babylon itself, Psa_137:8 Isa_47:1. In the same sense we read of the *daughter of Tyre* , Psa_45:12, and of Zidon, Isa_23:12, and of Egypt, Jer_46:11,24, and of Edom, Lam_4:21.

Is left as a cottage in a vineyard as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers; is left solitary, all the neighbouring villages and country round about it being laid waste.

Isaiah 1:9

If God, by his infinite power and goodness, had not restrained our enemies, and reserved some of us, the whole nation and race of us had been utterly cut off, as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were; so great was the rage and power of our enemies, and so utterly unable we were to deliver ourselves.

Isaiah 1:10

Hear the word of the Lord; I speak not my own fancies or passions, but the message of your Lord and Governor, to whom you owe all reverence and obedience.

Rulers of Sodom; so called for their resemblance of them in wickedness: compare Deu_32:32 Eze_16:46,48.

The law; or, *doctrine* , as this word is commonly used; the message which I am now to deliver to you from God, your great Lawgiver, which ought to have the force of a law, with you.

Isaiah 1:11

To what purpose? they are vain and useless, being neither accepted by me, nor beneficial to you.

Unto me, who am a Spirit, and therefore cannot be satisfied with such carnal oblations, but expect to be worshipped in spirit and truth, and to have your hearts and lives, as well as, your bodies and sacrifices, presented unto me.

I am full of the burnt-offerings; I am glutted with them, and therefore loathe them.

The blood; he mentions the fat and blood, because these were in a peculiar manner reserved for God, Lev_3:15,16 17:11, to intimate that even the best of their sacrifices were rejected by him.

Isaiah 1:12

When ye come to appear before me, upon the three solemn feasts, Exo_23:17 34:23, or upon other occasions.

Who hath required this at your hands, to wit, in this manner, and upon these terms? The thing that I commanded was not only nor chiefly that you should offer external sacrifices to me, but that you should do it with true repentance for all your sins, with faith in my promises, with hearty love to me, and sincere resolutions of devoting yourselves to my service, without which you offer me a dead carcass instead of a living sacrifice.

My courts; the courts of my temple, which were two, that of the priests, and that where the people assembled, 2Ch_4:9. So this reproof seems to be directed against both priests and people, as unworthy to enjoy this privilege.

Isaiah 1:13

Bring no more; I neither desire nor will accept of any upon these terms.

Oblations, Heb. *meat-offerings* ; of which see Lev_2:1 Num_15:4. *Incense is an abomination* , unto me; so far is it from being a sweet savour to me, as you foolishly imagine. *The new moons* ; which were holy to God, and observed with great solemnity. See Num_28:11,14 Psa 81:3.

The calling of assemblies; all other solemn times wherein the people were obliged to meet together, as the three great yearly feasts, and other extraordinary seasons.

I cannot away with, Heb. *I cannot bear* ; it is burdensome and grievous to me. It is also iniquity; so far is it from pleasing me, that it is an offence to me; and instead of reconciling me to you, which is your design, it provoketh me more against you.

The solemn meeting; the most solemn day of each of the three feasts, which was the last day, which is called by this very name, Lev_23:36 Num_29:35, and elsewhere; although the word be sometimes more generally used of any other solemn festival day.

Isaiah 1:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 1:15

When ye spread forth your hands; when you pray with hands spread abroad, as the manner was; of which see Exo_9:29,**33 Job 11:13**, &c.

I will hide mine eyes from you; which is a gesture of contempt and loathing. I will take no notice of your persons or requests.

Your hands are full of blood; you are guilty of murder, and oppression, and other crying sins, which I abhor, and have forbidden, under pain of mine highest displeasure.

Isaiah 1:16

Make you clean; cleanse your hearts and hands from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and do not content yourselves with your ceremonial washings.

Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; reform yourselves so thoroughly, that you may not only approve yourselves to men, but to me, who search your hearts, and try all your actions.

Isaiah 1:17

Learn to do well; begin and inure yourselves to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

Seek judgment; show your religion to God, by studying and practising justice to men, and neither give nor procure any unrighteous judgment.

Relieve the oppressed; be not only just, but merciful.

Judge the fatherless; defend and deliver them, as this word is used, Psa_7:8,**11 9:4**, and oft elsewhere.

Plead for the widow; maintain the righteous cause of poor and helpless persons, against their unjust and potent adversaries; whereby you will show your love to justice and mercy, and that you fear God more than men.

Isaiah 1:18

Come now, and let us reason together; I am willing to lay aside my prerogative, and to submit the matter to a fair and equal trial, whether I do not deal justly in rejecting all your services, which are accompanied with such gross hypocrisy and wickedness, and whether I do not deal very graciously in offering mercy and pardon to you upon these conditions.

Though your sins be as scarlet, red and bloody, as theirs were, Isa_1:15, great and heinous,

they shall be as white as snow; they shall be washed and purged by the blood of the Messias, whereby you shall be made white and pure in God's sight. It is a metonymical expression, as sins are said to be purged, Heb_1:3, when men are purged from their sins, Heb_9:14.

Shall be as wool; which for the most part is white, and is compared to snow for whiteness, Rev_1:14.

Isaiah 1:19

If ye be willing and obedient; if you are heartily willing and fully resolved to obey all my commands.

Ye shall eat the good of the land; together with the pardon of your sins, you shall receive many temporal and worldly blessings.

Isaiah 1:20

If ye refuse and rebel; if you obstinately persist in your disobedience to me, as hitherto you have done.

The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; he hath said it, who can as easily do it as speak the words, and who cannot lie, and therefore will do it.

Isaiah 1:21

How, a note of admiration at so strange, and sad, and sudden a change,

is the faithful city, Jerusalem, which in the reign of former kings was faithful to God,

become an harlot is filled with idolatry, which is commonly called whoredom.

It was full of judgment; judgment was duly and truly executed in all its courts. Righteousness lodged in it; it was famous for being the seat of justice, which did not only pass through it, like a wayfaring man, but had its settled abode in it.

But now murderers; under that one gross kind he comprehends all sorts of unrighteous men and practices, as may be gathered by the opposition. Only their connivance at that horrid crime of murder is noted, to assure us that Other crimes of a lower nature were not only unpunished, but even encouraged.

Isaiah 1:22

Thou art woefully degenerated from thy former purity. If there be any remainders of religion and justice in thee, they are mixed with many and great corruptions.

Isaiah 1:23

Thy princes are rebellious against me, their sovereign Lord; they cast off my yoke, and make their own wills and lusts the rule of their life and government.

Companions of thieves; partly by giving them connivance and countenance, and receiving a recompence from them for it; and partly by practising the same violence, and cruelty, and injustice that thieves use.

Loveth gifts, i.e. bribes given to pervert justice, which are severely forbidden, Deu_10:17 **27:25**.

Followeth after rewards; pursuing them with all eagerness, and by all means possible.

They judge not the fatherless, & c.; they are so far from doing them justice, that they will not so much as give them a fair hearing of their cause, because they cannot make their way to them by gifts.

Isaiah 1:24

I will ease me, Heb. *I will comfort myself* ; ease my mind, and satisfy my justice, by taking vengeance, as the next clause explains this. The same expression is used in the same sense Eze_5:13.

Of mine adversaries; of the Israelites, who, though they have called themselves my children and friends, yet by their temper and carriage towards me have showed themselves to be mine enemies.

Isaiah 1:25

I will turn my hand upon thee, to chastise thee again, which God threatened that he would not do, Isa_1:5, but now promiseth that he will do it, not in fury, or so as utterly to destroy them, but in mercy, and with moderation, so as to purge them, as it here follows.

And purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin; I will purge out of thee and destroy those wicked men that are incorrigible and infectious to others; and for those of you that are curable, I will by my word, and by the furnace of affliction, purge out all that hypocrisy and corruption that yet remains in you, and requires so sharp a cure.

Isaiah 1:26

I will restore thy judges, I will give thee such princes and magistrates,

as at the first, Heb. *as thou hadst in the beginning* ; either,

1. Of thy commonwealth, such as Moses and Joshua; or,
2. Of thy kingdom, such as David.

Thy counsellors; thy princes shall have and hearken to wise and faithful counsellors, which is a singular blessing to a prince and people.

Thou shalt be called, to wit, justly and truly; thou shalt be such; for *to be called* is oft put for *to be* , as Isa_4:3 **61:6** Mat_5:9.

Isaiah 1:27

Zion, the Jews that live in or near Zion, and worship God in Zion,

shall be redeemed, shall be delivered from all their enemies and calamities,

with judgment; or, *by judgment* , i.e. by God's righteous judgment, purging out those wicked and incorrigible Jews, who by their sins hindered the deliverance of the people, and punishing and destroying their unmerciful enemies, who kept them in cruel

bondage, as he did to the Babylonians, whereby he made the way open for their deliverance.

Her converts, Heb. *her returners* , those of them who shall come out of captivity into their own land,

with righteousness; or, *by righteousness* , i.e. either by my faithfulness, in keeping my promise of delivering them after seventy years; or by my goodness; for both these come under the name of *righteousness* in Scripture use.

Isaiah 1:28

And; or rather, *but* , as that particle is oft used; for here is a manifest opposition.

The destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together; though I will deliver my people from the Babylonish captivity, yet those of them who shall still go on in their wickedness shall not have the benefit of that mercy, but are reserved for a more dreadful and total destruction.

Isaiah 1:29

They shall be ashamed; not with an ingenuous and penitential shame for the sin, but with an involuntary and penal shame for the disappointment of their hopes which they had in their idols.

Which ye have desired; which, after the manner of the heathen, you have consecrated to idolatrous uses, that under them you might worship your idols, as they did, Eze_6:13 Hos_4:13: see also Isa_57:5 Jer_2:20 **3:6**.

The gardens; in which, as well as in the groves, they committed idolatry; of which we read Isa_65:3 **66:17**.

That ye have chosen, to wit, for the place of your worship, which is opposed to the place which God had chosen and appointed for his worship.

Isaiah 1:30

As you have sinned under the oaks and in gardens, so you shall be made like unto oaks and gardens, not when they are green and flourishing, but when they wither and decay.

Isaiah 1:31

The strong; either,

1. Your idols, which you think to be strong, and able to defend you, as appears by your confidence in them. Or,

2. The strongest persons among you, who think to secure themselves against the threatened danger by their wealth, or power, or wisdom; and much more they that are weak and helpless.

Shall be as tow; shall be as suddenly and easily consumed by my judgments as tow is by fire.

The maker of it; the maker of the idol, who can neither save himself nor his workmanship. Or,

his work; either all that he doth or can do, or that which he hath done, his wicked course of life, shall bring him to ruin.

Isaiah 2:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 2

A prophecy of Christ's kingdom, and the calling of the Gentiles, Isa_2:1-5; and rejection of the Jews for their idolatry and pride, Isa_2:6-9. The great majesty and power of God; and his terrors on the wicked; with an exhortation to fear God, and not to trust in man, Isa_2:10-22.

The word; or, the *matter or thing* , as this Hebrew word commonly signifies; the prophecy or vision.

Isaiah 2:2

And; or, *now* , as this particle is rendered, 1Sa_9:1 Eze_1:1, &c.

In the last days; in the times of the Messiah or the gospel, as the generality both of Jewish and Christian writers understand it, and as may further appear both from the use of this phrase in this sense, Jer_48:47 **49:39** Eze_38:8, **16 Da 10:14** Hos_3:5 Act_2:17 Heb_1:2 1Jo_2:18, and from the conversion of the Gentiles here promised, which was not to be till that time; and from the nature of the thing, for this really was the last time and state of the church in the world; the Jewish pedagogy was to be abolished, but Christ's institutions were to continue to the end of the world.

The mountain of the Lord's house; the temple of the Lord which is upon Mount Moriah; which yet is not to be understood literally of that material temple, but mystically of the church of

God, as appears from the next following words, which will not admit of a literal interpretation; and from the flowing of all nations to it, which was not to that temple, nor indeed was fulfilled till that temple was destroyed; and from the frequent use of this metaphor, the temple, or the house of the Lord, concerning the Christian church, both in the Old and the New Testament. Shall be exalted above the hills; shall be placed and settled in a most conspicuous and glorious manner, being advanced above all other churches and kingdoms in the world. All nations, those Gentiles, whom you now despise, and judge to be abhorred and quite forsaken by God, shall flow unto it, shall come in great abundance, and with great eagerness, like a river, as the word signifies.

Isaiah 2:3

Shall go; shall not only have some weak desires of going, but shall be ready to take pains, and shall actually go. And say; such shall be their zeal, that they shall not only go themselves, but shall persuade and press others to go with them.

We will walk in his paths; they show the truth of their conversion by their hearty desire to be instructed in the way or method of worshipping and serving God acceptably, and by their firm purpose of practising the instructions given to them. *For* : this last clause contains the reason why the people should be so forward to go, and to invite others to go with them; and they may be the words either of the people, continuing their speech; or of the prophet, now returning to speak in his own name.

The law; the new law, the doctrine of the gospel, which is frequently called a *law* , because it hath the nature and power of a law, obliging us no less to the belief and practice of it than the old law did.

The word of the Lord from Jerusalem: for the accomplishment of this promise, see Luk_24:47 Act_1:8 Rom_10:18.

Isaiah 2:4

He shall judge among the nations; Christ shall set up and use his authority among and over all nations, not only giving laws to them, as other rulers do, but doing that which no other powers can

do, Convincing their minds and consciences, conquering and changing their hearts, and ordering their lives.

Shall rebuke; either verbally, by his word and Spirit reproving or convincing the world of sin; or really, by his judgments upon his implacable enemies, which obstruct the propagation of the gospel. Neither shall they learn war any more; he shall root out those great animosities and hostilities which were between the Jews and Gentiles, Eph_2:13, &c., and between several nations, subduing men's pride, and passions, and lusts, which are the causes of all wars and contentions; and working humility, and meekness, and self-denial, and true and fervent love to all men, from whence peace necessarily follows. This was the design of the gospel in all, and the effect of it in those that rightly received it. And that war and dissension which was occasioned by the preaching of the gospel, as was foretold, Mat_10:21,22, it was wholly accidental, by reason of men's corrupt interests and lusts, which the gospel opposed; and it was not amongst those who received the gospel in the love of it, but between them and those who were either open enemies or false friends to them and to the gospel. But if this place be understood of an external and general peace which was to be in the world in the days of the Messiah, this also may in due time be verified, when all Israel shall be saved, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and both Jews and Gentiles shall be united together into one fold, under Christ their great Shepherd; all which is prophesied and promised, Joh_10:16 **Ro 11**, and elsewhere. For it is not necessary that all the prophecies concerning the kingdom of the Messiah should be accomplished in an instant, or at the beginning of it; but it is sufficient if they be fulfilled before the end of it. And some of them do manifestly belong to the last days of that kingdom. And therefore there is no truth nor weight in that argument which the Jews bring from this place against our Messiah, because of those wars that have hitherto been and still are amongst Christians; for this doth not prove that these wars shall never cease, or that there shall not be such a peace in the world as they understand before the end of Christ's kingdom.

Isaiah 2:5

Come ye; seeing the Gentiles are thus ready and resolved to go to the Lord's house, let this oblige and provoke you, O ye Israelites, to go with them, or before them. Whereby he secretly intimates their backwardness, and that when the Gentiles did come into the church, they would apostatize from it. Let us walk in the light of the Lord; take heed that you do not reject that light which is so clear that even the blind Gentiles will discern it.

Isaiah 2:6

Therefore; for the following reasons. Or, but, as this particle is oft used. But why do I persuade the Israelites to receive the light of the gospel? my labour is in vain. I foresee they will refuse it; and God, for their many and great sins, will give them up to apostacy and infidelity.

Thou hast forsaken; wilt certainly forsake and reject. *The body of that nation.*

They be replenished from the east; their land is full of the impious, and superstitious, and idolatrous manners of the Eastern nations, the Syrians and Chaldeans.

Are soothsayers: these undertook to discover secret things, and to foretell future contingent things, by the superstitious observation of the stars, or clouds, or birds, or other ways of divination, which God had severely forbidden. See Lev_19:26. Like the Philistines, who are infamous for those practices; of which see one instance 1Sa_6:2. They please themselves; they delight in their manners, and company, and conversation, making leagues, and friendships, and marriages with them.

In the children of strangers; either,

1. In the children begotten by them upon strange women; or rather,
2. In strangers, as this phrase is used, Neh_9:2 Isa_60:10, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 2:7

Neither is there any end of their treasures; they have heaped up riches immoderately, (which was forbidden even to their king, Deu_17:17) and by wicked practices; they are never satisfied, but

still greedily pursuing after more and more wealth, making this their chief business and joy. Their land also is full of horses; which even their king was forbidden to multiply, Deu_17:16, much more his subjects.

Isaiah 2:8

They give that worship to their own creatures which they deny to me their Creator, than which nothing can be more impious and absurd.

Isaiah 2:9

The mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself; men of all ranks fall down and worship idols.

Forgive them not; cut off these incorrigible idolaters. Such an imprecation is not strange, considering the heinousness and inexcusableness of the crime, the singular condition of the prophets, who spake such things not from any disorderly passion, but by Divine inspiration, and from a fervent zeal for God's glory, which ever was and ought to be dearer to them than all the interests of men, and from a pious care and fear lest others should be infected by their counsel or example. Yet the words may be taken as a prediction, *Thou wilt not forgive them* ; by this I know thou hast determined utterly to destroy them; for the Hebrew particle *al* is sometimes taken only for a simple denial, as Psa_121:3 Pro_12:28.

Isaiah 2:10

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust: this is spoken ironically, and with derision. The sense is, Such dreadful calamities are coming upon you, that you will be ready to hide yourselves in rocks and caves of the earth, but all to no purpose.

For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty; for fear of the glorious and terrible judgments of God.

Isaiah 2:11

Shall be bowed down judicially, as they bowed down voluntarily before their idols. So the punishment is very suitable to the sin.

Shall be exalted in that day; his justice and power shall be magnified, and the vanity and impotency of all other gods shall be detected.

Isaiah 2:12

The day of the Lord; the time of God's taking vengeance upon sinners, which is called *God's day*, Isa_13:6, **Eze 13:5 30:3**, and oft elsewhere.

Isaiah 2:13

Either,

1. Metaphorically, upon the highest and proudest sinners; or,
2. Literally, as may seem probable from the following verses, where there is distinct mention made of *mountains and hills*, Isa_2:14, *of towers and walls*, Isa_2:15, *of ships and pictures*, Isa_2:16. Whereby he intimates that the judgment should be so universal and terrible, that it should not only reach to men, but to things also, whether natural or artificial, in all which there should be manifest tokens of God's displeasure against the land. The cedars and oaks standing in the mountains shall be either thrown down by furious winds or earthquakes, or torn in pieces by thunder and lightning, and the stately houses built with cedars and oaks shall be destroyed.

Isaiah 2:14

To which men used to betake themselves in times of war and danger. It is usual with the prophets to describe God's judgments upon men by the shaking and smoking of the mountains, the trembling of the earth, and the like.

Isaiah 2:15

To which you resorted and trusted for your defence.

Isaiah 2:16

The ships of Tarshish; the ships of the sea, as that word is used, Psa_48:7, whereby you fetched riches and precious things from the remote parts of the world.

Isaiah 2:17

This he repeats again, partly to assure us of the certainty of it, and partly to fix it deeper in men's minds, because they are very backward to believe and consider things of this nature.

Isaiah 2:18

God will discover the impotency of idols to succour their worshippers, and thereby destroy their worship in the world.

Isaiah 2:19

They, the idolatrous Israelites,

shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth; their usual places of retreat in cases of danger; of which see Jos_10:16 Jud_6:2 1Sa_13:6.

To shake terribly the earth; either properly, or rather figuratively, to send dreadful judgments upon the inhabitants of the land.

Isaiah 2:20

Into the meanest and darkest places, in which moles and bats have their abode; whereas before they set them up in high and honourable places, where they might be seen and worshipped. This great and sudden change proceeded either from true repentance, which filled them with shame, and grief, and indignation against themselves, and all the instruments of their wickedness; or from a conviction of the vanity of their idols, which afforded them no help in the time of their need; or from a just fear lest God's judgment should have fallen more heavily upon them, if it had found them in the practice of idolatry; and that by this profession of repentance they might, if it were possible, either prevent or mitigate their calamity.

Isaiah 2:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 2:22

Seeing God will undoubtedly bring down the highest and proudest of the sons of men into so much contempt and misery, from henceforth never admire nor place your trust in man, whose breath, upon which his life and strength depends, is in his nostrils, and therefore is quickly stopped and taken away.

Wherein is he to be accounted of? what one real and valuable excellency is there in him, to wit, considered in himself, and without dependence upon God?

Isaiah 3:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 3.

Great confusion on both people and rulers for their sin and impudence in it, Isa_3:1-9. Peace to the righteous, and misery to

the wicked, Isa_3:10,11. The oppression and covetousness of the rulers, Isa_3:12-15. The pride of women, and its judgments, Isa_3:16-26.

Behold; look upon it as a thing as certain as if it were already done.

The stay and the staff; all the supports of their state and church. The whole stay of bread, called elsewhere the *staff of bread* ; whereby is understood either,

1. The nourishing power of bread, which wholly depend upon God's blessing; or rather,

2. Bread itself, as this phrase is understood, Lev_26:26 Psa_105:16 Eze_4:16, and directly explained, Eze_5:16, bread which is the staff of life.

Isaiah 3:2

The mighty man; strong and valiant men. The judge; the civil magistrates. The prophet; either strictly so called, the want of whom is matter of grief; see Psa_74:9; or largely, so as to include all skilful and faithful teachers.

The prudent; whose wisdom and conduct was necessary to preserve them from ruin. The ancient; whose wisdom was increased by long experience.

Isaiah 3:3

The captain of fifty; there shall not be a man left able to command and manage fifty soldiers, and much less such as could command hundreds or thousands, which yet were necessary. *The honourable man* ; men of high birth, and place, and power, and reputation. *The counsellor* ; wise and learned statesmen. The cunning artificer, who could make either ornaments for times of peace, or instruments for war; which therefore conquerors took away from those nations whom they subdued, 1Sa_13:19,20 2Ki_24:14.

The eloquent orator, Heb. *the skilful of charm* ; whereby he understands either,

1. Charmers, whom he threatens to take away, not as if such persons were blessings to a people, or the removing of such were

a curse, but only because they made great use of them, and trusted to them. And so he signifies that God would remove all the grounds of their confidence, both right and wrong, and make their case desperate. As, in like manner, and for the same reason, God threatens the Israelites that they should be, as *without a sacrifice, so without teraphim*, Hos_3:4. Or,

2. As most understand it, such as could powerfully persuade, and, as it were, chain that ungovernable beast, the multitude of common people, by their eloquence, to do those things which were necessary for their peace and safety; for this word may be taken in a good sense, as divination is, Pro_16:10.

Isaiah 3:4

Children; either,

1. In age, whose minority corrupt ministers of state commonly abuse to great mischiefs; or,
2. In understanding, experience, and manners; foolish, froward, unteachable, &c.

Isaiah 3:5

The people shall be oppressed, by the command or connivance of such childish rulers.

The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable; foolish and unworthy men shall by wicked arts gain the favour and abuse the power of the prince, and thereby behave themselves insolently towards their betters.

Isaiah 3:6

A man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father; whereas envy ordinarily reigns in near relations, when one brother is advanced far above all the rest.

Thou hast clothing: we are utterly undone, and have neither food nor raiment; but thou hast something yet left to support the dignity which we offer to thee, and to enable thee to execute thine office.

Be thou our ruler: he showeth that misgovernment should cause the dissolution of the government, and that the former governors

should be removed either by foreign force, or by domestic insurrection.

Let this ruin be under thine hand, to wit, to heal it, as it is explained in the next verse. Undertake the charge of this tottering state.

Isaiah 3:7

He shall swear, Heb. *he shall lift up* ; understand either,

1. His voice; he shall cry aloud, to show his earnestness in refusing the offer; or,
2. His hand, which was the usual gesture in swearing, Gen_14:22 Deu_32:40, &c., to show his resolvedness.

An healer; a repairer of the ruins of the state.

In my house is neither bread nor clothing; I have not sufficient provisions, either of food or raiment, for my own family; much less, as you falsely suppose, for the discharge of so high a trust.

Isaiah 3:8

Of his glorious majesty, whom they ought to reverence and adore.

Isaiah 3:9

The show of their countenance doth witness against them; their pride, and wantonness, and impiety manifestly shows itself in their very looks and carriages, and will be swift witness against them both before God and men.

They declare their sin; they act it publicly, casting off all fear of God, and reverence to men, and they glory in it.

They hide it not, as men do who have any remainders of modesty or ingenuity.

They have rewarded, i.e. procured a fit recompence for their wickedness, even utter ruin. *Or, they have done* ; for this word is oft so used, without any signification of a recompence, as Psa_7:4. They cannot blame me, but themselves; their destruction is wholly from themselves. Compare Hos_13:9.

Isaiah 3:10

Say ye: God hath said it, and doth now by me say it; and you, O ye priests and Levites, say it in your sermons to the people.

They shall eat the fruit of their doings; let not them fear, for God will be their safeguard and portion in the common calamity.

Isaiah 3:11

Woe unto the wicked! these heavy judgments are designed against them, and shall certainly find them out, though here they be mixed with the righteous.

Isaiah 3:12

Women; either,

1. Properly so called, by their favour and power with the rulers; or,
2. Weak and effeminate rulers, such being called *women* both in sacred and profane writings.

They which lead thee; thy rulers, civil and ecclesiastical, whose duty it is to show thee the right way. Or, as others, *they that bless thee*, i.e. thy false prophets, which flatter thee, and speak peace to thee.

Destroy the way of thy paths; keep thee from the knowledge or practice of that way which leads to thy salvation, and mislead thee into evil courses, by their wicked counsels or examples.

Isaiah 3:13

The Lord standeth up; he will shortly and certainly stand up as a judge, to inquire into the cause, and to give sentence.

To judge the people, i.e. to defend and deliver them, or to judge for them, as this phrase is oft used.

Isaiah 3:14

The ancients; the princes or rulers, as it is explained in the next clause, who are oft called elders, because such were commonly and fitly chosen out of those who were ripe in years.

Eaten up; destroyed instead of preserving and dressing it, as you should have done.

The vineyard; the church and commonwealth of Israel, which is oft called God's vineyard, as Psa_80:8,**14,15 Isa 5:1 Jer_2:21,** &c., and here *the vineyard*, by way of eminency; or, the vineyard which was committed to your care to keep.

The spoil of the poor; the goods which you have violently taken away from the poor.

Isaiah 3:15

What mean ye? what warrant have ye for it? how durst you presume to do it?

Grind, or *batter* , as the word is used, Exo_32:20; smite them cruelly: see Isa_58:4.

Isaiah 3:16

The daughters of Zion; the women; as hitherto he reprov'd the men.

Walk with stretched forth necks; affecting stateliness, Psa_75:5, and to seem tall.

Wanton eyes; or, as others, *twinkling with their eyes* in a lascivious manner.

Walking and mincing as they go, after the manner of loose and wanton persons. Making a tinkling with their feet, by some ornaments which they wore upon their shoes.

Isaiah 3:17

Will smite with a scab the crown of the head; will by sending scabs, or by other ways, take off the hair of their head, which is a woman's glory, 1Co_11:15, and which doubtless ministered to their pride and wantonness. Others render it, *he will make bald* , &c. Discover their secret parts, by giving her into the power of those enemies that shall either strip her of all her raiments, not leaving her sufficient to cover her nakedness; or otherwise abuse her by such immodest and contemptuous actions. Compare Isa_47:3 Eze_16:37 **23:10,26.**

Isaiah 3:18

Cauls: as for this and the other Hebrew words here following, I judge it unnecessary and improper to trouble the English reader with the differing interpretations given of them by learned men, which the curious may find in my Latin Synopsis. It is agreed by all that they were ornaments used by that people in those times, and made fuel to their lusts. And it is of no concernment to the direction, either of our faith or manners, exactly to understand the

nature and differences of them. And therefore I shall take them as they are in our translation.

Round tires like the moon; there were in ancient time, and at this day there are, some jewels or other ornaments worn which carry a manifest resemblance to the moon or half moon. Compare Jud_8:21,26.

Isaiah 3:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 3:20

The bonnets: these were ornaments to cover the head, common both to men, as Exo_39:28, and to women, as here.

The tablets, Heb. *the houses of the soul, or of life, or of breath* ; whereby he seems to mean boxes of excellent perfumes, which are of great efficacy to revive our drooping spirits, and to that end are oft applied to such as are ready to faint away.

Isaiah 3:21

Which were fastened to the head, and hung down upon the forehead to the beginning of the nose; of which see Gen_24:22,47 **Jud 8:24**, &c.

Isaiah 3:22

Of silver or gold, either used to curl the hair, or rather fastened and worn in the hair; which custom is not altogether disused at this day.

Isaiah 3:23

The glasses; the looking-glasses, as we call them, though in truth they were not made of glass, but of bright and burnished brass.

Isaiah 3:24

Instead of sweet smell, those perfumes mentioned Isa_3:20,

there shall be stink, from their scabs, mentioned Isa_3:17, or from other ill usages of their enemies.

Instead of a girdle, which were fine and costly, and useful to gird their garments about them,

a rent; either the rending of their garments for grief; or torn and tattered garments, not sufficient to cover their bodies.

Burning, by the heat of the sun, to which they are now commonly exposed, from which they used formerly to guard themselves with great care.

Isaiah 3:25

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 3:26

Her gates; the gates of Zion or Jerusalem, which, by a figure very usual in sacred Scripture and all authors, are said to lament, to imply the great desolation of the place, that there should be no people to go out and come in by the gates, or to meet together in the gates, as they used to do. Shall sit upon the ground, like a mournful woman bewailing the loss of her husband and children.

Isaiah 4:1 ISIAIAH CHAPTER 4

In the extremity of evils, Christ's glorious kingdom should appear to those who are left alive, Isa_4:1,2. They shall be holy, Isa_4:3; purged, Isa_4:4. A glory and defence upon them, Isa_4:5. A sanctuary from evils, Isa_4:6.

In that day, of which he hath hitherto been speaking, **Isa 2 Isa 3**, and still continueth to speak. In that calamitous time.

Seven; many. A certain number for an uncertain. *Shall take hold* ; shall sue to him, and even lay hands upon him, contrary to their custom, and their natural modesty.

Of one man; because few men shall survive that dreadful stroke. They who before were not contented with their own husbands, are now glad of a seventh part of a husband.

We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; we will ease thee of that charge, which otherwise would fall upon thee by God's law, Exo_21:10.

Let us be called by thy name; own us for thy wives.

Reproach: virginity was esteemed a reproach, especially among that people, because it was a token of contempt from men, and of the curse of God; children, the usual fruit of marriage, being both an honour to their parents before men, and a great blessing of

God, especially to that people, from some of whose loins the Messiah was to spring.

Isaiah 4:2

In that day; about and after that time; when the Lord shall have washed away (as this time is particularly expressed, Isa_4:4)

the filth of Zion by those dreadful judgments now described. The branch of the Lord; either,

1. The church and people of Israel, oft called *God 's vine* or vineyard, as we saw before, and *the branch of God 's planting* , Isa_60:21. Or,

2. The Messiah, who is commonly defined in Scripture by this title, *the Branch* , Isa_11:1 Jer_23:5 **33:15** Zec_3:8, *whose name* is expressly said to be *the Branch* , Zec_6:12, of whom not only Christians, but even the Hebrew doctors, understand it. For after the foregoing miseries were brought upon the Jews, by the remainders of the Grecian empire, of which Daniel prophesies of exactly and particularly, and afterwards by the Roman empire, the Messiah was born; and after that utter destruction brought upon the Jewish city, and temple, and nation by Titus, the kingdom of the Messiah became

beautiful and glorious, as it here follows.

The fruit of the earth shall be excellent; the land which for the sins of the people was made barren, upon their repentance and return to Christ, shall recover its former fertility. Under this one mercy he seems to understand all temporal blessings, which, together with spiritual and eternal, God shall confer upon them; and withal to intimate the fruitfulness of the people (the earth or land being oft put for its inhabitants,) in knowledge, and grace, and all good works.

That are escaped; that shall survive all the forementioned calamities.

Isaiah 4:3

Shall be called holy, i.e. shall be really holy, as is said, Isa_60:21. To be called is oft put for to be, as Gen_21:12 Isa_1:26 **44:5**.

Every one that is written among the living: so this is a restriction of the foregoing indefinite proposition. Not all that are left, but a great number of them, shall be holy, even all that are written, &c., i.e. all the elect, who are frequently described by this character, that they are *written in God 's or the Lamb 's book* , or *in the book of life* , or *of the living* , Psa_69:28 Dan_12:1 Phi_4:3 Rev_3:5 **13:8 17:8**, &c. But this last clause of the verse is by some learned interpreters rendered thus, *all that are in Jerusalem* (i.e. a very great number of them, as such general expressions are frequently used, or the generality of them) *shall be written unto life* , i.e. shall be such as are elected unto salvation through sanctification; which may deserve consideration. So he notes the singular privilege of this people at this time above the former ages, in which many were called, but few were chosen.

In Jerusalem; of the people living in or belonging to Jerusalem.

Isaiah 4:4

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion: this shall be accomplished when God hath thoroughly cleansed the Jewish nation from their sins. The blood; the blood-guiltiness, and especially that of killing the Lord of life, their own Messiah.

By the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning: this is opposed to the former legal way of purification, which was by water. By

the Spirit he seems to understand the Holy Spirit of God, to which this washing and purging work is commonly ascribed, as 1Co_6:11, and elsewhere; which Spirit did accompany the preaching of the gospel, and did this work in part in some of the Jews, and will do it more fully in the body of the nation. And this Spirit may well be called a Spirit of judgment, because it executes judgment in the church, and in the consciences of men, separating the precious from the vile, convincing men of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, Joh_16:8-11, manifesting the secrets of men's hearts in the preaching of the word, 1Co_14:25; accusing, and terrifying, and punishing some, witnessing for and with others, and filling them with peace and joy in believing; hardening some, and softening and subduing others to God, as this

Spirit is particularly promised to do to the Jews, Zec_12:10. And the same Spirit may be fitly called *the Spirit of burning*, as he is compared to fire, Mat_3:11, because he doth burn up and consume the dross which is in the church, and in the minds and hearts of men, and inflames the souls of believers with love to God, and zeal for his glory.

Isaiah 4:5

Will create; will in a marvellous manner produce, as it were by a new work of creation.

A cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flashing fire by night; a pillar of cloud and fire, like that wherewith the Lord directed, and protected, and honoured the israelites, when they came out of Egypt; whereby he implies that God would be their protector and their glory.

Upon all the glory; upon all that church and people, which God will make so glorious, not only in his own eyes, but even in the eyes of the world; upon all holy assemblies of sincere Christians.

Isaiah 4:6

There shall be a tabernacle; or, he, i.e. the Lord, shall be a tabernacle, or a tent, to defend them from the violent heat of the sun, and other injuries of the weather, which was the use and benefit of tents.

Isaiah 5:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 5

Israel God's vineyard; his mercies, and their unfruitfulness; should be laid waste, Isa_5:1-7. Judgments upon covetousness, Isa_5:8-10; upon drunkards, and the lascivious, Isa_5:11,12. The great misery of the Jews, Isa_5:13-17. Judgments on impiety, scoffers at God's threatenings, those who corrupt the notions of good and ill, strong drinkers, and unjust judges, Isa_5:18-23. God's anger and the Chaldeans' army against them, Isa_5:24-30.

Now will I sing; I will record it, to be a witness for God, and against you, as Moses did his song, Deu_31:19 **32:1**.

To my Well-beloved; to the Lord of the vineyard, as appears by the last clause of the verse; to God or Christ, whom I love and

serve, and for whose glory, eclipsed by you, I am greatly concerned.

A song of my Beloved; not devised by me, not the effect of my envy or passion; but inspired by God, which therefore it behoveth you to lay to heart.

His vineyard; his church, oft and very fitly called a *vineyard* , because of God's singular respect to it, and care of it, and his delight in it, and expectation of good fruit from it, &c.

In a very fruitful hill; hills being places most commodious for vines: see Psa_80:10. Heb. *in a horn* (which may signify either,

1. The figure or shape of the land of Canaan, which resembles a horn; or,
2. The height and hilliness of that land, as horns are the highest parts of beasts; or,
3. The goodliness and excellency of it, *as a horn* , when it is ascribed to a man, signifies his glory and dignity, as Job_16:1,5 Psa 89:17,24, &c.) *the son of oil* , which, by a vulgar Hebraism, notes an oily or a fat soil.

Isaiah 5:2

Fenced it, that neither men nor beasts might spoil it.

Gathered out the stones thereof; which otherwise would have marred the land; of which see 2Ki_3:19. The sense is, He removed all hinderances, and gave them all the means of fruitfulness.

Built a tower, for the residence of the keepers, that they might be obliged and encouraged to watch over it with more diligence.

Isaiah 5:3

I dare make you judges in your own cause, it is so plain and reasonable.

Isaiah 5:4

What work is there belonging to the office of a master or keeper of the vineyard which I have neglected? How unworthy and inexcusable a crime is it, that you have not only been unfruitful in good works, but also filled with all the fruits of wickedness!

Isaiah 5:5

I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; he graciously warns them beforehand, that they may have space and invitation to repent, and so to prevent the threatened miseries.

I will take away the hedge thereof, & c.; I will withdraw my presence and protection from them, and give them up into the hands of their enemies.

Isaiah 5:6

It shall not be pruned nor digged: vine-dressers use to dig up and open the earth about the roots of the vines, for divers good purposes. The meaning is. I will remove my ministers, who used great care and diligence to make you fruitful.

There shall come briars and thorns; I will give you up to your own wicked lusts.

I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain on it; I will deprive you of all my blessings, which are oft compared to rain, &c.

Isaiah 5:7

The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; in whom God formerly delighted to dwell and converse. Compare Pro_8:31 Jer_31:20. *Behold the cry from the oppressed* , crying to men for help, and to God for vengeance.

Isaiah 5:8

That join house to house, that lay field to field; that add new purchases of houses and lands to their former possessions; not that this was in itself unlawful, but because they did this from an inordinate and insatiable desire of riches, and with the injury of their brethren, as is manifest from the foregoing and following words.

That they may be alone; that they alone may be the lords and owners, all others only their tenants and servants.

Isaiah 5:9

In mine ears said the Lord; I heard God speak what I now about to utter. Heb. *In the ears of the Lord* ; may relate either,

1. To the foregoing words; The cry of your sins, and of the oppressed, as come into God's he hears and sees it, and will certainly punish it.

2. To the following clause, which being of great importance, he ushers in with an oath; I speak it in God's as well as in yours; I call God to witness the truth of what I say. *My houses shall be desolate* ; the houses you have so greedily coveted shall cast you out, and become desolate.

Isaiah 5:10

Ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, to wit, of wine. The bath contained about eight gallons. Thus an acre did yield one gallon.

The seed of an homer shall yield an ephah which was of the same quantity with the bath, only the bath was the measure of liquid things, the ephah of dry and an ephah was the tenth part of an homer, Eze_45:11. So instead of that great increase which that fruitful land commonly yielded, they should lose nine parts of their seed. Thus a fruitful land was made barren for their wickedness, according to God's threatening, Psa_107:34; and they had as little comfort in their lands as in their houses; which were the two kinds of their purchases, Isa_5:8.

Isaiah 5:11

That rise up early in the morning; which was unusual, and scandalous in that case, Ecc_10:16 Act_2:15. They made drinking their daily trade and business.

That continue until night; thereby wasting both precious time, and God's good creatures, and the health of their bodies, as well as of their souls. He useth this word partly to show their folly and misery, because the wine was so far from quenching and satisfying their appetites, that it did indeed inflame and increase them; and partly to prevent the vain excuse of them, who thought themselves innocent because they did not drink to drunkenness, although they cast themselves into an intemperate heat through their excess.

Isaiah 5:12

They give up themselves wholly to luxury, and that in a very unseasonable time, as it follows.

But they regard not the work of the Lord; what God hath lately done, and is yet doing, and about to do among them; his grievous judgments, partly inflicted, and partly threatened, which required another course of life, even to give themselves to fasting, and prayer, and reformation, that so they might remove the incumbent, and prevent the approaching calamities.

Isaiah 5:13

Are gone into captivity; either,

1. Are actually gone, which was true of the ten tribes in Hezekiah's reign, 2Ki_18:9, under whom this prophecy might be uttered; or,

2. Shall certainly and shortly go, as the two tribes afterward did.

They have no knowledge; no serious consideration of God's works, and of their own duty and danger. *Their honourable men* , who thought themselves quite out of reach of famine.

Isaiah 5:14

Hell; or, *the grave* , as this word most commonly signifies.

Opened her mouth without measure, to receive those vast numbers which shall die by this famine, or otherwise, as is here implied.

Their glory; their honourable men, as they were called, Isa_5:13, being distinguished both here and there from the multitude.

Their pomp; all their glory, shall die with them.

He that rejoiceth; that spendeth all his days in mirth and jollity, and casteth away all cares and fears.

Isaiah 5:15

All of them, both high and low, shall be brought to destruction.

Isaiah 5:16

Shall be exalted in judgment, by the execution of this just judgment upon his incorrigible enemies.

Shall be sanctified, shall appear to be a holy God,

in righteousness; by his righteous judgments.

Isaiah 5:17

Then; when God shall have finished that work of judgment upon the ungodly, he will extend mercy to a remainder. This is very usual in this prophet, in the midst of his threatenings, to insert something for the support of believers.

The lambs; the poor and harmless people, who shall be left in the land when the rich are carried into captivity, as it fell out, 2Ki_25:12.

Feed after their manner; or, *by their fold* , as this word is manifestly used, Mic_2:12, the only place of Scripture, except this, in which this word is found. *The waste places* ; the lands left by their owners, who were either slain or carried into captivity.

Of the fat ones; of the rich and great men, so called Psa_22:29
78:31 Isa_10:16.

Strangers; the poor Israelites, who were left to be *vine-dressers and husbandmen* , 2Ki_25:12, who are called strangers, because they were so in reference to that land, not being the proper owners of it, nor related to them; as the Israelites of other tribes are called *strangers* , in opposition to the Levites, as Num_1:51, and elsewhere; yea, and the Levites are so called, in opposition to the seed of Aaron, Num_16:40.

Isaiah 5:18

That draw iniquity; that are not only drawn to sin by the allurements of the world, or by the persuasions of wicked men, being surprised and overtaken by sin, as sometimes good men are, Gal_6:1, but are active and industrious in drawing sin to themselves, or themselves to sin; that greedily and steadily pursue sill, and the occasions of it, and are not at rest till they have overtaken it; that sin wilfully, and resolvedly, and industriously.

With cords of vanity; or, *with cords of lying* , as the last word frequently signifies, i.e. with vain and deceitful arguments and pretences, whereby sinners generally draw themselves to sin; among which, one follows in the next verse, to wit, the impunity which they promise to themselves. Or these cords may note the means which they use to accomplish that iniquity which they have devised.

With a cart rope; with all their might, as beasts commonly do that draw carts with ropes.

Isaiah 5:19

Let him, to wit, God, in whose name thou and other prophets are always reproving and threatening us.

Hasten his work, that we may see it; he only thinks to affright us with bugbears; but he either cannot or will not do us any harm: we do not fear him, let him do his worst; let him begin as soon as he pleaseth. Not that any of the Israelites were so impudent as to use these expressions; but this was the plain language of their actions; they lived as if they were of this opinion; their presumption and security showed their desperate contempt of God, and of all his judgments.

The Holy One of Israel; who by his holiness is engaged to punish us. They scornfully repeated the title usually given by the prophets unto God.

Isaiah 5:20

That call evil good, and good evil; that take away the difference between good and evil; that justify and approve wicked men and things, and condemn piety, or virtue; or righteous persons. Compare Pro_17:15. Thus many call serious godliness, humorous singularity; and justice, morosity; and meekness, stupidity, &c.; as, on the contrary, they call pride, magnanimity; and covetousness, good husbandry. And men are very apt to follow the course of the world in their false judgments of things; which therefore the prophet so severely forbids.

Isaiah 5:21

That being puffed up with an opinion of their own wisdom, despise the counsels and instructions of God by his prophets, and prefer their own vain fancies before the judgment of the all-wise God, as appears by the error before mentioned, Isa_5:20, that they affirmed that to be evil which God had declared to be good.

Isaiah 5:22

That are mighty to drink wine; that can drink much without intoxication, in which they gloried, as too many do at this day.

To mingle, i.e. to drink; the antecedent being put for the consequent, which is usual; for they mingled it in order to drinking.

Isaiah 5:23

Justify the wicked for reward; not by mistake or incogitancy, but wilfully for bribes.

Take away the righteousness of the righteous from him, to wit, juridically; they pronounce sentence against him, as if he and his cause were unjust.

Isaiah 5:24

Their root shall be as rottenness; they shall be like a tree which not only withers in its branches, but dies and rots at the roots, and therefore is past all hopes of recovery. The sense is, They shall be destroyed both root and branch.

Their blossom shall go up as dust; shall vanish (for so the word ascend or go up is oft used, as Exo_16:14 Job_5:26 Jer_48:15 Eze_11:23,24) as the dust, which is blown away with every wind; or, shall be resolved into dust, and yield no fruit.

They have cast away; which implies disobedience joined with contempt.

Isaiah 5:25

The hills did tremble; a metaphorical and hyperbolical description of a grievous calamity, familiar in the prophets, as Isa_64:1,2 Jer 4:24, and in other authors.

His hand is stretched out still, ready to give you another and a sorer blow. This is not the end, as you vainly imagine, but, if you repent not, the beginning, of your sorrows, and an earnest of further calamities.

Isaiah 5:26

He will lift up an ensign, to call them together for his service, as generals used to do for the raising of armies, to

the nations from far; either,

1. To the Assyrians, of whom he speaks more particularly **Isa 10**, and that under this same character of a people that come from far, Isa_5:29 and who did not long after this prophecy invade Judea,

and did much mischief in it. Although that part of the prediction, Isa_5:29,

They shall lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it, do not seem to agree to them, nor that invasion; for the Assyrians were forced to retreat with great shame and loss, and the Jews were delivered from them. Or,

2. To the Chaldeans; for even Babylon is called a *far country* , Isa_39:3. And he saith *nations* , because the Chaldean army was made up of several nations. *Will hiss unto them; or, will whistle unto or for them* ; will gather them together by his word, as shepherds gather their sheep. He intimates how easily and speedily God can do this work. *From the ends of the earth* ; which is not to be understood strictly, but popularly, and with a latitude, from very remote places; although part of the Chaldean army did come from places not very far distant from the end of that part of the world, so far as it was then known.

Isaiah 5:27

None shall be weary, though their march be long and tedious. As I have called them to this work, so I will strengthen and assist them in it. None shall slumber nor sleep; they shall all be watchful and diligent to take all opportunities and advantages of executing my judgments upon my people.

Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken; which otherwise would hinder, or at least slacken, them in their march. I will take all impediments out of their way.

Isaiah 5:28

Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; who are every way furnished and ready for my work, waiting only for my command.

Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, because they shall not be broken or battered by the length or stoutness and ruggedness of the way.

Their wheels like a whirlwind; partly for the swiftness of their march, and partly for the force and violence of their chariots in battle.

Isaiah 5:29

They shall roar like young lions; which signifies both their cruelty, and their greediness and eagerness to catch and devour the prey.

None; neither the Jews themselves, nor the Egyptians, to whose help they will trust, nor any of their confederates.

Isaiah 5:30

Like the roaring of the sea; which is violent and frightful.

Darkness and sorrow; darkness, to wit, sorrow: the latter word explains the former, and the particle

and is put expositively, as it is frequently.

The light is darkened in the heavens thereof; when they look up to the heavens, as men in distress usually do, they see no light there; their comforts are wholly eclipsed, and their hopes are like the giving up of the ghost.

Isaiah 6:1 ISALIAH CHAPTER 6

The glory of the Lord, Isa_6:1-4. Isaiah is terrified, Isa_6:5; is confirmed for his message, Isa_6:6-8. The people's obstinacy unto desolation, Isa_6:9-12. A remnant shall be saved, Isa_6:13.

I saw in a vision or ecstasy. The Lord; either,

1. God the Son, who frequently appeared to the patriarchs and prophets, and that sometimes in the form of a man. Or rather,

2. The Divine Majesty as he subsisteth in three persons, as may be gathered both from the plural number us, used of this Lord, Isa_6:8, and comparing other scriptures; for God the Father is described as sitting upon a throne, Dan_7:9,**13**, and elsewhere; and the glory of God here manifested is said to be Christ's glory, Joh_12:41, and the words of the Lord here following are said to be spoken by the Holy Ghost, Act_28:25. Sitting upon a throne, in the posture of a judge, to hear causes, and give sentence. Lifted up towards the roof of the temple.

His train; or, as the word properly signifies, and is here rendered by divers, the skirts or borders of him, or of it, to wit, his royal and judicial robe; for he is represented as a judge.

Filled the temple; his glorious robes reached down to the bottom of the temple, and were spread abroad in the temple, which was an evidence of a more than ordinary majesty. The temple may be here taken either,

1. Largely, and so it includes the courts as well as the house, as that word is oft used; or,
2. Strictly, for the house itself, or for that part of the temple in which this vision was exhibited, which may seem to have been the porch, for that was much higher than the other parts.

Isaiah 6:2

Above it stood, as ministers attending upon their Lord, and waiting to receive and execute his commands,

the seraphims; certain holy and blessed angels, thus called from *fire* and *burning*, which this word properly signifies; to represent either,

1. Their nature, which is bright and glorious, subtile, and pure, and spiritual, like fire; or,
2. Their property, of fervent zeal for God's service and glory; or,
3. Their office and present employment, which was to execute God's vengeance upon the Jews, and to burn them up like dross.

Covered his face, out of profound reverence, as being so sensible of the infinite distance between God and him, that he durst not presume to look directly upon him, and judged himself neither able nor worthy to behold the brightness of his glory.

Covered his feet; either,

1. His secret parts, which sometimes come under that name, as Deu_28:57 Isa_7:20 **36:12**; of which see more in my Latin Synopsis upon Exo_4:25. And so this is done for our instruction, to teach us modesty and chastity. Or,
2. Their feet properly so called, as that word is generally used; from which use we should not depart without necessity, which, with submission, seems not to be in this place. And so this may signify a sense of their own natural, though not moral infirmity, and a desire that God would not too severely examine all their

ways and actions, which the feet commonly signify, because though they did not swerve from God's commands, yet they were not worthy of the acceptation, nor suitable to the dignity of so glorious a Majesty.

Did fly; which signifies their great forwardness and expedition in executing God's commands. Compare Dan_9:21.

Isaiah 6:3

One cried unto another; singing in consort the praises of their Lord.

Holy, holy, holy: this is repeated thrice, either,

1. To intimate the Trinity of persons united in the Divine essence; or,
2. That he was most eminently and unquestionably holy in his present work of judgment, and in all his ways; such repetitions being very frequent in Scripture, for the greater assurance of the thing, as Jer_7:4 Eze_21:9.

The whole earth; not only Canaan, to which the Jews did vainly and arrogantly confine the presence of God, but all the world; which seems to have a respect to the conversion of the Gentiles, which did accompany the plenary and last execution of this judgment here threatened against the Jewish nation, Isa_6:10, as is evident by comparing this with Mat_13:14,15 Ac 28:26,27, and other places of the New Testament.

Full of his glory; of the effects and demonstrations of his glorious holiness, as well as of his power, and wisdom, and goodness.

Isaiah 6:4

The posts of the door, together with the door itself, as if the door was to be removed, and the temple thereby to be exposed to the view and rapine of profane persons. Such violent motions were commonly tokens of God's anger.

Him that cried, to wit, the angel, which cried; Isa_4:3.

Filled with smoke; which elsewhere is a token of God's presence and acceptance, as Exo_40:34 1Ki_8:10, but here of his anger, as Psa_18:8, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 6:5

I am a man of unclean lips; I am a great sinner, as many other ways, so particularly by my lips, which being in a special manner consecrated to God by my prophetic office, should have been entirely devoted to him; but, alas! my speeches, either to God in prayer, or from God in preaching and prophesying to the people, have been mixed and defiled with so much irreverence, dulness, distraction of thoughts and affections, carnal fear, and many other infirmities, that I dread the thoughts of appearing before thy judgment-seat, which I see erected in this place. For Isaiah had been a prophet before this time, Isa_1:1, and was now called, not in general to his prophetic office, but to the delivery of this special message.

I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; I am an unclean branch of an unclean tree; and besides my own uncleanness, I have both by my omissions and commissions involved myself in the guilt of their sins, and therefore may justly fear to partake with them in their plagues.

Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts; the sight of this glorious and holy God gives me cause to fear that he is come to judgment against me, together with others. Whilst sinners are secure and presumptuous, the holiest persons have ever been filled with great reverence, and oftentimes with doubts and fears, at any extraordinary manifestation of God's presence. See Gen_16:13
17:3 Jud_13:22.

Isaiah 6:6

Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, by God's command, *having a live coal* ; both a token and an instrument of purification, as the next verse explains it.

From off the altar of burnt-offering, which stood in the court of the priests near the porch, and which had always coals of fire upon it, Lev_6:12,13. Hence he took it, to show that men are to expect purification and expiation of sin only by such means as God hath appointed, and particularly by Christ, whom that altar did manifestly represent, Heb_13:10.

Isaiah 6:7

He laid it upon my mouth slightly, so as only to touch my lips, and not to burn them; which God could easily effect.

Thy sin purged; this is a sign that I have pardoned and purged the uncleanness of thy lips, and do own and accept time as a fit minister for my service.

Isaiah 6:8

Whom shall I send, and who will go for us, to deliver the following message? The change of the number,

I and

us, is very remarkable; and both being meant of one and the same Lord, do sufficiently intimate a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

Here am I; send me: God's last and great favour to him did both encourage and oblige him to be forward in God's service.

Isaiah 6:9

This people; not

my people, for I disown them, as they have rejected me.

Understand not, perceive not: the Hebrew words are imperative; yet they are not to be taken as a command what the people ought to do, but only as a signification and prediction. what by their own wickedness, and by God's just judgment, they did and would do, as is manifest by Mat_13:14 Act_28:26, where they are so rendered. And imperative words among the Hebrews are frequently put for the future, as is well known to the learned. The sense is, Because you have so long heard my words, and seen my works, to no purpose, and have hardened your hearts, and will not learn nor reform, I will punish you in your own kind, your sin shall be your punishment. I will still continue my word and works to you, not in mercy, and for your good, but to aggravate your sin and condemnation; for I will blind your minds, and withdraw my Spirit, so that you shall be as unable, as now you are unwilling, to understand or perceive any thing that may do you good.

Isaiah 6:10

Fat, i.e. stupid and senseless; for the fat which is in the body is without sense; and fatness in the heart makes it dull and heavy. Thus this phrase is used Psa_119:70. And this seems best to agree with the following words. This making of their hearts fat is here ascribed to the prophet, as it is ascribed to God in the repetition of this prophecy, Joh_12:40, because God inflicted this judgment upon them by the ministry of the prophet, partly by way of prediction, foretelling that this would be the effect of his preaching; and partly by way of judicial operation, withdrawing the light and help of his Spirit, and giving them up to the power and arts of Satan, and to their own mistakes and lusts, whereby they are easily and commonly led to turn God's word, as they do other things, into occasions of sin.

Make their ears heavy; make them dull of hearing, as Isa_59:1 Zec_7:11, as sometimes the ears are made by an excessive noise.

Shut their eyes, Heb. *daub their eyes*, as the word is used also Isa_44:18.

Lest they see; that they may not be able, as before they were not willing, to see.

Convert; turn from their sinful practices unto God.

Be healed of sin, which is the disease of the soul, by remission and sanctification, and of all the deadly effects of sin.

Isaiah 6:11

Lord, how long? an abrupt speech, arising from the prophet's great passion and astonishment. How long shall this dreadful judgment last?

Until the land be utterly desolate; until this land be totally destroyed, first by the Babylonians, and afterward by the Romans.

Isaiah 6:12

Have removed men far away; have caused this people to be carried away captive into far countries.

And there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land; till houses and lands be generally forsaken of their owners, either

because fled away from the sword into strange lands, or because they went into captivity.

Isaiah 6:13

A tenth; a small remnant reserved, that number being put indefinitely, as is very usual.

Shall return, to wit, on, of the Babylonish captivity, into their own land.

Shall be eaten; that remnant shall be devoured and destroyed a second time by the kings of Syria, and afterwards more effectually by the Romans.

As a teil tree, and as an oak, or, yet *as* , &c.; or, nevertheless *as* , &c.; such particles being frequently understood in the Hebrew, as hath been noted again and again. So the sense of the following words of the verse seems to be this, Although the Jewish nation shall undergo a second and a greater desolation by the Romans, yet there shall be another remnant, not such a one as that which came out of Babylon, which for the most part were corrupt and degenerate, as appears by the sacred histories and prophecies relating to that time; but a holy seed, a number of elect and godly Israelites, who shall afterwards look upon him whom they pierced, and mourn over him, as is said, *Zec_12:10*, and by me be received to mercy. Whose substance is in them, when they eat their leaves; who, when their leaves are withered and east, as it is in winter, have a substance, or subsistence, or support within themselves, to wit, a vital principle, which preserves life in the root and body of the tree, and in due time sends it forth into all the branches. But others take the Hebrew word *shallecheth* for the proper name of a place, to wit, a causeway which led from the palace to the temple, *1Ch_26:16*; and so the place is and may be rendered thus, *as a teil tree* , (or, *an elm* ,) and *as an oak* , (the singular number for the plural, as is very frequent,) *as the elms and the oaks which are at or by Shallecheth* (on both sides of which way such trees were planted, to beautify and to support that causeway, as some have observed) *have subsistence or support in them* ; either,

1. For themselves; they stand fast and firm, when other trees are blown down: or,

2. For the way which they uphold.

The substance thereof; or rather, *the support* (as the same word seems to be taken in the next foregoing; clause) *thereof*, to wit, of the land or people, which, were it not for the sake of these elect persons, should be totally and finally rooted out; or, of that tenth part, which shall be delivered and preserved for the sake of that holy seed, those true-hearted Israelites which are among them.

Isaiah 7:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 7

Ahaz, afraid of Rezin and Pekah, is comforted by Isaiah Isa_7:1-9; refusing to choose a sign, Christ is promised for one, Isa_7:10-16: his judgment should come by Assyria, Isa_7:17-25.

In the days of Ahaz, a most wicked king; yet no prophecies are more comfortable than those which were delivered in his time; God so ordering it, partly for the encouragement of the faithful that lived under his tyrannical and impious reign; and partly to manifest the riches and freeness of his grace, in conferring such favours upon a most worthless generation.

To war against it; which they attempted before in Jotham's reign, 2Ki_15:37, but now more seriously undertook, though without success, as is noted here, and 2Ki_16:5.

Isaiah 7:2

The house of David; Ahaz, and his royal relations and courtiers. He calls them *the house of David*, to intimate that the following comfortable message was sent to Ahaz, not for his own sake, but only for the sake of his worthy progenitor, David, to whom God had promised an everlasting kingdom.

Ephraim; the kingdom of the ten tribes, commonly called *Ephraim*, as Isa_28:1 Hos_12:1, because that was far the most numerous and potent of all of them.

Was moved with excessive fear, arising partly from the conscience of their own guilt, whereby they had put themselves out of God's protection; and partly from the consideration of the great strength and power of his enemies, who having prevailed against him severally, 2Ch_28:5,8, and having now united their threes, he, having no faith in God, nor confidence to desire or expect his help, concluded his case desperate and deplorable.

Isaiah 7:3

Go forth now to meet Ahaz, though he do not seek nor send to thee, as he ought. This is an eminent instance of preventing mercy.

Shear-jashub; whose very name carried in it a sign and pledge of the promised deliverance.

At the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field; whither he probably went to take care about the waters, which thence were brought into the city, either to secure them to himself, or to keep them from the enemy, as Hezekiah afterward did, 2Ch_32:3,4.

Isaiah 7:4

Take heed, and be quiet; see that thou be quiet, abandon thy fears, and settle thy mind by the belief of that joyful message and promise which I am now to deliver thee from the Lord.

Smoking fire-brands; they are not whole firebrands burning in the fire, but small pieces or ends of them, taken out of the fire, in which there is more smoke than fire, and the fire will be speedily extinguished. They have more of show and terror than of strength.

The son of Remaliah; Pekah king of Israel, Isa_7:1, whom here, and in the next verse, he calls only

the son of Remaliah, to intimate that he was unworthy of the name of king, as having got that title and power by usurpation, and the murder of his master and king Pekahiah, 2Ki_15:25.

Isaiah 7:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 7:6

Let us make a breach therein; either,

1. Break and divide that country into two parts, one for time, and another for me; or rather,
2. Break their power and kingdom, and subdue it to ourselves: for,
 1. The same word and phrase is so used 2Ch_32:1, where there was no such division intended.

2. Because the next clause intimates that the kingdom of Judah was still to be united under another king, who should pay tribute to them severally, as they should agree.

The son of Tabeal; some considerable captain, in whose fidelity both of them had good confidence; but whether he was an Israelite or Syrian is uncertain, and not material.

Isaiah 7:7

Their evil counsel, as it is called, Isa_7:5.

Isaiah 7:8

Is Damascus; or rather, *shall be Damascus* ; for the verb is not expressed in the Hebrew text, and therefore may be either way supplied. The sense is, Damascus shall still continue to be the capital and chief city of the kingdom of Syria; and therefore Jerusalem shall not be taken, nor become a part of Rezin's dominion; but he shall be kept within his own bounds, and be king of Damascus only, and not, as he hopes, of Jerusalem.

Within threescore and five years; to be computed either,

1. From the prophecy of Amos, who prophesied *in the days of Uzziah, two years before the earthquake* , Amo_1:1, which the Jews affirm to have happened about the time of his usurpation of the priest's office, and being smitten with leprosy, 2Ch_26:16, &c., which though it be not proved, yet it may be admitted, because it cannot be disproved. And it is more than probable that that action and accident was divers years before his death, during which time Jotham acted as his viceroy, 2Ch_26:21. And the prophecy of Amos being express and full concerning the destruction of the people and commonwealth of Israel, being also fresh in the memory of many now living, the prophet Isaiah might well have respect to it. So the sense is as if he had said, There shall be but sixty-five years between the delivery and the execution of that prophecy. And so the number of years may be thus made up. Fix the beginning of them ten years before Uzziah's death, add the sixteen years of Jotham's reign, and then the sixteen years of Ahaz's reign, and then six of Hezekiah's reign, in which Israel was carried captive, 2Ki_18:10, these make up forty-eight years; and for the seventeen years which yet remain of the sixty-five, they may be taken out of the rest of Hezekiah's reign.

For although the transportation of that people began in the sixth year of Hezekiah, yet it might be continued or repeated divers years after, and completed seventeen years after, Jer_52:28-30. Or rather,

2. These years may be computed from the time of this prophecy of Isaiah. And whereas it may be objected against this opinion, that the judgment here threatened was executed in the sixth year of Hezekiah, as was before noted, and therefore within eighteen or nineteen years of this prophecy, which was delivered in the third or fourth year of Ahaz; two things may be answered,

1. That the Israelites were not transported in the sixth year of Hezekiah; for although Samaria be said to be taken in the sixth year of Hezekiah, 2Ki_18:10, and the transportation of the Israelites be mentioned immediately after it, Isa_7:11, yet it doth not thence follow that it was done immediately, and at that one time; because this is not unusual in Scripture, in historical relations to mention those things together which were done at a considerable distance of time one from another, as it is recorded, Act_7:15, **16**, *Jacob died, he and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre of Abraham , &c.*, although it was above two hundred years ere all which is said in those few words was done. And other instances of like nature might easily be produced.

2. That this work of transportation was not done at once, but successively, and by degrees. Thus it certainly was in the transportation of Judah, which was begun in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year, continued in his eighteenth year, and perfected in his three and twentieth year, Jer_52:28-30. And thus it might be, and probably was, in this transportation. It might be begun presently after the taking of Samaria, and afterwards continued, until at last the whole body of the people was removed; and as soon as that was done, and not before, the king of Assyria brought into their place those new colonies mentioned 2Ki_17:24. Which that it was not done at the time of the taking of Samaria, but many years after it, seems to me evident, because those colonies were not brought thither by Shalmanezar, who took Samaria, 2Ki_18:10, no, nor by Sennacherib, his next successor; but by Esar-haddon, as is affirmed, Ezr_4:2, who was the son and successor of Sennacherib,

2Ki_19:37, and reigned above fifty years; for he seems to have begun his reign about the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, by comparing 2Ki_18:13, and 2Ki_19:35-37; and so he reigned with Hezekiah about fifteen years, and with Manasseh above forty years, as the learned Sir John Marsham affirms in his *Chronicus Canon*, &c, p. 496. And this work of transporting the remainders of the Israelites, and bringing the new colonies, might not be done till towards the end of his reign; which delay might be occasioned by his wars, or other great affairs. And lest this should seem to be only my own private conjecture, if the reader consult Sir John Marsham's fourth and last chronological table, inserted after p. 589 of his work, he will find that learned chronologer to be of the same mind, and to make above fifty years' distance between the taking of Samaria, and the translation of the new colonies into those parts. And thus these sixty-five years might well be accomplished in his time. And so this place agrees with other scriptures, and the difficulties objected against other interpretations seem to be avoided.

Isaiah 7:9

Is Samaria; or rather, *shall be Samaria* ; and the sense is the same as in the foregoing verse, Samaria shall continue to be the chief city of the kingdom of Israel, and Pekah shall not conquer Jerusalem, as he hoped and designed to do.

Ye shall not be established; if you do not believe this and the other promises of God, but, in distrust of God, shall seek to the Assyrians for succour, to which I perceive you are inclined, instead of that deliverance and settlement which you expect, you shall be distressed and consumed thereby; the accomplishment of which threatening is recorded 2Ch_28:20. And by this threatening he implies, that if they did rely upon God's word and help, they should be established. Only he delivereth it in the form of a threatening, rather than of promise, partly because he foresaw that they would choose the worse part, and bring the judgment threatened upon themselves; and partly because this was most necessary for them, to affright them out of their present security and infidelity.

Isaiah 7:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 7:11

Ask thee a sign of the Lord; I perceive thou dost not believe God's word and message now delivered by me; yet God is so patient and merciful to thee, that he gives thee liberty to demand of him any signal or miraculous work, whereby thou mayst be assured of the truth and certainty of this promise.

Thy God; both by right of dominion, and by virtue' of his gracious covenant made with all Israel, of whom thou art a member and king; and by thy own profession, for he still worshipped God together with his idols; and by the continuance of his care and kindness to thee and to thy people, notwithstanding all your wickedness; whereof this promise and offer is a clear demonstration.

Ask it either in the depth, or in the height above; demand some prodigy to be wrought, either in earth or in heaven, at thy pleasure.

Isaiah 7:12

I will not ask: this refusal proceeded not from the strength of his faith, but from his contempt of God, and total distrust and disregard of his word, and inward resolution to take another course; as is manifest both from the following words, and from the history of Ahaz, **2Ch 18**.

Neither will I tempt the Lord; either,

1. By asking a sign, as if he questioned the truth of his word: so this was deep hypocrisy. Or,
2. By neglecting any means necessary for my preservation, which were indeed a tempting of God. And therefore I shall not sit still and rely upon God till I be destroyed, which will be the effect of thy counsel; but I shall do as becometh a wise king, seek for succour from potent allies, such as the Assyrian is. So this is flat rebellion against God.

Isaiah 7:13

House of David; of which see above, Isa_7:2. He reproveth them all, because they were the king's counsellors, and promoted the design of sending for the Assyrian succours.

Is it a small thing for you? is not that wickedness more than enough? must you add more to it?

To weary men; to vex God's prophets and people, and the generality of your subjects, with your oppressions and horrid impieties.

Will ye weary my God also, by your cursed ingratitude, and unbelief, and disobedience to his commands? He saith, *my God* , i.e. the God whose servant and prophet or messenger I am, to intimate that this heinous offence was not committed against a weak and foolish man, such as they might think the prophet to be, but against God himself, who sent the message. Compare Exo_16:8.

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore; because you despise me, and the sign which I now offer to you, God of his own free grace will send you a more honourable messenger, and give you a nobler sign, to try whether that will cure you of your infidelity. Or, *nevertheless* , as this particle seems to be understood, Isa_30:18 Jer_16:14 **30:16**. Although you deserve no sign nor favour, yet, for the comfort of those few believers which are among you, and to leave you without excuse, I shall mind you or another and a greater sign, which God hath promised, and will in his due time perform; which also is a pledge of the certain accomplishment of all God's promises. Or, *surely* , as this particle is sometimes used, as Gen_4:15 Jer_2:33 **5:2** Zec_11:7.

A sign, to wit, of your deliverance.

Quest. How was this birth of a virgin, which was not to come till many ages after, a sign of their deliverance from the present danger?

Answ.

1. Because this was a clear demonstration of God's infinite power, and goodness, and faithfulness, and consequently of the certain truth of all God's promises from time to time, which can never fill so long as those attributes of God stand; and men's faith is either strong or weak, as they believe them or doubt of them; of which see Psa_77:8 **78:19,20** **Ro 4:20,21**. And so this was a proper

remedy for Ahaz's disease, which was a secret suspicion that God either could not or would not deliver them.

2. Because that promise, I say not only the actual giving, which was long after, but even the promise, of the Messiah, which had been made long since, and oft renewed, and was universally believed by all the people, was the foundation of all God's mercies and promises unto them, 2Co_1:20, and a pledge of the accomplishment of them.

3. Because this promised birth did suppose and require the preservation of that city, and nation, and tribe, in and of which the Messiah was to be born; and therefore there was no cause to fear that utter ruin which their enemies now threatened to bring upon them.

4. This is one, but not the only sign here given, as we shall see at Isa_7:16.

Behold; you who will not believe that God alone is able to deliver you from the united force of Syria and Israel, take notice, for your full satisfaction, that God is not only able to do this work, but to do far greater and harder things, which he hath promised, and therefore both can and will accomplish.

A virgin; strictly and properly so called. The Jews, that they may obscure this plain text, and weaken this proof of the truth of Christian religion, pretend that this Hebrew word signifies a young woman, and not a virgin. But this corrupt translation is easily confuted,

1. Because this word constantly signifies a virgin in all other places of Scripture where it is used, which are Gen_24:43, compared with Isa_7:16 Exo_2:8 Psa_68:25 Son_1:3 **6:8**; to which may be added Pro_30:19, *The way of a man with a maid, or a virgin* : for though it be supposed that he did design and desire to corrupt her, and afterwards did so; yet she may well be called a virgin, partly because he found her a virgin, and partly because she seemed and pretended to others to be such, which made her more careful to use all possible arts to preserve her reputation, and so made the discovery of her impure conversation with the man more difficult, whereas the filthy practices of common harlots are easily and vulgarly known.

2. From the scope of this place, which is to confirm their faith by a strange and prodigious sign, which surely could not be not a young woman should conceive a child, but that a virgin should conceive, &c.

Bear a Son; or rather, bring forth, as it is rendered, Mat_1:23, and as this Hebrew word is used, Gen_16:11 **17:19** Jud_13:5.

And shall call; the virgin, last mentioned, shall call; which is added as a further evidence of her virginity, and that this Son had no human father, because the right of naming the child (which, being a sign of dominion, is primarily in the husband, and in the wife only by his consent or permission, as is evident from Gen_5:29 **35:18** Luk_1:60,**63**, and many other places of Scripture) is wholly appropriated to her.

Immanuel; which signifies, *God with us* ; God dwelling among us, in our nature, Joh_1:14, God and man meeting in one person, and being a Mediator between God and men. For the design of these words is not so much to relate the name by which Christ should commonly be called, as to describe his nature and office; as we read that *his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor* , &c., Isa_9:6, and that *this is* said to be his (the Messiah's) name *whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness* , Jer_23:6, although he be never called by these names in any other place of the Old or New Testament; but the meaning of these places is, He shall be wonderful, and our Counsellor, &c., and our Righteousness; for to be called is oft put for to be, as Isa_1:26 **4:3**, &c.

Isaiah 7:15

Butter and honey; the common food of children in that Country, where they were in great abundance, and of the best sort.

He; the virgin's Son last mentioned, who, though he be God blessed for ever, yet shall become man, and, to show the truth of his humanity, shall not only be conceived and brought forth, but also shall be nourished and brought up, by the same means and steps as other children; which is justly mentioned here as a stupendous and miraculous work of God.

That he may know; that by this food he may grow up, and so may know, &c. Or, *until he know* , as it is rendered by divers

learned men, and, among others, by the Chaldee interpreter, who best knew the use of this particle among the Hebrews.

To refuse the evil, and choose the good; to discern between things morally good and evil; which children are capable of doing, in some measure, when they are five or six years old. Compare Deu_1:39, where young children are described by this character, that they had no knowledge between good and evil.

Isaiah 7:16

For; or, *yea* ; for so this particle is used by way of amplification or addition, Isa_32:13 Jer_14:5,**18**. So the sense is, Not only this land of thine shall be preserved until the virgin's Son be born, but thine enemy's land shall be sorely scourged, and these two kings destroyed, within a very little time.

The child, Heb. *this child* ; not the virgin's Son, but the prophet's child, Shear-jashub, whom in all probability the prophet, to prevent mistakes, pointed at, and who was brought hither by God's special command, Isa_7:3, and that for this very use; for otherwise his presence was wholly insignificant.

The land; the lands, to wit, of Syria and Israel, as is evident from the next words. It is an enallage of the singular for the plural.

That thou abhorrest, for its cruel designs and practices against time. Or, which vexeth or molesteth thee, as this word is used, Exo_1:12 Num_22:3, &c.

Shall be forsaken of both her kings; so far shall Pekah and Rezin be from conquering thy land, that they shall lose their own lands, and their lives too; which they did within two years after this time, being both slain by the king of Assyria, 2Ki_15:29,**30 16:9**.

Isaiah 7:17

The Lord shall bring; but although God will deliver you at this time for his own name's sake, yet he will remember and requite all your present and following wickedness, and hath a dreadful judgment in store for you.

Upon thee; for part of this Assyrian storm fell in Ahaz's reign, 2Ch_28:20.

Upon thy father's house; upon thy sons and successors, the kings of Judah; the accomplishment whereof is recorded in their history.

Days, to wit, evil days, by a synecdoche; or calamities; for days are oft put for the events which happen in them, and especially for judgments or tribulations, as Job_18:20 Psa_137:7 Isa_9:4 Oba_1:12.

The day that Ephraim departed from Judah; when ten tribes revolted from thy father's house, and set up another opposite kingdom.

Even the king of Assyria; who may well be called their plague or calamity, as he is called the rod of God's anger, Isa_10:5. Or, *with* (as this Hebrew particle oft signifies) *the king* , &c.; or, *by the king* , &c. And *king* is here put for *kings* , as Dan_2:37 **8:21**.

Isaiah 7:18

In that day; known to God, and appointed by him for the execution of these judgments.

Shall hiss: See Poole "Isa_5:26".

The fly; the flies. So he calls these enemies, to imply either their great numbers, or their speedy march, or their unavoidable assault.

In the uttermost part; in, or near, or towards their extremity or end, where they go out into the sea.

Of the rivers; of the river Nilus, which may be called rivers, either for its greatness, for which cause the title of rivers is given also to Euphrates, Psa_137:1, and to Tigris, Nah_2:6; or because, towards the end of it, it is divided into seven famous streams, by which it emptieth itself into the midland sea, Isa_11:15. He seems plainly to design and describe the Egyptians, who were always dangerous neighbours to Judah, and did probably animate and assist the Philistines, and Edomites, and others against them, and at last made a formal invasion and conquest of their land, 2Ki_23:33, &c. Besides, when the Chaldeans had in good measure subdued the Egyptians, it is very probable that great numbers of the Egyptian soldiers did list themselves in the Chaldean army, and with them invade the land of Judah.

The bee; the bees, the Assyrian army, who are compared to bees, as for their numerous forces and orderly march, so for their fierce attempts and mischievous effects.

In the land of Assyria; in the empire of Assyria, or Babylon; for these two were united into one empire, and therefore in Scripture are promiscuously called sometimes by one title, and sometimes by the other.

Isaiah 7:19

They; the flies, and especially the bees.

Shall rest all of them; they shall have an easy victory; few or none of them shall be slain in the attempt.

The desolate valleys; either,

1. Such as were and had long been desolate. So it signifies the vast numbers of their enemies, which filled all places, both such as were well inhabited, and such as were in a great measure desolate. Or,

2. Such as they found very fruitful, but made them desolate.

The rocks; to which possibly the Israelites fled for refuge.

Bushes; which he mentions, partly because flies and bees use frequently to rest there, and partly to intimate that no place should escape the fury of this enemy.

Isaiah 7:20

Shave with a razor, i.e. utterly spoil and destroy, as shaving takes away all the hair, and leaves not any thing of it visible, as there is when the hair is only cut or polled. *Hired* ; either,

1. By Ahaz, who did hire them, 2Ki_16:7,8. And so the prophet notes the just judgment of God, in scourging them with a rod of their own making; and by this threatening he endeavours to prevent that wicked design which then was on foot, of hiring Assyrian succours. Or,

2. By God, who did stir them up, and send them upon his errand against Judah, as he threatens, Isa_10:6, and paid them liberally for that service, as he did Nebuchadnezzar, of which see Jer_25:9 **27:6,7 Da 2:37,38.**

The river Euphrates, called the river, by way of eminency, Psa_72:8 Jer_2:18, beyond which Assyria lay.

By the king of Assyria; by the successive kings of the Assyrian empire, Sennacherib, 2Ki_18:13, &c., Esarhaddon, 2Ch_33:11, and especially by Nebuchadnezzar, who having subdued the Assyrian monarchy, from thenceforth was king of Assyria as well as of Chaldea. And the prophet rather mentions Assyria than Chaldea or Babylon, partly because the Assyrian began and continued to execute this judgment, although the Babylonian completed it; and partly to inform them that they laid the foundation of their own ruin, by opening the door to the Assyrian, who afterwards entered at his pleasure, and left it open for Nebuchadnezzar.

The hair of the feet; of the lower or secret parts, which come under that name, Eze_16:7,25, and elsewhere, as it hath been noted again and again; and which the Jewish writers affirm to have been shaved in the purification of lepers and Levites, Lev_14:8,9 Num 8:7.

The beard, which they highly esteemed, as a great ornament. By these metaphorical expressions he signifies the total destruction of their state, from head to foot, from the highest to the lowest.

Isaiah 7:21

This and the following verse contain either,

1. A mitigation of the foregoing calamity, or some comfort for the remainders of the people, after the public devastation; or rather,
2. A further declaration of the threatened desolation; which best agrees not only with the foregoing, but also with the following verses. So the sense of this verse is this, They who formerly used to keep great herds of cattle, and many flocks of sheep, shall esteem it a great happiness if they can keep but one cow and two sheep, to keep themselves from extremity of famine.

Isaiah 7:22

For the abundance of milk that they shall give; because they shall have excellent and large pastures, by reason of the great scarcity of cattle; whereas formerly their lands were oftentimes overstocked with cattle.

Butter and honey may be here mentioned, either,

1. As mean and vulgar food, being very common in those parts; which are opposed to that flesh and corn, and other excellent fruits of the earth, wherewith their land formerly abounded. Or,

2. As very good and pleasant food, which the poorer sort had formerly used to sell, to procure more necessary and cheaper food for themselves; but now the land should be so destitute of people, that there were none to whom they could sell them, and those few who did survive might freely eat all sorts of provisions.

Isaiah 7:23

A thousand vines at a thousand silverings; or, *pieces of silver*, as the same word is commonly rendered. Whereby we may understand either,

1. So many pounds; a pound for each vineyard, to wit, for the annual rent. Or,

2. So many shekels, which word is most commonly understood, when no particular kind of coin is expressed, as 2Sa_18:11, **12 Mt 26:15**; and then the meaning is, not that the thousand vineyards were let for a thousand shekels, a vineyard for a shekel, which is a contemptible price; but that each of the thousand vineyards might have been sold or let for a thousand shekels, which was the yearly rent of some excellent vineyards, as may be gathered from Son_8:11; except we understand this not of so many vineyards, as other interpreters do, but of so many single vines, as the word properly and generally signifies, planted together in one large vineyard, which may be here meant by the place of the river, and then each vine may be valued at a shekel. But this place may possibly be otherwise rendered, and that exactly according to the Hebrew text, *every place where there are a thousand vines, shall be for a thousand pieces of silver*, i.e. it shall be valued or offered, either to be let, or rather to be sold, at that price; which was a very low price, and therefore fitly signifies the greatness of the desolation.

It shall even be for briars and thorns, because it shall be utterly neglected, and therefore overspread with them. Or, yea,

it shall be for briers and thorns. No man will either buy or hire it upon any terms.

Isaiah 7:24

With arrows and with bows; either to hunt, or to defend themselves from wild beasts, which commonly abide in such desolate and overgrown grounds.

Isaiah 7:25

That shall be digged; or, *that were digged*, to wit, formerly; that used to be digged and dressed for the planting of vines, or other choice fruit trees.

There shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: the words thus rendered sound like a promise, but that doth no way agree with the scope of the place. And they may be, and are by some, understood not of briers and thorns growing in those grounds, which would hinder the feeding of cattle there, but of such wherewith they were fenced, and by which the cattle were affrighted or hindered from breaking into them, which cause of their fear being now removed by the general devastation, they might now enter there, and feed at pleasure, as the next words imply. Or they may be rendered thus, as they are by a late learned interpreter,

that there might not come thither, & c., which is mentioned as the reason why they were digged and dressed, that they might be freed from briers and thorns. And so there is only a defect of the Hebrew particle *asher*, which is frequent, and that not only as it signifies which, but as it is taken finally for that, as Isa_5:11 **10:2**, and elsewhere.

It shall be; or, *even* (as this particle is oft rendered) *there shall be*, to wit, a place; which word is understood, 2Sa_7:1 1Ki_18:12. Or the words may be thus rendered, *and all hills that shall be digged Ñand thorns, even they or each of them shall be*; the singular being taken collectively, as is very usual.

For the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle; all sorts of cattle may fairly enter, and feed there, the fences being broken down, and the owners generally slain, or carried into captivity.

Isaiah 8:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 8

Syria and Israel should be subdued by Assyria, Isa_8:1-4. Judah also should be afflicted, Isa_8:5-8, God's judgments irresistible, and to be feared, Isa_8:9-13. The Lord is a sanctuary to the godly, a stone of stumbling to the wicked, Isa_8:14,**15**. The prophecy sure; God to be waited on; necromancers not to be consulted, but the prophecy; their misery, Isa_8:16-22.

A great roll; or, *a great volume* , because the prophecy to be written in it was large, and God would have it written in very large and legible characters.

With a man's pen; with such a pen as writers use, Psa_41:6 Jer_8:6, that so all may read and understand it.

Concerning Maheshalal-hash-baz; concerning that thing which is signified by the name of thy child, which is here mentioned by way of anticipation, as not being given him till Isa_8:3, i.e. concerning that which God is making haste to do, the giving p the kingdoms of Syria and Israel for a prey to the Assyrian, as this name is explained, Isa_8:4.

Isaiah 8:2

Persons of unquestionable reputation, who should bear witness that the following name and prophecy was written and published by me, according to God's command.

Isaiah 8:3

I went unto, Heb. *I came near to her* . A modest expression of the conjugal act.

The prophetess; so called, partly as she was the prophet's wife, wives being frequently denominated from their husbands' titles, as the wives of *mayor*, or *doctor* , &c, are commonly called *mayoress*, *doctoress* , &c.; and partly because she did concur with the prophet to the procreation of this prophetic child.

Isaiah 8:4

To cry, My father, and my mother; to speak, and to know his parents; which is within the space of two years. And this agrees with the other prophecy, Isa_7:16,

Before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, which requires a longer time than to distinguish his parents from strangers; which suits well to Shear-jashub, who, being born some years before this, was capable of that further degree of knowledge as soon as this was capable of the lower degree.

The riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away; the kingdoms of Syria and Israel, here signified by their two capital cities, shall be stripped of their wealth and power, as they were by Tiglath-pileser, within the time here limited, 2Ki_15:29.

Before the king of Assyria; in his presence, and by himself and his forces; for in Scripture use that is said to be before a man, which is in or is put into a man's power, as Gen_13:9 **20:15**, &c.; and men are said to be smitten *before their enemies*, when they are smitten by them, as Num_14:42 Deu_1:42 Jud_20:39, and oft elsewhere. Others refer this phrase to the ancient custom of conquerors, of sending or carrying their spoils before them into their own country.

Isaiah 8:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 8:6

This people; either,

1. The people of Judah, which are supposed to have grown weary of their present government, and out of distrust of God's protection designed to revolt from God, and from the house of David, and to put themselves under the power and protection of the kings of Syria and Israel. But there are no footsteps of any such design or practice of that people. And the following clause of rejoicing in Bezin, &c. cannot with any colour be ascribed to the Jews, whom at this time they sought to destroy. Or rather,

2. The people of Israel, of whom he last spake, Isa_8:4, and who are the chief subject of this whole prophecy, contained in this and the foregoing chapter; and who did rejoice not only in their own king Pekah, but also in the assistance of go powerful an ally as Rezin was.

Refuseth; or rather, despiseth, as the word properly and most frequently signifies.

The waters of Shiloah; that small and contemptible river or brook which ran by that city, which is here secretly opposed to the great rivers of Tigris and Euphrates, by which the Assyrian empire was fortified. Hereby he understands the munitions and strength of the Jews, which their enemies derided and contemned.

That go softly; gently, as little rivers do.

Isaiah 8:7

Therefore; because they despise the opposition which they have from Shiloah and Jerusalem, they shall have a more potent enemy.

Upon them; upon Israel. See on the foregoing verse. *Of the river of Euphrates, oft called*

the river, for its eminent greatness; whereby he understands the Assyrian forces, as the next words explain the metaphor.

All his glory; his numerous and puissant army, in which he gloried. See Isa_10:8.

He shall come up over all his channels; this great river shall overflow its own proper channels. The meaning is, This great monarch shall enlarge his dominions, and add the lands of Syria and Israel to them. Some render the words, *he shall come up with all his channels or streams* ; for the Hebrew particle all sometimes signifies with, as Job_38:30. But it seems hard to understand the same particle one way in this clause, and another in the last clause. Besides, the last clause favours the former interpretation, the same thing being repeated in it, as is usual in the sacred writings. Or this may be understood of the channels and banks of the people or land of Israel. The enemy being represented under the metaphor of a river breaking in upon their land, may fitly be said to overflow all their channels and banks, to wit, all places, both low and high, so that nothing shall be able to withstand his fury.

Isaiah 8:8

He; or, *it* , to wit, the river, Isa_8:7 which yet designs the same person and thing, to wit, the invasion of the king of Assyria.

Shall pass through Judah; and when he shall have finished his work against you, he shall invade the land of Judah, as Sennacherib did some few years after his conquest of Samaria, 2Ki_18:9,13.

He shall reach even to the neck; so as they shall be in great danger of being drowned or destroyed. He persists in the metaphor of a river swelling so high as to reach to a man's neck, and be ready to overwhelm him. Such was the danger of Judah's land,

when Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah, 2Ki_18:13, and sent his army against Jerusalem.

Of his wings; of his forces, or of the wings of his army, as they anciently were and still are called.

Of thy land, O Immanuel; of the land of Judah, so called because the Messiah, who is called by God himself Immanuel, Isa_7:14, should certainly be born, and live, and die there. And this is added emphatically for the consolation of God's people, to assure them, that notwithstanding this dreadful scourge, yet God would make a difference between Israel and Judah; and whereas Israel should be so broken by the Assyrian, that they should not be a people, as was threatened, Isa_7:8, Judah should be restored and preserved, for the sake of the Messiah, to be the place of his birth and ministry, according to that famous prophecy, Gen_49:10.

Isaiah 8:9

O ye people; Syrians and Israelites. Immanuel's name inspireth the prophet with new courage, and makes him send a challenge to all God's enemies, and foretell their certain downfall.

Ye of far countries; whosoever you be, whether far or near, who do or shall conspire against Immanuel's land.

Gird yourselves with sword and belt; prepare yourselves for war.

Ye shall be broken in pieces: this is repeated for the greater assurance of the thing, and the comfort of God's people, who are apt to despond upon such occasions.

Isaiah 8:10

Speak the word; declare and fix your purpose, and make your boast of it.

God is with us; the almighty and only true God fighteth for us, and against you. He gives the interpretation of the name Immanuel expressed before, Isa_8:8; for though the word in the Hebrew be the same here and them, yet there it seems to be taken properly, and here appellatively.

Isaiah 8:11

With a strong hand; with a vehement and more than ordinary inspiration, strongly imprinting it in my mind. *Of this people* ; of the generality of the people of Judah; whose eminent danger and calamity he foretells, Isa_8:8, but withal gives them full assurance that God would deliver them out of it, Isa_8:9,10; which he doth to aggravate the present sin of Ahaz and his people, in forsaking God, and seeking to the king of Assyria for help, as they did, 2Ki_16:6-8.

Isaiah 8:12

Say ye not, thou, Isaiah, and thine and my children, A confederacy; do not approve of or consent to this wicked design of making a confederacy with the king of Assyria.

Their fear; that thing which they fear, that if they do not call in the Assyrian succours, they shall certainly be destroyed by those two potent kings united against them, and that God either cannot or will not deliver them.

Isaiah 8:13

Sanctify the Lord of hosts; give him the glory of his power, and goodness, and faithfulness, by trusting to his promises for your deliverance.

Let him be your fear; let God, and not the kings of Syria and Israel, be the chief object of your fear.

Isaiah 8:14

Your sanctuary; a sure refuge to all that truly fear him, and rely upon him.

For a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence; an occasion of sin and ruin, at whom they will take offence and stumble, so as to fall and be broken, as it is expressed, Isa_8:15.

To both the houses of Israel; to the two royal families of Israel, largely so called; that of Judah, to wit, the house of David; and

that of Ephraim: or, to the two kingdoms, that of the ten tribes, and that of the two tribes.

For a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; which are distinctly mentioned, as a very observable and wonderful thing, because Jerusalem was the seat of the temple, and of God's solemn worship, where all the means of knowledge and grace were in greatest power and plenty, where the thrones of civil and ecclesiastical judicature were established, where the most wise and learned doctors had their constant or frequent abode. And that such a place and people should reject Immanuel, or their Messiah, when he should appear, was so great and strange an occurrence, that the prediction of it was highly necessary, lest otherwise, when it came to pass, it should shake the faith of all who did believe on him; whereas now the accomplishment hereof was a notable confirmation of their faith, and an evidence that Christ was the true Messiah.

Isaiah 8:15

Many among them; not all, for there shall be a remnant, as was foretold, Isa_4:2 **5:13**.

Shall stumble at that stone or rock, mentioned Isa_8:14. This was accomplished at the coming of the Messias, whom the Jews rejected to their own destruction.

Isaiah 8:16

These are, by the consent of all, God's words to the prophet. *By the testimony and the law or doctrine* (for so this word is frequently taken) he understands one and the same thing, as he doth also to wit, the word of God, and especially that which is the main scope and substance thereof, the doctrine of the Messias, which, though now professed by all the Israelites, shall be disowned by the generality of them, when the Messiah shall come.

Bind up and

seal are to be understood prophetically, Declare and prophesy that it shall be bound up and sealed; as Isaiah is said to *make fat* , and to *blind* , &c. Isa_6:10, and Jeremiah to *root out* and *pull down* , &c., Jer_1:10, when they foretell these events. Moreover, *bind up* and

seal design the same thing, and that is, either,

1. Security and certainty, as things are bound up or sealed that they may not be lost. So he signifies, that although this doctrine would be lost among the body of the Israelites, yet it should be preserved among his disciples. Or,

2. Secrecy, as many things are bound up or sealed that they may be hid from the eyes of others. And so he informeth them that this doctrine now was and should be hid in a great measure among all God's people, even till the accomplishment of it; and that even when it was accomplished, it should still continue to be as a secret and mystery, known indeed to his true disciples, but hid from the body of the nation, who would not see it, and therefore should be blinded by God's just judgment, that they should not see it, as was prophesied, Isa_6:9,**10**. Or,

3. Both security and secrecy, signifying that it should certainly be fulfilled, yet withal kept secret from the unbelieving Jews. For why may not these two be joined in the exposition of this text, as they were in the event? By God's *disciples* he means those who were *taught of God*, as it is expressed, Isa_54:13, where this very word is used; or, every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, and therefore cometh unto Christ, as it is explained, Joh_6:45.

Isaiah 8:17

And, or, as this particle is rendered Jer_2:32,**35**, and elsewhere, yet, notwithstanding this dreadful prophecy concerning the unbelief and rejection of Israel,

I will wait upon the Lord; I will refer myself and this matter unto God, casting my care upon him, and expecting the accomplishment of his promise in sending the Messiah, and in conferring upon me and all believing Israelites, all his mercies and blessings, to be procured by and through his blood and merits.

That hideth his face; that now doth, and threateneth that he will hereafter, withdraw his favour and blessing as this phrase signifies, Psa_10:1 **27:9**, and oft elsewhere.

From the house of Jacob; from the family or people of Israel.

I will look for him with an eye of faith and expectation, till his time cometh.

Isaiah 8:18

Behold; it is worthy of your observation and admiration. These words are literally spoken by Isaiah concerning himself, but withal mystically concerning Christ, of whom he speaks more frequently and fully than any other prophet, and of whom he was an evident type; and therefore they are fitly applied to Christ, Heb_2:13.

Children; either,

1. His natural children, whose very names were prophetical, and signs of future events, Isa_7:3 **8:3,4;** or,

2. His spiritual children, whom he had either begotten or brought up by his ministry. For the prophets were called fathers not only with respect to the young prophets, who were commonly called *the sons of the prophets* , but also in relation to others, as 2Ki_2:12 **13:14.** And this sense seems more probable than the former, because it agrees best,

1. With the following words, which seem to be too lofty and emphatical to be used concerning his natural children; for their prophetical names, which, if they were signs, could not properly be called

wonders.

2. With the context and scope of the place, which is to set forth the incredulity of the Israelites, and their contempt and rejection of Christ, and of all his faithful messengers, both the prophets, who were sent as harbingers before his coming, and the apostles, who were witnesses of his coming.

3. With Heb_2:13, where they are expounded of spiritual children.

Are for signs and for wonders in Israel; are a gazingstock to and admired by them, for our folly in believing God's promises. For so the believing Jews now were to Ahaz and the generality of the people, who thought it their wisdom and interest to procure aid from Assyria, and esteemed those fools who, upon pretence of relying upon God, would neglect so great an advantage. And so

the prophet foretells that they should be when the Messiah did come; which is the mystical, as the other is the literal sense; and so both of them may be meant in this place.

In Israel; even amongst the Israelites, who have been taught and do profess better things.

From the Lord of hosts; which come to pass by the wise counsel and providence of God, in which I willingly acquiesce.

Which dwelleth in Mount Zion; where the temple now was, and where the Messiah was to set up his kingdom.

Isaiah 8:19

When they, the Israelites, to whom I and my children are signs and wonders, who are fallen from God, and his true religion and worship, into superstition and idolatry, and will endeavour to seduce you into the same impiety, shall say unto you, my children, whom the prophet here arms against the common temptation.

Seek unto them for advice and help, and seek no more to the prophets, who have hitherto deluded you with vain words. This was the counsel of the ungodly and unbelieving Jews.

Wizards; of whom see Lev_19:31 **20:27** Deu_18:11.

That peep, and that mutter; that speak with a puling and low voice, as these two words signify; which they affected to do, speaking rather inwardly in their bellies, than outwardly and audibly with their mouths and voice, as the title of *ventriloqui* , commonly given to them, signifies.

Should not a people seek unto their God? this answer the prophet puts into their mouths, to the foregoing counsel. Doth not every nation, in cases of difficulty or distress, seek to their own gods for relief? Much more should we do so, that have the only true God for our God.

For the living to the dead; shall they seek (which words are easily understood out of the foregoing clause) for the living, &c? That living men should inquire of the living God is proper and reasonable; but it is highly absurd for them to forsake him, and to seek to dead idols, either to the images, or to the spirits of dead men, which are supposed to dwell and speak in them.

Isaiah 8:20

To the law and to the testimony; let this dispute between you and them be determined by God's word, which is here and in many other places called

the law, to signify their obligation to believe and obey it; and the testimony, because it is a witness between God and man of God's mind and will, and of man's duty; and so these two titles contain two arguments against these idolatrous practices.

If they; your antagonists, that seek to pervert you, Isa_8:19.

It is because there is no light in them; this proceeds from the darkness of their minds, because they are blind, and will not see, and God hath shut their eyes that they cannot see. But these words are by divers learned interpreters understood not as a declaration of their ignorance, but a commination and prediction of their misery, *light* being most commonly used in Scripture for comfort and happiness, and darkness for sorrows and calamities. And this sense seems to be much favoured by the following passages. And then the words may be thus rendered, *assuredly* (for the Hebrew particle *asher* is frequently used as a note of asseveration, as 1Sa_15:20 Psa_10:6 **95:11**, &c., as hath been more than once observed before) no light or morning light shall be (for that may as well be understood as is) *to them* ; a night of misery shall come upon them, and they shall never have a morning of deliverance from it; they shall be swallowed up in endless calamities.

Isaiah 8:21

And they, the idolatrous and apostatical Israelites,

shall pass through it, or, *in it* , to wit, their own land, which is easily understood out of the context, and from the phrase itself; the pronoun relative being put without an antecedent, as it is in other places, which have been formerly noted. They shall either pass through it into captivity, or wander hither and thither in it, like distracted men, not knowing whither to go, nor what to do; whereas if they had not forsaken God, they might have had a quiet and settled abode in it.

Hardly bestead; sorely distressed, as this word is used, Gen_35:16 Job_30:25; and hungry; destitute of food, and of all necessaries, which are oft signified by food. Curse their king;

either because he doth not relieve them, or because by his foolish counsels and courses he brought them into these miseries.

Their God; either,

1. The true God; or rather,
2. Their idols, to whom they trusted, and whom they now find too late unable to help them.

Look upward to heaven for help, as men of all nations and religions in great calamities use to do.

Isaiah 8:22

They shall look unto the earth; finding no help from heaven, they turn their eyes downward, looking hither and thither for comfort.

Trouble and darkness. &c.; many words expressing the same thing are put together, to signify the variety, and extremity, and continuance of their miseries.

Isaiah 9:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 9

Joy in the midst of affliction, Isa_9:1-5. The birth, person, office, and kingdom of Christ, Isa_9:6,7. Judgments for their pride, Isa_9:8-12; for their impenitency and hypocrisy, Isa_9:13-21.

The dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation: the words thus rendered contain a mitigation of the foregoing threatening; and so the sense of the verse may be this, The calamity of this land and its inhabitants shall be great, yet not such as that which was brought upon the kingdom of the ten tribes by the king of Assyria, who at first indeed dealt more gently with them, but afterwards quite rooted them out, and carried them away into a dreadful captivity, from whence they were not to return, no, not when the Messiah came into the world; for after this darkness of which I have now spoken, there shall come a glorious light, as it follows in the next verse. The Dutch interpreters take it in the same sense, and render the words thus, *But the land that was distressed shall not be utterly darkened* . To the same purpose they may be thus rendered, according to the Hebrew, *But darkness shall not be* (i.e. shall not abide or continue; for to be is sometimes

put for to *abide* or *continue to be* , as 1Sa_12:14 Pro_23:5 Mat_17:4 Heb_8:4) *unto her* , (to wit, the land, which by the consent of interpreters is understood here, as it was Isa_8:21) to whom this distress is or shall be. She shall be distressed and darkened, as I said before, Isa_8:22, but not irrecoverably, nor for ever. Some understand the words to be an aggravation of the darkness or misery threatened Isa_8:22, rendering the words thus, *for the dimness shall not be* , &c. And so the sense is, This shall not be so slight an affliction as that which befell them by Pul, 2Ki_15:19, nor as that which succeeded it by Tiglathpileser, who, at the desire of Ahaz, did about this time make another invasion into the land of Israel, 2Ki_15:29, and was a heavier stroke than the former; but this shall be far heavier than either of them. But the former sense seems better to agree, both with the following verses, and with Mat_4:14-16, where these words are expounded as a promise, and said to be fulfilled by Christ's preaching the gospel in these parts. *At the first* ; in the first invasion which the king of Assyria made upon Israel. *He* , to wit, God, who is oft understood in such cases, and who is here supposed to be the author or inflicter of this judgment. Or it is an impersonal speech, *he afflicted* for *was afflicted* , than which nothing is more common in the Hebrew language. *Lightly afflicted* ; either,

1. By Pul; or rather,

2. By Tiglath-pileser, who at this time invaded and subdued these parts, as it is expressed, 2Ki_15:29; *the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali* : these parts are particularly mentioned, because this storm fell most heavily upon them; but under them the other parts of the land are understood by a common figure called synecdoche. *Did more grievously afflict her* ; either,

1. By Tiglath-pileser; or rather,

2. By Shalmaneser, who took Samaria, and carried Israel into captivity, 2Ki_17:5,6; of which calamity, though yet to come, the prophet speaks as if it were past, as the manner of the prophet is. *By the way of the sea* ; in that part of the land which bordereth upon the sea, to wit, the lake of Gennesaret, which is very commonly called a sea, as Mat_4:18 Joh_21:1, &c., and upon which the portions of Zebulun and Naphtali bordered. *Beyond*

Jordan ; or, on this side Jordan; for this preposition is used both ways, and this land might be said to be either *beyond* or *on this side Jordan* , in divers respects. *Galilee of the nations* , or *Galilee of the Gentiles* , to wit, the *Upper Galilee* , so called because it bordered upon the Gentiles. But this last clause, and the two foregoing clauses, are otherwise rendered and interpreted by divers learned men, as a prophecy concerning the light of the gospel that should shine in those parts: *As at the first time* (to wit, in the former ages of the Israelitish church and commonwealth) *he made the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali vile or contemptible* ; (as he might be said to have done, partly, by putting those people at so great a distance from his sanctuary; partly, by exposing them to some calamities which other tribes escaped; and partly, by denying them those honours and privileges which he afforded to other tribes, of which see Joh_7:52, *Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet* ; and Joh_1:46, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ?* which was an eminent city of Galilee;) so in the *latter* or *last* time (to wit, in the days of the Messiah, or of the gospel, which are frequently so called in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament) *he made it* (i.e. he will make it, for the prophet speaks of things to come as past, as he doth most commonly in this prophecy) *glorious* (to wit, by Christ's first preaching the gospel in those parts) *in* or *towards the way of the sea* , (to wit, of Galilee or Gennesaret,) *beyond* or *on this side Jordan*, *in Galilee of the Gentiles* : which interpretation I thought fit to propose, as deserving further consideration.

Isaiah 9:2

The people; the people of God, Israel and Judah, and especially those of them mentioned in the foregoing verse.

Walked; in Mat_4:16, it is *sat* . It notes not their gesture, but their state or condition, they lived or abode. Only *walking in darkness* is more perilous than sitting. *Darkness* : the expression is general, and so may well comprehend both the darkness of calamity, and the darkness of ignorance, and idolatry, and profaneness, in which those parts were eminently involved, by reason of their great distance from God's sanctuary, and by their frequent converse with the Gentiles, who bordered upon them, and of which this place is expounded, **Mt 4**.

Have seen, i.e. shall see, at the coming of the Messiah.

The land of the shadow of death; which notes both extreme, and dangerous, or deadly darkness.

Isaiah 9:3

Thou hast multiplied the nation; thou hast made good thy promise to Abraham concerning the multiplication of his seed, Gen_15:5 **22:17**, by adding his spiritual seed unto the carnal, by gathering in the Gentiles to the Jews, and making them both one people in Christ, Joh_10:16 Eph_2:14, &c. For in Scripture account the believing Gentiles are the seed of Abraham as well as the Jews; of which see Gal_3:7-9. Or,

thou hast magnified the nation; honoured them with peculiar privileges above all other nations, and especially with this transcendent privilege, that the Messiah and Saviour of the world should be born of them, and live among them; of which he speaks more fully Isa_9:6,7.

And not increased the joy; or, yet *not increased their joy* ; which might very truly and fitly be said of the Jewish nation upon this occasion, partly because they did not rejoice in the conversion of the Gentiles, as they should have done, but murmured, and grieved, and stumbled at it; and partly because, through their perverseness and unbelief, that would be unto them an occasion of their utter ruin, the conversion of the Gentiles being attended with the rejection of the Jews. But because this translation seems not to agree with the following words, which ascribe great joy to them, some render the words otherwise; either thus, and

wilt thou not increase their joy? to which question the next words give an affirmative answer. So the Hebrew particle *lo* is put interrogatively for *halo* , as it is in many other places, which I have formerly observed. Or thus, and *hast increased to it* , or *him* , or *them* (to that nation) *their joy* . For though the Hebrew *lo* be written like an adverb, yet it may be read like a pronoun, as it is both by Jewish and Christian interpreters acknowledged to be in many places; of which see more in my Latin Synopsis.

They joy before thee; in thy presence, and in the place of thy worship; not with a carnal and worldly, but with a spiritual and

religious joy, giving thee the praise and glory of all thy favours afforded to them.

According to the joy in harvest; when men receive with great joy that for which they have laboured much and long waited. See Psa_126:5,6.

When they divide the spoil; when, after a bloody fight, and a glorious victory, they come to take the spoil.

Isaiah 9:4

Thou hast broken: this notes the matter and occasion of the foregoing joy.

The yoke of his burden; his burdensome and heavy yoke, as *the throne of holiness* is put for *the holy throne* , Psa_47:8.

The staff of his shoulder; either the staff wherewith his shoulders were smitten, or the staff or staves by which he was forced to carry burdens upon his shoulders.

The rod, wherewith he beat him. Or, *the sceptre* ; the power and tyranny which he exercised over him.

Of his oppressor; of all his oppressors, but especially of sin and of the devil.

As in the day of Midian; when God destroyed the Midianites in so admirable a manner, and by such unlikely and contemptible means, by three hundred men, and they not fighting, but only holding lamps in their hands, and sounding their trumpets; which was an eminent type of Christ's conquering the devil, and all his enemies, by dying upon the cross, and by the preaching of a few unlearned and despicable persons, &c.

Isaiah 9:5

With confused noise; with the triumphant exclamations of the conqueror, and the bitter lamentations of the conquered, and the differing cries of the same persons, sometimes conquering, and sometimes conquered.

And garments rolled in blood; with great difficulty and slaughter.

But this shall be with burning and fuel of fire; but this victory which God's people shall have over all their enemies, shall be more easy to them, and more terrible to their adversaries, whom God will suddenly and utterly consume, as it were by fire.

Isaiah 9:6

Having spoken of the glorious light, and joy, and victory of God's people, he now proceeds to show the ground of it, and by what person these things are procured.

Unto us; unto us Jews, of whom Christ was born, and to whom he was primarily sent, Mat_15:24, for our use and benefit.

A Child; the Messiah, by the consent of interpreters, not only Christian, but Jewish; for so the ancient Hebrew doctors understood the place, and particularly the Chaldee paraphrast; although the later Jews, out of opposition to Christ, wrest it to Hezekiah; which extravagant conceit, as it hath no foundation at all in that or any other text of Scripture, and therefore may be rejected without any further reason, so it is fully confuted by the following titles, which are such as cannot without blasphemy and nonsense be ascribed to Hezekiah, nor indeed to any mere mortal man, as we shall see. But all the following particulars do so truly and exactly agree to Christ, that they cannot without great violence be alienated from him, or ascribed to any other.

Is born, for *shall be born* , as the prophets generally speak.

A Son; so he determines the sex of the child. Or, *the Son* , to wit, of the virgin, of whom I spake before, Isa_7:14.

Is given; is freely and graciously given to us by God. Other children also are said to be given by God, **Ge 30 6 48:9**, but this in a peculiar manner, and therefore he is called *the gift of God* , Joh_4:10.

The government, to wit, of Israel, or of God's people, to whom he is given,

shall be upon his shoulder, i.e. upon him, or in his hands. He mentions *shoulders* , because great burdens are commonly laid upon men's shoulders; and as all government, if it be rightly managed, so this especially, is a very heavy burden, requiring extraordinary care, and diligence, and self-denial. Possibly here

may be also an allusion to the ancient custom of carrying the ensigns of government before the magistrate upon the shoulders of their officers; or to the cross of Christ, which was laid upon his shoulders, Joh_19:17, which also was the way to his kingdom or government, Luk_24:26.

His name shall be called; either,

1. He shall be called; for names are oft put for persons, as Act_1:15 Rev_3:4 **11:13**. Or,

2. His name shall be; for *to be called* in Scripture is oft put for *to be*, as I have noted before on Isa_1:26, and oft elsewhere. But this is not to be taken for a description of his proper name, by which he should be commonly called, but of his glorious nature and qualities. See my notes on Isa_7:14.

Wonderful, Counsellor: these words may be taken either,

1. Severally, as they are in our translation, and by many others. This the Jews apply to Hezekiah, who, as they say, is called *wonderful*, because of the miracle which God wrought for him, 2Ki_20:2, &c.; and *counsellor*, because he took counsel with his princes about God's worship, and the defence of the city, 2Ch_29:4, &c., and gave good counsel to others; which ridiculous account is sufficient to overthrow that exposition. But they agree most eminently to the Lord Christ, who is truly wonderful, in his person, and natures, and words, and works, being made up of wonders, in whom there was nothing which was not wonderful; who also may well be called *Counsellor*, because he knew the whole counsel of God, and (so far as it was necessary) revealed it to us, and is the great Counsellor of his church and people in all their doubts and difficulties. Or,

2. Jointly,

wonderful Counsellor; which may seem best to agree both with the following titles, each of which is made up of two words, and with Isa_28:29, where God is called *wonderful in counsel*, and makes the title more full and emphatical. To call Christ simply a *Counsellor*, may seem too mean a character, being common to many others with him; but to say he is a *wonderful Counsellor*, is a singular commendation. And so Christ is, because he hath been

the Counsellor of his church in all ages, and the author and giver of all those excellent counsels delivered not only by the apostles, but also by the prophets, as is evident from 1Pe_1:10,11, and hath gathered, and enlarged, and preserved his church by admirable counsels and methods of his providence, and, in a word, hath in him *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* , Col 2 3.

The mighty God: this title can agree to no man but Christ, who was God as well as man, to whom the title of *God* or *Jehovah* is given, both in the Old and New Testament, as Jer_23:6 Joh_1:1 Rom_9:5, and in many other places. And it is a most true observation, that this Hebrew word *El* is never used in the singular number, of any creature, but only of the Almighty God, as is evident by perusing all the texts where this word is used. And although the title of *Elohim* , which is of the plural number, be twice or thrice given to some men, yet there is constantly added some diminishing expression to it, as when they are said to *be afraid* , Job_41:25, and to *die* , Psa_49:10; whereas here he adds the epithet of mighty, which is ascribed to the great God, Deu_10:17, and elsewhere.

The everlasting Father, Heb. *the Father of eternity* , Having called him a *Child* , and a *Son* in respect of his human nature, lest this should be misinterpreted to his disparagement, he adds that he is *a Father also* , even *the God and Father of all things* ; the work of creation being common and commonly ascribed to each of the persons of the blessed Trinity, the Maker and Upholder of all creatures, as he is said to be, Joh_1:3 Heb_1:3, and the Father of all believers, who are called his *children* , Heb_2:13, and *the Father of eternity* ; either,

1. The first *author* (such persons being called fathers, as Gen_4:20, and elsewhere) *of eternal salvation* , as he is called, Heb_5:9. Or,

2. As we render it, *the everlasting Father* , who, though as man he was then unborn, yet was and is from everlasting to everlasting. They who apply this to Hezekiah render it, *the father of an age* , and expound this of his long life and numerous posterity; which I the rather mention, to show what absurd shifts they are forced to use who interpret this text of any other but Christ. For he did not

live very long, nor had he, that we read of, more than one son, Manasseh. And if both these things had been true of him, they were more eminently true of many other men. Besides, this Hebrew word being used of God, as here it is of him who was now called *the mighty God* , constantly signifies eternity, as Isa_26:4 **57:15**, &c.

The Prince of peace: this title doth not fully agree to Hezekiah, whose reign was not free from wars, as we see, **2Ki 18**; but it agrees exactly to Christ, who is called *our peace* , Mic_5:5 Eph_2:14, and is the only purchaser and procurer of peace between God and men, Isa_53:5, and of peace between men and men, Jews and Gentiles, Eph_2:15, and of the peace of our own consciences, and leaves peace as his legacy to his disciples, Joh_14:27 **16:33**.

Isaiah 9:7

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; his peaceable and happy government shall be enlarged without end; either without end of duration, for ever; but that is expressed in a following clause of this verse: or without end of limitation, or without bounds. It shall not be confined to a narrow spot of ground, the land of Canaan, but shall be extended far and wide to all the ends of the earth.

The throne of David; which was promised to David, and to his seed for ever.

With judgment and with justice; not with oppression and tyranny, by which other kingdoms are commonly managed, but by the administration of justice.

From henceforth even for ever; from the beginning of it unto all eternity.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this; this great work, which surpasseth all the power and skill of men, shall be brought to pass by Almighty God, out of that fervent affection which he hath to his own name and glory, and to the honour of his dearly beloved Son, and unto his church and people.

Isaiah 9:8

Sent a word; a prophetic and threatening message by me; for now the prophet, having inserted some consolatory passages for the support of God's faithful people, returns to his former work of commination against the rebellious Israelites.

It lighted, Heb. *it fell* , i.e. it shall fall, in the prophetic style. It shall certainly be accomplished.

Israel; the same with Jacob in the former clause, the posterity of Jacob or Israel.

Isaiah 9:9

Shall know, to wit, by experience; they shall know whether my word be true or false; they shall feel the effects of it.

Even Ephraim; the people of the ten tribes, and particularly Ephraim, the strongest and proudest of them all.

The inhabitant of Samaria; the strongest place, and the seat of the king and court, who were most secure and presumptuous.

That say within themselves, and one to another. They purpose and boast of it.

Isaiah 9:10

The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones. It is true, we have received some damages from our enemies; but Rezin and the Syrians being now our friends and confederates, we doubt not we shall quickly repair them with great glory and advantage.

Sycamores; wild fig trees, a contemptible sort of trees, if compared with cedars, 1Ki_10:27.

We will change them into cedars; putting cedars into our buildings instead of sycamores. See Jer_22:13,15.

Isaiah 9:11

Therefore; to chastise your pride, and defeat your hopes and resolutions.

Set up, Heb. *exalt* ; advance their power, and give them success against him.

The adversaries of Rezin; the Assyrians, who, presently after this prophecy, fought and prevailed against him, 2Ki_16:7. He mentions Rezin, partly because he was confederate with Ephraim, and so his enemies were their enemies also, and partly because the Israelites trusted to his powerful assistance.

Against him; either,

1. Against Rezin last mentioned; or rather,
2. Against Ephraim or Israel, who may easily be understood either from the foregoing or following verse; for against them this prophecy is directed, and of them he speaks both in the next clause of this verse, and in the next verse; and it seems reasonable that *him* in this clause, and *his* in the next clause, should be understood of the same persons.

Join, Heb. *mingle* , i.e. unite them so that they shall agree together to fight against Israel, and shall invade him from several quarters.

His; not Rezin's, but Ephraim's, as appears from the next verse, which is added to explain this clause.

Isaiah 9:12

The Syrians; for although Rezin king of Syria was destroyed, yet the body of the nation survived, and submitted themselves to the king of Assyria, and served under him in his wars, and upon his command invaded Israel afterwards.

Before, Heb. *on the east* ; for Syria stood eastward from Israel.

The Philistines behind; on the western side of the land of Israel.

With open mouth; like wild and furious beasts, with great greediness and cruelty.

His hand is stretched out still; his justice is not fully satisfied, but he will yet take further vengeance upon them.

Isaiah 9:13

Turneth not from their wicked courses unto God by true repentance.

Neither do they seek the Lord of hosts; they do not study and endeavour to procure his favour by sincere and fervent supplication, and by removing the causes of his just displeasure.

Isaiah 9:14

Head and tail; high and low, honourable and contemptible, as the next verse explains it.

Branch; the goodly branches of tall and strong trees, the mighty and noble.

Rush; the bulrush, the weakest and meanest persons.

In one day; all together, one as well as another, without any distinction.

Isaiah 9:15

He is, i.e. signifies, as that word is commonly used in the Hebrew tongue, as Gen_41:26,27, and every where.

The prophet that teacheth lies; whose destruction he mentions, not as if it were a punishment to them to be deprived of such persons, but partly to show the extent of the calamity, that it should reach all sorts of persons; and partly to beat down their vain presumptions of peace and prosperity, by showing that those false prophets, which had fed their vain hopes, should perish, and all their false prophecies of peace with them.

He is the tail; these I mean by the tail, as being in' truth the basest part of the whole body of the people.

Isaiah 9:16

The leaders; their governors, both civil and ecclesiastical, and especially the latter, their teachers, even the false prophets last mentioned. Or, *they that bless or praise them*, to wit, the false prophets, that flatter them in their wicked ways, with hopes and promises of peace, as their manner was, **Jer 6 14 28:9**. Both ways the sense is the same.

Cause them to err; either compelling them by power, or deceiving them by false doctrines and evil counsels and persuasions.

Are destroyed; shall certainly perish; nor will it excuse them that they followed the counsel and conduct of their leaders.

Isaiah 9:17

Shall have no joy in their young men; shall not rejoice over them to do them good, as he doth to his people, Isa_62:5

Zep_3:17; will not have mercy or pity on them, as the next clause explains it. but will abhor and utterly destroy them; for more is here intended than is expressed, as Pro_17:21.

Neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows, who are the special objects of his care and pity, Deu_16:11,14 24:19,20, and much less upon others.

Every one; not precisely, for there were seven thousand elect persons among them, when they seemed to Elijah to be universally corrupt, 1Ki_19:18; but the body or generality of the people.

Is an hypocrite; for though they professed to worship and serve the true God, yet indeed they had forsaken him. Or, *a profane person* , as this word is rendered, Jer_23:15, as also Isa_32:6.

An evil-doer; elsewhere called a worker of iniquity, as Job_31:3 Psa_5:5 Mat_7:23; one that gives up himself to a constant course and custom of sinning.

Speaketh folly, i.e. wickedness, which is commonly called folly. They are not ashamed to proclaim their own wickedness, and the corruption of their hearts breaketh forth into ungodly speeches.

Isaiah 9:18

Wickedness burneth, i.e. shall burn you, as it follows, shall devour. Your

iniquity shall be your ruin, as God threatens, Eze_18:30.

The briers and thorns; either,

1. The wicked, who are oft compared to *briers and thorns* , as 2Sa_23:6 Isa_27:4; or rather,

2. The low and mean persons; for these are opposed to

the thickets of the forest, in the next clause. *In the thickets of the forest* ; in the wood, where the trees are tall, and stand thick, having their boughs entangled together, which makes them more ready both to catch and to spread the fire.

Like the lifting up of smoke; sending up smoke like a vast furnace. Heb. with *height* or *pride of smoke* , i.e. with aspiring

smoke, which in that case riseth high, and spreadeth far, and filleth all the neighbouring air.

Isaiah 9:19

Darkened, either with the smoke last mentioned, or with misery. Or, *burnt up* , as the LXX., Chaldee, and Arabic interpreters render it.

No man shall spare his brother; they shall destroy one another, as they did in their civil wars, which were frequent among them. The name *brother* is oft largely used among the Hebrews, even of the remoter kindred, yea, of the fellow members of one city, or tribe, or nation.

Isaiah 9:20

Shall snatch; every one shall greedily and violently seize upon any provisions that come in his way; which implies, either great scarcity, or insatiable covetousness, as is manifest from the next clause.

Shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm; either,

1. Properly; so it notes extreme famine; in which case men are apt to eat their own flesh. Compare Jer_19:9. Or,
2. Metaphorically, which seems best to suit with the following verse, the flesh of his brethren by nation and religion, which are as it were our own flesh, and are so called, Isa_58:7 Zec_11:9; and, consequently, the flesh of their arm is in a manner the flesh of our own arm. And one tribe was to another as an arm, i.e. a support or strength, which is called *an arm* , 2Ch_32:8 Jer_17:5, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 9:21

Manasseh, Ephraim; though more near and dear to one another than any other tribe, being both sons of Joseph.

They together shall be against Judah; which might be accomplished either before Shalmaneser took Samaria, or afterwards. For though the Israelites were miserably destroyed at that time, yet they were not utterly rooted out; of which **See Poole** "Isa_7:8".

Isaiah 10:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 10

The woe of unjust oppressors, Isa_10:1-4: of Assyria for their pride and ambition: his folly in it, Isa_10:5-19. A remnant of Israel shall be saved, and that speedily, Isa_10:20-27. Sennacherib marching toward Jerusalem, Isa_10:28-31. His judgment, Isa_10:32-34.

Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees! unto those magistrates who make unjust laws, and give unjust sentences.

That write; either,

1. The scribes, who were assistant to the magistrates, and oftentimes did promote or execute such decrees; or,
2. The unjust magistrates, whose decrees were usually written. So the same thing is repeated in other words. Only this *writing* may note their obstinacy or perseverance in their unjust decrees, and their proceeding to the execution of them.

Grievousness; grievous things, such unjust decrees as cause grief and vexation to their subjects.

Isaiah 10:2

From judgment; or, *from their right*, as it is in the next clause; or, from obtaining a just sentence, because they either denied or delayed to hear their causes, or gave a wrong sentence.

From the poor, whom I have in a special manner committed to your care.

Of my people; of Israelites. who profess themselves to be my people, and whom I did take into covenant with myself; and therefore this is an injury not only to them, but to me also.

Isaiah 10:3

What will ye do to save yourselves? In the day of visitation: when I shall come to visit you in wrath, as the next words limit it, and as this phrase is oft used; although sometimes it signifies a visitation in mercy, as Luk_19:14, and elsewhere.

From far; from the Assyrians. This he adds, because the Israelites, having weakened the Jews, and being in amity with the Syrians their next neighbours, were secure.

To whom will ye flee for help? to the Syrians, as now you do? But they shall be destroyed together with you, as they were, **2Ki 16**.

Where will you leave, to be kept safe for your use, and to be restored to you when you call for it, your glory? either,

1. Your power and authority, which now you so wickedly abuse; or,

2. Your wealth, got by injustice, as glory is taken, Gen_31:1 Psa_49:16,17, &c.

Isaiah 10:4

Without me they shall bow down: the words thus translated seem to contain an answer to the foregoing questions: In vain do you seek for a refuge and help from others; for without me, without my favour and help which you have forfeited, and do not seek to recover, and which I shall withdraw from you, or because you are without me, or forsaken by me,

you shall bow down, notwithstanding all your succours. In the Hebrew here is a change of the person and number, which is very usual in prophetic writings. The LXX., and some others, join these words to the foregoing verse, and translate them thus, *that you may not bow down* : so the sense of the place is, What will you do to prevent your captivity or slaughter? And it is true, that the first word is elsewhere taken for a negative particle. But the former translation seems more genuine.

Under the prisoners; or rather, *in the place* (as this particle signifies, and is rendered by interpreters, Gen_30:2 **50:19** Exo_16:29 Jos_5:8, and elsewhere) *of the prisoners* , or among *the prisoners* ; and so in the next clause, *among* or *in the place of the slain* .

Isaiah 10:5

O Assyrian: so it is God's call or invitation to him to take the charge, and set upon the work. Or, *Woe to the Assyrian* ! because though he do my work, yet he doth it in a wicked manner, and for wicked ends, as we shall see.

The rod of mine anger; the instrument of mine anger. wherewith I shall chastise my people.

The staff in their hand is mine indignation; mine anger against my people puts the weapons of war into their hand, and gives them strength and success in this expedition.

Isaiah 10:6

I will send him, not by express commission, but by the secret yet powerful conduct of my providence, giving him both occasion and inclination to this expedition. Hypocritical: **See Poole "Isa_9:17"**.

The people of my wrath; the objects of my just wrath, devoted to destruction.

Give him a charge, by putting this instinct into his mind.

To tread them down like the mire of the streets; which signifies that he should easily conquer them, and utterly destroy them, as he did after this time.

Isaiah 10:7

He meaneth not so; he doth not at all design the execution of my will. and the glory of my justice, in punishing mine enemies; but only to enlarge his own empire, and satisfy his own lusts; which is seasonably added, to justify God in his judgments threatened to the Assyrian, notwithstanding this service.

To destroy and cut off nations not a few; to sacrifice multitudes of people to his own ambition and covetousness; which is abominable impiety.

Isaiah 10:8

Equal for power, and wealth, and glory to the kings of other nations, though my subjects and servants.

Isaiah 10:9

Is not Calno as Carchemish? have not I conquered one place as well as another, the stronger as well as the weaker? Have I not from time to time added new conquests to the old? *Calno* seems to be the same with *Calneh* , Gen_10:10 Amo_6:2, a great and strong city. *Carchemish* was a city upon Euphrates, of which 2Ch_35:20 Jer_46:2.

Is not Hamath as Arpad? Hamath was an eminent city of Syria, not far from Euphrates, called *Hemath* , or *Hamath the great* , Amo_6:2; of which see 2Ki_14:28 **17:24** Jer_49:23. *Arpad* seems

to have been an obscure place, not being elsewhere named. Is not that as soon conquered as this?

Is not Samaria as Damascus? or, shall *not Samaria be as Damascus* ? Shall I not take that as I have done this city? For although Damascus possibly was not yet taken by the Assyrian, yet the prophet speaks of it as actually taken, because these words are prophetically delivered, and supposed to be uttered by the king of Assyria at or about the siege of Samaria, when Damascus was taken.

Isaiah 10:10

Hath found, i.e. hath taken, as this word is used, Pro_1:13, and oft elsewhere, the antecedent being put for the consequent, because what men find they commonly take to themselves.

The kingdoms of the idols; which worshipped their own proper idols, and vainly imagined that they could protect them from power. He calls the gods of the several nations, not excepting Jerusalem, idols, by way of contempt, because none of them could deliver their people out of his hands, as he brags, Isa_37:11,12, and because he judged them to be but petty gods, far inferior to the sun, which was the great god of the Assyrians.

Excel them, to wit, in reputation and strength; which blasphemy of his proceeded from his deep ignorance of the true God.

Isaiah 10:11

I shall certainly do it, and neither God nor man can hinder me.

Isaiah 10:12

Wherefore; because of this impudent blasphemy.

Hath performed his whole work, of chastising his people so long and so much as he sees fit and necessary for them.

Punish, Heb. *visit* , to wit, in wrath, as before on Isa_10:3.

The glory of his high looks; his insolent words and carriage, proceeding from intolerable pride of heart.

Isaiah 10:13

He saith, not only within himself, but before his courtiers and others.

By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; I owe all my successes to my own power, and valour, and wise conduct, and to no other god or man.

I have removed the bounds; I have invaded their lands, and added them to my own dominions, as this phrase is used, Pro_22:28 Hos_5:10.

Their treasures, Heb. *their prepared things* , their gold and silver, and other precious things, which they had long been preparing and laying in store.

I have put down; deprived of their former glory and power.

" Isaiah 10:14

Hath found as a nest; as one findeth young birds in a nest, the nest being put for the birds in it, as Deu_32:11. No less easily do I both find and take them.

Eggs that are left; which the dam hath left in her nest. This is more easy than the former; for the young birds might possibly make some faint resistance, or flutter away; but the eggs could do neither.

All the earth; all the riches of the earth or world. An hyperbole not unusual in the mouths of such persons, upon such occasions.

That moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped; as birds do, which, when they see and cannot hinder the robbing of their nests, express their grief and anger by hovering about them, and by mournful cries.

Isaiah 10:15

Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?

How absurd and unreasonable a thing is it for thee, who art but an instrument in God's hand, and canst do nothing without his leave and help, to blaspheme thy Lord and Master, who hath as great a power over thee, to manage thee as he pleaseth, as a man hath over the axe wherewith he heweth!

As if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up; or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by other interpreters, as if a rod should shake (i.e. shall pretend to shake, or should boast that it

would or could shake; which may easily be understood out of the foregoing words) them

that lift it up. As if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood; as if a staff should forget that it was wood, and should pretend or attempt to lift up itself either without or against the man that moveth it; which is absurd in the very supposition of it, and were much more unreasonable in the practice. Nor are thy boasts less ridiculous.

Isaiah 10:16

The Lord of hosts; the sovereign Lord and General of thine and all other armies.

Send among his fat ones leanness; strip him, and all his great princes and commanders, of all their wealth, and might, and glory. He shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire; he will destroy his numerous and victorious army, and that suddenly and irrecoverably, as the fire doth those combustible things which are cast into it; which was fulfilled 2Ki_19:25.

Isaiah 10:17

The light of Israel, that God who is and will be a comfortable light to his people,

shall be for a fire to the Assyrians who shall have heat without light, as it is in hell.

His thorns and briers; his vast army, which is no more able to resist God, than dry thorns and briers are to oppose the fire which is kindled among them.

Isaiah 10:18

Of his forrest; of his great army, which may not unfitly be compared to a forest, either for the multitude of their spears, which, when lifted up together, resemble the trees of a wood or forest; or for the numbers of men, which stood as thick as trees do in a forest. *Of his fruitful field* ; of his soldiers, which stood as thick as ears of corn do in a fruitful field. Heb. *of his Carmel* ; wherein it is not improbably conjectured by our late most learned Mr. Gataker, that there is an allusion to that brag of the Assyrian, who threatens that he would *go up to the sides of* (Israel's) *Lebanon* , and to *the forest of his Carmel* , and there *cut down the*

tall cedars thereof : which though it was not uttered by the Assyrian till some years after this time, yet was exactly foreknown to God, who *understandeth men's thoughts* , and much more their words, *afar off* , Psa_139:2-4, and therefore might direct the prophet to use the same words, and to turn them against himself; Whereas thou threatenest to destroy Israel's Carmel, I will destroy thy Carmel

Both soul and body, i.e. totally, both inwardly and outwardly, both strength and life. Heb. *from the soul to the flesh* ; which may possibly signify the manner of their death, which should be by a sudden stroke of the destroying angel upon their inward and vital parts, which was speedily followed by the consumption of their flesh. See Isa_37:35,36.

They shall be, the state of that king, and of his great and valiant army, shall be,

as when a standard-bearer fainteth; like that of an army when their standard-bearer either is slain, or rather flees away, which strikes a panic terror into the whole army, and puts them to flight.

Isaiah 10:19

The rest of the trees of his forest; the remainders of that mighty host.

That a child may write them; that they may be easily numbered by the meanest accountant. A child may be their muster-master.

Isaiah 10:20

The remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob; such Jews as shall be preserved from that sweeping Assyrian scourge, by which great numbers both of Israel and Judah were destroyed, and from their succeeding calamities. For that this place looks beyond the deliverance from the Assyrian army, and unto the times of the New Testament, seems probable,

1. From the following verses, which belong to that time, as we shall see.

2. From the state of the Jewish nation, which, after that deliverance, continued to be very sad and corrupt, and averse from that reformation which Hezekiah and Josiah prosecuted with all

their might; and therefore the body of that people had not yet learned this lesson of sincere trusting in God alone.

3. From St. Paul's explication and application of these words, Rom_9:27, of which more may be said when I come thither. And for the words *in that day*, which may seem to restrain this to the time of the Assyrian invasion, they are frequently used in the prophets of the times of the gospel, as Isa_2:2 **4:2 11:10**, &c.

Shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; shall learn by this judgment and experience never to trust to the Assyrians for help, as Ahaz and his people now did. *In truth*; not only by profession, but sincerely.

Isaiah 10:21

The remnant; or, *a remnant*; or, but *a remnant*; or, a remnant only; which particles are oft understood, as hath been formerly and frequently observed, and may be here supplied from the following verses.

Unto the mighty God; unto the Messiah, expressly called the mighty God, Isa_9:6.

Isaiah 10:22

Israel; or, *O Israel*; to whom by an apostrophe he directeth his speech.

A remnant; or, *a remnant* only, as before; for that this is a threatening in respect of some, as well as a promise in respect of others, is evident from the rest of this and from the following verse.

The consumption decreed shall overflow; the destruction of the people of Israel was already decreed or determined (as it is in the next verse) by the fixed counsel of God, and therefore must needs be executed, and like a deluge overflow them.

With righteousness, as this word is rendered, Rom_9:28; the preposition *in* or *with* being here understood, as it is every where. And this is added, to show, that although this judgment of God may seem very severe, yet it is most just, not only by the laws of strict and rigid justice, but even by the rules of equity and clemency, as this word oft signifies, inasmuch as he hath spared a considerable remnant of them, when he might have destroyed,

them utterly. And so this word is added as a reason why a remnant, and why but a remnant, should return, because God would both glorify his justice, and manifest his mercy. And in this mixed sense the apostle seems to expound this place, Rom_9:27,28.

Isaiah 10:23

Shall make a consumption, even determined; the same thing is repeated in other words, with some addition; God will execute his own decree concerning the destruction of Israel, which he is well able to do, because he is the Lord of hosts.

In the midst of all the land; in all the parts of the land, not excepting Jerusalem, which was to be preserved in the Assyrian invasion, when almost all the other fenced cities of Judah should be taken; but should afterwards be taken and destroyed, as it was, first by the Babylonians, and then by the Romans.

Isaiah 10:24

Therefore: this is an inference, not from the words immediately foregoing, but from the whole prophecy. Seeing the Assyrian shall be destroyed, and a remnant of my people preserved and restored.

In Zion; in Jerusalem, which is frequently called *Zion*, as Psa_48:12 **87:2** Isa_1:8,27 **33:20**, &c.; which he mentions, because this was the principal object of the Assyrians' design and rage, and there were the temple, and thrones of justice, and the king and his princes, and multitudes had fled thither from the Assyrian.

He shall smite thee with a rod; he shall afflict thee, but not destroy thee. Compare 1Ki_12:11.

After the manner of Egypt; as the Egyptians formerly did, and with the same ill success to themselves, and comfortable issue to you.

Isaiah 10:25

The indignation; mine anger, as it is explained in the next clause; either,

1. Towards my people; which shall weaken the Assyrian, whose great strength lay there; of which see above, Isa_10:5. Or,

2. Towards the Assyrian, with whom God was very angry, Isa_10:12, &c., yea, so angry, as not to be satisfied without their destruction, as it follows.

Shall cease; as anger commonly doth, when vengeance is fully executed.

Isaiah 10:26

Shall stir up a scourge; shall send a destroying angel, Isa_37:36.

According to the slaughter of Midian; whom God slew suddenly, and unexpectedly, and in the night, as he did the Assyrians.

At the rock of Oreb; upon which one of their chief princes was slain, and nigh unto which the Midianites were destroyed.

Was upon the sea, to smite and divide it, and so to make way both for thy deliverance, and for the destruction of the Egyptians.

After the manner of Egypt; as he did in Egypt, to bring his plagues upon that land and people.

Isaiah 10:27

His burden; the burden of the Assyrian: for so it was actively, because imposed by him; though passively it was Israel's burden, as being laid upon him. *Because of the anointing* ; out of the respect which I bear to that holy unction which I have established amongst you. And so this may relate either,

1. To the body of the people, who were in some sort anointed, being made by God *a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation* , Exo_19:6; or,

2. To that sacred kingdom which God had, by his positive precept and solemn covenant, established in David and his posterity for ever. The Jews therefore, and some others, understand this of Hezekiah, to whom God had a singular respect, and upon whose prayers God gave this deliverance, as we read, Isa_37:15, &c. Possibly it might be better understood of David, who is oft mentioned in Scripture by the name of God's *anointed* , as Psa_20:6 **89:20 132:17**, and elsewhere; and for whose sake God gave many deliverances to the succeeding kings and ages, as is expressly affirmed, 1Ki_11:32,**34** 2Ki_8:19. And, which is more

considerable, God declareth that he would give this very deliverance from the *Assyrian for David 's sake* , 2Ki_19:34 **20:6**. But the Messiah, I doubt not, is here principally intended, of whom David was but a type, and who was in a peculiar manner anointed above *all his fellows* , as is said, Psa_45:7. For he is the foundation of all the promises, 2Co_1:20, and of all the deliverances and mercies granted to God's people in all ages; whence this very prophet makes use of this great promise of the Messiah, as an assurance that God would make good his promises of particular deliverances from their present or approaching calamities, as Isa_7:14, &c.; Isa_9:4, &c. And therefore the prophet might well say, that God would grant this deliverance for Christ's sake; especially if it be considered, that this was the very reason why God had promised, and did so constantly perform, his mercy promised unto the tribe of Judah, and unto the house of David, until the coming of the Messiah, because the Messiah was to come of the tribe of Judah, and of the posterity of David, and was to succeed David in his throne and kingdom; and he was to be known by this character; and therefore this tribe, and house, and kingdom were to continue, and that in a visible manner, till Christ came.

Isaiah 10:28

He is come to Aiath: here the prophet returns to his former discourse concerning the Assyrian invasion into Judah; which he describes, after the manner of the prophets, as a thing present, and sets down the several stages by which he marched towards Jerusalem. The places here named are most of them towns of Benjamin, and some of Judah, as appears from other scriptures; of which it is needless to say more in this place.

He, to wit, Sennacherib, king of Assyria,

is come in his way to Jerusalem.

He hath laid up his carriages; leaving such things there as were less necessary, that so he might march with more expedition. Heb. *he visited his vessels or instruments* ; which may be meant of his taking a survey of his army and artillery, to see that all things were ready for his enterprise.

Isaiah 10:29

The passage; some considerable passage then well known, possibly that 1Sa_14:4. The people fled to Jerusalem for fear of the Assyrian.

Isaiah 10:30

O daughter of Gallim: Jerusalem was the mother city, and lesser towns are commonly called *her daughters* , as hath been oft noted.

Isaiah 10:31

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 10:32

He shall shake his hand, by way of commination. But withal he intimates that he should be able to do no more against it, and that there his proud waves should be stayed, as it is declared in the following verses, and in the history.

Isaiah 10:33

The bough; the top bough, Sennacherib; or,

the boughs, his valiant soldiers or commanders of his army, which he compareth to a forest, Isa_10:18,**34**.

With terror; with a most terrible and amazing stroke by an angel.

Isaiah 10:34

With iron; or, *as with iron* , as the trees of the forest are cut down by instruments of iron.

And Lebanon; or, his *Lebanon* , the pronoun being oft understood in the Hebrew text; the Assyrian army, which being before compared to a forest or wood, and being called his *Carmel* in the Hebrew text, Isa_10:18, may very fitly, upon the same ground, be called his *Lebanon* here; especially considering that the king of Assyria is called a cedar of Lebanon, Eze_31:3.

By a mighty one; by a mighty angel, Isa_37:36.

Isaiah 11:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 11

Christ, a Branch out of the root of Jesse, endued with the Spirit of the Lord, should set up a kingdom by the preaching of his word, Isa_19:1-5. The members of his church should live in peace and

unity, Isa_19:6-9; and be victorious over their enemies; and to him should the Gentiles seek, Isa_11:10-16.

The prophet having despatched the Assyrian, and comforted God's people with the promise of their deliverance from that formidable enemy, now he proceeds further, and declares that God will do greater things than that for them, that he will give them their long-expected and much desired Messiah, and by him will work wonders of mercy for them. For this is the manner of the prophets, to take the occasion of particular deliverances, to fix the people's minds upon their great and everlasting deliverance from all their enemies by the Messiah. And having said that the *Assyrian* yoke should be destroyed because of the anointing, Isa_10:27, he now more particularly explains who that anointed person was. A *rod* , or *twig* , called a *Branch* in the next clause. Parents are oft compared to roots or trees, and their children to branches. He speaks of the most eminent Branch, of that famous Son of a virgin, Isa_7:14, of that wonderful Child, Isa_9:6; not of Hezekiah, as some of the Jews and judaizing Christians conceit; but of the Messiah, as will evidently appear from the following description. *The stem, or trunk* ; or rather, *stump* ; for the word properly signifies a trunk cut off from the root; or, *root* , as the LXX. here render the word, and as it is explained in the next clause. By which he clearly implies that the Messiah should be born of the royal house of David, at that time when it was in a most forlorn and contemptible condition, like a tree cut down, and whereof nothing is left but a stump or root under ground; which really was the state of David's family when Christ was born, as is notoriously known, but was in a far better condition when Hezekiah was born. *Of Jesse* ; he doth not say of David, but

of Jesse, who was a private and mean person, 1Sa_18:18,**23 20:30**, to intimate, that at the time of Christ's birth the royal family should be reduced to its primitive obscurity.

A Branch shall grow: he speaks of one not yet born, and therefore not of Hezekiah, who was born divers years before his father Ahaz (in whose time this prophecy was delivered) was king, by comparing 2Ki_16:2 **18:2**; but of the Messiah.

Out of his roots; out of one of his roots, i.e. branches, as this word root is sometimes used, by a very usual figure called a *metonymy* , as it is here below, Isa_11:10 Isa_53:2 Hos_14:5.

Isaiah 11:2

The Spirit of the Lord; the Holy Ghost, wherewith he was anointed, Act_10:38, and by whom his mother was overshadowed, Luk_1:35.

Shall rest upon him; not only come upon him at certain times, as he did upon the prophets now and then at his pleasure, but shall have its constant and settled abode in him; although the same phrase be sometimes used of other prophets in an inferior sense, as Num_11:17 2Ki_2:15.

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding; which hath these perfections in itself, and confers them upon him. It is neither easy, nor at all necessary, exactly to distinguish these two gifts; it is sufficient that they are necessary qualifications for a governor, and for a teacher, both which offices were to meet in the Messiah; and it is evident that they signify a practical and perfect knowledge of all things necessary for the discharge of his trust, and for his own and people's good, and a sound judgment, to distinguish between things that differ.

Of counsel and might; of prudence, to give good counsel; and of might and courage, to execute it; which are two necessary qualifications of a ruler.

Of knowledge; of the perfect knowledge of the whole will and counsel of God, especially that which concerns the salvation of men, the prosecution whereof was his great work, as also of all secret and hidden things, yea, of the hearts of men, the knowledge whereof is ascribed to Christ. Mat_9:4 Rev_2:23.

Of the fear of the Lord; not a fear of diffidence or horror, but of reverence; a care to please him, and loathness to offend him, which well became the Messiah towards his God and Father.

Isaiah 11:3

Shall make him of quick understanding, Heb. *he shall make him smell* , i.e. perceive, as that word is used, **Jud 16 9 Job 39 25;** understand or judge, as it is explained in the next clause. Or, *his*

smelling shall be. Smelling is put for judging, because the sense of smelling, where it is quick and good, is more exact and sure in the judging of its proper objects, than the senses of seeing and hearing are.

In the fear of the Lord; which is added, either,

1. As the object of his judging; he is most perspicacious and judicious in the things which concern the fear, i.e. the worship and service of God, which he was to order and establish in his church. Or rather,

2. As the rule and manner of his judging, as may be gathered from the opposite and following clause. So the sense is, He shall not judge rashly and partially, but considerately and justly, as the fear of God obligeth all judges to do.

He shall not judge, of persons or causes. And *judging* seems to be here synecdochically put for absolving or giving sentence for a person, as it is used Psa_7:8,11, and in many other places, because this is opposed to reprovng in the next clause.

After the sight of his eyes; according to outward appearance, as men must do, because they cannot search men's hearts, 1Sa_16:7, or with respect of persons, but with *righteous judgment*, which is opposed to *judging by appearance*, Joh_7:24. *Reprove*, i.e. condemn or pass sentence against a person; for Christ is here supposed to be a Judge, and so he speaks of a judicial reproof. *After the hearing of his ears*, by false or uncertain rumours or suggestions, but shall thoroughly examine all causes, and search out the truth of things, and the very hearts of men.

Isaiah 11:4

Judge the poor; defend and deliver them, as *judging* is oft used, as Deu_32:36 Jer_5:28 **22:16**, &c. Or,

judge for the poor; the prefix *lamed* being understood out of the next clause, as is usual in the Hebrew language. He mentions the poor, partly to signify the justice of this Judge, because human judges commonly neglect and oppress the poor; and partly to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, and the quality of his subjects, who should, for the generality of them, be the poor and contemptible sort of men, Mat_11:5 Jam_2:5. *Reprove*; or, as this

word seems to be taken, Isa_11:3, condemn, to wit, their malicious and furious enemies.

For the meek; on their behalf, or giving sentence for them. He calls them meek, whom before he called poor, partly to show his justice in defending them who are most exposed to the contempt and injuries of men and partly to signify that his subjects should be poor in spirit as well as in the world, and not poor and proud, as many worldly men are.

Smite, i.e. slay, as this word is used, Isa_37:36, and very commonly, and as it is expounded in the next clause.

The earth; the men of the earth, the wicked, as it is in the next branch of the verse; fitly called earth, either because of their earthly minds and conversations, as they are called

the men of this world that have their portion here upon the earth, Psa_17:14, or because the far greatest part of the inhabitants of the earth is wicked; the whole world lies in wickedness, 1Jo_5:1,9; for which reason they are oft called *the world* , as Joh_16:20 **17:9,25**, &c.

With the rod of his mouth; with his word, which is his sceptre, *and the rod of his power* , Psa_110:2, which is sharper than a sword, Heb_4:12; by the preaching whereof he subdued the world to himself, and will destroy his enemies, 2Th_2:8. This he adds, further to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, that it is not of this world, and that his sceptre and arms are not carnal, but spiritual, as it is said, 2Co_10:4.

With the breath of his lips; with his word breathed out of his lips, whereby he explains what he meant by the foregoing rod.

Shall he slay the wicked; either spiritually, by inflicting deadly plagues upon their souls; or properly, which he doth very frequently by his terrible judgments executed upon many of them, and will certainly do, and that fully and universally, at his coming to judgment.

Isaiah 11:5

Shall be the girdle of his loins; it shall adorn him, and be the glory of his government, as a girdle was used for ornament, Isa_3:24, and as an ensign of power, Job_12:18; and it shall

constantly cleave to him, in all his administrations, *as a girdle cleaveth to a man 's loins* , which is the prophet's similitude, Jer_13:11.

The girdle of his reins; the same thing in other words.

Isaiah 11:6

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, & c.; the creatures shall be restored to that state of innocency in which they were before the fall of man. But this is not to be understood literally, which is a gross and vain conceit of some Jews; but spiritually and metaphorically, as is evident. And the sense of the metaphor is this, Men of fierce, and cruel, and ungovernable dispositions, shall be so transformed by the preaching of the gospel, and by the grace of Christ, that they shall become most humble, and gentle, and tractable, and shall no more vex and persecute those meek and poor ones mentioned Isa_11:4, but shall become such as they; of which we have instances in Saul being made a Paul, and in the rugged jailer, **Ac 16**, and in innumerable others. But how can this be applied to Hezekiah with any colour?

A little child shall lead them; they will submit their proud and rebellious wills to the conduct and command of the meanest persons that speak to them in Christ's name.

Isaiah 11:7

Shall feed together, as it follows, without any danger or fear.

The lion shall eat straw, the grass and fruits of the earth, as they did at first, Gen_1:29,**30**, and shall not devour other living creatures, as now they do.

Isaiah 11:8

The asp; a most fierce and poisonous serpent, Deu_32:33 Job_20:14,**16**, which also will not be charmed by any art of man, Psa_58:5.

The cockatrice; a serpent of more than ordinary cunning and cruelty, Pro_23:32. The meaning is, They shall not fear to be either deceived or destroyed by those who formerly watched all opportunities to do it.

Isaiah 11:9

In my holy mountain; in Zion, in my church. Wherever the gospel comes and prevails, it will have this effect.

The earth; metonymically put for the inhabitants of the earth; and as before it was used for the greater part, Isa_11:4, so here it is used for the better part of the world.

Of the knowledge of the Lord; of saying and practical knowledge; whereby he intimates that all that savageness and malignity which is in wicked men towards true Christians proceeded from their deep ignorance, and particularly from ignorance of God; and withal, that a right knowledge of God will make a marvellous and thorough change in the dispositions and conversations of men.

The sea; the channel of the sea, the thing contained being put for the thing containing, by a metonymy common in Scripture and all authors.

Isaiah 11:10

A root; a branch growing upon the root; of which see on Isa_11:1.

Shall stand for an ensign; shall grow up into a great and high tree, shall become a visible and eminent ensign. Of the people; which not only the Jews, but all nations may discern, and to which they may and shall resort.

To it shall the Gentiles seek; as the gospel shall be preached to the Gentiles, so they shall receive it, and believe in the Messiah. *His rest* ; his resting-place, as this word frequently signifies, as Gen_8:9 **49:15** Psa_132:8,**14** Isa **34:14** Mic_2:10; his temple or church, the place of his presence and abode.

Shall be glorious; shall be filled with greater glory than the Jewish tabernacle and temple were; of which see on Hag_2:9; only this glory shall be spiritual, consisting in glorious ordinances, in the plentiful effusions of the excellent gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 11:11

The second time: the first time, to which this word second relates, seems to be, either,

1. The deliverance out of Egypt, as most both Jewish and Christian interpreters understand it; and then this second deliverance must be that out of Babylon. Or,

2. The deliverance out of Babylon; and then this second deliverance must be in the days of the Messiah; which, with submission to better judgments, seems to me more probable,

1. Because that first deliverance is supposed to be, like the second, a deliverance of the remnant of this people from several countries, into which they were dispersed; whereas that out of Egypt was a deliverance not of a remnant, but of the whole nation, and that out of Egypt only.

2. Because this second deliverance was universal, extending to the generality of the outcasts and dispersed ones, both of Israel, or the ten tribes, and of Judah, or the two tribes, as is evident from Isa_11:12,13; whereas that out of Babylon reached only to the two tribes, and to some few of the ten tribes which were mixed with them, as is acknowledged, both by Jews and Christians.

3. Because this second deliverance was given them in the days of the Messiah, and did accompany or follow the conversion of the Gentiles, as is evident from Isa_11:9,10; whereas that out of Babylon was long before the coming of the Messiah, and the calling of the Gentiles.

From Assyria, & c.; from all places, both far and near, into which either the ten tribes or the two tribes were carried captives; for the places of both their captivities are here named; of which it is needless to discourse particularly., because they are well known, and have been considered in former texts. Only *Pathros* was not named before; and that was a province in Egypt, which yet is sometimes distinguished from Egypt strictly so called. See on Jer_44:1,15 Eze 29:14 30:14.

Isaiah 11:12

For the nations; all nations, Jews and Gentiles, who shall then embrace the true faith and the Messiah, as was said, Isa_11:10.

The outcasts; that were driven and banished out of their own land into foreign parts, as the word implies.

Of Israel; strictly so called, or of the ten tribes, as is manifest, both from their opposition to Judah in this verse, and from the mention of Ephraim in the next verse.

Isaiah 11:13

Of Ephraim, i.e. of the ten tribes, frequently called by the name of Ephraim, as hath been already and frequently observed, between whom and Judah there were great emulations and contentions. *Shall depart* ; of enemies they shall be made friends, and of wolves lambs, as was said before on Isa_11:6; they shall be united together in one church, under the Messiah, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The adversaries of Judah; not the body of Ephraim, for they are supposed to be reconciled, and they shall not be cut off, but live in love with Judah, as we see by the next clause; but those few of them which possibly may continue in their enmity against them, together with all the rest of their adversaries.

Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim; not only all outward hostilities shall cease, but also their inward animosities.

Isaiah 11:14

Shall fly upon the shoulders; either it is a metaphor from birds and beasts of prey, which commonly fasten upon the shoulders of cattle; or from wrestlers, who endeavour to catch hold of their adversaries' shoulders, that they may throw them down. Or, *shoulder* is put for a *side* , as Num_34:11 Jos_15:8,**10**, or for part or quarter of a country, as Deu_33:12.

They shall spoil them; they shall subdue them; which is to be understood of the spiritual victory which the Jewish Messiah shall obtain by his apostles and ministers over all nations, in bringing them to the obedience of his gospel. For it is the manner of the prophets to speak of the spiritual things of the gospel under such corporal representations.

Isaiah 11:15

Shall utterly destroy; shall not only divide it, as of old, but will quite dry it up, that it may be a highway, as it is explained in the next verse.

The tongue of the Egyptian sea; the Red Sea, which may well be called *the Egyptian sea* , both because it borders upon Egypt, and because the Egyptians were drowned in it, which is called *a tongue* in the Hebrew text, Jos_15:2,5, as having some resemblance with a tongue; for which reason the name of hath been given by geographers to promontories of land which shoot forth into the sea, as this sea did shoot out of the main ocean into the laud.

Shake his hand; he alludes to Moses's shaking of his hand with the rod of God in it over the sea;

over the river, to wit, of Egypt, Nilus, as appears both from the foregoing and from the following words.

The seven streams; for which Nilus is famous in all authors, and by which it emptieth itself into the sea.

Isaiah 11:16

From Assyria; as there was another highway from Egypt in the former verse. So the sense is, that all impediments shall be removed, and a way made for the return of God's Israel from all parts of the world. He mentions Assyria, because thither the ten tribes were carried, 2Ki_17:23; whose case seemed to be most desperate.

Isaiah 12:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 12

A thanksgiving of the faithful for their redemption.

In that day; when this great work of the reduction of God's Israel, and of the conversion of the Gentiles, promised in the foregoing chapter, shall be fulfilled.

Isaiah 12:2

God is my salvation; my salvation hath not been brought to pass by man, but by the almighty power of God.

Isaiah 12:3

Your thirsty and fainting souls shall be filled with Divine graces and comforts, which you may plentifully draw from God in the use of gospel ordinances, which was oft signified *by water* , both in the Old and in the New Testament. He seems to allude to the

state of Israel in the wilderness, where when they had been tormented with thirst, they were greatly refreshed and delighted with those waters which God so graciously and wonderfully afforded them in that dry and barren land, Num_20:11 **21:16-18**.

Isaiah 12:4

Among the people; in all the earth, as it follows, Isa_12:5; unto the Gentile world, who shall partake in the blessing, and will join with you in the praising of God for it. The knowledge of this glorious work of our redemption

Isaiah 12:5

The knowledge of this glorious work of our redemption by the Messiah shall no longer be confined to Israel's land, as it hitherto hath been; but shall reach to all nations.

Isaiah 12:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 13:1 ISIAIAH CHAPTER 13

God's armies, Isa_13:1-5. The destruction of Babylon by the Persians and Medes: their great distress and anguish; and their utter desolation, Isa_13:6-22.

The burden: this title is commonly given to sad prophecies, which indeed are grievous burdens to them upon whom they are laid. See 2Ki_9:25 Jer_23:33,**36**.

Of Babylon; of the city and empire of Babylon by Cyrus, for their manifold and great sins, and in order to the deliverance of his people.

Isaiah 13:2

Lift ye up a banner, to gather soldiers together for this expedition.

Upon the high mountain; whence it may be discerned at a considerable distance. Withal he seems to intimate that their enemies should come from the mountainous country of Media.

Unto them; to the Medes, who are named below, Isa_13:17.

Shake the hand; beckon to them with your hand, that they may come to this service.

That they may go into the gates of the nobles; that they may go and fight against Babylon, and take it, and so enter into the palaces of the king, and of his princes, and spoil them at their pleasure; which the Medes and Persians did. The manner of expression implies how easily and expeditiously they did their work, that, like Caesar, they might say they only came, and saw, and overcame.

Isaiah 13:3

My sanctified ones; the Medes and Persians, fitly so called, because they were solemnly designed and set apart by God for his own service, and for this holy work of executing his just vengeance upon them.

My mighty ones; those whom I have made mighty for this work.

In my highness; or, as others render it, *in my glory*, materially considered, to wit, in the doing of that work which tends much to the advancement of my glory, in destroying of the Babylonian empire. For otherwise the Medes had no regard to God nor to his glory, but only to their own carnal ends.

Isaiah 13:4

The kingdoms of nations; the Medes and Persians, and other nations which served under them in this war; of which see Jer_25:14 27:7 50:41.

Isaiah 13:5

From the end of heaven; from the ends of the earth under heaven, as Mat_24:30; which is not to be understood strictly and properly, but popularly and hyperbolically, as such expressions are commonly used in sacred and profane authors. And yet in some respects this might be truly said of Persia, which on the south side was bounded by the main ocean; as for the same reason Sheba, a part of Arabia, is called

the utmost parts of the earth, Mat_12:42.

The weapons of his indignation; the Medes and Persians, who were but a rod in God's hand, and the instruments of his anger, as was said of the Assyrian, Isa_10:5.

To destroy the whole land, to wit, of Babylon, of which he is now speaking.

Isaiah 13:6

It shall come as a destruction; or rather, a destruction or devastation shall come, as the LXX. and vulgar Latin render it. For this was not

as a destruction, but was a destruction indeed. And the particle as is not seldom used to express, not the likeness, but the reality of the thing, as Joh_1:14.

From the Almighty; who fighteth for your adversaries, and against you, and therefore your destruction is unavoidable.

Isaiah 13:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 13:8

They shall be amazed one at another, to see so populous and impregnable a city as Babylon was, so easily and unexpectedly taken.

Flames, Heb. *faces of flame* ; either pale with fear, or inflamed with rage and torment, as men in misery frequently are. Some render it *the faces of Lehabim* , a people descending from Mizraim, Gen_10:13 1Ch_1:11, i.e. black with pain, as men use to be; of which see Joe_2:6 Nah_2:10.

Isaiah 13:9

Cruel both with wrath and fierce anger; divers words are heaped together, to signify the extremity of his anger.

The sinners thereof; the inhabitants of that city, who were guilty of so much idolatry and cruelty, and all sorts of luxury.

Isaiah 13:10

The constellations; which consist of many stars, and therefore give a greater light.

The sun shall be darkened; either,

1. Properly and really, by an eclipse; for prodigies in heaven do sometimes go before or accompany great and public calamities upon earth. Or,

2. Figuratively, and in appearance. All things shall look darkly and dismally; men shall have no comfort nor hope. See the like

descriptions of a most calamitous state, Isa_5:30 **34:4**
Joe_2:10,**31**, &c.

In his going forth; as soon as he riseth, when he is most welcome to men, and giveth them hopes of a pleasant day. As soon as they have any appearance or hope of amendment, they shall be instantly disappointed.

Isaiah 13:11

The world; the Babylonish empire, which is called the world, as the Roman empire afterward was, Luk_2:1, because it was extended to a great part of the world, and because it was vastly populous, and Babylon itself looked more like a world than one city.

Of the terrible; of them who formerly were very terrible for their great power and cruelty.

Isaiah 13:12

The city and nation shall be so depopulated, that few men shall be left in it.

Isaiah 13:13

I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place; a poetical and prophetic description of great errors and confusions, as if heaven and earth were about to meet together.

Isaiah 13:14

And it, to wit, Babylon,

shall be as the chased roe; fearful in itself, especially when it is pursued by the hunter.

As a sheep that no man taketh up; in a most forlorn and neglected condition.

Every man; those soldiers of other and more warlike nations whom she had hired to assist her; which she used to do at other times, but especially upon this great occasion; of which **See Poole "Jer_50:16"; See Poole "Jer_51:9"**.

Isaiah 13:15

That is found in Babylon, at the taking of it; the expectation whereof made them flee away with all speed.

Isaiah 13:16

Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, as a just recompence for the like cruelty acted by them upon the Jews, 2Ch_36:17, which also was foretold, Psa_137:9.

Isaiah 13:17

The Medes; under whom he comprehends the Persians, who were their neighbours and confederates in this expedition.

They shall not delight in it; which is to be understood comparatively. They shall more eagerly pursue the destruction of the people than the getting of spoil; whereby it shall appear that they are only the executioners of my vengeance against them; they will accept no ransom to save their lives.

Isaiah 13:18

Their bows; under which are comprehended their arrows, and possibly other weapons of war; for so generally sometimes is the bow used in Scripture, as 2Sa_1:18 Psa_78:9 Isa_41:2. *Shall dash the young men to pieces* ; or, *shall pierce the young men through* , as the Chaldee readers it.

Isaiah 13:19

The glory of kingdoms; which once was the most noble and excellent of all the kingdoms then in being, and Was more glorious than the succeeding empires, whence it was represented by *the head of gold* , Dan_2:32.

The beauty of the Chaldees' excellency; the famous and beautiful seat of the Chaldean monarchy.

Shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah; shall be totally and irrecoverably destroyed, as is more fully expressed in the following verses; which yet was not done immediately upon the taking of the city by Darius and Cyrus, but was fulfilled by degrees, as is confessed by historians, and appears this day.

Isaiah 13:20

It shall never be inhabited, after the destruction threatened shall be fully accomplished.

Neither shall the Arabian, who dwelt in tents, and wandered from place, where they could find pasture; but shall avoid this place, either because the land, once noted for great fruitfulness, is

now become barren; or because the land is accursed by God, and abhorred by all men; or for fear of the wild beasts, as it follows.

Isaiah 13:21

Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; the land being forsaken by men, shall be possessed by wild beasts, which love solitary places. What the Hebrew words used here, and in the next verse, signify, the learned may see in my Latin Synopsis; and for others, it may suffice to know that in which all the learned agree, that these are frightful and solitary creatures; of which if I should particularly discourse, I should rather perplex than edify the vulgar reader.

Isaiah 13:22

Her time is near to come; so it was, though not according to man's rash judgment and impatient expectation, yet according to God's estimation, and to the eye of faith, whereby Abraham saw Christ's day as present, many ages before it came, Joh_8:56: and comparatively; for it happened within two hundred years; which is but a small proportion of time, if it be compared either with the foregoing or following ages of the world, or with the immense duration of eternity, from whence it was decreed by God, and therefore might well be said now to be near the accomplishment of it. In like manner the apostles speak of the day of judgment as near in their time, though it was at many ages distance.

Her days shall not be prolonged beyond the time prefixed and appointed by God. Compare Hab_2:3.

Isaiah 14:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 14

Israel should be delivered from the Babylonish captivity: their triumphant insultation over Babel, Isa_14:1-23. God's purpose against Assyria, Isa_14:24-27. Palestina is threatened, Isa_14:28-32.

The Lord will have mercy on Jacob; God will pity and deliver his people; and therefore will destroy Babylon, which hinders it, and set up Cyrus, who shall promote it.

will yet choose Israel; will renew his choice of them; for he had refused and rejected them.

The stranger shall be joined with them: so they did in part at their coming from Babylon, being thereunto moved either by the favour which the Jews had in the Persian court, or by the consideration of their wonderful deliverance, and that exactly in the time designed by their holy prophets. But what was then begun was more fully accomplished at the coming of the Messiah.

Isaiah 14:2

Which they might do literally, and sometimes did, after their return into their own land, either by their power with the Persian monarchs, as in the days of Cyrus and Darius, and especially of Ahasuerus; or by their own prowess, as in the time of the Maccabees. But this was more evidently and eminently verified in a spiritual sense, in the days of the gospel, when the apostles and other ministers, who were of the Jewish nation, conquered a great part of the Gentile world to the worship and obedience of their Messiah.

Isaiah 14:3

From thy fear; for besides their present hard service, they were in perpetual fear of further severities and sufferings, at the pleasure of their cruel lords and masters.

Isaiah 14:4

Shalt take up into thy mouth, as it is fully expressed, Psa_50:16.

How hath the oppressor ceased! this is spoken by way of astonishment and triumph. Who would have thought this possible?

The golden city, as they used to call themselves; which therefore he expresseth here in a word of their own language.

" Isaiah 14:5

This is an answer to the foregoing question. It is God's own work, and not man's; and therefore it is not strange that it is accomplished.

Isaiah 14:6

In anger; with rigour, and not with clemency, as many conquerors have done.

Non hindereth; neither the Babylonians themselves, nor their confederates, could withstand the power of the Medes and Persians.

Isaiah 14:7

The whole earth; the inhabitants and subjects of that vast empire, who groaned under their cruel bondage.

Isaiah 14:8

The cedars of Lebanon, which were felled down for the service of her pride and luxury, but now are suffered to stand and flourish. It is a figure usual in sacred and profane writers, called prosopopæia.

Isaiah 14:9

Hell; or, *the grave* , as the same word is rendered, Isa_14:11, and in innumerable other places; to which he elegantly ascribeth sense and speech, as poets and orators frequently do.

The chief ones, Heb. *the he-goats* ; which lead and govern the flock. *From their thrones* ; from their several graves, which he seems to call their thrones by way of irony or derision, the only thrones now left to them. Thrones both paved and covered with worms, as is noted, Isa_14:11, instead of their former thrones made of ivory or silver, and adorned with gold and precious stones.

Isaiah 14:10

Thou, who wast king of kings, and far superior to us in power and authority, that didst neither fear God nor reverence man, *that didst slay whom thou wouldst, and keep alive whom thou wouldst* , Dan_5:19.

Isaiah 14:11

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave; all thy glory is lost and buried with thee.

The noise of thy viols; all thy musical and melodious instruments, which were much used in Babylon, Dan_3:5,7,10, and were doubtless used in Belshazzar's solemn feast, Dan_5:1, at which time the city was taken; to which possibly the prophet here alludes.

The worm is spread under thee, instead of those rich and stately carpets upon which thou didst frequently tread.

Isaiah 14:12

From heaven; from the height of thy glory and royal majesty. As kings are sometimes called gods in Scripture, so their palaces and thrones may be fitly called their heavens.

O Lucifer; which properly is a bright and eminent star, which ushers in the sun and the morning; but is here metaphorically taken for the high and mighty king of Babylon. And it is a very usual thing, both in prophetic and in profane writers, to describe the princes and potentates of the world under the title of the sun or stars of heaven. Some understand this place of the devil; to whom indeed it may be mystically applied; but as he is never called by this name in Scripture, so it cannot be literally meant of him, but of the king of Babylon, as is undeniably evident from the whole context, which certainly speaks of one and the same person, and describes him as plainly as words can do it.

Son of the morning: the title of son is given in Scripture not only to a person or thing begotten or produced by another, but also in general to any thing which is any way related to another; in which sense we read of *a son of stripes* , Deu_25:2, *the son of a night* , Jon_4:10, *a son of perdition* , Joh_17:12, and, which is more agreeable to the present case, *the sons of Arcturus* , Job_38:32.

Isaiah 14:13

I will ascend into heaven; I will advance myself above the state of a weak and mortal man. Great monarchs are easily induced, by their own vain imaginations, and the flattery of their courtiers, to entertain an opinion of their own divinity; so far that many of them have received and required Divine worship to be paid to them. Above the stars of God; either,

1. Above all other kings and potentates whom he hath set up; or,
2. Above the most eminent persons of God's church and people, who are frequently called stars, as Dan_8:10 Rev_1:16, **20 12:1**, which sense the next words favour.

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation; I will establish my royal throne upon Mount Zion, where the Jews meet together to worship God.

In the sides of the north: this is added as a more exact description of the place of the temple, which stood upon Mount Moriah, which was northward from the hill of Zion strictly so called, and was a part of the hill of Zion largely so called. See on Psa_48:2.

Isaiah 14:14

Above the heights of the clouds, to wit, into heaven, as he said, Isa_14:13.

Like the Most High, in the uncontrollableness of my power, and the universal extent of my dominion over all the earth.

Isaiah 14:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 14:16

Shall narrowly look upon thee; as hardly believing their own eyes, because this change seemed impossible to them.

The earth; all the nations of the earth.

Isaiah 14:17

Whereby he signifies both his irresistible power, and his continued cruelty. He neither was willing to give them any liberty or ease, nor could any force him to do it.

Isaiah 14:18

All of them; other kings most commonly do, as the word *all* is frequently used.

Every one in his own house; are buried in their own sepulchres, having stately monuments erected to their honour and memory.

Isaiah 14:19

Cast out of thy grave; or, *cast from thy grave* or *burying* place; which very probably happened to Belshazzar, who was slain in the night, Dan_5:30, when his people had neither opportunity nor heart to bestow an honourable interment upon him, and the conquerors would not suffer them to do it.

Like an abominable branch; like a useless and rotten twig of a tree, which he that pruneth the trees cutteth off, and casteth away with abhorrency, and suffers to lie rotting more and more upon the

ground; or, like a degenerate plant of a noble vine, which is abominable.

As the raiment of those that are slain; which, being cut and mangled, and besmeared with mire, and defiled with blood, was cast away with contempt, and abominated as an unclean thing, as it was in divers respects, in that age and state of the church.

That go down to the stones of the pit; which persons being slain, they, together with their garments, are cast into some pit. He saith, *to the stones of the pit*, either because such bodies are commonly thrown into the next pits, and pits were frequently made by digging stones out of their quarries; or because there usually are a great number of stones in the bottoms of pits, either naturally, or being cast in thither upon, divers occasions; and when dead bodies are cast in thither, men use to throw a heap of stones upon them.

As a carcass trodden under feet; neglected, like such a carcass. Or this might literally happen to Belshazzar's dead body, through military fury and contempt, or from other causes.

Isaiah 14:20

Thou shalt not be joined with them; not in place, for so the kings of several nations did not use to be joined in the same sepulchre; but in condition, not be buried as they are.

Thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people; thou hast exercised great tyranny and cruelty, not only to thine enemies, but even to thine own subjects; which it is more than probable Belshazzar did, and it is certain that his parents and predecessors had done, whose sins contributed, together with his, to bring down God's judgments upon that empire.

The seed of evil-doers, such as Belshazzar was, being descended from that Nebuchadnezzar who had made such horrid slaughters and devastations in the world, merely to gratify his own insatiable lusts, and who had been so impious towards God and his temple, and so bloody towards his church and people.

Shall never be renowned; or, *shall not be renowned for ever*. Although I have long borne with thee and thy family, and suffered them to get a great name in the world, yet I will now put a period to the renown of thy family and empire.

Isaiah 14:21

Prepare slaughter for his children; O ye Medes and Persians, cut off all the branches of the royal family of Babylon.

For the iniquity of their fathers; in the guilt whereof the children are justly involved, partly because of that community of nature and interest which is between parents and children, which makes them for the most part bear a share with them, as in their rewards and advantages, so also in their punishments and miseries; and partly because they justified their sins by their impenitency, and imitation of their wicked example.

Do not rise, i.e. not recover their former splendour and power.

With cities; erected by them, either as instruments of tyranny, to keep the country round about them in slavery, or as monuments of their power and riches, as Babylon was, Dan_4:30.

Isaiah 14:22

The name and remnant; the remembrance of those that are dead, and the persons of those who yet survive.

Isaiah 14:23

The bittern; a great water fowl, which thrusting its bill into some broken reed, or hollow thing, makes a great noise; which also delights in solitary places, as also in waterish grounds, such as those were about Babylon. Others render the word *hedge-hog*, or *porcupine*; but this being not considerable in itself, nor at all necessary for the clearing of the text, I shall not trouble the English reader with any discourse about it; and the learned may consult my Latin Synopsis.

Pools of water: the ground about Babylon was of itself very moist and waterish, because of the great river Euphrates running by it, which was kept from overflowing the country with charge and labour; which being neglected, as it must needs be when the city was destroyed and dispeopled, it was easily turned into pools of water.

Isaiah 14:24

I will not repent of this threatening, as I did of that against Nineveh, Jon_3:4,10. And this solemn oath is added to confirm the faith of God's people, because otherwise the destruction of

this vast and mighty empire might seem incredible. But it is to be diligently observed, that this verse doth not only concern this present prophecy of Babylon's destruction by the Medes and Persians, but is also to be extended unto the foregoing prophecy concerning the overthrow of Sennacherib and the Assyrian host, **Isa 10**, as appears by the next verse, where the sum of that prophecy is repeated. Nor is this any digression, but very pertinent to the main design and business of this chapter; inasmuch as the overthrow of that great Assyrian host, and of the deliverance of God's people at that time, was a pledge of the certain accomplishment of that future destruction of the city and empire of Babylon, and of their deliverance out of that captivity.

Isaiah 14:25

The Assyrian; Sennacherib, and his Assyrian army. In my land; in Judea, which is my land in a peculiar manner, being chosen by me, and consecrated to my use and service, and inhabited by my people.

Upon my mountains; in my mountainous country, for such Judea was, Deu_8:9 Psa_133:3 Eze_6:2,3 **39:2,4,17**, especially about Jerusalem, Psa_125:2, upon some of which probably his army was lodged.

Then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders; which words are repeated from Isa_10:27, where they are explained.

Isaiah 14:26

Upon the whole earth; upon this vast empire, now in the hands of the Assyrians, and shortly to come into the hands of the Babylonians.

The whole earth is put synecdochically for a great part of it. The hand; the providence of God executing his purpose.

Isaiah 14:27

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 14:28

This following burdensome prophecy concerning the Philistines, who in Ahaz's time made an inroad into Judah, and took divers of their cities and villages, 2Ch_28:18.

Isaiah 14:29

Of him that smote thee: most understand this of Uzziah, who did them much mischief, 2Ch_26:6; but he was dead thirty-two years before this time, and therefore their joy for his death was long since past. Others understand it of Ahaz; but he was so far from smiting them, that he was smitten by them, as was noted on Isa_14:28. It seems better to understand it more generally of the royal race or foregoing kings of Judah, who had been a terrible scourge to them, whose rod might be said to be broken, because that sceptre was come into the hands of slothful and degenerate princes, such as Ahaz was, who had been lately broken by the Philistines, and who probably was alive when this prophecy was delivered, because he here speaks of Hezekiah not as a present, but as a future king. It is said indeed that *this burden was in the year that Ahaz died* ; but so it might be, though it was before his death.

His fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent; from the root and race of David shall come Hezekiah, who, like a serpent, shall sting thee to death, as he did, 2Ki_18:8.

Isaiah 14:30

The first-born of the poor; the people of the Jews, who are brought to extreme poverty by the cruelty and the malice of other enemies. The first-born were the chief of all the children. Hence the title of *first-born* is given to persons or things which are most eminent in their kinds, as to the people of Israel, Exo_4:22, to David, Psa_89:27, to a grievous death, Job_18:13, and here to persons eminently poor.

Shall feed; shall have plenty of provisions, in spite of all thine attempts against them.

I will kill thy root; I will utterly destroy thee both root and branch, so that there shall not be a remnant of thy people reserved, as it follows. It is a metaphor from a tree, which for want of nourishment is dried up by the roots.

Isaiah 14:31

O gate: *the gate* is put either,

1. Metaphorically, for the people passing through the gates, or for the magistrates and others who used to meet in the gate for judgment, or upon other occasions; or,

2. Synecdochically, for the city, as gates are commonly put, as Jer_22:19, and as it is explained in the next words.

O city: *city* is here put collectively for their cities, of which see 1Sa_6:17.

Dissolved, Heb. *melted* ; which may be understood either,

1. Of the fainting of their spirits and courage, as Exo_15:15 Jos_2:9,24, &c.; or, 2. Of the dissolution of their state.

From the north; either,

1. From Judea; which lay northward from some part of the Philistines' land. But in truth Judea lay more east than north from Palestine, and therefore the Philistines are said to be on the west, Isa_11:14, and never, so far as I remember, on the north. Or,

2. From Chaldea. as may be gathered,

1. From the Scripture use of this phrase, which generally designs that country, as Jer_1:14,15 6:1,22, &c.

2. From **Jer 47**, where destruction is threatened to the *Philistines from the north* , Isa_14:2, which all understand of the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. And whereas it is speciously objected, That this suits not with the next verse, which speaks of Zion's safety at the time of this destruction of the Philistines, whereas Zion and the land and people of Judah were destroyed together with the Philistines by Nebuchadnezzar; I humbly conceive it may be answered, that that verse is added to express the far differing condition of God's people and of the Philistines in the events of that Babylonian war; and that whereas the Philistines should be irrecoverably and eternally destroyed thereby, and no remnant of them should be left, as was said, Isa_14:30, God's people, though they should be sorely scourged, and carried into captivity, yet they should be strangely preserved, and after some years delivered, and restored to their own land and temple; whereby it would appear that Zion stood upon a sure foundation, and, albeit it was

grievously shaken, yet it could not be utterly and finally overthrown.

A smoke; a grievous judgment and calamity, which is oft signified by smoke, as Gen_15:17 Deu_29:20 Joe_2:30, either because smoke is generally accompanied with fire, or because it causeth a great darkness in the air; for afflictions are frequently described under the names of *fire and darkness*. *In his appointed times* : when God's appointed time shall come for the execution of this judgment, not one person of all that numerous army, which is signified by the smoke last mentioned, shall retire and desert his colours, or lag behind the rest; but they shall march with great unanimity and alacrity, and none of them shall withdraw his hand till the work be finished, till the Philistines be utterly destroyed.

Isaiah 14:32

What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? what shall a Jew say to the people of other nations, who shall either be sent or come to inquire concerning the state of Zion in that day, when not only the Philistines, but even the Jews themselves, shall fall by the hands of one and the same enemy?

Nation is put collectively for *nations* , as *gate* and *city* for *gates* and *cities* in the foregoing verse. They shall give them this answer, That although Zion at present be in a very distressed and deplorable condition, and seems to be forsaken by her God; yet she stands upon a firm foundation, and God, who first founded her, will again restore and establish her, and his poor despised people shall resort to her, as to a strong and sure refuge.

Isaiah 15:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 15

The destruction of Moab.

The burden of Moab; a prophecy of the destruction of the Moabites, the inveterate and implacable enemies of the Jews, begun by the Assyrian, and finished by the Babylonian emperors.

In the night; or, *in a night* ; suddenly and unexpectedly; for men sleep securely in the night, and therefore the evils which then overtake them are most terrible to them.

Ar; the chief city of Moab, Num_21:28 Deu_2:9.

Brought to silence; or rather, *is cut off*, as the word oft signifies, as Jer_47:5 Hos_10:7,**15**, and elsewhere. *Kir*; another eminent city of Moab, called more largely and fully *Kir-heres*, and *Kir-hareseth*, Isa_16:7,**11 Jer 48:31,36**.

Isaiah 15:2

Bajith signifies *a house*. It is supposed to be the name of a place, so called from some eminent house or temple of their idols which was in it. It is called more fully *Bethbaal-meon*, that is, *The house of Baal 's habitation*, Jos_13:17.

Dibon; another city of Moab, as is manifest from Jer_48:18,**22**, where also was their other eminent high place. To these two places they used to resort in case of great difficulties and troubles.

To weep; to offer their supplications with tears to their idols for help.

Over Nebo and over Medeba; two considerable cities, anciently belonging to the Moabites, from whom they were taken by the Amorites, and from them by the Israelites, and possessed by the Reubenites, Num_21:30 **32:3,38**; but were, as it seems, recovered by the Moabites, in whose hands they now were, as is evident, for Nebo, Jer_48:1,**22**, and for Medeba, from this text.

On all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off; the hair of their heads and beards (which was their ornament) was shaved, as was usual in great mournings, as hath been oft observed upon divers preceding texts. See on Lev_19:27,**28 21:5**.

Isaiah 15:3

Shall gird themselves with sackcloth: this was another practice of mourners.

The tops of their houses, which were made flat, Deu_22:8; to which men used to go up, either to walk, or to cry to God in heaven or to men for help.

In their streets; publicly, without shame; whereas in ordinary sorrows men are wont to seek secret places for their mourning.

Isaiah 15:4

Heshbon and Elealeh; two other Moabitish cities; of which see Num_21:25,**26 32:3,37**.

Jahaz another city in the utmost borders of Moab, Num_21:23, called also *Jahazah* , Jos_21:36.

The armed soldiers, who should be, and use to be, the most courageous.

His life shall be grievous unto him; the Moabites shall generally long for death, to free themselves from those dreadful calamities which they perceive unavoidably coming upon them.

Isaiah 15:5

My heart shall cry out for Moab; their destruction approaching is so dreadful, that although they are a most vile nation, and by their implacable enmity against God and his people do abundantly deserve it, yet the respect which I have to human nature fills me with horror at the very thoughts of it. Compare Isa_16:11.

His fugitives; or, *his bars* , as others render it, and as this word is frequently taken, as Exo_26:26,27 **Psa 107:16**, &c.; whereby we may understand their valiant men, or their princes and rulers, who as they are called *the shields of the earth* , Psa_47:9, because, like shields, they do or should defend their people; so for the same reason they may be called *bars* , because bars are the strength of the gates of cities or castles, and therefore are mentioned as such, Psa_147:13 Pro_18:19 Jer_51:30.

Shall flee unto Zoar; or, shall cry unto Zoar; either shall cry as they go along the way, even till they come to *Zoar* ; or shall cry so as they may be heard to *Zoar* ; which may easily be understood out of the foregoing verse. *Zoar* was a town bordering upon Moab; of which see Gen_19:20-22 Deu_34:3.

An heifer of three years old; which some understand of the city of Zoar, so called for her strength and wantonness. But such a description of Zoar seems very improper and impertinent in this place. The words therefore are to be translated here, as they are by our translators, Jer_48:34 as

an heifer of three years old; and so they belong to their cry, and signify that it is strong and loud, like that of such an heifer.

In the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry; he signifies that the cry should be universal, in all places where they come,

and reaching from one side of the country to another. Of *Luhith* , see Jer_48:4,5.

Of destruction; such a cry as men send forth when they are just falling into the pit of destruction.

Isaiah 15:6

The waters; either,

1. Properly, they shall be dried up; or,

2. Figuratively, the waterish grounds, *as waters* seem to be taken, Ecc_11:1 Isa_32:20. These being very fruitful, are commonly most inhabited and cultivated; but now they also, and much more the dry and barren grounds, shall be desolate, and without inhabitant.

There is no green thing, by the just and special judgment of God. Thus God and man conspire together to destroy them.

Isaiah 15:7

Shall they, to wit, their enemies, which is plainly implied,

carry away to the brook of the willows; unto some brook or river having great numbers of willows growing by it, by which they might convey them to some eminent and strong city built upon the same river. Possibly he means some such river which ran into Euphrates, and so gave them opportunity of carrying their spoils by water unto Babylon. Though the words may be rendered, *into the valley of the Arabians* ; whither the spoils might be first carried, in order to their transportation into Assyria or Chaldea; for part of Arabia lay between Moab and those countries. But the former translation seems better, because these very words are so rendered, Lev_23:40.

Isaiah 15:8

Their cry fills all the parts of the country.

Isaiah 15:9

Dimon: this seems to be the same place with *Dibon* , mentioned Isa_15:2, here called Dimon for the great bloodshed in it, as it here follows; such changes of a letter being not unusual in proper names, as in Merodach for Berodach, Isa_39:1. *More* ; either,

1. More than upon other parts of the country, that being one of their high places, Isa_15:2; or rather,

2. More than hath been already mentioned.

Lions upon him that escapeth of Moab; God shall send lions to find out those that escape the fury of men.

Isaiah 16:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 16

The Moabites exhorted to entertain kindly the banished Jews, Isa_16:1-5. They are threatened for their pride and arrogance, Isa_16:6-8. The prophet bewaileth them, Isa_16:9-11. Their judgment, Isa_16:12-14.

The prophet continues his prophecy against Moab in this chapter, and here turneth his speech to them, and gives them counsel what to do, to prevent, if possible, the threatened desolation. In these first words he adviseth them to the practice either,

1. Of justice; Pay that tribute of lambs and goats which you obliged yourselves to pay unto David, and to his posterity, 2Sa_8:2, and pay it not unto Israel, as you have done, 2Ki_3:4, but unto the king of Judah, who is the rightful heir of David, and king of the land. Or,

2. Of piety; *Send a lamb* , for a sacrifice, unto God, who is

Ruler of the land, to wit, of your land, no less than of ours; or, *of the earth* , as the word is commonly rendered, who is *the God of the whole earth* , as he is called, Isa_54:5, *the God of all the kingdoms of the earth* , Isa_37:16. Make your peace with God, by sacrifice, for all your injuries done to him, and to his people. These words may be understood ironically, and the design of them may be to represent their miserable and desperate condition; as if he had said, You have tried all other ways, and sought to your idols, Isa_16:2, and all in vain; now seek to the God of Israel, who alone can help you. But, alas! he is highly incensed against you, and coming to destroy you. But this seems rather to be a serious advice, by comparing these words with Isa_16:3,4. *Sela* ; an eminent city of Moab, seated upon a rock, which is here named, either because the king and his court at this time resided there, or for some other reason then evident, though now unknown.

To the wilderness; to the wilderness of Moab, of which we read Num_21:11; Dent. ii. 8, and so onward to Zion, as it follows. Or this may be added as a description of the place called *Sela* . Hence some render the words, *Sela of the wilderness* ; and others, *Sela* which lieth or looketh *towards the wilderness* . And this limitation might be the more necessary, to distinguish this from other places of Moab called by the same name, which, signifying a rock, might be common to several places in that rocky country.

Unto the mount of the daughter of Zion; unto the temple upon Mount Zion.

Isaiah 16:2

For; or, *otherwise* , as this particle is sometimes used; if you do not follow my advice.

As a wandering bird cast out of the nest; which knows not whither to go, nor what to do.

At the fords of Arnon; which was the border of the land of Moab, where they were, either being carried that way into captivity, or rather with design to flee out of their own land, although they knew not whither, as the foregoing metaphor showeth.

Isaiah 16:3

Take counsel; consider seriously among yourselves what course to take to prevent your utter ruin.

Execute judgment; do those things which are just and right, as to all men, so particularly to my people, to whom you have been most unrighteous and unmerciful.

As the night; or, *as the shadow of the night* , large and dark, as the shadow of the earth is in the night season. The meaning is, Conceal and protect my people in the time of their distress and danger, as this metaphor is explained in the rest of this and in the following verse.

The outcasts; *mine outcasts* , as it follows, Isa_16:4, those of my people which are driven out of their land.

Bewray not him that wandereth unto their enemies, as thou hast treacherously done in former times.

Isaiah 16:4

Mine outcasts; whom though I have forsaken, and sorely chastened, yet I do, and still will, own for my people; and I do observe, and will requite, both the kindnesses and the injuries done to them.

The extortioner is at an end; shall shortly be destroyed, and my people shall ere long be restored, and then thou wilt not lose the fruit of thy kindness. The present tense is put for the future, as it is usually in prophecies.

Isaiah 16:5

In mercy; by my mercy. Though they have sinned, and I am now punishing their sins, yet I will deliver them for my own mercy's sake.

The throne; the kingdom of Judah. Therefore for thine own sake show them kindness in this day of their distress; for they will be capable of requiting thee.

He; their king, which is easily and necessarily understood.

Shall sit upon it in truth; which may respect either,

1. The manner of his government, exercising truth and justice. But that is more plainly and fully expressed in the last part of the verse. Or,

2. The continuance of it, *in truth*, i.e. firmly and constantly; for truth is oft put for the stability and certainty of a thing, as 2Ch_32:1 Pro_11:18 Isa_61:8. And this makes the argument more considerable to the present purpose. The kingdom shall not only be restored, but firmly settled; therefore it is your interest, O Moabites, to be kind to my people.

In the tabernacle; in the house, or palace, which is called *a tent*, or *tabernacle*, either because houses are frequently so called in Scripture, as 2Sa_20:1 1Ki_8:66 **12:16**, or with respect unto the unsettledness of David's house, which now indeed was more like a tabernacle than a strong palace; and yet, notwithstanding its present imbecility, should be firmly established.

Seeking judgment; searching out the truth of causes and things with care and diligence, which is the duty of a judge.

Hasting righteousness; neither denying nor yet delaying justice. And these good qualifications seem to be here mentioned, partly to teach the rulers of Moab their duty towards their own people, and the Israelites which were among them; and partly as a reason and evidence of that stability which he had promised to the house of David.

Isaiah 16:6

The prophet, having spoken to the Moabites, and acquainted them with their duty and interest, now he turneth his speech to God's people, whom he armeth and comforteth against their approaching misery. The scope and sense of the prophet in this verse is this, I do not expect that my counsels will have any good effect upon Moab, they will still carry themselves insolently and outrageously towards you, and they promise themselves that they shall now effect what they have long desired, even satisfy their malice in your total and final destruction; but they shall be disappointed of their hopes. It is well known to me, and you, and all their neighbours, that they are a haughty and furious people; and therefore they will scorn my advice, and doubt not to stand upon their own legs.

His lies shall not be so; his vain imaginations, and false and crafty counsel, shall not take effect. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, but *his strength* (as this word is rendered, Job_18:13; Heb. *bars* , which are the strength of gates or doors) is *not so* ; not equal to his pride or fury. Or thus, exactly according to the words and order of the Hebrew text, *not so lies* . A concise speech, such as are very common in this and other prophets. And these words may possibly be brought in as the words of the Moabites, making this short reply to the prophet's counsels and threatenings, directed to them in the foregoing verses of this chapter: It is not or shall not be so as thou sayest; thy words are but lies, we fear not thy threats against us. But this I propose with submission.

Isaiah 16:7

For Moab; for itself; the noun put for the pronoun, as is usual in the Hebrew text. Or, *to Moab* . One Moabite shall howl or lament to or for another.

Kir-hareseth; an ancient and eminent city of Moab, called *Kir* , Isa_15:1 and *Kir-haresh* , Isa_16:11, which signifies, *The city of the sun* , probably because there was the temple of the sun; which city was preserved when their other cities were ruined, 2Ki_3:25, and therefore the destruction of it was more lamented.

Shall ye mourn; or, *ye shall meditate* or *talk* , as this word commonly signifies. Your thoughts and discourses will run much upon the ruin of such a city.

Stricken; or, *broken* ; overthrown or destroyed.

Isaiah 16:8

The fields of Heshbon languish; either for want of rain, as Isa_15:6, or because there are no men left to till and manure them.

The lords of the heathen; the Assyrians or Chaldeans, the great rulers of the Eastern nations.

The principal plants; the choicest vines; under which one particular he seems to understand not only all other fruits and goods, but even their persons and choicest people.

They are come even unto Jazer; either,

1. The lords of the heathen are come as far as Jazer, which is the utmost border of Moab; or,

2. The people of Moab are going into captivity, and part of them are already gone as far as Jazer. Some understand this and the following clauses of the vines, which are here commended, to aggravate the loss and ruin of them, and render the words, which *reached even unto Jazer* , which vineyards were planted for many miles together, even as far as Jazer.

They wandered through the wilderness; others of the Moabites fled away for their lives, and wandered hither and thither in the wilderness of Moab; of which see Num_21:11 Deu_2:8.

Her branches, i.e. her people, called *plants* before. *Are stretched out* ; or, are spread abroad, as this word signifies, Num_11:32 Jud_15:9 1Sa_30:16; are driven from their own homes, and dispersed into several countries.

Over the sea; over the Dead Sea, which was the border of Moab. They were forced to flee out of their own country to save their lives.

Isaiah 16:9

I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: so the sense is, I will bewail Sibmah as I did bewail Jazer, which, they say, was destroyed before Sibmah: or,

the weeping of Jazer might be a proverbial expression; for it is used also Jer_48:32, like that of *the mourning of Hadadrimmon* , Zec_12:11, though the reason of it be now unknown, as it is in many other proverbs. The words are by others rendered, and that more agreeably to the Hebrew text, *I will bewail with weeping* (which is a usual Hebraism for I will bitterly bewail)

Jazer, and (which particle is oft understood) *the vine of Sibmah* . But our translation seems to be justified by the parallel place, Jer_48:32, where it is, *O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer. The shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen* ; those joyful shouts and acclamations, which were customary in the time of harvest and vintage, Isa_9:3 Jer_25:30, shall cease, because thy land shall be wasted, and thy people destroyed. Or, as it is in the margin, *the shout or alarm is fallen upon thy summer fruits and thy harvest* , instead of that joyful shout which was then used, to which he here alludes; which seems to be the truer translation, not only because this Hebrew word is elsewhere used concerning *the shout* of an enemy falling upon a people, as Jer_25:30 **51:14**, but especially by considering the parallel place, Jer_48:32, where, *for the shout is fallen* , it is, *the spoiler is fallen upon* , &c. If it be objected, that the next verse speaks of the ceasing of their joyful shouts, and that this Hebrew word is there used for *vintage shouting* , which at first made me incline to the former interpretation, that seems to be fully answered from Jer_48:33, which speaks likewise of the ceasing of their joy and joyful shouts, but withal adds, in the close of the verse, what may end this controversy, *their shouting shall be no shouting* ; they shall indeed have a shouting, but not such a one as they used to have, a joyful shouting of their own people, but an insulting shout of their enemies.

Isaiah 16:10

The treaders: in those times they used to squeeze out the juice of their grapes by treading them with their feet, in vessels appointed for that use, Jud_9:27 Neh_13:15.

Isaiah 16:11

Shall sound, through compassion to them; of which **See Poole** "Isa_15:5". In excessive griefs the bowels are sometimes rolled and tumbled together, so as to make an audible noise. Hereby he signifies the greatness of their approaching calamity, which being so grievous to him, must needs be intolerable to them.

Isaiah 16:12

When it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place; when it shall appear to them and others that all their other devotions are vain and ineffectual.

To his sanctuary; to the temple of his great god, Chemosh, Num_21:29 1Ki_11:7 Jer_48:46, from whom he shall seek and expect succour.

He shall not prevail; his god can neither hear nor help him.

Isaiah 16:13

Since the beginning of God's revelation to me concerning Moab, and hitherto; which exposition seems to be confirmed by the following words, but now.

Isaiah 16:14

Hath spoken; hath made this further discovery of his mind to me.

Within three years; to be computed either,

1. From the time of Jerusalem's destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, who did, as is confessed by all, invade the Moabites at or about that time, and execute the judgment first foretold by this prophet, and afterwards by **Jer 48**. Or rather,

2. From the time of the delivery of this prophecy; which being uncertain, leaves us the greater latitude for the determination of the precise time when this was fulfilled. But this is certain, from Isa_1:1, that this prophecy must be delivered, at furthest, before the end of Hezekiah's reign. And then there ariseth this great difficulty, How this can consist with the prophecy of Jeremiah,

who above or about a hundred years after this time speaketh of Moab as a people that had *been at ease from their youth, and had not gone into captivity* , Jer_48:11, and prophesieth against them in the very same words which Isaiah useth in this prophecy? The answer is, That they do not speak of the same time, nor of the same calamity; but Isaiah of a former tribulation, and Jeremiah of their latter devastation. It is true, Jeremiah useth the same words which Isaiah doth, and so do the later prophets sometimes use the words of the former, to other purposes than they were first delivered, as we shall see hereafter, and as is most evident from the *Revelation of St. John* , in which the same words are used concerning mystical Babylon. which were used by the foregoing prophets concerning the first and literal Babylon. And although the foregoing prophecy of Isaiah seems to speak of the same destruction threatened by Jeremiah, and inflicted by Nebuchadnezzar; yet this prophecy contained in this verse, and ushered in with another preface, seems to be of a differing nature, and to speak of a more speedy and less grievous affliction that should befall them, which should be as a pledge to assure them of the certain accomplishment of the other prophecy, and of their utter destruction. And therefore it is observable, that the prophet doth not here say,

Within three years all that I have foretold and threatened shall be fulfilled; but only,

the glory of Moab shall be contemned, & c., which is quite another thing; and as the terms here used are much milder, so that; judgment here denounced seems much less, than in the foregoing prophecy. And therefore this verse may very well be understood of some great blow given to the Moabites, either by Sennacherib, or by his son Esarhaddon, from which notwithstanding they in a little time recovered themselves, and flourished again, and continued so to do till Nebuchadnezzar completed their destruction. And this may well enough consist with what is said of Moab's

being at ease from his youth, Jer_48:11, which is not to be understood simply, as if they had been wholly free from war and other calamities; for the contrary is evident, both from Scripture, as 2Sa_8:2 2Ki_3:24,25, and from other histories; but

comparatively, that they had not been brought to desolation, nor carried away into captivity, as it is explained in the following words, and as Israel had been at that time, and Judah was threatened to be.

As the years of an hireling, i.e. within three years precisely accounted; for hirelings are very punctual in observing the time for which they are hired; and their thoughts and desires run much upon it, because then they are to receive their wages; of which see Job_7:1,2 14:6. And this exposition is confirmed by comparing this place with Isa_21:16, where the same phrase is used of one year. So groundless is that opinion which the Jewish writers gather from this place, compared with Deu_15:18, that three years was the usual and appointed time for the generality of hired servants.

The glory of Moab; their strength, and wealth, and other things in which they glory.

Shall be contemned; shall be made contemptible to those who formerly admired them.

With all that great multitude; with the great numbers of their people, of which they boasted.

Shall be very small and feeble, comparatively to what they were before; which might be very true, and yet afterwards, in a hundred years' space, they might be sufficiently recruited.

Isaiah 17:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 17

Damascus, Samaria, Israel, and their cities, to be ruined by the Assyrians, Isa_17:1-5. A remnant shall consider and repent, Isa_17:6-8. The rest plagued for their impiety, Isa_17:9-11. The woe of Israel's enemies, Isa_17:12-14.

The burden of Damascus; both of that city and kingdom, as appears from Isa_17:2,3.

It shall be a ruinous heap: this was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser, 2Ki_16:9, although afterwards it was re-edified and possessed by another sort of inhabitants.

Isaiah 17:2

The cities of Aroer; of that part of Syria called Aroer, from a great city of that name; of which see Deu_2:36 **3:12**. These cities were possessed by the Reubenites and Gadites, whom Tiglath-pileser carried into captivity, 1Ch_5:26. These he mentions here, as he doth Ephraim in the next verse, because they were confederate with Syria against Judah.

None shall make them afraid, because the land shall be desolate, and destitute of men who might disturb them.

Isaiah 17:3

The fortress; either Samaria, their chief fortress; or all their fortress or strong holds, the singular number being put for the plural; or all their strength and glory, which answers to the kingdom in the next clause.

And the remnant of Syria; or, *and* from (which particle is easily understood from the former clause) *the remnant of Syria* . So the sense is, The remainders of Damascus and Syria shall be a headless body, a people without a king.

They shall be as the glory; an ironical speech, implying their contemptible condition; for their glory is supposed to be departed from them, by what he had already said of them. The sense is, Syria shall have as much glory as Israel, i.e. neither of them shall have any at all.

Isaiah 17:4

Shall be made thin; or, shall be emptied, as this word is rendered, Isa_19:6.

Isaiah 17:5

Reapeth the ears with his arm; taking care, as far as may be, that all may be gathered in, and nothing left. So shall the whole body of the ten tribes be carried away captive, some few gleanings only being left of them, as it is in the harvest.

The valley of Rephaim; a very fruitful place near Jerusalem, Jos_15:8 **18:16**.

Isaiah 17:6

Some few Israelites were left after their captivity, who joined themselves to the kingdom of Judah, and were carried captive to

Babylon with them, from whence also they returned with them, as we find in the history of their return in Ezra and Nehemiah.

Isaiah 17:7

Shall a man, those few men that are left,

look to his Maker, they shall sincerely respect, and trust, and worship (all which are understood by *looking to*) God, and God only, as the next verse explains it. Their afflictions shall at last bring them to repentance.

Isaiah 17:8

Not look to the altars; not resort or trust to them, or to the worship offered to idols upon them.

The work of his hands; their own inventions; for otherwise the altars made by God's command were the work of men's hands. *The groves* , which were devised and planted by men, as fit places for the worship of their gods; and therefore were forbidden, Deu_16:21 1Ki_14:15. *The images* , worshipped in their groves. The word properly signifies *images of the sun* , either having the form and shape of the sun, or at least erected to his honour and worship; of which see Deu_4:19 **17:3** 2Ki_23:5,**11 Jer 8:2 7:18 44:17,18.**

Isaiah 17:9

In that day; in the day of Jacob's trouble, of which he spake Isa_17:4, and continueth his speech unto these words, and afterwards.

An uppermost branch; which he that pruneth the tree neglecteth, either because he esteems it useless and inconsiderable, or because he cannot reach it.

Which they left because of the children of Israel: the sense is either,

1. **Which they**, to wit, the enemies, **left**, or, which shall be left, (the active verb being put impersonally, as it frequently is in the Hebrew text,)

because of or for the children of Israel; which God inclined their hearts to leave or spare, out of his love to his Israel. Thus this is mentioned as a mercy, or mitigation of the calamity. But this

seems not to agree either with the foregoing or following words, both which manifestly speak of the greatness of the judgment. And that their strong cities were not left for them, but taken from them, seems evident from Isa_17:3,4. Or,

2. As the cities (which words are easily understood out of the former part of the verse, where they are expressed) which they (to wit, the Canaanites, as the seventy interpreters express it; and it was needless to name them, because the history was so well known to them to whom the prophet writes) *left or forsook* (which they did either by departing from them, or being destroyed out of them) *because of* (or *before* , or *for fear of*) *the children of Israel* . And this was a very fit example, to awaken the Israelites to a serious belief of this threatening, because God had inflicted the same judgment upon the Canaanites, and that for the same sins of which they were guilty.

Isaiah 17:10

Thou, O Israel. The Rock of thy strength; that God Who was thy only sure defence.

Pleasant plants; excellent flowers and fruit trees.

Strange slips; fetched from far countries. and therefore highly esteemed. The sense is, Thou shalt use much industry and cost, but to no purpose, as it follows.

Isaiah 17:11

In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; thou shalt from day to day, beginning early in the morning, use all care and diligence that what thou hast planted and sown may thrive; and thou shalt see some effect of thy labours, and some hopes of success.

But the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow: the sense of the words thus rendered is this, But in the time of your grief, &c., or when this grievous calamity shall come, all your harvest shall be but one heap, which in itself is very inconsiderable, and is easily carried away by your enemies. But the place is and may be otherwise rendered, and that very agreeably both to the words and order of the Hebrew text; But *the heap* (or, *heaps* , the singular number being most

commonly put for the plural) *of the harvest* (i.e. instead of those heaps of corn which thou didst expect, and which men usually reap in harvest)

in the day or time (to wit, of the harvest; or, in the day of calamity, of which I have spoken, Isa_17:4,9; or, in a day, i.e. speedily or suddenly) shall be (or, thou shalt have)

grief and desperate sorrow. This shall be all thy harvest, and the event of thy labours.

Isaiah 17:12

This is a new prophecy, added for the present support and comfort of God's people.

The multitude of many people, combined together against Judah. It matters not whether you understand this of the Syrians and Israelites who were united against Judah, or of the Assyrians, whose army consisted of vast numbers, and of men of several nations. The following words agree to either of them.

Which make a noise like the noise of the seas; which invade my land and people with great force and fury, as the sea doth, either in its own channel, or when it enters into the land by a breach.

Isaiah 17:13

Shall rebuke them; not in words, but deeds; shall discomfit and overthrow them.

Like a rolling thing, which is easily moved by every slight touch, and much more by a violent wind. Or, *like a wisp*, to wit, of straw, which is sometimes rolled together.

Isaiah 17:14

Behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not: at even there is a great terror and consternation among God's people, for fear of their enemies; and ere the morning cometh, their enemies are cut off by the hand of God. This was literally and eminently fulfilled in the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem. Although the words may be more generally understood of any great and sudden change, and unexpected deliverance, granted to God's people, when their enemies were ready to devour them. And this place may be compared with that in Psa_30:5, *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in*

the morning. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us : this is a triumphant conclusion, uttered by the prophet in the name of God's people.

Isaiah 18:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 18

God, in defence of his church and punishing her enemies, will destroy the Ethiopians, Isa_18:1-6: an access thereby shall be to the church, Isa_18:7.

The land; either,

1. Of Arabia; or,
2. Of Ethiopia beyond Egypt; or,
3. Of Egypt, as some both ancient and later interpreters judge; of whom he speaks more darkly in this chapter, and then explains himself more clearly in the next chapter. But this controversy will be best determined by examining the following description.

Shadowing with wings: the title of wings is oft given, both in Scripture and in other authors, unto divers things which have, some general kind of resemblance to wings, as to the battlements of a house or temple, as Mat_4:5; to the skirts of a garment, as Rth_3:9, and oft elsewhere; to an army, as Isa_8:8 Jer_48:40 **49:22**; and to the sails of a ship, as this word is here commonly understood, and as it is unquestionably used in other authors. And *shadowing with wings* is nothing else but overspread or filled with them; which title may be given either to Ethiopia or Egypt, in regard of the great numbers, either,

1. Of their armies; or rather,
2. Of their ships or vessels sailing upon the sea or rivers: for,
 1. In these they exceeded most of those nations who had dealings with the Jews, whereas other nations equalled or exceeded them in numerous armies. But they had an innumerable company of ships or boats, not only because of the commodiousness of the river Nilus, and its' many branches, and the Red Sea, and the Midland Sea, for navigation; but also because of the frequent overflowings of the river Nilus over their land, which made them absolutely necessary.

2. This best suits with the next verse.

3. Those ancient and venerable interpreters, the LXX. and the Chaldee, who best understood the Hebrew words and phrases, expound it so.

Beyond; or, *on this side* , as this participle is rendered, Num_21:13 **22:1**, and in many other places. Or, as others translate it, *besides* , which may comprehend both sides; and so the land of which he speaks is supposed to be situated on both sides of this river or rivers; which is most true both of Egypt and of Ethiopia. *The rivers* : a late learned writer understands this of three or four rivers of Arabia Chusaea, whereof one flows into the Red Sea, another into the Midland Sea, and a third into a great lake; which being obscure and very inconsiderable rivers, and running in so distant channels, it is not probable that this land should receive its denomination from them. And therefore it seems more reasonable to understand this of the great river Nilus. which comes from Ethiopia, and runs through the length of that land, and through Egypt, into the Midland Sea; and which is here called *rivers* , in the plural number, as it is also Exo_7:19 Isa_7:18 Eze_29:3,4, and unquestionably Nab. iii. 8. And so it might well be called, either for its greatness, or for the many rivulets that run into it, or for the various streams or channels into which it is divided; as Tigris, upon the same reasons, hath the same title of rivers ascribed to it, Nah_2:6. *Of Ethiopia* , Heb. *of Cush* ; by which he seems to understand either,

1. Arabia, which in many places of Scripture comes under that name, though not in all places, as some learned men contend. Nor doth this place seem to be understood here, because these rivers were not interposed between Judea, in which Isaiah wrote this prophecy, and Arabia; nor were the rivers of Arabia, mentioned before, interposed between Judea and Egypt or Ethiopia: and besides, those rivers were but small and inconsiderable; and therefore, as was noted before, this land, whatsoever it is, would not have been denominated from them, especially when it is not properly situated either beyond them, or on this side of them. But if this Cush be Arabia, peradventure it were better to understand *the rivers* , or *the river* , as it was explained before, of the Red Sea, beyond which indeed both Egypt and Ethiopia were, in

reference to Arabia. And whereas it may be objected that the title of *river* or *rivers* is very improperly given to the sea, it may be fairly answered, that as rivers are sometimes called by the name of the sea, as Euphrates is, Isa_21:1 Jer_51:36; so this very word here rendered river is used concerning the sea in the Hebrew text, **Jon 2 3**, and indeed may not unfitly be given to the Red Sea, which both for its length and breadth hath a manifest resemblance unto some large rivers which are in the world. And so the words may be very truly understood either of Egypt or of Ethiopia, both which countries in this sense are *beyond the rivers or river of Arabia* . But this I only propose, and submit to the reader's judgment. Or,

2. Ethiopia, properly so called; for the Cushites or Ethiopians are distinguished by Herodotus, and divers other both ancient and later writers, into the eastern, which seem to be the Arabians, and the western, which seem to be the Ethiopians under Egypt. And it is probably thought that these Cushites were first planted in Arabia, and, upon their increase, part of them passed over into Africa by crossing the Red Sea, which was; very short and an easy passage, and settled there. And according to this interpretation of the word, the description of the land given in the last clause of this verse agrees either to Ethiopia or to Egypt, as is evident from what hath been already said for the clearing of this dark and difficult verse.

Isaiah 18:2

That sendeth ambassadors; that at this time are sending ambassadors, after their manner, to strengthen themselves with leagues and alliances, whereby they think to prevent those judgments and calamities which, notwithstanding all their endeavours, I will bring upon them. The first part of this verse seems to contain a further description of the people of the land, mentioned in the foregoing verse. By the sea; either by the Midland Sea, or by the Red Sea, or by great lakes which were both in and near the land of Egypt; it being usual among the Hebrews to give the title of seas to lakes, or any great collections Of waters, As hath been oft observed before.

In vessels of bulrushes; for both the Egyptians and Ethiopians, as Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, and Pliny relate, did commonly use

boats of rushes or reeds, which were more convenient for them than those of wood, because they were both cheaper, and swifter, and lighter for carriage from place to place, for which they had frequent occasion in those parts; and safer, because of the many rocks, and shelves, and waterfalls of Nilus.

Upon the waters, Heb. *upon the face or surface of the waters* ; which is properly expressed, because such vessels being very light, did not sink so deep into the waters as those of wood do.

Saying: this word is supplied here, as it is in many other places. And the words here following are supposed to contain the commission and direction given by the people hitherto described unto their messengers, to go to the people described in the following words. But this word saying is not in the Hebrew text, nor is it supplied either by the LXX. or by the Chaldee: nor doth it seem necessary to be understood. And it seems very improbable that the people to whom the messengers were sent should be described in such general and ambiguous terms, and in so large a manner, and not a word said concerning their message. And therefore, with submission, I humbly conceive these to be the words of the prophet, who having in God's name pronounced a woe against the land hitherto described, here continues his speech, and gives a commission from God to these

messengers following to go to this nation scattered, &c. Then he calls to all nations to be witnesses of the message sent by these messengers, Isa_18:3. And then the message follows in the succeeding verses. And so the coherence seems to be clear.

Go, ye swift messengers: O you, my angels, or men, whom I have appointed for this work, go speedily to them, and tell them what I am about to do with them, or inflict the following judgment upon them.

Scattered, not by banishment, but in their habitations; which agrees well to the Cushites or Ethiopians, both for the vastness of the land inhabited by them, to wit, Ethiopia and Arabia, and for the manner of their habitation, which is more scattered than that of other people. Or these people may be called *scattered* prophetically, not that they were so, but that they should be so. Or this word may be rendered, as it is in the margin, and by some

others, *outspread* , or *drawn out at length* ; which exactly suits to Egypt, which is much more extended in length than in breadth. *Peeled* ; either,

1. Without hair; for so were the Ethiopians in a great measure, through the great heat of their country. Or,

2. Having their hair shaven or plucked off; for the word doth not signify a natural want of hair, but a violent taking away of hair, as appears from *Ezr_9:3* *Neh_13:25* *Isa_1:6*. And this plucking or shaving of the hair is metaphorically used in Scripture, to signify some great calamity, whereby men are stripped of all their comforts, as *Isa_7:20*, and elsewhere. And this title maybe given to them prophetically, to signify their future and approaching destruction. *Terrible from their beginning hitherto* ; such were the Egyptians and Ethiopians or Cushites, as appears both from sacred and profane histories. And this may be here added as an aggravation of their impending miseries, that they who had been for a long time terrible to others, should now become a contemptible and wretched people. *Meted out* , Heb. *of line, line* , i.e. meted out as it were with lines to destruction; of which phrase and custom see *2Sa_8:2* *2Ki_21:13* *Psa_60:6* *Isa_34:11*.

Trodden down by Divine sentence and to be trodden down by their enemies.

The rivers have spoiled: which may be taken either,

1. Literally, because Egypt and Ethiopia were frequently overflowed by those two great rivers Niger and Nilus; although that overflow was rather an advantage to the land, by making it fruitful than a mischief. Or,

2. Metaphorically and prophetically, of the Assyrians or Babylonians breaking in upon them like a river, and destroying their land and people; of which see more on **Eze 30**. For powerful enemies invading a country are oft compared to a river, as *Isa_8:7,8* **59:19** *Jer_46:7,8*.

Isaiah 18:3

See ye; take notice of what I say and God will do. Or, *ye shall see it* ; you shall be eye-witnesses of this dreadful woe or judgment which I am bringing upon the people of whom I have spoken: The

prophet doth in a manner summon all nations to bear witness of his prophecy, and of the accomplishment thereof.

When he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains, and when he bloweth a trumpet; when God shall gather together the nations, as it were, by the lifting up of an ensign, or by the sound of a trumpet, to execute his judgments upon this people. Heb. *as when a man*

lifts up an ensign upon the mountains, which men can easily see; and *as when a man sounds a trumpet* , they can hear: no less visible and manifest shall this judgment of God be.

Hear ye; *ye shall hear* it, as in the other branch.

Isaiah 18:4

I will take my rest, I will sit still, and not bestir myself, either to help this people, or to hinder their enemies. God is said in Scripture *to rest* or *sit still* , when he doth not work on the behalf of a person or people; as, on the contrary, he is said *to bestir* himself when he acts for them.

I will consider; or, *I will contemplate* or *look upon them* , to wit, the people of whom I am here speaking. So it is only an ellipsis of the pronoun. Now God's *looking* in Scripture is variously used; sometimes in way of favour and mercy, as Psa_25:18 Isa_66:2, &c.; and sometimes in a way of anger and judgment, as Exo_14:24 Psa_25:19, and, as I humbly conceive, in this place. I know some learned men render this and the next word, *I will look upon my dwelling-place* , and interpret the place of God's gracious respect to his church or people, to preserve and deliver it in the midst of all the confusions and combustions that happen in the world; which interpretation seems altogether unsuitable to the scope and business of the chapter, which in all the foregoing and following verses speaks of another sort of people, even of the Egyptians or Ethiopians, of whom therefore this verse also must be understood, or otherwise we make a breach in the context.

In my dwelling place; in heaven, the place where God dwells, and where he is said to hear prayers, 1Ki_8:30,32, as here to consider men and things as elsewhere he is said to hear and *to look from heaven* , as 2Ch_6:21 Isa_63:15; the Hebrew particles

beth, in , and *mern, from* , being put promiscuously one for another, as hath been noted before.

Like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. The sense is, that God would look upon them, as the sun with a clear heat looks upon herbs, &c. But this may be understood either,

1. In way of mercy, as most take it. And so the sense is, that God would look out and shine forth upon his church and people, and be as comfortable and refreshing to them

as the clear heat which shines upon the herbs; or, as others render it, *after the rain* ; or, *as a cloud of dew is in the heat harvest* . Or,

2. In way of judgment. And so the sense, that God would look upon them with as uncomfortable an influence *as the sun with a clear heat upon the herbs* , which are scorched and killed by it; and *as a cloud of the dew* , which brings dew or rain, *in the heat of harvest* , when it is unwelcome and hurtful. And this sense seems best to agree with the following verse, which continueth the metaphor of a harvest, and manifestly speaks not of refreshing, but of the destruction of the fruits thereof.

Isaiah 18:5

Afore the harvest; before they receive the end of their hopes, and finish the work which they have designed and begun.

When the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower; when the bud or flower is turned into a perfect but unripe grape, which gives hopes of a good vintage. The body of this people are compared to a vine tree.

He; the Lord, who is easily understood from the foregoing verse, and who is here represented under the notion of a husbandman or vine-dresser.

Take away and cut down the branches; instead of the gathering of the grapes, he shall cut down the body and branches of the tree, and throw it into the fire.

Isaiah 18:6

The sprigs and branches being cut down and thrown upon the ground, with the unripe grapes upon them, they shall lie upon the earth neglected by men, as being unripe, and unfit for their use, so that either birds or beasts may shelter themselves with them, or feed on them, both summer and winter. You are not to understand that the summer is appropriated to the fowls, and the winter to the beasts; but this is only an elegancy of the Hebrew language to use such distributions, of which we have many instances in prophetical writings.

Isaiah 18:7

In that day; which is to be taken largely and indefinitely, as it is frequently in the prophets, as we have already seen, and shall more fully see hereafter. At or after that time, when the judgment threatened in the foregoing verses shall be fully and completely executed, whereby that people will be awakened to repentance.

A people; the people of whom I am speaking shall present and offer themselves and their sacrifices unto the true God. He speaks of their conversion to God and Christ by the preaching of the gospel; the accomplishment of which promise is recorded in the histories of the church.

Isaiah 19:1 ISALAH CHAPTER 19

The confusion of Egypt; their intestine dissension; their idols deceive them; cruel lords over them; waters fail them; their trade dead; their princes and counsellors made foolish; their terror before the Lord, Isa_19:1-17. The calling of Egypt to the church, Isa_19:18-22. The covenant of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel, Isa_19:23-25.

The burden of Egypt. Some learned men conceive that what was said more generally and darkly in the foregoing chapter, is here more particularly. and clearly explained to be meant of Egypt; it being usual for the prophets to mix obscure and plain passages together, and to clear the one by the other. Others understand that chapter of Ethiopia, and this of Egypt. But this controversy must be decided by an exact consideration of all the passages of the former chapter.

The Lord rideth, as a general in the head of his army, or as a judge riding the circuit to execute judgment.

Upon a swift cloud; which phrase showeth that the judgment shall come speedily, unexpectedly, and unavoidably. And clouds being very unusual in Egypt, the appearance of a cloud was a kind of prodigy, and a prognostic of some grievous calamity. *Shall be moved from their seats* , and from their former reputation. Or, *shall shake or tremble* . So far shall they be from helping the Egyptians, as they expect, that they shall tremble for themselves; which divers of the Egyptian gods, being living creatures, might properly do.

The heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it; they shall lose all their ancient strength and courage, for which they had been famous formerly.

Isaiah 19:2

I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians; I will raise civil wars among them.

Kingdom against kingdom; for although all Egypt was now one kingdom, and under one king, yet not many years after this time it was divided into twelve several kingdoms, between whom there were many and cruel wars, as is related by the historians of those times, and particularly by Herodotus and Diodorus.

Isaiah 19:3

The spirit; either

1. Their courage. But of that he spake Isa_19:1. Or,
2. Their understanding, as it is explained in the next clause; for the word *spirit* is oft put for the reasonable soul, as Ecc_3:21 **12:7**, and for the thoughts of the mind, as Pro_29:11 **Eze 13**.
3. **They shall seek to the idols**, as not knowing what to do without the help of a higher power.

Isaiah 19:4

A fierce king; either,

1. The king of Assyria or Chaldea; or,

2. Those twelve petty kings, the singular number being put for the plural; or,

3. Psammetichus, who being at first one of those twelve kings, waged war with the rest, and subdued them, and conquered all the land of Egypt, and ruled it with rigour.

Isaiah 19:5

The waters shall fail from the sea; which may be understood either,

1. Metaphorically, of the taking away of their dominion or commerce, &c.; or rather,

2. Properly, as may be gathered from the following words and verses. For as the river Nilus, when it had a full stream, and free course, did pour forth a vast quantity of waters by its seven famous mouths into the sea; so when that was dried up, which is expressed in the next clause, those waters did truly and properly fail from the sea. So there is no need of understanding by sea either the river Nilus, or the great lake of Moeris, which, after the manner of the Hebrews, might be so called.

The river, to wit, Nilus, upon whose fulness and overflow both the safety and the wealth of the land depended, as all authors agree; and therefore this was a very terrible judgment.

Dried up, not totally, but in a very great measure, as such phrases are commonly used.

Isaiah 19:6

They shall turn the rivers far away; which is to be taken impersonally, as such expressions are very frequently, for, *the rivers* (those small rivulets by which the waters of Nilus were conveyed and distributed into several parts of the land)

shall be turned far away, as they must needs be, when the greater river Nilus, which fed them, was dried up.

The brooks of defence; the several branches of the river Nilus, which were a great defence to Egypt, as is well known.

The reeds and flags; which were very useful to them for making their boats, which were absolutely necessary in that country, and divers other things.

Shall wither; as they commonly do for want of water.

Isaiah 19:7

The paper reeds; which by a needle, or other fit instrument, were divided into thin and broad leaves, which being dried and fitted, were used at that time for writing, as our paper is; and consequently was a very good commodity.

Sown by the brooks; and much more what was sown in more dry and unfruitful places.

Isaiah 19:8

Because they could catch few or no fish, by which trade they got their living; which also was a great plague to the people, whose common diet this was, because out of superstitious conceits they killed and eat but few living creatures, as appears both from sacred and profane writers.

Isaiah 19:9

That work in fine flax; that make fine linen, which was one of their best commodities; of which **See Poole** "1Ki_10:28", **See Poole** "Pro_7:16", **See Poole** "Eze_27:7".

Isaiah 19:10

Thereof, i.e. of Egypt, or of the Egyptians. They shall lose their ends and hopes; for the fishes in them shall die for want of water.

Isaiah 19:11

Zoan; the chief city, in which the king and court frequently resided. See Psa_78:12.

Brutish; exceeding foolish, and destructive to themselves.

How say ye unto Pharaoh? why do you put such false and foolish words into Pharaoh's mouth?

I am the son of the wise; wisdom is hereditary and natural to me. This vain opinion of himself they cherished by their flatteries, although he undid himself and his people by his folly.

The son of ancient kings: he derides the vanity of the Egyptians, who used to make great brags of the antiquity of their nation, and especially of their kings, who, as they pretended, had reigned successively for above ten thousand years; which number of years they made up by this craft, by making those successive kings,

which reigned together at the same time, in their several Nomi, or provinces.

Isaiah 19:12

Thy wise men; who pretended that either by their deep policy, or by their skill in astrology or magic, they could certainly foresee things to come.

Isaiah 19:13

Noph; another chief city, and one of the king's seats, so called also Jer_2:16 **44:1**; called also *Moph* in the Hebrew text, Hos_9:6; and by other and later authors, *Memphis*.

Even they that are the stay, Heb. *even the corner*, or the cornerstone, which is the chief support of the building. Whereby he may design either,

1. The king; or,
2. Some eminent statesman of that age, upon, whose counsels both king and people depended; or
3. Their chief counsellors, the, singular number being then put collectively, as it is in many other places. The tribes of the provinces, which he calls by a title borrowed from the Hebrews, in whose language he spake and wrote this prophecy.

Isaiah 19:14

Hath mingled; or, *hath poured out or given them to drink* as appears from their drunkenness, expressed in the end of the verse; which also suits with the Scripture phrase whereby a *cup* signifies God's judgments, as Isa_51:17,**21 22 Jer 25:15**.

A perverse spirit, Heb. *a spirit of perversities or crookednesses*; or, as the LXX. and Chaldee render it, *of error or delusion*; a disposition of mind very apt to mistake, and to mislead them into foolish and crooked counsels and courses; which God could easily effect, partly by laying occasions of stumbling in their way, and partly by withdrawing or darkening that wisdom which he had infused, by which alone men can discern their way.

In every work thereof; in all their designs and undertakings.

Staggereth in his vomit; when he is so excessively drunk, that he reels to and fro, and vomits up his drink.

Isaiah 19:15

All people, both high and low, shall be at their wits' end not knowing what to do.

Isaiah 19:16

Like unto women; feeble and fearful, as it follows.

Because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts; because they shall perceive that they do not fight with men only, but with the Lord of hosts, who now lifts up his hand against them, as he did against their forefathers, **Exo 14**, the very remembrance whereof is very terrible to them.

Isaiah 19:17

The land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt; either,

1. Because of Judah's calamities and desolations; for Judah was their bulwark against the Assyrians and Babylonians; and when this bulwark was removed, the Egyptians, their neighbours and confederates, had just cause to fear. Or,

2. Because of their manifold both former and later injuries against Judah, for which they now apprehend that God is calling them to an account; which interpretation seems to be favoured by the following words; for their fear of mentioning Judah's name seems to have proceeded partly from the sense of their guilt and miscarriages towards Judah, and partly from their apprehensions and experience of the irresistible power and justice of the God of Judah, whom they had provoked, and who was now marching to plead his own and Judah's cause against them. Compare Jer_23:34, &c.

Which he hath determined; because God is now about to execute his appointed judgment.

Against it; against Egypt.

Isaiah 19:18

In that day; after that time, as this phrase is used, Isa_4:2 **18:7**, and oft elsewhere. In the times of the gospel, which are oft noted in the prophets by that very expression.

Five cities; a considerable number of their chief cities, a certain number being put for an uncertain.

Speak the language of Canaan; profess the Jewish religion, agree with them in the same mind; which is fitly signified by speaking the same language, because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Thus the changing and purifying of a people's lips is used to signify the change of their hearts and lives, Zep_3:9; and praising God with one mouth, to note their unity or consent in the faith, Rom_15:6.

Swear to the Lord of hosts: it is well observed by some learned interpreters, that he doth not say swear by the Lord, which is the most common phrase, and which, being one eminent part and act of worship, is put for the whole; but *swear to the Lord* ; which phrase is also used 2Ch_15:14 Psa_132:2 Isa_45:23; and it implies the dedication, or oblation, and yielding up of a person or thing to the Lord, by a solemn vow, or covenant, or oath, as appears by the places now quoted. In like manner God is said to *swear* to a man, Deu_26:15, and one man to another, Gen_21:23, when they oblige themselves by oath to do such or such a thing for them. And therefore what is called *swearing to God* , Isa_45:23, is rendered or expounded *bowing the knee* (which signifies the subjection of a man's self) to God, and confessing to God, Rom_14:11.

One; not one of the five, for they are supposed to be saved in the foregoing clause; but one city, or another city, the sixth city. As divers cities shall be converted and saved, so some other cities shall continue in their impenitency, and be destroyed. Others render this clause thus, *one* of them

shall be called, (or, *shall be* ; for *to be called* is oft put for *to be* .) *The city of the sun* ; or, as the Grecians call it, *Heliopolis* ; which the Egyptians called *On* , Gen_41:45; which was a very eminent city, and a chief seat of idolatry, being a city of priests, as Strabo reports; and therefore its conversion to the faith was more wonderful.

Isaiah 19:19

An altar for God's worship; not a Levitical, but a spiritual and evangelical altar, as appears from hence, because that was confined to one place, Deu_12:13,14. The *altar* is put for the worship of God, as it is in many places both of the Old and New

Testament. And nothing is more common in the prophets than to speak of gospel worship in the phrases of the law.

A pillar; a monument of the true religion. Here also he alludes to the ancient custom of erecting pillars to God; of which **See Poole** "Gen_12:7", **See Poole** "Gen_28:18", **See Poole** "Jos_22:10", **See Poole** "Jos_24:26", **See Poole** "Jos_24:27".

At the border thereof; as before, *in the midst of it* . The meaning is, There shall be evidences of their piety in all places.

Isaiah 19:20

And it, the altar or pillar last mentioned,

shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord, to testify that they own the Lord for their God.

They shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors; being sorely distressed, and finding the weakness of their idols, they shall turn unto the true God.

A Saviour, and a great one; a great or mighty *Saviour* , by a common figure called *hendiaduo* , as a *cloud and smoke* is put for a *smoking cloud* , Isa_4:5; or, *a Saviour and a Prince* , even Christ, who is so called, Act_5:31, as is evident from the whole context, which apparently speaks of gospel times. And the emphatical phrase here used directed them to look for an extraordinary Saviour.

Isaiah 19:21

Shall know the Lord; shall acknowledge, and love, and serve him; for words of knowledge in Scripture commonly include affection and practice, as hath been often observed.

Shall do sacrifice and oblation; shall worship God spiritually; which yet is signified by typical phrases, as it is Mal_1:11, and in many other places.

And perform it; they shall not only profess and promise piety, but shall seriously and diligently practise it.

Isaiah 19:22

He shall smite and heal it; God will afflict them by oppressors, Isa_19:20, and otherwise; and by those afflictions he will convert and save them.

Isaiah 19:23

The Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; they who were implacable enemies one to another, and both to the church and people of God, shall now be reconciled and united together in the service of God, and love to his church.

Shall serve, to wit, the Lord, who is easily understood from Isa_19:21,25.

Isaiah 19:24

The third; the third party, to wit, in that sacred league, whereby all of them oblige themselves to God.

With Egypt and with Assyria: these people are named because they were the most obstinate and malicious enemies to God's church, and therefore in a special manner accursed by God; but they are here put synecdochically for all the Gentiles.

Even a blessing: this is peculiar to Israel, who is not only a third party, as the others are, but is the most eminent and blessed of the three, as being the fountain, or rather the conduit-pipe, by which the blessing is conveyed to the other two, because Christ was to be born of them, and the gospel church and ordinances were first established among them, and from them derived to the Gentiles.

In the midst of the land; or, *of the earth* ; which may be added, to imply that God's blessing should be conveyed from and by Israel, not only to the Egyptians and the Assyrians, but to all the nations of the earth, in the midst of which the land of Israel might well be said to lie. Or, *of that land* of which I am here speaking; or, the singular number being put for the plural, *of those lands* , Egypt and Assyria, between which Israel lay.

Isaiah 19:25

Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless; whom, i.e. which people, to wit, Israel, Egypt, and Assyria, expressed both in the foregoing verse, and in the following clause of this verse; of whom he speaks as of one people, in the singular number, because they are all united into one body and church. Or, *For* or *because* (as this particle is taken, 1Sa_15:15, and elsewhere) *the Lord of hosts shall bless him* or *them* . So this is added as a reason why he said Israel should be a blessing to them all. *My people* : this title, and

those which follow, that were peculiar to the people of Israel, shall now be given to these and all other nations of the world.

Isaiah 20:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 20

The captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia represented, to take off the Jews from seeking to them for help.

Tartan; a great commander in Sennacherib's army, 2Ki_18:17.

Ashdod; an eminent and strong city of the Philistines, Jos_13:3 1Sa_5:1, in the utmost part of the land of Canaan, towards Egypt.

Sargon: what king of Assyria this was is much disputed. It is well known, and confessed, that one and the same person hath frequently several names, both in Scripture, as hath been observed again and again, and in other authors. And therefore this may be either,

1. Shalmaneser, who, when he took Samaria, might also by Tartan take this place. Or,

2. Sennacherib, who, before he came to Jerusalem, *came up against and took all the fenced cities of Judah* , 2Ki_18:13, of which Ashdod might be reckoned one, as being in the tribe of Judah, Jos_13:3 **15:47**, and taken by Hezekiah from the Philistines, as it seems very probable from that passage, 2Ki_18:8, *He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city* . Or,

3. Esarhaddon, Sennacherib's son, who, by cutting off the first letter, is called *Sarchedon* , /**APC** Tob_1:21, and thence possibly, by abbreviation, *Sargon* ; who might do this thing in Hezekiah's time, some years after his father's death, and his coming to the empire, although it be not recorded in Scripture; for no man doubts that there were many great actions in those times which are wholly omitted in the sacred writings.

Isaiah 20:2

Loose the sackcloth; ungird it and put it off; the antecedent put for the consequent, which is very usual, as hath been often noted. God would sometimes have his prophets to add to their word a

visible sign, to awaken people's minds to a more serious consideration of the matters proposed to them.

The sackcloth; either,

1. His coarse and hairy garment, which the prophets used to wear, 2Ki_1:8 Zec_13:4, as many understand it. But that is expressed by another word in the places quoted, and never, to my knowledge, by this word. Or,

2. His mournful habit, which was commonly made of sackcloth, and which he wore in token of his hearty grief for the great calamities which were already come upon Israel, and were either come or coming upon Judah.

From off thy loins; upon which the upper garments were commonly girt, 1Ki_20:32 **2Ki 9**.

1.

Walking naked; not wholly naked, which had been indecent and scandalous, and withal very dangerous, at least to do so for three years, as he did, Isa_20:3; but without his upper garment, as slaves and prisoners used to do, whose posture he was to represent, Isa_20:4. And so the word *naked* is used 1Sa_19:24 2Sa_6:20 Joh_21:7. Thus also men are said to be naked when they are ill clothed, as Job_22:6 Mat_25:36 1Co_4:11 Jam_2:15.

Barefoot; after the manner of mourners, 2Sa_15:30, and captives, Jer_2:25.

Isaiah 20:3

Walked naked and barefoot three years; not constantly, but when he went abroad among the people, to whom this was appointed for a sign. Some think it was only three days, a day being usually put for a year in prophetic scriptures, as Num_14:33, **34 Eze 4:4-6**. But although a day be put for a year, yet a year is never put for a day.

A sign; either,

1. When this judgment should come, to wit, three years after this prophecy. Or,

2. How long it should continue, for three years; for some have observed that the Chaldeans spent so much time in conquering Egypt and Ethiopia.

Isaiah 20:4

Lead away, like beasts, of which this word is commonly used.

Their buttocks uncovered; having their garments cut off by the middle, to the discovery of their buttocks and their secret parts. Compare 2Sa_10:4 Isa_47:2.

Isaiah 20:5

They; all they that shall trust to them, and glory in them, as appears from the following words; the pronoun they being put indefinitely here, as it is Isa_2:19, and elsewhere. But under this general expression the Israelites not only are comprehended, but seem to be principally intended, because to them this prophecy was delivered, and they were eminently guilty of this sin; of which see Isa_30:2 **31:1**.

Isaiah 20:6

Of this isle; of this land, in which the prophet was, and to whose inhabitants these words were uttered. For the title of *isles* or *islands* in Scripture is frequently given not only to lands encompassed with the sea, but also to such countries as lay upon the sea-coasts, as Psa_72:10 Eze_26:15, **18**, as Palestine or Canaan did, yea, to such countries as are remote or separated from that place in or of which the words are spoken, as Est_10:1 Isa_24:15 **42:4,10**, &c, as Canaan was from Egypt, or at least from Ethiopia. Add to this, that Canaan had some resemblance with an isle, either because it was almost encompassed with the Midland Sea on one side, and with the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee or Tiberius and Jordan on the other side; or because, as isles are separated from other lands by the sea, so this land and people were seorated from all the rest of the world by God's special providence, and presence, and worship.

Such is our expectation; so vain is our hope placed upon such a people as are unable to deliver themselves, and much more to deliver us.

Whither we flee for help; to whom we now and usually trust; for this was the common disease of the people of Israel, although

Hezekiah was in a good measure free from it, as we read, 2Ki_18:5.

How shall we escape? either by their help, who cannot defend themselves; or by our own strength, seeing they who were much more potent than we are could not escape.

Isaiah 21:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 21

The prophet's fear and trouble at his vision of Babylon's ruin by the Medes and Persians, Isa_21:1-4. He mocketh Babel, Isa_21:5-9. Edom, scorning the prophet, is called to repentance, Isa_21:11,**12**. The time of Arabia's calamity set.

The desert of the sea; Babylon, as is evident both from her destroyers, the Medians, Isa_21:2, and especially from Isa_21:9, where she is named. She seems to be called

desert prophetically, to intimate, that although she was now a most populous city and kingdom, yet shortly she should be turned into a desolate wilderness, as was threatened, Isa_13:19, &c. But the word here rendered *desert* sometimes signifies a *plain*, as a very learned interpreter hath observed, and thus it most properly agrees to Babylon, and the land about it, which geographers note to be a very plain country, without any considerable mountains in it. It is called *the desert of the sea*, because it is situate by the sea, as the isles of the sea, Est_10:1, are those countries which were beside the sea. And the title of *the sea* might well be given to the waters of Babylon, because of the great plenty and multitude of them, the great channel of Euphrates, and the several several lesser channels cut out, and the vast lakes of water; in which respects it is said to sit upon many waters, Jer_51:13, the name of sea being given by the Hebrews to every great collection of waters.

In the south; in those parts which lay southward from Judea where there were many and great deserts, in which the winds have greater force. See Job_1:19 Jer_4:11. *Pass through*; as meeting with no stop or opposition. *It*; the burden or judgment. Or, *he*, the Median, as it is in the next verse.

Cometh from the desert; from Media and Persia; thus expressed, either because those countries were full of deserts, or because a great desert lay between them and Chaldea, as geographers and historians report.

From a terrible land; from the Medes, a warlike and formidable people, as appears both from sacred and profane writers.

Isaiah 21:2

A grievous vision; a vision or prophecy, containing dreadful calamities which were to fall upon Babylon.

The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth: this is spoken either,

1. Of the Chaldeans, as their sin, for which God sends the following judgment. So the sense is, The Chaldeans still persist in the practice of treachery and rapine, to which they have been so long accustomed. Or,

2. Of the Medes and Persians, who are here noted to pay the Babylonians in their own coin, and to use the same treachery and violence towards them which they had done to others. To which purpose the words are and may well be rendered otherwise; either thus, *the treacherous dealer hath found a treacherous dealer, and the spoiler hath found a spoiler* ; or thus, *O thou that dealest treacherously with the treacherous dealer, and that spoilest the spoiler, go up, O Elam , &c.*, as it followeth. These words will be much illustrated by compared them with Isa_33:1. There is no doubt to be made but the Medes and Persians used treachery as well as force against Babylon. And besides briars, and following their counsel and conduct in taking the city, which made them partakers of their treason.

Go up, to fight against her. These are God's words, either giving them command and commission to do so, or rather foretelling what they would do; which is oft done in this form of speech.

Elam; Persia, called Elam synecdochically, because Elam was an eminent province of Persia, bordering upon the Medes.

Besiege, to wit, Babylon, Isa_21:9. All the sighing thereof; either,

1. Babylon's sighing, which shall cease, because they shall have no time to sigh, or lament their miseries, being suddenly surprised, and cut off in a moment, as they were. As God is said to *seek out the wickedness* of wicked men *till he find none*, Psa_10:15, when he utterly destroyeth them in or with their sins. Or,

2. The sighing and groanings of God's people and other nations under the heavy oppressions of that potent and cruel empire; the pronoun *her*, or *thereof*, being taken here not passively, as commonly it is; but actively, or efficiently, as sometimes it is, as Deu_11:25, *your fear*, i.e. the fear of you; and Job_33:7, *my terror*, i.e. the terror or dread of me upon thee.

Isaiah 21:3

My loins; which he mentions with respect to the following similitude of child-bearing, in which the loins are sorely pained. And this the prophet speaks, either,

1. In the name and person of the Babylonian. Or rather,

2. In his own name; which is most natural, and agrees best with the last clause of the verse, which plainly speaks of the torment which he had in the mere hearing of the word, and seeing the vision, and not of that which they had in the feeling of it; although the latter is implied in the former; and the prophet expresseth his horror in hearing and seeing, to intimate the dreadful horror which should seize upon them when it came upon them.

As the pangs of a woman that travaileth; sharp and grievous pains.

Isaiah 21:4

The night of my pleasure; the night, in which I used to have a sweet repose and sleep. He seems to have had this vision in a night. But withal this horror of the prophet by night was typical, and did signify that grievous horror and destruction which should befall the Babylonians in a night of great feasting and jollity, as it did, Dan_5:1,30.

Hath he, God, who showed him that vision,

turned into fear unto me; into a time and matter of fear.

Isaiah 21:5

Prepare the table; furnish it with meats and drinks, as it follows. The prophet foretells what the Babylonians would be doing when their' enemies were at their doors, that they would give up themselves to feasting and security.

Watch in the watch-tower, to give us notice of any approaching danger, that in the mean time we may more securely indulge ourselves in mirth and pleasures.

Arise, ye princes; either,

1. Ye Medes and Persians; whilst your enemies the Babylonians are feasting securely, prepare to make your assault. Or,

2. Ye princes of Babylon; arise from the table and run to your arms. Which sudden alarm and change of their posture proceeded from tidings out of the watch-tower, as may be gathered from the former clause,

and is more fully expressed in the following verses.

Anoint the shield; prepare yourselves and your arms for the battle approaching: *The shield* is put for all their weapons of offence and defence. They used to anoint their shields with oil, partly to preserve and polish them, and partly to make them slippery, that their enemies' darts might not fasten in them, but slide off from them.

Isaiah 21:6

Thus hath the Lord said unto me; I speak not my own fancies, but what God hath made me to see and hear in a vision; the particulars whereof are related in the following verses.

A watchman; either,

1. A prophet; such being oft so called, as Eze_3:17 **33:2**. Or rather,

2. A military watchman. For this was now done only in a vision, which yet did foreshow what should be done really afterwards.

Let him declare, to thee in vision, to them really.

Isaiah 21:7

And he saw; a short speech for he told me that he saw.

A chariot, not for burden, but for war, in which chariots were then much used. With a couple of horsemen; attended with two horsemen. So there were both chariots and troops of horsemen. Or,

with a couple of horses, as this word is sometimes used, as 1Sa_8:11 2Sa_1:6. The chariot was drawn with two horses.

A chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; two chariots, one drawn by asses, (under which title some understand mules, as being engendered of asses,) and the other by camels; whereby he signifies the variety and abundance of warlike provisions which the Medes and Persians should have for this expedition, and particularly of chariots, whereof some were for the carriage of necessary things, and others for the battle.

He hearkened diligently; he carefully observed what he saw, and what he could further discover.

Isaiah 21:8

And he cried, A lion: the sense of the words thus rendered is this, The watchman cried out, I see also a lion, to wit, marching before the horsemen and chariots already mentioned; which they suppose to represent Cyrus or Darius marching in the head of their armies. Or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *he cried* as (which particle is oft understood, as hath been formerly and frequently noted)

a lion, with a terrible cry, as being affrighted with the vision, and withal signifying the dreadfulness of that judgment which was here represented as coming upon Babylon.

My lord; the watchman speaks these words either to God, or to the prophet, who by command from God had set him in this place and station; to whom therefore he gives the following account of his discharge of the work wherewith he was intrusted.

I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day time, and I am set in my ward whole nights; according to thy command I have stood, and do yet stand, continually, both day and night, upon my watch-tower.

Isaiah 21:9

Behold; the sum of what I have discovered is this.

A chariot of men; not filled with goods, as chariots of burden used to be; but provided with men, to fight from or with them.

With a couple of horsemen; understand, *and a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels* ; which is easily understood from Isa_21:7, where they are expressed.

He; the prophet Isaiah, who set the watchman or the Lord, by whose command he was set, Isa_21:6, who here gives an explication of the vision.

All the graven images of her gods; which is mentioned as an evidence that she was fully conquered, because otherwise they would not have suffered their idols to have been thrown to the ground.

He hath broken; God, by the hands of Cyrus, his instrument. Or it is an indefinite speech, *he hath broken* , &c., for *they are broken* , &c.

Isaiah 21:10

Threshing is here put for the corn threshed, as it is explained in the following words; the act being frequently put for the object, as *captivity* for the captives, *fear* for the thing feared, &c., as hath been noted before. And the corn threshed is here metaphorically put for people sorely afflicted and punished, which is oft expressed by threshing, as Isa_25:10 **41:15** Mic_4:13, &c. This is spoken either,

1. Of the Jews, to whom he now turneth his speech, whom God did grievously thresh and afflict by the Babylonians, and whom he here comforts with these tidings, as if he had said, Though thou wilt be threshed first, yet Babylon shall be threshed last, and most dreadfully, and their threshing shall be thy deliverance. This interpretation is thought necessary, because of the latter clause of the verse, wherewith this is to be joined. Or,

2. Of Babylon.

O my threshing; or, thou art my threshing, whom I have undertaken to thresh and punish. And so this is fitly mentioned here, to assure them that this prophecy of Babylon's fall must necessarily be accomplished, because the Almighty was engaged

in the work. And this interpretation seems not to be inconsistent with the rest of the verse, as we shall see.

The corn of my floor; the corn which I will cause to be threshed upon the floor, Heb. *the son of my floor* . For the title of *son* is oft given to lifeless things, as arrows are called the sons of the bow, or of the quiver, Job_5:7 **41:28**, &c.

That which I have heard of the Lord of hosts have I declared; what I have foretold is not my own invention, but the word of God, and therefore shall infallibly come to pass.

Unto you; either,

1. Unto you my people, or hearers; for all the prophecies, even concerning other nations, were published to them, and for their use and comfort: or,

2. Unto (or concerning, as this Hebrew particle is sometimes used, as the learned know) you Babylonians, to whom this was in some sort declared, because it was published amongst the Jews, and by their means might easily come to the knowledge of other people, and consequently of the Babylonians. Nor is it unusual for the prophets, in their prophecies delivered to God's people concerning Babylon, by an apostrophe to turn their speech to the Babylonians themselves; of which we have instances, Jer_50:24,**31 51:13,14,25,26**.

Isaiah 21:11

Of Dumah; either,

1. Of a part of Arabia, so called from Dumah, one of Ishmael's race, Gen_25:14 1Ch_1:30. Or rather,

2. Of Edom or Idumea, as seems most probable from the mention of Mount Seir, which was a part of Edom; which may here be called *Dumah* , either by an abbreviation, or cutting off the first letter from Idumea, as Ram is put for Aram, 1Ch_2:9 Job_32:2, or rather prophetically and sarcastically; for *Dumah* signifies silent; whereby he intimates that Edom, which was much given to vain boasting and railing against God, and against his people, as we read elsewhere, should be brought to silence and utter ruin. And such new, and enigmatical, and significant names are elsewhere given by the prophets to divers known places, as Babylon is called

Sheshach , Jer_25:26, and Egypt *Mazor* , &c. *He* , to wit, Dumah, or the people of Dumah, of whom he speaks, or one of them in the name and by the appointment of the rest.

Calleth to me; to the watchman, as appears by the following words; for the prophet delivers his prophecy in the form of a dialogue between the people and the watchman.

Out of Seir; out of Edom, which is frequently called *Seir* as Gen_32:3 **36:8** 2Ch_20:10 **25:11**, &c.

Watchman; whereby he means either,

1. The prophet Isaiah, whom they call *watchman* , either seriously, or in scorn, because the prophets were so called by God, and by the people of the Jews; or,
2. The watchman of Edom, whom they had set, as people use to do in times of great danger.

What of the night? *the night* is taken either,

1. Metaphorically, for a time of tribulation. So they ask the prophet what he hath to say concerning that night of calamity which he had so long and oft threatened to them, whereof as yet they saw no appearance. Or,
2. properly, the night being the proper and chief time in which the watchman's care is most necessary, because then their enemies had opportunity to do them most harm. So the people are supposed to come to him very early in the morning, to inquire what had happened in the night; which shows a state of great perplexity and fear, which might well be called a burden, both because fear in itself is a great torment, and because this fear was a sign or presage of their approaching miseries.

What of the night? the repetition of the same words shows the greatness of their solicitude and fear.

Isaiah 21:12

The morning cometh, and also the night: the night is past without any great mischief to you, and the comfortable light of the morning is approaching, which freeth men's minds from the terrors of the night; but although the morning be coming, it will be gone, and the night will return, and your fears with it. The night

seems to be here taken properly, as the morning is; yet so that he alludes to the metaphorical signification of the word, and intimates that the night of affliction was coming upon them.

If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come. If this watchman be the prophet Isaiah, then the sense of these words is this, *If you will be inquiring, inquire* sincerely and seriously of God, by me, concerning your danger, and the way to prevent it; return unto the Lord by true repentance, who alone can secure you, and come unto me for direction. But if it be their own watchman, which, with submission, I conceive most probable, the sense is, *If you will inquire, inquire* : I perceive, by what I have observed this night, that your danger is not passed, and there will be occasion for further inquiries from time to time; and therefore *return, come* , i.e. either return to them that sent you with this message, and then come to me for further tidings; or come again, as *return, lie down* , is put for *lie down again* , 1Sa_3:5; come to me the next morning, as you have reason to do, and so from morning to morning, for I see every night is likely to bring some evil tidings to you.

Isaiah 21:13

In the forest; not as you used to do, in the houses or tents of the Arabians; whereby he implies that that populous country should be turned into a desolate wilderness.

Travelling companies: in those parts travellers then did and still do go together in companies. See Gen_37:25,28 Job 6:19.

Dedanim; or, Dedamites; of whom see on Gen_25:3 Jer_25:23 49:8. These were merchants, and used to trade with Tyre, Eze_27:20 38:13, and their way lay through the same parts of Arabia.

Isaiah 21:14

Tema; a part of Arabia; of which see Job_6:19 Jer_25:23.

They prevented with their bread him that fled; whereby he implies that those other Arabians, against whom this prophecy is principally directed, should be reduced to great scarcity of all necessary provisions, and forced to flee for their lives from a bloody enemy, as is more fully expressed in the next verse.

Isaiah 21:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 21:16

Within a year, from the time of this prophecy.

According to the years of an hireling, to wit, an exact year; for hirelings diligently observe and wait for the end of the year, when they are to receive their wages.

All the glory; their power, and riches, and all things wherein they used to glory. This was executed by the Assyrians.

Kedar; of whom see on Psa_120:5 Jer_49:28.

Isaiah 21:17

Archers; bows and arrows were their: chief weapons, and they were expert in the use of them, both against beasts and men, as occasion required.

Isaiah 22:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 22

The anguish of Judah: the prophet much grieved, Isa_22:1-5, by the Persians, Medes, and Assyrians, Isa_22:6,7. He reproveth their human wisdom, Isa_22:8-11, and profane joy, Isa_22:12,13; which God would certainly punish, Isa_22:14. Shebna's deprivation for his pride, Isa_22:15-19. Eliakim put in his place: his glory, Isa_22:20-25.

Of the valley of vision; of Judah; and especially of the City of Jerusalem, as the next verse showeth; which is called a valley, because a great part of it stood in a valley, and comparatively to those higher mountains wherewith it was encompassed; of which see Psa_121:1 **125:2** Isa_52:7; and *the valley of vision* , because of the many and clear visions or revelations of God's mind in that place, above all other parts of the world. As the prophets are called *seers* , 1Sa_9:9, so prophecy is frequently called *vision* , as 1Sa_3:1 Isa_1:1 Eze_7:13,26.

Gone up to the housetops, as they used to do in times of great confusion and consternation, that they might mourn, and look, and cry to Heaven for help. Compare Isa_15:3 Jer_48:38.

Isaiah 22:2

Thou art full of stirs; or, thou who wast full of stirs, or noises, to wit, of joyful shouts, as the following words limit it, and as this word is used, *Zec_4:7*, though elsewhere it be taken for doleful cries.

Tumultuous; or, *streperous* ; full of noise and clamour, through revelling and jollity. See *Pro_20:1 Zec_9:15*.

Not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle, but either by famine or pestilence in the siege, as many died, *Jer_14:18 38:2*, or in their flight, as others were; both which were inglorious kinds of death.

Isaiah 22:3

Thy rulers; Zedekiah and his chief commanders, whose flight he foretells.

They are bound by the archers, Heb. *from the bow* , i.e. so as they were disenabled from using the bow; which is a usual Hebraism; as from a king is put for *from being a king* , *1Sa_15:23*; and *from seeing* , *Psa_69:23*, is rendered that they cannot see, *Rom_11:10*. But this word is by some, and may very well be, joined to the foregoing clause; for the words in the Hebrew lie thus, *All thy rulers are fled together from the bow* , (or, *bow-men* , as this word is rendered, *Isa_21:17*)

they are bound; which seems most plain and unforced, and suits best with the following words, as also with the prophet's use of the same phrase, *Isa_21:15*, *they fled from the bent bow* , &c. *All that are found in thee* ; that remained there with Zedekiah in the siege; for those who had fled to the Chaldeans saved their lives and liberties. *Are bound together in fetters* , *Jer_52:11*.

Which have fled from far; which fled to Jerusalem from the remotest parts of the land. But he rather speaks of those who fled from Jerusalem, and from their enemies, whereof some had fled away, but were pursued and overtaken by their enemies, and bound, as others had been. And the words seem to be well rendered, *they fled far away* , as this very word is used, *Isa_23:7*; which may be understood either of the same persons who fled, but were taken in their flight, as was now said; or of others, who fled away, when others abode, there and were bound.

Isaiah 22:4

Look away from me; take off your eyes and thoughts from me, and leave me alone, that I may take my fill of sorrows.

Labour not to comfort me; for all your labour will be lost, I neither can nor will receive any consolation.

Of the daughter of my people; of that city and nation whereof I am a member. The title of *daughter* is oft given both to cities and nations, as hath been noted before.

Isaiah 22:5

Of treading down; in which my people are trodden under foot by their insolent enemies.

Of perplexity by the Lord God of hosts: this is added, partly to show that this did not happen without God's providence; and partly to aggravate their calamity, because not only men, but God himself, fought against them.

Breaking down the walls *of the strong cities of Judah* ; which was done by Sennacherib, 2Ki_25:10.

Crying to the mountains, with such loud and dismal outcries as should reach to the neighbouring mountains, and make them ring again therewith.

Isaiah 22:6

Elam; the Persians, who now, and for a long time after. were subject to the Assyrian and Chaldean emperors, and were employed by them in their Wars.

Bare the quiver, being expert bow-men, as appears from Jer_49:35, and from Strabo's testimony.

With chariots of men and horsemen; as some of them fought on foot, so others fought from chariots and horses. *Kir* ; the Medes, so called by a synecdoche from Kir, an eminent city and region of Media, of which see 2Ki_16:9 Amo_1:5.

Uncovered; prepared it and themselves for the battle; for in times of peace arms were wrapt up and covered, to preserve them clean, and fit for use.

The shield; their defensive and offensive weapons.

Isaiah 22:7

Thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots: valleys were the most proper places for the use of chariots: see Jos_17:16.

The horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate, to assist and defend the footmen whilst they made their assault, and withal to prevent and take those who endeavoured to escape.

Isaiah 22:8

He; the enemy, Sennacherib, of whose invasion he seems to speak.

The covering of Judah: he took those fenced cities, which were a covering or safeguard both to the people of Judah, who fled to them, and to Jerusalem, which was begirt and defended by them.

Thou didst look in that day to the armour; thy hope and trust was wholly or chiefly placed in the arm of flesh. For although Hezekiah was commended for his trust in God, yet the generality of the people were guilty of distrust in God, and confidence in the creature.

The house of the forest; more fully called *the house of the forest of Lebanon* , 1Ki_7:2, not because it was built in Lebanon, for it was in Jerusalem; but either because it was built of the trees of Lebanon, for which cause the temple is called *Lebanon* , Zec_11:1, or for other reasons. **See Poole** "1Ki_7:2".

Isaiah 22:9

Ye have seen, i.e. observed or considered, as this word is used, Exo_32:9, and elsewhere, in order to the reparation of them, and to fortify the city, as the next words manifest.

Ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool, that you might both deprive the enemy of water, and supply the city with it; of which see on 2Ch_32:4,5.

Isaiah 22:10

Ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem; that they might exactly know their own strength, and the number of their people, and so lay the burdens more equally upon them, and make sufficient provisions for them.

The houses which stood upon or without the walls of their city, and so gave their enemies any advantage against them, and hindered the searching or fortifying the walls and city.

Isaiah 22:11

The two walls; either those 2Ki_25:4, or those 2Ch_32:5, in both which places we read of two walls.

For the water of the old pool; to receive the waters conveyed into it by pipes from the old pool.

The maker thereof; either,

1. Of the water; for both the springs and the rain which filleth the pools are from God alone: or,

2. Of Jerusalem, expressed in the foregoing verse, and easily understood here, because all these works were undertaken for Jerusalem's defence and provision. And it is usual in Scripture for the pronoun relative to be put by itself, without any express mention of the person or thing to which it belongs, which is left to the reader to gather out of the foregoing or following words; of which **See Poole "Psa_87:1"**, **See Poole "Son_1:1"**.

Him that fashioned it, Heb. *the former or framer of it*, God; who made it a city, and the place of his special presence and worship; which also he had undertaken to protect, if the people would observe his commands; to whom therefore they should have resorted and trusted in this time of their distress.

Long ago; which clause may be added to aggravate their sin, in distrusting that God who had now for a long time given proof of his care and kindness in defending this city.

Isaiah 22:12

Call; invite and oblige them by the course of his providence, and require this by the precepts requiring these things in such times and conditions.

To baldness; to make themselves bald, by plucking or shaving off the hair of their heads, as was usual in great sorrows, as Ezr_9:3 Job_1:20 Mic_1:16, although it was forbidden in case of the death of relations, for a special reason; of which see on Lev_19:27,**28 21:5**.

Isaiah 22:13

Eating flesh; not only for necessity, but to excess and luxury, as *eating and drinking* are taken, Mat_24:38.

Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die: the prophets tell us that we shall certainly and suddenly be destroyed; it concerns us therefore to make our best of the present time, and to be merry whilst we have the opportunity. A most perverse and desperate conclusion, proceeding from obstinate profaneness, and contempt of God's judgments.

Isaiah 22:14

It was revealed in mine ears; what I am saying is not my own invention, nor uncertain reports, but what I heard with these ears of mine. The like phrase we have 1Sa_9:15, *the Lord had told Samuel in his ear. This iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die* ; you shall feel the sad effects of this wickedness, and my just displeasure for it, as long as you live. This is not spoken exclusively, as if it should be purged after their death, which is absurd and impious to imagine, at least concerning such as lived and died in this desperate and impenitent condition; but emphatically. to show that God will have no mercy upon them in that time of life, in which he useth and delighteth to give repentance and remission of sins to mankind.

Isaiah 22:15

Get thee unto this treasurer; which the prophet might boldly do, because he had the protection not only of God, who sent him upon this errand, but probably of Hezekiah also, who at the time of this prophecy was either king, or his father's viceroy, or at least heir-apparent to the crown.

Shebna; who seems to have been advanced by wicked Ahaz, and to have been a great patron of impiety and injustice in his reign, and by politic compliance with Hezekiah thought to gain his favour, and so to keep his place and power at court.

Over the house; over the house of David, as is more fully expressed below, Isa_22:22. Possibly he was not only the lord treasurer, but also the king's prime minister of state.

Isaiah 22:16

What hast thou here? or, *What dost thou here* ? what right hast thou to this place and office? *Whom* ; either,

1. What friends, in whom thou canst confide? Thou hast so ill managed thyself and thy affairs, that thou art universally hated. Or,

2. What kindred or relations? For the Jews say he was a stranger by birth; which is the more probable, because his pedigree is not mentioned in any of those places of Scripture where he is named.

Hewed thee out a sepulchre, as great and ambitious men used to do. *Here* ; not in thine own country, the proper place for such a monument; but in Jerusalem, which should not be defiled nor disparaged with it.

On high; in a high and eminent place, as Isa_57:7. *An habitation* ; either,

1. A sepulchre, which is called a man's house, Job_30:23; or,

2. A dwelling-house. He erected, or is compared to one that doth erect, a stately house to live in, and a stately sepulchre to receive him when he dies. And these two are fitly joined together, because their sepulchres were commonly built in or near their houses. See Isa_14:18 Joh_19:41. *In a rock* ; a fit place both for strength and state. Thus we read of a sepulchre hewed out of a rock, Mat_27:60.

Isaiah 22:17

I will carry thee away with a mighty captivity; will cause thee to be carried into captivity by a strong hand, or by the hand of a mighty man, from which therefore thou shalt not be able to escape. Or, *will cast thee away with the casting of a mighty man* , i.e. with great force; or, *in casting will cast thee away, O thou mighty man* . *Will surely cover thee* , to wit, with confusion, as is here implied, and as this phrase is more fully expressed, Psa_89:40 **109:29**. Or

covering may be put for obscuring his glory, which he designed to publish, and to that end erected stately monuments, &c. Or this may be an allusion to the ancient custom of covering the faces of

condemned persons; of which see Est_7:8. Compare Job_9:24 Eze_12:6,12.

Isaiah 22:18

He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball, Heb. *wrapping he will wrap thee up like a ball* , which consists of materials wrapped and bound together, that it may be tossed far away. Or, *Rolling he will roll thee with the rolling of a ball. Into a large country* ; like a ball which is cast into a large and plain spot of ground, where being thrown by a strong man, it runs far and wide. Or, to a far country, which seems to be here called *large of spaces* , not so much in itself, for that was inconsiderable to him, whether the land of his captivity was large or little, as in respect of its distance from the place of his birth and abode.

The chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house. The sense of the words thus rendered seems to be this, Thy glorious chariots, wherein thou didst ride in great state at Jerusalem, shall then and there be turned into shame to thyself, and to thy master, to whom it is just matter of reproach, that he was so foolish as to advance and trust such a faithless and unworthy person. But the words are by divers others fitly rendered,

there the chariots of thy glory shall be, (or, shall die or vanish, i.e. that shall be the end of all thy pompous chariots, and other monuments of thy pride,) O thou who art

the shame of thy Lord's house; who by thy unjust and wicked practices hast exposed thy king and master, and the royal family, to reproach and contempt.

Isaiah 22:19

And I; the Lord, whose words these are, Isa_22:15, as is manifest from the following verses.

Shall he; the Lord; such sudden changes of persons being very usual in these writings.

Isaiah 22:20

I will call, by my Spirit fitting him, and by my powerful providence moving Hezekiah's heart to call him.

Isaiah 22:21

I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle: there was a peculiar sort of robe and girdle which was the badge of his office, which should be taken from him, and given to Eliakim.

He shall be a father; he shall not only have the authority of a father, which thou now hast, in which respect all rulers are called *fathers*, as Exo_20:12 Num_36:1; but shall also govern them with fatherly care and affection, and not with rigour and cruelty, as thou dost.

Isaiah 22:22

The key; the government, the power of opening and shutting, of letting men into it or putting them out of it, whereof *a key* is a fit emblem; whence the delivering of the keys of a house or city into the hands of another, is a sign to signify and confirm the giving him the power and possession of it.

Lay upon his shoulder; he mentions the shoulder rather than the hand, in which keys are commonly carried, either from some ceremony then in use, of carrying a key upon the shoulder, either of the officer of state himself, or of another in his name and stead; or to signify that this was a key of greater weight than ordinary, and that government, which is designed by this key, is a heavy burden, and therefore in Scripture phrase said to be upon the shoulder, as Isa_9:6.

None shall shut against his will, or without his commission or consent.

Isaiah 22:23

I will fasten him; I will establish the power in his hands.

In a sure place; in the strong walls, or solid timber, in the house; which is opposed to Shebna's instability, signified by a ball, Isa_22:18.

He shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house; by his prudent and righteous government he shall procure great glory, not only to himself, but to all that have any relation to him. This also is opposed to what is said of Shebna in the end of Isa_22:18.

Isaiah 22:24

Of his father's house; of his own kindred and family, who shall all depend upon him, and receive glory from him; of the house of David, which is called

his father's house, either because kings are called the fathers of all their subjects, both in Scripture, as 1Sa_24:11 2Ki_5:13 **16:7**, and in other authors; or, as Calvin ingeniously conjectures, because he was of the blood royal. Otherwise this had been no great commendation to him, that he studied so much the advancement of his own private family. And this seems more probable, because this character is opposed to that of Shebna, who was *the shame of his lord's*, to wit, the king's, house or family, Isa_22:18. *The offspring and the issue*; great and small, the children and grandchildren of his father's house.

All vessels of small quantity; the meanest of them shall receive a lustre and advantage from their relation to him.

From the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons; all sorts of vessels, great or small, mean or precious, may be hanged upon him, without any fear of falling; whereas ordinary nails or pins, if they be oppressed with too great weight, are easily broken down, and the vessels fall with them.

Isaiah 22:25

The nail that is fastened in the sure place; Shebna, who seemed to be so, both in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others. The burden that was upon it; all those wicked officers that were advanced and supported by his power.

Isaiah 23:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 23

The destruction of Tyre, from God, for their pride, Isa_23:1-14. The time of her rising again, Isa_23:15-17, and conversion to God, Isa_23:18.

The burden of Tyre; the prophecy of the heavy calamity and destruction of Tyre; which now stood in its strength and glory, being seated in an island, upon a rock, abounding in riches, mighty in naval power, having lately conquered that navy which the Assyrians brought against them. Yet this city was, according

to this prophecy, destroyed; and that twice, first by Nebuchadnezzar, and long afterward by Alexander the Great. And although this prophecy seem directly and properly to respect the former destruction, yet it seems to have some reference to the latter also; only it is intimated, that after seventy years Tyrus should recover her former power and glory, before her second and final destruction.

Howl, ye ships; either,

1. Properly; to which howling and lamenting is ascribed by a known figure called *prosopopoeia* : or,
2. Metonymically, the merchants and owners of ships, who had much commerce with this illustrious mart.

Of Tarshish; either,

1. Of Tarsus, a great port of Cilicia, which anciently had the dominion of that part of the sea; or,
2. Of the ocean, which is so called, 1Ki_10:22 Psa_48:7 Isa_2:16.

It is laid waste; it shall shortly be laid waste; which was fulfilled not by Shalmaneser, as some would have it; for though he straitened it for some time, yet he never took it; but by Nebuchadnezzar.

No entering in; so effectually wasted, that there is not a house left in it, nor any merchants or others that go into it, either to trade in it, or to repair it.

It is revealed to them: the sense of the words thus rendered may be this, *it* , i.e. this burden or destruction of Tyre, *is* , i.e. shall be, revealed, declared or made known, unto them; either,

1. To the Tyrians, to whom this notice should be sent concerning the preparations of their enemies against them: or,
2. To the ships, by which he means their owners or merchants,

from the land of Chittim; which may be here mentioned, either because they first had and gave them notice of it, as was now said; or because their last and sorest destruction was brought upon them by Alexander, who was *of the land of Chittim* , as is affirmed by that very ancient and venerable, though apocryphal writer, /**APC**

1Ma 1:1 8:5. But this place is otherwise rendered, both by ancient and later interpreters, which seems to be more natural and easy, and no less agreeable to the Hebrew text; either thus, *that she is laid waste, so that there is no house, nor entering or coming in* (to wit, for traffic)

from the land of Chittim, is made known to them, to wit, to the ships or merchants that used to resort thither for traffic: or rather thus, for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, (not any houses left for the citizens to dwell in,) *nor entering or coming in* (to wit, of merchants) *from the land of Chittim; she* (to wit, her people) *is removed or gone into captivity*, as this word properly signifies, and is rendered, Isa_38:12. And for the last Hebrew word, *lamo*, which is rendered *to them*, (which is the only objection against this interpretation,) it is only added as an elegancy of the Hebrew language, and hath no further signification, as it is also Psa_58:7, and as the particle *lo*, which signifies the same thing, and such other pronouns, are frequently redundant and insignificant in the Hebrew text, as hath been oft observed by grammarians and interpreters. He mentions

the land of Chittim, because this was an eminent place for shipping and trading, as is manifest from Num_24:24 Eze_27:6 Dan_11:30, and therefore doubtless had great dealings and commerce with Tyre, and may here be put synecdochically for all other countries which traded with her. It is not necessary, for the understanding of this text, to determine what Chittim is, whether it was Italy, or Greece, or the islands in those parts; it is sufficient to know that it was a seafaring place in the Midland Sea; and so much startled and concerned in the destruction of Tyre.

Isaiah 23:2

Be still, Heb. *Be silent*, as one confounded, and not knowing what to say, or as mourners use to be, **Job 2 8,13 Isa 47:5**; boast no more of thy wealth and power, as thou usedst to do.

Of the isle, Heb. *of Tyrus*, which now was an island, Eze_27:3 **28:2**, till Alexander joined it to the continent, as Pithy reports. Although the title of *islands* is oft given by the Hebrews to places bordering upon the sea.

Zidon; an eminent city of Palestine, nigh unto Tyre, much concerned with her and for her.

That pass over the sea; that are a seafaring people. Have replenished; with mariners, Eze_27:8, and commodities.

Isaiah 23:3

By great waters; by the sea, which is very fitly called *the great waters* , Psa_107:23; understand, *cometh* , or is brought to her.

The seed of Sihor; the corn of Egypt, wherewith Egypt abounded, and furnished divers other parts of the world, whence it was called the granary of the Roman empire; which also was easily conveyed by sea from Egypt to Tyre, and thence to divers other countries. This is called *seed* , here, as also Hag_1:10, and elsewhere, by a usual metonymy; and *the seed of Sihor* , because it grew up the more abundantly because of the overflow of the river, as all sorts of authors have noted. For Sihor is nothing else but Nilus, as appears from Jer_2:18, which is called *Sihor* , as by the Greeks it was called *Melas* , from its black colour. And this and no other river seems to be that Sihor, which is so oft mentioned as one of the bounds of the land of Canaan, as Num_34:5, &c., because that land, at least in that extent which God allotted and gave it to the Israelites, though they through neglect or cowardice might not actually possess it, did reach to one of the branches of that river. And indeed, if Sihor be not Nilus, that great and neighbouring river is not named in all the Scripture, which seems very improbable.

The harvest of the river: this clause explains the former; that plentiful harvest of corn which comes from the influence and inundation of Nilus, which is emphatically called the river, as here, so also Exo_1:22 Isa_19:5 Eze_29:3,9, as Euphrates is in other texts of Scripture.

Is her revenue; is as easily procured and plentifully enjoyed by her, as if it grew in her own territories.

A mart of nations; a place to which all nations resort for traffic.

Isaiah 23:4

Be thou ashamed, O Zidon; for Zidon was a great city near Tyre, and strongly united to her by commerce and league, and called by

some the mother of Tyre, which they say was built and first inhabited by a colony of the Sidonians; and therefore she must needs be greatly concerned in the destruction of Tyrus.

The sea; that part of the sea in which Tyrus was, and from which ships and men were sent into all countries.

The strength of the sea: this is added to explain what he meant by the sea, even Tyrus, who might be called *the strength of the sea*, either actively, because it defended that part of the sea from piracies and injuries; or passively, because it was defended and strengthened by the sea, which encompassed it. And this title is here given to Tyrus, to show what great cause of confusion and fear Zidon had from this example, which for strength was much inferior to Tyrus.

I travail not, nor bring forth children, & c.; I, who was so exceeding fruitful and populous, that I sent forth colonies into other countries, (of which the famous city of Carthage was one,) am now become barren and desolate.

Isaiah 23:5

According to this translation the sense is, All the neighbouring nations shall be no less terrified at the tidings of lite destruction of Tyrus, than they were of old upon the report of God's former and dreadful judgments upon the Egyptians, of which see Exo_15:14-16 Jos_2:9,11, because they shall despair of resisting that enemy against whom that vast and potent city, which was deemed impregnable, could not defend itself. But the words are by the LXX., and other both ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *When the report* (to wit, of the destruction of Tyre) came, or shall come, (which word is easily understood, as it is above, Isa_23:3, and in other texts of Scripture before mentioned,) *to the Egyptians, they shall be sorely pained according to the report of Tyre*; their grief shall be answerable to the report; as the report is very dreadful, so their grief and anguish shall be very great: or, they shall fear lest they should be destroyed in like manner as Tyrus was destroyed.

Isaiah 23:6

Pass ye over to Tarshish; flee from your own country to Tarsus of Cilicia, and there bewail your calamities. Or rather, as others

render the place, *Pass over the sea* , which is oft called Tarshish; of which **See Poole** "Isa_23:1".

Of the isle; of Tyrus, as before, Isa_23:2.

Isaiah 23:7

Is this your joyous city, that formerly lived in so much pomp, and pleasure, and security? Whose antiquity is of ancient days; being built before Joshua's time, as is manifest from Jos_19:29. *Her own feet shall carry her* ; whereas before, like a delicate lady, she would not set the sole of her foot to the ground, as the expression is, Deu_28:56, but used to be carried in stately chariots, or magnificent vessels.

To sojourn; to seek for new habitations. For as some of the Tyrians were taken and carried captive into Chaldea, and other places, so others fled by sea into several parts of the world, Carthage, and divers other towns of the Midland Sea, as is recorded by ancient historians.

Isaiah 23:8

Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre? words of admiration: who and where is he that could imagine or durst attempt such a thing as this? This is the work of God, as is expressed, Isa_23:9, and not of man.

The crowning city; which was a royal city, Jer_25:22, and called a *kingdom* , Eze_28:2,12, and carried away the crown from all other cities, and crowned herself and her, citizens with glory and delights.

Whose merchants are princes; equal to princes for wealth, and power, and reputation.

Isaiah 23:9

The Lord of hosts hath purposed it; this is the Lord's own doing; therefore do not doubt it, nor wonder at it. God's design is by this one example to abate and abase the pride of all the potentates of the earth, that they may see and know what weak and wretched creatures they are, when God leaves them, and sets himself against them.

Isaiah 23:10

Pass through the land; tarry no longer in thy own territories, but flee through them, and beyond them, into other countries, for safety and relief.

As a river; swiftly, lest you be prevented; and continually, till you be all gone; and in shoals and multitudes.

O daughter of Tarshish; O Tyrus; for of her he speaks both in the foregoing and following words. And Tyrus might well be called *the daughter of Tarshish*, i.e. of the sea, as that word is used, Isa_23:1, and elsewhere, because it then was an island, and therefore as it were born of the sea, and nourished and brought up by it.

No more strength, Heb. *no more girdle* : the girdle, which strengthens the loins of a man, is put for strength, as Job_12:21 **38:3**. It behoveth you, O people of Tyrus, to flee away, as I advise you; for your city is unable to defend you; your wealth, the sinews of war, is lost; your walls broken down; the sea, which, like a girdle, surrounded and defended you, is now in part filled up by your enemies, who have joined you to the main land; your former friends and allies forsake you.

Isaiah 23:11

He, the Lord, expressed Isa_23:9, stretched out his hand to strike it, the antecedent being put for the consequent,

over the sea; or, *against the sea*, i.e. against Tyrus, the daughter of the sea, as she was now called; and consequently against all those ships and men which used to traffic with Tyrus, and were enriched by that trade, and therefore suffered in her fall.

He shook the kingdoms, Heb. he made the kingdoms to tremble; either,

1. The two kingdoms of Tyre and Sidon; or rather,
2. The neighbouring and confederate kingdoms, as appears by comparing this with Eze_26:15-18, who might justly quake at her fall, partly, for the dreadfulness and unexpectedness of the thing; partly, because Tyre was a bulwark, and a refuge, and a great advantage to them; and partly, because her fall made way for their ruin, as being destroyed by their common enemy.

Hath given a commandment; hath contrived and purposed it, as was said, Isa_23:8,9; hath put this design into the heads and hearts of her enemies, and given them courage to attempt, and strength to execute, so difficult an enterprise.

Against the merchant city, Heb. *against Canaan* ; the word *Canaan* being taken either,

1. For a merchant, as it is used, Job_41:6 Hos_12:7; or rather,
2. For the proper name of a place or people, as it is generally used; for the Tyrians and Sidonians were descended from Canaan, Gen_10:15, and were the only considerable remainders of that cursed race whom God had devoted to destruction. And so this phrase may be here used both as all evidence and as an argument of their intended and approaching ruin.

Isaiah 23:12

O thou oppressed virgin: so he calls her, either for her pride and beauty, and living in great ease and pleasure; or because she had hitherto never borne the yoke of a conquering enemy; though withal he declares that she should be oppressed or defloured very suddenly.

Daughter of Zidon; whereby he understands either,

1. Zidon herself, who suffered in and with Tyre: for so this phrase seems generally to be used,

the daughter of Zion, or of *Jerusalem* , or of *Babel* , or *Egypt* , &c., being nothing else but *Zion, Jerusalem, Babel, Egypt* , &c. Or rather,

2. Tyrus, as most interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, understand it, of whom this whole context and prophecy speaks; which may well be called the daughter of Zidon, because she was first built and possessed by a colony of the Sidonians; as Pliny calleth Carthage the daughter of Tyre, because she was built by a colony of Tyrians. And the title of *daughter* is oftentimes given in Scripture to towns or cities which had their being from or dependence upon other cities; in which sense we read of the daughter of Heshbon, Num_21:25, and of Rubbah, Jer_49:2,3, and of Sodom, and of Samaria, Eze_16:46,49,53. And *the daughter of Tarshish* here above, Isa_23:10, is not meant of Tarshish itself,

but of Tyrus, which had a relation to and dependence upon Tarshish.

Pass over to Chittim; of which place See Poole "Isa_23:1". *There also shalt thou have no rest* ; thither thine enemies shall pursue thee, and there shall they overtake thee, although thou wilt think thyself secure when thou art fled to remote parts beyond the sea.

Isaiah 23:13

Behold the land of the Chaldeans; you Tyrians, who think your city impregnable, cast your eyes upon the land and empire of the Chaldeans, or Babylonians; which though now it be a flourishing kingdom, and shall shortly grow far more glorious and potent, even the *glory of kingdoms* , as it is called, Isa_13:19, yet. shall certainly be brought to utter ruin; and therefore your presumption is most vain and unreasonable.

This people was not: the Chaldeans at first were not a people, not formed into any commonwealth or kingdom.

Till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness; till Nimrod, the head and founder of the Assyrian monarchy, built Babel, Gen_10:10, now the head of the Chaldean monarchy, which he built for those people, who then lived in tents, and were dispersed here and there in wild and waste places, that he might bring them into order, and under government, and thereby establish and promote his own empire.

They set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; the Chaldeans being by this means brought together into a body, fell to the work of building their city, and its towers and palaces, and thereby got power and dominion over their neighbours, till at last they grew the greatest of all the monarchies that then were upon earth.

He; the Lord, who is expressed before, and is frequently designed in Scripture by this indefinite pronoun he, as hath been many times observed; whereby he insinuates the true reason why neither the Chaldeans nor the Tyrians should be able to stand, because the Almighty God was engaged against them. Brought it to ruin; will infallibly bring that great empire to ruin. *He* speaks of a future thing as if it were already past, as the prophets use to do. The

Chaldeans shall now return to their first nothing, and become no people again.

Isaiah 23:14

Your strength; the city of Tyre, where you found safety and wealth.

Isaiah 23:15

Forgotten; neglected and forsaken by those who used to resort thither.

Seventy years; during the whole time of the Jewish captivity in Babylon. For Tyrus was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer_27:3,8 Eze 26:7, a little after the taking of Jerusalem, and was restored by the favour of the Persian monarchs after the return of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon.

Of one king; either,

1. Of the kingdom of Babylon, which lasted so long after this time; the word *king* being put for *kingdom* , as it is Dan_7:17 8:21; or

2. Of one royal race, of Nebuchadnezzar, including his son, and his son's son, in whom his family and kingdom were to expire.

After the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot; she shall by degrees return to her former state of prosperity and traffic, whereby she shall easily entice the merchants of the world to converse and trade with her, as harlots use to entice their customers by lascivious songs.

Isaiah 23:16

Take an harp, go about the city; as harlots use to do, to allure customers.

Thou harlot; so he calleth Tyre, partly because she enticed merchants to deal with her by various artifices, and even by dishonest practices, as harlots use; and partly because of the great and general uncleanness which was both committed and tolerated in it. That thou mayest be remembered by those who had forgotten thee, Isa_23:15.

Isaiah 23:17

Visit Tyre, to wit, in mercy, as this phrase is used, Rth_1:6 Psa_65:9, and elsewhere.

Her hire: the Hebrew word properly signifies, *the hire of an harlot* ; which agrees well with the

fornication in the next clause; although these phrases are not to be understood properly, but metaphorically, of trading or commerce with others.

Shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world; shall trade promiscuously with people of all sorts of nations, as harlots entertain all comers.

Isaiah 23:18

Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: he speaks not here of what the Tyrians would do immediately after their restitution, but some time after it, even in the days of the Messiah; of which even some of the Jewish rabbies understand it, and to which the prophets have a special respect in their several prophecies, and Isaiah among and above the rest of them. So this is a prophecy concerning the conversion of the Tyrians to the true religion, of the accomplishment whereof something is said Act_21:3-5, and more in other authors.

It shall not be treasured nor laid up, either out of covetousness, or for the service of their pride and luxury, as they formerly did; but now they shall freely lay it out upon pious and charitable uses.

For them that dwell before the Lord; for the support and encouragement of the ministers of holy things, who shall teach the good knowledge of the Lord, who dwell in God's house, and minister in his presence; the support of such persons being not only an act of justice and charity, but also of piety, and of great use and necessity to maintain and propagate religion in the world. Although this doth not exclude, but rather imply, their liberality in contributing to the necessities of all Christians.

Isaiah 24:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 24

Judgments on Judah for their defilements and transgressions, Isa_24:1-12. A remnant shall praise God, Isa_24:13-15. God, by

his judgments on his people and their enemies, will advance his kingdom, Isa_24:16-23.

The earth; or, *the land* , to wit, of Canaan, or Israel, or Judea. It is usual with all writers, when they write of their own country, to call it *the land* , by way of eminency. There are many things in this prophecy which manifestly concern this land and people; and nothing, at least before Isa_24:21, which may be taken as a new and additional prophecy, which is necessary to be understood of other nations. But this I speak with submission, and due respect to those learned and judicious interpreters who take this to be a prophecy against Judea, and all the neighbouring nations.

Maketh it waste; he will shortly make it waste, first by the Assyrians, and then by the Chaldeans. *Turneth it upside down* ; bringeth it into great disorder and confusion.

Isaiah 24:2

It shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; the approaching calamity shall be universal, without any respect or distinction of persons or ranks of men; the priests themselves, having been partakers of the people's sins, shall also partake with them in their plagues.

As with the buyer, so with the seller; the purchaser of lands shall have no more left than he that hath sold all his patrimony; and all persons shall be made equal in beggary and slavery.

Isaiah 24:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 24:4

The world: from this word some infer that this prophecy concerns not only the land of Judea, but also the neighbouring countries. But if the proper signification of that word be urged, this prophecy must be extended to all the parts of the world, which these learned men will not allow. And *the world* , both in Scripture and other authors, is often used synecdochically for that which in truth is but a small part of it, at least in comparison with the whole; as it is not only of the Roman empire, as Luk_2:1 Act_11:28, but also of Babylon, Isa_13:11, and, which cometh nearer to the point, of this very land of Judea, as Joh_12:19 **18:20**, and elsewhere. And therefore it may well be so understood here, especially when this

word world is explained by those other words the earth and the land, which the very next verse showeth to be meant of Israel or Judea, as we shall there discover.

The haughty people; not only common people, who use to be of low spirits; but the high and lofty ones, who use to be stout in their words and carriages towards me, and to deride my threatenings.

Isaiah 24:5

The earth also, Heb. *And the land* ; or, *this land* ; for here is an emphatical article in the Hebrew text.

Is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; by the wickedness of its people; of which see Lev_18:25,27 Num 35:33, &c. *The laws* ; the laws of God revealed to them, and pressed upon them in a singular manner, called simply the laws, as the word of God is oftentimes called the word, by way of eminency.

The ordinance; God's ordinances concerning his worship and service; the singular being put collectively for the plural.

The everlasting covenant; the covenant made between God and Abraham, and all his posterity, renewed with the Israelites at Sinai, which was everlasting, both on God's part, who, upon the conditions therein expressed, engaged himself to be a God to them and to their seed for ever; and on Israel's part, who were obliged thereby to constant and perpetual obedience through all generations. All these clauses clearly prove that *the earth or land* which this prophecy concerns, is no other than the land of Israel and Judah.

Isaiah 24:6

The curse; the curse of God threatened to transgressors, Deu_28:15 29:20, and imprecated by and upon themselves, if they should not persist in their obedience to God, Deu_27:26, and elsewhere.

Are burned; are consumed by the wrath of God, which is commonly compared to fire.

Isaiah 24:7

The new wine mourneth, because there are either none, or none but the enemies of God and Israel, to drink it. Grief is ascribed to senseless creatures by a figure usual in all authors.

The vine languisheth; either because there are no people left to dress it, or gather its grapes; or because it is broken down and spoiled by the enemy.

All the merry-hearted, that made their hearts merry with wine, Psa_104:15.

Isaiah 24:8

Tabrets; which they used in their feasts and revellings.

The noise: the word properly signifies a roaring noise and confused clamour, such as drunken men make, Psa_78:65 Zec_9:15.

Isaiah 24:9

Because of the fears and miseries wherewith it is mixed.

Isaiah 24:10

The city; Jerusalem, and other cities; for the singular word may be here taken collectively.

Of confusion; or, of vanity, or emptiness, or desolation; for this Hebrew word signifies all these things. And the city may be thus called, either,

1. In regard of the judgments of God coming upon it, as if he had said, a city devoted to desolation or destruction, to be emptied of its goods and people; or,

2. For its sin, a city of confusion or disorder, breaking all the laws and orders which God had established among them; or a city that *walketh with or after vanity* , as the Scripture speaks, Job_31:5 Jer_2:5, that *loveth and speaketh vanity* , as they did, Psa_4:2 **12:2**. And this may seem most convenient, that the sin of the city should be noted in this word, as the punishment is expressed in the next.

Every house is shut up; either for fear of the enemy who have entered the city; or rather, because the inhabitants are either fled,

or dead, or gone into captivity, and so there are none to go into it, or come out of it.

Isaiah 24:11

There is a crying for wine; for the want or loss of their wine, and spoil of their vines, whereby they were deprived of the means both of their delight and profit; whereby he intimates their gross sensuality and sottishness, that instead of crying for their sins, and humbling themselves under God's judgments, did only *howl for their corn, and wine, and oil*, as they did, Hos_7:14.

Isaiah 24:12

The gates of the city are totally ruined, that the enemy may enter when and where they please.

Isaiah 24:13

When thus it shall be, when this judgment shall be executed,

in the midst of the land; in the land. But withal this phrase may intimate that the judgment should not be slight and superficial, and in the skirts of the land; but that it should reach their very heart, their most inward and best defended parts.

There shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, & c.; there shall be left a remnant, and that but a very small remnant; as there are some few, and but a few, olives or grapes left after the vintage is over; which, by comparing this with the following verse, seems to be added by way of mitigation, to signify that God would in judgment remember mercy.

Isaiah 24:14

They; the remnant preserved.

For the majesty of the Lord; for his glorious power and goodness manifested in their deliverance.

They shall cry aloud, in way of exultation and thanksgiving to God.

From the sea; from the isles of the sea, as this is explained in the next verse; from those parts beyond the sea, into which they were carried captive, and in which they were miraculously preserved.

Isaiah 24:15

Glorify ye the Lord: these are the words either,

1. Of the remnant, who being themselves delivered, do encourage and exhort their brethren to glorify God with them; or,
2. Of the prophet, directing and exciting God's people to glorify God in their afflictions, because of that deliverance which he had promised, and would assuredly give to them.

In the fires; when you are in the furnace of affliction; although this word is never used in Scripture in this sense. Others therefore render the word, *in the valleys* ; and others, *in the holes* , you that are now forced to hide yourselves in holes. Possibly it may be better rendered, *for light or illumination* ; which may be understood either of the light of the truth which God would reveal to them, or for the comfort and felicity which God would confer upon them; light being frequently taken both ways in Scripture. For this Hebrew word, in all other places of Scripture where it is found, signifies that Urim which was in the high priest's breastplate, and which properly signifies illumination, as both Jews and Christians render it, whereof that was both a sign and instrument; of which **See Poole** "Exo_28:30". Add to this, that this part of the prophecy seems to concern the days of the gospel, and that light which the Jews should then receive by the Messias, of whom the high priest with his ephod and Urim was a type. And so this is an exhortation to the converted Jews to bless God for the true Urim, even for Christ and the gospel. And some of the ancient translators had this signification of the word in their eye, as the vulgar Latin, who render it, *in doctrines* ; and the Chaldee, who translate it, *when light shall come to the just* . But this I propose with submission.

In the isles of the sea; in remote countries beyond the sea, which in Scripture are commonly called isles, as hath been formerly and oft observed; whereby he seems to imply that he here speaks not so much of a temporal felicity which the Jews should receive and enjoy in their own country, as of a spiritual advantage which they should have by the Messias in the places where they were dispersed.

Isaiah 24:16

From the uttermost part of the earth, from all the parts of the earth or land in which the Jews are or shall be,

have we heard songs, songs of joy and praise.

Even glory to the righteous; or, *glory* be

to the righteous; which may seem to be the matter of the song. By *the righteous* may be understood either,

1. The generation of righteous and holy men, who formerly were despised, but now upon this eminent deliverance shall be highly honoured; or,

2. The Lord, whom they were exhorted to glorify in the foregoing verse, and who may well be called the righteous one, as he is frequently styled *the Holy One* , as Hos_11:9 Hab_3:3, &c.; or,

3. The Messiah, to whom this title of *just* or *righteous* is frequently given, as Isa_53:11 Jer_23:5 Zec_9:9, &c. And the believing Jews call him *righteous* emphatically, partly to intimate that he is the author and procurer of all true righteousness, and partly in opposition to their unbelieving brethren, who rejected and condemned him as a malefactor; all which the prophet foresaw by the Spirit of prophecy. *But I said* ; but in the midst of these joyful tidings I discern something which interrupts my joys, and gives me cause of bitter complaint and lamentation. *My leanness, my leanness* ; I faint and pine away for grief, for the following reason. *The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously* ; the Jews, who have been frequently guilty of great perfidiousness towards God, are now acting the same part; which he speaks either,

1. Of those who lived in his time; or rather,

2. Of those who should live when the Messiah was upon earth, of whom he foresaw by the Spirit that they would forsake God, and reject their Messiah, and thereby bring utter destruction upon themselves. For even the Hebrew doctors expound this place of the perfidiousness of some Jews in the times of the Messiah. And it is not strange that so sad a sight made the prophet cry out, *My leanness* , &c. *The treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously* ; he repeats it to show the horridness of the crime, and how deeply he was affected with it.

Isaiah 24:17

Great and various judgments, some actually inflicted, and others expected and justly feared, as the punishment of their last-mentioned treachery.

Isaiah 24:18

He who fleeth from the noise of the fear; upon the report of some terrible evil coming towards him; the act, *fear*, being here put for the object, or the thing feared, as it is in many places. And thus this very phrase is taken Job_15:21.

Shall fall into the pit; when he designs to avoid one danger, by so doing he shall plunge himself into another and a greater mischief.

The windows from on high are opened, and the foundations of the earth do shake; both heaven and earth conspire against him. He alludes to the deluge of waters which God poured down from heaven, and to the earthquakes which he oftentimes causeth below.

Isaiah 24:19

This is repeated again, partly to show the dreadfulness and certainty of these judgments, and partly to awaken and affect the stupid Israelites, who greatly needed it.

Isaiah 24:20

The earth; the people of the earth.

Shall reel to and fro like a drunkard; shall be sorely perplexed and distressed, not knowing whither to go, nor what to do. *Like a cottage*; or *like a lodge* in a garden, of which this word is used, Isa_1:8, which is soon taken down, and set up ill another place, as occasion requires. Or, as others render it, *like a tent*, which is easily and commonly carried from place to place.

The transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; those sins which they formerly esteemed light and pleasant shall now be most burdensome and grievous to them, because of the dreadful punishments which shall follow them.

Isaiah 24:21

In that day; either when God shall punish the apostatical Jews, or about or after that time, or in a time known to God; for this phrase

is oft used indefinitely, and without any respect to the time designed in the foregoing passages.

The high ones that are on high; the proud and potent enemies of God, and of his people, who possess the high places of the earth.

The kings of the earth; either,

1. The great monarchs of the world, who now scorn and trample upon God's people; or,
2. The princes and rulers of Israel or Judah; for the name of king is frequently given in Scripture unto mean and inferior rulers, as Jud_1:7 1Ki_20:1, **12 Psa 119:46**, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 24:22

They shall be gathered together, by God's special providence, in order to their punishment, as the following words show. And thus the unbelieving Jews were generally gathered together at Jerusalem, to their solemn feast, when Titus came and besieged, and after some time took and destroyed them; which was a very remarkable hand of God, as Josephus and other historians observed. And I know nothing to the contrary but this very thing may be meant in this place, it being confessed that divers passages of this chapter concern the times of the Messiah.

Shall be shut up in the prison; as malefactors, which are taken in several places, are usually brought to one common prison, where they are reserved in order to their trial and punishment.

Shall they be visited; either,

1. In judgment, as visiting is oft used. So the sense is, After they have been punished with long imprisonment, and tormented with expectation and fear, they shall be brought forth to receive condign punishment. Or rather,
2. In mercy. And so the sense may be either,
 1. After the Jews shall have suffered many and grievous things from the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and others, at last their Messiah and Deliverer shall come into the world, he. Or,
 2. After the unbelieving and apostate Jews shall have been shut up in unbelief and in great tribulations for many ages together, they

shall be convinced of their sin in crucifying their Messiah, and brought home to God and Christ by true repentance.

Isaiah 24:23

The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed. The sun and moon are here considered either,

1. As they were abused to idolatry; for these two were most eminent idols, and most generally worshipped, especially in those Eastern countries, Deu_4:19 **17:3** Job_31:26, &c., and so may be put for all idols, which were confounded by Christ at his coming, as was foretold in Scripture, and verified by the testimony of ancient, yea, even of heathen historians. Or,

2. As they were the most eminent and glorious lights of the world, and were oft used, both in Scripture and other authors, to signify the great kings, and potentates, and glories of the world, as hath been formerly noted, and we shall have further occasion to remember. So the sense is, that all earthly powers and glories should be obscured with the far greater splendour of Christ, the King of kings, at whose feet even the kings of the earth shall fall down and worship, as we shall see in other parts of this prophecy. *The Lord of hosts* ; the Messiah, who, though man, yet is also God, and the Lord of hosts, and is so called, Zec_2:8,**11**.

Shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem; shall come in the flesh, and set up his kingdom, first in Jerusalem, and afterward in all other nations.

Before his ancients; before his ministers, who are in some sort the courtiers of this King of glory, as being continually attending upon him, and enjoying his presence, and executing the powers and offices of his kingdom; and especially before his apostles, who were the witnesses of his Divine words and works, and particularly of his resurrection and ascension, by which he entered upon his kingdom; and of this exercise of his royal power, in subduing both Jews and Gentiles to himself. The word *ancient* or *elder* is not a name of age, but of office, as it is in very many texts of Scripture. And *the ancients* are here put synecdochically for the whole church, in whose name and for whose service they act.

Gloriously, Heb. in glory, for that preposition is very frequently understood.

Isaiah 25:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 25

God glorious in his judgments on Babel, Isa_25:1-5, and his people's salvation, Isa_25:6-12.

The prophet reflecting upon those great and glorious prophecies which he had delivered concerning the destruction of his enemies, and the protection and deliverance of his people, and the sending of the Messiah, and the establishment of his own kingdom in spite of all opposition, interrupteth the course of his prophecies, and breaketh forth into a solemn celebration of all these wonderful works.

Thy counsels of old are faithless and truth; thy counsels, from which all thy works proceed, and which thou hast from time to time revealed to thy prophets and people, which were

of old, being conceived from all eternity, and long since made known by thy threatenings and promises, are true and firm, and therefore shall certainly be accomplished,

Isaiah 25:2

A city; which is put collectively for cities. He speaks of the cities of

strangers, as the following clause explains it, or of enemies of God, and of his people. And under the name cities he comprehends their countries and kingdoms, of which cities are an eminent and commonly the strongest part.

A palace of strangers; the royal cities, in which were the palaces of strangers, i.e. of the kings of strange people, or of the Gentiles.

It shall never be built; their cities and palaces have been or shall be utterly and irrecoverably destroyed.

Isaiah 25:3

Thy stoutest enemies observing thy wonderful works, in saving thy people, and in destroying others of thine and their adversaries, shall be either converted, or at least convinced, and forced to acknowledge thy power, and shall tremble before thee.

Isaiah 25:4

For thou hast been a strength to the poor, & c.; for thou hast defended thy poor and helpless people against the fiercest assaults of their enemies.

When the blast of the terrible one is as a storm against the wall; or, *for* (as this particle commonly signifies; or rather, *therefore* , as it is frequently used, because thou art their defender)

the blast of the terrible, or *strong* , or *violent* one, was *like a storm* (of hail, or rain, or wind) *against a wall* , which makes a great and terrible noise, but without any effect, for the wall stands firm in spite of it. It is probable the prophet in these words had a special respect to that miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the rage and attempt of Sennacherib; although the words be general, and include other deliverances of a like nature.

Isaiah 25:5

The noise; the tumultuous noise, as the word properly signifies, which he called their blast in the foregoing verse; by which he means their rage and furious attempts, which are commonly managed with much noise and clamour.

Of strangers; of those strange and heathen nations that fought against God's people.

Even the heat with the shadow of a cloud; with as much ease as thou dost in the course of thy common providence allay the heat of a dry season and place, either by the shadow of thy clouds, or by the rain which falleth from black and shadowy clouds.

The branch; the arm or power, as a branch is the arm of a tree. Or, the prince or commanders; for the word branch is sometimes put for a person of eminent place and power, as Psa_80:15 Isa_4:2 Zec_3:8 **6:12**. But others render the word, *the song* , as it is used, Son_2:12, their jovial and triumphant song.

Isaiah 25:6

In this mountain; in Mount Zion, to wit, in God's church, which is very frequently meant by the names of Zion and Jerusalem, both in the Old and in the New Testament.

Make unto all people, both Jews and Gentiles, who shall then be admitted to the participation of the same privileges and ordinances,

a feast of fat things; a feast made up of the most exquisite and delicate provisions; which is manifestly meant of the ordinances, graces, and comforts given by God in and to his church.

Of wines on the lees; which have continued upon the lees a competent time, whereby they gain strength, and afterwards drawn off from the lees, and so refined, as it is explained in the next clause.

Isaiah 25:7

The face of the covering; which is put either,

1. For the covering of the face, by an hypallage, as silver of shekels is put for shekels of silver, Lev_5:15; or,
2. For the covering or

veil, as the next clause expounds it; the word face being oft superfluously used in the Hebrew language, as Gen_1:2,29, and elsewhere. *The veil* ; the veil of ignorance of God, and of the true religion, which then was upon the Gentiles, and now is upon the Jews, 2Co_3:14-16, which, like a veil, covers men's eyes, and keeps them from discerning between things that differ. It may be also an allusion either to the veil which was put upon Moses's face, Exo_34:33,34, or to the veil of the sanctuary, by which the persons without it were kept from the sight of the ark. This is a manifest prophecy concerning the illumination and conversion of the Gentiles.

Isaiah 25:8

He, the Lord, expressed both in the foregoing and following words, even the Messiah, who is God and man, will swallow up death; shall by his death destroy the power of death, as is said, Heb_2:14; take away the sting of the first death, and prevent the second death, and give eternal life to the world, even to all that believe in him.

In victory, Heb. *unto victory* , i.e. so as to overcome it perfectly; which complete victory Christ hath already purchased for, and will in due time actually confer upon, his people.

Will wipe away tears; will take away from his people all sufferings and sorrows, and all the causes of them; which is begun here, and perfected in heaven.

The rebuke of his people; the reproach and contempt which was daily cast upon his faithful people by the ungodly world, and, among others, by the apostate and unbelieving Jews, who accounted the Christians to be the scum and offscouring of all things.

From off all the earth; or, *from off all this land*, i.e. from all the church and people of God, wheresoever they shall be, from all their faces, as was said in the foregoing clause.

The Lord hath spoken it; therefore doubt not of it, though it seem incredible to you.

Isaiah 25:9

It shall be said by God's people, in way of triumph and reply to their enemies,

Lo, this is our God: your gods are senseless and impotent idols; but our God is omnipotent, and hath done these great and glorious works, which fill the world with admiration. We may well boast of him, for there is no God like to him. Possibly it may be an intimation that God should take flesh, and become visibly present amongst men.

We have waited for him; our Messiah or Saviour, long since promised, and for whom we have waited a long time, now at last is come into the world, bringing salvation with him.

Isaiah 25:10

Shall the hand of the Lord rest; the powerful and gracious presence of God (which is oft signified in Scripture by God's hand) shall have its constant and settled abode; *it shall not move from place to place*, as it did with the tabernacle; nor shall it depart from it, as it did from Jerusalem; but shall continue in his church even to the end of the world, Mat_28:20.

Moab; the Moabites, which having been constant and implacable enemies to Israel, are synecdochically put for all the enemies of God's church, as the Edomites upon the same account are, Isa_34:6 **63:1**.

Under him; under his feet, as appears by the following similitude.

Even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill; as easily and as effectually as the straw, which being left upon the ground, and mixed with the dung which lies there, is trampled upon by the feet of men and beasts.

Isaiah 25:11

He; either,

1. Moab, who being plunged into a sea of troubles, shall endeavour to swim out of it, but to no purpose; or rather,
2. The Lord, who is designed by this very pronoun he, both in the latter clause of this verse, and in the following verse; whose power they shall be no more able to resist, than the waters can resist a man that swims, who with great facility divides them hither and thither.

Shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them; or, stretch forth his hands to the utmost, to smite and destroy them.

As he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands, which he doth to the uttermost.

With the spoils of their hands; with all that wealth which they have gained by rapine, and spoiling of God's people, and others. But the words are otherwise rendered by others, *with* or *by* (as this Hebrew particle is used, Est_9:25) *the arms of his hands* ; which he may mention, because the strength of a man, and of his hands, consisteth in his arms; whence also *the arm* in Scripture is oft put for strength: or, *by the motion or stroke of his hands* , as all the ancient translators do in effect render it. And this seems to agree best with the metaphor here borrowed from one that swimmeth, which is performed in that manner.

Isaiah 25:12

The fortress of the high fort of thy walls; all thy walled cities and fortifications, to which thou trustest.

Isaiah 26:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 26

A song of praise and confidence in God, for the blessings of righteousness, judgments on their enemies, and favour to his people: their chastisement, repentance, and hope.

In that day, when God shall do such glorious works for the comfort of his people, and for the ruin of his and their enemies, as he hath described in the foregoing chapter.

In the land of Judah; in the church of God, which in Scripture is oft signified by the titles of Judah, and Jerusalem, and Zion, or the like.

A strong city; Jerusalem, or the church, which is oft called or compared to a city, as Psa_87:3 Rev_3:12 **11:2 21:2**.

Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks; God's immediate and saving protection shall be to his church instead of walls, &c. But I conceive, with submission, the words may very fitly be thus rendered, *He will send* , or *put* , or *make her walls and bulwarks salvation* , i.e. as safe as salvation itself; or, in safety, there being only a defect of the preposition, which is very frequent in Scripture.

Isaiah 26:2

Open ye the gates of the city, mentioned Isa_26:1.

The righteous nation; either,

1. Those godly Jews who are returning from Babylon; or,
2. The whole body of righteous and holy men, whether Jews or Gentiles. For he seems to speak here, as he apparently did in the foregoing chapter, of the times of the gospel.

Which keepeth the truth; which is sincere and stedfast in the profession and practice of the true religion.

Isaiah 26:3

Heb. *The fixed thought or mind* (i.e. the man whose mind and thoughts are fixed and settled upon thee by faith as the next clause explains it, the qualifications being put for the person so qualified, as *folly* and *wisdom* are put for a fool and a wise man, Pro_24:9 Mic_6:9, and peace for a man of peace, Psa_120:7) *thou wilt keep*

in peace, peace , i.e. in all manner of peace, in constant and perfect peace. In the foregoing verse the righteous were admitted into the city, and here they were preserved and defended in it by God's almighty power.

Isaiah 26:4

For ever; in all times and conditions.

Everlasting strength, Heb. *the Rock of ages* ; a sure refuge to all those that trust in him, through all generations; therefore you may safely trust in him, and that for ever.

Isaiah 26:5

He bringeth down, Heb. *he hath brought down* , which yet may be put for the future, he will bring down, &c. You may trust him; for he can and doth raise some, and throw down others, according to his own good pleasure.

Them that dwell on high; he speaks not so much of height of place as of dignity and power, in which sense also he mentions *the lofty city* , in the next clause. *The lofty city* ; which may be understood either of proud Babylon; or collectively, of all the strong and stately cities of God's enemies.

Isaiah 26:6

God will bring it under the feet of his poor, and weak, and despised people.

Isaiah 26:7

Is uprightnes; or, *most even or plain* . Heb. *evenness or plainness* . Which is understood either,

1. Of the rectitude or goodness of his actions or course; or rather,
2. Of the good success of his affairs; for this suits best with the coherence. When the way of the wicked is rugged, in which they easily stumble and fall into mischief, of which he spoke, Isa_26:5,6, the path of just men is plain and smooth, and they walk safely and comfortably in it.

Thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just: the sense of the words thus rendered is, *Thou* , O God, who art *most upright* in all thy ways, and therefore a lover of uprightnes. and of all upright men, dost weigh (i.e. examine) *the path of the just* , the

course of his actions, and, which is implied, dost approve of them, and therefore direct them to a happy issue. But the words are otherwise rendered by some late learned interpreters, to this purpose, *Thou dost level or make plain* (as this very word signifies, Psa_78:50) the path of the just exactly, Heb. with *evenness* , or evenly, so as to make it very even. Thus the first clause declares that it was even or plain, and this showeth whence or by whom it is made such, even by God.

Isaiah 26:8

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee: and as we thy people have loved and served thee when thou hast made our way plain and easy for us; so we have not forsaken thee, but waited upon thee, when thou hast made it rugged and troublesome by thy judgments. He speaks of the same just men Isa_26:7-9, though it be with a change of the numbers and persons, which is usual in prophetic writings, the just, Isa_26:7, *we* , Isa_26:1 **26:9**.

To thy name, and to the remembrance of thee, Heb. *to thy name and thy memory* ; which by a known figure called *hendinduo* may be put for the remembrance of thy name. And *the name of God* is here, as it is in many other places, put for God himself, as he hath made himself known by his word and works. And so the sense of this clause is, Our affections are not alienated from thee by thy judgments, but we still continue to desire thy presence and favour, and we support and comfort ourselves with the remembrance of what thou art, and what thou hast done, and what thou hast promised to be and do to thy people.

Isaiah 26:9

With my soul; sincerely and most affectionately, as Psa_63:1, and elsewhere.

Have I: the prophet speaks this in the name of all God's people, by comparing this with the foregoing verse. In the night; either,

1. Figuratively, in the time of affliction, which is often called night or darkness; or rather,
2. Properly, as appears from the next clause, wherein early or in the morning is opposed to it. When others are sleeping, my thoughts and desires are working towards God. *Will I seek thee* ,

by fervent prayer for thy loving-kindness. *Early* ; betimes in the morning, as the word signifies.

For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness: and good reason it is that we should thus desire and seek thee in the way of thy judgments, because this is the very design of thy judgments, that men should thereby be awakened to learn and return to their duty; and this is a common effect of them, that those who have been careless in prosperity, are made wiser and better by afflictions. *The inhabitants of the world* seem to be here taken not in opposition to God's people, as if not they only, but even the wicked world, would do thus; but in a general notion, so as to include, yea principally to design, God's people, as may be gathered both from the former part of this, and the foregoing verse, in which he describes their pious carriage under affliction; as also from the two following verses, in which he speaks of *the wicked* , whom he seems to oppose to these inhabitants of the world, because these learn righteousness, whilst those wicked men remain incorrigible both under mercies and judgments, Isa_26:10,11.

Isaiah 26:10

Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness, this is the carriage of thy people; but the course of wicked men is directly contrary in all conditions; for if thou dost spare them, when thou punishest thine own people, they will not accept of that gracious invitation to repentance, nor walk worthy of so great a mercy.

In the land of uprightness; even in God's church, and among his people, where righteousness is professed and taught, and by many practised; and where unrighteousness is discountenanced and punished; all which things are aggravations of his sin.

Will not behold the majesty of the Lord; although God gives such plain and clear discoveries of his majesty and glory, not only in his word, but also in his works, and especially in this glorious work of his patience and mercy to wicked men, yet they wilfully shut their eyes at it, and will not acknowledge it.

Isaiah 26:11

When thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; and they are guilty of the same obstinate blindness when thou dost smite and punish them, which is commonly signified by lifting up the hand, as Eze_44:12 Mic_5:9. Compare also 2Sa_20:21 1Ki_11:26. Or, as others render it, *when thine hand is high or exalted* , i.e. when thy works are most evident and most glorious, when thou appearest most gloriously for the defence of thy people, and for the punishment of thine and their enemies, they will not see.

They shall see: the same word is repeated in another sense. They shall feel and know that by sad and costly experience, which they would not learn by other and easier ways. *Seeing* is oft put for *feeling* ; in which sense men are said to see affliction, Lam_3:1, and to see death, Psa_89:48, and the like. *At the people* ; or, at or towards thy people, the pronoun thy being repeated out of the following clause, as it is in many other places of Scripture, as hath been before noted. Their envy and hatred against God's people blinded their minds, that they neither could nor would see that God was on their side, though the tokens of it were most manifest and undeniable; which was the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who were not sensible that the Lord fought for Israel against the Egyptians, as they said, Exo_14:25, till it was too late.

The fire of thine enemies; not efficiently, but objectively; such fire or wrath as thou usest to pour forth upon thine implacable enemies. *As my wrong* , Gen_16:5, is not the wrong done by me, but to me; and my violence, Jer_2:35, is *the violence done to me* , as we translate it, not by me.

Isaiah 26:12

Thou wilt ordain peace for us; as thou wilt destroy thine and our enemies, so thou wilt bless us thy people with peace and prosperity.

All our works; either,

1. All the good works done by us, which are the effects of thy grace; or rather,
2. All the good and great works which have been wrought for us, all our wonderful deliverances and singular blessings, come from thee. And so the argument is this, God hath delivered us formerly

upon all occasions, and therefore he will still deliver us, and give us peace; which inference is frequently made by holy men in Scripture. *In us* , Heb. *to* or *for us* .

Isaiah 26:13

Other lords beside thee; others besides thee, who art our only *Judge, and King, and Lawgiver* , Isa_33:22, and besides those governors who have been set up by thee, and have ruled us for thee, and in subordination to thee, even foreign and heathenish lords, such as the Philistines, and lately the Assyrians.

Have had dominion over us; have exercised a tyrannical power over us.

By thee only; by thy favour and help, by which alone (and not by our strength or merits) we have been rescued from their tyranny.

Will we make mention of thy name; we will celebrate thy praise, and trust in thee for the future. Thou only hast given us both ability and occasion to magnify thy name, whereas without thy succour we had gone into the place of silence, where there is no remembrance of thee, as is said, Psa_6:5.

Isaiah 26:14

They shall not rise; those tyrants and enemies are utterly and irrecoverably destroyed, so as they shall never live or rise again to molest us. Possibly he speaks of the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem.

Therefore, that they might be so effectually destroyed, thou didst undertake the work. Or rather, *because* (as this particle is used, Num_14:43 Psa_42:6)

thou hast, & c., as it follows.

Destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish; thou hast destroyed both them and theirs, and all the monuments or memorials of their greatness and glory.

Isaiah 26:15

Thou hast increased the nation, Heb. *Thou hast added to the nation* ; which may be understood either,

1. In way of mercy, of adding to their numbers, as our translation takes it; and so we have in effect the same phrase 2Sa_24:3, *The*

Lord add to the people , &c., and Psa_115:14, in the Hebrew text, *The Lord shall add upon or to you* . Or,

2. In way of judgment, of adding to their plagues or miseries, of which we read Rev_22:18, in which sense the phrase is found in the Hebrew text, Psa_120:3, *What shall be added to thee* ? and in that usual form of imprecation, *The Lord do so to me, and more* , Rth_1:17 1Sa_3:17, &c., where it is in the Hebrew, *The Lord do so to me, and add* . And this sense seems to be favoured by the context, as also by the ancient Greek translators, who render the words, *add to them evil or punishments* . And so the word *adding* may be used emphatically and sarcastically. God indeed will add to them; but what? Not numbers, and power, and glory, as they expected, but plagues and judgments one after another. This

nation is supposed by the current of interpreters to be the people of Israel, emphatically called *the nation* . Possibly it may be the Assyrians, of whom he spoke in the last verse. But this I propose with submission.

Thou art glorified; thy justice is glorified in their punishment or destruction. Thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth; which may be understood either,

1. Of Israel, and that either in a way of mercy, Thou hast by destroying the Assyrians enlarged thy people, who were shut up in Jerusalem, so that now they may go to the remotest parts of the land; or in way of judgment, Thou hast removed thy people out of their own land, and suffered them to be carried captive to the ends of the earth. Or,

2. Of the Assyrians; Thou hast removed them from Jerusalem, which they had besieged, and caused them to flee into their own country, which in Scripture phrase was in the ends of the earth; of which see Isa_5:26 **13:5**.

Isaiah 26:16

They, to wit, thy people, as appears both from the matter of this verse, and from the following verses.

Visited thee; come into thy presence, with their prayers and supplications, as the next clause explains it.

They poured out; which notes the plenty or rather the earnestness of their prayers, as Psa_42:4 **142:2**.

A prayer, Heb. *a muttering or lowly speech* , such as charmers use, and such as Hezekiah used when he was in great distress, Isa_38:14, *Like a crane or swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove* ; and such as is usual in case of great humiliation and dejection of mind. When thy chastening was upon them; when thou wast punishing them for their sins.

Isaiah 26:17

So have we been, such was our anguish and danger, in thy sight; whilst thou didst only look upon us like a mere spectator, without affording us the least degree of pity or help. Or this phrase notes only the reality of the thing; God was witness of this our misery, and knoweth the truth of what I say.

Isaiah 26:18

We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have had the torment of a woman in child-bearing, but not the comfort of a living child, Joh_16:21, for we have brought forth nothing but wind; all our labours and hopes were vain and unsuccessful. The prophet here represents their deplorable and desperate condition before God appeared so eminently to deliver them.

We have not wrought any deliverance; we found that we were utterly unable to deliver ourselves.

In the earth; or, *in the land* , in our own country, where yet we had far greater advantages than we could have had elsewhere.

The inhabitants of the world; the Assyrians, or our other enemies; for they are here opposed to God's people.

Isaiah 26:19

Thy dead men shall live. The prophet here turneth his speech to God's people, and gives them a cordial to support them in their deep distress, expressed in the foregoing verse. Thy dead men are not like those Isa_26:14, for they shall not live, as I there said; but thine shall live. You shall certainly be delivered from all your fears and dangers. Nothing is more frequent, both in Scripture and other authors, than for great calamities to be compared to *death* ,

and deliverance from them *to life* , and reviving, and resurrection; and particularly the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and their deliverance out of it, is largely expressed by this very similitude, Eze_37:11, &c.

Together with my dead body; as I myself, who am one of your number, and of these dead men, shall live again. You shall be delivered together with me. Which he might add, to meet with an objection; for they might think that God would take some special care of this holy prophet, and would preserve him when they should he destroyed. No, saith he, as I am at present like a dead carcass no less than you, so you shall be restored to life no less than I. If the supplement of our translation seems to be too literal, it may be rendered to the same purpose, as *my body* , the particle as being oft understood, as I have divers times observed: As my dead body shall rise, so shall theirs also; we are equally dead, and shall equally live again.

Shall they arise unto life, as appears from the former clause.

Awake out of your sleep, even *the sleep of death* , as it is called, Psa_13:3; death being oft compared to a sleep, as Joh_11:11 Act_7:60, and restoration to life unto awaking, as 2Ki_4:31.

Ye that dwell in the dust; you that are dead and buried in the dust, as the dead are said to deep in the dust, Dan_12:2.

Thy dew; the favour and blessing of God upon thee, which is oft compared to the dew, as Hos_14:5 Mic_5:7. The pronoun *thy* is here taken not efficiently, but objectively, as *thy curse* , Gen_27:13, is the curse coming upon thee.

Is as the dew of herbs, which gently refresheth and reviveth them, and maketh them to grow and flourish.

The earth shall cast out the dead, as an abortive birth is cast out of the womb, to which the grave is compared. Job_1:21. But because the verb here used doth not signify to *cast out* , but to *cast down* , which seems not proper here, these words may be, and are, both by ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, *and thou wilt cast down the land of the giants* , or *of the violent ones* , of the proud and potent tyrants of the world. For the word here rendered *dead* is elsewhere rendered giants, as 2Sa_21:16,18. See

also Job_26:5 Pro_9:18 **21:16**. But then the words seem to be better rendered, *and thou wilt cast the giants down to the ground* : either,

1. *Thou* , O God, who is oft understood in such cases; or rather,

2. *Thou* , O my people, to whom he speaks in the foregoing clauses of the verse, *thy dead body, and thy dew* and here continueth his speech, *thou wilt or shalt cast* , &c., thou shalt subdue even the most giant-like and mighty enemies; which though it be properly God's work, the church is oft said to do, because she by her prayers engageth God to do it. And so as the former clauses of the verse speak of the deliverance and prosperity of God's church and people, so this clause speaks of the destruction of their enemies, which usually accompanieth it.

Isaiah 26:20

Having foretold the wonderful deliverance and great happiness of God's people, and the utter destruction of their enemies, lest they should think they were now entering into the possession of this felicity, he adds what here follows, and intimates, that for the present they were to expect storms, and to prepare for them, and patiently to wait God's time for the accomplishment of so great a mercy.

Enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; withdraw thyself from the company and conversation of the wicked world, lest partaking with them in their sins thou dost also partake of their plagues; pour out thy prayers to God in thy closet, as this may be explained by comparing Mat_6:6; put thyself under the protection of my providence and grace by faith and prayer. He alludes to the common practice of men, who when there are storms or dangers abroad, betake themselves into their own houses or chambers for safety; or, as some think, to that history, Exo_9:19,**20**, or to that command of *not going out of their houses* , Exo_12:22, or to the like charge given to Rahab, as the condition of her preservation, **Jos 2**.

For a little moment; whereby he intimates that all their afflictions, how long and tedious soever they may seem, are but short and momentary, in comparison of that happiness which is reserved for them.

The indignation; the dreadful effects of God's anger, those sore judgments of God mentioned in the following verse.

Isaiah 26:21

Cometh out of his place; cometh down from heaven; which God in Scripture is frequently said to do, when he undertaketh any great and glorious work, either of delivering his people, or of destroying their enemies. The speech is borrowed from the manner of princes, who come out of their palaces either to sit in judgment, or to fight against their enemies, which is the case here.

The inhabitants of the earth; all the enemies of God and of his people; for these are here opposed to God's people. Therefore take heed you be not found in the number of them.

The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain; the innocent blood which hath been spilled upon the earth shall be brought to light, and shall be severely revenged upon the murderers. For the phrase, see on Gen_4:10 Job_16:18 Eze_24:7.

Isaiah 27:1 ISIAIAH CHAPTER 27

God's care over his vineyard Isa_27:1-6. His chastisements on them, Isa_27:7-9. His severe judgments against them, Isa_27:10,11. Their return, Isa_27:12,13.

Shall punish leviathan; what kind of creature the leviathan is, See Poole "Job_41:1", &c.; whence it is evident that it was a very great and terrible sea-monster. But here it is certain that the expression is metaphorical, and that by this *leviathan*, *serpent*, and *dragon* (for all signify the same thing) he understands some very powerful enemy or enemies (for the singular number may be here put for the plural, as it is in many other places) of God, and of his church or people, which may well be called by these names, partly for their great might, and partly for the great terror and destruction which they cause upon the earth, as the leviathan doth in the sea. He seems to have a special respect to some particular enemy and oppressor of God's people; either the Assyrian emperor, who now was so; or rather the Babylonian, who should be so. Some understand this of the devil; but although it may be applied to him in a mystical sense, it seems to be literally meant of

some potent and visible adversary; which seems more agreeable to the following verses, and to the usage of this and other prophets.

The piercing serpent; which by its sting pierceth quickly and deeply into men's bodies. Or, *the bar* (as this word is elsewhere used) *serpent* , as this may be called, either for its length, or strength, or swift motion.

That crooked serpent; winding and turning itself with great variety and dexterity; whereby he seems to signify the craftiness and activity of this enemy, which being added to his strength makes it more formidable.

The dragon; or rather, *the whale* , as this word is rendered, Gen_1:21 Job_7:12, and elsewhere; which agrees better with the following words,

that is in the sea, which possibly were added only to limit that general and ambiguous word to a sea-monster, and not to describe the place in which the enemy signified by this dragon had his abode. Although the *sea* , which here follows, may be metaphorically understood of the great largeness of his empire, and the multitude of his subjects, by comparing this with Rev_17:1,15.

Isaiah 27:2

In that day; when this potent enemy shall be destroyedá

A vineyard of red wine: the words in the Hebrew text lie thus, *A vineyard* (Behold, a vineyard; or, Jacob or Israel, my church and people, which is sufficiently understood from the next verse, and is expressed Isa_27:6, shall be a vineyard, shall be defended and dressed, shall thrive and flourish like a vineyard) *of red wine* , (i.e. of the choicest and best wine, which in those parts was red, as appears both from Scripture, as Pro_23:31, whence it is called the blood of the grape, Gen_49:11 Deu_32:14, and from other authors,)

sing ye (O you faithful souls, sing with joy and thanksgiving to God) to (or *of* , or *concerning* , as this prefix is elsewhere used) *her* , or *it* , to wit, the vineyard, or church, (which is frequently compared to a vineyard, as Psa_80:8 Isa_5:7, and elsewhere,) now

delivered from her great enemy, and blessed with peace and prosperity.

Isaiah 27:3

I the Lord do keep it; I will secure it, that neither men, nor beasts, nor drought shall spoil it; which alone are the things that can hurt it. I will protect my church from all the assaults of her enemies, and supply her with all necessary provisions, with my ordinances, and with my Spirit and grace.

Isaiah 27:4

Fury, to wit, against my vineyard, or my people; which is easily understood both from the foregoing and following verses. I have been displeased with them, and have chastised them; but I am not implacable towards them, and resolved utterly to destroy them, as their enemies are, and would have me to be.

I would go through them, I would burn them together: this is added as a reason of the foregoing clause and assertion; which may be conceived either,

1. Thus, I rather desire to contend with briars and thorns, i.e. with the wicked enemies of my church, who are thus called, Isa_10:17 Eze_28:24; and if my wrath was now kindled against them, as it is against my people, I would be furious towards them, and never leave till I had utterly consumed them; but I will deal more indulgently with my people. Which exposition seems to receive some light and strength from Isa_27:6-8. Or,

2. Thus, For I consider the weakness of my people, that if I should let loose my fury upon them, they could no more stand before me than briars and thorns (to which God's people, when they fall into sin, and provoke God, are not unfitly resembled) can stand before a devouring fire, and therefore they would in an instant be utterly destroyed; which I will not do. And this consideration of man's imbecility is elsewhere alleged as a reason of God's indulgence, as **Psa 103:13-16** Isa_57:16. But this I deliver with submission.

Isaiah 27:5

Or, or if at any time fury be, or seem to be, in me against my vineyard or people,

let him, my people, as is clearly implied from the following words; *for there is no peace* to those who are not God's people, or to the wicked, Isa_57:21, and is expressed in the following verse; *take hold of my strength* , i.e. take hold of my arm, which is metonymically strength, and stay it from giving the blow, not by force, which is impossible, but by humble submission and earnest supplication. Or, *strengthen himself* , or *be strong* , (as this word properly signifies, and is elsewhere used,) *by my strength* ; not by his own strength, which he will oppose to mine, but by my strength, which he may by humble and frequent prayers not only restrain from doing him hurt, but effectually engage to assist him, and do him good. He seems to allude to that history of Jacob's wrestling with the angel of God, Gen_32:28, which he could never have done but by a strength received from God.

That he may make peace with me; that instead of opposing me, he may in this manner reconcile himself to me. Or, and

he shall make peace with me, as the same words are rendered in the next clause; which may be repeated to assure them of that great and important favour, that God would make peace with them. Or the words may be rendered in both clauses, let him make peace with me, yea, *let him make peace with me* ; this future verb being taken imperatively, as the other is in the former clause of the verse.

Isaiah 27:6

To take root; to be firmly settled in their possessions, and not tossed hither and thither, as they have been.

Fill the face of the world with fruit; their posterity shall be so numerous, that their own land shall not be sufficient for them, but they shall be forced to seek habitations in other countries, and shall replenish them with people. But this seems to be understood of the spiritual seed of Jacob, or of believers, who are oft called God's Israel, as Rom_9:6, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 27:7

Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? the question implies a denial; he hath not so smitten him, to wit, Jacob. He hath not dealt so severely with his people as he hath

dealt with his and their enemies, whom he hath utterly destroyed. This may look either,

1. Backward, upon times past. If you consult former experiences, you will find that God hath done so, hath spared and restored his people, and in judgment remembered mercy to them, when he hath totally ruined their enemies. Or,

2. Forward, upon the time to come, of which he speaks as of a thing past, after the manner of the prophets, and of which he speaks in the next verse.

Of them that are slain by him; of those who were slain by Israel, or rather by God at the prayer and on the behalf of Israel. Heb. *of his slain ones* , i.e. of those of his smiters or enemies who were slain; which exposition is favoured by comparing this with the foregoing clause.

Isaiah 27:8

In measure; with moderation, in certain proportions which God meteth out and fitteth to their strength. *When it shooteth forth* ; when the vine shooteth forth its luxuriant branches, he, like the vine-dresser, cutteth them off, but so as not to spoil or destroy the vine. Or, as divers interpreters render it, and the word properly and frequently signifies, *in or by casting* , or *dismissing* , or *sending her or it out* ; or, *when thou dost cast or send her out* , to wit, out of her own land, in which she was planted, into captivity. He alludes to a man that divorceth his wife, which is expressed by this word; but withal intimates that this shall not be peremptory and perpetual, as other divorces were.

Thou wilt debate with it; God is said to debate or contend with men, when he executeth his judgments upon them, as Isa_57:16 Amo_7:4.

He stayeth his rough wind; he mitigateth the severity of the judgment. But I must confess I do not meet with any of the ancient or modern translators that agree with ours in this version; nor is the Hebrew verb used, so far as I know, in the signification of staying or restraining; besides, our translation takes no notice of the Hebrew preposition. But this word unquestionably signifies *to remove or take away* , as 2Sa_20:13 Pro_25:4,5, and thus most interpreters understand it. And so the place is very fitly thus

rendered, *he* (or, when *he* , which particle may easily be understood out of the former clause, as is usual) *removeth* (understand either it, to wit, the vine; or them, to wit; the enemies of God and his people. And so this agreeth with the former verse, in representing the different way of God's proceeding against his people, and his and their enemies. Either way there is only a defect of the pronoun, which I have before showed in divers places to be very usual in the Hebrew language) *with or by his rough wind* ; by which sometimes vines and other trees are pulled up by the roots, as that did, 1Ki_19:11, whereby he understands his most terrible judgments.

In the day of the east wind; in the time when he sendeth forth his east wind; which he mentions, because that wind in those parts was most violent, and most hurtful to trees and fruits, as hath been oft observed, and therefore is used to signify the most grievous calamities.

Isaiah 27:9

By this, by this manner of God's dealing with his people, therefore, that the difference between Jacob and his enemies in their several sufferings may appear,

shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, Heb. *expiated or forgiven upon their true repentance* , which shall be the happy effect of their chastisement.

This is all the fruit to take away his sin; the effect hereof shall not be to destroy the sinner, as it is in other men, but only to take away the guilt and power of their sins.

When he maketh; which sin of Jacob's shall be purged and taken away, and the judgment removed, when he shall truly repent of all his sins, and especially of his idolatry, to which they were most inclined, and for which the most of God's judgments which they had hitherto felt had been inflicted upon them.

The altar; which by a usual enallage may be put for the altars, to wit, their idolatrous altars, as is evident from the following words. Possibly he may say *the altar* with respect to that particular altar which Ahaz had set up in the place of God's own altar; and this prophecy might be delivered either to the prophet, or by him to the people, in Ahaz's time, while that altar stood and was used.

As chalk stones; when he shall break all those goodly altars in pieces, which God by his law had enjoined.

That are beaten in sunder; which kind of stones are of themselves apt to break into small pieces, and by the artificer are broken into smaller pieces for making mortar. He seems to allude to that fact of Moses, who, to show his detestation of idolatry, took the golden calf, *and burnt it*, and ground it to powder; and intimates, that when their repentance should be sincere, it would discover itself by their zeal in destroying the instruments of their idolatry. *The groves*; which were frequently erected to the honour of idols, of which we have many instances in Scripture, which God therefore commanded his people to destroy, Deu_7:5 **12:3**.

Shall not stand up; shall be thrown down with contempt and indignation.

Isaiah 27:10

Yet; yet before this glorious promise concerning the removal of Israel's sin and calamity be fulfilled, a dreadful and desolating judgment shall first come upon them.

The defenced city; Jerusalem, and the rest of the defenced cities in the land, the singular number being put for the plural.

The habitation; the most inhabited and populous places. Or, as the Hebrew word properly signifies, their pleasant habitations, whether in the city or country.

Forsaken and left like a wilderness; which was fulfilled in the time of the Babylonish captivity.

The calf; which is synecdochically put for all sorts of cattle, which may securely feed there, because there shall be no men left to disturb or annoy them.

The branches thereof; of their pleasant habitation; of the young trees which shall grow up in that ruined country.

Isaiah 27:11

When the boughs thereof are withered; when they shall begin to wither, as they will when they are thus gnawed and cropped by cattle.

They shall be broken off, that there may be no hopes nor possibility of their recovery.

The women; he mentions women, either because it is their usual work in the country to make fires, and to gather fuel for them, or to signify that the men should be generally destroyed.

It is a people of no understanding; they do not understand either me or themselves, either my word or works; they know not the things which concern their own peace and happiness, but, like brute beasts made to be destroyed, they blindly and wilfully go on in those courses which will bring them to certain ruin. *He that made them* ; both as they are creatures, and as they are his people; for this also is expressed by making or forming, as Psa_100:3 **102:18 149:2**. Thus he overthroweth their false and presumptuous conceits, that God would never destroy the work of his own hands, nor the seed of Abraham his friend for ever; and plainly declareth the contrary.

Isaiah 27:12

Shall beat off; or, *shall beat out* ; which is not meant in a way of punishment, which is rather designed by *threshing* , as Isa_21:10 **25:10**, than by beating; but as an act of mercy, as is evident from the following clause of this, and from the next verse. It is a metaphor from some grains which were beaten out with a rod or staff, of which see Isa_28:27,**28**, and then were carefully gathered and laid up, for the use of man.

From the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt; from Euphrates to Nilus, which were the two borders of the Land of Promise, Jos_1:4 **13:3**. All the Israelites which are left in the land; which are here opposed to those of them that are dispersed into foreign parts, such as Assyria and Egypt.

Ye shall be gathered one by one; which signifies either the smallness of the remnant of that numerous people; or rather God's exact and singular care of them, that not one of them should be lost.

Isaiah 27:13

The great trumpet; which may be heard even to the remotest parts of the earth. God shall summon them all together as it were by sound of trumpet, to wit, by an eminent call or act of his

providence on their behalf. He alludes to the custom of calling the Israelites, together with trumpets; of which see Num_10:2,3.

The land of Assyria, where the ten tribes were carried captive. The land of Egypt, where many of the Jews were, as is manifest both from Scripture, as Jer_43:7 **44:28** Hos_8:13 Zec_10:10, and from other authors.

Isaiah 28:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 28

The drunkenness of Ephraim bringeth destruction on them: a remnant shall be honourable, Isa_28:1-8. Their unteachableness, Isa_28:9-13. Their mock at God's threatenings, Isa_28:14,**15**. Christ prophesied for a sure foundation to believers, Isa_28:16, and destruction to the mockers, who are exhorted to amend, Isa_28:17-22. God's providence, its work and seasons towards the church set out by a husbandman, Isa_28:23-29.

The crown of pride; that proud and insolent kingdom; for the crown is oft put for the kingdom, as Jer_13:18, &c.

The drunkards; either,

1. Metaphorically, drunk with proud self-confidence, and security, and prosperity; or rather,
2. Properly, by comparing this with Isa_28:7 Hos_7:5 Amo_6:6, where the Israelites are taxed with this sin. For having many and excellent vines among them, they were exposed to this sin, and frequently overcome by it.

Of Ephraim; of the kingdom of the ten tribes; which is commonly called. by the name of Ephraim, as hath been oft noted before.

Whose glorious beauty is a fading flower; whose glory and greatness shall suddenly wither and perish.

Which are; which proud and drunken Israelites have their common and chief abode. Or, which is, i.e. which flower is-or which beauty or glory is.

The head of the fat valleys either,

1. In Samaria, which might well be called the head, as being seated upon a mountain; and the head of the kingdom, and the head of the fat valleys, because it was encompassed with many fat and rich valleys. Or,

2. Upon the chief or choicest (as this word signifies, Exo_30:23 Son_4:14 Isa_9:14,15, and elsewhere) of the fat or rich valleys; which they made occasions and instruments of luxury.

That are overcome, Heb. *that are smitten* , or *broken* , or *overthrown* , or *knocked down* ; all which significations of this word fitly agree to drunkards.

Isaiah 28:2

The Lord hath, to wit, at his command, prepared and ready to execute his judgments,

a mighty and strong one; the king of Assyria.

Shall cast down; understand it, the crown of pride; or *them* , the drunkards of Ephraim.

With the hand; or, by his *hand* ; either by that king's force or strong hand; or by the hand of *God* , which shall strengthen and succeed him in this work.

Isaiah 28:3

The expression is emphatical; the crown which was upon their own heads shall be trodden under the feet of others; and they, whose drunkenness made them stagger and fall to the ground, shall be trodden down there.

Isaiah 28:4

As the hasty fruit; which coming before the season, and before other fruits, is most acceptable; which as soon as a man sees he covets it, and plucks it off, yet doth not long enjoy it, but through greediness devours it almost as soon as he can get it into his hand. And so shall it be with Ephraim's glory, which his enemies, as soon as they observe, shall covet and spoil, and devour it greedily, and with delight.

Isaiah 28:5

In that day; when the kingdom of Israel shall be utterly destroyed.

For a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty; God shall give them eminent glory and beauty. Unto the residue of his people; unto the kingdom of Judah, who shall continue in their own country, when Israel is carried into captivity.

Isaiah 28:6

He explains how, or wherein, God would glorify and beautify them, even by giving wisdom to their rulers, and courage to their soldiers; which two things contribute much to the strength, and safety, and glory of a nation.

To them that turn the battle to the gate; to their warriors; whom he describeth by this phrase, to intimate that their valour should be crowned with success, and that they should not only drive their enemies from their own gates and land, but should pursue them into their own lands, and besiege them in their own cities, which Hezekiah did; 2Ki_18:8.

Isaiah 28:7

But, alas! Judah is guilty of the same sins with Israel, and therefore they also must expect the same calamities; of which he speaks afterward. They run into the same excess of wine and strong drink, whereby they besot themselves, and fall into many errors and miscarriages, both in sacred and civil things. The many emphatical phrases and repetitions of the same thing in other words, in this verse, seem to evince that he here speaks of drunkenness, properly so called, although he afterward chargeth them with ignorance, and error, and stupidity; which also were the companions, and in part the effects, of that sin.

The priest, to whom strong drink was expressly forbidden in the time of their sacred ministrations, lest they should thereby be led into errors in their work, Lev_10:9,**10**.

The prophet; the teachers, who should have been patterns of sobriety to the people, and to whom sobriety was absolutely necessary for the right discharge of their office.

Have erred in their conversation, and in their holy administrations.

They are swallowed up; they are, as we say, drowned in it; their senses and reason are swallowed up and lost in it. They design only to swallow it, but indeed are swallowed up by it.

They err in vision; the prophets miscarry in their sacred employment of prophesying or teaching, which is called vision, Pro_29:18, and elsewhere.

They stumble in judgment; the priests mistake in pronouncing the sentence of the law, which was their duty, Deu_17:9-11.

Isaiah 28:8

All tables; at which the priests, and prophets, and other Jews did eat and drink. They hardly made one sober meal; drunkenness was their daily practice.

No place; no table, or no part of the table; no, not so much as the holy places, in which the priests did frequently eat their meals.

Isaiah 28:9

Whom shall he, to wit, *the teacher* , which is easily understood out of the following verb; either God, or his prophets, or ministers;

teach knowledge? who is there among this people that are capable and willing to be taught the good knowledge of God? A minister may as soon teach a young child as these men.

Isaiah 28:10

Precept must be upon precept; they must be taught, like little children, slowly, and by leisure; the same things being oft repeated, because of their great dulness.

Line upon line; one line of the book after another, as children are taught to read.

Isaiah 28:11

For; or, *therefore* , as this particle is oft used. For this seems to be the punishment of their dulness.

With stammering lips; either,

1. In way of condescension, as mothers and nurses teach children, lisping and stammering with them. Or,
2. In way of judgment; which suits best with the next clause.

And another tongue; by people of a strange language, whom he shall bring among them, and into whose power he shall deliver them; which is a great aggravation of their misery: see Deu_28:49 Jer_5:15 Eze_3:5.

Will he speak to this people: seeing they will not hear him speaking by his prophets and ministers, in their own language, they shall hear their enemies speaking to them in a strange and rough language.

Isaiah 28:12

To whom he said, to which people the Lord, by his minister, said,

This, this doctrine or precept, as it is expressed, Isa_28:9,10, or the word of the Lord, as it follows, Isa_28:13, is the rest; the only way, in the observation of which you will find rest and satisfaction.

Cause the weary to rest, Heb. *cause the weary* (understand either soul or country) rest. As rest is offered to you by the prophets in God's name, do you embrace it; which is to be done by hearkening to God's word, as appears by the following clauses. So shall this people, which hath been so oft and so long wearied and harassed by great and manifold calamities, find rest and peace.

Yet they would not hear; they are wilfully ignorant, and obstinately refused the very means of instruction.

Isaiah 28:13

The sense of the words thus rendered may be this, They spake of God's word with scorn and contempt, repeating the prophet's words in a scoffing manner, and with a stammering and ridiculous tone, saying, *Precept upon precept*, &c.; as if they had said, It seems the prophet takes us to be mere children, that need to be taught our first rudiments, and that but slowly. That these were scornful men. and mockers is affirmed, Isa_28:14,22; and as scoffers frequently catch the words out of other men's mouths, and use them in way of derision, so it may be thought they did with the prophet's words. But the words may be, and by divers learned men are, rendered a little otherwise;

And the word of the Lord shall be unto them precept upon precept, &c. As this method hath been used by them, and was

altogether necessary for them; so it still is, and for the future shall be. As they were children in understanding, they shall still continue to be such; they shall be ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; as they formerly would not, so now they shall not, profit by the word; and their sin shall be their punishment. And this seems to suit with the following clause, which notes the dreadful design and effect of that judicial blindness,

that they may or might go and fall backward, & c.

That they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken: according to the former, which is our translation, this clause notes only the event or consequent of their sin; according to the latter, it notes the judgment of God designed and inflicted for it; that God's word being so horribly abused by them, might be an occasion at which they might stumble and fall, and that backward, which is the worst and most dangerous way of falling; and so be broken to pieces, or by which they might be snared and taken.

Isaiah 28:14

Ye scornful men; which make a mock at sin, and at God's words and threatenings; and doubt not by your witty devices, and by your wicked practices, to escape God's judgments, of which we read in the next verse.

Isaiah 28:15

Because ye have said in your hearts,

We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; we are as safe from *death*, and *hell*, or the *grave*, as if they had entered into covenant with us, that they would not invade us. The word rendered *hell* most commonly signifies the grave; which also seems most proper in this place, that so the same thing may be repeated in other words, as is most usual in prophetic writings.

The overflowing scourge; the judgment of God, Which is called a *scourge*, for its sharpness and severity; and overflowing, for its universality; two differing metaphors being joined together; which is not unusual, both in Scripture and in other authors. Shall pass through, to wit, the land.

We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves; we shall secure ourselves by lying and dissimulation, by compliance with our enemies, and with their religion too, if it be necessary, and many crafty devices. Or by *lies* and falsehood he means their riches and strength, to which they trusted, to which he giveth these titles, not that they called or thought them such, but that he might signify what they really were, and would appear to be: **See Poole "Pro_1:11"**.

Isaiah 28:16

Therefore: the coherence is something obscure and difficult. It may be made either,

1. Thus, Therefore I will bring most terrible judgments upon you; which are fully expressed, Isa_28:17-21. But before he comes to the commination, to which *therefore* properly belongs, he first propoundeth a comfortable promise concerning the sending of the Messiah, partly for the support of believers, who are apt to tremble at God's word, and might otherwise be apt to despond at the prediction of such dreadful things; and partly to aggravate their misery, by comparing it with the safety and happiness which the godly and believing Jews, whom they despised and mocked, should find in Zion; and by signifying that that blessed and sure Foundation laid in Zion should yield them no support nor benefit, nor secure them from the vengeance of God. Or,

2. Thus, Because your refuges are so mean, and vain, and deceitful; therefore I will direct you to a better and surer Refuge, which will never fail those that trust to it, which God hath made in Zion. But if you shall despise and reject that Refuge, which I now offer to you all, if you will believe, then know that *I will lay judgment* to the line, &c., as it follows, Isa_28:17. And this seems to me to be the most natural and easy connexion.

I lay; I have purposed and promised it, and will, in the fulness of time, actually perform it.

In Zion in my church, which is commonly called Zion; and in Jerusalem, where this Stone shall be first laid, which afterwards spread further, and filled the whole earth, as it is said of it, Dan_2:35. *For a Foundation*, upon which I will build my church, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, the Foundation of all the

hopes, and comfort, and happiness of my people; the Foundation of my covenant made with my church, and of all my promises.

A Stone; not Hezekiah, but the Messiah, as appears,

1. From those Scriptures of the Old Testament, in which Christ is called a Stone, as Psa_118:22 Isa_8:14 Dan_2:34,**35,45 Zec 3:9**.

2. From the New Testament, where this text is directly expounded of Christ, as Rom_9:32,**33** 1Pe_2:4.

3. From the last clause, wherein he requires faith in this Stone, which is not to be given to any mere man, Jer_17:5; and wherein he implies that this Stone was not yet come, nor to come speedily, into the world; whereas Hezekiah was king at the time of this prophecy.

4. From the usual practice of the prophets, and especially of this prophet, which is to comfort and fortify God's people against the dread of approaching calamities by that great and fundamental promise of the Messiah, in whom alone all other promises are yea and amen; whereof we have seen some instances already, and shall see more hereafter.

A tried Stone; which I have tried, and approved as every way sufficient to be a Corner-stone, and a Foundation-stone. Such stones in buildings use to be chosen with care, and to be thoroughly examined by the builder.

Precious; giving not only strength, but beauty and glory, to the building, as corner-stones frequently do, Psa_144:12.

Corner-stone; uniting the several parts of the building together, making Ephraim and Judah, now sadly divided, one stick, Eze_37:19,**24**; and Jews and Gentiles, now implacable enemies, one church and people, Eph_2:14, &c.

A sure Foundation, upon whom you may securely rest; one who will not fail nor deceive you, as your lying refuges will.

He that believeth, to wit, this promise, or in this Stone, as it is explained, 1Pe_2:6,

shall not make haste; shall not make more haste than he ought, or, as we say, more haste than good speed; shall not hastily and

greedily catch at any way of escaping his danger, whether it be right or wrong, but shall patiently wait upon God in his way till he deliver him. Withal, here is a plain intimation that the mercy here promised was not to be given presently, but after some considerable time; and therefore that they should quietly and patiently submit to God's will under their present difficulties, and expect the accomplishment of it in God's due time: compare Hag_2:3. The word here rendered make haste, is by the seventy interpreters rendered *be confounded*, whom the apostles follow, Rom_9:33 1Pe_2:6, either because they thought it most convenient, in a matter where the difference was not considerable, to follow that translation which was most used and best understood by the generality of Jewish and Gentile Christians; or because the same word hath both these significations in the Eastern languages, as the most learned and worthy Dr. Pocock hath proved; or because the one follows upon the other, and precipitation or haste commonly exposeth men to shame and confusion; which also is implied in the following verses, wherein the dreadful judgments of God are denounced against those who should not believe, and would make haste to prevent or remove their dangers by any means whatsoever.

Isaiah 28:17

Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; I will execute just judgment, as it were by a line and plummet annexed to it, i.e. with exactness and care. And this may be understood either,

1. That God would so order and settle things in his church, that justice and judgment should prevail, and not iniquity, as hitherto it had done; or rather,
2. That as God would build up and preserve all believers upon that Foundation-stone, so he would severely punish and utterly destroy all those unbelieving Jews who should reject that Stone. For

the line and

plummet, or *the plumb-line*, was not only used in erecting buildings, but also in pulling them down; those parts of the building being thus marked out which were to be demolished; and therefore is used in Scripture to signify the destruction of a place

or people, as is evident from 2Ki_21:13 Isa_34:11 Lam_2:8 Amo_7:7,8. And this sense agrees best with the following clause and verse.

The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place; my judgments, which in Scripture are compared to a storm of hail or rain, shall discover the vanity of all your crafty and wicked devices, and shall sweep you away with the besom of destruction in spite of them.

Isaiah 28:18

Disannulled; made void, or of none effect; it shall stand you in no stead.

Ye shall be trodden down by it; which you flattered yourselves that it should not come unto you, Isa_28:15.

Isaiah 28:19

From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; as soon as this overflowing scourge or judgment shall *go forth* from me into the land, it shall assuredly, and with the first, take or seize upon you scoffers, or *carry you away*, which agrees well, both with the Hebrew word, which is frequently taken in that sense, and with the metaphor of a flood, which is here used. *Morning by morning it shall pass over*; it shall not only come to you, contrary to your presumption, Isa_28:15, but it shall abide upon you; and when it hath passed over you, it shall return again to you, morning after morning; and shall follow you day and night, without giving you the least respite.

It shall be a vexation only to understand the report; so dreadful shall the judgment be, that it shall strike you with great honor when you only hear the rumour of its approach, or of the sad effects of it upon other persons or parts of the land.

Isaiah 28:20

For those lying refuges to which you trust will not be able to give you that protection and comfort which you expect from them, no more than a man can stretch himself (as these luxurious Israelites used to do, Amo_6:4) upon a bed which is too narrow for him, or wrap or keep himself warm with a covering or bed-clothes which are not large enough for him.

Isaiah 28:21

Shall rise up, to act and fight against you; as he is said *to sit still* , when he doth forbear to act.

Mount Perazim where he fought against the Philistines, 2Sa_5:20. *The valley of Gibeon* ; where he fought against the Canaanites, Jos_10:10, &c, and afterwards against the Philistines, 1Ch_14:16.

His strange work; the execution of his judgment against Israel, which he calleth his strange work, to intimate either,

1. That God would punish them not with ordinary punishments, but in a most dreadful, and singular, and extraordinary manner; such a judgment being called

a marvellous work, Isa_29:14, although the Hebrew word there used be not the same with this, but of a much differing signification. Or rather,

2. That this work of bringing total and irrecoverable destruction upon Israel was contrary to the benignity of his own nature, and to the usual way of dealing with his people, whom he used and delighted to protect, and spare, and bless; and whom, even when he is angry with them, and punisheth them, he handleth more gently than he doth other persons, in judgment remembering mercy to them, as was noted, Isa_27:7,8: see also Isa_26:11.

Isaiah 28:22

Be ye not mockers; for your own sakes do not make a mock of God's word and threatenings, as you use to do.

Lest your bands be made strong; lest thereby you make the judgments of God, which are oft compared to bands, as Psa_66:11 **73:4**, and elsewhere, more sure and unavoidable, and more severe and terrible, as bands are when they are tied faster and more strongly upon a prisoner.

I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth; God hath assured me that he will utterly root out and destroy the people of Israel; as indeed he did in Hezekiah's reign.

Isaiah 28:23

Observe what I say, and do you judge if it be not reasonable.

Isaiah 28:24

Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? the ploughman doth not spend all his time in ploughing the ground, in order to the sowing it, or, as it follows, in opening it, and breaking its clods; but he hath several times for several works, a time for ploughing, and a time for sowing and harrowing, and a time for reaping, and a time for threshing, or beating, and bruising the corn for his own use; which wisdom God hath put into him. This is the sum of the similitude propounded here and in the following verses; the design and meaning whereof seems to be this, to teach them that God had his times and seasons for several works, and that the methods of his providence were various at several times, and towards several persons or people; and therefore that those scoffing Israelites were guilty of great folly, in flattering themselves, and despising God's threatenings, because of God's long patience towards them, and because of their present impunity and prosperity; for God would certainly and speedily take a time to thresh and break them with his judgments, as at present he ploughed and harrowed them, and so prepared them for it by his threatenings.

Doth he open; understand, all day, or continually, out of the foregoing clause.

And break the clods of his ground; which they used to do with a kind of harrow, or other proper instrument. See Jer_4:3 Hos_10:11,12

Isaiah 28:25

Made plain the face thereof, by breaking the clods, which made it ragged and uneven.

The principal wheat; either,

1. The wheat, which is the principal or chief of all these grains; or,
2. The best wheat, which he prudently chooseth for seed.

The appointed barley; that proportion of barley which he appointed. Or, as others, *the marked barley* ; or, *the choice barley* , which they laid aside in a sack for seed; and therefore set aside

with a peculiar mark upon it. *In their place* , Heb. *in his border* ; each seed in a several and proper place.

Isaiah 28:26

The sense of the words thus rendered is this, All this he performeth by that discretion which God hath put into him; and therefore be assured that God will order all his affairs with judgment, and will in due season execute the punishments which now he threatens, and will perfect his own works. But the words by some are rendered otherwise.

And he beateth it out (as this word may be rendered, 1Ki_12:11 Pro_19:18 **29:17**) *in such sort as his God doth teach him* ; in a discreet manner, which being generally mentioned here, is particularly described in the following verse.

Isaiah 28:27

A threshing instrument; which then and there was made like a sled shod with iron, which was drawn by men or beasts over the sheafs of corn, to bruise them, and beat the grain out of them.

A cart wheel; a lesser and lower wheel than a cart wheel, but of the same form, upon which possibly the threshing instrument was drawn.

The fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod, as being unable to bear harder usage.

Isaiah 28:28

Bread corn is bruised with a threshing instrument, by comparing this with the foregoing verse and the following words.

Because; or rather, *but* , or *nevertheless* , as the word is frequently used. The sense is, The husbandman doth indeed thresh the bread corn, but he doth it with moderation, and only for a time, not for ever.

Nor break it; understand, *for ever* , out of the foregoing clause, as is usual in Scripture.

With his horsemen; which governed the horse or horses that drew the threshing instrument. Or, *with horses* ; for it is evident, and hath been observed before, that this Hebrew word signifies horses as well as *horsemen* . And this was another way of

threshing out the corn, by driving horses, or other cattle, over the sheaves to tread it out; of which see Deu_25:4 Mic_4:13.

Isaiah 28:29

This also; this part of the husbandman's discretion, expressed Isa_28:27,**28**, as well as that expressed Isa_28:24,**25**.

Which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working: these words contain the application of the similitude. The husbandman manageth all his affairs with common discretion; but God governs the world and his church with wonderful wisdom; he is great and marvellous, both in the design or contrivance of things, and in the execution of them.

Isaiah 29:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 29.

The temple and city of Jerusalem destroyed, Isa_29:1-6. Her enemies unsatiable, Isa_29:7,**8**; their senselessness, Isa_29:9-12, and deep hypocrisy, Isa_29:13-17. The scorner and oppressor being cut off, the rest shall be converted, Isa_29:18-24.

Woe to Ariel! this word signifies *a strong lion*, or *the lion of God*; and is used concerning lion-like men, as it is rendered, 1Ch_11:22; and of God's altar, as it is rendered, Eze_43:15,**16**, which seems to be thus called, because it devoured and consumed the sacrifices put upon it, as greedily and as irresistibly as the lion doth his prey. If the altar be here meant, it is put synecdochically for the temple, and the words may be rendered, *Woe to Ariel, to Ariel of or in the city!* or, *and the city*; for that conjunction is sometimes understood, as Isa_22:6 Hab_3:11. And so the threatening is denounced both against the temple and against Jerusalem. But he seems rather to understand it of Jerusalem, as may be gathered,

1. From the next words, which seem to be added by way of apposition, to explain what he meant by that obscure and ambiguous term,

Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, even to the city!

2. From the following verses, which plainly declare that this Ariel is the place which God threatens that he would distress and fill with heaviness, Isa_29:2; and *lay siege* against her, Isa_29:3; and

that *the nations* should *fight against her* , Isa_29:7; all which expressions agree much better to Jerusalem than to the altar. And this city might be called *Ariel* , or *the strong lion* , either,

1. For its eminent strength in regard of its situation and fortifications, by reason whereof it was thought almost impregnable, both by themselves and others, Lam_4:12. Or,

2. For its lionlike fierceness and cruelty, for which she is called the bloody city, Eze_7:23 **22:2**, and, in effect, Isa_1:15 **59:3** Jer_19:4; and for which her princes are called *lions* , Eze_19:2 Zep_3:3. Or,

3. In respect of the altar of God, which was erected in and confined to that city, and in which the strength and glory of that city did chiefly consist.

The city where David dwelt; the royal city, and seat of David and his posterity; which is here mentioned as the ground of their confidence; and withal, it is implied that their relation to David, and their supposed interest in the promises made to him and to his seed, should not secure them from the destruction here threatened.

Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices; go on in killing sacrifices from time to time, one year after another, whereby you think to appease me, and to secure yourselves; but all shall be in vain.

Isaiah 29:2

Yet, notwithstanding all your sacrifices,

I will distress Ariel, by bringing and strengthening her enemies against her.

It shall be unto me as Ariel: the sense is either,

1. I will treat her like a strong and fierce lion, which, the people among whom it is endeavour by nets, or pits, and all other ways, to take and to destroy; or,

2. I will make Ariel the city like Ariel the altar, filling it with sacrifices, even with men, whom I will slay in my anger; which act of God's is called *his sacrifice* , Eze_39:17,**19**.

Isaiah 29:3

By those enemies whom I will assist and enable to destroy thee. This was fulfilled either,

1. By Sennacherib, as some learned men think. But what is here affirmed of these enemies is expressly denied concerning Sennacherib, Isa_37:3. Or rather,
2. By the Chaldeans, 2Ki_25:1, &c.

Isaiah 29:4

Thy speech shall be low out of the dust; thou who now speakest so loftily and scornfully against the Lord's prophets and others, shalt be humbled and confounded, and afraid and ashamed to speak aloud, and shalt in a submissive manner, and with a low voice, beg the favour of thine enemies.

Thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground; who, that they might possess the people with a kind of reverence and horror, used to speak and deliver their answers with a low voice, either out of their bellies, or from some dark cave under the ground.

Isaiah 29:5

Of thy strangers; either,

1. Of the strangers that encamp and fight against thee. Or,
2. Of the Egyptians, and other strangers, whom thou hast hired to assist thee, as indeed they did, when the Chaldeans came against them. This exposition seems to agree best, as with the phrase, thy strangers, so with the scope of the place, and with the whole context, especially the foregoing verses; which plainly shows that this is not a promise to Jerusalem, but a threatening against it.

Like small dust; quickly blown away with the least wind, by comparing this with the following clause.

Of the terrible ones; of thy great commanders and stoutest soldiers.

It shall be; this dissipation and destruction of thy strangers and terrible ones shall come to pass.

Isaiah 29:6

Thou, O Ariel or Jerusalem, of or to whom this whole context manifestly speaks, *shalt be visited* with dreadful judgments, which are frequently expressed in the prophets by these and such-like metaphors.

Isaiah 29:7

Wherein it shall be so is explained in the next verse.

Isaiah 29:8

His soul is empty; his appetite or desire (as the soul is taken, Psa_41:4 **78:18**, and elsewhere) is unsatisfied. Or, his stomach or body (as the soul is used, Psa_16:10) is empty.

So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against Mount Zion; no less unsatisfied and unsatiated shall the enemies of the Jews be, with all the cruelties which they have committed against you; and they shall be always thirsting after more of your blood, as if they had never tasted any of it.

Isaiah 29:9

Stay yourselves, and wonder; pause upon it, and you will see cause to wonder at the stupidity of this people, of which he is now about to speak. He directeth his speech, either to the religious part of the people, or to those particular persons who heard him when he delivered this prophecy.

Cry ye out, and cry; cry out again and again, either in way of supplication for them; or rather through astonishment and horror. Or, *they take pleasure or sport themselves*, (as this word most commonly signifies,) *and riot*; in the midst of all these threatenings and dangers, they are secure, and give up themselves to sensuality; which is matter of just wonder.

They are drunken, but not with wine; but either,

1. With drinking the cup of God's fury, wherewith they are said to be made drunk, Isa_51:17,**20**. And then, *they are drunk*, is put for, *they shall be drunk*, after the manner of the prophets. Or,
2. With the spirit of giddiness or stupidity, which makes them like drunken men, insensible of their danger, and not knowing what to do.

Isaiah 29:10

Hath poured out upon you; which phrase notes the plenty and vehemency of this judgment.

The spirit of deep sleep; hardness of heart, and insensibleness of your danger and misery, which God is said to send, because he denies or withdraws his fight and grace, which alone can cure those maladies. *The prophets and your rulers, the seers* ; your magistrates and ministers, whose blindness or stupidity is a great curse and plague to the people. Or, *the prophets, even the chief* (for *the head* is oft put for the chief of persons or things, as Exo_30:23 1Ch_12:18, and elsewhere) *of your seers* . Hath he covered with the veil of ignorance and stupidity, or as to their eyes, which is understood out of the former clause. And this last clause is and may be rendered thus, The eyes (which may be repeated out of the foregoing clause) *of your prophets, and of , or even of, your principal seers , (or, and of your most intelligent rulers,) hath he covered* .

Isaiah 29:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 29:12

The vision of all; of all your prophets, whether the true or false ones. *As the words of a book that is sealed* ; in which no man can read whilst it is scaled up, as books then sometimes were, 1Ki_21:8 Est_3:12,13, being made in the form of rolls, which was convenient for that purpose.

The book is delivered to him that is not learned; unsealed and opened, as the following clause implies. God so orders the manner of delivering this book, that neither the learned nor unlearned could read and understand it.

Isaiah 29:13

Draw near me, to wit, in acts of worship,

with their mouth and with their lips; with outward devotions, and the profession of religion.

But have removed their heart far from me; they do not pay me that love, and fear, and obedience which I require, and prefer before all sacrifices and external services.

Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men; they worship me not in such way and manner as I have commanded and prescribed, but according to their own and other men's inventions, preferring the devices and traditions of their false prophets before my institutions. For this was a common error among the Jews, as we learn from Jer_7:31 Hos_5:11, and many other scriptures; and thus our blessed Saviour expounds this very place, Mat_15:7-9.

Isaiah 29:14

Shall disappear and vanish; for this answers to,

shall perish, in the former clause. A veil shall be east upon the eyes of their minds; they shall give no evidences or proofs of their wisdom, but their folly shall be made manifest. And this was indeed a wonderful thing for their wise men to be made fools.

Isaiah 29:15

That seek deep, Heb. *that make deep* . A metaphor from men who use to dig deep into the earth, that they may hide any thing there which they would keep safe and unknown.

To hide their counsel from the Lord; vainly imagining that they can keep all their hypocrisy and secret wickedness out of God's sight, and that they can deceive, not only man, but God, by their external professions and services. Their works are in the dark; their wicked counsels are contrived, and their idolatry is practised, in secret and dark places, of which see Eze_8:12.

Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? we act so cunningly, that neither God nor man can discover us.

Isaiah 29:16

Your turning of things upside down; all your subtle devices, by which you turn yourselves into all shapes; and turn your thoughts hither and thither, and pervert the order which God hath appointed.

Shall be esteemed as the potter's clay; it is no more to me than the clay is to the potter, who can not only discern it thoroughly, but alter and dispose it as he seeth fit.

Shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not, & c.? and no less absurd and ridiculous is your conceit, that I, your

Maker and supreme Governor, cannot discover and control all your artifices at my pleasure.

Isaiah 29:17

The forest of Lebanon, which was a barren mountain and a desolate wilderness, shall by God's wonderful providence become a fruitful and populous place; and these places, which are now fruitful and populous, shall then become as barren and desolate as that forest. The sense is confirmed by that parallel place, Isa_32:15. And from both places compared together, this seems to be a prophecy of the rejection of the wicked and unbelieving Jews, whose sins and marvellous judgments, and particularly infatuation, are declared in the foregoing verses; and of the calling of the Gentiles, of which he speaks in the following verse, as appears further by comparing that verse with Isa_35:5. And this opinion may receive some countenance from Mat_15:7, &c., where Christ expounds the foregoing words, Isa_29:13, upon which these have a dependence, of his own times.

Isaiah 29:18

The deaf; who were deaf before God by his word and grace did open their ears; even the deaf and blind Gentiles, as was now noted. Compare Isa_35:5.

Shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness; being, by God's grace, brought out of that gross and worse than Egyptian darkness of ignorance and wickedness, in which they formerly lived, unto a clear and saving knowledge of the truth.

Isaiah 29:19

The meek; the humble and meek believers, opposed to those proud and scornful Israelites or Jews, of whom he speaks in this and in the foregoing chapter. *Shall increase their joy in the Lord*; shall greatly rejoice in this, that the Lord and Holy One of Israel is now their God and portion.

The poor; either,

1. Spiritually, of which Mat_5:3. Or,
2. Outwardly, mean and despicable people, such as the Gentiles were in the opinion of the Jews, and such as the greatest part of the first believing Christians were, Mat_11:5 1Co_1:26 Jam_2:5.

Isaiah 29:20

The terrible one; the proud and potent enemies of those meek and poor believers now mentioned, such as the unbelieving Jews and the heathen potentates were in the first age of Christianity.

The scorner; the scornful opposers of God's word and people. That watch for iniquity; that early and diligently apply themselves to the practice of wickedness, or to do mischief to others.

Isaiah 29:21

That make a man an offender; that condemn and punish a man as if he were a great criminal.

For a word; for a verbal reproof, as appears from the next clause.

For him that reproveth; for God's faithful prophets and ministers, whose office it is to reprove ungodly men, such as these were.

In the gate, publicly; which they took for a great affront and disgrace; although the reproof ought to be public, where the sin is public and scandalous. He mentions *the gate* , because there the people used to assemble, both upon civil and sacred accounts, and there prophets used to deliver their prophecies; of which see Jer_7:2 **17:19**.

Turn aside, to wit, *from judgment* , as this phrase is more fully delivered, Isa_10:2, or from his right; which is elsewhere called *the perverting* , or overturning, or overthrowing of a man's right or judgment, as Deu_27:19 Pro_17:23 Lam_3:35.

The just; the faithful prophets and ministers of God, and among others Christ, who is oft called the just or righteous one, both in the Old and New Testament.

For a thing of nought; not for any great advantage, but for a trifle, which is a great aggravation of their injustice. Or, *with vanity* , i.e. with vain and frivolous pretences, or without any colour of reason or justice.

Isaiah 29:22

Who redeemed Abraham *from manifold dangers* , and especially from that idolatry in which his family and ancestors were generally involved, Jos_24:2,**3**.

Jacob; the Israelites or posterity of Jacob, who are oft called Jacob in Scripture, who had great cause to be ashamed, for their continued infidelity, and for their persecutions of God's prophets and righteous servants, and for their rejection of their own Messiah; but shall at last be brought back unto the God of their fathers, and to their Messiah.

Neither shall his face now wax pale, through fear of their enemies, who, from time to time, have molested them; but now they shall be delivered from them all, and shall serve God without fear, as is said, Luk_1:74.

Isaiah 29:23

When he seeth his children; when the believing seed of Jacob shall see those children, whom they have begotten to God by the preaching of the gospel, even the Gentiles, converted by their ministry.

The work of mine hands; *the children, not of the flesh, but of the promise* , Rom_9:8, whom I, by my almighty power and grace, have created or regenerated, of stones raising up children to Abraham. *In the midst of him* ; which Gentiles shall be incorporated with the Jews into one and the same body and church.

They shall sanctify my name; they shall not despise and hate the Gentiles, and envy them the grace of God, and an interest in their Messiah, but shall praise and glorify God with them and for them, as the believing Jews did, Act_11:18.

Isaiah 29:24

They also that erred in spirit; those Gentiles whose spirits or minds were ignorant of and erred from God's truth, and who were led aside by a lying spirit, or by the spirit of error and delusion, to idolatry, and all manner of impiety,

Shall come to understanding; shall come to the knowledge of the truth.

They that murmured shall learn doctrine; they that would not receive the doctrine of God, but murmured at God's faithful prophets and teachers, who delivered it, which was the practice of

divers, both Jews and Gentiles, shall now learn doctrine, and receive God's truth in the love of it.

Isaiah 30:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 30

The prophet threateneth the people for their confidence in Egypt, Isa_30:1-7, and contempt of God's word, Isa_30:8-11; wherefore they shall be destroyed, Isa_30:12-17. God's mercies towards the church, Isa_30:18-26. God's wrath and his people's joy in the destruction of Assyria, Isa_30:27-33.

The rebellious children; the Jews, who call themselves God's children, though they are rebellious ones, as was said, Isa_1:2.

That take counsel; that consult together, and resolve to do what follows, Isa_30:2.

Not of me; not following nor asking my advice, which they had command and encouragement from me to do.

That cover with a covering; that seek protection.

Not of my Spirit; not such as by my Spirit, speaking in my word, I have directed and required them to do; but such as I have severely forbidden to them; for the contrary affirmative is frequently implied in the negative; of which I have formerly given many instances.

That they may add sin to sin; that unto those sins, by which they have deserved and procured my judgments upon them, they may add distrust of my power and mercy to save them, and confidence in an arm of flesh, which also is rebellion against my express command to the contrary.

Isaiah 30:2

That walk to go down into Egypt; that send ambassadors to Egypt for succour, as we read, Isa_30:4, which the Jews were forward to do upon all occasions, and did now upon the invasion of the king of Assyria, as is evident from Isa_20:5,6, and did the like against the king of Babylon, Jer_37:7 Eze_17:15.

Have not asked at my mouth; either by the priests or prophets, as they were to do in weighty cases; of which see Num_27:21 Jos_9:14 1Sa_23:9,10 1Ki_22:7 Jer_21:2 **42:2,20**; or by studying

my word, which plainly directs them to another course, and forbids them this practice.

In the shadow; in their power (as it is in the foregoing clause) and protection, which is oft signified by the shadow, as Jud_9:15 Psa_17:8 **91:1,4**.

Isaiah 30:3

As being not only unprofitable, but mischievous to you.

Isaiah 30:4

His princes; the princes of Judah, either sent by the king, or by the appointment of their brethren.

Hanes; an eminent city of Egypt, called more largely *Tahapanes* , and *Tahpanhes* , Jer_2:16 **43:8**.

Isaiah 30:5

They; both the messengers, and they who sent them.

Isaiah 30:6

The burden; either

1. The prophecy; which is oft called *the burden* ; or rather
2. The burden of riches or treasures, as it is explained in the latter part of the verse.

Of the beasts of the south; which is carried upon asses or camels, as it follows, into Egypt, which lay southward from Judea.

Into the land of trouble and anguish; into Egypt and Ethiopia or Cush; for both are joined together in this matter, **Isa 20**, whole land seems to be called *a land of trouble and anguish* prophetically, because they should distress them, and not help them; as was said of the Assyrians in the like case, 2Ch_28:20, some render it, *by or through the land* , &c., and understand it of the vast wilderness which lay between Judea and Egypt. But it was more proper and important to speak of the land to which these man and beasts went, than of that through which they were to pass; which it was needless so particularly to describe. Nor was the direct road from Judea to Egypt such a place as is here described.

The young and old lion; which may be understood properly, because these and the following creatures did abound, and were very fierce and mischievous, in Egypt and Ethiopia; but withal, seems to design the craft and cruelty of that people, and the danger of their confederacy with them, and the harm which they should have from them.

Fiery flying serpent: that there were flying serpents in those parts, is affirmed, not only in Scripture, but also by Herodotus, Cicero, and Ammianus, and divers other authors. *They* ; the Jews, designed by the same pronoun,

they, Isa 30 5,

will carry their riches; either,

1. To secure them; or rather,
2. To procure their assistance. Upon the shoulders of young asses; much used there for carrying burdens, as is evident from Gen_32:15 **45:23**, &c.

Upon the bunches; upon the backs, which were strengthened with bunches, by a synecdoche.

Isaiah 30:7

Concerning this; concerning this counsel or practice. Or, *to her* ; to Jerusalem or Judah.

Their strength is to sit still; it is safer and better for them to sit quietly at home, seeking to me for help. He seems industriously to use an ambiguous word, *Rahab* , which signifies both strength, as Job_9:13 Psa_90:10, and *Egypt* , as Psa_87:4 Isa_51:9, so called from its singular strength; to intimate that if they did not go to Rahab, Rahab, or what they expected from Rahab or Egypt, which was powerful succour, should come to them.

Isaiah 30:8

Write it; write this prophecy and warning which I have now delivered.

Before them; in their presence, in the public assembly; for the prophets were many times commanded to do such actions, as well as to deliver their messages.

In a table, and note it in a book; so this was to be written twice over; once in a table, to be handed up in some public place, that all that were then and there present might read it; and again in a book, that it might be kept for the use of posterity.

That it may be for the time to come, as a witness for me and against them, that I have given them fair warning, and they have wilfully run upon their own ruin.

Isaiah 30:9

Lying children; which profess one thing, and practise another.

The law of the Lord; the commands of God, either contained in Scripture, or delivered by my mouth, whereby these practices are expressly forbidden to them.

Isaiah 30:10

He speaks not of the words of their mouths; for none could be so mad or impudent as to have or profess a desire to be cheated, but of the language of their actions. They do so discourage and threaten God's faithful prophets, and so encourage their own false prophets, as if they had rather be deceived to their destruction, than hear the truth for their preservation and salvation. They prefer the pleasing of their humours before the saving of themselves.

Isaiah 30:11

Out of the way in which you now walk, out of your present course of preaching unsavoury and frightful things to us.

Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us; do not trouble us with harsh and repeated messages from God, as you used to do.

Isaiah 30:12

In oppression; in the wealth which you have gotten by oppression, whereby you now think to procure Egyptian succours; of which **See Poole "Isa_30:6"**.

And perverseness; and in your perverse and rebellious course of sending to Egypt for help.

Isaiah 30:13

This iniquity, of sending and trusting to Egypt for succour.

Whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant; like a wall which is high, and seems to be strong, but swelling forth in some parts, which upon the least accident falleth down suddenly to the ground. Such shall be the issue of your high and towering confidence in Egypt.

Isaiah 30:14

He shall break it; he, either God, or he whom God shall send against them. Or, *it shall be broken* ; for such phrases are oft taken indefinitely and passively; it, this iniquity last mentioned, Isa_30:13, your carnal confidence and all the grounds of it, and you that lean upon it.

Isaiah 30:15

In returning, either from your present purpose of sending to Egypt, or unto God, as the LXX., and Syriac, and Arabic translators render it. Or,

in quietness; for the verb from which this word come is elsewhere used in that sense, as Psa_23:2 **Jer 30 10 46:27.**

In quietness; in sitting still, and quieting your own minds. In confidence, to with, rightly placed upon me and my promises for your deliverance.

Isaiah 30:16

We will flee out of this land from the king of Assyria; which is very probable divers of the richer sort did, having sent their treasures before them, as we read Isa_30:6.

Isaiah 30:17

Shall flee; which words are fitly supplied out of the following clause.

At the rebuke; either,

1. At his real rebuke, upon his assault or onset; or rather,
2. At his verbal rebuke, upon his mere threats, as fearing that he will proceed from words to blows.

Shall ye flee; all of you, how numerous soever.

Till ye be left as a beacon, & c.; till you be generally destroyed, and but a few of you left.

Isaiah 30:18

Therefore; because of your general destruction and great misery; which is frequently mentioned in Scripture as a motive to God's mercy, as Deu_32:36, and in many other places, as hath been oft observed already. But some rendered this Hebrew particle *yet* , or *notwithstanding* , as it is supposed to signify, Isa_51:21 Jer_16:14 Eze_39:25 Hos_2:14.

Wait; patiently expect your repentance, and stop the course of his judicial proceedings against you, that you may have an opportunity of making your peace with him, and of preventing your utter ruin.

Will he be exalted; he will lift up and bestir himself, and will work gloriously in your behalf, as this phrase is used, Psa_21:13 **46:10** Isa_33:10, and oft elsewhere; and as the following verses explain it.

Is a God of judgment; who carrieth himself towards his people (for of them only he speaks in this place) not with furious passion, but with judgment and discretion, or with equity and moderation; for judgment is oft opposed to fury and rigorous justice, as Psa_112:5 Jer_10:24 **30:11**. Blessed are all they that wait for him; this waiting upon God, in his way, with faith and patience, is a surer way to your safety and happiness, than seeking to Egypt, or any other carnal remedies.

Isaiah 30:19

For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; for although the time is coming, when the people shall be banished from Jerusalem, and carried captives into Babylon; yet after a set time they shall return to Jerusalem, and have a fixed and comfortable abode there: which was in part accomplished upon their return from Babylon; but more fully in the times of the gospel, when many of them were, and the whole body of them shall be, brought into Christ's church, which is oft called Zion and Jerusalem, both in the Old and New Testament.

He will answer thee; whereas now he seems to be deaf to thy prayers.

Isaiah 30:20

And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction; and although in that time and state of the church you will be subject to many outward straits and afflictions. This phrase is borrowed from Deu_16:3 1Ki_22:27. He seems to allude to the condition of besieged cities, and particularly of Jerusalem, as it was straitened and distressed by Sennacherib, and as it should be far more straitened by the Chaldeans; of which see 2Ki_25:3. Heb. *And the Lord will give*, &c. Or, *the Lord indeed will give*, &c. Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more; as they have been in former times, both in Israel and Judah, when the godly prophets and ministers were but few, and when they were persecuted and banished by their wicked rulers. But in the New Testament God hath made better provision for his church, sending his Son, the great Teacher of the church, into the world, and pouring forth the gifts and graces of the Spirit in abundance, and increasing the number of able and faithful ministers, and promising a continued succession of them to the end of the world, Mat_28:19,20.

Thine eyes shall see thy teachers; thou shalt have their presence, and their instruction and assistance.

Isaiah 30:21

Thine ears shall hear a word; as oft as need requires thou shalt hear the voice of God's word and Spirit directing thee in thy course.

Hear a word behind thee; a metaphor borrowed either,

1. From the custom of shepherds, who use to follow their sheep, and to recall them when they go out of the way. Or,
2. From travellers, who when they are gone out of the right way, are oftentimes recalled and admonished of their error by some other passenger or person who is behind them, and therefore discerns their mistake; which he could not so easily discover if he were before them.

Isaiah 30:22

Ye shall defile, to show your contempt of it, and to make it unfit for your own or any other's use.

The covering; the leaves or plates wherewith their wooden images were frequently covered; of which see Exo_38:17,19 Num 16:38,39.

The ornament; or, *the coat* or *covering* . Heb. *the ephod* , as this very word is rendered, Exo_28:8 39:5, which was a costly and glorious robe. The idolaters spared no cost in the making and adorning their idols; and, among others, the image of Jupiter in Sicily had a coat put upon it made all of massy gold.

Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt so deeply abhor idolatry, that thou shalt cast away with indignation all the monuments and instruments thereof.

Isaiah 30:23

The rain of thy seed; or rather, as others render it; to or for thy seed, when thou hast newly sown thy seed, which was called the *former rain* ; or such as thy seed requires, which may include both the former and the latter rain. Their sins, the cause of all God's judgments which had befallen them, being removed by their sincere repentance, and God's gracious pardon, God showereth down all his blessings upon them.

Bread of the increase of the earth; which shall be the fruit of thy own land and labour; which is a great mercy and comfort.

It shall be fat and plenteous; thy bread shall be excellent for quality, which is called fat. Deu_32:14, and abundant for quantity.

Isaiah 30:24

Clean provender; or, as learned Mr. Gataker renders it, threshed, which agrees well with the following clause, corn being first threshed, and then winnowed. The sense is, there should be such plenty of corn, that their very beasts, instead of straw, should eat corn; and that not in the ear, or with the straw, but the pure grain.

Isaiah 30:25

Upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill; which are commonly dry and barren, and destitute of rivers.

In the day of the great slaughter; when God shall destroy the enemies of his people, he will shower down his blessings upon his church.

The towers; either properly, the towers of Babylon, for which she was famous; or metaphorically, the high and mighty potentates, which fought against God's people, as Isa_2:15.

Isaiah 30:26

As the light of the sun, for constancy and brightness; which, as also the following clause, is to be understood metaphorically, of the most glorious and comfortable condition of God's church, far surpassing what it was in former ages. And so this, as well as other passages in this chapter, concerns the times of the gospel.

As the light of seven days; as if the light of seven days were combined together in one. Its light shall then be transcendently more bright and glorious than it hath hitherto been. Which magnificent expressions seem to be too high for the deliverance of the Jews, either from Sennacherib or but of Babylon; and do much better agree to the times of the gospel, in which the light is far more clear, and the grace of God much more abundant, than ever it was in former times. And this exposition seems the more probable, because it is the manner of the prophets, and especially of this, who is rightly called the *evangelical prophet*, to take all occasions to speak of the days of the Messiah, and of the blessed privileges of that time and state of the church, among which they constantly reckon light, whether you take it for knowledge or for comfort, to be one.

In the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound; when God shall effectually cure the wounds and breaches of his people, first making up the breach between him and them, then making Israel and Judah to be one, who now are sadly divided; and making Jew and Gentile to be one fold under one Shepherd, even the Messiah, which the prophets foretell that it shall be in the times of the gospel.

Isaiah 30:27

Here begins the last part of the chapter, wherein he gives them an earnest of those greater mercies promised for times to come, by assuring them of the approaching destruction of the Assyrian forces.

The name of the Lord; the Lord himself: for as the names of men are oft put for the men themselves, as Num_26:53 Act_1:15 Rev_3:4 **11:13**; so *the name of God* is frequently put for God, as Gen_4:26 Deu_28:58 Psa_20:1,7, &c.

Cometh from far; from a very remote place, even from heaven, whence God sent his angel to destroy them, Isa_37:36. Possibly this expression may respect the judgment of the Assyrians, who looked upon God as one afar off, not only in his presence, which they thought to be confined to heaven, but in his care of and affections to the Jews; and therefore no more expected any opposition from him than from them who live in the ends of the earth.

The burden thereof is heavy; he will inflict heavy judgments upon them.

His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire; he hath pronounced a severe sentence against them, and will give command for the execution of it.

Isaiah 30:28

His breath; either,

1. *The breath of his nostrils* , as it is called, Job_4:9; or the blast of the breath of his nostrils, as Psa_18:15; in both which places it is mentioned as a sign and effect of God's anger, and the cause of the destruction of those against whom it is directed. And the expression seems to be borrowed from hence, that men discover their anger by a strong and vehement breathing through their nostrils. Or,

2. *The breath of his lips or mouth* , to which the destruction of God's enemies is elsewhere ascribed, as Job_15:30 Isa_11:4, which may be the same thing with his lips and tongue in the foregoing verse, or may design strong blast coming out of his mouth; for God is frequently said to destroy wicked men by blowing upon them, as Isa_40:7, **24 Eze 21:31 22:21**. As an overflowing stream; coming from him as vehemently as a mighty torrent of waters.

Shall reach to the midst of the neck; shall bring him into a most dangerous condition, as a man who is in deep waters which reach

to his neck is in danger of being drowned; and afterwards, as is related in the following verses, will utterly destroy him. And this was fulfilled in Sennacherib, who was highly endangered, when he lost so great a part of his army, and shortly after slain by his own sons. Although these words may be added as a description of the overflowing: stream now mentioned, and may be thus rendered, Which reacheth even to the midst of the neck; for the relative particle is frequently understood in Scripture.

To sift; to shake and scatter, as it were, with a sieve; or to try and vex, as this metaphor signifies, Amo_9:9 Luk_22:31. The nations; the Assyrian army, which was made up of the people of several nations. With the sieve of vanity; not with an ordinary sieve, which casteth away the chaff only, but keepeth the corn; but with a sieve which should shake them so long and so vehemently as to cast away all together, and to make a full end of them.

There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people; God will restrain and overrule them by his secret and powerful providence. *Causeth them to err* ; whereas other bridles guide the bridled creatures into the right way, this shall turn them out of the way, by giving them up to their own mistakes, and foolish counsels, and wicked courses, which shall bring them to sore and certain ruin.

Isaiah 30:29

Ye shall have a song; you shall have occasion of great joy and songs of praise for your stupendous deliverance from that formidable enemy. *Are in the night when a holy solemnity is kept* : he mentions the night, either because the Jewish feasts begun at the evening, and were celebrated with great joy in part of the night season, as well as on the following day; or because he hath a particular respect to the solemnity of the passover, in which they spent some considerable part of the night in feasting, and rejoicing, and singing of psalms and songs before the Lord.

As when one goeth with a pipe; like the joy of one that is going up to the solemn feasts with music, and the voice of joy and praise, as they used to do, Psa_42:4, to cheer up themselves in the way, which to many of them was long, and would otherwise have been tedious.

Isaiah 30:30

His glorious voice; his thunder, which is called God's voice, and said to be full of majesty, Psa_29:4. But then thunder is metaphorically taken for some terrible judgment, as it is in many places of Scripture.

The lightning down of his arm upon the Assyrian, whom he will smite with a deadly blow in the face of the world. The phrase is taken from the gesture of a man who is about to smite another, who first lifts up his hand, and then lets it fall with great force upon him whom he designs to strike.

With the indignation of his anger; with great wrath; which is signified by the heaping of so many words of the same signification together.

Isaiah 30:31

The voice of the Lord; that voice mentioned in the last verse.

Which smote with a rod; which was the rod wherewith God smote his and other people, Isa_10:5,6. He who used to smite others shall now be smitten himself. Or, as the words may be, and by others are, rendered, *he* (the Lord last mentioned) shall smite him *with a rod*, or with his rod.

Isaiah 30:32

The grounded staff, Heb. *the founded rod*; the judgment of God, which is frequently called a rod in Scripture, and may be here called a *founded rod*, or the *rod of foundation*, either because it was firmly established, and certainly to come, by God's immutable purpose and appointment; or because the rod should not slightly touch him, and pass over him, but strike deep, and be fixed, and as it were grounded or founded in his flesh, and made to rest upon him, as it follows in the next clause.

Shall lay, Heb. *shall cause to rest*; which is contrary to the manner of God's dealing with his people, upon whom he will not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest, Psa_125:3.

Upon him; upon the Assyrian, mentioned in the foregoing verse.

It shall be with tabrets and harps: the sense is either,

1. Their destruction shall be celebrated by God's people with joy, and music, and songs of praise. Or,

2. The victory shall be got, not by warlike instruments and achievements, but as it were by tabrets and harps; wherein he may possibly allude to the victory which Jehoshaphat got against Moab and Ammon, not by fighting; but only by singing and praising God with the voice, and with musical instruments, 2Ch_20:19,**21,27,28**; God being pleased to fight for them by his own immediate power; which also was the case here, which made the people of God sing a triumph before the fight, Isa_37:22. *In battles of shaking* ; or, *with battles or fightings of shaking* , to wit, of shaking of the hand, of which kind of shaking this Hebrew word is constantly used, such as are performed by the mere shaking of the hand; namely, by God's shaking his hand against them, as he threatens to do against others, Isa_11:15 **19:16**, in which last place this very word is used, and in the former the verb from whence it comes. For that this shaking is an act of God seems more than probable, and from the following words, *will he* , i.e. God, as all understand it, fight against it. And so the sense of the place may be this, God will fight against them, and destroy them by his own hands. *Will he* , to wit, the Lord, who declareth himself to be the enemy of the Assyrian, both in the foregoing and following verses, *fight with it* ; with the army of the Assyrians: or, according to the other Hebrew reading, *with them* ; with the, Assyrians.

Isaiah 30:33

Tophet was a place near Jerusalem, in which the idolatrous Israelites used cruelly to offer up their children to Moloch, 2Ch_28:3 **33:6**; see also Jer_7:31 **19:6**; and it may be put synecdochically for any place of torment or misery; and particularly it is put for hell, as well in the writings of the ancient Jewish doctors as in Holy Scripture, as Mat_18:8,**9 23:15** Mar_9:43,**44**. And so this place may be understood either,

1. Literally, of Tophet in the valley of Hinnom, in which the Assyrian host was either slain by the angel, as Josephus reports, or buried or burnt. For although the Assyrians did not make any great attempt upon Jerusalem, Isa_37:36, yet Rabshakeh came very near it with a great army, Isa_36:2. Or,

2. Figuratively, of hell. *Is ordained* ; or, *was ordered or prepared* . And it might be said, in some sort, to be prepared by Hezekiah for this end, by the care which he took to purge this and other places abused to idolatry, which made them more fit to receive so great a favour mid deliverance from God. But for hell, that doubtless was ordained or prepared by God for the punishment of impenitent sinners.

Of old, Heb. *from yesterday* ; which phrase is sometimes used of a time but lately past, as 2Sa_15:20 Job_8:9, and sometimes of any time past, without limitation.

For the king; for the king of Assyria; either,

1. For the kings, the singular number being put for the plural, whereby he may understand the princes or chief commanders of the host, by comparing Isa_10:8, *Are not my princes altogether kings ?* Or,

2. For Rabshakeh, the general of this army, who, according to the style of Scripture, might very well be called king. Or,

3. Sennacherib, for whom this place might be said to be ordained or prepared, partly because it was ordained for the destruction of his host; nothing being more ordinary, both in sacred and profane writers, than to entitle the king or general of the army to all the victories procured, or losses or slaughter sustained, by his army; and partly because the sudden destruction of the Assyrian army, supposed to be in this place, was the occasion of the conspiracy of that king's sons, and so of the king's death. But if this Tophet design hell, this is emphatically denounced against him, to intimate, that although he escaped that sudden plague which cut off his army, yet there was a more terrible judgment appointed for him, which he should be utterly unable to escape. *He* ; the Lord, who is oft designed by this pronoun, as in the next foregoing verse, and elsewhere; and who is expressed in the following words. Or it is an indefinite expression, for, it is made deep and large. *Hath made it deep and large* , capable of receiving vast numbers; whereby he intimates that he designed to make a great and general destruction of the Assyrians; and withal, that it was a vain and foolish confidence which the Assyrians had in their numerous host, seeing the greatest numbers of God's enemies are

wholly unable, either to oppose him, or to save themselves from his wrath and power. *The pile thereof is fire and much wood;* whereby he further implies that he intended to make a great slaughter among them. And he alludes in this phrase to the ancient custom, either of burning sacrifices, and particularly of burning children to Moloch, or of burning the dead bodies of men.

The breath of the Lord, the immediate hand of God, or his word of anger: **See Poole "Isa_30:28"**.

Like a stream of brimstone; he seems to allude to that shower of fire and brimstone, Gen_19:24.

Doth kindle it; the pile of fire and wood now mentioned.

Isaiah 31:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 31

The folly and punishment of trust in Egypt, Isa_31:1-3. God will fight for Jerusalem, Isa_31:4,5, if they will turn unto him, Isa_31:6,7. The fall of Assyria, Isa_31:8,9.

That go down to Egypt for help; as the Jews did, contrary to God's command, Deu_17:16.

And stay on horses; for Egypt had many and choice horses.

They look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord; their confidence in the creature was accompanied with and did produce a distrust of God, and a neglect of seeking to him by prayer for his help.

Isaiah 31:2

He also is wise: you think you are wise, and act wisely in engaging the Egyptians, who are a wise and warlike people, to help. you; but God is not inferior to them in wisdom nor in strength, but much their superior; and therefore you have done foolishly and wickedly in prefer. ring them before him.

Will bring evil; will execute his judgments upon you, notwithstanding all that you or your allies the Egyptians can do to hinder it.

Will not call back his words, his threatenings denounced against you, but will infallibly execute them.

Will arise; though at present he sit still, yet he will bestir himself and fight.

Against the house of evil-doers; against this wicked and rebellious people of the Jews.

The help; the helpers, as it is explained in the next verse; the abstract being put for the concrete.

Isaiah 31:3

Are men, and not God; and therefore utterly unable to defend you, either without or against my will.

Their horses flesh; weak and frail, as that word signifies, Psa_78:39 Heb_5:7, and elsewhere.

Not spirit; not like spiritual substances, such as the angels, who are immortal, and invisible by men; whereof we have instances, Exo_12:29, **30 Isa 37:36.**

Isaiah 31:4

For; or, *but* ; or, *nevertheless* , as this particle is elsewhere used, as hath been proved before. Although you have done evil in sending to Egypt for help, and they shall not be able to help you; yet the Lord himself will, of his own grace, and for the glory of his own name, give you that help and deliverance which you do not deserve, and have no reason to expect from him. And therefore desist from those evil courtels and courses, as those which are both unnecessary and pernicious.

Roaring on his prey; when he is ready to seize upon it, and devour it.

He will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself: it hath been observed of lions, that when they are pursued, they do not run away with all speed, as other creatures do, but march away slowly, and make an honourable retreat. *For* : although this Hebrew particle might be rendered *against* , and so this place might be understood of God's fighting against the Jews and Egyptians, of which he speaks Isa_31:3; yet it is better rendered for, as it is taken in many other places, as is manifest from the following similitude and verse.

Isaiah 31:5

As birds flying; which come from above, and so cannot be kept off; which fly swiftly, and engage themselves Valiantly and resolutely, when they perceive that their young ones are in eminent danger. He seems to allude, and to oppose this, to those boasting expressions of the Assyrian, Isa_10:14: compare Deu_32:11,12 Mt 23:37.

Passing over; the destroying angel shall pass over Jerusalem untouched, and shall fall upon the Assyrians. He seems to allude to the history of God's passing over and sparing the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the Egyptians, in which this word is constantly used, Exo_12:12,23,27.

Isaiah 31:6

Turn ye unto him; let the consideration of this gracious promise engage you to repent of your carnal policies, in seeking and trusting to Egypt for help, and sincerely to return to God.

The children of Israel; either,

1. The Israelites, strictly so called, who are now utterly destroyed for their apostacy; and therefore take heed that you do not follow their example. Or,

2. You Jews, who are the children of Israel; which title he here gives them, partly to admonish them of their great and many obligations to God, and partly to aggravate the sin of their apostacy.

Have deeply revolted, in neglecting and forsaking him, and seeking to Egypt for help; which he calls a *deep revolt* , partly because it was a heinous sin, being contrary to God's express command, and highly dishonourable to God; and partly because it was carried on with deep dissimulation, and with a public profession of cleaving to God, and with a design of *seeking deep to hide this their counsel from the Lord* , wherewith he charged this people, Isa_29:15.

Isaiah 31:7

For when the Assyrian shall invade your land, you shall find the vanity of those idols to which you have trusted; and therefore shall cast them away with indignation, and be forced to seek to me for

help. So this is added as an argument to persuade them to practise his counsel of turning to God. Which your own hands have made unto you for a sin; which you have made as instruments of your sin of idolatry. Or, which your sinful hands (by a common Hebraism, called hands of sin) have made for you. Or, the sin (as an idol is called, Deu_9:21) which your hands have made for you. So there is only a transposition of one word, which is very usual in the Hebrew text.

Isaiah 31:8

Then; when you have cast away your idols, and seriously sought to me for help; both which things were performed by Hezekiah.

With the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man; by the sword, not of any man, either mean or mighty, but of an angel.

From the sword; from, or for fear of, that plague which so strangely and suddenly destroyed his army.

His young men, Heb. *his choice young men* ; his guards and valiant commanders and soldiers.

Shall be discomfited, Heb. *shall melt away* , a great part of them being destroyed by the angel; and the hearts of the rest melting for fear.

Isaiah 31:9

He shall pass over to his strong hold; Sennacherib shall flee away, with all speed, from Jerusalem, to his strong city of Nineveh, Isa_37:37. Or, as it is in the margin, and as the words lie in the Hebrew text, *his rock* (i.e. his strength, the greatest champions of his army, to whom he trusted) *shall pass away* (shall flee with all speed from Jerusalem)

for fear, lest the sword of the destroying angel should overtake them.

Of the ensign; either,

1. Of any ensign. This dreadful judgment shall strike them with such a terror, that they shall not dare to look any enemy in the face. Or,

2. Of the Lord's ensign, which he hath lifted up against them.

Whose fire is in Zion: so the sense is either,

1. Whose fire is continually burning upon the altar in Zion; which signifies his presence and residence there. Or rather,

2. Who is and will appear to be in Zion, like a fire, to defend his people, and to consume their enemies; for which end God promiseth that he would be unto *Jerusalem a wall of fire round about* , *Zec_2:5*, &c.; and that he would *make the governor of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf* ; and that *they should devour all the people round about* . Possibly these and the following words may be thus rendered, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words, who will be *a fire* (to wit, a consuming fire) *to him* (to the king of Assyria, of whom he is here speaking) *in Zion* , (from whence he will send forth that fire which shall consume his army: or, for *Zion* ; for *Zion 's sake* ; for the prefix here rendered *in* frequently signifies *for* , as hath been proved,) *and a furnace to him in or for Jerusalem* . But this I only propose, leaving it to the judgment of the intelligent reader. *His furnace in Jerusalem* ; the same thing repeated in other words.

Isaiah 32:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 32

Christ's kingdom, and its blessings, *Isa_32:1-8*. Careless women shall be troubled, *Isa_32:9-11*, and the land laid waste, *Isa_32:12-14*, until a restoration, *Isa_32:15-20*.

This seems to me to be a distinct prophecy from the former, and delivered at another time, and probably before that which is related in the former chapters. For this is certain, and confessed by all, that the prophecies are not always set down in that order in which the prophets delivered them. The foregoing prophecy seems to have been delivered, not in the time of Ahaz, for he sent to the Assyrian, and not to the Egyptian, for help; but in the days of Hezekiah, *who rebelled against the king of Assyria* , as is said, *2Ki_18:7*, and was too prone to trust upon the staff of Egypt, as the Assyrian expressly chargeth him there, to which course it is likely he was drawn or tempted by some of his wicked princes and counsellors, whom the prophet therefore severely censures and condemns in the two foregoing chapters. And this seems to have

been delivered in the time of Ahaz, and to speak of Hezekiah, and of his righteous and happy government. But withal, as Hezekiah and his reign was an eminent type of Christ, and of his kingdom; so this prophecy looks through Hezekiah unto Christ, as many other scriptures in their literal sense do unquestionably concern David, which yet have a mystical sense, and are also meant of Christ, in whom those things were more fully and eminently accomplished.

A king; Hezekiah, a type of Christ, and Christ typified by him.

Shall reign; therefore Hezekiah was not king when this prophecy was delivered. And whereas some say that he speaks of the good government of Hezekiah after the destruction of Sennacherib, it is easy to observe that his government was as good before that time as afterward; and that in the very beginning of his reign he ruled with righteousness and the fear of God, as the history plainly declareth.

Princes; the ministers of state, and justice, and war under the king. For a wise and good king will take care to have like ministers.

Isaiah 32:2

A man ; either,

1. The man or king spoken of. Or,
2. Each or every one, to wit, of his princes. That king shall not patch up an old garment with new cloth, nor mingle good and bad together; but shall take care to purge out all the corrupt magistrates, and, as far as he can, to settle good ones in all places. *A man* is oft put for *every* or *any man* , as Isa_2:20 **3:5,6**, and elsewhere.

Shall be as an hiding place unto the people under their government, especially to such as are oppressed or injured by those Who are more potent than they.

From the wind; from the rage and violence of evil men.

As rivers of water in a dry place; no less refreshing and acceptable shall this king and his princes be to their subjects.

In a weary land; in a dry and scorched country, which is called weary here, as also Psa_63:1, metonymically, because it makes travellers weary; *as death* is called pale in other authors, because it makes men's faces pale.

Isaiah 32:3

This is meant either,

1. Of the princes or magistrates, who are instead of eyes and ears, both to the king and to the people, who, by their office, are to see and observe all things, and to hear all causes. These, saith he, shall not shut their eyes, nor suffer them to be blinded with gifts, to favour a rich man in an unjust cause; they shall not shut their ears against the complaints of the poor oppressed ones, as wicked princes commonly do. Or,

2. Of the people; they shall not shut their eyes and ears against the good counsels and examples of their religious king and rulers, as they have done formerly: both princes and people shall be reformed. This was done in some poor measure in Hezekiah's time; but far more fully and eminently in the days of the Messiah, who, by his grace, changeth men's hearts, and cureth them of that wilful and obstinate blindness whereof they had been guilty before; which clearly showeth that this prophecy looks through Hezekiah unto Christ. And the like may be said of the following verse.

Isaiah 32:4

The rash; who were hasty and heady in judging of things; which is an argument of ignorance and folly.

Shall understand knowledge; shall become more knowing and considerate in their judgments and actions.

The stammerers; that used to speak of the things of God darkly, and doubtfully, and unwillingly. As men's understandings shall then be enlightened, so their speech shall be reformed; which though it was in part fulfilled in Hezekiah; this reformation being effected in some measure by his counsel and example, and by the powerful preaching of the Levites, whom he excited and encouraged *to teach the good knowledge of the Lord*, as is said, 2Ch_30:22; yet was truly and fully accomplished only by Christ,

who wrought this wonderful change in an innumerable company both of Jews and Gentiles.

Isaiah 32:5

The vile person; base and worthless men. Heb. *the fool* ; which in Scripture use commonly signifies a wicked man.

Shall be no more called liberal, or *noble* , or *a prince* , or *lord* , as this word is used, Psa_118:9 **146:3**, and elsewhere. The sense of the place is, either,

1. Unworthy men shall not be advanced to places of honour and power, as the LXX. and some others understand it; for to be called is oft put in Scripture for to be, as hath been frequently observed. Or,

2. Vicious and worthless persons shall no longer be reputed honourable and virtuous because of their high and honourable places, as commonly they are under wicked princes by means of flatterers; but wickedness shall be discovered and punished wheresoever it is, and virtue shall be manifested and rewarded, and all things shall be managed with sincerity and simplicity; which was eminently fulfilled under the gospel; by the preaching whereof, and by Christ's Spirit, hypocrites are detected, and men are enabled to discern between good and evil, both persons and things. *The churl* ; the sordid and covetous man; which is a great vice in any man, but especially in magistrates; who therefore must be men hating covetousness, Exo_18:21. But under this one vice all vices are understood by a synecdoche, very frequent in Scripture and in other authors; as under the apposite virtue *of bountifulness* all virtues are comprehended.

Isaiah 32:6

For the vile person will speak villany: so this is a reason of the assertion, Isa_32:5; either thus, Such shall not be advanced to places of trust and dignity; for if they were, they would abuse them by unjust sentences and practices. Or thus, Men shall no longer be miscalled; for every one will discover what he is by his Words and actions; which also shall be narrowly observed. But these and the following words are and may be otherwise rendered: But (as this particle oft signifies) he shall be called or said to be (which words are easily understood out of the former verse, as is

very frequent in Scripture) *a fool* , who (which relative particle is understood in very many places) *shall speak villany, and whose heart shall work iniquity* , &c.

His heart will work iniquity; he will, from time to time, be devising wickedness, that he may execute it when he hath opportunity.

To practise hypocrisy: to, do bad things, but with a pretence of religion and justice, which he shall use to keep himself from the disfavour of his prince, and from the lash of the law. Or, *to practise profaneness or wickedness* , as this word, at least sometimes, seems to signify.

To utter error against the Lord; to pass unjust sentences, which is directly contrary to the will and command of God.

To make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail; whereby they take away the bread and drink of the poor, and give it to their rich oppressors.

Isaiah 32:7

The instruments also of the churl are evil, Heb. *The vessels* , &c., which is a word of a very general signification among the Hebrews, and signifies any person or thing which is employed in a man's use and service. I say person, for the name of *vessel* is given to such persons as are instrumental to another, as to the Babylonians, who were God's instruments in executing his vengeance, Isa_13:5 to God's ministers, Act_9:15 2Co_4:5; and to useful Christians, 2Ti_2:20; and to wives, 1Pe_3:7. And so it may be here noted, that such covetous or wicked princes most willingly choose and employ wicked men in their affairs, because such men will, without any regard to conscience or justice, serve all their exorbitant desires or lusts. But withal, it seems to include his counsels, and practices, and arts, which are here declared to be generally evil. But this verse is and may be otherwise rendered, as the former was; *And* (repeat, *he shall be called*) *a churl* (as indeed he is one) whose *instruments are evil, and who deviseth* , &c.; which agrees with the order of the words in the Hebrew text, and with the order of the foregoing verses: for as he speaks of *the vile person* , and of the *churl* , Isa_32:6; so he gives a description of the vile person, Isa_32:6, and then of *the churl* , in this verse.

He deviseth wicked devices; he useth all his wit and art to do injury to others, without any inconvenience to himself.

With lying words; with false and unrighteous decrees.

When the needy speaketh right; when their cause is just and good.

Isaiah 32:8

He who is truly liberal and virtuous will show it by designing and practising liberal or virtuous actions; and he who doth so will not destroy himself thereby, as wicked men falsely suppose, but establish and advance himself. But this verse also, as Well as the former, is and may be otherwise rendered; *And* (repeat, *he shall be called* , as before)

liberal, who deviseth liberal things, and persisteth or continueth in liberal things. If it be thought strange that so many verses should be spent in affirming that which in effect was said Isa_32:5, it must be considered that these verses do not only contain an affirmation, that they should be called *vile persons* , or *churls* , or *liberal* that were so; but also a description of their qualities and practices, which was useful for their conviction, and for the instruction of others.

Isaiah 32:9

Rise up; bestir and prepare yourselves to hear, as it follows, and shake off sloth and carelessness.

That are at ease; that indulge yourselves in idleness and luxury.

Careless, Heb. *confident or secure* , who are insensible of your sin and danger.

Daughters; the same before called *women* ; whom he here reprovethe and threateneth for their sins, as he did the men before for seeking to Egypt for help, and divers other sins, whereof the men were most guilty.

Isaiah 32:10

Many days and years, Heb. *Days above a year* , i.e. a year and some days; which notes either,

1. The time from this prophecy to the beginning of this judgment; or rather,

2. The time of the continuance of it, that it should last for above one year; as indeed this did, and no longer; for Hezekiah reigned in all but twenty-nine years, 2Ki_18:2, and Sennacherib came in his fourteenth year, and after his defeat and departure God promised and added to him fifteen years more, 2Ki_20:6.

The vintage shall fail, during the time of the Assyrian invasion. And this commination is here added to qualify the foregoing promise, and to warn them, that although God would give them so good a king, and there should be some reformation of their former abuses under the government of Ahaz; yet as there were many sins among them not yet repented of, so they should be severely chastised for them.

The gathering, to wit, of the other fruits of the earth; as that feast which was observed after the gathering of all the fruits was called the feast of ingathering, Exo_23:16.

Isaiah 32:11

Strip you, and make you bare; put off your ornaments, as God commanded upon a like occasion, Exo_33:5, that you may put on sackcloth instead of them, as mourners and penitents used to do.

Isaiah 32:12

They shall lament for the teats; either,

1. Properly, because through famine your teats are destitute of milk for the nourishment of your poor children. Or rather,
2. Metaphorically, as the following words explain it,

for the pleasant and fruitful fields, which like teats yielded you plentiful and excellent nourishment, for which the land was said to *flow with milk*, Eze_20:6. And the earth being compared to the womb that bare us, Job_1:21, it is not strange if its fruitful fields be compared to the breasts which nourish us.

Isaiah 32:13

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers. If any of you think there is no great cause for such trembling and lamentation, which shall last but for a year and some days, know that this calamity by the Assyrians is but an earnest of further and sorer judgments; for the time is coming when this land shall be

laid desolate, and instead of vines and other fruits, it shall yield nothing but briars and thorns; of which see on Isa_7:23,24.

Upon all the houses of joy; upon that ground where now your houses stand, in which you delight, and take your fill of mirth and pleasure.

Isaiah 32:14

The palaces, Heb. *the palace* ; the king's house, and other magnificent buildings in the city.

Shall be left; or rather, *shall be forsaken* , to wit, of God, and given up into their enemies' hands. And the verb in the foregoing clause may be rendered, *shall be left* .

A joy of wild asses; desolate places, in which wild asses delight to be, Job_39:5,6 Jer 2:24.

Isaiah 32:15

Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high: and this calamity and desolation shall, in a manner, continue until the time come, in which God will *pour* , or, as the Hebrew word properly signifies, reveal, i.e. evidently and plentifully pour out, his Spirit from heaven upon his people; which was done in some sort upon the return of the people from Babylon, when God, by his Spirit, stirred up the spirit, both of Cyrus to give them liberty of returning to Jerusalem, and of the people to return and build the city and temple; but was far more clearly and fully accomplished in the days of the Messiah. And indeed the promises contained in these and the following words and verses were not fulfilled upon their coming out of Babylon, after which time they had but *a little reviving in their bond* . age, as is said, Ezr_9:8, and continued in servitude and distress under the Persian emperors, Neh_9:36,37, and afterward suffered many and grievous calamities from the kings of Syria and Egypt, and from the Romans; which suits very ill with that glorious promise here following, Isa_32:18. And therefore these promises concern the times of the gospel, when God's Spirit was in a most evident and glorious manner poured forth upon the apostles, and other believing Jews, to the astonishment of their very adversaries; and when the following promises were in a good measure fulfilled, and are more fully to be accomplished in God's due time.

The wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest; which is allegorically understood. The meaning may be this; God's people, who were desolate and destroyed, shall be revived and flourish, and their flourishing enemies shall be brought to desolation and destruction. It may also signify the conversion of the barren and despised Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, in the time of the Messiah.

Isaiah 32:16

Judgment; just judgment, as the next clause explains it. Justice shall be executed in all the parts of the land, both in the barren and fruitful places, and shall be practised by all my people; which agrees with that promise, Isa_60:21, *Thy people shall be all righteous* , &c.

Isaiah 32:17

The work of righteousness shall be peace; the effect of this prevailing practice of righteousness shall be prosperity and outward felicity.

Quietness; tranquillity, both of mind and outward estate.

Assurance; or, *confidence* . The observation of God's precepts will beget in them a confidence and assurance of God's mercy, and the fulfilling of his promises.

Isaiah 32:18

My people; either the Gentiles, who then shall be my people; or the Jews, to whom this promise shall be made good upon their conversion to Christ in the latter times of the gospel.

Isaiah 32:19

When it shall hail, coming down on the forest, Heb. *And it shall hail* , &c. As my blessings shall be poured down upon my people, who from a wilderness are turned into a fruitful field, as it is said, Isa_32:15; so my wrath and judgments (which are signified by hail, Isa_28:2,17, and elsewhere) shall fall upon them, who were a fruitful field, but are turned into a forest, as was said, Isa_32:15, i.e. upon the unbelieving and rebellious Jews, who seem there to be designed under that notion.

The city; either,

1. Babylon, the great enemy and oppressor of God's people. Or,

2. Jerusalem, which, though now it was the seat of God's worship and people, yet he foresaw by the Spirit of prophecy that it would be the great enemy of the Messiah, and of God's people.

Shall be low in a low place, Heb. *shall be humbled with humiliation* ; which by an ordinary Hebraism signifies, *shall be greatly humbled, or brought very low* .

Isaiah 32:20

Blessed are ye that sow: as the barren forest shall be destroyed with hail, Isa_32:19, so the fruitful field shall be improved, and bring forth much fruit; which is signified by a declaration of the blessedness of them that sow in it.

Beside all waters; in all moist and fat grounds, which are like to yield good fruit. But this passage, as well as others in the foregoing verses, is to be understood mystically, and seems to respect the times of the gospel. The prophet reflecting upon his own unsuccessful labours, of which he complains, Isa_49:4, and elsewhere, and foreseeing by, the Spirit the great and happy success of his successors, the ministers of the gospel, tacitly bewails his own unhappiness, who sowed his seed upon dry and barren ground, by congratulating the happiness of the apostles, who sowed their seed more generally, upon all fit grounds, without any distinction between Jews and Gentiles; and who found the ground, to wit, the hearts of the people, more moistened and softened, and better prepared to receive the good seed of God's word.

The ox and the ass; which creatures they employed in ploughing and sowing the ground, Deu_22:10 Psa_144:14 Isa_30:24.

Isaiah 33:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 33

The destruction of the enemies of the church; who are derided, Isa_33:1-13; which terrifieth the sinners in Zion, Isa_33:14. The safety and privileges of the godly, Isa_33:15-24.

Woe to thee that spoilest! to Sennacherib, who wasted the land of Judah.

Thou wast not spoiled; thou didst not meet with any considerable opposition, but wast victorious over all thine enemies; of which the Assyrian boasteth, Isa_10:8,9 **36:18,19**.

Dealest treacherously; as Sennacherib did with Hezekiah, 2Ki_18:14,17.

They dealt not treacherously with thee; none of thine enemies could prevail against thee, either by force, of which he speaketh in the former clause, or by treachery, as here. Or, *when they dealt not*, &c.; when Hezekiah did not deal treacherously with thee. If it be said that Hezekiah dealt treacherously with him, in breaking his faith, and rebel. ling against him, it may be answered, that Hezekiah neither promised nor owed him any service or subjection. What was done in that kind was done by Ahaz only; and he only begged his assistance for a particular work, and paid him well for it, 2Ki_16:7,8, and the king of Assyria did not keep his conditions with him; *for he distressed him, but strengthened him not*, 2Ch_28:20.

When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; when thou hast performed the work of chastening my people, for which I sent thee, thou also shalt be spoiled by thine enemies.

Isaiah 33:2

O Lord, be gracious unto us; the prophet contemplating the judgment which was now coming upon God's people, directeth his prayer to God for them.

Their arm; our arm or strength. The change of persons is most frequent in prophetic writings.

Every morning; when we offer the morning sacrifice, and call upon thee; which yet is not meant exclusively, as if he did not desire God's help at other times; but comprehensively, the morning being put synecdochically for the whole day. The sense is, Help us speedily and continually.

Isaiah 33:3

At the noise of the tumult, which the angel shall make in destroying the army.

The people; those of the army who escaped that stroke.

The nations; the people of divers nations, which made up his army.

Isaiah 33:4

Your spoil, that treasure which you have raked together by spoiling divers people,

shall be gathered by the Jews at Jerusalem, when you shall be forced to flee away with all possible speed, leaving your spoils behind you.

Like the gathering of the caterpillar; either,

1. Passively, with as much ease, and in as great numbers, as caterpillars are gathered and destroyed. Or rather,
2. Actively, as appears from the next clause; as caterpillars or locusts (for the word signifies either) gather and devour all the fruits of the earth; which was a common plague in those countries.

As the running to and fro of locusts; as locusts, especially when they are sent and armed by commission from God, come with great force, and run hither and thither, devouring all the fruits of the earth, wheresoever they find them.

Isaiah 33:5

Is exalted; will get great glory by the marvellous deduction of so proud and potent an army, and by the defence of his people.

For he dwelleth on high; for he is and will appear to be superior to his enemies, both in place and power. He dwelleth in the heaven, whence he can easily and irresistibly pour down judgments upon his enemies. Although these words may be, and by some are, joined with those that follow, thus, *for he that dwelleth on high hath filled* , &c. *He hath filled Zion* , he will fill Jerusalem, with judgment and righteousness; either,

1. With a glorious instance of his just judgment against the Assyrians. Or,
2. With the execution of justice by good Hezekiah, as before it was filled with impiety and injustice under Ahaz. The city shall not only be delivered from that wicked enemy, but shall also be established and blessed with true religion and righteousness; which was a great addition to that mercy.

Isaiah 33:6

Wisdom and knowledge, to govern thyself and thy people well, shall be the stability of thy times; of thy reign; *times* being oft put for things done in those times, as 1Ch_12:32 Psa_31:15 **37:18**, &c. He turneth his speech to Hezekiah. The sense is, Thy throne shall be established upon the sure foundations of wisdom and justice.

Strength of salvation; thy saving strength, or thy strong or mighty salvation.

The fear of the Lord is his treasure: and although thou shalt have great treasures of gold and silver, &c., yet thy chief treasure and delight is, and shall be, in promoting the fear and worship of God; which shall be a great honour and safeguard to thyself and people. He saith,

his treasure, for thy treasure, by a sudden change of the person, usual in these books.

Isaiah 33:7

Behold: that the mercy here promised might be duly magnified, he makes a lively representation of their great danger and distress, in which it found them.

Their valiant ones; or, *their heralds* or *messengers*, as the Hebrew doctors expound the word: either,

1. Those whom the king of Assyria sent to Jerusalem, 2Ki_18:17. Or rather,

2. Those whom Hezekiah sent to treat with the Assyrian commissioners, 2Ki_18:18, as the next clause showeth.

Shall cry without, through grief and fear.

The ambassadors of peace, whom he shall send to beg peace of the Assyrian, shall weep bitterly, because they cannot obtain their desires.

Isaiah 33:8

The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth, because the Assyrian soldiers possessed and filled the land.

He hath broken the covenant; Sennacherib broke his faith, given to Hezekiah, of departing for a sum of money, 2Ki_18:14,**17**.

He hath despised the cities; the defenced cities of Judah, which he contemned and easily took, 2Ki_18:13.

He regardeth no man; either to spare them, or to fear them, or to keep faith with them. He neither feareth God, nor reverenceth man.

Isaiah 33:9

The earth mourneth, being desolate and neglected.

Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down *by the Assyrians* . Or, as the word signifies, and is here rendered by others, *withereth or languisheth* , because its trees are not now used by the Jews for their buildings, as they have been; and because they are spoiled and destroyed by the Assyrians.

Sharon; a pleasant and fruitful place, as appears from 1Ch_27:29 Son_2:1 Isa_35:2.

Bashan and Carmel; two places eminent for fertility, and especially for good pastures, Deu_32:14 1Sa_25:2, which are here synecdochically put for all such places.

Shake off their fruits; are spoiled of their fruits. Or, as it is rendered by some others, *yell or roar* , as this word is rendered Jer_51:38.

Isaiah 33:10

In this extremity, I will appear on the behalf of my people and land.

Isaiah 33:11

Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble, instead of solid corn. Your great hopes and designs, O ye Assyrians! shall be utterly disappointed.

Your breath, as fire, shall devour you; your rage against my people shall bring ruin upon yourselves.

Isaiah 33:12

Shall be as the burnings of lime; shall be burnt as easily and effectually as chalk is burned to make lime.

Isaiah 33:13

My power and justice in destroying the Assyrians shall be so evident, that people, both far and near, shall be forced to acknowledge it.

Isaiah 33:14

The sinners in Zion are afraid: this is spoken, not of the Assyrians, as some would have it, but of the Jews, as appears both from the words themselves, and from the following verses. The prophet having foretold the deliverance of God's people, and the destruction of their enemies, Isa_33:10-12, for the greater illustration of that wonderful mercy, here returns to the description, and gives a lively representation of the dismal and frightful condition in which the Jews, especially such of them as were ungodly and unbelieving, were before this deliverance came. Although the godly Jews were, in some measure, supported by the sense of God's favour, and by God's promises delivered to them by Isaiah; yet the generality of the people were filled with horrors, and expectation of utter destruction. *Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?* how shall we be able to abide the presence, and endure or avoid the wrath, of that God, who is a consuming fire; who is now about to destroy us utterly by the Assyrians, and will afterwards burn us with unquenchable fire? For seeing it is sufficiently evident, from both Old and New, Testament, as hath been formerly observed and proved, that the Jews, except the Sadducees, did generally believe the rewards and punishments of the future live and these temporal judgments, as they did frequently cut men off from this life, so they transmitted them into that future and endless life; it is not strange if their guilty consciences made them dread both the present judgment here, and the terrible consequences of it hereafter. Heb. *who shall dwell for us , &c.*, i.e. in our stead? who will interpose himself between God's anger and us? How shall we escape these miseries? That this is the sense of this question may be gathered from the answer given to it in the following verse; in which he directs them to the right course of removing God's wrath, and regaining his favour.

Isaiah 33:15

He that walketh righteously; who is just in all his dealings with men, of which the following clauses explain it: which is not spoken exclusively, as if piety towards God were not as necessary as righteousness towards men; but comprehensively, this being one evidence and a constant companion of piety.

Speaketh uprightly; who speaks truly and sincerely, what he really intends.

That despiseth; that refuseth it, not for politic reasons, as men sometimes may do, but from a contempt and abhorrency of injustice.

From holding; or, *from taking or receiving* ; as this verb signifies, Pro_4:4 **5:5 28:17**. That will not receive, much less retain, bribes.

That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood; who will not hearken or assent to any counsels or courses tending to shed innocent blood.

And shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; that abhorreth the very sight of ill committed by others, and guardeth his eyes from beholding occasions of sin; of which see on Job_31:1.

Isaiah 33:16

He shall dwell on high; out of the reach of danger.

Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure; God will furnish him with all necessities.

Isaiah 33:17

Shall see the king; first Hezekiah, and then Christ, as before.

In his beauty; triumphing over all enemies, and ruling his own people with righteousness; in which two things the beauty and glory of a king and kingdom doth chiefly consist.

They shall behold the land that is very far off; thou shalt not be shut up in Jerusalem, and confined to thine own narrow borders, as thou hast been; but thou shalt have free liberty to go abroad with honour and safety, where thou pleasest, even into the remotest countries, because of the great renown of thy king, and the enlargement of his dominions.

Isaiah 33:18

Thine heart shall meditate terror: this is either,

1. A premonition concerning a future judgment, as if he said, Before these glorious promises shall be accomplished, thou shalt be brought into great straits and troubles. Or rather,
2. A thankful acknowledgment of deliverance from a former danger; as if he had said, When thou art delivered, thou shalt, with pleasure and thankfulness, recall to mind thy former terrors and miseries.

Where is the scribe, & c.? these words are either,

1. Words of gratulation, and insultation over the enemy. Thou shalt then say, Where are the great officers of the Assyrian host? They are no where, they are not, they are dealt or slain. Or rather,
2. The words of men dismayed and confounded, such as proceeded from the Jews in the time of their distress, and are here remembered to aggravate the present mercy. For the officers here mentioned seem not to be those of the Assyrian army, who were actually fighting against the Jews and Jerusalem, (for then he would rather have mentioned *the captains of the host* , as the Scripture commonly doth in these cases, than *the scribes and receivers* , &c.,) but rather of the Jews in Jerusalem who, upon the approach of Sennacherib, began to make military preparations for the defence of the city, and to choose such officers as were necessary and usual for that end; such as these were, to wit,

the scribe, whom we call muster-master, who was to make and keep a list of the soldiers, and to call them together, as occasion required.

The receiver; who received and laid out the money for the charges of the war; and he

that counted the towers, who surveyed all the parts of the city, and considered what towers or fortifications were to be made or repaired for the security of the city. And unto these several officers the people resorted, with great distraction and confusion, to acquaint them with all occurrences, or to quicken them to their several works, or to transact matters with them, as occasion required.

Isaiah 33:19

Thou shalt not see a fierce people: as Moses said of the Egyptians, Exo_14:13, so I say of the Assyrians, that fierce and warlike people, whom thou hast seen, with great terror, near the walls of Jerusalem, Thou shalt see them again no more.

A people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; a foreign nation, whose language is abstruse and unknown to thee.

Of a stammering tongue; of which see on Isa_28:11.

Isaiah 33:20

Look upon Zion; contemplate Zion's beauty and safety, and her glorious and peculiar privileges; it is an object worthy of thy deepest meditation.

The city of our solemnities: this he mentions, as the chief part of Zion's glory and happiness, that God was solemnly worshipped, and the solemn assemblies and feasts kept in her. *A quiet habitation*, &c.; which was but very obscurely and imperfectly fulfilled in the literal Zion; but was clearly and fully accomplished in the mystical Zion, the church of God in the times of the gospel, against which, we are assured, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail*, Mat_16:18.

Isaiah 33:21

There, in and about Zion,

the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams: though we have nothing but a small and contemptible brook to defend us; yet God will be as sure and strong a defence to us, as if we were surrounded with such great rivers as Nilus or Euphrates, which were a great security to Egypt and Babylon.

Wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby; but although they shall have from God the security of a great river, yet they shall be freed from the disadvantage of it; which is, that the enemies may come against them in ships; for no galleys nor ships of the enemy's shall be able to come into this river to annoy them.

Isaiah 33:22

The Lord is our Judge; to judge for us, to plead our cause against our enemies, as the ancient judges of Israel did, **Jud 2 16.**

Our Lawgiver; our chief Governor, to whom it. belongs to give laws, and to defend his people.

Isaiah 33:23

Thy tacklings are loosed; he directeth his speech to the Assyrians; and having tacitly designed their army under the notion of a gallant ship, Isa_33:21, he here represents their broken and undone condition by the metaphor of a ship tossed in a tempestuous sea, having her cables broken, and all her tacklings loose, and out of order, so as she could have no benefit of her masts and sails; and therefore is quickly broken or swallowed up by the sea.

They; the Assyrians, of whom he still speaks, as in the first clause he spake to them.

Then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey; they who came to spoil and prey upon my people shall become a prey to them, and shall be forced to flee away so suddenly, that they shall leave so many spoils behind them, that when strong and active men have carried away all that they desired, there shall be enough left for the lame, who come last to the spoil. The general sense of the place is, that God's people shall be victorious over all their enemies.

Isaiah 33:24

The inhabitant, to wit, of Jerusalem, God's people,

shall not say, I am sick; shall have no cause to complain of any sickness or calamity; shall be fully delivered from all their enemies and evil occurrents; shall enjoy perfect tranquillity and prosperity. **The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity;** this may be added, either,

1. As the reason of the foregoing privilege. Their sins, the main causes of all their distresses, shall be pardoned; and therefore their sufferings, the effects of sin, shall cease. Or,

2. As an additional favour. They shall not only receive from me a glorious temporal deliverance; but, which is infinitely better, the pardon of all their sins, and all those spiritual and everlasting blessings which attend upon that mercy.

Isaiah 34:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 34

God's fury and wrath against his church's enemies, Isa_34:1-10. Their land utterly desolate, Isa_34:11-15. The certainty hereof, and duration, Isa_34:16,17.

Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people; let the people of all nations take notice of what I am about to say and do, as that wherein they are generally concerned, and by the consideration whereof they may, if they will, be instructed, and so delivered from the calamity here denounced.

All things that come forth of it, Heb. *all the offsprings of it* ; either,

1. All the trees and fruits, and other productions of it; for it is usual with the prophets, by a figure, to turn their speech to these senseless creatures. Or,

2. All the inhabitants of the world, as the Chaldee and other ancients restrain and understand this general expression; which also is emphatical, and admonisheth the proud and insolent sons of men of their mean and obscure original, that how great and glorious soever they may seem to themselves or others, yet in truth they are but a better sort of mushrooms springing out of the earth; for *dust they are, and unto dust they must return* , as was said, Gen_3:19.

Isaiah 34:2

Upon all nations; not only upon the Assyrians, and those nations which were confederate with them in this expedition, but upon all other enemies of my people whatsoever.

He hath utterly destroyed them; he will infallibly destroy all of them.

Isaiah 34:3

Shall be cast out into the fields, where they shall lie unburied, and be left for a prey to all ravenous birds and beasts; whereby he implies, either the vast numbers which shall be slain, so as they could not have time or place to bury them; or the curse of God upon them, and the people's contempt and abhorrency of them.

The mountains about Jerusalem, where they are supposed to be gathered to fight against Jerusalem, as the Assyrians now were, and as other enemies afterward would be, Zec_12:2 **14:2**.

Shall be melted with their blood; shall be filled with their blood, which shall run down abundantly from the mountains with great force, and dissolve and carry down part of the earth of the mountains with it, as great showers of rain frequently do.

Isaiah 34:4

All the host of heaven; the sun, and moon, and stars. which frequently come under this name in Scripture, as Deu_4:19 **17:3**, and elsewhere.

Shall be dissolved; shall seem to be dissolved. So great shall be the confusion and consternation of mankind, as if all the frame of the creation were broken into pieces. Some understand this of the general judgment; which some passages here following will not permit. But it is a very usual thing for prophetic writers, both in the Old and New Testament, to represent great and general calamities in such words and phrases as properly agree to the day of judgment; as, on the contrary, the glorious deliverances of God's people are set forth in such expressions as properly agree to the resurrection from the dead. See Eze_37:7 Joe_2:31 **3:15** Rev_6:12,13.

The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, Heb. *as a book* ; for books were then written in scrolls, which they usually rolled up together; and when they were so, no man could read any word in it; and no more shall any man be able to see those goodly lights of heaven, for they shall all be obscured and confounded. This phrase is used also Isa_8:1 Rev_6:14.

As the leaf that falleth off from the vine, when it is withered.

As a falling fig; which falleth, either through great maturity, or being thrust out by green figs coming forth, or by any other accident.

Isaiah 34:5

Shall be bathed in the blood of these people; Heb. *is or shall be made drunk. In heaven* ; either,

1. In my church, which is called *heaven* , Dan_8:10 Rev_4:1 **12:1**, in and against which these enemies are said to be gathered together. Or,

2. In the highest heaven, where God dwells; in which this is said to be done, because it was there decreed and appointed to be done.

Upon Idumea; upon the Edomites, who, though they were nearly related to the Israelites, and were circumcised as well as they; yet were their most inveterate and implacable enemies, watching all opportunities, and being ready to join with all those that attempted, to destroy them; whereof we have many intimations and instances in Scripture. But these are not named exclusively, but rather comprehensively, and synecdochically, for all the enemies of God's church, of whom they were a considerable part, and an eminent type.

Upon the people of my curse; to whom my curse belongs; or, whom I have cursed, and devoted to utter destruction, as this Hebrew word properly signifies.

Isaiah 34:6

Is filled with blood; shall drink its fill of blood. The metaphor is here taken from a great glutton or drunkard, who is almost insatiable with meat and drink.

With the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: by, lambs, and goats, and rams, he means people of all ranks and conditions, high and low, rich and poor. A sacrifice; so he calleth this bloody work, because it was done by God's command, and for his honour; and therefore was a service acceptable to him.

Bozrah; a chief city of Edom, Isa_63:1 Jer_49:13, and a type of those cities which should be most opposite and mischievous to God's people.

Isaiah 34:7

The unicorns, Heb. *the reemim* . But what kind of beast this is, whether that beast which is commonly called an unicorn, which seems to be but a fiction in the judgment of the learned, or a rhinoceros, or a wild ox or bull, it is needless to trouble the ordinary reader about it; and the learned may consult my Latin

Synopsis upon Num_23:22 about it. It is confessed that it was a beast of great strength and fierceness; and it is certain that it is metaphorically used in this place, to signify their princes and potentates.

Shall come down; shall be humbled and cast down. The LXX. and Syriac render it,

they shall fall down, as such beasts do when they have received a deadly blow. *With them* ; with the lambs, and goats, and rams, last mentioned, Isa_34:6.

With fatness; with the fat of the slain sacrifices, which shall be mingled with it.

Isaiah 34:8

This is the time which God hath long since appointed and fixed, to avenge the cause of his oppressed and persecuted people against all their enemies.

Isaiah 34:9

The streams, which seem most secure from this danger, and much more the land. Idumea shall be dealt with as Sodom and Gomorrah were, even utterly destroyed, as it were, by fire, or burning pitch and brimstone thrown down upon it from heaven.

Isaiah 34:10

It shall be irrecoverably ruined, and shall remain as a spectacle of God's vengeance to all succeeding ages.

Isaiah 34:11

The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it, the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; the inhabitants shall be wholly cut off, and it shall be entirely possessed by those creatures which delight in deserts and waste places. See the same or like expressions in the like case, Isa_13:21, **22 14:23.**

He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness; he shall use the line, or the stone or plummet joined to it, not to build them, but to mark them out to desolation and destruction, as workmen commonly use them to mark what they are to pull down.

Isaiah 34:12

They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there; they shall endeavour to heal their breaches, but in vain; the remnant of the people shall seek for any fit person, and offer the kingdom to him; but they shall not find any such who shall be willing to undertake the government.

Shall be nothing; either shall be lost and cut off, or shall have no courage or strength left in them.

Isaiah 34:13

This is another mark and evidence of extreme desolation, as it is also, Hos_9:6.

Isaiah 34:14

The satyr shall cry to his fellow: See Poole "Isa_13:21". See Poole "Isa_13:22".

The screech owl also shall rest there, because there shall be no men left to disturb or affright them, Isa_17:2.

Isaiah 34:15

The great owl; whether this or what other creature is meant by this Hebrew word, the learned reader may find largely discoursed in my Latin Synopsis upon this place; for others, it may suffice to know, what all agree in, that, whether it be a bird or a serpent, it is a creature that lives in desert places.

Make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow, as fearing no disturbance from any men.

Isaiah 34:16

Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; when this judgment is executed, if you peruse this book of holy writ, and particularly this prophecy of mine, you will find that all things shall exactly come to pass as I have told you.

No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: as I have said, that the vultures should each have their mate, so shall it be; and this prophecy shall be exactly fulfilled, even in its smallest circumstances. *His Spirit* ; my Spirit; such sudden changes of persons being frequent here. And God's *Spirit* may be put for his might and power, as it is in many places of Scripture. *Hath gathered them* ; hath brought all these creatures together, as he

formerly brought the creatures to Adam and to Noah, by an instinct which he put into them.

Isaiah 34:17

He hath divided the land to them, as it were, by lot and line, as Canaan was divided among the Israelites.

Isaiah 35:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 35

The joyful flourishing of Christ's kingdom, Isa_35:1,2. The weak he strengthens and comforts, Isa_35:3,4. His miracles, Isa_35:5,6. The prosperity and peace of his people, Isa_35:7-10.

And as the land of God's enemies, which was exceeding fruitful, shall be turned into a desolate wilderness, as was declared in the foregoing chapter; so, on the contrary, Emmanuel's land, or the seat of God's church and people, which formerly was deserted and despised like a wilderness, and which the rage and malice of their enemies had brought to desolation, shall flourish exceedingly.

For them; for the wilderness and solitary place; or,

for these things, which were prophesied in the foregoing destruction, concerning the ruin of the implacable enemies of God and his church. But that Hebrew letter which is in the end of this Hebrew verb, and is here rendered *for them* , is by all the ancient translators, and by divers others, neglected in their translations, as if it were only added to the verb paralogically, as grammarians speak; and therefore those two words may well be omitted.

Isaiah 35:2

The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; the wilderness shall be as pleasant and fruitful as Lebanon, and Carmel, and Sharon; which were eminent parts of the land of Canaan, as hath been oft noted.

They, who are understood by the wilderness,

shall see the glory of the Lord; the glorious discoveries and effects of God's power and goodness to his people.

Isaiah 35:3

Ye prophets and ministers of God, comfort and encourage God's people, who are now ready to faint, with hopes and assurance of

that salvation which, in due time, I will work for them. He mentions

hands and

knees, because the strength and weakness of any man eminently appears in those parts.

Isaiah 35:4

Your God will come; though he seem to be absent, and departed from you, he will come to you, and abide with you. He will shortly come in the flesh. For although this and the following promises may be metaphorically taken, concerning the temporal deliverance of his people from Babylonian and other oppressors; yet they are much more emphatically and literally understood concerning the redemption of God's people by Jesus Christ, as is sufficiently manifest, both from the words and phrases themselves, and from divers places of the New Testament, where they are so expounded by Christ and the apostles.

With vengeance; to execute vengeance upon the enemies of God, and of his people; which also was verified in Christ, who was *set for the fall as well as for the rising of many in Israel*, Luk_2:34, and who did accordingly inflict most dreadful judgments, both temporal and spiritual, upon the unbelieving and apostate Jews, who were the great persecutors of Christ and, of his people.

Isaiah 35:5

The most ignorant and stupid creatures shall be forced to acknowledge the wonderful works of God. Or rather thus, The poor Gentiles, who before were blind and deaf, shall now have the eyes and ears of their minds opened to see God's works, and to hear and receive his word. And in token hereof, many persons who are corporally blind and deaf shall have sight miraculously conferred upon them; all which being so fully and literally accomplished in Christ, and applied by Christ to himself, it is a plain proof that this prophecy belongs to the times of the gospel.

Isaiah 35:6

Then shall the lame man leap for joy, or go nimbly and readily. And this clause also, and that which follows, are to be understood both spiritually and literally, as in the former verse.

In the wilderness small waters break out, and streams in the desert; the most dry and barren places shall be made moist and fruitful; which is principally meant of the plentiful effusion of God's grace upon such persons and nations as had been wholly destitute of it.

Isaiah 35:7

Those dry and parched deserts, in which dragons have their abode, shall yield abundance of grass, and reeds, and rushes, which grow only in moist grounds, Job_8:11.

Isaiah 35:8

An highway shall be there, and a way: the highway and the way are not to be taken for two different ways, but for one and the same way, even a causey or cast-way, which is both raised ground, as the first Hebrew word signifies, and a way; both signifying a convenient, prepared, plain, and common road or path for travellers, such as the doctrine of the gospel is, which is frequently compared to a way, both in the Old and New Testament, as hath been often observed.

It shall be called the way of holiness; it shall be a holy way, trodden by holy men, and filled with holy practices. *The people* (walking in it) shall be all (i.e. a very great number of them, not so few as in the times of the law) *righteous*, as is declared and prophesied afterward, Isa_60:21.

The unclean shall not pass over it, either to disturb or defile it. Unclean persons shall, in a good measure, be kept or cast out of my church, by the strict exercise of good discipline, here, and hereafter not one unclean person shall enter into my kingdom.

It shall be for those; but this way shall be appropriated unto those persons above mentioned, the weak, and blind, and lame, whom God will heal and save, Isa_35:3-6. The pronoun relative is put without an antecedent, as it is in many other places. But this, and the following clause, is, and may well be, rendered otherwise, *and he* (to wit, God, who is oft designed by this pronoun, and is easily understood out of the context) shall be *to* or *with them walking* in the way, (their companion and guide in their way, which is a great felicity,) *that fools may not err therein. The way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein*; the way shall be

so plain and straight, that even the most foolish travellers (who are described by this character, that they know not the way to the city, Ecc_10:15) cannot easily mistake it.

Isaiah 35:9

It shall not only be a plain, but a safe way, free from all annoyance or danger from mischievous creatures. This is the same promise, for substance, with that Isa_11:9,

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.

Isaiah 35:10

The ransomed of the Lord; they whom God shall rescue and redeem from their corporal slavery in Babylon, and especially from their spiritual bondage under sin and Satan.

Shall return, and come to Zion; shall come again to Zion, from whence they had been carried away captive. Or, *shall return* , to wit, to the Lord now mentioned, *and come to Zion* , i.e. join themselves to God's church and people.

Sorrow and sighing shall flee away; which expressions are too magnificent and emphatical to be satisfied by the return of the Jews from Babylon to their own land, which was accompanied and followed with many sighs and sorrows, as appears, both from sacred and other historians; and therefore must necessarily be understood of gospel times, and of the joy and happiness purchased by Christ for his people, begun here, and continued to all eternity.

Isaiah 36:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 36

Sennacherib invadeth Judah, Isa_36:1. He sendeth Rabshakeh, who by his blasphemous persuasions tempteth Hezekiah to despair, and the people to revolt, Isa_36:2-22.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:4

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Isaiah 36:5

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Isaiah 36:6

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Isaiah 36:7

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Isaiah 36:8

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Isaiah 36:9

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Isaiah 36:10

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Isaiah 36:11

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Isaiah 36:12

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Isaiah 36:13

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Isaiah 36:14

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Isaiah 36:15

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Isaiah 36:16

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Isaiah 36:17

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Isaiah 36:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:20

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 36:22

The history related here, and in the three following chapters, is, for the substance of it, and almost wholly in the same words, contained 2Ki_18:1-20:**21**. It is fitly inserted here, to explain and confirm some of the foregoing predictions. It may seem to have been first written by this prophet, and from him to have been taken into the Book of Kings, to complete that history.

Isaiah 37:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 37

Hezekiah mourneth, and sendeth to Isaiah to pray for them, Isa_37:1-5. He comforteth them, Isa_37:6,**7**. Sennacherib, called away against the king of the Ethiopians, sendeth a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, Isa_37:8-13. His prayer, Isa_37:14-20. Isaiah's prophecy, Isa_37:21-35. An angel slayeth the Assyrians, Isa_37:36. Sennacherib is slain at Nineveh by his own sons, Isa_37:37,**38**.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 37:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 37:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 37:4

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Isaiah 37:5

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Isaiah 37:6

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Isaiah 37:7

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Isaiah 37:8

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Isaiah 37:9

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Isaiah 37:10

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Isaiah 37:11

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Isaiah 37:12

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Isaiah 37:13

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Isaiah 37:14

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Isaiah 37:15

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Isaiah 37:16

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Isaiah 37:17

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Isaiah 37:18

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Isaiah 37:19

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Isaiah 37:21

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Isaiah 37:22

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Isaiah 37:23

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Isaiah 37:24

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Isaiah 37:30

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Isaiah 37:31

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Isaiah 37:32

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Isaiah 37:33

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Isaiah 37:34

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Isaiah 37:35

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Isaiah 37:36

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 37:37

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 37:38

For the understanding of this, and the foregoing chapter, the reader is desired to consult my notes upon 2Ki_18:1-20:21.

Isaiah 38:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 38

Hezekiah in his sickness receiveth from Isaiah a message of death, Isa_38:1. By prayer, Isa_38:2,3, hath his life lengthened: the sun goeth backward for a sign thereof, Isa_38:4-8. His song of praise to God, Isa_38:9-20.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 38:9

Hezekiah was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and inspired by him to write this, both as a testimony of his own gratitude to God, and for the instruction of after-ages.

Isaiah 38:10

I said, to and within myself, I concluded it.

In the cutting off of my days; when my days were cut off by the sentence of God, related here, Isa_38:1.

I shall go to the gates of the grave; I perceive that I must die without any hopes of prevention. The grave is called a man's *long home* , Ecc_12:5, and *the house appointed for all living men* , Job_30:23, and death opens the gates of this house. We read also of the gates of death, Psa_9:13 **107:18**.

I am deprived of the residue of my years; which I might have lived, according to the common course of nature, and of God's dispensations; and which I expected and hoped to live, for the service of God and of my generation.

Isaiah 38:11

I shall not see the Lord; I shall not enjoy him; for *seeing* is put for *enjoying*, as hath been frequently noted.

In the land of the living; in this world, which is so called, Psa_27:13 **116:9** Isa_53:8; in his sanctuary: which limitation is prudently added, to intimate that he expected to see God in another place and manner, even in heaven, face to face.

I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world; I shall have no more society with men upon earth.

Isaiah 38:12

Mine age is departed; the time of my life is expired.

As a shepherd's tent, which is easily and speedily removed.

I have cut off, to wit, by my sins, provoking God to do it. Or, I do declare, and have concluded, that my life is or will be suddenly cut off; for men are oft said in Scripture to do those things which they only declare and pronounce to be done; as men are said to pollute, and to remit and retain sins, and the like, when they only declare men and things to be polluted, and sins to be remitted or retained by God.

Like a weaver, who cutteth off the web from the loom, either when it is finished, or before, according to his pleasure.

He; the Lord, who pronounced this sentence against him.

With pining sickness; with a consuming disease, wasting my spirits and life. Some render this word, *from the thrum*; from those threads at the end of the web, which are fastened to the beam. So the similitude of a weaver is continued.

From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me: the sense is either,

1. This sickness will kill me in the space of one day. Or rather,

2. Thou dost pursue me night and day with continual pains, and wilt not desist till thou hast made a full end of me; so that I expect that every day will be my last day.

Isaiah 38:13

When I was filled with pain, and could not rest all the night long, even till morning, my thoughts were working and presaging that God would instantly break me to pieces, and that every moment would be my last; and the like restless and dismal thoughts followed me from morning till evening. But he mentions only the time before morning, to aggravate his misery, that he was so grievously tormented, when others had sweet rest and repose.

Isaiah 38:14

Like a crane or a swallow; or, *a crane* and *a swallow* ; the conjunction and being here, as it is Hab_3:11, and elsewhere, understood, as is manifest from Jer_8:7, where it is expressed with these very words.

So did I chatter; my complaint and cry was like to the noise of a swallow, quick and frequent; and like that of a crane, loud and frightful. And this very comparison is used of mourners, not only in Scripture, but in other authors; concerning which the learned reader may consult my Latin Synopsis.

I did mourn as a dove; whose mournful tone is observed Isa_59:11 Eze_7:16, and elsewhere.

Mine eyes fail with looking upward; whilst I lift up mine eyes and heart to God for relief, but in vain.

I am oppressed by my disease, which like a serjeant hath seized upon me, and is haling me to the prison of the grave.

Undertake for me; stop the execution, and rescue me out of his hands.

Isaiah 38:15

What shall I say I want words sufficient to express my deep sense of God's dealings with me.

He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it; he did foretell it by his word, and effect it by his hand. This clause and verse is either,

1. A continuance of his complaint hitherto described: God hath passed this sentence upon me, and hath also put it in execution, and to him I must submit myself. Or,

2. A transition or entrance into the thanksgiving, which is undoubtedly contained in the following verses. So the sense is, God hath sent a gracious message to me by his prophet, concerning the prolongation of my life; and he, I doubt not, will make good his word therein. And this sense seems the more probable,

1. Because here is mention of his years to come, whereas in his sickness he expected not to live to the end of a day.

2. Because the Chaldee paraphrast, and the LXX., and Syriac, and Arabic interpreters expound it so in their versions.

3. Because this suits best with the context and coherence of this verse, both with the former and with the following verse. For as he endeth the foregoing verse with a prayer to God for longer life, so in this verse he relates God's gracious answer to his prayer. And if this verse be thus understood, the next verse hath a very convenient connexion with this; whereas it seems to be very abrupt and incoherent, if the thanksgiving begin there.

I shall go softly; I shall walk in the course of my life, either,

1. Humbly, with all humble thankfulness to God for conferring so great a favour upon so unworthy a person; or,

2. Easily and peaceably, with leisure, not like one affrighted, or running away from his enemy; or,

3. By slow and gentle paces, as men commonly spin out their days by degrees unto a just length, which is not unfitly opposed to his former state and time of sickness, wherein his *days* were *swifter than a weaver's shuttle*, and *than a post*, as Job complained upon the same occasion, Job_7:6 **9:25**, and were cut off like a weaver's web, as he complained, Isa_38:12.

In the bitterness of my soul; arising from the remembrance of that desperate condition from which God had delivered me; for great dangers, though past, are oftentimes very terrible to those that reflect upon them. But the words may be rendered, *upon* or *after*

(as this particule is rendered, Isa_18:4) *the bitterness of my soul* ; after the deliverance from this bitter and dangerous disease; which may be compared with Isa_38:17, where he saith, for or after peace I had great bitterness, as here he presageth and assureth himself of the contrary, that he should have peace after his great bitterness. The Chaldee paraphrast renders the words, *because of my deliverance from bitterness of soul; bitterness* being put for *deliverance from bitterness* , as *five* is put for *lack of five* , as we render it, Gen_18:28, and *fat* for *want of fat* , Psa_109:24, and *fruits* for *want of fruits* , Lam_4:9. And other such-like defects there are in the Hebrew, which is a very concise language.

Isaiah 38:16

By these things; by virtue of thy gracious word or promise, and powerful work; by thy promises, and thy performances of them, mentioned in the foregoing verse. This place may be explained by comparing it with Deu_8:3, *Man doth not live by bread, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord* . The sense is, Not I only, but all men, do receive and recover, and hold their lives by thy favour, and the word of thy power; and therefore it is not strange that one word of God hath brought me back from the very jaws of death.

In all these things is the life of my spirit; and as it is with other men, so hath it been with me in a special manner; for in these above all other things is *the life of my spirit or soul* , i.e. either the comfort (which is sometimes called life) of my spirit; or rather, that life which is in my body, from my spirit or soul united to it.

So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live; or, and or *for thou hast recovered me* , &c., to wit, by these things.

Isaiah 38:17

For peace I had great bitterness; my health and prosperity was quickly changed into bitter sickness and affliction. Or, as others render it, *my great bitterness was unto peace* ; was turned into prosperity, or became the occasion of my safety and further advantages; for that drove me to my prayers, and prayers prevailed with God for a gracious answer, and the prolonging of my life. *In love to my soul* ; in kindness to me, the soul being oft put for the man. This is an emphatical circumstance; for

sometimes God prolongs men's days in anger, and in Order to their greater misery.

Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back; thou hast forgiven those sins which brought this evil upon me, and upon that account hast removed the punishment of them; which showeth that thou didst this in love to me. The phrase is borrowed from the custom of men, who when they would accurately see and observe any thing, set it before their faces; and when they desire and resolve not to look upon any thing, turn their backs upon it, or cast it behind them.

Isaiah 38:18

In this and the following verse, he declares God's design in delivering him, that he might praise him in his church, which if he had died he could not have done.

The grave cannot praise thee; the dead are not capable of glorifying thy name among men upon earth; which I desire and determine to do. See the like expressions, Psa_6:5 **30:9 88:10**, &c. *The grave* is put for the persons lodged in it by a metonymy.

Cannot hope for thy truth; they cannot expect nor receive the accomplishment of thy promised goodness in the land of the living.

Isaiah 38:19

He shall praise thee; they are especially obliged to it, and they only have this privilege.

The father to the children shall make known thy truth; they shall not only praise thee whilst they live, but take care to propagate and perpetuate thy praise and glory to all succeeding generations.

Isaiah 38:20

Was ready to save me; was a present help to me, ready to hear and succour me upon my prayer in my great extremity.

We; both I and my people, who are concerned in me, and for me will sing forth those songs of praise which are due especially from me, for God's great mercy to me.

Will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, according to the custom of those times.

Isaiah 38:21

This was rather a sign appointed by God, than a natural means of the cure; for if it had a natural faculty to ripen a sore, yet it could never cure such a dangerous and pestilential disease, at least in so little time.

Isaiah 38:22

Hezekiah also had said; or, *For Hezekiah had said* ; had asked a sign, which is here added as the reason why Isaiah said what is related in the foregoing verse, to wit, in answer to Hezekiah's question.

That I shall go up, within three days, as is more fully related, 2Ki_20:5,8,

to the house of the Lord; for thither he designed in the first place to go, partly that he might pay his vow and thanksgiving. to God, and partly that he might engage the people to praise God with him, and for him.

Isaiah 39:1 ISALIAH CHAPTER 39

The king of Babel sendeth ambassadors with letters and a present to Hezekiah; who showeth them all his treasures, Isa_39:1-2. Isaiah foretelleth him of the Babylonish captivity, Isa_39:3-7. His resignation, Isa_39:8.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 39:8

The history contained in this chapter is related in the same words, 2Ki_20:12, &c., only he who here is called *Merodach* is there called *Berodach*, merely by the change of one letter, which is very usual in the Hebrew language, especially in proper names, as *Dimon* is put for *Dibon*, Isa_15:9, and the same man is called *Nebuchadnezzar* and *Nebuchadrezzar*. This king is called *Merodach* from the idol so called, Jer_1:2, and *Baladan* from his father's name. But whether this man was an Assyrian, or a Mede, or a Babylonian, it is not easy to determine, nor worth while to inquire. But this is certain, that about this time there were wars between the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the issue whereof was, that the latter subdued the former.

Isaiah 40:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 40

The prophet having now foretold the Babylonish captivity, Isa_39:6,7, doth here arm his people against it by the consideration of their certain deliverance out of it, and their blessed condition after it, as in other things, so especially in the coming of the Messiah, and the great and glorious privileges conferred upon God's church and people in his days.

The preaching of the gospel by John Baptist and the apostles, Isa_40:1-11. The power and wisdom of God in governing the world Isa_40:12-17. The folly of idolatry, Isa_40:18-26. God knoweth the state of his people, and both can and will protect them, Isa_40:27-31.

Ye prophets and ministers of the Lord, which now are, or hereafter shall be, deliver this comfortable message from me to my people, that they may not sink under their burdens.

Isaiah 40:2

Cry unto her; proclaim it in my name.

Her warfare; the time of her servitude, and captivity, and misery.

Her iniquity is pardoned; I am reconciled to her; I will not impute sin to her, to punish her any longer for it.

Double for all her sins; not twice as much as her sins deserved, for she herself confessed the contrary, Ezr_9:13 Lam_3:22; but abundantly enough to answer God's design in this chastisement, which was to humble and reform them, and to warn others by their example. *Double* is oft put for abundantly, as Isa_61:7 Jer_16:18 **17:18**. God here speaks of himself after the manner of men, and compareth himself to a tender-hearted father, who when he hath corrected his child for his misdemeanour, relenteth and repenteth of his severity, and casteth his rod away.

Isaiah 40:3

The voice; an abrupt and imperfect speech, such as there are many in the Hebrew language. Methinks I hear a voice; or, a voice shall be heard.

Of him that crieth in the wilderness; which words declare the place either,

1. Where the cry was made; or,
2. Where the way was to be prepared, as it is expressed in the following clause, which is added to explain this. And such places being commonly pathless, and many ways incommodious to passengers, it was the more necessary to prepare a way there. But both come to one thing, for the cry was to be in that place which was to be prepared. This place seems to be understood immediately of the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, and of smoothing their passage from thence to Judea, which lay through a great wilderness; but ultimately and principally concerning their redemption by the Messiah, whose coming is ushered in by the cry of John the Baptist, who did both cry and prepare the way in the wilderness, as we read, Mat_3:1, &c.; where this text is directly expounded of him. But withal the terms of wilderness and desert seem to be here chiefly used in a metaphorical sense, to express the desolate and forlorn condition of the Jewish nation, and especially of the Gentile world, when Christ came to redeem them; for so these words are frequently used in prophetic writings, as hath been noted in divers places.

Prepare ye the way; you to whom this work belongs. He alludes to the custom of princes, who send pioneers before them to prepare the way through which they intend to pass. The meaning is only this, that God shall by his Spirit so dispose men's hearts, and by his providence so order the empires and affairs of the world, as to make way for the accomplishment of this promise.

Of the Lord; *for the Lord*, as it is expounded in the next clause, that the Lord may walk in it; which though it may be understood of their coming out of Babylon, when God might in some sort be said to march in the head of them, conducting and preserving them, yet it was much more evidently and eminently fulfilled when Christ, who was and is God blessed for ever, came into the world in a visible manner. Straight; either direct, in opposition to crooked, or even and level, in opposition to the mountains and valleys mentioned in the next verse.

Isaiah 40:4

This is only a more particular explication of that which was generally expressed Isa_40:3. The sense is, All obstructions shall be removed, and the way made in all respects convenient and easy for the passenger.

Isaiah 40:5

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed: so it was in some sort, when God brought them out of Babylon, which was a glorious work of God; but far more properly and eminently when Christ, who was the glorious God, was manifested in the flesh, and gave much clearer and fuller discoveries of God's glorious wisdom, and holiness, and goodness, and other Divine perfections, than ever yet had been imparted to mankind and to the church.

All flesh; all nations, both Jews and Gentiles.

For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; though this may seem incredible, yet God is able to accomplish it.

Isaiah 40:6

The voice said: God speaks unto his prophets or ministers.

He said, What shall I cry: the prophet desires to know God's mind, and his message.

All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the prophet having foretold glorious and wonderful things which God had declared and determined to do, and suspecting that men would hardly believe them, he confirmeth their faith and the certainty of the thing in this and the two next verses, by representing to their minds the vast difference between the nature, and word, and work of men and of God. All that men are or have, yea, their highest accomplishments, are but like the grass or flower of the field weak and vanishing, soon nipped and brought to nothing; but God's word is like himself, immutable and irresistible; and therefore as *the mouth of the Lord* , and not of man, *hath spoken* these things as was said, Isa_40:5, so doubt not but they shall be fulfilled.

Isaiah 40:7

The Spirit of the Lord; or, *the breath* , &c, as this word is rendered, Psa_147:18; the wind, as it frequently signifies, which hath this effect upon grass and flowers, Psa_103:16 Jam_1:11.

The people; the same which he called flesh, and said they were grass, Isa_40:6; which, that he might prove, in this verse he first declares the frail nature of grass and flowers, and then he applies this to the people. Or, *this people* ; the Jews no less than the Gentiles; for here is an article in the Hebrew text, which is frequently emphatical and restrictive.

Isaiah 40:8

Whatsoever God hath said shall infallibly come to pass.

Isaiah 40:9

O Zion, that bringest good tidings; O Zion, to whom the glad tidings of the coming of Christ into the world, and of the salvation of mankind by him, were first published by Christ and his apostles, and by whom they were published to all nations. But the words are otherwise rendered in the margin, and by others, *O thou* (whosoever thou art, prophet or apostle)

that bringest good tidings to Zion. So Zion is not the deliverer, but the receiver, of these good tidings, as she is in the parallel place, Isa_52:7. But our translation seems to agree better with the Hebrew text, in which the particle *unto* is not here expressed, as it is in the latter part of the verse; by comparing which part with the

former, it seems most probable that Zion or Jerusalem is the speaker or publisher, and

the cities of Judah the hearers.

Get thee up into the high mountain, that thy voice may be better heard, as appears from the next branch of the verse: see Jud_9:7 1Sa_26:13,14.

Be not afraid, lest thou shouldst be found a false prophet; for it shall certainly be fulfilled.

Say unto the cities of Judah; to all my people in the several places of their abode, whether cities or countries. Only he names *cities* , to intimate that they also, though they should be destroyed, yet should afterwards be rebuilt, and inhabited again.

Behold your God! take notice of this wonderful work and glorious appearance of your God, who will be visibly present with you, so that men may point at him, and say, Behold, here he is.

Isaiah 40:10

With strong hand; with invincible strength, conquering all his enemies. The word *hand* or *arm* may very well be understood out of the following clause.

His arm shall rule for him; he shall need no succours, for his own power shall be sufficient to govern his people, and to destroy his adversaries.

His reward is with him; he comes furnished with recompences, as well of mercy and blessings for his friends and followers, as of justice and vengeance for his enemies.

His work before him; he carrieth on his work or design effectually, so as none can hinder him; for that is said in Scripture to *be before a man* which is in his power, as Gen_20:15 **24:51**, &c. Or *work* is here put for *the reward of the work* , as it is Isa_49:4 **65:7**, and elsewhere. And so the same thing is repeated in other words, as is very usual.

Isaiah 40:11

He shall perform all the offices of a tender and faithful shepherd towards his people, carrying himself with great wisdom, and

condescension, and compassion to every one of them, according to their several capacities and infirmities.

Isaiah 40:12

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? i.e. who can measure them? for indicative verbs in the Hebrew language are oft taken potentially. Who can do this and the following things but God! And this discourse of God's infinite power and wisdom is here conveniently added, to give them the greater assurance that God was able, as he had declared himself willing, to do these great and wonderful things which he had promised; and that neither men nor false gods were able to hinder him in it. God is here compared to a mighty giant, supposed to be so big that he can take up and hold all the waters of the sea and rivers of the whole world in one hand, and span the heavens, and then take up and weigh the whole earth with the other hand.

Isaiah 40:13

Who did God either need or take to advise him in any of his works, either of creation or the government of the world? were they not all the effects of his own sole wisdom? Therefore though all the nations of the world contrive and conspire against him, and against this work of his, as indeed they will do, yet his own counsel shall confound all their devices, and carry on his work in spite of them.

Isaiah 40:14

Taught him in the path of judgment; how to walk and manage all his affairs with good judgment and discretion.

Isaiah 40:15

The nations, all the nations of the world,

are as a drop of a bucket, compared with all the water in the bucket, wherein are innumerable drops: such are they if compared with God.

And are counted by him, and in comparison of him, as the small dust of the balance; which accidentally cleaves to the balance, but makes no alteration in the weight.

The isles; those numerous and vast countries to which they went from Judea by sea, which are commonly called isles, as hath been oft observed.

Isaiah 40:16

And although he is pleased to accept of poor and small sacrifices from his people, yet if men were to offer a sacrifice agreeable to his infinite excellency, the whole forest of Lebanon could not afford either a sufficient number of beasts to be sacrificed, or a sufficient quantity of wood to consume the sacrifice.

Isaiah 40:17

Before him; either in his eyes, or being set against him, as this Hebrew word properly and most usually signifies.

Counted to him, either in his judgment, or in comparison of him.

Less than nothing; less than a thing of nought, or of no account or worth; or, as others render it, *for nothing* .

Isaiah 40:18

This is a proper inference from the foregoing discourse of God's immense and infinite greatness; from whence he taketh occasion to show both the folly of those that make mean and visible representations of God, as not the Gentiles only, but even some of the Jews did; and the utter inability of men or idols to give any opposition to God in the doing of these great works. And this discourse of the madness of idolaters, prosecuted both here and in the following chapter, was designed by God, as a necessary antidote whereby the Jews might be preserved from the contagion of idolatry, to which God saw they now had strong inclinations, and would have many and great temptations when they were in captivity.

Isaiah 40:19

The workman melteth a graven image; he melteth some base metal into a mould, which giveth it the form of an image, which afterwards is graven or carved to make it more exact and amiable. Thus the image oweth all its excellency to the earth for the matter of it, and to the art of man for the form or fashion of it.

Spreadeth it over with gold, beaten out into leaves or plates.

Casteth silver chains; either for ornaments; or rather for use, to fasten it to a wall or pillar, lest it should fall down, and be broken in pieces; which is spoken in way of scorn and derision of such ridiculous deities as needed such supports.

Isaiah 40:20

That he hath no oblation; that he can hardly procure money sufficient to buy the meanest sacrifice for his God.

He seeketh unto him a cunning workman; he is so mad upon his idols, that he will one way or other find money to procure the choicest materials, and the help of the best artist, to make his idol.

That shall not be moved; which after all this cost and art cannot stir one step out of its place to give you any help.

Isaiah 40:21

Have ye not known, to wit, God to be the only true God, the Maker and Governor of the world, and all its inhabitants? how can you be ignorant of so evident a truth? He addresseth his speech to the idolatrous Gentiles.

From the beginning, to wit, of the world, as the next clause explains it. Were not these infinite perfections of God manifestly discovered to all mankind by the creation of the world?

Isaiah 40:22

That sitteth, as a judge or governor upon his throne,

upon the circle of the earth; or, *above the circle &c.*; far above this round earth, even in the highest heavens; from whence he looketh down upon the earth, where men appear to him like grasshoppers. He alludes to one that looks down upon the earth below him from some high place. As here we have *the circle of the earth* , so elsewhere we read of the *circle of heaven* , Job_22:14, and of the *circle of the deep* , or sea, Pro_8:27, because the form of the heaven, and earth, and sea is circular and round, as is evident both from sense, and from the principles of philosophy.

As grasshoppers; small and contemptible in his sight. Compare Num_13:33.

Stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, for the benefit of the earth and of mankind, that all parts might partake of its comfortable influences. **See Poole "Job_9:8"; See Poole "Psa_104:2".**

Isaiah 40:23

That bringeth the princes to nothing; that can at his pleasure destroy all the great potentates of the world.

Isaiah 40:24

They, the princes and judges last mentioned,

shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: they shall take no root, as it follows; for planting and sowing are in order to taking root, and are necessary to it. They shall not continue and flourish, as they have vainly imagined; but shall be rooted up and perish, as is declared in the rest of the verse.

Blow upon them; blast them, as a vehement east wind doth plants.

Isaiah 40:25

He repeateth what he said Isa_40:18, that he might oblige them to the more serious and frequent consideration of the absurdity of the idolatry.

Isaiah 40:26

Lift up your eyes on high; to the high and starry heaven as appears from the following words.

These things which you see on high, the host of heaven, as it follows.

That bringeth out; that at first brought them out of nothing, and from day to day brings them forth, making them to rise and set in their appointed and fixed times.

Their host by number, as a general brings forth his army into the field, and there musters them.

He calleth them all by names, as a master calleth all the members of his family.

For that he is strong in power; which work is a certain and evident proof of God's infinite power.

Not one faileth, either to appear when he calleth them, or to do the work to which he sends them.

Isaiah 40:27

Why sayest thou in thy heart? why dost thou give way to such jealousies concerning thy God, of whose infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness there are such evident demonstrations given to all mankind, and to thee in a singular manner?

My way; the course and condition of my life. He takes no notice of my prayers and tears, and sufferings for his name, but suffers my enemies to abuse me at their pleasure, and doth not attempt to rescue me out of their hands. This complaint is uttered in the name of the people, being prophetically supposed to be in captivity.

My judgment; either,

1. My punishment; or rather,
2. My cause, as this word is most commonly used. God hath neglected to plead my cause, and to give judgment for me against mine enemies, as he hath formerly done.

Is passed over from my God; God hath dismissed it, and left it and me in the hands of mine enemies, and now our case is so desperate that God cannot help us; for which reason they compared themselves to dry bones lying in the grave, **Eze 37\$**.

Isaiah 40:28

Of the ends of the earth; of all the earth, and the inhabitants thereof, from one end to another. He seems to mention the *ends* or utmost bounds, because they might seem to be more out of the reach and care of God's providence, as being most remote from Jerusalem, the only place of God's solemn and public worship in the world, and being then thought to be uninhabited. The argument is clear and strong: God, who made all, even the most desolate and barbarous parts of the earth, and consequently takes care of them, will not neglect his own land and people.

Fainteth not, neither is weary; he is not by age or hard labour become weak and unable to help his people, as men are apt to be.

There is no searching of his understanding; his counsels, by which he governeth all the world, and in a most particular manner

thine affairs, are far above the reach of thy understanding; and therefore thou dost ignorantly and foolishly in passing so rash a censure upon the ways and works of the infinitely wise God.

Isaiah 40:29

He hath strength enough not only for himself, but for all, even the weakest of his creatures, whom he can easily strengthen to bear all their burdens, and to vanquish all their oppressors.

Isaiah 40:30

The youngest and strongest men, left to themselves, or without God's help, or which do not wait upon God; which is easily understood from the opposition in the following verse.

Isaiah 40:31

That wait upon the Lord; that rely upon him for strength to bear their burdens, and for deliverance from them in due time.

Shall renew their strength; shall grow stronger and stronger in faith, and patience, and fortitude, whereby they shall be more than conquerors over all their enemies and adversities.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles; which fly most strongly, and swiftly, and high, out of the reach of all danger.

They shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint; they shall be enabled to run or walk in their way as they please, without any weariness.

Isaiah 41:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 41

God called Abraham, and was with him: the nations idolatrous, Isa_41:1-8. Israel encouraged by promises of safety and deliverance, Isa_41:9-20. The vanity of idols, Isa_41:21-24. Redemption by Christ, Isa_41:25-29.

Keep silence before me; attend diligently to my plea, and then answer it if you can.

O islands; O you inhabitants of islands, as the next clause explains this. By islands he here means, as he doth Isa_40:15, and elsewhere, countries remote from Judea, inhabited by the idolatrous Gentiles, with whom he here debateth his cause.

Let the people renew their strength; strengthen themselves to maintain their cause against me; let them unite all their strength together.

Let them come near unto me, that we may stand together, and plead our cause before any indifferent judge.

Let them speak; I will give them free liberty to say what they can on their own behalf.

Isaiah 41:2

Who? what man or god? Was it not my alone work? The idols were so far from assisting me, that they did their utmost to oppose me in it.

Raised up into being and power, stirring up his spirit, and strengthening him to the work.

The righteous man, Heb. *righteousness* , which is put for a man of righteousness, as *pride* is put for a proud man, Psa_36:11, and *deceit* for a deceitful man, Psa_109:2; for it is evident from the following words that he spake here of a person. But who this person is, is much disputed by interpreters. Some understand it of Christ. And doubtless the person here spoken of was an eminent type of Christ, and so in a mystical sense it may belong to him. But the things here said to be done by this righteous man, seem to agree much better unto a man of war than unto the Prince of peace. And therefore this place is immediately understood either,

1. Of Abraham, who was a person eminently righteous, and came out of Chaldea, which sometimes seems to be called the east, as Isa_2:6 Zec_8:7, who did the things here mentioned; partly in his own person, conquering five kings, and the nations with them, **Ge 14**, and following God he knew not whither; and partly by his posterity, whose exploits may well be ascribed to him, not only because they came out of his loins, but also and especially because all their successes and victories were given to them for Abraham's sake, and by the virtue of God's promise and covenant made with Abraham, for the giving of Canaan to him and to his seed for ever. And this interpretation may seem to receive some countenance from Isa_41:5,6, which agrees well to the practice of the Canaanites and neighbouring nations; who upon Israel's march towards them were filled with great consternation, and used

all possible diligence in seeking both to their idols and to men for help against them, as we read in that sacred history. And thus God's argument against idolatry is taken from an illustrious example of God's infinite power, put forth in saving his people, and destroying their enemies before them; and of the impotency of idols to hinder him in that work. Or,

2. Of Cyrus, who might be called a *righteous man* ; or, as it is in the Hebrew, a man of *righteousness* ; because he was raised up in righteousness, as it is said of him, Isa_14:13, and was God's great instrument to manifest his righteousness; both his faithfulness, in fulfilling his promise of delivering his people out of Babylon after seventy years (*righteousness* being often put for faithfulness); and his justice, in punishing the enemies and oppressors of his people, the wicked Babylonians; upon which account the Medes, who served under Cyrus in his expedition against the Babylonians, are called God's *sanctified ones* , Isa_13:3. And all the other expressions here used are very applicable to him, and were verified in him. He came *from the east* ; from Persia, which was directly eastward, both from Judea and from Babylon, and which is called *the east* in this very case, Isa_46:11. He was *raised up* by God in an eminent and extraordinary manner, as is noted both by sacred and profane historians; and therefore this very word is used concerning him and his army, not only here, but elsewhere; as Isa_13:17 **Jer 1 9 51:1,11**. To him also all the following passages agree, as we shall see. And although this great person and action were yet to come, yet the prophet speaks of them as if they were already past, as the prophets most frequently do. And as in the clause of the former chapter he speaks of God's people as if they were actually in the captivity of Babylon, Isa_41:27, so here he speaks of them as if they were actually brought out of Babylon by Cyrus. And by this instance he pleads his cause against the Gentiles and their idols, because this was an evident proof of God's almighty power, and of the vanity and weakness of idols, which eminently appeared in the destruction of the Babylonians, who were a people mad *upon their idols* , as is said, Jer_50:38, and yet were destroyed together with their idols, Jer_51:47. *From the east* ; from a country eastward from Judea, as Chaldea was in part, but Persia more directly. *Called him to his foot* ; to march

after him, and under God's banner, against Babylon. Thus Barak's army is said to be *at his feet* , Jud_4:10. Compare also Gen_30:30.

Gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings; subdued nations and their kings before him.

He gave them as the dust; to be beaten by him as small as dust, as is said, Psa_18:42. Or, to be put to flight as easily as the dust is scattered by the wind, as the following clause expounds this.

Isaiah 41:3

He pursued them, and passed safely; went on in the pursuit with great ease, and safety, and success.

Even by the way that he had not gone with his feet; which is added as further evidence of God's wonderful providence, in encouraging and enabling him to march by unknown paths; which hath oft proved dangerous and destructive to great armies. This also was verified both in Abraham and in Cyrus, as is well known.

Isaiah 41:4

Who hath wrought and done it? whose work was this but mine?

Calling; either,

1. Calling them out of nothing, giving to them breath and being; or,
2. Calling them to his foot, as he said above, Isa_41:2, disposing and employing them as he sees fit, sending them upon his errands.

The generations from the beginning; all persons and generations of mankind from the beginning of the world to the end of it.

The first, and with the last; who was before all things, even from eternity, and shall be unto eternity; whereas the idols, to whom God herein opposeth himself, were but of yesterday, being made by men's hands, and shall within a little time vanish, and be destroyed.

Isaiah 41:5

The isles, even remote countries, as Isa_41:1, saw it; discerned the mighty work of God in delivering his people, and overthrowing their enemies, in so wonderful a manner.

Feared, lest they should be involved in the same calamity, as being conscious to themselves that they also were enemies to God's people.

Drew near, and came; they gathered themselves together to consult for their common safety, and to maintain the cause of their idols, whom by this instance they perceived in great jeopardy.

Isaiah 41:6

They encouraged and assisted one another in their idolatrous practices.

Isaiah 41:7

The carpenter, who brought wood to compose the body of the idol.

The goldsmith, who was to prepare golden plates for covering and adorning of the image, which some of them beat out upon the anvil, and others smoothed or polished, as it follows.

It is ready for the soldering; that we may put the several parts together, and set it up to be worshipped.

He fastened it to the wall or pillar, lest it should fall down, or go, or be carried away from them. See Isa_40:19,20.

Isaiah 41:8

But thou, Israel, art my servant: thus the Gentiles show themselves to be the servants of their idols, and own them for their god; but thou art my people, and I am and will be thy God.

Whom I have chosen, out of the heap of the idolatrous nations, to be my peculiar people.

Abraham my friend; with whom I made a strict league of perpetual friendship; of which see Gen_12:2,3 15:1,18.

Isaiah 41:9

Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth; thou, Israel, whom I took to myself, and brought hither in the loins of thy father Abraham from a remote country, to wit, Chaldea; or, whom I brought back out of Babylon into thine own land, which though yet to come, he may speak of as of a thing past, as the prophets use to do, as was noted before. But the former interpretation seems to agree better with the foregoing verse.

From the chief men thereof; from the midst of many great and noble persons, among whom he lived in Chaldea. So this notes God's singular mercy to Abraham, and consequently to the Israelites descended from him, that he passed by many of Abraham's betters, and called him into fellowship with himself.

I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away; I have chosen thee not for a small moment, but for ever, by making an everlasting covenant with thee and thy seed through all generations. Or the sense is this; As I have chosen thee at first, so I have not since that time cast thee off, as thou hadst frequently given me sufficient occasion to do. Or, *and did not refuse thee*, as this word is elsewhere used. So the same thing is repeated in other words, not without some emphasis; for he intimates that he chose them when he had just cause of refusing them.

Isaiah 41:10

Which I do and will manage with righteousness, whereby I will deliver thee, and destroy thine and mine enemies, as it follows.

Isaiah 41:11

Shall be ashamed and confounded, both because their hopes and designs shall be utterly disappointed, and because the mischief which they contrived against thee shall fall upon themselves.

Shall be as nothing; shall come to nothing, or perish, as the next clause explains it.

Isaiah 41:12

Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them; they shall be so totally consumed, that although thou searchest for them, thou shalt not be able to find them any where in the world.

Shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought; shall be utterly brought to nought. The thing is twice repeated, to show the certainty and greatness of their destruction.

Isaiah 41:13

Will hold thy right hand; or, *will strengthen*, &c, as this word properly signifieth; will assist and enable thee to vanquish all thine enemies.

Isaiah 41:14

Thou worm Jacob, who art weak in thyself, and despised and trodden under foot by thy proud and potent enemies.

Isaiah 41:15

New; and therefore sharper and stronger than another which hath been much used.

Sharp threshing instrument having teeth; such as were usual in those times and places, of which **See Poole "Isa_28:25"**, **See Poole "Isa_28:28"**.

The mountains; the great and lofty potentates of the world, which set themselves against thee; such persons being frequently expressed in Scripture under the notion of

hills and mountains.

Isaiah 41:16

Thou shalt fan them, when thou hast beaten them as small as dust or chaff.

Shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel; for to him, and not to thyself, thou shalt ascribe thy victory over thine enemies.

Isaiah 41:17

When my poor people are come to the greatest extremity of danger and misery, then will I appear for their relief.

Isaiah 41:18

In high places; upon the mountains, where by the course of nature there are no rivers.

In the midst of the valleys; or, *in the valleys*, to wit, in such of them as are not well watered. *I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water*: these people, who are like a dry and barren wilderness, I will abundantly water with my blessing, and make them fruitful and beautiful, as the next verse showeth; which may be understood, either of the Jews, who were in a wilderness condition, till God brought them out of it; or of the Gentiles converted to the true religion under the gospel.

Isaiah 41:19

Trees which are both useful and pleasant to the eye, and giving a good shadow to the traveller, which in those hot and parched

countries was very comfortable. Thus much is evident and confessed. But what particular trees these Hebrew words signify seems to me improper to discourse here, because only the learned are capable of judging in this case, and they may consult my Latin Synopsis upon this and other places of Scripture where they are mentioned.

Isaiah 41:20

That they may see; or, *that men may see* ; for it is an indefinite expression. The sense is, that all that see this wonderful change may consider it, and may know that this is the work of God alone.

Isaiah 41:21

Produce your cause: the prophet having pleaded God's cause against the idolatrous Gentiles, whom he challenged to a dispute, Isa_41:1, he now reneweth the challenge, and gives them liberty and invitation to speak whatsoever they can on the behalf of their idols.

Bring forth your strong reasons, to prove the divinity of your idols.

Isaiah 41:22

Let them; either the idols; or, which is all one, the idolaters in the name and by the help of their idols.

What shall happen; all future events; which he divides into two sorts in the following clause, the former and the latter, as we shall see.

Let them show the former things; which is not to be understood of such things as are past, for such things might easily be known by men from history, much more by the devils who possessed and acted in their idols; but of such things as should shortly come to pass, which may be better discerned than those things which are yet at a great distance. So he propounds the easiest part first. Let us try whether they can foretell those things which are even at the door, and if so we will try them further. Let them tell us what things shall happen, and in what order, which first, and which last.

That we may consider them, Heb. *and we will set our heart* to it; we will allow the argument its due weight, and either fairly answer it, or give up our cause against idols.

And know; that we may know, or let us know by their information.

The latter end of them; the consequence of them, whether the events did answer to their predictions, or what things happened next after those former things.

Declare us things for to come, to wit, *hereafter* , or after a long time; which limitation may be easily gathered, both from the opposition of this clause to the former, and from the next following clause, where it is so limited and explained.

Isaiah 41:23

That we may know that ye are gods; that we may have, if not a certain proof, yet at least a probable argument, of your deity. It may be objected that the devil hath foretold future events by idols; but it may be answered, that such predictions were but rare, and oftentimes were false, and confuted by the event; and generally were dark and doubtful, as hath been noted; and when they were verified by the event, that was only done by Divine permission and revelation, for the trial or punishment of wicked men, of which we have an instance, Deu_13:1-3, and therefore doth no more prove them to be gods than the predictions made known by God unto the prophets proved them to be gods.

Do good, or

do evil; protect and bless your worshippers whom I intend to destroy, and destroy my people whom I intend to save, and then you have some colour to assert your deity. But, alas! you can neither do good nor evil.

That we may be dismayed, and behold it together; that I and my people may be astonished, and confounded, and forced to acknowledge your godhead.

Isaiah 41:24

Ye are of nothing; you lately were nothing, without any being at all, and now you have nothing at all of divinity or virtue in you.

Your work; either,

1. Passively, your workmanship, all the cost and art which is laid out upon you. Or,

2. Actively, all that you can do. Your operations are like your beings; there is no reality in your beings, nor efficacy in your actions.

He that chooseth you; he that chooseth you for his gods, is most abominable for his folly as well as his wickedness.

Isaiah 41:25

I have raised up; you neither foreknow nor can do any thing; but I do now foretell, and will certainly effect, great revolution and change in the world, which you shall not be able to hinder. *One* ; which word, though not expressed in the Hebrew, must necessarily be understood, as being oft designed in the following words by the pronoun he. He understands one people; or rather one person, prince, or general, together with his people or forces, as appears from the latter part of the verse. Some conceive that the prophet in this place speaks of two several persons; in the first clause of Nebuchadnezzar, who in Scripture is commonly said to come

from the north, as Jer_1:13,15 4:6; and the next clause of Cyrus, who came from the east, Isa_46:11. And then the words may be thus rendered, one

from the north, and he shall come; and one

from the rising of the sun, he shall call, &c. But it seems more natural and easy to understand the whole context of one and the same person, even of Cyrus, of whom he spake before, Isa_41:2, &c., who might well be said to come, both *from the north and from the east: from the north* rather, because he was a Mede by his mother, as he was a Persian by his father; or because a great part of his army was gathered out of Media, which was, and in Scripture is said to be, *northward* in reference to Judea, Jer_50:9,41 51:48; and because Darius the Mede was joined with him in this expedition: and *from the east* , because Persia was directly eastward from Judea. And peradventure this work of

calling upon or *proclaiming God 's name* is here ascribed to him as he came from the east, rather than as he came from the north, because that work was not done by Darius the Mede, but by Cyrus the Persian.

Shall he call upon my name; or rather, as others render it, *who shall call upon* ; or rather, proclaim my name, which Cyrus did in express and emphatical terms, Ezr_1:1 2.

He shall come upon princes as upon mortar; treading them down as easily as a man treadeth down mortar.

Isaiah 41:26

Who hath declared from the beginning? which of all your idols did or could foretell such things as this from the beginning of the world unto this day? They never yet did nor can foretell any such things, further than I think fit to reveal it to them.

Beforetime; either in time past, or before the things come to pass.

That we may say, that we may be convinced and forced to acknowledge,

He is righteous; his cause now pleaded is just and good; he. is a God indeed as he pretends to be, he claims his Divinity by a good title.

Yea, there is none; Heb. *surely* there is *none* of your gods that hath done or can do this, and therefore their claim to the Deity is false and foolish.

There is none that heareth your words; none of your worshippers ever heard any such thing, either from you or of you; nor indeed doth any man hear your words, because you are dumb, and cannot speak.

Isaiah 41:27

The first; I who am the first, as I said before, Isa_41:4, and therefore capable of declaring or foretelling things to come from the beginning, which your idols cannot do, Isa_41:26.

Shall say to Zion; do and will foretell unto my people by my prophets things to come.

Behold, behold them; I represent things future as if they were present, and to be beheld with your eyes. *By them* he means either,

1. These things which are to come: or,

2. These men; either Cyrus and his forces, who came to deliver the Jews out of Babylon; or, which is the same thing in effect, the Jews returning from their captivity in Babylon.

One that bringeth good tidings; a messenger or messengers, the singular number being here put for the plural, as it is in many other places, to wit, my prophets, who shall foretell the good tidings of their deliverance from captivity.

Isaiah 41:28

For I beheld, Heb. *And I beheld* ; I looked about me to see if I could find any man of them that could certainly and of themselves foretell such future events.

No man; not any, to wit, of the idols; for the word man is sometimes used by the Hebrews of brute creatures, and even of lifeless things, as Isa_34:15 **40:26**, and elsewhere.

There was no counsellor; though these idols were oft consulted, and by the help of the devil did sometimes deliver oracles, yet none of them were able to give any solid and certain advice concerning future things.

That, when I asked of them, could answer a word; when I tried their divinity by this character, they had nothing to say for themselves.

Isaiah 41:29

They are all vanity: this is the conclusion of the whole dispute, and the just sentence which God passeth upon idols after a fair trial; they are vain things, and are falsely called gods. *Their works are nothing* : see Isa_41:24.

Their molten images; which he mentions, because their materials were most precious, and more cost and art was commonly bestowed upon them; for after they had been molten, they used to be carved, or polished, and adorned: but under these he synecdochically comprehends all images whatsoever.

Are wind; empty and unsatisfying things, which also, like the wind, do quickly pass away, and come to nothing. And confusion; confused, and deformed, and useless things, like that rude heap in the beginning of God's creation, of which this very word is used, Gen_1:2.

Isaiah 42:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 42

The person and office of Christ appointed by the Father. Isa_42:1-9. A new song to God for his gospel among the Gentiles, Isa_42:10-16. The idolatry of the heathen, and obstinacy of the Jews, Isa_42:17-25.

The prophet, having in the former chapter detected the vanity of idols, by their gross ignorance of future things, and having given one eminent instance of God's certain foreknowledge of things to come, in the prediction of the destruction of Babylon, and the deliverance of the Jews out of it by Cyrus, he now addeth another more eminent and remote example of it, and foretelleth the coming of the Messiah, and several great effects or consequences thereof; which he rather doth, because this was the person by whom the idols were to be utterly abolished, as was foretold, Isa_2:18, compared with Isa_42:2-4, and as it fell out in the event; this having been observed not only by Christians, but even by the learned heathens, not without astonishment, that at that time when Christ came into the world idols were generally struck dumb, and the oracles ceased. My servant; the person of whom he here speaketh is by some supposed to be Cyrus, and by others Isaiah himself, and by others the people of the Jews. But the most and best interpreters understand this place of Christ. And although I am sensible that some learned men have done wrong to the sacred text, and to the Christian cause, by expounding some places of Christ without sufficient evidence, yet this is one of the many places in this prophecy which cannot without manifest violence be applied to any other; which is so evident, that not only the generality of Christians, but divers of the most learned Jews, understand it of the Messiah, and of him alone; and pass a severe censure upon their brethren that expound it of any other person, and affirm that they are smitten with blindness in this matter. Moreover this place is expressly interpreted of Christ, Mat_12:18, &c.; and to him, and to him only, all the particulars here following do truly and evidently belong, as we shall see.

Whom I uphold; whom I will assist and enable to do and suffer all those things which belong to his office to do.

Mine elect; chosen by me to this great work of mediation and redemption, to which he is said to be sealed and sent, Joh_6:27,29, and *predestinated* , 1Pe_1:20, and *chosen of God* , 1Pe_2:4.

Delighteth; or, as this same word is oft rendered, is well-pleased, both for himself and for all his people, being fully satisfied with that sacrifice which he shall offer up to me.

I have put my Spirit upon him; I have furnished him with that abundance and eminency of gifts and graces which are necessary for the discharge of his high and hard employment.

Shall bring forth; shall publish or *show* , as this word is translated, Mat_12:18; shall bring to light what before was hid in his breast, or in his Father's bosom.

Judgment: this word is very ambiguous, and elsewhere is put for punishment, which cannot be meant here, because the whole context speaks of his mercy and sweetness, and not of his severity; but here it is clearly put for God's *law* , as this very word is expounded here below, Isa_42:4, and as it is frequently used in the Holy Scriptures, as **Psa 119**, and elsewhere: which also best agrees with the *bringing forth or publishing* of it here mentioned, publication being necessarily required and constantly used about laws. And this interpretation is confirmed by the following words,

to the Gentiles. For the great things which Christ published unto all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, was nothing else but the law, and will, and counsel of God concerning man's salvation, and the way and means of obtaining it.

To the Gentiles; not only to the Jews, to whom the knowledge of God's laws had been hitherto appropriated, but to the heathen' nations of the world.

Isaiah 42:2

He shall not cry; either,

1. In a way of contention, as anger is oft accompanied with clamour, Eph_4:31. Or,
2. In a way of ostentation. It seems to be meant both ways, by comparing this place with Mat_12:16,17,20. He shall neither erect

nor manage his kingdom with violence and outward pomp and state, as Worldly princes do, but with meekness and humility.

Nor lift up his voice, which is easily understood out of the following clause, and from many other scriptures, where that word is added to this verb to complete the phrase.

Nor cause his voice to be heard in the street; as contentious and vain-glorious persons frequently do.

Isaiah 42:3

A bruised reed shall he not break; he will not break it to pieces, but rather will strengthen and bind it up. It is a common figure, whereby more is understood than was expressed, and one contrary is left to be gathered from another, of which many instances have been given in former texts. The sense is plainly this, Christ will not deal roughly and rigorously with those that come to him, but he will use all gentleness and kindness to them, passing by their greatest sins, bearing with their present infirmities, cherishing and encouraging the smallest beginnings of grace, comforting and healing wounded consciences, and the like.

The smoking flax shall he not quench; the same thing is repeated in other words, to give us the greater assurance of the truth of it. That wick of a candle (called *flax* metonymically, because it is made of flax) which is almost extinct, and doth only smoke and not flame, he will not utterly quench, but will revive and kindle it again.

He shall bring forth judgment unto truth: judgment may be here taken either,

1. For the law or will of God, or the doctrine of the gospel, which he will

bring forth, i.e. publish, which he will do *unto* , or *in* , or *with* , or *according* to (for this preposition is used all those ways) truth, i.e. truly and faithfully, not concealing nor corrupting it, as false teachers commonly do. So this is a character like that which is given to Christ, Mat_22:16, *Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth* ; and thus this phrase of *bringing forth judgment* is taken here, as it is Isa_42:1. Or,

2. For the cause which is debated, or for the sentence which is given in the cause, as this word is most frequently used, which he will bring forth, i.e. bring to light, or discover, or publish; and this he will do according to truth and equity, and not unjustly and partially, as corrupt judges use to give sentence against the poor and meek. In this sense this very phrase of

bringing forth judgment is taken Psa_37:6. And this sense seems to be favoured, both by the consideration of the quality of the persons, to whom this judgment is here implied to be brought forth, who are called *bruised reeds* , and *smoking flax* , whereby they are supposed to be persons discouraged and oppressed, and in a contest with themselves, or with their spiritual adversaries, about the state of their souls; as also by comparing this place with Mat_12:20, where these very words are quoted, and thus rendered, *till he send forth judgment unto victory* , i.e. till judgment or sentence be given for him, in which case a man is said to be victorious in judgment. If it be said for the former interpretation, that it seems most reasonable to understand *judgment* here as it is understood Isa_42:1,4, and *bringing forth judgment* here as it is taken, Isa_42:1, it may be truly and fairly answered, that it is a very common thing in Scripture for the same words or phrases to be used in several senses, not only in two neighbouring verses, but sometimes also in the very same verse, whereof I have formerly given divers instances.

Isaiah 42:4

He shall not fail, nor be discouraged; though he be thus meek, and gentle, yet he is also courageous and resolute against all the great and many difficulties and conflicts to which he will be exposed, and will not give over till he have finished his work; or, as others render the words, *He shall not be darkened* (this glorious light shall not be eclipsed or obscured; or, *He shall shine forth brightly* and gloriously, as the LXX. render this word) nor broken by all the attempts and vigorous endeavours of his enemies who design it.

Till he have set judgment in the earth; till he have published and established his law or doctrine (as this judgment is expounded in the next clause) among the nations of the earth. And this word

till respects only the time past, but not the time to come, as if he would then *fail* , or be *discouraged* , when once he had

set judgment on the earth; which is contrary to reason, and to other evident scriptures. And so this word is used, Gen_28:15 Psa_71:18 Mat_1:25.

The isles; the countries remote from Judea, to which God's law was now confined, as this word is oft used.

Shall wait for his law; shall gladly receive his doctrine and commands from time to time.

Isaiah 42:5

This large description of God's infinite power is here seasonably added, to give them assurance of the certain accomplishment of these great and wonderful promises, which otherwise would seem incredible.

Isaiah 42:6

Have called thee in righteousness; to declare my righteousness, as is said, Rom_3:26, or my faithfulness, which is frequently called *righteousness* in Scripture; according to my promise long since made, and oft-renewed. As the former verse asserted God's power, so this clause declares his will and firm purpose and obligation to effect this work, and both together evince the certainty and necessity of it.

Will hold thine hand; will give thee counsel and strength for thy high and hard work.

Will keep thee, that thou shalt not fail in, nor be hindered by, thine enemies from the accomplishment of thy work.

Give thee for a covenant; to be the Angel of the covenant, as Christ is called, Mal_3:1; or the Mediator, in and by whom my covenant of grace is made and confirmed with mankind.

Of the people; either of my people, the Jews; or, indefinitely or universally, of all people, not only Jews, but Gentiles also, as it follows.

For a light of the Gentiles; to enlighten them with true and saving knowledge, and to direct them in the right way to true happiness, from which they had miserably wandered. He alludes

to God's fiery pillar, which enlightened and directed the Israelites in the wilderness.

Isaiah 42:7

The blind eyes; the eyes of their minds blinded with long ignorance, and deep prejudice, and inveterate error, and by the power and policy of the god of this world, 2Co_4:4, which nothing but the almighty power of God could cure.

The prisoners; sinners, unto are taken captive by the devil at his will, as we read, 2Ti_2:26, and as daily experience showeth, and who are enslaved and chained by their own lusts, and made free-men only by Christ, Joh_8:32,36. Compare this portion of Scripture with Isa_61:1, and both with Luk_4:17-21, where it is said to be fulfilled in and by Christ.

Isaiah 42:8

I am the Lord, Heb. *Jehovah* ; who have all being in and of myself, and give being to all my creatures, and to all my promises, as this name signifies. The everlasting, and unchangeable, and omnipotent God, who therefore both can and will fulfil all my promises, and plead the cause and set up the kingdom of my Son in spite of all opposition, and destroy all those idols which are set up against him and inc.

That is my name, which I must own and justify to the world. He seems to allude to Exo_3:14,15 6:3.

My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images; I will not any longer suffer that honour and worship which is peculiar to me to be given to idols, as it hath been, but I will by Christ and the gospel abolish idolatry in the world.

Isaiah 42:9

The former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: as all things which I have formerly promised or foretold have exactly come to pass in their proper seasons, and not one of them failed, as was noted, Jos_23:14; so you have great reason to believe that what I now promise, though it be new and strange to you, shall infallibly be accomplished.

Before they spring forth I tell you of them, that when they come to pass, you may know that I am God, and that this is my work. Compare Joh_13:19.

Isaiah 42:10

Sing unto the Lord a new song, upon this new and great occasion, the calling and salvation of the world by Christ.

From the end of the earth; all nations, from one end of the earth. to another, who shall be sharers in this mercy.

Ye that go down to the sea, & c.; you that go by sea, carry these glad tidings from Judea, where Christ was born, and lived, and died, and published the gospel, unto the remotest parts of the earth, that they may join with you in singing forth God's praises for his marvellous kindness and grace to them.

Isaiah 42:11

The wilderness; those parts of the world which are now like a wilderness; not literally, for he speaks of their cities in the next clause, but spiritually, desolate and forsaken of God, dry and destitute of the waters of God's grace, and barren of all good fruits.

Kedar; the Arabians; which were a heathenish and barbarous people, and well known to the Jews, and are synecdochically put for all nations in the same circumstances.

Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains: having mentioned cities and villages, he now adds those who dwell upon rocks and mountains, which are commonly more savage and ignorant than others, and therefore harder to be taught and reformed.

Isaiah 42:12

In the remotest parts of the world, as well as in Arabia, which was near to them.

Isaiah 42:13

Shall go forth, to wit, to war, or battle, as this phrase is used, Num_1:3,28 2Sa_11:1.

He shall stir up jealousy; he shall stir up himself, and his strength, and anger, against the obstinate and implacable enemies of his Son and gospel.

He shall cry, yea, roar, as a lion doth upon his prey, and as soldiers do when they begin the battle.

Isaiah 42:14

I have long time held my peace; I have for many ages suffered the devil and his servants, tyrants, and idolaters, and persecutors to prevail in the world, to afflict my people, and to hinder the entertainment of my doctrine and worship in the world.

Now will I cry like a travailing woman; now I will bring forth and accomplish that glorious work which I have long conceived in my mind.

I will destroy and devour at once; I will suddenly and utterly destroy the incorrigible enemies of my truth, and of my Son's kingdom. He alludes to those wild beasts which open their mouths wide, and devour all their prey at one morsel, or at one time.

Isaiah 42:15

I will make waste mountains and hills; not dry and barren ones, for these were waste already, but such as are clothed with grass and herbs, as the following words imply; which is to be understood metaphorically, of God's destroying his most lofty and flourishing enemies, who are oft compared in Scripture unto mountains and hills.

I will dry up the pools; I will remove all impediments out of the way; which is expressed in the prophetical dialect, by *drying up Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*, Rev_16:12. He seems to allude to that which God did in drying up first the Red Sea, and then Jordan, to give his people passage into Canaan. And this exposition is confirmed by the following verse.

Isaiah 42:16

The blind; the Gentiles, who were blind, and were called so, above, Isa_42:7, and in many other places of Scripture, and were so accounted by the Jews.

By a way that they know not; by the way of truth, which hitherto hath been hidden from them, until by my word and Spirit I revealed it to them.

I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; I will take away all hinderances, and give them all advantages and conveniences for their journey. I will direct them in the right way. I will enlighten their dark minds, and rectify their perverse wills and affections.

And not forsake them, until I have brought them with safety and comfort to the end of their journey.

Isaiah 42:17

This may be understood either,

1. Of the converted Gentiles; who shall be *turned back* from their former sinful course, and shall sincerely grieve, and be ashamed that they did trust, &c., as the word may be rendered; *that* they should ever be guilty of such wickedness and madness to worship and trust in idols. Or rather,

2. Of those Gentiles who, when their brethren embraced the true God and Christ, persisted obstinately in their idolatrous courses, who shall be confounded and destroyed; for this phrase of *being turned back* is generally used in Scripture in a bad sense; or of them who are overthrown, or put to flight in battle, as Psa_9:3 **35:4 70:2,3**, &c. And the like I may say of *being ashamed* , or *confounded* , or *put to shame* , especially where this phrase is joined with the other, as it is in the two places of the Psalms last quoted.

Isaiah 42:18

O you, whosoever you are, whether Jews or Gentiles, which shall resist this clear light, and obstinately continue in your former errors, attend diligently to my words, and consider these mighty works of God.

Isaiah 42:19

Who is blind, but my servant? but no people under heaven are so blind as the Jews, who call themselves my servants and people, who will not receive their Messiah, though he be recommended to them with such evident and illustrious signs and miraculous

works, as force belief from the most unbelieving and obstinate Gentiles.

My messenger; my messengers, the singular number being put for the plural, as it is commonly in Scripture.

That I sent; the priests and other teachers whom I appointed to instruct my people in the right way.

As he that is perfect; as the most eminent teachers and rulers of the Jews, whom he calleth *perfect* , either because it was their duty to know and teach the way and truth of God perfectly; or rather sarcastically, because they pretended to greater perfection, and proudly called themselves *rabbies* and *masters* , as our Saviour observed, and despised the people as cursed, and not knowing the law, Joh_7:49, and derided Christ for calling them *blind* , Joh_9:40.

As the Lord's servant; which title, as it was given to the Jewish people in the first clause of the verse, so here it seems to be given to the priests, because they were called and obliged to be the Lord's servants in a special and eminent manner.

Isaiah 42:20

Thou dost not seriously and impartially consider the plain word and the wonderful works of God, of which thine ears and eyes have been witnesses, which are abundantly sufficient for the conviction of any considering man.

Isaiah 42:21

Is well-pleased, to wit, with you; or, as this word is most commonly used, *hath a good-will* to you or to *this people* ; which may be understood out of the following verse, as is very usual in sacred Scripture. The meaning seems to be this; Although thou art a wicked people, that rebellest against the clearest light, and therefore God might justly destroy thee suddenly; yet he is very unwilling to do it, and will patiently wait for thy repentance, that he may be gracious unto thee. *For his righteousness ' sake* ; not for thy sake, for thou deservest no such thing from him, but for the glory of his own faithfulness, in fulfilling that promise and covenant which he made with thy pious progenitors for themselves and for their seed.

He will magnify the law, and make it honourable; he will maintain the honour of his law, and therefore is not forward to destroy you, who profess God's law, and the true religion, lest his law should upon that occasion be exposed to contempt.

Isaiah 42:22

But this is a people robbed and spoiled: but notwithstanding this great respect which God hath to his law, and to his people for the sake of his law, it is apparent that God hath severely scourged you for your sins; and therefore take heed that you do not provoke him by your obstinate infidelity, lest he cast you off for ever.

They are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses; they are, or have been, taken in snares made by their own hands, and by God's just judgment delivered into the hands of their enemies, and by them cast into pits, or dungeons, and prisons.

None delivereth; none saith, Restore; none afford them either pity or help in their extremities.

Isaiah 42:23

Oh that you would learn from your former and dear bought experiences to be wiser for the future, and not to provoke God to your own total and final ruin!

Isaiah 42:24

Do not flatter yourselves with a conceit of impunity, because you are a people whom God hath favoured and endowed with many and great privileges, which the Jews were very prone to do, as we see, Jer_7:4, &c., and elsewhere; for as God hath punished you formerly, doubt not but if you continue to sin, he will proceed in punishing you more and more for your sins.

Isaiah 42:25

The fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; most grievous judgments.

Yet he knew not; they were secure and stupid under God's judgments, neither fearing them when threatened, nor truly sensible of God's hand in them, and of the causes of God's displeasure against them, and of the means of cure.

Isaiah 43:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 43

Promises to protect and enlarge the church, Isa_43:1-7. God appealeth to them as witnesses of his power and knowledge, Isa_43:8-13. He foretelleth them the destruction of Babylon, and a new deliverance of his people, Isa_43:14-21; whose sins, Isa_43:22-24, against God's mercies, render them inexcusable, Isa_43:25-28.

But now thus saith the Lord; but notwithstanding thy gross insensibleness under former judgments, for which I might justly send far heavier ones upon thee, yet I will deal mercifully with thee.

That created thee; that made, thee his people, and that in so miraculous a manner, as if he had created thee a second time out of nothing; and therefore he will be gracious to his own workmanship. *I have redeemed thee* from the Egyptians, and divers other enemies; and therefore I will redeem thee again.

By thy name; by the name of *God 's people* , which was as proper and peculiar to them as the name of Israel.

Isaiah 43:2

Though I will chastise thee for thy sins, yet I will not suffer thine enemies utterly to destroy thee: compare Jer_30:11.

Isaiah 43:3

I gave Egypt for thy ransom: this was fulfilled either,

1. When God smote the Egyptians, both first-born and others, in Egypt, and drowned Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, for the safety and benefit of his people; or,

2. When the king of Assyria, either Sennacherib, as many think, or rather Esar-haddon, who designed to revenge his father's disgrace and loss before Jerusalem upon the Jews, but was diverted and directed by God to employ his forces against Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Seba, as it follows. **See Poole "Isa_20:1"**, &c. *Ethiopia and Seba* ; the Sabeans, who were confederate with the Ethiopians or Cushites.

Isaiah 43:4

Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: so the sense is, From that time that I chose thee for my precious and peculiar treasure and people, I have had a great esteem and affection for thee. But the words may well be, and by some are, rendered thus, *Since that* (or, *For that* ; or, *Because*) *thou wast precious in my sight, thou wast honourable* , (the same thing repeated in other words,) *and I love thee* .

Therefore will I give men for thee; as I did give up the Egyptians, so I am ready to give up others to save thee, as occasion requires.

Isaiah 43:5

Although the Jews shall for their sins be carried captives out of their own land northward and eastward into Babylon and the adjacent countries, and others of them shall flee southward and westward, and shall there pine away in their iniquities, as I threatened; yet their posterity I will bring back into Canaan, from all the places where they are dispersed.

Isaiah 43:6

Give up; thou who hast so long had and held my people in bondage, resign them to me, and permit them to return to their own land. He speaks either to the countries themselves by a prosopopoeia, or to the inhabitants of them. Bring my sons; do not only permit, but assist and further, their return.

Isaiah 43:7

Even every one that is called by my name: They are called by my name; I own them for my people and children; and therefore what kindness or cruelty you exercise to them I take it as done to myself. So it is an argument to move those people to let their captives go; or it is an argument to confirm the faith of God's people, that God would deliver them, because they are his own.

I have created him for my glory; and therefore I will glorify my power, and goodness, and faithfulness in delivering them.

I have made him; I have not only created them out of nothing, as I did all other people, but I have also formed and made them my peculiar people.

Isaiah 43:8

The sense is either,

1. Bring out of captivity my people who were blind and deaf, but now have their eyes and ears opened by my grace. So this verse relates to the foregoing passages. Or rather,

2. O ye idolatrous Gentiles, produce and bring forth your false gods, which have eyes, but see not; and ears, but hear not, as is said, Psa_115:5,6. So this verse belongs to the following context, in which God reneweth his contest with idols; which in this verse he calleth blind, and in the next verse proveth them so to be.

Isaiah 43:9

Let the people be assembled, to plead the cause of their idols with me.

Who among them can declare this? this wonderful work of mine in bringing my people out of captivity, which I have already foretold, and shall further declare; and that so exactly, that I shall name the person by whom this work shall be begun, even Cyrus, who is yet unborn, and shall be so for above two hundred years: let any of your heathen gods do the like.

Former things, not things already past, but such things as shall happen long before the return from the captivity, which yet your blind idols cannot foresee. **See Poole "Isa_41:22".** *Their witnesses* , who can testify the truth and certainty of any such predictions of theirs.

That they may be justified; that they may be owned for true gods, which in that case I allow them to expect. But of this argument see on Isa_41:22,23. *Or let them hear and say, It is truth* ; or if they can produce no evidence of any such thing, as I am well assured that they cannot, let them be silent, and hear me and my witnesses, as it follows in the next verse; and let them confess that what I say is truth, that I only am the true God, and that they are but vanity and falsehood.

Isaiah 43:10

Ye are my witnesses; they can produce no witnesses for themselves, but you my people are able to witness for me, that I have given you many plain demonstrations of my certain

foreknowledge of future events, by my predictions and promises delivered to you from time to time.

My servant whom I have chosen; either,

1. Isaiah, and other prophets, the singular word being put collectively: or,

2. Cyrus, who is an eminent instance and proof of God's foreknowledge: or,

3. The Messiah, as not only Christians, but even the Chaldee paraphrast, understands it, who is called by this very title, Isa_42:1, who also is the most eminent witness in this cause; and that both passively, as he, and the time, and place, and other circumstances of his birth, and life, and death were particularly foretold by God in Scripture; and actively, as many future things were foretold by Christ, of which we have many examples in the New Testament. *I am he* ; he of whom the present dispute is, or *he whom* I have affirmed myself to be. That I only am that true God whom we are now seeking in this debate. *Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me* ; the gods of the heathens neither had a being before me, nor shall continue after me: wherein more is understood than is expressed, that whereas the Lord is God from everlasting to everlasting, these false pretenders to the Deity are but of yesterday, and shall shortly be abolished. And withal he calleth them *formed gods* , in way of contempt, and to show the ridiculousness of their pretence to the Divinity, which are formed by the hands of men.

Isaiah 43:11

That can and doth save his worshippers: whereby he implies that the false gods were not only weak, and unable to save their people, but also were the destroyers of their people, as being the great cause of their ruin.

Isaiah 43:12

I have declared, and have saved; I first foretold your deliverance, and then effected it.

I have showed; I foretold it. This branch he repeated, because this is the principal argument used here, and **Isa 41**, to determine this controversy between God and idols.

When there was no strange god among you; and this I did when you did not worship any idols, and therefore it could not be pretended that you had this knowledge from them.

Isaiah 43:13

Before the day was; before all time; or, which is all one, from all eternity: or, *since the day was* ; since the beginning of time and things, in all ages since the creation of the world.

I am he; I am God, and I have proved myself to be so.

There is none, none of those which are called gods, *that can deliver out of my hand* ; that can save them whom I will destroy. Therefore they are impotent, and consequently no gods.

I will work, and who shall let it? nor can they hinder me in any other work which I resolve to do.

Isaiah 43:14

I have sent to Babylon; I have sent Cyrus, and the Medes and Persians with him, to war against Babylon, to this very end and purpose, that he might deliver you out of captivity, and restore you to your land according to promise.

Have brought down from that height of power and glory to which they were advanced.

All their nobles; their princes and great commanders, who as they are called shields, Psa_47:9, so here they are called bars, for the same reason, because of that strength and defence which they give to their people.

The Chaldeans; the common people of Chaldea, together with their great men who had palaces in Babylon.

Whose cry is in the ships; who make fearful outcries, as they flee away from the Persians in ships; which they had opportunity to do, because of their two great and famous rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and the several branches of them.

Isaiah 43:15

Your Holy One; the Holy One of Israel, as he frequently styleth himself, who sanctify and glorify myself in this and such other glorious works, with respect to you, or for your benefit.

Isaiah 43:16

Who as he formerly made a pathway for his people through the Red Sea, so he will in no less wonderful manner remove all impediments or difficulties out of the way of his people, when they return from Babylon.

Isaiah 43:17

Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; or rather, *Who brought forth the chariots , &c., i.e. Pharaoh, and his chariots, and homes, and army;* as may be gathered from the next verse, where the things here mentioned are called *former things, and things of old . They shall lie down together, they shall not rise ;* or, *they did lie down together ,* (to wit, in the bottom of the sea,) *they did not rise; they sank like lead ,* as it is said, Exo_15:10, and they never rose again to molest the Israelites, as God promised, Exo_14:13. These two Hebrew verbs are of the future tense, but that seems to be put for the preter tense, because the two following verbs, which treat of the same thing, and are added to explain these, are of the preter tense.

They are quenched as tow; as the wick of a candle when it is put into the water is wholly extinguished, and not the least spark of fire left, so were they utterly destroyed, and not one of them remained.

Isaiah 43:18

But although your former deliverance out of Egypt was in itself a most glorious work, which you ought always to remember and consider; yet this other work of your deliverance out of Babylon by Cyrus, and those blessings which shall follow upon it, and particularly that inestimable mercy of sending the Messiah, shall be so transcendent a layout, that, in comparison thereof, all your former deliverances are scarce worthy of your remembrance and consideration. Which exposition is confirmed by two parallel texts, Jer_16:14,**15 23:7,8**. From all which texts laid together, it appears that this latter deliverance, compared with that out of Egypt, is not to be confined to their freedom from the Babylonish captivity, but to be extended to the consequences of it, and especially to the redemption by Christ, because otherwise that Egyptian deliverance was more glorious and wonderful in many respects than the Babylonian.

Isaiah 43:19

A new thing; such a work as was never yet done in the world, even the redemption of the world by the Messiah.

Now; shortly, although it was not to be done till after some hundreds of years. For so the Scripture oft speaketh of things at a great distance of time as if they were now at hand, as Hag_2:6 Jam_5:9 Rev_22:20, and elsewhere; which it doth to correct our impatience, and to make us willing to wait till God's time come; and to assure us that the mercy shall come as soon as ever it is fit for us, and we for it; and to make us sensible of the inconsiderableness of time, and all temporal things, in comparison of God, and of the eternal things; upon which account it is said that *a thousand years are in God 's sight but as one day* , Psa_90:4.

Shall ye not know it? certainly you Jews shall know it by experience, and shall find that I do not deceive you with vain hopes.

I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; I will give you direction and provision in the wilderness, where there is commonly no path, and where all necessaries are wanting; which as it literally speaks of God's conducting them in the way from Babylon to Jerusalem, which lay through a great desert; so it is mystically meant of those spiritual blessings which God in and through Christ will confer upon all his people, not the Jews only, but also the Gentiles, who in prophetic language are oft compared to the wilderness, as Isa_35:1, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 43:20

The beast of the field shall honour me; shall have cause, if they had abilities, to honour and praise me for their share in this mercy. Possibly *the beast of the field* may mystically signify the Gentiles, whom the Jews reputed as beasts, and who were as destitute of all saving knowledge as the beasts which perish, yet should become the Lord's people, as they seem to be called, Isa_43:21. *The dragons* ; which live in dry and barren deserts, and are very thirsty, and therefore more sensible of this mercy.

To give drink to my people; to whom these waters were principally designed, but the beasts fared better for their sakes.

Thus Christ was primarily *sent to the lost sheep of Israel* , Mat_15:24; yet the Gentiles, there compared to dogs, fared better for the children, picking up some crumbs of their bread; and the Jews generally rejecting Christ, the Gentiles came in their stead.

Isaiah 43:21

This people; my people, as he now called them, Isa_43:20: consisting in part of the Jews, but especially of the Gentiles;

have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise; I have created as it were out of nothing, I have called them into my church, that I might have glory and praise from them for so stupendous a mercy.

Isaiah 43:22

But; or, *for* , as this conjunction is oft used. So this may be added as a reason why God called the Gentiles to be his people, because the Jews forsook him.

Thou hast not called upon me; thou hast grossly neglected or very slightly performed the duties of my worship.

Thou hast been weary of me; thou hast not esteemed my service to be a privilege, as in truth it is, but as a burden and bondage. Compare Mal_1:13.

Isaiah 43:23

Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; either,

1. Because thou didst not offer thy sacrifices to me, but to idols. Or rather,

2. Because what thou didst offer was not done to me, not for my sake, not from a principle of love and obedience to me, not to please and honour me with it; but merely for thine own ends: which interpretation seems to be favoured by the following clause, and by comparing this with Zec_7:5,6, *Did ye fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat Ñdid ye not eat for yourselves?*

Neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices, because thou didst either neglect this work of sacrificing to me; or didst perform it merely out of custom or ill design, and not with a

purpose to please and glorify me; or didst dishonour me, and pollute thy sacrifices by thy wicked course of life.

I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense: so the sense may be this, I did not require these wearisome services of thee, to wit, upon these terms, or to be offered in such a manner, as God speaks, Isa_1:11-13. But the words may very well be rendered, although *I did not cause thee to serve with offerings, nor weary thee with incense* ; the particle *although* being here understood, as it is in many other places, as hath been formerly noted. And so this is an aggravation of their former sin, of being weary of and negligent in his service; although God hath not laid such heavy burdens upon them, nor required such hard services or costly offerings from them, as might give them cause to be weary, nor such as idolaters did freely and greedily perform in the service of their idols.

Isaiah 43:24

Thou hast bought me no sweet cane; or, calamus, as this word is rendered, Exo_30:23, which was used in the making of that precious ointment, Exo_30:34, and as a perfume, or for the incense, Exo_30:7: see Jer_6:20. The meaning of this clause seems to be this, Thou hast been niggardly in my service, when thou hast spared for no cost in the service of thine idols, as is elsewhere noted.

Neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; thou hast offered no more sacrifices than were simply necessary; thou hast not multiplied thy thank-offerings and free-will offerings, though I have given thee sufficient occasion to do so.

Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins; thou hast made me to bear the load and burden of thy sins, which are very grievous and oppressive to me, Amo_2:13, and great exercises of my patience. Yea, thou hast made it necessary for me to take upon me the form of a servant, that I might bear and carry away thy sins. This clause and that which follows are opposed to and aggravated by what he said, Isa_43:23. I did not make thee to serve or weary thee with offerings, though that work was honourable and beneficial to thee, as well as conducing to my service; but thou

hast made me to serve in the vilest manner, with such things as are not only offensive to me, but also pernicious to thee.

Isaiah 43:25

I, even I; I whom thou hast thus despised, and wearied, and provoked to destroy thee.

That blotteth out thy transgressions out of my book, in which they were all written, and to be lead unto thee and charged upon thee another day. See Jer_17:1 Rev_20:12. Sins are oft compared to debts, Mat_6:12,14, &c., which are written in the Creditor's book; and crossed or blotted out when they are paid.

For mine own sake; being moved thereunto not by thy merits, but by my own mere goodness and free mercy.

Will not remember thy sins; so as to punish them, and destroy thee for them, as thou deservest.

Isaiah 43:26

Put me in remembrance: I remember nothing by which thou hast deserved my favour and the pardon of thy sins; if thou knowest any such thing, bring it to my mind, I allow thee free liberty to plead with me, as it follows; and if thou hast right on thy side, I will justify thee. It is an ironical speech, whereby he insulteth over those who were puffed up with an opinion of their own innocency and merit; which was the case of many Jews, as this and other prophets have oft observed.

Isaiah 43:27

Thy first father; either,

1. Adam, from whom the guilt and filth of sin is propagated to thee; or rather,

2. Abraham, who might well be called the *first father* of the Israelites, because they all descended from him, had all their right and title to God's ordinances and promises, and other special privileges, from God's covenant made with Abraham and with his seed, and who is oft emphatically called their father, as Jos_24:2 Isa_51:2, &c; and the Jews gloried in and trusted to that relation which they had to Abraham, as we read, Mat_3:9 Joh_8:33, and elsewhere. And this agrees well with the foregoing context. For having sufficiently intimated that they had no merits of their own,

he now addeth, that even their father Abraham, to whose merits they trusted, had no merits of his own, nor any occasion of boasting; for he also was a sinful man, and hath left some instances of his failings. Or *the first father* may be put collectively for their forefathers; and so he tells them, that as they were sinners, so also were all their progenitors, yea, even the best of them, Abraham, and David, and others, for whose sakes they expected to be pardoned and rewarded. And this indeed is usual with God, to upbraid the Israelites with the sins of their fathers.

Thy teachers; thy priests and prophets; who were their intercessors with God, and who were generally presumed to be the holiest part of that people; and therefore if these were transgressors, the people had no reason to fancy themselves to be innocent.

Isaiah 43:28

I have profaned; as they have made themselves profane, so I have dealt with them as such, without any regard to the sacredness and dignity of their functions. I have exposed them to contempt and destruction.

The princes of the sanctuary; the highest and best of your priests, whose persons were most sacred, and therefore supposed by themselves and others to be the furthest from danger.

To the curse; to utter destruction, to which persons or things accursed were devoted, of which this Hebrew word is constantly used. To reproaches; to be the objects of their enemies' scorn and reproaches.

Isaiah 44:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 44

A further promise of spiritual blessings, Isa_44:1-6. The vanity of idols, and folly of idol.makers and worshippers, Isa_44:7-20. An exhortation to praise God, Isa_44:21-23, our Redeemer and Maker, Isa_44:24, for his wisdom, Isa_44:25, truth, Isa_44:26, power, Isa_44:27, and goodness, Isa_44:28.

Although I have chastised thee for thy sins, and had just cause utterly to destroy thee; yet in judgment I will remember mercy, and will still own thee for my servant and chosen people.

Isaiah 44:2

From the womb; from the time of thy birth, or coming out of the womb. From that time that I first took thee to be my people, I have been forming and fashioning thee, by giving thee laws, and ordinances, and teachers, by threatenings and corrections, and many other ways. He seems to allude to the practice of midwives, who use to compose all the parts of the new-born infant into a right frame.

Jesurun; another name of Jacob or Israel, given to him Deu_32:15 **33:5,26.**

Isaiah 44:3

I will pour water; my Spirit and blessing, which is frequently compared to water; and so it is expounded in the latter part of the verse.

Upon him that is thirsty: either,

1. Upon him that desires it. Or rather,
2. Upon him that is destitute of it; for what is here thirsty, in the next clause it is called dry ground.

My Spirit; the gifts and graces of my Spirit; which expression he seems designedly to use, to lift up the minds and hearts of the Jews from carnal and worldly things, to which they were too much addicted, unto spiritual and heavenly blessings, and thereby to prepare them for the better entertainment of the gospel.

My blessing; all the blessings of my covenant, both spiritual and temporal.

Isaiah 44:4

They shall spring up as among the grass; they shall increase and flourish like grass, and those herbs and plants which grow up in the midst of it.

Isaiah 44:5

The blessing of God upon the Jews shall be so remarkable, that the Gentiles shall join themselves unto them, and accept the Lord for their God, and own themselves for his people.

Isaiah 44:6

Here God reneweth his contest with idols; which he insisteth upon so oft and so much, because his own people were exceeding prone to idolatry.

Isaiah 44:7

Who, which of all the heathen gods,

as I, shall call, and shall declare? shall by his powerful call or word cause it to be, and by his infinite foreknowledge declare that it shall be. Or, *shall publish and declare* ; two words expressing the same thing, as is usual.

It; that which shall come to pass, whatsoever it be; which is easily understood out of the following clause.

Set it in order; orderly relate all future events in the same manner as they shall happen.

For me, Heb. *to me* , so as I may hear it, and thereby be convinced of their Divinity.

Since I appointed the ancient people; since the time that I appointed or called the Israelites to be my people, whom he calleth *the ancient people* , because they were his people long before this time; or, as the words may be rendered, *the everlasting people* , because he determined that he would never totally and finally cast them off and destroy them, as he would do other nations. But the words are and may well be otherwise rendered, *since I constituted or made* (as this word is elsewhere rendered) *the people of the world* since I first made man upon earth, as the LXX. and others understand it. Let them give me an account of any of their predictions of future events from the beginning of the world to this day.

The things that are coming, and shall come; such things as are near at hand, and such as are to come hereafter.

Unto them; unto their worshippers; who consult their oracles about future events, as I have *told* them *unto thee* , O Jacob, as it follows in the next verse. So the pronoun relative is put for the antecedent, which is left to be understood out of the following clause. Or, *to* or *for* themselves, in their own defence. Although these words might have been omitted in the translation, as being

insignificant; such pronouns being oft redundant in the Hebrew language, as Gen_12:1, and oft elsewhere, as also in the Greek and Latin.

Isaiah 44:8

Have not I told thee? *thee* , O Israel, whom he bids not to fear. The sense is, I call you Israelites to bear me witness, whether I have not, from time to time, acquainted you with things to come, such as your sojourning in a strange land for *four hundred* years, and your deliverance and happiness after that time, Gen_15:13,14, and many things of the like nature?

From that time; from the time when *I appointed the ancient people* , as I now said, Isa_44:7. These were pregnant instances of God's prediction of things to come, not only from the beginning of the Jewish commonwealth, but even from the first ages of the world, as unto Enoch, **Jude 14**, and unto Noah, **Ge 6 13**, to say nothing of what other authors relate concerning Adam and Seth.

Have declared it; have published it to the world in my sacred records.

My witnesses, both of my predictions, and of the exact agreeableness of events to them.

Is there a God besides me? judge by this character whether I be not the only true God.

Yea, there is no God; I know not any; if any of you be wiser than I am, I am willing to be informed. It is a sarcastical speech. But this clause may be, and is by others, taken interrogatively, *do not I know it* ? Is it not a certain and undeniable truth, that there is no other God?

Isaiah 44:9

Are all of them vanity; hereby discover themselves to be vain, empty, or foolish men. Or thus, *They that make graven images, all of them* make (which word may fitly be repeated out of the foregoing clause, as is very usual in Scripture)

a vanity, or *a thing of nought* . Which translation seems better to agree,

1. With the following clause, which is added to explain this, in which, not the idol-makers, but the idols themselves, are said to be vain or unprofitable.

2. With the use of the Hebrew word in Scripture, which is never applied to persons, but constantly to things, and sometimes to idols, as 1Sa_12:21.

Their delectable things; their idols, in the sight and worship of which they take so much pleasure.

They are their own witnesses; they that make them are witnesses against themselves, and against their idols, because they very well know that they are not gods, but the work of their own hands, in which there is nothing but mean matter and man's art.

They see not, nor know; or, that

they (to wit, their idols) *do not see nor know* , have neither sense nor understanding.

That they may be ashamed; therefore they have just cause to be ashamed of their folly and stupidity, in worshipping such senseless things.

Isaiah 44:10

What man in his wits can esteem that a god which his own hands have formed, or melt a graven image (understand out of the former clause, *to be his god*) which is profitable for nothing? He speaks of melting a graven image, because the image was first molten and cast in a mould, and then polished and graven with a tool, as was observed before. Or thus, Who art thou, O man, that formest a god, or meltest a graven image to worship it, which is profitable for nothing? Come hither, and let me reason the case with thee; which he doth in the following verses. So this verse is a kind of summons to idolaters to come and plead their own cause.

Isaiah 44:11

All his fellows; either,

1. The workmen, as it follows, who in this work are companions or partners with him, by whose cost and command the work is done. Or,

2. Those who any way assist and encourage him in this work, and join with him in worshipping the image which he maketh.

They are of men; they are of mankind, and therefore cannot possibly make a god. Or, *they are of the meanest sort of men* ; for so the Hebrew word *adam* sometimes signifies.

They shall be ashamed together; though all combine together, and stand up with all their might to maintain the cause of their false gods, they shall be filled with fear and confusion, when God shall plead his cause against them.

Isaiah 44:12

Both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers; first he makes the metal soft and pliable, by putting it among burning coals, and then he taketh it out, and beateth it into what form he pleaseth. It must be here noted, that some of these images were made of brass and iron, as others were of gold and silver, Dan_5:4.

He is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint: this is mentioned, either,

1. As an argument of the vanity of idols, which cannot relieve their poor workmen, when they are ready to faint away through hunger, and thirst, and weariness. Or,

2. As an evidence of great zeal and industry in carrying on this work, so that they forget or neglect to eat and drink when their necessities require it. This I prefer,

1. Because it suits best with the next foregoing clause, *he worketh with the strength of his arms* , i.e. fervently, and putting forth all his might in the work.

2. Because the prophet in this, and in the next following verses, is only describing the mechanical part, or the matter of images, and the art and labour of the workmen in making them; and afterwards proceeds to the theological consideration of the thing, and the confutation of these practices, as we shall see.

Isaiah 44:13

He here speaks, either,

1. Of the same image, which is supposed to be made of wood, and then covered with some metal; or,

2. Of another sort of images made of wood, as the former might be made of iron. It is not material which way you understand it.

He marketh it with a line; he measureth and marketh that portion of wood by his rule and line of which the idol is to be made.

According to the beauty of a man; in the same comely shape and proportions which are in a living man, whom he designs to represent as exactly as is possible.

That it may remain, or *sit* , or *dwelt* ; which implies either,

1. That it cannot stir out of its place; or,

2. That when the image is made, it is set up and fixed in its appointed place.

In the house; either in the temple appointed for it; or in the dwelling-house of him that made it; that he and his family might more frequently give worship to it, and might receive protection from it, as idolaters vainly imagined.

Isaiah 44:14

The cypress and the oak, which afford the best and most durable timber.

Which he strengtheneth for himself among the tress of the forest: the sense of the words thus rendered is, that he planteth, and with care and diligence improveth, those trees among and above all the trees of the forest, that he or his posterity may thence have materials for their images, and those things which belong to them. And this sense seems to be favoured by the following clause, wherein it is said, he planteth an ash, for this very reason. Or the sense may be this, which he suffers to grow to greater strength and largeness than other trees of the forest, that they may be better and fitter for his use. Heb. *and he strengtheneth himself* , &c.; and he useth all his strength among the trees of the forest, in planting such as are proper for this end, in walking hither and thither to survey which is the best of them; in hewing them down, and in other things relating to them.

Isaiah 44:15

Having related the practices of idolaters, he now discovers the vanity and folly of them; that he maketh his fire and his god of the same materials, distinguished only by the art of man.

Isaiah 44:16

He eateth flesh; he dresseth flesh for his eating.

I have seen the fire; I have felt the warmth of it. *Seeing* is oft put for other senses, as *feeling, hearing, &c.*, as hath been oft observed before.

Isaiah 44:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 44:18

They have not known or understood: this showeth that they want common discretion, and have not the understanding of a man in them. *He*, to wit, God; who is easily understood, and is oft expressed by this pronoun *he*; and to whom this very act is frequently ascribed in other places of Scripture. And therefore men need not to be shy in ascribing it to God here. Which yet is to be soberly understood; not as if God did make men wicked, but only permits them so to be, and orders and overrules their wickedness to his own glorious ends. And such passages as these are added in such cases to give an account of the prodigious madness of sinners herein; because, as they wilfully shut their own eyes, and harden their own hearts, so God judicially blinds and hardens them, and sends strong delusions upon them, and gives them up to believe lies, and then it is no wonder if they fall into such dotages.

Isaiah 44:19

None considereth in his heart; whereby he implies that the true cause of this, as well as of other absurd and brutish practices of sinners, is the neglect of serious and impartial consideration of things.

Isaiah 44:20

He feedeth on ashes, which is an unsavoury, unprofitable, and pernicious food, and no less unsatisfying, uncomfortable, and mischievous is the worship of idols.

A deceived heart; a mind corrupted and deceived by long custom, deep prejudice, gross error, and especially by his own lusts.

Hath turned him aside from the way of truth, from the knowledge and worship of the true God, unto this brutish idolatry.

Cannot deliver his soul from the snares. and dangers of idolatry. This *cannot* is to be understood morally, so as to note the great difficulty, but not the utter impossibility of it; for if idolaters would consider things, they might be convinced of and turned from that gross way of wickedness, as is implied from the foregoing verse.

Is there not a lie in my right hand? what is this idol, which I have made with my right hand, i.e. with all my strength? as was said before; the right hand being the strongest and the chief instrument of this and other actions: which I set at my right hand, as the true God is said in Scripture to be at *the right hand* of his people, Psa_16:8 **109:31 121:5**: which I highly honour; for the most honourable place was on the right hand, as is known: to which I look and trust for relief and assistance, which God in Scripture is said to afford to his people, by *being at and holding of their right hand* ; Psa_73:23 **110:5**. What, I say, is this idol Is it not a lie, which though it seems and pretends to be something, and to be a god, yet in truth is nothing but vanity and falsehood, deceiving all that put their trust in it?

Isaiah 44:21

Remember these; either these men; or, which comes to one, these things, the deep ignorance and stupidity of idolaters; which may be a warning to thee.

Thou shalt not be forgotten of me; I will not forget nor forsake thee; and therefore thou shalt have no need of *idols* . Or, as the ancient interpreters and divers others render it, *do not forget me* ; what I am, and what I have done, and can and will do, for thee; the forgetting whereof is the ready way to idolatry.

Isaiah 44:22

I have blotted out, as a thick cloud; as the sun commonly dissolveth, or the wind scattereth, the thickest and blackest cloud,

so as there is no remnant nor appearance of it left. *Return from thine idolatry*, and other wicked practices.

I have redeemed thee; therefore thou art mine, and obliged to return and adhere to me.

Isaiah 44:23

By such invitations to the senseless creatures to praise God with and for his people, he signifies the transcendent greatness of this mercy and deliverance, sufficient to make even the stones, if it were possible, to break forth into God's praises; and withal, that as the brute creatures were sufferers by man's fall, so they should receive benefit by man's redemption.

Isaiah 44:24

That formed thee from the womb; of which phrase See Poole "Isa_44:2".

That maketh all things, & c.; and therefore I can save thee without the help of any other gods or men.

Isaiah 44:25

That frustrateth the tokens of the liars; of the magicians, and astrologers, and sorcerers, who were numerous, and greatly employed and esteemed in Babylon, Isa_47:12, **13 Da 2:2,48**, and who had foretold the long continuance and prosperity of the Chaldean empire. But, saith God, I will confute their tokens or predictions, and prove them to be liars.

And maketh diviners mad with grief for the disappointment of their hopes and predictions, and their disgrace and loss which followed it.

That turneth wise men backward; stopping their way, thwarting and blasting their designs, so as they can proceed no further, but are forced to retreat and take new counsels, and giving them up to such counsels and courses as are foolish and pernicious to themselves.

Isaiah 44:26

Of his servant; of his servants, the prophets, as appears from the next clause, which answers to this, where he useth the plural number,

his messengers; Isaiah and other prophets, whom God sent upon this errand, to foretell the destruction of Babylon, and the redemption of his people.

Isaiah 44:27

That with a word can and will dry up the sea (which in Scripture is very frequently called

the deep, as Psa_107:24 Isa_63:13 Jon_2:3, &c.) and rivers, and remove all impediments, and make the way plain, that my people may return. Some think these words relate to that stratagem of Cyrus, whereby he diverted, and in a great measure dried up, the river Euphrates, and made it passable for his army. But he seems rather to allude to that great action of God's drying up the Red Sea and Jordan, to give passage to the Israelites.

Isaiah 44:28

Cyrus, whom God here designeth by his proper name two hundred years before he was born, that this might be an undeniable evidence of the certainty and exactness of God's foreknowledge, and a convincing argument, and so most fit to conclude this dispute between God and idols.

He is my shepherd; him will I set up to be the shepherd of my people, to rescue them from wolves or tyrants, to gather them together, to rule them gently, and to provide comfortably for them.

All my pleasure; all that I command him to do, even to give leave and order for the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem, as it here follows.

Isaiah 45:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 45

Cyrus's work and strength foretold, Isa_45:1-4. God hath all power, Isa_45:5-12; will assist Cyrus, Isa_45:13,14. The mystery of Providence, Isa_45:15. Idols and their worshippers shall be destroyed, and God alone exalted, 16-21. The Gentiles come in to Christ, Isa_45:22-25.

His anointed, i.e. his king, whom God hath designed, and separated, and fitted, in all respects, for his work and service; in which and such-like respects divers persons are said to be anointed, who never had any material oil poured upon them, as the

king of Tyrus, Eze_28:14, and Christ, Isa_61:1, and Zerubbabel, Zec_4:14, and Christians, 2 Cop. **1:21** 1Jo_2:27. And they are thus called by way of allusion to the practice of the Jews, whose kings were frequently anointed, 1Sa_10:1 **16:13**, &c.

I have holden, or *strengthened* ; whom I will powerfully assist, teaching his hands to war, as the phrase is, Psa_18:34, supporting and directing his right hand to strike home.

Nations; the Babylonians, and those other nations which were confederate with them, and fought for them, as may be gathered from Jer_51:9.

I will loose the loins of kings; I will weaken them, for a man's strength consists much in his loins, and receiveth some advantage by the girding of his loins: or, I will take away their girdle, which was about their loins, to wit, their power and authority, whereof that was an ensign, of which see on Job_12:18 Isa_22:21.

To open before him the two-leaved gates; the great and magnificent gates of their cities and palaces, which shall be opened to him as conqueror.

Isaiah 45:2

I will go before thee, to remove all obstructions, and to prepare the way for thee, as it follows.

I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; I will destroy all them that oppose thee, and carry thee through the greatest difficulties.

Isaiah 45:3

The treasures of darkness; such as have been stored up and long kept in dark and secret places, as well in Babylon, Jer_50:37 **51:13**, as in other countries, which Cyrus conquered; and from which he took infinite treasures, as Pliny and others relate.

That thou mayest know, by the accomplishment of these predictions.

Isaiah 45:4

I have even called thee by thy name; I have called thee to this honour, and that by name; not for thy sake, but for Israel's sake; therefore do not despise them, thou wilt find them a poor and

enslaved people, neither be puffed up into a great opinion of thyself.

I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me; I knew and called thee by thy name, when thou didst neither know nor think of me; nay, when thou hadst no being.

Isaiah 45:5

I girded thee; I made thee strong and active, and fitted and disposed thee for these great and warlike enterprises. For these were the uses and significations of girding in Scripture: see 1Ki_20:11 Psa_18:32 **45:3**.

Isaiah 45:6

That they may know; that all nations may know it by my foretelling of these things so long beforehand, and by the wonderful success that I shall give thee, and by my overruling thins heart, and counsels, and victories, to the deliverance of my people according to my promise.

Isaiah 45:7

All men's comforts and calamities come from my hand.

Isaiah 45:8

Let the skies pour down righteousness; the righteous and gracious acts of God for his people shall be so many and illustrious, as if God rained down showers of righteousness out of heaven.

Let the earth open; open itself, either to receive those showers of righteousness to be poured down from heaven, or to bring forth those fruits which might be expected from such showers.

Let them, the heavens and the earth conspiring together,

bring forth salvation; the redemption of God's people.

Let righteousness spring up together; together with salvation. Whereas persons or people are sometimes delivered from their troubles by unjust courses, this shall be effected with righteousness, both on God's part, who will hereby assert his own justice and faithfulness to his people; and on Cyrus's part, who will do a most righteous and worthy action in rescuing a righteous and oppressed nation from cruel tyrants and oppressors.

I the Lord have created it; this great work of salvation, and righteousness; whereof, though Cyrus is the instrument, I am the chief author.

Isaiah 45:9

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! This woe is denounced, either,

1. Against those Jews who, hearing this and many other prophecies and promises of their deliverance out of captivity, and yet continuing in captivity, were ever prone to distrust God, and to murmur at him for punishing them so grievously, and for not making more speed to deliver them. Or,

2. Against the Babylonians, the great opposers of Cyrus, and of the deliverance of God's people, whom they were resolved to keep in bondage, in spite of God and men. And therefore as God here makes many glorious promises to Cyrus, in order to this work; so he pronounceth a curse upon them who should endeavour to hinder it, and admonisheth the Babylonians, that they did not only fight against Cyrus, a man like themselves, but against God, the Maker and Governor of the world. For what Nebuchadnezzar spoke with respect to those three Jews, Dan_3:15, the Babylonians spoke in their hearts, in reference to the people of the Jews, *Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth* ; contend, if you please, with your fellow creatures, but not with your Creator.

Thy work: he turneth his speech to the potter, of whom he spake in the third person in the foregoing clause; such sudden changes of persons being usual in prophetic writings.

He hath no hands; the potter that made me had no hands, i.e. no ability or skill to make good work.

Isaiah 45:10

As it were an absurd and impudent thing for a child to quarrel with his parents, either simply for begetting him, or for begetting him of this or that sex, contrary to his desire; no better is it for any persons to quarrel with God the Maker and

Father of all things, as God is called, 1Co_8:6, for disposing of them and their affairs by his providence as he sees fit, and otherwise than they desire or expect; as. the Jews quarrelled with God for bringing them into captivity, and the Babylonians for translating the empire from them to the Persians.

Isaiah 45:11

His Maker; Israel's Maker, who not only created him, as I did all others, but made him a new creature, and a peculiar people to myself.

Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me: the words thus rendered contain a concession or permission; and the sense may be this, Although the potter doth not give an account to the clay, nor parents to their children; yet I will so far condescend to you, as to be at your command in this matter, to give you an account of these great actions of mine, for which you quarrel with me. As for the expression, *command ye me*, though it seem to be harsh, yet there are instances in Scripture of such wonderful condescensions, as when it is said, that *the Lord will make his people in heaven to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them*, Luk_12:37. But the words seem to be better rendered interrogatively, as they are by some interpreter, *Do you, or will you, ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of mine hands will ye command me*? Will you not allow me that liberty which yourselves take, of disposing of my own children and works as I see fit? Must I give you an account of. these matters? Will you set bounds to me by your commands, that I shall do this, and not that, according to your good pleasure? This is intolerable boldness in you; and yet I am able to give a good account of my actions. And the account is given in the following verse.

Isaiah 45:12

I have made the earth, and created man upon it; they are wholly and solely my creatures, and therefore absolutely at my disposal.

All their host have I commanded; I have commanded them to be, or made them by my command, or the word of my power: compare Psa_148:5.

Isaiah 45:13

I have raised him; Cyrus, who; was named before, Isa_45:1.

In righteousness; not in a way of absolute sovereignty, as I might have done, but most justly, to punish the wicked Babylonians, to plead the cause of the innocent oppressed ones, to manifest my own righteousness, and truth, and goodness.

Direct all his ways; guide and assist him in all his travels and marches, in all his attempts, and battles, and sieges, crowning him with success in all his undertakings.

Not for price nor reward; freely, without requiring any ransom for or from them, as is usual in such cases. Such an exact prediction of these things, which depended wholly upon the mind and will of Cyrus, is mentioned here, as an infallible evidence of the certainty of God's foreknowledge, and of his being the only true God, because idols could discover no such things at such a distance of time.

Isaiah 45:14

The labour of Egypt; the wealth gotten by their labour. *Men of stature* ; a tall and strong people, who yet shall use their strength not to oppose thee, but to serve thee, and to bring their labour to thee.

Shall come over unto thee; either,

1. To thee, O Cyrus: because thou wast so generous as to dismiss my people freely, I will give thee another and a better recompence, even *the labour of Egypt* , &c. Or,

2. To thee, O my city, or my captivity or captive people. For it is not to be neglected, that there are no less than six pronouns in this verse, all which are of the feminine gender; which seems not to agree to Cyrus. It is true which is objected by the most learned author of this part of the English Annotations, that the Scripture oft speaks of states and kingdoms in the feminine gender; but when it speaks of any particular king or emperor, it constantly speaks of him in the masculine gender, as it doth of Cyrus in this very chapter, Isa_45:1, and elsewhere. And thus the sense of the place seems to be this, Jerusalem shall not only be rebuilt, but the wealth and glory of other countries shall be brought to it again, as

it was in former times; which although it was in part verified in Jerusalem, yet it was much more fully accomplished in the church of the gospel, which is oft expressed in Scripture under the name of Jerusalem; and in the accession of the Gentiles to that church, which began in Jerusalem, and from thence spread itself into all the parts of the world. And this sense seems best to agree with the latter part of this and with the following verse, as we shall see.

In chains they shall come over; they shall be taken captive by thee, and willingly submit themselves to thee; which was accomplished in the conversion of the Gentiles, whose subjection to God's church is oft expressed in Scripture under such metaphors as this; as Psa_45:5 **149:8**, &c.; Psa_68:18, compared with Eph_4:8.

They shall make supplication, unto thee; to obtain thy favour and society.

Surely God is in thee, or, *with thee* . We plainly discern that God is on thy side, or in the midst of thee; and therefore we desire to join ourselves with thee.

There is none else, there is no God; we are now convinced that thou art the only true God, and that idols are vain and empty nothings; which was but very obscurely fulfilled in Cyrus's time, but was most evidently and eminently accomplished in the days of the Messiah, of whom Cyrus was a type; as also this deliverance of the Jews from Babylon by Cyrus was a type of the redemption of God's people by Christ.

Isaiah 45:15

These are the words of the prophet, drawn from him by the contemplation of the great and various works and dispensations of God towards his church, and in the world.

That hidest thyself, to wit, from thy people for a season. Thy counsels are deep and incomprehensible, thy ways and carriages are past finding out, and full of beautiful variety. Sometimes thou hidest thy face, and withdrawest thy help from thy people, and sometimes thou dost show thyself to be their God and Saviour, as it follows. And therefore it is meet that we should patiently wait for the accomplishment of these glorious things here promised to us. And this admonition is most fitly inserted here, to prevent the

mistakes of God's people, and to intimate that these promises were not to be speedily executed, but that they must expect and prepare for many and sharp afflictions before that time should come, which yet should end in their salvation.

Isaiah 45:16

They; the idolatrous Gentiles, as it is explained in the end of the verse, opposed to Israel in the beginning of the next verse.

Makers; either the artificers, or the chief masters that set them on work, and consequently all their worshippers; although the makers being most guilty, and the cause of the sins of others, might justly expect a higher degree of confusion.

Isaiah 45:17

With an everlasting salvation; not for a short time, as it was in the days of the judges and of the kings, under whom their dangers and calamities did frequently return upon them; but unto all ages, as it follows; whence it appears that he speaks not only nor chiefly of their deliverance out of Babylon, which was far from being complete or perpetual, as appears both from Scripture, as *Ezr_9:8*, and elsewhere, and from other authors; but of their redemption by Christ, by which this was truly and fully verified unto a great number of Israelites after the flesh, and especially unto the mystical, God's church and people, who are frequently called in Scripture by that name; as the ordinances and privileges of the gospel are commonly described in the Old Testament by expressions borrowed from the Levitical dispensation. And that this is the meaning of the place is evident from *Isa_45:22*, wherein all the ends of the earth are said to be sharers in this salvation.

Isaiah 45:18

This description of God is here added, either,

1. To detect the vanity of idols, by asserting that none was to be owned as the true God besides that one God who made the heavens and the earth, and the inhabitants thereof. Or,
2. To demonstrate God's sufficiency to fulfil all these glorious promises made to his church, because he made the world of nothing, and upholds it by the word of his power; and withal to discover God's goodness to mankind, inasmuch as he did not create the earth in vain, but for the use and comfort of men, that it

might be a fit habitation for them; whence it was easy to infer that God would much more be gracious to his own people.

Isaiah 45:19

I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: the heathen idols deliver their oracles darkly and doubtfully, in obscure cells and caverns of the earth, or out of the bellies of their priests; but I have delivered my oracles to Israel publicly and plainly, as one that was neither afraid nor ashamed to utter my mind, lest I should be convinced of folly and falsehood; which was the case of idols.

Seek ye me in vain; serve and worship me for nought. As I appointed them work, so I promised, and from time to time have given, and shall give, them abundant recompence for their service; whereas the Gentiles seek to their idols in vain, for they can do them no good, as is observed in the next verse.

I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right; I require nothing of my people which is not highly just and good; whereas the idols commanded their worshippers to do many sinful and shameful things, even in their worship, as is notoriously known.

Isaiah 45:20

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together; to debate the business with me concerning the divinity of your idols, and hear what I have said, and am now about to say again, in that matter.

Ye that are escaped of the nations; the remnant of the Gentiles, which shall survive those great and many destructions which I am bringing upon the heathen nations for their abominable idolatries and other wickedness. Let these dreadful judgments upon others, and God's singular mercy in sparing you, awaken you to a more impartial and serious consideration of this point, and cast off those idols, which have now discovered their own vanity and inability to help those who serve them and trust in them.

They have no knowledge; they hereby discover their deep ignorance and stupidity.

That set up in a high place, where it may be seen and worshipped.

Isaiah 45:21

Let them take counsel together, to maintain the cause of their idols.

Who hath declared this? this great work of which I have spoken, concerning Babylon's destruction, and the redemption of God's people.

A just God and a Saviour; whereas the gods of the heathens are neither just nor saviours to their people, but wicked, and the authors and abettors of all sorts of wickedness; and so far from being either able or willing to save their worshippers, that they are the chief occasion of their utter destruction.

Isaiah 45:22

Upon these considerations, I advise all people upon earth, from one end to the other, to cast away their *idols*, and to turn their eyes and hearts to me, expecting salvation from me, and from me only; and their labour shall not be in vain; for they shall be saved: the imperative being put for the future, as Gen_42:18, and oft elsewhere. And this is not only an exhortation to the Gentiles to turn from *idols* to God, but a prediction that they shall turn to him, and look upon Christ, who shall be the author of salvation to all that obey him, whether Jews or Gentiles, which is confirmed by the following verse.

Isaiah 45:23

I have sworn by myself, which is the highest and most solemn oath that is possible, Heb_6:13, and therefore signifies that the matter here sworn is of an extraordinary importance.

The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness; it is not a vain word rashly uttered, and afterwards never remembered nor observed, but what I sincerely speak, and will most faithfully and infallibly perform.

Shall not return, to wit, *unto me void*, or without effect, as this phrase is more fully delivered, Isa_55:11. It is a metaphor from ambassadors, who sometimes return to their princes without any success in their business.

Unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear; not only the Jews, but a people of all nations, shall worship me, and submit to my laws; which is signified by an outward act, the bowing of the knee, Which is a posture of reverence and subjection; and by one eminent part of God's worship, which is swearing by his name.

Isaiah 45:24

Shall one say; or, *shall he say* ; each or every one of those whom he now said that they should bow their knees to God, and swear by him, Isa_45:23. Or, it shall be said; such active verbs being oft used impersonally.

In the Lord; by or from God alone, or the Messiah, who is the true Jehovah as well as man. *Have I righteousness, to justify me from all things, from which I could not be justified by the law of Moses* , as is said, Act_13:39. This plainly points us to the Messiah, whose very name is, *The Lord our Righteousness* , Jer_23:6, and whose great business it was to bring *in everlasting righteousness* , Dan_9:24, and who is made unto us of God righteousness, 1Co_1:30. Strength; support and assistance to bear all my burdens, and overcome all my enemies, and perform all my duties. The sense is, the Gentiles shall expect and obtain from Christ both justification, or forgiveness of sins by his blood, and sanctification by his Spirit.

To him shall men come; the Gentiles shall come to God and Christ, either,

1. By constraint or necessity, to be judged by him at the last day; or,

2. Willingly, by prayer to seek, and by faith to receive, righteousness and strength from him; which seems better to agree with the foregoing clause, which speaks of true believers only. *Coming to Christ is put for believing on him* , Mat_11:28 Joh_5:40 **6:35-37**, and elsewhere.

And all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed; or, *but* (as this particle is oft rendered)

all that are, & c. But all his implacable enemies shall be brought to shame and punishment.

Isaiah 45:25

All the seed of Israel; all Israelites indeed, whether Jews or Gentiles; all believers, who are frequently called God's Israel in Scripture, as Psa_24:6 Rom_9:6 **11:26** Gal_6:16.

Justified; acquitted both from real guilt before God, and from all false aspersions before the world; for this justification of the true Israel is opposed to their enemies *being ashamed* , Isa_45:24, which seems to design their public shame and confusion before God and men.

Shall glory; shall not only receive him, but shall rejoice and triumph in him as their God and portion.

Isaiah 46:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 46

The ruin of Babylon and her idols, Isa_46:1,2. God's love and faithfulness to the Jews, Isa_46:3,4. Idols not to be compared with God, Isa_46:5-8, for power, knowledge, and sure salvation, Isa_46:9-13.

Bel; the chief idol of the Babylonians, Jer_50:2 **51:44**, called by profane historians Jupiter Belus.

Boweth down; as the Babylonians used to bow down to him to worship him, so now he boweth down and submits himself to the victorious Persians.

Nebo; another of the famous *idols* , which used to deliver oracles, as his name signifies.

Their idols were upon the beasts; were taken and broken, and the materials of them, which were gold, and silver, and brass, as both Scripture and other authors witness, were carried upon beasts into Persia.

Your carriages, O ye Persians; to whom he suddenly turneth his speech, as is usual;

were heavy laden; they lie upon the backs of your cattle like dull, and unprofitable, and heavy burdens to the beasts, as they had been to men before.

Isaiah 46:2

They; either,

1. The idols, of whom these words are used, Isa_46:1. Or,
2. The Babylonians, who are sufficiently implied in that expression, *their idols* , Isa_46:1.

They bow down together; either,

1. One as well as another; or,
2. The Babylonians and their idols together, neither could help the other.

They could not deliver the burden; either,

1. The *idols* could not deliver themselves, who were now a burden to the beasts, and carried away by them; or,
2. The Babylonians could not deliver their *idols* , which he now had called burdens. And this sense seems most probable from the following clause, which clearly speaks of the same persons or things; *but themselves* , &c., Heb. *their souls* ; for although the soul is here put for the person, as it commonly is, yet that title is never given to any idol or lifeless thing, but only to such creatures as have or had souls within their bodies. So the meaning of this and the foregoing verse is this, that neither the Babylonians nor their idols could either save themselves or one another, but both are bowed down and gone into captivity together.

Isaiah 46:3

All the remnant of the house of Israel; fitly so called, with respect either,

1. To all the tribes of Israel, ten of which were now lost and gone; or,
2. To the state of the Jews at their return from Babylon, there being only a remnant of the two tribes which did return.

Which are carried from the womb; whom I have nourished and cared for from time to time, ever since you were a people, and carne out of Egypt, and that as affectionately and tenderly as parents bring up their own children.

Isaiah 46:4

And that care and kindness which I have had for you from the beginning, I will continue to you to the end; never forsaking you,

unless you wilfully and obstinately cast me off, as the Jews did when their Messiah came. You are my workmanship, both as you are men, and as you are my peculiar people; and therefore I will preserve and deliver you.

Isaiah 46:5

If you are tempted or inclined at any time to exchange me for an *idol* , do me and yourselves this right, seriously to consider, whether you can find another God who will be more able and more ready to do you good than I have been; which if you can do, I am content you should prefer him before me; but if not, as will appear by what I am now saying, Isa_46:6,7, then it is best for you to adhere to your ancient God and Friend.

Isaiah 46:6

Maketh it a god; let us suppose, a god made with the greatest cost and art.

Isaiah 46:7

They carry him; either,

1. In pomp upon solemn occasions; or,
2. From that place where he is made, unto that place where they intend to set him up, as it is expressed in the following words.

Shall he not remove; or rather, *he cannot remove* . He can stir neither hand nor foot to help his people.

Isaiah 46:8

Remember this, consider these things which I now speak, O ye Israelites,

and show yourselves men; act like reasonable creatures, and be not so brutish as to worship your own works; be so wise and courageous as to withstand all solicitation to idolatry.

Bring it again to mind; think of this again and again.

O ye transgressors; you who have been guilty of this foolish sin; and therefore are obliged to take the better heed that you do not relapse into it again.

Isaiah 46:9

Remember the former things of old; what I have done for you, and in the world, my evident predictions of future things justified by the event, and those other miraculous works whereby I have abundantly proved my Divinity.

Isaiah 46:10

Declaring the end from the beginning; foretelling from the beginning of the world, or from the beginning of your nation, those future events which should happen in succeeding ages, even to the end of the world, or to the end of your commonwealth; for such predictions we find delivered by Moses, the first founder of their commonwealth.

My counsel shall stand; as I will not, so no other power can, disappoint my purposes and predictions.

Isaiah 46:11

Calling a ravenous bird; Cyrus, called a bird for his swiftness and great expedition, and ravenous for his fierceness and victoriousness over his enemies.

From the east; from Persia, as Isa_41:2.

That executeth my counsel, concerning the deliverance of my people, and the destruction of their cruel oppressors, the Babylonians.

From a far country; from Persia, which was far from Babylon, but much farther from Judea.

Isaiah 46:12

Ye stout-hearted; or, *ye whose hearts are proud* , or *hard* , or *stubborn* . He speaks either,

1. To the Babylonians, You who are stout against God, and say or think that neither God nor any man can deliver my people out of your hands: or rather,

2. *To the house of Jacob* , expressed Isa_46:3, where he bespeaks them in the same words here used, *hearken to me* ; and to whom alone he directeth his speech in this whole chapter; for though he speaketh of the Babylonians, yet he doth not speak to them; and to whom the prophet, for the most part, turneth his speech in all his

prophecies, unless where there is something in the text or context which determineth it to some other person or people. And this very crime of stoutness or hardness of heart is most justly and most frequently charged upon the Jews by their own prophets every where, because of their gross contempt of and incorrigibleness under all God's words and works. And the prophet speaks this either to the Jews of his generation, or rather to that generation which was carried captive to Babylon, whose stout-heartedness is particularly noted and reprov'd, Zec_7:11,12. Compare Mal_3:1,3-15.

That are far from righteousness; that are not only void of, but enemies to righteousness and true holiness; that give up yourselves to wickedness, that despise my counsels, and promises, and threatenings.

Isaiah 46:13

I bring near my righteousness: though you are most unrighteous persons, and have given me just cause to make you to know my breach of promise, as I threatened in the like case, Num_14:34; yet I will show myself to be a righteous and faithful God, making good my promise of delivering you out of Babylon after seventy years; and though you think the time long, and are apt to distrust the thing itself, yet it shall come, and that speedily, *I will bring it near* , or *cause it to approach* or *come unto you* , and, as it follows, *it shall not tarry beyond the appointed time* . It shall not be far off; my work of saving you from the Babylonish captivity.

I will place salvation in Zion; I will bring my people from Babylon to Zion, and there I will save them from all their enemies.

For Israel my glory; in whom I will once again glory as my people, and the illustrious monuments of my glorious wisdom, and power, and truth, and goodness; whom I will make a great and glorious people, though now they are mean and contemptible, and in whom I will once more settle my glorious presence and ordinances.

Isaiah 47:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 47

God's judgments upon Babylon and Chaldea; for their cruelty towards God's people, Isa_47:1-6; their pride and other sins, Isa_47:7-10. Their enchantments shall not deliver them, Isa_47:11-15.

Come down from thy throne, as it follows, *and sit in the dust* ; either necessarily, because thou shalt have no higher seat; or voluntarily, as mourners do, bewailing thine approaching calamities. *O virgin daughter of Babylon* ; so called, either,

1. Because she had not yet been humbled and conquered; or rather,
2. Because she was tender and delicate, as the next clause informeth us. *There is no throne* , to wit, for thee. The empire is taken away from thee, and translated to the Persians.

Thou shalt no more be called; either be reputed so, or rather be so; for to be called is frequently put for to be, as hath been divers times noted. Thou shalt be reduced to great hardships and miseries.

Isaiah 47:2

Take the millstones; betake thyself to the millstones; as we commonly say, *Take thy bed* , or, *Betake thyself to thy bed* . The meaning is, Thou shalt be brought down to the basest kind of slavery, which grinding at the mill was esteemed; of which see on Exo_11:5 Jud_16:21 Job_31:10 Lam_5:13. For this work was not performed by horses, as now it is, but by the labour of slaves and captives.

Grind meal; grind bread corn into meal for thy master's use. Such metonymical expressions we find Isa_28:28 Hos_8:7, and elsewhere. *Uncover thy locks* ; or, *thine hair* . Take off the ornaments wherewith such women as were free and of good quality used to cover and dress their heads. This and the following passages, though delivered in the form of a command, are only predictions of what they should be forced to do or suffer, as appears from the next verse.

Make bare the leg, uncover the thigh; gird up thy garments close and short about thee, that thou mayst be fit for service, and for travelling on foot, and, as it follows, for passing over those rivers, through which thou wilt be constrained to wade, in the way to the land of thy captivity.

Isaiah 47:3

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered; either,

1. For want of raiment to cover it; or rather,
2. By thine enemies in way of scorn and contumely, by comparing this place with Eze_16:37 **23:29**.

Thy shame shall be seen upon thee for thy many and great injuries done to my people.

I will take vengeance, as a man meets his enemy in the field, to contend with thee.

I will not meet thee as a man, with moderation and gentleness, as those men who have not quite put off humanity use to do; but like a lion tearing thee to pieces, to which God in such case compareth himself, as Hos_5:14 **13:7,8**: compare Hos_11:4.

Isaiah 47:4

According to this version, the prophet inserteth this passage in the midst of this prophecy against Babylon, as Jacob inserteth a like passage in the midst of his blessings and prophecies concerning his children, Gen_49:18. And this may be here interposed, either,

1. As the reason why the judgment here denounced should be certainly inflicted, because he who had undertaken it was the

Lord of hosts, and therefore able to effect it, and

the Holy One, and *the Redeemer of Israel* , whom the Babylonians had cruelly oppressed, whose quarrel God would avenge upon them, and whom he had determined and promised to deliver out of their hands. Or,

2. As a pathetic exclamation or acclamation of God's people for this wonderful work of breaking the staff of their oppressors, which they here ascribe to God, as he is their God and Redeemer, whom they here make their boast of, and whom they celebrate for

this glorious deliverance. But because these words, as for, are not in the Hebrew text, and therefore another word may be as conveniently supplied, this verse may be, and is by some learned interpreters, otherwise rendered, and joined with the foregoing words thus, *I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man, saith our Redeemer, whose name is the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel* . For the word *saith* or *saying* is frequently understood, and therefore supplied by translators, as 1Ki_20:34 Psa_27:8 **105:15**, and in this very prophecy, as Isa_5:9 **45:14**, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 47:5

Sit thou silent, through grief and shame, and as mourners use to do, Job_2:13. Cease thy vaunting and insolent speeches; thou canst say nothing for thine own justification.

Get thee into darkness; thou shalt go into an obscure, disconsolate, and calamitous condition.

Thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms; the chief and glory of all kingdoms, as Isa_13:19, the most large, and potent, and glorious empire of the world, as thou hast been.

Isaiah 47:6

I have polluted mine inheritance; I cast them away as an unclean thing; I stained their glory; I removed them from the Holy Land, and from the place of my presence and worship, which alone made them a holy and peculiar people; I banished them into a polluted land, amongst uncircumcised and unclean persons, by whom they were many ways defiled; I rejected them from being my people, and so were in my sight no better than the rest of the heathen nations.

Given them into thine hand, to punish them, and deal with them as thou sawest fit.

Thou didst show them no mercy; thou hast exceeded the bounds of thy commission, and instead of that compassion which humanity teacheth men to show to such as are in misery, thou didst add to their afflictions.

Upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid the yoke; who besides their common calamity were afflicted with the miseries of old age, and therefore did require both pity and reverence.

Isaiah 47:7

These things; thy cruel usages of my people, and the heavy judgments which thou hadst reason to expect for them. *The latter end of it* ; of that lady or of Babylon, and her glory and empire, or of thyself; here being a sudden change of the person, of which I have noted many examples in this prophet. The sense is, Thou wast besotted with the sense of thy present felicity, and didst not consider, as thy duty and common discretion obliged thee, what might and was likely to befall thee afterward; thou didst neither expect a change nor prepare for it.

Isaiah 47:8

I am; I am independent, and self-sufficient, and unchangeable, as that phrase implies, which therefore is appropriated to God, Isa_41:4 **43:10**, and elsewhere. The prophet doth not here use the very phrase which the Babylonians used, but expresseth their sense in a Scripture phrase.

None else beside me; which is not either subject to me, or far inferior to me in power and glory; so that in comparison of me it may be said not to be, because it disappears like stars at the presence of the sun.

I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children; I shall never want either a king or people to defend me from all dangers.

Isaiah 47:9

In their perfection; in the highest degree. Thy king and kingdom shall be utterly and eternally destroyed.

For the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments; for thy superstitious and magical practices, which were very frequent there, as we see Isa_47:12,13, and as was observed before. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *in the multitude of thy sorceries* , &c.; in the midst of and notwithstanding all thy diabolical artifices, whereby thou thinkest to foresee any dangers, and to secure thyself from them.

Isaiah 47:10

Thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; confidently expecting to preserve thyself by these and other wicked arts and policies. Thou hast said,

None seeth me; my counsels are so deeply and cunningly laid, that God himself can neither discover nor prevent the execution of them.

Thy wisdom and thy knowledge in state policy, and the arts mentioned above and below,

hath perverted thee; hath misled thee into the way of transgression and perdition.

Thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; which was said Isa_47:8, and is here repeated, to note their intolerable arrogance and self-confidence.

Isaiah 47:11

Therefore shall evil come upon thee; or rather, *when it shall come* : Heb. *the morning of it* , the day or time of its approach. And they are justly upbraided and derided for this ignorance, because *the astrologers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators* , mentioned here, Isa_17:13, pretended punctually to foretell the particular time of all future events. And this explication agrees with the history, Babylon being surprised by Cyrus when they were in deep security, as is manifest, both from Scripture, Jer_51:31 **Da 5**, and from other histories.

Desolation shall come upon thee suddenly; or, when *thou shalt not know it* . Thou shalt not apprehend thy danger till it be too late.

Isaiah 47:12

Stand: this word notes either,

1. Continuance. Persist or go on in these practices. Or,
2. Their gesture. For those that inquired of their gods by any of these superstitious practices used to stand; this being a posture, both of reverence, and waiting for an answer. But this is not a command or concession, but a sacred irony or scoff at the folly of these men, who having so oft been disappointed by these

impostures, yet were as forward to use them and trust to them as if they had never deceived them.

From thy youth; from the beginning of thy commonwealth or kingdom. For the Chaldeans in all ages were famous, or rather infamous, for the study and practice of these arts.

Isaiah 47:13

Thou art wearied; thou hast spent thy time and strength in going from one to another, in trying all manner of experiments, and all to no purpose.

Stand up, and save thee to succour thee, or to inquire for thee.

Isaiah 47:14

They shall not deliver themselves, and much less thee,

from the power of the flame; they shall be totally consumed, and all the comfort which thou didst expect from them shall utterly vanish.

Isaiah 47:15

Thus , such comfortless and helpless creatures, shall they be; either,

1. Thy merchants, as it follows, with whom thou hast trafficked. Or,

2. Thy sorcerers, astrologers, &c., with whom they are said *to have laboured* , both here and Isa_47:12, who also may possibly be called their *merchants* , because they traded so much with them, and because of their deceitful practices; for which Ephraim is called *a merchant* , Hos_12:7. And so the following clause may be rendered, who have been

thy merchants from thy youth. Or the last clause may be understood of merchants, properly so called, who came from several countries to trade with Babylon, as is noted in Scripture, and by other authors; and the verse may be thus rendered; *Thus* (vain and unprofitable) shall they (thy sorcerers, &c.) *with whom thou hast laboured be unto thee* : (so here is only a transposition of words, than which nothing is more usual in Scripture. Then follows another matter in the next clause:) also

thy merchants, or *they with whom thou hast traded from thy youth, shall wander every one to his own quarter. None shall save thee* ; they shall all leave thee, and flee away with all possible speed to their several countries and habitations.

Isaiah 48:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 48

God reproveth their hypocrisy and obstinacy by his prophecies, Isa_48:1-8. He spareth them for his name's sake, and that they may learn to know him aright, Isa_48:9-11. God's powerful salvation a motive to obedience, Isa_48:12-15. God lamenteth their backwardness, Isa_48:16-19. Deliverance out of Babylon, Isa_48:20,**21**. No peace to the wicked, Isa_48:22.

Hear ye this, what I am now going to say against thee, that thou mayst be assured that that great deliverance which I have determined and declared to give thee is not for thy own sake, but for my name's sake.

Which are called by the name of Israel; which are Israelites in name, but not in truth, as it follows.

Out of the waters of Judah; from the lineage of your progenitor, Judah, as waters flow from a fountain, and as the Israelites are said to be

of the fountain of Israel, Psa_68:26. Compare also Deu_33:28 Pro_5:15, &c.

Which swear; which profess the true religion; one act of religion being put for all.

Make mention of the God of Israel; either in oaths or otherwise; that own him and seek to glory in him as their God, and call themselves by his name.

But not in truth, nor in righteousness; which are the two chief ingredients of a lawful oath, Jer_4:2. They are guilty of falsehood and injustice, both in oaths, and in their whole conversation.

Isaiah 48:2

For; or, as others render it, and this particle frequently signifies, *Though* . And so this is added as a great aggravation of their want and neglect of truth and righteousness.

They shall call themselves of the holy city: they glory in this, that they are citizens of Jerusalem, a city sanctified by God himself to be the only place of his true worship and gracious presence; which as it is a great privilege, so it laid a great obligation upon them to walk more holily than they did.

Stay themselves; not by a true and well-grounded faith, but by a vain and presumptive confidence, flattering themselves, as that people commonly did, that they should enjoy peace and safety, notwithstanding all their wickedness, because they were the Lord's people, and had his temple and ordinances among them; which disposition the prophets frequently observe and sharply censure in them.

The Lord of hosts is his name; or, *whose name is the Lord of hosts* .

Isaiah 48:3

I have declared the former things from the beginning; those things which have formerly come to pass, which I punctually foretold from time to time before they came to pass; whereby I gave you full proof of my Godhead.

They came to pass; what my mouth foretold my hand effected.

Isaiah 48:4

Because I knew: therefore I gave thee the more and clearer demonstrations of my Divine nature and providence, because I knew thou wast an unbelieving and perverse nation, that would not easily nor willingly be convinced.

Thy neck is an iron sinew, which will not bow down to receive my yoke, nor to obey my commands. It is a metaphor taken from untamed and stubborn cattle; of which see also Neh_9:29 Zec_7:11 Act_7:51. The sense is, I considered that thou wast unteachable and incorrigible.

Thy brow brass; thou wast impudent, and therefore wouldst boldly pretend that thou didst forsake me, for want of full conviction of my Divine authority, and of thy duty; therefore I determined that I would leave thee without excuse.

Isaiah 48:5

I foretold these things, that it might be evident that they were the effects of my counsel, and not of thine idols, as I knew thou wast very inclinable to believe.

Isaiah 48:6

Thou hast heard, see all this; as thou hast heard all these things from my mouth, from time to time, so now I advise thee to see, i.e. seriously to consider them, and to lay them to heart.

Will not ye declare it? I call you to witness; must you not be forced to acknowledge the truth of what I say? Deny it if you can.
Or,

have ye not declared it unto all people, as occasion required it? Have you not boasted unto the Gentiles of this as your honour and privilege? *I have showed thee new things from this time* ; and I have now given thee new predictions of secret things, and such as till this time were wholly unknown to thee, as it follows, concerning thy deliverance out of Babylon by Cyrus.

Isaiah 48:7

They are created now, i.e. revealed unto thee by me; brought to light, as things are by creation. Things are frequently said to be made or done in Scripture, when they are declared or manifested. Job_5:3, *I cursed* , i.e. I pronounced it cursed. Psa_2:4, *That thou mightest be justified* , i.e. declared and acknowledged to be just. Hos_5:15, *Till they acknowledge their offence* ; which in the Hebrew is, *till they be guilty* . *Not from the beginning* , Heb. *not from thence* ; not from these ancient times, when other things were revealed unto thee. *Even before the day* , Heb. *and* (or, or, as this particle is frequently used) *before this day* . Such pronouns are oft understood, as we have seen; and this day answers to nor in the first clause; and this clause seems to be added as an exposition of the next foregoing clause, which is more general and ambiguous, not from then or before this day.

When thou heardest them not, Heb. *and thou didst not hear them* , to wit, before this time, in which God hath revealed them to time by my ministry.

Lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them; either by thine own sagacity, or by the help of thine idols. The sense is, That it

might appear that thou hadst the knowledge of these things only from me, who made known unto thee only what and when I pleased.

Isaiah 48:8

Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; the same thing is repeated again and again, because this was so illustrious a proof of the infinite power and providence of the God of Israel, and so clear and full a discovery of the vanity of idols.

Yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened; Heb. *yea, from then* (of which phrase see the foregoing verse) *thine ear was not opened* , i.e. thou didst not hear, to wit, from me; I did not reveal these things unto thee; for so this phrase of *opening the ear* is understood, 1Sa_9:15 2Sa_7:27.

I knew that thou wouldst deal treacherously; I knew all these cautions were necessary to cure thine infidelity and apostacy.

Wast called, to wit, justly and truly; or, thou wast indeed such a person; *to be called* put for *to be* , as we have oft noted.

Isaiah 48:9

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger: and although thou dost justly deserve my hottest anger and most dreadful judgments, which also, if thou repentest not, I will in due time inflict; yet at present I will spare thee, and deliver thee out of captivity, not for thy sake, be it known to thee, but merely for my own sake, and for the vindication of my name and glory, as it follows, Isa_48:11.

For my praise; that I may be praised and magnified for my power, faithfulness, and goodness, and other perfections. *Will I refrain* , to wit, mine anger; which is easily understood out of the foregoing clause.

Isaiah 48:10

I have refined thee; or, *I will refine thee* . Although I will not cut thee off, or utterly destroy thee, as I now said; yet I will put thee into the furnace, not to consume thee, but to purify thee from that dross which cleaveth to thee, and needs such afflictions to purge it away.

Not with silver; or, *not among silver* ; or, not as silver; which is put into and kept in the furnace so long till all the dross be purged

away from it. I will not deal so rigorously with thee, for then I should wholly consume thee; in judgment I will remember mercy.

I have chosen thee; or, *I will choose thee* ; or, *I will yet choose thee* , as it is expressed, Isa_14:1 Zec_1:17. Or, *I will choose thee again* , as Zec_2:12. For it must be considered that God had in a manner rejected Israel, when he sent them into captivity, and *given her a bill of divorce* , as he saith, Jer_3:8; see also Isa_1:1; and therefore it was necessary that God should choose this people a second time, that they might be *betrothed to him* again, as is expressed and promised, Hos_2:19,20. This seems to me the true sense; although it may be thus understood, *I will choose thee* , i.e. I will manifest by my carriage to thee that I have chosen thee; or, that thou art my chosen people. Things are oft said to be done when they are manifested, as was observed on Isa_48:7.

Isaiah 48:11

Will I do it; this great work of delivering my people out of Babylon. *My name* is here fitly supplied, both out of Isa_48:9, where it is expressed, and out of the following clause of this verse, where he saith,

my glory, which is equivalent to it. The sense is, If I should not spare and deliver my people, my name would be sadly profaned and blasphemed, as if I were either impotent or implacable to them.

I will not give my glory unto another; I will not give any colour or occasion to idolaters to ascribe the Divine nature and properties, which are my peculiar, unto idols, as they would do if I did not rescue my people out of their hands in spite of their idols.

Isaiah 48:12

Israel my called; whom I have called out of the world to be my peculiar people, to serve, and glorify, and enjoy me; and therefore you of all others have least cause to forsake me, or to follow after idols.

Isaiah 48:13

Hath spanned; or, *doth span* , i. e. *mete out the heavens with a span* , as the phrase is, Isa_40:12, although that be expressed there in other Hebrew words. Or, *hath spread them out with its palm* , or *like a palm* , when the hand is stretched out.

When I call unto them, they stand up together; either they stood up and arose out of nothing, when I commanded them to do so; or they are still continually in readiness to execute my commands.

Isaiah 48:14

All ye; ye Jews, to whom he addressed his speech, Isa_48:12, and continueth his speech, Isa_48:16,17, &c. *Assemble* ; I challenge you all to answer what I have said before, and am now going to say again.

Which among them hath declared these things? which of the gods whom any of you have served or do still hanker after? The Lord hath loved him, to wit, Cyrus, who might easily be understood out of the foregoing context, in which he is frequently mentioned. The pronoun is put for the noun, as is usual both in Scripture and in other authors. Now God loved Cyrus, not with a special, and everlasting, and complacential love, for he was a heathen, and had some great vices as well as virtues; but with that general love and kindness which God hath for all his creatures, as is observed, Psa_145:9; and moreover with that particular kind of love which God hath for such men as excel others in any virtues, as Cyrus did; in which sense Christ loved the young man, Mar_10:21; and with a love of good-will and beneficence. God had such a kindness for him, as to make him a most glorious and victorious general and king, and the great instrument for the deliverance of his own people; which was a singular honour and advantage to him, and might have been far greater, and extended to the eternal salvation of his soul, if he had not wanted a heart to use the price which God hereby put into his hand. And as anger being ascribed to God is not meant of the affection, for such passions are inconsistent with the perfection of God's nature, but of the effect; so the love of God, when it is applied in Scripture to such persons as Cyrus, is not so much to be understood of an inward affection, as of the outward effects of it; and so this love is explained in the following words, by that prosperous success which God gave him against the Chaldeans.

He will do his pleasure on Babylon; Cyrus shall execute that I have appointed him to do for the destruction of Babylon, and for

the redemption of my people; which was in itself a good work; and therefore this is added as the reason why God loved him.

His arm shall be on the Chaldeans; he shall smite and subdue them.

Isaiah 48:15

I, even I; both the foreknowledge and the execution of this great achievement cannot be ascribed to idols, but to me only.

He shall make his way prosperous; God will give him good success in this undertaking. Here is a sudden change of the person from *I to he*, which is very usual. Or, as others render it, *he shall prosper in his way*; the preposition in being most frequently understood.

Isaiah 48:16

Come ye near unto me, that you may the better hear me, as it follows. A speech of God after the manner of men.

I have not spoken in secret; I have not smothered the counsel and word of God, but have plainly and publicly declared it. unto you; or, I have openly revealed my mind to you. **See Poole "Isa_45:19"**, where these very words are spoken by God in his own name, as here by the prophet in God's name; and so all comes to one.

From the beginning; either,

1. From the first time that I began to prophesy until this time. Or,
2. From the beginning of my taking you to be my people, and of revealing my mind to you. **See Poole "Isa_41:26"**.

From the time that it was these words also, as well as the former, are the words, either,

1. Of the prophet; and so the sense seems to be this, From the time that I was first called to be a prophet, I have been there, i.e. I have diligently pursued my prophetic function; I have hearkened from time to time, to hear what God would speak to me, that I might impart it to you. Or,
2. Of God; and then the sense may be this, From the time that I first spoke of it, or foretold it, I am or was there, to take care to

effect what I had foretold; I minded it carefully from that time, as being then more especially obliged to do it, lest my truth or power should be questioned. Or the words may be thus rendered and explained, *from the time that this shall be* , when the time appointed for the doing of this work shall come, *there I* will be, to encourage and assist Cyrus in the work. *There am I* : this is opposed to those foregoing words, from the beginning. *God and his Spirit* ; God by his Spirit; or, God, even the Spirit or the Holy Ghost, to whom the sending and inspiring of God's prophets is ascribed, 2Pe_1:21. *Hath sent me* , to wit, the prophet Isaiah; who yet was a type of Christ, and so this may have a respect to him also.

Isaiah 48:17

Which teacheth thee to profit; which from time to time have made known unto thee, not vain and frivolous things, but all necessary and useful doctrines; which, if believed and observed by thee, would have been infinitely profitable to thee, both for this life and that to come. So that it is not my fault, but thine own, if thou dost not profit.

Which leadeth; which acquainteth thee with thy duty and interest in all the parts and concerns of thy life; so that thou canst not pretend ignorance.

Isaiah 48:18

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! the failure hath not been on my part, but on thine: I gave thee my counsels and commands, but thou hast neglected and disobeyed them, and that to thy own great disadvantage. Such wishes as these are not to be taken properly, as if God longed for something which he gladly would but could not effect, or as if he wished that to be undone which was irrevocably past and done; which is a vain and foolish wish even in a man; and much more are such wishes inconsistent with the infinite perfection and happiness of the Divine nature; but they are only significations of God's good and holy will, whereby he requires and loves obedience, and condemns and hates disobedience.

As a river, which runs sweetly, strongly, plentifully, and constantly; and such had been thy prosperity. Then thou hadst

never gone into this Babylonish captivity, nor needed such prodigies of my power and goodness to deliver thee out of it.

Thy righteousness; not properly so called, (for he is not now speaking of their virtues, but of their privileges,) but thy peace and prosperity, as appears by the foregoing clause, to which this manifestly answers; which is called righteousness here, as it is also 1Sa_12:7 Hos_10:12, and elsewhere, by a metonymy, because it is the fruit of righteousness, both of God's righteousness and of men's righteousness; as by the very same figure iniquity is very frequently put for the fruit and punishment of iniquity.

As the waves of the sea; infinite and continual.

Isaiah 48:19

Thy seed also had been as the sand, to wit, for multitude, according to my promise made to Abraham; whereas now I have, for thy sins, made thee to know my breach of promise, as is said. Num_14:34, and greatly diminished thy numbers.

The offspring of thy bowels; which come out of thy bowels, or belly, or loins; for all these are but various expressions of the same thing.

His name; which is continued in a man's posterity, and commonly dies with them; and so the *name* here is the same thing in effect with the seed and offspring in the former clauses, which, for the most part, are only the memorials of men, and of their names, when they are dead and gone.

Should not have been cut off, as now it hath been in a great measure; and should have been totally and finally cut off, if I had not spared them for my own name's sake, as he said before.

From before me; or, out of my sight; out of their own land, the place of my special presence and residence.

Isaiah 48:20

Go ye forth of Babylon: the imperative is here, as it is very frequently, put for the future, *Ye shall go forth*, &c.; for this is not so much a command as a promise; although this form of speech may be the rather used to intimate that it was their duty *to go forth*, as well as God's promise to carry them forth.

With a voice of singing; with joy and songs of praise to the Lord. *Declare ye* ; publish God's wonderful works on your behalf to all nations.

Isaiah 48:21

This is part of the matter which the Jews are obliged to declare to all people, as they have opportunity, to wit, that God took the same care of them in their return from Babylon to Canaan, which was through many dry and desolate places, as he did in their march from Egypt to Canaan.

They thirsted not, & c., i.e. they shall not thirst. He speaks of things to come, as if they were already past or present, as the prophets commonly do.

Isaiah 48:22

God having in the next foregoing verses foretold, that peace and blessed deliverance which he would certainly give to *his servant Jacob* , Isa_48:20, he here adds an explication and limitation of this mercy, and declareth that wicked men should not enjoy the benefit of this mercy; where, by *the wicked* , he means either,

1. The Babylonians, who well deserved that title; who shall be destroyed, when God's Israel shall be delivered: or rather,

2. The unbelieving and ungodly Jews, of whom these very words are used again, Isa_57:21, and to whom such a denunciation as this was far more proper and necessary, at least in this place, than to the Babylonians; for he had already said far more and worse things than this concerning them, having again and again declared that Babylon should be destroyed, in order to this deliverance of God's people out of it. But there was great need why he should say this to the ungodly Jews, because they were exceeding prone to cry, *Peace, peace* to themselves, when there was no solid ground of peace; and they confidently expected a share in this great deliverance. This therefore was a very seasonable caution to the Jews in Babylon to take heed to themselves, and to prepare for this mercy, and to purify themselves from all wickedness; because those of them who should either wickedly tarry in Babylon, when God invited and required them to go out of it, and when their godly brethren returned to their own land, and to the place of God's worship; or continue in wickedness, when they were

restored to their own country; should not enjoy that tranquillity and comfort which they promised to themselves. And the necessity of this commination appears from the event; for the Jews that returned to Canaan did, for the most part, relapse to many of their former sins, and therefore fell short of that peace and prosperity which otherwise they might have enjoyed.

Isaiah 49:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 49

Christ, being sent to the Jews, complaineth of them, Isa_49:1-4. He is sent to the Gentiles with gracious promises, Isa_49:5-12. God's love to his church perpetual, Isa_49:13-17. The ample restoration of the church, and its enlargement, Isa_49:18-23, Powerful deliverance out of captivity, Isa_49:24-26.

Listen, O isles. God having in the last words secretly signified the wickedness of the Jewish nation, after so glorious a deliverance, and foreseeing that, for their wickedness, he should cast them off, he here turneth his speech to the nations of the Gentiles, who are frequently described in this prophecy and elsewhere under the title of *isles*, as hath been formerly noted, and inviteth them to hearken to those counsels and doctrines which the Jews would reject.

Unto me; unto Christ; for it is apparent from Isa_49:6, and other passages of this chapter, that Isaiah speaks these words in the name of Christ, by whose Spirit they were dictated to him, 1Pe_1:11, and unto whom alone they belong, as we shall see. So this chapter is a prophecy of Christ, which also is very proper and seasonable in this place. The prophet having at large prophesied of the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, he now proceeds further, and prophesieth of the redemption of the world by Christ, of which that deliverance out of Babylon was a type and forerunner.

Hearken, ye people, from far; which live in countries far from Judea, now the only place of God's special presence and worship. It is evident from the foregoing clause, and many other passages following, that he speaks of distance of place, not of time.

The Lord hath called me from the womb: this or the like expression is used of Jeremiah, Isa_1:5, and of Paul, Gal_1:15;

but it was far more eminently true of Christ, who, as he was chosen to this great office of redemption from eternity, so he was separated and called to it before he was born, being both conceived and sanctified by the Holy Ghost in his mother's womb, and sent into the world upon this errand; of which see Mat_1:21 Luk_1:31, &c.; it. 11, &c.

Made mention of my name; called by my name, and by such a name as signified my office and work, in the places now mentioned.

Isaiah 49:2

He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; as he made me the great Teacher of his church and of the world, so he assisted me by his Spirit, and made my word or doctrine *quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword* , &c., as it is said to be, Heb_4:12, killing men's lusts, convincing, humbling, and converting their souls; and *mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* , as we read, 2Co_10:4,5.

In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me; he will protect me by his power from all mine enemies, until I have finished the work for which he sent me.

Made me a polished shaft; like an arrow, whose point is bright and polished; which therefore pierceth deeper. This metaphor signifies the same thing with the former, Christ's piercing of men's hearts by his word and Spirit.

Quiver; where arrows are hid and kept. The quiver signifies the same thing with the shadow in the foregoing clause, even God's powerful and gracious protection of him from dangers and mischiefs.

Isaiah 49:3

As the name of David is sometimes given to his successors, 1Ki_12:16, and particularly to Christ, Jer_30:9 Eze_34:23 Hos_3:5, and Jacob is called, as many think, by the name of his grandfather, Abraham, Act_7:16, and the name of Isaac is given to his posterity, Amo_7:9; so here the name of Israel may not unfitly be given to Christ, not only because he descended from his loins,

but also because he was the true and the great Israel, who, in a more eminent manner, prevailed with God, that name signifies, of whom Jacob, who was first called Israel, was but a type. And as the name of Christ, the Head, is sometimes given to the body, the church, as 1Co_12:12; so it is not strange if, on the contrary, the name of Israel, which properly belongs to the church, be given to Christ the Head of it. But this word may be otherwise rendered, being joined either,

1. With the foregoing words,

Thou art my servant unto, or *in* , or

for Israel, i.e. to bring them back unto me, from whom they have revolted; or,

2. With the following words; it is Israel,

in whom I will glorify myself by thee.

Isaiah 49:4

Then I said, by way of objection. Lord, thou sayest thou wilt be glorified by my ministry; but I find it otherwise. *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought* , without any considerable fruit of my word and works among the Israelites.

My judgment; my right, the reward which by his promise and my purchase is my right. *Judgment* is oft put for *that which is just or right* , as Exo_23:6 Job_8:3, and in many other places. And so this clause agrees with the next; and the sense of both is this; Though I see no fruit of my labour among the Jews, and meet with nothing but contempt, and reproach, and ill usage from them; yet God sees my fidelity and diligence in my work, and he will give judgment for me, and my reward is laid up with and by him, which he will give me in due time.

Isaiah 49:5

To bring Jacob again to him; to convert the wicked and apostate Israelites unto God.

Though Israel be not gathered; not brought home to God by my ministry. This word implies that the Israelites were divided and scattered from God, and divided among themselves, as they were in a high degree when Christ came into the world, and turned

every one to his own way, as is said, Isa_53:6, and therefore needed to be gathered. Either it is a metaphor from wandering sheep, Which the good shepherd diligently seeketh, and bringeth home to the fold; or it is an allusion to the state of the Israelites, who either now were, or shortly were to be, dispersed into several parts of the world, from whence God had promised to gather them, and bring them into their own land, and unto his temple, Isa_43:5,6, and elsewhere. The sense is, Though Israel, God's own and only people, reject me, which will be an occasion of great wonder and scandal.

Yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord; God will not despise me for the unsuccessfulness of my labours, but will honour and glorify me, both with himself and in the face of the world, in crowning my endeavours with glorious success among other people.

My God shall be my strength, to support and strengthen me under this and all other discouragements and difficulties in the discharge of mine office.

Isaiah 49:6

He; the Lord, expressed both in the foregoing and following verses.

It is a light thing; this is but a small favour in comparison of what follows.

To raise up the tribes of Jacob; that remnant of them which shall survive all their calamities and desolations.

I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation; I will make thy labour effectual for the illumination, and conversion, and salvation of the Gentiles in all the parts of the world; which cannot be said of Isaiah with any truth or colour, and therefore must be understood of Christ, by whom this was literally and fully accomplished. By my salvation he means the great instrument and author of that eternal salvation which I will give to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 49:7

His Holy One; the Holy One of Israel, as he is frequently called.

To him whom man despiseth; to Christ, to whom, as he was in the days of his flesh, this description doth most truly and fully agree, being the same in effect with that, Isa_53:3; for men, both Jews and Gentiles among whom he lived, did despise him from their very hearts and souls, as is here implied; and *the whole nation* of which he was a member, and among whom he conversed and preached, abhorred both his person and his doctrine; and he was so far from being a great temporal monarch, as the Jews vainly imagined, that he came in the form of a servant, and was

a servant of rulers, professing subjection and laying tribute unto Caesar, Mat_17:24, **25 22:21**, and being treated by the rulers, both of the Jews and the Romans, like a servant, being despitefully used and crucified, which was the proper punishment of servants.

Kings shall see: though for a time thou shalt be despised, yet after a while thou shalt be advanced to such royal majesty and glory, that kings shall look upon thee with admiration and reverence,

and arise from their seats in token of reverence, as was usual, Lev_19:32 Jud_3:20 Job_29:8, or to worship thee, as the next clause explains it:

shall see and arise, may be put for when they see thee they shall arise to thee; which is a common Hebraism.

Because of the Lord that is faithful; because God shall make good his promises to thee concerning the raising thee from the dead, and concerning the effusion of his Spirit upon thy disciples, by whose assistance they shall preach most powerfully, and confirm their doctrine by evident and glorious miracles, and concerning the

giving unto thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession, as he promised, Psa_2:8. These and such-like considerations were the great motives which prevailed with the princes and people of the Gentiles to receive thee as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world.

He shall choose thee: and although thou shalt be rejected by thine own people, and *refused* by their builders or rulers, as was

prophesied, Psa_118:22, and for a time and in some respects forsaken by God himself, Mat_27:46; yet God will return to thee and choose thee again, and manifest unto the world, that thou, and thou only, art the person whom God hath chosen to be the Redeemer of mankind, and whom, in spite of all opposition, he will make *the Head-stone of the corner* . For the phrase, **See Poole "Isa_48:10"**. But these words are well rendered by others, *who will choose or hath chosen thee* , the conjunction *and* being put for the pronoun relative, as Isa_44:14, and in many other places, as hath been observed before.

Isaiah 49:8

Thus saith the Lord, God the Father, unto Christ, *In an acceptable time* , Heb. *In a time of good-will* ; in that time when I shall have, and in a special manner manifest, my good-will unto the sons of men; in the day of my grace, and of man's salvation, as this phrase is explained in the next clause; in the time of the gospel, which is the time of God's *good-will towards men* , as the host of heaven declared at the birth of Christ, Luk_2:14; *In the days of thy flesh, when thou didst offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save thee from death* , as we read, Heb_5:7, which text is a good comment upon this place. *Heard thee* ; though not so as to deliver thee from death and from the sense of my wrath, yet so as to keep thee from sinking under these burdens, and so as thou shouldst not be *holden under the pains or power of death* , Act_2:24, and so as to crown thee with glory and honour, and a blessed success of all thy labours and sufferings.

In a day of salvation; in the time of grace and of the gospel, which I have appointed for the working out of man's salvation by thee.

I will preserve thee upon earth till thy work be finished, and unto that eternal kingdom and glory which is prepared for thee.

Give thee for a covenant; to be the *Mediator* and *Surety of that covenant* , which is made between me and them; as Christ is called, Heb_7:22 **8:6**; to renew and *confirm the covenant* , which the Messiah is said to do, Dan_9:27, by his own blood, by which God and men are reconciled and united one to the other. And

therefore he may well be called the covenant by a known metonymy, which is very usual in such cases, as upon the same account circumcision, the sign of the covenant, is called *God's covenant*, Gen_17:10, and the paschal lamb is called the *passover*, Exo_12:11, and the sacramental cup is called the new testament, Luk_22:20, *and the communion of the blood of Christ*, 1Co_10:16. *Of the people*; indefinitely of all my people, not only Jews, but also the Gentiles, as may be gathered from the context, and by comparing this place with Isa_42:6, where the same phrase is used; from both which places it is most manifest that the Messiah is designed, and not Isaiah, to whom this and divers other phrases here used cannot be ascribed without great force.

To establish the earth; to compose and settle the earth, and the inhabitants thereof, by making peace between God and men, and between Jews and Gentiles, and by establishing truth, and righteousness, and holiness upon earth, and by subduing those lusts and passions which are the great disturbers of human society; which was the design of God in sending, and of Christ in coming into the world.

To cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that desolate places may be repaired and repossessed. That Christ may possess the heathen, according to Psa_2:8, who were in a spiritual sense in a most desolate and forlorn condition.

Isaiah 49:9

That thou mayest say, to wit, with power and effect, as when God said, *Let there be light*, &c. *To the prisoners*; to the Gentiles, who are fast bound by the cords of their sins, and taken captive by the devil at his will, as this same phrase is understood, Isa_42:7.

Go forth; come forth to the light, receive Divine illumination and consolation.

They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places; they shall have abundant provision in all places, yea, even in those which commonly are barren and unfruitful, and such are both common roads and high grounds.

Isaiah 49:10

They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; they shall be supplied with all good and necessary things, and kept from all evil occurrences.

He that hath mercy on them shall lead them; God who hath magnified his mercy to them will conduct them with safety and comfort.

Isaiah 49:11

I will remove all hinderances, and prepare the way for them, by levelling high grounds, and raising low grounds; of which see on Isa_40:3,4.

Isaiah 49:12

These shall come from far; my people shall be called and gathered even from the most remote parts of the earth. He speaks here, and in many other places, of the conversion of the Gentiles, with allusion to that work of gathering and bringing back the Jews from all parts where they were dispersed into their own land.

From the north and from the west; from the several parts of the world; which are here synecdochically expressed, as they are in many other places.

From the land of Sinim; either of the Sinites, as they are called, Gen_10:17, who dwelt about the wilderness of Sin, which was southward from Judea; or of Sin, a famous city of Egypt, called *the strength of Egypt*, which may be synecdochically put for all Egypt, and that for all southern parts. And so he here mentions the several quarters of the world, where the generality of the Jews were dispersed; *the north*, which is every where named as the chief place of their banishment and dispersion, as Jer_16:15 **31:8**, and elsewhere; *the west*, the western countries and islands; and the south.

Isaiah 49:13

The Lord hath comforted his people; God hath now sent that long-desired consolation of Israel.

Isaiah 49:14

This is an objection against all these glorious predictions and promises hitherto mentioned. How can these things be true, when

the condition of God's church is now so sad and desperate? as it was when the Jews were captives in Babylon, in which the prophet here supposeth them to be.

Isaiah 49:15

Earthly parents sometimes are so unnatural and monstrous; but do not entertain such unworthy thoughts of me. I will remember thee effectually, to bring thee out of Babylon, and, which is infinitely greater, to send my Son into the world to work out eternal redemption for thee.

Isaiah 49:16

I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; mine eye and heart is constantly upon thee. He alludes to the common practice of men, who use to put signs and memorials upon their hands or fingers of such things as they dearly affect, and would remember. See Exo_13:9 Deu_6:8 Pro_6:21 Son_8:6 Jer_22:24.

Thy walls are continually before me; my thoughts run continually upon the walls of Jerusalem, which are now broken down, that I may repair them as soon as ever the set time cometh, and then proceed to do far greater things for thee.

Isaiah 49:17

Thy children; or, as others render it, *thy builders* ; which is favoured by the next clause, where the destroyers are opposed to them. Howsoever, the sense is the same; for her children were her builders, as we read in Ezra and Nehemiah.

Shall go forth of thee; shall be separated and driven from among thee, and so shall neither hinder nor annoy thee.

Isaiah 49:18

All these, to wit, the Gentiles, as sufficiently appeareth from what hath been already said, and from that which followeth. The sense is, Thy church shall not only be restored and established in Jerusalem, but it shall be vastly enlarged and adorned by the accession of the Gentiles to it.

Come to thee, to receive instruction from thee, and to be incorporated with thee into one and the same church.

As with an ornament; they shall not be a burden, as the Gentiles formerly were when they mixed themselves with the Jews; but an

ornament, in respect of those excellent gifts and graces wherewith they shall enrich and honour thy church.

Isaiah 49:19

Thy waste and thy desolate places; thy own land, which is now waste and desolate, and whereof divers parts lay formerly waste and desolate for want of people to possess and manage them.

The land of thy destruction; or rather, *thy land of destruction* ; so called because it is devoted and shall be exposed to destruction. Shall be far away, to wit, from thee.

Isaiah 49:20

The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, Heb. *The children of thine orbity or barren and childless state* . Those children which thou shalt have when thou art grown past the ordinary age and state of childbearing, as Sarah was made the mother of a most numerous posterity; . to which he seems here to allude. Those Gentiles which shall be begotten by thee, to wit, by the ministry of thy children, Christ and his apostles, when thou shalt be deprived of thine own natural children, when thou shalt become barren and unfruitful as to conversion of natural Jews, when the generality of the Jews shall cut themselves off from God, and from his true church, by their apostacy from God, and by their unbelief and obstinate refusal of their Messiah.

Shall say again, or rather,

shall yet say, though for the present it be otherwise.

Isaiah 49:21

Then shalt thou say, not without admiration,

Who hath begotten me these? whence or by whom have I this numberless issue?

Seeing I have lost my children; seeing it is not long since that I was in a manner left childless. *Am desolate* ; without a husband, being forsaken by God, who formerly owned himself for *my Husband* , Isa_54:5 Jer_31:32, and elsewhere.

A captive, and removing to and fro; which condition is in many respects a great impediment to the procreation of children. Who hath brought up these? the same thing repeated again to express

the miraculousness of this work, and the great surprisal of the Jews at it; which showeth that he speaks of the conversion of the Gentiles.

Isaiah 49:22

I will lift up mine hand; I will call them to me, and command them to do this work, as men commonly signify their calls and commands by this gesture.

Set up my standard, as generals do to gather their forces together. **See Poole "Isa_11:12".** *To the people* ; unto thee, or to thy church and people. *Shall bring thy sons* ; those which shall be thine, if not by natural generation, yet by adoption, that shall own God for their Father, and Jerusalem for their mother.

In their arms; with great care and tenderness, as nurses carry young infants. The sense is, Even the heathen shall contribute to the increase and preservation of those children which shall be begotten to thee.

Thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders; as sick or infirm persons used to be carried.. See Mar_2:3 Luk_15:5.

Isaiah 49:23

Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; kings and queens shall have a sincere affection and tender regard unto thee and thy children, which was in some sort fulfilled by Cyrus, Ahasuerus, and some few others of the Persian kings or queens, but much more truly and fully by those many kings and emperors of the Gentile world, which after Christ's time did both themselves embrace the true religion, and also set it up in their several dominions.

They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; they shall highly reverence and honour thee, and shall most humbly and readily submit themselves unto thee, which was not verified in any of the Persian kings, but only in these kings who were converted to the Christian faith and church. The expressions are borrowed from the practice of the Eastern people in their prostrations and adorations, when they bowed so low as to touch and kiss the ground, whereby they did or might seem to lick up the very dust of the ground which was about or under the feet of those whom they adored.

They shall not be ashamed that wait for me; their hopes and expectations shall not be disappointed, but abundantly satisfied.

Isaiah 49:24

Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? here he starteth an objection against the forementioned promises: How can God's church be delivered, when she is become a prey to, and is in the hands of, her most potent enemies?

Or the lawful captive delivered? he who was taken captive in a just war, as God's people might in some sort be said to be, because God himself had delivered them into their enemy's hands, and that justly for their sins. So here is a double impediment to their deliverance out of their corporal and spiritual bondage; the great power of the enemy which kept them in bondage, and the justice of God, which pleads against them and against their deliverance.

Isaiah 49:25

The prey of the terrible; or, *of the violent* ; which is opposed to *the lawful captive* in the foregoing verse; and it is hereby intimated, that although God was just in delivering them into captivity, yet their oppressors were guilty of injustice and violence, both in desiring and endeavouring to keep them in perpetual bondage beyond the seventy years which God had fixed, and in their cruel usage of them.

I will contend; I the Almighty God will undertake thy quarrel and this work, and therefore it must necessarily be accomplished.

Isaiah 49:26

I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; I will make them eat their own flesh, either through hunger, as Lev_26:29 Isa_9:20, or through rage and madness. Or, I will make thine enemies to destroy one another, and that greedily and with delight, as the next clause implies. All their enemies are here represented as one body; and so when one part of them devoured another, it was their

own flesh that was destroyed.

Isaiah 50:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 50

The dereliction of the Jews is not of Christ; for he hath power to save, Isa_50:1-4; and was obedient in that work; and God is present with him, Isa_50:5-9. An exhortation not to trust in ourselves, but in God, Isa_50:10,11.

Thus saith the Lord: this is another sermon begun here, and continued in the next chapter. The main scope of it is to vindicate God's justice, and to convince the Jews that they were the causes of all their calamities which they imputed to God.

Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? God had formerly espoused' the Israelites to himself in a kind of matrimonial covenant, but seemed to cast them off when he sent them to Babylon, and did wholly reject them afterward from being his people, and took the Gentiles into their stead; which great and wonderful change was foretold in the Old Testament, as hath been already observed, and we shall see again, and accomplished in the New. And because God foresaw that those strange dispensations would provoke the Jews to murmur and quarrel with God for, casting them off without sufficient cause, as indeed they were always prone to accuse God, and to vindicate themselves, he bids them produce their bill of divorce; for those husbands which put away their wives merely out of levity or passion were obliged to give their wives a bill of divorce, which vindicated the wife's innocency, and declared that the husband's will and pleasure was the cause of the divorce; of which see the notes on Deu_24:1 Mat_19:3.

Which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? have I any creditors to whom I was obliged or willing to sell you for the payment of my debt? Produce then the bill of sale to witness against me. Parents might, and in some cases were forced to sell their children to their creditors; of which see on Exo_21:7, and 2Ki_4:1.

For your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, & c.; you can blame none but yourselves and your own sins for all your captivities and miseries.

Isaiah 50:2

The general accusation delivered in the last words he now proveth by particular instances. *When I came; when I* , first by my prophets, and at last by my Son, came unto them, to call them to repentance, and to redeem and deliver them, as it is explained in the following clauses of this verse. No man that regarded and received me, that complied with my call and offer of grace, as it follows; whereby he implies that the generality of the Jews were guilty of gross infidelity and obstinate disobedience, and therefore might justly be rejected.

When I called; called them to repentance, or to come unto me, or to do my will, as masters call their servants.

None to answer; to come at my call, to obey my commands. *Have I no power to deliver ?* what is the reason of this horrible contempt and rebellion? Is it because you expect no good from me, but think that I am either unwilling or unable to save you? Because you see no miracles wrought for you to save you from the Babylonians; and because my Son, your Messiah, cometh not with pomp and power, as you expect, but in the form of a servant, poor, and exposed to contempt and death; do you therefore believe that my power to deliver you is less than it was?

At my rebuke: this phrase is borrowed from Psa_106:9, and it is used Mat_8:26. At my word or command, whereby I rebuke and check its proud waves.

I dry up, Heb. *I will dry up* ; or, *I can dry up* ; the future verb being put potentially. As I did it once, so I can and will do it again, when occasion requires it. *I make the rivers a wilderness* ; as dry and fit for travel as a wilderness.

Isaiah 50:3

I clothe the heavens with blackness; or, *I will or can clothe &c.* What I once did in Egypt, when I drew black curtains before all the heavenly lights, and caused an unparalleled and amazing darkness for three days together, to the great terror of mine enemies, so I can and will do still when it is necessary to save my people. And therefore you have no reason to distrust me.

I make sackcloth their covering; I cover them with thick and dark clouds, black as sackcloth, as is said, Rev_6:12, or as that

stuff of which the tents of Kedar were made, Son_1:5. From this and some other expressions it appears that they wore a black sackcloth, which also was most suitable to the state of mourners, by whom it was used.

Isaiah 50:4

God having asserted his own power, to show the groundlessness of the infidelity of the Jews, he proceeds to show what excellent and effectual means he used to bring them to repentance and salvation; which he mentions as a great aggravation of their unbelief and rebellion, which by this means was without all excuse. This and the following passages may be in some sort understood of the prophet Isaiah, though but obscurely and imperfectly; but they are far more evidently and eminently verified in Christ, and indeed seem to be meant directly of him. For seeing there are many other passages in this prophecy which are directly meant of Christ, and of his ministry, and not at all of the prophet, why may not this be added to the number of them? especially considering that there is nothing here which forceth us to understand this place of Isaiah, and several of these passages are expounded of Christ in the New Testament, as is confessed. Besides, this seems to suit best with the coherence; for according to this exposition the same person speaketh here who hath spoken in all the foregoing verses of the chapter, even the Lord himself considered as man, because he was both God and man, as is abundantly evident from many scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, as hath been already proved, and will hereafter be more fully evinced.

The tongue of the learned; an ability of speaking plainly, and convincingly, and persuadingly, and in all points so as becometh a person taught of God, and filled with all Divine and heavenly wisdom and knowledge, and with a singular skill of winning souls, and of working upon men's hearts and consciences.

Him that is weary; burdened with the sense of his sad and deplorable condition, in which case a word of comfort is most seasonable and acceptable. This was the proper and principal design of Christ's ministry, to give rest and comfort to distressed souls, according to what is said with respect to this place, Mat_11:28; and all the doctrines, reproofs, and threatenings of

Christ were directed to this end, to make men fit for comfort and salvation.

He wakeneth, to wit, me, the pronoun being oft understood; or, as it follows, *mine ear. Morning by morning* ; from time to time, and continually.

He wakeneth mine ear to hear; because human nature is of itself weak and slothful, he by his Divine power assisteth and stirreth me up to the observation and practice of all his commands and my duties.

As the learned; either,

1. As learned men or teachers use to awaken their scholars to hear and learn of them from time to time; or rather,
2. As those that are or desire and endeavour, up to be learned use to hear with all possible attention and diligence; for this title of *learned* is in the former part of the verse given not to the teacher, who is said to be God, but to the person taught by him.

Isaiah 50:5

Hath opened mine ear; hath revealed unto me; or rather, hath given me a power and will to hear and receive his commands, as this phrase is used, Psa_40:6 Isa_35:5, and elsewhere.

I was not rebellious; I readily did and suffered what he required of me.

Neither turned away back: the same thing repeated in other words. I did not turn away mine ear from hearing any of God's commands, nor my feet from going where God sent me, how difficult or dangerous soever my employment was. He seems to allude to the former prophets, who had, divers of them, shrunk back, and for a time refused such work as God called them to, as Moses, Exo_3:11,13, Jon_1:8, and others.

Isaiah 50:6

I gave my back to the smiters; I patiently yielded up myself, and turned my back to those who smote me. I was willing not only to do, but to suffer, the will of God, and the injuries of men. This and the following passages were literally fulfilled in Christ, as is expressly affirmed, Mat_26:57,67 27:26,30, and elsewhere; but

we read of no such thing concerning Isaiah. And therefore it is most safe and reasonable to understand it of Christ; the rather, because it is not usual with the prophets to commend themselves so highly as the prophet here commends the person of whom he speaketh.

Plucked off the hair; which was a contumely or punishment inflicted upon malefactors, Neh_13:25.

I hid not my face from shame, from all manner of reproachful usages; but did knowingly and willingly submit myself there unto.

And spitting; spitting in a man's face was used in token of contempt and detestation, Num_12:14 Job_30:10; and this was literally fulfilled in Christ, Mat_26:67.

Isaiah 50:7

For; or rather, *But* , as this particle is oft rendered. For God's favour is here opposed to the injuries of men.

The Lord God will help me; though as a man I am weak and inconsiderable, yet God will strengthen me to go through my great and hard work.

Therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore I assure myself of success in my employment, and of victory over all mine enemies.

Therefore have I set my face like a flint; I have hardened myself with resolution and courage against all opposition. So this or the like phrase is used Eze_3:8,9, which elsewhere signifies obstinacy and impudence, as Jer_5:3 Zec_7:12; so that it notes any settled and unmovable purpose, whether good or evil.

Isaiah 50:8

He is near; God, though he seem to be at a distance, and to hide his face from me, yet he is in truth at my right hand, and ready to help me.

That justifieth me; that will publicly acquit me from all the calumnies of mine adversaries, who say that I am a transgressor of the law, a false teacher and deceiver, a blasphemer, and a devil, and the like, in which opinion they are confirmed by my death and sufferings. But God will clear up my righteousness, and show by

many and mighty signs and wonders that he is well pleased with me, and that I lived and died his faithful servant.

Let him come near to me; I challenge all my accusers to stand and appear before the Judge face to face, and to produce all their charges against me; for I am conscious of mine own innocence, and I know that God will give sentence for me.

Isaiah 50:9

That shall condemn me; that dare attempt it, or can justly do it.

They all, mine accusers and enemies,

shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up: shall pine away in their iniquity, as God threatened, Lev_26:39; shall be cut off and consumed by a secret curse and judgment of God, which is compared to a

moth, Hos_5:12, whilst I shall survive and flourish, and *the pleasure of God shall prosper in my hands* , as is said, Isa_53:10.

Isaiah 50:10

Who is among you that feareth the Lord? he now turneth his speech from the unbelieving and rebellious Jews to those of them who were or should be pious.

Of his servant; of the same person of whom he hath hitherto spoken; of Christ, who is called God's servant, Isa_52:13 **53:11**, partly by way of eminency, and partly to intimate that although he was God, yet he should *take upon himself the form of a servant* , as is said, Phi_2:7. He hereby signifies that the grace of God, and the comfort here following, belongeth to none but to those that hear and believe this great Prophet of the church; which also was declared by Moses, Deu_18:15, compared with Act_3:22,**23**.

In darkness; not in sin, which is oft called darkness; as walking in darkness is put for living in wickedness, 1Jo_1:6; but in misery, which also frequently cometh under the name of darkness: that liveth in a most disconsolate and calamitous condition, together with great despondency or dejection of spirit.

No light; no comfort nor hope left.

Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God; let him fix his faith and hope in the name, i.e. in the most

excellent and amiable nature, and infinite perfections, and especially in the free grace, and mercy, and faithfulness,

of the Lord, declared in his word; and in his propriety or interest in God, who by the mediation of this Servant is reconciled to him, and made his God.

Isaiah 50:11

All ye that kindle a fire, that you may enjoy the light and comfort of it, as it is explained in the following words. You that reject the light which God hath set up, and refuse the counsel of his servant, and seek for comfort, and safety, and the knowledge of God's mind, and the enjoyment of his favour, by your own inventions; which was the common error of the Jews in all ages, and especially in the days of the Messiah, when they refused him, and that way of righteousness and salvation which he appointed, and rested upon their own traditions and devices, *going about to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting unto the righteousness of God* , as is expressed, Rom_10:3.

That compass yourselves about; endeavouring to warm and refresh yourselves on all sides.

With sparks; or rather, *with firebrands* , as this very word is fitly rendered, Pro_26:18, which is better than *sparks or flames* , which is there put in the margin, because firebrands only, and not sparks or flames, are capable of being thrown by one man at another. And this word is no where else used in Scripture. He mentions *firebrands* , either to imply that these fires yielded more smoke than heat or light, of because these were the usual materials of a fire.

Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled; use your utmost endeavours to get comfort and satisfaction from these devices.

This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow; this shall be the fruit of all, through my just judgment, that instead of that comfort and security which you expect by these means, you shall receive nothing but vexation and misery, which shall pursue you both living and dying; for this word, which is here rendered lie down, is frequently used for dying, as Gen_47:30 Job_21:26, and elsewhere. Or it is a metaphor from a man that

lying down on his bed for rest and ease, meets with nothing but trouble and pain, as Job complained, Job_7:13,14.

Isaiah 51:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 51

Abraham our pattern to trust in Christ; in his promises, and righteous salvation: this is constant, but men are transitory, Isa_51:1-8. A prayer of the godly in affliction, Isa_51:9-11. The Lord's answer, Isa_51:12-16. He bewaileth Jerusalem, Isa_51:17-20. The bitter cup taken from her, and given to her enemies, Isa_51:21-23.

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness: now he turneth his speech again to the believing and godly Jews.

That seek the Lord; that make it your chief care and business to seek favour and help from God.

Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged; consider the state of Abraham and Sarah, when they procreated Isaac, from whom Jacob and all of you sprang; for so he explains the metaphor in the next verse. He compareth the bodies of Abraham and Sarah unto a

rock, or *pit*, or quarry out of which stones are hewed or digged, thereby implying that God in some sort actually did that which Christ said he was *able to do*, Mat_3:9, even of *stones to raise up children unto Abraham*; it being then as impossible by the course of nature for Abraham and Sarah in that age to procreate a child, as it is to hew a living child out of a rock, or to dig one out of a pit of stone.

Isaiah 51:2

I called him from his own country and kindred to follow me to an unknown land, where I promised that I would multiply and bless him, as is particularly explained, Gen_12:1-3.

Alone, Heb. *one*; either,

1. Him only of all his kindred; for though he carried some few of them with him, yet I called none but him. So this notes God's singular favour to their progenitors above all the rest of the world.

Or,

2. Him when he was alone or solitary, to wit, as to any issue; when he neither had nor was likely to have any child by Sarah. And this word *alone* seems to belong not only to this word wherewith it is joined, but also unto the two following words, especially if we consider the order of rite words in the Hebrew text, where they lie thus; for *one* (or *alone* , or when he was alone, or but one)

I called him, and blessed him, and increased him. Increased him into a vast multitude, when his condition was desperate in the eye of reason. And therefore God can as easily raise and deliver his church when they are in the most forlorn condition, and seem to be dead, and buried, and consumed, so that nothing but dry bones remain of them, as it is declared at large, **Eze 37**.

Isaiah 51:3

For: so this comes in as a reason why they should look unto or consider that famous example of Abraham and Sarah, because they should find the like wonder wrought on their behalf. Or, *Therefore* , or for the sake of Abraham, my friend, and of that covenant which I made with him, and by which I promised to bless him and his seed for ever.

Shall comfort Zion; his church, which is frequently called by that name, both in the Old and New Testament.

He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord: although she shall be waste and desolate like a wilderness or desert for a time, yet she shall be restored, and be made as pleasant and flourishing as the garden of Eden was.

Isaiah 51:4

Hearken unto me, my people: seeing the Gentiles will hearken to me, as I have formerly told you, take heed that you Jews, whom I chose to be my peculiar people, do not reject my counsel, nor forsake your own mercies, as I fear you will do.

A law; a new law, even the doctrine of the gospel, which ought to have the force of a law with you, and I expect your obedience to it, no less than to my law delivered by Moses.

I will make my judgment to rest: judgment is here the same thing with law in the former clause, the word of God, which is

frequently called judgment, as hath been observed again and again, or the evangelical doctrine, of which he saith that he *will make it to rest* , i.e. settle and establish it; whereby he may-possibly intimate the stability and perpetuity of this light in the church, that it shall not be like the light of the Mosaical dispensation, which was only to shine for a season, even *until the time of reformation* , Heb_9:10, when all those dark shadows were to vanish and give place to the Sun of righteousness, and to that kingdom and state that should never be moved, as we read, Dan_2:44 Heb_12:26-28, and in many other places.

For a light of the people, Heb. *of or to the peoples* ; not only to you Jews, but unto people of all sorts and nations, who shall receive and walk in that light which you will reject, and use all possible endeavours to extinguish.

Isaiah 51:5

My righteousness; my salvation, as it is expounded in the next clause, the redemption of all my people, both Jews and Gentiles, which is the effect of his *righteousness* ; either his justice, or his faithfulness, or his mercy and goodness; for all these are called by the name of righteousness in Scripture, and all these contributed to the work of man's redemption.

My salvation is gone forth; shall shortly go forth; my secret and eternal purpose of saving my people shall speedily be fulfilled.

Mine arms shall judge the people; either,

1. Shall destroy those people who obstruct or oppose this work. Or rather,
2. Shall subdue the Gentiles to mine authority, and rule them by my word and Spirit; which agrees best with the following clause.

The isles; the remote countries of the Gentiles, as Isa_41:1 **42:4**, and elsewhere.

Shall wait upon me; shall confidently expect and hope for this promised righteousness and salvation from me, and from me only, and not from idols, as they have done, nor by any other way.

Isaiah 51:6

The heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; the heavens and earth shall pass away, either,

1. Simply, and by a substantial corruption or annihilation, which is yet to be understood comparatively or conditionally, that these should sooner vanish into nothing than God's promised salvation should not be accomplished; as when it is said, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*, Mat_24:35. It is thus expounded, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than (for) one tittle of the law to fail*. Or,

2. In regard of their present state, and properties, and use, as smoke is here said to vanish, although the substance of it be not destroyed. *They that dwell therein shall die in like manner; as they shall be dissolved*, as we read, 2Pe_3:11, and death is nothing else but a dissolution.

Isaiah 51:7

That know righteousness; that love and practise it, as knowing is commonly used.

In whose heart is my law; who are tacitly opposed to the carnal Jews that had the law written only in tables. Compare 2Co_3:3 Heb_8:10.

The reproach of men; the censures of the carnal Jews. who will lead their believing and godly brethren with a world of reproaches: but let not these things discourage you.

Isaiah 51:8

The moth shall eat them up; your reproachers shall be easily destroyed, and so God will revenge your cause upon them, and deliver you from their reproaches.

Like wool; like a woollen garment, which is sooner corrupted by moths or such creatures than linen.

Isaiah 51:9

Awake, awake, thou who hast carried thyself like one asleep, and unconcerned for thy people, and unable to save them. The prophet having foretold what great things God would do for his church, and longing for the accomplishment of them, and knowing that

prayer was one means by which God fulfils his promises, he poureth forth his prayer to God in his own name, and in the name of God's people.

Put on strength; clothe and adorn thyself with mighty works; put forth thy strength.

That hath cut, Heb. *hewed* , with thy sword, *Rahab* ; Egypt, so called here, and Psa_87:4 **89:10**, either from its pride or strength, or from the shape and figure of that land. The *dragon* ; Pharaoh, so called Psa_74:13 Eze_29:3 **32:2**.

Isaiah 51:10

Art thou not it which hath dried the sea? art not thou the same God, and as potent now as then thou wast?

For the ransomed; for thy people, whom thou didst redeem and bring out of Egypt.

Isaiah 51:11

Therefore; or, *So* ; Heb. *And* . This verse contains an answer to the prophet's prayer. It is true, I did these great things, and I will do the like again.

Everlasting joy shall be upon their head, like a crown of glory. But for the accomplishment of this magnificent promise we must needs look beyond their return from Babylon into their own land, when they met with many discouragements, and troubles, and calamities, and extend it unto the coming of Christ, by whom these great things were procured and actually conferred upon his people.

Isaiah 51:12

Who art thou? how unreasonable and distrustful art thou, O my church! how unlike to thyself! how unsuitable in these despondencies unto thy own professions and obligations!

Of the son of man which shall be made as grass; of a weak mortal and perishing creature.

Isaiah 51:13

And forgettest the Lord thy Maker; and dost not consider the infinite power of that God who made thee, and who will plead thy cause.

As if he were ready to destroy; as if it were in his power to destroy thee in a moment.

Where is the fury of the oppressor? what is become of the power and rage of the Babylonians? Is it not all gone? Are not they broken, and thou delivered? He speaks of the thing as if it were already done, because it should certainly and suddenly be done. Where is it? It is no where, it is quite lost and gone, as this phrase is frequently used, as Psa_42:3 Zec_1:5 1Co_15:55.

Isaiah 51:14

God is not slack, as you think, but maketh haste to fulfil his promise, and to rescue his captive and oppressed people from all their oppressions and miseries.

Isaiah 51:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 51:16

I have put my words in thy mouth; these great and glorious promises which are in thy mouth are not the vain words of man, a weak, and inconstant, and unfaithful creature, but the words of the almighty, unchangeable, and faithful God, and therefore they shall be infallibly accomplished. These words are manifestly spoken by God, either,

1. To Isaiah, by whom these promises were delivered. Or,
2. To Christ, of whom and to whom many things are said in this prophecy, as we have already seen, and will further appear. And such abrupt and sudden apostrophes to persons not mentioned in the foregoing words are not unusual in this prophecy, as hath been observed. Or rather,
3. To Israel, to God's church and people, to whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following verses. For God's word is frequently said to be

put into the mouths, not only of the prophets, but of the people also, as Isa_59:21; as also Deu_30:14 Jos_1:8, &c.

Have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand; have protected thee by my almighty power. See the same phrase Isa_49:2.

That I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth; I have given thee these promises and this protection in all thy calamities, to assure thee of any care and kindness to thee, and that I will reform thee in a most glorious manner, and bring thee unto that perfect and blessed estate which is reserved for the days of the Messiah, which in Scripture phrase is called *a making of new heavens and a new earth* , Isa_65:17 **66:22** 2Pe_3:13, and elsewhere.

And say unto Zion, Thou art my people; that I may own thee for my people, in a more illustrious manner than ever I have done.

Isaiah 51:17

Awake; either,

1. Out of the sleep of security. Or,
2. Out of the sleep of death. Heb. *Rouse up thyself* ; come out of that forlorn and disconsolate condition in which thou hast so long been. This sense suits best with the following words. Stand up upon thy feet, O thou who hast fallen, and been thrown down to the ground.

Which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; which hast been sorely afflicted; for so this metaphor is used. Psa_75:8 Jer_25:15, &c.; Jer_49:12.

The cup of trembling; which striketh him that drinketh it with a deadly horror.

Wrung them out; drunk every drop of, it. See Poole "Psa_75:8".

Isaiah 51:18

When thou wast drunk with this cup, and not able to go, neither thy princes, nor prophets, nor priests were able or willing to lead and support thee.

Isaiah 51:19

These two things; either,

1. Those which were now mentioned:
 1. That she was drunk with the cup of God's wrath, Isa_51:17.
 2. That she had none to support or comfort her in that condition, Or,

2. Those which here follow, which although they be expressed in four words, yet they may fitly be reduced to two things, *the desolation or devastation* of the land, and *the destruction* of the people, by famine and sword. So

famine and

sword are not named as new evils, but only as the particular ways or means of bringing the

destruction there mentioned; and the words may be thus rendered, *desolation and destruction, even* (this Hebrew particle being oft taken expositively, whereof many instances have been given) *famine* (or, by *famine*) *and sword* . Or two, may be put indefinitely for *many* , as *double* is put for abundantly more, Job_11:6 Isa_40:2 **61:7** Zec_9:12, and elsewhere. *By whom shall I comfort thee ?* I cannot find any man who is able to comfort and relieve thee.

Isaiah 51:20

Thy sons have fainted; they are so far from being able to comfort thee, as was said, Isa_51:18, that they themselves faint away for want of comfort, and through famine.

They lie dead by famine, or the sword of the enemy,

at the head of all the streets; where men enter in or go out of the streets, where the enemy found them either opposing their entrance, or running out of them to make an escape.

As a wild bull in a net: those of them who are not slain are struggling for life; and although they murmur at God, and fight with men, yet they cannot prevail or escape.

Isaiah 51:21

But with the cup of God's fury, mentioned Isa_51:17

Isaiah 51:22

Thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people; who though he hath fought against thee, is now reconciled to thee, and will maintain thy cause against all thine adversaries.

Isaiah 51:23

Bow down, that we may go over; lie down upon the ground, that we may trample upon thee, as conquerors. used to do upon their conquered enemies. See Jos_10:24 Psa_110:1.

Isaiah 52:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 52

The church redeemed, and called upon to rejoice therein, Isa_52:1-6. The universal preaching of the gospel glorious, Isa_52:7-10. A call to free ourselves from bondage, Isa_52:11,12. Christ's kingdom shall be exalted, Isa_52:13-15.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength: God biddeth his church do that which she entreated him to do, Isa_51:9. And because God's word is operative, and effectual, and his sayings are doings, this is a prediction and promise what she should do, that she should *awake* or arise out of her low estate, and be strong and courageous.

Put on thy beautiful garments: thy sorrows shall be ended, and thou shalt be advanced into a most glorious and blessed condition.

O Jerusalem, the holy city; O my church, which is every where called by the name of Zion or Jerusalem.

For henceforth there shall no more come into thee, either to molest thee, or to associate themselves with thee, or to defile or corrupt thee, *the uncircumcised*, heathens or infidels, who are commonly called *uncircumcised; and the unclean*; nor any others, who though they be circumcised, as the Jews generally were, are unclean in any thing: whereby he intimates that there should be a greater purity and reformation in the church than formerly there had been, which was eminently accomplished in the church and kingdom of Christ.

Isaiah 52:2

Shake thyself from the dust, in which thou hast lain as a prisoner, or sat as a mourner.

Sit down upon thy throne. Or, sit up, as this word is rendered, Gen_27:19.

Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck; the yoke of thy captivity shall be taken off from thee. It is a metaphor from beasts that have the yoke fastened by bands to their necks.

Isaiah 52:3

Ye have sold yourselves, by your sins, into the hands of the Chaldeans,

for nought; without any price or valuable consideration paid by them, either to you or to me, your Lord and Owner.

Ye shall be redeemed without money; without paying any ransom.

Isaiah 52:4

My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; where they had protection and sustenance, and therefore owed subjection to the king of Egypt. And yet when he oppressed them I punished him severely, and delivered them out of his hands. Which is easily understood from the following words. *And* ; or, *but* ; for here is an opposition made between these two cases.

The Assyrian; the king of Babylon, who is called *the king of Assyria* , 2Ki_23:29, compared with Isa_24:7, as also the Persian emperor is called, Ezr_6:22, because it was one and the same empire, which was possessed, first by the Assyrians, then by the Babylonians, and afterwards by the Persians. *Oppressed them without cause* ; without any such ground or *valour* , by mere force invading their land, and carrying them away into captivity. For although it be said that God gave this land and people *into his hand* , 2Ch_36:11, by his counsel and providence; yet that was neither known to nor regarded by the king of Babylon, nor was it a good and lawful title, God's word, and not his providence, being the rule by which men's rights are determined; otherwise a robber hath a right to my purse, which he cannot take from me upon the highway without God's providence.

Isaiah 52:5

What have I here? Heb. *What to me here* ? the sense is either,

1. What do I here? Why do I sit still here, and not go to Babylon to punish the Babylonians, and to deliver my people? Or,

2. What honour have I by suffering this injury to be done to my people?

Is taken away, were carried away captive by the Babylonians,

for nought; without any provocation or pretence of right. See before on Isa_52:3. They that rule over them, who by their office are obliged to deal justly and tenderly with their subjects,

make them to howl, by their tyrannical and unmerciful usage of them.

My name continually every day is blasphemed; instead of that praise and service which the Babylonians owe me for all their successes and conquests, they blaspheme me, as if I wanted either power or good-will to save my people out of their hands.

Isaiah 52:6

My people shall know my name; they shall have sensible experience of my infinite power and goodness in fighting for them and against you; whereby they shall be able to put your blasphemous tongues to silence.

They shall know; which word is understood from the foregoing clause, as is very frequent in Scripture.

In that day; when I shall redeem my people: which work was begun by the return of the Jews from Babylon, and afterwards carried on, and at last perfected, by the coming of the Messiah.

That I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I: that all these promises are not the words of a weak, or fickle, or deceitful man, but of him who is the omnipotent, and unchangeable, and covenant-keeping God. Or thus, That I who have formerly spoken to you by my servants the prophets, (for it was *the Spirit of Christ which was and spake in them*, 1Pe_1:11) do now speak to you in my own person, being clothed with flesh; which agrees well, as with the analogy of faith, and with divers other scriptures, so particularly with the next verse, and with divers following passages, which so evidently speak of the person and kingdom of Christ, that they cannot without great force be understood of any other.

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful! these are words of rejoicing and admiration. They are exceeding precious and acceptable.

Upon the mountains of Zion and Moriah, which are sometimes mentioned as one mountain, and sometimes as two. Or in the mountainous country of Judea, to which these glad tidings were brought, and from which they were spread abroad into other countries.

Are the feet, which carry this welcome messenger; or the messenger himself. *Of him* ; or, of them; for the singular number is oft put for the plural: although it may be here emphatically used, to signify, that although there were many messengers, yet one was the chief and Lord of the embassy, whose coming was more acceptable than the rest; which suits excellently to the Messiah, who is called *the Messenger of the covenant* , Mal_3:1, and is oft said to be sent by God, as Joh_6:38 **8:16,18**, &c., to publish the glad tidings of salvation.

That bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation: these emphatical and repeated expressions are a sufficient evidence that something further and better is here intended than their deliverance out of Babylon, which in itself was but a very imperfect work, and reached at first but to a few of that numerous people, and was attended with many fears, and sorrows, and remainders of their bondage, Ezr_9:8,**9 Ne 1:3**; and that although that was the beginning of these glad tidings, yet they extended much further, even to the coming of Christ, by whom alone true peace and salvation were procured.

That saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth: it is true, this might in some sort be said when God so overruled the affairs of the world, and the heart of Cyrus, that his people were freed from the Babylonish captivity, and restored into and settled in their own land. Although he that considers the state of God's people in their own land after their return, will find that the reign of God in and over the world was not then either very conspicuous or glorious. And therefore it seems far more reasonable to understand it of the days of the Messiah, when God did discover and exercise his

dominion over the world far more eminently than ever he had done from the beginning of the world until that time.

Isaiah 52:8

Thy watchmen, thy ministers, who shall descry the approach and coming of this heavenly King and kingdom, *shall lift up the voice* ; partly to give notice to all people of these glad tidings; and partly by way of exultation, to sing forth the praises of God for this glorious day and mercy, as it here follows.

They shall see; they shall understand, and so be able to teach, Divine mysteries.

Eye to eye; very distinctly, and clearly, and familiarly, their eyes beholding the eyes of this King of glory; as it is said of Zedekiah, Jer_34:3,

Thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon; and as it is said, *mouth to mouth* , Num_12:8, and *face to face* , Gen_32:30 Exo_33:11 Num_14:14. They shall see with their bodily eyes the King of the church, or the Word made flesh, as they are said to have done, Joh_1:14 1Jo_1:1. They shall be eye and ear witnesses of the words and works of Christ, and therefore their testimony of these things shall be more certain and valuable.

When the Lord shall bring again Zion; when God shall complete the work of bringing his church out of captivity; which was begun at the return out of Babylon, and perfected by Christ's coming into the world.

Isaiah 52:9

For you shall be restored unto your former and a far greater fertility.

Isaiah 52:10

Hath made bare his holy arm; hath discovered and put forth his great power, which for a long time hath lain hid, and seemed to be idle.

All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God; all nations of the world shall with astonishment behold the wonderful work of God, first in bringing his people out of Babylon, and afterwards in their redemption by Christ.

Isaiah 52:11

Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence; make haste, O ye banished Jews, to depart out of Babylon into your own land, that there I may meet with you, and bless you, and perform those further and greater things which I have promised there to do for you. And this invitation was the more necessary, because God foresaw that a great number of the Jews would upon worldly considerations continue in those foreign countries in which they were settled, and be very backward to return to the Holy Land.

Touch no unclean thing; and when you go thence, take heed that you carry not along with you any of their superstitions or idolatries; but purify and prepare yourselves, that so God may return to you in mercy, when you return into your own land.

Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord; and especially you priests and Levites, whose office it is to minister in holy things, and to carry back the holy vessels of the temple, keep yourselves from all pollution.

Isaiah 52:12

For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight; but securely, and in triumph, being conducted by your great Captain, the Lord of hosts. And therefore you will have both the greater obligation, and the more leisure and opportunity, to cleanse yourselves from all filthiness.

For the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your reward; so that none shall be able either to oppose and stop you in your march, or to fall upon you in the rear, as enemies commonly do.

Isaiah 52:13

This is the beginning of a new prophecy, which is continued from hence to the end of the next chapter; and therefore it is well observed by divers, both ancient and modern interpreters, that the fifty-third chapter should have begun here.

My servant.

Quest. Of whom doth the prophet here speak? It is apparent that these three last verses of this chapter, and all the following chapter, speak of one and the same person. And that that person is

Christ is so evident, that the Chaldee paraphrast, and other ancient, and some later Hebrew doctors, understand it directly of him, and that divers Jews have been convinced and converted to the Christian faith by the evidence of this prophecy. And there is not a verse in this whole context which doth not afford a clear and convincing proof of this truth, as we shall see. And there needs no other argument to confirm it, than the variety and vanity of the pretended expositions of the Jews, who use all possible wit and art to wrest all these passages to other persons. Those who would seem wiser than the rest, and confute the other expositions of their brethren, understand it either of the Jewish people in general, or of the prophet Jeremiah in particular. But both these conceits are so groundless and absurd, that there is scarce a verse but confutes them, as we shall clearly discern in the exposition of them. And therefore other Jews reject them both, and understand it of Abraham, or Moses, or Josiah, or Ezra, or Zorobabel; and they might as well have named twenty persons more, to whom this place might be applied upon as good grounds as to any of these. But there is not one clause in all this context which is not most truly and fitly applied to Christ, as I shall make apparent, step by step. And first this title of God's servant is in an eminent and peculiar manner given to Christ in this very prophecy, as Isa_42:1 **49:6 53:11** Eze_34:23 Zec_3:8. *Shall deal prudently* ; shall manage his kingdom with admirable wisdom. Or, *shall prosper* , as it is in the margin, and as this word is frequently rendered, and particularly in this very case, and of this same person, Jer_23:5; which also seems best to agree with the following clause, and with Isa_53:10,**11**: And this intimation concerning the future prosperity and advancement of the Messiah is fitly put in the first place to prevent those scandals which otherwise might arise from the succeeding passages, which largely describe his state of humiliation and deep affliction.

He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high: here are three words signifying the same thing, to express the height and glory of his exaltation; which agrees most fitly to Christ, but cannot without great force be applied to Jeremiah, who had no greater honour or favour done him by the Chaldeans at the taking of Jerusalem, than to be left at liberty to go where he pleased,

Jer_40:4, and who after that time met with great contempt and hardship from his own countrymen, **Jer 42 Jer 43 Jer 44**.

Isaiah 52:14

Were astonished; were struck with wonder, either,

1. At his glorious endowments, and the excellency and power of his doctrine, and his miraculous works. Or rather,

2. At his great deformity, and stupendous humiliation and calamity, as may be gathered both from the following words, and from the use of this word in Scripture, which is generally used in a bad sense, or of wondering at some extraordinary evil, as Jer_18:16 **19:8**, and oft elsewhere; and never in a good sense, or of wondering at any thing which is extraordinarily good.

At thee; at thee, O my servant, to whom he now turneth his speech, and then turneth his speech from him, and speaks of him in the next words; such sudden changes of persons, and speaking of one and the same man sometimes in one person, and then presently in another, being very frequent in the writings of the prophets, as we have already seen in divers instances.

His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; he was more deformed or uncomely than any other man; which was undoubtedly verified in Christ, who, in respect of his birth, and breeding, and manner of life, was most obscure and contemptible, and therefore said to be a worm, *and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people*, Psa_22:6; who was more hated and vilified by the generality of the Jews than any man upon earth, and was accounted and called by them a deceiver, a Samaritan, a blasphemer, and a devil, &c.; whose countenance also was so marred with frequent watchings, and fastings, and troubles, that he was thought to be near fifty years old when he was but about thirty, Joh_8:57; and was further spoiled with buffetings, and crowning with thorns, and other cruel and spiteful usages from men, and with the deep and continual sense of the burden of men's sins, and of God's displeasure due unto them; all which did not only oppress his spirit, but had a great influence upon the very constitution of his body.

Isaiah 52:15

So; his exaltation shall be answerable to his humiliation.

Shall he sprinkle; either,

1. With his blood, which is called *the blood of sprinkling* , Heb_12:24; or, shall justify them, as it follows, Isa_53:11, which is frequently expressed by *washing* , as Psa_51:2,7 **Eze 16:9**, and by *sprinkling clean water* , Eze_36:25. Or,

2. With his word or doctrine; which being oft compared to rain or waters, as Deu_32:2 Isa_55:10,11 **Hab 2:4**, &c, may be said to be sprinkled, as it is said to be dropped, Deu_32:2 Eze_20:46 **21:2**. And this sense seems to be most favoured by the following words.

The kings shall shut their mouths at him; shall be silent before him, out of a profound humility, and reverence, and admiration of his wisdom, and an eager desire to hear and receive counsels and oracles from his mouth. Compare Job_29:9-11, **21**. They shall no more contend with him, nor blaspheme the true God and religion, as they formerly used to do.

For that which had not been told them shall they see; for they shall hear from his mouth many excellent doctrines, which also will be new and strange to them, such as men are very desirous to hear. And particularly they shall hear from him that comfortable doctrine concerning the conversion and salvation of the Gentiles, which was not only new to them, but was strange and incredible to the most of the Jews themselves.

Shall they consider; or, they shall understand; which is added to show that the seeing in the former clause was meant of discerning these things with the eyes of their minds.

Isaiah 53:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 53

The incredulity of the Jews: the death of Christ, and the blessed effects thereof, Isa_53:1-11; his exaltation and glory, Isa_53:12.

Who hath believed our report? the prophet having in the three last verses of the former chapter made a general report concerning the great and wonderful humiliation and exaltation of Christ, of which he intended more largely to discourse in this chapter, before he descended to particulars he thought fit to use this preface.

Who, not only of the Gentiles, but even of the Jews, *will believe* the truth-of what I have said and must say? Few or none. The generality of them will never receive nor believe in such a Messiah as this. Thus this place is expounded by Christ himself, Joh_12:38, and by Paul, Rom_10:16. And this premonition was highly necessary, both to caution the Jews that they should not stumble at this stone, and to instruct the Gentiles that they should not be surprised, nor scandalized, nor seduced with their example.

The arm of the Lord; either,

1. The word of God, called the report in the former clause; the doctrine of the gospel, which is expressly called *the power of God* , 1Co_1:18, because of that admirable virtue and success which accompanied the preaching of it. Or,

2. The Messiah, who also is called the arm or *power of God* , 1Co_1:24; and that most fitly, because the almighty power of God was both seated in him, and declared and exercised by him in his powerful words and mighty deeds, as Simon for some great works wrought by him was called by the Samaritans *the power of God* , Act_8:10.

Revealed; not outwardly, for so Christ was revealed and preached to vast numbers, both of Jews and Gentiles, as is evident from this context, and from divers other places of Scripture; but inwardly and with power to their minds and hearts, of which kind of revelation see Eph_1:17-19, and compare it with 2Co_4:4. Thus even Moses, though sufficiently revealed to the eyes and ears of the Jews, yet is said to be unrevealed or hid from their minds and hearts, 2Co_3:14,15. The sense of the place is, few or none of the Jews will believe the gospel, or receive their Messiah when he comes among them.

Isaiah 53:2

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; and the reason or occasion why the Jews will so generally reject their Messiah, is because he shall not come into the world with secular pomp and power, like an earthly monarch, as they carnally and groundlessly imagined; but

he shall grow up (or, *spring up* , Heb. *ascend* , to wit, out of the ground, as it follows, brought forth, and brought up)

before him (before the unbelieving Jews, of whom he spake Isa_53:1, and that in the singular number, as here, who were witnesses of his mean original; and therefore despised him, according to Christ's observation, Joh_4:44; or, as others, *according to his face* , or outward appearance, as he was man; whereby he sufficiently implies that he had another, a far higher, and a Divine nature in him)

as a tender plant, (or, as this very word is translated, Eze_17:4, *a young twig* , which is a small and inconsiderable thing,)

and as a root (as Christ is called, Rom_15:12, and elsewhere; or, *as a branch* ; the root being put metonymically for the branch growing out of the root, as it is apparently used, where Christ is called *the root of Jesse, and of David* , Isa_11:10 Rev_5:5, and in other places, as 2Ch_22:10)

out of a dry ground; out of a mean and barren soil, whose productions are generally poor and contemptible: either,

1. Out of the womb of a virgin; but that was no ground of contempt; or,
2. Of the Jewish nation, which was then poor, and despised, and enslaved; or,
3. Out of the poor, and decayed, and contemptible family, such as the royal family of David was at that time.

He hath no form nor comeliness; his bodily presence and condition in the world shall be mean and contemptible.

When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him; when we shall look upon him, expecting to find incomparable beauty and majesty in his countenance, and carriage, and condition, we shall be altogether disappointed, and shall meet with nothing amiable or desirable in him. This the prophet speaketh in the person of the carnal and unbelieving Jews, we, i.e. our people, the Jewish nation.

Isaiah 53:3

He is despised and rejected of men; accounted as the scum of mankind, as one unworthy of the company and conversation of all men.

A man of sorrows; whose whole life was filled with, and in a manner made up of, an uninterrupted succession of sorrows and sufferings.

Acquainted with grief; who had constant experience of and familiar converse with grievous afflictions; for knowledge is oft taken practically, or for experience, as Gen_3:5 2Co_5:21, and elsewhere.

We hid as it were our faces from him; we scorned and loathed to look upon him. Or, as others,

he hid as it were his face from us, as one ashamed to show his face, or to be seen by any men, as persons conscious to themselves of any great deformity do commonly shun the sight of men, as lepers did, Lev_13:45.

He was despised, and we esteemed him not: here are divers words expressing the same thing, to signify both the utmost degree of contempt, and how strange and wonderful a thing it was, that so excellent a person should be so despised.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: and whereas it may seem all unreasonable and incredible thing, that so excellent and glorious, and so innocent and just, a person should meet with this usage, it must be known that his griefs and miseries were not laid upon him for his own sake, but wholly and solely for the sake of sinful men, in whose stead he stood, and for whose sins he suffered, as it here follows.

Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; yet our people, the Jews, were so far from giving him the glory and praise of such a prodigious condescension and compassion, that they made a most perverse construction of it; and so great was their prejudice against him, that they believed that he was thus disgraced and punished, and at last put to death, by the just judgment of God, for his blasphemy and other manifold wickednesses.

Isaiah 53:5

But; but this was a most false and unrighteous sentence.

He was wounded; which word comprehends all his pains and punishments, and his death among and above the rest.

For our transgressions; not by them, which is expressed by another particle, not by the wickedness of the Jews; but *for* or *because* of them, as this particle commonly signifies, for the guilt of their sins, which he had voluntarily taken upon himself, and for the expiation of their sins, which was hereby purchased and procured of God for men. Which interpretation is confirmed,

1. By the opposition of this truth to the false opinion mentioned in the foregoing clause, that he was *smitten of God* for the guilt of his own sins.

2. By the following clause, as we shall see.

3. By the nature of the thing; this being evident from scriptures both from the Old and New Testament, that Christ was not to suffer for his own, but for other men's sins. See Dan_9:24,26.

The chastisement of our peace; those punishments by which our peace, i.e. our reconciliation to God, and salvation, or happiness, was to be purchased.

Was upon him; was laid upon him by God's justice with his own consent.

With his stripes we are healed; by his sufferings we are saved from our sins, and from the dreadful effects thereof.

Isaiah 53:6

All we, all mankind, the Jews no less than the Gentiles,

like sheep, which are simple and foolish creatures, and exceeding apt to straggle and lose themselves, *have gone astray* from God, and from the way of his precepts, in which he put our first parents, and in which he commanded us to walk.

To his own way; in general, to the way and course of sin, which may well be called a man's *own way*, as sins are called men's own lusts, Jam_1:14 2Pe_3:3, and elsewhere, because sin is natural to us, inherent in us, born with us, and very dear to us; and in particular, to those several paths of divers lusts which several men choose and follow, according to their differing opinions, inclinations, occasions, and circumstances.

Hath laid, Heb. *hath made to meet* , as all the rivers meet in the sea.

The iniquity; not properly, for so he knew no sin, 2Co_5:21; but the punishment of iniquity, as that word is most frequently used, as Gen_4:1:3 Lev_20:17, &c.; that which was due for all the sins of all his people, whether Jews or Gentiles, which must needs be so great and heavy a load, that if he had not been God as well as man, he must have sunk under the burden of them. This was actually verified in Christ. And both this and divers other passages here do as manifestly and fully point at Christ, as if they were not a prophetic representation of things to come, but an historical relation of them after they were done. Nor do I see how they can be excused from the fearful *wresting of the Scripture* that expound these places of the prophet Jeremiah, of any other person but Christ.

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; he was sorely punished for our sins. But there is another translation, which seems to be more emphatical, and more agreeable to the Hebrew text; *It* (to wit, our iniquity last mentioned, or the punishment of all our sins) *was exacted or required* , (as this word most properly and frequently signifies, of which see my Latin Synopsis. God's justice expected and required satisfaction from us for our sins; which, alas! we could not make to him,)

and he was afflicted or *punished* ; he bore the guilt and punishment of our sins in his body upon the tree, as is said, **1Pe 2 24**; or, as others render this last word, *and he answered* , i.e. became our surety, or undertook to pay the debt, and to suffer the law in our stead, and for our sake.

Yet he opened not his mouth; he neither murmured against God for causing him to suffer for other men's sins, nor reviled men for punishing him without cause, nor used apologies or endeavours to save his own life; but willingly and patiently accepted of the punishment of our iniquity.

Is dumb; bears the loss of its fleece or life without any such clamour or resistance as other creatures use in such cases.

Isaiah 53:8

He was taken from prison and from judgment: these words are understood either,

1. Of Christ's humiliation or suffering; and then the words are to be thus rendered,

He was taken away (to wit, out of this life, as this word is used, Psa_31:13 Pro_1:19, and elsewhere; he was put to death) *by distress* (or *violence* , or *tyranny* , as this word is used with this preposition before it, Psa_107:39) *and judgment* ; by oppression and violence, under a form and pretence of justice. Or rather,

2. Of Christ's exaltation, because of the following clause; which is not unseasonably mentioned in the midst of his sufferings, to take off the scandal which might have arisen from Christ's sufferings, if there had not been a prospect and assurance of his victoriousness over them, and his glory after them; and so the words may be rendered, *He was taken up* (or, taken away, freed or delivered) *from prison* (i.e. from the grave, which being called a house, Job_30:23, and *a pit* , in which men are shut up Psa_69:15, may fitly be called a *prison* ; or, from *distress* or *affliction* , or *oppression* , from the power and malice of his enemies, and from the torments of his own soul, arising from the sense of men's sins and God's displeasure) *and from judgment* , i.e. from all the sufferings and punishments inflicted upon him, either by the unrighteous judgment of men, or by the just judgment of God, punishing him for those sins which he had voluntarily taken upon himself; or, which is the same thing, from the sentence of condemnation, and all the effects of it; for in this sense *judgment* is very commonly taken both in Scripture and other authors.

Who shall declare? who can declare it? the future being taken potentially, as it is frequently; no words can sufficiently express it.

His generation; either,

1. His age, or the continuance of his life. So the sense is, that he shall not only be delivered from death, and all his punishments, but also shall be restored to an inexpressible or endless life; and to an everlasting kingdom. Thus great interpreters understand it; with whom I cannot comply, because I do not find this Hebrew word to

be ever used in Scripture of the continuance of one man's life. Or rather,

2. His posterity; and so this word is unquestionably used, Gen_15:16 Exo_20:5 Deu_23:2,**3,8**, and in many other places. And so the sense of the place is this, that Christ's death shall not be unfruitful, and that when he is raised from the dead, he shall have a spiritual seed, as is promised, Isa_53:10; a numberless multitude of those who shall believe in him, and be regenerated and adopted by him into the number of his children, and of the children of God, Joh_1:12 Heb_2:10,**13,14**. *He was cut off* , to wit, by a violent death. And this may be added as a reason, both of his exaltation, and of the blessing of a numerous posterity conferred upon him, because he was willing to be cut off for the transgression of his people; and, as it followeth, Isa_53:10, made his soul an offering for sin; Christ's death being elsewhere declared to be the only way and necessary means of obtaining both these ends. Luk_24:26,**46 Joh 12:24,32,33 Php 2 8,9**. But these words may be rendered, *although he was cut off* , to signify that his death should not hinder these glorious effects.

For the transgression of my people was he stricken: this is repeated again, as it was fit it should be, to prevent men's mistakes about and stumbling at the death of Christ, and to assure them that Christ did not die for his own sins, but only for the sins and salvation of his people.

Isaiah 53:9

He made his grave with the wicked; and although he did not die for his own, but only for his people's sins, yet he was willing to die like a malefactor, or like a sinner, as all other men are, and to be put into the grave, as they used to be; which was a further degree of his humiliation. He saith, *he made his grave* , because this was Christ's own act, and he willingly yielded up himself to death and burial. And that which follows, *with the wicked* , doth not note the sameness of place, as if he should be buried in the same grave with ether malefactors, but the sameness of condition; as when David prayeth, Psa_26:9, *Gather not my soul* (to wit, by death) *with sinners*, he doth not mean it of the same grave, but of the same state of the dead.

With the rich in his death: this passage is thought by many to signify that Christ should be buried in the sepulchre of Joseph, who is said to be both *rich* , Mat_27:57, and *honourable* , Mar_15:43, which they conceive to be intimated as a token of favour and honour showed to him; which to me seems not probable, partly because this disagrees with the former clause, which confessedly speaks of the dishonour which was done to him; and partly because the burial of Christ, whatsoever circumstances it was attended with, is ever mentioned in Scripture as a part of his humiliation, **Ac 2 24,27**. And it seems more reasonable, and more agreeable to the usage of the Holy Scripture, that this clause should design the same thing with the former, and that by rich he means the same persons whom he now called *wicked* , not as if all rich men were or must needs be wicked, but because for the most part they are so; upon which ground riches and rich men do commonly pass under an ill name in Scripture; of which see Psa_37:10 **49:6** Luk_6:24 **18:24** Jam_1:11 **5:1**.

In his death, Heb. in or at (or after, as this participle is frequently taken, as hath been already noted) *his deaths* ; for Christ's death might well be called deaths, in the plural number, because he underwent many kinds of death, and many deadly dangers and pains, which are frequently called by the name of death in Scripture, of which instances have been formerly given; and he might say, with no less truth than Paul did, 1Co_15:31, *I die daily* , and 2Co_11:23. *I was in deaths oft. Because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth* : this some suppose to be added as a reason of the last branch of the foregoing clause, why God so overruled matters by his providence, that Christ should not be buried in the same grave, or in the same ignominious manner, as malefactors were, but in a more honourable manner, in Joseph's own tomb. But the last part of the foregoing clause cannot, without violence, be pulled asunder from the former, wherewith it is so closely joined, not only by a conjunction copulative, and, but also by being under the government of the same verb; and therefore this latter clause of the verse, if thus rendered, must be added as the reason of what is said to be done in the former. And so the sense of the place may be thus conceived, This was all the reward of the unspotted innocency of all his words and actions, to be thus ignominiously

used. But these words may well be and are otherwise rendered, both by Jewish and Christian interpreters, either thus, *although he had done* , &c., or rather thus, *not for* (as these two same particles placed in the very same order are rendered by our translator, and others, Job_16:17) *any violence* (or *injury* , or *iniquity*) which *he had done*, nor for any *deceit* which *was in his mouth* ; not for his own sins, but, as hath been said before, for his people's sins; in which translation there is nothing supplied but what is most frequent in Scripture also.

Isaiah 53:10

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; but although he was perfectly innocent, it pleased God for other just and wise reasons to punish him.

He hath put him to grief; God was the principal Cause of all his sorrows and sufferings, although men's sins were the deserving cause.

When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin; when thou, O God, shalt make, or have made, thy Son a sacrifice, by giving him up to death for the atonement of men's sins. His

soul is here put for his life, or for himself, or his whole human nature, which was sacrificed; his soul being tormented with the sense of God's wrath, and his body crucified, and soul and body separated by death. Or the words may be rendered, *when his soul shall make* , or *have made* , itself

an offering for sin; whereby it may be implied that he did not lay down his life by force, but willingly.

He shall see his seed; his death shall be glorious to himself, and highly beneficial to others; for he shall have a numerous issue of believers reconciled to God, and saved by his death.

He shall prolong his days; he shall be raised to immortal life, and shall live and reign with God for ever; *he shall die no more* , **Ro 6 9**, and *of his kingdom there shall be no end* , Luk_1:33.

The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; God's gracious decree for the redemption and salvation of mankind shall be effectually carried on by his ministry and mediation.

Isaiah 53:11

He shall see, he shall receive or enjoy, as this word commonly signifies,

of the travail of his soul, the comfortable and blessed fruit of all his hard labours and grievous sufferings,

and shall be satisfied; he shall esteem his own and his Father's glory, and the salvation of his people, an abundant recompence for all his sufferings.

By his knowledge; either,

1. Actively, by that knowledge of God's will, and of the way of salvation, which is in him in its highest perfection, and which by him is revealed unto men, and by his Spirit is imprinted in the minds and hearts of his people, so as to produce faith and obedience in them. Or,

2. Passively, by the knowledge of him, as *my fear* and *thy fear* are put for *the fear of me and of thee* , Psa_5:7 Jer_32:40; *knowledge* being here, as it is most frequently in Scripture, taken practically, for that kind of knowledge which worketh faith, and love, and obedience to him. So the sense is the same in both cases.

My righteous servant; which title is here given to Christ, partly to vindicate him from those false imputations of wickedness which were fastened upon him by his adversaries, and which found the more belief because of his most grievous and unexampled sufferings both from God and men; and partly to show his fitness for this great work of justifying sinners, because he was exactly

holy, and harmless, and undefiled, Heb_7:26, and

fulfilled all righteousness, according to his duty, Mat_3:15; and therefore his person and performance must needs be acceptable to God, and effectual for the justification of his people, which was the great design of his coming into the world. *Justify* acquit them from the guilt of their sins, and all the dreadful consequences thereof; for *justification* is here opposed to condemnation, as appears from the following clause, and from many other passages in this chapter, and as it is used in all places of Scripture, one, or two at most, excepted, where it is mentioned. And Christ is said to

justify sinners meritoriously, because he purchaseth and procureth it for us; as God the Father is commonly said to do it authoritatively, because he accepted the price paid by Christ for it, and the pronounciation of the sentence of absolution is referred to him in the gospel dispensation.

Many; which word is seasonably added, partly by way of restriction, to show that Christ will not justify all, but only such as believe in him and obey him; and partly by way of amplification, to declare that this blessed privilege shall not now be, as hitherto it had in a manner been, confined to Judea, and the Jews, but shall be conferred upon an innumerable company of all the nations of the world.

For he shall bear their iniquities; for he shall satisfy the justice and law of God for them, by bearing the punishment due to their sins, and therefore by the principles of reason and justice they must be justified or acquitted, otherwise the same debt should be twice required and paid.

Isaiah 53:12

Therefore will I, God the Father, the Spectator and Judge of the action or combat,

divide him; give him his share; or, *impart or give to him* ; for this word is oft used without respect to any distribution or division, as Deu_4:19 **29:26**, and elsewhere.

A portion; which is very commodiously supplied out of the next clause, where a word which answers to it,

the spoil, is expressed. *With the great* ; or, *among the great* ; such as the great and mighty potentates of the world use to have after a sharp combat and a glorious victory. Though he be a very mean and obscure person, as to his extraction and outward condition in the world, yet he shall attain to as great a pitch of glory as the greatest monarchs enjoy.

He shall divide the spoil with the strong: the same thing is repeated in other words, after the manner of prophetic writers. The sense of both clauses is, that God will give him, and he shall receive, great and happy success in his glorious undertaking; he shall conquer all his enemies, and lead captivity captive, as is said,

Eph_4:8, and Set up his universal and everlasting kingdom in the world.

Because he hath poured out his soul unto death; because he willingly laid down his life in obedience to God's command, Joh_10:17,18, and in order to the redemption of mankind. Death is here called a *pouring out of the soul, or life*, either because the soul or life, which in living men is contained in the body, is turned out of the body by death; or to signify the manner of Christ's death, that it should be with the shedding of his blood, in which the life of man consists, Lev_17:11,14.

He was numbered with the transgressors; he was willing for God's glory and for man's good to be reproached and punished like a malefactor, in the same manner and place, and betwixt two of them, as is noted with reference to this place, Mar_15:27,28.

He bare the sin of many; which was said Isa_53:11, and is here repeated to prevent a mistake, and to intimate, that although Christ was numbered with transgressors, and was used accordingly, yet he was no transgressor, nor did submit to and suffer this usage for his own sins, but for the sins of others, the punishment whereof was by his own consent laid upon him.

Made intercession for the transgressors; either,

1. By way of satisfaction; he interposed himself between an angry God and sinners, and received those blows in his own body which otherwise must have fallen upon them. Or,

2. In way of petition, as this word is constantly used. He prayed upon earth for all sinners, and particularly for those that crucified him, Luk_23:34; and in heaven he still intercedeth for them, not by a humble petition, but by a legal demand of those good things which he purchased for his own people by the sacrifice of himself, which, though past, he continually represents to his Father, as if it were present.

Isaiah 54:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 54

The blessings and fulness of the gospel church, Isa_54:1-3; the Gentiles becoming Christ's spouse; to whom his love is

everlasting, Isa_54:4-10. Her glories, Isa_54:11,12. The gifts of the Holy Ghost, Isa_54:13. Her sure preservation, Isa_54:14-17.

Sing, O barren. The prophet having largely discoursed of the sufferings of Christ, and of the blessed fruits or effects thereof, among which one is, that he should have a numerous seed that should believe on him, and that when the Jews rejected him, the Gentiles should gladly receive him, and here foreseeing by the Spirit of God that glorious state of the church, he rejoiced in it, as Abraham did upon the like occasion, Joh_8:56, and breaks forth into this song of triumph. He turneth his speech to the church and spouse of God, or of Christ, as is manifest from the following words, and especially from Isa_54:5, and from Gal_4:27, where it is so expounded. And although this chapter is by some understood of the flourishing condition of the Jewish church and state after their return from Babylon, yet the magnificent and glorious promises here following do so vastly exceed their condition at that time, which was full of uncertainties, and distractions, and troubles, as all the histories of those times assure us, and far from that glory and lasting tranquillity which is here assured to her, that it must necessarily be referred to the times of the gospel, in which all that is here said was or will be remarkably fulfilled. And therefore as the foregoing chapter doth directly and literally speak of Christ, so doth this literally speak of the church of Christ, or of the kingdom of the Messiah, of whom the ancient Hebrew doctors understood it. And this church, consisting at first of the Jews, and afterwards of the Gentiles, who were incorporated with them into the same body, he calleth *barren*, not because it now was so, but because before and until the coming of Christ it had been so; as Simon is called the leper, Mat_26:6, after he was cured. Now this church of the Jews might well be called, and had been, barren, because the sincere converts brought forth to God by her ministry had been but few among the Jews comparatively, and simply few among the Gentiles.

More are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife: the church or congregation of the Gentiles, which in the times of the Old Testament was desolate, having neither husband nor children, doth now under the gospel bring forth unto God a far more numerous posterity than the church of the Jews,

which had been married to God for many ages, until by her apostacy from God, and from her Messiah, she provoked God to put her away, He alludeth here either to the history of Sarah, who was long and naturally barren, but by the supernatural power of God was enabled to bring forth a numberless issue; or to that remarkable passage of God's providence concerning Hannah and Peninnah, 1Sa_2:5, *The barren hath born seven, and she that hath many children is waxed feeble* .

Isaiah 54:2

Enlarge the place of thy tent, that it may be capable of the Gentiles, which shall flock to thee in great numbers, and desire to associate themselves with thee.

Let them, those to whom that work belongs, stretch forth. The meaning is, they must and shall be stretched out.

Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes, that they may be able to support that great weight which the tents this enlarged shall be upon them.

Isaiah 54:3

Thou shalt break forth; thou shalt bring forth a multitude of children; for this word is commonly used of any great and extraordinary propagation of living creatures, whether beasts or men, Gen_30:30 Exo_1:12.

On the right hand and on the left; on every side, in all the parts of the world.

Thy seed; either,

1. Thy spiritual seed, the church of the new testament, which is accounted Abraham's seed, or children, Gal_3:7-9, **29**. Or,
2. Thy natural seed, Christ and his apostles, and other ministers, who were Jews, by whom this work was first and most eminently done.

Shall inherit the Gentiles; shall subdue the Gentile world to the church, and to the obedience of the faith.

The desolate cities; those cities and countries which in a spiritual sense were desolate and forsaken by God.

Isaiah 54:4

Thou shalt not be ashamed for that barrenness and widowhood, which once was the matter of thy grief and shame, because now thou shalt be delivered from it, and God will own thee for his wife, and beget children of thee; as it is explained in the following words.

Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth; it shall be forgotten both by thee and others: thou shalt not be upbraided with thy former barrenness in thy youthful state, nor confounded and tormented with the remembrance of it; both *remembering* and *forgetting* in Scripture use connote or comprehend those affections which naturally and usually follow upon them; so great shall be thy fertility and felicity, that it shall cause thee to forget thy former unfruitfulness and misery, as men commonly do in like cases, as Gen_41:51 Job_11:16 Isa_65:16 Joh_16:21.

The reproach of thy widowhood; that time and state when thou wert like a widow, disconsolate and desolate, forsaken by her husband, and having in a manner no children; which was a great reproach, especially among the Jews.

Isaiah 54:5

Thy Maker; he who made thee out of nothing, and therefore can easily fulfil all these promises, how unlikely soever they seem to be; and he who made thee a people, and, which is far more and better, his people, and therefore will not easily nor utterly forsake thee.

Is thine husband; he will own thee for his spouse, and will do the part of a husband to thee.

The Lord of hosts; who hath the sovereign command of all men and creatures, and therefore can subdue the Gentiles to thee, and can make thee to increase and multiply in so prodigious a measure, even in thine old age, notwithstanding thy barrenness in the days of thy youth, of which he speaketh in the foregoing verse.

The God of the whole earth; the God and Father of all nations; whereas formerly he was called only

the God of Israel, and the Gentiles had no special relation to him, nor interest in his covenant and favour, as was observed, Psa_147:19,20, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 54:6

The Lord hath called thee, to return and come again to him. *As a woman forsaken* ; when thou wast like a woman forsaken. Or, as a husband recalleth his wife. Forsaken by her husband, who hath given her a bill of divorce.

Grieved in spirit, for the loss of her husband's flavour and society, and for the reproach attending upon it.

And a wife of youth; or, and as (which note of similitude is supplied here by the LXX. and Chaldee interpreters, and is easily understood out of the foregoing clause, in which it is expressed) *a wife of youth* , i.e. as readily and affectionately as a husband recalleth his wife which no married in her and his own youth, of whom see on Pro_5:18, whom though he might through a sudden and violent passion put away, yet he soon repents of it, and his affections work towards her, and he invites her to return to him.

When thou wast refused; when thou wast in a desolate estate, and hadst been for some time rejected by me, then I recalled thee. Or, *although thou wast refused* , or *dismissed* , or *despised* by me, and that justly; yet I had mercy upon thee, and freely offered reconciliation to thee. Saith thy God; who will again be, and still show himself to be, thy God, and will renew his covenant with thee.

Isaiah 54:7

For a small moment; for the space of some few years, as seventy years in Babylon, and some such intervals, which may well be called a small moment in comparison of God's everlasting kindness mentioned in the next verse.

Forsaken thee; withdrawn my favour and help from thee, and left thee in thine enemies' hands.

With great mercies, such as are most precious and sweet for quality, as is here said, and such as are of long continuance, as is said in the following verse,

will I gather thee from all the places where thou art dispersed, from all the parts of the world.

Isaiah 54:8

I hid my face; I removed the means and pledges of my presence and kindness.

With everlasting kindness; with kindness to thee and thy seed through all succeeding generations, here and unto all eternity.

Isaiah 54:9

This is as the waters of Noah unto me; this covenant of grace and peace made with thee shall be as certain and perpetual as that which I made with Noah, that there should never be another flood of waters to drown the world; of which see Gen_9:11.

Would not be wroth with thee, to wit, so as I have been, or so as to forsake thee utterly.

Isaiah 54:10

The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; which hath been verified in some mountains and hills, that by earthquakes, or otherwise, have been removed from their places. But these kind of absolute expressions are oftentimes comparatively understood, of which **See Poole "Isa_51:6"**; and so the sense is, The mountains shall sooner depart from their places, than my kindness shall depart from thee. As when it is said absolutely, *I desired mercy, and not sacrifice*, it is meant comparatively, I desired mercy more than sacrifice, as it is explained in the following clause.

The covenant of my peace; that covenant whereby I have made peace and friendship with thee, and have promised unto thee all manner of happiness, which frequently comes under the name of peace in Scripture. The sense of the place is, that God will not cast off his Christian church, as he did cast off the church of the Jews; and that the new covenant is established upon better and surer promises than the old, as is observed, Heb_8:6,7, &c., and elsewhere.

That hath mercy on thee; who doth thus with thee not for thine own merits, but merely for his own grace and mercy.

Isaiah 54:11

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted; O thou my poor church, \who hast frequently been, and wilt again and again be, in a most afflicted and comfortless condition for a time, be not discouraged thereby.

I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires; I will make thee exceeding beautiful and glorious. Which yet is not to be understood of outward pomp and worldly glory, as is evident from many places of Scripture, which assure us that Christ's kingdom is of another nature, and that the external condition of God's church is, and for the most part will be, mean and calamitous in this world; but of a spiritual beauty and glory, consisting in the plentiful effusion of excellent gifts, and graces, and comforts; although these shall be followed with eternal glory in heaven. See the like description of the church's glory, Rev_21:11, &c.

Isaiah 54:12

Agates; one kind of which stones was transparent like glass, as Pliny writes in his Natural History, b. 37. ch. 10. But some render this word *crystal* , and the LXX., and some other of the ancients, translate it *jasper* . But the proper signification of the Hebrew names of precious stones is unknown to the Jews themselves, as hath been noted before. It may suffice us to know that this was some very clear, and transparent, and precious stone.

Thy borders; the utmost parts or walls. The church is here evidently compared to a building, whose foundation, pavement, gates, and windows were named before.

Isaiah 54:13

Shall be taught of the Lord; not only outwardly by his word, which was made known to all the Jews under the Old Testament, but inwardly by his Spirit, which is poured forth under the New Testament, both upon a far greater number of persons, and in a far higher measure, and with much more efficacy and success, than it was under the Old.

The peace:

1. Inward peace of mind or conscience arising from the clear discoveries of God's love and reconciliation to us, and wrought by

the Spirit of adoption, which is more abundantly given to believers under the gospel, whereas the spirit of bondage was more common and prevalent under the law.

2. Outward peace, safety, and happiness, which is more fully promised in the following verses, and which God, when he sees fit, will confer upon his church.

Isaiah 54:14

In righteousness; either,

1. As the means of thy establishment. This kingdom shall not be set up and settled by fraud or tyranny, as other kingdoms frequently are, but by justice. Or rather,

2. As the effect of the establishment. Thine affairs shall be managed with righteousness, which is the glory and felicity of any society, and not with oppression, as it follows. Justice shall be freely and impartially executed.

Thou shalt be far from oppression; either by thine own governors, or by foreign powers.

Thou shalt not fear; thou shalt neither have any just cause of fear, nor be given up to the torment of fear without cause.

Isaiah 54:15

They shall surely gather together; it is true, there will not want some that shall combine and make an attempt against thee.

But not by me; as they do this without any such commission from me, as Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar had, Isa_10:6,7 **Jer 25:9;** so they shall not have my help in it, without which all their endeavours will be vain and unsuccessful.

Whosoever shall gather together to battle, as is manifest from the following words, of which kind of gathering this word is used, Psa_140:2, and elsewhere. *Against thee* , Heb. *with thee* . But *to fight with a man* is all one with *fighting against him* .

Shall fall for thy sake; for that respect and love which I bear to thee. Or *before thee* , as this particle is sometimes used, so as thine eyes shall behold it.

Isaiah 54:16

Both the smith that maketh all warlike instruments, and the soldier that useth them, are my creatures, and totally at my command, and therefore they cannot hurt you without my leave. *To destroy* ; to destroy only whom and when I please.

Isaiah 54:17

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and as they cannot do any thing against thee without my leave, so I assure thee I will not suffer them to do it; and if any smith shall make any weapons to be employed against thee, he shall not succeed in it.

And every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn; and I will deliver thee not only from the fury of the war, but also from the strife of tongues, from all the threatenings, and boasts, and reproaches of thine enemies, and from all the claims and pretences which they have of any right and power over thee. So thine enemies shall neither prevail against thee by violence, nor by pretences of justice.

This is the heritage; this blessed condition described in this chapter is the portion allotted to them by me.

Their righteousness; either,

1. The reward or fruit of their righteousness, as *righteousness* is used, Psa_112:3,9. Or,
2. Their right or the righteous administration of all their concerns, whereby they are preserved from all manner of oppressions, as *righteousness* was used, Isa_54:14. *Is of me* ; I give it, and I will continue it to them; and who then can take it away from them?

Isaiah 55:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 55

An invitation to seek for spiritual blessings from Christ, whom the Father sendeth, Isa_55:1-5; to come to him speedily, and by repentance, Isa_55:6,7. His grace infinite, Isa_55:8,9, His word powerful, Isa_55:10,11. The joy of believers, Isa_55:12,13.

Ho, every one; not only Jews, but Gentiles. The prophet having largely discoursed of Christ, **Isa 53**, and of the church of Christ,

Isa 54, doth here invite all persons to come to Christ, and to his church.

That thirsteth for the grace of God, and the blessings of the gospel. This thirst implies a vehement, and active, and restless desire after it, not to be satisfied with any thing short of it.

Come ye to the waters; which are mentioned, either,

1. As the place where they were to buy the following commodities, it being usual to convey provisions to cities' by rivers. Or rather,

2. As the commodity to be bought, the graces and comforts of God's Spirit, which are frequently compared to waters, as **Isa_12:3 35:6,7 Joh 7:37,38**, and elsewhere, and which are designed by all these metaphorical expressions of *waters, wine, milk, and bread*. *He that hath no money*; even those who are most poor in the world, and those who are most worthless and wicked, if they do but thirst, may be welcome.

Buy, i.e. procure or receive that which is freely offered to you, if you do but come for it, and are willing to take it. Thus *buying* is used **Pro_23:23 Rev_3:18**. Nor can this be understood of *buying* properly, because here is no price paid.

Buy wine and milk; which are synecdochically put for all sorts of provisions; which also are to be understood of spiritual and gospel blessings, as is evident from the following words.

Isaiah 55:2

Money; all your time, and strength, and cost in seeking it.

For that which is not bread; for those vain or foolish things which can never nourish or satisfy yea, such as worldly goods, or your own inventions, superstitions, and idolatries.

Hearken diligently unto me; unto my doctrine and counsel.

Eat ye that which is good; that which is truly, and solidly, and everlastingly good, and not such things which though they be called and seem to be good, yet really are evil, and most pernicious to men.

In fatness; in this fat and most pleasant food of gospel enjoyments.

Isaiah 55:3

Hear; hearken attentively and obediently to my counsel; *hearing* being oft put for *obeying* , as Deu_18:15 1Sa_15:22,23 **Psa 95:7**, &c.

Your soul shall live, to wit, comfortably and happily; which only is worthy of the name *of life* . *I will make an everlasting covenant with you* ; that everlasting covenant of grace and peace which I made with Abraham, and his seed the Israelites, I am ready to make it with every one of you thirsting Gentiles.

Even the sure mercies of David; even that covenant which was made first with Abraham, and then with David, concerning the exhibition of those glorious and sure mercies or blessings which God hath promised to his people, one and the chief of which mercies was the giving of Christ to die for their sins, and to rise again for their justification. This exposition may receive light and strength by comparing this place with Act_13:33,34. He mentions David rather than Abraham, either,

1. Because these promises, and especially that great promise, which is the foundation of the rest, concerning Christ and his eternal kingdom, were far more frequently, and expressly, and fully made and revealed to David than they were to Abraham. Or,
2. Because David was a more evident and illustrious type of Christ than Abraham was, as being raised from a mean condition to the highest honour, being made a great and most victorious and righteous king, and the first king of that throne upon which the Messiah was to sit. Or,
3. Because the name of David is not here put personally for the king of that name, but patronymically for the Messiah, who was to be David's Son and successor, and who is therefore called David in the prophetic scriptures, as Jer_30:9 Eze_34:23,24 **37:24,25 Ho 3:5**; as Rehoboam upon the same account is called David, 1Ki_12:16. And this is the more probable, because the next verse, which hath a manifest relation to this verse, is confessedly understood of Christ.

Isaiah 55:4

I have given, I have already appointed, and will in due time actually give,

him; the David last mentioned, even Christ, the Son and successor of David, as is plain and certain from the titles and works ascribed to him in this and the following verse. But of this **See Poole "Isa_55:3"**. *For a witness* ; to be a Prophet or Teacher to declare the counsel and will of God concerning the duty and salvation of men; to bear witness unto the truth, as Christ himself affirmeth, Joh_18:37; to confirm God's promises, Rom_15:8, and, amongst others, those which respect the calling and reconciliation of the Gentiles; to be a witness for both parties of that covenant made between God and men. *To the people* ; not only to my people of Israel, but to all people, Gentiles no less than Jews, as is evident from the following verse, and from Isa_49:6, and divers other places.

A Leader and Commander; a sovereign Prince to give them laws, and exact their obedience, and in case of their obedience to give them protection and rewards.

Isaiah 55:5

Thou; thou, O Messiah, of whom he now spake, Isa_55:4, and to whom he suddenly turneth his speech, as is very common in the prophets;

shalt call a nation, to wit, unto thyself, and to the knowledge of thyself, as appears from the following words, and by thee unto acquaintance and fellowship With God.

That thou knowest not; or rather, *didst not know* , to wit, with that special knowledge which implies approbation, and tender care and affection, as words of knowledge are most frequently used in Scripture; the Gentiles, to whom in former times thou didst not make known thy law and covenant, and the way of salvation, Act_14:16 **17:30**.

Nations that knew not thee, that had but little knowledge of God, and no knowledge of the Messiah,

shall run unto thee; upon thy call shall speedily and readily come to thee, to receive instructions from thee, and to follow thee whithersoever thou shalt lead them.

Because of the Lord thy God; because the Lord shall by many evident and unquestionable tokens manifest himself to be thy God, and thee to be his Son and faithful Servant.

For he hath glorified thee; because the God of Israel, who is the only true God, will highly honour thee, by his singular presence with thee, by his almighty power accompanying thy word, and making it wonderfully effectual for the conversion of an innumerable company, both of Jews and Gentiles, and by confirming thy word with illustrious signs and miracles, and particularly by thy resurrection and glorious ascension. These and other like considerations were the motives which convinced the Gentiles that Christ was the true Messiah, and the religion which he taught was the true religion.

Isaiah 55:6

Seek ye the Lord: having discoursed of the office and work of Christ, and showed that he should call people and nations to himself, and to God, he now endeavours to persuade the people to hearken to his call, and *to seek the Lord*, i.e. to labour to get the knowledge of God's will, and to obtain his grace and favour; neither of which things were to be done but in and through Christ. And this invitation or exhortation is general, like that Isa_55:1, reaching to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, implying that both of them had lost him and his favour, and were gone astray from him. Seek him, ye Gentiles, whom he now inviteth so to do, and will assist in finding him. And seeing the Gentiles seek him earnestly, let their example provoke you Jews to imitate them therein, and take heed that you do not reject him, whom they will receive and own.

While he may be found; in this day of grace, whilst he offereth mercy and reconciliation to you; which he will not always do. Compare Pro_1:24, &c.; Luk_19:44 2Co_6:2. *While he is near*; near to you by his gracious presence and offers in his ordinances, ready and desirous to receive you to mercy upon the following conditions.

Isaiah 55:7

Let the wicked man, any wicked man, either Jew or Gentile, *forsake his way* ; his evil or wicked way, as is evident from the foregoing word, and as it is more fully expressed, Jer_18:11 **25:5**; which is called his way, because it is natural, and customary, and dear to him, and in opposition to God's good way; his sinful course or manner of life. Let him *cease to do evil* , as it is Isa_1:16. This he adds, to intimate that men's seeking and calling upon God will do them no good without reformation of their lives.

His thoughts; the sinful devices and purposes of his mind. Thus he strikes at the root of sinful actions, and showeth that the heart must be purged and changed as well as the outward actions.

Let him return unto the lord; as he hath departed from God by sin, let him turn to him by sincere repentance, and the practice of all God's precepts; whereby he intimates that a mere abstinence from wicked courses is not sufficient, without the exercise of the contrary graces; that we must not only *cease to do evil* , but also *learn to do well* , as it is prescribed, Isa_1:16,**17**.

To our God; to the God of Israel, who is and hath showed himself to be a most merciful and gracious God.

For he will abundantly pardon: he useth so many words and arguments to encourage them to repentance, because the persons here invited were guilty of idolatry, apostacy, and many other gross wickednesses; which he knew, when they came to themselves, and to a serious sense of their sins, and of the just and holy nature and law of God, would be an insupportable burden to their awakened consciences, and make them very prone to conclude that God either could not or would not pardon such horrid delinquencies, and therefore would rather drive them from God, than draw them to him.

Isaiah 55:8

My disposition and carriage is vastly differing from yours. If any man provoke or injure you, especially if he do it greatly, and frequently, and maliciously, you are very slow and backward to forgive him; and if you do or seem to forgive, and promise to forget, and pass it by, yet you retain a secret grudge in your hearts, and upon the least occasion and slight offence you forget your

promise, and you are soon weary with forgiving, and prone to revenge yourselves upon him: but it is not so with me; for I am slow to anger, and ready to forgive all true penitents, how many, and great, and numberless soever their sins be; and my promises of mercy and pardon shall be infallibly made good to them. And therefore you need not fear to come to me, or to find mercy and acceptance with me.

Isaiah 55:9

Higher than the earth; inexpressibly and infinitely; for the distance between the earth and the highest heavens is unmeasurable by any man upon earth.

Isaiah 55:10

And the snow, which in its season contributes to the fruitfulness of the earth as well as the rain.

Returneth not thither, to wit, void, or without effect, as it is expressed in the next verse; or immediately; it is not drawn up again as soon as it is come down, but abides for a convenient time upon the earth, until it do that work for which it was sent.

That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; that it may bring forth store of bread corn, both for men's present supplies, and for seed for the next year.

Isaiah 55:11

So shall my word; my promises before recited concerning the sending of the Messiah, and the blessing of his labours with such wonderful success, and concerning the reconciliation and pardon of the greatest sinners, and concerning the redemption and salvation of his people.

It shall not return unto me void; without success. It is an allusion to an ambassador who returns without despatching that business for which he was sent.

It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it; it shall have that effect which I intended; it shall certainly be fulfilled in manner before expressed.

Isaiah 55:12

For; or, *Therefore* ; because God hath promised it, and therefore will effect it.

Ye shall go out; ye shall be released from the place and state of your bondage. He alludes to their going out of Egypt, which was a type of their succeeding deliverances, and especially of their redemption by Christ from the power of sin and of the devil.

Be led forth; or, *be led along* ; be conducted by the gracious and powerful presence of God, as you were in the wilderness. *With peace* ; safely and triumphantly, without fear of being retaken and brought back into slavery by your enemies.

And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands; there shall be a great and general rejoicing at your deliverance, so that even the senseless creatures shall seem to rejoice with you and for you.

Isaiah 55:13

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; whereas your land was *filled with thorns and briers* , as was foretold, Isa_7:24, they shall be rooted out, and it shall be planted with fir trees and myrtle trees, and such other trees which are useful either for fruit or for delight. Or this promise may be answerable to that Eze_28:24, *There shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn* , &c., but instead of them shall be such trees as shall yield shade and refreshment. The meaning is, The church shall be delivered from pernicious men and things, and replenished with sincere and serious believers, and with all sorts of Divine graces and blessings.

It shall be to the Lord for a name; this wonderful change shall bring much honour to that God by whom it is wrought.

For an everlasting sign; for a monument or evident and glorious token of God's infinite power, and faithfulness, and love to his people unto all succeeding generations.

That shall not be cut off; which shall never be abolished, but shall always live and flourish in the minds and mouths of men.

Isaiah 56:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 56

Blessedness of the godly, without any respect of persons, Isa_56:1-8. Blind watchmen shall be destroyed, Isa_56:9-12.

This verse and the rest of this chapter, until verse 9, seems to belong to the foregoing prophecy. From the consideration of God's promises made to them he moveth them to perform their duty to him.

Keep ye judgment, and do justice: this phrase elsewhere signifies the duties which one man oweth to another, but here it seems to signify the duties which men owe to God, as it is explained in the following verses.

My salvation; that eminent salvation by the Messiah, so largely promised and insisted upon in the foregoing chapters; for which it behooves you to prepare yourselves, and in which, without this condition, you shall have no share nor benefit.

Is near to come: so the Scripture useth to speak of things which are at a great distance, as if they were present or at hand: see Hab_2:3 Jam_5:8,9 Re 22:20.

My righteousness: the same thing which he now called salvation, and here calleth *his righteousness* , because it is an evident demonstration of God's righteousness, as in the fulfilling of his promises, so in the punishment of sin, and in the salvation of sinners upon just and honourable terms.

Isaiah 56:2

Blessed is the man; every man, not only Jews, but Gentiles, or strangers, as it is explained in the following verses. *That were this* ; judgment and justice, mentioned Isa_56:1.

That layeth hold on it; or, *that holdeth it fast* ; that is resolute and constant in so doing; that not only begins well, but perseveres in it.

That keepeth the sabbath, from polluting it; that guardeth the sabbath from profanation, and doth not defile it, either by forbidden practices, or by the neglect of commanded duties. And the sabbath seems to be put here, as sacrifice is elsewhere, synecdochically for the whole worship of God, whereof this is an eminent part, and the bond of all the rest.

Keepeth his hand; which being the great instrument of action, is put for all the kinds and means of action.

From doing any evil, to wit, to one's neighbour, as it is more fully expressed, Psa_15:3.

Isaiah 56:3

The son of the stranger; the stranger, as *the son of man* is the same with *the man* , Isa_56:2; the Gentile, who by birth is a stranger to God, and to the commonwealth of Israel.

That hath joined himself to the Lord; that hath turned from dumb idols to the living God, and to the true religion; for such shall be as acceptable to me as the Israelites themselves, and the partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles shall be taken down, and repentance and remission of sins shall be preached and offered to men of all nations.

The eunuch; who is here joined with the stranger, because he was forbidden to *enter into the congregation of the Lord* , Deu_23:1, as the stranger was, and by his barrenness might seem no less than the stranger to be cast out of God's covenant, and cut off from his people, to whom the blessing of a numerous posterity was promised. And under these two instances he understands all those persons who either by birth, or by any ceremonial pollution, were excluded from the participation of church privileges; and so he throws open the door to all true believers, without any restriction whatsoever. *A dry tree* ; a sapless and fruitless tree, accursed by God with the curse of barrenness, which being oft threatened as a curse, and being a matter of reproach among the Jews, might easily occasion such discouraging thoughts as are here expressed.

Isaiah 56:4

Choose the things that please me; that observe my commands, not by custom, or force, or fear, but by free choice, and full consent, with love to them and delight in them.

Take hold of my covenant; that resolvedly and stedfastly keep the conditions of my covenant.

Isaiah 56:5

In mine house; in my temple, to serve me there as priests, which eunuchs were not allowed to do, Lev_21:17, &c.; Deu_23:1.

Within my walls; in the courts of my temple, which were encompassed with walls. This seems to be added with respect to

the people, who were admitted into the court, but not into the house itself.

A place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; a far greater blessing and honour than that of having posterity, which was but a temporal mercy, and that common to the worst of men; even my favour, and my Spirit, and eternal felicity.

Isaiah 56:6

That join themselves to the Lord; that with purpose of heart cleave unto him, as is said, Act_11:23.

To serve him, and to love the name of the Lord; to serve him out of love to him, and to his worship.

Isaiah 56:7

To my holy mountain; to my house, as it is explained in the following clause, which stood upon Mount Zion, largely so called, including Mount Moriah. Formerly the Gentiles neither had any desire to come thither, nor were admitted there; but now I will incline their hearts to come, and I will give them admission and free liberty to come into my church.

Make them joyful, by accepting their services, and comforting their hearts with the sense of my love, and pouring down all sorts of blessings upon them.

In my house of prayer; in my temple, in and towards which prayers are daily made and directed unto me, 1Ki_8:28,29.

Their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; they shall have as free access to my house and altar as the Jews themselves, and their services shall be as acceptable to me as theirs. Evangelical worship is here described under such expressions as agreed to the worship of God which then was in use, as it is Mal_1:11, and elsewhere. See also Rom_12:1 Heb_13:15.

Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people; Jews and Gentiles shall have equal freedom of access to my house, and shall there call upon my name. Possibly he may call it

a house of prayer, either to imply that prayer to God, whereof thanksgiving is a part, is a more considerable part of God's worship than sacrifice, which being considered in itself is little

valued by him, as he frequently declareth; or to signify that in the New Testament, when the Gentiles should be called, all other sacrifices should cease, except that of prayer, and such-like spiritual services; which also is confirmed from the nature of the thing. For seeing sacrifices were confined to the temple at Jerusalem, and it was impossible that all nations should resort thither to offer up Levitical sacrifices in such time and manner as God appointed, it was necessary upon supposition of the general conversion of the Gentiles, that that way of worship should be abolished, and such a way prescribed as they were capable of practicing.

Isaiah 56:8

Which gathereth the outcasts of Israel; which will gather to himself, and bring into their own land, those poor Israelites which are, or shall be, cast out of their own land, and from God's presence, and dispersed in divers parts of the world.

Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him; as there are some few Gentiles whom I have made proselytes, and added to the Jewish church, so I shall make another and a far more comprehensive gathering of the Gentiles, whom I shall bring into the same church with the Jews, making both Jews and Gentiles one fold under one Shepherd, as it is promised, Joh_10:16.

Isaiah 56:9

This invitation or proclamation is a prediction of Israel's destruction by their cruel enemies, which are oft expressed in Scripture under the names of ravenous beasts. But the great question is, What connexion this part of the chapter hath with the former? Which may be thus conceived: The prophet having largely discoursed concerning the Messiah, and his church and kingdom, and particularly of the great accession and conversion of the Gentiles to it, and of the infidelity, apostacy, and manifold wickednesses of the Jewish nation, and having comforted and encouraged the Gentiles with God's gracious promises made to them, he now proceeds to terrify the unbelieving and ungodly Jews, and to show that as the Gentiles should believe, and be saved, so they should reject their Messiah, and be utterly destroyed; although we need not labour much about the

coherence; for this may be a new sermon, and therefore many learned interpreters make this the beginning of the 57th chapter.

Isaiah 56:10

His; Israel's, as is evident from the following verses; the pronoun relative being put without and instead of the antecedent; of which I have given divers instances before.

Watchmen; priests and prophets, or other teachers, who are commonly called *watchmen*, as Eze_3:17 **33:2** Hos_9:8. He mentions only the teachers, because ignorance was most shameful in them; but hereby he supposeth the gross ignorance of the people, who neither pretended nor desired to be wiser than their teachers.

They are all ignorant of God's will and word, and of their own and the people's duty, and of the true Messiah.

They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; they are also slothful and negligent in instructing the people, and do not faithfully reprove them for their sins, nor warn them of their dangers, nor keep them from errors and corruptions in doctrine, and worship, and conversation, as they ought to do.

Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber; minding their own ease and safety more than the people's benefit.

Isaiah 56:11

Greedy dogs which can never have enough; insatiably covetous.

That cannot understand, Heb. *that know not to understand*; that do not care, or love, or desire (as *knowing* is frequently taken) either to understand the law or word of God themselves, or to make the people to understand it.

They all look to their own way; they regard neither God's command and glory, nor the people's good, but only the satisfaction of their own base lusts. **See Poole "Isa_53:6"**.

Every one for his gain, from his quarter; in their several places and stations, as they have opportunity. Heb. *from his or their end or extremity*, i.e. universally, or all from one end of that body or society of men unto the other; as the same word signifies,

Gen_19:4; from one end of the city to the other; or, as we there render it,

from every quarter; and as the same word is by divers learned men rendered, 1Ki_12:31, *out of the meanest of the people*, but out of all the people, or indifferently out of every tribe; of which **See Poole** "1Ki_12:31". But if that phrase be rightly rendered there, *out of the meanest of the people*, as divers also expound the same phrase, Gen_47:2, *of the meanest of his brethren*, why may it not as well be rendered here, even *from the meanest or poorest of his flock*? which is a great aggravation of their covetousness and cruelty, to extort gains from such as needed their charity.

Isaiah 56:12

Say they, unto their brethren, by office and in iniquity; unto their fellow priests, or other jolly companions.

We will fill ourselves; we will drink not only to delight, but even to drunkenness, as the word signifies, Nah_1:10, and elsewhere.

To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant; which showeth their dreadful security and contempt of God, and of his judgments, and their total and resolved abandoning of all care of their own or people's souls.

Isaiah 57:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 57

The blessed death of the righteous not duly lamented by the Jews; who also commit idolatry, and trusted in man: they are threatened, Isa_57:1-12; Evangelical promises to the penitent, Isa_57:13-19. No peace to the wicked, Isa_57:20,**21**.

The righteous; just and holy men, who are the pillars of the place and state in which they live; yea, as the Jews call them, the pillars of the world.

No man; few or none of the people. So he showeth that the corruption was general, in the people no less than in the priests.

Layeth it to heart; is duly affected with this severe stroke and sad sign of God's displeasure.

Merciful; or, *godly* ; the same whom he now called *righteous* , whose duty and practice it is to exercise both mercy or kindness, and justice.

From the evil to come; from those dreadful calamities which are coming upon the nation.

Isaiah 57:2

He shall enter into peace; this just and merciful man shall enter into a state of peace and rest, where he shall be out of the reach of the approaching miseries. Or, *He shall go* (to wit, *to his fathers* , as it is fully expressed, Gen_15:15; or, *he shall die; going* being put for *dying* , as 1Ch_17:11, compared with 2Sa_7:12 Job_10:21 **14:20** Luk_22:22, and elsewhere) in *peace*. *They* ; just men. Here is a sudden change of the number, which is very frequent in the prophets. *In their beds* ; in their graves, which are not unfitly called their *beds* , or sleeping houses, as their death is commonly called *sleep* in Scripture. *Walking* ; or, that *walketh* or *did walk* , i.e. live. *In his uprightness* ; in a sincere and faithful discharge of his duties to God and men. Or, *before him* , i.e. before God, according to the usual phrase of Scripture, as Gen_17:1 1Ki_2:4 **8:25**. For God is oft understood where he is not expressed, but only designed by this or the like pronoun, as Gen_15:13, and elsewhere.

Isaiah 57:3

Draw near hither, to God's tribunal, to answer for yourselves, and to hear what I have to say against you, and to receive your sentence.

Sons of the sorceress; not by propagation, but by imitation; such being frequently called a man or woman's sons that learn their art, and follow their example: you sorcerers, either properly or metaphorically so called; for the Jews were guilty of it both ways.

The seed of the adulterer and the whore; not the genuine children of Abraham, as you pretend and boast, but begotten in fornication upon a common whore; which is not to be understood properly, but figuratively, because their dispositions and carriage were far more suitable to a bastardly brood than to Abraham's seed.

Isaiah 57:4

Against whom do ye sport yourselves? consider whom it is that you mock and scoff when you deride God's prophets, as they did, Isa_28:14,22, and know that it is not so much men that you abuse as God, whose cause they plead, and in whose name they speak.

Make a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue: these are the known and common gestures of mockers, of which see Job_16:10 Psa_22:7 **35:21**.

Are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood? either an adulterous brood, as was said before; or a generation of liars, whose practices grossly contradict your principles and professions, who deal deceitfully and perfidiously both with God and with men.

Isaiah 57:5

Inflaming yourselves with idols, Heb. *Being inflamed* , &c.; lusting after them, and mad upon them, as the phrase is, Jer_50:38; fervent both in making and in worshipping of them, as was observed, Isa_44:12, &c. It is a metaphor borrowed from whoredom, to which idolatry is oft compared.

Under every green tree; wheresoever you see an idol erected, which was commonly done in groves, or under great and shady trees, which both defended the worshippers from the heat of the sun, and were supposed to strike them with a kind of sacred horror and reverence. **See Poole "Deu_12:2"; See Poole "2Ki_16:4"; See Poole "2Ki_17:10"**.

Slaying the children, in way of sacrifice to their idols, after the manner of the barbarous heathens; of which see on Lev_18:21 Deu_12:31 2Ki_21:6 **23:10**.

In the valleys; or, *beside the brooks* , which run in the valleys; which was most commodious for such bloody work. He seems to allude to the valley of Hinnom, in which these cruelties were practised, Jer_7:31, through which also the brook Kidron is supposed to have run.

Under the cliffs of the rocks; which they chose either for shade, or for those dark vaults and hollow places which were either by

nature or art made in rocks, and which were convenient for and frequently appointed to idolatrous uses.

Isaiah 57:6

Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; thou hast chosen for thy portion those idols which were either made of those smooth stones which were cast up by rivers, or which were worshipped upon altars made of such stones, or which were worshipped by the sides of brooks or rivers, where such smooth stones commonly lie.

They are thy lot; thou hast forsaken me, and chosen idols for the great object of thy worship and trust.

To them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meat-offering; for the devil is God's ape, and idolaters used the same rites and offerings in the worship of idols which God had prescribed in his own, Num_15:4, &c.

Should I receive comfort in these? should I be pleased with such a people and such actions? must I not needs be highly provoked, and show my displeasure by an exemplary punishment of such wicked and foolish actions? This is a usual figure, called *meiosis*, or *litotes*, when less is said, and more is understood.

Isaiah 57:7

Upon a lofty and high mountain, in high places, which were much used for religious worship, both by Israelites and by heathens,

hast thou set thy bed; thine altar, as appears from the sacrifice here following, in which thou didst commit spiritual whoredom with idols. Compare Eze_23:17,**41**.

Isaiah 57:8

Behind the doors also and the posts; which by a figure called *hendiaduo* may be put for *the door-posts*, as it is expressed, Deu_11:20. Behind the posts of the doors of thine house; where the heathens are said to have placed their tutelary gods, to whose protection they committed themselves and their houses, that so they might have their eyes and minds upon them, whensoever they went out or came in. Here also the Israelites might put them in

some close corner, that they might keep them secret, it being opprobrious, and oftentimes dangerous, for them to worship idols.

Thy remembrance; those images or monuments and tokens which thou didst make and set up there as remembrances of those idol-gods whom they represented, or to whom they belonged. He saith,

thy remembrance, in opposition to God's remembrances, or to that writing of God's law upon their door-posts, which God prescribed to keep him and his law in their remembrance, Deu_6:9 **11:20.**

Thou hast discovered thyself to another than me; thou hast uncovered thy nakedness, i.e. prostituted thy body, (as the phrase commonly signifies,) to others besides me, thine Husband. Heb. *from with me* (departing from me, or as it were rising out of my bed) *thou hast uncovered* or prostituted thyself to others, like an impudent and insatiable strumpet. *Art gone up* into the adulterous bed, as this very word is used, Gen_49:4.

Thou hast enlarged thy bed, that it might receive many adulterers together. Thou hast multiplied thine idols and altars. *Made a covenant with them* ; thou hast covenanted to serve them, and to expect help from them. But because the verb here used being thus put by itself never signifies *to make a covenant* , it seems to be better rendered in the margin of our Bible, and by others, *hast hewed it* (to wit, thy bed, which is expressed both in the next foregoing and in the next following words) *for thyself* (for thine idolatrous uses) larger *than theirs* ; than their bed, as it follows: or thus, *didst hew down* (to wit, trees, which is easily understood, both from the verb, and from the nature of the thing) *to or for thyself* (to make images or other things relating to thy false gods) *more than they* ; more than the heathens, of whom thou hast learned these practices, as God complains, 2Ki_21:9 Eze_16:46,47,52. *Thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest it* ; no sooner didst thou see their idols but thou wast enamoured with them, and didst fall down and worship them, like an unchaste and lewd woman, who upon all occasions, and at the very first view of any man, is inflamed with lust towards them. Heb. *thou lovedst their bed* (i.e. their filthy conversation) in *the place* (for so this

Hebrew word frequently signifies, as Deu_23:12 Isa_22:18, and elsewhere) where *thou sawest it* . Or thus, *thou lovedst their bed, thou didst provide* (as this word signifies, Exo_18:21, and so doth a word of the very same signification, Gen_22:8) *a place for it* , to receive their bed, to set up their idols in thine own house.

Isaiah 57:9

Thou wentest, either by thyself, or by thy messengers, as it follows. Or, *thou didst look* , to wit, earnestly, with expectation and vehement affection.

To the king; either to Moloch, which was as it were the king or chief of their idols, and which signifies a king. Or to the great king of Assyria, called *the king* by way of eminency, to whom the Israelites in the days of Isaiah were very prone to seek, and trust, and send presents. Although the word *king* may be here taken collectively for the kings of Assyria or Egypt, or any other king, from whom they desired or expected help in their straits. And so the prophet passeth here from their idolatry to another sin, even to their carnal confidence in heathen princes, for which they are oft severely reprov'd; although these two sins were commonly joined together, and they easily received idolatry from those kings whose help they desired.

With ointment; with precious ointments, and particularly with balm, which was of great price, and was a commodity peculiar to those parts, and was sometimes sent as a present: see Gen_43:11 Jer_8:22 **46:11**.

Didst increase thy perfumes; didst send great quantities thereof to them to procure their aid.

Didst send thy messengers far off; into Assyria, which was far from Judea.

Didst debase thyself even unto hell; thou wast willing to submit to the basest terms to procure their aid.

Isaiah 57:10

Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; thou hast not eased or relieved, but only tired thyself with all thy tedious journeys and laborious endeavours.

Yet saidst thou not, There is no hope; and yet thou wast so stupid under all thy discouragements and disappointments, that thou didst not perceive that thy labour was lost, and that thy case was not mended, but made worse and desperate by these practices.

Thou hast found the life of thine hand; thou hast found (i.e. thou falsely imaginest that thou hast found, or shalt assuredly find by these courses) *the life* (i.e. the strength and rigour) *of thine hand*, that thine hand is strengthened by these practices; or, *life by thine hand*, i.e. by these endeavours and applications of thyself to others for help. Or, thou hast sometimes found success in these ways.

Therefore thou wast not grieved; therefore thou didst not repent of thy sin and folly herein, but didst persist and applaud thyself in such courses.

Isaiah 57:11

And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared? and what or who are they the fear of whom drives thee to these wicked and desperate courses? Are they not men, weak and mortal creatures, such as wholly depend upon me, and can do nothing to thee either against me or without me?

That thou hast lied; that thou hast dealt thus disloyally and perfidiously with me, and sought for such foreign assistances, contrary to my command, and thy solemn covenant,

and hast not remembered me: hast thou forgotten all those great things which I have done for thee, and all those promises which I have made to thee, and constantly performed, when thou hast not grossly violated the conditions upon which they were made?

Nor laid it to thy heart; or thus, *nor set me upon thine heart*, as these very words are rendered, Son_8:6. And so this is a repetition of what is said in the foregoing clause in other words. The sense is, Thou hast not seriously and affectionately considered what I am, how all-sufficient, and faithful, and gracious, for then thou wouldst not have distrusted or disobeyed me.

Have not I held my peace even of old? have not I forbore to reprove and punish thee for this and for other sins, from time to

time, ever since thou wast my people, that by this goodness I might oblige thee to love me, and to cleave unto me?

And thou fearest me not; or, *therefore thou dost not fear or regard me* . Thus thou abusest mine indulgence and long-suffering, taking occasion from thence to despise me.

Isaiah 57:12

I will declare; I will no longer be silent and patient towards thee.

Thy righteousness and thy works; which may be put for the righteousness of thy works, by that known figure, of which See Poole "Isa_57:8", whereby he means their wickedness, which he calleth their

righteousness, either ironically, or because it was covered with a pretence of righteousness, and they alleged that this was a just and lawful thing, when they were distressed to seek for help from their neighbours or allies. The sense is, I will discover whether thy works be righteous, as thou pretendest they are; my punishments shall manifest the wickedness of thy actions.

They shall not profit thee; these actions shall do thee no good, but much hurt.

Isaiah 57:13

When thou criest, to wit, unto me for deliverance,

let thy companies deliver thee; expect it not from me, whom thou hast forsaken and despised, but from those foreign troops to whom thou hast sought and trusted for succour.

But the wind shall carry them all away; but they shall be so far from saving thee, that they shall not be able to deliver themselves, but shall be carried away suddenly and violently by the blast of mine anger.

Vanity; a vapour or puff of breath which quickly vanisheth away. It is the same thing in effect with the *wind*. *Shall take them* ; or, *take them away* , as this verb signifies, Hos_4:11, and elsewhere.

Shall inherit my holy mountain; shall enjoy my favour and presence in my temple.

Isaiah 57:14

And shall say, Heb. *And he shall say* ; or, *And one shall say* . God will raise up a man who shall say these words, and that with authority and efficacy, so as the thing shall be done.

Cast ye up; make causeways, where it is needful, for their safe and easy passage.

Take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people; remove all things which may hinder them in their return.

Isaiah 57:15

Whose name is Holy; who is omnipotent, everlasting, and unchangeable, holy in all his words and ways, and therefore both can and will deliver his people, as he hath promised to do.

With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit; with such also whose spirits are broken and humbled by afflictions, and by a sense of their sins for which they were afflicted; which doubtless was the case of many of the Jews in the Babylonish captivity; whom therefore he here implies that God would pity and deliver out of their distresses.

Isaiah 57:16

I will not contend for ever; I will not constantly proceed to the utmost severity with sinful men in this life, and therefore I will put an end to the miseries of the Jews, and turn their captivity.

For the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made; for then their spirits would sink and die under my stroke, and I should do nothing else but destroy the works of mine own hands. Therefore I consider their infirmity, and spare them. Compare Psa_78:38,**39 103:13,14**.

Isaiah 57:17

Covetousness; of which sin the Jews were eminently guilty, as is expressly affirmed, Jer_6:13 **8:10**. But this is not mentioned exclusively as to other sins, but synecdochically, so as to comprehend all those sins for which God contended with them.

I hid me; I withdrew my favour and help from him, and left him in great calamities.

And he went on frowardly in the way of his heart; yet he was not reformed by corrections, but in his distresses trespassed more and more, as was said of Ahaz, and obstinately persisted in those sinful courses which were chosen by and were most pleasing to the lusts of his own corrupt heart.

Isaiah 57:18

I have seen his ways; I have taken notice of these evil ways in which he seems resolved to walk, and that he is neither bettered by mercies nor judgments.

And will heal him; or, *yet I will heal him* . Although I might justly destroy him, and leave him to perish in his own ways, yet of my mere mercy, and for my own name's sake, I will pity him, and turn him from his sins, and bring him out of his troubles. *And* , or, *to wit* , the copulative conjunction being put expositively, as it is frequently,

to his mourners; to those who are humbled under God's hand, that mourn in Zion, Isa_61:2,3, for their own and others' sins, Eze_9:4, and for the calamities of God's church and people, Isa_66:10.

Isaiah 57:19

I create, I will by my almighty power and in a wonderful manner produce,

the fruit of the lips; Peace: either,

1. Praise or thanksgiving, which is called *the fruit of our lips* , Hos_14:2 Heb_13:15, and peace: or rather,

2. That peace which is not wrought by men's hands, but only by God's lips or word; peace with God, and in a man's own conscience, which God hath promised to his people, and which he hath published and offered to all sorts of men by the preaching of the prophets, and especially of the apostles; as may be gathered both from the object of this peace in the following words, and by the exclusion of all wicked men from this peace, Isa_57:20 **21**.

Peace: the doubling of the word signifies the certainty and abundance of this peace.

To him that is far off, and to him that is near; to the Gentiles, who are far from God and from salvation, Act_2:38,**39 Eph 2:12**, &c., as well as to the Jews, who are called *a people near unto God*, Psa_148:14.

Isaiah 57:20

Their minds are restless, being perpetually hurried and tormented with their own lusts and passions, and with the horror of their guilt, and the dread of the Divine vengeance due unto them, and ready to come upon them.

Isaiah 57:21

Though they may have as great a share of prosperity as the best of men have, as appears from Psa_37:35 **73:3**, &c.; Ecc_8:14 **9:2**; yet they have no share in this inward, and spiritual, and everlasting peace.

Isaiah 58:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 58

The Jews' hypocrisy in their fasts, Isa_58:1-5. A true fast described, Isa_58:6,**7**. Promises to godliness, Isa_58:8-12; to the keeping of the sabbath, Isa_58:13,**14**.

The prophet having in the foregoing chapter noted and censured divers gross miscarriages of the Jews, proceeds upon the same subject in this chapter, and in God's name expostulates with them for other misdemeanours.

Spare not; forbear not to speak whatsoever I command thee for the conviction of this people.

Isaiah 58:2

They seek me daily; they cover all their wickedness with a profession of religion, from time to time resorting to my house, pretending to ask counsel of me, and to desire and seek my favour and blessing.

Delight to know my ways: either,

1. They seem to delight in it; for men are oft said in Scripture to be or do that which they seem or profess to be or do; as Mat_13:12, *that which he hath*, is thus explained in Luk_8:18,

that which he seemeth to have ; and Rom_7:9, *I was alive* , i.e. I falsely thought myself to be alive. See also Phi_3:9. Or,

2. They really delight; for this is evident, that there are many men who take some pleasure in the knowing of God's will and word, and yet do not conform their lives to it.

As a nation that did righteousness; as if they were a righteous and godly people.

And forsook not the ordinance of their God; as if they were not guilty of any apostacy from God, or neglect of or disobedience to God's precepts.

They ask of me the ordinances of justice; as if they desired and resolved to observe them.

They take delight, of which see the second note upon this verse,

in approaching to God; in coming to my temple to hear my word, and to offer sacrifices.

Isaiah 58:3

Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? They complain of hard usage from God, that although they prayed, and fasted, and kept the rest of God's ordinances, all which are synecdochically comprehended under the title of *fasting* , all their labour was lost, and God neither regarded nor delivered them.

Afflicted our soul; defrauded and pinched our appetites with fasting, of which this phrase is used, Lev_16:29 **23:27,29.**

In the day of your fast; in those solemn days of fasting which I have appointed; or, in those times when I have called you by the course of my providence, and counsels of my prophets, unto fasting, and *weeping, and mourning* , &c., Isa_22:12. *Ye find pleasure* ; either,

1. You indulge yourselves in sensuality, as they did, Isa_22:13. But this doth not agree with that *afflicting of their souls* which they now professed, and which God acknowledgeth, Isa_58:5. Or rather,

2. You pursue and satisfy your own lusts; though you abstain from bodily food, you do not mortify your own sinful concupiscences;

and when you are restrained from outwards acts, yet even then your thoughts and affections are set upon and working toward those things which gratify your fleshly inclinations and worldly interests.

Your labours; your money got by your labour, and lent to others, either for their need, or your own advantage; for labour is oft put for wealth, as Deu_28:33 Isa_45:14, &c. Heb. *your griefs* ; not passively, those things which are grievous to you; but actively, such as are very grievous and burdensome to others; either hard service, above the strength of your servants, or beyond the time limited by God for their service, of which see an instance, Jer_34:13-16; or debts, which you require either with usury, or at least with rigour and cruelty, when either the general law of charity, or God's particular and positive law, commanded the release, or at least the forbearance, of them; of which see an instance, Neh_5:1,2, &c.

Isaiah 58:4

Ye fast for strife and debate; your fasting days, wherein you ought in a special manner to implore the mercy of God, and to show compassion to men, you employ in a great measure in injuring or quarrelling with your brethren, your servants, or debtors, or in contriving mischief against them, as if the design of your fasting and praying to God were only to obtain a licence to oppress men. Compare Mat_23:14.

With the fist of wickedness; or, *with a wicked fist* ; a genitive of the adjunct. To deal rigorously and injuriously with your servants or debtors; which servants, it may be, had sold themselves to the year of redemption, Exo_21:2 Lev_25:39,40,50. You handle them with a hard hand; the word is used for *fist* , Exo_21:18; the LXX. add the *humble, poor, or inferior person* ; and that not only their debtors, with a *summum jus* , exact rigour, which seems elsewhere to be expressed by *grinding* the face; Isa_3:15, and in that parable by taking by the throat, Mat_18:28; but also their servants out of mere will and pleasure, and in contempt of them, treating them opprobriously, as Christ was handled in contempt and scorn, Mat_26:67,68 Joh 18:22.

Your voice; either,

1. In strife and debate, in which men's passions show themselves by loud clamours. Or,

2. So as to cause the cry of the oppressed, by reason of your injuries, of what kind soever, to enter into the ears of God; which is a crying sin, whether it proceed from unmercifulness, Exo_22:25-27, which sometimes increaseth to *rage*, 2Ch_28:9; or from *injustice*, Isa_5:7; or from *fraud and deceit*, Jam_5:4. The Scripture doth frequently express whatever sin is against charity in special, as also general complex sins, by *crying*, Gen_18:20, 21Jo_1:2. Or,

3. By way of ostentation, to note their *hypocrisy*; they love to be taken notice of by others, Mt 6 2,5,16; or their *folly*, supposing that they shall be heard for their much speaking, upon which account Baal's priests are mocked by Elijah, 1Ki_18:27, 28 4. *Voice* here relates principally to their *prayer*; it is a synecdoche of the kind: so the sense is, This is not the way to have your prayers heard; if you desire that, you must first in another manner, and abstain from all kind of oppression. And this seems best to suit the context, which is to show what kind of fast the Lord reprove, and what he approves in the following verses.

Isaiah 58:5

That I have chosen; approve of, accept, or delight in, by a metonymy, because we delight in what we freely choose.

A day for a man to afflict his soul; or, to afflict his soul for a day. It is an *hypallage*, and so it may be understood either for a man to take a certain time to afflict his soul in, and that either from even to even, Lev_23:32, or from morning to evening, Jud_20:26 2Sa_3:35; or else to afflict his soul for a little time. *To afflict*, or keep himself low, or chastise the body for want of food, viz. outwardly, without any inward sorrow, or compunction for sin, working a true humiliation in the sight of God.

His soul, put here synecdochically for the body or person, as is usual in Scripture, Gen_46:18, 22, 25 Le 5:2, 4 7:20, 21, 27 22:11.

To bow down his head as a bulrush: here the prophet sets down those external gestures and postures in particular which they did join with their hypocritical fasts, as he had mentioned it before in general.

To bow down; bowing is the posture of mourners, Psa_35:14; and here it is either, as if through weakness of body their heads did hang down; or counterfeitedly, to represent the posture of true penitents, moving sometimes their heads this way, and that way, as the word signifieth, not unlike the balance of a clock, as the bulrush moved by the wind boweth itself down, waving to and fro, in a kind of circular or semicircular motion; the contrary motion of lifting up the head being an indication of pride, Isa_3:16. It is the guise of hypocrites to put on affected countenances, **Mt 6 16**.

To spread sackcloth and ashes under him. The Jews, to express their sorrow, made use of sackcloth and ashes two ways.

1. Sometimes by putting on sackcloth upon their bodies, as 1Ki_21:27 Psa_69:11, and casting ashes upon their heads, 2Sa_13:19. And,

2. Sometimes by spreading sackcloth under them, and lying down upon ashes, Est_4:3 Job_2:8. The intent of

sackcloth was to afflict the body by its displeasing harshness, and of

ashes to represent their own vileness, as being but dust and ashes; their putting of them on might note their uneasiness under sin, and laying on them their self-aborrency, shaming themselves for it.

Quest. Are such rites now convenient on a day of humiliation to help us in our afflicting of ourselves?

Answ. Gospel services neither require them nor need them, respecting more the inward afflicting of the soul with godly sorrow and deep contrition; yet may they carry this instruction along with them, that our ornaments, our best and gaudy apparel, ought to be laid aside, as not suiting either the ground and cause, or the end and design, of days of humiliation.

Wilt thou call this a fast? i.e. canst thou upon a rational account as a mere man call it so? canst thou think, suppose, or believe it to be so? it being such a one as has nothing in it but the lifeless skeleton and dumb signs of a *fast*, nothing of deep *humiliation* appearing in it, or real *reformation* proceeding from it. Not that the prophet blames them for these external rites in this outward way of afflicting themselves; for, this he commands,

Lev_23:27,**31,32**, and appoints certain rites to be used, Lev_16:19 **21**. And these particular rites were frequent in their solemn humiliations, 1Ki_21:27 Est_4:3 Dan_9:3; used also by the heathen, Jon_3:5,**6**. See Mat_11:21. But that which he condemns is their hypocrisy in separating true humiliation from them, for bodily exercise profiteth little, 1Ti_4:8.

An acceptable day to the Lord; a day that God will approve of, as before. Heb. *a day of acceptance* , or that will turn to a good account on your behalf.

Isaiah 58:6

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? or, *approve* , as before, Isa_58:5: or, Ought not such a fast to be accompanied with such things as these? where he is now about to show the concomitants of a true fast, with reference to the thing in hand, namely, to exercise works of charity, consisting partly in acts of self-denial, in this verse, and partly in doing good to those in distress, in the next. In this verse he instanceth in some particulars, and closeth with a general.

The bands of wickedness, viz. the cruel obligations of usury and oppression.

The heavy burdens, Heb. *bundles* ; a metaphor possibly pointing at those many bundles of writings, as *bills, bonds, mortgages, and acknowledgments* , which the usurers had lying by them: The former may relate to unjust and unlawful obligations extorted by force or fear, which he would have cancelled; this latter to just debts contracted through poverty and necessity, the rigour whereof he would have abated, whether by reason of loans upon too hard conditions, called a *drawing them into a net* , Psa_10:9, and so much is implied, Pro_6:5; or under too hard circumstances, whether they were loans of food or money, of which the people so bitterly complained, Neh_5:1-4, and is expressly forbid, Exo_22:25. For debts may be called *burdens* ,

1. Because they lie as a great load upon the debtor's spirits, under which whoever can walk up and down easily doth not so much excel in fortitude as in folly.

2. Because they usually introduce poverty, slavery, imprisonment, &c.

The oppressed; either in a large sense, viz. any ways grieved or vexed, whether by the gripings of usury, or the bondage of slavery accompanied with cruel usage; or more peculiarly (according to some) relating to their being confined and shut up in prisons, which latter sense the word

free may possibly seem to favour, the former being comprised in that general expression that follows of

breaking every yoke. Heb. *broken* , i.e. like a bruised reed, so crushed and weakened, that they have no consistency or ability, either to satisfy their creditors, or support themselves; and we usually call such insolvent persons broken that cannot look upon themselves to be *sui juris* , but wholly at another's mercy: you have the same kind of oppression, and the same words used, Amo_4:1.

That ye break every yoke, namely, that is grievous, a metaphor; i.e. free them from all sorts of vexation, whatever it is that held them under any bondage. The LXX. refer it to bonds and writings; but it seems more general: the word properly signifies that stick or cord that holds both ends of the yoke, that it spring not out, or fall off from the neck on which it is laid, Exo_25:14, where the same word is used for staves; and called the bands of the yoke, Lev_26:13, *I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright* ; the same thing that God would have them do here.

Isaiah 58:7

Is it, viz. the fast that pleaseth me, supplied from the former verse. Having showed the evil they are to abstain from in order to an acceptable fast, viz. *cruelty* , he here speaks of the duty that is required, viz. *mercy* , as a manifestation of repentance, Dan_4:27 Luk_19:8. For there are two parts of justice, one to do no man wrong, the other to do good to all; which two ought always to accompany each other, and cannot be parted, especially in acts of humiliation: and as by those evils mentioned he understands all other evil whatsoever, that they are to be abstained from as the consequence of a day of humiliation, so under these duties mentioned are comprised all the duties that we are to set upon as the effect of true repentance; and he instanceth rather in those of the second table than those of the first, not that they are to be

neglected, but because cheerful performance of external duties to our neighbour is the clearest discovery and indication of our inward piety towards God, 1Jo_4:20.

To deal: the word properly signifies to divide, or break into parts, for the more equal and expeditious doing whereof they were wont of old to bake their loaves with cuts or clefts in them, more or fewer according to the bigness of the loaf, not much unlike that which we ordinarily call buns. It implies, that as none is obliged to give away all, so none is exempted from giving some, but a distribution to be made according to the abilities of rich and poor; or the meaning is, What thou sparest on thy fasting day from thine own belly, thou give it to refresh the bowels of the hungry; what thou takest from thyself give to another, that thy poor neighbour's body may be refreshed by that from the abstinence whereof thine own is afflicted.

Thy bread: bread is taken for all necessaries for the support of human life, and here for all kind of food; and it is here limited by a term of propriety, thy, which may seem to have some emphasis in it: **See Poole** "Ecc_11:1". Speaking of their grinding and oppressing the poor, he would have them be sure to give of their own, not that which of right is another's, and thou hast, it may be, unjustly gotten. For to refresh some poor with that which thou hast gotten by the oppressing of others, and thereby possibly made them poor, will turn but to a bad account; it will bring a curse upon thy house, or family, Pro_15:27, or will transfer thy estate over to such strangers that will manage it as thou shouldst have done, Pro_28:8.

That thou bring, i.e. voluntarily, without pressing. Invite, encourage, freely accommodate.

The poor, viz. that are not only needy and necessitous as to their present condition, but helpless and shiftless as to the means of getting out of it.

That are cast out; and thereby become wanderers, having no abiding place; or rather, suffered to abide no where, such are mentioned Heb_11:37,38. Or, this word coming from a root that signifies to *rebel*, it may be applied to such as have been adjudged, whether wrongfully or no, rebels, and therefore cast out,

viz. of favour and protection, and so become as banished ones, or pilgrims in another country; or *afflicted* , as in the margin, viz. grievously oppressed by the cruelty of great men, whereby they are east out of their possessions, and so become wanderers, seeking relief abroad. *To thy house* ; that thou be hospitable, and make thy house a shelter to them that have none of their own left, but, as we usually say, *cast out of house and home* : see Act_16:34.

The naked, i.e. either that have no clothes, or that are so meanly clothed that they have scarce enough to cover their nakedness, 1Co_4:11, where naked is to be taken as hunger and thirst is, not absolutely starved, so neither quite stripped; but either in a ragged and undecent condition, as to others' sight, or so thinly and insufficiently clothed as not to defend him from the injury of weather, as to his own sense of feeling.

That thou cover him, i.e. that thou give him raiment suited to these wants, or that wherewith he may procure it, Jam_2:15,16: most of these circumstances we find were the eases of the apostles, 1Co_4:11.

That thou hide not thyself; that thou not only seek no occasion to excuse thyself, either by absence, or discountenancing and disowning of him; but that out of compassion thou apply thyself heartily to his speedy relief; that thou be not like that priest and Levite, Luk_10:31,32, but like the good Samaritan, Luk_10:33-35, not giving him occasion to complain as David, Psa_142:4.

From thine own flesh: some confine this to our own kindred, and relations, and family; and this the LXX. seem to favour, who render it, *those of thine own house, of thine own seed* , overlook not; agreeable to that of 1Ti_5:8, where the apostle useth the same word that the LXX. doth for kindred: but this would confine our charity within too narrow a compass, inasmuch as often, nay, most commonly, the necessities of others are greater than our own; neither is it congruous that the other words should be taken in the greatest latitude, and this alone confined within so narrow a compass. It is true the Hebrews by their *own flesh* do mostly understand those who are of the same stock, or lineage, and tribe, as Gen_37:27 2Sa_19:12,13; and thus many understand Paul's

meaning, Rom_11:14. But here it is to be taken more generally, for every man, he being thine own nature; and in this latitude our Saviour interprets the relation of neighbour to that lawyer, Luk_10:29,30, &c. We can look on no man but there we contemplate our *own flesh* ; and therefore it is barbarous, not only to tear, but not to love and succour, our own flesh, Neh_5:5. In which soever of these two senses you take it, there is a note of similitude to be understood; so that the sense is this, *break thy bread* , &c. to them as unto thine *own flesh* ; be not more severe to them than thou wouldst be to thyself; and thus it agrees with that of our Saviour, Mat_22:39, and with that of the apostle, Eph_5:29. In short, feed him as thou wouldst feed thyself, or have it fed; shelter him as thou wouldst shelter thyself, or have it sheltered; clothe him as thou wouldst clothe thyself, or be clothed; if in any of these respects thou wert in his circumstances.

Isaiah 58:8

Thy light: it is put in general for all *happiness* and prosperity; as all kind of adversity and calamity is set forth and resembled by darkness: but here more particularly for a comfortable and free estate after their dark and calamitous condition in the Babylonish captivity; for the like reason Josephus tells us, lib. 12. cap. 11., that the Jews instituted a feast to be observed by their posterity, upon the account of the service of the temple being re-established, which they called *the feast of lights* , because, saith he, so great a happiness broke forth upon them beyond their hope. *Break forth as the morning* : here is a metaphorical allusion in a metonymical expression, viz. of the *efficient* , describing the comfortable effect of humbling themselves in a right manner, which like the daylight shall

break forth from the blackness of their night of affliction, and bring with it the joy and comfort of all good things; and he doth not only say this light shall appear, but break forth, dart itself forth, notwithstanding all difficulties, as the sun breaks and pierceth through a cloud, noting how ready God is to help is people when they are rightly humbled, how quickly and how clearly salvation shall break forth upon them.

Thine health shall spring forth speedily: another metaphor to express the same thing, unless there may be this difference, the

light with reference to their outward state, and health with reference to the inward delight of their minds, in both to describe the complete satisfaction they should have. Deliverances out of great pressures are often in Scripture represented by the recovery of health, as Isa_57:18 Jer_8:22; and this prophet especially delights in this metaphor, because all affliction is as it were a sickness to the soul, altering the heart and countenance; see Neh_2:2,3; and a recovery out of this estate maketh the heart glad, and the countenance cheerful, Est_8:16,17 Jer 33:6: compare Isa_58:10,11. Hence the LXX. render it; *medicines. Thy righteousness* ; either,

1. Thy uprightness and sincerity, Gen_30:33. Or,

2. The reward of thy righteousness, by a metonymy, Isa_48:18 Psa_24:5; and here perhaps it may particularly relate to their works of mercy and charity, it being the thing in hand, and often so called, Psa_112:9, and applied by the apostle to this purpose, 2Co_9:9. It brings temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, and all this not of desert, but free grace, as a reward that naturally springs forth from the faithfulness of his promises, as the harvest from the earth, when the seed is sown; see Hos_10:12; so the fruit and reward of our righteousness springs not from our deserts, but from God's righteousness, **Heb 6 10**. Or,

3. The witness of thy righteousness; by what thou doest thou wilt appear to be righteous, Psa_37:6. For such a notion as this was vulgarly sucked in, that adversity did never befall a person or people but for their sins, and was strongly urged by way of argument against Job's integrity by his friends; therefore they being delivered shall be as a testimony of thy righteousness. Or,

4. The fruit and effect of thy righteousness, viz. the due, just, and right order of thy government, which, as Calvin saith, is a sign of God's fatherly kindness; things that are now in a confusion he will bring into right order again, i.e. justice shall be duly administered, and men shall carry themselves justly all the land over: see Isa_32:16-18. Or,

5. Christ's righteousness, Jer_23:6, compared with Isa_33:16. Then the meaning is, He shall go in and out before thee.

Shall go before thee; as it were making way for thy better state, as the break of day or the morning star goes before the sun.

The glory of the Lord, i.e. the glory of his power and providence, or his glorious power, shall be seen in bringing thee up from captivity, and defending thee free from their pursuit; or, as some, a glorious state shall succeed this thy calamitous condition, and called the glory of the Lord to express the greatness of this glory, as very great mountains are called the mountains of God, and tall cedars the cedars of God. The glorious Lord, by a metonymy of the adjunct.

Shall be thy rereward, Heb. *shall gather thee* : thus the word is used concerning Dan, who was appointed to bring up the rear, or to close up the march of the Israelites, when they marched through the wilderness of Sinai, Num_10:25. This office God takes upon himself; for it argues great skill and courage, and makes much for the honour and glory of a commander, both to gather up all the stragglers, that none be picked up by the enemy, which relates to the Hebrew word of *gathering* , and to secure and cover the rear of his army; thus the angel of his presence secured the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt, Exo_14:19.

Isaiah 58:9

They make great complaint, Isa_58:3, that God took no notice of their services, which complaint God seems now to satisfy: q.d. These conditions observed, call upon me, and thou shalt see I will regard, Psa_34:15. See Isa_1:18.

The Lord shall answer; he will give an effectual demonstration, that he hears thee, by the real answer that he will give to thy request, Psa_34:17 **99:6 118:5**.

Here I am; a phrase that notes a person to be ready at hand for work, as **Isa 6 8**; or for help, as God here, and Psa_46:1; or both, Psa_145:18,**19**.

From the midst; not a geometrical middle or centre, but having a place among others; the meaning is, from among you.

The yoke, i.e. all those pressures and grievances before mentioned, Isa_58:6; all that barbarous slavery they brought their

brethren into; the particulars expressed by that one Hebrew word *motah* , three times used in this chapter.

The putting forth of the finger: there being often an indication of a man's mind by the postures of several parts of the body, as of lust, malice, scorn, revenge, &c., Pro_6:12-14, this putting forth of the finger may point at divers things all springing from two roots; either the secret malice of the heart, or just and open violence. It is used,

1. Sometimes by way of scoff, reproof, or disdainful insulting, as the Pharisee seems to point at the publican, Luk_18:11; pointing with the finger, like winking with the eye, seeming to indicate something that may cause shame in another; and this is reckoned among great afflictions, Heb_11:36. See 2Ch_36:16 Jer_20:7 **2.** Sometimes for beating, or other injurious treating men, seizing either their persons or estates: such a putting forth of the hand you have mentioned 1Sa_22:17; and this agrees well to the *fist of wickedness* , Isa_58:4; and so the finger may be put by a synecdoche for the hand, and that which before was called the fist may be here called the *finger* .
3. Sometimes as a token of putting suitors by, and refusing to hear their petitions and requests, seeking to them for mercy and pity.
4. Sometimes to express an angry mind, stirring up itself, either to the imperious commanding of a thing, or to revenge, whether by the gesture alone, or accompanied with menacing expressions. signifying thereby a purpose to put our power in execution.

Speaking vanity, Heb. *aven* ; it signifies a lie, or iniquity, as Psa_5:5 **6 8**; and so the sense may be, If thou dost not proceed to indecent expressions in thy strifes, brawls, and threatenings with thy finger, which seldom is done without sin; and thus the counsel here may suit with our Saviour's, Mat_5:21,**22**, viz. not only not stretch out thine hand against thy brother, but not so much as be lavish with thy tongue: so speaking vanity may be a meiosis, for not railing; the LXX. render it muttering, which is an incomplete kind of speaking, whereby we reproach another in low, unformed, undigested expressions. But it seems here rather to signify *affliction* , not only because the word used in this place doth properly so signify, but because it is most agreeable to the matter

discoursed of, and the Chaldee render it *violence* ; and then the sense is, speaking *words of affliction* , or that will vex and grieve, like those words of Nabal to David's servants, 1Sa_25:10,**11 Pr 18:23**. And thus it relates to their harsh and unjust commands, wherewith they were wont to burden their servants; a synecdoche of the kind.

Isaiah 58:10

Draw out; or, *open* ; as when we break open a store or magazine to satisfy the wants of the needy: it implies bounty and liberality. A phrase contrary to that of *shutting up of the bowels* , 1Jo_3:17.

Thy soul; thy affection, i.e. thy pity and compassion; a metonymy of the subject, as one that condoles with them in their misery; affectionately, and with delight, Rom_12:8 2Co_9:7. God loves a cheerful giver as well as a liberal giver. Not grudgingly, not of constraint, not because thou must, but because thou wilt; not out of necessity, but of choice. Compassion and mercy in a work is more than the work of mercy itself; for this is something only without a man, but the other is something from within, and of himself. This argues a sympathy, which the other doth not; all without this being as nothing, 1Co_13:3.

And satisfy: here the prophet notes the work that is to be done, as in the former expression the affection wherewith it is to be done, otherwise it would be no more than what the apostle James reproveth, **Jas 2 15,16**; and the psalmist joins them both together, Psa_37:21. And then further it implies a complete and proportionable answering of his wants, that the supply answer the necessity; that is, be such as may satisfy, not barely keep him from starving.

The afflicted soul, i.e. the person afflicted with wants.

Then shall thy light rise: this is the same promise, and expressed in the same figure, as in Isa_58:8. See the same phrase opened there. The Hebrews delight to express the same things often by a little altering of the phrase; only here it seems to be carried to a higher degree: there the light shall break forth, but here

light shall be in

obscurity. And thy darkness be as the noon-day; in the very darkness of the affliction itself thou shalt have comfort, Psa_112:4. There it shall be as the morning, still increasing, here as the noonday, in its zenith and height of perfection, which shall be without so much as any shadow of affliction.

Isaiah 58:11

Shall guide thee, viz. like a shepherd, Psa_23:1-3; or, as the Vulgate; shall give thee rest; and so it may relate to the rest that God would give them in Judea, upon their return from captivity, as answering to their complaints in Babylon, Lam_5:5. And he adds continually, to show that his conduct and blessing shall not be momentary, or of a short continuance, but all along, as he did to Israel in the wilderness, not leaving them till he brought them into Canaan.

Drought, Heb. *droughts* ; or, drought of droughts; which being in the plural number, notes extremity of drought; Psa_78:72, *skillfulnesses* , that is, great skill; and Pro_1:20, wisdoms, i. e. excellent wisdom; and consequently great scarcity and famine. The meaning is, that when thy lot shall fall in the extremity of such a condition, either as to time or place, he will abundantly satisfy thy soul, i.e. thee, by a synecdoche; thou shalt have plenty, when others are in scarcity.

Make fat thy bones; or, *make nimble* ; and so the expression relates to bones full of marrow, which causeth agility and nimbleness, a state of health and strength: see Pro_15:30. Or it notes cheerfulness, which is often the cause of bones well covered with fat; therefore a broken or a sorrowful spirit is said to dry up the bones, Pro_17:22. This may be spoken in opposition to the sad effects of famine, whereby *the flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and the bones that were not seen stick out* , Job_33:21; they cleave to the skin, Psa_102:5. And thus it may have respect to their afflicted estate in Babylon, where they complain that their bones were broken, Lam_3:4; but now in their return their bones should not only be made whole, but strong, and in good condition: see **Psa 51 8**. Our English Annotations, after divers senses given, choose to close with the vulgar translation, *he will deliver, or set free thy bones* , and so the word doth signify, Pro_11:8,9. Some make each expression of these promises to

answer as suitable and conditional rewards of their several duties: e.g. If thou conduct the cast-outs and harbourless to thy house, Isa_58:7, God will guide and conduct thee continually. If thou draw forth thy soul to the hungry, so as to satisfy them, Isa_58:10, God will satisfy thee in a time of drought, and in famine thou shalt have sufficient, Psa_33:19. If thou let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, Isa_58:6,9, then God will make thy bones to rejoice, by delivering them from their burdens; i.e. if thou wilt free them, he will free thee. And if thou continue thus to draw forth thy soul, that it be ever running to the refreshing of the needy, thou shalt be as a spring of waters that shall never fail thee, but like the widow's oil, ever flowing. If thou relieve the poor, thou shalt never be poor, but as a well-watered garden, always flourishing: see Pro_3:9 10.

Like a watered garden; like *a garden* for the pleasure and beauty of it, a paradise; like a garden watered for the continual flourishing of thy estate; there shall be no withering or decay upon thy prosperous condition, Psa_1:3, contrary to what is said of the wicked, Psa_37:2,10,20,35,36. And thus Jeremiah speaks of the return of this same people, Jer_31:12.

Like a spring of water, whose water's fail not, Heb. *deceive not*; a metaphor which further notes also the continuance of this flourishing state, which will not be like a land flood, or brooks, that will soon be dried up with drought; see Job_6:15; but will be fed with a spring of blessing that will never fail: a very significant metaphor; it being the nature of springs, spontaneously and freely, as it were, to pour out their bowels to all that upon their wants come to receive it; neither is ever scanty, but flows still like fresh milk to the breast the more it is drawn; hence God is called a Fountain of goodness.

Isaiah 58:12

They that shall be of thee, i.e. either,

1. A remnant of thee among the captivity, that shall be as persons raised from the dead; or,
2. Thy posterity, expressed thus, because they sprang or proceeded from them.

The old waste places, Heb. *wastes of eternity* , i.e. which have lain long waste; for *holam* doth not always signify what is bounded by no time, but what respects a long time, looking either forward, as Gen_13:15 Exo_21:6, or backward, as here, viz. the space of seventy years, and so may truly be rendered *the wastes of an age* . By waste places he means the city and temple, with cities and places adjacent, turned as it were all into a waste, or wilderness, void and untilled, and which was done not only by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, but by Sennacherib also, and the other kings of Assyria. They had lain so long desolate, that the foxes inhabited them instead of men, Lam_5:18. And it was turned so much into a desert, that they were forced to fight with the beasts that possessed it to get their food, Lam_5:9.

The foundations of many generations; either the foundations that were laid many generations ago, as those of Jerusalem, which was not only built, but was the head of a kingdom, in the days of Melchizedek, who was king thereof in the days of Abraham, as appears, Gen_14:18; if that Salem were Jerusalem, as is generally agreed, and Josephus writes, lib. 1. Antiquit. cap. 10; who was born about the three hundredth year after the flood: the superstructures were now destroyed, viz. of Jerusalem, and divers other cities. Or, that shall continue for many generations yet to come.

Thou shalt be called; thou shalt be honoured with this title, as we use to say the *father of our country* , i.e. deservedly so called, because thou art so; the like phrase Isa_48:8.

The repairer of the breach: *breach* is put here collectively for breaches, which were made by God's judgment breaking in upon them in suffering the walls of their towns and cities to be demolished, and their state broken, Isa_5:5.

The restorer of paths; such a one was Moses, Psa_106:23. And this tends to the same sense with the former expression, because men were wont to make paths over those breaches, to go the nearest way. Or it may more particularly point at the recovering of the ancient paths, and bringing them into their wonted course, which were either those chief streets through the gates of the cities, or other lanes out of those streets, which were now

forgotten and lost, partly by being covered with rubbish, and partly by those shorter paths that were trod and made over the breaches; such a restorer of paths was Nehemiah, Neh_6:1. And we read of the several repairers he made use of, **Ne 3**. Or those paths that leads from city to city, which being now laid desolate, and uninhabited, were grown over with grass and weeds, for want of travellers, or safety of travelling, (of something a like case we read in the time of the judges, Jud_5:6,7) and so lost as in a wilderness, wherein there is no way; and by building up those cities again the several paths leading to them would be restored.

To dwell in; these accommodations being all recovered, their ancient cities might be fit to be reinhabited.

Isaiah 58:13

If thou turn away thy foot: this is taken either properly, i.e. If thou take no unnecessary journeys, or do any servile works, either of hand or foot, that are forbidden on the sabbath day, the instrument being here put for the work; or metaphorically, i.e. If thou keep thy mind and affections clear, and restrain thyself from whatever may profane it, as David did concerning the word, Psa_119:101. *Feet* are often put for the *affections*, Ecc_5:1, because the mind is moved by the affections, as the body is by the feet; If we do not let our thoughts be extravagant either upon impertinencies or unlawful things. The sum is, If thou be careful not to break the sabbath.

From the sabbath; or for the sabbath's sake, whether we understand it more largely, of the occasional sabbath in solemn humiliations or otherwise set apart for sacred services, which is called a sabbath, Lev_16:31 **23:32**. Days of this nature were set apart before the captivity, Isa_22:12 Jer_36:9, and also in the captivity, Zec_7:5. And thus it may be pertinent to the occasion of this discourse, Isa_58:3. And further, though sabbath be here only mentioned, yet it may take in every institution of God that they were in a capacity of observing during their captivity; thus I conceive it is understood Isa_56:1,2. Or whether we take it more particularly, for the weekly sabbath, such a carriage doth God expect as doth become it. *From doing thy pleasure*, satisfying thy lusts, and the corruption of thy will, *on my holy day*, i.e. on my sabbath, which is a holy day. *A delight; full of delights* in thy

judgment, not looking on it as a burden; and practice, performing the duties of it with cheerfulness, delighting in the ordinances of it: and so the sabbath by a metonymy is put for the works of the sabbath, the time being put for the things that ought to be done in that time; therefore calling here is not only a *verbal*, but *affectionate* calling, the *understanding* assenting, the will consenting, and the actions conforming thereto: this delight appears in the saints of God, in their breathings after it, as it did frequently in David, Psa_27:4 **36:8 42:1**, with many more.

The holy of the Lord; or to the Lord, i.e. dedicated to him, consecrated to his service. The Jews had a law that no man might take from the sabbath to add to the profane days but he might on the contrary.

Honourable, viz. the chief of days; worthy of all honour, and therefore honourable, because holy; and so shall honour, either it, i.e. the day; or *him*, i.e. the Lord, whose day it is. For to sanctify God and to sanctify his day is all one; compare Isa_8:13, with Exo_20:8; thus esteem it an honour as well as a pleasure.

Not doing thine own ways, or works, or course of life; a man's whole course being described by a way or walk, Gen_17:1 Eph_5:8.

Nor speaking thine own words, viz. that are properly thine own, i.e. thine own in opposition to what God commands, proceeding from the corruption of nature, and vanity of the mind; or not speaking words, i.e. vainly, impertinently, and not suitable to the work of the day, tending neither to thy profit nor pleasure; or rather injurious, revengeful, or reproachful words, contrary to rest, quiet, and sedate composedness of the sabbath. And thus it refers to what was their usual practice upon their solemn assemblies or sabbaths towards their poor brethren, which they are charged with, Isa_58:3, and is called speaking vanity, Isa_58:9; see there; and accordingly the LXX. render it, *if thou speak not a word in anger*.

Isaiah 58:14

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord: this hath reference to the foregoing verse. If thou wilt delight thyself in the sabbath, then thou shalt delight in the God of the sabbath; or thou shalt have cause to delight in the Lord, viz. in his goodness and

faithfulness to thee, and so shalt live by faith in him as the Fountain of all good, as Psa_37:4, in the assurance of his love and favour, Psa_33:21, and that in great abundance, Psa_36:8; such delights as no wicked man call have, Pro_14:10.

I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; thou shalt be above the reach of danger, Isa_33:16. Or it may have respect to their being brought out of Babylon, which lay very low in respect of Judea, called the earth, as it is elsewhere, Luk_23:44; and high, both in respect of the situation of it, as also its mountainousness. Or the expression may import the subduing of their enemies, as it is Deu_33:29. *Riding* is oft used for conquering, Psa_45:4; see the note there; Rev_6:2. The sense is, they shall come out of Babylon, not sneakingly, as on foot, but triumphantly and gloriously, *riding* , as God brought Israel out of Egypt harnessed, in good order, and with a high hand; or, they shall ride to and fro in their chariots at their pleasure.

And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, i.e. thou shalt enjoy the good of the land of Canaan, which God had promised as a heritage of Jacob and his seed, Gen_35:12, and feed on the fruits of it.

Quest. Why doth he say of the *heritage of Jacob* , and not of Abraham or Isaac.

Answ. Because the whole posterity of Jacob was within the covenant, but Ishmael and Esau, one the seed of Isaac, the other the seed of Abraham, were both excluded.

For the mouth of the Lord: this is to express the certainty and indubitableness of it, being from the mouth of him who cannot lie: see of the same expression of assurance, Isa_1:20 **40:5**. And this Calvin refers both to what was spoken in the beginning of the chapter, that it was in vain for those hypocrites to contend with God; and also as the confirmation of his promise, if they would rightly observe those promises. *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it* : he speaks of himself, as of a man, by a prosopopoeia; or it may relate to the prophet, the Lord, whose mouth and instrument I am.

Isaiah 59:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 59

Sin separates between God and us, Isa_59:1,2. Murder, theft, falsehood, injustice, cruelty, Isa_59:3-8. Calamity for sin, Isa_59:9-15. Salvation only of God, Isa_59:16-19. The covenant of the Redeemer, Isa_59:20,21.

The Lord's hand is not shortened; he is not grown weaker than in former times, as omnipotent as ever he was: hand is here by a synecdoche put for *arm* , and so for *strength* , because the strength of a man doth generally put forth itself in his arm; and thus it is applied to God in his bringing Israel out of Egypt, Psa_136:12.

Neither his ear heavy; or thick of hearing; he is not like your idol gods, that have hands, and cannot help, and ears, and cannot hear. The phrases are much to the same purpose, save only that they seem to be appropriated to the double cavil, or quarrel, that the Jews might have with God; as,

1. Surely if God were not heavy or hard of hearing, he could not but hear those strong cries that we put up in the days of our fast; or,

2. If he did hear, certainly he could not help us; and thus it may have respect to the beginning of the 58th chapter. Or the words may be by way of confirmation and establishment, and so may relate to the close of it, to let them know that if they sought him as they ought, and was before prescribed, he was not inexorable, but willing to hear, and able to make good all those promises that he had made from verse 8 to the end. The sum is, to show that the fault was not in God, that their fasts and cries were not regarded, for his ear was as quick to hear as ever; nor their services rewarded, for his hand was as able to help as ever; but the obstruction lay in their sins, which is positively asserted, Isa_59:2, and a more particular account given of them in the sequel.

Isaiah 59:2

Have separated; have been as a thick wall between God and you; have set him at a great distance, Pro_15:29.

Have hid his face: this may be put synecdoehically for the whole person; and the prophet speaking of God by an anthropopathy, may understand his *presence* ; and then it is, hath made him hide

or withdraw his presence, as one that turns away his face from some noisome thing; or rather his favour, that though you cry to be delivered out of Babylon, yet you shall not find that favour.

He will not hear, i.e. he will not grant it; thus it is used Psa_45:12 Hos_5:15: **See Poole** "Isa_1:15": see Jud_10:13.

Isaiah 59:3

Your hands are defiled with blood: here the prophet comes from a more general to a more particular charge against them; by blood we are to understand either murders and bloodshed properly so called; or ways of injustice, extortion, oppression, and cruelties, whereby men are deprived of a livelihood; hence hating our brother is called murder, 1Jo_3:15, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem called murderers. See how the prophet phraseth their oppression, Mic_3:1-3.

Your fingers: this is not added to protract the discourse, but to aggravate their sin: q.d. Not only your hands, but your fingers; you are not free from the least part of injustice.

Your lips have spoken lies; not only properly so called, but perjuries, and wronging' your neighbours by slanders and false accusations; wherein he shows they did not only offer violence by the hand, but they had ways of circumventing with their lips.

Your tongue hath muttered: the verb doth properly signify to *muse* , or *meditate* ; then the meaning is, that what they mutter, or utter with the tongue, they do it out of premeditated malice, from a perverse spirit; you may have a larger comment upon this Jer_9:3-6.

Perverseness: perverse words are such as are contrary to God's word, and it is put here in the abstract, to intimate that their words were every way contrary to God's will.

Isaiah 59:4

None calleth for justice, i.e. none seek to redress these wrongs and violences; they commit all rapines and frauds under impunity; either,

1. Because the judges are corrupt. Or,
2. Because none will warn the judges of their duty. Or,

3. Because none seek to bring offenders to justice. Or,

4. Because none will plead a righteous cause, or plead it righteously, or countenance goodness; and this the next expression favours; and so justice suffers, which the Hebrew word *mispāt*, being in the passive voice, seems to intimate: the sense is the same, and whereas it is said *none*, it is as much as to say very few, as we say few or none; the like Psa_14:3.

Quest. How could this be charged upon them, when in the time of their captivity they had no courts?

Ans. It is probable they had courts among themselves, to judge between one another, by leave of the Babylonish kings.

They trust in vanity; either,

1. Relating to their lies, which are words empty and void of all consistency; and so it is the same with the next expression,

and speak lies. Or,

2. In their idols, which are stocks and stones, and so oft called vanity and nothing, 1Co_8:4. For even in Babylon they worshipped idols, as appears by Jer_16:11,**12,18**. Or rather,

3. In their power, and craft, and policy, whereby, laying aside justice, they can oppress others; and so he calls it vanity by a metonymy of the adjunct, because it would prove all vain in the end, and either,

1. Frustrate their ends. Or,

2. Not justify them against God's proceedings with them. Or,

3. Bring all into emptiness and confusion: the word is *tohu*, whereby the confusion and mingling of all things is expressed, before the world was brought into order and form, Gen_1:2.

Speak lies: it may refer both to the judges, and to the lawyers and false prophets, that tell them they shall not go into captivity; they speak that which they know to be false.

They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity: these two words of conceiving and bringing forth note their whole contrivance, and perfecting their wickedness; the former notes their plotting, the latter their execution of mischief; whatever is in

the mind, only out of sight, warmed and formed there by cogitating and meditation, is called *conception*, which being ripe, and produced to view, is called a birth; intimating that the wicked sin not occasionally and accidentally, but premeditatingly and professedly; they grow big with it. The expression is allegorical, and in the two next verses compared to the cockatrice' eggs for the wickedness of it, and to a spider's web for the vanity of it.

Isaiah 59:5

They hatch cockatrice eggs; or *adder*, or *basilisk*; one kind put for any venomous creature; a proverbial speech, signifying by these eggs mischievous designs, and by *hatching* them their putting them in practice: this is to show that mischief is natural to them, and they can do no otherwise, poison is natural to these eggs.

Weave the spider's web; another proverbial speech, whereby is taught, both how by their plots they weave nets, lay snares industriously, with great pains and artifice, whereby they may entangle and involve their poor neighbours in intricacies and perplexities, and so devour them, as the spider weaves her web to catch flies, and then to feed on them; and also how that they contrive nothing but what will tend to their own ruin, as the issue of the viper is the death of the mother, and they and their designs will come to nothing, and not answer their end, as the spider's web is soon swept away, and is seen no more, which doth well agree with what follows.

He that eateth of their eggs dieth: here is a catachrestical allusion, noting that he who hath commerce with them, and approves their counsels, which are the eggs which they hatch, will be poisoned with them.

And that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper: if *and* be *copulative* here, then the sense is either, If any seek to crush and disappoint their plots, or if they be sprinkled or dispersed abroad, (as the margin seems to favour,) they will seek his ruin, will be as a viper to him. But if *and* be *causal*, as it often is, and may be here, then the sense is, q.d. He *dieth*, because the eggs being crushed, a poisonous viper proceeds from it; the more you partake

of their counsels, the more you are infected, there lies such a dreadful poison embodied in them.

Isaiah 59:6

Their webs shall not become garments, i.e. their contrivances and deep designs shall not advantage them, they being like a thin and raw garment, either through which all their wretchedness and malice will appear, as the next words intimate; or, for want of solidity and substance, shall not be able to defend them from their impending evils.

Works of iniquity, i.e. works of injustice, whereby they grieve and vex their brethren, which the next words do clear. The act of violence is in their hands, i.e. they exercise themselves in all acts of violence and oppression.

Isaiah 59:7

Their feet run to evil: this seems to be taken from Pro_1:16. See **Poole** "Pro_1:16". He had spoken of their hands, lips, and heart, &c. before, and now of their *feet*, to show that they were wholly set upon mischief.

Their thoughts, i.e. their heart and mind, is set upon doing wrong and injury; they not only do evil, but do it deliberately. You have the wicked described by this kind of working of their thoughts, Psa_64:6; they meditate on little or nothing else.

Wasting and destruction are in their paths; a metaphor put for the behaviours and carriages of men; in what way or work soever they are engaged, it all tends to ruin and destruction. A metaphor taken from an overspreading torrent, or sweeping plague, or beasts of prey, that tear and devour whatsoever comes in their way.

Isaiah 59:8

The way of peace they know not; they are of such turbulent spirits, living in such continual contentions and discords, that, breaking in pieces the very bonds of society, they neither know,

1. How to make and keep peace; neither,
2. Do they feel or enjoy the sweet fruits of it; and therefore by consequence,

3. They take not the course that leads to prosperity and happiness. They are not friends to peace.

There is no judgment, i.e. no justice, equity, faith, or integrity, which are the foundation of judgment,

in their goings; as *paths* did note their habitual way or manner of living, so *goings* do signify their actual progress in that way, or their works; thus Job_14:16.

They have made them crooked paths; they walk by no rule, which should discover the crooked from the straight; they are full of unevennesses and uncertainties, contrary to what David speaks, Psa_26:12. The LXX. render it *perverse*. Moses joins them both together, Deu_32:5; and so doth Solomon, speaking what wisdom shall deliver from, Pro_2:15; and it stands in opposition to them that walk uprightly, Pro_28:18. It may note,

1. Their hypocrisy, that pretend one thing and do another, that oppress under a pretence of justice. Or,

2. Their professed and owned irregularities and deviations from the rule of justice. Shall not know peace, i.e. shall not experience it; whosoever do as they do will be turbulent and perverse, as they are, and have as little peace within, or happiness without, as they have, Isa_57:21. They shall be poisoned by having converse with them, as in Isa_59:5, which the next words do intimate.

Isaiah 59:9

Therefore is judgment far from us: this seems to be spoken in the person of those Jews that did partake of these sins, giving the reason by way of complaint of those evils that they groaned under.

Justice: judgment, and so justice, is herb taken for deliverance, Isa_1:27: q.d. God doth not defend our right, nor revenge our wrong, nor deliver us, because of these outrages and acts of violence, injustice, and oppression that are committed among us; so that deliverance is called here *judgment and justice* by a metonymy of the efficient: q.d. If he had executed judgment and equity among one another, they would not now have been far from us. As works are sometimes put for the reward of works, Job_7:2 Psa_109:20, so judgment and justice is put for the reward of judgment and justice. Or wicked men are in power and seats of

judicature, that execute no judgment or justice in the behalf of the oppressed.

We wait for light: how the Hebrews use *light and darkness* , see before on Isa_58:8,10.

But we walk in darkness; or, *mist* ; we are in such a thick mist, that which way soever we look, we see no way out, no hope of deliverance; we are still in captivity, and like so to be, till we see judgment and justice executed, and then we may expect good days.

Isaiah 59:10

We grope: as a blind man that hath no other eyes than his hands feels for the wall, from whence he expects either direction or a resting place to lean on; so they expect salvation as it were blindfold, not taking direction from the prophets, but hoping to obtain it by their cries and fasts, though they continued in their sins, and therefore may well be said to grope after it. See Deu_28:28,29 Job 12:25.

And we grope as if we had no eyes; as if we were stark blind; and being here put for *yea* , thereby aggravating the misery in repeating the expression.

We stumble at noon-day: this notes their exceeding blindness, as it must needs be with one that can discern no more at noon-day than if it were midnight, Job_5:14.

We are as dead men: he compares their captivity to men dead without hope of recovery; their bonds render them as free among the dead, Psa_88:5. They can see the way, or get out of their captivity, no more than dead men can get out of their graves; thus a calamitous estate is set forth, Psa_44:19, great calamity and despair oft going together: they are as men cast out, no more to be looked after. Compare Lam_3:6. All darkness is uncomfortable, but that of the grave terrible.

Isaiah 59:11

We roar: this signifies the greatness of their anguish, that forced from them these loud outcries.

And mourn: this notes some sense of their condition, that wrought in them these sorrowful lamentations; or it may relate to

the condition that both sorts of people were in under their oppressing governors. It made the *wicked* roar like bears, and the *godly* mourn like doves. It is thus expressed because these properties are peculiar to these creatures. The bear, when robbed, goes into his den and roars; the *dove*, when absent from her mate, sits solitary and mourns.

For salvation, but it is far off from us: see the exposition of this last part of the verse Isa_59:9.

Isaiah 59:12

Our transgressions: the word here signifies sins of a high nature; such as wherein there is much of man's will against light; rebellious sins.

Are multiplied before thee: q.d. They admit of no excuse; for they are acted before thee, and multiplied against thee, whereby thou art justly provoked to deny us all help.

Our sins testify; every sin that is charged upon is like so many witnesses produced to prove the guilt of our consciences; or, as the Hebrew word, *do answer*; and so some make it an elegant metaphorical allusion to the echo, which, as it returns the voice again, so those judgments they cry out of are but the meritorious repercussion of their sins. They had been cruel to others, neither had they executed judgment and justice, and here they suffer all kind of cruelties and indignities from the Chaldeans, as the true and just representation or echo of their own works: see a personal instance in Adoni-bezek, Jud_1:6,7.

Our transgressions are with us, i.e. we lie under the guilt of them, they are a burden to us; God hath not yet forgiven them.

As for our iniquities, we know them; we are convinced of them; our guilty consciences must own and acknowledge them, **Psa 23**. It notes either their conviction or sorrow, or both. See Jer_14:7. Or, we know what are those sins thou art so angry with us for; and this is favoured by the sequel, where they seem to particularize those sins in the following verses.

Isaiah 59:13

He now enumerates some of those particular sins they profess themselves to be convinced of, whereby he doth not mean the sins

of some particular persons, or some slight sins, but a general defection and corruption of the whole body.

In transgressing: properly, we rebel against God, so the word is Isa_1:2, and have persisted in our rebellion.

Lying; being true to none of their engagements, vows, and promises. Some make *transgressing* here and *lying* to be one and the same thing, inasmuch as in their transgressing of the law of God they did break their solemn engagement to God upon Mount Sinai, Exo_19:8 **24:3**, and elsewhere frequently, which is a downright lying against God; for wherein do we more lie to God than in a perfidious withdrawing from him? So that by *transgressing* here he doth mean not a breach of One or another of the laws of God, but their being as it were fugitives, that would be under no yoke.

Departing, i.e. turning from God to idols.

Speaking; as it were talking of little else one among another but how to oppress their neighbours, and apostatize from God.

Conceiving and uttering, i.e. first contriving and forging in their heart false accusations to the ruin of their neighbour, and false worship to the dishonour of God, laying the contrivance so that it might be effectual; and then uttering it, or venting themselves one to another in their discourses, thereby encouraging each other in their perverse ways; see Isa_59:3; and whereas it is said

from the heart, it notes a resoluteness in their wickedness, being a great deal worse than now and then to deal falsely upon some occasion or temptation.

From the heart words of falsehood: they are called words of *falsehood* , both with reference to men, and so signify slanders and false accusations; as also to God, and so signify their dealing falsely with God, as an adulteress doth with her husband: hence idolaters are called the *seed of falsehood* , Isa_57:3-5; and it is said *from the heart* , to show that when they dealt with men in ways of fraud, it was *from the heart* , but when they spake with God, it was but from the lip.

Isaiah 59:14

Judgment is turned away backward: he speaks here of the sentences and decrees in courts of judicature, which are carried quite contrary to right and justice. God denies you justice, as you have denied help to others.

Justice standeth afar off: it notes the same thing with the former, to show that justice and judges are far asunder.

Truth is fallen; a metaphor taken from a feeble person that wants support, without which he falls; thus truth hath none to support or patronize it: the same, only otherwise expressed, with Isa_59:16. Truth is cast upon the ground, and justice trampled under foot.

In the street, i.e. in public.

Equity cannot enter; no such thing will be admitted in their courts; all corrupt, so that all equity and justice is violently kept off by the authority of the great ones.

Isaiah 59:15

Truth faileth: q.d. Truth is more than fallen, which he had said in the former verse; it *faileth*. For being only *fallen* it may recover itself again, but failing notes the loss of its very vitals; as being every where neglected, in court, in city, in country, in inferior as well as superior ranks, in the streets, in the gates, in the markets, in the fairs, in all public places of commerce, the condition much like that under the beast coming out of the earth, Rev_13:11, &c. See Psa_10:7,8, &c. All things are amiss, neither judgment, nor justice, nor truth is to be found among us, but fraud and deceit; yet none troubled at it.

He that departeth from evil, that separateth himself from evil things and persons, will not be as vile as others,

maketh himself a prey; or, *is accounted mad*; is laughed at that talks of justice, so some. Josephus tells us that immediately before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was matter of scorn to be religious. Though there be no solid ground for nor need of that marginal reading, yet is it a truth. The translators reach the meaning by *prey*; the wicked, like wild beasts, endeavouring to devour such as are not as bad as themselves: where wickedness rules, innocency is oppressed: in bargaining, as buying and selling, they that are

simple and innocent are outwitted by the crafty and fraudulent, as not willing, or rather daring, to oppose fraud with fraud, but to do all things in sincerity.

The Lord saw it, i.e. took notice of it: it is spoken of God after the manner of men, as Gen_11:5 **18:21**, and many other places.

It displeased him: q.d. If you would know why God is so angry with you, it is for such things as these; the Lord takes notice of it, and it is a great evil in his eye.

Isaiah 59:16

No man, viz. *to intercede* , which is supplied from the following words; or no man to help in such a case, to show himself and appear in such a corrupt state in the behalf of equity, as Isa_59:4; the like circumstances we have Eze_22:29,**30**; or none fit to intercede.

Wondered, Heb. *iistomen* , was *amazed* , astonished, as it were, not knowing what to do. This notes both God's solicitousness about their condition, and their hypocrisy, as if God took no notice of them, together with their dulness and blockishness, in not concerning themselves about it, especially considering they had been a people so well instructed, and yet under the guilt of such gross sins should be no more solicitous about pardon, which God would readily have granted, if any such could have been found, Jer_5:1.

Therefore; or, *yet* , as it is used, Isa_7:14 **51:21**.

His arm brought salvation unto him: this may relate,

1. To the parties thus oppressed. Or,
2. To God, as that either,
 1. He would do his work without help from any other, Isa_59:5. Or,
 2. He would avenge himself, his own honour; thus the word is used 1Sa_25:26; and this may and seems to be the meaning of the next clause. Or,
 3. He had made provision for the maintaining his own righteous cause and people's interest: this sense, that phrase, so like this,

favours, Isa_53:5, *Salvation unto me. His righteousness* , viz. his justice: q.d. Seeing there could be no justice found among them, he would avenge the innocent himself, which agrees with Isa_59:8, and is justified by Isa_63:5, where speaking of the destruction of the Idumeans, you have the same words, only the word *fury* changed for *righteousness* . The literal meaning is, God's taking vengeance on the Chaldeans for the people's sake; the mystical is, Christ's making use of his own righteousness for the redemption of lest man, being destitute of all other.

Isaiah 59:17

He put on righteousness as a breastplate; God, resolving to appear as a man of war against Babylon, that did now oppress his people, puts on his arms, Heb. *wrapped himself* , and particularly his

breastplate, which he calls *righteousness* , to show the justness of his cause, as also his faithfulness in making good his promises to his people.

An helmet: as the *breastplate* is to defend the heart and vital parts, whereby God doth signify the innocency and justness of his cause, as well as his faithfulness; so the

helmet is to defend the brain, the fountain of the animal spirits, and therefore by this piece of armour would have us know that he is invincible: as by the other, that he defends a just cause in his truth and faithfulness; so by this, that he cannot be disappointed in it by reason of his power and invincibleness.

The garments of vengeance, or garments made of vengeance; as God is said to put on the former for their sakes whom he would preserve, so he puts on these for their sakes whom he will destroy, viz. his people's enemies, the Chaldeans, and other enemies of the Jews.

Was clad with zeal; either,

1. Zeal to his own honour, which had been given to idols; or,
2. Zeal for his own people, who were now in distress; or,
3. Zeal and indignation against the Babylonians, who were such great oppressors of his people, which are the materials that his

garment of vengeance and his cloak of zeal is made of. It may be trifling to follow the metaphor of garments too close: see of the phrase Jud_6:34, margin. The sum of all these expressions is this, to describe both the cause and effect together; the cause was righteousness and zeal in God, the effect salvation to his people, and vengeance on his enemies, as is evident from the next verse.

Isaiah 59:18

Deeds, Heb. *recompences or deserts* , i.e. he will recompense his adversaries with those effects of his fury that they have deserved.

Fury; a metonymy of the efficient, for the effects of his fury.

Islands; or, *islanders* ; a metonymy of the containing for the contained; either Mesopotamia, and other adjacent islands, encompassed by Tigris and Euphrates; or those remoter nations (for the Hebrews call nations remote from Judea *islands* , Gen_10:5 Isa_41:1. **See Poole** "Isa_20:6", and the reason of it) under the king of Babylon, that thought themselves secure.

Isaiah 59:19

Fear the name of the Lord, i.e. either worship the Lord; for the name of God is put for God himself, as hath been often showed, and fear is put for his worship; or make his name renowned.

From the west, viz. the western part of the world.

His glory, or the glorious God.

From the rising of the sun, viz. the eastern parts of the world. The sum is, the whole world, either a synecdoche of the part for the whole, or if you divide the world through the poles, the one half will be east, and the other west, and so compriseth the whole world. It shall fear and worship God, and make his name renowned, laying aside their idolatries; whether you refer it to the deliverance of his people out of Babylon, when they shall hear how God hath executed vengeance on his enemies; or to the redemption by Christ, and his calling of the Gentiles, Mal_1:11.

When the enemy shall come in like a flood; either against the Babylonians, as some understand it, and so it is probably meant of Cyrus, who shall come like a violent flood, against whom there is no head to be made; him God would stir up against the

Babylonians for the deliverance of the Jews. Or against his own people; and so it may have either,

1. A more particular respect to Jerusalem, when Sennacherib came up against it; which suits well with what God saith of him, Isa_8:7,8. Or,

2. More general, at what time soever the *devil* or his instruments shall make violent irruptions upon the church, Rev_12:15; for powerful enemies invading a country are oft compared to a river. **See Poole** "Isa_18:2". It is an allusion to the overflowing of Euphrates, which by its violent inundations was wont to do much hurt and damage to the Babylonians. *The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him* : and here again, if it be taken in the first sense, viz. against the Babylonians, then the meaning is, God himself shall as it were carry the standard in the midst of Cyrus's army, the Medes and Persians, and that with a great deal of fury, intimated here by the

Spirit of the Lord; for *spirit* is often used among the Hebrews for the passions of the soul, as anger, wrath, fury, &c. Or, as a violent blast or gale of wind, shall help forward the violence of the torrent; and if so, then

him, by an *enallage* of the number, which is frequent, is put for *them* . But if in either of the other two senses, viz. with particular respect to Sennacherib, then the Spirit of the Lord, as with a blast, only shall puff him away, which was made good, Isa_37:7,36,37. Or with more general reference to the violence of enemies against the church; then the meaning is, God shall make known himself to take their part and defend them, Psa_48:3-5, and cause the enemies to give back, *or put them to flight* , as in the margin, Isa_17:12-14, and that without power, but by his *Spirit* alone, as easy as by a puff of wind, Zec_4:6. Again, if you take this (as some learned men do) in a spiritual sense, then it notes the suddenness of the gospel's spreading itself by the Spirit in the ministry of the apostles and evangelists, bearing down like a flood all that opposes it, the Lord Jesus Christ being lifted up in it as a banner or ensign: but this sense, though true, seems to be more forced, and as it relates to temporal deliverances, more genuine and natural: however, the prophet being about to speak of the

spiritual deliverances and state of the church by Christ, he seems to slide, as it were, into it by such plain allusions and types, being to speak of it more directly in the following chapters.

Isaiah 59:20

And, moreover, or to wit ; and being here not so much copulative as expositive.

The Redeemer: the word notes a redemption with power, viz.

1. Cyrus, the instrument for the efficient, viz. God the Redeemer, Isa_43:14 **45:13**. Or,

2. Christ, of whom the apostle expounds it, Rom_11:26; the prophets usually concluding their promises of temporal deliverances with the promises of spiritual, especially such of which the temporal were evident types.

To Zion, viz. Jerusalem, to which though Cyrus came not in person, yet his favours, and the good effects of his conquest over Babylon, reached it, setting free the citizens of Zion, as Christ also his church, which is often called by the name of Zion, and Jacob, and Israel, &c. *In Jacob* , viz. among the Jews, who were the children of Jacob; and he describes to whom of these, namely, to them, and none else, that

turn from transgression; such only whose hearts God touched, and turned to righteousness; and so to come to Zion here by the prophet, and *out of Zion* by the apostle, is one and the same thing; **See Poole "Deu_33:2"**; for the Hebrew *lamed* is not only an article of the dative case, but put often for *mim*, *of* or *from* , so that *letsion* is *out of Zion* ; and for Christ to be given a Redeemer to Zion is the same thing as his coming to *take iniquity from Jacob* . And so the apostle doth by this expound that, taking an apostolical liberty not only to quote, but to expound this text; and so by laying them together, and making them one, would teach us that God must do for us what he requireth of us, Act_3:26: or else, which is the opinion of some, he takes the last clause from some other text, or texts, as Isa_4:4. I incline to the former, partly because there is no need of searching for any other text, and partly because, as the apostle quoteth it, it is agreeable to the LXX., which he frequently makes use of; and this the apostle improves as an allegory to prove that the Jews toward the end of the world

shall he converted and saved, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in: q.d. As this people of old were delivered out of a dark and dolesome estate, when they seemed as it were extinct; so toward the end of the world the remnant of the Jews, that seem to be rejected, God will again bring home unto himself. *Saith the Lord* ; or, thus it is decreed and determined by the Lord: the prophets are wont to set down these words as a sacred seal of certainty, security, or confirmation of such signal promises as this is of the Redeemer, like to that of the apostle, 1Ti_1:15.

Isaiah 59:21

This is my covenant, or what I have promised, and so am engaged to see fulfilled, viz. to them that turn from their iniquity; or rather, the promise of his word and Spirit to abide in his church, upon which account it is also that the Spirit is promised in the next words, by which is understood either the gift of prophecy, or the prophecy itself, given here to Isaiah, and so to the church: and being here, as in the foregoing verse, explicative, not copulative; unless it note that in an ordinary way the Spirit and the word go together wherever either of them are effectual, the Spirit impressing what the word expresses, Joh_14:16-18\, and it is the spirit of Satan that is different from the word.

My Spirit that is upon thee. See Poole "Num_11:17", See Poole "Num_11:25", &c.; See Poole "2Ki_2:15".

Which I have put in thy mouth; which thou hast uttered by virtue of my Spirit, it being the church's great treasure and happiness to have God present with his word. *Shall not depart out of thy mouth* , &iowa.; the sense is either, these words, and the fulfilling of them, shall be always talked of, wherever the mention of this deliverance shall come, as is said of Mary's ointment, Mat_26:13. Or rather, he seems to promise the perpetual presence of his word and Spirit with the prophets, apostles, and ministers, and teachers of the church to all succeeding ages thereof, and may have a special reference to the gospel, or new covenant in Christ.

For ever, i.e. for a long, though yet a definitive, space of time, as it is often used.

Isaiah 60:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 60

The glory and blessings of the new church after a short affliction.

Arise; a word of encouragement accommodated to the Jewish or Hebrew style, wherein, as by *lying down* is described a servile and calamitous condition, Isa_47:1; so by *rising*, and standing up, a recovery out of it into a free and prosperous one, as may be seen frequently. *Rouse up*; intimating her deliverance to be at hand. And here under a type, or hieroglyphical description of Jerusalem's restoration, is displayed the flourishing state of the Gentile church under the Messiah, and that in the greatness, for quality, and also the number of her proselytes; in the description whereof the evangelical prophet, whatever he doth in other parts of his prophecy, doth here most briskly sparkle forth in Divine eloquence. *Shine*; discover thyself as one breaking forth from a dark night; or, look out, as men do at sea, who use to look out sharp, to see what they can discover after a dark and stormy season; or, be enlightened with more knowledge; or, be thou filled with joy; a metaphorical metonymy of the efficient; as thou art about to change thy condition, change thy countenance; be cheerful in that light or salvation that is approaching. *Thy light*; either,

1. Thy flourishing and prosperous estate; an allusion to people's rising, when after a dark night the light breaks forth. they begin to rise. Or,

2. The causer of thy light, the *effect* for the efficient, viz. thy God, or Christ, because the fountain of all happiness, as the sun and moon are called lights, because they give light, Gen_1:16. Thus Christ is called the *true Light*, Joh_1:9; and compare Joh_8:12, with Eph_5:14, and you will find these words quoted to that purpose. *The glory of the Lord*, i.e. the greatest glory, as the cedars of God, the mountains of God, &c.: compare Rev_21:11: or, the glorious Lord, or the *Lord of glory*, or Christ, who is the glory of the Father, is come unto thee; he is at hand to make himself glorious in some wonderful work for thy salvation, either in his doctrine, or miracles, or work of redemption, that his glory may rest upon thee, suitable to the psalmist's prayer, Psa_85:6,7,9. *Is risen*; like as when the sun spreads itself into

every place, leaving none dark: thus it refers to the glorious gospel, called such a glorious light, 2Co_4:4.

Isaiah 60:2

The darkness; either affliction and misery, a known metaphor; or ignorance and idolatry; as also all kinds of errors and immoralities, with which all that are out of the church are smutted and polluted: compare Eph_4:18,19.

Shall cover the earth; either,

1. General, all the inhabitants of the earth, such as through ignorance reject the gospel. Or rather,
2. More particular, the Babylonians, by a synecdoche of the *whole* for a *part* , in that dismal condition being harassed by Cyrus, whereby the Jews were delivered; this being also a type of the deliverance of God's people by the Messiah, which this text principally intends.

Gross darkness; an allusion to that Egyptian darkness, Exo_10:21, &c.; palpable ignorance, the inlet and nursery to gross idolatry and all profaneness.

The Lord, i.e. Christ, Mal_4:2 Luk_1:77-79.

His glory shall be seen; shall be wonderfully conspicuous: as the Lord's arising answers to the *darkness covering the earth* , so the *glory being seen* answers to that *gross darkness*. The sense is, that whereas the time was, that the people of God were under great calamities, while their enemies were in ease and prosperity, now it shall be quite contrary; now these shall be in adversity, and those in prosperity, a great turn of providence; and withal implies that this light of grace is a *peculiar* to his people, in respect of which all other prosperity is but darkness and misery; as light was peculiar to Goshen, when darkness was in all the Egyptian houses, Exo_10:23.

Isaiah 60:3

The Gentiles shall come; either to congratulate thy deliverance, or to note the respect that should be shown them by other nations upon their deliverance; or rather, shall be allured by thy light to come to thee: as travellers in a dark night, and out of their way, when a light discovers itself do make to it; so the doctrine of the

gospel shall shine so bright, and be made so conspicuous by preaching and miracles, that they shall not only congratulate them, and wish them much joy, but rejoice and participate with them in their happiness, Rev_21:24. A plain prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, which promise was made to Christ, Isa_49:6. *And* , or *yea* , or *even kings* , which was fulfilled under Cyrus, Darius, Alexander, and the Egyptian kings.

Kings: to add to thy lustre, thou shalt not be honoured only by the conversion of mean persons, but even of honourable personages, embracing the Christian faith, and submitting themselves to Christ's sceptre and government; **See Poole "Isa_49:23"**; to observe thy progress, and how thou shalt increase by degrees, as the sun in its ascending. In Christ's time there were twelve apostles, afterwards one hundred and twenty disciples, in a short time many thousands, then the church grew into congregations, and then spread to nations.

Isaiah 60:4

Lift up thine eyes round about; or in a circle; into all parts of the earth: it seems to relate to the apostles and disciples, with their successors, carrying the gospel into all parts of the world. And in regard it would be as if it were a thing incredible, he bids them *lift up their eyes* , as if they were to behold it in some vision, or upon some watch tower in Jerusalem: there is the like expression Isa_49:18.

All they gather themselves together: he speaks more particularly, either of the Jews flocking from all parts to Jerusalem, when they shall hear of their return from Babylon, which may be true in the type; or especially, of the coming in of some of all nations to the gospel.

Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side; the same thing, only for elegance' sake expressed in its parts; the sense respects both persons and place; as to persons, Thy *sons* and thy *daughters* also shall be brought unto thee tenderly, as it were in arms, Isa_49:22, where *by thy side* , by equivalent expressions of *arms* , *bosoms* , and *shoulders* , is supplied with reference to them both, and may import they shall be brought unto the church of Christ as unto their mother; and it

may be further observed, that where the masculine gender is joined with the feminine of the same *species*, it notes multitude and variety, as Ecc_2:8, *men singers* and *women singers*, i.e. all sorts and variety of vocal music: and as to *place*, Both thy *sons* and thy *daughters* that are not only near, but also afar off, shall come to thee, as we say, *far and near*, Act_2:39; or it is the same with what was said before, *round about* in all quarters of the world; *from far* noting the longitude, and *ad latus, at or on* thy side, the latitude, and even those that perhaps were before at enmity one with another.

Isaiah 60:5

Then shalt thou see, viz. with a great deal of delight, the multitudes of thy children running to thee.

Flow together; as when one river meeting with another and joining waters, run sweetly together, as one and the same river: this notes the abundance of their united joys and delights; or they shall flock together to behold such an amazing sight.

Thine heart shall fear; as standing amazed to see such multitudes come in to the Lord Christ; **See Poole "Isa_44:1"**, **See Poole "Isa_44:2"**, &c.; as it were surprised with it, as those **Ac 2 7**, or overwhelmed with the joyful sight, as Jacob was with the tidings of Joseph, Gen_45:26, and those of the circumcision that were with Act_10:45: such a mixture of fear and joy you have expressed Jer_33:9; the sense is much the same with Isa_49:18.

Be enlarged, both with joy and love; joy within at the coming in of the Gentiles, and this outwardly expressed in the enlargedness of love and charity towards them. *Fear* doth properly contract the heart, therefore this expression intimates it to be a *fear* mixed with such an affection as will dilate it.

The abundance of the sea; either the islands of the sea, viz. the nations, as before, a metonymy of the subject, shall turn to thee, in religion or affection; they that formerly so much hated thee (they that live by the sea-coasts being usually noted for the worst of men) shall now love thee: or the wealth and traffic of those that trade by sea, the riches of the merchant; and so possibly the prophet may allude to Psa_72:10, for Tarshish is sometimes taken for the sea, as hath been before showed: see on 1Ki_10:22.

Shall be converted unto thee; thy traders shall not so much convert their riches to their own use as to thine.

The forces; or, *wealth* ; thou shalt not have only the wealth, but the strength of the nations, to stand by thee, which hath also an eye, as in the type, to that readiness and willingness that would be in the nations to help them out of Babylon.

Isaiah 60:6

The multitude of camels, i.e. the abundance of wealth and treasure that is brought upon camels; this being the creature the Eastern people used for carriage of their gold and spice, and other rich treasure, which are said to cover them; the like phrase with that Jud_6:5: or whereby is understood those people that did use to ride on camels, as the Arabians and the bordering countries; for by these and such-like figurative and borrowed expressions in several verses, of this chapter is particularized several nations, and by them is implied the coming in of all nations unto Christ; and therefore they are brought in as presenting the choicest commodities of their respective countries, so that we may be the better excused from speaking particularly to them in their respective places.

The dromedaries; or, *also* or *even* the dromedaries, which are a lesser sort of camel, so called from their swiftness in running, to which they are the better enabled, because, as Pliny observes, they can endure thirst four days together: q.d. They shall make all the haste imaginable in bringing their riches to thee. *Of Midian and Ephah* : both these Midianites and Ephaites descended from Abraham by Keturah, Gen_25:2,4; they dwelt beyond Arabia; and camels are mentioned coming from hence, because of all places they were the most numerous here, Jud_7:12.

Sheba: this Sheba descended from Cush, the son of cursed Ham, the son of Noah, Gen_10:6,7, from whom a certain country in Arabia Felix took its name, whose queen it was that came to visit Solomon 1Ki_10:1; and her bringing gifts might be a type of this, Solomon being a type of Christ, of which the wise men might be the first-fruits, **Mt 2**.

Shall bring gold and incense; the principal commodities with which this country abounded, and by which we are to understand whatever is precious; and frankincense is only peculiar to Arabia.

They shall show forth the praises of the Lord; the motive drawing them thither being more for religion than trade.

Isaiah 60:7

All the flocks of Kedar; the people whereof descended from Ishmael, and lived in Arabia Petrea, who were principally shepherds. *The rams* ; q.d. nay, the chief of the flock, viz. for sacrifice; this Nebaioth being put for the people thereof, and sprang from Ishmael also, Gen_25:13; rich as the other were in *flocks* , and inhabiting the same country. As the Sabeans offered the proper commodities of their country, as gold and spice; so these of theirs, viz. cattle, showing that each country, and so each person, should bring that wherewith they did most excel.

Of Nebaioth: this shows that Abraham's children according to the flesh should also be brought in to the gospel: compare Mal_1:11.

They shall come up with acceptance; being offered, they shall not now, as heretofore, be rejected; and hereby they shall be distinguished from the profane oblations of the Gentiles, i.e. in the name of Christ, who is the true and only gospel Altar. The house of my glory, i.e. the temple, or my house; glory being put here by a metonymy of the adjunct for God himself, who is glorious. God shall become glorious by the multitude of sacrifices that shall be offered and accepted here, Psa_29:9. And it is a type how glorious his New Testament spiritual worship shall be; this altar pointing at Christ, out of whom nothing is accepted, and that his church should be glorious, being built of living stones, 1Pe_2:5.

Isaiah 60:8

In the 4th verse he spake to them as upon some high watch tower, whereby they might behold as in a circle all the parts of the world. Now espying from all parts, he brings them in calling out with admiration,

Who are these? partly with reference to the number, or partly with reference to the persons; so the Heb. *What are these* ? they being not Jews, but strangers, and so directly intimating the Gentiles flocking into the church, that come so swiftly, and in so

great flocks: the same thing still. The former metaphor of clouds imports their number as well as their speed, Eze_38:9: thus abundance of witnesses is called a cloud of witnesses, Heb_12:1: the scope is to note the great confluence of people that should come into the church, that should be begotten by the apostles' doctrine; which the LXX. translation seems to point at, who render it as *doves with their young ones unto me* ; and by *flying* may be noted their spiritual state, being elevated above the world, . as the clouds above the earth, and doves when upon the wing.

Isaiah 60:9

The isles: see Isa_41:1 **49:18.** *The ships* , viz. to convey them to me.

Of Tarshish, i.e. those that traffic by sea, as before; see Isa_2:16; these lying most convenient for that employment. In naming this he implies by a synecdoche all that had commerce with other nations. *First* ; preferring this before any other business they take in hand. This hath undergone the various senses of divers interpreters; such as are not futile and vain, I conceive, may run into one of these two: either,

1. By reading it with a supplement of the note of similitude, which is frequent, *as at first* , or *formerly* , viz. as in the days of Solomon, who was a type of Christ, the matter here spoken of seeming to suit with it, 1Ki_10:12: see 2Ch_9:21, &c. Or rather,

2. By taking the word *first* , as the Hebrews mostly do, not so much with reference to time or order as to dignity; namely, they shall have the precedency and honour of bringing themselves and conducting others: this may be true also as to time, and so verified in the wise men coming the first to Christ when he was born, and as the firstfruits of the rest of the Gentiles.

To bring thy sons, begotten by the word,

from far, from the remotest parts: this may be understood with reference either to place or state; at how great a distance soever either in place or state, they shall come to Christ, who hath sons abroad in God's decree, not yet called, *other sheep that he will bring into his fold* , Joh_10:16. *Their* : their may refer either to the merchants bringing traffic with them, as Isa_60:6; or the Jews, as Israel came out of Egypt with all their treasure with them, and

what others gave them, Ezr_1:4, as also the vessels that were sent back with them, Ezr_1:7.

Unto the name, i.e. to the Lord himself, by a periphrasis; or to his temple, where his name was placed, the type of the church; compare 2Sa_7:13, with 1Ch_17:12; or in the name of the Lord; or for his sake, who is the Holy One; the like metonymies having been formerly and frequently pointed at.

He hath glorified thee; he will spread thy fame, and make thee honourable in the eyes of the world, and that especially in setting up the ministry of the gospel in the midst of thee. The name of God, and so also of Israel, were contemptible among the Gentiles before the coming of Christ and spreading of the gospel, but (as a consolation to his people) it is promised they shall both be honourable; and here God by an *enallage* of the person speaks of himself in the third person.

Isaiah 60:10

The sons of strangers, viz. such as were not Israelites; and he puts sons of strangers by a usual Hebraism for strangers, properly termed *alienigenae* : see Isa_56:3. This was literally fulfilled in repairing the walls of Jerusalem; he spake before of the temple, now of the city; and spiritually in the ministers of the gospel, who are the walls and bulwarks of the church by preaching and writing for her; and ecclesiastical history affords us many instances of kings and princes that were great benefactors to her, among whom Constantine did greatly excel, not caring what he bestowed on her, Valentinian and Theodosius, &c.

Shall minister; shall administer all necessaries to thee: as they had been demolished by the Babylonians, so they were repaired by the favour of Cyrus, Darius Hystaspes, Artsxerxes, &c., all strangers, Ezr_6:7, &c, or strangers becoming proselytes: see Isa_56:6.

In my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee; as I afflicted thee in my anger, so out of my compassions I will abundantly bless thee.

Isaiah 60:11

Therefore; for that end and purpose; or by reason of the conflux of people that shall be continually flocking thither, arguing

abundance of peace and security, and great enlargement of the church, and that the Christian church shall be always open to the godly, to receive all comers freely.

The forces; or, wealth; either all wherein they excel, or all the prey taken in fight.

May be brought, as it were, captives in chains, such as they took in war, being made victorious, so say some; but rather, such as were led and conducted in state.

Isaiah 60:12

That will not serve thee; do offices of kindness; so is the word used, Isa_19:23; or rather, that will not submit to Christ's sceptre.

Shall perish; shall be no more *sui juris* , but subdued to thee; and as refusing subjection to Christ, shall perish everlastingly; as they all perished in the deluge that were not in the ark: they that should be saved were added to the church, Act_2:47 Rev_21:24.

Utterly wasted, Heb. *wasting be wasted* , viz. by the sword: accordingly we read of many victories in Josephus that the Jews obtained, and in the Book of the Maccabees, as a fulfilling of this prophecy; but this doth principally relate to the spiritual Jerusalem, and this seems to anticipate an objection, If the gates stand continually open, we shall be in danger of enemies. Not so, saith he, for they shall either serve thee or perish.

Isaiah 60:13

The glory of Lebanon; the box, the fir, the pine, and the cedar, on account whereof Lebanon grew so famous; a metonymy of the efficient: kings and great ones, the glory of the world, and also persons of a lower rank, the

pinés, firs, and box trees, as also the choicest persons, endued with the special gifts of the Holy Ghost, shall be the materials and members of Christ's church, as those also of a lower size and measure. We find the godly called trees, Isa_61:3. They shall have sweet communion together; the *box* shall not envy the *pine* , nor the *pine* despise the *box* , they shall worship the Lord together.

To beautify: this is the reason and end why the glory of Lebanon is to be brought hither: by these trees understand the beauty and

nobility of the church; trees being both for building and for beautifying.

The place of my sanctuary; the temple, wherein was the sanctuary; this being a type of the church, both actively, as that which his presence sanctifieth; and passively, as that wherein he is worshipped and sanctified.

The place of my feet, viz. the ark, 1Ch_28:2, described here by a periphrasis; so called, because, supposing God after the manner of man to sit as on a seat between the wings of the cherubims, his feet would rest upon the ark, and therefore called the mercy-seat, Exo_25:17-20. The temple and Zion is called his rest, Psa_132:13,14, and all this is made good in the gospel church, 2Co_6:16.

Isaiah 60:14

The sons; either their posterity, acknowledging their fathers' sins in afflicting thee; or themselves; for it is the manner of the Hebrews to put the sons of a thing for the thing itself.

Bending; humbling themselves, as penitents; this being the sign of reverence and respect; and that either for love or fear submit to the yoke of Christ; they shall be like Christ, of a humble and meek spirit, and the degree of this is mentioned in the next clause.

Bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet: this notes that great degree of submission, that even despisers and enemies shall yield to the church, prostrating themselves as humble suppliants; see Isa_49:23; or rather to Christ, the Head, King, and Husband of the church.

They shall call thee, The city; they shall give her that honourable title, or acknowledge her to be so, and so called, both from the love that God had for her, and from the temple of God that was in her.

Isaiah 60:15

Forsaken, both of God, i.e. as to outward appearance; and of her inhabitants, being upon the matter depopulated.

Hated; either slighted and neglected, or suffering actual miseries and slaughters: thus was she dealt with, Lam_1:2.

No man went through thee; thy streets were left desolate. *An eternal excellency* : the abstract is put here for the concrete, whereby the Hebrews were wont to express the superlative degree; and in this happy estate we find the church, **Zec 2.** *per tot . Zec_9:9, &c.*; which refers to the coming of Christ; and it is said to be *eternal* , i.e. for a great while; it being an hyperbolical expression, frequent with the Hebrews, who express a long time by eternity.

A joy of many generations; the church's happiness should be, the rejoicing and comfort of succeeding generations; she would be the matter of their great rejoicing; a metonymy of the object.

Isaiah 60:16

Thou shalt also suck, & c.; a metaphor taken from children sucking nourishment from the breast. The sense is, that the church should draw or drain the wealth of nations, and the riches and power of kings, and whatever is most excellent, and that it should come freely and affectionately, as milk flows from the breast of the mother; the same thing intended Isa_49:23, and in the foregoing verses. *Thou shalt know* , i.e. experience it; knowing is often put for an experimental knowing.

The mighty one of Jacob; styled so either with reference to Jacob's person, he being the first that gave God this title, Gen_49:24; or with reference to Jacob's posterity, viz. the Jews. These things will certainly be accomplished; for he is the *mighty God* , and so able; and the God of Jacob, so obliged by covenant and relation.

Isaiah 60:17

For brass I will bring gold: here is the effect of the former promise, Thy poverty shall be turned to riches, all things shall be altered for the best; an allusion to the days of Solomon, when gold was as brass: thus, on the contrary, when they change for the worse in the state, it useth to be expressed by the like metaphors, **Isa 21 Isa 22 Isa 23.**

I will also make thy officers peace, i.e. *loving, meek, and peaceable* ; the abstract put for the concrete, as is usual, whether you understand it of under officers, they shall be officers of peace, or of governors, thou shalt have a peaceable government, as it was

made good to them under Ezra, Nehemiah, Zorobabel, and such like.

And thine exactors righteousness; most righteous, as before peace for peaceable. The church is not freed from taxes and payments, that is given by Christ and Peter unto Caesar, but it shall be without oppression and grinding; no more than is necessary, and not exacted rigorously. Though all these were made good in their return out of Babylon, yet doth it more properly relate to the meliorating of the church under the gospel, wherein instead of carnal ceremonies, she had spiritual ordinances, which is the scope of the apostle, **Heb 9**, and larger measures of the Holy Spirit, and should have such officers as would speak peace to the consciences, by discovering the complete and perfect righteousness of him who fulfilled all righteousness.

Isaiah 60:18

That this and what follows must necessarily be understood of the church triumphant (though there only it will be complete) I see no necessity, neither will obtrude my judgment, but leave it to the judicious, as being more proper in a comment: none to offer violence to this quiet state thou shalt attain to, either within thee, to oppress by *injustice, rapine*, or *fraud*, or without thee by hostile invasions; and this the prophet mentions as the effect of good officers in the former verse.

Wasting nor destruction within thy borders; no havoc made among thy people.

Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation; they shall be safe, and able to defend thee; thou shalt be as safe as salvation itself can make thee. When a thing is said in Scripture to be called so, it often signifies as much as to be so, Isa_26:1 **47:1 65:7**, and it intimates as much as that God will be salvation to his church: when they shall be without gates and walls, he will be their safety, and the matter of their praise; see Isa_26:1; and God's care of his church is the matter of that exhortation to praise him, **Psa 147**.

And thy gates Praise; a double metonymy, viz. of the effect, as salvation will cause praise; and of the adjunct, as it is worthy of

praise; so that within or upon thy gates and walls thou shalt sing praises.

Isaiah 60:19

The sun shall be no more thy light, & c.; these shall not be at all esteemed in comparison of the spiritual light of the church; and this is laid down as the assurance of the church's *comfort*, as the former was for her safety, so that God will not only be a shield, but a sun to her, Psa_84:11; not that they shall not have the sun and moon among them, but that the light of the godly, as such, should principally consist in what is spiritual.

The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light; Christ shall scatter all darkness and ignorance, enlightening thee with the doctrines of the gospel, and graces of his Spirit; and this shall be

everlasting, not wax and wane, and suffer eclipses and settings, as the sun and moon do, but it shall be constant, without shadow of change; no night; which will be undoubtedly true of the church in heaven, whatever it will be, or how near soever it will come to it, here, which I presume will bear its analogy.

Thy God thy glory; always ministering matter of thy glorying in him; or, thy interest in this God shall be great honour to thee; or else it is the same thing with the sentence immediately before in other words, that will make time glorious, a metonymy of the efficient; thus he is said to *give glory*, Psa_84:11.

Isaiah 60:20

Literally he means the Jews' mourning in Babylon, but especially the uninterrupted happiness of the church: the Hebrew here for

ended signifies *recompensed*; their days of rejoicing shall abundantly recompense all their days of mourning.

Isaiah 60:21

Thy people also shall be all righteous, i.e. the greater part; the word in this use hath been shown frequently; or, *altogether* righteous, completely righteous. As this respects the Jews, the sense may be, they went into captivity wicked, but most of them being dead, and many of the survivors tarrying behind, they that are returned are said to be righteous, Isa_1:25-27 **4:4**; but principally as it respects the church, they shall be all saints, either

by profession, as Paul calls them frequently saints by calling; or rather by an inherent righteousness, or perfectly by the imputed righteousness of Christ: **See Poole** "Isa_35:8".

They shall inherit the land for ever, i.e. for a long time, as you have many instances; and this is spoken, lest that poor remnant should be afraid of being driven out again; but with reference to the church, that they should for ever be continued as God's peculiar people.

The branch of my planting; put by apposition, viz. *Thy people* being of my planting, and so also the next clause, the

work of my hands, and therefore cannot miscarry, being what I shall take delight in; and thus the children of God are said to be *his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*, Eph_2:10.

That I may be glorified; either that I may make them glorious in being thus planted, or myself glorious in thus planting them.

Isaiah 60:22

A little one shall become a thousand; though of very small beginning, and contemptible, yet shall greatly multiply. Though the church at first will be but a very few, yet will it increase into many thousands; this plant or seed will spring up to many. Some understand it, that many shall be converted, and brought into the church, by men of very few, low, and mean parts; however, these things seem to agree better to some state of the church here, than to the state of the church triumphant.

A small one a strong nation: if this signify, not the same with the other, as probably it may, the word *strong* signifying numerous, Joe_1:6, then we may understand it, that as the former respected *their number*, so this their *strength*.

Will hasten it in his time, viz. in due time, the time that I have appointed: q.d. Let not this be doubted, because I have undertaken it, to whom nothing is difficult. When the time of the promise comes, he will make haste, it will be done speedily; or as soon as it begins it shall hasten apace, as it did in Peter's sermon, three thousand in one day, **Ac 2**, and five thousand in another, **Ac 4**, and so soon filled the whole world, and one Paul planted whole

churches, as the people in Egypt increased from seventy persons to a vast multitude.

Isaiah 61:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 61.

Christ and his blessed office, Isa_61:1-3. The church's repair and increase, Isa_61:4-6 and joy, Isa_61:7-11.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, as it were, to accomplish that which is foretold and promised in the foregoing chapter, whereby this appears to be either the Holy Ghost; **See Poole** "1Ki_18:12"; or the Spirit of prophecy, i.e. the gift of prophecy; so we are often to understand by the Spirit, viz. *the gifts* ; as the Spirit upon Samson, viz. the gift of valour, and courage, and strength: see 1Co_12:4, &c. Though the prophet may speak this of himself in person, yet that it is principally understood of Christ is evident, because he applieth this text unto himself, Luk_4:18, being the first text he preached upon after his baptism, at which time the Holy Ghost did descend upon him in a visible shape, of which that John, who baptized him, was an ocular witness, Joh_1:32,**33**, and so making good the truth of this prophecy; and it is said to rest upon and dwell in him, according as it is prophesied, Isa_11:2 **42:1**.

Hath anointed me; set me apart, i.e. both capacitating him with gifts, and commissioning him with authority; and yet more as it is applied to Christ, a power to make all effectual, from whence he hath also the name of Messiah among the Hebrews, and of Christ among the Greeks; nay, Christ alone among the prophets hath obtained this name, Psa_45:7: and the prophet seems here to describe first who Christ is, and then what are his offices; this being the usual ceremony for the designing persons to the offices of prophets, priests, and kings, as hath been divers times shown, in all which respects it doth most eminently belong to Christ; so that the prophet doth hereby intimate both the final cause of his unction, viz. that he should execute these offices to which he was anointed; and the effect of it; that unction being upon him as the Head, it would flow from thence to his members, and so is an unction more peculiar to them; arid in a more general way it hath respect unto all the faithful, 2Co_1:21,**22** 1Jo_2:20,**27**.

To preach good tidings unto the meek: being meant of Christ, this relates to his prophetic office. Literally this points at the good news that Isaiah brought of Cyrus's being raised up to bring them out of Babylon, now they are become meek and humble; but if it be thus taken, it must be understood of his prophecies left behind him, for he died many years before the captivity. But they chiefly signify the good tidings of the gospel, that discovers Christ come in the flesh to redeem poor sinners from the captivity of sin and Satan, such as are meek, and tremble, or *afflicted*, as the word signifies, because ordinary *afflictions* make men *meek* and *humble*; called also the *poor*, and our Saviour expresseth it by that word, Luk_4:18. To these the gospel, these

good tidings, are brought, Mat_11:5. Whether by *poor* you understand,

1. The Gentiles, void of all grace and salvation, or tenders of it, till now. Or,

2. Properly so called, *indigent* and needy persons, of which sort were the greatest number that followed Christ, of which the reason might be, because Christ preached the contempt of the world and riches, which the poor would therefore sooner embrace, and the rich be more likely to oppose. Or,

3. The poor in spirit. *To bind up*: now follow several particular expressions to describe the same thing that he mentioned before more generally: a metaphor taken from surgeons, that carefully and tenderly roll up a broken bone, Hos_6:1; and this relates to Christ's priestly office.

The broken-hearted; the heart dejected and broken with sorrow. I am sent to ease their pains, whose consciences are wounded with a sense of God's wrath. *To proclaim liberty to the captives*; those captives in Babylon, but principally to Satan, that they shall be delivered; and this appertains to Christ's kingly office, whereby he proclaims liberty from the dominion and bondage of sin, and from the fear and terror of hell. See Isa_42:7. *The opening of the prison to them that are bound*, i.e. supposing them to be in chains and fetters, yet they should be delivered, though in the greatest bondage. The further explication of these things will be found

upon Luk_4:18, because there are some passages expressly mentioned here.

Isaiah 61:2

To proclaim; to declare, as it respects the Jews, that their liberty is at hand.

The acceptable year, viz. the happy age of God's grace, either which will be grateful and welcome news to them, or acceptable to God, a time wherein it pleaseth him to favour them; but this must be understood of a further extent than to Babylon, and rather unto mankind in Jesus Christ, Gal_4:4 Tit_3:4, called a time of God's good-will in that angelical song, Luk_2:14, on the account of those good tidings which the angel brought, Isa_61:10,**11**; called so possibly from the arbitrariness and good pleasure of God, having no respect to any satisfaction from man.

Year; not precisely, as if Christ preached but one year, the mistake of some ancients, mentioned and refuted by Irenaeus, lib. 2. ch. 38; but for time indefinitely, and may include the whole time of preaching the gospel; see Rom_10:15; which I take to be the meaning of that now, 2Co_6:2, and probably hath a pertinent allusion to the year of *jubilee* , which was a general release proclaimed by sound of trumpet, which relates also here to the word *proclaiming* , Lev_25:10.

The day of vengeance, viz. on Babylon, it being necessary, that where God will deliver his people, he should take vengeance on their enemies; but mystically and principally on the enemies of his church, and the spiritual ones chiefly, viz. Satan, sin, and death.

That mourn; either by reason of their sufferings, or of their sins, Mat_11:28; or the miseries of Zion. **See Poole "Isa_57:18"**.

Isaiah 61:3

To appoint; supply it, viz. comfort or joy; or else it may refer to those accusative cases following, *beauty, oil, garments* . *In Zion* ; put by a metonymy for the Jews; q.d. among the Jews; and they for the church of God, or, according to the Hebrew, *for Zion* .

Beauty for ashes: by *ashes* understand whatever is most proper for days of mourning, as sackcloth sprinkled with ashes; and these ashes, which were sprinkled on their heads, mixing themselves

with their tears, would render them of a woeful aspect, which was wont to be the habit of mourners; as by beauty whatever may be beautiful or become times of rejoicing.

The oil of joy for mourning: the sense is the same with the former; he calls it

oil of joy, in allusion to those anointings they were wont to use in times of joy, **Psa 104 15:** and also the same with what follows, viz. gladness for heaviness; gladness brings forth praise to God: and it is called a garment in allusion to their festival ornaments, for they had garments appropriated to their conditions, some suitable to times of rejoicing, and some to times of mourning; or else an allusion to comely garments; and

the spirit of heaviness, because heaviness doth oppress and debase the spirits. It is all but an elegant description of the same thing by a threefold antithesis.

That they might be called; that is, that they may be so, as it is usually expressed, Isa_58:12 **60:18;** they shall be acknowledged so, Isa_61:9.

Trees of righteousness: he ascribes righteousness to trees, understanding thereby persons by a metaphor, by which he means that they shall be firm, solid, and well-rooted, being by faith ingrafted into Christ, and bringing forth fruit suitable to the soil wherein they are planted, that had been as dry trees; see on Isa_56:3; viz. the church, the vineyard of God, and the hand by which they are planted, as in the next words.

The planting of the Lord; planted by the holy Lord, who' being himself holy and righteous, would plant none but such; which notes also their soundness and stability, an allusion to that passage in Moses's song, Exo_15:17.

That he might be glorified, either in that glory which he should confer upon them, or that glory he may expect and receive from them, that so it may be evident whose handiwork it was. See **Isa 60 21.**

Isaiah 61:4

See Isa_58:12. As it is applied to gospel times, the meaning may be, that Gentilism, which was as a wilderness overgrown with

briers and thorns, shall be cultivated; and those cities and provinces of the Gentiles that lay as it were waste, void of all true religion, shall now by the ministry of the word be edified in the true worship of God.

Isaiah 61:5

Strangers, viz. Gentiles, such as are not of, the natural race of the Jews, but Gentile converts. Or such as shall have no more than an outward profession, strangers to the true work of grace.

Shall stand; ready to be at thy service; a like expression Isa_48:13.

Feed your flocks, the churches, with, the word of God. The sons of the alien; the same with strangers, or their successors.

Shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers: as the words describe the prosperous estate of the Jews, the meaning of them is, that they should be in such a flourishing and prosperous condition, that without their own labour they should have all inferior offices executed, either by slaves taken in war, or by persons hired for reward, which they should have riches and wealth enough to accomplish; but as they principally relate to the spiritual state of the church, so probably by strangers we may understand converted Gentiles, with their successors, meant by the

sons of aliens, which should be ready to discharge all offices for the advantage of the church, feeding the flocks, viz. the churches of Christ, with the word of God, and should manage the whole work of God's spiritual husbandry therein: see 1Co_3:6-9. Or by strangers may be meant members of the church only by an outward profession, even they shall be some way serviceable to her in ordinary and inferior matters: *The earth shall help the woman* , Rev_12:16.

Isaiah 61:6

But ye shall be named the Priests; for your part, ye emphatically shall be as priests; either,

1. For *maintenance* ; as the priests of old were plentifully provided for without their labour, so shall you by the labour of strangers. Or,

2. For *countenance* ; you shall be every where as greatly valued as the priests were wont to be; you shall be esteemed as princes; for so the word is often used, the word *priest* being applied not only to the sacred function, but to one that was of great note among the people, and was supplied with all necessaries from others, without any labour of his own. Thus David's sons were called *priests* , or *princes* . Or rather,

3. For *privilege* ; the whole body of them shall now be as peculiar and as near to God as the priests were formerly, and shall be a royal priesthood, 1Pe_2:9. This is most certainly true of all the faithful under the gospel; hence they have also their spiritual sacrifices, Rom_12:1 Heb_13:15 **16** 1Pe_2:5.

Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles: it relates to the riches of the Gentiles, which did consist most in flocks and herds: or, what you eat shall be purchased by the riches of the Gentiles.

Shall ye boast yourselves; you shall exalt yourselves, or be renowned by others. The LXX. render it, you shall be *wonderful* , or to admiration; or grow high by the access of that glory which they shall bring unto you, viz. in riches, parts, learning, Isa_60:5,**11**.

Isaiah 61:7

For your shame ye shall have double: See Poole "Isa_40:2". *Supply honour* . Though you have been little accounted of among your enemies, yet now you shall be greatly in their esteem, Zec_9:12; you shall have double damages.

In their portion, viz. of honour that God will give them; the same thing with the former: or, in their inheritance which God shall restore to them; and that either,

1. *For worth* and value through God's blessing upon it. Or,
2. For room and space, and that possibly by reason of the few that will return to inhabit there, viz. only a tenth part, Isa_6:13; or that which he shall give them out of their enemy's land.

Therefore; or rather, *because* ; being rendered as a reason of their rejoicing, because of the doubling of their portion, in which sense it is taken Isa_16:14.

Everlasting joy; of long continuance here, and everlasting hereafter; or to be perpetually remembered on their anniversary festivals: though this had its accomplishment in their return from Babylon, yet was it most signally made good in that great change for the better which they should find in the gospel state, in the enlargement of Christ's kingdom and increase of his people, with whom they should ever rejoice together.

Isaiah 61:8

For I the Lord love judgment: q.d. They have suffered a great deal of hardship under their enemies, and I will do them right; for I love justice in myself, and in them that practise it. Or he gives a reason why he will recompense those strangers that did so freely minister to his people.

I hate robbery; all things gotten by injustice, though it be for sacrifice. As God will not accept of that which cost nothing, so much less of that which is the effect of rapine and oppression; a foundation whereon most of our abbeys and monasteries were built, viz. to expiate some great crimes. And thus by making God a *receiver*, they did interpretatively make him a *confederate*. *I will direct their work in truth*; either, I will lead and guide them so that they shall do all things in sincerity; they shall do good works, and to good ends; they shall now love truth, and walk in truth, and serve him in spirit and truth: or, I will reward them: or, I will make their work stable and firm. *Truth* notes stability; **See Poole "Isa_16:5"**; *work* being here put metonymically for the reward of work, proportionably to their work.

I will make an everlasting covenant: q.d. Though you have broken covenant with me, and I have seemed to forsake you in giving you up to captivity; yet I will renew my ancient covenant made with your fathers, confirmed with the blood of Christ, and it shall be everlasting, never to be abrogated, viz. it shall be continued in the Gentiles that shall come in your rooms, that for breach of covenant were broken off.

Isaiah 61:9

Their seed shall be known among the Gentiles i.e. eminently; a promise of the increase of the church; such shall be their prosperity and multiplying, that they shall be known abroad by

their great increase. Or else the meaning is, The church shall have a seed of the Gentiles, the borders of the church shall be enlarged; whereas it hath been confined as it were to one corner of the world, now it shall remain in one nation alone no more, but shall fill all the nations of the earth.

They are the seed which the Lord hath blessed; they shall be known to be the seed of Abraham, partly by their holy conversation, and partly by their exceeding blessings, it being the seed that the Lord had so often promised to bless. There shall be such visible characters of God's love to them, and of God's grace in them.

Isaiah 61:10

I will greatly rejoice: this by a prosopopoeia is spoken in the person of the church, wherein she doth thankfully acknowledge God's kindness to her in the forementioned promise, expressed here in the greatness of her affection, with reference both to her present deliverance from Babylon, and to the happiness of her gospel state.

In the Lord; or, because of the Lord, or of the goodness of the Lord towards me; a usual form of gratulation, 1Sa_2:1 Hab_3:18 Luk_1:47: or thus, I will not rejoice so much in my deliverance as in the Lord.

My soul shall be joyful in my God: this clause is to the same purpose, save only she varies the expression: q.d. Yea, I do it with my whole soul.

With the garments of salvation; with salvation as with a garment; so in the next with righteousness as with a robe. The meaning is, The salvation that God will work for me will render me as beautiful and considerable as they are that are clothed with the richest garments, as bridegrooms usually are, and brides with their jewels, or as venerable as kings in their princely robes; my sackcloth will now be turned into robes; or, I shall be compassed about with glory, as garments do compass the body.

With the robe of righteousness, i.e. either with the fruits and effects of his love and many favours to the church, in which sense righteousness is taken, Psa_112:3,4,9, compared with 2Co_9:9 Isa_51:6,8; she should see the *righteousness* of God in fulfilling

all these promises. Or *that righteousness* of Christ imputed to us, which we are said to put on, Rom_13:14; or those graces imparted to us, and acted in a holy life.

Isaiah 61:11

As the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth: by this and the other metaphor he shows not only the reviving of the blessings of the church after they had been as it were dead in the winter of affliction, but the great plenty and abundance of blessings that should break forth; that which had been as a wilderness shall be as a paradise, pointing at the effects of his grace and bounty.

So the Lord God will cause righteousness to spring forth, i.e. his great work of salvation shall break out and appear.

And praise, as the natural product and fruit of it; his own glory being the principal end of making his righteousness to appear and manifest itself.

Before all nations: these things will not be done in a corner, but will be eminently conspicuous in the sight of all the world, for which purpose those hymns penned by the godly will ever be famous in the churches of Christ to all ages, as of Moses, Hannah, Mary, Zacharias, Simeon, &c.

Isaiah 62:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 62

A prayer of the watchmen for the church in confidence of God's gracious designs and promises to it.

For Zion's sake, viz. the church's sake; Zion and Jerusalem being both put for the church, Heb_12:22.

Will I not hold my peace: these seem to be the words of the prophet, strongly resolving, notwithstanding all difficulties, to solicit God for the church's happiness, and constantly excite to the belief of it by his preaching, though it were long ere it came, for Isaiah lived near two hundred years before this was accomplished; but his prophecy lived, and the tenor of it was continued by other prophets, whom the Lord stirred up to be still establishing his people till this salvation was wrought: his meaning might be, as long as he lived he would never hold his peace; or he might

include himself among those who should be then alive, as Paul doth among the other saints, 1Th_4:17, *we which are alive* . Thus may we also include God speaking these words, as some would have it, viz. by the mouth of Isaiah, and other of his holy prophets, that never held their peace, till they saw this blessed state of the church appear.

Until the righteousness: with reference to the Babylonians, understand it of the righteousness of God, who hath promised his people deliverance, and he must be righteous, and so understand salvation before; or rather the vindicating of his people's cause in the eyes of the nations by the ruin of the Babylonians; he will show that his people have a righteous cause: or with reference to the church, till Christ, who is her righteousness, shall appear and be manifested in the gospel.

Go forth as brightness; clearing up their miserable and dark estate, which the church might be supposed to be in before Christ's coming, with much joy and happiness.

As a lamp that burneth; and to that purpose is set up where it may be seen continually, to signify how eminently conspicuous this prosperous estate of the church should be among the nations, and as it may particularly relate to revealing of Christ unto the world.

Isaiah 62:2

Thy righteousness: see what is said in the foregoing verse: some read, thy *Just One* , viz. Jesus Christ. *Kings* , those that were wont to scorn thee, shall now' be taken with the admiration of thy glory.

Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name; not the seed of Abraham, or the *children of Israel* , but of God; that whereas they were by nature the children of wrath, now by grace they shall be the children of God. Or, another name, as it is said of tongues. Compare Mar_16:17, with Act_2:4. Or, a name, the honour whereof shall make them famous, as Gen_11:4; they shall be called Christians. Or, the church shall be more renowned than ever, both in respect of her *condition* , and so called *Hephzi-bah* ; and of her relation, and so

called *Beulah* ; and this new name the Lord gives them accordingly, Isa_62:4.

Isaiah 62:3

A crown of glory; an expression to set forth the dignity of her state.

In the hand of the Lord, i.e. either as placed upon thee by God's hand, that he will dispose of or dispense to thee; a usual form of speech in Scripture, as Hag_1:1, by the hand of Haggai: so Mal_1:1. Or, *in the hand of God* ; he shall so manage thine honourable estate, that thou shalt be a crown, a credit, and honour to him; and so the word crown may be used for any kind of ornament, or matter of honour. Or, preserved and defended by God's hand; a phrase that expresseth it to be out of all danger, as to put a man's life in his hands is to expose it to dangers, Jud_12:3 1Sa_19:5 **28:21**.

A royal diadem; the same thing with the former for substance. Or, the royal priesthood, whereof the apostle speaks, 1Pe_2:9.

Isaiah 62:4

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; as a woman forsaken by her husband, contemptible, and of low esteem.

Neither shall thy land, i.e. the inhabitants of the land, a metonymy of the subject,

any more be termed Desolate; though it be now almost void of inhabitants, it shall be impeopled again.

Thou shalt be called, i.e. be, as you have frequently had such instances.

Hephi-bah; *My delight is in her* ; a new name, agreeing with her new condition.

Beulah;

Married, agreeing to her new relation; she shall be as one well married, to the great improvement of her state, Jer_3:14 Hos_2:18-20.

Thy land shall be married; thou shalt see the increase of thy children again in thy land, as the fruit of thy married condition,

which by reason of thy being forsaken of thy husband were in a manner wasted and decayed; and this refers to the great enlargement of the church in the gospel days. Or rather, shall be possessed, as the word *baal* properly signifies; and so it answers to desolate, Thou shalt be no more *desolate* , but *possessed* ; and this helps to solve a difficulty in the next verse, which otherwise may seem an impropriety, that the sons would marry the mother.

Isaiah 62:5

As a young man marrieth a virgin: this is delivered as a demonstration of what was said in the close of the 4th verse; and it is said *young* and *virgin* to note their suitableness; not *old* and *young* , but such as may delight each in other, signifying that mutual content that would be in all parties; thus it was at the first preaching of the gospel, Act_2:41-47.

So shall thy sons marry thee. Whereas it is improbable that the Spirit of God should carry on so sacred a prophecy by a similitude so abhorrent to nature, the *son should marry the mother* , the scruple is easily satisfied by taking the word in its right signification, to *possess* , as in the foregoing verse, reading it thus, As a young man marrieth or *possesseth* a virgin, so shall thy land be inhabited or possessed by thy sons; they shall dwell with thee as a man dwells with his wife; and thus the LXX. And it is said *sons* , to distinguish them from strangers, by whom she should not any longer be inhabited, but by her own natives; and expressed by *marrying* , to signify not only their unity of affection in the evenness of their living, but of faith in their common profession, called the *common faith* , Tit_1:4, according to which Paul calls Titus his son.

As the bridegroom rejoiceth, taketh delight in her; so shall thy God, viz. Christ, God and man, in thee: see Isa_62:4. Christ is often called a *bridegroom* , and his church a bride, 2Co_11:2 Rev_21:2,9.

Isaiah 62:6

Watchmen; understand by these, either,

1. *Angels* , as they are called, Dan_4:13,23. Or

2. *Magistrates* : see Isa_56:10, or rather,

3. *Ministers* . When once the church shall be restored again, God will undertake for its safety and protection, partly by magistracy, and partly by ministry, whom he here by a metaphorical allegory calls watchmen; but the next words seem principally to intimate spiritual watchmen, thy spiritual safety, Heb_13:17, and said to be upon the walls, as being thence able to espy dangers at the greater distance, Son_1:7.

Which shall never hold their peace day nor night; there shall be a most vigilant and industrious ministry, their constancy being intimated by day and night, either in praying, or teaching, Or warning, this being their office.

That make mention, i.e. are his servants. To make mention of one is, according to the Hebrew phrase, to be servant to him of whom we make mention, Isa_26:13. And here especially are meant his servants in ordinary, his *remembrancers* ; either such as put God in mind of his promise, like such officers that great men have about them on purpose to mind them of the public affairs; or such as make the Lord to be remembered, putting his people in mind of him.

Keep not silence: this seems to be the charge that he gives to his watchmen, that they never prove remiss or negligent.

Isaiah 62:7

Give him no rest; the same with the foregoing verse, and very acceptable to God, Luk_11:8-10.

Till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth, by sending the Messiah and those labourers into his vineyard, whereby the church may be established and settled on sure foundations, and so become matter of praise to God. All the nations may praise him for her, Psa_67:3,4. Or, that she may be praised, and become renowned and famous in the eyes of the world: see Isa_40:9 **61:9,11.**

Isaiah 62:8

This and the next verse are much to the same purpose, wherein the prophet, to encourage them to their industrious endeavours, tells them that the Lord had

sworn to see to the prosperity of Jerusalem; and he names the

hand, to signify his faithfulness, as the giving of our hand notes our fidelity; and arm, to signify his power,

the arm of his strength, i.e. his strong arm: these being eminently to be engaged and put forth for his people, he swears by them.

Surely I will no more give; or, *If I give* ; a usual aposiopesis; an abrupt form of swearing, implying something of an imprecation, as great as can be expressed: q.d. Never account me faithful or almighty, if I accomplish not this.

The sons of the stranger: see Isa_61:5.

Shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: the meaning is, That meat, and drink, and all necessaries that thou hast laboured for, the Babylonians took away from thee; but now it shall be so no more, he will not give thee up to the will of thine enemies.

Isaiah 62:9

They that have gathered it, i.e. the wine mentioned in the former verse, that have brought it from their several vineyards, and laid it in their cellars, every one shall eat the fruit of his own labours; thou shalt not sow, and another reap, as formerly.

And praise the Lord; they themselves shall praise him, viz. for his bounty and goodness; and others also that shall be partakers with them; *God will be bountiful* , and they shall be thankful. In the courts of my holiness; as I have commanded, Deu_14:23;

in my courts; holiness being put for God himself by a metonymy of the adjunct; alluding to those anniversary feasts and thank-offerings that were to be eaten in those places about the temple, and perhaps in special to that part which was appropriated to the priests, implying herein that they should be all priests; and, for aught I know, here may be an allusion to the great gospel feast, or thank-offering in the Lord's supper, these promises being not only applicable to, but do point at, the soul protections and the soul provisions of the church of Christ.

Isaiah 62:10

Go through, go through the gates; it is doubled by way of emphasis: q.d. Make haste to your own land; as if Cyrus should

say, Get you out of captivity as soon as you will, Isa_48:20. Or it may intimate an invitation issued out from them at Jerusalem to those that were scattered about in the captivity; therein possibly typifying the going of Christ's disciples into the various parts of the world, to bring those that were scattered up and down into the church. Or, Go meet the Gentiles, whom God purposeth to bring into the church, that by pure doctrine and your holy lives they may be the sooner won. Prepare ye the way; let them not have any obstructions in their way: he seems to call upon others to prepare the way for them; thus John was sent to prepare the way for Christ, as was prophesied, **Isa 40 3**; accordingly it is ordered to be

cast up: see Isa_57:14. *Gather out the stones*, that there be no stumbling-stone or offence in their way; or, q.d. Go to and fro, and remove every scandal that they may boggle at, Rom_14:13. The former notes the certainty of their deliverance, harbingers sent before; this the speed of it, no impediment.

Lift up a standard; an allusion to soldiers, that usually set up their standard, that the army may know whither to repair from all quarters; see Isa_49:22; and *lifting of it up* is, that it may be more visible; see Isa_11:10-12; and this is Christ held forth in the preaching of the gospel.

For the people; or, over the people.

Isaiah 62:11

The Lord hath proclaimed: this may be understood of Cyrus's proclamation, being thereunto directed by God: see 2Ch_36:22, &c.

To the daughter of Zion, i.e. to Jerusalem, or the church: the sum of which proclamation is in the, following words.

Thy salvation cometh; either,

1. The time of it is come, Isa_56:1 **60:1**. Or rather,
2. The person that effects it, thy Saviour, by a metonymy of the efficient, Luk_2:30.

His work, i.e. the reward due to the work, the same thing with the former: **See Poole "Isa_40:10"**. Or, his work is ready cut out for him which he is to do. Or, he will industriously set himself about

the work that is before him, Joh_4:34; and he is said to bring it *with him* , viz. the reward that he will give to his true worshippers; or, he brings eternal salvation with him, or the reward of redemption, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Isaiah 62:12

They shall call them, The holy people; or, they shall be called, or they shall be, a peculiar, separate people, Isa_4:3.

Sought out; or, one found that was lost: see Eze_34:16. Or, sought *out* , or *for* , or one in great esteem, one that the Gentiles should seek to join themselves withal, so as to be one church with her. That reproach should be wiped off from her, that *this is Zion whom no man seeketh after* , Jer_30:17. Or, cared. for, viz. by God, whom he hath out of infinite love gathered to himself.

A city not forsaken: see Isa_62:4. The meaning is, that thus they shall esteem the gospel church; she shall be accosted With such salutations as these are,

**the holy people, the
redeemed of the Lord, & c.**

Isaiah 63:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 63

Christ's victory over his enemies, Isa_63:1-6, and mercy towards his church; in judgment remembering mercy, Isa_63:7-14. The church's prayer and complaint in faith, Isa_63:15-19.

In these two verses either the prophet, as in some vision or ecstasy, is put probably upon inquiry by God himself, rather than by Christ, or Michael, or Judas Maccabees, as some have thought; and the rather, because this place doth thus suit best with Isa_59:16,17. Or the church makes inquiry, and that with admiration, who it is that appears in such a habit or posture, Isa_63:1, and why, Isa_63:2.

Edom; that is, the country of Idumea, where Esau dwelt, and Esau himself was sometimes called by this name, Gen_25:30; and it is put synecdochically for all the enemies of the church, as Moab is, Isa_25:10: **See Poole** "Isa_25:10".

With dyed garments; or, *stained* : thus Christ is described, Rev_19:13, and so also Isa_63:3: LXX., the redness of garments.

Bozrah; the capital city of Idumea; see further Isa_34:6, a parallel text; and Edom and Bozrah here are mentioned, either,

1. Not as relating to the places so called, but by way of allusion to the garments of this conqueror, *Edom* signifying *red*, and *Bozrah* a *vintage*; the one relating to his treading the winepress, and the other to the blood sprinkled upon his garments, Isa_63:3: the like manner of speaking you have Psa_120:5. Or rather,

2. Put synecdochically for all the enemies of the church, among whom, though antichrist be not particularly designed, yet may be reckoned, being one of the chief of them; thus typifying Christ's victories over all the enemies of the church, Rev_19:19-21; and this is usual. *Babylon* is put for any detestable city, and *Moab* for all that are vile and abominable, Isa_25:10; so *Edom* here for all God's enemies. And he mentions these Idumeans rather than the Chaldeans, who were the Jews' chief and particular enemies,

2. Partly to set forth the greatness of the enmity, being of old standing, and an inbred malignity, Gen_25:22,23, and irreconcilable, and perpetual, Amo_1:11, and particularly put forth when the Babylonians took Jerusalem, Psa_137:7 2. Partly to comfort the Jews, both because God would take particular revenge upon Edom, as he had threatened, and prophesied by Obadiah, which is the substance of that whole prophecy; and also these being their near neighbours, God doth give them security, that they shall not only be delivered from the Chaldeans, those remoter enemies, but from the Idumeans also, whose vicinity and neighbourhood might have been troublesome to them.

Glorious in his apparel; such as generals are wont to march before their armies in, or great conquerors, that walk in state and gallantry from their conquests.

In the greatness of his strength; in or according to the majesty of his gait, being an indication of the greatness of his strength, and intimating that he hath thoroughly done his work, and fears no pursuing enemy, as the lion that keepeth his majestic gait without the fear of any other beast, Pro_30:30: this notes the invincibleness of his power, and that it is his own strength, he

needeth not the help of armies or other instruments, and thus he will travel through all the countries of his enemies.

I that speak in righteousness: here the Lord Christ gives an answer, wherein he both asserts his fidelity, that he will faithfully perform what he hath promised, and that he will truly execute justice, Rev_19:11; and hereby also he distinguisheth himself from all idol gods, Isa_45:19,**20**.

Mighty to save; I have power to accomplish salvation as powerful as faithful, Isa_19:20.

Isaiah 63:2

Having inquired of the person, now he inquires the reason of his habit being thus sprinkled.

Isaiah 63:3

I have trodden the winepress, i.e. I have destroyed the enemies of my people, I have crushed them as grapes are crushed; this being a usual metaphor to describe the utter destruction of a people, Psa_44:5 Isa_25:10 Rev_14:19,**20**; and the easiness of doing it, no more than to crush a bunch of grapes.

Alone, to note his good-will and great power. The masters of vineyards are not willing to do this drudgery themselves; neither, if they would, could they be able to manage a whole vintage by themselves: but Christ was willing to undertake it, and able to go through it, without calling in the help of any other.

Of the people there was none with me:

1. Not that he excludes the Jews, but the other nations that dwelt about them; therefore he saith

of the people there was none with him; but God and his own people may be reckoned as one, Jud_5:23. And though this be true of his passion, in which sense some would carry it, yet doth it not so well suit with the design; for Christ is described here not as a priest sacrificing, or shedding of his own blood, but as a king, conquering and shedding the blood of his and his church's enemies; hence it is said

their blood, not his own, to show that it cannot fairly relate to his passion: besides Christ could expect no help in that, for he knew

none could; but here he looked, and wondered that there was none, Isa_63:5. And though it may be said that he makes use of instruments both in his conquering of temporal enemies, and also spiritual, consider,

1. That here he speaks as a general, and therefore the whole victory is ascribed to him alone.

2. They do it not only by commission and authority derived from him, but by strength conveyed to them from him, without which they could do no more than a watch without a spring, or tool without the workman's strength and skill: and that Christ may make it appear they are no coadjutors that he needs, he makes them bring about such things as they never designed, as he speaks of the Assyrian; **See Poole "Isa_10:6"**, **See Poole "Isa_10:7"**; and this is to be understood in like manner of Christ's conquest over spiritual enemies, 2Co_4:7. See Act_3:12,13.

And trample them in my fury: this latter expression is but an aggravating of the former; it implies a kind of insulting, an allusion to conquerors, who were wont to make the conquered to lie down, that others might trample on them, Isa_51:23.

Shall be sprinkled; or, *was sprinkled* ; as in treading of grapes the juice sparkles upon the clothes: q.d. in his answer, Thus came my garments to be sprinkled.

I will stain; it shall not be, or it was not, only sprinkled, but perfectly stained, as it were rolled in blood, Isa_9:5.

Isaiah 63:4

The day of vengeance, designed and purposed by me to take vengeance on the enemies of my church; or particularly the posterity of Esau.

Day and

year is all one, save the latter may have some respect to the length of their captivity.

Is in mine heart; or, *was in my heart*; a desire of execution, Psa_40:8. I have meditated or studied revenge; being long forborne, hath wrought in me resolutions of revenge; therefore

wonder not that I am so bloody: noting the severity of his proceedings against his enemies.

My redeemed: the Jews have this title, because he redeemed them out of Egypt, and would also out of Babylon.

Is come; is at hand : see Psa_102:13 Isa_34:8. The former part of the verse shows that Christ is still about his work, though he defer the execution till the fit time come; he may allude to the year of jubilee.

Isaiah 63:5

There was none to help; not that he needed it, for help implies a defect of power, or wisdom, or wealth, or opportunity, &c.; but to see what men would do, in regard his people needed it; therefore the standing or not standing by his people is the same thing with standing or not standing by him, Jud_5:23 Mat_25:35,**40,42,45**.

None to uphold; a metaphor taken from a staff, that is a help to one that leans on it.

My fury, or zeal , viz. against the adversaries of the church. God's arm notes his strength and power, and his zeal sets this power on work, Isa_9:7; but **See Poole "Isa_59:16"**, **See Poole "Isa_59:17"**.

Isaiah 63:6

Make them drunk: the Hebrew often expresseth calamities by a cup of wine, or strong drink, by which the distressed persons are made drunk, Psa_75:8 Isa_51:21,**22**; they go as it were to and fro, not knowing what to do with themselves; and in special drunk with their own blood, Isa_49:26 Rev_16:6.

I will bring down their strength to the earth; whatever it is wherein their strength lies, their strong ones, or their strong places, or deep counsels, &c., he will bring to the very dust, to nothing; like drunken men, they shall fall to the ground, not being able to stand; the most miserable condition that men can fall into, Psa_36:12.

Isaiah 63:7

Whether this ought to be the beginning of a new chapter, or no, is not material; but certainly here begins a new matter, which contains the prophet's prayer, either in his own name or the

church's, to the end of **Isa 64**; wherein he begins with mentioning the great kindnesses that God had shown the Jews, and that emphatically, setting it forth with the greatest advantages; and the more, either to aggravate their great unkindness, or to give them some hope of finding him the like again in their distresses, or by way of argument with God to show them mercy, because he had been so good to them.

Isaiah 63:8

For he said, viz. within himself of old, when he made a covenant with our fathers, and brought them out of Egypt,

Surely they are my people, in covenant; though they are unworthy of me, yet I cannot but look upon them as my people. Their enemies would persuade themselves, O they are not God's people, but cast-outs, that none cared for or looked after; but God will own them.

Children that will not lie; that will keep my covenant; they will not deal falsely with me, that are under such obligations: or, I presume they will not; though they did go after their idols, and prove unfaithful to me in serving Baal and Ashteroth, &c., now I presume they will do so no more. Thus parents are apt tenderly to think of those children that they have been indulgent to, that they will not offer to abuse their kindness; thus God thinks the best of them. Or, he intimates here what they are obliged to do, though he knew they would do otherwise. Or, they will not degenerate after I have renewed them.

So he was their Saviour, viz. on these hopes and on these conditions he undertook the charge of them, **Exo_19:5,6 Psa 81:8-10**; or, he; so he alone was their Saviour; when none to save, none to uphold, then he saved them; not Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, &c., but Christ himself.

Isaiah 63:9

In all their affliction he was afflicted; because of all the afflictions they endured in Egypt: this notes the sympathy that is in Christ, he having the same Spirit in him that the church hath, and her Head and Father. Or, *In all their afflictions no affliction*; so the words may be read; their afflictions were rather *favours* than *afflictions*; all that befell them from the Red Sea through the

wilderness; and then *tzar* is taken actively, *he afflicted not* : this may note his clemency, their sting was taken out; either way it may be read according to the different spelling of *lo* , whether by *aleph* or *vau* . The first seems the more genuine; they that list to drive this notion further may consult the Latin Synopsis, and the English Annotations. *The angel of his presence* ; the same that conducted them through the wilderness, called an *angel* , Exo_33:2, and his *presence* , Isa_63:14, and Jehovah, Exo_13:21; so that it must be the Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared to Moses in the bush, as Stephen doth interpret it, Act_7:35, &c. Other angels are in his presence, but they were not always; he was ever so, therefore so called by way of eminency; hence the LXX. express it not a *legate* , or *angel* , but *himself*. *Saved them* from the house of bondage; brought them through the Red Sea, the wilderness, &c. *Their Rock was Christ* , 1Co_10:4.

In his love and in his pity: this shows the ground of his kindness; they were a stubborn, superstitious, idolatrous people, yet Christ's love and pity saved them for all that; it was because he loved them.

He bare them, and carried them; he left them not to shift for themselves, but bare them as a father his child, or an eagle her young ones; he carried them in the arms of his power; see Isa_46:4; and on the wings of his providence: see Deu_32:10-12; and **See Poole "Deu_1:31"**. And he is said to do it

of old, to remember his ancient kindness for many generations past; *elam* signifies an eternity, or a long time past, as well as to come; from the clays of Abraham or Moses, from their bondage in Egypt, to the time of Isaiah; and it is used as an argument to move him to do so still; he will carry her till he bring her unto his Father.

Isaiah 63:10

They rebelled: many of their rebellions we read of in Exodus and Numbers in their travels. The Lord tells Moses that they had tempted him ten times, and therefore severely threatens them, Num_14:22,23. There were three principal times of their rebellion:

1. In the wilderness, where they murmured for want of bread and water.

2. In Canaan, in not destroying, but only making tributary, such nations as God commanded them to destroy.

3. Before the Babylonian captivity, when they set themselves against the prophets, which Stephen chargeth upon them, Act_7:51,52. Among which also we may reckon all their behaviours under their judges and their kings. Or we may understand it of their not answering God's end and expectation.

Vexed his holy Spirit; Spirit of his holiness; they vexed him by their obstinacy against his will and mind, and walking contrary unto him: not that there are such passions in God, but it is spoken after the manner of men, as they are vexed when their will is crossed.

He was turned to be their enemy; overthrew them not only in the wilderness, Psa_78:33,59,60, &c., sending among them fiery serpents, Num_21:6; but even in Canaan, stirring up against them adversaries sometimes the Philistines, and the Midianites, and then the Moabites, &c.

Isaiah 63:11

Then, or yet,

he remembered: this relates either,

1. To the people, and then he is collectively taken; and so it looks like the language of the people in Babylon, and must be read, he *shall remember* . Or,

2. It may look back to their condition in the wilderness; and thus they may properly say, Where is he? or that God that delivered his people of old, to do the like for us now? there is a like phrase used by Elisha, 2Ki_2:14. Or rather

3. To God, as it were recollecting himself in a pathetic prosopoeia: q.d. Where is he? Where am I with my former bowels, that moved me to help them of old, that I would now turn to be their enemy? Or, Is my hand shortened that I cannot do it? And so in the following verses he gives a particular description

how kind he had been to them formerly, the times mentioned Isa_63:9; and thus God seems to work upon himself.

Moses and his people; or what great things he had done for them by Mosesá

Where is he that brought them up out of the sea? here God speaks of himself, as in the former clause, viz. that divided the sea for them, being one of the greatest miracles that ever God wrought for his people; it is therefore frequently mentioned by way of encouragement to them, when they are in sore troubles.

The shepherd; or, *shepherds* ; viz. Moses, that brought out his people as a shepherd doth his flock; he and Aaron are both joined, Psa_77:20.

His holy Spirit, i.e. those abilities and gifts wherewith God furnished Moses, as properly proceeding from the Spirit, he can do the like again, and qualify instruments for his work.

Isaiah 63:12

The right land, viz. the strength and power that God gave to Moses, expressed by the *right hand* , that being usually esteemed the stronger, Psa_16:8 **20:6**. Or, the rod in his right hand; by which understand also all the wonders that he did for them in Egypt.

With his glorious arm; or that arm wherewith God gained to himself so much glory, being always present at the assistance of Moses, Deu_4:34: or Moses's right hand, led by God's glorious arm, as parents lead their children, that God may have all the glory in the using of his instruments.

Dividing the water; the Red Sea, Exo_14:21, and also Jordan, Jos_3:15,16. To make himself an everlasting name; with reference both to his power and providence, as respecting either his aim and end in doing what he did, or the effect of it when it was done, it got him renown.

Isaiah 63:13

That led them through the deep; showing that God did not dry up shallow places, but the very depth of the sea, the very channel, which is the deepest part. Or, between those heaps of waters that

stood up as a wall on each side of them, which might make it seem terrible, and therefore it is ascribed to their faith, Heb_11:29.

As an horse in the wilderness; or, *plain* ; for so wilderness is sometimes taken, and may be here meant, by comparing it to a valley in the next verse, viz. with as much safety as the horse runs up and down in the plain ground; or, with as much ease and tenderness as a horse led by the bridle; not as men affrighted, but soberly and orderly.

That they should not stumble: this may be taken metaphorically, they came to no harm; or properly, that though the sea were but newly divided, yet it was so dried, that the mud, as also the unevenness of the ground, was not any occasion of their stumbling, or their sticking in it; probably so dried and smoothed by the wind that God sent as it were to prepare the way before them. See Isa_40:3-5.

Isaiah 63:14

As a beast goeth down into the valley; a laden beast goeth warily and gently down the hill: or, as a beast goeth down to the valley for grass, that being a mountainous country: or

going down for going along; so the word is used Isa_38:8; noting the evenness of their passage; or alluding to their going down from the shore into that great channel (as the coming out of it is called a going up, Isa_63:11) now made through the sea, orderly, and composedly, not like the Gadarenes' swine, through consternation, ready to break their necks for haste.

The Spirit of the Lord, i.e. the Lord himself,

caused him to rest; led them easily, that they should not be overtravelled, or fall down, or come to any injury through weariness; thus Jeremiah expresseth it, Jer_31:2, and thus God gave them rest from their enemies, drowning of them in the sea, and in their safe conduct, that they could not annoy or disturb them, leading them till he found them a place for resting; the word for *leading* and *resting* being much of a like notion, Zec_10:6; pointing at their several rests by the way, Num_10:33: or it may be read by way of interrogation, as all the foregoing words, and be the close of that inquiry, And where is the Spirit that caused them to rest? or he led

them to Canaan, the place of their rest; so called Deu_12:9
Psa_95:11.

So didst thou lead: the prophet here by an apostrophe doth only repeat the words in the name of the Jews that he had spake before, Isa_63:12: q.d. As thou didst then, so mayst thou do again if thou pleasest.

Isaiah 63:15

Look down from heaven: now they, or the prophet, begin to pray, and expostulate with God, and to argue both from the goodness of his nature, and from the greatness of his works that he had done. God sees every where and every thing, but he is said to

look down from heaven, because there is his throne, whereon he sits in great majesty and splendour.

Behold is added to note that he would not only barely see and look on, but that he would behold with regard, and respect his poor people in captivity.

The habitation of thy holiness; a description of heaven by a periphrasis, frequently used and explained, Deu_26:15. *W here is thy zeal ?* what is become of that love which of old would not let time suffer thy people to be wronged? Isa_37:32.

Thy strength; that power of thine manifested in those valiant acts which thou didst put forth for thy people, Psa_145:11,12 **150:2:** see Jer_14:9.

The sounding of thy bowels: by the sounding thereof may be understood those sympathizing sighs and compassionate groans that proceed from the bowels when they are affected, which being thought the subject of pity are often by a metonymy put for compassion, and hence proceed those rumblings of the bowels occasioned by strong passions called *yearnings* : it is spoken of God after the manner of men. Is all this shut up from me? Thou art naturally so compassionate, dost thou lay a restraint upon thyself, that thy bowels shall not move towards me?

Are they restrained? or canst thou be thus straitened? Psa_77:7-9 Isa_64:12; an expostulation, that agrees very well with the next verse,

Doubtless, & c. How can this come to pass?

Isaiah 63:16

Doubtless thou art our Father: thus they urge God with that relation he stands in unto them, Mal_2:10; therefore we as thy children expect the bowels and compassions of a father.

Though Abraham, he who was our father after the flesh, though he be dead, and so ignorant of our condition.

And Israel; or, Jacob; who was also our father; and therefore a vain thing to call upon them; or if they were not dead, they could not help us out of our straits; or if they were alive, we are so much degenerate that they would not own us. Some say Abraham and Israel are here mentioned, and not Isaac,

1. Because the covenant was made more solemnly, and the promises more frequently renewed, with them, than with Isaac.
2. Because with Abraham the covenant was first made, and the whole seed of Israel was taken into it; but not so of Isaac. Or else,
3. Abraham and Israel being named Isaac is included.

Thou art our Father, our Redeemer: this is urged as another argument for pity, and the more because their Father was their Redeemer, Deu_32:6.

Thy name is from everlasting; or, *Redeemer is thy name from everlasting* ; thou hast been our Redeemer of old.

Isaiah 63:17

Made us to err from thy ways, commandments. It is the language of the godly among them being troubled, and therefore complaining that so gracious a Father should leave them to such exigences.

Made us to sin by withdrawing thy Spirit and leaving us to ourselves, Psa_81:12. It is not to be understood as if God did force them to it, but either letting loose their hearts, or by giving occasion to their hearts, being naturally too apt to apostatize by their severe afflictions: see this more cleared in the Latin Synopsis. Or, make us desperate, by leaving us so long under the oppression of the adversary, thereby casting off thy worship.

From thy fear, or fear of time, viz. as the object, Psa_5:7; or, that we *may* not fear thee; as *seeing, that they may not see*, Psa_69:23; or, thy service, Isa_29:13, so as to go after other gods.

Return for thy servants' sake either our godly forefathers, or particularly to Abraham, Isaac, &c., viz. for the sake of thy promises made to them; or rather, our sakes, that little remnant that are thy servants, be reconciled to us, Psa_90:13; for the next words seem to be put by apposition to the former.

The tribes of thine inheritance; either,

1. The people themselves, which were divided into tribes; or, rather,
2. The land of Canaan, which God gave them as an inheritance, as appears by the next verse: q.d. What will thine enemies say if thou suffer us to perish, or thine inheritance to be destroyed. Or *rods*, meaning their rulers, see Isa_43:28, or heads of their tribes.

Isaiah 63:18

The people of thy holiness; or, thy holy people, as being set apart for his servants; *holiness* being to be understood for a covenant separation from other people.

But a little while. i.e.

1. Comparatively to the promise, which was for ever, though they had possessed it about one thousand four hundred years. Or,
2. It seeming to them so, as things, especially such as are desirable, seem when they are past, Job_9:25,26 Psa 90 4. Or,
3. They enjoyed but small spaces of time in quietness, so they had small enjoyment of it. Or,
4. It may respect the temple, which stood but four hundred years.

Have trodden down thy sanctuary; the temple, called *the sanctuary* from the holiness of it; this our adversaries the Babylonians have trodden down, 2Ch_36:19; and this also implies their ruining of their whole ecclesiastical policy.

Isaiah 63:19

We are thine; we continue so; we are in covenant which they never were; and thus it is an argument they use with God to look

upon them. Or, the word *thine* , being not in the text, some do otherwise interpret it; We are even in the same condition we were in at first, either in Egypt, or Ur of the Chaldees, before thou broughtest us into covenant, and are accordingly dealt with; we are become even as they, whom thou didst not bear rule over. Or, we are as, if thou hadst never ruled over us of old.

Thou never barest rule over them; not in that manner, or in that relation to them, that thou didst over us.

They were not called by thy name; neither owned thee, nor owned by thee: this phrase implies a near relation in some circumstance or other, as wife, or servant, or child, &c., Isa_4:1.

Isaiah 64:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 64

The church's prayer continued, for the illustration of God's glory, Isa_64:1-5: with a confession of their sins, and complaint of their afflictions, Isa_64:6-12.

Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens: either the earnest desire of the prophet, or the Jews' strong wish, for the coming of the Messias: or rather, their cry to God for vengeance upon their adversaries, on consideration of the enemy's unmerciful dealing with them, and their insolent and opprobrious usage of God in his temple; partly expressing their haste and earnestness, and partly intimating that God would do it with *violence* and *fury* , implied in the word *rending* them, Psa_18:6,7, &c., spoken after the manner of man, who, if he were shut up, must have room made for his coming forth. This God is said to do, when he puts forth some signal manifestation of his power, Psa_144:5; a metaphor taken from men, that when they would resolutely and effectually help one in distress, break and fling open doors, and whatever may hinder coming to their relief.

That the mountains might flow down; or *melt* , Psa_68:1,2 97:5 Mic_1:3,4; that all impediments might be removed out of the way: possibly an allusion to God's coming down upon Mount Sinai in those terrible flames of fire, Jud_5:4,5.

Isaiah 64:2

As when the melting fire burneth; come with such zeal for thy people, that the solid mountains may be no more before thy breath than metal that runs, or water that boils by the force of a vehement fire; and thus, for the most part, when God will take vengeance of his enemies, the Scripture expresseth him coming with fire.

Thy name known; thy power known, that thine enemies and persecutors of thy church may know thy power, and that thy name may be dreaded among them; his name put for his power, Psa_106:8.

The nations; not the Babylonians only, but the nations round about.

Isaiah 64:3

When thou didst terrible things: this may relate to what he did among the Egyptians, though it be not recorded, and afterward in the wilderness.

Which we looked not for, viz. our forefathers, of whose race we are; before we expected them; or such things as we could never expect.

The mountains flowed down: q.d. Seeing thou hast made the mountains thus to melt, thou canst do the same again. This may allude either,

1. To those showers of rain that fell with that terrible thunder and lightning, and so ran violently down those mountains, and the adjacent, as is usual in such tempests. Or rather,

2. The running along of the fire upon the ground, Exo_9:23,24. It is possible it may allude to those mountains that do cast forth sulphurous matter, running down into the valleys and sea, like melted streams of fire. And kings, princes, and potentates may also metaphorically be understood by these mountains.

Isaiah 64:4

Whereas there are but three ways whereby men ordinarily come to the knowledge of a thing, viz. by the ear, either our own hearing, or by hearsay; and by the eye; and by reason, which the apostle adds, where he makes use of this text, 1Co_2:9; two of them are mentioned here.

Besides thee; with reference either to the gods that do them. never any other god could do like time; or to things done, never any

besides thee could do such things as were never seen or heard of. He refers to those terrible things mentioned in the former verse. It seems to be clear by comparing this with Deu_4:31-35. Not to be restrained to these, but to be applied to all the wonderful works that God at all times wrought for his people. And thus they are a plea with God, that they might well expect such things from him now, that had done such wonderful things for their fathers of old.

That waiteth for him; the apostle hath it, that *love* him, 1Co_2:9, to show that none can wait on him that love him not; so all that love him will wait on him. This may be taken with reference both to the state of grace and glory, those incomprehensible things that are exhibited through Christ in the mysteries of the gospel, as well as the good things of this present life, which the prophet may here literally aim at; it being not unusual for the prophets. in mentioning these temporal things to point at spiritual, especially being things that do so well suit with each other.

Isaiah 64:5

Thou meetest him; or, *wast wont* to meet him; or, thou preventest him, Isa_65:24 Psa_21:2,3, as the father the prodigal. *That rejoiceth and worketh righteousness*, viz. that rejoice to work righteousness; the same thing expressed by two words, by a figure called hendiadis.

That remember thee in thy ways; an amplification of the former words: q.d. To walk in thy ways, whether of providence, precept, or counsel, by virtue of the covenant they have with thee.

Thou art wroth; for we have sinned: or, greatly angry; for or because we have sinned, and provoked thee to wrath thereby, 1Ki_8:46.

In those is continuance, i.e. to those that work righteousness; in for to.

We shall be saved, viz. in so doing, in working righteousness. Or, as some, by way of interrogation; in *those*, i.e. in our sins, is continuance, and shall we be saved? Or, in those, viz. works of righteousness, in keeping in them, is our continuance and means

to be saved. Or, thou continuest to show mercy, *and* or *therefore* we shall be saved. The meaning of the place is to comfort the godly, that though they may have provoked God by their sins, yet, looking upon the ways of God's former proceedings, (in which he still continues, being unchangeable,) they may find hopes of salvation; and this is that which is amplified in the three following verses.

Isaiah 64:6

We are all as an unclean thing: he alludes either to things unclean under the ceremonial law, wherein the leprosy was found, and was to be burnt, Lev_13:55; or rather to persons unclean. They compare their present state with the former: q.d. Formerly there were some that feared thee, and walked uprightly before thee, and were in thy favour; but now we are all as one polluted mass, nothing of good left in us, by reason of a universal degeneracy, Isa_1:4,6.

Our righteousnesses: this, according to the most commentators, refers either to the observances of the rites and ceremonies of the law, wherein they thought their righteousnesses did much consist; or to the best work and actions that can be performed by us; or to our natural, universal depravities: but the best interpreters, and such aim at the peculiar sense of the place, refer it to the gross provocations that this people were guilty of, causing God to cast them out of their habitations; or else to their persons, i.e. the most righteous among us; and being plural, it raiseth it up to the highest degree, the Scripture frequently putting the abstract for the concrete, as *wisdoms* for the *greatest wisdom*, Pro_9:1, and many the like instances formerly given; so that the meaning is, the very best of us all are no better than the uncleanest things or persons; see Mic_7:2-4; and the rather, because he lived about the time of Isaiah.

As filthy rags; a cloth made up of patches, or such as come from a putrid sore, or defiled with the menstruous blood of a woman; the LXX., as a rag of one that *sits down*, possibly alluding to Rachel, Gen_31:34,35, or whatever may be most filthy.

As a leaf blown off the tree, and so withers.

Taken us away; carried us away to Babylon from our habitations, as leaves hurried away by a boisterous wind; our iniquities have been the procuring cause.

Isaiah 64:7

And there is none; or, yet there is none, i.e. few, Psa_14:3; they are not to be discerned among the multitude.

That calleth; such as call upon thee as they ought, as Jacob, and Moses, and David, &c. did, which often prevents the ruin of a state or kingdom: it points out the universal apostacy of the last times of the Jewish state, for which they were cut off.

To take hold of thee; either to stay thee from departing from us; see Luk_24:28,29; or to fetch thee back, when departed, Jer_12:7; or it is an allegorical allusion to one struck down and still smitten, but never stirs to lay hold on the arm that smites him, Isa_27:5; it notes their great slothfulness and carelessness, and some refer it to their lukewarmness and dead-heartedness, relying upon their privileges before they went into captivity, and so a great presage of their approaching judgments.

For, or *when* ; so the particle is used Job_5:21 Psa_75:2.

Consumed us; or, *melted us* ; our sins have kindled such a fire of thy wrath, that we are melted with it.

Because of our iniquities, Heb. in the hands of our iniquities, i.e. either, in the place of our iniquities, the land wherein they were committed; or, into the hands of our iniquities, to be punished by them, and as it were consumed, or melted down, or our strength exhausted by them, as wax before the fire, Lev_26:39 Eze_33:10; or, as we translate it, our iniquities being the procuring cause of it.

Isaiah 64:8

But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; an argument or pathetic plea for pity; or, Notwithstanding all this, thou art our Father, both by creation and by adoption, therefore pity us thy children.

We are the clay; a metonymy of the matter, clay for the vessels made of clay; or, we are clay, pointing at our original matter; or it may relate to their state, that God framed them in a body civil and ecclesiastical, out of a confused multitude; they plead at the same

time their own frailty, why they would be pitied; and God's covenant interest in them, why he should pity them.

We all are the work of thy hand; another argument of the same nature with the former, Psa_138:8, not only as men, but as a body of men made thy peculiar.

Isaiah 64:9

Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever, viz. Thou hast been angry with us a long time, be not so for ever; but deal with us as may best consist with a father's bowels. It hath reference both to *quantity* and *time*, that it might not be very great, nor of long durance. See on Psa_79:8.

We are all thy people, thy *peculiar* people, Isa_28:9. Though we are very bad in ourselves, and very badly handled by our enemies, thou sufferest in our sufferings, for thou hast not people in covenant but us, and wilt thou not leave thyself a people in the world?

Isaiah 64:10

Thy holy cities; either Zion and Jerusalem, being the cities they instance in: q.d. Thy holy cities, viz. Zion and Jerusalem: or rather, other cities also in the land of Judea besides those two; called *holy*, either,

1. Because they were built upon God's inheritance, Isa_63:17. Or,
2. Because they were inhabited by the Jews, who were a holy people, Deu_7:6 Dan_12:7. Or,
3. Because God had his synagogues in them, Psa_74:8. For all which reasons also they are called thy cities.

A desolation; utterly waste; not only the ordinary cities, but even Jerusalem and Zion themselves; the one called the upper Jerusalem, or *the city of David*, because it was built upon Mount Zion; the other the *lower city*, because it lay under the hill of Zion in the valley: he particularizeth Zion and Jerusalem, though he had mentioned the *other cities* before, because the chiefest of the cities; it being usual, notwithstanding the mentioning of generals, in which all the particulars or individuals are included, to name the particular again; as, and from the hand of Saul, Psa_18:1.

Isaiah 64:11

Our holy and our beautiful house; the *temple* , Isa_60:7: q.d. Not only our cities, and our principal cities, but even our *temple* , which we thought sacred and inviolable, in which we have gloried, because it was thine, and our *fathers* , and *ours* , the place where thy holy service was performed, and thy glory and presence was manifested.

Our fathers; not presuming to mention themselves, they had been so every way abominable, but their *fathers* .

All our pleasant things; the king's palace, and the houses of the nobles, and other places of state and magnificence, 2Ki_25:9 Lam_1:7,10; or, their *synagogues* ; or, those stately pieces about the temple.

Isaiah 64:12

Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, viz. that are done by the Babylonians? do none of these things move thee to take vengeance on them?

Wilt thou hold thy peace; wilt thou be as one that regards not? Wilt thou be still, and suffer them?

And afflict us very sore: see Isa_64:9: for these our sins, or for these our sufferings; shall we feel the smart of it, that have done no such things, but have been sufferers under the Babylonians? to which God answers in the next chapter.

Isaiah 65:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 65

The calling of the Gentiles, Isa_65:1. The Jews, for their incredulity, idolatry, and hypocrisy, rejected, Isa_65:2-7. A remnant shall be saved, Isa_65:8-10. Judgments on the wicked, and blessings on the godly, Isa_65:11-16. The flourishing and peaceable state of the new Jerusalem, Isa_65:17-25.

That in the primary sense of this text it is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, upon the rejection of the Jews, for their contempt and crucifying of Christ, cannot be doubted by any who will not arrogate to themselves a greater ability to interpret the prophecies of the Old Testament than Paul had, who,

Rom_10:20, expressly so interpreteth it, and applieth it, which showeth the vanity of the Jews in their other interpretations of it.

I am sought: the word signifies properly a diligent inquiry in things relating to God, 2Ch_14:4 Psa_34:4 Jer_37:7. *I am diligently inquired of by them that asked not for me* ; that in times before made no inquiry after me (as the Gentiles, who are said to be *without God in the world* , Eph_2:12). As *seeking* may more strictly relate to prayer, as the word is used, Isa_55:6, so this word translated asked may also be so taken, and is so, 1Sa_1:20 **22:13**, but (possibly) it is better interpreted more generally.

I am found of them that sought me not; yea, I was found of them before they sought me; those who formerly did not seek me now seek me; but they were found of me before they

sought me; I prevented them by my grace, sending my Son *to preach peace to those that were afar off* , Eph_2:17, and my apostles to entreat them to be reconciled to God, 2Co_5:20, and *my Spirit to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment* , Joh_16:8.

I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name; I invited whole nations by the preaching of my gospel to behold me; and I invited them with importunity, doubling my words upon them; and this I did unto a

nation not called by my name, with whom I was not in covenant, and which did not profess any relation to me, which none of the Gentiles could pretend unto. The prophet speaks of a thing to come many years after as if it were a thing then done, to signify the certainty of it. God doth the same thing yet in every soul that is converted. But the text is manifestly to be interpreted of the conversion of the Gentiles.

Isaiah 65:2

I have spread out my hands; applied to the Jews, Rom_10:21, *I have stretched out my hands* ; that is, I have used all probable means to reduce them, I have stretched out the *hands* of a passionate orator to persuade them, of a *tender mother* to protect and defend them, of a *liberal benefactor* to lead them with my benefits; this I have done continually in the whole course of my providence with them, yet they are a *rebellious people* . Paul

expounded it by, *apeiyounta kai antigeonta*, a people not persuaded, not believing, but contradicting the will of God.

Which walketh in a way that was not good; that term, *is not good*, often signifies what is very bad: see 1Sa_2:21 Pro_24:23 **28:21** Psa_36:4. Though all sins be not equal, yet what is not good is bad.

After their own thoughts: what is here called *after their own thoughts*, is elsewhere called *a walking after the imaginations of their hearts*; an ordinary phrase, by which sins (especially sins in the matter of the worship of God) are expressed. Eight times, in the prophet Jeremiah sinning is thus expressed, Jer_3:17 **7:24 9:14 11:8 13:10 16:12 18:12 23:17**; so also Deu_29:19. Errors in matter of worship are ordinarily thus expressed, certainly to let us know that *all worship must be according to God's revealed will*, and of such errors this text seemeth, by what followeth, to speak; though indeed the reason of all sin is men's fondness of their own imaginations in opposition to God's revealed will, whence it is that *self-denial* is made the law of a discipleship to Christ.

Isaiah 65:3

A people that provoketh me to anger: that the Jews are the people here intended is without question; the prophet, speaking of the calling of the Gentiles upon their rejection, reckons up their sins which were the causes. For though their rejecting and crucifying of Christ was that sin which was the proximate cause; yet God did but *visit* on that generation *their iniquities*, and *the iniquities of their fathers* together, they having by that act *filled up their measure*. They had provoked God continually to anger to his face.

To my face; either in *his temple*, the place where he used to manifest himself; or (considering what followeth) more probably the phrase signifieth their impudence, not taking notice of God's omnipresence and omniscience.

The particular provocations instanced in are deviations in the matter of Divine worship.

Sacrificing in gardens is one thing instanced in; and

burning incense on brick, or *altars of brick* , is another, Deu_12:13: there was a particular *altar of gold* appointed for incense, Exo_40:5. God commanded, Exo_20:24,25, that his altars should be made of earth, or rough stone. This people transgressed both these laws; *sacrificing in gardens* , for which the prophet reflected on them, Isa_1:29, and again Isa_66:17; whether in gardens consecrated to idols, or in such gardens, as the heathens worshipped idols in, is not much material for us to know; and *burning incense upon altars of brick* , directly contrary to the Divine rule. Their worship was doubtless idolatrous, and these phrases signify committing idolatry; but the expressing that sin by these phrases lets us know that the doing contrary to the direction of the Divine rule in God's worship is a great part of the sinfulness of idolatry.

Isaiah 65:4

They remained among the graves, either there expecting revelations by dreams, or there consulting with devils, who were thought to delight in such places; or to practise necromancy, all which were forbidden, Deu_18:11 Isa_8:19. And they

lodged in the monuments; the Hebrew word here used gives advantage to interpreters to vary in their senses. The word signifies only places kept or observed; some interpret it of idol temples; some of caves and dens, in which the heathens used to worship their idols; some of tombs or monuments for dead persons: besides the idolatry of the thing, there was in it a sinful imitation of the heathens, and a swerving from the rule which God had given them. They also ate

swine's flesh, contrary to the Divine law, Lev_11:7 Deu_14:8; and they endured in their vessels

broth of abominable things; so the word is used, **Jud 6 19,23**: others read it, *parts or pieces of abominable things* ; that is, broth, or pieces of such flesh as was to the Jews unclean by the law, **Le 11**. Every creature of God is good, but God's prohibition had made the flesh of divers creatures an abominable thing to the Jews, they might not touch their flesh, Lev_11:28; but they, taking the measures of their duty from their appetite, or from their reason, concluding from natural principles, made no conscience of

the positive law of God. This was their iniquity, which is further aggravated in the next verse.

Isaiah 65:5

Though they were so exceedingly guilty, yet they pretended to a singular sanctity, so as they would not suffer others to come near or touch them. The Samaritans are usually charged with this uncharitableness, and the use of this form of words; but as some do more excuse the Samaritans than the other Jews as to this rigour, so it may be questioned whether they were not at this time carried into captivity; and certain it is, that among the Jews there was such a generation from whom the Pharisees in our Saviour's time were derived, and this was the reason of their *not eating, except they washed, when they came from the market*, Mar_7:4, lest peradventure they should there have touched some heathen, or some person who was legally unclean. Thus they esteemed themselves holier than others, though all their *holiness* lay in these rituals, and those too such as God never commanded. And indeed those who most exceed in such ritual holiness (lying merely in a separation from others, by the usage of some unwritten traditions) come most short in moral and true holiness; for of these God saith,

These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day; that is, a continual provocation to me; as smoke is an *offence* to our *noses*, Pro_10:26; which seemeth to be the sense rather than what some make, who make it a threatening of God's wrath smoking against them, which is sufficiently expressed in the following verses.

Isaiah 65:6

They may think that I take no notice of these things, or if I take any notice, I will forget them, or at least not enter into judgment with them for them; but I as certainly know and will remember them, as princes or great men that record things in writing which they would not forget. And they shall know that I know and take notice of and will remember them; for

I will not keep silence; I will not long neglect the punishment of them, though for a while I have delayed it, like a man who bites in his wrath, for some wise reasons which are known unto himself best, Psa_50:21.

Will recompense into their bosom; my punishment of them shall be severe and certain, but yet it shall be just, but a giving them what is their own, as they are obnoxious to my justice, Deu_7:10 Jer_32:18; like the payment of an ox for an ox, Exo_21:36 (where the same word is used); they have been *froward against me* and I will show *myself froward against them* , Psa_18:26.

Isaiah 65:7

Yea, and when I reckon with them, I will punish them, not only for their personal sins, but for the sins of their parents, which they have testified their approbation of by continuing in them, and so made them their own, by an apish, sinful imitation.

Which have burnt incense upon the mountains: their fathers burnt incense upon the mountains, there performing to idols that homage which I obliged them to pay unto me; or if any of them pretend it was to me, though before an image, yet it was in a way which I directed them not, who had appointed them the place where I would be worshipped.

And blasphemed me upon the hills; so as that, instead of blessing, they indeed *blasphemed* me upon the hills; instead of speaking well, they spake ill of my name, worshipping me in a way which I had not appointed, and for which they only took their copy from idolaters.

Therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom; therefore I will punish them, and that justly, as he that rendereth another his due by

measure, giving *measure* for measure, and *weight* for *weight* ; only they must expect that I should not only punish the late sins that have committed of this nature, but the former sins of this kind which those in this nation, that went before this present generation, did commit, and the present age hath continued in the guilt of.

Isaiah 65:8

These words must be conceived as a gracious answer from God to the prophet, saying as Abraham, Gen_18:23,25, or as Moses, Exo_32:11-13, pleading God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. To this God replieth that he intended no such severity, the unfaithfulness of men should not make his promise of no

effect, Rom_3:3. His threatening should be made good upon the generality of this people, whose *vine* was of *Sodom* , and *of the fields of Gomorrah* , Deu_32:32. But yet, as in a vineyard which is generally unfruitful, there may be some particular vine that brings forth fruit; or, as in a vine which is full of luxuriant branches that bring forth no fruit, there may be here and there a branch that bringeth forth fruit, and hath the hopes of *new wine in the cluster* ; and as to such, the gardener bids his servant

Destroy it not, or *them not* , for they are fruitful; there is in them what speaketh God's *blessing* , or what may be of use, and do us good.

So (saith God)

will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all; either for the sake of my servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom I anciently made a covenant; or for my servant David's sake; or for the sake of such as are my elect at this time amongst them: see Jer_30:11 Amo_9:1.

Isaiah 65:9

I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob; no seed beareth a proportion to the tree or plant that it produceth, but in comparison with that is very little; yet it is enough, through the virtue which the God of nature hath put into it, to preserve and uphold the species to which it doth relate. They are but a remnant (saith God) that shall be saved; see Rom_11:5; but a small number that shall come out of the captivity of Babylon: or, (which I rather choose) they will be but a few that shall believe in my Son. yet they shall be enough for my promise to live in: this Paul argueth, **Ro 11**. As the plant yet lives in the seed, when the root is plucked up, the leaves dropped off, and the stalk is burnt up; so the *promise of God* lives in a few, when the generality of the people for their sins are cast off and destroyed. The favour of God to men, and the promise of God to good men, lived in one family of Lot, when the five cities were burned, and in the one family of Noah, when the world was drowned; the favour and promise of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David lived in the few that returned out of Babylon, and in those few who under the gospel received Christ, and believed in him, though the generality of them rejected the

counsel of God against themselves. God further promiseth to bring out of

Judah an inheritor of his mountains, which the most and best interpreters do interpret of the Jews' return out of the captivity of Babylon to Jerusalem, and into their own country, and particularly to worship God in his temple upon Mount Zion. *My mountains* : the country of Judea was a mountainous country, Eze_36:1,8. The mountains were *round about Jerusalem* , Psa_125:2. See also Eze_38:8. God calls these mountains his mountains, because he had chosen that country before all others, and was once truly worshipped there.

Mine elect signifieth here God's chosen ones, as in Psa_106:23 Isa_48:10. The term doth not always signify such as belong to the

election of grave, but such as are dignified with some special favour. The whole nation of the Jews are called *a chosen people* . But possibly this promise is to be interpreted with relation to the sincerer part of that people, after that the others should be wasted by the captivity.

Isaiah 65:10

Sharon was a place of great fruitfulness for pastures. David's herds were kept there, 1Ch_27:29. It was become like a wilderness, Isa_33:9; God here promiseth that it should again be a

place for the flocks. Jer_31:27, God promiseth to sow again the house of Judah *with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast* . The *valley of Achor* had its name from the stoning of Achan there, Jos_7:26. It is thought to have been the first place the Jews set foot in when they had passed Jordan; hence, Hos_2:15, God promised to make it *a door of hope* ; and here the text saith, *the flocks shall lie down* . But lest the wicked, idolatrous Jews should apply this promise to themselves, God limiteth it in the last words to the people that *had sought him* ; that is, that had truly worshipped him, according to his own institution; and that the words have the force of such a limitation appeareth from what followeth.

Isaiah 65:11

Do not you that are idolaters think that these promises belong to you,

ye are they that forsake the Lord, that is, the way of the Lord; it is a phrase opposed to *a walking with God* . Our walking with God is in the way of his statutes, *forsaking of him* signifieth a declining or turning aside from that way.

To forget God's holy mountain, signifies not to regard the true worship of God, or not to mind it. God calleth Zion his *holy mountain* , Joe_3:17, and Jerusalem is called God's *holy mountain* . The hill of Zion is called the mountain of *God's holiness* , Psa_48:1; as the temple is called the *beauty of holiness* , Psa_29:2 **96:9**: their not regarding the worship of God there, but worshipping *God or idols in gardens* , amongst the *graves and monuments* , is what is here called a *forgetting his holy mountain* . Isaiah prophesied in the time of Ahaz, Isa_1:1; of whom it is said, 2Ch_28:23-25, that he *sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, that he cut in pieces the vessels of the Lord's house, shut the doors of the house of the Lord, and made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem; and in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods* . See also more of his practices 2Ch_28:2-4, and 2Ki_16:3,**10-12**. And there were certainly many of his people that joined with him in his worship, who are all here said to *forget God's holy mountain, and to prepare a table for that troop* ; the *idols of the ten tribes* , 2Ki_16:3, and of the Assyrians, 2Ch_28:23, which were a *troop* , whereas the *God of Israel was one God* . And as God had *altars* , which are sometimes called a *table* , as in Eze_41:22; so they prepared *altars* for the *idols* , as may be read in the aforementioned story of Ahaz; though by *preparing a table* here seems rather to be meant the *feasts* they made upon their sacrifices in their *festival days* , which was in imitation of what the true God had commanded his people, Deu_16:14,**15**. Idolaters also made feasts in honour to their idols, as appears from Jud_9:27 Eze_18:6,**11 Am 2:8** 1Co_8:10. Nor did they only feast in honour to the idols, but they

furnished drink-offerings unto their number. God had appointed drink-offerings for his honour, and as a piece of homage to him, Exo_29:40,**41 Le 23:18,37**; these people had paid this homage to idols. See Jer_7:18 **19:13 32:29**. What we translate *number* in the Hebrew is *la Meni* , to *Meni* . Avenarius translates it *Mercury* , an idol whom merchants worshipped for good success

in trading; others understand it of the *host of heaven* ; others of the multitude of their idols; our translation reads it *their number* . The word coming from a Hebrew root, which signifieth to *number* , is no where else found in Scripture, which makes it hard too positively to assert the true meaning of it.

Isaiah 65:12

You have offended in number, worshipping a multitude, a troop of idols; there shall be a great number of you perish by the sword; or possibly the term

number may refer to all in the next phrase, to let them know that none of them should escape. God saith he will *number them* , tell them out one by one to the sword.

You shall all bow down to the slaughter; as you have bowed down to idols, Isa_44:17, (which are mine enemies,) I will make you bow down to your enemy's swords. *I called* you by my prophets, Zec_7:7,**11,12**: you did not answer by doing the things which I by them spoke to you for; but not considering that I saw you, or if considering it, yet not regarding it, you impudently did evil; yea, you sinned deliberately, choosing sinful courses, the things which I *hated* , which are (here as often) expressed by it meiosis, and called the things in which God delighteth not. In matters of worship we ought to choose nothing wherein God delighteth not; and reason as well as Scripture will assure us he can delight in nothing of that nature which himself hath not directed. It is observable, that ruin is here threatened to this people, not for their immoralities or lewd lives, but for their errors and superstitions in Divine worship. Other sins provoke God to wrath, but those of this nature alone are enough to ruin souls and nations.

Isaiah 65:13

As there are a party amongst you who, instead of serving God, are the servants of men, in complying with idolatry and superstition; so I have some servants amongst you who have distinguished themselves by keeping close to my institutions from the rest of you, I will distinguish them from you in the dispensations of my providence: those that have eat bread at their idol feasts shall be hungry; my people, that would not do so, they shall have enough:

those who have furnished a *drink offering to Meni* , or that *number of idols* , shall want that *drink* by which they have so profaned my name; but

my servants, from whose mouths you pulled the drink, because they would only furnish a *drink-offering to me* , they shall *drink* . My servants, whom now you make to mourn, and upon whom you pour shame and contempt, shall *rejoice* , and you shall be

ashamed; you that now rejoice and shout, while my servants that cannot comply with you are afflicted, and by you made to mourn, you shall cry for sorrow, and howl through vexation, whilst my servants who keep close to my institutions shall sing for joy of heart. Those who in an hour of persecution for religion can have patience under the enemy's triumphs and rage, will find that the *rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the lot of the righteous* .

Isaiah 65:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Isaiah 65:15

Your name shall rot , as Pro_10:7, or only be used when men would curse others, saying, Let them be made like such persons. As the names of Leah and Rachel, Rth_4:11, and others of God's servants, were used in blessing; so your names shall only be used in *cursing* ; or when men will curse themselves, they shall use your names as examples of the eminent wrath of God upon sinners. For you shall not perish by an ordinary hand, but by the hand of the

Lord God; and as is the God, so is his justice, so is his strength; yea, God himself shall look upon your name as accursed, and not suffer his people to be called by it; they shall not be called Jews, but Christians, Act_11:26, the children of God, Joh_1:12. So detestable a sin is idolatry, that God will not suffer himself to be called by a name given to idols, how proper soever it be to express his perfection, Hos_2:16,**17**; nor yet suffer *his own people* to be called by a name by which idolaters are known.

Isaiah 65:16

I will bring it to pass, that over all the world, if any man *bless himself* , or bless another, it shall be in God *Amen* . So the Hebrew

(we translate it the God of truth). *Amen* is a name given to Christ, Rev_3:14, *These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness* ; being here applied to God, many think it makes a great proof of the Godhead of Christ, and judge the sense of this text to be, that under the times of the gospel men should not bless themselves (as before) in the names of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, but in the name of Christ, in the God Amen; nor is this an improbable sense. Others taking it more appellatively, by *Elohim Amen* , here understand that God who shows himself true and faithful in his promises. In like manner it is prophesied, that those that swear (by which some understand worship God, others, calling God to be a witness) should swear by the

God of truth, or in the God of truth; either worshipping God in Christ the Amen, or calling the faithful God to attest their sincerity, or swearing by that God who hath approved his truth and faithfulness by saving and delivering his people.

Because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes; because they shall see what God promised is fulfilled, the troubles of his people are at an end, and they are hid from God's eyes, that is, they are at an end.

Isaiah 65:17

For, behold, I will tell you yet a more admirable thing, I am about wholly to alter and change the state not only of my people, who are now afflicted, restoring them to a more lightsome state, more free from trouble and afflictions; but

I create new heavens and a new earth, bringing a new face upon the world, sending my Son to raise up a new church, and to institute a new worship, Joh_4:21,24, and giving out my Spirit in a more plentiful manner, Act_2:17, which new state shall abide until *a new heaven and earth appear, in which shall dwell nothing but righteousness* , 2Pe_3:13 Rev_21:1. And that state of things shall be such, and so glorious, as *the former* state of my people *shall not be remembered* , nor come into mind. Whether this new heavens and new earth here promised signifies such a state of the church wherein Christ shall personally reign upon earth over his saints, the wicked being destroyed, (as some have thought lie shall

for a thousand years,) I very much doubt, and do not see how from this and the parallel texts any such thing can be concluded.

Isaiah 65:18

You that are my people, though you cannot rejoice with that degree of joy that attendeth a present fruition of good; yet be glad, and rejoice with the

rejoicing of hope, for the thing is certain what I am already doing. Nor let your present state, or the discouragements you have from seeming improbabilities, spoil your joy; for it is not a work to be produced in an ordinary course, or by an ordinary power, but by the power of me, who bring something out of nothing, or out of what hath no fittedness to such a production; and I will create

Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy: by *Jerusalem* here must be meant the church, as well under the gospel as under the law (because the gospel church is grafted into that olive); or else this prophecy must be understood as fulfilled in the coming of Christ, Luk_2:10; or else it referreth to a more full calling of the Jews than we have yet seen or heard of.

Isaiah 65:19

The nature of joy lying in the satisfaction and well pleasedness of the soul in the obtaining of the thing it hath willed, agreeth unto God, and joy and rejoicing are applied to him, Isa_62:5, and in this text; so also Jer_32:41 Zep_3:17.

The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying: such kind of promises are to be found Isa_35:10 **51:11** Jer_31:12 Rev_21:4, which must be understood either comparatively, they shall endure no such misery as formerly; or (if interpreted to a state in this life) as signifying only some long or eminent state of happiness; if as to another life, they may be taken strictly, as signifying perpetuity and perfection of joy and happiness.

Isaiah 65:20

Whereas God hath made many promises of long life to the Jews, they should all be fulfilled to God's people among them, so as there should be rare abortions among them, Exo_23:26; few infants should be carried out to burial, nor but few that should not have filled up their years; those that were now children should die

at a great age; yet none of these things should be of any advantage to wicked men, but if, any of them should live to be a hundred years old, yet they should die accursed. This seemeth to be the plain sense. If any desire to read more opinions of these words, he may find enough in the English Annotations.

Isaiah 65:21

The quite contrary to what is said of the slothful man, Pro_12:27: see Job_27:13-17.

Isaiah 65:22

Duration and perpetuity are promised to them in their happy estate.

Isaiah 65:23

And not only a blessing to them, but also to their offspring. But what is here promised which wicked men do not oftentimes enjoy, and God's people oftentimes want?

Ans. 1. Wicked men may have them for their good parents' sake, and good men may sometimes want them for evil parents' sake.

2. Bad men may have some of these things, but they cannot expect them; good men may at present want them, but they may expect them from the hand of God if they be good for them.

3. Bad men may have them in wrath; the blessing of God gives them to good men, and adds no sorrow therewith.

Isaiah 65:24

God promised, Isa_58:9, to answer them *when they called*; here he promiseth to be so ready to answer, as to answer the words as soon as they should be formed in their hearts, before they should get them out of their lips, Psa_32:5 Dan_10:12; yea, while they were speaking, Dan_9:20, **23 Ac 10:44**. Nor doth God say only they shall have the things they would have, (for so wicked men may sometimes have from the bountiful hand of Divine Providence,) but they shall have them as an *answer* or return unto their prayers.

Isaiah 65:25

This verse containeth a promise much like that Isa_11:6, **9**, and relates to the ceasing of persecution. The people of God for their

whiteness and innocency are often compared to *lambs* and *sheep* , wicked men to wolves and lions, for their antipathy to the seed of the woman: God here promiseth to take off the fierceness of the spirits of his people's enemies, so that they shall live quietly and peaceably together. Wicked men are compared to *serpents* , Mic_7:17, compared with Psa_72:9; God promiseth a time of tranquillity to his church under the metaphor of *serpents eating the dust* , their proper meat, Gen_3:14, instead of flying upon men: it signifies such a time when wicked men should mind their proper business, and not make it their work to eat up the people of God like bread. For the last phrase, see Isa_11:9, what is there noted. But will some say, When shall these things be? The Scripture gives us no record of any such period of time yet past. And it is very probable that this is a promise yet to be fulfilled, and it is not for us to know the times and seasons, but in the mean time to let our faith and patience be seen. In the mean time, we may learn that it is God's work to restrain the wolves and serpents of the world, who would else be always doing what they are sometimes doing; and it is a sad sign that God is not yet at peace with that people, where we see wolves devouring lambs, and serpents destroying men instead of licking up dust, nor well-pleased with that part of his holy mountain where there is nothing but *hurting and destroying* , biting and devouring one another. When God shall be at peace with a people, these things shall not be found amongst them.

Isaiah 66:1 ISAIAH CHAPTER 66

God is served with the Spirit, and not by ceremonies, Isa_66:1-4, the wonderful birth and benefits of the gospel church, Isa_66:5-14. Severe judgments against the wicked, Isa_66:15-18. The Gentiles shall be a holy church, Isa_66:19-23. The eternal punishment of the wicked, Isa_66:24.

The heaven is my throne; the heaven, that is, the highest heavens, are the place where I most manifest my power and glory, and show myself in my majesty. Psa_11:4 **103:19** Mat_5:34. Hence we are taught to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven* .
And

the earth is my footstool, or a place wherein I set my feet, Mat_5:35.

Where is the house that ye build unto me? can there be a house builded that will contain me, who can encompass the heavens and the earth with a house? *Where is the place of my rest* ? or, where is the place wherein I can be said to rest in a proper sense? The ark is indeed *God 's footstool* , and the

place of his

rest, in a figurative sense, because there God manifested himself, though in degrees much beneath the manifestations of himself in heaven; but properly, God hath no certain place of rest.

Isaiah 66:2

For all those things hath my hand made; the heavens and the earth are the work of my hands, Gen_1:1 Joh_1:3. (Some expound it of the temple and the sacrifices.)

All those things have been; they were not only made by God, but subsisted and were kept in being by him. These things were not therefore valued by him, nor could he have any need of or respect to any house, which is but a very little part of the earth; he having made the heavens and the earth, had all them at his command; and how could he need a temple, or wherein could he be advantaged from it? But God will look with a respect, and with a favourable eye, to him that hath

a broken and contrite spirit, whose heart is subdued to the will of God, and who is poor and low in his own eyes, Mat_5:3 Luk_6:20, and who trembleth when he heareth God's threatening words, nor ever heareth any revelation of the Divine will without a just reverence.

Isaiah 66:3

Solomon, Pro_15:8, gives us a short but full commentary on the whole verse, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord . He that killeth an ox* , that is, for sacrifice, as it is expounded by the next words, *he that sacrificeth a lamb* . The comparisons show God's detestation of *ceremonial performances* from men of wicked hearts and lives. *He that burneth incense* , as if he blessed an idol: from hence it is plain that the prophet is not

here reflecting upon idolatrous worship, but *formal worship* ; for to say, *he that burneth incense to an idol is as he that blesseth an idol* , is but to say, he that blesseth an idol blesseth an idol; but upon those who in a formality worshipped the true God, and by acts which he had appointed, such were offering sacrifices, oblation, incense. God by the prophet declares that these men's services were no more acceptable to him than *murder, idolatry* , or the most *horrid profanation of his name* . Such would cutting off a *dog 's neck* for sacrifice have been, or offering *swine 's blood* ; so little do ritual performances, though instituted by God himself, please God, when they are but mere *formalities* , as they always are when those that perform them live as they list, lewd and loose lives, and think to save themselves by their prayers, like the whore, Pro_7:14,15; not only sinning by human frailty, but taking pleasure in their sins, Pro_15:26. To offer a sacrifice with a heart resolved (when it is offered) to go on in sinful courses, is to offer it *with an evil mind* . This is a dreadful text to those persons who will *murder* , and *steal* , and *swear* , and *curse* , and *lie* , and *commit adultery* , and then come and stand before God in his house, which is called by his name, that is, come to serve him in acts of worship, Lev_10:3; see Psa_50:16-18 Isa_1:11-14 Jer_7:9,10 Mt 7:21-23 Joh_4:24 1Ti_4:8.

Isaiah 66:4

They had made their choice, they chose not the ways of God, but *their own ways* , that which God delighted not in, as in the latter part of this verse; therefore (saith God) *I will also choose their delusions* , or illusions, or devices. Montanus translates it, *ad inventionibus* ; it is a noun derived from a word which signifies to *speak childishly or corruptly* ; the word in this form is only used in this text, and in 1Sa_25:3; it signifies *studies* , or *works* , Psa_12:4 Isa_3:4 Hos_4:9. It is an ordinary thing for God thus generally to declare his justice against men, that he will deal with sinners as they deal with him; so Psa_18:25,26 **Le 26:27,28 Jer 34:17** Pro_1:24,28. The meaning is, I will be no kinder to them than they have been to me; they have chosen to *mock* and *delude me* , I will choose to suffer them to *delude themselves* ; or they have chosen to work wickedness, I will choose the effect. *Their fears* ; that is, (say some,) the things which they *feared* , and did these things to avoid, as Jer_42:16 Eze_11:8. Others by *their fears*

choose rather to understand such *terrors* and *affrightments* as are natural to men upon the prospect of great evils, as, Lev_20:4: as God in mercy delivereth his people *from their fears* , Psa_34:4; so in judgment he causeth fears as a great judgment to possess sinners, Lev_26:16 Deu_28:66.

Because when I called, none did answer; because when by my prophets I exhorted you to your duty, very few yielded obedience: see Pro_1:24 Isa_65:12 Jer_7:13.

When I spake, they did not hear: hearing here signifieth hearkening or obeying; *not hearing* is expounded by *doing evil* , and choosing that *wherein God delighted not* . God accounts that those do not hear who do not obey his will.

Isaiah 66:5

The prophet turneth his discourse from denouncing judgment against the idolaters and formalists amongst the Jews to such as feared God, whose religion is described by a

trembling at his word, as Isa_66:2; such a turning of the prophet's discourse was Isa_1:10 **51:1,7**. The same words belong not to saints and presumptuous sinners. *Your brethren* , by nation, or by external profession in religion, though false brethren, Gal_2:4. Thus Paul calls all the rejected Jews

brethren, Rom_9:3. *That cast you out* ; that either shut you out of their intimate society, or (which is more probable) excommunicate and cast you out of their synagogues, or cast you out of their city, and some of you out of the world, Joh_9:22,**35 16:2**.

For my name's sake, i.e. *for my sake* , for your owning me and adherence to my law. Said, *Let the Lord be glorified* ; either mocking you, as the Jews did Christ, when hanging upon the cross, Mat_27:43 Luk_23:35; thus they mocked at David, Psa_42:3. Or,

Let the Lord be glorified, thinking they did God good service, Joh_16:2.

But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed; there will come a day when God shall appear and let them know his judgment concerning their violence and rage, then you shall have joy, and they shall be ashamed, 1Th_4:16-18.

Isaiah 66:6

A voice of noise from the city; the expression of a prophetic ecstasy, as much as, Methinks I already hear

a voice of noise, rather a sad and affrighting noise, than the noise of triumphers (as some think); yea, it comes not from the city only, but from the temple, wherein these formalists have so much gloried, and reposed so much confidence. There is a noise of soldiers slaying, and of the priests or poor people fled thither shrieking or crying out.

A voice of the Lord; not in thunder, which is sometimes called so, Psa_29:3-5, &c., but

that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Thus the noise of soldiers, the roaring of guns, the sound of drums and trumpets, are the voice of the Lord. Thus the prophet seemeth to express the destruction of the Jews by the Roman armies, as if a thing at that time doing.

Isaiah 66:7

The whole verse is expressive of a great and sudden salvation, which God would work for his church, like the delivery of a woman, and that of a

man child, before her travail, and *without pain*. The only doubt is, whether it referreth to the deliverance of the people out of Babylon, or the world's surprisal with the Messiah, and the sudden and strange propagation of the gospel, and it is a question not easily determined. The delivery of the Jews out of Babylon, indeed, was without *strugglings* or any pain; not like their deliverance from Egypt, after the wasting of their enemies by ten successive plagues, but by the *kind proclamation* of Cyrus. But it seems not to have been sudden, only as to the day, and hour, and manner; for Daniel understood by books that the time was come, Dan_9:2, and the people had a prospect of it seventy years before, Jer_25:12 **29:10**. The prophecy therefore seems rather to refer to the coming of Christ, and the sudden propagation of the gospel. The popish interpreters applying it to the Virgin Mary bringing forth Christ, is like other of their fond dreams.

Isaiah 66:8

The prophet calls either to the whole world, or to such as feared God amongst the Jews, to admire God in his stupendous works of providence, either in the easy manner of the deliverance of the Jews out of the captivity of Babylon, without any pain, without so much as one throe; or else in the erecting of his gospel church, into which all the Jews that received Christ were gathered as well as Gentiles, *making both one* , Eph_2:14; which seems to be meant by the *earth 's bringing forth in one day* ; as great a work of Providence as if all the women in the world should have brought forth in a day, or as if all the plants of the earth had brought forth their flowers and fruit in one day.

As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth children; as soon as the church of the Jews began to move out of the captivity of Babylon, God put it into the hearts of multitudes to go up, Exo_1:5 Isa_2:1,2, &c. Or, as soon as the voice of the gospel put the church of the Jews into her travail, in John the Baptist's, Christ's, and the apostles' times, it presently brought forth. In John Baptist's time, *the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent took it by force* , Mat_11:12; and it continued so, as three thousand were converted at Peter's sermon, **Ac 2**. The Gentiles were the children of Zion, being planted into their stock, tho law of the gospel first going out of Zion.

Isaiah 66:9

The work before spoken of seemeth not after the manner of men, who do things that are great gradually, nor in an ordinary course of nature, whose motions also bring things by degrees to their perfection; but you must consider who it is that speaketh,

saith the Lord; now as is the God, so is his strength. Again, men may undertake things, and for want of power not bring them to perfection; but shall I do such a thing? I have by many prophecies and promises secured you in the expectation of such a thing, and shall I not by my providence effect it? I, that in the ordinary course of my providence use to give a birth to women, to whom I have given a power to conceive, shall I not give a birth to Zion, to my people, whom by my prophecies and promises I have made to conceive such hopes and expectations? Nor shall Zion once only bring forth, but she shall go on teeming; her womb shall not be

shut, she shall every day bring forth more and more children; my presence shall be with my church to that end, to the end of the world.

Isaiah 66:10

There is nothing more ordinary amongst men, than for friends and neighbours to meet together with their friends recovered from affliction, or brought into a better state, to rejoice with them, especially such friends as in their afflictions have mourned with them. Thus Mary, Luk_1:40, went to rejoice with Elisabeth, and Job's friends came to *rejoice with him* , Job_42:11. The prophet in like manner calls to all the friends of Jerusalem, especially such as in the days of her affliction had mourned for her, to come and rejoice and be *glad with her* , upon the prospect of her better state after the Babylonish captivity; or at least in the time of the Messiah; for though joy and gladness be the affection of the soul that works upon its union with its desirable object, and the deliverance of the people out of Babylon was not to be for many years after this, nor the Messiah to come for many years after that; yet *faith being the evidence of things not seen* , there is a *rejoicing of hope*, *hope* giving the soul a union with its object hoped for; and these things were now *present to believers* , who by faith called the things that were not as if they were, because they had the security of a Divine revelation for them, and they were already existent in their necessary causes.

Isaiah 66:11

Jerusalem is here set out as the mother of us all, as indeed she was; for *out of Zion went forth the law* , and *the word of the Lord from Jerusalem* , Isa_2:3. Christ was of the *seed of Abraham* , he was sent *to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* , and is called, Rom_15:8, *the minister of the circumcision* : they were the *olive* , the *branches* ; the Gentiles but a wild olive, grafted in amongst them, Rom_11:17; we sucked at their breasts; Christ was first preached to them; the twelve, the seventy, were all of them. The breasts of her consolations: the gospel doctrine was their breasts of consolation. Christ was in the first place.

Her glory; the *glory of the people Israel* , though he was also a *light* to lighten the Gentiles, Luk_2:32; we are required to rejoice with Jerusalem. *That ye may suck, and be satisfied* , &c.;

intimating that our joy should not be a mere act of charity to them, but a proper expression of our sense of God's goodness to ourselves, who should suck and be satisfied from the glad tidings of the gospel first published unto them, and ourselves be enlightened from what was at first the glory of Israel.

Isaiah 66:12

That this promise respects the times of the Messias seems plain, not only from the consideration that no history giveth us any account of any great or long peace or prosperity the Jews had before that time, nor indeed then, if we understand it not of a spiritual gospel

peace, which Christ preached to them that were nigh as well as to those afar off, Eph_2:17. It also appears from the mention of *the glory of the Gentiles as a flowing stream*, which can hardly be understood of any thing but Christ, and the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. But I leave it to the issues of Providence to expound and determine whether the prophecy of this text doth not relate to a further conversion and calling of the Jews than hath yet been seen. When Christ was revealed to the Jews, not those only of the Gentiles, but those of the Jews who belonged to God's election sucked gospel doctrine; the Gentiles were borne upon the sides of Jerusalem, and dandled upon her knees, as first hearing from the apostles, who were some of the daughters of Jerusalem, members of the Jewish church, the glad tidings of salvation.

Isaiah 66:13

That is, in the most tender and compassionating way imaginable; the husband doth not comfort his wife with that tenderness and those bowels that the mother comforteth the child after it hath received some fall or mischief. Jerusalem now mourneth, and you mourn with her; but she shall recover from her affliction and from her sorrows, and shall be comforted; and you that mourn for her shall partake of her joys, as you now share with her in her afflictions; God, in the day that he wipeth tears from her eyes, shall also wipe them from yours; and you shall have as great an occasion of joy from the happy, as now you have of sorrow from the afflicted, state of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 66:14

The peace and tranquillity of the church, and the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, is always the cause of a heart-rejoicing to such as fear God, Psa_105:3; the reason is, because it is the greatest object of their desires, which are then satisfied, and their thoughts are then at rest; and besides they are members of the same body, so as their own bones, which before are dry and withered, Eze_37:1,2, *and the sinews, and the flesh, come again upon them, and the skin covers them above* , so as they

flourish like an herb in the spring, all whose verdure and beauty in the winter was concealed in the root hid in the earth.

And the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants; and in this the power, protection, and influence of God for, of, and upon such as truly serve and obey him shall be made manifest and known.

And his indignation toward his enemies; but the wicked shall be under a quite contrary dispensation, Psa_1:4. As they have had a day which hath been to you *the power of darkness* , so you shall have a day which shall be to them the *power of darkness* ; as God's hand shall be upon and towards such as fear me, to cover, and bless, and influence them, so his indignation shall in that day be showed towards those of your nation who have declared themselves the enemies of the Lord.

Isaiah 66:15

Here the prophet comes more particularly to expound what indignation should be showed towards his enemies.

The Lord will come with fire; that is, with terrible judgments, nothing being more terrible and wasting than fire; or with fire in a proper sense, understanding it of the fire with which enemies use to consume places brought under their power. *With a whirlwind* ; with a sudden sweeping judgment that like a whirlwind shall destroy this people.

With fury; that is, with fervour; for fury properly so taken is not in God, Isa_27:4, but God sometimes executes justice and judgment more smartly and severely.

His rebukes: by *rebukes* he means punishments, for it is said God will execute them

with flames of fire. They had contemned the rebukes of his law, now God will rebuke them with fire and sword.

Isaiah 66:16

This kind of *rebuking* is also called *a pleading with them* ; so he threatens to plead against *Gog with pestilence and blood* , Eze_38:22. God at first pleads with sinners by *words* ; but if he cannot so prevail, he will plead with them in a way by which he will overcome by fire, pestilence, and blood.

With all flesh; thus he threatens to do with all sinners, or with all the wicked Jews.

The slain of the Lord shall be many; to the fire he threatens to add the sword, so as *the slain of the Lord* , that is, those whom God should cause to be slain, should be many.

Isaiah 66:17

That the Jews might not think that the judgments threatened concerned only the heathen, he tells them they concerned them, the idol worshippers amongst them; and not idolaters only, but such as broke his laws about meats, which he had prohibited them to eat. Those that *sanctified and purified themselves in gardens, gardens* in which they worshipped idols, Isa_1:29 **65:3,4** 1Ki_14:23 **15:13**: the word translated *gardens* signifieth such as were thick planted with trees, *and had groves* in them, where they set their idols, 1Ki_15:13; hence the idol is called the *grove* , 2Ki_23:6; they had also in these gardens pools, where they washed themselves in a way of preparation for their idol worship, as the priest by God's ordinance was to bathe himself, Num_19:7.

Behind one tree in the midst; *behind one of the trees, or one by one behind the trees* . Some think that Achar is here a proper name of an idol, behind which or behind whose temple these idolaters were wont to purify themselves. These gardens were places too as well for brutish lusts as idol worship, as may be learned from 1Ki_14:24 2Ki_23:7, and they by these washings thought to make themselves clean.

Eating swine' s flesh, forbidden Lev_11:7 Deu_14:8.

And the abomination; either any abominable things, or all those beasts forbidden the Jews for meat, Lev_11:9,10, &c. Some think a particular abominable thing is here meant, and think it is the weasel, which, Lev_11:29, is joined with the *mouse*, which is here next mentioned. The word which we translate *mouse* being no where found but there, and here, and 1Sa_6:4,5,11,18, some think it is not that creature we call a mouse, (because a mouse is properly no creeping thing; but the word, Lev_11:29, signifieth a creeping thing,) they therefore think it rather signifieth some serpent. It is a matter of no great consequence. The sense is, that God would not only destroy the open and gross idolaters and superstitious persons, but all those also who had made no conscience of yielding obedience to the law of God in such things as seemed to them of a minute nature, and such as they easily might have yielded obedience to; he saith that they shall all perish together. In the day of judgment, the idolatrous pagan and papist, and the lewd anti disobedient protestant, shall fare alike. It will be a hard thing for a thinking soul to see how baptism, and a membership in the Christian church, should save men from God's wrath, without holiness, more than circumcision and membership in the Jewish church.

Isaiah 66:18

The Hebrew is thus word for word. *And I their works, and their thoughts, coming together all nations and languages, and they shall come and see my glory*. So that it is necessary for interpreters to supply some words to make out the sense. And the sense will differ according to the nature and sense of those supplied words. We supply the verb know, as Amo_5:12; others supply. *I have noted*. Others make it a question; And I, *should I endure their thoughts and their works?* Others, But as for me, *oh their works and their thoughts!* Some make these words, *for I know their works and their thoughts it shall come*, one sentence, and to relate to the judgments before threatened, Isa_66:15,16, and the latter words a new sentence, and a promise of the call of the Gentiles. If we thus divide the words into two sentences, the former part doth but assert the certainty of the judgment that should come upon this people, and the confirmation or reason of it from the omniscience and justice of God. They have done these things, and I know it, and am of purer eyes than to behold

iniquity. I know I have marked their thoughts and works (before mentioned). Oh the vileness of them! Should I suffer, should I endure them? No. *It shall come* ; either the judgments before threatened shall come; or it shall come to pass, that I will cast them off, and then

I will gather all nations, & c. So *it shall come* may either refer to the threatening of judgments in the former part, or the promise of calling the Gentiles in the latter part of the verse. Others make the verse one entire sentence, and the sense thus, *Seeing I know their works* , &c., or when the time shall come that I shall let them by my vengeance know that I know their works, *I will gather all nations and languages. I will gather all nations* , I will call the Gentiles into my church, and they shall see my glory; my oracles, my holy institutions and ordinances, which hitherto have been locked up in the church of the Jews, Rom_3:2, and been their glory, shall be published to the Gentiles, Psa_97:6 Isa_40:5.

Isaiah 66:19

It is on all hands agreed that this verse is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles.

I will set a sign: by sign here some understand an ensign, as the word signifies, Psa_74:4, which is a military sign to gather people together; by this may be understood Christ, Luk_2:34. See Isa_11:10. Or, as others, the ministry of the word attended with miracles (often called signs); these were set up among the Jews first, then among the Gentiles. Others (but less probably) understand by *sign* a mark of distinction, like that mentioned Eze_9:4; so as, saith he, some shall escape and not be destroyed; and for those that shall escape, I will send them to Tarshish, Pul, Lud, Tubal, Javan, to Europe, Asia, and Africa, to all the quarters of the world, (see the Latin Synopsis, and the English Annotations, large discourses of these particular places,) to all nations that had never before heard of God or his true worship.

And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles; and they shall every where preach the gospel, and set up my gospel ordinances and institutions. This was eminently made good upon the apostles leaving the Jews, and turning to the Gentiles, Act_13:46, and more fully after the destruction of Jerusalem,

when the believers among the Jews, as well as the apostles, went about publishing the gospel to all people, which was the declaring of the Lord's glory.

Isaiah 66:20

Those who are the children of Abraham (not considered as the father of the Jewish nation only, but considered as *the father of many nations* , and as the *father of the faithful* , or who are the children of God, being believers, and receiving *Christ* , and so are your brethren, how contemptible soever you judge them) shall be brought out of all nations for an

offering to the Lord. God will have no more offerings of bullocks, and rams, or lambs, but of men and women, reasonable services, Rom_12:1; he will have an *offering up of the Gentiles* , Rom_15:16. And because the Gentiles are many of them far off from Jerusalem, and as yet farther off from God, Eph_2:17, God will find out fit means for this end, as horses, and litters, and mules, and swift beasts are, to bring men and women long journeys. And they shall be brought into the church, which began at Jerusalem; and lifts you may be assured of, for the Lord hath said it, who cannot lie nor repent. And they shall come with as much joy and gladness, with as much sincerity and holiness, as the godly Jews use and exercise when they bring their offerings in clean vessels.

Isaiah 66:21

Lest the Jews, being assured that the tribe of Levi, which God anciently chose to minister before him, was among them, should say, Alas, if the Gentiles should be brought in, where would they have priests or Levites? God here by his prophet tells them he would provide priests, he would take

of them, of these converted heathens. for priests and Levites, that is, for gospel ministers, to teach and to instruct people, which was the priest's work of old, Deu_33:10 2Ch_17:7,**9 Mal 2:6**; for they are mightily mistaken that think the priests among the Jews had nothing to do but to sacrifice and burn incense, which work is ceased. Saith the prophet, God will find amongst the converted Gentiles those who, though they be not of the tribe of Levi, or

house of Aaron, yet they shall do the true work of priests and Levites.

Isaiah 66:22

This whole verse is only a promise of the perpetuity of the gospel church, and the not failing of the additions to it of such as shall be saved till the world shall have an end.

The new heavens and the new earth; the new state of the church to be raised up under the Messias. As I intend that shall abide, so there shall be a daily succession of true believers for the upholding of it; for if believers could fail from the earth, the church, made up of them only, as the true members of it, must fail also.

Isaiah 66:23

In the gospel church there shall be as constant and settled a course of worship (though of another nature) as ever was in the Jewish church. Christians are not bound to keep the Jewish sabbath or new moons, **Ga 4 10,11 Col 2:16**; but New Testament worship is often expressed by Old Testament phrases. The Jews were only obliged to appear three times in a year at Jerusalem, but (saith the prophet) the gospel church shall worship God from one

sabbath to another.

Isaiah 66:24

Either the Gentiles, or the sincerer part of the Jews, shall go forth from their places, or from Jerusalem, or

go out of their graves, at the last day, and look upon the vengeance I have taken upon these vile idolaters and formalists, for their satisfaction, Psa_58:10; they shall see none of them alive, but they shall see their carcasses. For the worms that feed on their slain carcasses shall not suddenly die, and the enemy's fire burning upon their habitations shall not go out till they be wholly consumed; and after this life, and at the day of judgment, they shall go into eternal torments; see Mar_9:44,**46,48**; where they will feel a worm of conscience that shall never die, and a fiery wrath of God upon their souls and bodies that shall never go out.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

THE ARGUMENT

IT was the great unhappiness of this prophet to be a physician to, but that could not save a dying state, their disease still prevailing against the remedy; and indeed no wonder that all things were so much out of order, when the book of the law had been wanting above sixty years. He was called to be a teacher in his youth, in the days of good Josiah, being sanctified and ordained by God to his prophetic office from his mother's womb, **#Jer 1:5** in a very evil time, though the people afterward proved much worse upon the death of that good king. He setting himself against the torrent of the corruptions of the times, was always opposed and unkindly treated by his ungrateful countrymen, as also by false prophets, and the priests, princes, and people, who encouraged all their impieties and unrighteousness. At length he threatened their destruction and captivity by the Chaldeans, which he lived to see, but foretells their return after seventy years; all which accordingly came to pass. He doth also, notwithstanding his dreadful threatenings, intermix divers comfortable promises of the Messiah, and the days of the gospel; he denounceth also heavy judgments against the heathens nations that had afflicted God's people, both such as were near, and also more remote, as Egypt, the Philistines, Moab, Edomites, Ammonites, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, Elam, but especially Babylon herself, that is made so great a type of the antichristian Babylon in the New Testament. Upon the murder of Gedaliah, whom the Chaldeans had made governor of Judea, he was forcibly against his will carried into Egypt, where (after he had prophesied from first to last between forty and fifty years) probably he died; some say he was stoned.

Whatever else we hear mentioned of his writings, they are either counterfeit, as the Prophecies of Baruch, &c., or it is likely we have the sum of them in this book, though possibly some of his sermons might have had some enlargements in that roll which, by his appointment, was written by Baruch, **#Jer 36:2**, &c.

Jeremiah 1:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 1

The pedigree, time, and calling of Jeremiah; confirmed against his excuses, Jer_1:1-10. His visions of an almond rod and a seething pot, Jer_1:11-14. His heavy message against Judah, Jer_1:15,**16**. God promiseth him his assistance, Jer_1:17-19.

The words, i.e. sermons or prophecies, which he received from God, (as being his mouth to declare them unto the people,) and comprised all in the volume of this book going under his name, as the matter and substance of them. **See Poole** "Isa_2:1".

The son of Hilkiah: as this serves to distinguish him from other priests, so his being of Anathoth ranks him among the common priests; not that high priest mentioned 2Ki_22:8, under whose progeny Jeremiah is not named, 1Ch_6:13; who, it is probable, would have been named, being one of so much note, and who always lived at Jerusalem, not at Anathoth, which was a city three miles from Jerusalem, lotted out of the tribe of Benjamin for the priests, Jos_21:18. Of an ordinary teacher he was made a prophet, not so the rest.

In the land of Benjamin, i.e. that part of Canaan that fell to Benjamin's share.

Jeremiah 1:2

The word of the Lord; either that commission from God that did authorize him to his prophetic work, as it may probably be taken, Joh_10:35, was actually given unto him, Jer_1:10; or, command of God, as it is used, 1Ki_12:24; or rather, the materials of which his prophecies were to consist, for the space of forty-one years successively, in Judea, viz. from the thirteenth year of Josiah to the eleventh year of Zedekiah, besides the time that he prophesied in Egypt. See **Jer 43 Jer 44**, as Isa_2:1.

In the days of Josiah, i.e. during his reign and reformed state of religion.

Amon; who corrupted again that religion by those idolatries that his father Manasseh had in the latter part of his reign so well reformed by rooting of them out, 2Ch_33:21-23. In the thirteenth year; by which it appears that Jeremiah prophesied the last

eighteen years of Josiah's reign; for he reigned thirty-one years, 2Ki_22:1.

Jeremiah 1:3

It, viz. the word of the Lord, as Jer_1:2,

came also in the days of Jehoiakim; called at first by Josiah, Eliakim, 2Ki_23:34. Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, whereof the former reigned before him, 2Ki_23:31, the latter succeeded, 2Ki_24:8, are conceived not to be mentioned, because they reigned but each of them three months, and therefore not considerable, the Scripture often taking little notice of a small time, as of six months: compare 2Sa_5:5, with 1Ki_2:11: see Jer_1:2.

Zedekiah; of whom read 1Ch_3:15,16.

Unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive, i.e. the inhabitants of Jerusalem, namely, under Zedekiah, 2Ki_25:11, during all which time, things standing in that state and condition, Jeremiah prophesied. This doth not terminate the time of his prophecies, for he prophesied also both in Judea, and in Egypt afterwards; but only relates to what he prophesied while the city and temple were standing, the rest seeming rather to be added as a supplement, than to be reduced unto this general title of his prophecies.

In the fifth month, viz. of that present year; for though the year end not at the fifth month, yet it might end the year of Zedekiah's reign, because he might begin his reign at the fifth month of the year.

Jeremiah 1:4

Then, i. e. when he was first called to his office; or, The Lord then began to speak unto me.

Me; a change of the person, a thing very usual with the prophets.

Jeremiah 1:5

Before I formed thee in the belly, i.e. womb, Isa_46:3. Having spoken before of the time of his call, Jer_1:4, he now speaks of the manner of it.

I knew thee, i.e. approved and appointed thee, as a fit minister for this work. Words of knowledge among the Hebrews note affection, as hath been formerly noted.

I sanctified thee, viz. not with saving grace, though that need not to be excluded; but accordingly I prepared and ordained thee for this public service; and thus with Paul, Gal_1:15, where both are expressed. See the like use of the word Isa_13:3. He speaks thus to Jeremiah, not to the other prophets, because he stood in need of greater and more direct encouragement than they, both in respect of the tenderness of his years, and also of those insuperable difficulties which in those most degenerate and corrupt times he must unavoidably encounter with, which might cause him to decline the work, Jer_1:6.

Unto the nations; either with reference to place, to other nations besides the Jews, as appears, **Jer 43 Jer 46 Jer 47**, &c, taking the Jews in among them, as Jer_25:17,18, and so

unto may be taken for *against* , as it is often expressed in those places and elsewhere; or with reference to time, to people of all times, who may be instructed by this book, or whose words are made use of, both by several prophets of the Old Testament, as Daniel, Ezekiel, Nehemiah, &c., and by our Saviour in the New; by Mat_2:17,18; by Paul, 2Co_6:18; and by St. John, Rev_2:23.

Jeremiah 1:6

Ah! an introductory interjection, making way for his excuse in a way of grief and complaint, endeavouring with all reverence to clear himself of undertaking such a work rashly, it being properly the sigh of one that hath too great a weight upon his shoulders.

I cannot speak; not dumb, as Zacharias, Luk_1:20,22, nor stammering, as Moses, Exo_4:10,14; but not with that becoming gravity and commanding majesty as is suitable to a prophet; he modestly excuseth himself, from a consideration of the weight of the work, and the tenderness of his age, as in the next expression.

I am a child; either,

1. In years, and so not ripe or apt for the declaring of great things, and that to princes and nobles. Or,

2. In experience, being altogether unskilful in such affairs, not having been used to prophesy, and therefore in neither respect likely to be much regarded.

Jeremiah 1:7

Say not, I am a child; do not plead excuses.

Thou shalt go: this is God's answer to Jeremiah, in respect of his sense of his own inability. This may be by way of command, and then it is a check to his timorousness; Thou shalt go, therefore draw not back. Or by way of promise, and then it is a satisfactory answer to his excuse, as both proceeded from a sense of his own insufficiency: q.d. Fear not, I will make thee eloquent and courageous.

To all: this relates either to persons or things.

To all, i.e. to all persons to whom I shall send thee; thou shalt balk none: see Rev_10:11. Or,

upon all, so is the Hebrew; and then it is, Thou shalt go upon all errands and messages that I shall send thee. See Isa_55:11 Act_26:16.

Jeremiah 1:8

Be not afraid of their faces; their fierce looks, Eze_3:9, the indication of their enraged minds, Dan_3:19; neither when thou deliverest my message to them, nor when thou mayst be cited before them, Mat_10:18,19. This is God's answer to Jeremiah's fears in respect of the persons he was to deal with, as the other was in respect of his own consciousness of insufficiency; and he mentions their faces, because the majestic countenance of princes and magistrates is apt to strike a great awe and terror upon children.

I am with thee; I will not only send thee as other kings do their ambassadors, but I will go with thee. This God promises to Moses, Exo_3:12 Deu_31:6,8.

To deliver thee: here God promises his protection for encouragement.

Jeremiah 1:9

Then the Lord put forth his hand: God having before excited the prophet to his work by command and promise, doth now in a vision establish and confirm him, either by the hand of an angel, Isa_6:6,7, or rather, by himself in some visible shape.

Touched, Heb. *came upon* , as the word is used, Jud_20:41, hereby enabling him to speak; or, Thou shalt be my mouth to deliver my words; partly, to let Jeremiah understand that they were God's words; and partly, to intimate that they should be effectual; and partly, that he should never be without them, but continually supplied. See the like kind of phrase Jer_5:14. And he adds,

Behold; q.d. Attend to what I am about to say; or, Look upon this outward sign, and let it assure thee of the thing signified.

Jeremiah 1:10

I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms: having now received his commission, he is directed to whom he is to go, viz. to the greatest, not only single persons, but whole nations, as the Babylonians, Persians, and Egyptians, and exhorted to greatness of mind, as being sent as an ambassador from God, to deliver his messages without flattery or cowardice; and that he might make that proud people sensible of their folly, that looked upon themselves as above reproof, he gives unto his prophet this large authority.

To pull down, i.e. to prophesy that I will pull down; which I will as certainly effect as if thou hadst done it thyself; for, according to Scripture usage, the prophets are said to do that which they foretell shall come to pass, Gen_49:7 Eze_43:3, i.e. to pronounce destruction; hence God is said to slay them by the words of his mouth, Hos_6:5; and so are all the following expressions to be understood.

To build and to plant; metaphors taken from architects and gardeners. Either the former words relate to the enemies of God, and the latter to his friends; or rather, to both conditionally. If they repent, he will build them up, i.e. he will increase their families, and plant them, viz. settle them in the land, Jer_24:6. If they do not, he will root them up, and pull them down, &c. He will do the

contrary. Compare this with Jer_42:10, and Jer_45:4. The reason why God useth so many words to the same purpose seems to be, partly to show how deeply all kind of wickedness and contempt of God had taken root; which possibly may be one reason why he placeth pulling down and rooting up before building and planting, to show what a deal of rubbish there was to be removed before he could reform and repair his church and state; or rather, because the prophet was to begin with these in his prophecy, as appears by his second visions, Jer_1:11,13; and partly to quicken the prophet's zeal against them.

Jeremiah 1:11

This and the boiling caldron, Jer_1:13, is thought to be at the same time, and in the same vision, when he was first appointed to his work.

A rod of an almond tree, viz. that had leaves, and possibly blossoms, on it, like Aaron's, Num_17:8; for without leaves at least it is possible he had not so readily guessed of what kind it had been. This is a tree that blossoms early and speedily, and hence hath its name in Hebrew *scaked*, signifying watchful, forward, nimble, or quick; and so it may point at either God's readiness to smite, Jer_1:12, which is described elsewhere by summer fruit, Amo_8:1,2; or Israel's ripeness to be smitten, as we have the like Eze_7:10,11; or both; this rod being like a portentous comet, showing to Jeremiah the miseries that were at hand, as the death of Josiah, which soon followed this vision, 2Ki_23:29, and the taxing them by Pharaoh-nechoh, 2Ki_23:35, and presently after the breaking in of the Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, 2Ki_24:2, and then the Babylonian captivity, 2Ki_24:10, which happened in the eighth year of Jehoiachin, 2Ki_24:12, when Nebuchadnezzar took him with others, and carried them away, about twenty-three years from hence; and about the fortieth year Jerusalem was taken, and the temple burnt.

Jeremiah 1:12

Thou hast well seen; or, Thou hast seen and judged right; or, as the Hebrew,

Thou hast done well to see, i.e. in seeing so.

I will hasten; word for word,

I will almond-tree it, i.e. I will be upon them speedily, in a short time, and suddenly, ere they are aware; or, I will watch, and be ready to accomplish this in due time.

My word, i.e. my word of threatening against Judah and its inhabitants.

Jeremiah 1:13

After the smaller punishment from the Lord follows this of the boiling pot, by which understand Judea and Jerusalem, as may appear by the application that they themselves make of it in a way of scorn and derision, Eze_11:3,7. Some put the

face of the pot for the pot itself; *as the face of the cold, the face of his anger*, for cold and anger itself: q.d. I see a *pot* coming, meaning the Babylonian army flowing in upon them, like boiling or scalding water, as some interpret it: but this seems not to be so congruous to the vision; but rather thus, the Babylonians should besiege; as a fire plays round the furnace when it is to be made boil, so should these Chaldeans begirt it, as Jer_1:15, and reduce the inhabitants to most miserable extremities, with unspeakable cruelty, as if they were like flesh roasting by the fire, or boiling in a pot, as their sufferings are described, Mic_3:3.

The face, or front of the pot, or furnace, the place where the fire was put in or blowed up to make it boil; as a pot, hanged in the form of a furnace, seems to be all but one and the same pot or vessel, the face of which may be easily conceived to stand toward the north, not the mouth of the pot, for that looks directly upward, unless we conceive it to be represented in the vision leaning, of which conceit there is no need.

Is toward the north; indicating from whence their misery should come, Jer_1:14, viz. from Chaldea, which lay north from Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 1:14

The Lord said; explained this vision.

Out of the north, i.e. from Babylon, a metonymy of the subject; for though it lie eastward, yet it is north from Jerusalem, as lying four degrees more from the equinoctial. See Jer_1:13.

Shall break forth; it shall be withheld or restrained no longer in my treasure; I will let it out, viz. *that* evil of punishment represented by the fire.

Of the land: though God gave almost all the then known world to the king of Babylon, yet here he understands the land of Judea, Jer_25:9.

Jeremiah 1:15

I will call; or, I am upon calling, it is at hand, I am about to incline the northern countries to join together in this work, Jer_6:22 **10:22 25:9,26.**

The families, or kindreds, viz. those divers countries and nations that were under one lord, as a chief ruler is called the father of his country.

The kingdoms, viz. the Babylonians and their assistants, the Medes also being in confederacy with them, whose king's daughter Nebuchadnezzar married.

They shall set every one his throne; their seats, pavilions, or tents shall be pitched, which shall be as so many thrones, where I will see my judgments executed by the Chaldeans, Jer_52:4.

At the entering of the gates; at the entering to the gates, or way leading to the gates, Jud_9:35 2Ki_7:3 Jer_43:9, which besiegers have always a special regard to, that there be no going in or coming out, Isa_22:7.

Against all the walls thereof round about; they shall begirt it round, noting the great multitude, power, and courage of the Chaldeans.

Against all the cities; there were none of them should fare any better than Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 1:16

I will utter my judgments; cause sentence to be passed according to my threatening. See Jer_39:5. Or, I will place my bounty and their unworthiness before them. Or, I will upbraid them with their ingratitude, rebellion, and breach of covenant, &c. I will speak with them by thee, Jeremiah, and others of my prophets. Who have forsaken me; either noting the persons against

whom, or rather the cause for which, because they have forsaken me; the same particle being so used Jer_13:25, and elsewhere; or their sins whereby, as it is also expressed, Jer_16:11 **22:9**.

Burnt incense unto other gods, i.e. worshipped strange gods; a synecdoche of the part for the whole.

The works of their own hands, i.e. their idolatrous images, expressed here by a periphrasis, **Isa 2 8**.

Jeremiah 1:17

Gird up thy loins: by this expression God quickens and hastens him upon his work, not to stand hesitating, but to be doing; prepare thyself: for it is a speech taken from the custom of the countries where they did wear long garments; and therefore they did gird them up about them, that they might not hinder them in any work that required expedition. See the phrase and practice Exo_12:11 2Ki_4:29, and in many other texts. It implies two things:

1. Speed and despatch.
2. Courage and resolution, **Job 38**.

Arise; another expression to the same purpose, to speed him about his work; the like **Jer 13**.

Command thee, Heb. *shall command thee*. Be not dismayed at their faces; discover no fear, and conceal no message. See Jer_1:8.

Confound thee, Heb. **break thee in pieces**; either lest thou prove confused and shattered in thy notions, and unable to deliver thy message, lest I leave thee and forsake thee; or lest I terrify thee worse than they are able to do, even to ruin thee. See Mat_10:28.

Before them: it seems to be spoken by way of aggravation; God would shame him, or destroy him, even in their sight, to become their reproach. Or, Think not to escape any more than Urijah, Jer_26:23.

Jeremiah 1:18

For, behold; Heb. *For I*, lo: q.d. For my part, I will not fail to do what I have promised, to stand by thee.

A defenced city, Heb. *city of defence* , impregnable, which the two following expressions do import; it should be supported with pillars, not of wood, but of iron, and encompassed with walls, not of stone, but of brass, noting hereby both great uprightness and also strength.

Against the whole land, i.e. all its inhabitants in general, none to be spared, as he doth particularly rank them in their several degrees in the following words, intimating hereby, that though men of all degrees should set themselves against him, yet God would support him against them all, and that he would carry him through his work, though his troubles and trials would be not only great, but long, viz. passing through several kings' reigns, therefore possibly said kings here, in the plural.

Jeremiah 1:19

They shall fight against thee; make united attempts upon thee. See Jud_20:11.

They shall not prevail; they shall not be able, by all their devices, to shorten thy days, Jer_15:20 **20:10,11**.

For I am with thee: here is the reason given of his safety, God will be his guard. See Jer_1:8 2Ti_4:17,**18**.

Jeremiah 2:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 2

God's numerous and continued mercies render the Jews in their idolatry inexcusable, and unparalleled in any nation; and themselves the causes of their calamities, Jer_2:1-19. Their gross idolatry, Jer_2:20-28; incorrigibleness, blood-shedding, and hypocrisy, Jer_2:29-37.

Now God begins by Jeremiah to deal with the Jews, and to put him upon his work, having fitted him for it: this seeming to be his first sermon, it notes speed, and quick despatch about his business.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 2:2

Go, viz. from Anathoth to Jerusalem.

Cry in the ears; proclaim it so that they may hear it.

Of Jerusalem; declare God's will to the inhabitants thereof; a metonymy of the subject.

Thus saith the Lord; the prophet's usual form of words in this book, whereby he frequently intimates that he came with God's message, not his own; and therefore directs his sermon here, as in God's name and person, to the whole body of the people.

I remember thee; I record, or I mind thee of the kindness that was between us: though this be sometimes taken in a way of favour, Neh_13:31, yet not always so, as Neh_13:29 Psa_137:7.

The kindness of thy youth; either those forward and early affections of thine to me in thy youth; or rather, the kindness that I showed thee in thy youth, Isa_46:3; for this relates to the time of God's bringing them out of Egypt, which is sometimes called the birth of this people, Isa_44:2 Hos_2:3, and their youth, Isa_54:6 Hos_2:15. The story seems to favour most this latter sense, Deu_9:6,24.

The love of thine espousals, viz. when I entered into a covenant relation with thee at the giving of the law, Exo_24:7,8 **Deu 4:20,23,34 Eze 16:8,** &c.

When thou wentest after me in the wilderness; either out of that love and affection that thou didst show to me in following my conduct; or rather, when thou wert led by me in the wilderness, and I took such care of thee, both for protection and provision, in that howling wilderness, though thou didst ill deserve it, where nothing necessary to thy subsistence could have been expected; and therefore it is expressed in the next words by a periphrasis, a land that was not sown; and more enlarged upon Jer_1:6; for it plainly appears by the story that they did not follow him with entire affection, but went a whoring from him, Amo_5:25,26, and which we have a large account of Psa_106:7, &c.

Jeremiah 2:3

Israel was holiness, or

holy, the abstract for the concrete, i.e. a people dedicated to God; thus the word is used Lev_21:7 **27:14;** set apart from other people for myself by peculiar laws and rites.

And the first-fruits of his increase: this supplement

and is better left out, it being not in the text, and rendering the sense more obscure; therefore better read, either, being the first-fruits, by apposition; or, *as the first-fruits*, i.e. as the first-fruits were holy to God, so was Israel.

All that devour; or rather, devoured; for it refers to the time past, not to the future, and so the following words; all that were injurious to him

shall offend; or, did offend, were obnoxious, and liable to punishment, as he that devoured that which is holy, Pro_20:25.

Shall come upon them; came upon them: some evil was inflicted on them from the Lord, that was always wont to stand up for the vindication of his people, as upon the Egyptians, Amalekites, Sihon, Og, the Midianites, Canaanites, and others, as the four last books of Moses do abundantly testify; and by these expressions is insinuated that now they are like to find it otherwise, Jer_1:7; this minding of them what God had done for them making way for the closer setting home the following reproofs.

Jeremiah 2:4

Hear ye the word of the Lord: he bespeaks their attention to what he is about to speak, as unto the word of the Lord, telling them that he deliver's God's message, and vents not his own passions: the like Isa_1:10, and elsewhere frequently, both in the Old and New Testament, as 1Co_11:23 1Th_4:15.

Jacob, i.e. his posterity; Jacob and Israel here being the same, as it is Isa_43:1. The families, viz. tribes, Jer_31:1.

Jeremiah 2:5

God having, as it were on his own behalf, shown how kind he had been, calls upon them to speak now, if they knew any thing of injury, either in breach of covenant or severity, that they can charge him with, that they have thus apostatized. **See Poole** "Isa_1:18"; **See Poole** "Isa_5:3": compare Mic_6:2-4. By this manner of speech his proceeding appears the more justifiable; he both makes their conviction the clearer, and the reproof the sharper.

Walked after vanity, viz. idols, showing their folly in going from God to such vain things as idols are, Deu_32:21 1Sa_12:20,21; and see on Isa_41:29; the abstract for the concrete, Ecc_1:2.

Become vain, viz. in following their imaginations; fools,

Rom_1:21,22, as senseless as the stocks and stones that they made their idols of, Psa_115:8; and herein they are said to go far from God, and choose their delusions, Jon_2:8.

Jeremiah 2:6

Neither said, i.e. with themselves, thought not.

Brought us up: the expression may have some respect to the situation of the place, as lying lower than Canaan; but the design is to reprove their sloth and stupidity, charging herein their apostacy, not upon their ignorance, but wilfulness; their deliverance from Egypt, and therefore is it here mentioned, being such a deliverance as never greater was wrought for any people, wherein there was so much of his power and love seen; they never regarded the operations of his hands, never concerned themselves about what God had done for them, Jer_2:8, which should have engaged them to a more close cleaving to him.

Through a land of deserts; desolate places, Jer_1:13; and then what follows is to amplify the greatness of their dangers in the wilderness, and therein the greatness of their deliverance. *And of pits* ; either those natural dangerous pits that were there; or put for the grave, where passengers are so often buried quick in the heaps of sand suddenly blown up by the wind; or threatening in every respect nothing but death, which may be implied in that expression of the

shadow of death in this verse, which may allude to several kinds or fears of death in passing through a wilderness. See in the Synopsis.

A land of drought, where they had no water but by miracle; the LXX. render it a land without water. The shadow of death: see on the word pits: the LXX. render it a land without fruit, bringing forth nothing that might have a tendency to the support of life, therefore nothing but death could be expected; and besides, it yielding so many venomous creatures, as scorpions, and serpents,

&c., as also the many enemies that they went in continual danger of; all which could not but look formidable, and as the

shadow of death. That no man passed through, and where no man dwelt; as having in it no accommodation for travel, much less for habitation. In these respects may it well be called a waste howling wilderness, Deu_32:10.

Jeremiah 2:7

Plentiful country, Heb.

land of Carmel, Isa_29:17; understand Canaan, Num_13:27: **See Poole "Isa_35:2".**

To eat the fruit thereof and the goodness; to enjoy all the blessing of it.

My land, i.e. consecrated to my name, Lev_25:23; and this you have defiled by going a whoring after your idols, Jer_3:1, and many other abominations, Psa_106:29,**35,37-39**.

Mine heritage; in the same sense that it is said in the foregoing clause my land, and which you received from me as your heritage, the place that I chose for my church's present habitation, and earnest of their future heavenly one.

Jeremiah 2:8

They that handle the law knew me not: q.d. They that should have taught others knew as little as they, or regarded as little to know, Hos_4:6, who are said here to handle or teach the law, viz. the priests and Levites, who were the ordinary teachers of the law; not that they did so, but that either they ought to do so, or pretended to do so. This was their office, Deu_33:10, and their practice, Neh_8:8. The phrase is a metaphor taken from warriors, that are said *tractare bellum*, to handle their arms.

The pastors; either teachers, as instructors; or kings and princes, as conductors. See 1Ki_22:17.

The prophets prophesied by Baal; they that should have taught the people the true worship of God were themselves worshippers of Baal, 1Ki_18:22. Or, instead of fetching their oracles from me, saying,

Thus saith the Lord, they would say, Thus saith Baal; or they did make use of lesser deities (for so doth Baal or Baalim signify) in conjunction with God, persuading themselves they could honour God together with them, as the calves, 1Ki_12:28.

Things that do not profit, viz. idols, a periphrasis, that were never able to do them any service, as Jer_2:5,11. See Poole "Isa_44:10". Sure the state must be very bad, when priests, prophets, and people were thus corrupt.

Jeremiah 2:9

I will yet plead with you: this is to be understood either really, by his judgments, Psa_74:22, and that with great severities; or verbally, he will go on to deal with them, to convince them by his prophets, as he did with their fathers, that they may be left without excuse, Jer_7:25,26.

With your children's children; either for the heinousness of their fathers' sins; for God doth often visit the iniquities of the parents upon their children, Exo_20:5; or because they do imitate their parents.

Jeremiah 2:10

The isles of Chittim; a synecdochical expression, extending to all isles in the Mediterranean Sea, or any other the neighbouring coasts; for the Hebrews call all people that are separated from them by the Mediterranean Sea islanders, because they come to them by shipping. See of Chittim, Isa_23:1.

Send unto Kedar; understand Arabia, that lay east-south-east of Judea, as Chittim did more north or north-west: q. d. Go from north to south, east to west, and make the experiment; look to Chittim, the most civilized, or Kedar, the most barbarous, yet neither have changed their gods.

See if there be such a thing; not that they were to pass over locally, or send messengers thither actually; but, q.d. Cast your eyes thither, and make your observations; by what you have ever seen or heard, did you ever hear of such a prodigious thing? If you should either go or send, you will find it so.

Jeremiah 2:11

Hath a nation changed their gods? q.d. No, they are unmovable and fixed to their idols, although they are false gods; what they receive from their fathers they tenaciously hold.

Their glory, viz. the true God, who was their glory; a metonymy of the adjunct, Psa_106:20; and who always did them good, giving them cause to glory in him, and to make their boast of him.

For that which doth not profit; for those which never did or can do them good, that have no essence or power; but of whom they must necessarily be ashamed, as Jer_2:26.

Jeremiah 2:12

Be astonished, O ye heavens; angels, say some, but rather the visible heavenly bodies; a pathetic expression in a poetical prosopopoeia, as Deu_4:26 **32:1**, intimating that it is such a tiring that the very inanimate creatures, could they be sensible of it, would be astonished.

Be horribly afraid; the Hebrew imports as much as,

let your hair be lifted up; such a fright, as we usually say, makes our hair stand on end; such a trembling as some dreadful tempest doth sometimes cause in a man. Be ye very desolate; lose your brightness, lustre, and shining, as the sun, that heavenly body, seemed to do when Christ suffered, Mat_27:45; or melting, the heinousness of such a thing, as it were, dissolving them.

Jeremiah 2:13

Committed two evils, viz. remarkable ones, and with a witness.

Living waters; a metaphor taken from springs, called living here, and Gen_26:19, and elsewhere, because they never cease or intermit; such had God's care and kindness been over and to them; see on Isa_58:11; his Spirit continually proceeding from the Father and the Son to refresh their consciences. Compare Joh_4:10 **7:38,39**.

Cisterns: it is doubled, to show the multitude of their shifts; and

broken is added, to show the helplessness of them, as being able to hold no water; but when a man hath made many hard shifts to

get water, he cannot keep it, but it dries away; or if it abide, proves unwholesome: by which understand either their

idols, which are empty, vain things, that never answer expectation; or the Assyrians and Egyptians, as Jer_2:18, which proved but broken reeds, and as all other supports or props, friends, traditions, merits, &c. are that are trusted to besides God; they are but cisterns at the best, whose water will putrify, or broken, riven vessels, through which they will soak, and leave nothing but mud and dirt behind them.

Jeremiah 2:14

Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? did I ever account him so? or did I not rather always reckon him my first-born? so some, as Jer_2:31. But it may better relate to his sad condition and abuses from others, as Jer_49:1, which God or the prophet doth here inquire into; and slave is here rightly added to

home-born, (though not in the text,) to express the baseness of his service, because the master had power to make those slaves who were born of slaves in his house; which argues his condition very low, whether he were thus born, or had been forced to sell himself to be a slave.

Why is he spoiled? He speaks either of the thing that is to be as if it were already done, because of the certainty of it, as of that devastation made by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who afflicted the remnant of the Jews; or of that havoc that was made of them formerly by Sennacherib, the Assyrians, and Egyptians. Why is he thus tyrannized over, Isa_42:24, as if strangers had the same right over him as owners over their slaves? He removes here the false causes of Israel's misery, that he may the more aggravate and set home the true, as Jer_2:17,**19**. He was my son; if he now become a slave, he may thank himself:

Jeremiah 2:15

The young lions; understand the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians, &c., called

lions from their fierceness, and young from their strength. See this Jer_4:7 **50:17**.

Roared upon him, and yelled; noting the terrible voice that the lion puts forth, either in the seizing the prey, some say in sport, Lam_2:7; or the devouring it, Isa_5:29. A metaphor, noting the cruelty of the enemy, Psa_74:4.

Burned without inhabitant, i.e. so consumed and wasted that they are uninhabitable, or shortly shall so consume and waste them. See Jer_2:14.

Jeremiah 2:16

Noph and Tahapanes; two of the king of Egypt's principal seats. Concerning *Noph* , sometimes called Memphis, now Cairo, see on Isa_19:13. Concerning *Tahapanes* , see Eze_30:18, probably taking its name from Tahpenes, queen of Egypt, 1Ki_11:19; called also *Hanes* : **See Poole "Isa_30:4"**. And the inhabitants and natives of these cities are called here their *children* , Isa_37:12. *Broken the crown of thy head* : they that take the Hebrew word in the notion of *breaking* understand this of destroying whatever is chief or principal among them, either of persons or things; wounds in the head being most dangerous. Or, defiling the chief of the land, either by their corporal adulteries, and so take the word under the notion of *knowing* , as Gen_19:5; or spiritual, namely, idolatries, Jer_44:17, or their cruel, tyrannical oppressions, trampling upon all their glory, expressed by riding over their heads, and that universally, in a most insulting manner. But the word may be better taken in the notion of *feeding* , as the word is used Jer_3:15, i.e. they have fed upon her most fruitful and pleasant, the top and head of all her pastures, that lay in the southern borders towards Egypt; see Jer_13:18-20; thus depriving them of all way of subsistence, Jer_12:10. In short, they shall make havoc of all that is excellent in thee, Isa_28:4. The sum is, Thy league, O Judea, with Egypt against the Chaldeans will be the cause of thy total ruin. For the kings of Judah had not rebelled against the Babylonians, but to gratify the Egyptians, in expectation of help from them.

Jeremiah 2:17

Hast thou not procured this unto thyself? here God by his prophet shows that they may thank themselves for all that is hastening upon them. See Num_32:23.

In that thou hast forsaken the Lord: here he shows wherein, viz. in forsaking God: not that he left them, but they him, and that without any temptation or provocation; and therefore were the more inexcusable.

When he led thee by the way, viz. by the conduct of his providence in the wilderness, keeping thee in safety from all dangers, Exo_13:21,22 Isa 63:12,13; or in the way of his counsels, which the ways of their own carnal wisdom were so opposite unto.

Jeremiah 2:18

What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt? what business hast thou there? or what dost thou expect from thence? or what need hast thou to go or send messengers thither, if thou wouldst but keep close to me?

Sihor, viz. Nilus; it signifies black, from whence called Melas by the Greeks, either from the blackness of the land it passed through, or of the soil it casteth up. See on Isa_23:3.

To drink the waters: here, and by the same words before, is meant, to seek help from either place, noting their strength, Isa_8:6. A metaphorical allegory, wherein God minds them of two of their broken cisterns, and shows them their folly to go so far when they might have been better supplied nearer home; as if God were not able to help them. Compare Jer_2:36. The river, i.e. Euphrates, often called so by way of eminency; the chief river of Assyria, Isa_7:20.

Jeremiah 2:19

Thine own wickedness shall correct thee: the meaning is either,

1. There need no further evidence against thee than thine own evil courses, Hos_5:5. Or rather, might correct thee, i.e. one would think should be sufficient to reclaim thee: see Hos_2:7. Or,
2. Thy own wickedness is the cause of thy correction. Or,
3. Thy wickedness will be an evidence that whatever thou sufferest is just.

Thy backslidings shall reprove thee; the same with the former, but in other words, after the manner of the Hebrews, or a

metonymy of the effect for the cause; Thou wilt not be persuaded fill thou come to suffer, thou wilt not be instructed until corrected: or rather, as before, Thy many backslidings might teach thee more wisdom, and convince thee of thy folly: so doth the word reprove signify, **Job 6 25**.

Know, i.e. call to mind thy experiences, and consider well with thyself, and thou canst not but be convinced of those things, what forsaking of God hath cost thee.

An evil thing and bitter, viz. of punishment principally; so Isa_45:7; though it be true also of sin: therefore he calls it bitter, because the effect of it will be so; it will be displeasing and bitterness in the latter end.

The Lord thy God, i.e. me.

My fear is not in thee; or, the fear of me; or, thou hast not my fear in thee; this being the ground of all thy sin and suffering, Psa_36:1 Rom_3:16,18.

Jeremiah 2:20

Of old time I have broken thy yoke, i.e. the bondage and tyranny that thou wert under in old time in Egypt, as also divers times besides, as appears through the Book of Judges. The Hebrew elam, that signifies everlasting, is sometimes used for a long time to come, and also for a long time past; so here, and Gen_6:4 Isa_57:11.

And burst thy bands; a double allusion, either to the bands and fetters with which prisoners are wont to be bound, Jer_40:4, or those bands wherewith the ends of the yoke of beasts were wont to be bound. **See Poole "Isa_58:6"**.

Thou saidst, I will not transgress; when the deliverance was fresh, thou didst put on good resolutions. Heb.

serve, i.e. serve or worship idols: the word is of the feminine gender, because God speaks of his people as of a woman promising faithfulness, but breaking covenant. Some understand thee; I will not serve time, q.d. which thou madest appear,

when upon every hill, & c. And thus he accuseth them of their ingratitude, who owed themselves to their Redeemer. But this

doth not so well agree with their engagement, Exo_19:8. When; or, notwithstanding all thy promises.

Upon every high hill: idolaters were wont to sacrifice upon the tops of high hills, because there they thought themselves nearer heaven; nay, some have esteemed high hills to be gods, as the Indians of Peru at this day.

Under every green tree: under these shades idolaters thought there lay some hidden deity, with which they conversed.

Thou wanderest, viz. changing thy way to gad after idols, as one that hast broken covenant. See on Isa_57:8. The word properly signifies to go from one's place, as harlots use to do, instigated either by unbridled lust, or covetousness; i.e. making great haste from one tree to another, or from one idol to another. See Jer_2:23,24. Others, thou liest down, or, thou settest thyself.

Playing the harlot; committing idolatry, which is a spiritual harlotry, Jer_3:1,2. This is frequent. Some read the former part of the text otherwise, making it the daring boast of the people, *Thou hast said, I have broken*, &c. and saidst, *I will not serve*, i.e. I will not obey. But this will not suit well with the rest of the text.

Jeremiah 2:21

A noble vine; a usual metaphor for the church, Psa_80:8,9, &c. **See Poole "Isa_5:1"**. The Hebrew is *Sorek*, and may refer to the place or to the plant. With reference to the place, it may be taken either for a proper name, as Carmel for any fruitful place; so here noting either the place whence, viz. a vine of the same kind with those that come from Sorek; possibly that country where Samson saw Delilah, Jud_16:4: or, the place where planted, viz. in a fruitful land, Exo_15:17. **See Poole "Isa_1:2"**. If it be referred to the plant, then it points at the excellency of its kind; and this the next clause seems to favour: and thus it notes both God's care; he had as great a care of it as of the choicest plant; see on Isa_27:2,3; and also his expectation, that it should prove so, Isa_5:4. And the sense is, I planted thee, that thou shouldst bring forth choice fruit to me.

A right seed; a right seed of true believers, as ill the days of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Or supposing with to be understood before right seed, (as it often is in the Hebrew,) we

may understand it of the ordinances of his church, which are said to be the plants or seed that God furnisheth it withal, Mat_13:24; and these are called *right*, Neh_9:13, not false or counterfeit.

The degenerate plant: though there be only degenerate or declining in the Hebrew text, yet the supplement is necessary in regard of the metaphor.

Strange: this must here be taken in a bad sense, as the word

degenerate going before intimates, though it be sometimes for what is rare and excellent: here it notes their apostacy and infidelity, and other wickednesses, where God speaks after the manner of man, both in a way of wonder and reproof.

Jeremiah 2:22

Though interpreters do greatly vary. in describing what is particularly meant here by

nitre and soap, and it would be superfluous to mention here; yet all agree they are some materials that artists make use of for the cleansing away spots from the skin, clothes, or other things; and the sense is plain, that the blot of his people is by no art to be taken out: it cannot be covered by excuses; Though thou wouldst dissemble thy idolatries, thou canst not deceive me: nor expiated by sacrifices; it is beyond the power of all superstitious or religious washings to cleanse away, which may be understood by these natural and artificial ways of cleansing.

Thine iniquity is marked: the meaning seems to be either, Thy filthiness is so foul that it leaves a brand behind it that cannot be hid or washed out, but will abide: see Jer_17:1. Or, according to another acceptation of the word,

it is laid up with God. See the like Deu_32:34 Hos_13:12. Purge thee, wash thee, do what thou wilt, thou canst by no means conceal thy wickedness from me, Job_9:20. They that would see greater variety of interpretations, let them consult the Synopsis.

Jeremiah 2:23

How canst thou say? with what face canst thou go about to excuse thyself, or deny what is so evident, and so truly charged upon thee? Jer_2:20.

I have not gone after Baalim: the word is plural, as comprehensive of all their idols, Hos_11:2, and is a name usually given to several of them, as Baal-zebub, 2Ki_1:16, and Baal-peor, Num_25:3, and therefore their worshipping of many. Because they had the temple and sacrifices, &c., they still persuaded themselves that they worshipped the true God, though they joined their idolatries with it; as the papists though they make use of idols in worship, yet would not be accounted idolaters.

Thy way; the filthiness thou hast left behind thee, whereby thou mayst be traced, where thou leftest, as it were, thy footsteps, and monuments of thy frequent idolatries.

Thy way in the valley; thy frequent course in the valleys, whether of Hinnom, where they burnt their children's bones in sacrifice, Jer_7:31, or in any valleys where thou hast been frequent in thy idolatries; it seems to be thus largely taken.

Know what thou hast done; look on and consider thy ways, as Jer_2:19.

Thou art a swift dromedary; or, *thou art as* , &c.; or, *O dromedary* , a beast much used by carriers in Arabia, being rife there. See on Isa_60:6.

Traversing; a metaphor taken from creatures that are hunted, that keep no direct path; alluding to the nature of the she dromedary, which in gendering time runs capering this way, and crossing that way, making many vagaries to find out sometimes one male, sometimes another, without any rule or order; setting forth hereby the disposition of this people, that were so mad upon their idols, that they ran sometimes after this, and sometimes after that, called *wandering* , Jer_2:20, and that with great eagerness, fitly termed traversing, much like the description of a whore, Pro_7:11,12; the word being no where found but here, and being derived from a word that signifies a shoe-latchet, If any be curious, let the learned consult Synop. Critic., and the English reader the English Annotations on the place.

Jeremiah 2:24

A wild ass; or, *O wild ass* ; another similitude for the more lively description of the same thing; neither need we be solicitous about the variety or extravagancies of conjectures about this beast; or

you may consult as before. It is said to be wild and untamed, as being

used to the wilderness doth also imply; and as to satisfying its lust, much of the nature of the other.

That snuffeth up the wind: this snuffing properly appertains to the sense of smelling, by which certain creatures, by a natural sagacity, find out what they miss, which huntsmen express by a proper term of

winding, or having in the wind; and thus it is understood here; for this creature, by the wind; smells afar off which way her male is; for there is another sense of

snuffing up the wind, viz. for the service of health, as allaying inward heat and drought, &c., Jer_14:6.

At her pleasure; as her desire or lust serves when it runs out after the male; implying also that no choice, or judgment, or measure is observed in these beasts, when carried out after their lusts.

In her occasion who can turn her away? i.e. when she is set upon it, and hath an occasion and opportunity to run impetuously to her male for the satisfying her pleasure, she bears down all opposition before her; there is none can stop or put a bridle upon her raging lust.

Will not weary themselves, i.e. either they need not weary themselves; (speaking of Jerusalem, to which all the rest also is to be applied as in an allegory;) they that have a mind to be filthy with her may easily trace her, Jer_2:23, she refuses none: or rather, they will not bestow their labour in vain, when she is hot upon her lust, but let her take her course until she be satisfied, and wait their time and opportunity; and this agrees with the next words.

In her month they shall find her: if this relate to the former sense of not wearying themselves, it notes her impudence and insatiableness; you may have her at any time, even in her months or new moons, a season wherein such acts are abhorrent even to nature itself. Some understand this of the idolatry they committed every new moon; but it more properly points at the month of her breeding, or growing big and weighty; *month* put collectively for

months , such as Job speaks of, Job_39:1,2. Or, in her last month, because they grow then unwieldy. That this creature sleeps one month in the year, and that is the month she may be taken, is generally deemed but a fancy. The sense of the verse is, that though Jerusalem be now madly bent upon going after her idols, and other unclean courses, that there is no stopping or controlling of her, as in the next verse, and Jer_2:31 **22:21**; yet the time may come, in their afflictions, that they may grow more tame, and willing to receive counsel, as Jer_2:27, and Hos_5:15.

Jeremiah 2:25

Withhold thy foot from being unshod; good counsel given them by the prophet to tarry at home; either that they do not go a gadding after their spiritual or corporal adulteries, or seek foreign aids, thereby to wear out their shoes; a metonymy of the effect, Jos_9:13: or, that thou put not off thy shoes to go into the bed of lust, or uncover thy feet; a modest Hebrew expression, as also of other languages, for

exposing thy nakedness, Eze_16:25: or, take not those courses that will reduce thee to poverty, to go bare-foot, and bare-legged, and to want wherewith to quench thy thirst, as in the next clause, **Pr 6 26 Isa 20:2,4**. See Isa_5:13. *There is no hope* : she seems to return a cross answer, the word pointing at somewhat that is desperate, Ecc_2:20. It either expresseth the desperateness of their condition: q.d. We are as bad as we can be, and there is no hope that God should receive us into favour. Or, else by way of interrogation, Is there no hope? May we not hold on still, and prosper? Must we desist from our ways? No, we will not; but we will go after other gods, and they shall defend us, Isa_57:10 Jer_18:12. Or the desperateness of their resolution upon it: q.d. We care not since there is no remedy; you lose your labour to go about to reclaim us; which agrees with the next clause. Strangers, viz. idols, or strange gods.

After them will I go, come what will of it.

Jeremiah 2:26

Ashamed when he is found; not ashamed of his sin of theft, but that he is found, that his shifts and blinds would serve him no longer, especially if he have had the reputation of an honest man.

The house of Israel; or families, the twelve tribes; a metonymy of the subject.

Ashamed; or, confounded, in the passive voice; viz. when they shall be taken by Nebuchadnezzar, then their idols, which they went a whoring after, shall be discovered, and so put them to shame: in the active voice, their inability to help them, Jer_2:28 Isa_1:29 Hos_4:19; and their shame will be the more, because they had the repute of being my people.

Their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets; rulers and teachers, such as should have given better examples, and better instruction.

Jeremiah 2:27

A stone; idol; a metonymy of the matter, because idols are made of these materials, Dan_5:4.

Brought me forth; or, begotten me; so is the word used, Gen_4:18. This notes the sottish stupidity of this people, to take a lifeless stock or stone to be their maker, and to give the honour of God unto them, Isa_44:17. They that make them are like unto them, as senseless as they, Psa_115:8.

They have turned their back unto me, and not their face; they turn their faces wholly towards their idols: it notes the openness of their apostacy, Jer_7:24.

Arise, and save us; the usual language of God's children in distress, Psa_3:7, and often elsewhere; then they found the vanity of their idols, and their own folly in relying on them, that cannot help or save, and rejecting me, Jer_2:31, then they will come to me, Jud_10:10 Hos_5:15; the same thing with finding her in her month, Jer_2:24; herein abusing God's gentleness, making him their necessity, not their choice.

Jeremiah 2:28

Thy gods; thy idols, viz. gods of thy own making; what do they do for thee? Isa_31:3.

Let them arise: either by way of challenge, let them produce their idols now, to help them, if they can, whom they call their fathers and their makers; or by way of scoff, as Elijah to Baal's priests: see Jud_10:14. Besides, in this word arise there is an insinuation

of their lifelessness and deadness, Isa_46:7 Jer_10:15. And further, there may be a secret reply couched in it: q.d. In your trouble you will say to me, Arise, save us; now say so to them, and see if they can arise, and save you.

According to the number of thy cities are thy gods: q.d. Thou hast them near to thee, and enough of them, imitating the heathens, who had according to Varro above thirty thousand deities; no marvel if I, who am but one, be slighted, when thou hast in every city at least one, 2Ki_17:29-31, and in Jerusalem one in every street, Jer_11:13. It is a hard case if none nor all these thy tutelar gods can help thee: see Deu_32:37-39. Make trial if any, or all of them together, can help thee.

Jeremiah 2:29

Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all: q.d. You are all at my mercy, why will you contend? all this that I charge you with is clear and evident, and all makes against you, Jer_2:23,34. Wherefore do you expostulate, and put me to my proofs? This they were good at, Jer_16:10. There is nothing that you can justly reply, Jer_2:19.

Ye all have transgressed against me, i.e. some of all sorts; there is not any one sort of you innocent.

Jeremiah 2:30

Your children; either your posterity, that you breed up like yourselves; or rather, your inhabitants in every city, they being frequently called the children of such a city, or such a place: *children of Seir* , 2Ch_25:14, *children* , of the province, Ezr_2:1, and *children of thy people* , Lev_19:18, and abundance more the like; and thus it is comprehensive both of parents and children.

Correction, i.e. The fruit of correction, viz. instruction. The same word is rendered *correction* , Pro_23:13, which signifies *instruction* , Pro_5:12, and in other places; and so to be taken here: it notes their refractoriness, that though they were corrected, yet they would not be instructed; though God did smite them, yet the rod prevailed as little with them as the word.

Your own sword hath devoured your prophets; either the sword that I have sent to destroy you hath destroyed your false prophets together with you, Hos_4:5, and so it is both a prophecy

and a threatening; or rather, you have been so far from receiving counsel and instruction, that you have, by the sword, and other ways of destruction, (which is to be understood by the sword,) murdered those that I sent to reprove your follies in the days of Asa, Joash, Manasseh, &c., Neh_9:26. See Mat_23:34,35.

Devoured; or, eaten up; a metaphor. Hence we read of the *edge of the sword* , which both in Hebrew and Greek is called the *mouth of the sword* , Jer_21:7 Luk_21:24. *Like a destroying lion* ; without respect or pity; with all manner of savage usage; see Psa_7:2; laying aside all humanity.

Jeremiah 2:31

O generation; or, O ye men of this generation, a note of admiration; or rather, O generation, a note of compellation: it is to you I speak,

see ye the word of the Lord, i.e. look well to it, consider it; as the rod is to teach, and therefore ought to be heard, Mic_6:9, so the word is to be considered of, and therefore ought to be looked into, Jer_2:19. He speaketh here not so much of the doctrine of the word as of the thing itself: q.d. You shall see the thing with your eyes, because you give the doctrine the hearing only, as we use to say, i.e. your ears are shut against it.

Have I been a wilderness? here God challengeth them again to tell him what unkindness he had showed them, as before, Jer_2:5. Have I been like the wilderness of Arabia? have not I accommodated you with all necessaries at all times? Deu_32:13,14 Eze 34:13-15; nay, in the wilderness itself I was not a wilderness unto you: an account whereof Nehemiah gives, Neh_9:15-23. And you have the story of it **Psa 78**.

A land of darkness: divers interpreters derive this word from a different root, and accordingly render the sense variously. Some from a root that signifies to *fade* or *fall* , as a land where fruits fall off before they be ripe, bringing nothing to perfection; and so Tremelius and Junius translate it, Isa_28:1,4: q.d. Have you found me to fail your expectations in any thing that I have promised you? Jos_21:45 **23:14**. Others derive it from a word that signifies late, as a land that brings forth its fruit late in the year, which either ripeneth not, or ripeneth unkindly: q.d. Have you found me

backward in any thing to do you good? have I not fed you to the full? Others from *darkness* , properly thick darkness, Exo_10:22 Joe_2:2. And it is the more significant, because *Jah* , the name of God, is added to it; q.d. *the darkness of God* ; as a sleep of God, for a *deep sleep* , 1Sa_26:12; flame of God, for a *vehement flame* , Son_8:6; as if it were a land uninhabitable, because of the total want of light: q.d. Have I been a God of no use or comfort to them, that they thus leave me? Have they had nothing from me but misery and affliction? as this notion of darkness may import, Isa_8:22 Lam_3:2. Hence the LXX. express it by a *land bringing forth thorns* . Or this expression, *a land of darkness* , may be put by apposition to the former.

Say, i.e. in their heart.

We are lords; words of pride and boasting: God had endeavoured to make them sensible that all their happiness they owed to him, and now, q.d. you rule as lords without us; see 1Co_4:8; now you cast me off: or rather, We are well enough established in our government by foreign aids, and compacts with the Egyptians, and Assyrians, &c., and have rulers of our own; we have no such great need of thee. Hence the LXX. render it in the passive voice, We will not be ruled; which agrees with the text words of the verse, Deu_32:15,16. Something of this appeared in Uzziah, 2Ch_26:15,16, and Hezekiah, 2Ch_32:25; neither was David wholly clear, Psa_30:6.

Jeremiah 2:32

Can a maid forget her ornaments? how seldom is it, and how unlikely, that a maid should forget her ornaments!

Or a bride her attire? whether it belongs to the head, or the breast, or arms, whether bracelets or jewels, wherever worn, is not worth the disputing; but understand those rich jewels which the bridegroom was wont to present his bride with, partly for a general obligation, and partly of particular signification, and all of them ornamental, whatever may render her amiable in the eyes of her bridegroom; virgins, and especially brides, will not usually neglect any thing that may make them comely.

Have forgotten me, viz. in the neglect of my worship; me, who was not only their defence, but their glory, Jer_2:11, &c., that for which other nations honoured them, Psa_148:14 Eze_16:10-14.

Days without number, i.e. for a long time past, time out of mind, or, as the Hebrew, *days* of which there is no number.

Jeremiah 2:33

Why trimmest, or *deckest*, Eze_23:40, thinking thereby to entice others to thy help? thus is the word used, Jer_4:30. Or, Why dost thou use so much art and skill, and take so much pains, to go and send here and there to contract a friendship with foreign people, and to bring them to thy embraces, Isa_57:9,10, or thinking to set a good face or gloss upon the matter, and excuse thyself, as if thou couldst delude God, whereas all thou dost is to get acquaintance with other idolaters?

To seek love, i.e. to commit filthiness with thy idols; a synecdoche of the kind.

Therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones, i.e. thou art become so vile, that even strumpets themselves may come to learn of thee, 2Ch_33:9. Or by thy example; nations that have been vile enough of themselves, by thy example are become more vile.

Thy ways, i.e. thy actions; a metaphor.

Jeremiah 2:34

In thy skirts, viz. of thy garments; a synecdoche of the kind; the tokens of thy cruelty may be seen openly there: or, in *thy hands*, as the LXX.: or a metaphor from birds of rapine, whose wings are bloody with their prey; but not so well. *Is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents*, i.e. in thee is found the murders expressed here by blood of innocent persons, meant here by souls, comprising both their sacrificing of their little children to their idols, Psa_106:37,38 Eze_16:20,21,36, murdering souls as well as bodies; and also all those cruelties, oppressions, and murders that they executed upon poor innocent persons, which were not a few in what Manasseh did, 2Ki_21:16 Eze_7:23 9:9, and in special the prophets, Jer_2:30, that came in God's name to reclaim them; which notes their desperate malice as well as cruelty, to slay their physicians.

By secret search, Heb. *by digging* ; as if the earth had covered the blood, or as if they had committed their wickedness in some obscure places.

But upon all these; upon thy garments openly enough, as exposed to public view. There needs no such strict scrutiny to be made.

Jeremiah 2:35

Yet thou sayest; or interrogatively, Darest thou say? hast thou the impudence to affirm it?

Innocent; clear of this whole charge. *Shall turn* ; shall not break out against me, Isa_5:25.

I will plead with thee; I will proceed in my judgment against thee, Jer_2:9 Jer_25:31. Or it is a soft expression, wherein he shows that he will not act like a tyrant, carried on rashly and furiously; but as a judge, regularly and righteously, Eze_20:35; and it shows that he will convince her.

Because thou sayest, I have not sinned; because thou dost justify thyself, as if I had no cause to be angry with thee. God is not angry with her so much because she hath sinned, as because she will not acknowledge her sin.

Jeremiah 2:36

Thy way, i.e. thy actions; a metaphor. **See Poole "Jer_2:33"**. Why dost thou shuffle thus with me, to seek auxiliaries any where, rather than to cleave to me, Jer_2:18; **See Poole "Isa_52:9"**, **See Poole "Isa_52:10"**. Or, like strumpets, whose love is never fixed, but sometimes set on one, sometimes on another.

Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt: thou hast run to Assyria, and then to Egypt, and they shall both make thee ashamed by their disappointing of thee; thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as others have been, Isa_36:6. Or rather, Egypt shall stand thee in no more stead than Assyria hath done, Isa_30:3,5. And how Tilgath-pilneser served them, see 2Ch_28:20. Before Hezekiah's time the Jews made a league with the Assyrians against the Syrians and the Israelites, and then against the Egyptians; neither prospered. He tells them they must expect no better success from Egypt.

Jeremiah 2:37

Thou shalt go forth from him: some apply it to the sad and ineffectual return of the ambassadors, being disappointed in their expectation from the king of Egypt; but rather, All the help thou canst procure from abroad shall not prevent thy captivity, but from hence thou shalt go.

Thine hands upon thine head; a usual posture of sadness and mourning, 2Sa_13:19, suited here to her going into captivity.

Rejected thy confidences; refused to give success unto them, 2Ch_16:7. Or, rejected thee for thy confidences; or, he disapproves thy confidences, viz. all thy refuges which thou seekest out of God.

Thou shalt not prosper in them, viz. in thy refuges and dependencies.

Jeremiah 3:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 3

God's forbearance with the idolatry of Judah, who is worse than Israel, Jer_3:1-11. Both called to repent, with gospel promises, Jer_3:12-19. Misery by sin; salvation only of God, Jer_3:20-25.

They say; or, *Men use to say* . If this, with the four following verses, belong to the former chapter, then it seems to express God's condescension to them: q. d. Though if a woman forsake her husband, and be married to another man, the law will not permit him to receive her again; yet God would receive thee again upon thy returning to him; but thou chooseth rather obstinately to adhere to thy other confidences, wherein thou shalt not prosper. But if we look upon them as beginning a new argument, then here God declares his readiness to receive them again upon their repentance, though it be very unusual for husbands so to do, when their wives have proved treacherous unto them, in betaking themselves to other husbands; and so this chapter may very well begin with such a proverbial speech, *They say* , or, *Men use to say* , or, *It is commonly said. Put away his wife* ; or give her a bill of divorce, Deu_24:1. Shall he return unto her again? q. d. He cannot take her again, according to the law, Deu_24:1-4. Or rather, will a man do such a thing? If the law were not against it, would any man be so easily wrought upon as to take her again? No, certainly.

It is an argument from the less to the greater, to set forth God's great lenity towards them: q.d. If a husband should turn away his wife merely because he pleased her not, though she gave him no just cause, and she should bestow herself on another, he would not be reconciled to her, neither might he take her again; but you have gone a whoring from me, and sufficiently provoked me to reject and turn you off. I will dispense with my own law for your sakes, and will act by my prerogative; I am ready to be reconciled, to follow them that fly from me, as in the close of the verse, and Zec_1:3 Mat_3:7. God will pardon sins of apostacy, and falls after repentance.

Shall not that land be greatly polluted? Heb. *in being profane be profaned* . Would not so great a sin greatly pollute a state or nation? Lev_18:27,28. It must needs be polluted by such marriages to and fro, and promiscuous couplings, Deu_24:4.

With many lovers; not with one only, as being sufficient to make thee an adulteress, but a common strumpet, joining in fellowship with divers associates and companions, or many idols.

Jeremiah 3:2

Lift up thine eyes; do but look, and consider whether I do charge thee wrongfully or no.

Unto the high places: he directs her to the places of her whoredoms and idolatries, called

high places, being principally upon hills, 2Ki_21:3, and divers other places, though sometimes in valleys, Jer_2:23; which notes also her impudence, that whereas other whores affected privacy, she should be filthy in the open view.

And see where thou hast not been lien with; thy filthiness has been every where so frequent, that thou canst scarce show a place that hath been free from thy pollutions, Jer_3:6,13, where there are not the footsteps of thy fornications and idolatries.

In the ways, viz. to allure passengers, see Eze_16:24,25 and waiting for them, viz. thy associates; not being drawn by others' allurements, but thine own lasciviousness.

As the Arabian; an allusion to the manner and custom of that people, either lying in wait by the way for passengers, as robbers

use to do, Hos_6:9, they being noted for robbers. Or rather, in way of traffic, that were wont to pitch their tents by the way-sides, that they might meet with their customers to trade, as they passed along; very properly pointing out the practice of harlots. See Pro_7:11,12. Thy wickedness; not only thy idolatries, but all other thy wicked courses.

Jeremiah 3:3

Therefore the showers have been withholden, viz. by me, according to my threatening, Lev_26:19 Deu_28:23,24, i.e. a drought sent upon thee, either as a punishment of thy wickedness; thus public sins bring public judgments; or as an aggravation of it; and then it must be read *though*, as it often is; q. d. notwithstanding the great drought; and this the last words of the verse seem to favour. *There hath been no latter rain*: this, added to showers before mentioned, seems to imply there had been no former nor latter rain, the former for the springing of the corn, the latter for the plumping and ripening it; this coming a little before harvest.

Thou hadst a whore's forehead: for all this, thou didst still remain impudent and obstinate, as ashamed of nothing, Jer_6:15; thus proverbially expressed, because shame doth first and mostly appear in the forehead. Thus antichrist's impudence is expressed, Rev_17:5. And some ancient heretics were called *effrontes*.

Jeremiah 3:4

Wilt thou not from this time, viz. that I have withholden showers? Some refer this,

1. To the time to come; Wilt thou not yet be wise, and for the future seek to me, having found all thy other ways successful? Isa_9:13 Jer_8:14.

2. To the time present; How canst thou challenge me for my present severity, and continuing it towards thee, when thou still retainest thy filthiness, thy whore's forehead, Jer_3:3. Thou still continuest worshipping idols, and yet fanciest thyself faithful to me.

3. To the time past, i.e. Hast thou not all along pretended kindness to me, and as if thou hadst walked close with me? 2Ki_17:32,33
Eze 23:39.

Cry unto me, My father; wilt thou not as a child call upon, me, whom thou hast thus greatly provoked, and own me as a father? Jer_3:19; for such have I been to thee, Psa_103:13 Mal_1:6 **3:17.**

The guide of my youth; either on whom I have depended, as being brought up by thee; or the submissive expression of a wife seeking to be reconciled to her husband, that God would be to her as he had been in the days of her youth; such a case as is expressed 1Co_7:11; words of flattery usual with hypocrites: or rather, being married to thee in thy youth; a periphrasis for husband, Pro_2:17; which argues great tenderness towards her, Jer_3:2. Thus the tenderness of this relation is expressed Mal_2:14, and so God is said to espouse them to himself Eze_16:8.

Jeremiah 3:5

Will he reserve his anger for ever? here being a defect of the noun, the Jews supply it with *thy sin*, Isa_43:25, but the most and best, as we do,

his anger. Compare it with Jer_3:12 Psa_103:9 Nah_1:2, in which texts there is a defect of the same word. This may seem to be the words of the prophet, and so the connexion is easy with the foregoing words: q.d. If thou wouldst do so, try me now, &c.: would he reserve his anger? would he not be reconciled? but thou hast taken quite another course. Or they may be the words of God, as it were, teaching his people how they should accost him: God is more forward and earnest for reconciliation than sinners themselves.

The end; the same with the former for ever.

Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest: God's challenge of the people, charging them, either with their resolved wickedness, that they had made good all their evil words by their evil actions, they had even done as they said; or rather, with their hypocrisy: q.d. Notwithstanding all thy former promises, yet thou persistest still in thy lewdness and obstinacy, Isa_58:2 Hos_7:14.

Jeremiah 3:6

The Lord said also, or again; showing that here begins a new sermon, in which the prophet from God,

1. Declares Israel's apostacy, and how it fared with them for it.
2. Aggravates Judah's sin for not taking warning.
3. Issues forth an invitation of them both to repentance, with a promise of acceptation, and reuniting them under the Messiah.
4. Relates the compliance of the faithful among them with this invitation.

Unto me, viz. by revelation; for he speaks of things that Israel had done when they were carried away by the king of Assyria, 2Ki_17:5-13, long before Jeremiah was born; therefore he saith, Hast thou not seen, i.e. considered, wherefore God gave her a bill of divorce?

In the days of Josiah the king; when he would have purged the land, and restored the pure worship of God.

Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done, viz. the ten tribes, who fell off from Judah, and set up a distinct kingdom of their own under Jeroboam? what they did, viz. in their idolatries? expressed in the next words, and Jer_2:20; see there; when they openly apostatized from God, and that with one common consent, insomuch that all their kings proved wicked and idolatrous; and possibly it may look as far back as Solomon's defection, 1Ki_11:4, &c., which may now come in remembrance.

Jeremiah 3:7

Turn thou unto me, viz. by repentance, Act_3:19. Although she had been so vile and abominable, yet the Lord waited in expectation of her return.

Her treacherous sister Judah: Benjamin is also here comprised, but Judah being the chief is only named, these two abiding together after the other ten revolted to Jeroboam; called Israel's

sister, because they were all descended from the patriarch Jacob, Eze_16:46; compare Eze_23:2,4; and treacherous, or the *treacherous one*, because of her frequent revolts, 2Ch_21:6, &c.; 2Ch_24:17,18, and many other times, and after as frequent renewed covenants and promises, both in conjunction with the rest of the tribes, Deu_5:2,3,23, &c.; Deu_29:10-12, &c., and afterwards, 2Ch_13:9,10, &c.; 2Ch_15:12, &c.; **2Ch 23 16 29:10**.

Saw it , i.e. they were not strangers to it, but knew it, as the word is, Psa_40:3. They could not but know how I had dealt with Israel.

Jeremiah 3:8

I saw: q.d. That which others discern not I saw well enough, viz. both her hypocrisy and dissimulation, and her incorrigibleness notwithstanding what had befallen Israel, whose correction should have been her instruction; thus God speaks of the notice he took of both, Jer_23:13,**14**. Israel is said to be backsliding, but Judah

treacherous, because she retained the worship of God, though she did often privately and closely embrace idols. and sometimes publicly, under Manasseh, and Ahaz, and other wicked kings:

When for all the causes; or notwithstanding all the ground and reason I had to deal so with Israel in regard of her adulteries, as to put her away.

Given her a bill of divorce; delivered her up into the hands of the Assyrian, where God took from her the title of being his church, 2Ki_17:5,**6**, &c., which he calls here a bill of divorce; not such a one as the Jews were allowed to give upon every slight ground, (for such a one God denies that ever he gave them, and challengeth them to produce it, Isa_1:1) but upon just and great occasion, viz. her playing the adulteress against him in her idolatries. Feared not, i.e. was neither afraid of giving me offence, nor of the like punishment. But went and played the harlot also; although she had seen the judgment of God executed upon Israel before her eyes, which made it the more stupendous, that she would take no warning by her sister's sufferings, Pro_28:14, yet she went on still, Eze_23:11,**12**, &c.

Jeremiah 3:9

The lightness of her whoredom; whether of Judah's or of Israel's is not agreed upon, but the right applying of it doth depend much upon the right acceptance of the word *lightness* , which comes from a Hebrew word that signifies *voice* ; and so it may refer either to the noise or fame of it, that would fly abroad, and thus it is applied to Israel, i.e. though Israel's whoredoms were never so much blazed abroad, yet Judah regarded it not. Or it may be taken for the heinousness of it, a crying voice, as

Gen_4:10, and so by an hypallage, her *whoredoms of fame* , or notorious whoredoms; and is not ill expressed here by

lightness of her whoredom, noting her impudence in it, as we use to term a common harlot a light woman; and thus it is applied to Judah, both the foregoing and following words seeming to be an aggravation of Judah's refractoriness.

Defiled the land; brought the whole land under the imputation of filthiness.

With stones and with stocks, i.e. with idols made of stone and wood, a metonymy of the matter, to note the baseness of the fact.

Jeremiah 3:10

Though God saw what she did, and though she saw the shameful idolatry of Israel, and what she had suffered, yet she was not warned; see Jer_3:8; but fell to idolatry under Manasseh, who undid what Hezekiah had done, 2Ch_33:3, though under fair pretences she dissembled with God in the days of Josiah, 2Ch_34:32,**33**, as appeared by her sudden revolt, viz. in less than three months after Josiah's death, 2Ki_23:31,**32**.

Jeremiah 3:11

Was less vile, hath more to say for herself; Judah's sin being greatly aggravated compared with Israel, Eze_16:51 **23:11**. See Luk_18:14. For though Israel's sins were more, and their idolatry continued, yet in Judah it was more heinous,

1. Because of their unruly headstrongness, that broke the reins and restraint which their external worship ought to have had upon them.

2. Because of their stupid security in not being warned by the judgments that they had seen befall Israel for the very same things.

3. Because of their intolerable pride, boasting that their state was still unshaken.

4. Because of their gross perfidiousness in making promises, and breaking them, which Israel did not, because she brought not herself under such solemn and frequent obligations: see Jer_3:7. LastLy, Because they were a great deal more zealous in their

idolatries than Israel was, viz. under Manasseh, when they slew all the prophets of the Lord.

Jeremiah 3:12

Go: it may possibly be used here as an adverb of exciting, namely, to go, as is usual; or it notes speed, Go quickly, out of hand; not locally, but set thy face, Jer_2:2, or feet, that way, or by thy office address thyself to them, viz. by way of proclamation, crying aloud; possibly implying the distance of place: this voice may in time reach them, though a great way off. Or rather the deafness of Israel, or the obdurateness of Judah, that they might hear what God saith to Israel, conceive hope, and be reclaimed by their example, and be excited to emulation.

Toward the north, i.e. to Assyria and Media, and the regions thereabouts, that lay northward from Judea, whither the ten tribes were carried by Tiglath-pileser and Shulmaneser, 2Ki_15:29 **17:6.**

And I will not cause mine anger; upon condition of returning to their former true worship of God, that thereby Judah might be awakened, he promiseth that he will not let his anger, or his *face* , as in the Hebrew, (because anger principally appears in the face,) his *angry face* , or countenance, to be upon them; so it is used Lev_17:10 Psa_34:16; and not be inexorable, viz.

for ever, which is to be supplied from the next words; for otherwise his anger lay heavy upon them at this time.

To fall a metaphor from things on high that drop down to the hurt of whatever is under them, and so Jer_23:34: compare Gen_19:24.

For I am merciful: here is the ground of this conditional promise, taken from the nature of God, that sinners may not despair, Psa_86:15 **103:8,9**, &c.

Jeremiah 3:13

Only acknowledge thine iniquity; which will be the evidence of thy repentance, without which thou canst not lay claim to any pardon, Pro_28:13 Isa_55:7. This is spoken by way of limitation, lest the Israelites should fancy a too easy pardon from God's merciful nature. Exhortations to repentance should always accompany the exhibition of promises.

Hast scattered thy ways to the strangers, viz. to other nations, or rather to other gods, or to idols, running here and there, up and down, like a light, impudent harlot. sometimes to one, sometimes to another, thus sucking in divers superstitions, called

scattering thy ways, Jer_3:6 2Ki_17:4,**9,10 Jer 2:23,25**. *Feet* , whereby we go on in ways; a metaphorical metonymy. Ye have not obeyed my voice; so that your sin is not a sin of ignorance, but of obstinacy, shutting your ears against my counsels, which I sent you by my prophets for your reclaiming, 2Ki_17:13, &c.

Jeremiah 3:14

Turn, O backsliding children; for I am married unto you; I am in covenant with you, Deu_29:1,**10-12**, &c., and this covenant, notwithstanding all your unfaithfulness, I am ready to renew with you, Hos_2:19,**20**.

One of a city, and two of a family: this word family is not always to be taken strictly for a household; for then the expression would seem to imply more in a family than in a city; but frequently for a country or nation; compare Gen_12:3, with Gen_22:18; see Jer_1:15; or for a *tribe* ; and this may partly respect the fewness of those that will be found penitents and return. God will have a sprinkling in every city, and in every family, or tribe, or country. But chiefly it respects God's exact care of them, that being now married to them, there shall not be one in a city, or two in a country or tribe, but he will find them out; if there be but one or two, he will not overlook them: this seems to be intimated Isa_27:12, a text that points at the same thing.

I will bring you to Zion, i.e. to JerusaLem, a type of the church; a double metonymy of the subject. It is the manner of the prophets, when they are treating of temporal deliverances, especially from Babylon, frequently to break out abruptly into the spiritual deliverance by Christ, and so probably he doth here; and therefore *bringing them to Zion* must be understood, either of joining them to his church under the Messiah, or bringing them again to worship with Judah at Jerusalem; as may seem to be intimated, Jer_31:6; but the ten tribes did never return into their own land, and therefore that text must be understood of a spiritual going up

to Zion, viz. when all Israel shall be saved, Rom_11:26. See Isa_56:7,8 66:20; and this chapter, Jer_3:18. Thus we may look upon this part of the prophecy to have respect, partly to what God was at that time about to do, in this verse; and partly what he would hereafter do, when they should be again settled in their own land, under the Messiah, Jer_3:16-19.

Jeremiah 3:15

Pastors; either civil magistrates, which are sometimes so called, Mic_5:5; or rather ecclesiastical, as appears both from the reason of God's judgments upon Israel, viz. their pastors being generally either thieves or dumb dogs; and also from the nature of their office, in the close of the verse, and thus they are called Eph_4:11.

According to mine heart; such as I will both choose for you and approve of, and that shall faithfully and skilfully declare unto you my mind; which intimates not only a single act of deliverance, but his constant preservation of them.

Which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding; this notes either the nature of their food: see Neh_8:8 Mal_2:7. Or rather the manner of their feeding: see Psa_78:72 1Pe_5:2. See more of this promise Jer_23:4.

Jeremiah 3:16

When ye be multiplied; after the growth of the church under the Messiah.

In those days; pointing at the great work of conversion that should be among them, especially in the days of the Messias, and how greatly the church should be increased by the accession of the Gentiles, a beginning whereof we read Act_2:41 4:4.

The ark; a synecdoehical expression for all the legal ceremonies, whereof the ark was a chief part: the sense is, that whole worship, with all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it, should wholly cease, Christ being come, who was the substance of what the ark and all other rites did but shadow out for a time he being now our propitiatory, instead of the covering of the ark or mercy-seat, Rom_3:25; he answers all the uses and purposes thereof. In the ark was laid up the *manna*, *Aaron's rod*, and *the tables of the law*, Heb_9:4. He is now the bread of life, **Joh 6 35**, he is our rod of government, Psa_23:4, in him is the whole law fulfilled,

Rom_10:4; and now God shall reign gloriously in his church by his word and Spirit, and shall be so worshipped without ceremony, Joh_4:21,23. For if this so eminent and comprehensive a token of God's presence must cease in the days of the gospel, much more the temple service, with all the rites belonging to it, Joh_1:17 Col_2:17 Heb_10:8,9.

The ark of the covenant; called also the *ark of the testimony* , Exo_25:22 **30:26 31:7**; and the reason is, because the two tables of the law, which were the testimony or witness of the covenant, were closed up in it, Exo_25:16,21 **40:20**.

Neither shall it come to mind, & c., i.e. it shall be no more in use, neither shall there be any miss of it, or any thing like it, there shall be no such thing; men shall not trouble their thoughts about it, or mention it; compare Isa_65:17; or repair to it as an oracle to receive the answers of God; nor for God's worship; compare Jer_16:14,15; or the place of its residence, as if no where else to be had; in a word, it shall not at all be had in honour or respect, or made much of. The word hve *hhasah* , *done or made* , signifies to magnify, as it seems to be used, Deu_32:6 1Sa_12:6. The whole church shall now be the throne of God, Jer_3:17, to which purpose the ark formerly served; now God foreseeing, partly how hard a thing it would be to be believed, and partly the pleas that the corrupt wit and invention of man would find out for the retaining of these rites, and by consequence their lothness to forego them, he useth such a heap and variety of expressions to the same thing, that he may leave no room for doubting in a thing so plainly and fully prohibited in gospel times.

Jeremiah 3:17

They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; instead of the ark, whereon was the mercy-seat, now the church, typified by Jerusalem, Gal_4:26 Rev_21:2, shall be the place of God's residence, where by his Spirit he will rule and act in his word and ordinances, and in special the Messias. See Jer_14:21, and Jer_3:16.

All the nations shall be gathered unto it; intimating both their readiness to come in, and their number, according to first prophecy of Jacob, Gen_49:10. See Isa_2:2. By

nations here understand either the ten tribes, who are called many people, both Israel and Judah united, their distance being taken away; see Jer_3:18; or rather some of all nations, that shall flock into the gospel church; for when the prophets foretell this state, they generally usher it in with the return of this people, at which time the church shall be greatly enlarged.

To the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem, i.e. dwelling in Jerusalem, or where the Lord placed his name, viz. of old in Jerusalem, Psa_122:2,3, &c., but now in the church, Rev_21:2,3, without ark or temple, Rev_21:22, where he will be known as it were by his proper name, Isa_60:9, or as manifest in the flesh.

Neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart; both Jew and Gentile shall now conform themselves to the will of God, **Isa 2 3**. The word

imagination here comes from a root that signifies to *see*, and thus it is sometimes applied to the judgment, Psa_17:2, and sometimes to the affection, Psa_66:18; here it may comprehend both, they will follow neither their own judgment nor affection, but wholly the word of God. The word is thus phrased Num_15:39 Ecc_11:9; some read it *after the hardness*, Deu_29:19.

Jeremiah 3:18

The house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel; these two kingdoms shall become one, that had been so long divided; the enmity that was between them shall be taken away, and they shall walk hand in hand in a friendly manner one with another, which is implied in this phrase of walking together, Psa_55:14 Amo_3:3; and this points at their incorporating into one body united by the same Spirit, as members of the same body under Christ their Head, and that without distinction of nations. See Isa_11:12,13 Eze 37:16,17 Eph 2:14-16 3:6.

Of the north, viz. of their captivity: see the place, Jer_3:12.

To the land, viz. Canaan; both a promise of their enjoying again their ancient possession at their last conversion, and typifying the church of Christ, which they shall be of, when brought out of their spiritual captivity.

Jeremiah 3:19

How shall I words that speak either, first, God's putting them to their own thoughts, how they could think he should bring such a perfidious people as they were into the land which he had promised; else, secondly, his considering within himself how or what course he should take to bring such a thing about, and accomplish it, they had so greatly degenerated from him and disobliged him; see Hos_6:4; both implying that such a thing could not be brought about without repentance and true conversion to him, wrought by his free grace, Eph_1:5,6.

Put thee among the children; esteem thee as my child, till thou give some clearer proof and demonstration of thy repentance.

And give thee a pleasant land; how shall I put thee into possession of that pleasant land of desire that I have promised thee? Canaan is so called, Psa_106:24 Dan_8:9 **11:16,41.**

A goodly heritage, Heb. *heritage of glory*, or beauty: see Isa_4:2.

Of the hosts of nations; so called, either because possessed by several potent nations, Num_13:28 Deu_4:38; or rather, it may note the great hosts and multitudes of nations, or Gentiles, that should be joined to them in the gospel church, viz. of God's elect, and so a heritage of the greatest delights, or the desire of nations; a people to whom all the nations would desire to flock; see Eze_20:6; and may be spoken also of the heavenly Canaan: the LXX. render it, *the heritage of God, the omnipotent Governor of the nations.*

And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father: God comes now to a resolution how he would do it. Either it is a direction: q.d. On this condition, that thou wilt own me, and not return any more to idols, this shall be done; or a promise, I will cause thee to own me, and give thee perseverance, that thou shalt not depart from me; and this is very applicable to the work of Christ; see Joh_1:12; see also 2Co_6:17,**18**; and the condition is indeed no more than God promiseth to effect in them.

Jeremiah 3:20

God hereby telling her what she had formerly been, endeavours to engage her to what she ought to be, namely, considering her

former unfaithfulness in time past, how she ought to carry it for the future. See 1Pe_4:3.

Jeremiah 3:21

A voice was heard: here the prophet seems to express Israel's repentance and turning to God; and that which they were at present engaging themselves in; (the word being participial, and in the present tense;) delivered in a prophetic style, as that in Jer_31:15; and that not only out of a sense of their judgments that they were under, but chiefly of their sins they were guilty of, and the pardon of which they were now begging. which is intimated by weeping and supplication.

Upon the high places, viz. that their cry might be the more public, both open and loud, Jer_22:20 Mat_10:27; possibly alluding to the usual practice of praying on the tops of houses in great calamities, Isa_15:3 **22:1** Jer_7:29 **1**,

Weeping and supplications; or rather, *weeping supplications* ; showing the intenseness of it; *praying in weeping, and weeping in prayer* , Zec_12:10, like Peter's weeping, Mat_26:75.

Of the children of Israel; the end of which might be to provoke Judah also to repentance, or otherwise to charge upon them their stupidity, and threaten them with the like judgments, if they would not return upon Israel's example.

They have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God: this expresseth rather the matter of their prayer than the cause of it, Lam_5:16, drawn chiefly from their sins, as also from their calamities.

Jeremiah 3:22

Return, viz. repent for sin and from sin. Here God calls upon them, and invites them to consider whither they are going, and to hearken unto the voice of his ministers, Hos_14:1 Act_3:19. See Jer_3:12. God doth as it were bid them hearken to his messengers, and then he will heal their backsliding.

I will heal your backslidings, i.e. *idolatries* , whereby you turned from me, and rebelled against me; I will take you into that state, as if you had never turned from me; I will make all whole again among you, and reconcile you to myself, Isa_57:18 Jer_32:40. See

Zec_10:6 **13:9**. I will not only remove your judgments, but your sins also shall be forgiven.

Behold, we come unto thee. This is either God's framing their answer for them, prescribing the manner and form of their repentance, by a figure called *mimesis* , Hos_14:2,3; or it is their reply to God by way of promise, which they performed under Josiah, **2Ki 22 2Ki 23**, which with their confession reacheth to the end of the chapter.

For thou art the Lord our God; words expressing the strongest inducements to it imaginable, because God hath right to them, is willing to accept them, and able to save them, Isa_55:7 Jer_14:22.

Jeremiah 3:23

From the hills, i.e. either from their *idols* , which were worshipped upon hills, a metonymy of the subject, Jer_2:20, *idols of the hills* ; or from any other external power whatsoever, either of persons or things, as the strength of hills, or forts, high places, and strong places, and assistance from kings, Hos_14:3.

The multitude of mountains, viz, the abundance of them that they have in their mountains, or the multitude of sacrifices which they offer in the mountains, or to multiply sacrifices.

Quest. But doth not the psalmist hope for salvation from the hills? Psa_121:1.

Answ. Yes, the hills of the Land of Promise, which were a pledge of God's favour to his people, especially those two of Zion and Moriah, where God did peculiarly manifest his presence, **Psa 87**.

In the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel; or, our salvation which we do now acknowledge is only in our God, and not in idols, of which we have had ample experience, Psa_44:7 **130:7,8**. See Isa_43:10, **11 Ho 13:4,9**.

Jeremiah 3:24

Shame; either in general put for sin, which causeth shame, a metonymy of the effect; for that brought shame first into the world, Gen_2:25. Or in particular the idol Baal, called the *shameful thing* , Jer_11:13 Hos_9:10. *Hath devoured the labour of our fathers* : q.d. This hath been the fruit of our idolatry, to have all things go to ruin, both in respect of expense; that which our

fathers having got for themselves and us by their industry, they have expended upon Baal, and other idols, Eze_16:16-21; and also of the heavy judgments that God brought upon us for it, Jer_5:17.

From our youth; either with reference to the nation, ever since they began first to be a people unto God, and followed him in the wilderness, Jer_2:2; or rather, ever since we were born, or took notice of any thing, thus it was from time to time; we find from our childhood that our fathers have laboured in vain, and all things have succeeded ill with us, because of their departure from God. *Their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters* : all these things are mentioned to show that they did thrive in nothing; but either a blast upon all from God, Hos_9:11, to the end; Mal_2:2,3; or idolatrous sacrifices, consumed all, Amo_4:4,5, the idols not sparing even their very children, Psa_106:37; or the enemy spoiled them of all, Jer_5:17; and all this as the sad effect of their idolatries.

Jeremiah 3:25

We lie down in our shame; we are perplexed and confounded within ourselves; we are such a reproach, both to God and man, that we cannot but lift up our hands for shame, even we, that had once a whore's forehead, Jer_3:3, but must lie down in our shame; an expression to set forth the greatness of their repentance and sorrow; as one in great perplexity, not knowing what to do, throws himself down upon his couch or bed, 1Ki_21:4.

Our confusion covereth us; a metaphor from persons muffled up in the bed-clothes, as ashamed to be seen: the like expression Psa_44:15.

We and our fathers this notes the universality of their sins, the whole generation of us, like fathers, like children. True confession wraps up our own and others' sins, Eze_9:7 Neh_9:33,34 Psa 106:6,7 Jer 14:20, and keeps us from all excuse by others' examples, 2Ki_17:41, which gross guilt of theirs in this kind is described Jer_44:17.

From our youth even unto this day: as the former sets forth the universality of their sins, so this the continuance of them, Deu_9:7 2Ki_17:34,41.

Jeremiah 4:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 4

An invitation to true repentance, by promises, Jer_4:1-4; and judgments coming on them by the Babylonians, contrary to the predictions of their false prophets, for their sins, Jer_4:5-18. A grievous lamentation for the miseries of Judah, Jer_4:19-31.

Return unto me: this seems to be a continuation of the former sermon; so that Israel having promised repentance, they are here directed how it must be qualified, viz. it must not be hypocritical and reigned, but real and hearty, Jer_24:7, as Josiah's was, 2Ki_23:25; and it must be unto the Lord; not to this idol and that idol, hither and thither, shifting their way; but unto me; see Jer_2:36; or to my worship, and as thou hast promised, Jer_3:22. And this sense agrees best with the coherence. Or it maybe all emphatical, short, peremptory expression; If thou wilt return, return; make no longer demur or delay about it; like that Isa_21:12. The Hebrew read the words in the future tense, *if thou wilt return, thou shalt return* ; and so they may be taken partly as a promise, and that with reference either to their returning into their own land; and so they concern Israel; thus Deu_30:2-5: see Jer_3:14. But if the word be taken in the notion of *resting* , not *returning* , as some do, and as it is taken Isa_30:15, then it rather concerns Judah: q. d. Thou shalt abide quietly where thou art, and shalt not wander into captivity; and this may agree with the last expression in the verse,

not remove. Or else with reference to the assistance that God would give them to return unto him; partly, and that rather, as a direction (for in the Hebrew, though the word *return* be in the future tense, yet it is often used imperatively).

Abominations, viz. idols, a metonymy of the adjunct, which are so abominable in God's sight, Deu_27:15 Eze_20:7,8; called *dungy gods* , Deu_29:17. See 2Ch_15:8.

Out of my sight; though God's eye be every where; and hence implieth that idols are no where to be admitted, either in private or public; yet it doth particularly relate to the place of his more immediate presence, as their land and temple, 1Ki_9:3, and spiritually to our hearts, hypocrites thinking it enough if they conceal their wickedness from man's eye.

Then shalt thou not remove: if this be read imperatively, then it is,

remove not, as it may be read; and so it agrees with Israel, Depart not away from me to thy idols upon the mountains and hills: if read in the future tense, then it agrees with Judah, Thou shalt not go out of thine own land into exile. See the first clause of the verse.

Jeremiah 4:2

And thou shalt swear: this is to be understood, partly by way of command, as Deu_10:20; and partly by way of direction, if thou swear, or when thou swearest: it is put here synecdochically for the whole worship of God, hereby acknowledging and owning God as the only God.

The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness: here he prescribes,

1. The form of the oath. viz.

The Lord liveth, or, *By the life of God*, which was that form which they did use in swearing, 1Sa_14:39,**45**, and many other places; so Joseph sware *by the life of Pharaoh*, Gen_42:15,**16**; and Elisha very frequently useth this form, 2Ki_2:2,**4,6 3:14 5:16**; which is also to be understood exclusively; q.d. not by any idol, as Baal, &c., or any creature, Jer_5:7 Mat_5:34-36 Jam_5:12, but by God alone, Isa_65:16; see Hos_2:17; for by this indeed we declare the Godhead of him whom we worship, Isa_19:18 **2.** The qualification of it, in which indeed are comprised all the requisites to a religious oath and worship of God, both in our general and particular calling, with respect to God, ourselves, our neighbours,

1.

In truth, that the matter and substance of it be really true in itself, Rom_9:1, that which agrees with the intent of the mind, Psa_24:4, and with the intent of him that administers it; not doubtful, feigned, or deceitful, as they did, Isa_48:1 Jer_5:2, but as true as the Lord lives.

2.

In judgment, i.e. either in matter or places of judicature, for the decision of controversies, deliberately, advisedly, and reverently, well considering both of the form and matter of the oath, Lev_5:4, that God's name be neither taken in vain customarily, or in matters trivial, Deu_5:11, nor abused by oaths the are rash and precipitant, such as Saul's was, 1Sa_14:39, and as Herod's, Mat_14:7, and without necessity.

3.

In righteousness, that none be injured by it, that the things we engage be,

1. Both lawful and possible; see 1Sa_25:21,22 **28:10** 1Ki_19:2; and,

2. That we look to the performance, Psa_15:4 Mat_5:33; the want of either of which circumstances makes it a bond of iniquity, Ecc_5:4,5.

The nations shall bless themselves in him; this shall be a means to work upon the heathen nations, and prevail with them to come into the same way of worship, that now scorn both you and me, because I am forced to make them the rod of my anger against you, in regard of your provocations, Psa_47:8,9 **Jer 3:17**. They shall think themselves happy to be incorporated with thee, that it may be with them according to that promise, Gen_12:3 **22:17,18**. They shall, as it were, bless themselves in such like form; *The Lord make me and mine as Israel; blessed be Israel, and the God of Israel* . Or rather,

in him shall they glory; whereas before they gloried in their idols, now, being taken into the true church, among God's Israel, they shall glory in God alone, Psa_106:5, who indeed alone is the glory of his people, Psa_89:17 **148:14**.

Jeremiah 4:3

To the men, Heb. *man* , i.e. to each man; I speak to every individual among you, Eze_20:7,8.

Of Judah and Jerusalem: the Lord having spoke what he had to say at present to Israel, turns now his speech from Israel to Judah, and so continues it; which consists of several subjects, and first begins with repentance.

Break up your fallow ground, i.e. prepare your hearts by making them soft, tender, and pliable, fit to embrace my word; a metaphor taken from ploughmen, that do either prepare the ground that hath lain some time waste and untilled, by tearing up the surface of the earth, making it mellow and soft to receive the seed; (for the Hebrew word *nir* seems to be of larger extent than bare preparation; God useth the same word when he speaks to the same purpose to Israel, Hos_10:13; and so it is used Pro_13:23) or it may relate to both, that every thing that may be injurious to the seed may be stubbed up. Or rather, From such as plough the ground.

Sow not among thorns; rid you hearts and hands of what may hinder you of embracing my word; grub up all those briars, and thorns, and mischievous weeds that will not suffer my counsels to take, or my graces to thrive, with you; such as use to overrun the sluggard's field, Pro_24:30,31. Here the Lord begins to call upon them to repent. The phrase seems to intimate that the Jews had been wont to mix the truths of God among their own inventions, as seed among thorns, and so corrupted it; as also, that they retained many secret and hidden sins, like hypocrites, which he exhorts them to eradicate.

Jeremiah 4:4

Circumcise yourselves; put away your natural corruptions; which was signified by the sacrament of circumcision, Col_2:11; see 1Pe_3:21; the same thing with the other, but expressed in other words.

To the Lord; or, to me, viz. so as I will approve. Take away the fore-skins of your heart; let it be inward, not outward, viz. in the flesh only, (in which you so much glory in the sight of men,) but take away that brawniness and obstinacy that (having to do with God, who hath respect unto the heart) is upon your hearts, Deu_10:16 Eze_44:9 Act_7:51 Rom_2:29.

Lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it; not only fierce and consuming, like fire, Deu_4:24; but unquenchable, especially when it gets among your thorns, Jer_4:3, which are very apt to kindle, Isa_10:17; lest you proceed so far in your obstinacy that I will not be appeased, Jer_21:12 Amo_5:6;

there being nothing that stirs up God to anger but sin, as in the next clause, which is an explication of those metaphors of thorns and foreskins.

Jeremiah 4:5

The Lord being now about to bring enemies upon them, he bespeaks them in martial language, by stirring them to a speedy provision, and warning of them of the nature of their approaching judgment; not famine or plague within them, but a foreign enemy from without, **Jer 6 1**, viz. the coming of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans.

Cry, that your voice may be heard afar off, that all may hear.

Gather together; either to unite your forces, or to take counsel what to do, that you may be in safety; the same thing with

Assemble yourselves; implying that the calamity was general.

Let us go into the defenced cities, to secure from these invasions that are coming upon us.

Jeremiah 4:6

Set up the standard, i.e. for them to resort to, as is usual in war; and it is therefore said to be towards Zion or Jerusalem, as being a signal to show them whither they should repair; see Jer_1:5; Jerusalem being their principal place of strength, and Zion the strongest part of it, 2Sa_5:6,7.

Retire; or, *strengthen* ; fortify or strengthen yourselves for the fight. Or rather, make haste away, as men use to do in a great fight, viz. for your security: such a use there is of the word Isa_10:31 Jer_6:1, which sense is confirmed by the next words,

stay not, or, as some, *stay not yourselves in sin* , where you promise yourselves security.

I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction, i.e. I am about to bring a great destruction upon you from Chaldea, Jer_1:13-15. Some take this and the former verse to be spoken ironically.

Jeremiah 4:7

The lion is come up from his thicket, i.e. Nebuchadnezzar, called here a lion from his fierceness and strength, Pro_30:30; a

metaphor; especially in this expedition; see Isa_5:27-29 shall come up from Babylon, where his chief seat is, Dan_4:30; as lions are principally among the thickets of the forest, in coverts; this place being so remote and hid from them, that they least expected trouble to arise from thence.

The destroyer of the Gentiles; another description of the same person, of whose destroying armies the nations have had woeful experience, Isa_14:16,17, called *the hammer of the whole earth* , Jer_50:23: q.d. And how shall you think to escape him?

Is on his way, i.e. as it is expressed in the next clause, he is gone forth from his place, he is already upon his march.

To make thy land desolate, i.e. with a resolution so to do.

Shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant, i.e. as places uninhabited soon lie waste, and are overgrown with grass, as the notation of the word seems to import.

Jeremiah 4:8

Gird you with sackcloth; the usual habit of mourners, especially in those days, Isa_22:12 Jer_6:26: it is a calling upon them to repent.

Lament and howl: probably these expressions do import the several ways that men have to set forth their bitter complaints and sorrows of the mind, both by the gestures of the body, Jer_2:37 Luk_18:13, and expressions of the tongue, Psa_32:3 Isa_59:11.

Is not turned back from us; neither will it, until it have accomplished its ends, Jer_30:24.

Jeremiah 4:9

The heart of the king shall perish; the king, viz. of Judah, and the great men, that should have encouraged the people in such a calamitous day, and been their great support, shall not only be afraid, but their own hearts shall melt within them, they shall be even at their wits' end; see Jos_5:1; they shall have no heart at all to do any thing; they shall not be able to help their people, either by their counsel or arms; their courage will utterly fail, and their counsel perish. See Psa_73:26. This was fulfilled in Zedekiah, **Jer 39 Jer 42**, whose flight would not advantage him.

Shall be astonished; shall be in such a consternation, that they shall not know what course to take.

The prophets, viz. false prophets, that had nothing but visions of peace for them, Eze_13:16 Zec_13:3,4 **Jer 8:11.** See Jer_4:10.

Shall wonder, not so much at the disappointment of their prophecies, for they knew well enough they were false, Jer_23:26,27, as that they should be possessed with the same horror and frights with the rest, not knowing where to show, or rather to hide, their heads for the shame that would fall upon them; when their lies should be discovered, they would be put to shame, and perish with the rest, and whither shall they cause their shame to go.

Jeremiah 4:10

Ah, Lord God: the Hebrew *aha* is a word both of admiration and lamentation together; they are Jeremiah's words and complaint breathed out in the great sorrow and sighing of soul, which he expresseth more emphatically Jer_23:9.

Surely thou hast greatly deceived this people; either hast suffered them to be thus deluded by these false prophets, Isa_63:17 Eze_14:9; compare 1Ki_22:21-23 2Th_2:11; or possibly it may be read better by way of interrogation: q.d. How can it possibly be that thou shouldst suffer thy people to be thus deluded by their false prophets, Num_23:19, thou being a God that canst not lie? Tit_1:2.

Ye shall have peace: under the word peace is comprised and intended all good, intimating all things should go on prosperously with them. Gen_37:14; and seems the rather to be thus expressed, because it was the common language and phrase of the false prophets, Jer_8:11 **23:17.**

Whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul: to persuade them it should be well with them, when the sword is at the door, not only ready to take away the comforts of life, but even life itself, *soul* being put for *life*, Jer_4:30 Psa_69:1 Mat_16:25,26. It may intimate also a great cutting off and slaughter among them, especially their great ones; they being, as it were, the soul of the people.

Jeremiah 4:11

At that time, viz. when Nebuchadnezzar is upon this expedition, Jer_4:7, shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem; there shall be tidings brought both to the country and city, Jer_4:5.

A dry wind: the meaning is, a drying wind, such as shall blast and scorch where it comes, without any rain or moisture, or any other way for use or refreshment, as the last word in the verse intimates; and it may also allude unto the coast from whence this wind comes, viz. from Babylon, or the north, which drives away rain, Pro_25:23; for it points at the stormy and furious irruption of the Babylonian army, destroying all before them, a metaphorical allegory, Jer_23:19 **30:23,24**.

In the wilderness; or, in the plain, where there is no stop or obstacle in the way to hinder the wind, or to break its fury, Isa_21:1 Jer_13:24. **See Poole** "Isa_63:13".

Toward, i.e. directly and designedly, coming along in the way leading to my people; for so we are to understand this expression,

the daughter of my people, as the *daughter of Zion*, Isa_1:8, or rather, the *daughter Zion*, which is as comely and beautiful in my eyes and tender to me as a daughter, Jer_9:1.

Not to fan, nor to cleanse; not such a gentle wind which is made choice of to separate the chaff from the wheat, the bad from the good; but so boisterous and violent, that it shall depopulate, sweep away, and lay waste all together, Jer_51:1 Eze_21:3.

Jeremiah 4:12

A full wind from those places, Heb. *fuller than they*. A wind too strong for them. This is a further description of the former wind; it shall be full, even a fuller wind, that shall do its work thoroughly.

Shall come unto me: these are either God's words: q. d. It shall presently come to me, to receive my commission, and be at my beck, and do my will, Psa_148:8. Or they relate, as it were, what will be the language of the people at that time

unto me, for *against me*.

Now also will I give sentence: q.d. The coming of this terrible wind shall in effect speak the execution of my judgment upon

them, which is pointed at by this word now, viz. at the time of the coming of this terrible storm from Chaldea. Heb. *utter judgment* , viz. not by word, but by deed; my judgments shall speak as well as my prophets.

Jeremiah 4:13

He shall come up as clouds; either noting the vast number of them, Isa_60:8 Heb_12:1; or the suddenness of them, when not expected, clouds often rising on a sudden, and overspreading the whole face of the heavens; or rather, the great speed and swiftness with which Nebuchadnezzar shall march against them, Isa_19:1, hyperbolically described by the swiftness of eagles in this verse, Jer_48:8.

His chariots shall be as a whirlwind; which beside the swiftness, notes also the confusion and amazement that they will cause, Isa_66:15.

Woe unto us! for we are spoiled: the dreadful apprehensions that the people have of their woeful condition, or possibly the words of the prophet lamenting their misery.

Jeremiah 4:14

O Jerusalem, wash thine heart; cleanse your inward parts, O ye men of Jerusalem; not your hands only, as hypocrites do, but your hearts, Jam_4:8. The same exhortation with Jer_4:3,4, only in another metaphor of washing, which seems to be taken from such potions first physicians give to clear away the inward parts from noxious humours. See Isa_1:16,17.

From wickedness; viz. from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, 2Co_7:1 Jam_1:21.

That thou mayest be saved: this hath reference in this place to temporal salvation; it is prescribed as a means to prevent the judgments that are impending on them, as is plainly expressed, Jer_4:4, yet not exclusive of spiritual salvation, 2Th_2:13 Tit_3:5.

Vain thoughts; wicked thoughts, or rather hopes or expectation from any helps, Jer_2:5,37; pleasing thyself with vain fancies of safety and security, which thoughts of thine will assuredly bring ruin and misery upon thee, which is inevitably coming, as in the next verse.

Jeremiah 4:15

A voice, i.e. either the voice of the prophets, that is still sounding it in your ears, and declaring it unto you; or rather, the rumour and noise of this army is already come through your land; you have the heavy tidings of this great affliction, Jer_8:16, to note the near approach of it.

Declareth from Dan: this is said to come from Dan and Ephraim, because Dan was the first place these Chaldeans must come to, it being the utmost boundary of Canaan northward, and Ephraim the innermost border of Israel in the north of Judea, intimating the march of the Babylonians through all Israel toward Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 4:16

Make ye mention to the nations: these are either the nations in Judea; or these words are a proclamation, summoning in the nations by the Chaldeans, as it were, in pursuance of a commission from God, to bring great armies together against Jerusalem; or they are the prophets turning away from Judah, as despairing of doing any good upon them, and calling for the nations to execute God's sentence.

Publish; let her be acquainted with what is coming upon her, let her have public notice beforehand, that she may be warned.

Watchers; military watchers, i.e. the Chaldean soldiers, that shall so carefully and watchfully encompass Jerusalem, that none shall escape; possibly a metaphor from hunters, that in hunting their prey lay wait at every passage, that the game may not escape. See 2Ki_25:4,5. Or possibly there may be an allusion to Nebuchadnezzar's name; the Hebrew word for watchers being *notscrim*, which comes from *natser*, the end of his name, as if they were termed Nebuchadnezzartans, as the keepers or guards of his person; as they were called Caesarcans from Caesar.

Come; they are now at hand, you may as it were see them.

From a far country; from Chaldea.

Give out their voice; they will proclaim war against them; or a shout, either encouraging soldiers to the battle, or triumphing after the victory; or the outcries that they will make, such as the Turks now make in their onsets, Jer_2:15.

Jeremiah 4:17

They will strictly besiege her, as keepers of a field will be careful who go in and who go out, Zec_12:2; they will watch that none go in to relieve them, and also that none get out to escape: see 2Ch_16:1.

Because she hath been rebellious: God doth not threaten his judgments only, but he labours to convince them that there is a sufficient reason for it, both here and in the next verse.

Jeremiah 4:18

Thy way; thy manner of life, and particularly thy idolatries.

Have procured these things unto thee: q.d. Thou canst not lay any blame upon me.

This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter; thy wickedness hath been the cause of this thy grievous affliction, Isa_1:1 Jer_2:17,**19**, of this thy bitterness of bringing such a bitter enemy against thee, a metonymy of the efficient, which hath reached unto thy very heart, as the sword is said to reach unto the soul, Jer_4:10.

Jeremiah 4:19

My bowels, my bowels! here begins the woeful complaint of, and the great trouble the prophet was in, upon the consideration of these things, crying out as one even under great pain and torment, doubling his words for want of vent, thereby expressing the excess of his sorrow, which in words was inexpressible; the like 2Sa_18:33; which sorrow of his he expresseth Jer_9:1,**10**.

I am pained at my very heart, Heb. *the walls of my heart* ; or, my heartstrings, that surrounded and encompassed my heart, are ready to break. He may possibly allude to their encompassing the walls of Jerusalem. Or the proper meaning is, my heart is ready to break; the LXX. rendereth it *doth beat or pant. Maketh a noise* ; is disturbed within me, I can have no rest nor quiet within, Job_30:27 Lam_1:20.

I cannot hold my peace; I cannot forbear my complaints, I am so troubled and grieved, Job_7:11 Isa_22:4.

Because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, i.e. I have heard in the spirit of prophecy; it is as certain as if I now heard the trumpet sounding, and the alarm of war beating up.

Jeremiah 4:20

Destruction upon destruction; a further expression of his bitter lamentation, redoubling his complaint; the end of one, but the beginning of another; q.d. worse and worse, Deu_32:23 Eze_7:26; good Josiah slain, and four of his successors carried away or slain, or both, **2Ch 36**.

The whole-land is spoiled: this is more particularly described Jer_4:23-26.

Suddenly are my tents spoiled; the enemy makes no more of overthrowing my stately cities and magnificent palaces, sometimes described by tents, Isa_54:2, than if he were plundering of a camp, or overturning of tents made of curtains, Jer_49:29; either alluding to their ancient way of living, Num_24:2,5, or their wilderness condition, when they abode in tents: q.d. We are reduced to as mean a condition as then, and that suddenly, ere we are aware, and it is done with as much ease as overturning a poor shepherd's cottage, Lam_2:5,6. Jeremiah possibly personating a shepherd, speaks in the shepherd's style, and may here signify the destruction of their whole country, even all those places and fields where shepherds were wont to pitch their tents.

Jeremiah 4:21

He seems to have these concomitants of war, both of Judea preparing for defence, and especially these of the enemy preparing for ruin and destruction. always in his eye and ear, Jer_4:19, and bewailing the continuance of it in taking city after city, with the several sackings of Jerusalem under her three last kings. The LXX. read, *How long shall I see them flying ?* reading *nas*, a *refuge*, for *nes*, a banner, differing only in the points.

Jeremiah 4:22

For my people is foolish: though God show them here that the cause of all these calamities is their folly, Jer_2:17,19 **Psa 38:3,5**, yet he owns them for his people, Jer_2:11,**31,32**.

They have not known me; which is indeed the only true wisdom; they have not studied my disposition or mildness toward them; they are so sottish, that they have neither regarded my counsels

nor threats, but utterly stupid; they know not what is for their own good, have no understanding.

They have no knowledge, i.e. their knowledge is as bad or worse than none, it is very ill employed in doing evil, only witty here, crafty and subtle. See 2Sa_13:3. But how to do any good they know not, Jer_9:3 Luk_16:8: this the apostle dehorts from, 1Co_14:20.

Jeremiah 4:23

I beheld; either I Jeremiah saw all this in a vision, or I fancied and framed such an

idea of it in my mind; it seems to be impressed upon my thoughts *graphically*, as in a map, in such a rueful manner; for in this and the three following verses he doth, as one transported with sorrow, elegantly and hyperbolically describe the *phaenomenon*, face or appearance of it.

It was without form and void; the land was so squalid and so ruined, that he fancieth it to be like the first chaos, for which reason possibly he calls Judea the earth, in allusion to Gen_1:2; and herein implying that Judah's sins were such, that they had even overturned the course of nature, being laid waste and desolate, not of inhabitants only, but of all things that might tend either to ornament or use, without men, without houses, without fruits, without beasts or birds for food or service, Jer_4:25,26.

They had no light; some say being obnubilated and darkened by the abundance of smoke that would ascend from the desolating fires of towns and cities, Isa_9:18,19, of which you may read in the history of this breaking in of the Chaldeans. But he seems to proceed rather in his metaphor of the chaos, it being an expression whereby the Scripture doth set forth the saddest desolations, Isa_13:9, &c.; Eze_32:7, &c.; Joe_2:10,30,31; every thing above and below seemed to be in a mournful posture, wrapt up in dismal blackness.

Jeremiah 4:24

He proceeds in his figurative elegancies: q.d. Behold how the mountains of Judea tremble! a like expression Psa_18:7,8 **Isa 5:25**; as if the very senseless creatures were astonished at the

greatness of God's anger; and he mentions these as being the most stable part of the earth, yet shake before him.

All the hills moved lightly; as easily as if they were some very light matter, or as dust or feathers in a whirlwind. See Psa_114:4,6. Or these may be said hyperbolically to tremble and move by reason of the multitudes of trampling and prancing horses and chariots furiously passing over them.

Jeremiah 4:25

There was no man; quite depopulated and laid waste, all either slain, or carried captive, or fled; for after the flight of men, women, and children into Egypt, upon the death of Gedaliah, scarce a Jew was left in Judea.

All the birds of the heavens were fled; such birds as are used to inhabited places, that live, feed, and build among men; (others indeed, both birds and beasts, would continue, which implies but the greater desolation and waste of the land, as is threatened against Babylon, Isa_13:19-22)

fled, either to seek provisions, here being no food left for them, or frightened with the hideous noises and clatterings that do attend armies; as we have read, that such hath been the concussion of the air by the loud clamours and noises of armies, that birds have fallen down to the earth, Jer_9:10 Zep_1:2,3.

Jeremiah 4:26

The fruitful place, Heb. *Carmel* , either properly, for that part of the land so called for its fruitfulness; or rather appellatively, for not only their most pleasant, but most fruitful lands, that were kept dressed and occupied for food, both for necessity and delight, Jer_4:27 Isa_29:17 **33:9**.

All the cities thereof were broken down; no place left for men to inhabit, Isa_1:7.

By his fierce anger; that which the enemy could not have done with all his fury and fierceness, had it not been for the anger of the Lord, which by their great provocation they had brought upon them. selves, 2Ki_24:3 Jer_9:12,13.

Jeremiah 4:27

Some expound it, Neither shall this punishment suffice, nor my fury stop here; I will not thus have done with them; and so look to what they were further to endure in their long captivity. See Lev_26:36,39. But it seems rather to be a word of comfort, that they shall not be utterly extinct, he will preserve a remnant, Jer_5:10 Isa_1:9 **24:13**: q.d. Though I am greatly moved with anger, yet I will not be inexorable, I will remember my covenant, Jer_30:11: in the midst of judgment he will remember mercy; after seventy years' captivity he brought them back again.

Jeremiah 4:28

For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black; expressions to set forth the dreadfulness of the judgment; he makes the elements to personate mourners, a sad face of things above and below, a metaphor, and therein to shame the stupidity of his people.

Because I have spoken it: q.d. You would not believe either that my prophets spake, or what they said; now I tell you I speak myself, and what I have resolved upon I will not revoke; see Eze_24:13,14, and Jer_15:6; for I have purposed it; I have not spoken in my heat or fury, but upon mature deliberation; an anthropopathy; or, what the prophets have denounced I will ratify.

Jeremiah 4:29

The whole city shall flee; the inhabitants of all ranks and qualities shall seek to escape the fury of this Chaldean army, Jer_39:4.

For the noise; either upon the report of their coming, hereby as it were deriding their confidence; or rather at the approach of their vast armies, for they were close besieged before they fled, as appears, 2Ki_25:4.

They shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks; such a consternation there shall be upon them, that they shall run into every hole to hide themselves: thus Manasseh was taken among the thorns, 2Ch_33:11. The Hebrew is *abim*, the *clouds*, possibly alluding to dark places on the tops of hills, reaching as it were to the clouds, or among the cloudy shades of trees and groves that usually grew there. The LXX. render it *caves*, and so the rocks

for shelter, or the clefts, caves, and hiding-places in the rocks. See Isa_2:21.

Every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein; there shall be an utter desolation, their cities quite forsaken, not any to inhabit them, Jer_4:25,26.

Jeremiah 4:30

When thou art spoiled; which will certainly come upon thee; or when this destruction shall come upon thee, which is very near thee.

What wilt thou do? viz. when thou, O daughter of Zion, as Jer_4:31, art besieged by the Babylonians, what course wilt thou take? It is not to be avoided. A kind of an insulting way of speech, as it were upbraiding them with their pride and confidence: q.d. Your condition is desperate.

Crimson, or scarlet, 2Sa_1:24: see on **See Poole "Isa_1:18"**.

Though thou deckest thee with ornaments; though thou dost superinduce those ornaments, or jewels of gold, that may render thy attire the most rich and splendid, 2Sa_1:24.

Though thou rentest thy face with painting: it is observed that they that paint much make their skins withered. *Face*, Heb. *eyes*, the wantonness thereof being possibly set out more by painting; see Isa_3:16; or rather, face and eyes, being sometimes put one for the other see 1Sa_16:12 Isa_25:8, compared with Rev_21:4.

In vain shalt thou make thyself fair; all thy tricking up thyself, thinking thereby to ingratiate thyself with the Chaldeans, will be to no purpose, for they will work thy ruin, as in the close of the verse, and Jer_19:7.

Thy lovers will despise thee; they will slight thee more than ever; they that have doted on thee, thy unchaste paramours, their lust being satisfied, shall abhor thee; see 2Sa_13:15; and the pronoun, being not in the original, it may signify that no lovers at all will look after thee; thou shalt be cast off by all. See thus of Tyre, Isa_23:15,16. Those that were in confederacy with thee, and thy professed friends, Hos_2:5, shall not only forsake thee, but join with thine enemies to destroy thee, Lam_1:2. And thus is Babylon to be dealt withal, Rev_17:16,17. The sense is, That

notwithstanding all thy allurings and enticements, either to obtain the help of thy friends and allies the Egyptians, whom thou takest to be thy lovers, and didst forsake me to cleave to them, or to stop the fury of thine enemies, the Chaldeans; (possibly alluding to Jezebel's practice, in painting herself to stop the fury of Jehu, 2Ki_9:30 O yet shall it advantage thee nothing; thou shalt be no more regarded than a forsaken strumpet, Eze_16:36,**37 Eze 23**

Jeremiah 4:31

A voice as of a woman in travail: when the Scripture would express any exquisite sorrow, exceeding all other pains, it doth it by a woman in travail, Isa_13:8,**9 Jer 6:24 30:6,7**. *The anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child*, which of all seems to be the most painful, both from natural causes, and because they have less patience to bear, having not had former experience of the like.

The daughter of Zion, viz. Jerusalem, Isa_1:8.

That spreadeth her hands; in her great distress she either reacheth them out to God for some help, Isa_1:15; or rather, according to the use of persons in great anguish, clapping or wringing their hands together, as both the former expression of bewailing herself, fetching of deep sighs and lamentations, and the following *woe is me*, intimates. See Jer_2:37.

Woe is me now! or, the time of my woe is at hand; it draws near.

My soul is wearied because of murderers; there is no more spirit left within me, I am ready to sink under my distress, considering not only that my destruction is so near, but that those of whom I have been so fond, and whose idols I have so zealously served, should become my murderers, Jer_4:30, and that I should fall into the hands of such as will have no compassion, 2Ch_36:17.

Jeremiah 5:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 5

None godly in Judah, Jer_5:1. They swear falsely, though God be a God of truth; they are incorrigible and senseless, and know not the law, or else wilfully violate it, Jer_5:2-6. Their idolatry, adultery, Jer_5:7-9; contempt of God's word and prophets, which should be sadly verified, Jer_5:10-18. They forsake, forget, and

fear not God, whose power is so great, Jer_5:19-24. They are rich through deceit and violence; their false prophets, Jer_5:25-31.

Whether this begins a new sermon, or be part of the former, is neither certain nor material; but here the prophet is called upon to go up and down, and search here and there, in every part of the city, and to make a diligent inquiry in every street and place of concourse; a phrase frequently used for searching and inquiring after a thing, Dan_12:4 Amo_8:12; and it is spoken in the plural number, not restrained to Jeremiah in particular: q.d. Let who will search, they will find it even so. It implies the great scarcity of good men, that must be thus searched for. God gives leave to all the earth to look into the state of Jerusalem, by which he vindicates himself in the face of the whole world from all severity towards his people, whatever he brings upon them, and so stops the mouths of the Jews.

Seek in the broad places; even there, where usually is the greatest resort for merchants and merchandises, where men meet from all quarters.

If ye can find a man: it seems worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, for God condescends to pardon Jerusalem if there be but one righteous man found in it; there he came no lower than ten. But it will be *objected*, if it be understood thus individually, What must we think of Jeremiah himself, and Baruch, and Ebed-melech, and other few, who were then, no doubt, in Jerusalem?

Answ. Either he speaks of the corrupt body of the people, courtiers, priests, false prophets, not one, or scarce one among them to be found, or if any, so few as not to be discerned. A man might walk the streets of Jerusalem long enough before he could meet with any one truly religious; which universality of corruption is thus expressed in divers places, Psa_12:1,2 **14:2,3 Eze 22:30 Mic_7:1,2.** Or it may be understood hyperbolically for a few.

Any that executeth judgment, i.e. among the magistracy that rightly administer justice.

That seeketh the truth, i.e. among the commonalty that deal faithfully and uprightly; it signifies, that, among them all, there are none given to it; so far from endeavouring and seeking it sincerely with their whole heart, that they are not inclined to it,

but are given to oppressions, falsehoods, and deceits; they do not seek the truth.

I will pardon it; or, *him* ; I will not destroy it for the sake of those few: the like he promiseth with reference to those five cities, Gen_18:24, &c.

Jeremiah 5:2

Though they say, The Lord liveth; though when they swear, they use the form of an oath, and say, The

Lord liveth, Jer_5:2, or, By the *living God* . By swearing here we may understand all their service of God, by a synecdoche, swearing being a part of God's worship. *Surely they swear falsely* ; *yet* , or *therefore* , they swear falsely; either they swear to that which is false; or if to that which is true, they are so perfidious to me, that they do it deceitfully, not in sincerity, and in reverence to that holy name by which they swear: possibly they may often speak of God, and not swear by false gods, Jer_5:7, but it is all but hypocrisy and deceit, Isa_48:1 Jer_12:2 **42:5,20** 2Ti_3:5. It is neither in truth nor righteousness, two of the principal qualifications of a lawful oath. Thus they prostitute the name of God, making themselves guilty, not of hypocrisy only, but sacrilege.

Jeremiah 5:3

Are not thine eyes upon the truth? The prophet, observing the obstinacy of this people, abruptly turns himself to God, yet emphatically insinuates their incorrigibleness. This may refer either to God's discerning and knowing truth from falsehood, as being impossible that any thing should be hid from him, Psa_11:4; or rather, (more agreeably to the phrase,) to God's approving; and this some again refer to *persons*, as *men of truth* for *true men*, so *man of wisdom* for *a wise man* , Mic_6:9; but others, better, to truth and faithfulness, as that which God hath a great respect for, and delight in, Psa_51:6, and was not to be found among these people. Though none of these senses be improper, this seems the most genuine.

They have not grieved; they have been under sore grievances that God hath laid them under, yet they seem unconcerned, Pro_23:35 Isa_42:25; or it is probable they were grieved at their

sufferings, but they have not repented, thereby to turn away the causes of his just displeasure: see 2Co_7:9,10.

Thou hast consumed them; God had not only lightly chastised them, but wasted them by several enemies, as the Assyrian, Isa_10:5,6 36:1, and Pharaoh-nechoh, 2Ki_23:33, and the Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and the Ammonites, 2Ki_24:2, and Nebuchadnezzar, 2Ki_24:13, &c. All these he made use of as the rod of his indignation, yet they refused to receive correction; see Jer_2:30; a metonymy of the effect; they have profited nothing by it, not at all reformed, Isa_1:5,16 Am 4:6,8-11.

They have made their faces harder than a rock; noting their obstinacy and impudence, laying aside all sense of judgments, as past feeling, Pro_21:29 Zec_7:12. They have refused to return; wilfully rejected counsel, and slighted correction, resolving to persist in their obstinacy.

Jeremiah 5:4

Therefore I said; or, perhaps, I said with myself; not, possibly, that he thought so, but that he might thus express himself, as men use to speak.

Surely these are poor; poor, low-spirited, or of the meanest rank among the vulgar, understand but little; either men of greater ignorance, Joh_7:49, and therefore said not to know the way of the Lord; see Jer_8:7; being better skilled in fields and vineyards than in the law; or of less conscience than the better sort may be, and therefore said to be foolish, or infatuated, or put upon greater temptation by reason of their poverty, Pro_30:9.

The judgment of their God; the methods or ways of his providence, the usual manner of his dealing; so judgment is to be taken here for the same with ways, 1Sa_2:13, as it is also Jer_8:7.

Jeremiah 5:5

I will get me unto the great men, i.e. to the nobles, both prince and priest, that have more time to consider these things, have been better taught and educated, Pro_4:4. Not that Jeremiah had any better thoughts of these, but as carrying a great probability with it.

For they have known: had it been only among those, in the former verse, it might have been more excusable; but it is in the

very nobles themselves; the state is wholly corrupt, from head to foot, who cannot plead ignorance, therefore the more inexcusable.

These have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds; these are more refractory than the other, more heady and obstinate; no law of God is able to hold them, Psa_2:2,3: see Luk_19:14,27. There is not one better than another among them, whether poor or rich.

Jeremiah 5:6

Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army from Syria and Libanus, woody places, are here pointed at under the metaphor of beasts of prey of three kinds; the malignity that is proper to each of these creatures shall be put forth in this Babylonian army, compared, for instance, to a lion, Jer_4:7 which notes his great power, courage, pride, and insulting over his prey.

A wolf, for their greediness and unsatiableness; one wolf will destroy abundance of sheep; and said to be *the wolf of the evenings*, or deserts, or plains, they being the usual haunts of the wolf; or evenings, because then they are observed to be most ravenous, Hab_1:8, possibly because lying most part of the day in their dens for fear of the huntsmen, want of prey enrageth their hunger at night; and because of this greediness to devour, the judges among themselves are said to be

evening wolves, described Zep_3:3,

They gnaw not the bones till the morrow, either through hunger or rage.

A leopard; the Chaldean army compared to a leopard, not for its speed only, but especially for its vigilancy and subtlety; they will be so vigilant, that scarce any shall escape, according to Jer_4:16.

Increased, Heb. strong: here is the reason why God would bring such a devastation upon them, because they did, as it were, strengthen themselves in the multitude of their rebellions against him.

Jeremiah 5:7

How shall I pardon? how canst thou expect that I shall bear such affronts? I shall expose myself, and seem to lay aside my power; I

shall be looked upon as one that either regard not such injuries, or cannot avenge them, as Jer_5:9.

Thy children; thy inhabitants, both in city and country.

Sworn by them that are no gods, but by idols: swearing is here put, not for one part of worship, as sometimes it is, but for a religious worship and service of them, Jer_4:2.

When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery: here is noted the abuse of God's bounty, or the natural effect of our unsanctified prosperity, Deu_32:15 Jer_2:7 **Jude 4.** That which in good men doth oft breed forgetfulness, in bad men generally breeds filthiness: rising up to play the wanton was the effect of Israel's eating and drinking, Exo_32:6, and of Sodom's sin, Eze_16:49. *Adultery* ; either,

1. Metaphorically to be understood of their going a whoring after their idols; or,

2. Properly, for corporal uncleanness, they usually going both together, Num_25:1,2 **Ho 4:12,14.**

Assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses; it may be read in the nominative case, *the house of the harlot assembled themselves* : q.d. The whole house of Israel, Jerusalem and Judea, are but one stew. If it refers to their idolatry, then it alludes to their making the temple a common house of spiritual harlotry; but rather, as it refers to their corporal uncleanness, it seems to intimate that they did not act their adulteries clandestinely or by stealth, but laying aside all modesty, they went to harlots' houses, like brute beasts, in company, as ashamed of nothing.

Jeremiah 5:8

Fed horses, to note the greatness and unruliness of their lust, pampered horses being most wanton, like that Deu_32:15.

In the morning: it is questioned whether morning relates to horses or to men; if to horses, then they are compared to stallions, that having been fed to the full over-night, and lain at ease, in the morning they are most lusty; but rather it seems to relate to men, showing that they were very early in going about their filthinesses, Zep_3:7, following their uncleanness with as great eagerness as it is said that drunkards follow strong drink, Isa_5:11.

Every one neighed after his neighbour's wife, i.e. with an impetuous earnestness and unwearied hunting, they sought after the adulteresses to satisfy their beastly lusts. It notes,

1. The strength of their lust, a thing in horses much taken notice of by authors.

2. The unbridledness and uncontrollableness of it, as is seen in the pampered horses hunting after the mare, of which neighing is a sign, thus expressed Jer_13:27. Thus the Grecians would express men extremely libidinous by the word *ippobinoi*, and *ippopornoï*, and that they do *ippomanein*, so the LXX., and thus described Eze_22:11.

Jeremiah 5:9

Visit, i.e. punish, Psa_89:32. Should I connive at such things, the wicked would say, I did not see them, or take notice of them, Psa_50:21, much to the same purpose with Jer_5:7, beginning; and punishment may be termed visiting, as implying the equity of God's procedures, that he first sees and considers the case, before he inflicts punishment; as in the case of Sodom, Gen_18:21; spoke after the manner of man.

My soul, for *I*; it speaks the greatness of God's displeasure, Shall not my very soul be in this work of vengeance? Psa_11:5.

Jeremiah 5:10

Go ye up upon her walls; ye Babylonians, go now execute my vengeance on them. I give them into your hands; behold, I give you a commission.

And destroy; I permit and order you not only to take the city, but make havoc of her inhabitants, Isa_10:6.

But make not a full end: though God give them a large commission to destroy, yet he puts in a limitation, that he will reserve a remnant from destruction; he sets bounds to the most raging adversary, beyond which he must not pass. See on Jer_4:27.

Take away her battlements; lay her and all her fortifications level with the ground; take away her counterscarp, or high towers, or whatsoever may tend to the defence of a city; to let Jerusalem know that she did but in vain trust to her high walls and strong

towers; and battlements may as well be taken for the foundation of her walls, which spread wider than the wall itself. The word the prophet useth signifies things that spread; and thus it agrees with the scope, that is describing the utter overthrow and eradicating of it: so LXX., *take away her supports* . For they are not the Lord's; I undertake their defence no longer; I disown them, lake my protection from them, and give them up into your hands, O ye Chaldeans, though they make their boast that they are sheltered under my wing and protection, because there was the temple and altar; but they will find themselves deceived, for I disown them.

Jeremiah 5:11

Whether

Israel be put here for the ten tribes, and

Judah for the two, as often they are, Jer_2:4, and sundry other places; or rather, whether Judah here be only explicative, and the word meant of the two tribes only, read thus, the

house of Israel, even the house of Judah, is not much material.

Have dealt very treacherously; have apostatized and dealt perfidiously beyond measure, not only as to the grossness, but as to the universality of it.

Jeremiah 5:12

They have belied the Lord: this may signify either a denying, viz. a renouncing, making little or nothing of him, as some; or a denying, i.e. not believing, that these words of the prophet were God's words, or God did not say so; he gave not the prophet, nor any other, any such commission; and possibly their atheism might grow to so high a degree as to deny his providence, power, and justice, &c.: so it agrees with the following words,

It is not he, or, God did not speak as he meant; but he would only fright us, it shall not be thus.

Neither shall we see sword nor famine this siege or famine, or any other such dreadful judgments, as Jeremiah speaks of, shall not befall us. Seeing is used here for feeling, as it is in Job_7:7.

Jeremiah 5:13

Shall become wind; a proverbial speech, very frequent, not in common language only, but Scripture also, Job_6:26 Ecc_5:16, and elsewhere; i.e. all the prophet's threats shall come to nothing: and thus they scoffed at them, Tush, what do they signify? they are but *bruta fulmina* : see 2Ch_36:15,**16**. *The word is not in them* : this, possibly, they give as the reason that they apprehend the prophets' words to be but as wind, because they are not from God, they speak but dreams of their own fancying.

Thus shall it be done unto them; it shall fall upon their own heads that have thus threatened us, not upon us; or, we will kill them with the sword for thus vainly threatening us; we will use them like false prophets, as they are; and we shall see in the sequel of this prophecy how they used Jeremiah: or it may be an imprecation: q.d. May it fall upon their own heads: thus the Hebrew, *So be it unto them* .

Jeremiah 5:14

Wherefore thus saith the Lord: these vile wretches having now done speaking, God begins to speak; and because they had thus slighted the prophet, and God speaking by him, (as in the next words,

Because ye speak this word,) here tells them what he will do; or rather, turns himself abruptly to the prophet, as men usually do in a passion.

The Lord God of hosts; he makes his majesty and power known, to clothe his words with the greater terror. *Because ye speak this word* , viz. at the rate they discoursed in the former verse.

It shall devour them, i.e. it shall take place suddenly, and irresistibly, and fiercely, as fire is wont to take in dry wood, to their utter ruin and overthrow, Psa_83:14,**15** Isa **9:18,19**. They shall be but fuel to my wrath, which shall be executed by the Chaldean army, that shall consume and eat them up like fire; they shall find my words to be more than wind.

Jeremiah 5:15

From far, viz. from Chaldea. *House of Israel* : by these are meant Judah; for Israel, properly so called, viz. the ten tribes, were in captivity before; see on Jer_4:1; called the house of Israel, not

only because they descended from Jacob, but because they were the chief of that stocká

It is a mighty nation; it is both potent, or, as the word is, rough and harsh, and of great antiquity, ever since the laying the first foundation of Babylon by Nimrod, about one hundred and seventy years after the flood; and hence it is called the land of Nimrod, Mic_5:6. And this doth much add to their cruelty, that they have had dominion and rule in their hands so long, and whereby they have not only grown more proud and haughty, but having been brought up so long in ways of blood and slaughter, they must needs by this time become skilful to destroy.

Neither understandest what they say; which makes thy case much more desperate. It is a great disadvantage when persons understand not one another. They will neither understand thy entreaties, nor thou their offers, being both unintelligible and inexorable, which will render thy condition much more sad and perplexed; speech being that by which the affection is readily communicated, and is the bond of human society: hence this was part of the judgment threatened, Deu_28:36,**49,50**, the Jews not well understanding the Syrian tongue, which the Chaldeans spake, having had no converse with them before the captivity. It was this put a stop to all converse at the building of Babel.

Jeremiah 5:16

Quiver; collectively expressed for quivers; a synecdoche for the whole military preparations, and a metonymy of the containing for the contained, viz. the arrows that will be shot out of them, called *the sons of the quiver* , Lam_3:13; bow and arrow being the chief weapons for war in those countries, and in those days.

Is an open sepulchre; a proverbial speech, Psa_5:9, relating to the dreadful havoc and destruction that will be made, devouring the living as the grave doth the dead, or making work for the greedy, devouring grave, that never saith it hath enough, Pro_1:12. Or, they shall destroy many with one quiver, as one grave will swallow many dead, which may note their skill, and the success they shall have, few of their arrows shall fail of doing execution.

They are all mighty men; these Chaldeans are all men of valour, fit for warriors.

Jeremiah 5:17

They shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread; they shall make clean riddance, leave thee, no supports of life, but bring an utter famine upon thee; it is thus threatened Deu_28:30,**48,51**.

Which thy sons and thy daughters should eat; or, they shall eat up thy sons and thy daughters; but this is only a metonymy of the effect: but properly, this aggravates the dreadfulness of the judgment; parents, out of the tenderness of their affection, choosing rather to die themselves, than to live to see their children starved before their eyes, and they no ways able to relieve them, Lam_2:10,**11**.

They shall eat up thy flocks, & c.; a particular enumeration of the desolation that would be made, all tending to the greatness of the former. They shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword, i.e. beside the waste that the famine would make among persons, their cities also should be depopulated by the sword of the enemy; or rather, possibly the siege should be so strait and strict, as may be implied in the word *impoverish*, that they should be forced to eat one another, till they were quite wasted, they should be reduced to such poverty and exigencies; or the sword may relate to the mentioned mischiefs, as the cause of them all, the sword shall do all this: in all which he doth not so much tell them that the Chaldeans shall conquer them, for that is taken as it were for granted, as what cruelties they shall use when they have conquered.

Jeremiah 5:18

See this verse explained Jer_4:27, save only that I think here it is taken in the first sense there mentioned; for it is not said only, as in that verse,

I will not make a full end, or a full end *of you*, but a full end *with you*: q.d. I have not done with you yet. See Lev_26:14-40.

Jeremiah 5:19

Wherefore doeth the Lord our God all these things unto us? this speaks either their unparalleled insolency, in a manner challenging God, as if they had not deserved such dealing at his

hands, they might have expected better usage from him; the Jews were good at these kinds of challenging of God, Isa_58:3. Or gross stupidity, as being such sots as not to be sensible of what they had done to provoke him; like to that Jer_16:10.

Served strange gods, Heb. *gods of the stranger* ; he doth not say *strange gods* , but *gods of the stranger* , which aggravated their crime, that while they lived in their own land, and the true God among them, they would precariously go fetch in gods from the heathens.

Serve strangers in a land that is not yours: here the prophet,

1. Opposeth *strange lords* to rule over them to those strange gods that they had served, which God calls a forsaking of him.

2. He opposes a land *not theirs* to their own land; so that by this the prophet shows what resentments God had of their sin; for it implies that their sin was much greater, that they served strange gods in their own land, than if they had done it in another, under the tyrannical imposition of a stranger; and therefore he would accordingly suit their punishment, that they should serve in a strange land, which should be worse than to be servants in their own. This is a dreadful but a just retaliation.

Jeremiah 5:20

See of this Jer_4:5. By

Judah and

Jacob we are to understand the two tribes only, as Jer_5:11, which see.

Jeremiah 5:21

Without understanding, Heb. *heart* . They have no heart to return, or to any thing of instruction or reformation, but are stupid and sottish, regardless of all counsel, wisdom, and common prudence. The heart is said to be the symbol, and according to Galen the seat, of wisdom; so the poet placeth it, *Cor sapit, et joulmo loquitur, fel commovet iram* , &c.

Which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: see Jer_6:10. They are wilfully blind, and obstinately deaf; will neither see nor hear the word, will, or works of God, of which he

giveth two instances in two following verses, Jer_5:22,24, viz. in governing the sea, and appointing the seasons of the year. It may be he alludes herein to their idols, to which they were so much addicted.

Jeremiah 5:22

Fear ye not me: either a convincing argument to persuade them to submit unto him; Will ye not submit to me, that can rule the sea? which, as unruly a thing as it is, yet quietly yields to my will: or rather, a very angry challenge and expostulation; Do you think that I, that can tame the boisterous sea, cannot tame you?

Which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea; that stand not in need to make rocks for walls and bounds unto it, but can give a check to it by so small a matter as the sand, that of itself is not only yielding and penetrable, but subject to be blown away with every wind.

By a perpetual decree; either looking backward, that it never could, or forward, that it never shall. Whether this decree have respect to the creation, or to the deluge, it is not much material; the former of which times it could not have been contained within its bounds, neither in the latter could it have exceeded them, without God's special order, as no time since.

Though the waves thereof toss themselves; though they swell, rage, roar, and threaten never so much, as if they would swallow up all before them; though they foam against the rocks that stand in their way; yet, when they come to their bounds appointed, shall tamely yield unto the sand, and retire back.

Yet can they not prevail; not get any ground upon or against God's decree and appointment; either the

decree or the

sand; which in regard of their form, situation, unruliness, and fluxibility would overflow the whole earth, were it not for the limits and restraints that are laid upon it, Job_38:11. By this instance, God may show what he could do with reference to that enraged and raging army that is about to come upon them like a torrent, if his people would repent. Or rather be hereby upbraids the Jews with their unreasonable sottishness, that they are more

mad in their rebellions against God, than the raging waters of the sea, that, as boisterous as they are, yet obey his will.

Jeremiah 5:23

They are not only revolted from me, and gone back, but they continue obstinate, and will not return, Psa_78:8, as the next clause intimates, where God shows their obstinacy by the effect of it.

Gone, viz. from me, they persist in their courses, no reclaiming of them; for they are not only revolted, but they are gone quite away, and are irreclaimable.

Jeremiah 5:24

Neither say they in their heart; they are so careless that they never trouble themselves about it; or so obdurate and stiff that they never lay it to heart, or consider that it is God that disposeth of all fixings according to his own pleasure, both in the earth and in the great deep.

Fear; or, *serve and obey* ; all service to God being both performed in it, and proceeding from it.

That giveth rain, without which nothing could subsist. By this the true God is distinguished from all false idol gods, Jer_14:22; and in this appears not only his power in decreeing, Job_28:26, and preparing it, Psa_147:8 his sovereignty in withholding it, Amo_4:7; but his general goodness in bestowing it, Deu_28:12 Mat_5:45, and his special providence in the seasonable disposal of it, according as there is need, and which he gives as a witness of it, Act_14:17. As in the former instance God sets forth his people's insensibleness of the works of his greatness and power in so easily taming such an unruly element; so here he doth also further manifest the same by instances of his providence and goodness, implying, that so stupid, resolute, and obstinate they are grown, that they are neither afraid of him for his greatness, which possibly may be understood by the former fear, nor fear him for his goodness, which possibly may be the sense of the word in this latter place.

The former and the latter; he means not the former and latter part of the year, but according to their seasons of sowing and

reaping; the former to prepare the ground for sowing, and the latter to prepare the corn for plumping and ripening: see Jer_3:3.

He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest; he gives seasonable harvests according to his appointment: the sum is, God would let them know by this what an impudent and foolish, as well as wicked thing it is for them to set themselves against that God that keeps the whole order of nature at his own disposal, which he can govern and order as he sees men behave themselves towards him.

Jeremiah 5:25

Your iniquities have turned away these things: q.d. Do not say your ground is parched up with drought, or your fruits are corrupted and rotted by too much or unseasonable rain; we have nothing now in so due a course as we were wont to have it. Would you know the reason of it? You have inverted the ordinances and order of nature, have put heaven and earth out of their regular courses, by your iniquities.

Your sins have withholden good things from you; that either you have been cut short of these good things, or denied a blessing upon them: by this God would not have profane men think that unusual seasons either for better or worse do come by chance, but as he sees convenient, either for the encouragement of the obedient, or punishing the obstinate.

Jeremiah 5:26

Among my people are found wicked men; I need not search for such among the heathen nations, for they are found even among them that are called by my name, whereas all my people ought to have been holy.

They lay wait, or contemplate mischievous designs, under deceits, as fowlers do hide themselves, when they watch the birds coming to the snare or net, Pro_1:11 Mic_7:2; and therefore the next expression,

he that setteth snares, is but a periphrasis for a fowler, the Hebrew word being always so taken, Psa_91:3 Pro_6:5, and elsewhere; or they pry, i.e. they narrowly look where they may get an advantage; hence enemies are called priers, or observers, as

you may frequently find in the Psalms Psa_5:8 **27:11 56:2 59:10 92:11**.

They set a trap, they catch men; intimating the success of their wicked policies in bringing their wicked decrees to pass, Psa_37:7, as false witnesses and trespassers use to do, when they go about to ensnare men that are innocent; such a trap did Jezebel lay for Naboth, 1Ki_21:9,**10**. Such a one was that conspiracy of more than forty men against Paul, Act_23:13-15.

Jeremiah 5:27

As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit, i.e. they fill up their houses with the goods and wealth of those that they deceive and overreach; ill-gotten goods; a metonymy of the efficient; as the fowler carries his cage along with him, wherein he puts the birds which he catcheth, to keep safe that they get not away, when once they are caught, as also by their appearance and singing to entice others.

Therefore they are become great, and waxen rich; showing how and in what manner they got their riches, *therefore* , or by *this means* ; such as are gotten by a lying tongue, Pro_21:6, called the *treasures of wickedness* , Mic_6:10.

Jeremiah 5:28

They are waxen fat, they shine; or, so fat that they shine; by reason of their wealth and riches they pamper themselves till their eyes stand out with fatness, Psa_73:7; their wrinkles are filled up with fat, which makes their faces shine.

They overpass the deeds of the wicked; either, they go beyond the very heathen themselves in wickedness, Eze_5:6,**7**; or rather, they escape the hardships and sufferings that others undergo, Psa_73:5-8, they escape better than others; or they slightly pass over judgments threatened.

They judge not the cause of the fatherless; such whom even the law of nature commits to their patronage, they either disregard them, or wrong and injure them, either by refusing them a fair hearing, Isa_1:23, or giving wrong sentence against them in courts of judicature, Zec_7:10, expressly forbidden, Exo_22:22.

Yet they prosper; things go well with them, they live happily, according to their desire, *prosperum scelus* , Job_21:7, &c.; or, that they might prosper, viz. that God might bless them.

Jeremiah 5:29

It is expressed as a thing taken for granted, he certainly will. Can I be a God, and wink at such things? It cannot be. See this explained Jer_5:9.

Jeremiah 5:30

So prodigious or stupendous a crime, that it is beyond the thought or apprehension of man to conceive, much more to express; and so abominable, that a man would even loathe the thoughts of. What this is we have in the next verse.

The land, Heb. *this land* , aggravating the greatness of the wonder, that such a thing should be in such a land: see Isa_26:10.

Jeremiah 5:31

The prophets prophesy falsely; either spreading and dispersing abroad the lies of their idols, particularly Baal, Jer_2:8, or venting their lies in the name of the true God, Jer_4:10.

The priests bear rule by their means; by this means it comes to pass that the princes and priests are encouraged to do all their mischiefs, whether it were in corrupting judgment by bribes, or countenancing fraud and oppression, and hardening themselves against God's threatenings, or whatever else; they were encouraged by the lies of the false prophets, they, and the priests, and the princes combining, and setting themselves against the true prophets of God, Jer_26:8; and thus the priests in effect take the management of all the affairs into their *own hands* ; so the Heb. *take into their hands* , which intimates the authority they used in their ministry.

My people love to have it so; they are very well pleased with the flatteries and lies of the false prophets, not being able to bear the truths that were delivered them from God, Mic_2:11.

What will ye do in the end thereof? q.d. Whither do you think these things will tend? You must look for nothing but utter ruin as the fruit and effect of such doings, Mic_3:11,12: when this city, which you look upon to be perpetuated, shall be overthrown, and

you utterly perish in its ruin, how miserably will you find yourselves to be deluded by your false prophets, and disappointed in your hopes! A sad aposiopesis, concerning the exterminating of the people by the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 6:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 6

God sendeth and strengtheneth the Babylonians against Judah, Jer_6:1-5; for her oppression and spoils, Jer_6:6-8, and obstinacy; which provoke God's wrath and their destruction, Jer_6:9-12. Their covetousness, false confidence, and impudence; people and priests refuse to obey God, Jer_6:13-17. Their hypocritical worship shall not prevent their sure destruction, Jer_6:18-25. The people called to mourn, Jer_6:26. The prophet encouraged under their wickedness and the fruitlessness of his ministry among them, Jer_6:27-30.

Children of Benjamin: he means either the inhabitants of Jerusalem, because part of it stood in the lot of Benjamin, Jos_18:28; or else he means all Judah, because when the ten tribes fell off, the tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah, and was incorporated into them. If it be asked why the prophet rather speaks here to Benjamin than to Judah, the reason probably may be, because he being of Anathoth was of that tribe, and therefore mentions them as his own countrymen.

Gather yourselves to flee; spoken either ironically, that they should set themselves in array, and make head against the enemy, that is now at hand; or rather, that they should flee away together at once, make haste out of Jerusalem in troops, as the next expressions intimate; not counselling them what they should do, viz. for succour, Jer_4:5,6, but rather telling them what they must expect, viz. to be forced to flee out of it, if they may escape.

Blow the trumpet in Tekoa: q.d. Gather yourselves together by the sound of the trumpet at Tekoa, possibly alluding to the name, which signifies *trumpeting* ; or rather, it being one of those fenced cities twelve miles from Jerusalem that Rehoboam built, and made exceeding strong for and with his warlike provisions, 2Ch_11:6,11,12, and being built upon the advantage of a hill toward the north of Judea in the way that the Babylonians were to

come, q.d. There furnish yourselves out of that armoury, and see if you can make head against them: an irony. A place noted in Scripture, where dwelt that Tekoitish woman that interceded with David for Absalom by the subornation of Joab, 2Sa_14:2; and also for the herdsmen of whom Amos was, Amo_1:1, and (it is probable) a place where in time of danger their were wont, by the sound of the trumpet, to summon the people together.

Setup a sign of fire: the word used is of very large extent; *maset* is used for any thing that is lifted up, neither is there any more in the text. The LXX also render it only a sign and the sign *of fire* possibly is mentioned rather than any other, by a metonymy of the subject, because, partly in time of danger of invasion it is the most usual and commodious sign, being seen, in regard of its lifting or raising up of itself, at once afar off; q.d. *fire a beacon* ; and a sign whereby the Benjamites themselves once found they were surprised, Jud_20:38,40

2. It is a sign soonest given of any.

3. Possibly as being a more proper sign than any other would be to the vine-dressers, that they should secure themselves in some safe place, which seems to be pointed at by the next word, *Beth-haccerem* . It signifies the house of the vineyard, probably some high tower built among the vineyards for the keeper or keepers of them to watch them, that no damage came to them, this seeming to be usual, Isa_5:2. Or it may be the name of a town, such a one as some report to lie between Jerusalem and Tekoa, the same mentioned Neh_3:14, though that seems to be adjoining to Jerusalem. Whichsoever it be, it is probable it relates to some place noted for vineyards, which were wont to be planted upon hills, and lying in the way that the Chaldeans were to come; and by these two we are to understand all other places that lie in that coast. *Evil appeareth out of the north* ; that they may know whence their misery will come, he doth as it were point it out with the finger: see Jer_1:14 4:6.

Jeremiah 6:2

Woman: this supplement is not in the text; they that approve it render the epithet *comely* variously, for one dwelling at home, as the Hebrew nays doth also signify, Hab_2:5; and so the word

delicate serves to explain it, as showing the reason of her tarrying at home; not as a good housewife, discreetly guiding and governing her affairs at home, as she is described, Pro_31:10, &c.; Tit_2:5; but through her delicacy exposing herself to all wantonness and voluptuousness, tarrying at home to give entertainment to her paramours: or she, through her state and pride, is so delicate and nice that she will not set her foot out of door, Deu_28:56; possibly occasioned by the great wealth and riches that God had blessed Jerusalem with. This may also point at Judah's effeminacy, that will be so dispirited as not to have courage to oppose the adversary, but easily taken in her dwelling and habitation. Others, as *a beautiful shepherdess*. Some there are that rather choose to supply the defect by the word *land or pasture*, as being that which is greatly desirable by shepherds, as if she were some comely shepherdess, solacing herself in her delightful pastures: see Eze_34:14; and so it may not be without some allusion to the next verse, where her enemies are called by the names of *shepherds*, as being enticed by the pleasantness of her land.

Jeremiah 6:3

The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her: the prophet here proceeds in his metaphor, and possibly the rather, because he chooseth to speak in the style of his own education, which may also give some countenance to the supplement of *pasture or land* in the former verse instead of woman: the meaning is, the Chaldean princes, with their armies, as so many flocks, shall come into this pleasant land; see Jer_12:10; in which expression there is something of a scoff, as Jer_4:16,17.

They shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall so place their warlike tents, as to form a siege to begirt her round, Jer_1:15 Eze_4:2.

Every one in his place, Heb. *hand*, i.e. near hand, or *beside* or *near one another*; thus 2Ch_21:16 Job_1:14: thus *hand* is taken for *place*; i.e. each one in his quarter or station, not a man but shall do his part, and shall be skilful and powerful to destroy wherever he comes: it intimates also that every thing shall be so much at the enemy's own disposal, that they shall be able to choose their own quarters; they shall place their army in wings,

and troops, and regiments, as they see good, to their best advantage, to be helpful one unto another, as *shepherds* are wont to do their flocks; or, they shall fight in several parties, and each destroy his part assigned him through the whole country, and they shall join as it were in one body against Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 6:4

Prepare ye war against her: the prophet now passeth from his metaphor to tell them plainly what he means by the *shepherds*, viz. warriors: some make these the words of the Chaldeans, making preparations for their invasion, and it may be by some of their accustomed rites that they used before war; but they seem more probably to be the words of God inviting them, and calling them into this work, therefore in the Hebrew it is, *Sanctify* war against her, Jer_22:7; he speaks unto such as he had sanctified or set apart for this work, his *sanctified ones*, Isa_13:3.

Arise, and let us go up at noon: this shows how ready they will be to obey God's call; the like we read Isa_21:5; and therefore they are said to *go* or *march* up at *noon*, not only to note their daringness, as needing no stratagems, or strength, or needing to stay for help, but rather to show their forwardness to march on without stop or stay; they would not burn daylight, but be speedy in their work, and they would take the first opportunity, whether morning or noon, day or night, as the next verse. The next words seem to strengthen this sense; *Woe unto us! for the day goeth away*, &c.: q.d. We delay, and tarry too long, and the day spends apace, we lose time, let us make haste about our work; expressing their greediness after their prey, as soldiers use to do: or this

Woe unto us may be some form of imprecation, either against God or men, which kind of speeches are usual with soldiers when they are chafed, and going upon some sudden onset or exploit; though not a few make it the complaint of the prophet in the name of the people, foreseeing how their night of affliction hasted on, their joyful days being as it were gone, Amo_8:9,10. But the former seems best to agree with the scope.

The shadows of the evening are stretched out; they were so eagerly set upon it, that they watched the very lengthening of the

shadow, which shows the approach of the evening, Psa_109:23. See Hab_1:8.

Jeremiah 6:5

Let us go by night, or, *this night* . They were set upon it, they would lose neither day nor night; which shows that they were extraordinarily stirred up by God in this expedition.

Let us destroy her palaces: this was the bait or motive that they propounded to themselves, viz. to have the spoil of all the stately palaces and rich houses of the nobles and great ones.

Jeremiah 6:6

Said, viz. to the Chaldeans. Here God declares whence they have their commission: q.d. They come not up on their own heads: see Jer_5:14,15. God would have the Jews to know that they have not so much to do with the Chaldeans as with him; that they are his rod to scourge them for their sins, Jer_1:15,16. See 2Ki_18:25. And thus God is said to hiss for such whom he will employ in such work, Isa_5:26 **7:18**. And he styles himself the Lord of hosts, to show that it is in vain to contend in battle with them, whom he sends forth, and will be, as it were, the captain of their hosts.

Hew ye down trees, Heb. *a tree* , collectively taken: q.d. Cut them down all as one tree, not sparing their very fruit trees, which indeed were to be spared in such a case, Deu_20:19; either such as lie in the way of your march, or all round about Jerusalem; or such as you may have need of there or elsewhere for your use, either to raise up works against the strong places, Deu_20:20, or to make other instruments of war.

Cast a mount; throw up one continued trench, as a mount round about it. See on Isa_37:38. Heb. *pour out the engine* ; of that see 2Sa_20:15.

To be visited; God is said to visit sometimes in mercy, **Ge 1 24 Zep 2:7**, and sometimes in judgment, as here, and Jer_5:9 **23:2**. They are ripe for it, Eze_7:10-12; see 1Th_2:16; and it is decreed against them, and ready to come upon them, chap, 23:12 Hos_9:7. All attempts have failed, and now there is no remedy. She is wholly oppression; in the abstract, she doth nothing but oppress; there are found in her all kinds of oppression and injustice; a synecdoche for all other cruelties, 2Ki_24:3,4 **Eze 7:23**; even in

that city which was once full of judgment, and righteousness lodged in it, Isa_1:21, swallowed up with oppression.

Jeremiah 6:7

In this verse God aggravates their sin of oppression, mentioned in the former.

As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness; a metaphor, to express how natural all manner of wickedness is to her, how full she is of it, and how incessant in it, noting her impudence, a fountain being not able to retain its water; and the expression of *casting it out* seems to imply her violence in her filthiness, as it is said of the sea, that it *casteth out* mire and dirt, Isa_57:20, and favoured by the next clause.

Violence and spoil is heard in her: q.d. This is all she busieth herself about, Jer_20:8. It is the general complaint of her inhabitants.

Before me continually is grief and wounds, viz. that the poor sustain: wherever I go or look, I can hear and see nothing but the sad complaints and grievances of the poor, lamenting over oppression and cruelties that are used against them, Psa_69:26, this being so expressly against God's command, Exo_22:22-24, &c.; Isa_3:14,**15 Jas 5:4**; for this refers rather to their sin than to their sufferings from the enemy, as some would carry it.

Jeremiah 6:8

Be thou instructed, Heb. *corrected* : q.d. By the correction thou hast felt, and what is threatened, be persuaded to repentance before it be too late, Pro_29:15. God doth here

in the midst of judgment remember mercy, as it were suddenly putting a stop to his fury, seeking if by any means it may yet be prevented by their repentance: q.d. I would yet willingly spare them, if it might be.

Lest my soul depart from thee, Heb. *be disjointed* ; a most emphatical metaphor, whereby God would express how great grief it is to him to withdraw himself from them, could it possibly be avoided, (his great affection to them being here expressed by soul, which is the seat of it, Psa_42:1,**2**) even like the separating one limb from another: hereby is intimated the near communion that

God hath with the faithful, and how ready he is to return, if they will return.

Lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited; lest he make them not a people.

Jeremiah 6:9

Though gleaning be a term proper for all kind of harvest, yet the word used here is appropriated to the vintage, and implies the thorough riddance that the Chaldeans shall make, contrary to the law for gathering the vintage, though it may seem to allude to it, Lev_19:10. Judah shall be gleaned over and over, till there be a full end, none left; as the Israelites gleaned the Benjamites, Jud_20:45; for thus they *picked them up* at several times, both before, 2Ki_24:2, and also at thee time of Zedekiah's reign, 2Ki_25:6,7,11,15,19; and this seems to be intimated in the next words. See Hab_1:9.

Turn back thine hand; as much as to say, they should not be content with one spoiling, but they should go back a second and a third time, again and again, to carry away both persons and spoil, leaving nothing behind them worth carrying away, Jer_52:28-30; the first carrying away being as the vintage, the second the gleaning; carrying away first the principal, and afterwards the more inferior sort.

As a grape gatherer into the baskets; as the grapegatherers do, filling one basket after another. Whether these be the words of the Babylonians calling upon and stirring up one another to do it, as some; or the words of God to the Babylonians, as most; it comes much to the same thing; for what they did; as by God's commission.

Jeremiah 6:10

Give warning, Heb. *make protestation* ; noting with what earnestness the prophet would bespeak them in his warning of them: see Jer_11:7. The prophet taking notice of their obstinacy, speaks as one astonished, and highly makes complaint, being greatly grieved that he can find none that will take warning; the like Jer_7:23,24; he labours to persuade, but all is in vain; they turn a deaf ear to him, as the next expression intimates.

Their ear is uncircumcised; a figurative kind of speech frequent with the prophets: an *uncircumcised ear* signifying the rejecting of instruction; an *uncircumcised heart*, an obstinate and rebellious will: hence circumcision was for a testimony of obedience; and therefore the prophet doth tacitly insinuate their falseness to God, to whom they had promised to be obedient, 2Ki_11:17 **23:3**. And the Scripture calls those that are void of the fear of God, and carried out to all manner of lusts, uncircumcised, Eze_44:7,**9**; for uncircumcision was abominable among the Jews; so that it notes both their sin and their shame, their ear being stopped, unfit for hearing, as if it were with a foreskin or film over it, Act_7:51.

They cannot hearken: the prophet doth not here lessen their crimes by their inability and want of power, but rather aggravates it, inasmuch as they had brought themselves under that incapacity by their obstinacy and willfulness; as a drunken man that hath deprived himself of his reason by excess, renders the want of his understanding the more inexcusable.

A reproach; either they reproach it in the messenger's mouth, Luk_11:45, or rather they laugh at it and scorn it, they cannot bear counsel, they look upon reproving them to be reproaching them; they take no delight in hearing such things: a further reason of their impotency and obstinacy; all their admonitions and instructions seemed insipid, and therefore were they so stupid, according to the next words, Pro_15:12. See Jer_5:31 2Ti_4:3.

Jeremiah 6:11

Therefore. Heb. *And*; which seems to be a better connexion; for that which putteth him upon this work seems rather to be that Spirit of prophecy that is in him than any consideration drawn from them.

I am full of the fury of the Lord; I am, as it were, filled with the fire of God's wrath and curses against this people, which I am forced to discharge myself of; a metonymy of the subject. See Eze_3:3 Jer_4:19. He doth not only complain of their stupidity, as in the former verse, but stirs up his indignation against them.

I am weary with holding in; but he can contain himself no longer, which implies his great unwillingness to denounce these curses: q.d. The wrath of God, by the impulse of his Spirit, acting

so violently with mine, that it will break out: see the like Job_32:18,**19**. Whereby it appears the prophet is not carried on by his own private spirit, but by the Spirit of God; he hath no delight in it, but is forced to be the messenger himself of his wrath; therefore if he be sharp against them, they must not impute; it to him, but to the Spirit of God, that constrains him thus to speak.

I will pour it out, viz. in prophesying, noting the great plenty of it; a metaphor from violent rains, that we say do pour down upon the earth, Jer_7:20 Rev_16:1.

Upon the children abroad; the streets being the places where usually little children are wont to sport themselves, Zec_8:5. The same word used Psa_8:2.

Upon the assembly of young men together; their secret meetings, whether in harlots' houses, Jer_5:7, or for mirth and jollity, or to join either their strength or counsel together, which children are not capable of; for the Hebrews do not only call them youths that are past their childhood, possibly at fifteen or sixteen years of age, but men of twenty or thirty, grown to their full strength and maturity, in the flower of their years; yet it shall advantage them nothing.

The husband with the wife, Heb. *man with woman* ; the wife shall be taken as well as the husband, one sex as well as the other shall be a prey to the enemy.

The aged with him that is full of days; not only men that may be termed old, as they may be from fifty to eighty, which are then said to be waxing old; but such as had upon the point filled up the number of their days, at the edge of the grave, Isa_65:20, called very aged, as Barzillai, 2Sa_19:32,**34,35**. The sense is, that all sorts, from the children to the decrepit old man, had so corrupted their ways, see Jer_6:13, that their condition was desperate, and God would bring an enemy upon them should spare or pity none, of what sex or age soever.

Jeremiah 6:12

Their houses shall be turned unto others, i.e. their houses and their lands shall be devolved or turned over to strangers, Jer_8:10, even that land which they thought had been entailed upon them, and they so firmly fixed in for ever, Psa_132:13,**14**.

Their wives; their most desirable things; howbeit it need not be restrained precisely to wives, the Hebrew signifying women largely, Jer_7:18, comprising

maids, wives, or concubines, and this according to the threatening, Deu_28:30 Jer_8:10.

I will stretch out my hand, viz. to smite, to give you a sorer blow, Isa_5:25; a synecdoche of the kind, spoken after the manner of men. Here the prophet gives them the reason of this their unexpected calamity, that they might not think it an impossibility; namely, because God was become their enemy.

Jeremiah 6:13

From the least of them; not respecting so much their age as degree and quality, poor and rich; the prophet notes the generality of their corruption as the reason of God's severity against them, as Jer_6:6; observing also that it was even among the greatest, who ought to have given better examples, no soundness from head to foot.

Covetousness; in which possibly all their wickednesses, as cruelty, oppression, injustice, &c., may be comprised, it being the root of all evil, 1Ti_6:10, and may also speak the justice of God, in the Chaldeans taking them and all their substance away, that had by violence and fraud wrested it from others, Mic_2:2.

Dealeth falsely, Heb. *doing falsehood* ; as if that were their whole work, the proper and peculiar sin of the priests and prophets, to deceive the people, and to flatter them by false visions, as in the next verse; not that they were not also guilty of the other sins, Isa_56:11, and the princes and people of this, Mic_3:9 Jer_5:31, for they were all involved in the same wickedness; but the prophet mentions those sins that were most peculiar to each party. See the same Jer_8:10.

Jeremiah 6:14

They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly: this refers peculiarly to the prophets; either slighting or making light of these threatenings, tending to the reproach either,

1. Of the prophets of God, bringing their message into contempt; or,

2. The people, deceiving of them, and rendering their hopes vain, Jer_8:11. Or here the prophet shows wherein their false dealing consists, viz. in daubing over their misery and danger that was coming on them, by persuading them that it should not come, or if it did, it would be easily cured; as some physicians do with their patients, that make light of a wound, and so neglect the true method of cure; but either by lenitives give some ease for the present, by a superficial skinning over a sore while the corruption is in it; or stupefactive, making them senseless, not feeling their pain, Jer_23:14 Eze_13:10 **16:22**; and so the prophet makes this the cause of their last destruction.

Saying, Peace, peace; the Chaldeans shall not come, all things shall be prosperous with you; all kind of prosperity being included in the word *peace*. They promise you peace, but you shall come short of it, as in the next words.

Jeremiah 6:15

Were they, viz. the false prophets, ashamed? Some read it actively, as sometimes it is taken, Did they put the people to shame? but that is not so proper here; it rather notes how bold and confident, or rather impudent, they were in their flatteries, and deceiving the people, a great aggravation of their sin. The form of the interrogation chargeth them home with the guilt, as do also the next words,

neither could they blush; q.d. they had not the least show of shame, usually discovered by blushing.

Committed abomination; or, the thing to be abominated, (a metonymy of the effect,) both by encouraging the people, and joining with them in their idolatries. See Jer_3:3.

Therefore they shall fall among them that fall; therefore they shall perish with those whom they have deceived, as in the following expressions. *To fall* signifies to *be slain*, Psa_63:10 Luk_21:24. *Visit them*, viz. punish them, inflict punishment on them: see Jer_6:6.

Jeremiah 6:16

Having told the false prophets their doom, he now turns his speech to the people, and gives them counsel; for he rather propounds than commands, by a metaphor taken from travellers,

that being in doubt of their way, do stand still, pause, and consider, whether the direction they have received from some ignorant person or false guide be right or not.

The old paths, Heb. *paths of antiquity* , such as their godly forefathers of old were wont to walk in, the ancient paths, Jer_18:15. Or, *the oracles of God* , what directions his word gives, Isa_8:20. Or, *the providence of God* . Observe what hath been God's ways and method in times past, with reference to sin and punishment, Deu_4:3,4 **Jud 5:6,8 Jer 22:15,16**, and what have been want to be the best courses, called here the

good way, or the best way to continue mercies and prevent judgments, Deu_32:7, he.: see 1Th_5:21.

Walk therein; when you have found what was best and most prosperous, keep it, stick to it.

Ye shall find rest; you will find God to stand by you, and be a sanctuary to you, Deu_33:12,29. See Mat_11:29. You will find things mend with you; it will be well with you, as it hath been with others; you will be satisfied and quiet; you will not doubt any longer which way to follow: see 1Ki_18:21.

We will not walk therein; it notes their great wilfulness and obstinacy, that though the prophets had directed them in the right way, and though they knew others had experimented it to be so, yet they would not be persuaded to walk in it, but deliberately refused those favours offered, Isa_8:11-13 Jer_18:11,12.

Jeremiah 6:17

Watchmen, viz. prophets and messengers, that sought their good, and endeavoured to prevent their miseries by foretelling what was coming upon them, Eze_3:17 **33:7** *A metaphor from watchmen* , that are usually set upon high places to espy out dangers afar off.

The sound of the trumpet; either the voice of his prophets, which is compared to a trumpet, Isa_58:1, intimating his loud crying upon the account of imminent danger; for men do not use to sound the trumpet till danger be approaching; or the trumpet of that enemy, Jer_4:19,21.

We will not hearken; more of their obstinacy suitable to their carriage, Jer_6:16.

Jeremiah 6:18

Ver. 18, **Hear, ye nations:** he calls upon the nations round about to be as so many spectators of his severity against Judah, though they were his own people.

1. Partly to vindicate the justice of his proceedings, that they may not think him too severe.

2. Partly to shame them, if thereby tie may bring them to repentance; and therefore he makes them witnesses as well of their sin as of their punishment, Jer_6:19. Besides,

3. It is a secret upbraiding them, as if the nations were more ready to understand than they.

Know, O congregation; either of Israel, and then the next words must be which are among them; or rather, of all nations, as supposing them gathered all together, Psa_7:7. God is willing that all the world should be witness of the equity of his proceedings.

What is among them; or, *that which is among them* ; the relative put for the antecedent; either the height of their wickedness, or the severity of their judgments; understand it either way, or both ways, and then it is the greatness of their punishment, as the effect of the greatness of their sins.

Jeremiah 6:19

Hear, O earth; the inhabitants of the earth; or else God having spoken to the rational, he now speaks to the very senseless creatures to observe his proceedings, Eze_36:4.

I will bring evil; the Chaldean army, with all the direful effects of it. *The fruit of their thoughts* : q.d. They may thank themselves for what is come upon them, being the fruit of all these contrivances and wicked imaginations that their hearts were full of, Pro_1:29-31; see Isa_59:7 Jer_4:14; by which phrase is also intimated that their sins were not some slight oversights, but meditated and digested wickedness; and therefore God will bring upon them the just punishment for their doings.

My words; those messages that I so frequently and earnestly sent unto them by my prophets, Pro_1:24,25.

But rejected it; as it were bidding open defiance to me, scorning to be ruled by me.

Jeremiah 6:20

To what purpose? an interrogation of expostulation and contempt, wherein God by the prophet meets with their hypocrisy, who pleased themselves with their outward oblations and sacrifices, and thought God would be pleased with them too; but he tells them plainly they are to no purpose; as he speaks particularly in the close of the verse, Jer_7:21,22 Eze 20:39.

Incense from Sheba: that this was the product of Sheba, a country in Arabia Felix, to which country frankincense was peculiar, See Poole "Isa_60:6". *The sweet cane* , or, *cane* , i.e. good, or the best cane; the article h hath the force of a superlative, for cane that is good; the Hebrews have no degrees of comparison; the same that is mentioned as an ingredient in the holy oil, Exo_30:23. See Isa_43:24.

From a far country; not that it was brought from the remotest parts of the world, as from India, as some; for it was known to the Jews in Moses's time, Exo_30:23; but because it grew not in their own land, but was fetched or brought to them from Sheba, Isa_60:6, where it did grow, as Diodorus testifies, lib. 3. p. 125, and Strabo, lib. 16; 1Ki_10:2, compared with Joe_3:8; who is called *the queen of the south* , and to *come from the uttermost parts of the earth* , Mat_12:42, because the South Sea did bound the country. To what purpose art thou at this trouble and charge to fetch these ingredients for thy incense?

Are not acceptable; not likely to atone me; they will not be for acceptance; I cannot take delight in them, Hos_9:4, as the next expression: q.d. Away with these childish trifles, whereby you think to pacify me. By these species he understands the whole legal worship.

Jeremiah 6:21

I will lay stumbling-blocks; God gives this name to all the occasions of the Jews' ruin; he exposeth them, or suffereth such things to be laid in their way, as shall be the occasion of their destruction; such things which they shall not get over. Or an hypallage, I will bring destruction upon them; as the Hebrews use

to speak, They have sent a *city into the fire* , i.e. They have sent *fire into the city* . Or God doth here compare his judgments to traps, wherein they shall be taken, which they thought easily to have evaded. What these stumbling-blocks are seem to be expressed in the following verses.

The fathers and the sons together; as well the fathers, that have more prudence and policy, as the children, that are more inadvertent, or possibly may count themselves less guilty, shall perish by these stumbling-blocks; no recovering for themselves, Isa_8:14,15.

The neighbour and his friend; men of all sorts and conditions, the greatest intimates and associates, though all lay their heads together for counsel, yet shall they not be able to help one another, but a promiscuous destruction there shall be, Jer_6:11 Jer_13:14.

Jeremiah 6:22

Now the prophet is showing what these destructive stumbling-blocks shall be, of which he had prophesied forty years already, and yet they would not be warned. The north country: see Jer_6:1.

A great nation shall be raised; God shall stir up the Chaldeans like a great storm or tempest, Jer_1:15 **25:32**. See Eze_23:22.

From the sides of the earth; the remote and uttermost parts of the Babylonian territories, though at the greatest distance, yet God will bring them: which may note the greatness of God's displeasure against Judah, this circumstance being noted among the curses, Deu_28:49. See Isa_5:25,26, &c.; Jer_5:15.

Jeremiah 6:23

They shall lay hold on bow and spear; or, They shall *carry* ; they shall not want military ammunition of all sorts for the despatch of this great work; synecdochically expressed for all sorts of weapons. So Psa_35:2,3.

Have no mercy; see Jer_50:42; not be entreated, or have any pity to sex or age, poor or rich, Jer_21:7. See the like Isa_13:17,18. And this was as duly executed as here prophesied, 2Ch_36:17.

Their voice roareth like the sea; which, as it is very violent, so it causeth great consternation by its noise, compared to the roaring of the devils, Jam_2:19. Possibly it may intimate, they would not

hearken to the voice of his prophets, now they shall hear the terrifying noise of armies, like the roaring of the sea.

They ride upon horses; which is a creature in especial manner adapted by God for war, as he is described. Job_9:19,20, &c.; implying their speed, strength, and fierceness, Jer_50:42.

Set in array; the whole nation set as it were in *battalia* against them, that they may perceive they have to do with soldiers. The LXX. reading *va esh*, *fire*, for *vya ish*, *man*, render it, as fire to the war.

O daughter of Zion, or Jerusalem; for these two titles are promiscuously used for the same place; and the term daughter is often given to cities and countries, as Psa_45:12 **137:8** Isa_23:12 **47:1**.

Jeremiah 6:24

We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble. The prophet personates the people's affections: q.d. At the very report of the approach and fierceness of this people we are dismayed and discouraged, our hearts melt within us; all warlike courage is taken from us, 2Sa_4:1; or he modestly reckons himself among the rest.

Anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail; a description of the exquisiteness of their sufferings, Jer_13:21.

Jeremiah 6:25

Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; expressing the great danger that there would be every where, there would be no stirring out of their fenced cities or houses, Jer_8:14, but great danger to them that go out, and to those that come in, they would find death every where; now seek out some by-ways, venture not in common roads, Jud_5:6.

The sword of the enemy and fear is on every side: the language of one speaking to another: it seems to be a proverbial speech, frequently used to express unavoidable dangers, Psa_31:13 Jer_20:3,10 **49:29**. All places will be full of soldiers, so that all attempts will be very difficult, Lam_5:9.

Jeremiah 6:26

O daughter of my people, i.e. O my people, that art beloved as a *daughter* .

Gird thee with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes: he calls upon them to mourning in the deepest manner wherein they can express it, girding with sackcloth, close mourning, Jer_4:8, wallowing in ashes, Jer_25:34 Mic_1:10, lying low in humiliation, and prostrating themselves before him: he further describes the nature of it in the following expression, such as is for the death of a child, a son, an only son, Amo_8:10; and then seems to sum it up in this bitter,

most bitter lamentation, Heb. *wailing of bitternesses* , noting the highest degrees of lamentation; he seems to want words to express it. See Jer_9:17,**18**. And it is likely the prophet doth not so designedly exhort them to repent, as rather describe the state of persons in a lost and despairing condition. For here the prophet takes upon himself thee person of one denouncing war; and sackcloth and ashes is often mentioned where there is net hope of conversion or repentance.

The spoiler; the king of Babylon and his army, Jer_4:8.

Jeremiah 6:27

Here God speaks by way of encouragement to the prophet, and tells him he had made him a fortified tower, that he might both discover the carriages of his people, which is one use of a high tower, Isa_21:5,**8 Hab 2:1**; and also to assure him, though they shall make several attempts against him, yet he shall be kept safe, os in a castle or fortress, Jer_15:20.

That thou mayest know and try their way; their courses, actions, and manners, and which way they stand affected; thou mayest bring all to thy strict observation and scrutiny, as goldsmiths or refiners do metals; for so is the word try used, Psa_66:10, and elsewhere. Hereby he shall be encouraged to reprove them more freely, and with authority, because God doth promise to defend him, that they shall not hurt him; God will give him prudence to see what is amiss, and undauntedness to oppose it.

Jeremiah 6:28

Grievous revolvers; obstinate and refractory, Isa_31:6 Jer_5:3,23.

Walking with slanders; being their main business to detract from thee and the other prophets, Jer_18:18 **20:10**; a sin expressly forbidden, Lev_19:16.

They are brass and iron: this to the end of the chapter is all metaphorical; either they are impudent, as brass doth sometimes signify, or they are obstinate and inflexible, as iron notes: see both Isa_48:4: or it signifies their corrupt estate; they are not pure metal, as silver or gold, but base and mean, as brass and iron mixed together, Eze_22:18.

They are all corrupters: this relates to their manners; they propagate their corruption, Isa_1:4; they strengthen one another in wickedness.

Jeremiah 6:29

The bellows are burned: the prophet prosecutes his metaphor taken from refining of metals, intimating herein that the prophets had spent their lungs to no purpose; see the like Psa_22:15 **69:3**; and their strength was consumed by their so much labour and pains: q.d. The terror of the Lord is as a fire in my throat.

The lead is consumed; some read it, the *lead* was entire, viz. their dross did still remain in them, the lead put for their dross; but I see no reason for nor need of this reading, but rather hereby is understood either that means which was used to prevail with them, his words compared to *lead* for the weight of them, and the use of them; or the judgments, which were heavy as lead, that God mixed among them, the more easily to prevail with them; it was all upon them; as lead is used in melting silver, that it may melt the easier; it is all wasted, and doth no good.

The founder melteth in vain; let the artist use his greatest skill and industry, yet is it all in vain; He can make nothing of it: the prophets did but lose their labour in all the pains they took, Psa_58:5, after they had wearied themselves.

The wicked are not plucked away, or drawn away, as the word is, Jos_8:16 Jud_20:32. Their dross and corruption, their

wickedness and filthiness, is not removed, Isa_32:6: for wicked may be read wickedness.

Jeremiah 6:30

Reprobate silver; or, *Refuse silver* ; such as will be rejected in payments; they are not to be purged or reformed.

Shall men call them; or, *be called* , i.e. they shall be esteemed such as will not pass for current before God or good men, Lam_3:45.

Because the Lord hath rejected them; the prophet gives the reason of their being accounted such refuse stuff, viz. because God, who knew their hypocrisy in boasting of themselves, had rejected them, Lam_5:22; therefore every one else would.

Jeremiah 7:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 7.

A call to true repentance, Jer_7:1-7; and not, living in theft, murder, adultery, perjury, &c.. to trust in the outward worship and temple of God, by the example of Shiloh, Jer_7:8-15. The prophet is forbid to pray for them, Jer_7:16. Their idolatry, and its judgment, Jer_7:17-20. Their sacrifices rejected, and obedience required, Jer_7:21-28. They are called to mourn for their abominations in Tophet, and their judgments, Jer_7:29-34.

See Jer_1:2. This is the title of a new sermon, much of the nature of the former, which readeth to **Jer 10**.

Jeremiah 7:2

Stand in the gate, viz. the east gate, which was chiefly frequented; this being the public place of going out and coming in, and where the people were then wont to assemble, Jer_26:2,**10**; and he is said to *stand* , because he was to execute the office of a preacher, Jer_26:2, not of a judge, where the posture would rather have been *sitting* .

The Lord's house; the temple, Jer_7:4,**10**.

Proclaim there: the place notes the vanity of their confidence, who, notwithstanding all their provocations, yet placed their safety much in the privileges of the temple, glorying much in that; and the manner. proclaiming, signifies both the authority by which

he spake, and the divulging of what he spake plainly and boldly, which as it was in a public place, viz. the court of the people, not the court of the priests, (from which it is distinguished, 2Ch_4:9) and therefore said at these gates, viz. the several gates that were in the wall of the court, of which there were six, three on the south side and three on the north; so, possibly, it might be at some public time of the people's resorting thither from all quarters, Psa_122:4,5, when all the males were to meet, Exo_23:17; see Joh_7:37; and therefore said,

all ye of Judah. This word; the message that I send thee with.

The word of the Lord: see Jer_2:4.

Jeremiah 7:3

Amend your ways and your doings, i.e. mend your manners. Amending signifies both to turn from our evil works, and make our good better.

I will cause you to dwell in this place; you shall not go into captivity, implying that otherwise they should; he will continue their habitations to them from age to age, as Jer_7:7. The doing of a thing in Scripture often implies the continuance of it: Lev_26:11,

I will set my tabernacle, i.e. I will continue it.

Jeremiah 7:4

Because this was God's house, wherein he had promised to dwell, and that for ever, Psa_132:13,14, they flattered themselves that he could dwell no where else, and would not depart, and certainly would not suffer the Chaldeans to destroy this, and therefore that no evil could befall them, as they promised themselves, Mic_3:11; therefore the prophet cautions them not to deceive themselves in trusting to the temple and its buildings, as the two courts, and house, and holy of holies, implied in the word these, which he doth as it were point to with his finger; (for where the prophets speak distinctly of the form of the temple, they reckon the court, where the people did sacrifice, and the holy place, or house, whereinto the priests only did enter, and the oracle, or holy of holies, wherein was the ark of the covenant, and into which only the high priest entered, and that but once a year;) which these hypocrites looked upon themselves secured by, as it were, by a

treble wall, fort, or bulwark, that they could not miscarry; but he would have them to know that neither these, nor the services belonging to them, will be able to secure them, Jer_7:8 Jer_4:14; and it is likely their false prophets did thus persuade them, whose prophecies he calls here these

lying words; but God will have them know that he doth not choose a nation for the place's sake, but the place for the nation's sake; the like caution the apostle gives them, 1Co_10:2, &c. The emphasis that may be in this threefold repetition seems rather to relate to the confident and often reiterated brags and boasts of the temple that were in their mouths, than the worth and excellency of it, in regard of God's owning it.

These; the prophet, standing in the gate at which the people entered, doth as it were point at the several buildings appertaining to the temple, viz. the courts, house, oracle, &c.

Jeremiah 7:5

He tells them, it is not their vain confidence in their privileges, and boasting of the temple, but only their serious and thorough repentance in turning to God, both in point of piety and equity, that can secure them.

Between a man and his neighbour, i.e. impartially among one another, between man and man, without favour or hatred.

Jeremiah 7:6

Here they are cautioned against three sins that this people were generally addicted to, oppression, blood, and idolatry; and he instanceth in the worst of oppressions, viz. of such as God hath more especially taken into his immediate protection, because these are most void of help, and most obnoxious to injuries; the

stranger, Exo_22:21, the

fatherless, and widow, Jer_7:22-24; see them all three together, Deu_10:18 **27:19:** see on Isa_10:1,2: and where God speaks of right administering of justice, he usually makes mention of these three, to prove the integrity and impartiality of justice; and though this may more properly respect the princes and great ones, yet I conceive here the prophet doth not so restrain it.

Shed not innocent blood, either by murder or unrighteous sentence; being one of those sins in special mentioned for which God expresseth his high displeasure, and will send the Chaldeans upon them, 2Ki_24:4.

In this place; either in this city in special, or the whole land in general; see Jer_7:3; and there he would show what a foolish thing it is that they should boast of their security in this place, and yet shed blood, which pollutes every place, Num_35:31, &c.

Neither walk after other gods; abstain from your idolatrous courses and depart not from my pure and uncorrupted worship, unto your superstitious and hypocritical service; and he adds to

your hurt, or your own hurt, to show that they will be the only sufferers by it, not God, Jer_7:19. God is neither benefited nor damaged by any thing that we can do, Job_35:6-8.

Jeremiah 7:7

Then, i.e. upon this condition, that you will return unto me, then either I will establish and fix you in the land; or, as anciently read, *sachanti* in *kal* , I will dwell, viz. amongst you in this place, otherwise not.

In this place, viz. Judea, both in Jerusalem and the whole country, as the next words manifest.

For ever and ever, i.e. from age to age, as your fathers did before you from the days of Joshua until now.

Jeremiah 7:8

Behold; take notice of it, and think of it seriously.

Ye trust in lying words; either flattering yourselves with your own conceits, whereby, in your discourses, you strengthen one another; or depending upon the delusions of your false prophets, Jer_5:31 **23:26,27**; or rather, bolstering yourselves up upon your privileges or bare ceremonies, which you so much boast of, as Jer_7:4; all which he tells them will profit them nothing.

Jeremiah 7:9

Here the prophet mentions divers of those sins in which they were notorious, they were *thieves, murderers, adulterers* , perjured *idolaters* , &c. :q.d. Can you think that this can be grateful unto

me, or any whit advantageous to yourselves, to frequent my house, and yet retain these odious sins, as if I were a companion for thieves, murderers, &c.?

Gods whom ye know not; such as they had set up new, and never had any experience of, and therefore could have no reason to serve them; therefore called new gods, Deu_32:17 Jud_5:8: but of his power and goodness they had had ample proof, in their deliverance from Egypt, and the wonderful miracles and signs that God had shown them in the wilderness, and his victorious arm for them in Canaan; of which things these Jews could not be ignorant, and therefore the more inexcusable. Four of these sins respect the second table, these two last the first. The name of

Baal is here put for all idols.

Jeremiah 7:10

And come and stand before me in this house; in the temple; either as if they had done no such thing, like the whore, that wipes her mouth, and saith she hath done no wickedness, Pro_30:20, noting their deep hypocrisy; or else that barely this would expiate for all their abominations, as if they could make God amends for their sins by their duties; and their posture of standing notes their service, 1Ki_10:8 Pro_22:29.

Which is called by my name; that is acknowledged to be my house, and bears my name, dedicated to me.

We are delivered to do all these abominations; that is, after they had appeared before God with their sacrifices, either they thought themselves safe from all danger, and freed from God's judgments, Mal_3:15; or rather privileged to return to all those wickednesses again, hereby noting their impudence. See Isa_1:12, &c. LXX. read it, *we have abstained from all these abominations*, as if these were the lying words in which they trusted.

Jeremiah 7:11

Robbers, Heb. *breakers through*. The word is taken in a large notion for all sorts of plunderers, whether in house, Eze_7:22, or field, highway-men, Dan_11:14. Do you look upon this house as a sanctuary and refuge for *robbers* and *murderers*? do you esteem it so, and is it so in your eyes? so the phrase is used Num_13:33, &c.; hereby making me an abettor of all your lewdness,

Mat_21:13; a metaphor taken from wild beasts and mischievous persons, that do both secure themselves and hide their prey in holes and caves of the earth, Psa_10:8,9.

I have seen it: q.d. As crafty as you are, you cannot hide these things from me, nor all those workings of your thoughts about them, Psa_10:11,13,14 **Eze 18:12**. He checks their foolish vain confidences, whereby they deceive themselves, Isa_29:15. God will not be blinded by all their vain oblations.

Jeremiah 7:12

Shiloh; a place that did belong to the tribe of Ephraim, Psa_78:60, compare Psa_78:67; the situation whereof see Jud_21:19; and called *God's house*, as the temple is, 1Sa_1:3,7: he sends them hither for an example, which had the same privileges and holiness with the temple; not to go thither locally, but to cast their thoughts back, and consider of it, that they might know that God's presence is not tied to places, Act_7:48.

Where I set my name at the first; where I did at first give you the token and pledges of my presence among you, when you first entered into the pleasant land, noting the antiquity of Shiloh before the temple.

What I did to it, i.e. he utterly forsook it; he did not only deliver up his people into the Philistines' hands, but the ark also, the token of his presence, which never returned to Shiloh more; and afterwards delivered the ten tribes, wherein Shiloh was situate, into captivity to the Assyrian; see Jer_7:14,15; wherein he upbraids them for their folly ill thinking that the ark or altar in the temple should any more privilege them than it did Shiloh.

For the wickedness of my people; he gives them the reason of it in these words, *the wickedness of his people*, and chiefly the priests, Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons, 1Sa_2:12, &c.; and why should they think to escape, who did equal, if not exceed them?

Jeremiah 7:13

These works; either the same, or as bad, or worse than they did at Shiloh; or particularly those mentioned Jer_7:9.

Rising up early; a metaphor taken from persons that are diligent in their business, they use to rise up early: q.d. I did not only

speak by my prophets, but they in my name used all diligence to reclaim you, Jer_11:7,**8 25:3,4**, calling earnestly unto you; by which he means his exhortations and menaces, which ought to have had some efficacy upon them; but you slighted, and disregarded, and would not come at my call, Pro_1:24. **See Poole "2Ch_36:15"**, **See Poole "2Ch_36:16"**, and **See Poole "Isa_1:2"**.

Jeremiah 7:14

Therefore, because they have added this their obstinate refusing of all admonitions to the rest of their provocations,

will I do unto this house, viz. cause the consecrated things of the temple to be taken away by the hand of the Babylonians. *The place*, see Jer_7:7, which I gave to you, viz. upon condition of your obedience, Psa_105:44,**45**, and therefore may justly, upon the breach of the condition, take from you again, nay, by virtue of my sovereignty, Job_1:21.

Shiloh: see Jer_7:12.

Jeremiah 7:15

You shall have my presence with and watchful eye over you no more, but I will send you into captivity to Babylon. as I did your brethren into Assyria. See on 2Ki_17:6,**18**. And he terms them here

brethren, to let them know that they and Israel proceeded from the same stock, and therefore had no reason to expect but it should fare alike with them, seeing their sins were alike, 2Ki_21:13,**14**, &c.

Ephraim, viz. the ten tribes, Isa_7:1,**2**, compared; called by this name often, because that was the most numerous and potent of all of them; Jeroboam their first king was of that tribe.

Jeremiah 7:16

God forbids his prophets to pray for them in any kind by any cry or intercession; or, *running upon me*, which shows that God is resolved to root them out, seeing he will admit of no intercession; according as he charged Moses, Exo_32:10, and the like Jer_11:14. For God had been wont to suffer himself to be prevailed with by the mediation of his servants, as of Moses, Exo_32:11,**14 Num 14:19,20**; but now he would admit of no

intercession. See Eze_14:14,20, and Jer_15:1, and the next words. This charge seems to be laid upon the prophet, partly to take off the envy of the people from him, when they knew he was commanded to do no otherwise; partly to embolden him in this unpleasing work, laying aside all compassion. But certainly the prophet did pray that God would mind his covenant in saving a remnant, though not that God would revoke his decree, and to save the body of them.

Jeremiah 7:17

q.d. How canst thou pass along the streets but thou must needs be an eye witness of their abominations, to thy no small trouble and sorrow? as Sodom was to Lot, 2Pe_2:8; therefore how canst thou plead with me on their behalf? How canst thou either pray for them, or I pity them?

In the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; in city and country. See Jer_2:28 **11:13**.

Jeremiah 7:18

Here God shows how busily they are employed from the youngest to the oldest, and how industrious for their idolatry, Jer_44:1-7; see Mat_24:38; every one in the family doth somewhat towards it.

The children gather wood, or sticks; for the word is plural, and so used Num_15:32,33; an employment, if we understand small sticks, proper for children; if greater wood, suitable to youth, who excel in strength, and may be understood by children and young ones.

The fathers kindle the fire; they heat the oven, hearth, or stone on which they were baked.

The women knead their dough, to make cakes; prepare all the materials of which to make cakes; probably they were of some particular shape, or had some peculiar impression of some of their gods stamped upon them, like the popish wafers, some say stamped with stars, as being offered up to the host of heaven, or with some peculiar star, Amo_5:26 Act_7:43.

To the queen of heaven; or, frame or workmanship of heaven: this is diversely interpreted; some take it for the sun, which is signified by a word of the feminine gender, Isa_24:23, and of a

feminine use, Nah_3:17; some for the moon; as the sun was looked upon as king, so the moon as the queen of heaven, because of the largeness of her body in which she appears, and of the light she gives, but especially by reason of the government she exerciseth over inferior bodies; others, more probably, for the whole host of heaven, Jer_8:2 **19:13**, and so the LXX, according to which probably for their sakes they received divers stamps and impressions: they that would see more may consult the English Annotations and the Synopsis.

To pour out drink-offerings, viz. wine and other strong drinks, Exo_29:40, **41 Num 28:7**. The devil is God's ape, and taught idolaters to use the same rites and ceremonies that were used in God's worship; therefore here these idolaters, in pouring their drinkofferings, which might seem to be blood, or at least blood mixed with them, **See Poole "Psa_16:4"**, imitated God's drink-offerings, as they did his meat-offerings in their cakes, as in **Le 2**; by these they did furnish the table mentioned Isa_65:11, see there.

That they may provoke me to anger; noting rather the proper effects and consequences of their idolatries, than that they did propound to themselves such an end in doing it; but it seemed to be a kind of bidding open defiance to God, by which it appears they were all mad upon their idolatries; they were set upon it, as David's heart was set upon the worship of God, Psa_16:8.

Jeremiah 7:19

Do they think to grieve me, and trouble my mind? They are deceived, I am without passion, and can be without their offerings. Will not they themselves feel the smart of it? Jer_7:6. Will they not procure anger to themselves, as an arrow falls on the head of him that shoots? 1Co_10:22: of the phrase see Jer_3:25.

Jeremiah 7:20

Mine anger; put for his *revenge*, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect.

My fury: this expresseth his anger boiled up to the height, Jer_4:4.

Poured out; a metaphor taken from violent rains; see Jer_6:11; and may in particular allude to those showers of fire that were poured out upon Sodom, Gen_19:24.

Upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground: these particulars are enumerated to express an utter desolation and ruin; see Jer_4:25; and it is threatened against those creatures which are innocent, because they were made for the use of man, partly that it might show how greatly God is offended, and that it should work upon them not only a greater fear of his judgments, but a greater shame for their sin, that they should occasion such sufferings upon the innocent creature, Rom_8:20,**22**.

Shall not be quenched: he follows the threatening with showing the irresistibility of it; his resolution is not to be revoked, Jer_4:4; and this is suitable to the charge he gave the prophet, Jer_7:16.

Jeremiah 7:21

The ironical words of one that seems to be in a great rage: Take those that are peculiar, and to be all burnt to me, Lev_1:9, and put them to your own use of what kind soever; eat them, and do what you will with them, I will have none of them; take it all and fill your own bellies, for you sacrifice not to me, but to yourselves. See Hos_9:4, where their meat-offerings are called in scorn *meat for their life* to nourish their bodies.

Unto your sacrifices; that part of your sacrifices which you are allowed to eat; they are but as profane food; do not you think to be sanctified by them, because I accept them not.

Jeremiah 7:22

Some would argue from hence that sacrifices were at first an invention of men, as papists and Socinians; and because they should not be used to idols, God gave way for the introducing them into his worship; but it is evident in Scripture that they have been of Divine institution ever since Adam, Gen_4:3,**4**. As to the meaning of the words, God doth not condemn them, or deny them, save only comparatively in respect of obedience, not so much these as obeying his commands, 1Sa_15:22 Hos_6:6, i.e. mercy rather than sacrifice. Negatives are often put for comparatives, Gen_45:8 Exo_16:8 Joh_5:45. Hence the Hebrew is, *the matter of burnt-offerings*; for sacrifices were not instituted for themselves, but for other uses, and to be signs of faith in his promises, and

obedience to his commands, as in the next verse, where the condition, promise, and end are all set down.

Jeremiah 7:23

This thing, or word, which is the rule by which all obedience is to be tried, viz. what commands, every thing else being but mere superstition.

That it may be well unto you: he shows what would be the good effect of their obedience, Exo_15:26 Deu_5:29,**33**, which implies that their sufferings are from their perverseness, as it is expressed in the next verse.

Jeremiah 7:24

Nor inclined their ear: it notes something of a higher degree of non-attention than bare not hearkening, viz. their not listening that they might obey what they hear, Jer_7:26 **11:8**, noting not only their slightness, but their stiffness.

The imagination, or *stubbornness* . See Jer_3:17.

Went backward, and not forward, like restive beasts; see Jer_2:27; a sign of their contempt; implying either,

1. They were worse by their admonitions and corrections, and so nothing did thrive with them. Or,
2. From the very first they have gone further and further from me, as Jer_7:25,**26**.
3. Or else depending upon their outward services, they set not my commands before their eyes, but cast my true worship behind their backs, Mat_23:23.

Jeremiah 7:25

God seems to upbraid them with their stock, they came of a perverse kind, their very fathers were so before them, and they have continued in their perverseness, Neh_9:16,**17**; they did not now begin to be rebellious, but it had been their practice all along; never ceasing from the time their fathers came out of Egypt to the days of Jeremiah.

I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets; God tells them what care he had taken to inform them in their duty and happiness, not once or twice, but sending messengers to them

seasonably and constantly, from first to last, 2Ch_36:15
Neh_9:29,30 Am 2:10,11. See Poole "Jer_7:13", and See Poole
"Jer_25:3", See Poole "Jer_25:4", &c. The church of God hath
never wanted teachers raised up and sent by God.

Jeremiah 7:26

Their fathers had done bad enough, but they were so far from
reforming, that they did worse than their fathers, Jud_2:19,
Jer_9:3; and whereas he had said before *your* fathers, now
changing the person he saith

their fathers, as it were in great displeasure turning away from
them to the prophet, as one speaking, but in vain, to such a stupid
people.

Jeremiah 7:27

Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them, viz.
revive upon them all that thou hast been speaking to them from
me these forty years and upwards. Whereby God shows that there
is nothing wanting on his part; for notwithstanding all their
perverseness, yet he still warns them by his prophet, which will
leave them the more inexcusable, Eze_2:5,7.

But they will not hearken to thee: this must needs be a great trial
to the prophet, that he is assured that he shall speak to them in
vain. But this God acquaints him with beforehand, partly for
Jeremiah's sake, that he should not be discouraged, but the more
emboldened, though he saw no success, Eze_2:7; and partly for
the people's sake, that being foretold of their obstinacy, they
might bethink themselves and repent, if yet there might be hope,
Lam_3:29.

Thou shalt also call unto them, but they will not answer thee:
this shows their further refractoriness, that were not only deaf to
God's message by his prophet, but though he cried loud, followed
one exhortation with another, yet they would make no return unto
it.

Jeremiah 7:28

**This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their
God;** spoke in a way of contempt: q.d. A nation more than
heathenish; though they profess themselves a peculiar people to
me, yet to be numbered among the Gentiles.

Nor receiveth correction, i.e. answer not the ends of correction, viz. to be instructed, Jer_5:3, and submit their necks to the yoke, which laid the foundation of all their rebellion.

Truth is perished, and is off from their mouth; there is no trusting or believing them in any thing they say or do; no veracity or fidelity, but perfidious both to God and men, being all filed with hypocrisy, lies, and deceits.

Jeremiah 7:29

Cut off thine hair; it was a usual token of sorrow among the Jews to cut off the hair, Job_1:20 Isa_15:2 Mic_1:16. But here he speaketh either,

1. To Jeremiah; for

O Jerusalem is not in the text; or,

2. To the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and so speaks to them as a woman, whose hair is for an ornament, 1Co_11:15. Therefore this must needs signify a higher degree of sorrow. Cutting the hair among the ancients did signify,

1. Mourning.

2. Bondage. For the cutting off the hair in servants was a token of subjection; so that this speaks Jerusalem's mournful condition in her captivity.

Cast it away; it is not to be reserved, as sometimes men and women both do for some use; but to be cast away, and as a thing good for nought. And thus it may agree with the church's lamentation, Lam_5:16; for it is not here exhorted to as a token of repentance, but as a threatening of judgments.

Take up a lamentation on high places: see Jer_3:21. Lift up thy voice on high in lamentation, when thou hast thine eye or thoughts upon the high places where thou wentest a whoring from me, for which thou now goest into captivity.

The generation of his wrath; or, of his *overrunning anger* , as some render it, i.e. with whom he is extremely vexed, *this present generation* , that by their provocations have brought themselves under his wrath, Jer_7:18,20, a generation *destined to the wrath of God* , called elsewhere the people of his curse, Isa_34:5, and such

as the apostle calls vessels of wrath, Rom_9:22, so far as it concerns the phrase.

Jeremiah 7:30

The children of Judah; either Judah's posterity, Jos_14:6, or Judah's inhabitants, which are often called *their children* ; so **Jer 2 16.** *In my sight* , i.e. though they will not see it, yet I see it, and they shall know that it is in my sight, i.e. that it displeaseth me.

They have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name: here he instanceth in one species of their abominations for all the rest, whereby it appears they were grown to a great height of impiety. It was not enough to have their idols and superstitions abroad in the hills and groves, nor in private in their own houses, Isa_57:6-8 Jer_19:13; but they must bring them into God's house, as Manasseh did, 2Ki_21:4; God having but one house in the world, as it were, to confront him, 2Ch_36:14 Jer_32:31 Eze_43:8.

Jeremiah 7:31

High places of Tophet; See Poole "Isa_30:33". It comes from *Toph* , that signifies a *drum* , because they did beat drums to hinder the noise of their children's screeches, when they burnt them in sacrifice upon the altars, called here, *high places* , to Moloch, which is also called Melchom.

Which is in the valley of the son on Hinnom: Tophet was situate in a pleasant valley near Jerusalem, a place in the possession of the children of one *Hinnom* , Jos_15:8, watered by the river of Siloe.

To burn their sons and their daughters in the fire: this most inhuman practice of burning their children, even their own bowels, to Moloch, not their sons only, but their daughters, who were most tender, they did expressly against the command and caution of God; **See Poole "Deu_18:10"**; having learned it of the heathen, Deu_12:30,31, the devil commanding them so to do by his oracles. They took pattern from the Samaritans where those of every nation make gods of their own, 2Ki_17:29-31.

Neither came it into my heart; which was always so far from my approving, that I never let it come into my thought or debate,

whether I should or not; or which I abhorred from my heart: he speaks herein after the manner of men: see Jer_3:16 **32:35**

Jeremiah 7:32

It shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom: they were called so after this, and are known by those names to this day; but the meaning is, they shall acquire a name from another occasion, that shall suit them as well, viz. for the great slaughter that shall be made there, or rather thereabouts, in and about Jerusalem, and therefore called

the valley of slaughter, from the effect of slaughter; as Judas's field was called Aeldama, Act_1:19, being a place for burying of the slain, as the next words show.

They shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place; either there shall be so great a slaughter made upon that spot by the Chaldeans, that they shall bury as many as the place will contain, and the rest of the carcasses they shall throw on heaps, to rot above ground; for to lie unburied is frequently used as a curse on such, the burying of the dead being accounted as a thing sacred, and a significant symbol of the resurrection: or those that are slain in and about Jerusalem, at the siege and taking of it, shall be carried thither to be buried, either because there shall be no burying-places left about Jerusalem, or that valley shall be filled till there be no place for more, that hereby it may be so polluted, that no thoughts of holiness may remain in it; for a dead carcass under the law was unclean; and that which before was a valley of pleasure and great delight, and they had dedicated to God, shall now be a valley of slaughter.

Jeremiah 7:33

The *birds* and *beasts of prey* shall feed on them, being exposed to open view for want of interment, Jer_19:7,

and none shall fray them away; (a piece of humanity that even nature itself teacheth;) either by reason of the enemy's presence, for fear of whom they durst not; or rather, because there will be none left to do it: and this is reckoned among the curses, Deu_28:26.

Jeremiah 7:34

All kind and degrees of mirth shall cease, Rev_18:23, all places shall be filled with lamentations and woe; their singing shall be turned into sighing; they shall lay aside all things that are for the comfort of Human society, which is to be understood in this expression.

For the land shall be desolate; there shall be such an utter devastation, that there shall be neither season nor place for these things, Isa_64:10, **Jer 25:10:** where marrying shall cease, without which mankind cannot subsist, there must needs be desolation.

Jeremiah 8:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 8

The calamity of the Jews, both dead and alive, Jer_8:1-3. Their brutish impenitency, Jer_8:4-7: Their vain boast of wisdom; their covetousness, security, impudence, Jer_8:8-12. Their grievous judgments, Jer_8:13-17; bewailed by the prophet, Jer_8:18-22.

This chapter being a continuation of the former, he proceeds in carrying on the threatening with higher aggravations of the judgment, viz. that when the time shall come spoken of Jer_7:32, the Chaldeans' rage shall reach, not only to the living, but even against those that are in their graves, and that sparing none of any degree or quality.

They shall bring out the bones of the nobles and princes, as Manasseh and others, possibly led to it out of greediness, supposing to find great treasure in their sepulchres; of the

priests and prophets, principally the false ones, as a just judgment of God against them for deceiving the people; of the

inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their spite and fury kindled against them, as soldiers, or in contempt and ignominy: and this notes the utter desolation of the city, not only razing the walls, but turning up the very sepulchres, which were accounted sacred, and not to be violated.

Jeremiah 8:2

They shall spread them before the sun; not gather them together into charnel-houses, as we usually do out of humanity, but scatter them about as it were to be turned into dust and dung.

And the moon, and all the host of heaven, viz. all the rest of the stars, to show that they should not lie out in the day time only, but night also, before the moon and stars, Jer_36:30. Their carcasses shall be cast to their idols, Lev_26:30 2Ki_23:14,**20**; a kind of *lex talionis*, that as they had served and worshipped these creatures, God doth, as it were, appoint them as spectators and witnesses of his vengeance, and what contempt he pours upon them, their carcasses being brought before their idols, which will be so shameful, as if one should draw forth the adulteress with the adulterer into open view, and expose them together; and it also insinuates the inability that is in these dumb idols to help them in their misery.

Whom they have loved: this and the following term serve to express the greatness and variety of their affection and zeal in their worshipping of them, Deu_4:19 2Ki_23:5 Jer_7:18: he multiplies words, as it were implying that there can hardly be words enough to express their folly and madness, the Gentiles worshipping these creatures, not only for their beauty and lustre, but, according to their ancient philosophy, apprehending them to have been living creatures, and that all events were ordered by them.

They shall be for dung upon the face of the earth; on the superficies of it; there shall be no care taken of them, but they shall lie in the open country in the air, till they rot into dung, or dry into dust, as in the beginning of the verse; see Psa_83:10 Jer_9:22; they shall be ignominious even after death.

Jeremiah 8:3

And death shall be chosen rather than life; a description of the unexpressibleness of their misery, that notwithstanding all the barbarism of the Babylonians exercised both upon the living and the dead, yet a small matter in comparison of what the living would feel, of the greatness of which misery there was a double cause; not only their being led into captivity, but God's

displeasure following them, even in their banishment, being sorely oppressed; one of those threatenings Lev_26:36,39: see Job_3:20,21Ki_9:6. Which remain in all the places whither I have driven them; some dispersed among the mountains and hiding-places of Judea, others in the desert of Moab and Idumea, whither they fled for fear of the Chaldeans, and all other places where God would scatter them; an hypallage.

The Lord of hosts, he that hath all the creatures as an army at his command, can do this against those with whom he is displeased.

Jeremiah 8:4

Moreover thou shalt say unto them; though possibly it be all in vain, yet thou shalt keep in thy work.

Shall they fall, and not arise? an interrogation that hath the force of a negative, i.e. surely none. Or, *Will* men, is there no hope? And are they upon this ground desperate? Or rather, *Will* men fall, and not arise? Are they such fools, that having fallen by their sins, and been foretold all that is coming, that they will not accept of a remedy? Jer_7:27 Hos_14:1.

Shall he turn away, and not return? a metaphor taken from one that is out of his way; can any imagine that if one tell him of it, and direct him aright, that he will not hearken to him, and turn back? It is even against nature itself for a man not to seek his own good.

Jeremiah 8:5

By a perpetual backsliding: either a universal backsliding; or rather, obstinately resolved to hold on, though they see they are out of the way; not out of levity or inconsiderateness. The Hebrew word signifies *strength*, the same used Psa_13:1, and translated *for ever*, implying a strong, stiff, stout refusal. See Isa_57:17 Jer_5:3. *Deceit*: either their injustice and cozenages in circumventing one another, which was so frequent among them, Jer_9:4-6 Mic_7:3,4; or their hypocrisy, whereby they thought to deceive God, but they did indeed deceive themselves; the great impediment of their repentance, Isa_44:20; or rather, their sticking close to their false prophets, who did deceive them, thence encouraging themselves in their wickedness, and pleasing themselves that their miseries should not come upon them. **See**

Poole "Isa_30:10"; **See Poole** "**Jer v. 31**"; **See Poole** "**Jer_14:13**", &c.

Jeremiah 8:6

And heard, i.e. that I might hear; the words rather of God than of the prophet, which the continuance of the speech seems to show in the next verse, in the close whereof it is plain that God speaks, expressing himself after the manner of men, who are wont to listen diligently after the things they are very desirous of. See 1Ki_20:33 Mal_3:16.

Not aright; or, *not so*, as the LXX., and the word is thus used, Exo_10:11 Psa_1:4; not so as I would have had them; so far from repentance, that I do not perceive a word from them tending that way.

What have I done? I see no tendency to repentance, I see none of them so much as calling themselves to an account, not recoiling upon themselves, where repentance usually begins, 2Ch_6:37, as men use upon an inconsiderate act to smite upon their breast, or thigh, and say, What have I done? as 2Sa_3:24.

Every one turned to his course; to their accustomed way, committing all wickedness without restraint. See on Isa_59:7. The fury and unbridledness of their lusts, being spurred on by their wills, it described in the next expression, showing how, like a headstrong horse, he runs away with his rider; or compared to the delight that a horse seems to take in running violently and headstrongly into the battle, as it is described, Job_39:21, &c.; and this word *rushing*, signifying properly an inundation of waters, helps to show their uncontrollableness in another metaphor: see this verified of them Jer_2:23,24. It is said *every one* by an hyperbole, at, Psa_14:3, and frequently elsewhere.

Jeremiah 8:7

In the heaven, i.e. in the air, which is often called heaven, where the birds fly, Psa_8:8; compare Jer_7:33, who possibly observe the fit time by the temperature of the air.

Knoweth her appointed times, i.e. observeth the several seasons of her going and coming by some natural instinct, and this is said of the stork: what kind of fowl is here meant is disputable: see English Annotations and Latin Synopsis.

Observe the time of their coming; the same thing diversified in these several fowls, that know also their seasons.

But my people know not: this notes the great stupidity of his people, seeming not to have as much sense in them as the birds in the air, not knowing their *summer of prosperity*, to make a good use of God's favours, nor the winter of adversity, either to prevent or remove that wrath of God that hangs over their heads, Isa_5:12 Luk_19:42,44; they know not their time for repentance, and making their peace with God, compared also, on the same account, to the beasts of the field, Isa_1:3; and thus Christ upbraids the Pharisees, Mat_16:2,3.

The judgment of the Lord; either God's vengeance in general, or particularly hovering over Jerusalem and Judea; or rather, the manner of God's dispensations with them. So the word is used 1Sa_2:13 8:11.

Jeremiah 8:8

How do ye say, We are wise? q. d. These things considered, where is your wisdom, when you see the very fowls of the air are not so stupid as you are? he speaks either to princes and priests, or to the whole body of the people.

The law of the Lord is with us: this may be understood either more general of all, or may have a more special eye to the priests, with whom it was intrusted, Deu_33:10 Mal_2:7. They were wont to boast much of the law, as well as of the temple, Jer_18:18 Rom_2:17,23.

In vain made he it: q.d. For any use they made of it, they had as good have been without it; God needed not to have given them a law, Hos_8:12.

The pen of the scribes is in vain; neither need it ever have been copied out, divulged, and conveyed down to them by the scribe, Deu_17:18; or the prevarications and collusions these lawyers used in the false interpretation of the law, wherein they sided with the false prophets, should be in vain. A scribe was a teacher, one well versed in the in the Scripture, or esteemed so.

Jeremiah 8:9

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; they trusted to their refuge of lies, but when God shall bring the judgment threatened, the wisest among them will find that they shall be confounded among themselves, not knowing what to do for all their wisdom, but shall be taken with the rest, Jer_4:9: by *wise men* he means the scribes in the former verse. The same said of Babylon, Isa_47:10.

What wisdom is in them? or, *What is wisdom to them?* How can they say they are wise, when they have no fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, Pro_1:7; when they have no respect at all to the word of God, as to any holy practice, which is the *fountain of all wisdom?* Deu_4:6 Psa_19:7 2Ti_3:15.

Jeremiah 8:10

Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them; a paraphractical description of the miseries of war: God doth here insinuate that their misery shall not be for a short time, but so long, as that strangers, viz. the Chaldeans, shall enjoy their land by inheritances, so far should they be from possessing their land for ever.

Every one is given to covetousness; so greedy after their own private gain, that they took no care of equity or justice, in which word is comprised all their fraudulent dealings one among another. Of this and the two next verses, see on Jer_6:13-15.

Jeremiah 8:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 8:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 8:13

I will surely consume them; or, *In gathering I will consume them* : q.d. I will so gather them together into their several cities to be besieged, that it shall be no hard matter to destroy them, Jer_8:16, viz. the body of the people; not every one, for there was a remnant that did escape.

There shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree: these fruits, grapes and figs, it is probable, were of greatest

account and use among them, Isa_36:16, and so may be put for all other things, either for necessity or delight, which God threatens he will deprive them of by reason of the siege, which a famine shall succeed, Jer_5:17 Joe_1:7 Hab_3:17. See the like Zep_1:2,3. Or possibly it may be spoken by way of similitude: q.d. They shall be wasted, as when there is no grapes on the vine, &c.; the land shall be left as bare as when by tempests or other violence there is neither leaf nor fruit left upon the tree, Psa_78:47.

And the things that I have given them shall pass away: if this refer to the further punishment, as some, then it is as much as to say, what they have already received from me and laid up, they shall also be deprived of, Hos_2:8,9; or, though I have given it to them, yet they shall not enjoy it, it shall be taken away by their enemies: if it relate to the reason of the punishment, as others, then the copulative is put for the causal: q.d. *Because* the things that I gave them, viz. my laws, pass away, i.e. they have transgressed, Isa_24:4,5: either sense lies fair.

Jeremiah 8:14

Why do we sit still? the people at length seem to bethink themselves, and thus to bespeak each other. *Let us enter into the defenced cities* ; in the scattered villages there is no safety for us, let us retire into places of greater security, Mat_24:16-18; possibly they thought they might be secured there, as they had been before in the time of Sennacherib.

Let us be silent there; keep close within our walls, say or do nothing to provoke the enemy; but sit down and bewail the desperateness of our condition, Lam_3:28,29, or tremblingly expect the issue of this sad war, for there is no possibility of making head against such an enemy, that bears down all before them.

The Lord our God hath put us to silence: they now begin to perceive that the hand of God is in all this, and that therefore they have not a word to say, as if they were wronged; God hath put them to shame: much less courage to oppose the Babylonians; their heart fails them, they are as men in a great terror and consternation; God *hath put us to silence* , let us be silent.

Water of gall; or, poison; probably the name of some poisonous herb, with the juice or infusion whereof they were wont to kill persons, as hemlock, nightshade &c. See Hos_10:4. It notes those bitter destructive judgments that God was bringing upon them, Jer_9:15, which did spring from that bitter root of their sinning against him, as in the next words.

Jeremiah 8:15

Viz. Upon the persuasion of our prophets, we expected that these troubles would never come, but all would be well; but we find ourselves merely deluded by them; we looked so long, till even our eyes failed us, but we see no remedy for us, Lam_4:17. A metaphor. Miseries are often in Scripture compared to diseases, and deliverances to healing, Deu_32:39 Psa_103:3 Jer_33:6.

Jeremiah 8:16

The fury of the Chaldeans' march is described by the snorting of their horses, which is a noise they make through their nostrils, when they are chafed and fretted.

Was heard from Dan, i.e. even to Jerusalem: q.d. The dreadfulness of the noise shall be heard from far: or rather, Though Jerusalem seem to be secure, yet the farthest coasts of the land are in great consternation, viz. the outmost boundary of Canaan northward, through which the Chaldean army was to march: see Jer_4:15: or it is said *to be heard*, either the noise itself, or the fame of it, Jer_6:24.

His strong ones; his choice horses or cavalry; or his stout and sturdy ones, as the word signifies, and expressed by their brisk frolicsomeness and courage in the word *neighing*, properly applied to horses, understanding here the chief of them; and the word for *strong ones* is applied to any thing that excels, as to man, Job_34:20; *to angels*, Psa_78:25, *angels' food*, or *the bread of the mighty*; and for *horses*, as here, and Jud_5:22 Jer_47:3.

All that is in it, Heb. *the fulness of it*, the trees, and fruits. and wealth of the land; they are entered upon their spoil, and will leave nothing in the land, Jer_4:20. It is spoken in a prophetic style, who use to express the certainty of what shall be as if it actually were already. *The city*, viz. Jerusalem; or rather the

cities, with all their inhabitants, as well as the country, the singular number being put for the plural, as Isa_27:10.

Jeremiah 8:17

He proceeds in increasing of their terror: q.d. There will be no appeasing or allaying of their fury by any art or method; therefore represented by the cockatrice, called in Latin *regulus*, or king of serpents, as putting to flight all other serpents; but by apposition to

serpents, showing what kind of serpent they shall be, a sort that cannot be charmed, viz. such an enemy as by no entreaty can be made exorable: see on Isa_11:8. LXX. *deadly serpents. They shall bite you*; they shall afflict you with sore punishments, not only stings in their tails, as scorpions, but in their teeth, whereby they shall devour you, Jer_8:16.

Jeremiah 8:18

The language of the people, being long shut up in their cities, and finding no relief, at last faint, Lam_4:17. But more probably the prophet now seems to speak his own resentments, how greatly the calamity of his people did affect him; the like Isa_22:4: when he would sometimes refresh himself with the comfortable refreshments of nature, the thoughts of his people's misery do so afflict him, that his heart is ready to faint, to sink within him.

Jeremiah 8:19

The voice of the cry, i.e. the, greatness of their cry, the bitter cries, and screeches, and complaints that methinks I hear: the words are abrupt, because the prophet is to represent several persons speaking; himself, the people, and God.

Of the daughter of my people; see Jer_4:11; possibly because Jeremiah loved them, instructed them, admonished them as a daughter.

Them that dwell in afar country, viz. their enemies the Babylonians, that were to come against them from a far country, Jer_6:22; or the voice of them that were captives under those of a far country; now they begin to cry, which would not be persuaded to it before: the first is most to be approved of.

In Zion, viz. in Jerusalem, a metonymy of the subject.

Is not her king in her; or, as King in Zion; or, have we not a king of the seed of David, to whom the kingdom was granted to be perpetual? Either the words of God: q. d. Was not I among you, to provide for you, and protect you, but you must needs repair to idols? The like kind of speech is in 2Ki_1:3, and the close of the verse seems to favour this. Or, as others, an expostulatory lamentation of the people, that the cruel adversary should prevail over a people that had God so near them, Psa_48:2,**3 76:1,2**: Hath God now left us? and is the promise of his continuance here at an end? Psa_89:36-38.

Why have they provoked me with strange vanities? as if God should seem to reply here, Let them not think it strange, seeing they have turned their backs upon me, and trusted to idols, which are but vanity, Jer_2:11,**13**; called *vanity* , not only because idols are as nothing, but because all the confidence that is put them is vain, and because idolaters are vain in their minds, and want understanding. I have not forsaken them, but they me.

Jeremiah 8:20

The harvest is past, and the winter no time for war; the people's continued complaint, not unlike that Jer_8:15. The year is gone, and we are still frustrated in our expectations, the time that we expected help from Egypt, Isa_30:2,**3,5**.

We are not saved, viz. by the Egyptians, or any other confederates.

Jeremiah 8:21

The prophet here shows how deeply he is affected with the people's misery, he deeply sympathized with them.

The hurt; it signifies *breach* , I am broken in my spirit; and so it answers to the breach that is made upon the people.

I am black; I am as those that are clad in deep mourning, Psa_38:6 Jer_14:2.

Astonishment hath taken hold on me; I am amazed to think that my people should sin themselves beyond help, no remedy for them, as the next verse, that no threatenings or counsels should prevail with them.

Jeremiah 8:22

Gilead was eminent for balm, Gen_43:11, taken for *rosin or turpentine* , which is a kind of more liquid rosin, and either flows or drops from certain trees of its own accord, or their juice flows from several holes pierced into them, as from the pine, cedar, cypress, or terebinth tree. Heb. *tseri* ; Gr. *rhtinh*, from *rew*, to flow, or run; Lat. *resina* ; Engl. *rosin* . A near affinity of the words in each language, the nature whereof is to dissolve hardness, to clear and close up wounds.

Physician, or *chirurgion* : probably in a country where were such plenty of remedies there could not want artists, whereby their cures might be facilitated, by means of which the Gileadites and Arabians did excel there.

Recovered, Heb. *gone up* ; the like expression 2Ch_24:13, *the work was perfected* ; Heb. *the healing went up upon the work* ; and so Neh_4:7: the prophet expresseth his grievous complaint by way of admiration, by a metaphor, implying the inveteracy and obstinacy of their hearts, that either would not come to the *physician* , or that they should be thus incurable, where they wanted not for prophets and teachers, or for any spiritual means, flowing down daily upon them; can Jerusalem and Judea be without spiritual *physicians* ? Some understand it by way of sarcasm: q.d. Where are your medicines, your *arms* , your *counsels* , your *confederates* ? And where are your *physicians* , your *princes and priests* , that promised you relief? Without God you see no help in any means. But the former more natural, and agrees best with the beginning of the next chapter.

Jeremiah 9:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 9

The prophet's lamentation continueth over their adultery, deceit, idolatry, which God would certainly punish, and they should be laid waste, when they should sufficiently lament, Jer_9:1-22. No trust in ourselves, but in God, who will punish all nations, Jer_9:23-26.

Oh that my head were waters! Heb. *Who will give* , &c.? by way of inquiry, because the Hebrews do want the imperative mood.

The prophet in this chapter principally bewailing his poor countrymen's calamity, whom Its therefore calls

the daughter of his people, he expresseth the greatness and excess of his sorrows, by wishing that his brains were as it were dissolved into water, (for the word is singular,) as if he wished it were all one water, signifying plenty, and that his eyes might distil tears like a fountain; the same word in the Hebrew for *eye* signifies a fountain; noting the continuance of it, as not to be drawn dry, expressed by *day* and *night* , apprehending it a misery so great, as never sufficiently to be bewailed. See Luk_19:41.

The slain; or that are to be slain, viz. by the Babylonians; a prophetic style; as sure to be slain as if they were slain already.

Jeremiah 9:2

He proceeds in his lamentation, which in the former verse he did, by way of compassion, in this in a way of indignation, Wishing for some retiring place, or sorry shed, or night cottage; **See Poole "Isa_24:20"**; though it were but some mean and sorry lint in the wilderness, as David, Psa_55:6,7, such as might but shelter him from the injuries of the weather: LXX., in some remotest station or corner, where he might not be an eye-witness of their miseries to grieve him so at the heart, Psa_119:136,158; see 2Pe_2:7,8; and where he might hope to find better entertainment from the savage beasts than from his own countrymen.

They be all adulterers, i.e. for the most part, Jer_5:8, both properly and metaphorically, being full of idolatrous practices; or, there is no integrity found among them.

An assembly of treacherous men; that deal perfidiously with God and man in all the concerns they are conversant about, Isa_1:4. And though the word here for assembly is most ordinarily used for a *holy assembly* , Lev_23:36 Num_29:35, which causeth some to understand it of their being most vile when they should be most devout; yet here it most naturally signifies a kind of combination among them, as such that have conspired one among another to act all manner of villanies.

Jeremiah 9:3

Bend, Heb. *tread* , because bows are usually kneeled or trod upon when they are bent, **Jer 14 51:3**.

Like their bow; their tongues are here compared to a bow, and lies to arrows, because as a bow shoots out arrows, so doth the tongue words, Psa_64:3.

For lies, i.e. all reproachful, false, and noxious words, to the damage of one another; and so bending may be preparing, framing, and contriving that mischief which they purpose to vent with their tongues, Psa_52:2-4 **64:3**, as *bending* is preparing the bow to do execution with the arrow.

They are not valiant for the truth; equity, justice; they are as eager in the ways of falsehood as men engaged in war, but show no valour in maintaining the truth.

Upon the earth, i.e. no truth in the earth in them, as we use to express ourselves; or rather more genuinely in the land wherein they live, they have no courage in what is good.

They proceed from evil to evil; either in kind or in degree; they go on from bad to worse, 2Ti_3:13, which speaks little hopes of their repentance; the ground of all which is said here to be, their *not knowing of God*, as in the next clause, Jud_2:10,**11** 1Sa_2:12. The heart cannot work strongly after God where there be but mean apprehensions of him.

Jeremiah 9:4

Take ye heed every one of his neighbour; better rendered friend, or companion, as 2Sa_16:17, and in the next verse; showing the general corruption will be so malignant, that one friend will betray another; no faith in friends.

Will utterly supplant; wholly given to it; Heb. *supplanting will supplant*; or, *treading down treadeth down*; trampling them under their feet, noting their oppression, which they exercise all manner of ways, as in the next verse, both by fraud and force. Like the interpretation that Esau puts upon Jacob, Gen_27:36; not only such as are near in habitation, pretending neighbourhood and friendship; but near in relation, even a

brother will circumvent; no respect to blood, arguing them to be monstrous in nature, putting off humanity. The word is here in allusion to Jacob, who had his name from *supplanting*; a metaphor taken from the *sole of the foot*, Gen_25:26.

Walk with slanders; carrying tales and reports up and down, whether true or false, to the disturbance of the peace of neighbourhood, Jer_6:28, and against the law of God, Lev_19:16.

Jeremiah 9:5

They will deceive, Heb. *mock* , or *deride* ; they are scoffers. *They have taught their tongue to speak lies* ; they have so framed their tongues to it by custom and constant use, that lying is become so familiar to them that they cannot leave it. The same word is applied to the wild ass, used or taught to the wilderness, Jer_2:24 **13:23**.

Weary themselves to commit iniquity; they use a great deal of industry, diligence, and contrivance in it, Psa_7:14 Isa_5:18. They spare for no labour and feel no weariness in it, whereby they are become expert.

Jeremiah 9:6

This God speaks to the prophet, either to inform him that there is no hope of this people's reformation, Jer_8:5; therefore he expresseth a deceitful people by the abstract,

deceit, i.e. nothing among them but deceit one to another, and hypocrisy towards me, as Psa_109:2, and vanity for vain men, Job_35:13; or to caution and advise him how to behave himself among such a people, that he be very wary he be not insnared by them, Jer_12:6.

They refuse to know me; either hoping to shift well enough by their several means they think to use, they are careless of turning to me, Jer_8:5; or by hearkening to their false prophets, who have all along deceived them, they obstinately reject my ways and counsels, Psa_36:1-4 **82:5**.

Jeremiah 9:7

I will melt them, and try them; the same metaphor used Jer_6:29; try them by melting them, i.e. either I will try what lesser afflictions will do before I do utterly destroy them; or rather, I will bring judgment upon them, the fire and fury of the Chaldean war, that shall clear away their dross from among them, and purge away those deceits in which they trust, that fire remnant may be purified, Dan_11:35; as when the dross is separated from metals, the rest remains pure: see on Isa_1:25. *How shall I do ?* q.

d. There is no remedy, I have tried all other means, and they have been ineffectual, any people will take no warning; they are grown to such a height of impiety, that I can do no less, though they are any people, Hos_6:4. Or God doth expostulate with them, How can you expect that I should treat you otherwise, that have so provoked me, and whose impieties have redounded so much to any dishonour?

Jeremiah 9:8

Their tongue is as an arrow: before, Jer_9:3, it was compared to a bow, i.e. ready prepared, and furnished with materials contriving their wickedness, Psa_11:2; and here to an arrow shot out, actually executing what they have designed. Some translate it *a murdering arrow. It speaketh deceit*; never speaking what they mean, that thereby they may the easier deceive the credulous; a double tongue, speaking fair when they mean to destroy, Psa_55:21, as the next words explain it, intending to do the greatest mischief when they speak fairest.

In heart he layeth his wait, Heb. *in midst of him*, i.e. in his very inwards, with his whole heart he contrives mischief.

Jeremiah 9:9

See Jer_5:9, **29**.

Jeremiah 9:10

The prophet having, Jer_9:1, taken up a lamentation for the slaughter of the people, he now reassumes it for the desolation of the whole land, every part of it being to be laid waste: see Jer_4:23, **26**. And it either sets forth the greatness of his grief, that shall reach to the very mountains, as the words may be read; or rather, the cause of his mourning, because he presently adds, for

the habitations of the wilderness. Of the wilderness; plain, or valley, as it often signifies; so the word is used Isa_63:13, **14**; or, *pleasant plains*. The country of Judea being mountainous, these plains and valleys were their chief places for pasturage, which dealt greatly aggravate the devastation; these shall be burnt up, the herbage so burnt that it shall be left utterly barren, like a parched heath, Jer_9:12. The *mountains* shall not be able to secure them, nor the *valleys* to feed them. *None can pass through them*; either there being no path; the LXX. render it, *on the paths of the*

wilderness ; or none to pass to and fro, and so leave it desolate; or so parched and waste that none can pass through it, so far are they from being inhabited, Jer_2:6. *Neither can men hear the voice of the cattle* ; there, where once all sorts of cattle and fowls in great plenty where wont to feed and graze, there is not so much as the chirping of a bird, the bleating of a sheep or lowing of an ox to be heard: see Jer_23:10-12 **50:3**. They are said to be fled and gone; either the enemy hath swept away all, or they have forsaken the land, because there was no food, Jer_12:4. A figurative expression of a universal desolation.

Jeremiah 9:11

Heaps, viz. of stones and rubbish.

A den of dragons; noting a desolate place, not any longer fit for fine habitation of mankind, as the next words do speak; but for hideous beasts; as they had made use of the temple for a *den of thieves* , Jer_7:11. The same also he afterwards threatens on Babylon herself, Jer_51:37.

Jeremiah 9:12

Who is the wise man, that may understand this, viz. the ground of all these evils? q.d. Is there not a wise man among you, that will concern himself and search into the cause of all these threatened judgments, which hath provoked God to so great displeasure? See Hos_14:9. It is a question that implies there is none, or very few, that consider common calamities in the causes of them; but rather say of judgments, it is a *chance* , 1Sa_6:9.

Jeremiah 9:13

Either this and the next verse refer to the former, viz. because there are none can give the reason why the land perisheth, therefore God will; or else they refer to Jer_9:15,16, as showing the causes of those judgments threatened; for either of the references do not alter the sense: see Jer_5:19: this verse contains negative reasons.

They have forsaken my law; he chargeth them with their apostacy, and refusing to obey his precepts, and conform their conversation to them.

Which I set before them: lest they should plead they were obscure and hard to be understood, therefore he tells them he had

made it plain to them, they could not be ignorant of it, except it were out of wilfulness and obstinacy: the like expression Deu_11:32.

Jeremiah 9:14

Imagination, or stubbornness and obstinacy: see Jer_7:24.

Baalim: see Jer_2:23. The prophet doth not charge them with new crimes, but with their tenacious sticking to their idolatry.

Which their fathers taught them: see Jer_7:18. It seems they might partly thank their education for it, as well as their own natural perverseness: hence we should learn to follow God's counsel in the Scriptures, and not blindly follow our fathers' counsel, precepts, or examples, or our own will, which is the worst guide.

Jeremiah 9:15

Even this people: this supplement *even* shows that it is spoken emphatically, though they be a people that presume to be my peculiar. *Wormwood; worms*, Dutch Annotations. A plant to purify and cleanse them, say some; but this doth not seem to be spoken in favour to them; therefore rather some poisonous plant, which may agree to any other destructive herb as well as wormwood, and this the Hebrew word doth intimate, to which purpose the

water of gall is mentioned in the next words; both joined together Deu_29:18; possibly the one pointing at their drink, the other at their bread; both metaphorically to be understood, of which see on Jer_8:14.

Jeremiah 9:16

I will scatter them also among the heathen; either you shall wander up and down among strangers, like Cain's curse; or rather, you shall have no friend abroad, but be sold as so many slaves from person to person.

Whom neither they nor their fathers have known; part of the curse threatened Deu_28:64.

And I will send a sword after them: neither shall this serve their turn, but I will follow them with the sword till they be destroyed; probably meant of those that might escape out of Jerusalem, and

flee into Egypt, the Chaldeans should pursue them thither, and either take or slay them there, i.e. such of them as were appointed for destruction; for otherwise they were not all consumed, a full end was not to be made, as is promised, Jer_5:10.

Jeremiah 9:17

Consider ye; either in how sad a condition you are, what circumstances you are under; or rather, bethink yourselves what course to take: and therefore he puts them upon mourning and bewailing their condition, intimated by the following expression.

The mourning women; a sort of persons, and principally women, as more apt for passions in this kind, which they had among them, 2Ch_35:25; whose work it was, either to compose funeral elegies, or panegyrics in praise of the dead, and to act them in some mournful manner, as tearing their hair, and beating their breasts, with other mourning postures, or to sing them in some doleful tone, thereby artificially to provoke and excite both passions and expressions of grief in the friends of the deceased, rather wringing out tears than shedding them, in which probably they made greater seeming lamentations than those that did really mourn, as being most concerned; not that God calls upon them to do this as approving the formality, (though this foolish custom had obtained in most ages and countries,) any more than other customs that were made use of by way of illustration; as the *Olympic games*, and possibly that practice mentioned 1Co_15:29; but makes use of it, as being customary, either to excite them to and put them upon true repentance, or to convince them hereby that they were not able themselves sufficiently to bewail so great calamities as were coming upon them, intimating hereby that he would give them occasion for the most unfeigned weeping and lamentation.

Cunning women; such as are most skilful in it, Amo_5:16; *wisdom* being taken for skill in any arts, as Exo_31:3, and elsewhere.

Jeremiah 9:18

Let them make haste: as by the calling for their artificial mourners he did intimate the greatness of the misery that was coming upon them, that with all, their art they could not

sufficiently bewail it; so here, by making haste, he intimates the near approach of it, that it was even at the doors.

Take up a wailing for us; pitch upon some form of mourning that may be suitable to our condition.

Our eyelids gush out with waters: this and the former are each of them a hyperbolical expression, and yet are too little to bewail the greatness of the judgment, which suits with the prophet's lamentation, Jer_9:1. The prophet would herein intimate that they that were so stupid as to hear the prophets denouncing their judgments with dry eyes, though he wished them to have been *fountains of tears*, shall now suddenly feel that they shall have cause enough to send for all the helps, not only real, but artificial, to stir up their mournings.

Jeremiah 9:19

Is heard out of Zion, i.e. Jerusalem, spoken in the present tense, after the prophetic style, being a frequent way of the prophet's expressing the certainty of a thing. *How are we spoiled!* how great is our misery! or, how come we to be in such a desolate condition? possibly expressions of the artificial mourners, or rather their real sense of it, now it is all too late.

We are greatly confounded: whether this be the complaint of the country people forced to flee from their habitation to Jerusalem for shelter, or of Jerusalem itself, that could expect no less, it filled them with great consternation, that they who thought their houses should have continued for ever, because of God's promise, Psa_132:10, &c., must now forsake them, Lev_18:25; either their persons carried out into captivity, or have them utterly demolished by the enemy.

Jeremiah 9:20

Yet, or *therefore, hear the word of the Lord*, i.e. do not think I speak words out of my own mind or fancy, but what I speak is from the Lord.

O ye women; either those hired women mentioned before, or rather the women of the land; for God would have it not a mercenary, but a real mourning; and he mentioneth women,

1. To upbraid the men with their stupidity.

2. As being more apt to grieve, thereby to express the readiness that he would have the land to be in for mourning.

3. Because of the decay and want there would be of men, as is expressed in the next verse, by reason partly of the slaughter, and partly of the captivity; therefore here is mention of women with reference to *children* in the next verse, after whom their bowels would yearn; and daughters, either the scholars of the mourning women, or rather, with reference to young men, unto whom they might be given in marriage.

4. Because the female sex is least able to help themselves in a common calamity. Or,

5. Because they would be least solicitous, but would indulge their delicacies, pride, sloth, and wantonness, Isa_32:9,11. *Every one her neighbour* , Heb. *a woman her friend* ; namely, that the grief might spread the further, and become deeper; for affections and passions, of what kind soever, are augmented by company: it notes how large and universal the mourning shall be, Amo_5:16.

Jeremiah 9:21

Death is come up; the unavoidableness of the ruin is expressed metaphorically, Eze_21:14 Jer_6:5, most likely alluding to the violent and universal storming of a city, Jer_5:10, wherein there is no respect had to sex, youth, or age. Several other allusions. See English Annotations. The Chaldeans are here understood by death, as bringing death wherever they come; a metonymy of the effect.

To cut off the children from without; no safety within or without; the enemy shall cut off all, not only those at home, but even those that are conversing or playing in the streets, which most commonly young men and children are, Jer_6:11.

Jeremiah 9:22

Speak, Thus saith the Lord; lest they should think these things would never be, cease not to tell them from me that they shall certainly come to pass, viz. what was said before, and what is said now in this verse (these words, *Speak, Thus saith the Lord* , being best read in a parenthesis).

The carcasses of men, Heb. *a carcass of a man* , noting here and there a scattered carcass.

Shall fall as dung upon the open field; as Jezebel was, 2Ki_9:37, exposed to all contempt, strewed up and down on the superficies of the earth, Heb. *face of the field* , and be offensive by their stench to all that pass by, Jer_44:12.

As the handful after the harvest man; either laid in heaps by death, as the harvestman doth his cocks of hay or sheaves of corn; or rather, they shall be no more regarded than a few scattered ears that drop out of the reaper's hand, which either lie on the ground, and are eaten by birds, or trod to dirt by beasts; thus God would pour contempt upon them, which must needs be grievous to so proud a people as the Jews were.

None shall gather them; none shall have so much respect to them, or compassion of them, as to afford burial, Jer_8:2.

Jeremiah 9:23

The Jews did glory in the counsel of their *wise men* , the strength of the *soldiers* , and the wealth of their cities; but here God takes them off from their vain confidences, that neither their *counsels* and *policy* , Ecc_9:11, nor their *forces and arms* , Psa_33:16,17, nor their *wealth* or *riches* , Pro_11:4 Eze_7:19, should be able to deliver them from being either destroyed or carried captive by the Chaldeans. In these, or some of these, men are apt to put their confidences, and neglect God their only succour in distress; and therefore he puts them upon that in the next verse.

Jeremiah 9:24

Understandeth and knoweth me: whether we make any curious distinction between *understanding* God, as if that be more speculative, whereby we rightly apprehend his nature; and *knowing* God, as if that be more practical, as directing the conversation; we need not here inquire; yet certainly both centre in this, that we so know and understand God as to trust in him and depend on him alone in all conditions.

Which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; *kindness*, as it relates to his own people, Psa_5:12; *judgment* , with reference to his punishing the wicked; *righteousness* , namely, as he deals justly and uprightly with both,

Psa_92:15. The meaning here, I conceive is to show God's orderly governing and disposing of things in the world in his distributive justice, that all things are right and equal.

In these things I delight; both in himself and others, Psa_11:7.

Jeremiah 9:25

I will punish, viz. by the Babylonians, all them which are circumcised: q.d. Do not think to insist upon your external privilege of *circumcision* , that you are Abraham's natural seed, and thereby distinguished from other nations, as you sometimes were wont to do of the *temple* , that you had God in the midst of you. Do not think that shall privilege you: for you shall see it shall not be long ere I bring the Chaldeans upon those other nations, which either are circumcised in the flesh as well as you, and upon you also, who are uncircumcised in heart as well as they: or whether circumcision was lost, as being cast off by them, and so they were indeed uncircumcised; God tells them they shall fare alike: hence in the next verse he ranks Judah next to Egypt among the other uncircumcised nations; for he looks to the circumcision of the heart, not of the body; to inward worship, not outward only; therefore some read it the *circumcised in uncircumcision* .

Jeremiah 9:26

In the utmost corners: some refer this to the place of their habitation, as in corners, and remote parts of the wilderness, as it were separated from other nations, and therefore might think themselves furthest remote from danger; but some rather choose to refer it to their manners, as in cutting the corners of their hair, which was forbidden the Jews, Lev_19:27. The like description in Jer_25:23.

Uncircumcised in the heart: see the foregoing verse. God regards not the outward sign, but principally respects the circumcision of the heart. Here ends that sermon that began at Jer. vii.

Jeremiah 10:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 10

They are forbid to be afraid of the tokens of heaven, and consult idols, which are vain, Jer_10:1-5, and not to be compared with the majesty and power of God, who is Jacob's portion, Jer_10:6-16.

The Babylonians destroy the temple; the brutish pastors and the flocks are scattered, Jer_10:17-22. The prophet's humble supplication, Jer_10:23-25.

Here begins another sermon, i.e. most probably relating to Jechonias and the Jews, that were already in captivity.

Israel; the ten tribes.

Jeremiah 10:2

Learn not the way of the heathen: the Jews being to live among the Chaldeans in their captivity, where many of them were already, the prophet in this sermon admonisheth them against the superstitions of the Chaldean idolatries, which he understands here by

heathen, who were also much addicted to astrology, and esteemed it the original of sciences; the customs and their manners he calls here *their way*, as is frequent in Scripture, Lev_18:3 **20:23**.

Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven: this was a practice and study so common among them, that judicial astrologers, of what nation soever, were generally termed Chaldeans; a practice so hateful to God, that sometimes he positively prohibits it, Deu_18:10,14, and sometimes in a way of scorn and derision sarcastically sends them to such, Isa_47:13, and often labours to persuade against it; for though astronomy be not only lawful, but useful, as being subject to reason and the rules of art, whereby many actions of human life are directed, and guided, and proportioned, yet judiciary astrology is indeed originally diabolical and heathenish; and though God do suffer their predictions sometimes to fall out right, yet it is to punish the curiosity of the inquirer.

For the heathen are dismayed at them: q.d. Leave this to heathens; it doth not become God's people, who do wholly depend upon him; for indeed the heathen, as many ignorant Christians do to this day, were more afraid of the signs of heaven and astrological predictions than of God, and what is foretold in his word of prophecy, as if things were governed rather by the influence of the stars than the providence of God; not but that we may be affected with such preternatural appearances in the world,

which God doth extraordinarily cause to appear, as some tokens of his approaching judgments, Joe_2:30,31 Mt 24:7 Luk_21:11.

Jeremiah 10:3

The customs of the people are vain, i.e. such courses, institutions, idolatrous customs, and ceremonies as these, that many people follow, they are vain, and it is a foolish and wicked thing that any that profess the true God should give heed to such lying vanities.

One cutteth a tree out of the forest: here he annexeth their idolatry to their astrology: q.d. They cut down timber to make the images and representations of these stars and planets that they fear and worship as gods, either in memorial of them, when they could not see them, or else upon a superstitious conceit that the stars which they worshipped did by some magic art convey some virtue or spirit into these statues or images; or rather, he doth set forth the folly of the heathen, that whereas for the *matter* of them, they are but a piece of wood, a tree out of the forest; and as to the *form* of them, no other than the carver, a sorry man, is pleased to put them into by his axe, which I suppose is here put for any cutting tool of the artist whereby he shapes it; yet they are afraid of these, as if they were gods, Isa_40:20. **See Poole "Jer_8:2"**.

Jeremiah 10:4

A further description of their workmanship, having no other comeliness but what they confer upon it, and they no greater security or certainty of it than as they can with hammer and nail make it fast, and fix it to some place, the wooden god being not able to preserve itself from falling; therefore it is rather to be meant of fastening to some wall or pillar, than of fastening their parts together, because they seem to be cut out of one entire piece, and therefore need it not.

Jeremiah 10:5

They are upright as the palm tree; the nature of which is to grow upright and tall, without any branchings, till it comes to the top, thereby possibly representing majesty.

But speak not; looking as if they were about to speak, standing in a speaking posture; but have not a word to utter, being only dumb stocks, wooden gods.

They must needs be borne, because they cannot go; they move no further or faster than you lift them, either when you go to set them up, or upon any occasion of removal, as stiff as stakes, being indeed but sticks.

Be not afraid of them; they can do you no more harm than the signs of heaven could do; they are but dead stocks. The heathens worshipped some idols that they might do them good, and others that they might do them no harm; but God tells them here, they can do *neither good nor harm* , as in the next words; they can neither punish nor reward; they can neither hurt their enemies, nor help their friends: by this the true God will be distinguished from idols, that he alone can foretell things to come, and he alone can reward or punish, Isa_48:5, and therefore the prophet endeavours to turn them off from their idols to the true God.

Jeremiah 10:6

Forasmuch; this particle *Nj min* , is to be taken here causally, and refers either to what goes before, showing there is no comparison between God and idols; or rather, to what follows, as the ground and reason of all due subjection to God, as in the next verse.

Thy name is great, or, thou art transcendently great,

in might, i.e. though idols may have something of a name in the world among the heathen, yet there was nothing of their real power or might seen; or if the devil might act something through them to delude the world, yet nothing to be compared with that might that hath manifested itself in God's works, Psa_106:8 **111:6.** All the works of idols are either none, or feeble and weak, Jer_10:8.

Jeremiah 10:7

Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? he is called a great King, Mal_1:14: q.d. Thou, by whom all nations are governed, and all affairs in them disposed, and by none else, who would worship any but thee, or be afraid of any but thee, seeing it is fit for, and therefore can belong to, none besides? as in the next words; it is thy right and due. Or, Who can be so stupid as not to acknowledge one Supreme Being, and this to be but one? as, among the heathens, Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and divers others did; and therefore is it not a prodigious thing that any should so

withhold the truth in unrighteousness, be so gross as to worship many gods?

Among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee: q.d. If you search among all their wise men and philosophers, all the great men and rulers, in their kingdoms; for these the heathens were wont to worship as gods after death, *wise men* for their wisdom, and kings for their power; you will find none to compare with God, either for wisdom or power; their wise men are but as so many fools.

Jeremiah 10:8

They are altogether brutish: the awe that the idol doth impress upon carnal men's minds, and thereby taking them off from a due apprehension of the essence of God, doth keep them between such hope and fear, that they become as senseless and as inapprehensive of any true worship as brutes.

And foolish; not only some of them, but even all, both Jews and Gentiles: q.d. I need not stand to particularize, but take them altogether, they are become stupid idolaters, and have drank in the most gross superstitions of the Gentiles, as Rom_1:19,21.

The stock; a synecdoche put for all sorts of idols, of what materials soever; and a metonymy of the matter, to render them contemptible, either as deluding the ignorant, or in themselves considered; they are mere vain, foolish, helpless things.

Is a doctrine of vanities; the Hebrew word *musar* is taken for bad instruction, Pro_16:22: q. d. It is an easy matter to prove them very fools and brutish, when they look upon a stock, a piece of wood, to be their god, which hath neither knowledge nor providence, and therefore must needs be a doctrine of vanity, when they think to be taught devotion by images, which is a teacher of lies; that saith to the *dumb stone*, *It shall teach* , Hab_2:18,19; like that *doctrine of devils* first broached by Pope Gregory, who first commended Serenus bishop of Massilia for not permitting images to be worshipped, but reprov'd him for throwing them out of the church, because they serve for ornaments and laymen's books, which since hath been received as a catholic doctrine, that images are *laymen 's books* .

Jeremiah 10:9

Silver spread into plates; it was not wood washed with gold, nor massy silver or gold, but covered over *with plates of silver or gold* , Exo_39:3.

From Tarshish; from some remote place, probably from Spain, whence the best gold came; *Tarshish* is the proper name of a sea-town in Cilicia, Eze_27:12, **25 Jon 1:3**; and being a noted port, from whence they had passage to Africa, India, and other remote countries, it is usually put for the *ocean* , and may as well signify from any place *beyond the sea* . If you take it properly, then possibly it is noted as the best silver coming from thence, as *Uphaz* for the best gold; for though we read also of gold coming from thence, 1Ki_10:22 2Ch_9:21, yet where the most proper commodities of it are mentioned we read of no gold, Eze_27:12, unless what seems rather to be brought thither, Jer_10:22.

Gold from Uphaz, i.e. probably the best gold, coming from thence in those days, as the best silver from Tarshish, and that here was the best gold is probable from Dan_10:5. There are various conjectures at what place this points at, whether the same with Phas, or Fez, by an aphaeresis, or Ophir, a place not far from Tarshish; and divers other places are conjectured; and some think it refers to no place at all, but to point at the excellency of the gold only. But it is not the design that this comment should swell with things rather conjectural than profitable, it is enough to know that this place intends the purest gold.

The work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: thus, saith he, the artificer takes it, and each, according to his art, shapes it and adorns it; fits the silver and the gold for it.

Blue and purple is their clothing: expositors differing about the materials out of which they were dyed, do differ also in the colours, which here are called *blue and purple* ; the dispute is not worth the while in a vulgar comment, they that will may consult the English Annotations. Either this relates to the further adorning those rich idols of silver and gold; or it implies other artists, such as shape, or sew silk or cloth, woollen or linen, made use of to make these garments for those idols of more inferior materials, as

wood or stone, the other being sufficiently beautified without them.

They are all the work of cunning men, i.e. the choicest men in their respective arts were picked out for this work, that there might be nothing wanting as to exactness, richness, and curiosity; all this the prophet speaks the more to ridicule their idols, as if all this would put any thing of power, virtue, or excellency in them, still *deest aliquit intus* .

Jeremiah 10:10

The Lord is the true God: q. d. All these are but false gods: Jehovah is the alone true God; they are but lies, and the teachers of lies. God is truth itself, and that both in regard of his *essence* , as it is ascribed to Christ, 1Jo_5:20; and also in regard of his *faithfulness* , Num_23:19 Psa_31:5.

He is the living God; these are all but dead stocks and stones, Jehovah is the only living God, having life in himself, and giving life to all things else, Joh_5:21,26. Hence these idols are not only more base than any other creature, but even viler than the matter itself of which they are made.

An everlasting King: these, though accounted kings, and countenanced by kings, yet both they and their kings do all perish; time devours them all with worm or rust, or by injuries and violence offered to them, as in the next verse; but none of these or any thing else can affect the true God, he is

everlasting.

At his wrath the earth shall tremble; he can with his look or frown make the foundations of the heaven and the earth to shake, whereas these stocks can move them no more than they can themselves, which is not one hair's breadth from their stations.

The nations shall not be able to abide his indignation; not able either to *stop* it or *bear* it, but must stoop and fall under it, Psa_76:7; the wicked will not be able to *stand in judgment* , Psa_1:5.

Jeremiah 10:11

Say unto them, viz. to your great lords, the Babylonians, when they shall solicit you to worship idols.

The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth: this seems to have some allusion to a saying common among those Greeks that held one supreme Deity, *Let him that saith he is a god make another world* . Here is noted both how frail they are,

they shall perish; and how weak they are, they could not make

the heavens or the earth. This verse is writ in the Chaldean tongue, and not in the Hebrew, that when they came among them that did worship their idols, they might openly and plainly profess the true God in that language, which the enemies understood better than they did the Hebrew, and that in such kind of bold language as this; Let all those gods perish from off the earth, and under the heavens, that were not able to make either. It is an imprecation upon their idols.

Jeremiah 10:12

In this and the next verse the prophet enumerates some particulars wherein he is transcendently above all creatures which he hath made, much more above idols, which are the works of man's hands.

The earth, Act_14:15, i.e. the whole globe, consisting of waters as well as earth.

By his power: it must needs speak an almighty power to make such a vast body; where would the idols have found materials of which to have composed such a body and bulk? the true God was not at a loss, he drew them out of nothing, and commanded them into a being by the word of his power, Gen_1:1.

He hath established the world by his wisdom; either he hath made it firm, solid, and unmovable, i.e. off from its basis, or rather centre; (for it is out of our sphere and province here to meddle either with the fixation or the motion of it, that is left to the old and new philosophers to dispute among themselves;) or else by *establishing* we understand he hath appointed it its use, or hath prepared it to be every way subservient to the inhabitants thereof, both as to *delight* in prospect, and varieties of recreation, by its ornamental parts in mountains, little hills, woods, meadows, fields, &c., and *necessity* to accommodate man and beast with all things useful, both for habitation and provision, to sustain the natural life, and to praise and magnify the founder of it,

Gen_1:11,12; all which cannot choose but greatly manifest the *unsearchable* wisdom of God. *And hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion* : these are

stretched out, i.e. expanded and spread over our head, through the whole circumference of the earth, with all their glorious furniture, and varieties of motions, moving regularly in their several orbs, i.e. not varying the least degree, either in time or space, from the order and law that God hath set them, even in those which are more eccentric and erratic; which must needs argue an unparalleled skill and understanding in God, which the word *discretion* doth here properly signify, Exo_36:1 Job_12:13; all which are his *handiwork* , and do *declare his glory* , Psa_19:1.

Jeremiah 10:13

As in the former verse he relates God's unspeakable power and wisdom in his creating and fixing the stated order of things; so here he further sets it forth in his providential ordering and disposing their accidents.

When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters; i.e. either at his command, when he is pleased to call for the rain; or rather, when he thundereth in the heavens, Job_37:4,5 **Psa 77:18**: though it often rains when it thunders not, and thunders when it rains not, yet when it rains and thunders the rain usually falls more forcibly from the clouds, and in more sudden plenty, as it were a more immediate consequent of it.

The heavens, viz. the lowest heaven, the region of the air.

The vapours; exhalations, whether wet or dry, causing wind or rain, by the ascending whereof the lower heavens gather them into clouds, which, when full and burdened, descend in showers for the conveniences of the earth and springs.

He maketh lightnings with rain: though fire and water be contrary, yet it opens the clouds to make way for the rain, and is produced in the midst of waters, all which is wonderful.

And bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures; which, partly, notes that it is secret and hidden, as coming from the caverns and hollow parts of the earth; no man knows from whence they come, or whither they go, Joh_3:8; and it is wonderful to observe how

suddenly at a calm time the winds will rise how they will whirl about, how various, unconstant, and contrary in their motions; and partly, the plenty, both for vehemency and continuance, signified also by treasures, the plenty of snow and hail being thus expressed, Job_38:22; and partly, that it is at his disposal to bring out of his treasure when he pleases. See Psa_135:7.

Jeremiah 10:14

Every man is brutish in his knowledge; some limit it to the makers of these idols, that can employ their arts and wits to no better purpose than to frame such stocks into gods; this suits the next expression. Men are bewitched and besotted by these things, so as to see no more into their folly than if they were brutes; and the reason that it hath taken such root may be, because of men's so much admiring the art of carving and painting, or rather through their ignorance: q.d. It is for want of knowledge and understanding that men are thus brutish, Isa_44:18.

Every founder is confounded by the graven image; either it shall turn to his reproach; or rather, he shall see his folly, and shall be ashamed of it when he shall discover it, that ever he should make such a thing, and trust in it, and expose it to be adored by others.

His molten image is falsehood; it is not that which it pretends to be, but *a deceitful thing, a lie* ; they turn *the truth of God into a lie* , Rom_1:25.

There is no breath in them; they have nothing of life in them; nay, that very vegetative life that once was in their stocks is now lost; much less are they spirits sent down from heaven.

Jeremiah 10:15

They are vanity, and the work of errors; either in their rise, as springing from men of corrupt minds, or the foundation of them; a metonymy of the effect; teachers and encouragers of *lies* , Hab_2:18; things rather to be scoffed at and derided, than adored and worshipped; and it is expressed in the plural number, to note the multiplicity of them.

In the time of their visitation they shall perish; when God shall have a controversy with them, shall come to reckon with Babylon and her idols, they and their worshippers shall be destroyed,

alluding possibly to the manner of the pagan conquests, who were wont to carry away both persons and the idols of the country, and either break them to pieces, or burn them; thus were they served by, the Persians: see on Isa_46:1. This possibly may be spoken by way of encouragement to the Jews, that took offence at the Chaldean idols that were set up in their sight; that God may strengthen their patience he tells them he visits them in *mercy* , and their enemies in *judgment* ; he will destroy those idols.

Jeremiah 10:16

The portion of Jacob; a periphrasis for the true God, who vouchsafeth to be the portion of his people and to be so called, Deu_32:9 Psa_16:5, and many other places, because he is in covenant with his people in the Messiah, whose co-heirs are as dear to him as a portion is that descends to a man by inheritance; and he tells you his name in the close of the verse, Isa_47:4, one who hath the whole host of heaven and earth at his disposal.

He is the former of all things; idols are things framed and formed, but God is the former of all things, *the Maker of heaven and earth.*

Israel is the rod of his inheritance; so called, because the portions and inheritances of Israel were measured by a *line, reed, or rod* , and therefore called the

rod of his inheritance, Deu_32:9 Psa_74:2, and because they were his by a continual line of succession; beside Israel is *jbv schebet* , the *rod* or *sceptre* of his inheritance, because God did set up his kingdom in Israel.

Jeremiah 10:17

The prophet now enters upon another subject, and probably begins another sermon.

Gather up thy wares, i.e. every thing thou hast any advantage by, not only thy domestic concerns, but all thy traffic and merchandise, wherever thou hast any concerns in the land, as men use to do in case of invasion by an enemy, to secure them. It seems to be a sarcasm, or kind of military derision.

O inhabitant of the fortress: this is understood by some as spoken to the Babylonians, that they should make provision for

their escape, their idols being not able to save them; but this seems to be remote from the prophet's meaning. It is rather therefore directed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that being the chief place of security in Judea, and by a synecdoche to all other places that they promised themselves security in; the approaching destruction being to pass through the whole country.

Jeremiah 10:18

I will sling out; it notes with how much violence, and speed, and with ease the Chaldeans shall hurry away the people into Babylon, as the stone doth swiftly and violently pass which is thrown out of a sling, with so much ease, and therefore it is said at *at this once* ; I will not delay, but make one thorough quick work of it; noting not only the time, but implying the clear riddance the he would make of them, 2Ch_36:17-19: they had been often assaulted by enemies, and sometimes they redeemed themselves, sometimes delivered by God, their enemies being sometimes divided; but it should not be so now, but all swept away. *That they may find it so* ; that they may see I am in good earnest, that I have not only said it, but they shall find that I will execute it; and though they would never believe it, yet they shall actually find the truth of my threatenings. See Jer_5:12,13 Eze 6:10.

Jeremiah 10:19

Here the prophet doth not so much express his own sorrow, though that be great, as personate the sorrow and complaint that the land, i.e. the people of the land, manifest. or at least ought to do; which because they do not, causeth no little grief in the prophet himself, who cannot but be affected with their condition, which he calls not only a hurt, but a wound, and both of them very grievous.

But I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it; or rather, but *I better considered it* , and said within myself, I were as good be silent; it is indeed a grief *grievous* in itself, and grievous that I must smother it, and not complain, but it is my duty to bear it patiently. There is in this expression a double necessary preparation to repentance, viz.

1. An acknowledgment that they had deservedly brought the judgment upon themselves, and that therefore,

2. They would patiently bear it; and it doth imply something of their stupidity: q.d. We could not have imagined the damage could have been so very great, but now we see how it is, we will patiently bear *the indignation of the Lord, because we have sinned against him* . If this be not the meaning, then it is a further obstinate persisting in their rebelling: q.d. Seeing it must be so, truly it is very *grievous* , but I am bound now to bear it and rub through it as well as I can; a further persisting in their pertinacy, but I incline most to the former sense.

Jeremiah 10:20

He proceeds in his prosopopoeia to bring in the land, or the inhabitants thereof, enumerating their calamities, and by a metaphor sets out the overthrow of the land, or Jerusalem, by the breaking of the

cords of a *tabernacle* , the use whereof is to fasten it on every side to stakes in the ground, which *cords* being broken the *tabernacle falls* , implying all the supports of city and country were gone, nothing but desolation to be expected. See Jer_4:20.

My children are gone forth of me; either the inhabitants of the land, or the lesser cities, being frequently called daughters, viz. the Chaldeans have snatched them away from me, and carried them into captivity.

They are not; of the phrase and meaning of it see Jer_31:15. There is none to stretch forth my tent any more, i.e. it is irrevocable, I am without all help, either for defence or beauty, or any thing to regain my pristine state, which he chooseth to describe hereby, continuing this metaphor rather than any other, of a shepherd's tent; possibly insinuating the ground of it to arise principally from their pastors, the neglect both of their civil and ecclesiastical governors, which the next verse favours.

Jeremiah 10:21

The pastors are become brutish; not that the prophet takes off all blame from the people, but that he layeth it chiefly upon the rulers of church and state; for so is pastor taken frequently. See Jer_23:1-3,

And have not sought the Lord; not sought unto him, and taken him into their counsels.

Therefore they shall not prosper: the prophet gives the reason why nothing went well with them, namely, because there was no regard had to godliness, without which we cannot expect a blessing upon any thing.

All their flocks shall be scattered, i.e. all that have been committed to their care shall be carried unto Babylon, and divers of them dispersed abroad into several countries for their sakes.

Jeremiah 10:22

The prophet had divers times sounded this alarm in their ears, but to very little purpose; his words seemed but as idle tales, they believed him not: he speaks of it partly as one conceiving what dreadful commotions and concussions would be upon the land by the clattering of arms, prancings and neighings of horses, sounding of trumpets, and rattling of chariots, making as it were the earth to shake under them, when that vast army of the Chaldeans should furiously break in upon them. Partly, insinuating an antithesis, opposing the voice of God's prophets, that had so often spoken of this, but they would not hear, against this dreadful noise, which they should not but hear, and see, and feel too. So that they that would not learn of God's prophets shall be sent to harder masters, that shall teach them in a manner as Gideon did the men of Succoth, Jud_8:16.

The north country: see Jer_1:14 **5:15.**

A den of dragons. See Poole "Jer_9:11"

Jeremiah 10:23

The prophet finding that all he could say prevailed nothing upon this people, but they rather grew worse, he turns himself to God. How far these words concern Pelagianism, or free-will, either one way or other, or whether at all, concerns not this comment; they seem literally to be the words of the prophet, relating either to himself and other holy men: q.d. It is not in our power, neither do we presume, to stop this decree of thine against Judea: or else to the enemies in general, or Nebuchadnezzar in particular: q.d. We know all their marches and designs are of thine appointing, and all their achievements of thine ordering, it is thy providence that directs every *step* they take against this land, without whom no counsels shall prosper, who alone turnest men's hearts which way

thou pleasest, Pro_21:1, who canst bring men on, or turn them back, as thou seest good, Isa_37:29, so that no man's way is properly his own, to give them what success he will: or to the people, whereby he doth tacitly insinuate that all the counsels and measures they think to take, whether by their own strength at home, or confederacies and alliances abroad, will avail nothing; however they may think to escape by some devices or stratagems of their own, it is to no purpose, God can overturn all in a moment, when men think their counsels are ripe, and they want nothing but execution: or lastly, as others think, this is by way of petition: q.d. Lord, we know it is not in our power to divert these judgments that are coming upon us by the Chaldeans, but thou canst moderate and limit them as thou pleasest; seeing all their designs are ordered by thy providence, they cannot do any thing against us without thy permission: this the next verse seems to favour.

Jeremiah 10:24

O Lord, correct me: q.d. Seeing thou wilt bring the Chaldeans upon us to punish us for our sins, let it be a correction only, not a destruction and utter ruin.

But with judgment; let it be in measure, in judgment, i.e. in wisdom, proportioning it as a father toward his children, Jer_30:11; for so the Hebrew *mishpat* signifies, and thus judgment is taken, Isa_30:18. We refuse not correction, but we cast ourselves upon thee, therefore *in the midst of judgment remember mercy* .

Not in thine anger; the reason of this he gives in the next clause; lest if thou shouldst let out thy fury. upon me, thou wouldst

bring me to nothing, i.e. thou wouldst utterly consume me, or *make me few* , as Heb., that I should be no more a people, never lift up the head again.

Jeremiah 10:25

Pour out thy fury upon the heathen: this may imply both petition, that God would do so, and prediction, that God will certainly do so, which toward the close of the prophecy we find was fulfilled, God first sending the king of Babylon to overthrow divers of the heathen nations, and then Babylon itself destroyed

with a great destruction. He will make a difference between us and the heathen, such as

know thee not, i.e. such as do not acknowledge and own thee for their God: the phrase is frequent; 1Sa_2:12 Job_18:21 2Th_1:8: the sense is expressed here in the next words, *that do not call on thy name* . That call not on thy name; a synecdoche, one part of worship put for the whole: q.d. If thou wilt be pouring out thy fury, the effects of it be to thine enemies, not unto thine own people, who worship thee.

For they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate: here he gives a reason as a motive to God why he should do so; which words see explained on Psa_79:5-7, whence they are taken, and possibly Jeremiah himself was the author of that Psalm after the city was destroyed, and he carried into Egypt; and for the phrase of *devouring him* , see Jer_8:16.

Jeremiah 11:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 11.

God's covenant, Jer_11:1-7. Their disobedience, Jer_11:8-10. Evils to come on them, Jer_11:11-17, and on the men of Anathoth, for conspiring to kill Jeremiah, Jer_11:18-23.

What time and in what manner this revelation came from God to the prophet is not expressed, whether it were in the days of Josiah or Jehoiakim.

Jeremiah 11:2

Hear ye the words of this covenant: God speaking in the plural number, not *hear thou* , but *hear ye* , makes some conjecture that this was a charge given to some other prophets, either, Zephaniah (if it were in Josiah's time, Zep_1:1) or Uriah (if it were in the time of Jehoiakim). The term

this also manifests that the book of the law was before Jeremiah's time, for all conclude that the covenant here spoken of was the covenant of the law of God, delivered by Moses, to which the people more than once promised obedience.

Jeremiah 11:3

In Deu_27:26, it is, *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen* . The people's saying *Amen* testified their assent, and made the law a covenant; but they had besides formally and explicitly covenanted with God, Exo_24:3,7, with religious rites and ceremonies used in stipulations, and afterwards consented that God should punish those that violated that covenant, Deu_27:26.

Jeremiah 11:4

Which I commanded your fathers, which law (that you by your restipulation made a formal covenant) I that am the Lord, and so had a sovereign power to lay laws upon my creatures, commanded your fathers, *in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace* ; and obliged them to obedience before I laid my law upon them, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt, from the furnace wherein iron is melted, which may either be taken literally (probably that was a piece of their work in Egypt) or metaphorically, serving at iron furnaces being a very hard and servile labour.

Saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you; for which kindness I required no more of them but a gentler service to me, in obeying my voice as to the things of this law which I gave them in charge.

So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God; nor did I only lay my commands upon them, but I also encouraged them to the obedience of it, by my gracious promise, that if they would, they should be a people, I would bless, protect, and defend, and bear the name of my people, and I would be their God to own and bless them.

Jeremiah 11:5

I required their obedience for their own good; I had sworn to their fathers that I would give their posterity a land abounding with plenty of all good things, the best and choicest things, upon supposition of their obedience. I have performed that oath, I have brought them into such a land, and showed myself faithful to them. *So be it, O Lord* : God having ended his speech, the prophet saith, *Amen* , either asserting the truth of what God had said, or

wishing that the people would do according to their covenant, or assenting to the curse according as God had commanded, Deu_27:26.

Jeremiah 11:6

Let it be thy work to call upon this people, not only to hear, but to do, the words which I have commanded them, and they have engaged to do.

Jeremiah 11:7

In protesting I protested, a usual way in the Hebrew, by which they express the seriousness and vehemency of an action. By *protesting* he meaneth the same with charging and commanding, with promises annexed to obedience, and threatenings denounced in case of disobedience. This God saith he had done with a great deal of patience and diligence, even from the time that this people were brought by him out of the land of Egypt.

Jeremiah 11:8

But had not hearkened unto his counsels, but every one had walked after the imaginations of his own heart. A phrase by which sin is often expressed in holy writ, Deu_29:19 Jer_3:17 **7:24 9:14 13:10 16:12 18:12 23:17**. The imaginations of man's heart are only evil, Gen_6:5 **8:21**. Hence holiness is set out by the notion of *self-denying*, not pleasing ourselves, mortifying our members, &c. For this God threateneth to bring upon them all his words of threatening annexed to the covenant of the law.

Jeremiah 11:9

All sorts of people, whether of the city or country, have done alike, as if they had conspired together to break my law, and to provoke me to wrath, they are all alike and act alike. The thing is manifest, it is not done secretly, nor is it done rashly, but upon a conspiracy, upon counsel and deliberation.

Jeremiah 11:10

They are turned back from me, or they are turned back from their own better courses in the time of David, *to the sins of their forefathers* that worshipped the golden calf, or the many idols which they worshipped in the time of the judges. They are all alike, both the ten tribes, which were

the house of Israel, and the two tribes, which made the kingdom of Judah, they have all broken the covenant which I made with their forefathers.

Jeremiah 11:11

Evil upon them which they shall not be able to escape; a judgment from which they shall by no means be delivered, by any counsels of their own, or assistance of their friends and allies.

And though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them; and though prayer to me hath been their usual course in such cases, and I have delivered them, yet I will no more hear them, though they cry unto me, Pro_1:28,29 Zec 7:11,13. God will not hear them crying to him in their adversity, who refuse to hear him speaking to them in their prosperity.

Jeremiah 11:12

Shall here signifieth *will* , and might as well have been so translated, denoting the hardness of the hearts of this people, whom affliction would not reduce to God; or rather the indicative mood is here put for the imperative, and the sense, Let

the cities of Judah, & c., and the phrase taken ironically. So it agreeth with God's answer to the people crying to him, Jud_10:14, and what this prophet had before said, Jer_2:28. But, saith the prophet, they shall do them no good, then they shall understand their vanity in their superstition and idolatry, that they have bestowed a divine homage upon lies and vanities, and things able to do them no good, nor at all to profit them.

Jeremiah 11:13

Not that they had just so many idols as were cities in Judah, or altars as were streets in Jerusalem; the meaning is, they had very many, and that the people who lived in every city and street were guilty. What he calls *their shame* , or the shameful thing, is afterwards expounded *Baal* , called a *shameful thing* , because it was what they had reason to be ashamed of, and what would certainly bring them to shame and confusion.

Baal signifieth lord, and was a common name given to more idols than one; the Phoenicians used the name *Baal* , the Chaldeans *Bell* . God, Hos_2:16, forbade his people to call him by this name, because so abused to idolatry. Many think that the sun was what

the Phoenicians worshipped under this name; some say Saturn was he. Manasseh, who preceded Josiah, *reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them* , 2Ch_33:3. Learned men say that the Asians called the same idol Baal, whom those of Europe called Jupiter. It is not improbable which learned men judge, that the heathens acknowledging one Supreme Being, worshipped him in several creatures; some mistaking the *sun, moon, and stars* to be he, others other things; these they called *Baalim* , lords, as they called the principal god Baal. The heathens' idolatry seems to be their worshipping God *in creatures* , and paying a divine homage to creatures, the sun, moon, and stars, and other far inferior to them, not believing that those creatures were the Divine Being, but that the Divine Being was in them, and from them would hear their supplicants, and do them good; which, though the heathens might a little be excused in, having no Scriptures showing them the nature of the true God, and how he would be worshipped; yet in the Jews was inexcusable, they having the oracles of God committed to them, which both showed them the true nature of God, and let them know that no creature could be any similitude or representation of him; and that his will was, that they should pay their homage to him without any similitudes or representations exciting them to that homage, fit for nothing but to beget in the minds of people false conceptions and apprehensions of the Divine Being, which is merely spiritual; notwithstanding which direction from the Divine law, the Jews, after the manner of the heathens, would pay their homage to God before the sun, moon, and stars, and before images made with hands, and make altars to such creatures and images, which was the idolatry God complains of, and of which he declares a greater abhorrence than almost of any other sin. It is likely that *Baal* here mentioned was the sun, because it was near Manasseh's times, who thus highly offended God; and it is probable that though Josiah had begun a famous reformation. yet a great deal of this leaven was left in the common people; besides that the sins of Manasseh, 2Ki_23:26, are reckoned up as the special proximate cause of this wrath of God against Judah.

Jeremiah 11:14

Once before, and we shall find once after this, Jer_14:11, God forbiddeth the prophet to *pray for this people* ; hence ariseth a question how the prophet is excused from sin, in praying for them after this prohibition, especially when God had assured him that he would not hear.

Solut.

1. God (say some) sometimes forbiddeth prayers for persons and people to stir them up to more fervent prayer.
2. We find the like done by Moses, Exo_32:10, and 1Sa_15:35 **16:1**. Others say,
3. That we must not understand these words as an absolute prohibition to Jeremiah, but for the terrifying of the people.
4. God speaks only of a temporal evil, and willeth Jeremiah not to be too positive in his prayers for them, that they might be delivered from that; but he might pray for the pardon of their sins, and their deliverance from the eternal vengeance of God.
5. He might not pray for the obstinate part of this people, but for the elect of God amongst them.

Jeremiah 11:15

Some make these words the words of the prophet, declaring that God (whom they suppose here called the *beloved*) was about to forsake the temple. Others make them the words of God, speaking of his prophet, whom he calleth his beloved; or rather, speaking of his people, whom he calleth *his beloved* , upon the account of his ancient union with them, and marriage to them; this seemeth most probable, and agreeth both with Jer_7:9,**10**, and also with the usual confidence of the Jews, because of the temple of the Lord, and their formal services of God in it. *My people* , saith God, though I was formerly their Husband, yet have wrought lewdness with many, that is, committed idolatry with many idols; and now what have they to do more in my house, than a base strumpet which hath turned a whore hath to do in the house of her husband?

And the holy flesh is passed from thee: some by this phrase understand that God would own them no more as a holy people. Others that their circumcision was become uncircumcision. Others

more probably understand it of the flesh of the sacrifices they were wont to offer; either they had been remiss in offering the sacrifices God had commanded them; or (which is more probable) the flesh of their sacrifices, being set before idols, as well as before him who was the only true God, became polluted, and was abomination to the Lord. The learned author of our English Annotations notes, that the words may very fairly be translated, *and the holy flesh they shall pass away from thee* ; so the words import a threatening, that because they had polluted and profaned the sacrifices, God would make their sacrifices to cease.

When thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest: and this the Lord would rather do against them, because they were not only evil, but gloried in their wickedness, or at least were full of mirth and jollity as if they had done no iniquity.

Jeremiah 11:16

That is, the Lord fixed thee when he brought thee first into Canaan, in a beautiful flourishing state and condition, so as thou wert in a capacity both to have done thyself much good, and to have brought him much glory, like a beautiful fair olive tree, fit to bear fair and goodly fruit. But thou hast so behaved thyself, that the Lord is altering the course of his providence to thee, he that planted thee is about to pluck thee up. God is about to kindle a fire which will burn thee up, and to break thy branches. There is nothing more usual in prophetic writings than to have things yet to come expressed as if past, because of the certainty of them; they being what shall as certainly be as if already done.

Jeremiah 11:17

This verse expounds what was metaphorically expressed in the former verse, viz. that God had declared his will to his prophet; that he would destroy his people, the blame of which must lie upon themselves, for they had by idolatry most highly provoked him, and had therein done against themselves, as indeed all sinning is but an acting against ourselves. God is invulnerable, we cannot hurt him, though we may provoke his justice to take vengeance upon us for our iniquities. And the prophet tells them that the Lord *that planted them* would do this, thereby hinting to them both his power to do it, and also that they had no reason to be confident, that because God had made them, he would not

destroy them; or because he had planted them in that good land, therefore he would not pluck them up and throw them out of it: see Isa_27:11.

Jeremiah 11:18

This may be understood either more generally, as relating to all the wicked actions of his countrymen, to obviate their saying, How comest thou to know our doings? or else (which seemeth most probable) more specially, with relation to that conspiracy against him which is mentioned in the following verses.

Jeremiah 11:19

We have no other mention of this conspiracy in holy writ, but it is plain, both from this verse and what followeth to the end of this chapter, that the men of Anathoth (which was Jeremiah's own town) were offended at his prophesying so sharp things against the land of Judah, and had threatened to kill him if he would not leave off that style, and had conspired to that purpose, some think to mix poison with his meat, others by starving of him, others think by beating of him, into which variety of sense they interpret that phrase in this verse,

Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof; but the sense is plain, Let us not only put an end to his prophesying, but to his being also;

let us cut him off some way or other,

that his name may no more be remembered. Of this the prophet saith he was as ignorant as an *ox* or a *lamb* that is brought to the slaughter-house, that knoweth nothing what design is against its life.

Jeremiah 11:20

The prophet appealeth to God, and appealeth to him as one that knew both the innocency of his heart toward them, and the malice of their hearts toward him, and used to deal out justice impartially, and committeth his cause unto God, (as we are commanded, 1Pe_2:23) and desires that God would avenge him, and that he might see the

vengeance; which words some learned interpreters think spoken not without some passion and mixture of human frailty. Others,

not as a prayer so much as a prophecy. Others, not out of a desire of private revenge, but out of a pure zeal for the glory of God, whose prophet he was, and servant, in the delivery of those prophecies that were so ungrateful to them.

Jeremiah 11:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 11:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 11:23

The prayers of God's prophets, though they may sometimes have too much passion and human infirmity mixed with them, yet are heard of God, and many times answered in righteousness by terrible things, as to those against whom they are directed. The same thing they designed to do against the prophet God threateneth to do against them, utterly to consume them, so as no remembrance of them should remain.

Jeremiah 12:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 12

The prophet complaineth of the wicked's prosperity; by faith seeth their ruin, Jer_12:1-4. God admonisheth him of his brethren's treachery against him, and lamenteth his heritage, Jer_12:5-13. A return from captivity promised to the penitent, Jer_12:14-17.

Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: the prophet begins here with a recognition of God's unquestionable righteousness and justice, in all his providential dispensations in the government of the world. Some read the latter part, *should I plead with thee* . But let it be *should I plead* ; or, although or when I plead, that is, argue with thee; yet the prophet doth it not without a previous resolution to agree the Lord's dispensations just, whatsoever he should say.

Yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments; yet, saith he, let me talk with thee, not by way of accusing thee, but for my own satisfaction concerning thy judicial dispensations in the government of the world.

Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal treacherously? by *all they* , he means

many of them , and is thought to have spoken with a special relation to the priests at Anathoth, that had conspired against his life. The prosperity of the wicked hath in all times been a riddle, and a sore temptation to the best of God's people; to Job, Job_21:7,13; to David, Psa_37:1 **73:3,12 94:3,4 Hab 1:4,5**. Lord, saith Jeremiah, I know thy ways of providence are just and righteous, but they are dark and hidden from me, I cannot understand why thou doest this.

Jeremiah 12:2

Here are a people that indeed talk of thee, and one that only observeth their mouths would judge thou wert near to them, and they had communion with thee; but he that observeth their lives may easily discern that thou art far from their inward parts, they have neither fear of thee, nor love for thee, nor desire after thee, nor delight in thee, nor are they obedient to thee; yet thou hast planted them by thy power, and by thy providence they thrive, go on, and prosper.

Jeremiah 12:3

But thou, O Lord, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried my heart toward thee: here seemeth to be something understood, viz. *But, Lord, it is otherwise with me* , I am maligned, and my life is hunted after; yet, Lord, thou knowest the sincerity of my heart before and towards thee, thou hast had experience of me in the discharge of my prophetic office, and knowest that I have been faithful in revealing to the people what thou didst reveal to me, yet for this it is they seek my life and would have my blood.

Prepare them for the day of slaughter: Lord, avenge me on this wicked generation, confirm the words against them which I have from thee denounced. Concerning the meaning of expressions of this nature, and the lawfulness of putting up such petitions against those who are not only our enemies, but God's also, **See Poole** "Jer_11:20".

Jeremiah 12:4

The prophet seems to give a reason of his former passion and prayer against those wicked men he before reflected on, because they were the cause of the nation's ruin, which is also asserted by the psalmist, Psa_107:34. A land is said *to mourn* ,

metaphorically, when it is brought to an ill complexion, and looketh unpleasantly, the grass and green herbs in it being destroyed by enemies, or drought, or vermin. Nay, the effects of their wicked courses reached to the very beasts and birds, because they were so presumptuous as to conclude that they should do well enough, neither the prophet nor any other should see their last end.

Jeremiah 12:5

That these are the answer of God to the prophet is reasonably well agreed by the best interpreters, as also that this is a proverbial expression; but as to the application of it in this place, there is some difference. Some make it this: If thou dost not understand what is done by the men of thine own city, how canst thou think to fathom my dispensations of providence in the government of the world? But this sense seemeth not very probable, because the sense of the proverb seemeth to be, If thou be not able to encounter lesser dangers, how wilt thou be able to overcome greater? I rather agree with those who make the sense this: Jeremiah, I have greater dangers for thee to encounter than those thou art exposed to at Anathoth; if thou be so disturbed with them, who are but as footmen, how wilt thou be able to grapple with those far greater enemies which thou art like to meet with at Jerusalem? Anathoth also seemeth to be understood by *the land of thy peace*; that is, the land of thy friends, wherein thou hadst a confidence: If thy enemies thou hast there met with thee, what wilt thou do *in the swellings of Jordan*? that is, in a place where thou art like to meet with an increase of greater troubles, like the swelling of Jordan (which in harvest used to overflow its banks). Many other things are said by interpreters, both with reference to the sense of this text, and the explication of these proverbial expressions; but the sense above mentioned seemeth to me least strained, and best agreeing with what went before and what follows.

Jeremiah 12:6

The men of Anathoth, thine own town and country, and those of thy own family, have conspired evil against thee secretly.

They have called a multitude after thee; either they have exposed thee to the rage and rudeness of a multitude, or they have

accused thee to a multitude. Though therefore they give thee many fair words, yet repose no trust nor confidence in them, but look to thyself.

Jeremiah 12:7

God by his

house here understandeth the temple, which God is said here to have forsaken with respect to his gracious manifestations in it to the people that came thither to worship him. By his

heritage he means the whole body of the Israelites, called God's heritage not in this chapter only, but Jer_2:7 Joe_2:17 Mic_7:14: whom God threateneth to leave with respect to his special providence, by which he had taken care of them; upon which account Canaan is called the land which God *cared for* , Deu_11:12; that is, so cared for, as in comparison with them he might seem to neglect all other countries.

I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies; that is, he had given that nation which was once his dearly beloved into the hands or power of their enemies.

Jeremiah 12:8

That is, the reason why my heart is alienated from them, is because they are altered; those that were as my sheep, following me their chief Shepherd, and the guidance of those prophets and pastors which I set over them, are become like lions in the forest roaring against me, and rending and tearing the prophets which I sent unto them.

Jeremiah 12:9

Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird: the word in the Hebrew signifies to dye, or colour, and interpreters are here divided, whether to interpret it of a bird *coloured by nature* (so our translators understood it, and therefore have translated it *speckled*) or *by accident* , as ravenous birds are coloured by the blood of other birds killed by them. Hence some interpret the text as a reflection upon the Jews for their cruelty, coloured by their oppression and innocent bloodshed. Others, of their tincture by a variety of superstition and idolatry. The latter seemeth to me most probable, because of what follows, it being what is usual and natural for other birds to flock about a strange-coloured bird, such

as they have not been used to see, but rather to fly from, than to come at a bird of prey, that hath already stained her feathers with the blood of other birds. But it may be understood of either, for the Jews were notoriously guilty of both, and it is God that causeth the birds to come against her, and the beasts of the field to devour.

Jeremiah 12:10

By

pastors most here think civil persons, not ecclesiastical officers, are meant; but they are divided, some interpreting it of the rulers and princes of Nebuchadnezzar's army, who took Jerusalem, and destroyed Judah, called *God 's vineyard* , Isa_5:1,2; others understanding it of the rulers of the Jews, who by their wicked government, and as wicked example, had ruined their country, and caused God to turn the country which he had chosen for his portion, and declared such a pleasure in, into a wilderness, and such a wilderness as was not. only thinly inhabited, but wholly desolate.

Jeremiah 12:11

They have made it desolate, Heb. *He hath made it desolate* ; but it cannot be meant of God, for it is God that speaketh, and God is he mentioned in the next words: it must therefore either be understood of Nebuchadnezzar, the instrumental cause; or (one number being put for another) of the people or the rulers as the meritorious cause; and in that rueful state into which their sins had brought it it cried unto God. And one great cause of this sore judgment upon the land; as the people's not laying to heart, not seriously considering, what God had done or was doing against it.

Jeremiah 12:12

The prophet (as very usually) speaketh of a thing as already done which was very shortly to be done; he saith they were come up because they should come up, and no places should be so high but they should climb them, none so strong but they should subdue them. The sword of the enemy is called

the sword of the Lord, because he ordereth and succeeds it, though the enemy manageth it; and he saith it shall be against all, of all ranks and orders, no flesh should have peace; by

no flesh he meaneth no ranks, no orders of men.

Jeremiah 12:13

They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: if these words be understood literally, they only signify that God would blast the labours of the husbandman, and curse them in the field. The earth's bringing forth thorns and thistles was part of the curse for the first transgression of man, Gen_3:18. God's blasting the labours of husbandmen is often threatened as a punishment of sin. See Lev_26:16 Deu_28:38. If it be taken metaphorically, it is expounded by the next words.

They have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit; that they should labour in vain, all the works of their hands, all their counsels and deliberations, should be of no profit or avail unto them.

They shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the Lord; the fierce anger of God against them shall be so showed, that the returns of their labours or estates, the profits of their trades, &c., shall be so small that they shall be ashamed of them.

Jeremiah 12:14

God will not be angry for ever with his own people, nor suffer the rod of the wicked for ever to rest upon the back of the righteous; for saith he, for those that are nay evil neighbours, the nations bordering upon Judea, which God calls his inheritance, upon which account he calleth them his neighbours, who *touched* his inheritance, not so much by contiguity of habitation, as by rapacious fingers to do them hurt, insulting over them when the hand of God was upon them, and contributing to their affliction and misery by helping their enemies against them, as did the Edomites, Philistines, Moabites, &c.:

I will also pluck them out of their land, I will bring the sword upon them also, and they shall be led into captivity; and though they may have made some inroads upon my people, and have carried away some of them into captivity, yet I will fetch them out of their captivity.

Jeremiah 12:15

This seemeth not to be a prophecy only of the Jews' return into their land after the fulfilling of the years of their captivity, but also of the bringing back of these nations after that they should be plucked up, and seems to relate to the calling of the Gentiles; but this prophecy must be limited by what followeth in the next verse, and not understood of all the inhabitants of those nations.

Jeremiah 12:16

Though these people be heathens, yet if they will leave their idolatries, and superstitious ways of worship, and learn to worship and serve me, as my people do and ought to worship me, and

swear by my name, The Lord liveth; that is, pay that homage which they pay to the Divine Being to me, the living and true God; owning me alone as the fountain of life, and searcher of the hearts (for there is a great homage paid to the true God in swearing by his name only, which showeth the great impiety and profaneness of other oaths); then, saith God, I will bless and prosper them also, and they shall not only have a portion in the earth, but amongst my people; which was eminently fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles, Rom_11:17; they were originally *wild olives* , and *grafted in* amongst the Jews, and *with them made partakers of the root and fatness of the olive tree* .

Jeremiah 12:17

But for those, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, that shall continue in their idolatrous and superstitious courses, that shall refuse the Messiah, and continue in unbelief, and go on in courses of rebellion and disobedience, (saith God,) I will utterly destroy that people. Thus Isa_60:12, *The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted* .

Jeremiah 13:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 13

In the type of a linen girdle God prefigureth their destruction, Jer_13:1-11. Under the parable of bottles filled with wine, is foretold their drunkenness with misery, Jer_13:12-14. He exhorteth to prevent these judgments by repentance for their sins, which are the cause thereof, Jer_13:15-27.

God's design, by what is recorded in this chapter, is by two types, as in two glasses, to let the people understand by the prophet how he looked upon them, and what they were in his eyes, and also what he would do unto them, and they might expect from him; to this purpose he directeth the prophet to procure himself a girdle, not woollen, but linen, made of flax, or the like, and to put it not upon his clothes, but upon his loins, to signify (as some think) that this people were a people whom God had made near to him. He commands him not to put it in water, to soften it, as some think; linen newly made, before it is wetted in water, being rough; and this they conceive the prophet was forbidden, for a further type of the stiffness, and roughness, and stubbornness of this people. Others think, to typify that God was no cause of this people's rotting and growing corrupt.

Jeremiah 13:2

According to the word of the Lord; that is, according to God's command.

And put it on my loins; and used it as God commanded me, never disputing the reason why God bid me do such a thing.

Jeremiah 13:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 13:4

God having commanded the prophet to procure such a girdle as was before mentioned, and to tie it upon his loins, he a second time comes to him, and commandeth him to take this girdle, and carry it to Euphrates. This was one of the four great rivers that the river out of the garden of Eden divided itself into, Gen_2:10,14. It was the border of the Promised Land, Gen_15:18 Deu_1:7 **11:24** 1Ch_5:9. Reuben's lot was bounded by it. The prophet was commanded to hide his girdle in the

hole of a

rock in that river. But why there? Were there not other places nearer where the prophet might have hid it? It is judged by some that this command was also to signify unto them that they should be carried out of their own borders into captivity; or rather, that they had corrupted, and were become rotten, by doing after the fashions and manners of the heathens, who lived on the other side

of Euphrates always, but having (a hundred years before this) captivated the ten tribes, lived also on this side of it.

Jeremiah 13:5

Most think that Jeremiah did this but in a vision, for it was a very long journey for the prophet to take to go from Anathoth or Jerusalem as far as Euphrates. Jeremiah was obedient to God's command, without any disputing or asking God the meaning of this injunction to him.

Jeremiah 13:6

God, who had bidden the prophet go and hide the linen girdle, after some considerable time speaks again to him to go and take it away from the place where he had lodged it.

Jeremiah 13:7

Whether the prophet really made such a journey, or all this was but a vision, is very uncertain. When he came to the place, or in his vision, he thought, when he came to the place, that he saw all the girdle rotted; and good for nothing but to be thrown upon a dunghill.

Jeremiah 13:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 13:9

By this it appears that God commanded Jeremiah to do this, not only as a representation of the rotten and corrupt state of this people, but of his vengeance, which should suddenly be brought upon them, though they were a proud *people*, lifted up and swelled in the opinion of themselves, from the favour which God had showed them, in making them a people near unto him, and as it were wearing them upon his loins; yet, they having corrupted themselves by mixing their streams with the streams of Euphrates, corrupting themselves with the superstitions, corruptions, and idolatries of heathens, God would make use of some of those nations to abate their pride and pluck their feathers, and they should rot amongst those people and in some of those nations with whom and by whose example they had sinned against the Lord. This sense of these words is much confirmed by the following words.

Jeremiah 13:10

Hitherto the prophet had yielded a blind obedience to God, doing what he commanded him, though he possibly knew no other reason for it but because God bade him do so (which is a homage we owe unto God, though to none but him); now God expounds himself what he meant to teach the Jews by this, viz. that he did intend that they should be consumed by the people beyond the river Euphrates, as that girdle was there marred; and he also shows them that their own sins in disobeying his word, and following the imaginations of their own hearts, particularly their idolatry, was what had brought this sore judgment upon them.

Jeremiah 13:11

Here God openeth to the prophet why he commanded him to put the girdle about his loins, viz. to show that he of his singular favour had used the Jews as a man useth girdle, which he fasteneth about his loins; and as a man wareth his girdle, made up of some costly materials, for an honour and praise to him, so God's design in honouring this people, wearing them as a girdle, was, that they might bring him honour and glory, living to his praise, in the obedience of his commands, especially such commands as resisted to his worship.

But they would not hear; but they would not answer God's designs, nor hearken to any counsels of that nature which he gave them, and therefore he resolved to pluck them from his loins, and to suffer them to rot and consume as that girdle was rotted: see Psa_81:8-16, which the author of the English Annotations saith well is an excellent comment on this text.

Jeremiah 13:12

God by his prophet showeth them their ruin in another glass, he bids the prophet tell them that

every bottle should be filled with wine. Wine was what they delighted in; Hos_3:1, *they loved flagons of wine*, and were for those prophets that would prophesy to them of wine and strong drink, Mic_2:11. God therefore sendeth them a prophesy about wine, bids the prophet tell them that

every bottle should be filled with wine. Glad news to the drunkard among them! but no very strange thing to them who

often enough were wont both to fill and to empty bottles of wine: but they little understood the wine which God and his, prophet intended; God therefore openeth it to them.

Jeremiah 13:13

There is a *wine of astonishment and confusion* , Psa_60:3, a wine that intoxicateth, and inflameth, and stupifieth, as well as a wine that refresheth; saith God, With that wine I will fill all orders of persons,

kings, priests, prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Nor shall the throne of David be a protection to your kings; I will have no regard to them upon that account, nor to the priests, though they be persons consecrated to me.

Jeremiah 13:14

And I will set them one against another, raising up an evil spirit of division amongst them, that they shall be like earthen bottles dashed one against another, which are easily broken in pieces. I will have no pity on them, therefore let them not presume upon my mercy, and pity, and compassion; for I am resolved to show them no mercy, but to bring them to utter ruin and destruction.

Jeremiah 13:15

God ordinarily subjoineth exhortation and counsel to his reproof, if peradventure people will change their hearts and ways. Having threatened them, therefore the prophet speaketh to them, that they would yet hear, and that not formally, but

give ear; not exalting themselves against God, and nourishing a vain confidence or presumptuous hopes, and going on in their rebellious courses, despising him and others, who were but the Lord's prophets and his messengers unto them. The word which we bring is not ours, it is the Lord that hath spoken by us.

Jeremiah 13:16

Glorify God, by a humble confession of your sins, Jos_7:19,20, by submitting yourselves to God, Jam_4:7, humbling yourselves under his word, Jam_4:10, and under his mighty hand, 1Pe_5:6, before God brings upon you his great and heavy judgments before threatened. As a state of prosperity is set out often in Scripture by the notion of

light, which is a pleasant and cheering thing; so a state of affliction is often set out to us in Scripture under the notion of

darkness, Isa_8:22 Joe_2:2 Amo_5:18, &c.: and as in the want of light, which is directly to our feet, men are prone to stumble at any thing that lies in their way so as they know not how to direct their feet or take their steps; so in times of affliction, especially great afflictions, men are ordinarily perplexed, and know not what course to take. In the latter part of the verse he seemeth to threaten God's disappointment of their expectations. The Jews to the last appeared highly confident, looking for light, but they met with great disappointment, even gross darkness.

Jeremiah 13:17

That is, if you will not listen to what I say, take heed to what I say, and obey the counsel which I give you, I shall seriously and secretly mourn for your rebellion and obstinacy, which is rooted in your pride, and lifting up yourselves against the Lord's monitions and counsels; and I shall also mourn for your calamity when it comes upon you, I shall have a personal and family concern with you, but that will not so much trouble me as to consider that you who are the church and people of God should be led into captivity.

Jeremiah 13:18

The author of holy writ is discernible by this as by other things, that the Scripture equally speaks to the greatest persons as to persons of meaner rank. God here calls to the king of Judah, whether it was at this time Jehoiakim, or his son Jehoiachin, is uncertain. By

principalities he means both their dignity and their liberty, that which he often calleth the crown of their glory. Some expound it *head-tires*, because the word deriveth from a word which signifies the head.

Jeremiah 13:19

Either the cities of Judah which lay southward from Chaldea, and therefore their enemies in the next verse are said to come from the north, and this great evil is said to have come from the north; or (as some would have it) the cities of Egypt, which lay yet more southward, so as the Egyptians should neither come with

sufficient force to raise the siege, nor should there be any sanctuary or refuge for them in Egypt, but they should certainly be wholly carried into captivity.

Jeremiah 13:20

He speaks to them as if their enemy was even then upon their march, that if they did but look they might see him coming.

Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? the prophet either speaks to the king, or to the rulers, or chief of the congregation of Judah. Pro_14:28, *In the multitude of the people is the king 's honour* . So in the multitude of subjects, or of members, lies much of the honour of a church or state.

Jeremiah 13:21

That is, thou wilt have nothing to say, but be wholly confounded and ashamed when God shall visit thee with this sore judgment, or when Nebuchadnezzar's army sent by God shall visit thee; for thou, either by thy commerce and trading with them, or by thy so often calling them to thy assistance, or by thy idolatry borrowed from them, and other nations, hast taught them to be captains over thee; thy sorrows and affliction will come upon thee suddenly and terribly, as pain cometh upon a woman in travail; yea, and as certainly also.

Jeremiah 13:22

Hypocrites will rarely confess their own shame and God's righteousness, but are ready to expostulate and dispute with God, and to call him to account why he hath dealt so with them, as if God had dealt unjustly. But (saith God) if thou shouldst have any such thoughts in thine heart, do but remember thine iniquities, how many and how great they have been, thy *nakedness* is discovered because of these, and for these thou art exposed to contempt and shame. Probably these phrases are fetched from the usual practice of soldiers, when they have conquered a place and taken prisoners, to strip them, and leave those of either sex, either no clothes to cover their nakedness, or nothing but their own rags, not sufficient to cover their nakedness. By skirts is meant the lower part of their bodies covered with the lower part of their garments.

Jeremiah 13:23

In the Hebrew it is,

Can the Cushite, & c.? from whence it is well concluded, as learned men judge, that the Ethiopians are of the posterity of Cush the son of Ham, brother to Mizraim, the father of the Egyptians, Gen_10:6. For these were the only people of old noted for their black colour in Scripture, as the Ethiopians are now. God showeth that the Jews by their continued customary sinning had so inured themselves to wicked practices, that it was as much labour in vain to endeavour to reclaim them, as to go about to wash a blackamoor, or to take out the natural spots of the beasts called *leopards* .

Jeremiah 13:24

The words denote a great and clear dispersion, like that of the scattering of stubble by a fierce wind.

Jeremiah 13:25

This is what thou shalt have at the Lord's hand, the dispensation which thou shalt meet with, and thou mayest thank thyself for it; for hadst thou remembered either my former kindness to thee, or the law that I gave thee, this had not come unto thee; but thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in lies, or in idle, vain, and presumptuous hopes, therefore I have given thee but a just lot, and measured to thee a just measure.

Jeremiah 13:26

Therefore I will expose thee to all manner of shame and contempt, without any regard to thy honour. Those that honour God, God will honour, but those that despise and dishonour him shall not be able to maintain their own honour.

Jeremiah 13:27

Some think the prophet here reflects upon them for their corporal adulteries, and their madness upon them, which he compareth to the

neighings of horses; but those words

on the hills in the fields in the next clause seem to inform us that he means here only their idolatries, which are in holy writ often compared to adulteries, which are the greatest sins in their kind,

the greatest violations of the marriage covenant, and provocations of persons in conjugal relation, and the only cause of lawful divorce. He concludes with pathetic interrogations, intimating that yet there was hope if they would reform; and though, giving over their case almost as desperate, and not knowing what would not be, yet he leaves no means untried, but asks them if it was not yet time, or when such a thing might be hoped for at their hands.

Jeremiah 14:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 14

A grievous famine prophesied; its miseries, Jer_14:1-6. The prophet prayeth, but God will not be entreated for them, Jer_14:7-12. Lying prophets no excuse for them, Jer_14:13-16. The prophet's complaint, Jer_14:17-22.

What

dearth we are not told, nor when it happened; some think that it was in the time of the siege of Jerusalem; others, that it was in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah; but they judge most probably that think it was in the time of Jehoiakim, for we read, Jer_36:9, of an extraordinary fast by him proclaimed, which many judge was upon this occasion. The Hebrew phrase which is here used signifying, *the matter of the restraints*, gives interpreters some liberty to abound in their senses of this text; but the following words make it evident, Jer_14:4,5, that the restraints here mentioned were God's restraining of water from them, so that the *dearth* was occasioned from a great drought, which is elegantly described in the five next verses, and deprecated Jer_14:7-9, which make indeed but a preface to the revelation of the mind and will of God in this prophecy.

Jeremiah 14:2

By

Judah is meant the men and women in the whole country of Judah. The

gates is put for their cities; or the men of their cities languished, for want of moisture for themselves or their beasts. They are all in the habits of mourners, or their faces looked swarthy and starvedly, for want of due and wholesome nourishment,

and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up; either their cry unto God by their prayers in his temple, or their cry by the reason of, their misery and grief, is gone up to heaven.

Jeremiah 14:3

This scarcity of water afflicted not mean persons only, who have not so good means to supply their necessities as others; but their greatest persons; so as they sent their

little ones (it were better translated *servants* , for they are meant) to the places made to receive and retain water; but finding no water in the pits, they came back again with their vessels empty, like men ashamed and confounded, and troubled upon the seeing their expectations frustrated.

Jeremiah 14:4

The Hebrew word signifieth more largely than *chapt* , broken, spoiled, turned into dust, as is usual in great droughts. The word also which we translate *ploughmen* , doth not strictly signify ploughmen, but *husbandmen* : there having been no rain upon the earth, it brought forth little or no grass for those that employed themselves in breeding or feeding cattle; and it was so hard, and so much wanted moisture, that they could not plough nor sow, but were like men ashamed and confounded, who knew not what to do.

Jeremiah 14:5

Hinds use not to get their food in fields, but upon the mountains and in wildernesses; but the drought was such, that these wild creatures came into the lower grounds, nearer the habitations of men than they were wont, and there brought forth their young. The hinds are loving creatures, and as all creatures by a natural instinct love their young, so the hinds especially; but their moisture being dried up, they could not suckle them, but were forced to leave them, running about here and there to seek grass to eat.

Jeremiah 14:6

The wild asses, wanting water, got upon

high places, where was the freest and coolest air, and sucked in the wind, and this it is said they did

like dragons, of whom Aristotle and Pliny report, that by reason of the great heat of their bodies, they ordinarily stand upon high places sucking in the cool air, and they tell us those creatures will live upon it for some time. The prophet describing this great drought, tells us the wild asses did the like. But for want of grass their eyes were either almost sunk in their heads, they being almost starved; or else the phrase signifies the frustration of their expectation, which this phrase also sometimes signifies in Scripture, Psa_69:3.

Jeremiah 14:7

The prophet having described their misery, both in the cause of it, the drought for want of rain, and the effects of it, he applieth himself to that God who he knew was he who alone could give the former and the latter rain; confessing that their sins and backslidings were very many, and testified against them that they had deserved God's severe scourge, and God was righteous in what of this nature he had done against them. But yet, saith he,

do thou it; that is, do thou what we desire, and what we stand in need of; give us rain; though not for our sake, we deserve no such kindness from thee, yet for

thy name's sake, thy word, or promise; or rather, hear for thine honour and glory' sake. Isa_43:25 **48:11**, where God promiseth them to show them kindness for his *name 's sake* ; so as Jeremiah's prayer is but a pleading of God's promises, that he would fulfil his word.

For our backslidings are many; *for* here signifies *though* , and might have been better so interpreted.

Jeremiah 14:8

O the hope of Israel; that is, the object of Israel's hope, he in whom alone thy people Israel have been wont to hope, or he in whom alone Israel hath just reason to hope. The saviour thereof in time of trouble; thou who hast formerly been their Saviour in the times of their trouble, or who alone canst save them in such times of trouble as thou hast now brought them into. See Psa_9:9 **46:1**. Why shouldst thou be as one that regardest thy ancient people no more than a stranger or a traveller, who taketh no further care for

the place or the house where he lodgeth than for the short time that he is to stay or abide in it.

Jeremiah 14:9

Astonied; the Hebrew word here used being found in no place of holy writ but this, hath given interpreters a liberty to translate it variously, *sleepy, weak, astonished, frighted*, like a man in such disorder, through some great passions, that he is able to do nothing.

As a mighty man that cannot save; like a man who in his own nature is strong and mighty enough, but through sickness or passion is so weakened, that he cannot put forth any strength for the succour and relief of his friends.

Yet (saith the prophet)

thou art in the midst of us; that is, we have thy temple, to which thou hast promised thy special presence; or rather it is to be understood of the whole land, according to what God had declared, Num_5:3 **35:34**, Defile not the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.

We are called by thy name; that is, we are called the Lord's people, and that not only by others, amongst whom we have that repute, but by thyself. God often calleth his people in Scripture *his people, his portion*. Therefore he begs that God would not leave them; he means as to that special providence by which he had formerly watched over them, and cared for them, and been a protection to them; nor as to his ordinances, and his special gracious presence with them in his temple.

Jeremiah 14:10

Here beginneth that Divine revelation mentioned Jer_14:1, as an answer to the prophet's complaint and prayer in the nine first verses; the substance of which is, that for their manifold sins he was resolved to punish them, and therefore would not be any more solicited on their behalf.

Thus have they loved to wander; they have gone aside out of the way of my precepts, and that out of a principle of love and delight, they have been fond of their idols. They have not refrained their

feet; and they have persisted in those deviations and sinful courses, notwithstanding all counsels and arguments used with them to the contrary, nothing could keep their feet to the way of my testimonies.

Therefore the Lord doth not accept them; therefore though they pray, and cry, and fast, God will not accept them.

He will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins; but by his punishment of them for their sins, he will let them know, that as he hath seen and taken notice of, so he hath not forgot what they have done.

Jeremiah 14:11

Twice before God had given the prophet this charge, Jer_7:16 **11:14**; how it could consist with the piety of Jeremiah after those charges to put up the prayer we have Jer_14:7-9 of this chapter, **See Poole "Jer_11:14"**.

Jeremiah 14:12

When they fast, I will not hear their cry; the like threatening we have Pro_1:28 Isa_1:15 Jer_11:11 Eze_8:18 Mic_3:4.

When they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: men may so long despise God's calls, exhortations, and counsels, as their case may be desperate, as to the prevention of temporal judgments by such religious applications to God as ordinarily have their effect to prevent and remove judgments. See Jer_15:1 Eze_14:14,**20**.

But I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; he threateneth to add to their plague three sore judgments, ordinarily accompanying one another, both in God's threatenings, and in the execution of them, Jer_29:17,**18 34:17**, &c.

Jeremiah 14:13

We have many complaints of this prophet against false prophets that contradicted his prophecies, Jer_4:10 **23:9**, and we shall hereafter meet with the names of some of them. Corrupt governments never want prophets to their humour, though a bolder transgression can hardly be imagined, than for men to

entitle God to their own imaginations and fancies, and we shall, Jer_14:15, meet with the usual wages of such works.

Jeremiah 14:14

They did not only prophesy falsehoods, but lies, what they knew to be false; for they pretended that God had revealed such things unto them; for admit the things they spake (as to men) but future contingencies, which might be true or false, yet it was a lie for them to pretend that God had told them any such things. The things were certainly false in themselves, being contrary to God's revelation; but setting that aside, for them to pretend God had revealed that to them which he had not revealed was a formed lie. God denieth that he ever commanded them to speak any such things, or sent them upon any such errands; they prophesied what came in their own foolish heads, and the deceits of their own hearts.

Jeremiah 14:15

It is a most dangerous thing for ecclesiastical ministers to deliver that to people as the will of God which is not so. God here threateneth that these prophets, in testimony of the truth of the word of God delivered by Jeremiah, should die by these very judgments which they falsely prophesied to this people, as from God, an immunity from: see Jer_6:15 **20:6** 1Ki_22:25.

Jeremiah 14:16

The security promised by these false prophets shall be no excuse to the people for giving credit to them; the prophets shall perish for prophesying falsely in my name, and the people that hearken to and believe what they say, practise accordingly, shall perish for their light and vain credulity. As the sinful commands of superiors in things civil will not free those from guilt that execute their commands, so the lies and false teachings of ministers will not excuse those that run into error upon the credit of their words: both the one and the other owe their first homage and allegiance to God, by whose word they ought to examine the precepts of the one, and the prophesyings of the other.

Jeremiah 14:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 14:18

The prophet is by God directed to speak still of the calamities of this people as a thing past, though yet to come, according to the usual style of prophetic writings; and to tell them, that whatsoever their false prophets told them, yet he so certainly knew the contrary, that he could even wish himself melted into tears for them, and had even already before his eyes the doleful spectacle of their miseries; some in the field slain by the enemy's sword, others within the walls almost starved to death.

Both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not: the word in the Hebrew wdto which we translate *go about*, signifies so primarily, and in a second sense to merchandise, because merchants go about countries to trade. This hath made that variety of sense which the margins of our Bible have; but our translation is true enough, and the sense seems to be, that priests and prophets (though accounted sacred persons) should be made captives also, and wander in a land wherein they were foreigners. This is thought to relate to the first captivity in the time of Jehoiakim, when the people of the best fashion were carried into captivity.

Jeremiah 14:19

The prophet again returns to God, expostulating with him, and humbly imploring mercy for his people, which lets us know that he did not understand God's words to him, Jer_14:11, as an absolute prohibition of him to pray for this people.

Zion was a place whose gates God loved, and *Judah* was his pleasant portion. Lord, saith the prophet, is it possible thou shouldst loathe a place which thou so much lovedst, or cast off a people which thou hast so much owned?

Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? he acknowledgeth God to be he that had smitten them, and their condition without him to be helpless and hopeless; and that all their hopes and expectations were frustrated.

Jeremiah 14:20

That is, both we and our fathers have sinned against thee, and have given thee a right to punish and destroy its; we desire not to cover or cloak our sin, we own and acknowledge it.

Jeremiah 14:21

The thing which the prophet deprecateth is, the judgments come already and further coming upon this people, the famine, sword, and pestilence, with the drought, under the sad consequents of which they at present laboured; but he prays for the removal of these judgments, and the prevention of such as were yet to come, in this phrase, *Do not abhor us* ; noting to us that the love of God to a people is the root of all good which they can expect, and his hatred and displeasure the root of all the evil that can betide them. Here are divers arguments brought to back this petition.

1. **For thy name's sake**; that is, thine honour and glory sake; an argument often made use of in holy writ, in the prayers of God's people, Jos_7:9, &c., and upon a very good foundation, whether we consider God's concern for his own glory, or the tenure of God's promises, promising mercy for his own name's sake. He also argueth with God from his former love and kindness to this people, which he had made

the throne of his glory. The words are either to be understood of the throne of the house of David, called the *Lord 's throne* , 1Ch_29:23, or else the *temple* , and the ark in it, the more special symbol of God's presence: hence he is said to have dwelt *betwixt the cherubims* , Psa_80:1; so Jer_17:12, the prophet saith, *A glorious high throne from the beginning is our sanctuary* . Lord, (saith the prophet,) we have deserved all the disgrace thou canst throw upon us, but do not thou disgrace the throne of thine own glory.

Remember, break not thy covenant with us. Did not Jeremiah then know that God could not break his *covenant* ?

Answ. He did know it; but he also knew that it is our duty to pray to God to fulfil it; or possibly he would extend it a little further, and for God's covenant' sake made with the faithful in Israel he would have obtained mercy for the whole body of the nation.

Jeremiah 14:22

The present judgment under which they groaned was a drought, which he had described in the six first verses; the prophet imploring God for the removal of it, argues from the impossibility of help in this case from any other way; none of the idols of the

heathens, which he calls *vain things* , nothing in themselves, and of no use or profit to those that ran after them, could give rain. The heavens indeed give it, but in the order of second causes; if God stoppeth those bottles, they cannot run.

Art not thou he, O Lord our God? Lord, art not thou able to do it? (saith the prophet;) nay, art not thou he who alone is able to do it? (for so much the phrase doth import). The Scripture constantly giveth God the honour of giving rain, Gen_2:5 Deu_28:12 1Ki_8:36 2Ch_6:27 Job_5:10 **38:26,28** Psa **147:8** Jer_5:24 **51:16** Joe_2:23 Zec_10:1 Mat_5:45 Act_14:17.

Therefore, saith the prophet,

we thy people

will wait upon thee by prayer, and the payment of those homages thou requirest;

for thou hast made all these things; that is, (say some,) thou hast caused all these judgments, or afflictive dispensations; or rather, thou hast made the rain, last mentioned.

Jeremiah 15:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 15

The Jews' rejection, and judgments, especially of four kinds; the sins which procured them, Jer_15:1-9. The prophet complaineth that the people curse and persecute him for these prophecies; they are threatened, and he instructed and comforted, Jer_15:10-21.

We are (though in another chapter) yet in the same prophecy, or discourse betwixt God and this prophet. Jeremiah having been once denied, solicited God again, as we had it in the four last verses of the former chapter. God here replieth to that prayer; and the sum of what he saith is, that he was inexorable in their case. Though Moses, who could obtain so much of God upon their sinning, in the case of the golden calf, Exo_32:11,**14**, and in the case of the people's murmuring, Num_14:19,**20**; and Samuel, who was so prevalent with God, 1Sa_7:9; though these two, formerly so potent and prevalent mediators for a people with me, *stood before me* , waited (that is) upon me, and solicited me on the behalf of this people, yet I could not favour this people. *Cast them*

out of my sight, and let them go forth : q.d. I am not able to abide the sight of them, and therefore let them go forth.

Jeremiah 15:2

If they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? if they ask thee what thou meanest by going forth; which being a term of motion, implieth a term to which the motion should be. Saith God, In the general, it is to ruin and destruction, but they shall not all be destroyed one and the same way; some shall be destroyed by the pestilence, (for that is here to be understood by

death,) others shall be destroyed by the

famine, others by *the sword* of enemies, others shall go into

captivity, but one way or other the land shall be quitted of the most of you.

Jeremiah 15:3

Four kinds of destroyers ; the enemies' swords shall slay them, and so make meat for the dogs, who shall tear their carcasses, and for the birds of prey, who shall prey upon their dead bodies that shall lie unburied. And I will also send amongst them wild beasts, who shall both tear their living bodies and their dead carcasses.

Jeremiah 15:4

Though the body of the people were removed into Babylon, yet as it is more than probable that many of them fled into other countries to save themselves, so there is no doubt but the king of Babylon removed them into several kingdoms belonging to his large empire. What Manasseh did may be read 2Ki_21:11,**16**, *He did wickedly, above all that the Amorites did that were before him, and made also Judah to sin with his idols. Moreover, he shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin* , &c. Some make a question whether God means the personal sins of Manasseh and his ministers, or only the sins of the same kind that the Jews still continued. Manasseh lived fifty-five years, his son Josiah thirty-one years, it was now the time of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, who reigned but eleven years, and it is probable this was his fifth year, for in that year he proclaimed the fast for the drought, (as is supposed,) Jer_36:9. Though the people were bad enough still, yet it is no way probable that they were so bad as in

the time of Manasseh. We know all Josiah's time, the father of this prince, was a time of reformation, though it be certain much of their old leaven of idolatry and superstition was yet in them. Whatever therefore some think, God undoubtedly meaneth the guilt that Manasseh and his subjects contracted forty years before this time: nor do I see any reason why any should question, whether it be consistent with the justice of God to punish the sins of parents upon their posterity, when it is no more than we see done every day in the punishments of traitors and felons, by the seizing the estates of their children, and in wars, upon the taking of cities and fortified places; and it is no more than God hath threatened in the second commandment, **Exo 20**, and declared it as a piece of his name, **Exo_34:5**, and done in a multitude of Scriptural instances. Manasseh is here named as the son of Hezekiah for his shame, because of his degeneracy from so good a parent; it is expressly said, **2Ki_23:26**, that notwithstanding Josiah's reformation, yet the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his wrath kindled against Judah for the provocations of Manasseh.

Jeremiah 15:5

The sum of this is, that this people should be in a most miserable, pitiless state and condition; none should regard them in the day of their calamity, nor so much as once inquire after them, or how they fared, or what they did.

Jeremiah 15:6

God here, by more phrases of the same import with many that we have before met with, declareth his steady resolution to destroy them for their apostacy from him; and sets out himself to them as angry princes or parents, that had been often provoked against a subject or a child, and often resolved to punish the offender; but out of their own clemency, or upon the mediation and intercession of others for them, had altered their minds, and resolved to spare them, but at last met with so many fresh provocations, that they are weary of forgiving them any longer; so God declareth himself weary of his patient bearing with them, and resolved to bear no longer.

Jeremiah 15:7

I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; not a purging fan by affliction, to separate their chaff and dross from them, but a scattering fan. Some translate it *into the gates of the earth* ; so it is the same that God had before said, that he would remove them into all nations (*gates* being put for cities): but it is more probable that this is added in pursuit of the metaphor of fanning, men usually choosing barn-doors to fan at, that they may have the advantage of the wind.

I will bereave them of children; of *children* is not in the Hebrew, and is needlessly supplied; it may as well be, of any or all their comforts or good things.

I will destroy my people, since they return not from their ways; their privilege claimed of being my people shall not protect them, so long as they go on in their lewd and sinful courses.

Jeremiah 15:8

The prophet speaking in the name of that God who calleth things that are not as if they were, still continueth his style, speaking of things to come as if present. In Jehoiakim's time we read of no such plenty of

widows; they were multiplied when the city was besieged and taken in Zedekiah's time to a great number, hyperbolically compared to *the sands of the sea*. *I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noon-day* : there is a great variety amongst interpreters as to their sense of this phrase, about which those that are curious may consult the English Annotations upon this verse. By

the spoiler at noon-day is meant Nebuchadnezzar, in the sense of the best interpreters, who came not like a thief, who cometh by night to rob and to spoil, but with an army in the day time: the question only is about those words

against the mother of the young men. The Hebrew word, which our translation renders *young men* , is *dxb* which properly signifieth a choice man, or a person chosen, from the Hebrew verb which signifieth to choose; so as it may as well be translated *the mother of the chosen, as the mother of the young men* . Because young men are looked upon as the choice men, whether for

beauty, or strength and ability for any thing, the word often signifies a young man, Deu_32:25 2Sa_6:1 Psa_148:12 Son_5:15 Isa_23:4 Eze_9:6, and in many other texts. Some will have the sense, (as in our margin,)

against the mother a young man, meaning by the young man Nebuchadnezzar, and by the *mother* Jerusalem. The Jews are in the Canticles called the *daughters of Jerusalem*, and Jerusalem which is above is by the apostle called *the mother of us all*. The Hebrew word is in the singular number; how we translate it *young men* I understand not. Pagnine translates it *electi*, the mother of the chosen. I do think that by the *mother* is meant Jerusalem, and that *populi* may be understood to *electi*. Jerusalem was the mother of the Jewish people, or Judea at least, against whom Nebuchadnezzar the spoiler at noon-day was sent; and we know that the Jews were God's *chosen people*. *I have caused him to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city*: this last clause is yet more obscure than the other; word for word, as it is in the Hebrew, it is, *I have caused to fall upon it suddenly, the city and terrors*. The word here used *dyu* commonly signifies a city in Scripture, and is very rarely translated otherwise. Were it not for the adverb suddenly coming between it and city, the sense were plain, and thus, *I will cause to fall upon that city terrors*; others read it, *I will cause him to fall upon it, terrors upon the city*. The word sometimes in Scripture signifies enemies, and is so translated, 1Sa_28:16 Psa_139:20 Dan_4:19. In this signification of the word the sense is plain, *I will send upon it the enemy and terrors*. The learned author of our English Annotations observes it is translated a *watcher*, Dan_4:13, **23**, and thinks the sense may be thus, *I have caused it to fall upon them suddenly, a watcher that bringeth terrors*; to which purpose he tells us the Chaldean forces are compared to watchers, Jer_4:16, **17 5:6**.

Jeremiah 15:9

Seven signifies many, 1Sa_2:5 Job_5:19. The prophet complains that Jerusalem, or the country of Judah, that had been very numerous in people, now grew feeble, neither able to maintain those she had borne, nor yet to bear more.

Her sun is gone down while it was yet day; in the midst of her prosperity she became thus miserable.

She hath been ashamed and confounded: a part of them were confounded by the judgments of God, which came upon them before their captivity. For the remainder of them, (saith God,) they shall be destroyed by the sword of the enemy.

Jeremiah 15:10

The prophet in this verse cannot be excused from a great measure of passion and human infirmity; he almost curseth the day of his birth, denouncing himself a woeful, miserable man, to be born a man of strife and contention to the whole world, that is, those nations in it against which God sent him to denounce his judgments; which denunciations, how true soever, and the truth of which they afterward did effectually find, yet they were not able to bear, and therefore they strove with him, and contended against him; yet it was not for his sin.

Usury was forbidden the Jews, Deu_23:19, and so was the more odious; but saith the prophet, I have not followed that trade, I have neither lent nor borrowed upon usury; I have done them no wrong, or given them any occasion against me; yet they will not be reconciled to me, but speak of me all manner of evil. This was the lot of the old prophets, the lot of Samuel, of Christ, of his apostles, and of all the faithful ministers of the gospel ever since; let them carry themselves never so innocently and obligingly to people, yet if they will be faithful, and truly reveal unto people the mind and will of God, that is enough to anger a people whose wills are not subjugated to the will of God, and they will curse them.

Jeremiah 15:11

The latter words of the verse expound the former; for by remnant is here meant the residue or remnant of days Jeremiah had yet to live, not the remnant of the people who should come out of Babylon.

I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction; I will, by my providence, so order it, that how cruelly and severely soever the enemy deals with thy country, yet he shall use thee kindly when he shall take the city. See the fulfilling of this prophecy Jer_39:11:**40:3,4.**

Jeremiah 15:12

There is a great variety among interpreters as to this verse also, some interpreting this as a prophecy that none should break the prophet, whom God would make

as the northern iron and steel, which was the hardest of all iron, the *Chalybes* (from whom steel had its name *Chalybs*) being northern people, and the most famous of any then known in the world for tempering iron to make it hard and tough; others interpreting it, as denying that there should ever be an agreement betwixt the Jews and the Chaldeans: but to me the words of the next verse seem to give us the sense, that the Jews should certainly be overrun and conquered by the Babylonians; for as the northern iron and steel is the hardest, and no iron could break that, so God having edged and hardened their enemies the Chaldeans, all their opposition to them would signify nothing.

Jeremiah 15:13

All thy riches and precious things shall be spoiled, I will have no regard. saith God, to loss or gain in it, or there shall be no price taken for the redemption of them; for what shall be done shall be by me done for all the sins which thou hast been guilty of in all the parts of the country.

Jeremiah 15:14

As the former verse, so this also, must be understood, not of the prophet, for he was not carried into Babylon, but of the people, whose captivity is threatened in this place, and the cause of it declared, the wrath of the Lord against them for their sins, the effects of Which are compared to a fire which should burn them.

Jeremiah 15:15

O Lord, thou knowest; either thou knowest my sincerity, how faithfully I have revealed thy will; so Psa_139:1,23; or thou knowest my sufferings, how wickedly they deal with me; or thou knowest what thou hast to do, what is in thy purpose and resolution to do; I will say no more unto thee; only for my. own sake I beg, *remember me and visit me* , that I may not be out of thy thoughts, nor without the visitations of thy love, while this people is under the visitations of thy wrath, Neh_5:19 **13:14** Jer_18:20.

Revenge me of my persecutors: thou hast commanded me not to avenge myself, Lord, do thou avenge me upon my persecutors. (See the notes on Jer_11:20 **17:18**, how the prophet could thus pray against his enemies.)

Take me not away in thy long-suffering; confirm thy word, let not me be taken away into captivity; though I be a sinner, yet exercise toward me patience and long-suffering.

Know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke; Lord, remember that my reproach, and all that I suffer, is for thy sake, because I have faithfully published thy truth, and maintained and defended thine honour and glory.

Jeremiah 15:16

Either the words which from time to time thou didst reveal to me were by me greedily digested; and though some of them were dreadful and terrible words, yet because they proceeded from thee, I was glad to hear them, and to be thy instrument to communicate them to thy people; or, (which better pleaseth the learned author of our English Annotations, and possibly may be more the Sense of the place,) Thy word of commission, (of which see **Jer 1**) by which I was made thy prophet, was at first very grateful and pleasing to me; I was glad at the heart, when thou at any time didst reveal thy will to me. Thou art *the Lord of hosts*, and so able to protect thy messengers. Lord, **I am called by thy name**, I became a prophet by thy authority, therefore do thou own, protect, and defend me.

Jeremiah 15:17

I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced, some, and those the most, interpret these words as an argument the prophet useth with God to obtain his favour, because though the country was full of wicked men, such as scoffed at the denuncings of God's judgments, yet he had no share with them; therefore he desires he might have no share with those wicked men, in whose company he had no delight, and in whose profane contempt of God he had no share: but the learned author of our English Annotations thinks (and that very probably, if we consider what follows) that the words should rather be translated thus, *I sat not in the assemblies of those that made merry*; intimating, that

though he rejoiced in his heart when God gave him commission to be his prophet, yet God had all along filled his mouth with such dreadful messages to be delivered to his people, that his whole prophetic life had been to him a time of mourning and solitude, a time when he sat alone, mourning and weeping in secret for the wrath of God revealed to him against his people, and by him to be revealed unto the people.

Jeremiah 15:18

The words are judged to be the words of Jeremiah, and that with relation unto himself, complaining of the hard task which God had put upon him, continually filling his mouth With such bitter words of evil against the people, as exposed him to their most implacable rage against him, and persecution of him, so as his misery seemed like a

pain and a

wound, for which was no remedy but patience. Jeremiah, though a great prophet of the Lord, was (as Elijah) a man subject to like passions with other men; he here chargeth God with unfaithfulness, as if he had deceived his expectations, and had been to him as a pit of waters that promised fair, but failed a man when he had most need of them. The servants of God have sometimes been surprised with such passions and temptations, 1Sa_27:1 Psa_77:7,9. It is a hard thing not to see, and yet believe.

Jeremiah 15:19

If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: at the first reading of these words, one would take them to be a promise of God to restore this people to their former state, if they would reform; but upon a more wise and diligent consideration of what follows, both in this and in the following verse, they seem rather God's words unto the prophet, rebuking his diffidence and distrust in God, and promising him, that if he did return from that his diffidence and distrust in God's promise and providence, he would restore him to the former favour he had had with him, and he should be his prophet to reveal his mind to the people. And if he would separate *the precious* truths of God *from the vile* conceits of men, or rather preach so as to distinguish good and bad men one from another,

then God would continue him as his prophet, to speak in his name unto the people.

Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them: he chargeth the prophet to keep his ground, and not to go over unto wicked men, but to use his endeavour to reduce them to that obedience which he yielded to him.

Jeremiah 15:20

And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: these words are expounded by those that follow.

They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: look, as men may throw stones or strike at a brazen wall, but do it no hurt; so, saith God, though thou shalt have enemies that will be offering at thee, yet if thou continuest steady in the doing of thy duty, they shall do thee no harm; for thou shalt have my power engaged for thee, to deliver and save thee from their malice.

Jeremiah 15:21

I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked; the wicked Jews;

and out of the hand of the terrible; and the power of the terrible Chaldeans, into whose hands thou shalt come, but be preserved from any harm by the workings of my providence for thee.

Jeremiah 16:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 16

The prophet is commanded to abstain from marriage, from mourning, or festival assemblies; hereby representing to them their approaching misery, Jer_16:1-9. Their sins which caused it, Jer_16:10-13. Their strange deliverance from Babylon, Jer_16:14,15. After that their iniquity is recompensed, Jer_16:16-18. The prophet's comfort in the calling of the Gentiles, Jer_16:19-21.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 16:2

It is uncertain whether what we have in this chapter be a new revelation, or a continuance of his former prophecy. God

commandeth the prophet in it under certain types to foretell their utter ruin and destruction. First he commandeth him to marry no wife, nor have sons or daughters. He expoundeth this command Jer_16:3,4.

Jeremiah 16:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 16:4

God in these verses opens the reason why he would not have the prophet marry nor multiply relations. In evil and calamitous times, those who multiply relations do but multiply sorrows and afflictions to themselves; the apostle in evil times tells the Corinthians that married persons should have trouble in the flesh, 1Co_7:28; and Christ pronounceth a woe to those that should be with child, and to those that gave suck, at the time when Jerusalem should be besieged. God tells the prophet he was resolved that the people of this land, both young and old, should die miserable deaths, and die so fast, that there should be none to bury them. They should die by the

sword and the

famine, and be devoured by the

fowls and the

beasts; and therefore it was better for him to abide free from relations, for whose miseries he would be as much concerned as for his own affliction.

Jeremiah 16:5

Mourning, xzdj There is so great a difference in the translation of this word, that, Amo_6:7, the very same word signifieth a banquet, and is so translated; yet is there no contradiction, for banquets are now (and probably anciently were) in the houses of mourning, as well as in the houses of those that rejoiced. It appeareth plainly by the words that follow, that the apostle was here forbidden to go to funeral feasts, or to lament and bemoan any.

For (saith God)

I have, that is, *I will take away peace from this people* . Possibly the meaning of God might be this, Do not go to comfort such as mourn for any relations dead, (for their feasting upon those occasions were upon a consolatory account; thence, Jer_16:7, you read of a *cup of consolation* ,) for, saith God, they have no need of it; those that die are most happy; for I will take away the peace of this people, and deprive them of all my *mercy and loving-kindness* which I have hitherto showed them.

Jeremiah 16:6

There shall so many of all ranks and sizes die in this land, that men shall have no time to bury them, or there shall not be enough left living to bury the dead; nor shall men, for their own miseries, have leisure to lament for the miseries of other men. Cutting themselves in their flesh, and cutting off their hair, were pagan customs, which God forbade his own people; but yet it should seem they practised these barbarous customs; but saith God, I will put an end to that practice, men shall die so fast and in such multitudes, as they shall have no leisure to cut themselves for such as are dead, they shall not have such solemn mournings as they have had.

Jeremiah 16:7

Neither shall men tear themselves for them in mourning to comfort them for the dead: if we allow our translation here of the word *odp* with the word supplied, *themselves* , it will be hard to give a tolerable sense of these words, for then tearing is the same with the *cutting themselves* mentioned in the former verse, which though it might be as a passionate expression of the person's sorrow that did it, yet how it should comfort the friends of the deceased will be very hard to conceive. But the truth is, the word hath but two significations, and we have here given it what doth worst suit this text. It signifies to *divide* , and to *tear* , or *rend* . Both in *kal* the first conjugation, and in *pihel* the third conjugation, it is used to signify *dividing* : in the former, Isa_58:7, where we interpret it *deal* ; to deal, that is, *divide* thy bread to the hungry; which is the only text (excepting this) where it is used in this conjugation. In the ether conjugation it is so used in many texts, Lev_11:4,5 &c.; Deu_14:7; so certainly it ought to have been translated here, *Neither shall men deal out bread for them in*

mourning, to comfort them for the dead , and seemeth to hint to us a custom in use amongst them, when they had any friend that had lost his or her relations, to send them some meat or victuals, (for amongst the Hebrews all things that they ate were called *bread* ,) and then to go and dine or sup with them, to have opportunity to speak comfortably to them. This doubtless is the sense of the words, and so it is plain enough, and this is confirmed by the next phrase.

Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother; neither shall men drink the cup of consolation for their father, &c.; as in such cases they were wont to have something to eat, so they were also wont to send bottles of wine, or other cheering liquor, to drink, that they might forget their sorrows; this is called *the cup of consolation* , from the end for which the sending and drinking of it was intended. God tells them that the time should come that so many should die, and so fast, and the rest should be so much upon the brink of the grave, that they should have no leisure for or heart to these ceremonies.

Jeremiah 16:8

God did not only forbade his prophet to go into houses of mourning, to eat and to drink according to their custom, to comfort those who had lost their friends; but he forbade him also to go into houses where they were wont to eat and to drink upon a more cheerful account.

Jeremiah 16:9

And he declares that he laid this injunction upon him as a type that his countrymen, by such his forbearance, might understand that God in his providence was about to put an end to all their civil mirth in their days.

Jeremiah 16:10

When thou shalt show this people all these words, or all these things; when thou shalt be observed by this people to refuse marriage, and to go to the houses of mourners, according to the custom, to eat or to drink with mourners, to make them to forget their sorrows, or to go into the house of feasting for jollity and mirth, and they shall ask the reason of thy singularity in this

behaviour, and thou shalt give them the reason of it, according as I have instructed thee; and they shall pretend to be at a loss to know the reason why God is so severe against them, for what sin or iniquity it is, thinking perhaps that Manasseh's or Jehoiakim's commanding them to worship idols would excuse them, and only leave their superiors guilty; for otherwise, while there was such plain idolatry amongst them, they could not be ignorant of cause sufficient that God had, considering the multiplied threats in the law.

Jeremiah 16:11

Your fathers; the idolatrous kings of Judah that were before Manasseh's time, since whose time there were hardly forty years yet elapsed.

Jeremiah 16:12

Ye in latter ages, in the time of Manasseh,

have done worse than your fathers did, and now in the time of Jehoiakim you run on much in the same course of idolatry and superstition, which in this is worse in you, because for thirty years together you had the better example of good Josiah the father of your present king, together with what his authority could do to reduce you; he hath not been gone now above five years, and you are returned to your old vomit, and are all of you serving me according to your own fancies, so stubborn are you, and resolved against obedience to me.

Jeremiah 16:13

You would not hearken to me to obey my voice in that good land which I gave you, and which you have known and inherited now many years; therefore I will throw you out into a land which you know not, and which your fathers knew not. You would not serve me in this land, but chose to serve other gods in my land; you shall serve other gods in a strange land, you shall there have no such opportunities as you have here-at Jerusalem to worship me the true God, according to the prescription and direction of my word; ye shall there have no gods else but idols to worship, and what is now matter of choice to you shall then be forced upon you, the governors of those countries into which you shall be

carried shall force you to fall down and to worship their idols, which was verified afterward by Nebuchadnezzar, **Da 3**, &c.

Jeremiah 16:14

Therefore; it were better translated *Notwithstanding* , for that is manifestly the sense. God sweeteneth the dreadful threatenings preceding with a comfortable promise of their restoration.

Jeremiah 16:15

Which he saith should be so grateful a mercy to them, that either in regard of the newness of this deliverance, or in regard of the great misery they should be in during the captivity of Babylon, when they should be delivered from it, they should not so much remember their deliverance from the house of bondage in Egypt, and magnify God for that salvation, as this new deliverance of them out of this captivity; for he would certainly bring them again into the land of Canaan, a land which he had given unto their fathers.

Jeremiah 16:16

Though some interpreters make these words a promise, either of God's restoration of this people, and making use of Cyrus, who, as a *fisherman or huntsman* , by his proclamation fetched the Jews out of all parts of his dominions, to return to Jerusalem; or of the calling of God's elect by the apostles, who were God's fishermen, and went up and down preaching the gospel in all places; yet the next verse rather guideth us to interpret it as a threatening, and by these fishermen and huntsmen to understand all those enemies whom God made use of to destroy these Jews, hunting them out of all holes and coverts wheresoever they should fly and take sanctuary.

Jeremiah 16:17

God is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity in any so as to approve it, and therefore though he be long patient, yet he will at last punish evil-doers; for his eyes behold them, their sins are open in his sight, and he particularly observeth men's actions, that he may render unto every one according to his works.

Jeremiah 16:18

Before I will restore them, and return in my wonted favour to them, I will punish them for their ways which I have seen, which are ways of iniquity, and will plentifully punish them; (for so

double here signifies, not the double of what their sins deserve;) because by their idolatry, blood, and cruelty, and other sins, they have defiled the land which I own, and which I have given them; and have filled that country which I have chosen for and named

my inheritance with their

abominable things, that is, practices, or unclean beasts offered to their idols in sacrifices, or innocent persons slain by them.

Jeremiah 16:19

The prophet hearing God's resolution, before he showed this people any mercy, to be avenged on them for their sins, leaves off speaking to him upon that argument; but applieth himself to God for mercy for himself, and, to confirm his faith in him, gives him names suited to his hopes in him, and which might declare his faith in him for the obtaining favour from him in an evil day; and comforteth himself with the thoughts of those good days that were coming, when not only the Jews should be again restored to their country, but the

Gentiles also from all parts of the world (whom also many of the Jews should accompany) should apply themselves to God, confessing that both they and their fathers, in their worshipping dumb idols, had but inherited lies and vanity, and things that were unprofitable.

Jeremiah 16:20

It is doubtful whether these be to be understood as the words of God, showing the unreasonableness of the sin of idolatry, or, as others make them, the continued speech of the Gentiles, who after their conversion should see the unreasonableness of worshipping the works of their own hands. Whoso owneth a God owneth an *infinite Being*, a First Cause, and Mover, and Creator of all things. Now can any be so sottishly stupid as to think that a finite being should give a being to an *infinite Being*; that he who is a creature should make his Creator, that he should be a cause to the First Cause? (things which are all contradictions to the common

sense of men). A man is no god himself; how can he communicate a divine nature, which himself hath not, to another?

Jeremiah 16:21

Because all the goodness and mercy that I have showed them will not learn them to know me, my power and might, I will once for all make them to understand it by the dreadful strokes of my vengeance. They shall know that my name is Jehovah; that I am not such a one as their idols, but one who have my being from myself, and give life and being to all other things, and have all might and power in my hand, and can do whatsoever I please; and one that will make good whatsoever I have spoken, whether in a way of promise or threatening.

Jeremiah 17:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 17

The captivity of Judah for her sin, Jer_17:1-4. Trust in man cursed; in God, blessed, Jer_17:5-8. The deceitful heart and most secret practices are known to God, Jer_17:9-11. The salvation of God, Jer_17:12-14. The prophet complaineth of the mockers of his prophecies, Jer_17:15-18. Of keeping the sabbath, Jer_17:19-27.

There is much arguing amongst those that are critical about the true signification of words, what is here signified by *dyjv* which we translate a *diamond* ; most agree that it doth not signify a *diamond* , (not used in engraving,) but that by the *pen of iron* , and *the point of a diamond* , are meant some tools with which they were wont to engrave things upon hard substances; it may be made in a figure resembling the *claw of a bird* , as the word seemeth to import.

It is graven upon the table of their heart; it is graven in their hearts; they are so accustomed to sin, so inured to idolatry, that there is no hope of any reclaiming them. For how can they that are accustomed to do evil, do well?

And upon the horns of your altars; nor is it a thing done in secret, but it is written, or painted, or engraven upon the horns of their altars. God's altar was foursquare, and at each corner there was a rising part made of brass something high, these were called *the horns of the altar* . See Exo_27:2 Eze_43:15,16. Now their sin

is either said to be engraven or published upon the horns of the altar, because the blood of the sacrifices which they offered to idols was sprinkled there, or because their altars had some inscription upon them, declaring to what idol that altar was consecrated, as the altar of Athens had.

Jeremiah 17:2

This showed how inveterate they were in this sin of idolatry, that they taught it their children, and their children remembered their idolatrous altars and the groves where they were wont to worship idols by the green trees, as they did also upon the high hills; so their sin was derived from one age to another. Others think that the phrase rather expresseth their fondness of their idols, and think it should be read, *as their children they remember*, &c.; that is, they loved their idols and their idolatrous services as they loved their children, which also was true; yea, they that made their children pass through the fire to Molech loved them better than their children.

Jeremiah 17:3

O my mountain in the field; O Mount Zion; for though Jerusalem stood in a plain, yet it was at the foot of a hill, and part of it was built upon the side of the hill, upon the top of which hills were many pleasant fields. Or, O Judah; which was a country full of mountains. God calls it his mountain, because of the particular favour he had to this country. He threateneth to give all the riches of the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem as a spoil, and all the high places where they had committed idolatry throughout all their country into the enemies' hands.

Jeremiah 17:4

In the word

discontinue there is a secret promise that they should again come and possess and inherit their land; they should not lose their inheritance, but only discontinue their possession and occupation of it. Some learned authors considering that the same word is here used which is used Exo_23:11, in the law concerning the *sabbatical rest*, when they were to let the land rest, and lie still, Lev_26:34, think this text hath a reference to that, and the meaning is, Thou shalt discontinue thy ploughing and tilling the

land; and go into thine enemies' country, and serve them in a land of which thou hast no knowledge; because by thine idolatry and other sins thou hast increased my wrath into such a fire, as shall burn for a long time, for so the word *for ever* is oft taken, Exo_21:6 Deu_15:17 Psa_89:1 Isa_34:10.

Jeremiah 17:5

It was the great sin of this people, for which they are often taxed in holy writ, 2Ch_16:7 **28:16,20 Isa 30:1,2 31:1,2**, when any danger threatened them for their sins, to make leagues with and flee to foreign idolatrous nations to help and succour them, and to repose a confidence in them, and so bolster up themselves in their wicked and sinful courses, promising themselves deliverance from the dangers that threatened them by the power of their confederates and allies. This sin the prophet here reflecteth upon, that while their hearts

departed from God, they would yet encourage themselves from the hoped-for help of men. The prophet from God declares that such are and shall be *cursed* , and mentioned man, under the notion of

flesh, to show his frailty and impotency to help against, the mighty power and wrath of God; withal showing us that God alone is the true object of our faith and confidence, as well for the things of this life as those of another life, and that none

whose heart departeth from God can with any security look for any help from the creature.

Jeremiah 17:6

The sum is, he shall not thrive, nor prosper, but

be like the heath, by which is meant some barren shrub or tree, about which the various guesses of interpreters (which the reader that is curious may find in the English Annotations) are but uncertainties, and this planted in the wilderness too, which is a barren soil, which tree or plant is never the better for all the moisture that comes from heaven, nor for all the beams of the sun; but stands in a dry and salt place, not inhabited by people. The scope is, to let us know that sinners who depart from God, and do not place their confidence in him in times of danger, but trust in creature aids and assistances, shall miss of these very good things

which they might have had if they had expected them from him, from whom alone they could have been obtained.

Jeremiah 17:7

Trusting in the Lord necessarily implieth also a walking close with him, and not in heart departing from him; for it is naturally impossible that any should repose a confidence in another for any good things, which that other hath promised under any condition, without some satisfaction in himself that he hath in some measure fulfilled the condition upon which the promise is made. But that man that truly trusteth and hopeth in the Lord is and shall be a blessed man.

Jeremiah 17:8

The sum is, he shall be prosperous and successful in his counsels and undertakings; like a tree planted by the side of a river, which is not affected with drought, but in a time when the leaves of trees standing in dry mountainous places parch and wither, its leaves hold their greenness, and its colour is not altered by drought, neither doth it cease from yielding fruit, but bringeth forth much fruit when other trees are wholly unfruitful.

Jeremiah 17:9

The words translated

deceitful, and

desperately wicked, are very variously translated, fraudulent, perverse, supplanting. He speaks to the Jews, that they might not lean too much to their own counsels, fancies, or understandings; but it is a proposition true concerning the hearts of all the sons and daughters of men; there is nothing so false and deceitful as the heart of man; deceitful in its apprehensions of things, in the hopes and promises which it nourisheth, in the assurances that it gives us, &c.; unsearchable by others, *deceitful* with reference to ourselves, and abominably wicked, so that neither can a man know his own heart, neither can any other know our hearts.

Jeremiah 17:10

Lest these hypocrites should pretend that their hearts were not departed from God, or should say, Who then can judge us if none knoweth the heart? saith God, Though no creature knoweth the heart of another fellow creature, yet I know the hearts of all

creatures, I search the secret thoughts, and counsels, and designs of all my creatures; for I will judge them according to their thoughts and the secret motions and affections of their souls, according to all their ways, and the fruit of their doings. You cannot therefore mock me, and tell me your hearts are not departed from me.

Jeremiah 17:11

As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not: it is no wonder if we cannot be certain as to the sense of these words so far as they concern natural history, when we are not certain what bird it is to which they relate; we translate the word *partridge* ; others will have it the *cuckow* ; but certain it is that it is the same word which we translate *partridge* , 1Sa_26:20, and cuckows use not to be much hunted after. How the partridge is said to *sit on eggs, and hatch them not* , is yet a greater question. It may be occasioned so many ways, viz. either sitting upon *windeggs* , or *being killed* before the eggs are hatched, or *having its eggs destroyed* by the male partridge, or by some dog or other vermin, or its nest being found having her eggs taken from her, that it is hard to determine which the prophet means. Of all other I least approve of that which Jerome makes the sense, though the thing be true, (if we may believe Cassiodorus, and several natural historians, Aldrovandus, &c.,) that partridges have such a love and desire to hatch young ones, that having lost their own eggs, they will steal the eggs of other partridges and hatch them, which birds being hatched, the young ones, knowing the cry of their proper dams, hearing them call, leave the partridge that hatched them (which is one thing quoted by Aldrovandus to show the sagacity of that bird): but if this were the sense, the words would be, *As the partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them, but enjoyeth them not* , whereas they are *hatcheth them not* ; that is, having lost them, either by some man that hath taken them from her, or by some vermin or wild beast. *So he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool* ; so he that getteth an estate by oppression, or any cozenage, or unrighteous actions, shall lose it again before he cometh to die; and when he comes to die, shall understand what a fool he was to take so much pains to no more purpose.

Jeremiah 17:12

It is much more hard to give an account of the connexion of these words with the former, than of their sense considered absolutely in themselves. Some would have them the words of the people, reckoning up another vain ground of their confidence, because they had amongst them the *temple of the Lord*, which we know was what they mightily gloried in. Others would have them the words of the prophet owning his and the good Jews' confidence to be only in God, and themselves to worship God not in groves or high places, but only in that place which he had chosen to be worshipped in, even in his sanctuary or temple. Many other conjectures there are, but these two seem to me the most probable.

Jeremiah 17:13

The hope of Israel; that is, he in whom alone the true Israel of God can hope.

All they that forsake thee shall be ashamed; those who forsake thy law, and that rule thou hast given them whereby to direct their conversations, first or last will be ashamed of such their disobedience.

And they that depart from me shall be written in the earth; and those that depart from what I have, as thy prophet, revealed to them as thy will, shall have no portion beyond the earth which they seem so fond of; or their names and memories shall vanish, and perish, and be presently extinct, like words written in dust.

Because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters; because they have forsaken thee, who art the alone certain relief and comfort of any people, the fountain and original of all that good they can hope for.

Jeremiah 17:14

Most interpreters here understand the prophet speaking in these words to God for himself; he represents himself to God as a person wounded or sick, either with his sense of God's dishonour by the sins of the people, or with their reproaches or threatenings, and beggeth of God to heal him, he being he in whose hand or power it was to heal him, and who could certainly do it. The argument is in those words, for thou art my praise, he whom alone

I have reason to praise for mercies already received, to whom alone I owe all my good things.

Jeremiah 17:15

They say unto me, Where is the word of the Lord? scoffing at me, as if I had threatened them in thy name without any order or direction from thee, as the scoffers mentioned by Peter, 2Pe_3:4, said, *Where is the promise of his coming ?* This hath been the practice of all wicked men hardened in their sinful courses, and resolved to go on, to put the evil day far from them, and to scoff at all denunciations of God's judgments, Isa_5:19 Amo_5:18.

Let it come now; daring the vengeance of God, and challenging God to damn them, or to execute the vengeance with which he threateneth them.

Jeremiah 17:16

I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: that the words contain the prophet's appeal to God upon some reproaches cast upon him by this wicked people, as if he had thrust himself into the prophetic office, is evident, and reasonably well agreed by interpreters; but they are divided about the sense of the word *wxua* which yet always in Scripture signifies to *make haste* , or to *urge* , or *press* ; the sense seemeth to be this: Lord! as I did not seek the office of a prophet, so when thou wert pleased to call me to it, I did not decline to be a pastor after thee.

Neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest; neither (saith he) have I desired to be a prophet of these sad tidings, those woeful miseries which thou hast made me thy messenger to foretell.

That which came out of my lips was right before thee; I have spoken nothing but what was right in thy sight, being what thou commandedst me to deliver as from thee, and so I know was right in thy sight.

Jeremiah 17:17

Though these rebellious wicked men affright and terrify me, yet, Lord, be not thou a terror to me, own and defend me as thy prophet; for thou alone art he in whom I place my hope and trust in a day of trouble.

Jeremiah 17:18

That is, with abundant destruction. Concerning these prayers of the prophet against his enemies, **See Poole "Jer_11:20"**.

Jeremiah 17:19

Most think that here begins a new prophecy, and therefore this verse should have began a new chapter. The prophets were often commanded to publish such revelations as they had from God, either at the gates of the city, or the gates of the temple, Jer_7:2 **19:2**. It is not agreed what this particular gate was at which the kings of Judah were wont most ordinarily to come in and go out, but the prophet was also commanded to publish it in all the gates of Jerusalem, that all might take notice of it.

Jeremiah 17:20

The word of the Lord equally concerneth the highest and the lowest, the greatest princes as well as the meanest subjects.

Jeremiah 17:21

Take heed to yourselves; the Hebrew is, *Take heed to your souls*, intimating to us that the sanctification of the sabbath is a great thing, wherein the welfare of our souls is concerned.

Jeremiah 17:22

This command for the sanctification of the sabbath was given Exo_20:8, repeated Exo_23:12 **31:14,15** **Le 19:3 23:3** **Deu_5:12,15** **Eze 20:12**: the bearing of burdens forbidden was such as was for profit; for in some cases it was lawful to carry burdens for the saving the lives of men or beasts, and some learned men justify the poor sick man carrying his bed when he was cured, not only from the command of Christ alone, who could authorize him to it though against the rule of the law, but because he had no further occasion himself to be there, and was not obliged by the law of the sabbath to leave his bed behind him, himself going away; but no unnecessary burdens, no trading burdens, might on the sabbath day be either carried out of the gates of the city, or out of the gates of any of their private houses.

Jeremiah 17:23

The Jews were a very covetous people, and their covetousness as well as their other lusts were temptations to them to profane the Lord's sabbaths, Neh_13:19 Eze_20:2.

Jeremiah 17:24

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 17:25

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 17:26

The sum of all these three verses is, that if they would sanctify the Lord's sabbath, they should either continue in, or be restored unto, their ancient, civil, and ecclesiastical order, they should have kings and princes in their former order and splendour, and men should come from all parts of the country bringing their usual sacrifices and offerings to the temple, and those of all sorts. Some think this promise is to be understood synecdochically, one principal part of the law of God, and such a one as was in their power to obey, being put for the whole law of God. Those who desire to be satisfied in the niceties as to the terms and places here mentioned, may find satisfaction in the English Annotations upon this verse. The general sense is no more than that both their city and their temple, their civil and ecclesiastical state, should continue and flourish in that order wherein it was.

Jeremiah 17:27

A threatening quite contrary to the former promise, upon their acting contrary to the duty to which that promise was annexed. God would destroy their city; it should be burned with fire, and the highest and noblest structures should be burned; and though the hand of the enemy should do this, yet God should order them to do it, so as it should be a fire of his kindling, and therefore not like to be quenched, till it had effected that thing for which God so kindled it.

Jeremiah 18:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 18

By the parable of a potter God's absolute power in disposing of nations is set forth, Jer_18:1-10. Judah's unparalleled revolt, and her judgments, Jer_18:11-17. The prophet prayeth against his conspirators, Jer_18:18-23.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 18:2

It is likely there was but one

potter near the place, or at least that there was one more noted and eminent than the rest, to whose house the Lord here sendeth the prophet, intending there further to tell him his mind what he would have him publish as his mind and will to this people.

Jeremiah 18:3

Jeremiah yields a present and free obedience to the command of God, though he did not know God's meaning in it, and findeth the potter at work upon

wheels or *frames* which he formed his clay upon, to bring it into that form which he desired. For the true form of those frames or instruments it is hard to assert any thing, such kind of instruments differing not only according to several countries, but according to the several fancies of workmen, getting frames or engines made fitted to their own fancies and purposes.

Jeremiah 18:4

That which we read

of clay may be read, (as our margin tells us,) *as clay* ; that is, *while it was yet clay* it was spoiled in the potter's hand, so as he did not think fit to go on with his design as to the form of the vessel, but made it into another form, such as he liked best.

Jeremiah 18:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 18:6

God now expoundeth to the prophet his design in bidding him go to the potter's house, it was to instruct or confirm him in the power that he had over his creatures. For, saith he, as is the clay to the potter, so is the house of Israel (and indeed so are all the sons and daughters of men) unto God; God hath the same power over them that a potter hath over the clay, and a greater right to do what he pleaseth with them, than any potter hath relating to the clay; the clay is but the potter's purchase, not his creature, but man is God's creature. God, by his prophet Isaiah, made use of the same similitude, Isa_45:9. So doth the apostle, Rom_9:20. That God hath an absolute sovereign power to do what he pleaseth with the

work of his hands, can be denied by no men of sense, whether God useth this his sovereignty in the eternal punishment of sinners, that is another thing; he hath a sovereign power, but he acteth as a just judge, rendering to every man according to his works.

Jeremiah 18:7

God thus speaketh concerning nations and kingdoms more immediately in his word, or more mediately by his prophets and ministers; he told Jeremiah, Jer_1:10, that he had set him over nations, to root out, and to pull down

Jeremiah 18:8

If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil; if that nation leaveth off those sinful courses which I have by my prophets threatened with judgments;

I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them; I will also turn from the methods of my severe providence which I had resolved in case of their impenitency to proceed in against them. There is a difference betwixt repentance in man, and repentance as it is attributed to God; repentance in man must be, not only a change in action, but a change of heart; repentance as attributed to God never signifieth a change of heart, or purpose, or counsels, but only a change in action, all alteration of the course of his providence. Hence God in Scripture is said to repent, as in this text, and Jon_3:10. And it is also said of him, that he is not *as man, that he should lie or repent*, Num_23:19 1Sa_15:29. God never changeth his counsels or purposes, though he often varieth his actions of providence, according to the behaviours of his creatures.

Jeremiah 18:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 18:10

Speaking, Jer_18:9, and repenting, Jer_18:10, must be understood in the same sense as in the two former verses. The reason of this is, because in all God's threatenings and promises of this nature there is a condition either expressed or understood. God's threatenings of evil must be understood with this condition, Unless men and women repent and turn from their evil ways; and

his promises of good must be understood with this condition. If those to whom they are made be a willing and obedient people, and keep in the way of the Lord's statutes.

Jeremiah 18:11

The Lord fixeth a particular application to the more general doctrine which he had before delivered. God had told this people, that though he had by his prophet denounced his wrath and anger, and threatened to pluck them up and destroy them, yet if they turned from their sinful courses, he would show mercy to them, and alter the course of his providence. Now he tells them that this was their case, God had a work upon the wheel against them, and was framing evil against them, and bringing ruin upon them; therefore it was their wisdom now to return from their evil ways, and to make their doings good. Those who think that these exhortations are vain, if man hath not a power in himself to turn from his evil way, ought to consider that none denieth that man hath a power in himself, by virtue of that common grace of God which he denieth to no man, to turn from such evil courses as were before mentioned, viz. not to carry out burdens upon the sabbath day, not to bow down to and worship idols, but to worship the true and living God according to the prescription of his word. In short, there is no man but hath a power to do much more than he doth do, and so much as may serve to avert temporal judgment; and although no man without special grace, beyond the outward means of grace, hath a power to do whatsoever God requireth in order to his salvation, yet he hath a power to do so much, as if he doth, no instance can be given of any to whom, so doing, God denied his special grace, enabling him to do whatsoever God requireth of him in order to eternal life.

Jeremiah 18:12

There is no hope of us, thou dost but labour in vain in talking to us; for we are resolved to run on in our former race. It cannot be imagined that they should call the imaginations of their own hearts evil, unless it were in derision. The sum of what they said was this: Jeremiah, thou hadst as good say or do nothing as talk to us, we are resolved upon our course, and if thou callest our hearts

evil, we cannot help that; according to the purposes, counsels, and thoughts of those our evil hearts are resolved to steer our courses, we will not be guided by thee.

Jeremiah 18:13

God was moved at this desperate obstinacy and hardness of this people's hearts, he appeals to the world whether ever any heathens behaved themselves so towards their idols, which were no gods, as this people had, behaved themselves towards him. He calls Israel a

virgin; it is a term given to Zidon, Isa_23:12, and to Babylon, Isa_47:1. The horrible thing which they had done was their forsaking God, their God, a thing not usual amongst the heathens, as God tells them, Jer_2:11.

Jeremiah 18:14

Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? The margins of our Bibles will let us know that there is some variety in the opinions of the most learned interpreters as to the sense of these words. The general sense is plain and obvious, that it is a foolish thing for men to forsake God, who is the fountain of all good and refreshment, and what men do not use to do with reference to poor creature comforts, not to be named with God. But for the grammatical sense of the words, it is not so obvious. The vulgar Latin translates them, *Shall the snow of Lebanon fail from the rock of the field ?* The Septuagint, *Shall the dugs fail from the rocks ?* or, *the snow from Lebanon ?* The Syriac version followeth them. The Arabic version translateth it, *Should the snow fail from the mountain of breasts, and from Lebanon ?* The Chaldee paraphrast thus glosseth, *Behold, as it cannot be that the snow water should fail from Lebanon .* Pagnine seems to make *Lebanon* the nominative case, and renders the sense thus, *Shall Lebanon leave the snow from the rock of the field ?* Our translators supply these words, *a man* , and so make that the nominative case, and make *Lebanon* the genitive case. *Lebanon* was a mountainous place, in which were rocks; it had also fruitful valleys; snow fell upon those rocks, and upon a thaw ran down into the lower places, and was grateful to them, as it moistened them, and made them more fruitful.

Or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? The latter part of the verse seems as hard. Pegnine translates them, *Shall other cold flowing waters be forsaken ?* The vulgar Latin, *Or can the other cold flowing waters be plucked up ?* The LXX. and the Syriac, *Or shall the water fail, violently snatched up or taken away with the wind ?* The Arabic, *Or should the foreign cool waters desist ?* The Chaldee paraphrast glosseth, *So the rain waters that come down, and the waters of the fountain that spring, shall not fail .* In this great variety, it is very hard certainly to assert the particular sense of these phrases, the knowledge of which depends upon some affections or customs of those places, which we are not so well acquainted with. The next verse is the best guide we have, where the sin laid to the charge of this people is their *forsaking God* ; which sin is here aggravated by this topic, That reason teacheth men not to forsake a greater good for a lesser, though that greater good were but a poor creature comfort, not to be compared with God. This is the general sense, scope, and sum of this verse; so as we shall not need be very solicitous to be able to assert the particular grammatical sense.

Jeremiah 18:15

Forgotten and *forsaken* are much the same thing, differing only as the cause and the effect; for if men remembered God as they ought to do, they would not forsake him. By

vanity he means idols; which are called vanity, not only because they are in themselves nothing of what they are pretended to be, and because the worshipping of them is a high degree of sin, which is often called vanity in Scripture, but because the service of them is of no use nor profit, or advantage; and any expectations from them are idle and vain, for which there is no ground at all. Whether the false prophets or the idols are here said to cause them to stumble by receding from the

ancient paths is uncertain. The words may either be translated *paths of eternity* , or paths of *antiquity* ; the most and best translate it as we do. *Quid vetern primurn* , The ways of truth are the most *ancient ways* ; the ways wherein Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient patriarchs did walk.

To walk in paths, or in a way not cast up, not fitting for God's people to walk in. Pro_15:19, *The way of the righteous* is said to be a way made plain, Heb. *raised up as a causeway* . Wicked men, in opposition to these ways, are said to walk

in a way not cast up.

Jeremiah 18:16

Not that this was *finis operantis* , their end which they aimed at, none wisheth ill or doth any thing designedly to bring evil upon himself; but it was *finis operis* the end these courses would certainly issue in, they would bring the land of Judah to desolations, and to be a reproach; so as strangers that were wont to admire at the prosperity of this people above any other people should stand astonished, and wag their heads at them in scorn and derision.

Jeremiah 18:17

The east wind is (or was at least in those parts) the fiercest wind. As the east wind scatters the chaff, so, saith God, I will scatter them. And when they shall be in great calamity and misery, I will not hearken to them, I will not turn my face to them, or show them my face; but I will turn my back upon them, I will not regard them crying, nor hear their prayers.

Jeremiah 18:18

This faithful dealing of the prophet with them did only enrage them (as is usual) against the prophet; they plot against the prophet, how to be revenged on him, because he would cross their humours, and would not prophesy as they would have had him.

For the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet; we have the church on our side; the *regular priests* and the prophets, they know God's mind as well as he; for there is a promise that *the law shall not perish from the priest, nor the word from the prophet* ; the priests and prophets tell us other things than this Jeremiah doth.

Let us smite him with the tongue, expose him by railing on him, telling lies about concerning him, representing him to be what we know the people hate, abusing him to his face, informing against him; or, *in the tongue* , let us silence him, command him to speak

no more; or, for *his tongue* , for prophesying at this rate; and for his

words, let us not value them at a rush, nor at all regard them.

Jeremiah 18:19

The several following verses, to the end of this chapter, contain the prophet's prayer by way of appeal to God against those wicked men: Lord, (saith he,) though they are resolved to take no heed to my words, yet do thou give heed to them, and do thou take notice of those men that contend with me. Take notice of what they say, not to confirm, but to cross their desires, and to be revenged on them for them.

Jeremiah 18:20

Shall evil be recompensed for good? to requite *good for evil is divine* , God maketh his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, upon the just and unjust; to requite *evil for evil* , or *good for good* , is but human, what the nature of reasonable men prompt them to; but to requite *evil for good is diabolical* , and the character of those that are the children of the evil one.

For they have digged a pit for my soul; Lord, saith the prophet, these men have done thus, they have laid snares for my life; though thou knowest that as a prophet I stood before thee, both preaching and praying for their good. Their wrath is kindled to a great height against me, and thou knowest my business was, both in my preachings to them, and prayers for them,

to turn away thy wrath from them. Lord, *remember* this, both for good to me, and for vengeance upon them.

Jeremiah 18:21

Deliver up their children to the famine; a dreadful imprecation; we meet with more of the same nature, Jer_11:20 **15:15 17:18**. We find also several such imprecation in the Psalms, Psa_35:4 **40:14 69:22-25,27,28 109:6-10**, &c. Hence a question is raised, whether it be lawful for God's servants to pray for evil against their enemies. That which makes the doubt is, Christ's command to us to *pray for them that persecute us* , Mat_5:43,**44**, his own example, and Stephen's, Act_7:60. See the notes upon the aforementioned texts. It is doubtless our duty to pray for the *conversion, forgiveness, and eternal salvation* of our worst

enemies; so Christ prayed, and Stephen, but neither of them prayed for their outward prosperity in their persecution and rage; and without doubt we may pray against God's enemies, that God would tie their hands, weaken their power, confound their devices. For such other particulars as are mentioned in this verse, and the beginning of the following verse, and such as David mentions, **Psa 69**, we must know they were both prophets, and did but pray to God to do that thing which God had revealed to them he would do.

Jeremiah 18:22

That is, Let the enemy break into their houses, which are, in an ordinary course of providence, men's castles and sanctuaries, and cause such shrieks as use to be heard in such cases, for their malicious seeking my life by all secret practices.

Jeremiah 18:23

Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me; Lord, thou knowest I do not charge them falsely, though their counsels have been secret against my life. *Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight .*

Object. Will some say, Doth Jeremiah here pray for the eternal damnation of his adversaries? Is this lawful?

Solut. I do not think this is to be granted lawful, being so highly against charity; nor that Jeremiah in this is to be excused as a prophet, for even prophets had no such revelations; but I take these phrases to be expounded by the next words,

let them be overthrown before thee; and that all which the prophet prayeth for is God's showing some temporal displeasure and vengeance against them. For *forgiving* , and not *forgiving sin* , doth not always in holy writ signify the discharging or not discharging the persons, from the obligation to eternal death, under which sin layeth them; but sometimes the discharging or not discharging of them from the punishments in this life, to which sin doth expose the sinner; and all Jeremiah's meaning is, that however it should please God to deal with these wicked men as to their eternal state, yet he would so far not forgive, not blot out, their sins, as that he would set some mark of his vengeance on them in this life for their treachery and ingratitude to him.

Whether we in it consider Jeremiah as an ordinary suppliant in this cause, praying in faith, or as a prophet, foreknowing what God would do, it ought to lay a law upon, all to take heed of being mischievous and treacherous to others. It is seldom but God, before they die, repays such men into their own bosom, especially if it be against any who are God's ministers or people; and that for their speaking to or doing before them the will of God: it is a sin seldom escapes without a temporal vengeance; and if such men be saved at last, it will be as through fire. God will mind them that he hath said, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm* , 1Ch_16:22 Psa_105:15.

Jeremiah 19:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 19

Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel is foreshown the desolation of the Jews for their sins committed in the valley of Hinnom and elsewhere.

Critics dispute the figure and fashion of this

bottle; (see the English Annotations, and Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis;) but that is not much material, for God's design was only to show the *fragility* of this people, how easily he could break them, and how certainly he would break them in pieces. For the more public notice of this typical action, Jeremiah is commanded to take for witnesses some of the gravest of the people and of the priests; whether they were members of the Sanhedrim (which was made up of these two sorts) or not, the Scripture saith not.

Jeremiah 19:2

Go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom: we shall hereafter hear why God commanded Jeremiah to go thither, rather than to another place, to break this earthen pot. This valley was a place very near unto Jerusalem, of which one Hinnom was owner in Joshua's time, Jos_15:8 **18:16**. The valley is in Scripture sometimes called *Ge-hinnom* , from whence came the Greek word Gehenna, used by our Saviour for *hell* , Mat_5:22, eid thn geennan, because of the hellish torments they there put their children to when they sacrificed them, and of the hellish cries they made.

The east gate; in the Hebrew it is, *the sun gate* , supposed to be so called, because the sun riseth in the east. This valley is said to have lain very near to this gate; thither Jeremiah is commanded to go, and there to proclaim the following words.

Jeremiah 19:3

That is, a very great evil; it is a Hebrew way of expression, which we also find 1Sa_3:11 2Ki_21:12. As a very great glaring light affects our eyes, and blindeth them, so a very great sound affecteth the ear, and makes it tingle, and for some time deaf. This God commandeth the prophet to proclaim, as particularly directed to all, both high and low, as well the

kings of Judah as the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 19:4

Because they have forsaken me; the laws, statutes, and ordinances which God had given them, to direct them both in their religious behaviour towards him, and in their civil conversations.

Have estranged this place; either this city, or this temple, (which stood very nigh to this valley,) or this particular valley, which they had turned to a use quite contrary to the end for which God gave it them; for in it they had paid a religious homage to idols, strange idols, which their fathers knew not, and had filled that place with the blood of such as had not deserved death, either innocent men, or children, that they had there sacrificed to idols; of which he afterward speaketh more particularly.

Jeremiah 19:5

This and the following verse contain another great sin of this people, with the punishment which God proportioneth to it. The sin in the general was idolatry, but a most barbarous species of it, mentioned also Jer_7:31 **32:35**, where it is said they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire to Molech; the place where they did it is called *Tophet* , Jer_19:6, of which also mention is made Isa_30:33 Jer_7:31-33. For the opening of this text, as also of those other texts that mention this idolatry, we must open what is meant by *Baal*, *Moloch*, *Tophet* , and *the valley of the son of Hinnom* . There is no doubt but Baal and Molech, or Moloch, signify the same thing; *Baal* signifieth a *lord*, *Molech* a *king* . They ordinarily called their idols by these names; as also

Malcham , Zep_1:5; upon which account God would not be called *Baal* , Hos_2:16, though he was called *Jehovah*, *Elohim* , and *Adonai* , all which signified lord, as *Baal* did. Both *Baal* and *Molech* seem common names to all idols. There was more than one idol in the house of *Baal*, 2Ki_10:26. The Ammonites called their principal idol *Milcom* and *Molech* , as appears from 1Ki_11:5 2Ki_23:13. To this idol they sacrificed their children. It was a very ancient idolatry, as appeareth by the very early law of God against it, Lev_20:3-5. Some say it was derived from Saturn, whom they make contemporary with Deborah and Barak, who, to appease the gods in an imminent danger, sacrificed his son. Others say it began in the time of Serug, the father of Nahor, of whom we read Gen_11:20, and that it had its original from the devil, speaking out of the belly of some dead persons, commanding this homage, possibly in imitation of God, who, Gen_22:2, to try Abraham's obedience, commanded him to offer up Isaac upon the Mount Moriah. We must know there were other sacrifices they offered to *Baal*: they *burnt incense to Baal* , 2Ki_23:5; *they offered sacrifices and burnt-offerings of beasts* , 1Ki_18:26 2Ki_10:24; only in some extraordinary straits, to show their great obedience to the devil, they offered their children. What creature they worshipped under this name is not certain, but very probably it was the sun, from 2Ki_23:5, or some superior being, which they owned as their supreme lord and king, which they, some of them, mistook the *sun, moon, and stars* to be; they being glorious beings removed out of men's knowledge, so as they had not sufficient means to understand their natures, might, considering their motions, and vast influence they had upon all other creatures, mistake them for animate and supreme beings, to which as they paid other homages, (such as swearing by them, Zep_1:5, burning incense, offering beasts, praying to them,) so in imitation of the heathens, and in a pretence of high devotion and homage in some special cases and straits, they offered their children. Some think they only made them *go through the fire* , but did not burn them; and indeed so most of the scriptures express this abominable idolatry; but some scriptures speak it plain enough, that they actually burnt them: the psalmist, Psa_106:37, saith, *They shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted*

with blood , which it could not have been by their children's merely passing through the fire; and it is laid to their charge, Eze_16:20,21, *Thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and those hast thou sacrificed to them to be devoured. That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them* . We read of the idolatry of Jeroboam, who worshipped the true God, but by calves set up at Dan and Beth-el. Ahab exceeded this, bringing in the terminative worship of the creatures, worshipping the *sun, moon, and stars* , under the name of *Baal* . But, the first in Judah, of whom we read that he made *his son to pass through the fire* , was Ahaz, the father of Hezekiah, 2Ki_16:3. He was followed by his grandchild Manasseh, 2Ki_21:6. Josiah, the good son of a bad father, *defiled* the place where this abominable idolatry was committed, 2Ki_23:10. The place where they committed this horrible abomination was the valley of the son of Hinnom, very near the city, and the particular place was called Tophet. There was a high place built for the idol, and many think that the name *Tophet* ariseth from their use of a *drum* or *tabret* , with which, while the poor children were burning, they made great noises to drown the sound of the children's yellings; though others think the word *Tophet* originally signifies hell, or the place of the damned, of which this place, both for the torments and roarings in it, was a lively representation. Now of this barbarous and horrible idolatry God saith, *he commanded them not, neither came it into his mind* . It was so far from it, that God had most severely forbid it, Lev_20:2-5, making it a capital crime for any to do it, and for any to conceal others that they knew did it; so that here is a *meiosis* , less spoken than was true fit the case; but possibly God's expressing a thing of this nature, being an error in his worship, under these soft terms,

I commanded them not, neither did it come into my mind, giveth no small ground to considerate men to judge that we must have a command from God, though not for every individual act of our worship, nor for every circumstance of human action which we do in his worship, yet for every specifical religious act, and for any thing whereby we pay a homage to God; it being indeed the most reasonable thing imaginable, that God should have the same privilege which every prince or great man amongst men claimeth

as his right, to prescribe the acts, modes, and methods for his own homage.

Jeremiah 19:6

For this God, by his prophet, threateneth that this place, anciently, in Joshua's time, called

The valley of the son of Hinnom, and more lately *Tophet* , from the noise of drums and tabrets there, whilst children were burning, should have a new name, and be called

The valley of slaughter, from the multitude of dead bodies which upon the taking of the city should be slain and thrown into this valley. It was expounded Jer_7:32,**33**, *For they shall bury in Tophet till there be no place; and the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heavens, and for the beasts of the earth, and none shall fray them away.*

Jeremiah 19:7

In this place, amongst others, I will make void all the counsels that the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem have taken to escape my righteous judgments; I will frustrate all their little arts and designs to avoid the dint of my judgments; I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, so as there shall be no way of escape for them.

Jeremiah 19:8

This is no more than we met with before, Jer_18:16, and shall again meet with. Men's honour and reputation is ordinarily very dear to them, it was especially to the Jews, who valued themselves much upon the reputation their city and their temple had, and the security they promised themselves from their right in the holy city and land. God tells them he will make them as much a scorn and reproach as ever they were for an honour or praise; as great a wonderment for the wrath and vengeance he would execute upon them, as they had been in their flourishing state for the mercies which he bestowed upon them.

Jeremiah 19:9

These were the miserable effects or consequents of the famine with which God had often before threatened them, the just fulfilling of God's word threatened Lev_26:29 Deu_28:53, and

the accomplishment of which our prophet hath recorded, Lam_4:10.

Jeremiah 19:10

The earthen bottle, which, Jer_19:1, he was commanded to carry with him into the valley of the son of Hinnom, (where he now was,) in the sight of the ancients of the priests, and of the people, the men who there were appointed to go with the prophet. This symbolical or sacramental teaching by signs was much in use by the prophets.

Jeremiah 19:11

The Lord of hosts; a name ordinarily given to God, here very properly, to let them know that he said nothing with his lips but what he had power by his hand to accomplish, being the Captain-general of all the armies of his creatures. God, by ordering the prophet to carry no other vessel but one of earth, had a design, upon the breaking of it, not only to show them that he would bruise, wound, or endamage them greatly, but so destroy them, as there should be no present remedy. If a vessel of brass, silver, gold, &c. be broken, it may be mended, but an earthen vessel, if broken, cannot be made whole. See the like Isa_30:14. He tells them that this *Tophet*, which they had made a place of barbarous slaughter for the children, killed for idolatrous sacrifices, should continue for a slaughter-house, but of another nature, even for them that had committed such wickedness in it, who should be slain there in such plenty, that they should want ground to bury dead carcasses in.

Jeremiah 19:12

That is, a place of slaughter and burials, or a base, ignominious place, or where the noise of drums, and trumpets, and cryings, and yellings shall be heard, as used to be in *Tophet*

Jeremiah 19:13

Under the Judaic law, persons and places were defiled by touching dead bodies, or any unclean, filthy thing: God threateneth in this sense to defile *Tophet*, as it was said before it should be filled with dead bodies which should be buried or lie unburied there. He showeth that the aforementioned judgment of filling places with dead bodies should not be restrained to *Tophet* in the valley of

Hinnom, but reach to the dwelling-houses in Jerusalem, both their kings' houses, and the meaner subjects; the provoking cause of which should be their idolatry, which they had also brought into their dwelling-houses, for they having flat roofs, had upon them, though not burnt children in sacrifice to idols, yet poured out drink-offerings to the sun, moon, and stars, and to other idols.

Jeremiah 19:14

Jeremiah had now despatched the errand upon which God had sent him to Tophet; coming back by God's direction, he stands in the court, which was common to all people, where the most might hear.

Jeremiah 19:15

He assureth the people from God that he would most certainly justify all his words, and bring to pass all his threats against that city. and that they must thank themselves for it, for hardening their heart, so as all that he had said made no impression upon them, nor found any place with them.

Jeremiah 20:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 20

Pashur, smiting Jeremiah. for this prophecy, receiveth a new name, and a fearful doom, Jer_20:1-6. Jeremiah's impatience under their treachery and contempt, Jer_20:7-10. He rejoiceth in hope of vengeance, Jer_20:11-13. Curseth his birth, Jer_20:14-18.

The course of Immer was the sixteenth course of the priests, as we read in 1Ch_24:14.

Pashur was his son, that is, descended from him through many generations. It is neither much material for us to know, nor very easy to determine, in what sense he is called the

chief governor of the temple, whether he was *deputy* to the high priest, or the head of his course, which at that time waited in the temple, or had some place as *captain of the temple*, to take notice of any disorders should be committed there, contrary to the law. Certain it is he was no high priest, for then he could not have been one of the course of *Immer*.

Heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things; either he heard Jeremiah himself, (which is most probable,) or somebody told him

what Jeremiah had prophesied in the temple, which was within his charge and jurisdiction.

Jeremiah 20:2

Then Pashur smote Jeremiah; it is not said how he struck him, though some think it most probable that it was with his *fist*, as the false prophet struck Micaiah, 1Ki_22:24. We are as uncertain what is here meant by

stocks, whether such an engine as is in use amongst us to punish offenders, which we call by that name; or, as others. an engine like our pillory, where malefactors are fastened by the necks; or, as others, with three holes, one for the neck of the offender, one for each hand; or whether merely a prison, where he was kept all night a prisoner; the Hebrew word will not determine us further than that it was a place of restraint, and where that will not determine, other conjectures are as uncertain as needless. There is as much uncertainty as to the place where this prison or these stocks were; we are told it was near the temple, and

in the high gate of Benjamin; but whether this was a gate belonging to the temple that opened toward that part of the country which was the lot of Benjamin, or a gate of the city that opened that way, whether in the inner wall or outer wall, whether called the high gate, because nearer the temple, or upon some other account, are nice and curious speculations, the determination of which is of no moment for us to know.

Jeremiah 20:3

Possibly by this time the mad-brained priest thought he had done more than he could justify by law, for if he were a false prophet, the judgment of him belonged not to him, but to the sanhedrim; he had nothing to do to smite him. Possibly he brought him forth in order to his bringing him before the sanhedrim; but it doth not appear that he did so, though Jeremiah's following words to him might reasonably be thought provocative enough, if he had designed any formal charge against him. He had it seemeth no more to say to Jeremiah, but Jeremiah (to whom God had appeared in the prison that night, while he was separated from communion with men, and revealed to him what end this hot-headed priest should come to) had something to say to him. God's

meaning was, not that he should by men be no longer called *Pashur* , (for doubtless after this he was called by the same name he had before,) but his state and condition should not answer the name *Pashur* , which signifies, as some say, a noble, flourishing priest; or, as others, one who by his authority maketh others to tremble; but

Magor-missabib, that is, *fear and terror on all sides* .

Jeremiah 20:4

God now expoundeth the name of *Magor-missabib* , threatening to fill this wicked priest with terrors, that he and all his friends should be affrighted, reflecting upon his most miserable state and condition; and his friends, from whom he might possibly expect some relief, should be as miserable as he; and it should be an addition to his misery, that his eyes should see it, and see his whole country ruined, some being slain by the sword of the king of Babylon, others by him carried into captivity.

Jeremiah 20:5

This is but the repetition of what God had often threatened, viz. the perfect ruin of Jerusalem, and the land of Judah.

All the strength of this city; their military men, or rather their riches.

And all the labours thereof; and all the fruit of their labours.

And all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the king of Judah; and whatsoever was valuable in their eyes, or in the eyes of the greatest persons amongst them. The Babylonians should make a spoil and a prey of them all.

Jeremiah 20:6

Those that teach others to disobey the commandments of God seldom escape that vengeance which cometh upon them who are seduced by them.

Pashur was one whose office it was to have taught others the fear of the Lord. and obedience to his will; he teacheth them what was false, and is not patient to hear the will of God. Jeremiah tells him he should feel the truth of it, for he himself should be one of those who should be carried into captivity, and should die there, out of his own country, and be buried there, and this should be the

portion of all his friends, whom he had seduced by his false and lying prophecies.

Jeremiah 20:7

The following part of the chapter to the end of it containeth a complaint or prayer of the prophet unto God, made (as some think) during his imprisonment by Pashur, but the certain time is not known. Our translators here might have translated the word *yghym* more favourably than

thou hast deceived me. It might have been, *thou hast persuaded me*, or, thou hast allured or enticed me, as it is translated, Jud_14:15 1Ki_22:21,22 **Exo 22:16** Pro_1:10 **16:29** Psa_78:36. The word signifies no more than by words to remove a man from his own opinion. That is, doubtless, the sense here: Lord, I was not fond of this employment as a *prophet*, by thy words I was removed from my own opinion of myself; which might be spoken by the prophet without any reflection upon God; it only signifieth his undertaking the office of a prophet at God's command, not out of any ambition of his own.

Thou art stronger than I and hast prevailed; but thou prevailest against me. Jeremiah at first excused himself to God, as we read, Jer_1:6; he said *Ah, Lord God! behold, I am a child, and cannot speak*; but the Lord prevailed upon him, replying, Jer_1:7, *Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.* Jer_1:9, *The Lord put forth his hand, and touched his mouth, and said, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.* This is all that is here meant by *deceiving*, viz. God's overruling of him contrary to his own inclinations.

I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me; he complaineth that now he was in this office every one mocked him and derided him, and that for the faithful discharge of that office to which God had called him.

Jeremiah 20:8

For since I spake, I cried out: if the particle be translated *since*, as we translate it, the meaning is, Since I first began to be a prophet, I have faithfully discharged my prophetic office, and that with some warmth and zeal.

I cried violence and spoil: some understand it of the violence which he himself experienced: others understand it of those acts of injustice and violence which were found amongst the people; he cried out against them: others understand it as a denunciation of judgment; he prophesied that violence and spoil was coming upon them.

Because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily; because of that scorn and derision with which they treated him. But others think that it were better translated *surely* than *because* , as it is in many texts, Isa_60:9 **63:16**, &c. It is not much material which way we translate it, for it appeareth, from 2Ch_36:16, that this people's *mocking of God 's messengers, despising his words, and misusing his prophets* , was one great cause of the wrath of God coming upon them; and it is certain that Jeremiah was made such a scorn and derision to them.

Jeremiah 20:9

Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name: this daily scorn and reproach which the prophet saw himself exposed unto, for preaching against the sin and wickedness of the people, was a sore temptation upon him to lay down his employment as a prophet. He did not speak this openly, but he spoke it in his heart, he had (as he confesseth) many such thoughts in his breast. But he saith he was not able to do what he thought to do, he found in his heart a constraint to go on, that when a revelation came at any time from God unto him, it was like a fire in his bones, which he must quench by uttering what God had revealed to him.

Jeremiah 20:10

The prophet here rendereth a reason why he thought of giving over his work as a prophet, his ears were continually filled with the obloquies and reproaches of such as reproached him, and besides he was afraid on all hands, there were so many traps laid for him, so many devices devised against him. They did not only take all advantages against him, but they sought advantages and invited others to raise up false stories of him. They said to men like themselves, Raise but you the report, we will blow it abroad.

All my familiars watched for my halting; not only strangers, but those that I might have expected the greatest kindness from, those that pretended most courteously, watched for opportunities to do me mischief and lay in wait for my halting.

Saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him; desiring nothing more than that I might be enticed to speak or do something which they might make matter of a colourable accusation.

And we shall take our revenge on him; that so they might satisfy their malice upon me. This hath always been the genius of wicked men; Job and David both made complaints much like this, Job_19:19 Psa_31:13 **55:12-14**. Thus it fared with Christ himself. The same spirit which yet possesseth wicked men was found in wicked men in all former times. And this ought to be a great relief to the people of God under the like measures, to consider that the servants are not above their Lord, and wicked men thus of old persecuted the prophets.

Jeremiah 20:11

The prophet recovering himself out of his fit of passion, encourageth himself in his God, whom he calls the

mighty and

terrible one, so declaring his faith in the power of God, as one able to save him, and in the promise and good-will of God toward him; therefore he saith,

The Lord is with me; such was the promise of God to this prophet, when he first undertook the prophetic office, Jer_1:8, *Be not afraid of their faces; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord* . From hence he concludeth, that though he had many that pursued after his life, yet they should stumble in their ways of violence, and should not prevail; that they should either be ashamed of what they had done, or be brought to shame for what they had done; for

prosper they should not; or, they acted like fools, and did not deal prudently for themselves (so this word is translated, Isa_52:13).

Their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten; they should come to a reproach and ignominy, and their reproach

should not be like his, for a time, but it should be a lasting, perpetual reproach that should not be forgotten. This was not only written for that generation, but for all generations that are yet to come, and hath been made good in the experience of all ages past. The persecutors of God's ministers have found that God hath been with his ministers according to his promise, Mat_28:20, and that they have stumbled in their way, and not at last prevailed; that they have not acted prudently for their own good, and the good of their families; that a perpetual ignominy clave to the memory of those who have been employed in this work. There stands to this day a blot upon the memory of them who persecuted Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c., the apostles, and such faithful ministers as have been since their time.

Jeremiah 20:12

Seest the reins and the heart: the prophet had, Jer_17:10, spoken unto God under this notion; here he appealeth to him as such, who therefore must needs see as well the prophet's sincerity as his enemies' malice.

Let me see thy vengeance on them: for his prayer against his enemies, it is of the same nature with what we met with Jer_11:20, indeed this whole verse is the same with that. David, Psa_58:10, prophesieth that the *righteous should rejoice when they see the vengeance which God brings on his enemies*. But yet the prophet seems in this petition to have showed himself a man (as the apostle speaks of Elijah) subject to like passions with other men; for although God sometimes by his providence causeth vengeance to come upon his and his people's enemies in their sight, yet whether they may absolutely pray for it is a question. **See Poole "Jer_11:20"**.

Jeremiah 20:13

The prophet here riseth higher, from prayer to praise: it is not certain whether this was a rejoicing of faith or of sense; a thanksgiving to God upon his deliverance out of the hand of Pashur, or some other enemies, or a rejoicing in the sure belief that God would deliver his life out of the hands of these wicked men. If we take it in the latter sense, it teacheth us our duty, to give God the honour of all our deliverances from the hands of wicked men. If in the former sense, it showeth us the power of

faith , which being *the substance of things not seen* , and *evidence of things but hoped for* , showeth us things to come as if already present, and teacheth us to rejoice in the hope of those things of which we have no present possession.

Jeremiah 20:14

This sudden change of the prophet's style maketh both Mr. Calvin, and some other good interpreters, think that these words proceeded from Jeremiah rather as a repetition of a former passion, into which the abuses of his enemies had put him, than as the immediate product of his spirit at this time. Whenever they were spoken, they speak a very extravagant passion, to show us, that though Jeremiah was a great man, yet he was but a man, encompassed with infirmities, and subject to like passions with other men. We find Job in the like passion, Job_3:3. These great failures of God's people stand in Scripture, as rocks in the sea appear, to mind mariners to keep off them, not to run upon them.

Jeremiah 20:15

Parents are usually rejoiced when a son is born to them.

Jeremiah 20:16

By

the cities he means those cities mentioned Gen_19:25, Sodom and Gomorrah; by

the cry in the morning and shouting at noon, he means the shouts and noises that enemies make when they break in upon a place in a hostile manner.

Jeremiah 20:17

These various expressions do only let us see to what a tide passion swelled in this good man's heart, and teach us how much need we have to pray to be delivered from our own passions. Jeremiah's leaving these things recorded by himself, is one instance of what is brought as a rational argument to prove that only men wrote the Scriptures by inspiration from God, they would never else have recorded their own gross failings, men commonly writing for their own honour, not to their own defamation.

Jeremiah 20:18

These words let us know the prophet's temptation to these extravagant eruptions of passion; it was the reproach, and shame, and affliction which he endured for the faithful discharge of his ministry; which both lets us see the goodness of God towards those whom he spareth as to these trials, and what need we have under them to keep a watch upon our own hearts. These records also of holy writ are useful to us, if at any time we be overtaken with such errors, to comfort us, in that they are not such spots but have been found in the faces of God's fairest ones; and to make us charitable towards such as we may see sometimes overborne with the like temptations.

Jeremiah 21:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 21

King Zedekiah in the siege sendeth to Jeremiah to inquire of the event, Jer_21:1,2. He foretelleth a hard siege and miserable captivity, Jer_21:3-7. He counselleth the people to fall to the Chaldeans, Jer_21:8-10; and upbraideth the king's house, Jer_21:11-14.

God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, Heb_1:1. The two principal were visions and dreams, Num_12:6. How the following word came to Jeremiah is not expressed, it is enough that he knew it came from the Lord. It is apparent some prophecies in this book are not put in the right order as they were delivered. **Jer 25**, we have an account of the word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, who was the second son of Josiah, made king by Pharaoh-necho, pursuing his victory mentioned 2Ch_35:22 upon the battle, in which Josiah was killed, as we read there. The people made Jehoahaz king, but he reigned but three months; and the conqueror carrying him away, made Eliakim his brother king, changing his name to Jehoiakim, who reigned eleven years, that is, seven after the word of the Lord, mentioned **Jer 25**, came to Jeremiah; after whom Jehoiachin his son reigned three months and ten days: Zedekiah was his uncle, the son of Josiah, he reigned eleven years. So that it is plain that Jeremiah's prophecy mentioned **Jer 25** was seven years and three months before this, besides the number of years that Zedekiah had

reigned. But some think that **Jer 23 Jer 24 Jer 25**, doth but make a repetition to Zedekiah's messengers of what he had before prophesied. This message was (as appeareth by the next verse) when Nebuchadrezzar was come up to make war against Jerusalem, Jer_39:1. Jeremiah was at liberty when the word of the Lord at this time came to him, so as it was some time before the city was taken. The fatal siege held about a year and half, as appears by Jer_39:1,2. The

Pashur mentioned here was another from him mentioned Jer_20:1: he was the son of Immer, of the sixteenth course of the priests, and of a more rugged, ill temper; this was

the son of Melchiah, and so of the fifth course. See 1Ch_24:9,14.

Jeremiah 21:2

Zedekiah, as he was none of the best, so he was none of the worst, of the kings of Judah; he had some convictions and impressions (possibly from his education) not worn off; and having some reverence of God, he sends to the prophet to *inquire of the Lord*, because the

king of Babylon was come up to make war against them. It is true, the greatest contemners of God and his faithful ministers will sometimes, in great straits, choose to send for them rather than those who in their prosperity pleased them. Hence we read of Saul, when he went to the witch at Endor, desiring that Samuel might be raised up. But in Zedekiah's whole story we read no such eminent contempt of God, but a disobedience to the commands of God, proceeding rather from his easiness to be ruled by his corrupt court, than from a stubbornness in himself. By mentioning God's former

wondrous works, possibly he may have a respect to God's raising Sennacherib's siege in the time of his grandfather Hezekiah. The remembering of God's former wondrous works is of use to raise in us a hope and confidence in God for further deliverances, supposing ourselves under the same circumstances of obedience to God's will; otherwise not, as we shall see in the case of Judah and its king at this time; therefore Zedekiah saith,

if so be. Guilt of sin hinders confidence and holy boldness in the best: but as the guilt is greater, so the hope or confidence of any is justly less.

Jeremiah 21:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 21:4

The honour that the king of Judah had put upon the prophet, in sending these special messengers to him, is no temptation to this good prophet to prophesy smooth and pleasing things, for which he had no warrant from God. The prophet styleth God

the God of Israel, because the whole posterity of Jacob were in covenant with God; notwithstanding which, ten parts of twelve were at this time carried into a captivity from which they never returned; yet God was the God of Israel, for all were not Israel that were descended from Israel, but those only who were Israelites indeed, without guile; so that the prophet by this name given to God doth both assert God's faithfulness to his covenant, and also show the consistency of that faithfulness with those judgments which he was now bringing upon that remnant of Israel which yet were in their own land. The message which God by the prophet sendeth to Zedekiah is exceeding terrible. The sum of it is, that as they had not dealt with God according to the works of Israel, and the former generation that descended from him, or those at least who were the true Israel of God; so they must not expect that God should deal with them according to his former wondrous works, but that as he with the pure had showed himself *upright*, so with the *froward* he should show himself *froward*. For God had determined to turn into their own bowels, and against themselves, the weapons they had in their hands taken up

against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans that were now besieging them (by which we may learn that this message was sent during the time of the siege, probably about the beginning of it, for it lasted eighteen months).

I will assemble them into the midst of this city; God threateneth to bring the Chaldeans into the midst of the holy city, that their city should be broken up, their arms taken from them, and they

killed with their own swords. There is a great emphasis in the pronoun

I. It is not an enemy that is to be feared, but God's being our enemy.

Jeremiah 21:5

I will fight against you, (as a prince is said to fight against a nation whose captains fight against it, though himself stirreth not from his royal palace; yea, more than so,) animating and influencing the Babylonians and Chaldeans, whom I have sent to fight against you, and discouraging and dispiriting your armies.

With an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath; with such a hand and power as I manifested for my ancient Israel, Exo_6:6. God is here spoken of in a dialect which maketh him more intelligible to us. He hath no hands, no arms, neither are anger and fury in him considered as turbulent passions, as they are in us; but as men stretch out their hands and arms when they intend to give smart and terrible strokes, and are egged to such blows from their passions and excessive wrath, so God is set out to us by expressions proper to men, and in him significative only of his just will to be revenged severely upon a sinful people. The sense is no more, than that an end was now come, and God was resolved no longer to bear with such a provoking people, but to bring his utmost wrath upon them, and to deal with them no longer according to his wondrous works of mercy, but in wondrous works of justice, which in men would look like the effects of wrath and fury.

Jeremiah 21:6

Still God proclaimeth himself this people's enemy. Pestilences are but the usual consequents of long sieges, through the scantness and unwholesomeness of food; but God is the first cause of such sore judgments, though there be other second causes. The murrain of beasts bears proportion to the pestilence amongst men, and the beasts are threatened as well as men, not because of any sin in them, but because men are punished in them, they being part of their substance; and this is a part of that bondage of corruption from which the creature groaneth to be delivered, of that vanity to

which they are subject, which maketh the irrational part of the creation to be brought in by the apostle, Rom_8:20-22, like as a woman travailing in pain, and desiring the day of judgment.

Jeremiah 21:7

Afterward; after that many of the people of this city shall be destroyed, some by the enemy assaulting and skirmishing with them; others by the famine that shall be amongst them through a want of victuals, being all spent with the long siege; others by the pestilence. Zedekiah, who shall escape these three judgments, together with his courtiers, and the residue of the people, shall be delivered into the power of the king of Babylon, and into the power of such as will not be content with the plunder of their houses, but thirst after their blood; and these enemies (set on by Nebuchadnezzar) shall smite them with the sword, without showing them any mercy or pity. This is not to be understood of king Zedekiah himself, for God let him know, Jer_34:4, that he should not *die by the sword*, but in peace, as he did afterward in Babylon, though in prison; but it was true of his sons and courtiers, and a great part of the people, Jer_49:6, **8 52:10**. Those who went into captivity were only such as had revolted during the siege, and many of those that were of the poor of the land, for the rest there was little pity had of them, or mercy showed to them, as may be seen, **Jer 39, Jer 52** 2Ch_36:17.

Jeremiah 21:8

I tell you the way that you should take if you would save your lives, and the course which if you take you will certainly lose your lives.

Jeremiah 21:9

But certainly, if ever any man spake high treason, this prophet now did it, when there was an enemy besieging them, telling them, that if they would save their lives, they must revolt from their king, and join with their enemies. All that can be said in excuse for the prophet is, that this was a Divine revelation to him, and a message sent to the king himself.

His life shall be given him for a prey, appeareth to have been a proverbial expression, either signifying.

1. A man's possession of his life, as a prey or booty recovered from death, or the hand of the enemy; or,
2. A man's rejoicing in the saving of his life, as if he had got some notable booty.

Jeremiah 21:10

I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good; that is, I will set myself against it, I will be an enemy to it. See the like phrase Lev_17:10 **20:5**. It is a phrase signifying not only God's aversion from them, and the taking his affection off them, but his determination to bring ruin upon them, and choosing methods of providence tending and conducive thereunto; and so it is opened in the following words, which are rather to be understood of the structure of the city than of the inhabitants, for that not the people were burnt with fire, though probably many of the people perished in so great burnings.

Jeremiah 21:11

By

the house of the king of Judah he means the house of Zedekiah, the court, or those (as appeareth by the next verse) who were the magistrates. These, how great soever, are not excused from the common obligation upon all to listen to and to obey the revelations of the Divine will.

Jeremiah 21:12

He calls these the

house of David, either checking them, who were indeed so in a lineal descent, or minding them what they ought to be in imitation of their father, David. The only way they had to keep off those Divine judgments which now hanged over their heads was to

execute judgment, that is, *justice*, without partiality; the prophet's advice to them

to execute judgment in the morning either lets them know they must do it quickly, or else it hath respect to the time when the courts of justice sat. One species of justice was the deliverance of the oppressed from the hands, that is, from the power and malice, of the oppressors; which if it were not done, God threateneth certain ruin and destruction to them, which none should be able to

hinder or avoid. The cause of which was, their wicked doings; for that God who doth people good, and showeth them favour, not for their sake, but for his own name's sake, yet never punisheth them but for a cause found in them.

Jeremiah 21:13

Inhabitant of the valley; the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem are those here intended, Psa_125:2. The mountains were round about Jerusalem, yea, Jerusalem itself was builded in part upon the rocky mountain of Zion; but a great part was in the valley, and the higher mountains about Mount Zion made that mountain itself, in comparison with them, as a valley.

And rock of the plain; though also a rock of the plain, that is, near to the plain. Which situation of this place made the Jews think it to be impregnable, and to mock at dangers, or threats of enemies, saying,

Who shall, that is, *Who can* or *who will* , dare to come against us? or, Who will be able to enter into our city? Saith the Lord, *I am against you* ; I will come down against you, and I, by such as I shall employ, will enter into your habitations. No natural position or situation of places, no artificial fortifications, are sufficient against an almighty God.

Jeremiah 21:14

I will punish you; in the Hebrew it is, *I will visit upon you* . God's visitations are either of *mercy* , Psa_80:14 **106:4**, or of *judgment* ; therefore the sense is here rightly given by our translators *punish*. *According to the fruit of your doings* ; the fruit of men's doings is the product of their actions; God punisheth the fruit of our doings. In showing mercy, he acts from prerogative; in punishments, he doth but fill men with their own ways, and give them according to the fruit of their doings; so Jer_21:12.

I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof; by the *forest* he either meaneth the forest of Lebanon, or their houses made up of wood cut out of that forest, or their idolatrous groves.

And it shall devour all things round about it; and this fire he saith should not determine in the destruction only of this city, but in the total destruction of all the country adjacent to Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 22:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 22

God sendeth the prophet to court with promises, Jer_22:1-4, and threats against the king's house and Jerusalem, Jer_22:5-9. The judgment of Shallum, Jer_22:10-12; of Jehoiakim, Jer_22:13-19; and of Coniah, Jer_22:20-30.

Some by

the king of Judah, here mentioned, understand Jehoahaz. made king upon the death of Josiah by the people, (being the second son of Josiah,) 2Ki_23:30. Others understand Jehoiakim, whom Pharaoh-necho made king, carrying his elder brother Jehoahaz, after a short reign of three months, with him into Egypt, 2Ch_36:4.

Jeremiah 22:2

None is so great but he is obliged to hear the word of the Lord. The prophet's mentioning him under the notion of him that sat

upon the throne of David, both minds him of God's faithfulness, who had promised that David should not want one to sit on his throne; and his duty, to walk in the steps of him upon whose throne he sat; and also of his errors, he not walking in David's steps, though he sat upon his throne. The word of the Lord concerned not the king alone, but all his instruments in places of magistracy, and also all the people of Jerusalem and Judea.

Jeremiah 22:3

That is, Administer justice to all your subjects.

The stranger, the fatherless, and the widow are particularly named, as persons who have fewest friends, and so are most exposed to the lusts of great men, who have a power to oppress them. Two things are observable:

1. That the terms upon which God promiseth mercy to them are such as were in their power to perform.
2. They are the due performance of relative duties, to teach us how much lieth upon men's just performance of the duties of their relations, and more particularly, how much God loveth justice and judgment, without the impartial execution of which no princes, no magistrates, can promise themselves security from temporal

judgments; which much commendeth the love of God to human society, injustice being the greatest enemy to it, and justice the great foundation and pillar of it.

Jeremiah 22:4

If ye do this thing indeed; if ye will not pretendedly, but really, give to every one their due, and look that inferior magistrates acting under you do so. Then, he doth not say, you shall be saved: the promise is only of a secular, temporal nature, of all prosperity, and continuance of the family of David, with great honour and splendour, expressed by those phrases of

riding in chariots and on horses. Though the performance of moral acts of justice and mercy, which men may perform without any special grace of God, be not enough to entitle them to the hopes of spiritual and eternal good things; yet they may entitle them to the hopes of outward prosperity and happiness in this life, Dan_4:27; which is sufficient to demonstrate that men's outward infelicities and sufferings under the grievous judgments of God upon themselves is from their selves; they might in a great measure avoid them, by doing such acts as are in their power to do.

Jeremiah 22:5

By hearing the prophet meaneth *hearkening to* and *obeying* . God accounteth us to hear no more than we practise. If (saith the prophet) you will not *execute judgment* , &c., I give you the greatest assurance imaginable that this noble *house of David shall become a desolation* . The apostle saith that God, because he could swear by no greater, sware by himself. The end of an oath is, the confirmation of a thing where any doubt of the truth of it, or any have strife about it. Sinners finding in themselves a difficulty to believe God upon his word, revealing his will against the interests of their lusts, the Lord is brought in as swearing, not by a greater, (that is impossible,) but by himself, that *the house of David* , or *the house of Israel* , or *his own house* , the temple, (though the first seems most probable to be here meant, which seemeth to be the house mentioned Jer_22:4, through the gates of which kings should enter, riding in chariots and on horses,) should be made desolate.

Jeremiah 22:6

Interpreters are not agreed in what sense God saith that

the king's house of Judah was unto him as

Gilead, or

the head of Lebanon. Gilead was a country fertile for pastures; upon which account the Reubenites and Gadites, being men whose estates lay in cattle, begged it of Moses for their portion, Num_32:2, and Moses gave it to the sons of Manasseh, Num_32:40. It was also famous for spicery, balm, and myrrh, Gen_37:25. It had in it a famous mountain. Lebanon also was a very pleasant place, famous for cedars, and indeed whatsoever could gratify the senses; they both were in the lot of Gad and Manasseh. Some think God compareth the king of Judah's house to these places, in regard of the height and nobleness of the structure; others, for the pleasantness and delightfulness of it. Others consider Gilead as the principal part of the inheritance of the ten tribes, wasted by Tiglath-pileser, 2Ki_15:29; and that God telleth them, by this comparison, that he would certainly destroy them, and make them as Gilead, which was the *head of Lebanon*. Though Jerusalem were a noble and pleasant place, yet they might remember so was Gilead, which yet for their sins was wasted and brought to ruin. So also Jerusalem, formerly the garden of Judea, and joy of the whole earth, should be made a wilderness, and the cities of Judah should not be inhabited.

Jeremiah 22:7

They shall not only be edged with their own lusts and malice; but commissioned and influenced by me, and shall come sufficiently prepared for their work. And they shall cut down and burn thy buildings, which are made of goodly cedars.

Jeremiah 22:8

According to God's threatenings, Deu_29:24 1Ki_9:8. Though the Jews would not understand that there was a cause, yet others would understand it, and inquire into it.

Jeremiah 22:9

Some shall answer them, or they shall answer one another, Surely it is because they have broken the Divine law, which the Israelites made a covenant, Exo_19:8 **24:3,7 Deu 5:27**, upon which account

their sinning was an apostacy, and a forsaking their covenant. Their sinning was not of an ordinary nature, but by idolatry, worshipping images and idols, which indeed were no gods but only in the opinion of those nations that worshipped them.

Jeremiah 22:10

Weep not for Josiah your dead prince, for whom there was a great mourning, 2Ch_35:25, mentioned Zec_12:11. Josiah is happy, you need not trouble yourselves for him; but weep for Jehoahaz, who is to go, or is gone, into captivity: Jehoahaz was set up upon his father's death by the people, 2Ki_23:30 2Ch_36:1, but, Jer_22:3, put down within three months, and carried into Egypt, Jer_22:4, where he died, 2Ki_23:34; so as he no more returned into Judah. The participle being in the present tense, inclineth me to think that this prophecy was long before that in the former chapter, soon after the death of Josiah, upon the people's setting up of Jehoahaz in his stead, or presently after he was carried away. Some interpret this of the people that were dead, and those that were going into captivity; but the next verse makes it the more probable that it is to be understood of Josiah and Jehoahaz.

Jeremiah 22:11

Who this

Shallum was is a little doubted. Some think it was Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, 1Ch_3:15, called *Johanan* : there is also mentioned one Shallum, but he is there mentioned as the fourth son of Josiah. In the Book of Kings we read only of three sons which Josiah had, viz. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. Most think that this Shallum was Jehoahaz, or Johanan, (as he is called, 1Ch_3:15) who was indeed the second son of Josiah; for it is plain, from 2Ki_23:31, **36**, that Jehoiakim was two years older, otherwise he could not have been twenty-five years old when he began to reign after Jehoahaz, who began to reign at twenty-three years of age, and reigned but three months; but, 1Ch_3:15, he is called Josiah's *first-born* , because he was first made king; and here he is called *Shallum* , for the shortness of his reign, in derision to the Jews, who so called him, upon the account of their good hopes of prosperity under him; and in allusion to Shallum the son of Jabesh, one of the last kings of the ten tribes, mentioned 2Ki_15:13, who reigned but a month: for this, as some think,

could not be that Shallum mentioned after Zedekiah, as the fourth son of Josiah, 1Ch_3:15, for that Shallum, they say, never reigned; this, as the text saith, did reign three months

instead of Josiah his father; which phrase seemeth also to conclude that he immediately succeeded his father Josiah.

Which went forth out of this place; he was carried away from Jerusalem presently after he was set up, 2Ki_23:31,**33**, imprisoned at Riblah, and, 2Ki_23:34, died in Egypt.

Jeremiah 22:12

So as he returned no more to see his native country, as is there said. But others think this Shallum was Josiah's fourth son, that Johanan died before his father, and the people made Shallum his youngest son king, calling him Jehoahaz, so as he reigned immediately after Josiah.

Jeremiah 22:13

We have not here any certain guidance to let us know whether the prophet intended Jehoahaz or Jehoiakim; both of them *did evil in the sight of the Lord* , as we read in their story. The sin here reflected upon is manifestly injustice and oppression, but possibly, in the former part of the verse, all unjust and oppressive acts by which either of these princes endeavoured to promote their grandeur may be understood; for we need not take *building his house* in a strict, literal sense, but signifying the promotion of his family, or establishing his state and dignity. In the latter part, a special oppression, withholding workmen's wages, is the sin upon which the woe is denounced; a sin contrary to the law, Lev_19:13 Deu_24:14,**15**, and against which the judgment of God is also denounced under the New Testament, Jam_5:4. An evident demonstration of God's love to mankind, securing by his law just dealings between man and man, and revenging acts of injustice, and particularly where men take advantage of their greatness above and superiority over others, to trample them under their feet, and to withhold their just rights from them: though such persons may be out of the reach of human justice, yet God hath denounced a woe against them.

Jeremiah 22:14

That is, Woe to that man, who suffering oppression in his government, or making it his business himself to oppress, yet buildeth himself great houses and large chambers, ceiling them with cedar, promising himself prosperity and splendour, notwithstanding his wicked courses! for otherwise, it is lawful enough for princes to build themselves stately houses, &c. Yet some think that Jehoiakim's pride, and luxury, and magnificence is here blamed, which also may be, considering what fate he was trader, for Judah was reprieved only during Josiah's life, 2Ch_34:24-28. And this prince had seen Shallum or Jehoahaz his brother carried into captivity, and he still walked in the same wicked courses his brother had done; yet in contempt of the word of the Lord by Huldah in his father's time, he promiseth himself all prosperity and splendour, and accordingly was building himself stately houses, and adorning them; for this the woe is here denounced.

Jeremiah 22:15

Art thou so vain as to think that brave houses will continue thy kingdom? Thou art mistaken; magnificent buildings are not those things which establish a prince's throne. How was it with thy father? he lived prosperously, yet had no such stately edifices; his throne was established by justice and judgment; that were the right way for thee to sit sure upon thy throne.

Jeremiah 22:16

He judged the cause of the poor and needy; by himself in person, for the kings of Israel and Judah often sat personally to judge causes; or by setting such judges as did it, administering justice impartially, particularly to such as in respect of their low condition were most exposed to the power of others: and doing thus he prospered.

Was not this to know me? saith the Lord; this was for him truly to own and acknowledge me. They only truly know God who obey him; and men vainly pretend to piety who are notoriously defective in duties of justice and charity.

Jeremiah 22:17

All that thou lookest after, and that thy heart is set upon, is thy own grandeur and riches. And to make thyself great, thou makest no difficulty to destroy thy subjects that are innocent, and have not deserved death, and to oppress others, using all manner of violence against them. It is not to be thought that Jehoiakim did all this in person, but by such corrupt and unjust judges as he set up; so God accounted that Ahab had *killed* and taken possession, 1Ki_21:19, though the *elders and nobles* were those that did it, 1Ki_21:11-13. Princes are responsible to God for the sins of their ministers and judges.

Jeremiah 22:18

Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; a very bad son of a good father, whose name was Eliakim, by Pharaoh-nechoh turned to Jehoiakim, 2Ki_23:34, and by him set up. He reigned wickedly, and infinitely oppressed the people for money for Pharaoh-nechoh, that made him king, 22:35. He reigned but eleven years; but rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, we read, 2Ki_24:1,2, he was carried by him into Babylon in fetters, 2Ch_36:6, where, for aught we read, he died. Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, his son, succeeded him, Jer_22:9, reigning only three months and ten days.

They shall not lament for him; he died not lamented; for as it is not probable his enemies would lament him, so he had disobliged his own people by violence and oppression to that degree, that it is not likely that those of them that were in Babylon made any great lamentation for him.

Jeremiah 22:19

He shall be buried with the burial of an ass; that is, he shall not be buried at all, or he shall be buried in an indecent and contemptible manner, none attending him to his grave, none mourning for him. The last words of this verse incline some to think that Jehoiakim was buried near to Jerusalem; but the Scripture, which mentioneth his being carried into Babylon, saith nothing of his being brought back; nor is that very probable which some say, that the king of Babylon thought to have carried him to Babylon, but upon second thoughts altered his purposes, and caused him to be slain at Jerusalem, and his body to be

ignominiously dragged out of the gates. The Scripture saith expressly he was carried to Babylon, 2Ki_24:15; and if he died there, yet this text remaineth true, the scope of which seemeth to be to show the vanity of this prince in his great and stately buildings, which he was not like long to enjoy, nor to be buried nigh to them, nor in any degree of honour proportionate to the splendour of them.

Jeremiah 22:20

The Hebrew verb being feminine, lets us know that Jerusalem was the place to which this speech is directed; to the inhabitants of which the prophet here calleth to

go up to Lebanon; and *to Bashan* . Both Lebanon and Bashan were hills or places that looked towards Assyria, from whence the Jews looked for help, and had it sometimes, as 2Ki_16:7: he calls to them ironically to go up to the mountainous parts of them, where standing and crying they might be soonest and best heard. What we translate *from the passages* , others translate *from the borders* , or *from the sides* ; others, *from Abarim* , which is the name of a mountain, as well as Lebanon and Bashan; see Num_27:12 **33:47**; which seemeth to me the best interpretation: the meaning is, Go and cry for help from all places, but it will be in vain;

for all thy lovers are destroyed; the Egyptians and Assyrians, to whom thou wert wont heretofore to fly, choosing rather to trust to them than in me, are themselves in the power or danger of the Chaldeans, who shall also destroy them.

Jeremiah 22:21

I, by my prophets, spake to thee while all things went well with thee, so as thou hast not sinned ignorantly or without warning; I have not surprised thee with my judgments, but thou refusedst to hearken and obey my admonitions and precepts. From the time that I brought thee out of the land of Egypt, thou hast been thus a rebellious people.

Jeremiah 22:22

Either a vain hope and presumption shall destroy thy rulers and governors who flatter time with promises of prosperity; or a judgment shall seize them, that shall be like a violent wind, which

presently scattereth the clouds and the smoke; or they shall be blasted by my judgments, as plants are blasted and eaten up by winds. And those that have been thy friends and allies, Syria and Egypt, in whom thou hast trusted, shall themselves be made captive. Surely when thou seest this, thou wilt be convinced, and ashamed of thy wicked courses.

Jeremiah 22:23

Jerusalem, which is called an

inhabitant of Lebanon, either because their houses were built of wood cut down out of the forest of Lebanon, or because they lived in as great plenty and delight as if they lived in Lebanon, or because they thought the mountain of Lebanon was a certain refuge to them. They are said to

make their nest in the cedars, either because their houses were built of the cedars of Lebanon, or because of the security they promised themselves from that forest and mountain, so full of and famous for cedars. What favour wilt thou find when my judgments shall come upon thee, as suddenly and as smartly as the pains of a woman in travail come upon her! a similitude often made use of by this prophet, to express the suddenness, unavoidsableness, and greatness of judgments, Jer_4:31 **6:24 13:21 30:6 49:24 50:43**; and so in other scriptures, Psa_48:6 Mic_4:9 1Th_5:3.

Jeremiah 22:24

By

Coniah he meaneth *Jehoiachim* , 2Ki_24:8, whose name was *Jeconiah* , 1Ch_3:16, (for all Josiah's sons had two names, and so had his grandchild Jeconiah,) here in contempt called *Coniah* . He saith, that though this Coniah were as dear to him as his signet, which every man keepeth safe, yet this should not secure him from Divine vengeance.

Jeremiah 22:25

That is, into the power of the Chaldeans and Babylonians, whom they were afraid of, and justly, for they thirsted after their blood and ruin.

Jeremiah 22:26

Jeconiah's mother was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem, 2Ki_24:8 Jer_22:12, the fulfilling of this prophecy is recorded; and it is said that *Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants*, &c., so Jer_22:15, together with eight thousand prisoners of the meaner sort, besides princes and nobles.

Jeremiah 22:27

That is, they shall never come again to Jerusalem; though they be fond of it as their native country, and may promise themselves such favours from the king of Babylon, yet there shall no such thing be their portion.

Jeremiah 22:28

The prophet either speaketh this in the person of God. or of the people, who are here brought in, affirming that this prince, who was the idol of the people, was now, through the just judgment of God, become like a broken idol; or like a vessel which men care not for, being either so cracked, or so tainted, that they can make no use of it; and admiring at this catastrophe, and inquiring the cause why it so came to pass. *He and his seed*. It is said, Jer_22:30, that *no man of his seed should prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah*; nor is there any mention made of any of his children where his carrying into captivity is recorded, 2Ki_24:12, which makes some think that by his seed here is meant the posterity of his grandfather Josiah; but others think that he had children, either before he went into captivity, or born while he was in Babylon: and Mat_1:12, it is said, that *after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begat Salathiel*.

Jeremiah 22:29

By **earth** he either means the land of Judah, to which he calls thrice, to signify the deafness of this people, and unwillingness to hear and believe what God spake by him; or else he calls to the whole earth, as he calls heaven and earth to witness, Deu_30:19 **32:1** Isa_1:2 **34:1** Jer_6:19.

Jeremiah 22:30

The word translated

childless is but thrice read in holy writ, and by various interpreters translated *barren, not increasing, empty, full of sorrow, wanting children*, &c. It is thought to be interpreted by the next words,

no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah; for there are seven of his sons named 1Ch_3:17,18. So that he is said to be *childless*, either because all his children died before their father, or (which is most probable) because he had no child that sat upon the throne, or ever had any ruler's place in Judah, but only some that lived in a mean condition in captivity, amongst whom Salathiel is named, Mat_1:12, as a progenitor of Christ.

Jeremiah 23:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 23

Woe against wicked pastors; the scattered flock shall be gathered; Christ shall rule and save them, Jer_23:1-8: against false prophets, Jer_23:9-32, and mockers of the true, Jer_23:33-40.

There is the like woe against the

pastors denounced Eze_34:2. Interpreters judge that by the pastors are to be understood the *civil magistrates*, for Jer_23:9 he denounceth the judgments of God against their ecclesiastical officers. The civil magistrates at this time in Judah were great tyrants; and whereas God had committed his people (whom he calls the sheep of his pasture) to them in trust, that they should protect and govern them, and that they might live under them godly and peaceable lives, in all prosperity, they had acted quite contrary to their trust, and worried the people like wolves, instead of feeding them like shepherds. God took notice of their oppressions, and by the prophet denounceth this woe against them, to verify that of Solomon, Ecc_5:8.

Jeremiah 23:2

That feed my people: God calleth them *his people, his flock, the sheep of his pasture*, with respect to the ancient covenant which God had made with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are said to have fed this people, because it was their duty, and the business of their office, so to have done, though they had failed in it, and had done the quite contrary, scattering them by their acts of violence and oppression, and driving them from their

places to seek some more safe and quiet places of abode; or by their prodigious wickednesses, having been the cause of their being carried into captivity: *not visiting them* , that is, taking any due care of their good and welfare, seeing what they wanted, and supplying them, as good rulers ought to have done; for which neglect God threateneth to *visit upon them the evil of their doings* . The Hebrew word signifieth to visit with a visitation of care and love, and also with a visitation of justice and severity, and is often so used in holy writ.

Jeremiah 23:3

God puts a difference betwixt those that were misled by the examples of others, and the rulers who set them such an ill example; he threatened Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, that they should return no more; but for the people, he here promiseth them a return, at least a remnant of them, when he should have *punished the goats* , as he speaketh, *Zec_10:3*. *By their folds* , he meaneth Jerusalem, and other cities, the towns of Judah which they had formerly inhabited. *And they shall be fruitful and increase* ; where they should once more be in prosperity. He speaks here concerning the return of this people out of the captivity of Babylon, though there be some that think this text is primarily to be understood *of the gathering together in one the people of God scattered abroad* in and by Christ, according to the prophecy of Caiaphas, *Joh_11:52*.

Jeremiah 23:4

And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: some think this prophecy was fulfilled in Nehemiah and Zerobabel, who were pious and good governors, and consulted in their government the good of the people committed to their trust, *Neh_2:10* **5:14**. Others rather understand it of Christian princes and governors under the gospel.

And they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed; under whom they shall live peaceably and securely.

Neither shall they be lacking; and none of them shall perish. The two last passages of this verse incline interpreters to think that this promise doth not so much refer to their coming out of Babylon, as to their spiritual deliverance by Christ, for after their return out of

Babylon they were not secure long, but feared Sanballat and Tobiah, the Grecians, and Romans, and other enemies; besides that the last words exactly agree with Joh_10:28, when Christ saith his sheep should not perish, and it appears Jer_23:6 that the prophet is speaking of a time when not Judah only, but Israel also, should be saved, and the next verse doth manifestly refer unto Christ.

Jeremiah 23:5

Though some interpreters think that Zorobabel may be here intended, who was descended from David, and ruled the people when they came out of Babylon, yet even the Jewish doctors themselves, as well as the Christian interpreters, understand this as a prophecy and promise of the Messiah; the prophecies and promises of whom are usually ushered in with this particule

behold to stir up people's attention; and who also was the *Son of David* , and who is called *the Branch* , Isa_4:2 **53:2** Zec_3:8 Isa_11:1, where the reason is also given, he being there called *a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, a Branch out of his root* ; besides that, the application to him of the name *King* , ordinarily applied to Christ, never given to Zerobabel, and the term *righteous* , make it evident. Jer_33:15, he is called a *Branch of righteousness* , which is the same with the *righteous Branch* here mentioned. He is called the

righteous Branch, not only because himself was *righteous* , therefore called the righteous One, Act_3:14 **13:35**, but because he maketh his people *righteous* , Isa_53:11 **60:21**. Jesus Christ, answering the type of Melchisedec the king of Salem, and who is the *King of kings* , 1Ti_6:15, *shall reign* spiritually, and shall not be like Jeconiah, of whom God said he should not prosper; but he *shall prosper, and shall execute justice and judgment* , protecting the innocent, and defending his people throughout the world, judging the prince of the world, and by his Spirit governing his people. So as the prophet relieveth the people of God, under their oppressions by these latter kings of Judah, with the promise of the kingdom of Christ, a usual argument made use of by the prophets to comfort the people of God in those days against any evils come or coming upon them.

Jeremiah 23:6

During the reign and kingdom of the Messias (whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom) the people of God, typified by Judah and Israel, the true Israel of God, those that are Jews indeed, *shall be saved* with a spiritual salvation; for he was therefore called *Jesus*, because he was to *save his people from their sins*, Mat_1:21, and God will be a special protection to them. The name wherewith this *Branch* shall be called shall be,

The Lord our Righteousness. Some have applied this to the people, as if the people should be so called, or should say, The Lord hath dealt graciously with us; or, In the Lord we have righteousness. But this will appear but the new invention of some who either cannot or will not understand how Christ should be his people's righteousness, those who consider not that it is the *Branch* which was before spoken of, and that the word *people* is not to be found going before; there is indeed a mention of Judah and Israel, but surely they were not to be other men's righteousness, and if that had been the prophet's meaning, he would not have said, The Lord *our*, but the Lord *their* righteousness. Nor is the only place where Christ is called *our righteousness*, 1Co_1:30. This place is an eminent proof of the Godhead of Christ, he is here called *Jehovah*; and what is proper to God alone, viz. to *justify*, is here applied to Christ. The prophet saith Christ shall be so called, that is, by his people, who should believe in him and trust in him alone for that righteousness wherein they should at the last day stand before God: thus he was to bring in *everlasting righteousness*, Dan_9:24. He, *who knew no sin, was made sin* (that is, a sacrifice for sin) *for us, that we might be-made the righteousness of God in him.*

Jeremiah 23:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 23:8

See Poole "Jer_16:14", where much the same words are to be found. The prophet aggravateth the greatness of that salvation, which should be brought by Christ to all the true Israel of God, by comparing it with the deliverance of the ancient Israel of God out of the land of Egypt; which he saith it should so far transcend and excel, that the deliverance out of Egypt should not be named when

this salvation should appear, which should be after their return from Babylon, and when God should gather them from all countries, which was fulfilled when by the preaching of the gospel, not the Gentiles only were converted, but many of the Jews also which were scattered abroad, Jam_1:1 1Pe_1:1. Possibly part of this promise or prophecy remains yet to be accomplished, for the Jews are not yet come to

dwelt in their own land; unless that term be to be expounded of Christians, who during the times of persecution in the primitive church were scattered abroad, but upon the ceasing of those persecutions, when Christian emperors came to have the government, returned to their own countries, where they enjoyed a more still and quiet habitation.

Jeremiah 23:9

The prophet having denounced the wrath of God against the wicked rulers of Judah under the notion of pastors, cometh here to discharge the like trust with reference to those orders of persons amongst the Jews, whose office it was, or at least who took upon them, to reveal the mind and will of God to people, and who were upon that account called

prophets: for these he declares a great passion and trouble; either for their sake, in prospect of that vengeance of God which he saw was like to be poured out upon them; or for the people's sake, who had been deceived by their unfaithful revelations of the Divine will, and led into wickedness by their vile examples. For this he saith his

heart was broken, his bones shaken. And he was even astonished and stupified, and like a drunken man he knew not what he did; he was so stricken at the apprehensions of the wrath of the Lord ready to be revealed against them; and to consider what words the holy God had put into his mouth to speak against them.

Jeremiah 23:10

Under that term

adulterers all species of uncleanness are comprehended.

Because of swearing the land mourneth; by false swearing, or by idle and profane swearing, the land is brought to ruin. The

word signifies also a curse or cursing. Many good interpreters judge that the more genuine sense and true translation of this text were, *for because of the curse* (that is, the curse of God) the land is brought to that misery which is coming upon it.

The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up; the pastures of the wilderness, or of the plain, for so the word is rendered, Isa_63:13 Lam_4:19. The wrath of God was extended to all places, whether more or less inhabited.

Their course is evil, and their force is not right; the prophets did not only err in single acts, but the whole course of their actions was naught, and particularly their power, rule, and government was not right. If any say, What were the prophets concerned in the people's wickedness?

Ans. They were profane as well as the people, as we shall find, Jer_23:11; but besides this, the people were thus vile through their connivance; they did not warn the people of their sins, but soothed them up in their wicked courses, and so were the cause of the people's wickedness, who had not been so vile but for them.

Jeremiah 23:11

Those whose work was to reveal the mind of God to the people, and who pretended to that office; and those that were employed in offering sacrifices, and other works which belonged to the priestly office, according to the law; the whole ecclesiastical order, all their ministry, were

profane; not merely hypocritical, but lewd, immoral, and debauched. Yea, they were grown to that impudence, that they made the temple, which was the Lord's house, a den of thieves, a place where they committed

wickedness. Thus it was in the time of Eli, 1Sa_2:22, and more generally afterward, 2Ch_36:14. See Jer_7:10,11, and Jer_23:14 of this chapter. There is no more certain sign of a ruining nation, than when God suffereth in it a lewd and corrupt ministry.

Jeremiah 23:12

As their ordinary course is wicked and sinful, so they shall find that it will in the event be to them pernicious, perilous, and full of danger, as a slippery path is to them that walk in a dark night,

they shall be driven on till they fall therein. Courses of sin may look smooth, but they always prove slippery.

For I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation; for I am resolved to punish their wicked courses, and to visit them with my judgments.

Jeremiah 23:13

There was a time when I saw *folly in the prophets* that belonged to the ten tribes, whose chief city was Samaria. The word translated

folly signifies unsavoury, or an absurd thing. Our Saviour compareth wicked ministers to unsavoury salt, Mat_5:13, salt that is turned foolish (as the Greek word signifies). The ministers of God's word are, or ought to be,

the salt of the earth, to season people with sound doctrine, and by the good example of a holy life; if they be corrupt in doctrine or manners, they become unsavoury, and the very worst of men. Such God says the prophets of the ten tribes were, before they were carried away captive.

They prophesied, pretending they had their instructions and revelations from Baal, and so

caused the ten tribes

to err, which after the division of the kingdom in Jeroboam's time were called Israel, in contradistinction to the two tribes and half cleaving to the house of David, which were called Judah, after the name of their principal tribe.

Jeremiah 23:14

An horrible thing; the word signifies

filthiness, stench, or an abominable thing, things every whit as bad, in some kind worse, than what I saw in the prophets of the ten tribes.

They commit adultery; they commit not spiritual adultery only, but carnal adultery, they are whoremongers.

And walk in lies; and they make it their business to instil falsehoods into people, and entitle me to them; and this is their trade, not a single act, but their ordinary practice.

They strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: this is the great aggravation of the sin of those that occupy the place of spiritual guides, that they encourage profane men, either by their false doctrine, extenuating sin, and putting a fair gloss upon them; or at least by their mealy mouths fearing or forbearing to tell sinners of their wicked courses; or by their wicked examples, the most of people thinking they may do what their teachers do, by which means sinners, instead of being brought to a sense of their sins, and a repentance for them, are hardened in their wicked courses. By this means *all of them* , either of their prophets and priests, or all of the people, (the first seemeth chiefly here intended,) are become to me as contemptible and abominable as the people of *Sodom and Gomorrah* : though they were the sons of Aaron, and of the priestly order, yet living lewd lives, and acting quite contrary to the end of their holy calling, God declares himself to value them no more than as the vilest of men, such were the Sodomites. Or by those words God threatens that he would destroy them with as notorious a destruction as he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus the comparison is used Isa_1:9, and consonant to this are the words in the next verse.

Jeremiah 23:15

Under the term *prophets* he comprehendeth all the ecclesiastical guides of Jerusalem at this time, whether priests or prophets. He threatens to

feed them with wormwood; some think the word is better translated poison: by *wormwood, or poison* , and *the water of gall* , he threatens great and fatal judgments that he would bring upon them. And he giveth the reason why God would deal so severely with that order of men, who seemed by their office and employment to have the nearest relation to himself, because they were the fountain of wickedness, those from whom wickedness flowed out over the whole land. This was either by their conniving at wicked men's sins, for fear of displeasing them; or by teaching them licentious doctrine, that gave a liberty to the flesh; or by their vile lives setting the people patterns of sin. And indeed thus it is generally, when ministers, and such as are to teach others, are wicked, either in their doctrine or practice, they are a fountain of

wickedness; wickedness floweth from them to the whole city, town, parish where they are employed: and on the contrary it is observed, that where God gives a place a good ministry, goodness in one degree or other floweth from them to the whole city, town, or parish; though all are not converted, yet the generality are civilized and restrained from those gross and brutish immoralities which other places abound with. Ill ministers must look for the severest indignation of God. Others sin, and shall die in their sins; but they teach others to break God's commandments, and have the sins of many to answer for, who perish either by their flatteries, or loose doctrine, or looser lives and examples.

Jeremiah 23:16

People are under no religious obligation to hear any thing but the revealed will of God, and are not to obey those that call to them for what that doth not call to them; nor to listen to them, the scope of whose teaching is but to make them vain, sinfully vain, or to deceive their souls; no man is under an obligation to deceive himself. They pretend to visions, that God hath revealed his mind to them in the same way as he useth to reveal himself to true prophets; but there is no such thing, it is but a fiction of their own. Our Lord, Mat_7:15, gives us the same way to know *false prophets* : Jer_23:20, *By their fruits you shall know them* . Let their external mission be what and which way it will, if what they teach agree not with the revealed will of God, they are false prophets. Many of these priests were regularly enough descended, and the prophets regularly enough educated and constituted, yet by this showed themselves false prophets, that what they published was not from God, nor agreed with his revealed will; therefore the people were under no religious obligation to hearken to them.

Jeremiah 23:17

Lewd and corrupt ministers are a hatred and abomination in the house of the Lord to all serious good people, and are therefore obliged to make themselves a party of those that are like themselves, whose favour they cannot have without indulging them in their lusts. Hence they prophesy

peace to the vilest and worst of men, who have no patience of being daily alarmed with hearing of the wrath of God due and like

to come upon them for their sins. Hence they promise no evil to those that walk according to the counsels of their own heart, that is, sinfully, for, Gen_6:5, Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually. Hence a sinful course is very often expressed in Scripture under this notion of walking after the imaginations of our own heart, as Deu_29:19; but it is most in prophecy; see Jer_3:17 **7:21 9:14 13:10 16:12 18:12**. Hence a religious walking is called a *self denying* . None have a worse guide of their actions in their lapsed state, before regeneration, than their own hearts.

Jeremiah 23:18

Who besides us hath known

the counsel of the Lord? arrogating to themselves a fellowship and acquaintance with the mind and will of God. Or, (which I should rather judge the sense,) Which of those prophets, that prophesy such terrible things against this city, is a privy-counsellor to God? The words seem rather to be the words of the false prophets, either arrogating to themselves a peculiar acquaintance with God and fellowship with him, from whence they knew his mind, or mocking at Jeremiah, and other true prophets, as arrogating to themselves such a knowledge of the mind and counsels of God as indeed they had not, than (as some think) the words of Jeremiah denying them to have stood in God's counsels, or to have known his mind and will. This in all ages hath been the practice of corrupt prophets and ministers, to charge those servants of God who have faithfully published the will of God against sinners as making too bold with God's secret counsels, though they publish nothing but God's revealed will.

Jeremiah 23:19

A severe judgment of God, that should resemble a *whirlwind* , for the sudden and utter destruction that it shall bring. See Jer_30:23,24. The same word is elsewhere translated a *storm* , Psa_83:15 Amo_1:14 Jon_1:4. It is called a *whirlwind of the Lord* , either to denote the greatness of it, as Psa_36:6, or to let us know that the judgment came forth from God, and was of his sending. And whatever these flattering teachers said, it should fall upon wicked men, so as they should have no peace, but evil should most certainly come upon them.

Jeremiah 23:20

It is therefore called a *continuing whirlwind* , Jer_30:23. The prophet speaks of the judgment as of a messenger, which coming from God, should not return till it had done its errand, and executed what it came for, even whatever God had resolved it should effect. Men are ready to flatter themselves that they shall either outride or outlive the storms of Divine vengeance. No, (saith the prophet,) the anger of the Lord shall bring to pass whatsoever the just will of God is. And though you will not now believe it, but flatter yourselves with idle, vain hopes, yet hereafter, when it shall be too late, (which is the usual folly of sinners,) then you shall consider it perfectly.

Jeremiah 23:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 23:22

These false prophets did not prophesy without the approbation of the rulers of the ecclesiastical state amongst the Jews in their corrupt state, but so they might, and yet not be sent of God. The judgment of a Divine mission for the revelation of God's mind unto people must not be merely from their external mission, (which yet they ought to have in a church that is in order,) but from the faithful discharge of their ministry. Those whom God sends, and who are truly acquainted with his counsels, will cause his people to hear, not their own conceits and inventions, but the word of the Lord. God sendeth none upon any other errand but to reveal his will and tell his mind unto people.

Then, saith the prophet,

they should have turned them from their evil way; that is, they would have made this their scope, business, and end, to turn sinners from their sinful ways; and though possibly their labours would not have had so good an effect upon all, yet they would have had an effect upon some to turn them from their evil doings.

Jeremiah 23:23

Atheism is generally the foundation of ill life. Men say God sees them not, the Almighty doth not regard. them. By a God at hand many understand heaven: Do you think that my eyes are limited like yours, that I cannot see their practices, though far off from

me; that is, from the place of my glorious residence? Others interpret the particle with respect to time: Am I a God of yesterday, like the idols? Am not I the Ancient of days, the eternal God, whose majesty and omniscience you ought to have taken notice of?

Jeremiah 23:24

What do these atheistical priests, and prophets, and people think? Do they think that I, who am a God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, see and take notice of what doctrine they preach, and what lives they live? If they did, surely they would not dare to do as they do. Do they think that I do not see or take notice of them? Can any hide themselves out of my sight? I fill heaven and earth, not only with my influence, but with my essence, with the immensity of my being; which, as it cannot be circumscribed by any, so it is shut out of no place.

Jeremiah 23:25

Visions and dreams were two usual ways by which under the law God made himself known of old to his prophets, making them sometimes, being awake, to hear a voice; sometimes attended with, and proceeding upon, some visible appearance, sometimes not: at other times causing them being asleep, to dream; and in their sleep revealing to them, as in a dream, what his will was they should declare and publish to his people. These false prophets speaking what came into their own heads, and suited their own lust, or the lusts of a debauched people to whom they spake, would pretend that God had revealed to them what they so published in a dream; not in the mean time considering God took notice of these their little arts by which they cheated the people. But saith God, I am a God that know afar off as well as at hand, and I have heard what they say, prophesying lies as from me, and pretending that I had in dreams revealed them to them.

Jeremiah 23:26

Will these prophets never have done? Have they not deceived people long enough with their lies, and the deceit of their own hearts; and that not unwarily, and by involuntary mistake, but of set purpose, it being in their heart, their purpose and design, to do it. Some join it to the following verse, and make the sense this: Do these prophets, that publish lies, and the deceits of their hearts, for

my revealed will, think to cheat my people always, and to cause my people to forget my name? as it followeth in the next verse.

Jeremiah 23:27

To forget my name; that is, to forget me, and those things by which I have made myself known unto them, my word and my works.

By their dreams which they tell abroad every one to his neighbour, as if they were revelations which I had in their sleep made unto them; but they are indeed lies, and nothing but the deceits of their own hearts.

As their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal; so that in effect they are Baal's priests: for as Baal's prophets, by publishing their pretended revelations from Baal, seduced the people from the service and obedience of the true God; so these, by telling their pretended dreams, seduced men from their obedience to God in what he revealed to them by the true prophets: they agreed in the end, the seducing of the people from God, though they differed in the mean, the one pretending relations from Baal, the other from the true God by their dreams.

Jeremiah 23:28

A dream; not a Divine dream; a revelation which I have made to him in his sleep (as appeareth by the following opposition, betwixt a *dream* and the *word of the Lord*); but if any man hath dreamed an ordinary dream, let him tell it as a dream; let him not entitle God to it.

And he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully; and let him to whom I have revealed my will publish and declare that in all truth and faithfulness, not adding his own fancies or dreams to it, 2Co_2:17 1Pe_2:2, not corrupting my word.

What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord; there is as much difference between my will and their dreams as there is betwixt the chaff and the wheat; the one is of value to make food for the soul, as wheat doth for the body; the other is of no value: the one (viz. my word) is of a solid, abiding substance; the other is light and airy, and easily scattered by every wind.

Jeremiah 23:29

Full of life and efficacy, Joh_6:63 Heb_4:12;

like a fire that warmeth, and healeth, and melteth, and consumeth the dross;

and like a hammer that breaketh the flints, so my word breaketh hard hearts. Others think that the word is here compared to fire, and to a hammer, because of the certain effect that it should have upon those that would not obey it, to burn them up like fire, and break them in pieces like a hammer, and so think this text well expounded by the apostle, 2Co_2:16. Certain it is that God's word is like fire in both senses; no words of men have an effect and efficacy like God's words; nothing but that taketh hold upon the conscience, and hath such an effect upon the hearts of men; no words shall so certainly and infallibly be justified and made good.

Jeremiah 23:30

There are various opinions as to what the prophet meaneth here by those prophets that *stole the Lord 's words* from their neighbours. Some, by their

neighbour, understanding the true prophets, from whom they stole those forms of speech, *Thus saith the Lord* , or, *The word of the Lord* , or, *The burden of the Lord* . Or some of the matter which they prophesied, though they mixed it with their own lies and deceits. Others by neighbours understanding their associates, think that these false prophets conspired together what to say to deceive the people, and so stole what they said one from another: or, the generality of the people, from whom they are said to steal the Lord's word because they withheld it from them injuriously; or by their arts and flatteries brought men out of love with or fear of the words of the Lord, which had by the true prophets been delivered to them.

Jeremiah 23:31

Some think the Hebrew words were more properly translated *smooth their tongues* : see the English Annotations. But the next words seem to assure us that the crime for which God here by the prophet reflecteth upon the false prophets, was not so much their

flattering people, and speaking to them such smooth things as pleased them, as their entitling of God to their lies, saying,

He, that is, the Lord,

saith. So it may be, though the word might be translated smooth, yet it is her, better translated use.

Jeremiah 23:32

False dreams; that is, false things under the notion of things which I have revealed unto them in their sleep. By *lightness* here some understand volubility and smoothness of tongue and speech; others, lasciviousness; others, levity and inconstancy: the last seemeth most probably the sense.

I sent them not, (saith God.) therefore they shall not profit. None can expect God's blessing upon their ministry that are not called and sent of God into the ministry.

Jeremiah 23:33

The true prophets, to let the people know how little pleasing it was to them to be the messengers of God's threatenings, to denounce his judgments, usually thus began their prophecies of that nature, calling them

the burden of the Lord, as may be seen, Isa_13:1 **15:1 22:1** Hab_1:1 Zec_9:1 Mal_1:1. The profane people, and false prophets, and corrupt priests, not loving to hear their doom, would ordinarily mock at the true prophets; and in derision ask them what *was the burden of the Lord* ? what in news they had for them next? God bids the prophet tell them that God would forsake them, either as to the Spirit of prophecy, they should have no more prophets, or (which is more probable) as to his special providence, by which he had watched over, protected, and hitherto defended them; a burden heavy enough, Hos_9:12.

Jeremiah 23:34

That is, that shall in derision say thus, mocking at my threatenings and judgments. I will not only punish him, but his whole family.

Jeremiah 23:35

I will have you speak more reverently of me and my word to my prophets.

Jeremiah 23:36

The burden of the Lord shall ye mention no more; not in scorn and derision, as not believing there were any such judgments as they threaten; nor hardly, as if I sent you no other messages but burdens. These false and irreverent speeches, which are in every man's mouth, shall be burdensome to them, being such as shall bring down Divine vengeance upon them; because you have derided or misinterpreted *the words of God, the living God* ; the sin of which is the more aggravated against you, because he is the living, mighty God, and because he hath been our God.

Jeremiah 23:37

Thus shalt thou say to the prophet; to my true prophet. You shall speak to them reverently, and as becometh you.

Jeremiah 23:38

Because you go on in your scoffing and deriding my word and my prophets; and that when I have expressly forbidden you those profane speeches, or that deriding form of speech; adding further contempt to your former profaneness.

Jeremiah 23:39

I will forget you as to my affection, and that is more than if all your friends forgot you. There is a great emphasis in the doubling of the pronoun,

I, even I. I will forsake you as to the presence of my special gracious providence. And do not flatter yourselves that I will not do it, because of your fathers, or because I gave this city to your fathers, for that very city I will withdraw my special providence from, and that land, which heretofore was called *the land which the Lord thy God careth for, upon which the eyes of the Lord are always* , from the beginning of the year even to the end of the year, Deu_11:12. And I will cast both city and people out of my gracious presence; so as I will no longer do them good as I have done.

Jeremiah 23:40

And you shall be a reproach, and that not for a few days, but for ever; and a penal shame, which neither you nor those that see or hear of it shall forget. See such expressions Jer_20:11.

Jeremiah 24:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 24

Under the type of good and bad figs, Jer_24:1-3, he foreshoweth the return of some from captivity, Jer_24:4-7, and the ruin of Zedekiah and the rest, Jer_24:8-10.

The sum of what God by his prophet revealeth in this chapter is, that he would deal more graciously with those carried into captivity with Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, of which read 2Ki_24:12 2Ch_36:10, than with those that should afterward be carried into captivity with Zedekiah. This the prophet hath revealed to him ill a vision of two baskets of figs, as followeth.

Some think these

two baskets of figs were such as the people had brought for their first-fruits, because they are mentioned as

set before the temple; but this might be no more than a vision, or all appearance of two baskets. The time of this vision was some time betwixt the carrying away of Jeconiah, of which we read 2Ki_24:12, &c.; 2Ch_36:10, and the carrying away of Zedekiah his uncle, which was eleven years after. In 2Ki_24:16, there is a particular mention of the king of Babylon's carrying away *the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand* .

Jeremiah 24:2

God afterwards explaineth to the prophet, and he to the king's house, the significancy of this vision. The figs first ripe are usually best. By these

good figs, as will appear by the following verses, are intended Jeconiah or Jehoiachin, with the ten thousand mentioned 2Ki_24:14, and the seven thousand mentioned 2Ki_24:16, which went with him into captivity. By the other figs which were very bad, not to be eaten, are signified Zedekiah and the residue of the people carried with him into captivity. Some may object that Jeconiah and the people then carried away were wicked enough, why else were they carried away? and being so, how are they compared to good figs?

Answ. 1. Though they were bad, yet they might be comparatively good; this people, for the eleven years they continued in their own

land, after that their brethren were carried away, not only continuing in their former courses, but still growing worse and worse.

2. They seem not to be called good or bad figs with respect to their manners or quality, but in respect to what God intended to do to them, viz. to use them as bad figs are used, not fit to: be eaten.

Jeremiah 24:3

God having caused the prophet to have such a visible object appear to him, asked him what he saw as Jer_1:11.

Jeremiah 24:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 24:5

Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; who have power to do what I please, and who yet am in covenant with Israel, and have a kindness for the seed of my servant Jacob. Look, as thou approvest of one of these baskets of figs, so I do approve of those that were carried away captive with Jeconiah, repenting of their sinful courses, and accepting of that punishment of their iniquity.

Whom I have sent; though Nebuchadnezzar carried them away, it was by commission from me so that though he carried, yet I sent them.

For their good; which words may either refer to the last-mentioned words, intimating that God in sending them away aimed at either their spiritual good, to bring them to repentance, and an acknowledgment of their sins; or their temporal good, they being only quietly led away, without the miseries of famine, fire, and sword, besides carrying away; which those who remained, and were afterwards carried away with Zedekiah, experienced: or else they may be referred to the former words. I will acknowledge them for their good; that is, I will show them favour, being of the number of those who were not leaders to sin, but led away by the ill example of others, and who being carried away grew sensible of their sins by which they provoked me, and so accepted of the punishment of their iniquities.

Jeremiah 24:6

I will set mine eyes upon them for good; the soul looking out at the eye, discovereth its inclinations and affection, whether of love or wrath. Hence we read of God's setting his eyes upon people *for evil* , Amo_9:4, as here of his setting his eyes upon them for good. Or else it may signify God's setting himself to do them good, as a man when he sets upon doing a thing, sets his eyes upon it in order thereunto.

I will bring them again to this land; some of them probably returned before the end of the captivity, some at the end of the seventy years.

I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up: the meaning of these metaphorical expressions is, I will prosper them, and provide for them. We read, 2Ki_25:27,28, that *Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, lifted his head up out of prison, spake kindly to him , &c.*; but this prophecy was also fulfilled in Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Mordecai, and others, who are thought to be carried away with Jeconiah; or the prophecy may be understood of the posterity of those who were at this time carried away.

Jeremiah 24:7

Under the term

know me is here (as in many other texts) comprehended faith, love, obedience, all those motions of the soul which rationally should follow a right comprehending of God in men's knowledge.

They shall be my people, and I will be their God; I will be a God in covenant with them; as I will fulfil what I have promised them, so they shall do what is their duty to me. For, or when, or *after that they shall return to me* ; not feignedly, but with their heart; not partially, but

with their whole heart. This is promised as an effect of special grace, not of the mere good inclination of their natural wills, for so the words *I will give* , in the beginning of the verse, must be understood, otherwise God gives such a heart no more to one man than another.

Jeremiah 24:8

Whither it is probable many of the Jews had fled, upon the coming, or noise of the coming, of the king of Babylon, as they had done before, Isa_30:2 **31:1**.

Jeremiah 24:9

The Lord by his prophet expresseth those tremendous judgments which he had designed to bring upon this wicked prince and people in the words of Moses the man of God; as well because the Jews had a great reverence (pretendedly at least) for Moses, how little soever they had for Jeremiah; as to let them see that what the Lord here threatened, and suddenly would bring to pass, was but in a just accomplishment of what he before had threatened in his law, by which they ought to have taken warning. The sum is, he would make them a common scoff and by-word, that their misery should be a common proverb, and when men would curse one another, they should wish them like Zedekiah and the Jews.

Jeremiah 24:10

Many of them shall not live to be carried into captivity, but shall die miserably in their own land, if not by the enemies' *sword* , yet by the *famine* and the *pestilence* , which two things ordinarily attend long sieges. By one of these three sore judgments of God they shall be consumed out of the land, and shall not hold it by the title of God's gift of it

to their fathers. No gifts of God, except those of special grace, are perpetuities; but either given *quamdiu bene se gesserint* , so long as men behave themselves well in the use of them; or *durante bene placito* , during God's good will and pleasure.

Jeremiah 25:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 25

Their disobedience to the prophets reprov'd, Jer_25:1-7. The seventy years of captivity foretold, Jer_25:8-11; and after that the destruction of Babylon, Jer_25:12-14. By a cup of wine is fore shown the destruction of all nations, Jer_25:15-33. The howling of the shepherds, Jer_25:34-38.

The fourth year of Jehoiakim was seven years and odd months before Jeconiah or Jehoiachin his son was carried into captivity, as appears from 2Ki_23:36 **24:8,15**, and eighteen years before the

taking of the city, and the more general captivity; which argueth that this prophecy is misplaced, and set after the former, whereas in order of time it was sixteen or seventeen years before it. This is said to be

the first year of Nebuchadrezzar (called by Ptolemy, Nabopolassar). It is said, Dan_1:1, that this Nebuchadrezzar came up in the third year of Jehoiakim; to which is answered, that the first year of Nebuchadrezzar's reign must be understood of his *absolute reign*, which concurred partly with the third, partly with the fourth year of Jehoiakim; they say he was before a sharer in the kingly government with his father, but this was the first year that he had the name of king entirely given unto him.

Jeremiah 25:2

That is, the word concerned them all, and he spake it to so many of them as he met with in any public assembly at Jerusalem or elsewhere.

Jeremiah 25:3

We read, Jer_1:2, that Jeremiah began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah. Josiah reigned thirty-one years, 2Ki_22:1; so that taking in the thirteenth year, Jeremiah prophesied nineteen years during the life of Josiah, to which adding the four of Jehoiakim's reign, it maketh twenty-three. These twenty-three years, saith the prophet, I have been a preacher to you, and I have not been negligent in my work; but like men that get up early in the morning to despatch their business, so have I been in the discharge of my prophetic office.

Jeremiah 25:4

Nor am I the only prophet whom the Lord hath sent you, and whom you have neglected and despised; God hath sent you many more, and you have despised as many as he hath sent, though the Lord hath made it his business to send you one after another from time to time. This contempt of the Lord's messengers is made the proximate cause of God's wrath coming upon this people, till there was no remedy, 2Ch_36:16.

Jeremiah 25:5

The substance both of their and my sermons hath been to persuade you to leave off those sinful courses wherein you have lived, and

which you might have amended by virtue of that common grace which I did not deny you. We have not differed in our doctrine, to the practice of which you have also been encouraged both by them and me, with an assurance from God that if you did it, you should enjoy this good land, which the Lord promised and gave to you and your fathers, and you have now possessed from age to age.

Jeremiah 25:6

Gods; idols, which indeed are no gods, but so called by idolaters.

To serve them, and to worship them; to pay any divine homage unto them.

And provoke me not to anger by idols, which are the work of men's hands (no uncreated beings). Or more generally, any works which are contrary to the law of God. If you do this, I will by my providence do you no harm, you shall yet enjoy your own land and prosper.

Jeremiah 25:7

Ye heard me and other the Lord's prophets thus speaking to you, but you did not obey and hearken. As if you had done it on purpose to incense me against you, who am of myself slow to wrath, and must be provoked to execute vindictive justice by men's own wicked works; which do not otherwise affect or hurt me, but are to their hurt who do them.

Jeremiah 25:8

That is, because you have not hearkened to and obeyed my words; for it is manifest they had heard Jeremiah and the other prophets.

Jeremiah 25:9

I will put it into the heart of all those kings whose territories lie northward of Judea, and particularly into the heart of

Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, who in this work shall be

my servant; though you will not be my servants in obeying my commands, yet he shall serve me, Jer_27:6 **43:10.** *I will bring them* and their armies up against this people, and I will put you out of hopes from your alliances with other nations, for he shall first bring them under his command: thus we read, 2Ki_24:7, that the

king of Babylon had invaded the Egyptian dominions, and *taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt* . And I will make the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not only a desolation, but a scorn, and reproach, and wonderment to the world. See Jer_19:8.

Jeremiah 25:10

I will take away all your mirth and jollity, whether used at weddings, or at any of your merry meetings; I will leave you nothing to rejoice in; your very wedding times shall be times of mourning and lamentation. Nay, I will not only deprive you of your mirth, but of those things that are necessary for you, as necessary as bread and light; the millstone shall not move; you shall not have the light so much as of a candle. See the like expressions Rev_18:22,23. God here threatens not only to take away their superfluities, and what he had hitherto lent them for their pleasure and delight, but also what they had for their necessary sustenance, and to capacitate them to do their ordinary works.

Jeremiah 25:11

This prophecy is a famous prophecy in regard of its fixing the particular space of time in which the Jews abode in the captivity of Babylon, viz.

seventy years. When they determined we are plainly enough told, Ezr_1:1, *in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia* , but when they commenced is more disputed; for we read of three carryings into that captivity: the one in the third and fourth year of Jehoiakim, when it should seem that Nebuchadrezzar only carried away some few persons to be bred in his court, amongst whom were Daniel and the *three children* , Dan_1:1,2, &c.; a second seven years after, in Jeconiah's time, 2Ki_24:15,16; the last and most general eleven years after, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah: it seemeth most probable that the *seventy years* must be reckoned from the second; for Jeremiah, Jer_29:1, &c., writing to those then in captivity, tells them, that when *seventy years should be accomplished* , God would bring them back. This is confirmed by Ezekiel, Jer_40:1, where the *fourteenth year* after the taking of the city is expressly said to be the *twenty-fifth year* of their captivity.

Jeremiah 25:12

When seventy years are accomplished; seventy years accounted from the time that the Jews were carried away in the time of Jeconiah or Jehoiachin, 2Ki_24:15,16. This was fulfilled by Darius the king of Persia, Dan_4:31. Of these seventy Nebuchadnezzar reigned thirty-six, 2Ki_25:27, Evil-merodach thirty-two, and Belshazzar at least two, Dan_8:1. Though God, whose all the creation is, and who is the Lord of all the hosts of his creatures, doth often make use of heathens and other wicked men to punish his own people, yet he will at last punish them too; and ordinarily when he doth punish them, it is with a more severe and grievous destruction than that by which he punisheth his people, Isa_27:7; thus he threatens to make the Chaldeans a perpetual desolation.

Jeremiah 25:13

That land; the land of the Babylonians and Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 25:14

God threateneth the destruction of that monarchy by the Persians, according to the prophecy of this prophet, and declareth that their destruction was of themselves, God did but recompense unto them their own deeds, and the works of their hands; which is not to be restrained to their excesses in executing Divine vengeance, and the cruelty they used to the Israelites, but more generally interpreted of all their wicked courses.

Jeremiah 25:15

God's judgments are often in Scripture expressed under the notion of a cup of hot and intoxicating drink, and their suffering is set out under the notion of drinking such a cup, as Psa_75:8 Job_21:20 Isa_51:17 Psa_11:6 **60:3** Lam_4:21 Eze_23:32,34. God made Jeremiah to see the appearance of such a cup in a vision, and bade him to carry it to the nations to whom he sent him, to signify to them that his wrath should be poured out on them, and they should drink of it.

Jeremiah 25:16

Whether they will or no, they shall drink it, and be disturbed, and be mad, and rage like men overcome with wine, because of those dreadful judgments which I shall send amongst them.

Jeremiah 25:17

That is, in the vision; for it cannot be thought that the Lord made the prophet to travel up and down to all the nations afterward named with a cup of wine in his hand.

Jeremiah 25:18

Judgment usually beginneth at the house of God, 1Pe_4:17. God hath more known them and done them more good than other people, therefore their sins are higher provocations, and they are less excusable. By the kings here mentioned are to be understood Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah; these princes with their people God threatens to punish to astonishment, and so as men should mock at them, and curse them; which expressions we have before met with in the same cause. But here ariseth a doubt how the prophet saith,

as it is this day, whereas this prophecy, Jer_25:1, was in *the fourth year of Jehoiakim* , but Jerusalem was not made such a desolation till *the eleventh year of Zedekiah* , which was eighteen years after. Some think that though the thing were yet to come, yet the prophet speaketh of it as past, because of the certainty of it, which is but what is ordinary in the prophetic writings. Others think that these words were added after the captivity of Jeremiah, writing over his former prophecies. Others from these words judge that this part of the chapter was a prophecy at some other time following what was in the beginning of this chapter. Others think that he adds these words because the carrying into captivity was at this time begun, though not completed until the eleventh year of Zedekiah.

Jeremiah 25:19

The Egyptians being that people whom the Jews most trusted to for help, are named as the first to whom the prophet was sent with the wine-cup of God's fury, to let the Jews know, that if they trusted to them, their confidence was vain; for they should themselves be destroyed, which was fulfilled within the twelve years after the death of Josiah unto the time of Jehoiachin, as appears from 2Ki_24:6,7, for the king of Egypt made Jehoiakim king, 2Ki_23:34.

Jeremiah 25:20

It is of no great moment to determine whether God by

the mingled people, here mentioned, intended the various nations afterwards particularly expressed by their names, or some people that were not native Egyptians, but lived mingled with them, or some other people of several nations who lived near Judea or the Arabians.

By the kings of the land of Uz, it is most probably judged are to be understood those kings who ruled over that people, who descended from Dishan, Gen_36:28, and are judged to have inhabited some part of Arabia Petraea, near to Idumea. The cities of *the Philistines* are reckoned afterward.

Azzah, Ekron, Ashdod, and Ashkelon were four of them; the fifth, which was Gath, is not here named. See 1Sa_6:17. It had a king in former times, to whom David fled, 1Sa_21:10; but before this time it was destroyed, either by Psammeticus, father to Pharaoh-nechoh, or by Tartan, captain-general to Sargon king of Assyria, of whom read Isa_20:1, that he took Ashdod, which may be the reason that here mention is made of no more than

the remnant of Ashdod.

Jeremiah 25:21

The Edomites were the posterity of Esau the son of Isaac, to whom God had given a land which they inherited, and he would not suffer the Israelites to make their way through them by force, when they denied them a passage through their country; now he threatens their ruin, as also Jer_49:7; and Obadiah's prophecy was against them, where their triumphing in the captivity of the Jews is mentioned as one thing that had provoked God against them. The Moabites and Ammonites were descended from Lot. **Jer 48** is an entire prophecy against Moab; they had lived in long prosperity, as appears there, Jer_25:12; so had the Ammonites, against whom also Jeremiah prophesied particularly, Jer_49:1-7.

Jeremiah 25:22

Tyrus was a strong city upon the borders of the tribe of Asher, Jos_19:29 2Sa_24:7, a very rich city, and a kingdom, with the king of which (who was Hiram) Solomon in his time traded much,

2Ch_2:3. Isaiah prophesied its ruin, Jer_23:1; so did Ezekiel, Eze_27:28,29: it was destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar, Eze_29:18.

Zidon was nigh to it, therefore we shall ordinarily find Tyre and Zidon joined together in Scripture: both Isaiah and Ezekiel, as well as this prophet, prophesied their ruin. By

the isles beyond the sea, some understand Greece and Italy; others Rhodes, Cyprus, and Crete; but others think Nebuchadnezzar never conquered these, and rather understand those parts of Syria that coasted upon the midland sea.

Jeremiah 25:23

We read of a *Dedan* the issue of Ham, Gen_10:7. The other the posterity of Abraham by Jokshan, Gen_25:3. It seemeth to be a city of Idumea, Jer_49:8. *Tema* descended from Ishmael, Gen_25:15; his posterity inhabited in Arabia, Isa_21:14, where they are joined with those of Dedan. *Buz* was one of the posterity of Nahor, Gen_22:21. These were people mixed with the Saracens or Arabians.

All that are in the utmost corners; that dwell in the corners or furthest parts of the world. Some interpret it of the fashion of their cutting their beards, as the Saracens did: see Lev_19:27, where God forbade his people that fashion.

Jeremiah 25:24

All the kings of Arabia; there were several kings in Arabia, 2Ch_9:14.

All the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert; people of several nations that were got together in the desert, and had made to themselves several kings or chief rulers.

Jeremiah 25:25

All the kings of Zimri; those descended from Zimran, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen_25:2 (the Zamarens, as some think, mentioned by Pliny). By the Elamites are meant the Persians, descended from Shem, Gen_10:22. Elam is also mentioned Isa_22:6. See also Jer_49:34. The Medes came from Madai the son of Japheth, Gen_10:2; they are usually joined with the Persians, Dan_5:28.

Jeremiah 25:26

All the kings of the north, far and near; all under the government of the Chaldeans, or (as others) all those princes that have dominions between the north and east.

All the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; that is, in those parts of the world which were at that time known, with whom there was ordinary commerce.

And the king of Sheshach shall drink after them; and the king of *Babylon*, who was last of all to drink of this cup of the Lord's fury. That he is here meant is plain from Jer_51:41, where Sheshach is thus interpreted. But why Babylon is called Sheshach is a harder question, and not easily resolved. Those who think the prophet gives Babylon here another name to avoid an odium fresh the king of Babylon, at this time their enemy, neither consider the usual courage of this prophet, nor that he speaks plainly enough, Jer_51:41, where he mentioneth both Babylon and Sheshach, and expoundeth the latter by the former. It is thought that Babylon is called Sheshach from the name of an idol called Shach which they worshipped, to whose honour they yearly kept a festival for five days together, which they called Shace, and they say that during this festival Cyrus took Babylon. But these are all uncertain guesses; it is enough for us to know that by the king of Sheshach is meant the king of Babel, as the prophet expounds himself, Jer_51:41.

Jeremiah 25:27

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 25:28

The meaning of these two verses is no more than this; God let Jeremiah in a vision know that it was his will that he should prophesy a certain and unavoidable ruin to all these nations, which was brought upon all the rest by the king of Babylon, whom God made his instrument to execute his vengeance upon them; and last of all upon the king of Babylon himself by Cyrus the king of Persia. This judgment which he telleth them should be by the sword he expresseth by the effects, *falling* and *rising no more*, and commands them to *drink* it, to comport with the metaphor of the wine-cup of God's fury, mentioned Jer_25:15; the drinking of

cups of heady, intoxicating wine ordinarily producing such effects as *spewing* and *falling* , &c. This cup of the Lord's fury he assures them they should not turn by, but should most certainly drink it.

Jeremiah 25:29

By the city called by his name, or upon which his name was called, he means Jerusalem, elsewhere called the holy city. The apostle, 1Pe_4:17, speaketh much to this purpose, *The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ?* If God spareth not the green tree, how shall he spare those that are dry and withered? Atheists and lewd and profane persons have little reason to promise themselves an escape from God's righteous judgment, when they see God not sparing those that make the highest profession of him, and stand in some relation to him.

For I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth; it is in vain for you to promise yourselves an escape, for God is about to punish all your neighbours.

Jeremiah 25:30

Reveal my will unto them presently, to revenge myself upon them, in words to this sense or purpose; tell them that I, who hitherto have been toward them as a lamb, will now be to them as a lion; so Joe_3:16 Amo_1:2 **3:8**; and, as a lion, will roar from heaven; for though the temple be sometimes called his *holy habitation* , yet the foregoing words, *from, on high* , expound this term in this place otherwise. *Upon his habitation* , or *in his habitation* , which is more likely to be understood, in heaven, (as the former,) than, in Jerusalem, as divers would have it; for God is here revealing his wrath against foreign nations, upon some of which these judgments came after God had done roaring in or upon Jerusalem.

He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth; a shout, such as soldiers use to give when they storm a city, or assault their enemies, to encourage their fellows, and to dishearten their enemies; like the shout of those that tread the grapes, singing one to another, or rejoicing and triumphing in the vintage.

Jeremiah 25:31

There shall be such confusion, and noises as shall ring over all the world; for God's quarrel is not against the Jews only, but other nations also. Nor will he in any thing he doth act unjustly; if they will join issue with him, he will plead with them, and make it appear to all that he acteth righteously. He will give up many to the sword, but they shall be such only as by their wickedness have deserved it, recompensing to them their own works and evil doings.

Jeremiah 25:32

It is much the same thing which was said before, only repeated for the greater terror in a variety of expressions. He tells them that the judgment should be like a contagion, going from one nation to another, or like a fire catching hold of another house before the first is burned down, like a

whirlwind that blows from all sides, cometh suddenly, and devoureth dreadfully.

Jeremiah 25:33

That those who should be slain by commission from the Lord in this time of his judgments should be in all places, and so numerous, that there should be none left to lament for or to bury the dead; but the dead bodies should lie and rot upon the surface of the earth, and be as muck to it. See the like phrases Jer_16:4.

Jeremiah 25:34

Shepherds, and the

principal of the flock, are in this place of the same significancy, by both he means the civil rulers; so the word is used Jer_22:22 **23:1**. These he calls aforehand to bewail their fate; for the days were now come when they should be slain and scattered. And he tells them their fall should be like the fall of a crystal glass, or some delicate tender vessel, which when it falleth breaketh in pieces, and cannot again be set together.

Jeremiah 25:35

In ordinary dispensations of judgment, there is some way left to escape, and if there be any way of escape, great men are likeliest to find it; but he telleth them that the greatest men should find no way to flee from or escape this terrible dispensation of God.

Jeremiah 25:36

That is, there shall be heard a great outcry of the princes and rulers, when they shall see how the Lord hath spoiled the cities in which, and their people upon which, they have lived, and amongst whom they were wont to feed securely.

Jeremiah 25:37

That is, the places where these great men were wont to live splendidly, and dwell peaceably and securely, shall be as surely destroyed, through the Lord's anger, as if it were already done.

Jeremiah 25:38

God had before compared himself to a lion, Jer_25:30; here he declares himself to be about to move like a lion, who when he goeth out to seek his prey, leaveth his covert: see Jer_50:44. The effects of this rising up of God out of his covert is the desolation of the land through the fierceness of the enemy, caused from the fierce anger of God now ready to be poured out upon this people.

Jeremiah 26:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 26

The prophet, by God's command, in the court of the temple, threateneth that the temple shall be as Shiloh, and the land a curse: exhorteth to repentance, Jer_26:1-7. He is apprehended and arraigned, Jer_26:8-11. His apology, Jer_26:12-15. The princes clear him by the example of Micah, Jer_26:16-19, and of Urijah, Jer_26:20-23, and by the care of Ahikam, Jer_26:24.

The prophecy, **Jer 25**, is said to have been revealed in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, this in the beginning of his reign, which makes learned men think it ought to have been placed before that. The affairs of the Jews were then in a very desperate condition; Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt had overcome Josiah, and killed him in battle, Jehoahaz or Shallum being made king in his stead, 2Ki_23:30; he had reigned but three months, and Pharaoh-nechoh taketh him, and imprisoned him, and lays a tribute upon the land of three hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold, and makes Eliakim king, changing his name to Jehoiakim, 2Ki_23:33,**34**. Now in the beginning of this king's reign cometh this word of God to Jeremiah, the people being still hardened and going on in their sinful practices.

Jeremiah 26:2

Stand in the court of the Lord's house; in the largest court of the temple, where the most may hear what thou sayest, and there speak to all those that dwell in any of the cities of Judah (from whence they were wont to come up, more especially thrice in a year to the temple to worship, Psa_122:4). In the gate or court of that house wherein they have such a confidence do thou *stand*, so Jer_7:2 and declare unto them what I command thee. **Diminish not a word;** neither smoothing what may appear rough, nor suppressing what may offend them, entirely delivering my will unto them, not shunning to declare unto them the whole counsel of God, as Paul, Act_20:27.

Jeremiah 26:3

Not that God was ignorant of their obstinacy and the hardening of their hearts, which was the future event; but to let us know that their destruction would be of themselves, he would give them both a time and space, and also means, for repentance, and the prevention of the judgments of God coming on them. He did give them time, for it was after this eleven years before the captivity of Jehoiakim, and two and twenty before that of Zedekiah; and for means, God afforded them the ministry of this prophet. Repentance applied to man signifieth a change of heart and counsels, as well as of his course of actions: in the unchangeable God it only signifieth the turning of the course of his providence, not bringing that evil upon them for the evil of their doings which, supposing their progress and obstinacy in their sinful courses, he had fully resolved to bring upon them.

Jeremiah 26:4

A course of actions in Scripture is ordinarily called a way; in which sense we often read of

the way of the Lord, the way of the wicked, the way of the righteous, & c.; and a motion in this course is usually called walking, Psa_1:1 Eze_18:9, and applied both to God and men. To walk in God's laws is expounded by hearkening unto them, or (as in other places) by observing, keeping, and doing them. God is said to have set his laws before them, both in respect of their first promulgation to them at Sinai, and writing them in tables; and the

daily expositions and urging of them upon their practice by his servants the prophets, as it followeth.

Jeremiah 26:5

My servants the prophets; those prophets who in prophesying were my servants, revealing my will unto you. *Hearkening* here is the same with hearkening unto God's laws mentioned Jer_26:4.

Whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them; whom I have made my business to send unto you; and to whom you ought therefore to have hearkened, as unto me, but you have not done it hitherto, 2Ch_36:12,**16**.

Jeremiah 26:6

Shiloh was the city where the tabernacle was pitched, and the ark, the symbol of God's presence, was, Jud_18:31 **21:19** 1Sa_1:3,**9,24 3:21**. Out of it the ark was carried, 1Sa_4:3, when it was taken by the Philistines, and was carried no more thither, but rested in Kirjath-jearim, 1Sa_7:2, where it rested twenty years. David fetched it from thence, 2Sa_6:2. So that, as the psalmist tells us, Psa_78:60,**61**, *God forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh* ; here he threateneth to do the like as to the temple, because of which they had such a confidence. Jeremiah, Jer_7:12, had spoken much the same thing; it is a threatening that God would deprive them of his ordinances. To which he addeth a threatening of destruction to the city, to that degree, that when men should curse any place, they should say, God do unto thee as he did to Jerusalem. We had the like phrase Jer_24:9, and have it again Jer_29:18,**22**, &c.

Jeremiah 26:7

All the people present at that time heard the prophet, who, according to the command of God, came into the court of the Lord's house, and discharged his office, speaking these words.

Jeremiah 26:8

Either they had a reverence for the prophet, or the terror of God fell upon them, so as they did not interrupt him till he had fully despatched his errand. Then the chief of the priests, with the assistance of the people, apprehend him, and tell him he should be put to death.

Jeremiah 26:9

They charge him with being a false prophet, speaking false things in the name of God; their pretence seemeth to have been from the promises of God; such as that, Psa_132:13,14, *For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it* . Which they interpreted into such a sense, as if they could not by their sin drive God away from them, and therefore Jeremiah must prophesy falsely against the will of God before revealed. This caused a seditious tumult of the people in the temple, which alarmed the civil magistrates.

Jeremiah 26:10

When the nobles and other civil magistrates heard of the tumult, occasioned by Jeremiah's displeasing prophecy, they came from the king's court, where the nobles and great officers in nations usually are, to the temple; *and sat down at the entry of the new gate in the Lord's house* . Some think it was called the *new gate* because repaired by Jotham, 2Ki_15:35 2Ch_27:3. Some say it was the eastern, others that it was the western gate. It was certainly the place where their sanhedrim, who were to judge of false prophets, were wont to sit.

Jeremiah 26:11

In the corrupt state of all kingdoms and cities, the ecclesiastical officers always were the greatest enemies to the faithful ministers of God, as we shall find in the whole story both of the Old and New Testament. They speak to the members of the great court, who are called princes, and also to the people who were in the court, charging Jeremiah with sedition, by prophesying falsely, which was a capital crime. It was the charge against Stephen, Act_6:13, that he spake *blasphemous words against the holy place* . To prove this they appeal to those of the people that had heard him.

Jeremiah 26:12

The priests having given Jeremiah his charge, he makes his defence. The sum of which was, he acknowledgeth that he had prophesied against the temple, and against the city, and tacitly acknowledgeth their power to take cognizance of seditious persons and false prophets, and doth not deny but such persons

deserved to die; but denieth that he was a false prophet, or guilty of any design to stir up sedition, for he had said nothing but what God had sent him to speak; and therefore could not prophesy what was false, nor was to be charged with any seditious design.

Jeremiah 26:13

It is not I that have pronounced evil against you, but the Lord, who made both you and me: you rage against me, who am but God's instrument, by whom he lets you know his mind and will; it were more advisable for you to reform your wicked lives and practices; and that by a full obedience to what the Lord hath commanded you in his law, and by me speaketh to you. If you will do this, the Lord will change the course of his providence, and do that which in men is called a repenting, and not bring those evil things upon you which he, by me his servant, hath pronounced against you.

Jeremiah 26:14

I am in your hand; that is, I am in your power (as hand often signifieth in Scripture). Jeremiah doth not by this acknowledge any power they had justly thus to restrain and question him. Nor doth he dare them to do what they had a natural power to do, by saying,

Do with me what seemeth good unto you; the phrase imports no more than that he could not hinder their doing with him what they pleased. The hands in which he was were the hands of violence, not of justice; for though they had a just power against false prophets, yet they had no such power against any prophet sent by God, let the matter of his prophecy be never so threatening and ungrateful to them. Therefore he addeth,

Jeremiah 26:15

If you make this sedition, and put me to death for it, you have a natural power to do it, but you will get nothing by it, but further bring down the vengeance of God upon you by shedding my blood without a cause, the guilt of which will be added to your other guilt, and lie upon you, and upon your city: for you may think and talk what you please, it is a certain truth, that I spake nothing out of any evil design, nor of my own head; but only what the Lord sent me to speak.

Jeremiah 26:16

The judges in this case, with the assent of the people, acquit the prophet, and vindicate him from the charge of sedition given against him by the corrupt priests and false prophets, distinguishing betwixt one who of his own head spreadeth false news, and threateneth evil to a place, and one who doth it by authority from God, or by Divine revelation, which is here meant by

in the name of our Lord God. Thus the civil magistrates taught the priests and prophets a point of divinity, which they ought not to have been ignorant of. Some may inquire how the princes knew that Jeremiah spake what he spake in the name of the Lord. To which it may be replied, that Jeremiah had been a prophet now about twenty years, for he began in the thirteenth of Josiah, Jer_1:1,2. Josiah reigned thirty-one years, 2Ki_22:1. Then Shallum or Jehoahaz reigned three months; this was in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, in which time they had had a large experience both of his doctrine and conversation; and though the priests and prophets, who had had the like experience, were filled with malice and prejudice, yet the princes and a part of the people were more equal; and though the people were many of them led away with the priests, yet hearing the prophet's defence, and the princes' judgment upon it, they concur with them to acquit the prophet.

Jeremiah 26:17

Probably these

elders were some of the court, or else advocates, for they were wont to rise up, either to plead or to judge, Isa_3:13 Act_5:34. They rise up and apply themselves to the people to justify their absolutory sentence.

Jeremiah 26:18

This was that

Micah whose prophecies are part of holy writ, as appeareth by Mic_1:1 **3:12**, where are the very words of the prophecy here mentioned. The substance of that prophecy was the same with this of Jeremiah, that Zion should be ploughed up, and the place where

the temple stood should become so desolate that trees should grow there, as in a wood or forest.

Jeremiah 26:19

The interrogation here hath the force of a negation; that is, Hezekiah, and the sanhedrim in his time, did not go about to call him in question for his life, nor put him to death; his prophecy had a quite contrary effect on him; it begat in him an awe and dread of that God in whose name the prophet spake, and quickened him to apply himself to God by earnest prayer: and the course he took had a very good issue; the Lord did not do what he threatened to do. Now if we should take a quite contrary course, and put this man to death, we should do contrary to what that good prince did, (and that with good success,) do ourselves no good, but

procure great evil against our souls; that is, against ourselves, both bodies and souls strictly taken.

Jeremiah 26:20

This is a piece of story which we have recorded in no other part of Scripture. Some judge these words were the words of the same that spake before; but this is not likely, for then they had brought one instance for acquitting him, another for the condemning of him. They are therefore rather to be interpreted as the words of some others, either of the court, who were enemies to Jeremiah, or of his accusers, or their counsel, urging a later precedent, in the time of Jehoiakim, the king that at this time reigned, who also pretended to speak in the name of the Lord, and whose prophecy was the same in substance with this of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 26:21

When Jehoiakim, our present king, and all his great men, heard of it, (probably by the information of others,) they judged it a capital crime, and used means to apprehend him, in order to the putting him to death, upon which the prophet being advertised of it, and fearing the issue, fled into Egypt.

Jeremiah 26:22

The innocent prophet considered not the king of Judah's alliance with the king of Egypt, (obliging him upon demand to deliver up any of his subjects who, being charged with capital crimes, should flee into his country for sanctuary,) and fled thither; but the king

sent after him one of his great men, (mentioned also Jer_36:12) with some others to his assistance.

Jeremiah 26:23

These persons sent by Jehoiakim brought back the prophet by force; he was tried and cast, judged worthy to die, and put to death, and ignominiously buried, not in the sepulchres of the prophets, or any men of repute and fashion, but amongst the vulgar people; which, as also his diligence to send for Urijah, (fled into a foreign country to save his life,) showed the great malice of this prince against the Lord's true prophets; though it had but very ill effects. The sum is, (if we take these words as the speech of Jeremiah's enemies,) What do you tell us of what Hezekiah did, you have a later instance of it in our present king's time, the cases of Urijah and of Jeremiah are fully paralleled. So as the case is a judged case.

Jeremiah 26:24

Though Jeremiah's enemies pleaded this instance of Urijah, which had this advantage of the other, because it was matter of fact done lately, and a case judged in this very king's reign; yet *the hand*, that is, the power and interest, of one

Ahikam, who, as appears from 2Ki_22:12, was one of Josiah's counsellors, and the father of Gedaliah, Jer_39:14, who upon the taking of the city was made governor, Jer_40:5,

was with Jeremiah. So as, through the good providence of God, Jeremiah was not delivered *into the hands of the people*, some of whom were mutable, and malicious enough, ready to do any thing the priests put them upon. And the after-advancement of the son of this Ahikam to be governor of Judah may justly be interpreted a reward in this life, which God gave him for his kindness to his prophet.

Jeremiah 27:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 27

The prophet sendeth yokes to five neighbour kings, thereby foreshowing their subjection to Nebuchadnezzar, Jer_27:1-7. he exhorteth them to yield, and not to believe false prophets, Jer_27:8-11. The like he doth to Zedekiah, Jer_27:12-18. The

remnant of the vessels shall be carried to Babylon, and continue there till the appointed time, Jer_27:19-22.

Here is a difficulty ariseth from this verse, which there have been various attempts to resolve, and whether any hath been fully satisfactory I doubt. *It is said this word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim* , and, Jer_27:3, the prophet is bid *to send the bonds and yokes by the hand of the messengers which came to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah* , who began not to reign till about eleven years after the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. To solve this difficulty,

1. Some think Jehoiakim was a common name to all the sons of Josiah, and that Zedekiah is here called Jehoiakim, but I see no foundation for that conjecture from holy writ.
2. Others think it is an error in those that copied out the prophecies, but it is dangerous to admit that.
3. Others think that the prophecy came in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, but was to be concealed until the reign of Zedekiah.
4. I had rather agree with those who think that this command came to the prophet first in the time of Jehoiakim, but was to be repeated by the prophet often, and accordingly was so until and in the time of Zedekiah; not that he always went about with bonds and yokes about his neck, but that by times lie put them on, and went about with them, as a type of that bondage which the Jews were suddenly to endure.

Jeremiah 27:2

God commandeth the prophet to procure, either by his own labour, or with his money, some yokes, with bonds to make them more fast; and to put some one of them upon his own neck, that therein he might be a type both to his own people, and also the people afterward mentioned, that they should be in bondage to the king of Babylon, and their yoke should be so fastened with bonds, that they should not be able to slip them, or get them from off their necks.

Jeremiah 27:3

It was and is the custom of neighbour princes, to send ambassadors into each other's countries to reside there, and maintain correspondence on the behalf of their masters. These nations were neighbours to the Jews, and their princes had their ambassadors resident at Jerusalem. Jeremiah is directed to carry each of these ambassadors a yoke with a bond, as a present from God to their masters; the meaning he is also ordered to tell them in the following words.

Jeremiah 27:4

The Lord of hosts, who hath therefore a power over all the creatures; who though he be in a special sense

the God of Israel, yet his dominion is extended to your masters' countries, as well as unto Israel.

Jeremiah 27:5

To evince to them that his dominion extendeth to them, he mindeth them that he was the first efficient cause of all the creatures, and made both all men and all beasts that are upon the earth, and therefore had a special propriety in them, and a universal power over them, it being in his power to dispose of what was at first the work of his hands, and accordingly in the methods and workings of his providence he did daily dispose of kingdoms and nations according to his pleasure, without being for such disposal of them accountable unto any person.

Jeremiah 27:6

By the former words God gave the prophet authority to assert his dominion, and right to dispose of all creatures; by these he authorizeth him to reveal his will, concerning the disposal of the lands of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Zidon, viz. that he had disposed of them to

Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, whom he calleth his servant, because he did the work which he would have him to do; though, as God said of the Assyrian, Isa_10:7, he meant not so, he had nothing less in his thoughts than to obey any command of God; wicked men being God's servants, as the hawk is the prudent falconer's servant, who maketh use of the ravenous quality of the hawk to get game for him. Twice more at least we

find Nebuchadnezzar thus called, Jer_25:9 **43:10**. God further adds that

the beasts should serve him, by which he either means that the cattle which were in the possession of the men of those nations should also come into his power; or that God had also given the horses, and oxen, and other beasts which he should use in his wars for carriages, or conveniency to him, so as they should be really serviceable to him in his conquests of those countries.

Jeremiah 27:7

All nations shall serve him; that is, all these nations; and some think that it is expressed in the article used here demonstratively, though not so taken notice of by our translators. *And his son, and his son 's son* ; and Evil-merodach his son, who succeeded him, Jer_52:31, and Belshazzar his grandchild, Dan_4:1,**11**. Until the period of his kingdom shall come, (for nations have their periods,) which was after *seventy years* , according to Jer_29:10, during which years some say four princes ruled in Babylon, the Scripture mentions but three. After that he shall himself be conquered, as it came to pass in Belshazzar's time, Dan_5:30, Darius the emperor of the Medes taking his kingdom.

Jeremiah 27:8

That is, that will not, upon Nebuchadnezzar's coming against them, freely submit to his power, and yield themselves to his subjection. I will humble them by my sore judgments of *sword*, *pestilence* , and *famine* , and make them yield; and they shall not avoid what through their stubbornness they study to avoid, but shall at last be brought under by his power.

Jeremiah 27:9

It is uncertain whether these words were part of the message which Jeremiah by command from God sent to the kings above mentioned, or the prophet's words to the Jews; for as those pagan nations had

diviners, dreamers, enchanters, and sorcerers, so the Jews had them also, Isa_47:12,**13**: the meaning is, Harken to none of them that pretend as from God to foretell your escape from this judgment, and not being brought into servitude to the king of, Babylon, for you shall serve the king of Babylon. *By prophets* he

means such as pretended to some Divine revelations. By *diviners* he means soothsayers, of which were several sorts. By *dreamers*, such as pretend to revelations in their sleep. By *enchanters* and *sorcerers*, he means their astrologers, and such as used necromancy, or by any unlawful ways and means pretended to know the mind and will of God.

Jeremiah 27:10

Let them come by their pretended knowledge which way they will, what they say is false; and the issue of your belief of what they say will be nothing but your carrying into captivity out of your own country, and your ruin and destruction.

Jeremiah 27:11

Those that upon the first summons, or without making any hostile opposition, shall yield themselves servants to the king of Babylon, they shall remain still, and be left in the land to till the ground, and shall dwell therein. It is the time when God is resolved to put an end to the kingdom of Judah for a time, and to the other nations mentioned for ever: there is therefore no resisting of God's counsels; those that most quietly yield will be in the best condition.

Jeremiah 27:12

Some think this was at another time, but it is most probable it was the same time.

Jeremiah 27:13

That is, Why wilt thou wilfully not only ruin thyself, but thy innocent people, by the sword, the famine, and the pestilence? The word is spoken by the Lord, that all nations who will not willingly yield to the king of Babylon shall be thus destroyed.

Jeremiah 27:14

We shall find throughout all the Jewish story that wicked princes never wanted false prophets, ecclesiastical ministers who would entitle God to what they spake in humour to their governors. Such ministers they would have, and usually they proved fatal to them: so did Ahab's prophets, that encouraged him to go up to Ramoth-gilead, and Zedekiah's prophets, who persuaded him not to submit to the king of Babylon. Jeremiah persuades Zedekiah not to hearken to them; that is, not to believe them, nor follow their

advice; and he giveth him a good reason, because what they said was false.

Jeremiah 27:15

They make use of my name, and pretend to say what they say by commission from me, saith the Lord; but there is no such thing, I never gave them authority to speak any such things. And though possibly they do not design your ruin by these practices, for none can be thought to design their own ruin, yet that will be the end of it; for by this means your hearts are hardened against the revelations of my will, by which I shall be provoked to give you up to ruin; nor shall they escape, for they shall be ruined with you.

Jeremiah 27:16

The prophet, like God's faithful servant, spared none, but faithfully gave warning to all sorts, to take heed of the false prophets that undertook to foretell that the vessels of the temple carried away in the time of Jehoiakim, and his son Jehoiachin or Jeconiah, of which we read 2Ch_36:7,10, should be brought back again to Jerusalem in a short time.

Jeremiah 27:17

Believe them not, but satisfy yourselves as to God's providence with respect to you, and be content to be subject to the king of Babylon, so may you have your lives for a prey; though you be straitened as to your accommodations and plenteous and splendid way of life: if you do not, your city will certainly be laid waste; and why should you pull such a judgment upon your own heads?

Jeremiah 27:18

If they be true prophets, End have any communion with God, instead of foretelling the bringing back of the vessels carried away, let them apply themselves to hinder the carrying away of what vessels yet remain, and that either in the house of the Lord, or the king's house, or in Jerusalem; which is to be done no other way than by pleading with God to turn away his wrath, and not to bring those sore judgments which he is most certainly bringing upon you.

Jeremiah 27:19

These were all parts of the temple, or vessels used in it. See **1Ki 7**.

Jeremiah 27:20

Concerning the persons and things which the king of Babylon then carried away, see 2Ki_24:13-15.

Jeremiah 27:21

The prophet enlargeth his prophetic threatening, and makes it extend to all other vessels of price, in the houses of the king, the nobles, or more wealthy citizens.

Jeremiah 27:22

They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be: see the fulfilling of this prophecy, 2Ki_25:13-15, 2Ch_36:18; and that they abode in Babylon till the end of the captivity, appeareth from Dan_5:2, where we read of Belshazzar's sending for them to drink wine in at his fatal feast.

Until the day that I visit them; that is, until the expiration of the time of the Jewish captivity, which was seventy years.

Then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place; the fulfilling of that part of the prophecy we have Ezr_1:7-11, in these words, *Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem .* So punctually was Jeremiah's prophecy in this place fulfilled, and so exactly doth one part of holy writ agree with another, which are great arguments to prove the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

Jeremiah 28:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 28

Hananiah's false prophecy: Jeremiah's answer, Jer_28:1-9. Hananiah breaketh Jeremiah's yoke: he foretelleth an iron yoke, and Hananiah's death, Jer_28:10-17.

Here is a great appearing difficulty, viz. *how the fourth year* could be called

the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, who reigned in all but eleven years, which if they be divided into three parts, the fourth year can hardly be in any propriety called the beginning of his reign. Many things are said to untie this knot, which by such as are curious may be read both in the English Annotations and in Mr. Pool's Synopsis, I shall only repeat what seemed to both them, and seemeth also to me, the best solution. Though it be said *in the fourth year*, yet it is not said, in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign; they therefore think, that *the fourth year of the sabbatical course is here intended*. The Jews had a kind of jubilee every seventh year, it was a year when the land was to rest, and not be tilled, Lev_25:1-4, and in that year they were to release their debtors and servants, Deu_15:1; which notion of this fourth year is very probable, if the year wherein the city was besieged was a sabbatical year, or year of rest. For if Zedekiah's first year were the fourth of the seven that made the *sabbatical circle*, his third year was another sabbatical year, and his tenth another, presently after which the city was taken.

Of this

Hananiah we read no more in Scripture; it is probable from the place where he lived, which was one of the cities of the priests, that he was a priest, but no more than a pretended prophet. He comes to Jeremiah in the temple, where he was wont to deliver his prophecies, to confront him in the presence both of the priests and the people, saying,

Jeremiah 28:2

The false prophet counterfeiteth the style of the true prophets, both in the names which he gives unto God, and in speaking of what God would do, as if already done.

Jeremiah 28:3

It appeareth by what we met with Jer_27:16, that this was the constant song of the city prophets at that time, but we read not of any but this Hananiah, who was so confident as to limit a time; nor doth he mention any long time, he saith

within two full years; but he spake falsely, for it appeareth, from Jer_52:31, that Jeconiah was there thirty-seven years.

Jeremiah 28:4

Only it is admirable, that being so nigh the king's court he should mention the return of Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, which, had it been true, must have been to the prejudice of Zedekiah, for Jeconiah was the right heir to the crown, being the son of Jehoiakim. Zedekiah his uncle was put in by the conqueror, but it is probable he saw Jehoiachin was more acceptable to the people, and that the faction for the nephew was greater than for the uncle. False teachers are always on the greatest side, either for number or for power.

Jeremiah 28:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 28:6

The true *prophet Jeremiah* speaks to this false prophet with as much boldness as he had spoke to him with impudence, and in the same presence of the priests and of the people, but with a preface of great charity and modesty.

Amen, saith he; which particle is used in holy writ, either as a particle of *assertion* , as it is most ordinarily used both in this single form, and doubled by our Saviour in the gospel; or as a particle of *wishing and praying* , upon which account it is used in the Lord's prayer, though there it signifieth more than here, viz. a *faith or belief* that God will grant the petitions, as well as a *desire* that he would grant them; here it signifieth no more than the latter, and is expounded by the next words: nor indeed doth it, or can it here, signify so much as an absolute hearty desire, for Jeremiah could not heartily pray for that which God had told him he would not do. Jeremiah therefore must be understood here, either to have spoken only as a man, testifying the kindness he had for his country; then the sense is, If it be the will of God, or may it be the will of God; I wish what thou hast said might come to pass: or else in *sensu composito* : q.d. The Lord give unto this people a heart to reform and amend their ways, that the words which thou hast spoken may come to pass.

Jeremiah 28:7

The word which I am now about to speak concerneth, thee, and not thee alone, but all the people; therefore do thou mark it well, and let them mark it also.

Jeremiah 28:8

That is, Thou and I are not the first prophets that have foretold to countries and nations the great judgments of God coming upon them,

war, evil, pestilence: by *evil* , some think is to be understood famine, but it is not much material.

Jeremiah 28:9

By peace is here meant prosperity, all good being by the Hebrews usually understood under the notion of *peace* . The prophets either prophesied evil or good, according as God revealed his will unto them; what way was for them to discover whether the prophets were truly sent of God, yea or no? It was known by the event: this was the rule God set, Deu_18:22,

When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken. But this was not true on the contrary part, for a prophet might speak a thing, which thing might come to pass, and yet be none of the Lord's prophets, nor be hearkened to, as appeareth from Deu_13:1-3. Some have thought that prophecies concerning good things always were brought to pass if the prophet were a true prophet, but it appeareth otherwise from Jer_18:9,10. Prophecies both concerning good and evil might not come to pass, and yet the prophet be a true prophet, in case the manners of the people altered; for in all promises or threatenings of temporal good or evil there is a condition to be understood; God neither by his promises bindeth himself to do good to wicked men, nor by his threatenings tieth up his own hands from showing mercy to such as turn good: but some observe yet this difference, that good things are in Scripture never absolutely promised, but they come certainly to pass, and are fulfilled; but God for terror often threateneth evil things, without expressing any condition, when notwithstanding a condition is understood, upon the fulfilling of which the threatening cometh not to pass, as it was in the case of

Nineveh, upon the prophecy of Jonah. But the greater difficulty is to determine by what rule they could judge one a true or false prophet, if they might not always judge by the event, the coming or not coming to pass of what he prophesied. I answer, they were to judge from the word of God, as well as from the event, Isa_8:20; therefore, Deu_13:1-3, the people were commanded not to hearken to that prophet which should confirm what he said by a sign or wonder, if his scope were by it to persuade people to idolatry. So that if a prophet prophesied good and prosperity to any people, the people were to consider what his scope was, and whether what he prophesied was according to the law of God, which speaketh no good to a wicked impenitent people; and though what he said came to pass, yet he was to be determined no true prophet, if what he said were contrary to God's revealed will, or his scope in speaking of it was to harden people in sinful courses, or to seduce them from the right ways of God. Jeremiah here, as to the trial of the truth of his and Hananiah's contrary prophecies, appealeth to the event, telling him that he as a man heartily wished that his words might prove true.

Jeremiah 28:10

The prophet Jeremiah's coming into the temple with a yoke upon his neck, as a type of the yoke of the king of Babylon, under which the Jews were to come, gave occasion to the affront given him by the false prophet; in a further degree of impudence, being thus confronted by Jeremiah, he pulls the yoke off Jeremiah's neck, and breaketh it in a high and impudent contempt of God, and his will revealed by this prophet, and confirmed by this yoke as a sign, adding also the following words.

Jeremiah 28:11

As God hath his sacraments to confirm the truth of his word, of which his ministers are the stewards and administrators; so the devil hath his sacraments, of which his prophets are the administrators. God by his prophet Jeremiah had revealed his will as to the king of Babylon's success against many nations, and bringing them into his servitude; as a sacrament or sign of this, he had commanded Jeremiah to put on a yoke with bonds. Hananiah, the false prophet, cometh in the name of God, and declares the contrary, that within two years God would break the yoke of the

king of Babylon, and free the nations in subjection to him; and as a sacrament or sign to gain credit to this falsehood, he plucks off Jeremiah's yoke, and breaks it, and expounds himself that God should so break the king of Babylon's yoke from the neck of all nations, and pretends he had a commission from God to say this. Jeremiah, not able to endure to hear such lies, goeth away in testimony of his dissent from him, and adherence to what he had said.

Jeremiah 28:12

Some time after this, God taking notice of the affront put upon his prophet Jeremiah, for faithfully discharging the message with which he had intrusted him, revealeth his mind unto Jeremiah, that he might declare it unto the people, and particularly to this false prophet.

Jeremiah 28:13

Jeremiah seeing the impudence of Hananiah, and that his further discourse with him would do no good, but it may be have caused more danger to himself, prophesying what was more ungrateful to the people than what the false prophet prophesied, and possibly desirous further to know the will of God, withdrew himself. Soon after God sends him back to the people and to Hananiah with this message, That he by his false prophecy had done the people no good, but much hurt, further incensed God against them, and provoked him to make their judgment heavier, giving them iron yokes instead of those of wood.

Jeremiah 28:14

For notwithstanding all he had said, God was resolved to justify his word, and to bring them under subjection to Nebuchadnezzar, and to give all they had also into his power.

Jeremiah 28:15

Jeremiah being a second time confirmed in the truth of his revelation, and having likewise a special revelation relating to this false prophet, comes now and tells him his doom, viz. that he should die within a year, because he had taught people to believe, and to hope for, and trust to what was false, and they were never like to see.

Jeremiah 28:16

And because by this his doctrine he had made God a liar, contradicting his will revealed by Jeremiah, and by it taught people to hold out against Nebuchadnezzar, and not quietly to yield to him.

Jeremiah 28:17

That is, within the compass of a year after that Jeremiah had spoken these words, within two months after that Jeremiah had thus prophesied, as appeareth from Jer_28:1; so dangerous a thing it is for ministers to teach people contrary to the revealed will of God.

Jeremiah 29:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 29

Jeremiah's letter to the captives in Babylon, to be quiet there, Jer_29:1-7: not to believe false prophets; nor expect to return till after seventy years, Jer_29:8-14. The destruction of those who remained in Judah for their disobedience, Jer_29:15-19. The fearful end of two lying prophets, Jer_29:20-23. Shemaiah's letter against Jeremiah, Jer_29:24-29, who readeth his doom, Jer_29:30-32.

There were two carryings into the captivity of Babylon, the latter about eleven or twelve years after the former; the first was in the time of Jehoiachin, of which we read in 2Ki_24:14, when *the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths, were carried away*, as we read there, amongst whom were some priests and prophets.

Jeremiah 29:2

After this captivity.

Jeremiah 29:3

Zedekiah the king of Judah having some occasion to send two messengers, named *Elasah* and *Gemariah*, to Babylon, whether to carry his tribute money or upon what other errand is not expressed; Jeremiah, knowing that as there were some false prophets at Jerusalem, who fed people with hopes of a speedy return, so there were some with them in Babylon who did the like, (two of which he afterwards in this chapter reflecteth upon,) writeth the following letter, and sends it by these two messengers,

to quiet the people's minds, and to help to compose their spirits, disturbed by these false prophets, and raised up to vain and idle hopes, for which there was no ground at all.

Jeremiah 29:4

So as this letter was not wrote from himself, advising them charitably, but he had commission from God, by whom he mindeth them, as the principal efficient cause they were ordered to be carried away by, though their own sins were the meritorious cause, and Nebuchadnezzar with his captains and soldiers where the instrumental cause.

Jeremiah 29:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 29:6

That is, Be not uneasy in your minds, not resolving what to do, through the prophecies of the false prophets, that tell you the captivity shall be but two years, or at least very short; but do all things which you would do if Babylon were to be your fixed habitation (as it is like to be for seventy years, say the prophets what they please); marry, and give and take in marriage, do whatsoever it becometh prudent men to do, who would accommodate themselves in a place where they are like to abide, and preserve their families, that they might not be utterly extinguished. The words must not be understood as a precept, obliging all in the captivity to do every of these things, which it may be they were not able all to do, but as a counsel and advice not to forbear any thing of this nature, which they would do, if they did fully believe they were to abide in a place seventy years.

Jeremiah 29:7

That is, Seek to God for it, or rather live peaceably in it, and by all lawful means seek the welfare of it; do not raise any tumults or seditions, nor take part with those that do. And while your captivity lasts do you pray for it; (from whence those who think that Christ hath added new moral precepts, and reckon this precept of praying for enemies as one, may understand that praying for enemies was but a branch of that love to our neighbour which God required under the Old Testament;) for it was lawful for them to pray against Babylon at other times, Psa_137:8 Jer_51:35; but

when God hath put a yoke upon our necks, we must patiently wait until he takes it off. The lawyers say that *protection requireth allegiance to governors* . This text lets us know also that it requireth our prayers for them, though they be conquerors and tyrants.

For in the peace thereof shall ye have peace; for God having by his providence cast us under their power, our peace dependeth upon theirs.

Jeremiah 29:8

The Lord knows that you have a company of false prophets that tell you other things, and promise you a sudden return out of your captivity, pretending to know it by revelation from God, or by divination, &c., or to have it discovered to them in dreams. It is the will of God that you should not hearken to them, for they do but deceive you, and ye are accessory to your own ruin; they see you are pleased to hear such stories, and that causeth them to dream, as Jer_5:31, *The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so* . Thus, Isa_30:10, they said *to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not to us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits* . False teachers and guides of people's souls are the greatest plague can befall a nation, people from them expecting to hear the mind of God, and for the most part people are accessory to their own ruin in them. It can indeed hardly be imagined what other temptation persons whose office it is to reveal the mind of God should have to do otherwise, but the humouring and pleasing of a corrupt people, who through their fondness of their lusts are not patient of sound doctrine; so as though the church of God hath in all ages been troubled with dreamers, yet it is a wicked people that causeth them to dream.

Jeremiah 29:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 29:10

From this text appears that the seventy years' captivity was to be accounted from the first carrying into captivity in the time of Jehoiachin, so that eleven years of it were elapsed before Zedekiah was carried away. Whatever, saith the prophet, these

dreamers tell you, you must abide seventy years in Babylon, accounted from your first going thither; it is therefore your wisdom to acquiesce in the will of God, and to compose yourselves; and, to encourage you, the Lord by me assureth you, that after those seventy years shall be expired, as he hath now visited you with evil, so he will visit you for good, and fulfill the promise he hath made to you, and you shall return again to Jerusalem. We have the fulfilling of this recorded in 2Ch_36:21,22 **Ezr 1:1**. The promise was before, Jer_25:12 **27:22**. Daniel understood it from the words of this prophecy, Dan_9:2, which put him upon prayer at the expiration of that time.

Jeremiah 29:11

This deliverance will not depend upon your merits, but upon my own mercy and kind thoughts and purposes. I have for the seed of Abraham my servant, and I am resolved in my own thoughts what to do; I intend not the blotting out of the name of Israel from the earth, but to give such an end to their trouble as themselves expect and desire, though not so soon as they may expect it, being deceived by their prophets. There shall be an end of your captivity in my time, and that is after you shall have fulfilled seventy years in that captivity.

Jeremiah 29:12

I will not only give you a temporal salvation and deliverance, and bring you into your own land, but you shall go thither with new hearts; you shall worship idols no more, but you shall worship me, and be serious and diligent in your addresses and applications to me, and I will listen to you in those applications.

Jeremiah 29:13

That is, sincerely, as Psa_119:2.

Jeremiah 29:14

This verse containeth no more than was said before, only it is repeated in a little different phrase, for the further confirmation of their faith, and the promise is a little enlarged. God saith he will be *found of them* , that is, he will answer them. It is expressed in this nation to correspond with the term seeking, by which prayer is expressed, and to let us know that those that will have God's favour must *find it* ; which implieth a seeking and inquiry after it.

The promise, which before mentioned only their return from Babylon, is enlarged, and made here to extend to all places whither they were driven; for though the body of the people were carried to Babylon, yet it is more than probable that many of them shifted for themselves into other countries, and were in exile, but not in captivity. Cyrus's proclamation, 2Ch_36:22,23, extended to his whole empire.

Jeremiah 29:15

The prophet here turneth his speech to some wicked Jews that were in Babylon, or in Judea, and more believed some false prophets, who told them of a much quicker return, than Jeremiah telling them the truth from the mouth of God,

Jeremiah 29:16

The word

know is, as some think, needlessly supplied, for the following particle might be as well translated *for* , or *because* , or *therefore* . By the king he meaneth Zedekiah, whom he chooseth to express under the notion of him

that sitteth upon the throne of David, to take away the vain hopes which the Jews conceived from the promises which God had made to David, and to his seed.

Jeremiah 29:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 29:18

These verses contain no more than the threatening which we have had more than once before. He had compared them to *vile figs* , Jer_24:8,9,10 there threatened them with being made *a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, and a curse* ; and consuming them with the sword, famine, and pestilence: the same thing before delivered by word of mouth to those in Judea, is here repeated in a letter to that part of the Jews in Babylon, to take them off from giving credit to their false prophets, whether in Judea or in Babylon, who deluded them with the promises of a speedy return. Believe it, (saith the prophet,) you shall be so far from returning, whatever your idle prophets tell you, that your brethren that are here shall be brought to you, or destroyed with the *sword* , the *famine* , and the

pestilence , or scattered into other kingdoms, where they shall be made

a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach.

Jeremiah 29:19

A contempt of the word of the Lord was the cause of this people's ruin, and will be the cause of ruin to any people. See Jer_7:26 **11:7,8 17:23**. Lest they should say that they only disobeyed the prophets, God mindeth them that in not hearkening to them they did not hearken to him. The same thing Christ saith of the gospel ministers, Luk_10:16. The not believing, or not obeying, what ministers teach not in a due discharge of their office of revealing the will of God, is no contempt of God, but of them, who for that cause deserve to be contemned; but supposing that what ministers deliver be the mind and will of God revealed in holy writ, and but a true explication and application of that, not to hearken to God and not to hearken to them is the same thing.

Ye would not hear, saith the Lord; ye wilfully refused to believe them, speaking the truth to you in my name, and to obey those monitions they gave you by my direction. All this was a not hearing God.

Jeremiah 29:20

Those phrases, **I have sent**,

and *I have driven* , &c., are diligently to be observed by us. There is no evil in cities or nations which is an evil of punishment, but, whoever be the instruments to bring it, God is the author of it. These phrases also signified to those Jews that God was likeliest to know best how long they should stay there, because he sent them thither.

Jeremiah 29:21

Of these two persons we read no more in holy writ: that they pretended to be prophets, that they abused the name of God, pretending to reveal his will, whereas what they said was not the will of God, but a falsehood, we learn out of this verse; and that they were both of them burnt by the king of Babylon we find in Jer_29:22. What the falsehoods they published were is not expressed, but it is most probable they were some of those that pretended that God had revealed to them, that within two years, or

a short time, the captives carried away with Jehoiakim should return out of Babylon. God here tells those that were of the captivity, that those two wretches should themselves be slain by the king of Babylon.

Jeremiah 29:22

As false teachers are of the highest sort of transgressors, speaking lies in the name and under pretence of the authority of the God of truth; so God in his providence ordinarily makes them the greatest examples of his vengeance. God threateneth to bring them to an end that should turn into a proverb, that when men had a mind to curse others, wishing them the greatest evils, they should pray to God to make them like Ahab and Zedekiah, whom the king of Babylon burnt, or roasted in the fire; the word *Mlq* signifieth both, *Lev_2:14*; and roasting signifieth only to burn by degrees, which probably was the specifical punishment of these two false prophets, for we learn from the instance of the three children, *Dan_3:19*, that the consuming of persons slowly in a fiery furnace was a kind of punishment in use amongst the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 29:23

The reason here given must not be understood as the reason of the king of Babylon's punishment of them, but why God gave them up into his hands, because they had committed **villany** or *folly* in Israel; which is expounded by the next words, they had

committed adultery with their neighbours' wives. All sin is *folly*, and so called in Scripture, uncleanness particularly, *Gen_34:7*; here it is called villany, to denote the heinousness of it, especially in those whose office it was to teach others that they ought not to do it, *Rom_2:22*. Falsehood in discharge of a trust is ordinarily attended with debauchery of life, nor indeed can it be reasonably imagined that those who, to humour men, have debauched their consciences, and declared things as the will of God, which they know are not so, should be more true and honest in their conversation towards men. The second crime of these false prophets was, what gave them their denomination, teaching people what God never bid them speak. Now this, saith the Lord,

I know, and am a witness to; their adulteries are in secret, but I am a witness to them; the poor people do not know that they teach

them lies, but I know it. God will deal with men not according to what men like themselves know of them, and can prove against them, but according to what he knows and can witness against them.

Jeremiah 29:24

We have no guidance from any other scripture to teach us who this

Shemaiah was, but it is very probable that he was one of those who at this time were in the captivity of Babylon, and so came to the knowledge of Jeremiah's letter, mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, and wrote what followeth to Zephaniah, the son of Masseiah the priest, and the rest of the priests, to have Jeremiah punished; but why he is called the

Nehelamite is not so evident, for that the word is derived from *MLwx* a dreamer, is not very probable; we read of no such place in Judea as Nehelain or Halem, but we cannot imagine that the names of all the towns in Judah are to be found in Scripture: he is thrice in this chapter called the *Nehelamite* ; so as it is probable that there was such a place as Nehelam, from whence he was.

Jeremiah 29:25

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 29:26

Priest, that is, high priest, as some have thought; but it appears from *2Ki_25:18*, that Seraiah was at this time the high priest, and this Zephaniah was the second priest, as he is there styled, as also *Jer_52:24*; nor must any think that the Jehoiada here meant was the immediate predecessor of Zephaniah, for besides that Jehoiada was high priest, which Zephaniah never was, there were near two hundred years betwixt the death of Jehoiada and this time; in the stead therefore here signifieth, that thou shouldst be like the good high priest Jehoiada; unless some other Jehoiada was meant, who was turned out, and this Zephaniah put in his room.

That ye should be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man that is mad; that thou mightest have a care of religion, and particularly take care of persons who being mad or phrenetic make themselves prophets. The priests had a power to restrain such persons by imprisoning them, or putting them in the stocks,

by which most agree a particular punishment is expressed, but for the nature and way of it is not determined. Those who in so uncertain a thing have a mind to read what hath been said, may find it both in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Criticorum, and the English Annotations upon this verse, but the learned author of them reciting what authors have said, concludes it at last not with any certainty to be determined.

Jeremiah 29:27

He means it of an active, real reproof, as appears by what went before; he would have had Jeremiah imprisoned, or put to that punishment which they called the stocks, the nature of which we cannot determine, concluding him to be but a madman, and one who was not made a prophet by any immediate mission from God, but had only made himself a prophet.

Jeremiah 29:28

The matter of fact was true, as appeared Jer_29:5,6, but it was false that this was the effect of phrensy, or that he spake this of his own head without commission from God; for he wrote nothing of this nature but by order from God, as appeareth from Jer_29:4, where he began his letter with, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel .*

Jeremiah 29:29

It is uncertain whether Zephaniah did this out of kindness to Jeremiah, for we read he was sent to Jeremiah upon messages, Jer_21:1 **37:3**, from the king, or because he would not apprehend him before he heard him, and let him know that he did nothing against him but upon information, &c.

Jeremiah 29:30

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 29:31

This is the great mischief of false teachers, they are the causes of people's trusting in lies; and from hence the sins of false prophets are ordinarily aggravated.

Jeremiah 29:32

I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: punishments of this life ordinarily are extended to the children of sinful parents, for the parents' sake, who are punished in their

children, being *res parentum* , a considerable part of their parents' goods and portion. *He shall not have a man to dwell among this people* ; he and his whole posterity shall be rooted out;

neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people; and neither he nor they shall live to the time of my people's return from the captivity of Babylon.

Because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord; because by the falsehoods which he hath taught he hath been an instrument to make people disobey the commands of God. We had the same clause Jer_28:16, and such a kind of threatening we find Amo_7:17, denounced by that prophet against Amaziah the priest of Beth-el, forbidding him to prophesy at Beth-el, because it was *the king 's court and chapel* . To obstruct the revelation of God's will to people, or to publish what is contrary to it, to seduce people from believing it, or yielding obedience, are both crimes that have been and will be of fatal consequence to them and their families who are so hardy as to incur the guilt of them.

Jeremiah 30:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 30

God showeth Jeremiah the deliverance and return of the Jews, Jer_30:1-9. He comforteth Jacob, Jer_30:10-17. Their return shall be gracious. Wrath on the wicked, Jer_30:18-24.

This title is thought to extend to all we have both in this and the next chapter, both which mostly consist of comfortable promises of the restoration of this people, and teacheth us what ought to be the matter of our sermons; we ought to speak nothing for substance but what we can justify to come from the Lord, which all doctrine doth that is bottomed on Scripture, though opened and made more plain and intelligible by words formed in our own minds.

Jeremiah 30:2

It is uncertain whether this was a command from God to Jeremiah to record all the revelations which God had made to him, or only the revelation contained in this and the following chapter, which consists chiefly of promises of the people's restoration; and so God might command them to be written that they might not be forgotten, but be at hand for the people to read during their

captivity, to keep up their faith and hope in God. A book, in the Hebrew dialect, signifieth any parchment or roll; God would have them recorded to testify his truth, and the truth of the prophet, when they should see the things accomplished.

Jeremiah 30:3

The reason why God would have the prophecy written, was for a memorial of God's truth in his promises. Israel never returned as to the body of the people, but those of the ten tribes which were God's people did return; we read, Luk_2:36, of one Anna who was of the tribe of Asher, and many more doubtless did return according to the promises, Jer_3:12,14 23:6 31:1,6 Eze 37:21,22. It is uncertain whether this promise of returning to their own land was fulfilled in those few of the ten tribes who joined themselves with those of Judah after they were returned from Babylon, or remaineth yet in part to be fulfilled. The former is most probable, and that there shall be no such time when the Jews shall return again to Jerusalem, and possess their own land, for it is hard now to give an account where the posterity of the ten tribes be by whose return the promise should be justified. Besides that the phrase in the beginning of this verse, *For, lo, the days come*, seem to import a more speedy fulfilling of the promise than after some thousands of years, though it is certain the Jews feed themselves with some such expectations.

Jeremiah 30:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 30:5

God here speaketh, but whether personating other nations or the Jewish nation is not agreed, nor yet whether this text refers to the times of the Messiah, when the nations should tremble, or the time when Darius invaded Babylon, or the times of Gog and Magog, (of which read **Eze 38**) or the time when the Chaldeans invaded Judah: this last seemeth most probable, and that God by this intended only to rouse the Jews out of their security, and put them off from expecting peace according to the flatteries of the false prophets, assuring them that the times that were coming next were not times of peace, but such as should make them tremble.

Jeremiah 30:6

The voice which I hear is not the voice of women, but of men, and those the strongest and stoutest men, yet it is a voice like the voice of women in travail, roaring out through their pains; and the posture I see the generality of men are in is like the posture of women in travail, who hold their hands upon their loins, hoping thereby to abate their pain. Was it ever heard that males had the pains that use to attend child-bearing women?

And all faces are turned into paleness; and all men's faces look as if they had the yellow jaundice; or are of the colour of blasted corn, as the word signifieth, Deu_28:22.

Jeremiah 30:7

It is no wonder that there is such a trembling upon all hearts, such a consternation and great complaining; for it will be a time of no ordinary calamity, but of great evil and misery, in the same sense as it is called a great day, Joe_2:11, *great and terrible* ; and Zep_1:14, &c.; there never was such a day before. It will be a day of trouble to those that are the posterity of Jacob, both good and bad; they shall not be delivered from it, but they shall be delivered out of it.

Jeremiah 30:8

In that day; not in that great day before mentioned, but in the day when God should deliver the seed of Jacob *out of trouble* . God threatens to break the yoke of the king of Babylon, that is, to break that power of his which for seventy years he should exercise in keeping the Jews under; and he would break the bonds in which they should be kept, and foreign nations should no more serve themselves upon the Jews.

Jeremiah 30:9

Who is here meant by David is not well agreed. Some think this promise was fulfilled in the rule of Zorobabel, and those after the captivity of Babylon, of the family of David, who ruled over the Jews, though not under the style of kings; others think that Christ is intended, as in the other parallel prophecies, Eze_34:23 **37:22** Hos_3:5, and that the deliverance here promised was spiritual; and indeed unless we so understand it, it will be hard to assign a time when the promise of the former and this verse was made good, for

upon the return from the captivity to the coming of Christ, and from his time to this day, other nations have served themselves upon the Jews, and they have been in perpetual servitude, first to the Persians, then to the Grecians, then to the Romans, in servitude to whom they were at the coming of Christ, and soon after miserably subdued by them, and since that time almost all nations have served themselves of the Jews. Either therefore this prophecy must be understood in a spiritual sense of the kingdom of Christ, under which the Jews that received him were made spiritually free; or else there is a time yet to come, when this ancient people of God shall be restored to a further civil liberty than they have enjoyed ever since the captivity of Babylon, and be more fully converted to Christ than they yet are; towards which sense many texts of Scripture, besides this, look; particularly Rom_11:25,26.

Jeremiah 30:10

You that are my servants, and the posterity of Jacob, though your captivity be threescore and ten years, yet be not afraid that I have quite forgotten you, or my promise made to your fathers. For I will assure you, that though I have for your sins sent you afar off, yet you are not beyond the reach of my saving arm; you shall return out of the captivity of Babylon, and be at rest: as they were for one hundred and fifty years during the time of the Persian monarchy; a short history of which we have in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Jeremiah 30:11

To save thee with a temporal salvation and deliverance, and those of thee who are Israelites indeed with a spiritual and eternal salvation; but the first is what is here principally intended. God puts a difference betwixt the chastisements of his people, and the punishments of their enemies; the latter he destroyeth with an utter and total destruction, to make an end of them; but he chastens his people like a father for their profit, and will not bring them to utter ruin. He corrects them

in measure; the Hebrew word signifieth, in judgment; that is, not in equity only, but in wisdom, or with moderation, whereas he is said to punish his enemies in fury. There are many texts of Scripture that mention this difference which God puts betwixt his

punishing his people and his punishing their enemies, Isa_26:14,**19 27:7,8**. But yet God will not let his own people go altogether unpunished, that by it they may be reclaimed, and the world may take notice that God is of purer eyes than that he can, in any persons, behold iniquity.

Jeremiah 30:12

Interpreters generally understand by bruise or wound here the state that the Jews should be in the captivity of Babylon, which would be miserable, and so miserable that it would be incurable from any hand, except the hand of God. But I do not understand why it may not as well be interpreted of their sinful state, with reference to God's purpose, and interpreted by 2Ch_36:16, where it is said, *The wrath of God arose against them till there was no remedy* . They had sinned to that degree that God had resolved into captivity they should go, and there should abide till the determination of seventy years.

Jeremiah 30:13

Concerning the general design of the prophet in these words, all interpreters seem agreed that the prophet's scope is to bring their uneasy thoughts to a rest, and make them rest satisfied with the providence of God; for there was no resistance of the will of God, which he metaphorically expresseth under the notion of one miserably and incurably wounded, whom no physician or surgeon could heal, and for whom there was no effectual plaster: but concerning the particular sense of the Hebrew words much is critically said, which I conceive not my work to repeat, nor is it of much moment to us to know whether the word more properly signifies

healing medicines, or courses of cure, or plasters ; those who are curious may read sufficiently about it in the English Annotations upon the text. It may be more material to consider whether the prophet's meaning be, there was none would do it, or there was none could do it, or there was none should do it, that is, whom God would admit at present to do it; as he elsewhere saith, though Noah, Daniel, and Job, and though Moses and Samuel, stood before him, they should save none but their own souls. The prophet's design doubtless was to satisfy this people that there was no present remedy for them but patience: though some would

in charity plead for them, and though their false prophets might promise a cure; yet in very deed God would admit now of no plea for them, and all means that could be used for their more speedy restoration would prove no healing medicines, but like medicines that make the patients worse, and irritate instead of allaying the distemper.

Jeremiah 30:14

In the time of thy prosperity thou hadst many friends, but now they have

forgotten thee. Very probably the Egyptians and Assyrians, whose help the Jews made often use of, are the *lovers* here intended, 2Ch_28:21; Has. xii. 1; indeed the Egyptians were before conquered, or very much brought low, by the king of Babylon. They see the miserable case they are in, and now do not covet thee as formerly, they discern that I have wounded thee with such a wound as cruel men use to give their enemies; though it be in me no act of cruelty, for it is but in a just punishment of your iniquities, which were increased to a very great multitude.

Jeremiah 30:15

Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable:

Why complainest thou of my dealings with thee? or, as Jer_15:18, the cause of thy sorrow is incurable: or, as others, Why complainest thou that thy sorrow is incurable? Though it be so, yet thou hast no reason to complain of my dealings, for thy destruction is of thyself; I am just in what I have done, for I have but given thee that death which is the wages of thy work of sin; nor was I suddenly provoked, it is for the multitude of thine iniquities, and in that case the living man hath no just reason to complain, Lam_3:39.

Jeremiah 30:16

The particle Nbl is thought here to be ill translated *therefore* , for manifestly it is not a causal or illative, and those who interpret it therefore refer it to what went before, Jer_30:10,**11**. It were better translated *nevertheless* , or *notwithstanding yet* : so the learned author of the English Annotations thinks it should be translated Isa_7:14 **30:18**, and in many other texts.

This text is a declaration of God's free mercy: though this people had justly provoked the Lord by their iniquities to punish them, yet he would at length revenge them of their enemies, and those that spoiled them should feel his justice, and be themselves spoiled: so Isa_10:12 **33:1**. God ordinarily punisheth those that have been enemies to his people more severely than his people have been punished by them; the reasons are, because though they serve God in chastising his people, yet they do it not designedly, Isa_10:7, and commonly they exceed a measure in their executing God's vengeance.

Jeremiah 30:17

As the miserable state of this people was by the prophet, Jer_30:12,**13**, described under the similitude of a man wounded, and bruised, and sick; so their more prosperous state is described under the notion of health, and God's action in restoring them expressed under the notion of healing, both here and in many other texts, Isa_6:10 **19:22** Isa_57:18,**19**. The particle here translated because may so signify, here, for often the scorn and contempt of God's people's enemies causeth God to make haste to their salvation and deliverance; but many think that it were better translated *although*, as it is Jos_17:18: though the heathens call thee one that I have cast off, as a man doth his wife; yet they shall see the contrary, for I will heal thee of thy wounds.

Saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after; though they deriding say, This Zion whom none cares for. Some think that in this they alluded to the original signification of the word Zion, which is, a dry or waste place.

Jeremiah 30:18

This verse manifestly is a promise of the rebuilding of the city, and was fulfilled in the times of Ezra; and the term

captivity, which in its proper sense relates to persons, not to places, being here applied to places, signifies the miserable state of Jerusalem upon the taking it by Nebuchadnezzar, which God promiseth to change or alter under the notion of

bringing again; so we read of the captivity of Job, who yet strictly was never a captive, Job_42:10. Whether by the term heap be meant the heap of rubbish into which the city was turned, upon

the taking of it by the king of Babylon, or the *hill* upon which the city was builded, is not much material; by the *palace* is meant either the king's house or the temple: so the verse is a promise of the building again of the city, the temple, and the chief governor's house, all which was fulfilled by Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerobabel, the history of which we read in the books wrote by Ezra and Nehemiah.

Jeremiah 30:19

Out of them shall proceed thanksgiving; thanksgiving to God, as Jer_17:26, either thank-offerings, Lev_7:12,13, or vocal thanksgivings.

And the voice of them that make merry; either in a religious sense, or in a civil sense if it be taken in the former, it signifieth their mirth at their religious festivals, of which we read much in Scripture, Psa_42:4 **118:15**, &c.; if in the latter, it signifieth their happy and joyful state after their restoration.

I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; though they be diminished in the captivity, yet I will return to them in my wonted providences, and multiply them according to my promise to Abraham, so as they shall be for number many.

I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small; and as to their quality, it shall be honourable; though during those seventy years they shall be a people of mean or no reputation, yet after that time they shall recover their ancient reputation, and again be a people great for honour and glory.

Jeremiah 30:20

Their posterity also shall be as happy, and in as much repute, as they were before this carrying into Babylon. Their church, or the body of the people of the Jews, shall from generation to generation be established. And though in those times there will be some that will oppress them, yet they shall not escape my vengeance that do it, for I will protect and defend them.

Jeremiah 30:21

Their governor shall proceed from the midst of them: this promise was made good in Zerobabel, and other governors of the Jews after their return out of captivity, till they came to be subdued by the Romans. Some restrain this unto Christ, and make

it a prophecy of Christ being born of the Jewish nation; it is he, they say, that was meant by David, Jer_30:9: and it is not improbable that the sense of the text may reach unto Christ, but it seems literally to be understood of Zerobabel, and to be opposed to *strangers* ruling over them, which was no small piece of their calamity while they were in captivity.

He shall approach unto me; that is, he shall serve me, and I will favour him; or, this people shall serve me, and I will favour them, and not be as one at a distance or far off from them. Some understand this of the civil governor that should be after the captivity; some understand it of the people; some understand it of Christ. Those that understand it of the governor, make it to signify the special favour that governor should be in with God and his religion; those that understand it of the people, make it to signify the religion of the people, and the favour they should be in with God; those who understand it of Christ, interpret it of his favour with God, by whom also the saints have their access.

For who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? Interpreters are yet more divided about this phrase; some apply it to Christ, either as an admiration of his excellency, or as denoting that none but he could draw near to God in that manner as he did, nor had any such a delight in the sons of men as he, so as for him to be a Mediator betwixt offenders and an offended God; none but he durst look in the face of an angry God. Others understand it of God's people, intimating that in the day when they should return out of captivity there would be but few that with any serious purpose of heart would apply themselves unto God, or signifying the impotency that is in man heartily to draw nigh to God, till (as it is before said) God causeth him so to do; and some think the words have a reference to the covenant mentioned in the next verse.

Jeremiah 30:22

God in these words declares that in that day he would renew his covenant with Israel, (at least the true Israelites,) and they should be his people to serve and to obey him, and he would be their God to protect and bless them with all temporal and all spiritual blessings.

Jeremiah 30:23

The whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury; the vengeance of God compared to a whirlwind, for the suddenness of it, and because it should encompass them to their ruin, *a terrible whirlwind.*

A continuing whirlwind; or, a continuing whirling; not a sudden blast of wind, that shall presently go over, but a vengeance that shall abide. The miserable effects of which, in destroying, shall be either upon the heathen, or upon the wicked Jews that shall continue in their disobedience and stubbornness.

Jeremiah 30:24

He expoundeth in these words the continuing whirlwind, spoken of Jer_30:23, and withal lets them know that what the false prophets said of a speedy return out of Babylon of those already there, or of the not going of those which as yet were in Judea, was all but falsehood; for the Lord was angry, and was resolved to fulfil the purpose of his heart in punishing them. And though at present they would not consider nor believe it, yet afterward, when they should see things come to pass according as he had said, then they should consider what he had told them.

Jeremiah 31:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 31

The restoration of Israel published, Jer_31:1-14. Rachel mourning is comforted, Jer_31:15-17. Ephraim repenting is brought home, Jer_31:18-21. Christ promised, Jer_31:22-26. His care over the church, Jer_31:27-30. His new covenant, Jer_31:31-34. The stability and enlargement of the church, Jer_31:35-40.

When the Lord's anger shall turn, he having performed all the thoughts of his heart upon the wicked Israelites, he will declare himself not unmindful of the covenant which he made with Abraham and his seed, but will be their God, and they shall be the people of his favour, whom he will protect and bless. It is uncertain whether Israel here is to be taken in a more large sense, as it signifieth the whole twelve tribes, or only Judah, being that part of Israel which was before spoken of.

Jeremiah 31:2

God confirmeth the aforementioned promises, and his people's hope and faith in them, by minding them of what he had anciently done for this very people. Though God did, in the journey which the Israelites had from Egypt to Canaan, cut off many of them by the sword for their iniquities, some by the Amalekites, Exo_17:8, some by the swords of their brethren for the idolatry they committed about the golden calf, Exo_32:28; yet those that survived that and other judgments found favour in God's eyes while they were going to Canaan the land of rest, or while God, going before them, brought them into Canaan. God paralleleth his future providences and gracious purposes with his past gracious providences.

Jeremiah 31:3

The word

saying being not in the original, hath given advantage to some to think that the first words are either the words of some of the people owning that the Lord indeed had of old appeared to and for them, but doubting whether the kindness of God still held toward them; or else complaining that these were old stories. To which the prophet replies by assuring them that God's love was not a temporary love, manifested to a single generation, but it was an everlasting love; therefore he had drawn them with loving-kindness, he had all along dealt graciously with them, that way attempting to oblige them to that duty which they owed to him: this drawing with loving-kindness he calleth a drawing with *the cords of men*, Hos_11:4, who ordinarily are little wrought upon by force, but won by love.

Jeremiah 31:4

As upon their being carried into captivity both their civil state and church, which either of them were as a building framed together, were broken and pulled down, and they were scattered here and there, like the stones of a building pulled down; so God's bringing them again together, and cementing them by a political and ecclesiastical government, is fitly compared to a building. The calling them the

virgin Israel doth not signify that the body of that people had not been defloured by idolatry, but either signifies that this promise only concerned such as had kept their virginity; or else (which it may be is more probable) Israel is here called a virgin with relation to the following words, they being virgins which were wont to go out with tabrets, 1Sa_18:6, and to dance in the time of their mirth and jollity, Exo_15:20 Jud_11:34. The virgins are said to *be adorned with their tabrets* , or timbrels, either (as some think) because they were wont to tie scarfs or ribands about them, or because they looked comely with these instruments of music in their hands, or should use them in a more handsome and comely manner than they had done before, when they used them at unseasonable times. That which is here prophesied is, a merry, joyful, pleasant time to this people, when their mirth should become them; or the restoration of their religious festivals, at which they used instruments of music to express their inward spiritual joy and gladness. The prophets, 1Sa_10:5, came from the high place with a tabret, &c.

Jeremiah 31:5

Samaria was the metropolis of the ten tribes, called so from Shemer, who owned the hill: Omri king of Israel bought it, and built Samaria upon it. Mountains in many places are judged the most convenient places for vineyards, being free from shades, and most exposed to the sun. God promiseth them a liberty to plant, and that they should enjoy their plantations, eating them as common things, which they could not do till the fifth year, as appears from Lev_19:23-25. The three first years it was to be accounted by them as uncircumcised, that is, unclean; in the fourth year it was to be *holy to the Lord* ; in the fifth year they might eat the fruit of it, as any common thing that was not unclean, nor yet devoted and consecrated to the Lord.

Jeremiah 31:6

That

Mount Ephraim was a part of the lot of the ten tribes is out of question. Whether by

watchmen be to be understood state sentinels set to give warning of dangers approaching, or *keepers of vineyards* , seemeth not

much material. It is said they should call upon men to *go up to Zion* , that is, to the *temple of the Lord at Jerusalem* , to worship the Lord. The only question is, what time tills prophecy was fulfilled. For though Judah returned from the captivity of Babylon, yet the *ten tribes* (that we read of) never returned. Some think that it was fulfilled in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, when though the body of the ten tribes returned not, yet many particular persons of those tribes did return and join themselves with those who returned out of the captivity of Babylon, and rebuilt both the city and the temple. Besides, it appeareth from Josephus, 1.13. cap. 5.8, that the Demetrii gave Samaria, Galilee, and Perea to the Jews. But the best interpreters judge that this prophecy was fulfilled under the gospel; for both Galilee and Samaria received the gospel, as appeareth from Act_8:1,5,9,14 9:31.

Jeremiah 31:7

This grave, authoritative preface,

Thus saith the Lord, seemeth to be prefixed to put the people of God out of fear of the accomplishment of the good things he had before promised and prophesied of. The verse in itself is either an exhortation to those amongst the Jews who feared God, or to the heathen, to sing and rejoice on the behalf of the Jews, to whom God would certainly show such mercy as they might

sing for; before they had it in their hands, they might both publish the thing that it should certainly be, and also bless God for it. But withal he minds them that there would be occasion for prayer as well as praise, there would be a

remnant of Israel that would have at least no present share in these mercies, through their impenitency, unbelief, and hardness of heart. Hereby minding us that we ought not so to rejoice in our good things, as to forget those who are no sharers with us. The best of God's people's lot, while they are in this life, is such as will show them a need of prayer as well as praise.

Jeremiah 31:8

By the north country, is unquestionably meant Babylon, and the land of the Chaldeans, and those places which were northward of Jerusalem; and by the

coasts of the earth, all other parts into which any of the Jews had been driven. The meaning of this is, that nothing should hinder such from returning as had a mind to return; blind men that could not see their way, and lame persons, who had no strength to walk in it, though they saw it, and women with child, in regard of their heaviness, and women travailing, in regard of their pain, are persons more unfit to travel long journeys than any others; but saith God, I will make such provision, that some under those circumstances shall come. That these phrases must be interpreted only into this general sense appears, because such persons in a literal sense could not come. And though some worthy interpreters understand it in a spiritual sense, of ignorant and impotent persons, and such as are laden with the burden of their sins, and of coming to Christ, it seems not to be the primary sense of the text.

Jeremiah 31:9

They shall come with weeping; some think that it had been better translated, *They went weeping* ; for though the verb be the future tense in the Hebrew, yet that tense hath often the signification of the preterperfect tense; thus it answereth, Psa_126:5,6, *He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing* , &c.; but there is no need of it here, for there is a weeping for joy, as well as for sorrow, as we have it in the instances both of Jacob and Joseph, Gen_29:11 **43:30**; and thus the text correspondeth with that, Zec_12:10, *I will pour upon them the Spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn* . *Weeping* also here may be understood for their past sins. *I will cause them to walk, by the rivers of waters* ; and they shall have no want as they had when they came out of Egypt, through the wilderness, where they often wanted water.

In a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; neither shall they have any rough ways, nor turn backward and forward, as God made them to do in their passage through the wilderness.

For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born; for as I have the affection of a father for all Israel, so will I show the care and kindness of a father to them, and use them as a man useth his first-born; so God anciently called the Jews, Exo_4:22, they being the first of all nations, whom God owned and took into

covenant, and who owned God, and worshipped the true and living God only.

Jeremiah 31:10

God willeth his promises of good to his people to be published and declared beforehand, and that not to them only, but to other people, that the hand of his providence, when he brings them to pass, may be more conspicuous, and it may be undeniably owned to be the work of God, being no more than what he had foretold long before. God is not only the author of those judgments which come upon his people, but of their mercies; and his power in scattering them is enough to confirm us in a belief of his power to gather them. He will not only gather them, but keep and protect them when gathered; and thus God showeth himself their Shepherd: it is the work of a shepherd not only to call and gather his sheep together, but to watch over them, protect, and keep them, when they are so gathered together.

Jeremiah 31:11

Because of the certainty of Divine prophecies and promises, things in them are often said to be already done which are not to be fulfilled of many years after. The sense is, God will as certainly do it as if he had already done it; for whether it be understood of a deliverance from Babylon, or of the salvation of the gospel by Christ, which by a metaphor is often also called *redeeming and ransoming*, it was to be accomplished long after this time. By

him that was stronger than he, some understand the *Chaldeans*, others understand the devil (interpreting the text of the spiritual redemption of God's people by the blood of Christ, being the ransom given for them); but undoubtedly the text is literally to be understood of their deliverance from Babylon, though (as the apostle saith) *all these things happened to them in a figure*. In their deliverance, as well from Babylon as Egypt, they were types of the deliverance of God's people from spiritual Babylon and Egypt by Christ, as well as in their entering into Canaan they were (as the apostle proveth, **Heb 3 Heb 4**) types of the saints entering into heaven, of which Canaan was a type.

Jeremiah 31:12

The particular phrases in this verse must not be strained, nor do they need a particular explication, all signifying but one thing, viz. the happy and prosperous state the Jews should be in after their return from the captivity, both as to their religious and civil state.

The height of Zion may either signify Jerusalem, or the temple more especially, where those that returned, as well those of the ten tribes as those strictly of Judah, should come and sing praises to God; and should there come to beg of God good things upon the account of his goodness, owning him as the God of their mercies, whether of a spiritual or temporal nature; such as corn, wine, oil, and an increase of their cattle, both flocks and herds. And they should be a beautiful, flourishing, growing people, like

a watered garden that looks cheerly, and in which things grow and thrive (for soul doth not seem here to be taken for men's spiritual and immortal part, but for the whole man). And they shall be sorrowful no more in that manner as they have been, and for that age and generation were; or many years: see Isa_35:10. Some think that under these expressions is also promised the spiritual joy which the true Israel of God should have under the gospel, and the eternal joy they shall have in heaven, when, and not before, all tears shall be wiped from their eyes; for in a strict sense it was not fulfilled to the Jews, who at the taking of their city by the Romans, sixty years after Christ, met with more sorrow than they had ever before met with.

Jeremiah 31:13

This verse containeth only a further variety of expressions, all signifying the same thing, viz. their happy state for some time after the captivity. We may understand the dancings here of all sorts of people, either of their religious rejoicing in their holy festivals, (for under the Old Testament in their religious rejoicing they used these external expressions of joy, as appears from Psa_150:4, and from David's dancing before the ark,) or of their civil joy, where dancing was more usual: the last words of the verse expound all the former.

Jeremiah 31:14

By

priests some understand the ministers of the gospel, whom God here promiseth liberally to provide for; or rather, by giving a success to their ministry, and letting them see the fruit of their labours, make to rejoice: in which metaphorical sense I should rather interpret it, applying it first to the priests of the Jews after the captivity, of whom it is said, *Ezr_6:16*, that they *kept the feast of the dedication of the second temple with joy* ; and *Ezr_6:22*, *the Lord had made the people joyful* . Nor were the people for a short time only *satisfied with the Lord 's goodness* . In a secondary typical sense it may also signify the spiritual success and rejoicing of good ministers under the gospel, and the spiritual joy of believers. This rejoicing is metaphorically expressed by fatness, with allusion to the rift of the sacrifices under the law. It is a usual thing for God by his prophets to express New Testament duties and privileges by phrases borrowed from the worship of God under the Old Testament. See *Isa_66:22,23*.

Jeremiah 31:15

Interpreters are much divided in the sense of these words, whether they should refer to the slaughter of the Jews belonging to the ten tribes, upon their being captivated by the Assyrians, or to the slaughter of the Jews, upon the siege and taking of the city by the king of Babylon, or to Herod's killing the infants in Bethlehem. Certain it is, the evangelist, *Mat_2:18*, applieth them unto the latter; but whether the evangelist's application of it be as a literal fulfilling of the prophecy, or by way of allusion, or no, is the question. Those that think that it is primarily to be understood of the slaughter of the infants, urge,

1. That *Mat_2:18*, so applies it.
2. That women's mourning for children seems rather to be for the loss of infants, (as was there,) than expressive of the mourning of all sorts of people, in a general desolation.
3. That the place of the mourning seems to hint it; for Ramah was near to Bethlehem, and contained under the *coasts about Bethlehem* , mentioned by the evangelist.
4. The words

because they were not they think make for them; for by being carried into captivity, they did not cease to be, though they ceased to be in that happy estate they were in before.

5. Because they think that this is here propounded as a sign of his coming, upon whose coming these promises of felicity to the Jews should be fulfilled. These reasons are not unanswerable; for,

1. Matthew may apply it only by way of allusion, speaking of such a providence, when such a thing should happen as happened before; in which sense particular texts of Scripture are in Scripture often said to be *fulfilled*, though they had their fulfilling before.

2. *Rachel* here doth not signify a single person, no, nor a particular sex, but is brought in as a *common parent*, lamenting the loss of her offspring.

3. *Ramah* was indeed near Bethlehem, but it was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos_18:25 1Ki_15:17. Rachel was, buried betwixt it and Bethlehem, Gen_35:19 1Sa_10:2; and it was also the place where Nebuzaradan, after he had taken Jerusalem, disposed of his prisoners, as we read, Jer_40:1 4. Though the greater part of the Jews were not slain, but carried into captivity; yet doubtless many were slain, and those left alive were not as to her, being now carried out of Canaan into a strange land.

5. Although the promises in this chapter made to the Jews were more eminently and fully made good under the kingdom of Christ; yet it may be doubted whether any of these promises were primarily and solely fulfilled to them under the kingdom of Christ, but literally before that time, though more fully and largely then. In *Ramah* therefore *a voice was heard*, that is, in Canaan, and particularly in Ramah, where Nebuzaradan, Jer_40:1, disposed of the prisoners he had taken, setting some at liberty, (as Jeremiah in particular,) ordering others to death, and carrying the rest away to Babylon, which caused a bitter weeping and lamentation.

Rachel weeping for her children: Rachel is here brought in, having been buried near that place, as if she were risen up from the grave, and lamented the Jewish nation, which came out of her loins, (for so Benjamin did, which was one of the two tribes that made the kingdom of Judah,) all the people of which tribe are

properly enough called her children. *Rachel* here signifieth all the Benjamitish women who descended from Rachel.

Refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not; and, like a passionate woman, she refused all arguments of comfort, because her children either were not absolutely, being slain by the pestilence, the famine, and the sword of the king of Babylon, or were no longer her children, being transplanted and removed into Babylon. So as I take this text literally and primarily to refer to the lamentation for the miseries the people suffered, upon the king of Babylon's taking the city; to which mourning Matthew alludeth, there being a lamentation like this when Herod caused the infants of two years old to be slain in Bethlehem, and in the coasts about Bethlehem, of which Ramah was one.

Jeremiah 31:16

The prophet in this and the following verses is brought in as one appointed of God to quiet and comfort the Rachel before mentioned, calling to her to quiet herself, and not to mourn so excessively, for God would recompense her for her afflictions, which are here understood by the term

work (as some think); but the Hebrew word *leo* is hardly found in Scripture taken for affliction: others therefore apply it to Rachel, for whose piety's sake God would show mercy to her children, as a reward of grace, though not of debt. The best interpreters think that the terms of work and reward are here used only to express the succession of a comfortable state to their miserable state in captivity, (as the wages use to follow the work,) which should make them amends for their long time of affliction; and so it is expounded by the last words of the verse.

Jeremiah 31:17

And again here, where, by

end, is meant the end of the seventy years, and the words are but a repetition of the promise of the return of the Jews out of the captivity of Babylon, of which the prophet had often before assured them, and here only repeats it as an argument why they should not be immoderately afflicted; for their affliction was not endless, nor their captivity for ever; they should return again into their own land.

Jeremiah 31:18

The prophet in this verse showeth the change that should be wrought in the hearts of the Israelites preceding this turn out of their captivity. God had made an ancient promise to this people in their enemies' hands, Lev_26:40-42, *If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that they also have walked contrary unto me; and that also I have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land* . The Lord, to show his faithfulness to his word, and also to mind them of what must first be done before the aforementioned promises could be fulfilled, and made good to them, and to quicken them to their duty, speaks of a thing yet to come as of a thing past, foretelling that before their deliverance should come he should hear Ephraim, that is, the ten tribes, or rather, those of all the twelve tribes that feared the Lord, bemoaning or bewailing their miserable state, or themselves, both for that and their sins, which had brought them into such a state, and acknowledging not only what God had done unto them, that it was he who had chastised them, and that justly; for they were as wanton bullocks not used to the yoke, which ordinarily are very unruly when they are first put into it, but by use are more quiet under it; and praying to God that he would both change their hearts and also their state; for without him it could never be done, and by him it would be done easily; and to this purpose laying a claim to God as their God, and owning him as their God, promising him that though other lords had ruled over them, yet hereafter he alone should be owned, acknowledged, worshipped, and obeyed by them.

Jeremiah 31:19

We must consider that we are not in a history or a narration of things done, but in a prophecy foretelling what should come to pass. The prophet foretelleth that before this promised deliverance should come, the Israelites should be in another temper, that their uncircumcised hearts should be humbled, they should accept of the punishment of their sins, confess God's justice and

righteousness, and their own wantonness and unruliness, pray unto God to change their hearts, which would never else be changed, and change their conditions, which would depend upon that change of their hearts, laying claim to God as their God, who had promised, Deu_30:1,2, that when the blessings and the curses spoken of **Deu 28 Deu 29** should come upon them, and *they should call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord had driven them, if they returned unto the Lord their God, and obeyed his voice, according to all that he commanded them, they and their children, with all their heart, and all their soul; that then the Lord their God would turn their captivity, and have compassion on them*, &c. Now, saith Ephraim,

after I was turned, after God had changed our hearts, we

repented and changed our practices; after that God had instructed us, either by his prophets, or by briers and thorns, by our afflictions, or by his Holy Spirit, we smote upon our thighs in testimony of our sorrow and affliction, Eze_21:12. *Then I was ashamed and confounded for my sins*, understanding that I did but bear the just punishment of the sins which I had long ago committed, in the time of my wantonness, rebellion, and disobedience to God. This is expressed by the term youth, because ordinarily men and women's youth is their time of wantonness; persons ordinarily growing more considerate and sober as years increase upon them. Thus the prophet foretelleth that God would prepare this people for mercy. In the next verses he showeth how ready God's ear would be to hear.

Jeremiah 31:20

Interpreters run into a very great variety in their explications of this text; that which seemeth to be the cause of it is, that, amongst the Hebrews, affirmative interrogations are notes of the vehement denial of the thing as to which the question is propounded, which leads some to interpret these words into a denial that Ephraim was his

dear son, or a

pleasant child, and denying the truth of his professed repentance. But certainly this is quite contrary to the whole scope of the prophet. The reverend author of the English Annotations hath

observed, that the affirmative interrogation sometimes in Scripture doth imply a negative, for the negative particle is suppressed, and h is put for alh so that, *Is Ephraim my dear son* ? here, is the same with, *Is not Ephraim my dear son* ? He gives for instances 1Sa_2:27,28, where *did I* ? plainly is the same with *did I not* ? So Job_20:4, where we have supplied not, *Knowest thou not* , &c.? So Jer_3:6, where, *Hast thou seen* ? is the same with, *Hast thou not seen* ? So Eze_20:30 Amo_6:2. So that though the particle prefixed h be an affirmative particle, yet it is often put for Nld and signifieth negatively, the negative being suppressed and to be understood. I have also sometimes thought that even here it may be fairly enough interpreted, Is Ephraim now become my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? Is his heart turned? So is mine. *For since I spake against him, or with him, or of him, I do earnestly remember him* , ydbd ydj Ar. Montanus translateth it, *from the sufficiency of my speaking with him*; the reason of the difference is, yd signifies to *suffice* , and it signifies *time* . I see no reason to vary from our translation, *since* , or *from the time* , as the same particle signifieth, 1Sa_18:30 1Ki_14:28 Isa_28:19, I spake against him by my threatenings, I do remember him with the affection and compassion of a father.

My bowels are troubled for him, is as much as, I have pitied him; as the bowels of parents are turned and troubled for their children in calamities; therefore, saith God, I will certainly show him favour.

Jeremiah 31:21

The latter part of this verse expounds the former. Thou shalt (saith God) return again to these cities which thou now leavest, therefore take good notice of the way thou seest, set up some marks by which thou mayst know it again; make thee pillars of some high heaps of stone in the way, which thou mayst know again when thou comest at them; mind well the way that the Assyrians and the Babylonians carried thee, for thou shalt come back the same way. Further to assure them they should return, he calls to them

to turn again, and doubleth his words, for the further confirmation of the thing.

Jeremiah 31:22

That the Jews are here meant by the

backsliding daughter is out of question; but what *going about* is here intended is not so plain. Some interpret it of their running after idols; some, of their seeking help from foreign nations, instead of applying themselves unto God; others, of their wandering up and down in captivity. But the greater difficulty is about this

new thing, which the Lord saith he will

create in the new earth, a woman compassing a man; some by women understanding feeble persons that should prevail against strong men. But the two interpretations of this difficult passage, which seem most reasonably to contend for preference, are,

1. The interpretation of those who think it contains a promise both of the Jewish church in its time, and of the gospel church after the Jewish church's period, prevailing, over all its enemies, whether temporal or spiritual; though, considering the paucity of the church's members, with the multitude of its enemies, and their power, it seemed as strange a thing as for a woman to prevail against a strong and mighty man. This the learned author of the English Annotations judgeth the true and genuine sense of these words.

2. Others interpret this woman to be the Virgin Mary, who was to enclose in her womb the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom the converted Jews were to adhere; which sense neither Mr. Calvin nor our learned English Annotator approve of. But it being the received sense of very many interpreters, it is fit we should hear their reasons, which are,

1. They urge the particle *yk* for God, they say, here gives the reason why the Jews should desire to return into the country of Judea, because the Messiah was to be born there.

2. They urge the term *created*, the body of Christ being not begotten by man, but created by God, though of the flesh of the Virgin.

3. They say this indeed was a new thing. It was a new thing for a virgin to become a mother, still remaining a virgin, and to be the

mother of him who was God blessed for ever, though not the mother of the Divine nature; for so Christ answered the type of Melchisedec, *without father* as man, without mother as God.

4. All other encompassings of a man they say were as well out of Judea as in it, this was in Judea only.

5. The word translated woman in Scripture they say always signifies a particular individual woman, which could be no other than the Virgin.

6. They say the whole context refers to benefits coming by Christ, therefore he must certainly be the man here intended.

7. They urge that this prophecy follows Jer_31:15, which, Mat_2:8, is applied by the evangelist to Herod's murder of the infants upon the birth of Christ. But on the other side it is objected,

1. That the verb *bbo* is never used in Scripture to signify such an encompassing.

2. That the word translated *a man*, signifying a strong man, doth not properly agree to an infant in the mother's belly. But it is again replied,

1. That this is not the only word in Scripture that is but once read in the same sense.

2. That the Word signifieth any encompassing, and may be properly applied to the Virgin's womb encompassing an infant. And for the word translated man, they say it is applied to a new-born infant, Job_3:3 Isa_9:6; that it is applied to God, Deu_10:17, and to Christ, Zec_13:7, compared with Mat_26:31. In a matter wherein so many learned men are divided, it is enough for me to give their opinions and reasons, leaving my reader to his own judgment, in a matter wherein neither his faith nor holiness are much concerned; for the question is not concerning the thing, whether Christ was encompassed in the womb of a woman, which is plain enough from other scriptures, but only whether that be the sense of the phrase here.

Jeremiah 31:23

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: these prophecies of the restoration of the Jews are very ordinarily prefaced with these two attributes of God; the one of which asserts his power to do the thing promised; for what cannot be done by the Lord of hosts? the other asserting his goodness or good-will to this people, because he is their God, related to them, in covenant with them: ability and love, or good-will to us, being the two pillars of our faith and confidence in God, which requireth no more than that we should be assured that the person whom we trust is able and willing to do what we trust to him for.

Yet they shall use, & c.: the particle *bbo* seemeth better translated, Jer_31:5, *yet again they shall use*, &c. *The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness*. Three things the prophet here foretelleth.

1. That the cities which had formerly been the habitations of bloody, unjust, cruel men, should become the habitations of men who should do justice to all.
2. That the city which stood upon Mount Zion, and had formerly been a habitation of idolaters, and other unholy persons, should become a place in which men should in a due and holy manner serve and worship the true God.
3. That they should be so famous both for justice and holiness, that men should take notice of it, and wish them well under that notion; and upon that account, as they had for their sins been made a curse and a proverb, so upon their reformation they should be for a blessing. By this we may observe that those who would be blessed by God and men, must be just towards men, and holy towards God.

Jeremiah 31:24

This whole verse is but an expression of their peaceable state after their return; they should live innocently and peaceably. Jer_33:12.

Jeremiah 31:25

I have here is of the same significancy with *I will*, as ordinarily in prophetic promises, which are the words of Him who calleth the things that are not as if they were, and would have his people look upon the things which he hath promised to do as certain as if they

were already done. The words are only a promise to the same sense as before, that God would give his people abundance of ease and plenty, and wipe all tears from their eyes.

Jeremiah 31:26

Either this revelation was made to Jeremiah in a dream, from whence he awaking, looked about him; and he was very well pleased with his sleep at that time, because of the gracious promises concerning Judah which the Lord had in that dream revealed to them. Or else in a vision, upon the sight and hearing of which he was as well pleased as a man that had slept quietly, and had had no ill and unpleasing, but sweet and delightful, dreams while he slept.

Jeremiah 31:27

That is, I will exceedingly multiply them, both with men and with cattle: they are now laid waste, their men are destroyed, or gone into other lands, their profitable beasts are destroyed, and killed up; but it shall not be so always, I will again plant them, and there shall be as great plenty of either as if they were sown. The multiplying both of men and of beasts in nations is God's blessing.

Jeremiah 31:28

Nothing can produce in God a change of counsels, purposes, and decrees, for he is not as man that he should lie or repent, he is the God that changeth not, but men's reformation may produce in him a change of providential dispensations. God is here set out as a man that is vindictive, and his vindictive nature prompts him to watch all opportunities of doing hurt to the person against whom he is set. There is no fury nor revenge in God, but what he doth is justice; but here an angry God is set out as taking all opportunities to punish sinners, as if he had watched for them, whereas he never slumbereth nor sleepeth: but the time of their reformation and his favour being come, God promiseth to be as diligent to do them good, which is here expressed by the metaphorical notions of planting and building them, as he was before to execute his justice upon them.

Jeremiah 31:29

That is, We are punished for our fathers' sins; which yet God may justly do; and none questioneth the justice of man in the case, depriving children of their patrimonial estates for their parents' treasons; nor more than God threateneth in the second commandment, God indeed, Eze_18:2, seemeth displeased at their use of this proverb; but the reason is, because they so used it as to acquit themselves, intimating they were guiltless, and suffered only for the sins of their parents, whereas that was false; otherwise the punishment of children for the sins of their parents was no more than God had threatened, Exo_20:5 **34:7** Jer_15:4. But, saith God, your captivity shall, as to you, expiate your parents' guilt past, and you shall no more say so.

Jeremiah 31:30

But yet (saith God) you must not think that sinners shall escape my vengeance; but if men commit iniquity, they shall die; no man's teeth shall be set on edge but his only who hath eaten the sour grape.

Jeremiah 31:31

The apostle's application of this, Heb_8:8-10, puts us out of doubt that this promise referred to the gospel times. It was not only made with the Jews, but all those who should be ingrafted into that olive; but it is said to be made with them, either as those two terms signify the whole church, with whom that covenant was made (they being the whole church which God had upon the earth at that time); or because they were the only people that had broken the first covenant, the Gentiles being strangers at that time to the covenant of promise, **Eph 2 12**, covenants being usually renewed upon one party's violation of them; or because it was at first made with the Jews, though it concerned also *those that were afar off, even as many as the Lord should call*, Act_2:39. Neither is it called the new covenant because it was as to the substance new, for it was made with Abraham, Gen_17:7, and with the Jews, Deu_26:17,**18**. And it was then confirmed by the blood of Christ, though not actually shed, yet as he was

the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, whose blood was typified by the blood of the paschal lamb, and of all those

living creatures killed for sacrifice, but upon many other accounts, thus enumerated by divines.

1. Because it was new in the notion of a testament, not confirmed by the actual death of Christ till gospel times.
2. Because it was revealed and preached after a new manner, more fully and particularly, plainly and clearly.
3. Because it had no such mixture of promises of temporal blessings as it had when first made with the laws.
4. Nor was the ceremonial law any part of it, as it was to the Jews, who were obliged to approve themselves God's people by a strict observance of that.
5. It was in the publication extended both to Jews and Gentiles, which the former was not.
6. In regard of the efficacy of the Spirit attending the publication of it, in a much fuller and larger manner, with the distribution of its gifts and graces, enabling souls to fulfil it.

See more in the English Annotations upon this subject.

Jeremiah 31:32

Not in substance differing from it, but in circumstances vastly differing, as was showed before, and is further declared afterward. The covenant which God made with the Jews when they came out of the land of Egypt, was on God's part the law which he gave them, with the promises annexed to their observation of it; on their part (which made it a formal covenant) their promise of obedience to it, of which see **Exo_24:7,8 Deu 26:17,18**. This covenant God saith he made with them when they were an impotent, weak people, the care of whom he took upon him, and led them as a parent leadeth the feeble child by his hand. None must imagine that this covenant did not contain the promise of pardon, through the blood of the Messiah, upon their application to him, for to what purpose else was it confirmed by blood? **Exo_24:8**. Which covenant they are said to have broken, not because of every disobedience to the law of God, for so every one daily breaketh it, but by their gross and eminent sinnings, so oft repeated and continued in without repentance; and more particularly by their idolatry, which is compared to whoredom,

which breaketh the covenant and bond of marriage, and causeth God to say unto a people, *Lo Ammi* , You are not my people. And this covenant-breaking is aggravated from God's kindness to them, and care of them; who had for them the love, and declared the care, of a husband, and gave them no temptation to go a whoring from him.

Jeremiah 31:33

With the house of Israel; that is, with those *Israelites indeed* , who shall be without *guile* , (as Christ saith of Nathanael, Joh_1:47) with those who are (as the apostle speaks, Rom_2:29. Jews inwardly, by the circumcision of the heart and Spirit, spoken of and promised by God, Deu_30:6. *After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts* : in the times of the gospel, God's law is not abrogated and made void. Christ himself came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; but it is written in the hearts of God's true Israel by the finger of the Spirit, not in tables of stone only; and they become obedient to it, not from compulsion and force, but from their secret approbation of it, and acknowledgment of it, as *holy, just, and good* , the delight they take in it after the inward man, Rom_7:22. But some may object, How was this a new covenant? Did not God of old write his law in the hearts of his people? Did not David, and other the servants of God, (of whom we read in the Old Testament,) serve God out of a principle of love and delight in his law?

Ans. Undoubtedly David and others did so, and the law of God was wrote in their hearts, but it was by virtue of this *new covenant* , from the free and efficacious grace of God. Mr. Calvin, I think, judgeth right, that the prophet's design here is to express the difference betwixt the *law* and the *gospel* . The first showeth duty; the latter bringeth along with it the *grace of regeneration* , by which the heart is changed, fitted, and enabled for and unto duty. All under the time of the law that came to salvation were saved, not from the law, or by that, but by the gospel, and this new covenant; but this was not evidently exhibited, neither was the regenerating grace of God so common, under the time of the law, as it hath been under the gospel, which maketh it look like a new covenant with men, though it was the same covenant which God

was always in with his people; for what difference is there between the terms of the covenant as recited here, Jer_24:7 **30:22**, and as made with Abraham? Gen_17:7 Deu_30:6. It is further observable, that God maketh the writing the law in people's hearts his own work. There were no need of God's putting his law into men's inward parts, if they had such an inward power (as some talk of) of themselves to do it, and could write it there with a pen of their own making. The papists allow God a share in this work, only give man himself the greatest share. Others indeed give God nothing but the honour of giving man a *reasonable soul*, furnished with such a power, and that he hath done to heathens as well as those within the pale of the church, and the preaching of the gospel; and to those within the church, a further aid and assistance to them than heathens have to use their natural power well. But let any understanding person judge whether this be probably the sense of this text, or comprehensive of all within the covenant which God hath made with his people; or supposing this were true, what that is which differeth one man living under the gospel from another, but himself; and whether by this doctrine man be not made a god to himself that is, the principal cause of all spiritual and eternal good, which how it comporteth with the honour and glory of God, or with this text, and many others of like nature, I do not understand.

Jeremiah 31:34

This must not be so interpreted as if under the gospel there should be no more need of ministerial teaching, for Christ himself sent out his apostles to preach; nor yet as if there should be no more need of brotherly teachings, by instruction or conception; the contrary is commanded, Col_3:16. It is only an expression signifying the increase of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, that should be after the pouring out of the Spirit: we have such expressions 1Jo_2:27. The learned author of our English Annotations thinks this phrase signifies, that under the gospel there should be a greater measure of means of knowledge, and of knowledge got by that means, and of clearness of understanding in persons, or ability to conceive things revealed, and a greater number of persons that should be enlightened with the saving knowledge of God. Others say, that by *knowing the Lord* is to be understood the first knowledge of God; Christians should not need

be taught the first rudiments: but the apostle speaks otherwise, Heb_5:12. Others by *knowledge* understand the fear of the Lord. God saith, they should all know him; but it must not be understood of the same degree and measure, but in a degree of sufficiency for the duties which God expected from them upon their notion and apprehension of God. God makes the root of all this grace to be the free pardon and remission of their sins.

Jeremiah 31:35

The word *egd* is here ill translated *divide*, which hath led some interpreters to think that God here hath a respect to his dividing the Red Sea, that the Israelites might pass over, which seemeth not at all here to be intended. The word indeed signifieth to divide, but it also signifieth to *quiet* and *bring to rest*, and is so interpreted, Jer_50:34 Isa_34:14, and in this very chapter, Jer_31:2, and doubtless were better here translated, which *quieteth* the sea when the waves thereof roar. All the acts mentioned are acts speaking the Divine almighty power of him who is the Lord of all the regiments in the hosts of the creation.

Jeremiah 31:36

There are ordinances of worship, which are God's laws relating to his worship; and ordinances of justice, which are God's laws for the executing civil justice; and ordinances of nature, which are God's establishments for the working of natural causes in their order; these are those here spoken of, which shall hold and continue to the dissolution of the world, the continuance of which God pawneth as a pledge of the continuance of Israel as a nation *all the days*, (so it is in the Hebrew,) that is, many days, or all the days they shall keep close with him, or which he hath appointed. If we interpret it (as in our version)

for ever, it must be understood not of Israel according to the flesh, but of the church, the true Israel of God, which shall never fail.

Jeremiah 31:37

That is, I will never cast off all the seed of Israel, (which promise the apostle, Rom_11:1,2, proveth to have been by God made good, notwithstanding the rejection of the great body of that

people,) for none but God can either measure the heavens, or pierce to the centre of the earth.

Jeremiah 31:38

That is, it shall be built round, as largely as ever. We read of this

tower of Hananeel, Neh_3:1 **12:39** Zec_14:10; it was in the south, or rather the eastern part of the city. We read of the

gate of the corner, 2Ki_14:13 Zec_14:10; most agree that it is in the north-cast part of the city.

Jeremiah 31:39

That is, it shall be built round about upon its old foundations: see **Ne 3**. We are ignorant of the ancient situation of the city, so are the Jews themselves, therefore it is vain to pretend to an exact skill in these names of places; some say

Gareb signifies a *scab* , and the *hill* had its name from leprous persons lying there.

Jeremiah 31:40

The whole valley of the dead bodies; a valley so called (as some think) from the multitude of Sennacherib's army slain there; or, (as others think,) from the bodies of malefactors put to death at Golgotha, (which was near,) cast or buried there.

And of the ashes; so called (as is thought) from the ashes of the sacrifices carried thither. Some think that

the horse gate had its name from the king's horses led out at it. The sum is, the whole city shall be built.

Shall be holy unto the Lord; all these places shall be parts of the holy city, and God's name shall be sanctified, and he shall be worshipped in them all; and the city for a long time shall abide, and

not be plucked up, nor thrown down; for we know after many years it was plucked up by the Romans. If we interpret the word

for ever of a perpetuity, the church of God must here be understood, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, as Christ hath promised.

Jeremiah 32:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 32

Jeremiah, in the siege of Jerusalem, being imprisoned by Zedekiah, buyeth a field, taketh witnesses, draweth a writing, sealeth and delivereth it to Baruch to preserve, as tokens of the people's return, Jer_32:1-15. He prayeth with admiration of God's majesty and works; and representeth his own conflict, Jer_32:16-25. God confirmeth the captivity for their sins, Jer_32:26-35; but promiseth a gracious return, Jer_32:36-44.

That is, something more than a year before the city was taken, for it was taken in the fourth month of the eleventh year of this king's reign, Jer_39:2. This tenth year concurred with the eighteenth year of the king of Babylon's absolute reign, who began so to reign in the third and fourth year of Jehoiakim, Dan_1:1; so as Jehoiakim's last year was the seventh and eighth of Nebuchadrezzar, who is also sometimes called Nebuchadnezzar and Nabuchodonosor.

Jeremiah 32:2

The king of Babylon (as appears from 2Ki_25:1 Jer_39:1) besieged Jerusalem in the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah, so as he had besieged it some time before the revelation of this prophecy came to Jeremiah. Jeremiah was at that time a prisoner, in a prison within the king's house. The king could keep him from revealing God's will to the people, but he could not keep God from revealing himself to him. Prisons hinder us from communion with men, but often contribute to God's people freer and sweeter communion with him. In the mean time the desperate hardness of this prince and these people's hearts appear, in that the fear of an enemy besieging them could not awe them from such outrageous acts of persecution.

Jeremiah 32:3

We nowhere read that Zedekiah immediately commanded Jeremiah to be imprisoned, he seemeth rather to have been favourable to Jeremiah, and judicious interpreters think his present prison was a favourable prison; but God accounteth princes to do that which their ministers or subordinate magistrates do with their connivance, and without their hinderance. Though it be wild divinity for any to say, that inferior ministers or subjects are excused by the command of the superior, and the guilt lieth only

on them; yet it is as wild to say they contract no guilt by the extravagant acts of subordinate magistrates, whom they put in place, and can punish and remove from their places.

Jeremiah 32:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:5

Here the cause of the prophet's imprisonment is expressed. The things were true which Jeremiah prophesied, and fulfilled, Jer_39:5-7, and Jeremiah could not forbear speaking them, because he was sent of God upon the errand, Jer_34:2,3; yet the king and court could not bear his words.

There shall he be until I visit him, saith the Lord: interpreters are divided whether the visitation here mentioned were a visitation of judgment, and the same with *until he die* ; or of mercy: it is certain Zedekiah was not put to death, only his eyes put out, and he carried into Babylon, Jer_39:7, where some think he afterward found favour with the king of Babylon; certain it is that he died in Babylon, and had an honourable burial, but whether he met with any other favour, or no, the Scripture saith not. Some will have the words read, *until I visit this people* , and think that Zedekiah lived in prison in Babylon till the restoration; but he was twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years, so as he was thirty-two years old when he was carried to Babylon, 2Ch_36:11, and must be then ninety-two years old when he died, which is hardly probable, considering the delicate education and life of princes, that he, having lost his eyes, and seen so much misery, should continue sixty years longer.

Though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper; though ye make many sallies out upon the Chaldeans, that are now besieging you, yet you shall be beaten in all, and not be able to drive them from your walls, Hitherto hath been but the preface to the prophetic type and discourse in this chapter, which now followeth.

Jeremiah 32:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:7

From hence may be concluded the certainty of future contingency in God's eye; the coming of

Hanameel was a future contingency, yet certainly known to God, so as he could tell the prophet he would come. Anathoth (as appears from Jos_21:18) was one of the cities of the Levites; hence ariseth a question, how it could be sold to Jeremiah, who by the law might not possess it, Num_18:20, being a Levite.

1. Some excuse it from the command of God, who might dispense with his own law; but this seemeth not enough, because it is said afterward, the right of redemption is thine.

2. Others therefore say the Levites might have some small possessions, though no ploughed land; they might have houses, and orchards, and gardens, in cities and suburbs. But that these might be sold seemeth contrary to the law, Lev_25:34. It is therefore rather thought to be meant of some small estate left to Hanameel from his ancestors.

The right of redemption belonged to the next of kin, Lev_25:25 Rth_4:4.

Jeremiah 32:8

Hanameel *came freely*, none drove or forced him, yet he came necessarily as to the event; he could not but go, else God had not told the prophet truth.

Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord; when I saw it came to pass, knowing that God alone knew what was in men's hearts, told what they would do, I knew my former mentioned revelation was from God.

Jeremiah 32:9

Ver. 9. That is, about 2l. 2s. 6d., a small purchase, which argues the field here mentioned to be but some orchard or garden; though we must allow the price of land strangely fallen at this time, when the enemy was besieging the chief city of the country. It should seem they were wont there to make their payments more by weight than by tale.

Jeremiah 32:10

I went through with the purchase, setting my hand to and sealing the deed, and taking witnesses to it, as is usual.

Jeremiah 32:11

It is most probable that, upon such bargains and sales amongst the Jews, two instruments were made, the one sealed up, to be kept by the purchaser, the other open, to be showed to the judges, and by them ratified, and that this was the law and custom ordinarily amongst the Jews upon purchases; both which Jeremiah kept, the one for his use, the other to produce in court for ratification. There is no certainty in the guesses that some others make why there were two copies: nothing appeareth but that the prophet bought this little purchase with the same rites and circumstances that men ordinarily in that country made purchases in times of peace and civil order.

Jeremiah 32:12

This

Baruch (as appeareth from Jer_36:4,26) was a scribe, and an attendant upon Jeremiah, and one who wrote things for him, and from his mouth. He made this purchase with all the usual formalities; to make it public, he signed and sealed it before witnesses, and delivered it to Baruch, to keep in the presence of them all, and in the presence of the Jews who casually were in the place when the thing was done.

Jeremiah 32:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:15

Here is nothing of any seeming difficulty in these verses, but only why the prophet commandeth Baruch to put the evidences in an earthen vessel, which himself also expounds, that they might continue many days, that is, not defaced: had they been hid many days in the earth, they would have been rotten; had they been above ground in a box or chest, they might have been lost, or taken away by the soldiers plundering houses, or at least burnt with fire. Jer_32:15, the prophet expounds God's meaning in this

command to him, and his own design, in so formal a buying of so small a purchase, especially considering, that, very probably, Jeremiah was no great purchaser, nor very greedy of purchases. He lets them know that all this was for a sign of the truth of what God had revealed to him concerning the people's return, though after many days, (sixty years from this time,) and also of the firm assent he gave to that Divine revelation, that purchases should one day be enjoyed again in Judea, and houses, fields, and vineyards in it should be again possessed.

Jeremiah 32:16

What he prayed for the matter of his prayer in the following verses will inform us; but it should seem by it that he was not without his perplexities; though he yielded an absolute obedience to God's command, yet he prayeth for a clearer revelation of his meaning in this thing.

Jeremiah 32:17

He beginneth his prayer with a recognition of God's omnipotency, and the infiniteness of his power, which was showed in his first making the heaven and the earth, as we read, Gen_1:1 Psa_146:6. God himself used this instance to confirm his people's faith in his ability to do what he pleased, Jer_27:5. It is observable, that the servants of God in holy writ used in their prayers to give God such names as might help to confirm their faith as to what they asked. Nothing can further be necessary to confirm our faith that we shall have what we ask, than for us to be persuaded that the person is able to do it, and also willing. The prophet beginneth with a declaration of his faith in God as to the first, then goes on to the second.

Jeremiah 32:18

Thou shewest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: this is the name which God gave himself, Exo_34:7 Deu_5:9,10, and of this latter clause, declarative of the vengeance of God in punishing children for their parents' sins, are many instances in Scripture, Jos_7:24 1Sa_2:33,34 1Ki_14:10,11 21:24.

Jeremiah 32:19

Who dost nothing but in infinite wisdom, as if thou hadst taken counsel upon it; and art mighty in thy works of providence, by which thou governest the world; whose eyes ran to and fro the earth, beholding the evil and the good; so that all things are naked before thee, and thou art not a mere curious and idle spectator of men's actions, but lookest upon them for that end, that thou mightest reward or punish them, according as thou seest their actions good or bad in thy sight.

Jeremiah 32:20

Who didst wonders of justice in the land of Egypt, such as are remembered and made matters of astonishing discourse even to this day; and wroughtest wonders of mercy in Israel, bringing them out of Egypt through the Red Sea, raining them down manna and quails from heaven, and fetching water out of the rock for them, &c.; and hast done also many wondrous works in other places, by which thou hast made thyself a glorious name.

Jeremiah 32:21

The history of this we have in the eleven or twelve first chapters of Exodus. God sent ten plagues upon Egypt one after another, before Pharaoh would let them go; and when he pursued after them, divided the Red Sea for them, that they might pass through, and then brought the waters back upon the Egyptians, pursuing after them through the sea.

Jeremiah 32:22

God owneth this oath, Exo_6:8.

A land flowing with milk and honey; that is, abounding with all necessary things, and all pleasant things. Canaan is often thus described, Exo_3:8,17 13:5 33:3 Lev_20:24 Num_14:8 **16:13,14 Deu 6:3 11:9**, &c.

Jeremiah 32:23

In the former passage he acknowledged God's goodness, here he owns his truth and faithfulness, in so conducting this people by his providence, that they came into the Promised Land and possessed it. Having acknowledged God's power, omniscience, goodness, truth, and faithfulness, he comes to own his justice, confessing that this people for whom God had done so much had very ill

requited him, not obeying his voice, which he expounds by not *walking in his law* ; for the law was God's voice to them. This he aggravateth by saying they had done nothing of what he had commanded, not breaking some particular law, but the whole law of God. Therefore God was righteous in bringing this sword, pestilence, and famine upon them.

Jeremiah 32:24

Mounts; the word signifies *ramparts* , or rather *battering rams* , engines of war, which those nations used to batter walls, or to shoot great stones into places besieged.

They are come unto the city to take it; they are already besieging Jerusalem, and have been for some time; and the city is even ready to be taken, and cannot hold out; so many daily are killed, either with the sword of the enemy, or by famine for want of provision, or by the pestilence;

and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; thou art just and righteous in all this, and hast done but according to what thou threatenedst to do to a sinful people that would not obey thy voice.

Jeremiah 32:25

In this verse again the particle is ill translated *and* , and *for* in the latter clause. The learned author of the English Annotations judgeth well, that it had been better translated *whenas* in the second place, as Gen_4:11 Psa_102:5, or *albeit* , or *though* , as it is translated, Jos_17:18 Psa_23:4; and *yet* instead of *and* in the beginning, as it is Jer_23:21. Lord, saith the prophet, expound thy meaning to me, why, when the city is upon the matter ready to be yielded up to the Chaldeans, and cannot possibly hold out long, thou shouldst set me to make purchases for thine enemies to possess.

Jeremiah 32:26

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:27

The Lord beginneth this revelation, for the prophet's satisfaction, with the preface expressive of his power and universal dominion, from which Jeremiah might understand that he could do whatsoever he pleased, and man, that was but flesh, Gen_6:3, could not hinder his effecting what he designed to do. God is also

the God of the spirits of all flesh, Num_16:22; but he expresseth man here only under the notion of flesh, as Gen_6:3, to denote his vileness and inconsiderableness as to any grappling with God, and encountering his purposes.

Jeremiah 32:28

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:29

Thou judgest right, this city shall be taken, and that by this very army of Chaldeans which now besiegeth it, they shall set fire on it, and burn the houses; I have made all flesh, and I have power to dispose of it, I will give this city into their hands. But in this execution of my vengeance I shall not act by prerogative, but as a just and righteous judge, vindicating the violation of my laws: they have polluted their houses by idolatry upon the roofs of them, they have offered incense, paid a divine homage, to the idol Baal; and in them they have worshipped other gods; therefore I will watch over and protect them no longer, but send the Chaldeans by their fires to purge them.

Jeremiah 32:30

If they had offended me only by some particular single acts, or by some few omissions, or but for a small time, I might have been judged too severe upon them; but from the time they first began to be a nation they have made it their business, course, and trade, passing from one idolatry to another, &c.

Jeremiah 32:31

Solomon finished the building of Jerusalem, and he at least suffered idolatry in it, 1Ki_11:4,8. People have always been so fond of worshipping God according to their own fancies and inventions, that even in Judah (except in David's time) the worship of God could hardly be preserved pure during the entire reign of one king. As if they had done it on purpose to provoke me to destroy the city, and cast the people of it out. Nothing more easy than for people to keep close to the Divine rule, as to external acts in worship; nothing is more provocative of God than their doing the contrary. Yet nothing hath been more rarely done in any nation, as if men had set themselves to dare a jealous God.

Jeremiah 32:32

Still God maketh their destruction to be of themselves, as the meritorious cause, provoking him to that wrath he executed upon them. The whole head was sick, the whole heart faint. All orders of men were corrupted, so as there was no hope of their reformation or growing better.

Jeremiah 32:33

They have behaved themselves against me contemptuously, like men who, when they are spoken to, admonished, or instructed, instead of looking towards those who instruct or admonish them, turn their back upon them. Yet their sin had not been so great and heinous, if I by my prophets had not diligently instructed them, and they as stubbornly refused to be taught or amended by their instruction.

Jeremiah 32:34

Their abominations; their idols, which above all things the jealous God abhorreth, and therefore he calleth them abominations, in the abstract, for abominable things, Deu_32:16 1Ki_11:5 2Ki_23:13.

In the house which is called by my name; that is, in the temple, which was ordinarily called the house of the Lord, and the temple of the Lord.

Jeremiah 32:35

See Poole "Jer_19:5", See Poole "Jer_19:6", where all passages we meet with here are fully opened.

Jeremiah 32:36

The Jews now began to see that the Chaldeans would take the city, and to be as dead-hearted as before they were full of courage, and to give over themselves for ever as lost.

Jeremiah 32:37

Though the city shall be taken, and you shall go into captivity; yet you shall not be utterly lost, I will gather you again, and you shall have as quiet a habitation as ever.

Jeremiah 32:38

I will renew my covenant with them, and keep my covenant towards them; they shall serve me more faithfully, and I will own them, and take care of them, and bless them.

Jeremiah 32:39

I will give them one heart; I will give them union and concord, or a oneness of mind and judgment; as to the things of God, they shall not be some for superstitious and idolatrous worship, and some for my true worship. And one way; they shall all worship me according to the rule I have given them.

That they may fear me for ever; that they may worship me in truth, as a people that have a dread of me upon their hearts.

For the good of them, and of their children after them; this will be for the profit both of them and their posterity many days, even so long as they shall continue so to do.

Jeremiah 32:40

This promise manifestly relateth to those Jews that should receive the Lord Jesus Christ, or that were Israelites indeed; for as to others, God did turn away from doing them good, when their city was taken by Titus; unless it be to be understood of a national conversion of the Jews, not yet effected.

I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me; my Spirit, which shall beget in them a dread of me, so as they shall not depart from me. Hence some conclude well, that when once the body of the Jews shall be converted, they shall never again apostatize from God. It may well from hence be concluded, that both conversion unto God, and perseverance in the ways of God, are the gifts of God; we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Jeremiah 32:41

I will not only do them good, but I will take pleasure and delight in doing them good; and I will certainly bring them to this land, and constantly and freely do them good when they shall be there.

Jeremiah 32:42

You shall find me as true to my promises as you have found me to my threatenings.

Jeremiah 32:43

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 32:44

Now, Jeremiah, thou understandest wherefore I commanded thee to buy the field offered thee by Hanameel in Anathoth in the lot of Benjamin; it was to assure thee, that though at present the Chaldeans shall prevail against Jerusalem, and the Jews shall be carried into captivity, and the Jews shall neither buy nor sell here at present, yet fields shall here be bought again; men shall buy, and sell, and seal evidences in all parts of Judea, as they were wont to do in former times, for they shall return again out of the captivity of Babylon into their own land, and have commerce one with another as formerly.

Jeremiah 33:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 33

The taking of Jerusalem, carrying away the people, their return, Jer_33:1-8; joyful state and settled government, Jer_33:9-14. Christ the Branch of righteousness: his everlasting kingdom and priesthood; and blessed seed, Jer_33:15-26.

See Poole "Jer_32:2". Jeremiah was forced out of the temple, God followeth him to the prison, and there revealeth his mind to him once and again. The wickedness of the Jews in persecuting the prophet could not make God's promises of no effect for mercy to be showed to the people after the captivity, which though made before, are again confirmed a second time, for this chapter for substance contains no more than promises of the like nature with those in the foregoing chapters.

Jeremiah 33:2

The maker thereof, that is, say some, of Jerusalem, (so Mr. Calvin,) or the maker of these promises, (so others interpret it,) *his name is Jehovah* ; so as he hath a sufficiency in himself to make good his word to establish Jerusalem, or to establish the word spoken by him for the establishment of it.

Jeremiah 33:3

God either speaketh to the people to pray unto him, or to the prophet on the behalf of the people to pray, promising him he would show him great things.

Object. But how doth God say that Jeremiah did not know them, when God before this time had revealed them to the prophet, and the prophet had revealed them?

Solut. He did not know them before God had revealed them, and though God had revealed them, yet by his prayer in the former chapter it appears he did not fully understand them, or firmly believe them as he ought to have done.

Jeremiah 33:4

That is, which in part are thrown down, and shall yet further be thrown down, by the engines of war which the Chaldeans use to batter down the city: see before, Jer_32:24. Some read *for the mounts* , as if they were thrown down by the citizens to make room for the citizens to cast up defensive mounts. The word translated *sword* may be as well translated *hammers* or *mattocks* , as it is 2Ch_34:6. It is translated *axes* , Eze_26:9.

Jeremiah 33:5

It is very difficult to determine whether these words contain an entire sense in themselves, or what connexion they have with the foregoing words: not to repeat men's diverse apprehensions, of which a large account is given by the author of the English Annotations, I think they judge best who think they have an entire sense in themselves, and judge that the they here mentioned are the Jews, of whom the prophet saith they come, because he knew they would sally out and fight with their enemies; but to no purpose but to fill their houses with their own dead bodies, whom he would cause in his anger to be slain, for their wickedness which they had provoked God by, and caused him to hide his face from that city which had so much of his countenance formerly.

Jeremiah 33:6

The latter part of this verse expoundeth the former, for by

health and

cure the prophet meaneth *peace and truth* : we met with the like metaphorical expression Jer_30:17: **See Poole "Jer_30:17"**. The miserable disturbed state of a nation being compared to wounds and sickness, the restoring of it to a peaceable, prosperous state is fitly called its health and cure. By

truth here seems to be meant faithfulness, or stability, not truth of propositions: q.d. I will, after this great wound which I have given this people, bring them again into a quiet and peaceable state, in which they shall abide many days.

Jeremiah 33:7

In this verse the latter part is expounded by the former: the restoring of them is called *building them*, in opposition to the throwing them down, by the mounds mentioned Jer_33:4; unless by building be to be understood not laying the foundation of their new state, but the further prospering of them in that state.

Jeremiah 33:8

Here is but one thing expressed by two phrases; the word by us translated cleanse signifies to expiate or purify, with allusion to the legal purifications, so as cleansing must not be understood of regeneration, but of that pardon which is mentioned in the latter part of the verse.

Jeremiah 33:9

I will do so well by this people, that other nations shall honour and praise me for my goodness to them; and not only so, but shall fear to engage against a nation so beloved and favoured by me, Exo_15:14,16: Others interpret it of a religious fear and trembling, to which God's mercy to the Israelites should invite those people that should see and hear of it; but I think the former is the most probable sense of the prophet here.

Jeremiah 33:10

Ye say; those of you who, though you find no great difficulty to believe what I have prophesied concerning the Chaldeans' taking this city, seeing it upon the matter already taken, yet find a difficulty to believe what I tell you about the people's returning, and the rebuilding of it. The Lord speaketh the one as well as the other; There shall be heard again in it, &c.

Jeremiah 33:11

The sum of this verse is, that those that should be carried into captivity should return, and upon their return they should be in their former states; both as to civil transactions, they should again marry and give in marriage; and as to civil and spiritual joy, they should publicly praise the Lord as they were wont to do in the

words of David, Psa_106:1 **107:1 118:1 136:1**, (we have a record in holy writ of the fulfilling of this prophecy upon the laying the foundations of the second temple, Ezr_3:11) and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving. See Neh_12:27.

Jeremiah 33:12

That is, a great part of which is, and the other part shall soon be, desolate. In all these places there shall be flocks and herds of sheep and goats, which the shepherd shall take care of as in former times.

Jeremiah 33:13

So as to keep tale of them, as it is said they were wont to do both morning and evening in those countries.

Jeremiah 33:14

The Lord is not *yea* and *nay*, he cannot lie nor repent. I speak not of the present time, but there shall be a time when God will justify every good word of this nature which he hath spoken to his ancient people.

Jeremiah 33:15

Whatsoever the Jews and some others say, the

Branch of righteousness here spoken of can be meant of no other but Christ, who is called a Branch out of the stem of Jesse, Isa_11:1; the *Branch of the Lord*, Isa_4:2; a righteous Branch, Jer_23:5. (See the notes on those places.) Zorobabel, though descended from David, cannot be meant here, but the same who is thus called in all those parallel texts, of whom yet Zorobabel (being a good man, and descended from the family of David) may be allowed to have been a type; but this text far more concerneth Christ, as he in whom all the promises are founded, and in whom they are all *yea* and *Amen*. The kings they had hitherto had of the line of David were most of them unrighteous men, but God promiseth that after the captivity they should have a Branch of David that should execute judgment and righteousness in the land, for the protection and government of those that feared him.

Jeremiah 33:16

In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: it is the opinion of some that a spiritual salvation and security is promised under these expressions, but the most and

best interpreters rather understand it of a temporal salvation as primarily intended, though typical of that spiritual and eternal salvation which is often promised to the true Israel of God; as their rest in Canaan typified that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness: our translation of this phrase is something strange, the words in the Hebrew are hl adqy hx wgqa hwxy Pagnine translateth them, *and he who shall call it the Lord our righteousness* , supplying the verb substantive, *is* : He who shall call it *is the Lord our righteousness* . We translate it, *this is the name wherewith it shall be called* , &c.; that which causes the difficulty is, that the pronoun hz which signifieth he, is applied both to persons and things, and translated he or it, and the relative dva is of all cases, so may be translated who, or which, or with which; those words which our translators have supplied, is the name, are not in the Hebrew. This hath made a great doubt amongst interpreters, whether *The Lord our righteousness* be the name of Christ, or the name of the city. I do incline to their opinion who think that it is here mentioned as the name of Christ. In that sense there is nothing to be understood but the verb substantive, *is*, which is ordinarily understood; so the words are thus, and *he who shall call it, is, the Lord our righteousness* . The context seemeth to favour this, Christ being that Ruler mentioned Jer_33:15, as he who shall execute *justice and judgment in the land* ; besides that, there is no such name any where given, either to the Jewish or Christian church, as the *Lord our righteousness* , but the full import of that name is spoken of Christ, Isa_45:23, which text is applied to Christ, Rom_14:11 Phi_2:10; he is called the just King, Zec_9:9, and our righteousness, 1Co_1:30.

Jeremiah 33:17

This is apparently a promise relating to Christ, for David's line had failed long since, had it not been continued in Christ, whose kingdom is and shall be an everlasting kingdom. So long as Israel remained a kingdom, those of the line of David ruled over it; when that failed, Christ came in the flesh, who ruleth, and shall rule, over the Israel of God for ever.

Jeremiah 33:18

The best interpreters understand this of a ministry to abide in the church to the end of the world, according to Mat_28:20; nor is it unusual for God in the Old Testament to express promises relating to, and to be fulfilled under, the gospel by expressions and terms proper to the Old Testament, as Isa_66:23; and in this sense it must be expounded, or restrained to the times immediately following the captivity; but it is generally understood as a promise for a gospel ministry to succeed the ministry in the Jewish church, and to abide to the end of the world.

Jeremiah 33:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 33:20

By the

covenant of day and night here is meant the same with the *ordinances* mentioned Jer_31:35. God's law established in the course of natural causes, by virtue of which the day and night orderly succeed one another. These verses are but a further confirmation of what was said before, and the sense of them no more than this, that the succession of the gospel ministry in the church of God, to abide for ever, should be as certain as the succession of darkness and light; God had established the latter in a necessary course of natural causes, and he would by his providence take care for the other, that the effect should be every whit as certain. Though the second causes are widely different, yet God, who is the First Cause of both, is the same, and would as certainly bring the one to pass as the other.

Jeremiah 33:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 33:22

The former promise was for the stability, this for the multiplication of the church, which is here expressed under the notion of the

seed of David, that is, the members of Christ: the Jews were ordinarily called the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but I do not remember they are any where called the seed of David, unless it be 1Ki_11:39, where it seems also to be understood only of the

princes that came from David; nor indeed could they be so called in any proper sense; David being no common head to the whole Jewish nation, as both Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were; but Christ is often called the *seed of David* , Joh_7:42 Act_13:23 Rom_1:3 2Ti_2:8; and Christ is himself called David, whose *seed* and whose

Levites are multiplied in the multiplying of Christians and of faithful ministers under the gospel, which certainly are the things here promised.

Jeremiah 33:23

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 33:24

This people, that is, (say some,) the enemies of the Jews; but it may as well be interpreted either of the wicked Jews, wicked men being always full of groundless, presumptuous hopes, or sunk in despair; or of such amongst them as were better, but weak in faith, that knew not how to give any firm assent to promises, the fulfilling of which seemed to the eyes of sense and reason so improbable. By

the two families here mentioned, the prophet either meaneth the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, or, which seemeth to me much more probable, the families of David and Aaron, mentioned before. Thus, saith God, they have spoken scornfully of my people, as if they should never be a nation more, having rulers of themselves and a ministry.

Jeremiah 33:25

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 33:26

By

the seed of Jacob, and of *Abraham and Isaac* , are meant the body of the Jews, to whom these three patriarchs were common heads; by the *seed of David* , persons lineally descended from David, who should rule over the Israel of God. The sum of these two verses is plainly no more than God had said before, that a restoration of them to their own land should as certainly succeed their captivity as the night succeedeth the day, or the day

succeedeth the night. God had as certainly established and ordained the one as the other, though not as yet so established, the one in the order of natural causes as the other. God would certainly have mercy on them, and in showing his mercy would take care that one of the seed of David should be their ruler, which was fulfilled in the Messiah.

Jeremiah 34:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 34

The captivity of Zedekiah and the city, Jer_34:1-7. The princes and people by solemn covenant, according to the law, dismiss their bond-servants, but the Babylonians leaving the siege, they reassume them, Jer_34:8-11. For this God threateneth a return of the enemy, and destruction of Jerusalem, Jer_34:11-22.

The revelation of the will of God to Jeremiah, to be published to the people during the time of the siege. The seven first verses are plainly a distinct prophecy from that in the latter part of the chapter. It was (as some think) for this sermon that the prophet was imprisoned (for in this prophecy the sermons are much disordered in the placing of them); so as this, showing the cause for which the king imprisoned him, is set after others, **Jer 32**, which were during the time of his imprisonment.

Jeremiah 34:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 34:3

We had all this Jer_32:3,4.

See Poole "Jer_32:3", See Poole "Jer_32:4".

Jeremiah 34:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 34:5

This only place informeth us concerning the manner of Zedekiah's death, and that both negatively and positively. Negatively, that he did not die by the sword, the king of Babylon took him, killed his sons before his eyes, then put out his eyes, and bound him in chains, Jer_39:7, but killed him not, as we learn from this text; but he died a natural death, which is here meant by dying in peace; and had an honourable burial, which the *king of Babylon* would

not allow Jehoiakim, as we read, Jer_22:18,**19**; he was buried with the burial of an ass, and his body was *cast out of the gates of Jerusalem* , and no man lamented for him; but as to Zedekiah, they burned *sweet odours for him* , (after the manner of the burial of kings, 2Ch_16:14) and made solemn lamentation for him. The Jews, in their chronology, called by them *Seder Olam* , give us the form of their lamentation, thus: *Alas! Zedekiah is dead, who drank the dregs of all ages* ; that is, who was punished for the sins of all former ages.

Jeremiah 34:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 34:7

The prophet was not afraid to go and do the message God had intrusted him with to the king, upon which he was imprisoned, as we read before, Jer_32:3: the time it should seem was after that the king of Babylon had invaded the country, and, taken the greatest part of it; only three fortified places remained, which he was besieging, viz. Jerusalem, which was the chief city of that country, and Lachish, of the conquest of which we read Jos_10:31, disposed of to the tribe of Judah. Jos_15:39, and Azekah, which was a city of Judah, of which we read in the same chapters.

Jeremiah 34:8

This verse plainly beginneth a new prophecy, but at what particular time this revelation or the publication of it was we are not told, only the occasion of it is recorded. God had made a particular law respecting the Jewish nation, that if any *had bought an Hebrew servant, he should serve but six years, and in the seventh should go out free* , Exo_21:2 Deu_15:12. It came into Zedekiah's mind to make a proclamation for the execution of this law; what moved him to it we have not recorded. The learned author of the English Annotations observeth well, that it was their usual course when they were in some great straits to make some partial reformation, Jud_10:15,**16 Psa 78:34,35 Ho 6 1**.

Jeremiah 34:9

This was the tenor of God's law mentioned in the above named texts; and it seemeth Zedekiah, taking notice of the common

violation of this law, and the Jews' ordinary oppressing those of their own nation this way, judging that this might be one of those sins for which the wrath of God was at this time kindled against them, he caused the people to make a covenant, that they would give that liberty to their servants of either sex which the law of God required, of which he made proclamation.

Jeremiah 34:10

The princes and the people, having first with the king agreed to the thing, upon the issuing out of his proclamation they at first yielded obedience to it.

Jeremiah 34:11

Like a company of wretched hypocrites, they reformed this abuse only to serve a turn, which when it was served they returned again to their old oppression; and in this thing not the people alone, but the government, was to be blamed, for their judges in the courts of justice ought to have executed the law of the Lord, and to have restrained the covetous and oppressive humour of the people. The learned author of the English Annotations thinketh that that which altered their minds was a little alteration of their state, during the siege; for, Jer_37:5, we read that the Babylonians and Chaldeans hearing of an army coming out of Egypt, to relieve the city, left the siege for a time, and that the prophet, Jer_34:22 of this chapter, relates to that, when he prophesied that the king of Babylon's army should return. But these wretched men, seeing the Babylonian army raised from the siege, concluded they were now out of God's hands, and repented of their repentance in this particular, and would make all their servants return into their former servitude.

Jeremiah 34:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 34:13

The law of God is called often a

covenant, because it containeth the will of God which he would have them do, to which (whether they express their consent or no), they are bound to consent and agree. But to the Jews all God's laws given on Mount Sinai were a formal, explicit covenant, God explicitly telling them what he would have them to do, and they as

explicitly promising they would do it, Exo_24:3. Here was a double aggravation of their sin, in breaking this covenant made between God and them:

1. From the consideration of God's kindness in bringing them out of Egypt.

2. From the consideration of their having been bond-men in Egypt, which should have taught them to know the hearts of bond-men, so as to have compassionated them whom they kept in the like distress in which they had been themselves, and from which God had delivered them. We stand concerned to remember the vows we make to God in our distress, for God will not forget them, Gen_35:1; as also to compassionate them who fall into the same distresses that we have been in, and out of which God hath saved us: God expecteth that we should show the same compassion to others, Mat_18:33.

Jeremiah 34:14

This is but a repetition of the law, Exo_21:2 Deu_15:12, which concerned such persons as were sold by others, or had sold themselves. God would not have his people take advantage of the sudden and rash acts of their brethren, which were the effects of passion. Notwithstanding this law the Jews, who were always a very covetous, griping people, did otherwise.

Jeremiah 34:15

Ye were now turned; that is, reformed in this particular, in which you had done the thing which I commanded you,

proclaiming a liberty to your servants. And you

made a covenant in my presence to that purpose, and that in *the temple*, where it seemeth this covenant was made.

Jeremiah 34:16

You again licked up your vomit, and profaned my name, swearing by it to do that which you have not done, and forced your servants, though dismissed, to return again unto their former bondage and subjection to you.

Jeremiah 34:17

They had turned and given a liberty, Jer_34:20; how doth God say here they had not? So God accounteth none to have done those

good acts which they do in a fit, or merely to serve themselves of God; he saith they had not done it, because they did not persist to do it; in such a case men's righteousness shall by God never be remembered, but they shall die in the sins they have committed. Seeing you have refused to manumise your servants at my command, I will manumise you, and set you free from my protection and care. You shall perish by the sword, famine, and pestilence; and those of you who escape them shall see how pleasant a thing it is to be slaves, and in servitude, for you shall be dispersed in many nations, and be servants to the rulers of them.

Jeremiah 34:18

This was a ceremony which they used in making of covenants, not without something of a warrant from a Divine precedent, Gen_15:9,10: it is said, Jer_34:18, that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham (that covenant was a promise that Abraham's seed should possess the land of Canaan). Gen_15:8. Abraham said unto God, *Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?* Gen_15:9, God bids him *take an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old*, &c. Gen_15:10, it is said, that *he took them, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another*. Indeed we read nothing there of the parties covenanting passing betwixt the parts of the beasts so divided, but this was afterwards used in making covenants betwixt men, which had in it a secret imprecation or wishing that they might be cut in pieces like those beasts, if they did not keep the covenants which they made. It should seem that these Jews, in the making of their solemn promise or covenant with God about releasing their servants, used this rite; they caused a calf or heifer to be cut in pieces, and the parts to be laid in the temple right over against one another, then they recited this covenant, and in the way of a solemn promise, or confirmation of their resolution to make their promise good, they passed betwixt the parts of the calf or heifer so cut; silently agreeing that God should cut them in pieces like that beast if they did not make their words good. Hence is the Hebrew phrase of *cutting a covenant*, for making it. This was a ceremony ordinarily used also amongst the heathens, as we are informed by Cicero, Livy, and others.

Jeremiah 34:19

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 34:20

God doth not threaten all the Jews, but those only who had made this covenant, and formally confirmed it, by killing a beast, and passing through the parts of it thus divided and laid opposite one to another. Of these he spareth none, but threatens both the king, and nobles, and great courtiers, as well as the people, that he would give them into the hand of their enemies that thirsted after their blood; they should be slain, and their dead bodies should not be buried. Herein the righteousness of God appeared, by doing to them as they desired (by passing betwixt the calf) that God would do in case they did not keep to the promise they had made, and called God to witness, and challenging him to destroy them if they did not fulfil what they covenanted for.

Jeremiah 34:21

Here is nothing in this verse but what was said before, save only in the last clause, where mention is made of the king of Babylon's army, which was gone up from them, the occasion of which we shall meet with Jer_37:5, because there was an army came out of Egypt to assist the Jews.

Jeremiah 34:22

I will put it into their hearts to return, saith the Lord, and they shall come back again to the siege, and shall rise up no more till they have taken the city, and burned it with fire, and made the whole country desolate. The motions of armies are under the government of Divine Providence, they are at God's command; when he bids them come they come, what he bids them do they do, and shall certainly effect what God hath determined. When we come to **Jer 39**, we shall read of the fulfilling of this prophecy.

Jeremiah 35:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 35

By the obedience of the Rechabites, Jer_35:1-11, God condemneth the Jews' disobedience, Jer_35:12-17. The Rechabites are blessed, Jer_35:18,**19**.

This is another evidence that the prophecies of this book are not left us in that order wherein they were delivered, for those which

we had in the two or three foregoing chapters being in the time of Zedekiah must needs be ten or eleven years after this.

Jeremiah 35:2

These

Rechabites had their name from Rechab their father, who, as appears from 1Ch_2:55, descended from Hemath, who was a Kenite, who is also called Hobab, Jud_4:11 (unless it may be Hameth who was the son of Hobab). This Hobab was Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, as appears from Jud_4:11. We read, Jud_1:16, that *his children went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad, and they went and dwelt among the people* . The Rechabites here mentioned descended from this stock. Jehonadab, mentioned 2Ki_10:15, was of this family, a man of some note, as appeareth by Jehu's taking him there into his chariot. God commandeth the prophet to bring some of this family into the temple, into some of the chambers; for in and about the temple were several chambers for the priests, and where they disposed of the holy garments and several oblations, 1Ki_6:5,**6,10** 1Ch_28:11,**12**. God commands Jeremiah to bring these Rechabites into some of these chambers, and to set *wine before them* . This was either for the more publicness of the thing, or, it may be, for the reproof of the priests who drank too much wine.

Jeremiah 35:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:4

This term,

the man of God, doth in Scripture signify a prophet sometimes; but whether it so signifieth here, and if it doth, whether it relateth to Igdaliah or Hanan, is a question. Probably by the

chamber of the princes is meant some chamber where the princes were wont to meet in a court, or for counsel. Thither Jeremiah brings these Rechabites, and sets vessels of wine before them, not commanding them to drink it, but only inviting them.

Jeremiah 35:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:6

It is uncertain whether *father* here signifies their immediate parent, or (which is more probable) their progenitor; it is most likely it referreth to that Jonadab of whom we read 2Ki_10:15, who was the father (that is, the progenitor) of this family of the Rechabites, at three hundred years distance. The reason why he left his posterity this charge is uncertain, probably to warn them against the luxury which he saw began to abound in Israel, and being desirous that they should inure themselves to a more hard and laborious life; being originally Kenites, and used to husbandry, and keeping of sheep and other cattle, he desired they should live according to their quality.

Jeremiah 35:7

The last words of the verse probably give us a reason of the former; they were no native Jews, but strangers amongst them, who commonly are envied when they are observed to thrive too much, or to live splendidly; and that envy of the natives of the place where they sojourn exposeth them to their hatred and malice, so as their lives are made uneasy to them. Jonadab therefore cautions his sons to avoid these inconveniencies by a thrifty, sober, laborious life, to which they had been bred, in keeping flocks, and to avoid any thing might expose them to envy, or hatred, or malice of the people amongst whom they were come to sojourn.

Jeremiah 35:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:10

Tents; movable habitations, which they could with little labour remove from place to place, as they had convenience to feed their flocks: this was their ordinary way of living, until necessity compelled them to come and live in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 35:11

When the Chaldean army came into the land, they saw there would be no quiet abode for them any where but in some fortified place. The Syrians joined with the Chaldeans in this war, as we

read, 2Ki_24:2. This they tell the prophet was the reason why they, who never used to dwell in cities nor fixed houses, came to dwell at Jerusalem, to prevent being destroyed by the foragers for these armies.

Jeremiah 35:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:15

God, in this revelation of his mind to the prophet, expoundeth to him why he had set him to bring the Rechabites into the temple, and commanded him to set wine before them, and invite them to drink of it, viz. that by their refusal of doing according to the invitation, in obedience to their father Jonadab, he might convince the Jews of their disobedience to his commands, though God's commands were more advantaged than the commands of Jonadab, in that,

1. Jonadab was but an earthly parent, and so had no absolute universal sovereignty over his children; but God was the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel.
2. Jonadab's command was not for the performance of a moral duty, but the doing of a thing which they might do, or leave undone; God required of them what was but their moral duty, and for which was the highest reason.
3. Jonadab's command had no promise annexed; God's precept had a promise annexed, yet they had not yielded him that obedience which the sons of Jonadab had yielded him: he was their Father, but where was his honour?

Jeremiah 35:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:17

This is but the same threatening confirmed, which we have often met with before, concerning the ruin of this people, only the

meritorious cause of it is further amplified, their not paying that homage to God which these Rechabites paid to an earthly parent, and had been steady in the payment of now for three hundred years together.

Jeremiah 35:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 35:19

For ever here signifies the *ever* of the Jewish state or church; whether the promise relates to the abiding of Jonadab's family, when many families of the Jews were quite rooted out, cut off, and extinct, or to some special favour that God would show them, or to some place of office they should have in or about the temple, (as some judge, because, 1Ch_2:55, it appears they were scribes,) is uncertain. But it is a question of more moment, How God promiseth a reward to these sons' of Jonadab for obeying the command of their father, and whether they had sinned if they had not obeyed this command of Jonadab; which brings in another question, *Whether parents have a power to oblige their children in matters which God hath left at liberty* . To which I answer,

1. *God might reward these Rechabites for their reverence and obedience to Jonadab their father, though these were not strictly, by the Divine law, obliged thus far to have obeyed him* ; as he rewarded David for his thoughts in his heart to build him a house, though it was not God's will that he should do it; so as God's promise of the reward doth not prove their obedience in this particular to have been their duty. Admit that it remained still a matter of liberty, yet the general honour and reverence they testified might be rewarded by God.

2. Unquestionably *parents have not a power to determine children in all things as to which God hath left them a liberty* , for then they have a power to make their children slaves, and to take away all their natural liberty. To marry or not, and to this or that person, is matter of liberty. Parents cannot in this case determine their children; Bethuel, Gen_24:58, asketh Rebekah if she would go with Abraham's servant before he would send her.

3. *In matters of civil concernment they have a far greater power than in matters of religion . All souls are God's, and conscience can be under no other dominion than that of God.*

4. *In civil things parents have a great power, during the nonage of children, and after also in matters which concern their parents ' good , as to command them to assist them, to help to supply their necessities, &c.*

5. *Parents being set over children, and instead of God to them, as it is their duty to advise their children to the best of their ability for their good; so it is the duty of children to receive their advice, and not to depart from it, unless they see circumstances so mistaken by parents, or so altered by the providence of God, as they may reasonably judge their parents, had these known or foreseen it, would not have so advised.* But that parents have an absolute power to determine children in all things as to which God hath not forbidden them, and that children by the law of God are obliged to an obedience to all such commands, however they may see their parents mistaken, or God by his providence may have altered circumstances, I see no reason to conclude. Jonadab had prudently advised his sons as before mentioned; they were things they might do, and which by experience they found not hurtful to them, but of great profit and advantage, and that with reference to all the ends of man's life: herein they yield obedience, and pay a reverence to their parent; this pleaseth God, he promiseth to reward them with the continuance of their family, according to what he had said, Exo_20:12, in the fifth commandment, which the apostle calleth the first commandment with promise.

Jeremiah 36:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 36

Jeremiah causeth Baruch to write his prophecy, and publicly to read it, Jer_36:1-10. The princes send to fetch the roll and read it, Jer_36:11-18. They advise Baruch and Jeremiah to hide themselves, Jer_36:19. The king Jehoiakim teareth part of the roll, and burneth it, Jer_36:20-26. Jeremiah denounceth his judgment, Jer_36:27-31. Baruch writeth a new copy, Jer_36:32.

Jehoiakim was three years a tributary to Nebuchadnezzar, as we read, 2Ki_24:1, then he rebelled; which three years are judged to

be the sixth, seventh, and eighth years of his reign, for Pharaoh-nechoh set him up, to whom he was first a tributary, as we read, 2Ki_23:35. Pharaoh-nechoh having conquered him, Jehoiakim became servant to the conqueror three years, then rebelled; upon which the armies of the Chaldeans, with the Syrians, &c., came up against him, and carried him away. This word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the first year that he was tributary to the king of Babylon, which was the fourth year of his reign.

Jeremiah 36:2

By

a roll of a book is to be understood *parchments*, which anciently were their books, the art of binding books being not then known. The precept is for recording all the revelations he had from God for twenty-two years last past; for he began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, who reigned one and thirty years, so as he prophesied eighteen years during Josiah's life, and this was the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. God would have them recorded, that there might be a memorial of them, that so the truth of them might appear, when God should bring them to pass, the time of which now drew very near.

Jeremiah 36:3

What we translate *it may be* ylw others translate *if perhaps*, which better expresseth the sense. God knew what would be, but yet he would not be wanting in means by which they might be informed in his will, and so believe the thing, for believing and reforming are here meant by *hearing*, as the next words in part expound this term here. Forgiveness of sin in Scripture sometimes signifieth the acquitting of a sinner from the obligation sin layeth the sinner under to eternal death, sometimes the remission of a temporal punishment; it may here well be understood as comprehending both, though I think the latter to be what is here principally intended.

Jeremiah 36:4

We shall find this Baruch, being one of Jeremiah's disciples, more than once thus employed as Jeremiah's secretary or amanuensis. None shall need ask how Jeremiah could remember all the prophecies he had prophesied for twenty-two years before past,

that considereth who it was that commanded him to do this. God undoubtedly revived the prophet's memory, or he could not have called all to mind.

Jeremiah 36:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 36:6

We do not read that Jeremiah was a prisoner in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and therefore it is very uncertainly guessed in what sense he here saith he was *shut up*. Some think Jehoiakim had imprisoned him, or at least restrained him to his house, though we do not read of it. Others think he restrained himself; but in what sense he was shut up is not certain; that he was so is certain. He knew that God had not commanded his prophecies to be written for any other end, but that the people might have them recalled to their memories: he being not in a capacity himself at present to speak any thing to the people in so public a place, sendeth Baruch to do it in his stead, choosing for it a day of public fast; not the day of the yearly fast mentioned Lev_23:27, but on a fast day (of which we shall read more Jer_36:9) proclaimed by Jehoiakim, probably to avert the vengeance hanging over them from the Chaldeans, or rather from the drought. It was, undoubtedly, because of the concourse of people which the prophet knew would that day be in the temple that he chose that day, when some would be present from all parts of Judah.

Jeremiah 36:7

We had an expression like this Jer_36:3; it teacheth us that the only means to turn away God's fierce anger ready to fall upon people is prayer and reformation.

Jeremiah 36:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 36:9

This fast was appointed upon a particular emergency, whether it was for a famine which was then in the land, or to avert the ruin which they justly feared from the king of Babylon, who had lately brought them under his servitude, is not certain; the yearly fast, Lev_23:27, was to be kept in the seventh month, nor did God ever ordain any fast to be kept in the ninth month.

Jeremiah 36:10

This verse only attesteth Baruch's obedience to the command of the prophet Jeremiah, not only as to the thing. his reading it in the temple, but as to the circumstance, in as public a manner as he could,

in the chamber of Gemariah, & c., most likely out of some window, or in some balcony, the people being below, and hearing it.

Jeremiah 36:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 36:12

It is uncertain whether this *Michaiah* went to make this relation to the princes who sat in the secretary's chamber, as a piece of news only, or out of a malicious design to accuse the prophet and Baruch for what was done as a seditious practice.

Jeremiah 36:13

That is, the substance of all the words, for none can imagine that a hearer could remember every word; which shows the vanity of those who overstrain such universal particles to signify every particular word or person.

Jeremiah 36:14

That is, all the princes that at that time sat there in council sent a messenger with a command to Baruch to appear before them: and to bring the roll which he had read in the ears of the people.

Jeremiah 36:15

The courage of Baruch is admirable, he was now before the council, in the king's house, the substance of the prophecies were threatening both to the king and court, and to all the people. The king, as appears by all history, was of no good temper; we read, Jer_26:23, of his sending for Urijah the prophet out of Egypt; when he had fled thither for fear of the king, and slaying him, and we shall find that at that time the princes advised both Jeremiah and Baruch to hide themselves; yet Baruch is not afraid, but reads the prophecy in their ears.

Jeremiah 36:16

It is hardly to be imagined that all these counsellors should sit still till they had heard all Jeremiah's prophecies for twenty-two years read, but all signifies many, or the sense and substance of all the prophecies. They were all of them afraid: Jeremiah had now been above twenty years a prophet to this people, and doubtless in great esteem for eighteen years of it, while Josiah was alive, and one whose prophecies they could not but observe had been oft accomplished; therefore they could not but be afraid that they should see these words also fulfilled, and took themselves bound in duty to acquaint the king with them. Some, if not all, of these probably had been great men in Josiah's time, which was but four or five years before, and from him sucked in some good and religious principles, which begat some awe of God in them.

Jeremiah 36:17

This now seemed but a reasonable question, considering they were the substance of what he had been prophesying for so many years. The thing seemed strange to the princes, prophets being not used to study and pen their discourses, but to speak them extempore.

Jeremiah 36:18

This could not but add to the princes' fear and amazement. They must needs conceive that the thing was done from God, for without a special influence of God it had been a thing impossible that Jeremiah should have called to mind all that he had spoken at several times in so many years; and proceeding from the God of truth, they must needs fear that they would have their certain and just accomplishment in their season.

Jeremiah 36:19

This speaketh these princes to have been men of a much gentler temper and better disposition than those who succeeded them in Zedekiah's time; they were not willing that any harm should come to the prophet, nor to Baruch, and knew the fierce temper of Jehoiakim, and therefore advised Baruch that both he and the prophet should hide themselves.

Jeremiah 36:20

They were obliged by their office as counsellors to the king to acquaint him with what they heard, which might be prejudicial to him and his nation; and indeed this was the very end why God had commanded the enrolling of these prophecies, that both the king, and princes, and people might take notice of them; but they did not carry the book with them, but laid it up in the secretary's chamber.

Jeremiah 36:21

It appeareth by Jer_36:14 that this

Jehudi was a messenger commonly employed by the king and council; him the king sends

to fetch the roll, (before called a book,) then he employeth him to read it.

Jeremiah 36:22

The ninth month with them answered part of our November and December, which was a time of the year called for fires.

Jeremiah 36:23

He, that is, the king, not having patience to hear above three or four columns, or periods, or titles, took the penknife that (it is like) Jehudi had, and cut it in pieces, and burned it in the fire that was before him, not considering that it was the revelation of the will of God, but exalting himself above all that was called God. This showed both the wickedness and passionate temper of this prince, and his high contempt of God and his prophets.

Jeremiah 36:24

So hardened were this people's hearts, that though they knew that Jeremiah was a prophet of the Lord, upon the experience now of more than twenty years, and the whole scope of his prophecies had been to denounce the just judgments of God that now were coming upon this people, and they could not but understand that God must be greatly assistant to Jeremiah in writing this *roll* , all the matter of which he could not otherwise have kept in mind so many years, yet they had no serious fear of God upon their hearts, working upon the hearing the dreadful matter of these prophecies, nor showed any sign of remorse, or sense of their sins, or God's judgments coming upon them as indications of his wrath.

Jeremiah 36:25

These three princes seemed to have had a greater dread of God upon their hearts than the rest, for so far as they durst, they interposed, and besought the king not to burn the roll; but he would not hearken to their advice.

Jeremiah 36:26

The king was not satisfied with burning the roll, but gives order to apprehend both Jeremiah and Baruch, and commandeth the three persons named in this verse to do it; but God by his providence kept them both out of their hands. How the Lord hid them we are not told; the princes (as we read before) advised Baruch that they should both hide themselves. This phrase (probably) imports no more than that God directed them to find such a place of recess as the king's messengers could by no means find out, nor understand where they were, till the king's passion was a little over.

Jeremiah 36:27

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 36:28

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 36:29

It speaketh nothing but the impotency, and passion, and debauchery of human nature, to swell against any revelations of the Divine-will; the counsels of the Lord shall stand, and men only further entangle themselves by struggling in the Lord's net. Jehoiakim burns one roll, God will have the same thing wrote in another. We learn here both what was the matter of Jeremiah's prophecy, and the cause of the king's anger; he had prophesied that the king of Babylon should come, take Jerusalem; and lay the country waste, which, as to Jehoiakim's part, was fulfilled within six years after this, more fully in eighteen years; but corrupt princes can endure nothing that shall make their lives uneasy.

Jeremiah 36:30

That is, none that shall be king any considerable time; Jeconiah or Jehoiachin his son was set up, but kept his throne but three months, 2Ki_24:8-10. We no where read of the time or manner of this king's death, but that he had an ignominious burial, Jer_22:19, like the burial of an ass, none accompanying his

corpse, none mourning for him; and it appears from this text, that wherever he died, his body lay for a time unburied.

Jeremiah 36:31

As to the people, God threateneth they should feel, what they were not willing to hear, even all the evil which God by his prophet had pronounced against them.

Jeremiah 36:32

Wicked men get nothing by opposing themselves to the revealed will of God, how ungrateful soever it be to them, but the addition of guilt of their souls, and the increase of Divine wrath; God's counsels shall stand, and what he speaks shall most certainly be accomplished. Here is another roll, written with additional threatenings, confirmative of what God had before-said.

Jeremiah 37:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 37

The Egyptians raise the siege of the Chaldeans; and king Zedekiah sendeth to Jeremiah, to pray and inquire of the Lord for them, Jer_37:1-5. He prophesieth the Chaldeans' return and victory, Jer_37:6-10. He is apprehended for a fugitive, beaten, and put into prison, Jer_37:11-15. He assureth Zedekiah of the captivity; and, entreating for liberty, obtaineth some favour, Jer_37:16-21.

The history of this succession we have 2Ki_24:17 2Ch_36:10. Zedekiah's name was Mattaniah, the king of Babylon changed his name to Zedekiah. He reigned instead of Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, who reigned but three months, 2Ki_24:8; his name was Jeconiah, 1Ch_3:16, and, in a way of derision or contempt, is here called

Coniah. The king of Babylon made this Zedekiah king, who is here called the son of Josiah, and, 2Ki_24:17, Jehoiachin's father's brother, to distinguish him from another Zedekiah, son of Jehoiakim, as appears from 1Ch_3:16.

Jeremiah 37:2

This Zedekiah was little better than Jehoiakim; he seemeth by his story to be of a little better temper, not so cruel and bloody; but he no more regarded God's word by his prophet than Jehoiakim had done.

Jeremiah 37:3

This was apparently in the time of the siege; for, Jer_37:5, we read of Pharaoh's army being come to relieve the besieged, whether it was before the Babylonians were departed, or no, is uncertain; but it is plain, if they were departed, the king was afraid they would come back again. That which is most observable for us from hence is this, that wicked men of all ranks are desirous of the prayers of those ministers in their distresses, whose counsels and admonitions they never regard while they are in a time of prosperity; which is an evidence of their acting contrary to the convictions of their consciences, in obedience to their lusts, in their contempt of their instructions and admonitions. When affliction hath cooled their lusts, then their consciences can be heard in dictating their duty to them.

Jeremiah 37:4

We shall read afterward, Jer_37:15, that he was imprisoned; and we have heard, **Jer 32**, of two revelations he had while he was in prison; but as yet he walked at liberty.

Jeremiah 37:5

Zedekiah was set up by the king of Babylon, instead of Jehoiachin, whom the king of Babylon had carried into Babylon. Zedekiah (as is usual in those cases, and as it appeareth, Eze_17:16) had taken an oath of allegiance to the king of Babylon, but brake it, and the covenant which he made with him, Jer_37:16 and, Jer_37:15,

rebelled against him, and sent his ambassador into Egypt for horses, and much people. Now the king of Egypt came in person no more after the great overthrow given him in Carchemish, by the river Euphrates, of which we read Jer_46:2, which was thirteen or fourteen years before this; yet he sent an army at Zedekiah's request to relieve him, at this time besieged by the armies of the king of Babylon. The Chaldeans that were in the siege of Jerusalem hearing of it, raised the siege for a time, during which time (probably) it was that Zedekiah sent to the prophet to pray for them.

Jeremiah 37:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 37:7

The word

inquire lets us know that Zedekiah did not send to the prophet only to pray for him, but to inquire of God what the issue would be of this future contingency; it may be more desirous to know that, than that Jeremiah should intercede with God for them. The prophet tells them from God that the king of Egypt's army should do them no service; it is expounded, *Eze_17:17, He should not make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons* . Probably the Egyptian army, upon the sight of the strength of the Chaldeans, and the weak and impotent state of the Jews, were discouraged, and would not adventure to fight them, but by and by returned to their own land.

Jeremiah 37:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 37:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 37:10

The substance of the answer returned by the prophet to the king is this: That whereas they pleased themselves with fancies that the Babylonian army now withdrawn to meet with the army of the Egyptians would return no more to the siege, it was a dream; he assures them from God they should return, besiege the city, and take it, and burn it; and therefore they did but deceive themselves to think otherwise; though they were gone, yet it was but for a very short time. He further assures them that the potency or impotency of the Chaldeans was inconsiderable; for if their whole army were made up of wounded men, or if they could prevail so far as to wound all their soldiers, or thrust them through, (as the word is translated, *Jer_51:4*) yet they should do the work. When God is resolved upon an effect, the instruments are very little to be regarded. It is not the arm of flesh, but the power of God, which is in that case alone to be considered.

Jeremiah 37:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 37:12

The word we translate

separate signifieth *to divide, soften, or make slippery*, which hath made interpreters vary in the exposition of it. But the general use of it, especially in *Pihel*, (the conjugation in which it is here used,) being to signify a dividing or separating, and the latter signification being secondary, it seemeth most reasonably here translated to separate, or to withdraw. Jeremiah had no further revelation from God which he was under an obligation to communicate; and knowing the city would suddenly be taken, and that he could be no further useful to the people, taking advantage of the withdrawing of the Chaldean army, resolves to provide for himself, designing to go to his own country, to Anathoth, which was in the land of Benjamin; and because he was a noted person, who might probably be stopped (as he was) if known, he attempts to slip out in the crowd of people that were going out. This seemeth to me the most probable sense.

Jeremiah 37:13

The gate of Benjamin was some gate that looked toward the inheritance of that tribe, or where those used to go out who went that way; we read of it Jer_38:7. Irijah was a captain of the guard that was set to watch at the gates, to keep people from going out, or at least some persons; for it should seem by Jeremiah's endeavour to go out in the crowd, they suffered many to go out, as is usual in sieges, when victuals grow scarce; and though the Chaldeans were at present gone, yet they were not out of fear of their coming back. This captain apprehends Jeremiah, as one who was about to desert the city, and fall off to the Chaldeans. That Hananiah the grandfather of this Irijah was the false prophet we read of **Jer 28**, who died according to Jeremiah's prophecy, and this his grandchild apprehended Jeremiah in some revenge of his grandfather, is but uncertainly guessed. But Jeremiah's so frequent prophesying that the Chaldeans should take the city exposed him to this suspicion probably.

Jeremiah 37:14

Though Jeremiah, as the Lord's prophet, faithfully revealed the will of God, that the Chaldeans should take the city, to warn the people (if possible) to prevent it by solemn addresses unto God, or at least to prevent what mischief might be prevented by a timely surrender to the king of Babylon, yet he had no design to fly to

them; he was so far from delighting in their company, that when the city was taken, and the captain of the guard offered him either to go along with him to Babylon, promising to look well to him, Jer_40:4,5, or to go back to Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had left as deputy governor in Judea, he chose rather to go and dwell under Gedaliah's government in a poor condition, than to mend his commons in an idolatrous country: but the captain would not believe him, but carrieth him before the princes.

Jeremiah 37:15

These princes seem more fierce against the prophet than those that were in the time of Jehoiakim, for they proceed here upon the captain's information, cause the prophet to be beaten, and send him to prison, a prison within the compass of the court, bad enough, as appeareth by Jeremiah's complaint of his condition there to the king, Jer_37:20, and by what followeth in the next verse.

Jeremiah 37:16

The Hebrew words which we translate

dungeon signify the *house of the lake* ; they certainly signify some pit, or deep hole, or place in the prison, where were some cells or apartments, in which they were wont to keep those whom they judged great malefactors, or against whom they had some special anger; how many days the prophet was forced to abide in this miserable place it is not said, but it should seem by Jer_37:9, that it was until the Chaldean army was returned to the siege.

Jeremiah 37:17

Is there any word from the Lord? that is, Hath God revealed any thing to thee, concerning what will be the issue of the return of the Chaldean army to the siege of the city? What needed Zedekiah to have asked this, to whom God by this prophet had so often revealed his will in this case? Wicked men are always more curious to know, than careful to believe, observe, and obey the will of God. But God seldom or never speaketh good unto them: Jeremiah tells him there was, but it was a sad word, viz. that God would certainly deliver him into the hand or power of the king of Babylon.

Jeremiah 37:18

That is, What have I done worthy of bonds? I have faithfully heretofore revealed to you the mind and will of God; if this hath offended you, I am not to be blamed, I could not but execute God's commands.

Jeremiah 37:19

You now see what kind of prophets they are, who fed you with hopes that the king of Babylon's army should return no more to the siege of the city. I told you they would return, you had other prophets that told you they should not, judge now who were the true prophets. The devil in all ages had some that contradicted the true prophets of the Lord. Three hundred false prophets contradicted one Micaiah, as to Ahab's going up to Ramoth-gilead, and prospering in that expedition. There were many that contradicted Isaiah and Jeremiah, and other true prophets, as to the king of Babylon's coming to besiege Jerusalem, and his return again to the siege when he had risen up from it to meet the Egyptian army; and as to the length of time in which the Jews should be in captivity; yet, (to let us see men's madness upon their lusts,) as there still have risen up in other generations false teachers and flatterers, so they have always found more favour than those that have dealt more faithfully in revealing God's will.

Jeremiah 37:20

Though Jeremiah had dealt very faithfully with the king and princes, and they had dealt very hardly and cruelly with him, casting him for no just cause into a nasty prison, and Jeremiah knew well enough that Zedekiah was very soon to be disarmed of his power; yet (to learn us our duty) he speaks with all due respect and reverence to his sovereign, though a very bad man, and one who had dealt very ill with him. This petition of Jeremiah speaks the prison he was in was in a very inconvenient place, where he was in danger of his life.

Jeremiah 37:21

Commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison; so as he was a prisoner still, but in a freer air, where he did not suffer those inconveniences which he endured in the hole or dungeon. It is of no great moment to know whether the portion of bread allowed the prophet by the king were a loaf, (as

some think,) or a piece of a loaf; it was such a proportion as could be allowed according to the proportion which others had, and the straits which the city was in, and so much as served to keep him alive. Jeremiah remained here till, upon the suggestion of the princes, he was removed to a worse place, as we shall read in the sixth verse of the next chapter; where he staid not long, but was again removed to the court of the prison, as we shall read there, Jer_38:13, where (as it followeth there, Jer_38:28) he continued until the city was taken.

Jeremiah 38:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 38

Jeremiah prophesieth; is by the princes, with the king's permission, cast into a dungeon; but is by Ebed-melech, with the king's consent, taken out again, Jer_38:1-13. He hath a secret conference with the king, in which he counselleth him by yielding to save his life, Jer_38:14-23. By the king's command he concealeth the conference from the princes, Jer_38:24-27. He abideth in prison till Jerusalem is taken, Jer_38:28.

Vers. 1. Here are four of the great men, counsellors, or great officers to Zedekiah, named, of whom we have no further mention in holy writ, nor are they worthy of much inquiry after. Jeremiah being now removed into a little freer air, where his friends, or such as had a desire to see him, came to him, and it is very likely were inquisitive to know what God would do with the city, he could not but tell them what he knew of the mind of God in the case, and advise them the best he could. Some of them go to these princes, and inform them of what they had heard from the prophet.

Jeremiah 38:2

As to what is Jer_38:3, it is no more than had for some time been the constant tenor of this prophet's prophecies. The crime seemeth to lie in this, that in such a time of extreme danger he should repeat this prophecy, and also advise the people to leave the city, and shift for themselves, by going out to the Chaldeans, telling them that if they did so, though the city would be lost, and their estates in it lost, yet they should save their lives, which words might encourage many of low and cowardly spirits to desert their posts; which indeed had been crime sufficient in an ordinary time, and under ordinary circumstances, but was no crime now that God

had revealed his will to the king, princes, and people that the city should be lost; there lay now no further duty upon any to contribute to its defence, but they were obliged to make as good provisions for themselves as they could; but these wicked princes believed no such thing, therefore they make this a great charge.

Jeremiah 38:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 38:4

The prophet now seemeth under sad circumstances, the princes seek his life, though for delivering no other doctrine than he had been preaching for twenty years; their pretence was, his discouraging and weakening the military part of the city, letting them know that they laboured in vain, for the city was not defensible. This they interpret a seeking not the welfare of the people, but their hurt, though indeed their welfare was that alone which he sought, knowing that there was no other way for any of them to save their lives but by submitting to the Chaldeans; though the great men (being persons God had determined to ruin) would not believe it, and would have the welfare and hurt of the place determined by their opinions.

Jeremiah 38:5

He is in your hand; that is, in your power, either by the established law against false prophets, or else I yield up my power to you, I surrender him into your hands. But neither of these seemeth very probable, for here is no mention of the sitting of the sanhedrim to judge him as a false prophet, nor of any judicial proceedings of that nature: and it should seem by Zedekiah's relieving of him soon after from the dungeon, into which they threw him, that he had not surrendered Jeremiah so into their hands, but he to himself a superintendency upon them to correct their too severe dealings with him. The meaning seems rather to be, If you will do any such thing, I shall not oppose you, but I will not be the author of it.

For the king is not he that can do any thing against you; I see I am as it were no king, I can do nothing against you, you will do what you please. I incline to this sense from the consideration of the favour showed him by Zedekiah, both before and after this.

Jeremiah 38:6

Cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison; a place much of the same nature with that of which we read Jer_37:16, but in another prison. It should seem there was no passage into it by stairs, so as they were forced to let him down with cords. And in the bottom was nothing but mire, into which the prophet sank, in respect of which circumstances it was a much worse place than the dungeon in the prison in Jonathan's house appeared to be, though Jeremiah feared that he should die there. It is probable these princes thrust him into this place, designing he should die in this hole a miserable death, but God otherwise provided for him.

Jeremiah 38:7

Ebed-melech was unquestionably the name of the person, though some interpret it appellatively a servant of the king. It is particularly noted that he was an Ethiopian or a Cushite, to let us know that this prophet of the Lord found more kindness from a stranger, that was a native heathen, than from his own countrymen. Princes were wont to keep eunuchs in their houses in those countries, 2Ki_9:32 Dan_1:9 Act_8:27. It should seem the princes had privately put Jeremiah into this miserable place, but yet the noise of it came to Ebed-melech's ear, who was attending in the court. The gates of the city were places where princes were wont to sit to execute justice, and to receive petitions, and give answers, 2Sa xix, 8 Pr 31:23, &c.

Jeremiah 38:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 38:9

The courage of this good eunuch was very remarkable; he did not stay till the king came in, but went to the king, as he was *sitting in the gate of Benjamin*, administering justice, or receiving and answering petitions, where doubtless he was not alone, and probably was attended there by some of those princes who had thrown Jeremiah into this miserable place. Ebed-melech was not afraid of them, but openly complains of their cruelty to the king, and tells him that Jeremiah would be starved to death: those who were alive in the city could not long subsist, for the stores were almost all spent, and though the king had appointed the prophet an

allowance, yet being in such a hole, and there being so little bread left in the city, it was not likely there would be much care taken of him.

Jeremiah 38:10

There are several guesses why the king commandeth Ebed-melech to take

thirty men for the doing of that for which three or four were sufficient. I think they judge best who think it was to guard him against any opposition. Things were now in a great disorder, the city being upon the matter taken, and the king himself was much in the government of his princes, and, as may easily be judged by what went before, and what we shall hereafter meet with, could not rule them, but was in some fear of them, and he did not know but some of the most boisterous of them might oppose the execution of this command of his. This king in his whole story seemeth to have been of a much better humour than his predecessors, and to have had a kindness for the prophet, though he suffered himself to be miserably overruled by his courtiers, who were of a much fiercer temper, and worse affected to the prophet.

Jeremiah 38:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 38:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 38:13

The sense of these verses is obvious. Ebed-melech having received a commission from the king, presently puts it in execution, only because the dungeon was deep, and full of mire, and the prophet possibly not over-well clothed, he prudently takes some old clouts and rags, and lets them down with cords, that Jeremiah, to prevent the galling and macerating his flesh, might put them under the cords, by which they drew him up: thus he was restored to the court of the prison, where he was before this suggestion of the princes, and where he did abide until the city was taken. The rest of the chapter is spent in a private conference betwixt king Zedekiah and the prophet, after he was restored to the court of the prison.

Jeremiah 38:14

That is in the house of the Lord: some think that this were better translated, that is near the house of the Lord, and that this *third entry*, or principal entry, was that *ascent out of the king's house* into the temple mentioned 1Ki_10:5, which was one of the things the *queen of Sheba admired*; for it is hardly probable that Jeremiah being in a prison within the compass of the king's house, the king should, especially at such a time, go out of his house to so public a place as the temple, for a private conference with the prophet. The king desires him faithfully to tell him what he knew in a business he should inquire of him.

Jeremiah 38:15

Jeremiah had reason to caution with the king for his life, considering the easy answer of the king to the princes, moving for his death, Jer_38:4,5. We must imagine Jeremiah at this time under no Divine command to reveal God's will in this case unto the king.

Wilt thou not? is here as much as thou wilt not hearken unto me. Zedekiah had often been advised by the prophet, but would never take his advice, and the prophet knew it would be the same case still, that the king would be overruled by a corrupt court, and his own aversion, to change his state, as a king, for the state of a prisoner.

Jeremiah 38:16

Zedekiah saith nothing to the latter part of Jeremiah's speech, promising nothing as to his hearing and obeying his counsel: as to the former, he gives him the security of his oath, that he would neither himself slay him, by giving any immediate command from himself, nor surrender him up into the hands of those malicious princes who he perceived sought his life. The form of his oath is what was usual,

As the Lord liveth, with an addition, the Lord that gave me my life: *If I put thee to death, and if I deliver thee*; which form carrieth with it a concealed imprecation, Let the Lord do so to me, and more also; or, Let the Lord that gave me this soul take it from me, if I do either of these things. Thus he secures Jeremiah, as to

any hard measure for his telling him the truth, though it should be what might be interpreted a capital crime to publish.

Jeremiah 38:17

Thy soul shall live; that is, thou shalt live.

And this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house; and thou shalt save the city from being burned with fire, and thy wives and children from death. God did certainly know that Zedekiah would not do this, though it was in his power to do it, yet he doth not judge it vain for him, to exhort him to it, and to annex such a promise; for thereby he was left inexcusable, in his not saving the city and his relations' lives.

Jeremiah 38:18

As he before had used exhortations and promises, so here he useth threatenings, to persuade him to that which indeed was in his power to do, but God infallibly knew that he would not do; the end of God in which could be no other than to leave him without excuse, in not obeying what God commanded.

Jeremiah 38:19

But if Zedekiah went out according to the prophet's advice, and delivered himself, what needed he to fear his subjects (that had deserted the city) delivering of him? It seems rather therefore to be the sense, lest the Chaldeans, when I have yielded myself to them, should deliver me into the hands of those Jews which have fallen to them, and they should mock me: so as he seems to be more concerned for his honour than for his own life, and his family's, and the whole city: thus often great persons are more patient of death than of reproach and dishonour.

Jeremiah 38:20

The Chaldeans shall not do so base an act, but deal with thee as with a prince. Let not this therefore be a temptation to thee to disobey the command of God, which if thou doest, thou shalt live, though not in that splendour in which thou now livest, yet in a much more comfortable state than thou wilt do if they take the city by storming.

Jeremiah 38:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 38:22

Thou that art afraid of the insultings of men that are thy subjects shalt fall under the insultings and taunts of the women: either the court ladies who were left when Jehoiachin was carried away, or the women belonging to thine own court, shall be taken and brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, to be disposed of at their pleasure; and these women shall deride thee, and tell thee, for this thou mayst thank thy hearkening to thy priests and false prophets, called, in the Hebrew, *the men of thy peace*, because they soothed up the king with the promises of peace.

Thy feet are sunk in the mire: now they have left thee in evils out of which thou canst not escape.

And they are turned away back; and as for them whom thou believedst and trustedst to, and by whose words thou art brought into these snares, they have forsaken thee, every one shifting for himself.

Jeremiah 38:23

This is no more than what was said before, only here repeated, as an argument to persuade his obedience in surrendering himself, if not for the city's sake, yet for his own sake, and for his children's sake; for he assures the king that not himself only, but his wives and children also, would otherwise fall into the hands of the Babylonians, and their reflections upon him for the misery he had brought upon them would be no small aggravation of his affliction.

Jeremiah 38:24

These words sufficiently let us know that Zedekiah stood in awe of his courtiers, and we might probably think, that had it not been for them, he would have done better. This is the righteous judgment of God; those that will not sanctify the Lord of hosts, and make him their fear, shall fear men, whom to fear is much more base and ignoble.

Jeremiah 38:25

It could hardly be imagined that Zedekiah should have this private discourse with Jeremiah, but some or other of his courtiers would take notice of it; but yet it argues that this poor prince was in a

miserable subjection to them, that he could discourse with nobody but they must come and inquire what he said.

Jeremiah 38:26

The king instructs the prophet, in case the princes should be inquisitive to know what discourse passed betwixt the king and him, to tell them that he petitioned him that he might be sent no more to the prison in the house of Jonathan, of which he complained, and petitioned the king to be freed from it, Jer_37:20.

Jeremiah 38:27

As the king suspected, so it came to pass; the king's private discourse with the prophet took wind, and all the princes then at court came and inquired of Jeremiah what was the substance of his discourse. Jeremiah answered them according as the king had directed. A man is not bound in all cases to speak the whole truth, much less to those who have nothing to do to inquire of us, which these princes had not. By this means the princes never knew the matter of this discourse.

Jeremiah 38:28

Thus God hath several ways to hide his people in an evil day; he hid Josiah from it in the grave; he hid Noah in an ark, Lot in Zoar, Jeremiah in a prison, which in probability was a safer place for him than the land of Benjamin, whither he would have gone had not Irijah stopped him, Jer_37:12,13. Conquerors have commonly the greatest kindness for those whom they find under the frowns of the conquered, especially when that which hath made them so hath been something spoken or done in the favour of the conquerors.

Jeremiah 39:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 39

Jerusalem is taken: Zedekiah's sons are slain; his eyes put out; he is sent to Babylon: all the nobles of Judah are slain: the city is burnt, and the chief of the people carried captive, Jer_39:1-10. Nebuchadrezzar's charge concerning Jeremiah, Jer_39:11-14. God's promise to Ebed-melech, Jer_39:15-18.

This exactly agreeth with the historical part of Scripture, 2Ki_25:1, and with the repetition of it, Jer_52:4. This month was called Tebeth, Est_2:16, and answers to part of our December and

January. Princes are said to do that which is done by their officers by their order, yet some think Nebuchadnezzar came first in person, though he quickly left his army, and was not there at the taking of the city.

Jeremiah 39:2

The siege lasted a year and half, for it was the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year before it was taken: it is said here to be broken up, because their way of taking fortified places then was by beating down the walls of the besieged with iron rams and engines, as we now do with great guns. This kingdom had now held three hundred and eighty years, from Rehoboam their first king, in which they had had twenty kings (besides Athaliah). The ten tribes had been now in captivity one hundred and thirty years, so as the kingdom of Israel stood but two hundred and fifty years after the division, in which time they had had eighteen princes, but of several families; all the kings of Judah were of the house of David, lineally descended from him.

Jeremiah 39:3

All the great men of Babylon that were employed in the conduct of the Babylonian army (the city being taken by storm or surprise) entered into it, but rested at the middle gate. The city, they say, was encompassed with two walls, before they came to the wall of the temple; the gate in the inner wall is supposed to have been that which is called the middle gate: they would not at first adventure in further; the city being large and well fortified, there might have been some traps laid for them; they would therefore have their soldiers first clear the streets, and search all places, that they might enter further into the city without hazarding their persons. Some interpreters have examined the signification of the names of these princes, but I know of no use it can be to us, whether they were the names of the persons, or significative of the offices they bare.

Jeremiah 39:4

It should seem that the city was taken by a surprise; the Chaldeans battering the walls incessantly with their rams and engines of war, on a sudden made such a breach as gave them a liberty to enter in. The king either heard of it, or possibly might be in some place where he might see it; then he begins to think of escaping, but for

greater privacy stayeth till he had the covert of the night, and then goeth out towards the plains of Jericho, for there the Chaldeans overtook him, as we read in the next verse. He is said here to have gone by

the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls. It is very hard for us at this distance of time to pretend to any certainty in determining the way by which he made his escape. They seem to judge most probably that think that the king had prepared for himself a private passage out of his garden betwixt two walls, leading to the wall of the city, which they had before so weakened, as on a sudden they might dig it through. Possibly these particulars are the rather set down, to show us how God verified what he had revealed in this matter to the prophet **Eze 12**; where God set the prophet, *Eze_12:3, to prepare stuff for removing , and to remove by day in the sight of the people from his own place to another place ; and, Eze_12:4, to go out at even in their sight, as they that go out into captivity : Eze_12:5, to dig through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby : Eze_12:6, in their sight to bear it on his shoulders, and carry it forth in the twilight ; to cover his face, so as not to see the ground : and he told him, that in all this he was to be a sign ; and, Eze_12:10, tells him, this burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem (who was that Zedekiah). Eze_12:12, And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to go out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes.*

Jeremiah 39:5

Thus God by his providence fulfilled his threatening by his prophet Ezekiel, *Eze_17:12*. Riblah was upon the borders of Canaan, as appeareth from *Num_34:11*; it was in the land of Hamath, of which we read *2Ki_17:24*, being one of those provinces in the dominion of the king of Assyria, from whence he brought men to place them in the land of Israel after that he had conquered the ten tribes. It is not usual for princes upon conquests to sit in judgment upon princes conquered, but the reason of it in this case was because Zedekiah was a tributary to the king of Babylon, and so subject to his power, having made a covenant

with him, and secured his allegiance by his oath to him, and then rebelled against him, as we read, Eze_17:13-18.

Jeremiah 39:6

Thus the stubbornness of this prince and his nobles proved the ruin of his family, and of themselves, and of the whole people. The nobles were great authors of this mischief, and brought Zedekiah into that obstinacy which he showed to the prophet's admonitions and exhortations, upon them, therefore, a more exemplary punishment is taken. The Hebrew calls the nobles *white men*, either from their white garments, or from that *candour of spirit* which should be found in persons of their quality.

Jeremiah 39:7

Thus the two prophecies were fulfilled; that of this prophet, Jer_34:4, that Zedekiah should not *die by the sword*; and that of Ezekiel, that *he should not see Babylon*, though he should die there, Eze_12:13. Riblah was at a great distance from Babylon, where the king was at this time, probably to be nearer his army while the siege lasted at Jerusalem, and to give orders about it, and to divert himself, the place being a pleasant place, and the king not willing to trouble himself about the siege to go thither in person; but the siege being over, he now removeth to Babylon, and carrieth Zedekiah and the rest of the prisoners along with him.

Jeremiah 39:8

Still it is observable how punctual the Holy Ghost is in recording the fulfillings of the words of the Lord. This prophet had at least four times foretold that this would be one consequent of the king's and nobles' stubbornness, in not submitting to the king of Babylon. See Jer_37:8 **38:18,23**.

Jeremiah 39:9

This **Nebuzar-adan** was in that place which we call the *provost-marshal*, with them it was called

the captain of the guard; and here are two sorts of prisoners reckoned up whom he carried away:

1. Such as, after the armies were come into Judea, had yielded themselves.

2. Such as, when they took the city, remained in it, not being before consumed by the sword, famine, and pestilence; and so were taken upon the storming or surprisal of the city. Both sorts were carried away prisoners, although it is probable that the conqueror treated the former much more gently than he treated the latter, as is usual in those cases.

Jeremiah 39:10

This is usual with conquerors, for whose profit it is not that the countries conquered by them should lie waste, like wildernesses, but be peopled, and manured, that they may render some tribute to them: withal the justice of God is often seen in this, thus restoring to them oftentimes with advantage, by the hands of enemies that prove conquerors, those estates which in corrupt times their proper magistrates by violence and oppression took from them, or at least more than compensating their losses by acts of violence and injustice.

Jeremiah 39:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 39:12

It is more than probable that Nebuchadrezzar had been informed by some of the chief commanders of his army, who had it from some of the Jews that had escaped out of the city to the Chaldean army, that Jeremiah had constantly told the king and the nobles that the Chaldeans should take the city, and as steadily persuaded both the king, and princes, and people to surrender it to them, and prevent the effusion of blood; and that he was imprisoned for this, and had been a great sufferer that way; and that this made, this heathen prince so kind to the prophet as to give this order. In the mean time the hand of God is to be taken notice of, who undoubtedly put this into the heart of this pagan prince; and we may learn that none shall lose any thing at last by being faithful to the commands of God, though they may be for the present losers. What we translate,

look well to him, is in the Hebrew, *set thine eyes upon him* ; and expounded by the following words, commanding him to

do him no harm, and to give or grant to him whatever he desired.

Jeremiah 39:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 39:14

The king of Babylon's officers were very religious to their prince's order, and take the prophet out of prison. For the latter part of the 14th verse, it seems but an anticipation of what we shall find related more fully and particularly **Jer 40.**; or else so ought to be translated *yet*, as appeareth from the first verse of the next chapter, from whence it is plain that the prophet was also *bound in chains* amongst them that were carried away captive, and not discharged until he came at Ramah, which probably might be in that hurry of affairs; though the princes at first freed him from prison, the under officers not so diligently observing their special charge relating to Jeremiah, the neglect of which the captain of the guard observing when he came as far as Ramah, himself took care in it, as we shall find, **Jer 40**; after which, upon his choice, he was committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor over the country.

Jeremiah 39:15

These words let us know that these four verses (which contain mostly a promise to Ebed-melech for his kindness to Jeremiah while he was in the dungeon of Malchiah, of which we read Jer_38:6-11 mention a matter that happened before the things mentioned in the foregoing verses.

Jeremiah 39:16

Ebed-melech is here again called the

Ethiopian, to the reproach of the Jews, that a stranger should show more kindness to a prophet of the Lord than any of that nation to whom he was specially sent; which was a type of the calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews. God assures Ebed-melech the city should be taken and burnt, and the people carried into captivity.

Jeremiah 39:17

But promiseth Ebed-melech he should be delivered in that evil day; and, whether he feared the Chaldeans, that he should lose his life by them when they should break up the city, or the princes,

whom he had angered by complaining to the king of their hard usage of the prophet, he should come into none of their power.

Jeremiah 39:18

For God would deliver him, so as he should not die by the sword; but how little else soever he saved, he should save his life, because he had put his trust in God, not fearing the wrath of men in the doing of what was his duty. We read no more in holy writ of this man, and so cannot tell how otherwise God dealt with him; only may be assured that he was not slain by the Chaldeans. And from this we may observe,

1. How kind God hath always declared himself to those who have showed the least kindness to those that have been his true and faithful ministers.
2. That the root of such good works as God rewardeth must be faith, a trusting in the Lord.
3. That those who do good works out of a principle of faith may yet be encumbered with slavish fears.

Jeremiah 40:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 40

Jeremiah, being set free by Nebuchadnezzar, goeth to Gedaliah, Jer_40:1-6, to whom the remaining Jews repair, Jer_40:7-12. Johanan revealing Ishmael's conspiracy, is not believed, Jer_40:13-16.

These words refer to the forty-second chapter, where begins the revelation which Jeremiah had from God, for all this chapter and the next are no prophecy, but only an historical narration of some passages after the taking of the city, and so cannot be called a prophecy, but are a piece of history previous to that prophecy.

Ramah was a city in the tribe of Benjamin near Gibeon. See Jer_31:15. Jeremiah was by mistake, and expressly contrary to the king's orders, Jer_39:11, manacled and carried away amongst the other prisoners; probably the captain of the guard at that place called over his prisoners, and amongst them he found the prophet, contrary to his expectation.

Jeremiah 40:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 40:3

This pagan commander could see that which the blind Jews would not understand: they said, *Wherefore is this great evil come upon us ?* Nebuzar-adan knew wherefore, and gives God the glory of his master's victory, as also of his own faithfulness, saying God had but done what he said, brought the evil which he had pronounced against that city; he also acknowledgeth God's justice, that this evil was come upon them because of their sins. Thus the men of Tyre and Sidon, and of Nineveh, (according to our Saviour's words,) shall rise up in judgment against the Jews that lived in our Saviour's time, and Nebuzar-adan another day shall rise up in judgment against those Jews that lived in Jeremiah's time, and shall condemn them.

Jeremiah 40:4

Nebuzar-adan, like a faithful servant, remembers his master's orders to him about the prophet, Jer_39:11, and offers Jeremiah greater favour than to any others of his prisoners; he determined others by his right of conquest to what they should do, but he giveth the prophet a liberty to choose whether he would go to Babylon, or stay at Jerusalem in his own country; he promised him that if he would go to Babylon, he would take a particular care of him.

Jeremiah 40:5

While he was not yet gone back: it is not much material whether we interpret the he here mentioned of Jeremiah or Gedaliah. If we interpret it of Jeremiah, the sense is, that before Jeremiah was gone out of the presence of Nebuzar-adan, he, either by his silence, or by some declaration of his mind that is not here recorded, declaring that he was more inclined to stay in his own country, Nebuzaradan bid him,

Go back, & c. If we understand it of Gedaliah, the sense must be, Because Gedaliah is not to come back any more to me, *go thou to him* , &c. We read that the king of Babylon left Gedaliah as his viceroy or deputy in Judah. What he was, more than the son of Ahikam. and grandchild of Shaphan, the Scripture tells us not,

only that he was left by the king of Babylon as ruler over the people he thought fit to leave, 2Ki_25:22; probably he was one of them who, during the siege, had gone out to the king of Babylon: to him the captain of the guard directeth the prophet, but gives him liberty to dwell where he pleaseth; so sends him away with victuals and a reward. It is more than probable that the king of Babylon had heard from some of the Jews, who, during the siege, had made an escape to his army, that the scope of the prophet's prophecies were for the delivery of the city, and the Jews' submission to him, as was before said.

Jeremiah 40:6

Mizpah was built by Asa, 1Ki_15:22, or rather enlarged or further built, for we read of it as a city belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, Jos_18:26.

Jeremiah 40:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 40:8

It is most likely that these captains with their forces were no newly raised and formed companies; for to what purpose should that be when their city and whole country was lost? but some commanders of parties, which either were within the city till it was taken, and then escaped out, or were about before some where in the country, and were not so much regarded by the Chaldeans, who were more intent upon the conquest of the city than pursuing these little parties, who they knew could do them no hurt. These hearing that the business was over, and a deputy governor set up, who was of their own country, and a man of a good, ingenuous temper, out of the love they had to their native country come unto him. Of these captains we read little save Ishmael, (of whom we shalt afterwards read more,) nor are we at all concerned to seek their genealogy.

Jeremiah 40:9

They might reasonably suspect that the Chaldeans would have a jealous eye upon any conflux of people to Jerusalem, especially military men, and therefore be something suspicious of him who was the Chaldean deputy governor; the securing of them from fears on this account was the cause of this voluntary oath taken by

Gedaliah. He encourageth them to be servants to the Chaldeans, and to dwell in the land, assuring them that if they would, they should fare well; he was well enough assured of the Chaldeans' favour, that if they would live peaceably in their own land, they should, they would not come any more to carry them away captive.

Jeremiah 40:10

That is, I have made choice of Mizpah, a city upon the frontiers, where I intend to make my residence, it being a convenient place for me to receive orders from the king of Babylon, and to manage state matters. But do ye live in the country, and gather such fruits as the country affordeth; do not fear being stripped or spoiled of them, but do as you use to do in the times of greatest peace and security.

Jeremiah 40:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 40:12

Probably upon the king of Babylon's first invading Judah many fled, and more as he went on in his conquests, overrunning the country, and it is likely at the taking of the city many escaped, and fled into several countries as they had opportunity, or judged this or that country would be safest; some fled to Moab, some to Ammon, some to Edom, some one way, some another. But when they heard that the king of Babylon had set a governor of their own religion and country over them, they came back to him; and there being few people left in the land, which was of itself wonderfully fruitful, they gathered a great plenty of grapes and other summer fruits which the country produced.

Jeremiah 40:13

They had been with him before, Jer_40:8,9, but now they come to discover a conspiracy against his life.

Jeremiah 40:14

Dost thou, for dost thou not; for not is plainly understood, as the sense makes evident. Whether this *Baalis* be a proper name of the **king of the Ammonites**, or, as some think, an appellative name, signifying the *lady* or the *queen regent*, is uncertain. What made the prince of the Ammonites do this can be but guessed; probably

the old hatred they had to Israel, or hopes that they should have the better fishing in these waters when they were troubled. Gedaliah seems a man of a good humour, not too credulous, and believes not the information.

Jeremiah 40:15

Discerning that Gedaliah took no great notice of his word spoken to him in the presence of the other captains, he goeth to him secretly, offereth him his service to prevent the stroke, if he might have commission from him; mindeth him that if he did not value his own life, yet he ought to consider in what a condition the people would be in case he were cut off; they were now but a small remnant, and then that remnant also would perish.

Jeremiah 40:16

Thus God dementates those whom he designeth to destroy. Gedaliah in this showeth an excellent temper, not to be over-credulous and suspicious, *Charity thinks no ill* , but not that prudence which became a chief magistrate. He ought to have been watchful against one against whom he had received such an information, which we shall in the next chapter find he was not, but was slain by him.

Jeremiah 41:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 41

Ishmael, under a color of friendship, killeth Gedaliah and others, both Jews and Chaldeans, Jer_41:1-9. He purposeth to carry the residue captive to the Ammonites, but they are rescued from him by Johanan, who intendeth to flee into Egypt, Jer_41:10-18.

In the seventh month; that is, three months after the city was taken, Jer_39:2.

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal; the same Ishmael that came to Gedaliah, Jer_40:8,9, to whom he sware protection; only here we are told that he was of the royal blood, which might both raise his spirits, as having a more legal pretence to the government, and rendered him a fitter instrument for Baalis, the king or queen of the Ammonites, to make use of.

And the princes of the king, even ten men with him; some of the princes, who had escaped the army of the king of Babylon; they and their retinue came in pretended compliment to Gedaliah, who treated them kindly, they dined or supped with him.

Jeremiah 41:2

These ten men with their retinue fall upon Gedaliah, and barbarously murder him. Their quarrel against him was, that he was deputy governor to the king of Babylon; so desperately hardened were these Jews, that they would not yet see that God had given their country into the hand of the king of Babylon, who having now a right of conquest over them, had authority to set whom he pleased as his viceroy or deputy governor over them, to whom they ought to have yielded all subjection and obedience.

Jeremiah 41:3

It appeareth from Jer_41:10, that by all the Jews here must be understood only all those who were about the court of Gedaliah, for it is there said that he carried away many that were with him.

Jeremiah 41:4

That is, no man who lived at any great distance from Mizpah, for Ishmael was concerned what in him lay to keep this slaughter private, for fear the news of it should have reached the ears of the king of Babylon, or the commanders of some of his forces, so as he should not have had time to make his escape.

Jeremiah 41:5

Samaria was the name both of a city and a province; Shechem was a city within that province, within the limits of the tribe of Ephraim, Jos_20:7. These places were now inhabited by a mixed people, partly Jews, partly such as the king of Assyria had upon his conquest of the ten tribes brought to inhabit there. From thence came eighty men, who possibly had not heard of the temple being burnt, at least when they came out; or if they had heard of it, yet thought, hearing some Jews were left, that they might have erected some altar for sacrifices; or it may be they brought no beasts, for the text speaks only of *incense and offerings* ; they came with all indications of mourning used in those countries, shaven beards, clothes rent, and having cut themselves in a

barbarous fashion used by the heathens, and forbidden the Jews, but yet practised by many of them.

Jeremiah 41:6

He cometh out weeping, the better to deceive them into his trap, that they might believe he was as they equally affected with God's dispensations, and inviteth them to the new governor for protection, as if he had been one of his courtiers and friends: by those arts he concealeth his bloody design against them.

Jeremiah 41:7

When he had thus enticed them into Mizpah, he and his followers slay them, and throw their dead bodies into a pit, with the assistance of those bloody men that were with him.

Jeremiah 41:8

He slew seventy of them, but ten of them pleading for their lives, urged that they had estates in the country, both of corn, oil, and honey. His covetousness prevailed over his cruelty, he spared their lives to become master of what they had.

Jeremiah 41:9

The word which we translate

because of dyb signifieth *in the hand of Gedaliah*, which hath given critics a scope to vary in their notion of it, and to translate it, *in the power of, by occasion of, &c.* But the learned author of our English Annotations saith the sense of the place is plain enough; Jer_38:10, we have the same term twice, where we have translated it *with thee*, so here it doubtless signifies those who were *with Gedaliah* under his power or charge. What pit this was is not so well agreed, that is, upon what occasion made; the text telleth us it was digged by Asa king of Judah, and that it was made for fear of Baasha the king of Israel; but whether it was to receive water, or to hinder Baasha's coming near some weak part of the city, we are not told, and it is but in vain to guess. We read, 1Ki_15:22, of Asa's fortifying Mizpah with the stones of Ramah, but of this pit we read nothing.

Jeremiah 41:10

By this verse appeareth that *all the Jews*, Jer_41:3, must be understood in a restrained sense, concerning all those about Gedaliah. For he carried many away as prisoners, as also

Zedekiah's daughters, who either had concealed themselves at the taking of the city, or were left behind by the conquerors, as not like much to hurt them; and having done this, he knew there was no abiding for him long there, so he hasteneth away to the Ammonites, who (as we had it before) employed him in this murder.

Jeremiah 41:11

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 41:12

These

great waters are supposed to be a lake, or some great pool in Gibeon, the very same that is mentioned 2Sa_2:13, where Joab and the servants of David met, the one keeping on one side of the pool, the other on the other side.

Jeremiah 41:13

To see a probability of their escape out of the hands of this bloody man, who had slain so many of their brethren.

Jeremiah 41:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 41:15

When the people whom Ishmael had carried away prisoners saw Johanan coming with greater forces, they contrived and wheeled about and went to him, only Ishmael and eight men escaped and went to the land of Ammon.

Jeremiah 41:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 41:17

When Johanan had (as was before expressed) recovered the Jews whom Ishmael had carried away as prisoners, he came and dwelt with them in the

habitation of Chimham. Concerning this

Chimham, all that we read in Scripture is 2Sa_19:37,**38,40**; he was the son of Barzillai, whom David would have had to have gone along with him to his court; but he being eighty years old excused himself, and desired that his son Chimham might be

accepted in his stead. David agreeth it, and promiseth to do for him whatsoever his father should desire on his behalf: possibly David, having an estate near thereabouts, might give a portion of it to him, which though it returned to the family of David in the year of jubilee, yet from Chimham's house there might retain the name of the *habitation of Chimham* . Into those parts Johanan retired, with a further design to go into Egypt.

Jeremiah 41:18

Here was one slain whom the conqueror Nebuchadnezzar had made governor in the land of Judah, and it was but reasonable for them to think that Nebuchadnezzar would take the affront done to himself, he being constituted governor by him; and though Johanan had nothing to do in that murder, yet he did not know but that the king of Babylon, being ignorant of any parties amongst the Jews, might look upon them, all as guilty who were Jews, and revenge Gedaliah's blood upon all the remainder of that nation; he therefore chooseth them a habitation for the present, from whence they might in a short time go down into Egypt, which was Johanan's design, as we shall read in, the next chapter.

Jeremiah 42:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 42

Johanan and the people desire Jeremiah to inquire of God, promising obedience to his will, Jer_42:1-6. Jeremiah assureth them of safety in Judea, Jer_42:7-12, and destruction in Egypt, Jer_42:13-18, reproveth their hypocrisy and obstinacy, Jer_42:19-22.

The three following chapters give us an account of what happened to Johanan the son of Kareah, and the rest, after the slaughter of Ishmael, and their going to dwell in the habitation of Chimham, in order to their going into the land of Egypt; their coming to Jeremiah to go and inquire of the Lord for them, his inquiry of God, with the revelation of the Divine will unto him, that they should not go into Egypt, promising God's protection of them if they did not go, threatening their destruction if they did go; their proud answer to Jeremiah, and resolution to go, which they accordingly did, and there fell in with the idolatry of the Egyptians, for which God by his prophet threateneth them with an utter ruin.

After that this captain Johanan (who now had made himself head of the Jews) had fixed their abode in the habitation of Chimham in the way to Egypt, with thoughts of going down to inhabit there, for fear of the Chaldeans coming to revenge the death of Gedaliah upon all the remainder of the Jews, both these captains and many of the people, or some of all sorts of the people, (for it cannot be imagined that every particular person came,) made their address to the prophet Jeremiah, who probably was with them, carried away by Ishmael, and rescued by this captain.

Jeremiah 42:2

These men (though wretched hypocrites) yet come to the prophet with great respect and reverence, first desiring that he would allow them to make their request to him: probably the evidence they had had so lately of his being a prophet of the Lord, by the fulfilling of all that he had foretold against both the city and the temple, might in some measure occasion this. Their request was, that he would put up his prayer to God for the remnant, for now there was but a small remnant of Jews left, a few of many.

Jeremiah 42:3

The thing they would have him pray to God for, was direction what they should do in this desolate state into which God had brought them. What could be more pious? a practice founded upon a Divine precept, and encouraged by a promise, Pro_3:6, *Acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he shall direct thy steps* . But we may well apply here what God had said to their forefathers, Deu_5:29, when they had so freely promised their obedience to the law of God, Oh that there were such an heart in them, &c.

Jeremiah 42:4

I have heard you; that is, I will do for you according as you desire. And I will be faithful in giving you an account of what God shall reveal to me to be his will on your behalf. They called God Jeremiah's God, here Jeremiah calls him *their God* , both to mind them of God's relation to them, and their duty towards him.

Jeremiah 42:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 42:6

The preceding words are a perfect oath, the form of which lies in a calling of God to witness the sincerity of the heart of those that swear, for a security to those to whom the oath is given, which also includeth a secret challenging God to take vengeance upon the persons that give that security, if they should not do accordingly as they promise; which speaketh the atheism of the heart of the false swearer; for did a man believe that there is a God, and that the Divine Being is infinite in power, and a true and faithful witness, it were impossible that he should challenge him to be revenged on him-for not doing what he never seriously intends to do, which was the case of these wicked men. The thing they promise is a perfect obedience to God's will, whether grateful or ungrateful to them; and they further declare a conviction, that if they did it, it should be well with them, according to that, Deu_5:29; which showeth the mighty power of lusts in unregenerate hearts, and the mighty operations of the evil spirit in the children of disobedience, Eph_2:2; that although they be convinced that if they did obey the voice of God it would be well with them, yet they will not do it in things which they have a power to do.

Jeremiah 42:7

The word mentioned Jer_40:1; to which all that we have met with from the beginning of **Jer 40** is but an historical preface.

Jeremiah 42:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 42:9

The prophet after ten days, all which time some (but upon what ground I know not) think he spent in prayer, receiveth an answer from God, which he presently communicates to the princes and people, with a preface that containeth in it many arguments to have induced this compliance with it:

1. Because it came from the Lord.
2. From that God who, as he was in covenant with Israel, so in all the course of his providence had so carried himself to them, as they had no just reason to suspect either his kindness or his power.
3. From their employing of him to seek God upon their behalf.

Jeremiah 42:10

That is, if you will not go into the land of Egypt, as you are thinking, but abide where you are, or in any part of Judah, under subjection to the king of Babylon, into whose power I have given you, then I will see to your security and prosperity, and make you a happy people. The happiness and prosperity of people is in Scripture often set out under the notion of building and planting, as on the contrary their misery or destruction is expressed under the metaphorical notions of pulling down and plucking up.

For I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you; for I am satisfied with the punishment your nation hath undergone; and as to the remainder, if they do not destroy themselves by new disobedience, I will change the course of my providence.

Jeremiah 42:11

I know whom you are afraid of; you fear that the king of Babylon will come and utterly root you out, because one of your nation hath murdered his viceroy Gedaliah: suffer not your passion of fear to rise too high in this case, and to make you flee into Egypt; for you shall have my presence with you, to preserve and deliver you from his power, it shall not be in his power to do you any harm.

Jeremiah 42:12

We are beholden to God for all the pity and compassion which we meet with from men, God inclineth their hearts, though we receive the kindness from their hands. The mercy which God here promiseth these men is, that the king of Babylon should give them a liberty to go every one of them to their own inheritances, for at present they were banished by their own fear, from their own houses, though not from their own country.

Jeremiah 42:13

Our translation a little darkens the sense, translating the Hebrew particle *ylb*

neither, which signifies no more than *not*, or by *no means*, Num_14:16 1Sa_2:2 **20:26** Hos_13:4; and it is certain here is but one thing spoken of, for the thing wherein they disobeyed the voice of the Lord was not continuing in their own land, but going into the land of Egypt.

Jeremiah 42:14

The sense of the words is obvious, they thought that their life in the land of Judah would be at best an uneasy life, where they should be continually alarmed with the noise of war; and though they could not fear the want of bread in a land that flowed with milk and honey, yet they also considered that Egypt was a very fruitful country, by the overflowing of Nilus; and the prospect of this made them quit that usual fondness which people have of their native country. From whence appears that their great sin was unbelief; they would not take the promise of God for a security to them for a quiet and peaceable abode in Judah, but would fancy noises of drums and trumpets, and fear where no fear was. The prophet saw they were resolved into Egypt they would go, to live a more certain easy life (as they fancied); he therefore tells them, that if after their sending him to God to inquire for them, and promising a compliance with his will, and hearing now what that will was, this were their resolution, he had another word from God to them.

Jeremiah 42:15

This verse is wholly prefatory. to what followeth. If, saith God, all your mind be upon Egypt, and you be resolved thither you will go,

Jeremiah 42:16

In the general the prophet threateneth them, that in Egypt they should meet with the very same evils the fear of which made them flee out of their own country, the sword and famine; the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, who, after this, fully conquered Egypt; and a famine through want of bread; for although Egypt was a fruitful country, yet we know there was a famine there, against which Joseph provided; besides that scarcity of victuals commonly followeth great armies. Those who shun dangers, or think to shun them, by acts of disobedience to God, ordinarily are suffered by God to take such courses as they fall into the same or worse dangers than what they labour to avoid.

Jeremiah 42:17

Those words,

that set their faces to go, may reasonably be interpreted as a limitation of the universal particle *all* ; for as eventually we can

hardly conceive that every individual person that went into Egypt did thus perish, so it can hardly be thought that the just God should order an equal punishment to those who were the ringleaders in this design, and those who were forced or overruled by them, or perhaps knew not how to live when the rest were gone. But, saith God, for those who drive on this design, and go with their whole heart resolvedly against the contrary revelation of my will, there shall none of them escape one or other of my sore judgments, sword, pestilence, or famine; they shall not be the lot of one or two, but of all such persons.

Jeremiah 42:18

If you would see your doom in a glass, look upon Jerusalem, which according to my word I have dealt so severely with, that amongst men it would be called fury, though in me it was but deliberate justice, that my wrath declared against it (like liquid things melted) diffused itself into all the parts of it: I will deal so with you soon after you shall have entered into that land, where you promise yourselves so much ease, rest, and prosperity; and as I threatened to make Jerusalem a curse, an astonishment, and a reproach, Jer_24:9 **29:18**, so I will deal with you; and in this I will (saith God) deal worse with you, that whereas those of your brethren that were carried from Jerusalem to Babylon shall some of them come back again after sixty years, you shall see this place no more. There was this aggravation of the Jews' sin, to whom God was now by his prophet speaking, they had lately seen the words of the Lord spoken by the same prophet verified, and yet would take no warning, but ran into the same sin of unbelief.

Jeremiah 42:19

The good prophet, knowing how much it concerned this people to listen unto him, and to believe and obey what he said, repeats again the same thing which he had said before, assuring them that it was the Lord commanded him to say this to them. Critics note that the word which we translate *admonish*, in this form, signifieth to admonish before witnesses.

Jeremiah 42:20

Ye dissembled in your hearts; or, you have used deceit, either towards God, dealing falsely with him, calling him to be a witness to your sincerity in what you never intended any sincerity in; or

towards me, sending me to inquire of God for you, and promising to do according to what I should reveal to you from God as his will, whenas you never intended it; or towards your own souls, as every sinner doth but deceive his own soul: you made a pretence of what was not in your hearts, when you sent me to pray God's direction for you, and made me such a firm promise to do whatsoever I should reveal to you from God as his will in this case.

Jeremiah 42:21

I have been faithful to you, I went according to your desire to inquire of God for you, I had his will revealed to me in your case, and now I have as faithfully told you what it is;

but ye have not obeyed. How did Jeremiah know this, for they had not yet declared their minds to him? He had either learned it from their discourses during the ten days which God had made him to wait for the revelation, or he had learned it from some contemptuous behaviour of them when he delivered it, or (which is most probable) God had aforehand told it to him.

Jeremiah 42:22

The prophet ascertaineth that doom unto them which, Jer_42:15-17, he had threatened them with, in case they were resolved to go into Egypt. We must expect nothing but utmost disappointments upon actions done in disobedience to the revealed will of God: you think to avoid death by going thither for a little time to sojourn, but you shall die there, and that by those very deaths which by going thither you seek to avoid,

Jeremiah 43:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 43

Johanán and the commanders discredit Jeremiah's prophecy, Jer_43:1-3, and, with the people, carry him and Baruch into Egypt, Jer_43:4-7. He prophesieth, by a type, the conquest of Egypt by the Babylonians, Jer_43:8-13.

The Hebrew word which we translate

words signifieth also *things*. The prophet is very exact in letting us know that he had from the Lord what he delivered to them, he therefore twice repeats it, *the words of the lord their God*, and for

which the Lord had sent him to them: not that the prophets always limited themselves to those syllabical words they had revealed to them, but to the matter only of the revelation; which every minister of the gospel is still bound to do, delivering to the people only what they have received from the Lord, as 1Co_11:23, as to the matter and substance of what they deliver, though they clothe it with words and phrases of their own.

Jeremiah 43:2

Of

Johanan we have before heard, but not of

Azariah, unless under the name of *Jezeaniah* , Jer_42:1, but that is uncertain. These men are called *proud men* , either because they were the great men, or because their conceit of themselves led them into this fatal error. Pride is nothing else but a man's mind swelling in an opinion of himself, and always takes its rise from some higher ground the person possessed of it thinks he stands upon, and a very little hillock will serve the turn; those who have nothing else of pretence will make a silk coat or a piece of silver lace serve their turn. One man's spirit swells upon account of his descent, another upon account of his riches, a third upon the account of his learning, parts, and wit, a fourth upon the account of his or her beauty. These men are called

proud men, possibly upon account of their greatness, they were captains, and the chief of the Jews now left; but chiefly upon account of the good opinion they had of their own reason and wit, by which they judged they knew better how to guide themselves for their own security than Jeremiah could teach them; which pride or good opinion men have of themselves is a great root of disobedience: all men sin either through passion or pride, or both, either to gratify their sensitive appetite, or their rational appetite, as it is in man since the fall.

Because it had been downright atheism, and a disclaiming of God, to have said they knew better what to do than God could tell them, they only tell the prophet God had not sent him. As in these times hypocrites, whose lusts will not allow them to do the will of God, think to secure themselves by denying that to be the will of God,

and finding out other senses to put upon Scripture than are according to truth.

Jeremiah 43:3

Baruch was but a clerk or secretary to Jeremiah, so not very probable to overrule the prophet to a falsifying of his trust, and a betraying of his countrymen into the hands of their enemies; but so fond are wicked men of their lusts, that they will say any thing in justification of them, rather than deny themselves in them, and become obedient to the will of God.

Jeremiah 43:4

That is, they resolved not to obey the message God had sent them by Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 43:5

This resolution they presently put in practice. Though it is certain that Jeremiah and Baruch were not willing to go along with them, and probably that many of the people were not willing, yet these rebellious captains forced them all along with them, so as many of them were now a kind of prisoners to their own countrymen.

Jeremiah 43:6

Of

the king's daughters here mentioned, see Jer_41:10.

Jeremiah 43:7

Egypt at this time, though it was humbled by the king of Babylon, by an inroad he had made into it, of which we read, 2Ki_24:7, yet it was a distinct kingdom, and being near to Canaan, the Jews often fled thither for sanctuary, and borrowed assistance against their enemies from them. Of this city we read little but in holy writ. 1Ki_11:19, we read of a queen of Egypt called

Taphenes, in honour to whom probably this city was builded, after whose name this city was called, of which the Scripture saith nothing, but in this prophet, Jer_2:16, in this chapter, and Jer_44:1 **46:14**; it appears by Jer_43:9 that it was at this time the place where the king of Egypt made his residence, or at least had a palace. Thither these captains and the Jews came, forcing Jeremiah and Baruch along with them.

Jeremiah 43:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 43:9

God commandeth the prophet to take these
stones, and to place them

in the clay, & c., for a sign of what we shall meet with expounded in the next verse: it is plain from hence that the king of Egypt, called Pharaoh, either resided, or at least had a royal palace, in Tahpanhes; Jeremiah is directed to fix these stones at the entrance into this palace. This hath made interpreters divided about the true sense of the word which is here translated a

brick-kiln. That the word so signifies is out of doubt, and is so translated, 2Sa_12:31. All that troubleth some is, that they fancy there should not be a *brick-kiln* so near the king's palace; but possibly those learned men do not enough consider the difference of times and places. Great princes' sons and daughters do not use in our age to keep sheep, which yet we know Jacob's sons and Laban's daughters did; the grandeur of princes was not so great but it might admit of as plain a thing as this. Others say the palaces of their princes were very vast, so that the brick-kiln might be at a distance from the entry into the dwelling-house, though it was at the entry of the place called by the name of the palace. Others think it might be a house used not for making, but polishing earthenware. But the greatest offensiveness of such kilns with us is from the smoke, of which they had none, drying their bricks in the sun. But it is a nicety not worth so many guesses.

Jeremiah 43:10

Now God expounds his meaning in his former command: he ordered Jeremiah to take stones, and hide them in a place near the king of Egypt's palace; now he tells them that this was for a sign that Nebuchadnezzar should set his throne and spread his pavilion in that place. This Nebuchadnezzar God calls his *servant*, because he was to obey him in what he should do, though he intended not so. Thus Assyria is called the *rod of his anger*, Isa_10:5; and Nebuchadnezzar is so called, Jer_25:9 **27:6**.

Upon these stones that I have hid; God owneth the stones to be laid by himself, because they were laid at his command.

Jeremiah 43:11

He prophesieth the certain ruin of the Egyptians by the king of Babylon, some of whom the king of Babylon should slay, others of them he should lead away into captivity as prisoners of war. See the like phrases Jer_15:2.

Jeremiah 43:12

God by his prophet declares a particular hatred to the idols of Egypt, that he would burn up their temples, i.e. by the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.

And carry them away captives; he shall carry away both the idols and the inhabitants of Egypt captives.

He shall array himself with the land of Egypt; that is, with the spoils and plunder of the land of Egypt the king of Babylon shall clothe his army.

As a shepherd putteth on his garment: our unacquaintedness with the fashions of shepherds causeth divers guesses at the sense of this phrase; that which the best interpreters fix in as the best is, that as a shepherd that while he hath been attending his flocks goes in any rags and is careless of his clothes, but when he goes home at night he puts on his coat; so the Babylonish soldiers, when they have finished their work in the conquest of Egypt, shall go home clothed in the better habits of the Egyptians.

And he shall go forth from thence in peace; and the armies shall go home in peace, as conquerors not foiled in their undertaking.

Jeremiah 43:13

Beth-shemesh signifies *the house of the sun*, and it is also the name of a city in Egypt; so most take it here, as the name of a city which had its name from a famous temple builded in it to the honour of the sun. This idol is called *On*, Gen_41:45. By this it appears that the Egyptians, as well as other pagans, paid Divine adoration to the creature. God threatens not only the destruction of the idolatrous temples, but the houses of the inhabitants of Egypt. by the king of Babylon; from whence these Jews, would they have believed, might have understood, that they would not have the security which they promised themselves in the land of Egypt.

Jeremiah 44:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 44

Jeremiah representeth to the people in Egypt the former sins and punishment of Judah, Jer_44:1-10. He prophesieth their destruction in Egypt, Jer_44:11-14. Their obstinacy, Jer_44:15-19; threatened, Jer_44:20-28. For a sign, the destruction of Egypt is foretold Jer_44:29,**30**.

The patience and goodness of God to this remnant of his ancient people is very remarkable; he leaveth them not even in their rebellion, but sendeth Jeremiah, whom he had before sent to prevent their going into this idolatrous country, to try if in Egypt they would be brought to a better mind. It should seem that the generality of the Jews that went into Egypt had planted themselves at these four places. Of *Migdol* we read Exo_14:2 Num_33:7; from which places we may learn it was a city or town upon the borders of the Red Sea. We shall read of it again Jer_46:14. It was a place which might have minded them better of their obligations and duty to God, for upon their removal from thence God divided the Red Sea for their forefathers. *Noph* was another city in Egypt, of which we read Isa_19:13 Jer_2:16 **46:14** Eze_30:13,**16**. The Greeks and Latins call it Memphis; it is thought to be that city which is now called Cairo.

Pathros was a region or province, some think it derived its name from Pathrusim the son of Mizraim, Gen_10:14. It is the same (as some think) which is since called Thebais.

Jeremiah 44:2

He referreth to the late destruction of it by the king of Babylon; this remnant of the people was a brand plucked out of that fire, and their eyes had been witnesses to the desolations that God had wrought.

Jeremiah 44:3

As they were eye-witnesses to the effect, so it was nothing but their unbelief made them strangers to the cause; for God by his prophets had told them that the great moving cause was their paying a Divine homage to idols; the sin of which is aggravated from this, that they were as much strangers to the idols, as to the people with whom they joined in the worship of them, neither they nor any of their fathers having had any experimental

knowledge of what they had done or could do for such as adored them.

Jeremiah 44:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 44:5

These two verses contain another aggravation of this people's sin, viz. that they did this against light, and admonitions to the contrary. God had by his prophets let them know that this was an abominable thing, a thing which he hated, and that not with an ordinary degree of hatred; yet they would not hear, so as to yield obedience to God, but went on in their idolatries.

Jeremiah 44:6

For these very reasons, their idolatry and contempt of my word by my prophets, the very sins you are now committing, I have given Judah and Jerusalem into the hand of the king of Babylon, and it is (as you at this day see it) waste and desolate.

Jeremiah 44:7

What prudence can guide you to do such actions as these, by which you cannot hurt God, but yourselves only? You are now but a few of many; what love have you for your country, in taking courses which will certainly tend to the utter extirpation of those few, so as there shall be neither man, nor woman, nor child, nor suckling remaining of all the Jews?

Jeremiah 44:8

Idols are usually thus defamed, and indeed nothing can argue a greater stupidity than for any to pay a homage (confessedly due to the Supreme Being) to what is the work of men's hands, and therefore must be made by one superior to that order of beings in which idols are. But how doth the prophet say that they worshipped the works of men's hands? for it is apparent, from Jer_44:17, that they paid this homage to the *queen of heaven*, which is not the work of men's hands.

Solut. It was before images, which are but the works of men's hands. And this certainly was the idolatry of the generality of the heathens, they worshipped an unknown Divine Being before a creature, either as representing it, or rather putting them in mind of it.

That ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth; the term that doth not denote the idolater's end of intention, for none ever did any act intentionally to ruin themselves, it only signifies the end of their work, that their utter ruin would be the certain consequent of their work.

Jeremiah 44:9

God accounteth men and women to have forgotten that, the sight and reflection upon which hath made no such impression upon them, as to produce a practice suitable to those notices, according to the conduct of a reasonable soul, which teacheth every man, having notice of a great evil brought upon a man by such or such practices, to avoid running into the like danger. It was the aggravation of this people's sins, that they were committed in the holy land, and in a city which God had more favoured than any other place: to have done these things in any place had been guilt enough, but more to do it

in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 44:10

They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared: neither they nor you are humbled; for the prophet's passing from the second person to the third, and by and by from the third person again to the second, lets us know that he intendeth what he spake as well of them to whom he spake, as of them concerning whom he speaks.

Nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes; from whence we also learn that reformation and obedience are the first-fruits of contrition, or true humiliation. God accounteth those not humbled, but hardened, who are not reformed, and become obedient to his will, let their pretended attrition, contrition, or humiliation be in outward appearance what it will.

Jeremiah 44:11

Therefore thus saith the lord of hosts, the God of Israel: these names are frequently given to God in threatening prophecies, partly to let this people know that God is able to make good his word, and to bring the threatened evils upon them; and partly to let them know that the dealing thus with them would not make

him quit his relation to Israel, but he was and still would approve himself the God of those who were his true Israel.

Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah; the meaning is, My full design against you is to bring evil upon you; this is expressed under the notion of setting his face, and, Amo_9:4, setting his eyes against them.

Jeremiah 44:12

This is no more than the prophet had told these very persons before they went unto Egypt, Jer_42:16,17; here he doubleth his words for the confirmation of the truth of them to them now that they were there.

Jeremiah 44:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 44:14

There is a great variety in the reading of the words, Jer_44:14; some reading *besides such as have a desire to return* ; others, *although they have a desire to return* ; others, *for they have a desire to return* . The words seem to hint that these Jews went into the land of Egypt, not with a design to live there always, but to stay for a while till the heat of the Chaldeans in inquiring after the blood of Gedaliah should be over, then thinking to return into their own country; which one would think were true, considering it not only as their native soil, but also a place where was now room enough, and they might live in much greater plenty than they could in Egypt. The only difficulty is in the last words, compared with what in the same verse went before; it is said in the beginning of the verse that *none of them should escape* , and in the close,

none shall return but such as shall escape. But reason will guide us to interpret the first *none* in a restrained sense, i.e. none of those who have been the authors of this counsel and rebellion against God, and who went into Egypt willingly; for none can think that God involved Jeremiah and Baruch who were in Egypt (at least the first of them) in the same punishment with which he punished the rebellious Jews. Or none of those who in Egypt have burnt incense to idols, and defiled themselves with the idolatry of Egypt; but there shall some escape, such as have been forced into

Egypt against their wills; and such as, being so forced, when they came here did not fall in with the idolatry of the Egyptians, (for we may gather from the next verse that all of them did not,) these men shall again return into the land of Judah. This to me seemeth the fairest and most probable sense of the words.

Jeremiah 44:15

The burning of incense was a religious rite, which God had appointed the Jews as a piece of Divine homage to be paid to him alone, and by an ordinary figure is put for worship; so as burning incense to other gods is the same with worshipping other gods. It should seem that all the Jews had not been thus far guilty, and those that did it were mostly women, or at least they were the leaders in this idolatry; and one would think the phrase implieth that those who were thus culpable did it with some privacy, so as all their husbands did not know of it; but those that did were as bad as their wives, conniving at them, and justifying them in their idolatry, and joining with them in the following peremptory answer to and contempt of the prophet.

Jeremiah 44:16

We read, Jer_43:5, Johanan and the rest only denied that God had spoken such things, and told Jeremiah he had spoken falsely; but now these women and men rise higher, they acknowledge Jeremiah had spoken to them in the name of the Lord, but tell him in plain and direct terms they would not obey it. And indeed this is in the hearts of all sinners that are ruled by their lusts; though they will sometimes pretend that what they hear is not the will of God, but spoken out of malice and prejudice, yet they are pre-resolved they will not do it, let their understandings be never so well informed.

Jeremiah 44:17

Here is the root of all sinners' disobedience, their resolution to please and humour themselves, not knowing how in any thing to deny themselves; hence it is that denying ourselves is by Christ made the first law or condition of his disciples. By the

queen of heaven some here understand the sun, which notion is favoured from the words being of the feminine gender, which

signifieth the sun in Hebrew; others reading it not the queen, but the

frame of heaven, by it understanding the sun, moon, and stars.

Drink-offerings were a Divine homage which God had commanded to be paid to him, Lev_23:13 Num_6:17. Their arguments for it were,

1. Custom and antiquity, they and their fathers had used to do it.
2. The example of their kings and princes.
3. The plenty and prosperity they had while they did so, as if their idolatry had been the cause of it.

Jeremiah 44:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 44:19

Their last argument is drawn from the evils that had befallen them since they had left worshipping the sun, moon, and stars; thus strangely making their omission of that the cause of their sufferings, their former doing of which was indeed the true cause. They had lost their husbands in the siege and in battles, and had suffered famine and hunger; and all because they had burnt incense to other gods: they interpret these providences as a punishment of them for not doing it as they had formerly used to do. So bad interpreters are those of God's providences, who indulge their lusts in opposition to God's law.

Jeremiah 44:20

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 44:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 44:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 44:23

There is in these verses nothing of difficulty, nor any new phrases to be opened. That which is observable is, that though the prophet was but one against many, yet he feareth not their faces: the substance of what he saith is this, that they interpreted God's

voice in his providences toward their country directly contrary to the true sense of it. They concluded that their omission of late to burn incense to the sun, moon, and stars was the cause why it was so ill with them; as if these were animate beings, and the Supreme Being, whereas they were but creatures. Or as if it were the will of the Supreme Being to be adored and worshipped in them, or before statues and images represented by them, whereas the will of God was directly contrary: and as he in the second commandment had forbidden any such worship, because he was a jealous God; so he had for the breach of that commandment, by their burning incense to these creatures, burned up their houses and temple, and brought their nation into that misery into which they were come: from whence may be observed how ill an argument for any religious worship antiquity is, unless we by it mean what is most ancient; as also that prescription in that which is false in the worship of God justifieth none. Nor is it a good conclusion that those who lived nearest to the primitive institution are most likely to have done best, as having the best means to know what is truly primitive. Idolatry was as old as Laban, and the worst of idolatry (offering children to Molech) was older than the Levitical law, if not as old as Serug. In matters of worship the word of God is a sufficient rule, we need not plead antiquity, nor the *practice of our fathers*. Error is not capable of being justified by tradition or prescription.

Jeremiah 44:24

That is, all you men and women that belong to Judah, and are now come to inhabit in the land of Egypt.

Jeremiah 44:25

Those words

have spoken are in the Hebrew of the feminine gender, which giveth good reason to some interpreters to conclude the women were first and principal in this idolatry, and the men's guilt lay in conniving at them, and suffering themselves to be seduced by them. Ye, saith the prophet, have spoken it, and ye have been as big as your words, and for a cover you pretend the religion of a yew, as if a vow could be a bond of iniquity, and it were possible by a vow to oblige yourselves to a forsaking of the true God, and a committing of idolatry. The latter words seem ironical, so as to

have this sense, You are resolved upon it, and there is no moving you from your resolution; God hath resolved too.

Jeremiah 44:26

Seeing you are so fixed and peremptory, God is as resolved as you are; and as you think you must be religious to your wicked vows, so be assured God will be as religious to his oath; because he can swear by no greater, he hath sworn by himself, Heb_6:13,17, (for so *name* signifieth here,) There shall not any be left of the Jews that are in Egypt, to swear,

The Lord God liveth (for it should seem that the Jews yet retained something of the religion of their country, and sware by the name of the living God, according to the precept, Deu_6:13 **10:20**). God threateneth there should be none of them left alive to do it; he would not have his holy name polluted by those mouths that had been used to bless idols.

Jeremiah 44:27

God here either sets out himself as one who would be industrious and solicitous to bring evil upon them, as men who are so in any business watch opportunities to do it; or else he derides their vain confidence as to his protection of them, and care for them: saith God, I will watch over them, but not *to build and to plant* , as Jer_31:28, but, as it is in the former part of that verse, *to pluck up, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict* . For so it follows,

they shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine.

Jeremiah 44:28

This justifieth the restrained interpretation of *none of the remnant* , Jer_44:14; for here it is plainly said that some should escape and return; but for the rest, they should there perish, and by that it would appear whether God's word or theirs should stand, and have its accomplishment; they promising themselves security, God threatening them with utter ruin and destruction.

Jeremiah 44:29

Signs are usually antecedent to the thing signified, but the word is taken in a larger notion in this place, for that which should attend the thing signified by it, as Exo_3:12; besides, though their destruction and the destruction of Pharaoh-hophra were things

immediately following one another, yet the latter was in order before the other.

Jeremiah 44:30

Pharaoh was a name common to all the Egyptian kings, as may be learned from Gen_12:15 **41:1** Exo_1:8,**11**; but they had besides that name another peculiar to them. Whether this *Hophra* was Vaphres or Apries is not much material; nor is there any certainty when this prophecy was fulfilled; whether

Pharaoh-hophra were (as Herodotus saith) slain by Amasis, one of his subjects who rebelled against him and slew him, (as the aforementioned author tells us,) or Nebuchadnezzar, who Josephus saith came about five years after he had taken Jerusalem, and overran Egypt, and slew this Pharaoh-hophra, whose overthrow was a certain sign of the Jews' destruction, it being not like that the king of Babylon should spare these Jews who had fled to this king of Egypt for shelter; considering also that the Jews had slain Gedaliah his deputy governor in Judea.

How God delivered Zedekiah into the hand of the king of Babylon, we read **Jer 39**. Here now ends the story of these Jews that had fled into Egypt.

Jeremiah 45:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 45

Jeremiah instructeth and comforteth Baruch.

This chapter ought to have been annexed to the 36th chapter, or immediately to have followed it, for the writing of Jeremiah's prophecies we read of there. It was eighteen years before this time that the prophet thus spake to Baruch upon the writing of those prophecies which, as we read there, brought both Jeremiah and Baruch into a great deal of danger, which probably gave Baruch the occasion of the complaint we shall read of, Jer_45:3.

Jeremiah 45:2

Jeremiah had in his former discourses revealed the will of God concerning nations, here he revealeth it as to Baruch his secretary or clerk, upon which account some compare him to Paul writing to Philemon as well as to churches.

Jeremiah 45:3

Upon Baruch's reading the prophecies after he had wrote them from the mouth of Jeremiah, both he and Jeremiah were sent for before the princes, and advised to hide themselves, as we read, Jer_36:15,19. This probably disturbed Baruch, and made him lament his condition in such-like expressions, of which the prophet had heard, probably by revelation from God.

Jeremiah 45:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 45:5

What great things Baruch was seeking is not expressed, and impossible to be determined with any certainty; they could not be honour or riches, the time of Jehoiakim's reign was no time for any pious rational man to expect any thing of that nature; he might expect to have been a prophet, as Elisha was, who first was but a servant to Elijah. Or at least he might expect rest and protection, when others met with disturbance. But it may be the meaning is no more than, Dost thou expect what none meeteth with, or is like to meet with who feareth God? Never think of it.

I will bring evil upon all flesh; I am bringing calamities and misery upon the whole nation wherein thou livest.

But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest; I will preserve thy life, that is all thou art to expect, and thou shalt live to see the time that thou wilt judge that a great booty, that thou shalt have lent thee, whithersoever the wind of my providence shall happen to drive thee. This message of God to Baruch teacheth us that God expects from his people a spirit suited to his dispensations, and that they should keep their spirits low in a time of public judgments, not making to themselves any great promises of freedom from their share in the public calamities of that nation or kingdom in which they are; but contenting themselves with such allowances as God proportioneth to them at such a time without discontent or murmuring, and blessing God for any marks of gracious providence which he in such times will please to set upon them, being thankful for them and satisfied with them.

Jeremiah 46:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 46

The overthrow of Pharaoh's army, Jer_46:1-12. The conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar, Jer_46:13-26. God's people comforted, Jer_46:27,28.

This verse contains the title to all the ensuing discourses of this prophet; for though there be some particular verses in these chapters that relate to the Jews, yet they are all concerning their restoration. The prophecies of judgments from the beginning of this chapter to the 52nd chapter are all against foreign nations, which are called Gentiles; as to whom God revealed his will for the punishment of them, for the relief and satisfaction of his people, to whom the most of them had been bitter enemies. The 52nd chapter is by most concluded not to have been wrote by Jeremiah, who it is not probable would have repeated what he had related before, **Jer 39**, but it was wrote (as it is supposed) by some of the captives in Babylon, as a preface to the Book of Lamentations. This particular chapter containeth the revelation of the will of God concerning Egypt, whither some of the Jews fled for refuge after this time, and which had been a great occasion of sin to the Jews before, not only through the Jews' too many leagues with them, and confidence in them, but from their communicating in their idolatry with them: Jer_2:16, The children of Noph and Tahpanhes brake the crown of their head.

Jeremiah 46:2

Pharah-necho was king of Egypt in Josiah's time; it was by his army that Josiah was killed at Megiddo, 2Ki_23:29; it was he that made Jehoiakim king of Judah, taking away Jehoahaz, 2Ki_23:34; but though he prevailed at that time, and that was one time when he came out against Carchemish, 2Ch_35:20, yet he was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar in a battle with him afterwards, as appears from 2Ki_24:7, and Jehoiakim was made tributary to Nebuchadnezzar, as we read, 2Ki_24:1; and the king of Egypt was brought so low by that victory, that he *stirred no more out of Egypt, for the king of Babylon had taken from him all from Nilus, the great river of Egypt, to Euphrates*; and this, saith this verse, was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This prophecy must be before that time.

Carchemish appeareth, from Isa_10:9, to have been a place in Syria where the Egyptian army had been in Josiah's time, and then went away conquerors, as appears from 2Ch_35:20, &c.

Jeremiah 46:3

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 46:4

Art hath so much improved all things in later ages, that it is very hard to determine of what form the several weapons and pieces of armour, whether offensive or defensive, in use at this time were; the most here mentioned seem to have been defensive, and the whole speech of the prophet directed to the Egyptians seems to be ironical, calling to this army of Pharaoh-necho to get ready to defend themselves, for they were to encounter with an enemy would put them very hard to it, so as they had need to have their *helmets, and bucklers, and shields, and brigandines* all in a readiness, and know the use of them well; the horses for war had need be harnessed, the spears furbished, and the riders got up.

Jeremiah 46:5

God had either in a vision showed Jeremiah this army of the Egyptians flying, or else had revealed to him that they should be put to flight, which the prophet here publisheth. God made a fear to fall upon the Egyptians, so as when the king of Babylon came to join battle with them, they were not able at all to stand, but turned their backs, and their greatest commanders were either killed, or fled away as fast as they could.

Jeremiah 46:6

That is, it is in vain for the swift to flee away, the mighty men shall not escape, but they shall stumble and fall at Carchemish, which was near the river Euphrates, and northward from Egypt.

Jeremiah 46:7

The next verse expoundeth this.

Jeremiah 46:8

The prophet compareth the Egyptians, fleshed with their former victory obtained against Josiah at Megiddo, and now preparing to another expedition, to a flood, (with allusion probably to the river Nilus, whose waters used to rise to a great height,) both for the multitude of their soldiers, and for their rage; they were resolved

to carry such numbers as should cover the earth, and to take Carchemish, or some other city which their design was against. It should seem both by this text, and that Exo_15:9,10, that the Egyptians were a people much given to vaunt and boast of the great things they would do, boasting when they were putting on their harness as if they were putting it off, not considering how uncertain the events of war were, nor yet that wherein they talked proudly there was one that could be above them.

Jeremiah 46:9

Their ancient way of fighting was with chariots and bows; the prophet calls, in the name of the commanders of the Egyptian armies, to the horses and chariots to come on, and engage in the fight. The

Ethiopians were the Cushites, who were neighbours to the Egyptians, so were the Libyans; both of them it should seem were famous for handling the shield: the

Libyans were descended from Phut; both the Cushites and the Phutites or Libyans were descended from Ham, Gen_10:6. The

Lydians were as famous for the use of the bow in war; they were descended from Mizraim or Shem, Gen_10:13,22: the Lydians here meant are thought to be those descended from Mizraim, and some think these were Ethiopians. They were all auxiliaries to the Egyptians in this expedition.

Jeremiah 46:10

Or,

But this is the day of the Lord, & c. Pharaoh is mistaken in accounting this day his own, because of the multitude of his forces, this is

the day of the Lord, who as he is the Lord of all the hosts of his creatures, so hath a particular rule and government over hosts of men: this is further explained by the next words, a day of vengeance, which God hath set apart, in it to be avenged upon his enemies.

The sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: these phrases only metaphorically signify the great slaughter God would make that day amongst the

Egyptians. This the prophet declares that God would do for his honour and glory, therefore he calls it a

sacrifice, by which also he declareth his justice in this punishment of the Egyptians; and for the further repute and credit of his prophecy, telleth them to whom he spake of the place it should be in, viz. *near the river Euphrates*, where Josiah was slain by him, 2Ki_23:29.

Jeremiah 46:11

Great states are ordinarily in Scripture called

virgins, for their beauty and pleasant state;

Gilead was a most famous place for balm. The prophet ironically calls to the Egyptians to go to Gilead for balm, but tells them it would be to no purpose, God was about to wound them beyond all help of medicines.

Jeremiah 46:12

The prophet keepeth to his old prophetic style, speaking of things that were to come to pass some years after as if they were already past, because of the certainty of them; in this sense he saith other nations had seen, because they should see, the shame and confusion of the Egyptians upon their overthrow, and the cry of their slain and wounded men would fill other lands. For the Egyptians should certainly be overthrown, either by the Chaldeans stumbling upon the Babylonians, or the Babylonians on them, or they (fleeing) for haste stumbling one upon another, so as both those that went before, and those who followed after, should both fall together.

Jeremiah 46:13

A revelation different from the former in this, that the former only foretold the overthrow of the king of Egypt in a particular battle in Carchemish near Euphrates, of which we read that the thing was done, 2Ki_24:7. This foretells the king of Babylon's overrunning all the land of Egypt, and was not fulfilled till some years after Zedekiah was carried away captive, but prophesied of Jer_43:10 **44:30**, to come to pass in the time of Pharaoh-hophra, as we heard before, and more largely foretold by the prophet Ezekiel, **Eze 29 Eze 30 Eze 32**, to happen after the overthrow of Tyrus, Eze_29:18,19.

Jeremiah 46:14

Concerning these three cities of Egypt, **See Poole "Jer_44:1"**: the meaning is, Publish this prophecy over all the land of Egypt. Or perhaps these three were the chief places whither the Jews that went with Johanan the son of Kareah, &c. went, and where they fixed themselves: many more places in Egypt are named by Ezekiel, Jer_30:14, &c.

Stand fast, and prepare thee; for the sword shall devour round about thee; look to yourselves, and prepare yourselves for battle, for the nations are destroyed round about you, (so it is in the Hebrew,) and you have reason to expect that the sword should come next into your countries.

Jeremiah 46:15

The prophet first propoundeth a question, then returneth answer to himself. Egypt was full of valiant men, yet, saith the prophet, they shall be swept away, or broken down, as fruit or grass is beaten down with a violent storm of hail (so the word is used, Pro_28:3). How comes this to pass? (saith the prophet). He answereth himself; Because it was of God to destroy Egypt, who worketh, and none can let him; when he strikes, none can stand before him; none can stand up against him.

Jeremiah 46:16

The prophet had before spoken of Nebuchadnezzar, as an instrument in the hand of God, who being armed with his commission and power, made many to fall, yea, God caused such a fear to fall upon them, that in their flight they fell upon one another. And though they had many soldiers that came to help them from Cush, and Phut, and Libya, yet all was too little; the prophet foretells they should all be glad to go home again, and should speak to one another to that purpose, for the success of the king of Babylon's sword should be such, as they should quickly see there would be no standing before it.

Jeremiah 46:17

That is, the Ethiopians and Lubims that should come to help the king of Egypt should cry, or the Chaldeans or the Egyptians themselves should cry, Pharaoh is but a noise, that is, hath made a great noise, but it cometh to nothing: others make the sense,

Pharaoh is a man of noise, or tumult. that hath made a great deal of disturbance to himself and us.

He hath passed the time appointed; that is, say the most, he hath passed the time himself fixed whereat he would come and fight the Chaldeans. But these words compared with the next verse incline others to think, that either Pharaoh's soldiers or his allies are here brought in mocking at Pharaoh, promising himself that the *king of Babylon* would not come, and laughing at Jeremiah's prophecy, saying *the time appointed was past*, that is, the time of his coming mentioned by Jeremiah was past. Jeremiah foretells that Pharaoh's army and confederates would see reason to cry out, Pharaoh, in saying so, was but *a noise*.

Jeremiah 46:18

That is, he shall as certainly come and encompass you with his armies as Tabor is encompassed with mountains, and as Carmel is by the sea, or as Barak going down from Mount Tabor destroyed Sisera's army, or as surely as the rain came which Elijah first discovered from Mount Carmel, 1Ki_18:41,42. There are other guesses at the sense of this comparison, but the sense is undoubtedly no more than that Nebuchadnezzar should certainly come against Egypt, how vainly soever the Egyptians flattered themselves to the contrary, supposing the time past which the prophet spake of.

Jeremiah 46:19

That is, O you inhabitants in the land of Egypt, make ready to go into another country as prisoners of war; for your cities shall be destroyed; Noph particularly shall be wholly depopulated and laid waste, and have none to dwell in it.

Jeremiah 46:20

That is, Egypt is now in a thriving, prosperous condition, having not used to be under any yoke, like a heifer that is fair and fat; but she will not be so long, she is but as a beast fatted for the slaughter, and there are slaughtermen coming out of Chaldea that will kill this fair heifer, and make her a sacrifice to the justice of God.

Jeremiah 46:21

Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks; the mercenary soldiers also, which the Egyptians have hired from Cush and Phut, and other parts, are at present in a flourishing, prosperous state.

For they also are turned back, and are fled away together; they did not stand: we have translated yk here *ill*, it had been better translated *but*, for that is manifestly the sense. Though they at present lying in garrisons be fat and flourishing, like bullocks in the stalls, yet when it cometh to it they shall not stand, but turn back, and flee as well as the rest. *Because the day of their calamity was come upon them, and the time of their visitation*; because the time is come when God resolveth to punish them, and bring calamity upon them. When the time is come which God hath set in his counsels, wherein he will punish persons or nations, no probabilities to the contrary are much considerable.

Jeremiah 46:22

Egypt is now like a heifer that makes a great bellowing, but the time shall come when she shall make a lesser noise, like the hissing of a serpent when it seeth itself set upon. For the Chaldeans shall come with a great army, armed with battle-axes, as if they came to fell down some wood in a forest or wood.

Jeremiah 46:23

Egypt is compared to a forest, either for the multitude of cities or of people in that country; and to a thick forest, because as it is a hard thing to make one's way through a forest, so it was judged as hard for an enemy to make his way into that country: in human probability Egypt could not be searched, yet (saith God) the Chaldeans shall cut down this forest, and it shall be no more to them than for hewers of wood, with tools fitted for the purpose, to make their way through a forest. For the army of the Chaldeans shall be as numerous as the inhabitants of Egypt, more than the grasshoppers, which come in such troops as in a short time they devour every green herb in a place.

Jeremiah 46:24

That is, into the hand or power of the Chaldeans; it is the same thing which the prophet had before said again and again, and

repeats it so often only for the further confirmation of the truth of the prediction, notwithstanding the appearing improbability of any such thing.

Jeremiah 46:25

The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saith: these names are often in conjunction given unto God, the first signifying his power or ability to do what he either promiseth or threateneth, the other speaking his kindness and near relation to the Jews.

Behold, I will punish the multitude of No: there are great critical disputes about this phrase, whether the word translated

multitude signifies so, (as it doth Jer_52:15) and if so, whether it should not be *multitude from No* ; or whether it signifies the nourisher, (as some would have it,) because No (which some think is the same city with that at this time called Alexandria, being a great place of merchandise) nourished all the adjacent parts; but it is no easy thing to resolve the question, nor is the resolution of it of much moment to us. By those that trusted in Pharaoh the Jews are most probably meant, who all along in their prosperity put too much confidence in Egypt, and after that Jerusalem was taken some of them (as we before heard) fled into Egypt for sanctuary.

Jeremiah 46:26

The former part of this verse is but the same which the prophet hath often before said. The latter part is a promise for the restoration of Egypt to some degrees of its former prosperity and liberty. The determinate time for the fulfilling of this prophecy is told us, Eze_29:13,14, viz. at the end of forty years. This we are told by civil historians fell out in the time of Amasis, a king of Egypt coevous with Cyrus, who was overcome by Cyrus's son Cambyses, who brought Egypt to be a province belonging to the Medes and Persians; by the fulfilling of which prophecy the truth both of Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's prophecies are justified.

Jeremiah 46:27

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 46:28

See Poole "Jer_30:10", See Poole "Jer_30:11", where is the substance of what is said in these two verses, and almost the very words are repeated. The great thing to be observed by us is the

difference which the just and righteous God maketh betwixt his punishments of his church and own people, and his punishments of wicked men, who are their enemies: as there is a great difference in the root of such dispensations, God dealing them out to his people out of love, that they might not be condemned with the wicked; so there is a great deal of difference in the measure and duration of their punishments, the rod of the wicked shall not always lie upon the backs of the righteous, and they are corrected in measure.

Jeremiah 47:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 47

The destruction of the Philistines, Tyrians, Zidonians, and others by the sea-side.

In the former chapter the prophet foretold the judgments of God upon the Egyptians, who were the Jews' seeming friends, but their real enemies, as they were occasions to them of idolatry, and of a sinful confidence in them. He comes in this chapter to foretell the judgments of God upon the Philistines, who were inveterate enemies to the Jews, against whom also Isaiah, Isa_14:29 of his prophecy, and Ezekiel, and Amos prophesied, Eze_25:15 Amo_1:6; and also Zephaniah, in Zep_2:4,5 of his prophecy. When the king of Egypt took Gaza, one of the five cities of the Philistines, the Scripture doth not tell us. Some think it was either in his way to Carchemish, or as he came back a conqueror from the battle at Megiddo, where Josiah was slain. The time when Jeremiah had this revelation is set down to let us know that it was in the time of the Philistines' prosperity, when the prophet could see no such effect existent, or probable in its causes.

Jeremiah 47:2

Calamities and afflictions are often in Scripture set out under the notion of waters; and as the miseries of Egypt were set out by the overflowings of their great river Nilus, so the calamities of the Philistines are expressed by the overflowings of the great river Euphrates; these miseries coming upon them by the Chaldeans, which were a northern people, their waters are said to

rise up out of the north. It is said to be an

overflowing flood that should

overflow the land, because it was to be a sweeping judgment, which like a flood should carry all before it, which should produce amongst the inhabitants of Gaza a great howling and lamentation.

Jeremiah 47:3

This is all but a description of the march of an army, so terrible as should make parents forget their natural affection, and flee away to save themselves, looking upon themselves as lost, and unable to protect their children.

Jeremiah 47:4

Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines; the day which God hath set and appointed for the ruin of the Philistines. Tyre and Zidon were neighbouring to the Philistines, as appears from Gen_10:14,**15 Joe 3:4**, and so were often called to their help. God threateneth both to destroy them, and also those that helped them. It appeareth, from Gen_10:14, that the Philistines and Caphtorims were related; for their first progenitors, Philistim and Caphtorim, were both the sons of Mizraim the son of Ham, one of the sons of Noah. It appears, from Deu_2:23, that they expelled the Avites, and dwelt in Hazerim to Azzah; whether their country be what was afterwards called Cappadocia or Damiata is not much material for us to know, they were a people confederate with the Philistines, whom God here threateneth to destroy with them.

Jeremiah 47:5

Both

Gaza and

Ashkelon were two principal cities belonging to the Philistines taken by Judah, Jud_1:18; we read of them 1Sa_6:17; both Amos, Zephaniah, and Zechariah prophesied their ruin, Amo_1:8 Zep_2:4,**7 Zec 9:5**, as well as this prophet. By

the remnant of their valley, most understand those who lived in the valleys near about Ashkelon. Concerning the last clause in this verse there is some difference, whether the words should be joined with the next verse, and read,

how long wilt thou cut thyself, O thou sword of the Lord? or as they lie in our Bibles; and then the sense is, Why will you in so

desperate a case afflict yourselves, when all your mourning will do you no good.

Jeremiah 47:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 47:7

Some make the words of the 6th verse to be the words of the Philistines in their mourning and cutting themselves, crying to God to stop the sword drawn against them, and to return it again into its scabbard: others make them the words of the prophet, lamenting the havoc which he by the eye of the prophecy saw was like to be made amongst the Philistines by the Chaldeans (for good men are affected with the miseries even of the worst of men).

The latter verse must be expounded according to the former; for if the words of the former verse be understood as the words of the Philistines, those of this verse must be understood as the words of the prophet putting them out of hopes of the sword's stopping, because what it did was by commission from God, which it must execute. If the words of the former verse be to be understood as the prophet's words, the words of this verse are either the prophet's words correcting himself, and concluding that this sword could not be quiet, because it was edged by God himself, who had given it his commission, which it must execute; or the words of God, letting the prophet know that he had given this sword its commission, and therefore it could not stop till Ashkelon and the people on the sea-shore were destroyed by it.

Jeremiah 48:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 48

The judgment of Moab, Jer_48:1-6, for their pride, Jer_48:7-10; for their security and human confidence, Jer_48:11-25; especially for their contempt of God, and insolence towards his people, Jer_48:26-46. Their restoration, Jer_48:47.

The prophet having, **Jer 46**; denounced God's judgment against Egypt, and against the Philistines, **Jer 47**, in this chapter he cometh to do the like against the Moabites. Moab, the father of these Moabites, was the son of Lot, Gen_19:37. the Moabites' country lay in the way the Israelites went to Canaan,

Num_21:11,**13**, near the country of the Ammonites. Balak was king of it when the Israelites passed by it, who sent for the sorcerer Balaam to curse them, Num_22:5, who, Num_24:5, &c., blessed them. They seduced the Israelites to adultery and idolatry, Num_25:1.

Moab was a large country, and had many cities; we shall have divers of them named in this chapter; the first that we read of Nebo in holy writ is Num_32:3,**38**. Reuben built both that and Kirathaim, as may be read there, Num_32:38,**39**. It was also the name of a mountain, Deu_34:1. It should seem that in Jeremiah's time, the Moabites had got both the possession of Nebo, and Kiriathaim, and

Misgab, of which we read no more in Scripture. It seems to be a city built upon some hill or *high place*. The prophet threateneth ruin to all these three cities.

Jeremiah 48:2

Heshbon was formerly the city of Sihon, Num_21:26; it became afterward one of the principal cities of the Moabites, as appeareth from Isa_15:4; which maketh the learned author of our English Annotations think our translation not so good; for why should they devise evil in Heshbon against Moab, unless the enemies sat there in council, when they had taken it, against the other parts of the country? But possibly the sense is, they shall no more in Heshbon magnify Moab, or Moab shall no more glory of Heshbon, for the enemies had contrived the ruin of it.

Madmen was another city in the country of Moab. Some think the same with Ptolemy's Madiama. To that city also the prophet threateneth ruin and destruction by the sword.

Jeremiah 48:3

Another city of Moab, mentioned only in this place, and in Isa_15:5. Some think it the same with Horon, where Sanballat was born, Neh_2:10 **13:28**. The prophet threatens also ruin and destruction to this city.

Jeremiah 48:4

Moab was both the name of the whole country, and of a principal city in it. Some by it here understand the city; by her

little ones some understand little children; others, inferior magistrates, or the common people.

Jeremiah 48:5

Of

Luhith we read only in this place, and Isa_15:5; it was a city of Moab, and situated upon a hill, as appears both here and where it is mentioned in Isaiah. Some think that to this city the Moabites fled for sanctuary from the Chaldeans, and fleeing made so great an outcry that their enemies who pursued them heard their cry.

Jeremiah 48:6

It is of no great moment whether we understand these as the words of the Moabites, calling one to another to flee, and save their lives, though they lost all they had, and left themselves as bare as a naked tree; or as the words of the prophets speaking to the Moabites to the same sense.

Jeremiah 48:7

Whether by **works** in this place he meant their riches, got by the labour of their hands, or *their idols*, which often are called, by way of defamation, the works of their own hands, or their fortifications, is not much considerable; a confidence in creatures, opposed to a confidence in God, is doubtless the sin here intended, whatever the ground of it was, whether their idols, or riches, or fortified places.

Chemosh was their principal idol, as appears by Num_21:29 Jud_11:24 1Ki_11:7,33 2Ki_23:13. God showeth them the vanity of this idolatry, by telling them that this idol should go into captivity, and be so far from being able to protect them, that he should not be able to protect himself or his own priests, or the princes that favoured him.

Jeremiah 48:8

That is, all the parts of the country of Moab, and all the cities, as well those that stood upon hills and mountainous places, as those that stood in valleys; *because* or *for* the Lord had said it (for so the particle we translate as *is bettea* translated).

Jeremiah 48:9

That is, the Moabites had need of wings like a bird to escape that ruin which is coming upon them. Yea, if they had wings, they should not escape, for the Lord is resolved that the cities of Moab shall be all brought to desolation, so as no inhabitants shall be left in them.

Jeremiah 48:10

These words seem like the words of the prophet to the Chaldeans, inciting them to go on valiantly against the Moabites, calling it

the work of the Lord, which he would have done, and to which he had called them. There is a time to withhold our hands from shedding blood, and that is always when we have not a special authority and call from God to it; and there is a time when God will curse those that do so withhold their hands, that time is when God doth require the shedding of it.

Jeremiah 48:11

Moab hath been at ease from his youth; the Moabites ever since they began to be a people have been a quiet people, not exercised with wars, and enemies making inroads upon them.

He hath settled on his lees; like to a cask of wine, that hath not been racked, but hath continued in the same state.

And hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel; he follows the metaphor of wine, which is drawn out from vessel to vessel, when it is drawn off the lees. It is expounded by the next words,

neither hath he gone into captivity. And this is the reason why they retain their old sins, pride, presumption, luxury, and old wickednesses, as wine while it remaineth in the lees retains more its nature, strength, and colour than when it is once racked.

Jeremiah 48:12

By the

wanderers here mentioned the Chaldeans are most certainly understood, who wandered from their own country to conquer other people; the word is variously translated, *vagrants*, *travellers*, *removers*, &c., who shall conquer the Moabites, and carry them into captivity.

And shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles: he had before compared the Moabites to wine settled upon the lees, here he saith that God would send those that should not only disturb and roll them, but ruin and destroy them.

Jeremiah 48:13

It is a natural and a penal shame which is here spoken of; we are naturally ashamed when we have reposed a great confidence in, and made great boasts of, a thing which, when it comes to be tried, proveth of no use, but mischievous to us.

Chemosh was their great idol, in which the Moabites had great confidence, and of which they boasted; the prophet tells them they should be ashamed of this idol, or for this idol; as the Israelites, that is, the ten tribes, were ashamed of or for the golden calves, which Jeroboam set up at Dan and Beth-el, which were the cause of ruin to those tribes. Confidences in any thing but in God alone in a time of danger will bring both natural and penal shame.

Jeremiah 48:14

How can ye justify what you say, or why say you so, or to what purpose do you brag of your valour?

Jeremiah 48:15

Moab is spoiled; your country will be wasted and spoiled.

And gone up out of her cities; the inhabitants of it shall be all driven out of their cities. The Hebrew is, *and her cities*, it, or *he, is gone up*. So the sense may be, Moab and her cities are all spoiled, and he, that is, the enemy, is gone up.

And his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter; and the strong and mighty men she boasted of, and alerted in, are gone to the battle, as oxen or sheep to a slaughter-house.

Saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts: I do not speak this of myself, I cannot of myself tell things that shall come to pass hereafter, but the words I say are the words of him who is the Lord of all the armies of heaven and earth, who both knoweth what shall be, and is able to effect what he saith.

Jeremiah 48:16

Josephus tells us this destruction came upon the Moabites five years after the siege of Jerusalem; but if it were longer, we must

consider that he who speaketh is that God to whom a thousand years is but as one day.

Jeremiah 48:17

All ye that are about him, bemoan him: the prophet having spoken of Moab's calamity as already come upon him, or at least very near, calls to his friends to come and condole with him, as is usually done in case of some calamity befallen to a friend.

All ye that know his name, say, How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod! All ye that know how terrible Moab hath been to others, and how famous for mighty and strong men, say, How is this potent nation, and this people that hath been such a rod against others, or hath ruled over so many others, broken! for both a *staff* and a *rod* are as well ensigns of power and government, as instruments to punish offenders.

Jeremiah 48:18

Of this

Dibon we read Num_21:30. It was a land for cattle, Num_32:3. Both Dibon, and Aroer, and Ataroth were built by-the children of Gad, to whose lot it fell, Num_32:34, as also to the Reubenites in part, **Jos 13 17**. It should seem that the Moabites were now come into the possession of it, either by conquest, or upon the Assyrians taking the ten tribes.

Sit in thirst; it was a place well watered (otherwise it had not been fit for cattle); God threateneth that she should be

in thirst, that is, driven into some dry, barren countries.

For the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds; for the king of Babylon, whom God had appointed to spoil all Moab, shall destroy thee also, and thy strong holds shall not secure thee.

Jeremiah 48:19

Aroer was a city in the lot of Gad and Reuben, Num_32:34. In David's time it was in the hand of the Jews, 1Sa_30:28, but in Isaiah's time it belonged to Syria, Isa_17:2, and here it is reckoned to the Moabites. The inhabitants of it are called to

stand by the way, and seeing the Moabites fleeing, to ask what news. Others think that Aroer was at this time a city of the Ammonites, and here called unto to see their neighbours the Moabites fleeing before their enemies.

Jeremiah 48:20

Arnon was the name of a river, Num_21:14 Deu_2:36 Jos_12:1. It was the border of Moab, whither Balak went to meet Balaam, Num_22:36; probably the adjacent country or city might take its name from the river.

Jeremiah 48:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 48:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 48:23

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 48:24

God threateneth vengeance to come upon all Moab, which had great *plains* , Num_31:12 **33:48**. For the names of these cities, and those mentioned Jer_48:22-24, some of them we read of in other places of holy writ; others we read not of, neither is it material for us to know their situation; they are not at this day to be known by their old names: they are all here mentioned as cities at this time belonging to the Moabites, to whom this vengeance is threatened, and not to them only, but to all other cities of the land of Moab wherever situate.

Jeremiah 48:25

That is, the beauty and the *strength of Moab* . So these two terms often signify in holy writ, the horn being much the beauty of some beasts, and that part of their bodies by which they both do injury to others, and defend themselves from the assaults of others. God here declares that Moab should both lose its glory and beauty, and also all the power it formerly had to defend itself, or offend others.

Jeremiah 48:26

Make ye him drunken; either make ye him to stagger like a drunken man, (the cause being put for the effect,) or fill him with

the intoxicating wine cup of God's vengeance, with the effects of God's wrath. **For he magnified himself against the Lord;** because of his pride, and exalting himself against the Lord, as if he had been stronger than he, and so out of the reach of God's power.

Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision: as drunken men vomit, and stagger, and fall, and wallow in their vomit, so let the Moabites fall by the sword, wallow in their blood, and like drunken men be mocked at and had in derision by all those who see what their vaunts come to, and what vengeance they have pulled upon themselves.

Jeremiah 48:27

For was not Israel a derision unto thee? it is an ill thing to mock at the miseries of others, especially such as we have some relation to; the Moabites were descended from Lot, who was nearly related to Abraham the father of the Jews, and ought not to have mocked at them, but to have pitied their neighbours and kindred: they either mocked at the ten tribes when they were carried into captivity by Shalmaneser, or at Judah captivated by the king of Babylon. God threateneth the Ammonites, Eze_25:6, and the Edomites, by Obadiah, for the same misdemeanour.

Was he found among thieves? why didst thou deal by Israel as men deal by thieves, when they are brought to shame? Ought not he to have been by thee accounted in a better rank than that of thieves?

For since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy; instead of compassionating the Jews in their calamity, thou never spakest of them but with joy and triumph. Others make a quite other sense, viz. *for those words against him thou thyself shalt wander*. But the learned author of the English Annotations observes well, that the word in the form here used will not so well bear it, though the verb doth in its primary sense signify to wander.

Jeremiah 48:28

Still the prophet speaks of the Moabites as a people whose armies were routed, and calls to them to leave their houses in cities, not promising themselves any security, either to or from their houses, or from the walls of their cities, but to get them to rocks, which

are naturally fortified, and from whence (if from any place) security might be promised. And he commends to them the natural sagacity of a dove, which being a feeble creature, and not able to encounter a hawk or eagle, makes herself a nest in the sides of some rock where she may be at safety.

Jeremiah 48:29

There is a passage, Isa_16:6, &c., concerning Moab, very little differing from this: Isaiah lived some years before this prophet, who yet complaineth of them for the same sins, so as they were not at all reformed. God saith he had heard of their pride and arrogancy; a vice which commonly attendeth ease and prosperity, and is exceeding odious in the sight of God, so as a wicked man is often in Scripture set out under the notion of a proud man.

Jeremiah 48:30

I know his rage, either against Israel, or other people; but he shall never execute it, or bring to pass what he thinks to do. There is no trusting to what he saith, his boastings and his confidence are but lies, and shall never effect his designs.

Jeremiah 48:31

Though wicked men rejoice and triumph in the ruin of good men, yet their charity suffereth them not to do the like, but engageth them to mourn for them in the day of their affliction. Jeremiah declareth his compassion toward these Moabites, though they derided the Jews when they were carried into captivity. nay, he mourns upon the prospect of their misery at some distance; when the sight of the Jews' present calamity would not affect the Moabites with any compassion at all. We find the like compassion in another prophet, Isa_16:11 Jer_48:7 there it is called *Kir-hareseth*, which was a city of Moab, as we read, 2Ki_3:25.

Jeremiah 48:32

We read of this

vine of Sibmah also Isa_16:8,9. Both Sibmah and Jahaza were places in the portion of Reuben, Jos_13:18,19. Sibmah was doubtless a place famous in those days for vines and vineyards. This Jahaza or

Jazer was, as it should seem, first taken and carried into captivity, which caused a great lamentation. The prophet foretells such a

weeping for Sibmah as was for Jazer. By plants he means the inhabitants of Sibmah, which he prophesieth should be carried into captivity over the Dead Sea. As an aggravation of the judgment that should come upon them, God, by his prophet, tells them that the spoiler should come upon them in their vintage and harvest time.

Jeremiah 48:33

The time of harvest and vintage being times when the husbandmen were wont to reap the fruit of all their labours the preceding year, were times of great joy ordinarily; but the prophet foretells them of a year when there should be no such rejoicing, for they should have no wine from the winepresses, there should be no shouting as used to be in the time of harvest and of vintage.

Jeremiah 48:34

An heifer of three years old. See Isa_15:5.

Heshbon, and

Elealeh, and

Jahaz, and

Zoar, and

Horonaim, were all cities of Moab, who are here all threatened with ruin; with the country about *Nimrim* ; which Nimrim is mentioned no where in Scripture but here, and in Isa_15:6; nor are interpreters well agreed, whether in this place it be the name of a river, or a lake, or a city. The sense is, the whole country of Moab shall be destroyed, the cry shall reach from one part of the country to another, either the cry of the inhabitants, or of their enemies pursuing them with a great noise.

Jeremiah 48:35

That is, every one, or some of all orders, for the Moabites generally were idolaters; though the expressing it under this notion may hint to us also one great cause of this judgment coming upon them, viz. their idolatry.

Jeremiah 48:36

The prophet means such pipes as they were wont to use at funerals, and other sad occasions, to play doleful lessons upon;

see Isa_15:5; because of the great change in the state of this poor people, which had got together a great deal of wealth, which is all perished.

Jeremiah 48:37

These phrases are expounded in the beginning of the following verse, There shall be lamentation generally upon all the house-tops of Moab. Shaving of the hair, and clipping the beards, and cutting themselves, were rites and ceremonies of mourning used by these heathens.

Jeremiah 48:38

We met with the same phrase applied to Coniah, Jer_22:28. The meaning is, I have broken Moab all to pieces, as people use to do vessels they care not for; they never go about to mend such a vessel, but dash it in pieces against some stones or walls.

Jeremiah 48:39

Those that formerly lived in Moab, when it was in its glory, shall lament to see how the case is altered with it, that all its glory is broken down, and they that were wont to conquer their enemies turn their backs with shame upon their enemies. And Moab, that was wont to be the praise and admiration of all people, was become an astonishment, and an object of derision and scoffing to them.

Jeremiah 48:40

Nebuchadnezzar shall come upon Moab swiftly; and as an eagle covereth the prey which he hath taken with his wings, so Nebuchadnezzar shall spread himself over Moab.

Jeremiah 48:41

Whether

Kerioth here be the proper name of a city, as it is Jer_48:24, or an appellative noun signifying cities, is doubtful. The latter seems best to agree to this place: *The cities and the strong holds are all taken* ; and though Moab hath in it many mighty and valiant men, yet their hearts will be full of fear, or ready to fail them, like a woman's who is in her travail and hath great and sore pains.

Jeremiah 48:42

That is, for a time; see Jer_48:47; or being such a people as it hath been, so full of splendour and glory. The reason given is the same with that Jer_48:26.

Jeremiah 48:43

These three words,

fear, pit, snare, signify no more than a variety of dangers that should be on all sides of them, so as if any escaped one danger, he should presently meet with another, for this was the time when the Lord was resolved to punish all the inhabitants of the land of Moab.

Jeremiah 48:44

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 48:45

Heshbon was a great city, and, as it should seem, a place of some force; the war being in the country, they made Heshbon the place of their sanctuary. But the prophet, applying to the Chaldeans what was said in Moses's time, Num_21:28, prophesieth that Heshbon also should be destroyed, and the fire should devour the crown of the head, that is, the glory of the brave *rebell*ing gallants, called hi the Hebrew the children of *noise* .

Jeremiah 48:46

The prophet, closing the threatening part of his prophecy against Moab, repeateth the same thing which he had often said, that the Moabites should be carried into captivity by the king of Babylon, and denounceth a woe unto them upon that account.

Jeremiah 48:47

Some think this prophecy was fulfilled upon the return of the Jews out of Babylon, when the Jews inhabited the land of Moab, Zep_2:9; but this doth not seem to be the bringing again the captivity of Moab, but of Judah; besides, in that place it is said that *Moab should be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and salt-pits, and a perpetual desolation* . It is therefore rather to be understood of a spiritual reduction of them, by calling some of them under the kingdom of the Messiah, as the Jewish doctors themselves interpret it. Some think this a promise rather respecting the Jews

than the Moabites; it is said, Jer_48:9, that the remnant of the Lord's people should possess Moab; and, Jer_48:11, that all the isles of the heathen should worship God.

Thus far is the judgment of Moab: these last words are doubtless to be interpreted rather as a conclusion of this prophecy against Moab, than (as some would have it) as a limitation of the time how long this judgment on Moab should endure, as if *thus far* were as much as *thus long* .

Jeremiah 49:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 49

The judgment of the Ammonites, Jer_49:1-5: their restoration, Jer_49:6. The judgment of Edom, Jer_49:7-22; of Damascus, Jer_49:23-27; of Kedar and Hazor, Jer_49:28-33; of Elam, and its restoration, Jer_49:34-39.

The Ammonites were the posterity of Ben-ammi, Lot's incestuous child, by his younger daughter, Gen_19:38. Their country was near the Jews' country. The Jews, in their journey from Egypt to Canaan to possess it, passed by their country, but were by God forbidden to meddle with it, because he had given it to the children of Lot, Deu_2:19; but they proved bad neighbours to the Israelites when in Canaan. They assisted the king of Moab against them, Jud_3:13, and made war against them, Jud_10:9 **11:4**. Nahash their king made an inroad upon them, 1Sa_12:12. David fought with them in his time, 2Sa_8:12, and destroyed them, 2Sa_11:1. Jehoshaphat also and Jotham fought with them, 2Ch_20:1 **27:5**. During the long tract of time that there were wars betwixt the Jews and Ammonites, the land of Gad and Reuben, which lay beyond Jordan, fell into the hand of the Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites (whence it is that in the former chapter we read of many cities of Moab, which were, upon the division of Canaan, in the lot of Gad and Reuben). This prophecy cannot be well understood without a previous understanding this. Hence it is that the prophet saith, Hath Israel no sons? God had given that country of Gilead to Manasseh, and Reuben, and Gad, Num_32:40 Jos_13:29-31; and as men's estates ought to descend to their heirs, so this land should have continued and descended to the posterity of these tribes, but the Ammonites had by force taken away a part, and Melchom possessed it. Melchom is *their king* , or

the name of their idol to whom they gave the name of king, as other heathens called their idol Baal, that is, lord. And the people of the king of the Ammonites, or of Melcom the idol of the Ammonites, dwelt in the cities belonging to Gad, which was one of the tribes of Israel.

Jeremiah 49:2

Because the Ammonites had violently seized upon some part of the Jews' land, and (as we have it, Amo_1:13,**14**) cruelly *ripped up the women with child in Gilead*, that they might enlarge their border, God threatens a war to Rabbah, Amo_1:14, calls it a fire, which should make Rabbah a heap. Of this Rabbah, as the head city of the Ammonites, we read Deu_3:11 Jos_13:25 **15:60**. It was there where, in David's time, Uriah was slain, 2Sa_11:1,**17 12:26**. It is threatened by Jeremiah in this chapter, and Eze_25:5 Amo_1:13,**14**. We read not how or when this prophecy was fulfilled, whether by the Maccabees, /**APC 1Ma 5:6**, or rather after the coming of Christ, when most of these nations were destroyed. God threatens not only their metropolis, which was Rabbah their mother city, but all the other cities belonging to the Ammonites, which were as it were daughters to Rabbah. But how the last clause of this prophecy was ever fulfilled, if it were not in the time of the Maccabees, I cannot understand; for though they were swallowed up afterward by the Roman empire, yet Israel being also subdued by them, and scattered into all parts, it is not likely that many of them were suffered to, abide in any considerable numbers in a country so near their own.

Jeremiah 49:3

Heshbon was formerly a city of the Amorites, of whom Sihon was king, who resided here (but it appears by Jer_49:26 that it was taken from Moab); it is probable that it was at this time a city of Moab: the prophet calls to them to howl

for Ai a city of the Ammonites, not the same mentioned Jos_7:2, for that was on the other side of Jordan. It is uncertain whether by the

daughters of Rabbah be to be understood other lesser cities, or the younger women that inhabited Rabbah: he calls to them all to mourn; and for all the indications or signs of mourning, such as

girding with sackcloth, running up and down, like persons distracted, by the hedges, where they might be hidden, and not so easily seen. For they shall all go together into captivity; their *Melcom* , which may signify their idol to whom they gave that name, or their

king, or else their supreme magistrate, with their **priests** and *nobles* , all orders of persons.

Jeremiah 49:4

It should seem that this country was full of very fruitful valleys, which we know are always the most fertile places, lying lower and at a greater distance from the sun than mountains, and also receiving at second hand the moisture that falls upon the hills, and being usually watered with rivers; from whence they may be called

flowing valleys, either as flowing with receptacles of water, or plenty of corn and grass; though some read it, (and it seems rather more agreeable to the Hebrew,) *thy valley floweth* , either with the blood of men slain, or floweth away, the fertility of it ceaseth or decayeth. Or, *floods of waters* shall destroy the fruit of thy rich valleys, &c. O *backsliding daughter* : Ammon having never been in covenant with God, the word in the Hebrew (though it comes from *bwv* which signifies to return) seemeth ill translated *backsliding* , thou that hast turned thyself away from God.

That trusted in her treasures, saying, Who shall come unto me? thou that trustedst in thy riches, or in thy valleys full of riches, and promisedst thyself security from the situation of thy rich country, thinking none could come at thee.

Jeremiah 49:5

As secure as you think yourselves, I will cause you to be afraid, and your enemies shall be all those that are round about you. And you shall be driven out every man, either right forth, into some country opposite to you, or apart one from another, or so that you shall be glad to flee right forth, and never look back, but only forward, for any place of safety that appeareth next before you. And when you are wandering, being driven by your enemies, you shall find none who will be willing to receive or entertain you.

Jeremiah 49:6

Such a promise we read of Jer_48:47, concerning Moab, but when this was fulfilled the Scripture saith not. Josephus tells us something; but it is rather thought to refer to the conversion of some of the Ammonites as well as other heathens unto Christ.

Jeremiah 49:7

The Edomites were the posterity of Esau the eldest son of Isaac, but disinherited, the blessing being given to his younger brother Jacob, who was the head of the twelve tribes of the Israelites, Gen_27:29. God there, Gen_27:39, promised him that he should have a fat and plentiful country, though his brother should be his lord, and foretold that he should break his brother's yoke from off his neck; the *land of Seir* was his country, Gen_32:3. The Edomites coasted southward upon Canaan, the Israelites passed by their coasts to go into Canaan; their way lay through Edom, but their king refusing to suffer them to go through, God ordered them to go another way. Balaam prophesied their ruin, Num_24:18. They were enemies to the Israelites in Saul's time, 1Sa_14:47, and in David's time, 2Sa_8:14, and in Amaziah's time, 2Ki_14:7, who slew of them ten thousand, and took Selah, calling it Jokteel. Many of the prophets foretold their ruin. Jeremiah in this place, Eze_25:12-14 Joe_3:19 Amo_9:12 **Ob 1,8 Mal 1:4.**

Teman was a city of Edom, mentioned also Eze_25:13 Amo_1:12 Oba_1:9. Eliphaz, Job's friend, was of this place, Job_2:11. It was a place famous for wise and prudent men, of which Eliphaz was not the meanest. The prophet asks what was become of all their counsel and wisdom, for which the Arabians, the Temanites in particular, were so famous. Now they were at their wits' end.

Jeremiah 49:8

Dedan was the son of Jokshan, 1Ch_1:32, from which it is probable that the city

Dedan had its name; it is reckoned, Jer_25:23, with Tema and Buz, and is mentioned Eze_27:15, **20 38:13**. It was a city of Arabia joining on Idumea, Isa_21:13. They being neighbours to the Edomites, are called to flee, and to get into caves and holes of the earth, where they might dwell deep in the earth, and be in some security, which they would not be in their own city, so near

to the Edomites' country, for God was resolved to bring misery upon the Edomites, a time of calamity in which he would visit them with his judgments. There are other critical readings of these words, but this seemeth to be the plain sense of them.

Jeremiah 49:9

We have much the same **Ob 5**. The scope of the prophet in this place is only to show that Edom should be totally destroyed; their destruction should not be like the gleaning of grapes, where the gatherers content themselves with taking the principal clusters, but for single grapes, or small clusters, they leave them; nor yet like the robbings of thieves, who take for their hunger, and when they have got enough leave the rest.

Jeremiah 49:10

But the Edomites should be left bare; and though they sought to hide themselves in secret places, yet God would there find them out, and there should be no places sufficient to hide them. All their children should be destroyed, and the Moabites their kinsmen, and the Philistines their neighbours, should be ruined as well as they.

Jeremiah 49:11

The only question upon this verse is, whether, in the whole of it, it be a promise or a threatening: if it be a promise, the sense is, that though this great destruction should come upon the body of the Edomites, yet God would take care of some of their

fatherless children, whose parents being carried into captivity, they had none to provide for them: if it be taken as an ironical threatening, it soundeth ruin to those as well as the rest, and

I will is as much as I will not. But others think that these are rather to be understood with the supply of some other words, *There is not* , or *there shall be none to say* , *Leave thy fatherless children* , &c.; and whoso considereth those words in the tenth verse, *his seed shall be spoiled* , will see reason to judge it rather a threatening (whether by way of irony or no) than a promise.

Jeremiah 49:12

That by

the cup is meant the wine cup of the Lord's wrath, and that by those whose judgment was not to drink of it are meant the Jews, is not to be doubted; but the question is, how the prophet saith that it was not the judgment of the Jews to drink of this cup? The word here used is of so various significations as makes the fixing the sense of it here difficult; it cannot here signify *justice*, for in that sense it was the Jews' judgment to drink of it; nor can it here (as it often doth) signify the effect of justice, God's judicial dispensation; for they had drank of it, so it was their judgment. It must be taken in the most favourable sense imaginable. Either they who in regard of their relation to God, and God's relation to them, might have looked upon it as none of their portion, yet have drank of it; or, they who in comparison with others did not deserve to drink of the cup, yet have drank of it: and can you think to escape? No, thou shalt not escape, but most surely drink of it. 1Pe_4:17, *The time is come that judgment is begun at the house of God*; and if it first begin with that, where shall the end of others be? When an Israelite hath not escaped the justice of God, an Edomite must not expect it.

Jeremiah 49:13

As men, when they would confirm their promise or threatening to do any thing, add an oath to it, so doth God, who, having no greater to swear by, swears by himself, Jer_44:26. That which God would here confirm was his threatening against Edom, expressed under the notion of

Bozrah, (a part for the whole,) Bozrah being its principal city, Isa_63:1, as well as a city of Moab (as we found in the foregoing chapter); and that which he threatens it with was not being a reproach, a waste, and a curse for a time, but for ever.

Jeremiah 49:14

I have heard a rumour from the Lord: Obadiah beginneth his prophecy much with such words. God hath revealed his will to me in a vision or a dream.

An ambassador is sent unto the heathen: he speaks after the manner of earthly princes, who use to send their ambassadors to other princes to declare their minds to them.

Saying, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle: the meaning is, God hath made such impressions upon other nations, he hath inclined them, or set them on work, to get together in armies to come against Edom in battle.

Jeremiah 49:15

Obadiah, in his prophecy against Edom, **Ob 2**, hath much the same words, importing that God would bring the Edomites very low, and make them very contemptible.

Jeremiah 49:16

Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart: Obadiah in his prophecy against Edom useth much the same expressions, Oba_1:3,4. The word that is here used being of the number of those which are but once found in Scripture, hath given interpreters liberty to abound in their senses of it; some translating it *arrogance* , some, *thine idol* ; but the best interpreters understand by it their terribleness to others, their being so potent that others were all afraid of them; this deceived them, making them to conclude themselves secure, and out of danger; to which is also added the *pride* of the heart. The country of Edom being mountainous, they are said to

dwell in the clefts of the rocks, that is, in places impregnable, and inaccessible as they thought, in the heights of the hill. But the Lord lets them know no place was to his power inaccessible or impregnable, for if they dwell as

high as the eagle, which the Scripture tells us, Job_39:27,28, *maketh her nest on high, and dwelleth and abideth upon the rock, upon the crag of the rock* , yet he would bring them down.

Jeremiah 49:17

The like is said of Babylon, Jer_50:13: it appears from 1Ki_9:8, that it was a kind of proverbial expression, when they would express a great desolation, or great plagues, that those who passed by such a place should be astonished, and hiss at it.

Jeremiah 49:18

Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities were utterly destroyed, and therefore are set down, both here and Jer_50:40, as patterns of an utter ruin and desolation.

Jeremiah 49:19

This verse is very variously interpreted; some by

he understand the Jews, some understand Nebuchadnezzar, some understand the Edomites; I think the last is most probable to be here meant, because of the next words. The Edomites shall come out against the Chaldeans like a lion, as lions lurking about Jordan when it overfloweth come out to take their prey.

But I will suddenly make him run away from her: these words are variously understood, those who by *he* in the former part of the verse understand Nebuchadnezzar, interpret the running here mentioned of his running over the whole country of Edom; to me it appeareth a much more probable sense to interpret it of the Edomites running away from Nebuchadnezzar out of their own country, which seems to be understood by *her* ; all that makes a difficulty is the particle *from* , which yet makes the sense good enough, if by *her* we understand the Edomites' own land. In the Hebrew it is, *I will break them* , or *I will quiet them, and make them to run. Who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her ?* whom shall I set over Edom? Into whose hands shall I give that country, that he may rule over it?

For who is like me? for I can do whatsoever I please.

And who will appoint me a time to plead with men? so Job_9:19; or a time to fight?

Who is that shepherd that will stand before me? what is that king or potentate of the earth that will stand before me?

Jeremiah 49:20

Edom and *Teman* in this verse signify both the same thing; God calls to men to hear the resolutions he had taken up against the Edomites, resolutions as wise and steady as if they had been taken upon the wisest counsels and deliberation.

Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; God is resolved to drive out the Edomites, and the least of Nebuchadnezzar's forces shall drag them out of their lurking-places; and God will make the place where they dwell a desolation.

Jeremiah 49:21

That is, the ruin of the Edomites shall be so great, that all nations round about it shall be affected at the noise of their fall; and though the Red Sea, or the weedy sea, be at a great distance from them, yet their noise shall reach thither.

Jeremiah 49:22

See Poole "Jer_48:40", See Poole "Jer_48:41", where the very same thing, and under the same phrases, was spoken against Moab. That which is threatened is the enemies coming swiftly upon the Edomites and preying upon them, and the fear that should surprise them, which should make their hearts faint as the heart of a woman that hath a hard labour.

Jeremiah 49:23

The prophet comes to denounce the judgments of God against Syria, another nation of the Gentiles.

Damascus was the head city of Syria, Isa_7:8 **17:3**, or Aram, (as in the Hebrew,) because it was a country inhabited by the posterity of Aram, one of the sons of Shem; part of it lay betwixt Babylon and Arabia, and was called Mesopotamia, lying betwixt the two rivers of Tigris and Euphrates. Laban and Naaman were of this country. David had war with them, 2Sa_8:5 **10:18**. So had Ahab, 1Ki_20:20; and Joram, 2Ki_8:28; and Ahaz, Isa_7:2. After God's long patience with them he threatens them with ruin, as by Jeremiah in this place, so by Amos, i. 5. Damascus being the head of this country, is sometimes put (as here) for the whole country. *Hamath and Arpad* were two cities also of Syria, 2Ki_18:34. The prophet foretells that they also should hear of ill news, an enemy that is coming against them, and that they should be melted through fear, and their courage should fail them, they should be as troubled as the sea, is in a storm, or their inhabitants that lived near to the sea should be troubled.

Jeremiah 49:24

Syria, whose head is Damascus, hath lost her old courage and valour; it was wont to be a formidable country to its neighbours, but now they flee before their enemies.

Fear hath seized on her; they are seized, and overpowered by their own fears.

Anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail; great sorrows are ordinarily in Scripture expressed by the similitude of the pains of a woman in travail; we have met with it often in this prophecy, Jer_6:24 **22:23**: so Psa_48:6 Mic_4:9.

Jeremiah 49:25

It is called

the city of praise, because it was a city so much praised, a city of great renown, which the prophet seeing like to be destroyed, lamenteth either in the person of the king of Syria, or of the Syrian inhabitants, wondering that the conquerors should not spare so famous and renowned a city, in which so many did rejoice.

Jeremiah 49:26

The Hebrew particles are not always well rendered in our translation, and our learned English Annotator hath rightly observed this place as one instance, for Nbl cannot be here an illative, but is much better translated *surely*, as a note of assertion. God threateneth the Syrians with a certain ruin and desolation.

Jeremiah 49:27

I will bring a judgment that shall burn in Damascus like a consuming fire, and it shall reach to the royal seat of Benhadad; either that which was the royal seat of Ben-hadad, 2Ki_8:7, or else Ben-hadad (signifying the son of Hadad, which was their idol) was the common name of all the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt, Amo_1:4

Jeremiah 49:28

Kedar, Gen_25:13, was one of the sons of Ishmael, whose posterity inhabited part of Arabia Petrea. See Isa, Isa_21:13,**17**. We read of it Psa_120:5 Son_1:5 Eze_27:21. We read of

Hazor Jos_11:1 Jos_11:10, it was the head city to several kingdoms in Joshua's time; Jabin was king of it in the times of Deborah, Jud_4:2. The prophet foretells that Nebuchadrezzar should also conquer these kingdoms; and saith he heard the Lord call to Nebuchadrezzar to go up against them.

Jeremiah 49:29

That is, the Chaldeans shall take away the Kedarens' *tents*; for they being a people whose cattle were their livelihood, had no

fixed houses, but tents, which were movable habitations, covered with skins of beasts; and the curtains which they used to draw before those tents, and served them as sides, as gable ends of houses serve us; and all the furniture of their tents or tabernacles, and their cattle; and either their enemies should fright them with terrible noises and outcries, or they should themselves cry out that they were surrounded with objects of fear.

Jeremiah 49:30

The words seem to be the prophet's words of advice to this people, to make all the haste they could away, and to secure themselves as well as they could, because the king of Babylon had certainly been taking counsel against them, and was resolved to disturb them. See Jer_49:8, where the like counsel is given to the Edomites.

Jeremiah 49:31

The supposed result of Nebuchadnezzar's counsels, giving charge to his armies to march against the Kedarens, which lived at ease and quiet, and took no care; that had no cities, nor gates, nor bars to keep their enemies out, nor were near any neighbours that could assist them, nor very near to one another, living in tents, so might easily be overrun, and conquered, and made a prey to enemies.

Jeremiah 49:32

And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: these words sound like a part of the king of Babylon's supposed speech encouraging his soldiers from the booty they should get, which should be a great multitude of camels and other cattle; the latter words are the words of the prophet, in the name of the Lord, threatening ruin to these Kedarens and Hazorites, though they lived in corners, and might upon that account think themselves secure; God saith he would fetch them out of their utmost corners, and bring calamity from all parts upon them.

Jeremiah 49:33

That is, the whole country subject to the king of Hazor shall be desolate. See Isa_34:13 Jer_9:11.

Jeremiah 49:34

Elam was the son of Shem, Gen_10:22, his posterity were called Elamites; these were the Persians, as is most probable, though some judge that the Persians were at too great a distance from the Jews to be the people meant here, but we read of no other Elam in Scripture but in Persia, Dan_8:2; and though they were indeed at a great distance, yet it is probable that Nebuchadnezzar, having conquered the Assyrians, might also make some inroads into Persia, the emperor of which afterward conquered Babylon. This prophecy being in the first year of Zedekiah must needs be long before the thing was done, for it was ten years before the king of Babylon took Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 49:35

All those Eastern people were famous for the use of the bow, the Elamites in special, Isa_22:6: those bows were the chief of their offensive armour, though by the chief of their might may also be meant their most mighty and strong warriors. This prophecy is probably judged to be fulfilled when the Persians made a defection from the king of the Medes, who was son-in-law to Nebuchadnezzar. Others think that this prophecy was accomplished by Alexander the emperor of Greece, or rather by his successors.

Jeremiah 49:36

The prophet threateneth the destruction of the Persians by a confederacy of enemies, suppose Babylonians, Medes, &c., which should assault them on all sides, as when the wind blows at the same time from all quarters, which causeth a whirlwind, which driveth the dust every way hither and thither, so he saith the Persians should be scattered into all nations.

Jeremiah 49:37

We met with the like threatenings Jer_49:5,**24,29**, as to fear; and as to their destruction, we have often met with the like threatenings.

Jeremiah 49:38

God here calls the throne of Nebuchadnezzar, or Cyrus, or Alexander, (whoever he was that conquered the Persians,) his throne:

1. Because God gave it the conqueror.

2. Or because God showed himself the Lord of hosts, or the Lord of the whole earth, by disposing the kingdom of Persia at his pleasure. He doth not threaten the destruction of the whole nation, but the making of it all tributary, so as it should have no kings nor princes of its own.

Jeremiah 49:39

We had the like promise as to Moab, Jer_48:47, and as to Ammon, Jer_49:6; the same

latter days either signify after many days, or in the time of the Messias. In the former sense it may refer to Cyrus, who conquered Persia. In the latter sense it is referred to the spiritual liberty which some of these poor heathens were brought into by the gospel. We read, Act_2:9, that some of these Elamites were at Jerusalem at Pentecost, and were some of those converted to Christ.

Jeremiah 50:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 50

The judgment of Babel, and the land of Chaldea, for their idolatry, tyranny, and pride; with gracious promises of the redemption of Israel intermixed, Jer_50:4,**5,19,20,34**.

The prophet having from the 46th chapter been denouncing the judgments of God against the other Gentiles, the Egyptians, Moabites, Philistines, Ammonites, Edomites, Syrians, Kedarens, Hazorites, Elamites or Persians, (the most of which had been enemies to the Jews,) in these two chapters he denounceth God's judgments against the Chaldeans and Babylonians. These were to execute God's vengeance on all the rest, and therefore are themselves threatened in the last place to be destroyed by the Medes the prophecy against them is mixed with many gracious promises to the Jews.

Jeremiah 50:2

The prophet calls to men to publish it amongst other nations, and to

set up a standard, to make some signal to gather all people together to hear what he had to say from God against Babylon, which had been an instrument of great mischief unto most people

that lived about them, to whom it would therefore be glad and joyful news to hear that Babylon their common enemy was ruined. That by

Bel and

Merodach are meant two principal idols of the Babylonians, most think; but what, is not so well agreed. Some think that Bel is Baal by contradiction; but they judge most probably who think it was the image of one Belus, who was formerly a king of Babylon; and they judge the like of Merodach: we find in Scripture that Merodach was some of their kings' names, Isa_39:1 Jer_52:31. Those who desire to be further satisfied about these idols may read the English Annotations upon Isa_46:1, and our Annotations upon that verse. It was an ordinary practice amongst the heathens, when they had any princes died that had been famous in their government, to pay a divine homage to their images and statues. These idols are said to be

confounded, either because they should not be able at this pinch to help their suppliants, or because they should be destroyed together with the silly people that adored them.

Jeremiah 50:3

From Media, which lay northward to Babylon and Assyria, through which Cyrus's way to Babylon lay. This prophecy seemeth not to relate only to Cyrus's first taking of Babylon, who dealt very gently with it, but to a second taking of it by Darius the king of the Medes, who upon their defection from the Persian monarchy came and made a horrible devastation amongst them, hanging up (as some tell us) four thousand of their nobles, and slaying multitudes of the common people; or of the mischief done them afterward by Seleucus Nicanor, who is said to have built a city, which he called Seleucia, within fourscore and ten miles of Babylon, by which means he brought Babylon to an utter desolation.

Jeremiah 50:4

In the days wherein God shall begin to execute judgment upon Babylon, (which was in the time of Cyrus emperor of the Medes,) the children of Judah shall come out of captivity; and some of the children of Israel, (viz. those of the ten tribes,) hearing that their

brethren were gone out of the captivity of Babylon, shall go up also from the several places into which they were disposed by the Assyrians:

weeping, either for sorrow in the sense of their sins which had brought the miseries of captivity upon them, or for joy that God ever should show them such a mercy as to bring them home again into their own country. And those that feared God, whether of the ten tribes, or of the kingdom of Judah, worshipped God at Jerusalem, after their old accustomed manner.

Jeremiah 50:5

That is, those of Judah and Israel that fear the Lord shall seriously and steadily seek the true God, and the true way of his worship; and, being sensible that they had broken the covenant which their fathers had formerly made with God, with a desire to renew their covenant, and that not for a time, but for ever. See Jer_31:31. The only question is, whether this promise be yet accomplished or no, or when it was or shall be fulfilled?,

Ans. It was without doubt in a great measure fulfilled upon the Jews coming out of the captivity of Babylon, when those of the kingdom of Judah returned to Jerusalem, and were very zealous for restoring the true worship of God, and renewed their covenant with God (as we read in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah); but Mr. Calvin thinks it was more eminently fulfilled under the kingdom of the Messiah, when, though many believed not, yet many others did believe, and were added to the church, and whether a further fulfilling of it be not yet to come time must show.

Jeremiah 50:6

My people hath been lost sheep: all men are compared to sheep that go astray, Isa_53:6; here it is applied to the Jews, who are called the Lord's people, by reason of the ancient covenant God made with their fathers; they are said to be lost, either with respect to their captivity, being cast out of the land which God gave them for pastures, or in respect of their idolatry.

Their shepherds have caused them to go astray; their civil and ecclesiastical governors have been a cause of it. The former by their wicked commands forcing them to idolatry and superstition,

or at least by their wicked example setting them an example, and by their ill government conniving at them in their idolatrous practices, for which they are gone into captivity. Their priests, and ecclesiastical governors, teaching them such practices, and encouraging them by their own examples, and promising them impunity and security in them.

They have turned them away on the mountains; either they have been a cause of their offering sacrifices to idols upon the mountains, or of their being carried into captivity over the mountains. *They have gone from mountain to hill* ; either wandering up and down in a strange land, or in their way thither, or running from one species of idolatry to another. *They have forgotten their resting place* ; they have forgotten the land of Canaan, which I gave them for a resting-place after their toilsome travel in the wilderness; or (as some would have it) they have forgotten me who am their rest.

Jeremiah 50:7

All that found them have devoured them: as they are in the condition of lost sheep, so they have been under the fate of lost sheep, which every dog, fox, wolf devours. And those that are their enemies have pretended that in destroying them they have done no ill, because they had sinned; so as the sins of the Jews did both expose them to the wrath of God, and also imboldened their enemies, and encouraged them to think that they did God service in destroying them.

The habitation of justice: some think this is a name here given to God, who indeed is the habitation of justice, but whether the Chaldeans would call him so may be a question. Others therefore think the preposition *in* is understood, making this the aggravation of the Jews' sins, that they were committed in a land which ought to have been a habitation of justice; as, Isa_26:10, it is said that the wicked man *in a land of uprightness will deal unjustly* . Mr. Calvin hath another notion, viz. that the prophet here encourageth himself against what the adversaries had promised themselves because the people had offended God; viz. that notwithstanding this, God was a righteous God, in whom justice dwelt, and who would be faithful to his promises.

The hope of their fathers; and he was their hope, and had been he in whom their fathers before them had hoped, and that not in vain.

Jeremiah 50:8

These words immediately following the other, confirm Mr. Calvin's notion. God by his prophet commanding his people to remove out of Babylon, and to go forth cheerfully, and skipping like the he-goats of the flock leading the way, and setting an example unto others. We find much such a call Isa_48:20 Jer_51:6, which is applied to spiritual Babylon, Rev_18:4, where the coming out is to be understood of a separation from them as to any religious communion, which also was their duty as to old Babylon; but that is not the coming out here spoken of.

Jeremiah 50:9

He means the Medes and Persians, as it is expounded afterward.

Their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain; I will so direct their arrows, that every arrow they shoot shall pierce one or other. Or, (as some raffer choose to interpret it,) no soldier of that assembly of great nations that shall come up against Babylon shall return without some booty or other. The reason of the different reading noted in the margin is the difference of a point in the Hebrew, which if set on the right side of the letter, the word signifieth a destroyer; if on the left side, an *expert man*, as we translate it.

Jeremiah 50:10

Satisfied with spoil and plunder, for Babylon and Chaldea was at that time one of the richest places in those parts of the world. She was abundant in treasure, Jer_51:13.

Jeremiah 50:11

They

rejoiced at the ruin of the Jews; the same thing is laid to the charge of the Edomites, **Ob 12**. The Chaldeans were God's rod to scourge the Jews; but when men are made use of by God, as his rod and scourge, they ought not to put off humanity, but to behave themselves decently, and as persons that are sensible of the miseries which their brethren suffer. God calls them his *heritage*, because they formerly were a people whom he owned above all

other people. There is some difference amongst critical interpreters, whether the heifer here mentioned be to be understood of

a heifer at grass, (as we translate it,) or a heifer used to tread out the corn; or whether the last words be to be understood of a *horse neighing* , (as the words may be interpreted,) or a

bull bellowing. But these are things of very small moment. The cause for which Babylon is threatened was doubtless their luxury of all sorts commonly attending great wealth, and prosperity meeting with hearts unsanctified.

Jeremiah 50:12

Your chief City Babylon, or your country, which is the common mother of all the Chaldeans, shall be destroyed, or

shall be ashamed of you, who are not able to defend her. The sense here seems a little difficult, because it appears no such strange thing that the hindermost of the nations should be a wilderness. It is therefore probable that the words *shall be* are to be understood before

the hindermost of the nations; our translation supplieth them after; so the reading will be, *it shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness* , &c.; that is, Babylon, that hath been so famous, and accounted the head of the nations, shall become the meanest of all nations, a mere wilderness, and a dry land, and a desert.

Jeremiah 50:13

It shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; the same thing was threatened against Babylon, Isa_13:20, *It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues* : it seemeth to be a proverbial speech made use of to express the miserable state of a place; we had it before, Jer_49:17, applied to Edom. It is according to the threatening, Deu_28:37. See Jer_25:9,**11 29:18 42:18** Eze_5:15.

Jeremiah 50:14

The prophet calls to the Medes and Persians, with those who should come with them to their assistance, to put themselves in

military order ready to come up against Babylon. The Persians (as was noted before) were very famous for the bow, therefore he speaketh unto them as an army of archers, to shoot at the Babylonians, and to

spare no arrows; because Babylon had

sinned against the Lord exceedingly, as Gen_13:13, by their idolatry, luxury, and cruel usage of the Jews, &c.

Jeremiah 50:15

Shout against her round about; either as soldiers use to shout when they fall upon their enemy, or as they use to shout and triumph when they are entered city, or whet their enemies flee.

She hath given her hand; either acknowledging themselves overcome, and yielding themselves to the power of their enemies, or, as some think, confederating with the Lydians; but the former is more probable

Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: that is, she is wholly subdued and conquered, as if her walls were thrown down, for literally her walls were not beaten down by Cyrus, for he took the city by surprise

For it is the vengeance of the Lord: God is he who brings this vengeance upon Babylon, though it be by your hands.

As she hath done, do unto her: it is very observable, that there is hardly any sins which the Lord so ordinarily punisheth in the like kind, as those which are oftener against the laws of justice and charity. The common fate of cruel and uncharitable men is to meet with others to do to them as they have done to others; unmerciful men find no mercy. See Psa_137:8,9 **Jud 1:6,7.** Adonibezek acknowledged God's justice in it.

Jeremiah 50:16

We are told that Babylon was so large a city, that with the walls of it there was much ploughed ground: or else the threatening imports that God would deal more severely with Babylon, than conquerors use to do with places which they conquer, who use to spare and leave behind then ploughmen, and such as use to till the ground, but in the destruction of Babylon it should not be so.

They shall flee every one to his own land: he speaks either of such stranger as for commerce had their abodes in Babylon, or such assistants as the Babylonians had gotten against their enemies, who upon the coming in of the enemies should make as much haste home as they could.

Jeremiah 50:17

By **Israel** is here meant the whole twelve tribes (though sometimes it signifieth the ten tribes in opposition to Judah); they were all wandering sheep, they became penally *scattered sheep*. Enemies as fierce and cruel as lions had seized them, and carried them into captivity.

First the king of Assyria devoured the ten tribes, which were strictly called Israel, 2Ki_17:6. Then Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon took Jerusalem, as we heard, **Jer 39**, and carried away the people, and burnt the temple, which the prophet here calls a breaking of

his bones.

Jeremiah 50:18

God may justly punish those who do the things which he hath commanded them to do, if they do it not in that manner which he directeth, or if what they do be not done in obedience to his command, but in satisfaction to their own lusts, which was the case of the Assyrians, Isa_10:7.

As I have punished the king of Assyria: some refer this to the punishment of the Assyrians in the destruction of Sennacherib and his army in the time of Hezekiah, but the prophet seemeth here to speak of a destruction of Assyria which followed after his devouring of the ten tribes, from whence we may conclude that Assyria was destroyed before the time of this revelation.

Jeremiah 50:19

This must be understood of Judah, which was part of that people who were called Israel, for to this day we have neither read nor heard of the ten tribes being brought back again to their habitation. The only difficulty is, how it is said that the Jews upon their return should *feed upon Carmel and Bashan, and Mount Ephraim and Gilead*, which were places that belonged not to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin: to which it is answered, that these

places were granted to the Jews by Demetrius the father and the son, as we are told by Josephus, 1. 13. c. 5.8. These places were rich grounds for feeding cattle, therefore it is said

they shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, & c.

Jeremiah 50:20

Some here restrain the term

iniquity to *the idolatry* of the Jews, which indeed was their great sin, which God did more especially punish them for; and after the captivity of Babylon we do not read of their offending in that kind, which was according to the prophecy of Isa_27:9, that when God should make the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten asunder, the groves and the images should not stand up. But the last words seem to guide us to a larger sense of the term

iniquity, and to point us to another sense of the whole former phrase, viz. that God would no longer punish the sins of the Jews; they should be sought for as to punishment, and not found. And those words *and none* must be understood as if none, they shall be punished no, more than if they had none.

For I will pardon them whom I reserve; for as to those whom I save from the captivity of Babylon,

I will pardon them: not that they were all excused from the obligation their sins laid them under as, to eternal death, but that their temporal punishment was remitted to the whole body of the Jews, and those that were truly penitent also should be discharged from their obligation to eternal death. The obligation that sin layeth the sinner under to eternal death may be remitted, and yet the temporal punishment due to them may remain, 2Sa_12:13,14, &c. And, on the other side, the punishment in this life may be suspended or remitted, and the obligation sin layeth the sinner under to eternal death may remain.

Jeremiah 50:21

There is some disputes amongst interpreters, whether the words here,

Merathaim and

Pekod, be to be taken as common nouns, the one signifying rebels or rulers, the other visitation, because the Chaldeans were rebels against the Lord, and were great rulers over all the contiguous nations; or whether they be proper names of some places which Cyrus passed by, or, it may be, took in, and conquered in his way to Babylon. The latter are God's words by his prophet, like the former, commanding him with his armies to go up and destroy them fleeing away, or them that should succeed after them, their whole posterity; intimating God's design utterly to destroy them, which destruction was gently begun by Cyrus, and perfected by Darius.

Jeremiah 50:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 50:23

The latter part of the verse expounds the former; God had made the Babylonians his hammer, to break other nations in pieces, now it was itself broken: the participle

how may be understood either as expressing triumph and rejoicing, or admiration, or as inquiring how such a thing could be in the last sense. The next verse is an answer to this.

Jeremiah 50:24

We are told that Cyrus with his great army diverted the river Euphrates, so as his army passed over and surprised the city so suddenly, that those in the midst of it did not know it when part of the city was already taken. God directed Cyrus to this stratagem for the taking of the city, which the prophet calls a

snare, wherein the Babylonians were taken. The reason of this unexpected ruin to this great people was their sinning against the Lord, Jer_50:14, which is here called a striving against him, as indeed all sin is.

Jeremiah 50:25

Babylon was so rich and potent a nation, and had been so great a conqueror, that people looking only with the eye of sense, and judging according to probabilities in the eyes of men, might well ask how these things could possibly be. To which the prophet here answereth, that the hand of God was to be eyed in the case, this was the Lord's work upon the Chaldeans; God had

opened his armoury, and the Medes were to make use of the weapons of his indignation. He who threatened this destruction was able to carry it through, and it was no great matter what weapons either the Babylonians had to defend themselves, or the Medes to offend them, God's power and strength as only to be regarded.

Jeremiah 50:26

The prophet in the name of God calleth to the enemies of Babylon, the Medes, to come up from the furthest parts of their dominions, or from all parts, to fight against Babylon; to open the granaries, or store-houses, or treasuries of the Babylonians, and to cast up the cities as

heaps of rubbish, and utterly to destroy the city with such a total destruction that nothing of it should be left.

Jeremiah 50:27

By

bullocks in this place interpreters generally understand the great and rich men of Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:28

The prophet here brings in the poor Jews that had been captives in Babylon going back upon Cyrus's proclamation of liberty towards Zion, there joyfully to declare the revenge which their God had taken for them, and for his holy

temple, which the Chaldeans had burnt and destroyed.

Jeremiah 50:29

The word translated archers signifieth also many, and is by divers so translated, but the following words more justify our translation. The cause of God's calling for Babylon's enemies against her is assigned to be her

pride against the Lord.

Jeremiah 50:30

See Jer_49:26 where we met with the same words.

Jeremiah 50:31

Babylon is particularly branded for pride, which is the swelling of a man's heart in a self-opinion, caused from something wherein he

excelleth, or thinks that he excelleth, another, We have a large account of the pride of Babylon Isa_14:12-14, and particularly of one of their kings, Dan_5:20,21. The sinner exalteth himself against God, and either judgeth himself wiser or moro mighty than he.

Jeremiah 50:32

Babylon, before called **the most proud**, here

pride in the abstract, (which speaketh this people excessively faulty in this thing,) shall fall, and so full as never more to be recovered and raised up.

Jeremiah 50:33

Were oppressed together; not together in respect of times, for' there was one hundred and fifty years difference betwixt the time of Israel's and Judah's captivity; nor by the same enemy, Israel was carried away captive by the Assyrians, Judah by the Chaldeans.

Together in this place signifies no more than that they were both oppressed, or alike oppressed.

And all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go: and some may think that my prophecies are but flatteries and vain words, for those who have them in their hands are able to keep them, and will not be willing to let them go.

Jeremiah 50:34

Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name; the Lord, whose name is the Lord of hosts, is he that is their avenger (for so the word signifies); and he is as strong as any of those that hold them fast, and will not let them go.

He shall throughly plead their cause; he will plead their cause, not like a lawyer, but actually and really effect it, as pleading is often taken, as Jer_25:31 Eze_17:20 Joe_3:2.

That he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon: these are the two ends which God aimeth at, to give his people rest, and to punish Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:35

That is, there shall come a sword, the sword of the Medes, upon Babylon, and all the land of the Chaldeans, and all orders of persons in it.

Jeremiah 50:36

A sword is upon the liars; and they shall dote: the word here translated *liars* is by some translated *bars*, by some *liars*; and in the Hebrew it hath both significations; which makes some think it is to be understood of the chief men, who are the props, stays, and bars of a place, whose wisdom God threatens should fail them, so as they should dote, and show themselves fools. Others translating it *liars* as we do, understand it of their soothsayers and wizards, whom he calls *liars*, because they divined false, and saith they should dote, not foreseeing what should be.

A sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed: and though they were full of valiant, mighty men, yet their hearts should fail them when this day came, and all be destroyed amongst the rest.

Jeremiah 50:37

A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots; though they be full of chariots and horses, the enemy shall destroy them. By the mingled people some understand those whom the Babylonians had hired to their assistance from other nations; others, such strangers as lived amongst them; others, a people under the power of the Chaldeans, made up of people of several countries. See Jer_25:20,24 Eze 30:5. They seem to signify a people that were not native Chaldeans, but under their dominion.

They shall become as women; that is, faint-hearted.

A sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed; and though Babylon hath great treasures, yet those shall not secure her, she shall be robbed of them.

Jeremiah 50:38

A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up: some think that this phrase hath a special reference to Cyrus's stratagem used in the surprise of Babylon; one part of it was fortified by the great river Euphrates, running on one side, which Cyrus diverted by cutting several channels, till he had drained it

so low, that it became passable for his army to go over. Others think that a want of rain is here threatened.

For it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols: God gives the reason of this judgment, which was their idolatry, and exceeding zeal for it.

Jeremiah 50:39

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 50:40

The substance of both these verses is, that Babylon should be totally ruined, as Sodom and Gomorrah, so as there should be no habitations for men, but wild beasts only of all sorts should inhabit and lodge in it. The fulfilling of this we have not in holy writ, only the beginning of its accomplishment, it being taken by Cyrus, who only made them tributaries, and took away their government. But they rebelling against the emperor of the Medes, Darius Hystaspes, a succeeding emperor, pulled down their walls. And about two hundred and fifty years after Seleucus Nicenor, a Grecian prince, the Medes being before conquered by Alexander the Great, utterly destroyed Babylon, so as in the time of Hadrian the Roman emperor there was nothing left standing of that great city but some pieces of walls.

Jeremiah 50:41

The Medes and Persians with their armies, who shall also have many other kings who, from the several parts of the earth, shall join with them and help them.

Jeremiah 50:42

The bow and the lance were the two usual weapons of soldiers in those countries, Jer_6:23. The Persians were a cruel, bloody people. These phrases signify no more than that the enemies should come upon Babylon in a terrible manner, and prepared to destroy them.

Jeremiah 50:43

The Medes shall not be more prepared to destroy the Babylonians, than they shall be unprepared to make any resistance; as God will animate their enemies, so he will dispirit them, so as they shall faint upon the report of their coming, and be like a woman upon whom strong pangs of travail are.

Jeremiah 50:44

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 50:45

See Poole "Jer_49:19", where we have applied unto Edom all that is here spoken against Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:46

We have much the same spoken with reference to Edom, Jer_49:20. The words are only expressive of the greatness of the destruction of Babylon, which should be such as should make all that part of the world shake, and the noise of it would ring throughout all the nations in that part of the earth.

Jeremiah 51:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 51

The severe judgment of God against voluptuous, covetous, tyrannical, and idolatrous Babel, in the revenge and for the redemption of Israel, Jer_51:1-58. Jeremiah delivereth the book of this prophecy to Seraiah, to be cast into Euphrates, in token of the perpetual shaking of Babylon, Jer_51:59-64.

In this chapter the prophecy of the destruction of Babylon is continued under new metaphors; he begins with that of a wind,

a destroying wind, (as northerly winds are ordinarily very pernicious,) but the Hebrew idiom so ill suiteth that of other languages, that it is no easy matter positively to assert the sense of the words used. In the Hebrew they are, *and to, or against, those that inhabit the heart of those that rise up* . Some would have it those that are wise in their own opinion, and are therefore said to dwell in their heart; others, those that are secure; but the best interpreters judge our translation to have best hit the sense, Ñ

them that dwell in the heart, that is, in the midst of the Chaldeans, who are here said to have risen up against God, to strive against God. Jer_50:24.

Jeremiah 51:2

Wicked men are compared to *chaff* , Psa_1:4. Such as execute judgment on them are called *fanners* , Jer_15:7; so Mat_3:12; because as the fanner keepeth what is in the fan unquiet in a continual motion and agitation, by which (advantaged by the

wind) he emptieth it of the chaff; so the executioners of God's vengeance, by a succession of judgments, keeps a people from quiet, till all their chaff be winnowed out, and the fan be emptied of all but the more solid grain. For (he saith) as the fanner first riddleth what he hath in his fan one way, then another, first throweth it up, then lets it fall into the fan; so the enemies should be round about Babylon, and God would be on every side and every way destroying them.

Jeremiah 51:3

Whatever arms the Babylonians shall be armed with, they shall meet with their matches; those that are archers shall meet with archers to bend the bow against them, and those who are otherwise armed shall meet with persons prepared to encounter them at their own weapons. Their whole host shall be destroyed, both young and old men.

Jeremiah 51:4

Thus all of them shall be destroyed, some in the fields, some in the streets of their cities.

Jeremiah 51:5

That is, not, utterly forsaken, for in a sense they were forsaken as to some gradual manifestations of God's love to them, but Judah and Israel were not left as a widow, or were not divorced from God. The word translated *sin* signifies a most heinous sinning, or desolation, and the best interpreters judge that sin here signifieth the punishment of sin. God hath not forsaken the Jews utterly, though as they were formerly filled with grievous sins, so they be now filled with grievous judgments because of their sins.

Jeremiah 51:6

It is a matter of no great moment whether we understand these words as spoken to the Jews in the captivity of Babylon, as Jer_1:8, or to those whom the Chaldeans had hired to help them, or to such strangers as for their secular advantages lived in Babylon. By *soul* here seemeth to be meant *life*, and by iniquity the punishment of the Babylonians' iniquity (as the Hebrew word oft signifies); though in the New Testament these words be used as a monition to people to separate from the idolatries of mystical

Babylon, yet they seem here to be only a warning to others to remove out of the reach of Babylon's fall.

For this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence; for the time is come when God hath determined to take vengeance on Babylon, and to recompense to her all her sin, and that cruelty which she showed to the Jews in particular.

Jeremiah 51:7

A golden cup, because of her great riches and plenty. God hitherto had made me of Babylon as a rod in his hand, and had given her riches, and power, and prosperity proportioned to the service he had for her to do; what she did she did by commission from God; therefore this golden cup is said to have been

in the Lord's hand. She had made all the nations about her drunken with the Lord's fury, conquering them all, and making them mad through the misery and smart they felt from her. Babylon in Daniel is compared to a head of gold; and, Rev_17:4, she is said to have a golden cup in her hand; but the meaning is no more than this, that God had raised up Babylon to great degrees of dignity and splendour, intending to make use of her to execute his vengeance upon many other people; and he did accordingly so use her, to give the cup of his fury to many nations to the enraging of divers people; but now the course of his providence toward her was altering, &c.

Jeremiah 51:8

That is, she shall suddenly fall and be destroyed; you may try all the probable ways for her cure, but they will all be used to no purpose.

Jeremiah 51:9

The prophet here seemeth to personate the mercenary soldiers that should come to help the Chaldeans, as if they should say this, they would have helped Babylon, but there was no healing for her; and therefore they call one to another to leave her to herself, and return each man to his own country, for her punishment was very great, her case too sad for them to help. The reaching of things to the heavens, and lifting them up to the skies, are phrases used to signify high and great measures and degrees of things, so

expressed Gen_11:4 **28:12** Deu_1:28 1Sa_5:12 2Ch_28:9
Psa_107:26.

Jeremiah 51:10

These words are spoken as in the person of the Jews, owning the destruction of Babylon,

1. To be the mighty work of God.
2. An act of justice and judgment, pleading the cause and revenging the wrongs of his people; and owning the Jewish religion, and calling one to another to go to the temple to declare what God had done for them, and to give thanks unto him for it.

Jeremiah 51:11

Make bright the arrows; prepare the arrows for fighting, whether by feathering, sharpening, or polishing and cleansing of them, is not much material.

Gather the shields; you that are Chaldeans, gather all the shields you have together, you will have need of them all: or, you that are the enemies of the Chaldeans, gather you together your shields. For God hath put a spirit into Cyrus and Darius, &c., and his design is against Babylon to destroy it. It is a day in which God is resolved to take vengeance on Babylon, to take vengeance for the indignities they have offered to, and the horrible profanation of, his temple.

Jeremiah 51:12

Some judge these words spoken to the Medes, declaring the will of God, that they should use all probable means to conquer Babylon, or (as some would have it) display their banners upon the walls of it, as signs of its being already conquered: but certainly it is more reasonable to conclude them the prophet's words to the Babylonians, either rousing them out of their security, (for it appears they were strangely secure from **Da 5**; historians tell us that the city was fortified by walls fifty cubits high, and two hundred cubits broad, and by a very deep and large ditch, besides that on one side it had the river Euphrates,) or at least quickening them to make all the preparation they could, though all would be to very little purpose, for God had resolved upon what he would do upon Babylon, and it was already as good as done.

Jeremiah 51:13

Babylon is said to dwell upon many waters, because upon the great river Euphrates, which they say did not only run by it, but almost encompass it, branching itself into many smaller rivers, which made several parts of the city islands.

Abundant in treasures; it is a city much noted in Scripture for wealth, and made much more wealthy than it was by traffic by the conquest of many nations.

Thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness: the prophet tells them that now their gathering time was over, there was now a boundary set to their covetousness; in the Hebrew it is, *the cubit of thy covetousness* , which is by our translators well translated a *measure* , because it was amongst the Jews the common measure of height and depth. The word by us translated *covetousness* , as Exo_18:21, may either signify *riches* , the object of their covetousness, or prosperity, or that unlawful desire of having more, which is properly called *covetousness* , either because they should be destroyed utterly, or because they should prosper no more; there was no end put to the Babylonians' lusts, but there was an end put to the satisfaction of their lusts.

Jeremiah 51:14

The Lord, that is able to bring to pass what he saith, hath sworn by his life, or by himself; see the like phrase Jer_22:5 **44:26 49:13** Amo_4:2 **6:8** Isa_45:23; that is, the thing next mentioned shall come to pass as certainly as that there is a God in heaven, or that God liveth.

Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars; I will bring against thee a great army, that shall be like a swarm of caterpillars, and shall come against thee in such numbers as caterpillars use to come, and for the same end, to eat thee up and destroy thee; and as soldiers use do when they go on to fight their enemies, or to assault cities, they shall make a great shout against thee.

Jeremiah 51:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:16

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:17

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:19

We had these five verses all in Jer_10:12-16. See there the explication of the several passages in them; the scope of which is only to convince those to whom the prophet spoke, that notwithstanding all the power, and riches, and greatness, and alliances of the Chaldeans, yet that God who had threatened this ruin to them was able to bring it upon them, and all their idols were vanities, things of nought, that should not be able to protect them, and from whose power or impotency they must not measure nor make up a judgment of what God was able to do; for Israel's God was that God who made the world, and the Lord of all the armies of the creatures, whether in heaven or earth.

Jeremiah 51:20

Interpreters are here divided, whether by

thou or

thee in this and the following verses to understand Cyrus, whom God made use of to destroy Babylon and many other places, or Babylon. Our translators understand it of Cyrus, and therefore speak of the future tense,

will I. The Hebrew text will not resolve us; I rather incline to interpret it of Babylon, as indeed the most do, and so it should be, *Thou hast been* , and *art* , for that is the sense; Cyrus and Darius were not yet in being. God had made use of Babylon like a hammer or battle-axe to break many nations in pieces.

Jeremiah 51:21

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:23

The sense of all three verse is the same, viz. that God had made use of, and was still making use of the Babylonians to waste and

impoverish much people, wasting their goods, routing their armies, killing all sorts of their inhabitants.

Jeremiah 51:24

The particle in the front of this verse, which our translators (understanding the four former verses of Cyrus) render and in a copulative sense, must be rendered *now* , or *but* , if the four former verses be understood of Babylon, and the sense is this: Though I have hitherto made use of Babylon, and shall yet for a time make use of the Chaldeans and Babylonians to destroy several other nations; yet now the time is come that I will punish them, and recompense to them all the mischief they have done to the Jews, and some of the Jews shall live to see it.

Jeremiah 51:25

Babylon is not here called *a mountain* because it was situated upon any hills or mountains, for it appears from Gen_11:2 that it was situated in a plain, and we read, Jer_51:13, that it dwelt upon many *waters* ; but because it was very high for its power and greatness, and had very high walls and towers, that it looked at a distance like a high rocky mountain, and, as some say, (being a very large city,) was full of trees. They had destroyed many people of the earth that lay near to them. God threatens to destroy them notwithstanding their towers and great fortifications, as many times they threw down malefactors from high rocks, mountains, and precipices; and to make them like *®tna* or Vesuvius, or like some other mountains of sulphur, or other bituminous matter fired, which are always burning; or else he threateneth that their cities and towers, which appeared like a mountain, should be burnt.

Jeremiah 51:26

God threateneth to Babylon an utter ruin and desolation, so as they should not have a stone left fit to lay a foundation, or to make a corner-stone; or, as some others interpret it, that city should never be built again, there should never from the rubbish of it be taken a stone to lay the foundation, nor to lay upon the corners of new houses, new walls, new towers in that place. Foundation-stones, and corner-stones, are principal stones in buildings. Nothing shall be left in Babylon of any worth, value, or considerableness.

Jeremiah 51:27

The former words of this verse are expounded by those that follow; setting up of standards and blowings of trumpets are preparatory to bring armies together. The setting up of standards, and blowing of trumpets, are military signs of the will of those princes or captains-general whose those standards are, and to whom those trumpets belong, that those soldiers who are under their command should gather themselves together to the places where those standards are set up, and those trumpets blown. What this

kingdom of Ararat was, and those of

Minni and

Ashchenaz, is very hard to determine. We read of a mountain called Ararat, where the ark rested after the flood, Gen_8:4. Of Minni we read no where else: most writers think these were two kingdoms within Armenia. Ashchenaz descended from Noah by Japheth, Gen_10:3, Certain it is that the emperor of the Medes had the dominion of these places, from whence it is very probable that either Cyrus or Darius, or both, drew out soldiers to help them to conquer the Chaldeans.

Appoint a captain against her: after people are gathered together for war, the first thing to be done is to put them into military order, constituting a captain-general.

Cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars. Others read it, like the wasting caterpillar, or like the horrible affrighting caterpillar. Great disputes there are amongst critical interpreters what caterpillars are here meant, the caterpillars being generally smooth; but as we know not the complexion of insects over all the world, so even amongst us we see some caterpillars that look a little rough: that which alone we are here to attend is wily the Median *horses* are compared to these insects: undoubtedly it is either,

1 With respect to their numbers, for caterpillars in those countries used to come in vast numbers.

2. Or in regard of the horror and trembling caused by them in people when they came, being a great plague to the places which they infested.

Jeremiah 51:28

Here the prophet declares those particular princes and nations that should be God's instruments to destroy Babylon, viz. Cyrus and Darius, the emperors of the Medes, with all the forces under their command, and people under their dominion.

Jeremiah 51:29

That is, Babylon, or the land of Chaldea, shall tremble and sorrow; for God hath determined to destroy it, and to leave it wholly desolate, so as none should dwell in it.

Jeremiah 51:30

When God hath determined an end, he ordereth means proportionable to that end. Babylon had many valiant and mighty men, and it is very probable the Babylonians trusted very much to them; but when it came to, God took off their courage, so as they had no heart to fight, but kept themselves in their strong holds, and if at any time they came out, their courage failed them, and they behaved themselves more like women than men of war; so as their enemies burned their cities, brake down their fortifications, and made what havoc they pleased.

Jeremiah 51:31

We have had occasion one and again to recite what we have in civil historians about the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, viz., that it was taken by surprise, by the Median emperor's unexpected diverting the river Euphrates by divers channels which he cut; as also that Babylon was a very vast city, the greatness of which might admit of posts and messengers from one end of the city to another, to acquaint the king what was done at the other end of the city in which himself was resident; and it is said that the king of Babylon, when his city, was taken, did not know of his danger until the enemy had entered the city.

Jeremiah 51:32

This was part of the message which the prophet saith the messenger should carry to the king of Babylon, that was in the other part of the city, that the passages over the river Euphrates, or

any other passages by which the Babylonians might, upon the enemies' entrance, make their escape, were all stopped, and guarded with soldiers, or otherwise, so as there was no hope of any making an escape. The word translated

reeds signifies also standing pools of water, and that some judge the sense, the water is drained out of the pits or pools, so as it could not hinder the entrance of the enemies: those that adhere to the translation of it *reeds*, say that upon the borders of the river Euphrates were vast quantities of great and tall reeds, which, with the mud in which they stood, were as another wall to the city, but the Medes had burnt up them, so as the way was open to the walls; and the men of war, seeing these reeds burnt up, and the water drained from them, were affrighted, so as their hearts through fear failed them.

Jeremiah 51:33

Babylon had been a threshing instrument by which, and a threshing-floor in which, God had threshed many other nations; God now intended to make it as a

threshing-floor wherein he would thresh the Chaldeans.

It is time to thresh her: some think because of the next words, that the words were better translated *it is time to tread her*, (so the word properly signifies,) as men use to prepare their threshing-floors against the time of harvest, for the time of this harvest was near;

her harvest signifieth the harvest which the justice of God would have from the ruin of the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 51:34

The prophet speaketh this in the name of the Jews, complaining of the

king of Babylon as the author of all the miseries they had endured, which he expresseth by several phrases signifying the same thing, viz. that it was the king of Babylon that had ruined them, and filled himself and his soldiers with their delicate things, and cast them out of their land, dealing with them as wolves or other beasts of prey, that eat what they please of other beasts they have preyed upon, and leave the rest in the fields.

Jeremiah 51:35

The words are either a prayer, or a prediction of God's vengeance upon Babylon; so Psa_137:7,8. God hath said vengeance is his, and he will repay it. The church of the Jews here commits its cause to God, and prayeth him to execute vengeance for her. How far it is lawful for us to pray against our enemies we have heard once and again.

Jeremiah 51:36

Men had need take heed how they give cause of appeals to God against them, especially the appeals of such as are a people that have a covenant relation to God. God in those cases ordinarily showeth himself a *swift witness and judge* , and gives a speedy judgment in such causes.

Behold, saith God,

I will plead thy cause, not with words, but actually with my judicial dispensations, therefore it is expounded by taking vengeance. The vengeance which God threateneth is expressed metaphorically under the notion of

drying up her sea, and making her springs dry, which signifies the depriving her of all necessaries, not only of the abundance of her men, riches, treasures, but of her springs. Thus I had rather expound it, than as referring to the particular stratagem by which Cyrus took Babylon, viz, by drying up in some measure the river Euphrates, that is, turning it into other channels.

Jeremiah 51:37

Babylon shall become heaps; heaps of rubbish.

A dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. See Poole "Jer_50:39", See Poole "Jer_50:40", where the same thing was before said.

Jeremiah 51:38

It is uncertain whether this be to be understood of the Medes, making horrible roarings and noises when they took Babylon; or of the Babylonians, who upon the taking of their city (as is usual) made horrid outcries, as being a people quite undone: some think it referreth to the drunken noises of the Babylonians at their

festival, during the celebration of which we are told their city was taken; but to this one would think the comparison of

lions' whelps (which ordinarily yell for want of victuals, or for some mischief done them, not when their bellies are full) should not so well agree.

Jeremiah 51:39

When they shall grow hot with wine, I will put, or give, or make them a feast of another nature. Interpreters judge that the prophet referreth to the feast made by Belshazzar, Dan_5:1,

to a thousand of his lords, when he and his wives and concubines drank wine in the vessels belonging to the temple, during which feast the city was taken. So they were made drunk with the wine cup of God's fury, because the Lord had designed them to utter ruin and destruction, that as men filled with wine are merry, and shout, and then fall asleep; so the Chaldeans being drunk with the wine of the Lord's wrath, while they were merry with their cups of wine, might fall into such a sleep as they should never awake out of.

Jeremiah 51:40

That is, they shall be destroyed before they are aware of it.

Jeremiah 51:41

We meet with this term

Sheshach only here, and Jer_25:26; both places leave it doubtful whether it be to be taken for an idol, which they called by the name of *Shach*, or a name given to the city of Babylon, which worshipped that idol, to the honour of which the Babylonians kept a yearly festival for several days; in the time of which festival they say it was that Cyrus took the city of Babylon.

The praise of the whole earth; Babylon, that was so famous over all the world for her splendour. And so it is interpreted in the next words, wherein Babylon, for the punishment brought upon it, is said to be an astonishment to all nations; which makes it probable that Babylon is what was called Sheshach, by the doubling of a letter, because she worshipped Shach.

Jeremiah 51:42

A multitude of enemies, that are like the sea in which there is a multitude of waters, or that will overrun them as the sea overfloweth the shore, or any land into which it once breaketh.

Jeremiah 51:43

See Jer_2:6 **9:12**: the words are all of them descriptive of an utter desolation, that should not only be the fate of Babylon the head city, but of all the inferior cities, that were as daughters to that mother city.

Jeremiah 51:44

And I will punish Bel and Babylon: Bel was the principal Babylonian idol, of which see what is noted **Jer 1 2**.

And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; all the vessels of the temple, 2Ch_36:7, and whatever gifts the Babylonians had presented to him.

And the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: it was the custom of other nations to send presents to the gods of those nations whom they were in subjection to, or whom they would appease, whence it is that we read the Philistines when they had the ark would not send it home without a present, 1Sa_6:11. God by his prophet foretelleth that the time should come when the nations should come no more to Babylon, neither to pay a homage to their chief idol, nor yet to bring offerings unto him.

Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall; and the city of Babylon should be also ruined.

Jeremiah 51:45

These words are an exhortation to the Jews to be willing, upon the first proclamation of liberty by Cyrus, to go out of Babylon, notwithstanding the pleasantness of the place, and that now their stakes had been pitched there many years, because of the ruin which should most certainly come on that place.

Jeremiah 51:46

And lest your heart faint; and lest they should be affrighted by the succession of evils year after year that should come on Babylon. Some think it were better translated, *And let not your heart faint* . Though you should hear of Cyrus's coming year after

year, yet faint not; (for they say Cyrus was one year preparing, and that he spent the second year in passing through Assyria, so as he came not at Babylon till the third year;) no, not though you should see or hear of successive troubles, and a great deal of violence in the land by the opposition of great princes one to another, for none of them shall do you any harm; but this doth not so well suit to the former verse, where they are bidden to make haste out and to save their own lives. I do therefore prefer the sense of our interpreters, and their translation of it, as making another argument to persuade them to make haste out, because they would by reason of the successive evils year after year coming upon the Babylonians live there very troublesome and uneasy lives.

Jeremiah 51:47

I will do, that is, I will execute, *judgment upon the idols of Babylon*, and the whole land of Chaldea shall be confounded, when they shall see that their idols will do them no more service.

And all her slain shall fall in the midst of her: some, instead of *her slain* ' would have it read, *her dancers*, (for the city was taken while Belshazzar and his whole court were revelling,) but the learned author of the English Annotations tells us the word will not bear it.

Jeremiah 51:48

All the creatures in heaven and earth. shall rejoice at the vengeance which God shall take upon Babylon, which had been the destroyer of so many of their people. The Median soldiers are those here called spoilers from the north.

Jeremiah 51:49

The words in the Hebrew have some difficulty, which is not so obvious to those not acquainted with that language, but hath given occasion to interpreters to vary in their particular translations of it; but they mostly agree in the general sense, viz. that these words are given as a reason why the whole earth should so much rejoice in the ruin of Babylon, because Babylon had caused Israel to fall. The latter term,

all the earth, must be understood in a restrained sense, for *that earth*; the Chaldeans coming up from all parts of Chaldea to help

Babylon, should be slain there, as by the means of Babylon the Israelites were slain that came up from all parts of Judea to help Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 51:50

It is hard to resolve whether the prophet here speaks to the Chaldeans, or the Medes, or the Jews, though most understand it of the Jews, whom God would have leave Babylon as soon as they should have a liberty proclaimed; and to remember when they came into Judea the great things, both of justice toward the Chaldeans and mercy toward them, which God had done; and keep Jerusalem in their mind, as the place where they were to worship God according to his direction, and for which God had so wrought.

Jeremiah 51:51

The words of this verse seem to prove that the Jews were the persons intended in the former verse, whom God would have to go away, and not to stand still; for it is out of doubt that it is of them the prophet here speaketh, and whom the prophet brings in here, saying,

We are confounded, that is, ashamed (as it is expounded in the next words) to hear the enemies reproaching us for our God, or for our religion, as Psa_137:3; and *because* pagans that were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, who, Num_1:51, might not come near the tabernacle of the Lord, were come, and that not to worship, but to plunder and rifle in the *sanctuaries of the Lord*, even into the court of the priests and of the Israelites, and into the most holy place; those whose very presence in these places had been a pollution of them.

Jeremiah 51:52

For which complaints of my people, or rather for which profanation of my holy place, I will be revenged upon their graven images, and not only upon their idols, but upon the worshippers of them, and cause a groaning of wounded men over all the country of the Chaldeans; I will cause them to know that their idols are not able to protect them from my power and justice.

Jeremiah 51:53

We are very prone to measure things by the measures of our own reasons, and to judge of events which are to be the effects of Divine power by human probabilities, therefore God is put to use many words to the same purpose: he saw the Jews saying in their hearts, How can these things be? Babylon hath impregnable walls, two hundred feet high, (so historians report,) and of a great breadth, and it hath very strong and high towers. God by his prophet tells them, that if they could mount up as high as heaven, if they could make their towers much stronger than they were, yet the

spoilers were to come from him, and he could and would send spoilers who would pull down her wall and break down her towers.

Jeremiah 51:54

To assure them that what God threatened should certainly be, he calls to the Jews to listen, as if already there were cry from Babylon, and a sound of a great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 51:55

The sword is not so much the sword of the Medes a the sword of the Lord. It is he who is to be looked at, a the spoiler of Babylon.

And destroyed out of her the great voice; and hath made to cease in that great city the noise caused from the multitudes of people in it walking up an, down, and trafficking together. The noise of her enemies that shall break in upon her shall be like the noise and roarings of the sea, when it dasheth upon the shore or upon some rocks. That shall be the only noise shall be heard in her, instead of the noises wont there to be made from the multitude of people, or from revellers.

Jeremiah 51:56

Little more is said here than was before, only the words hint the taking of Babylon by a surprise, when the kin and the inhabitants were not aware of it, which he had be fore also told us, Jer_51:39,**40**. In this the prophet saith that God would act but as a just God, a

God of recompence. Where God's people suffer wrong, and either cannot revenge themselves, or may not do it, being private person, (to whom God hath given no power of the sword,) if they can exercise faith and patience, they shall find God a God of *recompences*, that can and will requite their enemies, all plead their cause.

Jeremiah 51:57

Drunken men use to fall asleep. The prophet speaks here metaphorically. His meaning is, that the Lord would fill them with the wine of his fury, mentioned Jer_30:15,16, and upon the drinking of it they should sleep their last sleep, the effects of it should be their utter ruin and destruction. Yet there seemeth to be an allusion to the posture the king of Babylon, and the thousand of his lords, mentioned Dan_5:1, were in, when their city was taken (which, as was before said, was in the time of the festival of their idol Shach,) when they were drinking wine in the bowls that were brought from the temple at Jerusalem, Jer_51:3 Jer_51:30, it is said, *In that very night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain*.

Jeremiah 51:58

Incredible things are told us by historians of this great city. They say the compass of it was threescore miles about; that her walls were in height two hundred feet, her breadth such as two chariots might drive abreast upon the top of them; that it had a hundred great gates, many of them of brass. God threatens the breaking down of these walls and the burning of these high gates and towers; and that though the people should labour to quench this fire, or to rebuild this city, yet it would be all lost labour, and they should give over their enterprise, as being weary.

Jeremiah 51:59

Of this

Seraiah we read no more than we have in this verse, though, Jer_36:26, there be mention made of another Seraiah.

When he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon: we nowhere read of any journey Zedekiah made into Babylon till he was carried a prisoner thither, it is therefore probable that *with* should be translated *from*, as the same particle is in other places,

Gen_4:1 **44:4**, it being not usual with great princes to make visits one to another at such distances, though the Jews tell us a story of some such thing.

In the fourth year of his reign: the expressing of this circumstance of time lets us know that this prophecy was many years before Babylon was destroyed, for it was seven years before Jerusalem was taken; so as it must be above sixty years before it was fulfilled in the first degree.

And this Seraiah was a quiet prince: the Hebrew word admits of various interpretations; some think that Menucha was a place over which Seraiah had some authority under Zedekiah, the same with Manahath, 1Ch_8:6. Others think it was a name of office, and signified *lord chamberlain* ; but the best interpreters see no reason to vary from our translation, the sense of which is, that he was a man of a moderate, quiet temper, that persuaded to peace.

Jeremiah 51:60

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:61

Not to the Chaldeans, nor possibly is it to be understood of a mere private reading of them to himself, but to the Jews that were in Babylon, acquainting them with what God had spoken against Babylon by the prophet.

Jeremiah 51:62

Thou shalt testify that thou believest what thou hast read to be what shall most certainly come to pass, by speaking words to this sense.

Jeremiah 51:63

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 51:64

It hath been often said that Euphrates was that great river which ran by the walls of Babylon; into this Seraiah is commanded by Jeremiah to throw this roll of prophecy against Babylon, symbolically to teach the Jews, that according to the tenor of his prophecy the time should come, after some years, when Babylon should be destroyed never to rise again to any great view or

degree of splendour, no more than that roll with the stone tied to it should rise from the bottom of Euphrates.

And they shall be weary; some read, though they weary themselves, that is, do what they can, or, (as it is here,) and they shall be weary with that weight of judgment which shall be upon them.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah: either the words of Jeremiah relating to Babylon reach thus far, or all the words of Jeremiah remaining on sacred record (for it is thought that the next chapter was rather penned by some other holy man); or (which seemeth the best) the prophetic words of Jeremiah, for the matter of the next chapter is historical, and the Book of Lamentations is not prophetic, as to the main of it, though there be in it three or four prophetic passages, Lam_4:21, **22**, &c.

Jeremiah 52:1 JEREMIAH CHAPTER 52

A repetition of the reign of Zedekiah: of the siege, taking, and destruction of Jerusalem; with the causes thereof; and what further happened there, Jer_52:1-30. Evil-merodach advanceth Jehoiachin, Jer_52:31-34.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:2

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:3

It is generally thought that what we have in this chapter was not penned by the prophet Jeremiah, who it is not probable would have so largely repeated what he had related before, **Jer 39**, and could not historically relate what happened after his time, as some things did, which are mentioned towards the end of the chapter, from Jer_52:31 to the end. They therefore rather think it penned by some or other of those in Babylon, and put in here as a preface to the Book of Lamentations. What we have in the three first verses is entirely taken out of 2Ki_24:18-20. See the notes there.

Here the wicked actions of Zedekiah, and particularly his rebellion against the king of Babylon, who had made him king, as 2Ki_24:17, and to whom he had given an oath of fealty, is

ascribed to *the wrath of the Lord* ; God not putting any such wickedness into his heart, but suffering him so to miscarry, having a design to send Judah into captivity. Princes are often by God suffered to miscarry for the sins of their people, which should oblige us, when we think we have cause to complain of the errors of our rulers, to consider whether we have not by some sinful courses provoked God, which hath made him leave our rulers so to miscarry in order to our ruin and punishment.

Jeremiah 52:4

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:5

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:6

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:7

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:8

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:9

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:10

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:11

This history is found 2Ki_25:1-7, much in the same words. See the annotations on that chapter. Jeremiah also hath the substance of it, Jer_39:1-7; only neither of those places have the last words, from whence we learn that Zedekiah died in Babylon a prisoner.

Jeremiah 52:12

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:13

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:14

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:15

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:16

See Poole "2Ki_25:8", See Poole "2Ki_25:9", See Poole "2Ki_25:10", See Poole "2Ki_25:11", See Poole "2Ki_25:12" where all this is related, only with a small difference as to the day of the month when Nebuzar-adan came to Jerusalem and burned the temple. In the Kings it is said he came the seventh day, here it is said he came the tenth day. See the solution of it in the annotations on **2Ki 25**. Probably he might come into Jerusalem the seventh day, and not burn the temple till the tenth. Much of it also is related by **Jer 39**. The provost-marshal, about a month after the taking of the city, returned with a part of the army, burned the temple, the great men's houses in the city, and many other houses, and carried away divers prisoners, but left some of the poorer sort of the people to dress the vineyards and till the grounds, which is a thing very usual with conquerors, for their own advantage, that their conquests may yield them some revenue.

Jeremiah 52:17

The particular enumeration of the parts and utensils of the temple, mentioned in this and in the following verses, may be conceived to have been to justify the prophecy of Jeremiah, **Jer_27:19**, where there is a particular mention made of the pillars, the bases, and the sea, that they should all, with the residue of the vessels of the temple, be carried into Babylon. Of these pillars we read **1Ki_7:15**; they were of brass, eighteen cubits high, they were in the porch of the temple, **Jer_52:21**: of the bases we read there also largely, **1Ki_7:27-37**; they also were all of brass: and of the sea, **Jer_52:23-26**. These being all made of brass, were, for conveniency of carriage, broken by the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 52:18

The caldrons also: these were called pots, **2Ki_25:14**.

And the shovels; which were to remove the ashes from the altar.

The snuffers: some think that this word in this place were better translated *tongs*, because he is speaking of instruments of brass; and that those utensils are not here understood with which they

snuffed the lamps, because they were of gold. *The bowls* , or basons; it is uncertain which is here intended, there being in the temple both bowls to drink in, and also basens to receive the blood of the sacrifices.

The spoons; the word is such as may signify ladles, or cups, or dishes.

Jeremiah 52:19

Some of these utensils were only of brass; others were some of them brass, some of silver, some of gold: the captain of the guard carried away all, both those of silver, and those of gold, and those of brass.

Jeremiah 52:20

Solomon made two pillars, 1Ki_7:15, which, Jer_52:21, he called *Jachin and Boaz* ; Jer_52:23, a molten sea, ten cubits broad; this, Jer_52:25, stood upon twelve oxen, and had ten bases, Jer_52:27: the making of all these took up a vast quantity of brass, as any one will easily judge, who, 1Ki_7:27, readeth the dimensions of these things.

Jeremiah 52:21

This agreeth with 1Ki_7:15, where what is called here a fillet is called a thread; concerning the height of the pillars, we read the same 2Ki_25:17 2Ch_3:15.

Jeremiah 52:22

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:23

There are some differences as to the measure of these chapters betwixt 2Ki_25:17 and this text; here the height of them is made to be five cubits, there it is said to be three cubits: that which is said to resolve this difficulty is, that there were three parts in the chapter, the square, the belly, and the crown, and that this text gives an account of the whole; but that text, 2Ki_25:17, gives an account only of the belly and the crown, which were no more than three cubits. The like difference there is betwixt this text and 1Ki_7:20, and 2Ch_4:13, about the number of the pomegranates. In the Book of Kings it is said the pomegranates were in number *two hundred* ; 2Ch_4:13, they are said to have been four hundred. The meaning is, there were a hundred in a row, in the two rows

two hundred, in the four rows (two upon each pillar) four hundred. Some other difference also there is about the particular number of pomegranates on a side, which are here said to be but ninety-six, which make on the two sides but one hundred and ninety-two, on the four sides but three hundred and eighty-four, and comes up neither to the two hundred mentioned in the Book of Kings, nor to the number of four hundred mentioned in the Book of Chronicles. See the English Annotations, where the learned author hath observed that in the Hebrew, what we translate of a side, is word for word *windward*, that is, toward the four winds, so as the table was *square*, and there were twenty-four on each side, which made ninety-six in all, to which four being added. one at each corner, this made a hundred. But these are niceties, a satisfaction in which is of no great concernment to us, unless to satisfy such as would make use of these little things to question the authority of the Scriptures because of these seeming contradictions, of how little concernment soever they be as to our faith and holiness.

Jeremiah 52:24

See Poole "2Ki_25:18", where we have the same words. This Seraiah was not he mentioned Jer_51:59, but the son of Azariah, 1Ch_6:14. By the

second priest, interpreters understand him that supplied the place of the high priest in case he were sick, &c., he that was sent by Zedekiah to the prophet, Jer_21:1, and whom Jeremiah chose by his letters, Jer_29:25, for not setting Jeremiah in the stocks. It is probable there were more keepers of the door, but the captain of the guard took only three of the principal.

Jeremiah 52:25

See 2Ki_25:19; only there is mention out of *five men*, here there is mention of seven, but probably two of them were of less note.

Jeremiah 52:26

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:27

See 2Ki_25:20,21.

Jeremiah 52:28

That is, in the time of Jehoiachin, 2Ki_24:12-14; here it is said to be in the seventh year, there in the eighth year, it might be in part

of both. But there is a difference in the number of the captives, which are here said to be three thousand and twenty-three, and 2Ki_24:14,**16**, seven thousand, or eight. It is thought by some that the number here mentioned were such as properly belonged to Judah, and the number mentioned **2Ki 24**, were the number of the captives of Judah and Benjamin. See the English Annotations.

Jeremiah 52:29

That was the year when the city was broken up.

Jeremiah 52:30

Of this we read nothing in holy writ; some judge it to have been upon occasion of Ishmael's killing Gedaliah, but this was four years after the taking of the city, and we are not certain what at this time brought again the Chaldean forces.

Jeremiah 52:31

Jehoiachin began his reign at eighteen years of age, 2Ki_24:8, and reigned but three months, but that he yielded himself to the king of Babylon besieging him, Jer_52:12, in the eighth year of the king of Babylon's reign. He was a prisoner in Babylon, (as appeareth by this text,) in which circumstances he continued (as appears from this text) about thirty years; which was during the whole reign of Nebuchadrezzar, sometimes called Nebuchadnezzar, sometimes Nebuchodonosor. *Evil-merodach* was son to this Nebuchadrezzar, who, *in the twelfth month* of that year, *the twenty-fifth day of the month*, (saith this text, but, 2Ki_25:27, it is the *twenty-seventh day*; but that difference may easily be reconciled: the penman of this part of holy writ might count precisely from the day of his father's death, and the penman of the Book of Kings from the time of the coronation of Evil-merodach, or when he openly showed himself as king; or the one might reckon from the day that Evil-merodach decreed the thing, the other from the day when he put it in execution,)

lifted up the head, which signifies in Scripture the altering of one's estate that is in misery, Gen_40:20, which is all that is here meant, for his bringing him out of prison is mentioned in the next words. The reason of this favour is variously guessed at. The reverend author of our English Annotations fancieth that Evil-merodach might be much of the same age with him, and that

Jehoiachin got into the acquaintance of this Evil-merodach during his thirty years' captivity, who considering his long imprisonment, and that now there was no danger of his heading the Jews, (whose city had now been destroyed twenty-five years and upward,) this prince out of his humanity might show him this favour; nor are such things unusual in nations upon their changes of princes and counsellors.

Jeremiah 52:32

The king of Babylon might have other kings his prisoners, his father having been so great a conqueror, or he might have other kings his subjects, that might reside at his court; and either out of a particular kindness he had to Jehoiachin, or in regard of the fame of David and Solomon, from whom Jehoiachin lineally descended, he might do him this honour.

Jeremiah 52:33

No text from Poole on this verse.

Jeremiah 52:34

He treated him like a prince, with a respect becoming his former state, took care both for his habit and diet: for his habit, that it should be decent, such as became a person of his quality, though a captive: for his diet, that he should have it in his court, thereby learning others that humanity which becometh all men to treat others with that are fallen under their power; that decency which becometh them as men, and as men whose circumstances have been better; doing to others as we would they should do unto us. Thus Jehoiachin's lot was different from that of his father Jehoiakim, whose body was cast out, as we heard before; as also from that of his uncle Zedekiah, who did not only die in Babylon, but died a prisoner; his nephew Jehoiachin died there, and a captive, but not in durance.

Thee four last verses are found also 2Ki_25:27-30; and being found here in a *narrative form* , related as a piece of history relating a thing done not in a prophetic style, are an argument (as was said before) that this whole chapter is no part of the prophecy of Jeremiah, and probably not wrote by him; for he beginning his prophecy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, who reigned thirty-one years, and continuing it three months during the

reign of Jehoahaz, and eleven years during the reign of Jehoiakim, and three months during the reign of Jehoiachin, (or Jeconiah,) and eleven years during the reign of Zedekiah, and Jehoiachin outliving the reign of Zedekiah twenty-five years, it must needs be sixty-five years and a half after the word of the Lord first came to Jeremiah before the death of Jehoiachin; so as the prophet, if he lived to that time, must be near a hundred years old, which is not probable.

Here now endeth the history of the kingdom of Judah. I shall only note the severe judgment of God upon this people, whose kingdom was made up of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and half the tribe of Manasseh. In the numbering of the persons belonging to these two tribes, **Num 1**, (counting half of the number of the tribe of Manasseh,) we find *one hundred twenty-six thousand one hundred* . **Num 26**, we find of them *one hundred forty-eight thousand four hundred and fifty* . Here, Jer_52:30, we find no more of them carried into captivity than four thousand and six hundred. From whence we may judge what a multitude of them were slain by the sword, or killed by the famine and the pestilence, though we make a great allowance for such as were left in the land to dress vineyards and to till the ground. It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, to *mock his messengers, despise his words, and misuse his prophets, till there be no remedy* , as this people did, 2Ch_36:16.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

THE ARGUMENT

This book in Greek, Latin, and English hath its name from the subject matter of it, which is lamentation; so also amongst the Hebrew writers; but in the Hebrew it hath its name from the first word of the book, as also the five books of Moses have.

That it was wrote by Jeremiah none can reasonably question, because in the Hebrew it is styled, The Book of Jeremiah.

There is little controversy about the time or occasion of the writing of it. That the occasion was the miseries of the people, by reason of the famine, sword, and captivity, is evident to those that read any part of it; but whether they were those miseries which began with the death of Josiah, and held on till the city was taken, which was two and twenty or three and twenty years after, or those only which began with the siege and followed on many years, hath been doubted by some. That Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations, is plain from **#2Ch 35:25**. But that these were the forms they used, or that they were composed upon that sad account, appeareth not; and the miseries which the prophet mentioneth befell not the people in the time of Josiah, but during the siege, more than twenty years after Josiah's death. Nor is there any thing which looks like a lamentation for Josiah through the whole book, unless **#Jer 4:20**, which (as we shall show) may also be fairly interpreted of Zedekiah. Some think that Jeremiah began to write them upon the death of Josiah, and continued his style to the time of the captivity, setting down all the miseries the people suffered all along that time.

The scope of the writing as to those whom it immediately concerned is plain and obvious, viz. to affect the people with those judgments which came upon them for their sins: as to us, (upon whom the ends of the world are come,) to mind us to take heed of their sins, lest we be sharers in their plagues.

The book is made up of complaints of their lamentable condition, petitions unto God for mercy, and prophecies both of their better estate and the ruin of their enemies.

In the four first chapters are several alphabets of letters beginning the several verses, each verse beginning with a new letter, only #La 3, every three verses begin with a new letter; the mystery of which we do not understand, nor possibly was there any mystery intended in it, only the chapters were so composed for the advantage of our memories.

The whole book lets us see from what a height of dignity to what a depth of misery sin may bring nations, how much soever interested in God; and likewise directs us to our duty in such states of affliction and misery if we would obtain mercy.

Lamentations 1:1 LAMENTATIONS CHAPTER 1

Jeremiah lamenteth the former excellency and present misery of Jerusalem for her sin, Lam_1:1-11. She complaineth of her grief, Lam_1:12-17; confesseth God's judgments to be righteous; and prayeth unto him, Lam_1:18-22.

The interrogative particle

how, once expressed and twice more understood in this verse, doth not so much inquire the cause or reason of the effect, as express admiration or lamentation. The prophet admires the miserable state of the city, which was full of people beyond the proportion of other cities, and now was solitary, so thin of people that scarce any could be seen in her streets. She that had a king, or rather a god, that was a husband to her, now was forsaken of God, her king taken from her, and she like a poor widow. She that was like a princess amongst the nations, that sometimes (as in David's time) had the Moabites, Ammonites, &c. tributaries to her, was now a tributary herself.

Lamentations 1:2

All her hours are hours of sadness, she doth not only mourn in the day time, but in the night also, when she should rest; her cheeks are like the grass in the morning, hanging full of drops, as if her head were a fountain of water, and her eyes rivers of tears. In her prosperity she had a great many friends that sought and courted her favour, with whom she made leagues and confederated (such were the Egyptians, Assyrians, &c.); but they were now so far from helping the Jews, that they helped their enemies, and dealt

treacherously with them, becoming themselves enemies instead of assistants to them.

Lamentations 1:3

This is expounded as the cause why the Jews were carried into captivity, because of the servitude and oppression exercised amongst them, oppression by their rulers, and servitude more generally, keeping their servants beyond the year of jubilee, when they ought to have set them at liberty; and that this was one cause appeareth from Jer_34:17: or if

because of affliction, & c. be joined to the next words, the sense is plain,

she dwelleth amongst the heathen, by reason of her low condition, and the state of servitude she is in; where she, that is, the Jews, have neither any satisfaction nor quiet in their own minds, nor are they by their enemies suffered to be at quiet any where. Those that pursued them with all violence to destroy them overtook them in places where they could not escape them, as huntsmen and others take their game by driving them into strait and narrow places.

Lamentations 1:4

The ways that lead to the temple have as unlovely a complexion as mourners, being overgrown, by reason that none goeth up as usually to the feasts of the passover, of tabernacles, &c. Either all the gates of Jerusalem, or the temple, or all her cities, are very thin of people, the places that use to be so full. Her priests that were wont to be so fully employed at festivals receiving the people's oblations, and offering sacrifices, they mourn, having now nothing to do. The virgins who in those feasts were wont to play with timbrels, Psa_68:25, they now mourn, and persons of all ages and ranks are in bitterness.

Lamentations 1:5

God hath fulfilled his threatening, Deu_28:43; the enemy is got

above us, and

we are brought very low, for the multitude of our sins, directly contrary to his promise in case of obedience, Lam_1:13. Not only

our young and old men, but the little children, have been driven like sheep before the enemy into a miserable captivity.

Lamentations 1:6

All the inhabitants of Zion have lost their former beauty; whatsoever splendour the city had, whether from the multitude or gallantry of her inhabitants, it is all gone; her nobles are become thin and ill-favoured, like beasts almost starved, their enemies pursue them to destroy them, and they have no strength to oppose or resist them.

Lamentations 1:7

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, now that they are in affliction and misery, have time to remember their former mercies, and with how many desirable things God had once blessed them, and compare her former state before she fell into the enemies' hands, with her present state now she is in their power. Now it is an affliction to them to hear her enemies mock at her sabbaths, which while they enjoyed they abused.

Lamentations 1:8

She is carried out of her own land into an enemy's country, and made a hissing and scorn to those who before revered her, (in all this God is righteous, for all orders of men have grievously sinned,) because they have seen the Lord stripping her of all her blessings, and exposing her to the scorn and reproach of all men, as strumpets are exposed.

Lamentations 1:9

He persisteth in his comparison of the Jewish people, either to a sluttish, nasty woman, or to an impudent woman that is not ashamed to expose her nastiness or wickedness to the view of all.

She remembereth not her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully; that is, the Jews never considered, or would not believe, what those degrees of sin would at last bring them to, and that hath been the cause of that prodigious calamity into which God had brought them.

O Lord, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself: the prophet turns himself to God, whom he desires to behold the affliction of this people, that is, with a pitiful, compassionate eye. It is a very usual thing in Holy Scripture to

signify the acts. of the heart by the acts of the inward and outward senses, those especially of the memory, eye, and ear, because objects must be first brought in by the senses before they can affect the soul. Hence (the Scripture speaking of God after the manner of men) the servants of God desiring God to have compassion on them, show them favour, &c., desire him to *behold* and look upon their affliction.

Lamentations 1:10

Hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things; that is, hath got them into possession. By pleasant things are here to be understood the ornaments of the temple, upon which the enemy had laid violent hands; so this phrase of

spreading out the hand is taken Isa_25:11. The things of the sanctuary were always pleasant things to those that feared God; possibly those that little valued them before, now looked upon them in their true notion. We seldom know our mercies till we come to be deprived of them.

The heathen entered into her sanctuary; he means the Ammonites and Moabites, whom the law concerned, Deu_23:3; some of whom probably assisted the Babylonians in the conquest of Judea.

Lamentations 1:11

He speaketh probably with reference to the siege, after which the people had scarcely any pleasant things to exchange for bread. The whole body of the people was in a sad condition; and in a land that ordinarily flowed with milk and honey, they were at loss for bread to eat, and gave any thing for something to satisfy their hunger.

See, O Lord, and consider; for I am become vile: the prophet sends up a sudden ejaculation to God, much like that Lam_1:9. The argument he useth is drawn from the misery the people were in, expressed under the notion of being become vile, that is, miserable or contemptible.

Lamentations 1:12

The prophet speaks in the name of the Jewish church, as a woman in misery sitting by the way-side, and calling to passengers that came by to have compassion on her, suggesting to them that her

affliction was no ordinary affliction, nor the effect of a common and ordinary providence, but the effect of the Lord's fierce anger, a most severe punishment.

Lamentations 1:13

By

fire he means a judgment as consuming and as afflictive as fire in the bones, which had consumed the strength of the Jews.

He hath spread a net for my feet; that is, God had brought them into a condition wherein they were entangled, and could not get out. The holy man owneth God as the first cause of all the evil they suffered, and entitles God to their various kinds of afflictions, both in captivity and during the siege, looking beyond the Babylonians, who were the proximate instrumental cause.

Lamentations 1:14

Still the prophet eyeth God in all, and acknowledgeth his justice while he calls their afflictions the yoke of their transgressions, that is, which was put upon their neck, upon the same account that yokes are put about the necks of beasts that use to break hedges, &c. and bound to keep them fast. My punishments are twisted as cords, to make them more strong; I have a complication of judgments upon me, sword, famine, pestilence, captivity; they are not only prepared for my neck, but they are already put upon it. All my valiant men, the strength of my nation is broken; and I am so fallen, that I am not able to rise again.

Lamentations 1:15

In the midst of me, may be interpreted either as *pleonastical*, or as denoting the place in which they lost their valiant men, viz. in the midst of the city during the siege, not in the field.

He hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men; instead of those solemn assemblies that were wont to be called together within Jerusalem by sound of trumpet for the solemn worship of God, God had called an assembly of Chaldeans as adversaries against the city, to crush the inhabitants of it.

The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press; God had trodden upon the Jews as men use to stamp grapes in a wine-press, where they use to crush them to

pieces to get out the juice, and then they throw the husks, that are good for nothing, upon the dunghills. These are but various expressions to set out the misery into which God had brought this people for their sins.

Lamentations 1:16

For these sore afflictions, and for my sins that have caused them, and for these impressions of Divine wrath which I discern in them, Lord! I that am thy prophet, and we that are Israelites indeed, weep, and that plentifully; having neither thee present with us as formerly to be our hope or comfort, nor any friend that will deal by us as friends sometimes do by others in swooning fits to fetch back their souls.

My children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed; either the other cities of Judah, (Jerusalem was the mother city,) or my people, my inhabitants, are wasted, destroyed, and made desolate, because the enemy hath prevailed.

Lamentations 1:17

The same in this verse is meant by *Zion, Jacob, and Jerusalem*, unless Zion more specially signifieth the Jews considered as a church, because of the temple built upon it. She spreadeth out her hands as in a posture of mourning, and bewailing herself; but she had none that could afford her any comfort. God had commanded concerning the Jews who were descended from Jacob, (their twelve tribes from his twelve sons,) that their enemies should encompass them. They were become loathsome and filthy even in the eyes of their enemies, like women which were separated from the congregation during their legal uncleanness.

Lamentations 1:18

The prophet either directeth those that feared God what they should say, or expresseth what many of them did say in the name of the rest, acknowledging both the Lord's justice and faithfulness, because they had been disobedient to the commandments of God.

Hear, I pray you, & c.; In these words the prophet only personates a passionate woman begging pity of all because her children were taken from her.

Lamentations 1:19

I desired help of my allies and confederates who courted my friendship and alliance in any prosperity, but they failed mine expectation, none of them either would or could succour me. My misery was such through the famine, that not only my common people, but those of the best rank in the city, magistrates and priests, fainted as they went along the street seeking bread to satisfy their hunger.

Lamentations 1:20

The petition is of the same nature as before, a petition for mercy, as the product of that pity and compassion which extreme misery begets in good souls, (and is ascribed unto God, though found in him in a much more perfect degree, Psa_78:38 **86:15 111:4**) through the eyes affecting the heart. The argument the prophet useth is drawn from the misery this people was now in, which he expreseth metaphorically, telling us their bowels were troubled, their heart turned, signifying the more inward disturbance of their mind; or more plainly, and that both generally, saying they were in distress, and more particularly by the great judgments of the sword and famine, the sword in the field, the famine in the city; unless the sword alone be meant both without and within the gates of the city. In all this the church justifieth God, confessing this was but the righteous product of her sin, by which, she having formerly subjected herself to God, had grievously rebelled; for as all men are born subjects to God, so by their sins they are become rebels; so it is a great aggravation of men's rebellion against the Lord, when they have formerly taken an oath of fealty to the Lord, and, as Moses said, avouched the Lord as their God.

Lamentations 1:21

The nations contiguous to me, Egypt, &c., those that before courted me, as pretended friends, have been no strangers to my bitter afflictions, that have brought forth sighs from me; but there is none of them can or will comfort me, but give me over as in a desperate case. The Edomites, **Ob 1**, &c., and Moabites, and other heathen nations, with whom I have had hostility, they are glad at the great misery that hath befallen me. But thou hast declared thy pleasure for their destruction also, and hast by me proclaimed it, Jer_49:1, and thou shalt in that day bring them into as sad a

condition as the church of the Jews are now in. As they seldom in themselves feel those miseries which they have felt and compassionated in others; so men hardly escape their own share at last in those evils which they have rejoiced to see brought upon God's people.

Lamentations 1:22

This verse is another prophetic curse or imprecation, several of which we meet with in holy writ, Psa_109:6-9 **137:8** Jer_11:20 **18:23**, and in many other texts; which would incline us to think that our Saviour's precept, Mat_5:44, to pray for those that persecute us, backed by his own example, Luk_23:34, and Stephen's; Act_7:60, is either to be interpreted of praying for the forgiveness of their sins, (we ought to desire the eternal condemnation of none,) or to be restrained to such as are our personal enemies, not the common enemies of the church of God. Our Saviour's precept most certainly is not to be so interpreted, but that we may lawfully pray for such evils to the implacable enemies of the church and people of God, as may restrain and weaken their hands, and put them out of a capacity of wasting the Lord's heritage: we are only obliged by it to wish well to their souls, and to desire no evil against them out of private revenge or malice, but only out of love to God, and zeal for his glory; but for their outward prosperity in their courses of enmity we ought no more to pray than against their eternal salvation; for this were to beg of God to encourage his enemies in their enmity against him. And though Jeremiah were a greater prophet than any of us can pretend to be, and had revelations of particular future contingencies which we have not; yet every one may prophesy a ruin to the enemies of God's church and people, and such as rejoice in their ruin; God never using a rod against his people which he doth not at last burn, nor ever countenancing inhumanity in any, but much less when it is rooted in a malice against himself, and his interest in the world.

Lamentations 2:1 LAMENTATIONS CHAPTER 2

Jeremiah lamenteth the misery of Jerusalem, and its causes, and their enemies' derision, Lam_2:1-17. In exhortation to true sorrow and repentance; a fervent prayer, Lam_2:18-22.

How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger? It hath been formerly observed that great states and kingdoms are often in Scripture expressed under the notion of daughters, Psa_137:8 Isa_10:30 **47:1,5 Jer 46:11 Lam_4:21,22**: the meaning is, How hath God obscured all the beauty and glory of the church and state of the Jews!

And cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel; that is, thrown them down from the highest pitch of glory and honour, to the meanest degree of baseness and servitude.

And remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger: the earth is called the Lord's footstool, Isa_66:1 Mat_5:35 Act_7:49, but here plainly the *temple* is understood, called God's footstool, 1Ch_28:2; and the whole temple seems rather to be understood than the ark, for we read of no indignity offered to the ark by the Chaldeans, more than to any other part of the temple; God had suffered the Chaldeans to burn the whole temple, and it may justly be doubted whether those other texts that mention a worshipping at God's footstool, Psa_99:5 **132:7**, be not to be understood of worshipping in the temple, for it was not the privilege of all the Jews to come so near the ark as to worship before that. The reason of the complaint is God's permission of the Chaldeans to burn the temple. See Jer_52:13.

Lamentations 2:2

The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied; as he hath had no respect to his own house, so he hath had much less respect to the common habitations of the Jews.

He hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; their military fortifications have been of no use to them, he hath made them to touch the ground, i.e. suffered the enemies to batter them to the earth.

He hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof; that is, either delivered them into the hands of pagans, whom to touch they judged a legal pollution, or else dealt with them as with a polluted thing, east them off, or brake them in pieces. All this is made the effect of God's wrath, and his work; for as a man is said to do that which he encourageth others to do, and assists them in doing; so God is said to have done this, because he did not only

suffer the Chaldeans to do it, but used them as a rod in his hand, inclining them to do it, and assisting them in the execution of his wrath.

Lamentations 2:3

He hath cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel; that is, the beauty and strength of Israel, so horn signifieth by a usual metaphor in Scripture, Psa_74:4 Jer_48:25, &c., the horn being much the beauty of the beast, as also that member by which the beast puts forth its strength in assaulting its adversary.

He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy; either God hath drawn back his assistance which he was wont to give the Jews against their enemies; or Israel, through God's leaving of them, hath drawn back his right hand; but it seems rather to be understood of God's weakening the Israelites' right hands, so as they were not able to hold them up (as before) against their enemies.

He burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about; God had consumed them, not in this or that part, but round about, as a fire seizing a house or heap of combustible matter at once, on all sides.

Lamentations 2:4

That is, God (whom by their sins they had provoked and made their enemy) behaved himself as an enemy, bending his bow, and stretching out his right hand, and slew their young men and maidens, who were pleasant to look upon; and had brought judgments upon them like fire, which devours without any discrimination.

Lamentations 2:5

See Lam_2:2. Several pathetic expressions signifying the same things, properly imitating the dialect of mourners, whose passion suffers them not to speak according to art, but frequently they say the same things over and over.

Lamentations 2:6

The word translated

tabernacle (say some) signifies a *hedge or fence*, and they would have it here so translated, and so the phrase should denote God's

withdrawing his protection from the Jews; but it is no where so translated. It is another word used Psa_80:12 **89:40**. The most judicious interpreters think that the word here signifieth the *temple*, and the rather because of what followeth. By the

places of the assembly may be understood the synagogues. By

the king and the priest are meant persons of greatest rank and eminency, though it is thought here is a special reference to Zedekiah the king of Judah, and Seraiah who was the high priest, the former of which was miserably handled, the latter slain.

Lamentations 2:7

By

altar and

sanctuary seemeth not to be meant strictly here the places or buildings so called, which are said to be the Lord's, because he directed the making of them, and they were dedicated to his service, and used for no other use; but the stated worship and communion of the church of the Jews; as altar is taken, 1Co_10:18. God, by his suffering the place to be destroyed where alone they might sacrifice, seemed to have abhorred his own institutions, as it is said, *The prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord*. He saith the Lord also had destroyed the most stately of their civil edifices; and the enemies, with their triumphs and blasphemies, had made as great noise, to the reproach and dishonour of God, as before those that sang holy songs, or played on instruments, were wont to make in the temple to the honour and glory of God.

Lamentations 2:8

The term

wall in this verse seemeth to be taken in a metaphorical sense, for the strength and security of the Jews (the strength and security of a place lying much in ifs walls).

He hath stretched out a line: artificers use with lines not only to mark out places for building, but also for destruction, to direct them what to cut off; such a line is here meant.

He hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying; God had gone on in destroying them: and had made their walls and ramparts feeble, and to shake like a man under some languishing distemper, that had no strength left.

Lamentations 2:9

Her gates are sunk into the ground; that is, the gates of Jerusalem are destroyed and covered over with rubbish.

He hath destroyed and broken her bars; the bolts of the gates are broken.

Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles; Zedekiah and the nobles of Judah that were not slain were in miserable captivity.

The law is no more; the law was no more read and opened, nor was there any more sacrifices offered according to the prescript of it, nor any solemn feasts kept according to the direction of it.

Her prophets also find no vision from the Lord; they had but very few prophets amongst them from this time to the time of the gospel, and very few of those at this time alive had any revelations from God; we read only of this prophet, Ezekiel, Daniel, and three after the captivity, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Lamentations 2:10

Sitting upon the ground, keeping silence, throwing dust on their heads, girding themselves with sackcloth, hanging down the head, were all of them postures, and actions, and gestures of mourners. The meaning of this whole verse is, that the whole city of Jerusalem was in a very sad state and condition, and all persons in it in a mournful posture; not the common people only, but the gravest of their magistracy and ministry, those who were wont to sit in the chairs of magistracy and of teachers. Their young women also, which used to be most brisk and frolic, those whose condition was furthest off from sorrow, and who were least disposed to it, were now all of them drowned in floods of it.

Lamentations 2:11

This whole verse is but expressive of the prophet's great affliction for the miseries come upon the Jews: he wept himself almost blind, his passion had disturbed his bodily humours, that his

bowels were troubled; his gall lying under his liver, upon this disturbance was vomited up: they are all no more than expressions of very great affliction and sorrow.

For the destination of the daughter of my people; for the miseries befallen the Jews: he had mourned for their sins before, and for their plagues too which he had in prospect, Jer_9:1; he now mourns for them as being come upon them: which mourning considered only as for their miseries, spake no more than the prophet's good nature and love to his country; but considered as the indication of God's wrath and displeasure, was also a godly sorrow.

Because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city; the children and sucklings fainted and swooned, either for want of water, or bread, or milk in their mothers' or nurses' breasts during the famine, occasioned by the long siege of the city. This appears in the next verse.

Lamentations 2:12

The little children, ignorant of the cause of the failure of their usual food, called to their mothers for it as formerly, being ready to faint and die, as men mortally wounded, for want of spirits and blood, use to faint, and died in their mothers' arms; for so I had rather interpret the phrase *poured out their souls*, than (as some) understand by *souls* the desires of their souls, for he is speaking of *sucklings* as well as more grown children: the phrase is capable of both senses.

Lamentations 2:13

The sum of this verse is, that the miserable condition of the people was both *incomparable* and *incurable*. There was no people whose miserable condition was in any degree parallel to the misery of the Jews. It is some comfort to persons in misery to consider that others are and have been, as miserable as they, but the prophet had not this topic from whence to fetch an argument of comfort to the Jews; there were none to whom he could liken them, nor was there any present cure for them; their breach was like a *sea-breach*, where the waters come in with such a torrent, that while the tide abates there is no making any bank of defence against them.

Lamentations 2:14

Not the Lord's prophets in thee, but those prophets to whom you chose rather to hearken, and whom you believed rather than me and others sent by God to reveal his will unto you, came and told you idle and vain stories, that those who were carried into captivity should after two years return, &c. And by telling you such smooth and pleasant things, tickled your humours instead of discovering your sins, which were bringing these judgments upon you; whereas they ought to have dealt freely and faithfully with you, and have made you sensible of your sins, and this might have prevented your miserable captivity. But they rather spent their breath in telling you false stories to encourage you in your sinful courses, and so proved to you the causes of your banishment; or else they told you false stories, which they pretended to be the causes of the captivity of your brethren, in the mean time concealing the true causes, and suffering you to run on in the same errors, till you came to be more miserable than those that went into captivity before you.

Lamentations 2:15

This was according to God's threatenings, 1Ki_9:8 Jer_18:16 **19:8**. God had poured out all his blessings upon this people, whatsoever might adorn them, or make them happy, so as all people blessed the Jewish nation; but now the case was so altered, that all people scoffed at them, and hissed, and admired at the change which God had made.

Lamentations 2:16

As strangers that had no quarrels with nor prejudices against the Jews, passing by their country, and their great city Jerusalem, despised and scorned it; so their enemies with whom they had former quarrels, and who had taken up prejudices against them, they reproached and abused them, and triumphed in their ruin, and in the success of their arms against them, and blessed themselves, as having now seen the day they had looked and wished for.

Lamentations 2:17

God hath not surprised us by these providences, he gave us notice what he would do, and hath done no more than what he threatened long since, Lev_26:16, &c.; Deu_28:15, &c. It is true he hath severely punished us, so as in his dispensation there appear no

prints of pity, he hath set up our enemies, and hath made them to triumph over his people, but in all this he hath but justified his truth, and fulfilled his word.

Lamentations 2:18

They cried unto God seriously, though not sincerely; from their heart, though not with their whole heart; either by the wall, or upon the wall, or (which is judged most probable) by occasion of the breaches made in the wall. Upon this he turns his discourse to the wall itself, and calls to it, or to those that were upon it, or near it, incessantly to mourn.

Let not the apple of thine eye cease; in the Hebrew it is, *let not the daughter of thine eye cease* . We call it the *apple* ; the Latins, the *pupil* , or *babe* , of the eye.

Lamentations 2:19

The prophet calls upon the Jews not to be slothful in this their very evil day, but to rise up from their beds, and either at the beginning of the four watches, or at the beginning of each watch, at all times in the night, to betake themselves to God by prayer, and that not in a cold, lazy manner, but so as to pour out their hearts with their words; and he moveth them to it, as for their own sake, so for the sake of their young children, who every where were starved to death.

Lamentations 2:20

Consider to whom thou hast done this; that is, not to heathen, who never owned thee, nor were called by thy name, but to thine own people, called thy portion and thine heritage; let thy former relation to us, and our former acknowledgments of thee, prevail with thee. Wilt thou suffer, or should such a thing be, as for women to satisfy their hunger with the fruit of their own bodies, and that when they are very young? And shall thy ministers be slain, and that in thy sanctuary? Any human blood polluted it; shall not the blood of those that were the ministers of God be judged a pollution and profanation of it?

Lamentations 2:21

None of what sex or age soever are spared: though the hands of the Chaldeans have done this, yet they have been set on and

assisted by thee, and have been but the executioners of thy wrath and displeasure.

Lamentations 2:22

As my people were wont to be called together from all parts in a solemn day, when they were to meet at Jerusalem from all parts of Judea; so now by thy providence my terrible enemies, or terrible things, are by thee called together against that holy city, whither thy people were wont to be called to thy solemn worship. Thou hast made me as a great mother to bring Up many inhabitants that were my children, and now the enemy hath consumed the far greater number of them.

Lamentations 3:1 LAMENTATIONS CHAPTER 3

The faithful bewail their misery and contempt, Lam_3:1-21. They nourish their hope by consideration of the justice, providence, and mercies of God, Lam_3:22-38. They stir up themselves to repentance, patience, prayers, and confidence of deliverance for themselves, and Divine vengeance on their enemies, Lam_3:39-66.

Some understand this of the prophet, some of the people, who were before set out under the notion of a woman, a daughter, here of a man.

Affliction must here be taken emphatically for eminent degrees of affliction, caused not merely from the power and malice of the enemy, but from the wrath of God, though brought upon them by the Chaldeans, who were to the two tribes the rod of God's wrath, as the Assyrians are called with reference to the ten tribes, Isa_10:5.

Lamentations 3:2

Darkness in Scripture (metaphorically taken) signifies *ignorance, sin, and misery*; and *light* signifies *knowledge*, a state of grace, or a state of mirth and jollity; they are both here taken in the latter sense, as light is taken, Est_8:16 Mic_7:8 Job_18:5 Psa_97:11; and also darkness is used, Jer_13:16 2Sa_22:29 Pro_20:20 Joe_2:2 Eze_32:8. The sense is, God hath not brought me into a joyful and prosperous, but into a sad and calamitous, estate and condition.

Lamentations 3:3

The course of God's providence toward me is quite altered, his hand, that is, his power, which was wont to be with me, and for me, against my enemies, is now turned against me; nor is it for a moment, or for one stroke or two, but his hand is continually against me.

Lamentations 3:4

I was a virgin, young and fair, but I am quite altered, and am now as an old woman whose flesh is decayed, and my skin wrinkled; all my beauty is gone, and all my strength is gone; my bones, those in whom my strength consisted, are slain and broken.

Lamentations 3:5

He hath not builded with me, increasing my prosperity, and protecting my houses, but he hath builded forts, and batteries, and castles, (military buildings,) to batter down my walls and houses, Isa_29:2,3. And compassed me with gall and travel; or with poison, venom, and misery, as some translate it; and it seems more proper than gall and travel, which have no cognation one with another. We are not well acquainted with the ancient dialect of other countries: the sense is obvious, God had surrounded them with misery and calamities.

Lamentations 3:6

The prophet compareth their state in Babylon to the state of bodies in the graves, or in some charnel-house, which are places of darkness, full of rottenness and dead men's bones. Such was the state of the Jews in Jerusalem during the time of the siege before the city was taken, when Jerusalem was a most miserable place by reason of the multitudes slain by the enemy, or by the famine: such was their state in Babylon, where the company of heathens made their state as the state of the living amongst the dead.

Lamentations 3:7

The use of a hedge about an enclosed field is twofold:

1. To keep out other beasts which belong not to the owner of the ground; in this sense God set a hedge sometimes about Canaan, Isa_5:5.
2. To keep in those beasts that are within; thus God had now hedged them in, into a barren place where they had no pasture, but

were continually pushed at by other beasts with whom they were mixed, and who were stronger than they, and they could not get out. God had dealt with them as with grievous malefactors, who are loaded with heavy chains. He had made their affliction heavy and insupportable.

Lamentations 3:8

In the condition I am in, I cannot help myself, no creatures can help me, I have no hope but in God. I take the ordinary course in that case, which is prayer, I pray fervently and aloud, as those that are serious and importunate for what they desire (for shouting here signifies no more than making a loud noise, not a loud noise of joy and rejoicing, as it mostly signifies); but he deals with me as great persons that have no mind to listen to suitors, and shut their gates against them, he shutteth out my supplications: which made their case wholly desperate and remediless.

Lamentations 3:9

Ways in Scripture ordinarily signifies men's courses, and methods of counsels, and actions; if the term be taken in that sense here, it signifieth God's defeating all their methods and counsels taken for their own security, in the pursuit of which they met not with ordinary, but with insuperable difficulties, like walls of hewn stone. Nay, God had not only defeated their counsels, but had made them prove more fatal and pernicious to themselves, which seemeth to be intended, by making their ways crooked, which should have led right on to the end intended.

Lamentations 3:10

That is, he hath taken all advantages against me to destroy me.

Lamentations 3:11

The same thing is repeated in other phrases which was before said, viz. that God had pleased by his providence to frustrate all the designs and counsels of the Jews, and miserably to destroy them, as a lion or a bear (the wild beasts mentioned before) tear in pieces the beasts they prey upon.

Lamentations 3:12

He hath prepared himself for acts of vindictive justice, and he hath made me the object of it.

Lamentations 3:13

That is, he hath made his judgments to pierce the most inward parts of the nation; or, he hath mortally wounded me. In the Hebrew it is,

the daughters of his quiver, a way of speaking very usual in Hebrew, to express any thing that comes from another as the effect either of a natural or moral cause; so sparks are called the sons of the quick coal, Job_5:7, and corn *the son of the floor*, &c.

Lamentations 3:14

Though some think the prophet speaks this of himself, yet, considering he hath all along spoken in the name of the people, it is not probable, which makes a difficulty, how the people could be a derision to themselves? It seemeth therefore ill translated, and that it should have been,

I was a derision to all people, leaving out *my*, that is, to all foreigners, to whom the Jews were made a derision and a hissing; there only wants the last letter in ymu and it is well observed by the learned author of the English Annotations, that the like defect is to be found, as to the same word, 2Sa_22:41, compared with Psa_18:43, so that is not *a pronoun affix*, (upon which supposal our translators go,) but one of the letters that form the plural number, the other being left out, and ymu put for Mymzy.

Lamentations 3:15

That is, he hath filled me with severe and bitter dispensations.

Wormwood is a bitter herb, but it is also a wholesome herb, and therefore some think that the Hebrew word should rather be translated *henbane*, and that it signifies some herb whose juice is intoxicating and poisonous.

Lamentations 3:16

These are but more metaphorical expressions, signifying the unpleasant difficult condition into which God had brought this people. They were like men that lived upon gritty bread, more fit to break their teeth than to nourish them; they were in the state of mourners, and no ordinary mourners, who were wont to throw ashes on their heads, they were all over covered with ashes.

Lamentations 3:17

Peace here signifieth *prosperity* , rather than a *freedom from war* . Though during the siege they were far from peace in a strict sense, yet in their captivity they had that peace; but both their minds were far off from quiet, and their persons from prosperity: the prophet owneth God as the cause of this. They had in Canaan lived prosperously, but now they thought of it no more, nor understood what such a thing meant.

Lamentations 3:18

No text from Poole on this verse.

Lamentations 3:19

If, according to our translation, we read

Remembering, or *While I remember* , these two verses contain but one sentence; in tire former part the prophet in the name of this people expresseth their despairing condition; in the latter he gives the reason of it, viz. the people's poring upon their great and heavy afflictions, which he compares to wormwood and gall, two things excessively bitter, and often made use of to signify great affliction, Psa_69:21 Jer_8:14 **9:15 23:15** Rev_8:11. But it may as well be read imperatively, *Remember* mine affliction; so the first of these two verses expresseth the dejection of the people's minds in their captivity, caused through their proneness to despair of any better condition that their angry God would bring them into. The 19th verse is a prayer directed to God, which showed that though they were mightily perplexed, yet they were not in utter despair; and to this sense the following verses seem to incline.

Lamentations 3:20

That is, I cannot forget them, and the thoughts of them sink my spirits.

Lamentations 3:21

This, not what was already said, that made them despair, and their souls to bow down; but this, that which followeth, concerning the nature of God, and other good providences. I see nothing in the circumstances of my condition to comfort me, but I see something in God's nature, and in some other dispensations of his providence, which gives me ground to hope for better things than an utter ruin and destruction.

Lamentations 3:22

Mercy is nothing else but love flowing freely from any to persons in misery, and differs from compassion only in the freeness of the emanation. It is not because God had not power enough utterly to have consumed us, nor because we had not guilt enough to have provoked his justice to have put an end to our lives, as well as to the lives of many thousands of our countrymen, but it is merely from the Lord's free love and pity to us in our miseries. If God had not a blessing in store for us, how is it that we are captives, and not slain as many others were during the siege?

Lamentations 3:23

These compassions of God are renewed day by day, to declare the great faithfulness of God in fulfilling his many promises made for mercy to his people.

Lamentations 3:24

God is the portion of his people, and they have chosen him as their portion; he hath declared himself to them as such, and they have accepted him as such. This gives them ground both for patience under his providences, and also of expectation of good from him in their lowest and meanest state.

Lamentations 3:25

Good is a term of a very comprehensive notion. The nature of it lieth in a suitableness to the thing or person to whom it relateth; so it signifieth *profit* and *pleasantness*. There is in God an essential goodness, which is his absolute perfection; but this text speaketh of a communicative goodness, which floweth from him to his creatures, and is seen in his suiting their various necessities and desires with satisfactory dispensations of providence. Though God be in one degree or oilier good to all, yet he is more especially good to the true worshippers of him; yet possibly not in their seasons or times when they expect or would have God show himself so to them, in this or that way, but always to those who wait for him, patiently enduring trials and afflictions until God please to send them deliverance.

Lamentations 3:26

Good here either signifies *honestum*, what becomes men, and is their duty; or *utile*, what is profitable, and will turn to good

account to them. *Hoping* and *waiting* differ but as the mother and daughter, hope being the mother of patience and waiting; or as the *habit* and *act* , hoping and waiting being rather the same, flowing from a gracious power and habit given the soul to wait. *Quietness* is necessary to waiting, for all turbulence and impatience of spirit under sad providences is opposed to waiting. *The salvation of the Lord* refers to the outward man, in preserving or delivering us from dangers; or to the soul and inward man, in preserving us from, and delivering our souls out of, dangers they fear, or evils they are pressed with. Now for a man in the midst of all evils to hope in God, and, without turbulence or disorder in himself, to wait for a preservation from, or a delivery out of, any evils, is what becometh a man, (a child of God especially,) and will turn to a good account to them.

Lamentations 3:27

Good here must be expounded in the same sense as in the foregoing verse. It is not pleasant, but it is profitable, it is honourable, what becomes us, and is our duty, quietly and patiently to bear what afflictions God will please to lay upon us, to restrain our wild and wanton spirits when they are most prone to be too brisk and lascivious. Some by yoke understand the law of God, called a

yoke, (because indeed it is so to flesh and blood,) Mat_11:29. It is not so easy to bend a neck stiffened with age, or change a heart made hard by custom. Solomon bids us to train up one in their youth in the way we would have them to walk; and whether God will tame us when young by his word or by his rod, it is of advantage to a man. It is also laudable, and what becomes a man, early to bear the yoke of God's law, or to bear afflictive providences, to have his heart betimes humbled to the will and feet of God.

Lamentations 3:28

Our English Annotations supplying *that* , makes the connexion clear, It is good for a man that he *sit alone* , Jer_15:17; not doing what he doth to be seen of men, but sitting alone, and when he is alone suppressing the mutinies of his spirit, and keeping his soul in subjection to God; because God hath humbled him by his rod, humbling himself to his will.

Lamentations 3:29

If *that* may be supplied, or *when* , (as Pagnine translath yb Lam_3:28, the connexion of these words with the former is very fair and easy, for then those words, Lam_3:27, It is good that must be repeated in the beginning of Lam_3:28 and Lam_3:29; however, both this and the former verses let us know the duty of persons under afflictions in order to their obtaining mercy at the hand of God, and admirably give us the character of persons under afflictions preparing for mercy. *They hope and quietly wait for God 's salvation* , Lam_3:26; *they bear God 's yoke* , Lam_3:27, because he hath laid it upon them; they sit alone and keep silence, Lam_3:28; and here, they *put their mouths in the dust* , that is, humble themselves to the feet of God, and to the will of God; not being too confident of deliverances in this life, but if peradventure

there may be hope.

Lamentations 3:30

According to our Saviour's precept, Mat_5:39, he doth not take any private revenge; he is reproached and reviled, but when he is so he *revileth not again* , 1Pe_2:23; he is filled with reproach from others, but his mouth is not filled with the reproachings of others.

Lamentations 3:31

This is that which beareth up his spirits, that though the Lord may for a time estrange himself from his people, yet he will not always forsake them.

Lamentations 3:32

But though, as a prudent parent, he may see reason to cause grief in and to afflict his own people, yet as a tender good father, that pitieth his children in misery, he will have compassion upon them, having not only mercies, but a multitude or abundance of mercies.

Lamentations 3:33

In the Hebrew it is, he doth not afflict from his heart, that is, with pleasure and delight; or (which seemeth the best sense to me) not from his own mere motion without a cause given him from the persons afflicted. Hence judgment is called God's *strange work* . Showing mercy is his proper natural work, which floweth from himself without any cause in the creature. Judgment is his *strange work* , to which he never proceedeth but when provoked, and as it

were forced from the creature, whence it followeth that he cannot delight in it.

Lamentations 3:34

No text from Poole on this verse.

Lamentations 3:35

No text from Poole on this verse.

Lamentations 3:36

Here are three things mentioned, of all which it is said that God

approveth them

not neither all, nor any of them. The first is, *to crush the prisoners of the earth* : he hath power to crush all men in the world, they are his prisoners, and cannot flee from him, but he delighteth not in it. Some think it spoken with special reference to the Jews, who now were all captives. A second thing which it is said God approveth not is, *turning away the right of a man before the face of the Most High* . Some by *the Most High* understand God, and make the sense to be, *in the sight of God* . Others think that a superior magistrate is understood, who, Ecc_5:8, is called the *highest* ; and that seemeth the most probable sense. The turning away the right of a man before them, signifieth the use of any arts to deprive them of their just right by misrepresenting their cause, aspersing their persons, &c. The third thing mentioned is, the *subverting* a man in his cause, either by art and rhetoric, making it to appear bad when it is not so, or by mere will and power, overruling it contrary to right and justice.

Lamentations 3:37

The sense of these words is doubted by none, that nothing cometh to pass in the world but by the disposal of Divine Providence, either effecting it by an immediate influence, or permitting it; but to what end these words are brought in in this place is not so generally agreed. Some think they are brought in to check the blasphemy of some that spake of what had befallen the Jews as a thing which God had no hand in. Others think they are brought in as expounding that term that went before, *The Lord seeth not* . Though God doth not approve of sinful actions, nor incline any man's heart or will to them, yet God hath a hand in the permission of the most cruel and unjust actions, which he could easily hinder.

I should rather incline to interpret them as an argument brought by the prophet in the name of the people of God, arguing themselves into a quiet submission to the afflictive providences under which they laboured from the consideration of the superior hand of God in them; as Christ told Pilate, Thou couldst not have had any power against me, if it had not been given thee from above. *Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it ?* Amo_3:6.

Lamentations 3:38

In the Hebrew the form of these words is interrogatory, as much as if he should say, Doth not evil come out of God's mouth from his direction and command, and from his providence, as well as good? He speaks of evils of punishment, judicial afflictive dispensations; so it agreeth with Job_2:10 Amo_3:6. It is no reproach unto God to make him the author of his own punishments, though we call them evil.

Lamentations 3:39

This verse admits of various senses, caused from the various interpretation of the Hebrew word, which we translate *complain* , which also signifies to mourn or grieve; so some render it, Why doth a living man grieve or vex himself? But the word is noted most generally to signify complaining or murmuring. The word also which we translate

sin sometimes signifieth that oblique act which we call sin; and those who interpret the former grieve or vex, thus understand the word translated sin, supplying some such words as these, *Let him mourn for his sin* . Why doth he mourn for his afflictions and plagues? let him rather spend his tears upon his sins. But the word also signifies the *guilt of sin* , or obligation to death, which it layeth men under: *Sin lieth at the door* , Gen_4:7; so also Gen_20:9; and also any punishment brought upon men for sin, Gen_4:13, where we translate it punishment. This sense our translators follow. The prophet then, in the person of the Jews, checks himself in his complaints for their punishments from the consideration, that nothing had befallen them but what was the just reward of their sins.

Lamentations 3:40

Seeing God doth not grieve us willingly, nor delight to crush us, though we be his prisoners, and seeing the hand of God is in these things upon us, and that justly, to recompense our iniquities into our bosoms, instead of mourning and fretting against God, which is not reasonable, nor will be of any profit to us, let us examine our thoughts, words, and actions, and consider what they have been, and reform, and turn again to the Lord, by apostatizing from whom we have brought these evils upon us.

Lamentations 3:41

Let us apply ourselves unto God by prayer, often expressed under this notion in Scripture from that gesture ordinarily used in prayer; and let us not do it in hypocrisy, but joining our hearts with our hands, praying seriously and fervently.

Lamentations 3:42

The prophet doth not dictate words, but sense to them, teaching them the matter of their prayer; first, by way of confession. Sin is called a *transgression*, because it is going aside from the way of God's precepts; it is called *rebellion*, because it is an act contrary to that allegiance and duty which we owe unto God, and the covenant we have made with him. By *pardoning* here is meant the discharge of the guilty persons from the temporal punishment due for sin (as it is often taken in Scripture); so it signifies, thou hast plagued us according to the just desert of our sins.

Lamentations 3:43

Thou hast covered with anger; either thou hast covered thyself with anger, or covered thy own face with anger, so as not to look upon us to move thy pity; or (which is more probably the sense) thou hast covered, that is, *overwhelmed*, us with thy wrath. Thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied; thou hast pursued us to a fatal ruin, without showing us any pity.

Lamentations 3:44

God had covered them with wrath, overwhelming them with afflictions. so as they had no way to escape; and whereas in this distress they had nothing else to do but only to apply themselves to God, he had hid his face from them, so as they could get no comfortable sight of him; he was as one covered with a cloud, that

could not be discerned through that opacous body. What is meant by this cloud, whether his fixed resolution to punish them, or his fresh remembrance of their sins, or his just will to be revenged on them, seems too curiously inquired. The phrase is a metaphor, and signifies no more than that God would not hear their prayers in their distress.

Lamentations 3:45

That is, thou hast made us to all nations extremely contemptible, so as they value us no more than the sweepings of their houses, or the most vile, refuse, and contemptible things imaginable.

Lamentations 3:46

That is, to mock, scoff, and reproach us.

Lamentations 3:47

All manner of misery was come upon them. They were seized first with fears and terrors; going to escape these they fell into a snare, or (as it is in the Hebrew) into a pit, out of which they could not get; they were wasted, made desolate, and destroyed.

Lamentations 3:48

No text from Poole on this verse.

Lamentations 3:49

The prophet was deeply affected upon the prospect of this evil before it came, Jer_9:1, and was now much more affected when he saw the judgment was come; he wept plentifully and constantly, as for their sins which had brought these judgments upon them, so for the judgments themselves, as indications of God's displeasure and wrath against them for their transgressions.

Lamentations 3:50

That is, until the Lord show me some favour. See the notes on Lam_1:9.

Lamentations 3:51

The eye and the ear are those organs of the body, by which the soul exerciseth its senses to bring in all objects, whether pleasant or sad, to the understanding to judge of them, according to the judgment of which upon them it is affected with joy or sorrow, desire or aversation, &c.; and the eye is the chiefest of these, because its evidence is more certain, and less subject to deceit.

The prophet and most of the Jews were eye-witnesses to the evils which had befallen the Jews, and which at present were upon them; so as their hearts were the more affected. The word translated

affect is by some noted to signify to *waste* and *consume* , which are the effects of a deep affecting the heart with sad and miserable objects. *Because of all the daughters of my city* : our margin tells us that it may be also read *more than all the daughters of my city* ; according to which the sense is, that he was more affected with the state of Jerusalem than the tenderest woman that had lived in it: but it is as well, if not better, in this place rendered causally, showing the reason of his deep affliction, viz. all those miseries he had seen fall upon all the Jewish nation, or upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Lamentations 3:52

As boys beat a bird from bush to bush, suffering it to rest no where, so mine enemies, to whom I gave no cause, pursued me.

Lamentations 3:53

Dungeon seemeth not to be here taken literally, for the lowest and nastiest place in prisons, which probably was the portion but of a few of the Jews; but metaphorically, for the lowest and saddest condition of misery. Their enemies had brought them into the deepest miseries, to the cutting off of their lives; and as men use to roll great stones upon the mouths of dens and pits, where they have shut up persons, to make them sure from escaping out, so their enemies had dealt with them, doing what lay in them to make their condition remediless and desperate.

Lamentations 3:54

Afflictions often in Scripture are called *waters* , Isa_28:17,**18**
59:19.

I am cut off; that is, I am utterly undone, there is no hope for me.

Lamentations 3:55

That is, out of my deepest affliction, as Jonah out of the

belly of hell, Jon_2:2. I cried unto God, and called upon him for mercy.

Lamentations 3:56

I in former great afflictions applied myself unto thee, and thou didst hear me; show me now the same favour. Our former experiences of God's goodness to us in hearing our prayers ought to hold up our hands in prayer, and beget a confidence in us that we, persisting in our duty, shall find God the same God, yesterday, this day, and for ever.

Lamentations 3:57

There was a time when I was in distress, and called upon thee, and thou didst draw near unto me. God is never far off from any of us, as to his essential presence; nor is it possible that he should, for he filleth all places. But he is said to be near us or far off from us, as he manifests, or doth not manifest, his goodness to us by acts of gracious providence: of that drawing near the text speaketh. God being infinite in goodness and mercy, is spoken of as absent from those persons and places where he is not showing mercy, and present only there where he showeth forth his goodness, and to be drawing nigh to them to whom he beginneth to show mercy.

Thou saidst, Fear not; thou didst encourage me formerly upon my prayer.

Lamentations 3:58

Thou hast been wont to take my part against my enemies, not like a lawyer by word of mouth, but actually and really pleading my cause. Thou hast redeemed my life; thou hast saved me from many a danger which looked fatally upon me.

Lamentations 3:59

Thou hast a perfect knowledge of men's perverse and unrighteous dealings with me at this time; do thou judge betwixt me and mine enemies, and deal with them according to what shall appear just to thee.

Lamentations 3:60

Thou hast been a witness to all their fury and rage, and all their malicious and bloody contrivances against me.

Lamentations 3:61

Whatever knowledge men get of things done from their eye or ear, thou hast from thy omniscency; thou knowest not only their malicious actions, but words and thoughts.

Lamentations 3:62

That is, thou hast observed and noted the motions or products of my enemies' lips, and their secret devices before they came out of their lips.

Lamentations 3:63

That is, at all times, when they sit down and rise up, I am their song. Though probably the words have a special reference to their sitting down at feasts, and at their merry meetings. I am all the subject of their discourse, they spend their time in mocking and scoffing at us, and at Jerusalem; we are they that make them sport.

Lamentations 3:64

These three last verses are all but the same general petition, though expressed in various phrases; the prophet had prayed, Lam_3:59, that God would judge his people's cause, here he prayeth that he would also judge his enemies, he only desireth justice against them, a recompence of the work of their hands.

Lamentations 3:65

The word translated

sorrow of heart is found no where else in holy writ, which makes a certain particular explication of it to be difficult, and hath given interpreters a strange liberty in translating it *shield, sorrow, and grief, obstinacy or hardness of heart, perplexity, abjection or breaking of heart*; the best guides we have to direct us in the sense of it are,

1. *The other things joined with it; persecution, destruction*, a recompence according to their works, so that some afflictive evil of a heavy nature is certainly signified by it.

2. *The analogy of faith*, which restraineth us from wishing or praying for spiritual or eternal evils against our worst enemies; it therefore probably signifies such perplexity and breakings of mind as commonly attend a state of great affliction.

Lamentations 3:66

Bring them to a temporal ruin and destruction. How far such petitions are lawful we have before showed, in our notes on Psa_69:22-24, &c.; Psa_119:6-10, &c.; Jer_11:20 **15:15**: see also Lam_1:22. It is hard to interpret all passages of this nature which we meet with as prophecies, though some of them are so, and others may be both prophecies and prayers.

Lamentations 4:1 LAMENTATIONS CHAPTER 4

Zion bewaileth her misery, confesseth her sins, Lam_4:1-6. Miseries of the chief ones; women who killed and dressed their own children, Lam_4:7-12. The sin of the false prophets and priests; their vain hope, Lam_4:13-19. Their king taken prisoner, Lam_4:20. Edom is threatened, and Zion comforted, Lam_4:21,**22**.

Though some take

gold here metaphorically, as signifying the most precious things, yet the most and best interpreters take it in its native sense, for the gold which adorned the temple either in its ceiling or in its vessels; the house of the Lord being burnt by Nebuzar-adan, Jer_52:13, the gold in and about the temple must needs be discoloured.

How! is here a note of admiration.

Are poured out in the top of every street; that is, are tumbled down and scattered in the head of every street about the city.

Lamentations 4:2

Either the nobles and great men, or the priests, or the good men amongst the Jews, that for their intrinsic worth and value may be compared to gold, are looked upon no better than earthen vessels, the workmanship of an ordinary potter. God carrying Jeremiah down to the potter's house, Jer_18:2 **19:1**, had taught them that they were no more in his hand; he now proveth it by his providence, they were indeed made so, and as miserably and irreparably broken in pieces.

Lamentations 4:3

The learned author of our English Annotations well observeth, that whatever creature is here intended by the word translated sea-monsters, yet our translation is not proper, the text speaking of creatures of God's making, monsters properly signifying such as have something beyond their natural bulk and proportion. What creatures are signified by the Hebrew term, whether sea-calves, or dragons, or serpents, or whales, is very hard to say, the Hebrew word signifying some creatures, occurring so rarely as it is not easy to determine the species, from the word used to express it. He certainly speaks of some brute beasts, and those that are most savage. He saith there are none such but by a natural instinct feed and nourish their young ones; but the Jewish women were become cruel to their children, either forced to appear so, having through the famine no milk to give them, nor any thing to relieve them, or were indeed so, killing them to make food for themselves, as Lam_2:20.

Like the ostriches in the wilderness; like *ostriches* , that lay their eggs and leave them in the sand, and are hardened against their young ones, as Job_39:14-16. Some think a kind of *owls* are intended, which for want of meat eat up their young ones, as the Jewish women now did. See Lam_4:10.

Lamentations 4:4

As the fatness of the mother's milk makes it instead of bread and flesh to the sucking child, so the moisture of it makes it to be as drink to allay its heat; the children wanting this moisture, their mouths were hot and dry. It was a time of famine; the little children, understanding not-the case of the city, were importunate for something to eat, but none had enough for himself, much less for others. See Lam_2:12,13.

Lamentations 4:5

This judgment reached not only to the common people, but to persons of the highest rank and order, whose misery was now so much the greater, because so contrary to their former splendid state and way of living. They were wont to fare deliciously; now they wanted bread to eat, and were desolate in the streets. They were wont to eat upon scarlet carpets, or to lodge upon scarlet

beds and conches; now they searched for their meat upon, or were glad to lie upon, dunghills.

Lamentations 4:6

The word translated

punishment signifies also *iniquity*, as was said in the notes on Lam_3:39. The sins of the Jews are compared to the sins of Sodom, Isa_3:9 Eze_16:46,**48,49**; hence their rulers are called *rulers of Sodom*, Isa_1:10; either their sins were specifically the same (as they were) as to many sins, Eze_16:49, or they were of an equal magnitude and provocative nature. The prophet here complains that they were punished like Sodom, Amo_4:11; yea, and their punishment was greater, because more lingering and gradual, whereas Sodom was overthrown in a moment, and that by no human hands that abode upon her, causing her a continued torment, as there did upon the Jews. David said, It is better to fall into the immediate hand of God than into the hands of men.

Lamentations 4:7

By

Nazarites in this place the most and best interpreters do not understand persons who were of the religious order of Nazarites, the laws of which order are to be read **Num 6**, and of whom we read Amo_2:11,**12**, for here is a beauty described (under several metaphors) which could never agree to them; but persons that were nobly and ingenuously bred; the word *Nezer* signifying a crown, or ensign of honour, 2Sa_1:10 2Ki_11:12. The name Nazarite was given to persons splendid for their breeding and education, or honour and dignity; it is given to Joseph, Gen_49:26, we translate it *separate from his brethren*, Deu_33:16; so Nah_3:17. *Her Nazarites* in this place signifieth her separated ones, who either in respect of birth, education, estate, places of magistracy, or the like, were distinguished from the rest of the people. He expresseth their former splendid estate by the metaphors of snow, milk, rubies, and sapphires.

Lamentations 4:8

They that in the prosperity of the city were fair, plump, and ruddy, look now black for want of fit nourishment, and through sorrow and grief; insomuch that those who before knew them by their

countenances, garbs, and habits, did not now know them. And by reason of the famine (for he speaketh with relation to the famine during the siege) they are almost starved, their skin is withered and hard, and even sticketh to their bones.

Lamentations 4:9

During the siege many were killed by the enemies' sword, many more perished by famine; the prophet saith the condition of those who perished by the sword was much better than the condition of those who perished by famine, because they had a quicker death, and were sooner despatched and put out of their pain; whereas they who perished by hunger died a miserable, lingering death, gradually pining away, because they wanted corn and herbs, the fruits of the field, to uphold their souls in life.

Lamentations 4:10

This was according to what God had threatened in case of disobedience, Deu_28:57, and a thing which hath often happened in sieges, 2Ki_6:29. Such things did happen in the last destruction of Jerusalem, as we read in Josephus; and though we read of no such thing happening in the siege of it by Nebuchadnezzar, yet that there were some such sad instances appears from this text.

Lamentations 4:11

An unusual fire, which burns up not only the roof and superstructure, but the foundations, leaving no bottom for hopes of being restored. See Deu_32:22.

Lamentations 4:12

Jerusalem was so naturally and artificially fortified, and so favoured by God, and taken notice of as a place which the Lord cared for, and watched over, that it could not have entered into the thoughts of any of those that were enemies to it, that they should ever have been able to make themselves masters of it.

Lamentations 4:13

Not for their sins alone who were the *false prophets* and Baal's *priests*, but for their sins in an eminent degree; they were the ringleaders, either encouraging the people to the wickednesses they committed, or not restraining them, and denouncing the wrath of God against them. So though they were the corrupt magistrates that had shed the innocent blood, yet the priests and

prophets became guilty of it, either encouraging the magistrates to it, or soothing them up in their bloody courses, or by burning the children that were burnt in the valley of Hinnom. The ecclesiastical men were a great cause of the first and last destruction of Jerusalem, and so they are of most other places that come to ruin, through their neglect of their duty, or encouraging others in their wicked courses; which both showeth us how great a blessing to a people a godly, conscientious ministry is, and how great a plague and curse a ministry is which is otherwise. See Jer_5:31 **23:21**.

Lamentations 4:14

A variety of interpreters hath made this text much more difficult than it is. Certainly nothing can appear more reasonable than to interpret the pronoun in the front of the verse relatively, and to fetch the antecedent from the former verse. They, that is, the prophets and the priests, wandered up and down the streets like blind men, being spiritually blind, polluting themselves with blood, either the blood of the children which they slew, or the just men mentioned Lam_4:13, the slaughter of whom they either encouraged, or at least did not discourage; so as one could not touch a prophet or a priest but he must be legally polluted, and there were so many of them, that men could not walk in the streets but that he must touch some of them. Some thinking the discourse of the priests done with interpret they of the blind men in the city who could not walk up and down the streets without touching the bodies of some that were slain. Others interpret the words of the common people, who, during the siege, could no more avoid touching bodies slain, and so polluting themselves with blood, than blind men could; so as they abhorred to touch their own garments. The first sense to me seemeth most natural and easy.

Lamentations 4:15

The various application of the pronoun *they* by interpreters makes them aa much divided in the sense of this as of the former verse. Either the Jews that made conscience of keeping to the law against *touching dead bodies* cried to the other Jews to leave the city as themselves did, the city being now so full of dead bodies that they could not stay in it without polluting themselves; or the priests called to them to that purpose; or their enemies spake in that

language to them. For their enemies had resolved they should not stay in Jerusalem.

Lamentations 4:16

These words seem to be the language of their enemies triumphing over them, as discerning that their God was provoked against them, and would have no more regard or respect unto them; and that they had misused his prophets, which agreeth with 2Ch_36:16. But others rather think these latter words (if not the former also) are the prophet's words, expressive of the cause of their miseries, viz. the Lord's anger, who had divided them, &c., and the effect of it, their enemies having no regard to the most grave and venerable persons amongst them.

Lamentations 4:17

That is, in expectation of the Egyptians, whom they waited for to raise the siege; it was a long time before they came, and When they did come, they could do them no service at all, Jer_37:5,7,8.

Lamentations 4:18

The Chaldeans employed in the siege are so close upon us, that we cannot stir a foot about our businesses, nor look out at our doors, nor walk safely in the streets; we are ruined, there is an end of our civil state; our period is come, and the time of our prosperity is elapsed.

Lamentations 4:19

Our enemies who pursued us to destroy us were very swift in their pursuit of us, (*As swift as an eagle* , was a proverbial expression,) we could no where be safe: if we sought refuge in the mountains, they followed us thither; if we fled from them into the wilderness, they laid wait for us there.

Lamentations 4:20

That he calls some prince here *the breath of their nostrils* , that is, their life, Gen_2:7, is out of doubt; and though some of the Jews would have it understood of Josiah, yet whoso considereth that he was not taken, but slain, and that not by the Chaldeans, but by the Egyptians twenty-three years before the city was taken, will see reason to conclude that he meaneth Zedekiah, who though a bad man, yet was a king, and of David's line, and afforded some protection to the Jews. We promised ourselves that though the

land of Judah was encompassed with pagan nations, yet through Zedekiah's valour and good conduct in government we should live comfortably, he being a covering and refreshing to us; but, saith the prophet, he also is fallen into the enemies' hands.

Lamentations 4:21

The Edomites were descended from Esau the elder brother of Jacob, and dwelled in a part of Arabia that obtained the name of Uz, probably from Uz the son of Dishan, who descended from Seir, Gen_36:20,28: they, out of their old hatred to the Jews, rejoiced at their ruin, as we learn from the prophecy of Obadiah, who upon this account was sent to prophesy against them: the prophet here ironically saith,

Rejoice, in the same sense as, Ecc_11:9, Solomon bids the young man *rejoice* . But their joy should be but for a little time, for God was dealing out the cup of his fury to more than the Jewish nation, and amongst others to the Edomites; and they should be filled. and intoxicated with it, and make themselves naked, as drunken men sometimes do in their debauches.

Lamentations 4:22

O Judea, thy punishment is past, but the punishment of Edom is yet to come. The Jews were to abide many years in captivity, but they were now suffering their last punishment from the Chaldeans, they were only for some years to continue in that state of captives.

He will no more carry thee into captivity; after thy term of captivity shall be expired, thou shalt not for thy old sins suffer any more punishment. Not that their present captivity should be all their punishment in case they went on in sinful courses, as they did in rejecting Christ, and causing him to be crucified; for those new wickednesses after many years they were destroyed by the Romans; but the prophet hints that there should at present, or for their past sins, no more wrath be poured out upon them, nor would God ever detain them in this captivity. But for the Edomites, their punishment was yet wholly to come, God was yet beginning to punish them, and would do it, discovering their sins. As the pardon of sin is in Scripture set out under the notion of covering it, Psa_32:1, so the punishment of sin may be expressed by

discovering it, Job_20:27; but the learned author of the English Annotations conceiveth the Hebrew may be better read, *he will discover thee for thy sins*, because of the particle *lu* set before thy sins (though our translation taketh no notice of it). *He will discover upon thy sins*; and so it answereth Jer_49:10, (as he conceiveth,) *I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself*.

Lamentations 5:1 LAMENTATIONS CHAPTER 5

A humble prayer, presenting to the Lord their great misery, Lam_5:1-15, confessing their sins, Lam_5:16-18, imploring deliverance, Lam_5:19-22.

It hath been before observed, that it is very frequent in Scripture to express those acts which are reasonably consequent to the exercise of our exterior or interior senses, by terms which signify the exercise of those senses. That which the prophet here prayeth for is God's freeing the Jews from those calamities which oppressed them; this he prayeth for under the notion of God's remembering them, and beholding their reproach.

Lamentations 5:2

What our fathers inherited as given them by thee, and we as left to us by them, is come into the hands of the Chaldeans.

Lamentations 5:3

We are all of us without a king, (who is the common father of the country,) we are deprived of thy fatherly care and protection, many young children amongst us are left without an earthly parent.

Our mothers are as widows; either our great cities are like widows, wanting magistrates; or, our women that were married are left widows.

Lamentations 5:4

This seemeth to refer to the state of the Jews in Babylon, where it is probable their adversaries made them buy both water and wood, which in the land of Canaan they had plentifully, and without any further charge to them than fetching the one, and cutting down and bringing home the other.

Lamentations 5:5

As the generality of prisoners of war are made slaves, and put to hard and incessant labour, so in probability the most of the Jews were at first at least.

Lamentations 5:6

The ten tribes were all carried captives into Assyria, many of the kingdom of Judah, as we have heard, fled into Egypt after the taking of Jerusalem.

Giving the hand may either signify working with their hands, and labouring for them; or yielding up themselves to their power, or lifting up the hands as supplicants to them, or striking hands and making covenants with them, or lending them their hand, to help them, and all to get any thing to live upon.

Lamentations 5:7

We must not understand this in the same sense as Eze_18:2, where God reflecteth upon them for using a proverb to this sense. It is the prophet who here speaketh, and in the name of the godly Jews, who would not excuse themselves as if they suffered merely for their forefathers' sins. But the prophet confesseth and bewaileth that God had punished their iniquities and the iniquities of their forefathers together; and it was better with their forefathers who had sinned, and were dead and gone, than with them, upon whom the punishment of their iniquity did abide, and was like so to do a long time.

Lamentations 5:8

Either those who sometimes were our servants, tributary to us, or the posterity of Ham, condemned of old to be servants to our forefather Shem, Gen_9:26; or the servants of those masters whom we serve in Babylon: and none will help us and give us more liberty.

Lamentations 5:9

The enemies lay encamped in all the plains, so as they could stir out no way but the sword of the Chaldeans was upon them, and what victuals they got they adventured their lives for, during the time of the siege.

Lamentations 5:10

The want of bread caused leanness, and paleness, and ill colours in their faces.

Lamentations 5:11

Usual outrages of barbarous soldiers. The Hebrew is, They *humbled* , a modest term to express these actions by.

Lamentations 5:12

Most probably by the enemies' hands, though some would have it by their hands, intimating a more sharp and lingering death. Hanging was an ancient way in the Eastern countries of putting malefactors to death, Gen_40:19.

Lamentations 5:13

Their base, servile condition is expressed by the labour they were put to, which was either grinding in the mill, (an ordinary employment of slaves in those countries,) or carrying millstones; and the younger children in carrying great burdens of wood, under which they fell, as being not able to stand under the burdens laid upon them.

Lamentations 5:14

Our grave men were wont to sit and execute judgment in the gates, but now there is no such thing. Our young men were wont to play on music, and to have their merry meetings, but they are also ceased.

Lamentations 5:15

Either our rejoicing at our solemn festivals, and dancings there, which were usual, as appeareth from many scriptures; or all our joy and dancings, as well at other times as in our solemn festivals.

Lamentations 5:16

Or, The crown of our head is fallen , by which is not only to be understood the cessation of their kingdom, but all their honour, splendour, and dignity (crown being taken in a metaphorical notion).

Woe unto us, that we have sinned! we must thank ourselves for all this, this woe is come upon us because of our sins

Lamentations 5:17

Either for our sins these miseries are befallen us; or for these miseries our spirits fail us, and we are almost blinded with weeping.

Lamentations 5:18

Foxes and other wild beasts, which flee from places inhabited for fear of men inhabiting, and are much in desolate places. The mountain of Zion, where the temple once stood, and people met to worship God, was now a desolate, unfrequented place, so as will beasts ran up and down there.

Lamentations 5:19

That is, Lord, though for our sins thou sufferest these things to be done unto us, and our throne be through thy righteous providence thrown down, and thy throne in thy sanctuary amongst us be thrown down; yet thou art still the same God, thy power is not diminished, nor thy goodness abated. Thou rulest the world, and shalt rule it for ever and for ever.

Lamentations 5:20

Wherefore dost thou, in the dispensations of thy providence, carry thyself as if thou hadst forgotten us, and forsaken us, and that for a long time.

Lamentations 5:21

See the like expression Jer_31:18. Turn thou us unto thee by giving us repentance, and then our condition will be altered; or receive us into thy favour, and then it shall be well with us. *Renew our days as of old* ; restore us to our former estate, that it may be with us as it hath formerly been.

Lamentations 5:22

Our translators have here so rendered the particule yk that the words seem to express some diffidence in the prophet of God's mercy in restoring the people to their former state, some expressions of which nature we find falling from the most eminent servants of God in an hour of great temptation; but where such a sense is not necessary, it is hard to put it upon a text. Some therefore expound Ma yb in this place by *But if* . Others translate them, *Although thou hast* , &c. Mr. Calvin preferreth the translation of them by *Nisi, Unless thou hast utterly rejected us* ,

and thinks that by this expression the prophet confirmeth himself against temptations of diffidence, because it was impossible God should utterly cast off his people, Rom_11:2. Others read it interrogatively, *Hast thou utterly rejected us ?* which doth not suppose that the prophet believed he had, though his present providence showed him very angry with them.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL

THE ARGUMENT

EZEKIEL was by descent a priest, and by commission a prophet, and received it from heaven, as will appear from the first, second, and third chapters. He was, and had been, a captive in Babylon five years when first called to this office, and there he met with many things that were occasions of grief to himself, and occasion of this prophecy. For in Babylon there were many that did repine at their state, repented they had rendered themselves, called into question the truth and integrity of Jeremiah and himself, and were ready to do violence to him; and not only thus, but they continued so to sin, that the name of God was blasphemed because of them: and these things both grieved and weakened the hearts of the best, and hardened the worst. To redress these is Ezekiel both extraordinarily called, commissioned, qualified, and assisted in the prophetic office, in discharge of which he doth reprove and calm the discontented, that they might return to a right frame of patience and hope. He calls the profane and wicked to acknowledge God's just and equal, and their own unequal, ways. He directeth the honest-hearted, who inquire that they might do their duties. He encourages that handful of godly ones among them with many comfortable promises of good in their own land, and of more grace from heaven; and confirmeth what Jeremiah had preached, advised. and foretold in Jerusalem, exactly harmonizing with him, though the one at Babylon, the other at Jerusalem, destitute of all means of conferring with each other. In all these particulars he is sometimes very plain, sometimes speaks in riddles, in which kind he is more frequent than any other of the prophets, in them all deep and mysterious; to the quarrelling and froward these are dark, but to the humble and teachable more significant and clear. In his first three chapters he opens his commission. In the next one and twenty chapters he doth sharply preach against the sins of the Jews; which they dislike, and grow weary of, and violent against the preacher, who for some time is ordered to forbear, and leave them to that severe sermon which the king of Babylon's army should preach to them in the destruction of country, city, and temple, which should open the

eyes of some, and wound the heart of all the Jews. So the prophet doth by order from the Lord preach against the heathen round about, through the 25th chapter and on to the end of the 32nd chapter; after which he is sent to preach repentance and pardon, with grace and favour, to Israel, to proclaim the Messiah's kingdom, and to assure them of the wonderful overthrow of their enemies, the rebuilding the city and temple in greatness beyond whatever it was, upon condition they become a reformed people, ashamed for former sins, loathe themselves, and love the Lord their God, and keep his ordinances; which they did not after their return, as is evident from the complaints, menaces, and reproofs which do every where sound in the mouths of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who lived after the joyful return from captivity, and saw the sinful deportment of these returned captives. Much of the prophet's discourses in the 33rd, 34th, 36th, and so on to the end, are typical and mysterious, and refer to the return, as to the emblem of our spiritual deliverance out of spiritual captivity.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 1

The time of Ezekiel's prophecy by the river Chebar, **#Eze 1:1-3**. His vision of four cherubims, and four wheels, **#Eze 1:4-25**, and of the glory of God above them, **#Eze 1:26-28**.

Ver. 1.

Now: this does not refer to any particular time before mentioned, though sometimes this English particle *now* connotes particular time, (the Hebrew is *and*, so the Greek and Latin,) but is a phrase in use on entering upon discourse.

It came to pass in the thirtieth year, of the prophet's age, or from the finding the book of the law in the eighteenth year of Josiah, when the threats were read which now were executed on the Jews, according to **#2Ki 22:16**, from which date to the fifth year of the captivity are thirty years; or in the thirtieth year of the Chaldean monarchy, founded by Nabopollassar. Other accounts omitted, you are left to your own thoughts which of these two latter are more probable; both have very weighty authority for them; and indeed they both concur and meet in the fifth year of the captivity, and so either computation may without mistake be followed.

In the fourth month; the original hath only *in the fourth*, concisely, but it is certainly the month, but whether in account from Marchesvan, October with us, to Shebat, January, or from Nisan, March, unto Tamuz, July, is more questionable; the latter I guess to be the rightest account; so from Nisan, which is part of our March and April, to Tamuz, part of our June and July, will be the fourth month; and this account in church things best suits the prophet's design.

In the fifth day of the month; it was the third day of our July, probably it was the sabbath day, when the Jews would be free from labour, and at leisure to hear the prophet; and indeed such declarations of the will of God are an entertainment suitable to the consecration of the seventh day to God.

As I was among the captives; Heb. *and I*, &c. Though a priest and prophet, the first by birth and lineal descent, the other by extraordinary commission, yet I also found as little respect as my countrymen.

Among the captives; in the midst of the captivity, so the Hebrew idiom; perhaps the prophet rather useth the abstract itself than the concrete, to express the grievousness of it: they were captive, nay, captivity rather, under extreme bondage; as darkness for dark.

By the river; either there commanded to dwell, or thither retiring, that more freely they might lament their own sins, and Jerusalem's desolation: or what if it were to keep, as they might, their sabbath, in which the spiteful Babylonians interrupt them, and with scorn require them to sing a temple song, #Ps 137:3.

Chebar; a branch of Euphrates, or that part which Chobar advised should be made to divert the violence of Euphrates, lest it damnify the city Babylon. Or rather a river now called Giulap, arising out of the mountain Masius, and falls into Euphrates, somewhat below a city called by the same name, Giulap or Chaboras; as Ferrarius and Hotoman observe.

The heavens were opened; the firmament or lower parts of the celestial arch either really did, or to appearance seemed to divide, and the contiguous parts withdrew as a curtain, to give the prophet the view of what was within; or as folding doors set open that he might look into that apartment where this unusual sight was prepared.

Were opened; expressed thus in the passive to let us see that there was a supreme, sovereign, and Divine power and authority by which this was done; it is not said the heavens did open, but they were opened. It was no meteor, chasm, or yawning, which is naturally a figured semblance of a breach in the visible heavens, whence appears a gulf or deep and wide pit to the eye. It was not thus, but a supernatural and extraordinary aperture or opening, wrought by the immediate power of God, who was now appearing to the prophet, and commissioning him. It might probably be somewhat like that which appeared to the proto-martyr Stephen, **#Ac 7:56**.

I saw; I had a distinct, full, and clear sight of what appeared, I was awake and with my eyes discerned what I shall now write, the things I am about to publish, how stupendous soever they are, what I am sure I saw, and am as sure they will be accomplished.

Visions; in the plural, either because they were many distinct visions, or because it was made of many distinct parts, each part might seem to be one vision.

Of God; excellent and wonderful. So by the name of God the Hebrew expresses any excellency, as, cedars of God, man of God. Or,

of God, wherein I saw God, who appeared to the prophet; or else, **of God,** i.e. which God did make me to see. It was not a dream of man's brain, it was a Divine vision, either corporeal or intellectual.

Ver. 2.

In the fifth day; the Hebrew hath only *fifth*, according to its concise style; we do well to supply *day*, as in **#Eze 1:1**.

Of the month Tamuz, as **#Eze 1:1**, answering to our June and July.

Which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity: this account observed will guide us in computing the times this prophet referred to, **#Eze 1:1**, these five of Jehoiachin, and the eleven of his predecessor, added to fourteen of Josiah's reign after he found the law, make up thirty years, **#Eze 1:1**, which likely might be the jubilee, the most fit for so solemn a passover as Josiah kept.

Jehoiachin, who is also called Jeconiah, and Coniah, whose father Jehoiakim was slain by the Chaldeans, and he, after three months' short reign, voluntarily yielded up himself to the Chaldees; of which rendition of himself and his we read **#2Ki 24:12**, &c. Though this man yielded up himself, yet the Babylonians made him prisoner, and carried him and his into captivity; and so the Hebrew, *avers*; though some distinguish this from captivity by calling it a transmigration, the Hebrew calls it **captivity**.

Ver. 3.

What was

visions, **#Eze 1:1**, is here

the word, both as signifying and declaring the mind of God, what he would do, and as containing his commands to Ezekiel and to the people, to whom these visions spake by signs.

The word of the Lord: lest the prophet should want his warrant, or the Jews except to his advice, it is plainly told them that Jehovah the sovereign Lord and eternal God, by Ezekiel, counsels, warns, commands, and threatens.

Came expressly unto; emphatically translated as it is emphatically expressed in the Hebrew,

being with him,

it was with him; so long he might discern, so clear he might understand, so near he could not be deceived, or easily forget what he was to tell them.

Ezekiel signifies either, the strength of God, or, strengthened by God, and in a few syllables contains what is more largely set forth, **#Eze 3:8,9**. He speaks of himself in the third person.

The priest; who therefore should be regarded as one whose interest among the priests at Jerusalem would be best promoted if better things might be hoped and shortly expected than he must now tell them; it was likely he dealt truly with them, when he must share so much in the sad things foretold. He was of the priests originally, he was a prophet by extraordinary call.

The son of Buzi; of a contemned man, so the etymology of the Hebrew, which gave the rabbins occasion to apply it to Jeremiah, and to account the prophet either son or servant to Jeremiah; but it is a proper name.

In the land of the Chaldeans, enemies to, and now masters of, poor captive Jews, the church of God: there God makes him a prophet, who was an ordinary priest in the land of Israel.

The river Chebar, though a river of Mesopotamia, yet here seems placed in Chaldea, because Mesopotamia was part of the kingdom of the Chaldeans; so Chebar or Chobar was in the land, i.e. within the kingdom, of Chaldea, but particularly in Mesopotamia, a province of that kingdom.

The hand of the Lord; the Divine impulse moving with power and efficacy on Ezekiel for the work, and clearly confirming and demonstrating to the captive Jews that he was the prophet of the Lord, and spake to them in his name; the Spirit of prophecy, as the Chaldee Paraphrase.

Was upon him there: God is not confined; though most prophets were in the land of Israel, yet here in Chaldea also appears a great prophet, and should be hearkened unto.

Ver. 4.

I looked; I did very diligently survey the things that were represented to me in the vision. *Behold*: this calls us to consider what he had seen and represented to us.

A whirlwind; a mighty, stormy, and turbulent wind, a wind that bears away or bears down all before it; this denotes the indignation and judgments of God, a quick, impetuous, and irresistible vengeance. Most grievous judgments, represented as here, so **#1Ki 19:11 Job 38:1 Ps 104:4**.

Came; came as if it knew its way, and, notwithstanding its impetuosity and irregularities, yet held its direct course.

Out of the north; from Babylon, which in Scripture geography is laid northward from Judea, and the prophet, though now in Babylon, does speak of the Jews as if they were in Jerusalem; against which this cloud, on which an angry God did ride, hastening vengeance on them, which they should be as little able to divert or withstand as to stop the course of the clouds, or their breaking upon us: it was the army of the Chaldeans, made up of multitudes of people, (as the cloud is made by the concurrence of multitudes of exhalations and vapours,) **#Jer 4:13**.

A fire infolding itself; burning in a dreadful manner, very fierce, fed by fuel within itself, breaking out and flashing with terror, though it had seemed to rebate, and encircling all things near it,

and threatening to devour all. Such was the anger of God against this sinful nation.

And a brightness was about it; though thus terrible, yet round about it was not smoke and darkness, but a clear light or splendour. The majesty, holiness, justice of God appeared to the prophet, and might be seen by the suffering Jews, to humble them, that they might seek him.

Out of the midst thereof; either of the whirlwind or cloud, or the fire rather, as in the end of the verse.

As the colour; Heb. *as the eye*, the aspect, or appearance.

Amber; the Hebrew word is variously interpreted, and it is lost labour to search the rabbins here. Amber is either natural, which if in the fire loseth its brightness; or artificial, made of fine gold and fine brass mixed, which will brighten in the fire, and of equal value with gold, (as the DD. Bothart observes,) of which Josephus saith Solomon did make the sea of brass, and the sacred vessels; somewhat like the Corinthian brass, known now only by its name, exceeding splendid, and very hard, the one speaking the glorious majesty to be revered, the other speaking the invincible power of God to be feared; both advising this people and us to repent and amend, and return and meet him.

Out of the midst of the fire; which the prophet saw, and in which the Jews were to be melted or consumed.

Ver. 5.

Also out of the midst thereof; of the fire, or that amber which appeared, as having four wheels.

The likeness of four living creatures; these were not indeed living creatures. but the appearance of them, and signify with some the four monarchies; with others, the four chief leaders in the four quarters of the camp of Israel; with others, the four evangelists; with others, more likely, the holy angels, whose attendance bespeaks the majesty of God, and the terribleness of judgments to be executed on the Jews: and they are four, either to denote the sufficient number of them, or to show God would use the four chief of his angels, or perhaps to let the Jews know he had as many ways to punish, and as many officers of his wrath, as they could find corners of the world to flee unto. Or, since the appearance of a chariot in the midst of this vision is supposed, it

was fittest that four living creatures should answer to the wheels thereof.

And this was their appearance; the form in which these four each appeared to the first view, or at some distance.

They had the likeness of a man; the stature, the greater part of them appeared of human shape, for they had face, hands, and thighs, and the posture was erect in standing or motion, as man's is.

Ver. 6.

And every one of those four living creatures which appeared to the prophet had four faces: this hieroglyphic, though it seems to present us with a monstrous sight, yet does not unbecome the Divine Wisdom, nor doth it want like representations, as **#Eze 10:14 Re 4:6 5:6**: and speaks either the full fitness of angels to do God's commands in all things and occasions, or the perfection of their nature and obedience; or the universal dominion of God, and the universal subjection of the creatures.

Faces; some would have this not literally understood of that part of the body which is properly the face, though I see no cause for it; but as these living creatures had wings, so they had faces, and what those were the 10th verse does tell us.

And every one had four wings; if it were every face had four wings, each living creature would have sixteen wings, but it is every one of the living creatures had four wings. With two they did fly, noting the speed of their obedience; and with two they cover their body, denoting the reverence of their mind, and obedience.

Ver. 7.

Their feet; the Hebrew expresseth the parts below the belly by foot, their thighs, legs, and feet (as by hand is meant the whole arm) were of human shape.

Were straight feet; not bowed to this or that part, which argues weakness: here is most elegantly described the unconquered firmness wherewith angels do the commands of God; their readiness and their wisdom also in doing it, nothing low or brutish in their actions.

The sole of their feet, that which is properly the foot,

was like the sole of a calf's foot: divided hoof spike the cleanness of the creature. The ox, patient of labour, a beast for sacrifice to God, in these things angels, servants of God, well resembled: what if we should add a slowness in pace; blessed angels are not over-forward to executions, yet ever go when bid.

They sparkled; it may refer either to the living creatures or to their feet; it speaks either their anger against an obstinate, sinful people, or the terror of executing God's judgments, or the self-discovering light of his justice, or the zeal of angels in a speedy performing the will of God, in which their swiftness enkindles these sparks.

Ver. 8.

They; each of the four living creatures.

Had the hands: hands in every language, especially in the Oriental, imply power; and being the chief instruments of action, are here ascribed to these active instruments that execute the commands of God.

Of a man: this is added to denote the wisdom, dexterity, and vigilance wherewith they discharge their ministry.

Under their wings; their power and manner of exerting it is secret and invisible, and it is put forth as God pleaseth to move them.

On their four sides; on each side of the chariot one of these living creatures stood, and so on each side hands were ready to act as they were moved; and though it was to all parts of the world, yet were they most ready and prepared.

And they four had their faces and their wings; it is doubled to confirm the truth and certainty of the thing, and to intimate the greatness of their power, agility, and wisdom.

Ver. 9.

Their wings were joined one to another; the wings of the living creatures, when stretched out to fly, were joined together; so the wings of those two cherubims which went foremost, and the wings of the two hindermost, were joined together when they moved. It seems to refer to that **#Ex 25:20**. It signifies, however, the equal and uniform readiness of angels, their concord and union with constancy to do the will of God, and it shows us the exact harmony that is between the works of God. These wings, and their

being joined, is expressed, Heb. by the union of loving sisters with each other.

They turned not when they went; they lost no time in a difficult or tedious turning, as we see in other chariots, for which way soever they were to go, thither they had faces directed, and so readily moved forward on their way, whether east or west, north or south, and held on till they had finished their course, but then were ready for further action, and returned as quick to their station, where they might receive new commands, as lightning does; so this and that **#Eze 1:14**, there they did return, here they did not, are reconciled.

They went every one straight forward: this explains the former, and confirms it to us, assuring us that every one of those living creatures are ready, faithful, and unwearied in doing the pleasure of their Creator, in his government of the world. See **#Eze 1:12**.

Ver. 10.

Here the prophet doth more expressly set forth what was more darkly mentioned in the 6th verse, and describeth their faces both by the proper resemblances, and by their respect to the local differences of east and west, or right and left hand. But since such differences are in themselves of little moment, and undeterminable, unless we were certain what prospect these living creatures stood in, whether looking to the prophet, or to Jerusalem, or toward Babylon, we shall say no more of it; what these signify is more material. Each face is compared to what is most excellent in its kind, man excels in wisdom, the lion in strength, the ox in patience and constancy of labour, the eagle in speed and high flight. So in the ministry of angels, and government of the world by the providence of God, what is most excellent may be observed.

Ver. 11.

Thus were their faces: if you make a full point at faces, it should seem better joined with the former verse, and this text will be more easy, for it is somewhat harsh to speak of faces stretched as wings are; but if their faces as well as wings must be stretched upward, we must understand their faces looking upward to the great and glorious Governor of the world, who sat upon the throne above the firmament, which was over their heads, **#Eze**

1:22,23,25,26, admiring, and adoring, and waiting his pleasure to do it.

Their wings were stretched upward; were divided above, so each face appeared distinct above the shoulders, and there the wings, divided from each other, were united to the body of the living creature.

Two wings of every one were joined one to another; which stretching two upward joined them to the wings of that living creature which stood by its side, to testify their readiness, concord, and cheerfulness in their office.

And two covered their bodies; see **#Isa 6:2**; with twain they covered their feet, either in deep humility, and for decency, or because of infirmity of human nature, for whose relief they appear in what they do, but must not appear what they are, because they would be too glorious for our sight.

Ver. 12.

They went every one straightforward: see **#Eze 1:9**. Which way soever they went, each living creature had one face looking straight forwards, and their other faces looking toward other coasts of the world; if the fore right were to the south, the other faces looked one to the east, one to the west, and the other to the north. Thus with rectitude, constancy, wisdom, and universal care Providence rules and guides affairs of the world, and especially of the church, to the glory of God.

Whither the spirit was to go; the wind moved, say some; but if there were a gale of wind, which blowing gently on these living creatures stirred them in the sight of the prophet, it was emblematical, and represented to his view the power and influence of the Spirit of God, which moved and acted these admirable creatures. The will, command, and breathing of the Spirit of God both gave and guided their motions to ends he himself designed. Going is attributed here to the Spirit of God by allusion, and not properly, for who is ever in every place cannot properly be said to go from or to any place.

They went; the living creatures readily observed the impressions of the Spirit of God, and obeyed.

They turned not when they went: see #Eze 1:9. They looked not back as unwilling, they turned not out of the way as froward, they gave not over till they had completed their course.

Ver. 13.

He further describeth what he had more briefly spoken of #Eze 1:6. There you had their shape and make, here you have their colour.

The likeness; in which they were seen by the prophet.

Their appearance was like burning coals of fire; their aspect was of a fiery colour, to affright and alarm secure sinners. That God who had hitherto appeared most patient and long-suffering, now makes discoveries of himself in dreadful displeasure, which would burn, as #Nu 11:1-3, or #Isa 10:17, or #Jer 4:4; that would consume their glory, and there be none to quench it, #Jer 7:20 21:12. God doth by his prophet here forewarn them of very great miseries coming on them, wrath as fire, as coals, and burning, every word adding weight to the phrase. It notes also the zeal and fervent affection of these living creatures doing the will of God.

And like the appearance of lamps: it was not a furious and unbounded fire, it was as that which burneth in the lamp, limited, it should not devour but the wicked. Or it may note the care and wisdom wherewith these executions should be made, as if all were done in the light of lamps, as in dark places we take candles to light us in our work. Or it may intimate the hope for the good among the Jews, as lamps doth, #Isa 62:1, and destruction of enemies, as #Zec 12:6. Or if it may be interpreted by #Da 10:6, where the lamp that burneth expresseth the Divine wisdom and love, and possibly the knowledge and love of Christ, as #Re 1:15, it will well suit with the whole vision, and with what next follows.

It went up and down; this fire, or the burning lamp or both, went up and down, stood not still, nor was carried, but, as the Hebrew,

made itself walk up and down. It moved itself, which is too much to ascribe to creatures; God only is an unmoved mover: so it will lead our thoughts to God, who moved all these living creatures.

This fire was bright; it was not the dark and sooty fire of malice and hell. It shined, as always God's zeal for his own glory, and as

angels' zeal for the glory of their God, doth. Or it was so bright as to discover itself in more than ordinary glory.

Out of the fire went forth lightning; with this God gave the law, #Ex 19:16; contends with enemies, #2Sa 22:15 Zec 9:14. These lightnings, as they are terrible to sinners, and strike an awe upon saints; so they tell both that there is more than ordinary of God to be looked to in them. His judgments as lightning call upon us to fear, seek, and shelter ourselves with God.

Ver. 14.

The living creatures; angels, ministers of the Divine pleasure, as above, #Eze 1:5.

Ran; were speedy in their motions; this signified by this expression figuratively applied to angels.

Returned; yet, #Eze 1:9,12, it is said they returned not, where this seeming contradiction is reconciled; the 9th and 12th verse deny their turning aside from their work, this 14th affirms they returned, i.e. when they had done their work.

As the appearance of a flash of lightning; very quick, with vehemency, splendour, and irresistible efficacy.

Ver. 15.

Now; or, *and*; it is a transition from the former to the latter part of the vision.

I beheld; considered and observed.

Behold; it calls for our attention.

One wheel; or a certain wheel of spherical form, as some; of a circular form, as the wheels of chariots, say others. It is one wheel, intimating that all the different causes and motions, how many soever in themselves, yet work the same work, and are governed as easily in their various motions, as one single wheel might be, and that God doth so govern them.

Upon the earth; not that we tread on, but that which in this vision was represented to the prophet; for it was here as it is in landscapes or pictures drawn, there is that which represents the earth, on which trees, men, or chariots seem to be upon. By the living creatures; by each of these living creatures stood one wheel, so that they were four in number, according to the number of the living creatures.

With his four faces: by this it appears each wheel had its four faces, of which more in the 17th verse, where what is here called faces is there called sides.

Ver. 16.

The appearance; the form in which these wheels were seen.

Their work; all that was wrought, whether engraved or otherwise, was of one colour.

The colour of a beryl, Heb. *tharshish*, a sea-green; some say this colour here was of a carbuncle, or chrysolite, or hyacinth, but it is better rendered a sea-green colour, which if it note the instability and changeableness of sublunary affairs, and of the outward concerns of the church, it may note also the inherent rigour and beauty of the church, and the frame of earthly things, when they are in a calm course, not disturbed first with sin, and then with punishment of sin.

Their four, by this it appears what was the number of the wheels,

had one likeness; were exactly of the same make for dimensions, colour, frame, and motion, so that who sees and knows one sees and knows all, hereby noting the harmony and likeness which is in God's works, which are all framed, managed, and governed by the same wisdom, and consequently the same uncertainty in all things under the sun.

Their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel: it is somewhat difficult to unfold this. It is probable the wheels were framed so as to be an exact sphere or globe, which is easily rolled to any side or quarter, since it toucheth the earth or basis on which it stands in a point, and is exactly orbicular. It is fitter we note,

1. The unsearchableness of Divine methods.
2. The curious frame of them.
3. The connexion of one part with other,
4. The seeming interfering and real harmony; what would seem to hinder shall further God's work.
5. How easily God can change affairs, and move for or against a people.

Ver. 17.

When they went; the living creatures; indeed the wheels moved according to the motion of the living creatures, but it will as well agree with the truth, as it better agrees with the grammar of the words, to say this;

they, i.e. the wheels.

They went upon their four sides; the wheels being supposed spherical or round every way as a globe, by an exact and curious framing of two wheels one in the other, the four semicircles which are in two whole wheels may be well taken for these four sides on which these wheels do move, and such a wheel will readily be turned to all points of the compass, as a ball on a billiard table.

They turned not when they went; they needed not go back to turn, as we see other chariots or coaches must do, putting back somewhat to alter their course; or, returned not till they came to their journey's end; or, nothing could divert them, or put them out of their course. So firm and sure are the methods, so unalterable and constant the purposes, of God, and so invariable the obedience and observance of holy angels; so subject to the just sovereign will of God are all second causes.

Ver. 18.

Their rings; the circumference of the wheels, the whole compass of the wheels, or the fellows (as a carter calls the whole round of his wheels).

They were so high; the two strakes, the thickness of hob and fellos, give us the height of a wheel from the earth on which it stands;

that they were dreadful; their very height impressed a fear on the beholder, but if we may suppose one near these wheels which so readily changed course, so easily overbearing all that none could turn them aside, (which might possibly be the prophet's case in this vision,) it would increase the terror.

Their rings, the whole circumference or circle of these wheels,

were full of eyes: this added to the dreadful of their appearance: so unusual and supernatural a sight could not but affect the prophet, who in so mighty a wheel might expect multitudes of nails, but instead thereof discovers as great a multitude of eyes. One eye seen, or imagined to be seen, suddenly,

and in the dark, hath amazed many a one, how much more so many as would fill up the circumference of these wheels! for they were round about.

Round about them four; every one of the four wheels were thus filled with eyes. Now this is too narrowly confined by some interpreters, who would have the greatness and policy of the Chaldean set out hereby; whereas the wheels, their motion, their height and eyes, signify the height, unsearchableness, wisdom, and vigilance of the Divine providence, in governing the affairs of the world and the church.

Ver. 19.

When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; the wheels' motion or standing depended on the motion and assistance of some higher agent which excited and guided them, when therefore the living creatures, the angels, ministers of God's will, moved, then did those affairs expressed by wheels move also. There was an exact accord between these, they were as well joined in motion as they were in station.

When the living creatures were lifted up; moved higher above our ordinary reach.

From the earth; that basis on which both the wheels seemed to stand, and from which sometimes they seemed to lift up themselves, as if to fetch a new commission and order from him that sat upon the throne.

Ver. 20.

Whithersoever the spirit; either the will and inclination of the living creatures, or rather the Spirit of God which moved the living creatures, gave them motion and guided it; these angels in their ministry punctually observed both the impulse and the conduct of God's Spirit.

Was to go: of this phrase applied to the Spirit, see **#Eze 1:12**. They went; the wheels, those inferior agents and second causes.

Thither was their spirit to go; the inclination and will of the wheels concurred with the spirit of the living creatures, so that there was a hearty accord between those superior and inferior causes, they agreed in the same design.

And the wheels were lifted up over against them: there seems to be an ellipsis here, the latter part of the speech expressed, and

the former implied only; as it was in the progressive motion, so in the motion upward, they accorded, and kept the same order.

For the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels; one and the same spirit was in both the wheels and living creatures, and so the same inclination and motion too.

Of the living, Heb. *of life*, the quickening, enlivening Spirit; hence some will have the wheels to be living creatures, but without this it is enough to represent to the prophet what was the frame and course of Providence, and who did preside and manage all. An undiscerned, yet Divine, mighty, wise, just, and holy, and ever-living, Power, Spirit, and Being actuated all, and governed all, to the execution of justice on the wicked, and protection of the godly.

Ver. 21.

This verse is a confirmation and further illustration of what is said in the 20th, and being almost word for word the same with the 20th, needs no distinct paraphrase. I shall only note how God doth fully assert his over-ruling and ever-ruling wise providence in the affairs of his church and the world, both against,

1. The profane thoughts of atheists and epicures, which ever abound in those times, when sinners of the world and church are ripe for harvest.
2. Against the distrust and fears of his own suffering people.

Ver. 22.

The likeness; the appearance or resemblance; of which word before, **#Eze 1:13,16**.

The firmament: the living creatures, the wheels, and these upon the earth, our prophet had seen and mentioned; now he speaks of the firmament, which must be supposed to be stretched forth above the earth; as the prophet saw the one, so he saw the other. This firmament was not that we behold, it was emblematical and representative. It appeared, but much more august and wonderful than the natural.

Upon; not resting upon, but over their heads stretched out, and the Hebrew were better read, over, in this place and on this occasion.

The colour, Heb. *eye*, a word twice already here used, and in the same sense; the aspect, and shape or form, as **#Eze 1:8,16**.

Of the terrible crystal, for splendour, purity, and solidity: all that was above these creatures and wheels was beautiful and very majestic, as indeed it was meet it should be; and it is therefore called terrible, because it impresseth a veneration upon the mind of the beholders, it dazzleth the eye, and overpowereth it: the same word is used concerning the name of God, holy and reverend, #Ps 99:3 111:9.

Ver. 23.

Under; below at a great, which is but due, distance of angels, and creatures and servants to their God, Creator, and Lord, stood these living creatures, i.e. two of each living creature, as appeareth by the phrase, one toward the other.

Straight; stretched forth, ready for motion if commanded, and with equal straightness and height, in close and affectionate union, joining in the work appointed them.

Every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies; each of the four living creatures had two other wings with which they covered their bodies; the two living creatures on the one side of the chariot, and two living creatures on the other side; so that in what position soever the prophet looked towards them, their lower wings covered them.

Bodies, here ascribed to them representatively, and, as all the rest, visionally.

Ver. 24.

And when they went; so soon and as often as they, i.e. the living creatures, moved, were on their work, executing God's commands.

I heard, and attended to know what it was.

The noise of their wings: though some of God's judgments are executed with silence, and are in the dark, yet here is an alarm, and they may be heard.

Like the noise of great waters: when the sea rageth and swells as though it would overwhelm the earth, so when the just and dreadful judgments of God are executed, they threaten the overflowing of all.

As the voice of the Almighty; thunder, called God's voice, #Ps 29:3. *The voice of speech;* the prophet heard the voice in an

articulate manner declaring the will of God, as if the wings had tongues to speak as well as power to fly.

As the noise of an host: this voice was not of friends saluting each other, or comforting, but it was the voice and noise of a host, a tumultuous voice of men, a confused noise of warlike weapons and instruments; some suppose it is meant of the army of the Chaldeans, which those winged living creatures had now fetched in to spoil the Jews, which they did with terrible outcries, as enraged, merciless adversaries use to do.

When they stood, they let down their wings; having done their office, they present themselves before God, and let down their wings, not out of weariness, but out of a sense that they must never act but by commission. And now with wings let down and covering their bodies, they do humbly watch as servants for the commands of their lord.

Ver. 25.

And; or, *for*; so the Latin. Two senses may be of these words in this verse. Either,

1. These living creatures thus let down their wings and ceased from acting, because they were commanded so to do by the voice from above the firmament, which they readily obey. Or,
2. That they stood, let down their wings, and hushed the noise, that the prophet might hear what was spoken from above. The former comes nearest the sense of the Latin, the latter nearer to our English, and either may well enough suit the text and context.

Ver. 26.

Above the firmament; the crystalline firmament which appeared in the vision, not the vast expanse or firmament in which are sun, moon, and stars.

That was over their heads; heads of the living creatures which moved the wheels, and stood by the chariot.

Was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; in view appeared a sapphire stone, like or in likeness of a throne; so the Hebrew, though we transpose the words somewhat in our version: the sapphire speaks splendour and preciousness; the throne speaks the authority and power of him who sitteth thereon.

As the appearance of a man; Christ, God-man, who here appears as King and Judge to vindicate his own honour, to punish rebels, and to give warning by his prophet ere he execute his just but severe indignation.

Ver. 27.

I saw as the colour of amber: see #Eze 1:4, and what is said there to this phrase. In this colour does Christ now appear against the rebellious Jews; he that would have been a Saviour to them, clothed with the garments of salvation, now puts on the garments of vengeance, and is clad with that zeal which is best, but not fully, expressed by such metaphors.

As the appearance of fire round about within it; of most intense degree; as that fire which is shut up in oven or furnace, so this was the appearance of a fire which had a house to it round about (as the Hebrew). The just indignation of Christ, and his glorious majesty, are hereby set forth to us also, which appear within the amber.

From the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire; as was his upward part, so the lower parts also, they appeared as fire. Provoked to wrath, and proceeding to judge, he comes in flames of fire taking vengeance, #2Th 1:8.

And it had brightness round about: see #Eze 1:4, where the phrase is explained. Majesty, justice, and unstained holiness shine round about Christ, though he comes in greatest wrath against enemies.

Ver. 28.

Here more particularly is described the brightness before mentioned. A rainbow, the fire being resplendent and clear, cast its rays on the thick cloud below. And this is mentioned, no doubt, to assure the prophet, and those among the Jews that did tremble and wait for God, that God would not forget his covenant, though he came to execute severest judgments, #Ge 9:13. A like appearance of Christ in a surrounding brightness, as of the rainbow, you have #Re 4:3. Mercy and truth, and both according to covenant and promise, are about the throne of Christ; this a brightness of mercy and grace that enlightens, that comforts.

This, the conclusion of the vision,

was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord; it was not the full glory of God, it was not the splendour of unveiled majesty, it was the likeness of his glory, such as the prophet might bear and tell to us: the fulness of his glory is inaccessible light, the prophet could not see it; and unspeakable majesty, and the prophet could not tell it to us.

When I saw it, I fell upon my face:

1. Astonished at such a sight, as **#Ge 17:3 Da 7:15,28**.
2. With deep humility and reverence he cast himself down,
3. It is a posture of prayer, and possibly the prophet might sue to know the meaning of all this. *And I heard a voice of one that spake;* such was the voice and such the things spoken, that the prophet seems to confess he could not say whose voice it was; but it was Divine, powerful, astonishing, as being such as is described **#Eze 1:25**, such the voice he hears.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 2

Ezekiel's commission, **#Eze 2:1-5**; his instructions, **#Eze 2:6-8**. The roll of heavy judgments spread before him, **#Eze 2:9,10**.

Ver. 1.

And he that sat upon the throne, Jesus Christ, whose messenger Ezekiel must be to the Jewish captives, now gone into captivity to Babylon.

Son of man; a phrase very familiar with Ezekiel in this prophecy, and he useth it for distinction, being now among angels, perhaps to keep him humble, who had such great revelations, which might occasion him to think of himself above what was meet, as prophecy. **#2Co 12:7**.

Stand upon thy feet; arise, resume thy wonted strength of soul and body, which seem lost by thy fall to the ground. Fear not my coming to punish thee, I come to send thee forth a prophet; arise, therefore, and be as other prophets, ready to receive the Divine

oracles, which usually came to prophets standing: and with this command God sent forth a power enabling him to arise and stand. **And I will speak unto thee;** get thyself into a fit posture and readiness, and I will speak: what that was appears in what followeth, #Eze 2:3.

Ver. 2.

And; so soon as the encouraging command went forth, immediately.

The spirit; the vital spirit or soul of the prophet, say some; but these suppose the vision had struck Ezekiel dead, which neither can be supposed, other prophetic visions did not prove deadly, nor did this; others will have it the spirit of courage, some an angel; but it is indeed the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, #Eze 3:24. The same Spirit which actuated the living creatures and wheels enters the heart of the prophet.

Entered into me; gave the prophet special and suitable qualifications for his office. The Spirit entered that he might abide with the prophet as a constant assister and guide to him.

When he spake unto me; while the words were speaking, or so soon as they were spoken. The efficacy of the Spirit, and his accompanying the word of Christ, here appears.

He; either Christ, who from the throne spake to the prophet, or the Holy Spirit, newly entered into the prophet.

And set me upon my feet, that I heard him; opened his ear, that he heard what was spoken. It is the Spirit which is the fountain of all our abilities, and which also actuates them; without it there is neither life, strength, or motion.

Ver. 3.

And he: see #Eze 2:2.

Said unto me; either vocally, or by impression upon his mind.

Son of man: the prophet had seen, #Eze 1:26 of the former chapter, a very glorious person on a throne above the firmament, and now the prophet is called son of man, perhaps, as the Jews conjecture, to encourage the prophet in his prophetic work, and to assure him he should be owned by that glorious One, who

appeared as a man, and calls Ezekiel son of man: it is certain he would never forget what he had seen, and it is likely this Mda Ng as oft as it was spoken, would mind the prophet what relation it might have to the vision.

I send thee; I am sending, or he that sendeth thee is whom thou sawest on the throne advanced above angels, who directs them in their course of ministry subserving the will of God, and who will give them charge of thee in thy way.

Children, Heb. *sons*; God gives them still the name of sons and children, he is not hasty to abdicate, to disinherit, and cast off.

To the children of Israel, now in the low estate of captives: the lessening name of Jacob had been too great, one might think; but God tells the prophet they were the children of Israel, that prince who wrestled with God, and prevailed, **#Ho 12:3-5**. It is very likely they had some that feared and sought the God of Jacob, and did wrestle as he had done before them: it insinuateth some hope, however, that God would redeem them, **#Ps 25:22**, would be good unto them, **#Ps 73:1**; his dominion was over them, **#Ps 114:2**, and they were a peculiar people, **#Ps 135:4,12**.

To a rebellious nation, Heb. *nations that are rebellious*, very disobedient: as rebellion is the highest crime against the supreme magistrate, so were Israel's sins against God. Hence some will have Ezekiel to be commissioned a prophet to denounce God's judgments against the heathen, who are in Scripture called by the word here used. But though Ezekiel did prophesy against the nations, as against Egypt, Babylon, Gog, and Magog, yet here these nations in this third verse are the Jews, who were like the nations in their idolatry and manners; they had degenerated from their father Israel, and rebelled against Israel's God. If the title

Israel be comfort to the best, the appellation given to the rest, they were a

rebellious nation, is terror and menace as well as rebuke to the worst, and God intimates they were what they accounted the Gentiles to be, polluted, profane, and hated of God.

That hath rebelled against me: this was implied in the former word, but thus expressly added to ascertain the charge, and to aggravate the crime of this people, who were from their fathers'

days to this very day rebelling against God. It was the glory of St. Paul, he served God with pure conscience; it is the shame of this nation, they have rebelled from their fathers.

They and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day; their fathers before them, and they with their fathers, and all successively; God was provoked at once with two generations of rebels, fathers who gave example, and children which took it.

Ver. 4.

Impudent children; shameless, who cannot blush, else they could never have transgressed so highly, constantly, and obstinately. Sodom in her day did not hide her sin, nor blush; so did the Jews in Isaiah's times, so they did to the days of their captivity, and under the captivity.

Stiffhearted; hard-hearted, resolute, and strongly bent to do whatever liked them. Of disposition that relenteth not, but rather more confidently going on in evil.

I, who appeared in so much glory, and on the throne,

send thee unto them; give thee authority that thou mayst, and I give thee charge that thou must, go to them, and say unto them what I shall say unto thee. They will scoff and persecute, but I command; and remember whom thou hast seen, who is with thee.

Thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; be sure to tell them who sends thee, read the commission,

Thus saith, &c.

Ver. 5.

Though the omniscient God knows which they will do, yet he lets not the prophet know, but enjoins him his duty, affords these sinners the mercy of warnings and calls, and expects that they act like men, hear and obey.

Hear; they only hear that comply with God's counsel, and as for others, they hearing hear not.

Forbear; either forbear their ways of sinning, and cease to do evil, or forbear to hear thee: be not too much dejected about it:

some perhaps may hear and forbear to sin, others will forbear to hear thee but not forbear to sin, the greatest part will show themselves a rebellious house.

For they are a rebellious house; family, house put for the whole nation; yet wait the event, do thy duty.

Shall know that there hath been a prophet among them; all of them shall know; they that hear and obey shall know by the good that I will do to them, I will bless them and bring them back; those that will neither hear what they should do, nor forbear doing what they should not do, shall know by the evil which I will bring upon them. Thy truth and name will I vindicate, and prove thee a prophet, to the comfort of thyself and others who are obedient, but to the shame and confusion of the evil and wicked.

Ver. 6.

Thou, son of man; thou a prophet, sent by him whose throne is highest, whom thou sawest as the appearance of a man in glory, and provided with power to protect thee.

Be not afraid of them; cast away discouraging fear, be not dismayed at their persons; rulers, priests, and pretended prophets will oppose, but yet in the delivery of thy message fear none of them.

Words, Heb. will bear counsels, or words, misreports, accusations, threats, flouts, or whatever else an envious and malicious heart can suggest to the tongue.

Briers: here two words in the Hebrew are used, the first used only in this place, though frequently used in the Chaldee paraphrase, where it expresseth contumacy, as **#Ex 7:14**, of Pharaoh refusing to let Israel go, and **#Jer 5:3**, obstinate refusing to learn. But our translators, guided by the proper signification of the other word, have rendered it

briers, which usually run up among thorns, and are a very fit emblem of the frowardness and keenness of sinners against God and his prophet, and of the sure destruction which will befall these briers and thorns when God shall send his judgments like fire amongst them.

With thee; against thee.

Scorpions: some say this is an herb which, because it is every way armed with sharp, pricking stings, hath this name given it; but if we retain the more common interpretation, it speaks the rage and heat, the poisonous malice, and the sly lurking craft and irreconcilableness, of these apostate Jews, and of all other contemners of God and religion. These men, like scorpions, undiscerned, wound, torment, and kill.

Be not afraid; the admonition against sinful fear is repeated; lest Ezekiel should forget, or we in like case should fail of our duty, it is four times given in charge.

Ver. 7.

Thou shalt speak my words unto them; declaring what I shall show thee, and in words which I will put into thy mouth.

Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: see #Eze 2:5.

For they are most rebellious; Heb. *rebellion* in the abstract, by which the Hebrew (as some other languages do) expresseth the superlative degree, as we have it rightly translated.

Ver. 8.

Hear what I say unto thee; obey when thou hearest. Harden not thyself in a seeming modest declining the office of a prophet, wed not thine own resolution herein.

Rebellious house; house of rebellion, as #Eze 2:7.

Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee: some take this figuratively, as if here the prophet had been called to open the powers of his soul and mind, to receive, retain all that God speaks; but I rather think that the prophet is required to open his mouth to eat what was put into his hand, i.e. the book, insinuating his Divine call and inspiration, and the bitterness of the Jews' calamity. A visionary book and a visionary eating is here spoken of.

Ver. 9.

The prophet, newly come out of that astonishing trance wherein he lay, and gotten upon his feet, hearing what was spoken, and

possibly looking if he might see who spake, he discovers *a hand*; either of one of those angels which ministered before the Lord, or the hand of God, or of Christ. This might fortify the prophet; when he saw a hand so soon with him as he was ready to hear and obey, power and skill to defend and guide him will ever be as ready.

Behold, an hand was sent unto me; an Eastern idiom of speech.

A roll of a book; their books were not of that fashion and make as ours now are, but written in parchment, and in the length of it, and so one piece fastened to other, till the whole would contain what was to be written, and then was it wrapped or rolled about a round piece of wood, fashioned for that purpose: hence books are called volumes.

Ver. 10.

He: Eze 2:9 it was the hand, here it is the person, he who held out his hand.

Spread it before me; unrolled it within that distance the prophet might read what was written therein.

Written within and without; on both sides, on that side which was inward when rolled upon its rundle, and on that side also that was outward, and as it were the back side: a long roll, and full on both sides; so would the sorrows of the Jews be.

Lamentations, and mourning, and woe; such things as would make the stoutest heart lament, inwardly grieve; and mourn, express it in visible tokens; and woe, sad thoughts and guesses at worse to come: so this prophet's message would be a most heavy burden to the Jews and other nations against which he prophesied.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 3

Ezekiel is made to eat the roll, **#Eze 3:1-3**. God encourageth him in the discharge of his office **#Eze 3:4-14**: he is carried by the Spirit to Tel-abib; and is there admonished of his duty as a watchman to Israel, **#Eze 3:15-21**. God further instructeth him

concerning his typical bands, and the shutting and opening of his mouth, #Eze 3:22-27.

Ver. 1.

He who sat on the throne and directed the chariot or cherubims, the Lord Jesus Christ, who also spake to him in the chapter before.

Eat: this was done in a vision.

That thou findest, in the hand which was sent to him, #Eze 2:9: this explains the former, and being ingeminated, doth require the prophet's greatest resolution and diligence.

Eat this roll; read attentively, meditate thoroughly, impress the things upon thy soul deeply, for thou must declare them with very great affection and tenderness, with exact faithfulness and fearless courage.

And go, for then art thou fitted for and commissioned to undertake the prophetic function, speak unto the house of Israel; publish to them of the captivity in Babylon what I have declared to them, tell them what they should do, and what I will do.

Ver. 2.

So, Heb. *And*; so soon as he had heard he must eat it. *I opened my mouth*; not to discuss points, but to obey, to show my readiness indeed, and to do what lay on me to do.

He caused me to eat that roll; not by a force compelling me, but by a concurrent help in what the prophet was ready to do.

Ver. 3.

In this verse is confirmed and explained what was spoken #Eze 3:1, which see.

Cause thy belly to eat; the mouth is the proper instrument of eating, but when meat is eaten and digested, the belly is said to eat; the prophet must not just taste, but he must chew, swallow down, retain, and fill his belly with God's word.

And fill thy bowels: this is the same repeated, unless it add to the other the measure, the fulness of the measure wherewith we should read, meditate, and digest the word of God and his works. And since bowels are the seat of compassion, it is likely the Lord would have his prophet be affected with pity toward that captive people, whose miseries he must foretell, and he foresees they must suffer.

This roll that I give thee: the roll and all that was in it came from God, and Ezekiel must remember this.

Then did I eat it, Heb. *And I did eat it.*

It was in my mouth as honey for sweetness; upon the palate it was sweet (this done in vision still) as honey. If you wonder that such bitter tidings could be sweet to the prophet, if it be doubted how this could be, since, **#Eze 2:10**, it was full of lamentation, &c..

Answ. It was sweet to receive such things by revelation from God, and so to converse with God; it is sweet to foresee future events, and to foretell God's just judgments against sinners, and to have prospect of a vindication of the honour of God and credit of the prophet, who seeing all these things with a well-composed mind, and just zeal for God, could not but approve and be pleased therewith. Or, it was sweet, as usually the first part of the ministerial work is pleasant, but at last wicked men's opposition and persecution make it bitter, as **#Eze 3:14 Jer 15:16-18 Re 10:10**.

Ver. 4.

Son of man: see **#Eze 3:1**, and **#Eze 2:1**. *Go*; either the first word, go, intimates the awakening and rousing him, and the latter, **get thee**, directs him whither to go when on his legs, or else it is an idiom of the Hebrew language, or a hendyadis, an ingemination of the same command.

The house of Israel: see **#Eze 2:3**.

Speak with my words; see **#Eze 3:1**; in my name and authority, so some, but then it would have been in the singular number, not plural. Better and fuller it is by others thus, What things I shall show thee, and in what words I shall declare them to thee, these declare to the captives in Babylon. They perhaps do expect to hear somewhat else, and their flattering false prophets suggest other matters; but look to it, thou goest on my errand, speak therefore in my words, as the Hebrew.

Ver. 5.

Though the Divine command is reason enough why we should obey readily, yet God is pleased to give the prophet arguments to persuade, and ushers them in here.

A people of a strange speech; who cannot skill of thy speech, nor thou speak (without gift of tongues) to them. Shift not off thy work as if, with Jonah, sent to a people of barbarous tongue, in which are dark and profound idioms, but as horrid to thy ear as deep and dark precipices and gulfs to the eye, as the Hebrew, *deep of lip*, intimates.

Of an hard language; the same repeated in other words; they will need no interpreter to tell them what thou sayest to them, nor wilt thou need an interpreter to tell thee what answer they give. Thy work will be the easier, neither difficult, as things that lie deep to be digged out, nor as things of great weight and heaviness to be lifted, as both metaphors imply: this is his first argument. Next, implied in it, I send thee to thine own countrymen, whose welfare thou shouldst readily seek, and in their own tongue thou mayst express thy care for them.

To the house of Israel; they still are a family that God owneth he hath not broke up housekeeping, there is further encouragement; and they are Israel's seed, the posterity of Jacob, and under covenant mercy; go therefore readily, for Israel shall be gathered.

Ver. 6.

This verse is much what the former, yet strengthens and illustrates what is laid down there.

Many people here may be, according to the comprehensiveness of the Hebrew word, either numerous, whose multitudes would be their pride, and tempt them to deride thee; or, mighty in valour and feats of war and policy, whose might would harden them; or, far off, who would wonder a stranger should come to tell them their destiny; or, divers nations, that thou shouldst need divers tongues, to speak to them all in their own language. This difficult work is reserved to those whom Shiloh will send, it is kept to the times when the Spirit poured forth shall enrich with the gift of tongues in gospel days.

Strange speech; deep lip, &c.: see #Eze 3:5.

Whose words thou canst not understand: words are articulate and significant, and when understood they are words to the hearer, but whilst not understood they are but empty and barbarous sounds, as the apostle observes in #1Co 14.

Surely: in the Hebrew the words occasion difficulty and variety of translations, but all of no great moment. Some would refer it to the Jews, and make this sense, Hadst thou gone in any name but mine they would have heard; so parallel it with #Joh 5:43; but it is better, and more agreeable with the text, to refer it to many nations mentioned, who would have heard what the house of Israel refused to hear, (of which Jonah's Ninevites are pregnant proofs,) and to them I would have sent thee, (say some,) but that they did not understand thee: this is but a very slender guess, and ill consists with the power of God, which can give the tongue, if he would have sent the message, as he intimated to Moses, unwilling to go. Our version hath well read and referred the words; with that asseveration,

surely, they have expressed what some will have the Hebrew אֵלֵּי מֵאָה to be, a form of an oath. God assures the prophet the message is such that any men in their wits would hear; go therefore to thy people, try whether they will act like men and hear, especially when their condition is quite otherwise than that I now suggest of the nations, for the Jews are few, weak, reduced to this by neglecting to hear; in reason, they should now hear, repent, seek me, do my word, and live.

Ver. 7.

But, Heb. *And*, put adversatively, is rightly rendered *but*.

Will not hearken unto thee; have no mind or will. The original is not here, as mostly it is elsewhere, content to express it by the word in the tense which connoteth the event. But the original first points out their want of a will and inclination, they have no propensity to hear, they are obstinate in their refusal; next adds what it was their wills were obstinately averse to, i.e. hearing and obeying.

For they will not hearken unto me: this passage confirms the prediction, and withal forearms the prophet that he stumble not at their scandalous refusal and abusing of him; so they have used their God and his, and no wonder if they consent as little to him as they have to God.

All the house of Israel, i.e. the far greater part, not every particular person; there were of the captives some few like good figs, &c.

Are impudent; have hardened their faces, they are not ashamed, nor can they blush now, as **#Jer 3:3**. Brazenfaced is no new phrase or Anglicism, but as old as **#Isa 48:4**, nay, as old as habitual sin.

Hard-hearted: this the root whence the other springs; and what hope from such whose hearts are as far from relenting as their faces from blushing? How can it be expected they will hear, whose hearts are deafer than their ear?

Ver. 8.

This may be to remove the objection of the prophet, who might plead the softness of his own metal, and pretend shameless sinners will scoff a young prophet out of countenance. Behold, says God, consider.

I have made; given. They have given themselves this impudent countenance; I have given thee true courage, constancy, and manly carriage.

Thy forehead strong; the same answer in words very little varying. God will qualify and gift him for this work among this people, and edge his own tools to cut into the hardest metal. So **#Isa 1:7 Jer 1:18 Mic 3:8**.

Ver. 9.

If their foreheads be hard and cutting as the flint, if they wound the soft and tender, if they sparkle with fire against those of harder metal; yet be not afraid, I have made thee as the adamant, harder than flint, able to cut and to break it. But what if there should be allusion to the Talmudic rabbinical tradition about their supposed worm

shamir, the word here used; if the tradition be as old as Ezekiel's time, it will carry some probability with it. This

schamir they say was a worm, which by secret virtue would, when applied, cut or form hard stones, and divide the greatest; that Moses used it to prepare the precious stones for the breastplate, and Solomon, they say, used it to fit the stones without hammer for the temple. Well then, Ezekiel, fear not, thou shalt be a

schamir to the Jews in captivity, and fit some of them to be either rich ornaments in the breastplate, or beautiful stones in the temple; go about thy work, it shall not be, though it seem, successful.

Fear them not; let no prevailing fear take thee quite off from thy work; let not any lesser surprises and sudden discomposures of mind, when thou appearest before them, unfit thee for this work I set thee about.

A rebellious house; as a house that is rebellion itself.

Ver. 10.

This verse is a repetition of the charge given to the prophet, to deal faithfully and undauntedly in the delivering his message, to deliver always what God should speak, to speak nothing else, and to speak all that. These repetitions in the abundance of the same words, are from the usage and custom of the people of those countries in which the Jews were now captive.

Receive in thine heart: this explains the visionary eating, of which #Eze 3:3. Hearing is first, and receiving into the heart follows; but with the Jews such transpositions are very usual.

Ver. 11.

See #Eze 3:4.

To them of the captivity; of the first captivity under Jeconiah's reign, who succeeded his father Jehoiakim, slain for his conspiracy with Egypt against Nebuchadnezzar, as #2Ki 24:1,6,7. These are those good figs, #Jer 24:5-7, of whom such good is spoken, and to whom those promises are made.

Thy people; Heb. *the sons of thy people*. Some will have God speaking here of this people as no more his, but I think it rather is to be interpreted of some that were amidst them who were disowned of God, and were now but children or sons of the people, the apostate idolaters and debauched sinners, which might possibly have embraced the conqueror's religion and manners.

Speak unto them: here again the command is repeated and doubled.

Thus saith the Lord: see #Eze 2:4,5.

Ver. 12.

The spirit; the Spirit of God, which governed the wheels and the living creatures, #Eze 8:3.

Took me up; either raised him up to nearer approaches, to see and discern, to hear and learn; or carried him to his countrymen, to whom he was to speak.

Behind me; his face toward the north while he saw the vision, now that he is carried south to his people the voice is behind him. *A voice of a great rushing;* an articulate sound, and intelligible, but with great commotion, for it was the voice of angels, attended with the rushing noise of the wheels added to the noise of their wings, and a mighty wind which might likely accompany all this.

Blessed be the glory of the Lord; praised and magnified be the gloriously holy and just God, riding on the glorious chariot of his sovereignty in prescribing laws, appointing ordinances, threatening sin, and punishing sinners.

From his place; either coming down from heaven, or departing from his temple. In brief, the glorious angels, and all the saints of God, bless, i.e. praise, admire, and justify God in all the ways of his judgments among the sons of men.

Ver. 13.

I heard, added to connect the verses and to make the reading full, hath I think somewhat perplexed the words, and occasioned inquiry after two different sounds or voices; whereas if we read them as in the Hebrew and as the Latin,

And the noise was of the wings, &c., so the 13th verse will explain the 12th, and tell you what was that great rushing which Ezekiel heard behind him.

Touched one another: see #Eze 1:9. *Over against them:* see #Eze 1:19,20.

Ver. 14.

So, Heb. *And,* or then, at that very time.

The spirit, the Spirit of God, as #Eze 3:12, which see.

Lifted me up, either from that prostration which the terrible vision had caused when he fell to the ground; or rather, caught him, who before was on his legs and well come to himself, up into the air.

Took me away; carried me, (as was Philip when carried away from the eunuch,) and brought me to the place where I was to deliver my message, the place where the captive Jews were crowded together.

I went: hitherto nothing appears of the prophet's concurrence, but the verse seems to speak constraint and force, but now you have his voluntary concurrence with the motion of the Spirit. He went when so moved and assisted.

In bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; Heb. *bitter in the heat of my spirit*; grieved, sad, and my spirit within me was as all in a heat of anger: either,

1. Enkindled within by the sympathy he had with his countrymen in their sufferings and calamities; or,
2. Because of those wickednesses he saw and reprov'd in them; or,
3. Because he must be the unwelcome messenger of such unwelcome news; or,
4. Because of the danger he was exposed to among enraged desperadoes: which way soever you explain it, Ezekiel's weakness and distempered humour will appear in it; Jonas-like, he will be angry. *But; for*, as some others; and, as the Hebrew. *The hand of the Lord was strong upon me*; either in general the power of God, which cannot be resisted; or the Spirit of prophecy, which, as a fire shut up, will break forth, as in **#Jer 20:7-9**; indeed both concur.

Ver. 15.

See **#Eze 3:11**.

Tel-abib; the name of a place in that part of Mesopotamia, which was shut up within Chebar westward, and Saocora eastward. This was divided into superior, called Gozan, and inferior, called here Tel-abib, a low country, and unprofitable, because spoiled by waters, and secure to keep captives in, and so it afforded matter of labour and toil to the captive Jews, and was as a prison to them lest they should escape, and in both pleased the Babylonians.

By the river; on or near to that part of the river Chebar which runs westward of this Tel-abib. Here then is no more contradiction than is in this, if I should name a place between two rivers, and say the place is near one of those rivers.

I sat where they sat; sat sad and astonished, where I found and saw them sitting astonished; for sitting sometimes is a posture of mourning and sadness, as in **#La 1:1**, and Job's friends, and **#Ps 137:1**.

Remained there astonished; either at the sight of that woeful change of the Jews from freedom and honour to servitude and shame; or astonished at foresight of that which the roll contained, or at the Jews' impenitence and unreformed manner of living under all these afflictions.

Seven days; mourning no doubt all that while, and waiting till the Spirit of prophecy should open his mouth, and till he might know persons, their inclinations, vices, and temper in them, and till he might speak somewhat of personal knowledge against their wickednesses.

Ver. 16.

This verse gives us sufficient account why the prophet staid these seven days; it was because the particular word he was to speak to them was not yet declared to him. He had a call and commission to be a prophet, and comes in this character to these Jews, but till seven days are ended he receives no particular word, when by his carriage among the Jews it appeared he was more than a common man, that he was full of matter more than ordinary; then came the word of the Lord, saying,

Ver. 17.

See **#Eze 2:1**.

I; the person that appeared to him, **#Eze 1:26**. It is the great and glorious One.

Made thee; appointed by commission; I have qualified by gifts, I have actually sent thee forth, &c.

Watchman; night and day to observe whether the enemy approach, and to give notice on pain of death.

Hear the word at my mouth: see #Eze 2:8.

Give them warning; I will give thee notice, thou art then to give warning unto them, and let them know it comes from me, and in mercy, to prevent their final ruin. Be not as a prognosticator, as one that consults the stars, and foretells from the conjunction of them, but own the things thou art to warn them of as from my mouth.

Ver. 18.

When I say, either by the, menaces of my law, or by motion of my Spirit stirring thee up to reprove and warn.

The wicked; any wicked one whatever, rich or poor, mean or mighty.

Thou shalt surely die; such courses will certainly end in death, and in damnation if not left.

Givest him not warning; frequently, and with repeated monitions, as the word signifies, and as the apostle, #Ac 20:31. This to those that will hearken.

Nor speakest; some will profanely scoff and deride, yet speak to warn them, till it do appear they are such as will turn again and rent you. Or else it is the same thing repeated.

From his way; men must be told of their own sins; these are their dangers. To save his life; that thou mayst preserve his life, his soul, and recall him at once from sin and death.

Shall die in his iniquity; the man who is not warned by thee will certainly die in his sin, the sinner's ignorance will not be sufficient to prevent his death, but thy not admonishing him will involve thee also in guilt and death. I will punish thee, who possibly mightest have saved by warning, however oughtest to have warned.

Ver. 19.

His wickedness: this may denote the sinfulness of his mind and heart, which is the spring of all.

His wicked way; his actual sinful courses; the practices of sin and the habits of sin must be left.

He shall die in his iniquity; the punishment of his unrepented sins shall be death, but there is no danger unto the watchman, the prophet and minister, who did his duty, and warned the sinner.

Ver. 20.

What must be done to sinners is said, now for those that have been righteous take thy directions.

A righteous man; either one that hath for some continuance of time professed the way of righteousness, but is now overcome of vices; or who is righteous only in appearance, as **#Pr 18:17 Eze 18:24,26 33:13 Mt 9:13.**

Doth turn from his righteousness; gives just cause to fear he not only hath committed some particular sin, but that he hath changed the course of life, the thoughts and purposes from good to evil, hath forsaken the way of righteousness.

Commit iniquity; gives himself up to a sinful life, wallows in sin.

I lay a stumbling-block; dispose affairs so by a just and punishing providence that what did restrain is taken away, or what will be occasion of greater sinning is not removed, or any other way I give such a one up to his own heart's lust, so that he continue in sin.

He shall die; shall perish in his sin.

His righteousness; either external, and seeming; or his partial and temporary righteousness, which he himself or others ascribed to him, and thought to be in him; shall not be profitable to him: he that apostatizeth is the worst of men, because he falls from known ways of goodness and holiness. Yet such must be warned, else their blood will be required at the hand of those who were to warn them.

Ver. 21.

If thou warn; as often as need. The righteous man; the truly and really pious, the regenerate man.

Sin not; deliberately, customarily, habitually.

And he doth not sin; takes warning, and departs further from sin, and keeps better to the ways of God.

Live; be accepted with God and happy; and both warners and warned have delivered their souls.

Ver. 22.

See #Eze 3:14 Eze 1:3.

There; at Tel-abib.

Go forth into the plain; withdraw from the multitude, and retire into the open place. Likely it was some spacious level in that low country which lay between the rivers.

Talk with thee; to comfort, encourage, direct, and communicate further of the Divine will and counsels to the prophet.

Ver. 23.

Then; so soon as commanded.

The glory of the Lord: see #Eze 1:28, with foregoing verses.

Stood there; in the plain whither he is now come.

As the glory which I saw by the river; it overpowered him now as then, and he could bear it no more now than before he could.

Ver. 24.

The spirit: see #Eze 2:2.

Shut thyself within thy house: some say this is to be an interrogation, wilt thou, &c.? others add it is an irony, upbraiding him; but I see no ground for either. It is, as we read it, a plain

command, which appears, in that with the command God giveth strength to do what is commanded; and he is to shut up himself, to learn of God what he must foretell, to foresignify the shutting up of Jews in Jerusalem.

Ver. 25.

Son of man: see #Eze 2:1. It is not said who shall do this, therefore interpreters guess variously at it. Some say it is figurative, noting the malice of the Jews, who would not suffer him quietly to converse with them, their malice was like bonds. Others understand the words as they sound, and refer,

1. To angels, as if they bound him.
2. To his friends and domestics, who would take his intensesness and earnestness in continued, retired thoughtfulness to be madness; so prophets were mistaken and misreported, #2Ki 9 Mr 3:21. To the ruder and more violent of the Jews, who on all occasions were ready thus to confine their prophets, when they foretold unwelcome tidings, and to stir up their governors hereto, as #1Ki 22:27 Jer 32:2 37:15 38:6,7. It is not improbable that the rabble should incense the *αἰχμαγοτάρχαι*, presidents of the captivity, to do this.

Put bands upon thee; signifying the bonds and chains of their future captivity who were yet at Jerusalem.

Shall bind thee with them: this I suppose denotes the severity with which the conqueror would treat them, he would bind their bonds fast, close, and this will be pain and grief to the bounden.

Thou shalt not go out among them; a Hebraism, thou shalt be denied a free converse.

Ver. 26.

Either by forbidding thee to speak, I will make thee as dumb as if thy tongue did cleave to the roof of thy mouth; or possibly God did suspend his influence, and leave the prophet dumb, as one who could not move his tongue, the use whereof is taken away.

A reprover; a man to reprove (as Heb.); shalt tell them as little of their faults and danger as a dumb man can do. God hereby giving the prophet some respite, signifying the future state of the Jews would be such they should no more dare to mutter or whisper; and punishing the refractory deafness of the Jews with taking away their reprover, &c.

A rebellious house: see #Eze 2:5,7.

Ver. 27.

When I speak with thee; whenever I shall reveal any thing to thee; or, when I shall have discovered all to thee which thy people should be informed in; then I will open thy lips, and loose thy tongue, and give thee power to speak.

Thou shalt say unto them; in point of duty thou must tell them what I speak, and tell them as from me, who am eternal and sovereign Lord of heaven and earth: and in this style the Lord speaks above eighty times in this prophecy.

Let him hear; it is his duty and safety, and I propose it to his consideration, let him think what he hath to do herein.

Let him forbear; it is at his own peril, thou hast warned him, and now trouble not thyself, neither be grieved much at it. They, a rebellious house, act like themselves in sinning, and thou hast acted like thyself, a faithful admonisher; I will act like myself in punishing and giving them up into the hands of cruel, ravenous, and devouring enemies, who shall destroy them.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 4

The prophet is directed to represent a mock siege of Jerusalem for a sign to the Jews, #Eze 4:1-3; and to lie before it in one posture for a set number of days, in order to denote the time of their sins for which God did visit, #Eze 4:4-8. His allotted provisions, with design to prefigure the people's defilement among the Gentiles, #Eze 4:9-15, and the scarcity they should be reduced to by the siege, #Eze 4:16,17.

Ver. 1.

Hitherto the preface, containing the call and commission of the prophet; now he begins. This is the first prophecy, and it is against Jerusalem.

A tile, or *brick*, or any square tablet on which he might engrave or carve.

Lay it before thee, as carvers use to do, as engravers and painters do.

Portray upon it the city; draw a map of Jerusalem, delineate or describe the city Jerusalem, whence they were come, who now are in Babylon, and probably repented that they had left Judea and Jerusalem, and murmured against them that advised to it: but let them know by this sign that Jerusalem should suffer much more than ever they suffered, that those who remained there sinning against God should bear a long siege, a very grievous famine, and cruel slaughters.

Ver. 2.

Draw the figure of a siege about the city; raise a tower and bulwarks which may annoy the besieged, and defend the besiegers, from which may be shot either darts against men, or mighty stones against the walls and towers of the city.

Cast a mount; which made large, high, and strong, and near as they can, might thence by help of galleries get over the walls and enter the city. Lay out the ground also for the army of the Chaldeans to pitch their tents in, and to form their camp.

Rams; the Chaldee paraphrast understands the captains and chief leaders among the soldiers, but it is better understood of those engines wherewith besiegers did batter the walls and towers of a besieged city; an engine of great use in days of old among all warlike nations, invented, say some, in the siege of Troy.

Ver. 3.

An iron pan, to signify the hardness and obstinacy of the besiegers; probably a frying-pan, on the plain part of which the the bearing the portrait of Jerusalem lying, the iron edges or brims compassed it round about, as a line drawn round a besieged city, out of which the distressed could not flee, into which no relief could be brought. It plainly noted the cruelty of the Chaldeans and future tortures of the Jews, who were like to be fried or broiled in this iron pan, as **#Jer 29:22;** /APC 2Mac 7:5.

Set it for a wall of iron; that it may resemble a wall of iron; for as impregnable as such a wall should the courage, resolution, and patience of the Chaldeans be attacking it.

Set thy face against it; fix thy displeased countenance against it, in token of my displeasure.

Thou shalt lay siege: if the prophet do represent him that sent him, then it speaks God's appearing against these wicked ones.

This shall be a sign; all these things are signs and emblems usual with all, most usual with this prophet, who in this hieroglyphic foreshows the state of those that lived at Jerusalem.

Ver. 4.

Lie thou also; a posture which was to signify the settled resolution of the besiegers, who had taken up their abode till the siege were finished in taking Jerusalem.

Upon thy left side, to note the less worthy part, the ten tribes, or Samaria, which was from Jerusalem toward the left hand, and was head of the ten tribes.

Lay the iniquity; take upon thee in the representation thereof both guilt and punishment; bear both, not to expiate, but to exemplify what they should suffer.

The house of Israel, distinguished from Judah; it is the ten tribes.

According to the number of the days; by that proportion of time thou shalt know and intimate to them how long I have borne patiently with their sins, and how long they shall bear their own punishment.

Thou shalt bear their iniquity; signifying that as the prophet in the sign, so God in very deed, had patiently borne with them.

Ver. 5.

This verse explains the former. I have pointed out the number of years wherein apostate Israel sinned against me, and I did bear with them according to the number of days, wherein thou must lie on thy left side. Three hundred and ninety days. See #Eze 4:4. There is some difference, though of no great moment, in fixing the periods of beginning and ending these prophetic days. These years some begin at Solomon's falling to idolatry, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, and end them in the fifth of Zedekiah's captivity. Others begin at the fourth year of Rehoboam, and end them in the twenty-first year of the captivity. Others begin them in the first of Rehoboam and Jeroboam, when the kingdom was divided, and then they must end about the seventeenth year of the captivity. The first supputation to me is much the likeliest, and agrees

nearest with the year wherein this prophet begins his prophecy. It is not altogether unlikely that the prophet may intimate, though obscurely, the continuance of the siege of Jerusalem, which the Chaldeans began on the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah, and lasted the remaining two months of the ninth year, and the whole tenth year except some five months, wherein the Babylonians retired to fight the Egyptians, beat them, spoiled them, and returned to the siege of Jerusalem, which lasted to the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year. So that one whole year, and three weeks, and four days, or thirteen months, at thirty days in each month, taking up three hundred and ninety days, and discounting the five months and odd days in the Egyptian expedition, you come to the continuance of three hundred and ninety days in the threatened siege, and possibly this may be the intent of the prophecy.

Ver. 6.

When thou hast almost accomplished, or when about to accomplish them, i.e. forty days, before the three hundred and ninety do expire, at the end of three hundred and fifty days turn thou to thy right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; and that this is the true account appears from this verse, compared with **#Eze 1:1,2 8:1**, say some, and those very learned men. Others will have the forty days distinct from the three hundred and ninety, and reckon them by themselves, and so the better and grammatical construction in the Hebrew seems to carry it, for it speaks in the perfect tense, and lying a second time. But be these numbers distinct or but one, is no great concern; either way they do plainly speak God's wonderful patience with Israel and Judah, and point out the time of the miseries of both for their sinfulness.

Again, Heb. *a second time. Thou shalt bear the iniquity*: see **#Eze 4:4**.

Of the house of Judah; of the two tribes, say some; of the royal family, say others, and countenance it with **#Isa 22:21**; and then Israel distinguished is the whole body of the two tribes, and the remnant of the ten tribes that escaped, and embodied with the two tribes; as some did at the first division, others afterward in Asa's, Jehoshaphat's, Hezekiah's, and Josiah's time, leave their places and came to Jerusalem.

Forty days; it is plain they are so many years, but not so plain where to begin them, whether from Manasseh, or more probably from Josiah's renewing covenant, until the destruction of the temple, which is forty years; during which time God deferred to punish, expecting whether they would keep covenant and walk with God, or retain their idolatries and wicked ways, which latter they did for thirteen years of Josiah's reign, for eleven of Jehoiakim, and eleven of Zedekiah's reign, and five of his captivity, which amount to just forty years; and they are mentioned, say some, apart from the three hundred and ninety, because they were more wickedly abused to promote sin.

Ver. 7.

Therefore, Heb. *And*, while thou liest on thy side, thou shalt fix thy countenance on the portrait of besieged Jerusalem, with angry and menacing looks.

Jerusalem; not which was in the land of Judah, but that described in the tile, the emblem of the other.

Thine arm, thy right arm, the stronger and more ready to act, shall be uncovered, naked and stretched out, as being ready to strike and slay.

Thou shalt prophesy against it: this very emblem doth threaten, which is a visional prediction, and no doubt Ezekiel unfolded these riddles on just occasions, and this was a prophesying to them, sometimes by signs, and sometimes by words.

Ver. 8.

Whoever were the persons that laid bonds on Ezekiel, in **#Eze 3:25**, here it is plain that the Lord doth it. If the prophet represent the besieged citizens who must be captives in bonds, then it is likely these bonds were visible and material, that they might be a teaching sign and admonition, that as they saw the prophet in them, so certainly he should see that come to pass which was signified by them. If he represent the Chaldeans, as those who were by Divine power as fast bound to this siege, till the city be taken, as he was tied to the place whence he could not stir a foot, then invisible bonds, which none feel or see but the prophet, may suffice these, assuring him that those could move no more from the siege than he from that side he lay on. And though the

Egyptian army make some diversion, yet it is very like the siege was not quite raised, but they kept the city blocked up, whilst the gross of the army drew off to fight Pharaoh's army, according to that **#Jer 37:9**, the Chaldeans shall not depart.

Thy siege, Heb. plural, *sieges*, either because it was like two sieges by that little interruption of three or four months, or else because of the length and soreness thereof.

Ver. 9.

Provide thee corn enough; for a grievous famine will accompany the siege. And whereas all sorts of grain are to be provided, it assures us all would be little enough; wheat and barley would not outlast the siege, coarser and meaner must be provided, though less fit for bread. Mix the worst with the best to lengthen out the best, that the mixture may render them useful in such necessity.

Three hundred and ninety days; he mentions only three hundred and ninety; the forty days either concur with them, or else because they refer to the time after the city was taken, whereby such as revived and got some liberty to go abroad found food for themselves; if they escaped the sword of the enemy, and were got into the country, they wanted not bread.

Ver. 10.

Thy meat; the mean and coarse bread which thou must eat and be content with.

By weight; not full, as once; not as much as you will, but a small pittance delivered by weight to all; which bespeaks the extreme penury the city should be brought to.

Twenty shekels; some say five ounces, others say ten ounces, the greater of the two scarce enough to maintain life, and yet, it is probable enough, it was but five ounces of bread which was his allowance. A hard case, when the law of the twelve tables allowed a pound of bread to prisoners daily for their diet. But here the prophet hath but half that allowance, if the twenty shekels were shekels of the sanctuary; and he hath but a quarter of that allowance, if they were common shekels by which his allowance was weighed.

From time to time; at set hours this was weighed out, and no more could be had at any other time, whether morning or evening; once in four and twenty hours, or once in twelve hours, still at the appointed hour; and possibly there might be different hours appointed to different persons, and every one must observe his own time.

Ver. 11.

Water; not wine or cordial drinks, but cold and thin water, nor a bellyful of this.

The sixth part of an hin; about six ounces of water, and that measured out by others to him that drinks it, scarce enough to keep the man alive. Such proportions of bread and water rather fed death than the man, yet more could not be had when the besiegers were masters of both fields and fountains, and cut off all from the city.

Ver. 12.

As barley cakes: these were delicacies with them when they could temper and make them right, but now these pitiful things should be to these half-starved bodies as delicates, Or rather, because they were greedy, and could not stay till they were baked. Or, lest any should take it from them. Or, because they never had enough to make a loaf with, they eat them as barley cakes.

With dung; there would be no wood left for such necessary uses, nor yet dung of other creatures, they would be all consumed by the length of the siege too. What loathsome food was this! yet in this straitness of the siege they are brought to it.

In their sight; openly, that any might see it. From this passage some conclude this was actually done, and not only represented in a vision.

Ver. 13.

This verse is a key to the former.

Even thus; scanty, mean, ill-dressed, and polluted in the very dressing, loathsome to any but starved bellies.

The children of Israel; not only the house of Judah, but all the rest of the children of Israel; not in the siege only, but this misery should pursue them.

Among the Gentiles; who would be ready enough to upbraid them, and twit them, as breaking the rules of their religion to fill their bellies: thus their sins would bring them to extremest want and shame.

Ver. 14.

Ah Lord God he deprecateth this, and entreats it may not be enjoined him. He proposeth his legal purity, as one argument; in obedience to ceremonial precepts, he had kept himself clean, and now prays that he may not have his obedience tried by enjoining to eat what is abominable.

From my youth up; he took early care of this, and had persevered to this age; therefore prays mitigation, and some change in his diet or dressing of it.

That which dieth of itself; forbidden as polluted, #Ex 22:31 Le 17:15 Eze 44:31.

Torn in pieces; forbidden by the law also, as #Ex 22:31.

Ver. 15.

So soon as he prayed God answered, and condescends to Ezekiel that he should use what was less abominable than man's dung; but it was not granted to the Jews, who in the siege at Jerusalem did much worse things, and more detestable, reduced to it by straits, as #Eze 5:10 La 1:11 2:11,12,20.

Ver. 16.

Here the Lord confirms his threat of famine by a solemn protestation that he would break the staff of bread; either take their, harvests away, and deny them bread, or withhold his blessing, the strength of bread, that it should not nourish and refresh, as #Le 26:26.

In Jerusalem, that sinful city.

By weight: see #Eze 4:10.

With care; afraid and doubtful whether or where they shall have any more.

By measure: #Eze 4:11.

With astonishment; amazed at the strangeness of their condition, and the wounds and death of many that fell by the enemies' hand, attempting to fetch a little water; or astonished, their very eyes failing for thirst.

Ver. 17.

The Lord will take away their provision, that they may die with want, punished for all their sins, and disappointed of all that their false prophets promised them; and under strangest disappointments, be filled with strangest amazements and horrors, at the woeful miseries of one another, and falling dead in each other's helpless sight.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 5

Under the type of the prophet's hair, **#Eze 5:1-4**, is showed God's judgment upon Jerusalem, **#Eze 5:5-11**, by pestilence, by famine, by the sword, and by dispersion, **#Eze 5:12-17**.

Ver. 1.

It is not unlikely that this command was given to the prophet so soon as he had understood the former chapter's vision.

Son of man: see **#Eze 2:1**.

Take thee; procure it by any means.

A sharp knife; a sword or knife very sharp, as the Hebrew; so the grievous judgment is expressed **#Eze 21:9-11,14-16**, and here the speedy, irresistible, and sweeping judgment against this people is aptly set forth.

A barber's razor: this in different words is the same thing, and explains the former, and makes the emblem more exact, for by hair shaved and destroyed is the destruction of Jerusalem and its people represented to us, Now, that this may appear in the certainty of it, both a sword for strength, and sharp for cutting, nay, a razor much sharper, that shaves close, leaves nothing behind it, and cannot be resisted by the weak hair, so shall it be here with this people.

Cause it to pass; a Hebraism, shave close with it.

Thy head; the chief, as king and rulers, the city.

Thy beard; the common citizens; or, the towns round about.

Balances; just and exact scales, an emblem of Divine justice and equity.

To weigh: the prophet's weighing represents God weighing these men and their ways.

The hair; these light, vain, and worthless ones, inhabitants of this sinful city, #2Sa 10:4,5 Jer 41:5 48:37. Thus foretell them their mourning, reproach, and deformity that is coming, for all this is signified by this shaving head and beard.

Ver. 2.

This verse tells you into how many parts the hair was to be divided, and how to be disposed of, and so plain it needs little explication.

With fire; so either pestilence, or famine, with the displeasure of God, and the burning of the city and of the citizens, is noted.

The city, described on the tile, #Eze 4:1, a type of what should be done in Jerusalem.

When the days of the siege are fulfilled; when the three hundred and ninety days of thy lying against the portrayed city shall be ended; for when Jerusalem shall be taken at the end of the siege, the city shall be burnt; and who can say that none of the inhabitants were burnt, as the two false prophets Ahab and Zedekiah? #Jer 29:22. To be sure many that hid themselves under ground, in vaults and cellars, were burnt with the burning of the city.

A third part; it is not necessary this part should be equal to the former, if it be proportional it is enough; perhaps it might be somewhat less then the first third.

Smite about it with a knife; for these were such as fell, in either defending the walls, or sallying out during the siege, or were found in arms when the city was taken, or were overtaken in their flight with their most unhappy king or by law martial were adjudged to die by the conqueror. These many, yet weak ones, women and children, which died in the siege by famine and pestilence, might be a greater third.

A third part; those that fell to the Chaldeans, or fled to Egypt, or other countries, though they escape somewhat longer, yet carrying like sins are at last overtaken with like evils.

Thou shalt scatter; though these disposed of themselves, yet there was God's hand also in it; he scattered those that of their own accord did flee.

In the wind; violent, uncertain, and troublesome should their enemies prove to them.

I will draw out; God will pursue them.

A sword; figuratively it is wasting punishment, literally it was fulfilled, #Jer 42:16,17,22 43:10,11 44:27. Thereof, i.e. of the last third which were to be dispersed. A few, or small quantity. In number; or, by number, as it may be read; tell out a small parcel of the hair. Bind them in thy skirts; as men tie up in a handkerchief, or in the skirt of their garment, what they would not lose. So some few shall be kept, God will not cut off the whole house of Israel, but reserves a remnant.

Ver. 3.

Thereof, i.e. of the last third which were to be dispersed.

A few, or small quantity.

In number; or, by number, as

them in thy skirts; as men tie up in a handkerchief, or in the skirt of their garment, what they would not lose. So some few shall be kept, God will not cut off the whole house of Israel, but reserves a remnant.

Ver. 4.

Then take of them again; another division make of that little number, the preserved remnant. Throw some of them into the fire; they are not all to be saved who are delivered at the end of the siege.

Burn them; literally burn the hair, but signify the burning them that are meant by it.

In the fire of God's displeasure, and of civil war, or private conspiracy, as in Ishmael against Gedaliah, #Jer 41.

Thereof, from their sin against God, their discontents at their state, and conspiracies against their governor, appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, evil like another fire shall break out, which shall devour the most, and be near consuming all the house of Israel, as happened to them after Gedaliah's death, and their going down to Egypt, as **#Jer 40:1-Jer 44:30 Jer 46**, under Johanan's revolt, which the Chaldean did revenge at last.

Ver. 5.

Thus saith the Lord God: this solemn declaration in God's name the prophet useth by express order, **#Eze 3:11**.

This portrayed city's typically Jerusalem, and her inhabitants.

I have placed her in a most delightful situation, chosen out the best part of the known world for her; in a neighbourhood to most rich and plenteous countries, with whom she might have conversed and spread forth my name, and which are round about her, either as servants about a mistress, or as meaner houses about the palace or manor of a lord, or as traders about an emporium, much to advantage of Jerusalem.

Ver. 6.

She; Jerusalem, the metropolis, where the temple and the solemn feasts and sacrifices were, which in likelihood was forwardest, fullest, and most expensive on other invented modes of worship; she who was most obliged to me.

Hath changed: the Hebrew includes a rebellion and contumacy; and these were cause of her changing, as rebels change the laws of a kingdom.

My judgments; the laws of holy, righteous, and sober living; the exact rules of manners. Into wickedness; improbity and injustice toward each other, and impiety and irreligion against God himself.

More than the nations; there is more honesty, truth, and righteousness among the nations than among the Jews.

My statutes; the precepts and rules of religious observances which I gave them they have less valued, been less constant to, than the nations have been to theirs, received from men, and invented by man. So **#Jer 2:9-11**.

They, the Jews, have refused, with scorn and abhorrence, as what their mind abominated. So vile were they grown, that they loathed the excellent law of God, and were weary of it, as the Hebrew implieth.

My statutes; as for my statutes in matters of religion, they have refused to walk in them, and have modelled religion to their own fancy, built altars, adopted new gods, and appointed new worship, more gay or easy, as their humour was.

Ver. 7.

Ye multiplied: there is some difficulty in assigning what it is they multiplied in, either numbers of people, benefits received from God, luxury, pride, tumultuousness, with increase of your riches; or in idols, superstitions, and appendant wickednesses. This last seems most agreeable with the text; the rest may not be excluded.

According to the judgments of the nations; while you have exceeded the nations in superstition and idolatry, you have fallen short of them in the moralities of their life, and done less good than they, taught by a far more imperfect law than-you, **#Ro 2:21-24.**

Ver. 8.

Therefore; it is very just what God doth, he hath cause more than enough given him to do so.

Behold; take notice, and consider me, not as now for you, but against you. You look to the instruments, to the rod, but, behold, I am, even I am, against you, against thee, O Jerusalem.

Will execute judgments; I will act in severities that shall convince you it is my hand that wields the sword. You despised my holy law, my judgments as a rule of life, but you shall now feel my judgments that you shall die under. The Chaldeans will kill you, but I condemn you. They will be cruel, but I will be just in the execution; and who can be for thee, when I will be against thee in this dreadful manner?

In the sight of the nations; as notorious as thy sins, so shall thy punishment be. The very heathen shall see my hand in it, and own my justice.

Ver. 9.

Though the old world perished by water, and the judgment was greater in its extent, and Sodom was destroyed by fire, yet neither one or other was so lingering a death. These poor Jews were long dying, and felt themselves dying. Read the Lamentations as commentary on this text, or Josephus's Wars of the Jews. Though in the siege of Samaria women ate their children, yet the city was not taken, sacked, and burnt as Jerusalem was after a long siege.

Whereunto I will not do any more the like: no doubt God keeps his word, though we should not be able to show how. And though the siege of Jerusalem under Vespasian was grievous, yet not in every thing equal with this, the Romans were not so cruel to the Jews.

Thine abominations; their sins were abominations, and God delivers them into the hands of men that did hate, loathe, and abhor the Jews, so much that they thought they could not be cruel enough against them.

Ver. 10.

And this explains what is above threatened. No history I know of that does mention any thing like this; barbarous Indians sell one another, and some report (as I take it) that children among them unnaturally murder aged parents, but they eat them not.

In the midst of thee; it may intimate their doing this publicly.

The whole remnant will I scatter: this was verified when they were fetched away who were left at the departure of the besiegers, and when the very small remnant with Johanan fled into Egypt.

Ver. 11.

As I live; a form of an oath becoming none but the living God, used often in Scripture and in this prophet.

Defiled; violated and profaned.

My sanctuary; my temple.

With all thy detestable things; not that all they did abominably was done in the temple; but either because they never heeded how they were polluted, but with legal pollutions on them came to the temple; or rather, brought in their idols, all their detestable

counterfeit gods, as **#Jer 7:30**, and, in **#2Ki 16:10 23:12,13**, their own altars, as Ahaz and Manasseh. All their idolatry and wickednesses, expressed by two words of like emphasis.

Diminish; lessen, break to pieces, cut up by the roots such stinking weeds.

Neither shall mine eye spare; there shall not be the least sign of pity in my eye, though I see all their misery.

Neither will I have pity; nor yet will I retain any affection of kindness for them; my heart, as my eye, shall be far from all pity and commiseration towards them.

Ver. 12.

From this to the end of the chapter we have a particular and more express declaration how God would execute these severe judgments upon this people.

With pestilence; no doubt, though it were not mentioned or threatened, as **#Jer 34:17**, we might conclude it could not but be in such a besieged city, where blood, putrifying carcasses, &c. annoy.

With famine; signified by fire, for it parcheth and withereth men.

Shall fall by the sword round about thee; as they did in their assailing the besiegers round about the walls, and as they did fall under the assault, when the enemy attempted to take the city, &c. See further **#Eze 5:12**. of this chapter.

I will draw out a sword after them; when the Babylonians' sword hath cut off all about Jerusalem, I will draw out my sword, and pursue the rest which Nebuchadnezzar could not reach.

Ver. 13.

Thus; in this terrible and relentless manner already declared.

Mine anger; my provoked justice, not passion, shall be executed to the full of that I intend and have spoken.

My fury; after the manner of man is this spoken, and implies the great and hot displeasure of the Lord.

To rest; my bowels were troubled how to spare, and yet to punish, but now I will rest from such strugglings between my mercy and my justice; this shall be glorified, and I will be at ease.

I will be comforted; I did what in reason they could expect, and more than I was bound to, for their preservation; but nothing would prevail. O Israel, thou art destroyed, but it is my satisfaction thou hast destroyed thyself, and canst not charge it on me.

They shall know; these ruined ones by sad experience shall know.

In my zeal; in that indignation against your sins which the love of my own glory stirred up within me. In my provoked jealousy I spake, and will act against a persisting, perfidious, and adulterous wife, and it shall be known when I have finished my work.

Ver. 14.

Judgments should empty the land of men that might till and manure it, and so your fruitful land shall be turned and continued a waste and desolate land.

A reproach, #Jer 24:9 29:18,22; a reproach or curse; men should taunt at them, and, in wishing the worst they can, wish their enemies like the Jews. So it was **#La 2:15,16.**

Ver. 15.

A reproach: see **#Eze 5:14.**

A taunt; a very proverb among men.

An instruction; sinners like thee shall learn by thy miseries what they may expect from me, and they shall acknowledge Divine justice in all.

When I shall execute judgments, in highest degrees of severity.

I the Lord; I, who can do it, because almighty; who may do it, because provoked; who will do it, because they repented not; I have spoken, and will do it, as **#Jer 25:9.**

Ver. 16.

I shall send; it is a messenger that goes not till God sends, and ever goes when he sendeth; he sends cleanness of teeth.

The evil arrows; either because thunder, tempests, locusts, blastings, &c., which cause famine, are sent by him, and fly like arrows; or because, like arrows shot forth, they pierce deep and kill.

Shall be for their destruction; is mortal and destructive in its nature.

To destroy you; that it may be sure to destroy and attain that effect, I design it for that very end. To make sure work against such,

I will increase the famine, either by sweeping away the little supplies expected, or continuing it longer than ordinary. Or, I will summon in penury as an army against you.

Break your staff of bread; withdraw the strengthening property of your' bread. See **#Eze 4:16**.

Ver. 17.

Evil beasts; Heb. *evil beast*: either the king of Babylon, which, like a ravenous and insatiable beast, tore and devoured all. Or, literally, lions, bears, &c., which are one of his four sore judgments, **#Eze 14:21**.

Bereave thee, of your children, friends, and your own life; when you flee to mountains and caves, for fear of the Chaldees, where you seek your safety you shall find your death, and be torn to pieces. Thy land shall be the common road and highway for pestilence and blood, as the Hebrew denotes, and they shall lodge in thy cities, in Jerusalem, as if they were the appointed receptacles for these guests. Here are the four sore plagues which God wastes nations with, all sent out against the Jews, and their commission signed from heaven with a witness, Ourselves. I have spoken it, saith the Lord.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 6

The judgement of Israel for their idolatry, **#Eze 6:1-7**. A remnant shall be saved, **#Eze 6:8-10**. The prophet is directed to lament their abominations and calamities, **#Eze 6:11-14**.

Ver. 1.

The word of the Lord, this revelation or prophecy, came in the sixth year of Jeconiah's captivity, on the twenty-first day (being the sabbath day) of the fifth month, a twelvemonth and fortnight after the first vision, **#Eze 1:2**, and probably it came so soon as three hundred and ninety days were ended.

Ver. 2.

Son of man; see **#Eze 2:1**; put thyself towards the mountains, in a posture of one who is going to speak, look toward them; hereby (as Isaiah did, **#Isa 12**) upbraiding the deafness of the Jews, whom he now left to speak to mountains. Or rather, to the inhabitants of the mountains, who were secure in their fastnesses; and great idolaters, who chose the high hills, &c. for places of idolatrous worship. Israel; the common name to all that now remained since the ten tribes were captivated by Shalmaneser.

Prophecy against them; declare my judgments against them.

Ver. 3.

Ye mountains; ye that dwell in the mountains, ye secure, fearless, and rude mountaineers, hear and consider what God speaks against you, for thus saith the Lord God to you, on mountains and hills of Israel ye dwell and commit idolatry.

To the rivers; to those who either by rivers' sides worshipped idols, or who accounted rivers among their gods.

To the valleys; to those that worshipped their idols in low and shadowy valleys. In all these places the Jews had either their several gods, or performed a several kind of worship, or, contrary to command, worshipped their God and set up altars to him there.

A sword upon you; that shall slay you inhabitants, waste your mountains and valleys, destroy your altars, and abolish your worship.

I, by the enemy, will destroy your high places; places of your idolatrous or superstitious worship; by the sword of those that serve idols your idols shall be destroyed, and you with them, unless ye repent.

Ver. 4.

Your altars; God's altar was only at Jerusalem, these were their altars.

Desolate; no priest to attend, no sacrifice offered, nor a votary come to them.

Images; statues, and perhaps the particular images made to the sun, as the Hebrew word including heat may signify. Or the open places on the tops of your houses, where you worshipped the sun, **#2Ki 23:5**; and **#Isa 27:9**, mentions this piece of idolatry.

Broken; either torn down from their places to be carried captives, which was a part of heathen conquerors' insolence, or torn in pieces in contempt, and to be destroyed.

I will cast down; my hand shall guide the pursuing enemy, who shall slay your men before the altars of those idols they worshipped formerly, and to whom, as senseless as the idols, they flee for refuge, as perhaps Sennacherib did, **#Isa 37:38**.

Ver. 5.

Lay before their idols; expose to open shame, while the carcasses of idolaters recall to mind their shameful folly and sin.

Carcasses; either of such as are newly slain, or such as the Chaldeans did dig out of their graves, in spite, contempt, or covetousness, hoping to find some costly ornaments buried with them. So God fulfills that of **#Le 26:30**.

I will scatter your bones, as unworthy to be laid up in earth, who had so highly provoked the God of heaven; they are made dung who served dunghill gods. You shall thus be a defilement to your supposed sacred altars and worship, and an abhorrence to beholders.

Ver. 6.

Mountains and hills with their altars were doomed, now the cities that were of less note than Jerusalem seem particularly to be threatened, because they were idolatrous; according to the number of cities were there gods, **#Jer 11:13**. High places and altars set up to the honour of those idols shall be laid waste, and the idols of those lesser cities shall be utterly destroyed. The images or statues that were usually fastened on some pedestal, somewhat high, shall be cut down; and all your costly works for idols, and your pompous preparation for them, shall, with your cities, be abolished for ever, as your sins and abominations deserve.

Ver. 7.

When the slain shall fall thus in your sight, you shall know two things you would not regard before.

1. That idols are vanity and snares.

2. That I am the Lord, who do avenge the quarrel of my covenant. Or, may it not be turned, And the profane shall fall, i.e. the idols, and altars; and other implements of idol-worship, made holy by unholy men, shall be profaned and east down, defiled and trod under foot in the sight of the Jews, as God threatens; then they shall know God is the only Lord and God. I conjecture at this by Ezekiel's being among the Chaldeans some years, who had gotten somewhat of their tongue; and the word here used, which is rendered slain, and I render profane, doth in the Chaldee signify profane, and is so rendered, #Eze 21:25. If so rendered here, it will better suit with the foregoing verse, and more fitly sum up that discourse and close it. See #Eze 6:10,12.

Ver. 8.

It is the Lord that preserves a remnant, the enemies' rage would destroy all; and it is an act of deliberate and voluntary resolution, not by chance, but by choice.

A remnant; some few in comparison with the great multitudes that are cut off. Though he promiseth a handful shall remain, yet it shall be in that condition that they are little more than escaped, a poor and small remnant left, as #Zep 3:12.

Ye shall be scattered; either by your own choice, shifting from country to country; or else, dissipated by the order of the proud oppressing conqueror, who will scatter families, lest they should be a little comfort to one another, and great jealousy to him; he will scatter to prevent conspiracies.

Ver. 9.

They that escape; some of them, not every one of them, for several of the escaped did not bethink themselves, as appears, #Jer 47\$ 48\$ 49\$.

Shall remember me; my precepts which they violated, my mercies which they abused, my threats which they despised, my promises which they refused, my prophets whom they persecuted,

my judgments which have executed; and shall consider and return, and seek me in their affliction.

Among the nations: in their own land they forgot and sinned, in a strange land they shall remember and weep; so the remnant is bettered by afflictions. At liberty they were captives to sin and idols; when in captivity they shall shake off that bondage, and become my servants.

Because I am broken, &c. Here we meet very different reading. The Chaldee paraphrase and Syriac version read it actively, so does the Latin Vulgate, because, or when, I have broken, &c.; and if this vary from the grammatical construction, yet it carrieth very good sense, and agreeable to the foregoing words. Their whorish hearts would still have forgotten God, if he had not broken their hearts with judgments; but they remembered when broken, and this breaking was the occasion or cause of their remembering God. Others read this passively, as our version, and as the Hebrew form most usually beareth, I am broken. It is an allusion to a misused husband whom a treacherous wife hath broken; either,

1. His peace and content.
2. His love and tenderness.
3. His patience and forbearance.
4. His purposes.
5. His offers and promises. So that, as overcome with grief and anger, he doth, contrary to his natural disposition, lay aside his courting her love, and in his jealousy takes revenge, and then she bethinks herself. So here.

Their whorish heart; their heart of whoredom, i.e. idolatrous heart, which was full of that sin, addicted to it, delighted in it, and wedded to it.

Hath departed from me: idolatrous hearts do actually depart from God, as an adulterous wife actually departs from her husband.

With their eyes: as it vexeth a husband to see his wife fixing her eyes with delight on the adulterer, and turning them with scorn from him, as this breaks the husband's patience; so in this case,

Israel's eyes were to idols, and delighted in them, expected help from them, were ready to serve them; all which broke their Husband's, i.e. God's, patience, and provoked his severe revenges.

Loathe themselves; with a mixture of grief towards God offended, of indignation against themselves offending, of abhorrence of the offence, and shame before all for it, shall they show their repentance.

For the evils; wickednesses, or, as #Ps 32:5,

iniquities of sin; the deepest and darkest part of sin, the complicated evils that were in each act.

In all their abominations: it is a hypocrite's repentance which is but for some; this of the reserved remnant shall be sound, it is for all abominations, for all kinds of their abominations.

Ver. 10.

They shall know; see, acknowledge, and believe it too.

The Lord; the only one whom they should worship or depend on, who can claim their hearts, their fear, love, and trust, as rightfully due; just in my ways, true both to threats and promises.

In vain; either,

1. Without cause; the sufferers gave him just cause to pronounce all that evil. Or,

2. Without effect, and to no purpose; I told them that the evils I would bring should make them know that I am the Lord, and these sufferers at last find this effect wrought in them. Their sins were the cause, and their instruction is the effects of their sufferings.

Ver. 11.

Here are two actions commanded, and both signify a mixture of affection in the person, as wonder and amazement, indignation and displeasure, grief and sorrow, pity and commiseration, all which are required in the prophet, to show both the evil of sin he did see, and the evil of sufferings which he did foresee, on Israel.

Say, Alas; tell them what thou meanest by such unusual gestures, speak with grief; Alas!

Evil abominations; sins in full growth, ripe to the harvest, make him cry out.

By the sword, &c.; grievous miseries coming on his people and on his kindred. The house of Israel must fall, be ruined, laid desolate, and carried captive.

Ver. 12.

Far off; either by his early and voluntary flight from his own country; or, he that is carried away captive, and sent by the enemy into a far country.

Pestilence; the arrow I will shoot after them.

He that is near; who stays in his own country, or dwells near to Jerusalem, or would retire to it when the Babylonians approach, but is taken before he can get thither.

He that remaineth; that surviveth those slain, but is shut up and besieged where he sought safety.

I will accomplish my fury; I will satisfy my just displeasure, and give them full measures of punishment; I will fulfil my threats.

Ver. 13.

Then shall ye know: see **#Eze 6:3-7,10**.

Upon every high hill, &c.; each of which was accounted a fit place for such superstitious rites, and in all which some or other of you did commit idolatry, and, shame to speak it, burnt sweets, rich spices, which God had given them, to dunghill gods, stinking idols, which the devil had commended to them, **#De 32:17**.

Ver. 14.

Stretch out my hand: this noteth the greatness of the blow, God striketh hard when he stretcheth out his hand, and therefore you find a mighty hand joined with outstretched arm.

Desolate; a desolation, (a Hebraism,) for most desolate.

Yea, more desolate; and a desolation greater or above the desolation of that most horrid wilderness of Moab, which is here called

Diblah, mentioned in a dual form, **#Nu 33:46 Jer 48:22**, as some think; and described by Moses, **#De 8:15**. It was that wherein the

fiery serpents so much annoyed Israel. Or, I will lay their habitations waste and desolate, from Jerusalem unto Diblath, the borders of Moab, and the land all along shall be as desolate as that very wilderness. So the Lord will turn a most fruitful land into barrenness for the sins of the people.

They shall have; some instructed and bettered shall own me and fear me, the rest convinced and astonished shall confess that God hath done this great thing against them.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 7

The final desolation of Israel, #Eze 7:1-15. The mournful repentance of them that escape, #Eze 7:16-19. The enemies are permitted to defile the sanctuary, because of the abominations practised in it, #Eze 7:20-22. Under the type of a chain is showed the miserable captivity of all orders of men, #Eze 7:23-27.

Ver. 1.

This introduceth a continuation and confirmation, with some illustration of what judgments were denounced in the former chapter.

Ver. 2.

Unto the land; the inhabitants who had sinned, and also to the land wherein they sinned.

An end, end of God's patience, of the peace and welfare of the people, and of the plenty, beauty, and desirableness of the land itself, is come, or is near at hand.

The end; that dreadful end I threatened against you, and which you will find in the execution of the menaces pronounced against you by the former and latter prophets.

Upon the four corners; it is an overflowing misery, that spreads over all the land.

Ver. 3.

There shall be no more delays, mine anger is upon thee. It is I who send the Chaldeans, the pestilence, famine, &c.; these are commissioned by me.

Will judge, punish,

thee according to thy way, as thou deservest.

Recompense, Heb. *give*, unto thee as the wages of thy iniquities, or lay all the guilt and all the punishment of all thy sins upon thee.

Ver. 4.

Mine eye: see **#Eze 5:11**.

Thine abominations, not only the punishment and smart, but the vileness, loathsomeness, and hatefulness of thy sins, shall be,

in the midst of thee; ever before thee, and openly known to others also, or shall reach thy very heart. See **#Eze 6:10,13**.

Ver. 5.

An evil and sore affliction, one misery enough to ruin the whole, so that there will be no need of another. Or, as the Chaldee paraphrase, one evil after another; and this bespeaks the extreme sadness of their condition who suffer under this evil. Open your eyes, you will see it is at the doors and breaking in upon you.

Ver. 6.

Thus frequently is it repeated to show the certainty of the thing, the heaviness of the judgment, the great apprehensions they should have of it, and yet the great security they are under. God's vengeance seems to slumber, and sinners dream it will never awake, but here the prophet assureth the sinners of Jerusalem, and its people, that God hath awakened his vengeance, which now watcheth to take the first opportunity, or rather to hasten it.

Ver. 7.

The morning; the word is variously rendered, and accordingly variously applied. It is, say some, of a Chaldee original, and signifies to cry out, to encompass, and to rise betimes in the morning, very fitly applicable here. With the morning star, which ushers in the light, thine enemies and thy sorrows are risen, have compassed thee about, and the cry of their shoutings, and the cry of thy distressed people, is raised; a long day of sorrows threatens thee, is upon thee, upon every one that dwelleth in the land. The day of trouble is near; as the day near to the morning, so near are thy troubles, thy great. perplexed, and tumultuous troubles, as the word implies, like that **#Isa 22:5 Zep 1:14-17**.

The sounding again; either it means the echo, which mountains make, and is an empty sound, makes great noise, and only startles

children; the noise and report of your calamities are real, yea dreadful. Or else thus; on the mountains were your vineyards, and in vintage time your grape gatherers were wont to shout for joy, and fill the neighbourhood with their joys, but no such soundings shall you hear now. Or it may allude to the music with which their idol worship was celebrated in mountains, high places, in valleys, & C, whence the sound was heard and echoed from hill to hill. Those soundings from the mountains shall cease, it is a long day of vengeance for those sins.

Ver. 8.

Shortly; or from a near distance, as well as in a short time, that the flood of my wrath may bear all down before it.

Pour out my fury; my wrath shall not be poured out as water from a cloud at mighty distance, but like the breaking out of the sea on the neighbouring villages, which swallows up houses, cattle, and men without remedy. See #Eze 5:13, and #Eze 7:3.

Ver. 9.

See #Eze 5:11.

According to thy ways, worse than the ways of heathens, and thy punishments shall be worse.

That are in the midst of thee; still thou retainest the old, and addest new abominations; these to this day are in thee, not hidden, but openly.

I am the Lord that smiteth; you look only to the hand and sword of the Chaldeans, but I will not cease till you feel and acknowledge my hand smiting, that you may accept punishment, repent, and return to me.

Ver. 10.

If you will open your eyes, you may see the lowering day of vengeance: see #Eze 7:7.

The rod hath blossomed: this and what follows may refer either,

1. To Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldeans, the rod of God's anger; they flourish, are strong and heavy, like to last too long in their strength to break Israel. Pride hath budded; as they flourish in strength, they exceed in pride and arrogance, which buddeth forth

in the haughty designs they lay of raising themselves on the ruins of all countries.

Ver. 11.

Violence; with fierceness, which is their natural temper, a bitter and hasty nation, #Hab 1:6; with eagerness and impetuous vigour executing, and with injustice and violence oppressing all.

Is risen up; is grown up to be, though a rod to punish bad men, yet to be worse than those it punisheth; in brief, you may expect the very worst from the power, pride, and violence of those I am now letting in upon you. Or,

2. It may refer to Israel; thus your tribe (or rod, the same word) blossometh, but it is in sin, and that in pride and violence, so grown that it is a most wicked rod of injustice and oppression to your neighbours, brethren, servants, &c., as Jeremiah, Moses, and other prophets as well as Ezekiel complained; and now, your sins thus ripe, your sorrows must be very near, as it is not many months between the budding of the tree, and the ripening and gathering of the fruit.

None of them: this also is fairly applicable to both Chaldeans and Jews; the Jews should be utterly wasted first for their sins, which God will punish by this violent, proud, mighty enemy, and afterwards he will destroy root and branch of that mighty oppressor; and so sad shall the sufferings of both be, that the living shall not bewail their dead friends, because they shall judge the dead in better case than the living. And though the words may have this double aspect, yet I take them to refer principally and first to the Jews, and their near approaching sorrows.

Ver. 12.

The time is come: see #Eze 7:2,3,6,7. Though the buyer honestly possess what his money purchased, yet let him not hug himself in the thought of his riches.

Nor the seller mourn: men usually part with their estates grieving that they must transmit their right to others, but let sellers now think how little a while they could have kept them, and how little time they shall keep them who have bought them. Wrath; such wrath from God, an offended Judge, and from insolent enemies, that buyer and seller shall find their state much alike.

Ver. 13.

He that now selleth is of that age that can scarce promise himself to live till the seventy years' captivity expire.

Shall not return; either out of captivity, or at the year of jubilee; he shall never with grief behold another in possession of that he was forced to sell. Nor doth this contradict Jeremiah, who promiseth a return, for he foretelleth the return to children and posterity, Ezekiel denies the present generation shall return; Jeremiah speaks of a return to the land of Canaan, Ezekiel denieth a return to ancient particular rights, estates, and possessions.

Although they were yet alive; for if any should survive the captivity, yet the conqueror wasting and destroying all would confound all distinct titles and ancient boundaries.

The evils foreseen and threatened are designed against all the multitude of Israel, whose sin and impenitence have involved them in these judgments and miseries, as I am assured by vision, which cannot fail of accomplishment, which shall not return vain and not performed. Nor shall any one man of them all be able to fortify himself and secure his state against these threats by his obstinacy and sin, or by any sinful contrivances.

Ver. 14.

The house of Israel have published their resolution for war, and summoned in all fit for arms, if the words be read as here. Or if in the imperative mood, Blow ye, &c., they are a smart irony against the preparations the Jews can possibly make for repelling the enemy, and defending their city.

To make all ready; persons fit for the war and all warlike provisions, a thing necessary in case of invasions, but in their case a vain attempt. There is not a man going to the war, (as the Hebrew,) all are backward in this danger.

My wrath; that displeasure which takes away their prudence and courage, that these men of might sleep, and none finds his hands or weapons, **#Isa 29:14.**

Ver. 15.

Without; in the countries.

Within; in the besieged city.

With the sword of the Chaldean soldier. Shall devour him; shall eat him up; you, O Jews! shall be food for unsatiable pestilence and famine. Heavy tidings to sinful Jerusalem!

Ver. 16.

As we read the words they are a prediction, some shall escape, and a promise of some mercy in the escape. But if we read them as we may, And

flee ye that are escaped of them, in the imperative, they are a command to, or direction for, such as would escape, like that **#Jer 21:9**.

On the mountains; wandering out of their proper place, and uneasy, like doves that are frightened out of their nests, and fly among the wilder sort of doves, which give them trouble and danger, such will be the state of escaped ones among savage idolaters.

Mourning; bemoaning themselves, and making a mournful noise, **#Na 2:7**.

For his iniquity; either for the punishment of their iniquity, so the worst of those that escape; or for their iniquity, cause of their punishment, so the best among them; or for both together: the mourning, though on different motives, yet should be universal, every one weeping.

Ver. 17.

All hands with which they should hold the instruments of fortification, the weapons of war, the tools of working, and that should carry away their goods, that they shall not be able to work at the ramparts, nor fight in the battle, nor earn-their bread, or carry away their substance on which they might subsist. All knees, which bowed to idols, shall now fall under the punishments of idolatry, shall be neither strong to stand in battle, or to flee from the drawn sword: and this weakness was on all, as it is twice repeated.

Ver. 18.

It is a very general usage in the Eastern parts in deepest sorrows and distresses to put sackcloth on, and to gird it close to their bodies.

Horror; either dreadful apprehensions of growing evils, or continued shakings from impressions of what formerly they felt, according to **#Le 26:16,36**.

Cover them; be on every side, no side safety, or quiet, and confidence. *Shame* of disappointment, which breeds consternation; and shame of conscious guilt and unbecoming deportment, which fills the countenance as much with blushing as it fills the conscience with guilt and sin.

Baldness; either by pulling off the hair amidst their sorrows, or cutting off their hair in token of greatest mourning, **#Isa 15:2 Jer 7:29 48:37 Am 8:10**.

Ver. 19.

They shall cast their silver; either,

1. The Jews themselves, that they be the lighter to flee, and might stop the pursuer, whom they hope silver may stop a while, and give them some space to get away; or, might occasion quarrels among soldiers of fortune, which might set them one against another till the distressed Jews could get away from them all. Or,

2. The Chaldeans, who in this day of their own rage and God's wrath against the Jews did (as the Medes and Persians shall, **#Isa 13:17**) not regard silver or gold, **#Pr 11:4**. Or, 3. Because Nebuchadnezzar might possibly reserve it all to himself, having those vast thoughts of enlarging his empire by arms; which could not be done without great treasures.

Removed; carried away into Babylon, to the royal treasury; or laid aside as despised, when offered a ransom of their life; or hid by the Jews in polluted places, which perhaps the Jew might think would be securest from searching, forasmuch as the Chaldean knew their law forbade them to touch any unclean tiring.

Silver and gold shall not be able to deliver them: this is the sum of it, these treasures shall stand them in no stead. If the self-flattering Jews should think much silver and gold might ransom their life when the city is taken, the prophet removes this confidence, and tells them they should not have enough to buy bread to fill their own bellies.

It is the stumbling-block of their iniquity; this silver and gold they valued too much, coveted immeasurably, abused to pride, luxury, idolatry, and oppression; this that they stumbled at and fell into sin, this now they stumble at and fall into deepest misery and danger.

Ver. 20.

The beauty of his ornament; their riches, the ornament of a nation, their silver, gold, &c. Or rather the temple and ark, and all that pertained to it, which was the beauty and glory of that nation, and they accounted it so.

He set it in majesty; God commanded it should be stately, beautiful, and rich; very magnificent, said Solomon, great, #2Ch 2:5, and God gave the riches with which it was built, #1Ch 29:11-16.

They made the images; either set up their idols which God so much abhorred in his temple, and provoked him with spiritual adulteries to his face, as if a wife should commit adultery before the eye of her husband; or, made their idols, those abominable images, those detestable things, of the silver and gold which I adorned them with.

I have set it far from them; I have parted between them; sent them from the temple, and their gold and silver from them.

Ver. 21.

I will give it, my temple,

into the hands, power and possession,

of the strangers, foreigners, who by direction of my law were excluded coming to it, they now shall enter into it, and take the riches of it as lawful prey.

To the wicked: this description of these men, strangers by their distance of place, and the worst of men on earth, by their proud, cruel, and fierce disposition.

Pollute it; enter, spoil, tear down, and use the temple as a vile place, and make no difference between this and other places. This I think the proper sense; some say the text speaks of the rich idols which the idolaters accounted most holy, and on which they laid

out their treasure, and which now the Chaldeans should plunder and pollute.

Ver. 22.

My face will I turn; either from the Jews, who cry under such violence and profaneness; or, from the Chaldeans who act it, neither relieving the one nor restraining the other.

My secret place; either,

1. My enclosed land of Judea. Or,

2. My city Jerusalem. Or,

3. The temple. And,

4. The holy of holies: all which the Babylonian conquerors trampled under their conquering feet. The robbers; the soldiers, who in truth robbed the temple and here have their true style given them, are robbers that used the temple and its consecrated gifts without any reverence or respect. They should break all open, and rush into the places which Jews, Levites, and priests might not enter.

Ver. 23.

A chain; either to signify that like criminals they should be brought in chains before God their Judge; or, as guilty and condemned, should be led away in chains; or else, as captives in chains, carried away in triumph, because murders and oppressions abounded in them, or because the

crimes which deserved death abounded among them.

Ver. 24.

The worst; the most violent, proud, and bloody men; such the Chaldeans showed themselves.

Possess; not only dwell in their houses, but by right of conquest account them their own, and descending to theirs after them.

The pomp; the excellency, magnificence, and glory, whatever they boasted of; either literally, the pride, or figuratively, the temple that the Jews gloried in.

Of the strong; of the Jews, who thought Jerusalem too well fortified by art and nature, and the Divine presence, it being the city of God, ever to be overthrown.

Their holy places; all that pertains to their religion, and exercise of it, persons, places, things, which now by their abuse of them are theirs, not mine, shall be polluted.

Ver. 25.

Destruction; such as an angry, provoked power makes when it cuts off all root and branch.

They shall seek peace; either by inquiring of prophets; or rather, suing to Nebuchadnezzar, whom, after so many affronts, they will attempt to pacify.

There shall be none; no such thing can be had: they should seek it elsewhere, and appease their God, who could give them peace; as for the Chaldean, he will not, because God doth not.

Ver. 26.

Mischief upon mischief; loss upon loss, one sorrow on the neck of another.

Rumour upon rumour; dreadful news one post after another of the enemies' threats, preparations, marches, successes, and cruelties, wounding the heart of the stoutest. In this multiplied perplexity they will inquire, it is likely, of their false prophets, hating the true, whom if they consult, they will not like their answer. Or rather, there shall be no prophet, as **#Ps 74:9**; no revelation from heaven for them.

But the law shall perish; Heb.

and, rather than

but. When they consult the priest, their ordinary director by the law, alas! if any remain, they are ignorant of the law, nor have they sacrifices to bring to them to offer unto God. Religious men can afford them no comfort, nor shall their senators know what to advise.

Ver. 27.

The king, Zedekiah, shall mourn, droop and despair, and every magistrate shall despond. The hands of the people: see **#Eze 7:17**.

Shall be troubled; hang down, and melt away. I will no more forbear what they have deserved, I will repay, and they shall know my vengeance.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 8

Ezekiel is brought in a vision of God to Jerusalem, **#Eze 8:1-4**, and showed the image of jealousy set up in the temple, **#Eze 8:5,6**, the worship of the ancients in their chambers of imagery, **#Eze 8:7-12**, the mourners for Tammuz, **#Eze 8:13,14**, and the worshippers of the sun, **#Eze 8:15,16**. God's wrath for their idolatry, **#Eze 8:17,18**.

Ver. 1.

In the sixth year of Jeconiah's captivity. In the sixth month; they had been almost seven years in captivity, it was Elul, or our August.

In the fifth day of the month; the sabbath day, as **#Eze 1:2**.

As I sat in my house; abode in my house, probably he lay on his side, the three hundred and ninety days not yet expired.

The elders of Judah, the chief of those that were now in captivity, sat before me; they were come either to spend the sabbath in religious exercises, such as the present state of affairs permitted, to hear somewhat from the prophet's mouth, expounding the law or declaring their duty, or to inquire what would become of their brethren in Jerusalem, whether they should be subdued and captivated, or whether there were any good news for them from heaven, and how they should behave themselves in these sad times.

The hand of the Lord; the Spirit of prophecy exerted itself with a mighty Divine power, which enlightened me at that very time, and in that very place: see **#Eze 1:8**.

Ver. 2.

A likeness of a man; that man whom he had seen upon the throne, i.e. of Christ.

The appearance of fire: see **#Eze 1:26-28**. This fire denotes the wrath of God against Jerusalem, and it is observed it was fire downward, wrath already coming down upon the Jews.

The appearance of brightness, to signify the majesty and glory of Christ. See more **#Eze 1:27**.

Ver. 3.

He put forth a hand; Christ. This was acted visionally, not corporally or actually, and so all that is here spoken of to the end of the 16th verse.

The spirit; which indeed is the hand which took him by the head, gently, but with mighty strength.

Lifted me up; very probably in the sight of the elders who were with him.

Between the earth and the heaven; he seemed to fly as a swift bird through the air.

Brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem; carried me to see Jerusalem, where in visions strange and glorious I beheld what was done there. This was no delusion, but a revelation from heaven; though all was done in an ecstasy, yet he was fully assured of every particular he saw done in the temple, whither he was carried in his spirit, not body, by the hand or Spirit of Christ.

To the door of the inner gate; to the door of the gate of the inner court, or court of the priests, **#2Ch 4:9**. The temple courts had four gates towards the four quarters of the world, and this was the north gate, which opened into the great court, where Ahaz had set up his Damascene altar, **#2Ki 16:11**, and where the idols were set up too.

The image, Baal, which Manasseh had set up, **#2Ki 21:7**, and Josiah had destroyed, and succeeding kings had again set up.

Of jealousy; because it was so notorious an affront to God, who had married Israel to himself, that above all other it provoked him to anger against this people.

Ver. 4.

The glory of God: see **#Eze 1:28 3:23**.

Was there; whither he carried me, and there it showed me what I saw.

According to the vision that I saw; like that; which gave further confirmation to the prophet, and encouraged him in his work and call.

Ver. 5.

Then; when he had in vision brought me hither.

Lift up thine eyes; observe diligently and exactly every thing which thou mayst see northward first.

The gate of the altar; so called, because Ahaz had removed it from the middle of the court, where by God's command it was placed by Solomon; but now Ahaz setting it near this north gate, it gave name to the gate or possibly because of an altar erected there to some idol by Manasseh.

Image of jealousy: see #Eze 8:3, &c.

In the entry; in the very midst of the court, in the very passage to the temple, to affront the worship of God.

Ver. 6.

Seest thou? dost thou observe?

What they do; the inhabitants, the generality of the Jews.

The great abominations; the notorious idolatries.

Here; in this court, in view of my temple, and where all that come, as most did, this way to worship me see it, so shameless is it!

That I should go; not that they designed this, but eventually it was so, and in all reason could be no otherwise expected.

From my sanctuary; that I chose, but am not confined to. That I shall leave not by local distance, but by rejecting and casting it off, and laying it desolate.

Ver. 7.

The door; the second door, for there were two in the north side.

The court; #Eze 8:3. Some say it was the court into which the Levites only, not the people, might enter, and round about which were the chambers of the priests.

When I looked; probably being at the door of the court, he might espy such a hole in the opposite wall that was toward the temple, whereon were built the treasury chamber, and chambers for tithes, and for other necessities about the temple worship, and for the priests' lodgings, in which these abominations were acted.

A hole in the wall, or little blind window, through which he might see somewhat, though not much, of what was done within.

Ver. 8.

The hole he saw in the wall was not quite through, it was not great enough for him to go through, therefore he is commanded to dig one large enough to come at the door mentioned in this verse.

A door; some very private door by which the idolatrous priests entered into the chamber of their imagery, to perform idolatrous worship to their images; the door of the treasury.

Ver. 9.

Go in: this was to secure him; he need fear neither the violence which idolaters usually show against those that discover them, nor yet any legal impurity by coming so near these abominable things.

Behold; look diligently, that thou mayst particularly reprove these, and denounce my just judgments against them.

The wicked abominations; the most abominable wickednesses; these are loathsome in their nature, and multiplied in number before me.

Do here, Heb. *are doing here:* before the evil day appeared so near, they did, and under the approach of judgments they are still doing at this day, in this very place, under the walls of my temple.

Ver. 10.

So I went in, according to the vision.

Of creeping things; of such creatures as the Egyptians, or any others with whom the Jews had acquaintance, did worship.

Abominable beasts; the beasts are here called abominable, because idolaters had abused them to unlawful uses, making idols of them.

The idols of the house of Israel; the Jews had multiplied to themselves idols of their own, besides those borrowed from their neighbours. Or they are called

the idols of the house of Israel, because they had adopted them, and because Israel's idolatry was so much more brutish and provoking than that of the other nations, who had not the law of God given to them as to the Jews.

Portrayed upon the wall: possibly they did thus picture their idols on the wall, vainly thinking this was not a breach of the law, which forbade graven images, and molten images; but every likeness of any thing made for to worship is forbidden, and such pictures are to be destroyed, #Nu 33:52. Possibly they had the same set of idols, by different givers, and by different painters, drawn on the walls of the chamber or house of idols.

Ver. 11.

There stood, offering incense before the idols.

Seventy men; either the sanhedrim, or council of seventy, who should have preserved religion pure and untainted, to which their office bound them; or else seventy of the more aged heads of the tribes or families, who should have been examples by their pure and constant affection to true religion; but these are ringleaders in this idolatry.

Ancients, by age or office, or both.

In the midst of them; either accompanying them in their idolatry, or rather as chief of the council or sanhedrim; in the chair, the seat of the chief, prefect, or principal next to the high priest.

Shaphan, mentioned #2Ki 22:9, as most likely; a person that seems forward in reforming under Josiah, and his son as forward now in corrupting the worship of God.

Every man; all were actors in this idolatry, and either priests to these idols, or very bigots in the service.

A thick cloud; or abundance of a cloud, or rich (as the word among rabbinical senses) cloud; or, since the word whence this comes signifies to pray or supplicate, a cloud of incense offered

with the prayers of these deluded idolaters, who were used to put both together.

Incense; whether simple and uncompounded, or compound, it was always of sweets, and very costly too; indeed idolatry, as adultery, will be lavish.

Ver. 12.

Hast thou seen? observed and thoroughly considered.

The ancients: see #Eze 8:11.

Do in the dark; whether ashamed to act openly what was most absurd, or whether out of blindness doting in secret on what heathens secretly derided, though for interest they acted it openly; owning that religion which awed the people among them, and deriding it at home. But idolatrous Jews blush in public, and retire into corners to be idolaters, as thou seest in this chamber.

Every man; every one of those ancients, for still God had his remnant that kept close to God.

In the chambers; secret closet, or bed-chamber.

They say; the most shameless would give a reason for their unreasonable practices.

The Lord, Jehovah, the everlasting and almighty God,

seeth us not: either they deny his providence, and act what they durst not if they thought the Lord knew and noted it, as if they accounted Jehovah no better than idols, that have eyes but see not; or else they deny God's care of them and their affairs, traduce him, as if he minded them not, and therefore they must choose some or other god for patron who would better help them than he had done.

The Lord hath forsaken the earth: this seems to explain the meaning of that,

he seeth us not; and so with atheism more than ordinary they would cast the blame of choosing other gods on God himself.

Ver. 13.

Thou shalt see, represented in this vision,

greater abominations; either because added to all the rest, or because some circumstances in these make them more abominable than what before was represented. Or it may be taken for very great, as when the word is applied to cities, **#De 1:28 6 10 9:1**; to stones, **#Jos 10:11,27 1Ki 7:10**; David's wars, **#1Ch 22:8**; kingdoms, **#Jer 28:8**; and to the marvellous works of God, **#Job 5:9 9:10 Ps 136:4**; and generally our version keeps to the positive degree, though here they render it by the comparative, and in the 6th verse of this chapter the very selfsame expression is rendered great (not greater) abominations. We need not then perplex our reader with a long discourse, to show wherein these latter sins are greater than the former mentioned; they are all very great.

They do; now they are doing these things; instead of worshipping the true God on the sabbath, as he required all his people, the leaders of the people are on the sabbath of the Lord offering incense to their detestable idols.

Ver. 14.

He brought me, not by real and corporal change of place, but in vision and by representation.

Of the gate of the outer court, or court of the women, so called because they were allowed to come into it, as were all the laity of the Jews: but it is more likely the gate of the inner court, the court of the priests, next to the house of God, whither none save priests might come; but in this very great corruption of the state others were admitted into it, which makes this sin the greater.

Towards the north; he enters at first by the north gate, and so passeth on to what places were next to the temple on that side.

There sat women: contrary to the law were they come thither, led by their blindest, because the vilest and most impudent, superstition, and waiting (expressed by

sitting) ready to commit most lewd wickednesses, as part of their obscene and beastly rites. Weeping: this is the only part which is specified of their irreligious religion, commemorating with tears an infamously lustful and unclean whoremonger, or votary of Venus, snatched from her by an unhappy wound of a boar, say some; this weeping implieth all the beastly rites of that idol.

Tammuz; a magician, say some; a handsome young man, but notorious for love of women, say others; an adulterer (say some) slain by his brother, king of Egypt, and mangled in pieces, whose torn members were thrown into the river, but gathered up by the fond adulteresses, and rites of worship fitted to so lewd an idol; whose adulteries, lascivious practices, and immodest gestures these she priests acted over before the idol with men of like lewdness, of whom what they received, as rewards of their prostituting themselves, was offered to Venus. By this means God's temple was turned into a lewd stew.

Ver. 15.

Besides these thou hast seen, thou shalt again see great abominations. Or if the expression be strictly comparative, then these latter wickednesses may be accounted greater, because acted in a more sacred place.

Ver. 16.

The inner court; the inmost, that which was next to the temple, called here the Lord's house.

At the door of the temple: before he saw abominations in the gates of the courts, now he is come to the very house itself.

The porch; that stately, large porch, beautified with the high, curious, and mighty brass pillars, Jachin and Boaz, of which see #1Ki 6:3 7:15,21.

The altar; the brazen altar for burnt-offerings, which was placed in the court before the front of the temple, and is here represented in its proper place, #2Ki 16:14. This is not contradictory to #Eze 8:5, which speaks of the place where Ahaz had wickedly placed the altar, but this, #Eze 8:16, speaks of the same altar, as supposing it to be where it ought, as God commanded it should be, and Solomon placed it, #2Ch 8:12.

About five and twenty; an indefinite and undetermined number.

Five and twenty men; either some principal men, or else some priests. If these, the greater sin in them to turn idolaters; if the other, the idolatry committed by them in a place they should not have entered appears presumptuous and greatly wicked.

With their backs toward the temple; in contempt of God, with an open and designed abrenunciation of God and his worship.

Worshipped the sun: though God had prohibited this, **#De 17:3**, with **#De 4:17-19**; yet, in imitation of the Chaldees, Persians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, and the Eastern idolaters, these Jews turn their back on God, who created the sun, and worship the creature in contempt of the Creator.

Ver. 17.

Then; after the prophet had seen all, and had time to consider all he saw.

He said unto me; God appeals to the prophet. Doth the house of Judah think these no sins, or but little sins, or that I account not those provocations to anger? Do they so sottishly undervalue me and my law and ordinances, &c.? These idolaters, as others of the same stamp, are great oppressors; every where their oppressions may be found in great and high degrees.

Violence; all injustice is here meant towards all sorts of men, whom they first despise, and next destroy.

Have returned; from injustice against man, they return to impiety against God.

They put the branch to their nose; consecrate first these branches in the sun, and then next prize them, as what had touched the idol, and was bettered by it. Or, perhaps, took some branches out of the garland, wherewith they decked the idol, the altar, the victim, or themselves; and as the Orgyasts, i.e. worshippers of Bacchus, did wave their Thyrsus, the stalk or stem wreathed with ivy about it, carrying it in their hands whilst they danced, bowed their bodies, and often kissed the branches, so did these idolatrous Jews.

Ver. 18.

What I will do is greater than to be expressed; they with a furious heat for their idols provoked me, and I will with a just indignation provoke them, nay, destroy them.

Mine eye shall not spare: see **#Eze 7:4,8,9**.

Though they cry: the prophet doth not give it the name of praying, but it is a cry, a loud cry, after the manner of other idolaters, who think to be heard for the noise they make.

I will not hear them; yet doth not this at all prejudice the truth or the mercy of God to those that pray, nor may it discourage from the duty, but it should awaken us that we pray with heart, and not only cry loud with voice.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 9

The prophet in the vision seeth a mark set upon some, #Eze 9:1-4, and the destruction of all the rest, #Eze 9:5-7. God rejecteth his intercession, #Eze 9:8-11.

Ver. 1.

He cried; the man whom he had seen upon the throne, Christ, who is Lord and Sovereign. Or, the glory of God, or the God of glory, or an angel by order from God.

In mine ears; either a Hebraism, he cried so that I distinctly heard; or rather to intimate that Ezekiel only heard what was spoken; the elders who were now with him hearing nothing of what was spoken.

Cause them to draw near; Approach, ye visitations, i.e. ye sore, wasting, unparalleled judgments; so the concrete in the superlative degree is sometimes expressed in the abstract, as it is here: or, these judgments are already near at hand. It may point, at the chief commanders in the Babylonish army,

them that have charge; not those that were now officers under Zedekiah, and commissioned by him, but those whom God hath appointed to destroy the city; angels, say some; the Chaldean commanders, think others.

With his destroying weapon; each of these had a weapon proper for that kind of destruction which he was to effect; and so, some to slay with sword, another with the pestilence, another with famine; each had his proper work herein, and it is called his destruction. *In his hand*, denoting both readiness unto, expedition in, and strength for the work.

Ver. 2.

So soon as command was given out, these ministers of God's just displeasure appear ready to execute.

Six; that was the precise number, neither more nor fewer.

Men. In appearance and vision they were men, and the prophet calls them as he saw them; whether angels in the shape of men, or whether really men, needs not much inquiry; they came without delay.

From the way of the higher gate; either because, being more inward, it is higher than the outward, as in all buildings upon ascents, where you go up by steps from the outward parts towards the inmost building; or because it was built more lofty than the other, enlarged likely by Jotham, **#2Ch 27:3**.

Toward the north; insinuating whence their destruction should come; from Babylon came that whirlwind, **#Eze 1:4**, which was to overthrow Jerusalem. And this north gate was the weakest, both by their sins there committed, and by its situation, which invited Antiochus and Titus to pitch their tents on that side when they besieged it, and on this side the Chaldeans did first enter.

A slaughter weapon: see **#Eze 9:1**.

One man; not companion, but as one of great authority over them, who are as officers waiting on him on every side.

Linens; a garment proper to the priesthood, whether ordinary priest or high priest, **#Ex 28:42,43 Le 6:10**: in this habit appeared the angel, **#Da 10:5 12:6,7**; and a very fit resemblance of Christ, who is the only Saviour of his elect, whose names he knows as if written by him.

They went in; all the seven, both the six executioners, and the single man clothed in linen, went into the inner court, where they stand waiting till the word be given for execution.

Stood beside the brazen altar; either showing that they were ready to offer up many sacrifices to the just revenge of God; or to show their value, zeal, and constancy to God's appointment, for they are not where Ahaz's altar was in the middle of the court, but near the brazen altar of God's own direction.

Ver. 3.

The glory; either a glorious brightness, such as some times appeared above the cherubims in the most, holy place, or the glorious God of Israel, who is the Lord that speaks, #Eze 9:4, or that glory which the prophet saw, #Eze 1:28 3:23 8:4, which see, and which brought him into the temple.

Gone up; withdrawn in part, departing from the place he had so long dwelt in. The cherub, or cherubims; for it is here singular instead of plural.

Whereupon he was either went to sit and appear, or else on which he was when he appeared unto Ezekiel, as #Eze 8:4.

The threshold of the house; of the holy of holies, or of the temple, towards the brazen altar; in token either of his sudden departure from the Jews because of their sins; or that he might come nearer to those seven, to give them orders about wasting the city.

He called with a plain and loud voice, declaring his purpose to proceed to judge and execute his righteous judgment; but yet first providing for the safety of the good.

Ver. 4.

The Lord said, spake from the midst of that glory, #Eze 9:3.

Unto him, the man clothed in linen, i.e. to Christ.

Go through; pass through as men use to go who keep an even, steady pace.

The midst of the city; the chief street of the city.

Set a mark: it is too curious, and as useless, to inquire what mark this was. It is groundless to confine it to the sign of the cross, whatever some discourse of the antique form of the letter Thau. It is sufficient that, after the manner of man's speaking, the Lord assures us his remnant are safe, as what is under a seal, which none can or dare break open.

Upon the foreheads, as the faithful servants of God, in allusion perhaps to the custom in the East, that servants wore their master's name in their foreheads, or to let us know that now this

deliverance would be not as in Egypt by whole families, but by single and selected persons.

That sigh, out of inward grief for other men's sins and sorrows.

That cry; express their grief by vocal lamentations, who dare openly bewail the abominations of this wicked city, and so bear their testimony against it.

For all the abominations; not as if these mourners knew every particular abomination, but they mourned for all the kinds of wickedness which they knew of.

Ver. 5.

The others; the six slaughtermen.

He said; the God of glory, or Christ, who appeared in great glory.

In my hearing; a note of certainty of the thing.

Go ye after him; linger not ere you set forward against the wicked, yet still go after, that you destroy none that are to be sealed; so also **#Re 7:3**.

Through the city; this order must be observed through the whole city, and through the whole execution. Smite; strike each with his weapon of perdition, so let every one fall by the sword, or famine, &c.

Let not your eye spare; do all with severity, act the Chaldeans' part indeed, and without remorse execute my just displeasure by your cruelty.

Ver. 6.

Slay utterly; my purpose is to exterminate and make desolate, therefore slay all that are designed to destruction. *Old;* whose venerable age, if innocent, might have awed you, whose wisdom might preserve some and themselves.

Young; who should be a seed-plot, or nursery, for posterity, cut them off too. Regard no state or sex, neither the loveliness of the virgin, nor the prettiness of the infant, nor the comeliness and gravity of the matron; spare none: yet in your fervours of revenge look you come not near to any sealed forehead; you may see them; though they blush for their own sins, and for the sins of

others, yet they look up to me and wait for me in the way of my judgments, they will lift up their heads, and look you in the faces.

And begin, both the execution and the distinction, at my sanctuary; there are the great sinners, and the abominable sins which have brought this on them; and that all Israel may know nothing but repentance can secure them.

The ancient men; the seventy, or sanhedrim, #Eze 8:10,11. Which were before the house; who were governors in the temple and house of God by office, but idolaters by practice and principles.

Ver. 7.

Defile the house; regard not the holiness of the temple: idolaters, whom you are to slay, have defiled it with the blood of idols, sacrifices, do you defile it with the blood of the idolatrous sacrificers; slay them where you find them, for there they sinned against me.

Fill the courts with the slain; make a great slaughter, let every place be stained with their blood. There were the priests', the Levites', and the women's courts, and there will be found persons of a different character; but unless my mark be upon them, forbear none of them.

Go ye forth; make haste, do not ye, for I do not, delay, nor will I.

They went forth: here, as before, they show their ready obedience.

Slew in the city: this slaughter was visional in the eye of the prophet, and a preface to the saddest butcheries Israel ever bled and groaned under.

Ver. 8.

And it came to pass: this is a most usual transition, and Scripture phrase.

While; there was some space of time taken up in the execution.

They were slaying; the six slaughtermen; not bodily and actually, but visionally, and in prophetic representation.

Slaying them; those about the sanctuary, and in the city.

I was left; either survived the slaughter, or left alone, now both the sealer and the slayers were gone; or alone sealed of all the priests, the rest being exposed to destruction.

I fell on my face, in most humble and earnest manner addressing to God, as one that would entreat mercy for a ruined state; and **cried,** importunately prayed; and the prayer follows.

Ah! an expression of the greatest compounded affection of pity, desire, and zeal for the afflicted; and what follows is a complex of arguments for pity and sparing mercy; from God himself, from his peculiar hand in this, from his people, the remnant of them, and from the sad and mournful state Jerusalem was already in. Must all Israel drink thus of the cup of thine indignation?

The residue of Israel; so called, because many were already in captivity with Jeconiah, and had been so about six or seven years; or else in respect to the electing love of God, who ever reserved a remnant to himself.

Ver. 9.

Then said he; God gives him a speedy answer.

Of the house of Israel; of those who either joined themselves to the house of David when the ten tribes fell off, or those that escaped when Shalmaneser carried them captive.

Judah; the two tribes; though only one is expressed the other is included.

Exceeding great; grown beyond all measure, that my justice cannot, and my mercy must not, longer forbear. Full of blood; very much innocent blood is spilt, or there are many bloodshedders among them.

Full of perverseness; all judgment is perverted; in judges, to injustice; in priests, to idolatry; in all, to scepticism, or atheism.

They say; they argue and dispute against my concerning myself in the government of the world and the church.

The Lord hath cast off the care of his people, and so they spoil him of his dominion, deny his omniscience, and make him as idols for ignorance, just as **#Ps 10:11 94:7.**

Ver. 10.

As for me, my resolution is fixed.

Mine eye, that eye they thought did not see to govern, shall see to punish.

I will recompense; they shall find me a Sovereign to vindicate myself, and do justice against their injustice. See **#Eze 5:11 7:4**.

Ver. 11.

While God gave the prophet the account of the people's sins, and of his own resolutions, Christ,

clothed with linen, the innocent one, and our Priest,

reported the matter, as it were came in, or returned from doing that work most delightful to him.

As thou hast commanded me; the Hebrew text is according, or as; but the reading is with all added, according to

all that which thou, O my Father, hast commanded me; as **#Joh 14:31**.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 10

The vision, of the coals of fire, which are ordered to be taken from between the cherubims, and scattered over the city, **#Eze 10:1-7**. The vision of the cherubims and the glory of God removing from the temple, **#Eze 10:8-22**.

Ver. 1.

Then, or *And*, which connecting this with the ninth chapter, will connote the time wherein he thus saw.

I looked, in spirit or vision; and this vision is the same of **#Eze 1**., repeated, or very little differing from it, and with some particular design, which that of **#Eze 1** did not express, viz. a design of leaving the temple and city desolate. *In the firmament*: see **#Eze 1:22,26**.

The cherubims; called living creatures **#Eze 1:5**, which see.

A sapphire stone: see **#Eze 1:26,27**, where these things are spoken to.

Ver. 2.

He spake that sat on the throne, i.e. God, who rules the world and church.

Unto the man; to Christ, as before, **#Eze 9:2**.

Go in: it is said, **#Eze 1:18**, that the rings of the wheels were dreadful, but here is a Divine command which encourageth, and insureth, and lessens the dread and terror.

Between the wheels; whether between the four, or between the two foremost, or hindermost, or either, between the wheels that made up one wheel, is not material to inquire.

Fill thine hand: this expresseth the fairness of vengeance which would overtake them, and the certainty and speediness of judgments; for such a quantity of coals in the hand ready to be scattered abroad will very soon set all in a flame.

From between the cherubims; either to intimate to us that this fire was the vengeance of God upon them; for he sits between the cherubims, and is consuming fire to sin; or to intimate that the vengeance was for sins against the grace of God, who sat between the cherubims, and thence gave out his grace toward Israel, **#Ex 25:20-22 Heb 9:5**. But abused grace will kindle into fire.

Scatter them over the city, that it may take fire in all parts, and none may escape; so cast the fire, that the coals may fall on every part.

He went in in my sight; which assured the prophet of the certainty, and intimated too the speed of the effect, which will be within five years' space.

Ver. 3.

Stood, as servants, and ready, waiting for orders.

On the right side; the north side, i.e. say some, the side toward Babylon, from whence the desolation, that fire, came which consumed the city.

The man; Christ, the Lord of angels, who now attend his coming and commands.

The cloud; as the sign of God's presence, so an emblem of the troubles and darkness of afflictions coming upon Jerusalem.

The inner court; the court of the priests, who were, as it appears, chief in the apostacy and idolatry, and shall now be chief in the misery and ruin which overwhelmed them about five years after.

Ver. 4.

The glory of the Lord; either the visible token of the presence of the God of glory; as #Eze 1:28 3:23 8:4; or Christ, who is the glory of the temple, and of his people, nay, is the brightness of his Father's glory. Went up, in displeasure, and in token of his departure from the temple.

Stood over the threshold of the house; showing both his unwillingness to leave, and giving them time to bethink themselves, and return by repentance; and he stands where he might be seen both by priests and people, that both might be moved to repentance.

The house; the temple, the most venerable and privileged place.

Was filled; there had been a fulness of sin, there is now a fulness of sufferings.

With the cloud; a very great darkness followed upon Christ's departure from the house.

The court was full of the brightness; not to reside there, but when Christ did turn his back upon the temple, and was coming through the court, a light of majesty shines before him, #Ps 18:12,13.

Ver. 5.

There was a great and dreadful noise to awaken, or stop the mouths of sinners; whether this was an applause of Christ's righteous procedure, or any sound of alarm, or both, let your own judgment determine. See #Eze 1:24.

Was heard; such as might well be heard; and as the vision represented such a great sound to the prophet, he reports it to the Jews; not that the elders now with Ezekiel did hear this, or that such an audible sound was heard in Jerusalem, but it is all represented to the prophet, and by him to them.

The outer court; this was the court of the women.

As the voice of the Almighty; as a mighty and terrible thunder, which is, **#Ps 29:3-5**, the voice of the Lord.

When he speaketh; as when he spake on Mount Sinai, which made them all fear, and the sight so terrible, that Moses himself trembled, **#Heb 12**.

Ver. 6.

See **#Eze 10:2**, which is the same in effect with this. What is said to be between the wheels is said also to be between the cherubims; which represent angels, the ministers of God's providence; and so what now is observed to be among the wheels, in the effects or order of God's providence, is among or between the angels, the ministerial causes thereof.

Then he went in, readily obeyed,

and stood beside the wheels; either as one that deferred execution, to try whether the city would repent, or as one that was to give some further order to angels, that were to be the ministers of his just displeasure; and whereas, **#Eze 10:3**, the cherubims stood as servants waiting, here Christ stands as a Lord commanding; they obey him, he obeys his Father.

Ver. 7.

One cherub; one of the four.

Stretched forth his hand; which was under his wing, as **#Eze 1:8**, which see.

From between the cherubims; this that reached the fire to Christ stood among the cherubims, and putting forth his hand, or exerting his strength and power, serveth Christ, our Lord and his.

Unto the fire: see **#Eze 10:2**, and **#Eze 1:13**.

Took thereof; as a servant that reacheth what his master would have and use.

The hands; both hands, for it is in the plural number.

Who took it; received it of the angel, as one who might employ it when he would.

Went out, from amidst the angels, and out of the temple; or from the threshold, where all this vision appeared as on its stage; and he goes into the city to prepare all, that nothing be done too soon, or too late.

Ver. 8.

There appeared to the prophet.

The cherubims; the ministering spirits.

The form of a man's hand; shaped to speedy, accurate working; it is therefore a man's hand. One hand was put forth to reach the fire, and that one is mentioned, though the angels had hands under their wings.

Under their wings; the manner of angels' working is hereby insinuated, for it is secret and speedy; secret, as hidden under wings; and speedy, as effected by the swiftest motion; the very speed hideth it.

Ver. 9.

Looked; attentively viewed.

The four wheels; mentioned #Eze 1:15,16, and there explained.

By the cherubims; one wheel by one cherub, so four cherubims and four wheels.

The appearance of the wheels; the revolutions and effects among worldly and sublunary affairs; as wheels unstable, yet governed by a sure wisdom.

As the colour of a beryl stone; of sea-green, to note the instability in a more pregnant simile.

Ver. 10.

Though there might be various aspects and faces of things, yet in this great variety there was great harmony; all of one likeness; see #Eze 1:16; and move to one great end.

They four; wheels.

Ver. 11.

When they went; whensoever they did go, what occasion soever they had to go.

They went; the wheels, moved by the cherubims, or that spirit of life which moved the living creatures. These wheels were so framed, that they could move on all four sides without the difficulty and delay of turning. See **#Eze 1:17**. *The head* of the living creatures; the Spirit, as **#Eze 1:12,20**: an admirable wisdom did guide and manage all.

They followed it; the wheels do certainly and orderly follow.

They turned not; divert not from the designed course and work till finished.

Ver. 12.

Now he describes both cherubims and wheels as full of wisdom, and as governed by an excellent wisdom.

Their whole body: angels have not bodies of flesh, but

body here is figurative, as also

back, and

wings, and

hands. The two latter are expressly ascribed to the cherubims, **#Eze 10:8**; the two former not mentioned before, (as I think,) but all full of eyes, i.e. wisdom, foresight, watchfulness, and diligence.

That they four had; the four cherubims had to move, govern, and direct.

Ver. 13.

As to their frame and motion, however it was, still there was one who guided as by vocal direction.

Unto them; to each of them, as appears by that,

O wheel, and the prophet is ear-witness of it.

Ver. 14.

Every one, of the living creatures, **#Eze 1:6**, the cherubims in this chapter.

The first face, which each had.

The face of a cherub: in Babylon, at the river Chebar, he saw somewhat a different face; in the temple he seeth a cherub, one of

the faces, which leads us to look on angels employed in those revolutions.

The second face, the second which each cherubim had, was a man's face, &c.: see **#Eze 1:6,10**.

Ver. 15.

Were lifted up; or lifted up themselves, ready to attend on the Lord of glory, who was now departing from his polluted and impenitent people.

The living creature: see **#Eze 1:13-15,19-22**.

Ver. 16.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 17.

These two verses are explained, **#Eze 1:20**, which see. A perfect harmony between second causes in their dependence on and subjection to the one infinite, wise, good, holy, and just God.

Ver. 18.

The Jews dreamed that God could not depart from his temple; indeed, whilst it was his, and used as his, he did not, nor would he depart, but he will abandon it when profaned, and thereby made not his.

The house; the temple; he had withdrawn out of the sanctuary, and stood awhile at the door.

Over the cherubims; on the right side of the house, where the cherubims were in the inner court, **#Eze 10:3**.

Ver. 19.

The glory of the Lord, **#Eze 10:18**, is said to have stood above the cherubims, and here the cherubims mount, get farther from the earth, and by nearer access declare their readiness to attend the Lord of glory.

In my sight; that he might assure the Jews of the danger of their losing God's presence.

Every one stood; the glory, the cherubims, the wheels all stood, respiting execution, and giving opportunity of preventing the approaching misery.

The door of the east gate; the last court, the court of the people, or laity of Israel.

Ver. 20.

The living creature; though four in number, but one in form, mind, and work.

The God of Israel; appearing as he did, **#Eze 1:26-28**, in form of a man, it leads us to conclude it meant of Christ.

I knew; either by special assurance as a prophet, or by comparing them with those which he had often, as priest about the temple, seen there.

Ver. 21.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 22.

See **#Eze 10:14**, and **#Eze 1:10**. These two verses are a full repeated attestation of the prophet's that God had appeared to him, foreshowed fiery judgments coming and it is so repeated to awaken a stupid and senseless people. They have been already explained.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 11

Ezekiel is showed the presumption of the princes of Judah, **#Eze 11:1-3**. He declareth their sin, and the manner of their punishment, **#Eze 11:4-12**. He is terrified at the sudden death of Pelatiah, **#Eze 11:13**. God showeth him his purpose of restoring the captives with favour, and of punishing the idolaters, **#Eze 11:14-21**. The glory of God leaveth the city, **#Eze 11:22,23**. Ezekiel, carried back by the Spirit, prophesieth to them of the captivity, **#Eze 11:24,25**.

Ver. 1.

The spirit; the Spirit of God, as **#Eze 2 2**.

Lifted me up; as at first, so still it supports him, and removes him from place to place.

The east gate: either of the east gates, whether that which leads into the first court, or into the second court, or into the house of the Lord, may be here understood, though probably this last. For

this number you find, **#Eze 8:16**. If you will suppose the prophet was brought to the east gate, where the glory of the Lord, now departing, was gone up from the temple, it is much the same.

Which looketh eastward: a pleonasm, or redundance of expression.

Five and twenty men: some inquire whether these were the same with those twenty-five **#Eze 8:16**. To me it is most likely they were, for in that same place we find them, and likely about the same work, worshipping eastward. Nor are the two arguments urged by some conclusive against it, nay, one of the two is plain for it, viz. that quoted from **#Eze 8:16**.

Among whom; as forward ringleaders and chief among them.

Jaazaniah: this man by his father's name added appears to be another, not he that is mentioned **#Eze 8:11**.

Pelatiah, named here for no good quality, but for that dreadful sudden death whereby he became a warning to others.

Princes of the people; either as public officers, or as heads of their families.

Ver. 2.

So soon as the prophet had seen and observed how many and who they were, the Lord, sitting on the cherub, spoke unto him, **#Eze 10:4**.

The men; not the only men, but indeed the most notorious.

Devise; frame and contrive with craft and false reasonings.

Mischief; vanity; so the thing was, and mischief the fruit of it. They persuade the people that the city shall not be burnt, but that they may safely build, and long dwell in their houses; this vain hope exhausts that money with which they might have provided for themselves, and this proves a mischief.

Give wicked counsel: this may be an explication of that he last spake. Or possibly it may note their activity and diligence, going about the city and counselling their acquaintance to put off the evil day. Or perhaps they teach a compliance and coalition with the Chaldean superstitions to save themselves; it is not impossible

they might give counsel to unhappy Zedekiah. The Chaldee paraphrast here useth a word whose first notation is to reign or be a king, the second sense to give counsel: whose counsellors soever they were, their counsel tended to shame and loss.

Ver. 3.

What counsel was by these men given appears by their words.

It is not near; either the threatened danger and ruin by the Chaldeans; or else, build, but not in the suburbs, not near, but in the city, that your houses may not shelter the enemy.

This city is the caldron: this is an impious scoff, yet mixed with some fear, of the prophets, **#Jer 1:13 Eze 24:6**. They deride the prophets, yet secretly dread the thing. Jerusalem is the pot, we the flesh that are to be boiled therein; but this will take up some time however, we were better be so destroyed than to fall by the hands of the Chaldeans, who perhaps may roast what is not boiled here.

Ver. 4.

For this their atheistical temper and words, tell them beforehand what they shall suffer. The charge and command is doubled, both to engage the prophet, and to intimate a doubled misery coming upon them, a misery they shall not have courage to laugh under, though they now dare contemptuously laugh at.

Ver. 5.

The Spirit of prophecy again moved him, which is here called the Spirit of the Lord, or, the Spirit the Lord, as the Hebrew will bear.

Fell upon me; descended, by its own act powerfully, sweetly, and prevailingly entered the man.

Said unto me; inclined me, that I could not but speak.

Thus saith the Lord; as thou goest by my appointment, so be sure to use my name and authority.

Thus have ye said; profanely, with scoffs, as hath been reported, **#Eze 11:3**.

I know the things that come into your mind; ye may be assured all that ariseth up in your mind is known to me. I see each one of the imaginations of your mind so soon as ever they peep up in your heart. Your thoughts I know afar off, **#Ps 139:2**.

Ver. 6.

Many murders, and great ones, (for the Hebrew includeth both,) have you committed, either with frauds or violence, and sometimes with colour and pretence of law.

Your slain; so called because they were such as God had not commanded to be cut off, but the Jews did it without warrant from God.

Filled the streets; either left them murdered in the streets; or rather, by an hyperbole, the streets are full, every where some or other in every street you have condemned and killed. It is an expression the Scripture much useth to set forth the bloody effects of the Jewish rage, and of others.

Ver. 7.

Therefore; your murders are the cause of my severity, and such sins first or last are surely punished.

Your slain: see #Eze 11:6. Or, *your slain*, because when they might and would have saved their life by a seasonable submission, you persuaded them to an obstinate opposition against the Chaldeans to their destruction.

Whom ye have laid, or placed (as the word bears); it is not unlike that they who persuaded all to stay did provide, or at least help, as many as did stay, to habitations, and placed them in houses or lodgings.

The flesh; the pieces which are to be east into the caldron, and here be punished.

But I, that is, the mighty, eternal, and just God, *will bring you forth*, not in mercy, but in wrath, by the conquering hand of Babylon; I will draw you out to greater torment.

Ver. 8.

Sinfully, and forgetting God, you would have escaped the sword of the Babylonians, and attempted it by an idolatrous compliance: for this very cause will I send that sword upon you, and it shall slay your wives, children, and fellow citizens.

Ver. 9.

Though the Chaldeans are the means or instruments by which it is done, yet I will so appear against you that it shall be confessed that I did it rather than the Chaldeans.

And deliver you; defeating all your projects for escape; so was Zedekiah when he secretly fled, and his company with him, delivered unto enemies and strangers.

Into the hands; it denoteth a full power over them.

Strangers; Babylonians and others who assisted in this war.

Will execute judgments among you; strangers will use you hardly; but the most severe part of the judgment will be from a provoked God, who would have pardoned, but impenitence refused the pardon.

Ver. 10.

The enemies' sword shall slay you; my just judgments shall pursue you whithersoever you flee, and overtake some of you; and ye shall know, Zedekiah and others who were judged at Riblah, **#2Ki 25:20,**

that I am the Lord.

Ver. 11.

This city, Jerusalem, though it suffered unparalleled hardships,

shall not be your caldron; shall not be the place of your sufferings; greater are reserved for you, you shall be tortured in a strange land.

I will judge you; do more against you, as at Riblah, **#2Ki 25:6,7,** where the captive king had his children and others with them first murdered before his eyes, and then his own eyes put out; and Riblah is called here the

border of Israel, for that Syria was adjoining to Israel on the north, and Riblah or Antioch was a pleasant city towards the frontiers of Syria, upon the river Orontes, which arising in Antilibanus runs through part of Syria, and for the delicacy of the seats it had many cities built on it. And here Nebuchadnezzar in his royal state, and amidst the pleasures of the place, expects the issue of the siege.

Ver. 12.

Ye shall know; though you would not believe my threats, nor fear them, you shall feel them, and then you shall know: thus the wicked learn.

I am the Lord, whom you should have obeyed, feared, and returned to, and who now convinceth you of his and his prophet's truth in all that was foretold you.

Walked; a Scripture phrase expressive of the course of man's life.

My statutes; the rules for religious observances.

My judgments refer to the political and civil state, where equity and justice should have been ministered.

After the manners of the heathen; in matters of religion you have turned downright idolaters, and with the greatest contempt of your God, the only true God, you have changed him for gods of the heathen round about, and taken in their modes and abominations. And as to civil matters, you have been as unjust, oppressive, and perfidious as these nations that know not my law.

Ver. 13.

Either this refers to some particular prediction of the death of this man; as Jeremiah did of Hananiah's death, **#Jer 28:17**; though I do not remember that Ezekiel had spoken of it before, and therefore I take the words for a usual transition. If you suppose the first guess at the meaning of,

it came to pass, then this will be best interpreted by

according to, or

even as; if you adhere to the latter, then this when is

whilst, or

as, I was prophesying.

Died; and so was a pledge or presage of the following death of the other twenty-four.

Then; immediately, in the most humble manner, as that people were used to do, **#Jos 7:10 2Ch 20:18**. He fell down upon his face, in order to pray.

Cried; with intense and earnest mind he prayed, as well as with a loud voice: see #Eze 9:8. Much like phrase is that in #Es 4:1.

Ah Lord God! an expression of his tender compassions for them.

Wilt thou make, &c.? a very usual way of interceding, and so common in Scripture, that it is a wonder any should find fault with it who know the Scripture.

Make a full end, by slaying all as this man is cut off. This man's name implieth one that escaped, or was delivered by God's good hand; and perhaps the prophet alludes to it; however, he is very solicitous, as others were, for the remnant, which was ever least, #2Ki 19:30,31 Isa 10:21,22 Jer 23:3 31:7; and in this manner does #Eze 9:8, intercede for the Jews.

Ver. 14.

It was a seasonable word to stop the mouths of the insulting Jerusalemites, and to encourage the captives at Babylon.

Ver. 15.

Son of man: see #Eze 2:1.

Thy brethren; thy nearest kindred, which it seems were left in Jerusalem, and were grown as bad as the rest, though theirs were of a priestly lineage. Their degeneracy and unjust censure is more noted in the repetition of the word brethren.

Of thy kindred; of the same parentage, to whom thou hadst right of redemption, if either their person or estate was to be sold; men who should have been as tender in affection as they were near in blood.

All the house of Israel; all that are now in captivity, be they more or less, of whatsoever condition and rank, these are the men of whom the Jerusalemites speak.

Have said; that is, censure and condemn as greatest sinners, and unworthy longer to dwell in the holy land, and tacitly infer that they were better, and should be safer now they were rid of them.

Get you far from the Lord; ye, or they, are gone far from the Lord; you are apostates, or irreligious, a company of backsliders: much as the heathens accused the Christians of atheism.

Unto us; who keep to the temple and holy city, and have not yielded to the Babylonish tyranny, who stand for our ancient privileges, are not, as you, betrayers of our country: thus you may suppose they boast.

This land; promised, holy, blest land, Canaan, where our fathers dwelt. This land is ours.

Given in possession; we shall never be put out of possession, but still it shall be our inheritance.

Ver. 16.

Therefore; in apology and vindication of them, backed with excellent promises in the following verses.

Say; say to them, and of them in Babylon.

Although I have cast them far off: the obstinate Jews at Jerusalem will call them apostates and renegades; but let such false accusers know that they were sent thither, and that I the Lord sent them thither, and will own them there too.

Far off; not from myself, but from you, your polluted land, and dreadful approaching judgments.

Among the heathen; the Chaldeans, or such as the Chaldeans placed them among.

Scattered them; dispersed and separated them from one another in many countries which were under the king of Babylon. Yet they are dear to me, and my purposes are for them more gracious than yours are for them, or than mine are for you.

As a little sanctuary; for a little while, i.e. during the seventy years' captivity; or for a few of them, the remnant was ever little: or, as it refers to the sanctuary, a little one in opposition to that great, rich, splendid, and admired temple at Jerusalem, which when they need most, shall help least; but I, saith God, will be really to my captives what the proud self-deceiving Jews promise their temple shall be to them, both for glory, defence, and for worship, which shall with heart and love be given by these I have sent away; and wherever they are, their prayers, synagogue worship, and obedience shall be to me as well-pleasing as they shall desire. They at a distance weep on Chebar banks; you, O

rebellious! pollute the temple by your idolatries. I will comfort the mourners; I will punish you polluters of my temple and worship.

Ver. 17.

Say; add to the former apology this promise.

The Lord God; the faithful and eternal God, the supreme and sovereign Lord.

I will gather; by my advice and hand they were scattered, and by my hand they shall be gathered.

Assemble you; and to confirm them, it is added in different words, and the promise is repeated, and thus it was punctually performed, #Ezr 1:1-4, with #Eze 8:15.

I will give you the land of Israel; though your brethren do say you are not to dwell at Jerusalem, nor inherit the land, yet my purpose is otherwise, and I do promise you, that you who followed my counsel, and now are in Babylon, you, or your seed, shall return and inherit Canaan. All this was so worded, that some have thought it no groundless inquiry whether any of those that went with Zedekiah into captivity, or only such as went with Jeconiah, did return out of captivity; and though it is most probable some did, yet of the returners the far greater part were of those that with Jeconiah were gone into captivity.

Ver. 18.

They; the gathered, who assembled upon Cyrus's proclamation first, and then again upon Darius's proclamation; of which #Ezr 1 and #Ezr 8: they met together some where in the land of their captivity, and had a long journey to Jerusalem. Shall come thither; they shall overcome all difficulties, and escape dangers, and despatch the long journey, and come safely to their own land.

They shall take away; abolish superstition and idolatry from the temple, Jerusalem, and from the priests.

The detestable things: see #Eze 11:18.

Thereof; of the land and city; and who reads Ezra, Nehemiah, and the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, will see this reformation carried on with SUCCESS.

Ver. 19.

And: this may be understood causally, and so gives an account how the reformation, mentioned **#Eze 11:18**, should be effected.

I; the Lord himself, and he assumeth it to himself thrice in this verse.

Will give: of free grace it is that this renewed heart is in any one; length, soreness, and multiplicity of troubles will not, cannot work it, unless God frame and renew it.

Will give them one heart: they were scattered abroad through the Babylonish kingdoms, were under various circumstances which might divide them, and keep them from each other, and from centering in a return; but I will stir up their heart, and with one heart they shall gather together, when the return shall be proclaimed. Cyrus shall first give them leave, and I will next give them a heart to return; and on their way shall there be great unity; and when come to Jerusalem, they shall own me, and my laws, &c.; they shall with one consent build Jerusalem, the temple, and restore true religion; as **#Jer 32:39 Eze 36:26**.

One heart; that is, judgment and understanding, mind and will, affections and conscience; all fixed only on God, and their obedience to him, as **#Eze 11:20**. This one heart is called a new spirit. A new spirit; an excellent, regenerate, holy, and sincere soul; they were of a base, corrupt, and hypocritical spirit, dividing between God and idols; but when God brings them back, they shall be of another frame, quite changed, and made new.

The stony heart; that hard, inflexible, undutiful, incorrigible disposition which was in their fathers, who refused to be amended; I will take that away.

Out of their flesh: flesh in Scripture sometimes speaks an unrenewed, carnal, sinful state, as **#Ro 7:18**, sometimes for the body, as **#Ps 38:3**, sometimes for the whole man; so **#Lu 3:6 Ro 3:20**; and thus in this place speaks the persons and whole man.

An heart of flesh; not like the old, hard and stony, but counsellable, tractable, that will hear, consider, obey, do commanded good, and forbear forbidden evils, submit to my law, and reform on admonitions. All which in part, and so far as

concerned those times, was fulfilled in the Jews that did return from Babylon, and is more fully made good to us in these gospel days.

Ver. 20.

This is the end grace aimeth at, converting us to God, that we may walk with God.

Walk: see #Eze 11:12.

My statutes; the rule of religious worship. Mine ordinances; standards in civil affairs and matters of right and wrong with men.

They shall be my people; they shall give themselves up to me for to be my people, to love me, trust me, and to worship and obey me, and I will take them to be mine; I will approve, encourage, bless, guide, and protect them, that it shall be seen they are my peculiar people. This contains all duty and privilege, as including both, and is again inculcated in the other part of the promise.

I will be their God, to pardon sin, give grace, supply wants, guide their ways, accept their duties, defend their persons, and lead them to glory. See #Eze 36:25-28 Jer 31:33, where Jeremiah, contemporary to Ezekiel, proposeth the same promise to this people.

Ver. 21.

For all those promises, and in the best times, some there will be who will refuse to own God and obey him, whose state shall as much differ as their practices did from the people of God.

As for them, whoever they be.

Heart, soul and affections, whose choice and love,

walketh after; either secretly adhereth to or provideth for the service of idols, called here detestable things, as #Eze 11:18,eze 5:11; and to express the obstinacy of this idolatry, it is called a

heart walking after a heart: idolatry is a bewitching sin, and steals away the heart and the promoters of idolatry propose the plausiblest arguments, as if idols had hearts and affections toward their worshippers to do them good; the expression in the Hebrew

is somewhat unusual and harsh to our ear, but this I take to be the meaning.

Their abominations; their idols, and idol worship, and dependencies.

Recompense; pay them in their own coin: they forsake me, I will forsake them; they profane my name and temple, I will give them up as common to be profaned by the Chaldeans. Their way tends to this, and shall end in this, and nothing more just.

Upon their heads, i.e. on each man, and in such manner as shall destroy the contumacious. Or, on those that are as heads of the people and ringleaders in obstinacy of sinning, such as the twenty-five, **#Eze 11:1**, and who shall be examples of my speedy and irresistible vengeance, as Pelatiah was.

Ver. 22.

The whole 22nd verse is in almost the same words you have in **#Eze 10:19**, which see.

Ver. 23.

See **#Eze 3:23 8:4 9:3 10:18,19**. The glory of the Lord removes now out of the city, over which it had stood some space of time waiting for their repentance; but no fruits of this, and God now departed from them.

Upon the mountain; above it. It was Mount Olivet, as the description of it in this place and elsewhere doth clearly show.

Ver. 24.

After all this, the same Spirit of God which carried him to Jerusalem, and to the temple, now brings him back in like manner to his captive brethren in Chaldea; not corporally, but in an ecstasy or rapture of his spirit, by the power of the Spirit of God. It was a vision from heaven, all that was represented to the prophet was as it were let down from heaven, and he having fully viewed it, it is taken up again to heaven.

Ver. 25.

When the ecstasy was past,

I spake unto them; either the elders who came to him, **#Eze 8:1**, or to the body of the people, who were in those parts where Ezekiel was; for many were scattered into other parts of Chaldea.

All the things that the Lord had showed me: here is his faithfulness, both to God and the people, who were concerned to know, for God had showed them to the prophet that he might show them to the people, and, that this might surely be done, God had commanded him to speak to them plainly and fully.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 12

Under the type of Ezekiel's removing of his household stuff it showed the captivity of Zedekiah and his people, **#Eze 12:1-16**. Under another type of his eating and drinking with trembling and anxiety is signified the consternation of the people and desolation of the land, **#Eze 12:17-20**. The prophet reproveth the presumptuous proverb of the Jews, **#Eze 12:21-25**. He repeateth the reproof, **#Eze 12:26-28**.

Ver. 1.

A Divine prediction of what was both sure and near to come to pass.

Came unto me, in the sixth and seventh years of Jeconiah's captivity, and of Zedekiah's reign; in the latter end of the three hundred and eighty-seven of Ezekiel's lying on his side, three years before the fatal siege began.

Ver. 2.

Thou dwellest; the prophet knowing the captivity would be long, had settled his habitation, and probably found some favour with the enemy, that he might be accommodated for his abode. The Jews who gave up to the Chaldeans found that kindness mentioned **#Jer 29:4-7**, with **#Eze 24:5,6**, and so were indifferently well placed together, and the prophet dwells among them, in the land of Chaldea.

A rebellious house; in their captivity too many of them retained their stubborn murmuring and rebellious humour, and blamed, quarrelled, and condemned them who gave them counsel to yield, and themselves for yielding, and it is likely stirred up them at

Jerusalem to hold out, and save themselves, and rescue their brethren. These will ridicule thy words, yet speak them; for they are mine, and shall be accomplished.

Eyes to see; they have wit enough, they are of a capacity well enough fitted, if they would, to understand and consider what thou speakest; expressed by a double phrase, which signifies one and the same thing; eyes and ears.

See not; they contemptuously refuse to see and hear, they will not consider, lay to heart, repent, and reform. *They are a rebellious house;* they have conspired together, and all they will resolve or design is to do whatever is good in their own eyes, and whatever their wild imaginations, raised by false prophets, suggest.

Ver. 3.

Therefore; and.

Prepare thee; make ready in the sight of some of those which live about thee, that they may tell others.

Stuff for removing; vessels or instruments, wherein thou mayst put what is portable, and you, with leave from the conqueror, may carry for your conveniencies; pack up what thou canst that may be of use in thy captivity.

Remove; go thy way, leave that place wherein thou now art, and go to another, with thy pack upon thy back, not on horses or asses.

By day; at noon-tide, when the most may see what thou doest, and be instructed.

It may be; it is not impossible that some may inquire what is the import and meaning of all this uncouth and obscure matter.

Ver. 4.

Having made all ready, as **#Eze 12:3**, thou shalt proceed to bear it away; not employ servants and labourers to do it. but thou thyself shalt do it.

By day: see **#Eze 12:3**.

As stuff for removing: see **#Eze 12:3**.

At even: this circumstance, added to what was **#Eze 12:3**, speaks the secrecy and shame, with the danger of their coming out; in the evening, in the dark, when night may soon conceal them, and they gain a night's journey before the enemy hath notice to pursue. In their sight; before it is quite night, that they, who should learn by this sign, may see it and consider it.

Ver. 5.

Come not through the door, but, as one who knows there is a watch and guard upon the door, get to some back part of thy house, and dig there, **#Eze 12:7**, thyself, either to make the greater haste, or to keep all secret; for all will be little enough for them that must act what thou dost represent.

Thereby; through the hole thou hast dug.

Ver. 6.

Upon thy shoulders; in testimony of the servitude they shall be reduced to, who then must do what servants or beasts were wont to be employed in.

Carry it forth; either the stuff or thyself; thou shalt go forth in the twilight, when there is a little light to guide thy way, but more darkness to conceal thy person and thy flight.

Cover thy face; as full of shame, and exceeding unwilling to be seen or known.

For I have set thee: there is good reason why thou shouldst do this, how strange, unmanly, or ridiculous soever this may seem; the moral concerns the house of Israel and its king; I have set thee for a sign to them, and thou shalt tell them the meaning of these hieroglyphics in due time.

Ver. 7.

Forth; either out of the house into some court or yard, through the wall whereof he digged; or else here is a transposing of his actions, and rehearsal of that in the first place which was acted in the second place.

Digged through the wall: see **#Eze 12:5**.

Ver. 8.

In the evening he packed, digged through the wall, and removed in the sight of the people; next morning inquiry is made how the people resent it.

Ver. 9.

What! are none come to thee, are they all so stupid, and regardless of my word and judgments? Do none inquire that they may know and do what is necessary in their circumstances? Do not thy fellow captives think these actions are significative? Do they not ask whether they in Babylon, or their fellow citizens at Jerusalem, are concerned in what thou doest?

Ver. 10.

Though they regard not to inquire, yet give them to know what I mean hereby.

Thus saith the Lord God: this to add weight and authority to the word.

This burden; this dreadful prognostic; this prophecy is a burden which the kingdom shall groan under, and your king and the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him.

The prince; Zedekiah.

All the house; none may be excepted.

Ver. 11.

My person is the emblem of yours, and my actions in these cases are signs of that you shall do; and where you do not actively the like, yet the like shall be done to you, O inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Remove; change their habitations, and carry away their goods, such as the clemency of a conqueror will permit.

Go into captivity; you to whom I tell these things shall see them come from Jerusalem unto Babylon, as dejected, spoiled, and naked captives.

Ver. 12.

The prince; Zedekiah.

Among them; in Jerusalem.

Shall bear upon his shoulder; disguised no doubt as a common ordinary servant, in hope so to escape; but to conceal himself he flees in a disguise, and chooseth the twilight as the time that would best favour his design; so **#2Ki 25:4**.

They shall dig through the wall; fulfilled when they broke down the wall to flee, as **#Jer 39:4**: probably they had built up some slight wall to blind the enemy, which now they break to flee through.

He shall cover his face; partly out of grief, partly out of shame, partly prefiguring Zedekiah's future loss of his eyes, and his blindness which the insolency of Nebuchadnezzar afflicted him with; but Zedekiah did by this chiefly aim at concealing himself in disguise and covering his face.

Ver. 13.

In the disguise this fugitive might possibly escape from the net of Nebuchadnezzar, and of his captains. But, poor Zedekiah, dost thou not at last see that the Babylonians are employed of God, and that God will bring thee into his own and into Nebuchadnezzar's net.

Will I spread upon him; in allusion to those that take birds or fish in nets, they spread it to its full extent, so will God spread his net that it shall cover Zedekiah and his followers.

He shall be taken; mentioned as the principal, though he was not taken alone, many were taken with him.

I will bring him; the Chaldeans carried him, and God brought him to Babylon, so second causes co-work with the first.

To Babylon; which was the metropolis of the kingdom.

The land of the Chaldeans; that strange land where they were captives whom God sent before, and whither obstinate Jerusalemites must now go.

Yet shall he not see it; neither the land nor the city, though he shall spend the rest of his days there, and there die, but the Babylonish tyrant will put out his eyes at Riblah, **#2Ki 25:6 Jer 39:5**.

Ver. 14.

All that are about him; either the Egyptians who came to help him; or rather, those that did flee with him, as the choice and flower of his valiant and trusty servants, who would guard him through all dangers in the flight, till he might rest some where in safety. This was verified, #2Ki 25:4,5 Jer 39:5.

All his bands; whether auxiliaries or his own trained soldiers.

Draw out the sword after them; send the enemy after them with drawn swords, wherewith they shall be slain, #Jer 42:22 43:10,11.

Ver. 15.

They shall know; they shall see, confess, and be sensible of my power, justice, and truth, who make good my threats against obdurate sinners as well as my promises to believers.

Scatter and distress; two expressions of the same thing, which is frequent in Scripture; and as it usually magnifieth the good or evil, so insures either.

Ver. 16.

But I will restrain the rage of the Chaldeans, and move them to some compassion towards some of the Jews, so that some, yet but few, shall remain; the sword shall not slay them, for 1 commission it, and it will not exceed its commission. I send the famine, but some I will feed; and the pestilence is my arrow, and hits but where I direct it.

A few men; including the women also.

That they may declare; either by relating those sins which were committed among them in Jerusalem, for which God was justly angry, and for which he punished them, though they were his own people. Or else, that though they should be silent, yet the very thing should speak itself, and their miseries should proclaim the wickednesses they had acted against God in their own land. Or, by their wicked practices which in captivity, and under the eye of the heathen, they commit, they will manifestly show to the heathen that God was just in all his severity.

They shall know; either the Jews, or rather here the Chaldean heathens.

Ver. 17.

He was a sign to them in digging and bearing his stuff, now he must be a sign to them in another manner.

Ver. 18.

With quaking; with commotion or shakings, as one whose apprehension of danger brings as it were an earthquake upon him; and this trembling is the same thing, but in other words. *Thy water:* here is no mention of delicious and generous wines, but water; so low should they be reduced, and yet not enjoy this very little, because of the great inward fears that shake them.

Ver. 19.

Explain the meaning of this unusual and uncomfortable manner of eating and drinking

unto the people; the common sort of people, distinguished from rulers, of the land of Chaldea, in which the Jews were captives. Tell thy fellow captives who grudge and repent their coming hither, where they have much sorrow, yet some safety, plenty, and rest.

Of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who are not yet captivated; their sorrows are coming, and their state will be worse than yours.

Of the land of Israel; nor will it be better with, those that dwell in the countries round about Jerusalem, they will flee for refuge into Jerusalem, and there perish. Eat their bread with carefulness; their very comforts shall be uncomfortable to them.

Her land; Jerusalem's land, so called because it was the head city thereof.

May be desolate; because that it is already, or shortly shall be, waste, emptied, though it was full of inhabitants, wealth, and plenty.

Violence; injustice, oppression, and tyranny of the Jews toward one another, #Jer 6:7 20:8 Eze 7:23; and this grown an epidemical sin, #Eze 22:9,12, from highest to lowest.

Ver. 20.

The cities, the lesser cities up and down the land, which now are and will be inhabited when Jerusalem is destroyed,

shall be wasted with the sword, as the word seems to imply. Then shall you, who are now in Chaldea, know how the goodness of God brought you hither, that you had no real cause to complain that your condition was worse than your brethren's in Judea. You shall know the truth and severity of God against sinners.

Ver. 21.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 22.

After the manner of man God speaks with man,

What is? or it is a comely transition to a new subject of discourse.

That proverb; that short saying taken up as undoubted truth, and in a very common manner used by all.

That ye have: he seems to include the prophet, as being one of the body of the people, though he used it not, nay, showed the falsehood and impiety of it.

In the land of Israel; in, so the prophet and those with him are reckoned as if they were in the land of Israel, for that is their country. Or rather, concerning, as the Hebrew $\text{ל}u$ here used.

The days of severe punishments, of wrath and vengeance, are to come a great while hence; let them fear who are like to feel them, these prophecies cannot be imagined to look to our times: thus atheists, and contemners of the prophets, hardened one another into sin and security.

Every vision, threatening vision, which Jeremiah at Jerusalem, and Ezekiel here in Chaldea, do dream of and would fright us with, comes to nothing, it is perished or dead in the nest.

Ver. 23.

Tell them; either who use the proverb, or are stumbled at it; tell the one to convince, the other to instruct them.

I will make this proverb to cease: thus they abuse my patience, and affront my truth, and deride my justice; but when my patience at its period calls in my justice to vindicate it, and when calamities felt prove my truth and the presence of these sorrows, there can be no more place for such a proverb, the groundlessness of it being discovered to all.

Say unto them; assure them.

The days are at hand: see #Eze 12:22: they draw near indeed, when within some three years Jerusalem shall see the enemy besieging it, and feel his sword cutting down her chosen men. All that which the vision contained shall, ere few years are over, clearly appear accomplished, according to what my prophets foretold.

Ver. 24.

These proverbializing scoffers compared the true prophets with the false. These predict prosperity and return of the captives from Babylon within few years, and before Jerusalem be destroyed; so they flattered the people. The true prophets foretell long captivity, bloody slaughters, strait siege, a burnt city and temple. Now these scoffers bear up themselves on these flatteries, and argue against the Divine menaces, and are ready to inquire, Why may not Ezekiel's vision be as vain as he saith theirs is? and if one, why not both? Well, these fools are capable of no better answer than that which will destroy at once their doubts and their hopes. Judgment executed shall convince the false prophets of their lying divination, and these atheists of their illogical inferences.

No more; for this many years, for seventy years to come, and till wickedness shall again take root with the prosperity of the returned captivity.

Ver. 25.

I can discover the vanity of flattering prophets, and will do it, by making good what my true prophets have foretold. No length of time shall make me forget it, no pretences of self-flattering prophets or people shall divert it, no power can hinder me, nor counsel defeat me. What Jeremiah and Ezekiel have foretold, I will now accomplish in these days, and defer no longer. I will not preach to you by my prophets the fatal sorrows of your children's children, who should cry out of calamities when you are past feeling them, but the same age that hears the threat shall feel the execution; the enemy I raise against you shall burn your city and temple, spoil your goods, famish you in the siege, and lead you captives after the siege, and all this and a thousand times more shall come upon you in your days, O rebellious house! When all

this comes to pass, your proverb will be sure to cease indeed. Hitherto he answers the ungodly users and abettors of this proverb.

Ver. 26.

Again; for instructing some that were seduced by those scoffers forementioned.

Ver. 27.

Some of the less judicious and the more credulous are abused by these sort of men.

Say; think, and hope, and so discourse it, that the prophet is a good man and true prophet, but surely his visions look to after-times; we do not think his visions vain, but we hope they are not to come on us, and in our days. Now these God will have his prophet to instruct in this matter, which he doth in the next verse.

Ver. 28.

Since it is an erroneous opinion they are brought into, it is not from contempt of my truth, but from weakness, warn them mildly, tell them the days are very near indeed, and there will be no adjournment. Now it will be done as soon as spoken almost, and God will make a short work with them in righteousness, and a very few days will bring his judgments to light.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 13

False prophets reproved, and their daubing with untempered mortar, #Eze 13:1-16. The prophetesses also reproved with their impostures under the title of pillows and kerchiefs, #Eze 13:17-23.

Ver. 1.

This first verse is the commission, by virtue whereof Ezekiel acteth as a prophet, and it is in the usual style near forty times in Ezekiel.

Ver. 2.

Prophecy; declare aforehand what I will do.

Against the prophets; against prince and people first, next against prophets and prophetesses; against the former in the foregoing chapters, against the latter in this chapter.

Of Israel, because approved of Israel, encouraged by Israel, and followed; but not prophets of the Lord, he sent them not. Whether these were in Babylon, or in Jerusalem, some inquiry is made; probably these false prophets were in both places.

That prophesy; foretell what is pleasing to the Jews, a sudden return out of captivity, with the vessels of the Lord's house, and prosperity in their own land.

Out of their own hearts; but all their promising words are of themselves, out of their own deceiving hearts, not from God, and so all will be lies.

Hear ye the word of the Lord; cease to deceive my people, and attend now to what God speaks of you.

Ver. 3.

They shall be doubly miserable, suffering with the deceived, and suffering by the enraged, when their lies are detected.

Foolish prophets; either in a moral sense, i. e. wicked; or in a literal sense, unwise. It is both foolishly wicked and imprudent to pretend revelations, and yet have none from God.

Their own spirit; in contradistinction to the Spirit of God, the true Spirit of prophecy, they strongly fancy what they would have, and then presumptuously prophesy that it shall come to pass.

Have seen nothing; God hath showed them no vision, nothing of all they pretend to is from God.

Ver. 4.

O Israel; a pathetic exclamation to awake Israel, both the dwellers at Jerusalem and those at Babylon.

Thy prophets, not mine, as **#Eze 13:2**.

Like the foxes; hungry and ravening, crafty and guileful, and living by their wits, but not one whit helpful to those they deceive. Such are false prophets. In the deserts, where want of prey makes them more eager of their prey, and where other devouring beasts endanger travellers, but no defence to them from foxes; these flee into their holes betimes, and leave the endangered ones. Or thus, O Israel, thou art like the desert, spoiled and robbed, and thy false prophets, like foxes hungry and hunting for some prey, live upon what they can catch, but will be no more profitable to thee than foxes are to the wilderness.

Ver. 5.

Ye, vulpine prophets. As in a besieged city whose wall is broken down and the enemy ready to enter, a valiant, faithful, and vigilant soldier would run up into the breach to repel the enemy; so true prophets do partly by prayer, and partly by doctrine, and partly by personal reformation, labour to preserve God's people. But, fox-like, they have shifted out of harm's way.

Neither made up the hedge: the house of Israel is the Lord's vineyard, through the hedge whereof many breaches are made, through which wild and wasting beasts come in and devour the grapes, and spoil the vines; but you have not stopped those breaches, but, fox-like, come in and pulled off the tender grapes, and done the most mischief; you have increased sin and danger thereby. And when the Lord's wrath shall give up the city, you will not stand to oppose the enemy breaking in; so useless will these be at last.

To stand; not with arms, but with fasting, prayers, repentance, laying hold on the arm of the Lord, and interceding for his people.

In the battle, which God will by the Chaldeans fight against the house of Israel. In that day of the Lord the weapons of war will not prevail against the Chaldeans, unless prayers, tears, and amendment prevail with the Lord to withdraw the battle, and be at peace with Israel.

Ver. 6.

They have seen; they pretend to have seen, but still they see nothing, as **#Eze 13:2**. The prophet speaks as if indeed they had seen, but the very censure of the things they said they saw clears it, that all was but pretence.

Vanity and lying divination; things that have no ground or foundation, and which will never be, and are therefore called vanity and lying divinations.

The Lord saith; foretelleth and promiseth.

Hath not sent them; never revealed any such thing to them, or bade them tell the Jews any such thing.

They have made others; by their pretences and arguments they have wheedled some into a belief of their word, and into a hope of

that they promise; and so the credulous Jew is undone by his prophet, who tells him all is well, and needs no alteration, and all will be well, and they need fear no desolation.

Ver. 7.

Consider with your own consciences; do they not tell you that all is vain pretence which you make? Can you think Jerusalem can escape, or the first captives be returned, and all this so soon? Is not this vain to be imagined, and they vainer that imagine and believe it? If it should come to pass, which it never shall, yet herein you are convicted liars; you say the Lord saith, whereas he hath said no such thing, nay, the contrary hath God spoken to what you speak, and the event shall be as contrary to your expectation, which is of good; but behold evil cometh out of the north, and great destruction.

Ver. 8.

The whole verse speaks the dreadful anger of God against those false prophets. It is unspeakable wrath, and we are left to guess at it by the manner of speech here used, which is minatory, **#Eze 21:3 26:3**, concealing the greater part intended; an aposiopesis.

I am against you: this is more particularly exemplified in the next verse.

Ver. 9.

Mine hand; my power striking them; so that it shall be evident they fall under Divine revenge, as Pelatiah, **#Eze 11:13**, and Hananiah, **#Jer 28:15,16**. Or if they escape this stroke,

they shall not be in the assembly of my people; have no seat among the rulers, nor voice among the counsellors, nor credit among the judges of my people; but, as false fellows, teachers of lies, be branded with infamy after the return from captivity. Or, they shall not be among those that return, dead before, or rejected as dangerous seducers and blasphemous abusers of the name of God. It may also refer to the excluding them out of the assembly of glorified ones in heaven.

Neither shall they be written; registered among those that return, of which registry **#Ezr 2:1,2**, but blotted out for their impiety; this literally: mystically, it may be an obliterating or blotting them out of the book of life; they shall not be written with

such as shall escape spiritually, they shall not be found among the elect that shall live for ever.

Neither shall they ever more come into the land of Israel, not survive the captivity. Or, with disgrace cast off, shall die in strange lands. In brief, the approaching prosperity which they promise the people none shall see, **#Jer 29:21,32**; but the prosperity after seventy years' captivity, which I promise, my people shall see, but these false prophets never shall see, my hand shall be so against them. They shall not be written in the book of eternal life, which is written for the just ones of the house of Israel, saith the Chaldee paraphrast. See **#Eze 12:15**.

Ver. 10.

The verse is a transition to a new subject, or rather to a new manner of discovering and condemning the sin of the false prophets.

They have seduced my people; made my people to err, both in their apprehension of their sin and danger, and of my displeasure and threats, as if all were less than it was, and there needed no repentance, or submission to the Babylonish king.

Peace; all will be well; no war, or else victory; no more going into captivity, but a speedy return of those that are in captivity: when nothing of all this, but the contrary, was to be told them; universal calamity was at the door, and these varlets promise universal tranquillity and plenty.

One; some one or other chief among the false prophets, as Hananiah, **#Jer 28:15**, and Shemaiah, **#Jer 29:31**, or Ahab son of Koliaiah, **#Jer 29:21,22**. When the state of the church was shattered and ready to fall, these chief false prophets would undertake to repair and build it, but indeed all was a mere contrived cheat, like as if a pretended architect should promise to build a wall substantial and sound, but a pack of deceitful builders in confederacy with this one set to laying the stones, and then with dirt instead of mortar, with melting and dissolving mire instead of holding and well-tempered cement, daub the wall. So the chief seducers cry, Peace, peace, and all the kennel of lesser cheats follow full cry, Peace, peace. Within two years shall the king of Babylon cease, saith one, **#Jer 28:11**, and all the inferior prophets

applaud the conjecture, and persuade the people to believe it; but the end will evince them liars, as in the following verse.

Ver. 11.

Unto them; the meaner and less noted, who follow the arch false prophets, and are as under-workers in this wall.

It shall fall; most certainly its fall shall be the shame and loss of the builders, and those that hoped its duration.

An overflowing shower; abundant, violent, and continued showers shall soak into your wall and dissolve the cement; and this shower is the Babylonish invasion, which all your provision shall be no more able to withstand, than mire in a wall can keep the stones together when drenched with showers. I will summon in the storms of hail, which with mighty stones shall beat upon the ruinous wall.

A stormy wind; a whirlwind, to shake the tumbling stones, which without much shaking would ere long drop down; but, to hasten the downfall, soaking showers, storms of hail and violent winds, shall meet; so shall your crazy state, O deceived Jews, come down to ruin.

Ver. 12.

Will not men thenceforth laugh you to scorn? you that built, you that daubed, you that applauded the wall, will they not upbraid you with your folly?

Ver. 13.

This confirms what was said **#Eze 13:11**, where it is explained. This verse addeth that God will do this by his hand, and in anger and fury, taking vengeance on this scoffing, atheistical, and secure generation in his just displeasure; he will execute the fierceness of his anger upon prince, prophets, people, city, and all their confederates.

Ver. 14.

This verse with very little variation repeats the same dreadful procedure of God against this people, and these false prophets, and their false, ill-grounded confidences. And this repeating these things is to give us to know the certainty of the thing, the terror

wherewith God will do it, and the stupidity of the Jews bewitched by the flatteries of their false prophets.

I will break down the wall; pull it down stone by stone; level it with the ground. The unsoundness of the foundation, whatever it may seem to be,

shall be discovered to every one that will look on it, and this to the utter shame of the builders.

And ye, who deceive and are deceived by it, shall perish in the midst thereof. So all that hearkened to these false prophets, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, fortified the city, and obstinately stood it out, fell with the ruins of the city, and perished, and then felt the stroke of God's hand, and truth of his prophet.

Ver. 15.

Thus, in this dreadful manner, by my hand visible in doing it,

will I fulfil what my prophets foretold, and perform my word and theirs, and fully pour out my wrath, so that it shall be fully according to the just displeasure they have provoked in me.

Will say unto you; I will deride them in their ruin, as **#Ps 2:4 Pr 1:26**. God curseth confidences in an arm of flesh, and will destroy them, for they are set up in direct opposition to his justice and sovereignty, to his threats and truth of them.

Ver. 16.

The prophets of Israel: see **#Eze 13:2,4**.

Which see visions: see **#Eze 13:7**.

Ver. 17.

Now turn thyself and discourse against the prophetesses, fear them not: see the phrase, **#Eze 4:3**. Some would have the prophet's words to be intended against the effeminate men, who were of no value, and by contempt called the daughters of his people; but I see no cause why the prophet's words should not be directed against the women who pretended to be prophetesses.

Of thy people, that were with him in Babylon. Or rather, because they were Jews, they are called daughters of his people. Or might

they not be daughters of priests, and so more nearly of kin to Ezekiel?

Which prophesy; there were women who had the gift of prophecy, #Ex 15:20 Jud 4:4 2Ki 22:14 Joe 2:28, and brought messages from God, but these in the text pretend themselves to be prophetesses, and speak their own imaginations, and fasten their lies on the God of truth.

Ver. 18.

Woe; calamities of all sorts shall fall upon them.

That sew pillows; a figurative speech, expressing their flatteries and security, which the women promised to every one that came to them to know the fate of themselves and others; in token of which safety and ease, either these women did put them for these inquirers to sleep on; or else to lean on as they lay on their side at meat; or else these gypsies, fortune-tellers, did sleep or pretend to sleep on those pillows, and thereby signify the peace, safety, and ease which this people should have.

To all arm-holes; all comers had the same answer, these women made not any difference.

Kerchiefs; either veils, or triumphal hats or caps, which were made by these prophetesses, and these were put upon the head of every one who consulted them; and by these habits the deceived inquirer was either persuaded he was made fit to receive the oracle, or was to interpret the sign as promise of victory over the Babylonian, and a triumphant rest in Judea. Perhaps they might use both; the veils were put on to signify the shame with which their enemies' faces should be covered, the triumphant caps to note the joys of the Jews; but the event showed which belonged to the one and other.

Of every stature, i.e. of every age, whether younger or elder, which usually is somewhat seen by their stature or growth.

To hunt: all this is a pretence, while really it is spreading a net, as hunters do, to catch the prey and devour it.

Souls; the persons, life, estate; and all to enrich or maintain themselves.

Will ye hunt the souls of my people? dare you promise they shall live when I do promise no such thing? Or can you preserve them alive whom you deceive by your promises? Are you no whit afraid thus to profane my name, and to insnare my people?

Ver. 19.

Will ye pollute me? profanely contradicting what is indeed spoken in my name, and pretending my name for that I never spake, nor will do.

Among my people; who are my peculiar, who have my word and true prophets, by which your lies are discovered, and further will be. What shameless impudence is this, to abuse my name, counterfeit my hand and seal, to them, that do or might know both!

For handfuls of barley; for a mean reward, tell fortunes for a penny! but there may be herein a provision made against the famine which was threatened and would come; this grain might be kept.

For pieces of bread; bread and morsels of bread. Mercenary sorceresses! that thus make sale of their predictions to feed their hungry bellies.

To slay the souls that should not die; you denounce evil to the best, perhaps threatened those in Babylon with death, whom God will keep alive there.

To save the souls alive that should not live; declaring safety, plenty, prosperity, peace, without war, or victory in the war, included in that they live.

By your lying; most falsely flattering those that come to you, and most maliciously threatening those that come not, because they know you speak your own lies. You save whom I will kill, and kill whom I will save.

Ver. 20.

I am against (the same phrase **#Eze 13:8**)

your pillows; the rite, and its signification too.

There hunt the souls; either at Jerusalem, or wherever you give out answers.

To make them fly: in this sense the word is nowhere else used, and thus used here renders the interpretation obscure. Elsewhere it is, to bud, as **#Nu 17:8 Eze 7:10**; to blossom, **#Isa 27:6**; to spring up as a flower or vine, **#Ps 92:7 So 6:11**; to grow, as **#Ho 14:8**. Thus the sense is obvious; by these lying ceremonies thus applied you promise a flourishing, growing state to all inquirers, and this is, the net with which you hunt souls. It is possible these prophetesses might bring their deceived ones into pleasant gardens, and (if well paid for it) entertain with all the pleasures of flowers and fruits; and might not these prophetesses be the priests of Flora, and seduce young, fair, wanton ones to the idolatry and brutish pleasures of the Floralia?

I will tear them, with some violence and suddenness, that may express an indignation; as, **#2Ki 5:7**, when the king of Israel rent his clothes at the hearing the letter of Benhadad king of Syria, so in wrath will God suddenly tear your enchanting and divining habits.

From your arms; either from the arms of such as put them on when they consulted with these seducers; or may be the seducers might ordinarily wear them, to be known what they were.

Will let the souls go: you held the souls of those that heard you as captives, or as bewitched with your enchantments and pleasures; but I will set them free, some I will enlighten to discover your frauds, others I will undeceive by sending them into captivity.

Ver. 21.

Kerchiefs: see **#Eze 13:18**.

My people; God owns them, at least some among them; though all were not his, yet he had a people among them.

Your hand; power of their seductions.

Ver. 22.

With lies; diametrically opposing what my prophets told to my people in my name.

The heart; the soul, which in weak ones received some saddening impressions from your lies; in the strongest and wisest it was matter of grief, to see so many contradict the Lord to their own ruin.

The righteous; who keep my law, and have respect to all my precepts, though none can fulfil the law; the upright and just, against whom you do thunder out your woes; but I know better how to distribute my orders. I never commissioned, nor ever will commission, any prophet to sadden the heart of a just one, who needs and is fit for encouragement, or to threaten where they should promise.

By promising him life; your flatteries persuade the worst to think they are in a good way, need not repent and return, and so, their hearts hardened in wickedness, their hands do work it. God would convince and turn the wicked, but you confirm them that they return not from sin; you assure them, but it is with lying words, that they shall not die by pestilence, nor famine, nor sword, but live and prosper.

Ver. 23.

See **#Eze 12:24**. Either these prophetesses with the prophets of the same stamp shall perish in the day of calamity, and of the miseries that they persuaded others to slight and contemn. Or else, if they live, they shall live to see all their predictions of prosperity vanish, to see the righteous, whom they threatened, escape, and the wicked, whom they spake good of, fall under miseries; this shall so confound them, they shall cease for ever, and pretend no more visions. Your credit shall be gone, and you found false dreamers, you shall never more be able to keep up any power over or interest in my people. Not one just, righteous soul shall ever grieve, or apprehend cause of fear, from what you threaten, and the unrighteous shall no more joy in the expectation of these lying promises. All shall know that I am the Lord, who fulfil promises to the just and execute threats on the bad.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 14

God reproveth those hypocrites, who came to inquire of him with idolatry in their hearts, **#Eze 14:1-5**. They are exhorted to repent, for fear of his judgments, **#Eze 14:6-11**. No intercession shall save the guilty land from God's judgment of famine, **#Eze 14:12-14**, noisome beasts, **#Eze 14:15,16**, the sword, **#Eze 14:17,18**, the pestilence, **#Eze 14:19**, or from the four judgments together, **#Eze**

14:20,21. A remnant shall be left for the instruction and consolation of others, **#Eze 14:22,23.**

Ver. 1.

Then, Heb. *And*, that we need not inquire the precise time of this prophecy.

Certain of the elders; men of note, that were in office and power among the Jews, called here elders, &c.

Of Israel; who were yet in Jerusalem; not the elders who were now, and had been some time, in Babylon.

Sat before me: see **#Eze 8:1.**

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

These men; who probably were come from Jerusalem, sent by Zedekiah, and mentioned by Jeremiah, **#Jer 51:59**; some of the courtiers, who, more out of curiosity than religion, give a visit to this famous prophet.

Have set up their idols in their heart; resolved idolaters, their heart was totally addicted to their idolatrous worship and ceremonies, immersed in it.

The stumbling-block of their iniquity; their idols, so expressed, because they were both the object of their sin, and occasion of their ruin. They account these idols to be gods, and worship, fear, trust in, and plead for them; this is their sin, and ere long this shall bring ruin on them. Can these men seriously consult me? Is it fit I should give counsel to obstinate, resolved sinners, who come to inquire, but will not hearken? Should I help them in their distress, who depend on idols which I hate?

Ver. 4.

Mince not the matter, lessen not, neither vary, what I say unto thee, but declare fully and undauntedly

unto them, though great men, and who will compliment with thee.

Every man, without exception, whoever be the man among the Israelites, that hath his heart riveted to idols, and yet comes to the prophet, as if it were to know what were best to be done, and what will be the issue of these times and things, I will answer him but little to his satisfaction or safety; such answer shall such receive, as in seeing they shall not see, &c. I will declare the greatness of their sin and punishment; they multiplied idols, this their sin, I will multiply their sorrows; they first run into darkness of idolatry, I will leave them to the darkness of misery. I will give answer, but in just judgment, and with severe reproofs, and menaces, and commands.

Ver. 5.

That I may convince and pierce their very hearts, or lay open what is in their heart, and discover their hypocrisy and impiety; because they have shamefully followed idols, which now in their distress neither know the cause, or can frame a remedy; and what folly is it to choose such gods! what greater impiety than this, to adhere to idols, and forsake God, the only true God and Saviour?

Estranged from me; minds that increase their averseness to God. Idolatry draws the man more and more from the Lord.

Ver. 6.

Unto the house of Israel; to these men the elders, whoever they are, give charge that they repent, and by them send word to the residue of the house of Jacob that they do so too.

Repent; be sorry and testify your sorrow for such sins.

And turn yourselves; renounce them for future, cease to be idolaters, let your visible carriage in reforming all be seen too. Amend heart and ways, let not your heart be towards idols in point of religion, nor your practice in point of outward deportment be vicious and immoral.

Ver. 7.

For every Jew of the seed of Abraham, and every proselyte, who withdraws himself from me, and worships idols, keeps them in his heart to the increase of their own sin and my displeasure, yet forsooth comes to the prophet to inquire how his God resenteth what they do, and what God will do with them, what they should do, what they may expect, yet all this while dote on idols, and

resolutely hold on in unjust practices, they shall find by the answer it was not the prophet, but the God of the prophet, that answered them, so dreadful, searching, and astonishing shall my answer be.

Ver. 8.

My face; my displeased face, my wrath, which none can bear; the phrase #**Le 17:10 20:3 Eze 15:7**.

A sign of Divine vengeance, provoked by sin and executed on the sinner.

A proverb; of whom every body shall speak with taunt and curse, #**De 28:37**.

I will cut him off; either by an immediate stroke from heaven, or else in an undeniably vindictive way, #**Le 20:3**.

From the midst of my people; openly, as what is done in the sight of all, or as one separated from God's people by this dreadfull excommunication, and who shall have no portion with them in this or the next life.

Ver. 9.

The prophet, viz. the prophet who makes this his trade and gain, the false prophet, who speaks all serene and quiet, in hope of reward for his kind answer to those that desired to hear what might please them more than what God commanded, promised, or threatened.

Have deceived; permitted him to err, or. iustly left him in his blindness, that he shall not discern his own self-deceivings; or else when such prophet promiseth good, and thinks concurrence of all second causes tend to it, yet I will disappoint and frustrate, as #**Isa 44:25**, if the confederacies to save were in likelihood sufficient, and it were no presumption to hope the best; and if your prophets on this ground promised you success, yet they shall deceive you, for I would defeat and disappoint them and you; so the sense would not carry a moral and culpable deceiving, but a just defeating and disappointing, or disabling, second causes, on which disappointment of hopes will follow. If Egypt's arms had so weakened the Babylonians, that none but wounded men remained,

yet the promise of your escape should fail you, O Israelites, for, **#Jer 37:10**, these should rise up and burn your city.

Stretch out my hand upon him; remarkably punish his falsehood, and in severity destroy him.

Ver. 10.

There is so great parity in the folly and impiety of both seducing prophets and the seduced people, that it is hard to say whose sin is greatest. Their punishment shall be by the Lord made as like as they made their sin, and both shall be cut off and destroyed.

Ver. 11.

Afflictions ever tend to a good and necessary effect or end, for God's glory, and his people's good, and so it is here.

The house of Israel; which are the seed of Jacob, and my people.

May go no more astray; they have wandered as sheep, which naturally are apt to go out of the way, and much more when seduced and drawn out of the way, but afflictions tend to reduce them from sheepish wanderings.

From me, their only God and Saviour.

Neither be polluted: idolatry is a great pollution, and ever attended with other transgressions and immoralities, which defile also; now by their present calamities God will open their eyes to see and abhor them.

That they may be my people; in name and external profession they were God's people, but they had forgotten their relation, and the duty of it to Godward; now by these present corrections they shall be disposed to own and love, to obey and walk with, him, as he is their God, and they his people. This effect the rod will have on my own people.

Ver. 12.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 13.

When; at what time soever.

The land, put for the men that dwell in the land.

By trespassing grievously; as a hypocritical, backsliding people, that give fair promises, but perform them not, rather act contrary to their professions, as the Hebrew intimateth.

Upon it; against it. Break the staff of the bread: scarcity and famine are effects of the power of God, which makes that barren for the sins of a people which otherwise would be fruitful.

Will cut off man and beast from it; make the land utterly desolate by famishing the cattle as well as their owners.

Ver. 14.

These three men; most eminent for holy and upright walking with God, very dear to God, exceedingly desirous of the welfare of others, powerful in prayer.

Noah, who it is probable prevailed with God to spare the world for some years, and saved his near relations when the flood came;

Daniel, who prevailed for the life of the wise men of Chaldea; and

Job, who daily offered sacrifice for his children, and at last reconciled God to those that had offended. These should not prevail for any one of this wicked generation; it should suffice them that their righteousness sayeth themselves, this contumacious generation of sinners I would not be entreated for.

Ver. 15.

Noisome beasts are one of the great plagues or armies that God hath always at his command.

To pass through the land; to range over the land, and spoil their cattle, devour their servants and children, and destroy travellers, and make it as a wilderness.

No man may pass through without much danger, and great guards that may repel the wild ravening beasts.

Ver. 16.

As I live; a form of speech in which God by oath confirms what he speaketh, and it is such an oath as becomes him only, who is life, and cannot die.

Neither sons nor daughters; neither sons that should perpetuate their families, and are the support of houses, nor daughters, the

tenderness of whose sex and age does make and keep parents' affections fervent towards them. No near relation should escape on their account.

Desolate, i.e. most desolate, as the Hebrew use by an abstract to express the superlative degree, #Isa 1:7 64:10.

Ver. 17.

He is Lord of hosts, and hath the militia of all the world in his hand, the sword is the right of the King of kings.

Bring a sword; raise war, and send enemies to invade it. That land; what land soever it be.

Go through the land: though inanimate things have not ears to hear, yet God speaks of them sometimes as if they had ears to hear, and understanding to discern; hereby intimating to us his overruling power, wisdom, justice, and sovereignty.

So that I cut off man: men cut off men in war, yet here God takes it to himself, he doth it by men.

And beast: though wars chiefly destroy men, yet the beasts of the field go to wreck too, the beasts that are serviceable in wars are waste, as horses and beasts of burden. The Eastern nations have brought store of camels and many elephants into the wars; beside the slaughter of these in fight, the spoiler wasting his enemy doth often destroy whole herds and flocks.

Ver. 18.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 19.

Diseases are sent whenever they come, especially wasting diseases, which empty nations and cities apace.

Pestilence; God's arrow that flies from God's bow.

Pour out; not drop or distil on a people in small measures, and by leisure, but in great measures, and hastily, as waters are poured out of a vessel all at once almost.

In blood: sometimes blood does denote war, but here, and in many other places, it denotes death and destruction of men, though not by the sword.

Man and beast; not that beasts die of the same pestilential disease which kills man, but either death of men by pestilence emptieth the nation, that there are not men to take care and provide for the beasts; or rather, because when pestilence wasteth men, murrains and plague of cattle, from the same infected air, and from the hand of God, waste the beasts also.

Ver. 20.

Their own souls; their person, their life.

By their righteousness; not meriting the deliverance, but yet the justice and mercy of God shall surely keep them from falling in the punishment who were kept from the sin.

Ver. 21.

Those three men, with their best interest, should not be able to keep off one of the four, much less able to keep off all four when I commission them all to go at once, as I will, nay, have done, against Jerusalem, to cut off the obstinate, incorrigible ones amidst it.

Ver. 22.

Therein; in Jerusalem itself, and in the land.

A remnant; some that escape, for though none could prevail with God to prevent the emptying the city and the land, and cutting off the most, yet this was not to extend to the utter cutting off and destruction of all.

Brought forth; by the proud, cruel, and barbarous conqueror bringing them in nakedness, chains, and in contempt more grievous than death itself.

Unto you; those naked, hunger-starved, derided captives, through heats and colds, through sands and tedious travels, shall come, though with great regret to you, to Babylon, whose condition they will either envy, or wish it their own.

Ye shall see; see them, and consider and know their way; what it hath brought them, how sinfully evil it was against God in their own land, and how miserably evil it is and must be with them in the enemies' land.

Ye shall be comforted; not rejoice in your brethren's misery, but comforted in remembrance of the good hour you resolved to obey God, in yielding up to the Chaldeans; comforted in the sense of your state much better than theirs, and in the vindication of you from the black aspersions the false prophets and their followers cast on you; and finally, comforted, in that your return, at set time promised, shall in its time be as surely made good as you see the threats are made good. God will be as true in his mercies as he hath been in his judgments; this is matter of great affliction and grief, that of comfort and hope.

Ver. 23.

They that survive the siege, famine, and ruin of Jerusalem, and are brought to Babylon,

shall comfort you; either confessing their faults in not doing as you had done, justifying the wise course they took who yielded, condemning the folly of hardening themselves against God, his judgments, and his prophets; or be matter of comfort, affording to you just ground of comforting yourselves.

When ye see their ways: understand it in the effects of it upon the ruined Jews; or, in the relation which they will make both of their sins and sufferings in the land of Canaan.

Ye, you of the first captivity, you that obeyed my voice, and submitted to the Babylonian yoke,

shall know, be fully satisfied, that I have had but too much cause, and most just reason, for all that I have done against Jerusalem and its land, and inhabitants of both; you shall know my hand, and as you feel the weight, so you shall see the justice of it too against them, and the mercy of it towards you.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 15.

By the unfitness of the vine branch for any work, **#Eze 15:1-5**, is showed the utter rejection of Jerusalem, **#Eze 15:6-8**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

The house of Israel is often compared to a vine, which when barren or fruitless is very contemptible and unprofitable. This the prophet minds them of to humble them, and awaken them to fruitfulness; Will you boast yourselves of this?

Than a branch which is among the trees of the forest; one single branch of a tree in the forest is of more use and worth than the whole vine tree is, except for its fruit.

Ver. 3.

Is there one good piece of timber in the whole vine fit for building a house, or ship, as there is in the oak, elm, or other wild forest trees? Will it furnish the husbandman or soldier, or seaman with fit materials for their use, in peace, war, or sea? Will it afford a pin to drive into a wall or post, on which you may safely fasten any weight? It is so weak that it is useless as to this.

Ver. 4.

When for its barrenness it is cut down, it is fit only to be burnt. Nor is it a choice fuel neither, a little branch of a tree of the forest is better, and affords more fuel.

Ver. 5.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 6.

Either thus, When the vine is, as the wild trees of the forest, barren and fruitless, it is less worth than the forest tree; so are you, O house of Israel, in my account: or else, As trees of the forest are for the fire in all the less valuable parts of them, so are all the branches and body of the barren vine, which you are, O Jerusalemites.

I have given; designed and doomed for food to the fire.

So will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem; for by their sins they have kindled a fire, which shall burn every barren branch in the degenerate and fruitless vine.

Ver. 7.

I will look upon them with an angry and displeased countenance, which is enough to destroy them, or to fill them with terrors. This phrase occurs **#Eze 14:8**, which see. My wrath shall kindle a fire among them.

They shall go out from one fire; either shift themselves, and flee from one evil, which as fire consumed them; or else be cast by others, by their enemies, out of one evil into another; from a less which troubled them to a greater which devours them, **#1Ki 19:17 Jer 48:43,44 Am 5:19.**

Ye shall know; you that are in Babylon, and hear what mischiefs are heaped on Jerusalem one after another, shall know it is my anger and fury poured out upon them.

Ver. 8.

Desolate: see **#Eze 6:14.**

A trespass; not one single trespass, but they have been so perpetually trespassing that it seemed a continued act, and all done with greatest aggravation.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 16

Under the similitude of a helpless exposed infant is represented the original state of Jerusalem, **#Eze 16:1-5**; whom God is described to have bred up, married, and treated with kind indulgence, **#Eze 16:6-14**. Her unnatural whoredoms, **#Eze 16:15-34**. God threateneth her with severe judgment, **#Eze 16:35-43**. Her sin, equal to her mother's, the Hittite, and exceeding that of her sisters', Sodom and Samaria, shall not go unpunished, **#Eze 16:44-59**. A promise of mercy in the end, **#Eze 16:60-63**.

Ver. 1.

Again, Heb. *And*, frequently and properly enough rendered as here, *again*, not pointing out any particular time wherein it came to the prophet.

The word of the Lord came unto me; both commanding and directing him what to speak; and it is a very elegant description of God's dealing with the Jews, and their carriage toward God; his dealing was kindness and tender compassion in the most unparalleled expressions of it toward the Jews, theirs to God was the most unthankful, undutiful, and rebellious.

Ver. 2.

Declare to them that are with thee, and to them that are at Jerusalem, to these declare by letter, to those by word of mouth,

what state theirs was in their infancy what I did for them, for the whole nation of the Jews, for so I take Jerusalem here to signify. Make them know: it was not in his power to give them understandings, and to enlighten their minds, but his declaring to them is here called making them to know, because it was sufficient to have brought it to their knowledge.

Her abominations; her multiplied transgressions, which were increased beyond number, and her great, foul sins, called here abominations, her idolatries spiritual adulteries, and unexemplified folly in her lewdness, changing her God and Husband, **#Jer 2:10-13.**

Ver. 3.

The proud and blinded Jews thought their original more pure than that of the heathen; this was an old tradition among them, now that the prophet is to acquaint them with the truth of their polluted original, which they will storm and fret at, he comes thus prefacing his discourse with a Divine commission.

The Lord God; who is omniscient, knows all we are and do, who is so just and true, speaks not any thing but the very truth, who is supreme Judge and determiner of controversies. He tells the prophet what they were, and commands him to tell them.

Unto Jerusalem, i.e. the whole race of the Jews, as **#Eze 16:2.** Or, perhaps, in more special manner the inhabitants and natives of that proud city, who thought it a singular privilege to be born there, which the Jews counted more holy than the rest of the land of Canaan.

Thy birth; thine habitation and thy kindred, so our English of the time of 2 Elizabeth. Thy root whence thou didst spring, the rock whence thou wast cut, the place where thou grewest up, the company and commerce thou didst use, all were of the land of Canaan, and thou hast a fulness of their vicious nature, manners, and practices, both in civil and religious things, as vile and obnoxious to my curse as Canaan itself.

Thy father: if the prophet refer to Abraham, it must be understood of his state and religion before God called him, when he, as his father and kindred, worshipped strange gods beyond the river, **#Jos 24:14,** with **#Eze 16:2.** If the prophet refer to those that were in Egypt, the Jews' ancestors that dwelt there, it is certain that many of them forgot Abraham's God, closed with the

Egyptian idolatry, and were polluted with idols, #**Jos 24:2**. If you refer it as a figurative speech, and call them fathers whom we reverence, consult, obey, and imitate, as well we may call such fathers, these were not the best and holiest of men, #**Mt 3:7 12:34 23:33**. O ye Jews, be it known to you, whatever you think, you have no cause to boast of your nobler or purer descent, your fountain was corrupt and poisonous.

Was; might have been, for likeness of manners.

An Amorite; either because this comprehended all the rest of the cursed nations; or because the Amorites, as the most powerful and mighty, so were the most wicked among them; it was the Amorites which were filling up their sins, #**Ge 15:16**.

Thy mother: sometimes the ill nature of a father is corrected in the child by the sweetness of the mother, but you Jews were not so happy, your mother was as bad every whit as your father; both prodigiously vile in their inclination, civil converse, and choice of their religion, and in the practice of it. The daughters of Heth were women of ill fame and worse manners, #**Ge 27:46**, enough to make a good soul weary of life. Such is your race, O ye Jews.

Ver. 4.

In the day thou wast born; either in the day I called Abraham to leave his idolatry; or when in Egypt you began to multiply into a nation; or when you were brought out of Egyptian bondage. Or whether you fix any other time, it was a helpless and miserable state they were in.

Thy navel was not cut: as the new-born infant cannot do this for its own preservation, and as there is great danger if not carefully and skilfully done, as it is the early care of the hand that delivers the child, so was the care and love of God towards this people when they could not, and others would not, help them, and this will be declared in a continued allegory. The preventing mercy of God was showed in this.

Washed in water. Born in blood, unpleasant to behold, thou must have weltered therein, and perished; none washed thee, that thou mightest be handled, but I; I purged away the blood and uncleanness of thy birth, took thee up, nursed, provided for, and disposed of thee.

Thou wast not salted: salt is of a drying, abstersive, and cleansing nature, and was used to purge, dry, and strengthen the new-born child, to make it the more lovely and lively.

Nor swaddled: this usage for the continued preservation of the infant, for strengthening it, setting its limbs, and keeping them in their right and orderly posture, is most necessary to be observed, and yet there was none that would do this for this infant: so forlorn was the state of the Jews in their birth, without beauty, weltering in blood, without strength, new-born, without friend that might act the mother's or midwife's office.

Ver. 5.

A confirmation of what was said #Eze 16:4; no hand helped, because no eye pitied them; neither Terah's family to Abraham, nor the Egyptians to sojourning or departing Israel, showed any bowels of pity to help.

To do any of these: though all those particulars toward an infant had not been done, if the more needful were done it might be well enough, but, poor infant, it hears of nobody to do any one of them for its health and life.

To have compassion; to show any tenderness of heart toward it.

Cast out; put out of doors, exposed to perish and starve with hunger and cold.

In the open field; as far from likelihood of relief as from the sight of men; not laid in the street of city or town, not at some man's door, but in the open wide field, where devouring wild beasts are likely to come first and tear the helpless wretch to pieces.

To the loathing of thy person; in contempt of thee, as unlovely and worthless; and in abhorrence of thee, as loathsome, putrifying, and offensive to the beholder.

Ver. 6.

After the manner of man God here speaks, alluding to some traveller or walker abroad, like Pharaoh's daughter, or the good Samaritan that lighted on this poor forlorn infant.

Saw thee, in such manner as to pity and consider how to relieve. To Omniscience every thing is seen, but here compassion is included in this seeing, this was the only eye that pitied.

Polluted in thine own blood; most exact emblem of man's sinful and miserable state, his filthiness and death arising from himself, as the death and filthiness of one wallowing in his own blood.

I said unto thee; I purposed to save thy life, I declared my purpose, and wrought the effect; I took care of thee, that thou mightest not die.

Yea, I said: this is repeated, both to set forth the freeness and abundance of God's love, and to work our heart to a suitable resentment thereof, and to intimate the stability and stedfastness of the purposes and effects of grace.

Live; it sounds like a command, but it is such a command as sends forth a power accompanying it to effect what is commanded; he gave that life; he spake, and it was done.

Ver. 7.

The Lord, who chose Abraham and his seed; by his blessing this people were increased as by millions. How inconsiderable is a clan of seventy-five persons! So many went with Jacob into Egypt, where in two hundred and fifty years they grew to six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty, beside women, and children under twenty years, and old men above sixty years old. So the promise, #Ge 12:2 15:5 17:2,4, was fulfilled.

As the bud of the field: for multitude, they are compared to the numberless buds of the herb; for flourishing, they are like the bud in the beauty of its spring; and both include the goodness and richness of the land they dwelt in.

Increased; grown up to maturity or full age.

Waxen great; and in stature thou hast come to full, just proportions, or grown strong, mighty, and terrible to thy neighbours who were enemies, but honourable and a defence to thy friends.

Come to excellent ornaments: as jewels and rich vestments set off a beautiful person, so the successes in enterprises, rich returns

in merchandise, fruitfulness of the country itself, were the lustre of thy beauty, which all thy neighbours courted; thou wast adorned with the choicest blessings of Divine Providence.

Thy breasts are fashioned: the prophet further describes the beauty and glory of the Jewish nation, grown up and fashioned under God's own hand, in order to be solemnly affianced to God.

Thine hair, which is an ornament when well set, whereas baldness is a deformity.

Thou wast naked and bare, i.e. when in Egypt, poor, and oppressed, and despised.

Ver. 8.

When I passed by thee: see #Eze 16:6, of the phrase. This second passing by may well be understood of God's visiting them and calling them out of Egypt.

Looked upon thee: see the phrase #Eze 16:6.

Thy time was the time of love; the time of thy misery was the time of love and pity in me towards thee, and the time of thy grown beautified state was the time of my love of delight, when I rejoiced in thee, and espoused thee to be my wife. Thy time, i.e. the season fittest for the discovery of my purposes towards thee, was the time of love, which is expressed in what follows in the verse,

I spread my skirt over thee, i.e. betrothed thee, as #Ru 3:9 De 22:30, engaged by marriage to love, cherish, protect, and safeguard.

Covered thy nakedness; what was and would be thy reproach my love and bounty covered, I clothed thee with spoils of Egypt, and gave thee flocks, with the wool whereof thou mightest clothe thyself. If you take it figuratively, I covered all thy filthiness, and washed it away.

I swear unto thee; gave thee the greatest, most inviolable, and solemn assurance of my conjugal love, care, and faithfulness.

Entered into a covenant with thee: this was done at Mount Sinai, #Ex 19:5.

Saith the Lord God: the truth of all which the Lord doth avow in this form of asseveration.

Thou becamest mine; by the obligations of my kindness thou couldst be no less, by thy own voluntary act and consent, by promise and profession, **#Ex 19:7,8.**

Ver. 9.

Then, Heb. *And:* this continueth the allegory, and declareth what more was done to prepare this virgin for advancement by this marriage covenant.

Washed I thee: it was a very ancient custom among those Eastern people, as appears **#Ru 3:3 Es 2 12**, to purify virgins who were to be espoused ere long; and it is likely the prophet alludes to that, **#Ex 19:10.**

I thoroughly washed away: the same thing, by a very usual figure, repeated to confirm and illustrate what is spoken; the word in Hebrew notes an abundant washing, a rinsing of what was washed to make it cleaner; it includes a bathing, as **#Le 15:10.**

Thy blood; thy original and birth pollution, which rendered thee displeasing to the eye, and unfit for the familiar and loving entertainment of a husband.

I anointed thee; not to royal sovereign dignity, this is expressed by another word in the Hebrew; but anointed as they that were to be married, as **#Ru 3:3 Es 2:12**; or as those who were to come into the presence of great and noble personages, as **#Da 10:3**; or as such who would look with cheerfuller countenances, and change their sad and mournful deportment, as **#2Sa 12:20**: it is not improbable it may allude to the bounty of God toward the Jews in a land flowing with oil. Spiritually these refer to our cleansing by the blood of Christ, and by his sanctifying Spirit.

Ver. 10.

So miserably poor was this creature, that she had not clothes to her back; he gave them who married her.

Broidered work; rich and beautiful needle-work of divers colours, much above the state of an abject infant, and suited to the bounty and riches of him who gave them.

Badgers' skin; those Eastern people had an art of curiously dressing and colouring the skins of those beasts, of which they made their neatest festival shoes, and these were for the richest and greatest personages to use.

I girded thee, both for strength, activity, and ornament.

With fine linen; both soft, warm, and comely. Such soft raiment, used in kings courts, intimate the advancement of tills abject to royal state, as well as delicately clothed.

I covered thee; either covered, as the upper garment covers all the rest, or as curtains of the bed cover one who is laid to rest within them. The veil this virgin was covered with when she appeared abroad, and her furniture at home, were very rich, and proportioned to her Lord's grandeur and riches.

Ver. 11.

If the inventory of this virgin's goods given to her were hitherto of such things as were needful for her comfort, now follows a particular of what served for state and magnificence, as the phrase **#Job 40:10**: it also expresseth the bravery of a bridegroom, **#Isa 61:10**; the curiosity and exactness wherewith such do dress themselves.

I put, Heb. *I gave*, i.e. freely.

Bracelets; which usually were of gold, as appears, **#Ge 24:22**, and presents made of these bespeak greatest respects.

A chain of gold, in token of honour and authority, **#Ge 41:42 Da 5:16**.

Ver. 12.

A jewel; it was many times of silver, but most commonly of gold, and was of circular figure, hanging by a string fastened above the forehead in such a manner that it lay or rested on the nose, much esteemed among the Eastern people, though of no account with us.

Earrings; golden ornaments hanging in the fleshy part of the ear.

A beautiful crown; a very rich and beautiful crown; as virgins espoused and married had crowns set on their heads, **#So 3:11**, so, to complete the solemnity, and make the magnificence of these

nuptials full, a crown of beauty is set on the head of this Jewish nation now married to God.

Ver. 13.

The prophet sums up all again, partly to aver the truth thereof, partly to bring it to her remembrance, and partly to affect her with thankfulness for what she had received, and with shame for what she had done.

Thou didst eat fine flour; it was the constant course of thy diet, to be provided thus with the choicest food, which thou didst not by scanty allowance taste of, but wast filled with: these were royal dainties, as #Ge 49:20.

Thou wast exceeding beautiful; such diet, with the additional ornaments, would surely render a perfect beauty, and to such perfection did this espoused virgin grow.

Thou didst prosper; all affairs succeeded well, and events added to thy greatness.

A kingdom, not only compact in itself, but victorious over others; and so she was a mistress over kingdoms, as in David's, Solomon's, Jehoshaphat's, and Hezekiah's time.

Ver. 14.

Thy renown; thy name was great and honoured.

Among the heathen; not only next neighbours, but the uttermost ends of the earth, as it is said of the queen of Sheba, heard thereof.

For thy beauty; the excellent order of thy government, prosperity of thy country, riches of thy merchants, and abundance of thy peace.

Perfect; the best of any upon earth, no nations had such laws as they had, or God so near them; it was perfect in its kind.

My comeliness which I had put upon thee; the form of the civil government and its laws, the wisdom, justice, and courage of the governors, the due compliance of the governed, and the holiness, purity, and truth of their religion; all which concurred to make up this beauty, and it was that God put upon them, or set before them, #De 4:7,8. The visible, outward, emblematic part of all was beautiful; the invisible, inward, and spiritual part was much more

beautiful, and ought to be duly considered. Thus far what God did for her.

Ver. 15.

Hear, O heavens, and be astonished at the complaint God doth make against this unthankful, forgetful, and perfidious woman!

Thou didst trust; grew proud, laid aside humility, which became one raised from a most abject state, cast off the modesty, chastity, and fidelity which became a wife.

Thine own beauty; it was not her own, but put upon her; she owed it to the love, bounty, and care of God; but, forgetting this, she accounts it her own, and then disposeth of it as she lists.

Playedst the harlot; no doubt with the increase of wealth and honour the lewdness of harlots and adulteresses increased too, but here spiritual harlotry, i.e. idolatry, is meant; and to this course did the wanton, unstable, and ungodly Jews betake themselves from the days of the judges, and, especially in the latter days of their kingdom, this people went a whoring after idols.

Because of thy renown; some would read it, against thy renown, to the blasting of thy honour; but rather her renown abroad drew to her idolatrous strangers, who brought their idols with them, and acquainted the Jews with the pomps of their idolatrous worship.

Pouredst out thy fornications; didst readily and profusely lavish thy wealth, and prostitute thyself to them, thy land, thy cities; Jerusalem itself was full of the idols which the nations far and near did worship. Every stranger who passed through thee might find room for his idol and idolatry, and very like it was thou didst infect every one-with somewhat of thine, as well as wast infected with their idolatry.

His it was; thy person, affection, riches, religion, all was at the command and service of every adulterer, so impudently vile and false was she to God.

Ver. 16.

Of thy garments; hers they were for use, by gift of God, but she looked on them as hers, without respect to either the giver or use intended. Those costly, royal robes, the very wedding clothes and furniture,

thou didst take; as an adulteress that parts with the rich gifts of her husband to oblige an adulterer.

Deckedst: by this it appears how shameless she was grown, that blushed not to be known, one that had turned her Husband's bounty, that had abused the unparalleled kindness of her God, to the open and public service of her adulterer, her idol; thus she turned her glory into shame.

Thy high places, where both the idol's altar and worship were fixed.

With divers colours, with those beautiful clothes and furniture I put upon thee to adorn thee; these hast thou made the carpets and hangings for the honour and service of idols.

The like things shall not come; so matchless is this adulteress, that none shall be so impudent, and do like her; as there was none before her that hath done so to be her example, so shall there be none to follow her in these things wherein she hath exceeded.

Ver. 17.

Thy fair jewels; she forgot the property was in God, she reckoned them her own. The word in Hebrew is of larger extent, and includes vessels, instruments, furniture of all sorts, with which, she was abundantly stored, even from their departure out of Egypt, when they spoiled the Egyptians, #Ex 11:2, where the selfsame phrase is used, and more since Solomon made gold and silver so common in Jerusalem, with which they made vessels for use, and furniture of all sorts for ornament.

My gold: the greater was the sin of this harlot, her ingratitude, and her injustice, that she robbed God, committed sacrilege, that she might have idols with which to defile herself by her idolatry.

I had given thee: had she received them of any other hand, the wrong had been the less; but she received them, every one of them, of the hand of God: he gave her what the Egyptians lent, what David won from enemies, and what Solomon brought in by traffic; so #Ho 2 aggravates Israel's idolatry.

Madest; brutish stupidity! to make an idol, and account it a god!

Images; statues, molten and graven images; not one single image, but many; so idolatry, as adultery, is boundless.

Of men: idolaters had male and female idols; and this idolatress here, as mostly they did, doted on male idols. It is not unlike to that **#Eze 8:14**, which see. And possibly the Egyptian idolatry with Osiris or Adonis may be noted, or some more lewd image or portrait of Priapus, which might be confirmed from **#Eze 16:26 23:19,20**.

Didst commit whoredom with them; provoked by such representations to speculative uncleanness, and prepared for bodily uncleanness also, and proceeding to spiritual adultery with these shameful images.

Ver. 18.

Thy broidered garments, mentioned **#Eze 16:10**, given by him who espoused this woman. Coveredst them; didst clothe the adulterers with whom thou didst commit lewdness, or didst clothe the images which thou hadst made, as was the custom of idolaters to suit clothing to their idols.

Mine oil; either in lamps to burn before them, or used in their sacrificing to their idols; or literally, didst in thy feast with thine adulterous lovers entertain them with the oil I gave thee.

Mine incense; burnt before the idol incense, being one part of what they offered to idols; or burnt in the private house, to make it the more grateful to the adulterer, as **#Pr 7:16,17**.

Ver. 19.

My meat also; the bread, all that was necessary and proper for thy sustentation in general, which I gave thee, thou hast fed thy paramours withal.

Fine flour, &c: here are particularly recounted the things God gave, and this adulteress misemployed, both literally and mystically; for I doubt not the Jews were lavish of the fruits of the Divine bounty, bestowing them both on adulterers and on idols.

For a sweet savour; to reconcile the idol, or to prolong the favour of the idol, or to give a pleasing entertainment to their adulterers, or to provide for the idolatrous priests and their

families, which could spend all this, though the idol knew not of it.

Thus it was; all which is self-evident, plain, and needs no proof; it is undeniable.

Ver. 20.

Thy sons; they were hers by birth, and should have been hers in affection, care, and preservation; but as idolatry is from the father of lies, the old murderer, it is even cruel, and spares neither sons or daughters. *Sons*, that are usually the father's darlings, are always the strength and glory of the family, without respect to him that begat them, were by this adulteress designed to please the idol.

Thy daughters, usually the mother's great delight, whose tender sex required better usage, unregarded, are by a cruel mother in idolatrous abominations destroyed.

Whom thou hast borne unto me; which were mine, born within covenant, before the lewd mother was divorced, born to be of my family, and to serve and love me.

And these; these very children of mine, to my dishonour and grief, to provoke me to utmost anger, hast thou destroyed.

Sacrificed; not only consecrating them to be priests to dumb idols, dunghill gods, as **#Eze 20:26 2Ch 33:6**; or idolatrously purifying them, called lustration; or, which is most inhumanly cruel, burning them in sacrifice to Molech, which cruelty the Jews themselves did barbarously imitate, **#2Ch 28:3**.

To be devoured; to be consumed to ashes, being made a burnt-offering to the devil, as **#Ps 106:37**.

Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter? were thy whoredoms a small matter with thee, that thou hast proceeded to this height of unnatural cruelty? Or, is both face and heart so hardened by an impudent course of adulteries, that thou canst do this as if it were no great matter? Will spiritual adulteresses as well as bodily thus hunt the precious life? Could such commit the worst who were forbid to commit any murder?

Ver. 21.

Thy blind superstition called this religion, and accounted it sacrifice, but truth is it was unnatural murder; it is as if thou hadst cut their throat, nay, worse, because it put them to greater torture. The word is used **#Isa 57:5 Ho 5:2**.

My children; sons here are first-born, which peculiarly were devoted to God, he reserved a special right in these, and yet this cruel mother, this perfidious wife, this sacrilegious adulteress, sacrificeth these to her idols.

Delivered them; either gave them to the idol's priests, or rather with her own hands gave them, i.e. led them through the fire, if lustrated, or put them into the idol's arms of brass or iron, which grasped them fast whilst they were consumed with fire that made the idol red hot.

For them; for the idol's worship, or possibly for the parents, who did wickedly imagine this a way to preserve and prosper the rest of their children.

Ver. 22.

Thou wast so intent upon and delighted in thy lewd courses, thou never thoughtest what once thou wast, or what again thou mightest be.

In all thine abominations, both corporal and spiritual.

Thy whoredoms: this is the same thing charged thus on her, because she would not consider, or lay it to heart.

Thou hast not remembered; thou hast utterly forgotten; it is a form of speech that contains more than the words seem to have in them, she had forgotten herself and her God.

Thy youth; the misery and loathsomeness of thy birth, which is expressed very elegantly.

1. Naked, as contemptible as poverty could make her.
2. Nay, she was nakedness itself, as the word will bear, exposed to all the suffering that can befall such poor helpless wretches.
3. Bleeding to death in a most loathsome, defiled condition, that none would come near her: but, ungrateful, she forgot all.

Ver. 23.

It came to pass; it shall come to pass; so the Hebrew may be read, and then this verse will be a dreadful threat of misery to come upon the Jews for all their wickednesses; when they have filled up the measure of their sins, God will fill them with his judgments, and bring one woe after another upon them, as they proceeded from one wickedness to another. But as we read the words, they are an introduction to a further declaring of this people's multiplied wickedness, with a dreadful menace introduced somewhat abruptly to express God's great displeasure against them: the threat is doubled, because it is certainly coming, and will be great when come.

Ver. 24.

Hast also built, with great charge and pains, as those do. who build, hereby declaring thy purposes of continuing thy lewdness.

Unto thee; for thyself, grown so prodigiously public, and followed with such numbers, and such great ones, that no common place was thought great enough, or stately enough.

An eminent place; not only eminent for its situation, but for its structure, that it might invite men in, and have room to treat them, unless you will refer the words that follow to the manner of the building, and the former words to the height of the situation.

An high place in every street; idol temples and brothel-houses were in every street; so common were these sins with the Jews; in every large street capable of and frequented with much company. This in Jerusalem and her cities.

Ver. 25.

Not content with what was done in the city, she built her idol temples and shows in the country, in places where many ways or roads met, wheresoever it was likely passengers would come.

Hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, as the beauty of a shameless whore is abhorred by them to whom she offers herself. In her high places every passenger might meet his own god, and worship his own idol, and then satisfy his lust with lewd women, common as the street; and this made men abhor that beauty they would have admired, dressed in modesty, and dwelling retired.

Hast opened thy feet; a modest expressing of the most immodest practice of lewd and insatiable adulteresses and whores, which are ready for every comer, and tempt such as tempt not them, #Eze 16:32,33.

Ver. 26.

Committed fornication; both figuratively and literally understood; worshipped Egypt's gods, made covenants with them, kept up a commerce of trade with them, and prostituted themselves to their lusts too, by cohabitation, while the servitude lasted, and by nearness of place, when in Canaan. The Jewish nation retained too much inclination to those idolatrous and lustful neighbours.

Great of flesh; politically they were great in power, and like to defend and help the Jews; naturally of big make, and men of great stature, and such as insatiable adulteresses would covet; and these considerations induced adulterous and idolatrous Israel to unite with them in leagues and religion.

To anger; to a fierceness of anger for its degree, and to an abhorring and contemning of the person against whom this anger is stirred.

Ver. 27.

Behold; open thine eyes, thou secure and foolish adulteress, see what hath been done against thee, and consider it is for thy lewdness.

I have stretched out my hand; I have chastised and punished already in some measure.

Over thee; it may be read, against thee. In like phrase #Isa 5:25 9:12,17,21 10:4, expresseth the punishing of this people.

Diminished thine ordinary food; abated of that plentiful allowance a kind Husband made, and an unfaithful wife abused: it refers to scarcity and penury, with which God did punish idolatrous Israel, and this more than once.

Delivered thee; stirred up first such to fight against them, and then gave victory to their arms, yet they might use the conquered as they pleased; sent them into captivity into an enemy's land,

where they that hated them ruled over them, and no doubt such would satisfy their own lusts on these captives.

The daughters of the Philistines: either it is a Hebraism, the daughters of the Philistines for the whole nation, or else some particular cities and principalities of the Philistines, which quarrelled with and prevailed against the Jews, when God had been so provoked by the sins of the Jews. Idolaters, but in this honester than the Jews; they were constant to their own god, and did not, as the Jews, lewdly go a whoring with every idol they saw.

Which are ashamed of thy lewd way; will therefore reprove, and teach thee some modesty and chastity.

Ver. 28.

Thou hast courted their friendship and alliance, and to obtain it hast entertained their religion, manners, and impieties, been all idolatress with them, and committed adulteries with them, though they were far from thee. When thou didst wickedly with thy neighbours, it might admit some little colour of excuse, but it is inexcusable to run to remotest nations.

Because thou wast unsatiable; without satisfying thyself (and so the Hebrew may be read); but our interpreters refer it to the boundless lusts of this lewd adulteress, and not to the issue and event of her practices; and in the endless lustings of a wicked heart idolaters and adulterers do agree.

Yea, thou hast played the harlot; it is repeated to shame her, and make her blush and repent.

Couldst not be satisfied; or, wast not satisfied. Assyrian gods proved, as other idols, a snare and a lie to the Jews, #2Ki 16:9,10 Jer 2:18,36 Ho 7:11,12 14:3.

Ver. 29.

Multiplied; both increased the number of thy idolatries, and made them greater, in that thou hast adopted the idols of Canaan, and all that between them and the Chaldeans are owned or worshipped.

In the land; the Hebrew may be read

towards as well as

in. The idolatry of the Jews worshipping Canaan's idols was most intolerable, because God had so fully declared the vileness of it, and his abhorrence thereof, and so strictly charged the Jews to keep themselves from it. How monstrously wicked is it, that in prosperity, and possessing the houses and wealth which thy God gave thee out of the hands of the Canaanites and their idols, thou forgettest God, and worshippesst their idols; and in adversity and captivity doest the like, and detest on the idols of thine enemies!

Ver. 30.

Weak; unstable, like water that melts away. Neither hast strength of judgment to discern the truth and purity of religion, nor hast strength of resolution to hold fast to it.

Doest all these things; changest thy God and religion, or detest on all the gaudy, pompous religions and idols thou hearest of.

Imperious whorish woman; a woman who thinks herself her own, that knows no superior, nor will be either guided and governed to do good, nor reprov'd and reclaim'd from evil; a woman whose lust is her law, and her husband her contempt and burden. Such will be boundless in her disorders, and shameless too.

Ver. 31.

Thou buildest; see #Eze 16:24; whereas the paramours of other lewd women build for them, as it is reported of Solomon, #1Ki 11:7,8. Here, on the contrary, this unfaithful nation forsake their God, commit fornication with strange gods, and bear the charges both of building their temples, and furnishing them with sacrifices, and maintaining the priests.

Thine eminent place: see #Eze 16:24.

Every way: see #Eze 16:25.

In every street: see #Eze 16:24. Hast not been as an harlot; common harlots make gain of their looseness, and live by that gain, they make a prey of the men that come in to them; thou doest worse, thou lavishest out thy credit, wealth, and all, to maintain and please thine adulterers. Scornest; the Hebrew word is of two significations, and opposite to each other, for it bears, as

our translation renders it, contempt, slighting, or disregarding; and so it suiteth with what follows, #**Eze 16:32-34**. It signifieth also to praise, value, and regard, as Buxtorf observes; and it will as well, if not better, be so rendered here, and be the character of a common harlot, which wandereth after her lovers with a design of receiving the rewards of her lewdness; and thus the Chaldee paraphrase reads it; so we shall need no parenthesis, nor begin the antithesis till the 32nd verse.

Ver. 32.

Here begins the antithesis. A wife, adulteress, such as the prophet compareth this nation to, which hath a most rich, bountiful, and kind husband, she differs from common harlots in this point, she hunts not rewards, but forbidden pleasures.

Ver. 33.

They, unclean fornicators and adulterers,

give gifts; the word is of a restrictive sense, speaks not any kind of gifts in general, but peculiarly such gifts as are presented by a wooer, or espouser of a woman, with which she is enriched and adorned; and may perhaps imply the arts, pretences, and arguments which are used by loose men to seduce and corrupt virgins; they pretend marriage designed, make presents, and deceive.

To all whores, i.e. to the most of them, it is usually so.

Thy gifts; thy nuptial gifts, which thy generous and bountiful Husband gave thee at the espousals, or on the wedding day. Those gifts which are most highly valued, most carefully preserved, and most unwillingly parted with by all virtuous women, thou most unparalleled adulteress hast given to thy Husband's greatest enemies, to thy beastly adulterers.

To all thy lovers; thou makest little difference, but, as it happens, any one of thy lewd companions may easily have these gifts of thy hand.

Hirest them, by large gifts, as bribes usually are; and the word used here signifieth, they slight thee, and have no desire after thee. Like despised adulteresses, they would hate thee, but thy bribes

change their behaviour, thought not their minds and thoughts of thee.

On every side; women have somewhat of modesty remaining amidst their lewdness for the most part, and if adulteresses, yet have their lovers in some corner or other; but thou, as unsatiable, hast them every where round about thee.

Ver. 34.

That which subverts the order of nature, is contrary to the innate modesty of thy sex. Thou followest them, treatest, importunest, promisest, payest, and caressest them. Thus, as a shameless adulteress, Israel had carried it toward her God, who espoused, enriched, beautified, and delighted in her; but she hired the nations round about her to enter covenant with her; entertained and maintained all their idolatrous worship, gave the nuptial gifts to hateful idols.

Ver. 35.

Her indictment and notoriety of all the charge against her we have heard; her crimes she was guilty of, with the aggravations of them; now follows sentence of condemnation against her.

Hear the word of just condemnation which thou must submit to, though thou refusedst the word of counsel and precept.

Ver. 36.

Thus saith the Lord God: this august title is a preface to give weight to the sentence, and to affect her heart with fear.

Thy filthiness; it might be rendered money, with which she hired and bribed her lovers, which she spent upon Baal, as **#Ho 2:8**. Her sorcery, with which she bewitched and enchanted them: her poison, infused into them she conversed with: the impudence of her carriage, as a whore with a forehead of brass, **#Jer 3:3**.

Poured out: it includes her eagerness, constancy, and abounding in her wickedness, and most modestly upbraids her with her most immodest lasciviousness, and discovery of it.

Thy nakedness discovered: sometimes it is figuratively taken, so it may be here, though I rather think she is charged with such prostitution as the discovering the parts nature hath concealed, and modesty should keep secret.

Through thy whoredoms; in thy playing the harlot thou hast shamelessly incited thy lovers by discovery of thy secret parts.

With all the idols: as before was observed, she doted on all the idols of her neighbours and acquaintance, which become her abominations by her loving them, when she should have abhorred them.

The blood of thy children: see #Eze 20,21. Adultery, idolatry, murder of her children, is the sum of this charge drawn up against her.

Ver. 37.

Behold: God calls her to consider what heavy judgment he pronounceth and will execute.

Gather whole herds and droves, for the word implieth such a gathering together.

All thy lovers; Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians. Pleasure; unlawful pleasures of body, commerce, and idolatrous feasts in their idolatrous sacrifices. Old pretended friends, now turned into vehement enemies; and old enemies, who have earnestly longed for such an opportunity to vent their malice; their hatred will heap on thee mischiefs, under which real friendship might somewhat relieve, but counterfeited friendship never will; thou shalt not have a friend to pity or help thee.

Them that thou hast hated; so shall my threats be fulfilled, #Le 26:17, when I give thee up into their hands, who remember thy hatred against them, and renew the old hatred they had against thee.

I will even gather them; it shall be very certain, and my hand, saith God, shall be seen doing it, I will do this. Round about; all the nations that are on every side, that there may be numbers enough to do this, and that there may be no escape for thee, when, which way soever thou fleest, still thou fleest into the mouth of thy enemies, and who hate thee.

Discover thy nakedness; lay open to view all thy shameless doings; thou didst discover thy nakedness to allure, and then to satisfy thy prodigious lust; now it shall be discovered to nauseate them, and to provoke them to contemn thee, and to use thee as so

vile a person deserveth. So God retaliateth, and punisheth sinners, that their sin may be seen in the punishment.

May see, with upbraiding, scorning, and hating of it and them.

All thy nakedness; the odiousness of thy sinful courses, and the weakness of thy state.

Ver. 38.

And I, who am thy Lord and Husband, whose authority and kindness thou hast so contemned and abused,

will judge thee; both condemn thee to suffer what thou deservest, and execute what thou art condemned to;

as women that break wedlock, who were sometimes strangled, sometimes stoned, sometimes burnt, were put to death to be sure, **#Le 20:10 De 22:22**. It may intimate the future destruction of her adulterous lovers, for both the adulterer and adulteress were to die. Site was guilty of the unnatural murder of her children, and God will, according to his own law, **#Ge 9:5,6 Nu 35:31,32**, cause her blood to be shed.

Will give thee blood; the like phrase you have **#Re 16:6**, and elsewhere; the like judgment is expressed by watering the land with blood, as **#Eze 32:6**, and by preparing one for blood, **#Eze 35:6**: Thou gavest the blood of thy children to idols in sacrifice, I will give thee thine own blood to drink; thou didst it in contempt of my law, I will do it in vindication of my law.

In fury and jealousy; passions that do usually appear in the revenges that abused husbands take on their wives which have intolerably dishonoured and wronged them; and God expresseth his great indignation, and the severity of his just displeasure, by allusion hereunto.

Ver. 39.

This particularly describes the manner in which God will do what he threatens.

I will give thee, as a judge delivers the condemned into the hand of the executioner. Their hand; power and exasperated rage.

Throw down, undermine and utterly ruin,

thine eminent place; thy idol temples, and thy stews: see #Eze 16:24,31.

Shall break down; the same in other terms.

They shall strip thee: it is opprobrium to a man to be stripped, more to a woman; this Jewish adulteress shall be stripped, that her nakedness appear. God's undeserved love covered her nakedness, #Eze 16:8, his just displeasure will now discover her nakedness.

Thy fair jewels: see #Eze 16:17.

Ver. 40.

They; the king of Babylon, and his counsellors, and captains.

A company; an assembled army. You had your assemblies for your idol worship, and I will have also an assembly, but it shall be of Chaldeans, #Hab 1:6, and others, to destroy you for your idolatry.

They shall stone thee: the punishment by stoning was not inflicted on the condemned, but in the sight of the congregation; so here is a congregation of many nations, before whom this just judgment of God shall be executed on this adulteress. It intimates the manner of battering of the walls of Jerusalem, with stones cast out of their engines.

Thrust thee through with their swords; when the enemy shall assault and take the battered city, he will in his fury slay and destroy with the sword. It is called

their sword, because it might mind the Israelites that the destruction would be with the sword of a cruel one, of either an old professed enemy, or a new revolted friend.

Ver. 41.

They; that company mentioned #Eze 16:40.

Shall burn thine houses; as harlots and idolaters were to be punished; intimating also the burning Jerusalem, the temple and houses in it, as #2Ki 25:9 2Ch 36:19.

Execute, as God's instruments to do his will, and also as men that satisfy their own rage, judgments, all kind of cruelty,

upon thee, O Jerusalem, and thine inhabitants, in the sight of many women; the people that were gathered to besiege, take, and spoil Jerusalem, and the daughters thereof. I

will cause thee: it is not said how this shall be done, whether by changing their minds, or by utterly ruining them; but this shall be done: this is the effect of the Divine judgments.

From playing the harlot; from idolatry, and adulteries, which attend it.

Thou also, who hast been so lavish and inclined to this course, shalt give no hire any more; so poor, thou canst not, or so changed, that thou wilt no more, hire paramours to come in to thee.

Ver. 42.

It may admit a doubt, whether this be spoken in way of promise and kindness, or of menace and wrath. This latter seems intended, as if God said, The jealousy whereto you have provoked me will never cease till these judgments have utterly destroyed you, and cut you off, as the anger of an abused husband ceaseth in the divorce and public punishment of the adulteress.

My jealousy shall depart from thee; I will no more concern myself for thee, nor be troubled at thy carriage, whatever it be, since thou art no more mine.

Will be no more angry, with the anger which is in the breast of a husband troubled for and angry at the miscarriages of a wife he loved.

Ver. 43.

This verse recapitulates the causes of God's great displeasure against Jerusalem.

Thou hast not remembered: see **#Eze 16:22**.

Hast fretted me; a mixed passion, in which is grief as well as anger, such as moves in the heart of a jealous husband, or such as is the passion of one that is grieved and angered at the rebukes of her folly, breaks out into disorderly carriage against the reprovor, and tumultuating within her own breast, holds on her course.

All these things, already mentioned and charged against thee.

Behold; lay it now before thine eyes, and consider it. Will recompense; or, have recompensed; for the prophet speaks of the times when all he threatened from God should be executed upon this people.

Thou shalt not commit this lewdness, &c.: this passage is somewhat intricate, and is read by some thus, I have not done according to what all thine abominations deserve, or I have not executed such thoughts as all thy lewdness calls for. Some read, as we, in the second person, Thou hast not, &c., i.e. made account, or thought with thyself what would become of thee, or what thou shouldst do after all thine abominations, therefore these sore judgments have overtaken and ruined thee. As our version renders the words, they seem to be the same with that **#Eze 16:41**. After all God's judgments poured forth, such should be their condition and state, they should be so poor and despised, they neither should have opportunity nor ability to please their idolatrous and adulterous companions.

Ver. 44.

That useth proverbs; that delights to make parables, and useth to taunt at the vices of notorious sinners.

Shall use this proverb against thee: this might be read with the former phrase, and render us this sense, Every one that would speak against thee, O Jerusalem, and tartly upbraid thee, shall use this proverb.

The mother; old Jerusalem, when the seat of the Jebusites; or the land of Canaan, when full of the idolatrous, bloody, barbarous nations.

Her daughter; Jerusalem, or synagogue of the Jews, which is more like in the wickednesses of those accursed nations, than near them in places of abode. See more **#Eze 16:3**.

Ver. 45.

Thou, the nation of the Jews,

art thy mother's daughter; as much for her vicious inclinations, as for thy original derived from her, the most wicked daughter of as wicked a mother.

That loatheth; that was weary of the best Husband, that while she doted on abominable adulterers, did most contemptuously disregard her Husband, and forsake him. Other lewd women have had some love for their children, because born of them, bred by them, and resembling them; so much of the mother was in the children, that some adulteresses have loved themselves in the children; but here is a loose woman, an unnatural beast, that loathes her own flesh, persecuting such as are constant to the law of God their Father, and murdering others in sacrifice to devils.

The sister of thy sisters: it runs in the blood; as the mother, so the sisters, loved and doted on strange flesh, were as inordinate in their affections to others, as they were in their disaffection to their own husbands and children.

Your mother: see #Eze 16:3. He speaks of them collectively, and as the greatest part were.

Ver. 46.

Thine elder sister, i.e. the greater for power, riches, and numbers of people, not the elder for years.

Samaria; metropolis, or mother city, of the revolted and idolatrous ten tribes.

Her daughters; lesser cities of the kingdom of Israel, or the people who dwelt in them.

At thy left hand; northward, as you look toward the east.

Thy younger sister; or lesser, so the Hebrew; which consists of fewer people, is of less power.

At thy right hand; southward from Jerusalem. Sodom, as chief city.

Her daughters; either the cities near in place, and joined in affinity, idolatry, and other sins like Sodom, or the inhabitants of those cities.

Ver. 47.

Yet, Heb. *And*.

Walked; lived and behaved thyself as they did, for they, all things considered, were less sinners than thou.

Nor done, &c.; the same in other words; their doings were abominable, but thine have been worse.

Thou, O Jerusalem! wast corrupted more than they; art deeper dyed in sin. These deep sins were more universal, if not as to the actors, for number, yet as to extent of the wickednesses those actors committed.

Ver. 48.

As I live; an oath which God often confirms his word by, and certainly that may be believed which the God of truth confirms by his own oath. See this oath explained, **#Eze 5:11**.

Hath not done; hath not equalled thy sins, how little soever thou believest this; the disparity lieth in this, she the less, thou the greater sinner.

Ver. 49.

The iniquity; iniquity, either for iniquities, or the fountain and occasion of all amongst the Sodomites.

Pride; a haughty mind, swelled with the excellency, beauty, and grandeur of their state, and vaunting of it above their neighbours.

Fulness of bread, i.e. luxury, and riotous excess in eating and drinking: their plenty was not their sin, but they made it occasion of sin to themselves; they were very intemperate in their diet.

Abundance of idleness; every thing so plentiful, that they little regarded to employ themselves, but were idle and slothful, or deeply secure in their peace, plenty, and honour, neither feared God's wrath or man's sword; the first was the fault of particular sinners, the latter was the sin and fault of the community.

Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy; she refused to help strangers, as appeareth in the history of the angels' entertainment, **#Ge 19**; nor was she mindful of helping the poor with counsel and defence; they were unmerciful and hard-hearted toward the poor amongst them. This was a great sin to those that abounded in wealth, as the Sodomites did.

Ver. 50.

Haughty; insufferably arrogant in their deportment towards good men, they vexed the soul of righteous Lot; and towards the angels,

whom they assaulted in Lot's house; and towards God himself, as both in this verse, and in **#Ge 13:13**.

Committed; worked, as if it were their trade.

Abomination; the whole of these men's life was as one continued act of the highest wickedness.

Before me; either against God, or openly and publicly, as **#Isa 3:9**.

I took them away; destroyed their state, cities, people, and country, turned them into a lake of dead and deadly water, or rather bitumen and sulphur.

As I saw good; in a way none could have suspected, and, for aught I know, none ever saw before or since. If you inquire how Jerusalem's sins were greater than Sodom's, I would answer, if not in the things done, yet in the aggravating circumstances of them; against redeeming mercy, against the law of God, which forbade what they did, and told them what they should do, against admonitions by the mouth of prophets, and against examples of God's vengeance on Sodom and the cities of the plain.

Ver. 51.

Samaria; the ten tribes, or kingdom of Israel, founded in rebellion and idolatry.

Committed half of thy sins; a proverbial speech, usual in comparison to set forth the lesser part, as **#1Ki 10:7**.

But thou hast multiplied: this explains the former.

More; more, or greater, the Hebrew word signifieth both.

Justified; not made them righteous, but declared them less unrighteous than thou in thy abominations; of the two they are less faulty.

Ver. 52.

Thou also; Jerusalem, and all the Jews with her.

Hast judged; hast pretended it was wonder a people should sin as Samaria; or hast once condemned their apesracy, whilst thou stoodest; or hast judged their punishment just, that they deserved all they suffered.

Bear; shalt surely be loaded with punishment.

Thine own shame; that shall be thy shame as well as smart.

More abominable: see #Eze 16:47,48,51.

Ver. 53.

It is disputed whether this be a promise or menace; it is most likely to be a threat; and if you consider the difference between a temporal and spiritual restitution, and the difference between an entire and partial restitution, it will be evident. Sodom and Samaria never were restored to that state they had been in, nor were the two tribes ever made so rich, mighty, and renowned, though God brought some of them out of Babylon; and yet were these words promissory, both Sodom, Samaria, and the two tribes would have been restored. The words seem to confirm irrecoverably a low, afflicted, despised state, as the future condition of the Jews for ever in their temporals.

Then; then, not before: this doth not preclude a future full restitution, but is an argument that concludes against the consequence, but a negation of the antecedent, as if it were said, If ever Sodom and Samaria may hope, then thou mayst hope for a restoring to thy former glory; but Sodom and Samaria never shall, therefore neither thou, O Jerusalem, and deluded Jews. And this may have respect to the false prophets, who deceived this people with promises of deliverance from being made captives, or of sudden restitution of all to them.

Ver. 54.

Thou mayest; *thou shalt*, so the Hebrew, as well as *mayest*.

Shame; punishment for offences is ever reproachful, and some punishments are more so than others. Such shall the Jews' punishments be.

Confounded; some offenders are hardened to an insensibleness of shame, but God will make these Jews to feel the smart, and blush under the shame of their punishments.

In all that thou hast done; for all the wickednesses from which the punishments of Sodom and Samaria should have deterred them, for imitating and outdoing them.

A comfort; encouraging sinners like those of Sodom and Samaria, and being fellow sufferers with them in as great, or greater, judgments.

Ver. 55.

This verse is explained in **#Eze 16:53**, and needs not a repeated explication; it threatens a perpetual continuance of their low, abject, and miserable state in their outward concerns.

Ver. 56.

This is the reason why their state should be hopeless as that of Sodom. The sins of Sodom and her plagues were not minded by thee, though thou didst worse in thy prosperity, didst not fear like misery, nor wouldst forbear like sins. Thou shouldst have told thy children what Sodom did against the Lord, and what the Lord did against them, that thou and thy daughters might have repented, and returned; but no such things were told them.

Ver. 57.

The time of her pride, security, and sin was when they were not afflicted, and despised by the Syrians.

Thy wickedness; thy abominable doings were made known to thyself, to thy friends and enemies too, by the execution of the severe menaces and sad predictions of my prophets, who foretold what punishments and what shame this sinful people should suffer by the hands of the Syrians, who should waste the Jews, and deride them, burn their cities, and carry citizens captives, as in the time of Ahaz over Judah, and Rezin over Syria.

All that are round about; the nations that were round about in vicinity, and combined in league against the house of David.

Her; either Jerusalem or Syria; rather this latter, the chief whereof were the Philistines, called here the daughters of the Philistines, as **#Isa 9:12**.

Despise thee; contemn thee, as an impotent as well as wicked people, a people which had deserved to be enslaved, and over whom they might at pleasure make a king.

Ver. 58.

What thou hast done I have imputed to thee; thou wilt not repent, therefore I account thee guilty, and I have in part punished thee;

and though what I have done seem grievous, yet worse is behind, as **#Eze 16:59**.

Ver. 59.

This is ushered in with a most solemn and sacred asseveration.

I will even deal with thee; either thus: Thou hast despised the laws and privileges of my covenant with thee, and I will despise all thy pretensions to my favour by virtue of my covenant; it is mutual, and who breaks it forfeits all benefit by it. Or, deal with thee according as thou hast done to other punished sinners, over which thou hast insulted and condemned.

Hast despised the oath; by wilful and contemptuous despite hast perjured thyself, which is a sin the nations about thee could not be guilty of, for they were not, thou only wast, in covenant with me. Or else, Thou hast contemptuously slighted my bounty and grace, and my faithfulness and truth, and bound thyself by covenant with idols and idolaters, though I had so expressly forbidden them.

The covenant, made in Horeb.

Ver. 60.

The Lord having denounced a perpetual punishment to the stubborn, impenitent body of the Jewish nation, he doth now promise to the remnant that they shall be remembered and obtain covenanted mercy, which makes up the last part of the chapter.

I will remember: properly neither remembering nor forgetting is in God, who is omniscient; but after the manner of man this is spoken of God, who is said to remember when he makes it appear that he hath regard to us, as **#Ps 20:3**, and blesseth us.

My covenant; in which I promised I would not utterly cast off the seed of Israel, nor fail to send the Messiah, the Redeemer, who Should turn away iniquity from Jacob.

With thee; in the loins of Abraham, and solemnly renewed after their coming out of Egypt, which is the time called the days of thy youth, **#Isa 44:2 46:3 Eze 16:43**.

Establish; confirm and ratify, it shall be sure and unailing.

Everlasting, i.e. of a very long continuance, as to that part of the covenant which respecteth their condition in the Land of Promise,

or Canaan; but in what is spiritual, and containeth heavenly things, it shall be absolutely everlasting, #**Jer 31:31-34**.

Ver. 61.

Then; when that new covenant, made and confirmed, shall operate and take effect.

Remember; consider and lay to heart, repent of, mourn for, loathe and abhor, and turn from all thy wicked ways, all thy evil practices and doings.

Be ashamed; though whilst thou wast an adulteress, and false to thy Husband, thou didst not blush, now thou shalt with a deep shame remember and detest thy lewdness.

Receive; admit into church communion, own them as members of the church of God.

Thy sisters; the Gentiles, now strangers, but then sisters.

Thine elder; or those that are greater and mightier than thou, or that by their power, wealth, and honour are as much above thee as the elder children are above the younger.

Thy younger; thy lesser or meaner sister.

I will give them unto thee; they shall be to thee as a gift bestowed in love.

For daughters: as daughters in duty hearken to and obey, so shall the Gentiles brought into the church hearken to the word of God, which sounded out from the Jews from Jerusalem.

By thy covenant; not by that old covenant which was violated, not by external ceremonies, which were a great part of the first covenant, but by that covenant which writes the law in the heart, and puts the fear of God into the inward parts.

Ver. 62.

This promise you have #**Eze 16:60**.

My covenant, in distinction from that is called thy covenant, #**Eze 16:61**.

With thee, O Israel, first, and then with the Gentiles, as thy children, with all the genuine children of Abraham, father of the faithful.

Thou shalt know that I am the Lord: this short sentence contains the sum of all our duty and privileges; it is summarily a promise of grace and glory; it is a sanctifying knowledge to fit us for obedience, and it is a justifying knowledge to deliver us from punishment; it is evangelical knowledge of God, a knowledge which is unto eternal life.

Ver. 63.

Mayest remember: see #Eze 16:61.

Confounded: see #Eze 16:61.

Never open thy mouth, neither to justify thyself, or to condemn others, or to quarrel with thy God, but, as a true penitent, be silent under the judgments sins have deserved, and God hath inflicted, to draw away from sin, and to bring a people to submit to God, and to give him glory.

Because of thy shame; such a confusion for thy sin will cover thee, that thou wilt readily justify God, and blush in remembrance of all thine own wickednesses.

When I am pacified; when I have pardoned, when I have covered all thy sins, and am reconciled to thee, thou wilt ingenuously acknowledge, remember, and hate what thy God hath graciously pardoned, will no more remember against thee, or punish any more upon thee.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 17

Under the parable of two eagles and a vine, #Eze 17:1-10, is showed God's judgment upon Zedekiah, for revolting from Babylon to Egypt, #Eze 17:11-21. A promise of Christ's kingdom, #Eze 17:22-24.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

These two verses are preface to what follows in the chapter.

A riddle; a dark saying, which calls for thorough consideration to understand and apply it, because the meaning is different to the sound of the words.

A parable; the same thing redoubled in different words. And it is likely the prophet is commanded to use a parable, because those Eastern people were much used to and taken with this kind of discourse.

The house of Israel, i.e. the remainders of the house of Israel, whether of the ten tribes, or of the two tribes.

Ver. 3.

A great eagle; Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, as **#Eze 17:12**, compared to a great eagle, king of birds, swift, strong, rapacious, and of a lofty flight.

With great wings; mighty provinces on each side of his kingdom.

Long-winged; his kingdom was vastly extended, as **#Da 3:3 4:1**; the greatest king then living.

Full of feathers; his kingdom was very full of people.

Which had divers colours; were of divers nations, languages, and manners, so that this eagle, may be well thought to be that sort which is greatest in the kind, and best resembleth him, who was the greatest monarch in the world at that time.

Came; invaded with a mighty army; he came not as a traveller to please his curiosity, but as an invader to enlarge his dominion.

Unto Lebanon; either the temple built with cedars of Lebanon; or Jerusalem, the chief city of the country where this great, fruitful, and pleasant hill was; or the whole country set forth by its chiefest hill, which runs about a hundred and twenty-five miles in length, and encloseth the land of Judea on the north side.

Took; took captive and carried away with him.

The highest branch; the king of Judah, Jehoiachin.

Of the cedar; either the royal family, or rather, the whole nation of the Jews.

Ver. 4.

Cropped off; as a gardener that crops off the goodliest scions, and carrieth them away to graft on some other stock. The top; both the king of Judah, now eighteen years old, and the nobles and chief of the land.

Into a land of traffic; into Babylon, which was a city of mighty trade, explained timber by being a city of merchants, and peculiarly of merchants that traded in sweet spices and odoriferous gums.

Ver. 5.

Took; chose out one to be king instead of Jehoiachin.

Of the seed of the land; a native, and, which is more, one of the royal family, Mattaniah, whom he called Zedekiah.

Planted it; settled him on the throne of Judah.

A fruitful field; a field fit for such a design, in the land of Judea. The prophet goeth on in his allusion, and explains what he meant, compares this new-made king to a willow, which grows no where so well as in a wet soil, and on banks of great waters.

Ver. 6.

It grew; both the king and kingdom.

Became a spreading vine; took root, grew up to a tolerable condition of riches, plenty, and prosperity.

Of low stature; but never reached the height of the cedar. Nebuchadnezzar, though he made Zedekiah king, yet kept him subject and dependent.

Turned; they grew and flourished, while they owned their state tributary to Babylon.

Toward him; Nebuchadnezzar, as their protector, benefactor, and sovereign lord.

The roots thereof; all the firmness, fruitfulness, and life of this state was in a subjection to the king of Babylon.

So; thus, in this order and manner of dependence, both the Jews and their king had life, growth, and verdure. Branches; greater and stronger boughs for present strength, beauty, and fruit.

Sprigs; younger and tenderer springles, as children, the hope of future times.

Ver. 7.

This is the second part of the parable.

Another great eagle, i.e. the king of Egypt, whether Apries, or Hophra, or what other was his name we need not curiously inquire, it was king of Egypt, #Eze 17:15.

Great wings: see #Eze 17:3.

This vine; Zedekiah, his nobles and people.

Did bend her roots towards him; sought the friendship and help of the king of Egypt.

Shot forth her branches; sent ambassadors, made a covenant, and trusted to the power of Egypt to defend her branches.

That he might water it; that they might add to their greatness and prosperous condition, as trees grow by due and seasonable watering them.

By the furrows; alluding to the manner of irrigation used in Egypt, by furrows or trenches to convey the water unto their plantations from the river Nile.

Ver. 8.

It was planted by Nebuchadnezzar, in a very hopeful condition, where it might have thrived, been fruitful, and flourished. But they, both king and people, were unthankful, and discontented, and by sinful courses sought to better themselves; they had no great or just cause to complain of Nebuchadnezzar's usage towards them, but out of pride, ambition, and ingratitude, joined with perjury, they revolt, and provoke God's wrath and Nebuchadnezzar's rage against them.

Ver. 9.

Say thou; tell them what will be the issue of all this, and tell it to them in my name.

Shall it prosper? this vine, shall Zedekiah and his people thrive by this? it is a question that must be resolved negatively, and with vehemency.

Shall he, Nebuchadnezzar, not pull up, utterly overthrow this kingdom which he had set up, destroy the king thereof?

Cut off the fruit; put to the sword and slay the children of Zedekiah and of the nobles.

Wither; never be in possibility of springing, so much is threatened by the withering of the branches.

All the leaves of her spring; all the promising hope they had shall vanish as the hope of a tree vanisheth, when all its buds and leaves wither in its spring.

Without great power; the king of Babylon shall do this easily, and never need to employ all his power and people to do this, utterly to root up this vine.

Ver. 10.

Nay, suppose this contrivance were successful, suppose this vine were planted by the help of Egypt, could it possibly prosper? No, no.

When the east wind; when the king of Babylon, which like the blasting wind conms from the north-east, shall but touch it, it will utterly wither.

In the furrows; even amidst its greatest and best helps to make it flourish. This discontent, ingratitude, and treachery will occasion the utter ruin of this people.

Ver. 11.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 12.

Say now: this is the order God gives to his prophet to explain the riddle.

To the rebellious house; to the house of Judah, which have been, and still are, rebellious against me, and are now entering into rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar.

Know ye not? are ye so blockish that you do not know what is meant? or are you so secure that you will not consider it, but run on your own ruin?

The king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, is that first great eagle with part of his power.

Jerusalem is the Lebanon which he is come to.

The king thereof; the king of Israel, and his seed, and nobles are the branches and twigs cropped off, these are taken, conquered, made captives.

Led them with him; judging them unfit to be trusted any more, he will, though in chains, carry them to Babylon.

Ver. 13.

Hath taken of the king's seed; first taken Jehoiachin and his princes captives, and next taken out from amidst the royal seed Mattaniah, and advanced him to the throne in Jerusalem.

Made a covenant with him, by solemn agreement, and on terms approved and accepted by Mattaniah, for performance of which terms he hath obliged himself by public promise.

An oath; because Nebuchadnezzar would be secure, he made Mattaniah enter into an oath, changed his name into Zedekiah, as a fit memorial who should avenge the crime, if this captive restored should perjure himself.

The mighty; the rich, honourable, valiant, wise, and who might (if rebellion ever arose among the Jews) be able to make head and do mischief against the Babylonian king.

Of the land; of Judea.

Ver. 14.

So plainly and openly did Nebuchadnezzar deal with the Jews.

The kingdom; the tributary kingdom, whereof Zedekiah is roitelet.

Base; low in power.

Lift itself up; rise up into rebellion, or be so considerable as to encourage any neighbour king to assist and confederate with them against Babylon.

That by continuing faithful, and performing the conditions of his covenant, either Nebuchadnezzar's, by imposing, or Zedekiah's, by submitting to it, and obliging himself by it, the kingdom of the Jews might continue and flourish.

Ver. 15.

But Zedekiah rebelled; endeavoured to cast off the dominion of the conqueror Nebuchadnezzar, who had advanced him and obliged him.

Sending his ambassadors is called bending his roots toward the second eagle.

Egypt; an old bitter enemy, and an impotent and false friend.

That they might give him horses: beside the perjury, here was a cursed trusting to an arm of flesh, of which **#Isa 31:1**.

Much people; Zedekiah had not men to set upon his hired horses; Egypt must help here too. How sottishly doth this unhappy Zedekiah act to run himself on the charge and hazard of a new war, in which, whoever is the gainer, he and his are sure to be the losers!

Shall he prosper? see **#Eze 17:9,10**. Can it be likely vengeance should not overtake such ingratitude? Can perjury be the way for any man's deliverance? Can such notorious sinning end in any thing but misery?

Ver. 16.

As sure as I am God, and live, I will punish this perjury: and here is a particular account of the punishment.

In the place; Babylon. The king; Nebuchadnezzar.

Made him king; Zedekiah.

Whose oath; the oath Nebuchadnezzar imposed.

He despised; contemptuously, without any just cause given; and therefore this perfidious prince could never expect more favour, but must in reason fear the greatest severities. Under this fear Zedekiah shall spend the rest of his days. He shall rather be always dying, for though he lived a natural life, yet it was in such sadness, it is more properly styled a dying; in blindness, under the memorial of the most afflictive sight, the murder of his children, which was the last thing his eye ever beheld.

Ver. 17.

Let his army be made up of ever so many well-disciplined soldiers, if as many as the Egyptian can vainly promise, or the Jews more vainly hope. Great company possibly may refer to the multitudes which usually attended the march of armies, or else it is a doubling the thing in doubled words.

Make for him: if Zedekiah be the person, as our version carrieth it, it foretells the unprofitableness of the Egyptian army, that shall not do him any kindness. If Nebuchadnezzar be intended, as the version which renders the Hebrew particle against, then it foretells the little hurt that the Egyptians shall do to Nebuchadnezzar.

By casting up mounts; when Nebuchadnezzar shall with so much speed and skill east up forts and build mounts, wooden castles, to annoy Jerusalem, secure his own forces, and terrify the Egyptian king from the difficulty of raising the siege, which could not be done without expense of much blood.

To cut off many persons, of the besieged in Jerusalem, and of the Egyptians, if they attempt to raise the siege; this sense it bears in the French version.

Ver. 18.

This verse gives us the reason of this unhappy enterprise, which is summed up in wilful, presumptuous, and most unparalleled perjury. Zedekiah

had given his hand; a solemn confirming of the oath, or covenant, and it implies the voluntary act of Zedekiah in swearing, which makes the perjury so much the fouler.

All these things; too bad to be named, and most unbecoming any one that was a beneficiary, and had so much from the bounty of one that was not obliged to do any thing for him.

Ver. 19.

As I live: see #Eze 16:48.

Mine oath; made in my name, and of which I am both witness and avenger.

Hath despised: see #Eze 16:59 17:18.

I will recompense; I will punish, as it deserveth, and it shall appear by the punishment that my hand doth execute it.

Upon his own head; it is probable some courtiers might advise to it, but this will not excuse Zedekiah, his perjury was his own act; and on his own head, as I charge, so I will punish it.

Ver. 20.

See **#Eze 12:13**, where the former part of this verse is word for word. *Plead with him*; or, be judged with him, i.e. the heathen shall both see what I do against this man, they shall consider why I do so, and be judge whether I do more than this perjured king deserves; or, I will punish him with continued punishments from my own hand, or by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, suitable to the greatness of his trespass against me.

Against me: falsehoods to men in breaking oaths and covenants are in a high degree trespasses against God.

Ver. 21.

All his fugitives; not strictly, but in large sense: all, i.e. the greatest part, as. **#Jer 13:19 44:22 Mt 2:3 3:5**, of those who, at the taking of Jerusalem, attempt to flee with their king.

His bands; his guards, probably of stoutest men, reserved to convey him in safety from the pursuing enemy.

Shall fall by the sword; the enemy shall overtake, and cut in pieces. The few that do escape shall be scattered abroad among strangers, who will show them very little kindness. The miseries these people shall fall under shall be of such weight and continuance, that all shall know it is the execution of an extraordinary wrath from Heaven against them.

Ver. 22.

Whereas the judgments threatened might seem to threaten the utter extirpation of the seed of David, now the Lord is pleased to assure its continuance, and the raising of the Messiah from that house according to promise. Nebuchadnezzar took and planted, and I will also take and plant, saith the Lord, of the royal seed of the house of David, of the highest branch that is heir to the throne, in the type Zorobabel, in the antitype Messiah.

And will set it; both set or plant, and give increase to his kingdom, that from a tender one he should grow up to great strength, victory, and glory.

Upon an high mountain; upon Mount Zion, #Ps 2:6, or as #Isa 2:2,3. Eminent, not for outward splendour, but for spiritual advantages above other nations in the church.

Ver. 23.

In the mountain; either the church or Jerusalem, whence the law of Christ was to be published, and where the preachers of the gospel were to continue till furnished with abilities for that work. Like a tree that taketh root, and spreadeth forth into branches, so the kingdom of Christ should grow, and be fruitful in good works, not flourishing in boughs and leaves only, but much more in excellent fruits of holiness, justice, and temperance, and in joy, peace, and love.

A goodly cedar; the goodliest that ever grew, most excellent and most durable.

All fowl, all nations, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, shall build, breed, and multiply under the kingdom of Christ; it shall be no more confined to the Jews, but extend to the Gentiles also. There they shall find peace and safety; and this repeated confirms the certainty of the promise.

Ver. 24.

The trees of the field; the great ones on earth, all considering persons.

Shall know; see and confess.

The high tree; Zedekiah, that would neither hearken to me, my prophets, or to Nebuchadnezzar; or the kingdom of Babylon, which was brought low indeed, when overthrown by Darius and Cyrus.

The low tree; either Jehoiachin's lineage, or the church, which, from being low, was exalted by the Lord, bending Cyrus to that work of restoring the captivity from Babylon, and building the city and house of God: its meaning is, the advancing the kingdom of Christ, and suppressing the enemies thereof.

Dried up the green tree; the same thing expressed in somewhat different words.

I the Lord have spoken; the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God, who can do what he pleaseth, and will do what he promiseth, is the assurance of the future accomplishment of his word.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 18

God disalloweth the parable of sour grapes, **#Eze 18:1-4**. He showeth his dealing with a just man, **#Eze 18:5-9**, with the wicked son of a just father, **#Eze 18:10-13**, and with the just son of a wicked father, **#Eze 18:14-18**. He declareth that the treatment of both son and father shall be according to their respective deserts, **#Eze 18:19,20**; and that the wicked, if he repent, shall live, **#Eze 18:21-23**; but he that revolteth from his righteousness shall die, **#Eze 18:21**. He defendeth the equity of his dealings, **#Eze 18:25-30**, and exhorteth to repentance, **#Eze 18:31,32**.

Ver. 1.

He did not entertain them with a dream of his own head, but the Holy Spirit of prophecy suggests this to him, which now he speaketh on God's behalf, and against the Jews. He had often before spoke God's word in his name, as **#Eze 6 Eze 7 Eze 13, #Eze 12:25**, and now once more he is commanded so to do.

Ver. 2.

What cause have you, or what would you have men think of your carriage to me, and of mine towards you, that ye who are now in Babylon openly, unjustly, and impudently justify yourselves, and condemn your God?

Israel; the two tribes, not the ten.

The fathers; our forefathers have sinned, and we their children, who were unborn, do suffer now for their sins: and this was grown common, both in Babylon, and also in Jerusalem, **#Jer 31:29**: you would be thought innocent, and my proceedings against you unjust and cruel.

Ver. 3.

Either you who use it shall die for it, or because I will vindicate my proceedings so that all who consider your punishments shall see you deserve all that you suffer.

Ver. 4.

There can be no colour of partial judgment in the proceedings of God, who is equally God to all; who hath as great interest in the son as in the father, and as kindly would deal with the son as with the father: and how can it be thought likely I should punish the son for the father's offence, or the father for the son's offence?

All souls; all persons, which are frequently called souls, #Le 7:18,20,21 Jos 20:3; and so it is #Eze 18:20, and #Jer 31:30.

The soul; the person, whether father or son, shall die, shall bear his own punishment: this text gives no colour for the opinion of the mortality of man's soul.

That sinneth, i.e. obstinately, and yet will pretend his own innocency; whoso sinneth shall suffer for his own sin. You querulous Jews suffer then for your own sins and had you been, as you say you are, innocent, the sins of your fathers should not have hurt you; and for the future know I will keep to that rule of equity; no innocent person shall be prejudiced by the guilt of guilty ones. And if one that is, for aught we can discern, absolutely innocent, yet suffers for another man's sin, it is most certain such a sufferer is not absolutely innocent, but some way or other is guilty of the sin for which he suffers.

Ver. 5.

So far is God from perverse and froward partiality in his judgments, that none ever had cause to complain hereof.

If a man, without respect of persons, every one, whoever he be, be just; faultless and unstained, which may refer to his temper and disposition of mind; and if his conversation hath agreed with the law of God and rule of justice in all points, in private and public affairs among men.

Ver. 6.

Hath not committed idolatry, first offering sacrifice, and eating of the things sacrificed to idols, whose temples and altars were on

mountains, **#Eze 20:28 Ho 4:13**, and where the idolaters did use to feed one another in honour of the idol; neither hath adored, nor expected help from the idols: this is a religious posture, as **#Ps 121:1**.

The idols of the house of Israel; they had idols of their own; and some that despised the heathens' idols yet were polluted with their own idolatry, which was a great sin, whatever the blind idolater thought of it.

His neighbour's wife; hath not broken out into adultery and defiled another man's wife, for every man is here included in neighbour, as **#Lu 10:36**. And abstained from both familiar converse and from conjugal acts with such a one, observing the law of God herein, **#Le 15:19 18:19**.

Ver. 7.

Hath not oppressed; by rigorous dealing grieve, injure, or damnify, and cause them to cry out, **#Eze 22:9 Zec 7:10**, which is done many ways; and how slyly soever it is done, yet it is a crying sin, **#Ex 22:21-24**. Much of oppression is in detaining what was laid in pawn, which was always of greater value than the thing that was taken upon it; and the poor often pawned their most necessary utensils, and oftentimes needed them ere they could redeem them; in such cases God will not that the pledge be detained; as **#Ex 22:26 De 24:6,10-13,17**; but here mercy ought to be preferred above profit; nor might the pledge be any way lessened by embezzling it.

Hath spoiled none by violence; nor by force robbed any one, and taken out of the hand of the owner, as the thief doth; whoso hath forborne these courses of inhumanity and injustice.

Hath given his bread; with compassion hath given to the necessitous, communicating to them as their case required, and our ability will reach.

Bread here is largely to be taken, **#Isa 58:7**.

To the hungry; such as truly want, are not able to help themselves, and, we may with reason think, have none to help them if we do not. Hath covered the naked; clothed the naked, who else are like to perish for want of clothing, as **#Job 31:19**.

Who are such, and live so just, so holy, so inoffensive, so beneficent a life among men, shall not suffer for the sins others commit.

Ver. 8.

Given forth; lent or put into another's hand, on condition of returning not the same, or equal value, but much more.

Upon usury; biting usury, (as the word implieth,) which no doubt is prohibited because of the injury it doth to the borrower, and the undue gain it brings to the lender. A rigorous imposing conditions of gain for the loan of money or goods, and exacting them without respect to the condition of the borrower, whether he gain or lose; whether poverty occasioned his borrowing, or whether visible likelihood of gain by employing the borrowed goods; which sort of usury is against both the law of charity, as well as against the express will of God, who prohibits it, #Ex 22:25 Le 25:35-37 De 23:19,20.

Any is not in the Hebrew, though interpreters here insert it for the greater emphasis and weight. This

increase here mentioned is by the critics in the Hebrew said to be either a receiving of the borrower some gratuity for lending that, for which the borrower must pay use also; a kind of oppression too common among us, called procuration, or continuation; or else when the buyer is required to increase the price, or return the thing he bought, which growing dearer than at the time he received it, proves an oppression to him. And this I suppose was usual among the covetous traders, who sold and gave day for payment; but if the commodity grew dearer, they exacted the thing again, or the increased price.

That hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity: this I think is not here to be taken in the larger sense, as if it referred to all iniquity, but in a restrictive sense, and as it refers to the iniquity and injustice of lenders and sellers; he that with care and conscience hath withdrawn his hand from all indirect or direct ways of forbidden usury.

Hath executed true judgment between man and man: this refers to this particular case of usury and taking increase; as if the prophet would make every man judge of the case ere he takes any

thing, and requires him to judge according to truth, whether any, or how much, may be expected and received, whether no wrong be to the lender or borrower in the case. And so the whole will amount to this, he that in his lending hath truly weighed the borrower's case, and used him with kindness as he would be used himself, this man is no usurer.

Ver. 9.

Walked; framed his life, and managed his conversation, conformed to the good, just, and holy ordinances of God. In my statutes; in matters of religion, hath kept to the direction of God's law.

Kept my judgments, in matters of civil concern between man and man.

To deal truly; to act sincerely, with an honest heart, according to the best of his knowledge and judgment.

He is just; is just comparatively, so far righteous that he shall not feel, nor need he fear, to suffer what others' sins bring upon them, he shall not suffer what he hath not deserved.

Shall surely live; shall be delivered from famine, pestilence, and sword, shall see good days, as **#Ps 34:12,13**; his teeth shall not be set on edge, whatever quarrelling sinners say or think, but the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him.

Ver. 10.

If he beget a son; the just man before described, who transmits his nature, but cannot transmit his virtues, to his son.

That is a robber; that by force and violence breaks over the law of God and man, takes away what is another man's; such a thief as sticks not to destroy that he may rob.

A shedder of blood; that is, a murderer; for shedding of blood here is not less than murder, as by the phrase, **#Ge 9:6 De 21:7 1Sa 25:33 Ps 79:10**.

That doeth the like; the thing that is brother to one of these, as the Hebrew may bear; there are things like these, which destroy either the life or estates of our neighbour; for there are many methods and artifices which such violent ones use.

To any one of these things; it might seem to speak one such single act unpardonable; but I refer this text to that, **#Ge 9:6 Nu 35:31**. The law doth condemn such to death; man must not, though God may, pardon such a one.

Ver. 11.

In the former verse sins which are violations of the law by a man's doing the evil which was forbidden, in the former part of this verse the sins which are omissions of good required, are mentioned.

Doeth not any; neglects all, frames not to do them. Of those duties: see **#Eze 18:6-8**.

Hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife: #Eze 18:6.

Ver. 12.

See Poole "Eze 18:7". In the seventh verse the words are more large, condemning the oppressing of any one; here they do more particularly condemn oppressing

the poor, which have little to maintain and less to defend themselves; and needy is added, to render us more sensible of the greatness of this sin, which takes away right where we should show charity.

Hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge: see **#Eze 18:7**.

Hath lifted up his eyes to the idols: see **#Eze 18:6**.

Hath committed abomination, i.e. come near to a menstruous woman, which is expressly named **#Eze 18:6**, and here pointed at; or else idolatry.

Ver. 13.

See **#Eze 18:8**.

Shall he then live? Do you think his father's righteousness shall preserve him from the punishment his own unrighteousness deserveth, my law threateneth, and my justice inflicteth? Shall he not with other sinners be spoiled, besieged, die by the sword or famine, or languish in a long captivity, and there die?

He shall not live; a decisive answer to the former question; such a one shall not prosper, nor long escape the strokes of my justice; and the answer is parallel with that **#Eze 17:10**.

He hath done all these abominations; is personally involved in the sins which are worthy of death, and which are so expressly threatened by law and prophets.

Done; not only winked at, or not hindered, but hath been a forward, voluntary, active doer of them.

All these that are here, and elsewhere in this prophet, and in others, charged on the Jews as the cause of their calamities at this day.

Abominations; great enormities, sins to be abominated and hated, not practised and justified by shameless sinners.

He shall surely die; most certainly die; or if you suppose such a one finally impenitent, he shall surely die under temporal judgments, and so by the first death fall under the second death also: dying he shall die; a Hebrew phrase, and very full.

His blood shall be upon him; Heb. it is plural, *bloods*: both the blood of the innocent which he murdered, and his own blood, which thereby he forfeited, the blood of his own soul and life, that is, the whole blame of his misery in time and eternity, shall lie upon himself, who brought all those sorrows on himself by his own wickednesses.

Ver. 14.

A third instance in a supposed son's son to clear the case fully. The just father lives, his unjust son dieth; but the grandson of the just, seeing his father's sins, and fleeing them, lives. It is rare that the children of debauched parents do think or discern evil in their parents' courses, but blindly follow them, without putting difference between what is good and what is bad in that the latter doth; such suffer for their own sins more than for their fathers: but if it be so that the son of a wicked father act like a man, bring his father's doings to the rule, and thereby discover the wickedness and danger of them, and do not the like, he shall not suffer for his father's sins.

Seeth all his father's sins; the kinds, or many of the several sorts, of his sins, for it is not possible the son should see all the particular acts of sin done by his father.

Considereth looks thoroughly into these things, and weighs the importance of them; considers God is our Sovereign, ought to be obeyed, will bless the obedient, will punish the disobedient; that his blessing is the life and welfare, his curse is the death and misery, of souls; that every man should look particularly to his own duty and happiness; that it is better to be happy with God, obeying him, than to perish with a father by imitating his vices; that God will be gracious to the obedient, according to his rich grace, though they be the children of irreligious idolaters and adulterers, &c.; on which or such-like considerations, if the son choose holiness, and walk in it, he shall live, his end shall not be, because his doings were not, like his father's.

Ver. 15.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 16.

These two verses are explained already in the same words: see **#Eze 18:6,7**.

Ver. 17.

Taken off his hand from the poor; withdrawn his hand from hurting or wronging the poor, though he had power and might to do it securely.

That hath not received usury, &c. see **#Eze 18:8,9**, where these particulars are explained.

Ver. 18.

Oppressing, he oppressed; and spoiling, spoiled; did all the mischief he could: he shall die.

Ver. 19.

Notwithstanding this method of the Divine justice, which renders to every one his own work, and gives to every one the fruit of his own doings, ye, proud, quarrelling, self-justifying debauchees, idolaters, adulterers, murderers, usurers, oppressors, will not see your own sins, for which you are punished, but cry you are innocent, that your fathers sinned and you suffer.

Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? The prophet here brings in what he met with among them; still every where they insist on it that they deserved not by any sin of their own what they now suffered, and so would cast the sin and guilt on their fathers, and the rigour and severity on God, and clear themselves to all; which the prophet answers by a recapitulation of what he had more largely spoken, and avows it, that the righteous son of an unrighteous father shall live, and not die.

Kept all my statutes; as #Ps 119:44.

Ver. 20.

See #Eze 18:4.

The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: this is a most unquestionable truth, and though perhaps it may seem otherwise in some cases, yet could we see perfectly the connexion between persons and persons, and how they are one, could we see the connexion of sins and sins, and how easily, secretly, and undiscerned men become guilty of the same sins, we should, it is likely, see father and son, though perhaps one of them might not do the evil, both guilty, and neither punished for the sin further than the sin was his own; nor do the scriptures, #Ex 20:5 De 28:18, menace innocent children, nor doom persons to punishment, for sins from which they are fully and wholly free; but if children shall follow their fathers in sin, or justify them in it, or not mourn for it, or not deprecate, or whatever way there is by which children may make the sins of progenitors become their own; then if they die for those sins, it is for them as they are their own sins, not as they are their fathers'.

The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him: #Isa 3:10 will fully explain this passage; it shall be well with the righteous, for he shall eat the fruit of his doing, he shall be rewarded as a righteous one.

The wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him; the reward of wickedness, i.e. woeful punishment, shall be executed upon the wicked, as #Isa 3:11.

Ver. 21.

So far is God from punishing the sins of guilty parents on innocent children, as in the last instance, #Eze 18:14 to the end of #Eze 18:20, appears, that he doth not punish the guilty for their own sins which they repent of and forsake. Our God, who mercifully pardoneth the penitent all their own sins, will not, cannot be supposed to charge innocent ones with the sins which are not their own.

The wicked; or a wicked man, any wicked man among you, O Jews! who charge me with such severity, if the most notorious sinner.

Turn, i.e. repent, for it is expressed by that word which implies repentance, and by the subsequent fruits of repentance.

From all; it must be a total renouncing of sin.

His sins that he hath committed; the penitent are most afflicted with the remembrance of their own sin, that which they committed, and watch most against it for the future.

Keep all my statutes; resolve to endeavour seriously and diligently, for in God's merciful judgment a gracious penitent soul keeps what he would keep, keeps all his statutes, in that he would transgress none of them.

He shall surely live; he shall be pardoned, escape punishments, it shall be well with him: and this is the constant method of God's proceedings with his people; he calls them to himself by promises of pardon, he never frights them from him by threatening to punish others' faults on their backs. Leave your own, and you shall never suffer for others' sins.

Ver. 22.

All; not one of all, so the Hebraism is; every one shall be forgiven.

His transgressions; personal, actual sins, in which he was not accessory, but principal; though great sins.

That he hath committed; formerly did commit, but now repenteth for.

They shall not be mentioned unto him; not remembered, i.e. imputed to or punished on him. They shall be as forgotten. So when God promiseth to pardon, he promiseth that he will not remember our sins.

In his righteousness that he hath done he shall live; this penitent, whose last works are righteousness, proper fruits of repentance, shall live, be rewarded and blessed for his righteousness, yet without merit: life should be the fruit of his repentance and righteousness.

Ver. 23.

Now, O ye perverse Jews! if by these truths you will judge of me, could it enter the thoughts of any one of you, that I should, as delighting in the death of sinners, impute other men's sins to you, that you might die for them, when I could not slay you for your own? Think not thus of the God of mercy, who pities, forbears, and though at last hath punished obstinate sinners, yet never delighted in their death. Is it not my command that you and other sinners repent? Have not you and others found mercy upon seeming repentance? And as for that repentance which is sound, it ever had a full pardon; and the promise of life and pardon hath been repeated and confirmed to you again and again; so that it is the most unjust, unreasonable, and impious quarrel you, O Jews, have taken up against your God, who would have you repent of your own sins, and you should live, but if you repent not, you shall die, but for your own sins, not your fathers'. Since therefore I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, turn yourselves, and live ye, as it is **#Eze 18:32**; for this 23rd verse equally declares God's mercy and our duty, the one in his pleasure at our return, the other in our pleasing him herein.

Ver. 24.

After the stating the equity of God's ways in his dealings with parents and children, and his mercy in dealing with sinners that return according to his own promise, he proceeds to vindicate the equity of his ways in another case.

When, or *if*; should it so happen at any time. *The righteous*; one who really had observed the commands of the law, not done the abominations the wicked do, but done the good which the

righteous doth, and in the sight of man appears as righteous, and as good as any one; whose apostacy is first full proof of his unsoundness and hypocrisy.

Turneth; changeth his course into sinful practices, like the wicked.

His righteousness; there is a righteousness which is of God, and there is a righteousness which is a man's own, such as does arise from a man's own reason and will, improved by common grace, or education, or awed by fears, or swayed by interest, or maintained by some failing spring which may easily dry up; these righteous ones easily fall away, and of such the prophet speaks.

Committeth iniquity; makes sin his work and business, #**Joh 8:31 1Jo 3:8,9**.

Doeth according to all the abominations; forgets all better rules, derides his own former preciseness, and shakes off all restraints, that he may run to the excess of sin.

Abominations; recounted #**Eze 18:10-13**.

That the wicked man doeth: see #**Eze 18:21**.

Shall he live? do you think I will be so partial as to acquit him from real wickedness, committed with his whole heart, from his last works, which are abominable? Do you think his first heartless, partial, temporary righteousness will counterbalance his last and final apostacy? I tell you nay, but he shall die in it.

All his righteousness that he hath done; though he could produce his own righteousnesses, (as the Hebrew,) and these multiplied to many, all, and that they were really done, yet these should not avail before a just judge; who by a law that requires man should ever be and do what he was and did at best, is to determine his rewards or punishments according to what the man is at last, not according to what he was or seemed to be at first.

Shall not be mentioned; the parable tells us, #**Mt 25:44,45**, some will plead that they did what they had opportunity of doing, and others, #**Mt 7:22**, will mention what they have done. But though they may mention these, the just judge will not, nor the

law by which they are to be judged will not, allow it for a good and sufficient plea: see the phrase **#Eze 18:22**.

In his trespass that he hath trespassed: this expression shows that this man's heart was on his sin; in his transgression he transgressed with full bent of mind, with delight and consent he did what he did, and could not say, I do what I would not; or, *So then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*, as **#Ro 7:17**. Lest any stumble at sight of infirmities in all, or needlessly disquiet themselves with fears of wrath at last, because they cannot be sinless, yet they do not fall under the character of such as are here threatened.

In them; in these great, wilful, continued, and multiplied sins.

Shall he die; every such obdurate and final apostate shall be condemned and punished temporally and eternally, and therefore look to it, ye wicked Jews, and consider, ye sinful Christians.

Ver. 25.

Yet ye say; you persist in your hard, unjust, and ungodly sentiments of an inequality in my ways, and are not afraid to speak as much.

The way: it were too much for sinners to charge God with inequality in a single act, but here are some dare censure the way, the whole management of affairs.

Of the Lord: strange frowardness! own him for Lord, yet condemn his government; grant his sovereign authority, and yet arraign the exercise of it!

Is not equal; not right, steady, or consistent with his own declaration and law; so the Hebrew. This prodigiously wicked assertion they build upon a most gross ignorance, and intolerably proud conceit of their own righteousness: We, say they, are righteous, not wicked, yet punished. Unheard-of pride, to condemn God, with whom is no iniquity, and acquit themselves, in whom is all iniquity!

Hear now; consider what I have proposed to clear my justice, hear me and my defence ere you condemn me, weigh well my defence. O house of Israel; both you that are in Jerusalem, and you also that are in Babylon at Telabib.

Is not my way equal? Do you speak what you think, does your judgment thus conclude, when you know, or might know, that this is the general rule I proceed by, The righteousness of the righteous is upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked is upon him? Can there be inequality here? Your ways which you choose, keep, plead for, and obstinately hold to, these are the crooked, unsteady, and unjust ways: for the question is to be resolved into a vehement asseveration.

Ver. 26.

See **#Eze 18:24**, where the whole of this verse is explained.

Ver. 27.

See **#Eze 18:21,22**, where this verse is interpreted.

Ver. 28.

God's promise is to pardon, spare, and preserve the penitent, such therefore shall not die.

Considereth: see **#Eze 18:14**.

Turneth; converteth: see **#Eze 18:21**.

He shall surely live, he shall not die: secure, self-justifying sinners misapprehend the justice of God, as we have heard, and repenting sinners are apt to mistrust the mercy of God, and therefore it is doubly assured in this promise.

Ver. 29.

This is the third or fourth appeal to the very consciences of Israel, on whose side the injustice lieth: the words are already unfolded **#Eze 18:25**, and the justice of God and the wickedness of such quarrellers declared.

Ver. 30.

Since you persist to implead me of iniquity in my judgments, after all I have said to clear myself, there is nothing left by which I may be cleared but this, to proceed with you according to your doings.

I will judge you; I will debate, determine with you.

O house of Israel; who do keep up this opinion of me, the proud contemnors of God, and justifiers of themselves.

Every one; none shall be overlooked or excused, every one shall be judged.

According to his ways; your ways shall be the standard and measure; if they are good, you shall receive good; if evil, you shall suffer evil; and then there can be no colour of complaint.

Repent; it will be safest for you that are proud quarrellers; be therefore advised, repent, and venture not your life and welfare on self-justification. Some others there were of better temper; they are exhorted by repentance to prevent wrath, and prepare for the mercy which the Lord ever showeth to the penitent, as #Eze 18:21,22.

Turn yourselves; or, return yourselves; persuade others also. (*Yourselves* is not in the Hebrew.)

Iniquity; neither your ungodly practices, nor your unjust opinions of me and my ways, saith the Lord.

Shall not be your ruin, the cause of your temporal and eternal misery. Or thus, Cease from sin, then you will judge aright, and not be stumbled at the supposed inequality of my judgments: who leave sin, can see what mercy spared, pardoned, saved them; but who live in sin, will have soft thoughts for sin, and hard thoughts of God.

Ver. 31.

Not only cease from sin, but with indignation throw it away, as a loathsome, pernicious thing, or as a burden will sink you.

Your transgressions; as God requires, so it is the property of true repentance, that it does frame the heart against his own sins.

Make you a new heart; open your eyes, and let the clear, convincing light of my words, arguments, and proceedings shine upon you; do not obstinately harden your hearts, that you should retain your old prejudices against my justice and mercy, but receive new opinions and tenets concerning the things I have been clearing to you, that new judgment may produce a renewed and reformed course of life. Your old heart is made up of strange notions of your innocence, and the inequality of the ways of your God, and this influenceth your spirit to pride, quarrelling with God, who might have convinced you by severer methods, which

should have put you as far out of doubt about the cause of your punishment, as out of hope of deliverance from it. Or else thus, I have proposed enough to change a considering heart, to renew the spirit of any thinking man; co-operate with me. See your sin, guilt, punishment, all yours, and from yourselves repent of sin, confess your guilt, deprecate your punishment.

Why will ye die? there is no other way for you to be delivered; your old ways and heart will end in death. This is an argument taken from their danger by old sins.

Ver. 32.

Another argument to persuade to conversion, taken from the gracious nature of God, who taketh pleasure in the return of a sinner; for that is the meaning of the words: sinners displease God when they undo themselves, they please him when they return.

Turn yourselves; do what you can, leave what sins you have loved.

Live ye; it is a promise.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 19

A lamentation for the princes of Israel, under the parable of lions' whelps taken in a pit, **#Eze 19:1-9**; and for Jerusalem, under the parable of a wasted vine, **#Eze 19:10-14**.

Ver. 1.

Moreover, Heb. *And*.

Take up a lamentation; son of man, Ezekiel, declare what a lamentable state the princes of Israel are falling into, propound it by parable. It was usually expressed in verse, as Jeremiah did in his lamentations, and as appears **#2Ch 35:25**; but the prophet is here directed to a hieroglyphic, as **#Eze 19:2**.

The princes of Israel; though they were kings, yet, because subject to Babylon or Egypt, they are, by a diminutive, lessening term, called

princes, and these were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Though they had but the two tribes under them, yet because some of Israel that escaped the captivating power of

Shalmaneser were joined with the two tribes, they are called by the name of Israel.

Ver. 2.

What resemblance shall I use to set out the nature, deportment, and state of the mother of these princes? an unhappy mother of unhappy children! Or, Alas! thy mother, &c.

Thy; one of these was upon the throne at once, and therefore the prophet speaks to one at a time, in the singular number. Mother; the land of Judea and Jerusalem, the chief city of it, the royal family of David.

A lioness; though chosen of God to execute justice, defend the poor, to be his vicegerents, and to delight in mercy; yet once advanced, they soon degenerated into the fierce and ravening nature of the lioness, and as violently seized the prey.

She lay down; associated, couched, and grew familiar with, by leagues, commerce, and intermixture of marriages with neighbour kings, called here lions: thou didst learn their manners, and grewest fierce and bloody, as they.

She nourished: the Hebrew includes both her bringing forth many, and her advancing them to greatness: the royal family of flat nation had many kings, and some very great, but the time the prophet points now at in particular was after Josiah, whose character, given **#Jer 22:16**, is, that he judged the poor and needy, but his successors were of another temper, as **#Jer 22:13-15,17**.

Her whelps, i.e. her sons, successors to the crown, which could be called nothing else, to keep the decorum of the parable.

Among young lions; either foreign princes and kings, or else some of the fiercer, unjust, aspiring, and tyrannizing princes at home; for such there were in these, as well as in Rehoboam's times, who would have the son's finger thicker than the father's loins.

Ver. 3.

See **#Eze 19:3**.

Brought up; not as a nurse, the word is of other import, but advanced, promoted, or caused him to take the throne after the slaughter of Josiah.

One of her whelps; this was Jehoahaz, the second son of Josiah, of whom it is said, #2Ki 23:30 2Ch 36:1, the people made him king; for God had not made him so by primogeniture, and right of succession. They looked upon him as a warlike prince, fitter for sustaining the troubles of those martial times than his eldest brother, and therefore strain a point of law and right.

It became a young lion; soon showed his fierce, haughty, cruel, and bloody disposition, as appears #2Ki 23:30-32, though he continued but three months, and some odd days, wherein to play his pranks.

Learned; had tutors and counsellors that showed him the method; and he, an apt scholar in an evil school, learnt apace.

To catch the prey; to seize first, and then to tear the prey, by frauds and violence to hunt, take, and devour that he took, as lions use.

Devoured; eat up, as the word notes, lived upon.

Men; man, *Adam*, the weaker sort; or it may be in those divided times *Adam* may imply such as were crushed because they were not of the tyrannizing faction: at that time Pharaoh had some that inclined to him, and perhaps these were used hardly by Jehoahaz.

Ver. 4.

The Egyptians heard and considered what he did, they had intelligence of Jehoahaz's rigours against them, and all that abetted their interest; this made them (as neighbours do when a lion is reported to waste their flocks) gather together against him. He was taken in their pit; or, in their net, as hunters in those parts dig pits and spread nets, into which they drive the hunted lion, or bear: so here. Or else thus, This lion was taken at last, though he did some mischief first to the Egyptians; so the word may bear.

They brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt; the story of it you have #2Ki 23:33; these barbarous conquerors used him as men use a lion, put and keep him in chains; carried him

captive into Egypt, where he died, **#Jer 22:10-12**, with **#2Ki 23:34**.

Ver. 5.

Upon the ill success of Jehoahaz, Jerusalem and the Jews in the land fell from their hopes under great disappointments, for Jehoahaz is taken, deposed, carried captive by the Egyptians, instead of shaking off the Egyptian yoke. She took another; yet it is said, **#2Ch 36:4 2Ki 23:34**, that the king of Egypt made the next king: both true; the Jews with Pharaoh's liking, or Pharaoh with the Jews' consent, advance him, whether it were Jehoiakim or Jehoiachin.

Made him a young lion; king, and infused the lion-like maxims for his rules.

Ver. 6.

He, Jehoiakim,

went up and down: it is said of him, because he continued eleven years on the throne, and so many years, as a lion, tore and devoured; whereas Jehoahaz was taken as soon almost as he first ventured out to hunt the prey.

Among the lions; carried it after the manners and usages of the heathen kings, those barbarous tyrants, with whom he entered leagues, as he saw good, and laid aside the law of God, which was to guide king and people.

Became a young lion; grew strong, fierce, ravenous, unsaltable: see **#Eze 19:3** where the rest is explained.

Devoured men; either his neighbours the Ammonites and Moabites, or he devoured his own subjects, impoverished and eat out their estates, spared not the prophets, or their prophecy, and Urijah he slew, **#Jer 26:23**: what Jehoiakim was appears **#Jer 22:13-15,17**.

Ver. 7.

He,

Jehoiakim, knew their desolate palaces, on view; not only heard of them, but setting on them violently, and taking them, he came

to know their palaces, which are here called, what he made them, desolate; so the word **#Isa 13:22**.

Palaces; or it may be rendered widows, and then it will refer to such whose husbands this lion devoured, and thereby occasioned their petitioning to him, and thus he knew them, whom he made desolate; but the former best suits what follows.

Laid waste their cities; pilling, polling, and by exactions driving the inhabitants out by his cruelty and tyranny.

The land was desolate; the whole land, or the country, sped as ill as the cities, and so it was emptied of men, riches, and strength.

By the noise of his roaring; by the perpetual violent threats of this cruel king, which are called his roaring, and so **#Pr 19:12**, which terrified his neighbours in the three years' revolt which are mentioned **#2Ki 24:1,2**.

Ver. 8.

The nations which were feudatory to Nebuchadnezzar, and were bound to assist him in his wars.

Set against him; by order of the king of Babylon gathered together to hunt this lion, to make war on this revolting king.

On every side; surrounded him that he might not escape.

The provinces which belonged to the Babylonish kingdom, and were governed by presidents, or petty kings, vassals to Nebuchadnezzar.

Spread their net over him; soon got him into their toils, as huntsmen get a lion, or other wild beast, into their net.

He was taken in their pit: see **#Eze 19:4**.

Ver. 9.

They, the armies of the several nations, or the chief commanders of those armies,

put him in ward, in grates, or a great cage, as wild beasts are conveyed.

In chains; it is reported they put an iron collar on his neck, and fastened an iron chain to it.

And brought him; he was carried that long journey in chains, enough to change his roaring lion-like into the roarings of a desperate, miserable captive.

To the king of Babylon, wherever he was, for some dispute it whether now in Babylon, or elsewhere with some of his armies; however, this unhappy king was carried to Nebuchadnezzar, or died on the way perhaps, by command of Nebuchadnezzar so used that hard usage killed him, and then they cast him out unburied, as **#Jer 22:18,19**, foretold.

Brought him into holds; kept him safe that he should not escape, or brought him to Babylon, which, though one city, yet so large, and had so great and many forts about it, that it seemed to be made up of many strong holds.

That his voice should no more be heard; that he might never more either affright, or kill, or devour any of his people and subjects in the land of Israel.

On the mountains of Israel: in a comely observance of the parable the kingdom is the mountains, when the king is the lion that rangeth and roareth on them. Two more lions of the same temper, and alike miserable in their end, I doubt not, are included in this emblem; and by these the Jews might know what would become of Jeconiah, called also Jehoiachin, and of Zedekiah, who was called Mattaniah.

Ver. 10.

The 10th verse begins the second part of the chapter.

Thy mother, O thou prince of Israel: see **#Eze 19:2**.

Is like a vine; frequently so compared, **#Ps 80:8,14,15 Isa 3:14 5:2 27:2**.

In thy blood; either when thou wast first born, as **#Eze 16:6**; or, the royal line, thy kingly race; or, in the rigour of thy strength.

Planted by the waters, in a very fruitful soil.

She was fruitful, and accordingly she did thrive, and brought forth much fruit: see **#Eze 17:8**. Though she lost many thousands carried away, yet more were born, bred up, and trained up to

useful arts and employments, say some; but this too general. The royal family did spring like a vine well watered.

Full of branches; full of children; when Josiah died he left four behind him, beside other branches of the royal line.

Ver. 11.

Strong rods; many excellent persons endowed with qualifications befitting kings, that they might sway the sceptre, and rule the people with equity.

Her stature; the grandeur of the kings and kingdom.

Exalted among the thick branches; exalted above the ordinary majesty of other kingdoms.

The thick branches; the goodly cedars and their thick branches; i.e. this kingdom equalled, if not excelled, the greatest neighbour kingdoms, and her kings, as David, Solomon, &c. exceeded all their neighbour kings in riches and power.

She appeared in her height; like a mighty tree, that overtops all the forest, so did this goodly kingdom over all kingdoms, and it was seen and noted, according to God's promise that it should be the head, and not the tail, and to that **#De 4:6-8**.

Ver. 12.

This flourishing vine first degenerated, brought forth fruit to itself, not to God, and grew proud, abused God's mercies to all manner of sin.

She was plucked up in fury; was violently, suddenly, and totally rooted out, tore up by the roots; so was the once flourishing kingdom of the Jews overthrown.

She was cast down to the ground; had she been again set, there might have been some hope, but plucked up root and branch together it is perished for ever. To hasten the utter destruction hereof, an east wind, that blasting, piercing wind, blows upon her; the king of Babylon with all his power, raised of God to pull up this sinful kingdom.

Dried up her fruit; blasted all her fruit; deposed her king, captivated him, his family, and the whole kingdom.

Her strong rods, all the choice men, the counsellors, warriors, artificers, all that were like to be the strength of the kingdom, were broken; by Nebuchadnezzar's hand plucked away, and removed into Babylon, where they lay as withered branches.

The fire consumed them; called fury in the former part of the verse. God's displeasure for their sins, their adversaries' rage, and their own animosities, burnt them up; their houses and palaces, their city and temple, all burnt, yea, and some persons with this fire were consumed also, beside some that the conqueror roasted.

Ver. 13.

And now; at this present time.

She is planted; but, alas! how unlike what she was! a brand pulled out of the burnings, a few of the branches of the last pruning, or a few smaller roots taken up by the provident hand of the Lord of the vineyard, a remnant that might be a nursery, a seedplot; but the much greater part of the vine is, as said, destroyed. It is not said who planted them, but it is easy to conjecture Nebuchadnezzar planted them in policy and for his advantage, they planted themselves out of necessity, and God planted them there in just correcting mercy, and will give them root, and make them thrive, and transplant them after seventy years, and set them on the mountains of Israel again.

In the wilderness; so it was to the Jews, a forlorn, dangerous, and necessitous state: though Babylon was in a very fruitful place, yet the savage cruelty and the insulting pride of the Babylonians made it to the Jews as terrible as a wilderness; besides, there were some barren places of this kingdom, to which some of the Jews might be carried and confined.

Dry: this and the other expression are a description of the nature of a wilderness, and illustrate what the prophet had spoken, or may be paraphrased by that of David, **#Ps 63:1**; it was dry and thirsty, where no one stream ran from that river which made glad the city of God, **#Ps 46:4**.

Ver. 14.

This verse gives you account of the immediate cause of this hasty, furious, total pulling up of this vine.

And fire, of rebellion, will be kindled by a rod of her branches, Zedekiah, who is of the blood royal, made king by Nebuchadnezzar, and who swore allegiance to him.

Hath devoured her fruit; brought the land, city, king's palaces, and God's temple to utter desolation. She hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule; the regal dignity is ceased, and shall no more rise, you shall never have a crowned head to rule you more.

This is a lamentation; this I have told you is the subject of my mournful thoughts.

And shall be for a lamentation; my the execution of these things which shall be much more terrible, shall make you lament at sight of them, and at remembrance of them, as long as you live.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 20

God refuseth to be consulted by the elders of Israel, **#Eze 20:1-3**. He rehearseth the rebellions of their ancestors in Egypt, **#Eze 20:4-9**; in the wilderness, **#Eze 20:10-26**; and in the Promised Land, **#Eze 20:27-29**. He reproacheth the present generation with the like corrupt manners, **#Eze 20:30-32**. He threateneth to rule over them with rigour, but with promise to gather them, to purge out the rebels, and accept the services of the faithful in his church, **#Eze 20:33-44**. The destruction of Jerusalem prophesied under the name of a forest, **#Eze 20:45-49**.

Ver. 1.

The seventh year of Jeconiah's captivity and Zedekiah's reign, two years and five months before Nebuchadnezzar did besiege Jerusalem.

The fifth month; August.

The tenth day; which answers to our twenty-seventh.

Certain, Heb. *men*. Some of note among the elders and rulers of Israel. Either some of the captives in Babylon, as most likely they were who, **#Eze 8:1**, came to him, or some of those who were sent from Zedekiah to compliment or carry tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, as most likely they were, **#Eze 14:1**.

Of the elders; not of the priests or Levites, but of the laity, civil magistrates and officers, who might be sent to view the state of Babylon, and to observe what posture things were in, the better to resolve on that Zedekiah and his councils were forming, whether it will be advisable to shake off the yoke of the king of Babylon by a rebellion, or patiently bear it: and I conjecture this might be the main inquiry they made now, which was two years and five months before the siege began, during which two years and five months I suppose the design was resolved on, framed, provision made of all sorts, and at last a rebellion raised.

Came to inquire of the Lord; yet resolved beforehand what they would do, as will appear. Prophets neither did pretend to, nor could they, resolve such inquiries, but the Lord whom the prophets did consult.

Sat before me: whether it speak the quality of the persons, that did not stand as mean persons, or their resolution to wait for answer, or be a phrase proper with the Jews to express the common deportment of the country, I leave you to guess.

Ver. 2.

While these men were with Ezekiel God gives him instruction what to say to them.

Ver. 3.

Son of man: see #Eze 2:3.

Speak unto the elders of Israel; speak plainly, boldly, and to their faces, fear not their frowns; if they are deputies from Zedekiah, yet let not that character make thee mealy-mouthed.

Thus saith the Lord God: this expression carries enough to encourage him.

Are ye come to inquire of me? are ye in good earnest? Nay, but you act a deep hypocrisy, being already resolved on your own course, and yet now pretend you would know my counsel. It is a sharp reproof of their wickedness, and God utterly refuseth to be inquired of by such.

As I live: see #Eze 14:16.

I will not be inquired of by you, profane hypocrites, that abuse my prophet, and tempt his God. They are, as all politicians who have less of religion than worldly wisdom, willing to hear whether the prophet will flatter, and fawn, and encourage them; if so, then he is a wise, able, honest man; else a sot to be slighted.

Ver. 4.

Wilt thou judge them? either, Wilt thou judge charitably, and, supposing they are upright and teachable, wilt thou plead with me for them? as **#Eze 14:3**, or as **#Jer 14:9**. Or else thus, Wilt thou argue with them, convince them, and reprove them? This is fittest to be done, and do this, handle them severely as they deserve. It is repeated, to whet the prophet, and quicken him to this work, and to intimate to us the great contumacy of the people.

Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers: tell them somewhat that they may go away wiser than they came. They expect to know what will be their fate, tell them what hath been their fathers' carriage towards me, which they imitate, nay exceed. Their curiosity and perplexity would be informed what is to come, but their consciences need more to be informed: what their fathers have done they approved, and have outdone; by that let them know what to do, what to expect.

Ver. 5.

In the day; at the time, the season; it speaks not of that precise portion of hours which make up the natural day, but of the time wherein God began to show them his great mercy. *When I chose*; it includes mercy without merit in them, and it refers to God's declaring by his kindness to them that he had chosen them; it supposeth the free eternal election, but it expressly refers to a temporal and seasonable selecting them from others; chosen, as **#Isa 14:1**; again **#De 7:6,7**: or possibly thus, when I went to make them a choice people by refining them from their dross and idolatries contracted in Egypt, so the word **#Isa 48:10**, and selecting them.

Israel; not personally considered, but nationally.

Lifted up mine hand; either assuring them by oath that he would now make good his promise, and bring them out of bondage; it is the gesture of one that solemnly sweareth, and scriptures

frequently mention it, as **#Eze 20:15 De 32:40**: or else, stretched out and made bare my arm, i.e. magnified my power for your deliverance.

The seed of the house of Jacob: this explaineth and tells us who Israel was.

Made myself known unto them, by the miracles which he wrought; for it is not to be understood of making known or discovering his essence and incomprehensible being. It is not unlikely that many of them either were ignorant or forgot God; now by his wonders wrought for their deliverance he brings them to remember him, and look to him. Moses's question in **#Ex 3:13** seems to intimate this ignorance of this people.

In the land of Egypt; as this expressly directs us to the place, so it points out the time too when Israel was chosen, selected.

When I lifted up mine hand unto them; showed my power in performing my oath and promise in what was now to be done, and assuring them of doing what was further promised by him, and expected by them; and to assure them the more, it is doubled.

I am the Lord your God: so **#Ex 3:13,16,17**. Yours from your progenitors, yours by promise, by covenant, and now am come to be your God by actual and punctual performing my word to you, bringing you out of the land of Egypt by a lifted-up hand and arm.

Ver. 6.

After the manner of man God speaks, as if he had been the spy to go from place to place to search out the best, and to appoint it for them; it was his wise and good providence which assigned this land to them. Literally, milk and honey in abundance were in the land of Canaan, and continued till this fruitful land was turned into barrenness, for the sins of its inhabitants. Proverbially, it speaks the choicest, best, the most useful and pleasant, and the plenty and abundance of all these blessings for life, and so to be here taken; and though the whole country in the utmost extent of it, as proposed for Israel, (whose sins kept them out of much of it,) were naturally a fruitful land, yet this great plenty was more from the special favour and blessing of God.

Which is the glory of all lands; makes every country desirable.

Ver. 7.

Then, Heb. *And*, which connects the words; and though we read it *then*, this doth not point out the time when God spake this, though it is certain, when he had brought them out of Egypt he gave them his ordinances and laws of worship; nay, it is sufficiently included, in that they were to go out that they might serve the Lord.

Cast ye away every man; let every one of you, man by man, and family by family, cast away with abhorrence and indignation; the word is used **#Eze 18:31**.

The abominations of his eyes; which your eyes should have abhorred, but you rather lifted up your eyes to them, and looked for help from them; and it includes their own voluntary act in this idolatry.

Defile not yourselves with the idols: this explains the former passage.

Of Egypt; which were in veneration among the Egyptians, and with whose worship too many of them had been insnared and polluted while they were in Egypt.

I am the Lord your God; the only true God, and therefore you should worship none other. See **#Eze 20:6**. You are my covenant people, and therefore ought to have no other God as **#Ex 20:3**. Thus God prepared them, by his mercies and by his law, for himself.

Ver. 8.

They rebelled against me; so great a sin is idolatry, it is against God, as open hostility is against a sovereign whom subjects fight against. All sin is against God, but idolatry is much more so.

And would not hearken unto me; their wills were alienated from God, they refused to hear and obey in this. They did not forsake the idols of Egypt; it is probable there were some among them that carried with them (as Rachel did her father's) the idols of Egypt.

Then I said; I was just upon resolving, I was very near saying.

I will pour out, as a storm or mighty shower,

my fury; just and severe wrath.

To accomplish my anger against them; to make an end of them.

In the midst of the land of Egypt; that they should have perished in Egypt, and never come out.

Ver. 9.

I wrought, according to my promise, my infinite mercy, and the hopes of those few that heard and obeyed.

For my name's sake; for my glory: had you been used as you deserved, you had died slaves in Egypt, and there had been your graves; but the glory of God's mercy and faithfulness is the motive of him sparing them.

Polluted; reproached, blasphemed, and lessened among the heathen.

The heathen, among whom they were; the Egyptians, amongst whom Israel had sojourned two hundred and fifteen years, in which time many of the children of Israel, no doubt, had discoursed of their hopes of going out of Egypt to the land promised to Abraham for them, and were apt to boast of their God, and that country; and, to render the thing credible in the eyes of the Egyptians, would speak of the mercy, power, faithfulness, and wisdom of the Lord to effect this, the glory of which would have been eclipsed, and the heathen blasphemed, if God had not brought them out; when it was thus God wrought for his name's sake.

Ver. 10.

Wherefore, Heb. *And*.

I caused them to go forth; removed all obstacles, furnished them with all necessaries, went before them, and showed them the way they should go, as is expressed, **#Ex 13:17**.

And brought them; I brought; it was not Moses's error, though Pharaoh thought so, **#Ex 14:3,4**, but the peculiar conduct of God, **#Ex 14:2**.

Into the wilderness; a barren, sandy part of the country, the borders of Egypt towards the Red Sea; yet having mountains which shut them in on both sides, and frontier garrisons near

them: and as he brought them in, so he conducted them out of these straits, though here it is not mentioned.

Ver. 11.

I, who spared them in Egypt, had brought them forth, and owned them as the children of Abraham my friend: God gave his law by Moses, and now Israel's laws are really of Divine origin, when others did but pretend it. Gave them; appointed and commanded by my authority, and communicated out of my love and kindness to them.

My statutes; the law on Mount Sinai, containing their duty.

Showed them; plainly declared, spake so that they might know.

My judgments; not the terrible executions of his wrath, but judgments here are the rules that God gave them to walk by.

If a man do; if any one, without partiality, whosoever should keep these statutes and judgments with God is no respect of persons.

He shall live: not that any ever did or could by sinless keeping the law attain the eternal blessedness; grace gives that; but it surely points out a future prosperity and flourishing state in this life to all that are careful to keep these statutes and judgments as they can; such should not be cut off, nor brought into captivity, but live and rejoice in their own land.

In them; both in the fruit of them already obeyed, and in the continuance to do them for the future.

Ver. 12.

I gave; both commanded, and also sanctified, those portions of time to be holy rests.

My sabbaths; either the weekly sabbath, which, recurring every seventh day, soon multiplied into many, and was to be the commemoration of God's rest from his labour, Israel's delivery out of Egypt, #De 5:15, and an awakening of their hopes of the eternal rest with God; or it may, as most like it doth, include all the solemn days of God's worship, every of which was a sabbath, and no work to be done in it.

To be a sign of their being peculiarly my people, select from all other, to walk with me, to rest in me, and receive more grace from me.

That they might know: this was a teaching sign, they might by other ways know, and by this also.

I am the Lord; in this see my authority, and my holiness, who by such means do promote and attain such holy purposes and ends.

That sanctify them; that have withdrawn them from the profane and common herd of the heathen, and made them by this relatively holy; or else, that have changed the heart, and filled it with holy, pure, and gracious inclinations, and so made them really holy.

Ver. 13.

The house of Israel; not a few, this I might have borne in silence, but most of them; they were, as we are, a rebellious house.

Rebelled against me; provoked me bitterly to indignation by their contumacies, and that frequently, as **#Ex 17:7 Nu 20:24 De 1:26,43**; a stubborn and rebellious generation, **#Ps 78:8**, with **#Eze 20:40**.

In the wilderness; where they most needed my care and favour, where the preserving their life from destruction by the noxious creatures, and from famine by the barrenness of the wilderness, was a continued miracle, which required their obedience and dependence.

Walked not in my statutes; made not them the only rule of their religion, and exercise of it, as they should have done, but framed religion to their own or their neighbours' idolatrous inclinations.

Despised my judgments; slighted first, as of little excellency, refused next, and cast off with disdain and loathing.

Which, the equitable and necessary rules for government of their civil affairs, which were framed to the safety and welfare of a people,

if a man do, he shall even live in them: see **#Eze 20:11**.

Polluted; profaned with working what was prohibited, misemploying those days on idols, or on any common ordinary business, as #Ex 16:27 Nu 15:32 Jer 17:22,23.

Then I said: see #Eze 20:8.

To consume them; to cut them off from being a people, as #Nu 16:21.

Ver. 14.

See #Eze 20:9, where these words are paraphrased.

Ver. 15.

Yet also; moreover also, as the same particles are rendered, #Eze 20:12.

I lifted up my hand unto them; see #Eze 20:5; swore in his wrath against them, #Ps 95:11.

In the wilderness of Paran, where the Israelites pitched and abode in several parts of it many days, during which time they lust for flesh, #Nu 11:4,5, and murmur against the Lord, Moses, and the two faithful spies, who had searched out the land: here it was they would make them a captain and return to Egypt, #Nu 14:4.

That I would not bring them, &c: so it is recorded, #Nu 14:11,12,22,23,28-32; so all the murmuring, disobedient, unbelieving generation was excluded, and their children were brought in; which, well noted, reconcileth the seeming contrariety between the oaths of God.

Them; those rebellious and murmuring ones.

Given them; promised to the seed of Abraham, but not confined to that generation; the promise was made good, though to the next generation.

Flowing with milk and honey: see #Eze 20:6.

Ver. 16.

See the whole former part of this verse explained already, #Eze 20:13. Their heart went after their idols; their will and affections, their zeal and resolution, were for their idols which they served in Egypt, and which they had brought with them out of Egypt.

Ver. 17.

Nevertheless mine eye spared them; though they did highly provoke God, and deserved to be cut off, yet his eye pitied them: they provoked his wrath, he stirred up his compassions.

Them; not all of them, for many did die in the wilderness, and, among these, some by immediate wrath; but how many soever they were, yet the growing generation was spared, and the nation was not extirpated.

Ver. 18.

But, and, or then

I said. The fathers were refractory, and deaf, would not hearken, therefore God turns his advice to children. Though the particular place is not specified, yet among the calamities of that mournful age, and at the funerals of so many as then died, there were some that had piety, zeal, and courage enough to warn the survivors, and **#Ps 90:7-11** affords us ground enough to believe Moses did warn and advise. *In the wilderness;* in that part of it where their fathers murmured, and where some were cut off by the hand of God, and in other parts through which they travelled and suffered.

Walk ye not: it is both counsel, as from love, and a command, as from power;

Live not as your fathers, for they walked contrary to reason, religion, and their own good, as much as they walked contrary to me.

Your fathers; though fathers, they may not command contrary to God's command, nor be imitated in what they do contrary to God's law.

Their judgments; it is observable, the prophet forbids them to imitate the customs, rites, and usages of their fathers, included in judgments, and thence passeth to forbid their imitating their fathers in their idolatry. Idolatry is fruitful when it so multiplied in Egyptian bondage, and in the desolate state of a people in the wilderness.

Ver. 19.

The Lord; the only God; idols, though your fathers' idols, are no gods, therefore let them never be that to you which they are not, cannot be in themselves, the object of worship, and trust, and love.

Your God, by covenant, by redemption out of Egypt, by adoption, and giving you the law; therefore own me as such, by keeping mine ordinances and judgments to do them; I am most your Father.

Ver. 20.

Hallow my sabbaths; remember to keep them holy, employ them on holy works of God's solemn and public worship, and cease from servile and worldly businesses.

A sign: see **#Eze 20:12**. As the Friday observed a rest is the sign of a Turk, the seventh day observed is the sign of a Jew, and distinguisheth: so it was of old, so it is now: the Christian sabbath is a sign between Christ and us.

May know more fully, acknowledge it more openly, and in waiting on mine ordinances may know by experience what the almighty grace of your God can do.

Ver. 21.

These unhappy children do even as their fathers in all points of disobediences to God; are as deaf to his counsel, and as averse to his law, which here is point by point recounted, and is the same with **#Eze 20:13**, where see it explained.

Ver. 22.

Nevertheless, Heb. *And*. God seems to take to himself the posture of one that was just going to smite, yet draws back that he might spare, and act like his own infinite goodness, not suitable to the sin of this generation.

Wrought: this is explained **#Eze 20:9**.

Ver. 23.

On this solemn gesture and signification, see **#Eze 20:5**. Here it is an oath added to a threat, to make it more dreadful to them, and to make it successful in keeping them from the sin threatened.

That I would scatter them; foretold them of a captivity which should come upon them for their sins, which it is probable was often inculcated in their hearing before Moses penned it for them, **#De 32:15 -42 Le 26:31-33**, and it is ingeminated to make it pierce the deeper, and affect them the more.

Ver. 24.

The whole 24th verse is already explained **#Eze 4:16**, which see.

They, that travelled through the wilderness, had not executed my judgments, in all that forty years, wherein their fathers were to be wasted, and by which their children should have learned, kept, and done God's judgments, but did them not.

Their fathers' idols; which their fathers chose in Egypt, and retained with them, and now their children serve the same, even the Egyptian idols.

Ver. 25.

Because they did by such perverse obstinacy reject the statutes I did in mercy give them; my good laws and judgments, saith God, they despised; for this cause God proceeds to punish them in a dreadful kind and manner,

Gave them; not by appointing or enjoining, but by permitting them to make such for themselves, much like that **#Ro 1:24**, giving up to a reprobate sense, or that **#2Th 2:11 Ps 81:11,12**, as a governor or father, after long and fruitless strivings with an obstinate and unruly youth, gives him up at last as hopeless, and casts off the care and guidance of him.

Statutes; orders and rules about their religious worship, which they first invented, next approved, and lastly made their established religion, where all they could love in it was, that it was their own.

Were not good; had nothing in them that was morally good, pious, or suited to the spiritual nature of God; that were unprofitable, and ministered nothing to the edifying and bettering of men, nor could commend the users of them to God; that were indeed pernicious to the users, and increased their sins, being superstitious and idolatrous: so the not good is very bad, inconvenient, and hurtful.

Whereby they should not live: if it be not explicatory of the former, it may, it is possible, refer distinctly to the inconvenient, oppressive, and unsafe courses, decrees, and edicts about civil matters, which were such as they could never thrive under; for however some heathen nations have thrived under an evident blessing from Heaven, though their religion were idolatrous, yet I do not remember that an apostate nation ever retained their good government and civil prosperity under their apostacy from God; thus the judgments given were such they could not live in them; they made grievous and destructive laws for themselves and theirs.

Ver. 26.

Polluted them; either I permitted them to pollute themselves, or discovered that they had polluted themselves, or treated them with loathing and abhorrence, as polluted persons.

In their own gifts; either in their gifts which they pretended to bring to me, or rather in their sacrifices they offered to whom, or at least in what manner, they, not I, had chosen; or, which is most likely, gifts are here their first-born, which are more than other children accounted gifts.

Through the fire: see #Eze 16:20,21. Most insufferable affront to God, to see those children inhumanly offered to the devil, which, in remembrance of his redeeming the fathers, were consecrated to God! #Ex 13:2; and possibly this was first done when they offered to Baalpeor, #Nu 25:3.

To the end, &c.; to provoke God so to afflict, weaken, and waste by his judgment, till it should undeniably appear that God had by signal displeasure against them for their sins brought them to desolation.

Might know; be convinced, and forced to own, that the Lord is a mighty King in punishing those that might, but would not, have him a gracious King in governing and guiding them.

Ver. 27.

Since all this evil and wicked carriage in Egypt and in the wilderness is too true, and cause of a Divine wrath against them, go on; tell what the deportment of those was whom I brought into the land.

Unto the house of Israel; to those elders that were now come to him, that they might tell others at Jerusalem.

Yet; or further yet, beside all the rest, this is added by them.

Blasphemed me; profanely and frowardly lessened my mercy, my law, my worship, cast a reproach upon it all, as less desirable than that of their own; theirs more august and stately, more taking and pleasing: or thus reproached my wisdom, as if it needed their additions to complete religion and Divine worship; or reproached my bounty, as if not I, but their idols, gave them what they enjoyed, as **#Ho 2:5,7,8:** the word speaks a reproach and blasphemy that comes from a heart full of enmity, as where it is used, **#Nu 15:30 2Ki 19:22 Ps 44:16 Isa 37:23 43:28;** they spitefully reproached.

Committed a trespass against me; grievously sinned, as the phrase is rendered, **#Eze 14:13:** what this was in particular the next verse will account to us.

Ver. 28.

When; so soon as settled in the land promised to Abraham and his seed.

Lifted up mine hand: see **#Eze 20:5,23.**

Saw; lookest after them, and, when seen, liked and prepared after the manner of the heathen; though this was forbidden, yet this thou didst, buildedst thy high places, and thou settest up thy groves every where.

There; not where God appointed, but where they listed.

Their sacrifices; either to God, as sometimes some did, or to their own idols, as the most did, which is here called the presenting the provocation of their offering.

Their offering; which being presented to their idol, was a provocation unto God.

Sweet savour; burnt sweet odours to their idols, which did stink in the nostrils of God.

Their drink-offerings; wine was a part of the offering that sacrificers offered, and so did these idolatrous Jews here, they

violated the whole law of sacrifice, and did all that to idols they should have done only to God.

Ver. 29.

Then; when they were intent upon this horrid course of sin, God pleaded by his messengers, and prophets, and law, and some faithful priests, What mean you, that ye go to the high place? should you not go to the altar of God, and bring your sacrifices to the temple? Or what God better than Abraham's do you expect there? What profit by attending upon those sacrifices offered daily? How often have you by such-like means poured contempt on God and his law!

Whereunto ye go; leaving my temple, and the service I prescribed, and in other places, unrequited, doing their supposed duties.

Bamah; high place: the very word tells them their wickedness, that they acted against the express will of God, and framed themselves to idolaters of the nation.

Unto this day; and this they did with obstinacy continue in to the days of Josiah, #2Ch 34:3. Thus far the narrative of their great wickednesses.

Ver. 30.

The house of Israel; those elders that were come to him, as #Eze 20:1, which see. They come to make inquiry, and now the prophet inquires of them, that their own conscience might make answer, and tell them what to expect: Your fathers, where are they? What became of some, that bore their iniquity? And what had become of the rest, if God had not withdrawn his hand? And all this hath been no warning to you, but, as they, so you, have polluted yourselves, and been idolaters.

Ver. 31.

Your gifts: see #Eze 20:26.

All your idols; it seems they took a compendious way to increase sin and wrath; they worshipped many idols at once; and this they did still to Ezekiel's time, to that very day. Are you fit to come and ask counsel of me, whom you have so shamelessly, so obstinately forsaken and reproached? Can you expect I should

answer you? My prophet knew you not to be hypocrites, but his God, who knows you, and all your abominations, hath put the answer into his mouth, which you must be content with. I will answer you as little as you regard me. So God refuseth them.

Ver. 32.

God by his prophet, to convince and recover them, tells them what they think and have purposed.

Shall not be at all; shall be quite frustrated.

Ye say; you have consulted and come to a resolution herein.

As the heathen; unite in habitation, covenants, marriages, commerce, and religion too; and then ye shall be more safe among them, thrive with them, and all the displeasure they have against you will cease: these are your imaginations and contrivances of you at the court of Zedekiah in Jerusalem. But I tell you that this shall not be at all. This designed apostacy to Gentilism, if you do act it, shall not prosper with you, or help you, ye blind, hardened, senseless atheists.

Ver. 33.

As I live: see #Eze 20:3.

A mighty hand; so mighty, that you shall never wrest yourselves out of it: you think to revolt, and get out of my hand, but you shall hereby discover your own folly, malice, and weakness.

A stretched out arm, which reacheth every where, whence you can never flee, which shall be most visible.

With fury; in hot, but just indignation.

Poured out; as an inundation from a mighty river, or like a violent storm poured from the clouds, or as a full vessel emptied all at once.

Rule over you; retain my right over you, and exercise it on you, us on combined rebels, since you will refuse my rule, as over-loyal subjects. If you will not be my free subjects, you shall be lettered slaves; the chains of affliction, the restraints of providence crossing you, the execution of my menaces, shall be too sharp and thick a hedge for you to break through; I will make every place where you are a prison for strength to confine you, and I will

make it a prison for the sorrows and hardships you shall there endure, and all this in my fury.

Ver. 34.

From the people; Sidonians, Ammonites, Moabites, &c., whoever they were to whom the house of the apostate Jews betook themselves; where they thought to lurk, God will bring them thence into Babylonish captivity.

Will gather you; the same thing doubled for greater emphasis.

Are scattered; you dispersed yourselves for your supposed safety and welfare.

With a mighty hand: see #Eze 20:33. My power and arm shall execute my just displeasure on you.

Ver. 35.

Bring you; drive you; and since you think of such a course of ease to yourselves by casting me off among the nations, I will bring you among such as you shall be soon weary of.

Into the wilderness; into the most horrid, barbarous, and savage parts of the inhabited world; into the mountainous barren parts of Media, Hyrcania, Iberia, Caspia, and Albania, and Scythia, inhospitable nations, and mortal enemies to strangers.

Plead; debate, pass sentence, and execute it also on you.

Face to face; not, as the rabbins dream, to conceal the dishonour of the Jews, but indeed plainly, openly, and so as my hand shall be seen.

Ver. 36.

With your fathers, who died there, and never entered Canaan.

In the wilderness; which lay on the further side of the Red Sea, over against the land of Egypt, and is from it called, as here, though it be *Arabia Deserta*; in which, within the space of less than forty years, all the rebellious murmurers died.

Ver. 37.

I will bring you out by number, yet so as you shall either by a voluntary submission own my sceptre and government, or by a conquered subjection yield to my sword and power.

Under the rod; either referring to the manner of shepherds in that country, which did tell their sheep in and out of the fold; or rather, as a king, whose sceptre protects some, and dasheth others, and maintains his own right. I will difference persons and persons, that I may deal with each suitably to their state and carriage.

Will bring you, i.e. the voluntary and obedient, into covenant with myself.

Ver. 38.

Purge out; cull, and pick out, that they may be rejected, as they deserve, or brought forth to shame and punishment.

The rebels, the contumacious sinners, who harden themselves against God; his severe wasting judgments shall find them out in their hiding-places, and drag them out, but not to return them to Canaan, they shall no more return thither.

Ye shall know that I am the Lord; by which it shall appear, that though apostates may change their religion, and deny their God, yet he hath not less power to restrain, nor less right to govern, nor less sovereignty to dispose of them.

Ver. 39.

In short, you have done wickedly as you could, and I have done what was sufficient to reclaim you, I have foretold you what will be the final event, O house of Israel, and further I will not strive with you.

Go ye; ironically spoken, or, as is usually said to unreclaimable ones, Take your course, which allows not, nor commands, but threatens the evil course of such a one; or it is a divorce of this adulterous house, an utter casting them off for their idolatry.

Hereafter also: it seems an abrupt, vehement speech, which includes some heavy sentence, but it is suppressed, as too great to be uttered, or to leave room for doing more than the offender expected, **#Ec 11:9 Am 4:4 Mt 23:23**. You take yours, I will take my course, and see whose word shall stand. But while ye are such idolaters and notorious sinners, forbear to take my name into your lips, bring me none of your gifts and sacrifices to your idols, and pretend you bring them ultimately to me.

Ver. 40.

The gifts of idolaters, and all their painted stuff, God rejected in the former verse; now he encourageth the upright, those that feared, and obeyed, and waited on him. *Mine holy mountain; Zion, holy hill, #Ps 2:6*; holy by designation, and God's own appointing it for his temple and presence.

The height of Israel: the hypocrites, you have your high places, I abhor them; my church hath its high place, but it is the Mount Zion I have loved and chosen, called the height: it was the glory of Israel, and though lower than many other hills, yet it was above them all for God's peculiar presence there.

All the house of Israel; redeemed by me, whom I have brought out of Babylon according to promise, the returned captivity.

All of them: it is doubled to insure them.

In the land; their own land, and their fathers' land.

Serve me; not idols, but the God of their fathers.

Accept them; delight in them, and in their sacrifices.

Require your offerings: when I have brought you into, and blest you in, the land, then I will require your offerings as formerly; your *first-fruits*, your tithes, in a word, all your holy gifts: you shall see my temple built, Jerusalem filled with inhabitants, the land of Israel planted with seed of man and beast, my worship restored, and you shall go up with joy, carrying your holy things, and I will there accept them.

Ver. 41.

The same gracious promise for substance repeated.

Sweet savour; incense of a pure and obedient heart.

From the people; from Babylon, and the parts of that kingdom, where they had been scattered these seventy years. Gather you, by Cyrus's proclamation, and my secret impulse on the spirits of the faithful and constant Jews, while apostates stay behind.

Sanctified; magnified and praised for the good I do to my people, and on occasion of their love, fear, and obedience to me.

Before the heathen; heathens shall see, and say, as **#Ps 126:2**, God hath done great things for them; their God is the great, the merciful, and faithful God. who hath remembered his servants.

Ver. 42.

Ye shall know more fully by experience that he is your God, who is the great, good, wise, and faithful God, who performs his word; you shall know, and love, fear, obey, and worship him alone, and according to his will. Of the rest of the verse, see **#Eze 20:5,23,28**, where these passages are spoken to.

Ver. 43.

In your restored state, and in your prosperity, in the land whither you are returned, ye shall review your former ways with sorrow; remember, and grieve.

Your ways of your folly, explained by their doings, which defiled them, i.e. all their more notorious sins.

Loathe: see **#Eze 6:9**.

In your own sight; your own heart and conscience shall see what you have done, and they shall take shame, and be humbled, though none else see it.

Ver. 44.

This 44th verse doth summarily acquaint us that all Goa did for this people was of free, mere mercy, and for his own sake, not theirs.

Ye shall know; experimentally, with affection and obedience. The hypocrite secretly thinks somewhat in himself and works that God had regard to, but an honest, good heart, when God hath wrought, owneth the mercy wrought to be free and undeserved.

Ver. 45.

A new prophecy, and which pertains, say some, to the next chapter, which is a large comment on this short prophecy in the three last verses, for the 45th and 46th are introductory.

Ver. 46.

He was now in Babylon, north from Jerusalem, and being commanded to look toward the south, it is toward Jerusalem, and the land of Canaan.

Thy face; thy courage and undaunted mind, manifest in prophesying as thou art commissioned.

Drop; let thy word distil, begin with softer words ere thou shower down with the vehemency of a storm; prophesy so, #Am 7:16 Mic 2:6.

The forest of the south field, i.e. Jerusalem, which was become like a forest for multitude of inhabitants, for barrenness, wildness, degeneracy, and sheltering wild beasts; murderers lodged in her.

Ver. 47.

Hear; hearken diligently, and consider.

The word of the Lord; what God foretells shall be done.

I will kindle a fire, I will bring an evil like fire, the Chaldean forces, in thee, in the midst of the land.

Every green tree, &c.; all that flourish, and all that are poor.

The flaming flame; it will be a raging and swift fire.

Shall not be quenched; all means that can be used will not avail to quench this fire, till it hath burnt up all.

Faces; persons and orders of men, expressed by faces.

From the south to the north; from one end of the land to the other: the length of Judea did so lie from south to north.

Shall be burnt: with terrors, labours, flight, famine, and sickness, occasioned by this mighty invasion, all persons shall wither, and be as parched, or burnt.

Ver. 48.

That is, all the nations round about, near to them, shall clearly see, openly own it, as God's own work, both kindling this fire, and continuing it till it hath consumed all which God would destroy by it.

Ver. 49.

When the prophet had done his duty, and prophesied, and they should have heard and understood, he returns with a complaint of their quarrelling, censuring, flouting, and reproaching him for it: one while they account him mad, out of his wits, taken up with raptures and ecstasies, or else doting and dreaming; thus they

fortify themselves in their atheism, infidelity, idolatry, and all other sins, and fear not thy word, but contemn thy servant.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 21

Ezekiel prophesieth the sword of the Lord against all flesh in the land of Israel, sighing bitterly for a sign, #Eze 21:1-7. Another prophecy of a bright and sharp sword, commissioned to destroy, #Eze 21:8-17. The sword of the king of Babylon, in suspense which of two ways to take, by divination is directed the way to Jerusalem, #Eze 21:18-24. The fall of the profane prince of Israel and of his kingdom for a time, #Eze 21:25-27. The destruction of the Ammonites, #Eze 21:28-32.

Ver. 1.

A command or direction to speak plainly, that none might quarrel with his obscurity.

Ver. 2.

Set thy face; put thyself in a posture may bespeak thy going to prophesy.

Toward Jerusalem, or against Jerusalem, called, #Eze 20:46, *forest of the south field.* Drop thy word; of the phrase see #Eze 20:46; as rain from heaven, so distil my word.

The holy places; either the temple, and all the parts of it, which were three, the porch, the holy, and holy of holies; or their synagogues, in which they met to worship and read the law, which were burnt up by this fire, #Ps 74:8.

Against the land of Israel; not only against Jerusalem, but the whole land of Israel, from the south thereof to the north; as #Eze 20:47.

Ver. 3.

Publish it to all the people of the land, if any will consider it; it is not the severe and morose conjecture of a disturbed and injured man, let them know God the Lord speaks it. Weigh this, I say it is of great importance. You think yourselves more righteous than those that come against you, that they are heathen, you my peculiar people, that my temple is with you, and that I will be on your side; but be not deceived, for

I am, and I will be, against you.

Will draw forth as an enemy resolved to slay,

my sword, the Chaldean army under captains that are skilful to destroy, out of his sheath; I will bring them out of their land, where they are now quiet and at rest. This army shall not vanish, but effect what it is raised for, it shall make a general havoc.

Will cut off, or take away out of the midst of thee, partly by the sword, and partly by captivity, or by famine.

The righteous; some say here is meant such as seemed to be, but were not, just; but it is no unusual thing that in outward troubles and public calamities those who are indeed righteous should be involved with others, nor does this contradict any places which seem to promise a security to them; they may be chastised, but shall not be condemned.

And the wicked; profane, ungodly, and vicious ones, who shall be cut off with double destruction.

Ver. 4.

I will cut off; it is both my purpose and threat, to do that by the Chaldeans in such manner as that it shall appear I did it.

The righteous, signified by the green tree, **#Eze 20:47**.

The wicked; the dry tree, **#Eze 20:47**. *Go forth*; have a commission, such as I gave Nebuchadnezzar, as large as is necessary for this work.

All flesh; all the Jews that dwell in the land; it may somewhat reflect upon the nations near about the Jews, as Moab and Ammon.

From the south; as it doth certainly denote the whole of the land of Judea, it may intimate the rise and spring of this evil from the south, i.e. Babylon, and its progress northward.

Ver. 5.

That they that smart and suffer may see and own God in their just sufferings, they that see and hear it may confess God's doings herein.

It shall not return any more: in #Eze 20:48 it is expressed thus, *it shall not be quenched*, for there it was a fire; here, it shall not return into the scabbard till it hath done full execution.

Ver. 6.

Sigh; thereby express to them deepest sorrows for what is present, and most piercing fears of what is to come.

With the breaking of thy loins; like a woman in travail, or as one whose griefs are ready to break his heart, #Isa 21:3.

With bitterness; with all sorts of the most bitter cries and tears.

Before their eyes who were now with him in Babylon, and who, as they easily could, so surely would, send word to them in Jerusalem and Judea.

Ver. 7.

This directs the prophet what account to give them, when they shall, as they certainly will, inquire what he meaneth by such unusual sorrows. Is it any private misery that makes thee sigh thus, or does it bode evil to others, or to us?

For the tidings; the news that is told me from Heaven, for the certain rumour of Nebuchadnezzar's preparations, and march against you. The saddest news you ever heard is coming, it will most assuredly come. The courage of the stoutest heart shall fail. which shall appear in the feebleness of their hands, dejectedness of their spirit, and their knees not able to support the body; such terrors shall seize them as shall make them unable to shift from, or to make head against, the evils that come against them.

It cometh; none can prevent it.

Shall be brought to pass; it shall have its full effect, nothing shall be wanting to your complete undoing, and then, as I do for a sign to you, so you and yours shall do under the sorrows signified, sigh, and weep, to the breaking your very heart.

Ver. 8.

This I suppose is a further explication of what was said already of the sword God draweth out against them; with a further direction or command how the prophet should note out the nearness of the evil; he is bade to speak plainly, and tell them they may see it.

Ver. 9.

As if he pointed to it, crying out as one that suddenly seeth some dreadful sight. A mighty sword, or many; so the ingemination may imply the forces of Nebuchadnezzar and his confederates.

Sharpened; prepared to wound, slay, and that with greater speed and sureness.

Furbished; to terrify the weaker courage, to dazzle the eyes of such as encounter it: in a word, the danger is as near as if an army come up in array, and their swords in their bends ready to go on and fight.

Ver. 10.

To make a sore slaughter; to slay many, and with as little regard as men kill beasts, or to offer whole herds of wicked men in sacrifice to the offended justice of God; much after this style both David, **#Ps 44:22**, and **#Isa 34:6**.

May glitter, and strike a terror into the enemy.

Should we then make mirth? shall we allow ourselves in jollity, in feasts, or dances, or songs? This would be very uncomely.

It contemneth; this great, sharp and glittering sword, appointed to cut off, slights and despiseth all the resistance that can be made against it, and reckons all former chastisements were but as the rod wherewith a son is corrected; but now the sword of an enemy is drawn out, and will cut off all. Or, Nebuchadnezzar despiseth your king, the royal family, and nobles, which are compared to gods, **#Eze 19:10,11**; and would use them as he would every common tree of the wood, as it appears he did, when he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him in chains as a slave.

Ver. 11.

He hath given it; either God, whose sword it is; or Nebuchadnezzar, God's servant herein. Some refer it to Christ, who is Lord and Sovereign of his church, and Governor of the world.

That it may be handled; be the fitter for use in the hand of the slayer, i.e. the Chaldean.

Ver. 12.

Cry, as one in great distress; nay, how unseemly soever it may appear, howl, that they may by this know what sorrows are coming on them, and how they, like wild beasts taken in the toils and girts, shall howl. For the devouring sword of Babylon shall certainly be upon all, high and low.

Terrors; surrounding terrors, out of which no way to escape.

The sword; that sword God will draw against them.

Smite upon thy thigh, in token of thy sense of what they must suffer, and to presignify what their sorrows shall be, when they must express them by signs, because too great for words.

Ver. 13.

It is a sore trial, therefore show all the signs of grief and sorrow; or it may refer to what follows in the verse; thus, since this is the exploration, or trial, which I make in so severe manner to bring them to repentance, mourn for them, lest they should harden themselves.

What if the sword? the addition of sword, which is not in the original, hath perplexed the words in my thoughts. I would read them thus,

and what if the rod contemn? It shall be no more. Then the sense runs thus: But if the king and kingdom of Judah despise this trial, and harden themselves against this sword, both shall be destroyed, and be no more, for nothing but a right use of this last trial could help them. Or else, if we must adhere to our version, what if it amount to this: All this is for probation and trial, not for utterly extirpating Israel, saith God to his prophet; who might propose this, What if the sword contemn those bounds, and despise the king and kingdom, and resolve to destroy them from being a nation? as **#Isa 10:6,7**. To this God gives answer thus; This he shall never effect, and in due time this sword shall be no more; Babylon shall be destroyed. In so perplexed a place I rather conjecture than affirm.

Ver. 14.

Smite thine hands together; either in token of amazement and sorrow, or else to signify what pleasure it should be to see justice

executed on obstinate rebels; or rather, as **#Eze 21:17**, clap thy hands, to awaken and hearten the Babylonians on to the slaughter.

Let the sword be doubled the third time: perhaps it is too curious to search out what particular calamities are pointed out by this trebled sword; whether,

1. Zedekiah's captivity with many of the princes. And,
2. Taking of the city.
3. Killing of Gedaliah and those with him: to be sure it speaks both the certainty of the thing, and the greatness of the affliction.

Sword of the slain; wherewith many shall be slain.

The great men; which were princes, and captains, and rulers.

Entereth into their privy chambers; searcheth the most secret rooms, where they slew such as they found hidden in hope to escape.

Ver. 15.

The Lord hath gathered them together round about Jerusalem, with their swords sharpened and drawn at every gate to slay whosoever attempt to come out, or to slay all they meet with when they take the city.

All their gates; both of meaner cities, of their palaces, and private houses.

That their heart may faint; as what heart can be thought able to retain its courage, when beset with death by an enemy's sword, which killeth all that come out, and entereth to kill all that stay within?

Multiplied; for number made many, for nature made very great.

Made bright; prepared, brightened, and sharpened.

Wrapped up; and hath been carefully kept in the scabbard, that it might keep its edge, and not be blunted.

Ver. 16.

O sword, take thy own course; O ye slaughtermen, ye Babylonian soldiers, all is open before you, go which way you will; I have

brought you to waste the land from south to north, begin where you will, and proceed as you will, none shall be able to resist you.

Ver. 17.

Smite mine hands together, in token of my approbation and well-pleasèdness in those executions which the Chaldeans shall finish against you; those hands, that were used to restrain and check, shall excite and encourage your enemies.

My fury: see #Eze 5:13.

Ver. 18.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 19.

Appoint; paint, mark out, or describe on the or tablet, as #Eze 4:1, two roads, and set it before thy countrymen in Babylon, and let them know that the arms and sword of Nebuchadnezzar are designed for exploits, where those ways lead them. Thus typically Ezekiel foretells the invasion the king of Babylon would make.

Both twain; the ways, though two in the course they lead, as stream that divide and multiply, yet must take their rise from one and the same land, that is, Babylon; there the prophet must begin to mark out the way which is to be drawn out: till it divide into two. And pitch on some convenience place, where thou mayst place Nebuchadnezzar's army, he and his council of war consulting where this one way divides into two, which was on the edge of the desert of Arabia, as Nebuchadnezzar pursued his march from Babylon.

At the head of the way; either where the way begins, at Babylon; or rather at the head where each distinct way runs out, toward either Rabbath of the Ammonites, of Jerusalem; for there Nebuchadnezzar will cast lots.

Ver. 20.

This royal city of the Ammonites, it seems, the king of Babylon had a quarrel with, as well as with Jerusalem, and he was resolved, when he came out of Babylon, to set upon one of them. There were two or three cities of this name Rabba, or Rabbath; one in the tribe of Judah, one in Issachar, one in Moab; but this in the text is distinguished by Rabbath of the Ammonites.

The Ammonites were the children of Lot's daughter by incestuous mixture.

To Judah i.e. the Jews, the land for the people of the land. In Jerusalem; particularly against Jerusalem, whose fortifications do now as little discourage as they shall ere long hinder Nebuchadnezzar from taking the city and destroying it

Ver. 21.

The prophet, by reason of the certainty of the thing, speaketh of what shall be as if it were already; he stood, i.e. he will make a halt, pitch his camp, and consult, on the borders of Arabia the Desert, to which one road brings travellers from Babylon, but henceforward it divides, and becomes two, one leading to Jerusalem, the other to Rabbath

To use divination; to consult with his gods, and to cast lots; and here the prophet foretells what divination he useth.

Made his arrows bright: this, the first kind of divination he used by arrows, (*Βεγουαντετα*.) either writing on them the names of the cities and countries, then putting them into a quiver, and there mixing them, and thence drawing them out, and concluding according as the names were which were on the arrows, or perhaps by shooting the arrows and judging by the flight, or casting them up in the air and divining by their fall, as beggars are said to go a their staff falls. So then if Jerusalem were on the first arrow drawn out of the quiver, or if the arrows best ties or most fell that way, toward Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar will take that way. The next way of divining was by asking counsel of his idol, or image, which being made artificially by the skill of their juggling priests and conjurers, with little help they could give answers, and the image spake aloud what the sorcerer spake more softly, somewhat like the artificial whispering places which convey the voice, from unseen persons. Or by a Divine permission the devil gave them answers from those images. The third divination is by sacrifice, and judging of future prosperous or unprosperous events by the entrails, and more especially by the liver, its position and colour. All these he used, that with greater confidence of success he might proceed.

Ver. 22.

Either the divination which concerned Jerusalem was managed on his right hand, that way the arrows were thrown, the images stood, and sacrifices were offered; or else the lot drawn with the right hand of the priest came forth for Jerusalem. The promising lot, encouraging tokens, were those which directed this superstitious, idolatrous kin to attack Jerusalem first, and this by the overruling providence of God, who determined by infinite wisdom what seemed to blind men to be the event designed by their divinations.

To appoint; now Nebuchadnezzar sets all in order pursuant to his observance of the diviners.

Captains; the commanders of his forces, and their particular charges in the march and siege; he did, it is probable, assign them by lot, as is ordinary where greatest dangers attend the charges.

To open the mouth; to assault the city where breaches were made, and storm the battered walls, to slay the defenders, and to run the hazard of being slain by them.

With shouting; so all the barbarous, fierce nations did with shouts and hideous noises assault and fight their enemies, and with this they hoped to terrify and amaze them, and so more easily master them; and so these Babylonians did, as may be collected from **#Ps 137:7 Jer 51:14**, where Babylon shall be repaid her shouts.

Battering rams; engines made to beat down walls; and they had this name from the iron or brass head, which usually was at the end of it, like unto the head of a ram.

Against the gates, which might more easily be broken and beat down.

To cast a mount: in a siege of some length mounts must be raised to offend the besieged by shooting from the tops of them into the city, and to defend the besiegers; and the toil and danger hereof seems here to be cast on both overseers and labourers too by lot.

To build a fort; wooden towers now all these works being thus by lot disposed, the wary tyrant prevents the murmurs of his commanders and soldiers, and insinuates a courage into them by the pretences of assured success, and his idols approving them.

Ver. 23.

Unto them; the Jews, who shall either not believe that Nebuchadnezzar did so consult, or else that it is a vain, false, and lying divination, which will delude him that believes it, but never hurt them who deride it.

Them that have sworn oaths; Zedekiah, his princes, and nobles, who swore allegiance to the king of Babylon first, and afterward conspired with Egypt, and by new and contrary oaths perjured themselves, provoked as well as dishonoured God, and enraged Nebuchadnezzar to revenge their perfidiousness; these perjured persons will contemn all predictions of the prophet, and all the preparations of the king of Babylon. But Nebuchadnezzar will think on, and thoroughly weigh, and impart also to his council, as the ground of his war, the great wickedness of their perjury and rebellion; that both Zedekiah, and the Jews with him, may be subdued, taken captives, and the kingdom overthrown, the city burnt, and they sent into Babylon.

Ver. 24.

Either referring to God, who saw still their wicked perjuries, and other sins which they persisted in, or rather referring to Nebuchadnezzar, and his ministers of state and war, to whose memory all the falsehood of the Jews was still kept fresh by repeated disloyalty, with reproach to God, whose oath the king and inhabitants of Jerusalem had violated.

Your transgressions against God, and against the king of Babylon, whose yoke you submitted to with promised obedience.

Discovered; visibly to all in court, city, and country.

All your doings; public management of matters of the kingdom, and private too; you add sin to sin, and that without blushing for them, or hiding them.

Because; the whole summed up for confirming the threats.

Taken with the hand; as birds or beasts taken in the net, encompassed therein that they cannot get away, are taken with the hand, so shall you, and be carried into Babylon.

Ver. 25.

Then; Zedekiah.

Profane; tainted with secret deep irreligious opinions, whence he despised God and his oath, and profaned the name of God. Prince: so much was his royal dignity lessened, that indeed he was rather a prince subject and dependent than a king.

Whose day, day of sorrows, and sufferings, and punishment, is at hand. Iniquity; the irreligion which is spread by thee among thy courtiers shall cease to spread itself, because of thy low estate. Or, when iniquity shall bring the fatal ruin of king and kingdom, and both shall be destroyed, and with the overthrow of your state the opportunities and means of sinning shall end too.

Ver. 26.

Either God speaks to the prophet to declare the thing, or to Nebuchadnezzar to do the thing, to take away the diadem, the royal tire of the head, which the king did ordinarily and daily wear.

The crown; which was a royal ornament used on solemnities, and more than ordinary occasions; or it may be one thing in doubled expressions of the deposing of Zedekiah.

The same; the kingdom and crown shall never be what it hath been; as we say of one greatly altered, He is not himself, so here, This shall not be the same; it was great, glorious, and flourishing, but hereafter small, dependent, ignoble, and withering.

Exalt him; Jeconiah; it is probable the prophet foretells the advance of this captive king, which came to pass in the 37th year of Jeconiah's captivity, in the first year of Merodach, #**2Ki 25:27-29 Jer 52:31**, who exalted his seat above all the captive kings in Babylon.

That is low; now in captivity in Babylon. Abase him; Zedekiah, That is high; not now on the throne of Judah, strengthened with the confederacy of Egypt, on which he relieth, and exalteth himself, and bears himself high against the prophet, the king of Babylon, and, which is most insolent, against the God of heaven.

Ver. 27.

This triplication of the threat speaks the certainty of the event, and also the gradual, successive troubles and overthrows that this kingdom should ever after be afflicted with.

It shall be no more; never recover its former glory and strength, but consume, till the sceptre be quite taken away from Judah, and way be made for the Messiah, who is he that is to come, whose is the dominion, and to whom the Father will give it. So the final desolation of the temporal kingdom of the seed of David, which was most heavy tidings to the carnal Jews, is threatened, and the eternal kingdom of the Messiah, most joyful tidings to the believing Jews, is promised.

Ver. 28.

In **#Eze 21:19,20** you had the mention of Rabbath, chief city of the Ammonites, in equal danger with Jerusalem; but while Jerusalem is threatened, Rabbath is no further minded, till now God directs the prophet to declare the ruin thereof.

The Ammonites; a stout, but proud, injurious, and insulting people.

Their reproach, wherewith they reproached Israel in the day of Israel's afflictions, as **#Jer 49:1**, and **#Eze 25:3,5,6**, and blasphemed the God of Israel.

The sword; all warlike preparations are made against you.

The sword is drawn; the war is declared, and your enemy hath drawn the sword: see **#Eze 21:9-11**.

For the slaughter; to make waste, by avenging former quarrels and affronts. The Babylonish king comes out with bloody mind against you, O Ammonites! You countenanced Ishmael, who slew Gedaliah, viceroy by Nebuchadnezzar's appointment, and you would have set Ishmael on the throne; this affront you shall satisfy for with your blood.

Because of the glittering: see **#Eze 21:9,10**.

Ver. 29.

War and desolation indeed hasten on thee, though in the mean while thy astrologers and soothsayers promise peace and prosperity, and deceive thee with fair but false divinations, of which Jeremiah warns them, **#Jer 27:9**.

Upon the necks of them that are slain; to bring thee under the sword of the Chaldeans, and to destroy thee as the Jews are, who

already are fallen under the destroying sword; to make thee stumble and fall on their necks, as men that fall among a multitude of slain.

Of the wicked, i.e. both Jews and their king, as #Eze 21:25.

Their iniquity shall have an end: see #Eze 21:25.

Ver. 30.

Some read it without interrogation, as an advice to the Ammonites to put up the sword they had drawn for their defence, as being to no purpose to resist. If it be an interrogation, it is such as more vehemently denieth, God will by no means suffer the sword to be sheathed; in this sense it refers to the sword of the Chaldeans.

Will judge thee; plead, condemn, and execute too.

Where thou wast created; explained by that which follows; though they might boast of their ancient original, and their safe and impregnable strengths, yet God will bring a sword into those very places, and there they should perish.

Ver. 31.

Pour out; as a flood sweeps all away, so God will let out his indignation to overwhelm the Ammonites.

I will blow against thee; as those who melt down metals blow upon the metal in the fire, that the fire might burn the fiercer, and consume the dross.

Deliver thee; or, as there is no hope to one delivered up to barbarous, merciless ruffians, whose trade is to destroy, so will God deal with these Ammonites.

Ver. 32.

Thou; Rabbath, and thy people.

For fuel; which is soon and unavoidably consumed in such a furnace.

Thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt no where be safe, or thy blood shall not be covered, nor thou buried.

Thou shalt be no more remembered; thy name shall perish.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 22

A catalogue of sins committed in Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews because of them, #Eze 22:1-16. God will burn them as dross in the furnace #Eze 22:17-22. The general corruption of all orders of men, for which God's wrath is poured out upon them, #Eze 22:23-31.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Some would have the prophet here to be questioned, whether he would, and why he would, plead for such a city. Others, that God doth forbid him to plead for it, or be solicitous about it. I rather think God doth awake: him to more vigorous reprovng of this sinful people, and threatening them for sin. The question is doubled to awaken the prophet more fully, and to quicken him to his work.

The bloody city; Jerusalem, which is guilty of the murders of innocent ones, of prophets and holy men.

Show her; make her know, at least tell her by writing; for the prophet was at Babylon now, and could not speak to then at Jerusalem, but he might and must send word to then what their abominations were.

All her abominations; all the kinds, not all individual acts of them.

Ver. 3.

The city, Jerusalem,

sheddeth, is shedding, blood; it is her present practice as well as her former, murders are committed by her, and it is said the city did it; it was done with public consent, and probably under pretext of judiciary process to colour it, as in Naboth's case, and as they would have done to Jeremiah.

In the midst of it: this aggravates their murders, and makes them more bloody, in that it was done where so many were, that should have been safety to the innocent; it was not done in a wilderness.

Her time; the time of ripeness in her sins, and of execution of judgments on her for them.

May come: this they did not design, they rather took away innocents, whom they surmised were dangerous to their state, to prevent, but this hastened the punishment.

Maketh idols; either maketh new images of their old idols, or repaireth the decayed beauty of them Or, taketh in new gods of their neighbours, who might hell them; but all this is against themselves, for this doth more defile them, and provoke God to wrath against them.

Ver. 4.

Guilty in thy blood; greatly or deeply guilty.

Thou has shed, in abundance, cruelly and perfidiously.

Defiled thy self; as a polluted thing, loathsome to be seen or touched

Thine idols; dunghill gods.

Caused thy days to draw near; . hastened the days of thy sorrows and punishment, of the desolation in Judea, and of thy captivity in Babylon; thou hast shortened thine own peace and my patience.

Came even unto thy years; grown up now to the eldest years in sin, beyond which thou wert not to go: it is the same effect with that went before.

Therefore; for thy old sin, thou art given up to be a reproach.

A reproach; to be scorned by them, to be branded as a most perfidious, irreligious, unconscionable sort of people, not worthy to live Or else to be a taunt and by-word among all nations; thus it was #Ps 44:13 Jer 24:9.

To all countries that were round about them, or, farther off, had heard of them.

Ver. 5.

Those that be near; as the Idumeans or Edomites, who insulted over Jerusalem when it was taken, Ammonites, and Moabites, and Philistines.

Those that be far from thee; the barbarous Medes, Iberians, Hyrcanians, &c., to whom thou shalt be carried captive, whose land is far off.

Infamous; of a most infamous name.

Much vexed; afflicted, impoverished, and ruined above what was ever done to any city.

Ver. 6.

He was in **#Eze 23:2** commanded to show the Jews all their abominations. Now he is directed to begin with the greatest first, either those of the royal family, or else such as adhered close to the interest of them, and were advanced to places of great trust; or, who were heads of families.

Every one; not one to be found of a juster or more merciful temper.

To their power; according to their ability and opportunity.

To shed blood; for murdering all they hated, or that stood in their way.

Ver. 7.

In thee; in Jerusalem.

Have they: it is plural, and agrees with princes, they whose better disposition, whose education and greatness, (beside the command of God,) should have advanced their venerable thoughts and deportment towards parents.

Set light by, have contemned, father and mother, though God threatens to curse such as do so, **#De 27:16**.

They; the princes still, as the construction in the original carrieth it.

By oppression; by force and fraud, for the oppression here mentioned is made up of both; where either the fox or lion could apart, or else both joined, they have oppressed the stranger, expressly against God's command, **#Ex 22:21**.

They; still the same great men, and rulers, who should, as **#Isa 1:17**, have defended, plead. ed for, relieved, and comforted the

fatherless and widow, but contrariwise they oppress, disquiet, and make a prey of them.

Ver. 8.

Thou, all the land, or thou, O Jerusalem, or thou, O Zedekiah, the chief of the princes; or else, having spoken of them all in the plural, he now changeth number, and so speaks to each in particular.

Hast despised; hast had very low esteem of them, as if mean and ridiculous.

Mine holy things; all my institutions, temple sacrifices, feasts, and priests, &c.

Profaned my sabbaths; spent them in profane work, or bestowed them upon idols and their service.

Ver. 9.

Men that carry tales; informers and trepanners, or persons that, corrupted with money, give in false witness against the innocent; and the princes of Israel had hand in it.

They eat, offer sacrifice, on the mountains, and feast there, celebrating the honour of their idols: see **#Eze 18:6,11,15**.

Lewdness; enormous, contrived mischiefs, as the word imports.

Ver. 10.

Like wild Arabians, the worst of heathens, there have been and are some that incestuously defile their fathers' bed.

Humbled; it seems to imply a force and violence offered to the persons, whether virgins or married, whom at unseasonable time they forced to satisfy their lusts: forbidden **#Le 18:19 20:18**, and that on very just reasons, and for preventing many mischiefs, which follow such unseasonable commixtures.

Ver. 11.

One, i.e. some, or the man of quality, state, and such as were of high degree, as the word is translated **#Ps 62:9**. Or what if it were translated as **#Eze 22:6**, every one; it was grown a most general vice, as **#Jer 5:8**.

Abomination with his neighbour's wife; adultery, which God doth, and man should, abhor.

Another: horrible, shameless doings! the father-in-law committing incest with the wife's daughter, and brothers defile their own sisters; all this against the light of nature, the law of civilized nations, and the law of God. And, if our conjecture be right, all this done in their lewd, idolatrous feasts kept to the honour of Tammuz, and in the very temple, or near to it. Compare this with **#Eze 23:9**, and with **#Eze 8:14**.

Ver. 12.

Judges, who should have saved, have sold the life of innocents; they who sat on God's tribunal have acted the devil there, and murdered innocents, contrary to **#Ex 23:8**.

Taken usury: see **#Eze 18:8**. Greedily gained of thy neighbours; with unsatiable thirst of gain torn to pieces and devoured thy neighbour: so hast thou been an oppressing extortioner where thou shouldst not have been a moderate usurer, and thus forgottest thy God.

Ver. 13.

Behold; hear therefore, and mark, ye wicked Jews.

I have smitten mine hand, in testimony of my abhorrence of your ways, as threatening to punish you, and setting on the fierce Babylonian upon you to execute my just displeasure.

At thy dishonest gain; thy covetousness, the root of all the evils in thee; thy cursed, unsatiable hunger for wealth.

Thy blood, which thou didst shed, that thou mightest then seize their estates; kill Naboths, and take possession.

Ver. 14.

Can thine heart endure? this question is a vehement negation, thou canst by no means endure, withstand and repel the evils that are coming, or bear them when come. Will thy courage hold out, and conquer? Nay, it will be with thee as **#Eze 21:7**, your hearts shall melt.

Can thine hands be strong, to hold the sword, and manage the warlike provisions against Nebuchadnezzar and his army? Your

hands shall be exceeding feeble, #Eze 21:7, your weapons fall out of your hands, your hearts first melting with fear.

The days; the times of long and multiplied sorrows, and furious indignation.

That I shall deal with thee; the Babylonians are but men, but I the Lord your God, whom you have provoked, am with them; they are my weapons of war and I strike by them, and thou shalt never be able to subsist under it. Flatter not thyself, the Lord will do it as he hath spoken it.

Ver. 15.

I will scatter thee, as the wind scatters chaff, among the heathen, the worst of the Babylonish vassals.

And disperse thee in the countries; doubled for certainty of the thing.

Consume thy filthiness out of thee: some take it for a threat by a fire, that shall consume the filthy sinners, and the filthy sins will cease; or else, that by removing them out of Jerusalem into captivity, and reducing them to a very low condition, they should not any more commit, but for ever loathe, their wickedness: some take it for a promise of purging mercy to better them, i.e. the remnant of them, when the rest are destroyed and wasted.

Ver. 16.

Whereas I was thine inheritance, and thou enjoyedst all riches, delight, safety, peace, and honour in me, so long as thou wert a holy, obedient people; now that you are polluted, a very sink of all filthiness, for which I have cast thee off, and sent thee into captivity, there be to thyself what thou canst be, for I will not be thine inheritance. And this forlorn, abject, helpless state shall be so visible, that the very heathen shall discern, and know, that you are rejected of your God, and he very just in doing so.

Ver. 17.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 18.

Not a few among many, but universally the whole house of Israel, the seed of him that was a prince with God, the covenant people

of God, are strangely degenerate and corrupted, as if purer and richer metals should by worse and worse turn to dross.

All they, from the king to the peasant, the priests, and prophets, and people, are brass; impudent in sin;

and tin; hypocrites, and mixed as tin; and iron; hard, cruel, and oppressive as iron; and lead; stupid and senseless as lead. Though I rather think this particular accommodating these metals somewhat too curious, I judge the prophet chargeth them with a continued degeneracy from bad to worse, by this gradation.

In the midst of the furnace; the afflictions I have laid upon them have not bettered them, they retain their corruptions and vices. While they kept covenant, adhered to my law, kept my worship pure, and loved mercy, did justly, walked humbly with their God, they were as silver; now they are degenerated, and are but the **dross of silver**, vile of price, and of little use.

Ver. 19.

Ye are all, from one end of the land to the other.

I will gather you; from all parts thereof I will by a secret overruling providence bring you together into Jerusalem, as into a furnace where you may be melted and consumed.

Ver. 20.

They; founders, who melt down metals to prove them.

Gather silver, &c.: if these different kinds of metals be to be gathered into one and the same furnace, it speaks the involving all promiscuously in the same afflictions; if it be meant as each distinct metal is tried by the fire in the furnace, but by fire proportioned to the stubbornness of the metal, then it bespeaks the future affliction shall be such as shall melt down the hardest of the degenerate idolaters and sinners.

To blow the fire; to raise the fierceness of the fire.

To melt it; till it be melted. So will I gather you: see **#Eze 23:19**.

In mine anger; in great but just displeasure, called fury too here, and elsewhere: such were the sins of this people, that they had kindled a fire against them which should surely consume them.

I will leave you there; or, I will sit down and rest me, as the founder, when he hath taken pains to gather in the metal, heaped up the wood, kindled fire, and blown it to its full height, rests himself, observing how the metal melts down: God will so rest himself; after the manner of man it is spoken; the like phrase #Eze 5:13 16:42, which see.

And melt you; he will take care the fire go not out till you are melted, either to the purging away, or consuming you with your dross.

Ver. 21.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 22.

These verses are an ingeminating of the same menaces, the more to affect the Jews with fear, and due apprehensions of their danger, and make them think of returning to God.

As silver is melted: this seems to intimate the Divine care over some few, that in the midst of the rest were precious, and God would purify, not destroy them.

Ye shall know; see, own, and submit to God's afflicting hand, and comply with him, putting away your dross.

Have poured out my fury upon you, promiscuously with others, among which you have suffered the same outward troubles, though the end be different, which intimates the escape of a remnant.

Ver. 23.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 24.

Thou; the land of Israel.

Is not cleansed, nor rained upon; though God's judgments have been as violent storms and floods, though they have been as hottest fires, yet neither thy filth hath been carried away, nor thy dross melted out of thee by them, still thou retainest both. Therefore is

indignation kindled against thee, and thou shalt be deprived of the dews of heaven, the rain that should cool thy thirsty land shall

be withholden, that rain that should make the ground fruitful shall not descend.

Ver. 25.

A conspiracy; a contrivance, or framing among themselves a design, to speak all alike flattering, smooth words, and give out promises of peace and safety, when there was no peace; they would have the Jews believe in little time the vessels of the Lord's house, and the Lord's people in Babylon, should be brought back, as **#Jer 28:1-4:** and whereas Jeremiah faithfully told them that it would be no such thing, but that the rest of the vessels, and Zedekiah, and the people should be carried away into Babylon, they conspire against him, and such as he was, **#Jer 20:2 26:8 29:25,26,** and persecute them with one consent and mind.

Of her prophets; hers, not God's prophets, the false prophets, such as Hananiah, **#Jer 28:1,2.**

In the midst thereof; of the land, but principally in Jerusalem, the metropolis, and residence of the court, where were such as loved to be flattered, and of whom flatterers might make gain.

Like a roaring lion, whom hunger enrageth, and maketh roar in most dreadful manner, as some observe of them, when they hunt their prey, and when they have seized and are tearing it; so did these false prophets with cruelty and fierceness pursue the true prophets, and such as believed their word, feared the judgments, and mourned for the sins of a self-ruining people.

They have devoured souls; have eat up, impoverished, and sucked dry, men that relieved and maintained them, the guise of all false prophets; or they have taken, in their plotting, and swallowed down whole the persons that disbelieved and opposed their lies.

Taken the treasure; they did not without reward tell their lies, nor would prophesy without a reward out of the treasures of those that advised with them; so they drained the people of their riches.

And precious things; either it is a further explication of what he had said, or possibly it may tell us, that where money was not to be had, these false prophets would demand something of value;

and, if it were money's worth, they were then for bartering the prophecies: so they gulled these sots.

Made her many widows; one while by raising persecutions, and cutting off husbands from their wives; another while, and which most agrees with the place, persuading, encouraging, and bewitching Zedekiah, and the princes, and people to hold out the war, and run all hazards and extremities of that siege, which filled Jerusalem with dead husbands and forlorn widows.

Ver. 26.

Her priests; God owns them not as his, they were priests that suited such a people.

Priests; men by office bound to reverence the law, to study it, and to preserve it from men's corruptions.

Violated my law; wrested it to oppression and impiety, and to maintain errors, and made it speak what they would, not what it did.

Profaned; lightly esteemed, as if they had been but common things, and accordingly use them.

My holy things; sacrifices and oblations, which were consecrated to holy uses, should be offered with holy hearts and hands, and be eaten by holy persons in due time and place. All this neglected with profane spirits.

They have put no difference between the holy and profane: this and the following clause may be an exegesis, explication of the former, or else thus; Neither have they in their own practice differenced holy, and profane, nor in their teaching acquainted the people with the difference, nor in the exercise of their authority separated the profane from the holy, either persons or things, but with promiscuous intermixtures of every thing, and all persons have been alike to them, whether holy or profane, i.e. of common and ordinary use.

Neither have they showed difference; have not made the people know, so the word.

Between the unclean and the clean; things and persons, what things might be touched or eaten, or what might not, what persons

might not be approached to and conversed with, and what might; all which was the duty of the priests, the neglect whereof spread the uncleanness of the Jews over the whole land.

Hid their eyes; despised, and would not see the holiness of the sabbaths, nor would look on such as observed them aright to encourage them, or on those that profaned them to reprove them; so they did not see what they would not see.

From my sabbaths; though they are expressly commanded to be kept holy, and with great care and exactness, **#Isa 58:13 Jer 17:21,22;** though the portion of time I consecrated to my service, they sacrilegiously direct to other uses, and grudge it me, nay, rob me of it.

I am profaned; contemned, dishonoured, disobeyed, and all my laws represented as trivial and light things.

Ver. 27.

Her princes, as before, **#Eze 22:25,26.** Princes; rulers of all sorts, who should have crushed oppressors and defended the oppressed. Wolves; creatures greedy, bloody, and crafty, resembling dogs that men make use of to defend their folds; so the authority which God had given to defend is by these hypocrites perverted to satisfy the bloody and greedy appetite of tyrannical governors among the Jews: possibly the prophet may tax the degeneracy and baseness of these rulers hereby. Shed blood; innocent blood; a crying sin in princes, who have God's power committed to them to preserve the innocent.

Destroy souls; undo and ruin families, cutting off the fathers, and impoverishing the widow and fatherless.

Get dishonest gain; confiscating estates not forfeited.

Ver. 28.

Prophets; false prophets.

Have daubed them; flattered their oppressing bloody princes in their ways of sin and violence.

With untempered mortar; with promises and encouragements that, like ill tempered mortar, will deceive them, though all seems for the present smooth and safe. Divining lies; pretending they had

by vision from God all the good they promised, whereas it was all a notorious lie and falsehood. God never spake to those prophets, and what by his own prophets he spake was of quite another tenure, it was evil, not good.

Ver. 29.

The people of the land, the common people, have used oppression; greatly, continuedly, and cruelly oppressed one another, wronged each other by frauds and violence.

Exercised robbery; on every occasion turned downright thieves and robbers.

Have vexed, by these oppressions, the poor and needy: see #Eze 18:7.

Wrongfully; without any colour of justice, reason, or so much as hearing him, as the phrase seems to import.

Ver. 30.

I sought, very earnestly and diligently; spoken of God after the manner of man.

A man; any one.

Amongst them; among princes, prophets, priests, or people.

That should make up the hedge; to repair the breach, and prevent further mischief.

Stand in the gap; that might interpose between a sinful, suffering people and their offended God, and entreat for mercy, that the land might not be destroyed.

But I found none; all were corrupted, not one but obstinately went on to sin and provoke me.

Ver. 31.

Therefore, thus provoked by all,

have I poured out mine indignation, as a flood to sweep them away. I have consumed them; kindled a fire against them, that will destroy them.

Their own way, sinful abominable ways,

have I recompensed upon their heads; brought these as a net on them, when as wild beasts taken in the pit to be destroyed.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 23

The whoredoms of Aholah and Ahollbah, **#Eze 23:1-21**. Aholibah shall be punished by her own lovers, **#Eze 23:22-35**. Their adulteries reprov'd, **#Eze 23:36-44**, and their judgments declared, **#Eze 23:45-49**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Two women; Judah and Israel, the two kingdoms.

Daughters of one mother; sprung from Sarah; or, as some, daughters of the synagogue. They rose from one family; these two were daughters, that is parts, and the mother is the whole posterity of the twelve tribes.

Ver. 3.

They committed whoredoms in Egypt; when they came down into Egypt, and sojourn'd there: possibly they might commit bodily whoredoms, but spiritual whoredoms, i.e. idolatry, they did certainly commit, as appears **#Jos 24:14 Eze 20:7,8**, which see; in a low condition, by converse with the idolatrous Egyptians they fell in with their idolatry.

In their youth; early; though it is no where said when they began, yet by this it appears that it was not long after their coming down into Egypt.

There were their breasts pressed: this and what follows is an allusion, which illustrates what was before spoken; while they were constant to God and his worship, they were as beautiful, chaste, and lovely virgins; when seduced to idolatry, they became as loathsome harlots or strumpets.

Ver. 4.

That we might know them, they are described.

Aholah; which, rendered in English, is, His own tabernacle; for Israel, falling off from the house of David, also fell off from the tabernacle or temple of God, so that all the temple and worship they had amongst them was of their own making.

The elder; greater for number of tribes, being ten of twelve; and greater for power, wealth, and multitudes of people.

Aholibah; this, rendered in English, is, My tabernacle in her: the two tribes had the temple and worship of God with them; God's own tent was pitched there, and his solemn services.

They were mine, by solemn marriage covenant, #Eze 16:18.

They bare sons and daughters; were fruitful, and brought forth children to me, saith God; they increased in numbers of people, and among these, some there were that were children of God by faith, love, and obedience.

Samaria; the chief city of the apostate ten tribes.

Jerusalem; the chief city of the two tribes.

Ver. 5.

Aholah, the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes,

played the harlot; united in confederacy in civil concerns, and in idolatry as to religious concerns, with the Assyrians.

When she was mine; when under my government and protection, or in my presence, or before I had abdicated and cast her off.

Doted; were madly enamoured with the Assyrian idols, temples, and manner of worship.

Her lovers; whom she loved, not that I find they so much loved her.

The Assyrians; so often mentioned, nothing needs be said of them.

Her neighbours; so they were now by their seizing of Syria, and possessing it as their own #2Ki 15:19.

Ver. 6.

Clothed with blue; richly appalled, and, as the humour of that nation, in rich and beautiful blue, very magnificent to the eye.

Captains; daring, valiant men, and fit for wars, who might defend the Jews in time of danger.

Rulers; worthy of authority, and fit to govern in times of peace.

Desirable young men; young and vigorous, full of beauty and strength to commend them to the desire and choice.

Horsemen riding upon horses; skilful in riding, and well furnished with choice horses, on which these deluded apostatizing Israelites relied for help, as appears, **#Ho 14:3**.

Ver. 7.

Thus, by the eye and familiar converse, she fell to idolatry. Committed her whoredoms: see **#Eze 23:3**.

With all them; she embraced the friendship and religion of all of them, and relied on the Assyrian's idols for deliverance and peace.

And with all, i.e. other nations with whom she had commerce and made leagues,

on whom she doted; like an adulterous wife, she was mad in her love to them, to their persons, customs, idols, and religion, with all which she polluted herself.

Ver. 8.

Neither left she her whoredoms brought from Egypt; though she took in so many gods of the Assyrians, yet she did not renounce or cast off the gods of Egypt, but kept them too. It is plain the Israelites learnt idolatry in Egypt, carried it with them out of Egypt, and retained it to the last.

In her youth, &c. see **#Eze 23:3**.

Ver. 9.

Wherefore, for this boundless idolatry and lewdness

I have delivered her; long ago I have delivered the ten tribes: first, Pul put them under tribute, **#2Ki 15:19,20**, about two hundred years before our prophet's time; then Tiglath-pileser, **#2Ki 15:29**; and finally into Shalmaneser's hand, who destroyed the kingdom, **#2Ki 17:6**.

Into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted; punished them for their sins by those who were fellow sinners with her.

Ver. 10.

These used her as lewd women deserve, stripped her naked, and exposed her to shame, as **#Eze 23:26**. God her Husband had

clothed her, and covered her nakedness, but she lightly esteemed her God, doted on idols, and idolaters strip her.

They took her sons and her daughters; made them captives, and carried them away as slaves, to serve the lusts of barbarous conquerors; so both sexes were used.

Slew her with the sword: as a person slain with the sword ceaseth to be, so this kingdom of Israel under Hoshea was by the sword of Shalmaneser utterly destroyed.

She became famous; her lewdness made her infamous, and God's judgments for it made her more known in the world.

For they, the Assyrians, a proud, bitter, and violent enemy,

had executed judgment upon her; had executed their own malicious revenges, but God's just displeasure, upon her.

Ver. 11.

Aholibah; Judah, yet two tribes.

Saw this; both the sins and punishments of the kingdom of Israel, which should have been her admonition.

She was more corrupt, ran more violently into both friendship, confederacies, and idolatries with the Assyrians,

than her sister, Samaria; Jerusalem had more idols in it, and more abominable idolatry, than any we read of in Samaria that, at present, I can remember.

Ver. 12.

This verse is the same with **#Eze 23:6**, which see; only the clothing of blue there is here clothing of beauty; i.e. most beautiful.

Ver. 13.

Then; when she took not warning, neither feared.

She was defiled; her heart was already on her idols. Both Samaria and Jerusalem took one way; chose the same idols and idolatry.

Ver. 14.

Increased her whoredoms; added to the number of her idolatries.

When she saw men portrayed upon the wall: wherever it was the Jews saw, there it was they doted on their persons and habits: it is probable enough they might see them in the idol temples, or in the house of the king of Judah, or of the great men, who promoted the friendships and leagues with these nations.

The images; the counterfeits of strangers, and such as were far off, as the Chaldeans were.

With vermilion; which, as it is a very glossy and shining colour, so, duly mixed with ceruse, doth lively express the colour of man's flesh.

Ver. 15.

With girdles upon their loins; with soldiers' belts about their loins, which includes the rest of the garb, dress, or habit of soldiers.

Exceeding in dyed attire; both rich, comely, large, and of divers colours, and those of the choicest that art or money could prepare.

Princes to look to; of princely aspect and majesty.

After the manner, agreeable to the garments, of the rich and proud Babylonians.

Of Chaldea; which probably was the most fruitful part of that kingdom, and most pleasant, and where the pride and luxury of the inhabitants exceeded others.

Ver. 16.

Saw them; the portraits of them.

She doted upon them; like an unsatiable and most impudent adulteress, she fell into most inordinate affection for their persons on sight of their pictures.

Sent messengers unto them; courted the love of those strangers, and wooed their embraces, sent to make alliances with them, prostituted herself to them.

Into Chaldea: though it was a long journey, troublesome and costly, all this hinders not this extravagant, lewd woman, she sends to these remote parts, and forgets her God.

Ver. 17.

The Babylonians came: the prophet prosecuteth the allegory; the adulteress sent, and invited, and here the Chaldeans comply with it, they came, ambassadors no doubt first to make a confederacy, and then free intercourse in trade, and religion too.

The bed of love; so the impudently lascivious call the polluted, forbidden bed, as the harlot, #Pr 7:18. It is like with this commerce and confederacy the lustful Babylonians did spread that disease, the Jewish nation were too much inclined to corporal adulteries and fornications; but metaphorically it is a delightful communicating with them in their idolatry in their idol temples and feasts.

Defiled her; made her unclean and loathsome.

Whoredom; spiritual and corporal.

Polluted; greatly defiled, as the doubling the expression imports. Her mind was alienated from them; like an arrant adulteress, wearied, but not satisfied with her adulterers, she changeth mind and friendships, and seeks new ones. So did this people, weary of the Chaldeans, seek new confederates.

Ver. 18.

So, by this unsatiableness and change of lovers,

she discovered her whoredoms; made it appear to all, far and near, that she was a most notorious and infamous strumpet.

Her nakedness; her weakness, and her shame.

Then, when I saw the lewdness, impudence, and boundlessness of her adulteries,

my mind was alienated; turned from her with abhorrency, I could no longer endure it.

From her; Jerusalem, the land of Judea, the kingdom of the two tribes.

As from her sister; Samaria, the ten tribes; and I resolved to destroy them both alike by their lovers.

Ver. 19.

Yet, Heb. *And.*

Multiplied; added more and greater to her former sins of idolatry and whoredoms, and persisted in them.

In calling to remembrance: this may refer either to the Jewish nation remembering their idolatries in Egypt, their alliances with and reliance upon it in days past, which she now resolves to act over again; or it may refer to God, who, by these continued courses of Judah's lewdness is provoked to remember and punish old perfidious and idolatrous practices.

The days of her youth: see #Eze 23:3.

Ver. 20.

Doted: see #Eze 23:5.

Upon their paramours; Egyptians, and the nations that were confederate with the Egyptians; looking on them as able to defend by their power, enrich by their trade, and make prosperous by their friendship.

Whose flesh, &c.: in these terms the prophet expresseth the vehement desire of the Jews to Egyptian idolatry, compared to whoredom, and may, for aught I know, tax the lustful impudence of some of the Jewish women in their corporal uncleannesses with the Egyptians, who were it seems (by report of authors) naturally disposed for that vice, and fittest for unsatiated, lustful women: see #Eze 16:26.

Ver. 21.

Calledst to remembrance: see #Eze 23:19.

The lewdness of thy youth: #Eze 23:3.

The paps of thy youth; the beauty and loveliness of them, when God had formed them, allured the Egyptians: this may be understood both politically, of the growing state of the Jewish commonwealth, or literally, of the beauty of their young women.

Ver. 22.

Thy lovers; thy confederates.

From whom thy mind is alienated; whom thou hast first loathed and forsaken, and thereby enraged them against thee.

Bring them against thee; be not only an exciter to stir them up against thee, but I will be a guide and conductor of them.

On every side; so no way left for thy escape.

Ver. 23.

The Babylonians and Chaldeans; these are known.

Pekod, &c.: some reckon these the titles of some of the great commanders in this army, which come against Jerusalem, but they are names of distinct countries or provinces under the Babylonish government; and so Pekod is the province between Tigris and Lycus rivers, in this was old Nineveh, and was the principal province of the kingdom; though some others think Pekod was Bactriana, now called Usbeck, and Corassan, fierce, thievish, and barbarous of old.

Shoa; either Sia in Armenia, or the Sohai, among which were the Adiabeni; and this contained the middle part of the kingdom of Babylon, and was Assyria Mediana.

Koa bordered on Media; the inhabitants were called Kohai, and dwelt about Arbel, or Arbelis, or Arbela, and comprehended Ganyamela, where a fortress Ganga looks like this Koa, being easily changed from Koa to Ganga by change of the original letters *q* into "G," and *e* into "G"; a people too like enough to be cruel and barbarous by their very situation.

And all; all these sons or subjects of the Assyrian monarchy, or confederates.

Desirable young men, &c.: most of these are already explained **#Eze 23:6**, where they were objects of love, now they are objects of terror; so God turns the occasions of men's sins into occasions of greater terror and punishment.

Renowned, Heb. *called*, or invited, first by the Jews to sin with them, **#Eze 23:16**, now called of God to punish their fellow sinners.

Ver. 24.

They, mentioned before, **#Eze 23:23**,

shall come against thee, or upon thee, surprise thee with a speedy march, for they were swift in their course.

With chariots; the Hebrew is of larger sense, and more properly speaks all kind of arms for the war, a thorough furniture; so the Chaldee paraphrase, with instruments of war, or arms.

Wagons, Heb. *chariots*, and is oftener so rendered; for expedition, for ease of their commanders on their march, and for strength against the enemy in the battle.

Wheels; whether distinct from all other, or whether prepared lest in their march the carriage wheels should break, and they be at a stand, therefore beforehand store of these were provided.

An assembly; a mighty confluence of people, and a mixture, where the worst and cruellest are the most numerous.

Which shall set against thee buckler, and shield, and helmet; yet for their own defence well armed, and with armature fitted to defeat the arrows and offensive weapons of their enemy, and to maintain a siege, such as they should weary Jerusalem with.

I will set judgment before them; give them a power by their victory, and in right of conquest over their rebels, as well as mine; and I will give them a spirit of judgment to discern the greatness of this people's sins.

They shall judge thee; plead with thee, convince, condemn, and execute sentence upon thee.

According to their judgments; to their will, power, wrath, and custom against rebels, for these are their rules of judgment; all which appeared when the chief of all the people were condemned to slavery, the wise counsellors and valiant commanders sentenced to die, Zedekiah's children slain, his own eyes put out, and city and temple to be burnt.

Ver. 25.

I will set my jealousy against thee; as a jealous provoked husband, I will be as much against thee as they are, their fury shall avenge my quarrel.

They shall deal furiously with thee; their disposition naturally is to furious wrath, my jealousy shall enkindle it more.

They shall take away thy nose and thine ears; as thou hast prostituted thy beauty like a harlot, so they shall use thee as such,

and mar thy beauty, and brand thee for ever, as thou deservest, and that thou mayst be as loathsome in thy deformity as ever thou wast thought lovely in thy beauty. This punishment of adulteresses is known to have been used, and is yet in use.

Thy remnant shall fall by the sword; or else, at last thy latter end shall be to fall by the sword, those that do not live under such reproach shall die by the sword of the enemy.

They shall take thy sons and thy daughters for captives and slaves for work, and somewhat a thousand times worse.

Thy residue; either the people who did hide themselves in vaults and cellars, and came not out; or else what remains of that the Chaldeans cannot carry away; all this shall be devoured by fire, as when the city was burnt.

Ver. 26.

Strip thee out of thy clothes; both as lewd, disgraced harlots and as captives are used: see **#Eze 16:39**.

Thy fair jewels; all thy rich, beautiful ornaments: see **#Eze 16:17**. They shall be prey and plunder to the enemy.

Ver. 27.

By these destroying judgments, which shall make thee cease to be a people, I will put an end to the lewdness thou wouldst never have put end to, thou shalt never have opportunity, if thou hadst heart, to do the like.

Thy whoredom, idolatries,

brought from the land of Egypt, when thou camest out under my hand.

Thou shalt not lift up thine eyes with desire and affection toward them, as once, when thou dotedst on them;

nor remember Egypt any more, with love, trust, imitation, and desire of commerce with her, but all thy remembrance of Egypt shall be with deep shame and loathing.

Ver. 28.

Deliver thee, give thee up,

into the hand, to the power and will,

of them whom thou hatest: those shall be the masters, and domineer over thee, whom of all men thou didst most desire might not. It is doubled for certainty of the thing, and to make deeper impression; they shall certainly lord it over thee, whom of all men thou dost most loathe.

Ver. 29.

Deal with thee, use thee, and ever demean themselves toward thee,

hatefully; in hatred; whatever drudgery hardship, base and vile employment, their spite and hatred can invent, they shall cast on thee.

Take away all thine labour; spoil thee of all thou hadst got in Judea, as they did when they conquered and plundered; and deprive thee of all the right and comfortable use of all thy labour, which they will exact of thee in captivity, and make thee know a slave hath no right to any thing.

Naked; both literally thou shalt not have clothes to cover thy nakedness; and figuratively, thou shalt be left in a most disgraced state, and the shame of all thy sins shall cover thee: all this, as this prophet usually doth, is doubled to affect the more.

Ver. 30.

This verse gives the same reason which hath been often given, why the Lord proceeds in this severity, because, as an obstinate, lewd, untractable adulteress abuseth the best husband, till none can forbear, so had the Jews dealt with God, and God will deal with them.

Ver. 31.

Thou, O Jerusalem and Judah,

hast walked; hast run into the same sinful enormities.

Thy sister; Samaria and the ten tribes, both great idolatresses.

Her cup of judgments and sorrow, expressed frequently by a cup, **#Ps 75:8 Jer 25:15:** I will punish thee with punishments like hers, since thou hast made thyself in sins like her.

Ver. 32.

Thou shalt drink; thou shalt not put it by, and shift it off.

Deep; towards the dregs, where the bitterest poison of it lieth.

And large; in great quantity; thy punishment shall be most grievous who must drink so deep of this cup of astonishment.

Thou shalt be laughed to scorn; when sick as heart can hold, and needest pity and help to relieve, instead hereof thou shalt be derided and abused: these will be cruel mockings.

It, the cup,

containeth much; is large, and contains what will last many years, till the seventy years be expired; and of this cup thou shalt still drink, and be derided.

Ver. 33.

Thy afflictions shall be as great as thou canst hold, as a vessel filled with liquor. Thou shalt stagger with sorrows, that shall intoxicate and astonish. In the verse each part explains the other, sorrow explains drunkenness, astonishment explains sorrow, desolation explains astonishment, and the cup of Samaria, elsewhere called the line of Samaria, explains all: Samaria was made a heap, **#Mic 1:6**; so shall Jerusalem be.

Ver. 34.

Thou shalt even drink it; nothing shall divert the punishment.

And suck it out; the dregs shalt thou drink, and multiply thine own sorrows.

Break the sherds; either out of indignation, or to suck out what was imbibed.

Pluck off thine own breasts; which tempted others, and undid thyself, for which cause thou now revengest thyself upon thyself.

Ver. 35.

Thou hast forgotten me, #Eze 22:12, which is here explained by what follows; it was a wilful forgetting of God, and voluntary despising his law, ordinances, worship, favour, and presence; so God is cast behind a sinner's back.

Bear thou the guilt, I will impute it; the punishment, I will not pardon it; and the shame, for I will pour out contempt upon thee: bear both sorrow and reproach for thy sins.

Ver. 36.

Wilt thou judge, excuse or plead for such adultresses. so #Eze 22:2.

Declare unto them plainly, fully tell them, what they have been, and what they must expect for all their abominations.

Ver. 37.

They have committed adultery: this seems to refer to corporal uncleannesses.

Blood is in their hands; innocent blood of the murdered prophets and just men.

Committed adultery; spiritual adultery, i.e. idolatry.

Caused their sons to pass through the fire; most unheard of cruelty, and unnatural murders, under pretext of religion! thus #Eze 16:20.

To devour them; they destroyed, took away the life of their sons in a barbarous manner.

Ver. 38.

This; which is declared in the following words, it was some great injury or affront done to God.

Defiled my sanctuary; my holy things, house, altar, sacrifices, and oblations; one part of the temple put for all parts of the holy things of God.

In the same day; when they had newly polluted themselves with most horrid crimes, idolatry and murder, they thrust into the temple; whereas by the law, if they had been but unclean by touch of a dead body, they must have been cleansed by sacrifices before they ought to come into company with the Jews.

Profaned my sabbaths, by offering sacrifices to idols, and doing that on those days which God, nature, and all civil nations abhor, only the devil is pleased with, who is a murderer from the beginning, and promotes such bloody cruelties.

Ver. 39.

Slain their children: see #Eze 16:20.

To profane it; using my holy temple as if it were a common and unclean place.

Thus have they done in the midst of my house; nay, these things have been done in my house, they have offered to their idols in the house where my name alone should be called upon.

Ver. 40.

Sent for men: see #Eze 23:16.

From far; from Chaldea.

A messenger was sent; an embassy from the king of Judah, with advice of his princes, no doubt.

They came: see #Eze 23:17.

Wash thyself; after the manner of harlots, gottest all fine, clean, and delicate against thy paramours came; so idol temples built, altars beautified, sacrifices prepared, all to commend thyself to their alliance and help.

Paintedst thy eyes; like a decayed harlot, madest up thy defects with paint.

Deckedst thyself with ornaments; putttest on the rich clothing I gave thee, and with thy Husband's bounty allured adulterers to thy bed; so #Eze 16:13,14: thus was God abused and provoked.

Ver. 41.

Safest; it is a table gesture, as appears, she was prepared to feast them.

Upon a stately bed; a magnificent, rich bed, on which women sat to feast, when men leant on their sides, which would not have been a comely posture to a woman.

Table prepared; table furnished with choicest provision, such as made for feasts, when solemn sacrifices were offered, or when vows were paid, as the harlot, #Pr 7:14,15.

Set mine incense: this assures us that idolatrous worship was acted by her in compliance with the Chaldeans, offered to their idols, and then feasted the idolaters, with what God had given her, when they confirmed their leagues, and swore by false gods.

Ver. 42.

A voice of a multitude; a shout for joy, that there was a treaty of peace between the Jews and the Chaldeans, or songs of gladness for the peace made, and confirmed, not in God's name, but in the name of the idols.

Being at ease; free now from the fears of any wars to disquiet them.

Was with her; about the altar first, where the peace was sworn; about her bed next, where she feasted her new allies, that were great princes and nobles.

And with the men; and to these worthy the name of men, or beside these great and famous ones. *Et avec ces hommes*, as the French version.

Were brought Sabeans; messengers were sent to, or received, or entertained and caressed, from the roaring Sabeans, who lived on robberies, and spoiling the merchants; these were brought to Jerusalem from the wilderness, deserts of Arabia, a rude, barbarous, and idolatrous scum of men, described by their ill properties in geographers: of these were they that destroyed Job's servants: in the verse described by their ornaments, bracelets about necks and arms, and crowns on their heads, which some think they bestowed upon this harlot.

Ver. 43.

Then said I; after the manner of man God seems to stand musing, or saying to himself, or it may be supposed that God speaks to the prophet, asking him.

Unto her; or rather, of her, concerning her.

Old in adulteries, such usually are out of request with adulterers; and now Samaria and Jerusalem had been long spiritual adulteresses, and one would think her lovers would be weary of her, if she were not weary of them.

Ver. 44.

This resolves the doubt of the former verse. In this metaphor the prophet expresseth the confederacy of the Jews, against God's express command, with the nations round about them. The Jews enter league with these robbers, and admit their idols, and so

commit whoredom with them; and these Sabeans probably admit some of the Jews' idols too, and so commit whoredom with her, expressed in the last words of the 43rd verse.

Ver. 45.

Righteous men; men that kept the law of their God, for some such there were about Aholibah herself; or prophets, such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and some few more: or else the Babylonians, who in the present controversy between Jerusalem and its king on the one part, and Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians on the other part, were comparatively the righteous men.

After the manner of adulteresses; which was, to be put to death by stoning, #Le 20:10; and murder was punished with death.

Ver. 46.

A company; the Babylonian army.

Upon them; against the Jews, the children of this Aholibah.

Give them; the inhabitants of Judea, the citizens of Jerusalem, with princes and royal family.

To be removed; to be carried away captive into the land of Chaldea.

And spoiled, by the rapine of the soldiers in their own land, and by the cruelty of their masters to whom they shall be slaves in a strange land: this is the plain sense of the verse, though possibly there may be an allusion to the solemn proceedings of a court of judicature couched in the proper import of many of the Hebrew words.

Ver. 47.

The company, Heb. *congregation*, the Babylonian army.

Stone them; the punishment of an adulteress; and this was in a manner done when the engines, which cast mighty stones into the besieged city, dashed out the brains of some, and when chimneys, or walls, or towers, beat down by those stones cast out of the engines, fell on others, and buried them alive.

Despatch them with their swords: some of them who escaped the stones fell under the sword of the Babylonian soldier.

Slay their sons; either in fight, or when they break into the city, or light on them wandering on mountains, or hiding in dens and caves.

And their daughters; either in sacking the city, when they regard no sex, or because they choose to die rather than yield to the lust of those vile ones.

Burn up their houses; as the cities, and houses abroad in the country; so the Babylonish army destroyed what they could not carry away with them, as **#Eze 23:25**.

Ver. 48.

Cause lewdness to cease: see **#Eze 23:27**. Hereafter in this land such-like abominations shall never be committed more, as indeed we do not read of any such after their return out of this captivity.

That all women, countries, kingdoms, and cities, may be warned by your examples of sorrows and destruction, to fear God, do justly, love mercy, and hate violence.

Ver. 49.

They; the Babylonians, and their confederates.

Shall recompense; as God's ministers of just vengeance, shall judge you worthy, and execute on you what you are worthy of, all that may make you desolate, a derision, and scorn.

Shall bear the sins of your idols; the guilt of the sins you committed in worshipping of and relying upon idols; and you shall bar the punishment of idolaters, which by the law of God is death without mercy, **#De 13:6-10**.

Ye shall know that I am the Lord God; by what you suffer you shall know that I am justly displeased with your sins, am true to my threats, and have made good my word: **#De 8:19**,

If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, &c.,

ye shall surely perish.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 24

By the parable of a boiling pot is showed the destruction of Jerusalem, the bloody city, **#Eze 24:1-14**. Ezekiel is forbidden to mourn for the death of his wife, **#Eze 24:15-18**, to denote that this calamity of the Jews shall be beyond all expressions of sorrow, **#Eze 24:19-24**. In that day of affliction the prophet's mouth shall be opened to their conviction, **#Eze 24:25-27**.

Ver. 1.

In the ninth year of the captivity of Jeconiah, and those that were carried away with him; it falls in also with the year of Zedekiah's reign, though the prophet, and the captives now in Babylon, reckon not by this, but by the former.

The tenth month; which answers to part of December and January.

The tenth day; about our 29th of December, when the winter was well over with them.

Came unto me; the prophet was now in Babylon many leagues from Jerusalem.

Ver. 2.

Write; set it down, and in such manner, with such witness, that it may be proved. *The name of the day*, most punctually, set it down.

The king of Babylon; Nebuchadnezzar, who in person it is like was there at first to encourage, direct, and settle the siege, though he withdrew from it for his delights when he perceived it would be a long siege, as on **#Eze 11:11**, the issue whereof he expected at Antioch on the banks of Orontes.

Set himself against; sat down to besiege.

Ver. 3.

Utter a parable; in somewhat a dark, yet apt similitude, or in an allegory, declare what they should know and consider.

Rebellious house: see **#Eze 2:3,6**. Set on a pot; set upon the fire a pot, or caldron.

Set it on; do it quickly, be sure to do it: this *pot* is Jerusalem.

Pour water into it; fill it with water; for as the pot full of water on the fire till the water be thoroughly heated, so shall Jerusalem be filled with the judgments of God.

Ver. 4.

The pieces; which are to put into this pot.

Every good piece, i.e. all the chief of the inhabitants of the land, the wealthiest, who in the time of this invasion will flee from their country-houses to live in safety in Jerusalem. The most warlike, who will betake themselves to Jerusalem for its defence.

The thigh, and the shoulder; as these are the principal parts for support, motion, defence, and strength; so those citizens, soldiers, rulers, that are the strength, defence, and glory of this people, are here signified by those parts.

Fill it; fill the pot, Jerusalem, let no place be empty.

With the choice bones; with those pieces that are biggest, fattest, fullest of marrow, and which are divided according to the bones; these are the principal members of this Jewish state, king, princes, priests, magistrates, and wealthy citizens.

Ver. 5.

Take the choice; pick out the very best in the flock, that is, the greatest, richest, most powerful for authority and interest in the nation and city.

Burn; or, heap together in order to burn, to make a fire with.

The bones; not of the pieces to be boiled, but the bones of the many innocents murdered in Jerusalem and in the land; for their blood crieth for vengeance, and their bones, scattered on the face of the earth, will both make and maintain this fire.

Make it boil well; let the fire be so great, and the pot so long over, till all within it be boiled thoroughly, till all the strength and marrow be wasted, and the very flesh drop to pieces; so shall this people be wasted by this judgment. Seethe the bones: see **#Eze 24:4**: this is doubled to assure us, however the meaner sort did, the more considerable part of the Jews should not escape. In this allegory there may lie couched an exact correspondence between the sins and punishments of this people; their sin was the slaying

the best, or by oppressing them broke their bones, boiled out the marrow, sucked them dry; and now God will retaliate to these men.

Ver. 6.

All this allegory contains woeful and heavy tidings, misery and desolation to them that are represented by it.

The bloody city; see #Eze 22:2,3; Jerusalem, which is this pot.

Whose scum is therein; filthiness, her abominations, all her lewdness, are still within. her; they have not been punished, restrained, or cast out by the execution of just and good laws; but the citizens have with obstinacy, impenitence, and with impudence continued in them.

Whose scum is not gone out of it; the same thing repeated for confirming what was said.

Bring it out piece by piece; let them know it shall be a lingering destruction to them, yet a total, one piece after another, till all be consumed.

Let no lot fall upon it; lots are for saving some, and determining who they shall be; but here shall no such discrimination be made, no sparing any and slaying others by lot, who do not die shall go into captivity.

Ver. 7.

Her blood, innocent blood which she hath shed,

is in the midst of her; openly and publicly, without fear, or shame, or reluctance.

Set it upon the top of a rock, where it might be long seen, cared not to hide her murders, as the next words clear it.

Poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust: with cruelty and inhumanity they did murder, for when the law directed that the blood of beast or fowl killed should be poured on the earth, and covered with dust, #Le 17:13, these butchers of innocent ones leave their blood uncovered, whether in a boasting manner, or for terror, I will not say, but this aggravates the sin.

Ver. 8.

This provoked the anger of the Lord, and raised his fury against them.

To come up, into the face of God, (after the manner of man,) as #Eze 38:18.

To take vengeance; to God it appertains to take vengeance, to punish such sinners according to the nature of their sin.

I have set her blood upon the top of a rock; God will openly punish, and in such manner as shall not be soon forgotten; they set it on a rock when they shed it with cruelty, God will set it on a rock when he punisheth it with severity.

That it should not be covered; that it be not forgotten, or go unpunished; nor yet punished in a corner; all this inquisition and execution shall be public in the sight of many nations.

Ver. 9.

Woe to the bloody city! see #Eze 24:6.

I will even make the pile for fire great; God's hand shall be seen inflicting all those sore afflictions on them. Judgments are a fire, the fuel whereof is to be great; for it is a fire to consume the wicked, and God will make it sufficiently great to do this. I will bring the mighty army of the Chaldeans, which, as a pile of wood set on fire, shall burn them up.

Ver. 10.

This is God's word, either what he will do pursuant of the 8th verse; or his word to the prophet, to typify to the people what should be done, or to the Chaldean army, to hasten what they were to do in destroying the city. Heap on wood; make full preparations.

Kindle the fire; begin the execution of judgment.

Compare the flesh: it is a fire, not gently to dress or prepare meat, but to destroy, and burn up.

Spice it well; either to take away the noisome smell, or to express the pleasing savour of this justice to God, and men whom he appointed to this work.

Let the bones be burned: in such fires the bones hold out longest, but this fire shall at last consume these also, that the destruction may be universal the greatest, strongest, and firmest of these Jews shall perish in this fiery indignation.

Ver. 11.

Set it, the hieroglyphic pot, *empty*; the water, flesh, bones, all consumed, i.e. the citizens all wasted with sword, famine, or pestilence, the city left as an empty, overboiled pot.

Upon the coals thereof; signifying the burning of the city itself, after the emptying of its inhabitants.

That the brass of it; perhaps he alludes to the impudence of their sins, in that the city is likened to a pot of brass.

May be hot; God's judgments would increase upon them, as heat doth in a pot set on coals.

And may burn; which is the highest degree; so should these miseries increase.

That the filthiness, type of the sinfulness, the unreformed sinfulness of the city, may be molten in it; that their wickedness may be taken away with their persons and city: they should have been purged by gentler meltings which God used; since they were not, nor would be purified, now they shall be melted to the utter destruction of them.

The scum: see #Eze 24:6.

Ver. 12.

She; the nation of the Jews, and the city Jerusalem.

Hath wearied; either her God, (so the French translation,) by her repeated sins, and pertinacy in them, as elsewhere, #Isa 1:14 7:13 43:24; or wearied others, by injuries done against them; or, as we read it, herself, spent much time and taken great pains, laid out much treasure in making alliances for her security.

With lies: her allies, their promises, their forces, and their idols, on which these unhappy Jews relied, all prove a lie to the house of Judah.

Her great scum went not forth; she repented not, nor did she reform her ways.

Her scum, her unrepented sins, shall be in the fire, shall be punished in the fire that burns their city.

Ver. 13.

In thy filthiness, in thy sinning, is lewdness; deliberate resolution grown up to obstinacy and boldness, with impudence that will not be corrected.

I have purged thee; used all sorts of proper means to purge, advice, reproof, chastisements, threats of sorer sufferings, by prophets, by the rod, sometimes gentler, sometimes rougher, #2Ch 36:15 Jer 18:11,12.

Thou wast not purged; wouldst not part from thy sins, and purify thy heart and ways, #Jer 25:3-7.

Thou shalt not be purged; all further use of means shall be forborne; I will preach no more by prophets to call thee to repentance, but to condemn thee for not repenting; God will from henceforth refer them to his sore destroying judgments, which are his fury, and which shall cease when this sinful kingdom, destroyed, can no longer provoke God as they had done formerly.

Till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee: see #Eze 5:13 6:12 16:42 21:17.

Ver. 14.

This verse scarce hath its like I think in the book of God, so fully doth it ratify and confirm all, and prevents all their evasions.

I the Lord have spoken it: this is Ezekiel's saying, Nay, it is the Lord that hath spoken it.

It shall come to pass. But perhaps it may not be. Yea, but it shall; for I will do it, who have spoken it.

I will not go back. But God hath relaxed, as in Nineveh's case. But he will not go back from this word.

Neither will I spare. But he will be merciful in the midst of judgment. Nay, but God will not spare, or mitigate his wrath.

Neither will I repent. Yet, ere all are consumed will he not, as #Am 7:3? No, he will not repent, your burnt flesh and city shall be a spiced sacrifice pleasing to his justice. Finally, as thou deservest, God will use thee. But then we shall be in his hand. Nay,

they, thy inveterate enemies, shall judge thee.

Ver. 15.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 16.

Behold; consider what I tell, and will do.

I take away from thee; by death I take from thee, but it is I the Lord, and I take her to myself, though from thee.

The desire of thine eyes: whether it refer to the beauty of her person or no, it certainly refers to the amiableness of her disposition, and the agreeableness of her to the prophet.

With a stroke; a sudden stroke, whether pestilence or what else is not so much as hinted at; I think it was God's own immediate hand.

Neither shalt thou mourn; make no solemn mourning for her, though it will look only in the sight of thy people.

Nor weep; let no lamenting voice be heard from thee, cry not out in bewailing thy loss.

Neither shall thy tears run down; neither let thy eyes pay any tribute to her, forbear even tears also, at least, let them not run down; if one chance to drop, check the rest.

Ver. 17.

Forbear to cry; restrain and curb thy sorrows, neither sigh nor lament.

Make no mourning for the dead; when thou carriest her out to burial, make no mourning for her.

Bind the tirc of thine head; adorn and trim up thy head, as thou wast used to do; go not bare-headed, as #Le 10:6 21:10, a mourner.

Put on thy shoes upon thy feet: in great mournings the Jews went bare-footed, #2Sa 15:30 Isa 47:2, but do not thou so, put on thy shoes.

Cover not thy lips: it was a custom among them to cover either the upper lip, or mustaches, as the leper did, #Le 13:45, and as #Mic 3:7; and this also is forbidden the prophet.

Eat not the bread of men; either of mourners, or rather of thy neighbours and friends, who were wont to visit and feast their mourning friends, and sent in both choice and abundance of provision to their houses, #Jer 16:7; and this was a custom with Scythians, Grecians, Athenians, and Romans. Eat thou thine own, as if no mourning occasion in thy family.

Ver. 18.

I spake unto the people; told them what God had told me, and which I expected would be.

In the morning; it is likely he had this revelation in the night, or evening before, and he tells them betimes in the morning, what God would do in taking away his wife, and what he must not do when she is dead, and to be buried. The next morning after her death he observed God's command, and without any sign of sorrow or mourning for his great loss.

Ver. 19.

The people said; some of the ordinary sort, the people, not rulers or priests.

Tell us; explain, and declare whether there be not, and what it is that we are to learn by this. These are types, but what do they mean?

Ver. 20.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 21.

Now he is commissioned to declare the meaning of that he did.

Speak unto the house of Israel; to them at Babylon by word of mouth, but to them at Jerusalem by letter, or messenger.

Profane my sanctuary; cast off, and put into the hands of heathens, who will regard it no more than any other common

building, though it is and hath been long my sanctuary; but you, O Jews, first profaned it with your sins, and now, in my just displeasure against you, I will suffer it to be profaned by the Chaldeans.

The excellency of your strength; so it was whilst God's presence was there, and whilst the Jews kept it undefiled; it was their confidence, and they trusted in it, though they were fallen from God, #Jer 7.

The desire of your eyes; as much your desire as my wife was mine, saith the prophet, most dear to you, as she to me, but this shall be burnt.

Your sons and your daughters; the children which survive to you after these grievous calamities, and in whom you hoped for comfort and posterity, shall die by the conqueror's sword too, #Eze 23:47.

Ver. 22.

Ye shall do as I have done, when you are in captivity, where you cannot, may not use your own customs and rites on these or any other occasions.

Ye shall not cover your lips: #Eze 24:17.

Nor eat the bread of men: see #Eze 24:17.

Ver. 23.

See #Eze 24:16,17.

Ye shall pine away; you shall languish with grief and secret sorrow, when you shall not dare to show it openly, lest you irritate your tyrannical masters, who will expect that nothing grieve you that rejoiceth them.

For your iniquities; the punishment of your iniquities, which have made your land, city, temple, and families desolate and miserable.

And mourn one toward another; in secret, Jew with Jew, you shall bewail what you durst not openly.

Ver. 24.

Ezekiel is unto you a sign; in what he doth you may see what you shall do; so **#Eze 4:3 12:6**. And so was Isaiah, **#Isa 8:18**.

When this cometh; when your necessities and enemies shall force you to do as I have done, make you write after this copy.

Ye shall know that I am the Lord; confess the justice, power, wisdom, and truth of God in all threatened and executed against you.

Ver. 25.

Shall it not be? the question is to be resolved affirmatively, it shall be.

In the day; in the day of the taking the city of Jerusalem.

When I take from them; though Nebuchadnezzar was the means or instrument, God did act by him, who did God's work more than his own.

Their strength, &c.; the kingdom dissolved, the king taken, city sacked, the temple burnt, which is by the following characters described, as the only thing they valued; though those particulars may be applied to soils and daughters in the close of the verse: however, it amounts to this, In that day, wherein all their public and private joys and hopes shall be destroyed in the destruction of the kingdom and their children, one that escapeth shall bring the news to the prophet.

Ver. 26.

He; so few escape, that the prophet seems to confine it to one.

That escapeth the common destruction when Jerusalem was sacked.

Shall come unto thee, purposely to declare how God hath made good his threats.

To cause thee to hear it; to give thee a narrative of all he had seen and observed: and this particular prediction, which I doubt not Ezekiel imparted to many who might see it fulfilled, was accomplished in the twelfth year, tenth month, and fifth day of the month, **#Eze 33:21**, with **#Jer 52:6**, after the city was taken (which happened in the eleventh year, fourth month, and ninth day

of Zedekiah's reign, and Jeconiah's captivity) one whole year, five months, and twenty-four days.

Ver. 27.

Shall thy mouth be opened, to speak freely to him that brings the news, and to the Jews afterward.

And thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb; from this prophecy for eighteen months during the siege he doth not prophesy of Israel, but of other nations.

Thou shalt be a sign; until the event, confirmed by eye-witness, shall convince the Jews, thou shalt by sign signify to them what is coming; and when it is come to pass according to thy word, they shall confess thou wert a true prophet sent of me, and they shall see that I am the Lord.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 25

God's vengeance upon the Ammonites, **#Eze 25:1-7**, upon Moab and Seir, **#Eze 25:7-11**, upon Edom, **#Eze 25:12-14**, and upon the Philistines, for their declared malevolence to the Jews, **#Eze 25:15-17**.

Ver. 1.

Though he had order no more yet awhile to prophesy against the Jews, he was to be dumb as to them, yet he hath commission to foretell sad tidings to other nations round about the Jews.

Ver. 2.

Set thy face against: the phrase you have **#Eze 20:46**. It includeth anger, menaces, and intention of mind.

The Ammonites; the posterity of Lot by the younger daughter, near neighbours, but bitter enemies to the Jews. Prophecy against them; leave recorded what heavy things shall befall them in after-days.

Ver. 3.

Say unto the Ammonites; either tell Ammonite merchants or travellers, of which some might likely be in Babylon for trade or to see its state; or else, send by letter to them of their nation who may serve in Nebuchadnezzar's camp, which was in that time a

school of arms, that they may tell others; or else, so plainly declare it that in time they may know this.

Hear the word of the Lord God; it is not the ambiguous or delusive oracle of your idols, but the plain, and true, and unfailing word of the only true God, the God of Israel, as **#Zep 2:9**. Because thou saidst, Aha; when thou shouldst have pitied, and been sorry, thou didst rejoice, and proudly didst insult, magnified thyself, and reproachedst my people, wert glad that so great calamities were come upon them.

Against my sanctuary; both the temple and the worship of God: it is like, in their pride, they boasted their idols' power to preserve their temples, and blasphemed God as unable to preserve his sacred rites and worship.

When it was profaned; when the heathen entered into, and when they burnt it.

Against the land of Israel; they insulted on the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, when afflicted. When it was desolate; wasted by Pul and Tiglath-pileser, and captivated by Shalmaneser.

Against the land of Judah; the two tribes, the kingdom of Judah.

When it went into captivity; first with Jehoiakim, then with Jeconiah, and, which was worse than both these, when it was captivated with Zedekiah, and the city burnt; a most mournful sight, and at which none but inhuman, barbarous men could do less than weep, but these rejoice, and cry, Aha.

Ver. 4.

I, the God whom thou hast despised, whose people thou hast reproached, whose worship thou hast vilified, I will avenge myself, and deliver time up.

To the men of the East; the Medes and Persians, say some; the Babylonians, say others, but this suits not well with geography; Arabians, say others, associates of Nehuchadnezzar, who, it is likely, recompensed their labour and service with giving them this country when it was conquered, as it was five years after the desolation of Jerusalem.

For a possession; they shall settle on it, as a very convenient country for their sheep and camels, and possess it, as their inheritance.

Set their palaces in thee: the word palaces seems little to agree with Arabians, who dwelt in tents, but this manner of dwelling many of them would be ready to change, where they might to so great advantage, as in that country, which was fruitful, as this was; besides, the word signifieth, what is fenced, as **#Isa 2:15**, and is paraphrased by camp, and Arabians had their munitions and fortified camps, and these they shall set here while they stay. And I add this also, that the next words explain these.

Make their dwellings in thee; they shall set up their tents, as the word properly; their tents and habitations they would fortify in some manner or other, that in their camp they might be safe, if they did not build cities in the country.

Eat thy fruit; the fruit of that land was once thine, of the trees thou plantedst.

Drink thy milk; which in so fruitful land and rich pastures they had in abundance from the multitude of their kine, and it was a drink that well suited with those hot regions.

Ver. 5.

Rabbah; the royal city, and seat of the kings of Ammon, called since Philadelphia, from Ptolemaeus Philadelphus, king of Egypt, who built it.

A stable; turn it from a royal palace to be a receptacle of camels, and their drivers.

Camels; wherewith not the Chaldeans and Bactrians, but the Arabians also, were well stored; all the men of the East, as appears in Job, using them for conveying merchandise, and for travels.

The Ammonites; the people, for the land they dwelt in.

Ye shall know; then shall you know I was as able to have defended my own people, house, and worship, as I was able to destroy your gods, your cities, and your people.

Ver. 6.

Clapped thine hands; expressed thy joy in that insolent manner.

And stamped with the feet; and added this sign of more than ordinary joy at this.

Rejoiced in heart; it was that which affected thy heart with gladness, thy soul and mind were in this thy rejoicing.

Despite; hatred and contempt; thou wast heartily glad such vile people, as thou countedst them, were made, what thou thoughtest they best deserved, slaves, beggars, and captives.

The land, for the people. Israel; either the ten tribes, or rather the two tribes, with the small remnant of the others that kept to the house of David.

Ver. 7.

Thou stretchedst out thy hand in joy,

I will stretch out mine in wrath; thou, against my people, I, against thee.

For a spoil; for a prey, or for meat, so the word will bear. The greedy, covetous soldier shall make thy wealth his prey; the hungry enemy shall eat thee up.

The heathen; Babylonians, and their confederates.

I will cut thee off; explained by that follows; Ammon, thou shalt no more be accounted among the nations, but cease from being a people. I will destroy thee; so shalt thou be destroyed.

Thou shalt know: see **#Eze 25:5**.

Ver. 8.

Moab; the children of Lot by the elder daughter, the whole nation going under the name of the first father of them, near but evil neighbours to Israel and Judah.

Seir; the seed of Esau, who are, Edom, Idumeans, or Seir, from the mountain where they first planted themselves; near of kin in blood, but bitter enemies to the Jews: though both here joined, yet Moab is first doomed, **#Eze 25:9-11**, and Seir next, **#Eze 25:12-14**.

The house of Judah; the peculiar people of God, who had his law, temple, worship of his own appointment, among them.

Is like unto all the heathen; are no more a select people than others; their religion no better, nor their god but as the gods of their neighbours, and they no more benefited by their, worshipping of him. Thus, atheist-like, they dethrone God, and debase him to an equality with their own idols. More particularly Moab's sin is set out, **#Jer 48**.

Ver. 9.

I will open; when the Lord will open the gates of iron, and say, The gates shall not be shut, as **#Isa 45:1,2**, every attempt shall be easy, and his soldiers shall break through the defences, that were vainly boasted impregnable.

The side of Moab; that part of his country, which was best fortified for the safeguard of the whole.

From the cities; from the cities of strength, called here his, because he gloried and trusted in them, such as Har and Aroer, seated on Arnon, very strong garrisons.

On his frontiers; or, from his frontiers, (for it is the same construction, Hebrew,) or from his outmost bounds, I will lay all open to the Chaldeans, they shall overrun it, as if it were an open country, as easily as if no fortresses to impede them.

The glory; so the great, strong, and beautiful, or regularly built and fortified cities are ever accounted the glory of the country, and these are reckoned beside Ar and Aroer.

Beth-jeshimoth; an ancient city, and formerly Reuben's lot, **#Jos 13:20**: its name tells you it was a fortress toward the desert, which watched, lest any should, through those wastes, make an inroad on the country.

Baal-meon; called also Moon, and Baiith, and Beth-baal-meon, mansion-house of Baal, word for word; it was situate on the north coast of Moab, as the other on the west.

Kiriathaim; a city, which probably consisted of two cities, or principal parts; a very strong frontier town, but not able to keep out those that God would lead in.

Ver. 10.

The men of the East: see #Eze 25:4.

With; rather against, and so the Hebrew, and the sense is plain; or, as our translation reads it, with, i.e. as I have given Ammon, so I will with them give Moab to the Chaldeans first, who will give Moab to the Arabians.

Possession: see #Eze 25:4.

That the Ammonites; I suppose here is either an ellipsis, thus, that as the Ammonites should so perish, as not to be remembered, so should Moab also; or else Ammon is appellative here, and speaks the numerousness of Moab, which yet should so cease as to be forgotten.

Ver. 11.

I will execute; though the Chaldeans do it, it is by God's direction, and he is principal therein. Judgments; the judgment passed by my prophet. They, those brutish nations, shall know this is my hand.

Ver. 12.

Edom; the Idumeans, children of Esau.

The house of Judah; the kingdom of David after the division of the tribes, when but two remained constant to the house of David.

By taking vengeance for the old quarrel, because Jacob got the blessing from Esau, or rather in revenging a later quarrel, which they had against Judah for the slaughter, spoil, and captivity they suffered by David's conquering sword.

Hath greatly offended; both in the thing itself, for vengeance belongs to God; and in the manner and measures of executing it, as appears both from #Ps 137:7, and the prophecy of #Ob 1:10-15, which see, and consider.

Ver. 13.

Stretch out mine hand: see #Eze 25:7, and #Eze 16:27.

Cut off man, by the sword of the Chaldeans, and by other wasting evils which accompany wars, as famine, pestilence, and other diseases.

And beast; either their cattle should be driven away by the plundering soldier, or devoured by the mighty numerous army of Nebuchadnezzar, or wasted with murrain, or all should concur to unstock their pastures.

Desolate; a desolation, i.e. most desolate.

From Teman; from the south, so the Chaldee paraphrase; but it is rather the name of the region, called by the name of Esau's grandson Teman, who also gave name to the metropolis of Idumea, and probably it was in the southern coast of Edom's country.

Dedan; the Dedanites, who were of Abraham by Keturah, #Ge 25:3; and these were neighbours to Edom, on the side of Arabia, or else intermixed with the Edomites in habitation and commerce, so that it might be a city reckoned either to Edom or Arabia. From Teman to Dedan the Chaldean sword should waste all.

Ver. 14.

I will lay my vengeance upon Edom; which as it is great, so just, sure, and opportune, their foot slideth in due time, #De 32:35.

By the hand of my people Israel; no history mentions the fulfilling of this, as it sounds in the letter of it, unless #/APC 1Ma 5:3,2Ma 10:16,17; some therefore interpret, by the hand, by the same hand, that I used in punishing my people Israel; others refer it to a spiritual meaning, as #Isa 11:14 Jer 49:2 Ob 21.

They; the instruments God used, whether Maccabees in after-times, or the Chaldeans in that present age.

Shall do in Edom according to my anger; my just displeasure, as it set them on work, shall give them their strength and measures; they shall do as much as I intended against Edom.

And according to my fury; redoubled to affect the more, and confirm the prediction.

They shall know my vengeance; both Edom, my people, and those I employ, shall see this was my quarrel, which I threatened to revenge, and now have done it, and Edom shall know I am not like their gods, though they said so, #Eze 25:8.

Ver. 15.

The Philistines; next neighbours to the Jews, between whom many quarrels, wars, and mutual spoil, slaughter, and injuries happened, as ever among borderers, who make all their own they can catch.

Have dealt by revenge; took the opportunity to revenge themselves when the Jews were weak and low.

With a despiteful heart; with hatred to them, and contempt of them.

To destroy it for the old hatred: this tells us what their hatred appeared in, it was a hatred to the name and being of Israel, they would cut them off, as **#Ps 83:7**, with a perpetuated, endless enmity pursuing them.

Ver. 16.

The Cherethims; either a name for all the Philistines, **#1Sa 30:14**, or else the principal soldiers, expert bowmen, the strength of Philistia.

The remnant, which had escaped the sword of Samuel, David, Hezekiah, and of Psammeticus king of Egypt.

Of the sea-coast; the Mediterranean about Azotus.

Ver. 17.

This verse is a confirmation of all spoken against the Philistines, and is in all the particulars explained in what went before.

Vengeance; great for measure, and many for number, vengeance, as the Hebrew.

With furious rebukes; in fierceness of anger, and without pity. They, as other stupid nations, will not see till they feel, and then they shall confess it is the hand of an angry, but just, and mighty God.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 26

Tyrus, for insulting over the distress of Jerusalem, is threatened with destruction, **#Eze 26:1-6**: of which Nebuchadrezzar shall be made the instrument, **#Eze 26:7-14**. The consternation and

mourning of the isles and princes of the sea for her fall, #Eze 26:15-21.

Ver. 1.

The eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, the year wherein Jerusalem was taken.

The first day of the month; that month which followed the taking of Jerusalem, i.e. the fifth month; for Jerusalem was taken on the fourth month, ninth day, and in twenty days after the news was brought to Tyrus, which behaved herself as the prophet will declare.

Ver. 2.

Tyrus; the city for the people; it is probable it was a universal joy, therefore ascribed to the whole city, built on a rock and island of the same name, not far distant from the continent, a very great traded port and city.

Hath said; either God revealed this to the prophet so soon as these insulting Tyrians spoke it, or else Ezekiel speaks of it prophetically, and as if it were done.

Said against Jerusalem, Aha; showed great joy at the fall of Jerusalem, and triumphed over her.

She is broken by Nebuchadnezzar's army.

The gates of the people; near to the gates of the cities were usually, the great merchants, and so here Jerusalem is called the great mart of nations and people from all parts resorting to her for trade or religion.

She is turned unto me; trading interest will turn to me, they that did carry merchandise to Jerusalem will now bring it to me.

I shall be replenished; have full trade, my haven full of ships, streets full of buyers and sellers, ships full of wares, houses full of lodgers, and purses full of money.

She is laid waste; she reflected on wasted Jerusalem with joy, which was impious, injurious, and inhuman, to rejoice in the ruin of her neighbour.

Ver. 3.

I am against thee; and if God be against them, they will soon have enemies enough too against them: God purposeth, threateneth, and assureth them he is and will be against them.

Many nations, for number, and mighty for strength, riches, authority, and feats of war already done.

As the sea causeth his waves to come up, with such violence, constancy, swelling in height, and making thee fear the issue, so shall the Babylonians come.

Ver. 4.

Destroy; batter and demolish with their mighty engines, which shall shake, disjoint, and beat down the strongest parts of their walls.

Break down; undermine, that they may tumble at once, or employ hands to take them down, as men pull down buildings.

Towers; watch-towers, and those that were for defence and safety of their city, which from their greatness have their name, Migdol.

I will also scrape her dust from her; I will leave thee nothing, thou shalt be scraped, and brushed, and swept, that not so much as dust shall remain to thee.

And make her like the top of a rock; as bare as was the rock on which thy city is built before wealth, beauty, buildings, and strength was brought to it by man's industry.

Ver. 5.

As barren sandy islets in the midst of the sea, good for nothing but to dry fishermen's nets, shalt thou be. A spoil; a prey: though the contexture of the words place this after its being made so bare and poor, yet we are to observe, that these last words give us account how this poverty and barrenness shall come upon thy rich city; the nations shall spoil her with thirteen years' long siege, interruption of trade, living on the quick stock, and finally taken on surrender. To the nations; Babylonians, and their confederates, who made the Tyrians pay the reckoning.

Ver. 6.

Her daughters; either the lesser cities, which were as daughters to Tyre, a phrase most familiar to the Scriptures; or else their virgins, and daughters of the family.

In the field; on the firm land, if you mean cities; or surprised in the fields, whether taking the air, or seeking to escape, if you mean daughters in the latter sense.

Shall be slain by the sword; barbarous soldiers shall spare none.

They shall know that I am the Lord: see #Eze 25:17.

Ver. 7.

I will bring: see #Eze 23:46.

A king of kings; so he stiled himself, according to the vaunting manner of those countries, and indeed, by the right of conquest, he was king of kings, having many tributary kings under him, and many captive kings with him in Babylon, #2Ki 18:28 Jer 52:32. From the north; so was Babylon accounted to lie, as observed, #Eze 1:4, though it did not lie full north, but had some points of the north from Tyre. With horses; those Eastern kings had store of horses, and used many in their wars: see #Eze 26:11.

With chariots: see #Eze 23:24.

With horsemen: see #Eze 23:12. And companies; an assembly of all sorts, from all parts of the large kingdom of Babylon.

And much people; a mighty army for fighting, and mighty train of hangers-on, who were ready enough to do mischief to the country, though not very fit to assist the army; if need required, these would sweep all before them wherever they came.

Ver. 8.

See #Eze 26:6.

Make a fort against thee: see #Eze 4:2 17:17.

Cast a mount against thee: he shall draw a line round about thee, and build bastions, raise sconces to defend the lines, to keep in the besieged, and secure the besiegers; or he shall pour out the shot, mighty stones or the like, out of the engines framed and placed on the forts before mentioned; for so did they of old build mighty

wooden towers, and there placed engines, out of which they could fling mighty stones or darts against the besieged, who were much annoyed from these high towers, overlooking their walls and streets that none could stir out.

Lift up the buckler: see #Eze 23:24.

Ver. 9.

Engines of war: these were mighty engines, whatever form made of, and had their description here from the irresistible force wherewith they cast stones, and beat down all before them.

Axes; whatever made of iron, and framed to demolish buildings: see #Eze 16:39.

Ver. 10.

Their dust; the dust they raise in marching, or in their exercising, in riding to and fro; but whether while on the land, or when they entered the city, may be doubted.

Shall cover thee; as a cloud it shall cover the city.

Shall shake, as buildings do with great noise, motion. or beating on the ground.

The wheels, of their engines, or wagons, or chariots.

He shall enter into thy gates; Nebuchadnezzar, without fear, shall enter and possess his conquest, which Tyre at last yielded to him after thirteen years' hard siege.

Wherein is made a breach; whose walls battered and leveled, there is nothing left to defend the citizens, who therefore yield, or defend the besieger, who therefore fearless entereth.

Ver. 11.

In proud, stately, and menacing posture shall the king of Babylon ride through all the streets of thy city, to the grief and sorrow of the Tyrians; and so shall his troops do too.

He shall slay thy people; in the wars some of thy people shall fall by his sword; but that is no wonder; I rather think that it is meant of giving judgment against some of the most valiant, constant, and active citizens, which were the cause of the city's

holding out so long against Nebuchadnezzar, as he did with some of the nobles of Jerusalem.

Strong garrisons; bastions, or forts about the city, or triumphal arches built by Tyrians, or statues erected in honour to some eminent citizens, or to the kings of Egypt, their ancient allies, enemies to the Chaldeans; or the statues of their gods Hercules and Apollo chained, that neither in nature and angry, nor yet charmed with other men's songs, should depart, and leave their pupils without a guard.

Shall go down to the ground; shall be all cast down together.

Ver. 12.

They; Chaldean soldiers.

Make a spoil; hinder thy trade during the war, and plunder thee in the end of the war.

Make a prey of thy merchandise; intercepting much, as it is coming to thee whilst besieged, and taking what they find, when they conquer.

Break down thy walls: see #Eze 26:4,9; there he speaks of the walls of the city, here of the walls of private houses, as appears by that which follows. Pleasant houses, that the Tyrians dwelt in with delight, or diverted themselves in as houses of pleasure; summerhouses.

Lay thy stones, &c.

in the midst of the water: it had been a quicker and easier way to have burnt all, but it is like the greedy soldier might dream of treasure hid in walls or under the timber, and therefore they take the pains to pull all down, and throw it into the sea; the very dust too. Thus God fulfils his word, and scraped Tyrus.

Ver. 13.

A populous, wealthy, ancient, and much frequented city, in the midst of great security, no doubt, had all sorts of music, and loud music on the water especially, and songs to their music; but God will dash it all.

The sound of thy harps: this particular music mentioned as one of the noblest, and most in request, but no more shall be heard in Tyre after it is taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 14.

Eze 14:4,5.

Thou shalt be built no more; either not this long time, or else not built in greatness and glory, or not raised to be a kingdom, or not by the inhabitants of old Tyre, or not with the same laws, customs, and usages; indeed, though there was a city of that name built, yet it was built on the continent, and in propriety of speech was another city, not old Tyre.

Ver. 15.

Isles, which are places freest from the danger of invasions, and in those days thought themselves safe, will think themselves in danger, and shake with fear, when they hear that Tyre is fallen; it will amaze and fright them all, when they hear thy men were wounded and slain in the midst of thee who dwellest in the sea.

Ver. 16.

The princes of the sea; who were lords of the islands in that sea, and who traded with Tyrus, and there were many such; or sea commanders, who, in their wooden world, are so many petty princes; but rather the former, the crowned heads whose kingdoms were so many islands.

Come down from their thrones, in token of sadness and condolence.

Lay away their robes, as further sign of grief.

Put off their broidered garments: this is added also to show how greatly they were affected with sorrow at this sad fall of their ally and friend.

Clothe themselves with trembling: this laying aside of their gallantry shall not be in compliment, as now in such cases of condolence, but they shall be heartily afraid of their own concerns, and astonished in the midst of their fears.

Ver. 17.

They; the princes of the sea, #Eze 26:16.

Take up a lamentation for thee; solemnly, heartily, and for many days bewail thee.

Say to thee, by a prosopopceia, or fiction of persons, personate a dismal, sorrowful congress with fallen Tyre.

How art thou destroyed! Alas, is it so? Can it be true? How is it that thou art destroyed, who hadst so many friends, so much riches, &c.?

The renowned city; for thy strength, wealth, and wisdom.

Wast strong; strong indeed, and thought impregnable.

Cause their terror to be on all that haunt it: who durst set on thee, who overawedst all the bold adventurers at sea?

Ver. 18.

The isles; or ships; so it might be rendered; whether one or other, it is the fixing for the men, as isles for islanders, or ships for mariners.

Tremble in the day of thy fall; apprehending that nothing can stand if Tyre fall, and that they are in danger too.

In the sea; at great distance, and farther from land.

Troubled; grieved and perplexed.

At thy departure; leaving thy ancient dwelling, which from eldest ages thy people had enjoyed with liberty, to go into captivity.

Ver. 19.

Shall make thee a desolate city; have made thee what now I threaten I will make thee.

Like the cities that are not inhabited; in the same state with cities that have not any to dwell in them, whose walls are broken down. and into whose streets all solitary wild beasts may come at pleasure.

The deep; figuratively, Nebuchadnezzar's army; literally, when thy walls and ramparts are so broken down by the Chaldeans, that the Sea, at high tides, and in stormy swelling seas, overflows part of thine ancient seat.

Great waters; either literally, as the deep coming up; or metaphorically, great afflictions shall flow over thee.

Ver. 20.

Bring thee down; destroy thee, slay thee, and bury thee, throw thee into the grave.

The people of old time; who are long since dead, and gone to eternity, the people of eternity.

In the low parts of the earth; another description of the grave, from the situation, and from the solitudes or desolation of it. In brief, when Tyre, as a dead man, shall be buried, forgotten and perish utterly, and my hand hath done it, then it shall be known my hand hath avenged and punished all her insolence, inhumanity, and covetousness that she discovered when she rejoiced at Jerusalem's fall.

Shall set glory; restore the beauty, strength, wealth of Israel, bring them back to Jerusalem, to worship in a rebuilt temple, where they shall enjoy me.

The land of the living; the land of Judea, called land of the living, because a land where God will bless and give life by his word, ordinances, and Spirit: thus different shall Tyre's captivity and Jerusalem's be.

Ver. 21.

A terror, or consumption; I will utterly consume thee; with more than one kind of destruction will I destroy thee, and make thee thereby a terror to all that hear the bruit of thee.

Thou shalt be no more: see #Eze 26:14. If any will be so curious as to inquire, if they come to seek out the footsteps of this ancient Tyre, they shall lose their labour, no signs of it On the rock where once it stood. Rich, populous, potent, wise, renowned Tyre, as once thou wast, shalt never more be found; and, alas, that which is now on the continent is not fit to bear its name, much less to be counted the same city.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 27

The riches and large commerce of Tyre, #Eze 27:1-25. Her great and irrecoverable fall, #Eze 27:26-36.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Pen a mournful narrative of Tyre's fall, tell the world what she was, and what she is come to; both city and citizens too.

Ver. 3.

Personate Tyre as near thee, and hearing what thou sayest unto or of her; describe her, that she may know thou speakest to her.

That art situate; that dwellest, so the Hebrew.

The entry, Heb. *entrances*, she was but four furlongs, or five hundred paces, or half our English mile, from the continent, as it were in the very door of the sea, far enough off to have convenient harbors between her and the continent, and to be out of danger of sudden or easy surprises.

A merchant; a rich and populous emporium or mart for all commodities, either to vend or buy to islanders, or those that dwell on firm land.

Thou hast said; in thy riches, strength, alliances, and trade, thou art grown proud, thou hast thought and said too a great deal more than becomes a changeable state.

I am of perfect beauty: thou hast boasted of the excellency of thy government, the strength of thy city, the inaccessibleness of thy situation, nearness, strength, and obligations of thy allies, and as if nothing were wanting to perpetuate thy glory and happiness, poor self-flattering Tyre! But let us view particulars.

Ver. 4.

Weak borders, which an enemy easily breaks through, are a great defect in a state; well, Tyre, thou art well secured here, thine are in the sea that surrounds and secureth thee.

Thy builders; thy first founders, whoever they were; Agenor king of Phoenice chose wisely to build a city in safety: or by

builders may be meant those who in aftertimes did add to the first foundation: these were masters of their art, and added this to the natural strength and beauty of the place; thus thou art perfected at home.

Ver. 5.

They; thy shipwrights.

Ship-boards; the planks, and benches, or transoms, for their ships.

Of fir trees; of the best and finest fir trees

of Senir, i.e. Hermon, **#De 3:9.**

Cedars, for height, strength, durableness, and pleasing smell, beside smoothness of grain, and fitness for curious carvings, the best of trees.

From Lebanon, whose cedars excelled others.

Ver. 6.

Oaks; of pines, say some; of chesnut-trees, say others: but, since oaks, and those of Bashan, are famous in sacred dendrology, I know not why we should not keep to our own version, since the primary notation of the Hebrew leads us to it.

The company of the Ashurites: as we read these words, there arise many difficulties in the expounding them. If the conjecture of the learned Bochart be well considered, it will seem very probable the words would be better rendered thus; Thy benches they have made of ivory, with box brought out, &c. For the isles of Chittim afforded many amid large box trees, Whereas ivory, or the elephant's tooth, we know, is the merchandise of other countries, and the elephant a foreigner to all the parts of Europe; nor are the teeth of elephants of that largeness to afford breadth for seats and benches; nor shall we find any such company of Ashurites, if we inquire for them. I shall therefore subscribe to that learned man in the opinion, that here are two words read divided, and by mistake translated as divided words, which ought to have been read in one word, and so translated as it is in **#Isa 41:19**, where we translate *Myvah*, *box*; then all is plain, and the sense this, That from the isles, and parts about the Ionian, Ægean, and other seas of the Mediterranean, where this box tree is native,

as in Corsica, Apulia, &c. and of great growth and firmness, fit to saw into boards for benches, they were conveyed to Tyrus, where their artists inlaid these box boards with ivory, and made them beautiful seats in their galleys and ships.

Ver. 7.

Fine linen; whereas thrift teaches us to use the coarse linen for like purposes, these prodigal Tyrians used the finest silken sails, as we may render the words.

With broidered work; divers figures, curiously drawn with the needle in this fine linen, which made exceeding costly sails; yet pride and wantonness in some of them went to the charges of it.

From Egypt; where was much of this fine linen, and many of these neat embroiderers.

Blue, or violet colour, and purple; both rich and noble colours: the garments of great men and princes were made hereof, #Ge 41:42 Pr 31:22; see #Eze 16:10.

From the isles of Elishah; either from the sea-coast of Æolis in the Lesser Asia, the inhabitants whereof were excellent in the skill of dying wool; or from Peloponnesus, in which is one country called Elis, famous for fine linen, and about the mouth of the river Eurotas. The fishing for the purple fish was fatuously known, so that it might be this place beside the isles of the Ægean and Cretian seas, as Cos, Nysirus, (called from its purples Porphyris,) Cythera, and the Cyclades, which are many; some twelve of better note we might name, as now called Andro, Parlo, Zea, Sdilli, Micoli, &c.

That which covered thee: he speaks not here of garments, but of the coverings they used in their ships or galleys. Their tilts, as our boatmen call them, the clothes they spread over their heads on ship-board, to keep them from sun and weather, were such as be fitted kings and princes for costliness and beauty.

Ver. 8.

Zidon; an ancient town and haven of Phoenicia, not far from Tyre.

Arvad; better known by its other name Aradus, an island belonging to Phoenicia, some say twenty, others say seven,

furlongs from the continent. Thy mariners; rowers in thy galleys: the rich Tyrians would not employ their own in such servile works, they hired strangers. These Zidonians and Arvadeans, or Aredins, once thy equals, thou hast now outstripped, and makest thy servants, with pride enough.

Thy wise men; thy learned men; for navigation was the great study of the Tyrians, and who were best skilled in this were the learned or wise men among them, whom they had of their own, and trusted to be pilots, which employment carried honour in it to suit the proud humour of the Tyrians.

Ver. 9.

The ancients; old experienced workmen.

Of Gebal; a town of Phoenicia near the sea, one of the four principal towns, to which belonged a jurisdiction over a fourth part of Phoenicia, mentioned **#Ps 83:7**, among the conspirators against Israel and the Giblites, **#1Ki 5:18**. Natives of Gebal are called stone-squarers, people fitted for hard and servile works.

The wise men; skilful in their trades.

Were in thee; hired and dwelt in Tyre for gain's sake, that they might be still employed.

Calkers; shipwrights, to build no doubt, as well as repair and strengthen, their ships.

All the ships of the sea; ships from all parts of the sea, full of mariners, not only to manage the ships at sea, but to offer their service to the Tyrians for bringing in or carrying out of their wares, so that they might reap the profit, whilst others did undergo trouble and danger of trafficking by sea; factors, and warehouse-keepers, and brokers.

Ver. 10.

They of Persia; Persians, excellent archers.

Of Lud; Lydians; not those Croesus was king over, but those that dwelt in Egypt about the lake Marcotis, or higher towards Ethiopia, if they were not of that country, Ethiopians themselves.

Of Phut; Libyans, a people of Africa; these were the hired soldiers, and ever served in their army under Tyrian commanders.

Men of war; stationary soldiers in time of peace, and who were sent out by sea or land as occasion required in a time of war.

They hanged the shield, in time of peace; or might they not, so often as they came off the guard, bring each man his armour, and hang it up in the public armoury?

The shield, which defended the body, and helmet, which covered the head.

They set forth thy comeliness; these stout, expert, well-armed guards were an honour to the state they served, and their arsenal especially did prove the gallantry of this Tyrian state.

Ver. 11.

Arvad: see #Eze 27:8.

With thine army; mixed with other hired soldiers, made up these military forces.

Upon thy walls round about; kept guard upon the walls.

The Gammadims; some say pigmies or dwarfs, because the Hebrew word is a cubit; but the whole story of such cubit-men is fabulous. Others think it is men bold and courageous, and the word of Syriac origin and sense, and so fitly expressing the temper of Syrian or Syrophenician soldiers. Or else, the men who name from Gammade, a town of Phoenicia. Or possibly, such as came from Aneon, another town of Phoenice; and this town had its name from its situation on a piece of land that resembles the cubit, Greek, Ἀγκῶς, and in the Hebrew, down

In thy towers; which were many, erected for strength and defence.

Hanged their shields upon thy walls: by this it appears these towers were also public armories, whence they fetched arms when needful, and where they laid them up when no further use of them.

Made thy beauty perfect; added much to her beauty, a well-armed state being among states as beautiful as a proper well-armed soldier among men.

Ver. 12.

Tarshish; the city or country for the inhabitants; some say Carthaginians, others Tarsus in Cilicia; others with more probability say it is Tartessus, an ancient town on the mouth of the river Baetis; or rather, over against it, in an island, (where Gades, now Cadiz,) a convenient port to export the rich metals that were brought down the Baetis from the country abounding with them, and through which their Baetis ran, and the inhabitants of this Tartessus furnished the Tyrians with them. Spain was full of silver and iron; these were the product of the country.

Tin; it is probable they fetched this from some islands over against the own country is most noted for tin and lead, which some say was fetched by the Phoenicians; if so, for aught I see to the contrary, the Tartessians, who were a people before ever the Tyrians came into those parts, might first trade here, and fetch it hence, and carry it to Tyre, the voyage being neither long or dangerous enough between that island and our Cornwall, to render the thing difficult or the conjecture improbable.

Ver. 13.

Javan; the Grecians, particularly the Ionians. *Tubal;* the Asiatic Iberians, &c.; the Albanians toward the Caspian Sea.

Meshech; the Cappadocians, with the Moschi, who dwelt about Cholcis, the country now called Mingrelia.

Traded the persons of men; brought men to sell for slaves, so the Greeks did; the (Mancipia Ionica) Ionian slaves were known and valued in the East, especially the handsome girls to wait on great ladies. The too great desire hereof in Atossa, Darius's queen, is said to be the chief cause of his war on Greece. And as to the other, beside their senile inclinations, they were so barbarous and inhuman, and had opportunities to seize men, women, and children to sell them, that no doubt the market of Tyre was full of them.

Brass; of which metal there was great store, they say, in Cappadocia and Iberia, which they brought with them.

Ver. 14.

Of the house; of the country.

Togarmah; Armenia the Lesser, or Phrygia, Galatia, or Cappadocia, or Paphlagonia; all which countries, as they are neighbours to each other, so they abounded in horses; and as they had many for number, so they had good for quality, and furnished their neighbours; it is reported the Cappadocians paid two thousand horses yearly tribute to the Persians. And as they bordered on each other, it is likely they might be reckoned thus together.

Horsemen; it is like with either many horses, or some choice ones, which they sold, they might sell their grooms, as best able to manage and keep those horses.

Mules; the countries above mentioned, especially Cappadocia, had many mules, which they sold to their neighbours.

Mules, which are a mixed creature of a mare and he-ass.

Ver. 15.

Dedan: see #Eze 25:13. This Dedan was in Arabia, built by Dedan the son of Regina, not far from the Persian Gulf, and now called Daden, whence through the Red Sea they might convey their own merchandise.

Many isles, in the Indian Seas and in the Red Sea, traded with thee.

For a present; knowing how acceptable they were to get thy favour, they either made presents, and gave these things, or brought them to sell. Horns; elks' horns, or wild goats'; some think it is meant of the unicorn, but the first is likeliest.

Ivory; ivory, not

of, the Hebrew is not in

regimen, but in

aposition, and should be read, They brought thee presents, horns, ivory, and ebony, which is a very solid, heavy, shining, and black wood, fit for many choice works.

Ver. 16.

The multitude of the wares of thy making; the abundance of the Tyrian manufacture for all uses, which the Syrians could have no where else.

With emeralds; rather, for emeralds, a rich and lovely stone; or carbuncles, as others have it.

Purple, or violet-coloured, clothes. *Broidered work:* see #Eze 27:7.

Fine linen: see #Eze 27:7.

Coral; men guess this may be rubies, carbuncles, or chalcedonies; or crystal, with which they made looking-glasses.

Agate; a stone well known to us, but not so well known whether it exactly translate the Hebrew דקדק here used; some say it is the chrysoprase, a stone mixed with gold colour and green, and some such mixture may be seen in some agates.

Ver. 17.

Judah; the two tribes, or kingdom of Judah.

The land of Israel; the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes until their dispersion.

Minnith; the name of some rich and excellent wheat country; it is mentioned in #Jud 11:33, on occasion of Jephthah's slaying the Ammonites, as lying on their borders, and it is said there is a town of that name still in being about four miles from Esbus, (or Sabasant as now called,) in the way toward Philadelphia, formerly Rubbath.

Pannag: some doubt whether this be a proper name of any country or region, but if it is, they conclude it must be Phenicia, but do not tell us how Judah and Israel should trade their wheat in Tyre market; it may be it was some more obscure place, which now is forgotten. Honey; with which Canaan flowed.

Oil; in making and selling whereof the labour, care, and profit of that country did lie.

Balm; the choicest balms were those of Gilead, whence it is probable it was carried to Tyre; or it may be it was rosin, of which

they had great use. The Chaldee paraphrast interprets it by the word that denotes wax, and so it may possibly be; a good commodity in Tyre.

Ver. 18.

Damascus; a very ancient and wealthy city of Syria, and the royal city.

The wares of thy making; see the phrase #Eze 27:16.

For the multitude of all riches: though the Tyrians had many rich and lovely commodities, yet it pleased the Damascenes to bring chiefly two of their commodities in exchange, richest wines to please the palate of the luxurious Tyrians, and finest wool to clothe their pride.

Halbon; this place I meet no where else; Ptolemy hath Chalinonis in Syria, perhaps they may be it. Others, to save trouble, make it a common name; sweet, or smooth, or fat wine; for

Helbon comes from a word that signifies fat.

Ver. 19.

If it were the tribe of Dan, it must be understood of a time before the captivity of the ten tribes; but there is a learned man tells us of Dana a city of Taprobana, or the island Zeilan mentioned by Ptolemy, and this learned man will have this meant.

Javan; not Javan or Greece, saith that learned man, but another Javan in the isle Meroe in remote parts of Egypt, where is a principal town Uzal, or Asel, from whence these merchants came, and therefore styled Javan of Uzal, or Javan Meuzal. And if the cassia or calamus, mentioned in the verse, were the wares brought in by the Danites and Javanites, I should go as far as Meroe and Taprobana to send them; but if the cassia and calamus were brought up at Tyre, I would believe they lived nearer, that they were Grecian pedlars, or in a northern dialect merchants, that bought them, and were meant in the text.

Bright iron; polished, as we see now an art, which so much betters the common sort of iron, and refines it, that it is of great value.

Cassia and calamus are sweet drugs.

Ver. 20.

Dedan, the posterity of Abraham by Keturah, who dwelt in Arabia, and were sheep-masters, and no doubt knew how to snare fine clothes of their wool.

Precious clothes, with which they lined their chariots, and covered them; also they used them for saddle-cloths, &c.

Ver. 21.

Arabia; a large country, and distinguished into Desert, or sandy, which cannot keep an honest man, but affords thieves enough; next the Stony, or Petraea, which afforded good pasturage for sheep and goats; and the third Felix, or happy, most remote from Tyre.

The princes; for there were many such among those Kedarens, or Scenites, who dwelt in tents, bred and fed cattle, and carried them to Tyre market; furnished the shambles at Tyre, and their altars too for sacrifices.

Ver. 22.

Sheba; a country in Arabia Felix, whence the queen came that visited Solomon.

Raamah; it is read Rhegma by change of v into G, as in Gomorrah, another people of the same Arabia. This Rhegma, brother to Sheba, settled near him in that fruitful land, and built towns there, and grew to fame.

Chief of all spices: this country affords all sorts of the best aromatics, or spices, which were carried to Tyre.

All precious stones, rich jewels of all sorts,
and gold too.

Ver. 23.

Haran; Haran or Charran in Mesopotamia, where Abraham dwelt.

Caneh; nowhere else mentioned, supposed to be the same with Calneh, #Ge 10:10, afterwards Ctesiphon, a pleasant city on Tigris, some three miles from Seleucia. It was built by the

Parthians, whose king resided there in the winter, because of the mildness of the air.

Eden; a pleasant country, part of Babylonia. The Chaldee paraphrase calls it Hadiab, and leads us to Adiabene, which Trajan conquered in his expedition against Babylon.

Sheba; whether the same mentioned **#Eze 27:22**, (which see,) or some other, is not certain; perhaps it may be Saba, whence Sabeans.

Asshur; Asshur, the name of the father of the nation, for Assyria.

Chilmad; a country or part of Media, between Assyria and Parthia, most likely to be Gaala of Media.

Ver. 24.

These, either last named, or all that have been mentioned, though I conjecture the first is the true meaning, those rich, stately, and sumptuous nations traded with Tyre.

All sorts of things, of rich, precious things.

Blue clothes, which those nations delighted in, especially the Chaldeans and Assyrians, **#Eze 23:6**.

Broidered work; bought of Egyptians, sold to Assyrians, &c.

Chests of cedar, curious yet strong, made on purpose to carry sumptuous apparel, bought up at Tyre, and in those chests conveyed to all parts of the Assyrian empire, and to the northern nations.

Bound with cords; it may refer to the chests mentioned, or to other sort of rich wares neatly made up, and bound for security with cords.

Among thy merchandise: by this it should seem these chests were not like our ordinary boxes, but as choice cabinets, and good merchandise.

Ver. 25.

Ships of Tarshish; the ships from all parts of the sea, which came to thee, and traded with thee, praised thee, boasted of thee.

Did sing of thee; had their songs of praise, which were made to commend thy state.

In thy market; as mariners, in the ports where they arrive, usually do with mirth and songs entertain one another, so at Tyre.

Thou wast replenished; all trading came to thee, none like thee in thy warehouses or public stores.

Made very glorious; and, to do thee right, thou wert very glorious, magnificent, and beautiful, none like thee. Hitherto the prophet hath recounted Tyre's greatness, now cometh her fall, foretold as if already come.

Ver. 26.

Thy rowers, governors and counsellors,

have brought thee, unadvisedly, into great waters, dangers and difficulties, in which thou art like to be shipwrecked, in which thou wilt perish.

The east wind, which is very tempestuous, and dangerous to ships in those seas: by this is meant the king of Babylon with his army, whose march was somewhat by east to Tyre.

Hath broken thee; as surely will as if he had already done it; he hath broken; it is the prophetic style.

In the midst of the seas; where thou art far from shore, and must therefore sink and drown, or where thou thoughtest thyself impregnable. Where many seas meet, it is impossible for a half-starved creature to swim out; so shall Tyre perish in the violent currents of many seas; many nations, fierce and cruel, under Nebuchadnezzar shall swallow thee up.

Ver. 27.

Thy riches; not the vast treasures of the public, nor the great wealth of private citizens, shall purchase Tyre a continued prosperity.

Thy fairs; these shall be interrupted by the siege, and none that frequented them shall prevail for access to them.

Thy merchandise; the stock of goods of all sorts now in thy warehouses, and what thou hast trusted out.

Thy mariners, &c.: see #Eze 27:8-11.

All thy company; all that are men fit for war in the multitudes of people that are in thee, or all thy own citizens that are thy militia, trained bands, or artillery company.

Shall fall: it is plural, these all shall at once fall together. The midst of the seas: see **#Eze 27:26**.

In the day; the time indeed was long preparing for the fall, but a day finished it.

Ruin; utter desolation.

Ver. 28.

The lesser cities on *terra firma* shall be alarmed with summons of their governors to put themselves in a posture of defence. Or, the waves, an elegant hyperbole, thus read; The very waves, which roar and terrify, shall hear and tremble at a stranger and more doleful cry than their own. Or, as our version, The suburbs, which are nearest the sea, shall first hear the outcries of pilots and mariners despairing of escape, when, their ship broken to pieces, all at once shriek out. So shall thy citizens cry and fall.

Ver. 29.

In the allegory of a miserable shipwreck, the prophet sets forth Tyre's fall, and in this verse he represents them all shifting out of the shattered sinking ship, in great confusion, and greater fear; the slaves quit the oars, the mariners throw up the tacklings, pilots leave the helm, all make for the long boat and the land, where they bewail their undone condition. Or it may be more literally understood thus; All sea-faring men, who got their living by service done for Tyre at sea, seeing her utterly broken, shall leave the ships, get to land, that elsewhere they may get employment, or by a timely flight save themselves, and bewail their old masters' fall.

Ver. 30.

Shall cause their voice to be heard; with greatest cries they shall make the country echo forth their sorrows.

Against thee; either standing on higher ground over against the shipwrecked city; or rather,

for thee, those Eastern people did use to lift up their voice in mourning, **#Job 2:12 Jer 31:15 La 2:18,19 Zec 11:3**.

Shall cry bitterly; their weeping shall be from a deep sense of the misery of their friends. and this expressed by bitter cries; so such sorrow is expressed, #**Zep 1:14 Isa 22:4 33:7.**

Shall cast up dust upon their heads; another expression of great distress and sorrow, proper to those countries, #**Jos 7:6 Job 2:12 La 2:10 Jer 6:26.**

Wallow themselves in the ashes; which they used to do in their greatest mourning, as #**Mic 1:10 Jer 6:26.** As every country hath its peculiar manners and customs in mourning, so had these customs that expressed most vehement sorrows in gestures which we are not accustomed to.

Ver. 31.

It was the custom of the heathen, to either pull off with their hands, or cut off, the hair of their heads in great mournings, which God forbade to his people, #**Le 21:5 De 14:1.** Thus do Tyre's mourners in baldness express their sorrow and despair. Gird them with sackcloth; another usual ceremony of mourners, well known to all.

With bitterness of heart; it shall be a hearty mourning, not a counterfeit one; this referring to the inward grief, the next bitter wailing refers to the outward expressing it.

Ver. 32.

In their wailing; in their sorrowful speeches of Tyre. Shall take up into their mouths, or with a composed, significant, and comprehensive form of speech, to show much grief in few words.

What city is like Tyrus? a few years since no city like her in beauty, riches, glory, and joy, now none like her in all the contraries.

The destroyed; now no more Tyre the flourishing, the renowned, the mart of nations, and the stately built; but now the destroyed, the silent, overwhelmed with grief, which was full of songs.

In the midst of the sea: alas! what was once her safeguard is now her grave, what enriched her once hath now swallowed all up at once.

Ver. 33.

Thy wares, brought home from all coasts.

Went forth out of the seas; were landed, brought on shore for the mart.

Thou filledst; there was enough to supply to the full.

Many people; numerous, stately, sumptuous nations, though their prodigality was great, thou furnishedst them, hadst wares rich and stately enough for all of them. Such influence had thy vast trade, that not only meaner men and subjects, but kings themselves, were made more wealthy by it.

Of the earth, i.e. all kings of the known world, or kings of nations far off as well as neighbouring kings.

The multitude of thy riches; the greatness of thy trade, the variety of thy wares brought from all parts were thy own riches, and enriched all thou didst trade with; kings were enriched by customs and tolls paid to them, by the enriching their subjects, who thereby were fitter to pay taxes, or by furnishing their treasuries with all the peculiar treasures of kings, the rare and precious jewels which they esteem; and since we know some kings did trade too, by this Tyre increased their wealth.

Ver. 34.

In the time; so soon as, or ever after the unhappy day. Broken; shattered to pieces. The seas; the powers of the Babylonians, that, like seas, shall swell, roar, and break in upon thee. In the depths of the waters; in the deepest afflictions, and by sorest oppressions and violence. Thy merchandise; all thy trade. All thy company; the multitude of thy citizens, of thy hired soldiers, of thy allies abroad, and of those that came into thy markets for trade, shall cease, wither, and perish too.

Ver. 35.

The isles; strictly and in a larger sense the seacoasts.

Astonished; wondering it ever should be effected that Tyre should fall.

Sore afraid: knowing how they are much less able to resist and defend themselves, and not knowing where that mighty conqueror would next try his arms and fortune.

They shall be troubled; shall not be able to conceal the discomposure of their mind; but in their countenance a trouble made up of grief, fear, and indignation, grief for their friends, fear for themselves, against that cruelty and inhumanity which, without respect to any thing dear to mankind, ruined the glory of the world, destroyed what could not be repaired by all the riches, and wisdom, and bounty of the Babylonish kingdom.

Ver. 36.

Hiss: this usually is an expression of scorn and contempt poured forth on the person hissed at; if thus understood, the meaning is, there should be some among Tyre's customers that would rejoice at her fall, and flout at her, either perhaps wronged by her in their trade, **#Eze 28:16**, or else with envy, and expectation of her trade to turn to them, return to her the wicked carriage she showed to Jerusalem fallen and sacked: if it be a sign of aught else, it is of wonder, as **#1Ki 9:8**.

A terror; matter of many fears, and to many people, who do or shall hear how terribly thine enemies have raged against thee and prevailed. Never shalt be any more: see **#Eze 26:14**.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 28

God's judgment upon the prince of Tyre for his impious pride, **#Eze 28:1-10**. A lamentation of his great glory corrupted and fallen through sin, **#Eze 28:11-19**. The judgment of Zidon, **#Eze 28:20-23**. The restoration of Israel, **#Eze 28:24-26**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Unto; of.

The princes; king, whose name was either Ethbaal, or Ithobaal.

Thine heart is lifted up; thou art waxen proud, and aspirest above all reason, and boastest extravagantly in thyself, state policy, and power.

Hast said; thought, imagined, or flattered thyself.

A god; or the mighty and strong one, for so the Hebrew is, and perhaps were better so rendered; he gloried in his strength, as if he were a god. The like you have **#Isa 14:14**.

In the seat of God: as a magistrate he did bear the name and authority of God; but he thought not of this; he dreams of the stateliness, strength, convenience, safety, and inaccessibleness of his seat, as if he were safe and impregnable as heaven itself.

A man, subject to all the casualties, sorrows, and distresses of man's state and life, thou art Adam, of earth, not *El*, nor like unto the Mighty One in heaven.

Thou set thine heart as the heart of God; thou hast entertained thoughts which become none but God, thou hast projected things which none but God can effect, thou hast promised thyself perpetual peace, safety, riches, and happiness in thyself, and from thyself.

Ver. 3.

Thou art wiser, in thy own thoughts of thyself, than Daniel, who was then famous for his wisdom, which was imparted to him from Heaven, **#Eze 14:20 Da 1:20 2:20,48**.

That they can hide from thee; that any sort of men can conceal, that thine adversaries shall contrive against thee to thy danger or hurt: all this ironically said.

Ver. 4.

With thy wisdom; by thy policy in government, and by thy skill in trading, for he speaks of that kind of prudence to which these names are given.

Gotten, or

made, so the word. Riches; power and might, so the Hebrew, as well as wealth and riches, and so the Gallic version reads

puissance; the princes of Tyre had been prudent, and so increased their power and interest.

Into thy treasures; into both his own private purse, and into the public treasuries too.

Ver. 5.

Thy great wisdom: here the eminent degree of this prince's wisdom is owned.

And by thy traffic: and might as well be spared, for as it is not in the Hebrew, so it rather obscures than clears the text; let it be read, By thy great wisdom in thy traffic, and it is very plain, and so the French reads it increased; made great or enlarged.

Thy riches; thy power, as **#Eze 28:4**.

Is lifted up; exalts itself, carrieth it loftily and proudly above thy neighbours, which is not good; above thyself, which is worse; and above God too, which is worst of all, as **#Eze 28:2**.

Thy riches; thy puissance at home and abroad, by nature and art.

Ver. 6.

Hast set thine heart: see **#Eze 28:2**.

As the heart of God, who doth, as justly he may, design himself, his own glory, in all he designeth and worketh, and take the glory to himself; thou hast done so too, designed thy own greatness, and gloried in it.

Ver. 7.

Will bring; cause to come.

Strangers; a foreign people, called strangers for their multitude, and to intimate how little regard they would have to the Tyrian glory; these strangers were the Babylonian forces. *The terrible of the nations;* a fierce, violent, and cruel nation, **#Hab 1:7,8**.

The beauty of thy wisdom; those beautiful things, in which thy wisdom appeared; either thy noble, regular, and strong buildings, or thy beautiful well-stored arsenal and army, or the unparalleled rarities, which all but rudest soldiers would esteem, and spare these monuments of thy wisdom. Defile; pour contempt and stain.

Thy brightness; thy royal dignity, depose thee from thy throne, and kill thy authority and thy person.

Ver. 8.

These strangers shall slay thee, which is a blemish to the honour of a king thus to be brought to the pit.

The pit; a usual periphrasis of death and the grave.

The deaths; in the plural, because of the many terrors, dangers, and wounds such meet with, the successive deaths, slain, drowned, eat of fish, cast upon shore, and become meat to sea fowl.

In the midst of the seas; if literally understood, thou shalt die as other common mariners, and be cast overboard; if figuratively, seas for great distresses, then amidst multitude of deep distresses thou shalt meet with more than one death, be often dying.

Ver. 9.

A cutting taunt, or sarcasm: What will become of thy godship then? Wilt thou then dream of immortality and almighty power, when thine enemy is cutting thy throat?

Thou shalt be a man; appear thou to thyself and others to be a mortal, weak, conquered man, who dieth a sacrifice to the conqueror's pride and cruelty.

Ver. 10.

The deaths: #Eze 28:8. A twofold death, temporal and eternal.

Of the uncircumcised; of the wicked, or an accursed death: the Jews do express a vile and miserable death thus. Or, the uncircumcised, i.e. heathens, cruel and merciless men, shall slay thee; and this suits with what follows in the verse, and this was ignominious with the Jews, **#1Sa 31:4.**

I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; O thou proud, self-admiring prince! slight not what is threatened, for God, the God of truth, hath spoken it.

Ver. 11.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 12.

A lamentation: see **#Eze 27:2.**

The king; called prince, **#Eze 28:2.**

Thou sealest up the sum; in the search into the frame of thy government, the management of it, the prosperity thereof, and its glory, power, riches, and confederacies, thou dost think thyself but

just to thy kingdom to account it the perfect idea of a good government, that in the Tyrian state nothing is wanting that might be required in a good government, in the best government, and so sealest to the premises; thus vainly puffed up, thou wilt have it that fulness of wisdom and perfection of beauty are in thee, but neither thy wisdom shall prevent or defeat the attempts of thine enemies, nor thy beauty charm their rage; thou shalt fall by them.

Ver. 13.

Thou hast been; thou hast dwelt and reigned.

In Eden; in the midst of all delights; and though nature made thy lot a very barren rock, thy art and industry, added to that of thy progenitors, have made it as pleasant, rich, and beautiful as Eden, that place of all desirable enjoyments.

The garden of God: this is explicative of the former; a garden is a place of delight, and men have made some delightful to a wonder, but none ever like that God planted: this of Tyre came as near as any, and yet ungrateful and atheistical Tyre dreams of Divine power and stability, forgetting human frailty and uncertainty.

Every precious stone; every sort of rich stones.

Thy covering, bought to adorn thy crown, thy robes, thy bed, &c.

The sardius; of a red, and by some said to be the ruby.

Topaz; of a yellowish green.

The diamond; of clear, waterish, sparkling colour.

The beryl; of a sea-green colour, the best.

The onyx resembles the whiteness of the nail of a man's hand.

The jasper; of divers colours, but the best green.

The sapphire; of sky colour, or blue.

The emerald; green interspersed with golden spots.

The carbuncle; of flame colour.

Gold; beside the abundance of which in their public treasures, much was used about the clothes and robes of this proud prince; it is like these precious stones were set in gold, that they might the

safer be put upon his garments. This was the accoutrement of solemnities, especially of the coronation, as appears in the close of the verse.

The workmanship of thy tabrets, &c: now the prophet notes their joys, music and songs; both to wind or loud music, and to softer music, as the lute and tabret, in the day of their king's coronation, and all this music on instruments of most exquisite make, and of their own artists' work too; in this they exceeded as in the other.

Wast created; either born, for the birth of princes hath been celebrated with great joys; or rather in the day of this king's coronation, or investiture in the kingdom and royal dignity.

Ver. 14.

Thou art the anointed cherub: I would rather keep the order of the words in the Hebrew, which the French also keep, Thou art a cherub, anointed, a protector, or one who covereth for defence. For thy wisdom, power, and excellency, like a cherub or angel; for the sacredness of thy person and office, as the anointed of God; for the exercise of thy power and office, as a shield or a protector of the weak; thus thou art, or thinkest thyself to be, and prdest thyself herein.

I have set thee so; I, whom thou forgettest, I have made thee so, set thee above others; this should have been matter of thanks and humility, not of pride and atheism. Thus the sarcasm is continued, and he is upbraided for his insolence.

Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; or thus, in the holy mountain a god thou hast been; so it is an irony, and suits the rest; or else, in pursuance of our version, thou wast advanced to kingly dignity, (which David calls a mountain, **#Ps 30:7 Jer 51:25 Da 2:35**) a sacred office, and of Divine institution and consecration, and thou hast in pride exalted thyself above me, as well as above men.

Walked up and down, in proud and stately manner, surrounded every way in thy chambers and beds and clothes with stones that sparkle like fire, thy crown, thy throne, thy chariots, thy umbrellas or canopies, glistening and dazzling beholders; as if thus also thou wouldst contend with God, who is clothed with light.

Ver. 15.

I think the prophet continues his irony: The prince of Tyre would be a god. Yes. Now God is perfect in all his ways or works; and thou, O prince, wert so too. Wert thou, and from thy original? But remember what a god is he, that hath a beginning, that was created, that at last was found full of iniquity! And this reproof and taunt leads us to look with the prophet from the proud claim of this prince to his great miscarriages. If any else will think all these things in the 14th and 15th verses to be asserters of God's bounty to this prince, and of his great magnificence and state, in hyperboles and allusions, nothing I have said shall contradict them, for they have their liberty, as I have mine, to think what seems most like the truth.

Ver. 16.

By the multitude; by, or in, or according to (as the Gallic version) the multitude or greatness of thy trading: in Tyre were merchants that traded in very great adventures, with vast stocks, and in mighty cargoes.

With violence; thy merchants have by craft, where that would, and by violence where craft would not, compassed their unjust designs, as noted, **#Eze 27:36**. This injustice and violence grew as their trade did, and filled the city with guilt as fast as that did with wealth.

Thou hast sinned: either as one trading among them, thou hast violated justice to promote thine own and their gain, or hast connived at thy merchants when they oppressed all they could; or hast, contrary to justice and equity, supported them in their violence, and judged for them against oppressed strangers. Thou who weft a king, and wouldst be thought a god, is this like to God, who hates violence, loves justice, relieveth the stranger, and righteth the oppressed?

I will cast thee out: these abominable things hast thou done, and now, as an abominable thing, I will throw thee out, either of thy throne and kingly dignity, see **#Eze 28:14**, or thy fancied and imagined heaven, where thou wouldst be a god, for such gods of violence and injustice deserve to be cast out with the aspiring angels.

Destroy thee; utterly destroy.

O covering cherub: see #Eze 28:14.

Ver. 17.

Thine heart was lifted up: see #Eze 28:2,5.

Thy beauty: see #Eze 28:12.

Converted thy wisdom; depraved or lost thy wisdom, by reflecting and gazing on thy own glory, state, wealth, and magnificence, and hast forgotten thou art a man; thou exaltest thyself above man, above thy neighbour kings.

I will cast thee to the ground; I will bring down thy pride, dethrone thee, and make thee sit in the dust; sully and darken all thy brightness.

Lay thee before kings; or, set thee before men of thy quality, who are, as thou, apt to forget men, themselves, and God, as he who, though he said not, I am God, yet, atheist-like, asked,

Who is God, that I should obey him? That they may behold thee; or, that thou mayst be a spectacle, an example and warning to them; or, that they see thee in chains, or an abused captive, and despise thee.

Ver. 18.

Thou who shouldst have kept all pure in religion, as thou art king, pretending to Divinity, has polluted it.

Thy sanctuaries: still there is, as all along from the 14th verse I think there hath been, much of an irony deriding this proud prince, an allusion to his pretended godship. A god hath his sanctuaries, and thou thine, but they nasty, polluted ones.

By the multitude, by the greatness as well as number,

of thine iniquities. The iniquity of thy traffic; impieties, irreligion, and atheism of thy merchants, as well as by their injustice, falsehood, and oppressions, by their perjuries, breaking covenants confirmed in the temples at the altars, or in the name of their gods; when thy trade thrived by these, thou and they have thought there was nothing sacred, nor any god above thee.

I will bring forth a fire; some civil dissension or occasion of thy injustice shall, like a fire,

rise from the midst of thee, among thy injured malcontents.

It shall devour thee; which, like fire in the house, shall burn all up, and waste all, thou shalt never quench it: thy discontented subjects applying themselves to Nebuchadnezzar with addresses for his favour, power, and royal justice to relieve them, and to right his own subjects oppressed by Tyre in their trade, shall enkindle Nebuchadnezzar's rage, and he shall never be appeased but in thy ruin.

I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth; thou shalt be burnt to ashes, and these cast on the earth to be scattered abroad, and trampled under feet.

In the sight of all them that behold thee; all this done, that all about thee may see, fear, and reverence the justice, power, and holiness of the God of heaven, who ruleth among men, and knows how to abase proud atheists.

Ver. 19.

All that have heard, seen, or formerly known thy riches, power, allies, wisdom, and vigilance, shall be astonished at thee; be amazed at the certain news of thy great fall, from greatest glory to greatest reproach.

Thou shalt be a terror to all that hear the bruit hereof:

though thou hast been a terror, so the Hebrew, to others by thy puissance and arms, thou shalt never be so again for ever: and this word hath been made good; Tyre never rose to that greatness as to be feared by her neighbours.

Ver. 20.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 21.

Set thy face: see #Eze 20:46 21:2.

Against Zidon; neighbour and confederate of Tyre.

Prophecy against it; declare her sins, approaching sorrows, and my judgments against her.

Ver. 22.

To these heathen, yet neighbours of the Jews. the prophet might well suppose the name and greatness of the God of Israel was so known, as to command their attention when he speaketh.

I am against thee; provoked by thy sins, I am an adversary to thee, and as such determined to proceed with thee.

Zidon; a city in the north-west from Canaan, at the foot of Mount Libanus; a king's seat of old, and from which Tyre descended, as a swarm cast out of that hive, **#Isa 23:2**; for it was a great city in Joshua's time, **#Jos 11:8 19:28**, and built by Sidon, Canaan's son, **#Ge 10:15 1Ch 1:13**; a famous mart full of merchants, like Tyre, and as full of sin as riches.

I will be glorified; when my judgments make my justice, power, holiness, sovereignty, and truth appear, both you Sidonians, and others about, shall confess my glory, and ascribe honour to me. I will vindicate my honour and glory, which by thy sins thou hast eclipsed, and I by judgments will illustrate, as **#Ex 14:4,17**.

They that dwell in thee, and round about thee, all that are concerned for thee, shall know that I am the Lord: see **#Eze 6:10**.

When I shall have executed judgments in her; so late do sinners come to any due sense of God's power, justice, and majesty. The hardened sinners learn not by any other way but this, and by this too in the rigours and repeated executions of it.

Sanctified; owned as holy, revered as just, obeyed as sovereign, and submitted to as wise, and mighty, and a hater of violence.

Ver. 23.

I will send; the pestilence is one of God's arrows, and he sends it wheresoever it walks; it is one of his sore judgments, and wasteth where it cometh.

Pestilence; the most dreadful of diseases, because most deadly, swift, and comes so immediately from the wrath of God offended with men; this pestilence attends on war, and seldom faileth to make havoc in besieged towns or cities.

Blood; bloody war by an enemy, that shall bring the war to the gates, nay, into the streets of Zidon.

Be judged; fall, be cast down, punished, in the midst of the city.

By the sword; by her enemy's sword prevailing and conquering.

On every side; a description either of the siege that Zidon should suffer by, or pointing out the multitude of her enemies on every side agreeing against her.

Ver. 24.

No more; the time intended here is, when, after seventy years' captivity, loathing themselves for their iniquities, and repenting, they return and settle in their own land. Pricking brier, grieving thorn: by these two metaphors the prophet points out the troublesome neighbours of the Jews.

Of all that are round about them; such as Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre, and this Zidon, which on all occasions did grieve, wound, and reproach the Jews, and triumph in the fall of the Jews, and were ever ready, being near.

That despised them; contemning both in word and carriage the Jews, their religion, manners, laws, and their God. They shall know that I am the Lord: see **#Eze 28:22**.

Ver. 25.

When seventy years is expired, which is the term of their captive state.

I shall have gathered; moved the hearts of my people to come together upon Cyrus's proclamation, and from all parts of that vast kingdom, to prepare for a return to the country most of them never saw: it was God who moved Cyrus to give them leave; it was as much God's work to stir up the people to return.

The house of Israel; the generality of them, those that were Israelites indeed.

From the people; several nations subjects to the king of Babylon.

Scattered, by the Babylonish king at first, and afterward by incident, necessity, or their own choice.

Shall be sanctified; have vindicated my name, which by them was blasphemed.

In the sight of the heathen: I was dishonoured by the Jews in the sight of the heathen, and I will be honoured by the Jews in their sight, they shall be witnesses of my vindication.

Dwell; settle in peace, and for continuance.

In their land; in a land that is theirs,
their own, as it is often called.

That I have given; their title is of me by deed of gift, not of late, but to one that was long since my servant; *to Jacob*, father to these returning captives. The Hebrew repeats the preposition,

to my servant, to Jacob, with an emphasis, to mind them of God's faithfulness.

Ver. 26.

Safely; which is to be understood comparatively, safer than before; it must be accommodated to the circumstances of human condition; in such safety as excludes continual inward cares, and fears, and perplexities, as it is said of Laish, **#Jud 18:7**; or as in the days of Solomon, **#1Ki 4:25**; or as **#Job 11:18,19**.

When I have executed judgments: that seems to intimate, that there might be some attempts, as by Sanballat and Tobias, but God blasted these; or it may refer more properly to the destruction of Babylon, and the nations confederate with them, who ruined and despised the Jews.

And they, the returned captives, shall own, and know by experience, that I sin not only the Lord, but their God too.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 29

The judgment upon Pharaoh for his treachery to Israel, **#Eze 29:1-7**. The desolation of Egypt, and restoration of it after forty years, **#Eze 29:8-16**. Egypt the reward of Nebuchadrezzar's service against Tyre, **#Eze 29:17-20**. Israel shall flourish again, **#Eze 29:21**.

Ver. 1.

The tenth year of Jeconiah's captivity. The tenth month, which answers to part of our December and part of January.

Ver. 2.

Set thy face: see #Eze 20:46 21:2.

Pharaoh; Hophra, as the Scripture styles him, #Jer 44:30; the Greek authors call him Apries, and Vaphres: most like he was grandson to Necho, who slew Josiah in fight, #2Ch 35:23,24.

Prophecy against him; in prophetic style and authority declare what shall be done to him in his person.

All Egypt; the whole multitude of Egyptians; for it is the place for the people dwelling in it.

Ver. 3.

Thus saith the Lord God; that God that drowned one of thy predecessors with his army, horsemen, and horses in the Red Sea, at whose name thou shouldst tremble, who ever fulfilled his word, and is the same, it is he foretells thee by my mouth what is to be. I am against thee: see #Eze 28:22. *Pharaoh:* see #Eze 29:2.

Great; it may refer either to the grandeur of this king, as if he had been Pharaoh the Great, or to the largeness of this creature, to which he is by this hieroglyphic compared.

Dragon: some would have it the whale, but that lies not in rivers, as in his own place: it is surely the crocodile, of which Nilus hath many; and #Eze 32:2, our prophet doth, and so #Isa 51:9, compare the Egyptian king to that devouring serpent, or dragon.

That lieth; not only at rest, but waiting for a prey, which never escapes, if this devourer lay any considerable hold of it.

In the midst of his rivers: Nilus was the chief river of Egypt; but either there were some less rivers that run into Nilus, or some divisions of it, where it made some islands, or the seven mouths of it, where it falls into the sea, which may give the name of rivers to it, or those channels that were cut large and deep, to convey water into the country; in all which these crocodiles bred, and rested, and waited for their prey.

Which hath said; which hath thought, accounted, and boasted; by which it appears the prophet speaks of a dragon in a figurative sense.

My river; kingdom, power, riches, and forces, signified here by a river. All the strength and glory of Egypt are mine, saith this proud king.

Is mine own; at my dispose and will. It is probable that this king of Egypt was an aspiring king, who aimed at absolute power, and thought he had secured it to himself; for the river, the emblem of the kingdom, is mine, saith he. *I have made it:* this seems to give some credit to the conjecture, that this king had raised the prerogative royal, and done what others before him would, but could not, and therefore assumes it to himself, as his own work, forgetting God, who gives kingdoms, and whose they are.

I have made it for myself; somewhat like the proud boast,

I have built for the glory of my name, #Da 4:30, and like to meet as sad an end.

Ver. 4.

Thou art secure against all, but God will draw thee out of thy river to thy ruin.

Hooks; the allegory is continued; fish are drawn out with hooks and lines, and God hath hooks for this proud dragon, first Aresis, and next the Babylonian king. The expedition of Aresis at the head of the Cyreneans and Grecians, and the event of it, is exactly represented in this hieroglyphic in the text. Amasis with those forces mastered Libya, the king thereof applies for help to this Pharaoh, he gathers all the power of Egypt out of Egypt with him into Cyrene, where he was defeated, lost all but a few that fled with him, and on this occasion the Egyptians rebelled against him: now this short history opens the parable. The first hook you see in the jaws of this dragon, this drew him out of his river, i.e. his kingdom.

The fish; these are the people of Egypt, the subjects of this kingdom.

To stick unto thy scales; to adhere to their king in this war.

I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers; both the king and his subjects, which made up his army, go out of the rivers, leave Egypt, and march into Cyrene (which was part of that kingdom now called Bares) with their king, as if they had been little fishes on the back of a mighty one. Thus far the emblem; the rest follows.

Ver. 5.

When thus brought out, as a fish out of the water, I will leave thee. God left this king.

The wilderness; the deserts of Libya and Cyrene.

All the fish; the whole army of Egyptians. Thou shalt fall upon the open fields; there was this king and his army ruined.

Thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered, as usually the slain are to be buried; these were not buried, but left in the wilderness, where they fell to be a prey to wild beasts, and birds of prey which haunted the wilderness, and would soon gather to their prey.

Ver. 6.

This mighty overthrow shall be known through all Egypt, and as it shall fill them with fears and troubles, so it should be a convincing argument to them that God had done this, and punished them, and their proud king, who used to say, as Herodotus reports, that God could not turn him out of his kingdom. Because they, both king, princes, counsellors, and people of Egypt,

have been a staff of reed; treacherously, as next verse, dealt with the Jews, whom they seduced to trust and depend on them, and then perfidiously broke promise with them. It was the sin of the Jews to trust Egypt; it was Egypt's great sin to falsify promise with the Jews, and for this God now punisheth Egypt.

Ver. 7.

When they, the Jews, unable to stand on their own legs, as men ready to fall, took hold of thee by thy hand; caught thine hand to lean on, as when besieged by the Chaldeans.

Thou didst break: it includes a designed and voluntary failure; Egypt would not support.

And rend all their shoulder; didst tear, and pierce, and wound arm and shoulder, didst them much mischief instead of benefiting them, as thou hadst promised, **#Jer 37:7 42:17.**

When they leaned, &c.; the same thing in words little different.

The loins are the strength of a man: thou hast put them to use all their strength to repel the enemy, thou hast been chief occasion of their engaging against.

Ver. 8.

Therefore, for thy atheistical pride, and thy perfidious mischief to the house of Israel, and other thy sins,

I will bring a sword upon thee; war, and the effects of it. First, a civil war arose against this king Hophra, who, weak and contemned, and fallen under the jealousies and disgusts of his subjects after his overthrow in the deserts of Libya and Cyrene, was again overthrown by his rebel subjects in a bloody battle at Memphis, was taken in his flight towards Sain, his royal seat, and some time after strangled by the enraged rout. The next sword, brought on Hophra's successor, and on the land of Egypt, was the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, in the same year after the overthrow of Tyre; the civil war of Egypt inviting him to take the occasion, and some few requests, it is likely, from the rebellious to assist them.

Cut off man, by the sword in battle and sieges, and by famine.

And beast; eaten up by a numerous army invading and prevailing, and which will drive away what they eat not. The same phrase you have **#Eze 14:13,17.**

Ver. 9.

The land of Egypt; that part here intended, say some, and in the 10th verse, bounded from Syene to the borders of Ethiopia; nor is this inconsistent with that **#Eze 29:2,** against all Egypt, for all Egypt suffered much, though all were not equally wasted, and turned into a desolation, as these parts shall be. *Desolate;* a desolation, i.e. most desolate, and wasteness by the sword of the enemy, and by drought, as the word imports both: and this latter part of the judgment was executed by the folly of the twelve Egyptian roitelets, who made a mighty lake, Morris, to fill which

they much drained and weakened Nilus, that it could not, as before it did, water and fertilize the land; suitable to #**Isa 19:5**.

He hath said, &c.: see #**Eze 29:3**.

Ver. 10.

I am against thee: see #**Eze 28:22**.

Thy rivers: see #**Eze 29:4**.

Waste: see #**Eze 29:9**.

The tower; thus, as a common name, we, and the French, and others read it; but some account it a proper name of a town or city, called Magdalum, for aught I know the old Migdol, #**Ex 14:2 Nu 33:7,8**; it was on the Red Sea side, north-east of Egypt: from this part unto Syene.

Syene; a city on the east of Nilus over against Arabia, saith one; a city that is just below the great cataract or fall of Nilus toward Ethiopia, and such a boundary between Ethiopia and Egypt as admits dispute to which it belongs. Ethiopia: now, to dispute nothing of this geography, it seems likely to me, that what we render Ethiopia is not so well and plainly rendered; for Syene being so near to Ethiopia, we must look some place of Egypt at some greater distance from Syene than this Ethiopia is; if then it were translated, the border of Cush, to whom Moses assigns Arabia, #**Ge 10:7**. Let us suppose then Magdalum, instead of

the tower, as one term; Syene on the edge of Ethiopia, as another; and the opposite point on the Red Sea towards Arabia; and then almost all Egypt is comprised herein, from north-east to south-east, down the Red Sea, thence to the westward as far as Ethiopia, and thence up the Nile as high northward as Magdalum.

Ver. 11.

No foot of man; not strictly to be taken, but in an accommodated sense, or comparatively to what once was, or so little traffic and passing to and fro, that no footsteps or tracks of men were found. It is a Scripture hyperbole, as #**Lu 19:44 Isa 14:31 Eze 26:14,21**.

Nor foot of beast; of profitable, useful, and tractable, as sheep, oxen, and horses; but of wild beasts too many are in the desolate places of that part of the world.

Neither shall it be inhabited forty years: accounting these years from the first wastings of Egypt by their civil dissensions and wars, some nine or ten years before Nebuchadnezzar subdued and wasted it, which he did in the thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, and thirty-seventh years of his reign, or thereabout. So that these forty years will fall in about the thirtieth year of Jeconiah's captivity, and end with the seventieth year of the captivity, which was the first of Cyrus.

Ver. 12.

This verse is a further repeated confirmation of what was said before, and needs no new explication, every thing in it being already spoken to in the former verses.

Among the nations; some into captivity, others by a timely retirement dispersed themselves, and got among their neighbours, who escaped, and where they kept, till the forty years expired.

Ver. 13.

Forty years: see **#Eze 29:11**.

Gather, by some eminent acts of Providence toward them, perhaps inclining the generous mind of Cyrus to favour them, and proclaim liberty to them, and under the government of old Aresis, that reigned fifty-five years, saith Diodorus, some ten or twelve of which might be under Cyrus, who had a kindness for the old man; and he, to repair the wastes, obtained and published great privileges for the new replanters.

The people; Babylon, Ethiopia, Libya, and other countries, that can be but conjectured to have been receptacles for them.

Ver. 14.

The captivity; which Nebuchadnezzar led away into Babylon.

The land of Pathros; one province or country of Egypt; it was a southern part of Egypt. in which was the famous city Thebae or Thebais, known for its hundred gates.

The land of their habitation; the ancient habitation of the fathers of the most of those that did return, forty years having eaten up almost all that had lived there before.

A base kingdom; a low, tributary, dependent kingdom, subject to the Persian kingdom as Achaemenid was to Cyrus; and though it did at length grow great, yet was it always dependent on Greeks or Romans.

Ver. 15.

The basest; the most abject, debased, and most underling. It is likely the kings to whom Egypt was tributary kept them lowest, as knowing how dangerous that kingdom might be, as it recovered its ancient greatness; and the word seems to intimate this, for it is more than the kingdoms it shall be depressed.

Neither shall it exalt itself; its masters would so watch and check it. I will diminish them; beside the hard and cruel usages of the Persian kings, which might be unjust enough, God's most just judgment should follow them to lessen their numbers, power, wealth, and honour.

They shall no more rule over the nations; though once they had subdued and ruled, yet should they not any more. In the times of the Ptolemies, though it was considerable, yet then it was not a kingdom that ruled the nations about her, though she made war upon them.

Ver. 16.

The confidence: on every occasion the Jews were wont, against express prohibition, to renew friendship with Egypt, and make leagues for defence by them, and here they sinfully rested, as **#Isa 30:2 31:1 36:6,9**; see **#Eze 29:7**.

Which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance; which sinful reliance on the arm of flesh provoked God to call to mind other their iniquities which accompanied this, viz. their idolatry, and going a whoring with these their confederates. God never forgets, but when he visits, punisheth, and judgeth a nation for their sin, then their sin is come up into remembrance.

When they shall look after them; or, in their, i.e. the house of Israel's, looking after, i.e. with a desire that the Egyptians would, with hope they will, and with confidence that they can, relieve, rescue, and save them; when they forgot God, and respected Egypt.

They shall know; the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord, and whoso knows him will put their trust in him, #Ps 9:10.

Ver. 17.

The seven and twentieth year of Jeconiah's captivity, the year after the conquest of Tyre, and the thirty-fifth of Nebuchadnezzar.

The first month; part of our March and April.

Ver. 18.

His army: the army, the inferior officers, and principal commanders, it is like, were weary of the siege, and might advise the raising it; but the authority, presence, and immovable resolution of the king kept them on still, and made them hold out.

A great service; it was service to the justice of God in punishing the Tyrians by the ambition of Nebuchadnezzar, who would not endure any thing to stand against him. It was great service, both for hardness of work, heaviness of burdens, and unreasonable length of the siege, thirteen years together.

Every head was made bald; either age, or sicknesses, (which often make men bald,) or continued wearing of the helmets, spoiled the best heads of hair amongst them; or perhaps it noteth the weeping bargain they had, though they mastered Tyre, where they got no booty; and both Nebuchadnezzar and his army might shave their heads, in token of mourning for their loss, rather than crown their heads with garlands of joy for gaining of the city.

Every shoulder was peeled; either clothes wore out, they had scarce any to their backs in so long a siege, or galled and blistered with carrying burdens, stones, timber, iron, and earth for fortifications, and to make a passage from the continent to Tyre; which sores, when healed, left scabs or dead skin that peeled off.

He had no wages; for though Tyre was very rich when first besieged, no doubt very much wealth was carried away by shipping at the beginning and during the siege, which none could prevent, very much spent and wasted in the siege, and what was left preserved by articles of surrender; for most conclude that it was delivered on composition, and the conqueror had only victory for his pains and charge.

Ver. 19.

I will give the land of Egypt: yet it is certain that the discontents of Egypt gave occasion, and the revolts of some of the subjects from Hophra, or Apries, and their inviting Nebuchadnezzar, gave him Egypt; but these were the irregularities of men, which God did wisely and justly manage to effect what he designed, and God gave, and men gave too; as the ten tribes gave, so God gave, the kingdom to Jeroboam; so the first cause and second causes produce the same effect. *Her multitude;* common people, who shall be made captives by the power of the conqueror, and servants or slaves next by the will of those that buy them of the soldier.

Her spoil: much of the Egyptian riches were the spoil of other nations, or the spoils of one another in the late civil wars between Pharaoh-hophra and Areasis; and now their dishonest gains shall be a prey to Babylonians.

Her prey; that which was once another's possession, whilst right prevailed; but became a prey when Egypt's power mastered the possessors.

The wages for his army: his army could not have plunder of Tyre, because it was surrendered on terms, but now they shall, and this shall be their prey.

Ver. 20.

I have given him; it is as sure as in his possession; thought he must fight for it, and it will cost blood, yet he shall surely have success.

Against it; Tyre.

They wrought for me; the proud, revengeful, covetous, and cruel Babylonians designed themselves, and did work for themselves, but God had further, higher, and more excellent ends, his work was doing by them who thought nothing less.

Ver. 21.

In that day; about that time, when Egypt was spoiled, Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, his wars first, and soon after his life, ended, about four or five years after his return out of Egypt into Babylon; for about the thirty-seventh or thirty-eighth of

his reign he finished his conquest of Egypt, and in the forty-third year he died at Babylon.

The horn; Jehoiachin by Evil-merodach was advanced, #Jer 52:31-33; beside dignities given to Daniel, the three children, and many others, under whose authority and favour the affairs of the Jews began, as a root that hath life in it, to spring and flourish; and whatever was the more immediate visible cause that prevailed with Evil-merodach, we are sure the principal cause was this, God's mercy and veracity, who had promised he would do it, and foretold the time when he would begin to do it.

The opening of the mouth; thou shalt with greater authority be heard speaking, when the sorrows thou foretoldest, and the joys thou promisedst, both come to pass; and both Jews and Babylonians shall see and own it; or, thou shalt have liberty and freedom, as well as will and cause to speak, to open thy mouth in comforting the good among them, and to give praise to God, who revived their hopes, and made them know him as the Lord their God.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 30

The desolation of Egypt and her helpers, #Eze 30:1-19. The arm of Babylon shall be strengthened to break the arm of Egypt, #Eze 30:20-26.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Howl ye, inhabitants of Egypt, and whoso are near enough in friendship and alliances to fall under the like calamities.

Woe worth the day! Ah the day! O sad and miserable times.

Ver. 3.

The day; the time of such distresses, as never the like known by you.

Near; it will begin in your overthrow in the Cyrenian and Libyan deserts in very little time next it will continue in your civil war, and finally end in the Babylonish conquest: some two years, and you shall be miserably routed in the deserts of Libya; immediately

after the civil war for eleven years together shall waste you; and then Nebuchadrezzar's forces will be upon you; so that, whereas there may be about sixteen or eighteen years between the prophecy and its fulfilling, here is thirteen or fourteen of them taken up with sorrows and afflictions, forerunners of the last.

The day of the Lord; of the Lord's sore displeasure against Egypt and its allies.

Near; within two years, as is said.

A cloudy day; a dark day, so times of trouble are called, whereas prosperity is a day of light. Troubles, like violent storms, are black.

Of the heathen; of the Egyptians to be wasted, and of the Babylonians to waste them; the day of pride, cruelty, and revenges to the one, the day of falling, spoil, and destruction to the other.

Ver. 4.

The sword: see #Eze 29:8.

In Ethiopia; next neighbour and ally to Egypt; they shall tremble at so great danger, so near, and they uncertain whether it will come on them, but very certain to be ruined if it does come, and as certain that they have cause to suspect it will come on them.

When the slain shall fall in Egypt; when the Egyptians, under the eye of the Ethiopians, shall fall in battle, and at the taking of their towns.

They shall take away her multitude; in miserable captivity carry them to Babylon, by whole droves.

Her foundations, their government, laws, counsellors, strong holds, which are to a nation as foundations to a house, are destroyed.

Ver. 5.

Ethiopia, Heb. *Cush*, which are commonly thought to be the Ethiopians in Africa, but some more inquisitive geographers have found them originally and chiefly in Arabia, which was either subject or ally to Egypt in its prosperity; and these were, as #Eze 30:4, in a panic that, lest the Babylonian should pass the sea, and take them in his way home.

Libya, Heb. *Phut*; hence the Putaens or Phutaans, who afterwards were better known by Libyans, a part of whose country was near to Egypt.

Lydia; Lydians, not the Asiatic, but the Africans, placed between some part of Cyrene and Egypt.

All the mingled people; the hired soldiers from all parts, a confused mixture of nations, such as the Libyans had got together; or all Arabia, so the word **#2Ch 9:14 Isa 13:20**; or all that ravenous sort of people, that like crows fly to slaughters; so soldiers of fortune follow the wars, and the Hebrew word is *crow*, **#Le 11:15 De 14:14 Ps 147:9**, as well as mixed.

Chub; Ethiopians beyond Egypt south, the inhabitants of the inmost Libya, which reached to the Nigritae; perhaps they may be the Nubians at this day, a letter easily changed.

The men of the land that is in league; the sons of the land of the covenant: some refer to the Jews, children of the covenant, but this is forced; it is all the people of Egypt's league, all the allies of the Egyptian kingdom. With them; with the Egyptians.

By the sword; in war by the sword of Babylon.

Ver. 6.

They also that uphold Egypt; either the princes, counsellors, and martial men in Egypt, or those abroad, that favour her and help her.

The pride of her power; the glory of all her strength, of which she was proud.

Shall come down; be trodden under foot. From the tower; from Magdalum in the north-east part of Egypt, toward the Red Sea, to Syene in the most south-west part of Egypt. See **#Eze 29:10**.

Ver. 7.

They, all those before mentioned,

shall be desolate; as much wasted as any of them that are most wasted. Her cities, of Egypt, equally wasted with other cities that have been sacked, as Jerusalem, Tyre, Zidon, Rabbath, &c.

Ver. 8.

They shall know; all that act, and all that suffer, in this tragedy, shall by the evidence of the things be enforced to own God's hand, and ascribe justice, and truth, and glory to him.

A fire; that war, which like increasing fire consumeth all.

Shall be destroyed; the destruction of so many and powerful aids shall prove that it was God's hand did it.

Ver. 9.

In that day; the day of God's severe but just judgments, and Egypt's fatal desolation.

Messengers; such as having seen and escaped the sword, shall tell the dismal news.

From me; by my permission and providence they shall go, as if sent by me.

In ships; ships that either carried them over into Pentapolis, crossing the river Nilus, or rather going down the river into the Mediterranean, and so to any part of those north parts of Africa, and others by ship through the Red Sea to Arabia Felix, which is that Ethiopia which is here meant; though it is possible in those days the African Ethiopia might, as once it did, extend quite to the mouth of the Red Sea. on whose shore their ancestors must needs first land out of Arabia, whence the Abyssinians, who are our present Ethiopians, do own their descent. So messengers by ships might carry the news to both the Ethiopian, Asian, and African, by the Red Sea.

The careless Ethiopians; in much security they had hitherto lived, the most potent and formidable neighbour having been their ancient ally, till the news of so mighty an enemy at their very doors.

Great pain; apprehensions of danger, that puzzles their wisdom, weakens their courage, makes them in perplexity, both sick and astonished.

As in the day of Egypt; either like that which, when their host was drowned in the Red Sea, seized all Egypt, or rather like this

latter fear, which arose from the mighty havoc made by the Chaldean.

It cometh; a storm like that certainly cometh against you.

Ver. 10.

The multitude; the numerous families and tribes. To cease; to dwindle and decrease.

By the hand; by the army, power, and conduct of Nebuchadrezzar.

Ver. 11.

He; Nebuchadrezzar.

His people; his own subjects, not hired soldiers.

The terrible: this is the description of them, **#Hab 1:7**, a fierce and cruel people, as **#Ps 137:8,9**.

Shall be brought, by the hand of God, using means for that end, as before noted, **#Eze 29:4**.

Draw their swords against Egypt; readily, and with resolution not to sheath them till Egypt be filled with slain.

Ver. 12.

I will make the rivers dry; either by some extraordinary drought, or rather by means of that mighty lake, which drew so much water from Nilus, that all their canals were ever after shallow, and the lake, as the oracle foretold, helped their enemy, and hurt their friends; or the Chaldeans might divert them, and so their fortified towns would want one great defence.

Sell the land: God gave it, here he sells; the one is proper, the other a borrowed expression; indeed God seems to pay wages with it, **#Eze 29:19,20**; but hereby is intimated, that as sellers deliver into the hand of the buyer, so God would deliver Egypt into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, as surely as if he had bought it. arid we may conclude the Chaldean as a buyer will make the most of all he buys.

Of the wicked; not of just and compassionate, but of injurious and merciless men. Strangers, who leave nothing they can carry away, eat up, or spoil.

I the Lord have spoken it; it is the decree and edict of Heaven, which cannot be broken.

Ver. 13.

I will also destroy; God did it by the Babylonians; those proud and impious nations did triumph over the gods of the conquered, and out of contempt of them burnt them or broke them, as is well known; so Sennacherib threatened, #2Ch 32:19 Isa 37:19,24, against the true God, as he did to idol gods.

The idols; dunghill gods, as the words, fitter to be trod under foot than to be decked and respected.

Their images; these nothings, as the word imports; whoever destroyed the image destroyed the god, for it was nothing but an image.

Noph; Memphis, now Grand Cairo, the chief city of the country, the seat of their kings first, of their priests by consequence, and of all their several gods too; but the Chaldeans destroyed the nest and birds too.

A prince; either an Egyptian horn, or independent, or over all Egypt, or that shall have the power, wealth, or honour like a former brave Egyptian king. A fear of consternation and cowardice, that should disable them for counsel and action in their most urgent affairs.

Ver. 14.

Parthos: see #Eze 29:14.

Set a fire in Zoan: it may be literally understood, that Zoan, Tanis, for that is its name, should be burnt down to ashes; or metaphorically, of war, and civil dissensions.

No; a very great and populous city, situate on one of the mouths of Nilus, and on the sea, #Na 3:8. Now Alexandria stands where that did. But it was greater in sin than in people, and it was visited with very great and dreadful judgments, #Na 3:8-11, which see.

Ver. 15.

Will pour my fury: see #Eze 21:31.

Sin; either Sain, or more likely Pelusium, which was a frontier, and secured the entrance of Egypt from the desert of Sin, was the

key of Egypt, and therefore always well fortified and strongly garrisoned; it was called Damtiata.

The strength of Egypt; one of the principal munitions of Egypt; for it was a good and large haven, and was strengthened with all needful fortifications.

The multitude, or the riches and tumultuous noise which the multitudes thereof made. If we read as the margin, it is plain, God does threaten Pelusium after No is cut off; if we retain our own translation, we must think of another city of that name, which God threatens with Sin. Now this may be Thebe Egyptiacae or this city may be Hamon No, called Diospolis, the city of Jupiter; possibly it may be the same mentioned already, and the threat repeated to confirm it.

Ver. 16.

Will set fire: see #Eze 30:14, and #Eze 20:47.

Sin: see #Eze 30:15. Great pain: see #Eze 30:9.

No: #Eze 30:14,15.

Rent asunder; her walls, and towers, and fortresses battered, torn, and broken through by the continued violence of engines, and by the assaults of the soldiers.

Noph: see #Eze 30:13.

Distresses: being the chief city where king and councils sat, whence orders should be given, whither all intelligences were brought, all should be so bad abroad, that nothing but fears and distresses fill their ears, mouths, and hearts, beside the wants that would increase daily on them.

Ver. 17.

The young men: it is probable these might be a select army of valiant youths in one body, collected out of these two cities, that resolved to break the Chaldean army, or fall in the enterprise; or else that they did to the utmost defend the walls, and were put to the sword when the city was taken by assault.

Aven; Bethshemesh and Heliopolis, an idolatrous city, that worshipped the sun, and in which was a stately temple built to the sun. Its size was one hundred and fifty furlongs, six miles and

three quarters, in compass, a very vain and sinful city, as its name Aven intimates.

Pi-beseth; Bubastus, and sometimes called Haephestus, no inconsiderable place, and I believe not far from Avon. It should seem to be some convenient pass, as I conjecture.

These cities; the citizens, cities put for citizens.

Go into captivity; some of the first, it may be the very first; which put Memphis, at report of it, into a sick fit, with great pain; this being the first-fruits of the sad coming harvest.

Ver. 18.

Tehaphnehes; a great and goodly city of Egypt. Tachapanes, Tachpanes, Tahapanes, Tahpanes, Chanes, and Hanes, #**Isa 30:4**, are names given it, and this from a queen of Egypt of that name in Solomon's time, #**1Ki 11:19,20**. It stood not far from Sin or Pelusium, and by the Greeks, a little softening the name, called Daphne Pelusiaca. It was a royal city, in it Pharaoh had a house; to it many Jews fled, when forbidden of the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah, #**Eze 44**. It was one of the first cities you come to out of the desert of Sin, and was one of the keys of Egypt.

The day shall be darkened; a night shall come upon it, and such a night of sorrow as shall grow darker and darker till the day, i.e. their day, be

darkness; or else, word for word, darkness shall be the day, and may bear this sense, shall be more welcome, more useful, more desired, than the day, whose light would discover their flight, which the night concealed.

I shall break, as into shivers.

The yokes; the sceptres; for there was one of Pharaoh's houses, and probably some sceptre and other regal ornaments: or, the bars, which kept enemies out, and secured the citizens and country; such was this frontier town. Or, when, by giving this strong place into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, I shall break the kingdom of Egypt, that it no more oppress with yokes, i.e. burdens.

The pomp; the beauty and goodliness with which the strength of this city was set out in her buildings, towers, forts.

Shall cease in her; shall be buried in her own ruins.

A cloud; sorrow at the success of the Chaldeans against her, compared often to a cloud.

Her daughters; either metaphorically, i.e. the towns and villages about her, or literally, her children; her daughters only mentioned, because her sons were destroyed and slain.

Ver. 19.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 20.

The eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, three months and two days before Jerusalem was taken, #Jer 52:4.

In the first month; the fourth day of our April.

Ver. 21.

I have often told thee I would break, now I tell thee

I have broken, partly by the victory of the Chaldean over Pharaoh-necho, partly by the victory the Cyreneaus got over Pharaoh-hophra to raise the siege, from which attempt he fell with shame and loss, but more by civil wars.

Pharaoh; Hophra or Apries.

It shall not be bound up to be healed; and this wound is incurable,

it shall never be bound up to be healed, his arm shall never be strong and fit to encounter a potent enemy, as once it was.

Ver. 22.

In the former verse God had broken the arm, in this he will break the arms of Pharaoh, he will show he is still against Pharaoh, and will break him more and more.

The strong; that part of his kingdom which remains entire.

That which was broken; that which was shattered before, that part of his kingdom in Syria, taken from him, from Euphrates to the river of Egypt; that once was a strong arm, but now is broken and useless to him: and Egypt, whatever strength it now hath, shall be as weak and useless too; thus all his power and strength shall be destroyed.

Ver. 23.

See **#Eze 29:12**, and **#Eze 20:23**, where are the same expressions.

Ver. 24.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 25.

These two foregoing verses are a repetition of God's threats against Pharaoh, and of his promises to assist Nebuchadnezzar in the war, and every thing plain in them.

Will strengthen; give the first strength, and continue it with new supplies, so that with strength from God he shall proceed.

Put my sword in his hand; is strength shall have a weapon suited and proportioned to it; and what will be hard, where God's sword and his strength are engaged to effect it?

He, Hophra,

shall groan; not only as the stoutest must when nature breaks, but cry out and sigh, or howl, not becoming a brave man.

Before him, king of Babylon,

with the groanings of a deadly wounded man; who hath given him his deadly wound, under which he roars while he hath any strength, and groans when his voice fails him. It speaks sore griefs, and deep sense of them, as **#Ex 2:24 Jud 2:18 Job 24:12**.

Ver. 26.

See **#Eze 30:23**.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 31

A recital to Pharaoh of the Assyrian's greatness, and of his fall for pride, **#Eze 31:1-17**. The like destruction shall be to Pharaoh, **#Eze 31:18**.

Ver. 1.

In the eleventh year; as **#Eze 30:20**.

in the third month; our June 26th old style, the 16th new style; just one month and eight days before the taking of the city on the 27th of July old style, but 17th of July new style. The first day of the month Tamuz.

Ver. 2.

Pharaoh; Apries or Hophra.

To his multitude; his numerous subjects, with the power and riches they glory in.

Whom art thou like in thy greatness? bethink thyself, what king of all before thee art thou equal with, or else greater? On what surer and more immovable foundation doth thy greatness stand, that thou dreamest of a perpetual quiet and flourishing state, in the midst of all thy sins and wickednesses?

Ver. 3.

The Assyrian kingdom and its kings were the greatest the world ever knew before thee, they had longest time of growth, through 1340 or 1360 years, from Belus who was Nimrod, or Belus Assyrius, to Sardanapalus, from 1719 or 1717, or 1718, to 3059, of the world. And they had as fair advantages, as reaching a foresight, and as unwearied diligence to advance the kingdom; yet I bought it down.

A cedar; like a cedar; kings and kingdoms oft compared to trees, both in profane and sacred emblems; or like the most goodly cedar for strength and beauty. In Lebanon; a great mountainous tract from east to west, one hundred and twenty five miles in length, encloseth Canaan on the north.

With fair branches, which are the beauty, greatness, strength of the tree; so had this mighty kingdom fair provinces, as branches springing from it.

With a shadowing shroud: what we render shadowing in the Hebrew may signify either *silent* and quiet, or framing and modelling, intimating that this kingdom, like a shady tree, gave shelter to the weak, as if framed artificially to this, and it was a silent quiet repose its subjects had; as weak creatures find shelter in a mighty wood, so these.

Of an high stature: this kingdom grew to great height, while its branches were so beneficial.

Among the thick boughs, or clouds; for so the word will without violence bear, clouds being called so from their thickness; however, the head among the thick boughs speaks the

magnificence and greatness of this king, compassed about with tributary kings and princes and mighty men.

Ver. 4.

As cedars grow great by the watercourses, so did this kingdom by multitudes of people and convenience of trade; or by the plenty of the country, if no trade, for it was first planted in the fruitful fields among the sweet rivers, Euphrates, Tigris, Lycus, Diava, and others. The deep set him up on high; the sea sent out her waters, which gave being to the rivers that watered him and improved him; whereas, Egypt, thy rivers rise out of a lake, which, though great, is not to be compared with the deep. His plants; the provinces of this mighty kingdom, that are like plants about a great tree. Little rivers; beneficence, justice, protection, encouragements, that subjects need, and good princes disperse among them; so the deep filled this king, and he sent out his streams to all his subjects in his kingdom.

Ver. 5.

His height was exalted; his power, glory, and his pride too ran up on high: a just administration of laws for the benefit of the public, and a kind usage of the subject, while it was here, made the king great and his kingdom famous.

Above all the trees of the field; above all his neighbour kings, among whom oppressed weaklings still came to this kingdom, while just, for shelter. His boughs were multiplied; many became his subjects by voluntary choice, and his native subjects increased in numbers and wealth.

His branches became long; the provinces reached far and wide by the conquest of his arms, or attractives of his kindness brought to unite with him.

The multitude of waters; the many streams of royal justice and beneficence sent forth from the throne of this kingdom; so his throne was advanced and established.

Ver. 6.

All the fowls; not every individual, but all sorts and kinds of men and people, nobles, merchants, husbandmen, likened to fowls.

Made their nests; did settle their habitations and families, expecting what they found, safety and rest, and hoping what did ensue, an increase of their children and posterity, as birds do in a quiet and safe nest.

In his boughs; in his kingdom, in the cities or towns of it.

Under his branches; the very same thing expressed by a new hieroglyphic. Beasts here are people, the field is the countries round about, their bringing forth their young includes their making their dens, that is, men's building, begetting children, and breeding them under his branches, under his government and protection.

Under his shadow dwelt all great nations: this gives some light to the riddle. No nation, that was great at that time in the world, but either owned the dominion, or sought the alliance and friendship, of this king and kingdom.

Ver. 7.

Fair; beautiful, lovely, and desirable. In his greatness; not exerted in tyranny and oppression, but exercised in the royal art of imitating the greatest and best being who is King over all, for he doth good to all.

In the length of his branches; how far soever remote, yet the justice and goodness of the government appeared the beauty of those provinces, as well as of the whole kingdom.

His root, whence he sprung, which supported and supplied the kingdom, was right, the laws, punishments, rewards, and encouragements neither founded in cruelty, nor maintained by violence.

By great waters; not by blood, which is no proper kindly nourishment for such cedars, but by waters, which are kindly and proper, and these great enough for his own growth and to nourish others too.

Ver. 8.

The cedars; kings, the greatest and most magnificent.

In the garden of God; either in the most fruitful gardens, or in Judah and Israel; not David, not Solomon, Jehoshaphat, or Hezekiah, could top and shade him.

The fir trees; a meaner sort of trees, emblem of lesser kings and kingdoms; these were but like his boughs, though they grow to great height and bulk. *The chesnut trees;* the same in another allusion. Kings, like chesnut trees, great when by themselves, yet, compared with this Assyrian, were but as branches of his boughs; all which see in Isaiah's words, **#Eze 10:7,8**. There was some truth, though more pride, in this speech of the Assyrian, which the prophet reports.

Nor any tree in the garden of God; all summed up, none like him in all the kingdoms of the world.

Ver. 9.

I have made him fair; all this greatness, wealth, and glory I have given him.

By the multitude of his branches; the numbers of his provinces, and multitude of his subjects, high and low, great and small.

Envied him; either did when they saw his greatness, or would have envied if they had seen it; or if there may be a seeming justifiableness in wondering at another's glory, and wishing it our own, here it might be found.

Ver. 10.

Now you shall hear the sin and the fall of this great kingdom of Assyria. His mind could not longer bear so great prosperity, he lifts up himself, and in his pride forgets God who lifted him up and will cast him down. You have a specimen of it in that of **#Isa 10:7-20 Isa 36:9,15,18**. This, as other best framed politics, degenerated into pride and violence against neighbours, subjects, friends, as well as against enemies; though it was too much to despise man, yet it was intolerably more insolent to reproach God. It is but time to lop, nay, cut down this cedar, as **#Isa 10:33**, with **#Isa 37:36,38**.

Ver. 11.

I have therefore delivered: no prophetic style, as some think, I have because I will, for most certainly God would deliver.

Him; the proud king of Assyria, who inherited all the vices of his progenitors more than their kingdoms; infamous Sardanapalus.

The mighty one: some say Cyrus, or rather Arbaces, who first struck at the root of this cedar, and cut him down; and well might this man, though no king when he attempted this, be styled the mighty one of the heathen, who could bring together four hundred thousand of Medes, Persians, Babylonians, and Arabians, a power sufficient to besiege the Assyrian king two years in his own city and palace.

He shall surely deal with him; so he did, for he held him besieged without hope of relief, till at two years' end this vicious king burned himself with his palace.

Driven him out, with disgrace, for his lewd, shameless courses, as a wife is cast out by divorce for adultery, #Le 21:7.

For his wickedness; so Sardanapalus was cast out for his effeminacy and lewdness; for it is reported this gave Arbaces first encouragement to lay a design against him. He was driven out, as the prophet words it, by the breach two miles and a half wide, made by the mighty floods from continual rains, which the walls of Nineveh could not withstand: so God rather than man did drive this beast out.

Ver. 12.

Strangers; foreigners, who regard neither justice nor mercy, such were those who made up his army of Arbaces the Mede.

The terrible; so these were for their strength and valour much, but for their numbers and barbarity more, to be dreaded.

Have cut him off; not shall, for it was done before Ezekiel's time, about the time Hezekiah was born, and about two hundred and forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonish captivity.

Left him; revolted or forsaken Sardanapalus.

Upon the mountains: as a tree, growing on the mountains which hang over the valleys, when it falls breaks, and its branches are scattered in the lower ground, on the banks of rivers that run in the bottom; so is this mighty cedar, this king and kingdom, fallen

from highest power and honour into deepest contempt and impotence, not able to repel his adversaries or escape out of their hands.

Have left him; all that were tributary to him have withdrawn their tribute, and rejected his dominion; and such as were his allies, and depended on his patronage, have quit their leagues and dependences, and left his shadow.

Ver. 13.

His ruin; his broken state.

All the fowls, which built and breed there, shall now despise the tree, and triumph over it.

All the beasts; the same in another emblem, as #Eze 31:6. Beasts, fowls, people, and nations, that were sheltered under the shadow of this tree, shall all, as is their custom, get from under it, and with the first insult and trample upon the body, boughs, and branches, fowls get on it, and both pick and defile, beasts rustle through it, and browse on the broken branches.

Ver. 14.

To the end; all this is designed to be a warning to mortals.

All the trees, i: e. the emperors, potentates, kings, or rich flourishing states.

By the waters; planted most commodiously, and furnished most abundantly with power and wealth.

Exalt themselves; grow proud, because they are high, shoot out tops above all the thick boughs, their neighbours. This caution against pride and self-exalting is three times repeated, that all, especially great men, and this proud king of Egypt, to whom this parable is propounded, should be humble.

For they are all delivered unto death; for if by office they are gods, yet by nature they are men, and by the decree of God, who cannot die, these gods must, as men, die, be laid in the grave, forgotten like other men, like the children of mean men, for death and the grave make no distinction.

Be not proud, God will pull down such; be humble, you must die.

Ver. 15.

When he, the king of Assyria, the tall cedar, or the kingdom of Assyria, went down to the grave; was a man in grave; buried in its own ruins.

I caused a mourning there was much lamentation.

I covered the deep; I put the sea, i.e. either neighbouring states, or the body of its people, or the trading part of the world, into mourning for him.

The floods thereof; all public affairs; commerce and friendly intelligences were at a great stand.

The great waters were stayed; the great traffic and wealth by it, which did flow as great waters, were stayed, and living rivers were as void of motion as the Dead Sea, all was out of course. Lebanon; the field in which this cedar grew, i.e. the whole kingdom of Assyria.

All the trees of the field; all the lesser kings and princes about him.

Fainted; fell into a swoon at the news of this great and unparalleled downfall of this mighty king and kingdom, which hath been here in sacred hyperbole set forth to warn Egypt, and convince it; none can stand whom God will cast down. Whether there were any portentous signs in the sea and great waters, and the rivers, and among the trees, presages of this fall, and pointed at here, I inquire not.

Ver. 16.

To shake; all that heard the noise of his fall trembled at it, it was as God intended it should be, an astonishment to them all.

Cast him down to hell; brought the king and kingdom, as a dead man, to the grave, among them that before were dead and buried.

All the trees of Eden; all kings, and particularly the greatest and richest, called here

the choice and best of Lebanon. All that drink water; did enjoy great power, riches, and worldly glory.

Shall be comforted: it is a prosopopoeia, and he speaks of the dead with allusion to the manner of the living, who rejoice to see the proud brought as low as the lowest; thus the prophet, **#Isa 14:9,10**.

Ver. 17.

They also; either his neighbour kings and princes, or those that were his own subjects, but rich and mighty.

Went down into hell; were broken and perished with him, and went to those God had slain for their pride and wickedness.

They that were his arm; his loyal and faithful subjects and friends abroad, who having been protected by him, remembered it, and adhered to him to support him; but all fell, are extinct, and gone down to the pit, where are many proud, but o pride; where all know themselves dust and ashes, and God glorious, holy, and just.

Ver. 18.

The mightiest, richest, and longest-lived kingdom I have represented, saith God, overthrown and destroyed; a kingdom thou canst not pretend to equal; and if not like this, what king or kingdom art thou like, that thou shouldst be invincible? Whoever thou art like in height and power, thou shalt be like them in thy fall and ruin.

Shall lie in the midst of the uncircumcised; as unclean, despised, and loathsome in thy blood, like the slain with the sword, not to be known without an upbraiding inscription;

This is Pharaoh.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 32

A lamentation for the fearful fall of Egypt, **#Eze 32:1-10**. The sword of Babylon shall destroy it, **#Eze 32:11-16**. It shall be brought down to hell among all the uncircumcised nations, **#Eze 32:17-32**.

Ver. 1.

In the twelfth year of the captivity of Jeconiah.

In the twelfth month, answering to part of our February and part of March, and called *Sabat*. In the first day; and was the 15th of February old style, and the 5th new style.

Ver. 2.

Take a lamentation: see #Eze 19:1 27:2.

Pharaoh; Hophra.

Like a young lion: of this hieroglyphic see #Eze 19:3,6.

Of the nations; among, or to, the nations round about thee, spoiling all thou canst, a cruel devourer abroad.

A whale; a crocodile, a devouring dragon in thy rivers at home, for there the crocodiles lay and did mischief, though sometimes they went down the river to the sea.

In the seas; that comes forth to seek prey and devour, so a lion at land, a whale, or crocodile rather, at sea, ravenous every where.

Camest forth with thy rivers; raisedst mighty armies, and didst lead them out against thy neighbours, as in particular, #Eze 29:3,4.

The waters; the people, kingdoms, and kings near thee.

With thy feet; with thy soldiers.

Fouledst their rivers; disturbed and muddied their pleasant clearness, and made them unfit to drink, i.e. did spoil all the pleasant and useful conveniences of thy neighbours.

Ver. 3.

My net; a large, long, and wide net, drawn out to full extent.

Over thee; with which both lions and crocodiles might be taken, and in which this lion and crocodile should certainly be taken; for God, whose hand never erreth, will spread the net.

With a company of many people: in the countries where these creatures were hunted, they went in mighty companies to the game, as they accounted it.

Bring thee up in my net; drag thee along to destroy thee, pull thee up out of the pit, in which the net was laid to take the lion to kill him, and draw this crocodile up out of the water for the same

end; in brief, war by land and sea by a confederacy of many people against Hophra shall be God's net, wherein he shall be taken, kept a prisoner, as he was, and at last strangled: see #Eze 29:4.

Ver. 4.

Leave thee upon the land; thy beaten army shall be slain: see #Eze 29:5: it was literally fulfilled in the deserts of Libya, where the slain of Hophra's army were left to be devoured by fowls and beasts. Metaphorically it is gathering a mixture of people, soldiers, like ravenous birds and beasts. from all parts to spoil Egypt.

To remain upon thee; they should not be removed till filled with the spoils of Egypt.

The beasts of the whole earth; the foreign and mercenary soldiers shall be enriched by the slaughter and plunder of the Egyptians.

Ver. 5.

Will lay; throw or cast.

Thy flesh; the carcasses of thy slain men and soldiers.

Upon the mountains; whither they retired for safety. *Fill the valleys;* not so fill them as to equal them in height with hills, but we say a man fills a place who scatters much or many things though but on the surface; so here valleys filled.

With thy height; with the carcasses of thy princes, as the Chaldee paraphrast I think hits right; and so the French, *et remplirai les vallies de tee glorieux qu' on aura abbatu.*

Ver. 6.

Water with thy blood; most plentifully pour out thy blood, as water is poured out to water land, when men float their grounds.

Wherein thou swimst; either because of the plenty thereof, wherein they swam, as we say; or else because this king was a whale or crocodile, his dwelling must be the waters, and in them he swam. To the mountains; an hyperbole; blood shall be poured forth, as if it were to rise to the very mountains and cover them; or thy blood shall be shed through all thy plain country, to

the very mountains, which I think are toward the south-west parts toward Ethiopia; so they should be slain from Migdol or Magdalum to Syene, as #Eze 29:10.

Full of thee; of thy blood, and of thy carcasses cast into the rivers by thine enemies, or drowned in attempting flight by water from the drawn sword.

Ver. 7.

Put thee out; as a torch is extinguished, #Isa 43:17, so I will put out thy light, and turn thee into darkness.

Cover the heaven; either by dark vapours that arise from blood and putrefying carcasses, which darken the heavens; or it is a description of great sorrows, fears, troubles, and perplexities; or else it may intimate particularly the total ruin of the whole kingdom, in which the best, greatest, and noblest parts are; as heaven suppose the government, the sun the king, the moon the queen, the stars the princes and nobles, bright lights the most eminent of the subjects for wisdom and understanding, and then the land the common people: all shall be covered with clouds, and darkness of misery first, and sorrow next. Or it is possible that some unusual darkneses might be seen in the heavens and on the earth about that time.

Ver. 8.

These two foregoing verses contain the same thing four times with a little variation, repeated to affect the hearers, and to impress it the more deeply on their minds.

Ver. 9.

Vex; it speaks a passion mixed and made up with grief for what is done, fear of the consequence of it, anger against him that did it, and an astonishment at the report, and it seizeth the heart and spirits of the hearers.

Many people, and great nations.

Thy destruction; either the fame of it, or the remainders that fled timely from thy destruction, or thy captives who after thou art destroyed are carried away, and the news of thy fall with them, or when the like ruin and destruction shall fall upon them. Which thou hast not known; such as were strangers to Egypt, and which

Egypt had no commerce with, shall be troubled with apprehension what mischief may come upon the world from so mighty a conqueror, and by the accession of so great a kingdom and power as that of Egypt.

Ver. 10.

Many people, and mighty people too.

Amazed; astonished and puzzled, not knowing what resolutions to take, what advices to follow, or what to do. *Their kings*, who usually are, and in reason should be, undaunted, and discover no signs of fear, shall discover mighty disorders of fear and doubt, both for Egypt and themselves. *Horribly afraid:* see #Eze 27:35.

Brandish my sword; or, make my sword pass with such speed, as if it did fly along their borders, or hover near them, and so threaten them. *They shall tremble;* be greatly afraid, lest Nebuchadnezzar, who here is God's sword, should smite them.

Every man; every one of the kings, whose kingdoms are near to Egypt, and by whose borders the Babylonish army must pass in their marches.

For his own life; they should be solicitous, not for the outmost parts of their kingdoms, or for their subjects, but for their own life.

In the day of thy fall; when they shall hear of Hophra beaten, taken, imprisoned, his kingdom taken from him, and he dead by a shameful death, and all his people slain, captivated, spoiled, or fled.

Ver. 11.

See #Eze 30:24,25.

Upon thee; both king and kingdom of Egypt.

Ver. 12.

By the swords of the mighty; the soldiers of Nebuchadnezzar, helped also by Amasis, and the rebellious Egyptians that joined with Amasis and Nebuchadnezzar against their own king.

The multitude; the people of the land, which were numerous before they were wasted by these wars.

The terrible of the nations: see #Eze 31:12.

Spoil the pomp; break her strength, rob her treasures, sack her cities, captivate her people, and make the kingdom tributary, and so stain all her glory.

All the multitude thereof, from high to low, the great and the mean promiscuously, shall perish.

Ver. 13.

All the beasts thereof; the sheep and oxen devoured by hungry Chaldean soldiers, or else driven away; the horses taken up to mount the horsemen of the Chaldee army, whose own horses were tired or spoiled.

Beside the great waters; the pastures lying along the river's side, and along their canals, should be emptied of all cattle, with which once they were full.

Neither shall the foot of man throttle them; there should be so few men left in Egypt, that they should not, as formerly, disturb the waters by digging, swimming, or rowing on them; or, no more trouble the waters with the passing of mighty armies over them to invade their neighbours.

Nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them; so few horses or cows, that they should not at watering times, or in the heat of the day, foul the waters by running into them, and stamping or trampling in them; but the waters shall continue pure and undisturbed.

Ver. 14.

Make their waters deep: the sense literally this, the waters undisturbed shall be clear, the mud settled at the bottom, and the waters above it of good depth.

To run like oil; smooth and softly, as oil glides along, which will be when neither men nor cattle disturb the rivers: but figuratively, waters and rivers are people and nations, and those near to, and once disturbed, and put into confusion by Egypt, at whose fall all those troubles shall cease, the people shall settle in quiet state, and affairs shall, like a quieted river, run smoothly and in great peace.

Ver. 15.

The former verse assures us of what it foretold, and the assurance is the word and truth of God; this verse tells us when this shall be.

Shall be destitute: this phrase is #Eze 12:19.

That whereof it was full; men and women, cattle, food, wealth, and peace. *When I shall smite by the sword,* the destroying sword of the Chaldeans.

Then shall they know that I am the Lord; then shall they confess it to the glory of God's power and justice.

Ver. 16.

This heavy, mournful, and sad account, which the prophet hath given of the state of Egypt,

is the lamentation, the funeral speech of this kingdom; for this, as a funeral oration, tells us what was their ancient glory, and what is now their miserable reproach and loss.

They shall lament; her friends, or the Egyptians themselves rather.

The daughters of the nations: this may be expository of the former, and tell us who they are that shall lament Egypt, the provinces and cities of their neighbouring nations; or literally, the daughters, the tender-hearted virgins and women abroad.

Even for Egypt; ruined Egypt.

All her multitude; the common people, many of whom suffered for what they could not prevent; a sort of people that were fitter to be pitied and spared, than to be robbed and slain, a sort of people none but unrelenting hearts could be harsh to or hasty with.

Ver. 17.

In the twelfth year: see #Eze 32:1.

The fifteenth day; about the 19th of February new style, or the 1st of March old style.

Ver. 18.

Prepare the funeral ceremonies at the burial of Egypt, compose a suitable song or speech, utter it with a like suitableness to the sad occasion. #Jer 9:17-19, and #Am 5:16, use the word, and the places read will explain this.

Cast them down; either declare that they shall be cast down from their height and glory; or rather, because this was done

already, lay them down as dead in the grave, bring him to his grave, as the word is used, with addition of sheol, #1Ki 2:9, and much like are #Eze 26:20 31:16.

The daughters of the famous nations; and celebrate the funerals of other cities and kingdoms, that lie buried in their own ruins and other men's oblivion.

The nether parts of the earth; a well-known description of the state of the dead and the grave.

Go down into the pit: usually this is no more than a common description of men's going to the dust in their burial, but here it includes more. The Egyptians affected to be buried either in the isle Chemnis, or in the pyramids, their kings and great ones thus would be laid by themselves; but Ezekiel provides them their grave among common people, buries them where they fall; for they shall not have what they account so much of in their funeral.

Ver. 19.

The whole, from this verse, is a most elegant personating of the dead, as if sensible, and acquainted, and discoursing with, and rejoicing at the fall of proud tyrants, who took not warning by their fall. Such a prosopopoeia you have #Isa 14. In this chapter the actors are the prophet, the king of Egypt and his people, and their auxiliaries.

Whom dost thou pass in beauty? the prophet begins with this question dialogue-wise, Art thou better than others, that thou shouldst not die and be laid in dust, as well as all others? speak, Hophra, if thou hast any privilege to plead, what hast thou to say why thou shouldst not go down to the pit as a despised mortal?

Go down: the prophet, hearing no plea of privilege, adjudgeth him to the grave, or lays him own with somewhat a sarcasm, Go down like others.

Be thou laid; take up thy lodging, thy long, dark, and dismal recess, where thy dust and bones shall never be known by any royal figure.

With the uncircumcised; among profane and loathed carcasses; such the uncircumcised were in the opinion of the circumcised, and Herodotus in Euterpe saith the Egyptians were circumcised.

However, in Scripture, a burial with the uncircumcised is a note of dishonour and contempt; thus for the king and princes.

Ver. 20.

Now the prophet determines concerning the people, which die as others, fall undistinguished, and, as undistinguished, must be laid in the pit.

They; the Egyptians. In the midst; in battle shall die.

By the sword; either of one another in civil war, or of their neighbours they invaded, or of Babylonians that invaded them.

She is delivered; the whole Egyptian kingdom is given up of God.

To the sword of wasting enemies, especially of the Chaldean. Draw her; make no ceremony more than usually is made, when common soldiers, slain in the field where the battle is fought, are dragged by scores into mighty pits, and thrown into them promiscuously; or, as the interlude will bear it, suppose any of them unwilling to stoop, draw them to it against their will.

All her multitudes, of soldiers and people, subjects, allies, and helpers of Egypt.

Ver. 21.

The prophet seems in this verse to introduce the next speakers in this parley, and bringing them in, gives their character.

The strong; the powerful, the valiant, whose natural strength of body was great, and their courage greater, those that were strongest.

Among the mighty; for feats they did, by which it appeared they might compared with others, pass for giants, mighty warriors. conquerors, and riders.

Shall speak to him, the king of Egypt.

Hell; or rather, the grave, where they lie without strength, as dead mortals, though while they lived they bore themselves as if gods and immortal.

Them that help him; either these great ones shall speak to Hophra's helpers, or else these his friends, slain in his quarrel and dead before him, shall speak to him.

Gone down to the grave: see #Eze 32:18. Uncircumcised; neglected and forgotten, or remembered with contempt: see #Eze 32:19.

Ver. 22.

Asshur, the famous, warlike, victorious kings of Assyria, is there; in the state of the dead, in the land of darkness and oblivion;

and all her company; princes, captains, soldiers, subjects, and confederates.

His graves are about him; perhaps his the greater, yet a grave, and they about him who were slain with him.

All of them slain; some in wars, whilst the kingdom began, grew, and flourished; others, when the kingdom was destroyed; these fell by the sword. Awhile their sword was longest; at last a longer sword, that of Arbaces the Mede, with his accomplices, wounds Asshur to the heart, and he is brought to the grave.

Ver. 23.

At least for decorum here is supposed a spacious vault, or pit, in midst whereof the king of Asshur in a stately tomb lies buried, and round about the vault are places to lay others dead with him, and in his cause, some of his more famous captains and commanders.

Her company; the common subjects and soldiers of the Assyrian empire, all buried undistinguished about her: see #Eze 32:22.

Her grave: the ruins of an empire are its grave; and so all the subjects of this empire lie buried with it.

Caused terror; were a terror to all they would be enemies to, and proudly boasted of and inhumanly used their power, now lie quiet, their dust little regarded, less feared, and least of all pitied. In the land of the living; while they were in the land of the living, a periphrasis of life.

Ver. 24.

Elam; the Persians, and their great, famous kings, who lived in former days. *All her multitude:* see #Eze 32:22,23.

All of them slain: see #Eze 32:22.

Gone down: #Eze 32:21.

Uncircumcised: see #Eze 32:21.

The nether parts of the earth: see #Eze 32:18.

Their terror: see #Eze 32:23.

Their shame God and man poured contempt upon them, and punished them for their pride, and turned their glory into shame, whose vices and miscarriages are more remembered than their noble facts and glorious achievements.

Ver. 25.

Some conceive the prophet may allude to the manner of burying with the Persians who had their coffins, or sepulchral chests, in which with balms and spices the dead were kept, and these chests placed in midst of places provided for them; in such is the king of Elam here placed with his slaughtered captains about him: see #Eze 32:23.

Ver. 26.

Meshech: see #Eze 27:13.

Tubal: see #Eze 27:13; to which interpretation I still adhere, adding that in the full extent of these Moschi and Tibareni, these Cappadocians and Albanians, the Scythians may be included, many of which were next neighbours to them. Junius is of opinion that the Scythians are here meant, and so am I. But it will be said they never had such a settled kingdom worth noting. It is true of that barbarous people, there is no account that ever they were lords of the world; yet *they caused their terror in the land of the living*, and were slain by the sword under the command and in the expeditions of their kings into Asia, who were accompanied with her multitudes. Velleius reports they wasted Asia 350 years before Rome was thought of, and that is about 1082 years before Christ's birth. Again, we find them in arms, (no doubt in numbers much like what they appeared in when Tomvris their queen destroyed Cyrus, or when they have moved against their neighbours in later days,) and with those arms wasted the Cimmerii, a people seated near them on the Euxine Sea and the Maeotis Palus; and about that time they did under their chieftains waste Asia, they forced

Cyaxares from the siege of Nineveh, such considerable strength they had then; this was 634 before Christ's birth, were lords of Asia for twenty-eight years, and it seems that their power was such, Cyaxares was glad to decline plain dealing, and to overthrow them by a wile, as Calvisius tells us, ad A.M. 3344, and the help of Halyattes, king of the Lydians. These things were fresh in memory when Ezekiel prophesied thus against Egypt, for they fell out about the eighth or ninth year of Pharaoh-necho, some fourteen years before Pharaoh-hophra came to the crown; now about the sixth year of his reign came this word of the Lord to Ezekiel; so that the prophet might well mention these as instances of God's power abating the pride and destroying the kingdoms of the mighty, and these are with reason brought in among the Persians and Assyrians.

Ver. 27.

They shall not lie with the mighty; the leaders of these Scythians were not buried with a pomp like that of Asshur or Elam, but, surprised by the fraud of Halyattes and Cyaxares, were cut off with all their multitude, and tumbled into pits with the rabble. *With their weapons;* a ceremony observed in pompous funerals of great captains, to have their weapons and their armour carried before the hearse.

Laid their swords under their heads; either when carried out to be buried, or laid under their head in their graves; or perhaps under the statues of them placed on the tops of their tombs: these barbarous Scythians were not so buried.

Their iniquity, the exemplary punishment of their iniquity,

shall be upon their bones; shall be seen upon their bones unburied, and cast out on the earth by the just judgment of God.

Though they were the terror; because they were Cruel, bloody, ravenous, and mischievously tyrannical while they lived.

The mighty; Cyaxares and the Persians, that durst not again attempt Nineveh, till the Scythians were fallen.

Ver. 28.

Thou; chief of Meshech and Tubal, though not named.

Shalt be broken; shalt be killed with the rest of wicked followers.

Shalt lie with them; without regard hurled into the pit with the common soldiers, as thou fallest with them.

That are slain; whose throats were cut after they were taken.

With the sword of Halyattes and his Lydians, in revenge it is like of the spoil done to Sardis; and by Cyaxares, in revenge of the affront they gave him, forcing him to quit the siege of Nineveh, and by giving him child's flesh to eat, pretending it was venison taken by them in hunting.

Ver. 29.

Edom; the posterity of Esau, the name of the country too in which they dwelt.

Her kings; which had been many, and some great warriors.

Her princes, or dukes, as #Ge 36:20,21.

With their might; showed in the assistance they gave the Assyrians.

Are laid by them; are slain, and laid aside to be buried, as commanders are usually after their death regarded, and their bodies kept for a funeral.

With the uncircumcised; yet, as the uncircumcised, so these must to the pit, though no mention is made of their being a terror to the nations.

Ver. 30.

Of the north; of all those countries, Tyrians, Zidonia Assyrians, and Syrians, &c., which lay northward from Judea, now swallowed up by the Babylonian. *With the slain* conquered and slain.

With their terror; their terror buried with them.

Ashamed of their might; when it appeared a vain confidence, and too weak to resist the enemy and save themselves.

Uncircumcised; scorned and cast out, as profane and loathsome.

By the sword of their conquering enemy.

Bear their shame; they lie under shameful fall, from a seeming glory to a real ignominy.

Ver. 31.

Hophra shall go to them by a like destruction, and, as he saw them all ruined as he was, should be comforted, rejoice that others before him met with the same fatal end and whatever comfort this might be, it is all he shall ever have, did he know all those things and persons that are here represented and personated to us.

Ver. 32.

It is God that speaketh, who had punished former tyrants and by a retaliation, that the world might see his just judgments. They were a terror to the world by their cruel oppression, and continued violence, by their covetousness ambition, and pride; and God hath made them a terror his just severities in their punishments. And so, saith God will I do with Pharaoh;

he shall be laid; that is, Pharaoh-hophra shall suffer as they did; since he sinned as they, he made himself like them by choice of their vices, I will make him like them by like miseries and just recompences and these shall be to his subjects as well as to himself. Hophra, who was strangled, and likely cast out without burial; to Amasis, who was taken out of his tomb and burnt to ashes: so unlike the condition of the dead, which usually is rest to the body, was their condition after death, who in life made it unlike, and imagined it was above, the condition of mortal men.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 33

According to the duty of a watchman in warning the people, Ezekiel is admonished of his duty in warning sinners, **#Eze 33:1-9**. God showeth the manner of his dealings with the righteous that revolteth, and with the returning sinner, **#Eze 33:10-16**. He maintaineth the equity of his proceeding, **#Eze 33:17-20**. Upon the news of the taking of Jerusalem, Ezekiel prophesieth the desolation of the land, **#Eze 33:21-29**. The hypocrisy of the captive Jews reproveth. **#Eze 33:30-33**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

The prophet, after three years' silence enjoined him now hath his mouth opened by new commission.

To the children of thy people; to the Jews in general, to who he had not spoken since what he spake in the 24th chapter,

Say unto them; propound a parable unto them

When; if at any time.

The sword; war, or any sore judgment.

Take a man; choose out a man who live on the borders, and knows the avenues and the ways the enemy will most likely come to assault them. Set him for their watchman; appoint him to watch the coasts, that they may not be surprised.

Ver. 3.

The sword of the enemy, or any other danger which he may foresee in any of the causes or forerunners of it.

Come, i.e. coming, approaching to the land.

Blow the trumpet; sound the alarm: the sound of the trumpet is a warning, yet to this sometimes it is necessary to add a warning by word of mouth, and tell the people brought together by the trumpet what he seeth.

Ver. 4.

Whosoever considers not and minds not what he hears, who hears and does not consider, he turns a deaf ear to the meaning, though not to the sound of the trumpet.

Taketh not warning; apprehends not, nor will be made apprehensive of, the danger, to provide for resisting or fleeing the sword.

Take him away; destroy him.

His blood; the guilt and blame of his blood, of his death. Shall be upon his own head; shall never be charged on any but himself.

Ver. 5.

He heard, as well as others who escaped, and he might have delivered himself, as they did who took warning. He is the only cause of his own death.

Shall deliver his soul; shall save his life, preserve his own person.

Ver. 6.

Blow not the trumpet; neglect his charge, which is to give the alarm.

Be not warned; but, unwarned, are surprised by the enemy.

Taken away in his iniquity; punished by the Lord for his sins and trespasses formerly done, and he is destroyed under the present fault of not watching, which is a fault in every one that is so secure in time of war.

His blood; the guilt of that blood.

Require at the watchman's hand; charge upon and for it punish the watchman, who sinned in not giving warning.

Ver. 7.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 8.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 9.

These three verses are the same with the 17th, 18th, 19th verses of the third chapter, where see them explained.

Ver. 10.

Speak, declare from me,

unto the house of Israel; the residue of the two tribes, which are brought to Babylon; or else to those already there, and here their brethren are on the way thitherward, since Jerusalem was taken.

Thus ye speak; thus ye discourse among themselves, object against God, and his prophet, and your own duty, some of you out of infirmity, others out of perverseness.

If our transgressions and our sins be upon us; the unpardoned guilt and the unsupportable punishment of our sins, who were warned and took not warning, do thus, as in the wasting our country, burning our city, abolishing the public worship of God, come upon us, we shall pine away, consume; it is too late to hope it will be better with us now, we should have heard and followed

the counsel earlier, if we would have delivered our own souls. If the prophet spake true at first, there is no hope, say the weaker; if there be hope now after so peremptory menaces and so great execution, the prophet did not speak truth, say the perverse, and so concluded they would as they were run the hazard.

How should we then live? how can it be better with us? if the threats be true and sure, it will be worse; if not true, how are his promises to be rested on, that it will be better.

Ver. 11.

As I live, saith the Lord God: see #Eze 5:11 16:48 17:16.

I have no pleasure: see #Eze 18:23,32.

But that the wicked: here is an ellipsis; but I have pleasure in the seasonable return the sinner makes from sin to holiness, and from death to life.

Turn ye; O leave sin, cease to do evil, be persuaded to repent; it will please me to pardon your faults, and to throw away the rod, and to save your persons.

Why will ye die? death is your choice, not mine, so long as you go on in the way that is not good; whoso sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul, and love to sin is interpretatively a love and choosing of death. It is your culpable will, not my severe resolution, that you die.

Ver. 12.

As for the wickedness of the wicked, &c.: see #Eze 3:20 18:20-22,24, where the same things are explained.

Ver. 13.

The righteous; who hath in his life that is past kept the law and forborne evil, hath done what is right and good, and not done what is evil, both which parts of this righteousness are described in Eze. xviii, 5-9.

He shall surely live; make him promise of doing him good, and giving him life, peace, every blessing, and happiness. *If he trust to his own righteousness;* if he conclude former righteousness is sufficient, and therefore turn to ways of sin, pleasing to an evil heart.

Commit iniquity; give himself to doing evil, as it were his work.

Shall not be remembered; no regard shall be had to what he had done, he doth himself practically renounce it, and interpretatively recant his doing it.

His iniquity that he hath committed; in his apostacy and backslidden state.

He shall die; shall be punished, his comforts shall be taken away or die in his hand, he shall live and die miserably.

For it; his iniquity and punishment of it, and this is emphatically repeated, as **#Eze 18:26**.

Ver. 14.

See **#Eze 18:21**.

Ver. 15.

See **#Eze 18:7,9**.

Without committing iniquity: it is not a sinless life here required or supposed, but a life in which a man doth not habitually and wilfully work iniquity.

Ver. 16.

As the threat against a righteous man that proves a presumptuous apostate was stated in the former part of the 12th, and in the whole 13th verse, so in these three verses the case of a repenting and reforming sinner is stated and determined to his encouragement and comfort, and they are the same with **#Eze 18:21,22,27,28**, which see.

Ver. 17.

These impious, obstinate quarrellers will accuse and do condemn the just and holy God, that they may acquit themselves. See this verse explained, **See Poole "Eze 18:25"**, **See Poole "Eze 18:29"**.

Ver. 18.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 19.

In these two verses the cases are so clearly stated, that it is as clear as the sun the ways of God are very just, and that none but ignorant atheists would think or surmise otherwise.

Ver. 20.

Still blinded prejudice quarrels.

Judge; call you to account, plead with you, and pass sentence.

Every one: this is added to rouse every one up to repent of all sins, and of this particularly.

After his ways; a terrible threat, and I know not how a greater could be denounced against sinners than this. God, infinitely holy and perfectly just, will judge them according to their unequal, unrighteous, sinful ways, and according to his inflexible justice. And if God enter thus into judgment, who can stand in his sight?

Ver. 21.

In the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month; that is one year and five months after the thing was done, and temple burnt, and the city sacked.

One that had escaped; one whose own care, but God's wonderful providence had much more, befriended him; perhaps it might be one of those that yielded to the Babylonians before, but was resolved to see the upshot of all.

Saying; likely giving a particular account of the whole.

The city; Jerusalem. Smitten; taken and plundered, the inhabitants slain or captives, and the city sacked, razed, and burnt.

Ver. 22.

The hand of the Lord was upon me; the powerful influence of the prophetic Spirit inspired me, and prepared me for what followed.

Had opened my mouth; not that the prophet was dumb through impotence and inability to speak, for he had prophesied against many nations, but he was forbidden to say any thing of the Jews, to threaten, warn, counsel, or command, #Eze 24:25-27 29:21; but now the Spirit moved me to speak, and continued his motion till the messenger came, and ever after, for God did not command him silence any more.

Ver. 23.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 24.

They that inhabit; who were left behind, having either hid themselves, but now come out of their holes, or returned from neighbour countries, whither they fled, or permitted by the conqueror to stay and plant vineyards.

Wastes; places once very fruitful and abounding with people, but now by the spoil of the soldiers emptied of inhabitants. and made as a desolate wilderness.

Speak, saying; thus think and speak; thus with vain reasonings they deceive them. selves.

He inherited the land; our father had hereditary right to all this land when but one, and he multiplied to a great company, and so they possessed the land; we children of Abraham, though diminished, are many, and the Divine goodness will surely appear then, and continue to us both right and possession, and we shall fill the land, and recover our former state and privileges.

Is given us; it was given by promise to us the seed, as well as to our progenitor; nay more, it is given us in possession, we dwell in it, when Abraham had not one foot of it in his possession.

For inheritance; the perpetual inheritance is ours. Thus with vain, fallacious arguments they cheat one another.

Ver. 25.

Say unto them; remove them from this dangerous carnal confidence, and show them what they do, and by that what they are, how far from Abraham's seed, his genuine seed.

Ye eat with the blood: whatever might be the reason why, it is most certain this was forbidden, #Ge 9:4 Le 17:14 19:26: they sinned by violating this law.

Lift up your eyes; honouring, praying, depending on, and committing yourselves to the protection and guidance of those dumb idols: see #Eze 18:6. Shed blood, innocent blood, ye are murderers.

Shall ye possess the land, polluted with such and many other heinous sins? and what colour of hope can you have, that you shall possess the land? The question includes a peremptory denial.

Ver. 26.

Ye stand upon your sword; you trust to your sword, and stand with it as it were drawn ready to kill and slay, you do all with violence and force, not regarding what is right and equal, and fear no restraints or punishments.

Abomination; idolatry, or other wickedness not to be named.

Ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: adultery is so common among you, that it is no bold hyperbole to say every one defiles his neighbour's wife.

Shall ye possess the land? Can such sinners flatter themselves that they shall inherit the land promised to a holy and good father, and to the like seed? Will not the land spew Jewish sinners out, as it did spew out such Canaanitish sinners?

Ver. 27.

The wastes; the ruinous heaps of cities or towns, in which some sorry habitations might possibly be found by them.

Shall fall; the Chaldean soldier ransacking all places, and either expecting or by chance finding them there, shall kill in revenge of Gedaliah's death and Ishmael with others shall destroy some of them.

That is in the open field; that wanders in the fields, shall be a prey to lions, or other ravenous beasts, that will multiply in that ruined country.

In the forts; out of the reach of men and beasts my hand shall reach, I will send the pestilence, that shall sweep them away.

Ver. 28.

I will lay the land; I do purpose to destroy utterly all in this land; and what can escape, when savage beasts, cruel men, and a pestilential air all concur to ruin the land? The pomp of her strength; the stately and pompous shows of her strength, and her former riches and power.

The mountains of Israel, on which were vineyards and oliveyards, where the joyful sounds of the vintage and harvests did glad the heart, there shall be utter desolation.

None shall pass through; no man daring to venture for fear of wild beasts, or pestilential air, or famine in those wasted mountains.

Ver. 29.

I would have had them acknowledge me to be the Lord by my blessings which beautified the land, by my holy precepts which directed to piety and justice, by my mercy and kindness towards them; but they despised my mercy, broke my law, abused my bounty; and now by the punishment of their sins, as I threatened, and by laying the land most waste, they shall be constrained to own and submit to me as the Lord.

Ver. 30.

The children; captives in Babylon.

Thy people; thy, not *my* people; God doth debase, degrade, and disown them.

By the walls; as men now do in cities or towns, so then they stood up to the wall, when, meeting in the streets, they would talk together.

In the doors of the houses; others got into the porches or doors of their houses, this they did to tell each other what news of their country.

Speak one to another: and all ends in this at last: Come, I pray, let us go up to the prophet, the true prophet, and inquire what God hath revealed to him, and what he may reveal unto us, whether any, or when will that end of our sorrows be.

Ver. 31.

Flocking to the school of some famous doctor, or as men and women flock to hear some famous preacher, or as they were wont to the synagogues to hear their learned scribes. So we find the elders of Judah, **#Eze 8:1**, which see; so the disciples of the great rabbies sat at their feet; so is Saul said to be brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. By their outward deportments, you might judge them to be my people, and hear seemingly very attentive. They do only hear what thou sayest, but they will not do it. All their love is but from teeth outward, either to me, my word, or my prophet, saith God.

Their heart goeth after their covetousness; their desire, love, and care is about their gain, how to make thriving bargains, how to place out and secure their money with excessive and intolerable usury and increase.

Ver. 32.

These Jews esteem and regard thee and what thou sayest, as men regard a skilful musician, who to a well-tuned instrument hath sung the praises of virtue or of virtuous men; it pleaseth their ear, but it doth not frame their hearts and life to virtue. They loved him for his eloquent lamentation, and reproof of their enemies, and for foretelling that they should fall, and saying nothing against them and their sins for these three years past; but when he exhorts them to duty, or dissuades from sin, they will hear, not do.

Ver. 33.

When all thou hast prophesied against the Jews shall, as that thou prophesiedst against the nations, come to pass to their ruin, they shall know thou wast no musician, but a prophet sent of God, to forewarn them to flee from wrath; not employed by men, to please their wanton ear and fancy.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 34

A reproof of the shepherds of Israel, **#Eze 34:1-6**. God's judgment against them, **#Eze 34:7-10**. His providence over his flock, **#Eze 34:11-19**. The blessings of Christ's kingdom, **#Eze 34:20-31**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

The shepherds; the rulers of the people, both political, as kings, magicians, and princes, and also ecclesiastical, priests and prophets.

Israel; the two tribes, and the few that out of the ten did adhere to the house of David.

Prophecy; the command is repeated to encourage and engage the prophet to his work.

Thus saith the Lord God: Ezekiel speaks, but these rulers must know it is God that speaks by him.

Woe be to the shepherds! they have been principal causes of many sins, and exemplary actors in other sins, for which many woes were threatened; many already are come, and the rest will come, in which woes these rulers shall have more than ordinary share.

Feed themselves; contrive their own ease, advantage, honour, and ambitious projects. Let the consciences of these rulers, ecclesiastical and political, speak, ought they not, as shepherds, to take care of the sheep committed to their care?

The flocks; the sheep, both whole flocks and the single sheep, whole societies and particular members of them.

Ver. 3.

The fat; rather the milk, which insatiably and without measure you devour; you exhaust their purses and weaken their estates by tributes, exacted by extortions: so the temporal rulers and the spiritual rulers had their methods and arts to milk them dry, these lived on the sins of the people.

With the wool; with best and finest, as best suiting with your pride and luxury, on which you force the people to bestow so much that they have not to clothe themselves and theirs; this was mighty oppression.

Ye kill them; contrive methods for a seeming legal course to forfeit first the life, and next the estate, of the well-fed, the rich, and wealthy, and then make merry and feast, as voluptuous, unfaithful shepherds feast on the fattest of the sheep in their masters' fold. Ye feed not the flock; take no care to lead, protect, provide for, and watch over them, but, as idle shepherds feasted with the fattest, let the rest starve for any thing they care.

Ver. 4.

The weak and languishing, (such there are in the church and state,) with your hand, countenance, and counsel; so these metaphorical shepherds should as the other strengthen their sheep, with carrying them into good and quiet pastures. The sheep in our pastures are subject to many sicknesses, the sheep in church and

state to more, and shepherds in both should be as physicians to heal them; but here these did not so. Sometimes violent and ravenous beasts break their bones, sometimes the stronger and fatter sheep bruise or break them, these should the shepherds bind up; violent oppressors in the state and in the church broke many of them, but these shepherds bound them not up. Sheep are often driven out of the pasture, frightened, hunted, and pursued by dogs, or other mischievous creatures; these the shepherd should find out, and bring back: in church and state there were many such, frightened and driven by fierce men like dogs running upon them, but the Jewish rulers took no care to inquire for them, or to bring them back to their own country. Sheep wander and lose themselves, shepherds should seek such and bring them home; many political sheep among the Jews wandered from their country, their king, religion, and God, and these careless rulers never sought them, but ruled them with hard hand, that held fast all that should look like royal power and privilege, and rigorously executed all their grievous laws and edicts. *With cruelty*, such as the Egyptians used toward the Jews, #Ex 1:13,14; instead of acting like shepherds, these tyrants in the Jewish polity acted like merciless butchers in church and state.

Ver. 5.

They, my neglected sheep, were scattered, by the inroads and invasions of their enemies, that broke in like devouring beasts.

No shepherd; no vigilant, faithful, good shepherd that loved the flock, and of love studied its welfare.

Became meat; were made a prey of, and devoured by Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, &c., all their neighbours might the devour them.

The beasts, signify men, troops of robbers, and spoilers.

When they were scattered; as sheep scattered are easily devoured by every hungry wolf or fox.

Ver. 6.

My sheep: these shepherds forgot the flock was not their property, but God will not lose his property in them, nor shall shepherds find at last they were more than God's stewards, and accountable.

Through all the mountains; when endangered, affrighted, pursued, they got upon the mountains by their own choice, or carried away by enemies; or it may refer to their wandering after idols worshipped in high places, or perhaps to kingdoms and states and great cities, compared to mountains, that there they might find what they could not at home, quiet and safety.

Upon every high hill; the same thing in like words.

My flock; they were, if any among the Jews could be called so, my flock that were so used; not the swine, and goats, and unclean beasts, that by whole herds rested undisturbed. It was Baruch and Jeremiah were fain to hide.

Scattered upon all the face of the earth; they were dispersed through maladministration to all parts of the known world; it is a hyperbole that speaks a mighty scattering.

None did search; the shepherds were contented, nay, glad they were rid of them, neither principal officers searched nor inferior sought after them.

Ver. 7.

Ye shepherds; the rulers, king of Israel, princes priest and priests, and pretended prophets, hear ye. God speaks in the style and manner of one greatly incensed.

Ver. 8.

See #Eze 34:2,3,5,6.

My shepherds: government governors are by God's appointment, and here he owns the careless, worst of rulers as his shepherds.

Ver. 9.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 10.

I am against; they have provoked me to displeasure to be their enemy, and I will appear and act so. They are enemies to my sheep, yet pretended to be shepherds, I will be an open enemy to them.

The shepherds; to Zedekiah, his princes, the priests, and prophets, all the ruling part in Jerusalem.

I will require my flock; I will require both account first, and next by severe punishing, as Zedekiah, his children, &c, found. Cause them to cease from feeding the flock; turn them out of my service, that honorable employment; so was the king and princes of Judah turned out of all by the king of Babylon, by whom God made good this his word. Feed themselves any more; their profit ceased with the ceasing of their authority, and they could no more milk, fleece, or slay the flock, when it was taken out of their hand.

I will deliver my flock; they should have delivered them out of the hands of violence; since they did not, I will deliver, save, and rescue this flock which is mine.

From their mouth: this speaks that those shepherds had been lions, or bears, or wolves, more than shepherds, and therefore out of their mouths, not hands, God will deliver.

That they may not be meat for them; so the flock shall no more be devoured by them.

Ver. 11.

I, even I: the construction is emphatical in the Hebrew and well expressed here; I, the Owner, the Lover, the Maker, the great Shepherd, even I, who committed them to your care, never submitted them to your rapine and cruelty, am as angry with you for devouring them as I am zealous for their welfare.

Search; will demand the them of you. I know how many I delivered to your keeping and I expect an account of so many again; I will see in what state and condition they are too. Seek them out: see **#Eze 34:5,6:** under your hand many are, but under my hand not one shall be lost.

Ver. 12.

As a shepherd doth gently gather them together, counteth them, brings them to the fold, views what they have suffered, whether lame or torn, and binds up, and healeth; if any are wanting, he looks till he findeth them, and brings them back; so will I, saith the Lord. If the shepherd find the wolf or lion among them or near them, he will either kill or drive him away; so will God. If under-servants have been careless, they shall be warned or turned away; so here, &c.

Will deliver them; they are wronged in all places where they were scattered, the places in which they are and should not be are part of that danger I will free them from.

The cloudy day; when the storm first began to arise from abroad or at home; here in persecutions, there in warlike preparations.

Dark day; that the land was invaded till the desolation of Jerusalem, the times of maladministration of their own governors, and violent irruption of their enemies.

Ver. 13.

When Cyrus's proclamation came forth that the Jews might return, this prophecy was literally fulfilled, God did incline the minds of the Jews to retire from the people amidst whom they had dwelt seventy years: see **#Ezr 1:5,6 7:13**.

Gather them; assemble them together; so they did in a place appointed without the country, where they were, (as appears, **#Ezr 8:15**) in their assembling at Ahava or Diava, near where it falls into Euphrates, in the country Adiabene, which was from the more inward recesses of the Babylonian kingdom onwards of their journey to Jerusalem.

Will bring them; lead, conduct, and as a shepherd go before them, till I have put them into possession again of their own land.

Their own land; Canaan, their own by grant from the crown of heaven, anciently possessed by their fathers, and out of which violence cast them.

Feed them; God will provide, maintain, and nourish them. *The mountains of Israel;* places proper for sheep, where now they shall once more be kept.

The rivers; water-brooks, as **#Ps 42:1**; which run down from the spring-heads in the sides and tops of the mountains, with some impetuosity and noise; or if greater rivers, they are those that run by the foot of the mountains, on which these sheep shall feed.

The inhabited places: this may explain the former. On such hills by rivers the returned captives would first settle their habitations, and here these sheep would be safest; thus literally: spiritually, it refers to the gathering the elect by the gospel out of the world, &c.

Ver. 14.

In a good pasture; in fat, sweet, plentiful pastures.

Their fold be; to rest in there for safety; they shall settle their habitations upon their return: or there my flock, my people, my church shall dwell and rest, where idolaters once had their high places; thus spiritually.

There they shall lie, &c.: this and what follows is a confirmation of what before was promised, and it is assured to them by the Lord, who himself will see all this be done.

Ver. 15.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 16.

In the former part of the 16th verse, God promiseth to his people that he will do all the offices of a good, watchful, tender, and faithful shepherd, which those shepherds did neglect. See also **#Eze 34:4**.

I will destroy; severely punish; which is threatened, and was fulfilled in the ruin of the rulers of this people.

The fat; the powerful and rich, who by oppressing and devouring my people grew fat, proud, troublesome, and dangerous to the poor sheep.

The strong; by their authority I gave, and by the encroachments they have made to increase their power.

I will feed them with judgment: it is an irony; I will feed them, but with wormwood and gall, my sore but just judgments and displeasure, so some: but others refer judgment here to reason, decency, and fitness, the most convenient, beneficial, and safe way; as a wise shepherd will I feed these my sheep. And either may consist with the context.

Ver. 17.

I judge between cattle and cattle; make a different estimate and judgment between men and men, between the smaller and weaker that need more tenderness, and the greater and stronger whose violence is to be restrained; and as becomes me, and their different state requires, I will do.

Rams; the hieroglyphic of rulers in their authority, humours, and carriage towards their subjects, who are also observed and shall be dealt with accordingly, when God makes good all this his word.

Ver. 18.

God awakens them by this interrogatory to think first, and then speak what this is. When you are full fed, and others hungry and ready to starve, who might live on that you leave if you did not spoil it, do you think such killing is no crime? Is it not a very great cruelty, and a most barbarous inhumanity? You great ones, who have much more than others, partly by the bounty of the Lord of the sheep, and partly by your injustice and rapine, you eat the fat and sweet, and what you cannot eat you waste and spoil; and what would you say, if your proud, fat, and spiteful servants in your houses should do so to their weaker, leaner, and modester servants?

The deep waters; which are clear to the eye and pleasant, which are sweet to their palate, which are wholesome to the drinker.

Ye must foul the residue with your feet; in spite as much as wantonness you stamp in them, raise all the mud from the bottom, that makes the waters unfit to be drunk: is this a trivial thing thus to starve and choke those you should feed and refresh? Such hath been the carriage of you rich, powerful, ruling, and governing part of my people, who have been forced either to live on what you made unwholesome and noxious, or to starve at home, or seek somewhat abroad; this hath destroyed many and dispersed more, but I will not always wink at and bear this.

Ver. 19.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 20.

I, even I: see #Eze 34:11,17. I am judge by office and I will vindicate and right the poor by judgment.

The fat cattle; the rich, voluptuous, and wanton ones.

The lean cattle; the poor and indigent, that are despised, oppressed, and injured; thus the Chaldee paraphrase, between the rich man and the poor man.

Ver. 21.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 22.

In the 21st verse these metaphors and allusions do express the unmercifulness, injustice, pride, cruelty, and wanton tyranny of the rulers in church and state against the meaner people, that as you see the greater cattle run against the lesser, and overturning, or laming, some way or other hurting them, by shouldering against them; or as horned cattle wound and tear the weaker, and make them run for it; so had these rulers used their power to the hurt and scattering of the people. Because I see they destroy who he should defend, I will interpose; they will not, but I will, be kind, just, and faithful to my people and promise; I will save from foreign violence and home oppressions. See **#Eze 34:2,5,10,17**.

Ver. 23.

I will set; advance, establish, and make great; thus I will appoint and set up.

One shepherd: formerly their many shepherds destroyed, as **#Jer 12:10**; now this one shall save. Literally and historically Zerubbabel may be somewhat intended, but principally and plenarily, as Christ is intended here, so in him it was accomplished; for he is the great, good, chief, only Shepherd, that laid down his life for his sheep.

Feed them; give them best, most abundant, and most seasonable food, he also shall govern them in righteousness, and with equity.

My servant David; Messiah, (as Kimchi on the place,) of the seed of David, the beloved One, who was typified by David, and in other places called by this name, as **#Isa 37:35 Jer 30:9 Eze 37:24 Ho 3:5**.

He shall do all the office of a good and faithful shepherd, and that for ever. I will trust them in his hands, for he will keep them, that not one of them shall be lost, but shall go in and out under his hand, and find pasture.

Ver. 24.

The Lord; the glorious, gracious, eternal One.

Will be their God; I so put them into Christ's hand, that still I am and will be their God; yea, I will, through this my servant David, be their God.

My servant; Christ was in this great work his Father's servant, #Isa 42:1 52:13 Eze 37:24,25. *David*; as #Eze 34:23; Christ, called David there as well as here.

Prince; so Christ is Prince and Saviour to his church, #Ac 5:31.

I the Lord have spoken it; God seals it with this as his oath unchangeable.

Ver. 25.

Will make; renew and confirm to them.

A covenant of peace; a covenant of promises, which contain and shall bring peace; in the Hebrew dialect,

all good. This, as it refers to the state of this people after their return, comprehends that outward peace and prosperity that God gave them, but it hath a higher and more excellent import, better mercies of this covenant established on better promises, i.e. best, because spiritual and eternal.

Evil beasts: during the Babylonish captivity evil beasts had exceedingly increased, through seventy years' desolation in Judea, but on the replanting and increasing of men these were diminished, and destroyed at last; thus literally. But mystically, under the bondage of Satan, worse beasts destroyed men; these Christ, who turns back that captivity, will destroy.

Safely; without danger and without fear: see #Eze 28:26.

In the wilderness; in which both wild and hurtful beasts, and wilder, more hurtful robbers, did haunt. There is somewhat of an hyperbole here; after the temporal redemption from Babylon, they should have such safety as they should account very great after such long and great troubles; in the spiritual redemption they should have greater safety, when, delivered from the hand of enemies, they serve God in holiness before him all their days.

In the woods, places where venomous and devouring creatures usually lurk, yet there shall ye venture confidently to sleep, and without much danger.

Ver. 26.

I will make them, my returned captives, who were looked upon as cursed, reproached, and hated.

The places round about; all the country.

My hill; Jerusalem, or the temple, Zion, which is called holy hill, #Ps 2:6.

A blessing; very prosperous, that men shall report them to be in a blessed condition, or a blessing to others among whom they dwell, or a pattern of blessing others, whom we shall wish like to them, whom we wish greatest good to.

I will cause the shower to come down in his season; their land shall be most fruitful in the products of it, corn, wine, oil, &c., and all these blessed to them; whereas formerly their blessings were so cursed that they were no blessings, now they shall be blessed, and so be double blessings to them.

Ver. 27.

The tree of the field; either those that are planted by man's industry in the field, or those that grow wild in the field, and yield fruit, as the oak, pine, &c.

The earth, tilled by man. *Her increase;* great increase, as formerly, when I blessed it.

Safe: see #Eze 34:25, and #Eze 28:26.

The bands; the power and tyranny of Babylon. *Their yoke,* which my people groaned under in captivity.

Served themselves of them; made them slaves, and used them so.

Ver. 28.

See #Eze 34:5,10,25, and #Eze 28:26.

None shall make them afraid; neither beasts nor men, for these shall be restrained if they would, those be destroyed and cease that they cannot, endanger them.

Ver. 29.

Raise; establish and settle.

A plant; or plantation, so the word, so the Chaldee paraphrast, and so it best suits new planters as they now were; however, as we read it, it is a promise of honour and fame to their posterity, as in the Maccabees' time, and, which is more, it is a promise of the Messiah to be raised for them.

With hunger in the land; by barrenness of a land cursed, or by wastes made by enemies, or by long siege, as formerly.

The shame of the heathen; who reproached them; cast away, rejected of God, and accursed, so that they were a taunt and proverb among the heathen.

Ver. 30.

Thus, by these many and great blessings I give them,
shall they know, the very heathen shall be convinced.

The Lord, who can do what I promise and my people expect.

Their God, by covenant from their forefathers.

With them; present with them, and reconciled to them, and do bless them.

That they, whom they despised and injured, and ere while did make slaves, and used so.

My people; my peculiar people above all people in the world; and that though he seemed to have cast him off, and they feared it, and the enemies boasted he had, yet he owns them for his, and will not break his covenant.

Ver. 31.

Now, that neither you nor any else mistake the allegory, note, saith God, this flock of my pasture are not sheep literally, but they are men expressed by this emblem, and these men are those I am a God to, and will be so for ever.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 35

The judgment of Mount Seir, for their hatred of Israel, and insulting over their distress.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Put thyself in a posture looking towards Mount Seir, but with a stern and menacing countenance; the phrase you meet **#Eze 20:46 21:2 25:2**.

Mount Seir; the country for the inhabitants of it, as is usual in Scripture. This was a mountainous country, yet fruitful. It was so called from the old lord of it, Seir the Horite, or mountaineer from Hor, whose posterity were ousted of it by Esau's posterity, **#De 2:12**.

Prophecy against it; foretell what sad things are coming on them.

Ver. 3.

Say unto it; by a prosopopoeia, or personating a discourse with them; speak of them as if thou wert speaking to them. *Against thee:* see **#Eze 28:22 34:10**.

Stretch out mine hand: see **#Eze 6 14,25:7**.

Against, or over, denoting how inevitable the stroke will be which God gives from above.

Most desolate; wasted, forsaken, and nothing but solitariness left in time.

Ver. 4.

God doth what he stirs up his servants to do; it was Nebuchchadnezzar who was appointed to do this, and who did it, as **#Jer 27:6 28:14**.

Thy cities, in the plural; there were many and strong cities in Edom, yet all should be wasted, as **#Eze 25:12-14**, where lie in like manner is threatened.

Ver. 5.

A perpetual hatred: Edom was of the same stock, brother to Jacob, and it was sin to disgust or envy, but greater to hate, and greatest to retain a perpetual hatred, an hereditary enmity from Esau's time, the father of the Edomites, till now: near one thousand two hundred years had the seed of Esau hated Jacob's seed for inheriting the blessing, which yet I have some cause to think they as little valued as their father did before them.

Hast shed the blood, by sudden incursions sometimes, by a formed war at other times, and by taking side with those who warred upon him at all times; thus the sword of Edom was ever drawn or ready against Jacob's seed.

By the force of the sword; with fierceness, cruelty, and burning hatred, as appears, **#Ob 1:11-14**, which see.

Their calamity; deepest calamity; when all was lost, and their city taken, and none to pity or help, then did Edom cruelly execute his hatred, **#Ps 137:7**.

In the time that their iniquity had an end; when their iniquity was charged and punished on them, which brought them to final ruin. See **#Eze 21:25**.

Ver. 6.

As I live: God is true and constant to his threats against hardened sinners, and will be so as sure as he lives.

Prepare thee unto blood; I will dispose all things for war against thee, for a bloody war, in which thy blood shall be shed.

Blood, thy guilt and my just revenges of innocent blood, shall pursue thee, never leave till thou die for it.

Hast not hated blood; hast loved, rather than hated, bloodshed; therefore vengeance for it follows thee.

Ver. 7.

All travellers that go to or from Edom's country, or his cities; or possibly it may intimate the close sieges with which his cities should be so begirt, that none should attempt to go out or go in, but it should cost them their life: so Jericho close besieged, none went in or out, **#Jos 6:1**.

Ver. 8.

His mountains; there they will fortify, or thither they will flee, and there the enemy shall take and slay his men every where, as it follows in the words; slaughter shall be made of his men, pursued by the eager Chaldean, but more by the vengeance of God. So this phrase **#Eze 30:11**, but explained **#Eze 32:5**.

Ver. 9.

Edom's sin was perpetual hatred, and Edom's punishment shall be perpetual desolations. Edomites would never return into friendship with the Israelites, but still hate, and molest, and waste them; now for just recompence Edom's cities shall be wasted, and never return to their former glory.

Ver. 10.

Covetousness is here charged upon these Edomites.

These two; Israel and Judah, two ever after the revolt of the ten tribes.

We will possess it; with arrogance they determine what they will do; they reckon the right was theirs, as being the descendants of the elder brother, and now the possession they say shall be theirs too.

The Lord was there: either thus, though God was with Israel, their patron and their right; this is blasphemous pride, to resolve thus against God himself; or though he was present among them, heard their resolutions, and would disappoint them.

Ver. 11.

I will even do, deal with thee, O Mount Seir,

according to thine anger; I will take my measures from thy using of Israel. Thou wast angry, and that very fiercely, in which anger thou didst smite: in fierce anger against thee I will smite thee. Thou thoughtest with an envious heart all Israel had was too good for him, and wouldst spoil him of all; and I know thee unworthy of all thou hast, and I will take it from thee. Thy hatred edged both thine anger and thine envy to extirpate and root them out; and in my hatred against such sins and obstinate sinners I will utterly destroy thee and root thee out.

When I have judged thee: so God is known by the judgments that he executeth, when such wicked ones are taken in their own works, as snares which themselves have laid.

Ver. 12.

Thou didst reproach, scoff, and vilify my people, as if they had been the people of some deaf idol; but I will make thee know I am the Lord, who heard all thy blasphemies, and can, for I have

punished them. *Which thou hast spoken*; not speaking this without insulting and rejoicing, as Tyre did, #Eze 26.

Saying, Their God hath left them, either unable to rescue them, or changed in his kindness, and gone back from his word; or some such-like impious thoughts and discourses they had against God, whose city and temple they saw the Babylonians ruin, and which Edomites helped in doing.

Given us; either by the Chaldeans, or else by God.

To consume; utterly to consume, and to satisfy our hatred against them in the destruction of them.

Ver. 13.

Though the very words be not reported, yet it is certain, from this passage, that they spake proudly against the God of Israel, boasting what they would do, will he nill be. And these blasphemous words or discourses were not once or twice, they multiplied them, it is probable, not much unlike the words of Sennacherib; but they shall smart for all this, and know it is for this, when God acts against them, who durst proudly speak against him. I have heard your words, you shall feel my sword.

Ver. 14.

The whole earth; the inhabitants of the countries round about thee, the whole that thou knowest.

Rejoiceth; is in peace and plenty, and enjoy both, thou shalt want all; and then envy at the welfare of others shall break thy heart. Envy was thy sin, and now what is the object of envy shall be thy grief, viz. the prosperity of others.

Ver. 15.

Thou didst rejoice; thou tookest pleasure in the ruin of my people; for this thy sin I will ruin thee, and then do to thee as thou didst, I will retaliate, and rejoice in thy ruin: thou helpedst to make Jerusalem desolate, I will make thee so: thou criedst to ruin them all, to destroy all the land; all thy land shall be ruined, and by these judgments I will be known to be the Lord.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 36

The land of Israel is comforted with a prospect of the ruin of its spiteful neighbours, and of its own blessings promised by God, **#Eze 36:1-15**. Israel was rejected for their sin, and shall be restored with blessings for the sake of God's name only, **#Eze 36:16-38**.

Ver. 1.

Also, Heb. And.

Prophecy, declare from me, and in my word,

unto the mountains of Israel; the inhabitants wasted or in captivity, speak concerning the mountains, that is, the land of Judah and Israel, which was a country full of mountains, which were now horrid, unplanted.

Hear what further revenge I will take on Edom, and on other nations that wasted you: this continued to the end of the 6th verse. And hear what good I will do to you: this from the 7th to the end of the chapter.

The word of the Lord; the severe judgments against your enemies, his gracious promises to you.

Ver. 2.

Many were the enemies of God's people, but they so conspired in one design, with one consent, and were so one in their humours, and enmity, and carriage, that the prophet speaks of them as one, and particularly of Edom.

Aha; rejoicingly and with insulting pride, as Ammon did, **#Eze 25:3**, and Tyre did, **#Eze 26:2**, which see.

The ancient high places; the everlasting hills; but this is common with other hills, whose foundations, as these of Israel, are from the beginning, and shall be to the end. What they aim at is a deriding of Israel, who by promise from God claimed these mountains as a perpetual inheritance, but were now cast out of it, and they hereby tax the God of Israel as not keeping his promise. So they blaspheme God and insult over his people.

Ours; our right, as of the elder house, now conquerors and feudatories to him that hath subdued them; thus they pretend right to justify their injustice.

In possession; we are now where we should have been these one thousand one hundred and sixty years or more, where we thought we would be one time or other, in spite of them and all their boasts of their God; we are where we will keep, and none shall put us out. Such impious brags were their ruin, and are implied in the words.

Ver. 3.

Because they, Edomites, and others with them,

have made you desolate; first broken your strength, wasted your cities, and burnt the temple, and waylaid you, to cut off them that were escaped at last.

Swallowed you up; devoured you, as hungry beasts devour the prey.

On every side; from all coasts of the land, through the whole.

That ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen; that such of the heathen as remained here might have, what they no where else could have, being the scum and worst of men, an inheritance and possession; so unnatural was Edom, that east out his own kindred, to bring in the vilest of men and the most barbarous strangers.

Ye are taken up in the lips of talkers; you are the subject on which wild and foul mouths discourse, which is explained, in that the people ever talked of them with reproach, and branding them as infamous. This was foretold to Israel, #**Jer 24:9**, and they were advised to prevent it.

Ver. 4.

To the hills: now is added a particular of hills, valleys, &c., whereas before only the mountains were mentioned, but by them the whole land was understood; and to assure them thereof, all parts are here particularly mentioned: all that the enemy wasted shall be repaired, all that he took away shall be restored in kind, and those he derided shall be vindicated; their estates repaired,

cities rebuilt and filled, their credit and honour cleared and vindicated. Their deliverance should be complete and full.

Ver. 5.

Surely; in the Hebrew it is in the form of an oath.

In the fire; in my hot displeasure.

Spoken against; threatened ruin and desolation to all the nations that are and have been enemies to Israel.

Idumea; the land in which the Edomites dwelt; the Hebrew is Edom.

Have appointed my land; have given or delivered, helped to take the land from my people, and then left it in the hand of the Chaldeans, in hope it should be given back to them for their possession.

With the joy of all their heart; transported with joy; Jacob's children put out, the heathen came in to possess the land, with rancorous minds, swelling with hatred, and from that acting with the utmost vigour to slay the inhabitants, that there might be no pretenders to the land, but that they might inherit it.

Ver. 6.

Say unto the mountains: see **#Eze 36:4**.

In my fury: see **#Eze 36:5**, where is no difference in the thing expressed, though a little difference in the expressing of it; there it was

the fire of my jealousy, here

in my jealousy and in my fury. Have borne the shame of the heathen; which in **#Eze 36:5** is, being a

derision to the residue of the heathen; these loaded them with reproaches, and exposed them to contempt, and Israel could not prevent it, they were forced to bear it.

Ver. 7.

Lifted up mine hand; sworn in my wrath, but in my truth also, **#De 32:40**; and when men did swear solemnly, they did heretofore use this rite, **#Ge 14:22**.

The heathen that are about you; Moabites, Ammonites, and Idumeans shall be repaid in their own coin; I will, as sure as I am God, as sure as I can, so surely make them a taunt, a proverb, and a curse among men.

Ver. 8.

Shall shoot; shall be fruitful, and send forth the branches, trees, plants, herbs, and grass, that are proper for you, and these branches shall not have leaves only, but they shall bring forth their fruit.

They are at hand; the time will come, yea is near, when my people shall come out of Babylonish captivity to resettle in their own land. I will perform my word, and give them assured peace, and this will not be long ere it is begun at least.

Ver. 9.

I am for you; favour you, and am pacified towards you, or I come towards you with redemption, that your old inhabitants may return to you with singing.

Turn unto you; look towards you, with regard to what hath been and is your estate, your sufferings, which were less than you deserved, yet were the greater because ye are mine. Your inhabitants gave me the back and sinned against me, and I turned the back on you and regarded you not; then all darkness covered you. now my face shall be towards you, and you shall prosper and be fruitful, to the comfort of those that shall dwell in you and plough and sow you.

Ver. 10.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 11.

These verses contain much the same promise of future good which God engageth to do for Israel after their return out of Babylon. He will multiply men upon the mountains of Israel, he will increase them; now, lest any should reply there had been too many men on the mountains, even all the heathen, God addeth, they shall be all of them of the house of Israel, Jews, and they should settle and build the wasted cities, not Jerusalem only, but other cities also; even wasted houses shall be built, you shall have

large stocks of cattle, that your condition shall be as in days of old.

Will do better unto you; I will give spiritual blessings instead of temporal, and Messiah's kingdom shall hasten to you instead of that which was abolished: in whatsoever this better consisted, it is certain God performed his word.

Ver. 12.

For years past since your captivity wild devouring beasts ranged up and down, but now, instead of such, men shall walk up and down in the mountains of Israel; I will take away the beasts from off you, and bring men upon you.

My people Israel; a people that are mine by covenant, whom I will own, my Israel.

They shall possess thee; Edom boasted he would possess you, O mountains; not Edom, or heathens, but your own ancient dwellers shall possess you, even Abraham's seed.

Their inheritance, for perpetuity, as inheritances are.

Thou, O land of Canaan.

Bereave them; consume and destroy thine inhabitants.

Ver. 13.

They say; the heathen round about, the enemies of Israel, accuse the land of destroying its natives, and bring an evil report on it.

Devourest up men; either by intestine wars, or foreign invasions, or by unhealthful air, or by multitude of wild beasts, or by barrenness and famine, thou killest them, art like a womb that conceives often, but almost as often miscarrieth, as the word implieth.

Hast bereaved; consumed thy nations, so the French; deprived them of their hope of increasing in numbers of men, as a miscarrying womb deprives a family of hoped children.

Ver. 14.

I will so bless thee, O land, that thou shalt bring forth and breed up many sons and daughters, thou shalt see thy children's children increase, and this reproach shall cease for ever.

Ver. 15.

This verse is a confirmation of what was promised in **#Eze 36:12-14**, all which is doubled for more assurance, and each part already explicated. See **#Eze 36:6**.

Ver. 16.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 17.

In their own land; in fullness, ease, and security, as in days past they did.

They defiled it; brought in much sin and great guilt upon the land, i.e. on themselves who dwelt there, and sinned greatly.

By their own way; leaving my law, despising my counsel, forsaking my worship and temple.

By their doings; by their carriage and practices in their whole conversation.

As the uncleanness, &c.; or as one excommunicate, and cut off from the congregation, because of some great sin. Or, since idolatry is so often compared to fornication and whoredom, possibly it may be here the filthiness of spiritual whoredom. I hated and loathed the filthiness of their ways, as I would the impurity of a whorish woman prostituting herself for gain. The word may include the reward of a whore, as it doth **#Eze 16:33**.

Ver. 18.

Wherefore; these and other sins were the true cause that the land was emptied of men, there was no ground for the heathen's calumny.

I poured my fury; I was angry with them, and the effects of my anger were such as made the land and cities desolate.

For the blood that they had shed; for murders committed in the land, and frequently charged on them, **#Eze 22:3,6,9,12,27 23:45**.

For their idols: idolatry was another of their sins, which brought desolation on them.

Ver. 19.

My hand scattered them, and what hand can retain the inhabitants that God will fling out?

They were driven away, as chaff before the wind. As their ways and doings provoked me, and deserved what I brought on them, so I judged them, and punished them with desolation.

Ver. 20.

When they entered; when they were come into Babylon, and entered into familiarity with the inhabitants as neighbours.

Profaned my holy name; did profanely sin against those precepts of my law, which heathens did know, venerate, and observe better than the Jews; or it may include the misery their sins had brought them to, which misery reflected upon their God in the opinion of the heathen.

They said, their heathen neighbours, to them, the miserable and profane Jews,

These are the people of the Lord; with taunt and cutting reprimand. These, these captive slaves, that are most forlorn of men, will have it that their God is the Lord, the mighty and the good God, the true and faithful One, that gave them the land out of which they are driven. If he be good, as they boast, how comes it to pass his people are in such ill state? Or is he not able to better their state? Was he weak, and could not keep them in their own land? or doth he falsify his word? You miserable Jews, say what this meaneth. But by their impure life they opened the mouths of the heathen more to blaspheme, and call the holiness of God into question; when they saw his people so unholy, they concluded. As is the people so is their God; and this, as it was a great offence and scandal to the heathen, so it was a great dishonour to God.

Ver. 21.

I had pity; I spared them, who in captivity continued to sin greatly against me, and for which sins I had just cause to cut them off; but I had pity.

For mine holy name; for my own sake, and for the glory of my name: had I destroyed them, the heathen would have concluded

against my omnipotence and my truth. I preserved, I reduced, I re-established them for the honour of my mercy, truth, and power.

Ver. 22.

I do not this, which I have done, sparing you and preserving you, and giving you favour in the sight of the heathen; nor do I that I am about to do for you, returning you to Judea, planting you, increasing you, and establishing you, and making you a blessing; I do not this for your sake, you deserve no such kindness from me.

For mine holy name's sake; my infinite mercy is the spring and fountain; the vindicating my name from all imputation of weakness or unfaithfulness, and the magnifying the glory of my goodness, wisdom, truth, and power, are the reasons on which I do what I do for Israel.

Which ye have profaned; brought under suspicion with the heathen, who think that the only and almighty God should do better for his own and only people!

Ver. 23.

Will sanctify, by clearing it up, and removing the objection that the Jews' sufferings and sins among the Babylonians had raised.

My great name; they gave the heathen occasion to think meanly and contemptibly of me, but I will show I am as great as good, in both infinite.

Was profaned: see #Eze 36:20,22.

Which ye have profaned; God chargeth the Jews with the blasphemies the heathen cast on God, the Jews were the cause of them, and they are therefore justly imputed to the Jews.

That I am the Lord; by what I do, the heathen shall know what I am, and from the great and good things I do for you, performing my promises, and purifying you, shall see I am great, good, faithful, and holy; then shall I be sanctified in you, as I have been profaned by you in their eyes: and so it was, #Ps 127:2.

Ver. 24.

The heathen purpose, as Pharaoh did, to detain you servants, and think it impossible any power should take you out of their hand or

break the yoke; but I will do it. I will by my omnipotent hand rescue you from their power.

Gather you; they were scattered so through a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, that the heathen judged it impossible to reassemble them, but God will do this too. *Will bring you into your own land:* so many difficulties lay in their way of getting into their own land, that they thought them insuperable, so long a journey, so many enemies, and strong, crafty, and malicious, such weak, poor, and unarmed people, &c.; yet all these shall not prevent me; I will bring them safe to their own land, and settle them. When this is done, they shall confess, and the heathen shall confess, that I am great, good, wise, and faithful to my promise; a God not like theirs, but-worthy to be thought well of, and to be spoken well of, to be praised and obeyed.

Ver. 25.

He alludes to the sprinklings under the law, perhaps to that **#Nu 19:9**, which was for purification of sin; and **#Eze 36:19,20**. So God will purify them from their guilt. *Clean water:* some think it may refer to baptismal water; if so, it is to the blood of Christ, signified by it, and this, say the best expositors, is here intended, and this is

the blood of sprinkling, #Heb 12:24.

Ye shall be clean; when sin is remitted, the person is indeed clean, both in the account of God and Christ.

From all your filthiness; though they have been many of all sorts, and among all ranks of men, yet multitude of sins shall not hinder me from pardoning.

From all your idols; that notorious great abomination, your multiplied idolatry, I will pardon that also, that ye may be clean. Thus remission of sin is promised.

Ver. 26.

A new heart; a renewed frame of soul, a disposition and mind changed from sinful to holy, from evil to good, from carnal to spiritual. See **#Eze 11:19**. A heart in which the law of God is written, as **#Jer 31:33**. It is a sanctified heart, in which the almighty grace of God is victorious, and turns it from sin to God.

Will I give you; God takes it to himself, as indeed it is his only work, see **#Eze 11:19**.

A new spirit: this is exegetical, and tells us what the new heart is; it is a new holy frame in the spirit of man, which is put in him, not found in him; given to him, not wrought by his own power.

The stony heart; stubborn, senseless, untractable heart, that receives no kindly impressions from the word, providences, or Spirit of God in its ordinary operations and influences, that hardens itself in a day of provocation, that is hardened by the deceitfulness of sin; this evil heart shall be taken away, and this God will do, who only can do it.

Out of your flesh, put for the man. *An heart of flesh;* that is, a heart different from the stony, hard heart, quite of another temper and frame, hearkening to God's law, trembling at his threats, by gentlest providences mounded to a compliance with his will; to forbear, do, be, or suffer what God will, receiving the impress of God, as softened wax receiveth the impress of the seal.

Ver. 27.

Put, elsewhere pour out; God will give freely and abundantly.

My spirit; the Holy Spirit of God, which is the immediate principal cause of that change of an old heart into new, and of hard into soft. By the efficient cause we may know the effect; and understand what a new heart is, and what the new spirit is, when we know they are wrought in us by the Spirit of God, which is given to and dwelleth in the saints, which makes them saints, and then abideth with them.

Cause you; sweetly, powerfully, successfully, yet without compulsion; for our spirit, framed by God's Spirit to a disposition suitable to his holiness, readily concurreth and co-worketh.

Keep my judgments; be willing and ready, able, and in your degree sufficient, to keep the judgments and to walk in the statutes of God, which is to live holiness.

Ver. 28.

Spiritual blessings, promised in **#Eze 36:25-27**, are now followed with temporal blessings; so earth doth follow heaven.

Ye shall dwell: God adds this to his taking, gathering, and bringing into the land, **#Eze 36:24**; when they are there, they shall settle and continue proprietors, possessing their own houses and lands.

Which I gave; they were greatly pleased to think Canaan their land was by God given to their fathers; in this land under this character you shall dwell, the land that was your right by promise to Abraham, 1346 years or near it.

My people, as your fathers were, who revered, loved, worshipped, obeyed, and believed in me.

Your God, as I was their God, to protect, guide, comfort, and enrich, &c.; see **#Eze 11:20**; to perform my promise to their faith and patience; and so you shall inherit the blessing.

Ver. 29.

Perhaps the former part of this verse would have been better joined with the former verse, as a glorious fruit of God's taking them to be his people, and his condescending to be their God. Salvation from all uncleannesses includeth justification, in our pardon, sanctification, the renewing our minds, somewhat of adoption in peace and hope, and a consummate glorification in heaven, that state of absolute purity. All this God gives when he is our God. Corn; all necessaries for aliment comprised in one, and these brought to them at God's call, which they will hear, **#Ps 105:16,40 Ho 2:21,22**.

Famine is God's arrow, he shoots it; where it is, he layeth it; but his people shall neither have it their misery nor their reproach any more; as in the next verse.

Ver. 30.

The former part of this verse is explained **#Eze 34:27**, and **#Eze 36:8-10** of this chapter. The latter part is explained in **#Eze 36:29**.

Ver. 31.

Then, when I have given you my Spirit, renewed your hearts, brought you by miraculous mercy out of captivity in a strange land unto liberty in your own, ye shall call to mind, review, and examine all your past life, your ways opposite to God's; therefore both their own by choice, and also evil in their very nature, the

ways the prophets condemned and threatened, as **#Eze 22 Jer 3:5**, &c.

Not good; it is a meiosis; not good, i.e. exceeding evil, like, yea worse than, other nations, **#Eze 5:6**, than Sodom, **#Eze 16:46**.

Loathe yourselves: see **#Eze 6:9**. Your mind shall abhor what you loved, and deeply grieve at what you rejoiced in; when swine, ye wallowed in mire; when made sheep, you shall as much fear and flee from it.

In your own right; not in sight of others, but repentance in the chief parts lieth more retired and inward, and loathes sins that are in the heart, though none ever knew them beside God and his own soul. This fruit is the first and most sure sign of true repentance.

Ver. 32.

Not for your sakes: to a self-exalting people, who have too high thoughts of themselves, this is a necessary monition; we are all like the Jews, proud of somewhat we have not; see veri. 22; an old disease, and we are long since warned of it, as well as they, **#De 9:5,6**.

Be ashamed and confounded: shame and confusion, self-abhorrence and deepest humiliation, will become you, for you have walked stubbornly in your own ways, though I would have reclaimed you, and did call you back from them by my prophets.

Ver. 33.

Committed sin, that deserveth, and imputed sin, that doth bring down, judgments on the sinner, so did the Jews' sins, and continued the punishment in those judgments, until a pardon take away guilt, and then judgments will be removed; so here, pardoned captives return to and dwell in their own cities. Sin unpardoned wasted the country, but sinners repenting and pardoned shall build the wastes. Sin unpardoned leaves the land untilled and barren, but pardoned ones shall plough, sow, reap, and eat.

Ver. 34.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 35.

They shall say; strangers or foreigners, who had heard or seen the sad wastes, and now either hear or see the replanting of it, and how it succeedeth.

Like the garden of Eden; see the phrase #Eze 28:13; most fruitful, pleasant, and desirable. This is true of the church of Christ without an hyperbole, but here it is to be accommodated by a comparative, thus; that good state the Jews are now in, compared with what they were in, is as an Eden to a wilderness. *Fenced;* not only built for habitation, but fortified for defence.

Ver. 36.

That are left; that were not carried away and dispersed, whether they were Tyrians, Zidonians, on the north, or Ammon, and Moab, and the Philistines, and Edomites, eastward and southward, these remnants of the heathen shall see and confess a peculiar providence of God toward the Jews, in their flourishing so greatly upon their return.

Ver. 37.

Though I have repeated so often my promise to return them, to rebuild, to multiply them, yet they shall know it is their duty to entreat it, to wait on me, and then I will give a merciful answer and do it. Thus Daniel prayed, when he knew the return was sure and near. Or else it may be thus; Above all this, or yet more than all this, I will be found of them when they do seek me: thus it is a promise made to their prayer, in the other it is a requiring them to pray, so they shall increase as a flock.

Ver. 38.

The holy flock; flocks designed to holy uses, as sacrifices, and therefore further described by the place where they are, Jerusalem.

Her solemn feasts; the occasion and time, solemn feasts, either the three annual great feasts, or you may hake in the daily sacrifices. These flocks were for quality the best of all, and for numbers very great, on the solemn feasts; thirty thousand at once of lambs and kids in Josiah's time, and many more at the passover in aftertimes. Thus should men multiply, and fill the cities of replanted Judea.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 37

By the resurrection of dry bones the revival of the lost hope of Israel is prefigured, #Eze 37:1-14. By the uniting of two sticks is showed the incorporation of Israel with Judah, #Eze 37:15-19. Their blessings in union under Christ their king, #Eze 37:20-28.

Ver. 1.

The hand; either the prophetic Spirit, as #Eze 1:3 8:1, moving him to prophesy by this emblem; or else the Spirit of God carrying him visionally, not corporeally, as in #Eze 8, into such a prospect or landscape.

In the spirit; either in the power of the Spirit of God, or it may refer to the prophet's own spirit, he was in his spirit, or mind and apprehension.

Set me down; so it seemed to me in the vision, that I was set gently down.

In the valley; it is vain to inquire what valley this should be, which was visional, not corporeal or real.

Full of bones: it is as vain to inquire whose bones these were, they are visional, and hieroglyphics of Israel's present condition.

Ver. 2.

Caused me; I was made to go round about them, in the same manner in which I was carried to see them.

Round about; round, round, perhaps twice or oftener, to view them well. Behold: he reports what he observed remarkable.

Very many; first for number, they were not only many, but very many, as #Eze 37:10, they made an exceeding great army.

In the open valley; next the place, the face or surface of the plain, exposed to wind, weather, and to violence.

Very dry; the quality of them, dry, very dry, in which could be nothing that might promise life.

Ver. 3.

He said; the Lord, who brought Ezekiel hither, asks him what he thought.

Can these bones live? either, is it likely they should? or, is it a future thing that shall be, or possible, that they may live?

Thou knowest: the prophet's answer refers all to God, to whom all things are possible which argue power in doing, and who knows all he will do in time to come. The prophet's answer seems to own the possibility, and refers the futurity to the will of God.

Ver. 4.

The prophet had spoken often to things that could as little hear as these bones could, yet when they are deaf to a prophet, they will hear the prophet's God.

Ye dry bones, hear: alas, what, dry bones hear! no, not a syllable of this word.

The word of the Lord; but this they will hear, observe, and obey it; his voice who calls things that are not, and makes them to be gives being by his word.

Ver. 5.

My prophet prophesied and spake, but I, saith the Lord, only can and I will surely give life to them. When God had formed Adam's body, as lifeless as these bones, he created him a living soul, by breathing into his face the breath of life; by a creating power he brings breath into these bones too. The effect shall be sure and speedy, when God brings his power to work it.

Ver. 6.

Sinews tie the bones together.

Flesh fills up the hollownesses, and being full of muscles helps motion.

Skin, as the upper silken garment, covers all with a clear and blushing colour.

Breath lastly must be added. All this God declares he will do, and I suppose these promises are what the prophet is to declare to these bones that they may revive.

Ver. 7.

I prophesied; declared or pronounced these promises or gracious purposes of God concerning them.

As I was commanded; whether it was thus or some other way, the prophet was commanded it, and so he did it; he spake to them which could not but be deaf to him, and which could not but hear when God speaks.

As I prophesied; either according to the purport of my prophecy, or rather during the time, or while I was prophesying, or so soon as I prophesied.

A noise; thunder, say some; others, more likely, the noise was the rattling of the bones in their motion; such noise they could not but make, where multitudes of them heaped or laid together disperse, and roll themselves from one to other, till they meet their fellow bones.

A shaking; there was a trembling or commotion among these bones, enough to make this noise, and to manifest a Divine presence and word from God working among them.

Came together; crept, or with this shaking motion glided, nearer and nearer, till each bone met the bone to which it was to be tied.

Ver. 8.

The noise he heard would certainly make any one look, and consider what it was.

I beheld; looked carefully, and heedfully observed.

Came up upon them; came gradually, spreading itself, as what grows wider and longer.

Above; uppermost the skin covered them. So here were men in skin, with flesh, sinews, bones; but, like Adam before inspired with the breath of life, the spirit of life was yet wanting.

Ver. 9.

Then said he; the Lord God.

Unto me; to Ezekiel, viewing, and no doubt wondering at the sight.

Prophecy; declare to that what my will is.

Unto the wind, Heb. *spirit*; and it might be so rendered, but our version hath it *wind*, while the French hath it *spirit*, i.e. the soul, whose emblem here is wind; which, as it did gently blow upon

these lifeless creatures, they received, each inspired with its own soul and spirit.

Come from the four winds; gather yourselves from all quarters of the earth under heaven, unite to your own bodies, inspire them. once more.

Slain by the sword of an enemy long since, some of them these seventy years.

May live; revive and rise.

Ver. 10.

I prophesied: see #Eze 37:7.

The breath, Heb. *the spirit*; the spirit of life, or the soul, #Ge 2:7.

Came; entered, took up its abode. *They lived;* presently discovered that they did live.

Stood up; rose with strength, able to support themselves.

Army; a power, so the Hebrew, or army of strong, courageous, and well-ordered soldiers. The phrase in the Hebrew is very full; a power, or great host, very, very great. Thus they rise, that the prophet and we might know how safe they would be in themselves, and how terrible to their enemies.

Ver. 11.

The whole house; the hieroglyphic or emblem of the house of Israel.

They say; think, discourse, and conclude.

Our bones are dried; their state as hopeless, as far from recovery, as dried bones scattered abroad, and, undistinguished, heaped up, are from life.

Our hope is lost; the hope, not that false prophets gave us, but that the true prophets proposed to us, is utterly lost, and we are out of all expectation of a recovery.

Ver. 12.

Prophecy; tell them their mistake, and revive their hope by a new promise and declaration of my purposes of mercy towards them.

Say unto them; these poor desponding, dejected Israelites.

Behold; consider what my prophet assures you he hath seen, dry bones miraculously revived, and standing up in power as a mighty host, so shall you.

I will open your graves; though your captivity be as death, your persons and confinements close as the grave, yet I will open those graves. I will lift you out, lend you a hand to bring you out with life and strength. And I will be your guide, that you may know the way; be your support, that you may be able to go; and your guard and defence against dangers of the way, that you may certainly come into your own land.

Ver. 13.

When your restitution to your own land, and your prosperity in your land, when your growth to strength and power, shall be so miraculously effected, then you shall acknowledge and publish the glory of my power, faithfulness, goodness, and wisdom.

Ver. 14.

My spirit: see #Eze 11:19 36:27.

Ye shall live, joyful in, thankful for, and contented with the blessings I give.

I shall place you; quietly and in rest settle you in your own habitations, and in your ancient possessions.

I the Lord have spoken it: this shall demonstrate the truth of my promises. the fullness and punctualness of my performances.

Ver. 15.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 16.

One stick; tablet, i.e. a writing tablet or a tally, such as is fitted to be written upon, or a rod, or staff, on which thou mayst write; the Hebrew calls it wood, without describing its form and fashion; but whatever its fashion was, it must be but one.

Write upon it; the inscription is not only commanded, but the words also in which it is to be written.

For Judah; the tribe, or possibly the kingdom; if the latter, then the companions mentioned will be such as in process of time fell

off from the ten tribes, and united with the kingdom of the house of David; if the former, which is most likely, then

the children of Israel, his companions, are Benjamin and Levi in part, who kept, with the tribe of Judah, their obedience to David's seed.

Then; when thou hast written on the first stick, then take **another stick;** a second stick, such as the first was.

For Joseph; he was father of two tribes, one of which was chief of the ten tribes, and is therefore mentioned here.

The stick of Ephraim; Ephraim was the son of Joseph, whom his grandfather blessed, and by prophetic Spirit foretold and promised that he should be one of the chief of all the tribes; and Ephraim was most considerable in the kingdom of Israel when divided from the other two.

All the house of Israel; the other nine tribes.

His companions; who did at first side, and have continued still, with Ephraim. Some say Ephraim was the whole kingdom of the ten tribes, and that his companions were the Gentiles converted to the faith of Christ, which I wish were well proved.

Ver. 17.

Join them: some would have this done miraculously, but I do not think God bade the prophet work a miracle; were it so, God would rather have said, I will make them one, for he can do miracles. It was enough if glued together, or but held in his hand, so that in his hand they were one.

Ver. 18.

When; so soon as.

The children of thy people; to whom thou art watchman by office, and near of kin by natural descent.

Wilt thou not? there was some reason why they might doubt whether he would, because they had carried it so, frowardly toward him; therefore they request it by an interrogatory, *Wilt thou not?* We shall never know the meaning unless thou unfold it; wilt thou not do it then?

Ver. 19.

The stick of Joseph; on which Joseph's name is written, and which represents Joseph.

Which is in the hand of Ephraim; which was under the government of Ephraim; or thus, which is the tribe of Ephraim, the latter explaining the former.

His fellows: #Eze 37:16.

Put them with him; Judah and his companions. One stick; one kingdom, one people, whereas these have been divided and enemies a great while.

They shall be one; real, cordial in their union.

In mine hand; under my government, care, and blessing. This is the meaning, God will make the two divided kingdoms one in his hand, as I make these two sticks one in my hand.

Ver. 20.

To affect them the more, and to assure them the more fully, let them see these two divided sticks made one in thy hand.

Ver. 21.

See this explained **#Eze 36:24.**

The children of Israel; the ten tribes, as well as Judah and Benjamin; at least, many of the ten tribes.

Whither they be gone: the expression seems to look to them that were gone among the heathen by a voluntary peregrination, whether before the captivity or after it I will not conjecture; but it is likely enough to me, that among the Jews carried away, and among their children, there were some that were uneasy where they were against their wills, who would ramble and range over countries, hoping to fare better; and perhaps these wanderers may be the persons meant by this gone, where they are who walked thither, as the Hebrew.

On every side; the wind was to come from the four coasts of heaven, **#Eze 37:9**, thereby telling us they should, as here, be gathered on every side.

Ver. 22.

I will make them one nation: they were one in David's time, who was type of the Messiah, and continued so to the end of Solomon's time, whose name includes peace. So when the Beloved, the Peace-maker, the Messiah shall be King, and on his throne exercising his kingly power, they shall be once more one again.

In the land of Canaan, called here, as elsewhere,

the mountains of Israel. One king; Messiah; the most and best, if not the learnedest, interpreters understand not Zerubbabel, nor Nehemiah, nor Judas Maccabeus.

No more two nations; the union under the Messiah's visible and actual exercise of his regal power shall be perpetual. From this place, so full and express for a firm, lasting union between the two nations Ephraim and Judah, and their being of two kingdoms made one in the land whence they were scattered, some take occasion to inquire whether it be fulfilled already, or remaineth yet to be accomplished; the discussion whereof, as it would be very alien to a literal paraphrase, and too prolix, I pass over, saying no more of it in the affirmative or negative.

Ver. 23.

Defile themselves: idolatry is a very defiling sin, and the Jews in both kingdoms were exceedingly addicted to it, pertinacious in it, to the utter ruin of both kingdoms; but after the return from Babylonish captivity, we find no where that they fell to idolatry.

Their idols: it may refer to the heathen, and then it means, they shall not defile themselves with the idols the heathen did worship; or to the idols of the Jews, their own idols, with which they shall no more be defiled.

Their detestable things; the same with idols, and added to set out the loathsomeness of the sin. *Their transgressions;* the former obstinate, bold, daring transgressors did that which these shall not defile themselves with: see #Eze 36:25,33 11:17,18. I will save them; whilst there I preserved them, and now I will bring them safe out of the places.

Wherein they have sinned; where out of a bad fear, or worse choice, they sinned, as did the heathen with whom they dwelt.

Will cleanse them; both sanctify and make them holy, and justify and give them pardon, **#Eze 36:29**. My people: see **#Eze 11:20 36:28**.

Ver. 24.

David: see **#Eze 34:23,24**. It is the Son of David, who was also his Lord, that is here intended. My servant: the Messiah, in his mediatory office, is God's servant and our Saviour.

Over them; over their hearts, and rule there in spiritual manner.

One shepherd; this King shall be a Shepherd, that feeds, not fleeceth, the flock; there is but one chief Shepherd, others that feed and rule the flock are so by commission from him.

They shall also walk, &c.: it is both declaratory of duty, predictive of the event, and promissory of ability and assistance to keep the holy commandments of God. Christ's kingdom is that which by law and precept commandeth righteousness, and which by grace and power strengthens its subjects to this, and so the event is sure, and freest grace makes holiest lives.

Ver. 25.

They; the ten tribes and the two tribes. That I have given: see **#Eze 28:25**.

Your fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, whose memory you venerate, and greatly affect to be heirs more of their lands and houses than of their virtues and piety. *Their children's children* for ever: if this prophecy or promise be to be understood with the precedent verses in the letter of it, and not mystically and only spiritually, I doubt not but to the end of the world, till Christ's coming to judgment, the Jews converted to Christ, and professing the gospel, shall, they and their seed after them, inherit this land of Canaan in much peace and glory. But I speak on supposition, not asserting any thing herein.

My servant David; typically understood it asserts the everlasting kingdom of our Messiah, and the everlasting happiness of all the faithful subjects of this King: see **#Eze 34:23,24**.

Ver. 26.

I will make; as it was my kindness to your fathers to give them, so shall it be to you to give you, my blessings on the sure and inviolable security of a covenant.

A covenant of peace; comprehending all blessings that may give a people content, and render them happy; peace with God in heaven? peace in your conscience with yourselves, with your brethren in the church, with the beasts of the field, and with your enemies, who shall for fear, though not of love, keep peace with you, while your ways please your God.

An everlasting covenant; the spiritual part is absolutely endless, the external part shall be for a long time, as it is always to be interpreted where temporals seem promised for ever.

My sanctuary; both temple and worship; not such as is typical of the Messiah to come, but such as may assert he is come, such as bring to the knowledge, love, and obedience of him. I will set up a spiritually glorious temple and worship amidst you. *For evermore;* never to be altered or abolished on earth, but to be consummated in heaven.

Ver. 27.

My tabernacle; the tabernacle of my presence, or wherein I will show my presence among them. Their fathers had a tabernacle of witness, so shall they; that was brought by Joshua into Canaan, but the Messiah shall bring with him a better, a spiritual and heavenly.

I will be their God: see #Eze 11:20 Re 21:1-3.

They shall be my people; by my grace I will make them holy, as the people of a holy God ought to be, and I will make them happy, as the people of the ever-blessed God expect and hope to be.

Ver. 28.

When Christ by his Spirit in gospel ordinances is among them, it shall appear they are a consecrated and a sanctified people.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 38

The army of Gog, #Eze 38:1-7. His evil attempts in the latter years, #Eze 38:8-13. God's judgment against him, #Eze 38:14-23.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Since the two former chapters had assured so great and wonderful blessings to the Jews, after the return out of Babylon, and the gathering them together in their own land; it is more than probable the Jews would expect a full accomplishment of all these things quickly after their return, and if troubles should, as they did, intervene, and prove long, would be discouraged, and quarrel with Providence; God doth in this 38th and the 39th chapters forewarn them, by telling what enemies and troubles would interpose themselves, to the great losses and dangers of the Jews, ere they should overcome them, and God should fully and finally deliver them.

Set thy face against: see #Eze 20:46 21:2 25:2.

Gog: this cannot be one single person, or one only prince, though like enough it points out some one by whom the troubles foretold were begun, yet the successors of this one, whoever he was, are included and designed by this Gog; nor is he to be limited to one certain nation that he was king of, nor yet confined to one age, or (it may be) to two or three. Some will fix the beginnings of this Gog among the Seleucidae, and take in the others who divided the Grecian empire among themselves, and who did much hurt to the Jews. The history of which in part you meet with in the Books of the Maccabees. But if we must account why these are called Gog, perhaps this may suffice: Gyges, who gave name to the land, predecessor to Creesus, (for he was grandson to Gyges,) was conquered by Cyrus, and deprived of the kingdom; and this was made and continued tributary to the Persians, till taken from them by the Grecians; and when that kingdom was divided, it fell among the successors of Alexander in Seleucus's line, and so the Seleucid may, not without some ground, be thought pointed at by Gog, whose country fell into the hand of Seleucus by the successes he had against Antigonus. And of all the Seleucidae, the

sixth from Seleucus stands fairest for it; this was Antiochus Epiphanes, type of antichrist, and a fierce enemy of the Jews. Others judge this war, in which Gog is prince and leader, refers to times much later, and there are several particulars that do not well suit with the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. They will therefore rather refer it to some Scythian king or kings, and that the time is still to come wherein this prophecy is to be fulfilled; and that it must intend those enemies of God's church who descended from the Scythians, and are now masters of Cappadocia, Iberia, Armenia, or are in confederacy with the Tartars, and those northern heathens. Now the arms and equipage here mentioned well suit with these Scythians, and they with the Turks, as like to make up part of this army. But others think that all the enemies of Israel in all quarters, both open and secret enemies, are here intended, and that the antichristian forces and combinations are what the prophet foretells; and if from a conjunction of affairs now, or lately on foot in the world, we might make our guess, the invasions of the Turks on one side, and the contrivance of others on this side Christendom, to extirpate the northern heresy, as some have called our religion, we might be excused, if we err, saying, The Constantinopolitan antichrist, and the Roman antichrist, with all their associates and helpers, are this Gog.

Magog is at least part of Scythia, and comprehends Syria, in which was Hierapolis, taken by the Scythians, and called of them Scythopolis. It is then that country which now is in subjection to the Turks, and may be extended through Asia Minor, the countries of Sarmatia, &c., from those parts under more than one in succession of time, and in the last times under some one particular active, undertaking, and daring prince, enemy of Israel; all their power will be stirred up against Christ and Christians.

The chief; or prince who is supreme in authority, most violent in opposition to the church of Christ, and most active to attempt its ruin.

Prince; what we render prince may well be the proper name of Araxes in Arabic, the principal river of Armenia, and so that the first country mentioned under the command of Gog, or the Scythians of Mount Taurus, which were called Rhos.

Tubal: see #Eze 27:13.

Ver. 3.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 4.

I will turn thee back: the words seem to imply a diverting him from some other enterprise, or else intimate to us, when that mighty power come out, that they are still under God's control, and he will turn them back from what they intended, that they shall not effect it.

Hooks: see this expression #Eze 29:4.

I will bring thee forth; so dispose affairs, thou shalt leave thine own country to invade, and spoil, and destroy.

All thy army; the whole power thou canst make.

Horses; those nations, Sarmatee, or Scythians, Cappadocians, &c., or which comprise all the Turks and Tartars, are to this day strong in horse, and their armies consist much of horsemen.

All of them clothed; their leaders both rich and gaudy, yet well armed, and their soldiers well provided too, and we know how they and other antichristian soldiers march with all warlike provisions.

A great company; in vast armies, far greater than any of their neighbours can bring out against them.

Bucklers for their foot, and

shields for their horsemen, as Servius observes the difference between the two Latin words *scutum* and *clypeus*, if not misreported. I doubt whether the Hebrew words do so differ; however, these were for defence of those that bear them, and to this day the Tartars use oblong shields for defence on horseback, as the figures represent them to our eye.

Handling swords; that is, very ready, expert, and strong in using the sword; this to slay the enemies, as the other to save themselves.

Ver. 5.

Persia; the land for the people who a Mahometans, and enemies to the name of Christ.

Ethiopia; not the African, which is Abyssinia, or Nubia, or both the old Macrobian, but the Asiatic or Arabian Ethiopia, posterity of Cush, Mahometans too. **Libya;** a people of Africa, either now subjects of, or confederates with, the Turks, and who are near enough to join, when the effect shall demonstrate this Gog who he is.

With shield and helmet; prepared to save themselves what they can, though they slay their enemies. Now some of all these were in the armies of Antiochus against the Jews, and many more will serve in the last army of Gog.

Ver. 6.

Gomer; inhabitants of Galatia, called formerly Gallograeci, Phrygians, and Bithynians, also these descended of Gomer.

Togarmah; Paphlagonia and Cappadocia: see #Eze 27:14.

Of the north quarters: it might be read in apposition, and leave out

of, so it will bring in many more to assist Gog; beside all those mentioned, the more northern people, the numerous Tartars, shall with all their bands fight for Gag.

Many people; great, and mighty of stature, and strength, and courage, as well as many in numbers.

Ver. 7.

Be thou prepared: it is an irony; God, the prophet, and the church deride this mighty preparation, as once the daughter of Zion laughed Sennacherib, that proud Assyrian, to scorn, and the scoff is doubled.

Prepare for thyself; such a mighty army will need great magazines and granaries, and good watches and guards for their marching in safety, therefore awaken thy diligence, let nothing be wanting, for, O Gog, thou wilt find I am against thee, saith the Lord.

Ver. 8.

After many days: some refer this to the time of the Maccabees; about two hundred years after their return, and finishing the repairs of the city wall; others say after the expiring of the thousand years spoken of **#Re 20:7**. But certainly the full accomplished days are yet to come, when Gog and Magog shall be destroyed, and so these days are the latter days of the Messiah's kingdom among men. Be visited; be called to account, judged and punished for thy violence, and possibly convinced by thy overthrow; it may prove a visitation in mercy for conversion.

The latter years: these must be contemporary with the many days already mentioned, so that where those are to be fixed, there these also are.

Thou shalt come, Gog with all thy numbers, into the land; the land of the Jews, who were under this character in the Maccabees' time, and will be under the same in these latter days, a people of God recovered from slavery and captivity, into which the sword of their enemy brought them, but God had now gathered out of the countries.

Against the mountains of Israel: if it refer to Gog, it was against the mountains; but if it doth, as it may, refer to the people gathered, it should be to, not against the mountains.

Which have been always waste; either designed to desolation by the rage and malice of enemies, or else because so long waste that it is beyond the memory of many living. It was four hundred years and upwards from this prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes' death, if he were Gog; but if the ten tribes, gathered to the two and made one kingdom, be this people, and the wasted mountains refer to them, they may well be called mountains always waste; for it is already two thousand four hundred years since the ten tribes were carried away by Shalmaneser.

It is brought forth; the land of Canaan, i.e. the people of it, **land** being, as often before, put for people.

Out of the nations, among whom they were scattered. Though we can give account of those nations to whom the two tribes were in captivity, we cannot so of them to whom the ten tribes are to this

day servants; but if this prediction do as much concern them as some confidently believe, these dry bones shall revive and come together.

They shall dwell safely: this began at least to be fulfilled, when, for some three hundred and eighty years after their return, they lived tolerably quiet; afterwards Antiochus vexed them, and did them much damage. What remains of longer and fuller quiet and prosperity after the slaying of Gog time will discover to the people of God, whose lot it will be to stand up in those days.

Ver. 9.

Thou shalt: sometimes such phrase declares duty and is perceptive, but here it declares the event and is predictive, Gog will, though he should not. The Hebrew might be read thus,

Thou shalt ascend as a storm, thou shalt come as a cloud. This storm is violent, with confused, tumultuous noises, and with devastation, as the word implieth; and come as a cloud, that is, as dark, as large, and as inevitable, and which continueth the violent waving storm.

To cover the land; Gog and his bands shall be a storm that overspreads the whole land.

All thy bands; troops, or wings.

Many people; many in number, great in courage and strength.

Ver. 10.

At the same time that the people are gathered together, settling in peace, before they have secured themselves, much like the dragon waiting on the child-bearing woman with purpose to devour her child.

Things come into thy mind; projects or designs for mischief, as appears #Eze 38:11.

Thou shalt think an evil thought; and these mischievous thoughts thou shalt so manage, as to forecast how they may, and to set on the execution till they do, take effect. If Antiochus Epiphanes be this Gag, Daniel, in #Eze 11:24,25, foretells the like thing of him against Egypt.

Ver. 11.

Thou shalt say; thou wilt resolve in thyself, and declare it to thy council.

Go up; invade with all thy puissance.

Of unwalled villages; weak, and without any considerable defences: a scattered people, that dwell in villages, can make little if any resistance.

That are at rest; who would willingly be quiet.

That dwell safely; suspecting as little evil from others, as they intend little against others, and trusting in the protection of their God, who hath promised they shall dwell safely.

Without walls that may resist and be too strong for my forces and engines; though they have walls, bars, and gates, yet Gog accounts as none against his mighty armies.

Ver. 12.

To take a spoil: the Scythians, and those other nations in this army, were from their original a violent, unjust, and thievish people, addicted to robberies; and they now, under this Gog, follow the old trade.

To take a prey; the same repeated. *To turn thine hand:* either it speaks the ease with which Gog presumeth he shall do what he intendeth, or the sad desolation which he would cause to return upon the Jews.

The desolate places; made so by the Babylonians, and continued so till of late years past.

Now inhabited; newly repeopled and rebuilt upon their return out of Babylon.

Which have gotten cattle and goods; or which are now by their husbandry and diligence getting somewhat of estate and riches; or, as we read it,

have gotten; for it was to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes from their return near three hundred and fifty years, and from the finishing the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah to the time of Antiochus two hundred years, so that in that time the Jews might

be grown rich enough to be accounted a great prey to him, if he were this Gog. However, such the Jews will be thought, when Gog attempts this enterprise.

Ver. 13.

Sheba: see #Eze 27:22: this Sheba was southward, and contains all of that coast which assisted Gog.

Dedan; Idumeans, or the most easterly parts of Arabia Deserta: by these are noted the eastern nations that assisted, say some.

The merchants of Tarshish; the inhabitants of the sea-coast westward, and Magog north. Robbers by land on three sides, pirates by sea on the fourth, in a confederacy to spoil the church of God.

The young lions; young men thirsty of blood, but more of spoil, flock to Gog, resolved to join, if they may rob and spoil for themselves.

Art thou come to take a spoil? this repeated inquiry made by these, I suppose, is not so much to sound the intentions of Gog, as it is a capitulation and agreement to come to his assistance; and on condition they might have, possess, and carry away what they seize, they are for him; and they mention particulars,

silver, gold, cattle, goods. They are thus exact, out of foresight what little part they might have without such a compact.

Ver. 14.

In that day: see #Eze 38:8.

Dwelleth safely: see #Eze 38:11 34:25.

Shalt thou not know it? thou wilt be informed how weak, yet how rich, how easy it is to make them a prey, and thou wilt believe and try it.

Ver. 15.

Thou shalt: see #Eze 38:9.

From thy place; out of thine own land.

Out of the north parts; from Scythia, from the Euxine and Caspian seas, and countries thereabouts.

Thou; the leader and chieftain.

Many people; mighty and numerous, as #Eze 38:6,9.

Riding upon horses: see #Eze 38:4.

A great company: see #Eze 38:9.

Ver. 16.

On the first part of the verse, see #Eze 38:9.

In the latter days: see #Eze 38:8.

I will bring thee: see #Eze 38:4.

That the heathen may know me: Gog gathers all from all quarters to be with him to take the spoil, God brings them together to do that among them which may make he heathen see and own his hand. They do it in proud contempt of God and his people, but God doth it to glorify his own name, and to vindicate his people.

Sanctified; confessed to be a great God over all, a gracious and faithful God to his people, and a just though dreadful enemy and avenger against the wicked and proud tyrants.

Before their eyes; in the sight of all the heathen that are with Gog in his expedition and much more in the sight of God's own wonderfully delivered people.

Ver. 17.

Art thou he? either by way of contempt from God, upon him and all his preparations, or by way of monition: All these enterprises I foresaw, have spoken of them, and I will as well defeat as I did foretell them.

Of whom I have spoken: it is not said it is written, though that be true also, but it was more spoken of.

In old time; in the days of those years past, or of their years, in the times when those prophets lived.

The prophets of Israel; not by prognostication or soothsayers, but by true prophets, my servants whom I sent, #Da 11 Zec 14. Now, though they had not foretold this when Ezekiel did, yet when the question shall be asked by the church, it will be so many hundreds of years past, it may well refer to these two prophets; beside #Isa 26:20,21, with #Isa 27:1 Jer 30:23,24 Joe 3:1,15,16; and #Mic 5:5,6, are prophets cited, as those who spake of this

mighty enemy and his coming, and from which an understanding reader may soon collect that this foe was intended as well as others in those places.

Ver. 18.

Gog cometh up in fury against Israel, and God's fury, i.e. hot yet just displeasure, comes up in his face against both the attempt and the attempters, against Gog and all his power, who think to find a weak people, but they shall meet with an angry God.

Ver. 19.

In my jealousy for my own people, that I may preserve them, and for mine own glory, to vindicate that, as **#Eze 39:25 Zec 1:14**.

In the fire of my wrath against mine enemies, Gog and all his herds.

Surely: it is in the Hebrew after the form of an oath, as **#Eze 36:5**.

A great shaking; to be sure a very great disturbance and tumult, like an earthquake, as the word signifies, for such an army, such threats, such assaults, and sieges will shake cities, towns, and the hearts of the stoutest.

In the land of Israel; or against the land of Israel, which, for aught I know, will make the sense more obvious; the mighty preparations and the proud threats of Gog against Israel will make many hearts to quake, as well as foundations of cities.

Ver. 20.

Here is a lofty strain indeed, giving us the description of the tokens of God's presence against his enemies; the effects of his displeasure against them are seen on all the creatures, sensible that their Maker is angry, though they know not with whom or for what. If to be interpreted literally, we shall find some parallels: when our God. marched before Israel through the Red Sea, as the waters, so the fishes, saw, trembled, and fled, **#Ps 77:16,19**. When he breaketh the cedars, **#Ps 29:5**, and discovers the forests, the birds that make their nests there shake at his presence and power. When Sinai trembled, Lebanon and Sirion skipped like a young unicorn, the creeping things in them no doubt shook, and the

beasts feeding on them did no less, #Ps 29:6. But men, apprehensive of God's displeasure, and shaken with their own guilt, shall much more shake. But I think it is a very elegant allusive description of those strange troubles and consternation of men's minds at that day, and so metaphorically to be understood. Mountains may be great ones. Or, possibly, when God comes to judge Gog, he will by his mighty power give the world so great a shake, that it shall be a preface to his dreadful judgment day.

Ver. 21.

Call; summon and awaken.

A sword; my army, the people of Israel. *Against him;* Gog and his powers.

Throughout all my mountains; from all parts of the land, called here mountains, because it was full of mountains.

Ver. 22.

I will plead, as judge and avenger, and in most dreadful manner, whether you take the words figuratively or literally. I slew others, Sennacherib's army, by pestilence, probably this was the angel's sword; others, as Ammon, Moab, Mount Seir, with blood by their own swords; the Amorites with hailstones, Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone, the old world with an overflowing flood. Each single was dreadful, but all meet in the destruction of Gog to make it most terrible. Whether these things are enigmatical or literal, I will not determine, but I am sure they tell us how great the final ruin of the enemies of God and his church shall be.

Ver. 23.

Thus, in this most dreadful manner, will I magnify myself; undeniably prove that I am the mighty, just, faithful, wise, holy, and merciful God toward my people, and that I am the great, just, and terrible One against mine and my church's enemies.

Sanctify myself; declare I am holy and true to my word.

Many nations; many heathen nations shall see this in the execution of my judgments, and own it to my praise, that I am, and none else is, the Lord.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 39

God's judgment upon Gog, #Eze 39:1-7. The loss of the enemy denoted by the multitude of weapons burned by Israel, #Eze 39:8-10. Gog's burial in Haman-gog, #Eze 39:11-16. The feast upon the slain proclaimed to the fowls and beasts, #Eze 39:17-20. The heathen shall see God's judgment, and know that he plagued Israel for their sins, #Eze 39:21-24; but he will gather them again with everlasting favour, #Eze 39:25-29.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Turn thee back: see #Eze 38:4: or else, when Gog or his assistants shall go into their countries to compose disorders risen since this enterprise was set on foot, they shall return to the rest of the confederates.

Leave but the sixth part of thee: some read, as our margin notes, I will draw thee back with a hook of six teeth, alluding to the drawing fish out of the water; others, I will strike thee with six plagues; others, I will kill five of six, and leave but the sixth part of thee: let me conjecture too, I will leave in thy country but one in six, and I will bring forth thy people with thee in so great numbers, that five of six shall march on this expedition. This runs more compliant with what follows.

Will cause thee to come up; by his all wise providence God will dispose things so, that Gog shall deliberately choose this expedition; so God will bring him, as #Eze 38:4. See #Eze 38:4,8,15,21.

Ver. 3.

I will smite thy bow; make thy hand weak, not able to hold the bow, and thy heart faint, not daring to take it up again. What is said of the bow rendered useless, is to be understood of all other weapons of war. This one kind, the bow, being most in use with these Scythians, is mentioned for all the rest.

Thy left hand; the hand for holding the bow, while the right fits the arrow to the string, and draws to shoot.

Thine arrows to fall; thou shalt throw away thine arrows, that thou mayst the better flee for escape.

Ver. 4.

Thou shalt fall; thy army shall be overthrown and slain. *Thou*, Gog himself the leader of this army, and all thy bands; thine own soldiers, the old trained soldiers.

The people; the several nations that had joined in this enterprise with Gog. Their unburied carcasses shall be torn and mangled by every ravenous bird of the air? and the wild beasts, that range over the mountains for their prey, shall eat them; so many of them shall be denied a burial. See a like place **#Eze 32:4,5**.

Ver. 5.

See **#Eze 16:5 29:5 32:4**.

Ver. 6.

I will send, by an unusual judgment from God, a fire; either civil dissensions, such as Egypt was consumed by, **#Eze 30:16**; or else the destroying pestilence, which always carrieth with it a burning distemper or fever; or that fire and brimstone mentioned **#Eze 38:22**. Or whatever this fire was, it should devour and lay desolate.

Them that dwell carelessly; who perhaps thought their situation would be their safety; though Gog fell on the land, the ships and isles might escape; not so, for the same hand will send the fire on the isles and their inhabitants which sent it on Gag. Possibly the Tyrians and Sidonians may be aimed at.

Ver. 7.

In **#Eze 39:6**, the judgments executed on Gog make God known in the midst of the heathen, here they make him known among his own people; in both glorious.

My holy name; the destruction threatened against the wicked for their enmity against holiness, being executed, manifest that God is holy, and the protection of such. Or, *holy name*, for that he does in his oath swear by his holiness.

So his faithfulness is here commended and illustrated. *I will not let them pollute my holy name any more*; will give them that new spirit, that due sense of my mercy; they shall not, as formerly, profane my name among the heathen, **#Eze 20:9**. See **#Eze 38:23**.

Ver. 8.

It, this prophecy, to be fulfilled in the destruction of Gog, the rescue of God's people, and magnifying the name of God, *is come*; as sure as if already come; or, as if already done; nor shall it be too long ere, in effect, and fully, it shall be done.

The day; that notable day of recompences against the last great enemies of Christ and the church.

I have spoken, by Ezekiel now, and by others see **#Eze 38:17**.

Ver. 9.

Shall go forth, out of their houses and out of the cities, with joy to see and admire the great goodness of God towards them, and the greatness of his power against their enemies. *Shall set on fire*: this expression seems to intimate that they should burn these things in the open field or mountains, where they found them; here is no mention made of the carrying any into city or houses, to burn in their chimneys: it may be they should make those fires in token of joy.

The weapons; the warlike provision, instruments, engines, carriages, and waggons, &c., as well as those recounted.

The shields: see **#Eze 38:4**.

The hand-staves, that either their leaders used, like our halfpikes, or perhaps such as they cast like darts at the enemy.

They shall burn them with fire seven years: it may be wondered they burn these weapons, which might be of use to them for defence and safety; but it was done, partly, because they were weapons of the uncircumcised; partly, because they were *anathemata*, as all Jericho was; but chiefly, in testimony that God was their safety and defence, on which they relied, and would ever since he had so wonderfully delivered, We might read the words thus, *they shall kindle with them a fire of seven years*, and then the sense would be plain, that there should be such store of weapons and warlike utensils, that, heaped together, they would last so long, being cast into the fire still by such as found them; for it is not unlike they gathered up the weapons, as they did scattered bones, on their walks, as they lighted on them. Others tell us it is a certain number for an uncertain; others, that it is somewhat a

proverbial speech, they shall have enough by the spoil of the enemy to make them and keep them warm, much as we sometimes say of one well provided, He is a warm gentleman; and some others tell us it is an expression of the Jews, who love to use this number in extraordinary cases, though they intend not precisely the same, as we say of a thing delayed, It will be seven years ere it come, or of a thing that will serve us a good while, It will last seven years. Or else, since the Hebrew hath not a distinct way of declaring what might be, or the potential mood, as the Latin, but they express possible by future, and say, that shall be, which we express by that may be, the meaning of these futures, they shall, in this and the next verse, is no more than,

they may or might burn for seven years; and so Kimchi glosseth it as to countenance this last guess. They shall be sufficient; and in such a country, where the need of fire is much less than with us, it will not seem very incredible that the warlike utensils of so numerous an army might be enough to furnish them with fuel for so many years, or more.

Ver. 10.

So, Heb. *And*, they shall not, &c.

They shall take: this, as noted before, taken potentially, or speaking what they might, not what they eventually should do; such store of fuel from the weapons and utensils of war left by these Gogites, that the Jews will not need to go to the forests to cut down wood. Or else comparatively, as some will; what they shall need to fetch from the forests shall be nothing in comparison to what they were wont to fetch.

They shall burn; they may if they will: it is not preceptive, to make it duty, nor doth it necessarily determine that they must, but there were and would be for all that time who would be burning these weapons, and save the labour and cost of buying and fetching wood; and these who should do this I would look for among the poorer sort.

They shall spoil; strip the dead, rifle their waggons and tents, searching what they may find of value and use, in which it is likely the poor among the Jews would be earliest and most diligent.

Those that spoiled them; the army of Gog, and his followers.

And rob: it was not theft or robbery in the Jews to do this, though it was robbery in Gog and his company to spoil the Jews; but for decorum of the phrase, the prophet useth the same word in both cases.

Ver. 11.

At that day; when God shall have destroyed this prince, and his formidable army.

Give unto Gog; and to many of those who were with him, for some were given to the birds and beasts to be devoured, **#Eze 39:4.**

A place there of graves: beside many other reasons for burying these slaughtered multitudes, the humanity that religion is full of would guide the Jews to it, and God tells us that Gog shall have a grave in Israel. He came to take possession, and so he shall, but not as he purposed and hoped, but as God intended; Gog shall possess his house of darkness in that land which he invaded to make a prey of. He shall have one place there, a grave, as the Hebrew.

The valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: this valley hath here its name and situation; the name from the frequent travels of passengers through it from Egypt and Arabia Felix into the more northern parts, and from these again into Egypt and Arabia. By its situation it is on the east side of the Dead Sea, to distinguish it from the valley that is on this side Jordan westward, in which is Dothan. Now in this valley did the Jews discomfit the Ammonites, Moabites, Tyrians, and Sidonians, **#APC 1Ma 5.** This might be a type, or firstfruits, and assurance of this great victory, but no more; for this was of a few against a few, and in this fight of some but few fell, &c.

It shall stop the noses; the stink of the putrefying carcasses should make travellers stop their noses, offended with the ill smells.

There shall they bury; partly in doing the office of humanity, though to dead enemies; and let their enemies live, who would not (for want of others) be so civil to them when dead; but chiefly to

remove the nuisance of eye and nose, and to prevent diseases, that rise many times from such smells.

Gog: this prince, whoever it is, shall there fall, and be buried with **his multitude. They shall call it:** this shall give name to the valley, which is to be called

The valley of Hamon-gog: which appellation I do not know to be given to any valley as yet, probably because this prophecy is not yet fully accomplished.

Ver. 12.

Seven months shall the house of Israel, many of the house of Israel, some voluntarily, others by appointment, be burying of them; a little time would not suffice to bury so great multitude, make what haste they could.

Cleanse the land; not in a legal sense, but in a natural, to clear the land of hurtful stinks.

Ver. 13.

All that dwell thereabout, or all that came out to resist and fight with this army.

It shall be to them, the house of Israel,

a renown; a commendation, matter of praise, that did, like men, bury the dead, who otherwise must have been all dung on the face of the earth, and the swelling hill rising from their buried bones shall be a monument to the praise of Israel's courtesy. Or else thus, the day of my being glorified shall be a renown to Israel: as indeed it is an honour to be owned of God, so when God shows he owneth such, he gives them honour among all that observe it.

Glorified, in the deliverance of Israel, and in the destruction of Gog by my wonderful power, in my just zeal against mine enemies, and for my people.

Ver. 14.

They, the rulers in Israel,

shall sever out, choose out men who shall make it their work.

Passing through; to go up and down over the whole land, for many of Gog's wounded, flying soldiers died in thickets, and by corners into which they crept, when they could go no further.

With the passengers; whose assistance they would desire of courtesy, or command by order, and that with reason, all this care and labour for burying the dead tending to their good, that they might unoffended travel whither they were going.

That remain unburied by the public labour of the house of Israel during the seven months.

To cleanse it: a legal cleansing, if-referred to Antiochus Epiphanes's times, but not so with those that refer it to a season not yet come, for all legal ceremonies are ended: when Gog's army shall be destroyed and buried, the land shall be cleansed from the stench and noisomeness of these carcasses. These officers begin their work after the first seven months are expired, for during the seven months there would be work for all of them to bury the dead and slain of Gog's army.

Ver. 15.

Order should be taken to inform travellers, if they lighted on any bone or bones of men, as they journeyed, that they were desired to set up some mark at them, that thereby the public officers appointed to gather and bury them might find and carry those bones to the common burying-place.

When any seeth a man's bone: many of Gog's soldiers were torn by beasts, which if some of the greater beasts did, the lesser could not, break and devour the bones, but with the flesh these were dragged about by beasts, or scattered by the eagles and vultures, and so lay divided from the body; of these the prophet speaks.

Ver. 16.

The city; either which is next to this common tomb of Gog, as most likely, or the city Jerusalem, whose people, delivered, sanctified, grateful, and magnified in the eyes of the nations by the wonderful mercy of their God, shall be called by way of eminence,

The people, or

Her people,

Hamonah.

Ver. 17.

Speak; though they understand not thy word, yet speak. for they will understand my word, which shall go out with thine.

Unto every feathered fowl; to all sorts of carnivorous birds, every kind of those that eat flesh.

To every beast, that are for the prey, little or great, which either by craft or power get their food out of the flesh of others.

Assemble yourselves; come in whole companies, flocks and herds too; and this repeated twice more,

come, gather yourselves: they have an earnest invitation, from all sides.

To my sacrifice: when sacrifices were offered, there usually was a feast to the priest the sacrificer, and for what guests were invited; now God is about to make such, he invites his guests, resolved to entertain them plentifully.

That I do sacrifice: the punishment of these God calls a sacrifice, which he doth offer, i.e. to his own justice, to satisfy that.

For you: it was for higher ends, yet since God intends to fill them with the flesh and blood of it, he is pleased to tell them he hath slain for their entertainment.

A great sacrifice, where more thousands are offered at once than ever were at any time offered; it is a sacrifice so great, that none ever was or will be like.

The mountains of Israel; the land of Canaan.

Eat flesh; the flesh of the sacrifice.

And drink blood; the blood of it: this was entertainment fitting these invited guests.

Ver. 18.

In these two and the two following verses, God takes on him the person of one that makes a feast, invites his guests, and promiseth to satisfy them. Of the two former, the first is an enigmatical invitation, or an invitation in a riddle; the latter is the key to this character.

The mighty; who had great authority, great courage and strength, the giant-like ones, commanders of great note in the army.

The princes: many princes came with their countrymen and subjects to assist in this war, whose blood these fowls should drink; and these compared to rams which lead the flock.

Lambs are the more ordinary in the army. Goats; great goats, as the Hebrew denoteth; and these signify the more lascivious and impetuous among them.

Bullocks; such as, though more slow, were of great strength.

Fatlings; well fed, it was no lean sacrifice made.

Of Bashan, a mountain of most rich and sweet soil, and that fed the best of any.

Ver. 19.

Eat fat; accounted best, and which shall here be plentiful.

Till ye be full; none should fray them away, nor should any devour so much as to leave others hungry.

My sacrifice: see #Eze 39:17.

Ver. 20.

At my table; in the field where Gog, his princes, and army are slain, compared to a table.

Horses put for *horsemen*, not common foot-soldiers.

Chariots for the men that ride in them.

Mighty men; see #Eze 39:18.

Ver. 21.

I will set, I will advance and continue, my glory; the glory of power, justice, and wisdom against enemies, and of power, mercy, and faithfulness, with wisdom, toward his people.

The heathen, among whom my name was evil spoken of; they eclipsed, but God will clear up his glory.

The heathen, that are either in Gog's army, or in the countries to which the news shall come,

shall see, not be able to deny or doubt, my judgment; the punishment just and from heaven, called God's

hand laid upon them.

Ver. 22.

Shall know that I am the Lord: see #Eze 34:31.

From that day, from the day of Gog's signal destruction, forward, while time shall be.

Ver. 23.

The sottish heathen thought meanly of the God of Israel, and reckoned they came into captivity because the people of some greater god had by the' power of their god prevailed against Israel's God and his people; but by this overthrow given to Gog, they shall see it was not impotence in Israel's God, but iniquity in Israel's people, that brought them into captivity.

Trespassed; committed sin perversely, continually, and with a high hand.

Hid my face; withdrew my favour, would no more regard them, and then it was soon a night of trouble to them.

Into the hand, into the power,

of their enemies, which could not have hurt Israel if Israel had not first forsaken his God, but then God forsook them. When God withdrew his defence, as fenceless, they fell under the sword of the enemy; for it is he that subdueth enemies and giveth victory.

Ver. 24.

Whatever severity I have seemed to use, it was but according to their sins, yet less than their sins, in punishing and hiding my face from them.

Ver. 25.

Therefore; since my name, my power, and justice are vindicated, and the heathen see it was Israel's iniquity brought them into captivity, and Israel knows this too.

Now; from this time of Gog's overthrow. Jacob; the seed of Jacob, here called by their father's name.

Have mercy: this reducing captive Jews is mere mercy: it is very true by sin they deserved to be made captives, and it is as true they never did or could deserve a deliverance from captivity; it was not extremity of justice that so punished, but it was the riches of mercy that so pardoned and redeemed.

Upon the whole house of Israel; on the ten tribes with the two. And all this in zeal

for my holy name, by which I am engaged to be their God.

Ver. 26.

After they have long suffered, and now shall suffer no longer; for it is enough my people know, and the heathen know, that I am the Lord.

Borne their shame; reproach for their sins cast on them by the heathen, with great reflections on their God: this was part of the punishment of them all, and the greatest grief to the best among them, that their God was reproached.

Their trespasses; the punishment of those trespasses whereby they sinned against God, which this prophet plainly and frequently chargeth them with.

When they dwelt safely; and this done amidst that prosperity and safety which should have obliged them to love and obedience; but when they were safe at home, they sinned as if danger would never overtake them.

None made them afraid; no enemy to endanger and alarm them. Strange ingratitude, to cast off the fear of God, and his law, when he had set them free from the fear of enemies!

Ver. 27.

When I have brought them: see the phrase **#Eze 28:25**. The persons here are not the two tribes only, but the ten with them, as **#Eze 39:25**.

Out of their enemies' lands; wherever they were, they were among enemies, out of their own country.

Sanctified; by their accepting punishment, repenting for sin, loathing their former ways, and themselves for them, acknowledging God to be holy, his law holy, and his worship

holy, and engaging themselves in covenant of perpetual obedience to God, and keeping it; by these things God will be sanctified among the Israelites, and in sight of the nations, when they see the furnace hath purified them.

Ver. 28.

Know; on fullest experiences, and clearest evidences, see, acknowledge, and publish to each other.

The Lord; the Mighty One, the just Judge, who determineth righteously between men and men, yea, between them and himself.

Their God; who, in covenant with their fathers, hath remembered it for the good of their children, who did assure them, that if they violated his covenant he would punish, and when they repented he would show mercy.

Which caused; who by his own hand raised up enemies against, and then delivered them into the enemies' hand, so sent them into a sad and long captivity.

But I have gathered them; but now done more for them than when I brought them out of Babylon? whence the two tribes (yet not all of them, for some staid behind) and a few of the house of Israel returned; now the whole of the twelve tribes shall be gathered.

Unto their own land; that country they so dearly loved, somewhat for their fathers' sake, whose ancient seat it was, but more for the goodness of it, which flowed with milk and honey. *Have left none:* this recovery it seems shall be much more universal than the former in Zorobabel's time: as, coining out of Egypt, not a feeble person left behind; so nor here, if the words be to be literally explained.

There; in the land of captivity, the enemies' country.

Ver. 29.

Neither will I hide my face: see #Eze 39:23. I will not turn from them in displeasure.

From them; from the whole house of Israel. This is no assurance to any pretender of great interest in God, who yet lives in sin.

Poured out, in abundant measures of wisdom and holiness, my Spirit; which is a Spirit of sanctification to make them holy, and a Spirit of strength to confirm them in holiness, and of adoption to sweeten obedience to them; they shall not, they will not depart from me, according to the promises, **#Eze 11:19,20 36:25-27 37:23-28 Jer 31:31**, &c.; **#Jer 32:37-40**. It was sin that caused God to hide his face, and now grace shall be given to keep them out of sin, and to engage them to constant obedience, that God may rejoice over them to do them good in this their latter end.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 40

Ezekiel's vision of the model of a city, and of an angel with a line and measuring reed taking the dimensions of the temple, **#Eze 40:1-5**. The description of the east gate of the outer court, **#Eze 40:6-19**; of the north gate, **#Eze 40:20-23**; and of the south gate, **#Eze 40:24-26**; of the south gate of the inner court, **#Eze 40:27-31**; of the east gate, **#Eze 40:32-34**; and of the north gate, **#Eze 40:35-38**. The eight tables, **#Eze 40:39-43**. The chambers for the singers and for the priests in waiting, **#Eze 40:44-47**. The porch of the house, **#Eze 40:48,49**.

Ver. 1.

Of our captivity; of those that with Jeconiah, who is also called Jehoiachin, were carried away into captivity eleven years before Jerusalem was sacked and burnt. And this falls in with the 3374th year of the world, or near it; about 574 years before Christ's incarnation.

In the beginning of the year; in the month Nisan.

The tenth day; the day that the paschal lamb was to be taken up in order to the feast on the tenth day, on which Israel went out of Egypt.

In the fourteenth year; which appears thus, the city was smitten in the eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, or eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, to which if you add fourteen, they amount to twenty-five.

Was smitten; taken, plundered, and spoiled by the Babylonians.

In the selfsame day; this is very particularly noted, as of some weight.

The hand of the Lord; the Spirit of prophecy: see **#Eze 1:3 3:14 8:1**.

Brought me; not by local motion carrying his body, but in visional representation, showing the prophet what he relates to us.

Thither; to Jerusalem, the place where it did stand, as appears in the next verse.

Ver. 2.

In the visions; by this it appears it was not a corporeal transumption of the prophet: see **#Eze 8:3**.

Brought me: see **#Eze 40:1**.

Into the land of Israel; the land of Canaan was in a scheme represented to him.

Set me upon a very high mountain; placed him in the most convenient situation for prospect. It were vain to inquire what mountain this was, since this is a vision; probably it was Mount Moriah here signified.

Was the frame, the portrait and model,

of a city; a goodly, fair city, or, by way of eminence,

the city, or of that city which fourteen years ago was burnt.

On the south; on the south of the mountain where the prophet was set, and this was the situation of Jerusalem, on whose north was Mount Zion, **#Ps 48:2**.

Ver. 3.

He brought me; the Lord by his Spirit, as **#Eze 40:1**.

Thither: see **#Eze 40:1**.

A man; the same, no doubt, which appeared to the prophet, **#Eze 1:26**, whose name is The Branch, and who builds the temple, **#Zec 6:12,13**.

Whose appearance, whose fashion and colour, was like burnished brass; so **#Re 1:15**; much like to that **#Eze 1:27**; and speaks glory and strength.

A line of flax; a plumbline, a mason's line, to discover the rectitude of the building, or its defects.

In the gate; not in the east gate, but in the north gate next toward the east.

Ver. 4.

The man: see #Eze 40:3.

Said unto me; Ezekiel, called here, as in many other places, the **son of man.** **Behold with thine eyes;** diligently view; all accurateness is required here in looking into these things presented to the eye.

Hear with thine ears; like care and attention use also in hearing what shall be spoken: these kind of phrases do bind us to greatest heedfulness.

Set thine heart upon; ponder and weigh with thyself, meditate and study on them. Though here is a supernatural revelation, yet he is required to act the utmost part of a man to know the things revealed.

All; nothing is insignificant here, therefore all must be regarded.

To the intent; this was the reason why thou wast brought hither, and why I am come to meet thee.

Declare; plainly tell them, that they may discern, and tell all, conceal nothing.

Ver. 5.

A wall: this was that outmost wall, which did encompass the whole ground on which the temple stood, and the courts that belonged to the temple; a wall that encompassed the whole Mount Zion, upon whose top the temple stood.

On the outside: this passage clears which wall it was, viz. the outermost of three, which the floor of the temple and the mount was encircled with.

Of the house; house of God, the temple, as #Eze 10:4 2Ch 2:1,5.

In the man's hand: the prophet is called to see and hear, but the standard is not put into his hand: Christ who is this man, hath and

keeps the reed in his own hand, as the only fit person to take the measures of all.

Reed, or cane, for this measuring rod or staff was of those canes growing in that country, straight, long, and light, and which architects did make use of.

Of six cubits long; each cubit consisting of eighteen inches in our common account; and though there is much wrangling about the exact dimensions of this cubit, I will not intermeddle with the dispute, it was about one Roman foot and half, which comes very near to our English foot and half, or eighteen inches, or one half-yard.

An hand breadth, added to each six cubits, not, as some have supposed, to each cubit.

The breadth; the thickness of the walls, which were one reed and one hand's breadth, or three yards and three inches, thick.

The height; and the height equal, taking the measure, not from the bottom of the wall in the valley on the outside, which was of different height, as the valley was of different depth, but taking the measure from the area, or floor, on the inside of the wall, it was in the whole circuit of equal height, as here.

Ver. 6.

Then, when the prophet had well observed the outer wall and the measuring thereof,

came he, the man with the measuring reed, i.e. Christ.

The gate, either of one of the inner walls, or of the temple itself.

Went up the stairs thereof: till he was got up, he could not measure the threshold, which was laid at the top of the stairs; and these were ten if the measurer be supposed in the gate of the house, or eight if in the gate of the court of the priests, or seven if in the court of Israel, and each stair half a cubit in height, too high at lowest for him to take the measure of the threshold, if he did not go up the stairs.

Measured the threshold; it is like he measured the lower threshold first, as next hand.

The other threshold, i.e. the upper threshold, or lintel of the gate, which was of equal dimensions with the lower, a reed broad, or three yards and three inches broad, or thick.

Ver. 7.

Along the wall of the porch were chambers, three on one side and three on the other, #Eze 40:10, of equal dimensions, each one reed square.

Five cubits, a space of two yards and one half, between each chamber, either filled with some neat posts or pillars, or it may be quite void, and nothing in them.

Within; the inward threshold as well as outward were of the same measures, and curiously arched over head from side to side, and end to end, which was from east to west.

Ver. 8.

The porch; the posts, which were joined together at the top by an arch, and so made the portico, say some. The open space under the arch between the posts, or the ally which leads from the gate into the more inward parts of the house, or to the inmost. So the French version, *puis apres il mesura d' une eanne l' alle qui menait a la porte la plus en dedans.*

Ver. 9.

This, say some, was another porch of another gate, distinct from that #Eze 40:6. But others, more likely, refer this measuring to the same gate, but where, as before the breadth, now the length is measured.

The posts: these were half columns, that from the floor to the height of the wall jutted out, as if one half of the column were in the wall, and the other without, which was both for beauty and strength; and the protuberance of this half column was one cubit, the other taken up in the wall.

Ver. 10.

This is a repetition of what the 7th verse hath already acquainted us with; I only observe, these chambers were for the priests and Levites to lodge in during their ministration, according to their courses in the temple, where they kept watch continually night

and day. The whole was framed in very great harmony and just proportions.

Ver. 11.

The breadth of the entry: it is meant of the whole length of the entry, or walk through the porch, which was so wide, and to which they ascended by stairs of a semi-circular form.

The length; the height is meant, but it is called its length, either because height is an erected length, or rather because thirteen cubits is the greater dimension; and this interpreters agree in, it is the height of the gate here measured.

Ver. 12.

The space; the bound, limit, or rails, as some think, which were set up at a cubit distance from the front of these little chambers, and gave a beauty to them; or else the space of a cubit on the outside for convenient placing of benches for the priests to sit on, while they observed who came in and went out of the gate.

The little chambers: see #Eze 40:7.

The space between the rails, or balusters, and the chambers on each side, north and south. There was no difference in the dimensions of these little chambers, they were all alike on each side.

Ver. 13.

He measured from the extremity of one little chamber on the north side of the gate, to the extremity of the opposite chamber on the south side; and so one cubit and half for the back wall of the one chamber, and as much for the back wall of the other chamber, with the length of the chambers six cubits each, and ten for the breadth of the gate, amounts to twenty-five cubits.

Door against door; either so placed, that the door of the first chamber on the north side answered to the door of the first on the south side; or some think the doors of the chambers were two in each chamber in the east and west parts, and so exactly set, that, the doors being all open, you had a clear prospect through all the chambers to the temple.

Ver. 14.

He made; measured, and thereby showed what kind of posts they should be.

Posts of threescore cubits: if this might be interpreted by Cyrus's edict for building this fabric sixty cubits high, it would be a clear confirmation of the Divine mission of the prophet, and the certainty of a future performance of the good he promised in God's name, when it appears so evident that he had so long before declared to what height the building should be raised by license from Cyrus. But more like it is that it refers to the height of this gate, built up two stories above the arch, and the posts in their height are only mentioned, but imply all the rest of the building over the east gate. These high columns or posts on the inner front of this gate were so disposed, that the last on each side was very near to the first post, or pillar of the court on either side of the gate; and so the posts, and buildings laid on those posts, joined on each side of this gate.

Ver. 15.

This verse seems to sum up all the dimensions at length, this gate, its porch, and thickness of its walls; and so sum the cubits, six in the thickness of the outer wall, eighteen in the three chambers, twenty in the spaces between the chambers, and six cubits in the thickness of the inner wall of the porch.

Ver. 16.

Narrow windows: these lights were made through the thickness of the wall of the chambers, and the wall was sloped for that purpose, both within toward the chamber, and without toward the cloister, this outward sloping gathering the light from without, and the inward sloping did disperse it over all the chamber; so they were windows narrowed inward, to the middle.

The little chambers; the three on each side of the porch.

To their posts; the upper lintel of each door, over which was a window to let in light from that side.

To the arches; windows under the arches between post and post, to give light to the five cubits' space between chamber and chamber.

Windows were round about inward: these were on both sides of the porch within the gate exactly unlike.

Palm trees, i.e. engraven with curious art for beauty, and whose upper branches spreading themselves along under the arches seemed to bear up the arches.

Ver. 17.

The outward court; so called in regard of the more inward court, between that where he was and the temple itself: this court here, called the outward court, was at least the second about the temple, as you go through the first and greatest court, or floor encompassed with that wall of one reed high, and one thick, through the second, which is the court of the people, and which probably is this in our text.

There were chambers; not only lodging rooms for the priests, but also storehouses for tithes and offerings; these were treasuries, and so rendered by some.

A pavement; a very beautiful floor laid with checker-work, as some say of marble, or of porphyry, which is much richer.

Round about; it was not laid as we see some courts before great houses with us, in a fair walk up from the gate to the door of the house, but the whole floor of this court was thus paved.

Thirty chambers; that is, fifteen on the south side of the gate, and fifteen on the north side, built over the pavement.

Ver. 18.

The pavement; that mentioned **#Eze 40:17**.

By the side of the gates; that part which lay on each side of the gate, and from thence spread itself towards the chambers, leaving a space of pavement of equal breadth with the porch, or gate in the middle.

The length of the gates: this length was measured fifty cubits, **#Eze 40:15**, from the outside of the first wall to the outside of the inmost wall of the gate and porch, from which, on a pavement somewhat raised, as in other stately walks, this went on to the next gate of the next court.

The lower pavement; the side pavement was laid somewhat lower than this middle pavement, not only for state, but for the more convenient keeping it clean; so the middle pavement rose with a little convex surface, and the edges sunk with a little declivity.

Ver. 19.

He measured the breadth of the whole ground between the inner front of one gate and porch, to the outer front of the next gate more inward to the temple.

The lower gate; called so in respect to the next gate, which was on the higher ground, and into which the entrance was by stairs or steps. So the first of the fabric was the lowest, the last was the highest, and the middle gates were the one higher than the other, as in all buildings that stand upon such ascents.

Unto the forefront; to the outside front of the gate of the priests' court, which was next to this gate now measured; that is, from the west front of the lower to the east front of the upper gate. This court was one hundred cubits in length from the west front of the lower gate to the east front of the gate of the inner court; and so was the space from the south front of the court to the north front: so the court was exactly square.

Ver. 20.

Now is this measurer giving account of the north gate of this outward court, in which is a most exact harmony with the measures, fashion, and ornaments of the east gate, so that nothing needs be here repeated; who would know all particulars of this gate may find them in the east gate.

Ver. 21.

The first gate; called, #Eze 40:22, east gate.

The length thereof was fifty cubits: see #Eze 40:15.

The breadth five and twenty cubits: see #Eze 40:13.

Ver. 22.

See #Eze 40:16.

By seven steps: it is not said what number of stairs they went up to the east gate, but by this it appears they were seven steps in number, and it is said by some the form was semi-circular.

The arches thereof, of this portico, the curious vaulted roof.

Before them; within, or more inward than the steps or gate.

Ver. 23.

The gate, the north gate, of

the inner court, or court of the priests.

The gate toward the north; the north gate of the outer court, these were directly over each other.

And toward the east: it is concise, but thus to be expressed fully: The east gate of the inner court was directly over against the east gate of the outer court, and equally distant from each other.

Ver. 24.

Having finished the measuring of the east gate, and showed the prophet the sameness of the north gate's buildings, measures, and ornaments, now he is informed of the south gate, and its exact symmetry with the other two, which consult in **#Eze 40:5-11**.

The south; the south point of heaven.

A gate toward the south; south part of the house.

The posts and the arches: see **#Eze 40:16,21,22**.

Ver. 25.

See **#Eze 40:16**.

Like those windows, which were in the east gate, and already measured there.

Ver. 26.

Seven steps: see **#Eze 40:22**.

To go up to it; the floor or square court.

Before them: see **#Eze 40:22**. One on this side, and another on that side; on the right and on the left-hand posts, each post had one palm tree.

Ver. 27.

As before the east gate answered to east, and north to north, so here one south gate answers to the other in the confronting or parallel walls, and in all points exactly uniform. To prevent repetition, I refer you to the particular measures, &c. of the east gate.

Ver. 28.

He brought me from the south gate of the outer court through the porch, and over the one hundred cubit pavement to the south gate of the inner court, which is he described by its harmony with the other gates, which were before measured, and to them are you referred, lest we needlessly repeat the same things.

Ver. 29.

Fifty cubits long: see #Eze 40:15.

Five and twenty cubits broad: see #Eze 40:13.

Ver. 30.

Five and twenty cubits long: here, as once before, #Eze 40:11, length is put for height.

Ver. 31.

In this verse two things are mentioned wherein this gate differed from the other; first, in the arches or porch, which stood not inward, but outward towards the outer court, the reason whereof will appear in what follows. The next difference lieth in this, that the ascent was by eight steps (more than the other, say some, and so make them fifteen). Now, if the porch to this gate built outward stood upon such ascent, it would be necessary the pillars should be such as #Eze 40:30 expresseth them, five cubits in the breadth of the basis, and twenty-five cubits high.

Ver. 32.

The inner court; the court of the priests, which was next to the house or temple itself.

Toward the east; to the east gate of that court; so he is brought from the south to the east gate.

According to these measures; as the other, so this, exactly like to the first in all dimensions of length and breadth.

Ver. 33.

Compare #Eze 40:33 with #Eze 40:6-16, where the form and dimensions are expressly set down.

Ver. 34.

See #Eze 40:31, where this verse is explained.

Ver. 35.

From the east gate, and taking the measures thereof, he passeth by order to the north gate, where all is exactly conformed to that in the south and east gates.

Ver. 36.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 37.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 38.

The chambers; either the six, three on one side, and three on the other, as before in the gates of the outer court, or else chambers built on purpose for the uses here specified, as some conjecture.

The entries; the doors, as well as the chambers, were by the pillars probably adjoining to them. Though some have thought the north gate was that alone where they washed the burnt-offering, yet others conceive it was done at the east gate too, if not at the south also; and the plural number warrants us to look for another gate beside the north, when it is said these chambers *were by the posts of the gates*, plural. God commanded that the legs and entrails of this burnt-offering should be washed, #Le 1:13; now here they did that, and whether these chambers were built for this use only, or put to this to other holy uses, is not greatly material to inquire.

Ver. 39.

Though the words seem so express, yet doubt is made whether any table were in the very porch itself, and think they would cumber the passage, but sure where only the priests in course of ministration entered, there would be no great crowd; therefore I conceive that these two pairs of tables were set in the very porch of the gate, which is the letter of the text.

Ver. 40.

On the right hand without, and probably in the open air, or else under the cloister that went eastward, stood two, and on the left hand two, in like manner, for the same end and use, to slay the sacrifices.

Ver. 41.

Either within the porch two, and without it two, on either side, or else, as some will, four without the porch and gate, in the cloisters on the right and left hand of the gate. However placed, they were eight for number, and designed for slaying the sacrifices on.

Ver. 42.

The four tables; each four tables, for the prophet speaks of all eight, but names them four, because they were coupled so one four on the one side and the other four on the other side.

Hewn stone: it is not likely these were mean, worthless stones, but either best marble, or else some stone better than marble, and they are exactly square, a cubit and half every way.

One cubit high: here is nothing said of the thickness of these stone tables, it is probable they were of a good thickness, which, added to the cubit height, on which they were set, might raise them to convenient height for use.

They laid the instruments, when they were brought out for present use; at other times we know they were laid up in chambers and cupboards prepared for that end.

Ver. 43.

Within the house, porch, or whatever the place be called where these tables stood.

Hooks; learned conjectures here, as in many other places, perplex more than explain. Hooks, on which the slaughtered sacrifice might be hanged. while they prepared it further, were needful, and the word imports such iron hooks. It is probable that there might be two hooks of iron fastened to or wrought out, where the plate was so broad, and therefore called hooks in the plural. Fastened to walls, no doubt, near these tables.

Upon the tables was the flesh of the offering; they were careful to keep the holy flesh from lying any where that might look like

common ground. It is like that the sacrifice was fastened to these hooks, and rested on these stone tables, while the priests cut them into their pieces.

Ver. 44.

Without; when he was got through the gate of the inner court.

Were the chambers, several in a row, of the singers; where they lodged both their instruments and themselves during the time of their attendance. In the inner court; next to the temple. The back parts of these lodgings were toward the north wall of the inner court, and their lights and prospects to the south, and stood both on the north-east side and on the north-west side.

One; one row of chambers. This row in length was from east to west, and however this row butted, it is certain the position of their lights was to the north; so these chambers must have their back parts on some building that run out from the east gate into the body of the court westward.

Ver. 45.

He, who appeared with measuring line and reed, **#Eze 40:3.** This chamber; this range of chambers, for this single number refers to the whole row, not to one particular chamber.

For the priests the sons of Aaron, yet, I think, not excluding others, who had charge under the priests.

The keepers, while, according to their courses, they had the charge of the house of God, and attended on the service of it.

Ver. 46.

The chamber: see **#Eze 40:45.**

For the priests, the keepers: see **#Eze 40:45.**

Of the charge of the altar; to preserve the fire perpetually on the altar, &c.

Zadok; the high priest, who was put in by Solomon's depriving of Abiathar, in whose race the high priesthood continued. While God's order was observed, his sons, especially among the Levites, had this charge, and in their turns took care of the altar, which that they might the better do, they had those chambers, whose prospect I suppose was toward the altar.

Ver. 47.

The court; the inner court, or court of the priests, who, according to their several charges, had lodgings in it, as #Eze 40:46.

Four-square: this court was an exact equilateral square.

The altar: here the place of the altar is only mentioned, the measuring of it is #Eze 43:13-18. This altar was placed in the very centre of this square, in a direct line from the north, east, and south gates, and might be seen from the lower courts by those who stood there. The house; the temple itself.

Ver. 48.

He brought me, from the measuring the building and court, to the porch of the house, that porch which joined to the temple, and was part of the house.

Each post of the porch; the post or wall on each side of the gate. The thickness or space between the outside of the wall and the inside of the wall was five cubits on each side, north and south, if we suppose the breadth of the porch from north to south, and the length from east to west. The whole breadth was eleven cubits, but the breadth of each leaf of this folding gate was three cubits, and they met, or shut, on an upright post, set in the middle of the gatespace, and this one cubit broad; and then each leaf hanged on posts two cubits thick; which amount to eleven cubits.

Ver. 49.

Though learned men dispute the position of the length, whether from east to west, or from north to south, express word determines the dimensions of this length and breadth. *The steps:* eight, say some, others eleven, and some say ten, others say twelve; but most say eight.

There were pillars: so soon as he was come into the porch, he saw two pillars, that stood off from the side walls, not joined to them, as the posts were, much like Jachin and Boaz in Solomon's temple.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 41

The measures, parts, chambers, and ornaments of the temple.

After the measuring of the courts, &c., now the prophet is brought to see the temple itself measured. The posts; the thickness of the walls (called posts here, as also #Eze 40:48) on the north side and on the south side of the gate. Six cubits broad; one whole reed in thickness. These walls in their thickness took up as much space as the whole breadth of Moses's tabernacle, #Ex 26:22-25, where eight boards, each one cubit and half broad, make just the breadth of the tabernacle, twelve cubits.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

The door; or the aperture, the open space which let in light, as well as men; properly the door of the porch. Ten cubits, between post and post, on which the folding doors did hang.

The sides of the door; the space from the edge of the wall by the posts to the side wall inward was on each side five cubits, on the north side so many, and on the south so many, which make the contents between wall and wall, as the verse hath it, twenty cubits in breadth.

The length of the sanctuary, from the porch to the partition between the holy of holies, and the inward front of the wall of the sanctuary, was forty cubits, unless we must take in the thickness of the walls of both sanctuary and holy of holies, of which more may possibly be spoken.

Ver. 3.

Inward; from the porch through the body of the temple, to the partition between the body of the temple and the holy of holies, or the oracle.

The post; either the thickness of that partition wall, or of the pilasters, which stood one on one side and the other on the other side of the door.

The door, or entrance out of the temple into the oracle. This door was

six cubits high, say some, but, more likely, it was six cubits broad, and an upright bar or post on which the leaves did meet,

and which was of one cubit's breadth, make out the seven cubits mentioned in the last words of this verse.

Ver. 4.

The length thereof; of the oracle, or holy of holies. It was an exact square, as was Solomon's, #1Ki 6:20.

Before the temple; parallel with the breadth of the temple.

He said unto me; the prophet was commanded to hear, and now he shows us his attention.

This is the most holy place, as having the tokens of God's more especial presence, in that the mercy-seat and propitiatory were there, so called #Nu 7:89; it was called also the *oracle*, #1Ki 6:16, and

the inner house, #Eze 41:15,17.

Ver. 5.

Having left the holy of holies measured in the 3rd verse, now he is come to take the measures of the outer wall.

The house; the temple itself,

Six cubits; three yards thick was this wall from the ground to the first story of the side chambers.

Every side chamber of the lowest floor; for there were three stories of these, and they differed in their breadth, as the wall of the temple on which they rested abated of its thickness; for the middle chambers were broader than the lowest by a cubit, and the highest as much broader than the middle.

Round about; on the north, south, and west parts.

On every side; on each side of every one of these three gates. The east gate, and buildings about that, were not faced with such facings.

Ver. 6.

One over another; in three stories high.

Thirty in order: how these thirty in a row were distributed is not said, some guess twelve on the north side, as many on the south side, and six on the west; but as this may be, so possibly it may

not be; but we are sure the whole number is thirty in a row on each story, i.e. three times thirty, or ninety in all.

The wall; not the five or six cubit wall, which was the wall of the house, but another wall of one cubit thickness, on the top whereof was a rest or ledge of one cubit breadth, on which the ends of the cedar beams were fastened. It is said this was built

for the side chambers: either from the foundation the wall was made so thick, that at five cubits from the ground they might rebate or draw in the thickness of the ascending wall one cubit, or else this cubit-thick wall was after added; but this, as not probable, I reject.

That they might have hold; that the beams of the chambers might have good and firm resting hold.

They had not hold in the wall; the ends of the beams were not thrust into the main body of the wall of the temple, as we see beams laid into the body of the walls of houses. But for each story a rebatement of one cubit in the thickness of the wall, so that six cubits thick at the ground, up to the first floor, and five cubits thick from that to the second floor, and four cubits thick from the second to the third floor, so each floor rests on a ledge of one cubit without the wall, and each story grows a cubit broader than that which is next lower.

Ver. 7.

An enlarging, viz. of the side chambers, so much of breadth added to the chamber as was taken from the thickness of the wall; that is, two cubits in the uppermost, and one cubit in the middlemost, more than in the lowest chambers.

A winding about; winding stairs which enlarged as the rooms did, and these run up between each two chambers, from the bottom to the top; so there were two doors at the head of each pair of stairs, one door opening into one chamber, and the other into the opposite chamber: or else you must make the chambers thoroughfares, and suppose passages through all. These stairs, as they rose in height, enlarged themselves too.

Round about, i.e. on all sides of the house where these chambers were, which, as observed, was on three sides of the house.

The breadth of the house; of each chamber.

Increased; grew broader by one cubit in every upper room or chamber; from five in the lowest to six in the middle, and to seven in the highest chamber.

Ver. 8.

Of the house; of the chambers, or the three stories of them; it is not the temple. The lowest chamber had properly a foundation laid on the earth, but the floor of the middle and highest story must be accounted here a foundation; so from the ground to the ceiling of the first room was six great cubits; from the first beams, joists, and boards to the second; six great cubits; and from the third floor to the roof of the chamber, a like number: to which if we add one cubit for thickness of each of the three roofs or floors, you have twenty-one cubits for height, ten yards and half high.

Ver. 9.

The outward wall for these chambers was five cubits in thickness, and was made of stone, which added both beauty and strength to the other part of the building, and served as buttresses to the temple wall.

That which was left; that space which was left without this wall, about five cubits broad, and served for a walk before the chambers, or for a passage from one chamber to another.

Within the walk and wall.

Ver. 11.

The doors of the lowest row opened into this void paved space. Beside the particular doors to each chamber, there were two, one on the north, where was a fair staircase, which did lead up to every story, and above these to the top of the temple. And so another like this on the south, excepting that this south staircase led not up to the top of all, as that north staircase did.

Ver. 12.

This is a new building not yet mentioned, but now measured by itself.

Before, or over against,

the separate place; either the temple, with all the appendant treasury chambers; or the oracle, which was in the west end of the temple, and separate from the rest of the temple; or that twenty cubits' space which was cut off from the chambers, and the five cubits' space before them by a breast wall, as some think.

At the end of either temple, oracle, or foresaid space,

toward the west, was seventy cubits broad: as men are not agreed about the fabric, and its dimensions, here intended to be measured, so they are as little agreed how to compute the measures; every one however makes out his account, whether the thing he measures be the right or mistaken. First, suppose the temple and the west part of it from north to south, thus: Twenty cubits the oracle, each side wall six cubits, breadth of chambers on each side four, the thickness of the out-walls of these chambers on both sides five cubits each, a void space of five cubits compassing the whole, and then the low or breast wall that enclosed this space five cubits thick on each side, making up the third ten, produce the seventy cubits. But they that think of a distinct building on the west end of the temple, do also in their method make out the account.

The wall of the building was five cubits thick: this seems to countenance their opinion who conceive a distinct building meant.

The length thereof ninety cubits: these proportions are easily laid together, which will make up the total, and agree with the temple, thus: Temple and oracle with their walls seventy cubits, porch eleven, and chambers and walls nine cubits. And who will have such a new structure here measured (which is more than was in the first temple fabric) will make all correspond to their hypothesis, and you may more easily object against another's than demonstrate your own guess. The best is, the error is not great if a man do err here.

Ver. 13.

The house; the whole temple, oracle, sanctuary, and porch, with the walls.

An hundred cubits long, from east to west, thus: Stairs of the east porch or the thickness of the wall six cubits, the passage through the porch eleven, wall of the temple within the porch six

cubits, the temple itself forty cubits, partition wall two cubits, the oracle twenty cubits, west wall thick six cubits, the chambers at bottom of the west wall four cubits, and the outer wall of the chambers five cubits.

The separate place: see #Eze 41:12.

The building, on both the north and south side of the temple.

An hundred cubits long; which is thus reckoned: The breadth of the temple twenty cubits, thickness of both walls twelve cubits, the bottom chambers on both sides eight cubits, the outer walls of these chambers five cubits a piece, the breadth of the place left out on each side five, on both sides ten, (i.e. five each,) and then the wideness between this on either side twenty cubits.

Ver. 14.

Of the face; the whole front of the house eastward, the prospect of it being to the east.

Of the separate place: this explains the other, say some, the house is the separate place; or else, as others, that other building on the west end of the temple, which was of equal dimensions with the temple.

An hundred cubits; measuring from the north point along by the eastern front to the south point, or corner of the building or wall. The admeasuring the particulars I forbear; but since this side runs equal with the length of the whole from east to west, we need not doubt it is a hundred cubits.

Ver. 15.

The building, possibly that of #Eze 41:12,13, or else the buildings of this court next to the temple, or else the west buildings behind the oracle, or the buildings of the utter court, of which in #Eze 42:1,3,7,8.

The separate place: see #Eze 41:12.

Which was behind it; the buildings that were behind on the west side of that supposed range, of buildings, or else behind the temple.

Galleries; either chambers, or porches, or balconies, places supported by pilasters, made for beauty and delight.

With the inner temple; according to the measures of the temple, and its appendant buildings.

Ver. 16.

What are here recounted were all measured by the angel, and with the same reed or measure.

The door posts: see #Eze 40:48,49. It is likely he means the door posts of every gate, or porch in every court.

Windows: see #Eze 40:16.

Galleries: see #Eze 41:5,15.

Three stories; see #Eze 40:6,7; or parts, or buildings; temple, separate place, and on the court walls.

The door; the singular for the plural number; the doors, which were

ceiled with wood, were measured; this ceiling was with choicest wood.

From the ground up to the windows; the height of these windows were taken too.

Were covered; had lids or curtains to cover them, and lattices too, say some.

Ver. 17.

In the 15th verse the prophet began his catalogue, and continueth it through this verse, in which, in the gross, he tells us all above the doors, in every porch and gate to the very inner house, and all without, the buildings about the walls, were measured exactly, though we have neither the particular account of what these were, either things or measures.

Ver. 18.

Now we are acquainted with the ornaments, the beautiful carving, which in all parts mentioned were to be seen.

Made; beautified.

Cherubims; generally taken for the portrait of angels, and framed to the beauty of young men with wings. Yet is the description of them very different in different places, as the

curious observe in Ezekiel's vision, #Eze 1, Isaiah's vision, #Isa 6, John's vision, #Re 4, and in Solomon's temple.

Palm trees; a very beautiful, upright tree, from a straight, well-grown body, spreading its head with large boughs and branches, which were used on occasions of joy, and were emblems of victory, #Joh 12:13 Re 7:9. These were so engraven, that each palm tree was between two cherubs, and each cherub between two palm trees, and this ariseth from the different aspect, or numbering them.

Two faces, curiously wrought on the same head, somewhat like a Janus's head; what these facts were the next verse tells us.

Ver. 19.

The face of a man, this one face, the other

of a young lion. Now as to the aspect, it was thus; the cherub between two palm trees looked towards both trees, towards the one a man's face, towards the other a young lion's face, looked. And thus it was through the whole house round about, and from bottom to top, as #Eze 41:20.

Ver. 20.

The door: some think it is the great east gate; I think rather here, is an enallage, or change of number, door for doors, and that every porch was so beautified: see #Eze 40:16,22,26,34. These beautiful sculptures were round about the walls of the temple, and oracle too, though not expressed here.

Ver. 21.

The posts on each side of the gate or door, both of temple and oracle, were squared; not round, as some other were, and as the posts of the door of the tabernacle were, but of exact square.

The face, the form of the door, or gate of the temple, was square, i.e. not arched, as the gates of our churches ordinarily are, but with a flat beam, or upper lintel, laid on the top of the posts, and so either made an equilateral square, or an oblong square.

The appearance of the one as the appearance of the other; as was the form of the gate of the temple in its larger, so was the form of the gate of the oracle in its lesser dimensions.

Ver. 22.

The altar of incense.

Of wood; so the inward parts were made, and covered with gold, #Ex 30:1-10 1Ki 6:20,22; and from this covering of gold it was called the

golden altar. Three cubits high; one cubit higher than that in the tabernacle of Moses, #Ex 30:2.

The length thereof two cubits; as long again as Moses's altar of incense in the tabernacle.

The corners; the horns framed out of the four posts at each angle on the top of the altar. The sides of this altar, for it was made up on all sides, are here called

the walls thereof, made of wood, but covered with gold.

The table; some say it is spoken of this altar of incense; others say, the angel pointed him to the table of shew-bread, and spake of that.

Before the Lord; in the temple, not in the oracle, or holy of holies: this incense altar was placed without the oracle, as appears from the priests' offering incense at it by courses, whereas none but the high priest might enter into the holy of holies.

Ver. 23.

Each had one door, so there were two doors, and they were folding doors, or two-leaved doors.

Ver. 24.

Made; carved.

On them; the doors of both temple and oracle.

The temple; including the holy of holies also.

Cherubims: see #Eze 41:18.

Thick planks; I suppose these were boards of more than ordinary thickness, which were fastened to the great beams, whose ends came out beyond the wall of the porch, and probably were laid so as to make a part of an arch over the entrance into the gate, as we see over some houses, and as sometimes under the balconies; and here also in these thicker planks, it is like, were some ornaments,

Upon or above the front
of the porch.

Without; on the court-side of the porch, that part that looked outward.

Ver. 25.

Narrow windows: see #Eze 41:16.

Palm trees: see #Eze 41:18.

On the one side and on the other side; on the north and on the south side, as you enter in from east toward the west; thus the sides of the porch outward were garnished.

Upon the side chambers; which were thirty in a row, and three stories high: see #Eze 41:6.

Thick planks; alike carved and beautified, and alike strengthening and defending the places where they were used.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 42

The chambers for the priests, #Eze 42:1-12. The use thereof, #Eze 42:13,14. The measures of the outward court, #Eze 42:15-20.

Ver. 1.

After a particular view of the temple, and all its parts, with the inmost court, and all in it, the prophet is

brought forth into the utter court; called so in regard to that more inward, whence the prophet now cometh: it is likely, if not certain, this was the priests' court, which had two others more outward, but because the prophet had been in one more inward than that of the priests, he giveth the name of outer to this court.

Toward the north; through the north gate, by which he descended into the court, where the staircase was by which he went up into the chambers, built over the pilasters and arches, so that underneath was a cloister, or gallery.

The chamber; either the singular number for the plural, or chamber for the row of chambers; or else, into one of the many that were there.

The separate place: whether you take it for the temple itself, or for that building equal to the temple, on the west part of the temple, still this row of chambers faced the north part of it.

Before the building toward the north: the south front of this range of chambers looked to the north front of the temple, and its buildings on that side, or to the north front of the separate place, and its buildings on that side, or to the north front of the separate place.

Ver. 2.

The temple, of one hundred cubits long, and of fifty broad, was on the south prospect of these chambers; or, possibly, this north door did give entrance into buildings that were one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits broad.

Ver. 3.

The twenty cubits' space of the inner court, or court of the temple, faced the south front of this row of chambers, their southern lights looked into this space, and to the north of the temple:

The pavement, which was in the priests' court, and on the north side of this building, into which pavement the north windows looked.

Gallery against gallery; that is, a gallery on the south part toward the inner court, and a gallery toward the pavement northward, and between the backs of these galleries were chambers.

In three stories; either in height, or else in three ranks, as now placed, two galleries on the sides, and a chamber in the midst; or two rows of chambers, and one long gallery in the middle.

Ver. 4.

This row of chambers had on the south side, or inward, a walk of ten cubits broad, which my between the wall on which these chambers were built, and the twenty cubits' space; possibly it might be some cloister, running along the wall on the inside. Before the galleries, probably, was a ledge of one cubit broad, running the whole length from east to west, called here *a way*, though not designed for any to walk on it: such ledges we see in many great houses. Every chamber door opened to the north; and so the entrance into these chambers was through the gallery, which looked to the pavement of the outer court.

Ver. 5.

Were shorter: at first view it should seem to refer to the length, but indeed it refers to the height of the chambers, of which the lowest chamber was highest pitched from the floor to the ceiling; the second lower pitched than the first, yet of greater height than the uppermost between the floor and ceiling.

The galleries were higher than these: possibly, there might be over the uppermost chambers a fiat roof, on which, as on a gallery, they might walk from one end to another, and therefore that floor was much lower than the middle or lowest, according to the rule of architecture, which directs that the upper rooms take not up so much in their height as the lower, that the weight of the timber be not too heavy for the walls..

Ver. 6.

In three stories; built high one over another.

As the pillars of the courts; as thick and strong as those were, but of the slenderer and weaker make.

The building, the highest room of the building, was straitened; was laid at nearer distance than the middlemost from the lowest, or than the roof of the lowest from the ground.

Ver. 7.

The wall; not of the chambers, but some wall at distance from them; perhaps some wall that might keep up a terrace-walk.

Over against the chambers; therefore was northward from the chambers.

The utter court; the court of the men, or of Israel, which is called utter with respect to this, wherein this building stood, as this was called *utter*, #Eze 42:1,3, with respect to the court that was more inward.

On the forepart of the chambers; which evidently shows that the wall of fifty cubits stood north from these chambers.

The length thereof was fifty cubits; answerable to the length of this building from east to west.

Ver. 8.

This verse gives us a reason why the wall over against the chambers was but fifty cubits, it might not be more or less because

it was to hold exact symmetry with these buildings, which it confronted: possibly this verse may give some light to the second verse, latter part.

The utter court: see #Eze 42:1,7.

And, lo, before the temple were an hundred cubits: some say the angel, conducting the prophet from these north chambers to the south, hath occasion given him to take notice of, and to measure a second time, this space before the temple; but what if the angel and the prophet were now on the roof of this fifty cubits' building, as they seem to be #Eze 42:5, measuring it, and thence the angel might point to the hundred cubits' space before the temple, and bid the prophet to mind it? The former, most received, suits best with the 11th and 12th verses.

Ver. 9.

I suppose this verse describes the entrance into the south chambers, that it was on the east point, and that those who would go into them must go up the stairs (which probably were winding stairs) at the east end of these buildings, whose front was toward the south.

Ver. 10.

The chambers, galleries also with them, of this south building now measured.

The thickness, or the breadth, of that wall of the court which was eastward, and as an enclosure of the building.

The separate place; which was west from this building, whose length lay north and south, and its breadth east and west: what this separate place may be, see #Eze 42:1.

The building: see #Eze 42:1.

Ver. 11.

The way; the walk, as #Eze 42:4.

Like the appearance, exactly uniform with the fabric, on the north side.

All their goings out; every window and door.

Were both according to their fashions; framed in the same manner.

According to their doors; according to the number of the doors in the one was the number of the other, all in all things exactly like.

Ver. 12.

This verse is a particular description of the door and way that, from the east end of this south building, did lead either under the buildings, or through some part of them toward the west point, as before; such a way from the north buildings did lead to the south, nor do I think necessary to speak more of the words.

Ver. 13.

Then said he; the measurer, Christ, man in appearance at that time.

The separate place: see #Eze 42:1.

Holy chambers; set apart, consecrated to holy services and uses, as vessels, garments, and days may be holy.

The priests, and Levites too,

that approach; that were then in waiting, according to their courses; for this approach is not only mentioned as distinguished from the distance the people were kept at, but as including the present actual approaches of the priests, in their ministering before the Lord.

Shall eat together, as in a public refectory.

The most holy things; things devoted to God were these most holy, some parts whereof God gave to the priests to live on. In some of these chambers the holy things that might be eat were laid up as in a storehouse, and those which were not for present use were here to be reserved till they were to be used; and whether it were more or less that was allowed to the priests out of the offerings, here it was to be kept till used.

The meat-offering: see what this was, #Le 2:1-12 6:14-16.

The sin-offering: see what this, #Le 6:26,29,30.

The trespass-offering: see #Le 7:2,3, &c.

Ver. 14.

When, at the time of their service, the priests, and Levites also, who assisted, enter therein, come into the court of the temple or inmost court in their priestly garments to offer sacrifice, or to do any other part of their office,

then, when they have done their office,

shall they not go out, in their priestly garments, of the holy place, the court of the priests, not of the temple, into the utter court, the court of the people.

There; in some one of the chambers of south or north buildings, which is a wardrobe for them. Lay their garments; lay up, either for other priests, whose course came next, or for themselves against the next return of their course.

Wherein they minister; expressly directed by God, #Ex 28:40-43.

They are holy; consecrated, ceremonially and relatively holy, for they are not capable of inherent holiness.

Shall put on other garments when they go out of this court into the outer, or outmost, they must put on common garments.

Shall approach to those things, and so they may, as they have occasion, and see good,

which are for the people; which common people may meddle with, which the priests may in their ordinary garments intermeddle with, and not be guilty, but may not touch while in the garments of their ministration..

Ver. 15.

The inner house; the holy of holies, the temple, and all the buildings that were in it, and its inner courts.

He brought me forth, quite out to the outmost court, and wall of it, which compassed all the rest of the courts.

Toward the gate whose prospect is toward the east; to the east gate of the outside wall, mentioned #Eze 40:6, which see.

Round about, i.e. the four squares of the wall for this, as the other walls, was square, not round, and therefore this round about is to be understood of measuring all four equilateral sides or parallels.

Ver. 16.

He, the angel, or Christ in the appearance of a man,

measured the east side, from the two opposite angles of the inside north and south, with the measuring reed, which was of six cubits and one hand or three inches.

Round about; as **#Eze 42:15**. The four square was five hundred reeds, that is, each wall was one hundred and twenty-five reeds, say some, yet this hath its difficulties, though I think it more likely than the conjecture of L. C.; and, for aught I see, the guess of Villalpandus may be admitted, that the whole square was four times measured round about, from the east round, from the north round, &c., as this: the 17th, 18th, and 19th verses repeat it.

Ver. 17.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 18.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 19.

Here is nothing new added but what is in the 16th verse. I observe that the 16th and 17th verses expressly mention the measuring round about, and why I should doubt it was twice done, when it is related twice, as done from different points, I know not; and then it is easy, and likely enough, that the double relation of this measuring in the 18th and 19th verses will be the relation of the same way of measuring from other points; which, I suppose, is the ground of Villalpandus's opinion, and is far more agreeable to the Hebrew text, and context, and account, and more agreeably to divinity, than that of L. C.

Ver. 20.

He measured it, the whole wall, by the four sides, repeating the measure of the whole, according to the number of the sides.

It had a wall; the whole had such a wall: had each side been five hundred reeds, the prophet must in propriety of speech have said

they, i.e. the sides, not

it, i.e. the whole compass of the wall.

Five hundred reeds long: in such an equilateral square there is properly no length, for all sides are equal, but because in the temple structure there was length and breadth, therefore that *latus*, or side, which runs in straight line, parallel with the length of the temple, is here taken for the length; the other, which was parallel to the breadth of the temple, is the breadth of this isopleuron, or equilateral square.

Five hundred broad: he speaks not here of the thickness, though sometimes breadth and thickness are the same.

To make a separation; to distinguish, and accordingly to exclude or admit persons, for all might not go in.

The sanctuary; not the temple, this is not here meant; but we must remember here that the Jews accounted the whole earth profane, i.e. common or unclean, compared with Canaan, and Canaan common or less holy than Jerusalem, and every part nearer the temple the more holy; and so here the outward court was enclosed to distinguish it by its comparative holiness, it was more holy than all without it.

Thus, enveloped in clouds and darkness, thou hast, good reader, a conjecture at many things, which, I need not blush to confess, are more above mine own comprehension than above some others. The mystical sense I refer to thy thoughts.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 43

The glory of God returneth into the temple, **#Eze 43:1-6**. God promiseth to dwell there, if the people will put away their sins, **#Eze 43:7-9**. In order to incite them to repentance, the prophet showeth them the model and law of the house, **#Eze 43:10-12**. The measures of the altar, **#Eze 43:13-17**. The ordinances thereof **#Eze 43:18-27**.

Ver. 1.

After that the measuring of the temple was finished,

he brought me, from the west gate where the whole was finished, and where the 42nd chapter left the prophet,

to the gate, which, lest we should mistake, is expressly described the east gate, of the first wall measured, where he began with the angel, **#Eze 40:6**. From this gate, in a direct line, you have the fairest prospect of the temple.

Ver. 2.

Behold: sometimes this word is expletive, but here surely it stands for more; it expresseth, no doubt, the joy the prophet had to see this excellent sight, which should not be seen there more than sixty year's; for in the sixth year of the captivity the glory of God left the city, **#Eze 11:22,23**; and now the prophet foreseeth its return after the settling the temple, its buildings, and ordinances, which took up a great time, as is evident, **#Joh 2:20**, which time of forty-six years (viz. thirty in Cyrus, eight in Cambyses, and some six in Darius) is very near accounted. So that between the departure and the return of the glory of God, are about one hundred and six or eight years, and about fourscore between this vision and the accomplishment. *The glory:* see **#Eze 1:28**.

Of the God of Israel; of him who is an infinitely glorious Being, yet in covenant with us, as a peculiar people of God.

Came from the way of the east: when the glory departed it went eastward, and now that it returns it comes from the east.

His voice: though by the voice of God thunder is sometimes meant, yet here it was an articulate voice, as appears **#Eze 43:7,8**. Perhaps this might be attended with thunder, as usually in such cases.

Like a noise of many waters; terrible, and a mighty voice, as the noise of mighty waves of the sea; so **#Eze 1:24 Re 1:15**.

The earth; not the whole earth, but that part about Jerusalem and the temple.

Shined with his glory; the rays of glory, like the sun-beams, made the dark earth to shine with glorious light.

Ver. 3.

And it, this glory of the God of Israel,

was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw: see #Eze 1:4,28.

To destroy the city; to declare that their sins would ruin their city, #Eze 9:3 10:4, which see. Here the effect seems ascribed to him, though he only declares it will be.

By the river Chebar: see #Eze 1:1,3.

Fell upon my face; overwhelmed, and as it were swallowed up: see #Eze 1:28.

Ver. 4.

The glory: see #Eze 43:3.

Came; the sins of impenitent Israel caused the glory of the Lord to go out of his house, but now the repentance of Israel is blessed with the return of this glory.

Into the house; the temple where before it dwelt.

Whose prospect is toward the east; whose front looks eastward: see #Eze 43:2.

Ver. 5.

The spirit: see #Eze 2:2.

Brought me; carried me, at least supported and moved.

The inner court; the court next to the house of the Lord, this was the innermost court.

Filled, either with splendour and brightness, or with a cloud, such as formerly was, #Le 16:2 1Ki 8:10,11, the token of his presence.

The house; the temple.

Ver. 6.

I heard, distinctly, intelligibly, so that I am sure it was no delusion.

Him; the Lord, who was in that glory.

Speaking; what was spoken appears in the next two verses.

Out of the house; God speaks to his out of his temple.

The man; Christ, Mediator.

Stood by, to encourage, inform, and strengthen him.

Ver. 7.

And he; the glorious God of Israel.

The place of my throne: his throne, i.e. of glory and majesty, is in heaven, but the throne of his grace is in his temple; in the dispensations of grace, God manifests himself a King.

The place of the soles of my feet: after the manner of man God speaks, and expresseth his abode and rest, where it is in his temple, as type, in his church, as the antitype.

I will dwell; not only shall my ordinances be there administered, but I myself will dwell there.

For ever; for a very long time, till the age of infancy with the Jewish church be over; and to eternity with my church, signified by this temple and city.

My holy name: see #Eze 22:26 36:20. *No more defile*; dishonour, and bring into contempt, as they have done. Neither they; the priests, the false prophets, and the common people, nor their governors and kings.

By their whoredom; by idolatries, and worshipping of strange gods, which, after the captivity, they did very punctually abstain from, as history assures us.

By the carcasses of their kings; either the dead bodies of their deceased kings, buried too near the temple, less likely; or by the sacrificing of men to their idols, to Moloch; or idols are here called carcasses, as dead, stinking, loathsome things in the sight of God. Or, if I had instances of any kings buried in the temples Of the idols, I should incline to interpret this passage of the profane and wicked burying idolatrous kings near the idols they worshipped.

In their high places; where idol temples and idol worship were celebrated.

Ver. 8.

The idolatrous kings of Judah and Israel built, temples and altars for their idols, and these are called their thresholds. The Jews, or people of Judah, and their kings, erected these in the courts, or

near the courts., of the temple, and so ill local nearness their threshold was by God's thresholds, and their posts by his, that they were a nuisance to him. And there was but a wall between me and them, that under my eye, and within my hearing, they have with greatest presumption defiled my name.

Defiled my holy name; despised my ordinances, corrupted my worship, or forsaken it, used me as if I were neither great nor holy.

Abominations; abominable idolatries, and wickednesses not to be named.

Committed; acted boldly and openly, against precept, threat, and admonitions.

Wherefore I have consumed them; for which sins I brought destruction upon them. The Chaldeans ruined them, but they were the rod of God's anger.

In mine anger; in great displeasure and wrath, i.e. in my provoked justice, as **#Eze 20:13 22:31**.

Ver. 9.

This verse is either prophetic or perceptive, it doth direct the Jew what he should in duty do under this temple, and foretell what the people of God will do under the gospel.

Put away; cast away, as impure and loathsome things should be cast away.

Their whoredom, &c.: see **#Eze 43:7**.

Far from me, my temple and worship.

I will dwell in the midst of them, as their light, protection, and glory. The promises which are made in these cases enjoin us duty: men may sin away God's presence and blessings. Cast away all sin, that God cast not you away.

For ever: see **#Eze 43:7**.

Ver. 10.

Son of man; Ezekiel, who is called thus above eighty times in this book.

Show: he could not lay a model before their eye, but he could, and this is required, describe it to them in all the parts.

The house; temple, which he had seen, and exactly measured.

To the house of Israel; to the rulers, prophets, and priests especially, not excluding others.

That they may be ashamed of their iniquities; when they shall blush to see what glory their iniquities had ruined, how great losers they were by their sins: or else thus interpret the meaning of these things, And let the Jews know what a church God will erect among the Gentiles, that so the Jews may be ashamed of their iniquities, which provoked God to east them off, and to destroy their church and state.

Let them measure the pattern; as thou declarest let them write down, delineate all, and then compute the whole, that they may fully comprehend it.

Ver. 11.

They; the house of Israel.

Be ashamed; repent, and show it by manifest tokens.

Of all: it is not true repentance which is ashamed of some only, but not of all sins. The form,; the model of the temple.

The fashion; the manner of the building, and fitting each part to other.

The goings out there of, and the comings in thereof; all the alleys, gates, stairs, &c.

The forms, which ought to be observed, saith the French version. Now though this be not in the Hebrew, yet the word may imply as much, it being an idea, pattern, or platform to which a thing is to be confirmed.

The ordinances; rites and orders, rules of governing priests, and their services. These are again repeated in the next words of the verse, which is usual in Scripture, and with this prophet.

Write it in their sight: that it may be remembered, they shall have a draught of it from thy hand, and drawn in their sight, that they may inquire of any particular wherein doubt ariseth.

That they may keep the whole form thereof: as Moses and Solomon did, so must the builders of this temple, frame the whole to the pattern or exemplar set before them, for not doing whereof a heavy account lieth on some in the church.

Ver. 12.

This is the first comprehensive rule. Holiness becomes God's house or temple: this relative holiness referred to personal and real holiness, and required it. The whole circuit of this mountain shall be holy, but the top of it, on which the temple stands, shall be most holy, into which only holy persons and holy things shall be brought.

Ver. 13.

Of the altar of burnt-offerings; for the altar of incense was within the temple, and is called the golden altar, but this in this verse is the brazen altar, and stood in the court of the house.

The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; the great or sacred cubit, three inches longer than the common cubit.

The bottom, the ledge or settle, or as a little bench fastened to the altar on all sides at the bottom, shall be a cubit in height.

The breadth, from the edge of this settle or bench on the outside, to the edge where it joined the body of the altar, a cubit; and this breadth, twenty-one inches, broad enough for the priests to walk on round the altar, as they had occasion.

The border, a ledge going round on all the squares, on the outer edge of this settle, a span high, about nine inches, which was to prevent the priests. that they slipped not down in walking on this settle.

This shall be the higher place of the altar: this seems somewhat harshly translated; the French hath it, this shall be the back of the altar; as the back bears burdens, so this should bear the weight of the whole altar; this the basis or bottom, as called before, which was one cubit in each square broader than the next square frame or settle.

Ver. 14.

From the bottom; from the superficies of the first ledge, which was a cubit broad and a cubit high from the ground.

To the lower settle; to the top of that square settle which is called lower, because another settle is raised upon it.

Two cubits in height.

The breadth one cubit on every square, as the first and bottom settle, which by this account was two cubits larger in each square or side than the middle settle.

From the lesser settle; from the highest edge of the uppermost settle, down to the cubit broad ledge about the lower settle. The prophet measures now downward.

The greater; so called, because it exceeded the upper settle a cubit in breadth on each side. Four cubits in the height thereof.

The breadth one cubit, as the two other were.

Ver. 15.

The altar: this upper part is now called the altar, though sometimes this name is given to the whole, as **#Eze 43:13**.

Four cubits in height, for it was of much greater wideness, as in the next verse.

From the altar; from the top of the altar, at each corner shall be a horn, four in all.

Ver. 16.

The altar; that which in the 15th verse is precisely determined to be the altar, the uppermost and least settle.

Twelve cubits long, twelve broad; all exact square, by which we may know the dimensions of the other two; the first of the two was wider by two cubits, and longer by two cubits, than the highest, and the lowest was as much greater and larger than the middlemost. The highest twelve cubits square, the middle fourteen cubits square, and the lowest sixteen cubits square.

Ver. 17.

The settle; so called now, since the uppermost carrieth the name of altar, proper to itself.

Fourteen cubits, as said in the former verse: nor can it be otherwise, since it is one cubit on each side broader than the altar, which was twelve cubits square.

The border; or a border, or ledge, fastened to the edge of the outside of this bench, that goes round about the settle.

Half a cubit; about eleven inches, being the half of this great cubit: now this border was for security to the priests in their going round the altar, that if a foot slipped, this border might stay it.

The bottom, the superficies, on which the priest treads when he is doing any thing on the altar, or the breadth of this bench within the border,

a cubit.

Stairs, or steps, for such they needed; and probably each stair about one fourth of a cubit, to carry them up to the first and second settles. These stairs were placed eastward, that he who went up should have his face to the west, his back to the east; his face toward God, not toward the rising sun, as they who made the sun their idol.

Ver. 18.

These are the ordinances; these are the measures and proportions for building the altar.

In the day when, whensoever,

they shall make it, the returned captives shall build and use it.

To offer burnt-offerings thereon: it appears then this was the great brazen altar, of which see #Ex 38:30 39:39.

To sprinkle blood thereon, according to the law, #Le 1:5.

Ver. 19.

Thou shalt give; direct or command that it be given; for the prophet could not bestow such a gift on them.

The priests the Levites; explaining who were meant by the priests.

Zadok, who was put into Abiathar's room. See #Eze 40:46 44:15.

To minister unto me: see #Eze 42:13.

A young bullock; the sacrifice appointed, #Ex 29:1,36, at the consecrating of the priests.

For a sin offering; an expiatory sacrifice, to make an atonement for errors, and to reconcile the person that brought the sacrifice. New consecration and reconciliation, needful after so long an interruption of their ministration, and for such as never were before consecrated.

Ver. 20.

Thou shalt take; appoint it to be taken.

Of the blood thereof; of the slain bullock.

Put it, not all, but some of the blood, on the horns of the altar, as **#Le 4:30** prescribeth, and as Moses did, **#Le 8:15**.

Of the settle, on which the altar stood, which was two cubits high, and set upon one of a cubit high from the ground.

Upon the border: see **#Eze 43:17**.

Cleanse and purge it; make it legally clean, that it may be fit for so sacred a use as this of sacrificing was.

Ver. 21.

Thou shalt take; as **#Eze 43:20**.

And he, the priest of Zadok's line, that by his course in ministration ought at that time to offer the sacrifice,

shall burn it; either the whole, or so much as is commanded to be burnt.

The house here is not the temple itself, but a place within the circuit of the most consecrated ground; it is called

the place of the house, because the place in which the house was built, which is the sanctuary or temple. This was done without the gate, without the camp, while the tabernacle stood. Now it is to be done in the court of the house, and on the altar appointed and consecrated. This is the first day's sacrifice.

Ver. 22.

The next day's sacrifice is here directed.

Without blemish: this was a qualification required in all sacrifices, and there were priests appointed to search whether they were perfect, in which search they were very punctual and curious.

For a sin offering: see #Eze 43:19.

And they, the priests in attendance or course,

shall cleanse the altar, with the blood of the kid put upon the altar, as appointed, and as the blood of the bullock, #Eze 43:20.

Ver. 23.

Made an end of the first and second days' sacrifices, and cleansing the altar.

Thou shalt offer on the third day, and so on, through seven days.

A ram: a kid, #Eze 43:22, now a ram; both, or either, as God appoints; there was no inherent excellency in either one or other to commend them to God, but a male and without blemish it must be.

Ver. 24.

Thou shalt offer; direct them to offer.

Before the Lord; not only to the Lord, but before the Lord, i.e. before the temple; so the altar stood where the burnt-offering was to be offered.

Cast salt upon them; so the law, #Le 2:13, expressly required, and the priests salted every sacrifice made by fire three times, they say, in the salt chamber, at the bottom of the altar, and when the sacrifice was on the altar. It may allude to the perpetuity of the covenant thus made by sacrifice, and salted; as #Nu 18:19 2Ch 13:5.

They; the priests.

Ver. 25.

By this it appears that there were seven days appointed for consecrating altar and priests, and that either these three sacrifices were every day of the seven offered up, and their blood sprinkled on the altar, or at least the young bullock every day, and one goat or one ram with it: the word here is copulative, but possibly the sense disjunctive, for so this particle is often used.

Ver. 26.

They, the priests in course,

shall purge the altar: the same with what is said of the priests; they and the altar were thus consecrated and dedicated unto God, to be his in peculiar manner.

Ver. 27.

When these days are expired; when you have on every day of these seven offered the sacrifices as appointed, and for the ends mentioned.

Upon the eighth day, which begins a new week and it is probable the first of these seven days for sacrifice might be the sabbath, and end on our Friday; however, the first week is spent in solemn consecration of altar and priests; all weeks after are to have, day by day, the usual appointed sacrifices.

Burnt-offerings; which were sacrifices expiatory, and for atonement of sin.

Upon the altar of burnt-offering, the great brazen altar described in this chapter, **#Eze 43:13-17**.

Peace-offerings; sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving unto God for his goodness.

I will accept you; be well-pleased with your persons, pardon your sins, smell a savour of rest in your thanksgiving, and own you with signal tokens of my favour and kindness; I will show my good-will and delight in you.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 44

The east gate assigned only to the prince, **#Eze 44:1-3**. The people reprov'd for steering strangers to pollute the sanctuary, **#Eze 44:4-8**. Idolaters declared incapable of the priest's office, **#Eze 44:9-14**. The sons of Zadok are accepted thereto, **#Eze 44:15,16**. Ordinances for the priests, **#Eze 44:17-31**.

Ver. 1.

Then; when the altar was measured, and directions given for consecrating it at first, and for the perpetual use of it for future.

Back; from the inner court, where he had been viewing the altar, to the outer part of the same court, and to the east gate thereof:

others say it was to the templegate eastward and that the temple is called

outward sanctuary, in respect of the holy of holies.

It was shut; when, or by whom, the prophet says not, but he found it shut.

Ver. 2.

Likely the prophet was somewhat surprised, and wondered that the door should be shut; and while he museth on it the Lord speaks to him out of the temple, and informs him, and satisfieth him.

Shall not be opened, i.e. shall not ordinarily stand open, but be shut till occasion requires it should sometimes be opened.

No man; none of the common ordinary sort of people, or none but the prince, God's vicegerent, and the ministering priests.

The God of Israel hath entered in: what was *the glory of the God of Israel*, #Eze 43:2, is here

the Lord, the God of Israel, that glory was the visible sign of his presence. His glory is himself, and where that entered he entered, i.e. gave evidence of a more than ordinary presence there.

It shall be shut; either kept shut with bars, or, by a prohibition, be as if it were shut, that none should enter thereby.

Ver. 3.

For the prince; for the king, say some; if so, then the door shut was the door, not of the temple, but of the east gate of the priests' court. The high priest, and the second priest, say others, and indeed this is most likely.

He shall sit: the king might sit before the Lord, others might not, and the priests stood ministering, as #Heb 10:11. Perhaps the high priest might have some privilege to sit, when others might not.

To eat bread: if understood of the king, it was his eating of the sacrifice, that part of it which was allowed to the offerer. If this prince be the high priest, this bread was the show-bread, which it seems he might sit and eat in or near the porch of the gate, whereas other priests were bound to eat in the common refectory, as appears, #Eze 42:13.

He shall enter; he may, it is his privilege; or he shall, that is, it is his duty to enter at this, and to come out at it, that the people may know which way to look, when they would see their high priest enter to make atonement: which may be mystical, and include our looking to the great High Priest.

Ver. 4.

Then, when he had been informed of the reason why the east gate was shut, and when he perceived he must not go out thereby.

He; the angel, or Christ in the appearance of man.

The way of the north gate; to the north gate of the inner court, whence he had a prospect of the temple, though no door to it on that side.

Behold; through the windows of the temple he did discern that brightness and lustre which filled the temple.

The glory of the Lord, &c.: see #Eze 1:28 43:2.

Ver. 5.

The whole of the first part of this verse is found at #Eze 40:4, where it is explained.

The ordinances; the prescribed rules for persons and things in and about the temple; these ordinances are called laws in this verse.

Mark well; set thy mind, that thou mayst comprehend them all.

The entering in; not so much the gates and porches, through which the entrance is to the house, as the persons who may, and who may not, enter.

The sanctuary, taken here largely for the holy courts, rather than for the house itself.

Ver. 6.

The rebellious: see #Eze 2:3,6-8.

Let it suffice you; let the time you have spent on your sins, your many great sins and abominations, let it be thought enough, nay, too much, as #1Pe 4:3; do so no more.

Ver. 7.

Ye have brought; either by abusing your power you have licensed, or by conniving you have permitted, to come into my holy courts.

Strangers; foreigners and heathen, who had their idols in the very courts of the temple, and there worshipped their idols, as **#Eze 8:5,10,14,16.**

Uncircumcised in heart; the worst of them, profane and impious.

Uncircumcised in flesh: no uncircumcised one should come into the court of the people, but you have brought them into the very sanctuary at the times of public worship, and when you have been offering my bread, &c. Some think that the profane carelessness of the Jewish rulers was such, that they suffered uncircumcised ones to be priests among them, and to approach to God's altar. This was done in Solomon's degenerate days, and in the days of Ahaz, Manasseh, Amon.

My bread; either the meat-offering, or first-fruits of corn and dough, and the show-bread.

The fat, which was taken off the sacrifices and burnt.

The blood, how let out, received into vessels, sprinkled and poured out, the priests and rulers of my house, through a sinful familiarity with heathens, have given them courage to ask, and you have not zeal and courage enough to refuse them, but you have satisfied their forbidden curiosity, and showed them all these things; or, as was said, have advanced some to be priests in my house, and suffered others to be priests of idols, standing and worshipped in my courts.

They, the whole nation of the Jews, the people of the land,

have broken my covenant; turned idolaters, mixed with heathens, forsaken me and my law, taking example from your practices, or complying with your superstitious and idolatrous inventions.

Ver. 8.

You have not observed the laws I gave you for the careful and exact keeping of my holy things; house, sacrifices, and worship. You have substituted others in your rooms, made officials, and surrogates, and curates to look to the gates, and these have let in the profane and unclean; your pride, or covetousness, or laziness, hath taken you off from your duty and your charge; or you have, as you saw good, consecrated persons, whether fit or unfit, whether approved or not approved by me. So you have profaned my name, and violated my law, #Nu 18:4.

Ver. 9.

Now God renews his former law against the permitting of the wicked and heathens to enter his sanctuary. None, of what quality soever, what interest soever they make, though princes, nobles, learned, travellers, that come to view nations and the rarities of them; none of these, or such like, shall on any colour of pretence be brought into my sanctuary. Perhaps Solomon showed Sheba's queen too much, we are sure Hezekiah showed the ambassadors too much, yet we read not that either of them showed the sanctuary.

Ver. 10.

The Levites; priests intended here, and indeed the sons or posterity of them are here intended; for this apostacy among them was elder than the eldest of them all.

Far from me: idolaters go far from God, for they depart as an adulterous wife from her husband; their hearts and affections are far from God, they fall to heathenish idolatry.

When Israel went astray: it may be worth our while to inquire what time, or near what time, this was. I doubt Baal-peor, #Nu 25, or from Solomon's time, when there was somewhat of this sin among the priests. But of Rehoboam's time it is said, #2Ch 12:1, *all Israel forsook the law of the Lord*. And in Ahaz's time, when the altar at Damascus so pleased him and the high priest Uriah, that presently an altar like that is made and set up between God's house and altar; and orders, or, in our language, injunctions, from the king to the high priest, and from him to the inferior priests and Levites, who obey, #2Ki 16:16: and Manasseh carried the

apostacy higher. Now account from any of these; from the last of them to the first return out of captivity is one hundred and fourteen years, to which we must add the twenty-five years which each priest must be ere they enter the priest's office, it will amount to one hundred and thirty-nine years, and to these add forty-four ere this temple was repaired, it will be one hundred and eighty-three years too great an age for any of the priests to be of; therefore, as I said, the priests that are now degraded are the children of those apostate priests who were *(as #Zec 1:5,6, said of the fathers)* dead.

They shall bear their iniquity; shall bear the punishment of this their apostacy, be debased to meanest services, subjected to others, and be deprived for ever ministering at the altar. So **#2Ki 23:8,9;** and so God executed his threat against Eli's house, **#1Sa 2:13.**

Ver. 11.

Ministers; servants, employed in the lowest and least honourable work.

In my sanctuary; not the temple itself, but about the courts of it.

Having charge at the gates; shall be porters to open and shut and sweep, and ready to go on errands.

Ministering; probably made to learn the arts of mason or smith, to mend and repair, to fetch wood and water with Jebusites.

They shall slay; do that servile work for the sacrificing priest.

The sacrifice for the people; all the sacrifices the people bring.

Stand before; Hebrew expression of servants' attendance.

To minister unto them; to wait on and obey the priests.

Ver. 13.

They shall never be admitted to the office, nor employed in the proper work of a priest that ministers to me. They shall not come into the temple, much less into the oracle, nor have any part in the offering up of sacrifices on the altar, though they have meat, drink, and lodging about the temple; yet, as discarded servants, that are retained lest they starve.

They shall bear their shame; they shall be little regarded, but disesteemed, and put to shame, and this shall be part of their punishment. They shall be dealt with according to their abominations, i.e. their apostacy and idolatry, and bear the punishment thereof.

Ver. 14.

See #Eze 44:11.

Ver. 15.

The priests; so called from their office. The Levites; by descent from Levi, Jacob's son.

Sons of Zadok; who was of Eleazar's family, to whose father Phinehas a covenant of salt insured the high priesthood, and all the honour, privileges, and advantages thereof, #Nu 25:12,13.

Kept the charge; were constant, zealous, and faithful in their priestly office, and their duties in it.

Went astray: this may possibly refer to that transgression in the matter of Baal-peor, of which #Nu 25:3 Ps 106:28-30. See #Eze 44:10. They shall come near to me: see #Eze 40:46.

To offer unto me the fat and the blood; to offer expiatory sacrifices, to make atonement and intercede for the people. This honour God put upon them for their integrity and constancy in the things of God.

Ver. 16.

They shall enter, the high priest and the other priests shall have right and liberty of entering, into my sanctuary; both to the altar, to the temple, and the high priest into the holy of holies.

To my table; to set the shew-bread on, and to take it off.

To minister unto me; to offer sacrifice at the altar, and incense in the house; this the priests did in their course; and of this line the high priest alone, once a year, in the day of expiation, went in to minister to the Lord in the holy of holies.

They shall keep my charge: see #Eze 44:8.

Ver. 17.

When they enter: they must put on their priestly garments in the chambers that are appointed for vestries to them, where they put off the garments when the service was done, and where they put them on when they approached to the altar, **#Eze 42:14**.

At the gates of the inner court; where the altar of burnt-offering stood, and where the temple, which is included, stood.

@With linen garments; according to the law, **#Ex 28:42,43**.

No wool; the reason hereof is given in the next verse.

In the gates of the inner court; about the altar of burnt-offering.

And within; in the temple itself, in every service of both.

Ver. 18.

This verse recounts but two garments of linen, the bonnet and the breeches, but **#Ex 28:39 1Sa 2:18,28 14:3**, mention a linen coat, or ephod; so they had three linen garments, and a girdle of fine twined linen about to gird the coat fast, yet so as not to make them sweat, or smell offensively.

Ver. 19.

See **#Eze 42:14**, where this verse is explained, yet here are two things that verse hath not, of which a word. **The utter court:** this tells us in which court stood the chambers, wherein the priests did attire themselves, into which also they retired to unclothe themselves of the priestly garments. The chambers were in the court next to the court of the people, as **#Eze 42:14**. **They shall not sanctify:** by the law, common things touching holy things became consecrate, and to be no more for common use. If the priests' consecrated clothes touched the people's, they must part with them, this would be inconvenient; so some. Or lost the people should think themselves the holier for such contact, and grow proud of it; so others. The Chaldee paraphrast frames it to the last clause of the 14th verse of the 42nd chapter, they in holy vests shall not intermix with the people; this would be a profaning the holy vests. Or else thus, they shall not come out to bless the people in their priestly garments, but, having finished the sacrifice and all belonging thereto, they should change garments, and in

their ordinary garments come out to the people, and bless them in that form, #Nu 6:23,24.

Ver. 20.

To shave their heads was forbidden, #Le 19:27 21:5. Hair is given for an ornament, and the priests should not disfigure themselves, nor imitate idolatrous heathens.

Nor suffer their locks to grow long; priding themselves in it, as Absalom, giving ill example by such excess. Shall only poll their heads; when the hair is grown somewhat, they shall trim, cut the ends of their hair, and keep it in moderate size; beside, long hair was a token of a Nazarite's vow, and God would have all holy things and persons kept unmixed and distinguished from other common things.

Ver. 21.

Any priest; any one, on any pretence.

Wine, or any other strong intoxicating liquor.

When they enter into the inner court; when they go, either to trim the lamps, or set the shew-bread in order, or to offer incense in the temple; or when they go to the altar to offer a sacrifice, which stood in the inner court: this prohibition you have #Le 10:9, which see, and it was to prevent all indecencies in the service.

Ver. 22.

God allowed them to marry, only directs that it be not to one of ill fame or divorced, #Le 21:13,14, nor the widow of any deceased common person; yet a priest might really a priest's widow, but a virgin is rather commended to their choice; and whether widow or virgin, it must not be as Moses married a daughter of a strange people, or as they did in Babylon, #Ezr 10:18, &c.; and possibly this of Ezekiel was designed as a rule to direct Ezra in reforming this disorder when they came from Babylon. Nor were they at liberty to marry any of any tribe, but it must be one of their own tribe too.

Ver. 23.

They shall teach; by their place they were bound to instruct the people, #Le 10:10,11; this was part of their work, to read the law,

expound it, and resolve questions arising about it. They were to be, as ministers ought now to be, *apt to teach*, #1Ti 3:2.

Between the holy and profane; whether legally and ceremonially so, or morally and really so, that they might keep the people from pollutions.

Between the unclean and the clean; the same thing in other words, only this seems to require priests' patient instructing, till the people have learned to difference unclean and clean.

Ver. 24.

In controversy; in doubts about lawful and unlawful, in pretences of right and wrong in all contests.

They shall stand in judgment; if the controversy be brought to them, they shall hear and consider.

Shall judge it; shall determine, end the controversy, and reconcile parties.

According to my judgments; not as they favour and affect, or disaffect and hate, but according to what God hath by his laws in that behalf directed.

They shall keep; priests first, and people with them.

Mine assemblies; public congregations for worshipping of God.

Shall hallow my sabbaths; with holy care observe the sabbaths, as days of holy work, to be spent in secret, family, and public worship of God, as he requires.

Ver. 25.

They, the priests, who come near to minister before the Lord,

shall come at no dead person; neither touch, nor come into the room, nor attend the funeral of the dead; for this would be a legal and ceremonial defilement, and it is prohibited #Le 21:1. The Jews tell us that he who comes within four cubits of the dead is defiled; and the law, though it determine not at what distance such are defiled, it doth determine that they are unclean till evening by touch or coming near the carcass of any but man, and the defilement by coming near a dead man lasted seven days.

But for father, &c: the priest was indulged in the death of so near relations, as **#Le 21:2,3**, where they are reckoned up as ill this verse.

They may defile themselves mourn for them, touch them, be at their funerals, and show their natural affections to them.

Ver. 26.

After he is cleansed; after that for seven days he hath kept from the dead, by which the Jews accounted a man was cleansed, for as nearness did defile, so absence did cleanse in this case.

They, the priests, who are about the house of God,

shall reckon unto him seven days; shall appoint seven days more to this defiled person for his cleansing, before he is admitted into the sanctuary.

Ver. 27.

During the days of his uncleanness he kept out of the sanctuary; when the days of purifying are fulfilled he then may go in.

The sanctuary; not the temple itself, but, as the next words have it, the inner court.

To minister; to execute the priest's office.

Sin-offering: it is not said what this should be, nor doth that **#Le 6:21** refer to this. I think rather that, **#Le 4:3**, a young bullock was to be this sin-offering in purifying as it was in consecrating him, **#Eze 43:19**.

Ver. 28.

Sin-offering being mentioned immediately before, gives the occasion of repeating the provision made for the priests, for under this one all other offerings are couched; and if the Lord do so expressly require a defiled priest to bring his sin-offering, in which the ministering priests had their share, he would expect the same of all Israel, which would amount to a great sum.

For an inheritance, instead of lands and cities.

I am their inheritance; God is the inheritance of all his people, but especially of his priests; and so what is given to God, by him is assigned to his officers.

Ye shall give them no possession, as the rest of the tribes had.

I am their possession; the peculiar blessing of God on them, and their share in his offerings, was a very rich possession.

Ver. 29.

We must not think that the whole of these were eat, God had his part, and the priest his part too; somewhat of each came to the priest.

Every dedicated thing; as first-fruits, and tithes, &c., the priest had part of them.

Ver. 30.

And the first; so soon as the first-fruits are ripe in the field, your vineyards and olive-yards, &c.; nay, redemption money for the first-born of man was theirs.

Every oblation, whether free-will offering or prescribed.

Of every sort; of what sort soever, whether of flock, or herd, &c.

The first of your dough: it is conceived this was of every mass of dough they made, and of the first of the dough which every year they first made of the new corn, as by the custom of the Jews at this day appears, who, since they cannot give to the priest, will burn a little cake of every batch in the oven.

That he, the priest, may bless and pray for thee.

Ver. 31.

This was forbidden to all the Jews, much more to the priests, **#Ex 22:31 Le 22:8**.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 45

The portion of land for the sanctuary, **#Eze 45:1-5**, for the city, **#Eze 45:6**, and for the prince, **#Eze 45:7,8**. Ordinances for the prince, **#Eze 45:9-25**.

Ver. 1.

When ye, ye returned Jews, restored to your own land, **shall divide by lot**: it was not on the return divided by lot, as it was by Joshua, but lot and inheritance are the same many times in the Scripture, and the expression alludes to the usual way of assigning

inheritances. **The land;** land of Canaan. **Ye shall offer an oblation;** as it is fit God have his portion first set out. **Holy portion,** by its relation to God, and because dedicated to his service. **Reeds:** the Hebrew doth not express either *reeds* or *cubits*; our translators supply *reeds*. but the French reads it *cubits*, (*coudees*,) Rochelle edit. 1616. The Greek keeps to the Hebrew, and adds not reed or cubit. Could it be demonstrated which is here intended, we might proceed with greater clearness and certainty. It is true *reeds* are first mentioned as the measure, but cubits are also very often mentioned, as a known measure in measuring the temple and courts, as appears to any one that will read over chapters 40 through 43. *Besides*, the 2nd verse expressly saith *cubits*; and I am apt to think that it hath relation as well to the twenty-five thousand, **#Eze 45:1**, as, to the five hundred, **#Eze 45:2**. I rather favour the cubit measure than the reed, that so the whole contents may not seem overgrown; for at reed measure this portion contains at least seventy-seven miles and a little more in length; but at the cubit measure it amounts but to twelve miles and a half. This easily, the other hardly imaginable. **Ten thousand reeds** is at least thirty miles and a half, but cubits amount to five miles in breadth, and this seems to me both likeliest to be intended and easiest to be understood: however, since the 1st verse mentions not the particular measure, I may as well borrow it from the 2nd verse, as others fetch it from the 40th chapter; and I think the 3rd expressly limits us to the measure by cubits, which see, with notes. **Shall be holy;** set apart for holy uses, the whole circuit thereof.

Ver. 2.

Of this whole consecrate portion of twenty-five thousand cubits long, or twelve miles and half, and ten thousand broad, or five miles and little more.

For the sanctuary; for a platform for the sanctuary, both house and courts.

Five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth; five hundred cubits square, which is about one-fourth of a mile square.

Fifty cubits; which amount to twenty-nine yards and half a foot. This bears some proportion to the contents of that square, which is one quarter of a mile in each side; but fifty cubits suburb to that

square, that should be supposed to have sides each a mile, a half, and half quarter long.

The suburbs thereof: place round about this the five hundred cubits square mountain of the house.

Ver. 3.

Of, or *by,* or from this cubit measure, **#Eze 45:2,** shalt thou measure. So express, that indeed I wonder a dispute can arise; and this justifies the French version, which from this verse no doubt took the *coudee*, which they use in **#Eze 45:1.**

In it, in the centre or navel of this twenty-five thousand and ten thousand, shall the whole sanctuary, courts, temple, and holy of holies, or the oracle, be built.

Ver. 4.

The holy portion; the whole contents of twelve miles and half long, and five broad.

For the priests; sons of Zadok, who minister to the Lord, and others with them, who, though degraded from the priestly honour, yet lived upon priestly provision.

A place for their houses; in which twenty-three of twenty-four courses of priests may dwell conveniently, while the twenty-fourth minister at the temple, as by order they did.

And an holyplace; and how much God did reserve to himself for his dwelling is expressly mentioned. Thus God makes himself and what is his the inheritance and possession of the priests his servants, as he told them, **#Eze 44:28.**

Ver. 5.

As we render the words they are a little clouded, but as they are rendered in the French they are plainer: we read them as if the verse spake of the same twenty-five thousand long and ten thousand broad, which the priests have; but the French thus, there shall be other twenty-five thousand in length and ten thousand in breadth, which shall appertain to the Levites, who do the service of the house, with twenty chambers; so they have abroad in the country equal share with the priests, and in the outer court or courts about the house twenty chambers or rows of them in which to abide for their conveniences, when, in their courses, they attend

the services they were to perform, as porters, singers, and attendants on the priests.

Ver. 6.

Appoint; order and measure out.

The possession; land to be a possession to the citizens of Jerusalem, and to be the contents of the city.

Five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long; about two miles and half broad, and twelve miles and half long, measured by the cubit, as **#Eze 45:3** directs.

Over against the oblation of the holy portion: this must run along parallel in length with the holy portion, though but half its breadth.

For the whole house of Israel: as the chief and capital city, to which the tribes resort, it must be large enough to entertain them too; and was to be framed with twelve gates to twelve streets, for the twelve tribes, as **#Eze 48:31**. as **#Eze 48:31 Eze 48:31**.

Ver. 7.

A portion; though not said how much, it is likely it was near fourfold to that of the city, sanctuary, or the priests and Levites.

For the prince; the king, or supreme ruler. One half of the prince's portion lay on the west side of those three already set out; the other half lay on the east side thereof; so the portion of city, Levites, and priests lay in the middle of it.

Of the holy portion; of priests, and Levites, and sanctuary.

Before; it lay parallel, as broad as these three were broad, and so run on both sides in its breadth from north to south, and had its length as the other from east to west, as in this diagram.

The tribe of Judah's portion from west to east.

The tribe of Benjamin's portion from west to east.

Over against; what called now *over against*, or parallel, or by the side all along, is called *before* three times together. So now you have an exact square of 25,000 cubits laid out for God, the Levites, and city, which appears thus in the breadth:

10,000 for the priests. 10,000 for the Levites. 5,000 for the city.

And the length of each 25,000, that is, some twelve miles and half square.

And the prince's portion embracing or bounding all at each end, as a guard and defence both of church and state, of religion and the civil rights, which may fairly be intimated by this assigning him his portion on each end of the other three.

Ver. 8.

In the land; either in that portion of land set out for him, or, as it is added, in Israel, i.e. in the land of Israel.

My princes; who own my favour in their advancement, and my law in their government. All princes are in some sort God's princes, but all do not regard God as sovereign Lord of them and their people; but God did raise up such at the return out of Babylon, who were and did recognise themselves God's princes.

Shall no more oppress: both Ezekiel and other prophets did reprove the injustices, cruelties, and oppressive methods of the kings of Israel, and yet they took not off the yoke; but it shall be better after the days of Babylonish captivity are ended.

The rest; after God had his portion, which was that the priests and Levites had, after the city and the prince have theirs, the remainder is to be given to the people.

They; the persons that are officers appointed to divide the land.

The house of Israel; two tribes and ten tribes.

According to their tribes, to the number of the tribes, and their right; we must be restored to them, or they compensated with an equal value.

Ver. 9.

Princes are here in God's name, and by advice from him he made them princes, counselled, exhorted, and commanded.

Let it suffice; be content, aim not at more: he who gave no more can make this enough, and he will curse and blast what you indirectly, and by sinful, oppressive crafts, wrest from others.

Remove violence; put it far from yourselves, do not you use it, and so discountenance in others, that neither common subjects dare violate one another, nor your officers violate any of them.

Spoil; either the same as violence, or the effect of it, violent courses; rob the oppressed and spoil them.

Execute judgment; judge righteously, and they look the sentence be executed, for terror to the unjust, and relief of the oppressed.

And justice: this is added for emphasis, though the same thing.

Exactions; heavy taxes and impositions on estates or trade.

My people; whom I must, if you will not, right.

Ver. 10.

Ye; princes of Israel.

Shall have: though they were not traders to use, yet they must have, i.e. appoint, for to them as a privilege it appertains to appoint standards for measure among their subjects. *Just balances*, or weights and scales, by which to measure what is to be sold by weight, one and the same to all, that none buy by a greater and sell by a lesser. So **#Le 19:35,36 Pr 11:1 16:11 Mic 6:10,11**. So must the prince remove oppressive cheating by divers weights.

Ephah, to measure dry things, as corn, olives, dates, &c.

Bath: this was a measure of liquid things, as oil, wine, or water, and what each contained the next verse will acquaint us. s.

Ver. 11.

One shall contain as much as the other, the ephah shall contain as many gallons of dry, as the bath doth contain of liquid things.

An homer is commonly said to be thirty bushels, or near it. So that the ephah will be some three bushels, in dry things, and the bath sixty-four pints, or eight gallons, in liquid things.

Ver. 12.

Having laid down the standard for weight and measure in less valuable things, and that are sold for money, now the standard is set down for the current coin which passed among them, and the

valuation of which was part of the prince's prerogative. The first mentioned in the text is the shekel, which, saith the text, contained **twenty gerahs**; now every gerah was one penny halfpenny English value: the shekel then was two shillings and sixpence. The twenty shekels was two pounds ten shillings, the fifteen shekels was one pound seventeen shillings and sixpence, and twenty-five was three pounds two shillings and six pence.

Maneh: some say it is one pound, and that the pound was either least, middle, or greatest, according as there were more or fewer shekels in it; the least or common pound was but seventeen shillings and sixpence; the next, which was the royal, was fifty shillings; and the greatest, or pound of the sanctuary, was sixty-two shillings and six pence.

Ver. 13.

In the daily service, the morning and evening sacrifice, there must be wheat and barley flour.

Sixth part of an ephah; sixtieth part of an homer, about one half bushel, and one peck, and one quarter of a peck, and three pints, or near it; so some. Others abate the odd measures, and say the ephah was about our half bushel, as indeed it can be no more; if the homer were thirty bushels, the ephah a tenth part of the homer, that is, three bushels, the sixth part of the ephah amounts to four gallons, or half a bushel.

Ver. 14.

Now forasmuch as oil was always offered with the meat-offering, here is direction what quantity shall be used at each offering.

The bath of oil; which contained about twenty-four gallons, or very near it.

The tenth part; so the quantity of oil by this account will be two gallons, three pints, and a little more.

The cor; which is here said to be an homer: these were two names of one and the same measure, and described by the baths it contained.

Ver. 15.

This verse prescribes the proportion that is to be observed in bringing the lambs for daily sacrifice. They were bound to choose out of the best pastures of Israel the best and fattest lambs, one out of two hundred; so favourable was God to them in these cattle, taking so few out of so many. And these lambs were designed for to be offered with the meat-offering, either in expiatory sacrifices, or in eucharistical sacrifices: thus daily sacrifices kept up their peace with God.

Ver. 16.

The plain and summary meaning of this verse is, that this daily sacrifice should be, as for the people and the prince, so should it be provided by a common purse of prince and people, all should contribute to this charge. Though some think the people were to give this, and the prince to give a like share; and I know some think that this prince is the high priest, and that all the people, joining and contributing to this sacrifice, are here bound to bring it to the high priest.

Ver. 17.

The prince's part; beside the share he gives to the daily sacrifice in the common charge, #Eze 45:16, the prince is bound also on solemnities to give sacrifices out of his own.

Burnt-offerings: see #Le 1, where these are described. *Meat-offerings* rings: see #Le 2:1, &c. *Drink-offerings:* see #Ex 30:9 Nu 15:24 the drink-offering was ever joined with the meat-offering, #Nu 29:11,16,19,22.

In the feasts; which he doth particularly recount, as new moons, &c.; of all particularly to treat would be too long.

He shall prepare: here lieth the main deciding circumstance, whether the secular or ecclesiastical prince be here intended. Some say this preparing is a sacerdotal act in order to offering; if so, it must be the high priest; but I think they mistake. This preparing is nothing more than on the prince's charge, and by his care, to see that there be such beasts ready at hand as are required at such solemnities; and so it is the secular prince.

To make reconciliation: see #Eze 45:15.

For the house of Israel; all the people.

Ver. 18.

In the first month of the year, every new-year's day; or the first new-year's day after the temple is built, a kind of feast of dedication: the former better agreeth with the following verses.

Thou shalt take; procure, either being out of his own flock, or buy with his money; this the prince must do.

A young bullock without blemish; such the law required, both for kind and quality, in what sacrifice, or on what occasion soever the sacrifice was offered.

And cleanse the sanctuary; that by this, offered according to the law, the temple might be cleansed.

Ver. 19.

The priest: had the 17th and 18th verses intended by *prince* the high priest, there would have been no need of changing the phrase, or of mentioning the *priest*, it would have been enough to have said, *And he shall*; but in those verses the bringing and preparing is not priestly, but ascribed to the prince, as it would be to any other who offers a sacrifice to the Lord by the hand of the priest.

Shall take; carry with him in some vessel or other, from the place where the bullock was slain.

Of the blood of the sin-offering: see #Le 1:5 Eze 43:20.

Upon the four corners of the settle: see #Eze 43:20.

Upon the posts; the blood of the sin-offering was to be put upon the posts of the temple door, and on the posts of the gate of the inner court, or that next to the temple.

Ver. 20.

The priest must offer the like sacrifice for cleansing the errors of the people, and reconciling them.

The seventh day; about a week before the passover.

For every one that erreth; for all the errors of all the house of Israel, in all that had erred through ignorance.

For him that is simple; that is, of weak intellectuals, half-witted, or a fool, as the word signifies; or, for one that was seduced.

Reconcile the house, i.e. cleanse, as **#Eze 45:18**, which legally or ceremonially was defiled by those errors done in the city or courts of the house, whither these persons might come, for it is not the temple itself, I suppose, that is here meant.

Ver. 21.

In the first month; Nisan, which is part of March and part of April with us.

The fourteenth day; as was appointed of old by Moses, **#Ex 12** at large.

Ye shall have; have, and slay, for so **#Ex 12:6**.

The passover; the lamb, which was to be eaten with thanksgiving for God's sparing the Jewish children, their first-born, when he slew the chief of the strength of Egypt, and for bringing the whole house of Israel out of Egypt.

A feast of seven days: see the institution, **#Ex 12**.

Unleavened bread shall be eaten: though here is an ellipsis, yet the thing clearly speaks itself; through the whole feast unleavened bread was to be eaten under great penalty, **#Ex 12:18,19**. These things no doubt concerned the returned captives, though they have a mystical meaning also.

Ver. 22.

Upon that day; upon the fourteenth day, on which the passover was slain.

The prince; as before, **#Eze 45:17,18**.

Prepare for himself, to expiate his own sins.

And for all the people: see **#Eze 45:17**, where the same is found.

Ver. 23.

After the first day's offering, **#Eze 45:22**, or else after the fifteenth day was over, though first more likely. The prince at his own charge is to get ready day by day seven bullocks, seven rams, perfect without blemish, as the law required, and one kid each day of the seven; in all forty-nine bullocks, as many rams, and seven

kids of the goats. These the priests were to offer to make atonement for the prince and his people.

Ver. 24.

And he, the prince,

shall prepare a meat-offering; for the sacrifice was not entire without this, and the text proportions this also: for each

bullock one

ephah of fine flour, three bushels and one half with the seven bullocks of the first day; and so for the rams; that is, seven bushels every day for seven days together, according to the number of rams and bullocks.

An hin of oil: this was about one gallon and three quarters of a pint.

For an ephah; to each ephah of meal. To every of the seven there were

Seven bullocks, seven ephahs, and seven hins of oil,

Seven rams, seven ephahs, and seven hins of oil;

Forty-nine of each kind of the beasts in the space of the seven days, and ninety-eight ephahs and as many hins with them: a greatly and costly service.

Ver. 25.

The seventh month, according to their ecclesiastical account, Tisri, which answers to part of our August and September.

The fifteenth day; on that day the feast of tabernacles began, and it continued seven days.

Shall he, the prince, as before, **#Eze 45:24**, do the like, in every respect, for sacrifices, and all that belonged to them.

According to the sin offering, &c.: as was required at the passover, so at this feast also, and therefore you are referred to the particulars of that feast.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 46

Ordinances for the prince in his worship, #Eze 46:1-8, and for the people, #Eze 46:9-15. An order for the prince's inheritance, #Eze 46:16-18. The courts for boiling and baking, #Eze 46:19-24.

Ver. 1.

It was the east gate of the court next to the temple, or which did lead into the inmost court, where the altar of burnt-offering stood. **Shall be shut:** this explains that of #Eze 44:2. **The six working days;** or every day that is a working day. **On the sabbath;** on that holy rest the prospect into the temple and to the altar shall be free. **It shall be opened;** the priests should open it. **The new moon:** this one festival is named, but all the rest are included: this gate was to be shut only on working days, therefore to be open on all holy days, which were days of holy service to God. to be open on all holy days, which were days of holy service to God.

Ver. 2.

The prince must come in at the gate which is between the court of the Jews and the court of the priests, which is here called the **gate without**, or the *outer gate* of that court, and so go up to the gate within, which leads into the inmost court, and rose by ten, or twelve, or fifteen stairs, say some. While this solemn service was acting to make atonement for the prince, or to offer sacrifices of peace. offerings for himself, he is directed

to stand before the Lord; in other cases he might sit: the greatest should revere that God whose mercy they need and seek.

By the post; one of the inward posts, where he might best see the sacrifice offered up, but may not go into the court; none might go in but such as were, by God's appointment, to minister before him.

The priests shall prepare: #Eze 46:22-24, it is said *the prince shall prepare*; here the priests must prepare; but these places speak of different preparations: the prince prepared by buying, or bringing of his own the best for sacrifice; the priest prepared by receiving, bringing the sacrifice to the altar, slaying and disposing of all things according to the rule. The householder prepares, so doth his cook prepare the feast, so that each prepares what is proper to him; and so it is here, the prince prepares, but doth not

sacrifice, the priest prepares, but doth not buy, or bring the sacrifices.

He shall worship; he shall bow (as the Hebrew) himself: it is a praying posture, #Ex 12:27, in which duty the prince, as all others, are to attend on God, while the expiatory sacrifice is offering, while their reconciliation is to be made; and in which posture the prince is to be all the while the priest is offering, #2Ch 29:29.

At the threshold: here he took his standing in the beginning of the service, here he is when it is finished; at the inner threshold of the gate, where his eye might see enough; if his understanding were enlightened with knowledge of these mysteries, he need not approach nearer to God than his faith could now carry him while at the threshold.

Then he shall go forth; not stay to gaze or talk; but as he came to worship, so having worshipped he must return. Until the evening; till all the sacrifices were offered, and the offerers reconciled; now each offerer was to bring his offering to this gate, and there give it to the priest, and there lay his hands oil the head of the sacrifice, #Le 1:3,4.

Ver. 3.

Likewise, Heb. *And*, i.e. as the prince had done, bringing, standing, worshipping at the threshold of the gate, and departing when the sacrifice was finished, so must the people when they brought their sacrifices; but one manner, one gate, one sacrifice; but one Saviour.

Before the Lord; with due sense of God's holy and glorious presence.

In the sabbaths; both weekly and other holy days, which are called sabbaths on good ground.

The new moons; which were solemn feasts to the Jews in their generation; but these days privileged them only to come thus near who brought their particular offerings, for I suppose the people might not approach at pleasure to see the stated morning and evening oblation sacrificed, this would crowd the gate; but at this time they kept in their own court.

Ver. 4.

The burnt-offering; this is different from that #Eze 42:13, as appears both from the kind of sacrifice and the occasion of it, or the time of each.

In the sabbath day; or weekly, sabbath by sabbath; this was three times as much as was required, #Nu 28:9.

Six lambs of the first year, and males, #Eze 46:13, and as the Hebrew implies.

Without blemish; unblemished sacrifices were ever required, and so this, #Le 1:3 Nu 6:14.

A ram; when it was more than a year old, the Jews accounted it a ram.

Ver. 5.

An ephah, three bushels of meal, for each ram.

As he shall be able to give; rather, as he shall see good, as much as he thinks fit in decency or in bounty.

An hin; one gallon and a pint, for an hin did contain twelve logs, and each log contained three quarters of a pint, or thereabouts.

To an ephah; which was three times eight gallons, for each ephah contained three bushels: see #Eze 46:11. So then one gallon and one pint of oil was required as proportion to three bushels of meal in the meat-offering.

Ver. 6.

In these verses nothing new occurs but the appointing a bullock with its meat-offering for the new moon sacrifice, of which also on another occasion already, #Eze 46:1.

A young bullock: see #Eze 45:22.

Without blemish: see #Eze 45:4.

Six lambs: see #Eze 46:4.

Ver. 7.

See #Eze 46:5, and #Eze 45:24.

Ver. 8.

Shall enter into the gate of the court next the temple to offer his sacrifice.

Go in by the way of the porch; go to the threshold, the inward threshold of the east gate, that opens into the court of the temple.

Go forth by the way thereof; none of the people might do so, only the prince and the priests might go out the same way they came in.

Ver. 9.

All except the prince, when they come to worship, must observe to go out at that door that is over against the door at which they came in.

Come before the Lord, present themselves and their sacrifices, in the solemn feasts, the three great annual feasts, the new moons, and the weekly sabbaths.

He that entereth in, &c.: the east gate they might not enter at, as already is observed, and whatever reason might be given besides, this passage in this verse gives one, they could not go right forward to go out, at a west gate; for the temple and the entrance into it stood in a straight line from every one of the east gates from the outmost court, so that if any should go straight forward, they would go into the temple and oracle, which was not to be. There were but two gates the people might enter at, the south or north.

He shall not return, &c.: none might turn their back on the temple, nor do that which looked like a going away from God, which may give us somewhat the meaning of **#Jer 2:27 32:33**, their turning the back on God.

Ver. 10.

The prince and people must meet together at the same time, and when it is the time for offering the morning or evening sacrifice, be ready to present their prayers to the Lord. And when they offer any particular oblations, on account whereof they go any whit nearer than at other times, both prince and people shall do it at the same time.

Ver. 11.

See #Eze 46:5,7.

Ver. 12.

In #Eze 46:2,4-7, orders were given about those offerings which were required, which the prince must offer; in this, direction is given about those that are free-will offerings, which in all points must be prepared as the other were on the sabbath day, which see in the forementioned verses.

One shall shut the gate; one of the priests' porters; as the gate was opened for this service only on such a day, so, the service performed, some priests' porter shall shut it, for it must not stand open on ordinary days. days.

Ver. 13.

Daily prepare: see #Eze 46:2.

A lamb: see #Eze 46:4.

Ver. 14.

A meat-offering: see #Eze 46:7.

The sixth part of an ephah; half a bushel of fine meal.

The third part of an hin; an hin held nine pints.

Continually; morning by morning.

A perpetual ordinance, to continue till the Messiah comes, who will set up a more spiritual worship.

Ver. 15.

This verse is a ratifying of all prescribed in #Eze 46:13,14. These three verses direct the daily sacrifice; and because they mention only the morning sacrifice and one lamb, some think that here less is required than in #Nu 28:3,4; but they forget that there is a parity of reason for the evening sacrifice, and that this is included. They were to do in the evening oblation as they did in the morning.

Ver. 16.

A gift, of houses or lands.

The inheritance thereof, the right to those houses or lands, shall descend to children's children; the fee simple shall be to the

posterity of that son to whom it was first given. They shall enjoy it, possess it, as heirs possess an inheritance.

Ver. 17.

Of his inheritance; of any part or parcel of the crown land, or the prince's inheritance.

To one of his servants; whether such servant be, strictly taken, a servant or bondman or in more large sense any of his servants in the court, and in office about it.

The year of liberty; the year of jubilee, as **#Le 25:10,13,28**.

To the prince; or his heirs, if the prince be dead.

His inheritance: this may be understood either of the prince or the servant. Either thus, though the land by gift go back to the prince or his heirs from the servant, yet what lands this servant had of his own inheritance shall descend to the heirs of that servant, and be theirs: or else thus, whatever lands of the prince are given to servants, by gift, shall at the year of jubilee revert to the sons of the prince, who shall repossess them, forasmuch as they are lands of inheritance, and of right belong to the heir.

For them; and for theirs after them.

Ver. 18.

Shall not take; seize and escheat as forfeited, (like as Ahab dealt with Naboth, or David with Mephibosheth,) to give to others, or keep for himself.

By oppression; whether fraudulent or violent oppression, whether under colour of justice or against all rules of law.

To thrust them out, that he may put in his own creatures or children.

He shall give his sons, provide for his own, out of that is his own.

That my people be not scattered; that they may keep together in their own land.

Ver. 19.

We left the prophet, **#Eze 44:4**, at the north gate, and on the inside of it; now we find him going through a private way by the side of that gate to the holy chambers appointed for the priests.

The holy chambers: see #Eze 40:45,46 42:13,14.

On the two sides westward; rather, on their sides westward, that is, on the west side of these chambers which looked toward the north. The Seventy read it thus, Behold, there was a place enclosed.

Ver. 20.

Where the priests shall boil the trespass-offering; those that were brought sacrifices for sin were in part for the sacrificing priest, and he was to eat thereof; but it was to be dressed in the verge of holy ground, and so kitchens, boilers, ovens, and other utensils were prepared to do it, and these kitchens are here described,

That they bear them not; the priests, or the attending Levites.

Into the utter court, where the people were, and many times in great numbers, that this holy flesh must needs be very near many of them, if it were carried out.

To sanctify the people: see #Eze 44:19.

Ver. 21.

The utter court; either the court of the people, or more likely the court of the priests or Levites, called here utter court, because it was more outward than the court of the temple.

To pass by the four corners, to go about the whole square of the court.

In every corner, where the side walls did meet in right angles.

A court; a smaller court made up on the outer sides with the walls of the greater square, and on the inside made with two walls, the one forty cubits long, the other thirty cubits broad.

Ver. 22.

They were then an oblong quadrangle, and all of equal capacity for length and breadth.

Ver. 23.

A row of building; a range of building on the inside of the walls of the lesser courts, or four ranges answerable to the four sides.

Round about in them; added, lest any should think the buildings were on the outside of the walls of these courts.

Four; four courts in the four corners.

Boiling places; places of stone raised on purpose, and framed for the more convenient boiling of that part of the sacrifice which was allowed to the priest, or to the people, to eat before the Lord, and feast with.

Under the rows: these rows of building were so framed, that the caldrons and pots were placed under them; it is likely they might be like cloisters, over which was a roof to cover both the priest or Levite cooks, and the meats they dress, and they were either open as a cloister, or had windows, out of which the smoke of the fire or steam of the meat passed.

Ver. 24.

Them that boil; appointed to do the cook's work.

The ministers; either Levites, or else degraded priests, of which see #Eze 44:9-14.

The house; the temple of God.

Shall boil the sacrifices which they bring, particularly their peace-offerings, of which the people were to have a portion, and to eat it before the Lord, which is the reason some think these courts and kitchens were in the corners of the courts of the people. But I think, as the people bringing a sacrifice were admitted into the court that was the court of the priests, and to the very gates of the court of the temple, where they gave the sacrifice to the priest, and saw him prepare and offer it for them, so they might be admitted to feast on so solemn occasion in the courts or chambers, whither ordinarily they might not come; I cannot therefore determine these kitchen courts to have been in the court of the people, it is more likely they were in the priests' courts.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 47

The vision of the holy waters, #Eze 47:1-5. The virtue of them, #Eze 47:6-12. The borders of the land, #Eze 47:13-21. The division of it by lot, #Eze 47:22,23.

Ver. 1.

After that the temple was measured, and the ordinances of it were settled, and what pertained to prince and people assigned, &c., he brought me; the angel, or the Spirit of God, #Eze 1:3 3:22. **The house;** the temple itself. Waters issued out: some do observe that there were aqueducts laid under ground, which from some fountain were conveyed to cleanse and purge away the blood of sacrifices poured fourth, and the excrements of the slain beasts, of which some would remain after the greatest care. However, they would need much water about their temple services, and this was conveyed in pipes from the fountain Etare, as Dr. Lightfoot observes from their rabbins, and from Aristaeus an eye-witness; these gave occasion or ground of this vision. **From under the threshold;** the fountain lay to the west, the conduit pipes were laid to bring the water to the temple, and so must run eastward, and perhaps one main pipe might be laid under the east gate of the temple. **From the right side;** on the south side of the temple, for so the south is to a man whose face looketh toward the east. **At,** or towards, the south side of the altar, for so it seems they were conveyed to run, till they came to the altar, and were conveyed by the right side of it into a room they called the well room. The spiritual meaning I refer to the private meditations of Christians; thus far of the aqueducts.

Ver. 2.

Then brought he me out of the inmost court, where he saw the waters running under the threshold, and by the south side of the altar.

The way of the gate northward: the east gate being shut, the prophet in this vision is led to the north gate, out of which he goeth into the next court, and so through them all, till he comes to the north gate of the outmost court.

Led me about; caused him to go about from that gate to the east gate of the same court.

The way without; not on the inside of the wall, but round on the outside of the wall, which will appear presently, and the reason why.

The utter gate; the outmost north gate in the wall, that compassed the whole mountain of the Lord's house.

The way that looketh eastward; when the prophet was come quite out of all the courts, and is on the outside of the last wall, he is turned from the north gate towards the east gate, and walks up to that gate.

And, behold, there he found the watercourse.

On the right side; that is, on the south side. See **#Eze 47:1**.

Ver. 3.

The man: this is he who accompanied the prophet as his guide all along, and of whom already hath been spoken in several notes.

The line, mentioned in **#Eze 40:3**, but hitherto not used, for the reed and cubit hitherto were used only, at least only mentioned.

Eastward; from the gate directly east, with whom the prophet goeth.

He measured, by the line in his hand.

A thousand cubits; almost the third part of an English mile; it wanted about eighty yards of a third part.

Through the waters; went before him, as his guide, and the prophet followed; all this in vision.

To the ankles; some five or six inches deep.

Ver. 4.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 5.

This was all done in vision, and these waters thus increased were visional waters; there was no such natural course of waters in the place, nor is it imaginable, that in three miles or thereabouts, which was the most of the current, the waters should so rise; but it is emblematical, and hath a deep mysterious meaning, and includes spiritual things, and their wonderful growth from small beginnings, and these from the temple also. But I refer this still to private meditations.

Ver. 6.

He said, i.e. the man with measuring line in hand.

Seen this; observed and considered this; hast thou well seen this?

Caused me to return: it is not said whether he was gone from the bank, though it be said he returned to the brink, or perhaps it is, he caused me to return along by the brink of the river.

Ver. 7.

In his first coming he observed no trees, and no mention is made of any, but it seems he found them on his return: though they do not really so soon grow, they might be visionally there.

At the bank of the river, where usually, for delight and ornament, and for profit too, men plant trees. Very many trees; the kinds are not mentioned, though (he excellency of them is commended, #Eze 47:12, but the multitude of them is mentioned, and the growth intimated, in the Hebrew; and perhaps the uniformity of them, which seemed as of one tree, for so it is, the singular number, in the Hebrew.

On the one side and on the other; on the north and south sides, for the river ran from east to west.

Ver. 8.

Then said he: see #Eze 47:6.

The east country; some read it as a proper name, and so render it, they did run toward Galilee in the east, and the Hebrew bears it indeed, as to the sound of the word; but it cannot be the meaning of the place, for neither the Upper nor Lower Galilee were east, but north-west from Jerusalem toward Tyre: our translation doth therefore better render it the east country, or border, as the Hebrew properly.

Into the desert; to Arabia, say the Seventy in their Greek version: if this were the course of the waters, they-did run a course quite contrary to that of Galilee, which lay north and by west from Jerusalem, whereas Arabia lay south and by east from Jerusalem. It is then the champaign, plain country, or the desert, as we read it, and may literally be understood of the desert of Maon, or Kadesh, or Ziph, which lay on the Dead Sea; and this suits well enough with En-gedi, and En-eglaim, mentioned as bordering on these waters, #Eze 47:10.

Into the sea; the sea of Tiberias, say some; others, the sea called the Dead Sea, or lake of Sodom, which needed healing.

Being brought forth: when they run into this sea, or fall it, to it, (which is our usual phrase,) the waters of the sea shall be healed, made wholesome. Where the grace of God from his temple and altar flows, as this water, it heals the corrupt, vicious nature of man, and renders barren, horrid, and terrible deserts as a land of waters and gardens; so represented here, and so promised by the Lord, #**Isa 35:1,2 41:19 43:19,20 51:3**. Once more, to this verse let me add, that as the Hebrew doctors do, so we may take it here, that these flowing waters do divide themselves, and that some flow toward one sea, i.e. the sea of Tiberias, toward Galilee, other parts flow toward Arabia the Desert, and so in their way take their course by En-gedi, the desert of Ziph, and into the Dead Sea.

Ver. 9.

That liveth; as fish, so this universal is to be limited. Which moveth in the waters; so in #**Ge 1:20** this kind of living creatures are described.

The rivers shall come; these rivers flow: by this it appears the Hebrew doctors have some ground for their interpreting the running of these waters in two channels.

Shall live; be preserved alive, or nourished, and thrive, whereas no fish can live in the Dead Sea, as all reports assure us, and to which this of the prophet alludeth.

A very great multitude of fish; before none, now innumerable fish here.

These waters; these temple waters, which have in them a healing virtue.

They shall be healed; the poisonous waters of the Dead Sea shall be made wholesome for fish.

Shall live; thrive and multiply in the virtue of the healing streams of this temple water. Thus enigmatically is the fruitfulness of the grace of God in the church set forth.

Ver. 10.

The fishers; men whose trade is to fish for livelihood and profit.

Shall stand; shall dispose of themselves about these waters; either on the shore along the river-side, or in boats on the sea, to take the fish.

Upon it; the sea, whose waters healed become fruitful.

From En-gedi; which lay on the south-west of the lake of Sodom, so near, that it is reported there are the trees which bring forth fruit beautiful to the eye, but touched with the hand fall into ashes; yet on those parts more remote from this sea, En-gedi affords excellent vines, #So 1:14, or gardens of balsam trees.

Unto En-eglaim; a city on the north-east of the Dead Sea, near which place Jordan runs into it, and they say it is a boundary town of Moab. Others will have it no proper, but a common name, and signifying the confluence of waters in any place; if so, it will be likeliest to be understood of that part of the Red Sea where Jordan and two lesser rivers run into it, at the north and north-east end of this sea.

A place to spread forth nets, all along on the west side of this sea, to dry them and fit them again.

According to their kinds; of all sorts.

As the fish of the great sea; for number, growth, and goodness for use.

Exceeding many, or great, of exceeding great bigness in their several kinds. All this is mystical, and fulfilled since Christ hath made his ministers, as he made his apostles, fishers of men.

Ver. 11.

Miry places; unsound, rotten parts, that are neither sea nor yet sound ground, a proper emblem of hypocrites. The marishes; low land, sopped with the overflowings of unhealthful waters, neither fit to breed fish as the sea, nor bear trees as the land.

Shall not be healed; these waters find them and leave them corrupt and noxious.

Given to salt; left to their barrenness, or used as salt to season, by being made examples to others.

Ver. 12.

By the river; all along this river, which way soever it runs, it shall make its banks so fruitful, that on both sides thereof it shall be abundantly planted with best trees. Shall grow; take root, flourish, and be fruitful, as trees that like their soil.

Trees for meat; they shall not be as trees that are set only for pleasure, their fruit shall be for food.

Shall not fade; ever green and flourishing, as trees in the spring and in their prime.

Neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; never be so little as to be consumed and spent, never rot and decay, there shall always be fruit and enough.

According to his months: these trees have, as the tree of life, their fruit every month, **#Re 22:2**.

Their waters; called so because watered by this stream.

Issued out of the sanctuary; and so carried a blessing with them; these waters came from the temple, and were indeed a spell against barrenness.

The leaf thereof: there are many herbs of a healing property, none like the leaves of these trees.

For medicine; healing the nations, as **#Re 22:2**. These trees most likely were palmetto trees, whence the balm that healeth, the fruit that feedeth, and juice that refresheth, and allays our thirst. Thus the *letter*, the *mystery* I do not insist on, it is no hard matter for private Christians to accommodate it to themselves.

Ver. 13.

The border; the utmost bounds of the whole land.

Shall inherit; that is, shall divide for inheritance to the tribes of Israel.

According to the twelve tribes: as it was at first divided into twelve portions, so now again.

Joseph; that is, the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, and this pursuant of their adoption by Jacob, as well as in fulfilling the will of Jacob, who gave Joseph a double share.

Ver. 14.

One as well as another; by equal right, each tribe and each family shall inherit their assigned portion, by right of children descended from a father whose it was by letters patent from heaven.

Concerning the which I lifted up mine hand; which by oath I bound myself, saith God, to give to you. See this form of oath #Eze 20:5 36:7.

Unto your fathers; first to Abraham, #Ge 13:15 15:18; next to Isaac, #Ge 26:3; next to Jacob, #Ge 28:13; and all three are frequently mentioned, as those to whom the Lord sware in this thing, #Ex 33:1 De 1:8 6:10, &c.

Shall fall; so we speak of the inheritance which is sure and firm by indefeasible right, and comes into actual possession; it may also refer to the dividing by lot, which God will guide, that each may have their own.

Unto you, returned captives, who were carried away and used as if nothing were your own, and as if you never should have any thing; but in their sight you shall inherit.

Ver. 15.

In bounding the land, the prophet is informed what is the north border first. *The great sea;* called so, not that it is the greatest, for it is the Mediterranean here spoken of, but with respect to the Jews; this to them was the greatest they knew or traded on: from this sea doth the measuring of the land begin, from the west point along to Hethlon.

Hethlon is called Hethalon by Adrichmius, in the tribe of Asher, at the foot or near the Mount Herman or Senir, as #Eze 27:5 calls that mount: this city was in the north-east of Asher's lot, and on the north-west of Naphtali's lot, in the old division of the land.

Zedad is Sedada, a small town under the same hill, and near the head of the river Eleutherus, anciently Gebat.

Ver. 16.

Hamath; very near to the head of Eleutherus, or Gebat, and to Sedada: it is likely to be that mentioned #Isa 10:9, situate about the middle of the north boundary of the land, called sometime

Epiphania, from Antiochus Epiphanes, who repaired it, and some say now called Enimas.

Berothah; Berotha, a small and inconsiderable town or village lying east of Sedada. Sibraim, or Sabarim, a place of no further note than the former, known thus by being a boundary. It lay between these two, Hamath to the west of it, and Damascus to the east by north, somewhat nearer to Hamath than to Damascus.

Hazar-hatticon; though we render it as a proper name, some render it otherwise. The small villages between them two, (so the French,) i.e. between Hamath and Hauran.

Hauran, or Auran, some miles beyond Jordan, eastward from Hamath, which also gives name to the country called Auranitis.

Ver. 17.

The border; the utmost northern bounds.

From the sea: see #Eze 47:15.

Hazar-enan; the village Enan, or Enon, near Sedada.

The north northward; a line drawn from west to east, that shall distinguish the most northern boundaries of Israel from the most southern of Syria Damascena.

Ver. 18.

From Hauran; that was the north-east bound, where we must begin to measure the east side.

From Damascus: this was more northward than the city Hauran, but the country Auranitis, for aught I know, might reach to Damascus, or near it, and so this more particularly direct the measuring: begin at Damascus, draw the line through Auranitis, and so on southerly to Gilead.

Gilead; a famous mountain about fifty miles in length from south to north, where it joins Mount Libanus at the east end of it, and hath many particular names in particular places, and seems to end its southern progress at the rock Arnon.

From the land of Israel by Jordan; from the outside of the land of Israel, which lay beyond Jordan.

Unto the east sea; thence to the

east sea, or Dead Sea, which lay on the east of Jerusalem. Thus a line drawn from Damascus through Auranitis, Gilead, the land of Israel beyond Jordan, to the east sea, made the eastern frontier.

Ver. 19.

The south side shall begin at that point which first vergeth southward from the east sea toward Tamar, which is near En-gedi, and known by the addition Hazon-tamar; and so some place the lake of Sodom, that the greatest part will be this southern frontier.

To the waters of strife; from Tamar a line drawn to Meribah in Kadesh, of which #Nu 20:13 27:14.

The river, called the river of Egypt, was on the south of Judah, and lay directly in the way to Egypt from Jerusalem.

To the great sea; to the south-west part of the Mediterranean Sea near Gaza. This is the southern frontier.

Ver. 20.

This boundary begins where the river falls into the Mediterranean, a little south of Gaza; this the south point of the western boundary, and the line runs all along the seashore northward, till you come in a straight line to Hamath; and this is the northern point of the west frontier, over right Sidon, or little differing.

Ver. 21.

This land, now bounded.

According to the tribes of Israel; into twelve parts or tribes, to which all, but what is allotted to prince, priests, Levites, and the city. This, as holy, must be reserved; and when reserved, a very fair portion is left to the twelve tribes, if you measure the holy portion by cubits, and not by reeds.

Ver. 22.

It shall come to pass: this directs what they should do, as well as foretells the event that shall be.

Ye shall divide it by lot; so it was divided before, so it must again, for thus all controversies shall be prevented; thus he will choose their inheritance for them, for the disposition of the lot is of the Lord.

Unto you, that are the natural seed of Abraham.

To the strangers that sojourn among you: foreigners never had such privilege before; though they might dwell and trade among the Jews, yet they were excluded all hereditary right, could not purchase nor possess inheritances. But now the constitution is altered; and by this temporal external incorporating them, a spiritual and heavenly is signified, no doubt; they are put into capacity of inheriting with Israel in both Cananus, in this below, in that above.

Which shall beget children among you; who from their birth should be invested with this right of inheriting.

Among the children of Israel; equally with the children of Israel in point of right, and with that very tribe ill which they sojourn.

Have inheritance; possess and enjoy, as well as you.

With you: this speaks the equal title or privilege.

Among the tribes: this directs where the inheritance of these strangers born among them, or that first came with them when they came out of Babylon, should be assigned them, viz. in that very tribe where they sojourned, which is fully expressed in the next verse.

Ver. 23.

It shall come to pass: see Eze47:22. In what tribe; whether by choice or chance the stranger fixed in that tribe. No stranger shall be excluded out of the tribe's inheritance, among whom he hath sojourned and begotten children.

The stranger; every proselyte or Gentile that joins himself to the people of God.

There shall ye give him; neither the Jew might thrust a stranger out into another tribe, nor might the stranger by choice go to another.

His inheritance; it is called his, for so much as he had a right preceding the assignation.

Saith the Lord God: all this confirmed by Divine authority.

EZEKIEL CHAPTER 48

The portions of the twelve tribes, #Eze 48:1-7,23-29, of the sanctuary, #Eze 48:8-14, of the city and suburbs, #Eze 48:15-20, and of the prince, #Eze 48:21,22. The dimensions and gates of the city, #Eze 48:30-35.

Ver. 1.

From the north end; as the measurer began to bound the land first on the north side, so he will first place the tribe to whom the most northern lot fell, or rather was assigned by a Divine direction. **To the coast;** along through the coast that leads from the west or great sea to Hethlon. **Hethlon:** see #Eze 47:15. **Hamath;** a frontier city of that name; see #Eze 47:16; anciently the royal city of Toi, who congratulated David in his victory over Hadadezer king of Syria Zobah, #2Sa 8:9,10. **Hazar-enan:** see #Eze 47:17, for I meet with no more concerning it. **The border of Damascus;** and so on by the border of Damascus, which lay further eastward than Enan, as geographers describe it. **To the coast of Hamath:** this is Syria, and perhaps might have been best so translated; along bordering on this coast the rest of the northern boundary did run. **His sides;** the land, or Dan, mentioned immediately after. **East;** that is, from the east point, where Mount Libanus joineth to Gilead, to the west point, which is supposed in the midland sea, near the hot baths or Sidon: see #Eze 47:20. **For Dan;** the tribe of Dan, and the strangers that sojourn with him.

Ver. 2.

That is, all along on the south side of Dan, from east to west in length, shall the share of the tribe of Asher lie.

Ver. 3.

To the north-west point, where the dividing line ends, being drawn from the north-east point to the north-west in the midland sea.

Ver. 4.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 5.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 6.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 7.

Hitherto you have seven of the twelve tribes placed in the northern part of Canaan, and reckoned as they lay in order, where nothing occurs new from the 2nd verse to the 8th.

Ver. 8.

The offering; the holy portion, of which #Eze 45:1, set out for priests, Levites, and city, #Eze 45:4-6.

Reeds is here supplied by the translators, but I rather think *cubits*; for the greatness of the portion measured by reeds will eat out the tribes, or leave very little for them, as appears thus: The whole length from north to south was about one hundred and sixty miles, the breadth about sixty. Now twenty-five thousand reeds is at the least seventy-seven miles, at one thousand paces to a mile. These seventy-seven taken out of one hundred and sixty, there will remain but eighty-three for the twelve tribes, which will afford not quite seven miles in breadth for each tribe; whereas seventy-seven miles are allotted to the priests, Levites, and city; so that there will remain but eighty-three miles for the twelve tribes, that is, to each one almost seven miles. Now this to me would seem very much disproportioned; but twenty-five thousand cubits reckoned doth give the holy portion and city twelve miles and half square, and gives near as much in breadth to each tribe, and five times almost as much in length to each tribe; which appears thus: twelve times twelve make one hundred and forty-four, and twelve quarters make three wholes; give then each tribe twelve and a quarter, you divide one hundred and forty-seven by twelve and a quarter: now to this add the prince's, the holy portion, and the city land, which is twelve miles and a half, and you have one hundred and fifty-nine miles and three quarters, which is the length of the whole land. Thus the breadth of each portion for each tribe; but the length of each exceeded the prince's by twelve and a half, and the holy portion as much as sixty exceeds twelve and a half.

From the east side to the west side; that is, twenty-five thousand in length, which amounts to twelve miles and a half. Now the residue of the land from the sea eastward abutting on the whole breadth of the holy portion by equal proportion, will be

twenty-three and a quarter, and as much from the other side, measuring from the eastern bounds of the holy portion to the utmost bounds eastward of the land, which is sixty miles from its utmost western bounds; as appears thus: take an oblong square, whose breadth is twelve and a half, its length sixty; suppose in the very middle twelve and a half square taken up, there will remain at each end the half of forty-seven and a half, which is twenty-three and three quarters. According to this we conceive the prince hath assigned him as much as two tribes very near, and almost four times as much as the holy oblation; so that there is good reason for that **#Eze 45:9**, against oppression, and the command that he be content.

The sanctuary; the whole contents of suburbs, courts, and house.

In the midst of it; of the land laid out for the holy portion, for God and his priests.

Ver. 9.

This verse is the same with **#Eze 45:3**, which see.

Ver. 10.

For the priests; who are more particularly described **#Eze 48:11**, which see.

Toward the north; the north side, in length from north-east to north-west.

Toward the west; from south-west to north-west point, between which points lay the west side.

Toward the east; between north-east and south-east points, which made the east border.

Toward the south; from south-east by line drawn to south-west, the same measure with the north.

Ver. 11.

See this verse explained **#Eze 44:15,16**.

Ver. 12.

This oblation; which, as it were the *primitiae* of the land, was ordered to be first set out for God.

Offered; set apart, and dedicated to God. Shall be unto them a thing most holy; in the account both of the priests and the whole

people it shall be most holy, on no occasion to be servant unto any common uses.

By the border of the Levites; it shall lie next to the Levites; these lay southward between the priests' and the city's portion.

Ver. 13.

See this verse explained **#Eze 45:5**. The Levites' portion ran parallel with the priest's, whose northern limits were next to the southern limits of the Levites.

Ver. 14.

It is most holy, and therefore no price should be offered for it, nor any price set upon it, nor may they pass away any on pretence of getting greater and more particularly serviceable to them and their employment, and so for convenience part with God's inheritance; this is forbidden: this is holy, as the first-fruits were under the law, **#Le 25:23,24 1Ki 21:4**.

Ver. 15.

In the breadth over against; or running along by the side.

The five and twenty thousand; assigned to the Levites.

A profane place; a common, not consecrated place, in which the city should be built, a place for all services, as men shall need. Now as that is counted holy which is set apart only for the service of God, so that common or profane that is for common uses.

For dwelling; houses within the walls.

For suburbs; streets and dwellings, or gardens without the walls.

The city; Jerusalem.

In the midst thereof; of this common place, which is called here profane; so that ten thousand are left at each end.

Ver. 16.

The measures; the extent and proportions of the ground for the city; a square of four thousand five hundred shall be taken out of the middle of the twenty-five thousand for the area or ground-plot of the city. So it shall be an equilateral square, every side exactly the same, north, south, east, and west, four thousand five hundred

apiece, by which measures the whole contents are visible, eighteen thousand cubits, not reeds.

Ver. 17.

Here are the dimensions of the suburbs, which added to those of the city thus, two hundred and fifty added to the four thousand five hundred on the north side, and two hundred and fifty added to the four thousand five hundred on the south side, make five thousand; so on the east add two hundred and fifty to four thousand five hundred, and then add two hundred and fifty to the four thousand five hundred on the west, it makes up an equilateral square five thousand on each side.

Ver. 18.

The residue in length, which remains on each side of the five thousand cubits square area, will be ten thousand on the east, and ten thousand on the west.

Shall be over against the oblation; lie parallel and even with the south side of the Levites' portion both on east and west.

The increase thereof; the product, revenues of this land.

For food; the maintenance, both salary and allowances of bread and wine.

Unto them that serve the city; for the city officers, so that they may live by the city, whose life is spent for the city, that the labourer may, as he is worthy of it, receive his wages.

Ver. 19.

Either this service is a burden, and if so, it is fit all should bear their part in it; or it is a privilege and advantage, and then it is as fit the advantage should be equally given to all the tribes; all tribes shall be capable of the advantage, and liable to the burden.

Ver. 20.

Having particularly measured out ten thousand for the priests, and ten thousand for the Levites, and five thousand for the city broadways, these make in all twenty-five thousand; and the length of each the same, twenty-five thousand; here is evidently a perfect equilateral square, whose sides are twenty-five thousand each.
With the possession of the city; the land assigned for the city,

being added to that of the priests and Levites, makes their twice ten thousand to amount to twenty-five thousand broad.

Ver. 21.

The residue of the land, which is a great portion, for it is the remainder of twelve and a half taken out of sixty; so that the remainder will be forty-seven and a half.

On the one side; suppose it be the east side, there will be twenty-three and three quarters.

On the other side; on the west just as much, twenty-three and three quarters.

Of the possession of the city; the residue of that which is on each side, east and west of the five thousand square area.

Over against the five and twenty thousand; which amounts out of the priests', Levites', and city portion.

Toward the east border of the land of Canaan; all from the east side of the twenty-five thousand to the utmost bounds eastward, shall be the prince's portion, and so likewise on the west side westward to the great sea.

Over against the portions for the prince; these twenty-five thousand on both sides lay over against, or run parallel with, the breadth of the prince's portion, but the length of the prince's portion on each side did exceed the length of the holy portion and the city land, as twenty-three and three quarters exceeds twelve and a half.

The sanctuary; the holy mount.

Of the house; of the temple of God.

In the midst thereof; of the land assigned to the priests, which lay as described, bounded and guarded with the prince's portion at east and west ends.

Ver. 22.

That we may clearly understand this, we must remember that the portion of Judah was laid from west to east next to the holy portion, and the portion of Benjamin is in **#Eze 48:23** laid likewise from west to east next to the possession of the city. So

that on each side the extent of Judah and Benjamin run out to twenty-three miles and three quarters farther than the holy portion and possession of the city did; and all the land contained between the borders of Judah and Benjamin were the prince's right, both the twelve miles and half broad, twenty-three and three quarters long on the west, and the same proportion on the east; and this is the sum of the 22nd verse.

Ver. 23.

In #Eze 48:7 we left with the prophet the last assigned portion to Judah, on the north side of the holy portions; now the first on the south side of the possession of the city is Benjamin, whose portion, as all the rest, runs in length from east to west, and its breadth from north to south.

Ver. 24.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 25.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 26.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 27.

Thus all the tribes have their inheritances assigned them, but their lot is not here as in Joshua's division. It was a new church and state that was here intended, and accordingly many changes are made in it, which differenced it from the old; which changes no doubt are instructive, but the particular instructions fall not within the design of a paraphrase or comment, which is to make the letter of the text plain to ordinary capacities.

Ver. 28.

The border of Gad; the south border of Gad. *The border* of the whole land southward.

From Tamar: see #Eze 47:19.

To the river; Sihor, say some; but if Sihor be the Nile, as Ortelius makes it, it cannot be the boundary: it is indeed a river that ariseth, as some place it, out of the north part of the mountains of Paran, and running a course west from its rise, passeth between Gerar and Rhino-curuva, and after some twenty-

eight or thirty miles' travel falls into the great sea, better known in Scripture by the name of the *river of Egypt*. But possibly the true rise may be from Mount Carmel and Gozen, whence it may be some forty miles English to the great sea.

Ver. 29.

This is the land, whose south bounds are here repeated, the north bounds #Eze 48:1.

Ye shall divide by lot; not casting lots, but assigning the shares.

These are their portions; these above described are the particular shares of each tribe.

Ver. 30.

Now the prophet hath a general topography of the city, which lay four-square. The first side mentioned is the north, for there he began to describe the land, or because it was nearest the temple. It was, as #Eze 48:16, which see, four thousand five hundred cubits, i.e. about a mile and one third of a mile.

Ver. 31.

So then it is probable these gates were built at equal distance from the corners and from each other.

Ver. 32.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 33.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 34.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 35.

Round measuring all four squares.

Eighteen thousand measures, or cubits, at which proportioned measures it was about five miles in compass; if the measures were reeds, it would be thirty miles and three hundred and twenty-five yards in compass of the walls, which cannot be conceived credible; whereas the other is the proportion the city might have been built to, if the sins of the Jews had not prevented.

The name, by which it shall be called, known, and which shall be the honour of it and its glory. From that day; from the day of the Lord's restoring this people, and rebuilding their city, and re-establishing his worship, and their thankful, holy, and pure worshipping of God there, from the day that such unmatched mercy produceth a suitable return unto God, from that day it shall be said of Jerusalem,

The Lord is there; the Lord, who, as his name alone is Jehovah, so is the only true God, faithful to promise, rich in mercy, glorious in majesty, righteous in his judgments, wise and holy in his government, whose presence makes us happy, whose withdrawing from us leaves us to misery. This God will, by his favour and presence, repel enemies and protect his people, bring with him the confluence of all good to persons, families, and cities; this God will be there to dwell, govern, defend, prosper, and crown. The people is blessed that is in such case, for their God is the Lord, **#Ps 144:15**. Such was the case of typical, earthly Jerusalem, though not long; such is and shall be for ever the case of the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of God, the true church and temple of God. Such is the case of every true sincere believer, who may, wherever he is in his way of duty, still write, Jehovah-shammah, My God is here; and it is best to be where he is, till he bring me within the gates of the glorious city, where inconceivable light and love from the immediate presence of God give every one an eternal demonstration that hmv hnh To him be glory for ever.