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Isaiah

From Commentary on the Old Testament

C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

adapted for Grace Notes training by Warren Doud

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Contents

Introduction - (More Especially to the First Part. Ch. 1–29)	5
Isaiah 1.....	25
Isaiah 2.....	47
Isaiah 3.....	57
Isaiah 4.....	68
Isaiah 5.....	73
Isaiah 6.....	88
Isaiah 7.....	98
Isaiah 8.....	110
Isaiah 9.....	118
Isaiah 10.....	128
Isaiah 11.....	138
Isaiah 12.....	144
Isaiah 13.....	145
Isaiah 14.....	152
Isaiah 15.....	160
Isaiah 16.....	165
Isaiah 17.....	170
Isaiah 18.....	174
Isaiah 19.....	178
Isaiah 20.....	186
Isaiah 21.....	189
Isaiah 22.....	196
Isaiah 23.....	205
Isaiah 24.....	214
Isaiah 25.....	222
Isaiah 26.....	226
Isaiah 27.....	232
Isaiah 28.....	236
Isaiah 29.....	245
Isaiah 30.....	250
Isaiah 31.....	260
Isaiah 33.....	262
Isaiah 33.....	267
Isaiah 34.....	272
Isaiah 35.....	278
Isaiah 36.....	280
Isaiah 37.....	286
Isaiah 38.....	297
Isaiah 39.....	303

Isaiah 40.....	306
Isaiah 41.....	321
Isaiah 42.....	330
Isaiah 43.....	339
Isaiah 44.....	346
Isaiah 45.....	354
Isaiah 46.....	362
Isaiah 47.....	365
Isaiah 48.....	370
Isaiah 49.....	376
Isaiah 50.....	386
Isaiah 51.....	390
Isaiah 52.....	397
Isaiah 53.....	405
Isaiah 54.....	424
Isaiah 55.....	430
Isaiah 56.....	434
Isaiah 57.....	438
Isaiah 58.....	447
Isaiah 59.....	453
Isaiah 60.....	461
Isaiah 61.....	469
Isaiah 62.....	475
Isaiah 63.....	480
Isaiah 64.....	492
Isaiah 65.....	497
Isaiah 66.....	508
Appendix.....	522

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ISAIAH	Page 5
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Isaiah

Introduction - (More Especially to the First Part. Ch. 1–29)

Time of the Prophet

The first prerequisite to a clear understanding and full appreciation of the prophecies of Isaiah, is a knowledge of his time, and of the different periods of his ministry. The *first* period was in the reigns of Uzziah (B.C. 811–759) and Jotham (759–743). The precise starting-point depends upon the view we take of Isa. 6. But, in any case, Isaiah commenced his ministry towards the close of Uzziah's reign, and laboured on throughout the sixteen years of the reign of Jotham. The first twenty-seven of the fifty-two years that Uzziah reigned run parallel to the last twenty-seven of the forty-one that Jeroboam II reigned (B.C. 825–784). Under Joash, and his son Jeroboam II, the kingdom of Israel passed through a period of outward glory, which surpassed, both in character and duration, any that it had reached before; and this was also the case with the kingdom of Judah under Uzziah and his son Jotham. As the glory of the one kingdom faded away, that of the other increased. The bloom of the northern kingdom was destroyed and surpassed by that of the southern. But outward splendour contained within itself the fatal germ of decay and ruin in the one case as much as in the other; for prosperity degenerated into luxury, and the worship of Jehovah became stiffened into idolatry. It was in this last and longest time of Judah's prosperity that Isaiah arose, with the mournful vocation to preach repentance without success, and consequently to have to announce the judgment of hardening and devastation, of the ban and of banishment. The *second* period of his ministry extended from the commencement of the reign of Ahaz to that of the reign of Hezekiah. Within these sixteen years three events occurred, which combined to bring about a new and calamitous turn in the history of Judah. In the place of the worship of Jehovah, which had been maintained

with outward regularity and legal precision under Uzziah and Jotham; as soon as Ahaz ascended the throne, open idolatry was introduced of the most abominable description and in very various forms. The hostilities which began while Jotham was living, were perpetuated by Pekah the king of Israel and Rezin the king of Damascene Syria; and in the Syro-Ephraimitish war, an attack was made upon Jerusalem, with the avowed intention of bringing the Davidic rule to an end. Ahaz appealed to Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria, to help him out of these troubles. He thus made flesh his arm, and so entangled the nation of Jehovah with the kingdom of the world, that from that time forward it never truly recovered its independence again. The kingdom of the world was the heathen state in its Nimrodic form. Its perpetual aim was to extend its boundaries by constant accretions, till it had grown into a world-embracing colossus; and in order to accomplish this, it was ever passing beyond its natural boundaries, and coming down like an avalanche upon foreign nations, not merely for self-defence or revenge, but for the purpose of conquest also. Assyria and Rome were the first and last links in that chain of oppression by the kingdom of the world, which ran through the history of Israel. Thus Isaiah, standing as he did on the very threshold of this new and all-important turn in the history of his country, and surveying it with his telescopic glance, was, so to speak, the universal prophet of Israel. The *third* period of his ministry extended from the accession of Hezekiah to the fifteenth year of his reign. Under Hezekiah the nation rose, almost at the same pace at which it had previously declined under Ahaz. He forsook the ways of his idolatrous father, and restored the worship of Jehovah. The mass of the people, indeed, remained inwardly unchanged, but Judah had once more an upright king, who hearkened to the word of the prophet by his side,—two pillars of the state, and men mighty in prayer (2 Chron. 32:20). When the attempt was afterwards made to break away from the Assyrian yoke, so far as the leading men and the great mass of the people were concerned, this

ISAIAH	Page 6
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

was an act of unbelief originating merely in the same confident expectation of help from Egypt which had occasioned the destruction of the northern kingdom in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign; but on the part of Hezekiah it was an act of faith and confident reliance upon Jehovah (2 Kings 18:7). Consequently, when Sennacherib, the successor of Shalmaneser, marched against Jerusalem, conquering and devastating the land as he advanced, and Egypt failed to send the promised help, the carnal defiance of the leaders and of the great mass of the people brought its own punishment. But Jehovah averted the worst extremity, by destroying the kernel of the Assyrian army in a single night; so that, as in the Syro-Ephraimitish war, Jerusalem itself was never actually besieged. Thus the faith of the king, and of the better portion of the nation, which rested upon the word of promise, had its reward. There was still a divine power in the state, which preserved it from destruction. The coming judgment, which nothing indeed could now avert, according to Isa. 6, was arrested for a time, just when the last destructive blow would naturally have been expected. It was in this miraculous rescue, which Isaiah predicted, and for which he prepared the way, that the public ministry of the prophet culminated. Isaiah was the Amos of the kingdom of Judah, having the same fearful vocation to foresee and to declare the fact, that for Israel as a people and kingdom the time of forgiveness had gone by. But he was not also the Hosea of the southern kingdom; for it was not Isaiah, but Jeremiah, who received the solemn call to accompany the disastrous fate of the kingdom of Judah with the knell of prophetic denunciations. Jeremiah was the Hosea of the kingdom of Judah. To Isaiah was given the commission, which was refused to his successor Jeremiah,—namely, to press back once more, through the might of his prophetic word, coming as it did out of the depths of the strong spirit of faith, the dark night which threatened to swallow up his people at the time of the Assyrian judgment. After the fifteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, he took no further part in public affairs; but he lived till the

commencement of Manasseh's reign, when, according to a credible tradition, to which there is an evident allusion in Heb. 11:37 ("they were sawn asunder"), he fell a victim to the heathenism which became once more supreme in the land.

To this sketch of the times and ministry of the prophet we will add a review of the scriptural account of the four kings, under whom he laboured according to Isa. 1:1; since nothing is more essential, as a preparation for the study of his book, than a minute acquaintance with these sections of the books of Kings and Chronicles.

I. Historical Account of Uzziah-Jotham.—The account of *Uzziah* given in the book of Kings (2 Kings 15:1–7, to which we may add 14:21, 22), like that of Jeroboam II, is not so full as we should have expected. After the murder of Amaziah, the people of Judah, as related in Isa. 14:21, 22, raised to the throne his son Azariah, probably not his first-born, who was then sixteen years old. It was he who built the Edomitish seaport town of Elath (for navigation and commerce), and made it a permanent possession of Judah (as in the time of Solomon). This notice is introduced, as a kind of appendix, at the close of Amaziah's life and quite out of its chronological position, because the conquest of Elath was the crowning point of the subjugation of Edom by Amaziah, and not, as Thenius supposes, because it was Azariah's first feat of arms, by which, immediately after his accession, he satisfied the expectations with which the army had made him king. For the victories gained by this king over Edom and the other neighbouring nations cannot have been obtained at the time when Amos prophesied, which was about the tenth year of Uzziah's reign. The attack made by Amaziah upon the kingdom of Israel, had brought the kingdom of Judah into a state of dependence upon the former, and almost of total ruin, from which it only recovered gradually, like a house that had fallen into decay. The chronicler, following the text of the book of Kings, has introduced the notice concerning Elath in the same place (2 Chron. 26:1, 2: it is written *Eloth*, as in 1 Kings

ISAIAH	Page 7
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

9:26, and the Septuagint at 2 Kings 14:22). He calls the king *Uzziahu*; and it is only in the table of the kings of Judah, in 1 Chron. 3:12, that he gives the name as *Azariah*. The author of the book of Kings, according to our Hebrew text, calls him sometimes *Azariah* or *Azariahu*, sometimes *Uzziah* or *Uzziahu*; the Septuagint always gives the name as *Azarias*. The occurrence of the two names in both of the historical books is an indubitable proof that they are genuine. *Azariah* was the original name: out of this *Uzziah* was gradually formed by a significant elision; and as the prophetic books, from Isa. 1:1 to Zech. 14:5, clearly show, the latter was the name most commonly used. *Azariah*, as we learn from the section in the book of Kings relating to the reign of this monarch (2 Kings 15:1–7), ascended the throne in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam's reign, that is to say, in the fifteenth year of his sole government, the twenty-seventh from the time when he shared the government with his father Joash, as we may gather from 2 Kings 13:13. The youthful sovereign, who was only sixteen years of age, was the son of Amaziah by a native of Jerusalem, and reigned fifty-two years. He did what was pleasing in the sight of God, like his father Amaziah; i.e., although he did not come up to the standard of David, he was one of the better kings. He fostered the worship of Jehovah, as prescribed in the law: nevertheless he left the high places (*bamoth*) standing; and while he was reigning, the people maintained in all its force the custom of sacrificing and burning incense upon the heights. He was punished by God with leprosy, which compelled him to live in a sick-house (*chophshuth* = *chophshith*: sickness) till the day of his death, whilst his son Jotham was over the palace, and conducted the affairs of government. He was buried in the city of David, and Jotham followed by him on the throne. This is all that the author of the book of Kings tells us concerning *Azariah*: for the rest, he refers to the annals of the kings of Judah. The section in the Chronicles relating to *Uzziah* (2 Chron. 26) is much more copious: the writer had our book of Kings before him, as 2 Chron. 26:3, 4, 21, clearly proves, and

completed the defective notices from the source which he chiefly employed,—namely, the much more elaborate *midrash*.

Uzziah, he says, was zealous in seeking Elohim in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in divine visions; and in the days when he sought Jehovah, God made him to prosper. Thus the prophet Zechariah, as a faithful pastor and counsellor, stood in the same relation to him in which Jehoiada the high priest had stood to Joash, *Uzziah's* grandfather. The chronicler then enumerates singly the divine blessings which *Uzziah* enjoyed. *First*, his *victories* over the surrounding nations (passing over the victory over Edom, which had been already mentioned), viz.: (1) he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built towns *b'ashdod* and *b'phelistim* (i.e., in the conquered territory of Ashdod, and in Philistia generally); (2) God not only gave him victory over the Philistines, but also over the Arabians who dwelt in Gur-Baal (an unknown place, which neither the LXX nor the Targumists could explain), and the Mehunim, probably a tribe of Arabia Petraea; (3) the Ammonites gave him presents in token of allegiance, and his name was honoured even as far as Egypt, to such an extent did his power grow. *Secondly*, his *buildings*: he built towers (fortifications) above the corner gate, and above the valley gate, and above the *Mikzoo*, and fortified these (the weakest) portions of Jerusalem: he also built towers in the desert (probably in the desert between Beersheba and Gaza, to protect either the land, or the flocks and herds that were pasturing there); and dug many cisterns, for he had large flocks and herds both in the *shephelah* (the western portion of Southern Palestine) and in the *mishor* (the extensive pasture-land of the tribe territory of Reuben on the other side of the Jordan): he had also husbandmen and vine-dressers on the mountains, and in the fruitful fields, for he was a lover of agriculture. *Thirdly*, his well-organized *troops*: he had an army of fighting men which consisted—according to a calculation made by Jeiel the scribe, and

Maaseiah, the officer under the superintendence of Nahaniah, one of the royal princes—of 2600 heads of families, who had 307,500 men under their command, “that made war with mighty power to help the king against the enemy.” Uzziah furnished these, according to all the divisions of the army, with shields, had spears, and helmet, and coats of mail, and bows, even with slinging-stones. He also had ingenious slinging-machines (*balistae*) made in Jerusalem, to fix upon the towers and ramparts, for the purpose of shooting arrows and large stones. His name resounded far abroad, for he had marvellous success, so that he became very powerful.

Up to this point the chronicler has depicted the brighter side of Uzziah’s reign. His prosperous deeds and enterprises are all grouped together, so that it is doubtful whether the history within these several groups follows the chronological order or not. The light thrown upon the history of the times by the group of victories gained by Uzziah, would be worth twice as much if the chronological order were strictly observed. But even if we might assume that the victory over the Philistines preceded the victory over the Arabians of Gur-Baal and the Mehunim, and this again the subjugation of Ammon, it would still be very uncertain what position the expedition against Edom—which was noticed by anticipation at the close of Amaziah’s life—occupied in relation to the other wars, and at what part of Uzziah’s reign the several wars occurred. All that can be affirmed is, that they preceded the closing years of his life, when the blessing of God was withdrawn from him.

The chronicler relates still further, in 2 Chron. 26:16, that as Uzziah became stronger and stronger, he fell into pride of heart, which led him to perform a ruinous act. He sinned against Jehovah his God, by forcing his way into the holy place of the temple, to burn incense upon the altar of incense, from the proud notion that royalty involved the rights of the priesthood, and that the priests were only the delegates and representatives of the king. Then Azariah the high priest, and eighty other priests, brave men, hurried after him, and went up to him, and said,

“This does not belong to thee, Uzziah, to burn incense of Jehovah; but to the priests, and sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary, for thou sinnest; and this is not for thine honour with Jehovah Elohim!” Then Uzziah was wroth, as he held the censer in his hand; and while he was so enraged against the priests, leprosy broke out upon his forehead in the sight of the priests, in the house of Jehovah, at the altar of incense. When Azariah the high priest and the rest of the priests turned to him, behold, he was leprous in his forehead; and they brought him hurriedly away from thence,—in fact, he himself hastened to go out,—for Jehovah had smitten him. After having thus explained the circumstances which led to the king’s leprosy, the chronicler follows once more the text of the book of Kings,—where the leprosy itself is also mentioned,—and states that the king remained a leper until the day of his death, and lived in a sick-house, without ever being able to visit the temple again. But instead of the statement in the book of Kings, that he was buried in the city of David, the chronicler affirms more particularly that he was not placed in the king’s sepulchre; but, inasmuch as he was leprous, and would therefore have defiled it, was buried in the field near the sepulchre. But before introducing this conclusion to the history of Uzziah’s reign, and instead of referring to the annals of the kings of Judah, as the author of the book of Kings has done, or making such citations as we generally find, the author simply states, that “the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.”

It cannot possibly be either the prophecies of Isaiah of the time of Uzziah, or a certain historical portion of the original book of Isaiah’s predictions, to which reference is here made; for in that case we should expect the same notice at the close of the account of Jotham’s reign, or, at any rate, at the close of that of Ahaz (cf., 2 Chron. 27:7 and 28:26). It is also inconceivable that Isaiah’s book of predictions should have contained either a prophetic or historical account of the first acts of Uzziah, since Isaiah was later than Amos,

later even than Hosea; and his public ministry did not commence till the close of his reign,—in fact, not till the year of his death. Consequently the chronicler must refer to some historical work distinct from “the visions of Isaiah.” Just as he mentions two historical works within the first epoch of the divided kingdom, viz., Shemaiah’s and Iddo’s,—the former of which referred more especially to the entire history of Rehoboam, and the latter to the history of Abijah,—and then again, in the second epoch, an historical work by Jehu ben Hanani, which contained a complete history of Jehoshaphat from the beginning to the end; so here, in the third epoch, he speaks of Isaiah ben Amoz, the greatest Judaeen prophet of this epoch as the author of a special history of Uzziah, which was not incorporated in his “visions” like the history of Hezekiah (cf., 2 Chron. 32:32), but formed an independent work. Besides this prophetic history of Uzziah, there was also an annalistic history, as 2 Kings 15:6 clearly shows; and it is quite possible that the annals of Uzziah were finished when Isaiah commenced his work, and that they were made use of by him. For the leading purpose of the prophetic histories was to exhibit the inward and divine connection between the several outward events, which the annals simply registered. The historical writings of a prophet were only the other side of his more purely prophetic work. In the light of the Spirit of God, the former looked deep into the past, the latter into the present. Both of them had to do with the ways of divine justice and grace, and set forth past and present, alike in view of the true goal, in which these two ways coincide.

Jotham succeeded *Uzziah*, after having acted as regent, or rather as viceroy, for several years (2 Kings 15:32–38). He ascended the throne in the second year of *Pekah* king of Israel, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and reigned for sixteen years in a manner which pleased God, though he still tolerated the worship upon high places, as his father had done. He built the upper gate of the temple. The author has no sooner written this than he refers to the annals, simply adding, before concluding with the usual

formula concerning his burial in the city of David, that in those days, i.e., towards the close of *Jotham*’s reign, the hostilities of *Rezin* of Damascus and *Pekah* of Israel commenced, as a judgment from God upon Judah. The chronicler, however, makes several valuable additions to the text of the book of Kings, which he has copied word for word down to the notice concerning the commencement of the Syro-Ephraimitish hostilities (vid., 2 Chron. 27). We do not include in this the statement that *Jotham* did not force his way into the holy place in the temple: this is simply intended as a limitation of the assertion made by the author of the book of Kings as to the moral equality of *Jotham* and *Uzziah*, and in favour of the former. The words, “the people continued in their destructive course,” also contain nothing new, but are simply the shorter expression used in the Chronicles to indicate the continuance of the worship of the high places during *Jotham*’s reign. But there is something new in what the chronicler appends to the remark concerning the building of the upper gate of the temple, which is very bold and abrupt as it stands in the book of Kings, viz., “On the wall of the Ophel he built much (i.e., he fortified this southern spur of the temple hill still more strongly), and put towns in the mountains of Judah, and erected castles and towers in the forests (for watchtowers and defences against hostile attacks). He also fought with the king of the Ammonites; and when conquered, they were obliged to give him that year and the two following a hundred talents of silver, ten thousand cors of wheat, and the same quantity of barley. *Jotham* grew stronger and stronger, because he strove to walk before Jehovah his God.” The chronicler breaks off with this general statement, and refers, for the other memorabilia of *Jotham*, and all his wars and enterprises, to the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

This is what the two historical books relate concerning the royal pair—*Uzziah*-*Jotham*—under whom the kingdom of Judah enjoyed once more a period of great prosperity and power,—“the greatest since the disruption,

ISAIAH	Page 10
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

with the exception of that of Jehoshaphat; the longest during the whole period of its existence, the last before its overthrow" (Caspari). The sources from which the two historical accounts were derived were the annals: they were taken directly from them by the author of the book of Kings, indirectly by the chronicler. No traces can be discovered of the work written by Isaiah concerning Uzziah, although it may possibly be employed in the *midrash* of the chronicler. There is an important supplement to the account given by the chronicler in the casual remark made in 1 Chron. 5:17, to the effect that Jotham had a census taken of the tribe of Gad, which was settled on the other side of the Jordan. We see from this, that in proportion as the northern kingdom sank down from the eminence to which it had attained under Jeroboam II, the supremacy of Judah over the land to the east of the Jordan was renewed. But we may see from Amos, that it was only gradually that the kingdom of Judah revived under Uzziah, and that at first, like the wall of Jerusalem, which was partially broken down by Joash, it presented the aspect of a house full of fissures, and towards Israel in a very shaky condition; also that the Ephraimitish ox- (or calf-) worship of Jehovah was carried on at Beersheba, and therefore upon Judaeon soil, and that Judah did not keep itself free from the idolatry which it had inherited from the fathers (Amos 2:4, 5). Again, assuming that Amos commenced his ministry at about the tenth year of Uzziah's reign, we may learn at least so much from him with regard to Uzziah's victories over Edom, Philistia, and Ammon, that they were not gained till after the tenth year of his reign. Hosea, on the other hand, whose ministry commenced at the very earliest when that of Amos was drawing to a close, and probably not till the last five years of Jeroboam's reign, bears witness to, and like Amos condemns, the participation in the Ephraimitish worship, into which Judah had been drawn under Uzziah-Jotham. But with him Beersheba is not referred to any more as an Israelitish seat of worship (Hos. 4:15); Israel does not interfere any longer with the soil of Judah, as in the time of Amos,

since Judah has again become a powerful and well-fortified kingdom (Hos. 8:14, cf., 1:7). But, at the same time, it has become full of carnal trust and manifold apostasy from Jehovah (Hos. 5:10; 12:1); so that, although receiving at first a miraculous deliverance from God (Hos. 1:7), it is ripening for the same destruction as Israel (Hos. 6:11).

This survey of the kingdom of Judah in the time of Uzziah-Jotham by the Israelitish prophet, we shall find repeated in Isaiah; for the same spirit animates and determines the verdicts of the prophets of both kingdoms.

II. Historical Account of Ahaz and the Syro-Ephraimitish War.—The account of Ahaz, given in the book of Kings and in the Chronicles (2 Kings 16, 2 Chron. 28), may be divided into three parts: viz., first, the general characteristics; secondly, the account of the Syro-Ephraimitish war; and thirdly, the desecration of the temple by Ahaz, more especially by setting up an altar made after the model of that at Damascus. (1.) 2 Kings 16:1–4. Ahaz ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of Pekah. He was then twenty years old (or twenty-five according to the LXX at 2 Chron. 28:1, which is much more probable, as he would otherwise have had a son, Hezekiah, in the tenth years of his age), and he reigned sixteen years. He did not please God as his forefather David had done, but took the way of the kings of Israel, and even made his son pass through the fire (i.e., burnt him in honour of Moloch), according to the abominations of the (Canaanitish) people whom Jehovah had driven out before Israel; and he offered sacrifice and burnt incense upon the high places, and upon the hills, and under every green tree. The Deuteronomic colouring of this passage is very obvious. The corresponding passage in the Chronicles is 2 Chron. 28:1–4, where the additional fact is mentioned, that he even made molten images for Baalim, and burnt incense in the valley of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire ("his children," a generic plural like "the kings" in v. 16, and "the sons" in 2 Chron. 24:25: "burnt," וִיבְעַר, unless the reading וַיִּבְעַר be

adopted, as it has been by the LXX, “he caused to pass through.”) (2.) 2 Kings 16:5–9. Then (in the time of this idolatrous king Ahaz) the following well-known and memorable event occurred: Rezin the king of Aram, and Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel, went up against Jerusalem to war, and besieged Ahaz, “but could not overcome him,” i.e., as we may gather from Isa. 7:1, they were not able to get possession of Jerusalem, which was the real object of their expedition. “At that time” (the author of the book of Kings proceeds to observe), viz., at the time of this Syro-Ephraimitish war, Rezin king of Aram brought Elath to Aram (i.e., wrested again from the kingdom of Judah the seaport town which Uzziah had recovered a short time before), and drove the Judaeans out of Elath (*sic*); and Aramaeans came to Elath and settled there unto this day. Thenius, who starts with the needless assumption that the conquest of Elath took place subsequently to the futile attempt to take Jerusalem, gives the preference to the reading of the Keri, “and Edomites (*Edomina*) came to Elath,” and would therefore correct *l'aram* (to Aram) into *l'edom* (to Edom). “Rezin,” he says, “destroyed the work of Uzziah, and gave Edom its liberty again, in the hope that at some future time he might have the support of Edom, and so operate against Judah with greater success.” But, in answer to this, it may be affirmed that such obscure forms as אַרְוִמִים for אֶדְוִמִים are peculiar to this account, and that the words do not denote the restoration of a settlement, but mention the settlement as a new and remarkable fact. I therefore adopt Caspari’s conclusion, that the Syrian king transplanted a Syrian colony of traders to Elath, to secure the command of the maritime trade with all its attendant advantages; and this colony held its ground there for some time after the destruction of the Damascene kingdom, as the expression “to this day,” found in the earlier source of the author of the book of Kings, clearly implies.

But if the conquest of Elath fell within the period of the Syro-Ephraimitish war, which

commenced towards the end of Jotham’s reign, and probably originated in the bitter feelings occasioned by the almost total loss to Judah of the country on the east of the Jordan, and which assumed the form of a direct attack upon Jerusalem itself soon after Ahaz ascended the throne; the question arises, How was it that this design of the two allied kings upon Jerusalem was not successful? The explanation is given in the account contained in the book of Kings (vv. 7–9): “Ahaz sent messengers to *Tiglath-pēlezer* (*sic*) the king of Asshur, to say to him, I am thy servant, and thy son; come up, and save me out of the hand of Aram, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, who have risen up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and the gold that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the palace, and sent it for a present to the king of Asshur. The king hearkened to his petition; and went against Damascus, and took it, and carried the inhabitants into captivity to Kir, and slew Rezin.” And what did Tiglath-pileser do with Pekah? The author of the book of Kings has already related, in the section referring to Pekah (2 Kings 15:29), that he punished him by taking away the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan, and a large part of the territory on this side towards the north, and carried the inhabitants captive to Assyria. This section must be supplied here,—an example of the great liberty which the historians allowed themselves in the selection and arrangement of their materials. The anticipation in v. 5 is also quite in accordance with their usual style: the author first of all states that the expedition against Jerusalem was an unsuccessful one, and then afterwards proceeds to mention the reason for the failure,—namely, the appeal of Ahaz to Assyria for help. For I also agree with Caspari in this, that the Syrians the Ephraimites were unable to take Jerusalem, because the tidings reached them, that Tiglath-pileser had been appealed to by Ahaz and was coming against them; and they were consequently obliged to raise the siege and made a speedy retreat.

The account in the Chronicles (2 Chron. 28:5–21) furnishes us with full and extensive details,

ISAIAH	Page 12
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

with which to supplement the very condensed notice of the book of Kings. When we compare the two accounts, the question arises, whether they refer to two different expeditions (and if so, which of the two refers to the first expedition and which to the second), or whether they both relate to the same expedition. Let us picture to ourselves first of all the facts as given by the chronicler. "Jehovah, his God," he says of Ahaz, "delivered him into the hand of the king of Aram, and they (the Aramaeans) smote him, and carried off from him a great crowd of captives, whom they brought to Damascus; and he was also given into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted upon him a terrible defeat." This very clearly implies, as Caspari has shown, that although the two kings set the conquest of Jerusalem before them as a common end at which to aim, and eventually united for the attainment of this end, yet for a time they acted separately. We are not told here in what direction Rezin's army went. But we know from 2 Kings 16:6 that it marched to Idumaea, which it could easily reach from Damascus by going through the territory of his ally,—namely, the country of the two tribes and a half. The chronicler merely describes the simultaneous invasion of Judaea by Pekah, but he does this with all the greater fulness. "Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all valiant men, because they forsook Jehovah, the God of their fathers. Zichri, an Ephraimitish hero, slew Ma'asejahu the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the palace, and Elkanah, the second in rank to the king. And the Israelites carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, boys, and girls, and took away much spoil from them, and brought this booty to Samaria." As the Jewish army numbered at that time three hundred thousand men (2 Chron. 25:5; 26:13), and the war was carried on with the greatest animosity, these numbers need not be regarded as either spurious or exaggerated. Moreover, the numbers, which the chronicler found in the sources he employed, merely contained the estimate of the enormous losses sustained, as

generally adopted at that time of the side of Judah itself.

This bloody catastrophe was followed by a very fine and touching occurrence. A prophet of Jehovah, named Oded (a contemporary of Hosea, and a man of kindred spirit), went out before the army as it came back to Samaria, and charged the victors to release the captives of their brother nation, which had been terribly punished in God's wrath, and by so doing to avert the wrath of God which threatened them as well. Four noble Ephraimitish heads of tribes, whose names the chronicler has preserved, supported the admonition of the prophet. The army then placed the prisoners and the booty at the disposal of the princes and the assembled people: "And these four memorable men rose up, and took the prisoners, and all their naked ones they covered with the booty, and clothed and shod them, and gave them to eat and drink, and anointed them, and conducted as many of them as were cripples upon asses, and brought them to Jericho the palm-city, to the neighbourhood of their brethren, and returned to Samaria." Nothing but the rudest scepticism could ever seek to cast a slur upon this touching episode, the truth of which is so conspicuous. There is nothing strange in the fact that so horrible a massacre should be followed by a strong manifestation of the fraternal love, which had been forcibly suppressed, but was not rekindled by the prophet's words. We find an older fellow-piece to this in the prevention of a fratricidal war by Shemaiah, as described in 1 Kings 12:22-24.

Now, when the chronicler proceeds to observe in v. 16, that "at that time Ahaz turned for help to the royal house of Assyria" (*malce asshur*), in all probability this took place at the time when he had sustained two severe defeats, one at the hands of Pekah to the north of Jerusalem; and another from Rezin in Idumaea. The two battles belong to the period before the siege of Jerusalem, and the appeal for help from Assyria falls between the battles and the siege. The chronicler then mentions other judgments which fell upon the king in his estrangement

from God, viz.: (1) "Moreover the Edomites came, smote Judah, and carried away captives;" possibly while the Syro-Ephraimitish war was still going on, after they had welcomed Rezin as their deliverer, had shaken off the Jewish yoke, and had supported the Syrian king against Judah in their own land; (2) the Philistines invaded the low land (*shephelah*) and the south land (*negeb*) of Judah, and took several towns, six of which the chronicler mentions by name, and settled in them; for "Jehovah humbled Judah because of Ahaz the king of *Israel* (an epithet with several sarcastic allusions), for he acted without restraint in Judah, and most wickedly against Jehovah." The breaking away of the Philistines from the Jewish dominion took place, according to Caspari, in the time of the Syro-Ephraimitish war. The position of v. 18 in the section reaching from v. 5 to v. 21 (viz., v. 18, invasion of the Philistines; v. 17, that of the Edomites) renders this certainly very probable, though it is not conclusive, as Caspari himself admits.

In vv. 20, 21, the chronicler adds an appendix to the previous list of punishments: Tiglath-Pilezer (*sic*) the king of Asshur came upon him, and oppressed him instead of strengthening him; for Ahaz had plundered both temple and palace, and given the treasures to the king of Asshur, without receiving any proper help in return. Thenius disputes the rendering, "He strengthened him not" (cf., Ezek. 30:21); but Caspari has shown that it is quite in accordance with the facts of the case. Tiglath-pileser did not bring Ahaz any true help; for what he proceeded to do against Syria and Israel was not taken in hand in the interests of Ahaz, but to extend his own imperial dominion. He did not assist Ahaz to bring either the Edomites or the Philistines into subjection again, to say nothing of compensating him for his losses with either Syrian or Ephraimitish territory. Nor was it only that he did not truly help him: he really oppressed him, by making him a tributary vassal instead of a free and independent prince,—a relation to Asshur which, according to many evident signs, was the direct consequence of his appeal for help,

and which was established, at any rate, at the very commencement of Hezekiah's reign. Under what circumstances this took place we cannot tell; but it is very probable that, after the victories over Rezin and Pekah, a second sum of money was demanded by Tiglath-pileser, and then from that time forward a yearly tribute. The expression used by the chronicler—"he came upon him"—seems, in fact, to mean that he gave emphasis to this demand by sending a detachment of his army; even if we cannot take it, as Caspari does, in a rhetorical rather than a purely historical sense, viz., as signifying that, "although Tiglath-pileser came, as Ahaz desired, his coming was not such as Ahaz desired, a coming to help and benefit, but rather to oppress and injure."

(3.) The *third* part of the two historical accounts describes the pernicious influence which the alliance with Tiglath-pileser exerted upon Ahaz, who was already too much inclined to idolatry (2 Kings 16:10-18). After Tiglath-pileser had marched against the ruler of Damascus, and delivered Ahaz from the more dangerous of his two adversaries (and possibly from both of them), Ahaz went to Damascus to present his thanks in person. There he saw the altar (which was renowned as a work of art), and sent an exact model to Uriah the high priest, who had an altar constructed like it by the time that the king returned. As soon as Ahaz came back he went up to this altar and offered sacrifice, thus officiating as priest himself (probably as a thanksgiving for the deliverance he had received). The brazen altar (of Solomon), which Uriah had moved farther forward to the front of the temple building, he put farther back again, placing it close to the north side of the new one (that the old one might not appear to have the slightest preference over the new), and commanded the high priest to perform the sacrificial service in future upon the new great altar; adding, at the same time, "And (as for) the brazen altar, I will consider (what shall be done with it)." "And king Ahaz," it is stated still further, "broke out the borders of the stools, and took away the basins; and the sea he took down from the oxen that bare it, and set it upon

a stone pedestal (that took the place of the oxen). And the covered sabbath-hall which had been built in the temple, and the outer king's entrance, *he removed* into the temple of Jehovah before the king of Assyria." Thenius explains this as meaning "he altered them" (taking away the valuable ornaments from both), that he might be able to take with him to Damascus the necessary presents for the king of Asshur. Ewald's explanation, however, is better than this, and more in accordance with the expression "before," viz., "in order that he might be able to secure the continued favour of the dreaded Assyrian king, by continually sending him fresh presents." But *הסב* does not mean to alter, and *בבית ה' = בית ה'* would be an unmeaning addition in the wrong place, which would only obscure the sense. If the great alterations mentioned in v. 17 were made for the purpose of sending presents to the king of Assyria with or from the things that were removed, those described in v. 18 were certainly made from fear of the king; and, what appears most probable to me, not to remove the two splendid erections from the sight of the Assyrians, nor to preserve their being used in the event of an Assyrian occupation of Jerusalem, but in order that his relation to the great king of Assyria might not be disturbed by his appearing as a zealous worshipper of Jehovah. They were changes made from fear of man and servility, and were quite in keeping with the hypocritical, insincere, and ignoble character of Ahaz. The parallel passage in the Chronicles is 2 Chron. 28:22-25. "In the time of his distress," says the chronicler in his reflective and rhetorical style, "he sinned still more grievously against Jehovah: he, king Ahaz. He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, who had smitten him. For the gods of the kings of Aram, he said, helped them; I will sacrifice to them, that they may also help me. And they brought him and all Israel to ruin. And Ahaz collected together the vessels of the house of God, and cut them in pieces, and shut the doors of the house of Jehovah, and made himself altars in ever corner of Jerusalem. And in every town of

Judah he erected high places to burn incense to other gods, and stirred up the displeasure of Jehovah the God of his fathers." Thenius regards this passage as an exaggerated paraphrase of the parallel passage in the book of Kings, and as resting upon a false interpretation of the latter. But the chronicler does not affirm that Ahaz dedicated the new altar to the gods of Damascus, but rather that in the time of the Syro-Ephraimitish war he attempted to secure for himself the same success in war as the Syrians had obtained, by worshipping their gods. The words of Ahaz, which are reported by him, preclude any other interpretation. He there states—what by no means contradicts the book of Kings—that Ahaz laid violent hands upon the furniture of the temple. All the rest—namely, the allusion to his shutting the temple-gates, and erecting altars and high places on every hand—is a completion of the account in the book of Kings, the historical character of which it is impossible to dispute, if we bear in mind that the Syro-Ephraimitish war took place at the commencement of the reign of Ahaz, who was only sixteen years old at the time.

The author of the book of Kings closes the history of the reign of Ahaz with a reference to the annals of the kings of Judah, and with the remark that he was buried in the city of David (2 Kings 16:19, 20). The chronicler refers to the book of the kings of Judah and Israel, and observes that he was indeed buried in the city (LXX "in the city of David"), but not in the king's sepulchre (2 Chron. 28:26, 27). The source employed by the chronicler was his *midrash* of the entire history of the kings; from which he made extracts, with the intention of completing the text of our book of Kings, to which he appended his work. His style was formed after that of the annals, whilst that of the author of the book of Kings is formed after Deuteronomy. But from what source did the author of the book of Kings make his extracts? The section relating to Ahaz has some things quite peculiar to itself, as compared with the rest of the book, viz., a liking for obscure forms, such as *Eloth* (v. 6), *hakkomim* (v. 7), *Dummeseke* (v. 10), and

Aromim (v. 6); the name *Tiglath-peleser*; מכר instead of מיד, which is customary elsewhere; the rare and more colloquial term *jehudim* (Jews); the inaccurate construction את־המסגרות (v. 17); and the verb בִּקֵּר (to consider, v. 15), which does not occur anywhere else. These peculiarities may be satisfactorily explained on the assumption that the author employed the national annals; and that, as these annals had been gradually composed by the successive writings of many different persons, whilst there was an essential uniformity in the mode in which the history was written, there was also of necessity a great variety in the style of composition. But is the similarity between 2 Kings 16:5 and Isa. 7:1 reconcilable with this annalistic origin? The resemblance in question certainly cannot be explained, as *Thenius* supposes, from the fact that Isa. 7:1 was also taken from the national annals; but rather on the ground assigned by Caspari,—namely, that the author of the Chronicles had not only the national annals before him, but also the book of Isaiah's prophecies, to which he directs his readers' attention by commencing the history of the Syro-Ephraimitish war in the words of the portion relating to Ahaz. The design of the two allies, as we know from the further contents of Isa. 1, was nothing less than to get possession of Jerusalem, to overthrow the Davidic government there, and establish in its stead, in the person of a certain *ben-Tāb'ēl* ("son of Tabeal," Isa. 7:6), a newly created dynasty, that would be under subjection to themselves. The failure of this intention is the thought that is briefly indicated in 2 Kings 16:5 and Isa. 7:1.

III. Historical Account of Hezekiah, *more especially of the first six years of his reign*.—The account given of Hezekiah in the book of Kings is a far more meagre one than we should expect to find, when we have taken out the large section relating to the period of the Assyrian catastrophe (2 Kings 18:13–20:19), which is also found in the book of Isaiah, and which will come under review in the commentary on Isa. 36–39. All that is then left to the author of the

book of Kings is 2 Kings 18:1–12 and 20:20, 21; and in these two paragraphs, which enclose the section of Isaiah, there are only a few annalistic elements worked up in Deuteronomical style. Hezekiah began to reign in the third year of Hosea king of Israel. He was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and reigned twenty-nine years. He was a king after the model of David. He removed the high places, broke in pieces the statutes, cut down the Asheroth, and pounded the serpent, which had been preserved from the time of Moses, and had become an object of idolatrous worship. In his confidence in Jehovah he was unequalled by any of his followers or predecessors. The allusion here is to that faith of his, by which he broke away from the tyranny of Asshur, and also recovered his supremacy over the Philistines. We have no means of deciding in what years of Hezekiah's reign these two events—the revolt from Asshur, and the defeat of the Philistines—occurred. The author proceeds directly afterwards, with a studious repetition of what he has already stated in Isa. 17 in the history of Hosea's reign, to describe Shalmanassar's expedition against Israel in the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign (the seventh of Hosea's), and the fall of Samaria, which took place, after a siege of three years, in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign, and the ninth of Hosea's. But as Shalmanassar made no attack upon Judah at the time when he put an end to the kingdom of Israel, the revolt of Hezekiah cannot have taken place till afterwards. But with regard to the victory over the Philistines, there is nothing in the book of Kings to help us even to a negative conclusion. In Isa. 20:20, 21, the author brings his history rapidly to a close, and merely refers such as may desire to know more concerning Hezekiah, especially concerning his victories and aqueducts, to the annals of the kings of Judah.

The chronicler merely gives an extract from the section of Isaiah; but he is all the more elaborate in the rest. All that he relates in 2 Chron. 29:2–31 is a historical commentary upon the good testimony given to king Hezekiah in the book of Kings (2 Kings 18:3),

which the chronicler places at the head of his own text in Isa. 29:2. Even in the month Nisan of the first year of his reign, Hezekiah re-opened the gates of the temple, had it purified from the defilement consequent upon idolatry, and appointed a re-consecration of the purified temple, accompanied with sacrifice, music, and psalms (2 Chron. 29:3ff.). Hezekiah is introduced here (a fact of importance in relation to Isa. 38) as the restorer of "the song of the Lord" (*Shir Jehovah*), i.e., of liturgical singing. The Levitical and priestly music, as introduced and organized by David, Gad, and Nathan, was heard again, and Jehovah was praised once more in the words of David the king and Asaph the seer. The chronicler then relates in 2 Chron. 30 how Hezekiah appointed a solemn passover in the second month, to which even inhabitants of the northern kingdom, who might be still in the land, were formally and urgently invited. It was an after-passover, which was permitted by the law, as the priests had been busy with the purification of the temple in the first month, and therefore had been rendered unclean themselves; moreover, there would not have been sufficient time for summoning the people to Jerusalem. The northern tribes as a whole refused the invitation in the most scornful manner, but certain individuals accepted it with penitent hearts. It was a feast of joy, such as had not been known since the time of Solomon (this statement is not at variance with 2 Kings 23:22), affording, as it did, once more a representation and assurance of that national unity which had been rent in twain ever since the time of Rehoboam. Caspari has entered into a lengthened investigation as to the particular year of Hezekiah's reign in which this passover was held. He agrees with Keil, that it took place after the fall of Samaria and the deportation of the people by Shalmanassar; but he does not feel quite certain of his conclusion. The question itself, however, is one that ought not to be raised at all, if we think the chronicler a trustworthy authority. He places this passover most unquestionably in the second month of the first year of Hezekiah's reign; and there is

no difficulty occasioned by this, unless we regard what Tiglath-pileser had done to Israel as of less importance than it actually was. The population that was left behind was really nothing more than a remnant; and, moreover, the chronicler draws an evident contrast between tribes and individuals, so that he was conscious enough that there were still whole tribes of the northern kingdom who were settled in their own homes. He then states in 2 Chron. 31:1, that the inhabitants of the towns of Judah (whom he calls "all Israel," because a number of emigrant Israelites had settled there) went forth, under the influence of the enthusiasm consequent upon the passover they had celebrated, and broke in pieces the things used in idolatrous worship throughout both kingdoms; and in 2 Chron. 31:2ff., that Hezekiah restored the institutions of divine worship that had been discontinued, particularly those relating to the incomes of the priests and Levites. Everything else that he mentions in 2 Chron. 32:1–26, 31, belongs to a later period than the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign; and so far as it differs from the section in Isaiah, which is repeated in the book of Kings, it is a valuable supplement, more especially with reference to Isa. 22:8–11 (which relates to precautions taken in the prospect of the approaching Assyrian siege). But the account of Hezekiah's wealth in 2 Chron. 32:27–29 extends over the whole of his reign. The notice respecting the diversion of the upper Gihon (2 Chron. 32:30) reaches rather into the period of the return after the Assyrian catastrophe, than into the period before it; but nothing can be positively affirmed.

Having thus obtained the requisite acquaintance with the historical accounts which bear throughout upon the book of Isaiah, so far as it has for its starting-point and object the history of the prophet's own times, we will now turn to the book itself, for the purpose of acquiring such an insight into its general plan as is necessary to enable us to make a proper division of our own work of exposition.

ISAIAH	Page 17
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Arrangement of the Collection

We may safely enter upon our investigation with the preconceived opinion that the collection before us was edited by the prophet himself. For, with the exception of the book of Jonah, which belongs to the prophetic-historical writings rather than to the literature of prediction, or the prophetic writings in the ordinary acceptation of the term, all the canonical books of prophecy were written and arranged by the prophets whose names they bear. The most important to our purpose is the analogy of the larger books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. No one denies that Ezekiel prepared his work for publication exactly as it lies before us now; and Jeremiah informs us himself, that he collected and published his prophecies on two separate occasions. Both collections are arranged according to the two different points of view of the subject-matter and the order of time, which are interwoven the one with the other. And this is also the case with the collection of Isaiah's prophecies. As a whole, it is arranged chronologically. The dates given in Isa. 6:1; 7:1; 14:28; 20:1, are so many points in a progressive line. The three principal divisions also form a chronological series. For Isa. 1-6 set forth the ministry of Isaiah under Uzziah-Jotham; Isa. 7-39, his ministry under Ahaz and Hezekiah down to the fifteenth year of the reign of the latter; whilst Isa. 40-66, assuming their authenticity, were the latest productions of the deepest inner-life, and were committed directly to writing. In the central part, the Ahaz group (Isa. 7-12) also precedes the Hezekiah group (Isa. 13-39) chronologically. But the order of time is interrupted in several places by an arrangement of the subject-matter, which was of greater importance to the prophet. The address in Isa. 1 is not the oldest, but is placed at the head as an introduction to the whole. The consecration of the prophet (Isa. 6), which ought to stand at the beginning of the Uzziah-Jotham group, if it relates to his original consecration to his office, is placed at the end, where it looks both backwards and forwards, as a prophecy that was in course of fulfilment. The

Ahaz group, which follows next (Isa. 7-12), is complete in itself, and, as it were, from one casting. And in the Hezekiah group (Isa. 13-39) the chronological order is frequently interrupted again. The prophecies against the nations (Isa. 14:24-22:24), which belong to the Assyrian period, have a *massa* upon Babel, the city of the world's power, for their opening piece (Isa. 13-14:23); a *massa* upon Tyre, the city of the world's commerce, which was to be destroyed by the Chaldeans, for their *finale* (Isa. 23); and a shorter *massa* upon Babel, for a party-wall dividing the cycle into two halves (Isa. 21:1-10); and all the prophecies upon the nations run into a grand apocalyptic epilogue (Isa. 24-27), like rivers into a sea. The first part of the Hezekiah group, the contents of which are pre-eminently ethnic (Isa. 13-27), are interwoven with passages which may not have been composed till after the fifteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. The grand epilogue (Isa. 34-35), in which the second portion of the Hezekiah group dies away, is also another such passage. This second part is occupied chiefly with the fate of Judah, the judgment inflicted upon Judah by the imperial power of Assyria, and the deliverance which awaited it (Isa. 27-33). This prediction closes with a declaration, in Isa. 34-35, on the one hand, of the judgment of God upon the world of Israel's foes; and on the other hand, of the redemption of Israel itself. This passage, which was composed after the fifteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, is followed by the historical portions (Isa. 36-39), which enclose in a historical frame the predictions of Isaiah delivered when the Assyrian catastrophe was close at hand, and furnish us with the key to the interpretation not only of Isa. 7-35, but of Isa. 40-66 also.

Taking the book of Isaiah, therefore, as a whole, in the form in which it lies before us, it may be divided into two halves, viz., Isa. 1 to 39, and Isa. 40 to 66. The former consists of seven parts, the latter of three. The first half may be called the *Assyrian*, as the goal to which it points is the downfall of Asshur; the second the *Babylonian*, as its goal is the deliverance from Babel. The first half, however, is not purely

ISAIAH	Page 18
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Assyrian; but there are Babylonian pieces introduced among the Assyrian, and such others, as a rule, as break apocalyptically through the limited horizon of the latter. The following are the seven divisions in the first half. (1.) *Prophecies founded upon the growing obduracy of the great mass of the people* (Isa. 2–6). (2.) *The consolation of Immanuel under the Assyrian oppressions* (Isa. 7–12). These two form a syzygy, which concludes with a psalm of the redeemed (Isa. 12), the echo, in the last days, of the song at the Red Sea. The whole is divided by the consecration of the prophet (Isa. 6), which looks backwards and forwards with threatenings and promises. It is introduced by a summary prologue (Isa. 1), in which the prophet, standing midway between Moses and Jesus the Christ, commences in the style of the great Mosaic ode. (3.) *Predictions of the judgment and salvation of the heathen*, which belong, for the most part, to the time of the Assyrian judgment, though they are enclosed and divided by Babylonian portions. For, as we have already observed, an oracle concerning Babel, the city of the world-power, forms the introduction (Isa. 13–14:23); an oracle concerning Tyre, the city of the world's commerce, which was to receive its mortal wound from the Chaldeans, the conclusion (Isa. 23); and a second oracle on the desert by the sea, i.e., Babel, the centre (Isa. 21:1–10). (4.) To this so thoughtfully arranged collection of predictions concerning the nations outside the Israelitish pale, there is attached a grand apocalyptic *prophecy of the judgment of the world and the last things* (Isa. 24–27), which gives it a background that fades away into eternity, and forms with it a second syzygy. (5.) From these eschatological distances the prophet returns to the realities of the present and of the immediate future, and describes *the revolt from Asshur, and its consequences* (Isa. 28–33). The central point of this group is the prophecy of the precious corner-stone laid in Zion. (6.) This is also paired off by the prophet with a far-reaching eschatological prediction of *revenge and redemption* for the church (Isa. 34–35), in which we already hear, as in a prelude,

the keynote of Isa. 40–66. (7.) After these three syzygies we are carried back, in the first two historical accounts of Isa. 36–39, into the Assyrian times, whilst the other two show us in the distance the future entanglement with Babylon, which was commencing already. These four accounts are arranged without regard to the chronological order, so that one half looks backwards and the other forwards, and thus the two halves of the book are clasped together. The prophecy in Isa. 39:5–7 stands between these two halves like a sign-post, with the inscription “To Babylon” upon it. It is thither that the further course of Israel's history tends. There, from this time forward, is Isaiah buried in spirit with his people. And there, in Isa. 40–66, he proclaims to the Babylonian exiles their approaching deliverance. The trilogical arrangement of this book of consolation has been scarcely disputed by any one, since it was first pointed out by Rückert in his *Translation and Exposition of Hebrew Prophets* (1831). It is divided into three sections, each containing three times three addresses, with a kind of refrain at the close.

The Critical Questions

The collection of Isaiah's prophecies is thus a complete work, most carefully and skilfully arranged. It is thoroughly worthy of the prophet. Nevertheless, we should be unable to attribute it to him in its present form, (1) if it were impossible that Isa. 13–14:23; 21:1–10, 23, 24–27, 34, 35, could have been composed by Isaiah, and (2) if the historical accounts in Isa. 36–39, which are also to be found in 2 Kings 18:13–20:19, have been copied from the book of Kings, or even directly from the national annals. For if the prophecies in question be taken away, the beautiful whole unquestionably falls into a confused *quodlibet*, more especially the book against the nations; and if Isa. 36–39 were not written directly by Isaiah, the two halves of the collection would be left without a clasp to bind them together. It would be irregular to think of deciding the critical questions bearing upon this point now, instead of taking them up in connection with

ISAIAH	Page 19
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

our exegetical inquiries. At the same time, we will put the reader in possession at once of the more general points, which cause us to dissent from the conclusions of the modern critics, who regard the book of Isaiah as an anthology composed of the productions of different authors.

The critical treatment of Isaiah commenced as follows:—It began with the *second part*. Koppe first of all expressed some doubts as to the genuineness of Isa. 1. Doderlein then gave utterance to a decided suspicion as to the genuineness of the whole; and Justi, followed by Eichhorn, Paulus, and Bertholdt, raised this suspicion into firm assurance that the whole was spurious. The result thus obtained could not possibly continue without reaction upon the first part. Rosenmüller, who was always very dependent upon his predecessors, was the first to question whether the oracle against Babylon in Isa. 13–14:23 was really Isaiah’s, as the heading affirms; and to his great relief, Justi and Paulus undertook the defence of his position. Further progress was now made. With the first oracle against Babylon in Isa. 13–14:23, the second, in Isa. 21:1–10, was also condemned; and Rosenmüller was justly astonished when Gesenius dropped the former, but maintained that the arguments with regard to the latter were inconclusive. There still remained the oracle against Tyre in Isa. 23, which might either be left as Isaiah’s, or attributed to a younger unknown prophet, according to the assumption that it predicted the destruction of Tyre by Assyrians or by Chaldeans. Eichhorn, followed by Rosenmüller, decided that it was not genuine. But Gesenius understood by the destroyers the Assyrians; and as the prophecy consequently did not extend beyond Isaiah’s horizon, he defended its authenticity. Thus the Babylonian series was set aside, or at any rate pronounced thoroughly suspicious. But the keen eyes of the critics made still further discoveries. Eichhorn found a play upon words in the cycle of predictions in Isa. 24–27, which was unworthy of Isaiah. Gesenius detected an allegorical announcement of the fall of Babylon. Consequently they both

condemned these three chapters; and it had its effect, for Ewald transferred them to the time of Cambyses. Still shorter work was made with the cycle of predictions in Isa. 34–35, on account of its relation to the second part. Rosenmüller pronounced it, without reserve, “a song composed in the time of the Babylonian captivity, when it was approaching its termination.” This is the true account of the origin of the criticism upon Isaiah. It was in the swaddling-clothes of rationalism that it attained its maturity. Its first attempts were very juvenile. The names of its founders have been almost forgotten. It was Gesenius, Hitzig, and Ewald, who first raised it to the eminence of a science.

If we take our stand upon this eminence, we find that the book of Isaiah contains prophecies by Isaiah himself, and also prophecies by persons who were either directly or indirectly his disciples. The New Testament passages in which the second half of the book of Isaiah is cited as Isaiah’s, are no proof of the contrary, since Ps. 2, for example, which has no heading at all, is cited in Acts 4:25 as David’s, merely because it is contained in the Davidic Psalter, and no critic would ever feel that he was bound by that. But many objections present themselves to such a conclusion. In the first place, nothing of the kind can be pointed out in any of the other canonical books of prophecy, except indeed the book of Zechariah, in which Isa. 9–14 is said to stand in precisely the same position as Isa. 40–66, according to Hitzig, Ewald, and others; with this difference, however, that Isa. 40–66 is attributed to a later prophet than Isaiah, whereas Zech. 9–14 is attributed to one or two prophets before the time of Zechariah. But even De Wette, who maintained, in the first three editions of his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, that Zech. 9–14 was written before the captivity, altered his views in the fourth edition; and Köhler has lately confirmed the unity of the book of Zechariah after an unbiased investigation. It is Zechariah himself who prophesies of the last times in Zech. 9–14, in images drawn from the past, and possibly with the introduction of

ISAIAH	Page 20
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

earlier oracles. It remains, therefore, that not a single book of prophecy is open to any such doubts as to the unity of its authorship and Hitzig admits that even the book of Jeremiah, although interpolated, does not contain spurious sections. Nevertheless, it is quite possible that something extraordinary might have taken place in connection with the book of Isaiah. But there are grave objections even to such an assumption as this in the face of existing facts. For example, it would be a marvellous occurrence in the history of chances, for such a number of predictions of this particular kind to have been preserved,—all of them bearing so evidently the marks of Isaiah's style, that for two thousand years the have been confounded with his own prophecies. It would be equally marvellous that the historians should know nothing at all about the authors of these prophecies; and thirdly, it would be very strange that the names of these particular prophets should have shared the common fate of being forgotten, although they must all have lived nearer to the compiler's own times than the old model prophet, whose style they imitated. It is true that these difficulties are not conclusive proofs to the contrary; but, at any rate, they are so much to the credit of the traditional authorship of the prophecies attacked. On the other hand, the weight of this tradition is not properly appreciated by opponents. Wilful contempt of external testimony, and frivolity in the treatment of historical data, have been from the very first the fundamental evils apparent in the manner in which modern critics have handled the questions relating to Isaiah. These critics approach everything that is traditional with the presumption that it is false; and whoever would make a scientific impression upon them, must first of all declare right fearlessly his absolute superiority to the authority of tradition. Now tradition is certainly not infallible. No more are the internal grounds of the so-called higher criticism, especially in the questions relating to Isaiah. And in the case before us, the external testimony is greatly strengthened by the relation in which Zephaniah and Jeremiah, the

two most reproductive prophets, stand not only to Isa. 40–66, but also to the suspected sections of the first half. They had these prophecies in their possession, since they evidently copy them, and incorporate passages taken from them into their own prophecies; a fact which Caspari has most conclusively demonstrated, but which not one of the negative critics has ventured to look fairly in the face, or to set aside by counter-proofs of equal force. Moreover, although the suspected prophecies do indeed contain some things for which vouchers cannot be obtained from the rest of the book, yet the marks which are distinctly characteristic of Isaiah outweigh by far these peculiarities, which have been picked out with such care; and even in the prophecies referred to, it is Isaiah's spirit which animates the whole, Isaiah's heart which beats, and Isaiah's fiery tongue which speaks in both the substance and the form.

Again, the type of the suspected prophecies—which, if they are genuine, belong to the prophet's latest days—is not thoroughly opposed to the type of the rest; on the contrary, those prophecies which are acknowledged to be genuine, present many a point of contact with this; and even the transfigured form and richer eschatological contents of the disputed prophecies have their preludes there. There is nothing strange in this great variety of ideas and forms, especially in Isaiah, who is confessedly the most universal of all the prophets, even if we only look at those portions which are admitted to be genuine, and who varies his style in so masterly a way to suit the demands of his materials, his attitude, and his purpose. One might suppose that these three counter-proofs, which can be followed up even to the most minute details, would have some weight; but for Hitzig, Ewald, and many others, they have absolutely none. Why not? These critics think it impossible that the worldwide empire of Babel, and its subsequent transition to Medes and Persians, should have been foreseen by Isaiah in the time of Hezekiah. Hitzig affirms in the plainest terms, that the very same *caligo futuri* covered the eyes of the

ISAIAH	Page 21
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Old Testament prophets generally, as that to which the human race was condemned during the time that the oracle at Delphi was standing. Ewald speaks of the prophets in incomparably higher terms; but even to him the prophetic state was nothing more than a blazing up of the natural spark which lies slumbering in every man, more especially in Ewald himself. These two *coryphaei* of the modern critical school find themselves hemmed in between the two foregone conclusions, "There is no true prophecy," and "There is no true miracle." They call their criticism free; but when examined more closely, it is in a vice. In this vice it has two magical formularies, with which it fortifies itself against any impression from historical testimony. It either turns the prophecies into merely retrospective glances (*vaticinia post eventum*), as it does the account of miracles into *sagas* and myths; or it places the events predicted so close to the prophet's own time, that there was no need of inspiration, but only of combination, to make the foresight possible. This is all that it can do. Now we could do more than this. We could pronounce all the disputed prophecies the production of other authors than Isaiah, without coming into contact with any dogmatical assumptions: we could even boast, as in the critical analysis of the historical books, of the extent to which the history of literature was enriched through this analysis of the book of Isaiah. And if we seem to despise these riches, we simply yield to the irresistible force of external and internal evidence. This applies even to Isa. 36–39. For whilst it is true that the text of the book of Kings is the better of the two, yet, as we shall be able to prove, the true relation is this, that the author of the book of Kings did not obtain the parallel section (2 Kings 18:13–20:19) from any other source than the book of Isaiah. We have similar evidence in 2 Kings 24:18ff. and 25, as compared with Jer. 52, that the text of a passage may sometimes be preserved in greater purity in a secondary work than in the original work from which it was taken. It was Isaiah's prophetic-historical pen which committed to writing the accounts in Isa. 36–39. The prophet not only wrote a special

history of Uzziah, according to 2 Chron. 26:22, but he also incorporated historical notices of Isaiah in his "vision" (2 Chron. 32:32). We reserve the fuller demonstration of all this. For whilst, on the one hand, we consider ourselves warranted in rejecting those tendencies of modern criticism, to which naturalistic views of the world have dictated at the very outset full-blown negative results, and we do so on the ground of supernatural facts of personal experience; on the other hand, we are very far from wishing to dispute the well-founded rights of criticism as such.

For centuries, yea, for thousands of years, no objection was raised as to the Davidic origin of a psalm headed "a psalm of David," to say nothing of a prophecy of Isaiah; and therefore no such objection was refuted. Apart from the whims of a few individuals, which left no traces behind them, it was universally assumed by both Jewish and Christian writers down to the last century, that all the canonical books of the Old Testament had the Holy Ghost as their one *auctor primarius*, and for their immediate authors the men by whose names they are called. But when the church in the time of the Reformation began to test and sift what had been handed down; when the rapid progress that was made in classical and oriental philology compelled the students of the Scriptures to make larger if not higher demands upon themselves; when their studies were directed to the linguistic, historical, archaeological, aesthetic—in short, the human—side of the Scriptures, and the attempt was made to comprehend the several aspects presented by sacred literature in their progressive development and relation to one another,—Christian science put forth many branches that had never been anticipated till then; and biblical criticism sprang up, which from that time forward has been not only an inalienable, but a welcome and even necessary, member in the theological science of the church. That school of criticism, indeed, which will not rest till all miracles and prophecies, which cannot be set aside exegetically, have been eliminated critically, must be regarded by

ISAIAH	Page 22
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

the church as self-condemned; but the labour of a spiritual criticism, and one truly free in spirit, will not only be tolerated, because “the spiritual man discerneth all things” (1 Cor. 2:15), but will be even fostered, and not looked upon as suspicious, although its results should seem objectionable to minds that are weakly strung, and stand in a false and fettered attitude in relation to the Scriptures. For it will be no more offended that the word of God should appear in the form of a servant, than that Christ Himself should do so; and, moreover, criticism not only brings any blemishes in the Scriptures to the light, but affords an ever-deepening insight into its hidden glory. It makes the sacred writings, as they lie before us, live again; it takes us into its very laboratory; and without it we cannot possibly obtain a knowledge of the historical production of the biblical books.

Exposition in Its Existing State

It was at the time of the Reformation also that historico-grammatical exposition first originated with a distinct consciousness of the task that it had to perform. It was then that the first attempt was made, under the influence of the revival of classical studies, and with the help of a knowledge of the language obtained from Jewish teachers, to find out the one true meaning of the Scriptures, and an end was put to the tedious jugglery of *multiplex Scripturae sensus*. But very little was accomplished in the time of the Reformation for the prophecies of Isaiah.

Calvin’s *Commentarii* answer the expectations with which we take them up; but Luther’s *Scholia* are nothing but college notes, of the most meagre description. The productions of Grotius, which are generally valuable, are insignificant in Isaiah, and, indeed, throughout the prophets. He mixes up things sacred and profane, and, because unable to follow prophecy in its flight, cuts off its wings. Aug. Varenus of Rostock wrote the most learned commentary of all those composed by writers of the orthodox Lutheran school, and one that even now is not to be despised; but though learned, it is too great a medley, and written

without discipline of mind. Campegius Vitringa (†1722) threw all the labours of his predecessors into the shade, and none even of his successors approach him in spirit, keenness, and scholarship. His *Commentary on Isaiah* is still incomparably the greatest of all the exegetical works upon the Old Testament. The weakest thing in the Commentary is the allegorical exposition, which is appended to the grammatical and historical one. In this the temperate pupil of the Cocceian school is dependent upon what was then the prevalent style of the commentary in Holland, where there was an utter absence of all appreciation of the “complex-apotelesmatical” character of prophecy, whilst the most minute allusions were traced in the prophets to events connected with the history of both the world and the church. The shady sides of the Commentary are generally the first to present themselves to the reader’s eye; but the longer he continues to use it, the more highly does he learn to value it. There is deep research everywhere, but nowhere a luxuriance of dry and dead scholarship. The author’s heart is in his work. He sometimes halts in his toilsome path of inquiry, and gives vent to loud, rapturous exclamations. But the rapture is very different from that of the Lord Bishop Robert Lowth, who never gets below the surface, who alters the Masoretic text at his pleasure, and goes no further than an aesthetic admiration of the form.

The modern age of exegesis commenced with that destructive theology of the latter half of the eighteenth century, which pulled down without being able to build. But even this demolition was not without good result. The negative of anything divine and eternal in the Scriptures secured a fuller recognition of its human and temporal side, bringing out the charms of its poetry, and, what was of still greater importance, the concrete reality of its history. Rosenmüller’s *Scholia* are a careful, lucid, and elegant compilation, founded for the most part upon Vitringa, and praiseworthy not only for the judicious character of the selection made, but also for the true earnestness which is

ISAIAH	Page 23
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

displayed, and the entire absence of all frivolity. The decidedly rationalistic Commentary of Gesenius is more independent in its verbal exegesis; displays great care in its historical expositions; and is peculiarly distinguished for its pleasing and transparent style, for the survey which it gives of the whole of the literature bearing upon Isaiah, and the thoroughness with which the author avails himself of all the new sources of grammatical and historical knowledge that have been opened since the days of Vitranga. Hitzig's Commentary is his best work in our opinion, excelling as it does in exactness and in the sharpness and originality of its grammatical criticisms, as well as in delicate tact in the discovery of the train of thought and in thoroughness and precision in the exposition of well-pondered results; but it is also disfigured by rash pseudo-critical caprice, and by a studiously profane spirit, utterly unaffected by the spirit of prophecy. Hendewerk's Commentary is often very weak in philological and historical exposition. The style of description is broad, but the eye of the disciple of Herbart is too dim to distinguish Israelitish prophecy from heathen poetry, and the politics of Isaiah from those of Demosthenes. Nevertheless, we cannot fail to observe the thoughtful diligence displayed, and the anxious desire to point out the germs of eternal truths, although the author is fettered even in this by his philosophical standpoint. Ewald's natural penetration is universally recognised, as well as the noble enthusiasm with which he dives into the contents of the prophetic books, in which he finds an eternal presence. His earnest endeavours to obtain deep views are to a certain extent rewarded. But there is something irritating in the self-sufficiency with which he ignores nearly all his predecessors, the dictatorial assumption of his criticism, his false and often nebulous pathos, and his unqualified identification of his own opinions with truth itself. He is a perfect master in the characteristics of the prophets, but his translations of them are stiff, and hardly to any one's taste. Umbreit's *Practical Commentary on*

Isaiah is a useful and stimulating production, exhibiting a deep aesthetic and religious sensibility to the glory of the prophetic word, which manifests itself in lofty poetic language, heaping image upon image, and, as it were, never coming down from the cothrunus. Knobel's prose is the very opposite extreme. The precision and thoroughness of this scholar, the third edition of whose *Commentary on Isaiah* was one of his last works (he died, 25th May 1863), deserve the most grateful acknowledgment, whether from a philological or an archaeological point of view; but his peculiar triviality, which amounts almost to an affectation, seems to shut his eyes to the deeper meaning of the work, whilst his excessive tendency to "historize" (*historisiren*, i.e., to give a purely historical interpretation to everything) makes him blind even to the poetry of the form. Drechsler's Commentary was a great advance in the exposition of Isaiah. He was only able to carry it out himself as far as Isa. 27; but it was completed by Delitzsch and H. A. Hahn of Greifswald († 1st Dec. 1861), with the use of Drechsler's notes, though they contained very little that was of any service in relation to Isa. 40–66. This was, comparatively speaking, the best commentary upon Isaiah that had appeared since the time of Vitranga, more especially the portion on Isa. 13–27. Its peculiar excellency is not to be found in the exposition of single sentences, which is unsatisfactory, on account of the comminuting, glossatorial style of its exegesis, and, although diligent and thorough enough, is unequal and by no means productive, more especially from a grammatical point of view; but in the spiritual and spirited grasp of the whole, the deep insight which it exhibits into the character and ideas of the prophet and of prophecy, its vigorous penetration into the very heart of the plan and substance of the whole book. In the meantime (1850), there had appeared the Commentary written by the catholic Professor Peter Schegg, which follows the Vulgate, although with as little slavishness as possible, and contains many good points, especially the remarks relating to the history of translation. At the same time

there also appeared the Commentary of Ernst Meier, the Tübingen orientalist, which did not get beyond the first half. If ever any one was specially called to throw fresh light upon the book of Isaiah, it was C. P. Caspari of Christiania; but all that has yet appeared of his Norwegian Commentary only reaches to the end of Isa. 5. Its further progress has been hindered partly by the exhaustive thoroughness at which he aimed, and the almost infinite labour which it involved, and partly by the fact that the Grundtvig controversy involved him in the necessity of pursuing the most extensive studies in ecclesiastical history. In the meantime, he has so far expanded his treatise *om Serapherne* (on the Seraphim), that it may be regarded as a commentary on Isa. 6; and rich materials for the prophetic sayings which follow may be found in his contributions to the introduction to the book of Isaiah, and to the history of Isaiah's own times, which appeared as a second volume of our biblico-theological and apologetico-critical *Studien* (1858), his *Programme* on the Syro-Ephraimitish war (1849), and his comprehensive and by no means obsolete article, entitled, "Jeremiah a witness to the genuineness of Isa. 34, and therefore also to that of Isa. 40–66, 13–14:23, and 21:1–10," which appeared in the *Zeitschrift für d. ges. luth. Theologie u. Kirche* (1843), together with an excursus on the relation of Zephaniah to the disputed prophecies of Isaiah.

We shall reserve those works which treat more particularly of the second part of the book of Isaiah for our special introduction to that part. But there are two other distinguished commentaries that we must mention here, both of them by Jewish scholars: viz., that of the M. L. Malbim (Krotoshin 1849), which is chiefly occupied with the precise ideas conveyed by synonymous words and groups of words; and that of S. D. Luzzatto of Padua,—a stimulating work, entitled *Profeta Isaia volgarizzato e commentato ad uso degli Israeliti*, which aims throughout at independence, but of which only five parts have yet appeared.

Exposition

In passing to our exposition of the book, the first thing which strikes us is its traditional title—*Yeshaiiah* (Isaiah). In the book itself, and throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, the prophet is called *Yeshayahu*; and the shorter form is found in the latest books as the name of other persons. It was a common thing in the very earliest times for the shorter forms of such names to be used interchangeably with the longer; but in later times the shorter was the only form employed, and for this reason it was the one adopted in the traditional title. The name is a compound one, and signifies "Jehovah's salvation." The prophet was conscious that it was not merely by accident that he bore this name; for יִשָּׁע (he shall save) and יְשׁוּעָה (salvation) are among his favourite words. It may be said, in fact, that he lived and moved altogether in the coming salvation, which was to proceed from Jehovah, and would be realized hereafter, when Jehovah should come at last to His people as He had never come before. This salvation was the goal of the sacred history (*Heilsgeschichte*, literally, history of salvation); and *Jehovah* was the peculiar name of God in relation to that history. It denotes "the existing one," not however "the always existing," i.e., eternal, as Bunsen and the Jewish translators render it, but "existing evermore," i.e., filling all history, and displaying His glory therein in grace and truth. The ultimate goal of this historical process, in which God was ever ruling as the absolutely free One, according to His own self-assertion in Ex. 3:14, was true and essential *salvation*, proceeding outwards from Israel, and eventually embracing all mankind. In the name of the prophet the tetragrammaton יהוה is contracted into יהו (יה) by the dropping of the second ה. We may easily see from this contraction that the name of God was pronounced with an *a* sound, so that it was either called *Yahveh*, or rather *Yahaveh*, or else *Yahvāh*, or rather *Yahavāh*. According to Theodoret, it was pronounced Ἰαβε (Yahaveh) by the Samaritans; and it is written in the same

way in the list of the names of the Deity given in Epiphanius. That the *ah* sound was also a customary pronunciation, may not only be gathered from such names as Jimnah, Jimrah, Jishvah, Jishpah (compare Jithlah, the name of a place), but is also expressly attested by the ancient variations, *Jao, Jeuo, Jo* (Jer. 23:6, LXX), on the one hand, and on the other hand by the mode of spelling adopted by Origen (*Jaoia*) and Theodoret (*Aia*, not only in *quaest. in Ex.* § 15, but also in *Fab. haeret. v. 4*: “*Aia* signifies the existing one; it was pronounced thus by Hebrews, but the Samaritans call it Jabai, overlooking the force of the word”). The dull-sounding long *a* could be expressed by *omega* quite as well as by *alpha*. Isidor follows these and similar testimonies, and says (*Orig. vii. 7*), “The tetragrammaton consisted of *ia* written twice (*ia, ia*), and with this reduplication it constituted the unutterable and glorious name of God.” The Arabic form adopted by the Samaritans leaves it uncertain whether it is to be pronounced *Yahve* or *Yahva*. They wrote to Job Ludolf (in the *Epistola Samaritana Sichemitarum tertia*, published by Bruns, 1781), in opposition to the statement of Theodoret, that they pronounced the last syllable with *damma*; that is to say, they pronounced the name *Yahavoh* (*Yahvoh*), which was the form in which it was written in the last century by Velthusen, and also by Muffi in his *Disegno di lezioni e di ricerche sulla lingua Ebraica* (Pavia, 1792). The pronunciation *Jehovah* (*Yehovah*) arose out of a combination of the *keri* and the *chethib*, and has only become current since the time of the Reformation. Genebrard denounces it in his *Commentary upon the Psalms* with the utmost vehemence, in opposition to Beza, as an intolerable innovation. “Ungodly violators of what is most ancient,” he says, “profaning and transforming the unutterable name of God, would read *Jova* or *Jehova*,—a new, barbarous, fictitious, and irreligious word, that savours strongly of the Jove of the heathen.” Nevertheless his *Jehova* (*Jova*) forced its way into general adoption, and we shall therefore retain it, notwithstanding the fact that the *o* sound is decidedly wrong. To return, then: the

prophet’s name signifies “Jehovah’s salvation.” In the Septuagint it is always written Ἰσαΐας, with a strong aspirate; in the Vulgate it is written *Isaias*, and sometimes *Esaias*.

In turning from the outward to the inward title, which is contained in the book itself, there are two things to be observed at the outset: (1.) The division of the verses indicated by *soph pasuk* is an arrangement for which the way was prepared as early as the time of the Talmud, and which was firmly established in the Masoretic schools; and consequently it reaches as far back as the extreme limits of the middle ages—differing in this respect from the division of verses in the New Testament. The arrangement of the chapters, however, with the indications of the separate sections of the prophetic collection, is of no worth to us, simply because it is not older than the thirteenth century. According to some authorities, it originated with Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury (†1227); whilst others attribute it to Cardinal Hugo of St. Caro (†1262). It is only since the fifteenth century that it has been actually adopted in the text. (2.) The small ring or star at the commencement points to the footnote, which affirms that Isa. 1:1–28 (where we find the same sign again) was the *haphtarah*, or concluding *pericope*, taken from the prophets, which was read on the same Sabbath as the *parashah* from the Pentateuch, in Deut. 1:1ff. It was, as we shall afterwards see, a very thoughtful principle of selection which led to the combination of precisely these two lessons.

Isaiah 1

Isaiah 1:1. *Title of the collection*, as given in v. 1: “*Seeing of Jeshu’-yahu, son of Amoz, which he saw over Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziyahu, Jotham, Ahaz, and Yehizkiyahu, the kings of Judah.*” Isaiah is called the “*son of Amoz.*” There is no force in the old Jewish doctrine (*b. Megilla 15a*), which was known to the fathers, that whenever the name of a prophet’s father is given, it is a proof that the father was also a prophet. And we are just as

incredulous about another old tradition, to the effect that Amoz was the brother of Amaziah, the father and predecessor of Uzziah (*b. Sota 10b*). There is some significance in this tradition, however, even if it is not true. There is something royal in the nature and bearing of Isaiah throughout. He speaks to kings as if he himself were a king. He confronts with majesty the magnates of the nation and of the imperial power. In his peculiar style, he occupies the same place among the prophets as Solomon among the kings. Under all circumstances, and in whatever state of mind, he is completely master of his materials—simple, yet majestic in his style—elevated, yet without affectation—and beautiful, though unadorned. But this regal character had its roots somewhere else than in the blood. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that Isaiah was a native of Jerusalem; for notwithstanding his manifold prophetic missions, we never find him outside Jerusalem. There he lived with his wife and children, and, as we may infer from Isa. 22:1, and the mode of his intercourse with king Hezekiah, down in the lower city. And there he laboured under the four kings named in v. 1, viz., Uzziah (who reigned 52 years, 811–759), Jotham (16 years, 759–743), Ahaz (16 years, 743–728), and Hezekiah (29 years, 728–699). The four kings are enumerated without a *Vav cop.*; there is the same *asyndeton enumerativum* as in the titles to the books of Hosea and Micah. Hezekiah is there called *Yehizkiyah*, the form being almost the same as ours, with the simple elision of the concluding sound. The chronicler evidently preferred the fullest form, at the commencement as well as the termination. Roorda imagines that the chronicler derived this ill-shaped form from the three titles, were it a copyist's error for יהוֹזָקִיָּהּ or יהוֹזָקִיָּה; but the estimable grammarian has overlooked the fact that the same form is found in Jer. 15:4 and 2 Kings 20:10, where no such error of the pen can have occurred. Moreover, it is not an ill-shaped form, if, instead of deriving it from the *piel*, as Roorda does, we derive it from the *kal* of the verb “strong is Jehovah,” an imperfect noun with a connecting *i*, which is frequently met

with in proper names from verbal roots, such as *Jesimiël* from *sim*, 1 Chron. 4:36: vid., Olshausen, § 277, p. 621). Under these four kings Isaiah laboured, or, as it is expressed in v. 1, saw the sight which is committed to writing in the book before us.

Of all the many Hebrew synonyms for seeing, הִרְאָה (cf., *cernere*, κρίνειν, and the Sanscrit and Persian *kar*, which is founded upon the radical notion of cutting and separating) is the standing general expression used to denote prophetic perception, whether the form in which the divine revelation was made to the prophet was in vision or by word. In either case he *saw* it, because he distinguished this divine revelation from his own conceptions and thoughts by means of that inner sense, which is designated by the name of the noblest of all the five external senses. From this verb *chazah* there came both the abstract *chazon*, seeing, and the more concrete *chizzayon*, a sight (*visum*), which is a stronger form of *chizyon* (from *chazi* = *chazah*). The noun *chazon* is indeed used to denote a particular sight (comp. Isa. 29:7 with Job 20:8; 33:15), inasmuch as it consists in seeing (*visio*); but here in the title of the book of Isaiah the abstract meaning passes over into the collective idea of the sight or vision in all its extent, i.e., the sum and substance of all that was seen. It is a great mistake, therefore, for any one to argue from the use of the word *chazon* (vision), that v. 1a was originally nothing more than the heading to the first prophecy, and that it was only by the addition of v. 1b that it received the stamp of a general title to the whole book. There is no force in the argument. Moreover, the chronicler knew the book of Isaiah by this title (2 Chron. 32:32); and the titles of other books of prophecy, such as Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah, are very similar. A more plausible argument in favour of the twofold origin of v. 1 has been lately repeated by Schegg and Meier, namely, that whilst “*Judah and Jerusalem*” are appropriate enough as defining the object of the first prophecy, the range is too limited to apply to all the prophecies that follow; since their

ISAIAH	Page 27
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

object is not merely Judah, including Jerusalem, but they are also directed against foreign nations, and at Isa. 7 the king of Israel, including Samaria, also comes within the horizon of the prophet's vision. And in the title to the book of Micah, both kingdoms are distinctly named. But it was necessary there, inasmuch as Micah commences at once with the approaching overthrow of Samaria. Here the designation is a central one. Even, according to the well-known maxims *a potiori*, and *a proximo, fit denominatio*, it would not be unsuitable; but Judah and Jerusalem are really and essentially the sole object of the prophet's vision. For within the largest circle of the imperial powers there lies the smaller one of the neighbouring nations; and in this again, the still more limited one of all Israel, including Samaria; and within this the still smaller one of the kingdom of Judah. And all these circles together form the circumference of Jerusalem, since the entire history of the world, so far as its inmost pragmatism and its ultimate goal were concerned, was the history of the church of God, which had for its peculiar site the city of the temple of Jehovah, and of the kingdom of promise. The expression "*concerning Judah and Jerusalem*" is therefore perfectly applicable to the whole book, in which all that the prophet sees is seen from Judah-Jerusalem as a centre, and seen for the sake and in the interests of both. The title in v. 1 may pass without hesitation as the heading written by the prophet's own hand. This is admitted not only by Caspari (*Micah*, pp. 90–93), but also by Hitzig and Knobel. But if v. 1 contains the title to the whole book, where is the heading to the first prophecy? Are we to take אִשְׂרָאֵל as a nominative instead of an accusative (*qui* instead of *quam*, sc. *visionem*), as Luzzatto does? This is a very easy way of escaping from the difficulty, and stamping v. 1 as the heading to the first prophetic words in Isa. 1; but it is unnatural, as חֲזוֹן אִשְׂרָאֵל חֲזוֹן, according to Ges. (§ 138, note 1), is the customary form in Hebrew of connecting the verb with its own substantive. The real answer is simple enough. The first

prophetic address is left intentionally without a heading, just because it is the prologue to all the rest; and the second prophetic address has a heading in Isa. 2:1, although it really does not need one, for the purpose of bringing out more sharply the true character of the first as the prologue to the whole.

FIRST HALF OF THE COLLECTION

CH. 1–39

PART I

PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE ONWARD COURSE OF THE GREAT MASS OF THE PEOPLE TOWARDS HARDENING OF HEART (CH. 1–6)

Opening Address Concerning the Ways of Jehovah with His Ungrateful and Rebellious Nation—Ch. 1:2ff.

Isaiah 1:2ff. The difficult question as to the historical and chronological standpoint of this overture to all the following addresses, can only be brought fully out when the exposition is concluded. But there is one thing which we may learn even from a cursory inspection: namely, that the prophet was standing at the eventful boundary line between two distinct halves in the history of Israel. The people had not been brought to reflection and repentance either by the riches of the divine goodness, which they had enjoyed in the time of Uzziah-Jotham, the copy of the times of David and Solomon, or by the chastisements of divine wrath, by which wound after wound was inflicted. The divine methods of education were exhausted, and all that now remained for Jehovah to do was to let the nation in its existing state be dissolved in fire, and to create a new one from the remnant of gold that stood the fiery test. At this time, so pregnant with storms, the prophets were more active than at any other period. Amos appeared about the tenth year of Uzziah's reign, the twenty-fifth of Jeroboam II; Micah prophesied

from the time of Jotham till the fall of Samaria, in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign; but most prominent of all was Isaiah, the prophet *par excellence*, standing as he did midway between Moses and Christ.

In the consciousness of his exalted position in relation to the history of salvation, he commences his opening address in Deuteronomic style. Modern critics are of opinion, indeed, that Deuteronomy was not composed till the time of Josiah, or at any rate not earlier than Manasseh; and even Kahnis adduces this as a firmly established fact (see his *Dogmatik*, i. 277). But if this be the case, how comes it to pass, not only that Micah (Mic. 6:8) points back to a saying in Deut. 10:12, but that all the post-Mosaic prophecy, even the very earliest of all, is tinged with a Deuteronomic colouring. This surely confirms the self-attestation of the authorship of Moses, which is declared most distinctly in Isa. 31:9.

Deuteronomy was most peculiarly Moses' own law-book—his last will, as it were: it was also the oldest national book of Israel, and therefore the basis of all intercourse between the prophets and the nation. There is one portion of this peculiarly Mosaic *thorah*, however, which stands not only in a more truly primary relation to the prophecy of succeeding ages than any of the rest, but in a normative relation also. We refer to Moses' dying song, which has recently been expounded by Volck and Camphausen, and is called *shirath haazinu* (song of "Give ear"), from the opening words in Isa. 32. This song is a compendious outline or draft, and also the common key to all prophecy, and bears the same fundamental relation to it as the Decalogue to all other laws, and the Lord's Prayer to all other prayers. The lawgiver summed up the whole of the prophetic contents of his last words (Isa. 27–28, 29–30), and threw them into the form of a song, that they might be perpetuated in the memories and mouths of the people. This song sets before the nation its entire history to the end of time. That history divides itself into four great periods: the creation and rise of Israel; the ingratitude and apostasy of Israel; the consequent surrender of

Israel to the power of the heathen; and finally, the restoration of Israel, sifted, but not destroyed, and the unanimity of all nations in the praise of Jehovah, who reveals Himself both in judgment and in mercy. This fourfold character is not only verified in every part of the history of Israel, but is also the seal of that history as a whole, even to its remotest end in New Testament times. In every age, therefore, this song has presented to Israel a mirror of its existing condition and future fate. And it was the task of the prophets to hold up this mirror to the people of their own times. This is what Isaiah does. He begins his prophetic address in the same form in which Moses begins his song. The opening words of Moses are: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth" (Deut. 32:1). In what sense he invoked the heaven and the earth, he tells us himself in Deut. 31:28, 29. He foresaw in spirit the future apostasy of Israel, and called heaven and earth, which would outlive his earthly life, that was now drawing to a close, as witnesses of what he had to say to his people, with such a prospect before them. Isaiah commences in the same way (Isa. 1:2a), simply transposing the two parallel verbs "hear" and "give ear:" "*Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for Jehovah speaketh!*" The reason for the appeal is couched in very general terms: they were to hear, because Jehovah was speaking. What Jehovah said coincided essentially with the words of Jehovah, which are introduced in Deut. 32:20 with the expression "And He said." What it was stated there that Jehovah would one day have to say in His wrath, He now said through the prophet, whose existing *present* corresponded to the coming *future* of the Mosaic ode. The time had now arrived for heaven and earth, which are always existing, and always the same, and which had accompanied Israel's history thus far in all places and at all times, to fulfil their duty as witnesses, according to the word of the lawgiver. And this was just the special, true, and ultimate sense in which they were called upon by the prophet, as they had previously been by Moses, to "hear." They had been present, and

had taken part, when Jehovah gave the *thorah* to His people: the heavens, according to Deut. 4:36, as the place from which the voice of God came forth; and the earth, as the scene of His great fire. They were solemnly invoked when Jehovah gave His people the choice between blessing and cursing, life and death (Deut. 30:19; 4:26).

And so now they are called upon to hear and join in bearing witness to all that Jehovah, their Creator, and the God of Israel, had to say, and the complaints that He had to make: "*I have brought up children, and raised them high, and they have fallen away from me*" (v. 2*b*). Israel is referred to; but Israel is not specially named. On the contrary, the historical facts are generalized almost into a parable, in order that the appalling condition of things which is crying to heaven may be made all the more apparent. Israel was Jehovah's son (Ex. 4:22, 23). All the members of the nation were His children (Deut. 14:1; 32:20). Jehovah was Israel's father, by whom it had been begotten (Deut. 32:6, 18). The existence of Israel as a nation was secured indeed, like that of all other nations, by natural reproduction, and not by spiritual regeneration. But the primary ground of Israel's origin was the supernatural and mighty word of promise given to Abraham, in Gen. 17:15, 16; and it was by a series of manifestations of miraculous power and displays of divine grace, that the development of Israel, which dated from that starting-point, was brought up to the position it had reached at the time of the exodus from Egypt. It was in this sense that Israel had been begotten by Jehovah. And this relation between Jehovah and Israel, as His children, had now, at the time when Jehovah was speaking through the mouth of Isaiah, a long and gracious past behind it, viz., the period of Israel's childhood in Egypt; the period of its youth in the desert; and a period of growing manhood from Joshua to Samuel: so that Jehovah could say, "I have brought up children, and raised them high." The *piel* (*giddel*) used here signifies "to make great;" and when applied to children, as it is here and in other passages, such as 2 Kings 10:6, it means to bring up, to make great, so far as

natural growth is concerned. The *pilel* (*romem*), which corresponds to the *piel* in the so-called *verbis cavis*, and which is also used in Isa. 23:4 and Ezek. 31:4 as the parallel to *giddel*, signifies to lift up, and is used in a "dignified (dignitative) sense," with reference to the position of eminence, to which, step by step, a wise and loving father advances a child. The two verses depict the state of Israel in the times of David and Solomon, as one of mature manhood and proud exaltation, which had to a certain extent returned under Uzziah and Jotham. But how base had been the return which it had made for all that it had received from God: "*And they have fallen away from me.*" We should have expected an adversative particle here; but instead of that, we have merely a *Vav cop.*, which is used energetically, as in Isa. 6:7 (cf., Hos. 7:13). Two things which ought never to be coupled—Israel's filial relation to Jehovah, and Israel's base rebellion against Jehovah—had been realized in their most contradictory forms. The radical meaning of the verb is to break away, or break loose; and the object against which the act is directed is construed with *Beth*. The idea is that of dissolving connection with a person with violence and self-will; here it relates to that inward severance from God, and renunciation of Him, which preceded all outward acts of sin, and which not only had idolatry for its full and outward manifestation, but was truly idolatry in all its forms. From the time that Solomon gave himself up to the worship of idols, at the close of his reign, down to the days of Isaiah, idolatry had never entirely or permanently ceased to exist, even in public. In two different reformations the attempt had been made to suppress it, viz., in the one commenced by Asa and concluded by Jehoshaphat; and in the one carried out by Joash, during the lifetime of the high priest Jehoiada, his tutor and deliverer. But the first was not successful in suppressing it altogether; and what Joash removed, returned with double abominations as soon as Jehoiada was dead. Consequently the words, "They have rebelled against me," which sum up all the ingratitude of Israel in one word, and trace it to

its root, apply to the whole history of Israel, from its culminating point under David and Solomon, down to the prophet's own time.

Isaiah 1:3. Jehovah then complains that the rebellion with which His children have rewarded Him is not only inhuman, but even worse than that of the brutes: *"An ox knoweth its owner, and an ass its master's crib: Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."* An ox has a certain knowledge of its buyer and owner, to whom it willingly submits; and an ass has at least a knowledge of the crib of its master (the noun for "master" is in the plural: this is not to be understood in a numerical, but in an amplifying sense, "the authority over it," as in Ex. 21:29: vid., Ges. § 108, 2, *b*, and Dietrich's *Heb. Gram.* p. 45), i.e., it knows that it is its master who fills its crib or manger with fodder (*evus*, the crib, from *avas*, to feed, is radically associated with *φάτνη*, vulgar *πάθνη*, Dor. and Lac. *πάτνη*, and is applied in the Talmud to the large common porringer used by labourers). Israel had no such knowledge, neither instinctive and direct, nor acquired by reflection (*hithbonan*, the reflective conjugation, with a pausal change of the *ē* into a long *a*, according to Ges. § 54, note). The expressions "doth not know" and "doth not consider" must not be taken here in an objectless sense,—as, for example, in Isa. 56:10 and Ps. 82:5, —viz. as signifying they were destitute of all knowledge and reflection; but the object is to be supplied from what goes before: they knew not, and did not consider what answered in their case to the owner and to the crib which the master fills,"—namely, that they were the children and possession of Jehovah, and that their existence and prosperity were dependent upon the grace of Jehovah alone. The parallel, with its striking contrasts, is self-drawn, like that in Jer. 8:7, where animals are referred to again, and is clearly indicated in the words "Israel" and "my people." Those who were so far surpassed in knowledge and perception even by animals, and so thoroughly put to shame by them, were not merely a nation, like any other nation on the earth, but were "Israel," descendants of Jacob, the

wrestler with God, who wrestled down the wrath of God, and wrestled out a blessing for himself and his descendants; and "my people," the nation which Jehovah had chosen out of all other nations to be the nation of His possession, and His own peculiar government. This nation, bearing as it did the God-given title of a hero of faith and prayer, this favourite nation of Jehovah, had let itself down far below the level of the brutes. This is the complaint which the exalted speaker pours out in vv. 2 and 3 before heaven and earth. The words of God, together with the introduction, consist of two tetrastichs, the measure and rhythm of which are determined by the meaning of the words and the emotion of the speaker. There is nothing strained in it at all. Prophecy lives and moves amidst the thoughts of God, which prevail above the evil reality: and for that very reason, as a reflection of the glory of God, which is the ideal of beauty (Ps. 50:1), it is through and through poetical. That of Isaiah is especially so. There was no art of oratory practised in Israel, which Isaiah did not master, and which did not serve as the vehicle of the word of God, after it had taken shape in the prophet's mind.

With v. 4 there commences a totally different rhythm. The words of Jehovah are ended. The piercing lamentation of the deeply grieved Father is also the severest accusation. The cause of God, however, is to the prophet the cause of a friend, who feels an injury done to his friend quite as much as if it were done to himself (Isa. 5:1). The lamentation of God, therefore, is changed now into violent scolding and threatening on the part of the prophet; and in accordance with the deep wrathful pain with which he is moved, his words pour out with violent rapidity, like flash after flash, in climactic clauses having no outward connection, and each consisting of only two or three words.

Isaiah 1:4. *"Woe upon the sinful nation, the guilt-laden people, the miscreant race, the children acting corruptly! They have forsaken Jehovah, blasphemed Israel's Holy One, turned away backwards."* The distinction sometimes drawn between *hoi* (with *He*) and *oi* (with

Aleph)—as equivalent to oh! and woe!—cannot be sustained. *Hoi* is an exclamation of pain, with certain doubtful exceptions; and in the case before us it is not so much a denunciation of woe (*vae genti*, as the Vulgate renders it), as a lamentation (*vae gentem*) filled with wrath. The epithets which follow point indirectly to that which Israel ought to have been, according to the choice and determination of God, and plainly declare what it had become through its own choice and ungodly self-determination. (1.) According to the choice and determination of God, Israel was to be a holy nation (*goi kadosh*, Ex. 19:6); but it was a sinful nation—*gens peccatrix*, as it is correctly rendered by the Vulgate. אֲחִי is not a participle here, but rather a participial adjective in the sense of what was habitual. It is the singular in common use for the plural אֲחִי, sinners, the singular of which was not used. Holy and Sinful are glaring contrasts: for *kadosh*, so far as its radical notion is concerned (assuming, that is to say, that this is to be found in *kad* and not in *dosh*: see *Psalter*, i. 588, 9), signifies that which is separated from what is common, unclean, or sinful, and raised above it. The alliteration in *hoi goi* implies that the nation, as sinful, was a nation of woe. (2.) In the *thorah* Israel was called not only “a holy nation,” but also “the people of Jehovah” (Num. 17:6, Eng. ver. 16:41), the people chosen and blessed of Jehovah; but now it had become “a people heavy with iniquity.” Instead of the most natural expression, a people bearing heavy sins; the sin, or iniquity, i.e., the weight carried, is attributed to the people themselves upon whom the weight rested, according to the common figurative idea, that whoever carries a heavy burden is so much heavier himself (cf., *gravis oneribus*, Cicero). עָוֹן (sin regarded as crookedness and perversity, whereas אֲחִי suggests the idea of going astray and missing the way) is the word commonly used wherever the writer intends to describe sin in the mass (e.g., Isa. 33:24; Gen. 15:16; 19:15), including the guilt occasioned by it. The people of Jehovah had grown into a people heavily laden

with guilt. So crushed, so altered into the very opposite, had Israel’s true nature become. It is with deliberate intention that we have rendered גּוֹי a nation (*Nation*), and עַם a people (*Volk*): for, according to Malbim’s correct definition of the distinction between the two, the former is used to denote the mass, as linked together by common descent, language, and country; the latter the people as bound together by unity of government (see, for example, Ps. 105:13). Consequently we always read of the people of the Lord, not the nation of the Lord; and there are only two instances in which *goi* is attached to a suffix relating to the ruler, and then it relates to Jehovah alone (Zeph. 2:9; Ps. 106:5).

(3.) Israel bore elsewhere the honourable title of the seed of the patriarch (Isa. 41:8; 45:19; cf., Gen. 21:12); but in reality it was a seed of evil-doers (miscreants). This does not mean that it was descended from evil-doers; but the genitive is used in the sense of a direct apposition to *zera* (seed), as in Isa. 65:23 (cf., Isa. 61:9; 6:13, and Ges. § 116, 5), and the meaning is a seed which consists of evil-doers, and therefore is apparently descended from evil-doers instead of from patriarchs. This last thought is not implied in the genitive, but in the idea of “seed;” which is always a compact unit, having one origin, and bearing the character of its origin in itself. The rendering brood of evil-doers, however it may accord with the sense, would be inaccurate; for “seed of evil-doers” is just the same as “house of evil-doers” in Isa. 31:2. The singular of the noun מִרְעִים is מִרְעֵי, with the usual sharpening in the case of gutturals in the verbs עִרַע מִרְעֵי with *patach*, מִרְעֵי with *kametz* in pause (Isa. 9:16, which see),—a noun derived from the *hiphil* participle. (4.) Those who were of Israel were “children of Jehovah” through the act of God (Deut. 14:1); but in their own acts they were “children acting destructively (*bânim mashchithim*), so that what the *thorah* feared and predicted had now occurred (Deut. 4:16, 25; 31:29). In all these passages we find the *hiphil*, and in the parallel passage of the great song (Deut. 32:5) the *piel*—both of them

conjugations which contain within themselves the object of the action indicated (Ges. § 53, 2): to do what is destructive, i.e., so to act as to become destructive to one's self and to others. It is evident from v. 2*b*, that the term children is to be understood as indicating their relation to Jehovah (cf., Isa. 30:1, 9). The four interjectional clauses are followed by three declaratory clauses, which describe Israel's apostasy as total in every respect, and complete the mournful seven. There was apostasy in heart: "They have forsaken Jehovah." There was apostasy in words: "They blaspheme the Holy One of Israel." The verb literally means to sting, then to mock or treat scornfully; the use of it to denote blasphemy is antiquated Mosaic (Deut. 31:20; Num. 14:11, 23; 16:30). It is with intention that God is designated here as "the Holy One of Israel,"—a name which constitutes the keynote of all Isaiah's prophecy (see at Isa. 6:3). It was sin to mock at anything holy; it was a double sin to mock at God, the Holy One; but it was a threefold sin for Israel to mock at God the Holy One, who had set Himself to be the sanctifier of Israel, and required that as He was Israel's sanctification, He should also be sanctified by Israel according to His holiness (Lev. 19:2, etc.). And lastly, there was also apostasy in action: "they have turned away backwards;" or, as the Vulgate renders it, *abalienati sunt*. נָזוּר is the reflective of זָוַר, related to נָזַר and סָוַר, for which it is the word commonly used in the Targum. The *niphal*, which is only met with here, indicates the deliberate character of their estrangement from God; and the expression is rendered still more emphatic by the introduction of the word "backwards" (*achor*, which is used emphatically in the place of מֵאַחֲרָיו). In all their actions they ought to have followed Jehovah; but they had turned their backs upon Him, and taken the way selected by themselves.

Isaiah 1:5. In this verse a disputed question arises as to the words עַל-מָה (מָה, the shorter, sharper form of מָה, which is common even before non-gutturals, Ges. § 32, 1): viz., whether

they mean "wherefore," as the LXX, Targums, Vulgate, and most of the early versions render them, or "upon what," i.e., upon which part of the body, as others, including Schröring, suppose. Luzzatto maintains that the latter rendering is spiritless, more especially because there is nothing in the fact that a limb has been struck already to prevent its being struck again; but such objections as these can only arise in connection with a purely literal interpretation of the passage. If we adopted this rendering, the real meaning would be, that there was no judgment whatever that had not already fallen upon Israel on account of its apostasy, so that it was not far from utter destruction. We agree, however, with Caspari in deciding in favour of the meaning "to what" (to what end). For in all the other passage in which the expression occurs (fourteen times in all), it is used in this sense, and once even with the verb *hiccâh*, to smite (Num. 22:32), whilst it is only in v. 6 that the idea of the people as one body is introduced; whereas the question "upon what" would require that the reader or hearer should presuppose it here. But in adopting the rendering "whereto," or to what end, we do not understand it, as Malbim does, in the sense of *cui bono*, with the underlying thought, "It would be ineffectual, as all the previous smiting has proved;" for this thought never comes out in a direct expression, as we should expect, but rather—according to the analogy of the questions with *lamah* in Ezek. 18:31, Jer. 44:7—in the sense of *qua de causa*, with the underlying thought, "There would be only an infatuated pleasure in your own destruction."

Isaiah 1:5a. V. 5*a* we therefore render thus: "Why would ye be perpetually smitten, multiplying rebellion?" עוֹד (with *tiphchah*, a stronger disjunctive than *tebir*) belongs to תִּבְּרִי; see the same form of accentuation in Ezek. 19:9. They are not two distinct interrogative clauses ("why would ye be smitten afresh? why do ye add revolt?"—(Luzzatto), but the second clause is subordinate to the first (without there being any necessity to supply *chi*, "because," as Gesenius supposes), an adverbial minor clause

defining the main clause more precisely; at all events this is the logical connection, as in Isa. 5:11 (cf., Ps. 62:4, “delighting in lies,” and Ps. 4:3, “loving vanity”): LXX “adding iniquity.” *Sârâh* (rebellion) is a deviation from truth and rectitude; and here, as in many other instances, it denotes apostasy from Jehovah, who is the absolutely Good, and absolute goodness. There is a still further dispute whether the next words should be rendered “every head” and “every heart,” or “the whole head” and “the whole heart.” In prose the latter would be impossible, as the two nouns are written without the article; but in the poetic style of the prophets the article may be omitted after *col*, when used in the sense of “the whole” (e.g., Isa. 9:12: with *whole* mouth, i.e., with full mouth). Nevertheless *col*, without the article following, never signifies “the whole” when it occurs several times in succession, as in Isa. 15:2 and Ezek. 7:17, 18. We must therefore render v. 5b, “Every head is diseased, and every heart is sick.” The *Lamed* in *locholi* indicates the state into which a thing has come: every head in a state of disease (Ewald, § 217, *d. locholi* without the article, as in 2 Chron. 21:18). The prophet asks his fellow-countrymen why they are so foolish as to heap apostasy upon apostasy, and so continue to call down the judgments of God, which have already fallen upon them blow after blow. Has it reached such a height with them, that among all the many heads and hearts there is not one head which is not in a diseased state, not one heart which is not thoroughly ill? (*davvai* an emphatic form of *daveh*). Head and heart are mentioned as the noblest parts of the outer and inner man. Outwardly and inwardly every individual in the nation had already been smitten by the wrath of God, so that they had had enough, and might have been brought to reflection.

Isaiah 1:6. This description of the total misery of every individual in the nation is followed by a representation of the whole nation as one miserably diseased body. V. 6. “From the some of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it: cuts, and stripes, and festering wounds; they have not been pressed out, nor

bound up, nor has there been any soothing with oil.” The body of the nation, to which the expression “in it” applies (i.e., the nation as a whole), was covered with wounds of different kinds; and no means whatever had been applied to heal these many, various wounds, which lay all together, close to one another, and one upon the other, covering the whole body. Cuts (from פצע to cut) are wounds that have cut into the flesh—sword-cuts, for example. These need binding up, in order that the gaping wound may close again. Stripes (*chabburâh*, from *châbar*, to stripe), swollen stripes, or weals, as if from a cut with a whip, or a blow with a fist: these require softening with oil, that the coagulated blood of swelling may disperse. Festering wounds, *maccâh teriyâh*, from *târâh*, to be fresh (a different word from the talmudic word *t’re*, *Chullin* 45b, to thrust violently, so as to shake): these need pressing, for the purpose of cleansing them, so as to facilitate their healing. Thus the three predicates manifest an approximation to a *chiasm* (the crossing of the members); but this retrospective relation is not thoroughly carried out. The predicates are written in the plural, on account of the collective subject. The clause וְלֹא רִבְּכָהּ בְּשֶׁמֶן, which refers to חבורה (stripes), so far as the sense is concerned (olive-oil, like all *oleosa*, being a dispersing medium), is to be taken as neuter, since this is the only way of explaining the change in the number: “And no softening has been effected with oil.” *Zoru* we might suppose to be a *pual*, especially on account of the other *puals* near: it is not so, however, for the simple reason that, according to the accentuation (viz., with two *pashtahs*, the first of which gives the tone, as in *tohu*, Gen. 1:2, so that it must be pronounced *zóru*), it has the tone upon the penultimate, for which it would be impossible to discover any reason, if it were derived from *zârâh*. For the assumption that the tone is drawn back to prepare the way for the strong tone of the next verb (*chubbâshu*) is arbitrary, as the influence of the pause, though it sometimes reaches the last word but one, never extends to the last but two. Moreover,

according to the usage of speech, *zorâh* signifies to be dispersed, not to be pressed out; whereas *zur* and *zârar* are commonly used in the sense of pressing together and squeezing out. Consequently *zoru* is either the *kal* of an intransitive *zor* in the middle voice (like *boshu*), or, what is more probable—as *zoru*, the middle voice in Ps. 58:4, has a different meaning (*abalienati sunt*: cf., v. 4)—the *kal* of *zârar* (= Arab. *constringere*), which is here conjugated as an intransitive (cf., Job 24:24, *rommu*, and Gen. 49:23, where *robbru* is used in an active sense). The surgical treatment so needed by the nation was a figurative representation of the pastoral addresses of the prophets, which had been delivered indeed, but, inasmuch as their salutary effects were dependent upon the penitential sorrow of the people, might as well have never been delivered at all. The people had despised the merciful, compassionate kindness of their God. They had no liking for the radical cure which the prophets had offered to effect. All the more pitiable, therefore, was the condition of the body, which was sick within, and diseased from head to foot. The prophet is speaking here of the existing state of things. He affirms that it is all over with the nation; and this is the ground and object of his reproachful lamentations. Consequently, when he passes in the next verse from figurative language to literal, we may presume that he is still speaking of his own times. It is Isaiah's custom to act in this manner as his own expositor (compare v. 22 with v. 23). The body thus inwardly and outwardly diseased, was, strictly speaking, the people and the land in their fearful condition at that time.

Isaiah 1:7. This is described more particularly in v. 7, which commences with the most general view, and returns to it again at the close. V. 7. "*Your land ... a desert; your cities ... burned with fire; your field ... foreigners consuming it before your eyes, and a desert like overthrowing by strangers.*" Caspari has pointed out, in his *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah* (p. 204), how nearly every word corresponds to the curses threatened in Lev. 26 and Deut. 28 (29); Mic. 6:13–16 and Jer. 5:15ff. stand in the very same

relation to these sections of the Pentateuch. From the time of Isaiah downwards, the state of Israel was a perfect realization of the curses of the law. The prophet intentionally employs the words of the law to describe his own times; he designates the enemy, who devastated the land, reduced its towers to ashes, and took possession of its crops, by the simple term *zarim*, foreigners or barbarians (a word which would have the very same meaning if it were really the reduplication of the Aramaean *bar*; compare the Syriac *barôye*, a foreigner), without mentioning their particular nationality. He abstracts himself from the definite historical present, in order that he may point out all the more emphatically how thoroughly it bears the character of the fore-ordained curse. The most emphatic indication of this was to be found in the fact, which the clause at the close of v. 7 palindromically affirms, that a desolation had been brought about "like the overthrow of foreigners." The repetition of a catchword like *zarim* (foreigners) at the close of the verse in this emphatic manner, is a figure of speech, called *epanaphora*, peculiar to the two halves of our collection. The question arises, however, whether *zarim* is to be regarded as the genitive of the subject, as Caspari, Knobel, and others suppose, "such an overthrow as is commonly produced by barbarians" (cf., 2 Sam. 10:3, where the verb occurs), or as the genitive of the object, "such an overthrow as comes upon barbarians." As *mahpechâh* (overthrow) is used in other places in which it occurs to denote the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, etc., according to the primary passage, Deut. 29:22, and Isaiah had evidently also this catastrophe in his mind, as v. 8 clearly shows; we decide in favour of the conclusion that *zârim* is the genitive of the object (cf., Amos 4:11). The force of the comparison is also more obvious, if we understand the words in this sense. The desolation which had fallen upon the land of the people of God resembled that thorough desolation (*subversio*) with which God visited the nations outside the covenant, who, like the people of the Pentapolis, were swept from off the earth without leaving a trace behind. But

although there was similarity, there was not sameness, as vv. 8, 9 distinctly affirm. Jerusalem itself was still preserved; but in how pitiable a condition! There can be no doubt that *bath-Zion* (“daughter of Zion,” Eng. ver.) in v. 8 signifies Jerusalem. The genitive in this case is a genitive of apposition: “daughter Zion,” not “daughter of Zion” (cf., Isa. 37:22: see Ges. § 116, 5). Zion itself is represented as a daughter, i.e., as a woman. The expression applied primarily to the *community* dwelling around the fortress of Zion, to which the individual inhabitants stood in the same relation as children to a mother, inasmuch as the community sees its members for the time being come into existence and grow: they are born within her, and, as it were, born and brought up by her. It was then applied secondarily to the *city itself*, with or without the inhabitants (cf., Jer. 46:19; 48:18; Zech. 2:11). In this instance the latter are included, as v. 9 clearly shows. This is precisely the point in the first two comparisons.

Isaiah 1:8a. “*And the daughter of Zion remains lie a hut in a vineyard; like a hammock in a cucumber field.*” The vineyard and cucumber field (*mikshah*, from *kisshu*, a cucumber, *cucumis*, not a gourd, *cucurbita*; at least not the true round gourd, whose Hebrew name, *dalaath*, does not occur in the Old Testament) are pictured by the prophet in their condition before the harvest (not after, as the Targums render it), when it is necessary that they should be watched. The point of comparison therefore is, that in the vineyard and cucumber field not a human being is to be seen in any direction; and there is nothing but the cottage and the night barrack or hammock (cf., Job 27:18) to show that there are any human beings there at all. So did Jerusalem stand in the midst of desolation, reaching far and wide,—a sign, however, that the land was not entirely depopulated. But what is the meaning of the third point of comparison? Hitzig renders it, “like a watch-tower;” Knobel, “like a guard-city.” But the noun neither means a tower nor a castle (although the latter would be quite possible, according to the primary meaning, *cingere*); and *nezurâh* does not mean “watch” or “guard.” On the other

hand, the comparison indicated (like, or as) does not suit what would seem the most natural rendering, viz., “like a guarded city,” i.e., a city shielded from danger. Moreover, it is inadmissible to take the first two *Caphs* in the sense of *sicut* (as) and the third in the sense of *sic* (so); since, although this correlative is common in clauses indicating identity, it is not so in sentences which institute a simple comparison. We therefore adopt the rendering, v. 8b, “*As a besieged city,*” deriving *nezurâh* not from *zur*, niphâl *nâzor* (never used), as Luzzatto does, but from *nâzar*, which signifies to observe with keen eye, either with a good intention, or, as in Job 7:20, for a hostile purpose. It may therefore be employed, like the synonyms in 2 Sam. 11:16 and Jer. 5:6, to denote the reconnoitring of a city. Jerusalem was not actually blockaded at the time when the prophet uttered his predictions; but it was like a blockaded city. In the case of such a city there is a desolate space, completely cleared of human beings, left between it and the blockading army, in the centre of which the city itself stands solitary and still, shut up to itself. The citizens do not venture out; the enemy does not come within the circle that immediately surrounds the city, for fear of the shots of the citizens; and everything within this circle is destroyed, either by the citizens themselves, to prevent the enemy from finding anything useful, or else by the enemy, who cut down the trees. Thus, with all the joy that might be felt at the preservation of Jerusalem, it presented but a gloomy appearance. It was, as it were, in a state of siege. A proof that this is the way in which the passage is to be explained, may be found in Jer. 4:16, 17, where the actual storming of Jerusalem is foretold, and the enemy is called *nozerim*, probably with reference to the simile before us.

Isaiah 1:9. For the present, however, Jerusalem was saved from this extremity.—V. 9. The omnipotence of God had mercifully preserved it: “*Unless Jehovah of hosts had left us a little of what had escaped, we had become like Sodom, we were like Gomorrah.*” *Sarid* (which is rendered inaccurately *σπέρμα* in the Sept.; cf.,

Rom. 9:29) was used, even in the early Mosaic usage of the language, to signify that which escaped the general destruction (Deut. 2:34, etc.); and כְּמִצְרַיִם (which might very well be connected with the verbs which follow: “we were very nearly within a little like Sodom,” etc.) is to be taken in connection with *sarid*, as the pausal form clearly shows: “a remnant which was but a mere trifle” (on this use of the word, see Isa. 16:14; 2 Chron. 12:7; Prov. 10:20; Ps. 105:12). *Jehovah Zebaoth* stands first, for the sake of emphasis. It would have been all over with Israel long ago, if it had not been for the compassion of God (vid., Hos. 11:8). And because it was the omnipotence of God, which set the will of His compassion in motion, He is called *Jehovah Zebaoth*, Jehovah (the God) of the heavenly hosts,—an expression in which *Zebaoth* is a dependent genitive, and not, as Luzzatto supposes, an independent name of God as the Absolute, embracing within itself all the powers of nature. The prophet says “us” and “we.” He himself was an inhabitant of Jerusalem; and even if he had not been so, he was nevertheless an Israelite. He therefore associates himself with his people, like Jeremiah in Lam. 3:22. He had had to experience the anger of God along with the rest; and so, on the other hand, he also celebrates the mighty compassion of God, which he had experienced in common with them. But for this compassion, the people of God would have become like Sodom, from which only four human beings escaped: it would have resembled Gomorrah, which was absolutely annihilated. (On the preterites in the protasis and apodosis, see Ges. § 126, 5.)

Isaiah 1:10, 11. The prophet’s address has here reached a resting-place. The fact that it is divided at this point into two separate sections, is indicated in the text by the space left between vv. 9 and 10. This mode of marking larger or smaller sections, either by leaving spaces or by breaking off the line, is older than the vowel points and accents, and rests upon a tradition of the highest antiquity (Hupfeld, *Gram.* p. 86ff.). The space is called *pizka*; the section indicated

by such a space, a closed *parashah* (*sethumah*); and the section indicated by breaking off the line, an open *parashah* (*pethuchah*). The prophet stops as soon as he has affirmed, that nothing but the mercy of God has warded off from Israel the utter destruction which it so well deserved. He catches in spirit the remonstrances of his hearers. They would probably declare that the accusations which the prophet had brought against them were utterly groundless, and appeal to their scrupulous observance of the law of God. In reply to this self-vindication which he reads in the hearts of the accused, the prophet launches forth the accusations of God. In vv. 10, 11, he commences thus: “*Hear the word of Jehovah, ye Sodom judges; give ear to the law of our God, O Gomorrah nation! What is the multitude of your slain-offerings to me? saith Jehovah. I am satiated with whole offerings of rams, and the fat of stalled calves; and blood of bullocks and sheep and he-goats I do not like.*” The second start in the prophet’s address commences, like the first, with “hear” and “give ear.” The summons to hear is addressed in this instances (as in the case of Isaiah’s contemporary Micah, Mic. 3) to the *kezinim* (from *kâzâh*, *decidere*, from which comes the Arabic *el-Kadi*, the judge, with the substantive termination *in*: see *Jeshurun*, p. 212 ss.), i.e., to the men of decisive authority, the rulers in the broadest sense, and to the people subject to them. It was through the mercy of God that Jerusalem was in existence still, for Jerusalem was “spiritually Sodom,” as the Revelation (Rev. 11:8) distinctly affirms of Jerusalem, with evident allusion to this passage of Isaiah. Pride, lust of the flesh, and unmerciful conduct, were the leading sins of Sodom, according to Ezek. 16:49; and of these, the rulers of Jerusalem, and the crowd that was subject to them and worthy of them, were equally guilty now. But they fancied that they could not possibly stand in such evil repute with God, inasmuch as they rendered outward satisfaction to the law. The prophet therefore called upon them to hear the law of the God of Israel, which he would announce to them: for the prophet was the appointed interpreter of

the law, and prophecy the spirit of the law, and the prophetic institution the constant living presence of the true essence of the law bearing its own witness in Israel. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Jehovah." The prophet intentionally uses the word יֵאָמֵר, not אָמַר: this was the incessant appeal of God in relation to the spiritless, formal worship offered by the hypocritical, ceremonial righteousness of Israel (the future denoting continuous actions, which is ever at the same time both present and future). The multitude of *zebâchim*, i.e., animal sacrifices, had no worth at all to Him. As the whole worship is summed up here in one single act, *zebâchim* appears to denote the *shelamim*, peace-offerings (or better still, communion offerings), with which a meal was associated, after the style of a sacrificial festival, and Jehovah gave the worshipper a share in the sacrifice offered. It is better, however, to take *zebâchim* as the general name for all the bleeding sacrifices, which are then subdivided into *'oloth* and *cheleb*, as consisting partly of whole offerings, or offerings the whole of which was placed upon the altar, though in separate pieces, and entirely consumed, and partly of those sacrifices in which only the fat was consumed upon the altar, namely the sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, and pre-eminently the *shelâmim* offerings. Of the sacrificial animals mentioned, the bullocks (*pârim*) and fed beasts (*meri'im*, fattened calves) are species of oxen (*bakar*); and the lambs (*cebâshim*) and he-goats (*atturim*, young he-goats, as distinguished from *se'ir*, the old long-haired he-goat, the animal used as a sin-offering), together with the ram (*ayil*, the customary whole offering of the high priest, of the tribe prince, and of the nation generally on all the high feast days), were species of the flock. The blood of these sacrificial animals—such, for example, as the young oxen, sheep, and he-goats—was thrown all round the altar in the case of the whole offering, the peace-offering, and the trespass-offering; in that of the sin-offering it was smeared upon the horns of the altar, poured out at the foot of the altar, and in

some instances sprinkled upon the walls of the altar, or against the vessels of the inner sanctuary. Of such offerings as these Jehovah was weary, and He wanted no more (the two perfects denote that which long has been and still is: Ges. § 126, 3); in fact, He never had desired anything of the kind.

Isaiah 1:12. Jeremiah says this with regard to the sacrifices (Jer. 7:22); Isaiah also applies it to visits to the temple: V. 12. "When ye come to appear before my face, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" לְרֵאוֹת is a contracted infinitive *niphal* for לְהֵרָאוֹת (compare the *hiphil* forms contracted in the same manner in Isa. 3:8; 23:11). This is the standing expression for the appearance of all male Israelites in the temple at the three high festivals, as prescribed by the law, and then for visits to the temple generally (cf., Ps. 42:3; 84:8). "My face" (*panai*): according to Ewald, § 279, c, this is used with the passive to designate the subject ("to be seen by the face of God"); but why not rather take it as an adverbial accusative, "in the face of," or "in front of," as it is used interchangeably with the prepositions לְ, אֶת, and אֵל? It is possible that לְרֵאוֹת is pointed as it is here, and in Ex. 34:24 and in Deut. 31:11, instead of לְרֵאוֹת, —like יֵרָאוּ for יִרָאוּ, in Ex. 23:15; 34:20, —for the purpose of avoiding an expression which might be so easily misunderstood as denoting a sight of God with the bodily eye. But the *niphal* is firmly established in Ex. 23:17; 34:23, and 1 Sam. 1:22; and in the Mishnah and Talmud the terms רָאָה and רָאִינוּ are applied without hesitation to appearance before God at the principal feasts. They visited the temple diligently enough indeed, but who had required *this* at their hand, i.e., required them to do this? Jehovah certainly had not. "To tread my courts" is in apposition to *this*, which it more clearly defines. Jehovah did not want them to appear before His face, i.e., He did not wish for this spiritless and undevotional tramping thither, this mere *opus operatum*, which might as well have been omitted, since it only wore out the floor.

Isaiah 1:13a. Because they had not performed what Jehovah commanded as He commanded it, He expressly forbids them to continue it.

“Continue not to bring lying meat-offering; abomination incense is it to me.” *Minchah* (the meat-offering) was the vegetable offering, as distinguished from *zebach*, the animal sacrifice. It is called a “lying meat-offering,” as being a hypocritical dead work, behind which there was none of the feeling which it appeared to express. In the second clause the Sept., Vulg., Gesenius, and others adopt the rendering “incense—an abomination is it to me,” *ketoreth* being taken as the name of the daily burning of incense upon the golden altar in the holy place (Ex. 30:8). But neither in Ps. 141:2, where prayer is offered by one who is not a priest, nor in the passage before us, where the reference is not to the priesthood, but to the people and to their deeds, is this continual incense to be thought of. Moreover, it is much more natural to regard the word *ketoreth* not as a bold absolute case, but, according to the conjunctive *darga* with which it is marked, as constructive rather; and this is perfectly allowable. The meat-offering is called “incense” (*ketoreth*) with reference to the so-called *azcarah*, i.e., that portion which the priest burned upon the altar, to bring the grateful offerer into remembrance before God (called “burning the memorial,” *hiktir azcârâh*, in Lev. 2:2). As a general rule, this was accompanied with incense (Isa. 66:3), the whole of which was placed upon the altar, and not merely a small portion of it. The meat-offering, with its sweet-smelling savour, was merely the form, which served as an outward expression of the thanksgiving for God’s blessing, or the longing for His blessing, which really ascended in prayer. But in their case the form had no such meaning. It was nothing but the form, with which they thought they had satisfied God; and therefore it was an abomination to Him.

Isaiah 1:13b. God was just as little pleased with their punctilious observance of the feasts: *“New-moon and Sabbath, calling of festal meetings ... I cannot bear ungodliness and a festal crowd.”* The first objective notions, which

are logically governed by “I cannot bear”

(לֹא-אֹכֵל: literally, a future *hophal*—I am unable, incapable, viz., to bear, which may be supplied, according to Ps. 101:5, Jer. 44:22, Prov. 30:21), become *absolute cases* here, on account of another grammatical object presenting itself in the last two nouns: “ungodliness and a festal crowd.” As for new-moon and Sabbath (the latter always signifies the weekly Sabbath when construed with *chodesh*),—and, in fact, the calling of meetings of the whole congregation on the weekly Sabbath and high festivals, which was a simple duty according to Lev. 23, —Jehovah could not endure festivals associated with wickedness. עֲצָרָה (from עָצַר, to press, or crowd thickly together) is synonymous with אֲקָרָה, so far as its immediate signification is concerned, as Jer. 9:1 clearly shows, just as πανήγυρις is synonymous with ἐκκλησία. נֶפֶשׁ (from נָפַח, to breathe) is moral worthlessness, regarded as an utter absence of all that has true essence and worth in the sight of God. The prophet intentionally joins these two nouns together. A densely crowded festal meeting, combined with inward emptiness and barrenness on the part of those who were assembled together, was a contradiction which God could not endure.

Isaiah 1:14. He gives a still stronger expression to His repugnance: *“Your new-moons and your festive seasons my soul hateth; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.”* As the soul (*nephesh*) of a man, regarded as the band which unites together bodily and spiritual life, though it is not the actual principle of self-consciousness, is yet the place in which he draws, as it were, the circle of self-consciousness, so as to comprehend the whole essence of His being in the single thought of “I;” so, according to a description taken from godlike man, the “soul” (*nephesh*) of God, as the expression “my soul” indicates, is the centre of His being, regarded as encircled and pervaded (personated) by self-consciousness; and therefore, whatever the soul of God hates (vid., Jer. 15:1) or loves (Isa. 42:1), is hated or loved

in the inmost depths and to the utmost bounds of His being (*Psychol.* p. 218). Thus He hated each and all of the festivals that were kept in Jerusalem, whether the beginnings of the month, or the high feast-days (*moadim*, in which, according to Lev. 23, the Sabbath was also included) observed in the course of the month. For a long time past they had become a burden and annoyance to Him: His long-suffering was weary of such worship. "To bear" (אָשַׁן, in Isaiah, even in Isa. 18:3, for אָשַׁן or אָשַׁן, and here for אָשַׁן: Ewald, § 285, c) has for its object the seasons of worship already mentioned.

Isaiah 1:15. Their self-righteousness, so far as it rested upon sacrifices and festal observances, was now put to shame, and the last inward bulwark of the sham holy nation was destroyed: "And if ye stretch out your hands, I hide my eyes from you; if ye make ever so much praying, I do not hear: your hands are full of blood." Their praying was also an abomination to God. Prayer is something common to man: it is the interpreter of religious feeling, which intervenes and mediates between God and man; it is the true spiritual sacrifice. The law contains no command to pray, and, with the exception of Deut. 26, no form of prayer. Praying is so natural to man as man, that there was no necessity for any precept to enforce this, the fundamental expression of the true relation to God. The prophet therefore comes to prayer last of all, so as to trace back their sham-holiness, which was corrupt even to this the last foundation, to its real nothingness. "Spread out," *parash*, or *pi. pērēsh*, to stretch out; used with *cappaim* to denote swimming in Isa. 25:11. It is written here before a strong suffix, as in many other passages, e.g., Isa. 52:12, with the inflection *i* instead of *e*. This was the gesture of a man in prayer, who spread out his hands, and when spread out, stretched them towards heaven, or to the most holy place in the temple, and indeed (as if with the feeling of emptiness and need, and with a desire to receive divine gifts) held up the hollow or palm of his hand (*cappaim*: cf., *tendere palmas*, e.g., Virg. *Aen.* xii.

196, *tenditque ad sidera palmas*). However much they might stand or lie before Him in the attitude of prayer, Jehovah hid His eyes, i.e., His omniscience knew nothing of it; and even though they might pray loud and long (*gam chi, etiamsi*: compare the simple *chi*, Jer. 14:12), He was, as it were, deaf to it all. We should expect *chi* here to introduce the explanation; but the more excited the speaker, the shorter and more unconnected his words. The plural *damim* always denotes human blood as the result of some unnatural act, and then the bloody deed and the bloodguiltiness itself. The plural number neither refers to the quantity nor to the separate drops, but is the plural of production, which Dietrich has so elaborately discussed in his *Abhandlung*, p. 40. The terrible *damim* stands very emphatically before the governing verb, pointing to many murderous acts that had been committed, and deeds of violence akin to murder. Not, indeed, that we are to understand the words as meaning that there was really blood upon their hands when they stretched them out in prayer; but before God, from whom no outward show can hide the true nature of things, however clean they might have washed themselves, they still dripped with blood. The expostulations of the people against the divine accusations have thus been negatively set forth and met in vv. 11–15: Jehovah could not endure their work-righteous worship, which was thus defiled with unrighteous works, even to murder itself. The divine accusation is now positively established in vv. 16, 17, by the contrast drawn between the true righteousness of which the accused were destitute, and the false righteousness of which they boasted. The crushing charge is here changed into an admonitory appeal; and the love which is hidden behind the wrath, and would gladly break through, already begins to disclose itself. There are eight admonitions. The first three point to the removal of evil; the other five to the performance of what is good.

Isaiah 1:16. The first three run thus: "Wash, clean yourselves; put away the badness of your doings from the range of my eyes; cease to do evil." This is not only an advance from figurative

ISAIAH	Page 40
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

language to the most literal, but there is also an advance in what is said. The first admonition requires, primarily and above all, purification from the sins committed, by means of forgiveness sought for and obtained. *Wash: rachatzu*, from *râchatz*, in the frequent middle sense of washing one's self. *Clean yourselves: hizzaccu*, with the tone upon the last syllable, is not the *niph* of *zâkak*, as the first plur. imper. *niph.* of such verbs has generally and naturally the tone upon the penultimate (see Isa. 52:11; Num. 17:10), but the *hithpael* of *zacah* for *hizdaccu*, with the preformative *Tav* resolved into the first radical letter, as is very common in the *hithpael* (Ges. § 54, 2, *b*). According to the difference between the two synonyms (to wash one's self, to clean one's self), the former must be understood as referring to the one great act of repentance on the part of a man who is turning to God, the latter to the daily repentance of one who has so turned. The second admonition requires them to place themselves in the light of the divine countenance, and put away the evil of their doings, which was intolerable to pure eyes (Hab. 1:13). They were to wrestle against the wickedness to which their actual sin had grown, until at length it entirely disappeared. *Neged*, according to its radical meaning, signifies prominence (compare the Arabic *négd*, high land which is visible at a great distance), conspicuousness, so that *minneged* is really equivalent to *ex apparentia*.

Isaiah 1:17. Five admonitions relating to the practice of what is good: "*Learn to do good, attend to judgment, set the oppressor right, do justice to the orphan, conduct the cause of the widow.*" The first admonition lays the foundation for the rest. They were to learn to do good,—a difficult art, in which a man does not become proficient merely by good intentions. "Learn to do good:" *hetib* is the object to *limdu* (learn), regarded as an accusative; the inf. abs. *הִרְע* in v. 16 takes the place of the object in just the same manner. The division of this primary admonition into four minor ones relating to the administration of

justice, may be explained from the circumstance that no other prophet directs so keen an eye upon the state and its judicial proceedings as Isaiah has done. He differs in this respect from his younger contemporary Micah, whose prophecies are generally more ethical in their nature, whilst those of Isaiah have a political character throughout. Hence the admonitions: "Give diligent attention to judgment" (*dârash*, to devote one's self to a thing with zeal and assiduity); and "bring the oppressor to the right way." This is the true rendering, as *châmotz* (from *châmatz*, to be sharp in flavour, glaring in appearance, violent and impetuous in character) cannot well mean "the oppressed," or the man who is deprived of his rights, as most of the early translators have rendered it, since this form of the noun, especially with an immutable *kametz* like *בְּגוֹדָה* (cf., *בְּגוֹדָה נִקְדָה*), is not used in a passive, but in an active or attributive sense (Ewald, § 152, *b*: vid., at Ps. 137:8): it has therefore the same meaning as *chometz* in Ps. 71:4, and *âshok* in Jer. 22:3, which is similar in its form. But if *châmotz* signifies the oppressive, reckless, churlish man, *אֲשֶׁר* cannot mean to make happy, or to congratulate, or to set up, or, as in the talmudic rendering, to strengthen (Luzzatto: *rianimate chi è oppresso*); but, as it is also to be rendered in Isa. 3:12; 9:15, to lead to the straight road, or to cause a person to keep the straight course. In the case before us, where the oppressor is spoken of, it means to direct him to the way of justice, to keep him in bounds by severe punishment and discipline. In the same way we find in other passages, such as Isa. 11:4 and Ps. 72:4, severe conduct towards oppressors mentioned in connection with just treatment of the poor. There follow two admonitions relating to widows and orphans. Widows and orphans, as well as foreigners, were the *protégés* of God and His law, standing under His especial guardianship and care (see, for example, Ex. 22:22 (21), cf., 21 (20)). "*Do justice to the orphan*" (*Shâphat*, as in Deut. 25:1, is a contracted expression for *shâphat mishpat*): for if there is not even a settlement or verdict in

their cause, this is the most crying injustice of all, as neither the form nor the appearance of justice is preserved. "Conduct the cause of the widows:" רִיב רִיב with an accusative, as in Isa. 51:22, the only other passage in which it occurs, is a contracted form for רִיב רִיב. Thus all the grounds of self-defence, which existed in the hearts of the accused, are both negatively and positively overthrown. They are thundered down and put to shame. The law (*thorah*), announced in v. 10, has been preached to them. The prophet has cast away the husks of their dead works, and brought out the moral kernel of the law in its universal application.

Isaiah 1:18. The first leading division of the address is brought to a close, and v. 18 contains the turning-point between the two parts into which it is divided. Hitherto Jehovah has spoken to His people in wrath. But His love began to move even in the admonitions in vv. 16, 17. And now this love, which desired not Israel's destruction, but Israel's inward and outward salvation, breaks fully through. V. 18. "O come, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah. If your sins come forth like scarlet cloth, they shall become white as snow; if they are red as crimson, they shall come forth like wool!" Jehovah here challenges Israel to a formal trial: *nocach* is thus used in a reciprocal sense, and with the same meaning as *nishpat* in Isa. 43:26 (Ges. § 51, 2). In such a trial Israel must lose, for Israel's self-righteousness rests upon sham righteousness; and this sham righteousness, when rightly examined, is but unrighteousness dripping with blood. It is taken for granted that this must be the result of the investigation. Israel is therefore worthy of death. Yet Jehovah will not treat Israel according to His retributive justice, but according to His free compassion. He will remit the punishment, and not only regard the sin as not existing, but change it into its very opposite. The reddest possible sin shall become, through His mercy, the purest white. On the two *hiphils* here applied to colour, see Ges. § 53, 2; though he gives the meaning incorrectly, viz., "to take a colour," whereas the words signify rather to emit a colour: not

colorem accipere, but *colorem dare*. *Shâni*, bright red (the plural *shânim*, as in Prov. 31:21, signifies materials dyed with *shâni*), and *tolâ*, warm colour, are simply different names for the same colour, viz., the crimson obtained from the cochineal insect, *color cocccineus*. The representation of the work of grace promised by God as a change from red to white, is founded upon the symbolism of colours, quite as much as when the saints in the Revelation (Rev. 19:8) are described as clothed in white raiment, whilst the clothing of Babylon is purple and scarlet (Isa. 17:4). Red is the colour of fire, and therefore of life: the blood is red because life is a fiery process. For this reason the heifer, from which the ashes of purification were obtained for those who had been defiled through contact with the dead, was to be red; and the sprinkling-brush, with which the unclean were sprinkled, was to be tied round with a band of scarlet wool. But red as contrasted with white, the colour of light (Matt. 17:2), is the colour of selfish, covetous, passionate life, which is self-seeking in its nature, which goes out of itself only to destroy, and drives about with wild tempestuous violence: it is therefore the colour of wrath and sin. It is generally supposed that Isaiah speaks of red as the colour of sin, because sin ends in murder; and this is not really wrong, though it is too restricted. Sin is called red, inasmuch as it is a burning heat which consumes a man, and when it breaks forth consumes his fellow-man as well. According to the biblical view, throughout, sin stands in the same relation to what is well-pleasing to God, and wrath in the same relation to love or grace, as fire to light; and therefore as red to white, or black to white, for red and black are colours which border upon one another. In the Song of Solomon (Song 7:5), the black locks of Shulamith are described as being "like purple," and Homer applies the same epithet to the dark waves of the sea. But the ground of this relation lies deeper still. Red is the colour of fire, which flashes out of darkness and returns to it again; whereas white without any admixture of darkness represents the pure, absolute triumph

of light. It is a deeply significant symbol of the act of justification. Jehovah offers to Israel an *actio forensis*, out of which it shall come forth justified by grace, although it has merited death on account of its sins. The righteousness, white as snow and wool, with which Israel comes forth, is a gift conferred upon it out of pure compassion, without being conditional upon any legal performance whatever.

Isaiah 1:19, 20. But after the restoration of Israel *in integrum* by this act of grace, the rest would unquestionably depend upon the conduct of Israel itself. According to Israel's own decision would Jehovah determine Israel's future. Vv. 19, 20. "If ye then shall willingly hear, ye shall eat the good of the land; if ye shall obstinately rebel, ye shall be eaten by the sword: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." After their justification, both blessing and cursing lay once more before the justified, as they had both been long before proclaimed by the law (compare v. 19b with Deut. 28:3ff., Lev. 26:3ff., and v. 20b with the threat of vengeance with the sword in Lev. 26:25). The promise of eating, i.e., of the full enjoyment of domestic blessings, and therefore of settled, peaceful rest at home, is placed in contrast with the curse of being eaten with the sword. *Chereb* (the sword) is the accusative of the instrument, as in Ps. 17:13, 14; but this adverbial construction without either genitive, adjective, or suffix, as in Ex. 30:20, is very rarely met with (Ges. § 138, Anm. 3); and in the passage before us it is a bold construction which the prophet allows himself, instead of saying, חָרַב הַאֲכַלְכֶם, for the sake of the *paronomasia* (Böttcher, *Collectanea*, p. 161). In the conditional clauses the two futures are followed by two preterites (compare Lev. 26:21, which is more in conformity with our western mode of expression), inasmuch as obeying and rebelling are both of them consequences of an act of will: if ye shall be willing, and in consequence of this obey; if ye shall refuse, and rebel against Jehovah. They are therefore, strictly speaking, *perfecta consecutiva*. According to the ancient mode of writing, the passage vv. 18–20 formed a

separate *parashah* by themselves, viz., a *sethumah*, or *parashah* indicated by spaces left within the line. The *piskah* after v. 20 corresponds to a long pause in the mind of the speaker.—Will Israel tread the saving path of forgiveness thus opened before it, and go on to renewed obedience, and will it be possible for it to be brought back by this path? Individuals possibly may, but not the whole. The divine appeal therefore changes now into a mournful complaint. So peaceful a solution as this of the discord between Jehovah and His children was not to be hoped for. Jerusalem was far too depraved.

Isaiah 1:21. "How is she become a harlot, the faithful citadel! she, full of right, lodged in righteousness, and now—murderers." It is the keynote of an elegy (*kinah*) which is sounded here. אֵיכָה, and but rarely אֵיךְ, which is an abbreviated form, is expressive of complaint and amazement. This longer form, like a long-drawn sigh, is a characteristic of the *kinah*. The *kinoth* (Lamentations) of Jeremiah commence with it, and receive their title from it; whereas the shorter form is indicative of scornful complaining, and is characteristic of the *mâshôl* (e.g., Isa. 14:4, 12; Mic. 2:4). From this word, which gives the keynote, the rest all follows, soft, full, monotonous, long drawn out and slow, just in the style of an elegy. We may see clearly enough that forms like מְלֹאֲתֵי for מְלֹאֲתַת, softened by lengthening, were adapted to elegiac compositions, from the first verse of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, where three of these forms occur. Jerusalem had previously been a faithful city, i.e., one stedfastly adhering to the covenant of Jehovah with her (vid., Ps. 78:37). This covenant was a marriage covenant. And she had broken it, and had thereby become a *zonâh* (harlot),—a prophetic view, the germs of which had already been given in the Pentateuch, where the worship of idols on the part of Israel is called whoring after them (Deut. 31:16; Ex. 34:15, 16; in all, seven times). It was not, however, merely gross outward idolatry which made the church of God a "harlot," but infidelity of heart, in whatever

form it might express itself; so that Jesus described the people of His own time as an “adulterous generation,” notwithstanding the pharisaical strictness with which the worship of Jehovah was then observed. For, as the verse before us indicates, this marriage relation was founded upon *right* and *righteousness* in the broadest sense: *mishpat*, “right,” i.e., a realization of right answering to the will of God as positively declared; and *tzedek*, “righteousness,” i.e., a righteous state moulded by that will, or a righteous course of conduct regulated according to it (somewhat different, therefore, from the more qualitative *tzedâkâh*). Jerusalem was once full of such right; and righteousness was not merely there in the form of a hastily passing guest, but had come down from above to take up her permanent abode in Jerusalem: she tarried there day and night as if it were her home. The prophet had in his mind the times of David and Solomon, and also more especially the time of Jehoshaphat (about one hundred and fifty years before Isaiah’s appearance), who restored the administration of justice, which had fallen into neglect since the closing years of Solomon’s reign and the time of Rehoboam and Abijah, to which Asa’s reformation had not extended, and re-organized it entirely in the spirit of the law. It is possible also that Jehoiada, the high priest in the time of Joash, may have revived the institutions of Jehoshaphat, so far as they had fallen into disuse under his three godless successors; but even in the second half of the reign of Joash, the administration of justice fell into the same disgraceful state, at least as compared with the times of David, Solomon, and Jehoshaphat, as that in which Isaiah found it. The glaring contrast between the present and the past is indicated by the expression “*and now*.” In all the correct MSS and editions, *mishpat* is not accented with *zakeph*, but with *rebia*; and *bâh*, which ought to have *zakeph*, is accented with *tiphchah*, on account of the brevity of the following clause. In this way the statement as to the past condition is sufficiently distinguished from that relating to the present. Formerly righteousness, now “murderers”

(*merazzechim*), and indeed, as distinguished from *rozechim*, murderers by profession, who formed a band, like king Ahab and his son (2 Kings 6:32). The contrast was as glaring as possible, since murder is the direct opposite, the most crying violation, of righteousness.

Isaiah 1:22. The complaint now turns from the city generally to the authorities, and first of all figuratively. V. 22. “*Thy silver has become dross, thy drink mutilated with water.*” It is upon this passage that the figurative language of Jer. 6:27ff. and Ezek. 22:18–22 is founded. *Silver* is here a figurative representation of the princes and lords, with special reference to the nobility of character naturally associated with nobility of birth and rank; for silver—refined silver—is an image of all that is noble and pure, light in all its purity being reflected by it (Bähr, *Symbolik*, i. 284). The princes and lords had once possessed all the virtues which the Latins called unitedly *candor animi*, viz., the virtues of magnanimity, affability, impartiality, and superiority to bribes. This silver had now become *l’sigim*, dross, or base metal separated (thrown off) from silver in the process of refining (*sig*, pl. *sigim*, *siggim* from *sug*, *recedere*, refuse left in smelting, or dross: cf., Prov. 25:4; 26:23). A second figure compares the leading men of the older Jerusalem to good wine, such as drinkers like. The word employed here (*sobe*) must have been used in this sense by the more cultivated classes in Isaiah’s time (cf., Nahum 1:10). This pure, strong, and costly wine was now adulterated with water (*lit. castratum*, according to Pliny’s expression in the *Natural History*: compare the Horatian phrase, *jugulare Falernum*), and therefore its strength and odour were weakened, and its worth was diminished. The present was nothing but the dross and shadow of the past.

Isaiah 1:23. In v. 23 the prophet says this without a figure: “*Thy rulers are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth presents, and hunteth after payment; the orphan they right not, and the cause of the widow has no access to them.*” In two words the prophet depicts the contemptible baseness of the national rulers (*sârim*). He describes first of all

their baseness in relation to God, with the alliterative *sorerim: rebellious*, refractory; and then, in relation to men, *companions of thieves*, inasmuch as they allowed themselves to be bribed by presents of stolen goods to acts of injustice towards those who had been robbed. They not only willingly accepted such bribes, and that not merely a few of them, but every individual belonging to the rank of princes (*cullo*, equivalent to *haccol*, the whole: every one loveth gifts); but they went eagerly in pursuit of them (*rodeph*). It was not *peace* (*shâlom*) that they hunted after (Ps. 34:16), but *shalmonim*, things that would pacify their avarice; not what was good, but compensation for their partiality.—This was the existing state of Jerusalem, and therefore it would hardly be likely to take the way of mercy opened before it in v. 18; consequently Jehovah would avail himself of other means of setting it right:—

Isaiah 1:24. “Therefore, saying of the Lord, of Jehovah of hosts, of the Strong One of Israel: Ah! I will relieve myself on mine adversaries, and will avenge myself upon mine enemies.” Salvation through judgment was the only means of improvement and preservation left to the congregation, which called itself by the name of Jerusalem. Jehovah would therefore afford satisfaction to His holiness, and administer a judicial sifting to Jerusalem. There is no other passage in Isaiah in which we meet with such a crowding together of different names of God as we do here (compare Isa. 19:4; 3:1; 10:16, 33; 3:15). With three names, descriptive of the irresistible omnipotence of God, the irrevocable decree of a sifting judgment is sealed. The word נָאֵם, which is used here instead of אָמַר and points back to a verb נָאֵם, related to נָהַם and הִמָּה, corresponds to the deep, earnest pathos of the words. These verbs, which are imitations of sounds, all denote a dull hollow groaning. The word used here, therefore, signifies that which is spoken with significant secrecy and solemn softness. It is never written absolutely, but is always followed by the subject who speaks (saying of Jehovah it is, i.e., Jehovah says). We meet with it first of all in Gen. 22:16. In the

prophetic writings it occurs in Obadiah and Joel, but most frequently in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It is generally written at the close of the sentence, or parenthetically in the middle; very rarely at the commencement, as it is here and in 1 Sam. 2:30 and Ps. 110:1. The “saying” commences with *hoi* (*ah!*), the painfulness of pity being mingled with the determined outbreak of wrath. By the side of the niphâl *nikkam min* (to be revenged upon a person) we find the niphâl *nicham* (lit. to console one’s self). The two words are derived from kindred roots. The latter is conjugated with *ě* in the preformative syllable, the former with *i*, according to the older system of vowel-pointing adopted in the East. Jehovah would procure Himself relief from His enemies by letting out upon them the wrath with which He had hitherto been burdened (Ezek. 5:13). He now calls the masses of Jerusalem by their right name.

Isaiah 1:25. V. 25 states clearly in what the revenge consisted with which Jehovah was inwardly burdened (*innakmah*, a cohortative with the *ah*, indicating internal oppression): “And I will bring my hand over thee, and will smelt out thy dross as with alkali, and will clear away all thy lead.” As long as God leaves a person’s actions or sufferings alone, His hand, i.e., His acting, is at rest. Bringing the hand over a person signifies a movement of the hand, which has been hitherto at rest, either for the purpose of inflicting judicial punishment upon the person named (Amos 1:8; Jer. 6:9; Ezek. 38:12; Ps. 81:15), or else, though this is seldom the case, for the purpose of saving him (Zech. 13:7). The reference here is to the divine treatment of Jerusalem, in which punishment and salvation were combined—punishment as the means, salvation as the end. The interposition of Jehovah was, as it were, a smelting, which would sweep away, not indeed Jerusalem itself, but the ungodly in Jerusalem. They are compared to dross, or (as the verb seems to imply) to ore mixed with dross, and, inasmuch as lead is thrown off in the smelting of silver, to such ingredients of lead as Jehovah would speedily and thoroughly remove, “like

alkali," i.e., "as if with alkali" (*cabbor*, *comparatio decurtata*, for *c'babbor*: for this mode of dropping *Beth* after *Caph*, compare Isa. 9:3, Lev. 22:13, and many other passages). By *bedilim* (from *bâdal*, to separate) we are to understand the several pieces of *stannum* or lead in which the silver is contained, and which are separated by smelting, all the baser metals being distinguished from the purer kinds by the fact that they are combustible (i.e., can be oxidized). Both *bor*, or potash (an alkali obtained from land-plants), and *nether*, natron (i.e., soda, or natron obtained from the ashes of marine plants, which is also met with in many mineral waters), have been employed from the very earliest times to accelerate the process of smelting, for the purpose of separating a metal from its ore.

Isaiah 1:26. As the threat couched in the previous figure does not point to the destruction, but simply to the smelting of Jerusalem, there is nothing strange in the fact that in v. 26 it should pass over into a pure promise; the meltingly soft and yearningly mournful termination of the clauses with *ayich*, the keynote of the later songs of Zion, being still continued. "And I will bring back thy judges as in the olden time, and thy counsellors as in the beginning; afterwards thou wilt be called city of righteousness, faithful citadel." The threat itself was, indeed, relatively a promise, inasmuch as whatever could stand the fire would survive the judgment; and the distinct object of this was to bring back Jerusalem to the purer metal of its own true nature. But when that had been accomplished, still more would follow. The indestructible kernel that remained would be crystallized, since Jerusalem would receive back from Jehovah the judges and counsellors which it had had in the olden flourishing times of the monarchy, ever since it had become the city of David and of the temple; not, indeed, the very same persons, but persons quite equal to them in excellence. Under such God-given leaders Jerusalem would become what it had once been, and what it ought to be. The names applied to the city indicate the impression produced by the manifestation of its true

nature. The second name is written without the article, as in fact the word *kiryah* (city), with its massive, definite sound, always is in Isaiah. Thus did Jehovah announce the way which it had been irrevocably determined that He would take with Israel, as the only way to salvation. Moreover, this was the fundamental principle of the government of God, the law of Israel's history.

Isaiah 1:27. V. 27 presents it in a brief and concise form: "*Sion will be redeemed through judgment, and her returning ones through righteousness.*" *Mishpat* and *tzedâkâh* are used elsewhere for divine gifts (Isa. 33:5; 28:6), for such conduct as is pleasing to God (Isa. 1:21; 32:16), and for royal Messianic virtues (Isa. 9:6; 11:3-5; 16:5; 32:1). Here, however, where we are helped by the context, they are to be interpreted according to such parallel passages as Isa. 4:4; 5:16; 28:17, as signifying God's right and righteousness in their primarily judicious self-fulfilment. A judgment, on the part of God the righteous One, would be the means by which Zion itself, so far as it had remained faithful to Jehovah, and those who were converted in the midst of the judgment, would be redeemed,—a judgment upon sinners and sin, by which the power that had held in bondage the divine nature of Zion, so far as it still continued to exist, would be broken, and in consequence of which those who turned to Jehovah would be incorporated into His true church. Whilst, therefore, God was revealing Himself in His punitive righteousness; He was working out a righteousness which would be bestowed as a gift of grace upon those who escaped the former. The notion of "righteousness" is now following a New Testament track. In front it has the fire of the law; behind, the love of the gospel. Love is concealed behind the wrath, like the sun behind the thunder-clouds. Zion, so far as it truly is or is becoming Zion, is redeemed, and none but the ungodly are destroyed. But, as is added in the next verse, the latter takes place without mercy.

Isaiah 1:28. "And breaking up of the rebellious and sinners together; and those who forsake

ISAIAH	Page 46
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Jehovah will perish." The judicial side of the approaching act of redemption is here expressed in a way that all can understand. The exclamatory substantive clause in the first half of the verse is explained by a declaratory verbal clause in the second. The "rebellious" were those who had both inwardly and outwardly broken away from Jehovah; "sinners," those who were living in open sins; and "those who forsake Jehovah," such as had become estranged from God in either of these ways.

Isaiah 1:29. Ver. 29 declares how God's judgment of destruction would fall upon all of these. The verse is introduced with an explanatory "for" (*chi*): "For they become ashamed of the terebinths, in which ye had your delight; and ye must blush for the gardens, in which ye took pleasure." The terebinths and gardens (the second word with the article, as in Hab. 3:8, first *binharim*, then *banneharim*) are not referred to as objects of luxury, as Hitzig and Drechsler assume, but as unlawful places of worship and objects of worship (see Deut. 16:21). They are both of them frequently mentioned by the prophets in this sense (Isa. 57:5; 65:3; 66:17): *châmor* and *bâchar* are also the words commonly applied to an arbitrary choice of false gods (Isa. 44:9; 41:24; 66:3), and *bosh min* is the general phrase used to denote the shame which falls upon idolaters, when the worthlessness of their idols becomes conspicuous through their impotence. On the difference between *bosh* and *châpher*, see the comm. on Ps. 35:4. The word *elim* is erroneously translated "idols" in the Septuagint and other ancient versions. The feeling which led to this, however, was a correct one, since the places of worship really stand for the idols worshipped in those places. The excited state of the prophet at the close of his prophecy is evinced by his abrupt leap from an exclamation to a direct address (Ges. § 137, Anm. 3).

Isaiah 1:30. He still continues in the same excitement, piling a second explanatory sentence upon the first, and commencing this also with "for" (*chi*); and then, carried away by the association of ideas, he takes terebinths and gardens as the future figures of the idolatrous

people themselves. "For ye shall become like a terebinth with withered leaves, and like a garden that hath no water." Their prosperity is destroyed, so that they resemble a terebinth withered as to its leaves, which in other cases are always green (*nobelet* 'aleah, a genitives connection according to Ges. § 112, 2). Their sources of help are dried up, so that they are like a garden without water, and therefore waste. In this withered state terebinths and gardens, to which the idolatrous are compared, are easily set on fire. All that is wanted is a spark to kindle them, when they are immediately in flames.

Isaiah 1:31. Ver. 31 shows in a third figure where this spark was to come from: "And the rich man becomes tow, and his work the spark; and they will both burn together, and no one extinguishes them." The form *poalo* suggests at first a participial meaning (its maker), but הַקָּסוֹן would be a very unusual epithet to apply to an idol. Moreover, the figure itself would be a distorted one, since the natural order would be, that the idol would be the thing that kindled the fire, and the man the object to be set on fire, and not the reverse. We therefore follow the LXX, Targ., and Vulg., with Gesenius and other more recent grammarians, and adopt the rendering "his work" (*opus ejus*). The forms פָּעֵלוֹ and פָּעֵלוֹ (cf., Isa. 52:14 and Jer. 22:13) are two equally admissible changes of the ground-form פָּעֵלוֹ (פָּעֵלוֹ). As v. 29 refers to idolatrous worship, *poalo* (his work) is an idol, a god made by human hands (cf., Isa. 2:8; 37:19, etc.). The prosperous idolater, who could give gold and silver for idolatrous images out of the abundance of his possessions (*châson* is to be interpreted in accordance with Isa. 33:6), becomes *tow* (talm. "the refuse of flax:" the radical meaning is to shake out, viz., in combing), and the idol the *spark* which sets this mass of fibre in flames, so that they are both irretrievably consumed. For the fire of judgment, by which sinners are devoured, need not come from without. Sin carries the fire of indignation within itself. And an idol is, as it

ISAIAH	Page 47
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

were, an idolater's sin embodied and exposed to the light of day.

The date of the composition of this first prophecy is a puzzle. Caspari thoroughly investigated every imaginary possibility, and at last adopted the conclusion that it dates from the time of Uzziah, inasmuch as vv. 7–9 do not relate to an actual, but merely to an ideal, present. But notwithstanding all the acuteness with which Caspari has worked out his view, it still remains a very forced one. The oftener we return to the reading of this prophetic address, the stronger is our impression that vv. 7–9 contain a description of the state of things which really existed at the time when the words were spoken. There were actually two devastations of the land of Judah which occurred during the ministry of Isaiah, and in which Jerusalem was only spared by the miraculous interposition of Jehovah: one under Ahaz in the year of the Syro-Ephraimitish war; the other under Hezekiah, when the Assyrian forces laid the land waste but were scattered at last in their attack upon Jerusalem. The year of the Syro-Ephraimitish war is supported by Gesenius, Rosenmüller (who expresses a different opinion in every one of the three editions of his *Scholia*), Maurer, Movers, Knobel, Hävernick, and others; the time of the Assyrian oppression by Hitzig, Umbreit, Drechsler, and Luzzatto. Now, whichever of these views we may adopt, there will still remain, as a test of its admissibility, the difficult question, How did this prophecy come to stand at the head of the book, if it belonged to the time of Uzziah-Jotham? This question, upon which the solution of the difficulty depends, can only be settled when we come to Isa. 6. Till then, the date of the composition of Isa. 1 must be left undecided. It is enough for the present to know, that, according to the accounts given in the books of Kings and Chronicles, there were two occasions when the situation of Jerusalem resembled the one described in the present chapter.

Isaiah 2

The Way of General Judgment; Or the Course of Israel from False Glory to the True—Ch. 2–4

Isaiah 2:1. The limits of this address are very obvious. The end of Isa. 4 connects itself with the beginning of Isa. 2, so as to form a circle. After various alternations of admonition, reproach, and threatening, the prophet reaches at last the object of the promise with which he started. Ch. 5, on the other hand, commences afresh with a parable. It forms an independent address, although it is included, along with the previous chapters, under the heading in Isa. 2:1: "*The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw over Judah and Jerusalem.*" Ch. 2–5 may have existed under this heading before the whole collection arose. It was then adopted in this form into the general collection, so as to mark the transition from the prologue to the body of the book. The prophet describes what he here says concerning Judah and Jerusalem as "*the word which he saw.*" When men speak to one another, the words are not seen, but heard. But when God spoke to the prophet, it was in a supersensuous way, and the prophet saw it. The mind indeed has no more eyes than ears; but a mind qualified to perceive what is supersensuous is altogether eye. The manner in which Isaiah commences this second address is altogether unparalleled. There is no other example of a prophecy beginning with וְיָהוָה. And it is very easy to discover the reason why. The *praet. consecutivum v'hâyâh* derives the force of a future from the context alone; whereas the *fut. consecutivum vay'hi* (with which historical books and sections very generally commence) is shown to be an aorist by its simple form. Moreover, the *Vav* in the *fut. consecut.* has almost entirely lost its copulative character; in the *praet. consec.*, on the other hand, it retains it with all the greater force. The prophet therefore commences with "and"; and it is from what follows, not from what goes before, that we learn that *hayah* is used in a future sense. But this is not the only strange thing. It is also

ISAIAH	Page 48
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

an unparalleled occurrence, for a prophetic address, which runs as this does through all the different phases of the prophetic discourses generally (viz., exhortation, reproof, threatening, and promise), to commence with a promise. We are in a condition, however, to explain the cause of this remarkable phenomenon with certainty, and not merely to resort to conjecture. Vv. 2–4 do not contain Isaiah's own words, but the words of another prophet taken out of their connection. We find them again in Mic. 4:1–4; and whether Isaiah took them from Micah, or whether both Isaiah and Micah took them from some common source, in either case they were not originally Isaiah's. Nor was it even intended that they should appear to be his. Isaiah has not fused them into the general flow of his own prophecy, as the prophets usually do with the predictions of their predecessors. He does not reproduce them, but, as we may observe from the abrupt commencement, he quote them. It is true, this hardly seems to tally with the heading, which describes what follows as the word of Jehovah which Isaiah saw. But the discrepancy is only an apparent one. It was the spirit of prophecy, which called to Isaiah's remembrance a prophetic saying that had already been uttered, and made it the starting-point of the thoughts which followed in Isaiah's mind. The borrowed promise is not introduced for its own sake, but is simply a self-explaining introduction to the exhortations and threatenings which follow, and through which the prophet works his way to a conclusion of his own, that is closely intertwined with the borrowed commencement.

Isaiah 2:2. The subject of the borrowed prophecy is Israel's future glory: *"And it cometh to pass at the end of the days, the mountain of the house of Jehovah will be set at the top of the mountains, and exalted over hills; and all nations pour unto it."* The expression "the last days" (*acharith hayyamim*, "the end of the days"), which does not occur anywhere else in Isaiah, is always used in an eschatological sense. It never refers to the course of history immediately following the time being, but invariably

indicates the furthest point in the history of this life—the point which lies on the outermost limits of the speaker's horizon. This horizon was a very fluctuating one. The history of prophecy is just the history of its gradual extension, and of the filling up of the intermediate space. In Jacob's blessing (Gen. 49) the conquest of the land stood in the foreground of the *acharith* or last days, and the perspective was regulated accordingly. But here in Isaiah the *acharith* contained no such mixing together of events belonging to the more immediate and the most distant future. It was therefore the last time in its most literal and purest sense, commencing with the beginning of the New Testament aeon, and terminating at its close (compare Heb. 1:1, 1 Pet. 1:20, with 1 Cor. 15 and the Revelation). The prophet here predicted that the mountain which bore the temple of Jehovah, and therefore was already in dignity the most exalted of all mountains, would one day tower in actual height above all the high places of the earth. The basaltic mountains of Bashan, which rose up in bold peaks and columns, might now look down with scorn and contempt upon the small limestone hill which Jehovah had chosen (Ps. 68:16, 17); but this was an incongruity which the last times would remove, by making the outward correspond to the inward, the appearance to the reality and the intrinsic worth. That this is the prophet's meaning is confirmed by Ezek. 40:2, where the temple mountain looks gigantic to the prophet, and also by Zech. 14:10, where all Jerusalem is described as towering above the country round about, which would one day become a plain. The question how this can possibly take place in time, since it presupposes a complete subversion of the whole of the existing order of the earth's surface, is easily answered. The prophet saw the new Jerusalem of the last days on this side, and the new Jerusalem of the new earth on the other (Rev. 21:10), blended as it were together, and did not distinguish the one from the other. But whilst we thus avoid all unwarrantable spiritualizing, it still remains a question what meaning the prophet attached to

the word *b'rosh* ("at the top"). Did he mean that Moriah would one day stand upon the top of the mountains that surrounded it (as in Ps. 72:16), or that it would stand at their head (as in 1 Kings 21:9, 12, Amos 6:7, Jer. 31:7)? The former is Hofmann's view, as given in his *Weissagung und Erfüllung*, ii. 217: "he did not indeed mean that the mountains would be piled up one upon the other, and the temple mountain upon the top, but that the temple mountain would appear to float upon the summit of the others." But as the expression "will be set" (*nacon*) does not favour this apparently romantic exaltation, and *b'rosh* occurs more frequently in the sense of "at the head" than in that of "on the top," I decide for my own part in favour of the second view, though I agree so far with Hofmann, that it is not merely an exaltation of the temple mountain in the estimation of the nations that is predicted, but a physical and external elevation also. And when thus outwardly exalted, the divinely chosen mountain would become the rendezvous and centre of unity for all nations. They would all "flow unto it" (*nâhar*, a denom. verb, from *nâhâr*, a river, as in Jer. 51:44; 31:12). It is the temple of Jehovah which, being thus rendered visible to nations afar off, exerts such magnetic attraction, and with such success. Just as at a former period men had been separated and estranged from one another in the plain of Shinar, and thus different nations had first arisen; so would the nations at a future period assemble together on the mountain of the house of Jehovah, and there, as members of one family, live together in amity again. And as Babel (*confusion*, as its name signifies) was the place whence the stream of nations poured into all the world; so would Jerusalem (the *city of peace*) become the place into which the stream of nations would empty itself, and where all would be reunited once more. At the present time there was only one people, viz., Israel, which made pilgrimages to Zion on the great festivals, but it would be very different then.

Isaiah 2:3. "And peoples in multitude go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; let Him instruct us

out of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." This is their signal for starting, and their song by the way (cf., Zech. 8:21, 22). What urges them on is the desire for salvation. Desire for salvation expresses itself in the name they give to the point towards which they are travelling: they call Moriah "the mountain of Jehovah," and the temple upon it "the house of the God of Jacob." Through frequent use, *Israel* had become the popular name for the people of God; but the name they employ is the choicer name *Jacob*, which is the name of affection in the mouth of Micah, of whose style we are also reminded by the expression "many peoples" (*ammim rabbim*). Desire for salvation expresses itself in the object of their journey; they wish Jehovah to teach them "out of His ways,"—a rich source of instruction with which they desire to be gradually entrusted. The preposition *min* (out of, or from) is not partitive here, but refers, as in Ps. 94:12, to the source of instruction. The "ways of Jehovah" are the ways which God Himself takes, and by which men are led by Him—the revealed ordinances of His will and action. Desire for salvation also expresses itself in the resolution with which they set out: they not only wish to learn, but are resolved to act according to what they learn. "We will walk in His paths:" the hortative is used here, as it frequently is (e.g., Gen. 27:4, vid., Ges. § 128, 1, c), to express either the subjective intention or subjective conclusion. The words supposed to be spoken by the multitude of heathen going up to Zion terminate here. The prophet then adds the reason and object of this holy pilgrimage of the nations: "For instruction will go out from Zion, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." The principal emphasis is upon the expressions "from Zion" and "from Jerusalem." It is a triumphant utterance of the sentiment that "salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). From Zion-Jerusalem there would go forth *thorah*, i.e., instruction as to the questions which man has to put to God, and *debar Jehovah*, the word of Jehovah, which created the world at first, and by which it is spiritually created anew. Whatever promotes the true prosperity of the nations, comes from Zion-Jerusalem. There the

nations assemble together; they take it thence to their own homes, and thus Zion-Jerusalem becomes the fountain of universal good. For from the time that Jehovah made choice of Zion, the holiness of Sinai was transferred to Zion (Ps. 68:17), which now presented the same aspect as Sinai had formerly done, when God invested it with holiness by appearing there in the midst of myriads of angels. What had been commenced at Sinai for Israel, would be completed at Zion for all the world. This was fulfilled on that day of Pentecost, when the disciples, the first-fruits of the church of Christ, proclaimed the *thorah* of Zion, i.e., the gospel, in the languages of all the world. It was fulfilled, as Theodoret observes, in the fact that the word of the gospel, rising from Jerusalem "as from a fountain," flowed through the whole of the known world. But these fulfilments were only preludes to a conclusion which is still to be looked for in the future. For what is promised in the following verse is still altogether unfulfilled.

Isaiah 2:4. *"And He will judge between the nations, and deliver justice to many peoples; and they forge their swords into coulters, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation lifts not up the sword against nation, neither do they exercise themselves in war any more."* Since the nations betake themselves in this manner as pupils to the God of revelation and the word of His revelation, He becomes the supreme judge and umpire among them. If any dispute arise, it is no longer settled by the compulsory force of war, but by the word of God, to which all bow with willing submission. With such power as this in the peace-sustaining word of God (Zech. 9:10), there is no more need for weapons of iron: they are turned into the instruments of peaceful employment, into *ittim* (probably a synonym for *ethim* in 1 Sam. 13:21), plough-knives or coulters, which cut the furrows for the ploughshare to turn up and *mazmeroth*, bills or pruning-hooks, with which vines are pruned to increase their fruit-bearing power. There is also no more need for military practice, for there is no use in exercising one's self in what cannot be applied. It is useless, and

men dislike it. There is peace, not an armed peace, but a full, true, God-given and blessed peace. What even a Kant regarded as possible is now realized, and that not by the so-called Christian powers, but by the power of God, who favours the object for which an Elihu Burritt enthusiastically longs, rather than the politics of the Christian powers. It is in war that the power of the beast culminates in the history of the world. This beast will then be destroyed. The true humanity which sin has choked up will gain the mastery, and the world's history will keep Sabbath. And may we not indulge the hope, on the ground of such prophetic words as these, that the history of the world will not terminate without having kept a Sabbath? Shall we correct Isaiah, according to Quenstedt, lest we should become chiliasts? "The humanitarian ideas of Christendom," says a thoughtful Jewish scholar, "have their roots in the Pentateuch, and more especially in Deuteronomy. But in the prophets, particularly in Isaiah, they reach a height which will probably not be attained and fully realized by the modern world for centuries to come." Yet they will be realized. What the prophetic words appropriated by Isaiah here affirm, is a moral postulate, the goal of sacred history, the predicted counsel of God.

Isaiah 2:5. Isaiah presents himself to his contemporaries with this older prophecy of the exalted and world-wide calling of the people of Jehovah, holds it up before them as a mirror, and exclaims in v. 5, *"O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of Jehovah."* This exhortation is formed under the influence of the context, from which vv. 2-4 are taken, as we may see from Mic. 4:5, and also of the quotation itself. The use of the term *Jacob* instead of *Israel* is not indeed altogether strange to Isaiah (Isa. 8:17; 10:20, 21; 29:23), but he prefers the use of *Israel* (compare Isa. 1:24 with Gen. 49:24). With the words "O house of Jacob" he now turns to his people, whom so glorious a future awaits, because Jehovah has made it the scene of His manifested presence and grace, and summons it to walk in the light of such a God, to whom all nations will press at the end of the days. The summons, "Come, let us walk," is the echo of v.

3, "Come, let us go;" and as Hitzig observes, "Isaiah endeavours, like Paul in Rom. 11:14, to stir up his countrymen to a noble jealousy, by setting before them the example of the heathen." The "light of Jehovah" ('or *Jehovah*, in which the echo of *v'yorenu* in v. 3 is hardly accidental; cf., Prov. 6:23) is the knowledge of Jehovah Himself, as furnished by means of positive revelation, His manifested love. It was now high time to walk in the light of Jehovah, i.e., to turn this knowledge into life, and reciprocate this love; and it was especially necessary to exhort Israel to this, now that Jehovah had given up His people, just because in their perverseness they had done the very opposite. This mournful declaration, which the prophet was obliged to make in order to explain his warning cry, he changes into the form of a prayerful sigh.

Isaiah 2:6. "For Thou hast rejected Thy people, the house of Jacob; for they are filled with things from the east, and are conjurors like the Philistines; and with the children of foreigners they go hand in hand." Here again we have "for" (*chi*) twice in succession; the first giving the reason for the warning cry, the second vindicating the reason assigned. The words are addressed to Jehovah, not to the people. Saad., Gecatilia, and Rashi adopt the rendering, "Thou has given up thy nationality;" and this rendering is supported by J. D. Michaelis, Hitzig, and Luzzatto. But the word means "people," not "nationality;" and the rendering is inadmissible, and would never have been thought of were it not that there was apparently something strange in so sudden an introduction of an address to God. But in Isa. 2:9; 9:2, and other passages, the prophecy takes the form of a prayer. And *nâtash* (cast off) with *âm* (people) for its object recalls such passages as Ps. 94:14 and 1 Sam. 12:22. Jehovah had put away His people, i.e., rejected them, and left them to themselves, for the following reasons: (1.) Because they were "full from the east" (*mikkedem*: *min* denotes the source from which a person draws and fills himself, Jer. 51:34, Ezek. 32:6), i.e., full of eastern manners and customs, more especially of idolatrous

practices. By "the east" (*kedem*) we are to understand Arabia as far as the peninsula of Sinai, and also the Aramaean lands of the Euphrates. Under Uzziah and Jotham, whose sway extended to Elath, the seaport town of the Elanitic Gulf, the influence of the south-east predominated; but under Ahaz and Hezekiah, on account of their relations to Asshur, Aram, and Babylon, that of the north-east. The conjecture of Gesenius, that we should read *mikkeseem*, i.e., of soothsaying, is a very natural one; but it obliterates without any necessity the name of the region from which Judah's imitative propensities received their impulse and materials. (2.) They were *onenim* (= *meonenim*, Mic. 5:11, from the *poel onen*: 2 Kings 21:6), probably "cloud-gatherers" or "storm-raisers," like the Philistines (the people conquered by Uzziah, and then again by Hezekiah), among whom witchcraft was carried on in guilds, whilst a celebrated oracle of Baal-Zebub existed at Ekron. (3.) And they make common cause with children of foreigners. This is the explanation adopted by Gesenius, Knobel, and others. *Sâphak* with *cappaim* signifies *to clap hands* (Job 27:23). The *hiphil* followed by *Beth* is only used here in the sense of *striking hands with a person*. Luzzatto explains it as meaning, "They find satisfaction in the children of foreigners; it is only through them that they are contented;" but this is contrary to the usage of the language, according to which *hispiik* in post-biblical Hebrew signifies either *suppeditare* or (like *saphak* in 1 Kings 20:10) *sufficere*. Jerome renders it *pueris alienis adhaeserunt*; but *yalde nâc'rim* does not mean *pueri alieni*, boys hired for licentious purposes, but the "sons of strangers" generally (Isa. 60:10; 61:5), with a strong emphasis upon their unsanctified birth, the heathenism inherited from their mother's womb. With heathen by birth, the prophet would say, the people of Jehovah made common cause.

Isaiah 2:7, 8. In vv. 7, 8 he describes still further how the land of the people of Jehovah, in consequence of all this (on the future consec. see Ges. § 129, 2, a), was crammed full of objects of luxury, of self-confidence, of

estrangement from God: *“And their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end of their treasures; and their land is filled with horses, and there is no end of their chariots. And their land is filled with—idols; the work of their own hands they worship, that which their own fingers have made.”* The glory of Solomon, which revived under Uzziah’s fifty-two years’ reign, and was sustained through Jotham’s reign of sixteen years, carried with it the curse of the law; for the law of the king, in Deut. 17:14ff., prohibited the multiplying of horses, and also the accumulation of gold and silver. Standing armies, and stores of national treasures, like everything else which ministers to carnal self-reliance, were opposed to the spirit of the theocracy. Nevertheless Judaea was immeasurably full of such seductions to apostasy; and not of those alone, but also of things which plainly revealed it, viz., of *elilim*, idols (the same word is used in Lev. 19:4; 26:1, from *elil*, vain or worthless; it is therefore equivalent to “not-gods”). They worshipped the work of “their own” hands, what “their own” fingers had made: two distributive singulars, as in Isa. 5:23, the hands and fingers of every individual (vid., Mic. 5:12, 13, where the idols are classified). The condition of the land, therefore, was not only opposed to the law of the king, but at variance with the decalogue also. The existing glory was the most offensive caricature of the glory promised to the nation; for the people, whose God was one day to become the desire and salvation of all nations, had exchanged Him for the idols of the nations, and was vying with them in the appropriation of heathen religion and customs.

Isaiah 2:9–11. It was a state ripe for judgment, from which, therefore, the prophet could at once proceed, without any further preparation, to the proclamation of judgment itself. V. 9. *“Thus, then, men are bowed down, and lords are brought low; and forgive them—no, that Thou wilt not.”* The consecutive futures depict the judgment, as one which would follow by inward necessity from the worldly and ungodly glory of the existing state of things. The future is frequently used in this way (for example, in Isa.

9:7ff.). It was a judgment by which small and great, i.e., the people in all its classes, were brought down from their false eminence. “Men” and “lords” (*âdâm* and *ish*, as in Isa. 5:15, Ps. 49:3, and Prov. 8:4, and like ἄνθρωπος and ἀνὴρ in the Attic dialect), i.e., men who were lost in the crowd, and men who rose above it,—all of them the judgment would throw down to the ground, and that without mercy (Rev. 6:15). The prophet expresses the conviction (*al* as in 2 Kings 6:27), that on this occasion God neither could nor would take away the sin by forgiving it. There was nothing left for them, therefore, but to carry out the command of the prophet in v. 10: *“Creep into the rock, and bury thyself in the dust, before the terrible look of Jehovah, and before the glory of His majesty.”* The glorious nation would hide itself most ignominiously, when the only true glory of Jehovah, which had been rejected by it, was manifested in judgment. They would conceal themselves in holes of the rocks, as if before a hostile army (Judg. 6:2; 1 Sam. 13:6; 14:11), and bury themselves with their faces in the sand, as if before the fatal simoom of the desert, that they might not have to bear this intolerable sight. And when Jehovah manifested Himself in this way in the fiery glance of judgment, the result summed up in v. 11 must follow: *“The people’s eyes of haughtiness are humbled, and the pride of their lords is bowed down; and Jehovah, He only, stands exalted in that day.”* The result of the process of judgment is expressed in perfects: *nisgab* is the third *pers. praet.*, not the participle: Jehovah “is exalted,” i.e., shows Himself as exalted, whilst the haughty conduct of the people is brought down (*shâphel* is a verb, not an adjective; it is construed in the singular by attraction, and either refers to *âdâm*, man or people: Ges. § 148, 1; or what is more probable, to the logical unity of the compound notion which is taken as subject, the *constr. ad synesin s. sensum*: Thiersch, § 118), and the pride of the lords is bowed down (*shach* = *shâchach*, Job 9:13). The first strophe of the proclamation of judgment appended to the prophetic saying in vv. 2–4 is here brought

to a close. The second strophe reaches to v. 17, where v. 11 is repeated as a concluding verse.

Isaiah 2:12. The expression “*that day*” suggests the inquiry, What day is referred to? The prophet answers this question in the second strophe. V. 12. “*For Jehovah of hosts hath a day over everything towering and lofty, and over everything exalted; and it becomes low.*” “*Jehovah hath a day*” (*yom layehovah*), lit., there is to Jehovah a day, which already exists as a finished divine thought in that wisdom by which the course of history is guided (Isa. 37:26, cf., 22:11), the secret of which He revealed to the prophets, who from the time of Obadiah and Joel downwards proclaimed that day with one uniform watchword. But when the time appointed for that day should arrive, it would pass out of the secret of eternity into the history of time,—a day of world-wide judgment, which would pass, through the omnipotence with which Jehovah rules over the hither as well as lower spheres of the whole creation, upon all worldly glory, and it would be brought low (*shaphel*). The current accentuation of v. 12b is wrong; correct MSS have עַל with *mercha*, כִּלְ-יִשָּׁא with *tifcha*. The word *v’shâphel* (third pers. praet. with the root-vowel *ē*) acquires the force of a future, although no grammatical future precedes it, from the future character of the day itself: “and it will sink down” (Ges. § 126, 4).

Isaiah 2:13, 14. The prophet then proceeds to enumerate all the high things upon which that day would fall, arranging them two and two, and binding them in pairs by a double correlative *Vav*. The day of Jehovah comes, as the first two pairs affirm, upon everything lofty in nature. Vv. 13, 14. “*As upon all the cedars of Lebanon, the lofty and exalted, so upon all the oaks of Bashan. As upon all mountains, the lofty ones, so upon all hills the exalted ones.*” But wherefore upon all this majestic beauty of nature? Is all this merely figurative? Knobel regards it as merely a figurative description of the grand buildings of the time of Uzziah and Jotham, in the erection of which wood had been used from Lebanon as well as from Bashan, on

the western slopes of which the old shady oaks (*sindiân* and *ballût*) are flourishing still. But the idea that trees can be used to signify the houses built with the good obtained from them, is one that cannot be sustained from Isa. 9:9 (10), where the reference is not to houses built of sycamore and cedar wood, but to trunks of trees of the king mentioned; nor even from Nahum 2:4 (3), where *habberoshim* refers to the fir lances which are brandished about in haughty thirst for battle. So again mountains and hills cannot denote the castles and fortifications built upon them, more especially as these are expressly mentioned in v. 15 in the most literal terms. In order to understand the prophet, we must bear in mind what the Scriptures invariably assume, from their first chapter to the very close, namely, that the totality of nature is bound up with man in one common history; that man and the totality of nature are inseparably connected together as centre and circumference; that this circumference is affected by the sin which proceeds from man, as well as by the anger or the mercy which proceeds from God to man; that the judgments of God, as the history of the nations proves, involve in fellow-suffering even that part of the creation which is not free; and that this participation in the “corruption” (*phthora*) and “glory” (*doxa*) of humanity will come out with peculiar distinctness and force at the close of the world’s history, in a manner corresponding to the commencement; and lastly, that the world in its present condition needs a *palingenesia*, or regeneration, quite as much as the corporeal nature of man, before it can become an object of good pleasure on the part of God. We cannot be surprised, therefore, that, in accordance with this fundamental view of the Scriptures, when the judgment of God fell upon Israel, it should also be described as going down to the land of Israel, and as overthrowing not only the false glory of the nation itself, but everything glorious in the surrounding nature, which had been made to minister to its national pride and love of show, and to which its sin adhered in many different ways. What the prophet foretold began to be fulfilled even in

ISAIAH	Page 54
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

the Assyrian wars. The cedar woods of Lebanon were unsparingly destroyed; the heights and valleys of the land were trodden down and laid waste; and, in the period of the great empires which commenced with Tiglath-pileser, the Holy Land was reduced to a shadow of its former promised beauty.

Isaiah 2:15, 16. The glory of nature is followed by what is lofty and glorious in the world of men, such as magnificent fortifications, grand commercial buildings, and treasures which minister to the lust of the eye. Vv. 15, 16. *“As upon every high tower, so upon every fortified wall. As upon all ships of Tarshish, so upon all works of curiosity.”* It was by erecting fortifications for offence and defence, both lofty and steep (*bâzur*, praeruptus, from *bâzar*, abrumpere, discernere), that Uzziah and Jotham especially endeavoured to serve Jerusalem and the land at large. The chronicler relates, with reference to Uzziah, in 2 Chron. 26, that he built strong towers above “the corner-gate, the valley-gate, and the southern point of the cheesemakers’ hollow,” and fortified these places, which had probably been till that time the weakest points in Jerusalem; also that he built towers in the desert (probably in the desert between Beersheba and Gaza, to increase the safety of the land, and the numerous flocks which were pastured in the *shephelah*, i.e., the western portion of southern Palestine). With regard to Jotham, it is related in both the book of Kings (2 Kings 15:32ff.) and the Chronicles, that he built the upper gate of the temple; and in the Chronicles (2 Chron. 27) that he fortified the ‘Ofel, i.e., the southern spur of the temple hill, still more strongly, and built cities on the mountains of Judah, and erected castles and towers in the forests (to watch for hostile attacks and ward them off). Hezekiah also distinguished himself by building enterprises of this kind (2 Chron. 32:27–30). But the allusion to the ships of Tarshish takes us to the times of Uzziah and Jotham, and not to those of Hezekiah (as Ps. 48:7 does to the time of Jehoshaphat); for the seaport town of Elath, which was recovered by Uzziah, was lost again to the kingdom of Judah during the reign of

Ahaz. Jewish ships sailed from this Elath (Ailath) through the Red Sea and round the coast of Africa to the harbour of Tartessus, the ancient Phoenician emporium of the maritime region watered by the Baetis (Guadalquivir), which abounded in silver, and then returned through the Pillars of Hercules (the Straits of Gibraltar: vid., Duncker, *Gesch.* i. 312–315). It was to these Tartessus vessels that the expression “ships of Tarshish” primarily referred, though it was afterwards probably applied to mercantile ships in general. The following expression, “works of curiosity” (*sechiyyoth hachemdah*), is taken in far too restricted a sense by those who limit it, as the LXX have done, to the ships already spoken of, or understand it, as Gesenius does, as referring to beautiful flags. Jerome’s rendering is correct: *“et super omne quod visu pulcrum est”* (and upon everything beautiful to look at); *seciyyâh*, from *sâcâh*, to look (see *Job*, p. 468), is sight generally. The reference therefore is to all kinds of works of art, whether in sculpture or paintings (*mascith* is used of both), which delighted the observer by their imposing, tasteful appearance. Possibly, however, there is a more especial reference to curiosities of art and nature, which were brought by the trading vessels from foreign lands.

Isaiah 2:17. Ver. 17 closes the second strophe of the proclamation of judgment appended to the earlier prophetic word: *“And the haughtiness of the people is bowed down, and the pride of the lords brought low; and Jehovah, He alone, stands exalted on that day.”* The closing refrain only varies a little from v. 11. The subjects of the verbs are transposed. With a feminine noun denoting a thing, it is almost a rule that the predicate shall be placed before it in masculine (Ges. § 147, a).

Isaiah 2:18. The closing refrain of the next two strophes is based upon the concluding clause of v. 10. The proclamation of judgment turns now to the *elilim*, which, as being at the root of all the evil, occupied the lowest place in the things of which the land was full (vv. 7, 8). In a short verse of one clause consisting of only three words, their future is declared as it were with a

lightning-flash. V. 18. "And the idols utterly pass away." The translation shows the shortness of the verse, but not the significant *synallage numeri*. The idols are one and all a mass of nothingness, which will be reduced to absolute annihilation: they will vanish *câlil*, i.e., either "they will utterly perish" (*funditus peribunt*), or, as *câlil* is not used adverbially in any other passage, "they will all perish" (*tota peribunt*, Judg. 20:40)—their images, their worship, even their names and their memory (Zech. 13:2).

Isaiah 2:19. What the idolaters themselves will do when Jehovah has so completely deprived their idols of all their divinity, is then described in v. 19: "And they will creep into caves in the rocks, and cellars in the earth, before the terrible look of Jehovah, and before the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to put the earth in terror." *Meârâh* is a natural cave, and *mechillah* a subterranean excavation: this is apparently the distinction between the two synonyms. "To put the earth in terror:" *laarotz hâ-aretz*, a significant paronomasia, which can be reproduced in Latin, thus: *ut terreat terram*. Thus the judgment would fall upon the earth without any limitation, upon men universally (compare the word *hâ-âdâm* in v. 20, which is scarcely ever applied to a single individual (Josh. 14:15), excepting, of course, the first man, but generally to men, or to the human race) and upon the totality of nature as interwoven in the history of man—one complete whole, in which sin, and therefore wrath, had gained the upper hand. When Jehovah rose up, i.e., stood up from His heavenly throne, to reveal the glory manifested in heaven, and turn its judicial fiery side towards the sinful earth, the earth would receive such a shock as would throw it into a state resembling the chaos of the beginning. We may see very clearly from Rev. 6:15, where this description is borrowed, that the prophet is here describing the last judgment, although from a national point of view and bounded by a national horizon.

Isaiah 2:20. Ver. 20 forms the commencement to the fourth strophe: "In that day will a man cast away his idols of gold and his idols of silver,

which they made for him to worship, to the moles and to the bats." The traditional text separates *lachpor peroth* into two words, though without its being possible to discover what they are supposed to mean. The reason for the separation was simply the fact that *plurilitera* were at one time altogether misunderstood and regarded as *composita*: for other *plurilitera*, written as two words, compare Isa. 61:1, Hos. 4:18, Jer. 46:20. The prophet certainly pronounced the word *lachparpârôth* (Ewald, § 157, c); and *chapharpârâh* is apparently a *mole* (lit. thrower up of the soil), *talpa*, as it is rendered by Jerome and interpreted by Rashi. Gesenius and Knobel, however, have raised this objection, that the mole is never found in houses. But are we necessarily to assume that they would throw their idols into lumber-rooms, and not hide them in holes and crevices out of doors? The mole, the shrew-mouse, and the bat, whose name (*atalleph*) is regarded by Schultens as a compound word (*atal-eph*, night-bird), are generically related, according to both ancient and modern naturalists. Bats are to birds what moles are to the smaller beasts of prey (vid., Levysohn, *Zoologie des Talmud*, p. 102). The LXX combine with these two words *l'hishtachavoth* (to worship). Malbim and Luzzatto adopt this rendering, and understand the words to mean that they would sink down to the most absurd descriptions of animal worship. But the accentuation, which does not divide the verse at עָשׂוּ-לֵוֹ, as we should expect if this were the meaning, is based upon the correct interpretation. The idolaters, convinced of the worthlessness of their idols through the judicial interposition of God, and enraged at the disastrous manner in which they had been deceived, would throw away with curses the images of gold and silver which artists' hands had made according to their instructions, and hide them in the holes of bats and in mole-hills, to conceal them from the eyes of the Judge, and then take refuge there themselves after ridding themselves of this useless and damnable burden.

Isaiah 2:21, 22. “To creep into the cavities of the stone-blocks, and into the clefts of the rocks, before the terrible look of Jehovah, and before the glory of His majesty, when He arises to put the earth in terror.” Thus ends the fourth strophe of this “*dies irae, dies illa*,” which is appended to the earlier prophetic word. But there follows, as an *epiphonem*, this *nota bene* in v. 22: *Oh, then, let man go, in whose nose is a breath; for what is he estimated at?* The Septuagint leaves this verse out altogether. But was it so utterly unintelligible then? Jerome adopted a false pointing, and has therefore given this marvellous rendering: *excelsus (bâmâh!) reputatus est ipse*, by which Luther was apparently misled. But if we look backwards and forwards, it is impossible to mistake the meaning of the verse, which must be regarded not only as the resultant of what precedes it, but also as the transition to what follows. It is preceded by the prediction of the utter demolition of everything which ministers to the pride and vain confidence of men; and in Isa. 3:1ff. the same prediction is resumed, with a more special reference to the Jewish state, from which Jehovah is about to take away every prop, so that it shall utterly collapse. Accordingly the prophet exhorts, in v. 22, to a renunciation of trust in man, and everything belonging to him, just as in Ps. 118:8, 9; 146:3, and Jer. 17:5. The construction is as general as that of a gnome. The *dat. commodi* לְךָ (Ges. § 154, 3, *e*) renders the exhortation both friendly and urgent: from regard to yourselves, for your own good, for your own salvation, desist from man, i.e., from your confidence in him, in whose nose (*in cuius naso*, the singular, as in Job 27:3; whereas the plural is used in Gen. 2:7 in the same sense, *in nares ejus*, “into his nostrils”) is a breath, a breath of life, which God gave to him, and can take back as soon as He will (Job 34:14; Ps. 104:29). Upon the breath, which passes out and in through his nose, his whole earthly existence is suspended; and this, when once lost, is gone for ever (Job 7:7). It is upon this breath, therefore, that all the confidence placed in man must rest,—a bad soil and foundation! Under these conditions, and with this liability

to perish in a moment, the worth of man as a ground of confidence is really nothing. This thought is expressed here in the form of a question: At (for) what is he estimated, or to be estimated? The passive participle *nechshâb* combines with the idea of the actual (*aestimatus*) that of the necessary (*aestimandus*), and also of the possible or suitable (*aestimabilis*); and that all the more because the Semitic languages have no special forms for the latter notions. The *Beth* is *Beth pretii*, corresponding to the Latin genitive (*quanti*) or ablative (*quanto*),—a modification of the *Beth instrumenti*, the price being regarded as the medium of exchange or purchase: “at what is he estimated,” not with what is he compared, which would be expressed by *'eth* (Isa. 53:12; compare μετά, Luke 22:37) or *'im* (Ps. 88:5). The word is בָּמָה, not בְּמָה, because this looser form is only found in cases where a relative clause follows (*eo quod*, Eccles. 3:22), and not *bammâh*, because this termination with *â* is used exclusively where the next word begins with *Aleph*, or where it is a pausal word (as in 1 Kings 22:21); in every other case we have *bammeh*. The question introduced with this *quanto (quanti)*, “at what,” cannot be answered by any positive definition of value. The worth of man, regarded in himself, and altogether apart from God, is really nothing.

The proclamation of judgment pauses at this *porisma*, but only for the purpose of gathering fresh strength. The prophet has foretold in four strophes the judgment of God upon every exalted thing in the *kosmos* that has fallen away from communion with God, just as Amos commences his book with a round of judgments, which are uttered in seven strophes of uniform scope, bursting like seven thunder-claps upon the nations of the existing stage of history. The seventh stroke falls upon Judah, over which the thunderstorm rests after finding such abundant booty. And in the same manner Isaiah, in the instance before us, reduces the universal proclamation of judgment to one more especially affecting Judah and Jerusalem.

ISAIAH	Page 57
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

The current of the address breaks through the bounds of the strophe; and the exhortation in Isa. 2:22 not to trust in man, the reason for which is assigned in what precedes, also forms a transition from the universal proclamation of judgment to the more special one in Isa. 3:1, where the prophet assigns a fresh ground for the exhortation:—

Isaiah 3

Isaiah 3:1. *“For, behold, the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah supporter and means of support, every support of bread and every support of water.”* The divine name given here, “The Lord, Jehovah of hosts,” with which Isaiah everywhere introduces the judicial acts of God (cf., Isa. 1:24; 10:16, 33; 19:4), is a proof that the proclamation of judgment commences afresh here. Trusting in man was the crying sin, more especially of the times of Uzziah-Jotham. The glory of the kingdom at that time carried the wrath of Jehovah within it. The outbreak of that wrath commenced in the time of Ahaz; and even under Hezekiah it was merely suspended, not changed. Isaiah foretells this outbreak of wrath. He describes how Jehovah will lay the Jewish state in ruins, by taking away the main supports of its existence and growth. “Supporter and means of support” (*mash’en* and *mash’edah*) express, first of all, the general idea. The two nouns, which are only the masculine and feminine forms of one and the same word (compare Mic. 2:4, Nahum 2:11, and the examples from the Syriac and Arabic in Ewald, § 172, c), serve to complete the generalization: *fulcra omne genus* (props of every kind, *omnigena*). They are both technical terms, denoting the prop which a person uses to support anything, whilst *mish’an* signifies that which yields support; so that the three correspond somewhat to the Latin *fulcrum*, *fulcra*, *fulcimen*. Of the various means of support, bread and wine are mentioned first, not in a figurative sense, but as the two indispensable conditions and the lowest basis of human life. Life is supported by bread and water: it walks, as it were, upon the crutch of

bread, so that “breaking the staff of bread” (Lev. 26:26; Ezek. 4:16; 5:16; 14:13; Ps. 105:16) is equivalent to physical destruction. The destruction of the Jewish state would accordingly be commenced by a removal on the part of Jehovah of all the support afforded by bread and water, i.e., all the stores of both. And this was literally fulfilled, for both in the Chaldean and Roman times Jerusalem perished in the midst of just such terrible famines as are threatened in the curses in Lev. 26, and more especially in Deut. 28; and in both cases the inhabitants were reduced to such extremities, that women devoured their own children (Lam. 2:20; Josephus, Wars of Jews, vi. 3, 3, 4). It is very unjust, therefore, on the part of modern critics, such as Hitzig, Knobel, and Meier, to pronounce v. 1b a gloss, and, in fact, a false one. Gesenius and Umbreit retracted this suspicion. The construction of the verse is just the same as that of Isa. 25:6; and it is Isaiah’s custom to explain his own figures, as we have already observed when comparing Isa. 1:7ff. and 1:23 with what preceded them. “Every support of bread and every support of water” are not to be regarded in this case as an explanation of the general idea introduced before, “supporters and means of support,” but simply as the commencement of the detailed expansion of the idea. For the enumeration of the supports which Jehovah would take away is continued in the next two verses.

Isaiah 3:2, 3. *“Hero and man of war, judge and prophet, and soothsayer and elder; captains of fifty, and the highly distinguished, and counsellors, and masters in art, and those skilled in muttering.”* As the state had grown into a military state under Uzziah-Jotham, the prophet commences in both verses with military officers, viz., the *gibbor*, i.e., commanders whose bravery had been already tried; the “man of war” (*ish milchâmâh*), i.e., private soldiers who had been equipped and well trained (see Ezek. 39:20); and the “captain of fifty” (*sar chamisshim*), leaders of the smallest divisions of the army, consisting of only fifty men (*pentekontarchos*, 2 Kings 1:9, etc.). The prominent members of the state are all mixed

up together; “the judge” (*shophet*), i.e., the officers appointed by the government to administer justice; “the elder” (*zâkên*), i.e., the heads of families and the senators appointed by the town corporations; the “counsellor” (*yôetz*), those nearest to the king; the “highly distinguished” (*nesu panim*), lit., those whose personal appearance (*panim*) was accepted, i.e., welcome and regarded with honour (Saad.: *wa’gîh*, from *wa’gh*, the face of appearance), that is to say, persons of influence, not only on account of their office, but also on account of wealth, age, goodness, etc.; “masters in art” (*chacam charâshim*: LXX σοφοὶ ἀρχιτέκτων), or, as Jerome has very well rendered it, *in artibus mechanicis exercitatus easque callide tractans* (persons well versed in mechanical arts, and carrying them out with skill). In the Chaldean captivities skilled artisans are particularly mentioned as having been carried away (2 Kings 24:14ff.; Jer. 24:1; 29:2); so that there can be no doubt whatever that *charâshim* (from *cheresh*) is to be understood as signifying *mechanical* and not *magical* arts, as Gesenius, Hitzig, and Meier suppose, and therefore that *chacam charâshim* does not mean “wizards,” as Ewald renders it (*chârâshim* is a different word from *chârâshim*, *fabri*, from *chârâsh*, although in 1 Chron. 4:14, cf., Neh. 11:35, the word is regularly pointed מְרַשְׁשִׁים even in this personal sense). Moreover, the rendering “wizards” produces tautology, inasmuch as masters of the black art are cited as *nebon lachash*, “skilled in muttering.” *Lachash* is the whispering or muttering of magical formulas; it is related both radically and in meaning to *nachash*, enchantment (Arabic *nachs*, misfortune); it is derived from *lâchash*, *sibilare*, to hiss (a kindred word to *nâchash*; hence *nâchâsh*, a serpent). Beside this, the masters of the black art are also represented as *kosem*, which, in accordance with the radical idea of making fast, swearing, conjuring, denoted a soothsayer following heathen superstitions, as distinguished from the *nabi*, of false Jehovah prophet (we find this as early as Deut. 18:10, 14). These came next to bread and water, and were in a higher grade the props of the state. They are mixed together

in this manner without regular order, because the powerful and splendid state was really a *quodlibet* of things Jewish and heathen; and when the wrath of Jehovah broke out, the godless glory would soon become a mass of confusion.

Isaiah 3:4. Thus robbed of its support, and torn out of its proper groove, the kingdom of Judah would fall a prey to the most shameless despotism: “*And I give them boys for princes, and caprices shall rule over them.*” The revived “Solomonian” glory is followed, as before, by the times of Rehoboam. The king is not expressly named. This was intentional. He had sunk into the mere shadow of a king: it was not he who ruled, but the aristocratic party that surrounded him, who led him about in leading strings as *unum inter pares*. Now, if it is a misfortune in most cases for a king to be a child (*na’ar*, Eccles. 10:16), the misfortune is twice as great when the princes or magnates who surround and advise him are youngsters (*ne’ârim*, i.e., young lords) in a bad sense. It produces a government of *taalulim*. None of the nouns in this form have a personal signification. According to the primary meaning of the verbal stem, the word might signify childishnesses, equivalent to little children (the abstract for the concrete, like τὰ παιδικά, *amasius*), as Ewald supposes; or puppets, *fantocci*, poltroons, or men without heart or brain, as Luzzatto maintains. But the latter has no support in the general usage of the language, and the verb *yimshelu* (shall rule) does not necessarily require a personal subject (cf., Ps. 19:14; 103:19). The word *taalulim* is formed from the reflective verb *hithallel*, which means to meddle, to gratify one’s self, to indulge one’s caprice. Accordingly *taalulim* itself might be rendered *vexationes* (Isa. 66:4). Jerome, who translates the word *effeminati*, appears to have thought of לְהַעֲלֵל in an erotic sense. The Sept. rendering, ἐμπαῖκται, is better, though ἐμπαίγματα would be more exact. When used, as the word is here, along with *ne’arim*, it signifies outbursts of youthful caprice, which do injury to others, whether in joke or earnest. Neither

law nor justice would rule, but the very opposite of justice: a course of conduct which would make subjects, like slaves, the helpless victims at one time of their lust (Judg. 19:25), and at another of their cruelty. They would be governed by lawless and bloodstained caprice, of the most despotic character and varied forms. And the people would resemble their rulers: their passions would be let loose, and all restraints of modesty and decorum be snapt asunder.

Isaiah 3:5. *“And the people oppress one another, one this and another that; the boy breaks out violently upon the old man, and the despised upon the honoured.”* *Niggas* is the reciprocal *niphāl*, as the clause depicting the reciprocity clearly shows (cf., *nilcham*, Isa. 19:2); *nagas* followed by *Beth* means to treat as a tyrant or taskmaster (Isa. 9:3). The commonest selfishness would then stifle every nobler motive; one would become the tyrant of another, and ill-mannered insolence would take the place of that reverence, which is due to the old and esteemed from boys and those who are below them in position, whether we regard the law of nature, the Mosaic law (Lev. 19:32), or the common custom of society. *Nikleh* (from *kâlâh*, the synonym of *לָקַח*, Isa. 8:23; 23:9; cf., Isa. 16:14, *kal*, to be light or insignificant) was a term used to denote whoever belonged to the lowest stratum of society (1 Sam. 18:23). It was the opposite of *nicbâd* (from *cabed*, to be heavy or of great importance). The Septuagint rendering, ὁ ἄτιμος πρὸς τὸν ἔντιμον is a very good one (as the Semitic languages have no such antithetical formations with *ἄ* στερητικόν). With such contempt of the distinctions arising from age and position, the state would very soon become a scene of the wildest confusion.

Isaiah 3:6, 7. At length there would be no authorities left; even the desire to rule would die out: for despotism is sure to be followed by mob-rule, and mob-rule by anarchy in the most literal sense. The distress would become so great, that whoever had a coat (cloak), so as to be able to clothe himself at all decently, would be asked to undertake the government. Vv. 6, 7.

“When a man shall take hold of his brother in his father’s house, Thou hast a coat, thou shalt be our ruler, and take this ruin under thy hand; he will cry out in that day, I do not want to be a surgeon; there is neither bread nor coat in my house: ye cannot make me the ruler of the people.” *“his father’s house”*—this is not an unmeaning trait in the picture of misery. The population would have become so thin and dispirited through hunger, that with a little energy it would be possible to decide within the narrow circle of a family who should be ruler, and to give effect to the decision. *“In his father’s house:”* *Beth âbiv* is an *acc. loci*. The father’s house is the place where brother meets with brother; and one breaks out with the urgent petition contained in the words, which follow without the introductory *“saying”* (cf., Isa. 14:8, 16, and 22:16; 33:14). לְכָה for דָּלָה with *He otians*, a form rarely met with (vid., Gen. 27:37). תְּהִי, which would be written תְּהִי before the predicate, is jussive in meaning, though not in form. *“This ruin:”* *macshelah* is used in Zeph. 1:3 for that which occasions a person’s fall; here it signifies what has been overthrown; and as *câshal* itself, which means not only to stumble, strip, or slide, but also to fall in consequence of some force applied from without, is not used in connection with falling buildings, it must be introduced here with an allusion to the prosopopeia which follows in v. 8. The man who was distinguished above all others, or at any rate above many others, by the fact that he could still dress himself decently (even if it were only in a blouse), should be made supreme ruler or dictator (cf., *kâtzin*, Judg. 11:6); and the state which lay so miserably in ruins should be under his hand, i.e., his direction, protection, and care (2 Kings 8:20; Gen. 41:35, cf., Isa. 16:9, where the plural is used instead of the ordinary singular *yâd*). The apodosis to the protasis introduced with *chi* as a particle of time (*when*) commences in v. 7. The answer given by the brother to the earnest petition is introduced with *“he will raise (viz., his voice, Isa. 24:14) in that day, saying.”* It is given in this circumstantial manner because it

is a solemn protest. He does not want to be a *chobēsh*, i.e., a *binder*, namely of the broken arms, and bones, and ribs of the ruined state (Isa. 30:26; 1:6; 61:1). The expression *ehyeh* implies that he does not like it, because he is conscious of his inability. He has not confidence enough in himself, and the assumption that he has a coat is a false one: he not only has no coat at home (we must remember that the conversation is supposed to take place in his father's house), but he has not any bread; so that it is utterly impossible for a naked, starving man like him to do what is suggested ("in my house," *ubebethi* with a *Vav* of causal connection: Ges. 155, 1, c).

Isaiah 3:8. The prophet then proceeds, in vv. 8–12, to describe this deep, tragical misery as a just retribution. V. 8. "For Jerusalem is ruined and Judah fallen; because their tongue and their doings (are) against Jehovah, to defy the eyes of His glory." Jerusalem as a city is feminine, according to the usual personification; Judah as a people is regarded as masculine. The two preterites *cāsh'lâh* and *nâphal* express the general fact, which occasioned such scenes of misery as the one just described. The second clause, beginning with "because" (*chi*), is a substantive clause, and attributes the coming judgment not to future sin, but to sin already existing. "Again Jehovah:" לֹא־יִשְׁמַח is used to denote a hostile attitude, as in Isa. 2:4, Gen. 4:8, Num. 32:14, Josh. 10:6. The capital and the land are against Jehovah both in word and deed, "to defy the eyes of His glory" (*lamroth 'ēnē chebodo*). לֹא־יִשְׁמַח is equivalent to לֹא־יִשְׁמַח; and *lamroth* is a syncopated *hiphil*, as in Isa. 23:11, and like the *niphil* in Isa. 1:12: we find the same form of the same word in Ps. 78:17. The *kal mârâh*, which is also frequently construed with the accusative, signifies to thrust away in a refractory manner; the *hiphil himrâh*, to treat refractorily, literally to set one's self rigidly in opposition, *obniti; mar, stringere*, to draw tightly, with which unquestionably the meaning bitter as an astringent is connected, though it does not follow that *mârâh, himrâh*, and *hemar* (Ex. 23:21) can be rendered παραπικραίνειν, as they

have been in the Septuagint, since the idea of opposing, resisting, fighting in opposition, is implied in all these roots, with distinct reference to the primary meaning. The *Lamed* is a shorter expression instead of לָמַד, which is the term generally employed in such circumstances (Amos 2:7; Jer. 7:18; 32:29). But what does the prophet mean by "the eyes of His glory?" Knobel's assertion, that *châbod* is used here for the religious glory, i.e., the holiness of God, is a very strange one, since the *châbod* of God is invariably the fiery, bright *doxa* which reveals Him as the Holy One. but his remark does not meet the question, inasmuch as it does not settle the point in dispute, whether the expression "the eyes of His glory" implies that the glory itself has eyes, or the glory is a quality of the eyes. The construction is certainly not a different one from "the arm of His glory" in Isa. 52:10, so that it is to be taken as an attribute. But this suggests the further question, what does the prophet mean by the glory-eyes or glorious eyes of Jehovah? If we were to say the eyes of Jehovah are His knowledge of the world, it would be impossible to understand how they could be called holy, still less how they could be called glorious. This abstract explanation of the anthropomorphisms cannot be sustained. The state of the case is rather the following. The glory (*chabod*) of God is that eternal and glorious *morphe* which His holy nature assumes, and which men must picture to themselves anthropomorphically, because they cannot imagine anything superior to the human form. In this glorious form Jehovah looks upon His people with eyes of glory. His pure but yet jealous love, His holy love which breaks out in wrath against all who meet it with hatred instead of with love, is reflected therein.

Isaiah 3:9. But Israel, instead of walking in the consciousness of being a constant and favourite object of these majestic, earnestly admonishing eyes, was diligently engaged in bidding them defiance both in word and deed, not even hiding its sin from fear of them, but exposing them to view in the most shameless manner.— V. 9. "The look of their faces testifies against

them, and their sin they make known like Sodom, without concealing it: woe to their soul! for they do themselves harm." In any case, the prophet refers to the impudence with which their enmity against God was shamelessly stamped upon their faces, without even the self-condemnation which leads in other cases to a diligent concealment of the sin. But we cannot follow Luzzatto and Jos. Kimchi, who take *haccârath* as used directly for *azzuth* (impudence), inasmuch as the Arabic *hakara* (*hakir'a*), to which Kimchi appeals, signifies to be astonished and to stare (see at Job 19:3). And in this case there would be nothing strange in the substantive form, which would be a *piel* formation like *בְּלִקְחָהּ תִּפְאַחַח*. But it may be a *hiphil* formation (Ewald, § 156, a); and this is incomparably the more probable of the two, as *hiccir panim* is a very common phrase. It signifies to look earnestly, keenly, or inquiringly in the face of a person, to fix the eye upon him; and, when used of a judge, to take the part of a person, by favouring him unjustly (Deut. 1:17; 16:19). But this latter idea, viz., "their acceptance of the person, or partiality" (according to Prov. 24:23; 28:21), is inadmissible here, for the simple reason that the passage refers to the whole nation, and not particularly to the judges. "The look of their faces" (*haccârath p'nêhem*) is to be understood in an objective sense, viz., the appearance (*τὸ εἶδος*, Luke 9:29), like the *agnitio* of Jerome, *id quo se agnoscendum dat vultus eorum*. This was probably the expression commonly employed in Hebrew for what we designate by a very inappropriate foreign word, viz., physiognomy, i.e., the expression of the face which reveals the state of the mind. This expression of their countenance testified against them (*anah b'*, as in Isa. 59:12), for it was the disturbed and distorted image of their sin, which not only could not be hidden, but did not even wish to be; in a word, of their *azzuth* (Eccles. 8:1). And it did not even rest with this open though silent display: they spoken openly of their sin (*higgid* in its simplest meaning, *palam facere*, from *nâgad*, *nagâda*, to be open, evident) without making any secret of it, like the Sodomites, who

publicly proclaimed their fleshly lusts (Gen. 19). Jerusalem was spiritually Sodom, as the prophet called it in Isa. 1:10. By such barefaced sinning they did themselves harm (*gâmal*, lit., to finish, then to carry out, to show practically).

Isaiah 3:10, 11. The prophet's meaning is evident enough. But inasmuch as it is the curse of sin to distort the knowledge of what is most obvious and self-evident, and even to take it entirely away, the prophet dwells still longer upon the fact that all sinning is self-destruction and self-murder, placing this general truth against its opposite in a palillogical Johannic way, and calling out to his contemporaries in vv. 10, 11: "Say of the righteous, that it is well with him; for they will enjoy the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked! it is ill; for what his hands have wrought will be done to him." We cannot adopt the rendering "Praise the righteous," proposed by Vitringa and other modern commentators; for although *âmar* is sometimes construed with the accusative of the object (Ps. 40:11; 145:6, 11), it never means to praise, but to declare (even in Ps. 40:11). We have here what was noticed from Gen. 1:4 onwards,—namely, the obvious *antiptôsis* or *antiphonêsis* in the verbs *רָאָה* (cf., Isa. 22:9, Ex. 2:2), *יָדַע* (1 Kings 5:17), and *אָמַר* (like *λέγειν*, John 9:9): *dicite justum quod bonus = dicite justum esse bonum* (Ewald, § 336, b). The object of sight, knowledge, or speech, is first of all mentioned in the most general manner; then follows the qualification, or more precise definition. *טוֹב*, and in v. 11 *רַע* (*רַע* without the pause), might both of them be the third pers. pret. of the verbs, employed in a neuter sense: the former signifying, it is well, viz., with him (as in Deut. 5:30, Jer. 22:15, 16); the latter, it is bad (as in Ps. 106:32). But it is evident from Jer. 44:17 that *טוֹב הוּא* and *רַע הוּא* may be used in the sense of *καλῶς* (*κακῶς*) *ἔχει*, and that the two expressions are here thought of in this way, so that there is no *לֹ* to be supplied in either case. The form of the first favours this; and in the second the accentuation fluctuates between *אֹי תiphchah* *לרשע* *munach*, and the former with

merka, the latter *tiphchah*. At the same time, the latter mode of accentuation, which is favourable to the personal rendering of ער, is supported by editions of some worth, such as Brescia 1494, Pesaro 1516, Venice 1515, 1521, and is justly preferred by Luzzatto and Bär. The summary assertions, The righteous is well, the wicked ill, are both sustained by their eventual fate, in the light of which the previous misfortune of the righteous appears as good fortune, and the previous good fortune of the wicked as misfortune. With an allusion to this great difference in their eventual fate, the word "say," which belongs to both clauses, summons to an acknowledgment of the good fortune of the one and the misfortune of the other. O that Judah and Jerusalem would acknowledge their to their own salvation before it was too late! For the state of the poor nation was already miserable enough, and very near to destruction.

Isaiah 3:12. "My people, its oppressors are boys, and women rule over it; my people, thy leaders are misleaders, who swallow up the way of thy paths." It is not probable that *me'olel* signifies maltreaters or triflers, by the side of the parallel *nashim*; moreover, the idea of despotic treatment is already contained in *nogesaiv*. We expect to find children where there are women. And this is one meaning of *me'olel*. It does not mean a suckling, however, as Ewald supposes (§ 160, a), more especially as it occurs in connection with *yonek* (Jer. 44:7; Lam. 2:11), and therefore cannot have precisely the same meaning; but, like ללע and ללע (the former of which may be contracted from *meolēl*), it refers to the boy as playful and wanton (*Lascivum, protervum*). Böttcher renders it correctly, *pueri, lusores*, though *meolēl* is not in itself a collective form, as he supposes; but the singular is used collectively, or perhaps better still, the predicate is intended to apply to every individual included in the plural notion of the subject (compare Isa. 16:8; 20:4, and Ges. § 146, 4): the oppressors of the people, every one without exception, were (even though advance din years) mere boys or youths in their mode of thinking and acting, and made all subject to

them the football of their capricious humour. Here again the person of the king is allowed to fall into the background. but the female rule, referred to afterwards, points us to the court. And this must really have been the case when Ahaz, a young rake, came to the throne at the age of twenty (according to the LXX twenty-five), possibly towards the close of the reign of Jotham. With the deepest anguish the prophet repeats the expression "my people," as he passes in his address to his people from the rulers to the preachers: for the *meassherim* or leaders are prophets (Mic. 3:5); but what prophets! Instead of leading the people in a straight path, they lead them astray (Isa. 9:15, cf., 2 Kings 21:9). This they did, as we may gather from the history of this crowd of prophets, either by acting in subservience to the ungodly interests of the court with dynastic or demagogical servility, or by flattering the worst desires of the people. Thus the way of the path of the people, i.e., the highway or road by whose ramifying paths the people were to reach the appointed goal, had been swallowed up by them, i.e., taken away from the sight and feet of the people, so that they could not find it and walk therein (cf., Isa. 25:7, 8, where the verb is used in another connection). What is swallowed up is invisible, has disappeared, without a grace being left behind. The same idea is applied in Job 39:27 to a galloping horse, which is said to swallow the road, inasmuch as it leaves piece after piece behind it in its rapid course. It is stated here with regard to the prophets, that they swallow up the road appointed by Jehovah, as the one in which His people were to walk, just as a criminal swallows a piece of paper which bears witness against him, and so hides it in his own stomach. Thus the way of salvation pointed out by the law was no longer to be either heard of or seen. The prophets, who ought to have preached it, said *mum, mum*, and kept it swallowed. It had completely perished, as it were, in the erroneous preaching of the false prophets.

Isaiah 3:13. This was how it stood. There was but little to be expected from the exhortations of the prophet; so that he had to come back

again and again to the proclamation of judgment. The judgment of the world comes again before his mind.—V. 13. “*Jehovah has appeared to plead, and stands up to judge the nations.*” When Jehovah, weary with His long-suffering, rises up from His heavenly throne, this is described as “standing up” (*kum*, Isa. 2:19, 21; 33:10); and when He assumes the judgment-seat in the sight of all the world, this is called “sitting down” (*yashab*, Ps. 9:5, Joel 4:12); when, having come down from heaven (Mic. 1:2ff.), He comes forward as accuser, this is called “standing” (*nizzab* or *amad*, Ps. 82:1: *amad* is coming forward and standing, as the opposite of sitting; *nizzab*, standing, with the subordinate idea of being firm, resolute, ready). This pleading (*ribh*, Jer. 25:31) is also judging (*din*), because His accusation, which is incontrovertible, contains the sentence in itself; and His sentence, which executes itself irresistibly, is of itself the infliction of punishment. Thus does he stand in the midst of the nations at once accuser, judge, and executioner (Ps. 7:8). But among the nations it is more especially against Israel that He contends; and in Israel it is more especially against the leaders of the poor misguided and neglected people that He sets Himself.

Isaiah 3:14, 15. “*Jehovah will proceed to judgment with the elders of His people, and its princes. And ye, ye have eaten up the vineyard; prey of the suffering is in your houses. What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the suffering? Thus saith the Lord Jehovah of hosts.*” The words of God Himself commence with “and ye” (*v’attem*). The sentence to which this (*et vos = at vos*) is the antithesis is wanting, just as in Ps. 2:6, where the words of God commence with “and I” (*va’ani, et ego = ast ego*). the tacit clause may easily be supplied, viz., I have set you over my vineyard, but he have consumed the vineyard. The only question is, whether the sentence is to be regarded as suppressed by Jehovah Himself, or by the prophet. Most certainly by Jehovah Himself. The majesty with which He appeared before the rulers of His people as, even without words, a practical and undeniable proof that their

majesty was only a shadow of His, and their office His trust. But their office consisted in the fact that Jehovah had committed His people to their care. The vineyard of Jehovah was His people—a self-evident figure, which the prophet dresses up in the form of a parable in Isa. 5. Jehovah had appointed them as gardeners and keepers of this vineyard, but they themselves have become the very beasts that they ought to have warded off. בֵּיטֵר is applied to the beasts which completely devour the blades of a corn-field or the grapes of a vineyard (Ex. 22:4). This change was perfectly obvious. The possessions stolen from their unhappy countrymen, which were still in their houses, were the tangible proof of their plundering of the vineyard. “The suffering:” *’ani* (*depressus*, the crushed) is introduced as explanatory of *haccerem*, the prey, because depression and misery were the ordinary fate of the congregation which God called His vineyard. It was *ecclesia pressa*, but woe to the oppressors! In the question “what mean ye?” (*mallâcem*) the madness and wickedness of their deeds are implied. מָה and לָכֶם are fused into one word here, as if it were a prefix (as in Ex. 4:2, Ezek. 8:6, Mal. 1:13; vid., Ges. § 20, 2). The *keri* helps to make it clear by resolving the *chethibh*. The word *mallâcem* ought, strictly speaking, to be followed by *chi*: “What is there to you that ye crush my people?” as in Isa. 22:1, 16; but the words rush forwards (as in Jonah 1:6), because they are an explosion of wrath. For this reason the expressions relating to the behaviour of the rulers are the strongest that can possibly be employed. אָדָּם (crush) is also to be met with in Prov. 22:22; but “grind the face” (*tâchan p’ne*) is a strong metaphor without a parallel. The former signifies “to pound,” the latter “to grind,” as the millstone grinds the corn. They grind the faces of those who are already bowed down, thrusting them back with such unmerciful severity, that they stand as it were annihilated, and their faces become as white as flour, or as the Germans would say, cheese-white, chalk-white, as pale as death, from oppression and despair. Thus the

language supplied to a certain extent appropriate figures, with which to describe the conduct of the rulers of Israel; but it contained no words that could exhaust the immeasurable wickedness of their conduct: hence the magnitude of their sin is set before them in the form of a question, "What is to you?" i.e., What indescribable wickedness is this which you are committing? The prophet hears this said by Jehovah, the majestic Judge, whom he here describes as *Adonai Elohim Zebaoth* (according to the Masoretic pointing). This triplex name of God, which we find in the prophetic books, viz., frequently in Amos and also in Jer. 2:19, occurs for the first time in the Elohist Psalm, Ps. 69:7. This scene of judgment is indeed depicted throughout in the colours of the Psalms, and more especially recalls the (Elohist) Psalm of Asaph (Ps. 82).

Isaiah 3:16, 17. But notwithstanding the dramatic vividness with which the prophet pictures to himself this scene of judgment, he is obliged to break off at the very beginning of his description, because another word of Jehovah comes upon him. This applies to the women of Jerusalem, whose authority, at the time when Isaiah prophesied, was no less influential than that of their husbands who had forgotten their calling.—V. 16, 17. "*Jehovah hath spoken: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk about with extended throat, and blinking with the eyes, walk about with tripping gait, and tinkle with their foot-ornaments: the Lord of all makes the crown of the daughters of Zion scabbed, and Jehovah will uncover their shame.*" Their inward pride (*gâbah*, as in Ezek. 16:50; cf., Zeph. 3:11) shows itself outwardly. They walk with extended throat, i.e., bending the neck back, trying to make themselves taller than they are, because they think themselves so great. The *keri* substitutes the more usual form, כְּרִי; but Isaiah in all probability intentionally made use of the rarer and ruder form *netuvoth*, since such a form really existed (1 Sam. 25:18), as well as the singular *nâtu* for *nâtui* (Job 15:22; 41:25; Ges. § 75, Anm. 5). They also went winking the eyes (*mesakkeroth*, for which we

frequently find the erratum *meshakkeroth*), i.e., casting voluptuous and amatory glances with affected innocence (νεύματα ὀφθαλμῶν, LXX). "*Winking:*" *sâkar* is not used in the sense of *fucare* (Targ. b. *Sabbath* 62b, *Jome* 9b, Luther),—which is all the more inappropriate, because blackening the eyelids with powder of antimony was regarded in the East of the Old Testament as indispensable to female beauty,—but in the sense of *nictare* (LXX, Vulg., Syr., *syn. remaz*, cf., *sekar*, Syr. to squint; Targ. = *shâzaph*, Job 20:9). Compare also the talmudic saying: God did not create woman out of Adam's ear, that she might be no eavesdropper (*tsaithânith*), nor out of Adam's eyes, that she might be no winker (*sakrânith*). The third was, that they walked *incedendo et trepidando*. The second inf. abs. is in this case, as in most others, the one which gives the distinct tone, whilst the other serves to keep before the eye the occurrence indicated in its finite verb (Ges. § 131, 3). They walk about tripping (*tâphoph*, a wide-spread onomato-poetic word), i.e., taking short steps, just putting the heel of one foot against the toe of the other (as the Talmud explains it). Luther renders it, "they walk along and waggle" (*schwânzen*, i.e., *clunibus agitatis*). The rendering is suitable, but incorrect. They could only take short steps, because of the chains by which the costly foot-rings (*achâsim*) worn above their ankles were connected together. These chains, which were probably ornamented with bells, as is sometimes the case now in the East, they used to tinkle as they walked: they made an ankle-tinkling with their feet, setting their feet down in such a manner that these ankle-rings knocked against each other. The writing *beraglêhem* (masc.) for *beraglêhen* (fem.) is probably not an unintentional *synallage gen.*: they were not modest *virgines*, but cold, masculine *viragines*, so that they themselves were a *synallage generis*. Nevertheless they tripped along. Tripping is a child's step. Nevertheless they tripped along. Tripping is a child's step. Although well versed in sin and old in years, the women of Jerusalem tried to maintain a youthful, childlike appearance. They therefore

tripped along with short, childish steps. The women of the Mohammedan East still take pleasure in such coquettish tinklings, although they are forbidden by the Koran, just as the women of Jerusalem did in the days of Isaiah. The attractive influence of natural charms, especially when heightened by luxurious art, is very great; but the prophet is blind to all this splendour, and seeing nothing but the corruption within, foretells to these rich and distinguished women a foul and by no means aesthetic fate. The Sovereign Ruler of all would smite the crown of their head, from which long hair was now flowing, with scab (*v'sippach*, a progressive preterite with *Vav apodosis*, a denom. verb from *sappachath*, the scurf which adheres to the skin: see at Hab. 2:15); and Jehovah would uncover their nakedness, by giving them up to violation and abuse at the hands of coarse and barbarous foes,—the greatest possible disgrace in the eyes of a woman, who covers herself as carefully as she can in the presence of any stranger (Isa. 47:3; Nahum 3:5; Jer. 13:22; Ezek. 16:37).

Isaiah 3:18–23. The prophet then proceeds to describe still further how the Lord would take away the whole of their toilet as plunder. Vv. 18–23. *“On that day the Lord will put away the show of the ankle-clasps, and of the head-bands, and of the crescents; the ear-rings, and the arm-chains, and the light veils; the diadems, and the stepping-chains, and the girdles, and the smelling-bottles, and the amulets; the finger-rings, and the nose-rings; the gala-dresses, and the sleeve-frocks, and the wrappers, and the pockets; the hand-mirrors, and the Sindu-cloths, and the turbans, and the gauze mantles.”* The fullest explanation of all these articles of female attire is to be found in N. W. Schröder's work, entitled *Commentarius de vestitu mulierum Hebraearum ad Jes. 3:16–24*, Ludg. Batav. 1745 (a quarto volume), and in that of Ant. Theod. Hartmann, consisting of three octavo volumes, and entitled *Die Hebräerin am Putztische und als Braut* (The Jewess at the Toilet-table, and as Bride, 1809–10); to which we may also add, Saalschütz, *Archaeologie*, ch. iii., where he treats of the dresses of men and women. It was not

usually Isaiah's custom to enter into such minute particulars. Of all the prophets, Ezekiel was the one most addicted to this, as we may see, for example, from Ezek. 16. And even in other prophecies against the women we find nothing of the kind again (Isa. 32:9ff.; Amos 4:1ff.). But in this instance, the enumeration of the female ornaments is connected with that of the state props in Isa. 3:1–3, and that of the lofty and exalted in Isa. 2:13–16, so as to form a trilogy, and has its own special explanation in that boundless love of ornament which had become prevalent in the time of Uzziah-Jotham. It was the prophet's intention to produce a ludicrous, but yet serious impression, as to the immeasurable luxury which really existed; and in the prophetic address, his design throughout is to bring out the glaring contrast between the titanic, massive, worldly glory, in all its varied forms, and that true, spiritual, and majestically simple glory, whose reality is manifested from within outwards. In fact, the theme of the whole address is the way of universal judgment leading on from the false glory to the true. The general idea of *tiphereth* (show: rendered “bravery” in Eng. ver.) which stands at the head and includes the whole, points to the contrast presented by a totally different *tiphereth* which follows in Isa. 4:2. In explaining each particular word, we must be content with what is most necessary, and comparatively the most certain. *“Ankle-clasps”* (*acâsim*): these were rings of gold, silver, or ivory, worn round the ankles; hence the denom. verb (*icces*) in v. 16, to make a tinkling sound with these rings. *“Head-bands,”* or *“frontlets”* (*shebisim*, from *shâbas* = *shâbatz: plectere*), were plaited bands of gold or silver thread worn below the hair-net, and reaching from one ear to the other. There is some force, however, in the explanation which has been very commonly adopted since the time of Schröder, namely, that they were sun-like balls (= *shemisim*), which were worn as ornaments round the neck, from the Arabic *'sumeisa* (*'subeisa*), a little sun. The *“crescents”* (*saharonim*) were little pendants of this kind, fastened round the neck and hanging down upon the breast (in Judg. 8:21 we meet with

them as ornaments hung round the camels' necks). Such ornaments are still worn by Arabian girls, who generally have several different kinds of them; the *hilâl*, or new moon, being a symbol of increasing good fortune, and as such the most approved charm against the evil eye. "Ear-rings" (*netiphoth*, ear-drops): we meet with these in Judg. 8:26, as an ornament worn by Midianitish kings. Hence the Arabic *munattafe*, a woman adorned with ear-rings. "Arm-chains:" *sheroth*, from *shâra*, to twist. According to the Targum, these were chains worn upon the arm, or spangles upon the wrist, answering to the spangles upon the ankles. "Fluttering veils" (*re'âloth*, from *râ'al*, to hang loose): these were more expensive than the ordinary veils worn by girls, which were called *tza'iph*.

"Diadems" (*pe'erim*) are only mentioned in other parts of the Scriptures as being worn by men (e.g., by priests, bride-grooms, or persons of high rank). "Stepping-chains:" *tze'âdoth*, from *tze'âdah*, a step; hence the chain worn to shorten and give elegance to the step. "Girdles:" *kisshurim*, from *kâshar* (*cingere*), dress girdles, such as were worn by brides upon their wedding-day (compare Jer. 2:32 with Isa. 49:18); the word is erroneously rendered hair-pins (*kalmasmezayyah*) in the Targum. "Smelling-bottles:" *botte hannepesh*, holders of scent (*nepesh*, the breath of an aroma). "Amulets:" *lechashim* (from *lâchash*, to work by incantations), gems or metal plates with an inscription upon them, which were worn as a protection as well as an ornament. "Finger-rings:" *tabbâ'oth*, from *tâba*, to impress or seal, signet-rings worn upon the finger, corresponding to the *chothâm* worn by men upon the breast suspended by a cord. "Nose-rings" (*nizmê hâaph*) were fastened in the central division of the nose, and hung down over the mouth: they have been ornaments in common use in the East from the time of the patriarchs (Gen. 24:22) down to the present day. "Gala-dresses" (*machalâtsoth*) are dresses not usually worn, but taken off when at home. "Sleeve-frocks" (*ma'atâphâh*): the second tunic, worn above the ordinary one, the Roman *stola*.

"Wrappers" (*mitpâchoth*, from *tâphach*, *expandere*), broad cloths wrapped round the body, such as Ruth wore when she crept in to Boaz in her best attire (Ruth 3:15). "Pockets" (*charitim*) were for holding money (2 Kings 5:23), which was generally carried by men in the girdle, or in a purse (*cis*). "Hand-mirrors" (*gilyonim*): the Septuagint renders this διαφανῆ λακωνικά, sc. ἱμάτια, Lacedaemonian gauze or transparent dresses, which showed the nakedness rather than concealed it (from *gâlâh*, *retegere*); but the better rendering is mirrors with handles, polished metal plates (from *gâlâh*, *polire*), as *gillâyon* is used elsewhere to signify a smooth table. "Sindu-cloths" (*sedinim*), veils or coverings of the finest linen, viz., of Sindu or Hindu cloth (σινδόνης),—*Sindu*, the land of Indus, being the earlier name of India. "Turbans" (*tseniphoth*, from *tsânaph*, *convolvere*), the head-dress composed of twisted cloths of different colours. "Gauze mantles" (*redidim*, from *râdad*, *extendere*, *tenuem facere*), delicate veil-like mantles thrown over the rest of the clothes. Stockings and handkerchiefs are not mentioned: the former were first introduced into Hither Asia from Media long after Isaiah's time, and a Jerusalem lady no more thought of suing the latter than a Grecian or Roman lady did. Even the veil (*burko*) now commonly worn, which conceals the whole of the face with the exception of the eyes, did not form part of the attire of an Israelitish woman in the olden time. The prophet enumerates twenty-one different ornaments: three sevens of a very bad kind, especially for the husbands of these state-dolls. There is no particular order observed in the enumeration, either from head to foot, or from the inner to the outer clothing; but they are arranged as much *ad libitum* as the dress itself.

Isaiah 3:24. When Jehovah took away all this glory, with which the women of Jerusalem were adorned, they would be turned into wretched-looking prisoners, disfigured by ill-treatment and dirt.—V. 24. "And instead of balmy scent there will be mouldiness, and instead of the sash a rope, and instead of artistic ringlets a baldness, and instead of the dress-cloak a frock of

sackcloth, branding instead of beauty." Mouldiness, or *mother* (*mak*, as in Isa. 5:24, the dust of things that have moulded away), with which they would be covered, and which they would be obliged to breathe, would take the place of the *bosem*, i.e., the scent of the balsam shrub (*bâsâm*), and of sweet-scented pomade in general; and *nipâh* that of the beautifully embroidered girdle (Prov. 31:24). The meaning of this word is neither "a wound," as the Targums and Talmud render it, nor "rags," as given by Knobel, ed. 1 (from *nâkaph*, *percutere*, *perforare*), but the rope thrown over them as prisoners (from *kâphâh* = *kâvâh*, *contorquere*: LXX, Vulg., Syr.). Baldness takes the place of artistic ringlets (מַעֲשֵׂה מְקַשָּׁה, not מַעֲשֵׂה, so that it is in apposition: cf., Isa. 30:20; Ges. § 113; Ewald, § 287, *b*). The reference is not to golden ornaments for the head, as the Sept. rendering gives it, although *miksseh* is used elsewhere to signify embossed or carved work in metal or wood; but here we are evidently to understand by the "artificial twists" either curls made with the curling-tongs, or the hair plaited and twisted up in knots, which they would be obliged to cut off in accordance with the mourning customs (Isa. 15:2; 22:12), or which would fall off in consequence of grief. A frock of sackcloth (*machagoreth sak*), i.e., a smock of coarse haircloth worn next to the skin, such as Layard found depicted upon a bas-relief at Kouyunjik, would take the place of the *pethigil*, i.e., the *dress-cloak* (either from *pâthag*, to be wide or full, with the substantive termination *il*, or else composed of *pethi*, breadth, and *gil*, festive rejoicing); and *branding* the place of *beauty*. Branding (*ci* = *cevi*, from *câvâh*, *καίειν*), the mark burnt upon the forehead by their conquerors: *ci* is a substantive, not a particle, as the Targum and others render it, and as the *makkeph* might make it appear. There is something very effective in the inverted order of the words in the last clause of the five. In this five-fold reverse would shame and mourning take the place of proud, voluptuous rejoicing.

Isaiah 3:25. The prophet now passes over to a direct address to Jerusalem itself, since the

"daughters of Zion" and the daughter of Zion in her present degenerate condition. The daughter of Zion loses her sons, and consequently the daughters of Zion their husbands.—V. 25. "Thy men will fall by the sword, and thy might in war." The plural *methim* (the singular of which only occurs in the form *methu*, with the connecting vowel *û* as a component part of the proper names) is used as a prose word in the Pentateuch; but in the later literature it is a poetic archaism. "Thy might" is used interchangeably with "thy men," the possessors of the might being really intended, like *robur* and *robora* in Latin (compare Jer. 49:35).

Isaiah 3:26. What the prophet here foretells to the daughter of Zion he sees in v. 26 fulfilled upon her: "Then will her gates lament and mourn, and desolate is she, sits down upon the ground." The gates, where the husbands of the daughters of Zion, who have now fallen in war, sued at one time to gather together in such numbers, are turned into a state of desolation, in which they may, as it were, be heard complaining, and seen to mourn (Isa. 14:31; Jer. 14:2; Lam. 1:4); and the daughter of Zion herself is utterly vacated, thoroughly emptied, completely deprived of all her former population; and in this state of the most mournful widowhood or orphanage, brought down from her lofty seat (Isa. 47:1) and princely glory (Jer. 13:18), she sits down upon the ground, just as Judaea is represented as doing upon Roman medals that were struck after the destruction of Jerusalem, where she is introduced as a woman thoroughly broken down, and sitting under a palm-tree in an attitude of despair, with a warrior standing in front of her, the inscription upon the medal being *Judaea capta*, or *devicta*. The Septuagint rendering is quite in accordance with the sense, viz., *καὶ καταλειφθήσῃ μόνη καὶ εἰς τὴν γῆν ἔδραφισθήσῃ* (cf., Luke 19:44), except that *עַשְׂתָּ* is not the second person, but the third, and *נִקְתָּ* the third pers. pret. *niph.* for *נִקְתָּ*,—a pausal form which is frequently met with in connection with the smaller distinctive accents, such as *silluk* and *athnach* (here it occurs with

tiphchah, as, for example, in Amos 3:8). The clause “sits down upon the ground” is appended ἄσυνδέτως;—a frequent construction in cases where one of two verbs defines the other in a manner which is generally expressed adverbially (vid., 1 Chron. 13:2, and the inverted order of the words in Jer. 4:5; cf., 12:6): Zion sits upon the earth in a state of utter depopulation.

Isaiah 4

Isaiah 4:1. When war shall thus unsparingly have swept away the men of Zion, a most unnatural effect will ensue, namely, that women will go in search of husbands, and not men in search of wives.—Ch. 4:1. *“And seven women lay hold of one man in that day, saying, We will eat our won bread, and wear our own clothes; only let thy name be named upon us, take away our reproach.”* The division of the chapters is a wrong one here, as this verse is the closing verse of the prophecy against the women, and the closing portion of the whole address does not begin till Isa. 4:2. The present pride of the daughters of Zion, every one of whom now thought herself the greatest as the wife of such and such a man, and for whom many men were now the suitors, would end in this unnatural self-humiliation, that seven of them would offer themselves to the same man, the first man who presented himself, and even renounce the ordinary legal claim upon their husband for clothing and food (Ex. 21:10). It would be quite sufficient for them to be allowed to bear his name (“let thy name be named upon us:” the name is put upon the thing named, as giving it its distinctness and character), if he would only take away their reproach (namely, the reproach of being unmarried, Isa. 54:4, as in Gen. 30:23, of being childless) by letting them be called his wives. The number *seven* (seven women to one man) may be explained on the ground that there is a bad seven as well as a holy one (e.g., Matt. 12:45).

In Isa. 4:1 the threat denounced against the women of Jerusalem is brought to a close. It is the side-piece to the threat denounced against

the national rulers. And these two scenes of judgment were only parts of the general judgment about to fall upon Jerusalem and Judah, as a state or national community. And this again was merely a portion, viz., the central group of the picture of a far more comprehensive judgment, which was about to fall upon everything lofty and exalted on the earth. Jerusalem, therefore, stands here as the centre and focus of the great judgment-day. It was in Jerusalem that the ungodly glory which was ripe for judgment was concentrated; and it was in Jerusalem also that the light of the true and final glory would concentrate itself. To this promise, with which the address returns to its starting-point, the prophet now passes on without any further introduction. In fact it needed no introduction, for the judgment in itself was the medium of salvation. When Jerusalem was judged, it would be sifted; and by being sifted, it would be rescued, pardoned, glorified. The prophet proceeds in this sense to speak of what would happen in that day, and describes the one great day of God at the end of time (not a day of four-and-twenty hours any more than the seven days of creation were), according to its general character, as opening with judgment, but issuing in salvation.

Isaiah 4:2. *“In that day will the sprout of Jehovah become an ornament and glory, and the fruit of the land pride and splendour for the redeemed of Israel.”* The four epithets of glory, which are here grouped in pairs, strengthen our expectation, that now that the mass of Israel has been swept away, together with the objects of its worthless pride, we shall find a description of what will become an object of well-grounded pride to the “escaped of Israel,” i.e., to the remnant that has survived the judgment, and been saved from destruction. But with this interpretation of the promise it is impossible that it can be the church of the future itself, which is here called the “*sprout of Jehovah*” and “*fruit of the land*,” as Luzzatto and Malbim suppose; and equally impossible, with such an antithesis between what is promised and what is abolished, that the “*sprout of Jehovah*” and “*fruit of the earth*” should signify

the harvest blessings bestowed by Jehovah, or the rich produce of the land. For although the expression *zemach Jehovah* (sprout of Jehovah) may unquestionably be used to signify this, as in Gen. 2:9 and Ps. 104:14 (cf., Isa. 61:11), and fruitfulness of the land is a standing accompaniment of the eschatological promises (e.g., Isa. 30:23ff., compare the conclusion of Joel and Amos), and it was also foretold that the fruitful fields of Israel would become a glory in the sight of the nations (Ezek. 34:29; Mal. 3:12; cf., Joel 2:17); yet this earthly material good, of which, moreover, there was no lack in the time of Uzziah and Jotham, was altogether unsuitable to set forth such a contrast as would surpass and outshine the worldly glory existing before. But even granting what Hofmann adduces in support of this view,—namely, that the natural God-given blessings of the field do form a fitting antithesis to the studied works of art of which men had hitherto been proud,—there is still truth in the remark of Rosenmüller, that “the magnificence of the whole passage is at variance with such an interpretation.” Only compare Isa. 28:5, where Jehovah Himself is described in the same manner, as the glory and ornament of the remnant of Israel. But if the “sprout of Jehovah” is neither the redeemed remnant itself, nor the fruit of the field, it must be the name of the Messiah. And it is in this sense that it has been understood by the Targum, and by such modern commentators as Rosenmüller, Hengstenberg, Steudel, Umbreit, Caspari, Drechsler, and others. The great King of the future is called *zemach*, ἀνατολή in the sense of Heb. 7:14, viz., as a shoot springing out of the human, Davidic, earthly soil,—a shoot which Jehovah had planted in the earth, and would cause to break through and spring forth as the pride of His congregation, which was waiting for this heavenly child. It is He again who is designated in the parallel clause as the “fruit of the land” (or lit., fruit of the earth), as being the fruit which the land of Israel, and consequently the earth itself, would produce, just as in Ezek. 17:5 Zedekiah is called a “seed of the earth.” The reasons already adduced to show that “the sprout of Jehovah” cannot refer

to the blessings of the field, apply with equal force to “the fruit of the earth.” This also relates to the Messiah Himself, regarded as the fruit in which all the growth and bloom of this earthly history would eventually reach its promised and divinely appointed conclusion. The use of this double epithet to denote “the coming One” can only be accounted for, without anticipating the New Testament standpoint, from the desire to depict His double-sided origin. He would come, on the one hand, from *Jehovah*; but, on the other hand, from *the earth*, inasmuch as He would spring from Israel. We have here the passage, on the basis of which *zemach* (the sprout of “Branch”) was adopted by Jeremiah (Jer. 23:5 and 33:15) and Zechariah (Zech. 3:8; 6:12) as a proper name for the Messiah, and upon which Matthew, by combining this proper name *zemach* (sprout) with *nezer* (Isa. 11:1, cf., 53:2), rests his affirmation, that according to the Old Testament prophecies the future Messiah was to be called a Nazarene. It is undoubtedly strange that this epithet should be introduced so entirely without preparation even by Isaiah, who coined it first. In fact, the whole passage relating to the Messiah stands quite alone in this cycle of prophecies in Isa. 1–6. But the book of Isaiah is a complete and connected work. What the prophet indicates merely in outline here, he carries out more fully in the cycle of prophecies which follows in Isa. 7–12; and there the enigma, which he leaves as an enigma in the passage before us, receives the fullest solution. Without dwelling any further upon the *man* of the future, described in this enigmatically symbolical way, the prophet hurries on to a more precise description of the *church* of the future.

Isaiah 4:3. “*And it will come to pass, whoever is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem, holy will he be called, all who are written down for life in Jerusalem.*” The leading emphasis of the whole verse rests upon *kadosh* (holy). Whereas formerly in Jerusalem persons had been distinguished according to their rank and condition, without any regard to their moral worth (Isa. 3:1–3, 10, 11; cf., Isa. 32:5); so the name *kadosh* (holy) would now be the one chief

name of honour, and would be given to every individual, inasmuch as the national calling of Israel would now be realized in the persons of all (Ex. 19:6, etc.). Consequently the expression “*he shall be called*” is not exactly equivalent to “*he shall be,*” but rather presupposes the latter, as in Isa. 1:26; 61:6; 62:4. The term *kadosh* denotes that which is withdrawn from the world, or separated from it. The church of the saints or holy ones, which now inhabits Jerusalem, is what has been left from the smelting; and their holiness is the result of washing. הַנְּשָׂאָר is interchanged with הַנוֹתָר. The latter, as Papenheim has shown in his Hebrew synonyms, involves the idea of intention, viz., “that which has been left behind;” the former merely expresses the fact, viz., that which remains. The character of this “remnant of grace,” and the number of members of which it would consist, are shown in the apposition contained in v. 3*b*. This apposition means something more than those who are entered as living in Jerusalem, i.e., the population of Jerusalem as entered in the city register (Hofmann); for the verb with *Lamed* does not mean merely to enter as a certain thing, but (like the same verb with the accusative in Jer. 22:30) to enter as intended for a certain purpose. The expression לְחַיִּים may either be taken as a noun, viz., “to life” (Dan. 12:2), or as an adjective, “to the living” (a meaning which is quite as tenable; cf., Ps. 69:29, 1 Sam. 25:29). In either case the notion of predestination is implied, and the assumption of the existence of a divine “book of life” (Ex. 32:32, 33; Dan. 12:1; cf., Ps. 139:16); so that the idea is the same as that of Acts 13:48: “As many as were ordained to eternal life.” The reference here is to persons who were entered in the book of God, on account of the good kernel of faith within them, as those who should become partakers of the life in the new Jerusalem, and should therefore be spared in the midst of the judgment of sifting in accordance with this divine purpose of grace. For it was only through the judgment setting this kernel of faith at liberty, that such a holy community as is described in the protasis

which comes afterwards, as in Ps. 63:6, 7, could possibly arise.

Isaiah 4:4. “*When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged away the bloodguiltinesses of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of sifting.*” “*When,*” followed by a preterite (equivalent to a *fut. exact.* as in Isa. 24:13; Ges. § 126, 5), introduces the circumstance, whose previous occurrence would be the condition of all the rest. The force of the future *yâdiach* (“shall have purged”) is regulated by that of the preterite *râchatz*, as in Isa. 6:11; for although, when regarded simply by itself, as in Isa. 10:12, the future tense may suggest the idea of a future perfect, it cannot have the force of such a future. The double purification answers to the two scenes of judgment described in Isa. 3. The filth of the daughters of Zion is the moral pollution hidden under their vain and coquettish finery; and the murderous deeds of Jerusalem are the acts of judicial murder committed by its rulers upon the poor and innocent. This filth and these spots of blood the Sovereign Ruler washes and purges away (see 2 Chron. 4:6), by causing His spirit or His breath to burst in upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, both male and female. This breath is called “the spirit of judgment,” because it punishes evil; and “the spirit of sifting,” inasmuch as it sweeps or cleans it away. בְּעֵר is to be explained, as in Isa. 6:13, in accordance with Deut. 13:6 (5, Eng. Ver.; “put the evil away”) and other passages, such especially as Isa. 19:13; 21:9. The rendering given in the Septuagint and Vulgate, viz., “in the spirit of burning,” is founded upon the radical meaning of the verb, which signifies literally to burn up, and hence to clear away or destroy (see *Comm. on Job*, at 31:12, Eng. Tr.). Nevertheless, “burning” in connection with judgment is not definite enough, since every manifestation of divine judgment is a manifestation of fire; but it is not every judgment that has connected with it what is here implied,—namely, the salutary object of burning away or, in other words, of winnowing.

The “spirit” is in both instances the Spirit of God which pervades the world, not only generating and sustaining life, but also at times destroying and sifting (Isa. 30:27, 28), as it does in the case before us, in which the imperishable glory described in v. 5 is so prepared.

Isaiah 4:5. “*And Jehovah creates over every spot of Mount Zion, and over its festal assemblies, a cloud by day, and smoke, and the shining of flaming fire by night: for over all the glory comes a canopy.*” Just as Jehovah guided and shielded Israel in the days of the redemption from Egypt in a smoke-cloud by day and a fire-cloud by night, which either moved in front like a pillar, or floated above them as a roof (Num. 14:14, etc.), the perpetuation of His presence at Sinai (Ex. 19:9, 16ff.); so would Jehovah in like manner shield the Israel of the final redemption, which would no longer need the pillar of cloud since its wanderings would be over, but only the cloudy covering; and such a covering Jehovah would create, as the *praet. consec.* וַיִּבְרָא (“and He creates”) distinctly affirms. The verb *bârâh* always denotes a divine and miraculous production, having its commencement in time; for even the natural is also supernatural in its first institution by God. In the case before us, however, the reference is to a fresh manifestation of His gracious presence, exalted above the present course of nature. This manifestation would consist by day in “a cloud,” and as the *hendiadys* “cloud and smoke” (i.e., cloud in form and smoke in substance) distinctly affirms, a smoke-cloud, not a watery cloud, like those which ordinarily cover the sky; and by night in a fiery splendour, not merely a lingering fiery splendour like that of the evening sky, but, as the words clearly indicate, a flaming brightness (*lehâbâh*), and therefore real and living fire. The purpose of the cloud would not only be to overshadow, but also to serve as a wall of defence against opposing influences; and the fire would not only give light, but by flaming and flashing would ward off hostile powers. But, above all, the cloud and fire were intended as signs of the nearness of God, and His satisfaction. In the

most glorious times of the temple a smoke-cloud of this kind filled the Holy of holies; and there was only one occasion—namely, at the dedication of Solomon’s temple—on which it filled the whole building (1 Kings 8:10); but now the cloud, the smoke of which, moreover, would be turned at night into flaming fire, would extend over every spot (*mâcôn*, a more poetical word for *mâkôm*) of Mount Zion, and over the festal assemblies thereon. The whole mountain would thus become a Holy of holies. It would be holy not only as being the dwelling-place of Jehovah, but as the gathering-place of a community of saints. “*Her assemblies*” (*mikrâehâ*) points back to Zion, and is a plural written defectively (at least in our editions),—as, for example, in Jer. 19:8. There is no necessity to take this noun in the sense of “meeting halls” (a meaning which it never has anywhere else), as Gesenius, Ewald, Hitzig, and others have done, since it may also signify “the meetings,” though not in an abstract, but in a concrete sense (*ecclesiae*). The explanatory clause, “*for over all the glory (comes) a canopy,*” admits of several interpretations. Dr. Shegg and others take it in the general sense: “for defence and covering are coming for all that is glorious.” Now, even if this thought were not so jejune as it is, the word *chuppâh* would not be the word used to denote covering for the sake of protection; it signifies rather covering for the sake of beautifying and honouring that which is covered. *Chuppâh* is the name still given by the Jews to the wedding canopy, i.e., a canopy supported on four poles and carried by four boys, under which the bride and bridegroom receive the nuptial blessing,—a meaning which is apparently more appropriate, even in Ps. 19:6 and Joel 2:16, than the ordinary explanation *thalamus* to *torus*. Such a canopy would float above Mount Zion in the form of a cloud of smoke and blaze of fire. (There is no necessity to take *chuppâh* as a third pers. *pual*, since תְּהִיָּה, which follows immediately afterwards in v. 6, may easily be supplied in thought.) The only question is whether *côl-câbôd* signifies “every kind of glory,” or according to Ps. 39:6; 45:14, “pure glory”

(Hofmann, *Stud. u. Krit.* 1847, pp. 936–38). The thought that Jerusalem would now be “all glory,” as its inhabitants were all holiness, and therefore that this shield would be spread out over pure glory, is one that thoroughly commends itself. but we nevertheless prefer the former, as more in accordance with the substantive clause. The glory which Zion would now possess would be exposed to no further injury: Jehovah would acknowledge it by signs of His gracious presence; for henceforth there would be nothing glorious in Zion, over which there would not be a canopy spread in the manner described, shading and yet enlightening, hiding, defending, and adorning it.

Isaiah 4:6. Thus would Zion be a secure retreat from all adversities and disasters. V. 6. “*And it will be a booth for shade by day from the heat of the sun, and for a refuge and covert from storm and from rain.*” The subject to “*will be*” is not the miraculous roofing; for *ânân* (cloud) is masculine, and the verb feminine, and there would be no sense in saying that a *chuppâh* or canopy would be a *succâh* or booth. Either, therefore, the verb contains the subject in itself, and the meaning is, “There will be a booth” (the verb *hâyâh* being used in a pregnant sense, as in Isa. 15:6; 23:13); or else Zion (v. 5) is the subject. We prefer the latter. Zion or Jerusalem would be a booth, that is to say, as the parallel clause affirms, a place of security and concealment (*mistor*, which only occurs here, is used on account of the alliteration with *machseh* in the place of *sether*, which the prophet more usually employs, viz., in Isa. 28:17; 32:2). “*By day*” (*yômâm*, which is construed with לַיּוֹם in the construct state, cf., Ezek. 30:16) is left intentionally without any “*by night*” to answer to it in the parallel clause, because reference is made to a place of safety and concealment for all times, whether by day or night. Heat, storm, and rain are mentioned as examples to denote the most manifold dangers; but it is a singular fact that rain, which is a blessing so earnestly desired in the time of *chôreb*, i.e., of drought and burning heat, should also be included. At the present day, when rain

falls in Jerusalem, the whole city dances with delight. Nevertheless rain, i.e., the rain which falls from the clouds, is not paradisaical; and its effects are by no means unfrequently destructive. According to the archives of Genesis, rain from the clouds took the place of dew for the first time at the flood, when it fell in a continuous and destructive form. The Jerusalem of the last time will be paradise restored; and there men will be no longer exposed to destructive changes of weather. In this prediction the close of the prophetic discourse is linked on to the commencement. This mountain of Zion, roofed over with a cloud of smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night, is no other than the mountain of the house of Jehovah, which was to be exalted above all the mountains, and to which the nations would make their pilgrimage; and this Jerusalem, so holy within, and all glorious without, is no other than the place from which the word of Jehovah was one day to go forth into all the world. But what Jerusalem is this? Is it the Jerusalem of the time of final glory awaiting the people of God in this life, as described in Rev. 11 (for, notwithstanding all that a spiritualistic and rationalistic anti-chiliasm may say, the prophetic words of both Old and New Testament warrant us in expecting such a time of glory in this life); or is it the Jerusalem of the new heaven and new earth described in Rev. 20:21? The true answer is, “Both in one.” The prophet’s real intention was to depict the holy city in its final and imperishable state after the last judgment. But to his view, the state beyond and the closing state here were blended together, so that the glorified Jerusalem of earth and the glorified Jerusalem of heaven appeared as if fused into one. It was a distinguishing characteristic of the Old Testament, to represent the closing scene on this side the grave, and the eternal state beyond, as a continuous line, having its commencement here. The New Testament first drew the cross line which divides time from eternity. It is true, indeed, as the closing chapters of the Apocalypse show, that even the New Testament prophecies continue to some

extent to depict the state beyond in figures drawn from the present world; with this difference, however, that when the line had once been drawn, the demand was made, of which there was no consciousness in the Old Testament, that the figures taken from this life should be understood as relating to the life beyond, and that eternal realities should be separated from their temporal forms.

Judgment of Devastation Upon the Vineyard of Jehovah—Ch. 5

Closing Words of the First Cycle of Prophecies

The foregoing prophecy has run through all the different phases of prophetic exhortation by the time that we reach the close of Isa. 4; and its leading thought, viz., the overthrow of the false glory of Israel, and the perfect establishment of true glory through the medium of judgment, has been so fully worked out, that Isa. 5 cannot possibly be regarded either as a continuation or as an appendix to that address. Unquestionably there are many points in which Isa. 5 refers back to Isa. 2–4. The parable of the vineyard in Isa. 5:1–7 grows, as it were, out of Isa. 3:14; and in Isa. 5:15 we have a repetition of the *refrain* in Isa. 2:9, varied in a similar manner to Isa. 2:17. But these and other points of contact with Isa. 2–4, whilst they indicate a tolerable similarity in date, by no means prove the absence of independence in Isa. 5. The historical circumstances of the two addresses are the same; and the range of thought is therefore closely related. But the leading idea which is carried out in Isa. 5 is a totally different one. The basis of the address is a parable representing Israel as the vineyard of Jehovah, which, contrary to all expectation, had produced bad fruit, and therefore was given up to devastation. What kind of bad fruit it produced is described in a six-fold “woe;” and what kind of devastation was to follow is indicated in the dark nocturnal conclusion to the whole address, which is entirely without a promise.

Isaiah 5

Isaiah 5:1, 2. The prophet commenced his first address in Isa. 1 like another Moses; the second, which covered no less ground, he opened with the text of an earlier prophecy; and now he commences the third like a musician, addressing both himself and his hearers with enticing words. V. 1a. “*Arise, I will sing of my beloved, a song of my dearest touching his vineyard.*” The fugitive rhythm, the musical euphony, the charming assonances in this appeal, it is impossible to reproduce. They are perfectly inimitable. The *Lamed* in *līdīdī* is the *Lamed objecti*. The person to whom the song referred, to whom it applied, of whom it treated, was the singer’s own beloved. It was a song of his dearest one (not his cousin, *patruelis*, as Luther renders it in imitation of the Vulgate, for the meaning of *dōd* is determined by *yâdid*, beloved) touching his vineyard. The *Lamed* in *l’carmo* is also *Lamed objecti*. The song of the beloved is really a song concerning the vineyard of the beloved; and this song is a song of the beloved himself, not a song written about him, or attributed to him, but such a song as he himself had sung, and still had to sing. The prophet, by beginning in this manner, was surrounded (either in spirit or in outward reality) by a crowd of people from Jerusalem and Judah. The song is a short one, and runs thus in vv. 1b, 2: “*My beloved had a vineyard on a fatly nourished mountain-horn, and dug it up and cleared it of stones, and planted it with noble vines, and built a tower in it, and also hewed out a wine-press therein; and hoped that it would bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.*” The vineyard was situated upon a *keren*, i.e., upon a prominent mountain peak projecting like a horn, and therefore open to the sun on all sides; for, as Virgil says in the *Georgics*, “*apertos Bacchus amat colles.*” This mountain horn was *ben-shemen*, a child of fatness: the fatness was innate, it belonged to it by nature (*shemen* is used, as in Isa. 28:1, to denote the fertility of a nutritive loamy soil). And the owner of the vineyard spared no attention or trouble. The plough could not be

used, from the steepness of the mountain slope: he therefore dug it up, that is to say, he turned up the soil which was to be made into a vineyard with a hoe (*izzēk*, to hoe; Arab. *mi'zak*, *mi'zaka*); and as he found it choked up with stones and boulders, he got rid of this rubbish by throwing it out *sikkēl*, a privative *piel*, *lapidibus purgare*, then *operam consumere in lapides*, sc. *ejiciendos*, to stone, or clear of stones: Ges. § 52, 2). After the soil had been prepared he planted it with *sorek*, i.e., the finest kind of eastern vine, bearing small grapes of a bluish-red, with pips hardly perceptible to the tongue. The name is derived from its colour (compare the Arabic *zerka*, red wine). To protect and adorn the vineyard which had been so richly planted, he built a tower in the midst of it. The expression “and also” calls especial attention to the fact that he hewed out a wine-trough therein (*yekeb*, the trough into which the must or juice pressed from the grapes in the wine-press flows, *lacus* as distinguished from *torcūlar*); that is to say, in order that the trough might be all the more fixed and durable, he constructed it in a rocky portion of the ground (*chātsēb bo* instead of *chātsab bo*, with *a* and the accent drawn back, because a *Beth* was thereby easily rendered inaudible, so that *chātsēb* is not a participial adjective, as Böttcher supposes). This was a difficult task, as the expression “and also” indicates; and for that very reason it was an evidence of the most confident expectation. But how bitterly was this deceived! The vineyard produced no such fruit, as might have been expected from a *sorek* plantation; it brought forth no *'anābim* whatever, i.e., no such grapes as a cultivated vine should bear, but only *b'ushim*, or wild grapes. Luther first of all adopted the rendering *wild grapes*, and then altered it to harsh or sour grapes. But it comes to the same thing. The difference between a wild vine and a good vine is only qualitative. The *vitis vinifera*, like all cultivated plants, is assigned to the care of man, under which it improves; whereas in its wild state it remains behind its true intention (see *Genesis*, § 622). Consequently the word *b'ushim* (from *bā'ash*, to be bad, or smell bad) denotes

not only the grapes of the wild vine, which are naturally small and harsh (Rashi, *lambruches*, i.e., grapes of the *labrusca*, which is used now, however, as the botanical name of a vine that is American in its origin), but also grapes of a good stock, which have either been spoiled or have failed to ripen. These were the grapes which the vineyard produced, such as you might indeed have expected from a wild vine, but not from carefully cultivated vines of the very choicest kind.

Isaiah 5:3, 4. The song of the beloved who was so sorely deceived terminates here. The prophet recited it, not his beloved himself; but as they were both of one heart and one soul, the prophet proceeds thus in vv. 3 and 4: “*And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard! What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore did I hope that it would bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes?*” The fact that the prophet speaks as if he were the beloved himself, shows at once who the beloved must be. The beloved of the prophet and the lover of the prophet (*yādid* and *dōd*) were Jehovah, with whom he was so united by a *union mystica* exalted above all earthly love, that, like the angel of Jehovah in the early histories, he could speak as if he were Jehovah Himself (see especially *Zech.* 2:12–15). To any one with spiritual intuition, therefore, the parabolical meaning and object of the song would be at once apparent; and even the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the men of Judah (*yōshēb* and *īsh* are used collectively, as in *Isa.* 8:14; 9:8; 22:21, cf., 20:6) were not so stupefied by sin, that they could not perceive to what the prophet was leading. It was for them to decide where the guilt of this unnatural issue lay—that is to say, of this thorough contradiction between the “doing” of the vineyard and the “doing” of the Lord; that instead of the grapes he hoped for, it brought forth wild grapes. (On the expression “what could have been done,” *quid faciendum est*, *mah-la'asoth*, see at *Hab.* 1:17, Ges. § 132, Anm. 1.) Instead of לְמַה (לְמַה) we have the more suitable term מְדִינָה, the latter

being used in relation to the actual cause (*causa efficiens*), the former in relation to the object (*causa finalis*). The parallel to the second part, viz., Isa. 50:2, resembles the passage before us, not only in the use of this particular word, but also in the fact that there, as well as here, it relates to both clauses, and more especially to the latter of the two. We find the same paratactic construction in connection with other conjunctions (cf., Isa. 12:1; 65:12). They were called upon to decide and answer as to this *what* and *wherefore*; but they were silent, just because they could clearly see that they would have to condemn themselves (as David condemned himself in connection with Nathan's parable, 2 Sam. 12:5). The Lord of the vineyard, therefore, begins to speak. He, its accuser, will now also be its judge.

Isaiah 5:5. "Now then, I will tell you what I will do at once to my vineyard: take away its hedge, and it shall be for grazing; pull down its wall, and it shall be for treading down." Before "now then" (*v'attâh*) we must imagine a pause, as in Isa. 3:14. The Lord of the vineyard breaks the silence of the umpires, which indicates their consciousness of guilt. They shall hear from Him what He will do at once to His vineyard (*Lamed* in *l'carmi*, as, for example, in Deut. 11:6). "I will do:" *ani 'ōseh, fut. instans*, equivalent to *facturus sum* (Ges. § 134, 2, b). In the *inf. abs.* which follow He opens up what He will do. On this explanatory use of the *inf. abs.*, see Isa. 20:2; 58:6, 7. In such cases as these it takes the place of the object, as in other cases of the subject, but always in an abrupt manner (Ges. § 131, 1). He would take away the *mesucah*, i.e., the green thorny hedge (Prov. 15:19; Hos. 2:8) with which the vineyard was enclosed, and would pull down the *gârēd*, i.e., the low stone wall (Num. 22:24; Prov. 24:31), which had been surrounded by the hedge of thorn-bushes to make a better defence, as well as for the protection of the wall itself, more especially against being undermined; so that the vineyard would be given up to grazing and treading down (LXX καταπάτημα), i.e., would become an open way and gathering-place for man and beast.

Isaiah 5:6. This puts an end to the unthankful vineyard, and indeed a hopeless one. V. 6. "And I will put an end to it: it shall not be pruned nor digged, and it shall break out in thorns and thistles; and I will command the clouds to rain no rain over it." "Put an end:" *bâthâh* (= *battâh*: Ges. § 67, Anm. 11) signifies, according to the primary meaning of *bâthath* (בִּתְּחַת, בִּתְּחַת, see at Isa. 1:29), viz., *abscindere*, either *abscissum* = *locus abscissus* or *praeruptus* (Isa. 7:19), or *abscissio* = *deletio*. The latter is the meaning here, where *shîth bâthâh* is a refined expression for the more usual כָּלָה עֵשָׂה, both being construed with the accusative of the thing which is brought to an end. Further pruning and hoeing would do it no good, but only lead to further disappointment: it was the will of the Lord, therefore, that the deceitful vineyard should shoot up in thorns and thistles (*'âlâh* is applied to the soil, as in Isa. 34:13 and Prov. 24:31; *shâmir vâshaith*, thorns and thistles, are in the accusative, according to Ges. § 138, 1, Anm. 2; and both the words themselves, and also their combination, are exclusively and peculiarly Isaiah's). In order that it might remain a wilderness, the clouds would also receive commandment from the Lord not to rain upon it. There can be no longer any doubt who the Lord of the vineyard is. He is Lord of the clouds, and therefore the Lord of heaven and earth. It is He who is the prophet's beloved and dearest one. The song which opened in so minstrel-like and harmless a tone, has now become painfully severe and terribly repulsive. The husk of the parable, which has already been broken through, now falls completely off (cf., Matt. 22:13; 25:30). What it sets forth in symbol is really true. This truth the prophet establishes by an open declaration.

Isaiah 5:7. "For the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the plantation of His delight: He waited for justice, and behold grasping; for righteousness, and behold a shriek." The meaning is not that the Lord of the vineyard would not let any more rain fall upon it, because this Lord was Jehovah (which is not affirmed in fact in the words

ISAIAH	Page 76
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

commencing with “for,” *ci*), but a more general one. This was how the case stood with the vineyard; for all Israel, and especially the people of Judah, were this vineyard, which had so bitterly deceived the expectations of its Lord, and indeed “the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts,” and therefore of the omnipotent God, whom even the clouds would serve when He came forth to punish. The expression “for” (*ci*) is not only intended to vindicate the truth of the last statement, but the truth of the whole simile, including this: it is an explanatory “for” (*ci explic.*), which opens the *epimythion*. “The vineyard of the Lord of hosts” (*cerem Jehovah Zebaoth*) is the predicate. “The house of Israel (*beth Yisrâel*) was the whole nation, which is also represented in other passages under the same figure of a vineyard (Isa. 27:2ff.; Ps. 80, etc.). But as Isaiah was prophet in Judah, he applies the figure more particularly to Judah, which was called Jehovah’s favourite plantation, inasmuch as it was the seat of the divine sanctuary and of the Davidic kingdom. This makes it easy enough to interpret the different parts of the simile employed. The fat mountain-horn was Canaan, flowing with milk and honey (Ex. 15:17); the digging of the vineyard, and clearing it of stones, was the clearing of Canaan from its former heathen inhabitants (Ps. 54:3); the sorek-vines were the holy priests and prophets and kings of Israel of the earlier and better times (Jer. 2:21); the defensive and ornamental tower in the midst of the vineyard was Jerusalem as the royal city, with Zion the royal fortress (Mic. 4:8); the winepress-trough was the temple, where, according to Ps. 36:9 (8), the wine of heavenly pleasures flowed in streams, and from which, according to Ps. 42 and many other passages, the thirst of the soul might all be quenched. The grazing and treading down are explained in Jer. 5:10 and 12:10. The bitter deception experienced by Jehovah is expressed in a play upon two words, indicating the surprising change of the desired result into the very opposite. The explanation which Gesenius, Caspari, Knobel, and others give of *mispâch*, viz., bloodshed, does not commend itself; for

even if it must be admitted that *sâphach* occurs once or twice in the “Arabizing” book of Job (Job 30:7; 14:19) in the sense of pouring out, this verbal root is strange to the Hebrew (and the Aramaean). Moreover, *mispâch* in any case would only mean pouring or shedding, and not bloodshed; and although the latter would certainly be possible by the side of the Arabic *saffâch*, *saffâk* (shedder of blood), yet it would be such an ellipsis as cannot be shown anywhere else in Hebrew usage. On the other hand, the rendering “leprosy” does not yield any appropriate sense, as *mispachath* (*sappachath*) is never generalized anywhere else into the single idea of “dirt” (Luzzatto: *sozzura*), nor does it appear as an ethical notion. We therefore prefer to connect it with a meaning unquestionably belonging to the verb *ספח* (see *kal*, 1 Sam. 3:36; *niphâl*, 14:1; *hithpaël*, 1 Sam. 26:19), which is derived in *קָסַף, קָסַף, קָסַף*, from the primary notion “to sweep,” *spec.* to sweep towards, sweep in, or sweep away. Hence we regard *mispach* as denoting the forcible appropriation of another man’s property; certainly a suitable antithesis to *mishpât*. The prophet describes, in full-toned figures, how the expected noble grapes had turned into wild grapes, with nothing more than an outward resemblance. The introduction to the prophecy closes here.

The prophecy itself follows next, a seven-fold discourse composed of the six-fold woe contained in vv. 8–23, and the announcement of punishment in which it terminates. In this six-fold woe the prophet describes the bad fruits one by one. In confirmation of our rendering of *mispâch*, the first woe relates to covetousness and avarice as the root of all evil.

Isaiah 5:8. “Woe unto them that join house to house, who lay field to field, till there is no more room, and ye alone are dwelling in the midst of the land.” The participle is continued in the finite verb, as in v. 23, Isa. 10:1; the regular syntactic construction is cases of this kind (Ges. § 134, Anm. 2). The preterites after “till” (there are to such preterites, for ‘*ephes* is an intensified *קָסַף* enclosing the verbal idea)

ISAIAH	Page 77
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

correspond to future perfects: "They, the insatiable, would not rest till, after every smaller piece of landed property had been swallowed by them, the whole land had come into their possession, and no one beside themselves was settled in the land" (Job 22:8). Such covetousness was all the more reprehensible, because the law of Israel and provided so very stringently and carefully, that as far as possible there should be an equal distribution of the soil, and that hereditary family property should be inalienable. All landed property that had been alienated reverted to the family every fiftieth year, or year of jubilee; so that alienation simply had reference to the usufruct of the land till that time. It was only in the case of houses in towns that the right of redemption was restricted to one year, at least according to a later statute. How badly the law of the year of jubilee had been observed, may be gathered from Jer. 34, where we learn that the law as to the manumission of Hebrew slaves in the sabbatical year had fallen entirely into neglect. Isaiah's contemporary, Micah, makes just the same complaint as Isaiah himself (vid., Mic. 2:2).

Isaiah 5:9, 10. And the denunciation of punishment is made by him in very similar terms to those which we find here in vv. 9, 10: "Into mine ears Jehovah of hosts: Of a truth many houses shall become a wilderness, great and beautiful ones deserted. For ten yokes of vineyard will yield one pailful, and a quarter of seed-corn will produce a bushel." We may see from Isa. 22:14 in what sense the prophet wrote the substantive clause, "Into mine ears," or more literally, "In mine ears [is] Jehovah Zebaoth," viz., He is here revealing Himself to me. In the pointing, **יְהוָה אֵלַי** is written with *tiphchah* as a pausal form, to indicate to the reader that the boldness of the expression is to be softened down by the assumption of an ellipsis. In Hebrew, "to say into the ears" did not mean to "speak softly and secretly," as Gen. 23:10, 16, Job 33:8, and other passages, clearly show; but to speak in a distinct and intelligible manner,

which precludes the possibility of any misunderstanding. The prophet, indeed, had not Jehovah standing locally beside him; nevertheless, he had Him objectively over against his own personality, and was well able to distinguish very clearly the thoughts and words of his own personality, from the words of Jehovah which arose audibly within him. These words informed him what would be the fate of the rich and insatiable landowners. "Of a truth:" **אִם-לֹא** (if not) introduces an oath of an affirmative character (the complete formula is *chai ani 'im-lo'*, "as I live if not"), just as *'im* (if) alone introduces a negative oath (e.g., Num. 14:23). The force of the expression *'im-lo'* extends not only to *rabbim*, as the false accentuation with *gershayim* (double-geresh) would make it appear, but to the whole of the following sentence, as it is correctly accentuated with *rebia* in the Venetian (1521) and other early editions. A universal desolation would ensue: *rabbim* (many) does not mean less than all; but the houses (*bâttim*, as the word should be pronounced, notwithstanding Ewald's objection to Köhler's remarks on Zech. 14:2; cf., Job, 2:31) constituted altogether a very large number (compare the use of the word "many" in Isa. 2:3, Matt. 20:28, etc.). **יְהוָה אֵלַי** is a double, and therefore an absolute, negation (so that there is not, no inhabitant, i.e., not any inhabitant at all). V. 10, which commences, with *ci*, explains how such a desolation of the houses would be brought about: failure of crops produces famine, and this is followed by depopulation. "*Ten zimdē* (with *dagesh lene*, Ewald) of vineyard" are either ten pieces of the size that a man could plough in one day with a yoke of oxen, or possibly ten portions of yoke-like espaliers of vines, i.e., of vines trained on cross laths (the *vina jugata* of Varro), which is the explanation adopted by Biesenthal. But if we compare 1 Sam. 14:14, the former is to be preferred, although the links are wanting which would enable us to prove that the early Israelites had one and the same system of land measure as the Romans; nevertheless Arab. *fddân* (in Hauran) is precisely similar, and this

ISAIAH	Page 78
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

word signifies primarily a *yoke* of oxen, and then a *yoke* (*jugerum*) regarded as a measure of land. Ten days' work would only yield a single *bath*. This liquid measure, which was first introduced in the time of the kings, corresponded to the *ephah* in dry measure (Ezek. 45:11). According to Josephus (Ant. viii. 2, 9), it was equal to seventy-two Roman *sextarii*, i.e., a little more than thirty-three Berlin quarts; but in the time of Isaiah it was probably smaller. The *homer*, a dry measure, generally called a *cor* after the time of the kings, was equal to ten Attic *medimnoi*; a *medimnos* being (according to Josephus, Ant. xv. 9, 2) about 15–16ths of a Berlin bushel, and therefore a little more than fifteen pecks. Even if this quantity of corn should be sown, they would not reap more than an *ephah*. The harvest, therefore, would only yield the tenth part of the sowing, since an *ephah* was the tenth part of a *homer*, or three *seahs*, the usual minimum for one baking (vid., Matt. 13:33). It is, of course, impossible to give the relative measure exactly in our translation.

Isaiah 5:11. The second woe, for which the curse about to fall upon vinedressing (v. 10a) prepared the way by the simple association of ideas, is directed against the debauchees, who in their carnal security carried on their excesses even in the daylight. V. 11. "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning to run after strong drink; who continue till late at night with wine inflaming them!" Boker (from *bâkar*, *bakara*, to slit, to tear up, or split) is the break of day; and *nesheph* (from *nâshaph*, to blow) the cool of the evening, including the night (Isa. 21:4; 59:10); *'ichër*, to continue till late, as in Prov. 23:30: the construct state before words with a preposition, as in Isa. 9:2; 28:9, and many other passages (Ges. § 116, 1). *Shêcâr*, in connection with *yayin*, is the general name for every other kind of strong drink, more especially for wines made artificially from fruit, honey, raisins, dates, etc., including barley-wine (οἶνος κριθίνος) or beer (ἐκ κριθῶν μέθυ in Aeschylus, also called βρυτόν βρυτόν ζῦθος ζύθος, and by many other names), a beverage known in Egypt, which was half a wine country

and half a beer country, from as far back as the time of the Pharaohs. The form *shêcâr* is composed, like עֲנֵב (with the fore-tone *tsere*), from *shâcar*, to intoxicate; according to the Arabic, literally to close by stopping up, i.e., to stupefy. The clauses after the two participles are circumstantial clauses (Ewald, § 341, b), indicating the circumstances under which they ran out so early, and sat till long after dark: they hunted after mead, they heated themselves with wine, namely, to drown the consciousness of their deeds of darkness.

Isaiah 5:12. Ver. 12 describes how they go on in their blindness with music and carousing: "And guitar and harp, kettle-drum, and flute, and wine, is their feast; but they regard not the work of Jehovah, and see not the purpose of His hands." "Their feast" is so and so (מִשְׁתֵּיהֶם) is only a plural in appearance; it is really a singular, as in Dan. 1:10, 16, and many other passages, with the *Yod* of the primary form, מִשְׁתֵּיהֶם = מִשְׁתֵּיהֶם, softened: see the remarks on עֲלָה at Isa. 1:30, and עֲשֶׂה at Isa. 22:11); that is to say, their feast consisted or was composed of exciting music and wine. Knobel construes it, "and there are guitar, etc., and wine is their drink;" but a divided sentence of this kind is very tame; and the other expression, based upon the general principle, "The whole is its parts," is thoroughly Semitic (see Fleischer's *Abhandlungen über einige Arten der Nominalapposition in den Sitzungsberichten der sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft*, 1862). *Cinnor* (guitar) is a general name for such instruments as have their strings drawn (upon a bridge) over a sounding board; and *nebel* (the harp and lyre) a general name for instruments with their strings hung freely, so as to be played with both hands at the same time. *Toph* (Arab. *duff*) is a general name for the tambourin, the drum, and the kettle-drum; *chalil* (lit. that which is bored through) a general name for the flute and double flute. In this tumult and riot they had no thought or eye for the work of Jehovah and the purpose of His hands. This is the phrase used to express the idea of eternal counsel of God (Isa. 37:26),

ISAIAH	Page 79
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

which leads to salvation by the circuitous paths of judgment (Isa. 10:12; 28:21; 29:23), so far as that counsel is embodied in history, as moulded by the invisible interposition of God. In their joy and glory they had no sense for what was the most glorious of all, viz., the moving and working of God in history; so that they could not even discern the judgment which was in course of preparation at that very time.

Isaiah 5:13. Therefore judgment would overtake them in this blind, dull, and stupid animal condition. V. 13. *“Therefore my people go into banishment without knowing; and their glory will become starving men, and their tumult men dried up with thirst.”* As the word *“therefore”* (*lâcēn*, as in Isa. 1:24) introduces the threat of punishment, *gâlâh* (go into captivity) is a prophetic preterite. Israel would go into exile, and that *“without knowing”* (*mibb’li-da’ath*). The meaning of this expression cannot be *“from want of knowledge,”* since the *min* which is fused into one word with *b’li* is not causal, but negative, and *mibb’li*, as a preposition, always signifies *“without”* (*absque*). But are we to render it *“without knowing it”* (as in Hos. 4:6, where *hadda’ath* has the article), or *“unawares?”* There is no necessity for any dispute on this point, since the two renderings are fundamentally one and the same. The knowledge, of which v. 12 pronounces them destitute, was more especially a knowledge of the judgment of God that was hanging over them; so that, as the captivity would come upon them without knowledge, it would necessarily come upon them unawares. *“Their glory”* (*cebōdō*) and *“their tumult”* (*hamono*) are therefore to be understood, as the predicates show, as collective nouns used in a personal sense, the former signifying the more select portion of the nation (cf., Mic. 1:15), the latter the mass of the people, who were living in rioting and tumult. The former would become *“men of famine”* (*mēthē rââb*: מְתֵי, like מְשֵׁי in other places, viz., 2 Sam. 19:29, or מְבֵי, 1 Sam. 26:16); the latter *“men dried up with thirst”* (*tsichēh tsâmâh*: the same number as the subject). There is no

necessity to read מְתֵי (dead men) instead of מְתֵי, as the LXX and Vulgate do, or מְזֵי (מְזֵה) according to Deut. 32:24, as Hitzig, Ewald, Böttcher, and others propose (compare, on the contrary, Gen. 34:30 and Job 11:11). The adjective *tzicheh* (*hapax leg.*) is formed like *chirēsh*, *cēheh*, and other adjectives which indicate defects: in such formations from verbs *Lamed-He*, instead of *e* we have an *ae* that has grown out of *ay* (Olshausen, § 182, *b*). The rich gluttons would starve, and the tippling crowd would die with thirst.

Isaiah 5:14. The threat of punishment commences again with *“therefore;”* it has not yet satisfied itself, and therefore grasps deeper still. V. 14. *“Therefore the under-world opens its jaws wide, and stretches open its mouth immeasurably wide; and the glory of Jerusalem descends, and its tumult, and noise, and those who rejoice within it.”* The verbs which follow *lâcēn* (therefore) are prophetic preterites, as in v. 13. The feminine suffixes attached to what the lower world swallows up do not refer to *sheol* (though this is construed more frequently, no doubt, as a feminine than as a masculine, as it is in Job 26:6), but, as expressed in the translation, to Jerusalem itself, which is also necessarily required by the last clause, *“those who rejoice within it.”* The withdrawal of the tone from מְזֵי to the penultimate (cf., *châphētz* in Ps. 18:20; 22:9) is intentionally omitted, to cause the rolling and swallowing up to be heard as it were. A mouth is ascribed to the under-world, also a *nephesh*, i.e., a greedy soul, in which sense *nephesh* is then applied metonymically sometimes to a thirst for blood (Ps. 27:12), and sometimes to simple greediness (Isa. 56:11), and even, as in the present passage and Hab. 2:5, to the throat or swallow which the soul opens *“without measure,”* when its craving knows no bounds (*Psychol.* p. 204). It has become a common thing now to drop entirely the notion which formerly prevailed, that the noun *sheol* was derived from the verb *shâal* in the sense in which it was generally employed, viz., to ask or demand; but Caspari, who has revived it again, is certainly so

far correct, that the derivation of the word which the prophet had in his mind was this and no other. The word *sheol* (an infinitive form, like *pekōd*) signifies primarily the irresistible and inexorable demand made upon every earthly thing; and then secondarily, in a local sense, the place of the abode of shades, to which everything on the surface of the earth is summoned; or essentially the divinely appointed curse which demands and swallows up everything upon the earth. We simply maintain, however, that the word *sheol*, as generally used, was associated in thought with *shâal*, to ask or demand. Originally, no doubt, it may have been derived from the primary and more material idea of the verb **שאל**, possibly from the meaning "to be hollow," which is also assumed to be the primary meaning of **על**. At any rate, this derivation answers to the view that generally prevailed in ancient times. According to the prevalent idea, Hades was in the interior of the earth. And there was nothing really absurd in this, since it is quite within the power and freedom of the omnipresent God to manifest Himself wherever and however He may please. As He reveals Himself above the earth, i.e., in heaven, among blessed spirits in the light of His love; so did He reveal Himself underneath the earth, viz., in *Sheôl*, in the darkness and fire of His wrath. And with the exception of Enoch and Elijah, with their marvellous departure from this life, the way of every mortal ended there, until the time when Jesus Christ, having first paid the **λύτρον**, i.e., having shed His blood, which covers our guilt and turns the wrath of God into love, descended into Hades and ascended into heaven, and from that time forth has changed the death of all believers from a descent into Hades into an ascension to heaven. But even under the Old Testament the believer may have known, that whoever hid himself on this side the grave in Jehovah the living One, would retain his eternal germ of life even in *Sheôl* in the midst of the shades, and would taste the love of God even in the midst of wrath. It was this postulate of faith which lay at the foundation of the fact, that

even under the Old Testament the broader and more comprehensive idea of *Sheôl* began to be contracted into the more limited notion of hell (see *Psychol.* p. 415). This is the case in the passage before us, where Isaiah predicts of everything of which Jerusalem was proud, and in which it revelled, including the persons who rejoice in these things, a descent into Hades; just as the Korahite author of Ps. 49 wrote (v. 14) that the beauty of the wicked would be given up to Hades to be consumed, without having hereafter any place in the upper world, when the upright should have dominion over them in the morning. Hades even here is almost equivalent to the New Testament *gehenna*.

Isaiah 5:15, 16. The prophet now repeats a thought which formed one of the refrains of the second prophetic address (Isa. 2:9, 11, cf., v. 17). It acquires here a still deeper sense, from the context in which it stands. Vv. 15, 16. "*Then are mean men bowed down, and lords humbled, and the eyes of lofty men are humbled. And Jehovah of hosts shows Himself exalted in judgment, and God the Holy One sanctifies Himself in righteousness.*" That which had exalted itself from earth to heaven, would be cast down earthwards into hell. The consecutive futures depict the coming events, which are here represented as historically present, as the direct sequel of what is also represented as present in v. 14: Hades opens, and then both low and lofty in Jerusalem sink down, and the soaring eyes now wander about in horrible depths. God, who is both exalted and holy in Himself, demanded that as the exalted One He should be exalted, and that as the Holy One He should be sanctified. But Jerusalem had not done that; He would therefore prove Himself the exalted One by the execution of justice, and sanctify Himself (*nikdash* is to be rendered as a reflective verb, according to Ezek. 36:23; 38:23) by the manifestation of righteousness, in consequence of which the people of Jerusalem would have to give Him glory against their will, as forming part of "the things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). Jerusalem has been swallowed up twice in this manner by Hades; once in the Chaldean war, and again in

the Roman. But the invisible background of these outward events was the fact, that it had already fallen under the power of hell. And now, even in a more literal sense, ancient Jerusalem, like the company of Korah (Num. 16:30, 33), has gone underground. Just as Babylon and Nineveh, the ruins of which are dug out of the inexhaustible mine of their far-stretching foundation and soil, have sunk beneath the ground; so do men walk about in modern Jerusalem over the ancient Jerusalem, which lies buried beneath; and many an enigma of topography will remain an enigma until ancient Jerusalem has been dug out of the earth again.

Isaiah 5:17. And when we consider that the Holy Land is at the present time an extensive pasture-ground for Arab shepherds, and that the modern Jerusalem which has arisen from the dust is a Mohammedan city, we may see in this also a literal fulfilment of v. 17: *“And lambs feed as upon their pasture, and nomad shepherds eat the waste places of the fat ones.”* There is no necessity to supply an object to the verb *וָרָעָה*, as Knobel and others assume, viz., the waste lands mentioned in the second clause; nor is *cedâbrâm* to be taken as the object, as Caspari supposes; but the place referred to is determined by the context: in the place where Jerusalem is sunken, there lambs feed after the manner of their own pasture-ground, i.e., just as if they were in their old accustomed pasture (*dober*, as in Mic. 2:12, from *dâbâr*, to drive). The lambs intended are those of the *gârim* mentioned in the second clause. The *gârim* themselves are men leading an unsettled, nomad, or pilgrim life; as distinguished from *gêrim*, strangers visiting, or even settled at a place. The LXX have *ἄρνες*, so that they must have read either *cârim* or *gedâim*, which Ewald, Knobel, and others adopt. But one feature of the prophecy, which is sustained by the historical fulfilment, is thereby obliterated. *Chârboth mēchim* are the lands of those that were formerly marrowy, i.e., fat and strutting about in their fulness; which lands had now become waste places. Knobel’s statement, that *âcāl* is

out of place in connection with *gârim*, is overthrown by Isa. 1:7, to which he himself refers, though he makes he-goats the subject instead of men. The second woe closes with v. 17. It is the longest of all. This also serves to confirm the fact that luxury was the leading vice of Judah in the time of Uzziah-Jotham, as it was that of Israel under Jeroboam II (see Amos 6, where the same threat is held out).

Isaiah 5:18. The third woe is directed against the supposed strong-minded men, who called down the judgment of God by presumptuous sins and wicked words. V. 18. *“Woe unto them that draw crime with cords of lying, and sin as with the rope of the waggon.”* Knobel and most other commentators take *mâshak* in the sense of *attrahere* (to draw towards one’s self): “They draw towards them sinful deeds with cords of lying palliation, and the cart-rope of the most daring presumption;” and cite, as parallel examples, Job 40:25 and Hos. 11:4. But as *mâshak* is also used in Deut. 21:3 in the sense of drawing in a yoke, that is to say, drawing a plough or chariot; and as the waggon or cart (*agâlâh*, the word commonly used for a transport-waggon, as distinguished from *mercâbâh*, the state carriage or war chariot: see *Genesis*, pp. 562–3) is expressly mentioned here, the figure employed is certainly the same as that which underlies the New Testament *ἕτεροζυγεῖν* (“unequally yoked,” 2 Cor. 6:14). Iniquity was the burden which they drew after them with cords of lying (*shâv’h*: see at Ps. 26:4 and Job 15:31), i.e., “want of character or religion;” and sin was the waggon to which they were harnessed as if with a thick cart-rope (Hofmann, Drechsler, and Caspari; see Ewald, § 221, *a*). Iniquity and sin are mentioned here as carrying with them their own punishment. The definite *הַעֲוֹן* (crime or misdeed) is generic, and the indefinite *הַמִּצְדָּה* qualitative and massive. There is a bitter sarcasm involved in the bold figure employed. They were proud of their unbelief; but this unbelief was like a halter with which, like beasts of burden, they were harnessed to sin, and therefore to the punishment of sin, which they went on drawing

further and further, in utter ignorance of the waggon behind them.

Isaiah 5:19. Ver. 19 shows very clearly that the prophet referred to the free-thinkers of his time, the persons who are called fools (*nabal*) and scorners (*lētz*) in the Psalms and Proverbs. "Who say, Let Him hasten, accelerate His work, that we may see; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, that we may experience it." They doubted whether the day of Jehovah would ever come (Ezek. 12:22; Jer. 5:12, 13), and went so far in their unbelief as to call out for what they could not and would not believe, and desired it to come that they might see it with their own eyes and experience it for themselves (Jer. 17:15; it is different in Amos 5:18 and Mal. 2:17–3:1, where this desire does not arise from scorn and defiance, but from impatience and weakness of faith). As the two verbs denoting haste are used both transitively and intransitively (vid., Judg. 20:37, to hasten or make haste), we might render the passage "let His work make haste," as Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, and Drechsler do; but we prefer the rendering adopted by Gesenius, Caspari, and Knobel, on the basis of Isa. 60:22, and take the verb as transitive, and Jehovah as the subject. The forms *yāchishâh* and *taboâh* are, with Ps. 20:4 and Job 11:17, probably the only examples of the expression of a wish in the third person, strengthened by the *âh*, which indicates a summons or appeal; for Ezek. 23:20, which Gesenius cites (§ 48, 3), and Job 22:21, to which Knobel refers, have no connection with this, as in both passages the *âh* is the feminine termination, and not hortative (vid., *Comm. on Job*, at 11:17, note, and at 22:21). The fact that the free-thinkers called God "the Holy One of Israel," whereas they scoffed at His intended final and practical attestation of Himself as the Holy One, may be explained from Isa. 30:11: they took this name of God from the lips of the prophet himself, so that their scorn affected both God and His prophet at the same time.

Isaiah 5:20. The fourth woe: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who give out darkness for light, and light for darkness; who give out bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

The previous woe had reference to those who made the facts of sacred history the butt of their naturalistic doubt and ridicule, especially so far as they were the subject of prophecy. This fourth woe relates to those who adopted a code of morals that completely overturned the first principles of ethics, and was utterly opposed to the law of God; for evil, darkness, and bitter, with their respective antitheses, represent moral principles that are essentially related (Matt. 6:23; Jas. 3:11), Evil, as hostile to God, is dark in its nature, and therefore loves darkness, and is exposed to the punitive power of darkness. And although it may be sweet to the material taste, it is nevertheless bitter, inasmuch as it produces abhorrence and disgust in the godlike nature of man, and, after a brief period of self-deception, is turned into the bitter woe of fatal results. Darkness and light, bitter and sweet, therefore, are not tautological metaphors for evil and good; but epithets applied to evil and good according to their essential principles, and their necessary and internal effects.

Isaiah 5:21. The fifth woe: "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight." The third woe had reference to the unbelieving naturalists, the opponents of prophecy (*nebuâh*); the fourth to the moralists, who threw all into confusion; and to this there is appended, by a very natural association of ideas, the woe denounced upon those whom want of humility rendered inaccessible to that wisdom which went hand in hand with prophecy, and the true foundation of which was the fear of Jehovah (Prov. 1:7; Job 28:28; Eccles. 12:13). "Be not wise in thine own eyes," is a fundamental rule of this wisdom (Prov. 3:7). It was upon this wisdom that that prophetic policy rested, whose warnings, as we read in Isa. 28:9, 10, they so scornfully rejected. The next woe, which has reference to the administration of justice in the state, shows very clearly that in this woe the prophet had more especially the want of theocratic wisdom in relation to the affairs of state in his mind.

Isaiah 5:22, 23. The sixth woe: "Woe to those who are heroes to drink wine, and brave men to

mix strong drink; who acquit criminals for a bribe, and take away from every one the righteousness of the righteous." We see from v. 23 that the drinkers in v. 22 are unjust judges. The threat denounced against these is Isaiah's universal *ceterum censeo*; and accordingly it forms, in this instance also, the substance of his sixth and last woe. They are *heroes*; not, however, in avenging wrong, but in drinking wine; they are men of renown, though not for deciding between guilt and innocence, but for mixing up the ingredients of strong artistic wines. For the terms applied to such mixed wines, see Ps. 75:9, Prov. 23:30, Song of Sol. 7:3. It must be borne in mind, however, that what is here called *shecâr* was not, properly speaking, wine, but an artificial mixture, like date wine and cider. For such things as these they were noteworthy and strong; whereas they judged unjustly, and took bribes that they might consume the reward of their injustice in drink and debauchery (Isa. 28:7, 8; Prov. 31:5). "*For reward:*" *êkêb* (Arab. *'ukb*; different from *âkêb*, a heel, = *'akib*) is an adverbial accusative, "in recompense," or "for pay." "*From him*" (*mimmennu*) is distributive, and refers back to *tsaddikim* (the righteous); as, for example, in Hos. 4:8.

Isaiah 5:24. In the three exclamations in vv. 18–21, Jehovah rested contented with the simple undeveloped "woe" (*hoi*). On the other hand, the first two utterances respecting the covetous and the debauchees were expanded into an elaborate denunciation of punishment. But now that the prophet has come to the unjust judges, the denunciation of punishment bursts out with such violence, that a return to the simple exclamation of "woe" is not to be thought of. The two "therefores" in vv. 13, 14, a third is now added in v. 24: "*Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours stubble, and hay sinks together in the flame, their root will become like mould, and their blossom fly up like dust; for they have despised the law of Jehovah of hosts, and scornfully rejected the proclamation of the Holy One of Israel.*" The persons primarily intended as those described in vv. 22, 23, but with a further extension of the range of vision to Judah

and Jerusalem, the vineyard of which they are the bad fruit. The sinners are compared to a plant which moulders into dust both above and below, i.e., altogether (cf., Mal. 3:19, and the expression, "Let there be to him neither root below nor branch above," in the inscription upon the sarcophagus of the Phoenician king *Es'mun'azar*). Their root moulders in the earth, and their blossom (*perach*, as in Isa. 18:5) turns to fine dust, which the wind carries away. And this change in root and blossom takes place suddenly, as if through the force of fire. In the expression *ce'ecol kash leshon 'esh* ("as the tongue of fire devours stubble"), which consists of four short words with three sibilant letters, we hear, as it were, the hissing of the flame. When the infinitive construct is connected with both subject and object, the subject generally stands first, as in Isa. 64:1; but here the object is placed first, as in Isa. 20:1 (Ges. § 133, 3; Ewald, § 307). In the second clause, the infinitive construct passes over into the finite verb, just as in the similarly constructed passage in Isa. 64:1. As *yirpeh* has the intransitive meaning *collabi*, to sink together, or collapse; either *lehâbâh* must be an *acc. loci*, or *chashash lehâbâh* the construct state, signifying flame-hay, i.e., hay destined to the flame, or ascending in flame. As the reason for the sudden dissolution of the plantation of Judah, instead of certain definite sins being mentioned, the sin of all sins is given at once, namely, the rejection of the word of God with the heart (*mâ'as*), and in word and deed (*ni'ets*). The double *'eth* (with *yethib* immediately before *pashta*, as in eleven passages in all; see Heidenheim's *Mispetê hate'amim*, p. 20) and *v'eth* (with *tebir*) give prominence to the object; and the interchange of Jehovah of hosts with the Holy One of Israel makes the sin appear all the greater on account of the exaltation and holiness of God, who revealed Himself in this word, and indeed had manifested Himself to Israel as His own peculiar people. The prophet no sooner mentions the great sin of Judah, than the announcement of punishment receives, as it were, fresh fuel, and bursts out again.

ISAIAH	Page 84
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Isaiah 5:25. “Therefore is the wrath of Jehovah kindled against His people, and He stretches His hand over them, and smites them; then the hills tremble, and their carcasses become like sweepings in the midst of the streets. For all this His anger is not appeased, and His hand is stretched out still.” We may see from these last words, which are repeated as a refrain in the cycle of prophecies relating to the time of Ahaz (Isa. 9:11, 16; 10:4), that the prophet had before his mind a distinct and complete judgment upon Judah, belonging to the immediate future. It was certainly a coming judgment, not one already past; for the verbs after “therefore” (*’al-cēn*), like those after the three previous *lâcēn*, are all prophetic preterites. It is impossible, therefore, to take the words “and the hills tremble” as referring to the earthquake in the time of Uzziah (Amos 1:1; Zech. 14:5). This judgment, which was closer at hand, would consist in the fact that Jehovah would stretch out His hand in His wrath over His people (or, as it is expressed elsewhere, would swing His hand: Luther, “wave His hand,” i.e., move it to and fro; vid., Isa. 11:15; 19:16; 30:30, 32), and bring it down upon Judah with one stroke, the violence of which would be felt not only by men, but by surrounding nature as well. What kind of stroke this would be, was to be inferred from the circumstance that the corpses would lie unburied in the streets, like common street-sweepings. The reading *תצות* must be rejected. Early editors read the word much more correctly *תצות*; Buxtorf (1618) even adopts the reading *תצות*, which has the Masoretic pointing in Num. 22:39 in its favour. It is very natural to connect *cassuchâh* with the Arabic *kusâcha* (sweepings; see at Isa. 33:12): but *kusâcha* is the common form for waste or rubbish of this kind (e.g., *kulâme*, nail-cuttings), whereas *cassuach* is a form which, like the forms *fâôl* (e.g., *châmôts*) and *fâûl* (compare the Arabic *fâsûs*, a wind-maker, or wind-bag, i.e., a boaster), has always an intensive, active (e.g., *channun*), or circumstantial signification (like *shaccul*), but is never found in a passive sense. The *Caph* is consequently to be taken as a

particle of comparison (followed, as is generally the case, with a definite article); and *sûchâh* is to be derived from *sûach* (= *verrere*, to sweep). The reference, therefore, is not to a pestilence (which is designated, as a stroke from God, not by *hiccâh*, but by *nâgaph*), but to the slaughter of battle; and if we look at the other terrible judgment threatened in vv. 26ff., which was to proceed from the imperial power, there can be no doubt that the spirit of prophecy here points to the massacre that took place in Judah in connection with the Syro-Ephraimitish war (see 2 Chron. 28:5, 6). The mountains may then have trembled with the marching of troops, and the din of arms, and the felling of trees, and the shout of war. At any rate, nature had to participate in what men had brought upon themselves; for, according to the creative appointment of God, nature bears the same relation to man as the body to the soul. Every stroke of divine wrath which falls upon a nation equally affects the land which has grown up, as it were, with it; and in this sense the mountains of Judah trembled at the time referred to, even though the trembling was only discernible by initiated ears. But “for all this” (*Beth*, = “notwithstanding,” “in spite of,” as in Job 1:22) the wrath of Jehovah, as the prophet foresaw, would not turn away, as it was accustomed to do when He was satisfied; and His hand would still remain stretched out over Judah, ready to strike again.

Isaiah 5:26. Jehovah finds the human instruments of His further strokes, not in Israel and the neighbouring nations, but in the people of distant lands. V. 26. “And lifts up a banner to the distant nations, and hisses to it from the end of the earth; and, behold, it comes with haste swiftly.” What the prophet here foretold began to be fulfilled in the time of Ahaz. But the prophecy, which commences with this verse, has every possible mark of the very opposite of a *vaticinium post eventum*. It is, strictly speaking, only what had already been threatened in Deut. 28:49ff. (cf., Isa. 32:21ff.), though here it assumes a more plastic form, and is here presented for the first time to the view of the prophet as though coming out of a mist.

Jehovah summons the nations afar off: *haggōyim mērâchok* signifies, as we have rendered it, the “distant nations,” for *mērâchok* is virtually an adjective both here and Isa. 49:1, just as in Jer. 23:23 it is virtually a substantive. The visible working of Jehovah presents itself to the prophet in two figures. Jehovah plants a banner or standard, which, like an optical telegraph, announces to the nations at a more remote distance than the horn of battle (*shophâr*) could possibly reach, that they are to gather together to war. A “banner” (*nēs*): i.e., a lofty staff with flying colours (Isa. 33:23) planted upon a bare mountain-top (Isa. 13:2). אֲשָׁף alternates with הָרִים in this favourite figure of Isaiah. The nations through whom this was primarily fulfilled were the nations of the Assyrian empire. According to the Old Testament view, these nations were regarded as far off, and dwelling at the end of the earth (Isa. 39:3), not only inasmuch as the Euphrates formed the boundary towards the north-east between what was geographically known and unknown to the Israelites (Ps. 72:8; Zech. 9:10), but also inasmuch as the prophet had in his mind a complex body of nations stretching far away into further Asia. The second figure is taken from a bee-master, who entices the bees, by hissing or whistling, to come out of their hives and settle on the ground. Thus Virgil says to the bee-master who wants to make the bees settle, “Raise a ringing, and beat the cymbals of Cybele all around” (*Georgics*, iv. 54). Thus does Jehovah entice the hosts of nations like swarms of bees (Isa. 7:18), and they swarm together with haste and swiftness. The plural changes into the singular, because those who are approaching have all the appearance at first of a compact and indivisible mass; it is also possible that the ruling nation among the many is singled out. The thought and expression are both misty, and this is perfectly characteristic. With the word “behold” (*hinnēh*) the prophet points to them; they are approaching *mehērâh kal*, i.e., in the shortest time with swift feet, and the nearer they come to his view the more clearly he can describe them.

Isaiah 5:27. “There is none exhausted, and none stumbling among them: it gives itself no slumber, and no sleep; and to none is the girdle of his hips loosed; and to none is the lace of his shoes broken.” Notwithstanding the long march, there is no *exhausted* one, obliged to separate himself and remain behind (Deut. 25:18; Isa. 14:31); no *stumbling* one (*cōshēl*), for they march on, pressing incessantly forwards, as if along a well-made road (Jer. 31:9). They do not *slumber* (*nūm*), to say nothing of *sleeping* (*yâshēn*), so great is their eagerness for battle: i.e., they do not slumber to refresh themselves, and do not even allow themselves their ordinary night’s rest. No one has the *girdle* of his armour-shirt or coat of mail, in which he stuck his sword (Neh. 4:18), at all *loosened*; nor has a single one even the *shoe-string*, with which his sandals were fastened, *broken* (*nittak, disrumpitur*). The statement as to their want of rest forms a *climax descendens*; the other, as to the tightness and durability of their equipment, a *climax ascendens*: the two statements follow one another after the nature of a *chiasmus*.

Isaiah 5:28. The prophet then proceeds to describe their weapons and war-chariots. V. 28. “He whose arrows are sharpened, and all his bows strung; the hoofs of his horses are counted like flint, and his wheels like the whirlwind.” In the prophet’s view they are coming nearer and nearer. For he sees that they have brought the sharpened arrows in their quivers (Isa. 22:6); and the fact that all their bows are already *trodden* (namely, as their length was equal to a man’s height, by treading upon the string with the left foot, as we may learn from Arrian’s *Indica*), proves that they are near to the goal. The correct reading in Jablonsky (according to Kimchi’s *Lex. cf., Michlal yofi*) is יִשְׁתַּדְּדוּ with *dagesh dirimens*, as in Ps. 37:15 (Ges. § 20, 2, b). As the custom of shoeing horses was not practised in ancient times, firm hoofs (ὄπλαι καρτεραί, according to Xenophon’s *Hippikos*) were one of the most important points in a good horse. And the horses of the enemy that was now drawing near to Judah had hoofs that would be found like flint (*tzar*, only used here,

equivalent to the Arabic *zirr*). Homer designates such horses *chalkopodes*, brazen-footed. And the two wheels of the war-chariots, to which they were harnessed, turned with such velocity, and overthrew everything before them with such violence, that it seemed not merely as if a whirlwind drove them forward, but as if they were the whirlwind itself (Isa. 56:15; Jer. 4:13). Nahum compares them to lightning (Isa. 2:5). Thus far the prophet's description has moved on, as if by forced marches, in clauses of from two to four words each. It now changes into a heavy, stealthy pace, and then in a few clauses springs like a wild beast upon its prey.

Isaiah 5:29. *“Roaring issues from it as from the lioness: it roars like lions, and utters a low murmur; seizes the prey, carries it off, and no one rescues.”* The futures, with the preceding שִׁבְעָה

לֵי which is equivalent to a future, hold each feature in the description fast, as if for prolonged contemplation. The lion roars when eager for prey; and such is now the war-cry of the bloodthirsty enemy, which the prophet compares to the roaring of a lion or of young lions (*cephirim*) in the fulness of their strength. (The lion is described by its poetic name, לֵבִיא; this does not exactly apply to the lioness, which would rather be designated by the term לֵבִיָּה.)

The roar is succeeded by a low growl (*nâham, fremere*), when a lion is preparing to fall upon its prey. And so the prophet hears a low and ominous murmur in the army, which is now ready for battle. But he also sees immediately afterwards how the enemy seizes its booty and carries it irrecoverably away: literally, “how he causes it to escape,” i.e., not “lets it slip in cruel sport,” as Luzzatto interprets it, but carries it to a place of safety (Mic. 6:14). The prey referred to is Judah. It also adds to the gloomy and mysterious character of the prophecy, that the prophet never mentions Judah. In the following verse also (v. 30) the object is still suppressed, as if the prophet could not let it pass his lips.

Isaiah 5:30. *“And it utters a deep roar over it in that day like the roaring of the sea: and it looks*

to the earth, and behold darkness, tribulation, and light; it becomes night over it in the clouds of heaven.” The subject to “roars” is the mass of the enemy; and in the expressions “over it” and “it looks” (*nibbat*; the *niphil*, which is only met with here, in the place of the *hiphil*) the prophet has in his mind the nation of Judah, upon which the enemy falls with the roar of the ocean—that is to say, overwhelming it like a sea. And when the people of Judah look to the earth, i.e., to their own land, darkness alone presents itself, and darkness which has swallowed up all the smiling and joyous aspect which it had before. And what then? The following words, *tzar vâ'ôr*, have been variously rendered, viz., “moon (= sahar) and sun” by the Jewish expositors, “stone and flash,” i.e., hail and thunder-storm, by Drechsler; but such renderings as these, and others of a similar kind, are too far removed from the ordinary usage of the language. And the separation of the two words, so that the one closes a sentence and the other commences a fresh one (e.g., “darkness of tribulation, and the sun becomes dark”), which is adopted by Hitzig, Gesenius, Ewald, and others, is opposed to the impression made by the two monosyllables, and sustained by the pointing, that they are connected together. The simplest explanation is one which takes the word *tzar* in its ordinary sense of tribulation or oppression, and *'ôr* in its ordinary sense of light, and which connects the two words closely together. And this is the case with the rendering given above: *tzar vâ'ôr* are “tribulation and brightening up,” one following the other and passing over into the other, like morning and night (Isa. 21:12). This pair of words forms an interjectional clause, the meaning of which is, that when the predicted darkness had settled upon the land of Judah, this would not be the end; but there would still follow an alternation of anxiety and glimmerings of hope, until at last it had become altogether dark in the cloudy sky over all the land of Judah (*'ariphim*, the cloudy sky, is only met with here; it is derived from *'âraph*, to drop or trickle, hence also *'arâphel*: the suffix points back to *lâ'âretz, erez* denoting sometimes the earth as a whole, and at other times the land as

being part of the earth). The prophet here predicts that, before utter ruin has overtaken Judah, sundry approaches will be made towards this, within which a divine deliverance will appear again and again. Grace tries and tries again and again, until at last the measure of iniquity is full, and the time of repentance past. The history of the nation of Judah proceeded according to this law until the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The Assyrian troubles, and the miraculous light of divine help which arose in the destruction of the military power of Sennacherib, were only the foreground of this mournful but yet ever and anon hopeful course of history, which terminated in utter darkness, that has continued now for nearly two thousand years. This closes the third prophetic address. It commences with a parable which contains the history of Israel *in nuce*, and closes with an emblem which symbolizes the gradual but yet certain accomplishment of the judicial, penal termination of the parable. This third address, therefore, is as complete in itself as the second was. The kindred allusions are to be accounted for from the sameness of the historical basis and arena. During the course of the exposition, it has become more and more evident and certain that it relates to the time of Uzziah and Jotham,—a time of peace, of strength, and wealth, but also of pride and luxury. The terrible slaughter of the Syro-Ephraimitish war, which broke out at the end of Jotham's reign, and the varied complications which king Ahaz introduced between Judah and the imperial worldly power, and which issued eventually in the destruction of the former kingdom,—those five marked epochs in the history of the kingdoms of the world, or great empires, to which the Syro-Ephraimitish war was the prelude,—were still hidden from the prophet in the womb of the future. The description of the great mass of people that was about to roll over Judah from afar is couched in such general terms, so undefined and misty, that all we can say is, that everything that was to happen to the people of God on the part of the imperial power during the five great and extended periods of

judgment that were now so soon to commence (viz., the Assyrian, the Chaldean, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman), was here unfolding itself out of the mist of futurity, and presenting itself to the prophet's eye. Even in the time of Ahaz the character of the prophecy changed in this respect. It was then that the eventful relation, in which Israel stood to the imperial power, generally assumed its first concrete shape in the form of a distinct relation to Asshur (Assyria). And from that time forth the imperial power in the mouth of the prophet is no longer a majestic thing without a name; but although the notion of the imperial power was not yet embodied in Asshur, it was called Asshur, and Asshur stood as its representative. It also necessarily follows from this, that Isa. 2–4 and 5 belong to the times anterior to Ahaz, i.e., to those of Uzziah and Jotham. But several different questions suggest themselves here. If Isa. 2–4 and 5 were uttered under Uzziah and Jotham, how could Isaiah begin with a promise (Isa. 2:1–4) which is repeated word for word in Mic. 4:1ff., where it is the direct antithesis to Isa. 3:12, which was uttered by Micha, according to Jer. 26:18, in the time of Hezekiah? Again, if we consider the advance apparent in the predictions of judgment from the general expressions with which they commence in Isa. 1 to the close of Isa. 5, in what relation does the address in Isa. 1 stand to Isa. 2–4 and 5, inasmuch as vv. 7–9 are not ideal (as we felt obliged to maintain, in opposition to Caspari), but have a distinct historical reference, and therefore at any rate presuppose the Syro-Ephraimitish war? And lastly, if Isa. 6 does really relate, as it apparently does, to the call of Isaiah to the prophetic office, how are we to explain the singular fact, that three prophetic addresses precede the history of his call, which ought properly to stand at the commencement of the book? Drechsler and Caspari have answered this question lately, by maintaining that Isa. 6 does not contain an account of the call of Isaiah to the prophetic office, but simply of the call of the prophet, who was already installed in that office, to one particular mission. The proper heading to be adopted for

Isa. 6 would therefore be, "The ordination of the prophet as the preacher of the judgment of hardening;" and Isa. 1-5 would contain warning reproofs addressed by the prophet to the people, who were fast ripening for this judgment of hardening (reprobation), for the purpose of calling them to repentance. The final decision was still trembling in the balance. But the call to repentance was fruitless, and Israel hardened itself. And now that the goodness of God had tried in vain to lead the people to repentance, and the long-suffering of God had been wantonly abused by the people, Jehovah Himself would harden them. Looked at in this light, Isa. 6 stands in its true historical place. It contains the divine sequel to that portion of Isaiah's preaching, and of the prophetic preaching generally, by which it had been preceded. But true as it is that the whole of the central portion of Israel's history, which lay midway between the commencement and the close, was divided in half by the contents of Isa. 6, and that the distinctive importance of Isaiah as a prophet arose especially from the fact that he stood upon the boundary between these two historic halves; there are serious objections which present themselves to such an explanation of Isa. 6. It is possible, indeed, that this distinctive importance may have been given to Isaiah's official position at his very first call. And what Umbreit says—namely, that Isa. 6 must make the impression upon every unprejudiced mind, that it relates to the prophet's inaugural vision—cannot really be denied. but the position in which Isa. 6 stands in the book itself must necessarily produce a contrary impression, unless it can be accounted for in some other way. Nevertheless the impression still remains (just as at Isa. 1:7-9), and recurs again and again. We will therefore proceed to Isa. 6 without attempting to efface it. It is possible that we may discover some other satisfactory explanation of the enigmatical position of Isa. 6 in relation to what precedes.

Isaiah 6

The Prophet's Account of His Own Divine Mission

Isaiah 6:1. The time of the occurrence here described, viz., "*the year that king Uzziah (Uzîyah) died,*" was of importance to the prophet. The statement itself, in the naked form in which it is here introduced, is much more emphatic than if it commenced with "it came to pass" (*vay'hi*; cf., Ex. 16:6, Prov. 24:17). It was the year of Uzziah's death, not the first year of Jotham's reign; that is to say, Uzziah was still reigning, although his death was near at hand. If this is the sense in which the words are to be understood, then, even if the chapter before us contains an account of Isaiah's first call, the heading to Isa. 1, which dates the ministry of the prophet from the time of Uzziah, is quite correct, inasmuch as, although his public ministry under Uzziah was very short, this is properly to be included, not only on account of its own importance, but as inaugurating a new era (*lit.* "an epoch-making beginning"). But is it not stated in 2 Chron. 26:22, that Isaiah wrote a historical work embracing the whole of Uzziah's reign? Unquestionably; but it by no means follows from this, that he commenced his ministry long before the death of Uzziah. If Isaiah received his call in the year that Uzziah died, this historical work contained a retrospective view of the life and times of Uzziah, the close of which coincided with the call of the prophetic author, which made a deep incision into the history of Israel. Uzziah reigned fifty-two years (809-758 B.C.). This lengthened period was just the same to the kingdom of Judah as the shorter age of Solomon to that of all Israel, viz., a time of vigorous and prosperous peace, in which the nation was completely overwhelmed with manifestations of divine love. But the riches of divine goodness had no more influence upon it, than the troubles through which it had passed before. And now the eventful change took place in the relation between Israel and Jehovah, of which Isaiah was chosen to be the instrument before and above all other prophets. The year in which

all this occurred was the year of Uzziah's death. It was in this year that Israel as a people was given up to hardness of heart, and as a kingdom and country to devastation and annihilation by the imperial power of the world. How significant a fact, as Jerome observes in connection with this passage, that the year of Uzziah's death should be the year in which Romulus was born; and that it was only a short time after the death of Uzziah (*viz.*, 754 B.C. according to Varro's chronology) that Rome itself was founded! The national glory of Israel died out with king Uzziah, and has never revived to this day.

In that year, says the prophet, *"I saw the Lord of all sitting upon a high and exalted throne, and His borders filling the temple."* Isaiah saw, and that not when asleep and dreaming; but God gave him, when awake, an insight into the invisible world, by opening an inner sense for the supersensuous, whilst the action of the outer senses was suspended, and by condensing the supersensuous into a sensuous form, on account of the composite nature of man and the limits of his present state. This was the mode of revelation peculiar to an ecstatic vision (*ἐν ἑκστάσει*, Eng. ver. "in a trance," or *ἐν πνεύματι*, "in the spirit"). Isaiah is here carried up into heaven; for although in other instances it was undoubtedly the earthly temple which was presented to a prophet's view in an ecstatic vision (Amos 9:1; Ezek. 8:3; 10:4, 5; cf., Acts 22:17), yet here, as the description which follows clearly proves, the *"high and exalted throne"* is the *heavenly antitype* of the earthly throne which was formed by the ark of the covenant; and the *"temple"* (*hēcâl*: lit., a spacious hall, the name given to the temple as the palace of God the King) is the temple in heaven, as in Ps. 11:4; 18:7; 29:9, and many other passages. There the prophet sees the Sovereign Ruler, or, as we prefer to render the noun, which is formed from *'âdan = dūn*, *"the Lord of all"* (*All-herrn*, sovereign or absolute Lord), seated upon the throne, and in human form (Ezek. 1:26), as is proved by the robe with a train, whose flowing ends or borders (*fimbriae: shūlim*, as in Ex.

28:33, 34) filled the hall. The Sept., Targum, Vulgate, etc., have dropped the figure of the robe and train, as too anthropomorphic. But John, in his Gospel, is bold enough to say that it was Jesus whose glory Isaiah saw (John 12:41). And truly so, for the incarnation of God is the truth embodied in all the scriptural anthropomorphisms, and the name of Jesus is the manifested mystery of the name Jehovah. The heavenly temple is that super-terrestrial place, which Jehovah transforms into heaven and a temple, by manifesting Himself there to angels and saints. But whilst He manifests His glory there, He is obliged also to veil it, because created beings are unable to bear it. But that which veils His glory is no less splendid, than that portion of it which is revealed. And this was the truth embodied for Isaiah in the long robe and train. He saw the Lord, and what more he saw was the all-filling robe of the indescribable One. As far as the eye of the seer could look at first, the ground was covered by this splendid robe. There was consequently no room for any one to stand. And the vision of the seraphim is in accordance with this.

Isaiah 6:2. *"Above it stood seraphim: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly."* We must not render *לִּוּ מִמַּעַל* "near him;" for although *עַל* or *מֵעַל* is applied to a person standing near or over against another who is sitting down (Ex. 18:13; Jer. 36:21; compared 2 Chron. 26:19, where the latter is used to signify "over against" the altar of incense), and is used in this sense to denote the attitude of spirits (Job 1:16; 1 Kings 22:19; Zech. 6:5), and even of men (Zech. 4:14), in relation to God when seated on His throne, in which case it cannot possibly be employed in the sense of "towering above;" yet *לִּוּ מִמַּעַל*, the strongest expression for *supra*, cannot be employed in any other than a literal sense here; for which reason Rashi and the Targums understand it as signifying "above in the attitude of service," and the accentuation apparently, though erroneously, implies this (Luzzatto). What Isaiah meant by this standing above, may be inferred from the use which the

seraphim are said to have made of their wings. The imperfects do not describe what they were accustomed to do (Böttcher and others), but what the seer saw them do: with two of their six wings he saw them fly. Thus they stood flying, i.e., they hovered or soared (cf., Num. 14:14), as both the earth and stars are said to stand, although suspended in space (Job 26:7). The seraphim would not indeed tower above the head of Him that sat upon the throne, but they hovered above the robe belonging to Him with which the hall was filled, sustained by two extended wings, and covering their faces with two other wings in their awe at the divine glory (Targ. *ne videant*), and their feet with two others, in their consciousness of the depth at which the creature stands below the Holiest of all (Targ. *ne videantur*), just as the cherubim are described as veiling their bodies in Ezek. 1:11. This is the only passage in the Scriptures in which the seraphim are mentioned. According to the orthodox view, which originated with Dionysius the Areopagite, they stand at the head of the nine choirs of angels, the first rank consisting of *seraphim*, *cherubim*, and *throni*. And this is not without support, if we compare the cherubim mentioned in Ezekiel, which carried the chariot of the divine throne; whereas here the seraphim are said to surround the seat on which the Lord was enthroned. In any case, the seraphim and cherubim were heavenly beings of different kinds; and there is no weight in the attempts made by Hendewerk and Stickel to prove that they are one and the same. And certainly the name *serpahim* does not signify merely spirits as such, but even, if not the highest of all, yet a distinct order from the rest; for the Scriptures really teach that there are gradations in rank in the hierarchy of heaven. Nor were they mere symbols or fanciful images, as Hävernick imagines, but real spiritual beings, who visibly appeared to the prophet, and that in a form corresponding to their own supersensuous being, and to the design of the whole transaction. Whilst these seraphim hovered above on both sides of Him that sat upon the throne, and therefore formed two opposite

choirs, each ranged in a semicircle, they presented antiphonal worship to Him that sat upon the throne.

Isaiah 6:3. *“And one cried to the other, and said, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: filling the whole earth is His glory.”* The meaning is not that they all lifted up their voice in concert at one and the same time (just as in Ps. 42:8 *el* is not used in this sense, viz., as equivalent to *c’neged*), but that there was a continuous and unbroken antiphonal song. One set commenced, and the others responded, either repeating the *“Holy, holy, holy,”* or following with *“filling the whole earth is His glory.”* Isaiah heard this antiphonal or “hypophonal” song of the seraphim, not merely that he might know that the uninterrupted worship of God was their blessed employment, but because it was with this doxology as with the doxologies of the Apocalypse, it had a certain historical significance in common with the whole scene. God is in Himself the *Holy One* (*kâdôsh*), i.e., the separate One, beyond or above the world, true light, spotless purity, the perfect One. His *glory* (*câbod*) is His manifested holiness, as Oetinger and Bengel express it, just as, on the other hand, His holiness is His veiled or hidden glory. The design of all the work of God is that His holiness should become universally manifest, or, what is the same thing, that His glory should become the fulness of the whole earth (Isa. 11:9; Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14). This design of the work of God stands before God as eternally present; and the seraphim also have it ever before them in its ultimate completion, as the theme of their song of praise. But Isaiah was a man living in the very midst of the history that was moving on towards this goal; and the cry of the seraphim, in the precise form in which it reached him, showed him to what it would eventually come on earth, whilst the heavenly shapes that were made visible to him helped him to understand the nature of that divine glory with which the earth was to be filled. The whole of the book of Isaiah contains traces of the impression made by this ecstatic vision. The favourite name of God in the mouth of the prophet viz., “the Holy One of Israel” (*kedosh*

ISAIAH	Page 91
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Yisrael), is the echo of this seraphic *sanctus*; and the fact that this name already occurs with such marked preference on the part of the prophet in the addresses contained in Isa. 1:2–4:5, supports the view that Isaiah is here describing his own first call. All the prophecies of Isaiah carry this name of God as their stamp. It occurs twenty-nine times (including Isa. 10:17; 43:15; 49:7), viz., twelve times in Isa. 1–39, and seventeen times in Isa. 40–66. As Luzzatto has well observed, “the prophet, as if with a presentiment that the authenticity of the second part of his book would be disputed, has stamped both parts with this name of God, ‘the Holy One of Israel,’ as if with his own seal.” The only other passages in which the word occurs, are three times in the Psalms (Ps. 71:22; 78:41; 89:19), and twice in Jeremiah (Jer. 50:29; 51:5), and that not without an allusion to Isaiah. It forms an essential part of Isaiah’s distinctive prophetic signature. And here we are standing at the source from which it sprang. But did this thrice-holy refer to the triune God? Knobel contents himself with saying that the threefold repetition of the word “holy” serves to give it the greater emphasis. No doubt men are accustomed to say three times what they wish to say in an exhaustive and satisfying manner; for three is the number of expanded unity, of satisfied and satisfying development, of the key-note extended into the chord. But why is this? The Pythagoreans said that numbers were the first principle of all things; but the Scriptures, according to which God created the world in twice three days by ten mighty words, and completed it in seven days, teach us that God is the first principle of all numbers. The fact that three is the number of developed and yet self-contained unity, has its ultimate ground in the circumstance that it is the number of the trinitarian process; and consequently the trilogy (*trisagion*) of the seraphim (like that of the cherubim in Rev. 4:8), whether Isaiah was aware of it or no, really pointed in the distinct consciousness of the spirits themselves to the triune God.

Isaiah 6:4. When Isaiah heard this, he stood entranced at the farthest possible distance from

Him that sat upon the throne, namely, under the door of the heavenly palace or temple. What he still further felt and saw, he proceeds to relate in v. 4: “*And the foundations of the thresholds shook with the voice of them that cried; and the house became full of smoke.*” By *’ammoth hassippim*, the LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and others understand the posts of the lintels, the supporting beams of the *superliminaria*, which closed the doorway at the top. But as *saph* is only used in other places to signify the threshold and porch (*limen* and *vestibulum*), *’ammoth hassippim* must be understood here in the (perfectly appropriate) sense of “the foundations of the thresholds” (*’ammâh*, which bears the same relation to מֵאָ, mother, as *matrix* to *mater*, is used to denote the receptive basis into which the door-steps with their plugs were inserted, like the talmudic *ammetâh derêchayyâh*, the frame or box of the hand-mill (*Berachoth* 18*b*), and *ammath megêrah*, the wood-work which runs along the back of the saw and keeps it firmly extended (*Kelim* 21, 3); compare the “*Schraubenmutter*,” literally screw-mother, or female screw, which receives and holds the cylindrical screw). Every time that the choir of seraphim (הַקְּרָאִים: compare such collective singulars as *hâ’oreb*, the ambush, in Josh. 8:19; *hechâlutz*, of men of war, in Josh. 6:7, etc.) began their song, the support of the threshold of the porch in which Isaiah was standing trembled. The building was seized with reverential awe throughout its whole extent, and in its deepest foundations: for in the blessed state beyond, nothing stands immoveable or unsusceptible in relation to the spirits there; but all things form, as it were, the *accidentia* of their free personality, yielding to their impressions, and voluntarily following them in all their emotions. The house was also “*filled with smoke.*” Many compare this with the similar occurrence in connection with the dedication of Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 8:10); but Drechsler is correct in stating that the two cases are not parallel, for there God simply attested His own presence by the cloud of smoke behind which He concealed Himself,

whereas here there was no need of any such self-attestation. Moreover, in this instance God does not dwell in the cloud and thick darkness, whilst the smoke is represented as the effect of the songs of praise in which the seraphim have joined, and not of the presence of God. The smoke arose from the altar of incense mentioned in v. 6. But when Drechsler says that it was the prayers of *saints* (as in Rev. 5:8; 8:3, 4), which ascended to the Lord in the smoke, this is a thought which is quite out of place here. The smoke was the immediate consequence of the seraphs' song of praise. This begins to throw a light upon the name *seraphim*, which may help us to decipher it. The name cannot possibly be connected with *sârâph*, a snake (Sanscr. *sarpa*, Lat. *serpens*); and to trace the word to a verb *sârâph* in the sense of the Arabic *'sarafa* (*'sarufa*), to tower high, to be exalted, or highly honoured (as Gesenius, Hengstenberg, Hofmann, and others have done), yields a sense which does not very strongly commend itself. On the other hand, to follow Knobel, who reads *shârâthim* (worshippers of God), and thus presents the Lexicon with a new word, and to pronounce the word *serpahim* a copyist's error, would be a rash concession to the heaven-storming omnipotence which is supposed to reside in the ink of a German scholar. It is hardly admissible, however, to interpret the name as signifying directly spirits of light or fire, since the true meaning of *sârâph* is not *urere* (to burn), but *comburare* (to set on fire or burn up). Umbreit endeavours to do justice to this transitive meaning by adopting the explanation "fiery beings," by which all earthly corruption is opposed and destroyed. The vision itself, however, appears to point to a much more distinctive and special meaning in the name, which only occurs in this passage of Isaiah. We shall have more to say upon this point presently.

Isaiah 6:5. The seer, who was at first overwhelmed and intoxicated by the majestic sight, now recovers his self-consciousness. V. 5. "Then said I, Woe to me! for I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I am dwelling among a

people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts." That a man cannot see God without dying is true in itself, and was an Old Testament conviction throughout (Ex. 33:20, etc.). He must die, because the holiness of God is to the sinner a consuming fire (Isa. 33:14); and the infinite distance between the creature and the Creator is sufficient of itself to produce a prostrating effect, which even the seraphim could not resist without veiling their faces. Isaiah therefore regarded himself as lost (*nidmēthi*, like ὄλωλα, *perii*, a preterite denoting the fact which, although not outwardly completed, is yet effected so far as a man's own consciousness is concerned), and all the more because he himself was of unclean lips, and he was also a member of a nation of unclean lips. The unholiness of his own person was doubled, in consequence of the closeness of the natural connection, by the unholiness of the nation to which he belonged. He designates this unholiness as uncleanness of lips, because he found himself transported into the midst of choirs of beings who were praising the Lord with pure lips; and he calls the King *Jehovah*, because, although he had not seen Jehovah face to face, he had seen the throne, and the all-filling robe, and the seraphim who surrounded and did homage to Him that sat upon the throne; and therefore, as he had seen the heavenly King in His revealed majesty, he describes the scene according to the impression that he had received. But to stand here in front of Jehovah of hosts, the exalted King, to whom everything does homage, and to be obliged to remain mute in the consciousness of deep uncleanness, excited within him the annihilating anguish of self-condemnation. And this is expressed in the confession made by the contrite seer.

Isaiah 6:6, 7. This confession was followed by the forgiveness of his sins, of which he received an attestation through a heavenly sacrament, and which was conveyed to him through the medium of a seraphic absolution. Vv. 6, 7. "And one of the seraphim flew to me with a red-hot coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth

with it, and said, Behold, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away; and so thy sin is expiated." One of the beings hovering round the Lord (there were, therefore, a large and indefinite number) flew to the altar of incense,—the heavenly original of the altar of incense in the earthly temple, which was reckoned as belonging to the Most Holy Place,—and took from this altar a *ritzpâh*, i.e., either a red-hot stone (Vulg. *calculus*, Ar. *radfe* or *radafe*), or, according to the prevailing tradition, a red-hot coal (vid., *râtzēph - râshaph*, to scatter sparks, sparkle, or glow: syn. *gacheleth*), and that with a pair of tongs, because even a seraph's hand cannot touch the vessels consecrated to God, or the sacrifices that belong to Him. With this red-hot coal he flew to Isaiah, and having touched his mouth with it, i.e., that member of his body of whose uncleanness he had more especially complained (cf., Jer. 1:9, where the prophet's mouth is touched by Jehovah's hand, and made eloquent in consequence), he assured him of the forgiveness of his sins, which coincided with the application of this sacramental sign. The *Vav* connects together what is affirmed by *nâga'* (hath touched) and *sâr* (a taker away) as being simultaneous; the *zeh* (this) points as a neuter to the red-hot coal. The future *tecuppâr* is a future consec., separated by *Vav* conversive for the purpose of bringing the subject into greater prominence; as it is practically impossible that the removal of guilt should be thought of as immediate and momentary, and the expiation as occurring gradually. The fact that the guilt was taken away was the very proof that the expiation was complete. *Cipper*, with the "sin" in the accusative, or governed by עָ, signifies to cover it up, extinguish, or destroy it (for the primary meaning, vid., Isa. 28:18), so that it has no existence in relation to the penal justice of God. All sinful uncleanness was burned away from the prophet's mouth. The seraph, therefore, did here what his name denotes: he burned up or burned away (*comburit*). He did this, however, not by virtue of his own fiery nature, but by means of the divine fire which he had taken from the

heavenly altar. As the smoke which filled the house came from the altar, and arose in consequence of the adoration offered to the Lord by the seraphim, not only must the incense-offering upon the altar and this adoration be closely connected; but the fire, which revealed itself in the smoke and consumed the incense-offering, and which must necessarily have been divine because of its expiatory power, was an effect of the love of God with which He reciprocated the offerings of the seraphim. A fiery look from God, and that a fiery look of pure love as the seraphim were sinless, had kindled the sacrifice. Now, if the fact that a seraph absolved the seer by means of this fire of love is to be taken as an illustrative example of the historical calling of the seraphim, they were the vehicles and media of the fire of divine love, just as the cherubim in Ezekiel are vehicles and media of the fire of divine wrath. For just as, in the case before us, a seraph takes the fire of love from the altar; so there, in Ezek. 10:6, 7, a cherub takes the fire of wrath from the throne-chariot. Consequently the cherubim appear as the vehicles and media of the wrath which destroys sinners, or rather of the divine *doxa*, with its fiery side turned towards the world; and the seraphim as the vehicles and media of the love which destroys sin, or of the same divine *doxa* with its light side towards the world.

Isaiah 6:8. When Isaiah had been thus absolved, the true object of the heavenly scene was made apparent. V. 8. "Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Behold me here; send me!" The plural "for us" (*lânu*) is not to be accounted for on the ground that, in a case of reflection or self-consultation, the subject also stands as the object in antithesis to itself (as Hitzig supposes); nor is it a *pluralis majestatis*, as Knobel maintains; nor is the original abstract signification of the plural hinted at, as Meier thinks. The plural is no doubt used here with reference to the seraphim, who formed, together with the Lord, one deliberative council (*sōd kedoshim*, Ps. 89:8), as in 1 Kings 22:19–22, Dan. 4:14, etc.; just as, from their very nature as

“sons of God” (*b'nē Hâ-elohim*), they made one family with God their Creator (vid., Eph. 3:15), all linked so closely together that they themselves could be called Elohim, like God their Creator, just as in 1 Cor. 12:12 the church of believers is called *Christos*, like Christ its head. The task for which the right man was sought was not merely *divine*, but heavenly in the broadest sense: for it is not only a matter in which God Himself is interested, that the earth should become full of the glory of God, but this is also an object of solicitude to the spirits that minister unto Him. Isaiah, whose anxiety to serve the Lord was no longer suppressed by the consciousness of his own sinfulness, no sooner heard the voice of the Lord, than he exclaimed, in holy self-consciousness, “Behold me here; send me.” It is by no means a probable thing, that he had already acted as a messenger of God, or held the office of prophet. For if the joy, with which he offered himself here as the messenger of God, was the direct consequence of the forgiveness of sins, of which he had received the seal; the consciousness of his own personal sinfulness, and his membership in a sinful nation, would certainly have prevented him thereto from coming forward to denounce judgment upon that nation. And as the prophetic office as such rested upon an extraordinary call from God, it may fairly be assumed, that when Isaiah relates so extraordinary a call as this, he is describing the sealing of his prophetic office, and therefore his own first call.

Isaiah 6:9, 10. This is confirmed by the words in which his commission is expressed, and the substance of the message.—Vv. 9, 10. “*He said, Go, and tell this people, Hear on, and understand not; and look on, but perceive not. Make ye the heart of this people greasy, and their ears heavy, and their eyes sticky; that they may not see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and their heart understand, and they be converted, and one heal them.*” “*This people*” points back to the people of unclean lips, among whom Isaiah had complained of dwelling, and whom the Lord would not call “my people.” It was to go to this people and preach to them, and therefore to be

the prophet of this people, that he was called. But how mournful does the divine commission sound! It was the terrible opposite of that seraphic mission, which the prophet had experienced in himself. The seraph had absolved Isaiah by the burning coal, that he as prophet might not absolve, but harden his people by his word. They were to hear and see, and that continually as the *gerundives* imply (Ges. § 131, 3, *b*; Ewald, § 280, *b*), by having the prophet’s preaching *actu directo* constantly before them; but not to their salvation. The two prohibitory expressions, “understand not” and “perceive not,” show what the result of the prophet’s preaching was to be, according to the judicial will of God. And the imperatives in v. 10 are not to be understood as simply instructing the prophet to tell the people what God had determined to do; for the fact that “prophets are often said to do what they announce as about to happen,” in proof of which Jer. 1:10 is sometimes quoted (cf., Jer. 31:28; Hos. 6:5; Ezek. 43:3), has its truth not in a rhetorical figure, but in the very nature of the divine word. The prophet was the organ of the word of God, and the word of God was the expression of the will of God, and the will of God is a divine act that has not yet become historical. For this reason a prophet might very well be said to perform what he announced as about to happen: God was the *causa efficiens principalis*, the word was the *causa media*, and the prophet the *causa ministerialis*. This is the force of the three imperatives; they are three figurative expressions of the idea of hardening. The first, *hishmin*, signifies to make fat (*pinguem*), i.e., without susceptibility or feeling for the operations of divine grace (Ps. 119:70); the second, *hicbîd*, to make heavy, more especially heavy or dull of hearing (Isa. 59:1); the third, *עָשָׂה* or *עָשָׂה* (whence the imperative *עָשָׂה* or *עָשָׂה*), to smear thickly, or paste over, i.e., to put upon a person what is usually the result of weak eyes, which become firmly closed by the hardening of the adhesive substance secreted in the night. The three future clauses, with “lest” (*pen*), point back to these three imperatives in

ISAIAH	Page 95
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

inverse order: their spiritual sight, spiritual hearing, and spiritual feeling were to be taken away, their eyes becoming blind, and their ears deaf, and their hearts being covered over with the grease of insensibility.

Under the influence of these futures the two preterites **לֹא יִרְפָּא לֹא יִרְפָּא** affirm what might have been the result if this hardening had not taken place, but what would never take place now. The expression **לֹא יִרְפָּא** is used in every other instance in a transitive sense, “to heal a person or a disease,” and never in the sense of becoming well or being healed; but in the present instance it acquires a passive sense from the so-called impersonal construction (Ges. § 137, 3), “and one heal it,” i.e., “and it be healed:” and it is in accordance with this sense that it is paraphrased in Mark 4:12, whereas in the three other passages in which the words are quoted in the New Testament (viz., Matthew, John, and Acts) the Septuagint rendering is adopted, “and I should heal them” (God Himself being taken as the subject). The commission which the prophet received, reads as though it were quite irreconcilable with the fact that God, as the Good, can only will what is good. But our earlier doctrinarians have suggested the true solution, when they affirm that God does not harden men *positive aut effective*, since His true will and direct work are man’s salvation, but *occasionaliter et eventualiter*, since the offers and displays of salvation which man receives necessarily serve to fill up the measure of his sins, and *judicialiter* so far as it is the judicial will of God, that what was originally ordained for men’s salvation should result after all in judgment, in the case of any man upon whom grace has ceased to work, because all its ways and means have been completely exhausted. It is not only the loving will of God which is good, but also the wrathful will into which His loving will changes, when determinately and obstinately resisted. There is a self-hardening in evil, which renders a man thoroughly incorrigible, and which, regarded as the fruit of his moral behaviour, is no less a judicial punishment inflicted by God, than self-induced

guilt on the part of man. The two are bound up in one another, inasmuch as sin from its very nature bears its own punishment, which consists in the wrath of God excited by sin. For just as in all the good that men do, the active principle is the love of God; so in all the harm that they do, the active principle is the wrath of God. An evil act in itself is the result of self-determination proceeding from a man’s own will; but evil, regarded as the mischief in which evil acting quickly issues, is the result of the inherent wrath of God, which is the obverse of His inherent love; and when a man hardens himself in evil, it is the inward working of God’s peremptory wrath. To this wrath Israel had delivered itself up through its continued obstinacy in sinning. And consequently the Lord now proceeded to shut the door of repentance against His people. Nevertheless He directed the prophet to preach repentance, because the judgment of hardness suspended over the people as a whole did not preclude the possibility of the salvation of individuals.

Isaiah 6:11–13. Isaiah heard with sighing, and yet with obedience, in what the mission to which he had so cheerfully offered himself was to consist. V. 11a. “Then said I, Lord, how long?” He inquired how long this service of hardening and this state of hardness were to continue,—a question forced from him by his sympathy with the nation to which he himself belonged (cf., Ex. 32:9–14), and one which was warranted by the certainty that God, who is ever true to His promises, could not cast off Israel as a people for ever. The answer follows in vv. 11b–13: “Until towns are wasted without inhabitant, and houses are without man, and the ground shall be laid waste, a wilderness, and Jehovah shall put men far away, and there shall be many forsaken places within the land. And is there still a tenth therein, this also again is given up to destruction, like the terebinth and like the oak, of which, when they are felled, only a root-stump remains: such a root-stump is a holy seed.” The answer is intentionally commenced, not with **עַד־כִּי**, but with **עַד אֲשֶׁר אָם** (the expression only occurs again in Gen. 28:15 and Num. 32:17), which,

even without dropping the conditional force of כִּי , signified that the hardening judgment would only come to an end when the condition had been fulfilled, that towns, houses, and the soil of the land of Israel and its environs had been made desolate, in fact, utterly and universally desolate, as the three definitions (without inhabitant, without man, wilderness) affirm. The expression *richak* (put far away) is a general and enigmatical description of exile or captivity (cf., Joe. 4:6, Jer. 27:10); the literal term *gâlâh* has been already used in Isa. 5:13. Instead of a national term being used, we find here simply the general expression “men” (*eth-hâ’âdâm*; the consequence of depopulation, viz., the entire absence of men, being expressed in connection with the depopulation itself. The participial noun *hâ azubâh* (the forsaken) is a collective term for places once full of life, that had afterwards died out and fallen into ruins (Isa. 17:2, 9). This judgment would be followed by a second, which would expose the still remaining tenth of the nation to a sifting. שֶׁבַע וְהָיָה , to *become again* (Ges. § 142, 3); וְהָיָה לְבָעֵר , not as in Isa. 5:5, but as in Isa. 4:4, after Num. 24:22: the feminine does not refer to the land of Israel (Luzzatto), but to the tenth. Up to the words “given up to destruction,” the announcement is a threatening one; but from this point to “remains” a consolatory prospect begins to dawn; and in the last three words this brighter prospect, like a distant streak of light, bounds the horizon of the gloomy prophecy. It shall happen as with the terebinth and oak. These trees were selected as illustrations, not only because they were so near akin to evergreens, and produced a similar impression, or because there were so many associations connected with them in the olden times of Israel’s history; but also because they formed such fitting symbols of Israel, on account of their peculiar facility for springing up again from the root (like the beech and nut, for example), even when they had been completely felled. As the forms *yabbesheth* (dryness), *dalleketh* (fever), *’avvereth* (blindness), *shachepheth* (consumption), are used to denote

certain qualities or states, and those for the most part faulty ones (*Concord.* p. 1350); so *shalleceth* here does not refer to the act itself of felling or casting away, but rather to the condition of a tree that has been hewn or thrown down; though not to the condition of the trunk as it lies prostrate upon the ground, but to that of the root, which is still left in the earth. Of this tree, that had been deprived of its trunk and crown, there was still a *mazzebeth* kindred form of *mazzebâh*), i.e., a root-stump (*truncus*) fast in the ground. The tree was not yet entirely destroyed; the root-stump could shoot out and put forth branches again. And this would take place: the root-stump of the oak or terebinth, which was a symbol of Israel, was “a holy seed.” The root-stump was the remnant that had survived the judgment, and this remnant would become a seed, out of which a new Israel would spring up after the old had been destroyed. Thus in a few weighty words is the way sketched out, which God would henceforth take with His people. The passage contains an outline of the history of Israel to the end of time. Israel as a nation was indestructible, by virtue of the promise of God; but the mass of the people were doomed to destruction through the judicial sentence of God, and only a remnant, which would be converted, would perpetuate the nationality of Israel, and inherit the glorious future. This law of a blessing sunk in the depths of the curse actually inflicted, still prevails in the history of the Jews. The way of salvation is open to all. Individuals find it, and give us a presentiment of what might be and is to be; but the great mass are hopelessly lost, and only when they have been swept away will a holy seed, saved by the covenant-keeping God, grow up into a new and holy Israel, which, according to Isa. 27:6, will fill the earth with its fruits, or, as the apostle expresses it in Rom. 11:12, become “the riches of the Gentiles.”

Now, if the impression which we have received from Isa. 6 is not a false one,—namely, that the prophet is here relating his first call to the prophetic office, and not, as Seb. Schmidt observes, his call to one particular duty (*ad*

ISAIAH	Page 97
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

unum specialem actum officii),—this impression may be easily verified, inasmuch as the addresses in Isa. 1–5 will be sure to contain the elements which are here handed to the prophet by revelation, and the result of these addresses will correspond to the sentence judicially pronounced here. And the conclusion to which we have come will stand this test. For the prophet, in the very first address, after pointing out to the nation as a whole the gracious pathway of justification and sanctification, takes the turn indicated in Isa. 6:11–13, in full consciousness that all is in vain. And the theme of the second address is, that it will be only after the overthrow of the false glory of Israel that the true glory promised can possibly be realized, and that after the destruction of the great body of the people only a small remnant will live to see this realization. The parable with which the third begins, rests upon the supposition that the measure of the nation’s iniquity is full; and the threatening of judgment introduced by this parable agrees substantially, and in part verbally, with the divine answer received by the prophet to his question “How long?” On every side, therefore, the opinion is confirmed, that in c. 6 Isaiah describes his own consecration to the prophetic office. The addresses in Isa. 2–4 and 5, which belong to the time of Uzziah and Jotham, do not fall earlier than the year of Uzziah’s death, from which point the whole of Jotham’s sixteen years’ reign lay open before them. Now, as Micah commenced his ministry in Jotham’s reign, though his book was written in the form of a complete and chronologically indivisible summary, by the working up of the prophecies which he delivered under Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and was then read or published in the time of Hezekiah, as we may infer from Jer. 26:18, it is quite possible that Isaiah may have taken from Micah’s own lips (though not from Micah’s book) the words of promise in Isa. 2:1–4, which he certainly borrowed from some quarter. The notion that this word of promise originated with a third prophet (who must have been Joel, if he were one of the prophets known to us), is rendered very improbable by the

many marks of Micah’s prophetic peculiarities, and by its natural position in the context in which it there occurs (vid., Caspari, *Micah*, pp. 444–5).

Again, the *situation* of Isa. 6 is not inexplicable. As Hävernick has observed, the prophet evidently intended to vindicate in Isa. 6 the style and method of his previous prophecies, on the ground of the divine commission that he had received. but this only serves to explain the reason why Isaiah has not placed Isa. 6 at the commencement of the collection, and not why he inserts it in this particular place. He has done this, no doubt, for the purpose of bringing close together the prophecy and its fulfilment; for whilst on the one hand the judgment of hardening suspended over the Jewish nation is brought distinctly out in the person of king Ahaz, on the other hand we find ourselves in the midst of the Syro-Ephraimitish war, which formed the introduction to the judgments of extermination predicted in Isa. 6:11–13. It is only the position of Isa. 1 which still remains in obscurity. If Isa. 1:7–9 is to be understood in a historically literally sense, then c. 1 must have been composed after the dangers of the Syro-Ephraimitish war had been averted from Jerusalem, though the land of Judah was still bleeding with the open wounds which this war, designed as it was to destroy it altogether, had inflicted upon it. Ch. 1 would therefore be of more recent origin than Isa. 2–5, and still more recent than the connected Isa. 7–12. It is only the comparatively more general and indefinite character of Isa. 1 which seems at variance with this. But this difficulty is removed at once, if we assume that Isa. 1, though not indeed the first of the prophet’s addresses, was yet in one sense the first,—namely, the first that was committed to writing, though not the first that he delivered, and that it was primarily intended to form the preface to the addresses and historical accounts in Isa. 2–12, the contents of which were regulated by it. For Isa. 2–5 and 7–12 form two prophetic cycles, Isa. 1 being the portal which leads into them, and Isa. 6 the band which connects them together. The prophetic cycle in Isa. 2–5 may be called the

ISAIAH	Page 98
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Book of hardening, as it is by Caspari, and Isa. 7–12 the *Book of Immanuel*, as Chr. Aug. Crusius suggests, because in all the stages through which the proclamation in Isa. 7–12 passes, the coming Immanuel is the banner of consolation, which it lifts up even in the midst of the judgments already breaking upon the people, in accordance with the doom pronounced upon them in Isa. 6.

Part II

Consolation of Immanuel in the Midst of the Assyrian Oppressions—Ch. 7–12

Isaiah 7

Divine Sign of the Virgin's Wondrous Son

Isaiah 7:1. As the following prophecies could not be understood apart from the historical circumstances to which they refer, the prophet commences with a historical announcement. V. 1. *"It came to pass, in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah (Uziyâhu), king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aramaea, and Pekah (Pekach) the son of Remaliah (Remalyâhu), king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, and (he) could not make war upon it."* We have the same words, with only slight variations, in the history of the reign of Ahaz in 2 Kings 16:5. That the author of the book of Kings copied them from the book of Isaiah, will be very apparent when we come to examine the historical chapters (36–39) in their relation to the parallel sections of the book of Kings. In the passage before us, the want of independence on the part of the author of the book of Kings is confirmed by the fact that he not only repeats, but also interprets, the words of Isaiah. Instead of saying, "And (he) could not make war upon it," he says, "And they besieged Ahaz, and could not make war." The singular *yâcol* (he could) of Isaiah is changed into the simpler plural, whilst the statement that the two allies could not assault or storm Jerusalem (which must be the meaning of *nilcham 'al* in the passage before us), is more clearly defined by the additional information that they did

besiege Ahaz, but to no purpose (*tzur 'al*, the usual expression for *obsidione claudere*; cf., Deut. 20:19). The statement that "they besieged Ahaz" cannot merely signify that "they attempted to besiege him," although nothing further is known about this siege. But happily we have two accounts of the Syro-Ephraimitish war (2 Kings 16 and 2 Chron. 28). The two historical books complete one another. The book of Kings relates that the invasion of Judah by the two allies commenced at the end of Jotham's reign (2 Kings 15:37); and in addition to the statement taken from Isa. 7:1, it also mentions that Rezin conquered the seaport town of Elath, which then belonged to the kingdom of Judah; whilst the Chronicles notice the fact that Rezin brought a number of Judaeans captives to Damascus, and that Pekah conquered Ahaz in a bloody and destructive battle. Indisputable as the credibility of these events may be, it is nevertheless very difficult to connect them together, either substantially or chronologically, in a certain and reliable manner, as Caspari has attempted to do in his monograph on the Syro-Ephraimitish war (1849). We may refer here to our own manner of dovetailing the historical accounts of Ahaz and the Syro-Ephraimitish war in the introduction to the present work (p. 23ff.). If we could assume that יָבֵל (not יָבֵלוּ) was the authentic reading, and that the failure of the attempt to take Jerusalem, which is mentioned here, was occasioned by the strength of the city itself, and not by the intervention of Assyria,—so that v. 1b did not contain such an anticipation as we have supposed (p. 24), although summary anticipations of this kind were customary with biblical historians, and more especially with Isaiah,—the course of events might be arranged in the following manner, viz., that whilst Rezin was on his way to Elath, Pekah resolved to attack Jerusalem, but failed in his attempt; but that Rezin was more successful in his expedition, which was a much easier one, and after the conquest of Elath united his forces with those of his allies.

Isaiah 7:2. It is this which is referred to in v. 2: “And it was told the house of David, Aram has settled down upon Ephraim: then his heart shook, and the heart of his people, as trees of the wood shake before the wind.” The expression *nuach ‘al* (settled down upon) is explained in 2 Sam. 17:12 (cf., Judg. 7:12) by the figurative simile, “as the dew falleth upon the ground:” there it denotes a hostile invasion, here the arrival of one army to the support of another. *Ephraim* (*feminine*, like the names of countries, and of the people that are regarded as included in their respective countries: see, on the other hand, Isa. 3:8) is used as the name of the leading tribe of Israel, to signify the whole kingdom; here it denotes the whole military force of Israel. Following the combination mentioned above, we find that the allies now prepared for a second united expedition against Jerusalem. In the meantime, Jerusalem was in the condition described in Isa. 1:7–9, viz., like a besieged city, in the midst of enemies plundering and burning on every side. Elath had fallen, as Rezin’s timely return clearly showed; and in the prospect of his approaching junction with the allied army, it was quite natural, from a human point of view, that the court and people of Jerusalem should tremble like aspen leaves. נִינֵט is a contracted *fut. kal*, ending with an *a* sound on account of the guttural, as in Ruth 4:1 (Ges. § 72, Anm. 4); and נִינֵט, which is generally the form of the *infin. abs.* (Isa. 24:20), is here, and only here, the *infin. constr.* instead of נִינֵט (cf., *noach*, Num. 11:25; *shob*, Josh. 2:16; *mōt*, Ps. 38:17, etc.: vid., Ewald, § 238, b).

Isaiah 7:3. In this season of terror Isaiah received the following divine instructions. V. 3. “Then said Jehovah to Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shear-jashub thy son, to the end of the aqueduct of the upper pool, to the road of the fuller’s field.” The fuller’s field (*sedēh cōbēs*) was situated, as we may assume with Robinson, Schultz, and Thenius, against Williams, Krafft, etc., on the western side of the city, where there is still an “upper pool” of great antiquity (2 Chron. 32:30). Near to this pool the

fullers, i.e., the cleaners and thickeners of woollen fabrics, carried on their occupation (*cōbēs*, from *cābas*, related to *cābash*, *subigere*, which bears the same relation to *râchatz* as πλύνειν to λούειν). Robinson and his companions saw some people washing clothes at the upper pool when they were there; and, for a considerable distance round, the surface of this favourite washing and bleaching place was covered with things spread out to bleach or dry. The road (*mesillâh*), which ran past this fuller’s field, was the one which leads from the western gate to Joppa. King Ahaz was there, on the west of the city, and outside the fortifications,—engaged, no doubt, in making provision for the probable event of Jerusalem being again besieged in a still more threatening manner. Jerusalem received its water supply from the upper Gihon pool, and there, according to Jehovah’s directions, Isaiah was to go with his son and meet him. The two together were, as it were, a personified blessing and curse, presenting themselves to the king for him to make his own selection. For the name *Sheâr-yâshub* (which is erroneously accentuated with *tiphchah munach* instead of *merchah tiphchah*, as in Isa. 10:22), i.e., the remnant is converted (Isa. 10:21, 22), was a kind of abbreviation of the divine answer given to the prophet in Isa. 6:11–13, and was indeed at once threatening and promising, but in such a way that the curse stood in front and the grace behind. The prophetic name of Isaiah’s son was intended to drive the king to Jehovah by force, through the threatening aspect it presented; and the prophetic announcement of Isaiah himself, whose name pointed to salvation, was to allure him to Jehovah with its promising tone.

Isaiah 7:4. No means were left untried. V. 4. “And say unto him, Take heed, and keep quiet; and let not thy heart become soft from these two smoking firebrand-stumps: at the fierce anger of Rezin, and Aram, and the son of Remaliah.” The imperative הִשָּׁמֵר (not pointed הִשְׁמֵר, as is the case when it is to be connected more closely with what follows, and taken in the sense of

cave ne, or even *cave ut*) warned the king against acting for himself, in estrangement from God; and the imperative *hashkēt* exhorted him to courageous calmness, secured by confidence in God; or, as Calvin expresses it, exhorted him “to restrain himself outwardly, and keep his mind calm within.” The explanation given by Jewish expositors to the word *hisshamēr*, viz., *conside super faeces tuas* (Luzzatto: *vivi riposato*), according to Jer. 48:11, Zeph. 1:12, yields a sense which hardly suits the exhortation. The object of terror, at which and before which the king’s heart was not to despair, is introduced first of all with *Min* and then with *Beth*, as in Jer. 41:46. The two allies are designated at once as what they were in the sight of God, who sees through the true nature and future condition. They were two tails, i.e., nothing but the fag-ends, of wooden pokers (*lit.* stirrers, i.e., fire-stirrers), which would not blaze any more, but only continue smoking. They would burn and light no more, though their smoke might make the eyes smart still. Along with Rezin, and to avoid honouring him with the title of king, Aram (Syria) is especially mentioned; whilst Pekah is called Ben-Remaliah, to recal to mind his low birth, and the absence of any promise in the case of his house. The *ya’an ‘asher* (“because”) which follows (as in Ezek. 12:12) does not belong to v. 4 (as might appear from the *sethume* that comes afterwards), in the sense of “do not be afraid because,” etc., but is to be understood as introducing the reason for the judicial sentence in v. 7.

Isaiah 7:5–7. “Because Aram hath determined evil over thee, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah (Remalyahu), saying, We will march against Judah, and terrify it, and conquer it for ourselves, and make the son of Tâb’êl king in the midst of it: thus saith the Lord Jehovah, It will not be brought about, and will not take place.” The inference drawn by Caspari (*Krieg*, p. 98), that at the time when Isaiah said this, Judaea was not yet heathen or conquered, is at any rate not conclusive. The promise given to Ahaz was founded upon the wicked design, with which the war had been commenced. How far the

allies had already gone towards this last goal, the overthrow of the Davidic sovereignty, it does not say. But we know from 2 Kings 15:37 that the invasion had begun before Ahaz ascended the throne; and we may see from v. 16 of Isaiah’s prophecy, that the “terrifying” (*nekitzennah*, from *kütz*, *taedere*, *pavere*) had actually taken place; so that the “conquering” (*hibkia’*, i.e., splitting, forcing of the passes and fortifications, 2 Kings 25:4, Ezek. 30:16, 2 Chron. 21:17; 32:1) must also have been a thing belonging to the past. For history says nothing about a successful resistance on the part of Judah in this war. Only Jerusalem had not yet fallen, and, as the expression “king in the midst of it” shows, it is to this that the term “Judah” especially refers; just as in Isa. 23:13 *Asshur* is to be understood as signifying Nineveh. There they determined to enthrone a man named *Tâb’êl* (vid., Ezra 4:7; it is written *Tâb’al* here in pause, although this change does not occur in other words (e.g., *Israel*) in pause—a name resembling the Syrian name *Tab-rimmon*), a man who is otherwise unknown; but it never went beyond the determination, never was even on the way towards being realized, to say nothing of being fully accomplished. The allies would not succeed in altering the course of history as it had been appointed by the Lord.

Isaiah 7:8, 9. “For head of Aram is Damascus, and head of Damascus Rezin, and in five-and-sixty years will Ephraim as a people be broken in pieces. And head of Ephraim is Samaria, and head of Samaria the son of Remalyahu; if ye believe not, surely ye will not remain.” The attempt to remove v. 8*b*, as a gloss at variance with the context, which is supported by Eichhorn, Gesenius, Hitzig, Knobel, and others, is a very natural one; and in that case the train of thought would simply be, that the two hostile kingdoms would continue in their former relation without the annexation of Judah. But when we look more closely, it is evident that the removal of v. 8*b* destroys both the internal connection and the external harmony of the clauses. For just as 8*a* and 8*b* correspond, so do 9*a* and 9*b*. Ephraim, i.e., the kingdom of the ten tribes, which has entered into so unnatural and

ungodly a covenant with idolatrous Syria, will cease to exist as a nation in the course of sixty-five years; “and ye, if ye do not believe, but make flesh your arm, will also cease to exist.” Thus the two clauses answer to one another: *8b* is a prophecy announcing Ephraim’s destruction, and *9b* a warning, threatening Judah with destruction, if it rejects the promise with unbelief. Moreover, the style of *8b* is quite in accordance with that of Isaiah (on בָּעוֹד, see Isa. 21:16 and 16:14; and on מָעַם, “away from being a people,” in the sense of “so that it shall be no longer a nation,” Isa. 17:1; 25:2, and Jer. 48:2, 42). And the doctrinal objection, that the prophecy is too minute, and therefore taken *ex eventu*, has no force whatever, since the Old Testament prophecy furnishes an abundance of examples of the same kind (vid., Isa. 20:3, 4; 38:5; 16:14; 21:16; Ezek. 4:5ff., 24:1ff., etc.). The only objection that can well be raised is, that the time given in v. *8b* is wrong, and is not in harmony with v. 16. Now, undoubtedly the sixty-five years do not come out if we suppose the prophecy to refer to what was done by Tiglath-pileser after the Syro-Ephraimitish war, and to what was also done to Ephraim by Shalmanassar in the sixth year of Hezekiah’s reign, to which v. 16 unquestionably refers, and more especially to the former. But there is another event still, through which the existence of Ephraim, not only as a kingdom, but also as a people, was broken up,—namely, the carrying away of the last remnant of the Ephraimitish population, and the planting of colonies from Eastern Asia by Esarhaddon on Ephraimitish soil (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:2). Whereas the land of Judah was left desolate after the Chaldean deportation, and a new generation grew up there, and those who were in captivity were once more enabled to return; the land of Ephraim was occupied by heathen settlers, and the few who were left behind were melted up with these into the mixed people of the Samaritans, and those in captivity were lost among the heathen. We have only to assume that what was done to Ephraim by Esarhaddon, as related in the historical books, took place in

the twenty-second and twenty-third years of Manasseh (the sixth year of Esarhaddon), which is very probable, since it must have been under Esarhaddon that Manasseh was carried away to Babylon about the middle of his reign (2 Chron. 33:11); and we get exactly sixty-five years from the second year of the reign of Ahaz to the termination of Ephraim’s existence as a nation (viz., Ahaz, 14; Hezekiah, 29; Manasseh, 22; in all, 65). It was then that the unconditional prediction, “Ephraim as a people will be broken in pieces,” was fulfilled (*yēchath mē’ām*; it is certainly not the 3rd pers. fut. *kal*, but the *niphāl*, Mal. 2:5), just as the conditional threat “ye shall not remain” was fulfilled upon Judah in the Babylonian captivity. נִאֲמַן signifies to have a fast hold, and הִיאָמִין to prove fast-holding. If Judah did not *hold fast* to its God, it would lose its *fast hold* by losing its country, the ground beneath its feet. We have the same play upon words in 2 Chron. 20:20. The suggestion of Geiger is a very improbable one, viz., that the original reading was אַם לֹא תֵאֱמִינוּ בִי, but that בִי appeared objectionable, and was altered into כִּי. Why should it be objectionable, when the words form the conclusion to a direct address of Jehovah Himself, which is introduced with all solemnity? For this כִּי, passing over from a confirmative into an affirmative sense, and employed, as it is here, to introduce the apodosis of the hypothetical clause, see 1 Sam. 14:39, and (in the formula כִּי עֲתָה) Gen. 31:42; 43:10, Num. 22:29, 33, 1 Sam. 14:30: their continued existence would depend upon their faith, as this *chi* emphatically declares.

Isaiah 7:10, 11. Thus spake Isaiah, and Jehovah through him, to the king of Judah. Whether he replied, or what reply he made, we are not informed. He was probably silent, because he carried a secret in his heart which afforded him more consolation than the words of the prophet. The invisible help of Jehovah, and the remote prospect of the fall of Ephraim, were not enough for him. His trust was in Asshur, with whose help he would have far greater superiority over the kingdom of Israel, than

Israel had over the kingdom of Judah through the help of Damascene Syria. The pious, theocratic policy of the prophet did not come in time. He therefore let the enthusiast talk on, and had his own thoughts about the matter. Nevertheless the grace of God did not give up the unhappy son of David for lost. Vv. 10, 11. "And Jehovah continued speaking to Ahaz as follows: Ask thee a sign of Jehovah thy God, going deep down into Hades, or high up to the height above." Jehovah continued: what a deep and firm consciousness of the identity of the word of Jehovah and the word of the prophet is expressed in these words! According to a very marvellous interchange of idioms (*communicatio idiomatum*) which runs through the prophetic books of the Old Testament, at one time the prophet speaks as if he were Jehovah, and at another, as in the case before us, Jehovah speaks as if He were the prophet. Ahaz was to ask for a sign from Jehovah his God. Jehovah did not scorn to call Himself the God of this son of David, who had so hardened his heart. Possibly the holy love with which the expression "thy God" burned, might kindle a flame in his dark heart; or possibly he might think of the covenant promises and covenant duties which the words "thy God" recalled to his mind. From this, his God, he was to ask for a sign. A *sign* ('*oth*, from '*uth*, to make an incision or dent) was something, some occurrence, or some action, which served as a pledge of the divine certainty of something else. This was secured sometimes by visible miracles performed at once (Ex. 4:8, 9), or by appointed symbols of future events (Isa. 8:18; 20:3); sometimes by predicted occurrences, which, whether miraculous or natural, could not possibly be foreseen by human capacities, and therefore, if they actually took place, were a proof either retrospectively of the divine causality of other events (Ex. 3:12), or prospectively of their divine certainty (Isa. 37:30; Jer. 44:29, 30). The thing to be confirmed on the present occasion was what the prophet had just predicted in so definite a manner, viz., the maintenance of Judah with its monarchy, and the failure of the wicked enterprise of the

two allied kingdoms. If this was to be attested to Ahaz in such a way as to demolish his unbelief, it could only be effected by a miraculous sign. And just as Hezekiah asked for a sign when Isaiah foretold his recovery, and promised him the prolongation of his life for fifteen years, and the prophet gave him the sign he asked, by causing the shadow upon the royal sun-dial to go backwards instead of forwards (Isa. 38); so here Isaiah meets Ahaz with the offer of such a supernatural sign, and offers him the choice of heaven, earth, and Hades as the scene of the miracle.

הַעֲמִק and הַגְּבֵה are either in the infinitive absolute or in the imperative; and שְׁאַלָה is either the imperative אֲשַׁל with the *He* of challenge, which is written in this form in half pause instead of שְׁאַלָה (for the two similar forms with *pashtah* and *zakeph*, vid., Dan. 9:19), "Only ask, going deep down, or ascending to the height," without there being any reason for reading שְׁאַלָה with the tone upon the last syllable, as Hupfeld proposes, in the sense of *profundam fac* (or *faciendo*) *precationem* (i.e., go deep down with thy petition); or else it is the pausal subordinate form for שְׁאַלָה, which is quite allowable in itself (cf., *yechpâtz*, the constant form in pause for *yachpôtz*, and other examples, Gen. 43:14; 49:3, 27), and is apparently preferred here on account of its consonance with לְמַעַלָה (Ewald, § 93, 3). We follow the Targum, with the Sept., Syr., and Vulgate, in giving the preference to the latter of the two possibilities. It answers to the antithesis; and if we had the words before us without points, this would be the first to suggest itself. Accordingly the words would read, Go deep down (in thy desire) to Hades, or go high up to the height; or more probably, taking הַעֲמִק and הַגְּבֵה in the sense of gerundives, "Going deep down to Hades, or (אַנִּי from אָנָה, like *vel* from *velle* = *si velis, malis*) going high up to the height." This offer of the prophet to perform any kind of miracle, either

in the world above or in the lower world, has thrown rationalistic commentators into very great perplexity. The prophet, says Hitzig, was playing a very dangerous game here; and if Ahaz had closed with his offer, Jehovah would probably have left him in the lurch. And Meier observes, that "it can never have entered the mind of an Isaiah to perform an actual miracle:" probably because no miracles were ever performed by Göthe, to whose high poetic consecration Meier compares the consecration of the prophet as described in Isa. 6. Knobel answers the question, "What kind of sign from heaven would Isaiah have given in case it had been asked for?" by saying, "Probably a very simple matter." But even granting that an extraordinary heavenly phenomenon could be a "simple matter," it was open to king Ahaz not to be so moderate in his demands upon the venturesome prophet, as Knobel with his magnanimity might possibly have been. Dazzled by the glory of the Old Testament prophecy, a rationalistic exegesis falls prostrate upon the ground; and it is with such frivolous, coarse, and common words as these that it tries to escape from its difficulties. It cannot acknowledge the miraculous power of the prophet, because it believes in no miracles at all. But Ahaz had no doubt about his miraculous power, though he would not be constrained by any miracle to renounce his own plans and believe in Jehovah. V. 12. "*But Ahaz replied, I dare not ask, and dare not tempt Jehovah.*" What a pious sound this has! And yet his self-hardening reached its culminating point in these well-sounding words. He hid himself hypocritically under the mask of Deut. 6:16, to avoid being disturbed in his Assyrian policy, and was infatuated enough to designate the acceptance of what Jehovah Himself had offered as tempting God. He studiously brought down upon himself the fate denounced in Isa. 6, and indeed not upon himself only, but upon all Judah as well. For after a few years the forces of Asshur would stand upon the same fuller's field (Isa. 36:2) and demand the surrender of Jerusalem. In that very hour, in which Isaiah

was standing before Ahaz, the fate of Jerusalem was decided for more than two thousand years.

Isaiah 7:13. The prophet might have ceased speaking now; but in accordance with the command in Isa. 6 he was obliged to speak, even though his word should be a savour of death unto death. V. 13. "*And he spake, Hear ye now, O house of David! Is it too little to you to weary men, that ye weary my God also?*" "He spake." Who spake? According to v. 10 the speaker was Jehovah; yet what follows is given as the word of the prophet. Here again it is assumed that the word of the prophet was the word of God, and that the prophet was the organ of God even when he expressly distinguished between himself and God. The words were addressed to the "house of David," i.e., to Ahaz, including all the members of the royal family. Ahaz himself was not yet thirty years old. The prophet could very well have borne that the members of the house of David should thus frustrate all his own faithful, zealous human efforts. But they were not content with this (on the expression *minus quam vos = quam ut vobis sufficiat*, see Num. 16; 9, Job 15:11): they also wearied out the long-suffering of his God, by letting Him exhaust all His means of correcting them without effect. They would not believe without seeing; and when signs were offered them to see, in order that they might believe, they would not even look. Jehovah would therefore give them, against their will, a sign of His own choosing.

Isaiah 7:14, 15. "*Therefore the Lord, He will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin conceives, and bears a son, and calls his name Immanuel. Butter and honey will he eat, at the time that he knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.*" In its form the prophecy reminds one of Gen. 16:11, "Behold, thou art with child, and wilt bear a son, and call his name Ishmael." Here, however, the words are not addressed to the person about to bear the child, although Matthew gives this interpretation to the prophecy; for קְרִיאָה is not the second person, but the third, and is synonymous with קְרִיאָה (according to Ges. § 74. Anm. 1), another form which is also met with in

Gen. 33:11, Lev. 25:21, Deut. 31:29, and Ps. 118:23. Moreover, the condition of pregnancy, which is here designated by the participial adjective הָרָה (cf., 2 Sam. 11:5), was not an already existing one in this instance, but (as in all probability also in Judg. 13:5, cf., 4) something future, as well as the act of bearing, since *hinnēh* is always used by Isaiah to introduce a future occurrence. This use of *hinneh* in Isaiah is a sufficient answer to Gesenius, Knobel, and others, who understand *hâ'almâh* as referring to the young wife of the prophet himself, who was at that very time with child. But it is altogether improbable that the wife of the prophet himself should be intended. For if it were to her that he referred, he could hardly have expressed himself in a more ambiguous and unintelligible manner; and we cannot see why he should not much rather have said אִשְׁתִּי or הַנְּבִיאָה, to say nothing of the fact that there is no further allusion made to any son of the prophet of that name, and that a sign of this kind founded upon the prophet's own family affairs would have been one of a very precarious nature.

And the meaning and use of the word *'almâh* are also at variance with this. For whilst *bethulâh* (from *bâthal*, related to *bâdal*, to separate, *sejungere*) signifies a maiden living in seclusion in her parents' house and still a long way from matrimony, *'almâh* (from *'âlam*, related to *châlam*, and possibly also to אָלַם, to be strong, full of vigour, or arrived at the age of puberty) is applied to one fully mature, and approaching the time of her marriage. The two terms could both be applied to persons who were betrothed, and even to such as were married (Joel 2:16; Prov. 30:19: see Hitzig on these passages). It is also admitted that the idea of spotless virginity was not necessarily connected with *'almâh* (as in Gen. 24:43, cf., 16), since there are passages—such, for example, as Song of Sol. 6:8—where it can hardly be distinguished from the Arabic *surrije*; and a person who had a very young-looking wife might be said to have an *'almah* for his wife. But it is inconceivable that in a well-

considered style, and one of religious earnestness, a woman who had been long married, like the prophet's own wife, could be called *hâ'almâh* without any reserve. On the other hand, the expression itself warrants the assumption that by *hâ'almâh* the prophet meant one of the *'alâmoth* of the king's harem (Luzzatto); and if we consider that the birth of the child was to take place, as the prophet foresaw, in the immediate future, his thoughts might very well have been fixed upon *Abijah* (*Abi*) *bath-Zechariah* (2 Kings 18:2; 2 Chron. 29:1), who became the mother of king Hezekiah, to whom apparently the virtues of the mother descended, in marked contrast with the vices of his father. This is certainly possible. At the same time, it is also certain that the child who was to be born was the Messiah, and not a new Israel (Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1, 87, 88); that is to say, that he was no other than that "wonderful" heir of the throne of David, whose birth is hailed with joy in Isa. 9, where even commentators like Knobel are obliged to admit that the Messiah is meant. It was the Messiah whom the prophet saw here as about to be born, then again in Isa. 9 as actually born, and again in Isa. 11 as reigning,—an indivisible triad of consolatory images in three distinct states, interwoven with the three stages into which the future history of the nation unfolded itself in the prophet's view. If, therefore, his eye was directed towards the Abijah mentioned, he must have regarded her as the future mother of the Messiah, and her son as the future Messiah. Now it is no doubt true, that in the course of the sacred history Messianic expectations were often associated with individuals who did not answer to them, so that the Messianic prospect was moved further into the future; and it is not only possible, but even probable, and according to many indications an actual fact, that the believing portion of the nation did concentrate their Messianic wishes and hopes for a long time upon Hezekiah; but even if Isaiah's prophecy may have evoked such human conjectures and expectations, through the measure of time which it laid down, it would not be a prophecy at all, if it rested upon no

better foundation than this, which would be the case if Isaiah had a particular maiden of his own day in his mind at the time.

Are we to conclude, then, that the prophet did not refer to any one individual, but that the “virgin” was a personification of the house of David? This view, which Hofmann propounded, and Stier appropriated, and which Ebrard has revived, notwithstanding the fact that Hofmann relinquished it, does not help us over the difficulty; for we should expect in that case to find “daughter of Zion,” or something of the kind, since the term “virgin” is altogether unknown in a personification of this kind, and the house of David, as the prophet knew it, was by no means worthy of such an epithet.

No other course is left, therefore, than to assume that whilst, on the one hand, the prophet meant by “the virgin” a maiden belonging to the house of David, which the Messianic character of the prophecy requires; on the other hand, he neither thought of any particular maiden, nor associated the promised conception with any human father, who could not have been any other than Ahaz. The reference is the same as in Mic. 5:3 (“she which travaileth,” *yōlēdah*). The objection that *hâ’almâh* (the virgin) cannot be a person belonging to the future, on account of the article (Hofmann, p. 86), does not affect the true explanation: it was the virgin whom the spirit of prophecy brought before the prophet’s mind, and who, although he could not give her name, stood before him as singled out for an extraordinary end (compare the article in *hanna’ar* in Num. 11:27 etc.). With what exalted dignity this mother appeared to him to be invested, is evident from the fact that it is she who gives the name to her son, and *that* the name Immanuel. This name sounds full of promise. But if we look at the expression “therefore,” and the circumstance which occasioned it, the *sign* cannot have been intended as a pure or simple promise. We naturally expect, first, that it will be an extraordinary fact which the prophet foretells; and secondly, that it will be a fact with a threatening front. Now a humiliation of the

house of David was indeed involved in the fact that the God of whom it would know nothing would nevertheless mould its future history, as the emphatic אִיִּי implies, *He* (αὐτός, the Lord *Himself*), by His own impulse and unfettered choice. Moreover, this moulding of the future could not possibly be such an one as was desired, but would of necessity be as full of threatening to the unbelieving house of David as it was full of promise to the believers in Israel. And the threatening character of the “sign” is not to be sought for exclusively in v. 15, since both the expressions “therefore” (*lâcēn*) and “behold” (*hinnēh*) place the main point of the sign in v. 14, whilst the introduction of v. 15 without any external connection is a clear proof that what is stated in v. 14 is the chief thing, and not the reverse. But the only thing in v. 14 which indicated any threatening element in the sign in question, must have been the fact that it would not be by Ahaz, or by a son of Ahaz, or by the house of David generally, which at that time had hardened itself against God, that God would save His people, but that a nameless maiden of low rank, whom God had singled out and now showed to the prophet in the mirror of His counsel, would give birth to the divine deliverer of His people in the midst of the approaching tribulations, which was a sufficient intimation that He who was to be the pledge of Judah’s continuance would not arrive without the present degenerate house of David, which had brought Judah to the brink of ruin, being altogether set aside.

But the further question arises here, What constituted the extraordinary character of the fact here announced? It consisted in the fact, that, according to Isa. 9:5, Immanuel Himself was to be a אִלֹּהִים (wonder or wonderful). He would be God in corporeal self-manifestation, and therefore a “wonder” as being a superhuman person. We should not venture to assert this if it went beyond the line of Old Testament revelation, but the prophet asserts it himself in Isa. 9:5 (cf., Isa. 10:21): his words are as clear as possible; and we must not make

them obscure, to favour any preconceived notions as to the development of history. The incarnation of Deity was unquestionably a secret that was not clearly unveiled in the Old Testament, but the veil was not so thick but that some rays could pass through. Such a ray, directed by the spirit of prophecy into the mind of the prophet, was the prediction of Immanuel. But if the Messiah was to be *Immanuel* in this sense, that He would Himself be *El* (God), as the prophet expressly affirms, His birth must also of necessity be a wonderful or miraculous one. The prophet does not affirm, indeed, that the “*almâh*,” who had as yet known no man, would give birth to Immanuel without this taking place, so that he could not be born of the house of David as well as into it, but be a gift of Heaven itself; but this “*almâh*” or virgin continued throughout an enigma in the Old Testament, stimulating “inquiry” (1 Pet. 1:10–12), and waiting for the historical solution. Thus the sign in question was, on the one hand, a mystery glaring in the most threatening manner upon the house of David; and, on the other hand, a mystery smiling with which consolation upon the prophet and all believers, and couched in these enigmatical terms, in order that those who hardened themselves might not understand it, and that believers might increasingly long to comprehend its meaning.

In v. 15 the threatening element of v. 14 becomes the predominant one. It would not be so, indeed, if “butter (thickened milk) and honey” were mentioned here as the ordinary food of the tenderest age of childhood (as Gesenius, Hengstenberg, and others suppose). But the reason afterwards assigned in vv. 16, 17, teaches the very opposite. Thickened milk and honey, the food of the desert, would be the only provisions furnished by the land at the time in which the ripening youth of Immanuel would fall. חֶמְצָה (from חָמַץ, to be thick) is a kind of butter which is still prepared by nomads by shaking milk in skins. It may probably include the cream, as the Arabic *semen* signifies both, but not the curds or

cheese, the name of which (at least the more accurate name) is *gebînâh*. The object to עָדְךָ is expressed in vv. 15, 16 by infinitive absolutes (compare the more usual mode of expression in Isa. 8:4). The *Lamed* prefixed to the verb does not mean “until” (Ges. § 131, 1), for *Lamed* is never used as so definite an indication of the *terminus ad quem*; the meaning is either “towards the time when he understands” (Amos 4:7, cf., Lev. 24:12, “to the end that”), or about the time, at the time when he understands (Isa. 10:3; Gen. 8:11; Job 24:14). This kind of food would coincide in time with his understanding, that is to say, would run parallel to it. Incapacity to distinguish between good and bad is characteristic of early childhood (Deut. 1:39, etc.), and also of old age when it relapses into childish ways (2 Sam. 19:36). The commencement of the capacity to understand is equivalent to entering into the so-called years of discretion—the riper age of free and conscious self-determination. By the time that Immanuel reached this age, all the blessings of the land would have been so far reduced, that from a land full of luxuriant corn-fields and vineyards, it would have become a large wooded pasture-ground, supplying milk and honey, and nothing more. A thorough devastation of the land is therefore the reason for this limitation to the simplest, and, when compared with the fat of wheat and the cheering influence of wine, most meagre and miserable food. And this is the ground assigned in vv. 16, 17. Two successive and closely connected events would occasion this universal desolation.

Isaiah 7:16, 17. “For before the boy shall understand to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land will be desolate, of whose two kings thou art afraid. Jehovah will bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father’s house, days such as have not come since the day when Ephraim broke away from Judah—the king of Asshur.” The land of the two kings, Syria and Israel, was first of all laid waste by the Assyrians, whom Ahaz called to his assistance. Tiglath-pileser conquered Damascus and a

portion of the kingdom of Israel, and led a large part of the inhabitants of the two countries into captivity (2 Kings 15:29; 16:9). Judah was then also laid waste by the Assyrians, as a punishment for having refused the help of Jehovah, and preferred the help of man. Days of adversity would come upon the royal house and people of Judah, such as (*asher, quales*, as in Ex. 10:6) had not come upon them since the calamitous day (*l'miyyōm, inde a die*; in other places we find *l'min-hayyom*, Ex. 9:18, Deut. 4:32; 9:7, etc.) of the falling away of the ten tribes. The appeal to Asshur laid the foundation for the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, quite as much as for that of the kingdom of Israel. Ahaz became the tributary vassal of the king of Assyria in consequence; and although Hezekiah was set free from Asshur through the miraculous assistance of Jehovah, what Nebuchadnezzar afterwards performed was only the accomplishment of the frustrated attempt of Sennacherib. It is with piercing force that the words "the king of Assyria" (*'eth melek Asshur*) are introduced at the close of the two verses. The particle *'eth* is used frequently where an indefinite object is followed by the more precise and definite one (Gen. 6:10; 26:34). The point of the verse would be broken by eliminating the words as a gloss, as Knobel proposes. The very king to whom Ahaz had appealed in his terror, would bring Judah to the brink of destruction. The absence of any link of connection between vv. 16 and 17 is also very effective. The hopes raised in the mind of Ahaz by v. 16 are suddenly turned into bitter disappointment. In the face of such catastrophes as these, Isaiah predicts the birth of Immanuel. His eating only thickened milk and honey, at a time when he knew very well what was good and what was not, would arise from the desolation of the whole of the ancient territory of the Davidic kingdom that had preceded the riper years of his youth, when he would certainly have chosen other kinds of food, if they could possibly have been found. Consequently the birth of Immanuel apparently falls between the time then present and the Assyrian calamities, and his earliest childhood

appears to run parallel to the Assyrian oppression. In any case, their consequences would be still felt at the time of his riper youth. In what way the truth of the prophecy was maintained notwithstanding, we shall see presently. What follows in vv. 18–25, is only a further expansion of v. 17. The promising side of the "sign" remains in the background, because this was not for Ahaz. When Ewald expresses the opinion that a promising strophe has fallen out after v. 17, he completely mistakes the circumstances under which the prophet uttered these predictions. In the presence of Ahaz he must keep silence as to the promises. But he pours out with all the greater fluency his threatening of judgment.

Isaiah 7:18. "And it comes to pass in that day, Jehovah will hiss for the fly which is at the end of the Nile-arms of Egypt, and the bees that are in the land of Asshur; and they come and settle all of them in the valleys of the slopes, and in the clefts of the rocks, and in all the thorn-hedges, and upon all grass-plats." The prophet has already stated, in Isa. 5:26, that Jehovah would hiss for distant nations; and how he is able to describe them by name. The Egyptian nation, with its vast and unparalleled numbers, is compared to the swarming fly; and the Assyrian nation, with its love of war and conquest, to the stinging bee which is so hard to keep off (Deut. 1:44; Ps. 118:12). The emblems also correspond to the nature of the two countries: the fly to slimy Egypt with its swarms of insects (see Isa. 18:1), and the bee to the more mountainous and woody Assyria, where the keeping of bees is still one of the principal branches of trade. יָאֵר, pl. יְאֵרִים, is an Egyptian name (*yaro*, with the article *phiaro*, pl. *yarōu*) for the Nile and its several arms. The end of the Nile-arms of Egypt, from a Palestinian point of view, was the extreme corner of the land. The military force of Egypt would march out of the whole compass of the land, and meet the Assyrian force in the Holy Land; and both together would cover the land in such a way that the valleys of steep precipitous heights (*nachalē habbattōth*), and clefts of the rocks

(*nekikē hasselâ'im*), and all the thorn-hedges (*nâ'azūzīm*) and pastures (*nahalolim*, from *nihēl*, to lead to pasture), would be covered with these swarms. The fact that just such places are named, as afforded a suitable shelter and abundance of food for flies and bees, is a filling up of the figure in simple truthfulness to nature. And if we look at the historical fulfilment, it does not answer even in this respect to the actual letter of the prophecy; for in the time of Hezekiah no collision really took place between the Assyrian and Egyptian forces; and it was not till the days of Josiah that a collision took place between the Chaldean and Egyptian powers in the eventful battle fought between Pharaoh-Necho and Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish (Circesium), which decided the fate of Judah. That the spirit of prophecy points to this eventful occurrence is evident from v. 20, where no further allusion is made to Egypt, because of its having succumbed to the imperial power of Eastern Asia.

Isaiah 7:20. *"In that day will the Lord shave with a razor, the thing for hire on the shore of the river, with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet; and even the beard it will take away."* Knobel takes the hair to be a figurative representation of the produce of the land; but the only thing which at all favours the idea that the flora is ever regarded by biblical writers as the hairy covering of the soil, is the use of the term *nâzîr* as the name of an uncultivated vine left to itself (Lev. 25:5). The nation of Judah is regarded here, as in Isa. 1:6, as a man stript naked, and not only with all the hair of his head and feet shaved off (*raglaim*, a euphemism), but what was regarded as the most shameful of all, with the hair of his beard shaved off as well. To this end the Almighty would make use of a razor, which is more distinctly defined as hired on the shore of the Euphrates (*conductitia in litoribus Euphratis: nâhâr* stands here for *hannâhâr*), and still more precisely as the king of Asshur (the latter is again pronounced a gloss by Knobel and others). *"The thing for hire:"* *hassecîrâh* might be an abstract term (hiring, *conductio*), but it may also be the feminine of *sâcîr*, which

indicates an emphatic advance from the indefinite to the more definite; in the sense of "with a razor, namely, that which was standing ready to be hired in the lands on both sides of the Euphrates, the king of Assyria." In *hassecîrâh* (the thing for hire) there was involved the bitterest sarcasm for Ahaz. The sharp knife, which it had hired for the deliverance of Judah, was hired by the Lord, to shave Judah most thoroughly, and in the most disgraceful manner. Thus shaved, Judah would be a depopulated and desert land, in which men would no longer live by growing corn and vines, or by trade and commerce, but by grazing alone.

Isaiah 7:21, 22. *"And it will come to pass in that day, that a man will keep a small cow and a couple of sheep; and it comes to pass, for the abundance of the milk they give he will eat cream: for butter and honey will every one eat that is left within the land."* The former prosperity would be reduced to the most miserable housekeeping. One man would keep a milch cow and two head of sheep (or goats) alive with the greatest care, the strongest and finest full-grown cattle having fallen into the hands of the foe (תִּירָה, like תִּירָה in other places: *shtē*, not *shnē*, because two female sheep or goats are meant). But this would be quite enough, for there would be only a few men left in the land; and as all the land would be pasture, the small number of animals would yield milk in abundance. Bread and wine would be unattainable. Whoever had escaped the Assyrian razor, would eat thickened milk and honey, that and nothing but that, without variation, *ad nauseam*. The reason for this would be, that the hills, which at other times were full of vines and corn-fields, would be overgrown with briers.

Isaiah 7:23–25. The prophet repeats this three times in vv. 23–25: *"And it will come to pass in that day, every place, where a thousand vines stood at a thousand silverlings, will have become thorns and thistles. With arrows and with bows will men go, for the whole land will have become thorns and thistles. And all the hills that were*

accustomed to be hoed with the hoe, thou wilt not go to them for fear of thorns and thistles; and it has become a gathering-place for oxen, and a treading-place for sheep." The "thousand silverlings" (*'eleph ceseph*, i.e., a thousand shekels of silver) recall to mind Song of Sol. 8:11, though there it is the value of the yearly produce, whereas here the thousand shekels are the value of a thousand vines, the sign of a peculiarly valuable piece of a vineyard. At the present time they reckon the worth of a vineyard in Lebanon and Syria according to the value of the separate vines, and generally take the vines at one piastre (from 2nd to 3rd) each; just as in Germany a Johannisberg vine is reckoned at a ducat. Every piece of ground, where such valuable vines were standing, would have fallen a prey to the briars. People would go there with bow and arrow, because the whole land had become thorns and thistles (see at Isa. 5:12a), and therefore wild animals had made their homes there. And thou (the prophet addresses the countryman thus) comest not to all the hills, which were formerly cultivated in the most careful manner; thou comest not thither to make them arable again, because thorns and thistles deter thee from reclaiming such a fallow. They would therefore give the oxen freedom to rove where they would, and let sheep and goats tread down whatever grew there. The description is intentionally thoroughly tautological and pleonastic, heavy and slow in movement. The writer's intention is to produce the impression of a waste heath, or tedious monotony. Hence the repetitions of *hâyâh* and *yihyeh*. Observe how great the variations are in the use of the future and perfect, and how the meaning is always determined by the context. In vv. 21, 22, the futures have a really future sense; in v. 23 the first and third *yihyeh* signify "will have become" (*factus erit omnis locus*), and the second "was" (*erat*); in v. 24 *יָבֹא* means "will come" (*veniet*), and *tihyeh* "will have become" (*facta erit terra*); in v. 25 we must render *yē'âdērûn, sarciebantur* (they used to be hoed). And in vv. 21, 22, and 23, *hâyâh* is equivalent to *fiet* (it will become); whilst in v. 25 it means

factum est (it has become). Looked at from a western point of view, therefore, the future tense is sometimes a simple future, sometimes a future perfect, and sometimes an imperfect or synchronistic preterite; and the perfect sometimes a prophetic preterite, sometimes an actual preterite, but the sphere of an ideal past, or what is the same thing, of a predicted future. This ends Isaiah's address to king Ahaz. He does not expressly say when Immanuel is to be born, but only what will take place before he has reached the riper age of boyhood,—namely, first, the devastation of Israel and Syria, and then the devastation of Judah itself, by the Assyrians. From the fact that the prophet says no more than this, we may see that his spirit and his tongue were under the direction of the Spirit of God, who does not descend within the historical and temporal range of vision, without at the same time remaining exalted above it. On the other hand, however, we may see from what he says, that the prophecy has its human side as well. When Isaiah speaks of Immanuel as eating thickened milk and honey, like all who survived the Assyrian troubles in the Holy Land; he evidently looks upon and thinks of the childhood of Immanuel as connected with the time of the Assyrian calamities. And it was in such a perspective combination of events lying far apart, that the *complex* character of prophecy consisted. The reason for this complex character was a double one, viz., the human limits associated with the prophet's telescopic view of distant times, and the pedagogical wisdom of God, in accordance with which He entered into these limits instead of removing them. If, therefore, we adhere to the letter of prophecy, we may easily throw doubt upon its veracity; but if we look at the substance of the prophecy, we soon find that the complex character by no means invalidates its truth. For the things which the prophet saw in combination were essentially connected, even though chronologically separated. When, for example, in the case before us (Isa. 7–12), Isaiah saw Asshur only, standing out as the imperial kingdom; this was so far true, that the four imperial kingdoms from the Babylonian to

ISAIAH	Page 110
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

the Roman were really nothing more than the full development of the commencement made in Assyria. And when he spoke of the son of the virgin (Isa. 7) as growing up in the midst of the Assyrian oppressions; this also was so far true, that Jesus was really born at a time when the Holy Land, deprived of its previous abundance, was under the dominion of the imperial power, and in a condition whose primary cause was to be traced to the unbelief of Ahaz. Moreover, He who became flesh in the fulness of time, did really lead an ideal life in the Old Testament history. He was in the midst of it in a pre-existent presence, moving on towards the covenant goal. The fact that the house and nation of David did not perish in the Assyrian calamities, was actually to be attributed, as Isa. 8 presupposes, to His real though not His bodily presence. In this way the apparent discrepancy between the prophecy and the history of the fulfilment may be solved. We do not require the solution proposed by Vitringa, and recently appropriate by Haneberg,—namely, that the prophet takes the stages of the Messiah's life out of the distant future, to make them the measure of events about to take place in the immediate future; nor that of Bengel, Schegg, Schmieder, and others,—namely, that the sign consisted in an event belonging to the immediate future, which pointed typically to the birth of the true Immanuel; nor that of Hofmann, who regards the words of the prophet as an emblematical prediction of the rise of a new Israel, which would come to the possession of spiritual intelligence in the midst of troublous times, occasioned by the want of intelligence in the Israel of his own time. The prophecy, as will be more fully confirmed as we proceed, is directly Messianic; it is a divine prophecy within human limits.

Isaiah 8

Two Omens of the Immediate Future—Ch. 8:1–4

Isaiah 8:1, 2. In the midst of the Syro-Ephraimitish war, which was not yet at an end, Isaiah received instructions from God to perform a singular prophetic action. Vv. 1, 2.

“Then Jehovah said to me, Take a large slab, and write upon it with common strokes, ‘In Speed Spoil, Booty hastens;’ and I will take to me trustworthy witnesses, Uriyah the priest, and Zecharyahu the son of Yeberechياهو.” The slab or table (cf., Isa. 3:23, where the same word is used to signify a metal mirror) was to be large, to produce the impression of a monument; and the writing upon it was to be “a man’s pen” (*cheret ‘enōsh*), i.e., written in the vulgar, and, so to speak, popular character, consisting of inartistic strokes that could be easily read (vid., Rev. 13:18; 21:17). Philip d’Aquin, in his *Lexicon*, adopts the explanation, “*Enosh* - writing, i.e., hieroglyphic writing, so called because it was first introduced in the time of *Enosh*.” Luzzatto renders it, *a lettere cubitali*; but the reading for this would be *b’cheret ammath ‘ish*. The only true rendering is *stylo vulgari* (see *Ges. Thes. s.v. ‘enosh*). The words to be written are introduced with *Lamed*, to indicate dedication (as in Ezek. 37:16), or the object to which the inscription was dedicated or applied, as if it read, “A table devoted to ‘Spoil very quickly, booty hastens;’ ” unless, indeed, *l’mahēr* is to be taken as a *fut. instans*, as it is by Luzzatto—after Gen. 15:12, Josh. 2:5, Hab. 1:17—in the sense of *acceleratura sunt spolia*, or (what the position of the words might more naturally suggest) with *mahēr* in a transitive sense, as in the construction הָיָה לְבָעֵר, and others, *accelerationi spolia*, i.e., they are ready for hastening. Most of the commentators have confused the matter here by taking the words as a proper name (Ewald, § 288, c), which they were not at first, though they became so afterwards. At first they were an oracular announcement of the immediate future, *accelerant spolia, festinat praeda* (spoil is quick, booty hastens). *Spoil; booty*; but who would the vanquished be? Jehovah knew, and His prophet knew, although not initiated into the policy of Ahaz. But their knowledge was studiously veiled in enigmas. For the writing was not to disclose anything to the people. It was simply to serve as a public record of the fact, that the course of events was one that Jehovah had foreseen and indicated

beforehand. And when what was written upon the table should afterwards take place, they would know that it was the fulfilment of what had already been written, and therefore was an event pre-determined by God. For this reason Jehovah took to Himself witnesses. There is no necessity to read וְאֶעְיָדָה (and I had it witnessed), as Knobel and others do; nor וְהָעֵיֶדָה (and have it witnessed), as the Sept., Targum, Syriac, and Hitzig do. Jehovah said what He would do; and the prophet knew, without requiring to be told, that it was to be accomplished instrumentally through him. Uriah was no doubt the priest (Urijah), who afterwards placed himself at the service of Ahaz to gratify his heathenish desires (2 Kings 16:10ff.). Zechariah ben Yeberechياهو (Berechiah) was of course not the prophet of the times after the captivity, but possibly the Asaphite mentioned in 2 Chron. 29:13. He is not further known to us. In good editions, *ben* is not followed by *makkeph*, but marked with *mercha*, according to the Masora at Gen. 30:19. These two men were reliable witnesses, being persons of great distinction, and their testimony would weigh with the people. When the time should arrive that the history of their own times solved the riddle of this inscription, these two men were to tell the people how long ago the prophet had written that down in his prophetic capacity.

Isaiah 8:3, 4. But something occurred in the meantime whereby the place of the lifeless table was taken by a more eloquent and living one. Vv., 3, 4. *“And I drew near to the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son: and Jehovah said to me, Call his name In-speed-spoil-booty-hastens (Maher-shalal-hash-baz): for before the boy shall know how to cry, My father, and my mother, they will carry away the riches of Damascus, and the spoil of Samaria, before the king of Asshur.”* To his son Shear-yashub, in whose name the law of the history of Israel, as revealed to the prophet on the occasion of his call (Isa. 6), viz., the restoration of only a remnant of the whole nation, had been formulated, there was now added a second son,

to whom the inscription upon the table was given as a name (with a small abbreviation, and if the *Lamed* is the particle of dedication, a necessary one). He was therefore the symbol of the approaching chastisement of Syria and the kingdom of the ten tribes. Before the boy had learned to stammer out the name of father and mother, they would carry away (*yissâ'*, not the third pers. fut. *niphal*, which is *yinnâsē'*, but *kal* with a latent, indefinite subject *hannōsē'*: Ges. § 137, 3) the treasures of Damascus and the trophies (i.e., the spoil taken from the flying or murdered foe) of Samaria before the king of Asshur, who would therefore leave the territory of the two capitals as a conqueror. It is true that Tiglath-pileser only conquered Damascus, and not Samaria; but he took from Pekah, the king of Samaria, the land beyond the Jordan, and a portion of the land on this side. The trophies, which he took thence to Assyria, were no less the spoil of Samaria than if he had conquered Samaria itself (which Shalmanassar did twenty years afterwards). The birth of Mahershalal took place about three-quarters of a year later than the preparation of the table (as the verb *vâ'ekrab* is an aorist and not a pluperfect); and the time appointed, from the birth of the boy till the chastisement of the allied kingdoms, was about a year. Now, as the Syro-Ephraimitish war did not commence later than the first year of the reign of Ahaz, i.e., the year 743, and the chastisement by Tiglath-pileser occurred in the lifetime of the allies, whereas Pekah was assassinated in the year 739, the interval between the commencement of the war and the chastisement of the allies cannot have been more than three years; so that the preparation of the table must not be assigned to a much later period than the interview with Ahaz. The inscription upon the table, which was adopted as the name of the child, was not a purely consolatory prophecy, since the prophet had predicted, a short time before, that the same Asshur which devastated the two covenant lands would lay Judah waste as well. It was simply a practical proof of the omniscience and omnipotence of God, by which the history of the future was directed and controlled. The

prophet had, in fact, the mournful vocation to harden. Hence the enigmatical character of his words and doings in relation to both kings and nation. Jehovah foreknew the consequences which would follow the appeal to Asshur for help, as regarded both Syria and Israel. This knowledge he committed to writing in the presence of witnesses. When this should be fulfilled, it would be all over with the rejoicing of the king and people at their self-secured deliverance.

But Isaiah was not merely within the broader circle of an incorrigible nation ripe for judgment. He did not stand alone; but was encircled by a small band of believing disciples, who wanted consolation, and were worthy of it. It was to them that the more promising obverse of the prophecy of Immanuel belonged. Mahershalal could not comfort them; for they knew that when Asshur had done with Damascus and Samaria, the troubles of Judah would not be over, but would only then be really about to commence. To be the shelter of the faithful in the terrible judicial era of the imperial power, which was then commencing, was the great purpose of the prediction of Immanuel; and to bring out and expand the consolatory character of that prophecy for the benefit of believers, was the design of the addresses which follow.

Esoteric Addresses—Ch. 8:5–12:6

A. Consolation of Immanuel in the Coming Darkness—Ch. 8:5–9:7

Isaiah 8:5–7. The heading or introduction, “*And Jehovah proceeded still further to speak to me, as follows,*” extends to all the following addresses as far as Isa. 12. They all finish with consolation. But consolation presupposes the need of consolation. Consequently, even in this instance the prophet is obliged to commence with a threatening of judgment. Vv. 6, 7. “*Forasmuch as this people despiseth the waters of Siloah that go softly, and regardeth as a delight the alliance with Rezin and the son of Remalyahu, therefore, behold! the Lord of all bringeth up upon them the waters of the river,*

the mighty and the great, the king of Asshur and all his military power; and he riseth over all his channels, and goeth over all his banks.” The Siloah had its name (*Shiloach*, or, according to the reading of this passage contained in very good MSS, *Shilloach*), *ab emittendo*, either in an infinitive sense, “shooting forth,” or in a participial sense, with a passive colouring, *emissus*, sent forth, spirted out (vid., John 9:7; and on the variations in meaning of this substantive form, *Concord*. p. 1349, s.). Josephus places the fountain and pool of Siloah at the opening of the Tyropoeon, on the south-eastern side of the ancient city, where we still find it at the present day (vid., *Jos. Wars of the Jews*, v. 4, 1; also Robinson, *Pal.* i. 504). The clear little brook—a pleasant sight to the eye as it issues from the ravine which runs between the south-western slope of Moriah and the south-eastern slope of Mount Zion (v. Schulbert, *Reise*, ii. 573)—is used here as a symbol of the Davidic monarchy enthroned upon Zion, which had the promise of God, who was enthroned upon Moriah, in contrast with the imperial or world kingdom, which is compared to the overflowing waters of the Euphrates. The reproach of despising the waters of Siloah applied to Judah as well as Ephraim: to the former because it trusted in Asshur, and despised the less tangible but more certain help which the house of David, if it were but believing, had to expect from the God of promise; to the latter, because it had entered into alliance with Aram to overthrow the house of David; and yet the house of David, although degenerate and deformed, was the divinely appointed source of that salvation, which is ever realized through quiet, secret ways. The second reproach applied more especially to Ephraim. The *'eth* is not to be taken as the sign of the accusative, for *sūs* never occurs with the accusative of the object (not even in Isa. 35:1), and could not well be so used. It is to be construed as a preposition in the sense of “*and (or because) delight (is felt) with (i.e., in) the alliance with Rezin and Pekah.*” (On the constructive before a preposition, see Ges. § 116, 1: *sūs 'ēth*, like *râtzâh 'im*.) Luzzatto compares, for the construction, Gen. 41:43,

v'nâthōn; but only the *inf. abs.* is used in this way as a continuation of the finite verb (see Ges. § 131, 4, *a*). Moreover, מְשׁוֹשׁ is not an Aramaic infinitive, but a substantive used in such a way as to retain the power of the verb (like מִסַּע in Num. 10:2, and מִסְפָּר in Num. 23:10, unless, indeed, the reading here should be מִסְפָּר). The substantive clause is preferred to the verbal clause וְשָׁשׁ, for the sake of the antithetical consonance of מְשׁוֹשׁ with מֵאֵס. It is also quite in accordance with Hebrew syntax, that an address which commences with יֵעַן כִּי should here lose itself in the second sentence “in the twilight,” as Ewald expresses it (§ 351, *c*), of a substantive clause. Knobel and others suppose the reproof to relate to dissatisfied Judaeans, who were secretly favourable to the enterprise of the two allied kings. But there is no further evidence that there were such persons; and v. 8 is opposed to this interpretation. The overflowing of the Assyrian forces would fall first of all upon Ephraim. The threat of punishment is introduced with וְלִכְנֹן, the *Vav* being the sign of sequence (Ewald, § 348, *b*). The words “the king of Asshur” are the prophet’s own gloss, as in Isa. 7:17, 20.

Isaiah 8:8. Not till then would this overflowing reach as far as Judah, but then it would do so most certainly and incessantly. V. 8. “*And presses forward into Judah, overflows and pours onward, till it reaches to the neck, and the spreading out of its wings fill the breadth of thy land, Immanuel.*” The fate of Judah would be different from that of Ephraim. Ephraim would be laid completely under water by the river, i.e., would be utterly destroyed. And in Judah the stream, as it rushed forward, would reach the most dangerous height; but if a deliverer could be found, there was still a possibility of its being saved. Such a deliverer was Immanuel, whom the prophet sees in the light of the Spirit living through all the Assyrian calamities. The prophet appeals complainingly to him that the land, which is his land, is almost swallowed up by the world-power: the spreadings out

(*muttoth*, a *hophal* noun: for similar substantive forms, see v. 23, Isa. 14:6; 29:3, and more especially Ps. 66:11) of the wings of the stream (i.e., of the large bodies of water pouring out on both sides from the main stream, as from the trunk, and covering the land like two broad wings) have filled the whole land. According to Norzi, *Immanuël* is to be written here as one word, as it is in Isa. 7:14; but the correct reading is *Immānu El*, with *mercha silluk* (see note on Isa. 7:14), though it does not therefore cease to be a proper name. As Jerome observes, it is *nomen proprium, non interpretatum*; and so it is rendered in the Sept., Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός.

Isaiah 8:9, 10. The prophet’s imploring look at Immanuel does not remain unanswered. We may see this from the fact, that what was almost a silent prayer is changed at once into the *jubilate* of holy defiance.—Vv. 9, 10.

“*Exasperate yourselves, O nations, and go to pieces; and see it, all who are far off in the earth! Gird yourselves, and go to pieces; gird yourselves, and go to pieces! Consult counsel, and it comes to nought; speak the word, and it is not realized: for with us is God.*” The second imperatives in v. 9 are threatening words of authority, having a future signification, which change into futures in v. 19 (Ges. § 130, 2): Go on exasperating yourselves (רַעֲוִי with the tone upon the penultimate, and therefore not the *pual* of רָעָה, *consociari*, which is the rendering adopted in the Targum, but the *kal* of רָעַע, *malum esse*; not *vociferari*, for which רָוַע, a different verb from the same root, is commonly employed), go on arming; ye will nevertheless fall to pieces (*chōttu*, from *châthath*, related to *câthath*, *confringi, consternari*). The prophet classes together all the nations that are warring against the people of God, pronounces upon them the sentence of destruction, and calls upon all distant lands to hear this ultimate fate of the kingdom of the world, i.e., of the imperial power. The world-kingdom must be wrecked on the land of Immanuel; “*for with us,*” as the watchword of believers runs, pointing to the person of the Saviour, “*with us is God.*”

Isaiah 8:11, 12. There then follows in v. 11 an explanatory clause, which seems at first sight to pass on to a totally different theme, but it really stands in the closest connection with the triumphant words of vv. 9, 10. It is Immanuel whom believers receive, constitute, and hold fast as their refuge in the approaching times of the Assyrian judgment. He is their refuge and God in Him, and not any human support whatever. This is the link of connection with vv. 11, 12: *“For Jehovah hath spoken thus to me, overpowering me with God’s hand, and instructing me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, Call ye not conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy; and what is feared by it, fear ye not, neither think ye dreadful.”* תִּהְיֶה, “the hand,” is the absolute hand, which is no sooner laid upon a man than it overpowers all perception, sensation, and thought: *chezkath hayyâd* (viz., ‘*âlai*, upon me, Ezek. 3:14) therefore describes a condition in which the hand of God was put forth upon the prophet with peculiar force, as distinguished from the more usual prophetic state, the effect of a peculiarly impressive and energetic act of God. Luther is wrong in following the Syriac, and adopting the rendering, “taking me by the hand;” as *chezkath* points back to the *kal* (*invalescere*), and not to the *hiphil* (*apprehendere*). It is this circumstantial statement, which is continued in *v’yissereni* (“and instructing me”), and not the leading verb *’âmar* (“he said”); for the former is not the third pers. pret. *piel*, which would be *v’yisserani*, but the third pers. fut. *kal*, from the future form *yissôr* (Hos. 10:10, whereas the fut. *piel* is *v’yassêr*); and it is closely connected with *chezkath hayyâd*, according to the analogy of the change from the participial and infinitive construction to the finite verb (Ges. § 132, Anm. 2). With this overpowering influence, and an instructive warning against going in the way of “this people,” Jehovah spake to the prophet as follows. With regard to the substance of the following warning, the explanation that has been commonly adopted since the time of Jerome, viz., *noli duorum regum timere conjurationem* (fear not the conspiracy of the

two kings), is contrary to the reading of the words. The warning runs thus: The prophet, and such as were on his side, were not to call that *keshet* which the great mass of the people called *keshet* (cf., 2 Chron. 23:13, “She said, Treason, Treason!” *keshet, keshet*); yet the alliance of Rezin and Pekah was really a conspiracy—a league against the house and people of David. Nor can the warning mean that believers, when they saw how the unbelieving Ahaz brought the nation into distress, were not to join in a conspiracy against the person of the king (Hofmann, Drechsler); they are not warned at all against making a conspiracy, but against joining in the popular cry when the people called out *keshet*. The true explanation has been given by Roorda, viz., that the reference is to the conspiracy, as it was called, of the prophet and his disciples “(*sermo hic est de conjuratione, quae dicebatur prophetarum et discipulorum ejus*”). The same thing happened to Isaiah as to Amos (Amos 7:10) and to Jeremiah. Whenever the prophets were at all zealous in their opposition to the appeal for foreign aid, they were accused and branded as standing in the service of the enemy, and conspiring for the overthrow of the kingdom. In such perversion of language as this, the honourable among them were not to join. The way of God was now a very different one from the way of that people. If the prophet and his followers opposed the alliance with Asshur, this was not a common human conspiracy against the will of the king and nation, but the inspiration of God, the true policy of Jehovah. Whoever trusted in Him had no need to be afraid of such attempts as those of Rezin and Pekah, or to look upon them as dreadful.

Isaiah 8:13–15. The object of their fear was a very different one. Vv. 13–15. *“Jehovah of hosts, sanctify Him; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your terror. So will He become a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence (vexation) to both the houses of Israel, a snare and trap to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and shall fall; and be dashed to pieces, and be snared and taken.”* The logical apodosis to v. 13 commences

with *v'hâhâh* (so shall He be). If ye actually acknowledge Jehovah the Holy One as the Holy One (*hikdîsh*, as in Isa. 29:23), and if it is He whom ye fear, and who fills you with dread (*ma'arîtz*, used for the object of dread, as *môrah* is for the object of fear; hence "that which terrifies" in a causative sense), He will become a *mikdâsh*. The word *mikdâsh* may indeed denote the object sanctified, and so Knobel understands it here according to Num. 18:29; but if we adhere to the strict notion of the word, this gives an unmeaning apodosis. *Mikdâsh* generally means the sanctified place or sanctuary, with which the idea of an asylum would easily associate itself, since even among the Israelites the temple was regarded and respected as an asylum (1 Kings 1:50; 2:28). This is the explanation which most of the commentators have adopted here; and the punctuators also took it in the same sense, when they divided the two halves of v. 14 by *athnach* as antithetical. And *mikdâsh* is really to be taken in this sense, although it cannot be exactly rendered "asylum," since this would improperly limit the meaning of the word. The temple was not only a place of shelter, but also of grace, blessing, and peace. All who sanctified the Lord of lords He surrounded like temple walls; hid them in Himself, whilst death and tribulation reigned without, and comforted, fed, and blessed them in His own gracious fellowship. This is the true explanation of *v'hâyâh l'mikdâsh*, according to such passages as Isa. 4:5, 6, Ps. 27:5; 31:21. To the two houses of Israel, on the contrary, i.e., to the great mass of the people of both kingdoms who neither sanctified nor feared Jehovah, He would be a rock and snare. The synonyms are intentionally heaped together (cf., Isa. 28:13), to produce the fearful impression of death occurring in many forms, but all inevitable. The first three verbs of v. 15 refer to the "stone" (*'eben*) and "rock" (*tzûr*); the last two to the "snare" (*pach*), and "trap" or springe (*môkêsh*). All who did not give glory to Jehovah would be dashed to pieces upon His work as upon a stone, and caught therein as in a trap. This was the burden of the

divine warning, which the prophet heard for himself and for those that believed.

Isaiah 8:16. The words that follow in v. 16, "*Bind up the testimony, seal the lesson in my disciples,*" appear at first sight to be a command of God to the prophet, according to such parallel passages as Dan. 12:4, 9, Rev. 22:10, cf., Dan. 8:26; but with this explanation it is impossible to do justice to the words "in my disciples" (*b'limmudâi*). The explanation given by Rosenmüller, Knobel, and others, viz., "by bringing in men divinely instructed" (*adhibitis viris piis et sapientibus*), is grammatically inadmissible. Consequently I agree with Vitranga, Drechsler, and others, in regarding v. 16 as the prophet's own prayer to Jehovah. We *tie together* (צָרַר, imperf. צֹר = צַר) what we wish to keep from getting separated and lost; we *seal* (*châtham*) what is to be kept secret, and only opened by a person duly qualified. And so the prophet here prays that Jehovah would take his testimony with regard to the future, and his instruction, which was designed to prepare for this future,—that *testimony* and *thorah* which the great mass in their hardness did not understand, and in their self-hardening despised,—and lay them up well secured and well preserved, as if by band and seal, in the hearts of those who received the prophet's words with believing obedience (*limmûd*, as in Isa. 50:4; 54:13). For it would be all over with Israel, unless a community of believers should be preserved, and all over with this community, if the word of God, which was the ground of their life, should be allowed to slip from their hearts. We have here an announcement of the grand idea, which the second part of the book of Isaiah carries out in the grandest style. It is very evident that it is the prophet himself who is speaking here, as we may see from v. 17, where he continues to speak in the first person, though he does not begin with וְאֲנִי.

Isaiah 8:17. Whilst offering this prayer, and looking for its fulfilment, he waits upon Jehovah. V. 17. "*And I wait upon Jehovah, who hides His face before the house of Jacob, and hope for Him.*" A time of judgment had now

ISAIAH	Page 116
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

commenced, which would still last a long time; but the word of God was the pledge of Israel's continuance in the midst of it, and of the renewal of Israel's glory afterwards. The prophet would therefore hope for the grace which was now hidden behind the wrath.

Isaiah 8:18. His home was the future, and to this he was subservient, even with all his house. V. 18. "*Behold, I and the children which Jehovah hath given me for signs and types in Israel, from Jehovah of hosts, who dwelleth upon Mount Zion.*" He presents himself to the Lord with his children, puts himself and them into His hands. They were Jehovah's gift, and that for a higher purpose than every-day family enjoyment. They subserved the purpose of signs and types in connection with the history of salvation. "*Signs and types:*" 'oth (sign) was an omen or prognostic (σημείον) in word and deed, which pointed to and was the pledge of something future (whether it were in itself miraculous or natural); *mopheth* was either something miraculous (τέρας) pointing back to a supernatural cause, or a type (τύπος, *prodigium* = *porridigium*) which pointed beyond itself to something future and concealed, literally twisted round, i.e., out of the ordinary course, paradoxical, striking, standing out (Arab. *aft, ift, res mira*, δεινόν τι), from פתא (related to הפה, אבא) = מאפת, like מוסר = מאסר. His children were signs and enigmatical symbols of the future, and that from Jehovah of hosts who dwelt on Zion. In accordance with His counsel (to which the עַם in עַם מְעַם points), He had selected these signs and types: He who could bring to pass the future, which they set forth, as surely as He was Jehovah of hosts, and who would bring it to pass as surely as He had chosen Mount Zion for the scene of His gracious presence upon earth. Shear-yashub and Mahershalal were indeed no less symbols of future wrath than of future grace; but the name of the father (*Yasha'hâhu*) was an assurance that all the future would issue from Jehovah's salvation, and end in the same. Isaiah and his children were figures and emblems of redemption, opening a way for itself through judgment. The Epistle to the

Hebrews (Heb. 2:13) quotes these words as the distinct words of Jesus, because the spirit of Jesus was in Isaiah,—the spirit of Jesus, which in the midst of this holy family, bound together as it was only to the bands of "the shadow," pointed forward to that church of the New Testament which would be found together by the bands of the true substance. Isaiah, his children, and his wife, who is called "the prophetess" (*nebi'ah*) not only because she was the wife of the prophet but because she herself possessed the gift of prophecy, and all the believing disciples gathered round this family,—these together formed the stock of the church of the Messianic future, on the foundation and soil of the existing *massa perdita* of Israel.

Isaiah 8:19. It is to this *ecclesiola in ecclesia* that the prophet's admonition is addressed. V. 19. "*And when they shall say to you, Inquire of the necromancers, and of the soothsayers that chirp and whisper:—Should not a people inquire of its God? for the living to the dead?*" The appeal is supposed to be made by Judaeans of the existing stamp; for we know from Isa. 2:6; 3:2, 3, that all kinds of heathen superstitions had found their way into Jerusalem, and were practised there as a trade. The persons into whose mouths the answer is put by the prophet (we may supply before v. 19b, "Thus shall ye say to them;" cf., Jer. 10:11), are his own children and disciples. The circumstances of the times were very critical; and the people were applying to wizards to throw light upon the dark future. 'Ob signified primarily the spirit of witchcraft, then the possessor of such a spirit (equivalent to *Baal ob*), more especially the necromancer. *Yidd'oni*, on the other hand, signified primarily the possessor of a prophesying or soothsaying spirit (πύθων or πνεῦμα τοῦ πύθωνος), Syr. *yodûa'* (after the intensive from *pâ'ul* with immutable vowels), and then the soothsaying spirit itself (Lev. 20:27), which was properly called *yiddâ'ôn* (the much knowing), like δαίμων, which, according to Plato, is equivalent to δαήμων. These people, who are designated by the LXX, both here and elsewhere, as ἐγγαστρούμοι, i.e., ventriloquists,

imitated the chirping of bats, which was supposed to proceed from the shadows of Hades, and uttered their magical formulas in a whispering tone. What an unnatural thing, for the people of Jehovah to go and inquire, not of their won God, but of such heathenish and demoniacal deceivers and victims as these (*dârash 'el*, to go and inquire of a person, Isa. 11:10, synonymous with *shâ'al b'*, 1 Sam. 28:6)! What blindness, to consult the dead in the interests of the living! By "*the dead*" (*hammēthim*) we are not to understand "the idols" in this passage, as in Ps. 106:28, but *the departed*, as Deut. 18:11 (cf., 1 Sam. 28) clearly proves; and *עַד* is not to be taken, either here or elsewhere, as equivalent to *tachath* ("instead of"), as Knobel supposes, but, as in Jer. 21:2 and other passages, as signifying "for the benefit of." Necromancy, which makes the dead the instructors of the living, is a most gloomy deception.

Isaiah 8:20. In opposition to such a falling away to wretched superstition, the watchword of the prophet and his supporters is this. V. 20. "*To the teaching of God (thorah, Gotteslehre), and to the testimony! If they do not accord with this word, they are a people for whom no morning dawns.*" The summons, "to the teaching and to the testimony" (namely, to those which Jehovah gave through His prophet, v. 17), takes the form of a watchword in time of battle (Judg. 7:18). With this construction the following *אִם-לֹא* (which Knobel understands interrogatively, "Should not they speak so, who, etc.?" and Luzzatto as an oath, as in Ps. 131:2, "Surely they say such words as have no dawn in them") has, at any rate, all the presumption of a conditional signification. Whoever had not this watchword would be regarded as the enemy of Jehovah, and suffer the fate of such a man. This is, to all appearance, the meaning of the apodosis *אֲשֶׁר אֵין-לוֹ שָׁחַר*. Luther has given the meaning correctly, "If they do not say this, they will not have the morning dawn;" or, according to his earlier and equally good rendering, "They shall never overtake the morning light," literally, "They are those to whom no dawn

arises." The use of the plural in the hypothetical protasis, and the singular in the apodosis, is an intentional and significant change. All the several individuals who did not adhere to the revelation made by Jehovah through His prophet, formed one corrupt mass, which would remain in hopeless darkness. *אֲשֶׁר* is used in the same sense as in Isa. 5:28 and 2 Sam. 2:4, and possibly also as in 1 Sam. 15:20, instead of the more usual *כִּי*, when used in the affirmative sense which springs in both particles out of the confirmative (*namque* and *quoniam*): Truly they have no morning dawn to expect.

Isaiah 8:21, 22. The night of despair to which the unbelieving nation would be brought, is described in vv. 21, 22: "*And it goes about therein hard pressed and hungry: and it comes to pass, when hunger befals it, it frets itself, and curses by its king and by its God, and turns its face upward, and looks to the earth, and beyond distress and darkness, benighting with anguish, and thrust out into darkness.*" The singulars attach themselves to the *וְ* in v. 19, which embraces all the unbelievers in one mass; "therein" (*bâh*) refers to the self-evident land (*'eret*). The people would be brought to such a plight in the approaching Assyrian oppressions, that they would wander about in the land pressed down by their hard fate (*niksheh*) and hungry (*râ'eb*), because all provisions would be gone and the fields and vineyards would be laid waste. As often as it experienced hunger afresh, it would work itself into a rage (*v'hithkazzaqph* with *Vav apod.* and *pathach*, according to Ges. § 54, Anm.), and curse by its king and God, i.e., by its idol. This is the way in which we must explain the passage, in accordance with 1 Sam. 14:43, where *killel bêholim* is equivalent to *killel b'shēm elohim*, and with Zeph. 1:5, where a distinction is made between an oath *layehovâh*, and an oath *b'malcâm*; if we would adhere to the usage of the language, in which we never find a *כִּי* corresponding to the Latin *execrari in aliquem* (Ges.), but on the contrary the object cursed is always expressed in the accusative. We must therefore give up Ps. 5:3 and 68:25 as

parallels to *b'malco* and *bēlohâiv*: they curse by the idol, which passes with them for both king and God, curse their wretched fate with this as they suppose the most effectual curse of all, without discerning in it the just punishment of their own apostasy, and humbling themselves penitentially under the almighty hand of Jehovah. Consequently all this reaction of their wrath would avail them nothing: whether they turned upwards, to see if the black sky were not clearing, or looked down to the earth, everywhere there would meet them nothing but distress and darkness, nothing but a night of anguish all around (*me'ūph zūkâh* is a kind of summary; *mâ'ūph* a complete veiling, or eclipse, written with *ū* instead of the more usual *ô* of this substantive form: Ewald, § 160, *a*). The judgment of God does not convert them, but only heightens their wickedness; just as in Rev. 16:11, 21, after the pouring out of the fifth and seventh vials of wrath, men only utter blasphemies, and do not desist from their works. After stating what the people see, whether they turn their eyes upwards or downwards, the closing participial clause of v. 22 describes how they see themselves "thrust out into darkness" (*in caliginem propulsum*). There is no necessity to supply הוּא; but out of the previous *hinnēh* it is easy to repeat *hinno* or *hinnenu* (*en ipsum*). "Into darkness:" "āphēlâh (*acc. loci*) is placed emphatically at the head, as in Jer. 23:12.

Isaiah 9

Isaiah 9:1. After the prophet has thus depicted the people as without morning dawn, he gives the reason for the assumption that a restoration of light is to be expected, although not for the existing generation. Ch. 9:1. "For it does not remain dark where there is now distress: in the first time He brought into disgrace the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and in the last He brings to honour the road by the sea, the other side of Jordan, the circle of the Gentiles." כִּי is neither to be taken as equivalent to the untranslatable ὅτι *recitativum* (Knobel), nor is there any necessity to translate

it "but" or "nevertheless," and supply the clause, "it will not remain so." The reason assigned for the fact that the unbelieving people of Judah had fallen into a night without morning, is, that there was a morning coming, whose light, however, would not rise upon the land of Judah first, but upon other parts of the land. *Mū'āph* and *mūzâk* are *hophal* nouns: a state of darkness and distress. The meaning is, There is not, i.e., there will not remain, a state of darkness over the land (*lâh*, like *bâh* in 8:21, refers to 'eret), which is now in a state of distress; but those very districts which God has hitherto caused to suffer deep humiliation He will bring to honour by and by (*hēkal* = *hēkēl*, according to Ges. § 67, Anm. 3, opp. *hicbid*, as in Isa. 23:9). The height of the glorification would correspond to the depth of the disgrace. We cannot adopt Knobel's rendering, "as at a former time," etc., taking עַתָּה as an accusative of time and וְ as equivalent to כַּאֲשֶׁר, for וְ is never used conjunctionally in this way (see *Psalter*, i. 301, and ii. 514); and in the examples adduced by Knobel (viz., Isa. 61:11 and Job 7:2), the verbal clauses after *Caph* are elliptical relative clauses. The rendering adopted by Rosenmüller and others (*sicut tempus prius vilem reddidit*, etc., "as a former time brought it into contempt") is equally wrong. And Ewald, again, is not correct in taking the *Vav* in *v'hâ-acharōn* as the *Vav* of sequence used in the place of the *cēn* of comparison. הַיָּמִים הָרִאשׁוֹן and הָאֲחֵרִים are both definitions of time. The prophet intentionally indicates the time of disgrace with וְ, because this would extend over a lengthened period, in which the same fate would occur again and again. The time of glorification, on the other hand, is indicated by the *accus. temporis*, because it would occur but once, and then continue in perpetuity and without change. It is certainly possible that the prophet may have regarded *hâ-acharōn* as the subject; but this would destroy the harmony of the antithesis. By the land or territory of Naphtali (*'artzâh*, poet. for 'eret, as in Job 34:13; 37:12, with a toneless *ah*) we are to understand the upper Galilee of later times, and by the land of

Zebulun lower Galilee. In the antithetical parallel clause, what is meant by the two lands is distinctly specified: (1) "the road by the sea," *derek hayyâm*, the tract of land on the western shore of the sea of Chinnereth; (2) "the other side of Jordan," *'ēber hayyardēn*, the country to the east of the Jordan; (3) "the circle of the Gentiles," *gelīl haggōyim*, the northernmost border-land of Palestine, only a portion of the so-called *Galilaea* of after times. Ever since the times of the judges, all these lands had been exposed, on account of the countries that joined them, to corruption from Gentile influence and subjugation by heathen foes. The northern tribes on this side, as well as those on the other side, suffered the most in the almost incessant war between Israel and the Syrians, and afterwards between Israel and the Assyrians; and the transportation of their inhabitants, which continued under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmanassar, amounted at last to utter depopulation (Caspari, *Beitr.* 116–118). But these countries would be the very first that would be remembered when that morning dawn of glory should break. Matthew informs us (Matt. 4:13ff.) in what way this was fulfilled at the commencement of the Christian times. On the ground of this prophecy of Isaiah, and not of a "somewhat mistaken exposition of it," as Renan maintains in his *Vie de Jésus* (ch. 13), the Messianic hopes of the Jewish nation were really directed towards Galilee. It is true that, according to Jerome, *in loc.*, the Nazarenes supposed Isa. 9:1b to refer to the light of the gospel spread by the preaching of Paul *in terminos gentium et viam universi maris*. But "the sea" (*hayyâm*) cannot possibly be understood as referring to the Mediterranean, as Meier and Hofmann suppose, for "the way of the sea" (*derek hayyâm*) would in that case have been inhabited by the Philistines and Phoenicians; whereas the prophet's intention was evidently to mention such Israelitish provinces as had suffered the greatest affliction and degradation.

Isaiah 9:2. The range of vision is first widened in v. 2.: "The people that walk about in darkness see a great light; they who dwell in the land of

the shadow of death, upon them a light shines." The range of vision is here extended; not to the Gentiles, however, but to all Israel. Salvation would not break forth till it had become utterly dark along the horizon of Israel, according to the description in Isa. 5:30, i.e., till the land of Jehovah had become a land of the shadow of death on account of the apostasy of its inhabitants from Jehovah (*zalmâveth* is modified, after the manner of a composite noun, from *zalmûth*, according to the form *kadrûth*, and is derived from צלם, Aeth. *salema*, Arab. *zalima*, to be dark). The apostate mass of the nation is to be regarded as already swept away; for if death has cast its shadow over the land, it must be utterly desolate. In this state of things the remnant left in the land beholds a great light, which breaks through the sky that has been hitherto covered with blackness. The people, who turned their eyes upwards to no purpose, because they did so with cursing (Isa. 8:21), are now no more. It is the remnant of Israel which sees this light of spiritual and material redemption arise above its head. In what this light would consist the prophet states afterwards, when describing first the blessings and then the star of the new time.

Isaiah 9:3. In v. 3 he says, in words of thanksgiving and praise: "Thou multiplieth the nation, preparest it great joy; they rejoice before Thee like the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they share the spoil." "The nation" (*haggoi*) is undoubtedly Israel, reduced to a small remnant. That God would make this again into a numerous people, was a leading feature in the pictures drawn of the time of glory (Isa. 26:15; 66:8; Zech. 14:10, 11), which would be in this respect the counterpart of that of Solomon (1 Kings 4:20). If our explanation is the correct one so far, the only way to give an intelligible meaning to the *chethib* חֶתִּיב, taking it in a negative sense, is to render it, as Hengstenberg, Hitzig, and others have done, "Thou multiplieth the nation to which Thou hadst formerly not given great joy," which must signify, *per litoten*, "the nation which Thou hadst plunged into deep sorrow." But it is unnatural to take any

one of the prophetic preterites, commencing with *hichbîd* in v. 1, in any other than a future sense. We must therefore give the preference to the *keri* כִּרִי, and render it, "Thou makest of the nation a great multitude, and preparest it great joy." The pronoun *lō* is written first, as in Lev. 7:7-9, Job 41:4 (*keri*), probably with the emphasis assumed by Drechsler: "to it, in which there was not the smallest indication of such an issue as this." The verbs "multiplied" (*higdaltâ*) and "increased" (*hirbithâ*) are intentionally written together, to put the intensity of the joy on a level with the extensiveness of the multitude. This joy would be a holy joy, as the expression "before Thee" implies: the expression itself recalls the sacrificial meals in the courts of the temple (Deut. 12:7; 14:26). It would be a joy over blessings received, as the figure of the harvest indicates; and joy over evil averted, as the figure of dividing the spoil presupposes: for the division of booty is the business of conquerors. This second figure is not merely a figure: the people that are so joyous are really victorious and triumphant.

Isaiah 9:4. "For the yoke of its burden and the stick of its neck, the stick of its oppressor, Thou hast broken to splinters, as in the day of Midian." The suffixes refer to the people (*hâ'âm*). Instead of *soblō*, from *sōbel*, we have intentionally the more musical form כִּבְלוֹ (with *dagesh dirimens* and *chateph kametz* under the influence of the previous *u* instead of the simple *sheva*). The rhythm of the verse of anapaestic. "Its burden" (*subbōlo*) and "its oppressor" (*nogēs bō*) both recal to mind the Egyptian bondage (Ex. 2:11; 5:6). The future deliverance, which the prophet here celebrates, would be the counterpart of the Egyptian. But as the whole of the great nation of Israel was then redeemed, whereas only a small remnant would participate in the final redemption, he compares it to the day of Midian, when Gideon broke the seven years' dominion of Midian, not with a great army, but with a handful of resolute warriors, strong in the Lord (Judg. 7). The question suggests itself here, Who is the hero, Gideon's antitype, through whom all this is to occur? The prophet

does not say; but building up one clause upon another with כִּי, he gives first of all the reason for the cessation of the oppressive dominion of the imperial power,—namely, the destruction of all the military stores of the enemy.

Isaiah 9:5. "For every boot of those who tramp with boots in the tumult of battle, and cloak rolled in blood, shall be for burning, a food of fire." That which is the food of fire becomes at the same time a *sērēphâh*, inasmuch as the devouring fire reduces it to ashes, and destroys its previous existence. This closing statement requires for כִּסְוֵה the concrete sense of a combustible thing; and this precludes such meanings as business (*Handel und Wandel*), noise, or din (= כִּסְוֵה, Jerome, Syriac, Rashi, and others). On the other hand, the meaning "military equipment," adopted by Knobel and others,—a meaning derived from a comparison of the derivatives of the Aramaean *zûn*, *âzan*, and the Arabic *zâna*, fut. *yezîn* (to dress or equip),—would be quite admissible; at the same time, the interchange of *Samech* and *Zain* in this word cannot be dialectically established. Jos. Kimchi has very properly referred to the Targum *sên*, *mesân* (Syr. also *sâûn* with an essentially long *a*), which signifies shoe (see Bynaeus, *de calceo Hebraeorum*),—a word which is more Aramaean than Hebrew, and the use of which in the present connection might be explained on the ground that the prophet had in his mind the annihilation of the Assyrian forces. We should no doubt expect *sâ'ûn* (*sandaloumenos*) instead of *sō'ên*; but the denom. verb *sâ'ân* might be applied to a soldier's coming up in military boots, and so signify *caligatum venire*, although the primary meaning is certainly *calceare se* (e.g., Eph. 6:15, Syr.). Accordingly we should render it, "every boot of him who comes booted (*des Einherstiefelnden*) into the tumult of battle," taking the word *ra'ash*, not as Drechsler does, in the sense of the noise made by a warrior coming up proudly in his war-boots, nor with Luzzatto in the sense of the war-boot itself, for which the word is too strong, but as referring to the noise or tumult of battle (as in Jer. 10:22), in

the midst of which the man comes up equipped or shod for military service. The prophet names the boot and garment with an obvious purpose. The destruction of the hostile weapons follows as a matter of course, if even the military shoes, worn by the soldiers in the enemies' ranks, and the military cloaks that were lying in *dâmim*, i.e., in blood violently shed upon the battle-field, were all given up to the fire.

Isaiah 9:6. Upon the two sentences with *ci* the prophet now builds a third. The reason for the triumph is the deliverance effected; and the reason for the deliverance, the destruction of the foe; and the reason for all the joy, all the freedom, all the peace, is the new great King.— V. 6. *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government rests upon His shoulder: and they call His name, Wonder, Counsellor, mighty God, Eternal-Father, Prince of Peace.”* The same person whom the prophet foretold in Isa. 7 as the son of the virgin who would come to maturity in troublous times, he here sees as born, and as having already taken possession of the government. There he appeared as a sign, here as a gift of grace. The prophet does not expressly say that he is a son of David in this instance any more than in Isa. 7 (for the remark that has been recently made, that *yeled* is used here for “infant-prince,” is absurd); but this followed as a matter of course, from the fact that he was to bear the government, with all its official rights (Isa. 22:22) and godlike majesty (Ps. 21:6), upon his shoulder; for the inviolable promise of eternal sovereignty, of which the new-born infant was to be the glorious fulfilment, had been bound up with the seed of David in the course of Israel's history ever since the declaration in 2 Sam. 7. In Isa. 7 it is the mother who names the child; here it is the people, or indeed any one who rejoices in him: וִיקְרָא, “one calls, they call, he is called,” as Luther has correctly rendered it, though under the mistaken idea that the Jews had altered the original וִיקְרָא into וִיקְרָא, for the purpose of eliminating the Messianic sense of the passage. But the active verb itself has really been twisted by Jewish commentators in this

way; so that Rashi, Kimchi, Malbim, and others follow the Targum, and explain the passage as meaning, “the God, who is called and is Wonder,’ Counsellor, the mighty God, the eternal Father, calls his name the Prince of Peace;” but this rendering evidently tears asunder things that are closely connected. And Luzzatto has justly observed, that you do not expect to find attributes of God here, but such as would be characteristic of the child. He therefore renders the passage, “God the mighty, the eternal Father, the Prince of Peace, resolves upon wonderful things,” and persuades himself that this long clause is meant for the proper name of the child, just as in other cases declaratory clauses are made into proper names, e.g., the names of the prophet's two sons. But even granting that such a sesquipedalian name were possible, in what an unskilful manner would the name be formed, since the long-winded clause, which would necessarily have to be uttered in one breath, would resolve itself again into separate clauses, which are not only names themselves, but, contrary to all expectation, names of God! The motive which prompted Luzzatto to adopt this original interpretation is worthy of notice. He had formerly endeavoured, like other commentators, to explain the passage by taking the words from “Wonderful” to “Prince of Peace” as the name of the child; and in doing this he rendered פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ “one counselling wonderful things,” thus inverting the object, and regarded “mighty God” as well as “eternal Father” as hyperbolic expressions, like the words applied to the King in Ps. 45:7a. But now he cannot help regarding it as absolutely impossible for a human child to be called *el gibbor*, like God Himself in Isa. 10:21. So far as the relation between his novel attempt at exposition and the accentuation is concerned, it certainly does violence to this, though not to such an extent as the other specimen of exegetical leger-demain, which makes the clause from פְּלֵא אֲבִי-עַד to פְּלֵא the subject to וִיקְרָא. Nevertheless, in the face of the existing accentuation, we must admit that the latter is,

comparatively speaking, the better of the two; for if ויקרא שמו were intended to be the introduction to the list of names which follows, שמו would not be pointed with *geresh*, but with *zakeph*. The accentuators seem also to have shrunk from taking *el gibbor* as the name of a man. They insert intermediate points, as though “eternal Father, Prince of Peace,” were the name of the child, and all that precedes, from “Wonder” onwards, the name of God, who would call him by these two honourable names. But, at the very outset, it is improbable that there should be two names instead of one or more; and it is impossible to conceive for what precise reason such a periphrastic description of God should be employed in connection with the naming of this child, as is not only altogether different from Isaiah’s usual custom, but altogether unparalleled in itself, especially without the definite article. The names of God should at least have been defined thus, הַיְיָ הַגָּבֹר, פְּלֵא, so as to distinguish them from the two names of the child.

Even assuming, therefore, that the accentuation is meant to convey this sense, “And the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, calls his name Eternal-Father, Prince of Peace,” as appears to be the case; we must necessarily reject it, as resting upon a misunderstanding and misinterpretation. We regard the whole, from פְּלֵא onwards,—as the connection, the expression, and the syntax require,—as a dependent accusative predicate to ויקרא חמו (they call his name), which stands at the head (compare קרא, they call, it is called, in Gen. 11:9; 16:14, Josh. 7:26, and above Isa. 8:4, ישא, they will carry: Ges. § 137, 3). If it be urged, as an objection to the Messianic interpretation of Isa. 7:14, 15, that the Christ who appeared was not named Immanuel, but Jesus, this objection is sufficiently met by the fact that He did not receive as a proper name any one of the five names by which, according to this second prophecy, He was to be called. Moreover, this objection would apply quite as strongly to the

notion, which has been a very favourite one with Jewish commentators (e.g., Rashi, A. E. Kimchi, Abravanel, Malbim, Luzzatto, and others), and even with certain Christian commentators (such as Grotius, Gesenius, etc.), that the prophecy refers to Hezekiah,—a notion which is a disgrace to those who thereby lead both themselves and others astray. For even if the hopes held out in the prophecy were attached for a long time to Hezekiah, the mistake was but too quickly discovered; whereas the commentators in question perpetuate the mistake, by forcing it upon the prophecy itself, although the prophet, even after the deception had been outlived, not only did not suppress the prophecy, but handed it down to succeeding ages as awaiting a future and infallible fulfilment. For the words in their strict meaning point to the Messiah, whom men may for a time, with pardonable error, have hoped to find in Hezekiah, but whom, with unpardonable error, men refused to acknowledge, even when He actually appeared in Jesus. The name Jesus is the combination of all the Old Testament titles used to designate the Coming One according to His nature and His works. The names contained in Isa. 7:14 and 9:6 are not thereby suppressed; but they have continued, from the time of Mary downwards, in the mouths of all believers. There is not one of these names under which worship and homage have not been paid to Him. But we never find them crowded together anywhere else, as we do here in Isaiah; and in this respect also our prophet proves himself the greatest of the Old Testament evangelists.

The first name is פְּלֵא, or perhaps more correctly פְּלֵא, which is not to be taken in connection with the next word, וַיַּעַן, though this construction might seem to commend itself in accordance with הַפְּלֵא עֲצָה, in Isa. 28:29. This is the way in which it has been taken by the Seventy and others (thus LXX, θαυμαστός σύμβουλος; Theodoret, θαυμαστῶς βουλευόμενος). If we adopted this explanation, we might regard וַיַּעַן פְּלֵא as an inverted form for וַיַּעַן פְּלֵא:

counselling wonderful things. The possibility of such an inversion is apparent from Isa. 22:2, תשאות מלאה, i.e., full of tumult. Or, following the analogy of *pere' âdâm* (a wild man) in Gen. 16:12, we might regard it as a genitive construction: a wonder of a counsellor; in which case the disjunctive *telishâh gedolâh* in *pele'* would have to be exchanged for a connecting *mahpach*. Both combinations have their doubtful points, and, so far as the sense is concerned, would lead us rather to expect מְפַלֵּא עֵצָה; whereas there is nothing at all to prevent our taking פֶּלֵא and יְעִיץ as two separate names (not even the accentuation, which is without parallel elsewhere, so far as the combination of *pashta* with *telishah* is concerned, and therefore altogether unique). Just as the angel of Jehovah, when asked by Manoah what was his name (Judg. 13:18), replied פֶּלֵא (פֶּלֵאִי), and indicated thereby his divine nature—a nature incomprehensible to mortal men; so here the God-given ruler is also *pele'*, a phenomenon lying altogether beyond human conception or natural occurrence. Not only is this or that wonderful in Him; but He Himself is throughout a wonder—*παράδοξασμός*, as Symmachus renders it. The second name if *yô'êtz*, counsellor, because, by virtue of the spirit of counsel which He possesses (Isa. 11:2), He can always discern and give counsel for the good of His nation. There is no need for Him to surround Himself with counsellors; but without receiving counsel at all, He counsels those that are without counsel, and is thus the end of all want of counsel to His nation as a whole. The third name, *El gibbor*, attributes divinity to Him. Not, indeed, if we render the words “Strength, Hero,” as Luther does; or “Hero of Strength,” as Meier has done; or “a God of a hero,” as Hofmann proposes; or “Hero-God,” i.e., one who fights and conquers like an invincible god, as Ewald does. But all these renderings, and others of a similar kind, founder, without needing any further refutation, on Isa. 10:21, where He, to whom the remnant of Israel will turn with penitence, is called *El gibbor* (the

mighty God). There is no reason why we should take *El* in this name of the Messiah in any other sense than in *Immanu-El*; not to mention the fact that *El* in Isaiah is always a name of God, and that the prophet was ever strongly conscious of the antithesis between *El* and *âdâm*, as Isa. 31:3 (cf., Hos. 11:9) clearly shows. And finally, *El gibbor* was a traditional name of God, which occurs as early as Deut. 10:17, cf., Jer. 32:18, Neh. 9:32, Ps. 24:8, etc. The name *gibbor* is used here as an adjective, like *shaddai* in *El shaddai*. The Messiah, then, is here designated “mighty God.” Undoubtedly this appears to go beyond the limits of the Old Testament horizon; but what if it should go beyond them? It stands written once for all, just as in Jer. 23:6 *Jehovah Zidkenu* (Jehovah our Righteousness) is also used as a name of the Messiah,—a Messianic name, which even the synagogue cannot set aside (vid., *Midrash Mishle 57a*, where this is adduced as one of the eight names of the Messiah). Still we must not go too far. If we look at the spirit of the prophecy, the mystery of the incarnation of God is unquestionably indicated in such statements as these. But if we look at the consciousness of the prophet himself, nothing further was involved than this, that the Messiah would be the image of God as no other man ever had been (cf., *El*, Ps. 82:1), and that He would have God dwelling within Him (cf., Jer. 33:16). Who else would lead Israel to victory over the hostile world, than God the mighty? The Messiah is the corporeal presence of this mighty God; for He is with Him, He is in Him, and in Him He is with Israel. The expression did not preclude the fact that the Messiah would be God and man in one person; but it did not penetrate to this depth, so far as the Old Testament consciousness was concerned. The fourth name springs out of the third: אֲבִי-עַד, eternal Father (not Booty Father, with which Hitzig and Knobel content themselves); for what is divine must be eternal. The title Eternal Father designates Him, however, not only as the possessor of eternity (Hengstenberg), but as the tender, faithful, and wise trainer, guardian, and provider for His people even in eternity (Isa. 22:21). He is

eternal Father, as the eternal, loving King, according to the description in Ps. 72. Now, if He is mighty God, and uses His divine might in eternity for the good of His people, He is also, as the fifth name affirms, *sar-shâlôm*, a Prince who removes all peace-disturbing powers, and secures peace among the nations (Zech. 9:10),—who is, as it were, the embodiment of peace come down into the world of nations (Mic. 5:4). To exalt the government of David into an eternal rule of peace, is the end for which He is born; and moreover He proves Himself to be what He is not only called, but actually is.

Isaiah 9:7. *“To the increase of government and to peace without end, upon the throne of David, and over his Kingdom, to strengthen it, and to support it through judgment and righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The jealousy of Jehovah of hosts will fulfil this.”* לְמִרְבָּה (written with *Mêm clausum* in the middle of the *one* word, and, according to Elias Levita, properly to be read לִם רִבָּה, *iis magnificando*, in accordance with this way of writing the word) is not a participle here, but a substantive after the forms מְרַבֵּה, מְעַשֵּׂה, and that not from הִרְבָּה, but from רָבָה, an infinitive noun expressing, according to its formation, the practical result of an action, rather than the abstract idea. Ever extending dominion and endless peace will be brought in by the sublime and lofty King’s Son, when He sits upon the throne of David and rules over David’s kingdom. He is a *semper Augustus*, i.e., a perpetual increaser of the kingdom; not by war, however, but with the spiritual weapons of peace. And within He gives to the kingdom “judgment” (*mishpât*) and “righteousness” (*zedâkâh*), as the foundations and pillars of its durability: *mishpât*, judgment or right, which He pronounces and ordains; and righteousness, which He not only exercises Himself, but transfers to the members of His kingdom. This new epoch of Davidic sovereignty was still only a matter of faith and hope. But the zeal of Jehovah was the guarantee of its realization. The accentuation is likely to

mislead here, inasmuch as it makes it appear as though the words “from henceforth even for ever” (*me’attâh v’ad ’ôlâm*) belonged to the closing sentence, whereas the eternal perspective which they open applies directly to the reign of the great Son of David, and only indirectly to the work of the divine jealousy. “Zeal,” or *jealousy*, *kin’âh*, lit., glowing fire, from קָנָא, Arab. *kanaa*, to be deep red (Deut. 4:24), is one of the deepest of the Old Testament ideas, and one of the most fruitful in relation to the work of reconciliation. It is two-sided. The fire of love has for its obverse the fire of wrath. For jealousy contends for the object of its love against everything that touches either the object or the love itself. Jehovah loves His nation. That He should leave it in the hands of such bad Davidic kings as Ahaz, and give it up to the imperial power of the world, would be altogether irreconcilable with this love, if continued long. But His love flares up, consumes all that is adverse, and gives to His people the true King, in whom that which was only foreshadowed in David and Solomon reaches its highest antitypical fulfilment. With the very same words, “the zeal of Jehovah of hosts,” etc., Isaiah seals the promise in Isa. 37:32.

B. Jehovah’s Outstretched Hand—Ch. 9:8–10:4

Isaiah 9:8–10:4. The great light would not arise till the darkness had reached its deepest point. The gradual increase of this darkness is predicted in this second section of the esoteric addresses. Many difficult questions suggest themselves in connection with this section. 1. Is it directed against the northern kingdom only, or against all Israel? 2. What was the historical standpoint of the prophet himself? The majority of commentators reply that the prophet is only prophesying against Ephraim here, and that Syria and Ephraim have already been chastised by Tiglath-pileser. The former is incorrect. The prophet does indeed commence with Ephraim, but he does not stop there. The fates of both kingdoms flow into one another

here, as well as in Isa. 8:5ff., just as they were causally connected in actual fact. And it cannot be maintained, that when the prophet uttered his predictions Ephraim had already felt the scourging of Tiglath-pileser. The prophet takes his stand at a time when judgment after judgment had fallen upon all Israel without improving it. And one of these past judgments was the scourging of Ephraim by Tiglath-pileser. How much or how little of the events which the prophet looks back upon from this ideal standpoint had already taken place, it is impossible to determine; but this is a matter of indifference so far as the prophecy is concerned. The prophet, from his ideal standing-place, had not only this or that behind him, but all that is expressed in this section by perfects and aorists (Ges. § 129, 2, *b*). And we already know from Isa. 2:9; 5:25, that he sued the future conversive as the preterite of the ideal past. We therefore translate the whole in the present tense. In outward arrangement there is no section of Isaiah so symmetrical as this. In Isa. 5 we found one partial approach to the strophe in similarity of commencement, and another in Isa. 2 in similarity of conclusion. But here Isa. 5:25*b* is adapted as the *refrain* of four symmetrical strophes. We will take each strophe by itself.

Isaiah 9:8–12. Strophe 1. Vv. 8–12. *“The Lord sends out a word against Jacob, and it descends into Israel. And all the people must make atonement, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, saying in pride and haughtiness of heart, ‘Bricks are fallen down, and we build with square stones; sycamores are hewn down, and we put cedars in their place.’ Jehovah raises Rezin’s oppressors high above him, and pricks up his enemies: Aram from the east, and Philistines from the west; they devour Israel with full mouth. For all this His anger is not turned away, and His hand is stretched out still.”* The word (*dâbâr*) is both in nature and history the messenger of the Lord: it runs quickly through the earth (Ps. 147:15, 18), and when sent by the Lord, comes to men to destroy or to heal (Ps. 107:20), and never returns to its sender void (Isa. 55:10, 11). Thus does the Lord now send a

word against Jacob (*Jacob*, as in Isa. 2:5); and this heavenly messenger descends into Israel (*nâphal*, as in Dan. 4:28, and like the Arabic *nazala*, which is the word usually employed to denote the communication of divine revelation), taking shelter, as it were, in the soul of the prophet. Its immediate commission is directed against Ephraim, which has been so little humbled by the calamities that have fallen upon it since the time of Jehu, that the people are boasting that they will replace bricks and sycamores (or sycamines, from *shikmin*), that wide-spread tree (1 Kings 10:27), with works of art and cedars. *“We put in their place:”* *nachaliph* is not used here as in Job 14:7, where it signifies to sprout again (*nova germina emittere*), but as in Isa. 40:31; 41:1, where it is construed with כֹּחַ (strength), and signifies to renew (*novas vires assumere*). In this instance, when the object is one external to the subject, the meaning is to substitute (*substituere*), like the Arabic *achlafa*, to restore. The poorest style of building in the land is contrasted with the best; for “the sycamore is a tree which only flourishes in the plain, and there the most wretched houses are still built of bricks dried in the sun, and of knotty beams of sycamore.” These might have been destroyed by the war, but more durable and stately buildings would rise up in their place. Ephraim, however, would be made to feel this defiance of the judgments of God (to “know,” as in Hos. 9:7, Ezek. 25:14). Jehovah would give the adversaries of Rezin authority over Ephraim, and instigate his foes: *sicsêc*, as in Isa. 19:2, from *sâcac*, in its primary sense of “prick,” *figere*, which has nothing to do with the meanings to plait and cover, but from which we have the words תֵּשֶׁבֶת, תֵּשֶׁבֶת, a thorn, nail, or plug, and which is probably related to תֵּשֶׁבֶת, to view, lit., to fix; hence *pilpel*, to prick up, incite, which is the rendering adopted by the Targum here and in Isa. 19:2, and by the LXX at Isa. 19:2. There is no necessity to quote the talmudic *sicsêc*, to kindle (by friction), which is never met with in the metaphorical sense of exciting. It would be even better to take our *sicsêc* as an intensive form of *sâcac*, used in the

ISAIAH	Page 126
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

same sense as the Arabic, viz., to provide one's self with weapons, to arm; but this is probably a denominative from *sicca*, signifying offensive armour, with the idea of pricking and spearing,—a radical notion, from which it would be easy to get at the satisfactory meaning, to spur on or instigate. "The oppressors of Rezin" *tzârê Retzîn*, a simple play upon the words, like *hoi goi* in Isa. 1:4, and many others in Isaiah) are the Assyrians, whose help had been sought by Ahaz against Rezin; though perhaps not these exclusively, but possibly also the Trachonites, for example, against whom the mountain fortress *Retzîn* appears to have been erected, to protect the rich lands of eastern Hauran. In v. 12 the range of vision stretches over all Israel. It cannot be otherwise, for the northern kingdom never suffered anything from the Philistines; whereas an invasion of Judah by the Philistines was really one of the judgments belonging to the time of Ahaz (2 Chron. 28:16–19). Consequently by *Israel* here we are to understand all Israel, the two halves of which would become a rich prize to the enemy. Ephraim would be swallowed up by Aram,—namely, by those who had been subjugated by Asshur, and were now tributary to it,—and Judah would be swallowed up by the Philistines. But this strait would be very far from being the end of the punishments of God. Because Israel would not turn, the wrath of God would not turn away.

Isaiah 9:13–17. Strophe 2. Vv. 13–17. *"But the people turneth not unto Him that smiteth it, and they seek not Jehovah of hosts. Therefore Jehovah rooteth out of Israel head and tail, palm-branch and rush, in one day. Elders and highly distinguished men, this is the head; and prophets, lying teachers, this is the tail. The leaders of this people have become leaders astray, and their followers swallowed up. Therefore the Lord will not rejoice in their young men, and will have no compassion on their orphans and widows: for all together are profligate and evil-doers, and every mouth speaketh blasphemy. With all this His anger is not turned away, and His hand is stretched out still."* As the first stage of the

judgments has been followed by no true conversion to Jehovah the almighty judge, there comes a second. שׁוּב עַד (to turn unto) denotes a thorough conversion, not stopping half-way. "The smiter of it" (*hammaccêhu*), or "he who smiteth it," it Jehovah (compare, on the other hand, Isa. 10:20, where Asshur is intended). The article and suffix are used together, as in Isa. 24:2, Prov. 16:4 (vid., Ges. § 110, 2; Caspari, *Arab. Gram.* § 472). But there was coming now a great day of punishment (in the view of the prophet, it was already past), such as Israel experienced more than once in the Assyrian oppressions, and Judah in the Chaldean, when head and tail, or, according to another proverbial expression, palm-branch and rush, would be rooted out. We might suppose that the persons referred to were the high and low; but v. 15 makes a different application of the first double figure, by giving it a different turn from its popular sense (compare the Arabic *er-ru 'ûs w-aledhnâb* = lofty and low, in Dietrich, *Abhandlung*, p. 209). The opinion which has very widely prevailed since the time of Koppe, that this verse is a gloss, is no doubt a very natural one (see Hitzig, *Begriff der Kritik*; Ewald, *Propheten*, i. 57). But Isaiah's custom of supplying his own gloss is opposed to such a view; also Isaiah's composition in Isa. 3:3 and 30:20, and the relation in which this verse stands to v. 16; and lastly, the singular character of the gloss itself, which is one of the strongest proofs that it contains the prophet's exposition of his own words. The chiefs of the nation were the head of the national body; and behind, like a wagging dog's tail, sat the false prophets with their flatteries of the people, loving, as Persius says, *blando caudam jactare popello*. The prophet drops the figure of *cippâh*, the palm-branch which forms the crown of the palm, and which derives its name from the fact that it resembles the palm of the hand (*instar palmae manus*), and *agmôn*, the rush which grows in the marsh. The allusion here is to the rulers of the nation and the dregs of the people. The basest extremity were the demagogues in the shape of prophets. For it had come to this, as v. 16 affirms, that those who promised to

lead by a straight road led astray, and those who suffered themselves to be led by them were as good as already swallowed up by hell (cf., Isa. 5:14; 3:12). Therefore the Sovereign Ruler would not rejoice over the young men of this nation; that is to say, He would suffer them to be smitten by their enemies, without going with them to battle, and would refuse His customary compassion even towards widows and orphans, for they were all thoroughly corrupt on every side. The alienation, obliquity, and dishonesty of their heart, are indicated by the word *chânēph* (from *chânaph*, which has in itself the indifferent radical idea of inclination; so that in Arabic, *chanîf*, as a synonym of *'âdil*, has the very opposite meaning of decision in favour of what is right); the badness of their actions by *מִרְעָה* (in half pause for *מִרְעָה* = *מִרְעָה*, *maleficus*); the vicious infatuation of their words by *nebâlâh*. This they are, and this they continue; and consequently the wrathful hand of God is stretched out over them for the infliction of fresh strokes.

Isaiah 9:18–21. Strophe 3. Vv. 18–21. *“For the wickedness burneth up like fire: it devours thorns and thistles, and burns in the thickets of the wood; and they smoke upwards in a lofty volume of smoke. Through the wrath of Jehovah of hosts the land is turned into coal, and the nation has become like the food of fire: not one spares his brother. They hew on the right, and are hungry; and devour on the left, and are not satisfied: they devour the flesh of their own arm: Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: these together over Judah. With all this His anger is not turned away, and His hand is stretched out still.”* The standpoint of the prophet is at the extreme end of the course of judgment, and from that he looks back. Consequently this link of the chain is also past in his view, and hence the future conversives. The curse, which the apostasy of Israel carries within itself, now breaks fully out. Wickedness, i.e., the constant thirst of evil, is a fire which a man kindles in himself. And when the grace of God, which damps and restrains this fire, is all over, it is sure to burst forth: the wickedness bursts forth like fire (the verb is

used here, as in Isa. 30:27, with reference to the wrath of God). And this is the case with the wickedness of Israel, which now consumes first of all thorns and thistles, i.e., individual sinners who are the most ripe for judgment, upon whom the judgment commences, and then the thicket of the wood (*sib-che*, as in Isa. 10:34, from *sebac*, Gen. 22:13 = *sobec*), that is to say, the great mass of the people, which is woven together by bands of iniquity (*vattizzath* is not a reflective *niphal*, as in 2 Kings 22:13, but *kal*, to kindle into anything, i.e., to set it on fire). The contrast intended in the two figures is consequently not the high and low (Ewald), nor the useless and useful (Drechsler), but individuals and the whole (Vitranga). The fire, into which the wickedness bursts out, seizes individuals first of all; and then, like a forest fire, it seizes upon the nation at large in all its ranks and members, who “*whirl up* (roll up) *ascending of smoke*,” i.e., who roll up in the form of ascending smoke (*hith'abbek*, a synonym of *hithhappêk*, Judg. 7:13, to curl or roll). This fire of wickedness was no other than the wrath (*'ebrâh*) of God: it is God's own wrath, for all sin carries this within itself as its own self-punishment. By this fire of wrath the soil of the land is gradually but thoroughly burnt out, and the people of the land utterly consumed: *עָתָה אֵפ. לֵעָן*. to be red-hot (LXX συγκέκωται, also the Targum), and to be dark or black (Arabic *'atame*, late at night), for what is burnt out becomes black. Fire and darkness are therefore correlative terms throughout the whole of the Scriptures. So far do the figures extend, in which the prophet presents the inmost essence of this stage of judgment. In its historical manifestation it consisted in the most inhuman self-destruction during an anarchical civil war. Destitute of any tender emotions, they devoured one another without being satisfied: *gâzar*, to cut, to hew (hence the Arabic for a butcher): *zero'o*, his arm, according to Jer. 19:9, equivalent to the member of his own family and tribe, who was figuratively called his arm (Arabic *'adud*: see Ges. *Thes.* p. 433), as being the natural protector and support. This interminable self-immolation, and the regicide

associated with the jealousy of the different tribes, shook the northern kingdom again and again to its utter destruction. And the readiness with which the unbrotherly feelings of the northern tribes towards one another could turn into combined hostility towards Judah, was evident enough from the Syro-Ephraimitish war, the consequences of which had not passed away at the time when these prophecies were uttered. This hostility on the part of the brother kingdoms would still further increase. And the end of the judgments of wrath had not come yet.

Isaiah 10

Isaiah 10:1–4. Strophe 4. Ch. 10:1–4. “*Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and to the writers who prepare trouble to force away the needy from demanding justice, and to rob the suffering of my people of their rightful claims, that widows may become their prey, and they plunder orphans! And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the storm that cometh from afar? To whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye deposit your glory? There is nothing left but to bow down under prisoners, and they fall under the slain. With all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still.*” This last strophe is directed against the unjust authorities and judges. The *woe* pronounced upon them is, as we have already frequently seen, Isaiah’s *ceterum censeo*. *Châkak* is their decisive decree (not, however, in a denominative sense, but in the primary sense of hewing in, recording in official documents, Isa. 30:8, Job 19:23); and *cittēb* (*piel* only occurring here, and a perfect, according to Gesenius, § 126, 3) their official signing and writing. Their decrees are *chikekē* ‘*aven* (an open plural, as in Judg. 5:15, for *chukkē*, after the analogy of לְלִי, עֲמֻקָּי, with an absolute *châkâkîm* underlying it: Ewald, § 186–7), inasmuch as their contents were worthlessness, i.e., the direct opposite of morality; and what they wrote out was ‘*âmâl*, trouble, i.e., an unjust oppression of the people (compare πόνος and πονηρός). Poor persons who wanted to commence legal proceedings

were not even allowed to do so, and possessions to which widows and orphans had a well-founded claim were a welcome booty to them (for the diversion into the finite verb, see Isa. 5:24; 8:11; 49:5; 58:5). For all this they could not escape the judgment of God. This is announced to them in v. 3, in the form of three distinct questions (commencing with *ûmâh, quid igitur*). The noun *pekuddah* in the *first question* always signifies simply a visitation of punishment; *sho’âh* is a confused, dull, desolate rumbling, hence confusion (*turba*), desolation: here it is described as “coming from afar,” because a distant nation (Asshur) was the instrument of God’s wrath. *Second question*: “Upon whom will ye throw yourselves in your search for help then” (*nûs ‘al, a constr. praegnans*, only met with here)? *Third question*: “Where, i.e., in whose hand, will ye deposit your wealth in money and possessions” (*câbôd*, what is weighty in value and imposing in appearance); ‘*âzab* with *b’yad* (Gen. 39:6), or with *Lamed* (Job 39:14), to leave anything with a person as property in trust. No one would relieve them of their wealth, and hold it as a deposit; it was irrecoverably lost. To this negative answer there is appended the following *bilti*, which, when used as a preposition after a previous negation, signifies *praeter*; when used as a conjunction, *nisi (bilti ‘im, Judg. 7:14)*; and where it governs the whole sentence, as in this case, *nisi quod* (cf., Num. 11:6; Dan. 11:18). In the present instance, where the previous negation is to be supplied in thought, it has the force of *nil reliquum est nisi quod* (there is nothing left but). The singular verb (*câra’*) is used contemptuously, embracing all the high persons as one condensed mass; and *tachath* does not mean *aeque ac* or *loco* (like, or in the place of), as Ewald (§ 217, *k*) maintains, but is used in the primary and local sense of *infra* (below). Some crouch down to find room at the feet of the prisoners, who are crowded closely together in the prison; or if we suppose the prophet to have a scene of transportation in his mind, they sink down under the feet of the other prisoners, in their inability to bear such hardships, whilst the

rest fall in war; and as the slaughter is of long duration, not only become corpses themselves, but are covered with corpses of the slain (cf., Isa. 14:19). And even with this the wrath of God is not satisfied. The prophet, however, does not follow out the terrible gradation any further. Moreover, the captivity, to which this fourth strophe points, actually formed the conclusion of a distinct period.

C. Destruction of the Imperial Kingdom of the World, and Rise of the Kingdom of Jehovah in His Anointed—Ch. 10:5–12:6

Isaiah 10:5–12:6. The law of contrast prevails in prophecy, as it does also in the history of salvation. When distress is at its height, it is suddenly brought to an end, and changed into relief; and when prophecy has become as black with darkness as in the previous section, it suddenly becomes as bright and cloudless as in that which is opening now. The *hoi* (woe) pronounced upon Israel becomes a *hoi* upon Asshur. Proud Asshur, with its confidence in its own strength, after having served for a time as the goad of Jehovah's wrath, now falls a victim to that wrath itself. Its attack upon Jerusalem leads to its own overthrow; and on the ruins of the kingdom of the world there rises up the kingdom of the great and righteous Son of David, who rules in peace over His redeemed people, and the nations that rejoice in Him:—the counterpart of the redemption from Egypt, and one as rich in materials for songs of praise as the passage through the Red Sea. The Messianic prophecy, which turns its darker side towards unbelief in Isa. 7, and whose promising aspect burst like a great light through the darkness in Isa. 8:5–9:6, is standing now upon its third and highest stage. In Isa. 7 it is like a star in the night; in Isa. 8:5–9:6, like the morning dawn; and now the sky is perfectly cloudless, and it appears like the noonday sun. The prophet has now penetrated to the light fringe of Isa. 6. The name *Shear-yashub*, having emptied itself of all the curse that it contained, is now transformed into a pure promise. And it becomes perfectly clear what the name

Immanuel and the name given to Immanuel, *El gibbor* (mighty God), declared. The remnant of Israel turns to God the mighty One; and God the mighty is henceforth with His people in the Sprout of Jesse, who has the seven Spirits of God dwelling within Himself. So far as the date of composition is concerned, the majority of the more recent commentators agree in assigning it to the time of Hezekiah, because Isa. 10:9–11 presupposes the destruction of Samaria by Shalmanassar, which took place in the sixth year of Hezekiah. But it was only from the prophet's point of view that this event was already past; it had not actually taken place. The prophet had already predicted that Samaria, and with Samaria the kingdom of Israel, would succumb to the Assyrians, and had even fixed the years (Isa. 7:8 and 8:4, 7). Why, then, should he not be able to presuppose it here as an event already past? The stamp on this section does not tally at all with that of Isaiah's prophecy in the times of Hezekiah; whereas, on the other hand, it forms so integral a link in the prophetic cycle in Isa. 7–12, and is interwoven in so many ways with that which precedes, and of which it forms both the continuation and crown, that we have no hesitation in assigning it, with Vitranga, Caspari, and Drechsler, to the first three years of the reign of Ahaz, though without deciding whether it preceded or followed the destruction of the two allies by Tiglath-pileser. It is by no means impossible that it may have preceded it.

Isaiah 10:5, 6. The prophet commences with *hoi* (woe!), which is always used as an expression of wrathful indignation to introduce the proclamation of judgment upon the person named; although, as in the present instance, this may not always follow immediately (cf., Isa. 1:4, 5–9), but may be preceded by the announcement of the sin by which the judgment had been provoked. In the first place, Asshur is more particularly indicated as the chosen instrument of divine judgment upon all Israel.—Vv. 5, 6. "*Woe to Asshur, the rod of mine anger, and it is a staff in their hand, mine indignation. Against a wicked nation will I send them, and against the people of my wrath give*

ISAIAH	Page 130
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

them a charge, to spoil spoil, and to prey prey, to make it trodden down like street-mire." "Mine indignation:" *za'mi* is either a permutation of the predicative הוּא, which is placed emphatically in the foreground (compare the אֶת־הוּא in Jer. 14:22, which is also written with *makkeph*), as we have translated it, though without taking הוּא as a copula (= *est*), as Ewald does; or else הוּא בִּידָם is written elliptically for אֲשֶׁר הוּא בִּידָם, "the staff which they hold is mine indignation" (Ges., Rosenmüller, and others), in which case, however, we should rather expect וּמִטָּה בִּידָם זַעֲמֵי הוּא. It is quite inadmissible, however, to take *za'mi* as a separate genitive to *matteh*, and to point the latter with *zere*, as Knobel has done; a thing altogether unparalleled in the Hebrew language. The futures in v. 6 are to be taken literally; for what Asshur did to Israel in the sixty year of Hezekiah's reign, and to Judah in his fourteenth year, was still in the future at the time when Isaiah prophesied. Instead of וְלִשְׂמוֹ the *keri* has וְלִשְׂמוֹ, the form in which the infinitive is written in other passages when connected with suffixes (see, on the other hand, 2 Sam. 14:7). "Trodden down:" *mirmas* with short *a* is the older form, which was retained along with the other form with the *a* lengthened by the tone (Ewald § 160, *c*).

Isaiah 10:7-11. Asshur was to be an instrument of divine wrath upon all Israel; but it would exalt itself, and make itself the end instead of the means. V. 7. "Nevertheless he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; for it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." Asshur did not think so (*lo'-cēn*), i.e., not as he ought to think, seeing that his power over Israel was determined by Jehovah Himself. For what filled his heart was the endeavour, peculiar to the imperial power, to destroy not a few nations, i.e., as many nations as possible, for the purpose of extending his own dominions, and with the determination to tolerate no other independent nation, and the desire to deal with Judah as with all the rest.

For Jehovah was nothing more in his esteem than one of the idols of the nations. Vv. 8-11. "For he saith, Are not my generals all kings? Is not Calno as Carchemish, or Hamath as Arpad, or Samaria as Damascus? As my hand hath reached the kingdoms of the idols, and their graven images were more than those of Jerusalem and Samaria; shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, do likewise to Jerusalem and her idols?" The king of Asshur bore the title of the great king (Isa. 36:4), and indeed, as we may infer from Ezek. 26:7, that of the king of kings. The generals in his army he could call kings, because the satraps who led their several contingents were equal to kings in the extent and splendour of their government, and some of them were really conquered kings (cf., 2 Kings 25:28). He proudly asks whether every one of the cities named has not been as incapable as the rest, of offering a successful resistance to him. *Carchemish* is the later *Circesium* (*Cercusium*), at the junction of the *Chaboras* with the *Euphrates* (see above); *Calno*, the later *Ctesiphon*, on the left bank of the *Tigris*; *Arpad* (according to *Merâshid*, i. p. 47, in the pashalic of *Chaleb*, i.e., *Aleppo*) and *Hamath* (i.e., *Epiphania*) were Syrian cities, the latter on the river *Orontes*, still a large and wealthy place. The king of Asshur had also already conquered *Samaria*, at the time when the prophet introduced him as uttering these words. *Jerusalem*, therefore, would be unable to resist him. As he had obtained possession of idolatrous kingdoms (לְמַצְּרָה, to reach, as in Ps. 21:9: *hâ-'elil* with the article indicating the genus), which had more idols than *Jerusalem* or than *Samaria*; so would he also overcome *Jerusalem*, which had just as few and just as powerless idols as *Samaria* had. Observe there that v. 11 is the apodosis to v. 10, and that the comparative clause of v. 10 is repeated in v. 11, for the purpose of instituting a comparison, more especially with *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*. The king of Asshur calls the gods of the nations by the simple name of idols, though the prophet does not therefore make him speak from his own *Israelitish* standpoint. On the contrary, the great sin of the king of Asshur consisted in the

ISAIAH	Page 131
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

manner in which he spoke. For since he recognised no other gods than his own Assyrian national deities, he placed Jehovah among the idols of the nations, and, what ought particularly to be observed, with the other idols, whose worship had been introduced into Samaria and Jerusalem. But in this very fact there was so far consolation for the worshippers of Jehovah, that such blasphemy of the one living God would not remain unavenged; whilst for the worshipers of idols it contained a painful lesson, since their gods really deserved nothing better than that contempt should be heaped upon them. The prophet has now described the sin of Asshur. It was ambitious self-exaltation above Jehovah, amounting even to blasphemy. And yet he was only the staff of Jehovah, who could make use of him as He would.

Isaiah 10:12. And when He had made use of him as He would, He would throw him away. V. 12. "And it will come to pass, when the Lord shall have brought to an end all His work upon Mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, I will come to punish over the fruit of the pride of heart of the king of Asshur, and over the haughty look of his eyes." The "fruit" (*peri*) of the heart's pride of Asshur is his vainglorious blasphemy of Jehovah, in which his whole nature is comprehended, as the inward nature of the tree is in the fruit which hangs above in the midst of the branches; *tiph'ereh*, as in Zech. 12:7, the self-glorification which expresses itself in the lofty look of the eyes. Several constructives are here intentionally grouped together (Ges. § 114, 1), to express the great swelling of Asshur even to bursting. But Jehovah, before whom humility is the soul of all virtue, would visit this pride with punishment, when He should have completely cut off His work, i.e., when He should have thoroughly completed (*bizza'*, *absolvere*) His punitive work upon Jerusalem (*ma'aseh*, as in Isa. 28:21). The prep. *Beth* is used in the same sense as in Jer. 18:23, *agere cum aliquo*. It is evident that *ma'aseh* is not used to indicate the work of punishment and grace together, so that *yebazza'* could be taken as a literal future (as Schröring and Ewald suppose), but that it

denotes the work of punishment especially; and consequently *yebazza'* is to be taken as a *futurum exactum* (cf., Isa. 4:4), as we may clearly see from the choice of this word in Lam. 2:17 (cf., Zech. 4:9).

Isaiah 10:13, 14. When Jehovah had punished to such an extent that He could not go any further without destroying Israel,—a result which would be opposed to His mercy and truth,—His punishing would turn against the instrument of punishment, which would fall under the curse of all ungodly selfishness. Vv. 13, 14. "For he hath said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my own wisdom; for I am prudent: and I removed the bounds of the nations, and I plundered their stores, and threw down rulers like a bull. And my hand extracted the wealth of the nations like a nest: and as men sweep up forsaken eggs, have I swept the whole earth; there was none that moved the wing, and opened the mouth, and chirped." The futures may be taken most safely as regulated by the preterites, and used, like German imperfects, to express that which occurs not once merely, but several times. The second of these preterites, יָשַׁבְתִּי, is the only example of a *poel* of verbs הִלֵּךְ; possibly a mixed form from הִסֵּב (*poel* of הִסֵּב) and הִפֵּשׂ (*piel* of הִפֵּשׂ). The object to this, viz., 'athidoth (*chethib*) or 'athudoth (*keri*), is sometimes used in the sense of τὰ μέλλοντα; sometimes, as in this instance, in the sense of τὰ ὑπάρχοντα. According to the *keri*, the passage is to be rendered, "And I, a mighty one, threw down kings" (those sitting on thrones), *cabbir* being taken in the same sense as in Job 34:17, 24; 36:5. But the *chethib câ'abbîr* is to be preferred as more significant, and not to be rendered "as a hero" (to which the *Caph similitudinis* is so little suitable, that it would be necessary to take it, as in Isa. 13:6, as *Caph veritatis*), but "as a bull," 'abbîr as in Ps. 68:31; 22:13; 50:13. A bull, as the excavations show, was an emblem of royalty among the Assyrians. In v. 14, the more stringent *Vav conv.* is introduced before the third pers. fem. The Kingdoms of the nations are compared here to birds' nests, which the Assyrian took for

himself (*'âsaph*, as in Hab. 2:5); and their possessions to single eggs. The mother bird was away, so that there was not even a sign of resistance; and in the nest itself not one of the young birds moved a wing to defend itself, or opened its beak to scare the intruder away. Seb. Schmid has interpreted to correctly, *"nulla alam movet ad defendendum aut os aperit ad terrendum."* Thus proudly did Asshur look back upon its course of victory, and thus contemptuously did it look down upon the conquered kingdoms.

Isaiah 10:15. This self-exaltation was a foolish sin. V. 15. *"Dare the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or the saw magnify itself against him that useth it? As if a staff were to swing those that lift it up, as if a stick should lift up not-wood!"* "Not-wood" is to be taken as one word, as in Isa. 31:8. A stick is wood, and nothing more; in itself it is an absolutely motionless thing. A man is "not-wood," an incomparably higher, living being. As there must be "not-wood" to lay hold of wood, so, wherever a man performs extraordinary deeds, there is always a superhuman cause behind, viz., God Himself, who bears the same relation to the man as the man to the wood. The boasting of the Assyrian was like the bragging of an instrument, such as an axe, a saw, or a stick, against the person using it. The verb *hēnīph* is applied both to saw and stick, indicating the oscillating movements of a measured and more or less obvious character. The plural, "those that lift it up," points to the fact that by Him who lifts up the stock, Jehovah, the cause of all causes, and power of all powers, is intended.

Isaiah 10:16. There follows in the next verse the punishment provoked by such self-deification (cf., Hab. 1:11). V. 16. *"Therefore will the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send consumption against his fat men; and under Asshur's glory there burns a brand like a firebrand."* Three epithets are here employed to designate God according to His unlimited, all-controlling omnipotence: viz., *hâ'âdôn*, which is always used by Isaiah in connection with judicial and penal manifestations of power; and *adonâi*

zebâoth, a combination never met with again, similar to the one used in the Elohist Psalms, *Elohim zebaoth* (compare, on the other hand, Isa. 3:15; 10:23, 24). Even here a large number of codices and editions (Norzi's, for example) have the reading Jehovah Zebaoth, which is customary in other cases. *Râzôn* (Isa. 17:4) is one of the diseases mentioned in the catalogue of curses in Lev. 26:16 and Deut. 28:22. Galloping consumption comes like a destroying angel upon the great masses of flesh seen in the well-fed Assyrian magnates: *mishmannim* is used in a personal sense, as in Ps. 78:31. And under the glory of Asshur, i.e., its richly equipped army (*câbôd* as in Isa. 8:7), He who makes His angels flames of fire places fire so as to cause it to pass away in flames. In accordance with Isaiah's masterly art of painting in tones, the whole passage is so expressed, that we can hear the crackling, and spluttering, and hissing of the fire, as it seizes upon everything within its reach. This fire, whatever it may be so far as its natural and phenomenal character is concerned, is in its true essence the wrath of Jehovah.

Isaiah 10:17. *"And the light of Israel becomes a fire, and His Holy One a flame; and it sets on fire and devours its thistles and thorns on one day."* God is fire (Deut. 9:3), and light (1 John 1:5); and in His own self-life the former is resolved into the latter. *Kâdôsh* (holy) is here parallel to *'ôr* (light); for the fact that God is holy, and the fact that He is pure light, are essentially one and the same thing, whether *kâdash* meant originally to be pure or to be separate. The nature of all creatures, and of the whole *cosmos*, is a mixture of light and darkness. The nature of God alone is absolute light. But light is love. In this holy light of love He has given Himself up to Israel, and taken Israel to Himself. But He has also within Him a basis of fire, which sin excites against itself, and which was about to burst forth as a flaming fire of wrath against Asshur, on account of its sins against Him and His people. Before this fire of wrath, this destructive might of His penal righteousness, the splendid forces of Asshur were nothing but a mass of thistles and a bed of thorns (written

here in the reverse order peculiar to Isaiah, *shâmîr vâshaith*), equally inflammable, and equally deserving to be burned. To all appearance, it was a forest and a park, but it was irrecoverably lost.

Isaiah 10:18, 19. *“And the glory of his forest and his garden-ground will He destroy, even to soul and flesh, so that it is as when a sick man dieth. And the remnant of the trees of his forest can be numbered, and a boy could write them.”*

The army of Asshur, composed as it was of many and various nations, was a forest (*ya’ar*); and, boasting as it did of the beauty of both men and armour, a garden ground (*carmel*), a human forest and park. Hence the idea of “utterly” is expressed in the proverbial “even to soul and flesh,” which furnishes the occasion for a leap to the figure of the wasting away of a **חַיִּי** (*hap. leg.* the consumptive man, from *nâsas*, related to *nûsh*, *’ânash*, Syr. *n’sîso*, *n’shisho*, a sick man, based upon the radical notion of melting away, cf., *mâsas*, or of reeling to and fro, cf., *mût*, *nût*, Arab. *nâsa*, *nâta*). Only a single vital spark would still glimmer in the gigantic and splendid colossus, and with this its life would threaten to become entirely extinct. Or, what is the same thing, only a few trees of the forest, such as could be easily numbered (*mispâr* as in Deut. 33:6, cf., Isa. 21:17), would still remain, yea, so few, that a boy would be able to count and enter them. And this really came to pass. Only a small remnant of the army that marched against Jerusalem ever escaped. With this small remnant of an all-destroying power the prophet now contrasts the remnant of Israel, which is the seed of a new power that is about to arise.

Isaiah 10:20. *“And it will come to pass in that day, the remnant of Israel, and that which has escaped of the house of Jacob, will not continue to stay itself upon its chastiser, and will stay itself upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.”* Behind the judgment upon Asshur there lies the restoration of Israel. “The chastiser” was the Assyrian. While relying upon this, Israel received strokes, because Jehovah made Israel’s staff into its rod. But henceforth it would

sanctify the Holy One of Israel, putting its trust in Him and not in man, and that purely and truly (*be’emeth*, “in truth”), not with fickleness and hypocrisy. Then would be fulfilled the promise contained in the name Shear-yashub, after the fulfilment of the threat that it contained.

Isaiah 10:21. *“The remnant will turn, the remnant of Jacob, to God the mighty.”* *El gibbor* is God as historically manifested in the heir of David (Isa. 9:6). Whilst Hosea (Hos. 3:5) places side by side Jehovah and the second David, Isaiah sees them as one. In New Testament phraseology, it would be “to God in Christ.”

Isaiah 10:22, 23. To Him the remnant of Israel would turn, but only the remnant. Vv. 22, 23. *“For if thy people were even as the sea-sand, the remnant thereof will turn: destruction is firmly determined, flowing away righteousness. For the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, completes the finishing stroke and that which is firmly determined, within the whole land.”* As the words are not preceded by any negative clause, *ci ’im* are not combined in the sense of *sed* or *nisi*; but they belong to two sentences, and signify *nam si* (for if). If the number of the Israelites were the highest that had been promised, only the remnant among them, or of them (*bō* partitive, like the French *en*), would turn, or, as the nearer definition *ad Deum* is wanting here, come back to their right position. With regard to the great mass, destruction was irrevocably determined (*râchatz*, *τέμνειν*, then to resolve upon anything, *ἀποτόμως*, 1 Kings 20:40); and this destruction “overflowed with righteousness,” or rather “flowed on (*shôtēph*, as in Isa. 28:18) righteousness,” i.e., brought forth righteousness as it flowed onwards, so that it was like a swell of the penal righteousness of God (*shâtaph*, with the accusative, according to Ges. § 138, Anm. 2). That *cillâyōn* is not used here in the sense of completion any more than in Deut. 28:65, is evident from v. 23, where *câlâh* (fem. of *câleh*, that which vanishes, then the act of vanishing, the end) is used interchangeably with it, and *necherâtzâh* indicates judgment as a thing irrevocably decided (as in Isa. 28:22, and

borrowed from these passages in Dan. 9:27; 11:36). Such a judgment of extermination the almighty Judge had determined to carry fully out (*'ōseh* in the sense of a *fut. instans*) within all the land (*b'kereb*, within, not *b'thok*, in the midst of), that is to say, one that would embrace the whole land and all the people, and would destroy, if not every individual without exception, at any rate the great mass, except a very few.

Isaiah 10:24. In these esoteric addresses, whoever, it is not the prophet's intention to threaten and terrify, but to comfort and encourage. He therefore turns to that portion of the nation which needs and is susceptible of consolation, and draws this conclusion from the element of consolation contained in what has been already predicted, that they may be consoled.—V. 24. *"Therefore thus saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, My people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of Asshur, if it shall smite thee with the rod, and lift its stick against thee, in the manner of Egypt."* "Therefore:" *lacēn* never occurs in Hebrew in the sense of *attamen* (Gesenius and Hitzig), and this is not the meaning here, but *propterea*. The elevating appeal is founded upon what has just before been threatened in such terrible words, but at the same time contains an element of promise in the midst of the peremptory judgment. The very words in which the people are addressed, "My people that dwelleth on Zion," are indirectly encouraging. Zion was the site of the gracious presence of God, and of that sovereignty which had been declared imperishable. Those who dwelt there, and were the people of God (the servants of God), not only according to their calling, but also according to their internal character, were also heirs of the promise; and therefore, even if the Egyptian bondage should be renewed in the Assyrian, they might be assured of this to their consolation, that the redemption of Egypt would also be renewed. *"In the manner of Egypt:" b'derek Mitzraim*, lit., in the way, i.e., the Egyptians' mode of acting; *derek* denotes the course of active procedure, and also, as in v. 26

and Amos 4:10, the course of passive endurance.

Isaiah 10:25, 26. A still further reason is given for the elevating words, with a resumption of the grounds of consolation upon which they were founded. Vv. 25, 26. *"For yet a very little the indignation is past, and my wrath turns to destroy them: and Jehovah of hosts moves the whip over it, as He smote Midian at the rock of Oreb; and His staff stretches out over the sea, and He lifts it up in the manner of Egypt."* The expression "a very little" (as in Isa. 16:14; 29:17) does not date from the actual present, when the Assyrian oppressions had not yet begun, but from the ideal present, when they were threatening Israel with destruction. The indignation of Jehovah would then suddenly come to an end (*câlâh za'am*, borrowed in Dan. 11:36, and to be interpreted in accordance with Isa. 26:20); and the wrath of Jehovah would be, or go, *'al-tablithâm*. Luzzatto recommends the following emendation of the text, וַאֲפִי עַל-תִּבְיָל וַיִּתֵּן, "and my wrath against the world will cease," *tēbēl* being used, as in Isa. 14:17, with reference to the *oikoumenon* as enslaved by the imperial power. But the received text gives a better train of thought, if we connect it with v. 26. We must not be led astray, however, by the preposition *'al*, and take the words as meaning, My wrath (burneth) over the destruction inflicted by Asshur upon the people of God, or the destruction endured by the latter. It is to the destruction of the Assyrians that the wrath of Jehovah is now directed; *'al* being used, as it frequently is, to indicate the object upon which the eye is fixed, or to which the intention points (Ps. 32:8; 18:42). With this explanation v. 25b leads on to v. 26. The destruction of Asshur is predicted there in two figures drawn from occurrences in the olden time. The almighty Judge would swing the whip over Asshur (*'orer*, *agitare*, as in 2 Sam. 23:18), and smite it, as Midian was once smitten. The rock of Oreb is the place where the Ephraimites slew the Midianitish king 'Oreb (Judg. 7:25). His staff would then be over the sea, i.e., would be stretched out, like the wonder-working staff of

Moses, over the sea of affliction, into which the Assyrians had driven Israel (*yâm*, the sea, an emblem borrowed from the type; see Kohler on Zech. 10:11, cf., Ps. 66:6); and He would lift it up, commanding the waves of the sea, so that they would swallow Asshur. "In the manner of Egypt:" *b'derek Mitzraim* (according to Luzzatto in both instances, "on the way to Egypt," which restricts the Assyrian bondage in a most unhistorical manner to the time of the Egyptian campaign) signifies in v. 24, as the Egyptians lifted it up; but here, as it was lifted up above the Egyptians. The expression is intentionally conformed to that in v. 24: because Asshur had lifted up the rod over Israel in the Egyptian manner, Jehovah would lift it up over Asshur in the Egyptian manner also.

Isaiah 10:27. The yoke of the imperial power would then burst asunder. V. 27. "And it will come to pass in that day, its burden will remove from thy shoulder, and its yoke from thy neck; and the yoke will be destroyed from the pressure of the fat." We have here two figures: in the first (*cessabit onus ejus a cervice tua*) Israel is represented as a beast of burden; in the second (*et jugum ejus a collo tuo*), as a beast of draught. And this second figure is divided again into two fields. For *yâsûr* merely affirms that the yoke, like the burden, will be taken away from Israel; but *chubbal*, that the yoke itself will snap, from the pressure of his fat strong neck against it. Knobel, who alters the text, objects to this on the ground that the yoke was a cross piece of wood, and not a collar. And no doubt the simple yoke is a cross piece of wood, which is fastened to the forehead of the ox (generally of two oxen yoked together: *jumenta = jugmenta*, like *jugum*, from *jungere*); but the derivation of the name itself, 'ol, from 'âlal, points to the connection of the cross piece of wood with a collar, and here the yoke is expressly described as lying round the neck (and not merely fastened against the forehead). There is no necessity, therefore, to read *chebel* (*chablo*), as Knobel proposes; *chubbal* (Arabic *chubbila*) indicates her a *corrumpi* consequent upon a *disrumpi*. (On *p'nē*, vid., Job 41:5; and for the application of the term *mippenē* to energy manifesting itself in its

effects, compare Ps. 68:3 as an example.) Moreover, as Kimchi has observed, in most instances the yoke creates a wound in the fat flesh of the ox by pressure and friction; but here the very opposite occurs, and the fatness of the ox leads to the destruction of the yoke (compare the figure of grafting employed in Rom. 11:17, to which Paul gives a turn altogether contrary to nature). Salvation, as the double turn in the second figure affirms, comes no less from within (27*b*) than from without (27*a*). It is no less a consequence of the world-conquering grace at work in Isaiah, than a miracle wrought for Israel upon their foes. The prophet now proceeds to describe how the Assyrian army advances steadily towards Jerusalem, spreading terror on every hand, and how, when planted there like a towering forest, it falls to the ground before the irresistible might of Jehovah. Eichhorn and Hitzig pronounce this prophecy a *vaticinium post eventum*, because of its far too special character; but Knobel regards it as a prophecy, because no Assyrian king ever did take the course described; in other words, as a mere piece of imagination, as Ewald maintains. Now, no doubt the Assyrian army, when it marched against Jerusalem, came from the southwest, namely, from the road to Egypt, and not directly from the north. Sennacherib had conquered Lachish; he then encamped before Libnah, and it was thence that he advanced towards Jerusalem. But the prophet had no intention of giving a fragment out of the history of the war: all that he meant to do was to give a lively representation of the future fact, that after devastating the land of Judah, the Assyrian would attack Jerusalem. There is no necessity whatever to contend, as Drechsler does, against calling the description an ideal one. There is all the difference in the world between idea and imagination. Idea is the essential root of the real, and the reality is its historical form. This form, its essential manifestation, may be either this or that, so far as individual features are concerned, without any violation of its essential character. What the prophet here predicts has, when properly interpreted, been all literally

fulfilled. The Assyrian did come from the north with the storm-steps of a conqueror, and the cities named were really exposed to the dangers and terrors of war. And this was what the prophet depicted, looking as he did from a divine eminence, and drawing from the heart of the divine counsels, and then painting the future with colours which were but the broken lights of those counsels as they existed in his own mind.

Isaiah 10:28–32. Aesthetically considered, the description is one of the most magnificent that human poetry has ever produced. Vv. 28–32. *“He comes upon Ayyath, passes through Migron; in Michmash he leaves his baggage. They go through the pass: let Geba be our quarters for the night! Ramah trembles; Gibeah of Saul flees. Scream aloud, O daughter of Gallim! Only listen, O Laysha! Poor Anathoth! Madmenah hurries away; the inhabitants of Gebim rescue. He still halts in Nob today; swings his hand over the mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. Behold, the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, lops down the branches with terrific force; and those of towering growth are hewn down, and the lofty are humbled. And He fells the thickets of the forest with iron; and Lebanon, it falls by a Majestic One.”* When the Assyrian came upon Ayyath (= *Ayyah*, 1 Chron. 7:28 (?), Neh. 11:31, generally *hâ-’ai*, or *’Ai*), about thirty miles to the north-east of Jerusalem, he trod for the first time upon Benjaminitish territory, which was under the sway of Judaea. The name of this *’Ai*, which signifies “stone-heap,” tallies, as Knobel observes, with the name of the *Tell el-hagar*, which is situated about three-quarters of an hour to the south-east of *Beitîn*, i.e., Bethel. But there are tombs, reservoirs, and ruins to be seen about an hour to the south-east of Beitin; and these Robinson associates with *Ai*. From *Ai*, however, the army will not proceed towards Jerusalem by the ordinary route, viz., the great north road (or “Nablus road”); but, in order to surprise Jerusalem, it takes a different route, in which it will have to cross three deep and difficult valleys. From *Ai* they pass to Migron, the name of which has apparently been preserved in the ruins of *Burg Magrun*, situated

about eight minutes’ walk from Beitin. Michmash is still to be found in the form of a deserted village with ruins, under the name of *Muchmâs*, on the eastern side of the valley of Migron. Here they deposit their baggage (*hiphkid*, Jer. 36:20), so far as they are able to dispense with it,—either to leave it lying there, or to have it conveyed after them by an easier route. For they proceed thence through the pass of Michmash, a deep and precipitous ravine about forty-eight minutes in breadth, the present Wady Suweinit. “The pass” (*ma’bârâh*) is the defile of Michmash, with two prominent rocky cliffs, where Jonathan had his adventure with the garrison of the Philistines. One of these cliffs was called *Seneh* (1 Sam. 14:4), a name which suggests *es-Suweinit*. Through this defile they pass, encouraging one another, as they proceed along the difficult march, by the prospect of passing the night in Geba, which is close at hand. It is still disputed whether this Geba is the same place as the following Gibeah of Saul or not. There is at the present time a village called Geba’ below *Muchmâs*, situated upon an eminence. The almost universal opinion now is, that this is not Gibeah of Saul, but that the latter is to be seen in the prominent *Tell (Tuleil) el-Fûl*, which is situated farther south. This is possibly correct. For there can be no doubt that this mountain, the name of which signifies “Bean-hill,” would be a very strong position, and one very suitable for Gibeah of Saul; and the supposition that there were two places in Benjamin named *Geba*, *Gibeah*, or *Gibeath*, is favoured at any rate by Josh. 18:21–28, where *Geba* and *Gibeath* are distinguished from one another. And this mountain, which is situated to the south of *er-Râm*—that is to say, between the ancient Ramah and Anathoth—tallies very well with the route of the Assyrian as here described; whilst it is very improbable that Isaiah has designated the very same place first of all *Geba*, and then (for what reason no one can tell) Gibeah of Saul. We therefore adopt the view, that the Assyrian army took up its quarters for the night at Geba, which still bears this name, spreading terror in all directions, both east and west, and still more towards the

south. Starting in the morning from the deep valley between Michmash and Geba, they pass on one side of Rama (the present *er-Râm*), situated half an hour to the west of Geba, which trembles as it sees them go by; and the inhabitants of Gibeath of Saul, upon the “Bean-hill,” a height that commands the whole of the surrounding country, take to flight when they pass by. Every halting-place on their route brings them nearer to Jerusalem. The prophet goes in spirit through it all. It is so objectively real to him, that it produces the utmost anxiety and pain. The cities and villages of the district are lost.

He appeals to the daughter, i.e., the population, of Gallim, to raise a far-sounding yell of lamentation with their voice (Ges. § 138, 1, Anm. 3), and calls out in deep sympathy to Laysha, which was close by (on the two places, both of which have vanished now, see 1 Sam. 25:44 and Judg. 18:29), “only listen,” the enemy is coming nearer and nearer; and then for Anathoth (*Anâtâ*, still to be seen about an hour and a quarter to the north of Jerusalem) he utters this lamentation (taking the name as an omen of its fate): O poor Anathoth! There is no necessity for any alteration of the text; *'anniyâh* is an appeal, or rather an exclamation, as in Isa. 54:11; and *'anâthoth* follows, according to the same verbal order as in Isa. 23:12, unless indeed we take it at once as an adjective written before the noun,—an arrangement of the words which may possibly have been admissible in such interjectional sentences. The catastrophe so much to be dreaded by Jerusalem draws nearer and nearer. Madmenah (dung-hill, see *Comm. on Job*, at 9:11–15) flees in anxious haste: the inhabitants of Gebim (water-pits) carry off their possessions (יָרָעוּ, from יָרָע, to flee, related to *chush*, hence to carry off in flight, to bring in haste to a place of security, Ex. 9:19, cf., Jer. 4:6; 6:1; synonymous with *hēnīs*, Ex. 9:20, Judg. 6:11; different from *'âzaz*, to be firm, strong, defiant, from which *mâ'oz*, a fortress, is derived,—in distinction from the Arabic *ma'âdh*, a place of refuge: comp. Isa. 30:2, to flee to Pharaoh's shelter).

There are no traces left of either place. The passage is generally understood as implying that the army rested another day in Nob. But this would be altogether at variance with the design—to take Jerusalem by surprise by the suddenness of the destructive blow. We therefore render it, “Even to-day he will halt in Nob” (*in eo est ut subsistat*, Ges. § 132, Anm. 1),—namely, to gather up fresh strength there in front of the city which was doomed to destruction, and to arrange the plan of attack. The supposition that Nob was the village of *el-'Isawiye*, which is still inhabited, and lies to the south-west of *Anâta*, fifty-five minutes to the north of Jerusalem, is at variance with the situation, as correctly described by Jerome, when he says: “*Stans in oppidulo Nob et procul urbem conspiciens Jerusalem.*” A far more appropriate situation is to be found in the hill which rises to the north of Jerusalem, and which is called *Sadr*, from its breast-like projection or roundness,—a name which is related in meaning to *nob, nâb*, to rise (see *Gen.* p. 635). From this eminence the way leads down into the valley of Kidron; and as you descend, the city spreads out before you at a very little distance off. It may have been here, in the prophet's view, that the Assyrians halted. It was not long, however (as the *yenôphēph* which follows ἀσυνδέτως implies), before his hand was drawn out to strike (Isa. 11:15; 19:16), and swing over the mountain of the daughter of Zion (Isa. 16:1), over the city of the holy hill. But what would Jehovah do, who was the only One who could save His threatened dwelling-place in the face of such an army? As far as v. 32a, the prophet's address moved on at a hurried, stormy pace; it then halted, and seemed, as it were, panting with anxiety; it now breaks forth in a dactylic movement, like a long rolling thunder. The hostile army stands in front of Jerusalem, like a broad dense forest. But it is soon manifest that Jerusalem has a God who cannot be defied with impunity, and who will not leave His city in the lurch at the decisive moment, like the gods of Carchemish and Calno. Jehovah is the Lord, the God of both spiritual and starry hosts. He smites down the

branches of this forest of an army: *sē'ēph* is a so-called *piel privativum*, to lop (lit. to take the branches in hand; cf., *sikkēl*, Isa. 5:2); and *pu'rah* = *pe'urah* (in Ezekiel *pō'rah*) is used like the Latin *frons*, to include both branches and foliage,—in other words, the leafy branches as the ornament of the tree, or the branches as adorned with leaves. The instrument He employs is *ma'arâtzâh*, his terrifying and crushing power (compare the verb in Isa. 2:19, 21). And even the lofty trunks of the forest thus cleared of branches and leaves do not remain; they lie hewn down, and the lofty ones must fall. It is just the same with the trunks, i.e., the leaders, as with the branches and the foliage, i.e., with the great crowded masses. The whole of the forest thicket (as in Isa. 9:17) he hews down (*nikkaph*, third pers. *piel*, though it may also be *niphâl*); and Lebanon, i.e., the army of Asshur which is now standing opposite to Mount Zion, like Lebanon with its forest of cedars, falls down through a Majestic One (*'addîr*), i.e., through Jehovah (Isa. 33:21, cf., Ps. 76:5; 93:4). In the account of the fulfilment (Isa. 37:36) it is the angel of the Lord (*mal'ach Jehovah*), who is represented as destroying the hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp in a single night. The angel of Jehovah is not a messenger of God sent from afar, but the chosen organ of the ever-present divine power.

Isaiah 11

Isaiah 11:1. This is the fate of the imperial power of the world. When the axe is laid to it, it falls without hope. But in Israel spring is returning. Ch. 11:1. "*And there cometh forth a twig out of the stump of Jesse, and a shoot from its roots bringeth forth fruit.*" The world-power resembles the cedar-forest of Lebanon; the house of David, on the other hand, because of its apostasy, is like the stump of a felled tree (*geza'*, *truncus*, from *gâza'*, *truncare*), like a root without stem, branches, or crown. The world-kingdom, at the height of its power, presents the most striking contrast to Israel and the house of David in the uttermost depth announced in Isa. 6 *fin.*, mutilated and reduced

to the lowliness of its Bethlehemish origin. But whereas the Lebanon of the imperial power is thrown down, to remain prostrate; the house of David renews its youth. And whilst the former has no sooner reached the summit of its glory, than it is suddenly cast down; the latter, having been reduced to the utmost danger of destruction, is suddenly exalted. What Pliny says of certain trees, "*inarescunt rursusque adolescent, senescunt quidem, sed e radicibus repullulant,*" is fulfilled in the tree of Davidic royalty, that has its roots in Jesse (for the figure itself, see F. v. Lasaulx, *Philosophie der Geschichte*, pp. 117–119). Out of the stumps of Jesse, i.e., out of the remnant of the chosen royal family which has sunk down to the insignificance of the house from which it sprang, there comes forth a twig (*choter*), which promises to supply the place of the trunk and crown; and down below, in the roots covered with earth, and only rising a little above it, there shows itself a *nētzer*, i.e., a fresh green shoot (from *nâtzēr*, to shine or blossom). In the historical account of the fulfilment, even the ring of the words of the prophecy is noticed: the *nētzer*, at first so humble and insignificant, was a poor despised *Nazarene* (Matt. 2:23). But the expression *yiphreh* shows at once that it will not stop at this lowliness of origin. The shoot will bring forth fruit (*pârâh*, different in meaning, and possibly also in root, from *pârach*, to blossom and bud). In the humble beginning there lies a power which will carry it up to a great height by a steady and certain process (Ezek. 17:22, 23). The twig which is shooting up on the ground will become a tree, and this tree will have a crown laden with fruit.

Consequently the state of humiliation will be followed by one of exaltation and perfection.

Isaiah 11:2. Jehovah acknowledges Him, and consecrates and equips Him for His great work with the seven spirits. V. 2. "*And the Spirit of Jehovah descends upon Him, spirit of wisdom and understanding, spirit of counsel and might, spirit of knowledge and fear of Jehovah.*" "The Spirit of Jehovah" (*ruach Yehovah*) is the Divine Spirit, as the communicative vehicle of the whole creative fulness of divine powers. Then follow

the six spirits, comprehended by the *ruach Jehovah* in three pairs, of which the first relates to the intellectual life, the second to the practical life, and the third to the direct relation to God. For *chocmâh* (wisdom) is the power of discerning the nature of things through the appearance, and *bînâh* (understanding) the power of discerning the differences of things in their appearance; the former is σοφία, the latter διάκρισις or σύνεσις. "Counsel" (*'etzâh*) is the gift of forming right conclusions, and "might" (*gebûrâh*) the ability to carry them out with energy. "The knowledge of Jehovah" (*da'ath Jehovah*) is knowledge founded upon the fellowship of love; and "the fear of Jehovah" (*yir'ath Jehovah*), fear absorbed in reverence. There are seven spirits, which are enumerated in order from the highest downwards; since the spirit of the fear of Jehovah is the basis of the whole (Prov. 1:7; Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10), and the Spirit of Jehovah is the heart of all. It corresponds to the shaft of the seven-lighted candlestick, and the three pair of arms that proceeded from it. In these seven forms the Holy Spirit descended upon the second David for a permanent possession, as is affirmed in the *perf. consec.* הַנְּחִי (with the tone upon the ultimate, on account of the following guttural, to prevent its being pronounced unintelligibly; *nuach* like καταβαίνειν καὶ μένειν, John 1:32, 33). The seven torches before the throne of God (Rev. 4:5, cf., 1:4) burn and give light in His soul. The seven spirits are His seven eyes (Rev. 5:6).

Isaiah 11:3. And His regal conduct is regulated by this His thoroughly spiritual nature. V. 3. "And fear of Jehovah is fragrance to Him; and He judges not according to outward sight, neither does He pass sentence according to outward hearing." We must not render it: His smelling is the smelling of the fear of God, i.e., the penetration of it with a keen judicial insight (as Hengstenberg and Umbreit understand it); for *hērīach* with the preposition *Beth* has not merely the signification to smell (as when followed by an accusative, Job 39:25), but to smell with satisfaction (like רָחַף, to see with

satisfaction), Ex. 30:38, Lev. 26:31, Amos 5:21. The fear of God is that which He smells with satisfaction; it is *rēach nīchoach* to Him. Meier's objection, that fear of God is not a thing that can be smelt, and therefore that *hērīach* must signify to breathe, is a trivial one. Just as the outward man has five senses for the material world, the inner man has also a sensorium for the spiritual world, which discerns different things in different ways. Thus the second David scents the fear of God, and only the fear of God, as a pleasant fragrance; for the fear of God is a sacrifice of adoration continually ascending to God. His favour or displeasure does not depend upon brilliant or repulsive external qualities; He does not judge according to outward appearances, but according to the relation of the heart to His God.

Isaiah 11:4, 5. This is the standard according to which He will judge when saving, and judge when punishing. Vv. 4, 5. "And judges the poor with righteousness, and passes sentence with equity for the humble in the land; and smites the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He slays the wicked. And righteousness is the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His hips." The main feature in v. 4 is to be seen in the objective ideas. He will do justice to the *dallim*, the weak and helpless, by adopting an incorruptibly righteous course towards their oppressors, and decide with straightforwardness for the humble or meek of the land: *'ânâv*, like *'ânî*, from *'ânâh*, to bend, the latter denoting a person bowed down by misfortune, the former a person inwardly bowed down, i.e., from all self-conceit (*hōcīach l'*, as in Job 16:21). The poor and humble, or meek, are the peculiar objects of His royal care; just as it was really to them that the first beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount applied. But "the earth" and "the wicked" (the latter is not to be understood collectively, but, as in several passages in the Old Testament, viz., Ps. 68:22; 110:6, Hab. 3:13, 14, as pointing forward prophetically to an eschatological person, in whom hostility towards Jehovah and His Anointed culminates most satanically) will experience the full force of His penal

righteousness. The very word of His mouth is a rod which shatters in pieces (Ps. 2:9; Rev. 1:16); and the breath of His lips is sufficient to destroy, without standing in need of any further means (2 Thess. 2:8). As the girdle upon the hips (*mothnaim*, LXX τὴν ὀσφύν), and in front upon the loins (*chālāzaim*, LXX τὰς πλευράς), fastens the clothes together, so all the qualities and active powers of His person have for their band *tzedâkâh*, which follows the inviolable norm of the divine will, and *hâ'emûnâh*, which holds immovably to the course divinely appointed, according to promise (Isa. 25:1). Special prominence is given by the article to *'emûnâh*; He is the faithful and true witness (Rev. 1:5; 3:14). Consequently with Him there commences a new epoch, in which the Son of David and His righteousness acquire a world-subduing force, and find their home in a humanity that has sprung, like Himself, out of deep humiliation.

Isaiah 11:6–9. The fruit of righteousness is peace, which now reigns in humanity under the rule of the Prince of Peace, and even in the animal world, with nothing whatever to disturb it. Vv. 6–9. *“And the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies down with the kid; and calf and lion and stalled ox together: a little boy drives them. And cow and bear go to the pasture; their young ones lie down together: and the lion eats shopped straw like the ox. And the suckling plays by the hole of the adder, and the weaned child stretches its hand to the pupil of the basilisk-viper. They will not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the land is filled with knowledge of Jehovah, like the waters covering the sea.”* The fathers, and such commentators as Luther, Calvin, and Vitranga, have taken all these figures from the animal world as symbolical. Modern rationalists, on the other hand, understand them literally, but regard the whole as a beautiful dream and wish. It is a prophecy, however, the realization of which is to be expected on this side of the boundary between time and eternity, and, as Paul has shown in Rom. 8, is an integral link in the predestined course of the history of salvation (Hengstenberg, Umbreit, Hofmann, Drechsler).

There now reign among irrational creatures, from the greatest to the least,—even among such as are invisible,—fierce conflicts and bloodthirstiness of the most savage kind. But when the Son of David enters upon the full possession of His royal inheritance, the peace of paradise will be renewed, and all that is true in the popular legends of the golden age be realized and confirmed. This is what the prophet depicts in such lovely colours. The wolf and lamb, those two hereditary foes, will be perfectly reconciled then. The leopard will let the teasing kid lie down beside it. The lion, between the calf and stalled ox, neither seizes upon its weaker neighbour, nor longs for the fatter one. Cow and bear graze together, whilst their young ones lie side beside in the pasture. The lion no longer thirsts for blood, but contents itself, like the ox, with chopped straw. The suckling pursues its sport (*pilpel* of פִּלְפֵל, *mulcere*) by the adder’s hole, and the child just weaned stretches out its hand boldly and fearlessly to *me'ûrath tziph'ōni*. It is evident from Jer. 8:17 that *tziph'ōni* is the name of a species of snake. According to Aquila and the Vulgate, it is *basiliskos, serpens regulus*, possibly from *tzaph*, to pipe or hiss (Ges., Fürst); for Isidorus, in his *Orig.* xii. 4, says, *Sibilus idem est qui et regulus; sibilo enim occidit, antequam mordeat vel exurat*. For the *hapax leg. hâdâh*, the meaning *dirigere, tendere*, is established by the Arabic; but there is all the more uncertainty about the meaning of the *hap. leg.* מאור.

According to the parallel חַר, it seems to signify the hollow (Syr., Vulg., LXX, κοίτη): whether from אור = עור, from which comes מְעָרָה; or from אור, the light-hole (like מְאֹר, which occurs in the Mishna, *Ohaloth* xiii. 1) or opening where a cavern opens to the light of day. It is probable, however, that *me'ûrâh* refers to something that exerts an attractive influence upon the child, either the “blending of colours” (Saad. renders *tziph'oni, errakas'*, the motley snake), or better still, the “pupil of the eye” (Targum), taking the word as a feminine of *mâ'ôr*, the light of the eye (*b. Erubin* 55b - the power of vision). The look

of a snake, more especially of the basilisk (not merely the basilisk-lizard, but also the basilisk-viper), was supposed to have a paralyzing and bewitching influence; but now the snake will lose this pernicious power (Isa. 65:25), and the basilisk become so tame and harmless, as to let children handle its sparkling eyes as if they were jewels. All this, as we should say with Luthardt and Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, 567), is only colouring which the hand of the prophet employs, for the purpose of painting the peace of that glorified state which surpasses all possibility of description; and it is unquestionably necessary to take the thought of the promise in a spiritual sense, without adhering literally to the medium employed in expressing it. But, on the other hand, we must guard against treating the description itself as merely a drapery thrown around the actual object; whereas it is rather the refraction of the object in the mind of the prophet himself, and therefore a manifestation of the true nature of that which he actually saw.

But are the animals to be taken as the subject in v. 9 also? The subject that most naturally suggests itself is undoubtedly the animals, of which a few that are alarming and destructive to men have been mentioned just before. And the fact that they really are thought of as the subject, is confirmed by Isa. 65:25, where Isa. 11:6-9a is repeated in a compendious form. The idea that יִרְעוּ requires men as the subject, is refuted by the common הִיָּה רָעָה (compare the parallel promise in Ezek. 34:25, which rests upon Hos. 2:20). That the term *yashchithu* can be applied to animals, is evident from Jer. 2:30, and may be assumed as a matter of course. But if the animals are the subject, *har kodshi* (my holy mountain) is not Zion-Moriah, upon which wild beasts never made their home in historical times; but, as the generalizing *col* (all) clearly shows, the whole of the holy mountain-land of Israel: *har kodshi* has just this meaning in Isa. 57:13 (cf., Ps. 78:54, Ex. 15:17). The fact that peace prevails in the animal world, and also peace between man and beast, is then attributed to the universal prevalence of the

knowledge of God, in consequence of which that destructive hostility between the animal world and man, by which estrangement and apostasy from God were so often punished (2 Kings 17:25; Ezek. 14:15, etc.: see also Isa. 7:24), have entirely come to an end. The meaning of "the earth" is also determined by that of "all my holy mountain." The *land of Israel*, the dominion of the Son of David in the more restricted sense, will be from this time forward the paradisaical centre, as it were, of the whole earth,—a prelude of its future state of perfect and universal glorification (Isa. 6:3, "all the earth"). It has now become full of "the knowledge of Jehovah," i.e., of that experimental knowledge which consists in the fellowship of love (רַדַּע, like לִדָּע, is a secondary form of רַדַּע, the more common infinitive or verbal noun from יָדַע: Ges. § 133, 1), like the waters which cover the sea, i.e., bottom of the sea (compare Hab. 2:14, where *lâda'ath* is a virtual accusative, full of that which is to be known). "*Cover:*" *cissâh l'* (like *sâcac l'*, Ps. 91:4), signifies to afford a covering to another; the *Lamed* is frequently introduced with a participle (in Arabic regularly) as a sign of the object (Ewald, § 292, e), and the omission of the article in the case of *mecassim* is a natural consequence of the inverted order of the words.

Isaiah 11:10. The prophet has now described, in vv. 1-5, the righteous conduct of the Son of David, and in vv. 6-9 the peace which prevails under His government, and extends even to the animal world, and which is consequent upon the living knowledge of God that has now become universal, that is to say, of the spiritual transformation of the people subject to His sway,—an allusion full of enigmas, but one which is more clearly expounded in the following verse, both in its direct contents and also in all that it presupposes. V. 10. "*And it will come to pass in that day: the root-sprout of Jesse, which stands as a banner of the peoples, for it will nations ask, and its place of rest is glory.*" The first question which is disposed of here, has reference to the apparent restriction thus far of all the blessings of this peaceful rule to Israel

and the land of Israel. This restriction, as we now learn, is not for its own sake, but is simply the means of an unlimited extension of this fulness of blessing. The proud tree of the Davidic sovereignty is hewn down, and nothing is left except the root. The new David is *shoresh Yishai* (the root-sprout of Jesse), and therefore in a certain sense the root itself, because the latter would long ago have perished if it had not borne within itself from the very commencement Him who was now about to issue from it. But when He who had been concealed in the root of Jesse as its sap and strength should have become the rejuvenated root of Jesse itself (cf., Rev. 22:16), He would be exalted from this lowly beginning *l'nēs 'ammin*, into a banner summoning the nations to assemble, and uniting them around itself. Thus visible to all the world, He would attract the attention of the heathen to Himself, and they would turn to Him with zeal, and His *menuchâh*, i.e., the place where He had settled down to live and reign (for the word in this local sense, compare Num. 10:33 and Ps. 132:8, 14), would be glory, i.e., the dwelling-place and palace of a king whose light shines over all, who has all beneath His rule, and who gathers all nations around Himself. The Vulgate renders it "*et sepulcrum ejus gloriosum*" (a leading passage for encouraging pilgrimages), but the passion is here entirely swallowed up by the splendour of the figure of royalty; and *menuchah* is no more the place of rest in the grave than *nēs* is the cross, although undoubtedly the cross has become the banner in the actual fulfilment, which divides the *parousia* of Christ into a first and second coming.

Isaiah 11:11, 12. A second question also concerns Israel. The nation out of which and for which this king will primarily arise, will before that time be scattered far away from its native land, in accordance with the revelation in Isa. 6. How, then, will it be possible for Him to reign in the midst of it?—Vv. 11, 12. "*And it will come to pass in that day, the Lord will stretch out His hand again a second time to redeem the remnant of His people that shall be left, out of Asshur, and out of Egypt, and out of Pathros, and out of*

Ethiopia, and out of 'Elam, and out of Shinar, and out of Hamath, and out of the islands of the sea. And he raises a banner for the nations, and fetches home the outcasts of Israel; and the dispersed of Judah will He assemble from the four borders of the earth." Asshur and Egypt stand here in front, and side by side, as the two great powers of the time of Isaiah (cf., Isa. 7:18–20). As appendices to Egypt, we have (1) *Pathros*, hierogl. *to-rēs*, and with the article *petorēs*, the southland, i.e., Upper Egypt, so that Mizraim in the stricter sense is Lower Egypt (see, on the other hand, Jer. 44:15); and (2) *Cush*, the land which lies still farther south than Upper Egypt on both sides of the Arabian Gulf; and as appendices to Asshur, (1) *'Elam*, i.e., Elymais, in southern Media, to the east of the Tigris; and (2) *Shinar*, the plain to the south of the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris. Then follow the Syrian *Hamath* at the northern foot of the Lebanon; and lastly, "*the islands of the sea,*" i.e., the islands and coast-land of the Mediterranean, together with the whole of the insular continent of Europe. There was no such *diaspora* of Israel at the time when the prophet uttered this prediction, nor indeed even after the dissolution of the northern kingdom; so that the specification is not historical, but prophetic. The redemption which the prophet here foretells is a second, to be followed by no third; consequently the banishment out of which Israel is redeemed is the ultimate form of that which is threatened in Isa. 6:12 (cf., Deut. 30:1ff.). It is the second redemption, the counterpart of the Egyptian. He will then stretch out His hand again (*yōsiph*, supply *lishloach*); and as He once delivered Israel out of Egypt, so will He now redeem it—purchase it back (*kânâh*, opp. *mâcar*) out of all the countries named. The *min* attached to the names of the countries is to be construed with *liknōth*. Observe how, in the prophet's view, the conversion of the heathen becomes the means of the redemption of Israel. The course which the history of salvation has taken since the first coming of Christ, and which is will continue to take to the end, as described by Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, is distinctly indicated by

the prophet. At the word of Jehovah the heathen will set His people free, and even escort them (Isa. 49:22; 62:10); and thus He will gather again (*'âsaph*, with reference to the one gathering point; *kibbêtz*, with reference to the dispersion of those who are to be gathered together) from the utmost ends of the four quarters of the globe, "the outcasts of the kingdom of Israel, and the dispersed of the kingdom of Judah" (*nidchê Yisrâel ûnephutzôth Yehūdâh*: *nidchê* = *niddechê*, with the *dagesh* dropped before the following guttural), both men and women.

Isaiah 11:13. But this calls to mind the present rent in the unity of the nation; and the third question very naturally arises, whether this rent will continue. The answer to this is given in v. 13: "*And the jealousy of Ephraim is removed, and the adversaries of Judah are cut off; Ephraim will not show jealousy towards Judah, and Judah will not oppose Ephraim.*" As the suffix and genitive after *tzôrêr* are objective in every other instance (e.g., Amos 5:12), *tzorrê Yehudâh* must mean, not those members of Judah who are hostile to Ephraim, as Ewald, Knobel, and others suppose, but those members of Ephraim who are hostile to Judah, as Umbreit and Schegg expound it. In v. 13a the prophet has chiefly in his mind the old feeling of enmity cherished by the northern tribes, more especially those of Joseph, towards the tribe of Judah, which issued eventually in the division of the kingdom. It is only in v. 13b that he predicts the termination of the hostility of Judah towards Ephraim. The people, when thus brought home again, would form one fraternally united nation, whilst all who broke the peace of this unity would be exposed to the immediate judgment of God (*yiccârêthu*, will be cut off).

Isaiah 11:14. A fourth question has reference to the relation between this Israel of the future and the surrounding nations, such as the warlike Philistines, the predatory nomad tribes of the East, the unbrotherly Edomites, the boasting Moabites, and the cruel Ammonites. Will they not disturb and weaken the new Israel, as they did the old? V. 14. "*And they fly upon the shoulder of the Philistines seawards;*

unitedly they plunder the sons of the East: they seize upon Edom and Moab, and the sons of Ammon are subject to them." *Câthêph* (shoulder) was the peculiar name of the coast-land of Philistia which sloped off towards the sea (Josh. 15:11); but here it is used with an implied allusion to this, to signify the shoulder of the Philistian nation (*bcâthêph* = *bcêthêph*; for the cause see at Isa. 5:2), upon which Israel plunges down like an eagle from the height of its mountain-land. The "object of the stretching out of their hand" is equivalent to the object of their grasp. And whenever any one of the surrounding nations mentioned should attack Israel, the whole people would make common cause, and act together. How does this warlike prospect square, however, with the previous promise of paradisaical peace, and the end of all warfare which this promise presupposes (cf., Isa. 2:4)? This is a contradiction, the solution of which is to be found in the fact that we have only figures here, and figures drawn from the existing relations and warlike engagements of the nation, in which the prophet pictures that supremacy of the future united Israel over surrounding nations, which is to be maintained by spiritual weapons.

Isaiah 11:15, 16. He dwells still longer upon the miracles in which the antitypical redemption will resemble the typical one. Vv., 15, 16. "*And Jehovah pronounces the ban upon the sea-tongue of Egypt, and swings His hand over the Euphrates in the glow of His breath, and smites it into seven brooks, and makes it so that men go through in shoes. And there will be a road for the remnant of His people that shall be left, out of Asshur, as it was for Israel in the day of its departure out of the land of Egypt.*" The two countries of the diaspora mentioned first are Asshur and Egypt. And Jehovah makes a way by His miraculous power for those who are returning out of both and across both. The sea-tongue of Egypt, which runs between Egypt and Arabia, i.e., the Red Sea (*sinus Heroopolitanus*, according to another figure), He smites with the ban (*hecherim*, corresponding in meaning to the pouring out of the vial of wrath in Rev. 16:12, —a stronger term than *gâ'ar*, e.g., Ps. 106:9);

and the consequence of this is, that it affords a dry passage to those who are coming back (though without there being any necessity to read *hecherīb*, or to follow Meier and Knobel, who combine *hecherīm* with *chârūm*, Lev. 21:18, in the precarious sense of splitting). And in order that the dividing of Jordan may have its antitype also, Jehovah swings His hand over the Euphrates, to smite, breathing upon it at the same time with burning breath, so that it is split up into seven shallow brooks, through which men can walk in sandals. עֲצָבָה stands, according to the law of sound, for עֲצָבָה; and the ἀπ. λεγ. עֲצָבָה (with a fixed *kametz*), from עוֹם = חוֹם, חֶמֶם, to glow, signifies a glowing heat,—a meaning which is also so thoroughly supported by the two Arabic verbs *med. Ye 'lm* and *glm* (*inf. 'aim, gaim*, internal heat, burning thirst, also violent anger), that there is no need whatever for the conjecture of Luzzatto and Gesenius, עֲצָבָה. The early translators (e.g., LXX πνεύματι βιάϊω, Syr. *buchdono*, with a display of might) merely give conjectural renderings of the word, which had become obsolete before their time; Saadia, however, renders it with etymological correctness *suchûn*, from *sachana*, to be hot, or set on fire. Thus, by changing the Euphrates in the (parching) heat of His breath into seven shallow wadys, Jehovah makes a free course for His people who come out of Asshur, etc. This was the idea which presented itself to the prophet in just this shape, though it by no means followed that it must necessarily embody itself in history in this particular form.

Isaiah 12

Isaiah 12:1, 2. As Israel, when redeemed from Egypt beyond the Red Sea, sang songs of praise, so also will the Israel of the second redemption, when brought, in a no less miraculous manner, across the Red Sea and the Euphrates. Ch. 12:1, 2. *“And in that day thou wilt say, I thank Thee, O Jehovah, that Thou wast angry with me: | Thine anger is turned away, and Thou hast comforted me. | Behold, the God of my salvation; | I trust, and am not afraid: | for Jah Jehovah is my pride*

and song, | and He became my salvation.” The words are addressed to the people of the future in the people of the prophet’s own time. They give thanks for the wrath experienced, inasmuch as it was followed by all the richer consolation. The formation of the sentence after כִּי is paratactic; the principal tone falls upon *1b*, where *yâshōb* is written poetically for *vayyâshob* (cf., Deut. 32:8, 18; Ps. 18:12; Hos. 6:1). We hear the notes of Ps. 90:13; 27:1, resounding here; whilst v. 2*b* is the echo of Ex. 15:2 (on which Ps. 118:14 is also founded). עֲצָבָה (to be read *'ozzi*, and therefore also written עֲצָבָה) is another form of עֲצָבָה, and is used here to signify the proud self-consciousness associated with the possession of power: pride, and the expression of it, viz., boasting. *Zimrath* is equivalent in sense, and probably also in form, to *zimrâthi*, just as in Syriac *zmori* (my song) is regularly pronounced *zmôr*, with the *i* of the suffix dropped (see Hupfeld on Ps. 16:6). It is also possible, however, that it may be only an expansion of the primary form *zimrath* = *zimrâh*, and therefore that *zimrath* is only synonymous with *zimrâthi*, as *chêphetz* in 2 Sam. 23:5 is with *chephtzi*. One thing peculiar to this echo of Ex. 15:2 is the doubling of the *Jah* in *Jâh Jehōvâh*, which answers to the surpassing of the type by the antitype.

Isaiah 12:3–6. V. 3, again, contains a prophetic promise, which points back to the commencement of v. 1: *“And with rapture ye will draw water out of the wells of salvation.”* Just as Israel was miraculously supplied with water in the desert, so will the God of salvation, who has become your salvation, open many and manifold sources of salvation for you (מַעְיָיִן as it is pointed here, instead of מַעְיָיִן), from which ye may draw with and according to your heart’s delight. This water of salvation, then, forms both the material for, and instigation to, new songs of praise; and vv. 4–6 therefore continue in the strain of a psalm: *“And ye will say in that day, Praise Jehovah, proclaim His name, | make known His doings among the nations, | boast that His name is exalted. | Harp to Jehovah; for*

ISAIAH	Page 145
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

He has displayed majesty: | let this be known in all lands. | Shout and be jubilant, O inhabitants of Zion: | for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." The first song of six lines is here followed by a second of seven lines: a prophetic word of promise, inserted between them, separates the one from the other. This second also commences with the well-known tones of a psalm (compare especially Ps. 105:1, 1 Chron. 16:8). The phrase, "Call upon the name of Jehovah," signifies, Make the name of Jehovah the medium of invocation (Ges. § 138, Anm. 3*), i.e., invoke it, or, as here, call it out. *Gē'ūth* is high, towering dignity; here it is used of God, as in Isa. 26:10, with *'āsāh*: to prove it practically, just as with *lābēsh* in Ps. 93:1, to show one's self openly therein. Instead of the *Chethib* *meyudda'ath* in v. 5, the *keri* substitutes the *hophal* form *mūda'ath*, probably because *meyuddā'*, according to the standing usage of speech, denotes one well known, or intimate; the passive of the *hophal* is certainly the more suitable. According to the preceding appeals, the words are to be understood as expressing a desire, that the glorious self-attestation of the God of salvation might be brought to the consciousness of the whole of the inhabitants of the earth, i.e., of all mankind. When God redeems His people, He has the salvation of all the nations in view. It is the knowledge of the Holy One of Israel, made known through the word of proclamation, that brings salvation to them all. How well may the church on Zion rejoice, to have such a God dwelling in the midst of it! He is great as the giver or promises, and great in fulfilling them; great in grace, and great in judgment; great in all His saving acts which spread from Israel to all mankind. Thus does this second psalm of the redeemed nation close, and with it the book of Immanuel.

Part III

Collection of Oracles Concerning the Heathen— Ch. 13–23

Isaiah 13

Oracle Concerning the Chaldeans, the Heirs of the Assyrians—Ch. 13:1–14:27

Isaiah 13–23. Just as in Jeremiah (Jer. 46–51) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 25–32), so also in Isaiah, the oracles concerning the heathen are all placed together. In this respect the arrangement of the three great books of prophecy is perfectly homogeneous. In Jeremiah these oracles, apart from the prelude in Jer. 25, form the concluding portion of the book. In Ezekiel they fill up that space of time, when Jerusalem at home was lying at her last gasp and the prophet was sitting speechless by the Chaboras. And here, in Isaiah, the compensate us for the interruption which the oral labours of the prophet appears to have sustained in the closing years of the reign of Ahaz. Moreover, this was their most suitable position, at the end of the cycle of Messianic prophecies in Isa. 7–12; for the great consolatory thought of the prophecy of Immanuel, that all kingdoms are to become the kingdoms of God and His Christ, is here expanded. And as the prophecy of Immanuel was delivered on the threshold of the times of the great empires, so as to cover the whole of that period with its consolation, the oracles concerning the heathen nations and kingdoms are inseparably connected with that prophecy, which forms the ground and end, the unity and substance, of them all.

Isaiah 13:1. The heading in Isa. 13:1, "*Oracle concerning Babel, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see,*" shows that Isa. 13 forms the commencement of another part of the whole book. *Massâh* (from אַשָּׁף, *efferre*, then *effari*, Ex. 20:7) signifies, as we may see from 2 Kings 9:25, *effatum*, the verdict or oracle, more especially the verdict of God, and generally, perhaps always, the judicial sentence of God, though without introducing the idea of *onus* (burden), which is the rendering adopted by

the Targum, Syriac, Vulgate, and Luther, notwithstanding the fact that, according to Jer. 23:33ff., it was the scoffers who associated this idea with the word. In a book which could throughout be traced to Isaiah, there could be no necessity for it to be particularly stated, that it was to Isaiah that the oracle was revealed, of which Babel was the object. We may therefore see from this, that the prophecy relating to Babylon was originally complete in itself, and was intended to be issued in that form. But when the whole book was compiled, these headings were retained as signal-posts of the separate portions of which it was composed. Moreover, in the case before us, the retention of the heading may be regarded as a providential arrangement. For if this "oracle of Babel" lay before us in a separate form, and without the name of Isaiah, we should not dare to attribute it to him, for the simple reason that the overthrow of the Chaldean empire is here distinctly announced, and that at a time when the Assyrian empire was still standing. For this reason the majority of critics, from the time of Rosenmüller and Justi downwards, have regarded the spuriousness of the prophecy as an established fact. But the evidence which can be adduced in support of the testimony contained in the heading is far too strong for it to be set aside: viz., (1) the descriptive style as well as the whole stamp of the prophecy, which resembles the undisputed prophecies of Isaiah in a greater variety of points than any passage that can be selected from any other prophet. We will show this briefly, but yet amply, and as far as the nature of an exposition allows, against Knobel and others who maintain the opposite. And (2) the dependent relation of Zephaniah and Jeremiah,—a relation which the generally admitted muse-like character of the former, and the imitative character of the latter, render it impossible to invert. Both prophets show that they are acquainted with this prophecy of Isaiah, as indeed they are with all those prophecies which are set down as spurious. Stähelin, in his work on the Messianic prophecies (Excursus iv.), has endeavoured to make out that the derivative passages in

question are the original passages; but *stat pro ratione voluntas*. Now, as the testimony of the heading is sustained by such evidence as this, the one argument adduced on the other side, that the prophecy has no historical footing in the circumstances of Isaiah's times, cannot prove anything at all. No doubt all prophecy rested upon an existing historical basis. But we must not expect to be able to point this out in the case of every single prophecy. In the time of Hezekiah, as Isa. 39 clearly shows (compare Mic. 4:10), Isaiah had become spiritually certain of this, that the power by which the final judgment would be inflicted upon Judah would not be Asshur, but *Babel*, i.e., an empire which would have for its centre that Babylon, which was already the second capital of the Assyrian empire and the seat of kings who, though dependent then, were striving hard for independence; in other words, a Chaldean empire. Towards the end of his course Isaiah was full of this prophetic thought; and from it he rose higher and higher to the consoling discovery that Jehovah would avenge His people upon Babel, and redeem them from Babel, just as surely as from Asshur. The fact that so far-reaching an insight was granted to him into the counsels of God, was not merely founded on his own personality, but rested chiefly on the position which he occupied in the midst of the first beginnings of the age of great empires. Consequently, according to the law of the creative intensity of all divinely effected beginnings, he surveyed the whole of this long period as a universal prophet outstripped all his successors down to the time of Daniel, and left to succeeding ages not only such prophecies as those we have already read, which had their basis in the history of his own times and the historical fulfilment of which was not sealed up, but such far distant and sealed prophecies as those which immediately follow. For since Isaiah did not appear in public again after the fifteenth year of Hezekiah, the future, as his book clearly shows, was from that time forth his true home. Just as the apostle says of the New Testament believer, that he must separate himself from the world, and walk in heaven, so

the Old Testament prophet separated himself from the present of his own nation, and lived and moved in its future alone.

Isaiah 13:2. The prophet hears a call to war. From whom it issues, and to whom or against whom it is directed, still remains a secret; but this only adds to the intensity. V. 2. *“On woodless mountain lift ye up a banner, call to them with loud sounding voice, shake the hand, that they may enter into gates of princes!”* The summons is urgent: hence a threefold signal, viz., the banner-staff planted on a mountain “made bald” (*nishpeh*, from which comes *shphi*, which only occurs in Isaiah and Jeremiah), the voice raised high, and the shaking of the hand, denoting a violent beckoning,—all three being favourite signs with Isaiah. The destination of this army is to enter into a city of princes (*ndibim*, freemen, nobles, princes, Ps. 107:40, cf., Ps. 113:8), namely, to enter as conquerors; for it is not the princes who invite them, but Jehovah.

Isaiah 13:3. *“I, I have summoned my sanctified ones, also called my heroes to my wrath, my proudly rejoicing ones.”* “To my wrath” is to be explained in accordance with Isa. 10:5. To execute His wrath He had summoned His “sanctified ones” (*mkuddashim*), i.e., according to Jer. 22:7 (compare Jer. 51:27, 28), those who had already been solemnly consecrated by Him to go into the battle, and had called the heroes whom He had taken into His service, and who were His instruments in this respect, that they rejoiced with the pride of men intoxicated with victory (vid., Zeph. 1:7, cf., 3:11). עֲלִיז is a word peculiarly Isaiah’s; and the combination עֲלִיז נֶאֱזָרָה is so unusual, that we could hardly expect to find it employed by two authors who stood in no relation whatever to one another.

Isaiah 13:4, 5. The command of Jehovah is quickly executed. The great army is already coming down from the mountains. Vv. 4, 5. *“Hark, a rumbling on the mountains after the manner of a great people; hark, a rumbling of kingdoms of nations met together! Jehovah of hosts musters an army, those that have come out*

of a distant land, from the end of the heaven: Jehovah and His instruments of wrath, to destroy the whole earth.” *Kōl* commences an interjectional sentence, and thus becomes almost an interjection itself (compare Isa. 52:8; 66:6, and on Gen. 4:10). There is rumbling on the mountains (Isa. 17:12, 13), for there are the peoples of Eran, and in front the Medes inhabiting the mountainous north-western portion of Eran, who come across the lofty *Shahu* (*Zagros*), and the ranges that lie behind it towards the Tigris, and descend upon the lowlands of Babylon; and not only the peoples of Eran, but the peoples of the mountainous north of Asia generally (Jer. 51:27),—an army under the guidance of Jehovah, the God of hosts of spirits and stars, whose wrath it will execute over the whole earth, i.e., upon the world-empire; for the fall of Babel is a judgment, and accompanied with judgments upon all the tribes under Babylonian rule.

Isaiah 13:6–8. Then all sink into anxious and fearful trembling. Vv. 6–8. *“Howl; for the day of Jehovah is near; like a destructive force from the Almighty it comes. Therefore all arms hang loosely down, and every human heart melts away. And they are troubled: they fall into cramps and pangs; like a woman in labour they twist themselves: one stares at the other; their faces are faces of flame.”* The command הִלְלוּ (not written defectively, הִלְלוּ) is followed by the reason for such a command, viz., “the day of Jehovah is near,” the watchword of prophecy from the time of Joel downwards. The *Caph* in *cshod* is the so-called *Caph veritatis*, or more correctly, the *Caph* of comparison between the individual and its genus. It is destruction by one who possesses unlimited power to destroy (*shōd*, from *shādad*, from which we have *shaddai*, after the form *chaggai*, the festive one, from *chāgag*). In this play upon the words, Isaiah also repeats certain words of Joel (Joel 1:15). Then the heads hang down from despondency and helplessness, and the heart, the seat of lift, melts (Isa. 19:1) in the heat of anguish. Universal consternation ensues. This is expressed by the word *vnibhālu*, which stands

in half pause; the word has *shalsheth* followed by *psik* (*pasek*), an accent which only occurs in seven passages in the twenty-one prose books of the Old Testament, and always with this dividing stroke after it. Observe also the following *fut. paragogica*, which add considerably to the energy of the description by their anapaestic rhythm. The men (*subj.*) lay hold of cramps and pangs (as in Job 18:20; 21:6), the force of the events compelling them to enter into such a condition. Their faces are faces of flames. Knobel understands this as referring to their turning pale, which is a piece of exegetical jugglery. At the same time, it does not suggest mere redness, nor a convulsive movement; but just as a flame alternates between light and darkness, so their faces become alternately flushed and pale, as the blood ebbs and flows, as it were, being at one time driven with force into their faces, and then again driven back to the heart, so as to leave deadly paleness, in consequence of their anguish and terror.

Isaiah 13:9, 10. The day of Jehovah's wrath is coming,—a starless night—a nightlike, sunless day. Vv. 9, 10. "*Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, a cruel one, and wrath and fierce anger, to turn the earth into a wilderness: and its sinners He destroys out of it. For the stars of heaven, and its Orions, will not let their light shine: the sun darkens itself at its rising, and the moon does not let its light shine.*" The day of Jehovah cometh as one cruelly severe (*'aczâri*, an *adj. rel.* from *'aczâr*, *chosh*, *kosh*, to be dry, hard, unfelling), as purely an overflowing of inward excitement, and as burning anger; *lâsûm* is carried on by the finite verb, according to a well-known alteration of style (= *ûlhashmîd*). It is not indeed the general judgment which the prophet is depicting here, but a certain historical catastrophe falling upon the nations, which draws the whole world into sympathetic suffering. *'Eretz*, therefore (inasmuch as the notions of land generally, and some particular land or portion of the earth, are blended together,—a very elastic term, with vanishing boundaries), is not merely the land of Babylon here, as Knobel supposes, but *the*

earth. V. 10 shows in what way the day of Jehovah is a day of wrath. Even nature clothes itself in the colour of wrath, which is the very opposite to light. The heavenly lights above the earth go out; the moon does not shine; and the sun, which is about to rise, alters its mind. "*The Orions*" are Orion itself and other constellations like it, just as the morning stars in Job 38:7 are Hesperus and other similar stars. It is more probable that the term *cesîl* is used for Orion in the sense of "the fool" (= foolhardy), according to the older translators (LXX ὀρπίων, Targum *nephilehon* from *nephila'*, Syr. *gaboro*, Arab. *gebbâr*, the giant), than that it refers to *Suhêl*, i.e., *Canopus* (see the notes on Job 9:9; 38:31), although the Arabic *suhêl* does occur as a generic name for stars of surpassing splendour (see at Job 38:7). The comprehensive term employed is similar to the figure of speech met with in Arabic (called *taglîb*, i.e., the preponderance of the *pars potior*), in such expressions as "the two late evenings" for the evening and late evening, "the two Omars" for Omar and Abubekr, though the resemblance is still greater to the Latin *Scipiones*, i.e., men of Scipio's greatness. Even the Orions, i.e., those stars which are at other times the most conspicuous, withhold their light; for when God is angry, the principle of anger is set in motion even in the natural world, and primarily in the stars that were created "for signs (compare Gen. 1:14 with Jer. 10:2).

Isaiah 13:11, 12. The prophet now hears again the voice of Jehovah revealing to him what His purpose is,—namely, a visitation punishing the wicked, humbling the proud, and depopulating the countries. Vv. 11, 12. "*And I visit the evil upon the world, and upon sinners their guilt, and sink into silence the pomp of the proud; and the boasting of tyrants I throw to the ground. I make men more precious than fine gold, and people than a jewel of Ophir.*" The verb *pâkad* is construed, as in Jer. 23:2, with the accusative of the thing punished, and with *ל* of the person punished. Instead of *'eretz* we have here *têbel*, which is always used like a proper name (never with the article), to denote the earth in its

entire circumference. We have also *'ârîtzîm* instead of *nedîbîm*: the latter signifies merely princes, and it is only occasionally that it has the subordinate sense of despots; the former signifies men naturally cruel, or tyrants (it occurs very frequently in Isaiah). Everything here breathes the spirit of Isaiah both in thought and form. "The lofty is thrown down:" this is one of the leading themes of Isaiah's proclamation; and the fact that the judgment will only leave a remnant is a fundamental thought of his, which also runs through the oracles concerning the heathen (Isa. 16:14; 21:17; 24:6), and is depicted by the prophet in various ways (Isa. 10:16–19; 17:4–6; 24:13; 30:17). There it is expressed under the figure that men become as scarce as the finest kinds of gold. Word-painting is Isaiah's delight and strength. *'Ophir*, which resembles *'okir* in sound, was the gold country of India, that lay nearest to the Phoenicians, the coast-land of *Abhira* on the northern shore of the *Runn* (*Irina*), i.e., the salt lake to the east of the mouths of the Indus (see at Gen. 10:29 and Job 22:24; and for the Egypticized *Souphir* of the LXX, Job 28:16).

Isaiah 13:13. Thus does the wrath of God prevail among men, casting down and destroying; and the natural world above and below cannot fail to take part in it. V. 13. "Therefore I shake the heavens, and the earth trembles away from its place, because of the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and because of the day of His fierce anger." The two *Beths* have a causative meaning (cf., Isa. 9:18). They correspond to *'al-cên* (therefore), of which they supply the explanation. Because the wrath of God falls upon men, every creature which is not the direct object of the judgment must become a medium in the infliction of it. We have here the thought of v. 9a repeated as a kind of refrain (in a similar manner to Isa. 5:25). Then follow the several disasters. The first is flight.

Isaiah 13:14. "And it comes to pass as with a gazelle which is scared, and as with a flock without gatherers: they turn every one to his people, and they flee every one to his land." The neuter *v'hâyâh* affirms that it will then be as described in the simile and the interpretation

which follows. Babylon was the market for the world in central Asia, and therefore a *rendezvous* for the most diverse nations (Jer. 50:16, cf., 51:9, 44)—for a *πάμμικτος ὄχλος*, as Aeschylus says in his *Persae*, v. 52. This great and motley mass of foreigners would now be scattered in the wildest flight, on the fall of the imperial city. The second disaster is violent death.

Isaiah 13:15, 16. "Every one that is found is pierced through, and every one that is caught falls by the sword." By "every one that is found," we understand those that are taken in the city by the invading conquerors; and by "every one that is caught," those that are overtaken in their flight (*sâphâh*, *abripere*, Isa. 7:20). All are put to the sword.—The third and fourth disasters are plunder and ravage. V. 16. "And their infants are dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses plundered, and their wives ravished." Instead of *tisshâgalnâh*, the *keri* has the euphemistic term *tisshâcabnâh* (*concubitum patientur*), a passive which never occurs in the Old Testament text itself. The *keri* readings *shuccabt* in Jer. 3:2, and *yishcâbennâh* in Deut. 28:30, also do violence to the language, which required *עם שכב* and *את* (the latter as a preposition in Gen. 19:34) for the sake of euphemism; or rather they introduce a later (talmudic) usage of speech into the Scriptures (see Geiger, *Urschrift*, pp. 407–8). The prophet himself intentionally selects the base term *shâgal*, though, as the queen's name *Shegal* shows, it must have been regarded in northern Palestine and Aramaean as by no means a disreputable word. In this and other passages of the prophecy Knobel scents a fanaticism which is altogether strange to Isaiah.

Isaiah 13:17. With v. 17 the prophecy takes a fresh turn, in which the veil that has hitherto obscured it is completely broken through. We now learn the name of the conquerors. "Behold, I rouse up the Medes over them, who do not regard silver, and take no pleasure in gold." It was the Medes (Darius Medus = Cyaxares II) who put an end to the Babylonian kingdom in combination with the Persians (Cyrus). The Persians are mentioned for the first time in the

Old Testament by Ezekiel and Daniel. Consequently *Mâdai* (by the side of which Elam is mentioned in Isa. 21:2) appears to have been a general term applied to the Arian populations of Eran from the most important ruling tribe. Until nearly the end of Hezekiah's reign, the Medes lived scattered about over different districts, and in hamlets (or villages) united together by a constitutional organization. After they had broken away from the Assyrians (714 B.C.) they placed themselves in 709–8 B.C. under one common king, namely Deyoces, probably for the purpose of upholding their national independence; or, to speak more correctly, under a common *monarch*, for even the chiefs of the villages were called kings. It is in this sense that Jeremiah speaks of "king of Madai;" at any rate, this is a much more probable supposition than that he refers to monarchs in a generic sense. But the kings of Media, i.e., the rulers of the several villages, are mentioned in Jer. 25:25 among those who will have to drink the intoxicating cup which Jehovah is about to give to the nations through Nebuchadnezzar. So that their expedition against Babylon is an act of revenge for the disgrace of bondage that has been inflicted upon them. Their disregarding silver and gold is not intended to describe them as a rude, uncultivated people: the prophet simply means that they are impelled by a spirit of revenge, and do not come for the purpose of gathering booty. Revenge drives them on to forgetfulness of all morality, and humanity also.

Isaiah 13:18. "And bows dash down young men; and they have no compassion on the fruit of the womb: their eye has no pity on children." The bows do not stand for the bowmen (see Isa. 21:17), but the bows of the latter dash the young men to the ground by means of the arrows shot from them. They did not spare the fruit of the womb, since they ripped up the bodies of those that were with child (2 Kings 8:12; 15:16, etc.). Even towards children they felt no emotion of compassionate regard, such as would express itself in the eye: *chūs*, to feel, more especially to feel with another, i.e., to sympathize; here and in Ezek. 5:11 it is

ascribed to the eye as the mirror of the soul (compare the Arabic *chasyet el-'ain ala fulânin*, carefulness of eye for a person: Hariri, *Comment.* p. 140). With such inhuman conduct on the part of the foe, the capital of the empire becomes the scene of a terrible conflagration.

Isaiah 13:19. "And Babel, the ornament of kingdoms, the proud boast of the Chaldeans, becomes like Elohim's overthrowing judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah." The ornament of kingdoms (*mamlâcoth*), because it was the centre of many conquered kingdoms, which now avenged themselves upon it (v. 4); the *pride* (cf., Isa. 28:1), because it was the primitive dwelling-place of the Chaldeans of the lowlands, that ancient cultivated people, who were related to the Chaldean tribes of the Carduchisan mountains in the north-east of Mesopotamia, though not of the same origin, and of totally different manners (see at Isa. 23:13). Their present catastrophe resembled that of Sodom and Gomorrah: the two *eths* are accusative; *mahpēcâh* (καταστροφή) is used like *de'âh* in Isa. 11:9 with a verbal force (τὸ καταστρέψαι, well rendered by the LXX ὄν τρόπον κατέστρεψεν ὁ Θεός. On the arrangement of the words, see Ges. § 133, 3).

Isaiah 13:20–22. Babel, like the cities of the Pentapolis, had now become a perpetual desert. Vv. 20–22. "She remains uninhabited for ever, and unoccupied into generation of generations; and not an Arab pitches his tent there, and shepherds do not make their folds there. And there lie beasts of the desert, and horn-owls fill their houses; and ostriches dwell there, and field-devils hop about there. And jackals howl in her castles, and wild dogs in palaces of pleasure; and her time is near to come, and her days will not be prolonged." The conclusion is similar to that of the prophecy against Edom, in Isa. 34:16, 17. There the certainty of the prediction, even in its most minute particulars, is firmly declared; here the nearness of the time of fulfilment. But the fulfilment did not take place so soon as the words of the prophecy might make it appear. According to Herodotus, Cyrus, the leader of the Medo-Persian army, left the city still standing, with its double ring of walls. Darius Hystaspis,

who had to conquer Babylon a second time in 518 B.C., had the walls entirely destroyed, with the exception of fifty cubits. Xerxes gave the last thrust to the glory of the temple of Belus. Having been conquered by Seleucus Nicator (312), it declined just in proportion as Seleucia rose. *Babylon*, says Pliny, *ad solitudinem rediit exhausta vicinitate Seleucia*. At the time of Strabo (born 60 B.C.) Babylon was a perfect desert; and he applies to it (Isa. 16:15) the words of the poet, ἐρημία μεγάλη ἴστιν ἡ μεγάλη πόλις. Consequently, in the passage before us the prophecy falls under the law of perspective foreshortening. But all that it foretells has been literally fulfilled. The curse that Babylon would never come to be settled in and inhabited again (a poetical expression, like Jer. 17:25; 33:16), proved itself an effectual one, when Alexander once thought of making Babylon the metropolis of his empire. He was carried off by an early death. Ten thousand workmen were at that time employed for two months in simply clearing away the rubbish of the foundations of the temple of Belus (the Nimrod-tower). “*Not an Arab pitches his tent there*” (*Arâbi*, from *Arâbâh*, a steppe, is used here for the first time in the Old Testament, and then again in Jer. 3:2; *yâhêl*, different from *yâhêl* in Isa. 13:10 and Job 31:26, is a syncopated form of לְהַאֲרִי, *tentorium figet*, according to Ges. § 68, Anm. 2, used instead of the customary לְהַאֲרִי): this was simply the natural consequence of the great field of ruins, upon which there was nothing but the most scanty vegetation. But all kinds of beasts of the desert and waste places make their homes there instead. The list commences with *ziyyim* (from *zi*, dryness, or from *ziyi*, an adj. relat. of the noun *zi*), i.e., dwellers in the desert; the reference here is not to men, but, as in most other instances, to animals, though it is impossible to determine what are the animals particularly referred to. That *ochim* are horned owls (*Uhus*) is a conjecture of Aurivillius, which decidedly commends itself. On *bnoth ya’ânâh*, see at Job 39:13–18. Wetzstein connects *ya’ânâh* with an Arabic word for desert; it is probably more correct, however, to connect it

with the Syriac אַנְי, greedy. The feminine plural embraces ostriches of both sexes, just as the *’iyyim* (sing. יַי = יַיִ, from *’âvâh*, to howl: see Bernstein’s *Lex. on Kirsch’s Chrestom. Syr.* p. 7), i.e., jackals, are called *benât âwa* in Arabic, without distinction of sex (*âwa* in this appellation is a direct reproduction of the natural voice of the animal, which is called *wawi* in vulgar Arabic). *Tan* has also been regarded since the time of Pococke and Schnurrer as the name of the jackal; and this is supported by the Syriac and Targum rendering *yaruro* (see Bernstein, p. 220), even more than by the Arabic name of the wolf, *tinân*, which only occurs here and there. יַי, *ibnu âwa*, is the common jackal found in Hither Asia (*Canis aureus vulgaris*), the true type of the whole species, which is divided into at least ten varieties, and belongs to the same genus as dogs and wolves (not foxes). *Tan* may refer to one of these varieties, which derived its name from its distinctive peculiarity as a *long-stretched* animal, whether the extension was in the trunk, the snout, or the tail.

The animals mentioned, both quadrupeds (*râbatz*) and birds (*shâcan*), are really found there, on the soil of ancient Babylon. When Kerporter was drawing near to the Nimrod-tower, he saw lions sunning themselves quietly upon its walls, which came down very leisurely when alarmed by the cries of the Arabs. And as Rich heard in Bagdad, the ruins are still regarded as a rendezvous for ghosts: *sâ’ir*, when contrasted with *’attûd*, signifies the full-grown shaggy buck-goat; but here *se’irim* is applied to demons in the shape of goats (as in Isa. 34:14). According to the Scriptures, the desert is the abode of unclean spirits, and such unclean spirits as the popular belief or mythology pictured to itself were *se’irim*. Virgil, like Isaiah, calls them *saltantes Satyros*. It is remarkable also that Joseph Wolf, the missionary and traveller to *Bochâra*, saw pilgrims of the sect of Yezidis (or devil-worshippers) upon the ruins of Babylon, who performed strange and horrid rites by moonlight, and danced extraordinary dances

with singular gestures and sounds. On seeing these ghost-like, howling, moonlight pilgrims, he very naturally recalled to mind the dancing *se'irim* of prophecy (see Moritz Wagner's *Reise nach Persien und dem Lande der Kurden*, Bd. ii. p. 251). And the nightly howling and yelling of jackals (*'ânâh* after *rikkêd*, as in 1 Sam. 18:6, 7) produces its natural effect upon every traveller there, just as in all the other ruins of the East. These are now the inhabitants of the royal *'armnoth*, which the prophet calls *'almnoth* with a sarcastic turn, on account of their widowhood and desolation; these are the inhabitants of the palaces of pleasure, the luxurious villas and country-seats, with their hanging gardens. The Apocalypse, in Isa. 18:2, takes up this prophecy of Isaiah, and applies it to a still existing Babylon, which might have seen itself in the mirror of the Babylon of old.

Isaiah 14

Isaiah 14:1, 2. But it is love to His own people which impels the God of Israel to suspend such a judgment of eternal destruction over Babylon. Ch. 14:1, 2. *"For Jehovah will have mercy on Jacob, and will once more choose Israel, and will settle them in their own land: and the foreigner will associate with them, and they will cleave to the house of Jacob. And nations take them, and accompany them to their place; and the house of Israel takes them to itself in the land of Jehovah for servants and maid-servants: and they hold in captivity those who led them away captive; and become lords over their oppressors."* We have here *in nuce* the comforting substance of Isa. 46–66. Babylon falls that Israel may rise. This is effected by the compassion of God. He chooses Israel once more (*iterum*, as in Job 14:7 for example), and therefore makes a new covenant with it. Then follows their return to Canaan, their own land, Jehovah's land (as in Hos. 9:3). Proselytes from among the heathen, who have acknowledged the God of the exiles, go along with them, as Ruth did with Naomi. Heathen accompany the exiles to their own place. And now their relative positions are reversed. Those who accompany Israel are now taken possession of by the latter (*hithnachêl*,

κληρονομεῖν ἑαυτῶ, like *hithpattēach*, Isa. 52:2, λῦεσθαι; cf., p. 62, note, and Ewald, § 124, *b*), as servants and maid-servants; and they (the Israelites) become leaders into captivity of those who led them into captivity (*Lamed* with the participle, as in Isa. 11:9), and they will oppress (*râdâh b'*, as in Ps. 49:15) their oppressors. This retribution of life for life is to all appearance quite out of harmony with the New Testament love. But in reality it is no retribution of like for like. For, according to the prophet's meaning, to be ruled by the people of God is the true happiness of the nations, and to allow themselves to be so ruled is their true liberty. At the same time, the form in which the promise is expressed is certainly not that of the New Testament; and it would not possibly have been so, for the simple reason that in Old Testament times, and from an Old Testament point of view, there was no other visible manifestation of the church (*ecclesia*) than in the form of a nation. This national form of the church has been broken up under the New Testament, and will never be restored. Israel, indeed, will be restored as a nation; but the true essence of the church, which is raised above all national distinctions, will never return to those worldly limits which it has broken through. And the fact that the prophecy moves within those limits here may be easily explained, on the ground that it is primarily the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity to which the promise refers. And the prophet himself was unconscious that this captivity would be followed by another.

Isaiah 14:3, 4a. The song of the redeemed is a song concerning the fall of the king of Babel. Vv. 3, 4a. *"And it cometh to pass, on the day that Jehovah giveth thee rest from thy plague, and from thy cares, and from the heavy bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt raise such a song of triumph concerning the king of Babel, and say."* Instead of the hiphil *hinniach* (to let down) of v. 1, we have here, as in the original passage, Deut. 25:19, the form *hêniach*, which is commonly used in the sense of quieting, or procuring rest. עָצַב is trouble which

plagues (as מַלְאָכָה is trouble which oppresses), and *rōgez* restlessness which wears out with anxious care (Job 3:26, cf., Ezek. 12:18). The assimilated *min* before the two words is pronounced *mī*, with a weak reduplication, instead of *mē*, as elsewhere, before ה, ה, and even before ו (1 Sam. 23:28; 2 Sam. 18:16). In the relative clause אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְדָּךְ אֲשֶׁר is not the Hebrew *casus adverb.* answering to the Latin ablative *quâ servo te usi sunt*; not do אֲשֶׁר ... דָּךְ belong to one another in the sense of *quo*, as in Deut. 21:3, *quâ (vitulâ)*; but it is regarded as an *acc. obj.* according to Ex. 1:14 and Lev. 25:39, *qu'on t'a fait servir*, as in Num. 32:5, *qu'on donne la terre* (Luzzatto). When delivered from such a yoke of bondage, Israel would raise a *mâshâl*. According to its primary and general meaning, *mâshâl* signifies figurative language, and hence poetry generally, more especially that kind of proverbial poetry which loves the emblematical, and, in fact, any artistic composition that is piquant in its character; so that the idea of what is satirical or defiant may easily be associated with it, as in the passage before us.

Isaiah 14:4-6. The words are addressed to the Israel of the future in the Israel of the present, as in Isa. 12:1. The former would then sing, and say as follows. Vv. 4b-6. "How hath the oppressor ceased! the place of torture ceased! Jehovah hath broken the rod of the wicked, the ruler's staff, which smote nations in wrath with strokes without ceasing, subjugated nations wrathfully with hunting that never stays." Not one of the early translators ever thought of deriving the *hap. leg. madhebâh* from the Aramaean *dehab* (gold), as Vitringa, Aurivillius, and Rosenmüller have done. The former have all translated the word as if it were *marhēbâh* (haughty, violent treatment), as corrected by J. D. Michaelis, Doederlein, Knobel, and others. But we may arrive at the same result without altering a single letter, if we take דָּאָב as equivalent to דָּהַב, דָּוַב, to melt or pine away, whether we go back to the *kal* or to the *hiphil* of

the verb, and regard the *Mem* as used in a material or local sense. We understand it, according to *madmenah* (dunghill) in Isa. 25:10, as denoting the place where they were reduced to pining away, i.e., as applied to Babylon as the house of servitude where Israel had been wearied to death. The tyrant's sceptre, mentioned in v. 5, is the Chaldean world-power regarded as concentrated in the king of Babel (cf., *shēbēt* in Num. 24:17). This tyrant's sceptre smote nations with incessant blows and hunting: *maccath* is construed with *macceh*, the derivative of the same verb; and *murdâph*, a *hophal* noun (as in Isa. 8:23; 29:3), with *rodeh*, which is kindred in meaning. Doederlein's conjecture (*mirdath*), which has been adopted by most modern commentators, is quite unnecessary. Unceasing continuance is expressed first of all with *bilti*, which is used as a preposition, and followed by *sârâh*, a participial noun like *câlâh*, and then with *b'li*, which is construed with the finite verb as in Gen. 31:20, Job 41:18; for *b'li chāsâk* is an attributive clause: with a hunting which did not restrain itself, did not stop, and therefore did not spare. Nor is it only Israel and other subjugated nations that now breathe again.

Isaiah 14:7, 8. "The whole earth rests, is quiet: they break forth into singing. Even the cypresses rejoice at thee, the cedars of Lebanon: 'Since thou hast gone to sleep, no one will come up to lay the axe upon us.'" The preterites indicate inchoatively the circumstances into which the whole earth has now entered. The omission of the subject in the case of *pâtz'chu* (they break forth) gives the greatest generality to the jubilant utterances: *pâtzach rinnâh* (*erumpere gaudio*) is an expression that is characteristic of Isaiah alone (e.g., Isa. 44:23; 49:13); and it is a distinctive peculiarity of the prophet to bring in the trees of the forest, as living and speaking beings, to share in the universal joy (cf., Isa. 55:12). Jerome supposes the trees to be figuratively employed here for the "chiefs of the nations" (*principes gentium*). But this disposition to allegorize not only destroys the reality of the contents, but the spirit of the poetry also. Cypresses and cedars rejoice

because of the treatment which they received from the Chaldean, who made use of the almost imperishable wood of both of them for ornamental buildings, for his siege apparatus, and for his fleets, and even for ordinary ships,—as Alexander, for example, built himself a fleet of cypress-wood, and the Syrian vessels had masts of cedar. Of the old cedars of Lebanon, there are hardly thirty left in the principle spot where they formerly grew. Gardner Wilkinson (1843) and Hooker the botanist (1860) estimated the whole number at about four hundred; and according to the conclusion which the latter drew from the number of concentric rings and other signs, not one of them is more than about five hundred years old.

Isaiah 14:9. But whilst it has become so quiet on earth, there is the most violent agitation in the regions below. V. 9. *“The kingdom of the dead below is all in uproar on account of thee, to meet thy coming; it stirreth up the shades for thee, all the he-goats of the earth; it raiseth up from their throne-seats all the kings of the nations.”* The notion of Hades, notwithstanding the mythological character which it had assumed, was based upon the double truth, that what a man has been, and the manner in which he has lived on this side the grave, are not obliterated on the other side, but are then really brought to light, and that there is an immaterial self-formation of the soul, in which all that a man has become under certain divinely appointed circumstances, by his own self-determination, is, as it were, reflected in a mirror, and that in a permanent form. This psychical image, to which the dead body bears the same relation as the shattered mould to a cast, is the shade-like corporeality of the inhabitants of Hades, in which they appear essentially though spiritually just as they were on this side the grave. This is the deep root of what the prophet has here expressed in a poetical form; for it is really a *mâshâl* that he has interwoven with his prophecy here. All Hades is overwhelmed with excitement and wonder, now that the king of Babel, that invincible ruler of the world, who, if not

unexpected altogether, was not expected so soon, as actually approaching. From עוֹרֵר onwards, *Sheol*, although a feminine, might be the subject; in which case the verb would simply have reverted from the feminine to the radical masculine form. But it is better to regard the subject as neuter; a *nescio quid*, a nameless power. The shades are suddenly seized with astonishment, more especially the former leaders (leading goats or bell-wethers) of the herds of nations, so that, from sheer amazement, they spring up from their seats.

Isaiah 14:10. And how do they greet this lofty new-comer? V. 10. *“They all rise up and say to thee, Art thou also made weak like us? art thou become like us?”* This is all that the shades say; what follows does not belong to them. The *pual chullâh* (only used here), “to be made sickly, or powerless,” signifies to be transposed into the condition of the latter, viz., the *Repahim* (a word which also occurs in the Phoenician inscriptions, from רָפָה = רָפָה, to be relaxed or weary), since the life of the shades is only a shadow of life (cf., εἶδωλὰ ἄκις, and possibly also καμόντες in Homer, when used in the sense of those who are dying, exhausted and prostrate with weakness). And in Hades we could not expect anything more than this expression of extreme amazement. For why should they receive their new comrade with contempt or scorn? From v. 11 onwards, the singers of the *mashal* take up the song again.

Isaiah 14:11. *“Thy pomp is cast down to the region of the dead, the noise of thy harps: maggots are spread under thee, and they that cover thee are worms.”* From the book of Daniel we learn the character of the Babylonian music; it abounded in instruments, some of which were foreign. Maggots and worms (a bitter sarcasm) now take the place of the costly artistic Babylonian rugs, which once formed the pillow and counterpane of the distinguished corpse. מַצְעֵי might be a third pers. *hophal* (Ges. § 71); but here, between perfects, it is a third pers. *pual*, like *yullad* in Isa. 9:5. *Rimmâh*, which is preceded by the verb in a masculine and to a certain extent an indifferent form (Ges. § 147,

a), is a collective name for small worms, in any mass of which the individual is lost in the swarm. The passage is continued with אֵיךְ (on which, as a catchword of the *mashal*, see at Isa. 1:21).

Isaiah 14:12. “How art thou fallen from the sky, thou star of light, sun of the dawn, hurled down to the earth, thou that didst throw down nations from above?” הַיְלֵל is here the morning star (from *hâlal*, to shine, resolved from *hillel*, after the form מֵאֵן, Jer. 13:10, סַעֲף, Ps. 119:113, or rather attaching itself as a third class to the forms הַיְכָל, עֵירוֹם: compare the Arabic *sairaf*, exchanger; *saikal*, sword-cleaner). It derives its name in other ancient languages also from its striking brilliancy, and is here called *ben-shachar* (sun of the dawn), just as in the classical mythology it is called son of Eos, from the fact that it rises before the sun, and swims in the morning light as if that were the source of its birth. Lucifer, as a name given to the devil, was derived from this passage, which the fathers (and lately Stier) interpreted, without any warrant whatever, as relating to the apostasy and punishment of the angelic leaders. The appellation is a perfectly appropriate one for the king of Babel, on account of the early date of the Babylonian culture, which reached back as far as the grey twilight of primeval times, and also because of its predominant astrological character. The additional epithet *chōlēsh ‘al-gōyim* is founded upon the idea of the *influxus siderum*: *cholesh* signifies “overthrowing” or laying down (Ex. 17:13), and with ‘*al*, “bringing defeat upon;” whilst the Talmud (*b. Sabbath* 149*b*) uses it in the sense of *projiciens sortem*, and thus throws light upon the *cholesh* (= *purah*, lot) of the Mishnah. A retrospective glance is now cast at the self-deification of the king of Babylon, in which he was the antitype of the devil and the type of antichrist (Dan. 11:36; 2 Thess. 2:4), and which had met with its reward.

Isaiah 14:13–15. “And thou, thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, and sit down

on the mount of the assembly of gods in the corner of the north. I will ascend to the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High. Nevertheless, thou wilt be cast down into the region of the dead, into the corner of the pit.” An antithetical circumstantial clause commences with *vattah*, just as in v. 19, “whilst thou,” or “whereas thou.” The *har hammōēd* (mount of assembly) cannot be Zion, as is assumed by Schegg and others, who are led astray by the parallel in Ps. 48:3, which has been entirely misunderstood, and has no bearing upon this passage at all. Zion was neither a northern point of the earth, nor was it situated on the north of Jerusalem. The prophet makes the king of Babylon speak according to the general notion of his people, who had not the seat of the Deity in the midst of them, as the Israelites had, but who placed it on the summit of the northern mountains, which were lost in the clouds, just as the Hindoos place it on the fabulous mountains of *Kailâsa*, which lie towards the north beyond the Himalayas (Lassen, i. 34ff.). יְרֵכָהּיָם (with an aspirated ך in a loosely closed syllable) are the two sides into which a thing parts, the two legs of an angle, and then the apex at which the legs separate. And so here, יְרֵכָהּי צָפוֹן (with an unaspirated *Caph* in a triply closed syllable) is the uttermost extremity of the north, from which the northern mountains stretch fork-like into the land, and *yarcethe-bor* the interior of the pit into which its two walls slope, and from which it unfolds or widens. All the foolhardy purposes of the Chaldean are finally comprehended in this, “I will make myself like the Most High;” just as the Assyrians, according to Ctesias, and the Persians, according to the *Persae* of Aeschylus, really called their king God, and the Sassanidae call themselves *bag*, *Theos*, upon coins and inscriptions (*‘eddammeh* is *hithpael*, equivalent to *‘ethdammeh*, which the usual assimilation of the preformative *Tav*: Ges. § 34, 2, *b*). By the אֲנִי in v. 14, the high-flying pride of the Chaldean is contrasted with his punishment, which hurls him down into the lowest depths. אֲנִי, which was originally affirmative, and then restrictive (as

rak was originally restrictive and then affirmative), passes over here into an adversative, just as in Ps. 49:16, Job 13:15 (a change seen still more frequently in אֲכַזֵּב);: *nevertheless* thou wilt be hurled down; nothing but that will occur, and not what you propose. The prophetic *tūrad* is language that neither befits the inhabitants of Hades, who greet his advent, nor the Israel singing the *mashal*; but the words of Israel have imperceptibly passed into words of the prophet, who still sees in the distance, and as something future, what the *mashal* commemorates as already past.

Isaiah 14:16, 17. The prophet then continues in the language of prediction. Vv. 16, 17. “*They that see thee look, considering thee, look at thee thoughtfully: Is this the man that set the earth trembling, and kingdoms shaking? that made the world a wilderness, and destroyed its cities, and did not release its prisoners (to their) home?*”

The scene is no longer in Hades (Knobel, Umbreit). Those who are speaking thus have no longer the Chaldean before them as a mere shade, but as an unburied corpse that has fallen into corruption. As *tēbēl* is feminine, the suffixes in v. 17 must refer, according to a *constructio ad sensum*, to the world as changed into a wilderness (*midbâr*). *Pâthach*, to open, namely locks and fetters; here, with *baithâh*, it is equivalent to releasing or letting go (syn. *shillēach*, Jer. 50:33). By the “prisoners” the Jewish exiles are principally intended; and it was their release that had never entered the mind of the king of Babylon.

Isaiah 14:18, 19. The prophet, whose own words now follow the words of the spectators, proceeds to describe the state in which the tyrant lies, and which calls for such serious reflections. Vv. 18, 19. “*All the kings of the nations, they are all interred in honour, every one in his house: but thou art cast away far from thy sepulchre like a shoot hurled away, clothed with slain, with those pierced through with the sword, those that go down to the stones of the pit; like a carcase trodden under feet.*” Every other king was laid out after his death “in his house” (*b’bēthō*), i.e. within the limits of his own

palace; but the Chaldean lay far away from the sepulchre that was apparently intended for him. The מן in מִקְבְּרֵךְ signifies *procul ab*, as in Num. 15:24, Prov. 20:3. He lies there like *nētzer nith’âb*, i.e., like a branch torn off from the tree, that has withered and become offensive, or rather (as *nētzer* does not mean a branch, but a shoot) like a side-shoot that has been cut off the tree and thrown away with disgust as ugly, useless, and only a hindrance to the regular growth of the tree (possibly also an excrescence); *nith’âb* (cast away) is a pregnant expression, signifying “cast away with disgust.” The place where he lies is the field of battle. A *vaticinium post eventum* would be expressed differently from this, as Luzzatto has correctly observed. For what *Seder ‘Olam* says—namely, that Nebuchadnezzar’s corpse was taken out of the grave by Evilmerodach, or as Abravanel relates it, by the Medo-Persian conquerors—is merely a conclusion drawn from the passage before us, and would lead us to expect הוֹצֵאנוּ rather than הִשְׁלַכְנוּ. It is a matter of indifference, so far as the truth of the prophecy is concerned, whether it was fulfilled in the person of Nebuchadnezzar I, or of that second Nebuchadnezzar who gave himself out as a son of Nabonnet, and tried to restore the freedom of Babylon. The scene which passes before the mind of the prophet is the field of battle. To clear this they made a hole and throw stones (*abnē-bor*, stones of the pit) on the top, without taking the trouble to shovel in the earth; but the king of Babylon is left lying there, like a carcase that is trampled under foot, and deserves nothing better than to be trampled under foot (*mūbâs*, part. *hoph.* of *būs*, *conculcare*). They do not even think him worth throwing into a hole along with the rest of the corpses.

Isaiah 14:20. “*Thou art not united with them in burial, for thou hast destroyed thy land, murdered thy people: the seed of evil-doers will not be named for ever.*” In this way is vengeance taken for the tyrannical manner in which he has oppressed and exhausted his land, making his people the involuntary instruments of his thirst for conquest, and sacrificing them as victims to

ISAI AH	Page 157
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

that thirst. For this reason he does not meet with the same compassion as those who have been compelled to sacrifice their lives in his service. And it is not only all over for ever with him, but it is so with his dynasty also. The prophet, the messenger of the penal justice of God, and the mouthpiece of that Omnipotence which regulates the course of history, commands this.

Isaiah 14:21. *“Prepare a slaughter-house for his sons, because of the iniquity of their fathers! They shall not rise and conquer lands, and fill the face of the earth with cities.”* This exhortation is addressed to the Medes, if the prophet had any particular persons in his mind at all. After the nocturnal storming of Babylon by the Medes, the new Babylonian kingdom and royal house which had been established by Nabopolassar vanished entirely from history. The last shoot of the royal family of Nabopolassar was slain as a child of conspirators. The second Nebuchadnezzar deceived the people (as Darius says in the great inscription of Behistan), declaring, “I am Nabukudrac ara the son of Nabunita.” בָּל (used poetically for אָל, like בָּלִי in Isa. 14:6 for לָא) expresses a negative wish (as *pen* does a negative intention): Let no Babylonian kingdom ever arise again! Hitzig corrects עָרִים into עָיִים (heaps of ruins), Ewald into עָרִיצִים (tyrants), Knobel into רָעִים, and Meier into עָדִים, which are said to signify conflicts, whilst Maurer will not take עָרִים in the sense of cities, but of enemies. But there is no necessity for this at all. Nimrod, the first founder of a Babylonio-Assyrian kingdom, built cities to strengthen his monarchy. The king of Asshur built cities for the Medes, for the purpose of keeping them better in check. And it is to this building of cities, as a support to despotism, that the prophet here refers.

Isaiah 14:22, 23. Thus far the prophet has spoken in the name of God. But the prophecy closes with a word of God Himself, spoken through the prophet.—Vv. 22, 23. *“And I will rise up against them, saith Jehovah of hosts, and root out in Babel name and remnant, sprout and*

shoot, saith Jehovah. And make it the possession of hedgehogs and marshes of water, and sweep it away with the bosom of destruction, saith

Jehovah of hosts.” וְשָׂאָר וְנִכְדָּר are two pairs of alliterative proverbial words, and are used to signify “the whole, without exception” (compare the Arabic expression *“Kiesel und Kies,”* “flint and pebble,” in the sense of “altogether:” Nöldecke, *Poesie der alten Araber*, p. 162). Jehovah rises against the descendants of the king of Babylon, and exterminates Babylon utterly, root and branch. The destructive forces, which Babylon has hitherto been able to control by raising artificial defences, are now let loose; and the Euphrates, left without a dam, lays the whole region under water. *Hedgehogs* now take the place of men, and *marshes* the place of palaces. The *kippod* occurs in Isa. 34:11 and Zeph. 2:14, in the company of *birds*; but according to the derivation of the word and the dialects, it denotes the *hedgehog*, which possesses the power of rolling itself up (LXX ἔρημον ὥστε κατοικεῖν ἐχίνου), and which, although it can neither fly, nor climb with any peculiar facility, on account of its mode of walking, could easily get upon the knob of a pillar that had been thrown down (Zeph. 2:14). The concluding threat makes the mode of Babel’s origin the omen of its end: the city of טִיט, i.e., Babylon, which had been built for the most part of clay or brick-earth, would be strangely swept away. The *pilpel* טֹאטָא (or טֹאטָא, as Kimchi conjugates it in *Michlol* 150ab, and in accordance with which some codices and early editions read וְטֹאטָאֲתִיָּהּ with double *zere*) belongs to the cognate root which is mentioned at Ps. 42:5, with an opening ד, ט, ס (cf., Isa. 27:8), and which signifies to drive or thrust away. מְטֹאטָא is that with which anything is driven out or swept away, viz., a broom. Jehovah treats Babylon as rubbish, and sweeps it away, destruction (*hashmēd*: an inf. absol. used as a substantive) serving Him as a broom.

Isaiah 14:24–27. There now follows, apparently out of all connection, another

prophecy against Asshur. It is introduced here quite abruptly, like a fragment; and it is an enigma how it got here, and what it means here, though not an enigma without solution. This short Assyrian passage reads as follows. Vv. 24–27. *“Jehovah of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, that takes place; to break Asshur to pieces in my land, and upon my mountain will I tread him under foot: then his yoke departs from them, and his burden will depart from their neck. This is the purpose that is purposed over the whole earth; and this the hand that is stretched out over all nations. For Jehovah of hosts hath purposed, and who could bring it to nought? And His hand that is stretched out, who can turn it back?”* It is evidently a totally different judicial catastrophe which is predicted here, inasmuch as the world-power upon which it falls is not called Babel or Chasdim, but Asshur, which cannot possibly be taken as a name for Babylon (Abravanel, Lowth, etc.). Babylon is destroyed by the Medes, whereas Asshur falls to ruin in the mountain-land of Jehovah, which it is seeking to subjugate,—a prediction which was literally fulfilled. And only when this had taken place did a fitting occasion present itself for a prophecy against Babel, the heiress of the ruined Assyrian power. Consequently the two prophecies against Babel and Asshur form a hysteron-proteron as they stand here. The thought which occasioned this arrangement, and which it is intended to set forth, is expressed by Jeremiah in Jer. 50:18, 19, *“Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.”* The one event was a pledge of the other. At a time when the prophecy against Assyria had actually been fulfilled, the prophet attached it to the still unfulfilled prophecy against Babylon, to give a pledge of the fulfilment of the latter. This was the pedestal upon which the *Massâh Bâbel* was raised. And it was doubly suited for this, on account of its purely epilogical tone from v. 26 onwards.

The Oracle Concerning Philistia—Ch. 14:28–32

Among the punishments enumerated in 2 Chron. 28:5–21 as falling upon king Ahaz, we find the following, viz., that the Philistines invaded the low country (*shephelah*) and the south land (*negeb*), took several cities, six of which are mentioned by name, and settled there. This offensive movement of the Philistines against the government of Judaea was probably occasioned either by the oppression of Judah on the part of Syria and Ephraim, or by the permanent crippling of Judah through the Syro-Ephraimitish war. In either case, the fact itself is quite sufficient to throw light upon the threatening prophecy which follows.

Isaiah 14:28. This is one of the prophecies the date of which is fixed in v. 28. *“In the year of the death of king Ahaz the following oracle was uttered.”* *“The year of the death of king Ahaz”* was (as in Isa. 6:1) the year in which the death of Ahaz was to take place. In that year the Philistines still remained in those possessions, their hold of which was so shameful to Judah, and had not yet met with any humiliating retribution. But this year was the turning-point; for Hezekiah, the successor of Ahaz, not only recovered the cities that they had taken, but thoroughly defeated them in their own land (2 Kings 18:8).

Isaiah 14:29. It was therefore in a most eventful and decisive year that Isaiah began to prophesy as follows. V. 29. *“Rejoice not so fully, O Philistia, that the rod which smote thee is broken to pieces; for out of the serpent’s root comes forth a basilisk, and its fruit is a flying dragon.”* *Shēbet maccēk*, “the rod which smote thee” (not “of him that smote thee,” which is not so appropriate), is the Davidic sceptre, which had formerly kept the Philistines in subjection under David and Solomon, and again in more recent times since the reign of Uzziah. This sceptre was now broken to pieces, for the Davidic kingdom had been brought down by the Syro-Ephraimitish war, and had not been able to recover itself; and so far as its power over the surrounding nations was concerned, it had completely fallen to pieces. Philistia was thoroughly filled with joy in consequence, but

ISAIAH	Page 159
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

this joy was all over now. The power from which Philistia had escaped was a common snake (*nâchâsh*), which had been either cut to pieces, or had died out down to the very roots. But out of this root, i.e., out of the house of David, which had been reduced to the humble condition of its tribal house, there was coming forth a *zepha'*, a basilisk (*regulus*, as Jerome and other early translators render it: see at Isa. 11:8); and this basilisk, which is dangerous and even fatal in itself, as soon as it had reached maturity, would bring forth a winged dragon as its fruit. The basilisk is Hezekiah, and the flying dragon is the Messiah (this is the explanation given by the Targum); or, what is the same thing, the former is the Davidic government of the immediate future, the latter the Davidic government of the ultimate future. The figure may appear an inappropriate one, because the serpent is a symbol of evil; but it is not a symbol of evil only, but of a curse also, and a curse is the energetic expression of the penal justice of God. And it is as the executor of such a curse in the form of a judgment of God upon Philistia that the Davidic king is here described in a threefold climax as a snake or serpent. The selection of this figure may possibly have also been suggested by Gen. 49:17; for the saying of Jacob concerning Dan was fulfilled in Samson, the sworn foe of the Philistines.

Isaiah 14:30. The coming Davidic king is *peace* for Israel, but for Philistia *death*. V. 30. "And the poorest of the poor will feed, and needy ones lie down in peace; and I kill thy root through hunger, and he slays thy remnant." "The poorest of the poor:" *bcôrē dallim* is an intensified expression for *bnē dallim*, the latter signifying such as belong to the family of the poor, the former (cf., Job 18:13, *mors dirissima*) such as hold the foremost rank in such a family,—a description of Israel, which, although at present deeply, very deeply, repressed and threatened on every side, would then enjoy its land in quietness and peace (Zeph. 3:12, 13). In this sense וְרַעַי is used absolutely; and there is no necessity for Hupfeld's conjecture (*Ps.* ii. 258), that we should read בְּכָרִי (in my pastures).

Israel rises again, but Philistia perishes even to a root and remnant; and the latter again falls a victim on the one hand to the judgment of God (famine), and on the other to the punishment inflicted by the house of David. The change of persons in v. 30b is no *synallage*; but the subject to *yahărōg* (slays) is the basilisk, the father of the flying dragon. The first strophe of the *massah* terminates here. It consists of eight lines, each of the two Masoretic verses (29, 30) containing four clauses.

Isaiah 14:31. The *massah* consists of two strophes. The first threatens judgment from Judah, and the second—of seven lines—threatens judgment from Asshur. V. 31. "Howl, O gate! cry, O city! O Philistia, thou must melt entirely away; for from the north cometh smoke, and there is no isolated one among his hosts." שַׁעַר, which is a masculine everywhere else, is construed here as a feminine, possibly in order that the two imperfects may harmonize; for there is nothing to recommend Luzzatto's suggestion, that שַׁעַר should be taken as an accusative. The strong gates of the Philistian cities (Ashdod and Gaza), of world-wide renown, and the cities themselves, shall lift up a cry of anguish; and Philistia, which has hitherto been full of joy, shall melt away in the heat of alarm (Isa. 13:7, *nâmōg*, inf. abs. *niph.*; on the form itself, compare Isa. 59:13): for from the north there comes a singing and burning fire, which proclaims its coming afar off by the smoke which it produces; in other words, an all-destroying army, out of whose ranks not one falls away from weariness or self-will (cf., Isa. 5:27), that is to say, an army without a gap, animated throughout with one common desire. (מוֹעֵד, after the form מוֹשֵׁב, the mass of people assembled at an appointed place, or *mō'ed*, Josh. 8:14, 1 Sam. 20:35, and for an appointed end.)

Isaiah 14:32. To understand v. 32, which follows here, nothing more is needed than a few simple parenthetical thoughts, which naturally suggest themselves. This one desire was the thirst for conquest, and such a desire could not possibly have only the small strip of Philistian coast for its object; but the conquest of this was

intended as the means of securing possession of other countries on the right hand and on the left. The question arose, therefore, How would Judah fare with the fire which was rolling towards it from the north? For the very fact that the prophet of Judah was threatening Philistia with this fire, presupposed that Judah itself would not be consumed by it.

And this is just what is expressed in v. 32: "*And what answer do the messengers of the nations bring? That Jehovah hath founded Zion, and that the afflicted of His people are hidden therein.*"

"The messengers of the nations" (*malacē goi*): *goi* is to be taken in a distributive sense, and the messengers to be regarded either as individuals who have escaped from the Assyrian army, which was formed of contingents from many nations, or else (as we should expect *pelitē* in that case, instead of *mal'acē*) messengers from the neighbouring nations, who were sent to Jerusalem after the Assyrian army had perished in front of the city, to ascertain how the latter had fared. And they all reply as if with one mouth (*yaaneh*): Zion has stood unshaken, protected by its God; and the people of this God, the poor and despised congregation of Jehovah (cf., Zech. 11:7), are, and know that they are, concealed in Zion. The prophecy is intentionally oracular. Prophecy does not adopt the same tone to the nations as to Israel. Its language to the former is dictatorially brief, elevated with strong self-consciousness, expressed in lofty poetic strains, and variously coloured, according to the peculiarity of the nation to which the oracle refers. The following prophecy relating to Moab shows us very clearly, that in the prophet's view the judgment executed by Asshur upon Philistia would prepare the way for the subjugation of Philistia by the sceptre of David. By the wreck of the Assyrian world-power upon Jerusalem, the house of David would recover its old supremacy over the nations round about. And this really was the case. But the fulfilment was not exhaustive. Jeremiah therefore took up the prophecy of his predecessor again at the time of the Chaldean judgment upon the nations (Jer. 47), but only

the second strophe. The Messianic element of the first was continued by Zechariah (Zech. 9).

Isaiah 15

The Oracle Concerning Moab—Ch. 15–16

Isaiah 15–16. So far as the surrounding nations were concerned, the monarchy of Israel commenced with victory and glory. Saul punished them all severely for their previous offences against Israel (1 Sam. 14:47), and the Moabites along with the rest. The latter were completely subdued by David (2 Sam. 8:2). After the division of the kingdom, the northern kingdom took possession of Joab. The Moabites paid tribute from their flocks to Samaria. But when Ahab died, Mesha the king of Moab refused this tribute (2 Kings 1:1; 3:4ff.). Ahaziah of Israel let this refusal pass. In the meantime, the Moabites formed an alliance with other nations, and invaded Judah. But the allies destroyed one another, and Jehoshaphat celebrated in the valley of Berachah the victory which he had gained without a battle, and which is commemorated in several psalms. And when Jehoram the king of Israel attempted to subjugate Moab again, Jehoshaphat made common cause with him. And the Moabites were defeated; but the fortress, the Moabitish Kir, which was situated upon a steep and lofty chalk rock, remained standing still. The interminable contests of the northern kingdom with the Syrians rendered it quite impossible to maintain either Moab itself, or the land to the east of the Jordan in general. During the reign of Jehu, the latter, in all its length and breadth, even as far south as the Arnon, was taken by the Syrians (2 Kings 10:32, 33). The tribes that were now no longer tributary to the kingdom of Israel oppressed the Israelitish population, and avenged upon the crippled kingdom the loss of their independence. Jeroboam II, as the prophet Jonah had foretold (2 Kings 14:25), was the first to reconquer the territory of Israel from Hamath to the Dead Sea. It is not indeed expressly stated that he subjugated Moab again; but as Moabitish bands had disturbed even the country on this side under his predecessor

Joash (2 Kings 13:20), it may be supposed that he also attempted to keep Moab within bounds. If the Moabites, as is very probable, had extended their territory northwards beyond the Arnon, the war with Joab was inevitable. Moreover, under Jeroboam II on the one hand, and Uzziah-Jotham on the other, we read nothing about the Moabites rising; but, on the contrary, such notices as those contained in 1 Chron. 5:17 and 2 Chron. 26:10, show that they kept themselves quiet. But the application made by Ahaz to Assyria called up the hostility of Joab and the neighbouring nations again. Tiglath-pileser repeated what the Syrians had done before. He took possession of the northern part of the land on this side, and the whole of the land on the other side, and depopulated them. This furnished an opportunity for the Moabites to re-establish themselves in their original settlements to the north of the Arnon. And this was how it stood at the time when Isaiah prophesied. The calamity which befel them came from the north, and therefore fell chiefly and primarily upon the country to the north of the Arnon, which the Moabites had taken possession of but a short time before, after it had been peopled for a long time by the tribes of Reuben and Gad.

Isaiah 15:1. There is no other prophecy in the book of Isaiah in which the heart of the prophet is so painfully affected by what his mind sees, and his mouth is obliged to prophesy. All that he predicts evokes his deepest sympathy, just as if he himself belonged to the unfortunate nation to which he is called to be a messenger of woe. He commences with an utterance of amazement. V. 1. "*Oracle concerning Moab! for in a night 'Ar-Moab is laid waste, destroyed; for in a night Kir-Moab is laid waste, destroyed.*" The *ci* (for) is explanatory in both instances, and not simply affirmative, or, as Knobel maintains, recitative, and therefore unmeaning. The prophet justifies the peculiar heading to his prophecy from the horrible vision given him to see, and takes us at once into the very heart of the vision, as in Isa. 17:1; 23:1. '*Ar Moab* (in which '*Ar* is Moabitish for '*Ir*'; cf., Jer. 49:3, where we find '*Ai* written instead of '*Ar*, which

we should naturally expect) is the name of the capital of Moab (Grecized, *Areopolis*), which was situated to the south of the Arnon, at present a large field of ruins, with a village of the name of *Rabba*. *Kir Moab* (in which *Kir* is the Moabitish for *Kiryah*) was the chief fortress of Joab, which was situated to the south-east of *Ar*, the present *Kerek*, where there is still a town with a fortification upon a rock, which can be seen from Jerusalem with a telescope on a clear day, and forms so thoroughly one mass with the rock, that in 1834, when Ibrahim Pasha resolved to pull it down, he was obliged to relinquish the project. The identity of *Kir* and *Kerek* is unquestionable, but that of *Ar* and *Rabba* has been disputed; and on the ground of Num. 22:36, where it seems to be placed nearer the Arnon, it has been transposed to the ruins on the pasture land at the confluence of the *Lejûm* and *Mujib* (= "the city that is by the river" in Deut. 2:36 and Josh. 13:9, 16: see Comm. on Num. 21:15),—a conjecture which has this against it, that the name *Areopolis*, which has been formed from *Ar*, is attached to the "*metropolis civitas Ar*," which was called *Rabba* as the metropolis, and of which Jerome relates (on the passage before us), as an event associated with his own childhood, that it was then destroyed by an earthquake (probably in 342). The two names of the cities are used as masculine here, like *Dammesek* in Isa. 17:1, and *Tzor* in Isa. 23:1, though it cannot therefore be said, as at Mic. 5:1, that the *city* stands for the *inhabitants* (*Ges. Lehrgebäude*, p. 469). "*In a night*" (לַיָּל absolute, as in Isa. 21:11, not construct, which would give an illogical assertion, as *shuddad* and *nidmâh* are almost coincident, so far as the sense is concerned) the two pillars of the strength of Moab are overthrown. In the space of a night, and therefore very suddenly (Isa. 17:14), Moab is destroyed. The prophet repeats twice what it would have been quite sufficient to say once, just as if he had been condemned to keep his eye fixed upon the awful spectacle (on the *asyndeton*, see at Isa. 33:9; and on the *anadiplosis*, v. 8, Isa. 8:9; 21:11; 17:12, 13). His first sensation is that of horror.

Isaiah 15:2-4. But just as horror, when once it begins to reflect, is dissolved in tears, the thunder-claps in v. 1 are followed by universal weeping and lamentation. Vv. 2-4. *“They go up to the temple-house and Dibon, up to the heights to weep: upon Nebo and upon Medebah of Moab there is weeping: on all heads baldness, every beard is mutilated. In the markets of Moab they gird themselves with sackcloth; on the roofs of the land, and in its streets, everything wails, melting into tears. Heshbon cries, and ‘Elâle; even to Jahaz they hear their howling; even the armed men of Moab break out into mourning thereat; its soul trembles within it.”* The people (the subject to עָלָה) ascend the mountain with the temple of *Chemosh*, the central sanctuary of the land. This temple is called *hab-baith*, though not that there was a Moabitish town or village with some such name as *Bêth-Diblathaim* (Jer. 48:22), as Knobel supposes. *Dibon*, which lay above the Arnon (*Wady Mujib*), like all the places mentioned in vv. 2-4, at present a heap of ruins, a short hour to the north of the central Arnon, in the splendid plain of *el-Chura*, had consecrated heights in the neighbourhood (cf., Josh. 13:17; Num. 22:41), and therefore would turn to them. Moab mourns upon *Nebo* and *Medebah*; יְהִלִּיל, for which we find יְהִלִּיל in Isa. 52:5, is written intentionally for a double preformative, instead of יִלִּיל (compare the similar forms in Job 24:21, Ps. 138:6, and Ges. § 70, Anm.). עַל is to be taken in a local sense, as Hendewerk, Drechsler, and Knobel have rendered it. For *Nebo* was probably a place situated upon a height on the mountain of that name, towards the south-east of *Heshbon* (the ruins of *Nabo*, *Nabau*, mentioned in the *Onom.*); and *Medebah* (still a heap of ruins bearing the same name) stood upon a round hill about two hours to the south-east of *Heshbon*. According to Jerome, there was an image of *Chemosh* in *Nebo*; and among the ruins of *Medeba*, Seetzen discovered the foundations of a strange temple. There follows here a description of the expressions of pain. Instead of the usual רָאֲשָׁיו, we read רָאֲשָׁיו here. And instead of *gedu’âh*

(*abscissae*), *Jeremiah* (Jer. 48:37) has, according to his usual style, *geru’âh* (*decurtatae*), with the simple alteration of a single letter. All runs down with weeping (*culloh*, written as in Isa. 16:7; in Isa. 9:8, 16, we have *cullo* instead). In other cases it is the eyes that are said to run down in tears, streams, or water-brooks; but here, by a still bolder metonymy, the whole man is said to flow down to the ground, as if melting in a stream of tears. *Heshbon* and *Elale* are still visible in their ruins, which lie only half an hour apart upon their separate hills and are still called by the names *Husban* and *el-Al*. They were both situated upon hills which commanded an extensive prospect. And there the cry of woe created an echo which was audible as far as *Jahaz* (*Jahza*), the city where the king of *Heshbon* offered battle to Israel in the time of Moses (Deut. 2:32). The general mourning was so great, that even the armed men, i.e., the heroes (Jer. 48:41) of Moab, were seized with despair, and cried out in their anguish (the same figure as in Isa. 33:7). עֲלִיבֶן, thereat, namely on account of this universal lamentation. Thus the lamentation was universal, without exception. *Naphsho* (his soul) refers to Moab as a whole nation. The soul of Moab trembles in all the limbs of the national body; יִרְעָה (forming a play upon the sound with יִרְעוּ), an Arabic word, and in יִרְעָה a Hebrew word also, signifies *tremere, huc illuc agitari*,—an explanation which we prefer, with Rosenmüller and Gesenius, to the idea that יִרְעַת is a secondary verb to רָעַע, *fut. יִרְעַת*. לוֹ is an ethical dative (as in Ps. 120:6 and 123:4), throwing the action or the pathos inwardly (see *Psychology*, p. 152). The heart of the prophet participates in this pain with which Moab is agitated throughout; for, as Rashi observes, it is just in this that the prophets of Israel were distinguished from heathen prophets, such as *Balaam* for example, viz., that the calamities which they announced to the nations went to their own heart (compare Isa. 21:3, 4, with Isa. 22:4).

Isaiah 15:5a. The difficult words in which the prophet expresses this sympathy we render as follows: V. 5a. *“My heart, towards Moab it crieth out; its bolts reached to Zoar, the three-year-old heifer.”* The *Lamed* in *l’Moab* is the same both here and in Isa. 16:11 as in Isa. 14:8, 9, viz., “turned toward Moab.” *Moab*, which was masculine in v. 4, is feminine here. We may infer from this that *בְּרִיחָהּ עַד-צֶעַר* is a statement which concerns Moab as a land. Now, *brichim* signifies the *bolts* in every other passage in which it occurs; and it is possible to speak of the bolts of a land with just as much propriety as in Lam. 2:9 and Jer. 51:30 (cf., Jonah 2:7) of the bolts of a city. And the statement that the bolts of this land went to *Zoar* is also a very appropriate one, for Kir Moab and Zoar formed the southern fortified girdle of the land; and Zoar, on the south-western tongue of land which runs into the Dead Sea, was the uttermost fortress of Moab, looking over towards Judah; and in its depressed situation below the level of the sea it formed, as it were, the opposite pole of Kir Moab, the highest point in the high land itself. Hence we agree with Jerome, who adopts the rendering *vectes ejus usque ad Segor*, whereas all the modern translators have taken the word in the sense of *fugitives*. *‘Eglath shlishiyyâh*, which Rosenmüller, Knobel, Drechsler, Meier, and others have taken quite unnecessarily as a proper name, is either in apposition to Zoar or to Moab. In the former case it is a distinguishing epithet. An ox of the three years, or more literally of the third year (cf., *mshullesheth*, Gen. 15:9), i.e., a three-year-old ox, is one that is still in all the freshness and fulness of its strength, and that has not yet been exhausted by the length of time that it has worn the yoke. The application of the term to the Moabitish nation is favoured by Jer. 46:20, where Egypt is called “a very fair heifer” (*‘eglâh yephêh-phiyyâh*), whilst Babylon is called the same in Jer. 50:11 (cf., Hos. 4:16; 10:11). And in the same way, according to the LXX, Vulg., Targum, and Gesenius, Moab is called *juvenca tertii anni, h. e. indomita jugoque non assueta*, as a nation that was still in the vigour of youth, and if it had

hitherto borne the yoke, had always shaken it off again. But the application of it to Zoar is favoured (1) by Jer. 48:34, where this epithet is applied to another Moabitish city; (2) by the accentuation; and (3) by the fact that in the other case we should expect *brîchâh* (the three-year-old heifer, i.e., Moab, is a fugitive to Zoar: vid., Luzzatto). Thus Zoar, the fine, strong, and hitherto unconquered city, is now the destination of the wildest flight before the foe that is coming from the north. A blow has fallen upon Joab, that is more terrible than any that has preceded it.

Isaiah 15:5b, 6. In a few co-ordinate clauses the prophet now sets before us the several scenes of mourning and desolation. Vv. 5b, 6. *“For the mountain slope of Luhith they ascend with weeping; for on the road to Horonayim they lift up a cry of despair. For the waters of Nimrim are waste places from this time forth: for the grass is dried up, the vegetation wasteth away, the green is gone.”* The road to *Luhith* (according to the *Onom.* between Ar-Moab and Zoar, and therefore in the centre of Moabitis proper) led up a height, and the road to *Horonayim* (according to Jer. 48:5) down a slope. Weeping, they ran up to the mountain city to hide themselves there (*bo*, as in Ps. 24:3; in Jer. 48:5 it is written incorrectly *בְּכִי*). Raising loud cries of despair, they stand in front of *Horonayim*, which lay below, and was more exposed to the enemy. *יְעָרְרוּ* is softened from *יְעָרְרוּ* (possibly to increase the resemblance to an echo), like *כוֹכֵב* from *כְּבֹכֵב*. The Septuagint renders it very well, *κραυγῆν συντριμμῶ ἐξαναγεροῦσιν*,—an unaccustomed expression of intense and ever renewed cries at the threatening danger of utter destruction, and with the hope of procuring relief and assistance (*sheber*, as in Isa. 1:28; 30:26). From the farthest south the scene would suddenly be transferred to the extreme north of the territory of Moab, if *Nimrim* were the *Nimra* (*Beth-Nimra*, Talm. *nimrin*) which was situated near to the Jordan in Gilead, and therefore farther north than any of the places previously

mentioned, and the ruins of which lie a little to the south of Salt, and are still called *Nimrin*. But the name itself, which is derived from the vicinity of fresh water (Arab. *nemir*, *nemîr*, clear, pure, sound), is one of frequent occurrence; and even to the south of Moabitis proper there is a *Wadi Numere*, and a brook called *Moyet Numere* (two diminutives: "dear little stream of Nimra"), which flows through stony tracks, and which formerly watered the country (Burckhardt, Seetzen, and De Saulcy). In all probability the ruins of *Numere* by the side of this wady are the Nimrim referred to here, and the waters of the brook the "waters of Nimrim" (*me Nimrim*). The waters that flowed fresh from the spring had been filled up with rubbish by the enemy, and would now probably lie waste for ever (a similar expression to that in Isa. 17:2). He had gone through the land scorching and burning, so that all the vegetation had vanished. On the miniature-like short sentences, see Isa. 29:20; 33:8, 9; 32:10; and on לֹא הָיָה ("it is not in existence," or "it has become *not*," i.e., annihilated), vid., Ezek. 21:32.

Isaiah 15:7–9. As Moabitis has thus become a great scene of conflagration, the Moabites cross the border and fly to Idumaea. The reason for this is given in sentences which the prophet again links on to one another with the particle *ci* (for). Vv. 7–9. "Therefore what has been spared, what has been gained, and their provision, they carry it over the willow-brook. For the scream has gone the round in the territory of Moab; the wailing of Joab resounds to Eglayim, and his wailing to BeeĪr-Elim. For the waters of Dimon are full of blood: for I suspend over Dimon a new calamity, over the escaped of Moab a lion, and over the remnant of the land." *Yithrâh* is what is superfluous or exceeds the present need, and *pekuddâh* (lit. a laying up, *depositio*) that which has been carefully stored; whilst *'âsâh*, as the derivative passage, Jer. 48:36, clearly shows (although the accusative in the whole of v. 7 is founded upon a different view: see Rashi), is an attributive clause (what has been made, worked out, or gained). All these things they carry across *nachal*

hâ'arâbim, i.e., not the desert-stream, as Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, and Knobel suppose, since the plural of *'arâbâh* is *'arâboth*, but either the Arab stream (LXX, Saad.), or the willow-stream, *torrens salicum* (Vulg.). The latter is more suitable to the connection; and among the rivers which flow to the south of the Arnon from the mountains of the Moabitis highlands down to the Dead Sea, there is one which is called *Wadi Sufsaf*, i.e., willow-brook (*Tzaphtzâphâh* is the name of a brook in Hebrew also), viz., the northern arm of the *Seil el-Kerek*. This is what we suppose to be intended here, and not the *Wadi el-Ahsa*, although the latter (probably the biblical *Zered*) is the boundary river on the extreme south, and separates Moab from Edom (*Kerek* from *Gebal*: see Ritter, *Erdk.* xv. 1223–4). Wading through the willow-brook, they carry their possessions across, and hurry off to the land of Edom, for their own land has become the prey of the foe throughout its whole extent, and within its boundaries the cry of wailing passes from *Eglayim*, on the south-west of Ar, and therefore not far from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea (Ezek. 47:10), as far as *Beer-Elim*, in the north-east of the land towards the desert (Num. 21:16–18; יַעַן must be supplied: Ewald, § 351, *a*), that is to say, if we draw a diagonal through the land, from one end to the other. Even the waters of *Dibon*, which are called *Dimon* here to produce a greater resemblance in sound to *dâm*, blood, and by which we are probably to understand the *Arnon*, as this was only a short distance off (just as in Judg. 5:19 the "waters of Megiddo" are the *Kishon*), are full of blood, so that the enemy must have penetrated into the very heart of the land in his course of devastation and slaughter. But what drives them across the willow-brook is not this alone; it is as if they forebode that what has hitherto occurred is not the worst or the last. Jehovah suspends (*shith*, as in Hos. 6:11) over *Dibon*, whose waters are already reddened with blood, *nôsâphôth*, something to be added, i.e., a still further judgment, namely *a lion*. The measure of Moab's misfortunes is not yet full: after the northern enemy, a lion will

come upon those that have escaped by flight or have been spared at home (on the expression itself, compare Isa. 10:20; 37:32, and other passages). This lion is no other than the basilisk of the prophecy against Philistia, but with this difference, that the basilisk represents one particular Davidic king, whilst the lion is Judah generally, whose emblem was the lion from the time of Jacob's blessing, in Gen. 49:9.

Isaiah 16

Isaiah 16:1. But just because this lion is Judah and its government, the summons goes forth to the Moabites, who have fled to Edom, and even to *Sela*, i.e., Petra (*Wady Musa*), near Mount Hor in Arabia Petraea, to which it gave its name, to turn for protection to Jerusalem. Ch. 16:1. "*Send a land-ruler's tribute of lambs from Sela desertwards to the mountain of the daughter of Zion.*" This verse is like a long-drawn trumpet-blast. The prophecy against Moab takes the same turn here as in Isa. 14:32; 18:7; 19:16ff., 23:18. The judgment first of all produces slavish fear; and this is afterwards refined into loving attachment. Submission to the house of David is Moab's only deliverance. This is what the prophet, weeping with those that weep, calls out to them in such long-drawn, vehement, and urgent tones, even into the farthest hiding-place in which they have concealed themselves, viz., the rocky city of the Edomites. The tribute of lambs which was due to the ruling prince is called briefly *car mōshēl-'eretz*. This tribute, which the holders of the pasture-land so rich in flocks have hitherto sent to Samaria (2 Kings 3:4), they are now to send to Jerusalem, the "mountain of the daughter of Zion" (as in Isa. 10:32, compared with Isa. 18:7), the way to which lay through "*the desert*," i.e., first of all in a diagonal direction through the Arabah, which stretched downwards to Aelath.

Isaiah 16:2. The advice does not remain without effect, but they embrace it eagerly. V. 2. "*And the daughters of Moab will be like birds fluttering about, a scared nest, at the fords of the Arnon.*" "The daughters of Moab," like "the daughters of Judah," for example, in Ps. 48:12,

are the inhabitants of the cities and villages of the land of Moab. They were already like birds soaring about (Prov. 27:8), because of their flight from their own land; but here, as we may see from the expression *וְהָיָה ... תְּהִי־יָנֵה*, the simile is intended to depict the condition into which they would be thrown by the prophet's advice. The figure (cf., Isa. 10:14) as well as the expression (cf., Isa. 17:2) is thoroughly Isaiah's. It is a state of anxious and timid indecision, resembling the fluttering to and fro of birds, that have been driven away from their nest, and wheel anxiously round and round, without daring to return to their old home. In this way the daughters of Moab, coming out of their hiding-places, whether nearer or more remote, show themselves at the fords of the Arnon, that is to say, on the very soil of their old home, which was situated between the Arnon and Wady el-Ahsa, and which was now devastated by the hand of a foe. *מִמְעִבְרוֹת לְאַרְנוֹן* we should regard as in apposition to *broth Moab* (the daughters of Moab), if *ma'bâroth* signifies the coast-lands (like *'ebrē* in Isa. 7:20), and not, as it invariably does, the fords. It is locative in its meaning, and is so accentuated.

Isaiah 16:3, 4a. There they show themselves, on the spot to which their land once reached before it passed into the possession of Israel,—*there*, on its farthest boundary in the direction towards Judah, which was seated above; and taking heart, address the following petitions to Zion, or to the Davidic court, on the other side. Vv. 3, 4a. "*Give counsel, form a decision, make thy shadow like night in the midst of noon; hide the outcasts, do not betray the wanderers. Let mine outcasts tarry in thee, Moab; be a covert to it from before the spoiler.*" In their extremity they appeal to Zion for counsel, and the once proud but now thoroughly humbled Moabites place the decision of their fate in the hands of the men of Judah (so according to the *Keri*), and stand before Zion praying most earnestly for shelter and protection. Their fear of the enemy is so great, that in the light of the noon-day sun they desire to be covered with the protecting shade of Zion as with the blackness of night,

that they may not be seen by the foe. The short-sentences correspond to the anxious urgency of the prayer (cf., Isa. 33:8). *Pelilâh* (cf., *peliliyyâh*, Isa. 28:7) is the decision of a judge (*pâlîl*); just as in Isa. 15:5 *shelishiyyâh* is the age and standing of three years. The figure of the shadow is the same as in Isa. 30:2, 3; 32:2, etc.; *nôdêd* is the same as in Isa. 21:14; *niddâchai* as in Isa. 11:12; *sêther* as in Isa. 32:2, and other passages; *shôdêd* as in Isa. 33:1; *mippnê* as in Isa. 21:15. The whole is word for word Isaiah's. There is no necessity to read *nidchê* instead of *niddâchai Mo'âb* in v. 4; still less is *ay* a collective termination, as in Isa. 20:4. Nor are the words to be rendered "my outcasts ... of Moab," and the expression to be taken as a *syntaxis ornata* (cf., Isa. 17:6). On the contrary, such an expression is absolutely impossible here, where the speaker is alluding to himself. It is better to abide by the punctuation as we have it, with *niddâchai* (*zakeph*) closing the first clause of v. 4a, and *Moab* (*tebir*, which is subordinate to the following *tiphchah*, and with this to *athnach*) opening the second as an absolute noun. This is the way in which we have rendered it above: "Moab ... be a shield to it ..." (though without taking *lâmô* as equivalent to *lô*).

Isaiah 16:4b, 5. The question then arises, By what means has Zion awakened such reverence and confidence on the part of Moab? This question is answered in vv. 4b, 5: "*For the extortioner is at an end, desolation has disappeared, treaders down are away from the land. And a throne is established by grace, and there sits thereon in truth in the tent of David one judging, and zealous for right, and practised in righteousness.*" The imperial world-power, which pressed out both marrow and blood (*mêtz*, a noun of the same form as *lêtz*, like *mîtz* in Prov. 30:33, pressure), and devastated and trod down everything (Isa. 29:20; 10:6; 33:1, cf., 8), is swept away from the land on this side of the Jordan; Jerusalem is not subject to it now, but has come forth more gloriously out of all her oppressions than ever she did before. And the throne of the kingdom of Judah has not fallen down, but by the manifestation of

Jehovah's grace has been newly established. There no longer sits thereon a king who dishonours Him, and endangers His kingdom; but the tent-roof of the fallen and now re-erected hut of David (Amos 9:11) is spread over a King in whom the truth of the promise of Jehovah is verified, inasmuch as justice and righteousness are realized through all that He does. The Messianic times must therefore have dawned (so the Targum understands it), since grace and truth (*chesed ve'emeth*) and "justice and righteousness" (*mishpât ûtzedâkâh*) are the divino-human signs of those times, and as it were their kindred genii; and who can here fail to recal to mind the words of Isa. 9:6 (cf., 33:5, 6)? The king depicted here is the same as "the lion out of Judah," threatened against Moab in Isa. 15:9. Only by thus submitting to Him and imploring His grace will it escape the judgment.

Isaiah 16:6. But if Moab does this, and the law of the history of Israel, which is that "a remnant shall return," is thus reflected in the history of Moab; v. 6 cannot possibly contain the answer which Moab receives from Zion, as the more modern commentators assume according to an error that has almost become traditional. On the contrary, the prophecy enters here upon a new stage, commencing with Moab's sin, and depicting the fate of Moab in still more elegiac strains. V. 6. "*We have heard of the pride of Moab, the very haughty (pride), his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath, the falsehood of his speech.*" The future self-humiliation of Moab, which would be the fruit of its sufferings, is here contrasted with the previous self-exaltation, of which these sufferings were the fruit. "*We have heard,*" says the prophet, identifying himself with his people. Boasting pompousness has hitherto been the distinguishing characteristic of Moab in relation to the latter (see Isa. 25:11). The heaping up of words of the same verbal stem (cf., Isa. 3:1) is here intended to indicate how thoroughly haughty was their haughtiness (cf., Rom. 7:13, "that sin might become exceeding sinful"), and how completely it had taken possession of Moab. It boasted and was full of rage towards Israel, to which, so far as it retained its

consciousness of the truth of Jehovah, the talk of Moab (לִּבְדָּי from בְּדָד = אֲבָדָה, אֲבָדָה, to talk at random) must necessarily appear as לֹא-כֵן, *not-right*, i.e., at variance with fact. These expressions of opinion had been heard by the people of God, and, as Jeremiah adds in Jer. 48:29, 30, by Israel's God as well.

Isaiah 16:7, 8. Therefore the delightful land is miserably laid waste. Vv. 7, 8. *“Therefore will Moab wail for Moab, everything will wail: for the grape-cakes of Kir-Hareseth will ye whine, utterly crushed. For the fruit-fields of Heshbon have faded away: the vine of Sibmah, lords of the nations its branches smote down; they reached to Ja’zer, trailed through the desert: its branches spread themselves out wide, crossed over the sea.”* The Lamed in *l’Moab* is the same as in Isa. 15:5, and in *la’ashishē*, which follows here. *Kir-Hareseth* (written *Kir-Heres* in v. 11, and by Jeremiah; compare 2 Kings 3:25, where the vowel-pointing is apparently false): *Heres* or *Hareseth* may possibly refer to the glazed tiles or grooved stones. As this was the principal fortress of Moab, and according to Isa. 15:1 it had already been destroyed, *’ashishē* appears to mean the “strong foundations,”—namely, as laid bare; in other words, the “ruins” (cf., Jer. 50:15, and *mōsdē* in Isa. 58:12). But in every other passage in which the word occurs it signifies a kind of cake; and as the devastation of the vines of Moab is made the subject of mourning afterwards, it has the same meaning here as in Hos. 3:1, namely *raisin-cakes*, or raisins pressed into the form of cakes. Such cakes as these may have been a special article of the export trade of Kir. Jeremiah has altered *’āshishē* into *’anshē* (Jer. 48:31), and thus made *men* out of the grapes. *Hāgāh* is to be understood in accordance with Isa. 38:14; 59:11 (viz., of the cooing of the dove); *’ac* (in good texts it is written with *mercha*, not with *makkeph*) according to Deut. 16:15. On the construction of the *pluralet. shadmoth*, compare Hab. 3:17. We have rendered the clause commencing with *baalē goyim* (lords of the nations) with the same amphibolism as we find in the Hebrew. It might mean either “lords of

the nations (*domini gentium*) smote down its branches” (viz., those of the vine of *Sibmah*; *hâlam* being used as in Isa. 41:7), or “its branches smote down (i.e., intoxicated) lords of the nations” (*dominos gentium*; *hâlam* having the same meaning as in the undisputed prophecy of Isaiah in Isa. 28:1). As the prophet enlarges here upon the excellence of the Moabitish wine, the latter is probably intended. The wine of *Sibmah* was so good, that it was placed upon the tables of monarchs, and so strong that it smote down, i.e., inevitably intoxicated, even those who were accustomed to good wines. This *Sibmah* wine was cultivated, as the prophet says, far and wide in Moab,—northwards as far as *Ja’zer* (between Ramoth, i.e., Salt, and Heshbon, now a heap of ruins), eastwards into the desert, and southwards across the Dead Sea,—a hyperbolical expression for close up to its shores. Jeremiah defines *yâm* (the sea) more closely as *yam Ja’zer* (the sea of Jazer; vid., Jer. 48:32), so that the hyperbole vanishes. But what sea can the sea of Jazer be? Probably some celebrated large pool, like the pools of Heshbon, in which the waters of the *Wady (Nahr) Sir*, which takes its rise close by, were collected. Seetzen found some pools still there. The “sea” (*yâm*) in Solomon’s temple shows clearly enough that the term *sea* was also commonly applied to artificial basins of a large size; and in Damascus the marble basins of flowing water in the halls of houses are still called *baharât*; and the same term is applied to the public reservoirs in all the streets of the city, which are fed by a network of aqueducts from the river *Baradâ*. The expression “break through the desert” (*tâ’u midbâr*) is also a bold one, probably pointing to the fact that, like the red wines of Hungary at the present time, they were trailing vines, which did not require to be staked, but ran along the ground.

Isaiah 16:9. The beauties of nature and fruitfulness of the land, which come into the possession of any nation, are gifts from the riches of divine goodness, remnants of the paradisaical commencement of the history of man, and types of its paradisaical close; and for

ISAIAH	Page 168
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

this very reason they are not matters of indifference to the spirit of prophecy. And for the same reason, it is not unworthy of a prophet, who predicts the renovation of nature and the perfecting of it into the beauty of paradise, to weep over such a devastation as that of the Moabitish vineyards which was now passing before his mind (cf., Isa. 32:12, 13). V. 9. "Therefore I bemoan the vines of Sibmah with the weeping of Jazer; I flood thee with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh, that Hêdad hath fallen upon thy fruit-harvest and upon thy vintage." A tetrastich, the Hebrew equivalent, in measure and movement, of a sapphic strophe. The circumstantiality of the vision is here swallowed up again by the sympathy of the prophet; and the prophecy, which is throughout as truly human as it is divine, becomes soft and flowing like an elegy. The prophet mingles his tears with the tears of Jazer. Just as the latter weeps for the devastated vines of *Sibmah*, so does he also weep. The form אָרַיִךְ, transposed from אָרַיִךְ = אָרַיִךְ (cf., Ewald, § 253, a, where it is explained as being a rare "voluntative" formation), corresponds to the elegiac tone of the whole strophe. *Heshbon* and *Elealeh*, those closely connected cities, with their luxuriant fields (*shdemoth*, v. 8), are now lying in ruins; and the prophet waters them with tears, because *hedad* has fallen upon the fruit-harvest and vintage of both the sister cities. In other instances the term *kâtzîr* is applied to the *wheat-harvest*; but here it is used in the same sense as *bâtzîr*, to which it is preferred on account of Isaiah's favourite alliteration, viz., with *kaytz* (compare, for example, the alliteration of *mistor* with *sêther* in Isa. 4:6). That it does not refer to the wheat-harvest here, but to the vintage, which was nearly coincident with the fruit-harvest (which is called *kaytz*, as in Isa. 28:4), is evident from the figure suggested in the word *hêdâd*, which was the shout raised by the pressers of the grapes, to give the time for moving their feet when treading out the wine (v. 10; Jer. 25:30). A *hêdâd* of this kind had fallen upon the rich floors of Heshbon-Elealeh, inasmuch as they

had been trodden down by enemies,—a *Hedad*, and yet no *Hedad*, as Jeremiah gives it in a beautiful oxymoron (Jer. 48:33), i.e., no joyous shout of actual grape-treaders.

Isaiah 16:10, 11. The prophet, to whose favourite words and favourite figures *Carmel* belongs, both as the name of a place and as the name of a thing, now proceeds with his picture, and is plunged still more deeply into mourning. Vv. 10, 11. "And joy is taken away, and the rejoicing of the garden-land; and there is no exulting, no shouting in the vineyards: the treader treads out no wine in the presses; I put an end to the *Hedad*. Therefore my bowels sound for Moab like a harp, and my inside for *Kir-Heres*." It is Jehovah who says "I put an end;" and consequently the words, "My bowels sound like a harp," or, as Jeremiah expresses it (Jer. 48:36), like flutes, might appear to be expressive of the feelings of Jehovah. And the Scriptures do not hesitate to attribute *mê'ayim* (*viscera*) to God (e.g., Isa. 63:15, Jer. 31:20). But as the prophet is the sympathizing subject throughout the whole of the prophecy, it is better, for the sake of unity, to take the words in this instance also as expressing the prophet's feelings. Just as the hand or plectrum touches the strings of the harp, so that they vibrate with sound; so did the terrible things that he had heard Jehovah say concerning Moab touch the strings of his inward parts, and cause them to resound with notes of pain. By the bowels, or rather entrails (*viscera*), the heart, liver, and kidneys are intended,—the highest organs of the Psyche, and the sounding-board, as it were, of those "hidden sounds" which exist in every man. God conversed with the prophet "in the spirit;" but what passed there took the form of individual impressions in the domain of the soul, in which impressions the bodily organs of the psychical life sympathetically shared. Thus the prophet saw in the spirit the purpose of God concerning Moab, in which he could not and would not make any change; but it threw his soul into all the restlessness of pain.

Isaiah 16:12. The ultimate reason for this restlessness is, that Moab does not know the living God. V. 12. "And it will come to pass, when

ISAIAH	Page 169
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

it is seen that Moab is weary with weeping upon the mountain height, and enters into its sanctuary to pray, it will not gain anything."

נְרָאָה נְרָאָה, a pictorial assonance, such as Isaiah delights in. נְרָאָה is transferred from the Israelitish worship (appearance before God in His temple) to the heathen; syntactically, *si apparuerit, etc.*, with *Vav* before the apodosis. It would be with the Moabites as with the priests of Baal in the time of Elijah (1 Kings 18:26ff.).

Isaiah 16:13. The *massa* is now brought to a close, and there follows an epilogue which fixes the term of the fulfilment of what is not predicted now for the first time, from the standpoint of the anticipated history. V. 13. *"This is the word which Jehovah spake long ago concerning Moab. And now Jehovah speaketh thus: In three years, like years of a hireling, the glory of Moab is disgraced, together with all the multitude of the great; a remnant is left, contemptibly small, not great at all."* The time fixed is the same as in Isa. 20:3. Of working time the hirer remits nothing, and the labourer gives nothing in. The statement as to the time, therefore, is intended to be taken exactly: three years, not more, rather under than over. Then will the old saying of God concerning Moab be fulfilled. Only a remnant, a contemptible remnant, will be left (וְשָׂרָר, cf., וּמְשׁוֹשׁ, Isa. 8:6, in sense equivalent to וְשָׂרָר); for every history of the nations is but the shadow of the history of Israel.

The *massa* in Isa. 15:1–16:12 was a word that had already gone forth from Jehovah "long ago." This statement may be understood in three different senses. In the *first* place, Isaiah may mean that older prophecies had already foretold essentially the same concerning Moab. But what prophecies? We may get an answer to this question from the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning Moab in Jer. 48. Jeremiah there reproduces the *massa Moab* of the book of Isaiah, but interweaves with it reminiscences (1) out of the *mâshal* on Moab in Num. 21:27–30; (2) out of Balaam's prophecy concerning Moab in Num. 24:17; (3) out of the prophecy of

Amos concerning Moab (Amos 2:1–3). And it might be to these earlier words of prophecy that Isaiah here refers (Hävernick, Drechsler, and others). But this is very improbable, as there is no ring of these earlier passages in the *massa*, such as we should expect if Isaiah had had them in his mind. *Secondly*, Isaiah might mean that Isa. 15:1ff. contained the prophecy of an older prophet, which he merely brought to remembrance in order to connect therewith the precise tenor of its fulfilment which had been revealed to him. This is at present the prevailing view. Hitzig, in a special work on the subject (1831), as well as in his Commentary, has endeavoured to prove, on the ground of 2 Kings 14:25, that in all probability *Jonah* was the author of the oracle which Isaiah here resumes. And Knobel, Maurer, Gustav Baur, and Thenius agree with him in this; whilst De Wette, Ewald, and Umbreit regard it as, at any rate, decidedly non-Messianic. If the conjecture that *Jonah* was the author could but be better sustained, we should heartily rejoice in this addition to the history of the literature of the Old Testament. But all that we know of *Jonah* is at variance with such a conjecture. He was a prophet of the type of *Elijah* and *Elisha*, in whom the eloquence of a prophet's words was thrown altogether into the shade by the energy of a prophet's deeds. His prophecy concerning the restoration of the kingdom of Israel to its old boundaries, which was fulfilled by the victories of *Jeroboam II*, we cannot therefore imagine to have been so pictorial or highly poetical as the *massa Moab* (which would only be one part of that prophecy) really is; and the fact that he was angry at the sparing of *Nineveh* harmonizes very badly with its elegiac softness and its flood of tears. Moreover, it is never intimated that the conquerors to whom *Moab* was to succumb would belong to the kingdom of Israel; and the hypothesis is completely overthrown by the summons addressed to *Moab* to send tribute to *Jerusalem*. But the conclusion itself, that the oracle must have originated with any older prophet whatever, is drawn from very insufficient premises. No doubt it is a thing altogether unparalleled even

in Isaiah, that a prophecy should assume so thoroughly the form of a *kinah*, or lamentation; still there are tendencies to this in Isa. 22:4 (cf., Isa. 21:3, 4), and Isaiah was an inexhaustible master of language of every character and colour. It is true we do light upon many expressions which cannot be pointed out anywhere else in the book of Isaiah, such as *baalē goyim*, *hedād*, *ylâlâh*, *yâra'*, *yithrâh*, *mâhir*, *mêtz*, *nosâphoth*, *pekuddâh* (provision, possession); and there is something peculiar in the circular movement of the prophecy, which is carried out to such an extent in the indication of reason and consequence, as well as in the perpetually returning, monotonous connection of the sentences by *ci* (for) and *'al-cên* (*lâcên*, therefore), the former of which is repeated twice in Isa. 15:1, three times in Isa. 15:8, 9, and four times in succession in Isa. 15:5, 6. But there is probably no prophecy, especially in Isa. 13–23, which does not contain expressions that the prophet uses nowhere else; and so far as the conjunctions *ci* and *'al-cên* (*lâcên*), are concerned, Isaiah crowds them together in other passages as well, and here almost to monotony, as a natural consequence of the prevailing elegiac tone. Besides, even Ewald can detect the characteristics of Isaiah in Isa. 16:1–6; and you have only to dissect the whole rhetorically, syntactically, and philologically, with the carefulness of a Caspari, to hear throughout the ring of Isaiah's style. And whoever has retained the impression which he brought with him from the oracle against Philistia, will be constrained to say, that not only the stamp and outward form, but also the spirit and ideas, are thoroughly Isaiah's. Hence the third possible conjecture must be the correct one. *Thirdly*, then, Isaiah may mean that the fate of Moab, which he has just proclaimed, was revealed to him long ago; and the addition made now is, that it will be fulfilled in exactly three years. שָׁנָה does not necessarily point to a time antecedent to that of Isaiah himself (compare Isa. 44:8; 48:3, 5, 7, with 2 Sam. 15:34). If we assume that what Isaiah predicts down to Isa. 16:12 was revealed to him in the year that Ahaz died, and that the epilogue

reckons from the third or tenth year of Hezekiah, in either case the interval is long enough for the *mê'âz* (from of old). And we decide in favour of this. Unfortunately, we know nothing certain as to the time at which the three years commence. The question whether it was Shalmanassar, Sargon, or Sennacherib who treated the Moabites so harshly, is one that we cannot answer. In Herodotus (ii. 141), Sennacherib is called "king of the Arabians and Assyrians;" and Moab might be included in the Arabians. In any case, after the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy in the Assyrian times, there was still a portion left, the fulfilment of which, according to Jer. 48, was reserved for the Chaldeans.

Isaiah 17

The Oracle Concerning Damascus and Israel—Ch. 17

Isaiah 17. From the Philistines on the west, and the Moabites on the east, the prophecy relating to the neighbouring nations now turns, without any chronological order, to the people of Damascene Syria on the north. The curse pronounced on them, however, falls upon the kingdom of Israel also, because it has allied itself with heathen Damascus, in opposition to its own brother tribe to the south, as well as to the Davidic government; and by this unnatural alliance with a *zâr*, or stranger, had become a *zâr* itself. From the period of Hezekiah's reign, to which the *massa Moab* belongs, at least so far as its epilogue is concerned, we are here carried back to the reign of Ahaz, and indeed far beyond "the year that Ahaz died" (Isa. 14:28), to the very border of the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz,—namely, to the time when the league for the destruction of Judah had only just been concluded. At the time when Isaiah incorporated this oracle in his collection, the threats against the kingdoms of Damascus and Israel had long been fulfilled. Assyria had punished both of them. And Assyria itself had also been punished, as the fourth turn in the oracle indicates. Consequently the oracle stands here as a memorial of the truthfulness of the

ISAIAH	Page 171
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

prophecy; and it answers a further purpose still, viz., to furnish a rich prophetic consolation for the church of all times, when persecuted by the world, and sighing under the oppression of the kingdom of the world.

Isaiah 17:1-3. The first turn: vv. 1-3. *“Behold, Damascus must (be taken) away out of the number of the cities, and will be a heap of fallen ruins. The cities of Aroer are forsaken, they are given up to flocks, they lie there without any one scaring them away. And the fortress of Ephraim is abolished, and the kingdom of Damascus; and it happens to those that are left of Aram as to the glory of the sons of Israel, saith Jehovah of hosts.”* *“Behold,”* etc.: *hinnēh* followed by a participle indicates here, as it does everywhere else, something very near at hand. Damascus is removed *מְעַר* (= *מְהֵיֹת עֵר*, cf., 1 Kings 15:13), i.e., out of the sphere of existence as a city. It becomes *מְעֵי*, a heap of ruins. The word is used intentionally instead of *עֵי*, to sound as much as possible like *מְעַר*: a mutilated city, so to speak. It is just the same with Israel, which has made itself an appendage of Damascus. The “cities of Aroer” (*gen. appos.* Ges. § 114, 3) represent the land to the east of the Jordan: there the judgment upon Israel (executed by Tiglath-pileser) first began. There were two *Aroers*: an old Amoritish city allotted to the tribe of Reuben, viz., “Aroer on the Arnon” (Deut. 2:36; 3:12, etc.); and an old Ammonitish one, allotted to the tribe of Gad, viz., “Aroer before Rabbah” (Rabbath, Ammon, Josh. 13:25). The ruins of the former are *Arair*, on the lofty northern bank of the *Mugib*; but the situation of the latter has not yet been determined with certainty (see Comm. on Josh. 13:25). The “cities of Aroer” are these two *Aroers*, and the rest of the cities similar to it on the east of the Jordan; just as “the Orions” in Isa. 13:10 are Orion and other similar stars. We meet here again with a significant play upon the sound in the expression *’ârē ’Aro’ēr* (cities of Aroer): the name of Aroer was ominous, and what its name indicated would happen to the cities in its circuit. *עָרָר* means “to lay bare,” to pull down

(Jer. 51:58); and *עָרָרִי עָרִירִי* signifies a stark-naked condition, a state of desolation and solitude. After v. 1 has threatened Damascus in particular, and v. 2 has done the same to Israel, v. 3 comprehends them both. Ephraim loses the fortified cities which once served it as defences, and Damascus loses its rank as a kingdom. Those that are left of Aram, who do not fall in the war, become like the proud citizens of the kingdom of Israel, i.e., they are carried away into captivity. All this was fulfilled under Tiglath-pileser. The accentuation connects *שָׂרָר אֲרָם* (the remnant of Aram) with the first half of the verse; but the meaning remains the same, as the subject to *יִהְיֶה* is in any case the Aramaeans.

Isaiah 17:4-8. Second turn: vv. 4-8. *“And it comes to pass in that day, the glory of Jacob wastes away, and the fat of his flesh grows thin. And it will be as when a reaper grasps the stalks of wheat, and his arm mows off the ears; and it will be as with one who gathers together ears in the valley of Rephaim. Yet a gleaning remains from it, as at the olive-beating: two, three berries high up at the top; four, five in its, the fruit tree’s, branches, saith Jehovah the God of Israel. At that day will man look up to his Creator, and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel. And he will not look to the altars, the work of his hands; and what his fingers have made he will not regard, neither the Astartes nor the sun-gods.”* This second turn does not speak of Damascus, but simply of Israel, and in fact of all Israel, the range of vision widening out from Israel in the more restricted sense, so as to embrace the whole. It will all disappear, with the exception of a small remnant; but the latter will return. Thus “a remnant will return,” the law of Israel’s history, which is here shown first of all in its threatening aspect, and then in its more promising one. The reputation and prosperity to which the two kingdoms were raised by Jeroboam II and Uzziah would pass away. Israel was ripe for judgment, like a field of corn for the harvest; and it would be as when a reaper grasps the stalks that have shot up, and cuts off

the ears. *אֵישׁ קֶצִיר* is not used elliptically for *אֵישׁ קֶצִיר* (Gesenius), nor is it a definition of time (Luzzatto), nor an accusative of the object (Knobel), but a noun formed like *נְבִיא, פְּלִיל, פְּרִיץ*, and used in the sense of reaper (*kōtzēr* in other cases). The figure suggested here is more fully expanded in John 4 and Rev. 14. Hardly a single one will escape the judgment: just as in the broad plain of Rephaim, which slopes off to the south-west of Jerusalem as far as Bethlehem, where it is covered with rich fields of wheat, the collectors of ears leave only one or two ears lying scattered here and there.

Nevertheless a gleanings of Israel ("in it," viz., in Jacob, v. 4, Isa. 10:22) will be left, just as when the branches of the olive tree, which have been already cleared with the hand, are still further shaken with a stick, there still remain a few olives upon the highest branch (two, three; cf., 2 Kings 9:32), or concealed under the foliage of the branches. *"Its, the fruit tree's, branches:"* this is an elegant expression, as, for example, in Prov. 14:13; the carrying over of the ה to the second word is very natural in both passages (see Ges. § 121, b). This small remnant will turn with steadfast gaze to the living God, as is becoming in man as such (*hâ'âdâm*), and not regard the idols as worthy of any look at all, at least of any reverential look. As *hammânim* are here images of the sun-god *בעל חמן*, which is well known from the Phoenician monuments, *'ashêrim* (for which we find, though more rarely, *'ashêroth*) apparently signifies images of the moon-goddess. And the combination of "Baal, Asherah, and all the host of heaven" in 2 Kings 23:4, as well as the surname "queen of heaven" in Jer. 7:18; 44:18, 19, appears to require this (Knobel). But the latest researches have proved that *'Ashêrâh* is rather the Semitic Aphrodite, and therefore the planet Venus, which was called the "little luck" (*es-sa'd el-as'gar*) by the Arabs, in distinction from *Musteri* (Jupiter), or "the great luck." And with this the name *'Asherah* the "lucky" (i.e., the source of luck or prosperity) and the similar surname given to the Assyrian *Istar* agree; for *'Asherah* is

the very same goddess as *'Ashtoreth*, whose name is thoroughly Arian, and apparently signifies the star (Ved. *stri* = star; Zend. *stare*; Neo-Pers. *sitâre*, used chiefly for the morning star), although Rawlinson (without being able to suggest any more acceptable interpretation) speaks of this view as "not worthy of much attention." Thus *Asherim* is used to signify the *bosquets* (shrubberies) or trees dedicated to the Semitic Aphrodite (Deut. 16:21; compare the verbs used to signify their removal, *גָּדַע, בָּרַח, נָתַשׁ*); but here it probably refers to her statues or images (2 Kings 21:7; compare the *miphletzeth* in 1 Kings 15:13, which is used to denote an obscene exhibition). For these images of the sun-god and of the goddess of the morning star, the remnant of Israel, that has been purified by the smelting furnace of judgment, has no longer any eye. Its looks are exclusively directed to the one true God of man. The promise, which here begins to dawn at the close of the second turn, is hidden again in the third, though only to break forth again in the fourth with double or triple intensity.

Isaiah 17:9–11. Third turn: vv. 9–11. *"In that day will his fortified cities be like the ruins of the forest and of the mountain top, which they cleared before the sons of Israel: and there arises a waste place. For thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not thought of the Rock of thy stronghold, therefore thou plantedst charming plantations, and didst set them with strange vines. In the day that thou plantedst, thou didst make a fence; and with the morning dawn thou madest thy sowing to blossom: a harvest heap in the day of deep wounds and deadly sorrow of heart."* The statement in v. 3, "The fortress of Ephraim is abolished," is repeated in v. 9 in a more descriptive manner. The fate of the strongly fortified cities of Ephraim would be the same as that of the old Canaanitish castles, which were still to be discerned in their antiquated remains, either in the depths of forests or high up on the mountains. The word *'azubâh*, which the early translators quite misunderstood, signifies, both here and in Isa. 6:12, desolate places that have

gone to ruin. They also misunderstood הַחֲרִישׁ וְהָאֶמֶר. The Septuagint renders it, by a bold conjecture, οἱ Ἀμορρῶται καὶ οἱ Εὐβαῖοι; but this is at once proved to be false by the inversion of the names of the two peoples, which was very properly thought to be necessary. הָאֶמֶר undoubtedly signifies the top of a tree, which is quite unsuitable here. But as even this meaning points back to אֶמֶר, *extollere, efferre* (see at Ps. 94:4), it may also mean the mountain-top. The name *hâ'emori* (the Amorites: those who dwell high up in the mountains) proves the possibility of this; and the prophet had this name in his mind, and was guided by it in his choice of a word. The subject of עָבְדוֹ is self-evident. And the reason why only the ruins in forests and on mountains are mentioned is, that other places, which were situated on the different lines of traffic, merely changed their inhabitants when the land was taken by Israel. The reason why the fate of Ephraim's fortified castles was the same as that of the Amoritish castles, which were then lying in ruins, was that Ephraim, as stated in v. 10, had turned away from its true rocky stronghold, namely from Jehovah. It was a consequence of this estrangement from God, that Ephraim planted נִטְעֵי נְעֻמִים, plantations of the nature of pleasant things, or pleasant plantations (compare on Ps. 78:49, and Ewald, § 287, *ab*), i.e., cultivated all kinds of sensual accompaniments to its worship, in accordance with its heathen propensities; and sowed, or rather (as *zemôrâh* is the layer of a vine) "set," this garden-ground, to which the suffix *ennu* refers, with strange grapes, by forming an alliance with a *zâr* (a stranger), namely the king of Damascus. On the very day of the planting, Ephraim fenced it carefully (this is the meaning of the *pilpel, sigsēg* from שָׁג = סָג, not "to raise," as no such verb as שָׁג = שָׁגָה, שָׁגָא, can be shown to exist), that is to say, he ensured the perpetuity of these sensuous modes of worship as a state religion, with all the shrewdness of a Jeroboam (see Amos 7:13). And the very next morning he had brought into blossom what he

had sown: the foreign layer had shot up like a hot-house plant, i.e., the alliance had speedily grown into a hearty agreement, and had already produced one blossom at any rate, viz., the plan of a joint attack upon Judah. But this plantation, which was so flattering and promising for Israel, and which had succeeded so rapidly, and to all appearance so happily, was a harvest heap for the day of the judgment. Nearly all modern expositors have taken *nēd* as the third person (after the form *mēth*, Ges. § 72, Anm. 1), and render it "the harvest flees;" but the third person of נָד would be נָד, like the participle in Gen. 4:12; whereas the meaning *cumulus* (a heap), which it has elsewhere as a substantive, is quite appropriate, and the statement of the prophet resembles that of the apostle in Rom. 2:5. The day of the judgment is called "the day of נְחֻלָּה" (or, according to another reading, נְחֻלָּה), not, however, as equivalent to *nachal*, a stream (Luzzatto, *in giorno di fiumana*), as in Ps. 124:4 (the tone upon the last syllable proves this), nor in the sense of "in the day of possession," as Rosenmüller and others suppose, since this necessarily gives to נָד the former objectionable and (by the side of קִצִיר) improbable verbal sense; but as the feminine of *nachleh*, written briefly for *maccâh nachlâh* (Jer. 14:17), i.e., inasmuch as it inflicts grievous and mortal wounds. Ephraim's plantation is a harvest heap for that day (compare *kâtzir*, the harvest of punishment, in Hos. 6:11 and Jer. 51:33); and the hope set upon this plantation is changed into כְּאֵב אָנוּשׁ, a desperate and incurable heartfelt sorrow (Jer. 30:15). The organic connection between vv. 12-14, which follow, and the oracle concerning Damascus and Israel, has also been either entirely misunderstood, or not thoroughly appreciated. The connection is the following: As the prophet sets before himself the manner in which the sin of Ephraim is punished by Asshur, as the latter sweeps over the Holy Land, the promise which already began to dawn in the second turn bursts completely through: the world-power is the

instrument of punishment in the hands of Jehovah, but not for ever.

Isaiah 17:12-14. Fourth turn: vv. 12-14. *“Woe to the roaring of many nations: like the roaring of seas they roar; and to the rumbling of nations, like the rumbling of mighty waters they rumble! Nations, like the rumbling of many waters they rumble; and He threatens it: then it flies far away, and is chased like chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a cloud of dust before the gale. At eventide, behold consternation; and before the morning dawn it is destroyed: this is the portion of our plunderers, and the lot of our robbers.”* It is the destruction of Asshur that the prophet is predicting here (as in Isa. 14:24-27; 29:5-8, etc.), though not of Asshur as Asshur, but of Asshur as the imperial kingdom, which embraced a multitude of nations (Isa. 22:6; 8:9, 10; 14:26; 29:7, 8) all gathered together under the rule of one will, to make a common attack upon the church of God. The connection between this fourth turn and the third is precisely the same as between Isa. 8:9, 10, and Isa. 8:6-8. The exclamation of woe (*hoi*) is an expression of pain, as in Isa. 10:1; and this is followed by a proclamation of the judgment of wrath. The description of the rolling wave of nations is as pictorial as the well-known *illi inter sese, etc.*, of the Cyclops in Virgil. “It spreads and stretches out, as if it would never cease to roll, and roar, and surge, and sweep onward in its course” (Drechsler). In the expression “it” (*bo*) in v. 13a, the many surging nations are kneaded together, as it were, into one mass. It costs God simply a threatening word; and this mass all flies apart (*mimmerchâk* like *mêrâchôk*, Isa. 23:7), and falls into dust, and whirls about in all directions, like the chaff of threshing-floors in high situations, or like dust whirled up by the storm. The judgment commences in the evening, and rages through the night; and before the morning dawns, the army of nations raised by the imperial power is all destroyed (compare Isa. 29:7, 8, and the fulfilment in Isa. 37:36). The fact that the oracle concerning Damascus in its fourth stage takes so comprehensive and, so far as Israel is concerned, so promising a form, may be

explained on the ground that Syria was the forerunner of Asshur in the attack upon Israel, and that the alliance between Israel and Syria became the occasion of the complications with Asshur. If the substance of the *massâ Dammesek* (the oracle concerning Damascus) had been restricted to the prophecy contained in the name Mahershalal, the element of promise so characteristic of the prophecies against the nations of the world would be entirely wanting. But the shout of triumph, “This is the portion,” etc., supplied a terminal point, beyond which the *massa* could not go without the sacrifice of its unity. We are therefore warranted in regarding Isa. 18 as an independent prophecy, notwithstanding its commencement, which apparently forms a continuation of the fourth strophe of Isa. 17.

Isaiah 18

Ethiopia's Submission to Jehovah

Isaiah 18. The notion that Isa. 18:4-6 contains an account of the judgment of Jehovah upon Ethiopia is quite an untenable one. The prophet is here predicting the destruction of the army of Sennacherib in his usual way, and in accordance with the actual fulfilment (Isa. 37:36). The view which Hofmann has adopted from the Jewish expositors—namely, that the people so strangely described at the commencement and close of the prophecy is the Israelitish nation—is equally untenable. It is Ethiopia. Taking both these facts together, then, the conclusion to which we are brought is, that the prophet is here foretelling the effect that will be produced upon Ethiopia by the judgment which Jehovah is about to inflict upon Asshur. But it is altogether improbable either that the prophecy falls later than the Assyrian expedition against Egypt (as Schegg supposes), or that the Ethiopian ambassadors mentioned here are despatched to Judah to seek for friendship and aid (as Ewald, Knobel, Meier, and Thenius maintain). The expedition was still impending, and that against Judah was the means to this further end. The ambassadors are not sent to Judah, but carry commands with the

most stirring despatch to every province under Ethiopian rule. The Ethiopian kingdom is thrown into the greatest excitement in the face of the approaching Assyrian invasion, and the messengers are sent out to raise the militia. At that time both Egypts were governed by the Ethiopian (or twenty-fifth) dynasty, *Sabako* the Ethiopian having made himself master of the country on the Lower Nile. The king of Egypt who was contemporaneous with Sennacherib was the *Tirhaka* of the Old Testament, the *Tarakos* of Manetho, and the *Tearkon* of Strabo,—a great conqueror, according to Megasthenes, like Sesostris and Nebuchadnezzar, who had carried his conquests as far as the Pillars of Hercules (Strabo, xv. 1, 6). This explains the strangely sounding description given in vv. 2 and 7 of the Ethiopian people, which had the universal reputation in antiquity of gigantic strength and invincibility. It is impossible to determine the length of time that intervened between the composition of the prophecy and the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, in which the Assyrian army commenced the expedition across Judah to Egypt. The event which the prophecy foretells—namely, that the judgment of Jehovah upon Asshur would be followed by the submission of Ethiopia to Jehovah—was only partially and provisionally fulfilled (2 Chron. 32:23). And there is nothing to surprise us in this, inasmuch as in the prophecies delivered before the destruction of Assyria the latter always presented itself to the mind of the prophet as the kingdom of the world; and consequently the prophecy had also an eschatological feature, which still remained for a future and remote fulfilment.

Isaiah 18:1, 2a. The prophecy commences with *hoi*, which never signifies *heus*, but always *vae* (woe). Here, however, it differs from Isa. 17:12, and is an expression of compassion (cf., Isa. 55:1, Zech. 2:10) rather than of anger; for the fact that the mighty Ethiopia is oppressed by the still mightier Asshur, is a humiliation which Jehovah has prepared for the former. Vv. 1, 2a: “Woe to the land of the whirring of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Cush, that sends

ambassadors into the sea and in boats of papyrus over the face of the waters.” The land of *Cush* commences, according to Ezek. 29:10 (cf., 30:6), where Upper Egypt ends. The *Sevēneh* (*Aswân*), mentioned by Ezekiel, is the boundary-point at which the Nile enters *Mizraim* proper, and which is still a depot for goods coming from the south down the Nile. The *naharē-Cush* (rivers of Cush) are chiefly those that surround the Cushite *Seba* (Gen. 10:7). This is the name given to the present *Sennâr*, the Meroitic island which is enclosed between the White and Blue Nile (the *Astapos* of Ptolemy, or the present *Bahr el-Abyad*, and the *Astaboras* of Ptolemy, or the present *Bahr el-Azrak*). According to the latest researches, more especially those of Speke, the White Nile, which takes its rise in the Lake of Nyanza, is the chief source of the Nile. The latter, and the Blue Nile, whose confluence (*makran*) with it takes place in lat. 15° 25', are fed by many larger or smaller tributary streams (as well as mountain torrents); the Blue Nile even more than the Nile proper. And this abundance of water in the land to the south of *Sevēneh*, and still farther south beyond *Seba* (or Meroë), might very well have been known to the prophet as a general fact. The land “beyond the rivers of Cush” is the land bounded by the sources of the Nile, i.e., (including Ethiopia itself in the stricter sense of the word) the south land under Ethiopian rule that lay still deeper in the heart of the country, the land of its African auxiliary tribes, whose names (which probably include the later Nubians and Abyssinians), as given in 2 Chron. 12:3, Nahum 3:9, Ezek. 30:5, Jer. 46:9, suppose a minuteness of information which has not yet been attained by modern research. To this Ethiopia, which is designated by its farthest limits (compare Zeph. 3:10, where Wolff, in his book of Judith, erroneously supposes Media to be intended as the Asiatic Cush), the prophets give the strange name of *eretz tziltzal cenâphaim*. This has been interpreted as meaning “the land of the wings of an army with clashing arms” by Gesenius and others; but *cenâphaim* does not occur in this sense, like *'agappim* in Ezekiel. Others render it “the land of the noise of waves” (Umbreit); but

cenâphaim cannot be used of waters except in such a connection as Isa. 8:8. Moreover, *tziltzal* is not a fitting onomatopoeic word either for the clashing of arms or the noise of waves. Others, again, render it “the land of the double shadow” (Grotius, Vitranga, Knobel, and others); but, however appropriate this epithet might be to Ethiopia as a tropical land, it is very hazardous to take the word in a sense which is not sustained by the usage of the language; and the same objection may be brought against Luzzatto’s “land of the far-shadowing defence.” Shelling has also suggested another objection,—namely, that the shadow thrown even in tropical lands is not a double one, falling northwards and southwards at the same time, and therefore that it cannot be figuratively described as double-winged. *Tziltzal cenâphaim* is the buzzing of the wings of insects, with which Egypt and Ethiopia swarmed on account of the climate and the abundance of water: *לְצִלְצַל*, *constr.* *לְצִלְצַל*, *tinnitus*, *stridor*, a primary meaning from which the other three meanings of the word—cymbal, harpoon (a whirring dart), and grasshopper—are derived. In Isa. 7:18 the forces of Egypt are called “the fly from the end of the rivers of Egypt.” Here Egypt and Ethiopia are called the land of the whirring of wings, inasmuch as the prophet had in his mind, under the designation of swarms of insects, the motley swarms of different people included in this great kingdom that were so fabulously strange to an Asiatic. Within this great kingdom messengers were now passing to and fro upon its great waters in boats of papyrus (on *gōme*, Copt. *gōme*, Talm. *gāmi*, see at Job 8:11), Greek βαρίδες παπύρινας βαρίς, from the Egyptian *bari*, *bali*, a barque). In such vessels as these, and with Egyptian tackle, they went as far as the remote island of Taprobane. The boats were made to clap together (*plicatiles*), so as to be carried past the cataracts (Parthey on *Plutarch. de Iside*, pp. 198–9). And it is to these messengers in their paper boats that the appeal of the prophet is addressed.

Isaiah 18:2b, 3. He sends them home; and what they are to say to their own people is generalized into an announcement to the whole earth. Vv. 2b, 3. “Go, swift messengers, to the people stretched out and polished, to the terrible people far away on the other side, to the nation of command upon command and treading down, whose land rivers cut through. All ye possessors of the globe and inhabitants of the earth, when a banner rises on the mountains, look ye; and when they blow the trumpets, hearken!” We learn from what follows to what it is that the attention of Ethiopia and all the nations of the earth is directed: it is the destruction of Asshur by Jehovah. They are to attend, when they observe the two signals, the banner and the trumpet-blast; these are decisive moments. Because Jehovah was about to deliver the world from the conquering might of Assyria, against which the Ethiopian kingdom was now summoning all the means of self-defence, the prophet sends the messengers home. Their own people, to which he sends them home, are elaborately described. They are *memushâk*, stretched out, i.e., very tall (LXX ἔθνος μετέωρον), just as the Sabaeans are said to have been in Isa. 45:14. They are also *mōrât* = *mmorât* (Ges. § 52, Anm. 6), smoothed, *politus*, i.e., either not disfigured by an ugly growth of hair, or else, without any reference to depilation, but rather with reference to the bronze colour of their skin, smooth and shining with healthy freshness. The description which Herodotus gives of the Ethiopians, μέγιστοι καὶ κάλλιστοι ἀνθρώπων πάντων (iii. 20), quite answers to these first two predicates. They are still further described, with reference to the wide extent of their kingdom, which reached to the remotest south, as “the terrible nation *מְגֵהוּא וְהִלְאָה*,” i.e., from this point, where the prophet meets with the messengers, farther and farther off (compare 1 Sam. 20:21, 22, but not 1 Sam. 18:9, where the expression has a chronological meaning, which would be less suitable here, where everything is so pictorial, and which is also to be rejected, because *מְגֵהוּא* cannot be equivalent to *מְאֻשָּׁר* *הוּא*; cf., Nahum 2:9). We may see from Isa.

28:10, 13, what *kāv* (*kāv*, with connecting accusatives and before *makkeph*), a measuring or levelling line, signifies, when used by the prophet with the reduplication which he employs here: it is a people of “command upon command,”—that is to say, a commanding nation; (according to Ewald, Knobel, and others, *kāv* is equivalent to the Arabic *kūwe*, strength, a nation of double or gigantic strength.) “*A people of treading down*” (*sc.*, of others; *mbūsah* is a second genitive to *goi*), i.e., one which subdues and tramples down wherever it appears. These are all distinctive predicates—a nation of imposing grandeur, a ruling and conquering nation. The last predicate extols its fertile land. **אֶרֶץ** we take not in the sense of *diripere*, or as equivalent to *bāzaz*, like **מִשָּׁה**, to melt, equivalent to *māsas*, but in the sense of *findere*, i.e., as equivalent to **עָרַב**, like **אֶרֶץ**, to sip = **עָרַב**. For it is no praise to say that a land is scoured out, or washed away, by rivers. Böttcher, who is wrong in describing this chapter as “perhaps the most difficult in the whole of the Old Testament,” very aptly compares with it the expression used by Herodotus (ii. 108), *κατεμύθη ἡ Αἴγυπτος*. But why this strange elaboration instead of the simple name? There is a divine irony in the fact that a nation so great and glorious, and (though not without reason, considering its natural gifts) so full of self-consciousness, should be thrown into such violent agitation in the prospect of the danger that threatened it, and should be making such strenuous exertions to avert that danger, when Jehovah the God of Israel was about to destroy the threatening power itself in a night, and consequently all the care and trouble of Ethiopia were utterly needless.

Isaiah 18:4–6. The prophet knows for certain that the messengers may be home and announce this act of Jehovah to their own people and to all the world. Vv. 4–6. “*For thus hath Jehovah spoken to me: I will be still, and will observe upon my throne during clear weather in sunshine, during a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For before the harvest, when the blossom falls off, and the fruit becomes the*

ripening grape: then will He cut off the branches with pruning-hooks; and the tendrils He removes, breaks off. They are left altogether to the birds of prey on the mountains, and to the cattle of the land; and the birds of prey summer thereon, and all the cattle of the land will winter thereon.” The prophecy explains itself here, as is very frequently the case, especially with Isaiah; for the literal words of v. 6 show us unquestionably what it is that Jehovah will allow to develop itself so prosperously under favourable circumstances, and without any interposition on His part, until He suddenly and violently puts an end to the whole, must as it is approaching perfect maturity. It is the might of Assyria. Jehovah quietly looks on from the heavenly seat of His glorious presence, without disturbing the course of the thing intended. This quietness, however, is not negligence, but, as the hortative expressions show, a well-considered resolution. The two *Caphs* in v. 4 are not comparative, but indicate the time. He remains quiet whilst there is clear weather with sunshine (**לְיָ** indicating continuance, as in Jer. 8:18, 1 Sam. 14:32), and whilst there is a dew-cloud in the midst of that warmth, which is so favourable for the harvest, by causing the plants that have been thoroughly heated in the day and refreshed at night by the dew, to shoot up and ripen with rapidity and luxuriance. The plant thought of, as v. 5 clearly shows, is the vine. By *liphnē kâtzir* (before the harvest) we are either to understand the period just before the wheat-harvest, which coincides with the flowering of the grape; or, since Isaiah uses *kâtzir* for *bâzri* in Isa. 16:9, the time at the close of the summer, immediately preceding the vintage. Here again the *Caph* indicates the time. When the blossoming is over, so that the flower fades away, and the fruit that has set becomes a ripening grape (*boser*, as in Job 15:33, not in the sense of *labruscum*, but of *omphax*; and *gâmal*, *maturescere*, as in Num. 17:23, *maturare*), He cuts off the branches (*zalzallim*, from *zilzēl*, to swing to and fro; compare the Arabic *dâliye*, a vine-branch, from *dalâ*, to hang long and loose) upon which the nearly ripened grapes are hanging, and removes or nips off the tendrils

(*netishoth*, as in Jer. 5:10, from *nâtash*, to stretch far out; *niphâl*, to twist about a long way, Isa. 16:8, compare Jer. 48:32); an intentional asyndeton with a pictorial sound. The words of Jehovah concerning Himself have here passed imperceptibly into words of the prophet concerning Jehovah. The ripening grapes, as v. 6 now explains, are the Assyrians, who were not far from the summit of their power; the fruit-branches that are cut off and nipped in pieces are their corpses, which are now through both summer and winter the food of swarms of summer birds, as well as of beasts of prey that remain the whole winter through. This is the act of divine judgment, to which the approaching exaltation of the banner, and the approaching blast of trumpets, is to call the attention of the people of Ethiopia.

Isaiah 18:7. What effect this act of Jehovah would have upon the Ethiopian kingdom, if it should now take place, is described in v. 7: “*At that time will there be offered as a homage to Jehovah of hosts a nation stretched out and polished, and from a terrible people, far away on the other side; a nation of command upon command and treading down, whose land rivers cut through, at the place of the name of Jehovah of hosts, the mountain of Zion.*” עַם (a people), at the commencement, cannot possibly be equivalent to מַעַם (from a people). If it were taken in this sense, it would be necessary to make the correction accordingly, as Knobel has done; but the important parallels in Isa. 66:20 and Zeph. 3:10 are against this. Consequently ‘*am* and *goi* (people and nation) must be rendered as subjects; and the מֵן in מַעַם must be taken as partitive. Ethiopia is offered, i.e., offers itself, as a free-will offering to Jehovah, impelled irresistibly by the force of the impression made by the mighty act of Jehovah, or, as it is expressed in “the Titan among the Psalms” (Ps. 68:32, probably a Davidic psalm of the time of Hezekiah), “there come kingdoms of splendour out of Egypt; Cush rapidly stretches out its hands to Elohim.” In order that the greatness of this spiritual conquest might be fully appreciated, the description of this

strangely glorious people is repeated here; and with this poetical rounding, the prophecy itself, which was placed as a kind of overture before the following *massa Mitzraim* when the prophet collected the whole of his prophecies together, is brought to a close.

Isaiah 19

The Oracle Concerning Egypt

Isaiah 19. The three prophecies in Isa. 18, 19 and 20 really form a trilogy. The first (Isa. 18), which, like Isa. 1, the introduction to the whole, is without any special heading, treats in language of the sublimest pathos of *Ethiopia*. The second (Isa. 19) treats in a calmer and more descriptive tone of *Egypt*. The third (Isa. 20) treats of both *Egypt* and *Ethiopia* in the style of historic prose. The kingdom to which all three prophecies refer is one and the same, viz., the Egypto-Ethiopian kingdom; but whilst Isa. 18 refers to the ruling nation, Isa. 19 treats of the conquered one, and Isa. 20 embraces both together. The reason why such particular attention is given to Egypt in the prophecy, is that no nation on earth was so mixed up with the history of the kingdom of God, from the patriarchal times downwards, as Egypt was. And because Israel, as the law plainly enjoined upon it, was never to forget that it had been sheltered for a long time in Egypt, and there had grown into a great nation, and had received many benefits; whenever prophecy has to speak concerning Egypt, it is quite as earnest in its promises as it is in its threats. And thus the *massa* of Isaiah falls into two distinct halves, viz., a threatening one (vv. 1–15), and a promising one (vv. 18–25); whilst between the judgment and the salvation (in vv. 16 and 17) there stands the alarm, forming as it were a connecting bridge between the two. And just in proportion as the coil of punishments is unfolded on the one hand by the prophet, the promise is also unfolded in just as many stages on the other; and moving on in ever new grooves, rises at length to such a height, that it breaks not only through the limits of contemporaneous history, but even through

those of the Old Testament itself, and speaks in the spiritual language of the world-embracing love of the New Testament.

Isaiah 19:1. The oracle opens with a short introduction, condensing the whole of the substance of the first half into a few weighty words,—an art in which Isaiah peculiarly excelled. In this the name of Egypt, the land without an equal, occurs no less than three times. V. 1. *“Behold, Jehovah rideth upon a light cloud, and cometh to Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shake before Him, and the heart of Egypt melteth within it.”* Jehovah rides upon clouds when He is about to reveal Himself in His judicial majesty (Ps. 18:11); and in this instance He rides upon a light cloud, because it will take place rapidly. The word *kal* signifies both light and swift, because what is light moves swiftly; and even a light cloud, which is light because it is thin, is comparatively עב, i.e., literally dense, opaque, or obscure. The idols of Egypt shake (גוע, as in Isa. 6:4; 7:2), because Jehovah comes over them to judgment (cf., Ex. 12:12; Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:13): they must shake, for they are to be thrown down; and their shaking for fear is a shaking to their fall (גוע, as in Isa.

24:20; 29:9). The *Vav apodosis* in וְנָעוּ together the cause and effect, as in Isa. 6:7.—In what judgments *the* judgment will be fulfilled, is now declared by the majestic Judge Himself. Vv. 2–4. *“And I spur Egypt against Egypt: and they go to war, every one with his brother, and every one with his neighbour; city against city, kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt is emptied out within it: and I swallow up its ready counsel; and they go to the idols to inquire, and to the mutterers, and to the oracle-spirits, and to the soothsayers. And I shut up Egypt in the hand of a hard rule; and a fierce king will reign over them, saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts.”* Civil war will rage in Egypt (on *sicsēc*, see at Isa. 9:10). The people once so shrewd are now at their wits’ end; their spirit is quite poured out (נִבְבְּקָה, with the reduplication removed, for נִבְבְּקָה, according to Ges. § 68, Anm. 11, —as, for example, in Gen. 11:7, Ezek. 41:7), so that there

is nothing left of either intelligence or resolution. Then (and this is also part of the judgment) they turn for help, in counsel and action, where no help is to be found, viz., to their “nothings” of gods, and the manifold demoniacal arts, of which Egypt could boast of being the primary seat. On the names of the practisers of the black art, see Isa. 8:19; *’ittim*, the mutterers, is from *’âtat*, to squeak (used of a camel-saddle, especially when new), or to rumble (used of an empty stomach): see Lane’s *Lexicon*. But all this is of no avail: Jehovah gives them up (סָכַר, syn. הִסְגִּיר, συγκαλείειν) to be ruled over by a hard-hearted and cruel king. The prophecy does not relate to a foreign conqueror, so as to lead us to think of Sargon (Knobel) or Cambyses (Luzzatto), but to a native despot. In comparing the prophecy with the fulfilment, we must bear in mind that v. 2 relates to the national revolution which broke out in Sais, and resulted in the overthrow of the Ethiopian rule, and to the federal dodekarchy to which the rising of the nation led. “Kingdom against kingdom:” this exactly suits those twelve small kingdoms into which Egypt was split up after the overthrow of the Ethiopian dynasty in the year 695, until *Psammetichus*, the dodekarch of Sais, succeeded in the year 670 in comprehending these twelve states once more under a single monarchy. This very *Psammetichus* (and the royal house of *Psammetichus* generally) is the hard ruler, the reckless despot. He succeeded in gaining the battle at Momemphis, by which he established himself in the monarchy, through having first of all strengthened himself with mercenary troops from Ionia, Caria, and Greece. From his time downwards, the true Egyptian character was destroyed by the admixture of foreign elements; and this occasioned the emigration of a large portion of the military caste to Meroe. The Egyptian nation very soon came to feel how oppressive this new dynasty was, when *Necho* (616–597), the son and successor of *Psammetichus*, renewed the project of *Ramses-Miamun*, to construct a Suez canal, and tore away 120,000 of the natives of the land from their homes, sending them to wear out their

lives in forced labour of the most wearisome kind. A revolt on the part of the native troops, who had been sent against the rising Cyrene, and driven back into the desert, led to the overthrow of Hophra, the grandson of Necho (570), and put an end to the hateful government of the family of Psammetichus.

Isaiah 19:5–10. The prophet then proceeds to foretell another misfortune which was coming upon Egypt: the Nile dries up, and with this the fertility of the land disappears. Vv. 5–10. *“And the waters will dry up from the sea, and the river is parched and dried. And the arms of the river spread a stench; the channels of Matzor become shallow and parched: reed and rush shrivel up. The meadows by the Nile, on the border of the Nile, and every corn-field of the Nile, dries up, is scattered, and disappears. And the fishermen groan, and all who throw draw-nets into the Nile lament, and they that spread out the net upon the face of the waters languish away. And the workers of fine combed flax are confounded, and the weavers of cotton fabrics. And the pillars of the land are ground to powder; all that work for wages are troubled in mind.”* In v. 5 the Nile is called *yâm* (a sea), just as Homer calls it *Oceanus*, which, as Diodorus observes, was the name given by the natives to the river (Egypt. *oham*). The White Nile is called *bahr el-abyad* (the White Sea), the Blue Nile *bahr el-azrak*, and the combined waters *bahr en-Nil*, or, in the language of the *Besharîn*, as here in Isaiah, *yâm*. And in the account of the creation, in Gen. 1, *yammim* is the collective name for great seas and rivers. But the Nile itself is more like an inland sea than a river, from the point at which the great bodies of water brought down by the Blue Nile and the White Nile, which rises a few weeks later, flow together; partly on account of its great breadth, and partly also because of its remaining stagnant throughout the dry season. It is not till the tropical rains commence that the swelling river begins to flow more rapidly, and the *yâm* becomes a *nâhâr*. But when, as is here threatened, the Nile sea and Nile river in Upper Egypt sink together and dry up (*nisshtu*, niphal either of *shâthath* = *nâshattu*, to set, to grow shallow; or more probably from *nâshath*,

to dry up, since Isa. 41:17 and Jer. 51:30 warrant the assumption that there was such a verb), the mouths (or *arms*) of the Nile (*nehâroth*), which flow through the Delta, and the many canals (*ye’orim*), by which the benefits of the overflow are conveyed to the Nile valley, are turned into stinking puddles (הַאֲזִיחוֹת, a *hiphil*, half substantive half verbal, unparalleled elsewhere, signifying to spread a stench; possibly it may have been used in the place of הַזְנוּיָה, from אֲזָנָה or אֲזָנָה, stinking, to which a different application was given in ordinary use). In all probability it is not without intention that Isaiah uses the expression *Mâtzor*, inasmuch as he distinguishes *Mâtzor* from *Pathros* (Isa. 11:11), i.e., Lower from Upper Egypt (Egyp. *sa-het*, the low land, and *sares*, the higher land), the two together being *Mitzrayim*. And *ye’orim* (by the side of *nehâroth*) we are warranted in regarding as the name given of the Nile canals. The canal system in Egypt and the system of irrigation are older than the invasion of the Hyksos (vid., Lepsius, in Herzog’s *Cyclopaedia*). On the other hand, *ye’ôr* in v. 7 (where it is written three times *plene*, as it is also in v. 8) is the Egyptian name of the Nile generally (*yaro*). It is repeated emphatically three times, like *Mitzrayim* in v. 1. Parallel to *mizra’*, but yet different from it, is עָרוֹת, from עָרָה, to be naked or bare, which signifies, like many derivatives of the synonymous word in Arabic, either open spaces, or as here, grassy tracts by the water-side, i.e., meadows. Even the meadows, which lie close to the water-side (*pi = ora*, as in Ps. 133:2, not *ostium*), and all the fields, become so parched, that they blow away like ashes. Then the three leading sources from which Egypt derived its maintenance all fail:—viz. the fishing; the linen manufacture, which supplied dresses for the priests and bandages for mummies; and the cotton manufacture, by which all who were not priests were supplied with clothes. The Egyptian fishery was very important. In the Berlin Museum there is an Egyptian *micmoreth* with lead attached. The mode of working the flax by means of *serikâh*,

pectinatio (compare סְרוּק, wool-combs, *Kelim*, 12, 2), is shown on the monuments. In the Berlin Museum there are also Egyptian combs of this description with which the flax was carded. The productions of the Egyptian looms were celebrated in antiquity: *chôrây*, lit., white cloth (*singular et.* with the old termination *ay*), is the general name for cotton fabrics, or the different kinds of byssus that were woven there (compare the βυσσίνων ὀθονίων of the Rosetta inscription). All the castes, from the highest to the lowest, are not thrown into agonies of despair. The *shâthôth* (an epithet that was probably suggested by the thought of *shethi*, a warp, Syr. *'ashti*, to weave, through the natural association of ideas), i.e., the “pillars” of the land (with a suffix relating to *Mitzrayim*, see at Isa. 3:8, and construed as a masculine as at Ps. 11:3), were the highest castes, who were the direct supporters of the state edifice; and עֲשֵׂי שֹׁכֵר cannot mean the citizens engaged in trade, i.e., the middle classes, but such of the people as hired themselves to the employers of labour, and therefore lived upon wages and not upon their own property (שֹׁכֵר is used here as in Prov. 11:18, and not as equivalent to סָקַר, the dammers-up of the water for the purpose of catching the fish, like סִכְרִין, *Kelim*, 23, 5).

Isaiah 19:11–13. The prophet now dwells upon the punishment which falls upon the pillars of the land, and describes it in vv. 11–13: “*The princes of Zoan become mere fools, the wise counsellors of Pharaoh; readiness in counsel is stupefied. How can ye say to Pharaoh, I am a son of wise men, a son of kings of the olden time? Where are they then, thy wise men? Let them announce to thee, and know what Jehovah of hosts hath determined concerning Egypt. The princes of Zoan have become fools, the princes of Memphis are deceived; and they have led Egypt astray who are the corner-stone of its castes.*”

The two constructives יַעֲצֵי הַחֲכָמִי do not stand in a subordinate relation, but in a co-ordinate one (see at Ps. 78:9 and Job 20:17; compare also 2 Kings 17:13, *keri*), viz., “the wise men,

counsellors of Pharaoh,” so that the second noun is the explanatory permutative of the first. *Zoan* is the *Tanis* of primeval times (Num. 13:22), which was situated on one of the arms through which the Nile flows into the sea (viz., the *ostium Taniticum*), and was the home from which two dynasties sprang. *Noph* (*per aphaer.* = *Menoph*, contracted into *Moph* in Hos. 9:6) is *Memphis*, probably the seat of the Pharaohs in the time of Joseph, and raised by Psammetichus into the metropolis of the whole kingdom. The village of *Mitrahenni* still stands upon its ruins, with the Serapeum to the north-west.

Consequently princes of Zoan and Memphis are princes of the chief cities of the land, and of the supposed primeval pedigree; probably priest-princes, since the wisdom of the Egyptian priest was of world-wide renown (Herod. ii. 77, 260), and the oldest kings of Egypt sprang from the priestly caste. Even in the time of Hezekiah, when the military caste had long become the ruling one, the priests once more succeeded in raising one of their own number, namely Sethos, to the throne of Sais. These magnates of Egypt, with their wisdom, would be turned into fools by the history of Egypt of the immediate future; and (this is the meaning of the sarcastic “how can ye say”) they would no longer trust themselves to boast of their hereditary priestly wisdom, or their royal descent, when giving counsel to Pharaoh. They were the corner-stone of the *shebâtim*, i.e., of the castes of Egypt (not of the districts or provinces, νομοί); but instead of supporting and defending their people, it is now very evident that they only led them astray. הִתְעַי, as the Masora on v. 15 observes, has no *Vav cop.*

Isaiah 19:14, 15. In vv. 14 and 15 this state of confusion is more minutely described: “*Jehovah hath poured a spirit of giddiness into the heart of Egypt, so that they have led Egypt astray in all its doing, as a drunken man wandereth about in his vomit. And there does not occur of Egypt any work, which worked, of head and tail, palm-branch and rush.*” The spirit which God pours out (as it also said elsewhere) is not only a spirit of salvation, but also a spirit of judgment.

The judicial, penal result which He produces is here called עֲוֹנוֹת, which is formed from עָוָה (root עו, to curve), and is either contracted from עֲוֹנוֹת, or points back to a supposed singular עָוָה (vid., Ewald, § 158, b). The suffix in *b'kirbâh* points to Egypt. The divine spirit of judgment makes use of the imaginary wisdom of the priestly caste, and thereby plunges the people, as it were, into the giddiness of intoxication. The prophet employs the *hiphil* הִתְעָה to denote the carefully considered actions of the leaders of the nation, and the *niphal* נִתְעָה to denote the constrained actions of a drunken man, who has lost all self-control. The nation has been so perverted by false counsels and hopes, that it lies there like a drunken man in his own vomit, and gorges and rolls about, without being able to find any way of escape. "No work that worked," i.e., that averted trouble (עָשָׂה is as emphatic as in Dan. 8:24), was successfully carried out by any one, either by the leaders of the nation or by the common people and their flatterers, either by the upper classes or by the mob.

Isaiah 19:16, 17. The result of all these plagues, which were coming upon Egypt, would be fear of Jehovah and of the people of Jehovah. Vv. 16, 17. *"In that day will the Egyptians become like women, and tremble and be alarmed at the swinging of the hand of Jehovah of hosts, which He sets in motion against it. And the land of Judah becomes a shuddering for Egypt; as often as they mention this against Egypt, it is alarmed, because of the decree of Jehovah of hosts, that He suspendeth over it."* The swinging (*tenuphâh*) of the hand (Isa. 30:32) points back to the foregoing judgments, which have fallen upon Egypt blow after blow. These humiliations make the Egyptians as soft and timid as women (*tert. compar.*, not as in Isa. 13:7, 8; 21:3, 4). And the sacred soil of Judah (*'adâmâh*, as in Isa. 14:1, 2; 32:13), which Egypt has so often made the scene of war, throws them into giddiness, into agitation at the sight of terrors, whenever it is mentioned (כָּל אֲשֶׁר, cf., 1 Sam. 2:13, lit,

"whoever," equivalent to "as often as any one," Ewald, § 337, 3, f; אֲשֶׁר is written according to the Aramaean form, with *Aleph* for *He*, like אֲרָא in Num. 11:20, אֲרָא in Ezek. 37:31, compare אֲלָא, Ezek. 36:5, and similar in form to אֲחָא in Isa. 4:5).

The author of the plagues is well known to them, their faith in the idols is shaken, and the desire arises in their heart to avert fresh plagues by presents to Jehovah.

Isaiah 19:18. At first there is only slavish fear; but there is the beginning of a turn to something better. V. 18. *"In that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan, and swearing to Jehovah of hosts: 'Ir ha-Heres will one be called."* Five cities are very few for Egypt, which was completely covered with cities; but this is simply a fragmentary commencement of Egypt's future and complete conversion. The description given of them, as beginning to speak the language of Canaan, i.e., the sacred language of the worship of Jehovah (comp. Zeph. 3:9), and to give themselves up to Jehovah with vows made on oath, is simply a periphrastic announcement of the conversion of the five cities. וְשָׁבַע הָ

(different from וְשָׁבַע, Isa. 65:16, as Isa. 45:23 clearly shows) signifies to swear to a person, to promise him fidelity, to give one's self up to him. One of these five will be called *'Ir ha-Heres*. As this is evidently intended for a proper name, *lâ'echâth* does not mean *unicuique*, as in Judg. 8:18 and Ezek. 1:6, but *uni*. It is a customary thing with Isaiah to express the nature of anything under the form of some future name (vid., Isa. 4:3; 32:5; 61:6; 62:4). The name in this instance, therefore, must have a distinctive and promising meaning.

But what does *'Ir ha-Heres* mean? The Septuagint has changed it into πόλις ἀσεδέκ, equivalent to *'Ir hazzedek* (city of righteousness), possibly in honour of the temple in the Heliopolitan *nomos*, which was founded under Ptolemaeus Philometor about 160 B.C., during the Syrian reign of terror, by

Onias IV, son of the high priest Onias III, who emigrated to Egypt. Maurer in his *Lexicon* imagines that he has found the true meaning, when he renders it “city of rescue;” but the progressive advance from the meaning “to pull off” to that of “setting free” cannot be established in the case of the verb *hâras*; in fact, *hâras* does not mean to pull off or pull out, but to pull down. *Heres* cannot have any other meaning in Hebrew than that of “destruction.” But as this appears unsuitable, it is more natural to read *’Ir ha-cheres* (which is found in some codices, though in opposition to the Masora). This is now generally rendered “city of protection” (Rosenmüller, Ewald, Knobel, and Meier), as being equivalent to an Arabic word signifying *divinitus protecta*. But such an appeal to the Arabic is contrary to all Hebrew usage, and is always a very precarious loophole. *’Ir ha-cheres* would mean “city of the sun” (*cheres* as in Job 9:7 and Judg. 14:18), as the Talmud in the leading passage concerning the Onias temple (in *b. Menahoth* 110a) thinks that even the received reading may be understood in accordance with Job 9:7, and says “it is a description of the sun.” “Sun-city” was really the name of one of the most celebrated of the old Egyptian cities, viz., *Heliopolis*, the city of the sun-god *Ra*, which was situated to the north-east of Memphis, and is called *On* in other passages of the Old Testament. Ezekiel (Ezek. 30:17) alters this into *Aven*, for the purpose of branding the idolatry of the city. But this alteration of the well-attested text is a mistake; and the true explanation is, that *Ir-hahares* is simply used with a play upon the name *Ir-hacheres*. This is the explanation given by the Targum: “Heliopolis, whose future fate will be destruction.” But even if the name is intended to have a distinctive and promising meaning, it is impossible to adopt the explanation given by Luzzatto, “a city restored from the ruins;” for the name points to destruction, not to restoration. Moreover, Heliopolis never has been restored since the time of its destruction, which Strabo dates as far back as the Persian invasion. There is nothing left standing now out of all its monuments but one granite obelisk:

they are all either destroyed, or carried away, like the so-called “Cleopatra’s Needle,” or sunk in the soil of the Nile (Parthey on Plutarch, *de Iside*, p. 162). This destruction cannot be the one intended. But *hâras* is the word commonly used to signify the throwing down of heathen altars (Judg. 6:25; 1 Kings 18:30; 19:10, 14); and the meaning of the prophecy may be, that the city which had hitherto been *’Ir-ha-cheres*, the chief city of the sun-worship, would become the city of the destruction of idolatry, as Jeremiah prophesies in Jer. 43:13, “Jehovah will break in pieces the obelisks of the sun-temple in the land of Egypt.” Hence Herzfeld’s interpretation: “*City of demolished Idols*” (p. 561). It is true that in this case *ha-heres* merely announces the breaking up of the old, and does not say what new thing will rise upon the ruins of the old; but the context leaves no doubt as to this new thing, and the one-sided character of the description is to be accounted for from the intentional play upon the actual name of that one city out of the five to which the prophet gives especial prominence. With this interpretation—for which indeed we cannot pretend to find any special confirmation in the actual fulfilment in the history of the church, and, so to speak, the history of missions—the train of thought in the prophet’s mind which led to the following groove of promises is a very obvious one.

Isaiah 19:19, 20. The allusion to the sun-city, which had become the city of destruction, led to the *mazzeboth* or obelisks (see Jer. 43:13), which were standing there on the spot where *Ra* was worshipped. Vv. 19, 20. “*In that day there stands an altar consecrated to Jehovah in the midst of the land of Egypt, and an obelisk near the border of the land consecrated to Jehovah. And a sign and a witness for Jehovah of hosts is this in the land of Egypt: when they cry to Jehovah for oppressors, He will send them a helper and champion, and deliver them.*” This is the passage of Isaiah (not v. 18) to which Onias IV appealed, when he sought permission of Ptolemaeus Philometor to build a temple of Jehovah in Egypt. He built such a temple in the *nomos* of Heliopolis, 180 stadia (22 1/2 miles)

to the north-east of Memphis (Josephus, *Bell.* vii. 10, 3), and on the foundation and soil of the ὄχρωμα in Leontopolis, which was dedicated to Bubastis (Ant. xiii. 3, 1, 2). This temple, which was altogether unlike the temple of Jerusalem in its outward appearance, being built in the form of a castle, and which stood for more than two hundred years (from 160 B.C. to A.D. 71, when it was closed by command of Vespasian), was splendidly furnished and much frequented; but the recognition of it was strongly contested both in Palestine and Egypt. It was really situated "in the midst of the land of Egypt." But it is out of the question to seek in this temple for the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, from the simple fact that it was by Jews and for Jews that it was erected. And where, in that case, would the obelisk be, which, as Isaiah prophesies, was to stand on the border of Egypt, i.e., on the side towards the desert and Canaan? The altar was to be "a sign" ('oth) that there were worshippers of Jehovah in Egypt; and the obelisk a "witness" ('ēd) that Jehovah had proved Himself, to Egypt's salvation, to be the God of the gods of Egypt. And now, if they who erected this place of worship and this monument cried to Jehovah, He would show Himself ready to help them; and they would no longer cry in vain, as they had formerly done to their own idols (v. 3). Consequently it is the approaching conversion of the native Egyptians that is here spoken of. The fact that from the Grecian epoch Judaism became a power in Egypt, is certainly not unconnected with this. But we should be able to trace this connection more closely, if we had any information as to the extent to which Judaism had then spread among the natives, which we do know to have been by no means small. The *therapeutae* described by Philo, which were spread through all the *nomoi* of Egypt, were of a mixed Egypto-Jewish character (vid., Philo, *Opp.* ii. p. 474, ed. Mangey). It was a victory on the part of the religion of Jehovah, that Egypt was covered with Jewish synagogues and coenobia even in the age before Christ. And Alexandria was the place where the law of Jehovah was translated into Greek, and thus made accessible to the

heathen world, and where the religion of Jehovah created for itself those forms of language and thought, under which it was to become, as Christianity, the religion of the world. And after the introduction of Christianity into the world, there were more than one *mazzebah* (obelisk) that were met with on the way from Palestine to Egypt, even by the end of the first century, and more than one *mizbeach* (altar) found in the heart of Egypt itself. The importance of Alexandria and of the monasticism and anachoretism of the peninsula of Sinai and also of Egypt, in connection with the history of the spread of Christianity, is very well known.

Isaiah 19:21, 22. When Egypt became the prey of Islam in the year 640, there was already to be seen, at all events in the form of a magnificent prelude, the fulfilment of what the prophet foretells in vv. 21, 22: "And Jehovah makes Himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians know Jehovah in that day; and they serve with slain-offerings and meat-offerings, and vow vows to Jehovah, and pay them. And Jehovah smites Egypt, smiting and healing; and if they return to Jehovah, He suffers Himself to be entreated, and heals them." From that small commencement of five cities, and a solitary altar, and one solitary obelisk, it has now come to this: Jehovah extends the knowledge of Himself to the whole of Egypt (גִּדְעַת, reflective *se cognoscendum dare*, or neuter *innotescere*), and throughout all Egypt there arises the knowledge of God, which soon shows itself in acts of worship. This worship is represented by the prophet, just as we should expect according to the Old Testament view, as consisting in the offering of bleeding and bloodless, or legal and free-will offerings: וְעִבְדוּ, viz., אֲתֵיְהוָה, so that עִבְד is construed with a double accusative, as in Ex. 10:26, cf., Gen. 30:29; or it may possibly be used directly in the sense of sacrificing, as in the Phoenician, and like עִבְדָה in the *Thorah*; and even if we took it in this sense, it would yield no evidence against Isaiah's authorship (compare Isa. 28:21; 32:17). Egypt, though converted, is

still sinful; but Jehovah smites it, “smiting and healing” (*nâgoph vrâpho*’, compare 1 Kings 20:37), so that in the act of smiting the intention of healing prevails; and healing follows the smiting, since the chastisement of Jehovah leads it to repentance. Thus Egypt is now under the same plan of salvation as Israel (e.g., Lev. 26:44, Deut. 32:36).

Isaiah 19:23. Asshur, as we already know from Isa. 18, is equally humbled; so that now the two great powers, which have hitherto only met as enemies, meet in the worship of Jehovah, which unites them together. V. 23. *“In that day a road will run from Egypt to Asshur, and Asshur comes into Egypt, and Egypt to Asshur; and Egypt worships (Jehovah) with Asshur.”* אַשּׁוּר is not a sign of the accusative, for there can be no longer any idea of the subjection of Egypt to Asshur: on the contrary, it is a preposition indicating fellowship; and עֲבָדָה is used in the sense of worship, as in v. 21. Friendly intercourse is established between Egypt and Assyria by the fact that both nations are now converted to Jehovah. The road of communication runs through Canaan.

Isaiah 19:24, 25. Thus is the way prepared for the highest point of all, which the prophet foretells in vv. 24, 25: *“In that day will Israel be the third part to Egypt and Asshur, a blessing in the midst of the earth, since Jehovah of hosts blesseth them thus: Blessed be thou, my people Egypt; and thou Asshur, the work of my hands; and thou Israel, mine inheritance.”* Israel is added to the covenant between Egypt and Asshur, so that it becomes a tripartite covenant in which Israel forms the “third part” (*shelishiyâh, tertia pars*, like *’asiriyyâh, decima pars*, in Isa. 6:13). Israel has now reached the great end of its calling—to be a blessing in “the midst of the earth” (*b’kereb hâ’âretz*, in the whole circuit of the earth), all nations being here represented by Egypt and Assyria. Hitherto it had been only to the disadvantage of Israel to be situated between Egypt and Assyria. The history of the Ephraimitish kingdom, as well as that of Judah, clearly proves this. If Israel relied upon Egypt, it deceived itself, and

was deceived; and if it relied on Assyria, it only became the slave of Assyria, and had Egypt for a foe. Thus Israel was in a most painful vise between the two great powers of the earth, the western and the eastern powers. But how will all this be altered now! Egypt and Assyria become one in Jehovah, and Israel the third in the covenant. Israel is no longer the only nation of God, the creation of God, the heir of God; but all this applies to Egypt and Assyria now, as well as to Israel. To give full expression to this, Israel’s three titles of honour are mixed together, and each of the three nations receives one of the choice names,—*nachali*, “my inheritance,” being reserved for Israel, as pointing back to its earliest history. This essential equalization of the heathen nations and Israel is no degradation to the latter. For although from this time forward there is to be no essential difference between the nations in their relation to God, it is still the God of Israel who obtains this universal recognition, and the nation of Israel that has become, according to the promise, the medium of blessing to the world.

Isaiah 19:25. Thus has the second half of the prophecy ascended step by step from salvation to salvation, as the first descended step by step from judgment to judgment. The culminating point in v. 25 answers to the lowest point in v. 15. Every step in the ascending half is indicated by the expression “in that day.” Six times do we find this sign-post to the future within the limits of vv. 16–25. This expression is almost as characteristic of Isaiah as the corresponding expression, “Behold, the days come” (*hinneh yâmim bâ’im*), is of Jeremiah (compare, for example, Jer. 7:18–25). And it is more particularly in the promising or Messianic portions of the prophecy that it is so favourite an introduction (Isa. 11:10, 11; 12:1; compare Zech. 12, 13, 14). Nevertheless, the genuineness of vv. 16–25 has recently been called in question, more especially by Hitzig. Sometimes this passage has not been found fanatical enough to have emanated from Isaiah, i.e., too free from hatred towards the heathen; whereas, on the other hand, Knobel adduces evidence

that the prophet was no fanatic at all. Sometimes it is too fanatical; in reply to which we observe, that there never was a prophet of God in the world who did not appear to a "sound human understanding" to be beside himself, since, even assuming that this human understanding be sound, it is only within the four sides of its own peculiar province that it is so. Again, in vv. 18, 19, a prophecy has been discovered which is too special to be Isaiah's, in opposition to which Knobel proves that it is not so special as is supposed. But it is quite special enough; and this can never astonish any one who can discern in the prophecy a revelation of the future communicated by God, whereas in itself it neither proves nor disproves the authorship of Isaiah. So far as the other arguments adduced against the genuineness are concerned, they have been answered exhaustively by Caspari, in a paper which he contributed on the subject to the *Lutherische Zeitschrift*, 1841, 3. Hävernick, in his *Introduction*, has not been able to do anything better than appropriate the arguments adduced by Caspari. And we will not repeat for a third time what has been said twice already. The two halves of the prophecy are like the two wings of a bird. And it is only through its second half that the prophecy becomes the significant centre of the Ethiopic and Egyptian trilogy. For Isa. 19 predicts the saving effect that will be produced upon Egypt by the destruction of Assyria. And Isa. 19:23ff. announces what will become of Assyria. Assyria will also pass through judgment to salvation. This eschatological conclusion to Isa. 19, in which Egypt and Assyria are raised above themselves into representatives of the two halves of the heathen world, is the golden clasp which connects Isa. 19 and 20. We now turn to this third portion of the trilogy, which bears the same relation to Isa. 19 as Isa. 16:13, 14 to Isa. 15–16:12.

Isaiah 20

Symbol of the Fall of Egypt and Ethiopia, and Its Interpretation

Isaiah 20:1, 2a. This section, commencing in the form of historic prose, introduces itself thus: vv. 1, 2a. *"In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, Sargon the king of Asshur having sent him (and he made war against Ashdod, and captured it): at that time Jehovah spake through Yeshayahu the son of Amoz as follows,"* i.e., He communicated the following revelation through the medium of Isaiah (*b'yad*, as in Isa. 37:24, Jer. 37:2, and many other passages). The revelation itself was attached to a symbolical act. *B'yad* (lit. "by the hand of") refers to what was about to be made known through the prophet by means of the command that was given him; in other words, to v. 3, and indirectly to v. 2b. *Tartan* (probably the same man) is met with in 2 Kings 18:17 as the chief captain of Sennacherib. No Assyrian king of the name of *Sargon* is mentioned anywhere else in the Old Testament; but it may now be accepted as an established result of the researches which have been made, that Sargon was the successor of Shalmanassar, and that Shalmaneser (Shalman, Hos. 10:14), Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, are the names of the four Assyrian kings who were mixed up with the closing history of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. It was Longperrier who was the first to establish the identity of the monarch who built the palaces at Khorsabad, which form the north-eastern corner of ancient Nineveh, with the Sargon of the Bible. We are now acquainted with a considerable number of brick, harem, votive-table, and other inscriptions which bear the name of this king, and contain all kinds of testimony concerning himself. It was he, not Shalmanassar, who took Samaria after a three years' siege; and in the annalistic inscription he boasts of having conquered the city, and removed the house of Omri to Assyria. Oppert is right in calling attention to the fact, that in 2 Kings 18:10 the conquest is not attributed to Shalmanassar himself, but to the army. Shalmanassar died in front of Samaria; and

Sargon not only put himself at the head of the army, but seized upon the throne, in which he succeeded in establishing himself, after a contest of several years' duration with the legitimate heirs and their party. He was therefore a usurper. Whether his name as it appears on the inscriptions is *Sar-kin* or not, and whether it signifies the king *de facto* as distinguished from the king *de jure*, we will not attempt to determine now. This Sargon, the founder of a new Assyrian dynasty, who reigned from 721–702 (according to Oppert), and for whom there is at all events plenty of room between 721–20 and the commencement of Sennacherib's reign, first of all blockaded Tyre for five years after the fall of Samaria, or rather brought to an end the siege of Tyre which had been begun by Shalmanassar (Jos. Ant. ix. 14, 2), though whether it was to a successful end or not is quite uncertain. He then pursued with all the greater energy his plan for following up the conquest of Samaria with the subjugation of Egypt, which was constantly threatening the possessions of Assyria in western Asia, either by instigation or support. The attack upon Ashdod was simply a means to this end. As the Philistines were led to join Egypt, not only by their situation, but probably by kinship of tribe as well, the conquest of Ashdod—a fortress so strong, that, according to Herodotus (ii. 157), Psammetichus besieged it for twenty-nine years—was an indispensable preliminary to the expedition against Egypt. When Alexander the Great marched against Egypt, he had to do the same with Gaza. How long Tartan required is not to be gathered from v. 1. But if he conquered it as quickly as Alexander conquered Gaza,—viz. in five months,—it is impossible to understand why the following prophecy should defer for three years the subjugation of Ethiopia and Egypt. The words, “and fought against Ashdod, and took it,” must therefore be taken as anticipatory and parenthetical.

Isaiah 20:2b. It was not after the conquest of Ashdod, but in the year in which the siege commenced, that Isaiah received the following admonition: *2b.* “Go and loosen the smock-frock

from off thy loins, and take off thy shoes from thy feet. And he did so, went stripped and barefooted.” We see from this that Isaiah was clothed in the same manner as Elijah, who wore a fur coat (2 Kings 1:8, cf., Zech. 13:4, Heb. 11:37), and John the Baptist, who had a garment of camel hair and a leather girdle round it (Matt. 3:4); for *sak* is a coarse linen or hairy overcoat of a dark colour (Rev. 6:12, cf., Isa. 50:3), such as was worn by mourners, either next to the skin (*'al-habbâsâr*, 1 Kings 21:27, 2 Kings 6:30, Job 16:15) or over the tunic, in either case being fastened by a girdle on account of its want of shape, for which reason the verb *châgar* is the word commonly used to signify the putting on of such a garment, instead of *lâbash*. The use of the word *'ârôm* does not prove that the former was the case in this instance (see, on the contrary, 2 Sam. 6:20, compared with v. 14 and John 21:7). With the great importance attached to the clothing in the East, where the feelings upon this point are peculiarly sensitive and modest, a person was looked upon as stripped and naked if he had only taken off his upper garment. What Isaiah was directed to do, therefore, was simply opposed to common custom, and not to moral decency. He was to lay aside the dress of a mourner and preacher of repentance, and to have nothing on but his tunic (*cetoneth*); and in this, as well as barefooted, he was to show himself in public. This was the costume of a man who had been robbed and disgraced, or else of a beggar or prisoner of war. The word *cên* (so) is followed by the inf. abs., which develops the meaning, as in Isa. 5:5; 58:6, 7.

Isaiah 20:3, 4. It is not till Isaiah has carried out the divine instructions, that he learns the reason for this command to strip himself, and the length of time that he is to continue so stripped. Vv. 3, 4. “*And Jehovah said, As my servant Yesha'yahu goeth naked and barefooted, a sign and type for three years long over Egypt and over Ethiopia, so will the king of Asshur carry away the prisoners of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, children and old men, naked and barefooted, and with their seat uncovered—a shame to Egypt.*” The expression “as he goeth”

ISAIAH	Page 188
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

(*ca'asher hâlac*) stands here at the commencement of the symbolical action, but it is introduced as if with a retrospective glance at its duration for three years, unless indeed the preterite *hâlac* stands here, as it frequently does, to express what has already commenced, and is still continuing and customary (compare, for example, Job 1:4 and Ps. 1:1). The strange and unseemly dress of the prophet, whenever he appeared in his official capacity for three whole years, was a prediction of the fall of the Egypto-Ethiopian kingdom, which was to take place at the end of these three years. Egypt and Ethiopia are as closely connected here as Israel and Judah in Isa. 11:12. They were at that time one kingdom, so that the shame of Egypt was the shame of Ethiopia also. *'Ervâh* is a shameful nakedness, and *'ervath Mitzrayim* is in apposition to all that precedes it in v. 4. *Shêth* is the seat or hinder part, as in 2 Sam. 10:4, from *shâthâh*, to set or seat; it is a substantive form, like *שֵׁם, רֵעַ, עֵץ, בֶּן*, with the third radical letter dropt. *Chashûphay* has the same *ay* as the words in Isa. 19:9, Judg. 5:15, Jer. 22:14, which can hardly be regarded as constructive forms, as Ewald, Knobel, and Gesenius suppose (although *כֹּחַ* of the construct has arisen from *כֹּחַ*), but rather as a singular form with a collective signification. The emendations suggested, viz., *chasûphê* by Olshausen, and *chasûphî* with a connecting *i* by Meier, are quite unnecessary.

Isaiah 20:5, 6. But if Egypt and Ethiopia are thus shamefully humbled, what kind of impression will this make upon those who rely upon the great power that is supposed to be both unapproachable and invincible? Vv. 5, 6. *"And they cry together, and behold themselves deceived by Ethiopia, to which they looked, and by Egypt, in which they gloried. And the inhabitant of this coast-land saith in that day, Behold, thus it happens to those to whom we looked, whither we fled for help to deliver us from the king of Asshur: and how should we, we escape?"* *אִי*, which signifies both an island and a coast-land, is used as the name of Philistia and

Zeph. 2:5, and as the name of Phoenicia in Isa. 23:2, 6; and for this reason Knobel and others understand it here as denoting the former with the inclusion of the latter. But as the Assyrians had already attacked both Phoenicians and Philistines at the time when they marched against Egypt, there can be no doubt that Isaiah had chiefly the Judaeans in his mind. This was the interpretation given by Jerome ("Judah trusted in the Egyptians, and Egypt will be destroyed"), and it has been adopted by Ewald, Drechsler, Luzzatto, and Meier. The expressions are the same as those in which a little further on we find Isaiah reproving the Egyptian tendencies of Judah's policy. At the same time, by "the inhabitant of this coast-land" we are not to understand Judah exclusively, but the inhabitants of Palestine generally, with whom Judah was mixed up to its shame, because it had denied its character as the nation of Jehovah in a manner so thoroughly opposed to its theocratic standing.

Unfortunately, we know very little concerning the Assyrian campaigns in Egypt. But we may infer from Nahum 3:8-10, according to which the Egyptian Thebes had fallen (for it is held up before Nineveh as the mirror of its own fate), that after the conquest of Ashdod Egypt was also overcome by Sargon's army. In the grand inscription found in the halls of the palace at Khorsabad, Sargon boasts of a successful battle which he had fought with Pharaoh *Sebech* at Raphia, and in consequence of which the latter became tributary to him. Still further on he relates that he had dethroned the rebellious king of Ashdod, and appointed another in his place, but that the people removed him, and chose another king; after which he marched with his army against Ashdod, and when the king fled from him into Egypt, he besieged Ashdod, and took it. Then follows a difficult and mutilated passage, in which Rawlinson agrees with Oppert in finding an account of the complete subjection of *Sebech* (Sabako?). Nothing can be built upon this, however; and it must also remain uncertain whether, even if the rest is correctly interpreted, Isa. 20:1 relates to that conquest of Ashdod which was followed by

the dethroning of the rebellious king and the appointment of another, or to the final conquest by which it became a colonial city of Assyria. This conquest Sargon ascribes to himself in person, so that apparently we must think of that conquest which was carried out by Tartan; and in that case the words, "he fought against it," etc., need not be taken as anticipatory. It is quite sufficient, that the monuments seem to intimate that the conquest of Samaria and Ashdod was followed by the subjugation of the Egypto-Ethiopian kingdom. But inasmuch as Judah, trusting in the reed of Egypt, fell away from Assyria under Hezekiah, and Sennacherib had to make war upon Egypt again, to all appearance the Assyrians never had much cause to congratulate themselves upon their possession of Egypt, and that for reasons which are not difficult to discover. At the time appointed by the prophecy, Egypt came under the Assyrian yoke, from which it was first delivered by Psammetichus; but, as the constant wars between Assyria and Egypt clearly show, it never patiently submitted to that yoke for any length of time. The confidence which Judah placed in Egypt turned out most disastrously for Judah itself, just as Isaiah predicted here. But the catastrophe that occurred in front of Jerusalem did not put an end to Assyria, nor did the campaigns of Sargon and Sennacherib bring Egypt to an end. And, on the other hand, the triumphs of Jehovah and of the prophecy concerning Assyria were not the means of Egypt's conversion. In all these respects the fulfilment showed that there was an element of *human* hope in the prophecy, which made the distant appear to be close at hand. And this element it eliminated. For the fulfilment of a prophecy is divine, but the prophecy itself is both divine and human.

Isaiah 21

The Oracle Concerning the Desert of the Sea (Babylon)

Isaiah 21:1–10. Ewald pronounces this and other headings to be the glosses of ancient readers (*proph.* i. 56, 57). Even Vitranga at first

attributed it to the collectors, but he afterwards saw that this was inadmissible. In fact, it is hardly possible to understand how the expression "desert of the sea" (*midbar-yâm*) could have been taken from the prophecy itself; for *yâm* cannot signify the south (as though synonymous with *negeb*), but is invariably applied to the west, whilst there is nothing about a *sea* in the prophecy. The heading, therefore, is a peculiar one; and this Knobel admits, though he nevertheless adheres to the opinion that it sprang from a later hand. But why? According to modern critics, the hand by which the whole *massa* was written was certainly quite late enough. From Koppe to Knobel they are almost unanimous in asserting that it emanated from a prophet who lived at the end of the Babylonian captivity. And Meier asserts with dictatorial brevity, that no further proof is needed that Isaiah was not the author. But assuming, what indeed seems impossible to modern critics,—namely, that a prophet's insight into futurity might stretch over hundreds of years,—the *massa* contains within itself and round about itself the strongest proofs of its genuineness. Within itself: for both the thoughts themselves, and the manner in which they are expressed, are so thoroughly Isaiah's, even in the most minute points, that it is impossible to conceive of any prophecy in a form more truly his own. And round about itself: inasmuch as the four *massa*'s (Isa. 21:1–10, 11–12, 13–17, and 22), are so intertwined the one with the other as to form a tetralogy, not only through their emblematical titles (compare Isa. 30:6) and their visionary bearing, but also in many ways through the contexts themselves. Thus the designation of the prophet as a "watchman" is common to the *first* and *second* *massa*'s; and in the *fourth*, Jerusalem is called the valley of vision, because the watch-tower was there, from which the prophet surveyed the future fate of Babylon, Edom, and Arabia. And just as in the first, Elam and Madai march against Babylon; so in the fourth (Isa. 22:6) Kir and Elam march against Jerusalem. The form of expression is also strikingly similar in both instances (compare

Isa. 22:6, 7, with Isa. 21:7). Is it then possible that the first portion of the tetralogy should be spurious, and the other three genuine? We come to the same conclusion in this instance as we did at Isa. 13:1ff.; and that, most truly, neither from a needless apologetical interest, nor from forced traditional prejudice. Just as the *massâ Bâbel* rests upon a prophecy against Asshur, which forms, as it were, a pedestal to it, and cannot be supposed to have been placed there by any one but Isaiah himself; so that *massa midbar-yâm* rests, as it were, upon the pillars of its genuineness, and announces itself *velut de tripode* as Isaiah's. This also applies to the heading. We have already noticed, in connection with Isa. 15:1, how closely the headings fit in to the prophecies themselves. Isaiah is fond of symbolical names (Isa. 29:1; 30:7). And *midbar-yâm* (desert of the sea) is a name of this kind applied to Babylon and the neighbourhood. The continent on which Babylon stood was a *midbâr*, a great plain running to the south into *Arabia deserta*; and so intersected by the Euphrates as well as by marshes and lakes, that it floated, as it were, in the sea. The low-lying land on the Lower Euphrates had been wrested, as it were, from the sea; for before Semiramis constructed the dams, the Euphrates used to overflow the whole just like a sea (*πελαγίζειν*, Herod. i. 184). Abydenus even says, that at first the whole of it was covered with water, and was called *thalassa* (Euseb. *praep.* ix. 41). We may learn from Isa. 14:23, why it was that the prophet made use of this symbolical name. The origin and natural features of Babylon are made into ominous prognostics of its ultimate fate. The true interpretation is found in Jeremiah (Jer. 51:13; 50:38), who was acquainted with this oracle.

Isaiah 21:1, 2. The power which first brings destruction upon the city of the world, is a hostile army composed of several nations. Vv. 1, 2. "As storms in the south approach, it comes from the desert, from a terrible land. Hard vision is made known to me: the spoiler spoils, and the devastator devastates. Go up, Elam! Surround, Maday! I put an end to all their sighing." "Storms

in the south" (compare Isa. 28:21, Amos 3:9) are storms which have their starting-point in the south, and therefore come to Babylon from *Arabia deserta*; and like all winds that come from boundless steppes, they are always violent (Job 1:19; 37:9; see Hos. 13:15). It would be natural, therefore, to connect *mimmidbâr* with *lachelôph* (as Knobel and Umbreit do), but the arrangement of the words is opposed to this; *lachelôph* ("pressing forwards") is sued instead of *yachelôph* (see Ges. § 132, Anm. 1, and still more fully on Hab. 1:17). The *conjunctio periphraistica* stands with great force at the close of the comparison, in order that it may express at the same time the violent pressure with which the progress of the storm is connected. It is true that, according to Herod. i. 189, Cyrus came across the Gyndes, so that he descended into the lowlands to Babylonia through Chalonitis and Apolloniatis, by the road described by Isidor v. Charax in his *Itinerarium*, over the Zagros pass through the Zagros-gate (Ptolem. vi. 2) to the upper course of the Gyndes (the present *Diyala*), and then along this river, which he crossed before its junction with the Tigris. But if the Medo-Persian army came in this direction, it could not be regarded as coming "from the desert." If, however, the Median portion of the army followed the course of the Choaspes (*Kerkha*) so as to descend into the lowland of Chuzistan (the route taken by Major Rawlinson with a Guran regiment), and thus approached Babylon from the south-east, it might be regarded in many respects as coming *mimmidbâr* (from the desert), and primarily because the lowland of Chuzistan is a broad open plain—that is to say, a *midbâr*. According to the simile employed of storms in the south, the assumption of the prophecy is really this, that the hostile army is advancing from Chuzistan, or (as geographical exactitude is not to be supposed) from the direction of the desert of *ed-Dahna*, that portion of *Arabia deserta* which bounded the lowland of Chaldean on the south-west. The Medo-Persian land itself is called "a terrible land," because it was situated outside the circle of civilised nations by which the land of Israel was surrounded.

After the thematic commencement in v. 1, which is quite in harmony with Isaiah's usual custom, the prophet begins again in v. 2. *Châzuth* (a vision) has the same meaning here as in Isa. 29:11 (though not Isa. 28:18); and *châzuth kâshâh* is the object of the passive which follows (Ges. § 143, 1, *b*). The prophet calls the look into the future, which is given to him by divine inspiration, hard or heavy (though in the sense of *difficilis*, not *gravis*, *câbêd*), on account of its repulsive, unendurable, and, so to speak, indigestible nature. The prospect is wide-spread plunder and devastation (the expression is the same as in Isa. 33:1, compare Isa. 16:4; 24:16, *bâgad* denoting faithless or treacherous conduct, then heartless robbery), and the summoning of the nations on the east and north of Babylonia to the conquest of Babylonia; for Jehovah is about to put an end (*hishbatti*, as in Isa. 16:10) to all their sighing (*anchâthâh*, with *He raf.* and the tone upon the last syllable), i.e., to all the lamentations forced out of them far and wide by the oppressor.

Isaiah 21:3, 4. Here again, as in the case of the prophecy concerning Moab, what the prophet has given to him to see does not pass without exciting his feelings of humanity, but works upon him like a horrible dream. Vv. 3, 4. *"Therefore are my loins full of cramp: pangs have taken hold of me, as the pangs of a travailing woman: I twist myself, so that I do not hear; I am brought down with fear, so that I do not see. My heart beats wildly; horror hath troubled me: the darkness of night that I love, he hath turned for me into quaking."* The prophet does not describe in detail what he saw; but the violent agitation produced by the impression leads us to conclude how horrible it must have been. *Chalchâlâh* is the contortion produced by cramp, as in Nahum 2:11; *tzirim* is the word properly applied to the pains of childbirth; *na'avâh* means to bend, or bow one's self, and is also used to denote a convulsive utterance of pain; *tâ'âh*, which is used in a different sense from Ps. 95:10 (compare, however, Ps. 38:11), denotes a feverish and irregular beating of the pulse. The darkness of evening and night, which

the prophet loved so much (*chêshek*, a desire arising from inclination, 1 Kings 9:1, 19), and always longed for, either that he might give himself up to contemplation, or that he might rest from outward and inward labour, had been changed into quaking by the horrible vision. It is quite impossible to imagine, as Umbreit suggests, that *nesheph chishki* (the darkness of my pleasure) refers to the nocturnal feast during which Babylonia was stormed (Herod. i. 191, and Xenophon, *Cyrop.* vii. 23).

Isaiah 21:5. On the other hand, what Xenophon so elaborately relates, and what is also in all probability described in Dan. 5:30 (compare Jer. 51:39, 57), is referred to in v. 5: *"They cover the table, watch the watch, eat, drink. Rise up, ye princes! Anoint the shield!"* This is not a scene from the hostile camp, where they are strengthening themselves for an attack upon Babylonia: for the express allusion to the covering of the table is intended to create the impression of confident and careless good living; and the exclamation "anoint the shield" (cf., Jer. 51:11) presupposes that they have first of all to prepare themselves for battle, and therefore that they have been taken by surprise. What the prophet sees, therefore, is a banquet in Babylonia. The only thing that does not seem quite to square with this is one of the infinitives with which the picture is so vividly described (Ges. § 131, 4, *b*), namely *tzâphôh hatztzâphith*. Hitzig's explanation, "they spread carpets" (from *tzâphâh*, *expandere*, *obducere*, compare the Talmudic *tziphâh*, *tziphtâh*, a mat, *storea*), commends itself thoroughly; but it is without any support in biblical usage, so that we prefer to follow the Targum, Peshito, and Vulgate (the Sept. does not give any translation of the words at all), and understand the *hap. leg.* *tzâphith* as referring to the watch: "they set the watch." They content themselves with this one precautionary measure, and give themselves up with all the greater recklessness to their night's debauch (cf., Isa. 22:13). The prophet mentions this, because (as Meier acknowledges) it is by the watch that the cry, "Rise up, ye princes," etc., is addressed to the feasters. The shield-leather was generally oiled,

to make it shine and protect it from wet, and, more than all, to cause the strokes it might receive to glide off (compare the *laeves clypeos* in Virg. *Aen.* vii. 626). The infatuated self-confidence of the chief men of Babylon was proved by the fact that they had to be aroused. They fancied that they were hidden behind the walls and waters of the city, and therefore they had not even got their weapons ready for use.

Isaiah 21:6. The prophecy is continued with the conjunction “for” (*ci*). The tacit link in the train of thought is this: they act thus in Babylon, because the destruction of Babylon is determined. The form in which this thought is embodied is the following: the prophet receives instruction in the vision to set a *mtzappeh* upon the watch-tower, who was to look out and see what more took place. V. 6. “*For thus said the Lord to me, Go, set a spy; what he seeth, let him declare.*” In other cases it is the prophet himself who stands upon the watch-tower (v. 11; Hab. 2:1, 2); but here in the vision a distinction is made between the prophet and the person whom he stations upon the watch-tower (*specula*). The prophet divides himself, as it were, into two persons (compare Isa. 18:4 for the introduction; and for the expression “go,” Isa. 20:2). He now sees through the medium of a spy, just as Zechariah sees by means of the angel speaking in him; with this difference, however, that here the spy is the instrument employed by the prophet, whereas there the prophet is the instrument employed by the angel.

Isaiah 21:7. What the man upon the watch-tower sees first of all, is a long, long procession, viz., the hostile army advancing quietly, like a caravan, in serried ranks, and with the most perfect self-reliance. V. 7. “*And he saw a procession of cavalry, pairs of horsemen, a procession of asses, a procession of camels; and listened sharply, as sharply as he could listen.*” *Receb*, both here and in v. 9, signifies neither riding-animals nor war-chariots, but a troop seated upon animals—a procession of riders. In front there was a procession of riders arranged two and two, for Persians and Medes fought either on foot or on horseback (the latter, at

any rate, from the time of Cyrus; vid., *Cyrop.* iv. 3); and *pârâsh* signifies a rider on horseback (in Arabic it is used in distinction from *râkib*, the rider on camels). Then came lines of asses and camels, a large number of which were always taken with the Persian army for different purposes. They not only carried baggage and provisions, but were taken into battle to throw the enemy into confusion. Thus Cyrus gained the victory over the Lydians by means of the great number of his camels (Herod. i. 80), and Darius Hystaspis the victory over the Scythians by means of the number of asses that he employed (Herod. iv. 129). Some of the subject tribes rode upon asses and camels instead of horses: the Arabs rode upon camels in the army of Xerxes, and the Caramanians rode upon asses. What the spy saw was therefore, no doubt, the Persian army. But he only saw and listened. It was indeed “listening, greatness of listening,” i.e., he stretched his ear to the utmost (*rab* is a substantive, as in Isa. 63:7, Ps. 145:7; and *hikshib*, according to its radical notion, signifies to stiffen, viz., the ear); but he heard nothing, because the long procession was moving with the stillness of death.

Isaiah 21:8. At length the procession has vanished; he sees nothing and hears nothing, and is seized with impatience. V. 8. “*Then he cried with lion’s voice, Upon the watch-tower, O Lord, I stand continually by day, and upon my watch I keep my stand all the nights.*” He loses all his patience, and growls as if he were a lion (compare Rev. 10:3), with the same dull, angry sound, the same long, deep breath out of full lungs, complaining to God that he has to stand so long at his post without seeing anything, except that inexplicable procession that has now vanished away.

Isaiah 21:9. But when he is about to speak, his complaint is stifled in his mouth. V. 9. “*And, behold, there came a cavalcade of men, pairs of horsemen, and lifted up its voice, and said, Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the images of its gods He hath dashed to the ground!*” It is now clear enough where the long procession went to when it disappeared. It entered Babylon, made itself master of the city, and established itself

there. And now, after a long interval, there appears a smaller cavalcade, which has to carry the tidings of victory somewhere; and the spy hears them cry out in triumph, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon!" In Rev. 18:1, 2, the same words form the shout of triumph raised by the angel, the antitype being more majestic than the type, whilst upon the higher ground of the New Testament everything moves on in spiritual relations, all that is merely national having lost its power. Still even here the spiritual inwardness of the affair is so far expressed, that it is Jehovah who dashes to the ground; and even the heathen conquerors are obliged to confess that the fall of Babylon and its *pesilim* (compare Jer. 51:47, 52) is the work of Jehovah Himself. What is here only hinted at from afar—namely, that Cyrus would act as the anointed of Jehovah—is expanded in the second part (Isa. 40–66) for the consolation of the captives.

Isaiah 21:10. The night vision related and recorded by the prophet, a prelude to the revelations contained in Isa. 40–60, was also intended for the consolation of Israel, which had already much to suffer, when Babylon was still Assyrian, but would have to suffer far more from it when it should become Chaldean. V. 10. "O thou my threshing, and child of my threshing-floor! What I have heard from Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared to you." Threshing (*dūsh*) is a figure used to represent *crushing oppression* in Isa. 41:15 and Mic. 4:12, 13; and *judicial visitation* in Jer. 51:33 (a parallel by which we must not allow ourselves to be misled, as Jeremiah has there given a different turn to Isaiah's figure, as he very frequently does); and again, as in the present instance, *chastising plagues*, in which wrath and good intention are mingled together. Israel, placed as it was under the tyrannical supremacy of the imperial power, is called the *medūsshâh* (for *medūshah*, i.e., the threshing) of Jehovah,—in other words, the corn threshed by Him; also His "child of the threshing-floor," inasmuch as it was laid in the floor, in the bosom as it were of the threshing-place, to come out threshed (and then to become a thresher itself, Mic. 4:12, 13). This floor, in

which Jehovah makes a judicial separation of grains and husks in Israel, was their captivity. Babylon is the instrument of the threshing wrath of God. But love also takes part in the threshing, and restrains the wrath. This is what the prophet has learned in the vision ("I have heard," as in Isa. 28:22),—a consolatory figure for the threshing-corn in the floor, i.e., for Israel, which was now subject to the power of the world, and had been mowed off its own field and carried captive into Babylonia.

The Oracle Concerning the Silence of Death (Edom)—Ch. 21:11, 12

Isaiah 21:11. This oracle consists of a question, addressed to the prophet from Seir, and of the prophet's reply. Seir is the mountainous country to the south of Palestine, of which Edom took possession after the expulsion of the Horites. Consequently the *Dumah* of the heading cannot be either the *Dûma* of Eastern Hauran (by the side of which we find also a *Tema* and a *Buzan*); or the *Duma* in the high land of Arabia, on the great Nabataean line of traffic between the northern harbours of the Red Sea and Irak, which bore the cognomen of the rocky (*el-gendel*) or Syrian Duma (Gen. 25:14); or the *Duma* mentioned in the *Onom.*, which was seventeen miles from Eleutheropolis (or according to Jerome on this passage, twenty) "*in Daroma hoc est ad australem plagam,*" and was probably the same place as the *Duma* in the mountains of Judah,—that is to say, judging from the ruins of *Daume*, to the south-east of Eleutheropolis (see the Com. on Josh. 15:52), a place out of which Jerome has made "a certain region of Idumaea, near which are the mountains of Seir." The name as it stands here is symbolical, and without any demonstrable topographical application. *Dūmâh* is deep, utter silence, and therefore the land of the dead (Ps. 94:17; 115:17). The name אֲדוֹם is turned into an emblem of the future fate of Edom, by the removal of the *a*-sound from the beginning of the word to the end. It becomes a land of deathlike stillness, deathlike

sleep, deathlike darkness. V. 11. "A cry comes to me out of Seir: Watchman, how far is it in the night? Watchman, how far in the night?" Luther translates the participle correctly, "they cry" (*man ruft*; compare the similar use of the participle in Isa. 30:24; 33:4). For the rest, however, we have deviated from Luther's excellent translation, for the purpose of giving to some extent the significant change from מְלִילָה and מְלִיל. The more winged form of the second question is expressive of heightened, anxious urgency and haste. The wish is to hear that it is very late in the night, and that it will soon be past; *min* is partitive (Saad.), "What part of the night are we at now?" Just as a sick man longs for a sleepless night to come to an end, and is constantly asking what time it is, so do they inquire of the prophet out of Edom, whether the night of tribulation will not be soon over. We are not to understand, however, that messengers were really sent out of Edom to Isaiah; the process was purely a pneumatical one. The prophet stands there in Jerusalem, in the midst of the benighted world of nations, like a sentry upon the watch tower; he understands the anxious inquiries of the nations afar off, and answers them according to the word of Jehovah, which is the plan and chronological measure of the history of the nations, and the key to its interpretation. What, then, is the prophet's reply? He lets the inquirer "see through a glass darkly."

Isaiah 21:12. "Watchman says, Morning cometh, and also night. Will ye inquire, inquire! Turn, come!!" The answer is intentionally and pathetically expressed in an Aramaean form of Hebrew. אָתָּא (written even with א at the end, cf., Deut. 33:2) is the Aramaean word for בּוֹא; and בְּעָה (בְּעָא) the Aramaean word for שָׂאָל, from the primary form of which (בְּעִי) the future *tib'âyūn* is taken here (as in Isa. 33:7), and the imperative *b'âyū* (Ges. § 75, Anm. 4). אָתָּי, which is here pointed in the Syriac style, אָתָּי, as in Isa. 56:9, 12, would be similarly traceable to אָתָּי (cf., Ges. § 75, Anm. 4, with § 23, Anm. 2). But what

is the meaning? Luther seems to me to have hit upon it: "When the morning comes, it will still be night." But *v'gam* (and also) is not equivalent to "and yet," as Schröring explains it, with a reference to Ewald, § 354, *a*. With the simple connection in the clauses, the meaning cannot possibly be, that a morning is coming, and that it will nevertheless continue night, but that a morning is coming, and at the same time a night, i.e., that even if the morning dawns, it will be swallowed up again directly by night. And the history was quite in accordance with such an answer. The Assyrian period of judgment was followed by the Chaldean, and the Chaldean by the Persian, and the Persian by the Grecian, and the Grecian by the Roman. Again and again there was a glimmer of morning dawn for Edom (and what a glimmer in the Herodian age!), but it was swallowed up directly by another night, until Edom became an utter *Dūmâh*, and disappeared from the history of the nations. The prophet does not see to the utmost end of these Edomitish nights, but he has also no consolation for Edom. It is altogether different with Edom from what it is with Israel, the nocturnal portion of whose history has a morning dawn, according to promise, as its irrevocable close. The prophet therefore sends the inquirers home. Would they ask any further questions, they might do so, might turn and come. In *shūbū* (turn back) there lies a significant though ambiguous hint. It is only in the case of their turning, coming, i.e., coming back converted, that the prophet has any consolatory answer for them. So long as they are not so, there is suspended over their future an interminable night, to the prophet as much as to themselves. The way to salvation for every other people is just the same as for Israel,—namely, the way of repentance.

The Oracle in the Evening (Against Arabia)—
Ch. 21:13–17

Isaiah 21:13–15. The heading מִשָּׂא בְעֵרָב (the ע written according to the best codd. with a simple *sheva*), when pointed as we have it,

signifies, according to Zech. 9:1 (cf., Isa. 9:7), "oracle against Arabia." But why not *massâ 'Arâb*, since *massâ* is followed by a simple genitive in the other three headings? Or again, is this the only heading in the tetralogy that is not symbolical? We must assume that the *Beth* by which this is distinguished is introduced for the express purpose of rendering it symbolical, and that the prophet pointed it first of all בְּעֶרְבַּי, but had at the same time בְּעֶרְבַּי in his mind. The earlier translators (LXX, Targum, Syr., Vulg., Ar.) read the second בְּעֶרְבַּי like the first, but without any reason. The oracle commences with an evening scene, even without our altering the second בְּעֶרְבַּי. And the *massa* has a symbolical title founded upon this evening scene. Just as *Edom* becomes *Dumah*, inasmuch as a night without a morning dawn falls upon the mountain land of Seir, so will בְּעֶרְבַּי soon be בְּעֶרְבַּי, inasmuch as the sun of Arabia is setting. Evening darkness is settling upon Arabia, and the morning-land is becoming an evening-land. Vv. 13–15. "In the wilderness in Arabia ye must pass the night, caravans of the Dedanians. Bring water to meet thirsty ones! The inhabitants of the land of Tema are coming with its bread before the fugitive. For they are flying before swords, before drawn swords, and before a bent bow, and before oppressive war." There is all the less ground for making any alteration in בְּעֶרְבַּי, inasmuch as the second *Beth* (wilderness in Arabia for of Arabia) is favoured by Isaiah's common usage (Isa. 28:21; 9:2; compare 2 Sam. 1:21, Amos 3:9). *'Arab*, written with *pathach*, is Arabia (Ezek. 27:21; *'arâb* in pause, Jer. 25:24); and *ya'ar* here is the solitary barren desert, as distinguished from the cultivated land with its cities and villages. Wetzstein rejects the meaning *nemus, sylva*, with *ya'ar* has been assumed to have, because it would be rather a promise than a threat to be told that they would have to flee from the steppe into the wood, since a shady tree is the most delicious dream of the Beduins, who not only find shade in the forest, but a constant supply of green pasture,

and fuel for their hospitable hearths. He therefore renders it, "Ye will take refuge in the *V'ar* of Arabia," i.e., the open steppe will no longer afford you any shelter, so that ye will be obliged to hide yourselves in the *V'ar*. Arab. *wa'ur* for example, is the name applied to the trachytic rayon of the Syro-Hauranitic volcanoes which is covered with a layer of stones. But as the *V'ar* in this sense is also planted with trees, and furnishes firewood, this epithet must rest upon some peculiar distinction in the radical meaning of the word *ya'ar*, which really does mean a forest in Hebrew, though not necessarily a forest of lofty trees, but also a wilderness overgrown with brushwood and thorn-bushes. The meaning of the passage before us we therefore take to be this: the trading caravans (*'ârchôth*, like *halicoth* in Job 6:19) of the Dedanians, that mixed tribe of Cushites and Abrahamides dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Edomites (Gen. 10:7; 25:3), when on their way from east to west, possibly to Tyre (Ezek. 27:20), would be obliged to encamp in the wilderness, being driven out of the caravan road in consequence of the war that was spreading from north to south. The prophet, whose sympathy mingles with the revelation in this instance also, asks for water for the panting fugitives (הַתְּיָוִי, as in Jer. 12:9, an imperative equivalent to הַתְּיָוִי = הַתְּיָוִי; compare 2 Kings 2:3: there is no necessity to read קָדְמוֹ, as the Targum, Döderlein, and Ewald do). They are driven back with fright towards the south-east as far as Tema, on the border of Negd and the Syrian desert. The Tema referred to is no the trans-Hauranian *Têmâ*, which is three-quarters of an hour from *Dumah*, although there is a good deal that seems to favour this, but the Tema on the pilgrim road from Damascus to Mecca, between *Tebuk* and *Wadi el-Kora*, which is about the same distance (four days' journey) from both these places, and also from *Chaibar* (it is to be distinguished, however, from *Tihama*, the coast land of Yemen, the antithesis of which is *ne'gd*, the mountain district of Yemen). But even here in the land of Tema they do not feel themselves

ISAIAH	Page 196
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

safe. The inhabitants of Tema are obliged to bring them water and bread ("its bread," *lachmo*, referring to *nōdēd*: the bread necessary in order to save them), into the hiding-places in which they have concealed themselves. "How humiliating," as Drechsler well observes, "to be obliged to practise their hospitality, the pride of Arabian customs, in so restricted a manner, and with such unbecoming secrecy!" But it could not possibly be done in any other way, since the weapons of the foe were driving them incessantly before them, and the war itself was rolling incessantly forward like an overwhelming colossus, as the repetition of the word "before" (*mippnē*) no less than four times clearly implies.

Isaiah 21:16, 17. Thus does the approaching fate of Arabia present itself in picture before the prophet's eye, whilst it is more distinctly revealed in vv. 16, 17: "*For thus hath the Lord spoken to me, Within a year, as the years of a hired labourer, it is over with all the glory of Kedar. And the remnant of the number of bows of heroes of the Kedarenes will be small: for Jehovah, the God of Israel, hath spoken.*" The name *Kedar* is here the collective name of the Arabic tribes generally. In the stricter sense, Kedar, like Nebaioth, which is associated with it, as a nomadic tribe of Ishmaelites, which wandered as far as the Elanitic Gulf. Within the space of a year, measured as exactly as is generally the case where employers and labourers are concerned, Kedar's freedom, military strength, numbers, and wealth (all these together constituting its glory), would all have disappeared. Nothing but a small remnant would be left of the heroic sons of Kedar and their bows. They are numbered here by their bows (in distinction from the numbering by heads), showing that the righting men are referred to,—a mode of numbering which is customary among the Indian tribes of America, for example. The noun *she'âr* (remnant) is followed by five genitives here (just as *peri* is by four in Isa. 10:12); and the predicate *יָרַבְתִּי* is in the plural because of the copiousness of the subject. The period of the fulfilment of the

prophecy keeps us still within the Assyrian era. In Herodotus (2, 141), Sennacherib is actually called "king of Arabians and Assyrians" (compare Josephus, Ant. x. 1, 4); and both Sargon and Sennacherib, in their annalistic inscriptions, take credit to themselves for the subjugation of Arabian tribes. But in the Chaldean era Jeremiah predicted the same things against Kedar (Jer. 49) as against Edom; and Jer. 49:30, 31 was evidently written with a retrospective allusion to this oracle of Isaiah. When the period fixed by Isaiah for the fulfilment arrived, a second period grew out of it, and one still more remote, inasmuch as a second empire, viz., the Chaldean, grew out of the Assyrian, and inaugurated a second period of judgment for the nations. After a short glimmer of morning, the night set in a second time upon Edom, and a second time upon Arabia.

Isaiah 22

The Oracle Concerning the Valley of Vision (Jerusalem)

Isaiah 22:1–14. The *châzûth* concerning Babylon, and the no less visionary prophecies concerning Edom and Arabia, are now followed by a *massâ*, the object of which is "the valley of vision" (*gē' chizzâyōn*) itself. Of course these four prophecies were not composed in the tetralogical form in which they are grouped together here, but were joined together at a later period in a group of this kind on account of their close affinity. The internal arrangement of the group was suggested, not by the date of their composition (they stand rather in the opposite relation to one another), but by the idea of a storm coming from a distance, and bursting at last over Jerusalem; for there can be no doubt that the "valley of vision" is a general name for Jerusalem as a whole, and not the name given to one particular valley of Jerusalem. It is true that the epithet applied to the position of Jerusalem does not seem to be in harmony with this; for, according to Josephus, "the city was built upon two hills, which are opposite to one another and have a valley to

divide them asunder, at which valley the corresponding rows of houses on both hills end” (Wars of the Jews, v. 4, 1; Whiston). But the epithet is so far allowable, that there are mountains round Jerusalem (Ps. 125:2); and the same city which is on an eminence in relation to the land generally, appears to stand on low ground when contrasted with the mountains in the immediate neighbourhood (πρὸς δὲ τὰ ἐχόμενα ταύτης γηόλοφα χθαμαλίζεται, as Phocas says). According to this twofold aspect, Jerusalem is called the “inhabitant of the valley” in Jer. 21:13, and directly afterwards the “rock of the plain;” just as in Jer. 17:3 it is called the mountain in the fields, whereas Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:11) applies the epithet *mactēsh* (the mortar or cauldron) not to all Jerusalem, but to one portion of it (probably the ravine of the Tyropaeum). And if we add to this the fact that Isaiah’s house was situated in the lower town,—and therefore the standpoint of the epithet is really there,—it is appropriate in other respects still; for the prophet had there the temple-hill and the Mount of Olives, which is three hundred feet higher, on the east, and Mount Zion before him towards the south; so that Jerusalem appeared like a city in a valley in relation to the mountains inside, quite as much as to those outside. But the epithet is intended to be something more than geographical. A valley is a deep, still, solitary place, but off and shut in by mountains. And thus Jerusalem was an enclosed place, hidden and shut off from the world, which Jehovah had chosen as the place in which to show to His prophets the mysteries of His government of the world. And upon this sacred prophets’ city the judgment of Jehovah was about to fall; and the announcement of the judgment upon it is placed among the oracles concerning the nations of the world! We may see from this, that at the time when this prophecy was uttered, the attitude of Jerusalem was so worldly and heathenish, that it called forth this dark, nocturnal threat, which is penetrated by not a single glimmer of promise. But neither the prophecies of the time of Ahaz relating to the Assyrian age of judgment, nor those which were uttered in the midst of the

Assyrian calamities, are so destitute of promise and so peremptory as this. The *massa* therefore falls in the intermediate time, probably the time when the people were seized with the mania for liberty, and the way was prepared for their breaking away from Assyria by their hope of an alliance with Egypt (vid., Delitzsch-Caspari, *Studien*, ii. 173–4).

Isaiah 22:1–3. The prophet exposes the nature and worthlessness of their confidence in vv. 1–3: “What aileth thee, then, that thou art wholly ascended upon the house-tops? O full of tumult, thou noisy city, shouting castle, thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor slaughtered in battle. All thy rulers departing together are fettered without bow; all thy captured ones are fettered together, fleeing far away.” From the flat house-tops they all look out together at the approaching army of the foe, longing for battle, and sure of victory (*cullâk* is for *cullêk*, Isa. 14:29, 31). They have no suspicion of what is threatening them; therefore are they so sure, so contented, and so defiant. תְּשׂוּאוֹת מְלָאָה is inverted, and stands for מְלָאֵת תְּשׂוּאוֹת, like אֶפְלָה אֶפְלָה in Isa. 8:22. עֲלִיזָה is used to denote self-confident rejoicing, as in Zeph. 2:15. How terribly they deceive themselves! Not even the honour of falling upon the battle-field is allowed them. Their rulers (*kâtzin*, a judge, and then any person of rank) depart one and all out of the city, and are fettered outside “without bow” (*mikkesheth*), i.e., without there being any necessity for the bow to be drawn (*min*, as in Job 21:9, 2 Sam. 1:22; cf., Ewald, § 217, *b*). All, without exception, of those who are attacked in Jerusalem by the advancing foe (*nimzâ’aik*, thy captured ones, as in Isa. 13:15), fall helplessly into captivity, as they are attempting to flee far away (see at Isa. 17:13; the *perf. de conatu* answers to the classical *praesens de conatu*). Hence (what is here affirmed indirectly) the city is besieged, and in consequence of the long siege hunger and pestilence destroy the inhabitants, and every one who attempts to get away falls into the hands of the enemy, without venturing to defend himself, on account of his emaciation and exhaustion from hunger. Whilst

ISAIAH	Page 198
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

the prophet thus pictures to himself the fate of Jerusalem and Judah, through their infatuation, he is seized with inconsolable anguish.

Isaiah 22:4, 5. *“Therefore I say, Look away from me, that I may weep bitterly; press me not with consolations for the destruction of the daughter of my people! For a day of noise, and of treading down, and of confusion, cometh from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, in the valley of vision, breaking down walls; and a cry of woe echoes against the mountains.”* The note struck by Isaiah here is the note of the *kinah* that is continued in the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Jeremiah says *sheber* for *shod* (Lam. 3:48), and *bath-ammi* (daughter of my people) is varied with *bath-zion* (daughter of Zion) and *bath-yehudah* (daughter of Judah). *Mērēr babbeci* (weep bitterly) is more than *bâcâh mar* (Isa. 33:7): it signifies to give one’s self thoroughly up to bitter weeping, to exhaust one’s self with weeping. The two similar sounds which occur in v. 5, in imitation of echoes, can hardly be translated. The day of divine judgment is called a day in which masses of men crowd together with great noise (*mehūmâh*), in which Jerusalem and its inhabitants are trodden down by foes (*mebūsâh*) and are thrown into wild confusion (*mebūcâh*). This is one play upon words. The other makes the crashing of the walls audible, as they are hurled down by the siege-artillery (*mekarkar kir*). *Kirkēr* is not a denom. of *kīr*, as Kimchi and Ewald suppose (unwalling walls), but is to be explained in accordance with Num. 24:17, “he undermines,” i.e., throws down by removing the supports, in other words, “to the very foundations” (*kur*, to dig, hence *karkârâh*, the bottom of a vessel, *Kelim* ii. 2; *kurkoreth*, the bottom of a net, *ib.* xxviii. 10, or of a cask, *Ahaloth* ix. 16). When this takes place, then a cry of woe echoes against the mountain (*shōa’*, like *shūa’*, *sheva’*), i.e., strikes against the mountains that surround Jerusalem, and is echoed back again. Knobel understands it as signifying a cry for help addressed to the mountain where Jehovah dwells; but this feature is altogether unsuitable to the God-forgetting worldly state in which Jerusalem is found. It is also to be observed, in opposition to

Knobel, that the description does not move on in the same natural and literal way as in a historical narrative. The prophet is not relating, but looking; and in v. 5 he depicts the day of Jehovah according to both its ultimate intention and its ultimate result.

Isaiah 22:6, 7. The advance of the besiegers, which leads to the destruction of the walls, is first described in vv. 6, 7. *“And Elam has taken the quiver, together with chariots with men, horsemen; and Kir has drawn out the shield. And then it comes to pass, that thy choicest valleys are filled with chariots, and the horsemen plant a firm foot towards the gate.”* Of the nations composing the Assyrian army, the two mentioned are *Elam*, the Semitic nation of Susiana (Chuzistan), whose original settlements were the row of valleys between the Zagros chain and the chain of advanced mountains bounding the Assyrian plains on the east, and who were greatly dreaded as bowmen (Ezek. 32:24; Jer. 49:35), and *Kir*, the inhabitants of the country of the Cyrus river, which was an Assyrian province, according to 2 Kings 16:9 and Amos 1:5, and still retained its dependent position even in the time of the Achaemenides, when Armenia, at any rate, is expressly described in the arrowheaded writings as a Persian province, though a rebellious one. The readiness for battle of this people of Kur, who represent, in combination with Elam, the whole extent of the Assyrian empire from south to north, is attested by their “drawing out the shield” (*’ērâh mâgēn*), which Caesar calls *scutis tegimenta detrahere* (*bell. gall.* ii. 21); for the Talmudic meaning *applicare* cannot be thought of for a moment (Buxtorf, *lex. col.* 1664). These nations that fought on foot were accompanied (*beth*, as in 1 Kings 10:2) by chariots filled with men (*receb ’âdâm*), i.e., war-chariots (as distinguished from *’agâloth*), and, as is added ἄσυνδέτως, by *pârâshim*, riders (i.e., horsemen trained to arms). The historical tense is introduced with וַיִּהְיֶה in v. 7, but in a purely future sense. It is only for the sake of the favourite arrangement of the words that the passage does not proceed with *Vav relat.* וַיִּמְלֵאוּ.

“Thy valleys” (*ʿamâkaik*) are the valleys by which Jerusalem was encircled on the east, the west, and the south, viz., the valley of Kidron on the east; the valley of Gihon on the west; the valley of Rephaim, stretching away from the road to Bethlehem, on the south-west (Isa. 17:5); the valley of Hinnom, which joins the Tyropaeum, and then runs on into a south-eastern angle; and possibly also the valley of Jehoshaphat, which ran on the north-east of the city above the valley of Kidron. These valleys, more especially the finest of them towards the south, are now cut up by the wheels and hoofs of the enemies’ chariots and horses; and the enemies’ horsemen have already taken a firm position gatewards, ready to ride full speed against the gates at a given signal, and force their way into the city (*shīth* with a *shoth* to strengthen it, as in Ps. 3:7; also *sīm* in 1 Kings 20:12, compare 1 Sam. 15:2).

Isaiah 22:8–11. When Judah, after being for a long time intoxicated with hope, shall become aware of the extreme danger in which it is standing, it will adopt prudent measures, but without God. Vv. 8–11. *“Then he takes away the covering of Judah, and thou lookest in that day to the store of arms of the forest-house; and ye see the breaches of the city of David, that there are many of them; and ye collect together the waters of the lower pool. And ye number the houses of Jerusalem, and pull down the houses, to fortify the wall. And ye make a basin between the two walls for the waters of the old pool; and ye do not look to Him who made it, neither do ye have regard to Him who fashioned it long ago.”* *Mâsâk* is the curtain or covering which made Judah blind to the threatening danger. Their looks are now directed first of all to the forest-house, built by Solomon upon Zion for the storing and display of valuable arms and utensils (*nēshĕk*, or rather, according to the Masora on Job 20:24, and the older editions, *nēshĕk*), and so called because it rested upon four rows of cedar columns that ran all round (it was in the centre of the fore-court of the royal palace; see Thenius, *das vorexil. Jerusalem*, p. 13). They also noticed in the city of David, the southern and highest portion of the city of Jerusalem, the bad

state of the walls, and began to think of repairing them. To this end they numbered the houses of the city, to obtain building materials for strengthening the walls and repairing the breaches, by pulling down such houses as were suitable for the purpose, and could be dispensed with (*vattithtzu*, from *nâthatz*, with the removal of the recompensative reduplication). The lower pool and the old pool, probably the upper, i.e., the lower and upper Gihon, were upon the western side of the city, the lower (*Briket es-Sultan*) to the west of Sion, the upper (*Birket el-Mamilla*) farther up to the west of Akra (Robinson, i. 483–486; v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 305–6). *Kibbētz* either means to collect in the pool by stopping up the outflow, or to gather together in the reservoirs and wells of the city by means of artificial canals. The latter, however, would most probably be expressed by *קִבְּצָה*; so that the meaning that most naturally suggests itself is, that they concentrate the water, so as to be able before the siege to provide the city as rapidly as possible with a large supply. The word *sâtham*, which is used in the account of the actual measures adopted by Hezekiah when he was threatened with siege (2 Chron. 32:2–5), is a somewhat different one, and indicates the stopping up, not of the outflow but of the springs, and therefore of the influx. But in all essential points the measures adopted agree with those indicated here in the prophecy. The chronicler closes the account of Hezekiah’s reign by still further observing that “Hezekiah also stopped the outflow of the upper Gihon, and carried the water westwards underground to the city of David” (2 Chron. 32:30, explanatory of 2 Kings 20:20). If the upper Gihon is the same as the upper pool, there was a conduit (*teâlâh*), connected with the upper Gihon as early as the time of Ahaz, Isa. 7:3. And Hezekiah’s peculiar work consisted in carrying the water of the upper pool “into the city of David.” The *mikvâh* between the two walls, which is here prospectively described by Isaiah, is connected with this water supply, which Hezekiah really carried out. There is still a pool of Hezekiah (also called *Birket el-Batrak*, pool of the

ISAIAH	Page 200
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

patriarchs, the *Amygdalon* of Josephus) on the western side of the city, to the east of the Joppa gate. During the rainy season this pool is supplied by the small conduit which runs from the upper pool along the surface of the ground, and then under the wall against or near the Joppa gate. It also lies between two walls, viz., the wall to the north of Zion, and the one which runs to the north-east round the Akra (Robinson, i. 487–489). How it came to pass that Isaiah's words concerning "a basin between the two walls" were so exactly carried out, as though they had furnished a hydraulic plan, we do not know. But we will offer a conjecture at the close of the exposition. It stands here as one of those prudent measures which would be resorted to in Jerusalem in the anticipation of the coming siege; but it would be thought of too late, and in self-reliant alienation from God, with no look directed to Him who had wrought and fashioned that very calamity which they were now seeking to avert by all these precautions, and by whom it had been projected long, long before the actual realization. עֲשֵׂיָהּ might be a plural, according to Isa. 54:5; but the parallel יִצְרָה favours the singular (on the form itself, from עֲשֵׂי = עֲשָׂה, see Isa. 42:5, and at Isa. 5:12; 1:30). We have here, and at Isa. 37:26, i.e., within the first part of the book of Isaiah, the same doctrine of "ideas" that forms so universal a key-note of the second part, the authenticity of which has been denied. That which is realized in time has existed long before as a spiritual pattern, i.e., as an idea in God. God shows this to His prophets; and so far as prophecy foretells the future, whenever the event predicted is fulfilled, the prophecy becomes a proof that the event is the work of God, and was long ago the predetermined counsel of God. The whole of the Scripture presupposes this pre-existence of the divine idea before the historical realization, and Isaiah in Israel (like Plato in the heathen world) was the assiduous interpreter of this supposition. Thus, in the case before us, the fate of Jerusalem is said to have been fashioned "long ago" in God. But Jerusalem might have averted its

realization, for it was no *decretum absolutum*. If Jerusalem repented, the realization would be arrested.

Isaiah 22:12–14. And so far as it had proceeded already, it was a call from Jehovah to repentance. Vv. 12–14. "*The Lord, Jehovah of hosts, calls in that day to weeping, and to mourning, and to the pulling out of hair, and to girding with sackcloth; and behold joy and gladness, slaughtering of oxen and killing of sheep, eating of flesh and drinking of wine, eating and drinking, for 'to-morrow we die.'* And Jehovah of hosts hath revealed in mine ears, Surely this iniquity shall not be expiated for you until ye die, saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts." The first condition of repentance is a feeling of pain produced by the punishments of God. But upon Jerusalem they produce the opposite effect. The more threatening the future, the more insensibly and madly do they give themselves up to the rude, sensual enjoyment of the present. *Shâthoth* is interchanged with *shâthō* (which is only another form of שָׂתָה, as in Isa. 6:9; 30:19), to ring with *shâchōt* (compare Hos. 10:4). There are other passages in which we meet with unusual forms introduced for the sake of the play upon the words (vid., Isa. 4:6; 8:6; 16:9, and compare Ezek. 43:11, and the *keri* of 2 Sam. 3:25). The words of the rioters themselves, whose conduct is sketched by the *inf. abs.*, which are all governed by *hinnēh*, are simply "for tomorrow we shall die." This does not imply that they feel any pleasure in the thought of death, but indicates a love of life which scoffs at death. Then the unalterable will of the all-commanding God is audibly and distinctly revealed to the prophet. Such scoffing as this, which defies the chastisements of God, will not be expiated in any other way than by the death of the scoffer (*cuppar*, from *câphar*, *tegere*, means to be covered over, i.e., expiated). This is done in the case of sin either by the justice of God, as in the present instance, or by the mercy of God (Isa. 6:7), or by both justice and mercy combined (as in Isa. 27:9). In all three cases the expiation is demanded by the divine holiness, which requires a covering

between itself and sin, by which sin becomes as though it were not. In this instance the expunging act consists in punishment. The sin of Jerusalem is expiated by the giving up of the sinners themselves to death. The verb *temūthūn* (ye shall die) is written absolutely, and therefore is all the more dreadful. The Targum renders it "till ye die the second (eternal) death" (*mōthâh thinyânâh*).

So far as they prophecy threatened the destruction of Jerusalem by Assyria, it was never actually fulfilled; but the very opposite occurred. Asshur itself met with destruction in front of Jerusalem. But this was by no means opposed to the prophecy; and it was with this conviction that Isaiah, nevertheless, included the prophecy in the collection which he made at a time when the non-fulfilment was perfectly apparent. It stands here in a double capacity. In the first place, it is a memorial of the mercy of God, which withdraws, or at all events modifies, the threatened judgment as soon as repentance intervenes. The falling away from Assyria did take place; but on the part of Hezekiah and many others, who had taken to heart the prophet's announcement, it did so simply as an affair that was surrendered into the hands of the God of Israel, through distrust of either their own strength or Egyptian assistance. Hezekiah carried out the measures of defence described by the prophet; but he did this for the good of Jerusalem, and with totally different feelings from those which the prophet had condemned. These measures of defence probably included the reservoir between the two walls, which the chronicler does not mention till the close of the history of his reign, inasmuch as he follows the thread of the book of Kings, to which his book stands, as it were, in the relation of a commentary, like the *midrash*, from which extracts are made. The king regulated his actions carefully by the prophecy, inasmuch as after the threats had produced repentance, vv. 8–11 still remained as good and wise counsels. In the second place, the oracle stands here as the proclamation of a judgment deferred but not repealed. Even if the danger of destruction which threatened Jerusalem on the

part of Assyria had been mercifully caused to pass away, the threatening word of Jehovah had not fallen to the ground. The counsel of God contained in the word of prophecy still remained; and as it was the counsel of the Omniscient, the time would surely come when it would pass out of the sphere of ideality into that of actual fact. It remained hovering over Jerusalem like an eagle, and Jerusalem would eventually become its carrion. We have only to compare the *temūthūn* of this passage with the ἀποθανεῖσθε of John 8:21, to see when the eventual fulfilment took place. Thus the "*massa* of the valley of vision" became a memorial of mercy to Israel when it looked back to its past history: but when it looked into the future, it was still a mirror of wrath.

Against Shebna the Steward—Ch. 22:15–25

(Appendix to the Tetralogy in Ch. 21–22:14)

Isaiah 22:15–25. *Shebna* (שֶׁבְנָא; 2 Kings 18:18, 26, שֶׁבְנָה) is officially described as "*over the house*." This was the name given to an office of state of great importance in both kingdoms (1 Kings 4:6; 18:3), in fact the highest office of all, and one so vastly superior to all others (Isa. 36:3; 37:2), that it was sometimes filled by the heir to the throne (2 Chron. 26:21). It was the post of minister of the household, and resembled the Merovingian office of *major domus* (*maire du palais*). The person "who was over the house" had the whole of the domestic affairs of the sovereign under his superintendence, and was therefore also called the *socēn* or administrator (from *sâcan*, related to *shâcan*, to assist in a friendly, neighbourly manner, or to be generally serviceable: see on Job 22:2), as standing nearest to the king. In this post of eminence Shebna had helped to support that proud spirit of self-security and self-indulgent forgetfulness of God, for which the people of Jerusalem had in the foregoing oracle been threatened with death. At the same time, he may also have been a leader of the Egyptian party of magnates, and with this anti-

theocratical policy may have been the opponent of Isaiah in advising the king. Hence the general character of Isa. 22:1–14 now changes into a distinct and special prophecy against this Shebna. The time at which it was fulfilled was the same as that referred to in Isa. 22:1–14. There was still deep peace, and the great minister of state was driving about with splendid equipages, and engaged in superintending the erection of a family sepulchre.

Isaiah 22:15–19. *“Thus spake the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, Go, get thee to that steward there, to Shebna the house-mayor. What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewn thyself out a sepulchre here, hewing out his sepulchre high up, digging himself a dwelling in rocks? Behold, Jehovah hurleth thee, hurling with a man’s throw, and graspeth thee grasping. Coiling, He coileth thee a coil, a ball into a land far and wide; there shalt thou die, and thither the chariots of thy glory, thou shame of the house of thy lord! And I thrust thee from thy post, and from thy standing-place he pulleth thee down.”*

לָךְ־בָּא, go, take thyself in,—not into the house, however, but into the present halting-place. It is possible, at the same time, that the expression may simply mean “take thyself away,” as in Gen. 45:17 and Ezek. 3:4. The preposition לְ is interchanged with עַל, which more commonly denotes the coming of a stronger man upon a weaker one (1 Sam. 12:12), and is here used to designate the overwhelming power of the prophet’s word. *“That steward there:”* this expression points contemptuously to the position of the minister of the court as one which, however high, was a subordinate one after all. We feel at once, as we read this introduction to the divine address, that insatiable ambition was one of the leading traits in Shebna’s character. What Isaiah is to say to Shebna follows somewhat abruptly. The words “and say to him,” which are added in the Septuagint, naturally suggest themselves. The question, What hast thou to do here, and whom hast thou to bury here? is put with a glance at Shebna’s approaching fate. This building of a

sepulchre was quite unnecessary; Shebna himself would never lie there, nor would he be able to bury his relations there. The threefold repetition of the word “here” (*poh*) is of very incisive force: it is not here that he will stay,—here, where he is even now placing himself on a bier, as if it were his home. The participles חָצַבְתָּ and חָקַקְתָּ (with *chirek compaginis*: see on Ps. 113) are also part of the address. The third person which is introduced here is syntactically regular, although the second person is used as well (Isa. 23:2, 3; Hab. 2:15). Rock-tombs, i.e., a collection of tombs in the form of chambers in the rocks, were indeed to be found to the east of Jerusalem, on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, and in the wall of rock to the west of Jerusalem; but the word *mârom* (“high up”), in connection with the threefold “here” (*poh*), and the contemptuous “that administrator there,” warrants us in assuming that *mârom* refers to “the height of the sepulchres of the sons of David” (2 Chron. 32:33), i.e., the eastern slope of Zion, where the tombs of the kings were excavated in the rocks.

So high did Shebna stand, and so great did he think himself, that he helped after his death to rest among kings, and by no means down at the bottom. But how he deceived himself! Jehovah would hurl him far away (*tûl*, to be long; *pilpel*, to throw or stretch out to a distance), טָלַטְלָה טָלַטְלָה טָלַטְלָה. This is either equivalent to טָלַטְלָה טָלַטְלָה טָלַטְלָה, with a man’s throw (Rosenmüller), or טָלַטְלָה is in apposition to *Jehovah* (Gesenius and Knobel). As *taltēlah* stands too baldly if the latter be adopted, for which reason the vocative rendering “O man,” which is found in the Syriac, does not commend itself, and as such an elliptical combination of the absolute with the genitive is by no means unusual (e.g., Prov. 22:21, Jer. 10:10), we give the preference to the former. Jerome’s rendering, “as they carry off a cock,” which he obtained from the mouth of his *Hebraeus*, cannot be taken into consideration at all; although it has been retained by Schegg (see Geiger, *Lesestücke aus der Mischna*, p. 106). The verb טָטַע does not give a suitable sense as used

in Jer. 43:12, where it merely signifies to cover one's self, not to wrap up; nor can we obtain one from 1 Sam. 15:19; 25:14; 14:32, since the verbal forms which we find there, and which are to be traced to עִט (from which comes עֵיט, a bird of prey), and not to עָטָה, signify "to rush upon anything" (when construed with either אָ or אֶל). It is better, therefore, to take it, as Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Knobel, and others do, in the sense of grasping or laying hold of. On the other hand, *tzânaph*, which is applied in other instances to the twisting of a turban, also signifies to wrap up, make up into a bundle, or coil up. And *caddûr*, like *tzenêphâh*, signifies that into which Shebna would be coiled up; for the *Caph* is not to be taken in a comparative sense, since the use of *caddûr* in the sense of *globus* or *sphaera* is established by the Talmud (see at Job 15:24), whereas the Arabic *daur* only means *gyrus*, *periodus*. Shebna is made into a round coil, or ball, which is hurled into a land stretching out on both sides, i.e., over the broad surface of Mesopotamia, where he flies on farther and farther, without meeting with any obstacle whatever. He comes thither to die—he who, by his exaggeration and abuse of his position, has not only dishonoured his office, but the Davidic court as well; and thither do his state carriages also come. There can be no doubt that it was by the positive command of Jehovah that Isaiah apostrophized the proud and wealthy Shebna with such boldness and freedom as this. And such freedom was tolerated too. The murder or incarceration of a prophet was a thing of rare occurrence in the kingdom of Judah before the time of Manasseh. In order to pave the way for the institution of another in Shebna's office, the punishment of deposition, which cannot be understood in any other way than as preceding the punishment of banishment, is placed at the close of the first half of the prophecy. The subject in v. 19b is not the king, as Luzzatto supposes, but *Jehovah*, as in v. 19a (compare Isa. 10:12).

Isaiah 22:20–24. Jehovah first of all gives him the blow which makes him tremble in his post,

and then pulls him completely down from this his lofty station, in order that another worthier man may take his place. Vv. 20–24. *"And it will come to pass in that day, that I call to my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiâh, and invest him with thy coat, and I throw thy sash firmly round him, and place thy government in his hand; and he will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I place the key of David upon his shoulder: and when he opens, no man shuts; and when he shuts, no man opens. And I fasten him as a plug in a fast place, and he becomes the seat of honour to his father's house. And the whole mass of his father's house hangs upon him, the offshoots and side-shoots, every small vessel, from the vessel of the basins even to every vessel of the pitchers."* Eliakim is called the "servant of Jehovah," as one who was already a servant of God in his heart and conduct; the official service is added for the first time here. This title of honour generally embraces both kinds of service (Isa. 20:3). It is quite in accordance with oriental custom, that this transfer of the office is effected by means of investiture (compare 1 Kings 19:19): *chizzêk*, with a double accusative, viz., that of the person and that of the official girdle, is used here according to its radical signification, in the sense of girding tightly or girding round, putting the girdle round him so as to cause the whole dress to sit firmly, without hanging loose. The word *memshaltekâ* (thy government) shows how very closely the office forfeited by Shebna was connected with that of the king. This is also proved by the word "father," which is applied in other cases to the king as the father of the land (Isa. 9:5). The "key" signifies the power of the keys; and for this reason it is not given into Eliakim's hand, but placed upon his shoulder (Isa. 9:5). This key was properly handled by the king (Rev. 3:7), and therefore by the "house-mayor" only in his stead. The power of the keys consisted not only in the supervision of the royal chambers, but also in the decision who was and who was not to be received into the king's service. There is a resemblance, therefore, to the giving of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter under the

New Testament. But there the “binding” and “loosing” introduce another figure, though one similar in sense; whereas here, in the “opening” and “shutting,” the figure of the key is retained. The comparison of the institution of Eliakim in his office to the fastening of a tent-peg was all the more natural, that *yâthêd* was also used as a general designation for national rulers (Zech. 10:4), who stand in the same relation to the commonwealth as a tent-peg to the tent which it holds firmly and keeps upright. As the tent-peg is rammed into the ground, so that a person could easily sit upon it, the figure is changed, and the tent-peg becomes a seat of honour. As a splendid chair is an ornament to a room, so Eliakim would be an honour to his hitherto undistinguished family. The thought that naturally suggests itself—namely, that the members of the family would sit upon this chair, for the purpose of raising themselves to honour—is expressed by a different figure. Eliakim is once more depicted as a *yâthêd*, but it is as a still higher one this time,—namely, as the rod of a wardrobe, or a peg driven high up into the wall. Upon this rod or peg they hang (*thâlu*, i.e., one hangs, or there hangs) all the *câbôd* of the house of Eliakim, i.e., not every one who wished to be honoured and attained to honour in this way (cf., Isa. 5:13), but the whole weight of his family (as in Isa. 8:7). This family is then subdivided into its separate parts, and, as we may infer from the juxtaposition of the masculine and feminine nouns, according to its male and female constituents. In צִנְעָנִים (offshoots) and צִנְעָנִים (“side-shoots,” from צָפַץ, to push out; compare צִנְעָנִים, dung, with צִנְעָנִים, mire) there is contained the idea of a widely ramifying and undistinguished family connection. The numerous rabble consisted of nothing but vessels of a small kind (*hakkâtân*), at the best of basons (*aggânoth*) like those used by the priests for the blood (Ex. 24:6), or in the house for mixing wine (Song of Sol. 7:3; Aram. *aggon*, Ar. *iggâne*, *ingâne*, a washing bason), but chiefly of *nebâlim*, i.e., leather bottles or earthenware pitchers (Isa. 30:14). The whole of this large but hitherto ignoble family of

relations would fasten upon Eliakim, and climb through him to honour. Thus all at once the prophecy, which seemed so full of promise of Eliakim, assumes a satirical tone. We get an impression of the favouring of nephews and cousins, and cannot help asking how this could be a suitable prophecy for Shebna to hear.

Isaiah 22:25. We will refer to this again. But in the meantime the impression is an irresistible one; and the Targum, Jerome, Hitzig, and others, are therefore right in assuming that Eliakim is the peg which, however glorious its beginning may have been, comes at last to the shameful end described in v. 25: *“In that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, will the peg that is fastened in a sure place be removed, and be cast down, and fall; and the burden that it bore falls to the ground: for Jehovah hath spoken.”* The prophet could not express in clearer terms the identity of the peg threatened here with Eliakim himself; for how is it conceivable that the prophet could turn all that he has predicated of Eliakim in vv. 23, 24, into predicates of Shebna? What Umbreit says—namely, that common sense must refer v. 25 to Shebna—is the very reverse of correct. Eliakim himself is also brought down at last by the greatness of his power, on account of the nepotism to which he has given way. His family makes a wrong use of him; and he is more yielding than he ought to be, and makes a wrong use of his office to favour them! He therefore falls, and brings down with him all that hung upon the peg, i.e., all his relations, who have brought him to ruin through the rapacity with which they have grasped at prosperity.

Hitzig maintains that vv. 24, 25 form a later addition. But it is much better to assume that the prophet wrote down Isa. 22:15–25 at one sitting, after the predicted fate of the two great ministers of state, which had been revealed to him at two different times, had been actually fulfilled. We know nothing more about them than this, that in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah it was not Shebna, but Eliakim, “who was over the house” (Isa. 36:3, 22; 37:2). But Shebna also filled another office of importance,

namely that of *sōpher*. Was he really taken prisoner and carried away (a thing which is perfectly conceivable even without an Assyrian captivity of the nation generally)? Or did he anticipate the threatened judgment, and avert it by a penitential self-abasement? To this and other questions we can give no reply. One thing alone is certain,—namely, that the threefold prediction of Shebna's fall, of Eliakim's elevation, and of Eliakim's fall, would not stand where it does, if there were any reason whatever to be ashamed of comparing the prophecy with its fulfilment.

Isaiah 23

The Oracle Concerning Tyre

(Conclusion of the Cycle of Prophecies Relating to the Heathen)

Isaiah 23. The second leading type of the pride of heathen power closes the series of prophecies against the nations, as Stier correctly observes, just as Babylon opened it. Babylon was the city of the imperial power of the world; Tyre, the city of the commerce of the world. The former was the centre of the greatest land power; the latter of the greatest maritime power. The former subjugated the nations with an iron arm, and ensured its rule by means of deportation; the latter obtained possession of the treasures of the nations in as peaceable a manner as possible, and secured its advantages by colonies and factories. The Phoenician cities formed at first six or eight independent states, the government of which was in the hands of kings. Of these, Sidon was much older than Tyre. The *thorah* and Homer mention only the former. Tyre did not rise into notoriety till after the time of David. But in the Assyrian era Tyre had gained a kind of supremacy over the rest of the Phoenician states. It stood by the sea, five miles from Sidon; but when hard pressed by enemies it had transferred the true seat of its trade and wealth to a small island, which was three-quarters of a mile farther to the north, and only twelve hundred paces from the mainland. The strait

which separated this insular Tyre (Tyros) from ancient Tyre (*Palaetyrus*) was mostly shallow, and its navigable waters near the island had only a draught of about eighteen feet, so that on one or two occasions a siege of singular Tyre was effected by throwing up an embankment of earth,—namely, once by Alexander (the embankment still in existence), and once possible by Nebuchadnezzar, for Tyre was engaged in conflict with the Chaldean empire as well as the Assyrian. Now which of these two conflicts was it that the prophet had in his mind? Eichhorn, Rosenmüller Hitzig, and Movers say the Chaldean, and seek in this way to establish the spuriousness of the passage; whereas Gesenius, Maurer, Umbreit, and Knobel say the Assyrian, thinking that this is the only way of sustaining its genuineness. Ewald and Meier say the same; but they pronounce vv. 15–18 an interpolation belonging to the Persian era. De Wette wavers between the genuineness and spuriousness of the whole. In our opinion, however, as in that of Vitringa and those who tread in his footsteps, the question whether the imperial power by which Tyre was threatened was the Assyrian or the Chaldean, is a purely exegetical question, not a critical one.

Isaiah 23:1. The prophecy commences by introducing the trading vessels of Phoenicia on their return home, as they hear with alarm the tidings of the fate that has befallen their home. V. 1. *"Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entrance any more! Out of the land of the Chittaeans it is made known to them."* Even upon the open sea they hear of it as a rumour from the ships that they meet. For their voyage is a very long one: they come from the Phoenician colony on the Spanish Baetis, or the Guadalquivir, as it was called from the time of the occupation by the Moors. *"Ships of Tarshish"* are ships that sail to Tartessus (LXX inaccurately, *πλοῖα Καρχηδόνας*). It is not improbable that the whole of the Mediterranean may have been called "the sea to Tarshish;" and hence the rendering adopted by the Targum, Jerome, Luther, and others, *naves maris* (see Humboldt,

Kosmos, ii. 167, 415). These ships are to howl (*hēlilū* instead of the feminine, as in Isa. 32:11) because of the devastation that has taken place (it is easy to surmise that Tyre has been the victim); for the home and harbour, which the sailors were rejoicing at the prospect of being able to enter once more, have both been swept away. Cyprus was the last station on this homeward passage. The *Chittim* (written in the legends of coins and other inscriptions with *Caph* and *Cheth*) are the inhabitants of the Cyprian harbour of *Citium* and its territory. But Epiphanius, the bishop of Salamis in the island of Cyprus, says that *Citium* was also used as a name for the whole island, or even in a still broader sense. Cyprus, the principal mart of the Phoenicians, was the last landing-place. As soon as they touch the island, the fact which they have only heard of as a rumour upon the open sea, is fully disclosed (*niglâh*), i.e., it now becomes a clear undoubted certainty, for they are told of it by eye-witnesses who have made their escape to the island. The prophet now turns to the Phoenicians at home, who have this devastation in prospect.

Isaiah 23:2, 3. *“Be alarmed, ye inhabitants of the coast! Sidonian merchants, sailing over the sea, filled thee once. And the sowing of Sichor came upon great waters, the harvest of the Nile, her store; and she became gain for nations.”* The suffixes of מְלֵאָה (to fill with wares and riches) and תְּבוּאָה (the bringing in, viz., into barns and granaries) refer to the word אֵץ, which is used here as a feminine for the name of a country, and denotes the Phoenician coast, including the insular Tyre. *“Sidonian merchants”* are the Phoenicians generally, as in Homer; for the *“great Sidon”* of antiquity (*Zidon rabbâh*, Josh. 11:8; 19:28) was the mother-city of Phoenicia, which so thoroughly stamped its name upon the whole nation, that Tyre is called אֵץ צִדֹנִים upon Phoenician coins. The meaning of v. 3a is not that the revenue of Tyre which accrued to it on the great unfruitful sea, was like a Nile-sowing, or an Egyptian harvest (Hitzig, Knobel). Such a simile would be a very beautiful one, but

it is a very unlikely one, since the Phoenicians actually did buy up the corn-stores of Egypt, that granary of the ancient world, and housed the cargoes that were brought to them *“upon great waters,”* i.e., on the great Mediterranean. *Sichor* is a Hebraic form of *Siris* (the native name of the upper Nile, according to Dionysius Perieg. and Pliny). It signifies the black river (*Meals*, Eust. on Dion. Per. 222), the black slime of which gave such fertility to the land. *“The harvest of the Nile”* is not so much an explanation as an amplification. The valley of the Nile was the field for sowing and reaping, and the Phoenician coast was the barn for this valuable corn; and inasmuch as corn and other articles of trade were purchased and bartered there, it thereby became gain (constr. of *sachar*, Ewald, § 213, a, used in the same sense as in Isa. 18, Isa. 45:14, and Prov. 3:14), i.e., the means of gain, the source of profit or provision, to whole nations, and even to many such. Others render the word *“emporium;”* but *sâchâr* cannot have this meaning. Moreover, foreigners did not come to Phoenicia, but the Phoenicians went to them (Luzzatto).

Isaiah 23:4. The address to the whole of the coast-land now passes into an address to the ancestral city. V. 4. *“Shudder, O Sidon; for the sea speaketh, the fortress of the sea, thus: I have not travailed, nor given birth, nor trained up young men, brought up maidens.”* The sea, or more closely considered, the fortress of the sea, i.e., the rock-island on which Neo-tyrus stood with its strong and lofty houses, lifts up its voice in lamentation. Sidon, the ancestress of Canaan, must hear with overwhelming shame how Tyre mourns the loss of her daughters, and complains that, robbed as she has been of her children, she is like a barren women. For the war to have murdered her young men and maidens, was exactly the same as if she had never given birth to them or brought them up. Who is there that does not recognise in this the language of Isaiah (compare Isa. 1:2)?—Even in Egypt the fate of Phoenicia produces alarm. V. 5. *“When the report cometh to Egypt, they tremble at the report from Tzor.”* In the protasis (v. 5a) *Imitzraim* (to Egypt) the verb *“cometh”*

is implied; the *Caph* in v. 5*b* signifies simultaneousness, as in Isa. 18:4 and 30:19 (Ges. *Thes.* p. 650). The news of the fall of Tyre spreads universal terror in Egypt, because its own prosperity depended upon Tyre, which was the great market for its corn; and when such a bulwark had fallen, a similar fate awaited itself.

Isaiah 23:6–9. The inhabitants of Tyre, who desired to escape from death or transportation, are obliged to take refuge in the colonies, and the farther off the better: not in Cyprus, not in Carthage (as at the time when Alexander attacked the insular Tyre), but in Tartessus itself, the farthest off towards the west, and the hardest to reach. Vv. 6–9. *“Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the coast! Is this your fate, thou full of rejoicing, whose origin is from the days of the olden time, whom her feet carried far away to settle? Who hath determined such a thing concerning Tzor, the distributor of crowns, whose merchants are princes, whose traders are the chief men of the earth? Jehovah of hosts hath determined it, to desecrate the pomp of every kind of ornament, to dishonour the chief men of the earth, all of them.”* The exclamation “howl ye” (*hēlilu*) implies their right to give themselves up to their pain. In other cases complaint is unmanly, but here it is justifiable (compare Isa. 15:4). In v. 7*a* the question arises, whether *’allizâh* is a nominative predicate, as is generally assumed (“Is this, this deserted heap of ruins, your formerly rejoicing city?”), or a vocative. We prefer the latter, because there is nothing astonishing in the omission of the article in this case (Isa. 22:2; Ewald, 327, *a*); whereas in the former case, although it is certainly admissible (see Isa. 32:13), it is very harsh (compare Isa. 14:16), and the whole expression a very doubtful one to convey the sense of *הזאת קריה עליזה אחר לכם*. To *’allizâh* there is attached the descriptive, attributive clause: whose origin (*kadmâh*, Ezek. 16:55) dates from the days of the olden time; and then a second “whose feet brought her far away (*raglaim* construed as a masculine, as in Jer. 13:16, for example) to dwell in a foreign land.

This is generally understood as signifying transportation by force into an enemy’s country. But Luzzatto very properly objects to this, partly on the ground that *יְבִלוּהָ רַגְלֶיהָ* (her feet carried her) is the strongest expression that can be used for voluntary emigration, to which *lâgūr* (to settle) also corresponds; and partly because we miss the antithetical *וְעָתָה*, which we should expect with this interpretation. The reference is to the trading journeys which extended “far away” (whether by land or sea), and to the colonies, i.e., the settlements founded in those distant places, that leading characteristic of the Tyro-Phoenician people (this is expressed in the imperfect by *yobiluâh, quam portabant; gur* is the most appropriate word to apply to such settlements: for *mērâchōk*, see at Isa. 17:13). Sidon was no doubt older than Tyre, but Tyre was also of primeval antiquity. Strabo speaks of its as the oldest Phoenician city “after Sidon;” Curtius calls it *vetustate originis insignis*; and Josephus reckons the time from the founding of Tyre to the building of Solomon’s temple as 240 years (Ant. viii. 3, 1; compare Herod. ii. 44). Tyre is called *hamma’atirâh*, not as wearing a crown (*Vulg. quondam coronata*), but as a distributor of crowns (Targum). Either would be suitable as a matter of fact; but the latter answers better to the *hiphil* (as *hikrîn, hiphrîs*, which are expressive of results produced from within outwards, can hardly be brought into comparison). Such colonies as Citium, Tartessus, and at first Carthage, were governed by kings appointed by the mother city, and dependent upon her. Her merchants were princes (compare Isa. 10:8), the most honoured of the earth; *נִכְבְּדֵי* acquires a superlative meaning from the genitive connection (Ges. § 119, 2). From the fact that the Phoenicians had the commerce of the world in their hands, a merchant was called *cena’ani* or *cena’an* (Hos. 12:8; from the latter, not from *cin’âni*, the plural *cin’ânim* which we find here is formed), and the merchandise *cin’âh*. The verb *chillêl*, to desecrate or profane, in connection with the “pomp of every kind of ornament,” leads us to

think more especially of the holy places of both insular and continental Tyre, among which the temple of Melkarth in the new city of the former was the most prominent (according to the Arrian, *Anab.* ii. 16, *παλαιότατον ὧν μνήμη ἀνθρωπίνη διασώζεται*). These glories, which were thought so inviolable, Jehovah will profane. “*To dishonour the chief men:*” *lhâkêl* (*ad ignominiam deducere*, Vulg.) as in Isa. 8:23.

Isaiah 23:10. The consequence of the fall of Tyre is, that the colonies achieve their independence, Tartessus being mentioned by way of example. V. 10. “*Overflow thy land like the Nile, O daughter of Tarshish! No girdle restrains thee any longer.*” The girdle (*mēzach*) is the supremacy of Tyre, which has hitherto restrained all independent action on the part of the colony. Now they no longer need to wait in the harbour for the ships of the mother city, no longer to dig in the mines as her tributaries for silver and other metals. The colonial territory is their own freehold now, and they can spread themselves over it like the Nile when it passes beyond its banks and overflows the land. Koppe has already given this as the meaning of v. 10.

Isaiah 23:11, 12. The prophet now proceeds to relate, as it were, to the Phoenician-Spanish colony, the daughter, i.e., the population of Tartessus, what has happened to the mother country. Vv. 11, 12. “*His hand hath He stretched over the sea, thrown kingdoms into trembling; Jehovah hath given commandment concerning Kena’an, to destroy her fortresses. And He said, Thou shalt not rejoice any further, thou disgraced one, virgin daughter of Sidon! Get up to Kittim, go over; there also shalt thou not find rest.*” There is no ground whatever for restricting the “kingdoms” (*mamlâcoth*) to the several small Phoenician states (compare Isa. 19:2). Jehovah, reaching over the sea, has thrown the lands of Hither Asia and Egypto-Ethiopia into a state of the most anxious excitement, and has summoned them as instruments of destruction with regard to Kena’an (אֵל, like עַל in Esther 4:5). Phoenicia called itself *Kena’an* (Canaan); but this is the only passage in the Old Testament in which the

name occurs in this most restricted sense.

לְשָׂמִיד, for לְהִשְׁמִיד, as in Num. 5:22, Amos 8:4.

The form מְעַנְיָהּ is more rare, but it is not a deformity, as Knobel and others maintain. There are other examples of the same resolution of the reduplication and transposition of the letters (it stands for מְעַנְיָהּ, possibly a Phoenician word; see Hitzig, *Grabschrift*, p. 16, and Levi, *Phoenizische Studien*, p. 17), viz., תִּמְנוּ in Lam. 3:22 (vid., at Ps. 64:7), and קָבְנוּ in Num. 23:13, at least according to the Jewish grammar (see, however, Ewald, § 250, b). “*Virgin of the daughter of Sidon*” (equivalent to “*virgin daughter of Sidon*,” two exegetical genitives; Ewald, § 289, c) is synonymous with *Kena’an*. The name of the ancestral city (compare Isa. 37:22) has here become the name of the whole nation that has sprung from it. Hitherto this nation has been untouched, like a virgin, but now it resembles one ravished and defiled. If now they flee across to Cyprus (*cittiyim* or *cittim*), there will be no rest for them even there, because the colony, emancipated from the Phoenician yoke, will only be too glad to rid herself of the unwelcome guests from the despotic mother country.

Isaiah 23:13, 14. The prophet now proceeds to describe the fate of Phoenicia. Vv. 13, 14.

“*Behold the Chaldean land: this people that has not been (Asshur—it hath prepared the same for desert beasts)—they set up their siege-towers, destroy the palaces of Kena’an, make it a heap of ruins. Mourn, he ships of Tarshish: for your fortress is laid waste.*” The general meaning of v. 13, as the text now runs, is that the Chaldeans have destroyed Kena’an, and in fact Tyre. הִקִּימוּ (they set up) points to the plural idea of “this people,” and בְּחֻזְיוֹ (*chethib* בְּחֻזְיוֹ) to the singular idea of the same; on the other hand, the feminine suffixes relate to Tyre. “They (the Chaldeans) have laid bare the palaces (*armenoth*, from *armoneth*) of Tyre,” i.e., have thrown them down, or burned them down to their very foundations (עוֹרֵר, from עָרָה = עָרָה, Ps. 137:7, like עָרַר in Jer. 51:58); it (the Chaldean

people) has made her (Tyre) a heap of rubbish. So far the text is clear, and there is no ground for hesitation. But the question arises, whether in the words אֲשׁוּר יִסְדָּה לְצִיִּים Asshur is the subject or the object. In the former case the prophet points to the land of the Chaldeans, for the purpose of describing the instruments of divine wrath; and having called them “a nation which has not been” (לֹא הָיָה), explains this by saying that Asshur first founded the land which the Chaldeans now inhabit for them, i.e., wild hordes (Ps. 72:9); or better still (as *tziyyim* can hardly signify mountain hordes), that Asshur has made it (this nation, אֶם fem., as in Jer. 8:5, Ex. 5:16) into dwellers in steppes (Knobel), which could not be conceived of in any other way than that Asshur settled the Chaldeans, who inhabited the northern mountains, in the present so-called land of Chaldea, and thus made the Chaldeans into a people, i.e., a settled, cultivated people, and a people bent on conquest and taking part in the history of the world (according to Knobel, primarily as a component part of the Assyrian army). But this view, which we meet with even in Calvin, is exposed to a grave difficulty. It is by no means improbable, indeed, that the Chaldeans, who were descendants of Nahor, according to Gen. 22:22, and therefore of Semitic descent, came down from the mountains which bound Armenia, Media, and Assyria, having been forced out by the primitive migration of the Arians from west to east; although the more modern hypothesis, which represents them as a people of Tatar descent, and as mixing among the Shemites of the countries of the Euphrates and Tigris, has no historical support whatever, the very reverse being the case, according to Gen. 10, since Babylon was of non-Semitic or Cushite origin, and therefore the land of Chaldea, as only a portion of Babylonia (Strabo, xvi. 1, 6), was the land of the Shemites. But the idea that the Assyrians brought them down from the mountains into the lowlands, though not under Ninus and Semiramis, as Vitringa supposes, but about the time of Shalmanassar (Ges., Hitzig, Knobel, and others), is pure

imagination, and merely an inference drawn from this passage. For this reason I have tried to give a different interpretation to the clause אֲשׁוּר יִסְדָּה לְצִיִּים in my *Com. on Habakkuk* (p. 22), viz., “Asshur—it has assigned the same to the beasts of the desert.” That *Asshur* may be used not only pre-eminently, but directly, for *Nineveh* (like *Kena’an* for *Tzor*), admits of no dispute, since even at the present day the ruins are called Arab. *’l-âtûr*, and this is probably a name applied to Nineveh in the arrow-headed writings also (Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*). The word *tziyyim* is commonly applied to beasts of the wilderness (e.g., Isa. 13:21), and אֲשׁוּר יִסְדָּה לְצִיִּים for אֶם צִיָּה (used of Nineveh in Zeph. 2:13, 14) may be explained in accordance with Ps. 104:8. The form of the parenthetical clause, however, would be like that of the concluding clause of Amos 1:11. But what makes me distrustful even of this view is not a doctrinal ground (Winer, *Real Wörterbuch*, i. 218), but one taken from Isaiah’s own prophecy. Isaiah undoubtedly sees a Chaldean empire behind the Assyrian; but this would be the only passage in which he prophesied (and that quite by the way) how the imperial power would pass from the latter to the former. It was the task of Nahum and Zephaniah to draw this connecting line. It is true that this argument is not sufficient to outweigh the objections that can be brought against the other view, which makes the text declare a fact that is never mentioned anywhere else; but it is important nevertheless. For this reason it is possible, indeed, that Ewald’s conjecture is a right one, and that the original reading of the text was הִנֵּה אֶרֶץ כְּנַעֲנִים. Read in this manner, the first clause runs thus: “Behold the land of the Canaanites: this people has come to nothing; Asshur has prepared it (their land) for the beasts of the desert.” It is true that לֹא הָיָה generally means not to exist, or not to have been (Ob. 16); but there are also cases in which לֹא is used as a kind of substantive (cf., Jer. 33:25), and the words mean to become or to have become nothing (Job 6:21, Ezek. 21:32, and possibly

also Isa. 15:6). Such an alteration of the text is not favoured, indeed, by any of the ancient versions. For our own part, we still abide by the explanation we have given in the *Commentary on Habakkuk*, not so much for this reason, as because the seventy years mentioned afterwards are a decisive proof that the prophet had the Chaldeans and not Asshur in view, as the instruments employed in executing the judgment upon Tyre. The prophet points out the Chaldeans,—that nation which (although of primeval antiquity, Jer. 5:15) had not yet shown itself as a conqueror of the world (cf., Hab. 1:6), having been hitherto subject to the Assyrians; but which had now gained the mastery after having first of all destroyed Asshur, i.e., Nineveh (namely, with the Medo-Babylonian army under Nabopolassar, the founder of the Neo-Babylonian empire, in 606 B.C.),—as the destroyers of the palaces of Tyre. With the appeal to the ships of Tarshish to pour out their lamentation, the prophecy returns in v. 14 to the opening words in v. 1. According to v. 4, the fortress here is insular Tyre. As the prophecy thus closes itself by completing the circle, vv. 15–18 might appear to be a later addition. This is no more the case, however, here, than in the last part of Isa. 19. Those critics, indeed, who do not acknowledge any special prophecies that are not *vaticinia post eventum*, are obliged to assign vv. 15–18 to the Persian era.

Isaiah 23:15, 16. The prophet here foretells the rise of Tyre again at the close of the Chaldean world-wide monarchy. Vv. 15, 16. *“And it will come to pass in that day, that Tzor will be forgotten seventy years, equal to the days of one king; after the end of the seventy years, Tzor will go, according to the song of the harlot. Take the guitar, sweep through the city, O forgotten harlot! Play bravely, sing zealously, that thou mayest be remembered!”* The “*days of a king*” are a fixed and unchangeable period, for which everything is determined by the one sovereign will (as is the case more especially in the East), and is therefore stereotyped. The seventy years are compared to the days of such a king. Seventy is well fitted to be the number used to denote a uniform period of this kind,

being equal to 10×7 , i.e., a compact series of heptads of years (*shabbathoth*). But the number is also historical, prophecy being the power by which the history of the future was “periodized” beforehand in this significant manner. They coincide with the seventy years of Jeremiah (compare 2 Chron. 36:21), that is to say, with the duration of the Chaldean rule. During this period Tyre continued with its world-wide commerce in a state of involuntary repose. *“Tyre will be forgotten.”* *v'nishcachath* is not a participle (Böttcher), but the *perf. cons.* which is required here, and stands for וְנִשְׁכַּחְתִּי with an original η fem. (cf., Isa. 7:14, Ps.

118:23). After the seventy years (that is to say, along with the commencement of the Persian rule) the harlot is welcomed again. She is like a bayadere or troubadour going through the streets with song and guitar, and bringing her charms into notice again. The prophecy here falls into the tone of a popular song, as in Isa. 5:1 and 27:2. It will be with Tyre as with such a musician and dancer as the one described in the popular song.

Isaiah 23:17. When it begins again to make love to all the world, it will get rich again from the gain acquired by this worldly intercourse. V. 17. *“And it will come to pass at the end of the seventy years: Jehovah will visit Tzor, and she comes again to her hire, and commits prostitution with all the kingdoms of the earth on the broad surface of the globe.”* Such mercantile trading as hers, which is only bent upon earthly advantages, is called *zânâh*, on account of its recognising none of the limits opposed by God, and making itself common to all the world, partly because it is a prostitution of the soul, and partly because from the very earliest times the prostitution of the body was also a common thing in markets and fairs, more especially in those of Phoenicia (as the Phoenicians were worshippers of Astarte). Hence the gain acquired by commerce, which Tyre had now secured again, is called *'ethnân* (Deut. 23:19), with a feminine suffix, according to the Masora without *mappik* (Ewald, § 247, a).

Isaiah 23:18. This restoration of the trade of Tyre is called a visitation on the part of Jehovah, because, however profane the conduct of Tyre might be, it was nevertheless a holy purpose to which Jehovah rendered it subservient. V. 18.

“And her gain and her reward of prostitution will be holy to Jehovah: it is not stored up nor gathered together; but her gain from commerce will be theirs who dwell before Jehovah, to eat to satiety and for stately clothing.” It is not the conversion of Tyre which is held up to view, but something approaching it. *Sachar* (which does not render it at all necessary to assume a form *sâchâr* for v. 3) is used here in connection with *'ethnân*, to denote the occupation itself which yielded the profit. This, and also the profit acquired, would become holy to Jehovah; the latter would not be treasured up and capitalized as it formerly was, but they would give tribute and presents from it to Israel, and thus help to sustain in abundance and clothe in stately dress the nation which dwelt before Jehovah, i.e., whose true dwelling-place was in the temple before the presence of God (Ps. 27:4; 84:5; *mecasseh* = that which covers, i.e., the covering; *'âthik*, like the Arabic *'atik*, old, noble, honourable). A strange prospect! As Jerome says, *“Haec secundum historiam necdum facta comperimus.”*

The Assyrians, therefore, were not the predicted instruments of the punishment to be inflicted upon Phoenicia. Nor was Shalmanassar successful in his Phoenician war, as the extract from the chronicle of Menander in the *Antiquities* of Josephus (Ant. ix. 14, 2) clearly shows. Elulaeus, the king of Tyre, had succeeded in once more subduing the rebellious Cyprians (*Kittaioi*). But with their assistance (if indeed ἐπὶ τούτους πέμψας is to be so interpreted) Shalmanassar made war upon Phoenicia, though a general peace soon put an end to this campaign. Thereupon Sidon, Ace, Palaetyrus, and many other cities, fell away from Tyrus (insular Tyre), and placed themselves under Assyrian supremacy. But as the Tyrians would not do this, Shalmanassar renewed the war; and the Phoenicians that were under his sway supplied him with six

hundred ships and eight hundred rowers for this purpose. The Tyrians, however, fell upon them with twelve vessels of war, and having scattered the hostile fleet, took about five hundred prisoners. This considerably heightened the distinction of Tyre. And the king of Assyria was obliged to content himself with stationing guards on the river (Leontes), and at the conduits, to cut off the supply of fresh water from the Tyrians. This lasted for five years, during the whole of which time the Tyrians drank from wells that they had sunk themselves. Now, unless we want to lower the prophecy into a mere picture of the imagination, we cannot understand it as pointing to Asshur as the instrument of punishment, for the simple reason that Shalmanassar was obliged to withdraw from the “fortress of the sea” without accomplishing his purpose, and only succeeded in raising it to all the greater honour. But it is a question whether even Nebuchadnezzar was more successful with insular Tyre. All that Josephus is able to tell us from the Indian and Phoenician stories of Philostratus, is that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years in the reign of Ithobal (Ant. x. 11, 1). And from Phoenician sources themselves, he merely relates (*c. Ap. i. 21*) that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years under Ithobal (*viz.*, from the seventh year of his reign onwards). But so much, at any rate, may apparently be gathered from the account of the Tyrian government which follows, *viz.*, that the Persian era was preceded by the subjection of the Tyrians to the Chaldeans, inasmuch as they sent twice to fetch their king from Babylon. When the Chaldeans made themselves masters of the Assyrian empire, Phoenicia (whether with or without insular Tyre, we do not know) was a satrapy of that empire (Josephus, Ant. x. 11, 1; *c. Ap. i. 19*, from Berosus), and this relation still continued at the close of the Chaldean rule. So much is certain, however,—and Berosus, in fact, says it expressly,—*viz.* that Nebuchadnezzar once more subdued Phoenicia when it rose in rebellion; and that when he was called home to Babylon in consequence of the death of his

father, he returned with Phoenician prisoners. What we want, however, is a direct account of the conquest of Tyre by the Chaldeans. Neither Josephus nor Jerome could give any such account. And the Old Testament Scriptures appear to state the very opposite,—namely, the failure of Nebuchadnezzar’s enterprise. For in the twenty-seventh year after Jehoiachim’s captivity (the sixteenth from the destruction of Jerusalem) the following word of the Lord came to Ezekiel (Ezek. 29:17, 18): “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has caused his army to perform a long and hard service against Tyre: every head is made bald, and every shoulder peeled; yet neither he nor his army has any wages at Tyre for the hard service which they have performed around the same.” It then goes on to announce that Jehovah would give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar, and that this would be the wages of his army. Gesenius, Winer, Hitzig, and others, infer from this passage, when taken in connection with other non-Israelitish testimonies given by Josephus, which merely speak of a siege, that Nebuchadnezzar did not conquer Tyre; but Hengstenberg (*de rebus Tyriorum*, 1832), Hävernick (*Ezek.* pp. 427–442), and Drechsler (*Isa.* ii. 166–169) maintain by arguments, which have been passed again and again through the sieve, that this passage presupposes the conquest of Tyre, and merely announces the disproportion between the profit which Nebuchadnezzar derived from it and the effort that it cost him. Jerome (on Ezekiel) gives the same explanation. When the army of Nebuchadnezzar had made insular Tyre accessible by heaping up an embankment with enormous exertions, and they were in a position to make use of their siege artillery, they found that the Tyrians had carried away all their wealth in vessels to the neighbouring islands; “so that when the city was taken, Nebuchadnezzar found nothing to repay him for his labour; and because he had obeyed the will of God in this undertaking, after the Tyrian captivity had lasted a few years, Egypt was given to him” (Jerome).

I also regard this as the correct view to take; though without wishing to maintain that the words might not be understood as implying the failure of the siege, quite as readily as the uselessness of the conquest. But on the two following grounds, I am persuaded that they are used here in the latter sense. (1.) In the great trilogy which contains Ezekiel’s prophecy against Tyre (Ezek. 26–28), and in which he more than once introduces thoughts and figures from Isa. 23, which he still further amplifies and elaborates (according to the general relation in which he stands to his predecessors, of whom he does not make a species of mosaic, as Jeremiah does, but whom he rather expands, fills up, and paraphrases, as seen more especially in his relation to Zephaniah), he predicts the conquest of insular Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. He foretells indeed even more than this; but if Tyre had not been at least conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, the prophecy would have fallen completely to the ground, like any merely human hope. Now we candidly confess that, on doctrinal grounds, it is impossible for us to make such an assumption as this. There is indeed an element of human hope in all prophecy, but it does not reach such a point as to be put to shame by the test supplied in Deut. 18:21, 22. (2.) If I take a comprehensive survey of the following ancient testimonies: (a) that Nebuchadnezzar, when called home in consequence of his father’s death, took some Phoenician prisoners with him (Berosus, *ut sup.*); (b) that with this fact before us, the statement found in the Phoenician sources, to the effect that the Tyrians fetched two of their rulers from Babylon, viz., Merbal and Eirom, presents a much greater resemblance to 2 Kings 24:12, 14, and Dan. 1:3, than to 1 Kings 12:2, 3, with which Hitzig compares it; (c) that, according to Josephus (*c. Ap.* i. 20), it was stated “in the archives of the Phoenicians concerning this king Nebuchadnezzar, that he conquered all Syria and Phoenicia;” and (d) that the voluntary submission to the Persians (Herod. 3:19; Xen. *Cyrop.* i. 1, 4) was not the commencement of servitude, but merely a change of masters;—if, I

ISAIAH	Page 213
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

say, I put all these things together, the conclusion to which I am brought is, that the thirteen years' siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar ended in its capture, possibly through capitulation (as Winer, Movers, and others assume).

The difficulties which present themselves to us when we compare together the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, are still no doubt very far from being removed; but it is in this way alone that any solution of the difficulty is to be found. For even assuming that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Tyre, he did not destroy it, as the words of the two prophecies would lead us to expect. The real solution of the difficulty has been already given by Hävernich and Drechsler: "The prophet sees the whole enormous mass of destruction which eventually came upon the city, concentrated, as it were, in Nebuchadnezzar's conquest, inasmuch as in the actual historical development it was linked on to that fact like a closely connected chain. The power of Tyre as broken by Nebuchadnezzar is associated in his view with its utter destruction." Even Alexander did not destroy Tyre, when he had conquered it after seven months' enormous exertions. Tyre was still a flourishing commercial city of considerable importance under both the Syrian and the Roman sway. In the time of the Crusades it was still the same; and even the Crusaders, who conquered it in 1125, did not destroy it. It was not till about a century and a half later that the destruction was commenced by the removal of the fortifications on the part of the Saracens. At the present time, all the glory of Tyre is either sunk in the sea or buried beneath the sand,—an inexhaustible mine of building materials for Beirut and other towns upon the coast. Amidst these vast ruins of the island city, there is nothing standing now but a village of wretched wooden huts. And the island is an island no longer. The embankment which Alexander threw up has grown into a still broader and stronger tongue of earth through the washing up of sand, and now connects the island with the shore,—a standing memorial of divine justice (Strauss, *Sinai und Golgotha*, p. 357).

This picture of destruction stands before the prophet's mental eye, and indeed immediately behind the attack of the Chaldeans upon Tyre,—the two thousand years between being so compressed, that the whole appears as a continuous event. This is the well-known law of perspective, by which prophecy is governed throughout. This law cannot have been unknown to the prophets themselves, inasmuch as they needed it to accredit their prophecies even to themselves. Still more was it necessary for future ages, in order that they might not be deceived with regard to the prophecy, that this universally determining law, in which human limitations are left unresolved, and are miraculously intermingled with the eternal view of God, should be clearly known.

But another enigma presents itself. The prophet foretells a revival of Tyre at the end of seventy years, and the passing over of its world-wide commerce into the service of the congregation of Jehovah. We cannot agree with R. O. Gilbert (*Theodulia*, 1855, pp. 273–4) in regarding the seventy years as a sacred number, which precludes all clever human calculation, because the Lord thereby conceals His holy and irresistible decrees. The meaning of the seventy is clear enough: they are, as we saw, the seventy years of the Chaldean rule. And this is also quite enough, if only a prelude to what is predicted here took place in connection with the establishment of the Persian sway. Such a prelude there really was in the fact, that, according to the edict of Cyrus, both Sidonians and Tyrians assisted in the building of the temple at Jerusalem (Ezra 3:7, cf., 1:4). A second prelude is to be seen in the fact, that at the very commencement of the labours of the apostles there was a Christian church in Tyre, which was visited by the Apostle Paul (Acts 21:3, 4), and that this church steadily grew from that time forward. In this way again the trade of Tyre entered the service of the God of revelation. But it is Christian Tyre which now lies in ruins. One of the most remarkable ruins is the splendid cathedral of Tyre, for which Eusebius of Caesarea wrote a dedicatory address, and in which Friedrich Barbarossa,

who was drowned in the Kalykadnos in the year 1190, is supposed to have been buried. Hitherto, therefore, these have been only preludes to the fulfilment of the prophecy. Its ultimate fulfilment has still to be waited for. But whether the fulfilment will be an ideal one, when not only the kingdoms of the world, but also the trade of the world, shall belong to God and His Christ; or *spiritually*, in the sense in which this word is employed in the Apocalypse, i.e., by the true essence of the ancient Tyre reappearing in another city, like that of Babylon in Rome; or *literally*, by the fishing village of *Tzur* actually disappearing again as Tyre rises from its ruins,—it would be impossible for any commentator to say, unless he were himself a prophet.

Part IV

Finale of the Great Catastrophe - CH. 24–27

Isaiah 24

Isaiah 24–27. The cycle of prophecies which commences here has no other parallel in the Old Testament than perhaps Zech. 9–14. Both sections are thoroughly eschatological and apocryphal in their character, and start from apparently sharply defined historical circumstances, which vanish, however, like will-o'-the-wisps, as soon as you attempt to follow and seize them; for the simple reason, that the prophet lays hold of their radical idea, carries them out beyond their outward historical form, and uses them as emblems of far-off events of the last days. It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority of modern critics, from the time of Eichhorn and Koppe, have denied the genuineness of these four chapters (24–27), notwithstanding the fact that there is nothing in the words themselves that passes beyond the Assyrian times. Rosenmüller did this in the first edition of his *Scholia*; but in the second and third editions he has fallen into another error, chiefly because the prophecy contains nothing which passes beyond the political horizon of Isaiah's own times. Now we cannot accept this test of

genuineness; it is just one of the will-o'-the-wisps already referred to. Another consequence of this phenomenon is, that our critical opponents inevitably get entangled in contradictions as soon as they seek for a different historical basis for this cycle of prophecies from that of Isaiah's own times. According to Gesenius, De Wette, Maurer, and Umbreit, the author wrote in Babylonia; according to Eichhorn, Ewald, and Knobel, in Judah. In the opinion of some, he wrote at the close of the captivity; in that of others, immediately after the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah. Hitzig supposes the imperial city, whose destruction is predicted, to be Nineveh; others, for the most part, suppose it to be Babylon. But the prophet only mentions Egypt and Asshur as powers by which Israel is enslaved; and Knobel consequently imagines that he wrote in this figurative manner from fear of the enemies that were still dwelling in Judah. This wavering arises from the fact, that what is apparently historical is simply an eschatological emblem. It is quite impossible to determine whether that which sounds historical belonged to the present or past in relation to the prophet himself. His standing-place was beyond all the history that has passed by, even down to the present day; and everything belonging to this history was merely a figure in the mirror of the last lines. Let it be once established that no human critics can determine *à priori* the measure of divine revelation granted to any prophet, and all possible grounds combine to vindicate Isaiah's authorship of Isa. 24–27, as demanded by its place in the book of Isaiah.

Appended as they are to Isa. 13–23 without a distinct heading, they are intended to stand in a relation of steady progress to the oracles concerning the nations; and this relation is sustained by the fact that Jeremiah read them in connection with these oracles (compare Isa. 24:17, 18, with Jer. 48:43, 44), and that they are full of retrospective allusions, which run out like a hundred threads, though grasped, as it were, in a single hand. Ch. 24–27 stand in the same relation to Isa. 13–23, as Isa. 11, 12 to Isa.

ISAIAH	Page 215
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

7–10. The particular judgments predicted in the oracle against the nations, all flow into the last judgment as into a sea; and all the salvation which formed the shining edge of the oracles against the nations, is here concentrated in the glory of a mid-day sun. Ch. 24–27 form the *finale* to Isa. 13–23, and that in a strictly musical sense. What the *finale* should do in a piece of music—namely, gather up the scattered changes into a grand impressive whole—is done here by this closing cycle. But even part from this, it is full of music and song. The description of the catastrophe in Isa. 24 is followed by a simple hymnal echo. As the book of Immanuel closes in Isa. 12 with a psalm of the redeemed, so have we here a fourfold song of praise. The overthrow of the imperial city is celebrated in a song in Isa. 25:1–5; another song in Isa. 25:9 describes how Jehovah reveals himself with His saving presence; another in Isa. 26:1–19 celebrates the restoration and resurrection of Israel; and a fourth in Isa. 27:2–5 describes the vineyard of the church bringing forth fruit under the protection of Jehovah. And these songs contain every variety, from the most elevated heavenly hymn to the tenderest popular song. It is a grand manifold concert, which is merely introduced, as it were, by the epic opening in Isa. 24 and the epic close in Isa. 27:6ff., and in the midst of which the prophecy unfolds itself in a kind of recitative. Moreover, we do not find so much real music anywhere else in the ring of the words. The heaping up of *paronomasia* has been placed among the arguments against the genuineness of these chapters. But we have already shown by many examples, drawn from undisputed prophecies (such as Isa. 22:5; 17:12, 13), that Isaiah is fond of painting for the ear; and the reason why he does it here more than anywhere else, is that Isa. 24–27 formed a *finale* that was intended to surpass all that had gone before. The whole of this *finale* is a grand hallelujah to Isa. 13–23, hymnic in its character, and musical in form, and that to such a degree, that, like Isa. 25:6, the prophecy is, as it were, both text and divisions at the same time. There was no other than Isaiah who was so incomparable a master of

language. Again, the incomparable depth in the contents of Isa. 24–27 does not shake our confidence in his authorship, since the whole book of this Solomon among the prophets is full of what is incomparable. And in addition to much that is peculiar in this cycle of prophecies, which does not astonish us in a prophet so richly endowed, and so characterized by a continual change “from glory to glory,” the whole cycle is so thoroughly Isaiah’s in its deepest foundation, and in a hundred points of detail, that it is most uncritical to pronounce the whole to be certainly not Isaiah’s simply because of these peculiarities. So far as the eschatological and apocalyptic contents, which seem to point to a very late period, are concerned, we would simply call to mind the wealth of eschatological ideas to be found even in Joel, who prophesies of the pouring out of the Spirit, the march of the nations of the world against the church, the signs that precede the last day, the miraculous water of the New Jerusalem. The revelation of all the last things, which the Apocalypse of the New Testament embraces in one grand picture, commenced with Obadiah and Joel; and there is nothing strange in the fact that Isaiah also, in Isa. 24–27, should turn away from the immediate external facts of the history of his own time, and pass on to these depths beyond.

The Judgment Upon the Earth—Ch. 24

Isaiah 24:1–3. It is thoroughly characteristic of Isaiah, that the commencement of this prophecy, like Isa. 19:1, places us at once in the very midst of the catastrophe, and condenses the contents of the subsequent picture of judgment into a few rapid, vigorous, vivid, and comprehensive clauses (like Isa. 15:1; 17:1; 23:1, cf., 33:1). Vv. 1–3. *“Behold, Jehovah emptieth the earth, and layeth it waste, and marreth its form, and scattereth its inhabitants. And it happeneth, as to the people, so to the priest; as to the servant, so to his master; as to the maid, so to her mistress; as to the buyer, so to the seller; as to the lender, so to the borrower; as to the creditor, so to the debtor. Emptying the*

earth is emptied, and plundering is plundered: for Jehovah hath spoken this word.” The question, whether the prophet is speaking of a past of future judgment, which is one of importance to the interpretation of the whole, is answered by the fact that with Isaiah “*hinnēh*” (behold) always refers to something future (Isa. 3:1; 17:1; 19:1; 30:27, etc.). And it is only in his case, that we do meet with prophecies commencing so immediately with *hinnēh*. Those in Jeremiah which approach this the most nearly (viz., Jer. 47:2; 49:35, cf., 51:1, and Ezek. 29:3) do indeed commence with *hinnēh*, but not without being preceded by an introductory formula. The opening “behold” corresponds to the confirmatory “for Jehovah hath spoken,” which is always employed by Isaiah at the close of statements with regard to the future and occurs chiefly, though not exclusively, in the book of Isaiah, whom we may recognise in the detailed description in v. 2 (vid., Isa. 2:12–16; 3:2, 3, 18–23, as compared with Isa. 9:13; also with the description of judgment in Isa. 19:2–4, which closes in a similar manner). Thus at the very outset we meet with Isaiah’s peculiarities; and Caspari is right in saying that no prophecy could possibly commence with more of the characteristics of Isaiah than the prophecy before us. The play upon words commences at the very outset. *Bâkak* and *bâlak* (compare the Arabic *ballûka*, a blank, naked desert) have the same ring, just as in Nahum 2:11, cf., 3, and Jer. 51:2. The *niphāl* futures are intentionally written like verbs *Pe-Vâv* (*tibbōk* and *tibbōz*, instead of *tibbak* and *tibbaz*), for the purpose of making them rhyme with the infinitive absolutes (cf., Isa. 22:13). So, again, *caggbirtâh* is so written instead of *cigbirtâh*, to produce a greater resemblance to the opening syllable of the other words. The form *נָשָׂא* is interchanged with *נָשָׂא* (as in 1 Sam. 22:2), or, according to Kimchi’s way of writing it, with *נָשָׂא* (written with *tzere*), just as in other passages we meet with *נָשָׂא* along with *נָשָׂא*, and, judging from Arab. *ns’*, to postpone or credit, the former is the primary form. *Nōsheh* is the creditor, and

נָשָׂא is not the person who has borrowed of him, but, as *נָשָׂא* invariably signifies to credit (*hiphil*, to give credit), the person whom he credits (with *ב* *obj.*, like *נָשָׂא בְּ* in Isa. 9:3), not “the person through whom he is *נָשָׂא*” (Hitzig on Jer. 15:10). Hence, “lender and borrower, creditor and debtor” (or taker of credit). It is a judgment which embraces all, without distinction of rank and condition; and it is a universal one, not merely throughout the whole of the *land* of Israel (as even Drechsler renders *הָאֲרֶץ*), but in all the earth; for as Arndt correctly observes, *הָאֲרֶץ* signifies “the earth” in this passage, including, as in Isa. 11:4, the ethical New Testament idea of “the world” (*kosmos*). **Isaiah 24:4–9.** That this is the case is evident from vv. 4–9, where the accursed state into which the earth is brought is more fully described, and the cause thereof is given. Vv. 4–9. *“Smitten down, withered up is the earth; pined away, wasted away is the world; pined away have they, the foremost of the people of the earth. And the earth has become wicked among its inhabitants; for they transgressed revelations, set at nought the ordinance, broke the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they who dwelt in it make expiation: therefore are the inhabitants of the earth withered up, and there are very few mortals left. New wine mourneth, vine is parched, all the merry-hearted groan. The joyous playing of tabrets is silent; the noise of them that rejoice hath ceased; the joyous playing of the guitar is silent. They drink no wine with a song; meth tastes bitter to them that drink it.”* “The world” (*tēbēl*) is used here in v. 4, as in Isa. 26:9 (always in the form of a proper name, and without the article), as a parallel to “the earth” (*hâ’âretz*), with which it alternates throughout this cycle of prophecies. It is used poetically to signify the globe, and that without limitation (even in Isa. 13:11 and 18:3); and therefore “the earth” is also to be understood here in its most comprehensive sense (in a different sense, therefore, from Isa. 33:9, which contains the same play upon sounds). The earth is sunk in

ISAIAH	Page 217
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

mourning, and has become like a faded plant, withered up with heat; the high ones of the people of the earth (*merôm*; *abstr. pro concr.*, like *câbôd* in Isa. 5:13; 22:24) are included (עם is used, as in Isa. 42:5; 40:7, to signify humanity, i.e., man generally). אֲמַלְלוּ (for the form, see *Comm. on Job*, at 18:16–19) stands in half pause, which throws the subjective notion that follows into greater prominence. It is the punishment of the inhabitants of the earth, which the earth has to share, because it has shared in the wickedness of those who live upon it: *chânaph* (not related to *tânaph*) signifies to be degenerate, to have decided for what is evil (Isa. 9:16), to be wicked; and in this intransitive sense it is applied to the land, which is said to be affected with the guilt of wicked, reckless conduct, more especially of blood-guiltiness (Ps. 106:38, Num. 35:33; compare the transitive use in Jer. 3:9). The wicked conduct of men, which has caused the earth also to become *chanêphâh*, is described in three short, rapid, involuntarily excited sentences (compare Isa. 15:6; 16:4; 29:20; 33:8; also Isa. 24:5; 1:4, 6, 8; out of the book of Isaiah, however, we only meet with this in Joel 1:10, and possibly Josh. 7:11). Understanding “the earth” as we do in a general sense, “the law” cannot signify merely the positive law of Israel. The Gentile world had also a *torâh* or divine teaching within, which contained an abundance of divine directions (*tôrôth*). They also had a law written in their hearts; and it was with the whole human race that God concluded a covenant in the person of Noah, at a time when the nations had none of them come into existence at all. This is the explanation given by even Jewish commentators; nevertheless, we must not forget that Israel was included among the transgressors, and the choice of expression was determined by this. With the expression “therefore” the prophecy moves on from sin to punishment, just as in Isa. 5:25 (cf., v. 24). אֲלֵהּ is the curse of God denounced against the transgressors of His law (Dan. 9:11; compare Jer. 23:10, which is founded upon this, and from which אֲבָלָהּ has been introduced into this

passage in some codices and editions). The curse of God devours, for it is fire, and that from within outwards (see Isa. 1:31; 5:24; 9:18; 10:16, 17; 29:6; 30:27ff., 33:11–14): *chârû* (*milel*, since *pashta* is an *acc. postpos.*), from *chârar*, they are burnt up, *exusti*. With regard to וַיִּאֲשְׁמוּ, it is hardly necessary to observe that it cannot be traced back to אָשַׁם = יָשַׁם, שָׁמַם; and that of the two meanings, *culpam contrahere* and *culpam sustinere*, it has the latter meaning here. We must not overlook the genuine mark of Isaiah here in the description of the vanishing away of men down to a small remnant: נִשְׂאָר (שָׂאָר) is the standing word used to denote this; מִזֶּעַר (used with regard to number both here and in Isa. 16:14; and with regard to time in Isa. 10:25 and 29:17) is exclusively Isaiah’s; and אֲנוּשׁ is used in the same sense as in Isa. 33:8 (cf., Isa. 13:12). In v. 7 we are reminded of Joel 1 (on the short sentences, see Isa. 29:20; 16:8–10); in vv. 8, 9 any one acquainted with Isaiah’s style will recal to mind not only Isa. 5:12, 14, but a multitude of other parallels. We content ourselves with pointing to עֲלִיזָה (which belongs exclusively to Isaiah, and is taken from Isa. 22:2 and 32:13 in Zeph. 2:15, and from Isa. 13:3 in Zeph. 3:11); and for *basshir* (with joyous song) to Isa. 30:32 (with the beating of drums and playing of guitars), together with Isa. 28:7. The picture is elegiac, and dwells so long upon the wine (cf., Isa. 16), just because wine, both as a natural production and in the form of drink, is the most exhilarating to the heart of all the natural gifts of God (Ps. 104:15; Judg. 9:13). All the sources of joy and gladness are destroyed; and even if there is much still left of that which ought to give enjoyment, the taste of the men themselves turns it into bitterness.

Isaiah 24:10–13. The world with its pleasure is judged; the world’s city is also judged, in which both the world’s power and the world’s pleasure were concentrated. Vv. 10–13. “*The city of tohu is broken to pieces; every house is shut up, so that no man can come in. There is lamentation for wine in the fields; all rejoicing*

has set; the delight of the earth is banished. What is left of the city is wilderness, and the gate was shattered to ruins. For so will it be within the earth, in the midst of the nations; as at the olive-beating, as at the gleaning, when the vintage is over." The city of *tohu* (*kiryath tōhu*): this cannot be taken collectively, as Rosenmüller, Arndt, and Drechsler suppose, on account of the annexation of *kiryath* to *tohu*, which is turned into a kind of proper name; for can we understand it as referring to Jerusalem, as the majority of commentators have done, including even Schegg and Stier (according to Isa. 32:13, 14), after we have taken "the earth" (*hâ'âretz*) in the sense of *kosmos* (the world). It is rather the central city of the world as estranged from God; and it is here designated according to its end, which end will be *tohu*, as its nature was *tohu*. Its true nature was the breaking up of the harmony of all divine order; and so its end will be the breaking up of its own standing, and a hurling back, as it were, into the *chaos* of its primeval beginning. With a very similar significance Rome is called *turbida Roma* in Persius (i. 5). The whole is thoroughly Isaiah's, even to the finest points: *tohu* is the same as in Isa. 29:21; and for the expression מְבוּזָה (so that you cannot enter; namely, on account of the ruins which block up the doorway) compare Isa. 23:1; 7:8; 17:1, also 5:9; 6:11; 32:13. The cry or lamentation for the wine out in the fields (v. 11; cf., Job 5:10) is the mourning on account of the destruction of the vineyards; the vine, which is one of Isaiah's most favourite symbols, represents in this instance also all the natural sources of joy. In the term *'ârbâh* (rejoicing) the relation between joy and light is presupposed; the sun of joy is set (compare Mic. 3:6). What remains of the city (בְּעִיר is partitive, just as בּוֹ in Isa. 10:22) is *shammâh* (desolation), to which the whole city has been brought (compare Isa. 5:9; 32:14). The strong gates, which once swarmed with men, are shattered to ruins (*yuccath*, like Mic. 1:7, for *yūcath*, Ges. § § 67, Anm. 8; פְּשִׁיחַ, ἀπ. λεγ., a predicating noun of sequence, as in Isa. 37:26, "into desolated heaps;" compare Isa. 6:11, etc., and other

passages). In the whole circuit of the earth (Isa. 6:12; 7:22; *hâ'âretz* is "the earth" here as in Isa. 10:23; 19:24), and in the midst of what was once a crowd of nations (compare Mic. 5:6, 7), there is only a small remnant of men left. This is the leading thought, which runs through the book of Isaiah from beginning to end, and is figuratively depicted here in a miniature of Isa. 17:4–6. The state of things produced by the catastrophe is compared to the olive-beating, which fetches down what fruit was left at the general picking, and to the gleaning of the grapes after the vintage has been fully gathered in (*câlâh* is used here as in Isa. 10:25; 16:4; 21:16, etc., viz., "to be over," whereas in Isa. 32:10 it means to be hopelessly lost, as in Isa. 15:6). There are no more men in the whole of the wide world than there are of olives and grapes after the principal gathering has taken place. The persons saved belong chiefly, though not exclusively, to Israel (John 3:5). The place where they assemble is the land of promise.

Isaiah 24:14, 15. There is now a church there refined by the judgment, and rejoicing in its apostolic calling to the whole world. Vv. 14, 15. "They will lift up their voice, and exult; for the majesty of Jehovah they shout from the sea: therefore praise ye Jehovah in the lands of the sun, in the islands of the sea the name of Jehovah the God of Israel." The ground and subject of the rejoicing is "the majesty of Jehovah," i.e., the fact that Jehovah had shown Himself so majestic in judgment and mercy (Isa. 12:5, 6), and was now so manifest in His glory (Isa. 2:11, 17). Therefore rejoicing was heard "from the sea" (the Mediterranean), by which the abode of the congregation of Jehovah was washed. Turning in that direction, it had the islands and coast lands of the European West in front (*iyyi hayyâm*; the only other passage in which this occurs is Isa. 11:11, cf., Ezek. 26:18), and at its back the lands of the Asiatic East, which are called *'urim*, the lands of light, i.e., of the sun-rising. This is the true meaning of *'urim*, as J. Schelling and Drechsler agree; for Döderlein's comparison of the rare Arabic word *awr*, *septentrio* is as far removed from the Hebrew

usage as that of the Talmud אור־תָּא אור, *vespera*. Hitzig's proposed reading באיים (according to the LXX) diminishes the substance and destroys the beauty of the appeal, which goes forth both to the east and west, and summons to the praise of the name of Jehovah the God of Israel, עֶלְכֶן, i.e., because of His manifested glory. His "name" (cf., Isa. 30:27) is His nature as revealed and made "nameable" in judgment and mercy.

Isaiah 24:16a. This appeal is not made in vain. V. 16a. *"From the border of the earth we hear songs: Praise to the Righteous One!"* It no doubt seems natural enough to understand the term *tzaddik* (righteous) as referring to Jehovah; but, as Hitzig observes, Jehovah is never called "the Righteous One" in so absolute a manner as this (compare, however, Ps. 112:4, where it occurs in connection with other attributes, and Ex. 9:27, where it stands in an antithetical relation); and in addition to this, Jehovah gives צָבִי (Isa. 4:2; 28:5), whilst כְּבוֹד, and not צָבִי, is ascribed to Him. Hence we must take the word in the same sense as in Isa. 3:10 (cf., Hab. 2:4). The reference is to the church of righteous men, whose faith has endured the fire of the judgment of wrath. In response to its summons to the praise of Jehovah, they answer it in songs from the border of the earth. The earth is here thought of as a garment spread out; *cenaph* is the point or edge of the garment, the extreme eastern and western ends (compare Isa. 11:12). Thence the church of the future catches the sound of this grateful song as it is echoed from one to the other.

Isaiah 24:16-20. The prophet feels himself, "in spirit," to be a member of this church; but all at once he becomes aware of the sufferings which will have first of all to be overcome, and which he cannot look upon without sharing the suffering himself. Vv. 16-20. *"Then I said, Ruin to me! ruin to me! Woe to me! Robbers rob, and robbing, they rob as robbers. Horror, and pit, and snare, are over thee, O inhabitant of the earth! And it cometh to pass, whoever fleeth from the tidings of horror falleth into the pit; and whoever escapeth out of the pit is caught in the snare: for*

the trap-doors on high are opened, and the firm foundations of the earth shake. The earth rending, is rent asunder; the earth bursting, is burst in pieces; the earth shaking, tottereth. The earth reeling, reeleth like a drunken man, and swingeth like a hammock; and its burden of sin presseth upon it; and it falleth, and riseth not again." The expression "Then I said" (cf., Isa. 6:5) stands here in the same apocalyptic connection as in Rev. 7:14, for example. He said it at that time in a state of ecstasy; so that when he committed to writing what he had seen, the saying was a thing of the past. The final salvation follows a final judgment; and looking back upon the latter, he bursts out into the exclamation of pain: *râzi-lî*, consumption, passing away, to me (see Isa. 10:16; 17:4), i.e., I must perish (*râzi* is a word of the same form as *kâli*, *shâni*, *âni*; literally, it is a neuter adjective signifying *emaciatum* = *macies*; Ewald, § 749, g). He sees a dreadful, bloodthirsty people preying among both men and stores (compare Isa. 21:2; 33:1, for the play upon the word with בגד, root ג, cf., κεύθειν τινά τι, *tecte agere*, i.e., from behind, treacherously, like assassins). The exclamation, "Horror, and pit," etc. (which Jeremiah applies in Jer. 48:43, 44, to the destruction of Moab by the Chaldeans), is not an invocation, but simply a deeply agitated utterance of what is inevitable. In the pit and snare there is a comparison implied of men to game, and of the enemy to sportsmen (cf., Jer. 15:16, Lam. 4:19; *yillâcêr*, as in Isa. 8:15; 28:13). The על in עָלֶיךָ is exactly the same as in Judg. 16:9 (cf., Isa. 16:9). They who should flee as soon as the horrible news arrived (*min*, as in Isa. 33:3) would not escape destruction, but would become victims to one form if not to another (the same thought which we find expressed twice in Amos 5:19, and still more fully in Isa. 9:1-4, as well as in a more dreadfully exalted tone). Observe, however, in how mysterious a background those human instruments of punishment remain, who are suggested by the word *bôgdim* (robbers). The idea that the judgment is a direct act of Jehovah, stands in the foreground and governs the

ISAI AH	Page 220
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

whole. For this reason it is described as a repetition of the flood (for the opened windows or trap-doors of the firmament, which let the great bodies of water above them come down from on high upon the earth, point back to Gen. 7:11 and 8:2, cf., Ps. 78:23); and this indirectly implies its universality. It is also described as an earthquake. "The foundations of the earth" are the internal supports upon which the visible crust of the earth rests. The way in which the earth in its quaking first breaks, then bursts, and then falls, is painted for the ear by the three reflective forms in v. 19, together with their gerundives, which keep each stage in the process of the catastrophe vividly before the mind. רָעָה is apparently an error of the pen for רָעַע, if it is not indeed a *n. actionis* instead of the *inf. absol.* as in Hab. 3:9. The accentuation, however, regards the *ah* as a toneless addition, and the form therefore as a gerundive (like *kob* in Num. 23:25). The reflective form הִתְרַעַע is not the *hithpalel* of רָעָה, *vociferari*, but the *hithpoel* of רָעַע (רָעַע), *frangere*. The threefold play upon the words would be tame, if the words themselves formed an anti-climax; but it is really a *climax ascendens*. The earth first of all receives rents; then gaping wide, it bursts asunder; and finally sways to and fro once more, and falls. It is no longer possible for it to keep upright. Its wickedness presses it down like a burden (Isa. 1:4; Ps. 38:5), so that it now reels for the last time like a drunken man (Isa. 28:7; 29:9), or a hammock (Isa. 1:8), until it falls never to rise again.

Isaiah 24:21–23. But if the old earth passes away in this manner out of the system of the universe, the punishment of God must fall at the same time both upon the princes of heaven and upon the princes of earth (the prophet does not arrange what belongs to the end of all things in a "chronotactic" manner). They are the secrets of two worlds, that are here unveiled to the apocalyptic seer of the Old Testament. Vv. 21–23. "And it cometh to pass in that day, Jehovah will visit the army of the high place in the high place, and the kings of the earth on the earth.

And they are imprisoned, as one imprisons captives in the pit, and shut up in prison; and in the course of many days they are visited. And the moon blushes, and the sun turns pale: for Jehovah of hosts reigns royally upon Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders is glory." With this doubly expressed antithesis of *mārôm* and *'adâmâh* (cf., 23:17b) before us, brought out as it is as sharply as possible, we cannot understand "the army of the high place" as referring to certain earthly powers (as the Targum, Luther, Calvin, and Hävernick do). Moreover, the expression itself is also opposed to such an interpretation; for, as v. 18 clearly shows, in which *mimmârom* is equivalent to *misshâmaim* (cf., Isa. 33:5; 37:23; 40:26), צָבָא מְרוֹם is synonymous with צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם; and this invariably signifies either the starry host (Isa. 40:26) or the angelic host (1 Kings 22:19; Ps. 148:2), and occasionally the two combined, without any distinction (Neh. 9:6). As the moon and sun are mentioned, it might be supposed that by the "host on high" we are to understand the angelic host, as Abravanel, Umbreit, and others really do: "the stars, that have been made into idols, the shining kings of the sky, fall from their altars, and the kings of the earth from their thrones." But the very antithesis in the word "kings" (*malchê*) leads us to conjecture that "the host on high" refers to personal powers; and the view referred to founders on the more minute description of the visitation (*pâkad 'al*, as in Isa. 27:1, 3, cf., 26:21), "they are imprisoned," etc.; for this must also be referred to the heavenly host. The objection might indeed be urged, that the imprisonment only relates to the kings, and that the visitation of the heavenly host finds its full expression in the shaming of the moon and sun (v. 23); but the fact that the moon and sun are thrown into the shade by the revelation of the glory of Jehovah, cannot be regarded as a judgment inflicted upon them. Hence the commentators are now pretty well agreed, that "the host on high" signifies here the angelic army. But it is self-evident, that a visitation of the angelic army cannot be merely a relative

and partial one. And it is not sufficient to understand the passage as meaning the wicked angels, to the exclusion of the good. Both the context and the parallelism show that the reference must be to a penal visitation in the spiritual world, which stands in the closest connection with the history of man, and in fact with the history of the nations. Consequently the host on high will refer to the angels of the nations and kingdoms; and the prophecy here presupposes what is affirmed in Deut. 32:8 (LXX), and sustained in the book of Daniel, when it speaks of a *sar* of Persia, Javan, and even the people of Israel. In accordance with this exposition, there is a rabbinical saying, to the effect that "God never destroys a nation without having first of all destroyed its prince," i.e., the angel who, by whatever means he first obtained possession of the nation, whether by the will of God or against His will, has exerted an ungodly influence upon it. Just as, according to the scriptural view, both good and evil angels attach themselves to particular men, and an elevated state of mind may sometimes afford a glimpse of this encircling company and this conflict of spirits; so do angels contend for the rule over nations and kingdoms, either to guide them in the way of God or to lead them astray from God; and therefore the judgment upon the nations which the prophet here foretells will be a judgment upon angels also. The kingdom of spirits has its own history running parallel to the destinies of men. What is recorded in Gen. 6 was a seduction of men by angels, and one of later occurrence than the temptation by Satan in paradise; and the seduction of nations and kingdoms by the host of heaven, which is here presupposed by the prophecy of Isaiah, is later than either.

Isaiah 24:22a. V. 22a announces the preliminary punishment of both angelic and human princes: *'asēphâh* stands in the place of a gerundive, like *taltêlâh* in Isa. 22:17. The connection of the words *'asēphâh* *'assir* is exactly the same as that of *taltêlâh* *gâbēr* in Isa. 22:17: incarceration after the manner of incarcerating prisoners; *'âsaph*, to gather together (Isa. 10:14; 33:4), signifies here to

incarcerate, just as in Gen. 42:17. Both verbs are construed with *'al*, because the thrusting is from above downwards, into the pit and prison (*'al* embraces both *upon* or *over* anything, and *into* it, e.g., 1 Sam. 31:4, Job 6:16; see Hitzig on Nah. 3:12). We may see from 2 Pet. 2:4 and Jude 6 how this is to be understood. The reference is to the abyss of Hades, where they are reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day. According to this parallel, *yippâkedu* (shall be visited) ought apparently to be understood as denoting a visitation in wrath (like Isa. 29:6, Ezek. 38:8; compare *pâkad* followed by an accusative in Isa. 26:21, also 26:14, and Ps. 59:6; *niphkad*, in fact, is never used to signify visitation in mercy), and therefore as referring to the infliction of the final punishment. Hitzig, however, understands it as relating to a visitation of mercy; and in this he is supported by Ewald, Knobel, and Luzzatto. Gesenius, Umbreit, and others, take it to indicate a citation or summons, though without any ground either in usage of speech or actual custom. A comparison of Isa. 23:17 in its relation to Isa. 23:15 favours the second explanation, as being relatively the most correct; but the expression is intentionally left ambiguous. So far as the thing itself is concerned, we have a parallel in Rev. 20:1–3 and 7–9: they are visited by being set free again, and commencing their old practice once more; but only (as v. 23 affirms) to lose again directly, before the glorious and triumphant might of Jehovah, the power they have temporarily reacquired. What the apocalypticist of the New Testament describes in detail in Rev. 20:4; 20:11ff., and 21, the apocalypticist of the Old Testament sees here condensed into one fact, viz., the enthroning of Jehovah and His people in a new Jerusalem, at which the silvery white moon (*lebânâh*) turns red, and the glowing sun (*chammâh*) turns pale; the two great lights of heaven becoming (according to a Jewish expression) "like a lamp at noonday" in the presence of such glory. Of the many parallels to v. 23 which we meet with in Isaiah, the most worthy of note are Isa. 11:10 to the concluding clause, "and before His elders is

ISAIAH	Page 222
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

glory” (also Isa. 4:5), and Isa. 1:26 (cf., 3:14), with reference to the use of the word *zekēnim* (elders). Other parallels are Isa. 30:26, for *chammâh* and *lebânâh*; Isa. 1:29, for *châphēr* and *bōsh*; Isa. 33:22, for *mâlak*; Isa. 10:12, for “Mount Zion and Jerusalem.” We have already spoken at Isa. 1:16 of the word *neged* (Arab. *ne’gd*, from *nâgad*, *njd*, to be exalted; vid., *opp.* Arab. *gâr*, to be pressed down, to sink), as applied to that which stands out prominently and clearly before one’s eyes. According to Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, i. 320–1), the elders here, like the twenty-four *presbuteroi* of the Apocalypse, are the sacred spirits, forming the council of God, to which He makes known His will concerning the world, before it is executed by His attendant spirits the angels. But as we find counsellors promised to the Israel of the new Jerusalem in Isa. 1:26, in contrast with the bad *zkēnim* (elders) which it then possessed (Isa. 3:14), such as it had at the glorious commencement of its history; and as the passage before us says essentially the same with regard to the *zekēnim* as we find in Isa. 4:5 with regard to the festal meetings of Israel (vid., Isa. 30:20 and 32:1); and still further, as Rev. 20:4 (cf., Matt. 19:28) is a more appropriate parallel to the passage before us than Rev. 4:4, we may assume with certainty, at least with regard to this passage, and without needing to come to any decision concerning Rev. 4:4, that the *zkēnim* here are not angels, but human elders after God’s own heart. These elders, being admitted into the immediate presence of God, and reigning together with Him, have nothing but glory in front of them, and they themselves reflect that glory.

Isaiah 25

The Fourfold Melodious Echo—Ch. 25–26

A. First Echo: Salvation of the Nations After the Fall of the Imperial City—Ch. 25:1–8

There is not merely reflected glory, but reflected sound as well. The melodious echoes commence with Isa. 25:1ff. The prophet, transported to the end of the days,

commemorates what he has seen in psalms and songs. These psalms and songs not only repeat what has already been predicted; but, sinking into it, and drawing out of it, they partly expand it themselves, and partly prepare the way for its further extension.

Isaiah 25:1–5. The first echo is Isa. 25:1–8, or more precisely Isa. 25:1–5. The prophet, whom we already know as a psalmist from Isa. 12, now acts as choral leader of the church of the future, and praises Jehovah for having destroyed the mighty imperial city, and proved Himself a defence and shield against its tyranny towards His oppressed church. Vv. 1–5.

“Jehovah, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name, that Thou hast wrought wonders, counsels from afar, sincerity, truth. For Thou hast turned it from a city into a heap of stones, the steep castle into a ruin; the palace of the barbarians from being a city, to be rebuilt no more for ever. Therefore a wild people will honour Thee, cities of violent nations fear Thee. For Thou provedst Thyself a stronghold to the lowly, a stronghold to the poor in his distress, as a shelter from the storm of rain, as a shadow from the burning of the sun; for the blast of violent ones was like a storm of rain against a wall. Like the burning of the sun in a parched land, Thou subduest the noise of the barbarians; (like) the burning of the sun through the shadow of a cloud, the triumphal song of violent ones was brought low.” The introductory clause is to be understood as in Ps. 118:28: Jehovah (*voc.*), my God art Thou. *“Thou hast wrought wonders:”* this is taken from Ex. 15:11 (as in Ps. 77:15; 78:12; like Isa. 12:2, from Ex. 15:2). The wonders which are now actually wrought are *“counsels from afar”* (*mērâchōk*), counsels already adopted afar off, i.e., long before, thoughts of God belonging to the olden time; the same ideal view as in Isa. 22:11; 37:26 (a parallel which coincides with our passage on every side), and, in fact, throughout the whole of the second part. It is the manifold “counsel” of the Holy One of Israel (Isa. 5:19; 14:24–27; 19:12, 17; 23:8; 28:29) which displays its wonders in the events of time. To the verb עָשָׂה

we have also a second and third object, viz., אֶמְוֶנָה אֶמְוֶנָה. It is a common custom with Isaiah to place derivatives of the same word side by side, for the purpose of giving the greatest possible emphasis to the idea (Isa. 3:1; 16:6). אֶמְוֶנָה indicates a quality, אֶמְוֶנָה in actual fact. What He has executed is the realization of His faithfulness, and the reality of His promises. The imperial city is destroyed. Jehovah, as the first clause which is defined by *tzakeph* affirms, has removed it away from the nature of a city into the condition of a heap of stones. The sentence has its object within itself, and merely gives prominence to the change that has been effected; the *Lamed* is used in the same sense as in Isa. 23:13 (cf., 37:26); the *min*, as in Isa. 7:8; 17:1; 23:1; 24:10. *Mappêlâh*, with *kametz* or *tzere* before the tone, is a word that can only be accredited from the book of Isaiah (Isa. 17:1; 23:13). עִיר, קִרְיָה, and אֶמְרוֹן are common parallel words in Isaiah (Isa. 1:26; 22:2; 32:13, 14); and *zârim*, as in Isa. 1:7 and 29:5, is the most general epithet for the enemies of the people of God. The fall of the imperial kingdom is followed by the conversion of the heathen; the songs proceed from the mouths of the remotest nations. V. 3 runs parallel with Rev. 15:3, 4. Nations hitherto rude and passionate now submit to Jehovah with decorous reverence, and those that were previously oppressive (*arîtzim*, as in Isa. 13:11, in form like *pârîtzim*, *shâlîshîm*) with humble fear. The cause of this conversion of the heathen is the one thus briefly indicated in the Apocalypse, "for thy judgments are made manifest" (Rev. 15:4). לֵךְ and אֶבְיֹן (cf., Isa. 14:30; 29:19) are names well known from the Psalms, as applying to the church when oppressed. To this church, in the distress which she had endured (בְּצָר לִי, as in Isa. 26:16; 63:9, cf., 33:2), Jehovah had proved Himself a strong castle (*mâ'ôz*; on the expression, compare Isa. 30:3), a shelter from storm and a shade from heat (for the figures, compare Isa. 4:6; 32:2; 16:3), so that the blast of the tyrants (compare *ruach* on Isa. 30:28; 33:11, Ps. 76:13) was like a wall-storm, i.e., a

storm striking against a wall (compare Isa. 9:3, a shoulder-stick, i.e., a stick which strikes the shoulder), sounding against it and bursting upon it without being able to wash it away (Isa. 28:17; Ps. 62:4), because it was the wall of a strong castle, and this strong castle was Jehovah Himself. As Jehovah can suddenly subdue the heat of the sun in dryness (*tzâyôn*, abstract for concrete, as in Isa. 32:2, equivalent to dry land, Isa. 41:18), and it must give way when He brings up a shady thicket (Jer. 4:29), namely of clouds (Ex. 19:9; Ps. 18:12), so did He suddenly subdue the thundering (*shâ'on*, as in Isa. 17:12) of the hordes that stormed against His people; and the song of triumph (*zâmîr*, only met with again in Song of Sol. 2:12) of the tyrants, which passed over the world like a scorching heat, was soon "brought low" (*ânâh*, in its neuter radical signification "to bend," related to כָּנַע, as in Isa. 31:4).

Isaiah 25:6. Thus the first hymnic echo dies away; and the eschatological prophecy, coming back to Isa. 24:23, but with deeper prayerlike penetration, proceeds thus in v. 6: "And Jehovah of hosts prepares for all nations upon this mountain a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things rich in marrow, of wines on the lees thoroughly strained." "This mountain" is Zion, the seat of God's presence, and the place of His church's worship. The feast is therefore a spiritual one. The figure is taken, as in Ps. 22:27ff., from the sacrificial meals connected with the *shelânim* (the peace-offerings). *Shmârim mzučkâkim* are wines which have been left to stand upon their lees after the first fermentation is over, which have thus thoroughly fermented, and have been kept a long time (from *shâmar*, to keep, *spec.* to allow to ferment), and which are then filtered before drinking (*Gr.* οἶνος σακκίας, i.e., διυλισμένος or διηθικός, from διηθεῖν, *percolare*), hence wine both strong and clear. *Memuchâyîm* might mean *emedullatae* ("with the marrow taken out;" compare, perhaps, Prov. 31:3), but this could only apply to the bones, not to the fat meat itself; the meaning is therefore "mixed with marrow," made marrowy, *medullosae*. The thing

symbolized in this way is the full enjoyment of blessedness in the perfected kingdom of God. The heathen are not only humbled so that they submit to Jehovah, but they also take part in the blessedness of His church, and are abundantly satisfied with the good things of His house, and made to drink of pleasure as from a river (Ps. 36:9). The ring of the verse is inimitably pictorial. It is like joyful music to the heavenly feast. The more flexible form מְמַחֵי (from the original, מְמַחֵה = מְמַחֵה) is intentionally chosen in the place of מְמַחֵי. It is as if we heard stringed instruments played with the most rapid movement of the bow.

Isaiah 25:7, 8. Although the feast is one earth, it is on an earth which has been transformed into heaven; for the party-wall between God and the world has fallen down: death is no more, and all tears are for ever wiped away. Vv. 7, 8. "And He casts away upon this mountain the veil that veiled over all peoples, and the covering that covered over all nations. He puts away death for ever; and the Lord Jehovah wipes the tear from every face; and He removes the shame of His people from the whole earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it." What Jehovah bestows is followed by what He puts away. The "veil" and "covering" (*massêcâh*, from *nâsac* = *mâsâc*, Isa. 22:8, from *sâcac*, to weave, twist, and twist over = to cover) are not symbols of mourning and affliction, but of spiritual blindness, like the "veil" upon the heart of Israel mentioned in 2 Cor. 3:15. The *pnê hallôt* (cf., Job 41:5) is the upper side of the veil, the side turned towards you, by which Jehovah takes hold of the veil to lift it up. The second *hallôt* stands for הִלֹּט (Ges. § 71, Anm. 1), and is written in this form, according to Isaiah's peculiar style (vid., Isa. 4:6; 7:11; 8:6; 22:13), merely for the sake of the sound, like the obscurer *niphâl* forms in Isa. 24:3. The only difference between the two nouns is this: in *lôt* the leading idea is that of the completeness of the covering, and in *massêcâh* that of its thickness. The removing of the veil, as well as of death, is called בִּלְעַ, which we find applied to God in other passages, viz.,

Isa. 19:3, Ps. 21:10; 55:10. Swallowing up is used elsewhere as equivalent to making a thing disappear, by taking it into one's self; but here, as in many other instances, the notion of receiving into one's self is dropped, and nothing remains but the idea of taking away, unless, indeed, abolishing of death may perhaps be regarded as taking it back into what hell shows to be the *eternal* principle of wrath out of which God called it forth. God will abolish death, so that there shall be no trace left of its former sway. Paul gives a free rendering of this passage in 1 Cor. 15:54, κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῆκος (after the Aramaean *ntzach, vincere*). The Syriac combines both ideas, that of the Targum and that of Paul: *absorpta est mors per victoriam in sempiternum*. But the abolition of death is not in itself the perfection of blessedness. There are sufferings which force out a sigh, even after death has come as a deliverance. But all these sufferings, whose ultimate ground is sin, Jehovah sweeps away. There is something very significant in the use of the expression הִמְצַח (a tear), which the Apocalypse renders πᾶν δάκρυον (Rev. 21:4). Wherever there is a tear on any face whatever, Jehovah wipes it away; and if Jehovah wipes away, this must be done most thoroughly: He removes the cause with the outward symptom, the sin as well as the tear. It is self-evident that this applies to the church triumphant. The world has been judged, and what was salvable has been saved. There is therefore no more shame for the people of God. Over the whole earth there is no further place to be found for this; Jehovah has taken it away. The earth is therefore a holy dwelling-place for blessed men. The new Jerusalem is Jehovah's throne, but the whole earth is Jehovah's glorious kingdom. The prophet is here looking from just the same point of view as Paul in 1 Cor. 15:28, and John in the last page of the Apocalypse.

B. Second Echo: The Humiliation of Moab—
Ch. 25:9–12

ISAIAH	Page 225
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Isaiah 25:9. After this prophetic section, which follows the first melodious echo like an interpolated recitative, the song of praise begins again; but it is soon deflected into the tone of prophecy. The shame of the people of God, mentioned in v. 8, recals to mind the special enemies of the church in its immediate neighbourhood, who could not tyrannize over it indeed, like the empire of the world, but who nevertheless scoffed at it and persecuted it. The representative and emblem of these foes are the proud and boasting Moab (Isa. 16:6; Jer. 48:29). All such attempts as that of Knobel to turn this into history are but so much lost trouble. Moab is a mystic name. It is the prediction of the humiliation of Moab in this spiritual sense, for which the second echo opens the way by celebrating Jehovah's appearing. Jehovah is now in His manifested presence the conqueror of death, the drier of tears, the saviour of the honour of His oppressed church. V. 9. "And they say in that day, Behold our God, for whom we waited to help us: this is Jehovah, for whom we waited; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation." The undefined but self-evident subject to *v'amar* ("they say") is the church of the last days. "Behold:" *hinnēh* and *zeh* belong to one another, as in Isa. 21:9. The *waiting* may be understood as implying a retrospective glance at all the remote past, even as far back as Jacob's saying, "I wait for Thy salvation, O Jehovah" (Gen. 49:18). The appeal, "Let us be glad," etc., has passed over into the grand *hodu* of Ps. 118:24.

Isaiah 25:10-12. In the land of promise there is rejoicing, but on the other side of the Jordan there is fear of ruin. Two contrasted pictures are placed here side by side. The Jordan is the same as the "great gulf" in the parable of the rich man. Upon Zion Jehovah descends in mercy, but upon the highlands of Moab in His wrath. Vv. 10-12. "For the hand of Jehovah will sink down upon this mountain, and Moab is trodden down there where it is, as straw is trodden down in the water of the dung-pit. And he spreadeth out his hands in the pool therein, as the swimmer spreadeth them out to swim; but Jehovah forceth down the pride of Moab in spite

of the artifices of his hands. Yea, thy steep, towering walls He bows down, forces under, and casts earthwards into dust." Jehovah brings down His hand upon Zion (*nūach*, as in Isa. 7:2; 11:1), not only to shelter, but also to avenge. Israel, that has been despised, He now makes glorious, and for contemptuous Moab He prepares a shameful end. In the place where it now is (תַּהֲרִי, as in 2 Sam. 7:10, Hab. 3:16, "in its own place," its own land) it is threshed down, stamped or trodden down, as straw is trodden down into a dung-pit to turn it into manure: *hiddūsh*, the *inf. constr.*, with the vowel sound *u*, possibly to distinguish it from the *inf. absol.* *hiddosh* (Ewald, § 240, *b*). Instead of בָּמוֹ (as in Isa. 43:2), the *chethib* has בָּמִי (cf., Job 9:30); and this is probably the more correct reading, since *madmēnāh*, by itself, means the dunghill, and not the tank of dung water. At the same time, it is quite possible that *b'mo* is intended as a play upon the name *Moab*, just as the word *madmēnāh* may possibly have been chosen with a play upon the Moabitish *Madmēn* (Jer. 48:2). In v. 11 Jehovah would be the subject, if *b'kirbo* (in the midst of it) referred back to Moab; but although the figure of Jehovah pressing down the pride of Moab, by spreading out His hands within it like a swimmer, might produce the impression of boldness and dignity in a different connection, yet here, where Moab has just been described as forced down into the manure-pit, the comparison of Jehovah to a swimmer would be a very offensive one. The swimmer is Moab itself, as Gesenius, Hitzig, Knobel, and in fact the majority of commentators suppose. "In the midst of it:" *b'kirbo* points back in a neuter sense to the place into which Moab had been violently plunged, and which was so little adapted for swimming. A man cannot swim in a manure pond; but Moab attempts it, though without success, for Jehovah presses down the pride of Moab in spite of its artifices (עַם, as in Neh. 5:18; אֶרְבֹּת, written with *dagesh* (according to the majority of MSS, from אֶרְבָּה, like the Arabic *urbe*, *irbe*, cleverness, wit,

ISAIAH	Page 226
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

sharpness), i.e., the skilful and cunning movement of its hands. Saad. gives it correctly, as *muchâtaie*, wiles and stratagems; Hitzig also renders it "machinations," i.e., twistings and turnings, which Moab makes with its arms, for the purpose of keeping itself up in the water. What v. 11 affirms in figure, v. 12 illustrates without any figure. If the reading were מִשְׁגָּב מִבְּצָרָה, the reference would be to Kir-Moab (Isa. 15:1; 16:7). But as the text stands, we are evidently to understand by it the strong and lofty walls of the cities of Moab in general.

Isaiah 26

Third Echo: Israel Brought Back, or Raised from the Dead

Isaiah 26:1. Thus the second hymnic echo has its confirmation in a prophecy against Moab, on the basis of which a third hymnic echo now arises. Whilst on the other side, in the land of Moab, the people are trodden down, and its lofty castles demolished, the people in the land of Judah can boast of an impregnable city. V. 1. "In that day will this song be sung in the land of Judah: A city of defence is ours; salvation He sets for walls and bulwark." According to the punctuation, this ought to be rendered, "A city is a shelter for us;" but עִיר עֲזוּ seem rather to be connected, according to Prov. 17:19, "a city of strong, i.e., of impregnable offence and defence." The subject of יְשׁוּעָה is Jehovah. The figure indicates what He is constantly doing, and ever doing afresh; for the walls and bulwarks of Jerusalem (*chêl*, as in Lam. 2:8, the small outside wall which encloses all the fortifications) are not dead stone, but *yeshuâh*, ever living and never exhausted *salvation* (Isa. 60:18). In just the same sense Jehovah is called elsewhere the wall of Jerusalem, and even a wall of fire in Zech. 2:9, —parallels which show that *yeshuâh* is intended to be taken as the accusative of the object, and not as the accusative of the predicate, according to Isa. 5:6, Ps. 21:7; 84:7, Jer. 22:6 (Luzzatto).

Isaiah 26:2. In v. 1 this city is thought of as still empty: for, like paradise, in which man was placed, it is first of all a creation of God; and hence the exclamation in v. 2: "Open ye the gates, that a righteous people may enter, one keeping truthfulness." The cry is a heavenly one; and those who open, if indeed we are at liberty to inquire who they are, must be angels. We recal to mind Ps. 24, but the scene is a different one. The author of Ps. 118 has given individuality to this passage in vv. 19, 20. *Goi tzaddik* (a righteous nation) is the church of the righteous, as in Isa. 24:16. *Goi* (nation) is used here, as in v. 15 and Isa. 9:2 (cf., p. 53), with reference to Israel, which has now by grace become a righteous nation, and has been established in covenant truth towards God, who keepeth truth (*'emunim*, from *'ēmūn*, Ps. 31:24).

Isaiah 26:3. The relation of Israel and Jehovah to one another is now a permanent one. V. 3. "Thou keepest the firmly-established mind in peace, peace; for his confidence rests on Thee." A gnome (borrowed in Ps. 112:7, 8), but in a lyrical connection, and with a distinct reference to the church of the last days. There is no necessity to take יָצַר קְמוּיָה as standing for קְמוּיָה, as Knobel does. The state of mind is mentioned here as designating the person possessing it, according to his inmost nature. יָצַר (the mind) is the whole attitude and habit of a man as inwardly constituted, i.e., as a being capable of thought and will. קְמוּיָה is the same, regarded as having a firm hold in itself, and this it has whenever it has a firm hold on God (Isa. 10:20). This is the mind of the new Israel, and Jehovah keeps it, *shâlom, shâlom* (peace, peace; accusative predicates, used in the place of a consequential clause), i.e., so that deep and constant peace abides therein (Phil. 4:7). Such a mind is thus kept by Jehovah, because its trust is placed in Jehovah. בְּטוּחָהּ refers to יָצַר, according to Ewald, § 149, *d*, and is therefore equivalent to בְּטוּחָהּ הוּא (cf., Ps. 7:10; 55:20), the passive participle, like the Latin *confisus, fretus*. To hang on God, or to be thoroughly devoted to Him, secures both stability and peace.

Isaiah 26:4. A cry goes forth again, as if from heaven, exhorting Israel to continue in this mind. V. 4. *“Hang confidently on Jehovah for ever: for in Jah, Jehovah, is an everlasting rock.”* The combination *Jah Jehovah* is only met with here and in Isa. 12:2. It is the proper name of God the Redeemer in the most emphatic form. The *Beth essentiae* frequently stands before the predicate (Ges. § 151, 3); here, however, it stands before the subject, as in Ps. 78:5; 55:19. In *Jah Jehovah* (*munach, tzakeph*) there is an everlasting rock, i.e., He is essentially such a rock (compare Deut. 32:4, like Ex. 15:2 for Isa. 12:2).

Isaiah 26:5, 6. He has already proved Himself to be such a rock, on which everything breaks that would attack the faithful whom He surrounds. Vv. 5, 6. *“For He hath bent down them that dwell on high; the towering castle, He tore it down, tore it down to the earth, cast it into dust. The foot treads it to pieces, feet of the poor, steps of the lowly.”* Passing beyond the fall of Moab, the fall of the imperial city is celebrated, to which Moab was only an annex (Isa. 25:1, 2; 24:10–12). The futures are determined by the preterite; and the *anadiplosis*, which in other instances (e.g., Isa. 25:1, cf., Ps. 118:11) links together derivatives or variations of form, is satisfied in this instance with changing the forms of the suffix. The second thought of v. 6 is a more emphatic repetition of the first: it is trodden down; the oppression of those who have been hitherto oppressed is trodden down.

Isaiah 26:7. The righteous, who go astray according to the judgment of the world, thus arrive at a goal from which their way appears in a very different light. V. 7. *“The path that the righteous man takes is smoothness; Thou makest the course of the righteous smooth.”* יָשָׁר is an accusative predicate: Thou rollest it, i.e., Thou smoothes it, so that it is just as if it had been bevelled with a rule, and leads quite straight (on the derivative *peles*, a level, see at Job 37:16) and without interruption to the desired end. The song has here fallen into the language of a *mashal* of Solomon (vid., Prov. 4:26; 5:6,

21). It pauses here to reflect, as if at the close of a strophe.

Isaiah 26:8, 9. It then commences again in a lyrical tone in vv. 8 and 9: *“We have also waited for Thee, that Thou shouldest come in the path of Thy judgments; the desire of the soul went after Thy name, and after Thy remembrance. With my soul I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit deep within me, I longed to have Thee here: for when Thy judgments strike the earth, the inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness.”* In the opinion of Hitzig, Knobel, Drechsler, and others, the prophet here comes back from the ideal to the actual present. But this is not the case. The church of the last days, looking back to the past, declares with what longing it has waited for that manifestation of the righteousness of God which has now taken place. *“The path of Thy judgments:”* *’orach mishpâtêkâ* belongs to the *te*; *venientem* (or *venturum*) being understood. The clause follows the poetical construction בּוֹא אֶרְרָה, after the analogy of הִלַּךְ דָּרָךְ. They longed for God to come as a Redeemer in the way of His judgments. The “name” and “remembrance” ad the nature of God, that has become nameable and memorable through self-assertion and self-manifestation (Ex. 3:15). They desired that God should present Himself again to the consciousness and memory of man, by such an act as should break through His concealment and silence. The prophet says this more especially of himself; for he feels himself “in spirit” to be a member of the perfected church. “My soul” and “my spirit” are accusatives giving a more precise definition (Ewald, § 281, c). *“The night”* is the night of affliction, as in Isa. 21:11. In connection with this, the word *shichêr* (lit. to dig for a thing, to seek it eagerly) is employed here, with a play upon *shachar*. The dawning of the morning after a night of suffering was the object for which he longed, *naphshi* (my soul), i.e., with his entire personality (*Pyschol.* p. 202), and *ruchi b’kirbi* (my spirit within me), i.e., with the spirit of his mind, πνεῦμα τοῦ νοῦς (*Pyschol.* p. 183). And why? Because, as often as God manifested Himself in judgment, this brought

men to the knowledge, and possibly also to the recognition, of what was right (cf., Ps. 9:17).

“Will learn:” *lâmdu* is a *praet. gnomicum*, giving the result of much practical experience.

Isaiah 26:10. Here again the *shîr* has struck the note of a *mâshâl*. And proceeding in this tone, it pauses here once more to reflect as at the close of a strophe. V. 10. *“If favour is shown to the wicked man, he does not learn righteousness; in the most upright land he acts wickedly, and has no eye for the majesty of Jehovah.”* עַיִן רַחֵם is a hypothetical clause, which is left to be indicated by the emphasis, like Neh. 1:8 (Ewald, § 357, b): granting that favour (*chên* = “goodness,” Rom. 2:4) is constantly shown to the wicked man. *“The most upright land:”* *‘eretz necochoth* is a land in which everything is right, and all goes honourably. A worthless man, supposing he were in such a land, would still act knavishly; and of the majesty of Jehovah, showing itself in passing punishments of sin, though still sparing him, he would have no perception whatever. The prophet utters this with a painful feeling of indignation; the word *bal* indicating denial with emotion.

Isaiah 26:11–13. The situation still remains essentially the same as in vv. 11–13: *“Jehovah, Thy hand has been exalted, but they did not see: they will see the zeal for a people, being put to shame; yea, fire will devour Thine adversaries. Jehovah, Thou wilt establish peace for us: for Thou hast accomplished all our work for us. Jehovah our God, lords besides Thee had enslaved us; but through Thee we praise Thy name.”* Here are three forms of address beginning with Jehovah, and rising in the third to “Jehovah our God.” The standpoint of the first is the time before the judgment; the standpoint of the other two is in the midst of the redemption that has been effected through judgment. Hence what the prophet states in v. 11 will be a general truth, which has now received its most splendid confirmation through the overthrow of the empire. The complaint of the prophet here is the same as in Isa. 53:1. We may also compare Ex. 14:8, not Ps. 10:5; (*rûm* does not mean to remain beyond and unrecognised, but

to prove one’s self to be high.) The hand of Jehovah had already shown itself to be highly exalted (*râmâh*, 3 *pr.*), by manifesting itself in the history of the nations, by sheltering His congregation, and preparing the way for its exaltation in the midst of its humiliation; but as they had no eye for this hand, they would be made to feel it upon themselves as the avenger of His nation. The “zeal for a people,” when reduced from this ideal expression into a concrete one, is the zeal of Jehovah of hosts (Isa. 9:6; 37:32) for His own nation (as in Isa. 49:8). *Kin’ath ‘âm* (zeal for a people) is the object to *yechezû* (they shall see); *v’yêbôshû* (and be put to shame) being a parenthetical interpolation, which does not interfere with this connection. *“Thou wilt establish peace”* (*tishpôt shâlom*, v. 12) expresses the certain hope of a future and imperturbable state of peace (*pones, stabilies*); and this hope is founded upon the fact, that all which the church has hitherto accomplished (*ma’aseh*, the acting out of its calling, as in Ps. 90:17, see at Isa. 5:12) has not been its own work, but the work of Jehovah *for it*. And the deliverance just obtained from the yoke of the imperial power is the work of Jehovah also. The meaning of the complaint, “other lords beside Thee had enslaved us,” is just the same as that in Isa. 63:18; but there the standpoint is in the midst of the thing complained of, whereas here it is beyond it. Jehovah is Israel’s King. He seemed indeed to have lost His rule, since the masters of the world had done as they liked with Israel. But it was very different now, and it was only through Jehovah (“through Thee”) that Israel could now once more gratefully celebrate Jehovah’s name.

Isaiah 26:14. The tyrants who usurped the rule over Israel have now utterly disappeared. V. 14. *“Dead men live not again, shades do not rise again: so hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and caused all their memory to perish.”* The meaning is not that Jehovah had put them to death because there was no resurrection at all after death; for, as we shall see further on, the prophet was acquainted with such a resurrection. In *mêthim* (dead men) and *rephâ’im* (shades) he had directly in mind the

ISAIAH	Page 229
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

oppressors of Israel, who had been thrust down into the region of the shades (like the king of Babylon in Isa. 14), so that there was no possibility of their being raised up or setting themselves up again. The לָכֵן is not argumentative (which would be very freezing in this highly lyrical connection), but introduces what must have occurred *eo ipso* when the other had taken place (it corresponds to the Greek ἄρα, and is used here in the same way as in Isa. 61:7, Jer. 5:2; 2:33, Zech. 11:7, Job 34:25; 42:3). They had fallen irrevocably into Sheol (Ps. 49:15), and consequently God had swept them away, so that not even their name was perpetuated.

Isaiah 26:15. Israel, when it has such cause as this for praising Jehovah, will have become a numerous people once more. V. 15. *“Thou hast added to the nation, O Jehovah, hast added to the nation; glorified Thyself; moved out all the borders of the land.”* The verb הֵסִיף, which is construed in other cases with עָל, אָל, here with ל, carried its object within itself: to add, i.e., to give an increase. The allusion is to the same thing as that which caused the prophet to rejoice in Isa. 9:2 (compare Isa. 49:19, 20; 54:1ff., Mic. 2:12; 4:7, Obad. 19, 20, and many other passages; and for *richaktâ*, more especially Mic. 7:11). Just as v. 13 recals the bondage in Egypt, and v. 14 the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, so v. 16 recals the numerical strength of the nation, and the extent of the country in the time of David and Solomon. At the same time, we cannot say that the prophet intended to recal these to mind. The antitypical relation, in which the last times stand to these events and circumstances of the past, is a fact in sacred history, though not particularly referred to here.

Isaiah 26:16–18. The *tephillâh* now returns to the retrospective glance already cast in vv. 8, 9 into that night of affliction, which preceded the redemption that had come. Vv. 16–18. *“Jehovah, in trouble they missed Thee, poured out light supplication when Thy chastisement came upon them. As a woman with child, who draws near to*

her delivery, writhes and cries out in her pangs, so were we in Thy sight, O Jehovah. We went with child, we writhed; it was as if we brought forth wind. We brought no deliverance to the land, and the inhabitants of the world did not come to the light.” The substantive circumstantial clause in the parallel line, מוֹסְרָךָ לָמוּ, *castigatione tua eos affligente* (ל as in v. 9), corresponds to בִּצְרָא and שָׁקוֹן לְחַשׁ, a preterite (יִצְקָ = צוּקָ, Job 28:2; 29:6, to be poured out and melt away) with *Nun paragogic* (which is only met with again in Deut. 8:3, 16, the *yekōshūn* in Isa. 29:21 being, according to the syntax, the future of *kōsh*), answers to *pâkad*, which is used here as in Isa. 34:16, 1 Sam. 20:6; 25:15, in the sense of *lustrando desiderare*. *Lachash* is a quiet, whispering prayer (like the whispering of forms of incantation in Isa. 3:3); sorrow renders speechless in the long run; and a consciousness of sin crushes so completely, that a man does not dare to address God aloud (Isa. 29:4). Pregnancy and pangs are symbols of a state of expectation strained to the utmost, the object of which appears all the closer the more the pains increase. Often, says the perfected church, as it looks back upon its past history, often did we regard the coming of salvation as certain; but again and again were our hopes deceived. The first כְּמוֹ is equivalent to כִּי, “as a woman with child,” etc. (see at Isa. 8:23); the second is equivalent to כִּי־אִשֶּׁר, “as it were, we brought forth wind.” This is not an inverted expression, signifying we brought forth as it were wind; but כְּמוֹ governs the whole sentence in the sense of “(it was) as if.” The issue of all their painful toil was like the result of a false pregnancy (*empneumatosi*), a delivery of wind. This state of things also proceeded from Jehovah, as the expression “before Thee” implies. It was a consequence of the sins of Israel, and of a continued want of true susceptibility to the blessings of salvation. Side by side with their disappointed hope, v. 18 places the ineffectual character of their won efforts. Israel’s own doings,—no, they could never make the land into יְשׁוּעָה (i.e., bring it into

a state of complete salvation); and (so might the final clause be understood) they waited in vain for the judgment of Jehovah upon the sinful world that was at enmity against them, or they made ineffectual efforts to overcome it. This explanation is favoured by the fact, that throughout the whole of this cycle of prophecies *yōshbē tēbēl* does not mean the inhabitants of the holy land, but of the globe at large in the sense of “the world” (v. 21, Isa. 24:5, 6). Again, the relation of יִפְּלוּ to the תִּפְּיל in v. 19, land the figure previously employed of the pains of child-birth, speak most strongly in favour of the conclusion, that *nāphal* is here used for the falling of the fruit of the womb (cf., Wisd. 7:3, Il. xix. 110, καταπεσεῖν and πεσεῖν). And *yōshbē tēbēl* (the inhabitants of the world) fits in with this sense (viz., that the expected increase of the population never came), from the fact that in this instance the reference is not to *the* inhabitants of the earth; but the words signify inhabitants generally, or, as we should say, young, new-born “mortals.” The punishment of the land under the weight of the empire still continued, and a new generation did not come to the light of day to populate the desolate land (cf., *Psychol.* p. 414).

Isaiah 26:19. But now all this had taken place. Instead of singing what has occurred, the *tephillah* places itself in the midst of the occurrence itself. V. 19. “*Thy dead will live, my corpses rise again. Awake and rejoice, ye that lie in the dust! For thy dew is dew of the lights, and the earth will bring shades to the day.*” The prophet speaks thus out of the heart of the church of the last times. In consequence of the long-continued sufferings and chastisements, it has been melted down to a very small remnant; and many of those whom it could once truly reckon as its own, are now lying as corpses in the dust of the grave. The church, filled with hope which will not be put to shame, now calls to itself, “Thy dead will live” (יִחְיֶי מֵתֵיךָ, *reviviscent*, as in תִּחְיֶי הַמֵּתִים, the resurrection of the dead), and consoles itself with the working of divine grace and power, which is even now setting itself in motion: “my corpses will rise

again” (נִבְּלָתֵי יִקְמוּן, *nebēlah*: a word without a plural, but frequently used in a plural sense, as in Isa. 5:25, and therefore connected with יִקְמוּן, equivalent to תִּקְמְנָה: here before a light suffix, with the *ē* retained, which is lost in other cases). It also cries out, in full assurance of the purpose of God, the believing word of command over the burial-ground of the dead, “Wake up and rejoice, ye that sleep in the dust,” and then justifies to itself this believing word of command by looking up to Jehovah, and confessing, “Thy dew is dew born out of (supernatural) lights,” as the dew of nature is born out of the womb of the morning dawn (Ps. 110:3). Others render it “dew upon herbs,” taking אֲוֵרוֹת as equivalent to יִרְקוֹת, as in 2 Kings 4:39. We take it as from אֲוֵרָה (Ps. 139:12), in the sense of אֲוֵר הַחַיִּים. The plural implies that there is a perfect fulness of the lights of life in God (“the Father of lights,” Jas. 1:17). Out of these there is born the gentle dew, which gives new life to the bones that have been sown in the ground (Ps. 141:7),—a figure full of mystery, which is quite needlessly wiped away by Hofmann’s explanation, viz., that it is equivalent to *tal hōrōth*, “dew of thorough saturating.” Luther, who renders it, “Thy dew is a dew of the green field,” stands alone among the earlier translators. The Targum, Syriac, Vulgate, and Saad. all render it, “Thy dew is light dew;” and with the uniform connection in which the Scriptures place *’or* (light) and *chayyim* (life), this rendering is natural enough. We now translate still further, “and the earth (*vā’āretz*, as in Isa. 65:17, Prov. 25:3, whereas אֲרֶץ is almost always in the construct state) will bring shades to the day” (*hippil*, as a causative of *nāphal*, v. 18), i.e., bring forth again the dead that have sunken into it (like Luther’s rendering, “and the land will cast out the dead”—the rendering of our English version also: Tr.). The dew from the glory of God falls like a heavenly seed into the bosom of the earth; and in consequence of this, the earth gives out from itself the shades which have hitherto been held fast beneath the ground, so

that they appear alive again on the surface of the earth. Those who understand v. 18 as relating to the earnestly descried overthrow of the lords of the world, interpret this passage accordingly, as meaning either, “and thou castest down shades to the earth” (אָרץ, *acc. loci*, = עַד-אָרץ, v. 5, לְאָרץ, Isa. 25:12), or, “and the earth causeth shades to fall,” i.e., to fall into itself. This is Rosenmüller’s explanation (*terra per prosopopaeiam, ut supra 24:20, inducta, deturbare in orcum sistitur impios, eo ipso manes eos reddens*). But although *rephaim*, when so interpreted, agrees with v. 14, where this name is given to the oppressors of the people of God, it would be out of place here, where it would necessarily mean, “those who are just becoming shades.” But, what is of greater importance still, if this concluding clause is understood as applying to the overthrow of the oppressors, it does not give any natural sequence to the words, “dew of the lights is thy dew;” whereas, according to our interpretation, it seals the faith, hope, and prayer of the church for what is to follow. When compared with the New Testament Apocalypse, it is “the first resurrection” which is here predicted by Isaiah. The confessors of Jehovah are awakened in their graves to form one glorious church with those who are still in the body. In the case of Ezekiel also (Ezek. 37:1–14), the resurrection of the dead which he beholds is something more than a figurative representation of the people that were buried in captivity. The church of the period of glory on this side is a church of those who have been miraculously saved and wakened up from the dead. Their persecutors lie at their feet beneath the ground.

Isaiah 26:20, 21. The judgment upon them is not mentioned, indeed, till after the completion of the church through those of its members that have died, although it must have actually preceded the latter. Thus the standpoint of the prophecy is incessantly oscillating backwards and forwards in these four chapters (24–27). This explains the exhortation in the next verses, and the reason assigned. Vv. 20, 21. “Go in, my people, into thy chambers, and shut the door

behind thee; hide thyself a little moment, till the judgment of wrath passes by. For, behold, Jehovah goeth out from His place to visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth upon them; and the earth discloses the blood that it has sucked up, and no more covers her slain.” The *shir* is now at an end. The prophecy speaks once more as a prophet. Whilst the judgment of wrath (*za’am*) is going forth, and until it shall have passed by (on the *fut. exact.*, see Isa. 10:12; 4:4; and on the fact itself, *acharith hazza’am*, Dan. 8:19), the people of God are to continue in the solitude of prayer (Matt. 6:6, cf., Ps. 27:5; 31:21). They can do so, for the judgment by which they get rid of their foes is the act of Jehovah alone; and they are to do so because only he who is hidden in God by prayer can escape the wrath. The judgment only lasts a little while (Isa. 10:24, 25; 54:7, 8, cf., Ps. 30:6), a short time which is shortened for the elect’s sake. Instead of the dual דְּלִתְיָהּ (as the house-door is called, though not the chamber-door), the word is pointed דְּלִתָּהּ (from דָּלָה = דָּלַת), just as the prophet intentionally chooses the feminine חֲבִי instead of חֲבֵה. The nation is thought of as feminine in this particular instance (cf., Isa. 54:7, 8); because Jehovah, its avenger and protector, is acting on its behalf, whilst in a purely passive attitude it hides itself in Him. Just as Noah, behind whom Jehovah shut the door of the ark, was hidden in the ark whilst the water-floods of the judgment poured down without, so should the church be shut off from the world without in its life of prayer, because a judgment of Jehovah was at hand. “He goeth out of His place” (verbatim the same as in Mic. 1:3), i.e., not out of His own divine life, as it rests within Himself, but out of the sphere of the manifested glory in which He presents Himself to the spirits. He goeth forth thence equipped for judgment, to visit the iniquity of the inhabitant of the earth upon him (the singular used collectively), and more especially their blood-guiltiness. The prohibition of murder was given to the sons of Noah, and therefore was one of the stipulations of “the covenant of old” (Isa. 24:5). The earth supplies

two witnesses: (1) the innocent blood which has been violently shed (on *dânim*, see Isa. 1:15), which she has had to suck up, and which is now exposed, and cries for vengeance; and (2) the persons themselves who have been murdered in their innocence, and who are slumbering within her. Streams of blood come to light and bear testimony, and martyrs arise to bear witness against their murderers.

Isaiah 27

Isaiah 27:1. Upon whom the judgment of Jehovah particularly falls, is described in figurative and enigmatical words in Isa. 27:1: *“In that day will Jehovah visit with His sword, with the hard, and the great, and the strong, leviathan the fleet serpent, and leviathan the twisted serpent, and slay the dragon in the sea.”* No doubt the three animals are emblems of three imperial powers. The assertion that there are no more three animals than there are three swords, is a mistake. If the preposition were repeated in the case of the swords, as it is in the case of the animals, we should have to understand the passage as referring to three swords as well as three animals. But this is not the case. We have therefore to inquire what the three world-powers are; and this question is quite a justifiable one: for we have no reason to rest satisfied with the opinion held by Drechsler, that the three emblems are symbols of ungodly powers in general, of every kind and every sphere, unless the question itself is absolutely unanswerable. Now the *tannin* (the stretched-out aquatic animal) is the standing emblem of Egypt (Isa. 51:9; Ps. 74:13; Ezek. 29:3; 32:2). And as the Euphrates-land and Asshur are mentioned in vv. 12, 13 in connection with Egypt, it is immediately probable that the other two animals signify the kingdom of the Tigris, i.e., Assyria, with its capital Nineveh which stood on the Tigris, and the kingdom of the Euphrates, i.e., Chaldea, with its capital Babylon which stood upon the Euphrates. Moreover, the application of the same epithet Leviathan to both the kingdoms, with simply a difference in the attributes, is suggestive of two kingdoms that were related

to each other. We must not be misled by the fact that *nâchâsh bâriach* is a constellation in Job 26:13; we have no *bammarôm* (on high) here, as in Isa. 24:21, and therefore are evidently still upon the surface of the globe. The epithet employed was primarily suggested by the situation of the two cities. Nineveh was on the Tigris, which was called *Chiddekel*, on account of the swiftness of its course and its terrible rapids; hence Asshur is compared to a serpent moving along in a rapid, impetuous, long, extended course (*bâriach*, as in Isa. 43:14, is equivalent to *barriach*, a noun of the same form as עֲלִי, and a different word from *brriach*, a bolt, Isa. 15:5). Babylon, on the other hand, is compared to a twisted serpent, i.e., to one twisting about in serpentine curves, because it was situated on the very winding Euphrates, the windings of which are especially labyrinthine in the immediate vicinity of Babylon. The river did indeed flow straight away at one time, but by artificial cuttings it was made so serpentine that it passed the same place, viz., Arderikka, no less than three times; and according to the declaration of Herodotus in his own time, when any one sailed down the river, he had to pass it three times in three days (Ritter, x. p. 8). The real meaning of the emblem, however, is no more exhausted by this allusion to the geographical situation, than it was in the case of “the desert of the sea” (Isa. 21:1). The attribute of winding is also a symbol of the longer duration of one empire than of the other, and of the more numerous complications into which Israel would be drawn by it. The world-power on the Tigris fires with rapidity upon Israel, so that the fate of Israel is very quickly decided. But the world-power on the Euphrates advances by many windings, and encircles its prey in many folds. And these windings are all the more numerous, because in the prophet’s view Babylon is the final form assumed by the empire of the world, and therefore Israel remains encircled by this serpent until the last days. The judgment upon Asshur, Babylon, and Egypt, is the judgment upon the world-powers universally.

D. The Fourth Echo: The Fruit-Bearing Vineyard Under the Protection of Jehovah—
Ch. 27:2–6

Isaiah 27:2–5. The prophecy here passes for the fourth time into the tone of a song. The church recognises itself in the judgments upon the world, as Jehovah's well-protected and beloved vineyard. Vv. 2–5. "In that day
A merry vineyard—sing it!
I, Jehovah, its keeper,
Every moment I water it.
That nothing may come near it,
I watch it night and day.
Wrath have I none;
O, had I thorns, thistles before me!
I would make up to them in battle,
Burn them all together.
Men would then have to grasp at my protection,
Make peace with me,
Make peace with me."

Instead of introducing the song with, "In that day shall this song be sung," or some such introduction, the prophecy passes at once into the song. It consists in a descending scale of strophes, consisting of one of five lines (vv. 2, 3), one of four lines (v. 4), and one of three lines (v. 5). The thema is placed at the beginning, in the absolute case: *cerem chemer*. This may signify a vineyard of fiery or good wine (compare *cerem zaith* in Judg. 15:5); but it is possible that the reading should be *cerem chemed*, as in Isa. 32:12, as the LXX, Targum, and most modern commentators assume. עָנָה לְ signified, according to Num. 21:17, Ps. 147:7 (cf., Ex. 32:18, Ps. 88:1), to strike up a song with reference to anything,—an onomatopoetic word (different from עָנָה, to begin, literally to meet, see p. 101). *Cerem* (the vineyard) is a feminine here, like בְּאֵר, the well, in the song of the well in Num. 21:17, 18, and just as Israel, of which the vineyard here is a symbol (Isa. 3:14; 5:1ff.), is sometimes regarded as masculine, and at other times as feminine (Isa. 26:20). Jehovah Himself is introduced as speaking. He is the

keeper of the vineyard, who waters it every moment when there is any necessity (*lirgâ'im*, like *labbkârim* in Isa. 33:2, every morning), and watches it by night as well as by day, that nothing may visit it. פָּקַד עָלָיו (to visit upon) is used in other cases to signify the infliction of punishment; here it denotes visitation by some kind of misfortune. Because it was the church purified through afflictions, the feelings of Jehovah towards it were pure love, without any admixture of the burning of anger (*chēmâh*). This is reserved for all who dare to do injury to this vineyard. Jehovah challenges these, and says, Who is there, then, that gives me thorns, thistles! (יִתְּנֵנִי לִי = יִתְּנֵנִי, as in Jer. 9:1, cf., Josh.

15:19.) The *asyndeton*, instead of שָׂמִיר וְשִׁיתָ, which is customary elsewhere, corresponds to the excitement of the exalted defender. If He had thorns, thistles before Him, He would break forth upon them in war, i.e., make war upon them (*bâh*, neuter, upon such a mass of bush), and set it all on fire (הַצִּיתָ = הַצִּיתָ). The arrangement of the strophes requires that we should connect אֶפְשָׁעָה with בְּמִלְחָמָה (var. אֶפְשָׁעָה), though this is at variance with the accents. We may see very clearly, even by the choice of the expression *bammilchâmâh*, that thorns and thistles are a figurative representation of the enemies of the church (2 Sam. 23:6, 7). And in this sense the song concludes in v. 5: only by yielding themselves to mercy will they find mercy. וְ with a voluntative following, "unless," as in Lev. 26:41. "Take hold of:" *hechëzik b'*, as in 1 Kings 1:50, of Adonijah, who lays hold of the horns of the altar. "Make peace with:" *âsâh shâlôm l'*, as in Josh. 9:15. The song closes here. What the church here utters, is the consciousness of the gracious protection of its God, as confirmed in her by the most recent events.

Isaiah 27:6. The prophet now adds to the song of the vineyard, by way of explanation,—V. 6. "In future will Jacob strike roots, Israel blossom and bud, and fill the surface of the globe with fruits." We may see from הִבְאִים (acc. temp. as in

Eccles. 2:16, equivalent in meaning to “Behold, the days come,” Jer. 7:32, etc.), that the true language of prophecy commences again here.

For the active וּמְלֵאָה, compare Jer. 19:4, Ezek.

8:17, etc. The prophet here says, in a figure, just the same as the apostle in Rom. 11:12, viz., that Israel, when restored once more to favour as a nation, will become “the riches of the Gentiles.”

Jehovah’s Chastising and Saving Course Towards Israel—Ch. 27:7–13

Isaiah 27:7, 8. The prophet does not return even now to his own actual times; but, with the certainty that Israel will not be exalted until it has been deeply humbled on account of its sins, he placed himself in the midst of this state of punishment. And there, in the face of the glorious future which awaited Israel, the fact shines out brightly before his eyes, that the punishment which God inflicts upon Israel is a very different thing from that inflicted upon the world. Vv. 7, 8. *“Hath He smitten it like the smiting of its smiter, or is it slain like the slaying of those slain by Him? Thou punishedst it with measures, when thou didst thrust it away, sifting with violent breath in the day of the east wind.”* “Its smiter” (*maccēhū*) is the imperial power by which Israel had been attacked (Isa. 10:20); and “those slain by Him” (הַרְגֵי) are the slain of the empire who had fallen under the strokes of Jehovah. The former smote unmercifully, and its slain ones now lay without hope (Isa. 26:14). Jehovah smites differently, and it is very different with the church, which has succumbed in the persons of its righteous members. For the double play upon words, see Isa. 24:16; 22:18; 10:16. When Jehovah put Israel away (as if by means of a “bill of divorcement,” Isa. 50:1), He strove against it (Isa. 49:25), i.e., punished it, “*in measure*,” i.e., determining the measure very exactly, that it might not exceed the enduring power of Israel, not endanger the existence of Israel as a nation (cf., *bmishpāt* in Jer. 10:24; 30:11; 46:28). On the other hand, Hitzig, Ewald, and Knobel read הַמְסָאָה, from a word מְסָאָה,

related to מְסָאָה, or even מְסָאָה, “when thou didst disturb (or drive forth);” but the traditional text does not indicate any various reading with הַמְסָאָה, and the ancient versions and expositors all take the word as a reduplication of מְסָאָה, which stands here as the third of an ephah to denote a moderately large measure. The clause *hâgâh brūchō* is probably regarded as an elliptical relative clause, in which case the transition to the third person can be best explained: “thou, who siftedst with violent breath.” *Hâgâh*, which only occurs again in Prov. 25:4, signifies to separate, e.g., the dross from silver (Isa. 1:25). Jehovah sifted Israel (compare the figure of the threshing-floor in Isa. 21:10), at the time when, by suspending captivity over it, He blew as violently upon it as if the east wind had raged (vid., *Job*, 2:77). But He only sifted, He did not destroy.

Isaiah 27:9. He was angry, but not without love; He punished, but only to be able to pardon again. V. 9. *“Therefore will the guilt of Jacob be purged thus: and this is all the fruit of the removal of his son: when He maketh all altar-stones like chalk-stones that are broken in pieces, Astarte images and sun-pillars do not rise up again.”* With the word “therefore” (*lâcēn*) a conclusion is drawn from the expression “by measure.” God punished Israel “by measure;” His punishment is a way to salvation: therefore it ceases as soon as its purpose is secured; and so would it cease now, if Israel would thoroughly renounce its sin, and, above all, the sin of all sins, namely idolatry. “Thus” (by this) refers to the בְּשִׁמּוֹ which follows; “by this,” namely the breaking to pieces of the altars and images of the moon goddess; or possibly, to speak more correctly, the goddess of the morning-star, and those of the sun-god as well (see Isa. 17:8). By the fact that Israel put away the fundamental cause of all mischief, viz., idolatry, the guilt for which it had yet to make atonement would be covered, made good, or wiped away (on *cuppar*, see at Isa. 22:14). The parenthesis (cf., Isa. 26:11b) affirms that this very consequence would be all the fruit (*cōl-*

peri) desired by Jehovah of the removal of the sin of Israel, which the chastisement was intended to effect.

Isaiah 27:10, 11. The prophet said this from out of the midst of the state of punishment, and was therefore able still further to confirm the fact, that the punishment would cease with the sin, by the punishment which followed the sin. Vv. 10, 11. *“For the strong city is solitary, a dwelling given up and forsaken like the steppe: there calves feed, and there they lie down, and eat off its branches. When its branches become withered, they are broken: women come, make fires with them; for it is not a people of intelligence: therefore its Creator has no pity upon it, and its Former does not pardon it.”* The nation without any intelligence (Isa. 1:3), of which Jehovah was the Creator and Former (Isa. 22:11), is Israel; and therefore the fortress that has been destroyed is the city of Jerusalem. The standpoint of the prophet must therefore be beyond the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the midst of the captivity. If this appears strange for Isaiah, nearly every separate word in these two verses rises up as a witness that it is Isaiah, and no other, who is speaking here (compare, as more general proofs, Isa. 32:13, 14, and 5:17; and as more specific exemplifications, Isa. 16:2, 9; 11:7, etc.). The suffix in *“her branches”* refers to the city, whose ruins were overgrown with bushes. Synonymous with קַטְפִּים, branches (always written with *dagesh* in distinction from קַטְפִּים, clefts, Isa. 2:21), is *kâtzir*, cuttings, equivalent to shoots that can be easily cut off. It was a mistake on the part of the early translators to take *kâtzir* in the sense of “harvest” (Vulg., Symm., Saad., though not the LXX or Luther). As *kâtzir* is a collective term here, signifying the whole mass of branches, the predicate can be written in the plural, *tisshâbarnâh*, which is not to be explained as a singular form, as in Isa. 28:3. אֹתָהּ, in the neuter sense, points back to this: women light it (הָאֵר, as in Mal. 1:10), i.e., make with it a lighting flame (אֵר) and a warming fire (אֵר, Isa. 54:16). So desolate does

Jerusalem lie, that in the very spot which once swarmed with men a calf now quietly eats the green foliage of the bushes that grow between the ruins; and in the place whence hostile armies had formerly been compelled to withdraw without accomplishing their purpose, women now come and supply themselves with wood without the slightest opposition.

Isaiah 27:12, 13. But when Israel repents, the mercy of Jehovah will change all this. Vv. 12, 13. *“And it will come to pass on that day, Jehovah will appoint a beating of corn from the water-flood of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt, and ye will be gathered together one by one, O sons of Israel. And it will come to pass in that day, a great trumpet will be blown, and the lost ones in the land of Asshur come, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and cast themselves down before Jehovah on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.”* I regard every exposition of v. 12 which supposes it to refer to the return of the captives as altogether false. The Euphrates and the brook of Egypt, i.e., the *Wady el-Arish*, were the north-eastern and south-western boundaries of the land of Israel, according to the original promise (Gen. 15:18; 1 Kings 8:65), and it is not stated that Jehovah will beat on the outside of these boundaries, but within them. Hence Gesenius is upon a more correct track, when he explains it as meaning that “the kingdom will be peopled again in its greatest promised extent, and that as rapidly and numerously as if men had fallen like olives from the trees.” No doubt the word *châbat* is applied to the beating down of olives in Deut. 24:20; but this figure is inapplicable here, as olives must already exist before they can be knocked down, whereas the land of Israel is to be thought of as desolate. What one expects is, that Jehovah will cause the dead to live within the whole of the broad expanse of the promised land (according to the promise in Isa. 26:19, 21). And the figure answers this expectation most clearly and most gloriously. *Châbat* as the word commonly applied to the knocking out of fruits with husks, which were too tender and valuable to be threshed. Such fruits, as the prophet himself affirms in Isa. 28:27, were knocked out

ISAIAH	Page 236
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

carefully with a stick, and would have been injured by the violence of ordinary threshing. And the great field of dead that stretched from the Euphrates to the Rhinokoloura, resembled a floor covered over with such tender, costly fruit. There true Israelites and apostate Israelites lay mixed together. But Jehovah would separate them. He would institute a beating, so that the true members of the church would come to the light of day, being separated from the false like grains sifted from their husks. "Thy dead will live;" it is to this that the prophet returns. And this view is supported by the choice of the word *shibboleth*, which combines in itself the meanings of "flood" (Ps. 69:3, 16) and "ear" (sc., of corn). This word gives a fine dilogy (compare the dilogy in Isa. 19:18 and Hab. 2:7). From the "ear" of the Euphrates down to the Peninsula of Sinai, Jehovah would knock—a great heap of ears, the grains of which were to be gathered together "one by one," i.e., singly (in the most careful manner possible; Greek, καθ' ἕνα). To this risen church there would be added the still living *diaspora*, gathered together by the signal of God (compare Isa. 18:3; 11:12). Asshur and Egypt are named as lands of banishment. They represent all the lands of exile, as in Isa. 19:23–25 (compare Isa. 11:11). The two names are emblematical, and therefore not to be used as proofs that the prophecy is within the range of Isaiah's horizon. Nor is there any necessity for this. It is just as certain that the cycle of prophecy in Isa. 24–27 belongs to Isaiah, and not to any other prophet, as it is that there are not two men to be found in the world with faces exactly alike.

Part V - BOOK OF WOES;

Or Historical Discourses Relating to Asshur and the Egyptian Alliance - CH. 28–33

Isaiah 28

Isaiah 28–33. These chapters carry us to the earliest years of Hezekiah's reign, probably to the second and third; as Samaria has not yet been destroyed. They run parallel to the book

of Micah, which also takes its start from the destruction of Samaria, and are as faithful a mirror of the condition of the people under Hezekiah, as Isa. 7–12 were of their condition under Ahaz. The time of Ahaz was characterized by a spiritless submission to the Assyrian yoke; that of Hezekiah by a casual striving after liberty. The people tried to throw off the yoke of Assyria; not with confidence in Jehovah, however, but in reliance upon the help of Egypt. This Egyptianizing policy is traced step by step by Isaiah, in Isa. 28–32. The gradual rise of these addresses may be seen from the fact, that they follow the gradual growth of the alliance with Egypt through all its stages, until it is fully concluded. By the side of this casual ground of trust, which Jehovah will sweep away, the prophet exhibits the precious corner-stone in Zion as the true, firm ground of confidence. We might therefore call these chapters (28–33) "the book of the precious corner-stone," just as we called Isa. 7–12 "the book of Immanuel." But the prophecy in Isa. 28:16 does not determine and mould the whole of this section, in the same manner in which the other section is moulded and governed by the prophecy of the Son of the Virgin. We therefore prefer to call this cycle of prophecy "the book of woes;" for censure and threatening are uttered here in repeated utterances of "woe," not against Israel only, but more especially against Judah and Jerusalem, until at last, in Isa. 33, the "hoi concerning Jerusalem" is changed into a "hoi concerning Asshur." All the independent and self-contained addresses in this cycle of prophecy commence with *hoi* ("woe:" Isa. 28, 29, 30, 31–32, 33). The section which does not begin with *hoi* (viz., Isa. 32:9–20) is the last and dependent part of the long address commencing with Isa. 31:1. On the other hand, Isa. 29:15–24 also commences with *hoi*, though it does not form a distinct address in itself, since Isa. 29 forms a complete whole. The subdivisions of the sections, therefore, have not a uniform commencement throughout; but the separate and independent addresses all commence with *hoi*. The climax of these prophecies of woe is Isa. 30. Up to this point the

exclamation of woe gradually ascends, but in Isa. 31–32 it begins to fall; and in Isa. 33 (which contains an epilogue that was only added in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah’s reign) it has changed into the very opposite. The prophet begins with *hoi*, but it is a woe concerning the devastator. This *utmost* woe, however, was not fulfilled at the point of time when the fulfilment of “the *utmost*” predicted in Isa. 28–32 was apparently close at hand; but Jerusalem, though threatened with destruction, was miraculously saved. Yet the prophet had not merely to look on, as Jonah had. He himself predicted this change in the purpose of God, inasmuch as the direction of the “woe” in his mouth is altered, like that of the wrath of God, which turns from Jerusalem to Asshur, and destroys it.

The First Woe—Judgment Upon Samaria and Jerusalem, and Consolation for Both—Ch. 28

Isaiah 28:1. Isaiah, like Micah, commences with the fall of the proud and intoxicated Samaria. V. 1. “*Woe to the proud crown of the drunken of Ephraim, and to the fading flower of its splendid ornament, which is upon the head of the luxuriant valley of those slain with wine.*” The allusion is to Samaria, which is called (1) “the pride-crown of the drunken of Ephraim,” i.e., the crown of which the intoxicated and blinded Ephraimites were proud (Isa. 29:9; 19:14), and (2) “the fading flower” (on the expression itself, compare Isa. 1:30; 40:7, 8) “of the ornament of his splendour,” i.e., the flower now fading, which had once been the ornament with which they made a show. This flower stood “upon the head of the valley of fatnesses of those slain with wine” (cf., Isa. 16:8), i.e., of the valley so exuberant with fruitfulness, belonging to the Ephraimites, who were thoroughly enslaved by wine. Samaria stood upon a beautiful swelling hill, which commanded the whole country round in a most regal way (Amos 4:1; 6:1), in the centre of a large basin, of about two hours’ journey in diameter, shut in by a gigantic circle of still loftier mountains (Amos 3:9). The situation was commanding; the hill terraced up to the very

top; and the surrounding country splendid and fruitful (Ritter, *Erdkunde*, xvi. 660, 661). The expression used by the prophet is intentionally bombastic. He heaps genitives upon genitives, as in Isa. 10:12; 21:17. The words are linked together in pairs. *Shmânîm* (fatnesses) has the absolute form, although it is annexed to the following word, the logical relation overruling the syntactical usage (compare Isa. 32:13, 1 Chron. 9:13). The *sesquipedalia verba* are intended to produce the impression of excessive worldly luxuriance and pleasure, upon which the woe is pronounced. The epithet *nôbhêl* (fading; possibly a genitive, as in v. 4), which is introduced here into the midst of this picture of splendour, indicates that all this splendour is not only destined to fade, but is beginning to fade already.

Isaiah 28:2–4. In the next three verses the *hoi* is expanded. Vv. 2–4. “*Behold, the Lord holds a strong and mighty thing like a hailstorm, a pestilent tempest; like a storm of mighty overflowing waters, He casts down to the earth with almighty hand. With feet they tread down the proud crown of the drunken of Ephraim. And it happens to the fading flower of its splendid ornament, which is upon the head of the luxuriant valley, as to an early fig before it is harvest, which whoever sees it looks at, and it is no sooner in his hand than he swallows it.*” “A strong and mighty thing:” חֲזָק וְאַמִּיץ we have rendered in the neuter (with the LXX and Targum) rather than in the masculine, as Luther does, although the strong and mighty thing which the Lord holds in readiness is no doubt the Assyrian. He is simply the medium of punishment in the hand of the Lord, which is called *yâd* absolutely, because it is absolute in power,—as it were, the hand of all hands. This hand hurls Samaria to the ground (on the expression itself, compare Isa. 25:12; 26:5), so that they tread the proud crown to pieces with their feet (*têrâmasnâh*, the more pathetic plural form, instead of the singular *têrâmês*; Ges. 47, Anm. 3, and Caspari on Obad. 13). The noun *sa’ar*, which is used elsewhere in the sense of shuddering, signifies here, like סַעֲרָה, an awful

tempest; and when connected with קָטַב, a tempest accompanied with a pestilential blast, spreading miasma. Such destructive power is held by the absolute hand. It is soon all over then with the splendid flower that has already begun to fade (צִיצֵת נָבֵל, like כְּלֵי הַקֶּטֶן in Isa. 22:24). It happens to it as to a *bikkūrâh* (according to the Masora, written with *mappik* here, as distinguished from Hos. 9:10, equivalent to *kbhikkūrâthâh*; see Job 11:9, "like an early fig of this valley;" according to others, it is simply euphonic). The gathering of figs takes place about August. Now, if any one sees a fig as early as June, he fixes his eyes upon it, and hardly touches it with his hand before he swallows it, and that without waiting to masticate it long. Like such a dainty bit will the luxuriant Samaria vanish. The fact that Shalmanassar, or his successor Sargon, did not conquer Samaria till after the lapse of three years (2 Kings 18:10), does not detract from the truth of the prophecy; it is enough that both the thirst of the conqueror and the utter destruction of Samaria answered to it.

Isaiah 28:5, 6. The threat is now followed by a promise. This is essentially the same in character as Isa. 4:2-6. The place of the false glory thus overthrown is now filled by a glory that is divine and true. Vv. 5, 6. *"In that day will Jehovah of hosts be the adorning crown and the splendid diadem to the remnant of His people; and the spirit of justice to them that sit on the judgment-seat, and heroic strength to them that drive back war at the gate."* "The remnant of His people" (שְׁאָר with a fixed *kametz*, as in Isa. 21:17) is not Judah, as distinguished from Ephraim that had utterly perished; but Judah and the remaining portion of Ephraim, as distinguished from the portion which had perished. After the perishable thin in which they gloried had been swept away, the eternal person of Jehovah Himself would be the ornament and pride of His people. He, the Lord of the seven spirits (Isa. 11:1), would be to this remnant of His people the spirit of right and heroic strength. There would be an end to unjust judging and powerless submission. The

judges are called "those who sit *'al-hammishpât*" in the sense of "on the seat of judgment" (Ps. 9:5; 122:5); the warriors are called "those who press back *milchâmâh shâ'râh*" (war at the gate), i.e., either war that has reached their own gate (Isa. 22:7), or war which they drive back as far as the gate of the enemy (2 Sam. 11:23; 1 Macc. 5:22). The promise in this last passage corresponds to Mic. 5:4, 5. The *athnach* in v. 6 ought to stand at *hammishpât*; the second clause of the verse may be completed from the first, וְלִגְבוּרָה being equivalent to וְלִירוּחַ גְּבוּרָה, and לְמִשִּׁיבֵי to מְשִׁיבֵי.

We might regard 2 Chron. 30 as a fulfilment of what is predicted in v. 6, if the feast of passover there described really fell in the age succeeding the fall of Samaria; for this feast of passover did furnish a representation and awaken a consciousness of that national unity which had been interrupted from the time of Rehoboam. But if we read the account in the Chronicles with unprejudiced minds, it is impossible to shut our eyes to the fact that this feast of passover took place in the second month of the first year of Hezekiah's reign, and therefore not after the depopulation of the northern kingdom by Shalmanassar, but after the previous and partial depopulation by Tiglath-pileser (see pp. 33f.). In fact, the fulfilment cannot be looked for at all in the space between the sixth and fourteenth years of Hezekiah, since the condition of Judah during that time does not answer at all to the promises given above. The prophet here foretells what might be hoped for, when Asshur had not only humbled Ephraim, but Judah also. The address consists of two connected halves, the promising beginnings of which point to one and the same future, and lay hold of one another.

Isaiah 28:7, 8. With the words, "and they also," the prophet commences the second half of the address, and passes from Ephraim to Judah. Vv. 7, 8. *"And they also reel with wine, and are giddy with meth; priest and prophet reel with meth, are swallowed up by wine: they are giddy with meth, reel when seeing visions, stagger when pronouncing judgment. For all tables are full of*

filthy vomit, without any more place." The Judaeans are not less overcome with wine than the Ephraimites, and especially the rulers of Judah. In wicked violation of the law of God, which prohibited the priests from drinking strong drink when performing priestly service, and that on pain of death (Lev. 10:9, cf., Ezek. 44:21), they were intoxicated even in the midst of their prophetic visions (הִרְאָה, literally "the thing seeing," then the act of seeing; equivalent to רָאָה, like הִרְאָה in v. 15 = הִרְאָה; Olshausen, § 176, c), and when passing judicial sentences. In the same way Micah also charges the prophets and priests with being drunkards (Mic. 3:1ff., cf., 2:11). Isaiah's indignation is manifested in the fact, that in the words which he uses he imitates the staggering and stumbling of the toppers; like the well-known passage, *Sta pes sta mi pes stas pes ne labere mi pes*. Observe, for example, the threefold repetition of *shâgu—tâghu, shâgu—tâghu, shâgu—pâqu*. The hereditary priests and the four prophets represent the whole of the official personages. The preterites imply that drunkenness had become the fixed habit of the holders of these offices. The preposition מִ indicates the cause ("through," as in 2 Sam. 13:28 and Esther 1:10), and *min* the effect proceeding from the cause (in consequence of wine). In v. 8 we can hear them vomit. We have the same combination of the and וּ in the verb *kotzen*, Gothic *kozan*. All the tables of the carousal are full, without there being any further room (cf., Isa. 5:8); everything swims with vomit. The prophet paints from nature, here without idealizing. He receives their conduct as it were in a mirror, and then in the severest tones holds up this mirror before them, adults though they were.

Isaiah 28:9. 10. "Whom then would he teach knowledge? And to whom make preaching intelligible? To those weaned from the milk? To those removed from the breast? For precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, a little here, a little there!" They sneer at the prophet, that intolerable moralist. They are of age, and free; and he does

not need to bring knowledge to them (*da'ath* as in Isa. 11:9), or make them understand the proclamation. They know of old to what he would lead. Are they little children that have just been weaned (on the constructives, see Isa. 9:2; 5:11; 30:18; Ges. § 114, 1), and who must let themselves be tutored? For the things he preaches are nothing but endless petty teazings. The short words (*tsâv*, as in Hos. 5:11), together with the diminutive זָעִיר (equivalent to the Arabic *sugayyir*, mean, from *sagîr*, small), are intended to throw ridicule upon the smallness and vexatious character of the prophet's interminable and uninterrupted chidings, as לֵ (= עַל, אֵל; comp. לֵ יִסְרֵף, Isa. 26:15) implies that they are; just as the philosophers in Acts 17:18 call Paul a *σπερμολόγος*, a collector of seeds, i.e., a dealer in trifles. And in the repetition of the short words we may hear the heavy babbling language of the drunken scoffers.

Isaiah 28:11–13. The prophet takes the *ki* ("for") out of their mouths, and carries it on in his own way. It was quite right that their ungodliness should show itself in such a way as this, for it would meet with an appropriate punishment. Vv. 11–13. "For through men stammering in speech, and through a strange tongue, will He speak to this people. He who said to them, There is rest, give rest to weary ones, and there is refreshing! But they would not hear. Therefore the word of Jehovah becomes to them precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, a little here, a little there, that they may go and stumble backwards, and be wrecked to pieces, and be snared and taken." Jehovah would speak to the scoffing people of stammering tongue a language of the same kind, since He would speak to them by a people that stammered in their estimation, i.e., who talked as barbarians (cf., βαρβαρίζειν and *balbutire*; see Isa. 33:19, compared with Deut. 28:49). The Assyrian Semitic had the same sound in the ear of an Israelite, as Low Saxon (a provincial dialect) in the ear of an educated German; in addition to which, it was plentifully mixed up with Iranian, and possibly also with

ISAIAH	Page 240
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Tatar elements. This people would practically interpret the will of Jehovah in its own *patios* to the despisers of the prophet. Jehovah had directed them, through His prophets, after the judgments which they had experienced with sufficient severity (Isa. 1:5ff.), into the true way to rest and refreshing (Jer. 6:16), and had exhorted them to give rest to the nation, which had suffered so much under Ahaz through the calamities of war (2 Chron. 28), and not to drag it into another way by goading it on to rise against Assyria, or impose a new burden in addition to the tribute to Assyria by purchasing the help of Egypt. But they would not hearken (אָבוֹאָ = אָבוֹאָ, Isa. 30:15, 16; Ges. § 23, 3, Anm. 3). Their policy was a very different one from being still, or believing and waiting. And therefore the word of Jehovah, which they regarded as an endless series of trivial commands, would be turned in their case into an endless series of painful sufferings. To those who thought themselves so free, and lived so free, it would become a stone on which they would go to pieces, a net in which they would be snared, a trap in which they would be caught (compare Isa. 8:14, 15).

Isaiah 28:14–17. The prophet now directly attacks the great men of Jerusalem, and holds up a Messianic prophecy before their eyes, which turns its dark side to them, as Isa. 7 did to Ahaz. Vv. 14–17. *“Therefore hear the word of Jehovah, ye scornful lords, rulers of this people which is in Jerusalem! For ye say, We have made a covenant with death, and with Hades have we come to an agreement. The swelling scourge, when it cometh hither, will do us no harm; for we have made a lie our shelter, and in deceit have we hidden ourselves. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I am He who hath laid in Zion a stone, a stone of trial, a precious cornerstone of well-founded founding; whoever believes will not have to move. And I make justice the line, and righteousness the level; and hail sweeps away the refuge of lies, and the hiding-place is washed away by waters.”* With *lâkhên* (therefore) the announcement of punishment is once more suspended; and in v. 16 it is

resumed again, the exposition of the sin being inserted between, before the punishment is declared. Their sin is *lâtsôn*, and this free-thinking scorn rests upon a proud and insolent self-confidence, which imagines that there is no necessity to fear death and hell; and this self-confidence has for its secret reserve the alliance to be secretly entered into with Egypt against Assyria. What the prophet makes them say here, they do not indeed say exactly in this form; but this is the essential substance of the carnally devised thoughts and words of the rulers of the people of Jerusalem, as manifest to the Searcher of hearts. Jerusalem, the city of Jehovah, and such princes as these, who either proudly ignore Jehovah, or throw Him off as useless, what a contrast! *Chōzeh*, and *châzûth* in v. 18, signify an agreement, either as a decision or completion (from the radical meaning of the verb *châzâh*; see p. 47), or as a choice, *beneplicitum* (like the Arabic *ray*), or as a record, i.e., the means of selecting (like the talmudic *châzîth*, a countersign, a *ra’âyâh*, a proof or argument: Luzzatto). In *shôt shôtêph* (“the swelling scourge,” *chethib* עֵבֶר), the comparison of Asshur to a flood (vv. 2, 8, 7), and the comparison of it to a whip or scourge, are mixed together; and this is all the more allowable, because a whip, when smacked, really does move in waving lines (compare Jer. 8:6, where *shâtaph* is applied to the galloping of a war-horse). The *chethib* עֵבֶר in v. 15 (for which the *keri* reads עֵבֶר, according to v. 19) is to be read עֵבֶר (granting that it shall have passed, or that it passes); and there is no necessity for any emendation. The Egyptian alliance for which they are suing, when designated according to its true ethical nature, is *sheqer* (lie) and *kâzâbh* (falsehood); compare 2 Kings 17:4 (where we ought perhaps to read *sheqer* for *qesher*, according to the LXX), and more especially Ezek. 17:15ff., from which it is obvious that the true prophets regarded self-willed rebellion even against heathen rule as a reprehensible breach of faith.

The *lâkhēn* (therefore), which is resumed in v. 16, is apparently followed as strangely as in Isa. 7:14, by a promise instead of a threat. But this is only apparently the case. It is unquestionably a promise; but as the last clause, "he that believeth will not flee," i.e., will stand firm, clearly indicates, it is a promise for believers alone. For those to whom the prophet is speaking here the promise is a threat, a savour of death unto death. Just as on a former occasion, when Ahaz refused to ask for a sign, the prophet announced to him a sign of Jehovah's own selection; so here Jehovah opposes to the false ground of confidence on which the leaders relied, the foundation stone laid in Zion, which would bear the believing in immovable safety, but on which the unbelieving would be broken to pieces (Matt. 21:44). This stone is called *'ebhen bōchan*, a stone of proving, i.e., a proved and self-proving stone. Then follow other epithets in a series commencing anew with *pinnath* = *'ebhen pinnath* (compare Ps. 118:22): *angulus h. e. lapis angularis pretiositatis foundationis fundatae*. It is a corner-stone, valuable in itself (on *yiqrath*, compare 1 Kings 5:31), and affording the strongest foundation and inviolable security to all that is built upon it (*mūsād* a substantive in form like *mūsār*, and *mūssād* a *hophal* participle in the form of those of the *verba contracta pe yod*). This stone was not the Davidic sovereignty, but the true seed of David which appeared in Jesus (Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6, 7). The figure of a stone is not opposed to the personal reference, since the prophet in Isa. 8:14 speaks even of Jehovah Himself under the figure of a stone. The majestically unique description renders it quite impossible that Hezekiah can be intended. Micah, whose book forms the side piece of this cycle of prophecy, also predicted, under similar historical circumstances, the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem Ephratah (Mic. 5:1). What Micah expresses in the words, "His goings forth are from of old," is indicated here in the preterite *yissad* connected with *hinni* (the construction is similar to that in Obad. 2, Ezek. 25:7; compare v. 2 above, and Jer. 49:15; 23:19). It denotes

that which has been determined by Jehovah, and therefore is as good as accomplished. What is historically realized has had an eternal existence, and indeed an ideal pre-existence even in the heart of history itself (Isa. 22:11; 25:1; 37:26). Ever since there had been a Davidic government at all, this stone had lain in Zion. The Davidic monarchy not only had in this its culminating point, but the ground of its continuance also. It was not only the Omega, but also the Alpha. Whatever escaped from wrath, even under the Old Testament, stood upon this stone. This (as the prophet predicts in *ישׁי יְהוָה לֹא יִהְיֶה הַמְּצָאָה לֹא יִהְיֶה* the *fut. kal*) would be the stronghold of faith in the midst of the approaching Assyrian calamities (cf., Isa. 7:9); and faith would be the condition of life (Hab. 2:4). But against unbelievers Jehovah would proceed according to His punitive justice. He would make this (justice and righteousness, *mishpāt* and *tsdāqâh*) a norm, i.e., a line and level. A different turn, however, is given to *qâv*, with a play upon vv. 10, 11. What Jehovah is about to do is depicted as a building which He is carrying out, and which He will carry out, so far as the despisers are concerned, on no other plan than that of strict retribution. His punitive justice comes like a hailstorm and like a flood (cf., v. 2, Isa. 10:22). The hail smites the refuge of lies of the great men of Jerusalem, and clears it away (*יָעַר*, hence *יָעַר*, a shovel); and the flood buries their hiding-place in the waters, and carries it away (the accentuation should be *סִתְּרָה tifchah*, *מֵיִם mercha*).

Isaiah 28:18, 19. And the whip which Jehovah swings will not be satisfied with one stroke, but will rain strokes. Vv. 18, 19. "And your covenant with death is struck out, and your agreement with Hades will not stand; the swelling scourge, when it comes, ye will become a thing trodden down to it. As often as it passes it takes you: for every morning it passes, by day and by night; and it is nothing but shuddering to hear such preaching. For the bed is too short to stretch in, and the covering too tight when a man wraps himself in it." Although *brīth* is feminine, the

predicate to it is placed before it in the masculine form (Ges. § 144). The covenant is thought of as a document; for *khuppar* (for *obliterari* (just as the *kal* is used in Gen. 6:14 in the sense of *oblinere*; or in Prov. 30:20, the Targum, and the Syriac, in the sense of *abstergere*; and in the Talmud frequently in the sense of wiping off = *qinnēäch*, or wiping out = *mâchaq*,—which meanings all go back, along with the meaning *negare*, to the primary meaning, *tegere, obducere*). The covenant will be “struck out,” as you strike out a wrong word, by crossing it over with ink and rendering it illegible. They fancy that they have fortified themselves against death and Hades; but Jehovah gives to both of these unlimited power over them. When the swelling scourge shall come, they will become to it as *mirmâs*, i.e., they will be overwhelmed by it, and their corpses become like dirt of the streets (Isa. 10:6; 5:5); מְרִמָּסִים has the *mercha* upon the *penult*, according to the older editions and the smaller Masora on Lev. 8:26, the tone being drawn back on account of the following לָ. The strokes of the scourge come incessantly, and every stroke sweeps them, i.e., many of them, away. מִדֵּי (from דֵּי, construct דֵּי, sufficiency, abundance) followed by the infinitive, *quotiescunque irruet; lâqach, auferre*, as in Jer. 15:15, and in the idiom *lâqach nephesh*. These scourgings without end—what a painful lecture Jehovah is reading them! This is the thought expressed in the concluding words: for the meaning cannot be, that “even (*raq* as in Ps. 32:6) the report (of such a fate) is alarming,” as Grotius and others explain it; or the report is nothing but alarming, as Gussetius and others interpret it, since in that case שְׂמוּעָה שְׂמוּעָה (cf., Isa. 23:5) would have been quite sufficient, instead of הִבִּין שְׂמוּעָה. There is no doubt that the expression points back to the scornful question addressed by the debauchees to the prophet in v. 9, “To whom will he make preaching intelligible?” i.e., to whom will he preach the word of God in an intelligible manner? (as if they did not possess *bîndâh* without this; שְׂמוּעָה, ἀκοή, as in Isa. 53:1).

As v. 11 affirmed that Jehovah would take up the word against them, the drunken stammerers, through a stammering people; so here the scourging without end is called the *shmû'âh*, or sermon, which Jehovah preaches to them. At the same time, the word *hâbhîn* is not causative here, as in v. 9, viz., “to give to understand,” but signifies simply “to understand,” or have an inward perception. To receive into one’s comprehension such a sermon as that which was now being delivered to them, was *raq-zvâ'âh*, nothing but shaking or shuddering (*raq* as in Gen. 6:5); רָעַע (from which comes רָעַע, or by transposition רָעַע) is applied to inward shaking as well as to outward tossing to and fro. Jerome renders it “*tantummodo sola vexatio intellectum dabit auditui*,” and Luther follows him thus: “but the vexation teaches to take heed to the word,” as if the reading were רָעַע. The alarming character of the lecture is depicted in v. 20, in a figure which was probably proverbial. The situation into which they are brought is like a bed too short for a man to stretch himself in (*min* as in 2 Kings 6:1), and like a covering which, according to the measure of the man who covers himself up in it (or perhaps still better in a temporal sense, “when a man covers or wraps himself up in it,” cf., Isa. 18:4), is too narrow or too tight. So would it be in their case with the Egyptian treaty, in which they fancied that there were rest and safety for them. They would have to acknowledge its insufficiency. They had made themselves a bed, and procured bed-clothes; but how mistaken they had been in the measure, how miserably and ridiculously they had miscalculated!

Isaiah 28:21. It would be with them as it was with the Philistines when David turned their army into water at Baal-Perazim (2 Sam. 5:20; 1 Chron. 14:11), or when on another occasion he drove them before him from Gibeon to Gezer (1 Chron. 14:13ff.). V. 21. “For Jehovah will rise up as in the mountain of Perazim, and be wroth as in the valley at Gibeon to work His work; astonishing is His work; and to act His act: strange is His act.” The Targum wrongly

supposes the first historical reminiscence to refer to the earthquake in the time of Uzziah, and the second to Joshua's victory over the Amorites. The allusion really is to the two shameful defeats which David inflicted upon the Philistines. There was a very good reason why victories over the Philistines especially should serve as similes. The same fate awaited the Philistines at the hands of the Assyrians, as predicted by the prophet in Isa. 14:28ff. (cf., Isa. 20). And the strangeness and verity of Jehovah's work were just this, that it would fare no better with the magnates of Judah at the hand of Asshur, than it had with the Philistines at the hand of David on both those occasions. The very same thing would now happen to the people of the house of David as formerly to its foes. Jehovah would have to act in opposition to His gracious purpose. He would have to act towards His own people as He once acted towards their foes. This was the most paradoxical thing of all that they would have to experience.

Isaiah 28:22. But the possibility of repentance was still open to them, and at least a modification of what had been threatened was attainable. V. 22. *"And now drive ye not mockeries, lest your fetters be strengthened; for I have heard from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, a judgment of destruction, and an irrevocable one, upon the whole earth."* It is assumed that they are already in fetters, namely, the fetters of Asshur (Nah. 1:13). Out of these fetters they wanted to escape by a breach of faith, and with the help of Egypt without Jehovah, and consequently they mocked at the warnings of the prophet. He therefore appeals to them at any rate to stop their mocking, lest they should fall out of the bondage in which they now are, into one that would bind them still more closely, and lest the judgment should become even more severe than it would otherwise be. For it was coming without fail. It might be modified, and with thorough repentance they might even escape; but that it would come, and that upon the whole earth, had been revealed to the prophet by Jehovah of hosts. This was the *shmū'âh* which the prophet had heard from

Jehovah, and which he gave them to hear and understand, though hitherto he had only been scoffed at by their wine-bibbing tongues.

Isaiah 28:23–26. The address of the prophet is here apparently closed. But an essential ingredient is still wanting to the second half, to make it correspond to the first. There is still wanting the fringe of promise coinciding with vv. 5, 6. The prophet has not only to alarm the scoffers, that if possible he may pluck some of them out of the fire through fear (Judg. 5:23); he has also to comfort believers, who yield themselves as disciples to him and to the word of God (Isa. 8:16). He does this here in a very peculiar manner. He has several times assumed the tone of the *mashal*, more especially in Isa. 26; but here the consolation is dressed up in a longer parabolical address, which sets forth in figures drawn from husbandry the disciplinary and saving wisdom of God. Isaiah here proves himself a master of the *mashal*. In the usual tone of a *mashal* song, he first of all claims the attention of his audience as a teacher of wisdom. V. 23. *"Lend me your ear, and hear my voice; attend, and hear my address!"* Attention is all the more needful, that the prophet leaves his hearers to interpret and apply the parable themselves. The work of a husbandman is very manifold, as he tills, sows, and plants his field. Vv. 24–26. *"Does the ploughman plough continually to sow? to furrow and to harrow his land? Is it not so: when he levels the surface thereof, he scatters black poppy seed, and strews cummin, and puts in wheat in rows, and barley in the appointed piece, and spelt on its border? And He has instructed him how to act rightly: his God teaches it him."* The ploughing (*chârash*) which opens the soil, i.e., turns it up in furrows, and the harrowing (*siddēd*) which breaks the clods, take place to prepare for the sowing, and therefore not interminably, but only so long as it necessary to prepare the soil to receive the seed. When the seed-furrows have been drawn in the levelled surface of the ground (*shivvâh*), then the sowing and planting begin; and this also takes place in various ways, according to the different kinds of fruit. *Qetsach* is the black poppy (*nigella sativa*, Arab. *habbe soda*, so

ISAIAH	Page 244
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

called from its black seeds), belonging to the ranunculaceae. *Kammôn* was the cummin (*cuminum cyminum*) with larger aromatic seeds, Ar. *kammûn*, neither of them our common caraway (*Kümmel, carum*). The wheat he sows carefully in rows (*sôrâh, ordo; ad ordinem*, as it is translated by Jerome), i.e., he does not scatter it about carelessly, like the other two, but lays the grains carefully in the furrows, because otherwise when they sprang up they would get massed together, and choke one another. *Nismân*, like *sôrâh*, is an *acc. loci*: the barley is sown in a piece of the field specially marked off for it, or specially furnished with signs (*sîmânîm*); and *kussemeth*, the spelt (ζειά, also mentioned by Homer, *Od. iv. 604*, between wheat and barley), along the edge of it, so that spelt forms the rim of the barley field. It is by a divine instinct that the husbandman acts in this manner; for God, who established agriculture at the creation (i.e., Jehovah, not Osiris), has also given men understanding. This is the meaning of *v'yissrô lammishpât: and* (as we may see from all this) *He* (his God: the subject is given afterwards in the second clause) *has led him* (Prov. 31:1) *to the right* (this is the rendering adopted by Kimchi, whilst other commentators have been misled by Jer. 30:11, and last of all Malbim Luzzatto, "*Così Dio con giustizia corregge*;" he would have done better, however, to say, *con moderazione*).

Isaiah 28:27-29. Again, the labour of the husbandman is just as manifold after the reaping has been done. Vv. 27-29. "*For the black poppy is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cummin; but black poppy is knocked out with a stick, and cummin with a staff. Is bread corn crushed? No; he does not go on threshing it for ever, and drive the wheel of his cart and his horses over it: he does not crush it. This also, it goeth forth from Jehovah of hosts: He gives wonderful intelligence, high understanding.*" *Ki* (for) introduces another proof that the husbandman is instructed by God, from what he still further does. He does not use the threshing machine (*chârûts*, syn. *mōrag*, Ar. *naureg, nôreg*), or the

threshing cart (*'ăgâlâh*: see Winer's *Real-Wörterbuch*, art. *Dreschen*), which would entirely destroy the more tender kinds of fruit, but knocks them out with a staff (*baculo excutit*: see at Isa. 27:12). The sentence *lechem yūdâq* is to be accentuated as an interrogative: Is bread corn crushed? Oh no, he does not crush it. This would be the case if he were to cause the wheel (i.e., the wheels, *gilgal*, constr. to *galgal*) of the threshing cart with the horses harnessed in front to rattle over it with all their might (*hâmam*, to set in noisy violent motion). *Lechem*, like the Greek *sitos*, is corn from which bread is made (Isa. 30:23; Ps. 104:14). *וְדָוֶשׁ* is metaplastic (as if from *וְדָשׁ*) for *וְדָשׁוּ* (see Ewald, § 312, *b*). Instead of *וְפָרְשָׁיו*, the pointing ought to be *וְפָרְשָׁיו* (from *פָּרַשׁ* with *kametz* before the tone = Arab. *fārās*, as distinguished from *פָּרַשׁ* with a fixed *kametz*, equivalent to *farras*, a rider): "his horses," here the threshing horses, which were preferred to asses and oxen. Even in this treatment of the fruit when reaped, there is an evidence of the *wonderful intelligence* (*הַפְּלֵאָה*, as written *הַפְּלֵאָה*) and *exalted understanding* (on *וְיָשִׁי*, see at Job 26:3) imparted by God. The expression is one of such grandeur, that we perceive at once that the prophet has in his mind the wisdom of God in a higher sphere. The wise, divinely inspired course adopted by the husbandman in the treatment of the field and fruit, is a type of the wise course adopted by the divine Teacher Himself in the treatment of His nation. Israel is Jehovah's field. The punishments and chastisements of Jehovah are the ploughshare and harrow, with which He forcibly breaks up, turns over, and furrows this field. But this does not last for ever. When the field has been thus loosened, smoothed, and rendered fertile once more, the painful process of ploughing is followed by a beneficent sowing and planting in a multiform and wisely ordered fulness of grace. Again, Israel is Jehovah's child of the threshing-floor (see Isa. 21:10). He threshes it; but He does not thresh it only: He also knocks; and when He threshes, He does not continue

threshing for ever, i.e., as Caspari has well explained it, "He does not punish all the members of the nation with the same severity; and those whom He punishes with greater severity than others He does not punish incessantly, but as soon as His end is attained, and the husks of sin are separated from those that have been punished, and the punishment ceases, and only the worst in the nation, who are nothing but husks, and the husks on the nation itself, are swept away by the punishments" (compare Isa. 1:25; 29:20, 21). This is the solemn lesson and affectionate consolation hidden behind the veil of the parable. Jehovah punishes, but it is in order that He may be able to bless. He sifts, but He does not destroy. He does not thresh His own people, but He knocks them; and even when He threshes, they may console themselves in the face of the approaching period of judgment, that they are never crushed or injured.

Isaiah 29

The Second Woe: The Oppression and Deliverance of Ariel

Isaiah 29:1–4. The prophecy here passes from the fall of Samaria, the crown of flowers (Isa. 28:1–4), to its formal parallel. Jerusalem takes its place by the side of Samaria, the crown of flowers, and under the emblem of a hearth of God. *'Ari'el* might, indeed, mean a lion of God. It occurs in this sense as the name of certain Moabitish heroes (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:22), and Isaiah himself used the shorter form אַרְיֵאל for the heroes of Judah (Isa. 33:7). But as אֱרֵיאל (God's heart, interchanged with הֵרֵאֵל, God's height) is the name given in Ezek. 43:15, 16, to the altar of burnt-offering in the new temple, and as Isaiah could not say anything more characteristic of Jerusalem, than that Jehovah had a fire and hearth there (Isa. 31:9); and, moreover, as Jerusalem the city and community within the city would have been compared to a lioness rather than a lion, we take אַרְיֵאל in the sense of *ara Dei* (from אָרָה, to

burn). The prophet commences in his own peculiar way with a grand summary introduction, which passes in a few gigantic strides over the whole course from threatening to promise. V. 1. *"Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the castle where David pitched his tent! Add year to year, let the feasts revolve: then I distress Ariel, and there is groaning and moaning; and so she proves herself to me as Ariel."* By the fact that David fixed his headquarters in Jerusalem, and then brought the sacred ark thither, Jerusalem became a hearth of God. Within a single year, after only one more round of feasts (to be interpreted according to Isa. 32:10, and probably spoken at the passover), Jehovah would make Jerusalem a besieged city, full of sighs (*vahātsiqōthī, perf. cons.*, with the tone upon the ultimate); but "she becomes to me like an *Ariel*," i.e., being qualified through me, she will prove herself a hearth of God, by consuming the foes like a furnace, or by their meeting with their destruction at Jerusalem, like wood piled up on the altar and then consumed in flame. The prophecy has thus passed over the whole ground in a few majestic words. It now starts from the very beginning again, and first of all expands the *hoi*. Vv. 3 and 4. *"And I encamp in a circle round about thee, and surround thee with watch-posts, and erect tortoises against thee. And when brought down thou wilt speak from out of the ground, and thy speaking will sound low out of the dust; and thy voice cometh up like that of a demon from the ground, and thy speaking will whisper out of the dust."* It would have to go so far with Ariel first of all, that it would be besieged by a hostile force, and would lie upon the ground in the greatest extremity, and then would whisper with a ghostlike softness, like a dying man, or like a spirit without flesh and bones. *Kaddūr* signifies *sphaera, orbis*, as in Isa. 22:18 and in the Talmud (from *kâdar = kâthar*; cf., *kudur* in the name *Nabu-kudur-ussur*, Nebo protect the crown, κίδαρν), and is used here poetically for קַבְּרֵיב. Jerome renders it *quasi sphaeram* (from *dūr, orbis*). מְצֵב (from נָצַב, יָצַב) might signify "firmly planted" (Luzzatto, *immobilmente*;

compare *shūth*, Isa. 2:7); but according to the parallel it signifies a military post, like *נָצִיב, מַצֵּב*. *Mtsurōth* (from *mâtsōr*, Deut. 20:20) are instruments of siege, the nature of which can only be determined conjecturally. On *'ōbh*, see Isa. 8:19; there is no necessity to take it as standing for *ba'al 'ōbh*.

Isaiah 29:5–8. Thus far does the unfolding of the *hoi* reach. Now follows an unfolding of the words of promise, which stand at the end of v. 1: “And it proves itself to me as Ariel.” Vv. 5–8. “*And the multitude of thy foes will become like finely powdered dust, and the multitude of the tyrants like chaff flying away; and it will take place suddenly, very suddenly. From Jehovah of hosts there comes a visitation with crash of thunder and earthquake and great noise, whirlwind and tempest, and the blazing up of devouring fire. And the multitude of all the nations that gather together against Ariel, and all those who storm and distress Ariel and her stronghold, will be like a vision of the night in a dream. And it is just as a hungry man dreams, and behold he eats; and when he wakes up his soul is empty: and just as a thirsty man dreams, and behold he drinks; and when he wakes up, behold, he is faint, and his soul is parched with thirst: so will it be to the multitude of the nations which gather together against the mountain of Zion.*” The hostile army, described four times as *hāmōn*, a groaning multitude, is utterly annihilated through the terrible co-operation of the forces of nature which are let loose upon them (Isa. 30:30, cf., Isa. 17:13). “*There comes a visitation:*” *tippâqēd* might refer to Jerusalem in the sense of “it will be visited” in mercy, viz., by Jehovah acting thus upon its enemies. But it is better to take it in a neuter sense: “punishment is inflicted.” The simile of the dream is applied in two different ways: (1.) V. 7. They will dissolve into nothing, as if they had only the same apparent existence as a vision in a dream. (2.) V. 8. Their plan for taking Jerusalem will be put to shame, and as utterly brought to nought as the eating or drinking of a dreamer, which turns out to be a delusion as soon as he awakes. Just as the prophet emphatically combines two

substantives from the same verbal root in v. 1, and two adverbs from the same verb in v. 5; so does he place *צָבָא* and *צָבָה* together in v. 7, the former with *עַל* relating to the crowding of an army for the purpose of a siege, the latter with an objective suffix (compare Ps. 53:6) to the attack made by a crowded army. The *mtsōdâh* of Ariel (i.e., the watch-tower, *specula*, from *tsūd*, to spy) is the mountain of Zion mentioned afterwards in v. 8. *בְּאֵשׁ*, as if; comp. Zech. 10:6, Job 10:19. *וְהָיָה אוֹכֵל* without *הוּא*; the personal pronoun is frequently omitted, not only in the leading participial clause, as in this instance (compare Isa. 26:3; 40:19; Ps. 22:29; Job 25:2; and Köhler on Zech. 9:12), but also with a minor participial clause, as in Ps. 7:10; 55:20, and Hab. 2:10. The hungering and thirsting of the waking man are attributed to his *nepshesh* (soul: cf., Isa. 32:6; 5:14; Prov. 6:30), just because the soul is the cause of the physical life, and without it the action of the senses would be followed by no sensation or experience whatever. The hungry stomach is simply the object of feeling, and everything sensitive in the bodily organism is merely the medium of sensation or feeling; that which really *feels* is the soul. The soul no sooner passes out of the dreaming state into a waking condition, than it feels that its desires are as unsatisfied as ever. Just like such a dream will the army of the enemy, and that victory of which it is so certain before the battle is fought, fade away into nothing.

Isaiah 29:9a. This enigma of the future the prophet holds out before the eyes of his contemporaries. The prophet received it by revelation of Jehovah; and without the illumination of Jehovah it could not possibly be understood. The deep degradation of Ariel, the wonderful deliverance, the sudden elevation from the abyss to this lofty height,—all this was a matter of faith. But this faith was just what the nation wanted, and therefore the understanding depending upon it was wanting also. The *shmu'âh* was there, but the *bînâh* was absent; and all *הַבֵּין שְׁמוּעָה* was wrecked on the

ISAIAH	Page 247
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

obtuseness of the mass. The prophet, therefore, who had received the unhappy calling to harden his people, could not help exclaiming (v. 9a), “*Stop, and stare; blind yourselves, and grow blind!*” הַתְּמַהֲמָה, to show one’s self delaying (from תְּמַהֵה, according to Luzzatto the reflective of תְּמַהֲמָה, an emphatic form which is never met with), is connected with the synonymous verb תְּמַה, to be stiff with astonishment; but to שָׁעַע, to be plastered up, i.e., incapable of seeing (cf., Isa. 6:10), there is attached the *hithpalpel* of the same verb, signifying “to place one’s self in such circumstances,” *se oblinere* (differently, however, in Ps. 119:16, 47, compare Isa. 11:8, *se permulcere*). They could not understand the word of God, but they were confused, and their eyes were, so to speak, festered up: therefore this self-induced condition would become to them a God-appointed punishment. The imperatives are judicial words of command.

Isaiah 29:9–12. This growth of the self-hardening into a judicial sentence of obduracy, is proclaimed still more fully by the prophet. Vv. 9b -12. “*They are drunken, and not with wine; they reel, and not with meth. For Jehovah hath poured upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and bound up your eyes; the prophets and your heads, the seers, He has veiled. And the revelation of all this will be to you like words of a sealed writing, which they give to him who understands writing, saying, Pray, read this; but he says, I cannot, it is sealed. And they give the writing to one who does not understand writing, saying, Pray, read this; but he says, I do not understand writing.*” They were drunken and stupid; not, however, merely because they gave themselves up to sensual intoxication (יָזַן, dependent upon שָׁכַרוּ, *ebrii vino*), but because Jehovah had given them up to spiritual confusion and self-destruction. All the punishments of God are inflicted through the medium of His no less world-destroying than world-sustaining Spirit, which, although not willing what is evil, does make the evil called into existence by the creature the means of punishing evil. *Tardēmâh* is used here to signify the powerless, passive

state of utter spiritual insensibility. This judgment had fallen upon the nation in all its members, even upon the eyes and heads of the nation, i.e., the prophets. Even they whose duty it was to see to the good of the nation, and lead it, were blind leaders of the blind; their eyes were fast shut (עָצַם, the intensive form of the *kal*, Isa. 33:15; *Aram.* עָצַם; *Talmud* also עָמַץ: to shut the eyes, or press them close), and over their heads a cover was drawn, as over sleepers in the night. Since the time of Koppe and Eichhorn it has become a usual thing to regard אֲתֵּי הַנְּבִיאִים and הַחֲזִיזִים as a gloss, and indeed as a false one (compare Isa. 9:13, 14); but the reason assigned—namely, that Isaiah’s polemics are directed not against the prophets, but against the stupid staring people—is utterly groundless (compare Isa. 28:7, and the polemics of his contemporary Micah, e.g., Mic. 3:5–8). Moreover, the author of a gloss would have been more likely to interpret רָאִשֵׁיכֶם by הַשָּׂרִים or הַכֹּהֲנִים (compare Job 9:24). And vv. 11 and 12 are also opposed to this assumption of a gloss. For by those who understood what was written (*sēpher*), it is evident that the prophets and rulers of the nation are intended; and by those who did not understand it, the great mass of the people. To both of them, “the vision of all,” i.e., of all and everything that God had shown to His true prophets, was by the judgment of God completely sealed. Some of them might have an outward knowledge; but the inward understanding of the revelation was sealed to them. Some had not even this, but stared at the word of the prophet, just as a man who cannot read stares at what is written. The *chethib* has הַסֵּפֶר; the *keri* סֵפֶר, though without any ground, since the article is merely generic. Instead of קרא נא־זה, we should write קרא־נא זה in both cases, as certain codices and old editions do.

Isaiah 29:13, 14. This stupefaction was the self-inflicted punishment of the dead works with which the people mocked God and deceived themselves. Vv. 13, 14. “*The Lord hath*

ISAIAH	Page 248
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

spoken: Because this people approaches me with its mouth, and honours me with its lips, and keeps its heart far from me, and its reverence of me has become a commandment learned from men: therefore, behold, I will proceed wondrously with this people, wondrously and marvellously strange; and the wisdom of its wise men is lost, and the understanding of its intelligent men becomes invisible.” Ever since the time of Asaph (Ps. 50, cf., 78:36, 37), the lamentation and condemnation of hypocritical ceremonial worship, without living faith or any striving after holiness, had been a leading theme of prophecy. Even in Isaiah’s introductory address (Isa. 1) this complain was uttered quite in the tone of that of Asaph. In the time of Hezekiah it was peculiarly called for, just as it was afterwards in that of Josiah (as the book of Jeremiah shows). The people had been obliged to consent to the abolition of the public worship of idols, but their worship of Jehovah was hypocrisy. Sometimes it was conscious hypocrisy, arising from the fear of man and favour of man; sometimes unconscious, inasmuch as without any inward conversion, but simply with work-righteousness, the people contented themselves with, and even prided themselves upon, an outward fulfilment of the law (Mic. 6:6–8; 3:11). Instead of נִגַּשׁ (LXX, Vulg., Syr., Matt. 15:8, Mark 7:6), we also meet with the reading שִׁגַּג, “because this people harasses itself as with tributary service;” but the antithesis to *richaq* (LXX πῶρρω ἀπέχει) favours the former reading *niggash*, *accedit*; and *bphiv* (with its moth) must be connected with this, though in opposition to the accents. This self-alienation and self-blinding, Jehovah would punish with a wondrously paradoxical judgment, namely, the judgment of a hardening, which would so completely empty and confuse, that even the appearance of wisdom and unity, which the leaders of Israel still had, would completely disappear. יוֹסִי (as in Isa. 38:5) is not the third person *fut. hiphil* here (so that it could be rendered, according to Isa. 28:16, “Behold, I am he who;” or more strictly still, “Behold me, who;” which, however, would give

a prominence to the subject that would be out of place here), but the *part. kal* for יוֹסִי. That the language really allowed of such a lengthening of the primary form *qatil* into *qatil*, and especially in the case of יוֹסִי, is evident from Eccles. 1:18 (see at Ps. 16:5). In הִפְלֵא וְפִלֵא, פִּלֵּא (cf., Lam. 1:9) alternates with the gerundive (see at Isa. 22:17): the fifth example in this one address of the emphatic juxtaposition of words having a similar sound and the same derivation (vid., vv. 1, 5, 7, 9).

Isaiah 29:15, 16. Their hypocrisy, which was about to be so wonderfully punished according to the universal law (Ps. 18:26, 27), manifested itself in their self-willed and secret behaviour, which would not inquire for Jehovah, nor suffer itself to be chastened by His word. Vv. 15, 16. *“Woe unto them that hide plans deep from Jehovah, and their doing occurs in a dark place, and they say, Who saw us then, and who knew about us? Oh for your perversity! It is to be regarded as potters’ clay; that a work could say to its maker, He has not made me; and an image to its sculptor, He does not understand it!”* Just as Ahaz had carefully kept his appeal to Asshur for help secret from the prophet; so did they try, as far as possible, to hide from the prophet the plan for an alliance with Egypt. לִסְתֵּיר is a syncopated *hiphil* for לְהִסְתִּיר, as in Isa. 1:12; 3:8; 23:11. הֶעֱמִיק adds the adverbial notion, according to our mode of expression (comp. Joel 2:20, and the opposite thought in Joel 2:26; Ges. § 142). To hide from Jehovah is equivalent to hiding from the prophet of Jehovah, that they might not have to listen to reproof from the word of Jehovah. We may see from Isa. 8:12 how suspiciously they watched the prophet in such circumstances as these. But Jehovah saw them in their secrecy, and the prophet saw through the whole in the light of Jehovah. הִפְכָּכָם is an exclamation, like תִּפְלֵצְתֶּךָ in Jer. 49:16. They are perverse, or (*im*) “is it not so?” They think they can dispense with Jehovah, and yet they are His creatures; they attribute cleverness to themselves, and practically

ISAIAH	Page 249
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

disown Jehovah, as if the pot should say to the potter who has turned it, He does not understand it.

Isaiah 29:17–21. But the prophet's God, whose omniscience, creative glory, and perfect wisdom they so basely mistook and ignored, would very shortly turn the present state of the world upside down, and make Himself a congregation out of the poor and wretched, whilst He would entirely destroy this proud ungodly nation. Vv. 17–21. *"Is it not yet a very little, and Lebanon is turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field esteemed as a forest? And in that day the deaf hear scripture words, and the eyes of the blind will see out of obscurity and out of darkness. And the joy of the humble increases in Jehovah, and the poor among men will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For tyrants are gone, and it is over with scoffers; and all who think evil are rooted out, who condemn a man for a word, and lay snares for him that is free-spoken in the gate, and overthrow the righteous through shameful lies."* The circumstances themselves, as well as the sentence passed, will experience a change, in complete contrast with the present state of things. This is what is affirmed in v. 17; probably a proverb transposed into a more literary style. What is now forest becomes ennobled into garden ground; and what is garden ground becomes in general estimation a forest (לְרַמֵּל, לְיַעַר, although we should rather expect לְ, just as in Isa. 32:15). These emblems are explained in vv. 18ff. The people that are now blind and deaf, so far as the word of Jehovah is concerned, are changed into a people with open ears and seeing eyes. Scripture words, like those which the prophet now holds before the people so unsuccessfully, are heard by those who have been deaf. The unfettered sight of those who have been blind pierces through the hitherto surrounding darkness. The heirs of the new future thus transformed are the *'ānāvīm* ("meek") and the *'ebhyōnīm* ("poor"). אָדָם (the antithesis of אֲנִישִׁים, e.g., v. 13) heightens the representation of lowliness; the combination is a superlative one, as in צַעֲרֵי

הַצָּאן, Jer. 49:20, and עֲנֵי הַצָּאן in Zech. 11:7 (cf., פְּרִיץ הַיּוֹת in Isa. 35:9): needy men who present a glaring contrast to, and stand out from, the general body of men. Such men will obtain ever increasing joy in Jehovah (*yāsaph* as in Isa. 37:31). Such a people of God would take the place of the oppressors (cf., Isa. 28:12) and scoffers (cf., Isa. 28:14, 22), and those who thought evil (*shâqad, invigilare, sedulo agere*), i.e., the wretched planners, who made a אַטְוָה of every one who did not enter into their plans (i.e., who called him a *chōtē'*; cf., Deut. 24:4, Eccles. 5:5), and went to law with the man who openly opposed them in the gate (Amos 5:10; *yqōshūn*, possibly the *perf. kal*, cf., Jer. 50:24; according to the syntax, however, it is the *fut. kal* of *qūsh = yâqōsh*: see at Isa. 26:16; Ges. § 44, Anm. 4), and thrust away the righteous, i.e., forced him away from his just rights (Isa. 10:2), by *tōhū*, i.e., accusations and pretences of the utmost worthlessness; for these would all have been swept away. This is the true explanation of the last clause, as given in the Targum, and not "into the desert and desolation," as Knobel and Luzzatto suppose; for with Isaiah *tōhū* is the synonym for all such words as signify nothingness, groundlessness, and fraud. The prophet no doubt had in his mind, at the time that he uttered these words, the conduct of the people towards himself and his fellow-prophets, and such as were like-minded with them. The charge brought against him of being a conspirator, or a traitor to his country, was a *tōhū* of this kind. All these conspirators and persecutors Jehovah would clear entirely away.

Isaiah 29:22–24. Everything that was incorrigible would be given up to destruction; and therefore the people of God, when it came out of the judgment, would have nothing of the same kind to look for again. Vv. 22–24. *"Therefore thus saith Jehovah of the house of Jacob, He who redeemed Abraham: Jacob shall not henceforth be ashamed, nor shall his face turn pale any more. For when he, when his children see the work of my hands in the midst of him, they will sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shudder before the God of*

Israel. And those who were of an erring spirit discern understanding, and murmurers accept instruction.” With לֵאלֹהֵינוּ (for which Luzzatto, following Lowth, reads לֵאלֹהֵינוּ, “the God of the house of Jacob”) the theme is introduced to which the following utterance refers. The end of Israel will correspond to the holy root of its origin. Just as Abraham was separated from the human race that was sunk in heathenism, to become the ancestor of a nation of Jehovah, so would a remnant be separated from the great mass of Israel that was sunk in apostasy from Jehovah; and this remnant would be the foundation of a holy community well pleasing to God. And this would never be confounded or become pale with shame again (on *bōsh*, see at Isa. 1:29; *chāvar* is a poetical Aramaism); for both sins and sinners that called forth the punishments of God, which had put them to shame, would have been swept away (cf., Zeph. 3:11). In the presence of this decisive work of punishment (*ma’āseh* as in Isa. 28:21; 10:12; 5:12, 19), which Jehovah would perform in the heart of Israel, Israel itself would undergo a thorough change. לְדָוִד is in apposition to the subject in בְּרֵאשִׁיתוֹ, “when he, namely his children” (comp. Job 29:3); and the expression “his children” is intentionally chosen instead of “his sons” (*bānīm*), to indicate that there would be a new generation, which would become, in the face of the judicial self-manifestation of Jehovah, a holy church, sanctifying Him, the Holy One of Israel. *Yaqdīshū* is continued in *vhiqdīshū*: the prophet intentionally repeats this most significant word, and *he’ērīts* is the parallel word to it, as in Isa. 8:12, 13. The new church would indeed not be a sinless one, or thoroughly perfect; but, according to v. 24, the previous self-hardening in error would have been exchanged for a willing and living appropriation of right understanding, and the former murmuring resistance to the admonitions of Jehovah would have given place to a joyful and receptive thirst for instruction. There is the same interchange of *Jacob* and *Israel* here which we so frequently met with in Isa. 40ff. And, in fact, throughout this

undisputedly genuine prophecy of Isaiah, we can detect the language of Isa. 40–66. Through the whole of the first part, indeed, we may trace the gradual development of the thoughts and forms which predominate there.

Isaiah 30

The Third Woe: The Momentous Result of the Alliance with Egypt

Isaiah 30:1–5. The plan which, according to Isa. 29:15, was already projected and prepared in the deepest secrecy, is now much further advanced. The negotiations by means of ambassadors have already been commenced; but the prophet condemns what he can no longer prevent. Vv. 1–5. “*Woe to the stubborn children, saith Jehovah, to drive plans, and not by my impulse, and to plait alliance, and not according to my Spirit, to heap sin upon sin: that go away to travel down to Egypt, without having asked my mouth, to fly to Pharaoh’s shelter, and to conceal themselves under the shadow of Egypt. And Pharaoh’s shelter becomes a shame to them, and the concealment under the shadow of Egypt a disgrace. For Judah’s princes have appeared in Zoan, and his ambassadors arrive in Hanes. They will all have to be ashamed of a people useless to them, that brings no help and no use, but shame, and also reproach.*” *Sōrrīm* is followed by infinitives with *Lamed* (cf., Isa. 5:22; 3:8): who are bent upon it in their obstinacy. *Massēkhâh* designates the alliance as a plait (*massēkheth*). According to Cappellus and others, it designates it as formed with a libation (σπονδή, from σπένδεσθαι); but the former is certainly the more correct view, inasmuch as *massēkhâh* (from *nāsakh*, *fundere*) signifies a cast, and hence it is more natural here to take *nāsakh* as equivalent to *sākhakh*, *plectere* (Jerome: *ordiremini telam*). The context leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the adverbial expressions וְלֹא־מִנִּי and וְלֹא־רֹחִי, viz., without its having proceeded from me, and without my Spirit being there. “Sin upon sin:” inasmuch as they carry out further and further to perfect realization the thought which was

already a sinful one in itself. The prophet now follows for himself the ambassadors, who are already on the road to the country of the Nile valley. He sees them arrive in Zoan, and watches them as they proceed thence into Hanes. He foresees and foretells what a disgraceful opening of their eyes will attend the reward of this untheocratical beginning. On *lâ'ôz b'*, see at Isa. 10:31: 'ôz is the infinitive constr. of 'ûz; *mâ'ôz*, on the contrary, is a derivative of 'âzaz, to be strong. The suffixes of שָׂרֵי (his princes) and מְלִאֲכָיו (his ambassadors) are supposed by Hitzig, Ewald, and Knobel, who take a different view of what is said, to refer to the princes and ambassadors of Pharaoh. But this is by no means warranted on the ground that the prophet cannot so immediately transfer to Zoan and Hanes the ambassadors of Judah, who were still on their journey according to v. 2. The prophet's vision overleaps the existing stage of the desire for this alliance; he sees the great men of his nation already suing for the favour of Egypt, first of all in Zoan, and then still further in Hanes, and at once foretells the shameful termination of this self-desecration of the people of Jehovah. The LXX give for יִגְעוּ הַגִּסּוֹת, ἡ γὰρ κοπιᾶσσοσιν, i.e., הַגִּסּוֹת, and Knobel approves this reading; but it is a misunderstanding, which only happens to have fallen out a little better this time than the rendering ὡς Δαυὶδ given for כְּדָוִד in Isa. 29:3. If *chinnâm* had been the original reading, it would hardly have entered any one's mind to change it into *chânēs*. The latter was the name of a city on an island of the Nile in Central Egypt, the later Heracleopolis (Eg. *Hnēs*; *Ehnēs*), the *Anysis* of Herodotus (ii. 137). On *Zoan*, see at Isa. 19:11. At that time the Tanitic dynasty was reigning, the dynasty preceding the Ethiopian. Tanis and Anysis were the two capitals. הַבְּאִישׁ (= הַבֵּישׁ, a metaplastic *hiphil* of יָבַשׁ = בּוֹשׁ, a different word from יָבַשׁ) is incorrectly pointed for הַבְּאִישׁ, like הַבְּאִישׁ (keri) for רְאִישָׁנָה in Josh. 21:10. הַבְּאִישׁ signifies elsewhere, "to make stinking" (to calumniate, Prov. 13:5), or "to come into ill

odour" (1 Sam. 27:12); here, however, it means to be put to shame (בּוֹשׁ = בָּאֵשׁ).

Isaiah 30:6, 7. The prophet's address is hardly commenced, however, when a heading is introduced of the very same kind as we have already met with several times in the cycle of prophecies against the heathen nations. Gesenius, Hitzig, Umbreit, and Knobel, rid themselves of it by pronouncing it a gloss founded upon a misunderstanding. But nothing is more genuine in the whole book of Isaiah than the words *massâ' bahāmōth negebh*. The heading is emblematical, like the four headings in Isa. 21, 22. And the *massâ'* embraces vv. 6, 7. Then follows the command to write it on a table by itself. The heading is an integral part of the smaller whole. Isaiah breaks off his address to communicate an oracle relating to the Egyptian treaty, which Jehovah has specially commanded him to hand down to posterity. The same interruption would take place if we expunged the heading; for in any case it was vv. 6, 7 that he was to write upon a table. This is not an address to the people, but the preliminary text, the application of which is determined afterwards. The prophet communicates in the form of a citation what has been revealed to him by God, and then states what God has commanded him to do with it. We therefore enclose vv. 6, 7 in inverted commas as a quotation, and render the short passage, which is written in the tone of Isa. 21, as follows: Vv. 6, 7. "Oracle concerning the water-oxen of the south: Through a land of distress and confinement, whence the lioness and lion, adders and flying dragons; they carry their possessions on the shoulders of asses' foals, and their treasures on the humps of camels, to a nation that profits nothing. And Egypt, worthlessly and hollowly will they help; therefore I call this Egypt, Great-mouth that sits still." The "water-oxen of the south" is the Nile-horse; and this is the emblem of Egypt, the land of the south (in Daniel and Zechariah Babylonia is "the land of the north"). *Bahāmōth* is the construct of *bhēmōth* (Job 40), which is a Hebraized form of an Egyptian word, *p-ehe-mau* (though the word

itself has not yet been met with), i.e., the ox of the water, or possibly *p-ehe-mau-t* (with the feminine article at the close, though in *hesmut*, another name for a female animal, *mut = t. mau* signifies “the mother:” see at Job 40:15). The animal referred to is the hippopotamus, which is called *bomarino* in Italian, Arab. the Nile-horse or water-pig. The emblem of Egypt in other passages of the Old Testament is *tannin*, the water-snake, or *leviathan*, the crocodile. In Ps. 78:31 this is called *chayyath qâneh*, “the beast of the reed,” though Hengstenberg supposes that the Nile-horse is intended there. This cannot be maintained, however; but in the passage before us this emblem is chosen, just because the fat, swine-like, fleshy colossus, whose belly nearly touches the ground as it walks, is a fitting image of Egypt, a land so boastful and so eager to make itself thick and broad, and yet so slow to exert itself in the interest of others, and so unwilling to move from the spot. This is also implied in the name *rahabh-hêm-shâbheheth*. *Rahab* is a name applied to Egypt in other passages also (Isa. 51:9; Ps. 87:4; 89:11), and that in the senses attested by the LXX at Job 26:12 (cf., 9:13), viz., κῆτος, a sea-monster, *monstrum marinum*. Here the name has the meaning common in other passages, viz., violence, domineering pride, boasting (ἀλαζονεία, as one translator renders it). הַם is a term of comparison, as in Ge. 14:2, 3, etc.; the plural refers to the people called *rahabh*. Hence the meaning is either, “The bragging people, they are sit-still;” or, “Boast-house, they are idlers.” To this deceitful land the ambassadors of Judah were going with rich resources (*châyâlîm, opes*) on the shoulder of asses’ foals, and on the hump (*dabbesheth*, from *dâbhash*, according to Luzzatto related to *gâbhash*, to be hilly) of camels, without shrinking from the difficulties and dangers of the road through the desert, where lions and snakes spring out now here and now there (הַם, neuter, as in Zeph. 2:7, comp. Isa. 38:16; see also Deut. 8:15, Num. 21:6). Through this very desert, through which God had led their fathers when He redeemed them out of the bondage of Egypt, they were

now marching to purchase the friendship of Egypt, though really, whatever might be the pretext which they offered, it was only to deceive themselves; for the vainglorious land would never keep the promises that it made.

Isaiah 30:8. So runs the divine oracle to which the following command refers. V. 8. “Now go, write it on a table with them, and note it in a book, and let it stand there fore future days, for ever, to eternity.” The suffixes of *kothbâh* (write it) and *chuqqâh* (note it) refer in a neuter sense to vv. 6, 7; and the expression “go” is simply a general summons to proceed to the matter (cf., Isa. 22:15). *Sêpher* could be used interchangeably with *lûäch*, because a single leaf, the contents of which were concluded, was called *sêpher* (Ex. 17:14). Isaiah was to write the oracle upon a table, a separate leaf of durable material; and that “with them,” i.e., so that his countrymen might have it before their eyes (compare Isa. 8:1, Hab. 2:2). It was to be a memorial for posterity. The reading לְעַד (Sept., Targ., Syr.) for לְעַד is appropriate, though quite unnecessary. The three indications of time form a climax: for futurity, for the most remote future, for the future without end.

Isaiah 30:9–11. It was necessary that the worthlessness of the help of Egypt should be placed in this way before the eyes of the people. Vv. 9–11. “For it is a refractory people, lying children, children who do not like to hear the instruction of Jehovah, who say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things! Speak flatteries to us! Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, remove from our face the Holy One of Israel.” On the expression ‘am mrî (a people of stubbornness), see at Isa. 3:8. The vowel-pointing of מְרִים follows the same rule as that of מְרִים. The prophet traces back their words to an unvarnished expression of their true meaning, just as he does in Isa. 28:15. They forbid the prophets of Jehovah to prophesy, more especially *nkhôchôth*, straight or true things (things not agreeable to their own wishes), but would rather hear *châlâqôth*, i.e., smooth, insinuating, and flattering things,

ISAIAH	Page 253
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

and even *mahāthallōth* (from *hāthal*, Talm. *tal, ludere*), i.e., illusions or deceits. Their desire was to be entertained and lauded, not repelled and instructed. The prophets are to adopt another course (מַנִּי only occurs here, and that twice, instead of the more usual מָן = מְנִי, after the form אֶלֵי, אֶלֵי), and not trouble them any more with the Holy One of Israel, whom they (at least Isaiah, who is most fond of calling Jehovah by this name) have always in their mouths.

Isaiah 30:12-14. Thus do they fall out with Jehovah and the bearers of His word. Vv. 12-14. *“Therefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye dislike this word, and put your trust in force and shufflings, and rely upon this; therefore will this iniquity be to you like a falling breach, bent forwards in a high-towering wall, which falls to ruin suddenly, very suddenly. And He smites it to pieces, as a potter’s vessel falls to pieces, when they smash it without sparing, and of which, when it lies smashed to pieces there, you cannot find a sherd to fetch fire with from the hearth, or to take water with out of a cistern.”* The “word” towards which they cherished *m’ōs* (read *mo’oskhem*), was the word of Jehovah through His prophet, which was directed against their untheocratic policy of reckoning upon Egypt. *Nālōz*, bent out or twisted, is the term used to denote this very policy, which was ever resorting to bypaths and secret ways; whilst *’ōsheq* denotes the squeezing out of the money required to carry on the war of freedom, and to purchase the help of Egypt (compare 2 Kings 15:20). The guilt of Judah is compared to the broken and overhanging part of a high wall (*nibh’eh*, bent forwards; compare בִּטְעָע, a term applied to a diseased swelling). Just as such a broken piece brings down the whole of the injured wall along with it, so would the sinful conduct of Judah immediately ruin the whole of its existing constitution. Israel, which would not recognise itself as the image of Jehovah, even when there was yet time (Isa. 29:16), would be like a vessel smashed into the smallest fragments. It is the

captivity which is here figuratively threatened by the prophet; for the smashing had regard to Israel as a state. The subject to וְשִׁבְרָה in v. 14 is Jehovah, who would make use of the hostile power of man to destroy the wall, and break up the kingdom of Judah into such a diaspora of broken *sherd*s. The reading is not וְשִׁבְרָה (LXX, Targum), but וְשִׁבְרָה, *et franget eam*. *Kāthōth* is an infinitive statement of the mode; the participle *kāthūth*, which is adopted by the Targum, Kimchi, Norzi, and others, is less suitable. It was necessary to proceed with לֹא יְהַמֵּל (without his sparing), simply because the infinitive absolute cannot be connected with לֹא (Ewald, § 350, a). לְהַשׁוּף (to be written thus with *dagesh* both here and Hag. 2:16) passes from the primary meaning *nudare* to that of scooping up, as עָרָה does to that of pouring out.

Isaiah 30:15-17. Into such small sherd, a heap thus scattered hither and thither, would the kingdom of Judah be broken up, in consequence of its ungodly thirst for self-liberation. Vv. 15-17. *“For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, Through turning and rest ye would be helped; your strength would show itself in quietness and confidence; but ye would not. And ye said, No, but we will fly upon horses; therefore ye shall flee: and, We will ride upon racehorses; therefore your pursuers will race. A thousand, ye will flee from the threatening of one, from the threatening of five, until ye are reduced to a remnant, like a pine upon the top of the mountain, and like a banner upon the hill.”* The conditions upon which their salvation depended, and by complying with which they would attain to it, were *shūbhâh*, turning from their self-chosen way, and *nachath*, rest from self-confident work of their own (from *nūäch*, like *rachath, ventilabrum*, from *rūäch*, and *shachath, fovea*, from *shūäch*). Their strength (i.e., what they would be able to do in opposition to the imperial power) would show itself (*hâyâh*, arise, come to the light, as in Isa. 29:2), in *hashqêt*, laying aside their busy care and stormy eagerness, and *bitchâh*, trust,

which cleaves to Jehovah and, renouncing all self-help, leaves Him to act alone. This was the leading and fundamental principle of the prophet's politics even in the time of Ahaz (Isa. 7:4). But from the very first they would not act upon it; nor would they now that the alliance with Egypt had become an irreversible fact. To fly upon horses, and ride away upon racehorses (*kal*, like κέλης, *celer*) had been and still was their proud and carnal ambition, which Jehovah would answer by fulfilling upon them the curses of the *thorah* (Lev. 26:8, 36; Deut. 28:25; 32:30). One, or at the most five, of the enemy would be able with their snorting to put to flight a whole thousand of the men of Judah. The verb *nūs* (v. 16), which rhymes with *sūs*, is used first of all in its primary sense of "flying" (related to *nūts*, cf., Ex. 14:27), and then in its more usual sense of "fleeing." (Luzzatto, after *Abulwalīd*: *vogliamo far sui cavalli gloriosa comparsa*, from *nūs*, or rather *nāsas*, hence *nânōs*, from which comes *nēs*, *excellere*.) יָקַלְ, the fut. *niphāl*, signifies to be light, i.e., swift; whereas לָקַלְ, the fut. *kal*, had become a common expression for light in the sense of despised or lightly esteemed. The horses and chariots are Judah's own (Isa. 2:7; Mic. 5:9), though possibly with the additional allusion to the Egyptian cavalry, of world-wide renown, which they had called to their help. In v. 17a the subject of the first clause is also that of the second, and consequently we have not יִפְּגְוּ (compare the asyndeta in Isa. 17:6). The insertion of *rbhābhāh* (ten thousand) after *chāmisshāh* (five), which Lowth, Gesenius, and others propose, is quite unnecessary. The play upon the words symbolizes the divine law of retribution (*talio*), which would be carried out with regard to them. The nation, which had hitherto resembled a thick forest, would become like a lofty pine (*törne*, according to the talmudic *türnithā'*, *Pinus pinea*), standing solitary upon the top of a mountain, and like a flagstaff planted upon a hill—a miserable remnant in the broad land so fearfully devastated by war. For דָּבַר followed by a

preterite (equivalent to the *fut. exactum*), compare Isa. 6:11 and Gen. 24:19.

Isaiah 30:18. The prophet now proceeds with יָקַלְ, to which we cannot give any other meaning than *et propterea*, which it has everywhere else. The thought of the prophet is the perpetually recurring one, that Israel would have to be reduced to a small remnant before Jehovah would cease from His wrath. V. 18. "And therefore will Jehovah wait till He inclines towards you, and therefore will He withdraw Himself on high till He has mercy upon you; for Jehovah is a God of right, salvation to those who wait for Him." In other places *lākhēn* (therefore) deduces the punishment from the sin; here it infers, from the nature of the punishment, the long continuance of the divine wrath. *Chikkâh*, to wait, connected as it is here with *Lamed*, has at least the idea, if not the actual signification, of *delay* (as in 2 Kings 9:3; compare Job 32:4). This helps to determine the sense of *yârûm*, which does not mean, He will show Himself exalted as a judge, that through judgment He may render it possible to have mercy upon you (which is too far-fetched a meaning); but, He will raise Himself up, so as to be far away (cf., Num. 16:45, "Get you up from among this congregation;" and Ps. 10:5, *mârôm* = "far above," as far as heaven, out of his sight), that thus (after having for a long time withdrawn His gracious presence; cf., Hos. 5:6) He may bestow His mercy upon you. A dark prospect, but only alarming to unbelievers. The salvation at the remotest end of the future belongs to believers even now. This is affirmed in the word *'ashrē* (blessed), which recalls Ps. 2:12. The prophet uses *châkhâh* in a very significant double sense here, just as he did *nūs* a short time before. Jehovah is waiting for the time when He can show His favour once more, and blessed are they who meet His waiting with their own waiting.

Isaiah 30:19–22. None but such are heirs of the grace that follows the judgment—a people, newly pardoned in response to its cry for help, conducted by faithful teachers in the right way, and renouncing idolatry with disgust. Vv. 19–

22. "For a people continues dwelling in Zion, in Jerusalem; thou shalt not weep for ever: He will prove Himself gracious to thee at the sound of thy cry for help; as soon as He hears, He answers thee. And the Lord giveth you bread in penury, and water for your need; and thy teachers will not hide themselves any more, and thine eyes come to see thy teachers. And thine ears will hear words behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it!' whether ye turn to the right hand or to the left. And ye defile the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the clothing of thy molten images of gold; thou wilt scatter them like filthy thing: 'Get out!' thou sayest to it." We do not render v. 19a, "For O people that dwelleth in Zion, in Jerusalem!" For although the personal pronoun may be omitted after *Vav* in an apostrophizing connection (Prov. 8:5; Joel 2:23), we should certainly expect to find אֲתָהּ here. The accent very properly marks these words as forming an independent clause. The apparent tautology in the expression, "in Zion, in Jerusalem," is emphatic and explanatory. The fate of Zion-Jerusalem will not be the same as that of the imperial city (Isa. 13:20; 25:2); for it is the city of Jehovah, which, according to His promise, cannot become an eternally deserted ruin. After this promising declaration, the prophet turns and addresses the people of the future in the people of his own time; *bâkhô* strengthens the verbal notion with the mark of duration; *chânôn* with the mark of certainty and fulness. אֲנִי־אֲנִי, with an advanced *ô*, as in Gen. 43:29, for אֲנִי־אֲנִי. אֲנִי is the shortest expression used to denote simultaneous occurrence; answering and hearing would coincide (*shom'âh, nomen actionis*, as in Isa. 47:9; 55:2; Ges. § 45, 1b; *'ânâkh*, the pausal form here, as in Jer. 23:37). From this lowest stage of response to the penitential cry for help, the promise rises higher and higher. The next stage is that in which Jerusalem is brought into all the distress consequent upon a siege, as threatened by the prophet in Isa. 29:3, 4; the besieged would not be allowed by God to die of starvation, but He would send them the necessary support. The same expression, but very little altered, viz., "to

give to eat *lechem lachatz ūmayim lachatz*," signifies to put any one upon the low rations of a siege or of imprisonment, in 1 Kings 22:27 and 2 Chron. 18:26; but here it is a promise, with the threat kept in the background. צַר and לֶחֶם are connected with the absolute nouns לָחֶם and מַיִם, not as adverbial, but as appositional definitions (like תִּירָעָלָה גִין, "wine which is giddiness," in Ps. 60:5; and מַיִם בְּרִכָּיִם, "water which is knees," i.e., which has the measure of the knees, where *birkayim* is also in apposition, and not the accusative of measurement): literally, bread which is necessity, and water which is affliction; that is to say, nourishment of which there is extreme need, the very opposite of bread and water in abundance. Umbreit and Drechsler understand this spiritually. But the promise rises as it goes on. There is already an advance, in the fact that the faithful and well-meaning teachers (*mōrîm*) no longer keep themselves hidden because of the hard-heartedness and hatred of the people, as they have done ever since the time of Ahaz (גִּבְיָהּ, a denom.: to withdraw into גִּבְיָהּ, πτερύξ, the utmost end, the most secret corner; though *kânaph* in itself signifies to cover or conceal). Israel, when penitent, would once more be able to rejoice in the sight of those whom it longed to have back again. מוֹרִיךְ is a plural, according to the context (on the singular of the previous predicate, see Ges. § 147). As the shepherds of the flock, they would follow the people with friendly words of admonition, whilst the people would have their ears open to receive their instruction. תִּצְמִינֵנוּ is here equivalent to תִּצְמִינֵנוּ, תִּצְמִינֵנוּ. The abominations of idolatry (which continued even in the first years of Hezekiah's reign: Isa. 31:7; Mic. 1:5; 5:11-13; 6:16) would now be regarded as abominations, and put away. Even gold and silver, with which the images that were either carved or cast in inferior metal were overlaid, would be made unclean (see 2 Kings 28:8ff.); that is to say, no use would be made of them. *Dâvâh* is a shorter expression for *klî dâvâh*, the cloth worn by a

ISAIAH	Page 256
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

woman at the monthly period. On *zârâh*, to dispense—to which *dâvâh* would be inappropriate if understood of the woman herself, as it is by Luzzatto—compare 2 Kings 23:6. With זָרָה, the plural used in the general address passes over into the individualizing singular; לוֹ is to be taken as a neuter pointing back to the plunder of idols.

Isaiah 30:23–25. The promise, after setting forth this act of penitence, rises higher and higher; it would not stop at bread in time of need. Vv. 23–25. “*And He gives rain to thy seed, with which thou sowest the land; and bread of the produce of the land, and it is full of sap and fat: in that day your flocks will feed in roomy pastures. And the oxen and the young asses, which work the land, salted mash will they eat, which is winnowed with the winnowing shovel and winnowing fork! And upon every high mountain, and every hill that rises high, there are springs, brooks in the day of the great massacre, when the towers fall.*” The blessing which the prophet depicts is the reverse of the day of judgment, and stands in the foreground when the judgment is past. The expression “in that day” fixes, as it were, the evening of the day of judgment, which is followed by the depicted morning of blessing. But the great mass of the Jewish nation would be first of all murdered in war; the towers must fall, i.e., (though without any figure, and merely as an exemplifying expression) all the bulwarks of self-confidence, self-help, and pride (Isa. 2:15; Mic. 5:9, 10). In the place of the self-induced calamities of war, there would now come the God-given rich blessings of peace; and in the place of the proud towers, there would come fruitful heights abounding with water. The field would be cultivated again, and produce luxuriant crops of nutritious corn; so that not only the labour of man, but that of the animals also, would receive a rich reward. “Rain to thy seed:” this is the early rain commencing about the middle of October. אֶשֶׁר as an accusative, זָרָה being construed with a double accusative, as in Deut. 22:9. מִקְנֵי might be the singular, so far as the

form is concerned (see 1:30; 5:12; 22:11); but, according to Ex. 17:3, it must be taken as a plural, like מִקְנֵי. The *’âlâphîm* are the oxen used in ploughing and threshing; the *’âyârîm*, the asses used for carrying manure, soil, the sheaves, or the grain. *Blîl châmîts* is a mash (composed of oats, barley, and vetches, or things of that kind) made more savoury with salt and sour vegetables; that is to say, a *farrago* (from *bâlal*, to mix; *Comm. on Job*, at 40:19–24). According to Wetzstein, it is ripe barley (unthreshed during the harvest and threshing time, and the grain itself for the rest of the year) mixed with salt or salt vegetables. In any case, *blîl* is to be understood as referring to the grain; this is evident from the relative clause, “which has been winnowed” (= *mzōreh*, Ewald, § 169, *d*), or perhaps more correctly, “which he (one) winnows” (*part. kal*), the participle standing for the third person, with the subject contained within itself (Ewald, § 200), i.e., not what was generally given from economy, viz., barley, etc., mixed with chopped straw (*tibn*), but pure grain (*habb mahd*, as they say at the present day). *Rachath* is a winnowing shovel, which is still used, according to Wetzstein, in *Merj. Gedur*, and *Hauran*; *mizreh*, on the other hand, is the winnowing fork with six prongs. Dainty food, such as was only given occasionally to the cattle, as something especially strengthening, would then be their regular food, and would be prepared in the most careful manner. “Who cannot see,” exclaims Vitringa, “that this is to be taken spiritually?” He appeals to what Paul says in 1 Cor. 9:9, viz., that God does not trouble Himself about oxen. But Paul did not mean this in the same sense as Aristotle, who maintained that the *minima* were entirely excluded from the providence of God. What the Scriptures say concerning cattle, they do not say for the sake of the cattle, but for the sake of men; though it does not follow that the cattle are to be understood figuratively, as representing men. And this is the case here. What the prophet paints in this idyllic style, in colours furnished by the existing customs, is not indeed intended to be understood in the letter; and yet it is to be taken literally. In the age of glory, even on this

ISAIAH	Page 257
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

side of eternity, a gigantic stride will be taken forward towards the glorification of universal nature, and towards the end of all those sighs which are so discernible now, more especially among domestic animals. The prophecy is therefore to be interpreted according to Rom. 8:19ff.; from which we may clearly see that God does trouble Himself about the sighing of an ox or ass that is overburdened with severe toil, and sometimes left to starve.

Isaiah 30:26. The promise now rises higher and higher, and passes from earth to heaven. V. 26. *“And the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be multiplied sevenfold, like the light of seven days, in the day that Jehovah bindeth the hurt of His people, and healeth the crushing of His stroke.”* Modern commentators from Lowth downwards for the most part pronounce כָּאוֹר שִׁבְעַת הַיָּמִים a gloss; and there is one external evidence in favour of this, which is wanting in the case of the other supposed glosses in Isaiah, namely, that the words are omitted by the LXX (though not by the Targum, the Syriac, or Jerome). Even Luther (although he notices these words in his exposition and sermons) merely renders them, *der Sonnen schein wird siebenmal heller sein denn jtzzt* (the sunlight will be seven times as bright as it is now). But the internal evidence does not favour their spuriousness even in the case before us; for the fact that the regularity of the verse, as consisting of four members, is thereby disturbed, is no evidence at all, since the verse could be warranted in a pentastic quite as well as in a tetrastic form. We therefore decide in this instance also in favour of the conclusion that the prophet composed the gloss himself. But we cannot maintain, with Umbreit, that the addition was necessary, in order to guard against the idea that there would be seven suns shining in the sky; for the prophet does not predict a multiplication of the sun by seven, but simply the multiplication of its light. The seven days are the length of an ordinary week. Drechsler gives it correctly: “The radiated light, which is sufficient to produce the daylight for a whole week according to the

existing order of things, will then be concentrated into a single day.” Luther renders it in this way, *als wenn sieben tag ynn eyinander geschlossen weren* (as if seven days were enclosed in one another). This also is not meant figuratively, any more than Paul means is figuratively, when he says, that with the manifestation of the “glory” of the children of God, the “corruption” of universal nature will come to an end. Nevertheless, it is not of the new heaven that the prophet is speaking, but of the glorification of nature, which is promised by both the Old Testament prophecy and by that of the New at the closing period of the world’s history, and which will be the closing typical self-annunciation of that eternal glory in which everything will be swallowed up. The brightest, sunniest days then alternate, as the prophet foretells, with the most brilliant moonlight nights. No other miracles will be needed for this than that wonder-working power of God, which even now produces those changes of weather, the laws of which no researches of natural science have enabled us to calculate, and which will then give the greatest brilliancy and most unchangeable duration to what is now comparatively rare,—namely, a perfectly unclouded sky, with sun or moon shining in all its brilliancy, yet without any scorching from the one, or injurious effects from the other. Heaven and earth will then put on their sabbath dress; for it will be the Sabbath of the world’s history, the seventh day in the world’s week. The light of the seven days of the world’s week will be all concentrated in the seventh. For the beginning of creation was light, and its close will be light as well. The darkness all comes between, simply that it may be overcome. At last will come a *bōqer* (morning), after which it will no more be said, “And evening was, and morning was.” The prophet is speaking of the last type of this morning. What he predicts here precedes what he predicted in Isa. 24:23, just as the date of its composition precedes that of Isa. 24–27; for there the imperial city was Babylon, whereas here the glory of the latter day is still placed immediately after the fall of Assyria.

Isaiah 30:27, 28. *“Behold, the name of Jehovah cometh from far, burning His wrath, and quantity of smoke: His lips are full of wrathful foam, and His tongue like devouring fire. And His breath is like an overflowing brook, which reaches half-way to the neck, to sift nations in the sieve of nothingness; and a misleading bridle comes to the cheeks of the nations.”* Two figures are here melted together,—namely, that of a storm coming up from the farthest horizon, which turns the sky into a sea of fire, and kindles whatever it strikes, so that there rises up a heavy burden, or thick mass of smoke (*kōbhed massâ’âh*, like *mas’êth* in Judg. 20:40, cf., 38; on this attributive combination, burning His wrath (Ewald, § 288, c) and a quantity, etc., see Isa. 13:9); and that of a man burning with wrath, whose lips foam, whose tongue moves to and fro like a flame, and whose breath is a snorting that threatens destruction, which when it issues from Jehovah swells into a stream, which so far covers a man that only his neck appears as the visible half. We had the same figure in Isa. 8:8, where Asshur, as it came upon Judah, was compared to such an almost overwhelming and drowning flood. Here, again, it refers to Judah, which the wrath of Jehovah had almost though not entirely destroyed. For the ultimate object of the advancing name of Jehovah (*shēm*, name, relating to His judicial coming) is to sift nations, etc.: *lahănâphâh* for *lhânîph* (like *lahăzâdâh* in Dan. 5:20), to make it more like *nâphâh* in sound. The *sieve of nothingness* is a sieve in which everything, that does not remain in it as good corn, is given up to annihilation; אִשׁוּפ is want of being, i.e., of life from God, and denotes the fate that properly belongs to such worthlessness. In the case of *v’resen* (and a bridle, etc.) we must either supply in thought לְשׁוּפ (שֵׁפ), or, what is better, take it as a substantive clause: “a misleading bridle” (or a bridle of misleading, as Böttcher renders it, *math’eh* being the form *mashqeh*) holds the cheeks of the nations. The nations are regarded as wild horses, which could not be tamed, but which were now so firmly bound

and controlled by the wrath of God, that they were driven down into the abyss.

Isaiah 30:29. This is the issue of the judgment which begins at the house of God, then turns against the instrument employed, namely the heathen, and becomes to the Israel that survives a counterpart of the deliverance from Egypt. V. 29. *“Your song will then sound as in the night, when the feast is celebrated; and ye will have joy of heart like those who march with the playing of flutes, to go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the Rock of Israel.”* In the word *châg* (feast), which is generally used with special reference to the feast of tabernacles, there is here an unmistakeable allusion to the passover, as we may see from the introduction of “the night,” which evidently means the night before the passover (*lêl shimmurîm*, Ex. 12:42), which was so far a festal night, that it preceded and introduced the feast of unleavened bread. The prophet has taken his figure from the first passover-night in Egypt, when Israel was rejoicing in the deliverance which it was just about to receive, whilst the destroying angel was passing through the land. Such would be the song which they would be able to sing, when Jehovah poured out His judgment upon His people’s enemies outside. The church is shut up in its chamber (Isa. 26:20), and its joy resembles the heartfelt joy of those who go on pilgrimage on one of the three great feasts, or in the procession that carries up the first-fruits to Jerusalem (*Biccurim*, iii. 3), going up with the sound of flutes to the mountain of Jehovah, to appear before Him, the Rock of Israel.

Isaiah 30:30–33. Israel is marching in such a joyful way to a sacred and glorious height, whilst outside Jehovah is sweeping the world-power entirely away, and that without any help from Israel. Vv. 30–33. *“And Jehovah causes His majestic voice to be heard, and causes the lowering of His arm to be seen, with the snorting of wrath and the blazing of devouring fire, the bursting of a cloud, and pouring of rain and hailstones. For Asshur will be terrified at the voice of Jehovah, when He smites with the staff. And it will come to pass, every stroke of the rod of destiny, which Jehovah causes to fall upon*

Asshur, is dealt amidst the noise of drums and the playing of guitars; and in battles of swinging arm He fights it. For a place for the sacrifice of abominations has long been made ready, even for the king is it prepared; deep, broad has He made it: its funeral-pile has fire and wood in abundance; the breath of Jehovah like a stream of brimstone sets it on fire." The imposing crash (on *hōd*, see Job 39:20) of the cry which Jehovah causes to be heard is thunder (see Ps. 29); for the catastrophe occurs with a discharge of all the destructive forces of a storm (see Isa. 29:6). *Nephets* is the "breaking up" or "bursting," viz., of a cloud. It is through such wrath-announcing phenomena of nature that Jehovah manifests the otherwise invisible letting down of His arm to smite (*nachath* may possibly not be the derivative of *nūāch*, "settling down," but of *nāchath*, "the coming down," as in Ps. 38:3; just as *shebheheth* in 2 Sam. 23:7 is not derived from *shūbh*, but from *shābhath*, to go to ruin). V. 31, commencing with *ki* (for), explains the terrible nature of what occurs, from the object at which it is directed: Asshur is alarmed at the voice of Jehovah, and thoroughly goes to pieces. We must not render this, as the Targum does, "which smites with the rod," i.e., which bears itself so haughtily, so tyrannically (after Isa. 10:24). The smiter here is Jehovah (LXX, Vulg., Luther); and *basshēbhet yakkeh* is either an attributive clause, or, better still, a circumstantial determining clause, *eo virga percutiente*. According to the accents, *vhâyâh* in v. 32 is introductory: "And it will come to pass, every stroke of the punishing rod falls (supply יִהְיֶה) with an accompaniment of drums and guitars" (the *Beth* is used to denote instrumental accompaniment, as in v. 29, Isa. 24:9, Ps. 49:5, etc.),—namely, on the part of the people of Jerusalem, who have only to look on and rejoice in the approaching deliverance. *Mūsâdâh* with *matteh* is a verbal substantive used as a genitive, "an appointment according to decree" (comp. *yâsad* in Hab. 1:12, and *yâ'ad* in Mic. 6:9). The fact that drums and guitars are heard along with every stroke, is explained in v. 32b: "Jehovah fights against Asshur with battles of swinging," i.e., not with darts or any other

kind of weapon, but by swinging His arm incessantly, to smite Asshur without its being able to defend itself (cf., Isa. 19:16). Instead of הָבַ, which points back to *Asshur*, not to *matteh*, the *keri* has מָבַ, which is not so harsh, since it is immediately preceded by עָלָי. This cutting down of the Assyrians is accounted for in v. 33, (*ki*, for), from the fact that it had long ago been decreed that they should be burned as dead bodies. *Ethmûl* in contrast with *mâchâr* is the past: it has not happened to-day, but yesterday, i.e., as the predestination of God is referred to, "long ago."

Tophthet is the primary form of *tôpheth* (from *tûph*, not in the sense of the Neo-Persian *tâften*, Zend. *tap*, to kindle or burn, from which comes *tafedra*, melting; but in the Semitic sense of vomiting or abhorring: see at Job 17:6), the name of the abominable place where the sacrifices were offered to Moloch in the valley of Hinnom: a Tophet-like place. The word is variously treated as both a masculine and feminine, possibly because the place of abominable sacrifices is described first as *bâmâh* in Jer. 7:31. In the clause גַּם-הָיוּא לְמַלְאָךְ הַגִּבּוֹר, the *gam*, which stands at the head, may be connected with *lammelekh*, "also for the king is it prepared" (see at Job 2:10); but in all probability *lammelekh* is a play upon *lammolekh* (e.g., Lev. 18:2), "even this has been prepared for the Melekh," viz., the king of Asshur. Because he was to be burned there, together with his army, Jehovah had made this Tophet-like place very deep, so that it might have a far-reaching background, and very broad, so that in this respect also there might be room for many sacrifices. And their *mdûrâh*, i.e., their pile of wood (as in Ezek. 24:9, cf., 5, from *dûr*, Talm. *dayyēr*, to lay round, to arrange, pile), has abundance of fire and wood (a *hendiadys*, like "cloud and smoke" in Isa. 4:5). Abundance of fire: for the breath of Jehovah, pouring upon the funeral pile like a stream of brimstone, sets it on fire. בָּעֵרָ, not to burn up,

but to set on fire. **בָּהּ** points back to *tophthēh*, like the suffix of *mdurâthâh*.

Isaiah 31

The Fourth Woe—The False Help; The Despised One Pitied; And the New Era—Ch. 31-32:1-8

Isaiah 31:1-3. There is nothing to surprise us in the fact, that the prophet returns again and again to the alliance with Egypt. After his warning had failed to prevent it, he wrestled with it in spirit, set before himself afresh the curse which would be its certain fruit, brought out and unfolded the consolation of believers that lay hidden in the curse, and did not rest till the cursed fruit, that had become a real thing, had been swallowed up by the promise, which was equally real. The situation of this fourth woe is just the same as that of the previous one. The alliance with Egypt is still in progress. Vv. 1-3. *“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and rely upon horses, and put their trust in chariots, that there are many of them; and in horsemen, that there is a powerful multitude of them; and do not look up to the Holy One of Israel, and do not inquire for Jehovah! And yet He also is wise; thus then He brings evil, and sets not His words aside; and rises up against the house of miscreants, and against the help of evil-doers. And Egypt is man, and not God; and its horses flesh, and not spirit. And when Jehovah stretches out His hand, the helper stumbles, and he that is helped falls, and they all perish together.”* The expression “them that go down” (*hayyōrdīm*) does not imply that the going down was taking place just then for the first time. It is the participle of qualification, just as God is called **הַבְּרָא לְעֹזְרָה** with *Lamed* of the object, as in Isa. 20:6. The horses, chariots, and horsemen here, as those of Egypt, which Diodorus calls *ἰππασμοί*, on account of its soil being so suitable for cavalry (see Lepsius in Herzog’s *Cyclopaedia*). The participle is combined in the finite verb. Instead of **וְעַל-סוּסִים**, we also find the reading preferred by Norzi, of **עַל** without *Vav*, as in Isa. 5:11 (cf., 23). The perfects, **שָׁעוּ** and **לֹא** and

לֹא דָרְשׁוּ, are used without any definite time, to denote that which was always wanting in them. The circumstantial clause, “whilst He is assuredly also wise,” i.e., will bear comparison with their wisdom and that of Egypt, is a touching *μείωσις*. It was not necessary to think very highly of Jehovah, in order to perceive the reprehensible and destructive character of their apostasy from Him. The fut. consec. **וַיִּבֶא** is used to indicate the inevitable consequence of their despising Him who is also wise. He will not set aside His threatening words, but carry them out. The house of miscreants is Judah (Isa. 1:4); and the help (*abstr. pro concr.*, just as Jehovah is frequently called “my help,” *‘ezrâthī*, by the Psalmist) of evil-doers is Egypt, whose help has been sought by Judah. The latter is “man” (*‘âdâm*), and its horses “flesh” (*bâsâr*); whereas Jehovah is God (*El*) and spirit (*rûäch*; see *Psychol.* p. 85). Hofmann expounds it correctly: “As *rûäch* has life in itself, it is opposed to the *bâsâr*, which is only rendered living through the *rûäch*; and so *El* is opposed to the corporeal *‘âdâm*, who needs the spirit in order to live at all.” Thus have they preferred the help of the impotent and conditioned, to the help of the almighty and all-conditioning One. Jehovah, who is God and spirit, only requires to stretch out His hand (an anthropomorphism, by the side of which we find the rule for interpreting it); and the helpers, and those who are helped (i.e., according to the terms of the treaty, though not in reality), that is to say, both the source of the help and the object of help, are all cast into one heap together.

Isaiah 31:4. And things of this kind would occur. V. 4. *“For thus hath Jehovah spoken to me, As the lion growls, and the young lion over its prey, against which a whole crowd of shepherds is called together; he is not alarmed at their cry, and does not surrender at their noise; so will Jehovah of hosts descend to the campaign against the mountain of Zion, and against their hill.”* There is no other passage in the book of Isaiah which sounds so Homeric as this (vid., II. xviii. 161, 162, xii. 299ff.). It has been misunderstood by Knobel, Umbreit, Drechsler,

and others, who suppose לְצַבֵּא עַל to refer to Jehovah's purpose to fight for Jerusalem: Jehovah, who would no more allow His city to be taken from Him, than a lion would give up a lamb that it had taken as its prey. But how could Jerusalem be compared to a lamb which a lion holds in its claws as *tereph*? (Isa. 5:29). We may see, even from Isa. 29:7, what construction is meant to be put upon עַל צִבְאָה. Those sinners and their protectors would first of all perish; for like a fierce indomitable lion would Jehovah advance against Jerusalem, and take it as His prey, without suffering Himself to be thwarted by the Judaeans and Egyptians, who set themselves in opposition to His army (The Assyrians). The mountain of Zion was the citadel and temple; the hill of Zion the city of Jerusalem (Isa. 10:32). They would both be given up to the judgment of Jehovah, without any possibility of escape. The commentators have been misled by the fact, that a simile of a promising character follows immediately afterwards, without anything to connect the one with the other. But this abrupt μετάβασις was intended as a surprise, and was a true picture of the actual fulfilment of the prophecy; for in the moment of the greatest distress, when the actual existence of Jerusalem was in question (cf., Isa. 10:33, 34), the fate of Ariel took suddenly and miraculously a totally different turn (Isa. 29:2). In this sense, a pleasant picture is placed side by side with the terrible one (compare Mic. 5:6, 7).

Isaiah 31:5. Jehovah suddenly arrests the work of punishment, and the love which the wrath enfolds within itself begins to appear. V. 5. "Like fluttering birds, so will Jehovah of Hosts screen Jerusalem; screening and delivering, sparing and setting free." The prophet uses the plural, "like fluttering birds," with an object—namely, not so much to represent Jehovah Himself, as the tender care and, as it were, *maternal* love, into which His leonine fierceness would be changed. This is indicated by the fact, that he attaches the feminine *'âphôth* to the common gender *tsippôrîm*. The word *pâsôäch* recalls to mind the deliverance from Egypt (as in Isa. 30:29) in a

very significant manner. The sparing of the Israelites by the destroyer passing over their doors, from which the passover derived its name, would be repeated once more. We may see from this, that in and along with Assyria, Jehovah Himself, whose instrument of punishment Assyria was, would take the field against Jerusalem (Isa. 29:2, 3); but His attitude towards Jerusalem is suddenly changed into one resembling the action of birds, as they soar round and above their threatened nests. On the inf. abs. *kal* (*gânôn*) after the *hiphil*, see Ewald, § 312, *b*; and on the continuance of the inf. abs. in the finite verb, § 350, *a*. This generally takes place through the future, but here through the preterite, as in Jer. 23:14, Gen. 26:13, and 1 Sam. 2:26 (if indeed *vgâdêl* is the third pers. preterite there).

Isaiah 31:6. On the ground of this half terrible, half comforting picture of the future, the call to repentance is now addressed to the people of the prophet's own time. V. 6. "Then turn, O sons of Israel, to Him from whom men have so deeply departed." Strictly speaking, "to Him with regard to whom (אֲשֶׁר) ye are deeply fallen away" (*he'ēmîq*, as in Hos. 9:9, and *sârâh*, that which is alienated, alienation, as in Isa. 1:5); the transition to the third person is like the reverse in Isa. 1:29. This call to repentance the prophet strengthens by two powerful motives drawn from the future.

Isaiah 31:7. The first is, that idolatry would one day be recognised in all its abomination, and put away. V. 7. "For in that day they will abhor every one their silver idols and their gold idols, which your hands have made you for a sin," i.e., to commit sin and repent, with the preponderance of the latter idea, as in Hos. 8:11*b* (compare 1 Kings 13:34). אֲשֶׁר, a second accusative to עָשׂוּ, indicating the result. The prospect is the same as that held out in Isa. 30:22; 27:9; 17:8; 2:20.

Isaiah 31:8, 9. The second motive is, that Israel will not be rescued by men, but by Jehovah alone; so that even He from whom they have now so deeply fallen will prove Himself the only

true ground of confidence. Vv. 8, 9. "And Asshur falls by a sword not of a man, and a sword not of a man will devour him; and he flees before a sword, and his young men become tributary. And his rock, for fear will it pass away, and his princes be frightened away by the flags: the saying of Jehovah, who has His fire in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem." The LXX and Jerome render this falsely φεύξεται οὐκ (ἰ) ἀπὸ προσώπου μαχαίρας. ἰ is an ethical dative, and the prophet intentionally writes "before a sword" without any article, to suggest the idea of the unbounded, infinite, awful (cf., Isa. 28:2, *byâd*; *Psalter*, vol. i. p. 15). A sword is drawn without any human intervention, and before this Asshur falls, or at least so many of the Assyrians as are unable to save themselves by flight. The power of Asshur is for ever broken; even its young men will henceforth become tributary, or perform feudal service. By "his rock" most commentators understand the rock upon which the fugitive would gladly have taken refuge, but did not dare (Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Knobel, etc.); others, again, the military force of Asshur, as its supposed invincible refuge (Saad., etc.); others, the apparently indestructible might of Asshur generally (Vulgate, Rashi, Hitzig). But the presence of "his princes" in the parallel clause makes it most natural to refer "his rock" to the king; and this reference is established with certainty by what Isa. 32:2 affirms of the king and princes of Judah. Luther also renders it thus: *und jr Fels wird fur furcht wegzihen* (and their rock will withdraw for fear). Sennacherib really did hurry back to Assyria after the catastrophe in a most rapid flight. *Minnēs* are the standards of Asshur, which the commanders of the army fly away from in terror, without attempting to rally those that were scattered. Thus speaks Jehovah, and this is what He decrees who has His *'ūr* and *tannūr* in Jerusalem. We cannot suppose that the allusion here is to the fire and hearth of the sacrifices; for *tannūr* does not mean a hearth, but a furnace (from *nūr*, to burn). The reference is to the light of the divine presence, which was

outwardly a devouring fire for the enemies of Jerusalem, an unapproachable red-hot furnace (*ignis et caminus qui devorat peccatores et ligna, faenum stipulamque consumit*: Jerome).

Isaiah 33

Isaiah 32:1, 2. For Judah, sifted, delivered, and purified, there now begins a new ear. Righteous government, as a blessing for the people, is the first beneficent fruit. Ch. 32:1, 2. "Behold, the king will reign according to righteousness; and the princes, according to right will they command. And every one will be like a shelter from the wind, and a covert from the storm; like water-brooks in a dry place, like the shadow of a gigantic rock in a languishing land." The kingdom of Asshur is for ever destroyed; but the kingdom of Judah rises out of the state of confusion into which it has fallen through its God-forgetting policy and disregard of justice. King and princes now rule according to the standards that have been divinely appointed and revealed. The *Lamed* in *ūlsârîm* (and the princes) is that of reference (*quod attinet ad*, as in Ps. 16:3 and Eccles. 9:4), the exponent of the usual *casus abs.* (Ges. § 146, 2); and the two other *Lameds* are equivalent to *κατά*, *secundum* (as in Jer. 30:11). The figures in v. 2 are the same as in Isa. 25:4. The rock of Asshur (i.e., Sennacherib) has departed, and the princes of Asshur have deserted their standards, merely to save themselves. The king and princes of Judah are now the defence of their nation, and overshadow it like colossal walls of rock. This is the first fruit of the blessing.

Isaiah 32:3, 4. The second is an opened understanding, following upon the ban of hardening. Vv. 3, 4. "And the eyes of the seeing no more are closed, and the ears of the hearing attend. And the heart of the hurried understands to know, and the tongue of stammerers speaks clear things with readiness." It is not physical miracles that are predicted here, but a spiritual change. The present judgment of hardening will be repealed: this is what v. 3 affirms. The spiritual defects, from which many suffer who do not belong to the worst, will be healed: this

is the statement in v. 4. The form *תִּשְׁעִינָה* is not the future of *שָׁעַף* here, as in Isa. 31:1; 22:4; 17:7, 8 (in the sense of, they will no longer stare about restlessly and without aim), but of *שָׁעַף* = *עָעַף*, a metaplastic future of the latter, in the sense of, to be smeared over to closed (see Isa. 29:9; 6:10; cf., *tach* in Isa. 44:18). On *qâshabh* (the *kal* of which is only met with here), see at Isa. 21:7. The times succeeding the hardening, of which Isaiah is speaking here, are “the last times,” as Isa. 6 clearly shows; though it does not therefore follow that the king mentioned in v. 1 (as in Isa. 11:1ff.) is the Messiah Himself. In v. 1 the prophet merely affirms, that Israel as a national commonwealth will then be governed in a manner well pleasing to God; here he predicts that Israel as a national congregation will be delivered from the judgment of not seeing with seeing eyes, and not hearing with hearing ears, and that it will be delivered from defects of weakness also. The *nimhârîm* are those that fall headlong, the precipitate, hurrying, or rash; and the *עֲלִיגִים*, stammerers, are not scoffers (Isa. 28:7ff., 19:20), as Knobel and Drechsler maintain, but such as are unable to think and speak with distinctness and certainty, more especially concerning the exalted things of God. The former would now have the gifts of discernment (*yâbhîn*), to perceive things in their true nature, and to distinguish under all circumstances that which is truly profitable (*lâda’ath*); the latter would be able to express themselves suitably, with refinement, clearness, and worthiness. *Tsachôth* (old ed. *tsâchôth*) signifies that which is light, transparent; not merely intelligible, but refined and elegant. *תְּמַהֵר* gives the adverbial idea to *ldabbêr* (Ewald, § § 285, a).

Isaiah 32:5-8. A third fruit of the blessing is the naming and treating of every one according to his true character. Vv. 5-8. “*The fool will no more be called a nobleman, nor the crafty a gentleman. For a fool speaks follies, and his heart does godless things, to practise tricks and to speak error against Jehovah, to leave the soul of hungry men empty, and to withhold the drink of*

thirsty ones. And the craft of a crafty man is evil, who devises stratagems to destroy suffering ones by lying words, even when the needy exhibits his right. But a noble man devises noble things, and to noble things he adheres.” Nobility of birth and wealth will give place to nobility of character, so that the former will not exist or not be recognised without the latter. *Nâdîbh* is properly one who is noble in character, and then, dropping the ethical meaning, one who is noble by rank. The meaning of the word *generosus* follows the same course in the opposite direction. *Shôâ’* is the man who is raised to eminence by the possession of property; the gentleman, as in Job 34:19. The prophet explains for himself in what sense he uses the words *nâbhâl* and *kîlai*. We see from his explanation that *kîlai* neither signifies the covetous, from *kûl* (Saad.), nor the spendthrift, from *killâh* (Hitzig). Jerome gives the correct rendering, viz., *fraudulentus*; and Rashi and Kimchi very properly regard it as a contraction of *nkhîlai*. It is an adjective form derived from *כָּלַי* = *כָּלִיל*, like *נְשִׂיא* = *נְשִׂיא* (Job 20:6). The form *כָּלַי* in v. 1 is used interchangeably with this, merely for the sake of the resemblance in sound to *כָּלַי* (*machinatoris machinae pravae*). In v. 6, commencing with *ki* (for), the fact that the *nâbhâl* (fool) and *kîlai* (crafty man) will lose their titles of honour, is explained on the simple ground that such men are utterly unworthy of them. *Nâbhâl* is a scoffer at religion, who thinks himself an enlightened man, and yet at the same time has the basest heart, and is a worthless egotist. The infinitives with *Lamed* show in what the immorality (*âven*) consists, with which his heart is so actively employed. In v. 6, *ûbhdabbêr* (“and if he speak”) is equivalent to, “even in the event of a needy man saying what is right and well founded:” *Vâv* = *et* in the sense of *etiam* ((cf., 2 Sam. 1:23; Ps. 31:12; Hos. 8:6; Eccles. 5:6); according to Knobel, it is equivalent to *et quidem*, as in Eccles. 8:2, Amos 3:11; 4:10; whereas Ewald regards it as *Vav conj.* (§ 283, d), “and by going to law with the needy,” but *אֶת־אֲבִיּוֹן* would be the construction in this case (vid., 2 Kings 25:6). According to v.

8, not only does the noble man devise what is noble, but as such (אִתְּה) he adheres to it. We might also adopt this explanation, "It is not upon gold or upon chance that he rises;" but according to the Arabic equivalents, *qūm* signifies *persistere* here.

Against the Women of Jerusalem—Ch. 32:9–20

Appendix to the Fourth Woe

This short address, although rounded off well, is something more than a fragment complete in itself, like the short parabolic piece in Isa. 28:23–29, which commences in a similar manner. It is the last part of the fourth woe, just as that was the last part of the first. It is a side piece to the threatening prophecy of the time of Uzziah-Jotham (Isa. 3:16ff.), and chastises the frivolous self-security of the women of Jerusalem, just as the former chastises their vain and luxurious love of finery. The prophet has now uttered many a woe upon Jerusalem, which is bringing itself to the verge of destruction; but notwithstanding the fact that women are by nature more delicate, and more easily affected and alarmed, than men, he has made no impression upon the women of Jerusalem, to whom he now foretells a terrible undeceiving of their carnal ease, whilst he holds out before them the ease secured by God, which can only be realized on the ruins of the former.

Isaiah 32:9–14. The first part of the address proclaims the annihilation of their false ease. Vv. 9–14. "Ye contented women, rise up, hear my voice; ye confident daughters, hearken to my speech! Days to the year: then will ye tremble, confident ones! for it is all over with the vintage, the fruit harvest comes to nought. Tremble, contented ones! Quake, ye confident ones! Strip, make yourselves bare, and gird your loins with sackcloth! They smite upon their breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. On the land of my people there come up weeds, briars; yea, upon all joyous houses of the rejoicing city. For the palace is made solitary; the crowd of the city is left desolate; the ofel and watch-tower serve as

caves for ever, for the delight of wild asses, for the tending of flocks." The summons is the same as in Gen. 4:23 and Jer. 9:19 (comp. Isa. 28:23); the attributes the same as in Amos 6:1 (cf., Isa. 4:1, where Isaiah apostrophizes the women of Samaria). אִתְּה, lively, of good cheer; and בְּטָח, trusting, namely to nothing. They are to rise up (*qōmnâh*), because the word of God must be heard standing (Judg. 3:20). The definition of the time "days for a year" (*yâmîm 'al-shânâh*) appears to indicate the length of time that the desolation would last, as the word *tirgazznâh* is without any *Vav apod.* (cf., Isa. 65:24, Job 1:16–18); but Isa. 29:1 shows us differently, and the *Vav* is omitted, just as it is, for example, in Dan. 4:28. *Shânâh* is the current year. In an undefined number of days, at the most a year from the present time (which is sometimes the meaning of *yâmîm*), the trembling would begin, and there would be neither grapes nor fruit to gather. Hence the spring harvest of corn is supposed to be over when the devastation begins. יָמִים is an *acc. temporis*; it stands here (as in Isa. 27:6, for example; vid., Ewald, § 293, 1) to indicate the starting point, not the period of duration. The *milel*-forms מְלִיץ, מְלִיץ, מְלִיץ, are explained by Ewald, Drechsler, and Luzzatto, as *plur. fem. imper.* with the *Nun* of the termination *nâh* dropped,—an elision that is certainly never heard of. Others regard it as *inf.* with *He femin.* (Credner, *Joel*, p. 151); but קְטֹלָה for the infinitive קְטֹלָה is unexampled; and equally unexampled would be the *inf.* with *He* indicating the summons, as suggested by Böttcher, "to the shaking!" "to the stripping!" They are *sing. masc. imper.*, such as occur elsewhere apart from the pause, e.g., מְלִיץ (for which the *keri* has מְלִיץ) in Judg. 9:8; and the singular in the place of the plural is the strongest form of command. The masculine instead of the feminine appears already in הִרְדֵּי, which is used in the place of הִרְדְּנָה. The prophet then proceeds in the singular number, comprehending the women as a mass, and using the most massive expression. The *He*

introduced into the summons required that the feminine forms, רָגְזוּ, etc., should be given up. עָרָה, from עָרַר, to be naked, to strip one's self. חָגְרָה absolute, as in Joel 1:13 (cf., Isa. 3:24), signifies to gird one's self with sackcloth (*saq*). We meet with the same remarkable *enall. generis* in v. 12. Men have no breasts (*shâdaim*), and yet the masculine *sôphedîm* is employed, inasmuch as the prophet had the whole nation in his mind, throughout which there would be such a *plangere ubera* on account of the utter destruction of the hopeful harvest of corn and wine. *Shâdaim* (breasts) and שְׂדֵי (construct to *sâdôth*) have the same common ring as *ubera* and *ubertas frugum*. In v. 13 *ta'âleh* points back to *qôts shâmîr*, which is condensed into one neuter idea. The *ki* in v. 13*b* has the sense of the Latin *imo* (Ewald, § 330, *b*). The genitive connection of קָרְיָה עֲלִיזָה with בְּתֵי מְשׁוֹשׁ (joy-houses of the jubilant city) is the same as in Isa. 28:1. The whole is grammatically strange, just as in the Psalms the language becomes all the more complicated, disjointed, and difficult, the greater the wrath and indignation of the poet. Hence the short shrill sentences in v. 14: palace given up (cf., Isa. 13:22); city bustle forsaken (i.e., the city generally so full of bustle, Isa. 22:2). The use of בָּעֵד is the same as in Prov. 6:26, Job 2:4. 'Ofel, i.e., the south-eastern fortified slope of the temple mountain, and the *bachan* (i.e., the watch-tower, possibly the flock-tower which is mentioned in Mic. 4:8 along with 'ofel), would be *pro speluncis*, i.e., would be considered and serve as such. And in the very place where the women of Jerusalem had once led their life of gaiety, wild asses would now have their delight, and flocks their pasture (on the wild asses, *prâ'im*, that fine animal of the woodless steppe, see at Job 24:5; 39:5-8). Thus would Jerusalem, with its strongest, proudest places, be laid in ruins, and that in a single year, or ever less than a year.

Isaiah 32:15-19. The state would then continue long, very long, until at last the destruction of the false rest would be followed by the realization of the true. Vv. 15-19. "Until

the Spirit is poured out over us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted as the forest. And justice makes its abode in the desert, and righteousness settles down upon the fruit-field. And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the reward of righteousness rest and security for ever. And my people dwells in a place of peace, and in trustworthy, safe dwellings, and in cheerful resting-places. And it hails with the overthrow of the forest, and into lowliness must the city be brought low." There is a limit, therefore, to the "for ever" of v. 14. The punishment would last till the Spirit, which Israel had not then dwelling in the midst of it (see Hag. 2:5), and whose fulness was like a closed vessel to Israel, should be emptied out over Israel from the height of heaven (compare the *piel* עָרָה, Gen. 24:20), i.e., should be poured out in all its fulness. When that was done, a great change would take place, the spiritual nature of which is figuratively represented in the same proverbial manner as in Isa. 29:17. At the same time, a different turn is given to the second half in the passage before us. The meaning is, not that what was now valued as a fruit-bearing garden would be brought down from its false eminence, and be only regarded as forest; but that the whole would be so glorious, that what was now valued as a fruit-garden, would be thrown into the shade by something far more glorious still, in comparison with which it would have the appearance of a forest, in which everything grew wild. The whole land, the uncultivated pasture-land as well as the planted fruitful fields of corn and fruit, would then become the tent and seat of justice and righteousness. "Justice and righteousness' (*mishpât* and *tsdâqâh*) are throughout Isaiah the stamp of the last and perfect time. As these advance towards self-completion, the *produce* and *result* of these will be peace (*ma'âseh* and *'âbhôdâh* are used to denote the fruit or self-reward of work and painstaking toil; compare פְּעֻלָּה). But two things must take place before this calm, trustworthy, happy peace, of which the existing carnal security is only a caricature,

can possibly be realized. In the *first* place, it must *hail*, and *the wood must fall*, being beaten down with hail. We already know, from Isa. 10:34, that “the wood” was an emblem of Assyria; and in Isa. 30:30, 31, we find “the hail” mentioned as one of the forces of nature that would prove destructive to Assyria. And *secondly*, “the city” (הָעִיר, a play upon the word, and a counterpart to הַיְעָר) must first of all *be brought low into lowliness* (i.e., be deeply humiliated). Rosenmüller and others suppose the imperial city to be intended, according to parallels taken from Isa. 24–27; but in this cycle of prophecies, in which the imperial city is never mentioned at all, “the city” must be Jerusalem, whose course from the false peace to the true lay through a humiliating punishment (Isa. 29:2–4; 30:19ff., 31:4ff.).

Isaiah 32:20. In the face of this double judgment, the prophet congratulates those who will live to see the times after the judgment. V. 20. “*Blessed are ye that sow by all waters, and let the foot of the oxen and asses rove in freedom.*” Those who lived to see these times would be far and wide the lords of a quiet and fruitful land, cleared of its foes, and of all disturbers of peace. They would sow wherever they pleased, by all the waters that fertilized the soil, and therefore in a soil of the most productive kind, and one that required little if any trouble to cultivate. And inasmuch as everything would be in the most copious abundance, they would no longer need to watch with anxiety lest their oxen and asses should stray into the corn-fields, but would be able to let them wander wherever they pleased. There cannot be the slightest doubt that this is the correct explanation of the verse, according to Isa. 30:23–25 (compare also Isa. 7:21ff.).

This concludes the four woes, from which the fifth, that immediately follows, is distinguished by the fact, that in the former the Assyrian troubles are still in the future, whereas the fifth places us in the very midst of them. The prophet commenced (Isa. 28:1–4) with the destruction of Samaria; he then threatened Judah and Jerusalem also. But it is uncommonly

difficult to combine the different features of the threat into a complete picture. Sifting even to a small remnant is a leading thought, which runs through the threat. And we also read throughout the whole, that Asshur will meet with its own destruction in front of that very Jerusalem which it is seeking to destroy. But the prophet also knows, on the one hand, that Jerusalem is besieged by the Assyrians, and will not be rescued till the besieged city has been brought to the last extremity (Isa. 29:1ff., 31:4ff.); and, on the other hand, that this will reach even to the falling of the towers (Isa. 30:25), the overthrow of the wall of the state (Isa. 30:13, 14), the devastation of the land, and the destruction of Jerusalem itself (Isa. 32:12ff.); and for both of these he fixes the limit of a year (Isa. 29:1; 32:10). This double threat may be explained in the following manner. The judgments which Israel has still to endure, and the period of glory that will follow them, lie before the mental eye of the prophet like a long deep diorama. While threatening the existing generation, he penetrates more or less deeply into the judgments which lie in perspective before him. He threatens at one time merely a siege that will continue till it is brought to the utmost extremity; at another time utter destruction. But the imperial power intended, by which this double calamity is to be brought upon Judah, must be Assyria; since the prophet knew of no other in the earliest years of Hezekiah, when these threatening addresses were uttered. And this gives rise to another difficulty. Not only was the worst prediction—namely, that of the destruction of Jerusalem—not fulfilled; but even the milder prophecy—namely, that of a siege, which would bring them to the deepest distress—was not accomplished. There never was any actual siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians. The explanation of this is, that, according to Jer. 18:7, 8, and 9, 10, neither the threatenings of punishment nor the promises of blessing uttered by the prophets were so unconditional, that they were certain to be fulfilled and that with absolute necessity, at such and such a time, or upon such and such a generation. The threatened punishment might

ISAIAH	Page 267
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

be repealed or modified, if repentance ensued on the part of the persons threatened (Jonah 3:4; 1 Kings 21:29; 2 Kings 22:15–20; 2 Chron. 12:5–8). The words of the prophecy did not on that account fall to the ground. If they produced repentance, they answered the very purpose for which they were intended; but if the circumstances which called for punishment should return, their force returned as well in all its fulness. If the judgment was one irrevocably determined, it was merely delayed by this, to be discharged upon the generation which should be ripest for it. And we have also an express historical testimony, which shows that this is the way in which the non-fulfilment of what Isaiah threatened as about to take place within a year is to be accounted for. Not only Isaiah, but also his contemporary Micah, threatened, that along with the judgment upon Samaria, the same judgment would also burst upon Jerusalem. Zion would be ploughed as a field, Jerusalem would be laid in ruins, and the temple mountain would be turned into a wooded height (Mic. 3:12). This prophecy belongs to the first year of Hezekiah's reign, for it was then that the book of Micah was composed. But we read in Jer. 26:18, 19, that, in their alarm at this prophecy, Hezekiah and all Judah repented, and that Jehovah withdrew His threat in consequence. Thus, in the very first year of Hezekiah, a change for the better took place in Judah; and this was necessarily followed by the withdrawal of Isaiah's threatenings, just as those threatenings had co-operated in the production of this conversion (see Caspari, *Micha*, p. 160ff.). Not one of the three threats (Isa. 29:1–4; 32:9–14; Mic. 3:12), which form an ascending climax, was fulfilled. Previous threatenings so far recovered their original force, when the insincerity of the conversion became apparent, that the Assyrians did unquestionably march through Judah, devastating everything as they went along. But because of Hezekiah's self-humiliation and faith, the threat was turned from that time forward into a promise. In direct opposition to his former threatening, Isaiah now promised that Jerusalem would not be

besieged by the Assyrians (Isa. 37:33–35), but that, before the siege was actually established, Assyria would fall under the walls of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 33

The Fifth Woe—Woe Concerning Asshur; Deliverance and Glory of Jerusalem

Isaiah 33:1. We are now in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. The threatenings of the first years, which the repentance of the people had delayed, are now so far in force again, and so far actually realized, that the Assyrians are already in Judah, and have not only devastated the land, but are threatening Jerusalem. The element of promise now gains the upper hand, the prophet places himself between Asshur and his own nation with the weapons of prophecy and prayer, and the woe turns from the latter to the former. V. 1. *“Woe, devastator, and thyself not devastated; and thou spoiler, and still not spoiled! Hast thou done with devastating? thou shalt be devastated. Hast thou attained to rob? men rob thee.”* Asshur is described as not devastated and not spoiled (which could not be expressed by a participle as with us, since *bâgad* is construed with *Beth*, and not with the accusative of the person), because it had not yet been visited by any such misfortune as that which had fallen upon other lands and nations. But it would be repaid with like for the like as soon as (וְ indicating simultaneousness, as in Isa. 30:19 and 18:5, for example) its devastating and spoiling had reached the point determined by Jehovah. Instead of בָּדָד, we find in some codd. and editions the reading בּוּ, which is equally admissible. In בְּהִתְיַמֵּד (from תָּמַם) the radical syllable is lengthened, instead of having *dagesh*. בְּגִלְתָּד is equivalent to בְּגִלְתָּדָה, a *hiphil* syncopated for the sake of rhythm (as in Isa. 3:8, Deut. 1:33, and many other passages), written here with *dagesh dirimens*, from the verb *nâlâh*, which is attested also by Job 15:29. The coincidence in meaning with the Arab. verb *nâl* (*fut. i and u*), to acquire or attain (see *Comm. on Job*, at 15:29 and 30:24–27), has been

admitted by the earliest of the national grammarians, Ben-Koreish, Chayug, etc. The conjecture כְּכַלְיוֹתָהֶם (in addition to which Cappellus proposed כְּגַלְיוֹתָהֶם) is quite unnecessary. The play upon the sound sets forth the punishment of the hitherto unpunished one as the infallible echo of its sin.

Isaiah 33:2. In v. 2 the prophet's word of command is changed into a believing prayer: "Jehovah, be gracious to us; we wait for Thee: be their arm with every morning, yea, our salvation in time of need!" "Their arm," i.e., the power which shelters and defends them, viz., Thy people and my own. "Yea," 'aph, is emphatic. Israel's arm every morning, because the danger is renewed every day; Israel's salvation, i.e., complete deliverance (Isa. 25:9), because the culminating point of the trouble is still in prospect.

Isaiah 33:3, 4. While the prophet is praying thus, he already sees the answer. Vv. 3, 4. "At the sound of a noise peoples pass away; at Thy rising nations are scattered. And your booty is swept away as a swarm of locusts sweeps away; as beetles run, they run upon it." The indeterminate *hâmôn*, which produces for that very reason the impression of something mysterious and terrible, is at once explained. The noise comes from Jehovah, who is raising Himself judicially above Assyria, and thunders as a judge. Then the hostile army runs away (נָפְצוּ = נִפְצוּ, from the *niphāl* נִפְצָה, 1 Sam. 13:11, from נָפַץ = נִפְצוּ, from נָפַץ); and your booty (the address returns to Assyria) is swept away, just as when a swarm of locusts settles on a field, it soon eats it utterly away. Jerome, Cappellus, and others follow the Septuagint rendering, ὃν τρόπον ἕαν τις συναγάγη ἀκρίδας. The figure is quite as appropriate, but the article in *hechâsîl* makes the other view the more natural one; and v. 4b places this beyond all doubt. *Shâqaq*, from which the participle *shôqêq* and the substantive *masshâq* are derived, is sued here, as in Joel 2:9, to signify a busy running hither and thither (*discursitare*). The syntactic use of *shôqêq* is the same as that of קָרָע (they call) in

Isa. 21:11, and *sôphdîm* (they smite) in Isa. 32:12. The inhabitants of Jerusalem swarm in the enemy's camp like beetles; they are all in motion, and carry off what they can.

Isaiah 33:5, 6. The prophet sees this as he prays, and now feasts himself on the consequences of this victory of Jehovah, prophesying in vv. 5, 6: "Jehovah is exalted; for, dwelling on high, He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness. And there will be security of thy times, riches of salvation, of wisdom, and knowledge. Fear of Jehovah is then the treasure of Judah." Exalted: for though highly exalted in Himself, He has performed an act of justice and righteousness, with the sight and remembrance of which Zion is filled as with an overflowing rich supply of instruction and praise. A new time has dawned for the people of Judah. The prophet addresses them in v. 6; for there is nothing to warrant us in regarding the words as addressed to Hezekiah. To the times succeeding this great achievement there would belong 'emûnâh, i.e., (durability (Ex. 17:12),—a uniform and therefore trustworthy state of things (compare Isa. 39:8, "peace and truth"). Secondly, there would also belong to them יְדִינָה, a rich store of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge (compare the verb in Isa. 23:18). We regard these three ideas as all connected with *chôsen*. The prophet makes a certain advance towards the unfolding of the seven gifts in Isa. 11:2, which are implied in "salvation;" but he hurries at once to the lowest of them, which forms the groundwork of all the rest, when he says, thirdly, that the fear of Jehovah will be the people's treasure. The construct form, *chokhmâth*, instead of *chokhmâh*, is a favourite one, which Isaiah employs, even apart from the genitive relation of the words, for the purpose of securing a closer connection, as Isa. 35:2; 51:21 (compare *pârash* in Ezek. 26:10), clearly show. In the case before us, it has the further advantage of consonance in the closing sound.

Isaiah 33:7–10. The prophet has thus run through the whole train of thought with a few rapid strides, in accordance with the custom which we have already frequently noticed; and

now he commences afresh, mourning over the present miserable condition of things, in psalm-like elegiac tones, and weeping with his weeping people. Vv. 7-9. *“Behold, their heroes weep without; the messengers of peace weep bitterly. Desolate are roads, disappeared are travellers; he has broken covenant, insulted cities, despised men. The land mourns, languishes; Lebanon stands ashamed, parched; the meadow of Sharon has become like a steppe, and Bashan and Carmel shake their leaves.”*

אֲרִיאֵל is probably chosen with some allusion to 'Ariel, the name of Jerusalem in Isa. 29; but it has a totally different meaning. We have rendered it “heroes,” because אֲרִיאֵל is here synonymous with אֲרִיאֵל in the *Nibelung*-like piece contained in 2 Sam. 23:20 and 1 Chron. 11:22. This 'ārī'el, which is here contracted into 'er'el (compare the biblical name 'Ar'ēlī and the post-biblical name of the angels, 'Er'ellīm), is compounded of 'ārī (a lion) and 'El (God), and therefore signifies “the lion of God,” but in this sense, that El (God) gives to the idea of leonine courage merely the additional force of extraordinary or wonderful; and as a composite word, it contents itself with a singular, with a collective sense according to circumstances, without forming any plural at all. The *dagesh* is to be explained from the fact that the word (which tradition has erroneously regarded as a compound of אֲרִיאֵל לְהֵם) is pointed in accordance with the form אֲרִיאֵל (אֲרִיאֵל). The heroes intended by the prophet were the messengers sent to Sennacherib to treat with him for peace. They carried to him the amount of silver and gold which he had demanded as the condition of peace (2 Kings 18:14). But Sennacherib broke the treaty, by demanding nothing less than the surrender of Jerusalem itself. Then the heroes of Jerusalem cried aloud, when they arrived at Jerusalem, and had to convey this message of disgrace and alarm to the king and nation; and bitterly weeping over such a breach of faith, such deception and disgrace, the embassy, which had been sent off, to the deep self-humiliation of Judah and

themselves, returned to Jerusalem. Moreover, Sennacherib continued to storm the fortified places, in violation of his agreement (on *má'as 'ārīm*, see 2 Kings 18:13). The land was more and more laid waste, the fields were trodden down; and the autumnal aspect of Lebanon, with its faded foliage, and of Bashan and Carmel, with their falling leaves, looked like shame and grief at the calamities of the land. It was in the autumn, therefore, that the prophet uttered these complaints; and the definition of the time given in his prophecy (Isa. 32:10) coincides with this. קָמַל is the pausal form for קָמַל, just as in other places an ē with the tone, which has sprung from *i*, easily passes into *a* in pause; the sharpening of the syllable being preferred to the lengthening of it, not only when the syllable which precedes the tone syllable is an open one, but sometimes even when it is closed (e.g., Judg. 6:19, וַיִּנְשֵׁ). Instead of בְּעֶרְבָה we should read עֶרְבָה (without the article), as certain codd. and early editions do. Isaiah having mourned in the tone of the Psalms, now comforts himself with the words of a psalm. Like David in Ps. 12:6, he hears Jehovah speak. The measure of Asshur's iniquity is full; the hour of Judah's redemption is come; Jehovah has looked on long enough, as though sitting still (Isa. 18:4). V. 10. *“Now will I arise, saith Jehovah, now exalt myself, now lift up myself.”* Three times does the prophet repeat the word 'attâh (now), which is so significant a word with all the prophets, but more especially with Hosea and Isaiah, and which always fixes the boundary-line and turning-point between love and wrath, wrath and love. אֲרוּמָם (in half pause for אֲרוּמָם) is contracted from אֲתָרוּמָם (Ges. § 54, 2, *b*). Jehovah would rise up from His throne, and show Himself in all His greatness to the enemies of Israel.

Isaiah 33:11. After the prophet has heard this from Jehovah, he knows how it will fare with them. He therefore cries out to them in triumph (v. 11), *“Ye are pregnant with hay, ye bring forth stubble! Your snorting is the fire that will devour you.”* Their vain purpose to destroy Jerusalem

comes to nothing; their burning wrath against Jerusalem becomes the fire of wrath, which consumes them (for *chăshash* and *qash*, see at Isa. 5:24).

Isaiah 33:12. The prophet announces this to them, and now tells openly what has been exhibited to him in his mental mirror as the purpose of God. V. 12. *“And nations become as lime burnings, thorns cut off, which are kindled with fire.”* The first simile sets forth the totality of the destruction: they will be so completely burned up, that nothing but ashes will be left, like the lump of lime left at the burning of lime. The second contains a figurative description of its suddenness: they have vanished suddenly, like dead brushwood, which is cut down in consequence, and quickly crackles up and is consumed (Isa. 5:24, cf., 9:17): *kăsach* is the Targum word for *zâmar*, *amputare*, whereas in Arabic it has the same meaning as *sâchâh*, *verrere*.

Isaiah 33:13, 14. But the prophet, while addressing Asshur, does not overlook those sinners of his own nation who are deserving of punishment. The judgment upon Asshur is an alarming lesson, not only for the heathen, but for Israel also; for there is no respect of persons with Jehovah. Vv. 13, 14. *“Hear, ye distant ones, what I have accomplished; and perceive, ye near ones, my omnipotence! The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling seizes the hypocrites: who of us can abide with devouring fire? who of us abide with everlasting burnings?”* Even for the sinners in Jerusalem also there is no abiding in the presence of the Almighty and Just One, who has judged Asshur (the act of judgment is regarded by the prophet as having just occurred); they must either repent, or they cannot remain in His presence. Jehovah, so far as His wrath is concerned, is “a consuming fire” (Deut. 4:24; 9:3); and the fiery force of His anger is “everlasting burnings” (*mōkdē ‘ōlām*), inasmuch as it consists of flames that are never extinguished, never burn themselves out. And this God had His fire and His furnace in Jerusalem (Isa. 31:9), and had just shown what His fire could do, when once it burst forth. Therefore do the sinners inquire in their alarm,

whilst confessing to one another (*lânû*; cf., Amos 9:1) that none of them can endure it, “Who can dwell with devouring fire?” etc. (*gūr* with the *acc. loci*, as in Ps. 5:5).

Isaiah 33:15, 16. The prophet answers their question. Vv. 15, 16. *“He that walketh in righteousness, and speaketh uprightness; he that despiseth gain of oppressions, whose hand keepeth from grasping bribes; he that stoppeth his ear from hearing murderous counsel, and shutteth his eyes from looking at evil; he will dwell upon high places; rocky fastnesses are his castle; his bread is abundant, his waters inexhaustible.”* Isaiah’s variation of Ps. 15 and 24:3–6 (as Jer. 17:5–8 contains Jeremiah’s variation of Ps. 1). *Tsdâqōth* is the accusative of the object, so also is *mēshârîm*: he who walks in all the relations of life in the full measure of righteousness, i.e., who practises it continually, and whose words are in perfect agreement with his inward feelings and outward condition. The third quality is, that he not only does not seek without for any gain which injures the interests of his neighbour, but that he inwardly abhors it. The fourth is, that he diligently closes his hands, his ears, and his eyes, against all danger of moral pollution. Bribery, which others force into his hand, he throws away (cf., Neh. 5:13); against murderous suggestions, or such as stimulate revenge, hatred, and violence, he stops his ear; and from sinful sights he closes his eyes firmly, and that without even winking. Such a man has no need to fear the wrath of God. Living according to the will of God, he lives in the love of God; and in that he is shut in as it were upon the inaccessible heights and in the impregnable walls of a castle upon a rock. He suffers neither hunger nor thirst; but his bread is constantly handed to him (*nittân, partic.*), namely, by the love of God; and his waters never fail, for God, the living One, makes them flow. This is the picture of a man who has no need to be alarmed at the judgment of God upon Asshur.

Isaiah 33:17. Over this picture the prophet forgets the sinners in Zion, and greets with words of promise the thriving church of the future. V. 17. *“Thine eyes will see the king in his*

ISAIAH	Page 271
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

beauty, will see a land that is very far off." The king of Judah, hitherto so deeply humbled, and, as Micah instances by way of example, "smitten upon the cheeks," is then glorified by the victory of his God; and the nation, constituted as described in vv. 15, 16, will see him in his God-given beauty, and see the land of promise, cleared of enemies as far as the eye can reach and the foot carry, restored to Israel without reserve, and under the dominion of this sovereign enjoying all the blessedness of peace.

Isaiah 33:18, 19. The tribulation has passed away like a dream. Vv. 18, 19. *"Thy heart meditates upon the shuddering. Where is the valuer? where the weigher? where he who counted the towers? The rough people thou seest no more, the people of deep inaudible lip, of stammering unintelligible tongue."* The dreadful past is so thoroughly forced out of mind by the glorious present, that they are obliged to turn back their thoughts (*hâgâh, meditari*, as Jerome renders it) to remember it at all. The *sôphêr* who had the management of the raising of the tribute, the *shôqêl* who tested the weight of the gold and silver, the *sôphêr 'eth hammigdâlîm* who drew up the plan of the city to be besieged or stormed, are all vanished. The rough people (עם נועז, the *niphal* of עזז, from יעז), that had shown itself so insolent, so shameless, and so insatiable in its demands, has become invisible. This attribute is a perfectly appropriate one; and the explanation given by Rashi, Vitringa, Ewald, and Fürst, who take it in the sense of *lô'êz* in Ps. 114:1, is both forced and groundless. The expressions *'imkê* and *nil'ag* refer to the obscure and barbarous sound of their language; *misshmôã* to the unintelligibility of their speech; and אֵין בִּינָה to the obscurity of their meaning. Even if the Assyrians spoke a Semitic language, they were of so totally different a nationality, and their manners were so entirely different, that their language must have sounded even more foreign to an Israelite than Dutch to a German.

Isaiah 33:20. And how will Jerusalem look when Asshur has been dashed to pieces on the strong fortress? The prophet passes over here

into the tone of Ps. 48 (vv. 13, 14). Ps. 46 and 48 probably belong to the time of Jehoshaphat; but they are equally applicable to the deliverance of Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah. V. 20. *"Look upon Zion, the castle of our festal meeting. Thine eyes will see Jerusalem, a pleasant place, a tent that does not wander about, whose pegs are never drawn, and none of whose cords are ever broken."* Jerusalem stands there unconquered and inviolable, the fortress where the congregation of the whole land celebrates its feasts, a place full of good cheer (Isa. 32:18), in which everything is now arranged for a continuance. Jerusalem has come out of tribulation stronger than ever,—not a nomadic wandering tent (*tsâ'am*, a nomad word, to wander, lit., to pack up = *tâ'an* in Gen. 45:17), but one set up for a permanent dwelling.

Isaiah 33:21, 22. It is also a great Lord who dwells therein, a faithful and almighty defender. Vv. 21, 22. *"No, there dwells for us a glorious One, Jehovah; a place of streams, canals of wide extent, into which no fleet of rowing vessels ventures, and which no strong man of war shall cross. For Jehovah is our Judge; Jehovah is our war-Prince; Jehovah is our King; He will bring us salvation."* Following upon the negative clauses in v. 20b, the next verse commences with *kî 'im (imo)*. Glorious (*'addîr*) is Jehovah, who has overthrown Lebanon, i.e., Assyria (Isa. 10:34). He dwells in Jerusalem for the good of His people,—a place of streams, i.e., one resembling a place of streams, from the fact that He dwells therein. Luzzatto is right in maintaining, that בּוֹ and יַעֲבֹרְנוּ point back to מְקוֹם, and therefore that *mkôm* is neither equivalent to *loco* (*tachath*, instead of), which would be quite possible indeed, as 1 Kings 21:19, if not Hos. 2:1, clearly proves (cf., Isa. 22:38), nor used in the sense of substitution or compensation. The meaning is, that, by virtue of Jehovah's dwelling there, Jerusalem had become a place, or equivalent to a place, or broad streams, like those which in other instances defended the cities they surrounded (e.g., Babylon, the "twisted snake," Isa. 27:1), and of broad canals, which kept off the enemy, like moats around a fortification.

The word יָאִיִּךְ was an Egyptian word, that had become naturalized in Hebrew; nevertheless it is a very natural supposition, that the prophet was thinking of the *No* of Egypt, which was surrounded by waters, probably Nile-canals (see Winer, *R.W. Nah.* 3:8). The adjective in which *yâdaim* brings out with greater force the idea of breadth, as in Isa. 22:18 (“on both sides”), belongs to both the nouns, which are placed side by side, ἀσυνδέτως (because permutative). The presence of Jehovah was to Jerusalem what the broadest streams and canals were to other cities; and into these streams and canals, which Jerusalem had around it spiritually in Jehovah Himself, no rowing vessels ventured (יָלִיִּךְ, *ingredi*). Luzzatto renders the word “ships of roving,” i.e., pirate ships; but this is improbable, as *shût*, when used as a nautical word, signifies to row. Even a majestic *tsī*, i.e., *trieris magna*, could not cross it: a colossal vessel of this size would be wrecked in these mighty and dangerous waters. The figure is the same as that in Isa. 26:1. In the consciousness of this inaccessible and impenetrable defence, the people of Jerusalem gloried in their God, who watched as a *shōphēt* over Israel’s rights and honour, who held as *mchoqēq* the commander’s rod, and ruled as *melekh* in the midst of Israel; so that for every future danger it was already provided with the most certain help.

Isaiah 33:23, 24. Now indeed it was apparently very different from this. It was not Assyria, but Jerusalem, that was like a ship about to be wrecked; but when that which had just been predicted should be fulfilled, Jerusalem, at present so powerless and sinful, would be entirely changed. Vv. 23, 24. “*Thy ropes hang loose; they do not hold fast the support of thy mast; they do not hold the flag extended: then is booty of plunder divided in abundance; even lame men share the prey. And not an inhabitant will say, I am weak: the people settled there have their sins forgiven.*” Nearly every commentator (even Luzzatto) has taken v. 23 as addressed to Assyria, which, like a proud vessel of war, would cross the encircling

river by which Jerusalem was surrounded. But Drechsler has very properly given up this view. The address itself, with the suffix *ayikh* (see at Isa. 1:26), points to Jerusalem; and the reference to this gives the most appropriate sense, whilst the contrast between the *now* and *then* closes the prophecy in the most glorious manner. Jerusalem is now a badly appointed ship, dashed about by the storm, the sport of the waves. Its rigging hangs loose (Jerome, *laxati sunt*); it does not hold the *kēn tornām* fast, i.e., the support of their mast, or cross beam with a hole in it, into which the mast is slipped (the *mesodme* of Homer, *Od.* xv. 289), which is sure to go to ruin along with the falling mast, if the ropes do not assist its bearing power (*malum sustinentes thecae succurrant*, as Vitruvius says). And so the ropes of the ship Jerusalem do not keep the *nēs* spread out, i.e., the ἐπίσημον of the ship, whether we understand by it a flag or a sail, with a device worked upon it (see Winer, *R.W. s. v. Schiffe*). And this is the case with Jerusalem now; but then (*’âz*) it will be entirely different. Asshur is wrecked, and Jerusalem enriches itself, without employing any weapons, from the wealth of the Assyrian camp. It was with a prediction of this spoiling of Asshur that the prophet commenced in v. 1; so that the address finishes as it began. But the closing words of the prophet are, that the people of Jerusalem are now strong in God, and are יָרָם וְנִשְׂאָ (as in Ps. 32:1), lifted up, taken away from their guilt. A people humbled by punishment, penitent, and therefore pardoned, would then dwell in Jerusalem. The strength of Israel, and all its salvation, rest upon the forgiveness of its sins.

Part VI - FINALE OF THE JUDGMENT UPON ALL THE WORLD (MORE ESPECIALLY UPON EDOM), AND REDEMPTION OF THE PEOPLE OF JEHOVAH

Isaiah 34

Isaiah 34–35. These two chapters stand in precisely the same relation to Isa. 28–33 as Isa. 24–27 to Isa. 13–23. In both instances the special prophecies connected with the history

ISAIAH	Page 273
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

of the prophet's own times are followed by a comprehensive *finale* of an apocalyptic character. We feel that we are carried entirely away from the stage of history. There is no longer that foreshortening, by which the prophet's perspective was characterized before the fall of Assyria. The tangible shapes of the historical present, by which we have been hitherto surrounded, are now spiritualized into something perfectly ideal. We are transported directly into the midst of the last things; and the eschatological vision is less restricted, has greater mystical depth, belongs more to another sphere, and has altogether more of a New Testament character. The totally different impression which is thus made by Isa. 34–35, as compared with Isa. 28–33, must not cause any misgivings as to the authenticity of this closing prophecy. The relation in which Jeremiah and Zephaniah stand to Isa. 34 and 35, is quite sufficient to drive all doubts away. (Read Caspari's article, "Jeremiah a Witness to the Genuineness of Isa. 34, and therefore also to the Genuineness of Isa. 40–66, 13–14:23, and 21:1–10," in the *Lutherische Zeitschrift*, 1843, 2; and Nägelsbach's *Jeremia und Babylon*, pp. 107–113, on the relation of Jer. 50–51 more especially to Isa. 34–35.) There are many passages in Jeremiah (*viz.*, Jer. 25:31, 22, 23; 46:10; 50:27, 39; 51:40) which cannot be explained in any other way than on the supposition that Jeremiah had the prophecy of Isaiah in Isa. 34 before him. We cannot escape from the conclusion, that just as we find Jeremiah introducing earlier prophecies generally into his cycle of prophecies against the nations, and, in the addresses already mentioned, borrowing from Amos and Nahum, and placing side by side with a passage from Amos (compare Jer. 25:30 with Amos 1:2) one of a similar character, and agreeing with Isa. 34, so he also had Isa. 34 and 35 before him, and reproduced it in the same sense as he did other and earlier models. It is equally certain that Zeph. 1:7, 8, and 2:14, stand in a dependent relation to Isa. 34:6, 11; just as Zeph. 2:15 was taken from Isa. 47:8, and Zeph. 1:7 *fin.* and 3:11 from Isa. 13:3; whilst Zeph. 2:14 also points back to Isa. 13:21, 22. We

might, indeed, reverse the relation, and make Jeremiah and Zephaniah into the originals in the case of the passages mentioned; but this is opposed to the generally reproductive and secondary character of both these prophets, and also to the evident features of the passages in question. We might also follow Movers, De Wette, and Hitzig, who get rid of the testimony of Isaiah by assuming that the passages resting upon Is. 34, and other disputed prophecies of Isaiah, are interpolated; but this is opposed to the moral character of all biblical prophecy, and, moreover, it could only apply to Jeremiah, not to Zephaniah. We must in this case "bring reason into captivity to obedience" to the external evidence; though internal evidence also is not wanting to set a seal upon these external proofs. Just as Isa. 24–27 are full of the clearest marks of Isaiah's authorship, so is it also with Isa. 34–35. It is not difficult to understand the marked contrast which we find between these two closing prophecies and the historical prophecies of the Assyrian age. These two closing prophecies were appended to Isa. 13–23 and 28–33 at the time when Isaiah revised the complete collection. They belong to the latest revelations received by the prophet, to the last steps by which he reached that ideal height at which he soars in Isa. 40–66, and from which he never descends again to the stage of passing history, which lay so far beneath. After the fall of Assyria, and when darkness began to gather on the horizon again, Isaiah broke completely away from his own times. "The end of all things" became more and more his own true home. The obscure foreground of his prophecies is no longer *Asshur*, which he has done with now so far as prophecy is concerned, but *Babel* (Babylon). And the bright centre of his prophecies is not the fall of Asshur (for this was already prophetically a thing of the past, which had not been followed by complete salvation), but deliverance from Babylon. And the bright noon-day background of his prophecies is no longer the realized idea of the kingdom of prophecy,—realized, that is to say, in the one person of the Messiah, whose form had lost the sharp outlines of Isa. 7–12 even in

the prophecies of Hezekiah's time,—but the *parousia* of Jehovah, which *all flesh* would see. It was the revelation of the mystery of the incarnation of God, for which all this was intended to prepare the way. And there was no other way in which that could be done, than by completing the perfect portrait of the Messiah in the light of the ultimate future, so that both the factors in the prophecy might be assimilated. The spirit of Isaiah, more than that of any other prophet, was the laboratory of this great process in the history of revelation. The prophetic cycles in Isa. 24–27 and 34–35 stand in the relation of preludes to it. In Isa. 40–66 the process of assimilation is fully at work, and there is consequently no book of the Old Testament which has gone so thoroughly into New Testament depths, as this second part of the collection of Isaiah's prophecies, which commences with a prediction of the *parousia* of Jehovah, and ends with the creation of the new heaven and new earth. Ch. 34 and 35 are, as it were, the first preparatory chords. Edom here is what Moab was in Isa. 24–27. By the side of Babylon, the empire of the world, whose policy of conquest led to its enslaving Israel, it represents the world in its hostility to Israel as the people of Jehovah. For Edom was Israel's brother-nation, and hated Israel as the chosen people. In this its unbrotherly, hereditary hatred, it represented the sum-total of all the enemies and persecutors of the church of Jehovah. The special side-piece to Isa. 34 is Isa. 63:1–6.

Isaiah 34:1–3. What the prophet here foretells relates to all nations, and to every individual within them, in their relation to the congregation of Jehovah. He therefore commences with the appeal in vv. 1–3: *“Come near, ye peoples, to hear; and he nations, attend. Let the earth hear, and that which fills it, the world, and everything that springs from it. For the indignation of Jehovah will fall upon all nations, and burning wrath upon all their host; He has laid the ban upon them, delivered them to the slaughter. And their slain are cast away, and their corpses—their stench will arise, and mountains melt with their blood.”* The summons

does not invite them to look upon the completion of the judgment, but to hear the prophecy of the future judgment; and it is issued to everything on the earth, because it would all have to endure the judgment upon the nations (see at Isa. 5:25; 13:10). The expression *qetseph layehōvâh* implies that Jehovah was ready to execute His wrath (compare *yôm layehōvâh* in v. 8 and Isa. 2:12). The nations that are hostile to Jehovah are slaughtered, the bodies remain unburied, and the streams of blood loosen the firm masses of the mountains, so that they melt away. On the stench of the corpses, compare Ezek. 39:11. Even if *châsam*, in this instance, does not mean “to take away the breath with the stench,” there is no doubt that Ezekiel had this prophecy of Isaiah in his mind, when prophesying of the destruction of Gog and Magog (Ezek. 39).

Isaiah 34:4. The judgment foretold by Isaiah also belongs to the last things; for it takes place in connection with the simultaneous destruction of the present heaven and the present earth. V. 4. *“And all the host of the heavens moulder away, and the heavens are rolled up like a scroll, and all their host withers as a leaf withers away from the vine, and like withered leaves from the fig-tree”* (*Nâmaq*, to be dissolved into powdered matter (Isa. 3:24; 5:24); *nâgōl* (for *nâgal*, like *nâzōl* in Isa. 63:19; 64:2, and *nârōts* in Eccles. 12:6), to be rolled up,—a term applied to the cylindrical book-scroll. The heaven, that is to say, the present system of the universe, breaks up into atoms, and is rolled up like a book that has been read through; and the stars fall down as a withered leaf falls from a vine, when it is moved by even the lightest breeze, or like the withered leaves shaken from the fig-tree. The expressions are so strong, that they cannot be understood in any other sense than as relating to the end of the world (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; compare Matt. 24:29). It is not sufficient to say that “the stars appear to fall to the earth,” though even Vitringa gives this explanation.

When we look, however, at the following *kī* (for), it undoubtedly appears strange that the prophet should foretell the passing away of the

heavens, simply because Jehovah judges Edom. But Edom stands here as the representative of all powers that are hostile to the church of God as such, and therefore expresses an idea of the deepest and widest cosmical signification (as Isa. 24:21 clearly shows). And it is not only a doctrine of Isaiah himself, but a biblical doctrine universally, that God will destroy the present world as soon as the measure of the sin which culminates in unbelief, and in the persecution of the congregation of the faithful, shall be really full.

Isaiah 34:5–7. If we bear this in mind, we shall not be surprised that the prophet gives the following reason for the passing away of the present heavens. Vv. 5–7. *“For my sword has become intoxicated in the heaven; behold, it comes down upon Edom, and upon the people of my ban to judgment. The sword of Jehovah fills itself with blood, is fattened with fat, with blood of lambs and he-goats, with kidney-fat of rams; for Jehovah has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. And buffaloes fall with them, and bullocks together with bulls; and their land become intoxicated with blood, and their dust fattened with fat.”* Just as in Isa. 63 Jehovah is represented as a treader of the wine-press, and the nations as the grapes; so here He is represented as offering sacrifice, and the nations as the animals offered (*zebhash*: cf., Zeph. 1:7; Jer. 46:10); Ezek. 39:17ff.: all three passages founded upon this). Jehovah does not appear here in person as judge, as He does there, but His sword appears; just as in Gen. 3:24, the “sword which turned every way” is mentioned as an independent power standing by the side of the cherub. The sword is His executioner, which has no sooner drunk deeply of wrath *in heaven*, i.e., in the immediate sphere of the Deity (*rivvthâh*, an intensive form of the *kal*, like *pittëäch*, Isa. 48:8; Ewald, § 120, *d*), than it comes down in wild intoxication upon Edom, the people of the ban of Jehovah, i.e., the people upon whom He has laid the ban, and there, as His instrument of punishment, fills itself with blood, and fattens itself with fat. *הַדְּשָׁנָה* is the *hothpaal* = *הַתְּדַשְׁנָה*, with the ת of

the preformative syllable assimilated (compare *הַזְּבוּ* in Isa. 1:16, and *אֶדְמָה* in Isa. 14:14). The penultimate has the tone, the *nâh* being treated as in the plural forms of the future. The dropping of the *dagesh* in the *ש* is connected with this. The reading *מִחֵלֶב*, in v. 6, is an error that has been handed down in modern copies (in opposition to both codices and ancient editions); for *חֵלֶב* (primary form, *chilb*) is the only form met with in the Old Testament. The lambs, he-goats, and rams, represent the Edomitish nation, which is compared to these smaller sacrificial animals. *Edom* and *Bozrah* are also placed side by side in Isa. 63:1. The latter was one of the chief cities of the Edomites (Gen. 36:33; Amos 1:12; Jer. 49:13, 22),—not the Bozrah in Auranitis (*Haurân*), however, which is well known in church history, but Bozrah in the mountains of Edom, upon the same site as the village of *Buzaire* (i.e., Minor Bozrah), which is still surrounded by its ruins. In contrast with the three names of the smaller animals in v. 6, the three names of oxen in v. 7 represent the lords of Edom. They also will fall, smitten by the sword (*yârdû*: cf., Jer. 50:27; 51:40; also Jer. 48:15). The feast of the sword is so abundant, that even the earth and the dust of the land of Edom are satiated with blood and fat.

Isaiah 34:8–10. Thus does Jehovah avenge His church upon Edom. Vv. 8–10. *“For Jehovah hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense, to contend for Zion. And the brooks of Edom are turned into pitch, and its dust into brimstone, and its land becomes burning pitch. Day and night it is not quenched; the smoke of Edom goes up for ever: it lies waste from generation to generation; no one passes through it for ever and ever.”* The one expression, “to contend for Zion,” is like a flash of lightning, throwing light upon the obscurity of prophecy, both backwards and forwards. A day and a year of judgment upon Edom (compare Isa. 61:2; 63:4) would do justice to Zion against its accusers and persecutors (*rîbh*, *vindicare*, as in Isa. 51:22). The everlasting punishment which would fall

ISAIAH	Page 276
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

upon it is depicted in figures and colours, suggested by the proximity of Edom to the Dead Sea, and the volcanic character of this mountainous country. The unquenchable fire (for which compare Isa. 66:24), and the eternally ascending smoke (cf., Rev. 19:3), prove that the end of all things is referred to. The prophet meant primarily, no doubt, that the punishment announced would fall upon the land of Edom, and within its geographical boundaries; but this particular punishment represented the punishment of all nations, and all men who were Edomitish in their feelings and conduct towards the congregation of Jehovah.

Isaiah 34:11, 12. The land of Edom, in this geographical and also emblematical sense, would become a wilderness; the kingdom of Edom would be for ever destroyed. Vv. 11, 12. *“And pelican and hedgehog take possession of it, and eared-owl and raven dwell there; and he stretches over it the measure of Tohu and the level of Bohu. Its nobles—there is no longer a monarchy which they elected; and all its princes come to nought.”* The description of the ruin, which commences in v. 11a with a list of animals that frequent marshy and solitary regions, is similar to the one in Isa. 13:20–22; 14:23 (compare Zeph. 2:14, which is founded upon this). Isaiah’s was the original of all such pictures of ruin which we meet with in the later prophets. The *qippōd* is the hedgehog, although we find it here in the company of birds (from *qâphad*, to draw one’s self together, to roll up; see Isa. 14:23). קָאָת is written here with a double *kametz*, as well as in Zeph. 2:14, according to *codd.* and Kimchi, *W.B.* (Targ. *qâth*, elsewhere *qâq*; Saad. and Abulwalid, *qûq*: see at Ps. 102:7). According to well-established tradition, it is the long-necked pelican, which lives upon fish (the name is derived either from קָאָת, to vomit, or, as the construct is קָאָת, from a word קָאָה, formed in imitation of the animal’s cry). *Yanshūph* is rendered by the Targum *qīppōphīn* (Syr. *kafūfo*), i.e., eared-owls, which are frequently mentioned in the Talmud as birds of ill omen (Rashi, or *Berachoth* 57b,

chouette). As the parallel to *qâv*, we have אָבֵי (stones) here instead of מִשְׁקָלָהּ, the *level*, in Isa. 28:17. It is used in the same sense, however,—namely, to signify the weight used in the plumb or level, which is suspended by a line. The level and the measure are commonly employed for the purpose of building up; but here Jehovah is represented as using these for the purpose of pulling down (a figure met with even before the time of Isaiah: vid., Amos 7:7–9, cf., 2 Kings 21:13, Lam. 2:8), inasmuch as He carries out this negative reverse of building with the same rigorous exactness as that with which a builder carries out his well-considered plan, and throws Edom back into a state of desolation and desert, resembling the disordered and shapeless chaos of creation (compare Jer. 4:23, where *tōhū vâbhōhū* represents, as it does here, the state into which a land is reduced by fire). אָתָה has no *dagesh lene*; and this is one of the three passages in which the opening mute is without a *dagesh*, although the word not only follows, but is closely connected with, one which has a soft consonant as its final letter (the others are Ps. 68:18 and Ezek. 23:42). Thus the primeval kingdom with its early monarchy, which is long preceded that of Israel, is brought to an end (Gen. 36:31). אָתָה stands at the head as a kind of protasis. Edom was an elective monarchy; the hereditary nobility electing the new king. But this would be done no more. The electoral princes of Edom would come to nothing. Not a trace would be left of all that had built up the glory of Edom.

Isaiah 34:13–15. The allusion to the monarchy and the lofty electoral dignity leads the prophet on to the palaces and castles of the land. Starting with these, he carries out the picture of the ruins in vv. 13–15. *“And the palaces of Edom break out into thorns, nettles and thistles in its castles; and it becomes the abode of wild dogs, pasture for ostriches. And martens meet with jackals, and a wood-devil runs upon its fellow; yea, Lilith dwells there, and finds rest for itself. There the arrow-snake makes its nest, and breeds and lays eggs, and broods in the shadow*

there; yea, there vultures gather together one to another." The feminine suffixes refer to Edom, as they did in the previous instance, as בַּת־אֲדוֹם or אֲרָץ אֲדוֹם. On the *tannīm*, *tsiyyīm*, and *'iyyīm*, see at Isa. 13:21, 22. It is doubtful whether *châtsîr* here corresponds to the Arabic word for an enclosure (= הַצֵּר), as Gesenius, Hitzig, and others suppose, as elsewhere to the Arabic for green, a green field, or garden vegetable. We take it in the latter sense, viz., a *grassy place*, such as was frequented by ostriches, which live upon plants and fruits. The word *tsiyyim* (steppe animals) we have rendered "martens," as the context requires a particular species of animals to be named. This is the interpretation given by Rashi (*in loc.*) and Kimchi in Jer. 50:39 to the Targum word *tamvân*. We do not render *'iyyīm* "wild cats" (*chattûlîn*), but "jackals," after the Arabic. קָרָא with עַל we take in the sense of קָרָה (as in Ex. 5:3). *Lîlith* (Syr. and Zab. *lelitho*), lit., the creature of the night, was a female demon (*shêdâh*) of the popular mythology; according to the legends, it was a malicious fairy that was especially hurtful to children, like some of the fairies of our own fairy tales. There is life in Edom still; but what a caricature of that which once was there! In the very spot where the princes of Edom used to proclaim the new king, satyrs now invite one another to dance (Isa. 13:21); and there kings and princes once slept in their palaces and country houses, the *lîlith*, which is most at home in horrible places, finds, as though after a prolonged search, the most convenient and most comfortable resting-place. Demons and serpents are not very far distant from one another. The prophet therefore proceeds in v. 15 to the arrow-snake, or springing-snake (Arabic *qiffâze*, from *qâphaz*, related to *qâphats*, Song of Sol. 2:8, to prepare for springing, or to spring; a different word from *qippôd*, which has the same root). This builds its nest in the ruins; there it breeds (*millêt*, to let its eggs slide out) and lays eggs (*bâqa'*, to split, i.e., to bring forth); and then it broods in the shade (*dâgar* is the Targum word in Job 39:14 for *chimmēm* (*ithpael* in Lam. 1:20

for הַמְרַמֵּר), and is also used in the rabbinical writings for *fovere*, as Jerome renders it here). The literal sense of the word is probably to keep the eggs together (Targum, Jer. 17:11, מְכַנְשׁ בַּעֲיֵן, LXX σπνήγγαγεν), since דָּגַר (syn. חָמַר) signifies "to collect." Rashi has therefore explained it in both passages as meaning *glousser*, to cluck, the noise by which a fowl calls its brood together. The *dayyâh* is the vulture. These fowls and most gregarious birds of prey also collect together there.

Isaiah 34:16, 17. Whenever any one compared the prophecy with the fulfilment, they would be found to coincide. Vv. 16, 17. "Search in the book of Jehovah, and read! Not one of the creatures fails, not one misses the other: for my mouth—it has commanded it; and His breath—it has brought them together. And He has cast the lot for them, and His hand has assigned it (this land) to them by measure: they will possess it for ever; to generation and generation they will dwell therein." The phrase עַל כְּתָב is used for entering in a book, inasmuch as what is written there is placed upon the page; and דָּרַשׁ מֵעַל for searching in a book, inasmuch as a person leans over the book when searching in it, and gets the object of his search out of it. The prophet applied the title "The Book of Jehovah" to his collection of the prophecies with which Jehovah had inspired him, and which He had commanded him to write down. Whoever lived to see the time when the judgment should come upon Edom, would have only to look inquiringly into this holy scripture; and if he compared what was predicted there with what had been actually realized, he would find the most exact agreement between them. The creatures named, which loved to frequent the marshes and solitary places, and ruins, would all really make their homes in what had once been Edom. But the *satyrs* and the *lîlith*, which were only the offspring of the popular belief—what of them? They, too, would be there; for in the sense intended by the prophet they were actual devils, which he merely calls by well-known popular names to produce a spectral

impression. Edom would really become a rendezvous for all the animals mentioned, as well as for such unearthly spirits as those which he refers to here. The prophet, or rather Jehovah, whose temporary organ he was, still further confirms this by saying, "My mouth hath commanded it, and His breath has brought them (all these creatures) together." As the first creating word proceeded from the mouth of Jehovah, so also does the word of prophecy, which resembles such a word; and the breath of the mouth of Jehovah, i.e., His Spirit, is the power which accomplishes the fiat of prophecy, as it did that of creation, and moulds all creatures and their history according to the will and counsel of God (Ps. 33:6). In the second part of v. 16*b* the prophet is speaking of Jehovah; whereas in the first Jehovah speaks through him,—a variation which vanishes indeed if we read פָּיִן (Olshausen on Job 9:2), or, what would be better, פִּיהוּ, but which may be sustained by a hundred cases of a similar kind. There is a shadow, as it were, of this change in the לְהֵן, which alternates with לְהֵן in connection with the animals named. The suffix of *chillqattâh* (without *mappik*, as in 1 Sam. 1:6) refers to the land of Edom. Edom is, as it were, given up by a divine lot, and measured off with a divine measure, to be for ever the horrible abode of beasts and demons such as those described. A prelude of the fulfilment of this swept over the mountainous land of Edom immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem (see Köhler on Mal. 1:2–5); and it has never risen to its previous state of cultivation again. It swarms with snakes, and the desolate mountain heights and barren table-lands are only inhabited by wild crows and eagles, and great flocks of birds. But the ultimate fulfilment, to which the appeal in v. 16 refers, is still in the future, and will eventually fall upon the abodes of those who spiritually belong to that circle of hostility to Jehovah (Jesus) and His church, of which ancient Edom was merely the centre fixed by the prophet.

Isaiah 35

Isaiah 35:1, 2. Edom falls, never to rise again. Its land is turned into a horrible wilderness. But, on the other hand, the wilderness through which the redeemed Israel returns, is changed into a flowery field. Ch. 35:1, 2. "*Gladness fills the desert and the heath; and the steppe rejoices, and flowers like the crocus. It flowers abundantly, and rejoices; yea, rejoicing and singing: the glory of Lebanon is given to it, the splendour of Carmel and the plain of Sharon; they will see the glory of Jehovah, the splendour of our God.*" יִשְׂשׂוּם מְדֻבָּר (to be accentuated with *tiphchah munach*, not with *mercha tiphchah*) has been correctly explained by Aben-Ezra. The original *Nun* has been assimilated to the following *Mem*, just as *pidyôn* in Num. 3:49 is afterwards written *pidyôm* (Ewald, § 91, *b*). The explanation given by Rashi, Gesenius, and others (*laetabuntur his*), is untenable, if only because *sûs* (*sîs*) cannot be construed with the accusative of the object (see at Isa. 8:6); and to get rid of the form by correction, as Olshausen proposes, is all the more objectionable, because "the old full plural in *ûn* is very frequently met with before *Mem*" (Böttcher), in which case it may have been pronounced as it is written here. According to the Targum on Song of Sol. 2:1 (also Saad., Abulw.), the *chăbhatstseleth* is the narcissus; whilst the Targum on the passage before us leaves it indefinite—*sicut lilia*. The name (a derivative of *bâtsal*) points to a bulbous plant, probably the crocus and primrose, which were classed together. The sandy steppe would become like a lovely variegated plain covered with meadow flowers. On *gîlath*, see at Isa. 33:6 (cf., Isa. 65:18): the infin. noun takes the place of an inf. abs., which expresses the abstract verbal idea, though in a more rigid manner; 'aph (like *gam* in Gen. 31:15; 46:4) is an exponent of the increased emphasis already implied in the gerunds that come after. So joyful and so gloriously adorned will the barren desert, which has been hitherto so mournful, become, on account of the great things that are in store for it. Lebanon, Carmel, and Sharon have, as it were, shared their

splendour with the desert, that all might be clothed alike in festal dress, when the glory of Jehovah, which surpasses everything self in its splendour, should appear; that glory which they would not only be privileged to behold, but of which they would be honoured to be the actual scene.

Isaiah 35:3, 4. The prophet now exclaims to the afflicted church, in language of unmixed consolation, that Jehovah is coming. Vv. 3, 4. *“Strengthen ye the weak hands, and make the trembling knees strong! Say to those of a terrified heart, Be strong! Fear ye not! Behold, your God will come for vengeance, for a divine retribution: He will come, and bring you salvation.”* Those who have become weak in faith, hopeless and despairing, are to cheer up; and the stronger are to tell such of their brethren as are perplexed and timid, to be comforted now: for Jehovah is coming *nâqâm* (i.e., as vengeance), and *gmûl* ‘*Elôhîm* (i.e., as retribution, such as God the highly exalted and Almighty Judge inflicts; the expression is similar to that in Isa. 30:27; 13:9, cf., 40:10, but a bolder one; the words in apposition stand as abbreviations of final clauses). The infliction of punishment is the immediate object of His coming, but the ultimate object is the salvation of His people (יִשְׁעָכֶם a contracted future form, which is generally confined to the aorist). Vv. 5–7. *“Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame man leap as the stag, and the tongue of the dumb man shout; for waters break out in the desert, and brooks in the steppe. And the mirage becomes a fish-pond, and the thirsty ground gushing water-springs; in the place of jackals, where it lies, there springs up grass with reeds and rushes.”* The bodily defects mentioned here there is no reason for regarding as figurative representations of spiritual defects. The healing of bodily defects, however, is merely the outer side of what is actually effected by the coming of Jehovah (for the other side, comp. Isa. 32:3, 4). And so, also, the change of the desert into a field abounding with water is not a mere poetical ornament; for in the last times, he era

of redemption, nature itself will really share in the *doxa* which proceeds from the manifested God to His redeemed. *Shârâbh* (Arab. *sarâb*) is essentially the same thing as that which we call in the western languages the *mirage*, or *Fata morgana*; not indeed every variety of this phenomenon of the refraction of light, through strata of air of varying density lying one above another, but more especially that appearance of water, which is produced as if by magic in the dry, sandy desert (literally perhaps the “desert shine,” just as we speak of the “Alpine glow;” see Isa. 49:10). The antithesis to this is *’âgam* (Chald. *’agmâ*, Syr. *egmo*, Ar. *agéam*), a fish-pond (as in Isa. 41:18, different from *’âgâm* in Isa. 19:10). In the arid sandy desert, where the jackal once had her lair and suckled her young (this is, according to Lam. 4:3, the true explanation of the permutative *ribhtsâh*, for which *ribhtsâm* would be in some respects more suitable), grass springs up even into reeds and rushes; so that, as Isa. 43:20 affirms, the wild beasts of the desert praise Jehovah.

Isaiah 35:8–10. In the midst of such miracles, by which all nature is glorified, the people of Jehovah are redeemed, and led home to Zion. Vv. 8–10. *“And a highway rises there, and a road, and it will be called the Holy Road; no unclean man will pass along it, as it is appointed for them: whoever walks the road, even simple ones do not go astray. There will be no lion there, and the most ravenous beast of prey will not approach it, will not be met with there; and redeemed ones walk. And the ransomed of Jehovah will return, and come to Zion with shouting, and everlasting joy upon their head: they lay hold of gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing flee away.”* Not only unclean persons from among the heathen, but even unclean persons belonging to Israel itself, will never pass along that holy road; none but the church purified and sanctified through sufferings, and those connected with it. הוֹיָא לָמוֹ, to them, and to them alone, does this road belong, which Jehovah has made and secured, and which so readily strikes the eye, that even an idiot could not miss it; whilst it lies so high, that no beast of

prey, however powerful (*prits chayyōth*, a superlative verbal noun: Ewald, § 313, c), could possibly leap up to it: not one is ever encountered by the pilgrim there. The pilgrims are those whom Jehovah has redeemed and delivered, or set free from captivity and affliction (גָּאֵל, גָּל, related to חָל, *solvere*; פָּדָה, פָּד, *scindere, abscondere*). Everlasting joy soars above their head; they lay fast hold of delight and joy (compare on Isa. 13:8), so that it never departs from them. On the other hand, sorrow and sighing flee away. The whole of v. 10 is like a mosaic from Isa. 51:11; 61:7; 51:3; and what is affirmed of the holy road, is also affirmed in Isa. 52:1 of the holy city (compare Isa. 62:12; 63:4). A prelude of the fulfilment is seen in what Ezra speaks of with gratitude to God in Ezra 8:31. We have intentionally avoided crowding together the parallel passages from Isa. 40–66. The whole chapter is, in every part, both in thought and language, a prelude of that book of consolation for the exiles in their captivity. Not only in its spiritual New Testament thoughts, but also in its ethereal language, soaring high as it does in majestic softness and light, the prophecy has now reached the highest point of its development.

PART VII - FULFILMENTS OF PROPHECY; AND PROPHECIES BELONGING TO THE FOURTEENTH YEAR OF HEZEKIAH'S REIGN, AND THE TIMES IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

Isaiah 36

Isaiah 36–39. To the first six books of Isaiah's prophecies there is now appended a seventh. The six form three syzygies. In the "Book of Hardening," Isa. 1–6 (apart from Isa. 1, which belonged to the times of Uzziah and Jotham), we saw Israel's day of grace brought to an end. In the "Book of Immanuel," Isa. 7–12 (from the time of Ahaz), we saw the judgment of hardening and destruction in its first stage of accomplishment; but Immanuel was pledged that, even if the great mass should perish, neither the whole of Israel nor the house of David would be destroyed. The separate

judgments through which the way was to be prepared for the kingdom of Immanuel, are announced in the "Book concerning the Nations," Isa. 13–23 (from the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah); and the general judgment in which they would issue, and after which a new Israel would triumph, is foretold in the "Book of the great Catastrophe," Isa. 24–27 (after the fifteenth year of Hezekiah). These two syzygies form the first great orbit of the collection. A second opens with the "Book of Woes, or of the Precious Corner-stone," Isa. 28–33 (28–32, from the first years of Hezekiah, and 33 from the fourteenth year), by the side of which is placed the "Book of the Judgment upon Edom, and of the Restoration of Israel," Isa. 34–35 (after Hezekiah's fifteenth year). The former shows how Ephraim succumbs to the power of Asshur, and Judah's trust in Egypt is put to shame; the latter, how the world, with its hostility to the church, eventually succumbs to the vengeance of Jehovah, whereas the church itself is redeemed and glorified. Then follows, in Isa. 36–39, a "Book of Histories," which returns from the ideal distances of Isa. 34–35 to the historical realities of Isa. 33, and begins by stating that "at the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field," where Ahaz had formerly preferred the help of Asshur to that of Jehovah, there stood an embassy from the king of Asshur with a detachment of his army (Isa. 36:2), scornfully demanding the surrender of Jerusalem.

Just as we have found throughout a well-considered succession and dovetailing of the several parts, so here we can see reciprocal bearings, which are both designed and expressive; and it is *à priori* a probable thing that Isaiah, who wrote the historical introduction to the Judaeo-Assyrian drama in the second book, is the author of the concluding act of the same drama, which is here the subject of Book 7. The fact that the murder of Sennacherib is related in Isa. 37:37, 38, in accordance with the prophecy in Isa. 37:7, does not render this impossible, since, according to credible tradition, Isaiah outlived Hezekiah (see p. 28). The assertion made by Hitzig and

others—that the speciality of the prophecy, and the miraculous character of the events recorded in Isa. 36–39, preclude the possibility of Isaiah’s authorship, inasmuch as, “according to a well-known critical rule,” such special prophecies as these are always *vaticinia ex eventu*, and accounts of miracles are always more recent than their historical germ—rests upon a foregone conclusion which was completed before any investigation took place, and which we have good ground for rejecting, although we are well acquainted with the valuable service that has been rendered by this philosopher’s stone. The statement that accounts of miracles as such are never contemporaneous with the events themselves, is altogether at variance with experience; and if the advance from the general to the particular were to be blotted out of Isaiah’s prophecy in relation to Asshur, this would be not only unhistorical, but unpsychological also.

The question whether Isaiah is the author of Isa. 36–39 or not, is bound up with the question whether the original place of these histories is in the book of Isaiah or the book of Kings, where the whole passage is repeated with the exception of Hezekiah’s psalm of thanksgiving (2 Kings 18:13–20:19). We shall find that the text of the book of Kings is in several places the purer and more authentic of the two (though not so much so as a biased prejudice would assume), from which it apparently follows that this section is not in its original position in the book of Isaiah, but has been taken from some other place and inserted there. But this conclusion is a deceptive one. In the relation in which Jer. 52 and 2 Kings 24:18–25 stand to one another, we have a proof that the text of a passage may be more faithfully preserved in a secondary place than in its original one. For in this particular instance it is equally certain that the section relating to king Zedekiah and the Chaldean catastrophe was written by the author of the book of Kings, whose style was formed on that of Deuteronomy, and also, that in the book of Jeremiah it is an appendix taken by an unknown hand from the book of the Kings. But it is also an acknowledged fact, that

the text of Jer. 52 is incomparably the purer of the two, and also that there are many other instances in which the passage in the book of Kings is corrupt—that is to say, in the form in which it lies before us now—whereas the Alexandrian translator had it in his possession in a partially better form. Consequently, the fact that Is. 36–39 is in some respects less pure than 2 Kings 18:13–20:19, cannot be any argument in itself against the originality of this section in the book of Isaiah.

It is indeed altogether inconceivable, that the author of the book of Kings should have written it; for, on the one hand, the liberality of the prophetic addresses communicated point to a written source (see p. 10); and, on the other hand, it is wanting in that Deuteronomic stamp, by which the hand of this author is so easily recognised. Nor can it have been copied by him out of the annals of Hezekiah (*dibhrē hayyâmîm*), as is commonly supposed, since it is written in prophetic and not in annalistic style. Whoever has once made himself acquainted with these two different kinds of historical composition, the fundamentally different characteristics of which we have pointed out in the Introduction (p. 1ff.), can never by any possibility confound them again. And this passage is written in a style so peculiarly prophetic, that, like the magnificent historical accounts of Elijah, for example, which commence so abruptly in 2 Kings 17:1, it must have been taken from some special and prophetic source, which had nothing to do with other prophetic-historical portions of the book of Kings. And the following facts are sufficient to raise the probability, that this source was no other than the book of Isaiah itself, into an absolute certainty. In the *first* place, the author of the book of Kings had the book of Isaiah amongst the different sources, of which his apparatus was composed; this is evident from 2 Kings 16:5, a passage which was written with Isa. 7:1 in view. And *secondly*, we have express, though indirect, testimony to the effect that this section, which treats of the most important epoch in Hezekiah’s reign, is in its original place in the book of Isaiah. The author

of the book of Chronicles says, in 2 Chron. 32:32: "Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and the gracious occurrences of his life, behold, they are written in the vision (*châzôn*) of Isaiah the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel." This notice clearly proves that a certain historical account of Hezekiah had either been taken out of the collection of Isaiah's prophecies, which is headed *châzôn* (vision), and inserted in the "book of the kings of Judah and Israel," or else had been so inserted along with the whole collection. The book of the Kings was the principal source employed by the chronicler, which he calls "the *midrash* of the book of the Kings" in 2 Chron. 24:27. Into this Midrash, or else into the still earlier work upon which it was a commentary, the section in question was copied from the book of Isaiah; and it follows from this, that the writer of the history of the kings made use of our book of Isaiah for one portion of the history of Hezekiah's reign, and made extracts from it. The chronicler himself did not care to repeat the whole section, which he knew to be already contained in the canonical book of Kings (to say nothing of the book of Isaiah). At the same time, his own historical account of Hezekiah in 2 Chron. 27 clearly shows that he was acquainted with it, and also that the historical materials, which the annals supplied to him through the medium of the Midrash, were totally different both in substance and form from those contained in the section in question. These two testimonies are further strengthened by the fact, that Isaiah is well known to us as a historian through another passage in the Chronicles, namely, as the author of a complete history of Uzziah's reign (see p. 25); also by the fact, that the prophetic-historical style of Isa. 36–39, with their fine, noble, pictorial prose, which is comparable to the grandest historical composition to be met with in Hebrew, is worthy of Isaiah, and bears every mark of Isaiah's pen; thirdly, by the fact, that there are other instances in which Isaiah has interwoven historical accounts with his prophecies (Isa. 7–8 and 20), and that in so doing he sometimes speaks of himself in the first person (Isa. 6:1;

8:1–4), and sometimes in the third (Isa. 7:3ff., and 20), just as in Isa. 36–39; and fourthly, by the fact that, as we have already observed, Isa. 7:3 and 36:2 bear the clearest marks of having had one and the same author; and, as we shall also show, the order in which the four accounts in Isa. 36–39 are arranged, corresponds to the general plan of the whole collection of prophecies,—Isa. 36 and 37 looking back to the prophecies of the Assyrian era, and Isa. 38 and 39 looking forwards to those of the Babylonian era, which is the prophet's ideal present from Isa. 40 onwards.

A. First Assyrian Attempt to Compel the Surrender of Jerusalem—Ch. 36–37:7

Isaiah 36:1, 2. Marcus v. Niebuhr, in his *History of Asshur and Babel* (p. 164), says, "Why should not Hezekiah have revolted from Asshur as soon as he ascended the throne? He had a motive for doing this, which other kings had not,—namely, that as he held his kingdom in fief from his God, obedience to a temporal monarch was in his case sin." But this assumption, which is founded upon the same idea as that in which the question was put to Jesus concerning the tribute money, is not at all in accordance with Isaiah's view, as we may see from Isa. 28–32; and Hezekiah's revolt cannot have occurred even in the sixth year of his reign (see p. 33). For Shalmanassar, or rather Sargon, made war upon Egypt and Ethiopia after the destruction of Samaria (Isa. 20; cf., Oppert, *Les Inscriptions des Sargonides*, pp. 22, 27), without attempting anything against Hezekiah. It was not till the time of Sargon, who overthrew the reigning house of Assyria, that the actual preparations for the revolt were commenced, by the formation of an alliance between the kingdom of Judah on the one hand, and Egypt, and probably Philistia, on the other, the object of which was the rupture of the Assyrian yoke. The campaign of Sennacherib the son of Sargon, into which we are transported in the following history, was the third of his expeditions, the one to which Sennacherib himself refers in the inscription upon the prism: "*dans ma 3*

campagne je marchai vers la Syrie.” The position which we find Sennacherib taking up between Philistia and Jerusalem, to the south-west of the latter, is a very characteristic one in relation to both the occasion and the ultimate object of the campaign. Ch. 36:1. “*And it came to pass in the (K. and in the) fourteenth year of king Hizkiyahu, Sancherib king of Asshur came up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them. (K. adds: Then Hizkiyah king of Judah sent to the king of Asshur to Lachish, saying, I have sinned, withdraw from me again; what thou imposest upon me I will raise. And the king of Asshur imposed upon Hizkiyah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. And Hizkiyah gave up all the silver that was in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king’s house. At the same time Hizkiyah mutilated the doors of the temple of Jehovah, and the pillars which Hizkiyah king of Judah had plated with gold, and gave it to the king of Asshur).*” This long addition, which is distinguished at once by the introduction of חזקיהו in the place of חזקיהו, is probably only an annalistic interpolation, though one of great importance in relation to Isa. 33:7. What follows in Isaiah does not dovetail well into this addition, and therefore does not presuppose its existence. V. 2. “*Then the king of Asshur sent Rabshakeh (K.: Tartan, and Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh) from Lachish towards Jerusalem to king Hizkiyahu with a great army, and he advanced (K.: to king H. with a great army to Jerusalem; and they went up and came to Jerusalem, and went up, and came and advanced) to the conduit of the upper pool by the road of the fuller’s field.*” Whereas in K. the repeated ויעלו ויבאו (and went up and came) forms a “dittography,” the names *Tartan* and *Rab-saris* have apparently dropped out of the text of Isaiah, as Isa. 37:6 and 24 presuppose a plurality of messengers. The three names are not names of persons, but official titles, viz., the commander-in-chief (*Tartan*, which really occurs in an Assyrian list of offices; see Rawlinson, *Monarchies*, ii. 412), the chief cup-bearer (רַב־שָׂקָה with *tzere* = רַב־שָׂקָה). The

situation of *Lachish* is marked by the present ruins of *Umm Lakis*, to the south-west of *Bet-Gibrin* ((Eleutheropolis) in the Shephelah. The messengers come from the south-west with the *ultima ratio* of a strong detachment (חיל a connecting form, from חיל, like גִּיא גדולה, Zech. 14:4; Ewald, § 287, a); they therefore halt on the western side of Jerusalem (on the locality, see at Isa. 7:3; 22:8–11; compare Keil on Kings).

Isaiah 36:3–10. Hezekiah’s confidential ministers go there also. V. 3 (K. “*And they called to the king), and there went out to him (K. to them) Eliakim son of Hilkiyahu, the house-minister, and Shebna the chancellor, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder.*” On the office of the house-minister, or major-domo, which was now filled by Eliakim instead of Shebna (שְׁבנָא, K.

twice שְׁבנָא), see Isa. 22:15ff.; and on that of *sōphēr* and *mazkār*, see pp. 5, 6. Rabshakeh’s message follows in vv. 4–10: “*And Rabshakeh said to them, Say now to Hizkiyahu, Thus saith the great king, the king of Asshur, What sort of confidence is this that thou hast got? I say (K. thou sayest, i.e., thou talkest), vain talk is counsel and strength for war: now, then, in whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me? (K. Now) Behold, thou trustest (K. לָךְ) in this broken reed-staff there, in Egypt, on which one leans, and it runs into his hand and pierces it; so does Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. But if thou sayest to me (K. ye say), We trust in Jehovah our God; is it not He whose high places and altars Hizkiyahu has removed, and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before the altar (K. ads, in Jerusalem)? And now take a wager with my lord (K. with) the king of Asshur; I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou art able for thy part to give horsemen upon them. And how couldst thou repel the advance of a single satrap among the least of the servants of my lord?! Thou puttest thy trust then in Egypt for chariots and riders! And (omitted in K.) now have I come up without Jehovah against this land to destroy it (K. against this place, to destroy it)? Jehovah said to me, Go up to (K. against) this land, and destroy it.*” The chronicler has a

portion of this address of Rabshakeh in 2 Chron. 32:10–12. And just as the prophetic words in the book of Kings have a Deuteronomic sound, and those in the Chronicles the ring of a chronicle, so do Rabshakeh's words, and those which follow, sound like the words of Isaiah himself. "The great king" is the standing royal title appended to the names of Sargon and Sennacherib upon the Assyrian monuments (compare Isa. 10:8). Hezekiah is not thought worthy of the title of king, ether here or afterwards. The reading אָמַרְתָּ in v. 5 (thou speakest vain talk) is not the preferable one, because in that case we should expect דַּבַּרְתָּ, or rather (according to the usual style) אָדָּ דַּבַּרְתָּ. The meaning is, that he must look upon Hezekiah's resolution, and his strength (עֲזָה וְגִבּוֹרָה) connected as in Isa. 11:2) for going to war, as mere boasting ("lip-words," as in Prov. 14:23), and must therefore assume that there was something in the background of which he was well aware. And this must be Egypt, which would not only be of no real help to its ally, but would rather do him harm by leaving him in the lurch. The figure of a reed-staff has been borrowed by Ezekiel in Ezek. 29:6, 7. It was a very appropriate one for Egypt, with its abundance of reeds and rushes (Isa. 19:6), and it has Isaiah's peculiar ring (for the expression itself, compare Isa. 42:3; and for the fact itself, Isa. 30:5, and other passages). רָצוּץ does not mean fragile (Luzz. *quella fragil canna*), but broken, namely, in consequence of the loss of the throne by the native royal family, from whom it had been wrested by the Ethiopians (Isa. 18), and the defeats sustained at the hands of Sargon (Isa. 20). The construction *cui quis innitur et intrat* is paratactic for *cui si quis*. In v. 7 the reading תִּאמָרוּן commends itself, from the fact that the sentence is not continued with הִקְיִירְתָּ; but as Hezekiah is addressed throughout, and it is to him that the reply is to be made, the original reading was probably תִּאמָר. The fact that Hezekiah had restricted the worship of Jehovah

to Jerusalem, by removing the other places of worship (2 Kings 18:4), is brought against him in a thoroughly heathen, and yet at the same time (considering the inclination to worship other gods which still existed in the nation) a very crafty manner. In vv. 8, 9, he throws in his teeth, with most imposing scorn, his own weakness as compared with Asshur, which was chiefly dreaded on account of its strength in cavalry and war-chariots. אָ הִתְעַרְבָּ נָא does not refer to the performance and counter-performance which follow, in the sense of "connect thyself" (Luzz. *associati*), but is used in a similar sense to the Omeric *μυγῆνα*, though with the idea of vying with one another, not of engaging in war (the synonym in the Talmud is *himrâh*, to bet, e.g., *b. Sabbath 31a*): a bet and a pledge are kindred notions (Heb. עֲרִבּוֹן, cf., Lat. *vadari*). On *pechâh* (for *pachâh*), which also occurs as an Assyrian title in Ezek. 23:6, 23, see p. 173, note 2. פָּחַת אָחַד, two constructives, the first of which is to be explained according to Ewald, § 286, *a* (compare above, v. 2, חֵיל כְּבֹד), form the logical *regens* of the following *servorum dominin mei minimorum*; and *hēshîbh pnē* does not mean here to refuse a petitioner, but to repel an antagonist (Isa. 28:6). The *fut. consec.* וְתִבְטַח deduces a consequence: Hezekiah could not do anything by himself, and therefore he trusted in Egypt, from which he expected chariots and horsemen. In v. 10, the prophetic idea, that Asshur was the instrument employed by Jehovah (Isa. 10:5, etc.), is put into the mouth of the Assyrian himself. This is very conceivable, but the colouring of Isaiah is undeniable.

Isaiah 36:11. The concluding words, in which the Assyrian boasts of having Jehovah on his side, affect the messengers of Hezekiah in the keenest manner, especially because of the people present. V. 11. "Then said Eliakim (K. *the son of Hilkiyahu*), and Shebna, and Joah, to Rabshakeh, Pray, speak to thy servants in Aramaean, for we understand it; and do not speak to (K. *with*) us in Jewish, in the ears of the people that are on the wall." They spoke

ISAIAH	Page 285
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Yhūdīth, i.e., the colloquial language of the kingdom of Judah. The kingdom of Israel was no longer in existence, and the language of the Israelitish nation, as a whole, might therefore already be called Judaeen (Jewish), as in Neh. 13:24, more especially as there may have been a far greater dialectical difference between the popular speech of the northern and southern kingdoms, than we can gather from the biblical books that were written in the one or the other. Aramaean (*ʾārāmīth*), however, appears to have been even then, as it was at a later period (Ezra 4:7), the language of intercourse between the empire of Eastern Asia and the people to the west of the Tigris (compare Alex. Polyhistor in Euseb. *chron. arm.* i. 43, where Sennacherib is said to have erected a monument with a Chaldean inscription); and consequently educated Judaeans not only understood it, but were able to speak it, more especially those who were in the service of the state. Assyrian, on the contrary, was unintelligible to Judaeans (Isa. 28:11; 33:19), although this applied comparatively less to the true Assyrian dialect, which was Semitic, and can be interpreted for the most part from the Hebrew (see Oppert's "Outlines of an Assyrian Grammar" in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1859), than to the motley language of the Assyrian army, which was a compound of Arian and Turanian elements. The name Sennacherib (*Sanchērībh* = סַנְחֶרִיב, LXX *Sennachēreim*, i.e., "Sin, the moon-god, had multiplied the brethren") is Semitic; on the other hand, the name Tartan, which cannot be interpreted either from the Semitic or the Arian, is an example of the element referred to, which was so utterly strange to a Judaeen ear.

Isaiah 36:12. The harsh reply is given in v. 12. "Then Rabshakeh said (K. *to them*), *Has my lord sent me to (K. הָעַל) the men who sit upon the wall, to eat their dung, and to drink their urine together with you?*"—namely, because their rulers were exposing them to a siege which would involve the most dreadful state of famine.

Isaiah 36:13–20. After Rabshakeh had refused the request of Hezekiah's representatives in

this contemptuous manner, he turned in defiance of them to the people themselves. Vv. 13–20. "Then Rabshakeh went near, and cried with a loud voice in the Jewish language (K. *and spake*), and said, *Hear the words (K. the word) of the great king, the king of Asshur. Thus saith the king, Let not Hizkiahu practise deception upon you (אִשָּׁא, K. יִשְׂא); for he cannot deliver you (K. out of his hand). And let not Hizkiahu feed you with hope in Jehovah, saying, Jehovah will deliver, yea, deliver us: (K. and) this city will not be delivered into the hand of the king of Asshur. Hearken not to Hizkiahu: for thus saith the king (hammelekh, K. melekh) of Asshur, Enter into a connection of mutual good wishes with me, and come out to me: and enjoy every one his vine, and every one his fig-tree, and drink every one the water of his cistern; till I come and take you away into a land like your land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread-corn and vineyards (K. a land full of fine olive-trees and honey, and live and do not die, and hearken not to Hizkiahu); that Hizkiahu to not befool you (K. for he befools you), saying, Jehovah will deliver us! Have the gods of the nations delivered (K. really delivered) every one his land out of the hand of the king of Asshur? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? where the gods of Sepharvayim (K. adds, Hena' and 'Ivah)? and how much less (וְכִי, K. כִּי) have they delivered that Samaria out of my hand? Who were they among all the gods of these (K. of the) lands, who delivered their land out of my hand? how much less will Jehovah deliver Jerusalem out of my hand!?"* The chronicler also has this continuation of Rabshakeh's address in part (2 Chron. 32:13–15), but he has fused into one the Assyrian self-praise uttered by Rabshakeh on his first and second mission. The encouragement of the people, by referring to the help of Jehovah (2 Chron. 32:6–8), is placed by him before this first account is given by Isaiah, and forms a conclusion to the preparations for the contest with Asshur as there described. Rabshakeh now draws nearer to the wall, and harangues the people. הַשִּׂיא is construed here with a dative (to excite

treacherous hopes); whereas in 2 Chron. 32:15 it is written with an accusative. The reading מִיָּדוֹ is altered from מִיָּדִי in v. 20, which is inserted still more frequently by the chronicler. The reading אֶת־הָעִיר with תִּנְתָּן is incorrect; it would require יִתָּן (Ges. § 143, 1a). To make a *brâkhâh* with a person was equivalent to entering into a relation of blessing, i.e., into a state of mind in which each wished all prosperity to the other. This was probably a common phrase, though we only meet with it here. אָצַץ, when applied to the besieged, is equivalent to surrendering (e.g., 1 Sam. 11:3). If they did that, they should remain in quiet possession and enjoyment, until the Assyrian fetched them away (after the Egyptian campaign was over), and transported them to a land which he describes to them in the most enticing terms, in order to soften down the inevitable transportation. It is a question whether the expansion of this picture in the book of Kings is original or not; since הִנֵּץ in v. 19 appears to be also tacked on here from Isa. 37:13 (see at this passage). On *Hamath* and *Arpad* (to the north of Haleb in northern Syria, and a different place from *Arvad* = *Arad*), see Isa. 10:9. *Sepharvayim* (a dual form, the house of the *Spharvîm*, 2 Kings 17:31) is the Sippahra of Ptol. v. 18, 7, the southernmost city of Mesopotamia, on the left bank of the Euphrates; Pliny's *Hipparenum* on the *Narraga*, i.e., the canal, *nhar malkâ'*, the key to the irrigating or inundating works of Babylon, which were completed afterwards by Nebuchadnezzar (Plin. *h. n.* vi. 30); probably the same place as the sun-city, *Sippara*, in which Xisuthros concealed the sacred books before the great flood (see K. Müller's *Fragmenta Historicorum Gr.* ii. 501–2). פָּן in v. 18 has a warning meaning (as if it followed להשמרו לכם); and both וְכִי and כִּי in vv. 19, 20, introduce an exclamatory clause when following a negative interrogatory sentence: and that they should have saved," or "that Jehovah should save," equivalent to "how much less have they saved,

or will He save" (Ewald, § 354, c; comp. אֶף־כִּי, 2 Chron. 32:15). Rabshakeh's words in vv. 18–20 are the same as those in Isa. 10:8–11. The manner in which he defies the gods of the heathen, of Samaria, and last of all of Jerusalem, corresponds to the prophecy there. It is the prophet himself who acts as historian here, and describes the fulfilment of the prophecy, though without therefore doing violence to his character as a prophet.

Isaiah 36:21, 22. The effect of Rabshakeh's words. Vv. 21, 22. "But they held their peace (K. and they, the people, held their peace), and answered him not a word; for it was the king's commandment, saying, Ye shall not answer him. Then came Eliakim son of Hilkiyahu (K. Hilkiyah), the house-minister, and Shebna the chancellor, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hizkiyahu, with torn clothes, and told him the words of Rabshakeh." It is only a superficial observation that could commend the reading in Kings, "They, the people, held their peace," which Hitzig and Knobel prefer, but which Luzzatto very properly rejects. As the Assyrians wished to speak to the king himself (2 Kings 18:18), who sent the three to them as his representatives, the command to hear, and to make no reply, can only have applied to them (and they had already made the matter worse by the one remark which they had made concerning the language); and the reading וַיִּהְיוּ־שֵׁט in the text of Isaiah is the correct one. The three were silent, because the king had imposed the duty of silence upon them; and regarding themselves as dismissed, inasmuch as Rabshakeh had turned away from them to the people, they hastened to the king, rending their clothes, in despair and grief and the disgrace they had experienced.

Isaiah 37

Isaiah 37:1–4. The king and the deputation apply to Isaiah. Ch. 37:1–4. "And it came to pass, when king Hizkiyahu had heard, he rent his clothes, and wrapped himself in mourning linen, and went into the house of Jehovah. And sent Eliakim the house- minister, and Shebna (K.

omits תִּשְׁבֵּר) *the chancellor, and the eldest of the priests, wrapped in mourning linen, to Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet* (K. has what is inadmissible: *the prophet son of Amoz*). *And they said to him, Thus saith Hizkiyahu, A day of affliction, and punishment, and blasphemy is this day; for children are come to the matrix, and there is no strength to bring them forth. Perhaps Jehovah thy God will hear the words* (K. *all the words*) *of Rabshakeh, with which the king of Asshur his lord has sent him to revile the living God; and Jehovah thy God will punish for the words which He hath heard, and thou wilt make intercession for the remnant that still exists.*" The distinguished embassy is a proof of the distinction of the prophet himself (Knobel). The character of the deputation accorded with its object, which was to obtain a consolatory word for the king and people. In the form of the instructions we recognise again the flowing style of Isaiah. תּוֹכַחָה, as a synonym of מוֹסֵר, נִקְּם, is used as in Hos. 5:9; נִאֲצָה (from the *kal* נִאֲצָה) according to Isa. 1:4; 5:24; 52:5, like נִאֲצָה (from the *piel* נִאֲצָה, Neh. 9:18, 26 (reviling, i.e., reviling of God, or blasphemy). The figure of there not being sufficient strength to bring forth the child, is the same as in Isa. 86:9. מִשְׁבֵּר (from שָׁבַר, syn. פָּרַץ, Gen. 38:29) does not signify the actual birth (Luzzatto, *punto di dover nascere*), nor the delivering-stool (Targum), like *mashbēr shel-chayyâh*, the delivering-stool of the midwife (*Kelim* xxiii. 4); but as the subject is the children, and not the mother, the matrix or mouth of the womb, as in Hos. 13:13, "He (Ephraim) is an unwise child; when it is time does he not stop in the children's passage" (*mashbēr bânim*), i.e., the point which a child must pass, not only with its head, but also with its shoulders and its whole body, for which the force of the pains is often not sufficient? The existing condition of the state resembled such unpromising birth-pains, which threatened both the mother and the fruit of the womb with death, because the matrix would not open to give birth to the child. לָדָה like יָדָה in Isa. 11:9.

The timid inquiry, which hardly dared to hope, commences with *'ulai*. The following future is continued in perfects, the force of which is determined by it: "and He (namely Jehovah, the Targum and Syriac) will punish for the words," or, as we point it, "there will punish for the words which He hath heard, Jehovah thy God (*hōkhīāch*, referring to a judicial decision, as in a general sense in Isa. 2:4 and 11:4); and thou wilt lift up prayer" (i.e., begin to offer it, Isa. 14:4). "He will hear," namely as judge and deliverer; "He hath heard," namely as the omnipresent One. The expression, "to revile the living God" (*Ichârēph 'Elōhīm chai*), sounds like a comparison of Rabshakeh to Goliath (1 Sam. 17:26, 36). The "existing remnant" was Jerusalem, which was not yet in the enemy's hand (compare Isa. 1:8, 9). The deliverance of the remnant is a key-note of Isaiah's prophecies. But the prophecy would not be fulfilled, until the grace which fulfilled it had been met by repentance and faith. Hence Hezekiah's weak faith sues for the intercession of the prophet, whose personal relation to God is here set forth as a closer one than that of the king and priests.

Isaiah 37:5-7. Isaiah's reply. Vv. 5-7. "And the servants of king Hizkiyahu came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said to them (אֲלֵיהֶם, K. לָהֶם), *Speak thus to your lord, Thus saith Jehovah, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Asshur have blasphemed me! Behold, I will bring a spirit upon him, and he will hear a hearsay, and return to his land; and I cut him down with the sword in his own land.*" Luzzatto, without any necessity, takes וַיִּאָמְרוּ in v. 3 in the modal sense of what they were to do (*e dovevano dirgli*): they were to say this to him, but he anticipated them at once with the instructions given here. The fact, so far as the style is concerned, is rather this, that v. 5, while pointing back, gives the ground for v. 6: "and when they had come to him (saying this), he said to them." נְעָרֵי we render "servants" (*Knappen*) after Esth. 2:2; 6:3, 5; it is a more contemptuous expression than עֲבָדֵי. The *rūāch*

mentioned here as sent by God is a superior force of a spiritual kind, which influences both thought and conduct, as in such other connections as Isa. 19:14; 28:6; 29:10 (*Psychol.* p. 295, Anm.).

The external occasion which determined the return of Sennacherib, as described in Isa. 37:36, 37, was the fearful mortality that had taken place in his army. The *shmū'âh* (rumour, hearsay), however, was not the tidings of this catastrophe, but, as the continuation of the account in vv. 8, 9, clearly shows, the report of the advance of Tirhakah, which compelled Sennacherib to leave Palestine in consequence of this catastrophe. The prediction of his death is sufficiently special to be regarded by modern commentators, who will admit nothing but the most misty figures as prophecies, as a *vaticinium post eventum*. At the same time, the prediction of the event which would drive the Assyrian out of the land is intentionally couched in these general terms. The faith of the king, and of the inquirers generally, still needed to be tested and exercised. The time had not yet come for him to be rewarded by a clearer and fuller announcement of the judgment.

B. Second Attempt of the Assyrians to Force the Surrender of Jerusalem. Its Miraculous Deliverance.—Ch. 37:8ff.

Isaiah 37:8, 9. Rabshakeh, who is mentioned alone in both texts as the leading person engaged, returns to Sennacherib, who is induced to make a second attempt to obtain possession of Jerusalem, as a position of great strength and decisive importance. Vv. 8, 9. *"Rabshakeh thereupon returned, and found the king of Asshur warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he had withdrawn from Lachish. And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, (K. Behold), he has come out to make war with thee; and heard, and sent (K. and repeated, and sent) messengers to Hizkiyahu, saying." Tirhakah* was cursorily referred to in Isa. 18. The twenty-fifth dynasty of Manetho contained three Ethiopian rulers: *Sabakon,*

Sebichōs (שִׁיחַ = שִׁיחַ, although, so far as we know, the Egyptian names begin with *Sh*), and *Tarakos* (Tarkos), Egypt. *Taharka*, or Heb. with the tone upon the penultimate, *Tirhâqâh*. The only one mentioned by Herodotus is Sabakon, to whom he attributes a reign of fifty years (ii. 139), i.e., as much as the whole three amount to, when taken in a round sum. If Sebichos is the biblical *So'*, to whom the lists attribute from twelve to fourteen years, it is perfectly conceivable that Tirhakah may have been reigning in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. But if this took place, as Manetho affirms, 366 years before the conquest of Egypt by Alexander, i.e., from 696 onwards (and the *Apis-stele*, No. 2037, as deciphered by Vic. de Rougé, *Revue archéol.* 1863, confirms it), it would be more easily reconcilable with the Assyrian chronology, which represents Sennacherib as reigning from 702–680 (Oppert and Rawlinson), than with the current biblical chronology, according to which Hezekiah's fourteenth year is certainly not much later than the year 714. It is worthy of remark also, that Tirhakah is not described as Pharaoh here, but as the king of Ethiopia (*melekh Kūsh*; see at v. 36). Libnah, according to the Onom. a place in *regione Eleutheropolitana*, is probably the same as *Tell es-Safieh* ("hill of the pure" = of the white), to the north-west of *Bet Gibrin*, called *Alba Specula* (*Blanche Garde*) in ten middle ages. The expression וַיִּשְׁמַע ("and he heard"), which occurs twice in the text, points back to what is past, and also prepares the way for what follows: "having heard this, he sent," etc. At the same time it appears to have been altered from וַיִּשְׁמַע.

Isaiah 37:10–13. The message. Vv. 10–13. *"Thus shall ye say to Hizkiyahu king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Asshur. Behold, thou hast surely heard what (K. that which (the kings of Asshur have done to all lands, to lay the ban upon them; and thou, thou shouldst be delivered?! Have the gods of the nations, which my fathers destroyed, delivered them: Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the Bnē-'Eden, which are*

in Tellasar? Where is (K. where is he) the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of 'Ir-Sepharvaim, Hena', and 'Ivah?' Although אֲרָץ is feminine, אֲוֹתָם (K. אֲתָם), like לְהַרְרִימָם, points back to the lands (in accordance with the want of any thoroughly developed distinction of the genders in Hebrew); likewise אֲשָׁר *quas pessumdederunt*. There is historical importance in the fact, that here Sennacherib attributes to his fathers (Sargon and the previous kings of the Derketade dynasty which he had overthrown) what Rabshakeh on the occasion of the first mission had imputed to Sennacherib himself. On Gozan, see p. 33. It is no doubt identical with the Zuzan of the Arabian geographers, which is described as a district of outer Armenia, situated on the *Chabur*, e.g., in the *Meraside*. ("The *Chabur* is the *Chabur* of *el-Hasaniye*, a district of *Mosul*, to the east of the Tigris; it comes down from the mountains of the land of Zuzan, flows through a broad and thickly populated country in the north of *Mosul*, which is called outer Armenia, and empties itself into the Tigris." Ptolemy, on the other hand (v. 18, 14), is acquainted with a Mesopotamian *Gauzanitis*; and, looking upon northern Mesopotamia as the border land of Armenia, he says, κατέχει δὲ τῆς χώρας τὰ μὲν πρὸς τῇ Ἀρμενίᾳ ἢ Ἀνθεμουσίᾳ (not far from Edessa) ὑφ' ἣν ἡ Χαλκίτις ὑπὸ δὲ ταύτῃ ἢ Γαυζανίτις, possibly the district of *Gulzan*, in which *Nisibin*, the ancient *Nisibis*, still stands. For *Hârân* (Syr. *Horon*; Joseph. *Charran* of Mesopotamia), the present *Harrân*, not far from *Charmelik*, see *Genesis*, p. 327. The *Harran* in the *Guta* of Damascus (on the southern arm of the *Harus*), which Beke has recently identified with it, is not connected with it in any way. *Retseph* is the *Rhesapha* of Ptol. v. 18, 6, below Thapsacus, the present *Rusafa* in the Euphrates-valley of *ez-Zor*, between the Euphrates and Tadmur (Palmyra; see Robinson, *Pal.*). *Telassar*, with which the Targum (ii. iii.) and Syr. confound the Ellasar of Gen. 14:1, i.e., Artemita (Artamita), is not the *Thelseae* of the *Itin. Antonini* and of the *Notitia dignitatum*,—in which case the *Bnē-'Eden* might be the tribe of

Bêt Genn (Bettegene) on the southern slope of Lebanon (i.e., the 'Eden of Coelesyria, Amos 1:5; the *Paradeisos* of Ptol. v. 15, 20; *Paradisus*, Plin. v. 19),—but the *Thelser* of the *Tab. Peuting.*, on the eastern side of the Tigris; and *Bnē 'Eden* is the tribe of the 'Eden mentioned by Ezekiel (Ezek. 27:23) after Haran and Ctesiphon. Consequently the enumeration of the warlike deeds describes a curve, which passes in a north-westerly direction through Hamath and Arpad, and then returns in Sepharvaim to the border of southern Mesopotamia and Babylonia. 'Ir-Spharvaim is like 'Ir-Nâchâsh, 'Ir-Shemesh, etc. The legends connect the name with the sacred books. The form of the name is inexplicable; but the name itself probably signifies the double shore (after the Aramaean), as the city, which was the southernmost of the leading places of Mesopotamia, was situated on the Euphrates. The words הִנֵּעַ וְעָנָה, if not take as proper names, would signify, "he has taken away, and overthrown;" but in that case we should expect הִנֵּעוּ וְעָנּוּ or הִנֵּעְתִּי וְעָנִיתִי. They are really the names of cities which it is no longer possible to trace. *Hena'* is hardly the well-known *Avatho* on the Euphrates, as Gesenius, v. Niebuhr, and others suppose; and 'Ivah, the seat of the *Avvîm* (2 Kings 17:31), agrees still less, so far as the sound of the word is concerned, with "the province of *Hebeh* (? *Hebeb*: Ritter, *Erchk.* xi. 707), situated between *Anah* and the *Chabur* on the Euphrates," with which v. Niebuhr combines it.

Isaiah 37:14, 15. This intimidating message, which declared the God of Israel to be utterly powerless, was conveyed by the messengers of Sennacherib in the form of a letter. Vv. 14, 15. "And *Hizkiyahu* took the letter out of the hand of the messengers, and read it (K. read them), and went up to the house of *Jehovah*; and *Hizkiyahu* spread it before *Jehovah*." *Sphârîm* (the sheets) is equivalent to *the letter* (not a letter *in duplo*), like *literae* (cf., *grammata*). וְיִקְרָאֶהוּ (changed by K. into קָרָא) is construed according to the singular idea. Thenius regards this spreading out of the letter as a *naiveté*; and Gesenius even

goes so far as to speak of the praying machines of the Buddhists. But it was simply prayer without words—an act of prayer, which afterwards passed into vocal prayer. Vv. 16–20. “*And Hizkiyahu prayed to (K. before) Jehovah, saying (K. and said), Jehovah of hosts (K. omits tsbhâ’ôth), God of Israel, enthroned upon the cherubim, Thou, yea Thou alone, art God of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth. Incline Thine ear, Jehovah, and year (וּשְׁמָעַי, various reading in both texts וּשְׁמָעַי) Open Thine eyes (K. with Yod of the plural), Jehovah, and see; and hear the K. all the words of Sennacherib, which he hath sent (K. with which he hath sent him, i.e., Rabshakeh) to despise the living God! Truly, O Jehovah, the kings of Asshur have laid waste all lands, and their land (K. the nations and their land), and have put (vnâthôn, K. vnâthnū) their gods into the fire: for they were not gods, only the work of men’s hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. And now, Jehovah our God, help us (K. adds pray) out of his hand, and all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou Jehovah (K. Jehovah Elohim) art it alone.*” On כְּרֻבִים (no doubt the same word as γρυπές, though not fabulous beings like these, but a symbolical representation of heavenly beings), see my *Genesis*, p. 626; and on *yōshēbh hakkrubhīm* (enthroned on the cherubim), see at Ps. 18:11 and 80:2. אֶתְּהִי הוּא in הוּא is an emphatic repetition, that is to say a strengthening, of the subject, like Isa. 43:25; 51:12, 2 Sam. 7:28, Jer. 49:12, Ps. 44:5, Neh. 9:6, 7, Ezra 5:11: *tu ille* (not *tu es ille*, Ges. § 121, 2) = *tu, nullus alius*. Such passages as Isa. 41:4, where הוּא is the predicate, do not belong here. עֵינַי is not a singular (like עֵינִי in Ps. 32:8, where the LXX have עֵינִי), but a defective plural, as we should expect after *pâqach*. On the other hand, the reading *shlâchō* (“hath sent him”), which cannot refer to *dbhârīm* (the words), but only to the person bringing the written message, is to be rejected. Moreover, Knobel cannot help giving up his preference for the reading *vnâthôn* (compare Gen. 41:43; Ges. § 131, 4a);

just as, on the other hand, we cannot help regarding the reading אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת וְאֶת־אֲרָצָם as a mistake, when compared with the reading of the book of Kings. Abravanel explains the passage thus: “The Assyrians have devastated the lands, and *their own land*” (cf., Isa. 14:20), of which we may find examples in the list of victories given above; compare also *Beth-Arbel* in Hos. 10:14, if this is *Irbil* on the Tigris, from which Alexander’s second battle in Persia, which was really fought at Gaugamela, derived its name. But how does this tally with the fact that they threw the gods of these lands—that is to say, of their own land also (for אֱלֹהֵיהֶם could not possibly refer to הָאֲרָצוֹת, to the exclusion of אֲרָצָם)—into the fire? If we read *haggōyīm* (the nations), we get rid both of the reference to their own land, which is certainly purposeless here, and also of the otherwise inevitable conclusion that they burned the gods of their own country. The reading הָאֲרָצוֹת appears to have arisen from the fact, that after the verb הָרַיב the lands appeared to follow more naturally as the object, than the tribes themselves (compare, however, Isa. 60:12). The train of thought is the following: The Assyrians have certainly destroyed nations and their gods, because these gods were nothing but the works of men: do Thou then help us, O Jehovah, that the world may see that Thou alone art it, viz., God (*‘Elōhīm*, as K. adds, although, according to the accents, Jehovah Elohim are connected together, as in the books of Samuel and Chronicles, and very frequently in the mouth of David: see *Symbolae in Psalmos*, pp. 15, 16).

Isaiah 37:21, 22a. The prophet’s reply. Vv. 21, 22a. “*And Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hizkiyahu, saying, Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me concerning Sennacherib the king of Asshur (K. adds, I have heard): this is the utterance which Jehovah utters concerning him.*” He sent, i.e., sent a message, viz., by one of his disciples (*limmūdīm*, Isa. 8:16). According to the text of

Isaiah, אָשָׁר would commence the protasis to זֶה הַדְּבָר (as for that which—this is the utterance); or, as the *Vav* of the apodosis is wanting, it might introduce relative clauses to what precedes (“I, to whom:” Ges. § 123, 1, Anm. 1). But both of these are very doubtful. We cannot dispense with שָׁמַעְתִּי (I have heard), which is given by both the LXX and Syr. in the text of Isaiah, as well as that of Kings.

Isaiah 37:22b, 23. The prophecy of Isaiah which follows here, is in all respects one of the most magnificent that we meet with. It proceeds with strophe-like strides on the *cothurnus* of the Deborah style: Vv. 22b, 23. “The virgin daughter of Zion despiseth thee, laugheth thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem shaketh her head after thee. Whom hast thou reviled and blasphemed, and over whom hast thou spoken loftily, that thou hast lifted up thine eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel.” The predicate is written at the head, in v. 22b, in the masculine, i.e., without any precise definition; since בָּזָה is a verb לִיָּה, and neither the participle nor the third pers. fem. of בָּזָה. Zion is called a virgin, with reference to the shame with which it was threatened though without success (Isa. 23:12); *bthūlath bath* are subordinate appositions, instead of co-ordinate. With a contented and heightened self-consciousness, she shakes her head behind him as he retreats with shame, saying by her attitude, as she moves her head backwards and forwards, that it must come to this, and could not be otherwise (Jer. 18:16; Lam. 2:15, 16). The question in v. 23 reaches as far as עֵינַיִךְ, although, according to the accents, v. 23 is an affirmative clause: “and thou turnest thine eyes on high against the Holy One of Israel” (Hitzig, Ewald, Drechsler, and Keil). The question is put for the purpose of saying to Asshur, that He at whom they scoff is the God of Israel, whose pure holiness breaks out into a consuming fire against all by whom it is dishonoured. The *fut. cons.* וְתִשָּׂא is essentially the same as in Isa. 51:12, 13, and מְרוֹם is the same as in Isa. 40:26.

Isaiah 37:24. Second turn, v. 24. “By thy servants (K. *thy messengers*) hast thou reviled the Lord, in that thou sayest, With the multitude (K. *chethib* בִּרְכַב) of my chariots have I climbed the height of the mountains, the inner side of Lebanon; and I shall fell the lofty growth of its cedars, the choice (*mibhchar*, (K. *mibhchōr*) of its cypresses: and I shall penetrate (K. *and will penetrate*) to the height (K. *the halting-place*) of its uttermost border, the grove of its orchard.” The other text appears, for the most part, the preferable one here. Whether *mal’ākhekhā* (thy messengers, according to Isa. 9:14) or *’ābhādekhā* (thy servants, viz., Rabshakeh, Tartan, and Rabsaris) is to be preferred, may be left undecided; also whether רַכְבֵי רַכְבֵי is an error or a superlative expression, “with chariots of my chariots,” i.e., my countless chariots; also, thirdly, whether Isaiah wrote *mibhchōr*. He uses *mistōr* in Isa. 4:6 for a special reason; but such obscure forms befit in other instances the book of Kings, with its colouring of northern Palestine; and we also meet with *mibhchōr* in 2 Kings 3:19, in the strongly Aramaic first series of histories of Elisha. On the other hand, מְלוֹן קֶצֶה is certainly the original reading, in contrast with מְרוֹם קֶצֶה. It is important, as bearing upon the interpretation of the passage, that both texts have וְאִכְרַת, not וְאִכְרַת, and that the other text confirms this pointing, inasmuch as it has וְאִבּוֹאָה instead of וְאִבּוֹאָה. The Lebanon here, if not purely emblematical (as in Jer. 22:6 = the royal city Jerusalem; Ezek. 17:3 = Judah-Jerusalem), has at any rate a synecdochical meaning (cf., 14:8), signifying the land of Lebanon, i.e., the land of Israel, into which he had forced a way, and all the fortresses and great men of which he would destroy. He would not rest till Jerusalem, the most renowned height of the land of Lebanon, was lying at his feet. Thenius is quite right in regarding the “resting-place of the utmost border” and “the pleasure-garden wood” as containing allusions to the holy city and its

royal citadel (compare the allegory in Isa. 5, pp. 107–8).

Isaiah 37:25. Third turn, v. 25. “*I, I have digged and drunk (K. foreign) waters, and will make dry with the sole of my feet all the Nile-arms* (יָאֲרֵי, K. יָאוּרֵי) *of Matsor.*” If we take עָלִיתִי in v. 24 as a perfect of certainty, v. 25a would refer to the overcoming of the difficulties connected with the barren sandy steppe on the way to Egypt (viz., *et-Tih*); but the perfects stand out against the following futures, as statements of what was actually past. Thus, in places where there were no waters at all, and it might have been supposed that his army would inevitably perish, there he had dug them (*qūr*, from which *mâqōr* is derived, *fodere*; not *scaturire*, as Luzzatto supposes), and had drunk up these waters, which had been called up, as if by magic, upon foreign soil; and in places where there were waters, as in Egypt (*mâtsōr* is used in Isaiah and Micah for *mitsrayim*, with a play upon the appellative meaning of the word: an enclosing fence, a fortifying girdle: see Ps. 31:22), the Nile-arms and canals of which appeared to bar all farther progress, it was an easy thing for him to set at nought all these opposing hindrances. The Nile, with its many arms, was nothing but a puddle to him, which he trampled out with his feet.

Isaiah 37:26, 27. And yet what he was able to do was not the result of his own power, but of the counsel of God, which he subserved. Fourth turn, vv. 26, 27. “*Hast thou not heart? I have done it long ago, from (K. lmin, since) the days of ancient time have I formed it, and now brought it to pass* (הִבִּיאֲתִיהָ, L. הִבֵּאתִיהָ): *that thou shouldst lay waste fortified cities into desolate stone heaps; and their inhabitants, powerless, were terrified, and were put to shame* (וַיִּבְשׂוּ, K. וַיִּבְשׂוּ): *became herb of the field and green of the turf, herb of the house-tops, and a corn-field* (וַיִּשְׂדְּמָה, K. and *blighted corn*) *before the blades.*” *L’mērâchōq* (from afar) is not to be connected with the preceding words, but according to the parallel with those which follow. The historical reality, in this instance the Assyrian judgment

upon the nations, had had from all eternity an ideal reality in God (see at Isa. 22:11). The words are addressed to the Assyrian; and as his instrumentality formed the essential part of the divine purpose, וַיִּתְּהִי does not mean “there should,” but “thou shouldst,” ἔμελλες ἐξήρημεῶσαι (cf., Isa. 44:14, 15, and Hab. 1:17). K. has לְהַשׂוֹת instead of לְהַשְׂוֹת (though not as *chethib*, in which case it would have to be pointed לְהַשׂוֹת), a singularly syncopated *hiphil* (for לְהַשְׂוֹת). The point of comparison in the four figures is the facility with which they can be crushed. The nations in the presence of the Assyrian became, as it were, weak, delicate grasses, with roots only rooted in the surface, or like a cornfield with the stalk not yet formed (*shdēmâh*, Isa. 16:8), which could easily be rooted up, and did not need to be cut down with the sickle. This idea is expressed still more strikingly in Kings, “like corn blighted (*shdēphâh*, compare *shiddâphōn*, corn-blight) before the shooting up of the stalk;” the Assyrian being regarded as a parching east wind, which destroys the seed before the stalk is formed.

Isaiah 37:28, 29. Asshur is Jehovah’s chosen instrument while thus casting down the nations, which are “short-handed against him,” i.e., incapable of resisting him. But Jehovah afterwards places this lion under firm restraint; and before it has reached the goal set before it, He leads it back into its own land, as if with a ring through its nostril. Fifth turn, vv. 28, 29. “*And thy sitting down, and thy going out, and thy entering in, I know; and thy heating thyself against me. On account of thy heating thyself against me, and because thy self-confidence has risen up into mine ears, I put my ring into thy nose, and my muzzle into thy lips, and lead thee back by the way by which thou hast come.*” Sitting down and rising up (Ps. 139:2), going out and coming in (Ps. 121:8), denote every kind of human activity. All the thoughts and actions, the purposes and undertakings of Sennacherib, more especially with regard to the people of Jehovah, were under divine control.

שֶׁן is followed by the infinitive, which is then continued in the finite verb, just as in Isa. 30:12. שֶׁן אֲנִי (another reading, שֶׁן אֲנִי) is used as a substantive, and denotes the Assyrians' complacent and scornful self-confidence (Ps. 123:4), and has nothing to do with שֶׁן אֲנִי (Targum, Abulw., Rashi, Kimchi, Rosenmüller, Luzzatto). The figure of the leading away with a nose-ring (*chachī* with a latent *dagesh*, אָחַח to prick, hence *chōäch*, Arab. *chôch*, *chôcha*, a narrow slit, literally means a cut or aperture) is repeated in Ezek. 38:4. Like a wild beast that had been subdued by force, the Assyrian would have to return home, without having achieved his purpose with Judah (or with Egypt).

Isaiah 37:30. The prophet now turns to Hezekiah. V. 30. "And let this be a sign to thee, Men eat this year what is self-sown; and in the second year what springs from the roots (*shâchīs*, K. *sâchīsh*); and in the third year they sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat (*chethib* אָכַל) their fruit." According to Thenius, *hasshânâh* (this year) signifies the first year after Sennacherib's invasions, *hasshânâh hasshênîth* (the second year) the current year in which the words were uttered by Hezekiah, *hasshânâh hasshlishîth* (the third year) the year that was coming in which the land would be cleared of the enemy. But understood in this way, the whole would have been no sign, but simply a prophecy that the condition of things during the two years was to come to an end in the third. It would only be a "sign" if the second year was also still in the future. By *hasshânâh*, therefore, we are to understand what the expression itself requires (cf., Isa. 29:1; 32:10), namely the current year, in which the people had been hindered from cultivating their fields by the Assyrian who was then in the land, and therefore had been thrown back upon the *sâphîäch*, i.e., the after growth (ἀυτόματα LXX, the self-sown), or crop which had sprung up from the fallen grains of the previous harvest (from *sâphach*, *adjicere*, see at Hab. 2:15; or, according to others, *effundere*, see p. 107). It was autumn at the time when Isaiah gave this

sign (Isa. 33:9), and the current civil year was reckoned from one autumnal equinox to the other, as, for example, in Ex. 23:16, where the feast of tabernacles or harvest festival is said to fall at the close of the year; so that if the fourteenth year of Hezekiah was the year 714, the current year would extend from Tishri 714 to Tishri 713. But if in the next year also, 713–712, there was no sowing and reaping, but the people were to eat *shâchīs*, i.e., that which grew of itself (ἀυτόφους, Aq., Theod.), and that very sparingly, not from the grains shed at the previous harvest, but from the roots of the wheat, we need not assume that this year, 713–712, happened to be a sabbatical year, in which the law required all agricultural pursuits to be suspended. It is very improbable in itself that the prophet should have included a circumstance connected with the calendar in his "sign;" and, moreover, according to the existing chronological data, the year 715 had been a sabbatical year (see Hitzig). It is rather presupposed, either that the land would be too thoroughly devastated and desolate for the fields to be cultivated and sown (Keil); or, as we can hardly imagine such an impossibility as this, if we picture to ourselves the existing situation and the kind of agriculture common in Palestine, that the Assyrian would carry out his expedition to Egypt in this particular year (713–12), and returning through Judah, would again prevent the sowing of the corn (Hitzig, Knobel). But in the third year, that is to say the year 712–11, freedom and peace would prevail again, and there would be nothing more to hinder the cultivation of the fields or vineyards. If this should be the course of events during the three years, it would be a sign to king Hezekiah that the fate of the Assyrian would be no other than that predicated. The year 712–11 would be the peremptory limit appointed him, and the year of deliverance.

Isaiah 37:31, 32. Seventh turn, vv. 31, 32. "And that which is escaped of the house of Judah, that which remains will again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For from Jerusalem will a remnant go forth, and a fugitive from Mount Zion; the zeal of Jehovah of hosts (K. *chethib*

omits *tsbhâ'ôth*) will carry this out." The agricultural prospect of the third year shapes itself there into a figurative representation of the fate of Judah. Isaiah's watchword, "a remnant shall return," is now fulfilled; Jerusalem has been spared, and becomes the source of national rejuvenation. You year the echo of Isa. 5:24; 9:6, and also of Isa. 27:6. The word *tsbhâ'ôth* is wanting in Kings, here as well as in v. 17; in fact, this divine name is, as a rule, very rare in the book of Kings, where it only occurs in the first series of accounts of Elijah (1 Kings 18:15; 19:10, 14; cf., 2 Kings 3:14).

Isaiah 37:33–35. The prophecy concerning the protection of Jerusalem becomes more definite in the last turn than it ever has been before. Vv. 33–35. *"Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the king of Asshur, He will not enter into this city, nor shoot off an arrow there; nor do they assault it with a shield, nor cast up earthworks against it. By the way by which he came (K. will come) will he return; and he will not enter into this city, saith Jehovah. And I shield this city (על, K. לֹאֵ), to help it, for mine own sake, and for the sake of David my servant."* According to Hitzig, this conclusion belongs to the later reporter, on account of its "suspiciously definite character." Knobel, on the other hand, sees no reason for disputing the authorship of Isaiah, inasmuch as in all probability the pestilence had already set in (Isa. 33:24), and threatened to cripple the Assyrian army very considerably, so that the prophet began to hope that Sennacherib might now be unable to stand against the powerful Ethiopian king. To us, however, the words "Thus saith Jehovah" are something more than a flower of speech; and we hear the language of a man exalted above the standard of the natural man, and one how has been taken, as Amos says (Amos 3:7), by God, the moulder of history into "His secret." Here also we see the prophecy at its height, towards which it has been ascending from Isa. 6:13 and 10:33, 34 onwards, through the midst of obstacles accumulated by the moral condition of the nation, but with the same goal invariably in view. The Assyrian will not storm Jerusalem; there will not even be

preparations for a siege. The verb *qiddēm* is construed with a double accusative, as in Ps. 21:4: *sōllâh* refers to the earthworks thrown up for besieging purposes, as in Jer. 32:24. The reading יבא instead of אבא has arisen in consequence of the eye having wandered to the following יבא. The promise in v. 35a sounds like Isa. 31:5. The reading אָל for עַל is incorrect. One motive assigned ("for my servant David's sake") is the same as in 1 Kings 15:4, etc.; and the other ("for mine own sake") the same as in Isa. 43:25; 48:11 (compare, however, Isa. 55:3 also). On the one hand, it is in accordance with the honour and faithfulness of Jehovah, that Jerusalem is delivered; and, on the other hand, it is the worth of David, or, what is the same thing, the love of Jehovah turned towards him, of which Jerusalem reaps the advantage.

Isaiah 37:36–38. To this culminating prophecy there is now appended an account of the catastrophe itself. Vv. 36–38. *"Then (K. And it came to pass that night, that) the angel of Jehovah went forth and smote (vayyakkeh, K. vayyakh) in the camp of Asshur a hundred and eight-five thousand; and when men rose up in the morning, behold, they were all lifeless corpses. Then Sennacherib king of Asshur decamped, and went forth and returned, and settled down in Nineveh. And it cam to pass, as he was worshipping in the temple of Miroch, his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons (L. chethib omits 'his sons') smote him with the sword; and when they escaped to the land of Ararat, Esarhaddon ascended the throne in his stead."* The first pair of histories closes here with a short account of the result of the Assyrian drama, in which Isaiah's prophecies were most gloriously fulfilled: not only the prophecies immediately preceding, but all the prophecies of the Assyrian era since the time of Ahaz, which pointed to the destruction of the Assyrian forces (e.g., 10:33–4), and to the flight and death of the king of Assyrian (Isa. 31:9; 30:33). If we look still further forward to the second pair of histories (Isa. 38–39), we see from Isa. 38:6 that it is only by anticipation that the account of these closing events is finished

here; for the third history carries us back to the period before the final catastrophe. We may account in some measure for the haste and brevity of this closing historical fragment, from the prophet's evident wish to finish up the history of the Assyrian complications, and the prophecy bearing upon it. But if we look back, there is a gap between Isa. 37:36 and the event narrated here. For, according to v. 30, there was to be an entire year of trouble between the prophecy and the fulfilment, during which the cultivation of the land would be suspended. What took place during that year? There can be no doubt that Sennacherib was engaged with Egypt; for (1) when he made his second attempt to get Jerusalem into his power, he had received intelligence of the advance of Tirhakah, and therefore had withdrawn the centre of his army from Lachish, and encamped before Libnah (Isa. 37:8, 9); (2) according to Josephus (Ant. x. 1, 4), there was a passage of Berosus, which has been lost, in which he stated that Sennacherib "made an expedition against all Asia and Egypt;" (3) Herodotus relates (ii. 141) that, after Anysis the blind, who lost his throne for fifty years in consequence of an invasion of Egypt by the Ethiopians under Sabakoa, but who recovered it again, Sethon the priest of Hephaestus ascended the throne. The priestly caste was so oppressed by him, that when Sanacharibos, the king of the Arabians and Assyrians, led a great army against Egypt, they refused to perform their priestly functions. but the priest-king went into the temple to pray, and his God promised to help him. He experienced the fulfilment of this prophecy before Pelusium, where the invasion was to take place, and where he awaited the foe with such as continued true to him. "Immediately after the arrival of Sanacharibos, an army of field-mice swarmed throughout the camp of the foe, and devoured their quivers, bows, and shield-straps, so that when morning came on they had to flee without arms, and lost many men in consequence. This is the origin of the stone of Sethon in the temple of Hephaestus (at Memphis), which is standing there still, with a mouse in one hand, and with this inscription:

Whosoever looks at me, let him fear the gods!" This Σέθως (possibly the *Zet* whose name occurs in the lists at the close of the twenty-third dynasty, and therefore in the wrong place) is to be regarded as one of the Saitic princes of the twenty-sixth dynasty, who seem to have ruled in Lower Egypt contemporaneously with the Ethiopians (as, in fact, is stated in a passage of the Armenian Eusebius, *Aethiopas et Saitas regnasse aiunt eodem tempore*), until they succeeded at length in ridding themselves of the hateful supremacy. Herodotus evidently depended in this instance upon the hearsay of Lower Egypt, which transferred the central point of the Assyrian history to their own native princely house. The question, whether the disarming of the Assyrian army in front of Pelusium merely rested upon a legendary interpretation of the mouse in Sethon's hand, which may possibly have been originally intended as a symbol of destruction; or whether it was really founded upon an actual occurrence which was exaggerated in the legend, may be left undecided.

But it is a real insult to Isaiah, when Thenius and G. Rawlinson place the scene of v. 36 at Pelusium, and thus give the preference to Herodotus. Has not Isaiah up to this point constantly prophesied that the power of Asshur was to be broken in the holy mountain land of Jehovah (Isa. 14:25), that the Lebanon forest of the Assyrian army would break to pieces before Jerusalem (Isa. 10:32-34), and that there the Assyrian camp would become the booty of the inhabitants of the city, and that without a conflict? And is not the catastrophe that would befall Assyria described in Isa. 18 as an act of Jehovah, which would determine the Ethiopians to do homage to God who was enthroned upon Zion? We need neither cite 2 Chron. 32:21 nor Ps. 76 (LXX ὁδὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἀσσύριον), according to which the weapons of Asshur break to pieces upon Jerusalem; Isaiah's prophecies are quite sufficient to prove, that to force this Pelusiac disaster into v. 36 is a most thoughtless concession to Herodotus. The final catastrophe occurred before Jerusalem, and the account in

Herodotus gives us no certain information even as to the issue of the Egyptian campaign, which took place in the intervening year. Such a gap as the one which occurs before v. 36 is not without analogy in the historical writings of the Bible; see, for example, Num. 20:1, where an abrupt leap is made over the thirty-seven years of the wanderings in the desert. The abruptness is not affected by the addition of the clause in the book of Kings, "It came to pass that night." For, in the face of the "sign" mentioned in v. 30, this cannot mean "in that very night" (viz., the night following the answer given by Isaiah); but (unless it is a careless interpolation) it must refer to vv. 33, 34, and mean *illa nocte*, viz., the night in which the Assyrian had encamped before Jerusalem. The account before us reads just like that of the slaying of the first-born in Egypt (Ex. 12:12; 11:4). The plague of Egypt is marked as a pestilence by the use of the word *nâgaph* in connection with *hikkâh* in Ex. 12:23, 13 (compare Amos 4:10, where it seems to be alluded to under the name *דִּבְרָה*); and in the case before us also we cannot think of anything else than a divine judgment of this kind, which even to the present day defies all attempts at an aetiological solution, and which is described in 2 Sam. 24 as effected through the medium of angels, just as it is here. Moreover, the concise brevity of the narrative leaves it quite open to assume, as Hensler and others do, that the ravages of the pestilence in the Assyrian army, which carried off thousands in the night (Ps. 91:6), even to the number of 185,000, may have continued for a considerable time. The main thing is the fact that the prophecy in Isa. 31:8 was actually fulfilled. According to Josephus (Ant. x. 1, 5), when Sennacherib returned from his unsuccessful Egyptian expedition, he found the detachment of his army, which he had left behind in Palestine, in front of Jerusalem, where a pestilential disease sent by God was making great havoc among the soldiers, and that on the very first night of the siege. The three verses, "he broke up, and went away, and returned home," depict the hurried character of the retreat, like "*abiit excessit evasit erupit*" (Cic. ii. *Catil. init.*). The form of the sentence in v. 38

places Sennacherib's act of worship and the murderous act of his sons side by side, as though they had occurred simultaneously. The connection would be somewhat different if the reading had been *וַיִּכְרֶהוּ* (cf., Ewald, § 341, a).

Nisroch apparently signifies the eagle-like, or hawk-like (from *nisr*, *neshar*), possibly like "*Arioch* from *'ārī*. (The LXX transcribe it *νασαραχ*, A. *ασαραχ*, *ασαρακ* (K. *ἐσθραχ*, where B. has *μεσεραχ*), and explorers of the monuments imagined at one time that they had discovered this god as *Asarak*; but they have more recently retracted this, although there really is a hawk-headed figure among the images of the Assyrian deities or genii. The name has nothing to do with that of the supreme Assyrian deity, *Asur*, *Asshur*. A better derivation of *Nisroch* would be from *שָׂרָד, שָׂרָד, שָׂרָד*; and this is confirmed by Oppert, who has discovered among the inscriptions in the harem of Khorsabad a prayer of Sargon to Nisroch, who appears there, like the Hymen of Greece, as the patron of marriage, and therefore as a "uniter." The name *'Adrammelekh* (a god in 2 Kings 17:31) signifies, as we now know, *gloriosus ('addir) est rex;*" and *Sharetser* (for which we should expect to find *Saretser*), *dominator tuebitur*. The Armenian form of the latter name (in Moses Chroen. i. 23), *San-asar* (by the side of *Adramel*, who is also called *Arcamozan*), probably yields the original sense of "*Lunus (the moon-god Sin) tuebitur.*" Polyhistorus (in Euseb. *chron. arm.* p. 19), on the authority of Berossus, mentions only the former, *Ardumuzan*, as the murderer, and gives eighteen years as the length of Sennacherib's reign. The murder did not take place immediately after his return, as Josephus says (Ant. x. 1, 5; cf., Tobit i. 21–25, Vulg.); and the expression used by Isaiah, he "dwelt (settled down) in Nineveh," suggests the idea of a considerable interval. This interval embraced the suppression of the rebellion in Babylon, where Sennacherib made his son *Asordan* king, and the campaign in Cilicia (both from Polyhistorus), and also, according to the

monuments, wars both by sea and land with Susiana, which supported the Babylonian thirst for independence. The *Asordan* of Polyhistorus is *Esar-haddon* (also written without the *makkeph*, *Esarhaddon*), which is generally supposed to be the Assyrian form of אֲשׁוּר־אֶחָד־יָדִין, *Assur fratrem dedit*. It is so difficult to make the chronology tally here, that Oppert, on Isa. 36:1, proposes to alter the fourteenth year into the twenty-ninth, and Rawlinson would alter it into the twenty-seventh. They both of them assign to king Sargon a reign of seventeen (eighteen) years, and to Sennacherib (in opposition to Polyhistorus) a reign of twenty-three (twenty-four) years; and they both agree in giving 680 as the year of Sennacherib's death. This brings us down below the first decade of Manasseh's reign, and would require a different author from Isaiah for vv. 37, 38. But the accounts given by Polyhistorus, Abydenus, and the astronomical canon, however we may reconcile them among themselves, do not extend the reign of Sennacherib beyond 693. It is true that even then Isaiah would have been at least about ninety years old. But the tradition which represents him as dying a martyr's death in the reign of Manasseh, does really assign him a most unusual old age. Nevertheless, vv. 37, 38 may possibly have been added by a later hand. The two parricides fled to the "land of Ararat," i.e., to Central Armenia. The Armenian history describes them as the founders of the tribes of the Sassunians and Arzerunians. From the princely house of the latter, among whom the name of Sennacherib was a very common one, sprang Leo the Armenian, whom Genesios describes as of Assyrio-Armenian blood. If this were the case, there would be no less than ten Byzantine emperors who were descendants of Sennacherib, and consequently it would not be till a very late period that the prophecy of Nahum was fulfilled.

Isaiah 38

Hezekiah's Illness. Isaiah Assures Him of His Recovery

Isaiah 38:1-3. There is nothing to surprise us in the fact that we are carried back to the time when Jerusalem was still threatened by the Assyrian, since the closing verses of Isa. 37 merely contain an anticipatory announcement, introduced for the purpose of completing the picture of the last Assyrian troubles, by adding the fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction of their termination. It is within this period, and indeed in the year of the Assyrian invasion (Isa. 36:1), since Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, and fifteen of these are promised here, that the event described by Isaiah falls,—an event not merely of private interest, but one of importance in connection with the history of the nation also.—Vv. 1-3. *"In those days Hizkiyahu became dangerously ill. And Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet, came to him, and said to him, Thus saith Jehovah, Set thine house in order: for thou wilt die, and not recover. Then Hizkiyahu turned (K. om.) his face to the wall, and prayed to Jehovah, and said (K. saying), O Jehovah, remember this, I pray, that I have walked before thee in truth, and with the whole heart, and have done what was good in Thine eyes! And Hizkiyahu wept with loud weeping."* "Give command to thy house" (לְ, cf., אָל, 2 Sam. 17:23) is equivalent to, "Make known thy last will to thy family" (compare the rabbinical *tsavvâ'âh*, the last will and testament); for though *tsivvâh* is generally construed with the accusative of the person, it is also construed with *Lamed* (e.g., Ex. 1:22; cf., לְ, Ex. 16:34). הָיָה in such a connection as this signifies to revive or recover. The announcement of his death is unconditional and absolute. As Vitranga observes, "the condition was not expressed, because God would draw it from him as a voluntary act." The sick man turned his face towards the wall (הִסָּבַח בְּפָנָיו, hence the usual fut. cons. יִסָּבַח as in 1 Kings 21:4, 8, 14), to retire into himself and to God. The supplicatory אָנָּה (here,

ISAIAH	Page 298
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

as in Ps. 116:4, 16, and in all six times, with ה) always has the principal tone upon the last syllable before יהוה = אֲדֹנָי (Neh. 1:11). The *metheg* has sometimes passed into a conjunctive accent (e.g., Gen. 50:17, Ex. 32:31). אֲשֶׁר אֵת אֲשֶׁר does not signify that which, but this, that, as in Deut. 9:7, 2 Kings 8:12, etc. "In truth," i.e., without wavering or hypocrisy. בְּלֵב שָׁלֵם, with a complete or whole heart, as in 1 Kings 8:61, etc. He wept aloud, because it was a dreadful thing to him to have to die without an heir to the throne, in the full strength of his manhood (in the thirty-ninth year of his age), and with the nation in so unsettled a state.

Isaiah 38:4–6. The prospect is now mercifully changed. Vv. 4–6. "And it came to pass (K. *Isaiah was not yet out of the inner city; kerī* הֶעִיר, *the forecourt, and*) the word of Jehovah came to Isaiah (K. *to him*) as follows: Go (K. *turn again*) and say to Hizkijahu (K. *adds, to the prince of my people*), Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thine ancestor, I have heard thy prayer, seen thy tears; behold, I (K. *will cure thee, on the third day thou shalt go up to the house of Jehovah*) add (K. *and I add*) to thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee ad this city out of the hand of the king of Asshur, and will defend this city (K. *for mine own sake and for David my servant's sake*)."

In the place of הֶעִיר (the city) the *kerī* and the earlier translators have הֶעִיר. The city of David is not called the "inner city" anywhere else; in fact, Zion, with the temple hill, formed the upper city, so that apparently it is the inner space of the city of David that is here referred to, and Isaiah had not yet passed through the middle gate to return to the lower city, where he dwelt (pp. 46, 254). The text of Kings is the more authentic throughout; except that נָגִיד עַמִּי, "the prince of my people," is an annalistic adorning which is hardly original. הִלֹּךְ in Isaiah is an inf. abs. used in an imperative sense; שׁוּב, on the other hand, which we find in the other text, is imperative. On *yōsiph*, see at Isa. 29:14.

Isaiah 38:21, 22. The text of Isaiah is not only curtailed here in a very forced manner, but it has got into confusion; for vv. 21 and 22 are removed entirely from their proper place, although even the Septuagint has them at the close of Hezekiah's psalm. They have been omitted from their place at the close of v. 6 through an oversight, and then added in the margin, where they now stand (probably with a sign, to indicate that they were supplied). We therefore insert them here, where they properly belong. Vv. 21, 22. "Then Isaiah said they were to bring (K. *take*) a fig-cake; and they plaistered (K. *brought and covered*) the boil, and he recovered. And Hizkijahu said (K. *to Isaiah*), What sign is there that (K. *Jehovah will heal me, so that I go up*) I shall go up into the house of Jehovah?" As *shchīn* never signifies a plague-spot, but an abscess (indicated by heightened temperature), more especially that of leprosy (cf., Ex. 9:9, Lev. 13:18), there is no satisfactory ground, as some suppose, for connecting Hezekiah's illness (taken along with Isa. 33:24) with the pestilence which broke out in the Assyrian army. The use of the figs does not help us to decide whether we are to assume that it was a boil (*bubon*) or a carbuncle (*charbon*). Figs were a well-known *emmolens* or *maturans*, and were used to accelerate the rising of the swelling and the subsequent discharge. Isaiah did not show any special medical skill by ordering a softened cake of pressed figs to be laid upon the boil, nor did he expect it to act as a specific, and effect a cure: it was merely intended to promote what had already been declared to be the will of God. וַיִּמְרְחוּ עַל is probably more original than the simpler but less definite וַיִּשִׁמוּ עַל. Hitzig is wrong in rendering וַיִּחִי, "that it (the boil) may get well;" and Knobel in rendering it, "that he may recover." It is merely the anticipation of the result so common in the historical writings of Scripture (see at Isa. 7:1 and 20:1), after which the historian goes back a step or two.

Isaiah 38:7, 8. The pledge desired. Vv. 7, 8. " (K. *Then Isaiah said*) and (K. *om.*) let this be the sign

to thee on the part of Jehovah, that (כִּי, אֲשֶׁר) Jehovah will perform this (K. the) word which He has spoken; Behold, I make the shadow retrace the steps, which it has gone down upon the sun-dial of Ahaz through the sun, ten steps backward. And the sun went back ten steps upon the dial, which it had gone down" (K. "Shall the shadow go forward [הָלַךְ, read הָלַךְ according to Job 40:2, or הָלַךְ] ten steps, or shall it go back ten steps? Then Yechizkiyahu said, It is easy for the shadow to go down ten steps; no, but the shadow shall go back ten steps. Then Isaiah the prophet cried to Jehovah, and turned back the shadow by the steps that it had gone down upon the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten steps backward"). "Steps of Ahaz" was the name given to a sun-dial erected by him. As *ma'âlâh* may signify either one of a flight of steps or a degree (syn. *madrigâh*), we might suppose the reference to be to a dial-plate with a gnomon; but, in the first place, the expression points to an actual succession of steps, that is to say, to an obelisk upon a square or circular elevation ascended by steps, which threw the shadow of its highest point at noon upon the highest steps, and in the morning and evening upon the lowest either on the one side or the other, so that the obelisk itself served as a gnomon. It is in this sense that the Targum on 2 Kings 9:13 renders *gerem hamma'âlôth* by *drag shâ'ayyâ'*, step (flight of steps) of the sun-dial; and the obelisk of Augustus, on the Field of Mars at Rome, was one of this kind, which served as a sun-dial. The going forward, going down, or declining of the shadow, and its going back, were regulated by the meridian line, and under certain circumstances the same might be said of a vertical dial, i.e., of a sun-dial with a vertical dial-plate; but it applies more strictly to a step-dial, i.e., to a sun-dial in which the degrees that measure definite periods of time are really *gradus*. The step-dial of Ahaz may have consisted of twenty steps or more, which measured the time of day by half-hours, or even quarters. If the sign was given an hour before sunset, the shadow, by going back ten steps of half-an-hour each, would return to the point at which it stood at twelve o'clock. But how was

this effected? Certainly not by giving an opposite direction to the revolution of the earth upon its axis, which would have been followed by the most terrible convulsions over the entire globe; and in all probability not even by an apparently retrograde motion of the sun (in which case the miracle would be optical rather than cosmical); but as the intention was to give a sign that should serve as a pledge, and therefore had not need whatever to be supernatural (p. 139), it may have been simply through a phenomenon of refraction, since all that was required was that the shadow which was down at the bottom in the afternoon should be carried upwards by a sudden and unexpected refraction. *Hamma'âlôth* (the steps) in v. 8 does not stand in a genitive relation to *tsêl* (the shadow), as the accents would make it appear, but is an accusative of measure, equivalent to *בַּמְעֹלוֹת* in the sum of the steps (2 Kings 20:11). To this accusative of measure there is appended the relative clause: *quos (gradus) descendit* (הֵרַדָּה; יָל being used as a feminine) *in scala Ahasi per solem*, i.e., through the onward motion of the sun. When it is stated that "the sun returned," this does not mean the sun in the heaven, but the sun upon the sun-dial, upon which the illuminated surface moved upwards as the shadow retreated; for when the shadow moved back, the sun moved back as well. The event is intended to be represented as a miracle; and a miracle it really was. The force of will proved itself to be a power superior to all natural law; the phenomenon followed upon the prophet's prayer as an extraordinary result of divine power, not effected through his astronomical learning, but simply through that faith which can move mountains, because it can set in motion the omnipotence of God.

Isaiah 38:9. As a documentary proof of this third account, a psalm of Hezekiah is added in the text of Isaiah, in which he celebrates his miraculous rescue from the brink of death. The author of the book of Kings has omitted it; but the genuineness is undoubted. The heading runs thus in v. 9: "Writing of Hizkiyahu king of Judah, when he was sick, and recovered from his

sickness.” The song which follows might be headed *Mikhtam*, since it has the characteristics of this description of psalm (see at Ps. 16:1). We cannot infer from *bachălôthô* (when he was sick) that it was composed by Hezekiah during his illness (see at Ps. 51:1); *vayyechi* (and he recovered) stamps it as a song of thanksgiving, composed by him after his recovery. In common with the two Ezrahitish psalms, Ps. 88 and 89, it has not only a considerable number of echoes of the book of Job, but also a lofty sweep, which is rather forced than lyrically direct, and appears to aim at copying the best models.

Isaiah 38:10–12. *Strophe* 1 consists indisputably of seven lines:

“I said, In quiet of my days shall I depart into the gates of Hades:

I am mulcted of the rest of my years.

I said, I shall not see Jah, Jah, in the land of the living:

I shall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the regions of the dead.

My home is broken up, and is carried off from me like a shepherd’s tent:

I rolled up my life like a weaver; He would have cut me loose from the roll:

From day to night Thou makest an end of me.”

“In quiet of my days” is equivalent to, in the midst of the quiet course of a healthy life, and is spoken without reference to the Assyrian troubles, which still continued. דָּמִי, from דָּמָה, to be quiet, lit., to be even, for the radical form דָּם has the primary idea of a flat covering, of something stroked smooth, of that which is level and equal, so that it could easily branch out into the different ideas of *aequabilitas*, equality of measure, *aequitas*, equanimity, *aequitas*, equality, and also of destruction = *complanatio*, levelling. On the cohortative, in the sense of that which is to be, see Ewald, § 228, a; אֲלֶכָּה, according to its verbal idea, has the same meaning as in Ps. 39:14 and 2 Chron. 21:20; and the construction with בָּ (= אֲלֶכָּה) is *constructio praegnans* (Luzzatto). The

pual פִּקְדָתִי does not mean, “I am made to want” (Rashi, Knobel, and others), which, as the passive of the causative, would rather be הִפְקִשְׁדָתִי, like הִנְחַלְתִּי, I am made to inherit (Job 7:3); but, I am visited with punishment as to the remnant, mulcted of the remainder, deprived, as a punishment, of the rest of my years. The clause, “Jah in the land of the living,” i.e., the God of salvation, who reveals Himself in the land of the living, is followed by the corresponding clause, עַם-יִשְׁבֵי הַדָּל, “I dwelling with the inhabitants of the region of the dead;” for whilst הַלָּד signifies temporal life (from *châlad*, to glide imperceptibly away, Job 11:17), הַדָּל signifies the end of this life, the negation of all conscious activity of being, the region of the dead. The body is called a dwelling (*dôr*, Arab. *dâr*), as the home of a man who possesses the capacity to distinguish himself from everything belonging to him (*Psychol.* p. 227). It is compared to a nomadic tent. רָעִי (a different word from that in Zech. 11:17, where it is the *chirek compaginis*) is not a genitive (= רָעָה, Ewald, § 151, b), but an adjective in *i*, like רָעָה אֲוִלִי in Zech. 11:15. With *niglâh* (in connection with נָסַע, as in Job 4:21), which does not mean to be laid bare (Luzz.), nor to be wrapt up (Ewald), but to be obliged to depart, compare the New Testament ἐκδημεῖν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος (2 Cor. 5:8). The ἄπ. γεγρ. קָפַד might mean to cut off, or shorten (related to *qâphach*); it is safer, however, and more appropriate, to take it in the sense of rolling up, as in the name of the badger (Isa. 14:23; 34:11), since otherwise what Hezekiah says of himself and of God would be tautological. I rolled or wound up my life, as the weaver rolls up the finished piece of cloth: i.e., I was sure of my death, namely, because God was about to give me up to death; He was about to cut me off from the thrum (the future is here significantly interchanged with the perfect). *Dallâh* is the thrum, *licium*, the threads of the warp upon a loom, which becomes shorter and shorter the further the weft proceeds, until at

length the piece is finished, and the weaver cuts through the short threads, and so sets it free (בצע, cf., Job 6:9; 27:8). The strophe closes with the deep lamentation which the sufferer poured out at that time: he could not help feeling that God would put an end to him (*shâlam*, syn. *kâlâh*, *tâmam*, *gâmar*) from day to night, i.e., in the shortest time possible (compare Job 4:20).

Isaiah 38:13, 14. In *strophe* 2 the retrospective glance is continued. His sufferings increased to such an extent, that there was nothing left in his power but a whining moan—a languid look for help.

*"I waited patiently till the morning; like the lion,
So He broke in pieces all my bones:*

*From day to night Thou makest it all over with
me.*

Like a swallow, a crane, so I chirped;

I cooed like the dove;

Mine eyes pined for the height.

O Lord, men assault me! Be bail for me."

The meaning of *shivvithi* may be seen from Ps. 131:2, in accordance with which an Arabic translator has rendered the passage, "I smoothed, i.e., quieted (*sâweitu*) my soul, notwithstanding the sickness, all night, until the morning." But the morning brought no improvement; the violence of the pain, crushing him like a lion, forced from him again and again the mournful cry, that he must die before the day had passed, and should not live to see another. The Masora here has a remark, which is of importance, as bearing upon Ps. 22:17, viz., that כָּאָרִי occurs twice, and בתרי לישני with two different meanings. The meaning of כָּסוּס עָגוּר is determined by Jer. 8:7, from which it is evident that כָּסוּס is not an attribute of עָגוּר here, in the sense of "chirping mournfully," or "making a circle in its flight," but is the name of a particular bird, namely the crane. For although the Targum and Syriac both seem to render כָּסוּס in that passage (*keri* כִּסִּים, which is the *chethib* here, according to the reading of Orientals) by כּוּרְכִיָּא (a crane, Arab. *Kurki*), and עָגוּר, by סְנוּנִיתָא

(the ordinary name of the swallow, which Haji Gaon explains by the Arabic *chuttaf*), yet the relation is really the reverse: *sūs* (*sīs*) is the swallow, and *'âgūr* the crane. Hence Rashi, on *b. Kiddusin* 44a ("then cried Res Lakis like a crane"), gives *'âgūr*, Fr. *grue*, as the rendering of כּוּרְכִיָּא; whereas Parchon (s.v. *'âgūr*), confounds the crane with the hoarsely croaking stork (*ciconia alba*). The verb *'âtsaphtsēph* answers very well not only to the *fleBILE murmur* of the swallow (into which the penitential Progne was changed, according to the Grecian myth), but also to the shrill shriek of the crane, which is caused by the extraordinary elongation of the windpipe, and is onomatopoeically expressed in its name *'âgūr*. *Tsiphtsēph*, like τριζέειν, is applied to every kind of shrill, penetrating, inarticulate sound. The ordinary meaning of *dallū*, to hang long and loose, has here passed over into that of pining (syn. *kâlâh*). The name of God in v. 14b is *Adonai*, not *Jehovah*, being one of the 134 וְדָאֵן, i.e., words which are really written *Adonai*, and not merely to be read so. It is impossible to take עֲשֵׂה לִי as an imperative. The pointing, according to which we are to read *'ashqa*, admits this (compare *shâmrâh* in Ps. 86:2; 119:167; and on the other hand, *zochrâlli*, in Neh. 5:19, etc.); but the usage of the language does not yield any appropriate meaning for such an imperative. It is either the third person, used in a neuter sense, "it is sorrowful with me;" or, what Luzzatto very properly considers still more probable, on account of the antithesis of *'ashqâh* and *'ârbēni*, a substantive (*'ashqah* for *'osheq*), "there is pressure upon me" (compare רָוִי לִי, Isa. 24:16), i.e., it presses me like an unmerciful creditor; and to this there is appended the petition, Guarantee me, i.e., be bail for me, answer for me (see at Job 17:3).

Isaiah 38:15–17. In *strophe* 3 he now describes how Jehovah promised him help, how this promise put new life into him, and how it was fulfilled, and turned his sufferings into salvation.

"What shall I say, that He promised me, and He hath carried it out:

I should walk quietly all my years, on the trouble of my soul?!

'O Lord, by such things men revive, and the life of my spirit is always therein:

And so wilt Thou restore me, and make me to live!'

Behold, bitterness became salvation to me, bitterness;

And Thou, Thou hast delivered my soul in love out of the pit of destruction

For Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back."

The question, "What shall I say?" is to be understood as in 2 Sam. 7:20, viz., What shall I say, to thank Him for having promised me, and carried out His promise? The *Vav* in וַיִּמְרָא introduces the statement of his reason (Ges. § 155, 1, c). On הִדְדָה (= הַהֲדָדָה), from דָּדָה (= אֲדָדָה), see at Ps. 42:5. The future here, in v. 15*b*, gives the purpose of God concerning him. He was to walk (referring to the walk of life, not the walk to the temple) gently (without any disturbance) all his years upon the trouble of his soul, i.e., all the years that followed upon it, the years that were added to his life. This is the true explanation of עַל, as in Isa. 38:5; 32:10, Lev. 15:25; not "in spite of" (Ewald), or "with," as in Ps. 31:24, Jer. 6:14, where it forms an adverb. A better rendering than this would be "for," or "on account of," i.e., in humble salutary remembrance of the way in which God by His free grace averted the danger of death. What follows in v. 16 can only be regarded in connection with the petition in v. 16*b*, as Hezekiah's reply to the promise of God, which had been communicated to him by the prophet. Consequently the neuters עֲלֵי־הֵם and בְּהֵן (cf., Isa. 64:4, Job 22:21, Ezek. 33:18, 19) refer to the gracious words and gracious acts of God. These are the true support of life (עַל as in Deut. 8:3) for every man, and in these does the life of his spirit consist, i.e., his inmost and highest source of life, and that "on all sides" (לְכָל, which it would be more correct to point לְכָל, as in 1 Chron. 7:5; cf., *bakkōl*, in every respect, 2 Sam.

23:5). With this explanation, the conjecture of Ewald and Knobel, that the reading should be רִוּחַ, falls to the ground. From the general truth of which he had made a personal application, that the word of God is the source of all life, he drew this conclusion, which he here repeats with a retrospective glance, "So wilt Thou then make me whole (see the *kal* in Job 39:4), and keep me alive" (for וְתַחֲיֵי; with the hope passing over into a prayer). The praise for the fulfilment of the promise commences with the word *hinnēh* (behold). His severe illness had been sent in anticipation of a happy deliverance (on the radical signification of *mar*, which is here doubled, to give it a superlative force, see *Comm. on Job*, at 16:2-5). The Lord meant it for good; the suffering was indeed a chastisement, but it was a chastisement of love. Casting all his sins behind Him, as men do with things which they do not wish to know, or have no desire to be reminded of (compare e.g., Neh. 9:26), He "loved him out," i.e., drew him lovingly out, of the pit of destruction (*châshaq*, love as a firm inward bond; *blī*, which is generally used as a particle, stands here in its primary substantive signification, from *bâlâh*, to consume).

Isaiah 38:18-20. In *strophe* 4 he rejoices in the preservation of his life as the highest good, and promises to praise God for it as long as he lives. *"For Hades does not praise Thee; death does not sing praises to Thee:*

They that sink into the grave do not hope for Thy truth.

The living, the living, he praises Thee, as I do to-day;

The father to the children makes known Thy truth.

Jehovah is ready to give me salvation;

Therefore will we play my stringed instruments all the days of my life

In the house of Jehovah."

We have here that comfortless idea of the future state, which is so common in the Psalms (vid., Ps. 6:6; 30:10; 88:12, 13, cf., 115:17), and also in the book of Ecclesiastes (Eccles. 9:4, 5, 10). The foundation of this idea,

ISAIAH	Page 303
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

notwithstanding the mythological dress, is an actual truth (vid., *Psychol.* p. 409), which the personal faith of the hero of Job endeavours to surmount (*Comment.* pp. 150–153, and elsewhere), but the decisive removal of which was only to be effected by the progressive history of salvation. The verse is introduced with “for” (*kī*), inasmuch as the gracious act of God is accounted for on the ground that He wished to be still further glorified by His servant whom He delivered. לָא, in v. 18a, is written only once instead of twice, as in Isa. 23:4. They “sink into the grave,” i.e., are not thought of as dying, but as already dead. “Truth” (*’ēmeth*) is the sincerity of God, with which He keeps His promises. V. 19b reminds us that Manasseh, who was twelve years old when he succeeded his father, was not yet born (cf., Isa. 39:7). The יהוה להושיעני, μέλλει σώζειν με, is the same as in Isa. 37:26. The change in the number in v. 20b may be explained from the fact that the writer thought of himself as the choral leader of his family; *ay* is a suffix, not a substantive termination (*Ewald*, § 164, p. 427). The impression follows us to the end, that we have cultivated rather than original poetry here. Hezekiah’s love to the older sacred literature is well known. He restored the liturgical psalmody (2 Chron. 29:30). He caused a further collection of proverbs to be made, as a supplement to the older book of Proverbs (Prov. 25:1). The “men of Hezekiah” resembled the Pisistratian Society, of which Onomacritus was the head.

Isaiah 38:21, 22. On vv. 21, 22, see the notes at the close of vv. 4–6, where these two verses belong.

Isaiah 39

Threatening of the Babylonian Captivity Occasioned by Hezekiah

Isaiah 39:1. From this point onwards the text of the book of Kings (2 Kings 20:12–19, cf., 2 Chron. 32:24–31) runs parallel to the text before us. Babylonian ambassadors have an interview with the convalescent king of Judah.

V. 1. “At that time Merodach Bal’adan (K. *Berodach Bal’adan*), son of Bal’adan king of Babel, sent writings and a present to Hizkiyahu, and heard (K. *for he had heard*) that he (K. *Hizkiyahu*) had been sick, and was restored again.” The two texts here share the original text between them. Instead of the unnatural וַיִּשְׁמַע (which would link the cause on to the effect, as in 2 Sam. 14:5), we should read בִּי שָׁמַע, whereas וַיִּחַזַק in our text appears to be the genuine word out of which חֲזָקָה in the other text has sprung, although it is not indispensable, as חָלָה has a pluperfect sense. In a similar manner the name of the king of Babylon is given here correctly as מְרֹאֲדָךְ (Nissel, מְרֹדָךְ without א, as in Jer. 50:2), whilst the book of Kings has בְּרֹאֲדָךְ (according to the Masora with א), probably occasioned by the other name *Bal’ādân*, which begins with *Beth*. It cannot be maintained that the words *ben Bal’ādân* are a mistake; at the same time, *Bal’ādân* (*Jos. Baladas*) evidently cannot be a name by itself if *Mrō’dakh Bal’ādân* signifies “*Merodach* (the Babylonian *Bel* or *Jupiter*) *filium dedit*.” In the Canon Ptol. *Mardokempados* is preceded by a *Jugaeus*; and the inscriptions, according to G. Rawlinson, *Mon.* ii. 395, indicate Merodach-Baladan as the “son of *Yakin*.” They relate that the latter acknowledged Tiglath-pileser as his feudal lord; that, after reigning twelve years as a vassal, he rose in rebellion against Sargon in league with the Susanians and the Aramaean tribes above Babylonia, and lost everything except his life; that he afterwards rebelled against Sennacherib in conjunction with a Chaldean prince named *Susub*, just after Sennacherib had returned from his first Judaeen campaign to Nineveh; and that having been utterly defeated, he took refuge in an island of the Persian Gulf. He does not make his appearance any more; but *Susub* escaped from his place of concealment, and being supported by the Susanians and certain Aramaean tribes, fought a long and bloody battle with Sennacherib on the Lower Tigris.

this battle he lost, and *Nebo-som-iskun*, a son of Merodach Baladan, fell into the hands of the conqueror. In the midst of these details, as given by the inscriptions, the statement of the *Can. Ptol.* may still be maintained, according to which the twelve years of *Mardokempados* (a contraction, as Ewald supposes, of *Mardokempalados*) commence with the year 721. From this point onwards the biblical and extra-biblical accounts dovetail together; whereas in Polyhistor (*Eus. chron. arm.*) the following Babylonian rulers are mentioned: “a brother of Sennacherib, Acises, who reigned hardly a month; *Merodach Baladan*, six months; *Elibus* into the third year; *Asordan*, Sennacherib’s son, who was made king after the defeat of *Elibus*.” Now, as the *Can. Ptolem.* also gives a *Belibos* with a three years’ reign, the identity of *Mardokempados* and *Marodach Baladan* is indisputable. The *Can. Ptol.* seems only to take into account his legitimate reign as a vassal, and Polyhistor (from Berosus) only his last act of rebellion. At the same time, this is very far from removing all the difficulties that lie in the way of a reconciliation, more especially the chronological difficulties. Rawlinson, who places the commencement of the (second) Judæan campaign in the year 698, and therefore transfers it to the end of the twenty-ninth year of Hezekiah’s reign instead of the middle, sets himself in opposition not only to Isa. 36:1, but also to Isa. 38:5 and 2 Kings 18:2. According to the biblical accounts, as compared with the *Can. Ptol.*, the embassy must have been sent by Merodach Baladan during the period of his reign as vassal, which commenced in the year 721. Apparently it had only the harmless object of congratulating the king upon his recovery (and also, according to 2 Chron. 32:31, of making some inquiry, in the interests of Chaldean astrology, into the *mōphēth* connected with the sun-dial); but it certainly had also the secret political object of making common cause with Hezekiah to throw off the Assyrian yoke. All that can be maintained with certainty beside this is, that the embassy cannot have been sent before the fourteenth year of Hezekiah’s reign; for as he

reigned twenty-nine years, his illness must have occurred, according to Isa. 38:5, in the fourteenth year itself, i.e., the seventh year of *Mardokempados*. Such questions as whether the embassy came before or after the Assyrian catastrophe, which was till in the future at the time referred to in Isa. 38:4–6, or whether it came before or after the payment of the compensation money to Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:14–16), are open to dispute. In all probability it took place immediately before the Assyrian campaign, as Hezekiah was still able to show off the abundance of his riches to the Babylonian ambassadors.

Isaiah 39:2. “*And Hezekiah rejoiced (K. heard, which is quite inappropriate) concerning them, and showed them (K. all) his storehouse: the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the fine oil (hasshâmen, (K. shemen), and all his arsenal, and all that was in his treasures: there was nothing that Hezekiah had not shown them, in his house or in all his kingdom.*” Although there were spices kept in נְבִית נְבַח, is not equivalent to נְבִית (from נָבַח, to break to pieces, to pulverize), which is applied to gum-dragon and other drugs, but is the *niphāl* נְבִית from כּוּת (piel, Arab. *kayyata*, to cram full, related to כּוּס (כּוּס), and possibly also to כּוּתם, *katama* (Hitzig, Knobel, Fürst), and consequently it does not mean “the house of his spices,” as Aquila, Symmachus, and the Vulgate render it, but his “treasure-house or storehouse” (Targ., Syr., Saad.). It differs, however, from *bēth kēlīm*, the wood house of Lebanon (Isa. 22:8). He was able to show them all that was worth seeing “in his whole kingdom,” inasmuch as it was all concentrated in Jerusalem, the capital.

Isaiah 39:3–8. The consequences of this coqueting with the children of the stranger, and this vain display, are pointed out in vv. 3–8: “*Then came Isaiah the prophet to king Hizkiyahu, and said to him, What have these men said, and whence come they to thee? Hizkiyahu said, They came to me from a far country (K. omits to me), out of Babel. He said further, What*

have they seen in thy house? Hizkiyahu said, All that is in my house have they seen: there was nothing in my treasures that I had not shown them. Then Isaiah said to Hizkiyahu, Hear the word of Jehovah of hosts (K. omits *tsbhâ'ôth*); Behold, days come, that all that is in thy house, and all that thy fathers have laid up unto this day, will be carried away to Babel (בְּבָבֶל, K. בְּבִלְיָה): nothing will be left behind, saith Jehovah. And of thy children that proceed from thee, whom thou shalt beget, will they take (K. *chethib*, 'will he take'); and they will be courtiers in the palace of the king of Babel. Then said Hizkiyahu to Isaiah, Good is the word of Jehovah which thou hast spoken. And he said further, Yea (כִּי, K. הֲלוֹא אַם), there shall be peace and stedfastness in my days." Hezekiah's two candid answers in vv. 3 and 4 are an involuntary condemnation of his own conduct, which was sinful in two respects. This self-satisfied display of worthless earthly possessions would bring its own punishment in their loss; and this obsequious suing for admiration and favour on the part of strangers, would be followed by plundering and enslaving on the part of those very same strangers whose envy he had excited. The prophet here foretells the Babylonian captivity; but, in accordance with the occasion here given, not as the destiny of the whole nation, but as that of the house of David. Even political sharp-sightedness might have foreseen, that some such disastrous consequences would follow Hezekiah's imprudent course; but this absolute certainty, that Babylon, which was then struggling hard for independence, would really be the heiress to the Assyrian government of the world, and that it was not from Assyria, which was actually threatening Judah with destruction for its rebellion, but from Babylon, that this destruction would really come, was impossible without the spirit of prophecy. We may infer from v. 7 (cf., Isa. 38:19, and for the fulfilment, Dan. 1:3) that Hezekiah had no son as yet, at least none with a claim to the throne; and this is confirmed by 2 Kings 21:1. So far as the concluding words are concerned, we should quite misunderstand them, if we saw nothing in

them but common egotism. כִּי (for) is explanatory here, and therefore confirmatory. הֲלוֹא אַם, however, does not mean "yea, if only," as Ewald supposes (§ 324, *b*), but is also explanatory, though in an interrogative form, "Is it not good (i.e., still gracious and kind), if," etc.? He submits with humility to the word of Jehovah, in penitential acknowledgement of his vain, shortsighted, untheocratic conduct, and feels that he is mercifully spared by God, inasmuch as the divine blessings of peace and stability (אַמְנָתָה a self-attesting state of things, without any of those changes which disappoint our confident expectations) would continue. "Although he desired the prosperity of future ages, it would not have been right for him to think it nothing that God had given him a token of His clemency, by delaying His judgment" (Calvin).

Over the kingdom of Judah there was now hanging the very same fate of captivity and exile, which had put an end to the kingdom of Israel eight years before. When the author of the book of Kings prefaces the four accounts of Isaiah in 2 Kings 18:13–20, with the recapitulation in 2 Kings 18:9–12 (cf., Isa. 17:5, 6), his evident meaning is, that the end of the kingdom of Israel, and the beginning of the end of the kingdom of Judah, had their meeting-point in Hezekiah's time. As Israel fell under the power of the Assyrian empire, which foundered upon Judah, though only through a miraculous manifestation of the grace of God (see Hos. 1:7); so did Judah fall a victim to the Babylonian empire. The four accounts are so arranged, that the first two, together with the epilogue in Isa. 37:36ff., which contains the account of the fulfilment, bring the Assyrian period of judgment to a close; and the last two, with the eventful sketch in Isa. 39:6, 7, open the way for the great bulk of the prophecies which now follow in Isa. 40–66, relating to the Babylonian period of judgment. This Janus-headed arrangement of the contents of Isa. 36–39 is a proof that this historical section formed an original part of the "vision of Isaiah." At any rate, it leads to the conclusion that, whoever

arranged the four accounts in their present order, had Isa. 40–66 before him at the time. We believe, however, that we may, or rather, considering the prophetic-historical style of Isa. 36–39, that we must, draw the still further conclusion, that Isaiah himself, when he revised the collection of his prophecies at the end of Hezekiah's reign, or possibly not till the beginning of Manasseh's, bridged over the division between the two halves of the collection by the historical trilogy in the seventh book.

Second Half of the Collection

Isaiah 40

Isaiah 40–66. The first half consisted of seven parts; the second consists of three. The trilogical arrangement of this cycle of prophecies has hardly been disputed by any one, since Rückert pointed it out in his *Translation of the Hebrew Prophets* (1831). And it is equally certain that each part consists of 3 × 3 addresses. The division of the chapters furnishes an unintentional proof of this, though the true commencement is not always indicated. The *first* part embraces the following nine addresses: Isa. 40; 41, 42:1–43:13; 43:14–44:5; 44:6–23; 44:24–45; 46; 47; 48. The *second* part includes the following nine: Isa. 49; 50; 51; 52:1–12; 52:13–53; 54; 55; 56:1–8; 56:9–57. The *third* part the following nine: Isa. 58; 59; 60; 61; 62; 63:1–6; 63:7–64; 65; 66. It is only in the middle of the first part that the division is at all questionable. In the other two it is hardly possible to err. The theme of the whole is the comforting announcement of the approaching deliverance, and its attendant summons to repentance. For the deliverance itself was for the Israel, which remained true to the confession of Jehovah in the midst of affliction and while redemption was delayed, and not for the rebellious, who denied Jehovah in word and deed, and thus placed themselves on the level of the heathen. *"There is no peace, saith Jehovah, for the wicked."* with these words does the first part of the twenty-seven addresses close in Isa. 48:22. The second closes in Isa. 57:21 in a more

excited and fuller tone: *"There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked."* And at the close of the third part (Isa. 66:24) the prophet drops this form of refrain, and declares the miserable end of the wicked in deeply pathetic though horrifying terms: *"Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh;"* just as, at the close of the fifth book of the Psalms, the shorter form of *brâkhâh* (blessing) is dropt, and an entire psalm, the Hallelujah (Ps. 150), takes its place. The three parts, which are thus marked off by the prophet himself, are only variations of the one theme common to them all. At the same time, each has its own leading thought, and its own special key-note, which is struck in the very first words. In each of the three parts, also, a different antithesis stands in the foreground: viz., in the *first* part, Isa. 40–48, the contrast between Jehovah and the idols, and between Israel and the heathen; in the *second* part, Isa. 49–57, the contrast between the present suffering of the Servant of Jehovah and His future glory; in the *third* part, Isa. 58–66, the contrast observable in the heart of Israel itself, between the hypocrites, the depraved, the rebellious, on the one side, and the faithful, the mourning, the persecuted, on the other. The first part sets forth the deliverance from Babylon, in which the prophecy of Jehovah is fulfilled, to the shame and overthrow of the idols and their worshippers; the second part, the way of the Servant of Jehovah through deep humiliation to exaltation and glory, which is at the same time the exaltation of Israel to the height of its world-wide calling; the third part, the indispensable conditions of participation in the future redemption and glory. There is some truth in Hahn's opinion, that the distinctive characteristics of the three separate parts are exhibited in the three clauses of Isa. 40:2: *"that her distress is ended, that her debt is paid, that she has received* (according to his explanation, *'will receive')* *double for all her sins."* For the central point of the first part is really the termination of the Babylonian distress; that of the second, the expiation of guilt by the self-sacrifice of the Servant of Jehovah; and that of

the third, the assurance that the sufferings will be followed by "a far more exceeding weight of glory." The promise rises higher and higher in the circular movements of the 3 × 9 addresses, until at length it reaches its zenith in Isa. 65 and 66, and links time and eternity together.

So far as the language is concerned, there is nothing more finished or more elevated in the whole of the Old Testament than this trilogy of addresses by Isaiah. In Isa. 1–39 of the collection, the prophet's language is generally more compressed, chiselled (*lapidarisch*), plastic, although even there his style passes through all varieties of colour. But here in Isa. 40–66, where he no longer has his foot upon the soil of his own time, but is transported into the far distant future, as into his own home, even the language retains an ideal and, so to speak, ethereal character. It has grown into a broad, pellucid, shining stream, which floats us over as it were into the world beyond, upon majestic yet gentle and translucent waves. There are only two passages in which it becomes more harsh, turbid, and ponderous, viz., Isa. 53 and 56:9–57:11a. In the former it is the emotion of sorrow which throws its shadow upon it; in the latter, the emotion of wrath. And in every other instance in which it changes, we may detect at once the influence of the object and of the emotion. In Isa. 63:7 the prophet strikes the note of the liturgical *tphillâh*; in Isa. 63:19b -64:4 it is sadness which chokes the stream of words; in Isa. 64:5 you year, as in Jer. 3:25, the key-note of the liturgical *vidduy*, or confessional prayer.

And when we turn to the contents of his trilogy, it is more incomparable still. It commences with a prophecy, which gave to John the Baptist the great theme of his preaching. It closes with the prediction of the creation of a new heaven and new earth, beyond which even the last page of the New Testament Apocalypse cannot go. And in the centre (Isa. 52:13–53) the sufferings and exaltation of Christ are proclaimed as clearly, as if the prophet had stood beneath the cross itself, and had seen the Risen Saviour. He is transported to the very commencement of the New Testament times, and begins just like

the New Testament evangelists. He afterwards describes the death and resurrection of Christ as completed events, with all the clearness of a Pauline discourse. And lastly, he clings to the heavenly world beyond, like John in the Apocalypse. Yet the Old Testament limits are not disturbed; but within those limits, evangelist, apostle, and apocalypticist are all condensed into one. Throughout the whole of these addresses we never meet with a strictly Messianic prophecy; and yet they have more christological depth than all the Messianic prophecies taken together. The bright picture of the coming King, which is met with in the earlier Messianic prophecies, undergoes a metamorphosis here, out of which it issues enriched by many essential elements, viz., those of the two *status*, the *mors vicaria*, and the *munus triplex*. The dark typical background of suffering, which the mournful Davidic psalms give to the figure of the Messiah, becomes here for the first time an object of direct prediction. The place of the Son of David, who is only a King, is now taken by the Servant of Jehovah, who is *Prophet* and *Priest* by virtue of His self-sacrifice, and *King* as well; the Saviour of Israel and of the Gentiles, persecuted even to death by His own nation, but exalted by God to be both Priest and King. So rich and profound a legacy did Isaiah leave to the church of the captivity, and to the church of the future also, yea, even to the New Jerusalem upon the new earth. Hengstenberg has very properly compared these prophecies of Isaiah to the Deuteronomic "last words" of Moses in the steppes of Moab, and to the last words of the Lord Jesus, within the circle of His own disciples, as reported by John. It is a thoroughly esoteric book, left to the church for future interpretation. To none of the Old Testament prophets who followed him was the ability given perfectly to open the book. Nothing but the coming of the Servant of Jehovah in the person of Jesus Christ could break all the seven seals. But was Isaiah really the author of this book of consolation? Modern criticism visits all who dare to assert this with the double ban of want of science and want of conscience. It regards Isaiah's authorship as

being quite as impossible as any miracle in the sphere of nature, of history, or of the spirit. No prophecies find any favour in its eyes, but such as can be naturally explained. It knows exactly how far a prophet can see, and where he must stand, in order to see so far. But we are not tempted at all to purchase such omniscience at the price of the supernatural. We believe in the supernatural reality of prophecy, simply because history furnishes indisputable proofs of it, and because a supernatural interposition on the part of God in both the inner and outer life of man takes place even at the present day, and can be readily put to the test. But this interposition varies greatly both in degree and kind; and even in the far-sight of the prophets there were the greatest diversities, according to the measure of their charisma. It is quite possible, therefore, that Isaiah may have foreseen the calamities of the Babylonian age and the deliverance that followed "by an excellent spirit," as the son of Sirach says (Ecclus. 48:24), and may have lived and moved in these "last things," even at a time when the Assyrian empire was still standing. But we do not regard all that is possible as being therefore real. We can examine quite impartially whether this really was the case, and without our ultimate decision being under the constraint of any unalterable foregone conclusion, like that of the critics referred to. All that we have said in praise of Isa. 40–66 would retain its fullest force, even if the author of the whole should prove to be a prophet of the captivity, and not Isaiah.

We have already given a cursory glance at the general and particular grounds upon which we maintain the probability, or rather the certainty, that Isaiah was the author of Isa. 40–66 (vid., pp. 37–40); and we have explained them more fully in the concluding remarks to Drechsler's *Commentary* (vol. iii. pp. 361–416), to which we would refer any readers who wish to obtain a complete insight into the *pro* and *con* of this critical question. All false supports of Isaiah's authorship have there been willingly given up; for the words of Job to his friends (Job

13:7, 8) are quite as applicable to a biblical theologian of the present day.

We have admitted, that throughout the whole of the twenty-seven prophecies, the author of Isa. 40–66 has the captivity as his fixed standpoint, or at any rate as a standpoint that is only so far a fluctuating one, as the eventual deliverance approaches nearer and nearer, and that without ever betraying the difference between the real present and this ideal one; so that as the prophetic vision of the future has its roots in every other instance in the soil of the prophet's own time, and springs out of that soil, to all appearance he is an exile himself. But notwithstanding this, the following arguments may be adduced in support of Isaiah's authorship. In the first place, the deliverance foretold in these prophecies, with all its attendant circumstances, is referred to as something beyond the reach of human foresight, and known to Jehovah alone, and as something the occurrence of which would prove Him to be the God of Gods. Jehovah, the God of the prophecy, new the name of Cyrus even before he knew it himself; and He demonstrated His Godhead to all the world, inasmuch as He caused the name and work of the deliverer of Israel to be foretold (Isa. 45:4–7). *Secondly*, although these prophecies rest throughout upon the soil of the captivity, and do not start with the historical basis of Hezekiah's time, as we should expect them to do, with Isaiah as their author; yet the discrepancy between this phenomenon and the general character of prophecy elsewhere, loses its full force as an argument against Isaiah's authorship, if we do not separate Isa. 40–66 from Isa. 1–39 and take it as an independent work, as is generally done. The whole of the first half of the collection is a staircase, leading up to these addresses to the exiles, and bears the same relation to them, as a whole, as the Assyrian pedestal in Isa. 14:24–27 to the Babylonian *massâ'* in Isa. 13–14:26 (see p. 205). This relation between the two—namely, that Assyrian prophecies lay the foundation for Babylonian—runs through the whole of the first half. It is so arranged, that the prophecies

ISAIAH	Page 309
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

of the Assyrian times throughout have intermediate layers, which reach beyond those times; and whilst the former constitute the groundwork, the latter form the gable. This is the relation in which Isa. 24–27 stand to Isa. 13–23, and Isa. 34–35 to Isa. 28–33. And within the cycle of prophecies against the nations, three Babylonian prophecies—viz. Isa. 13–14:23; 21:1–10, and 23—form the commencement, middle, and end. The Assyrian prophecies lie within a circle, the circumference and diameter of which consist of prophecies that have a longer span. And are all these prophecies, that are inserted with such evident skill and design, to be taken away from our prophet? The oracle concerning Babel, in Isa. 13–14:23, has all the ring of a prophecy of Isaiah's, as we have already seen; and in the epilogue, in Isa. 14:24–27, it has Isaiah's signature. The second oracle concerning Babel, in Isa. 21:1–10, is not only connected with three passages of Isaiah's that are acknowledged as genuine, so as to form a tetralogy; but in style and spirit it is most intimately bound up with them. The cycle of prophecies of the final catastrophe (Isa. 24–27) commences so thoroughly in Isaiah's style, that nearly every word and every turn in the first three verses bears Isaiah's stamp; and in Isa. 27:12, 13, it dies away, just like the book of Immanuel, Isa. 11:11ff. And the genuineness of Isa. 34 and 35 has never yet been disputed on any valid grounds. Knobel, indeed, maintains that the historical background of this passage establishes its spuriousness; but it is impossible to detect any background of contemporaneous history. Edom in this instance represents the world, as opposed to the people of God, just as Moab does in Isa. 25. Consider, moreover, that these disputed prophecies form a series which constitutes in every respect a prelude to Isa. 40–66. Have we not in Isa. 13:1, 2, the substance of Isa. 40–66, as it were, *in nuce*? Is not the trilogy "Babel," in Isa. 46–48, like an expansion of the vision in Isa. 21:1–10? Is not the prophecy concerning Edom in Isa. 34 the side-piece to Isa. 63:1–6? And do we not hear in Isa. 35 the direct prelude to the melody, which

is continued in Isa. 40–66? And to this we may add still further the fact, that prominent marks of Isaiah are common alike to the disputed prophecies, and to those whose genuineness is acknowledged. The name of God, which is so characteristic of Isaiah, and which we meet with on every hand in acknowledged prophecies in Isa. 1–39, viz., "the Holy One of Israel," runs also through Isa. 40–66 (p. 125). And so again do the confirmatory words, "Thus saith Jehovah," and the interchange of the national names Jacob and Israel (compare, for example, Isa. 40:27 with Isa. 29:23). The rhetorical figure called *epnanaphora*, which may be illustrated by an Arabic proverb,—
"Enjoy the scent of the yellow roses of Negd;
For when the evening is gone, it is over with the yellow roses,"—

is very rare apart from the book of Isaiah (Gen. 6:9; 35:12; Lev. 25:41; Job 11:7); whereas in the book of Isaiah itself it runs like a favourite oratorical turn from beginning to end (vid., Isa. 1:7; 4:3; 6:11; 13:10; 14:25; 15:8; 30:20; 34:9; 40:19; 42:15, 19; 48:21; 51:13; 53:6, 7; 54:5, 13; 50:4; 58:2; 59:8, —a collection of examples which could probably be still further increased). But there are still deeper lines of connection than these. How strikingly, for example, does Isa. 28:5 ring in harmony with Isa. 62:3, and Isa. 29:23 (cf., 5:7) with Isa. 60:21! And does not the leading thought which is expressed in Isa. 22:11; 37:26 (cf., Isa. 25:1), viz., that whatever is realized in history has had its pre-existence as an idea in God, run with a multiplied echo through Isa. 40–66? And does not the second half repeat, in Isa. 65:25, in splendidly elaborate paintings, and to some extent in the very same words (which is not unlike Isaiah), what we have already found in Isa. 11:6ff., 30:26, and other passages, concerning the future glorification of the earthly and heavenly creation? Yea, we may venture to maintain (and no one has ever attempted to refute it), that the second half of the book of Isaiah (Isa. 40–66), so far as its theme, its standpoint, its style, and its ideas are concerned, is in a state of continuous formation

throughout the whole of the first (Isa. 1–39). On the frontier of the two halves, the prediction in Isa. 39:5, 7 stands like a sign-post, with the inscription, “To Babylon.” There, viz., in Babylon, is henceforth Isaiah’s spiritual home; there he preaches to the church of the captivity the way of salvation, and the consolation of redemption, but to the rebellious the terrors of judgment.

That this is the case, is confirmed by the reciprocal relation in which Isa. 40–66 stand to all the other literature of the Old Testament with which we are acquainted. In Isa. 40–66 we find reminiscences from the book of Job (compare Isa. 40:23 with Job 12:24; 44:25 with Job 12:17, 20; 44:24 with Job 9:8; 40:14 with Job 21:22; 59:4 with Job 15:35 and Ps. 7:15). And the first half points back to Job in just the same manner. The poetical words *הַתְּגַבֵּר*, *וַיָּזַע*, *צִפְצִפִּים*, are only met with in the book of Isaiah and the book of Job. Once at least, namely Isa. 59:7, we are reminded of *mishlê* (Prov. 1:16); whilst in the first half we frequently met with imitations of the *māshāl* of Solomon. The two halves stand in exactly the same relation to the book of Micah; compare Isa. 58:1 with Mic. 3:8, like 2:2–4 with Mic. 4:1–4, and 26:21 with Mic. 1:3. And the same relation to Nahum runs through the two; compare Nah. 3:4, 5 with Isa. 47, 2:1 with 52:7a, 1b, and 2:11 with 24:1; 3:13 with 19:16. We leave the question open, on which side the priority lies. But when we find in Zephaniah and Jeremiah points of contact not only with Isa. 40–66, but also with Isa. 13–14:23; 21:1–10, 34–35, which preclude the possibility of accident, it is more than improbable that these two prophets should have been imitated by the author of Isa. 40–66, since it is in them above all others that we meet with the peculiar disposition to blend the words and thoughts of their predecessors with their own. Not only does Zephaniah establish points of contact with Isa. 13 and 34 in by no means an accidental manner, but compare Isa. 2:15 with Isa. 47:8, 10, and Isa. 3:10 with Isa. 56:20. The former passage betrays its derivative character by the fact that *עָלִיז* is a

word that belongs exclusively to Isaiah; whilst the latter is not only a compendium of Isa. 66:20, but also points back to Isa. 18:1, 7, in the expression *מַעְבָּר לְנֶהְרֵי־כוּשׁ*. In Jeremiah, the indication of dependence upon Isaiah comes out most strongly in the prophecy against Babylon in Jer. 50–51; in fact, it is so strong, that Movers, Hitzig, and De Wette regard the anonymous author of Isa. 40–66 as the interpolator of this prophecy. But it also contains echoes of Isa. 13, 14, 21, and 34, and is throughout a Mosaic or earlier prophecies. The passage in Jer. 10:1–16 concerning the nothingness of the gods of the nations, sounds also most strikingly like Isaiah’s; compare more especially Isa. 44:12–15; 41:7; 46:7, though the attempt has also been made to render this intelligible by the interpolation hypothesis. It is not only in vv. 6–8 and 10, which are admitted to be Jeremiah’s, that we meet with the peculiar characteristics of Jeremiah; but even in passages that are rejected we find such expressions of his as *יָפָה אוֹתָם* for *אֶתָם*, *נִבְעַר*, *תַּעֲתָעִים*, *פְּקֻדָה*, a penal visitation, such as we never meet with in Isaiah II. And the whole of the consolatory words in Jer. 30:10, 11, and again in 46:27, 28, which sound so much like the deutero-Isaiah, are set down as having been inserted in the book of Jeremiah by Isaiah II. But Caspari has shown that this is impossible, because the concluding words of the promise, “I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished,” would have no meaning at all if uttered at the close of the captivity; and also, because such elements as are evidently Jeremiah’s, and in which it coincides with prophecies of Jeremiah that are acknowledged to be genuine, far outweigh those of the deutero-Isaiah. And yet in this passage, when Israel is addressed as “my servant,” we hear the tone of the deutero-Isaiah. Jeremiah fuses in this instance, as in many other passages, the tones of Isaiah with his own. There are also many other passages which coincide with passages of the second part of Isaiah, both in substance and expression, though not so conclusively as those

already quoted, and in which we have to decide between regarding Jeremiah as an imitator, or Isaiah II as an interpolator. But if we compare Jer. 6:15 with Isa. 56:11, and Isa. 48:6 with Jer. 33:3, where Jeremiah, according to his usual custom, gives a different turn to the original passages by a slight change in the letters, we shall find involuntary reminiscences of Isaiah in Jeremiah, in such parallels as Jer. 3:16, Isa. 65:17; Jer. 4:13, Isa. 66:15; Jer. 11:19, Isa. 53; and shall hear the ring of Isa. 51:17–23 in Jeremiah's *qinōth*, and that of Isa. 56:9–57:11a in the earlier reproachful addresses of Jeremiah, and not *vice versa*.

In conclusion, let us picture to ourselves the gradual development of Isaiah's view of the captivity, that penal judgment already threatened in the law. (1.) In the *Uzziah-Jotham* age the prophet refers to the captivity, in the most general terms that can be conceived, in Isa. 6:12, though he mentions it casually by its own name even in Isa. 5:13. (2.) In the time of *Ahaz* we already see him far advanced beyond this first sketchy reference to the captivity. In Isa. 11:11ff. he predicts a second deliverance, resembling the Egyptian exodus. Asshur stands at the head of the countries of the *diaspora*, as the imperial power by which the judgment of captivity is carried out. (3.) In the early years of *Hezekiah*, Isa. 22:18 appears to indicate the carrying away of Judah by Asshur. But when the northern kingdom had succumbed to the judgment of the Assyrian banishment, and Judah had been mercifully spared this judgment, the eyes of Isaiah were directed to Babylon as the imperial power destined to execute the same judgment upon Judah. We may see this from Isa. 39:5–7. Micah also speaks of Babylon as the future place of punishment and deliverance (Mic. 4:10). The prophecies of the overthrow of Babylon in Isa. 13:14, 21, are therefore quite in the spirit of the prophecies of Hezekiah's time. And Isa. 40–66 merely develop on all sides what was already contained in germ in Isa. 14:1, 2; 21:10. It is well known that in the time of Hezekiah Babylon attempted to break loose from Assyria; and so also the revolt of the Medes from

Asshur, and the union of their villages and districts under one monarch named *Deyoces*, occurred in the time of Hezekiah. It is quite characteristic of Isaiah that he never names the Persians, who were at that time still subject to the Medes. He mentions *Madai* in Isa. 13:17 and 21:2, and *Kōresh (Kurus)*, the founder of the Persian monarchy; but not that one of the two leading Iranian tribes, which gained its liberty through him in the time of Astyages, and afterwards rose to the possession of the imperial sway.

But how is it possible that Isaiah should have mentioned Cyrus by name centuries before this time (210 years, according to Josephus, Ant. xi. 1, 2)? Windischmann answers this question in his *Zoroastrische Studien*, p. 137. "No one," he says, "who believes in a living, personal, omniscient God, and in the possibility of His revealing future events, will ever deny that He possesses the power to foretell the name of a future monarch." And Albrecht Weber, the Indologist, finds in this answer "an evidence of self-hardening against the scientific conscience," and pronounces such hardening nothing less than "devilish."

It is not possible to come to any understanding concerning this point, which is the real nerve of the prevailing settled conclusion as to Isa. 40–66. We therefore hasten on to our exposition. *And in relation to this, if we only allow that the prophet really was a prophet, it is of no essential consequence to what age he belonged.* For in this one point we quite agree with the opponents of its genuineness, namely, that the standpoint of the prophet is the second half of the captivity. If the author is Isaiah, as we feel constrained to assume for reasons that we have already stated here and elsewhere, he is entirely carried away from his own times, and leads a pneumatic life among the exiles. There is, in fact, no more "Johannic" book in the whole of the Old Testament than this book of consolation. It is like the produce of an Old Testament gift of tongues. The fleshly body of speech has been changed into a glorified body; and we hear, as it were, spiritual voices from the world beyond, or world of glory.

ISAIAH	Page 312
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

PART I

First Prophecy—Ch. 40

Words of Comfort, and the God of Comfort

Isaiah 40:1. In this first address the prophet vindicates his call to be the preacher of the comfort of the approaching deliverance, and explains this comfort on the ground that Jehovah, who called him to this comforting proclamation, was the incomparably exalted Creator and Ruler of the world. The first part of this address (vv. 1–11) may be regarded as the prologue to the whole twenty-seven. The theme of the prophetic promise, and the irresistible certainty of its fulfilment, are here declared. Turning of the people of the captivity, whom Jehovah has neither forgotten nor rejected, the prophet commences thus in v. 1: “*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.*” This is the divine command to the prophets. *Nachāmū* (*piel*, literally, to cause to breathe again) is repeated, because of its urgency (*anadiplosis*, as in Isa. 41:27; 43:11, 25, etc.). The word *אָמַר*, which does not mean “will say” here (Hofmann, Stier), but “saith” (LXX, Jerome),—as, for example, in 1 Sam. 24:14, —affirms that the command is a continuous one. The expression “*saith your God*” is peculiar to Isaiah, and common to both parts of the collection (Isa. 1:11, 18; 33:10; 40:1, 25; 41:21; 66:9). The future in all these passages is expressive of that which is taking place or still continuing. And it is the same here. The divine command has not been issued once only, or merely to one prophet, but is being continually addressed to many prophets. “*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,*” is the continual charge of the God of the exiles, who has not ceased to be their God even in the midst of wrath, to His messengers and heralds the prophets.

Isaiah 40:2. The summons is now repeated with still greater emphasis, the substance of the consoling proclamation being also given. V. 2. “*Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her affliction is ended, that her debt is*

paid, that she has received from the hand of Jehovah double for all her sins.” The holy city is thought of here in connection with the population belonging to it. *דַּבֵּר עַל-לֵב* (to speak to the heart) is an expression applied in Gen. 34:3 and Judg. 19:3 to words adapted to win the heart; in Gen. 50:21, to the words used by Joseph to inspire his brethren with confidence; whilst here it is used in precisely the same sense as in Hos. 2:16, and possibly not without a reminiscence of this earlier prophecy. *קָרָא אֶל* (to call to a person) is applied to a prophetic announcement made to a person, as in Jer. 7:27, Zech. 1:4. The announcement to be made to Jerusalem is then introduced with *כִּי*, *ὅτι*, which serves as the introduction to either an indirect or a direct address (Ges. § 155, 1, e). (1.) Her affliction has become full, and therefore has come to an end. *צָבָא*, military service, then feudal service, and hardship generally (Job 7:1); here it applies to the captivity or exile—that unsheltered bivouac, as it were, of the people who had been transported into a foreign land, and were living there in bondage, restlessness, and insecurity. (2.) Her iniquity is atoned for, and the justice of God is satisfied: *nirtsâh*, which generally denotes a satisfactory reception, is used here in the sense of meeting with a satisfactory payment, like *רָצָה עָוֹן* in Lev. 26:41, 43, to pay off the debt of sin by enduring the punishment of sin. (3.) The third clause repeats the substance of the previous ones with greater emphasis and in a fuller tone: Jerusalem has already suffered fully for her sins. In direct opposition to *לֹקְחָהּ*, which cannot, when connected with two actual perfects as it is here, be taken as a perfect used to indicate the certainty of some future occurrence, Gesenius, Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, Stier, and Hahn suppose *kiphlayim* to refer to the double favour that Jerusalem was about to receive (like *mishneh* in Isa. 61:7, and possibly borrowed from Isaiah in Zech. 9:12), instead of to the double punishment which Jerusalem had endured (like *mishneh* in Jer. 16:18). It is not to be taken, however, in a judicial sense; in which case God

ISAIAH	Page 313
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

would appear over-rigid, and therefore unjust. Jerusalem had not suffered more than its sins had deserved; but the compassion of God regarded what His justice had been obliged to inflict upon Jerusalem as superabundant. This compassion also expresses itself in the words "for all" (*bkhol, c. Beth pretii*): there is nothing left for further punishment. The turning-point from wrath to love has arrived. The wrath has gone forth in double measure. With what intensity, therefore, will the love break forth, which has been so long restrained!

Isaiah 40:3. There is a *sethume* in the text at this point. The first two verses form a small *parashah* by themselves, the prologue of the prologue. After the substance of the consolation has been given on its negative side, the question arises, What positive salvation is to be expected? This question is answered for the prophet, inasmuch as, in the ecstatic stillness of his mind as turned to God, he hears a marvellous voice. V. 3. "Hark, a crier! In the wilderness prepare ye a way for Jehovah, make smooth in the desert a road for our God." This is not to be rendered "a voice cries" (Ges., Umbreit, etc.); but the two words are in the construct state, and form an interjectional clause, as in Isa. 13:4; 52:8; 66:6: Voice of one crying! Who the crier is remains concealed; his person vanishes in the splendour of his calling, and falls into the background behind the substance of his cry. The cry sounds like the long-drawn trumpet-blast of a herald (cf., Isa. 16:1). The crier is like the outrider of a king, who takes care that the way by which the king is to go shall be put into good condition. The king is Jehovah; and it is all the more necessary to prepare the way for Him in a becoming manner, that this way leads through the pathless desert. *Bammidbâr* is to be connected with *pannû*, according to the accents on account of the parallel (*zakeph katan* has a stronger disjunctive force here than *zakeph gadol*, as in Deut. 26:14; 28:8, 2 Kings 1:6), though without any consequent collision with the New Testament description of the fulfilment itself. And so also the Targum and Jewish expositors

take קול קורא במדבר together, like the LXX, and after this the Gospels. We may, or rather apparently we must, imagine the crier as advancing into the desert, and summoning the people to come and make a road through it. But why does the way of Jehovah lie through the desert, and whither does it lead? It was through the desert that He went to redeem Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and to reveal Himself to Israel from Sinai (Deut. 33:2; Judg. 5:4; Ps. 88:8); and in Ps. 88:4 (5) God the Redeemer of His people is called *hârôkhēbh bâ'ârâbhôth*. Just as His people looked for Him then, when they were between Egypt and Canaan; so was He to be looked for by His people again, now that they were in the "desert of the sea" (Isa. 21:1), and separated by *Arabia deserta* from their fatherland. If He were coming at the head of His people, He Himself would clear the hindrances out of His way; but He was coming through the desert to Israel, and therefore Israel itself was to take care that nothing should impede the rapidity or detract from the favour of the Coming One. The description answers to the reality; but, as we shall frequently find as we go further on, the literal meaning spiritualizes itself in an allegorical way.

Isaiah 40:4. The summons proceeds in a commanding tone. V. 4. "Let every valley be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low; and let the rugged be made a plain, and the ledges of rocks a valley." וְהָיָה, which takes its tone from the two jussive verbs, is also itself equivalent to וְהָיָה. Instead of אֲנִי (from אָנֹכִי), the pointing in Zech. 14:4, we have here (according to Kimchi) the vowel-pointing אֲנִי; at the same time, the editions of Brescia, Pesaro, Venice 1678, have אֲנִי (with *tzere*), and this is also the reading of a codex of Luzzatto without Masoretic notes. The command, according to its spiritual interpretation, points to the encouragement of those that are cast down, the humiliation of the self-righteous and self-secure, the changing of dishonesty into simplicity, and of unapproachable haughtiness into submission (for 'âqôbh, hilly, rugged,

compare Jer. 17:9 together with Hab. 2:4). In general, the meaning is that Israel is to take care, that the God who is coming to deliver it shall find it in such an inward and outwards state as befits His exaltation and His purpose.

Isaiah 40:5. The cry of the crier proceeds thus in v. 5: “*And the glory of Jehovah will be revealed, and all flesh seeth together: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.*” The *pret. cons.* וַיְגַלֶּה is here *apodosis imper.* When the way is prepared for Jehovah the Coming One, the glory of the God of salvation will unveil itself (on the name *Jehovah*, which is applied to God, the absolute I, as living and revealing Himself in history, more especially in the history of salvation, see p. 45). His *parousia* is the revelation of His glory (1 Pet. 4:13). This revelation is made for the good of Israel, but not secretly or exclusively; for all the human race, called here designedly “all flesh” (*kol bāsār*), will come to see it (compare Luke 3:6, “the salvation of God”). Man, because he is flesh, cannot see God without dying (Ex. 33:20); but the future will fill up this gulf of separation. The object to the verb “see” is not what follows, as Rosenmüller supposes, viz., “that the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken,” for the word of promise which is here fulfilled is not one addressed to all flesh; nor does it mean, “see that Jehovah hath spoken with His own mouth,” i.e., after having become man, as Stier maintains, for the verb required in this case would be מְדַבֵּר, not דִּבֵּר. The clause, “for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it,” is rather Isaiah’s usual confirmation of the foregoing prophecy (see p. 278). Here the crier uses it to establish the certainty of what he foretells, provided that Israel will do what he summons it to perform.

Isaiah 40:6–8. The prophet now hears a second voice, and then a third, entering into conversation with it. Vv. 6–8. “*Hark, one speaking, Cry! And he answers, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all its beauty as the flower of the field. Grass is withered, flower faded: for the breath of Jehovah has blown upon it. Surely grass is the people; grass withereth, flower fadeth: yet the word of our God will stand for*

ever.” A second voice celebrates the divine word of promise in the face of the approaching fulfilment, and appoints a preacher of its eternal duration. The verb is not וַיְדַבֵּר (*et dixi*, LXX, Vulg.), but וַיִּשְׂאֵר; so that the person asking the question is not the prophet himself, but an ideal person, whom he has before him in visionary objectiveness. The appointed theme of his proclamation is the perishable nature of all flesh (v. 5 πᾶσα σὰρξ, here πᾶσα ἡ σὰρξ), and, on the other hand, the imperishable nature of the word of God. Men living in the flesh are universally impotent, perishing, limited; God, on the contrary (Isa. 31:3), is the omnipotent, eternal, all-determining; and like Himself, so is His word, which, regarded as the vehicle and utterance of His willing and thinking, is not something separate from Himself, and therefore is the same as He. *Chasdō* is the charm or gracefulness of the outward appearance (LXX; 1 Pet. 1:24, δόξα: see Schott on the passage, Jas. 1:11, εὐπρέπεια). The comparison instituted with grass and flower recalls Isa. 37:27 and Job 8:12, and still more Ps. 90:5, 6, and Job 14:2. V. 7a describes what happens to the grass and flower. The preterites, like the Greek *aoristus gnomicus* (cf., Isa. 26:10), express a fact of experience sustained by innumerable examples: *exaruit gramen, emarcuit flos*; consequently the כִּי which follows is not hypothetical (granting that), but explanatory of the reason, viz., “because *rūāch Jehovah* hath blown upon it,” i.e., the “breath” of God the Creator, which pervades the creation, generating life, sustaining life, and destroying life, and whose most characteristic elementary manifestation is the wind. Every breath of wind is a drawing of the breath of the whole life of nature, the active indwelling principle of whose existence is the *rūāch* of God. A fresh verse ought to commence now with אֲבָן. The clause אֲבָן הַצִּיר הָעָם is genuine, and thoroughly in Isaiah’s style, notwithstanding the LXX, which Gesenius and Hitzig follow. אֲבָן is not equivalent to a comparative כִּן (Ewald, § 105, a), but is assuring, as in Isa. 45:15; 49:4; 53:4; and *hā’ām*

(the people) refers to men generally, as in Isa. 42:5. The order of thought is in the form of a *triolet*. The explanation of the striking simile commences with *'âkhên* (surely); and then in the repetition of the words, "grass withereth, flower fadeth," the men are intended, resemble the grass and the flower. Surely grass is the human race; such grass withereth and such flower fadeth, but the word of our God (Jehovah, the God of His people and of sacred history) *yâqûm l'ôlâm*, i.e., it rises up without withering or fading, and endures for ever, fulfilling and verifying itself through all times. This general truth refers, in the preset instance, to the word of promise uttered by the voice in the desert. If the word of God generally has an eternal duration, more especially is this the case with the word of the *parousia* of God the Redeemer, the word in which all the words of God are yea and amen. The imperishable nature of this word, however, has for its dark foil the perishable nature of all flesh, and all the beauty thereof. The oppressors of Israel are mortal, and their *chesed* with which they impose and bribe is perishable; but the word of God, with which Israel can console itself, preserves the fields, and ensures it a glorious end to its history. Thus the seal, which the first crier set upon the promise of Jehovah's speedy coming, is inviolable; and the comfort which the prophets of God are to bring to His people, who have now been suffering so long, is infallibly sure.

Isaiah 40:9. The prophet accordingly now takes, as his standpoint, the time when Jehovah will already have come. V. 9. "*Upon a high mountain get thee up, O evangelistess Zion; lift up thy voice with strength, evangelistess Jerusalem: lift up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God.*" Knobel and others follow the LXX and Targum, and regard *Zion* and *Jerusalem* as accusatives of the object, viz., "preacher of salvation (i.e., a chorus of preachers) to Zion-Jerusalem;" but such parallels as Isa. 52:7 and 62:11 are misleading here. The words are in apposition (A. S. Th. *εὐαγγελίζομένη Σιών*). Zion-Jerusalem herself is called an evangelistess: the personification as a

female renders this probable at the outset, and it is placed beyond all doubt by the fact, that it is the cities of Judah (the daughters of Zion-Jerusalem) that are to be evangelized. The prophet's standpoint here is in the very midst of the *parousia*. When Jerusalem shall have her God in the midst of her once more, after He has broken up His home there for so long a time; she is then, as the restored mother-community, to ascend a high mountain, and raising her voice with fearless strength, to bring to her daughters the joyful news of the appearance of their God. The verb *bissēr* signifies literally to smooth, to unfold, then to make glad, more especially with joyful news. It lies at the root of the New Testament *εὐαγγελίζειν* (evangelize), and is a favourite word of the author of Isa. 40–66, that Old Testament evangelist, though it is no disproof of Isaiah's authorship (cf., Nahum 2:1). Hitherto Jerusalem has been in despair, bowed down under the weight of the punishment of her sins, and standing in need of consolation. But now that she has Jehovah with her again, she is to lift up her voice with the most joyful confidence, without further anxiety, and to become, according to her true vocation, the messenger of good tidings to all Judaea.

Isaiah 40:10. In v. 10 the prophet goes back from the standpoint of the fulfilment to that of the prophecy. "*Behold the Lord, Jehovah, as a mighty one will He come, His arm ruling for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His retribution before Him.*" We must not render the first clause "with strong," i.e., with strength, as the LXX and Targum do. The *Beth* is *Beth essentiae* (cf., Isa. 26:4; Ges. § 154, 3, a). He will come in the essence, strength, and energy of a strong one; and this is still further defined by the participial, circumstantial clause, "His arm ruling for Him" (*brachio suo ipsi dominante*). It is His arm that rules for Him, i.e., that either brings into subjection to Him, or else overthrows whatever opposes Him. Nevertheless, v. 10b does not present Him merely in one aspect, namely as coming to judge and punish, but in both aspects, viz., that of the law and that of the gospel, as a righteous rewarder; hence the double name of God,

Adonai Jehovah (compare Isa. 3:15; 28:16; 30:15, all in the first part), which is used even in the Pentateuch, and most frequently by Amos and Ezekiel, and which forms, as it were, an anagram. פָּעֵלָה is already met with in Lev. 19:13 as a synonym of שָׂכָר, passing from the general idea of *work* to that of something earned and forfeited. Jehovah brings with Him the penal reward of the enemies of His people, and also the gracious reward of the faithful of His people, whom He will compensate for their previous sufferings with far exceeding joys (see Isa. 62:11).

Isaiah 40:11. The prophet dwells upon this, the redeeming side not the judicial, as he proceeds to place the image of the good shepherd by the side of that of the Lord Jehovah. V. 11. *“He will feed His flock like a shepherd, take the lambs in His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are giving suck.”* The flock is His people, now dispersed in a foreign land. The love with which He tends this flock is shown, by way of example, in His conduct towards the טְלָאִים (= טְלֵי = טָלָה), the young lambs that have not long been born, and the עֹלוֹת, those giving suck, *lactantes* (Vulg. *fetae*), not those that are sucking, *sugentes* (from עָלָה *med. Vav*, to nourish, cf., p. 90). Such as cannot keep pace with the flock he takes in his arms, and carries in the bosom of his dress; and the mothers he does not overdrive, but יְנַהֵל (see at Ps. 23:2), lets them go gently alone, because they require care (Gen. 33:13). With this loving picture the prologue in vv. 1–11 is brought to a close. It stands at the head of the whole, like a divine inauguration of the prophet, and like the quintessence of what he is commanded to proclaim. Nevertheless it is also an integral part of the first address. For the questions which follow cannot possibly be the commencement of the prophecy, though it is not very clear how far they form a continuation.

The connection is the following: The prophet shows both didactically and paraenetically what kind of God it is whose appearance to redeem His people has been prophetically

announced in vv. 1–11. He is the incomparably exalted One. This incomparable exaltation makes the ignorance of the worshipers of idols the more apparent, but it serves to comfort Israel. And Israel needs such consolation in its present banishment, in which it is so hard for it to comprehend the ways of God.

Isaiah 40:12. In order to bring His people to the full consciousness of the exaltation of Jehovah, the prophet asks in v. 12, *“Who hat measured the waters with the hollow of his hand, and regulated the heavens with a span, and taken up the dust of the earth in a third measure, and weighed the mountains with a steelyard, and hills with balances?”* Jehovah, and He alone, has given to all these their proper quantities, their determinate form, and their proportionate place in the universe. How very little can a man hold in the hollow of his hand (*shō'al*)! how very small is the space which a man's span will cover! how little is contained in the third of an ephah (*shālīsh*; see at Ps. 80:6)! and how trifling in either bulk or measure is the quantity you can weight in scales, whether it be a *peles*, i.e., a steelyard (*statera*), or *mō'znayim*, a tradesman's balance (*bilances*), consisting of two scales. But what Jehovah measures with the hollow of His hand, and with His span, is nothing less than the waters beneath and the heavens above. He carries a scoop, in which there is room for all the dust of which the earth consists, and a scale on which He has weighed the great colossal mountains.

Isaiah 40:13, 14. A second question follows in vv. 13, 14. *“Who regulated the Spirit of Jehovah, and (who) instructed Him as His counsellor? With whom took He counsel, and who would have explained to Him and instructed Him concerning the path of right, and taught Him knowledge, and made known to Him a prudent course?”* The first question called to mind the omnipotence of Jehovah; this recalls His omniscience, which has all fulness in itself, and therefore precludes all instruction from without. “The Spirit of Jehovah” is the Spirit which moved upon the waters at the creation, and by which chaos was reduced to order. “Who,” inquires this prophet,—“who furnished

this Spirit with the standard, according to which all this was to be done?" תִּכְחַן as in v. 12, to bring into conformity with rule, and so to fit for regulated working. Instead of *mercha tifchah athnach*, which suggests the Targum rendering, "quis direxit spiritum? Jehova" (vid., Prov. 16:2), it would be more correct to adopt the accentuation *tifchah munach athnach* (cf., Ex. 21:24; 23:9), and there are certain codices in which we find this (see Dachselt). In v. 13^b we might follow the Septuagint translation, καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο ὃς σύμβιβᾶ (Rom. 11:34; 1 Cor. 2:16, συμβιβάσει) αὐτόν, but in this case we miss the verb תִּכְחַן. The rendering we have given above is not so harsh, and the accentuation is indifferent here, since *silluk* is never written without *tifchah* if only a single word precedes it. In v. 14 the reciprocal תִּכְחַן is connected with תִּכְחַן = תִּכְחַן. The *futt. cons.* retain their literal meaning: with whom did He consult, so that he supplied Him with understanding in consequence (*hēbhīn*, generally to understand, here in a causative sense). The verbs of instruction are sometimes construed with כִּי of the lesson taught, sometimes with a double accusative. In reply to the questions in vv. 13, 14, which are essentially one, Israel must acknowledge that its God is the possessor of absolute might, and also of absolute wisdom.

Isaiah 40:15. From His exaltation as Creator, the prophet now proceeds to His exaltation as Governor of the world. V. 15. "Behold, nations like a little drop on a bucket, and like a grain of sand in a balance, are they esteemed; behold, islands like an atom of dust that rises in the air." Upon Jehovah, the King of the world, does the burden rest of ruling over the whole human race, which is split up into different nations; but the great masses of people over whom Jehovah rules are no more burden to Him than a drop hanging upon a bucket is a burden to the man who carries it (*min* is used in the same sense as in Song of Sol. 4:1; 6:5), no more than the weight in a balance is perceptibly increased or diminished by a grain of sand that happens to

lie upon it (*shachaq*, from *shāchāq*, to grind to powder). The *islands*, those fragments of firm ground in the midst of the ocean (אִי = *ivy*, from תִּכְחַן, to betake one's self to a place, and remain there), upon which the heathen world was dispersed (Gen. 10), are to Him who carries the universe like the small particle of dust (קֶדַח from קֶדַח, to crush or pulverize), which is lifted up, viz., by the slightest breath of wind (יָטוּל metaplastic *fut. niph.* of *tūl* = *nātal*, cf., 63:9). The rendering of Knobel, "dust which is thrown," would require תִּפְּרָה (Isa. 41:2); and neither that of Gesenius, viz., "He takes up islands like a particle of dust," nor that of Hitzig, "He carries islands," etc., is admissible, for טוּל = טוּל signifies *tollere*, not *portare*; and the former, viz., *insulas tollit*, furnishes no answer to the question, "How so, and to what end?"

Isaiah 40:16. By the side of this vanishing diminutiveness on the part of man as contrasted with Jehovah, everything by which man could express his adoration of the exalted One comes incomparably short of His exaltation. V. 16. "And Lebanon is not a sufficiency of burning, nor its game a sufficiency of burnt-offerings;" i.e., there is not enough wood to sustain the fire, nor a sufficient supply of sacrificial animals to be slaughtered, and to ascend in fire. דַּי (constr. דַּי) signifies that which suffices (and then that which is plentiful); it differs therefore from τὸ δέον, what is requisite.

Isaiah 40:17. From the obverse of the thought in v. 15 the prophet returns to the thought itself, and dwells upon it still further. V. 17. "All the nations are as nothing before Him; they are regarded by Him as belonging to nullity and emptiness." 'Ephes is the end at which a thing ceases, and in an absolute sense that at which all being ceases, hence non-existence or nullity. *Tōhū* (from *tāhāh*, related to *shā'āh*; vid., *Comm. on Job*, at 37:6), a horrible desolation, like the chaos of creation, where there is nothing definite, and therefore as good as nothing at all (see p. 25); *min* is hardly comparative in the sense of "more nothing than nothing itself"

(Like Job 11:17, where “brighter” is to be supplied, or Mic. 7:4, where “sharper” is similarly required), but is used in the same partitive sense as in Isa. 41:24 (cf., 44:11 and Ps. 62:10).

Isaiah 40:18. The conclusion drawn from v. 17, that Jehovah is therefore the matchless Being, shapes itself into a question, which is addressed not to idolaters, but to such of the Israelites as needed to be armed against the seductive power of idolatry, to which the majority of mankind had yielded. V. 18. “*And to whom can ye liken God, and what kind of image can ye place beside Him!*” The ׀ before יִאֵל is conclusive, as in Isa. 28:26, and the futures are *modi potent.*: with what can ye bring into comparison (לְאֵל as in Isa. 14:10) *El*, i.e., God, the one Being who is absolutely the Mighty? and what kind of *dmūth* (i.e., divine, like Himself) can ye place by His side?

Isaiah 40:19. Least of all can an idol bear comparison with Him. V. 19. “*The idol, when the smith has cast it, the melter plates it with gold, and melteth silver chains for it.*” The object (*happesel*, the idol), which is here placed first as the theme in the accusative (lit. the image hewn out), denotes in this instance an idol generally. חֲרָשׁ is as comprehensive as *faber*. רָקַע בְּזָהָב signifies here to cover over with a זָהָב רָקַע (*laminâ aurî*), the verb being used in a denominative sense, and not in its primary meaning. As we must assume, according to v. 20, that the prophet intends to carry us into the midst of the process of manufacturing the idol, the paratactic expression is to be pointed as above, viz., “after the (a) smith has cast it (compare Arab. *nasik*, a piece of cast metal), the (a) melter (goldsmith) covers it with gold plate;” and *tsōrēph*, which is palindromically repeated, according to Isaiah’s custom (p. 387), is not the third pers. *poel* (on the *poel* of strong stems, see at Job 9:15 and Ps. 109:10), but a participle, equivalent to צֹרֵף הוּא (as in Isa. 29:8, which see; and also, according to the accents, Isa. 33:5), “and he melteth chains of silver,” viz., to fasten the image.

Isaiah 40:20. This is the origin of a metal idol. The wooden idol is described in v. 20: “*The man who is impoverished in oblations, he chooseth a block of wood that will not rot; he seeketh for himself a skilful smith, to prepare an idol that will not shake.*” He who has fallen into such poverty that he can only offer to his God a poor oblation (*trūmâh*, accusative, according to Ewald, § 284, c), has an idol cut for himself out of a block of wood. That *sâkhan* (Arab. *sakana* or *sakuna*) is an ancient word, is evident from Deut. 8:9. The verb *yimmōt*, like *yittōl* in v. 15, is a *fut. niphāl*, to be made to shake. A wooden image, which is planed at the bottom, and made heavier below than above, to prevent its falling over with every shock, is to be a god! The thing carries its own satire, even when described with the greatest seriousness.

Isaiah 40:21. Having thus depicted in a few strokes the infatuation of idolatry, the prophet addresses the following question to such of the Israelites as are looking at it with longing eye, even if they have not already been deluded by it. V. 21. “*Do ye not know? Do ye not hear? Is it not proclaimed to you from the beginning? Have ye not obtained an insight into the foundations of the earth?*” We have here four questions chiasmically arranged. The absolute being of God, which is above all created things, is something which may be either inferred *per ratiocinationem*, or learned *per traditionem*. When Israel failed to acknowledge the absolute distinctness and unequalled supremacy of Jehovah its God, it hardened itself against the knowledge which it might acquire even in a natural way (cf., Ps. 19 and Rom. 1:20), and shut its ears against the teaching of revelation and tradition, which had come down from the very beginning of its history. The first two questions are construed with futures, the other two with perfects; the former refer to what is possible, the latter to what is an actual fact. Have you—this is the meaning of the four questions—have you obtained no knowledge of the foundations of the earth, namely, as to the way in which they were laid?

Isaiah 40:22. The prophet now proceeds to describe the God whom both His works and

word proclaim. The participles which follow are predicates of the subject, which filled the consciousness of the prophet as well as that of every believer. V. 22. *“He who is enthroned above the vault of the earth, and its inhabitants resemble grasshoppers; who has spread out the heavens like gauze, and stretched them out like a tent-roof to dwell in.”* He, the manifested and yet unknown, is He who has for His throne the circle of the heavens (*chūg shāmayim*, Job 22:14), which arches over the earth, and to whom from His inaccessible height men appear as diminutive as grasshoppers (Num. 13:33); He who has spread out the blue sky like a thin transparent garment (*dōq*, a thin fabric, like *daq*, fine dust, in v. 15), and stretched it out above the earth like a tent for dwelling in (*’ōhel lāshebheheth*). The participle brings to view the actions and circumstances of all times. In the present instance, where it is continued in the historical sense, it is to be resolved into the perfect; in other cases, the preservation of the world is evidently thought of as a *creatio continua* (see *Psychol.* p. 111).

Isaiah 40:23, 24. This is followed by a series of predicates of God the Ruler of the universe. Vv. 23, 24. *“He who giveth up rulers to annihilation; maketh judges of the earth like a desolation. They are hardly planted, hardly sown, their stem has hardly taken root in the earth, and He only blows upon them, and they dry up, and the storm carries them away like stubble.”* There is nothing so high and inaccessible in the world, that He cannot bring it to nothing, even in the midst of its most self-confident and threatening exaltation. *Rōznīm* are solemn persons, *σεμνοί*, possessors of the greatest distinction and influence (p. 134); *shōphlīm*, those who combine in themselves the highest judicial and administrative power. The former He gives up to annihilation; the latter He brings into a condition resembling the negative state of the *tōhū* out of which the world was produced, and to which it can be reduced again. We are reminded here of such descriptions as Job 12:17, 24 (p. 388). The suddenness of the catastrophe is depicted in v. 24. *לֹא יֵרָא* (which

only occurs here), when followed by *וְנִגַּם* in the apodosis (cf., 2 Kings 20:4), signifies that even this has not yet taken place when the other also occurs: hence *vixdum plantati sunt*, etc. The *niphāl* *יִצְטַג* and the *pual* *יִצְרַח* denote the hopeful commencement; the *poel* *יִצְרַח* the hopeful continuation. A layer or seed excites the hope of blossom and fruit, more especially when it has taken root; but nothing more is needed than a breath of Jehovah, and it is all over with it (the verb *nāshaph* is used in this verse, where plants with stems are referred to; a verb with a softer labial, *nāshabh*, was employed above in connection with grass and flowers). A single withering breath lays them at rest; and by the power of Jehovah there rises a stormy wind, which carries them away like light dry stubble (*אֶשְׁרָף*; compare, on the other hand, the verb used in v. 15, viz., *tūl = nātāl*, to lift up, to keep in the air).

Isaiah 40:25. The thought of v. 18 now recurs like a refrain, a conclusion being appended to the premises by means of *וְ*, as was the case there. V. 25. *“And to whom will ye compare me, to whom I can be equal? saith the Holy One.”* Not *haqqādōsh*, because a poetical or oratorical style omits the article wherever it can be dispensed with. The Holy One asks this, and can ask it, because as such He is also exalted above the whole world (Job 15:15; 25:5).

Isaiah 40:26. After the questions in vv. 18 and 25, which close syllogistically, a third start is made, to demonstrate the incomparable nature of Jehovah. V. 26. *“Lift up your eyes on high, and see: who hath created these things? It is He who bringeth out their host by number, calleth them all by names, because of the greatness of (His) might, and as being strong in power: there is not one that is missing.”* Jehovah spoke in v. 25; now the prophet speaks again. We have here the same interchange which occurs in every prophetic book from Deuteronomy downwards, and in which the divine fulness of the prophets is displayed. The answer does not begin with *הוֹדֵיאוּצֵי*, in the sense of “He who brings them out has created them;” but the participle is the

ISAIAH	Page 320
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

predicate to the subject of which the prophet's soul is full: Jehovah, it is He who brings out the army of stars upon the plane of heaven, as a general leads out his army upon the field of battle, and that *bmispâr*, by number, counting the innumerable stars, those children of light in armour of light, which meet the eye as it looks up by night. The finite verb יִקְרָא denotes that which takes place every night. He calls them all by name (comp. the derivative passage, Ps. 147:4): this He does on account of the greatness and fulness of His might (*'ōnīm, vires, virtus*), and as strong in power, i.e., because He is so. This explanation is simpler than Ewald's (§ 293, c), viz., "because of the power (τὸ κρατερόν) of the Strong One." The call addressed to the stars that are to rise is the call of the Almighty, and therefore not one of all the innumerable host remains behind. נְעַדֵּר individualizes; נְעַדֵּר (participle), as in Isa. 34:16, suggests the idea of a sheep that is missed from the flock through staying behind. The second part of the address closes here, having demonstrated the folly of idolatry from the infinite superiority of God; and from this the third part deduces consolation for Israel in the midst of its despair.

Isaiah 40:27. Such of the Israelites are required first of all to be brought to a consciousness of the folly of idolatry are not called Israel at all, because they place themselves on a part with the *gōyīm*. But now the prophet addresses those of little faith, who nevertheless desire salvation; those who are cast down, but not in utter despair. V. 27. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hidden from Jehovah, and my right is overlooked by my God?" The name *Jacob* stands here at the head, as in Isa. 29:22, as being the more exquisite name, and the one which more immediately recalled their patriarchal ancestor. They fancied that Jehovah had completely turned away from them in wrath and weariness. "My way" refers to their thorny way of life; "my right" (*mishpâti*) to their good right, in opposition to their oppressors. Of all this He appeared to take no notice at all. He seemed to have no thought of vindicating it judicially (on

the double *min*, away from him, see Ges. § 154, 3, c).

Isaiah 40:28. The groundlessness of such despondency is set before them in a double question. V. 28. "Is it not known to thee, or hast thou not heard, an eternal God is Jehovah, Creator of the ends of the earth: He fainteth not, neither becomes weary; His understanding is unsearchable." Those who are so desponding ought to know, if not from their own experience, at least from information that had been handed down, that Jehovah, who created the earth from one end to the other, so that even Babylonian was not beyond the range of His vision or the domain of His power, was an eternal God, i.e., a God eternally the same and never varying, who still possessed and manifested the power which He had displayed in the creation. Israel had already passed through a long history, and Jehovah had presided over this, and ruled within it; and He had not so lost His power in consequence, as to have now left His people to themselves. He does not grow faint, as a man would do, who neglected to take the repeated nourishment requisite to sustain the energy of his vital power; nor does He become weary, like a man who has exhausted his capacity for work by over-exertion. And if He had not redeemed His people till then, His people were to know that His course was pure *tbhūnâh* or understanding, which was in the possession of infallible criteria for determining the right point of time at which to interpose with His aid.

Isaiah 40:29. Jehovah is so far from becoming faint, that it is He who gives strength to the fainting. V. 29. "Giving power to the faint, and to the incapable He giveth strength in abundance." אֵין לְאֵין אֹנִים is equivalent to אֵין אֹנִים; אֵין is used exactly like a privative to form a negative adjective (e.g., Ps. 88:5; Prov. 25:3).

Isaiah 40:30, 31. Faith is all that is needed to ensure a participation in the strength (עֲצָמָה) after the form הִקְבֵּמָה), which He so richly bestows and so powerfully enhances. Vv. 30, 31. "And youths grow faint and weary, and young

men suffer a fall. But they who wait for Jehovah gain fresh strength; lift up their wings like eagles; run, and are not weary; go forward, and do not faint." Even youths, even young men in the early bloom of their morning of life (*bachūrīm*, youths, from בָּחַר, related to בָּכַר, בָּגַר), succumb to the effects of the loss of sustenance or over-exertion (both futures are defective, the first letter being dropped), and any outward obstacle is sufficient to cause them to fall (נָכַשׁל with *inf. abs. kal*, which retains what has been stated for contemplation, according to Ges. § 131, 3, Anm. 2). In v. 30a the verb stands first, v. 30 being like a concessive clause in relation to v. 31. "Even though this may happen, it is different with those who wait for Jehovah," i.e., those who believe in Him; for the Old Testament applies to faith a number of synonyms denoting trust, hope, and longing, and thus describes it according to its inmost nature, as *fiducia* and as hope, directed to the manifestation and completion of that which is hoped for. The *Vav cop.* introduces the antithesis, as in v. 8. הִקְלִיף, to cause one to pursue, or new to take the place of the old (Lat. *recentare*). The expression יַעֲלוּ וְגוֹ is supposed by early translators, after the Sept., Targ. Jer., and Saad., to refer to the moulting of the eagle and the growth of the new feathers, which we meet with in Ps. 103:5 (cf., Mic. 1:16) as a figurative representation of the renewal of youth through grace. But Hitzig correctly observes that הִקְלִיף is never met with as the causative of the *kal* used in Isa. 5:6, and moreover that it would require נוֹצָה instead of אָבַר. The proper rendering therefore is, "they cause their wings to rise, or lift their wings high, like the eagles" (*'ēbher* as in Ps. 55:7). Their course of life, which has Jehovah for its object, is as it were possessed of wings. They draw from Him strength upon strength (see Ps. 84:8); running does not tire them, nor do they become faint from going ever further and further.

The first address, consisting of three parts (vv. 1–11, 12–26, 27–31), is here brought to a close.

Second Prophecy—Ch. 41

The God of the World's History, and of Prophecy

Jehovah comes forward here, and speaking in the tone in which He already began to speak in Isa. 40:25, invites the idolatrous nations to contend with Him, declares the raising up of the conqueror from the east to be His work, and adduces this as the sign that He has been the Author and Guider of the world's history from the beginning. But what if the question should be asked on the part of the nations, With what right does He do this? The acts of the conqueror prove themselves to be a work of the God who is exalted above the idols, from the fact that they bring destruction to the idolatrous nations, and to the people of Jehovah the long-desired redemption. It is in this that the conclusiveness of the illustration lies. The argument, however, presupposes that Cyrus has already entered upon his victorious course. It is evident at the outset that future events, or events still unfulfilled, would have no force as present proofs. And the words also clearly imply, that the work which Jehovah attributes to Himself, in opposition to the gods of the nations, is already in progress.

Isaiah 41

Isaiah 41:1. Summons to the contest: "Be silent to me, ye islands; and let the nations procure fresh strength: let them come near, then speak; we will enter into contest together." The words are addressed to the whole of the heathen world, and first of all to the inhabitants of the western islands and coasts. This was the expression commonly employed in the Old Testament to designate the continent of Europe, the solid ground of which is so deeply cut, and so broken up, by seas and lakes, that it looks as if it were about to resolve itself into nothing but islands and peninsulas. הַיְהוּדִים אֵל is

ISAIAH	Page 322
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

a pregnant expression for turning in silence towards a person; just as in Job 13:13 it is used with *min*, in the sense of forsaking a person in silence. That they may have no excuse if they are defeated, they are to put on fresh strength; just as in Isa. 40:31 believers are spoken of as drawing fresh strength out of Jehovah's fulness. They are to draw near, then speak, i.e., to reply after hearing the evidence, for Jehovah desires to go through all the forms of a legal process with them in *pro et contra*. The *mishpât* is thought of here in a local sense, as a forum or tribunal. But if Jehovah is one party to the cause, who is the judge to pronounce the decision? The answer to this question is the same as at Isa. 5:3. "The nations," says Rosenmüller, "are called to judgment, not to the tribunal of God, but to that of reason." The deciding authority is reason, which cannot fail to recognise the facts, and the consequences to be deduced from them.

Isaiah 41:2. The parties invited are now to be thought of as present, and Jehovah commences in v. 2: "Who hath raised up the man from the rising of the sun, whom justice meets at his foot, He giveth up nations before him, and kings He subdues, giveth men like the dust to his sword, and like driven stubble to his bow?" The sentence governed by "who" (*mī*) ends at *lraglō* (at his foot); at the same time, all that follows is spoken with the echo of the interrogative accent. The person raised up is Cyrus, who is afterwards mentioned by name. The coming one (if, that is to say, we adhere to the belief in Isaiah's authorship of these addresses) first approaches gradually within the horizon of the prophet's ideal present; and it is only little by little that the prophet becomes more intimately acquainted with a phenomenon which belongs to so distant a future, and has been brought so close to his own eyes. Jehovah has raised up the new great hero "from the east" (*mimmizrâch*), and, according to v. 25, "from the north" also. Both of these were fulfilled; for Cyrus was a Persian belonging to the clan of Achaemenes (*Hakhâmanis*), which stood at the head of the tribe, or of the Pasargadae. He was the son of Cambyses; and even if the Median princess

Mandane were not his mother, yet, according to nearly all the ancient accounts, he was connected with the royal house of Media; at any rate, after Astyages was dethroned, he became head and chief of the Medes as well as of the Persians (hence the name of "Mule" which was give to him by the oracle, and that given by Jerome, "*agitor bigae*"). Now Media was to the north of Babylonia, and Persia to the east; so that his victorious march, in which, even before the conquest of Babylon, he subjugated all the lands from the heights of Hinduku to the shores of the Aegean Sea, had for its starting-point both the east and north. The clause *צֶדֶק יִקְרָאֵהוּ לְרִגְלוֹ* is an attributive clause, and as such a virtual object: "him whom (supply *אֲתֵּשׁ*) justice comes to meet (*קָרָא* = *קָרָה*, Ges. § 75 vi.) on his track" (cf., Gen. 30:30; Job 18:11; Hab. 3:5). The idea of *tsedeq* is determined by what follows: Jehovah gives up nations before him, and causes kings to be trodden down (causative of *râdâh*). Accordingly, *tsedeq* is either to be understood here in an attributive sense, as denoting the justice exercised by a person (viz., the justice executed successfully by Cyrus, as the instrument of Jehovah, by the force of arms); or objectively of the justice awarded to a person (to which the idea of "meeting" is more appropriate), viz., the favourable result, the victory which procures justice for the just cause of the combatant. Rosenmüller, Knobel, and others, are wrong in maintaining that *tsedeq* (*tsdâqâh*) in Isa. 40–66 signifies primarily justice, and the prosperity and salvation as its reward. The word means straightness, justice, righteousness, and nothing more (from *tsâdaq*, to be hard, firm, extended, straight, e.g., *rumhun-tsadq*, a hard, firm, and straight lance); but it has a double aspect, because justice consists, according to circumstances, of either wrath of favour, and therefore has sometimes the idea of the strict execution of justice, as in this instance, sometimes of a manifestation of justice in fidelity to promises, as in v. 10. *יִתֵּן* is repeated here in v. 2 (just like *וילמדוהוּ* in Isa. 40:14) with the same subject, but in a different

sense. To make sword and bow the subject, in the sense of "his sword gives (sc., 'the foe')," is a doubtful thing in itself; and as *cherebh* and *qesheth* are feminines, it is by no means advisable. Moreover, in other instances, the comparative ׀ leaves it to the reader to carry out the figure indicated according to his own fancy. And this is the case here: He (Jehovah) makes his sword as if there were dust, his bow as if there were hunted stubble (Böttcher), i.e., pounding the enemy like dust, and hunting it like flying stubble. Our text has כְּעָפָר, but in certain codices we find כְּעֶפֶר with *tzere*; and this reading, which is contrary to rule, has in its favour the express testimony of Moses the punctuator.

Isaiah 41:3. The conqueror is now still further described in futures, which might be defined by הָעֵינִי, and so express a simultaneous past (synchronistic imperfects), but which it is safer to take as standing traits in the picture drawn of the conqueror referred to. V. 3. "He pursueth them and marcheth in peace by a course which he never trod with his feet." He marches victoriously further and further, *shâlôm*," i.e., "in safety" (or, as an adjective, safely; Job 21:9), without any one being able to do him harm, by a course (accus. Ges. § 138, 1) which he has not been accustomed to tread with his feet (*ingredi*).

Isaiah 41:4. The great fact of the present time, which not one of the gods of the heathen can boast of having brought to pass, is now explained. Jehovah is its author. V. 4. "Who hath wrought and executed it? He who calleth the generations of men from the beginning, I Jehovah am first, and with the last am I He." The synonyms פָּעַל and עָשָׂה are distinguished from each other in the same way as "to work" (or bring about) and "to realize" (or carry out). Hence the meaning is, Who is the author to whom both the origin and progress of such an occurrence are to be referred? It is He who "from the beginning," i.e., ever since there has been a human history, has called into existence the generations of men through His

authoritative command. And this is no other than Jehovah, who can declare of Himself, in contrast with the heathen and their gods, who are of yesterday, and to-morrow will not be: I am Jehovah, the very first, whose being precedes all history; and with the men of the latest generations yet to come "I am it." אֲנִי is not introduced here to strengthen the subject, *ego ille* "I and no other," as in Isa. 37:16, which see); but, as in Isa. 43:10, 13; 56:4; 48:12, it is a predicate of the substantive clause, *ego sum is (ille)*, viz., 'Elôhîm; or even as in Ps. 102:28 (cf., Job 3:19 and Heb. 13:8), *ego sum idem* (Hitzig). They are both included, without any distinction in the assertion. He is this, viz., God throughout all ages, and is through all ages He, i.e., the Being who is ever the same in this His deity. It is the full meaning of the name Jehovah which is unfolded here; for God is called Jehovah as the absolute I, the absolutely free Being, pervading all history, and yet above all history, as He who is Lord of His own absolute being, in revealing which He is purely self-determined; in a word, as the unconditionally free and unchangeably eternal personality.

Isaiah 41:5-7. In the following verse we have not a description of the impression made upon the heathen by the argument of Jehovah, but the argument itself is continued. V. 5. "Islands have seen it, and shuddered; the ends of the earth trembled; they have approached, and drawn near." We have here a description of the effects which the victorious course of Cyrus had begun to produce in the heathen world. The perfects denote the past, and the futures a simultaneous past; so that we have not to compare v. 5a with Hab. 3:10 so much as with Ps. 77:17. The play upon the words אָזַר ... יִירָאוּ pairs together both seeing and fearing. The Cumaeans, when consulting the oracle, commenced thus: ἡμεῖς δὲ δευμαίνοντες τὴν Περσέων δύναμιν. The perfect with the aorist following in v. 5b places the following picture upon the stage: They have approached and drawn near (from all directions) to meet the threatening danger; and how? Vv. 6, 7. "One helped his companion, and he said to his brother, Only firm! The caster put

*firmness into the melter, the hammer-smoother into the anvil-smiter, saying of the soldering, It is good; and made him firm with nails, that he should not shake.” Him, viz., the idol. Everything is in confusion, from the terror that prevails; and the gods from which they expect deliverance are not made till now, the workmen stimulating one another to work. The *chârâsh*, who casts the image, encourages the *tsôrêph*, whose task it is to provide it with the plating of gold and silver chains (Isa. 40:19), to work more bravely; and the man who smooths with the hammer (*pattish, instrumentalis*) does the same to the man who smites the anvil (הוֹלֵם) with *seghol*, whereas in other cases, e.g., Ezek. 22:25, the tone generally gives way without any change in the vowel-pointing). The latter finds the soldering all right, by which the gold plates of the covering are fastened together, so as to give to the golden idol a massive appearance. He is the last into whose hands it comes; and nothing more is wanting, than that he should forge upon the anvil the nails with which it is fastened, to prevent it from falling. To such foolish, fruitless proceedings have the nations resorted when threatened with subjugation by Cyrus.*

Isaiah 41:8–10. The proof adduced by Jehovah of His own deity closes here. But instead of our hearing whether the nations, with which He has entered upon the contest, have any reply to make, the address turns to Israel, upon which deliverance dawns from that very quarter, from which the others are threatened with destruction. Vv. 8–10. *“And thou, Israel my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, seed of Abraham my friend, thou whom I have laid hold of from the ends of the earth, and called from the corners thereof, and said to thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen and not despised thee; fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not afraid, for I am thy God: I have chosen thee, I also help thee, I also hold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”* The ׀ before אֶתְּהוָה connects together antitheses, which show themselves at once to be antitheses. Whereas the nations, which put their trust in idols that they

themselves had made, were thrown into alarm, and yielded before the world-wide commotions that had originated with the eastern conqueror, Israel, the nation of Jehovah, might take comfort to itself. Every word here breathes the deepest affection. The address moves on in soft undulating lines. The repetition of the suffix ך, with which אֶתְּהוָה forms a relative of the second person, for which we have no equivalent in our language (Ges. § 123, Anm. 1), gives to the address a pressing, clinging, and, as it were, loving key-note. The reason, which precedes the comforting assurance in v. 10, recalls the intimate relation in which Jehovah had placed Himself towards Israel, and Israel towards Himself. The leading thought, “servant of Jehovah,” which is characteristic of Isa. 40–46, and lies at the root of the whole spirit of these addresses, more especially of their Christology, we first meet with here, and that in a popular sense. It has both an objective and a subjective side. On the one hand, Israel is the servant of Jehovah by virtue of a divine act; and this act, viz., its election and call, was an act of pure grace, and was not to be traced, as the expression “I have chosen and not despised thee” indicates, to any superior excellence or merit on the part of Israel. On the contrary, Israel was so obscure that Jehovah might have despised it; nevertheless He had anticipated it in free unmerited love with this stamp of the *character indelibilis* of a servant of Jehovah. On the other hand, Israel was the servant of Jehovah, inasmuch as it acted out what Jehovah had made it, partly in reverential worship of this God, and partly in active obedience. עָבַד אֶתְּהוָה, i.e., “serving Jehovah,” includes both liturgical service (also עָבַד absolutely, Isa. 19:23) and the service of works. The divine act of choosing and calling is dated from Abraham. From a Palestinian point of view, Ur of Chaldaea, within the old kingdom of Nimrod, and Haran in northern Mesopotamia, seemed like the ends and corners of the earth (*’âtsilîm*, remote places, from *’âtsal*, to put aside or apart). Israel and the land of Israel were so

inseparably connected, that whenever the origin of Israel was spoken of, the point of view could only be taken in Palestine. To the far distant land of the Tigris and Euphrates had Jehovah gone to fetch Abraham, "the friend of God" (Jas. 2:23), who is called in the East even to the present day, *chalil ollah*, the friend of God. This calling of Abraham was the furthest *terminus a quo* of the existence of Israel as the covenant nation; for the leading of Abraham was providentially appointed with reference to the rise of Israel as a nation. The latter was pre-existent in him by virtue of the counsel of God. And when Jehovah adopted Abraham as His servant, and called him "my servant" (Gen. 26:24), Israel, the nation that was coming into existence in Abraham, received both the essence and name of a "servant of Jehovah." Inasmuch then as, on looking back to its past history, it would not fail to perceive that it was so thoroughly a creation of divine power and grace, it ought not to be fearful, and look about with timidity and anxiety; for He who had presented Himself at the very beginning as its God, was still always near. The question arises, in connection with the word יְהוָה יִצְמַח, whether it means to strengthen (Isa. 35:3; Ps. 89:22), or to lay firm hold of, to attach firmly to one's self, to choose. We decide in favour of the latter meaning, which is established by Isa. 44:14, cf., Ps. 80:16, 18. The other perfects affirm what Jehovah has ever done, and still continues to do. In the expression "by the right hand of my righteousness," the justice or righteousness is regarded pre-eminently on its brighter side, the side turned towards Israel; but it is also regarded on its fiery side, or the side turned towards the enemies of Israel. It is the righteousness which aids the oppressed congregation against its oppressors. The repeated יָסַף heaps one synonym upon another, expressive of the divine love; for יָ simply connects, בָּ appends, יָסַף heaps up (*cumulat*). Language is too contracted to hold all the fulness of the divine love; and for this reason the latter could not find words enough to express all that it desired.

Isaiah 41:11–13. With the exclamation *hēn* (behold) the eyes of Israel are now directed to the saving interposition of Jehovah in the immediate future. Vv. 11–13. "*Behold, all they that were incensed against thee must be ashamed and confounded; the men of thy conflict become as nothing, and perish. Thou wilt seek them, and not find them, the men of thy feuds; the men of thy warfare become as nothing, and nonentity. For I, Jehovah thy God, lay hold of thy right hand, He who saith to thee, Fear not; I will help thee.*" The comprehensive expression *omnes inflammati in te* (*niphāl*, as in Isa. 45:24) stands at the head; and then, in order that every kind may be included, the enemies are called by a different name every time. The three substantives bear much the same relation to one another as *lis, rixa, bellum* (*milchâmâh*, lit., throng = war-tumult, like the epic κλόνοϛ), hence *adversarii, inimici, hostes*. The suffixes have the force of objective genitives. We have founded our translation upon the reading יְהוָה יִצְמַח. The three names of the enemies are placed emphatically at the close of the sentences, and these are long drawn out, whilst the indignation gives vent to itself; whereas in v. 13 there follows nothing but short sentences, in which the persecuted church is encouraged and affectionately embraced. Two clauses, which are made to rhyme with *ēm*, announce the utter destruction of their foes; then the inflective rhyme *ekha* is repeated five times; and the sixth time it passes over into *ikha*.

Isaiah 41:14–16. The consolatory words, "Fear not," are now repeated, for the purpose of once more adding the promise that Israel will not succumb to its foes, but will acquire power over its enemies. Vv. 14–16. "*Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and handful Israel: I will help thee, saith Jehovah; and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made thee a threshing roller, a sharp new one, with double edges: thou wilt thresh mountains, and pound them; and hills thou wilt make like chaff. Thou wilt winnow them, and wind carries them away, and tempest scatters them: and thou wilt rejoice in Jehovah, and glory in the Holy One of Israel.*" Israel, which

is now helplessly oppressed, is called “worm of Jacob” (*gen. appos.*) in compassion, i.e., Jacob that is like a worm, probably with some allusion to Ps. 22:7; for the image of the Messiah enriches itself in these discourses, inasmuch as Israel itself is looked upon in a Messianic light, so that the second David does not stand by the side of Israel, but appears as Israel’s heart, or true and inmost essence. The people are then addressed as the “people of Israel,” with some allusion to the phrase *מְהִי מְסָפָר* (i.e., few men, easily numbered) in Gen. 34:30, Deut. 4:27 (LXX ὀλιγοστός Ἰσραήλ; Luther, *Ir armer hauffe Israel*, ye poor crowd of Israel). They no longer formed the compact mass of a nation; the band of the commonwealth was broken: they were melted down into a few individuals, scattered about hither and thither. But it would not continue so. “I help thee” (perfect of certainty) is Jehovah’s solemn declaration; and the Redeemer (*redemptor*, Lev. 25:48, 49) of His now enslaved people is the Holy One of Israel, with His love, which perpetually triumphs over wrath. Not only will He set it free, but He will also endow it with might over its oppressors; *samtikh* is a perfect of assurance (Ges. § 126, 4); *mōrag* (roller) signifies a threshing-sledge (Arab. *naureg*, *nōreg*), which has here the term *קְרוּיָן* (Isa. 28:27) as a secondary name along with *שְׂדֵדָה*, and is described as furnished on the under part of the two arms of the sledge not only with sharp knives, but with two-edged knives (*פִּיפִיּוֹת*) a reduplication, like *מֵאֵסָאָה* in Isa. 27:8, whereas *מִימִי* is a double plural). Just like such a threshing machine would Israel thresh and grind to powder from that time forth both mountains and hills. This is evidently a figurative expression for proud and mighty foes, just as wind and tempest denote the irresistible force of Jehovah’s aid. The might of the enemy would be broken down to the very last remnant, whereas Israel would be able to rejoice and glory in its God.

Isaiah 41:17–20. At the present time, indeed, the state of His people was a helpless one, but its cry for help was not in vain. Vv. 17–20. “*The*

poor and needy, who seek for water and there is none, their tongue faints for thirst. I Jehovah will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I open streams upon hills of the field, and springs in the midst of the valleys; I make the desert into a pond, and dry land into fountains of water. I give in the desert cedars, acacias, and myrtles, and oleasters; I set in the steppe cypresses, plane-trees, and sherbin-trees together, that they may see, and know, and lay to heart and understand all together, that the hand of Jehovah hath accomplished this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” Kimchi, Hitzig, and others refer these promises to the returning exiles; but there is also a description, without any restriction to the return home, of the miraculous change which would take place in the now comfortless and helpless condition of the exiles. The *shphâyim*, i.e., bare, woodless hills rising up from the plain, Jer. 12:12, the *bqâ’ôth*, or deep valleys, by the sides of which there rise precipitous mountains, and the *’erets tsiyyâh*, the land of burning heat or drought (cf., Ps. 63:2), depict the homeless condition of Israel, as it wandered over bald heights and through waterless plains about a land with parched and gaping soil. For the characteristics of the object, which is placed before *אֲנִינָם*, we may therefore compare such passages as Isa. 44:3; 55:1. *נִשְׁתָּה* is either a pausal form for *נִשְׁתָּה*, and therefore the *niphal* of *שָׁתַת* (to set, become shallow, dry up), or a pausal form for *נִשְׁתָּה*, and therefore the *kal* of *נִשַׁת* with *dagesh affectuosum*, like *נִתְנוּ* in Ezek. 27:19 (Olshausen, § 83, *b*). The form *נִשְׁתָּה* in Jer. 51:30 may just as well be derived from *שָׁתַת* (Ges. § 67, Anm. 11) as from *נִשַׁת*, whereas *נִשְׁתוּ* may certainly be taken as the *niphal* of *שָׁתַת* after the form *נִבְלָה*, *נִחָר* (Ges. § 67, Anm. 5), though it would be safer to refer it to a *kal* *נִשַׁת*, which seems to be also favoured by *יִנְתְּשׁוּ* in Jer. 18:14 as a transposition of *יִנְשְׁתוּ*. The root *נש*, of which *נִשַׁת* would be a further expansion, really exhibits the meaning to dry up or thirst, in the Arabic

ISAIAH	Page 327
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

nassa; whereas the verbs נוֹשַׁ, נוֹשְׁ, נוֹסָ (Isa. 10:18), נוֹשָׁ, Syr. *nas', nos'*, Arab. *nâsa, nasnasa*, with the primary meaning to slacken, lose their hold, and נוֹשְׁ, נוֹשָׁ, נוֹסָ, to deceive, derange, and advance, form separate families. Just when they are thus on the point of pining away, they receive an answer to their prayer: their God opens streams, i.e., causes streams to break forth on the hills of the field, and springs in the midst of the valleys. The desert is transformed into a lake, and the steppe of burning sand into fountains of water. What was predicted in Isa. 35:6, 7 is echoed again here,—a figurative representation of the manifold fulness of refreshing, consolation, and marvellous help which was to burst all at once upon those who were apparently forsaken of God. What is depicted in vv. 19, 20, is the effect of these. It is not merely a scanty vegetation that springs up, but a corresponding manifold fulness of stately, fragrant, and shady trees; so that the steppe, where neither foot nor eye could find a resting-place, is changed, as by a stroke of magic, into a large, dense, well-watered forest, and shines with sevenfold glory,—an image of the many-sided manifestations of divine grace which are experienced by those who are comforted now. Isaiah is especially fond of such figures as these (vid., Isa. 5:7; 6:13; 27:6; 37:31). There are seven (4 + 3) trees named; seven indicating the divine character of this manifold development (*Psychol.* p. 188). 'Erez is the generic name for the cedar; *shittâh*, the acacia, the Egyptian *spina* (ἄκανθα), Copt. *shont*; *hâdas*, the myrtle, 'ets *shemen*, the wild olive, as distinguished from *zayith* (ἡ ἀγριέλαιος, opposed to ἡ ἐλαία in Rom. 11:17); *brôsh*, the cypress, at any rate more especially this; *tîdhâr* we have rendered the "plane-tree," after Saad.; and *t'asshûr* the "sherbin" (a kind of cedar), after Saad. and Syr. The crowded synonyms indicating sensual and spiritual perception in v. 20a (וְיִשְׂמוּ, sc. לָבָם, v. 22) are meant to express as strongly as possible the irresistible character of the impression. They will be quite unable to regard all this as accidental or self-produced, or as anything but

the production of the power and grace of their God.

Isaiah 41:21–23. There follows now the second stage in the suit. Vv. 21–23. "Bring hither your cause, saith Jehovah; bring forward your proofs, saith the king of Jacob. Let them bring forward, and make known to us what will happen: make known the beginning, what it is, and we will fix our heart upon it, and take knowledge of its issue; or let us hear what is to come. Make known what is coming later, and we will acknowledge that ye are gods: yea, do good, and do evil, and we will measure ourselves, and see together." In the first stage Jehovah appealed, in support of His deity, to the fact that it was He who had called the oppressor of the nations upon the arena of history. In this second stage He appeals to the fact that He only knows or can predict the future. There the challenge was addressed to the worshippers of idols, here to the idols themselves; but in both cases both of these are ranged on the one side, and Jehovah with His people upon the other. It is with purpose that Jehovah is called the "King of Jacob," as being the tutelar God of Israel, in contrast to the tutelar deities of the heathen. The challenge to the latter to establish their deity is first of all addressed to them directly in v. 21, and then indirectly in v. 22a, where Jehovah connects Himself with His people as the opposing party; but in v. 22b He returns again to a direct address. מְצַוִּים are evidences (lit. *robara*, cf., ὀχυρώματα, 2 Cor. 10:4, from מְצַוֵּ, to be strong or stringent; *mishn.* מְצַוֵּתָּהּ, to contend with one another *pro et contra*); here it signifies proofs that they can foresee the future. Jehovah for His part has displayed this knowledge, inasmuch as, at the very time when He threatened destruction to the heathen at the hands of Cyrus, He consoled His people with the announcement of their deliverance (vv. 8–20). It is therefore the turn of the idol deities now: "Let them bring forward and announce to us the things that will come to pass." the general idea of what is in the future stands at the head. Then within this the choice is given them of proving their foreknowledge of what is

afterwards to happen, by announcing either *ראשונות*, or even *באות*. These two ideas, therefore, are generic terms within the range of the things that are to happen. Consequently *הראשונות* cannot mean “earlier predictions,” *prius praedicta*, as Hitzig, Knobel, and others suppose. This explanation is precluded in the present instance by the logic of the context. Both ideas lie upon the one line of the future; the one being more immediate, the other more remote, or as the expression alternating with *הבאות* implies *האחרות* *לְאַחֲרָיָהּ*, *ventura in posterum* (“in later times,” compare Isa. 42:23, “at a later period;” from the participle *אָתָה*, radical form *אָתָה*, vid., Ges. § 75, Anm. 5, probably to distinguish it from *אָתָה*). This is the explanation adopted by Stier and Hahn, the latter of whom has correctly expounded the word, as denoting “the events about to happen first in the immediate future, which it is not so difficult to prognosticate from signs that are discernible in the present.” The choice is given them, either to foretell “things at the beginning” (*haggidū* in our editions is erroneously pointed with *kadma* instead of *geresh*), i.e., that which will take place first or next, “what they be” (*quae et qualia sint*), so that now, when the *achārith*, “the latter end” (i.e., the issue of that which is held out to view), as prognosticated from the standpoint of the present, really occurs, the prophetic utterance concerning it may be verified; or “things to come,” i.e., things further off, in later times (in the remote future), the prediction of which is incomparably more difficult, because without any point of contact in the present. They are to choose which they like (*או* from *אָוָה*, like *vel* from *velle*): “ye do good, and do evil,” i.e., (according to the proverbial use of the phrase; cf., Zeph. 1:12 and Jer. 10:5) only express yourselves in some way; come forward, and do either the one or the other. The meaning is, not that they are to stir themselves and predict either good or evil, but they are to show some sign of life, no matter what. “And we will measure ourselves (i.e., look one another in the face, testing and measuring),

and see together,” viz., what the result of the contest will be. *הַשְׁתַּעָּה* like *הַתְּרָאָה* in 2 Kings 14:8, 11, with a cohortative *âh*, which is rarely met with in connection with verbs *לִי*, and the tone upon the penultimate, the *âh* being attached without tone to the voluntative *נִשְׁתַּעַ* in v. 5 (Ewald, § 228, c). For the *chethib* *וְנִרְאָה*, the *keri* has the voluntative *וְנִרְאָה*.

Isaiah 41:24. Jehovah has thus placed Himself in opposition to the heathen and their gods, as the God of history and prophecy. It now remains to be seen whether the idols will speak, to prove their deity. By no means; not only are they silent, but they cannot speak. Therefore Jehovah breaks out into words of wrath and contempt. V. 24. “Behold, ye are of nothing, and your doing of nought: an abomination whoever chooseth you.” The two *מִן* are partitive, as in Isa. 40:17; and *מֵאֲפַע* is not an error of the pen for *מֵאֲפָס*, as Gesenius and others suppose, but *אֲפַע* from *עָפַע* = *פָּה* (from which comes *פָּה*), *פָּעָה*, Isa. 42:14 (from which comes *אֲפָעָה*, Isa. 59:5), to breathe, stands as a synonym to *אָוֶן*, *הַבָּל*, *רִיחַ*. The attributive clause *יִבְחַר בְּכֶם* (supply *הוּא* *אֲשֶׁר*) is a virtual subject (Ewald, § 333, b): ye and your doings are equally *nil*; and whoever chooses you for protectors, and makes you the objects of his worship, is morally the most degraded of beings.

Isaiah 41:25. The more conclusively and incontrovertibly, therefore, does Jehovah keep the field as the moulder of history and foreteller of the future, and therefore as God above all gods. V. 25. “I have raised up from the north, and he came: from the rising of the sun one who invokes my name; and he treads upon satraps as mud, and like a potter kneadeth clay.” The object of the verb *hâ'irōthī* (I have wakened up) is he who came when wakened up by Jehovah from the north and east, i.e., from Media and Persia (*וַיֵּאָתָּה* = *וַיֵּאָתָּה* for *וַיֵּאָתָּה*, with evasion of the auxiliary *pathach*, Ges. § 76, 2, c), and, as the second clause affirms, who invokes

ISAIAH	Page 329
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

or *will invoke* the name of Jehovah (at any rate, *qui invocabit* is the real meaning of *qui invocat*). For although the Zarathustrian religion, which Cyrus followed, was nearest to the Jehovah religion of all the systems of heathenism, it was a heathen religion after all. The doctrine of a great God (*baga vazarka*), the Creator of heaven and earth, and at the same time of a great number of Bagas and Yazatas, behind whose working and worship the great God was thrown into the shade, is (apart from the dualism condemned in Isa. 45:7) the substance of the sacred writings of the Magi in our possession, as confirmed by the inscriptions of the Achemenides. But the awakened of Jehovah would, as is here predicted, “call with the name, or by means of the name, of Jehovah,” which may mean either call upon this name (Zeph. 3:9; Jer. 10:25), or call out the name (compare Ex. 33:19; 34:5, with Ex. 35:30) in the manner in which he does make use of it in the edict setting the exiles free (Ezra 1:2). The verb **יָבֵא** which follows (cf., v. 2) designated him still further as a conqueror of nations; the verb construed with an accusative is used here, as is very frequently the case, in the sense of hostile attack. The word *Sâgân*, which is met with first in Ezekiel—apart, that is to say, from the passage before us—may have owed its meaning in the Hebrew vocabulary to its similarity in sound to *sôkhên* (Isa. 22:15); at any rate, it is no doubt a Persian word, which became naturalized in the Hebrew (**ζωγάνης** in Athenaeus, and Neo-Pers. *sichne*, a governor: see *Ges. Thes.*), though this comparison is by no means so certain as that **σατράπης** is the same as the *Ksatrapâvan* of the inscriptions, i.e., protector of the kingdom. Without at all overlooking the fact that this word *sgânîm*, so far as it can really be supposed to be a Persian word, favours the later composition of this portion of the book of Isaiah, we cannot admit that it has any decisive weight, inasmuch as the Persian word *pardês* occurs even in the Song of Solomon. And the indications which might be found in the word *sgânîm* unfavourable to Isaiah’s authorship are abundantly counterbalanced by what immediately follows.

Isaiah 41:26–28. As v. 25 points back to the first charge against the heathen and their gods (vv. 2–7), so vv. 26–28 point back to the second. Not only did Jehovah manifest Himself as the Universal Ruler in the waking up of Cyrus, but as the Omniscient Ruler also. Vv. 26–28. “*Who hath made it known from the beginning, we will acknowledge it, and from former time, we will say He is in the right?! Yea, there was none that made known; yea, none that caused to hear; yea, none that heard your words. As the first I saith to Zion, Behold, behold, there it is: and I bestow evangelists upon Jerusalem. And I looked, and there was no man; and of these there was no one answering whom I would ask, and who would give me an answer.*” If any one of the heathen deities had foretold this appearance of Cyrus so long before as at the very commencement of that course of history which had thus reached its goal, Jehovah with His people, being thus taught by experience, would admit and acknowledge their divinity. **קראשׁ** is used in the same sense as in Isa. 48:16: and also in Isa. 41:4 and 40:21, where it refers according to the context in each case, to the beginning of the particular line of history. **צדיק** signifies either “he is right,” i.e., in the right (compare the Arabic *siddik*, genuine), or in a neuter sense, “it is right” (= true), i.e., the claim to divine honours is really founded upon divine performances. But there was not one who had proclaimed it, or who gave a single sound of himself; no one had heard anything of the kind from them. **יָזַע** receives a retrospective character from the connection; and bearing this in mind, the participles may be also resolved into imperfects. The repeated **יָזַע**, passing beyond what is set down as possible, declares the reality of the very opposite. What Jehovah thus proves the idols to want, He can lay claim to for Himself. In v. 27 we need not assume that there is any *hyperbaton*, as Louis de Dieu, Rosenmüller, and others have done: “I first will give to Zion and Jerusalem one bringing glad tidings: behold, behold them.” After what has gone before in v. 26 we may easily supply

אָמַרְתִּי, “I said,” in v. 27a (compare Isa. 8:19; 14:16; 27:2), not אָמַר, for the whole comparison drawn by Jehovah between Himself and the idols is retrospective, and looks back from the fulfilment in progress to the prophecies relating to it. The only reply that we can look for to the question in v. 26 is not, “I on the contrary *do* it,” but “I *did* it.” At the same time, the rendering is a correct one: “Behold, behold *them*” (*illa*; for the neuter use of the masculine, compare Isa. 48:3; 38:16; 45:8). “As the first,” Jehovah replies (i.e., without any one anticipating me), “Have I spoken to Zion: behold, behold, there it is,” pointing with the finger of prophecy to the coming salvation, which is here regarded as present; “and I gave to Jerusalem messengers of joy;” i.e., long ago, before what is now approaching could be known by any one, I foretold to my church, through the medium of prophets, the glad tidings of the deliverance from Babylon. If the author of Isa. 40–66 were a prophet of the captivity, his reference here would be to such prophecies as Isa. 11:11 (where Shinar is mentioned as a land of dispersion), and more especially still Mic. 4:10, “There in Babylon wilt thou be delivered, there will Jehovah redeem thee out of the hand of thine enemies;” but if Isaiah were the author, he is looking back from the ideal standpoint of the time of the captivity, and of Cyrus more especially, to his own prophecies before the captivity (such as Isa. 13:1–14:23, and 21:1–10), just as Ezekiel, when prophesying of Gog and Magog, looks back in Ezek. 38:17 from the ideal standpoint of this remote future, more especially to his own prophecies in relation to it. In that case the *mbhassēr*, or evangelist, more especially referred to is the prophet himself (Grotius and Stier), namely, as being the foreteller of those prophets to whom the commission in Isa. 40:1, “Comfort ye, comfort ye,” is addressed, and who are greeted in Isa. 52:7, 8 as the bearers of the joyful news of the existing fulfilment of the deliverance that has appeared, and therefore as the *mbhassēr* or evangelist of the future מְבַשְּׂרִים. In any case, it follows from vv. 26, 27 that the overthrow of

Babylon and the redemption of Israel had long before been proclaimed by Jehovah through His prophets; and if our exposition is correct so far, the futures in v. 28 are to be taken as imperfects: And I looked round (אָרָאָה, a voluntative in the hypothetical protasis, Ges. § 128, 2), and there was no one (who announced anything of the kind); and of these (the idols) there was no adviser (with regard to the future, Num. 24:14), and none whom I could ask, and who answered me (the questioner). Consequently, just as the raising up of Cyrus proclaimed the sole omnipotence of Jehovah, so did the fact that the deliverance of Zion-Jerusalem, for which the raising up of Cyrus prepared the way, had been predicted by Him long before, proclaim His sole omniscience.

Isaiah 41:29. This closing declaration of Jehovah terminates with similar words of wrath and contempt to those with which the judicial process ended in v. 24. V. 29. “*See them all, vanity; nothingness are their productions, wind and desolation their molten images.*” מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם are not the works of the idols, but, as the parallel shows, the productions (plural, as in Ezek. 6:6, Jer. 1:16) of the idolaters,—in other words, the idols themselves,—a parallel expression to נִסְכֵיהֶם (from נָסַךְ, as in Isa. 48:5 = *massēkhâh*, Isa. 42:17). אָנֹן אֶפֶס is an emotional asyndeton (Ges. § 155, 1, a). The address is thus rounded off by returning to the idolaters, with whom it first started. The first part, vv. 1–24, contains the judicial pleadings; the second part, vv. 25ff., recapitulates the evidence and the verdict.

Isaiah 42

Third Prophecy—Ch. 42:1–43:13

The Mediator of Israel and Saviour of the Gentiles

Isaiah 42:1. The *hēn* (behold) in Isa. 41:29 is now followed by a second *hēn*. With the former, Jehovah pronounced sentence upon the idolaters and their idols; with the latter, He introduces His “servant.” In Isa. 41:8 this epithet was applied to the nation, which had

been chosen as the servant and for the service of Jehovah. But the servant of Jehovah who is presented to us here is distinct from Israel, and has so strong an individuality and such marked personal features, that the expression cannot possibly be merely a personified collective. Nor can the prophet himself be intended; for what is here affirmed of this servant of Jehovah goes infinitely beyond anything to which a prophet was ever called, or of which a man was ever capable. It must therefore be the future Christ; and this is the view taken in the Targum, where the translation of our prophecy commences thus: "*Hâ' 'abhdî Mshîchâ'.*" Still there must be a connection between the national sense, in which the expression "servant of Jehovah" was used in Isa. 41:8, and the personal sense in which it is used here. The coming Saviour is not depicted as the Son of David, as in Isa. 7-12, and elsewhere, but appears as the embodied idea of Israel, i.e., as its truth and reality embodied in one person. The idea of "the servant of Jehovah" assumed, to speak figuratively, the form of a pyramid. The base was Israel as a whole; the central section was that Israel, which was not merely Israel according to the flesh, but according to the spirit also; the apex is the person of the Mediator of salvation springing out of Israel. And the last of the three is regarded (1) as the centre of the circle of the promised kingdom—the *second David*; (2) the centre of the circle of the people of salvation—the *second Israel*; (3) the centre of the circle of the human race—the *second Adam*. Throughout the whole of these prophecies in Isa. 40-66 the knowledge of salvation is still in its second stage, and about to pass into the third. Israel's true nature as a servant of God, which had its roots in the election and calling of Jehovah, and manifested itself in conduct and action in harmony with this calling, is all concentrated in Him, the One, as its ripest fruit. The gracious purposes of God towards the whole human race, which were manifested even in the election of Israel, are brought by Him to their full completion. Whilst judgments are inflicted upon the heathen by the oppressor of the nations, and display the

nothingness of idolatry, the servant of Jehovah brings to them in a peaceful way the greatest of all blessings. V. 1. "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, whom my soul loveth: I have laid my Spirit upon Him; He will bring out right to the Gentiles.*" We must not render the first clause "by whom I hold." *Tâmakh b'* means to lay firm hold of and keep upright (*sustinere*). רָצַתָּהּ נָפְשִׁי (supply בו or אֵתָּה, Job 33:26) is an attributive clause. The amplified subject extends as far as *naphshî*; then follows the predicate: I have endowed Him with my Spirit, and by virtue of this Spirit He will carry out *mishpât*, i.e., absolute and therefore divine right, beyond the circle in which He Himself is to be found, even far away to the Gentiles. *Mishpât* is the term employed here to denote true religion regarded on its practical side, as the rule and authority for life in all its relations, i.e., religion as the law of life, νομός.

Isaiah 42:2. The prophet then proceeds to describe how the servant of Jehovah will manifest Himself in the world outside Israel by the promulgation of this right. V. 2. "*He will not cry, nor lift up, nor cause to be heard in the street, His voice.*" "His voice" is the object of "lift up," as well as "cause to be heard." With our existing division of the verse, it must at least be supplied in thought. Although he is certain of His divine call, and brings to the nations the highest and best, His manner of appearing is nevertheless quiet, gentle, and humble; the very opposite of those lying teachers, who endeavoured to exalt themselves by noisy demonstrations. He does not seek His own, and therefore denies Himself; He brings what commends itself, and therefore requires no forced trumpeting.

Isaiah 42:3. With this unassuming appearance there is associated a tender pastoral care. V. 3. "*A bruised reed He does not break, and a glimmering wick He does not put out: according to truth He brings out right.*" "Bruised:" *râtsûts* signifies here, as in Isa. 36:6, what is cracked, and therefore half-broken already. *Glimmering:* *kêheh* (a form indicative of defects, like עֵינָר), that which is burning feebly, and very nearly

extinguished. Tertullian understands by the "bruised reed" (*arundinem contusam*) the faith of Israel, and by the "glimmering wick" (*linum ardens*) the momentary zeal of the Gentiles. But the words hardly admit of this distinction; the reference is rather a general one, to those whose inner and outer life is only hanging by a slender thread. In the statement that in such a case as this He does not completely break or extinguish, there is more implied than is really expressed. Not only will He not destroy the life that is dying out, but He will actually save it; His course is not to destroy, but to save. If we explain the words that follow as meaning, "He will carry out right to truth," i.e., to its fullest efficacy and permanence (LXX εἰς ἀλήθειαν; instead of which we find εἰς νίκην, "unto victory," in Matt. 12:20, as if the reading were לְנִצָּחַ, as in Hab. 1:4), the connection between the first and last clauses of v. 3 is a very loose one. It becomes much closer if we take the ל as indicating the standard, as in Isa. 11:3 and 32:1, and adopt the rendering "according to truth" (Hitzig and Knobel). It is on its subjective and practical side that truth is referred to here, viz., as denoting such a knowledge, and acknowledgement of the true facts in the complicated affairs of men, as will promote both equity and kindness.

Isaiah 42:4. The figures in v. 3a now lead to the thought that the servant of God will never be extinguished or become broken Himself. V. 4. "He will not become faint or broken, till He establish right upon earth, and the islands wait for His instruction." As יִבָּהֶה (become faint) points back to פִּשְׁתָּה כְּהָה (the *finat* or glimmering wick), so יָרוּץ must point back to קָנָה רֵצוֹן (the bruised or broken reed); it cannot therefore be derived from רוּץ (to run) in the sense of "He will not be rash or impetuous, but execute His calling with wise moderation," as Hengstenberg supposes, but as in Eccles. 12:6, from רָצַץ = יָרַץ (Ges. § 67, Anm. 9), in the neuter sense of *infringetur* (will break). His zeal will not be extinguished, nor will anything break His

strength, till He shall have secured for right a firm standing on the earth (יָשִׁים is a *fut. ex.* so far as the meaning is concerned, like יִבָּצֵעַ in Isa. 10:12). The question arises now, whether what follows is also governed by עַד, in the sense of "and until the islands shall have believed his instruction," as Hitzig supposes; or whether it is an independent sentence, as rendered by the LXX and in Matt. 12:21. We prefer the latter, both because of Isa. 51:5, and also because, although יַחַל לְדַבֵּר ה' may certainly mean to exercise a believing confidence in the word of God (Ps. 119:74, 81), יַחַל לְהוֹרֹתוֹ can only mean "to wait with longing for a person's instruction" (Job 29:23), and especially in this case, where no thought is more naturally suggested, than that the messenger to the Gentile world will be welcomed by a consciousness of need already existing in the heathen world itself. There is a *gratia praeeparans* at work in the Gentile world, as these prophecies all presuppose, in perfect harmony with the Gospel of John, with which they have so much affinity; and it is an actual fact, that the cry for redemption runs through the whole human race, i.e., an earnest longing, the ultimate object of which, however unconsciously, is the servant of Jehovah and his instruction from Zion (Isa. 2:3),—in other words, the gospel.

Isaiah 42:5–7. The words of Jehovah are now addressed to His servant himself. He has not only an exalted vocation, answering to the infinite exaltation of Him from whom he has received his call; but by virtue of the infinite might of the caller, he may be well assured that he will never be wanting in power to execute his calling. Vv. 5–7. "Thus saith God, Jehovah, who created the heavens, and stretched them out; who spread the earth, and its productions; who gave the spirit of life to the people upon it, and the breath of life to them that walk upon it: I, Jehovah, I have called thee in righteousness, and grasped thy hand; and I keep thee, and make thee the covenant of the people, the light of the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners out of the prison, them that sit in

darkness out of the prison-house." The perfect *'amar* is to be explained on the ground that the words of God, as compared with the prophecy which announces them, are always the earlier of the two. הָאֵל (the absolutely Mighty) is an anticipatory apposition to Jehovah (Ges. § 113**). The attributive participles we have resolved into perfects, because the three first at least declare facts of creation, which have occurred once for all. נוֹטֵיָהֶם is not to be regarded as a plural, after Isa. 54:5 and Job 35:10; but as בּוֹרֵא precedes it, we may take it as a singular with an original quiescent *Yod*, after Isa. 5:12; 22:11; 26:12 (cf., p. 71). On רָקַע (construct of רָקַע), see Isa. 40:19. The וֹצֵאֵצִיָּהּ (a word found both in Job and Isaiah, used here in its most direct sense, to signify the vegetable world) must be taken in accordance with the sense, as the *Vav* of appurtenance; since רָקַע may be affirmed of the globe itself, but not of the vegetable productions upon it (cf., Gen. 4:20; Judg. 6:5; 2 Chron. 2:3). *Nshâmâh* and *rûäch* are epithets applied to the divine principle of life in all created corporeal beings, or, what is the same thing, in all beings with living souls. At the same time, *nshâmâh* is an epithet restricted to the self-conscious spirit of man, which gives him his personality (*Psychol.* p. 76, etc.); whereas *rûäch* is applied not only to the human spirit, but to the spirit of the beast as well. Accordingly, עַם signifies the human race, as in Isa. 40:7. What is it, then, that Jehovah, the Author of all being and all life, the Creator of the heaven and the earth, says to His servant here? "I Jehovah have called thee 'in righteousness'" (*btsedeq*: cf., Isa. 45:13, where Jehovah also says of Cyrus, "I have raised him up in righteousness"). צָדֵק, derived from צָדַק, to be rigid, straight, denotes the observance of a fixed rule. The righteousness of God is the stringency with which He acts, in accordance with the will of His holiness. This will of holiness is, so far as the human race is concerned, and apart from the counsels of salvation, a will of wrath; but from the

standpoint of these counsels it is a will of love, which is only changed into a will of wrath towards those who despise the grace thus offered to them. Accordingly, *tsedeq* denotes the action of God in accordance with His purposes of love and the plan of salvation. It signifies just the same as what we should call in New Testament phraseology the *holy love* of God, which, because it is a *holy love*, has wrath against its despisers as its obverse side, but which acts towards men not according to the law of works, but according to the law of grace. The word has this evangelical sense here, where Jehovah says of the Mediator of His counsels of love, that He has called Him in strict adherence to the will of His love, which will show mercy as right, but at the same time will manifest a right of double severity towards those who scornfully repel the offered mercy. That He had been called in righteousness, is attested to the servant of Jehovah by the fact that Jehovah has taken Him by the hand (וָאָחַזְתִּי) contracted after the manner of a future of sequence), and guards Him, and appoints Him לְבְרִית עִם לְאוּר גּוֹיִם. These words are a decisive proof that the idea of the expression "servant of Jehovah" has been elevated in Isa. 42:1ff., as compared with Isa. 41:8, from the national base to the personal apex. Adherence to the national sense necessarily compels a resort to artifices which carry their own condemnation, such as that עַם בְּרִית signifies the "covenant nation," as Hitzig supposes, or "the mediating nation," as Ewald maintains, whereas either of these would require עַם בְּרִית; or "national covenant" (Knobel), in support of which we are referred, though quite inconclusively, to Dan. 11:28, where בְּרִית קִדְשׁ does not mean the covenant of the patriots among themselves, but the covenant religion, with its distinctive sign, circumcision; or even that עַם is collective, and equivalent to עַמִּים (Rosenmüller), whereas עַם and גּוֹיִם, when standing side by side, as they do here, can only mean Israel and the Gentiles; and so far as the passage before us is concerned,

this is put beyond all doubt by Isa. 49:8 (cf., v. 6).

An unprejudiced commentator must admit that the “servant of Jehovah” is pointed out here, as He in whom and through whom Jehovah concludes a new covenant with His people, in the place of the old covenant that was broken,—namely, the covenant promised in Isa. 54:10; 61:8, Jer. 31:31–34, Ezek. 16:60ff. The mediator of this covenant with Israel cannot be Israel itself, not even the true Israel, as distinguished from the mass (where do we read anything of this kind?); on the contrary, the remnant left after the sweeping away of the mass is the object of this covenant. Nor can the expression refer to the prophets as a body, or, in fact, have any collective meaning at all: the form of the word, which is so strongly personal, is in itself opposed to this. It cannot, in fact, denote any other than that Prophet who is more than a prophet, namely, Malachi’s “Messenger of the covenant” (Isa. 3:1). Amongst those who suppose that the “servant of Jehovah” is either Israel, regarded in the light of its prophetic calling, or the prophets as a body, Umbreit at any rate is obliged to admit that this collective body is looked at here in the ideal unity of one single Messianic personality; and he adds, that “in the holy countenance of this prophet, which shines forth as the idea of future realization, we discern exactly the loved features of Him to whom all prophecy points, and who saw Himself therein.” This is very beautiful; but why this roundabout course? Let us bear in mind, that the servant of Jehovah appears here not only as one who is the medium of a covenant to the nation, and of light to the Gentiles, but as being himself the people’s covenant and heathen’s light, inasmuch as in his own person he is the band of a new fellowship between Israel and Jehovah, and becomes in his own person the light which illumines the dark heathen world. This is surely more than could be affirmed of any prophet, even of Isaiah or Jeremiah. Hence the “servant of Jehovah” must be that one Person who was the goal and culminating point to which, from the very first, the history of Israel was ever

pressing on; that One who throws into the shade not only all that prophets did before, but all that had been ever done by Israel’s priests of kings; that One who arose out of Israel, for Israel and the whole human race, and who stood in the same relation not only to the wider circle of the whole nation, but also to the inner circle of the best and noblest within it, as the heart to the body which it animates, or the head to the body over which it rules. All that Cyrus did, was simply to throw the idolatrous nations into a state of alarm, and set the exiles free. But the Servant of Jehovah opens blind eyes; and therefore the deliverance which He brings is not only redemption from bodily captivity, but from spiritual bondage also. He leads His people (cf., Isa. 49:8, 9), and the Gentiles also, out of night into light; He is the Redeemer of all that need redemption and desire salvation.

Isaiah 42:8. Jehovah pledges His name and honour that this work of the Servant of Jehovah will be carried into effect. V. 8. *“I am Jehovah; that is my name, and my glory I give not to another, nor my renown to idols.”* That is His name, which affirms how truly He stands alone in His nature, and recalls to mind the manifestations of His life, His power, and His grace from the very earliest times (cf., Ex. 3:15). He to whom this name belongs cannot permit the honour due to Him to be permanently transferred to sham gods. He has therefore made preparations for putting an end to idolatry. Cyrus does this provisionally by the tempestuous force of arms; and the Servant of Jehovah completes it by the spiritual force of His simple word, and of His gentle, unselfish love.

Isaiah 42:9. First the overthrow of idolatry, then the restoration of Israel and conversion of the Gentiles: this is the double work of Jehovah’s zeal which is already in progress. V. 9. *“The first, behold, is come to pass, and new things am I proclaiming; before it springs up, I let you hear it.”* The “first” is the rise of Cyrus, and the agitation of the nations which it occasioned,—events which not only formed the starting-point of the prophecy in these addresses, whether the captivity was the prophet’s historical or ideal

standpoint, but which had no less force in themselves, as the connection between the first and second halves of the verse before us imply, as events both foreknown and distinctly foretold by Jehovah. The “new things” which Jehovah now foretells before their visible development (Isa. 43:19), are the restoration of Israel, for which the defeat of their oppressors prepares the way, and the conversion of the heathen, to which an impulse is given by the fact that God thus glorifies Himself in His people.

Isaiah 42:10–13. The prediction of these “new things,” which now follows, looks away from all human mediation. They are manifestly the work of Jehovah Himself, and consist primarily in the subjugation of His enemies, who are holding His people in captivity. Vv. 10–13. *“Sing ye to Jehovah a new song, His praise from the end of the earth, ye navigators of the sea, and its fulness; ye islands, and their inhabitants. Let the desert and the cities thereof strike up, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; the inhabitants of the rock-city may rejoice, shout from the summits of the mountains. Let them give glory to Jehovah, and proclaim His praise in the islands. Jehovah, like a hero will He go forth, kindle jealousy like a man of war; He will breath forth into a war-cry, a yelling war-cry, prove Himself a hero upon His enemies.”* The “new things” furnish the impulse and materials of “a new song,” such as had never been heard in the heathen world before. This whole group of verses is like a variation of Isa. 24:14, 15. The standing-place, whence the summons is uttered, is apparently *Ezion-geber*, at the head of the Elanitic Gulf, that seaport town from which in the time of the kings the news of the nations reached the Holy Land through the extensive commerce of Israel. From this point the eye stretches to the utmost circle of the earth, and then returns from the point where it meets with those who “go down to the sea,” i.e., who navigate the ocean which lies lower than the solid ground. These are to sing, and everything that lives and moves in the sea is to join in the sailors’ song. The islands and coast lands, that are washed by the sea, are likewise

to sing together with their inhabitants. After the summons has drawn these into the net of the song of praise, it moves into the heart of the land. The desert and its cities are to lift up (viz., “their voice”), the villages which Kedar inhabits. The reference to *Sela’*, the rock-city of Edomitish Nabataea, which is also mentioned in Isa. 16:1 (the *Wadi Musa*, which is still celebrated for its splendid ruins), shows by way of example what cities are intended. Their inhabitants are to ascend the steep mountains by which the city is surrounded, and to raise a joyful cry (*yitsvâchû*, to cry out with a loud noise; cf., Isa. 24:11). Along with the inhabitants of cities, the stationary Arabs, who are still called *Hadariye* in distinction from *Wabariye*, the Arabs of the tents, are also summoned; *hadar* (*châtsēr*) is a fixed abode, in contrast to *bedû*, the steppe, where the tents are pitched for a short time, now in one place and now in another. In v. 12 the summons becomes more general. The subject is the heathen universally and in every place; they are to give Jehovah the glory (Ps. 56:2), and declare His praise upon the islands, i.e., to the remotest ends of the whole world of nations. In v. 13 there follows the reason for this summons, and the theme of the new song in honour of the God of Israel, viz., His victory over His enemies, the enemies of His people. The description is anthropomorphically dazzling and bold, such as the self-assurance and vividness of the Israelitish idea of God permitted, without any danger of misunderstanding. Jehovah goes out into the conflict like a hero; and like a “man of war,” i.e., like one who has already fought many battles, and is therefore ready for war, and well versed in warfare, He stirs up jealousy (see at Isa. 9:6). His jealousy has slumbered as it were for a long time, as if smouldering under the ashes; but now He stirs it up, i.e., makes it burn up into a bright flame. Going forward to the attack, קָרַע, “He breaks out into a cry,” אָרַע-יָרִיחַ, “yea, a yelling cry” (*kal* Zeph. 1:14, to cry with a yell; *hiphil*, to utter a yelling cry). In the words, “He will show Himself as a hero upon His enemies,” we see Him already engaged in the battle itself,

in which He proves Himself to possess the strength and boldness of a hero (*hithgabbar* only occurs again in the book of Job). The overthrow which heathenism here suffers at the hand of Jehovah is, according to our prophet's view, the final and decisive one. The redemption of Israel, which is thus about to appear, is redemption from the punishment of captivity, and at the same time from all the troubles that arise from sin. The period following the captivity and the New Testament times here flow into one.

Isaiah 42:14. The period of punishment has now lasted sufficiently long; it is time for Jehovah to bring forth the salvation of His people. V. 14. *"I have been silent eternally long, was still, restrained myself; like a travailing woman, I now breathe again, snort and snuff together."* The standpoint of these prophecies has the larger half of the captivity behind it. It has already lasted a long time, though only for several decades; but in the estimation of Jehovah, with His love to His people, this time of long-suffering towards their oppressors is already an "eternity" (see Isa. 57:11; 58:12; 61:4; 63:18, 19; 64:4, cf., vv. 10, 11). He has kept silence, has still forcibly restrained Himself, just as Joseph is said to have done to prevent himself from breaking out into tears (Gen. 43:31). Love impelled Him to redeem His people; but justice was still obliged to proceed with punishment.

Three real futures now take the place of imperfects regulated by *הִתְקַשְׁתִּי*. They are not to be understood as denoting the violent breathing and snorting of a hero, burning with rage and thirsting for battle (Knobel); nor is *אָשַׁם* to be derived from *שָׂמַם*, as Hitzig supposes, through a mistaken comparison of Ezek. 36:3, though the latter does not mean to lay waste, but to be waste (see Hitzig on Ezek. 36:3). The true derivation is from *נָשַׁם*, related to *נָשַׁף*, *נָשַׁשׁ*, *נָשַׁב*. To the figure of a hero there is now added that of a travailing woman; *פָּטְטָה* is short breathing (with the glottis closed); *נָשַׁם* the snorting of violent inspiration and expiration;

רָאָה the earnest longing for deliverance

pressing upon the burden in the womb; and *יָדָה* expresses the combination of all these several strainings of the breath, which are associated with the so-called labour-pains. Some great thing, with which Jehovah has, as it were, long been pregnant, is now about to be born.

Isaiah 42:15. The delivery takes place, and the whole world of nature undergoes a metamorphosis, which is subservient to the great work of the future. V. 15. *"I make waste mountains and hills, and all their herbage I dry up, and change streams into islands, and lakes I dry up."* Here is another example of Isaiah's favourite palindromy, as Nitzsch calls this return to a word that has been used before, or linking on the close of a period of its commencement (see p. 387). Jehovah's panting in labour is His almighty fiery breath, which turns mountains and hills into heaps of ruins, scorches up the vegetation, condenses streams into islands, and dries up the lakes; that is to say, turns the strange land, in which Israel has been held captive, into a desert, and at the same time removes all the hindrances to His people's return, thus changing the present condition of the world into one of the very opposite kind, which displays His righteousness in wrath and love.

Isaiah 42:16. The great thing which is brought to pass by means of this catastrophe is the redemption of His people. V. 16. *"And I lead the blind by a way that they know not; by steps that they know not, I make them walk: I turn dark space before them into light, and rugged places into a plain. These are the things that I carry out, and do not leave."* The "blind" are those who have been deprived of sight by their sin, and the consequent punishment. The unknown ways in which Jehovah leads them, are the ways of deliverance, which are known to Him alone, but which have now been made manifest in the fulness of time. The "dark space" (*machshâk*) is their existing state of hopeless misery; the "rugged places" (*ma'âqasshîm*) the hindrances that met them, and dangers that threatened them on all sides in the foreign land. The mercy

ISAIAH	Page 337
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

of Jehovah adopts the blind, lights up the darkness, and clears every obstacle away. *“These are the things”* (*haddbhârîm*): this refers to the particulars already sketched out of the double manifestation of Jehovah in judgment and in mercy. The perfects of the attributive clause are perfects of certainty.

Isaiah 42:17. In connection with this, the following verse declares what effect this double manifestation will produce among the heathen. V. 17. *“They fall back, are put deeply to shame, that trust in molten images, that say to the molten image, Thou art our God.”* *Bōsheth* takes the place of an inf. intens.; cf., Hab. 3:9. Jehovah’s glorious acts of judgment and salvation unmask the false gods, to the utter confusion of their worshippers. And whilst in this way the false religions fall, the redemption of Israel becomes at the same time the redemption of the heathen. The first half of this third prophecy is here brought to a close.

Isaiah 42:18. The thought which connects the second half with the first is to be found in the expression in v. 16, “I will bring the blind by a way.” It is the blind whom Jehovah will lead into the light of liberty, the blind who bring upon themselves not only His compassion, but also His displeasure; for it is their own fault that they do not see. And to them is addressed the summons, to free themselves from the ban which is resting upon them. V. 18. *“Ye deaf, hear; and ye blind, look up, that ye may see.”* הַחֲרָשִׁים and הַעִוְרִים (this is the proper pointing, according to the codd. and the Masora) are vocatives. The relation in which רָאָה and הִבִּיט stand to one another is that of design and accomplishment (Isa. 63:15, Job 35:5, 2 Kings 3:14, etc.); and they are used interchangeably with פָּקַח עֵינָיו and רָאָה (e.g., 2 Kings 19:16), which also stand in the same relation of design and result.

Isaiah 42:19. The next verse states who these self-willed deaf and blind are, and how necessary this arousing was. V. 19. *“Who is blind, but my servant? and deaf, as my messenger whom I send? who blind as the confidant of God,*

and blind as the servant of Jehovah?” The first double question implies that Jehovah’s servant and messenger is blind and deaf in a singular and unparalleled way. The words are repeated, the questioner dwelling upon the one predicate *’ivvēr*, “blind,” in which everything is affirmed, and, according to Isaiah’s favourite custom, returning palindromically to the opening expression “servant of Jehovah” (cf., Isa. 40:19; 42:15, and many other passages). מְשַׁלֵּם does not mean “the perfect one,” as Vitranga renders it, nor “the paid, i.e., purchased one,” as Rosenmüller supposes, but one allied in peace and friendship, the confidant of God. It is the passive of the Arabic *muslim*, one who trusts in God (compare the *hophal* in Job 5:23). It is impossible to read the expression, “My messenger whom I send,” without thinking of Isa. 42:1ff., where the “servant of Jehovah” is represented as a messenger to the heathen. (Jerome is wrong in following the Jewish commentators, and adopting the rendering, *ad quem nuntios meos misi*.) With this similarity both of name and calling, there must be a connection between the “servant” mentioned here, and the “servant” referred to there. Now the “servant of Jehovah” is always Israel. But since Israel might be regarded either according to the character of the overwhelming majority of its members (the mass), who had forgotten their calling, or according to the character of those living members who had remained true to their calling, and constituted the kernel, or as concentrated in that one Person who is the essence of Israel in the fullest truth and highest potency, statements of the most opposite kind could be made with respect to this one homonymous subject. In Isa. 41:8ff. the “servant of Jehovah” is caressed and comforted, inasmuch as there the true Israel, which deserved and needed consolation, is addressed, without regard to the mass who had forgotten their calling. In Isa. 42:1ff. that One person is referred to, who is, as it were, the centre of this inner circle of Israel, and the head upon the body of Israel. And in the passage before us, the idea is carried from this its highest point back again to its lowest basis; and the servant of

Jehovah is blamed and reproved for the harsh contrast between its actual conduct and its divine calling, between the reality and the idea. As we proceed, we shall meet again with the “servant of Jehovah” in the same *systole* and *diastole*. The expression covers two concentric circles, and their one centre. The inner circle of the “Israel according to the Spirit” forms the connecting link between Israel in its widest sense, and Israel in a personal sense. Here indeed Israel is severely blamed as incapable, and unworthy of fulfilling its sacred calling; but the expression “whom I send” nevertheless affirms that it will fulfil it,—namely, in the *person* of the servant of Jehovah, and in all those members of the “servant of Jehovah” in a national sense, who long for deliverance from the ban and bonds of the present state of punishment (see Isa. 29:18). For it is really the mission of Israel to be the medium of salvation and blessing to the nations; and this is fulfilled by the servant of Jehovah, who proceeds from Israel, and takes his place at the head of Israel. And as the history of the fulfilment shows, when the foundation for the accomplishment of this mission had been laid by the servant of Jehovah in person, it was carried on by the servant of Jehovah in a national sense; for the Lord became “a covenant of the people” through His own preaching and that of His apostles. But “a light of the Gentiles” He became purely and simply through the apostles, who represented the true and believing Israel.

Isaiah 42:20–22. The reproof, which affects Israel *a potiori*, now proceeds still further, as follows. Vv. 20–22. “*Thou hast seen much, and yet keepest not; opening the ears, he yet doth not hear. Jehovah was pleased for His righteousness’ sake: He gave a thorah great and glorious. And yet it is a people robbed and plundered; fastened in holes all of them, and they are hidden in prison-houses: they have become booty, without deliverers; a spoil, without any one saying, Give it up again!*” In v. 20 “thou” and “he” alternate, like “they” and “ye” in Isa. 1:29, and “I” and “he” in Isa. 14:30. רָאִיתָ, which points back to the past, is to be preserved. The reading of the *keri*

is רָאִיתָ (inf. abs. like שָׁתוּת Isa. 22:13, and עָרוּת Hab. 3:13), which makes the two half-verses uniform. Israel has had many and great things to see, but without keeping the admonitions they contained; opening its ears, namely to the earnestness of the preaching, it hears, and yet does not hear, i.e., it only hears outwardly, but without taking it into itself. V. 21 shows us to what v. 20 chiefly refers. פָּקַדְתָּ is followed here by the future instead of by *Lamed* with an infinitive, just as in Isa. 53:10 it is followed by the perfect (Ges. § 142, 3, *b*). Jehovah was pleased for His righteousness’ sake (which is mentioned here, not as that which recompenses for works of the law, but as that which bestows mercy according to His purpose, His promise, and the plan of salvation) to make *thorâh*, i.e., the direction, instruction, revelation which He gave to His people, great and glorious. The reference is primarily and chiefly to the Sinaitic law, and the verbs relate not to the solemnity of the promulgation, but to the riches and exalted character of the contents. But what a glaring contrast did the existing condition of Israel present to these manifestations and purposes of mercy on the part of its God! The intervening thought expressed by Hosea (Hos. 8:12*b*), viz., that this condition was the punishment of unfaithfulness, may easily be supplied. The inf. abs. פָּקַדְתָּ is introduced to give life to the picture, as in Isa. 22:13. Hahn renders it, “They pant (*hiphil* of *pūäch*) in the holes all of them,” but *kullâm* (all of them) must be the accusative of the object; so that the true meaning is, “They have fastened (*hiphil* of *pâchach*) all of them,” etc. (Ges. § 131, 4, *b*). Schegg adopts the rendering, “All his youths fall into traps,” which is wrong in two respects; for *bachūrîm* is the plural of *chūr* (Isa. 11:8), and it is parallel to the double plural בְּתֵי הַלְאִים, houses of custodies. The whole nation in all its members is, as it were, put into bonds, and confined in prisons of all kinds (an allegorizing picture of the homelessness and servitude of exile), without any one thinking of demanding it back (בְּשֵׁב =

הַשָּׁב, as in Ezek. 21:35; a pausal form here: vid., Ges. § 29, 4 Anm.).

Isaiah 42:23–25. When they ceased to be deaf to this crying contradiction, they would recognise with penitence that it was but the merited punishment of God. Vv. 23–25. *“Who among you will give ear to this, attend, and hear afar off? Who has give up Jacob to plundering, and Israel to the spoilers? Is it not Jehovah, against whom we have sinned? and they would not walk in His ways, and hearkened not to His law. Then He poured upon it in burning heat His wrath, and the strength of the fury of war: and this set it in flames round about, and it did not come to be recognised; it set it on fire, and it did not lay it to heart.”* The question in v. 23 has not the force of a negative sentence, “No one does this,” but of a wish, “O that one would” (as in 2 Sam. 23:15; 15:4; Ges. § 136, 1). If they had but an inward ear for the contradiction which the state of Israel presented to its true calling, and the earlier manifestations of divine mercy, and would but give up their previous deafness for the time to come: this must lead to the knowledge and confession expressed in v. 24. The names Jacob and Israel here follow one another in the same order as in Isa. 29:23; 40:27 (compare Isa. 41:8, where this would have been impracticable). וַיִּשָּׁב belongs to וַיִּשְׁמַע in the sense of *cui*. The punctuation does not acknowledge this relative use of וַיִּשָּׁב (on which, see at Isa. 43:21), and therefore puts the *athnach* in the wrong place (see Rashi). In the words “we have sinned” the prophet identifies himself with the exiles, in whose sin he knew and felt that he was really involved (cf., Isa. 6:5). The objective affirmation which follows applies to the former generations, who had sinned on till the measure became full. הַלְוִיָּהּ takes the place of the object to אָבִיב (see Isa. 1:17); the more usual expression would be לְלִבָּת; the inverted order of the words makes the assertion all the more energetic. In v. 25 the genitive relation אָפוּ הַמָּת is avoided, probably in favour of the similar ring of הַמָּה and מְלַחְמָה.

הַמָּה is either the accusative of the object, and אָפוּ a subordinate statement of what constituted the burning heat (cf., Ewald, § 287, k), or else an accusative, of more precise definition = מְלַחְמָה in Isa. 66:15 (Ges. § 118, 3). The outpouring is also connected by *zeugma* with the “violence of war.” The *milchâmâh* then becomes the subject. The war-fury raged without result. Israel was not brought to reflection.

Isaiah 43

Isaiah 43:1, 2. The tone of the address is now suddenly changed. The sudden leap from reproach to consolation was very significant. It gave them to understand, that no meritorious work of their own would come in between what Israel was and what it was to be, but that it was God’s free grace which came to meet it. Ch. 43:1, 2. *“But now thus saith Jehovah thy Creator, O Jacob, and thy Former, O Israel! Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by name, thou art mine. When thou goest through the water, I am with thee; and through rivers, they shall not drown thee: when thou goest into fire, thou shalt not be burned; and the flame shall not set thee on fire.”* The punishment has now lasted quite long enough; and, as וַיִּשְׁמַע affirms, the love which has hitherto retreated behind the wrath returns to its own prerogatives again. He who created and formed Israel, by giving Abraham the son of the promise, and caused the seventy of Jacob’s family to grow up into a nation in Egypt, He also will shelter and preserve it. He bids it be of good cheer; for their early history is a pledge of this. The perfects after כִּי in v. 1b stand out against the promising futures in v. 2, as retrospective glances: the expression “I have redeemed thee” pointing back to Israel’s redemption out of Egypt; “I have called thee by thy name” (lit. I have called with thy name, i.e., called it out), to its call to be the peculiar people of Jehovah, who therefore speaks of it in Isa. 48:12 as “My called.” This help of the God of Israel will also continue to arm it against the destructive power of the most hostile elements,

and rescue it from the midst of the greatest dangers, from which there is apparently no escape (cf., Ps. 66:12; Dan. 3:17, 27; and Ges. § 103, 2).

Isaiah 43:3, 4. Just as in v. 1*b*, *kī* (for), with all that follows, assigns the reason for the encouraging “Fear not;” so here a second *kī* introduces the reason for the promise which ensures them against the dangers arising from either water or fire. Vv. 3, 4. “For I Jehovah am thy God; (I) the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I give up Egypt as a ransom for thee, Ethiopia and Seba in thy stead. Because thou art dear in my eyes, highly esteemed, and I loved thee; I give up men in thy stead, and peoples for thy life.” Both “Jehovah” and “the Holy One of Israel” are in apposition to “I” (*’ānī*), the force of which is continued in the second clause. The preterite *nāthattī* (I have given), as the words “I will give” in v. 4*b* clearly show, states a fact which as yet is only completed so far as the purpose is concerned. “A ransom:” *kōpher* (λύτρον) is literally the covering (see pp. 258 and 307),—the person making the payment. *אֲרָבָה* is the land of Meroë, which is enclosed between the White and Blue Nile, the present *Dâr Sennâr*, district of *Sennâr* (*Sen-ârti*, i.e., island of *Senâ*), or the ancient Meriotic priestly state settled about this enclosed land, probably included in the *Mudrâya* (Egypt) of the Achaemenidian arrowheaded inscriptions; though it is uncertain whether the *Kusiya* (Heb. *Kūshim*) mentioned there are the predatory tribe of archers called Κοσσαῖοι (Strabo, xi. 13, 6), whose name has been preserved in the present Chuzistan, the eastern Ethiopians of the Greeks (as Lassen and Rawlinson suppose), or the African Ethiopians of the Bible, as Oppert imagines. The fact that Egypt was only conquered by Cambyses, and not by Cyrus, who merely planned it (Herod. i. 153), and to whom it is only attributed by a legend (Xen. *Cyr.* viii. 6, 20, λέγεται καταστρέψασθαι Αἴγυπτον), does no violence to the truth of the promise. It is quite enough that Egypt and the neighbouring kingdoms were subjugated by the new imperial power of Persia, and that through that empire

the Jewish people recovered their long-lost liberty. The free love of God was the reason for His treating Israel according to the principle laid down in Prov. 11:8; 21:18. *מִאֲשֶׁר* does not signify *ex quo tempore* here, but is equivalent to *מִפְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר* in Ex. 19:18, Jer. 44:23; for if it indicated the *terminus a quo*, it would be followed by a more distinct statement of the fact of their election. The personal pronoun “and I” (*va’ānī*) is introduced in consequence of the change of persons. In the place of *וְנִתְּחַי* (*perf. cons.*), *וְנִתְּחַי* commended itself, as the former had already been used in a somewhat different function. All that composed the chosen nation are here designated as “man” (*ādām*), because there was nothing in them but what was derived from Adam. *תַּחַת* has here a strictly substitutionary meaning throughout.

Isaiah 43:5–7. The encouraging “Fear not” is here resumed, for the purpose of assigning a still further reason. Vv. 5–7. “Fear not; for I am with thee: I bring thy seed from the east, and from the west will I gather them; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth; everything that is called by my name, and I have created for my glory, that I have formed, yea finished!” The fact that Jehovah is with Israel will show itself in this, that He effects its complete restoration from all quarters of the heaven (compare the lands of the diaspora in all directions already mentioned by Isaiah in Isa. 11:11, 12). Jehovah’s command is issued to north and south to give up their unrighteous possession, not to keep it back, and to restore His sons and daughters (compare the similar change in the gender in Isa. 11:12), which evidently implies the help and escort of the exiles on the part of the heathen (Isa. 14:2). The four quarters and four winds are of the feminine gender. In v. 7 the object is more precisely defined from the standpoint of sacred history. The three synonyms bring out the might, the freeness, and the riches of grace, with which Jehovah called Israel into existence, to glorify Himself in it, and that He might be

glorified by it. They form a climax, for בָּרָא signifies to produce as a new thing; יָצַר, to shape what has been produced; and עָשָׂה, to make it perfect or complete, hence *creavi, formavi, perfeci*.

Isaiah 43:8–10. We come now to the third turn in the second half of this prophecy. It is linked on to the commencement of the first turn (“Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see”), the summons being now addressed to some one to bring forth the Israel, which has eyes and ears without seeing or hearing; whilst, on the other hand, the nations are all to come together, and this time not for the purpose of convincing them, but of convincing Israel. Vv. 8–10. *“Bring out a blind people, and it has eyes; and deaf people, and yet furnished with ears! All ye heathen, gather yourselves together, and let peoples assemble! Who among you can proclaim such a thing? And let them cause former things to be heard, appoint their witnesses, and be justified. Let these hear, and say, True! Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and see that it is I: before me was no God formed, and there will be none after me.”* “Bring out” does not refer here to bringing out of captivity, as in Ezek. 20:34, 41; 34:13, since the names by which Israel is called are hardly applicable to this, but rather to bringing to the place appointed for judicial proceedings. The verb is in the imperative. The heathen are also to gather together *en masse*; נִקְבְּצוּ is also an imperative here, as in Joel 4:11 = הִקְבְּצוּ (cf., נִלְוּ, Jer. 50:5; Ewald, § 226, c). In v. 9b we have the commencement of the evidence adduced by Jehovah in support of His own divine right: Who among the gods of the nations can proclaim this? i.e., anything like my present announcement of the restoration of Israel? To prove that they can, let them cause “former things” to be heard, i.e., any former events which they had foretold, and which had really taken place; and let them appoint witnesses of such earlier prophecies, and so prove themselves to be gods, that is to say, by the fact

that these witnesses have publicly heard their declaration and confirm the truth thereof. The subject to וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ וַיִּגְרּוּ (they may hear, etc.) is the witnesses, not as now informing themselves for the first time, but as making a public declaration. The explanation, “that men may hear,” changes the subject without any necessity. But whereas the gods are dumb and lifeless, and therefore cannot call any witnesses for themselves, and not one of all the assembled multitude can come forward as their legitimate witness, or as one able to vindicate them, Jehovah can call His people as witnesses, since they have had proofs in abundance that He possesses infallible knowledge of the future. It is generally assumed that “and my servant” introduces a second subject: “Ye, and (especially) my servant whom I have chosen.” In this case, “my servant” would denote that portion of the nation which was so, not merely like the mass of the people according to its divine calling, but also by its own fidelity to that calling; that is to say, the kernel of the nation, which was in the midst of the mass, but had not the manners of the mass. At the same time, the sentence which follows is much more favourable to the unity of the subject; and why should not “my servant” be a second predicate? The expression “ye” points to the people, who were capable of seeing and hearing, and yet both blind and deaf, and who had been brought out to the forum, according to v. 8. *Ye*, says Jehovah, are *my* witnesses, and ye are my servant whom I have chosen; I can appeal to what I have enabled you to experience and to perceive, and to the relation in which I have in mercy caused you to stand to myself, that ye may thereby be brought to consider the great difference that there is between what ye have in your God and that which the heathen (here present with you) have in their idols. “I am He,” i.e., God exclusively, and God for ever. His being has no beginning and no end; so that any being apart from His, which could have gone before or could follow after, so as to be regarded as divine (in other words, the deity of the artificial and temporal images which are called gods by the heathen), is a contradiction in itself.

ISAIAH	Page 342
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Isaiah 43:11–13. The address now closes by holding up once more the object and warrant of faith. Vv. 11–13. “*I, I am Jehovah; and beside me there is no Saviour. I, I have proclaimed and brought salvation, and given to perceive, and there was no other god among you: and ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God. Even from the day onwards I am so; and there is no deliverer out of my hand: I act, and who can turn it back?*” The proper name “*Jehovah*” is used here (v. 13) as a name indicating essence: “I and no other am the absolutely existing and living One,” i.e., He who proves His existence by His acts, and indeed by His saving acts. מוֹשִׁיעַ and Jehovah are kindred epithets here; just as in the New Testament the name Jehovah sets, as it were, but only to rise again in the name Jesus, in which it is historically fulfilled. Jehovah’s previous self-manifestation in history furnished a pledge of the coming redemption. The two synonyms הַגִּדְתִּי and הַשְׁמַעְתָּהּ have הוֹשַׁעְתָּהּ in the midst. He proclaimed salvation, brought salvation, and in the new afflictions was still ever preaching salvation, without there having been any *zâr*, i.e., any strange or other god in Israel (Deut. 32:16; see above, Isa. 17:10), who proved his existence in any such way, or, in fact, gave any sign of existence at all. This they must themselves confess; and therefore (*Vav* in sense equivalent to *ergo*, as in Isa. 40:18, 25) He, and He alone, is *El*, the absolutely mighty One, i.e., God. And from this time forth He is so, i.e., He, and He only, displays divine nature and divine life. There is no reason for taking מִיּוֹם in the sense of מִהְיוֹת יוֹם, “from the period when the day, i.e., time, existed” (as the LXX, Jerome, Stier, etc., render it). Both the *gam* (also) and the future *’eph’al* (I will work) require the meaning supported by Ezek. 48:35, “from the day onwards,” i.e., from this time forth (syn. לְפָנַיִם, Isa. 48:7). The concluding words give them to understand, that the predicted salvation is coming in the way of judgment. Jehovah will go forward with His work; and if He who is the same yesterday and to-day sets this before Him, who can turn it back, so that it

shall remain unaccomplished? The prophecy dies away, like the *massâ’ Bâbhel* with its epilogue in Isa. 14:27. In the first half (Isa. 42:1–17) Jehovah introduced His servant, the medium of salvation, and proclaimed the approaching work of salvation, at which all the world had reason to rejoice. The second half (Isa. 42:18–43:13) began with reproaching, and sought to bring Israel through this predicted salvation to reflect upon itself, and also upon its God, the One God, to whom there was no equal.

Fourth Prophecy—Ch. 43:14–44:5

Avenging and Deliverance; And Outpouring of the Spirit

Isaiah 43:14, 15. In close connection with the foregoing prophecy, the present one commences with the dissolution of the Chaldean empire. Vv. 14, 15. “*Thus saith Jehovah, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, For your sake I have sent to Babel, and will hurl them all down as fugitives, and the Chaldeans into the ships of their rejoicing. I, Jehovah, am your Holy One; (I) Israel’s Creator, your King.*” Hitzig reads בְּאֲנִיּוֹת, and adopts the rendering, “and drowned the shouting of the Chaldeans in groaning.” Ewald also corrects v. 14a thus: “And plunge their guitars into groanings, and the rejoicing of the Chaldeans into sighs.” We cannot see any good taste in this un-Hebraic bombast. Nor is there any more reason for altering בְּרִיחִים (LXX φεύγοντας) into בְּרִיחִים (Jerome, *vectes*), as Umbreit proposes: “and make all their bolts fall down, and the Chaldeans, who rejoice in ships” (*bāōniyōth*). None of these alterations effect any improvement. For your sakes, says Jehovah, i.e., for the purpose of releasing you, I have sent to Babylon (sc., the agents of my judgments, Isa. 13:3), and will throw them all down (viz., the πάμμικτος ὄχλος of this market of the world; see Isa. 13:14; 47:15) as fugitives (*bārīchīm* with a fixed *kametz*, equivalent to *barrīchīm*), i.e., into a hurried flight; and the Chaldeans, who have been settled there from a hoary antiquity, even

they shall be driven into the ships of their rejoicing (*bööniyōth*, as in Prov. 31:14), i.e., the ships which were previously the object of their jubilant pride and their jubilant rejoicing. יהוֹרִידֵי stands in the *perf. consec.*, as indicating the object of all the means already set in motion. The ships of pleasure are not air-balloons, as Hitzig affirms. Herodotus (i. 194) describes the freight ships discharging in Babylon; and we know from other sources that the Chaldeans not only navigated the Euphrates, but the Persian Gulf as well, and employed vessels built by Phoenicians for warlike purposes also. הוֹרִידֵי itself might indeed signify “to hurl to the ground” (Ps. 56:8; 59:12); but the allusion to ships shows that הוֹרִידֵי בֵּי are to be connected (cf., Isa. 63:14), and that a general driving down both by land and water to the southern coast is intended. By thus sweeping away both foreigners and natives out of Babylon into the sea, Jehovah proves what He is in Himself, according to v. 15, and also in His relation to Israel; we must supply a repetition of אָנֹכִי here (v. 15*b*), as in v. 3*a*. The congregation which addresses Him as the Holy One, the people who suffer Him to reign over them as their King, cannot remain permanently despised and enslaved.

Isaiah 43:16–21. There now follows a second field of the picture of redemption; and the expression “for your sake” is expounded in vv. 16–21: “*Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth a road through the sea, and a path through tumultuous waters; who bringeth out chariot and horse, army and hero; they lie down together, they never rise: they have flickered away, extinguished like a wick. Remember not things of olden time, nor meditate upon those of earlier times! Behold, I work out a new thing: will ye not live to see it? Yea, I make a road through the desert, and streams through solitudes. The beast of the field will praise me, wild dogs and ostriches: for I give water in the desert, streams in solitude, to give drink to my people, my chosen. The people that I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise.*” What Jehovah really says

commences in v. 18. Then in between He is described as Redeemer out of Egypt; for the redemption out of Egypt was a type and pledge of the deliverance to be looked for out of Babylon. The participles must not be rendered *qui dedit, eduxit*; but from the mighty act of Jehovah in olden time general attributes are deduced: He who makes a road in the sea, as He once showed. The sea with the tumultuous waters is the Red Sea (Neh. 9:11); *’izzūz*, which rhymes with *vāsūs*, is a concrete, as in Ps. 24:8, the army with the heroes at its head. The expression “bringeth out,” etc., is not followed by “and suddenly destroys them,” but we are transported at once into the very midst of the scenes of destruction. יִשְׁכְּבוּ shows them to us entering upon the sleep of death, in which they lie without hope (Isa. 26:14). The close (*kappishtâh khâbhū*) is iambic, as in Judg. 5:27. The admonition in v. 18 does not commend utter forgetfulness and disregard (see Isa. 66:9); but that henceforth they are to look forwards rather than backward. The new thing which Jehovah is in the process of working out eclipses the old, and deserves a more undivided and prolonged attention. Of this new thing it is affirmed, “even now it sprouts up;” whereas in Isa. 42:9, even in the domain of the future, a distinction was drawn between “the former things” and “new things,” and it could be affirmed of the latter that they were not yet sprouting up. In the passage before us the entire work of God in the new time is called *chādâshâh* (new), and is placed in contrast with the *ri’shônōth*, or occurrences of the olden time; so that as the first part of this new thing had already taken place (Isa. 42:9), and there was only the last part still to come, it might very well be affirmed of the latter, that it was even now sprouting up (not already, which עָתָה may indeed also mean, but as in Isa. 48:7). In connection with this, הָלוֹא תִדְעוּהָ (a verbal form with the suffix, as in Jer. 13:17, with *kametz* in the syllable before the tone, as in Isa. 6:9; 47:11, in pause) does not mean, “Will ye then not regard it,” as Ewald, Umbreit, and others render it; but, “shall ye not, i.e., assuredly ye will,

experience it." The substance of the *chădâshâh* (the new thing) is unfolded in v. 19b. It enfolds a rich fulness of wonders: אֵל affirming that, among other things, Jehovah will do this one very especially. He transforms the pathless, waterless desert, that His chosen one, the people of God, may be able to go through in safety, and without fainting. And the benefits of this miracle of divine grace reach the animal world as well, so that their joyful cries are an unconscious praise of Jehovah. (On the names of the animals, see pp. 197f.; and Köhler on Mal. 1:3.) In this we can recognise the prophet, who, as we have several times observed since Isa. 11 (compare especially Isa. 30:23, 24; 35:7), has not only a sympathizing heart for the woes of the human race, but also an open ear for the sighs of all creation. He knows that when the sufferings of the people of God shall be brought to an end, the sufferings of creation will also terminate; for humanity is the heart of the universe, and the people of God (understanding by this the people of God according to the Spirit) are the heart of humanity. In v. 21 the promise is brought to a general close: the people that (*zû* personal and relative, as in Isa. 42:24) I have formed for myself will have richly to relate how I glorified myself in them.

Isaiah 43:22-24. It would be the praise of God, however, and not the merits of their own works, that they would have to relate; for there was nothing at all that could give them any claim to reward. There were not even acts of ceremonial worship, but only the guilt of grievous sins. Vv. 22-24. *"And thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, that thou shouldst have wearied thyself for me, O Israel! Thou hast not brought me sheep of thy burnt-offerings, and thou hast not honoured me with thy slain-offerings. I have not burdened thee with meat-offerings, and have not troubled thee about incense. Thou hast bought me no spice-cane for silver, nor hast thou refreshed me with fat of thy slain-offerings. No; thou hast wearied me with thy sins, troubled me with thine iniquities."* We cannot agree with Stier, that these words refer to the whole of the previous worship of Israel,

which is treated here as having no existence, because of its heartlessness and false-holiness. And we must also not forget, that all these prophecies rested on either the historical or the ideal soil of the captivity. The charge commences with the worship of prayer (with calling upon Jehovah, as in Ps. 14:4; 18:7), to which the people were restricted when in exile, since the law did not allow them to offer sacrifice outside the holy land. The personal pronoun אֲנִי, in the place of the suffix, is written first of all for the sake of emphasis, as if the meaning were, "Israel could exert itself to call upon other gods, but not upon Jehovah." The following *kî* is equivalent to *ut* (Hos. 1:6), or '*ad-kî* in 2 Sam. 23:10, *adeo ut laborasses me colendo* (so as to have wearied thyself in worshipping me). They are also charged with having offered no sacrifices, inasmuch as in a foreign land this duty necessarily lapsed of itself, together with the self-denial that it involved. The spelling אֲנִי אֲנִי (as in Num. 14:31) appears to have been intended for the pronunciation אֲנִי אֲנִי (compare the pronunciation in 2 Kings 19:25, which comes between the two). The *ôlôth* (burnt-offerings) stand first, as the expression of adoration, and are connected with *sêh*, which points to the daily morning and evening sacrifice (the *tâmîd*). Then follow the *zbâchîm* (slain-offerings), the expression of the establishment of fellowship with Jehovah (אֲנִי אֲנִי is equivalent to אֲנִי אֲנִי, like אֲנִי אֲנִי = אֲנִי אֲנִי, Isa. 43:25). The "fat" (*chêlebh*) in v. 24 refers to the portions of fat that were placed upon the altar in connection with this kind of sacrifice. After the *zbâchîm* comes the *michâh*, the expression of desire for the blessing of Jehovah, a portion of which, the so-called remembrance portion (*'azkârâh*), was placed upon the altar along with the whole of the incense. And lastly, the *qâneh* (spice-cane), i.e., some one of the *Amoma*, points to the holy anointing oil (Ex. 30:23), or if it refer to spices generally, to the sacred incense, though *qâneh* is not mentioned as one of the ingredients in Ex. 30:34. The nation, which Jehovah was now

redeeming out of pure unmingled grace, had not been burdened with costly tasks of this description (see Jer. 6:20); on the contrary, it was Jehovah only who was burdened and troubled. He denies that there was any “causing to serve” (הַעֲבִיד, lit., to make a person a servant, to impose servile labour upon him) endured by Israel, but affirms this rather of Himself. The sins of Israel pressed upon Him, as a burden does upon a servant. His love took upon itself the burden of Israel’s guilt, which derived its gravitating force from His won holy righteous wrath; but it was a severe task to bear this heavy burden, and expunge it,—a thoroughly divine task, the significance of which was first brought out in its own true light by the cross on Golgotha. When God creates, He expresses His *fiat*, and what He wills comes to pass. But He does not blot out sin without balancing His love with His justice; and this equalization is not effected without conflict and victory.

Isaiah 43:25. Nevertheless, the sustaining power of divine love is greater than the gravitating force of divine wrath. V. 25. “*I, I alone, blot out thy transgressions for my own sake, and do not remember thy sins.*” Jehovah Himself here announces the *sola gratia* and *sola fides*. We have adopted the rendering “I alone,” because the threefold repetition of the subject, “I, I, He is blotting out thy transgressions,” is intended to affirm that this blotting out of sin is so far from being in any way merited by Israel, that it is a sovereign act of His absolute freedom; and the expression “for my own sake,” that it has its foundation only in God, namely, in His absolute free grace, that movement of His love by which wrath is subdued. For the debt stands written in God’s own book. Justice has entered it, and love alone blots it out (*mâchâh*, ἐξαλείφει, as in Isa. 44:22, Ps. 51:3, 11; 109:14); but, as we know from the actual fulfilment, not without paying with blood, and giving the quittance with blood.

Isaiah 43:26. Jehovah now calls upon Israel, if this be not the case, to remind Him of any merit upon which it can rely. V. 26. “*Call to my remembrance; we will strive with one another:*

tell now, that thou mayst appear just.”

Justification is an *actus forensis* (see Isa. 1:18). Justice accuses, and grace acquits. Or has Israel any actual merits, so that Justice would be obliged to pronounce it just? The object to *hazkîrēnî* and *sappēr*, which never have the closed sense of pleading, as Böttcher supposes, is the supposed meritorious works of Israel.

Isaiah 43:27. But Israel has no such works; on the contrary, its history has been a string of sins from the very first. V. 27. “*Thy first forefather sinned, and thy mediators have fallen away from me.*” By the first forefather, Hitzig, Umbreit, and Knobel understand Adam; but Adam was the forefather of the human race, not of Israel; and the debt of Adam was the debt of mankind, and not of Israel. The reference is to Abraham, as the first of the three from whom the origin and election of Israel were dated; Abraham, whom Israel from the very first had called with pride “our father” (Matt. 3:9). Even the history of Abraham was stained with sin, and did not shine in the light of meritorious works, but in that of grace, and of faith laying hold of grace. The *mlîtsîm*, interpreters, and mediators generally (2 Chron. 32:31; Job 33:23), are the prophets and priests, who stood between Jehovah and Israel, and were the medium of intercourse between the two, both in word and deed. They also had for the most part become unfaithful to God, by resorting to ungodly soothsaying and false worship. Hence the sin of Israel was as old as its very earliest origin; and apostasy had spread even among those who ought to have been the best and most godly, because of the office they sustained.

Isaiah 43:28. Consequently the all-holy One was obliged to do what had taken place. V. 28. “*Then I profaned holy princes, and gave up Jacob to the curse, and Israel to blasphemies.*” וְאַחֲלַלְתִּי אֲנֹכְחִי might be an imperfect, like וְאָכַלְתִּי, “I ate,” in Isa. 44:19, and וְאַבִּיטְךָ, “I looked,” in Isa. 63:5; but וְאַתְּנָהּ by the side of it shows that the pointing sprang out of the future interpretation contained in the Targum; so that as the latter is to be rejected, we must substitute וְאַחֲלַלְתִּי וְאַתְּנָהּ

(Ges. § 49, 2). The “holy princes” (*sârē qōdesh*) are the hierarchs, as in 1 Chron. 24:5, the supreme spiritual rulers as distinguished from the temporal rulers. The profanation referred to was the fact that they were ruthlessly hurried off into a strange land, where their official labours were necessarily suspended. This was the fate of the leaders of the worship; and the whole nation, which bore the honourable names of Jacob and Israel, was give up to the ban (*chērem*) and the blasphemies (*giddūphīm*) of the nations of the world.

Isaiah 44

Isaiah 44:1–4. The prophet cannot bear to dwell any longer upon this dark picture of their state of punishment; and light of the promise breaks through again, and in this third field of the fourth prophecy in all the more intensive form. Ch. 44:1–4. “*And now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus saith Jehovah, thy Creator, and thy Former from the womb, who cometh to thy help; Fear not, my servant Jacob; and Jeshurun, whom I have chosen! For I will pour out water upon thirsty ones, and brooks upon the dry ground; will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine after-growth; and they shoot up among the grass, as willows by flowing waters.*” In contrast with the *chērem*, i.e., the setting apart for destruction, there is here presented the promise of the pouring out of the Spirit and of blessing; and in contrast with the *giddūphīm*, the promise of general eagerness to come and honour Israel and its God (v. 5). The epithets by which Jehovah designates Himself, and those applied to Israel in vv. 1, 2, make the claim to love all the more urgent and emphatic. The accent which connects *וַיִּצְרֶדְךָ מִבְּטֶן*, so as to make *בְּתַרְתִּי בּוֹ* by itself an attributive clause like *בְּתַרְתִּי בּוֹ*, is confirmed by v. 24 and Isa. 49:5: Israel as a nation and all the individuals within it are, as the chosen servant of Jehovah (Isa. 49:1), the direct formation of Jehovah Himself from the remotest point of their history. In v. 26, *Jeshurun* is used interchangeably with Jacob. This word occurs in three other passages (viz.,

Deut. 32:15; 33:5, 26), and is always written with *kibbutz*, just as it is here. The rendering *Ἰσραελίσκος* in *Gr. Ven.* is founded upon the supposition that the word is equivalent to *יִשְׂרָאֵל*,—a strange contraction, which is inadmissible, if only on account of the substitution of *ש* for *ש*. The *ש* points back to *יִשְׂר*, to be straight or even; hence *A. S. Th.* *εὐθύς* (elsewhere *εὐθύτατος*), Jerome *rectissimus* (though in Deut. 32:15 he renders it, after the LXX, *dilectus*). It is an offshoot of *יִשְׂר = יִשְׂר* (Ps. 25:21), like *יִדְתוֹן זְבֻלוֹן* from *יִדְת, זְבֻל*; and *ūn* (= *ōn*) does not stamp it as a diminutive (for *אִישׁוֹן*, which Kamphausen adduces in opposition to Hengstenberg and Volck, does not stand in the same relation to *אִיש* as *mannikin* to man, but rather as the image of a man to a man himself; compare the Arabic *insân*). We must not render it therefore as an affectionate diminutive, as Gesenius does, the more especially as Jehovah, though speaking in loving terms, does not adopt the language of a lover. The relation of *Jeshurun* to *יִשְׂר* is rather the same as that of *שְׁלֵמָה* to *שָׁלוֹם*, so that the real meaning is “gentleman,” or one of gentlemanly or honourable mind, though this need not appear in the translation, since the very nature of a proper name would obliterate it. In v. 3, the blessings to be expected are assigned as the reason for the exhortation to be of good cheer. In v. 3a water is promised in the midst of drought, and in v. 3b the Spirit and blessing of God, just as in Joel the promise of rain is first of all placed in contrast with drought; and this is followed by the promise of the far surpassing antitype, namely, the outpouring of the Spirit. There is nothing at variance with this in the fact that we have not the form *צְמָא* in the place of *צְמָא* (according to the analogy of *אֶרֶץ עֵיפָה צִיָּה, גְּלֵאָה, צִיָּה*, Ps. 68:10). By *צְמָא* we understand the inhabitants of the land who are thirsting for rain, and by *yabbâshâh* the parched land itself. Further on, however, an express distinction is made between the abundance of water in the land and the

prosperous growth of the nation planted by the side of water-brooks (Ps. 1:3). We must not regard 3a, therefore, as a figure, and 3b as the explanation, or turn 3a into a simile introduced in the form of a protasis, although unquestionably water and mountain streams are made the symbol, or rather the anagogical type, of spiritual blessings coming down from above in the form of heavenly gifts, by a gradual ascent from מים and נוזלים (from נוזל, to trickle downwards, Song of Sol. 4:15, Jer. 18:14) to רוח ה' and ה' (ברכת ה'). When these natural and spiritual waters flow down upon the people, once more restored to their home, they spring up among גבין only met with here, LXX and Targum (גבין) the grass, like willows by water-brooks.

The willows are the nation, which has hitherto resembled withered plants in a barren soil, but is now restored to all the bloom of youth through the Spirit and blessing of God. The grass stands for the land, which resembles a green luxuriant plain; and the water-brooks represent the abundant supply of living waters, which promote the prosperity of the land and its inhabitants.

Isaiah 44:5. When Jehovah has thus acknowledged His people once more, the heathen, to whose *giddūphim* (blasphemies) Israel has hitherto been given up, will count it the greatest honour to belong to Jehovah and His people. V. 5. *“One will say, I belong to Jehovah; and a second will solemnly name the name of Jacob; and a third will inscribe himself to Jehovah, and name the name of Israel with honour.”* The threefold *zeh* refers to the heathen, as in Ps. 87:4, 5. One will declare himself to belong to Jehovah; another will call with the name of Jacob, i.e., (according to the analogy of the phrase קרא בשם ה' make it the medium and object of solemn exclamation; a third will write with his hand (ידו, an acc. of more precise definition, like חמה in Isa. 42:35, and זבחיך in Isa. 43:23), “To Jehovah,” thereby attesting that he desires to belong to Jehovah,

and Jehovah alone. This is the explanation given by Gesenius, Hahn, and others; whereas Hitzig and Knobel follow the LXX in the rendering, “he will write upon his hand *layhōvâh*,’ i.e., mark the name of Jehovah upon it.” But apart from the fact that *kâthabh*, with an accusative of the writing materials, would be unprecedented (the construction required would be על-ידו), this view is overthrown by the fact that tattooing was prohibited by the Israelitish law (Lev. 19:28; compare the mark of the beast in Rev. 13:16). בנה בשם is interchanged with קרא בשם, to surname, or entitle (the Syriac and Arabic are the same; compare the Arabic *kunye*, the name given to a man as the father of such and such a person, e.g., *Abu-Muhammed*, rhetorically called metonymy). The name *Israel* becomes a name or title of honour among the heathen. This concludes the fourth prophecy, which opens out into three distinct fields. With ועתה in Isa. 44:1 it began to approach the close, just as the third did in Isa. 43:1, —a well-rounded whole, which leaves nothing wanting.

Fifth Prophecy—Ch. 44:6–23

The Ridiculous Gods of the Nations; And the God of Israel, Who Makes His People to Rejoice

Isaiah 44:6, 7. A new pledge of redemption is given, and a fresh exhortation to trust in Jehovah; the wretchedness of the idols and their worshippers being pointed out, in contrast with Jehovah, the only speaking and acting God. V. 6. *“Thus saith Jehovah the King of Israel, and its Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts; I am first, and I last; and beside me there is no God.”* The fact that His deity, which rules over not only the natural world, but history as well, is thus without equal and above all time, is now proved by Him from the fact that He alone manifests Himself as God, and that by the utterance of prophecy. V. 7. *“And who preaches as I do? Let him make it known, and show it to me; since I founded the people of ancient time!”*

And future things, and what is approaching, let them only make known.” Jehovah shows Himself as the God of prophecy since the time that He founded עַם-עוֹלָם (אֵלֹהֵי יִקְרָא) refers to the continued preaching of prophecy). *’Am ’ōlām* is the epithet applied in Ezek. 26:20 to the people of the dead, who are sleeping the long sleep of the grave; and here it does not refer to Israel, which could neither be called an “eternal” nation, nor a people of the olden time, and which would have been more directly named; but according to Isa. 40:7 and 42:5, where *’am* signifies the human race, and Job 22:15ff., where *’ōlām* is the time of the old world before the flood, it signifies humanity as existing from the very earliest times. The prophecies of Jehovah reach back even to the history of paradise. The parenthetical clause, “Let him speak it out, and tell it me,” is like the apodosis of a hypothetical protasis: “if any one thinks that he can stand by my side.” The challenge points to earlier prophecies; with וְאֵתִיּוֹת it takes a turn to what is future, אֵתִיּוֹת itself denoting what is absolutely future, according to Isa. 41:23, and אֲשֶׁר תִּבְאֲנָה what is about to be realized immediately; *lāmō* is an ethical dative.

Isaiah 44:8. Of course, none of the heathen gods could in any way answer to the challenge. So much the more confident might Israel be, seeing that it had quite another God. V. 8. *“Despair ye not, neither tremble: have not I told thee long ago, and made known, and ye are my witnesses: is there a God beside me? And nowhere a rock; I know of none.”* The Jewish lexicographers derive תִּרְהוּ (with the first syllable closed) from רָהָה (רה); whereas modern lexicographers prefer some of them to read תִּרְהוּ, *tīrhū*, from יָרָה (Ges., Knobel), and others תִּירָאוּ (Ewald). But the possibility of there being a verb רָהָה, to tremble or fear, cannot for a moment be doubted when we think of such words as יָרַע, יָרַע, compare also Arab. *r’h* (applied to water moving to and fro). It was not of the heathen deities that they were directed

not to be afraid, as in Jer. 10:5, but rather the great catastrophe coming upon the nations, of which Cyrus was the instrument. In the midst of this, when one nation after another would be overthrown, and its tutelary gods would prove to be worthless, Israel would have nothing to fear, since its God, who was no dumb idol, had foretold all this, and that indeed long ago (מִזְמָן, cf., מְרֹאֵשׁ, Isa. 41:26), as they themselves must bear witness. Prophecies before the captivity had foretold the conquest of Babylon by Medes and Elamites, and the deliverance of Israel from the Babylonian bondage; and even these prophecies themselves were like a spirit’s voice from the far distant past, consoling the people of the captivity beforehand, and serving to support their faith. On the ground of such well-known self-manifestations, Jehovah could well ask, “Is there a God beside me?”—a virtual denial in the form of an interrogation, to which the categorical denial, “There is no rock (i.e., no ground of trust, Isa. 26:4; 17:10), I know of none (beside me),” is attached.

Isaiah 44:9–11. The heathen gods are so far from being a ground of trust, that all who trust in them must discover with alarm how they have deceived themselves. Vv. 9–11. *“The makers of idols, they are all desolation, and their bosom-children worthless; and those who bear witness for them see nothing and know nothing, that they may be put to shame. Who hath formed the god, and cast the idol to no profit? Behold, all its followers will be put to shame; and the workmen are men: let them all assemble together, draw near, be alarmed, be all put to shame together.”* The *chāmūdīm* (favourites) of the makers of idols are the false gods, for whose favour they sue with such earnestness. If we retain the word הִמָּה, which is pointed as critically suspicious, and therefore is not accentuated, the explanation might possibly be, “Their witnesses (i.e., witnesses against themselves) are they (the idols): they see not, and are without consciousness, that they (those who trust in them) may be put to shame.” In any case, the subject to *yēbhōshū* (shall be put to shame) is the worshippers of idols. If we

erase הַמָּה, הַמְדִּיקִים will be those who come forward as witnesses for the idols. This makes the words easier and less ambiguous. At the same time, the Septuagint retains the word (καὶ μάρτυρες αὐτῶν εἰσίν). As “not seeing” here signifies to be blind, so “not knowing” is also to be understood as a self-contained expression, meaning to be irrational, just as in Isa. 45:20; 56:10 (in Isa. 1:3, on the other hand, we have taken it in a different sense). לְמַעַן implies that the will of the sinner in his sin has also destruction for its object; and this is not something added to the sin, but growing out of it. The question in v. 10 summons the maker of idols for the purpose of announcing his fate, and in לְבִלְתִּי הוֹעִיל (to no profit) this announcement is already contained. V. 11 is simply a development of this expression, “to no profit.” יִצֵּר, like נֹטַע in v. 14, is contrary to the rhythmical law *milra* which prevails elsewhere. חֲבֵרָיו (its followers) are not the fellow-workmen of the maker of idols (inasmuch as in that case the maker himself would be left without any share in the threat), but the associates (i.e., followers) of the idols (Hos. 4:17; 1 Cor. 10:20). It is a pernicious work that they have thus had done for them. And what of the makers themselves? They are numbered among the men. So that they who ought to know that they are made by God, become makers of gods themselves. What an absurdity! Let them crowd together, the whole guild of god-makers, and draw near to speak to the works they have made. All their eyes will soon be opened with amazement and alarm.

Isaiah 44:12, 13. The prophet now conducts us into the workshops. Vv. 12, 13. “*The iron-smith has a chisel, and works with red-hot coals, and shapes it with hammers, and works it with his powerful arm. He gets hungry thereby, and his strength fails; if he drink no water, he becomes exhausted. The carpenter draws the line, marks it with the pencil, carries it out with planes, and makes a drawing of it with the compass, and carries it out like the figure of a man, like the beauty of a man, which may dwell in the house.*”

The two words *chârash barzel* are connected together in the sense of *faber ferrarius*, as we may see from the expression *chârash 'êtsîm* (the carpenter, *faber lignarius*), which follows in v. 13. *Chârash* is the construct of *chârâsh* (= *charrâsh*), as in Ex. 28:11. The second *kametz* of this form of noun does indeed admit of contraction, but only to the extent of a full short vowel; consequently the construct of the plural is not חֲרָשִׁי, but חֲרָשִׁי (Isa. 45:16, etc.). Hence v. 12 describes how the smith constructs an idol of iron, v. 13 how the carpenter makes one of wood. But the first clause, חֲרָשׁ בְּרֹזֶל מִמַּעַד, is enigmatical. In any case, מִמַּעַד is a smith's tool of some kind (from עָצַד, related to חָצַד). And consequently Gesenius, Umbreit, and others, adopt the rendering, “the smith an axe, that does he work, ...;” but the further account of the origin of an idol says nothing at all about this axe, which the smith supplies to the carpenter, that he may hew out an idol with it. Hitzig renders it, “The smith, a hatchet does he work, and forms it (viz., into an idol);” but what a roundabout way! first to make a hatchet and then make it into an idol, which would look very slim when made. Knobel translates it, “As for the cutting-smith, he works it;” but this guild of cutting-smiths certainly belongs to Utopia. The best way to render the sentence intelligible, would be to supply לוֹ: “The smith has (uses) the *ma'âtsâd*.” But in all probability a word has dropped out; and the Septuagint rendering, ὅτι ὤξυνεν τέκτων σίδηρον σκεπάρον εἰργάσατο κ.τ.λ., shows that the original reading of the text was חָדַד חָרֶשׁ בְּרֹזֶל מִמַּעַד, and that חָדַד got lost on account of its proximity to יָחַד. The meaning therefore is, “The smith has sharpened, or sharpens (*chiddêd*, syn. *shinnên*) the *ma'âtsâd*,” possibly the chisel, to cut the iron upon the anvil; and works with red-hot coals, making the iron red-hot by blowing the fire. The piece of iron which he cuts off is the future idol, and this he shapes with hammers (יִצְרֶהוּ the future of יִצֵּר). And what of the carpenter? He stretches the line upon the block

of wood, to measure the length and breadth of the idol; he marks it upon the wood with red-stone (*sered, rubrica*, used by carpenters), and works it with planes (*maqtsu'ōth*, a feminine form of מִקְצוֹעַ, from קָצַע, to cut off, pare off, plane; compare the Arabic *mikta'*), and with the compasses (*mchūgâh*, the tool used, *lâchūg*, i.e. for making a circle) he draws the outline of it, that is to say, in order that the different parts of the body may be in right proportion; and he constructs it in such a manner that it acquires the shape of a man, the beautiful appearance of a man, to be set up like a human inmate in either a temple or private house. The *piel* תָּאָר (תָּאָר), from which comes *ytāārēhū*, is varied here (according to Isaiah's custom; cf., Isa. 29:7; 26:5) with the *poel* תָּאָר, which is to be understood as denoting the more exact configuration. The preterites indicate the work for which both smith and carpenter have made their preparations; the futures, the work in which they are engaged.

Isaiah 44:14–17. The prophet now traces the origin of the idols still further back. Their existence or non-existence ultimately depends upon whether it rains or not. Vv. 14–17. *“One prepares to cut down cedars, and takes holm and oak-tree, and chooses for himself among the trees of the forest. He has planted a fig, and the rain draws it up. And it serves the man for firing: he takes thereof, and warms himself; he also heats, and bakes bread; he also works it into a god, and prostrates himself; makes an idol of it, and falls down before it. The half of it he has burned in the fire: over the half of it he eats flesh, roasts a roast, and is satisfied; he also warms himself, and says, Hurrah, I am getting warm, I feel the heat. And the rest of it he makes into a god, into his idol, and says, Save me, for thou art my god.”* The subject of the sentence is not the carpenter of the previous verse, but “any one.” אֲרָזִים apparently stands first, as indicating the species; and in the Talmud and Midrash the trees named are really described as מִיני אֲרָזִים. But *tirzâh* (from *târaz*, to be hard or firm) does not appear to be a coniferous tree; and the

connection with *'allōn*, the oak, is favourable to the rendering ἀγριοβάλανος (LXX, A. Th.), *illex* (Vulg.). On *'immēts*, to choose, see Isa. 41:10. אֲרָז (with *Nun minusculum*), plur. אֲרָזִים (*b. Ros-ha Sana 23a*) or אֲרָזִים (*Para iii. 8*), is explained by the Talmud as עָרִי, sing. עָרָא, i.e., according to Aruch and Rashi, *laurier*, the berries of which are called *baies*. We have rendered it “*fig*,” according to the LXX and Jerome, since it will not do to follow the seductive guidance of the similarity in sound to *ornus* (which is hardly equivalent to ὀρεινός). The description is genealogical, and therefore moves retrogressively, from the felling to the planting. וְהָיָה in v. 15a refers to the felled and planted tree, and primarily to the ash. מִהֶם (of such as these) is neuter, as in Isa. 30:6; at the same time, the prophet had the עֵצִים (the wood, both as produce and material) in his mind. The repeated אֲרָז lays emphasis upon the fact, that such different things are done with the very same wood. It is sued for warming, and for the preparation of food, as well as for making a god. On the verbs of adoration, *hishtachāvâh* (root *shach*, to sink, to settle down) and *sâgad*, which is only applied to idolatrous worship, and from which *mes'gid*, a mosque, is derived, see Holemman's *Bibelstudien*, i. 3. לָמוֹ may no doubt be taken as a plural (= לָהֶם, as in Isa. 30:5), “such things (*talia*) does he worship,” as Stier supposes; but it is probably pathetic, and equivalent to לוֹ, as in Isa. 53:8 (compare Ps. 11:7; Ewald, § 247, a). According to the double application of the wood mentioned in v. 15, a distinction is drawn in vv. 16, 17 between the one half of the wood and the other. The repeated *chetsyō* (the half of it) in v. 16 refers to the first half, which furnishes not only fuel for burning, but shavings and coals for roasting and baking as well. And as a fire made for cooking warms quite as much as one made expressly for the purpose, the prophet dwells upon this benefit which the wood of the idol does confer. On the tone upon the last syllable

of *chammōthī*, see at Job 19:17; and on the use of the word רָאָה as a comprehensive term, embracing every kind of sensation and perception, see my *Psychologie*, p. 234. Diagoras of Melos, a pupil of Democritus, once threw a wooden standing figure of Hercules into the fire, and said jocularly, "Come now, Hercules, perform thy thirteenth labour, and help me to cook the turnips."

Isaiah 44:18, 19. So irrational is idolatry; but yet, through self-hardening, they have fallen under the judgment of hardness of heart (Isa. 6:9, 10; 19:3; 29:10), and have been given up to a reprobate mind (Rom. 1:28). Vv. 18, 19. "They perceive not, and do not understand: for their eyes are smeared over, so that they do not see; their hearts, so that they do not understand. And men take it not to heart, no perception and no understanding, that men should say, The half of it I have burned in the fire, and also baked bread upon the coals thereof; roasted flesh, and eaten: and ought I to make the rest of it an abomination, to fall down before the produce of a tree?" Instead of טָפַח, Lev. 14:42, the third person is written טָח (from *tâchach*, Ges. § 72, Anm. 8) in a circumstantial sense: their eyes are, as it were, smeared over with plaster. The expression עָלֵי־לֵב or הָשִׁיב אֶל־לֵב (Isa. 46:8), literally to carry back into the heart, which we find as well as שִׁים עָלֵי־לֵב, to take to heart (Isa. 42:25), answers exactly to the idea of reflection, here with reference to the immense contrast between a piece of wood and the Divine Being. The second and third לֹא in v. 19 introduce substantive clauses, just as verbal clauses are introduced by וְאִין לֹא־מֵר. וְאִין is used in the same manner as in Isa. 9:8: "perception and insight showing themselves in their saying." On *būl*, see Job 40:20; the meaning "block" cannot be established: the talmudic *būl*, a lump or piece, which Ewald adduces, is the Greek βῶλος.

Isaiah 44:20. This exposure of the infatuation of idolatry closes with an epiphonem in the form of a gnome (cf., Isa. 26:7, 10). V. 20. "He who striveth after ashes, a befooled heart has led

him astray, and he does not deliver his soul, and does not think, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" We have here a complete and self-contained sentence, which must not be broken up in the manner proposed by Knobel, "He hunts after ashes; his heart is deceived," etc. He who makes ashes, i.e., things easily scattered, perishable, and worthless, the object of his effort and striving (compare *rūäch* in Hos. 12:2), has been led astray from the path of truth and salvation by a heart overpowered by delusion; he is so certain, that he does not think of saving his soul, and it never occurs to him to say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" All that belongs to idolatry is *sheqer*—a fabrication and a lie. רָעָה means primarily to pasture or tend, hence to be concerned about, to strive after. הוֹתֵל is an attributive, from *tâlal* - *hâthal*, *ludere*, *ludificare* (see at Isa. 30:10).

Isaiah 44:21, 22. The second half of the prophecy commences with v. 21. It opens with an admonition. V. 21. "Remember this, Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art servant to me, O Israel: thou art not forgotten by me." The thing to which the former were blind,—namely, that idolatry is a lie,—Jacob was to have firmly impressed upon its mind. The words "and Israel," which are attached, are a contract for "and remember this, O Israel" (compare the vocatives after *Vāv* in Prov. 8:5 and Joel 2:23). In the reason assigned, the tone rests upon *my* in the expression "my servant," and for this reason "servant to me" is used interchangeably with it. Israel is the servant of Jehovah, and as such it was formed by Jehovah; and therefore reverence was due to Him, and Him alone. The words which follow are rendered by the LXX, Targum, Jerome, and Luther as though they read לֹא תִשְׁכַּח, though Hitzig regards the same rendering as admissible even with the reading תִּשְׁכַּח, inasmuch as the *niphāl* נִשְׁכַּח has the middle sense of ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι, *oblivisci*. But it cannot be shown that *nizkar* is ever used in the analogous sense of μὴ μνησκεισθαι, *recordari*. The *niphāl*, which was no doubt originally reflective,

is always used in Hebrew to indicate simply the passive endurance of something which originated with the subject of the action referred to, so that *nissâh* could only signify "to forget one's self." We must indeed admit the possibility of the meaning "to forget one's self" having passed into the meaning "to be forgetful," and this into the meaning "to forget." The Aramaean אִתְּנִישִׁי also signifies to be forgotten and (with an accent following) to forget, and the connection with an objective suffix has a support in וְיִלְחַמוּנִי in Ps. 109:3. But the latter is really equivalent to וְיִלְחַמוּ אֹתִי, so that it may be adduced with equal propriety in support of the other rendering, according to which תִּנְשִׁנִי is equivalent to תִּזְשֶׁה לִי (Ges., Umbr., Ewald, Stier). There are many examples of this brachyological use of the suffix (Ges. § 121, 4), so that this rendering is certainly the safer of the two. It also suits the context quite as well as the former, "Oh, forget me not;" the assurance "thou wilt not be forgotten by me" (compare Isa. 49:15 and the lamentation of Israel in Isa. 40:27) being immediately followed by an announcement of the act of love, by which the declaration is most gloriously confirmed.—V. 22. "I have blotted out thy transgressions as a mist, and thy sins as clouds: return to me; for I have redeemed thee." We have adopted the rendering "mist" merely because we have no synonym to "cloud;" we have not translated it "thick cloud," because the idea of darkness, thickness, or opacity, which is the one immediately suggested by the word, had become almost entirely lost (see Isa. 25:5). Moreover, עָב קָל is evidently intended here (see Isa. 19:1), inasmuch as the point of comparison is not the dark, heavy multitude of sins, but the facility and rapidity with which they are expunged. Whether we connect with מְחִיתִי the idea of a stain, as in Ps. 51:3, 11, or that of a debt entered in a ledge, as in Col. 2:14, and as we explained it in Isa. 43:25 (cf., *mâchâh*, Ex. 32:32, 33), in any case sin is regarded as something standing between God and man, and impeding or disturbing the intercourse

between them. This Jehovah clears away, just as when His wind sweeps away the clouds, and restores the blue sky again (Job 26:13). Thus does God's free grace now interpose at the very time when Israel thinks He has forgotten it, blotting out Israel's sin, and proving this by redeeming it from a state of punishment. What an evangelical sound the preaching of the Old Testament evangelist has in this passage also! Forgiveness and redemption are not offered on condition of conversion, but the mercy of God comes to Israel in direct contrast to what its works deserve, and Israel is merely called upon to reciprocate this by conversion and renewed obedience. The perfects denote that which has essentially taken place. Jehovah has blotted out Israel's sin, inasmuch as He does not impute it any more, and thus has redeemed Israel. All that yet remains is the outward manifestation of this redemption, which is already accomplished in the counsel of God.

Isaiah 44:23. There is already good ground, therefore, for exuberant rejoicing; and the reply of the church to these words of divine consolation is as follows: V. 23. *"Exult, O heavens; for Jehovah hath accomplished it: shout, ye depths of the earth; break out, ye mountains, into exulting; thou forest, and all the wood therein: for Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob, and He showeth Himself glorious upon Israel."* All creation is to rejoice in the fact that Jehovah has completed what He purposed, that He has redeemed His people, and henceforth will show Himself glorious in them. The heavens on high are to exult; also the depths of the earth, i.e., not Hades, which would be opposed to the prevailing view of the Old Testament (Ps. 66, cf., 88:13), but the interior of the earth, with its caves, its pits, and its deep abysses (see Ps. 139:15); and the mountains and woods which rise up from the earth towards heaven—all are to unite in the exultation of the redeemed: for the redemption that is being accomplished in man will extend its effects in all directions, even to the utmost limits of the natural world.

This exulting finale is a safe boundary-stone of this fifth prophecy. It opened with "Thus saith the Lord," and the sixth opens with the same.

Sixth Prophecy—Ch. 44:24–45

Cyrus, the Anointed of Jehovah, and Deliverer of Israel

Isaiah 44:24–28. The promise takes a new turn here, acquiring greater and greater speciality. It is introduced as the word of Jehovah, who first gave existence to Israel, and has not let it go to ruin. Vv. 24–28. “*Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb, I Jehovah am He that accomplisheth all; who stretched out the heavens alone, spread out the earth by Himself; who bringeth to nought the signs of the prophets of lies, and exposeth the soothsayers as raging mad; who turneth back the wise men, and maketh their science folly; who realizeth the word of His servant, and accomplisheth the prediction of His messengers; who saith to Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited! and to the cities of Judah, They shall be built, and their ruins I raise up again! who saith to the whirlpool, Dry up; and I dry its streams! who saith to Koresh, My shepherd and he will perform all my will; and will say to Jerusalem, She shall be built, and the temple founded!*” The prophecy which commences with v. 24a is carried on through this group of verses in a series of participial predicates to אֲנִי (I).

Jehovah is *’oseh kōl*, accomplishing all (*perficiens omnia*), so that there is nothing that is not traceable to His might and wisdom as the first cause. It was He who alone, without the co-operation of any other being, stretched out the heavens, who made the earth into a wide plain by Himself, i.e., so that it proceeded from Himself alone: אֲנִי, as in Josh. 11:20 (compare אֲנִי, Isa. 30:1; and *mimmennī* in Hos. 8:4), *chethib* אֲנִי, “who was with me,” or “who is it beside me?” The Targum follows the *keri*; the Septuagint the *chethib*, attaching it to the following words, τίς ἕτερος διασκεδάσει. V. 25 passes on from Him whom creation proves to be God, to Him who is proving Himself to be so in history also, and that with obvious reference to the Chaldean soothsayers and wise men (Isa.

47:9, 10), who held out to proud Babylon the most splendid and hopeful prognostics. “*Who brings to nought (mēphēr, opp. mēqīm) the signs,*” i.e., the marvellous proofs of their divine mission which the false prophets adduced by means of fraud and witchcraft. The LXX render *baddīm*, ἐγγαστριμύθων, Targ. *bīdīn* (in other passages = *’ōb*, Lev. 20:27; *’ōbōth*, Lev. 19:31; hence = πύθων πύθωνες). At Isa. 16:6 and Job 11:3 we have derived it as a common noun from הִדָּבַר = אֲדָבַר, to speak at random; but it is possible that הִדָּבַר may originally have signified to produce or bring forth, without any reference to βαπτολογεῖν, then to invent, to fabricate, so that *baddīm* as a personal name (as in Jer. 50:36) would be synonymous with *baddā’īm*, mendaces. On *qōsmīm*, see Isa. 3:2 (p. 86); on *yhōlēl*, (Job 12:17, where it occurs in connection with a similar predicative description of God according to His works.

In v. 26 a contrast is drawn between the heathen soothsayers and wise men, and the servant and messengers of Jehovah, whose word, whose *’ētsâh*, i.e., determination or disclosure concerning the future (cf., *yâ’ats*, Isa. 41:28), he realizes and perfectly fulfils. By “his servant” we are to understand Israel itself, according to Isa. 42:19, but only relatively, namely, as the bearer of the prophetic word, and therefore as the kernel of Israel regarded from the standpoint of the prophetic mission which it performed; and consequently “his messengers” are the prophets of Jehovah who were called out of Israel. The singular “his servant” is expanded in “his messenger” into the plurality embraced in the one idea. This is far more probable than that the author of these prophetic words, who only speaks of himself in a roundabout manner even in Isa. 40:6, should here refer directly to himself (according to Isa. 20:3). In v. 26b the predicates become special prophecies, and hence their outward limits are also defined. As we have תּוֹשָׁב and not תּוֹשָׁבֵי, we must adopt the rendering *habitetur* and *oedificentur*, with which the continuation of the latter *et vastata ejus erigam* agrees. In v. 27 the prophecy moves back from the restoration of

Jerusalem and the cities of Judah to the conquest of Babylon. The expression calls to mind the drying up of the Red Sea (Isa. 51:10; 43:16); but here it relates to something future, according to Isa. 42:15; 50:2, —namely, to the drying up of the Euphrates, which Cyrus turned into the enlarged basin of Sepharvaim, so that the water sank to the depth of a single foot, and men could “go through on foot” (Herod. i. 191). But in the complex view of the prophet, the possibility of the conqueror’s crossing involved the possibility or the exiles’ departing from the prison of the imperial city, which was surrounded by a natural and artificial line of waters (Isa. 11:15). צוּלָה (from צוּל = לָלַץ, to whiz or whirl) refers to the Euphrates, just as *mtsûlâh* in Job 41:23, Zech. 10:11, does to the Nile; נְהַרְתִּיָּהּ is used in the same sense as the Homeric Ὠκεάνοιο ῥέεθρα. In v. 28 the special character of the promise reaches its highest point. The deliverer of Israel is mentioned by name: “That saith to Koresh, My shepherd (i.e., a ποιμὴν λαῶν appointed by me), and he who performs all my will” (*chēphets*, θέλημα, not in the generalized sense of πράγμα), and that inasmuch as he (Cyrus) saith to (or of) Jerusalem, It shall be built (*tibbâneh*, not the second pers. *tibbânî*), and the foundation of the temple laid (*hēkhâl* a masculine elsewhere, here a feminine). This is the passage which is said by Josephus to have induced Cyrus to send back the Jews to their native land: “Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfil what was so written” (Jos. Ant. xi. 2). According to Ctesias and others, the name of Cyrus signifies the sun. But all that can really be affirmed is, that it sounds like the name of the sun. For in Neo-Pers. the sun is called *châr*, in Zendic *hvarē* (*karē*), and from this proper names are formed, such as *châr’s’îd* (Sunshine, also the Sun); but Cyrus is called *Kuru* or *Khuru* upon the monuments, and this cannot possibly be connected with our *chur*, which would be *uwara* in Old Persian (Rawlinson, Lassen, Spiegel), and *Kōresh* is simply the name of *Kuru* (Κῦρος) Hebraized

after the manner of a segholate. There is a marble-block, for example, in the Murghab valley, not far from the mausoleum of Cyrus, which contained the golden coffin with the body of the king (see Strabo, xv. 3, 7); and on this we find an inscription that we also meet with elsewhere, viz., *adam. k’ur’us.khsâya thiya.hakhâmanisiya*, i.e., I am Kuru the king of the Achaemenides. This name is identical with the name of the river *Kur* (Κῦρος; see p. 256, note); and what Strabo says is worthy of notice,—namely, that “there is also a river called Cyrus, which flows through the so-called cave of Persis near Pasargadae, and whence the king took his name, changing it from Agradates into Cyrus” (Strab. xv. 3, 6). It is possible also that there may be some connection between the name and the Indian princely title of *Kuru*.

Isaiah 45

Isaiah 45:1–3. The first strophe of the first half of this sixth prophecy (Isa. 44:24ff.), the subject of which is Cyrus, the predicted restorer of Jerusalem, of the cities of Judah, and of the temple, is now followed by a second strophe (Isa. 45:1–8), having for its subject Cyrus, the man through whose irresistible career of conquest the heathen would be brought to recognise the power of Jehovah, so that heavenly blessings would come down upon the earth. The naming of the great shepherd of the nations, and the address of him, are continued in Isa. 45:1–3: “Thus saith Jehovah to His anointed, to Koresh, whom I have taken by his right hand to subdue nations before him; and the loins of kings I ungird, to open before him doors and gates, that they may not continue shut. I shall go before thee, and level what is heaped up: gates of brass shall I break in pieces, and bolts of iron shall I smite to the ground. And I shall give thee treasures of darkness, and jewels of hidden places, that thou mayest know that I Jehovah am He who called out thy name, (even) the God of Israel.” The words addressed to Cyrus by Jehovah commence in v. 2, but promises applying to him force themselves into the introduction, being evoked by the mention of his name. He is the only king of the Gentiles

whom Jehovah ever *mshīchī* (my anointed; LXX τῷ χριστῷ μου). The fundamental principle of the politics of the empire of the world was all-absorbing selfishness. But the politics of Cyrus were pervaded by purer motives, and this brought him eternal honour. The very same thing which the spirit of Darius, the father of Xerxes, is represented as saying of him in the *Persae* of Aeschylus (v. 735), Θεὸς γὰρ οὐκ ἤχθησεν ὡς εὐφρων ἔφθ (for he was not hateful to God, because he was well-disposed), is here said by the Spirit of revelation, which by no means regards the virtues of the heathen as *splendida vitia*. Jehovah has taken him by his right hand, to accomplish great things through him while supporting him thus. (On the inf. *rad* for *rōd*, from *rādād*, to tread down, see Ges. § 67, Anm. 3.) The dual *dlâthaim* has also a plural force: “double doors” (*fores*) in great number, viz., those of palaces. After the two infinitives, the verb passes into the finite tense: “loins of kings I ungird” (*discingo*; *pittēäch*, which refers primarily to the loosening of a fastened garment, is equivalent to depriving of strength). The gates—namely, those of the cities which he storms—will not be shut, sc. in perpetuity, that is to say, they will have to open to him. Jerome refers here to the account given of the elder Cyrus in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*. A general picture may no doubt be obtained from this of his success in war; but particular statements need support from other quarters, since it is only a historical romance. Instead of אוֹשֵׁר (אוֹשֵׁר)? in v. 2, the *keri* has אִישֵׁר; just as in Ps. 5:9 it has הַיִּשֵׁר instead of הַוִּשֵׁר. A *hiphil* הוֹשִׁיר cannot really be shown to have existed, and the abbreviated future form אוֹשֵׁר would be altogether without ground or object here. הַדְּוִרִים (*tumida*; like נְעִימִים, *amaena*, and others) is meant to refer to the difficulties piled up in the conqueror’s way. The “*gates of brass*” (*ndhūshâh*, brazen, poetical for *nchōsheth*, brass, as in the derivative passage, Ps. 107:16) and “*bolts of iron*” remind one more especially of Babylon with its hundred “brazen gates,” the very posts and lintels of which were also of

brass (Herod. i. 179); and the *treasures* laid up in deep darkness and *jewels* preserved in hiding-places, of the riches of Babylon (Jer. 50:37; 51:13), and especially of those of the Lydian Sardes, “the richest city of Asia after Babylon” (*Cyrop.* vii. 2, 11), which Cyrus conquered first. On the treasures which Cyrus acquired through his conquests, and to which allusion is made in the *Persae* of Aeschylus, v. 327 (“O Persian, land and harbour of many riches thou”), see Plin. *h. n.* xxxiii. 2. Brerewood estimates the quantity of gold and silver mentioned there as captured by him at no less than £126,224,000 sterling. And all this success is given to him by Jehovah, that he may know that it is Jehovah the God of Israel who has called out with his name, i.e., called out his name, or called him to be what he is, and as what he shows himself to be.

Isaiah 45:4–7. A second and third object are introduced by a second and third לְמַעַן. Vv. 4–7. “For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I called thee hither by name, surnamed thee when thou knewest me not. I Jehovah, and there is none else, beside me no God: I equipped thee when thou knewest me not; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and its going down, that there is none without me: I Jehovah, and there is none else, former of the light, and creator of the darkness; founder of peace, and creator of evil: I Jehovah am He who worketh all this.” The וְאֶקְרָא which follows the second reason assigned like an apodosis, is construed doubly: “I called to thee, calling thee by name.” The parallel אֶכְבֶּדָּה refers to such titles of honour as “my shepherd” and “my anointed,” which had been given to him by Jehovah. This calling, distinguishing, and girding, i.e., this equipment of Cyrus, took place at a time when Cyrus knew nothing as yet of Jehovah, and by this very fact Jehovah made known His sole Deity. The meaning is, not that it occurred while he was still worshipping false gods, but, as the *refrain*-like repetition of the words “though thou hast not know me” affirms with strong emphasis, before he had been brought into existence, or could know anything of Jehovah. The passage is

to be explained in the same way as Jer. 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee" (see *Psychol.* pp. 36, 37, 39); and what the God of prophecy here claims for Himself, must not be questioned by false criticism, or weakened down by false apologetics (i.e., by giving up the proper name *Cyrus* as a gloss in Isa. 44:28 and 45:1; or generalizing it into a king's name, such as Pharaoh, Abimelech, or Agag). The third and last object of this predicted and realized success of the oppressor of nations and deliverer of Israel is the acknowledgement of Jehovah, spreading over the heathen world from the rising and setting of the sun, i.e., in every direction. The *ah* of מִמְעַרְבָּהּ is not a feminine termination (LXX, Targ., Jer.), but a feminine suffix with *Heraphato pro mappic* (Kimchi); compare Isa. 23:17, 18; 34:17 (but not נִצָּה in Isa. 18:5, or מוֹסְדָהּ in Isa. 30:32). *Shemesh* (the sun) is a feminine here, as in Gen. 15:17, Nah. 3:17, Mal. 3:20, and always in Arabic; for the west is invariably called מִמְעַרְבָּהּ (Arab. *magrib*). In v. 7 we are led by the context to understand by darkness and evil the penal judgments, through which light and peace, or salvation, break forth for the people of God and the nations generally. But as the prophecy concerning Cyrus closes with this self-assertion of Jehovah, it is unquestionably a natural supposition that there is also a contrast implied to the dualistic system of Zarathustra, which divided the one nature of the Deity into two opposing powers (see Windischmann, *Zoroastrische Studien*, p. 135). The declaration is so bold, that Marcion appealed to this passage as a proof that the God of the Old Testament was a different being from the God of the New, and not the God of goodness only. The Valentinians and other gnostics also regarded the words "There is no God beside me" in Isaiah, as deceptive words of the Demiururgs. The early church met them with Tertullian's reply, "*de his creator profitetur malis quae congruunt iudici*," and also made use of this self-attestation of the God of revelation as a weapon with which to attack Manicheism. The meaning of the words is not

exhausted by those who content themselves with the assertion, that by the *evil* (or *darkness*) we are not to understand the evil of guilt (*malum culpae*), but the evil of punishment (*malum paenae*). Undoubtedly, evil as an act is not the direct working of God, but the spontaneous work of a creature endowed with freedom. At the same time, evil, as well as good, has in this sense its origin in God,—that He combines within Himself the first principles of love and wrath, the possibility of evil, the self-punishment of evil, and therefore the consciousness of guilt as well as the evil of punishment in the broadest sense. When the apostle celebrates the glory of free grace in Rom. 9:11 ff., he stands on that giddy height, to which few are able to follow him without falling headlong into the false conclusions of a *decretum absolutum*, and the denial of all creaturely freedom.

Isaiah 45:8. In the prospect of this ultimate and saving purpose of the mission of Cyrus, viz., the redemption of Israel and the conversion of the heathen, heaven and earth are now summoned to bring forth and pour down spiritual blessings in heavenly gifts, according to the will and in the power of Jehovah, who has in view a new spiritual creation. V. 8. "*Cause to trickle down, ye heavens above, and let the blue sky rain down righteousness; let the earth open, and let salvation blossom, and righteousness; let them sprout together: I Jehovah have created it.*" What the heavens are to cause to trickle down, follows as the object to יִזְלוּ. And what is to flower when the earth opens (*pâthach* as in Ps. 106:17; compare *aprilis* and the Neo-Greek *anoixis*, spring), is salvation and righteousness. But *tzedek* (righteousness) is immediately afterwards the object of a new verb; so that יִשַׁע, which are thought of as combined, as the word יַחַד (together) shows, are uncoupled in the actual expression. Knobel expresses a different opinion, and assumes that יִשַׁע is regarded as a collective noun, and therefore construed with a plural, like אֲמָרָה in Ps.

119:103, and חִמְדָּה in Hag. 2:7. But the use of *yachad* (together) favours the other interpretation. The suffix of בְּרֵאֵתֵי points to this fulness of righteousness and salvation. It is a creation of Jehovah Himself. Heaven and earth, when co-operating to effect this, are endowed with their capacity through Him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, and obey now, as at the first, His creative fiat. This "*rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant justum*," as the Vulgate renders it, is justly regarded as an old advent cry.

Isaiah 45:9, 10. The promise is now continued in the third strophe (Isa. 45:9–13), and increases more and more in the distinctness of its terms; but just as in Isa. 29:15–21, it opens with a reproof of that pusillanimity (Isa. 40:27; cf., Isa. 51:13; 49:24; 58:3), which goes so far to complain of the ways of Jehovah. Vv. 9, 10. "*Woe to him that quarreleth with his Maker—a pot among the pots of earthenware? Can the clay indeed say to him that shapeth it, What makest thou? and thy work, He hath no hands? Woe to him that saith to his father, What begetteth thou? and to the woman, What bringest thou forth?*" The comparison drawn between a man as the work of God and the clay-work of a potter suggested itself all the more naturally, inasmuch as the same word *yōtsēr* was applied to God as Creator, and also to a potter (*figulus*). The word *cheres* signifies either a sherd, or fragment of earthenware (Isa. 30:14), or an earthenware vessel (Jer. 19:1; Prov. 26:23). In the passage before us, where the point of comparison is not the fragmentary condition, but the earthen character of the material (*‘adâmâh*), the latter is intended: the man, who complains of God, is nothing but a vessel of clay, and, more than that, a perishable vessel among many others of the very same kind. The questions which follow are meant to show the folly of this complaining. Can it possibly occur to the clay to raise a complaint against him who has it in hand, that he has formed it in such and such a manner, or for such and such a purpose (compare Rom. 9:20, "Why hast thou made me thus")? To the words "or thy work" we must

supply *num dicet* (shall it say); *pō'al* is a manufacture, as in Isa. 1:31. The question is addressed to the maker, as those in Isa. 7:25 are to the husbandman: Can the thing made by thee, O man, possibly say in a contemptuous tone, "He has no hands?"—a supposition the ridiculous absurdity of which condemns it at once; and yet it is a very suitable analogy to the conduct of the man who complains of God. In v. 10 a woe is denounced upon those who resemble a man who should say to his own father, What children dost thou beget? or to a wife, What dost thou bring forth? (*tchilîn* an emphatic, and for the most part pausal, *fut. parag.*, as in Ruth 2:8; 3:18). This would be the rudest and most revolting attack upon an inviolably tender and private relation; and yet Israel does this when it makes the hidden providential government of its God the object of expostulation.

Isaiah 45:11. After this double woe, which is expressed in general terms, but the application of which is easily made, the words of Jehovah are directly addressed to the presumptuous criticizers. V. 11. "*Thus saith Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker, Ask me what is to come; let my sons and the work of my hands be committed to me!*" The names by which He calls Himself express His absolute blamelessness, and His absolute right of supremacy over Israel. שְׁאֵלוֹנִי is an imperative, like שְׁמַעוּנִי in Gen. 23:8; the third person would be written שְׁאֵלוֹנִי. The meaning is: If ye would have any information or satisfaction concerning the future ("things to come," Isa. 41:23; 44:7), about which ye can neither know nor determine anything of yourselves, inquire of me. צַוֵּה with an accusative of the person, and עַל of the thing, signifies to commit anything to the care of another (1 Chron. 22:12). The fault-finders in Israel were to leave the people of whom Jehovah was the Maker (a retrospective allusion to vv. 10 and 9), in the hands of Him who has created everything, and on whom everything depends. V. 12. "*I, I have made the earth, and created men upon it; I, my hands have*

stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I called forth." אֲנִי יְדִי, according to Ges. § 121, 3, is equivalent to my hands, and mine alone,—a similar arrangement of words to those in Gen. 24:27, 2 Chron. 28:10, Eccles. 2:15. Hitzig is wrong in his rendering, "all their host do I command." That of Ewald is the correct one, "did I appoint;" for *tsivvâsh*, followed by an accusative of the person, means to give a definite order or command to any one, the command in this case being the order to come into actual existence (= *esse jussi*, cf., Ps. 33:9).

Isaiah 45:13. He who created all things, and called all things into existence, had also raised up this Cyrus, whose victorious career had increased the anxieties and fears of the exiles, instead of leading them to lift up their heads, because their redemption was drawing nigh. V. 13. "I, I have raised him up in righteousness, and all his ways shall I make smooth: He will build my city, and release my banished ones, not for price nor for reward, saith Jehovah of hosts." All the anxieties of the exiles are calmed by the words "in righteousness," which trace back the revolutions that Cyrus was causing to the righteousness of Jehovah, i.e., to His interposition, which was determined by love alone, and tended directly to the salvation of His people, and in reality to that of all nations. And they are fully quieted by the promise, which is now expressed in the clearest and most unequivocal words, that Cyrus would build up Jerusalem again, and set the captivity free (*gâlûth*, as in Isa. 20:4), and that without redemption with money (Isa. 52:3),—a clear proof that Jehovah had not only raised up Cyrus himself, but had put his spirit within him, i.e., had stirred up within him the resolution to do this (see the conclusion to the books of Chronicles, and the introduction to that of Ezra). This closes the first half of our sixth prophecy.

Isaiah 45:14. The second half is uttered in the prospect, that the judgment which Cyrus brings upon the nations will prepare the way for the overthrow of heathenism, and the universal acknowledgment of the God of Israel. The

heathen submit, as the first strophe or group of verses (Isa. 45:14–17) affirms, to the congregation and its God; the idolatrous are converted, whilst Israel is for ever redeemed. With the prospect of the release of the exiles, there is associated in the prophet's perspective the prospect of an expansion of the restored church, through the entrance of "the fulness of the Gentiles." V. 14. "Thus saith Jehovah, The productions of Egypt, and gain of Ethiopia, and the Sabaeans, men of tall stature, will come over to thee, and belong to thee: they will come after thee; in chains they will come over, and cast themselves down to thee; they pray to thee, Surely God is in thee, and there is none else; no Deity at all." Assuming that יַעֲבֹרֵי has the same meaning in both cases, the prophet's meaning appears to be, that the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Meroites (see Isa. 43:3), who had been enslaved by the imperial power of Persia, would enter the miraculously emancipated congregation of Israel (Ewald). But if they were thought of as in a state of subjugation to the imperial power of Asia, who could the promise be at the same time held out that their riches would pass over into the possession of the church? And yet, on the other hand, the chains in which they come over cannot be regarded, at least in this connection, where such emphasis is laid upon the voluntary character of the surrender, as placed upon them by Israel itself (as in Isa. 60:11 and Ps. 149:8). We must therefore suppose that they put chains upon themselves voluntarily, and of their own accord, and thus offer themselves spontaneously to the church, to be henceforth its subjects and slaves. Egypt, Ethiopia, and Saba are the nations that we meet with in other passages, where the *haereditas gentium* is promised to the church, and generally in connection with Tyre (vid., Ps. 68:32; 72:10; compare Isa. 18:7; 19:16ff., 23:18). Whilst the labour of Egypt (i.e., the productions of its labour) and the trade of Ethiopia (i.e., the riches acquired by trade) are mentioned; in the case of Saba the prophecy looks at the tall and handsome tribe itself, a tribe which Agatharchides describes as having σώματα

ἀξιολογώτερα. These would place themselves at the service of the church with their invincible strength. The voluntary character of the surrender is pointed out, not only in the expression “they will come over,” but also in the confession with which this is accompanied. In other cases the words *hithpallēl* ‘*el* are only used of prayer to God and idols; but here it is to the church that prayer is offered. In the prophet’s view, Jehovah and His church are inseparably one (compare 1 Cor. 12:12, where “Christ” stands for the church as one body, consisting of both head and members; also the use of the word “worship” in Rev. 3:9, which has all the ring of a passage taken from Isaiah). תָּשׁ is used here in its primary affirmative sense, as in Ps. 58:12. There can be no doubt that Paul had this passage of Isaiah in his mind when writing 1 Cor. 13:24, 25, ἀπαγγέλλων ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ὄντως ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστὶ, or, according to a better arrangement of the words, ὅτι ὄντως (= תָּשׁ) ὁ Θεὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν. ‘*Ephes* does not signify *praeter* (as a synonym of יִתְּבַלְבַּל, יִתְּזוֹז) either here or anywhere else, but is a substantive used with a verbal force, which stands in the same relation to תָּשׁ as “there is not at all (absolutely not)” to “there is not;” compare Isa. 5:8; 45:6; 46:9, also Deut. 32:36 (derivative passage, 2 Kings 14:26), and Amos 6:10, 2 Sam. 9:3; vid., Isa. 47:8.

Isaiah 45:15. What follows in v. 15 is not a continuation of the words of the Gentiles, but a response of the church to their confession. The nations that have been idolatrous till now, bend in humble spontaneous worship before the church and its God; and at the sight of this, the church, from whose soul the prophet is speaking, bursts out into an exclamation of reverential amazement. V. 15. “*Verily Thou art a mysterious God, Thou God of Israel, Thou Saviour.*” Literally, a God who hides Himself (*mistattēr*: the resemblance to μυστηριώδης is quite an accidental one; the *ē* is retained in the participle even in pause). The meaning is, a God who guides with marvellous strangeness the history of the nations of the earth, and by secret

ways, which human eyes can never discern, conducts all to a glorious issue. The exclamation in Rom. 11:33, “O the depth of the riches,” etc., is a similar one.

Isaiah 45:16, 17. The way in which this God who hides Himself is ultimately revealed as the God of salvation, is then pointed out in vv. 16, 17: “*They are put to shame, and also confounded, all of them; they go away into confusion together, the forgers of idols. Israel is redeemed by Jehovah with everlasting redemption: ye are not put to shame nor confounded to everlasting eternities.*” The perfects are expressive of the ideal past. Jehovah shows Himself as a Saviour by the fact, that whereas the makers of idols perish, Israel is redeemed an everlasting redemption (acc. obj. as in Isa. 14:6; 22:17; Ges. § 138, 1, Anm. 1), i.e., so that its redemption is one that lasts for aeons (αἰωνία λύτρωσις, Heb. 9:12):—observe that *tshū’âh* does not literally signify redemption or rescue, but transfer into a state of wide expanse, i.e., of freedom and happiness. The plural ‘*olāmim* (eternities = αἰῶνες *aeua*) belongs, according to Knobel, to the later period of the language; but it is met with as early as in old Asaphite psalms (Ps. 77:6). When the further promise is added, Ye shall not be put to shame, etc., this clearly shows, what is also certain on other grounds,—namely, that the redemption is not thought of merely as an outward and bodily one, but also as inward and spiritual, and indeed (in accordance with the prophetic blending of the end of the captivity with the end of all things) as a final one. Israel will never bring upon itself again such a penal judgment as that of the captivity by falling away from God; that is to say, its state of sin will end with its state of punishment, even תַּעֲמִיג־דָּע, i.e., since תַּע has no plural, εἰς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων.

Isaiah 45:18, 19. The second and last strophe of this prophecy commences with v. 18. By the fulfilment of the promise thus openly proclaimed, those of the heathen who have been saved from the judgment will recognise Jehovah as the only God; and the irresistible will of Jehovah, that all mankind should

worship Him, be carried out. The promise cannot remain unfulfilled. Vv. 18, 19. *“For thus saith Jehovah, the creator of the heavens (He is the Deity), the former of the earth, and its finisher; He has established it (He has not created it a desert, He has formed it to be inhabited): I am Jehovah, and there is none else. I have not spoken in secret, in a place of the land of darkness; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, Into the desert seek ye me! I Jehovah am speaking righteousness, proclaiming upright things.”* The *athnach* properly divides v. 18 in half. V. 18*a* describes the speaker, and what He says commences in v. 18*b*. The first parenthesis affirms that Jehovah is God in the fullest and most exclusive sense; the second that He has created the earth for man’s sake, not “as a desert” (*tōhū*: the LXX, Targum, and Jerome render this with less accuracy, *non in vanum*), i.e., not to be and continue to be a desert, but to be inhabited. Even in Gen. 1:2, *chaos* is not described as of God’s creation, because (whatever may be men’s opinions concerning it in other respects) the creative activity of God merely made use of this as a starting-point, and because, although it did not come into existence without God, it was at any rate not desired by God for its own sake. The words of Jehovah commence, then, with the assertion that Jehovah is the absolute One; and from this two thoughts branch off: (1.) The first is, that the prophecy which emanates from Him is an affair of light, no black art, but essentially different from heathen soothsaying. By “a dark place of the earth” we are to understand, according to Ps. 139:15, the interior of the earth, and according to Job 10:21, Hades; the intention being to point out the contrast between the prophecies of Jehovah and the heathen cave-oracles and spirit-voices of the necromancists, which seemed to rise up from the interior of the earth (see Isa. 65:4; 8:19; 29:4). (2.) The second thought is, that the very same love of Jehovah, which has already been displayed in the creation, attests itself in His relation to Israel, which He has not directed to Himself “into the desert” (*tōhū*), just as He did not create the earth a *tōhū*. Meier and Knobel suppose that

baqshūnī, which is written here, according to a well-supported reading, with *Koph raphatum* (whereas in other cases the *dagesh* is generally retained, particularly in the imperative of *biqqēsh*), refers to seeking for disclosures as to the future; but the word *בַּקְשׁוּנִי* would be used for this, as in Isa. 8:19. He has not said, “Seek ye me (as in Zeph. 2:3) into the desert,” i.e., without the prospect of meeting with any return for your pains. On the contrary, He has attached promises to the seeking of Himself, which cannot remain unfulfilled, for He is “one speaking righteousness, declaring things that are right;” i.e., when He promises, He follows out the rule of His purpose and of His plan of salvation, and the impulse of sincere desire for their good, and love which is ever true to itself. The present word of prophecy points to the fulfilment of these promises.

Isaiah 45:20, 21. The salvation of Israel, foretold and realized by Jehovah, becomes at the same time the salvation of the heathen world. Vv. 20, 21. *“Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye escaped of the heathen! Irrational are they who burden themselves with the wood of their idol, and pray to a god that bringeth no salvation. Make known, and cause to draw near; yea, let them take counsel together: Who has made such things known from the olden time, proclaimed it long ago? have not I, Jehovah? and there is no Deity beside me; a God just, and bringing salvation: there is not without me!”* The fulness of the Gentiles, which enters into the kingdom of God, is a remnant of the whole mass of the heathen: for salvation comes through judgment; and it is in the midst of great calamities that the work of that heathen mission is accomplished, which is represented in these prophecies on the one hand as the mission of Cyrus, and on the other hand as the mission of Jehovah and His servant. Hence this summons to listen to the self-assertion of the God of revelation, is addressed to the escaped of the heathen, who are not therefore the converted, but those who are susceptible of salvation, and therefore spared. By “the heathen” (*haggōyīm*) Knobel

understands the allies and auxiliaries of the Babylonians, whom Cyrus put to flight (according to the *Cyropaedia*) before his Lydian campaign. But this is only an example of that exaggerated desire to turn everything into history, which not only prevented his seeing the poetry of the form, but obscured the fact that prophecy is both human and divine. For the future was foreshortened to the telescopic glance of the prophet, so that he could not see it in all its length and breadth. He saw in one mass what history afterwards unrolled; and then behind the present he could just see as it were the summit of the end, although a long eventful way still lay between the two. Accordingly, our prophet here takes his stand not at the close of any particular victory of Cyrus, but at the close of all his victories; and, in his view, these terminate the whole series of catastrophes, which are outlived by a remnant of the heathen, who are converted to Jehovah, and thus complete the final glory of the restored people of God. Throughout the whole of these prophecies we see immediately behind the historical foreground this eschatological background lifting up its head. The heathen who have been preserved will assemble together; and from the fact that Jehovah proves Himself the sole foreteller of the events that are now unfolding themselves, they will be brought to the conviction that He is the only God. The *hithpael hithnaggēsh* does not occur anywhere else. On the absolute ידע לֹא, see at Isa. 44:9 (cf., 1:3). To the verb *haggīshū* we must supply, as in Isa. 41:22, according to the same expression in v. 21, עֲצַמְתִּיכֶם (your proofs). “This” refers to the fall of Babylon and redemption of Israel—salvation breaking through judgment. On *mē’āz*, from the olden time, compare Isa. 44:8. God is “a just God and a Saviour,” as a being who acts most stringently according to the demands of His holiness, and wherever His wrath is not wickedly provoked, sets in motion His loving will, which is ever concerned to secure the salvation of men.

Isaiah 45:22. It is in accordance with this holy loving will that the cry is published in v. 22:

“Turn unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and none else.” The first imperative is hortatory, the second promising (cf., Isa. 36:16 and 8:9): Jehovah desires both, viz., the conversion of all men to Himself; and through this their salvation, and this His gracious will, which extends to all mankind, will not rest till its object has been fully accomplished. V. 23. “By myself have I sworn, a word has gone out of a mouth of righteousness, and will not return, That to me every knee shall bend, every tongue swear.” Swearing by Himself (see Gen. 22:16), God pledges what He swears with His own life (compare Rom. 14:11, “as I live”). Parallel to בִּי

יִצָא מִפִּי צְדָקָה דְבַר וְלֹא יָשׁוּב is the clause

Here Rosenmüller connects דבר צדקה together as if with a hyphen, in the sense of a truth-word (Jerome, *justitiae verbum*). But this is grammatically impossible, since it would require צדקה דְבַר; moreover, it is opposed both to the accents, and to the *dagesh* in the *Daleth*. Hitzig’s rendering is a better one: “Truth (LXX δίκαιοσύνη), a word that does not return,”—the latter being taken as an explanatory permutative; but in that case we should require לֹא לֹא, and *tsdāqâh* is not used in the sense of truth anywhere else (compare *tsaddīq*, however, in Isa. 41:26). On the other hand, צדקה might be equivalent to בצדקה “in righteousness;” cf., Isa. 42:25, חֲמָה = בְּחֲמָה, if it were not incomparably more natural to connect together מִפִּי צְדָקָה as a genitive construction; though not in the sense in which מִפִּי הַגְּבוּרָה is used in post-biblical writings,—namely, as equivalent to “out of the mouth of God” (see Buxtorf, *Lex. Chald. Col.* 385),—but rather in this way, that the mouth of God is described attributively as regulated in its words by His holy will (as “speaking righteousness, v. 19b). A word has gone forth from this mouth of righteousness; and after it has once gone forth, it does not return without accomplishing its object (Isa. 55:11). What follows is not so much a promising prediction (that every knee will bend to me), as a definitive declaration of will

(that it shall or must bend to me). According to Isa. 19:18; 44:5, “to me” is to be regarded as carried forward, and so to be supplied after “shall swear” (the Septuagint rendering, ὁμεῖται ... τὸν Θεόν, is false; that of Paul in Rom. 14:11, ἐξομολογήσεται τῷ Θεῷ, is correct; and in this case, as in others also, the *Cod. Al.* of the Sept. has been corrected from the New Testament quotations).

Isaiah 45:24. This bending of the knee, this confession as an oath of homage, will be no forced one. V. 24. “*Only in Jehovah, do men say of me, is fulness of righteousness and strength; they come to Him, and all that were incensed against Him are put to shame.*” The parenthetical insertion of לִי אֱמַר (לִי, with reference to, as in Isa. 41:7; 44:26, 28) is the same as in Ps. 119:57. אֵין has a restrictive sense here, which springs out of the affirmative (cf., Ps. 39:7; 73:1), just as, in the case of *raq*, the affirmative grows out of the primary restrictive sense. The “righteousness” is abounding (superabundant) righteousness (Rom. 5:15ff.). יָצַח is the strength of sanctification, and of the conquest of the world. The subject to יָבֹא (which is not to be changed, according to the Masora, into the more natural יָבֵא, as it is by the LXX, Syr., and Vulg.) is, whoever has seen what man has in Jehovah, and made confession of this; such a man does not rest till he has altogether come over to Jehovah, whereas all His enemies are put to shame. They separate themselves irretrievably from the men who serve Him, the restoration of whom is His direct will, and the goal of the history of salvation. V. 25. “*In Jehovah all the seed of Israel shall become righteous, and shall glory.*” Ruetschi has very properly observed on this verse, that the reference is to the Israel of God out of all the human race, i.e., the church of the believers in Israel expanded by the addition of the heathen; which church is now righteous, i.e., reconciled and renewed by Jehovah, and glories in Him, because by grace it is what it is.

This brings the sixth prophecy to a close. Its five strophes commence with “Thus saith the Lord;”

at the same time, the fifth strophe has two “woes” (*hoi*) before this, as the ground upon which it rests.

Isaiah 46

Seventh Prophecy

Fall of the Gods of Babel

Isaiah 46:1, 2. There follows now a trilogy of prophecies referring to Babylon. After the prophet has shown what Israel has to expect of Cyrus, he turns to what awaits Babylon at the hands of Cyrus. Vv. 1, 2. “*Bel sinketh down, Nebo stoopeth; its images come to the beast of burden and draught cattle: your litters are laden, a burden for the panting. They stopped, sank down all at once, and could not get rid of the burden; and their own self went into captivity.*” The reference to Babylon comes out at once in the names of the gods. *Bēl* was the Jupiter of the Babylonians and, as *Bel-Merodach*, the tutelary deity of Babylon; *Nebo* was Mercury, the tutelary deity of the later Chaldean royal family, as the many kings’ names in which it appears clearly show (e.g., *Mabonassar*, *Nabo-polassar*, etc.). The pyramidal heap of ruins on the right bank of the Euphrates, which is now called *Birs Nimrud*, is the ruin of the temple of Bel, of which Herodotus gives a description in i. 181–183, and probably also of the tower mentioned in Gen. 11, which was dedicated to Bel, if not to *El* = Saturn. Herodotus describes two golden statues of Bel which were found there (cf., Diodorus, ii. 9, 5), but the way in which Nebo was represented is still unknown. The judgment of Jehovah falls upon these gods through Cyrus. Bel suddenly falls headlong, and Nebo stoops till he also falls. Their images come to (fall to the lot of) the *chayyâh*, i.e., the camels, dromedaries, and elephants; and *bhēmâh*, i.e., horses, oxen, and asses. Your נִסְוֵי, *gestamina*, the prophet exclaims to the Babylonians, i.e., the images hitherto carried by you in solemn procession (Isa. 45:20; Amos 5:26; Jer. 10:5), are now packed up, a burden for that which is wearied out, i.e., for cattle that has become weary with carrying them. In v. 1, as the two

participial clauses show, the prophet still takes his stand in the midst of the catastrophe; but in v. 2 it undoubtedly lies behind him as a completed act. In v. 2a he continues, as in v. 1, to enter into the delusion of the heathen, and distinguish between the *numina* and *simulacra*. The gods of Babylon have all stooped at once, have sunken down, and have been unable to save their images which were packed upon the cattle, out of the hands of the conquerors. In v. 2b he destroys this delusion: they are going into captivity (Hos. 10:5; Jer. 48:7; 49:3), even "their ownself" (*naphshâm*), since the self or personality of the beingless beings consists of nothing more than the wood and metal of which their images are composed.

Isaiah 46:3–5. From this approaching reduction of the gods of Babylon to their original nothingness, several admonitions are now derived. The first admonition is addressed to all Israel. Vv. 3–5. *"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel: ye, lifted up from the womb; ye, carried from the mother's lap! And till old age it is I, and to grey hair I shall bear you on my shoulder: I have done it, and I shall carry; and I put upon my shoulder, and deliver. To whom can ye compare me, and liken, and place side by side, that we should be equal?"* The house of Jacob is Judah here, as in Obad. 18 (see Caspari on the passage), Nah. 2:3, and the house of Israel the same as the house of Joseph in Obadiah; whereas in Amos 3:13; 6:8; 7:2, Jacob stands for Israel, in distinction from Judah. The Assyrian exile was earlier than the Babylonian, and had already naturalized the greater part of the exiles in a heathen land, and robbed them of their natural character, so that there was only a remnant left by whom there was any hope that the prophet's message would be received. What the exiles of both houses were to hear was the question in v. 5, which called upon them to consider the incomparable nature of their God, as deduced from what Jehovah could say of Himself in relation to all Israel, and what He does say from הַעַמִּים onwards. Babylon carried its idols, but all in vain: they were carried forth,

without being able to save themselves; but Jehovah carried His people, and saved them. The expressions, "from the womb, and from the mother's lap," point back to the time when the nation which had been in process of formation from the time of Abraham onwards came out of Egypt, and was born, as it were, into the light of the world. From this time forward it had lain upon Jehovah like a willingly adopted burden, and He had carried it as a nurse carries a suckling (Num. 11:12), and an eagle its young (Deut. 32:11). In v. 4 the attributes of the people are carried on in direct (not relative) self-assertions on the part of Jehovah. The *senectus* and *canities* are obviously those of the people,—not, however, as though it was already in a state of dotage (as Hitzig maintains, appealing erroneously to Isa. 47:6), but as denoting the future and latest periods of its history. Even till then Jehovah is He, i.e., the Absolute, and always the same (see Isa. 41:4). As He has acted in the past, so will He act at all times—supporting and saving His people. Hence He could properly ask, Whom could you place by the side of me, so that we should be equal? (*Vav consec.* as in Isa. 40:25).

Isaiah 46:6, 7. The negative answer to this question is the direct result of what precedes, but a still further proof is given in vv. 6, 7. *"They who pour gold out of the bag, and weigh silver with the balance, hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, that they may fall down, yea, throw themselves down. They lift it up, carry it away upon their shoulder, and set it down in its place: there it stands; from its place it does not move: men also cry to it, but it does not answer; it saves no one out of distress."* There is no necessity for assuming that הַזֵּלִים is used in the place of the finite verb, as Hitzig imagines, or as equivalent to הֵם זֵלִים, as Rosenmüller and Gesenius suppose; but up to יִשְׁכְּרוּ the whole is subject, and therefore יִשְׁקֻלוּ is the point at which the change into the finite verb occurs (Ges. § 131, 2). The point in *hazzâlîm* is not the extravagant expenditure, as Ewald thinks, but the mean origin of the god, which commences with the

pouring out of gold from a purse (*zûl = zâlal*, to shake, to pour out). *Qâneh* is the lever of the scales (καλὼν). The metal weighed out is given to a goldsmith, who plates the idol with the gold, and makes the ornaments for it of silver. When it is finished, they lift it up, or shoulder it (שָׂאוּהָ with a distinctive Great Telisha), carry it home, and set it down in the place which it is to have *under it* (תַּחְתָּיו). There it stands firm, immoveable, and also deaf and dumb, hearing no one, answering no one, and helping no one. The subject to יִצְעֶק is any צֶעֶק. The first admonition closes here. The gods who are carried fall without being able to save themselves, whereas Israel's God carries and saves His people; He, the Incomparable, more especially in contrast with the lifeless puppets of idols.

Isaiah 46:8–11. The second admonition is addressed to those who would imitate the heathen. Vv. 8–11. *“Remember this, and become firm, take it to heart, ye rebellious ones! Remember the beginning from the olden time, that I am God, and none else: Deity, and absolutely none like me: proclaiming the issue from the beginning, and from ancient times what has not yet taken place, saying, My counsel shall stand, and all my good pleasure I carry out: calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a distant land: not only have I spoken, I also bring it; I have purposed it, I also execute it.”* The object to which “this” points back is the nothingness of idols and idolatry. The persons addressed are the פִּזְשָׁעִים (those apostatizing), but, as הַתְּאָשָׁשׁוּ shows, whether it mean ἀνδρίζεσθε or κραταιοῦσθε (1 Cor. 16:13), such as have not yet actually carried out their rebellion or apostasy, but waver between Jehovahism and heathenism, and are inclined to the latter. הַתְּאָשָׁשׁוּ is hardly a denom. *hithpalel* of אִישׁ in the sense of “man yourselves,” since אִישׁ, whether it signifies a husband or a social being, or like אָנוּשׁ, a frail or mortal being, is at any rate equivalent to אָנָשׁ, and therefore never

shows the modification *u.* שָׁשָׁה (שָׁשָׁה) signifies to be firm, strong, compact; in the *piel* (rabb.), to be well-grounded; *nithpael*, to be fortified, established; here *hithpael*, “show yourselves firm” (Targ., Jer.: *fundamini ne rursum subitus idololatriae vos turbo subvertat*). That they may strengthen themselves in faith and fidelity, they are referred to the history of their nation; רַאשֵׁנוֹת are not prophecies given at an earlier time,—a meaning which the *priora* only acquire in such a connection as Isa. 43:9, —but former occurrences. They are to pass before their minds the earlier history, and indeed “from the olden time.” “Remember:” *zikhru* is connected with the accusative of the object of remembrance, and כִּי points to its result. An earnest and thoughtful study of history would show them that Jehovah alone was *El*, the absolutely Mighty One, and *’Elôhîm*, the Being who united in Himself all divine majesty by which reverence was evoked. The participles in vv. 10, 11 are attached to the “I” of בְּמוֹנֵי. It is Jehovah, the Incomparable, who has now, as at other times from the very commencement of the new turn in history, predicted the issue of which it would lead, and *miqqedem*, i.e., long before, predicted things that have not yet occurred, and which therefore lit outside the sphere of human combination,—another passage like Isa. 41:26; 45:21, etc., in which what is predicted in these prophecies lays claim to the character of a prediction of long standing, and not of one merely uttered a few years before. The רַאשֵׁית, in which the רַאשֵׁנוֹת are already in progress (Isa. 42:9), is to be regarded as the prophet's ideal present; for Jehovah not only foretells before the appearance of Cyrus what is to be expected of him, but declares that His determination must be realized, that He will bring to pass everything upon which His will is set, and summons the man upon the stage of history as the instrument of its accomplishment, so that He knew Cyrus before he himself had either consciousness or being (Isa. 45:4, 5). The east is Persis (Isa. 41:2); and the distant land, the northern part of Media (as

in Isa. 13:5). Cyrus is called an eagle, or, strictly speaking, a bird of prey (*'ayit*), just as in Jer. 49:22 and Ezek. 17:3 Nebuchadnezzar is called a *nesher*. According to *Cyrop.* vii. 1, 4, the campaign of Cyrus was ἀετὸς χρυσοῦς ἐπὶ δόρατος μακροῦ ἀνατεταμένος. Instead of *יְהוָה*, the *keri* reads more clearly, though quite unnecessarily, *יְהוָה* *שֵׁנִי* (see e.g., Isa. 44:26).

The correlate *יָצָא* (v. 11*b*), which is only attached to the second verb the second time, affirms that Jehovah does not only the one, but the other also. His word is made by Him into a deed, His idea into a reality. *יָצָא* is a word used particularly by Isaiah, to denote the ideal preformation of the future in the mind of God (cf., Isa. 22:11; 37:26). The feminine suffixes refer in a neuter sense to the theme of the prophecy—the overthrow of idolatrous Babel, upon which Cyrus comes down like an eagle, in the strength of Jehovah. So far we have the *nota bene* for those who are inclined to apostasy. They are to lay to heart the nothingness of the heathen gods, and, on the other hand, the self-manifestation of Jehovah from the olden time, that is to say, of the One God who is now foretelling and carrying out the destruction of the imperial city through the eagle from the east.

Isaiah 46:12, 13. A third admonition is addressed to the *forts esprits* in vv. 12, 13. *"Hearken to me, ye strong-hearted, that are far from righteousness! I have brought my righteousness near; it is not far off, and my salvation tarrieth not: and I give salvation in Zion, my glory to Israel."* All that is called in Hellenic and Hellenistic νοῦς λόγος συνείδησις θυμός, is comprehended in καρδία; and everything by which *bâsâr* and *nephesh* are affected comes into the light of consciousness in the heart (*Psychol.* p. 251). According to this biblico-psychological idea, *אֲבִירֵי לֵב* may signify either the courageous (Ps. 76:6), or, as in this instance, the strong-minded; but as a synonym of *חֲזָקֵי לֵב* (Ezek. 2:4) and *קִשְׁי לֵב* (Ezek. 3:7), viz., in the sense of those who resist the impressions

of the work and grace of God in their consciousness of mental superiority to anything of the kind, and not in the sense of those who have great mental endowments. These are "far from righteousness" (*tsdâqâh*), that is to say, they have despaired of the true, loving fidelity of Jehovah, and have no wish for any further knowledge of it. Therefore they shall hear, and possibly not without impression, that this loving fidelity is about to manifest itself, and salvation is about to be realized. Jehovah has given salvation in Zion, that is to say, is giving it even now, so that it will become once more the centre of the renovated nation, and impart its glory to this, so that it may shine in the splendour bestowed upon it by its God. We have here the side of light and love, turned towards us by the two-faced *tsdâqâh*, as a parallel word to *thshû'âh*, or salvation. With this admonition to the indifferent and careless, to whom the salvation of which they have given up all hope is proclaimed as at the door, this prophecy is brought to a close. In three distinct stages, commencing with "hearken," "remember," "hearken," it has unfolded the spiritual influences which the fact declared in vv. 1, 2 ought to have upon Israel, and resembles a pastoral sermon in its tone.

Isaiah 47

Eighth Prophecy

Fall of Babel, the Capital of the Empire of the World

Isaiah 47:1–4. From the gods of Babylon the proclamation of judgment passes onto Babylon itself. Vv. 1–4. *"Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter Babel; sit on the ground without a throne, O Chaldaeans-daughter! For men no longer call thee delicate and voluptuous. Take the mill, and grind meal: throw back they veil, lift up the train, uncover the thigh, wade through streams. Let thy nakedness be uncovered, even let thy shame be seen; I shall take vengeance, and not spare men. Our Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts is His name, Holy One of Israel."* This is the first strophe in the prophecy. As v. 36 clearly shows,

ISAIAH	Page 366
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

what precedes is a penal sentence from Jehovah. Both בַּת in relation to בְּתוּלָת (Isa. 23:12; 37:22), and בְּבָבֶל and כְּשָׂדִים in relation to בַּת, are appositional genitives; Babel and Chaldeans (כְּשָׂדִים as in Isa. 48:20) are regarded as a woman, and that as one not yet dishonoured. The unconquered oppressor is threatened with degradation from her proud eminence into shameful humiliation; sitting on the ground is used in the same sense as in Isa. 3:26. Hitherto men have called her, with envious admiration, *rakkâh va'ânuggâh* (from Deut. 28:56), *mollis et delicata*, as having carefully kept everything disagreeable at a distance, and revelled in nothing but luxury (compare *'ōneg*, Isa. 13:22). Debauchery with its attendant rioting (Isa. 14:11; 25:5), and the Mylitta worship with its licensed prostitution (Herod. i. 199), were current there; but now all this was at an end. תּוֹסִיפִי, according to the Masora, has only one *pashta* both here and in v. 5, and so has the tone upon the last syllable, and accordingly *metheg* in the *antepenult*. Isaiah's artistic style may be readily perceived both in the three clauses of v. 1 that are comparable to a long trumpet-blast (compare Isa. 40:9 and 16:1), and also in the short, rugged, involuntarily excited clauses that follow (compare p. 279). The mistress becomes the maid, and has to perform the low, menial service of those who, as Homer says in *Od.* vii. 104, ἀλετρεύουσι μύλης ἔπι μήλοπα καρπὸν (grind at the mill the quince-coloured fruit; compare at Job 31:10). She has to leave her palace as a prisoner of war, and, laying aside all feminine modesty, to wade through the rivers upon which she borders. *Chespī* has *ě* instead of *ĩ*, and, as in other cases where a sibilant precedes, the mute *p* instead of *f* (compare *'ispī*, Jer. 10:17). Both the *prosopopeia* and the parallel, "thy shame shall be seen," require that the expression "thy nakedness shall be uncovered" should not be understood literally. The shame of Babel is her shameful conduct, which is not to be exhibited in its true colours, inasmuch as a stronger one is coming upon it to

rob it of its might and honour. This stronger one, apart from the instrument employed, is Jehovah: *vindictam sumam, non parcam homini*. Stier gives a different rendering here, namely, "I will run upon no man, i.e., so as to make him give way;" Hahn, "I will not meet with a man," so destitute of population will Babylon be; and Ruetschi, "I will not step in as a man." Gesenius and Rosenmüller are nearer to the mark when they suggest *non pangam (paciscar) cum homine*; but this would require at any rate *תִּפְּגֵנִי*, even if the verb *פָּגַע* really had the meaning to strike a treaty. It means rather to strike against a person, to assault any one, then to meet or come in an opposite direction, and that not only in a hostile sense, but, as in this instance, and also in Isa. 64:4, in a friendly sense as well. Hence, "I shall not receive any man, or pardon any man" (Hitzig, Ewald, etc.). According to an old method of writing the passage, there is a pause here. But v. 4 is still connected with what goes before. As Jehovah is speaking in v. 5, but Israel in v. 4, and as v. 4 is unsuitable to form the basis of the words of Jehovah, it must be regarded as the antiphone to vv. 1–3 (cf., Isa. 45:15). Our Redeemer, exclaims the church in joyfully exalted self-consciousness, He is Jehovah of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel! The one name affirms that He possesses the all-conquering might; the other that He possesses the will to carry on the work of redemption,—a will influenced and constrained by both love and wrath.

Isaiah 47:5–7. In the second strophe the penal sentence of Jehovah is continued. Vv. 5–7. "*Sit silent, and creep into the darkness, O Chaldeans-daughter! for men no longer call thee lady of kingdoms. I was wroth with my people; I polluted mine inheritance, and gave them into thy hand: thou hast shown them no mercy; upon old men thou laidst thy yoke very heavily. And thou saidst, I shall be lady for ever; so that thou didst not take these things to heart: thou didst not consider the latter end thereof.*" Babylon shall sit down in silent, brooding sorrow, and take herself away into darkness, just as those who have fallen into disgrace shrink from the eyes of

men. She is looked upon as an empress (Isa. 13:9; the king of Babylon called himself the king of kings, Ezek. 26:7), who has been reduced to the condition of a slave, and durst not show herself for shame. This would happen to her, because at the time when Jehovah made use of her as His instrument for punishing His people, she went beyond the bounds of her authority, showing no pity, and ill-treating even defenceless old men. According to Loppe, Gesenius, and Hitzig, Israel is here called *zâqên*, as a decayed nation awakening sympathy; but according to the Scripture, the people of God is always young, and never decays; on the contrary, its *ziqnâh*, i.e., the latest period of its history (Isa. 46:4), is to be like its youth. The words are to be understood literally, like Lam. 4:16; 5:12: even upon old men, Babylon had placed the heavy yoke of prisoners and slaves. But in spite of this inhumanity, it flattered itself that it would last for ever. Hitzig adopts the reading *גְּבֵרֶת עַד*, and renders it, "To all future times shall I continue, mistress to all eternity." This may possibly be correct, but it is by no means necessary, inasmuch as it can be shown from 1 Sam. 20:41, and Job 14:6, that *עַד* is used as equivalent to *עַד אֲשֶׁר*, in the sense of "till the time that;" and *gbereth*, as the feminine of *gâbhēr = gebher*, may be the absolute quite as well as the construct. The meaning therefore is, that the confidence of Babylon in the eternal continuance of its power was such, that "these things," i.e., such punishments as those which were now about to fall upon it according to the prophecy, had never come into its mind; such, indeed, that it had not called to remembrance as even possible "the latter end of it," i.e., the inevitably evil termination of its tyranny and presumption.

Isaiah 47:8–11. A third strophe of this proclamation of punishment is opened here with *וְעַתָּה*, on the ground of the conduct censured. Vv. 8–11. "And now hear this, thou voluptuous one, she who sitteth so securely, who sayeth in her heart, I am it, and none else: I shall not sit a widow, nor experience bereavement of

children. And these two will come upon thee suddenly in one day: bereavement of children and widowhood; they come upon thee in fullest measure, in spite of the multitude of thy sorceries, in spite of the great abundance of thy witchcrafts. Thou trustedst in thy wickedness, saidst, No one seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, they led thee astray; so that thou saidst in thy heart, I am it, and none else. And misfortune cometh upon thee, which thou dost not understand how to charm away: and destruction will fall upon thee, which thou canst not atone for; there will come suddenly upon thee ruin which thou suspectest not." In the surnames given to Babylon here, a new reason is assigned for the judgment,—namely, extravagance, security, and self-exaltation. *עֲדִין* is an intensive from of *עָדַן* (LXX *τροφερά*). The *י* of *אֶפְסִי* is regarded by Hahn as the same as we meet with in *אֶתִּי = אֵתִּי*; but this is impossible here with the first person. Rosenmüller, Ewald, Gesenius, and others, take it as *chirek compaginis*, and equivalent to *עִין עִין*, which would only occur in this particular formula. Hitzig supposes it to be the suffix of the word, which is meant as a preposition in the sense of *et praeter me ultra (nemo)*; but this *nemo* would be omitted, which is improbable. The more probable explanation is, that *אֶפְסִי* signifies absolute non-existence, and when used as an adverb, "exclusively, nothing but," e.g., *אֶפְסִי קֶצֶר*, nothing, the utmost extremity thereof, i.e., only the utmost extremity of it (Num. 23:13; cf., 22:35). But it is mostly used with a verbal force, like *אִין (אִין)*, (*utique) non est* (see Isa. 45:14); hence *אֶפְסִי*, like *אִינִי*, (*utique) non sum*. The form in which the presumption of Babylon expresses itself, viz., "I (am it), and I am absolutely nothing further," sounds like self-deification, by the side of similar self-assertion on the part of Jehovah (Isa. 45:5, 6; 18:22; cf., vv. 21:14 and Isa. 46:9). Nineveh speaks in just the same way in Zeph. 2:15 (on the secondary character of this passage, see p. 343); compare Martial: "Terrarum Dea gentiumque Roma cui par est

ISAI AH	Page 368
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

nihil et nihil secundum.” Babylon also says still further (like the Babylon of the last days in Rev. 18:7): “I shall not sit as a widow (viz., mourning thus in solitude, Lam. 1:1; 3:28; and secluded from the world, Gen. 38:11), nor experience the loss of children” (*orbitatem*). She would become a widow, if she should lose the different nations, and “the kings of the earth who committed fornication with her” (Rev. 18:9); for her relation to her own king cannot possibly be thought of, inasmuch as the relation in which a nation stands to its temporal king is never thought of as marriage, like that of Jehovah to Israel. She would also be a mother bereaved of her children, if war and captivity robbed her of her population. But both of these would happen to her suddenly in one day, so that she would succumb to the weight of the double sorrow. Both of them would come upon her *kthummâm* (*secundum integritatem eorum*), i.e., so that she would come to learn what the loss of men and the loss of children signified in all its extent and in all its depth, and that in spite of (אֲ, with, equivalent to “notwithstanding,” as in Isa. 5:25; not “through = on account of,” since this tone is adopted for the first time in v. 10) the multitude of its incantations, and the very great mass (*ōtsmâh*, an inf. noun, as in Isa. 30:19; 55:2, used here, not as in Isa. 40:29, in an intensive sense, but, like *ātsum*, as a parallel word to *rabh* in a numerical sense) of its witchcrafts (*chebher*, binding by means of incantations, κατάδεσμος). Babylonia was the birth-place of astrology, from which sprang the twelve-fold division of the day, the horoscope and sun-dial (Herod. ii. 109); but it was also the home of magic, which pretended to bind the course of events, and even the power of the gods, and to direct them in whatever way it pleased (Diodorus, ii. 29). Thus had Babylon trusted in her wickedness (Isa. 13:11), viz., in the tyranny and cunning by which she hoped to ensure perpetual duration, with the notion that she was exalted above the reach of any earthly calamity.

She thought, “None seeth me” (*non est videns me*), thus suppressing the voice of conscience,

and practically denying the omnipotence and omnipresence of God. רָאִי (with a verbal suffix, *videns me*, whereas רָאִי in Gen. 16:3 signifies *videns mei = meus*), also written רָאִי, is a pausal form in half pause for רָאִי (Isa. 29:15). *Tzere* passes in pause both into *pathach* (e.g., Isa. 42:22), and also, apart from such *hithpael* forms as Isa. 41:16, into *kametz*, as in קִימְנוּ (Job 22:20, which see). By the “wisdom and knowledge” of Babylon, which had turned her aside from the right way, we are to understand her policy, strategy, and more especially her magical arts, i.e., the mysteries of the Chaldeans, their ἐπιχώριοι φιλόσοφοι (Strabo, xxi. 1, 6). On *hōvâh* (used here and in Ezek. 7:26, written *havvâh* elsewhere), according to its primary meaning, “yawning,” χᾶϊνον, then a yawning depth, χάσμα, utter destruction, see at Job 37:6. שָׁחַר signifies primarily a desert, or desolate place, here destruction; and hence the derivative meaning, waste noise, a dull groan. The perfect consec. of the first clause precedes its predicate רָעָה in the radical form אָרָה (Ges., § 147, a). With the parallelism of בְּפִרְהָ, it is not probable that שְׁחַרְרָה, which rhymes with it, is a substantive, in the sense of “from which thou wilt experience no morning dawn” (i.e., after the night of calamity), as Umbreit supposes. The suffix also causes some difficulty (hence the Vulgate rendering, *ortum ejus*, sc. *mali*); and instead of תִּדְרְעֵי, we should expect תִּרְאֵי. In any case, *shachrâh* is a verb, and Hitzig renders it, “which thou wilt not know how to unblacken;” but this privative use of *shichêr* as a word of colour would be without example. It would be better to translate it, “which thou wilt not know how to spy out” (as in Isa. 26:9), but better still, “which thou wilt not know how to conjure away” (*shichêr* = Arab. *shîhr*, as it were *incantitare*, and here *incantando averrunicare*). The last relative clause affirms what *shachrâh* would state, if understood according to Isa. 26:9: destruction which thou wilt not know, i.e., which will come suddenly and unexpectedly.

Isaiah 47:12–15. Then follows the concluding strophe, which, like the first, announces to the imperial city in a triumphantly sarcastic tone its inevitable fate; whereas the intermediate strophes refer rather to the sins by which this fate has been brought upon it. Vv. 12–15. *“Come near, then, with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy witchcrafts, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth: perhaps thou canst profit, perhaps thou wilt inspire terror. Thou art wearied through the multitude of thy consultations; let the dissectors of the heavens come near, then, and save thee, the star-gazers, they who with every new moon bring things to light that will come upon thee. Behold, they have become like stubble: fire has consumed them: there is not a red-hot coal to warm themselves, a hearth-fire to sit before. So is it with thy people, for whom thou hast laboured: thy partners in trade from thy youth, they wander away every one in his own direction; no one who brings salvation to thee.”* Hitzig and others adopt the simple rendering, “Persevere, then, with thine enchantments.” It is indeed true, that in Lev. 13:5 עָמַד בָּ signifies “to remain standing by anything,” i.e., to persevere with it, just as in Ezek. 13:5 it signifies to keep one’s standing in anything; in 2 Kings 23:3, to enter upon anything; and in Eccles. 8:3, to engage in anything; but there is no reason for taking it here in any other sense than in v. 13. Babylon is to draw near with all the processes of the black art, wherein (בְּאֲשֶׁר, according to our western mode of expression, equivalent to אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם, Ges. 123, 2*) it had been addicted to abundance of routine from its youth upwards (יָנְעָתָהּ with an auxiliary *pathach* for יָנְעָתָהּ); possibly it may be of some use, possibly it will terrify, i.e., make itself so terrible to the approaching calamity, as to cause it to keep off. The prophet now sees in spirit how Babylon draws near, and how it also harasses itself to no purpose; he therefore follows up the עָמַד־יָנָא, addressed *in pleno* to Babylon, with a second challenge commencing with עָמְדוּ־יָנָא. Their astrologers are to draw near, and try that power over the future to

which they lay claim, by bringing it to bear at once upon the approaching destruction for the benefit of Babylon. עֲצָתֶיךָ is a singular form connected with a feminine plural suffix, such as we find in Ps. 9:15, Ezek. 35:11, Ezra 9:15, connected with a masculine plural suffix. Assuming the correctness of the vowel-pointing, the singular appears in such cases as these to have a collective meaning, like the Arabic *pl. fractus*; for there is no ground to suppose that the Aramaean plural form *’êtsâth* is used here in the place of the Hebrew. Instead of אָשֶׁר הִבְרוּ (which would be equivalent to אָשֶׁר הִבְרוּ), the *keri* reads הַבְּרִי שְׂמִים, cutters up of the heavens, i.e., planners or dissectors of them, from *hâbhar*, *dissecare*, *resecare* (compare the rabbinical *hâbhârâh*, a syllable, i.e., *segmentum vocabuli*, and possibly also the talmudic *’êbhârîm*, limbs of a body). The correction proposed by Knobel, viz., *chôbhrê*, from *châbhâr*, to know, or be versed in, is unnecessary. *Châzâh b’* signifies here, as it generally does, to look with pleasure or with interest at anything; hence Luther has rendered it correctly, *die Sternkucker* (Eng. ver. star-gazers). They are described still further as those who make known with every new moon (*lechôdâshîm*, like *labbqârîm*, every morning, Isa. 33:2, etc.), things which, etc. מֵאֲשֶׁר is used in a partitive sense: out of the great mass of events they select the most important, and prepare a calendar or almanack (ἀλμεινγιακά in Plutarch) for the state every month. But these very wise men cannot save themselves, to say nothing of others, out of the power of that flame, which is no comforting coal-fire to warm one’s self by, no hearth-fire (Isa. 44:16) to sit in front of, but a devouring, eternal, i.e., peremptory flame (Isa. 33:14). The rendering adopted by Grotius, Vitringa, Lowth, Gesenius, and others, “*non supererit pruna ad calendum*,” is a false one, if only because it is not in harmony with the figure. “Thus shall they be unto thee,” he continues in v. 15, i.e., such things shall be endured to thy disgrace by those about whom thou hast wearied thyself (אֲשֶׁר =

ISAIAH	Page 370
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

(אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם). The learned orders of the Chaldeans had their own quarter, and enjoyed all the distinction and privileges of a priestly caste. What follows cannot possibly be understood as relating to these masters of astrology and witchcraft, as Ewald supposes; for, according to the expression שְׁחָרָה in v. 11, they would be called שְׁחָרָה. Moreover, if they became a prey of the flames, and therefore were unable to flee, we should have to assume that they were burned while taking flight (Umbreit). שְׁחָרָה are those who carried on commercial intercourse with the great "trading city" (Ezek. 17:4), as Berossos says, "In Babylon there was a great multitude of men of other nations who had settled in Chaldea, and they lived in disorder, like the wild beasts;" compare Aeschylus, *Pers.* 52-3, Βαβυλῶν δ' ἡ πολύχρυσος πάμμικτον ὄχλον πέμπει. All of these are scattered in the wildest flight, אִישׁ אֶל-עִבְרֹו, every one on his own side, viz., in the direction of his own home, and do not trouble themselves about Babylon.

Isaiah 48

Ninth Prophecy

Deliverance from Babylon

Isaiah 48:1, 2. This third portion of the trilogy (Isa. 46, 47, 48) stands in the same relation to Isa. 47, as Isa. 46:3ff. to Isa. 46:1, 2. The prophecy is addressed to the great body of the captives. Vv. 1, 2. "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and have flowed out of the waters of Judah, who swear by the name of Jehovah, and extol the God of Israel, not in truth and not in righteousness! For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel, Jehovah of hosts His name." The summons to hear is based upon the Israelitish nationality of those who are summoned, to which they still cling, and upon the relation in which they place themselves to the God of Israel. This gives to Jehovah the right to turn to them, and imposes upon them the duty to hearken to Him. The

blame, inserted by the way, points at the same time to the reason for the address which follows, and to the form which it necessarily assumes. "The house of Jacob" is not all Israel, as the following words clearly show, but, as in Isa. 46:3, the house of Judah, which shared in the honourable name of Israel, but have flowed out of the waters, i.e., the source of Judah. The summons, therefore, is addressed to the Judaeans exiles in Babylon, and that inasmuch as they swear by the name of Jehovah, and remember the God of Israel with praise (*hizkîr b'* as in Ps. 20:8), though not in truth and not in righteousness (1 Kings 3:6; Zech. 8:8), i.e., without their state of mind (cf., Isa. 38:3, Jer. 32:41) or mode of action corresponding to their confession, so as to prove that it was sincerely and seriously meant. The praise bestowed upon the persons summoned, which is somewhat spoiled by this, is explained in v. 2; they call themselves after the holy city (this title is applied to Jerusalem both here and in Isa. 52:1, as well as in the books of Daniel and Nehemiah). We may easily supply here, that the holiness of the city laid an obligation upon its citizens to be holy in their character and conduct. They also relied upon the God of Israel, whose name is Jehovah Zebaoth; and therefore He would require of them the fullest confidence and deepest reverence.

Isaiah 48:3-5. After this summons, and description of those who are summoned, the address of Jehovah begins. Vv. 3-5. "The first I have long ago proclaimed, and it has gone forth out of my mouth, and I caused it to be heard. I carried it out suddenly, and it came to pass. Because I knew that thou art hard, and thy neck an iron clasp, and thy brow of brass; I proclaimed it to thee long ago; before it came to pass, I caused thee to hear it, that thou mightest not say, My idol has done it, and my graven image and molten image commanded it." The word הִרְאֵשְׁנוֹת in itself signifies simply *priora*; and then, according to the context, it signifies *prius facta* (Isa. 46:9), or *prius praedicta* (Isa. 43:9), or *prius eventura* (Isa. 41:22; 42:9). In the present passage it refers to earlier occurrences,

which Jehovah had foretold, and, when the time fixed for their accomplishment arrived, which He had immediately brought to pass. With a retrospective glance at this, we find plural masc. suffixes (cf., Isa. 41:27) used interchangeably with plural fem. (cf., v. 7 and Isa. 38:16); the prophet more frequently uses the sing. fem. in this neuter sense (Isa. 41:20; 42:23, etc.), and also, though very rarely, the sing. masc. (Isa. 45:8). On *gīd*, a band, a sinew, but here a clasp (cf., Arab. *kaid*, a fetter), see *Psychology*, p. 233. *Nchūshâh* is a poetical equivalent for *nchōsheth*, as in Isa. 45:2. The heathen cravings of Israel, which reached into the captivity, are here presupposed. Hengstenberg is mistaken in his supposition, that the prophet's standpoint is always anterior to the captivity when he speaks in condemnation of idolatry. We cannot draw any conclusion from the character of the community that returned, with regard to that of the people of the captivity generally. The great mass even of Judah, and still more of Israel, remained behind, and became absorbed into the heathen, to whom they became more and more assimilated. And does not Ezekiel expressly state in Ezek. 20:30ff., that the *golah* by the Chaboras defiled themselves with the same abominations of idolatry as their fathers, and that the prevailing disposition was to combine the worship of Jehovah with heathenism, or else to exchange the former altogether for the latter? And we know that it was just the same with the exiles in Egypt, among whom the life and labours of Jeremiah terminated. Wherever the prophet speaks of פשעים and רשעים, these names invariably include a tendency or falling away to Babylonian idolatry, to which he describes the exiles as having been addicted, both in Isa. 66:17 and elsewhere.

Isaiah 48:6–8. But in order to determine exactly what “the former things” were, which Jehovah had foretold in order that Israel might not ascribe them to this idol or the other, we must add vv. 6–8: “*Thou hast heard it, look then at it all; and ye, must ye not confess it? I give thee*

new things to hear from this time forth, and hidden things, and what thou didst not know. It is created now, and not long ago; and thou hast not heard it before, that thou mightest not say, Behold, I knew it. Thou hast neither heard it, nor known it, nor did thine ear open itself to it long ago: for I knew thou art altogether faithless, and thou art called rebellious from the womb.” The meaning of the question in v. 6a is very obvious: they must acknowledge and attest, even thou against their will (Isa. 43:10; 44:8), that Jehovah has foretold all that is now confirmed by the evident fulfilment.

Consequently the “former things” are the events experienced by the people from the very earliest times (Isa. 46:9) down to the present times of Cyrus, and more especially the first half or epoch of this period itself, which expired at the time that formed the prophet's standpoint. And as the object of the prediction was to guard Israel against ascribing to its idols that which had taken place (which can only be understood of events that had occurred in favour of Israel), the “former things” must include the preparation for the redemption of Israel from the Babylonian captivity through the revolution brought to pass by Cyrus. Hence the “new things” will embrace the redemption of Israel with its attendant circumstances, and that not merely on its outward side, but on its spiritual side as well; also the glorification of the redeemed people in the midst of a world of nations converted to the God of Israel, and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth; in short, the New Testament aeon (compare לְבָרִיתָא עָלְמָא, LXX εἰς διαθήκην γένους, Isa. 42:6), with the facts which contribute to its ultimate completion (f. Isa. 42:9). The announcement and realization of these absolutely new and hitherto secret things (cf., Rom. 16:25) take place from this time forward; Israel has not heard of them “before to-day” (compare מִיּוֹם, “from this day forward,” Isa. 43:13), that it may not lay claim to the knowledge conveyed to it by prophecy, as something drawn from itself. This thought is carried to a climax in v. 8 in three correlated sentences commencing with

“yea” (*gam*). גָּמֵל signifies *patescere* here, as in Isa. 60:11 (Ewald, § 120, *a*). Jehovah had said nothing to them of this before, because it was to be feared that, with their faithlessness and tendency to idolatry, which had run through their entire history, they would only abuse it. This is strange! On the one hand, the rise of Cyrus is spoken of here as predicted from of old, because it belonged to the “former things,” and as knowable through prophecy,—a statement which favours the opinion that these addresses were written before the captivity; and, on the other hand, a distinction is drawn between these “former things” and certain “new things” that were intentionally not predicted before the expiration of these “former things,” which certainly seems to preclude the possibility of their having been composed before the captivity; since, as Ruetschi observes, if “the older Isaiah had predicted this, he would have acted in direct opposition to Jehovah’s design.” But in actual fact, the dilemma in which the opponents of the authenticity of these prophecies find themselves, is comparatively worse than this. For the principal objection—namely, that a prophet before the captivity could not possibly have known or predicted anything concerning Cyrus—cannot be satisfactorily removed by attributing these prophecies to a prophet of the time of the captivity, since they expressly and repeatedly affirm that the rise of Cyrus was an event foreknown and predicted by the God of prophecy. Now, if it is Isaiah who thus takes his stand directly in the midst of the captivity, we can understand both of these: viz., the retrospective glance at previous prophecies, which issued in the rise of Cyrus that prepared the way for the redemption from Babylon, since, so far as the prophet was concerned, such prophecies as Isa. 13–14:23; 21:1–10, and also Isa. 11:10–12 (Mic. 4:10), are fused into one with his present predictions; and also the prospective glance at prophecies which are now first to be uttered, and events which are now for the first time about to be accomplished; inasmuch as the revelations contained in these prophecies concerning

Israel’s pathway through suffering to glory, more especially so far as they grew out of the idea of the “servant of Jehovah,” might really be set down as absolutely new to the prophet himself, and never heard of before. Meanwhile our exposition is not affected by the critical question; for even we most firmly maintain, that the prophet who is speaking here has his standpoint in the midst of the captivity, on the boundary line of the condition of suffering and punishment and its approaching termination.

Isaiah 48:9–11. The people now expiating its offences in exile has been from time immemorial faithless and inclined to apostasy; nevertheless Jehovah will save it, and its salvation is therefore an unmerited work of His compassion. Vv. 9–11. *“For my name’s sake I lengthen out my wrath, and for my praise I hold back towards thee, that I may not cut thee off. Behold, I have refined thee, and not in the manner of silver: I have proved thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, for mine own sake I accomplish it (for how is it profaned!), and my glory I give not to another.”* The futures in v. 9 affirm what Jehovah continually does. He lengthens out His wrath, i.e., He retards its outbreak, and thus shows Himself long-suffering. He tames or chains it (מִסָּוֶה, like Arab. *chṭm*, root סט, compare *domare*, root Sanscr. *dam*, possibly also to dam or damp) for the sake of Israel, that He may not exterminate it utterly by letting it loose, and that for the sake of His name and His praise, which require the carrying out of His plan to salvation, on which the existence of Israel depends. What Israel has hitherto experienced has been a melting, the object of which was not destruction, but testing and refinement. The *Beth* of בֵּית לֶאֱלֹהִים is not *Beth pretii* in the sense of “not to gain silver,” or “not so that I should have gained silver as *operae pretium*,” as Umbreit and Ewald maintain (and even Knobel, who explains it however as meaning “in the accompaniment of silver,” though in the same sense). Such a thought would be out of place and purposeless here. Nor is Rosenmüller’s explanation admissible, viz., “not with silver,

ISAIAH	Page 373
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

i.e., with that force of fire which is necessary for the smelting out of silver." This is altogether unsuitable, because the sufferings inflicted upon Israel did resemble the smelting out of the precious metal (see Isa. 1:25). The *Beth* is rather the *Beth essentiae*, which may be rendered by *tanquam*, and introduces the accusative predicate in this instance, just as it introduces the nominative predicate in the substantive clause of Job 23:13, and the verbal clause of Ps. 39:7. Jehovah melted Israel, but not like silver (not as men melt silver); the meaning of which is, not that He melted it more severely, i.e., even more thoroughly, than silver, as Stier explains it, but, as the thought is positively expressed in v. 10*b*, that the afflictions which fell upon Israel served as a smelting furnace (*kūr* as in Deut. 4:20). It was, however, a smelting of a superior kind, a spiritual refining and testing (*bâchar* is Aramaic in form, and equivalent to *bâchan*). The manifestation of wrath, therefore, as these expressions affirm, had a salutary object; and in this very object the intention was involved from the very first, that it should only last for a time. He therefore puts an end to it now for His own sake, i.e., not because He is induced to do so by the merits of Israel, but purely as an act of grace, to satisfy a demand made upon Him by His own holiness, inasmuch as, if it continued any longer, it would encourage the heathen to blaspheme His name, and would make it appear as though He cared nothing for His own honour, which was inseparably bound up with the existence of Israel. The expression here is curt and harsh throughout. In v. 9*b*, לְמַעַן and אֲפִי are to be supplied in thought from v. 9*a*; and in the parenthetical exclamation, לְיְהוָה (niph'al of לָקַח, as in Ezek. 22:26), the distant word שְׁמִי (my name), also from v. 9*a*. "I will do it" refers to the carrying out of their redemption (cf., Isa. 44:23). In Ezek. 36:19–23 we have, as it were, a commentary upon v. 11.

Isaiah 48:12–16. The prophecy opened with "Hear ye;" and now the second half commences with "Hear." Three times is the appeal made to Israel: Hear ye; Jehovah alone is God, Creator,

shaper of history, God of prophecy and of fulfilment. Vv. 12–16. "Hearken to me, O Jacob, and Israel my called! I am it, I first, also I last. My hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: I call to them, and they stand there together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear: Who among them hath proclaimed this? He whom Jehovah loveth will accomplish his will upon Babel, and his arm upon the Chaldeans. I, I have spoken, have also called him, have brought him here, and his way prospers. Come ye near to me! Hear ye this! I have not spoken in secret, from the beginning: from the time that it takes place, there am I: and now the Lord Jehovah hath sent me and His Spirit." Israel is to hearken to the call of Jehovah. The obligation to this exists, on the one hand, in the fact that it is the nation called to be the servant of Jehovah (Isa. 41:9), the people of sacred history; and on the other hand, in the fact that Jehovah is הוּא (ever since Deut. 32:39, the fundamental clause of the Old Testament *credo*), i.e., the absolute and eternally unchangeable One, the Alpha and Omega of all history, more especially of that of Israel, the Creator of the earth and heavens (*tippach*, like *nâtâh* elsewhere, equivalent to the Syriac *tphach*, to spread out), at whose almighty call they stand ready to obey, with all the beings they contain. קָרָא אֲנִי is virtually a conditional sentence (Ewald, § 357, *b*). So far everything has explained the reason for the exhortation to listen to Jehovah. A further reason is now given, by His summoning the members of His nation to assemble together, to hear His own self-attestation, and to confirm it: Who among them (the gods of the heathen) has proclaimed this, or anything of the kind? That which no one but Jehovah has ever predicted follows immediately, in the form of an independent sentence, the subject of which is יְהוָה אֱהַבּוּ (cf., Isa. 41:24): He whom Jehovah loveth will accomplish his will upon Babylon, and his arm (accomplish it) upon the Chaldeans. וְזָרַעוּ is not an accusative (as Hitzig, Ewald, Stier, and others maintain); for the expression "accomplish his arm" (? Jehovah's or his own) is

a phrase that is quite unintelligible, even if taken as zeugmatic; it is rather the nominative of the subject, whilst כְּשֵׁדִים = בְּכַשְׁדִּים, like תהלתִי = למען תהלתִי in v. 9. Jehovah, He alone, is He who has proclaimed such things; He also has raised up in Cyrus the predicted conqueror of Babylon. The prosperity of his career is Jehovah's work.

As certainly now as הַקְּבֻצוֹ in v. 14 is the word of Jehovah, so certain is it that קָרְבוֹ אֵלַי is the same. He summons to Himself the members of His nation, that they may hear still further His own testimony concerning Himself. From the beginning He has not spoken in secret (see Isa. 45:19); but from the time that all which now lies before their eyes—namely, the victorious career of Cyrus—has unfolded itself, He has been there, or has been by (*shâm*, there, as in Prov. 8:27), to regulate what was coming to pass, and to cause it to result in the redemption of Israel. Hofmann gives a different explanation, viz.: "I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; not from the time when it came to pass (not then for the first time, but long before); I was then (when it occurred)." But the arrangement of the words is opposed to this continued force of the אֵלַי, and the accents are opposed to this breaking off of the אֲנִי, which affirms that, at the time when the revolution caused by Cyrus was preparing in the distance, He caused it to be publicly foretold, and thereby proclaimed Himself the present Author and Lord of what was then occurring. Up to this point Jehovah is speaking; but who is it that now proceeds to say, "And now—namely, now that the redemption of Israel is about to appear (וְעַתָּה) being here, as in many other instances, e.g., Isa. 33:10, the turning-point of salvation)—now hat the Lord Jehovah sent me and His Spirit?" The majority of the commentators assume that the prophet comes forward here in his own person, behind Him whom he has introduced, and interrupts Him. But although it is perfectly true, that in all prophecy, from Deuteronomy onwards, words of Jehovah

through the prophet and words of the prophet of Jehovah alternate in constant, and often harsh transitions, and that our prophet has this mark of divine inspiration in common with all the other prophets (cf., Isa. 62:5, 6), it must also be borne in mind, that hitherto he has not spoken once objectively of himself, except quite indirectly (vid., Isa. 40:6; 44:26), to say nothing of actually coming forward in his own person. Whether this takes place further on, more especially in Isa. 61, we will leave for the present; but here, since the prophet has not spoken in his own person before, whereas, on the other hand, these words are followed in Isa. 49:1ff. by an address concerning himself from that servant of Jehovah who announces himself as the restorer of Israel and light of the Gentiles, and who cannot therefore be ether Israel as a nation or the author of these prophecies, nothing is more natural than to suppose that the words, "And now hath the Lord," etc., form a prelude to the words of the One unequalled servant of Jehovah concerning Himself which occur in Isa. 49. The surprisingly mysterious way in which the words of Jehovah suddenly pass into those of His messenger, which is only comparable to Zech. 2:12ff., 4:9 (where the speaker is also not the prophet, but a divine messenger exalted above him), can only be explained in this manner. And in no other way can we explain the וְעַתָּה, which means that, after Jehovah has prepared the way for the redemption of Israel by the raising up of Cyrus, in accordance with prophecy, and by his success in arms, He has sent him, the speaker in this case, to carry out, in a mediatorial capacity, the redemption thus prepared, and that not by force of arms, but in the power of the Spirit of God (Isa. 42:1; cf., Zech. 4:6). Consequently the Spirit is not spoken of here as joining in the sending (as Umbreit and Stier suppose, after Jerome and the Targum: the Septuagint is indefinite, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ); nor do we ever find the Spirit mentioned in such co-ordination as this (see, on the other hand, Zech. 7:12, *per spiritum suum*). The meaning is, that it is also sent, i.e., sent in and with the servant of Jehovah, who is speaking here. To convey this

meaning, there was no necessity to write either *שְׁלַח אֶת־רוּחוֹ* or *שְׁלַח אֶת־רוּחוֹ*, since the expression is just the same as that in Isa. 29:7, *צִבְיָהּ וּמִצְדָּתָהּ*; and the *Vav* may be regarded as the *Vav* of companionship (*Mitschaft*, lit., with-ship, as the Arabs call it; see at Isa. 42:5).

Isaiah 48:17–19. The exhortation is now continued. Israel is to learn the incomparable nature of Jehovah from the work of redemption thus prepared in word and deed. The whole future depends upon the attitude which it henceforth assumes to His commandments. Vv. 17–19. *“Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I, Jehovah thy God, am He that teacheth thee to do that which profiteth, and leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go. O that thou hearkenedst to my commandments! then thy peace becomes like the river, and thy righteousness like waves of the sea; and thy seed becomes like the sand, and the children of thy body like the grains thereof: its name will not be cut off nor destroyed away from my countenance.”* Jehovah is Israel’s rightful and right teacher and leader. *לְהוֹעִיל* is used in the same sense as in Isa. 30:5 and 44:10, to furnish what is useful, to produce what is beneficial or profitable. The optative *לוֹא* is followed, as in Isa. 63:19, by the preterite *utinam attenderis*, the idea of reality being mixed up with the wish. Instead of *וַיְהִי* in the apodosis, we should expect *וַיְהִי* (so would), as in Deut. 32:29. The former points out the consequence of the wish regarded as already realized. *Shâlôm*, prosperity or health, will thereby come upon Israel in such abundance, that it will, as it were, bathe therein; and *tsdâqâh*, rectitude acceptable to God, so abundantly, that it, the sinful one, will be covered by it over and over again. Both of these, *shâlôm* and *tsdâqâh*, are introduced here as a divine gift, not merited by Israel, but only conditional upon that faith which gives heed to the word of God, especially to the word which promises redemption, and appropriates it to itself. Another consequence of the obedience of faith is, that Israel thereby becomes a numerous and eternally enduring

nation. The play upon the words in *מְעִיד בְּמַעוֹתָיו* is very conspicuous. Many expositors (e.g., Rashi, Gesenius, Hitzig, and Knobel) regard *מַעוֹת* as synonymous with *מַעִים*, and therefore as signifying the *viscera*, i.e., the beings that fill the heart of the sea; but it is much more natural to suppose that the suffix points back to *chôl*. Moreover, no such metaphorical use of *viscera* can be pointed out; and since in other instances the feminine plural (such as *knâphôth*, *qrânôth*) denotes that which is artificial as distinguished from what is natural, it is impossible to see why the interior of the sea, which is elsewhere called *lêbh* (*lbhabh*, the heart), and indirectly also *beten*, should be called *מַעוֹת* instead of *מַעִים*. To all appearance *מַעוֹתָיו* signifies the grains of sand (LXX, Jerome, Targ.); and this is confirmed by the fact that *מְעָא* (Neo-Heb. *מְעָה numulus*) is the Targum word for *גֵּרָה*, and the Semitic root *מְעָ*, related to *מַק*, *מַג*, melted, dissolved, signifies to be soft or tender. The conditional character of the concluding promise has its truth in the word *מִלְפָּנַי*. Israel remains a nation even in its apostasy, but fallen under the punishment of *kareth* (of cutting off), under which individuals perish when they wickedly transgress the commandment of circumcision, and others of a similar kind. It is still a people, but rooted out and swept away from the gracious countenance of God, who no more acknowledges it as His own people.

Isaiah 48:20–22. So far the address is hortatory. In the face of the approaching redemption, it demands fidelity and faith. But in the certainty that such a faithful and believing people will not be wanting within the outer Israel, the prophecy of redemption clothes itself in the form of a summons. Vv. 20–22. *“Go out of Babel, flee from Chaldaea with voice of shouting: declare ye, preach ye this, carry it out to the end of the earth! Say ye, Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob His servant. And they thirsted not: He led them through dry places; He caused water to trickle out of rocks for them; He split rocks, and waters gushed out. There is no peace, saith*

ISAIAH	Page 376
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Jehovah, for the wicked.” They are to go out of Babylon, and with speed and joy to leave the land of slavery and idolatry far behind. *Bârach* does not mean literally to flee in this instance, but to depart with all the rapidity of flight (compare Ex. 14:5). And what Jehovah has done to them, is to be published by them over the whole earth; the redemption experienced by Israel is to become a gospel to all mankind. The tidings which are to be sent forth (הוֹצִיא as in Isa. 42:1), extend from גָּאֵל to the second מָצַי, which is repeated palindromically. Jehovah has redeemed the nation that He chose to be the bearer of His salvation, amidst displays of love, in which the miracles of the Egyptian redemption have been renewed. This is what Israel has to experience, and to preach, so far as it has remained true to its God. But there is no peace, saith Jehovah, to the *rshâ’îm*: this is the name given to *loose* men (for the primary meaning of the verbal root is laxity and looseness), i.e., to those whose inward moral nature is loosened, without firm hold, and therefore in a state of chaotic confusion, because they are without God. The reference is to the godless in Israel. The words express the same thought negatively which is expressed positively in Gal. 6:16, “Peace upon the Israel of God.” *Shâlôm* is the significant and comprehensive name given to the coming salvation. From this the godless exclude themselves; they have no part in the future inheritance; the sabbatical rest reserved for the people of God does not belong to them. With this divine utterance, which pierces the conscience like the point of an arrow, this ninth prophecy is brought to a close; and not that only, but also the trilogy concerning “Babel” in Isa. 46–49, and the whole of the first third of these 3 × 9 addresses to the exiles. From this time forth the name *Kōresh* (Cyrus), and also the name *Babel*, never occur again; the relation of the people of Jehovah to heathenism, and the redemption from Babylon, so far as it was foretold and accomplished by Jehovah, not only proving His sole deity, but leading to the overthrow of the idols and the destruction of

their worshippers. This theme is now exhausted, and comes into the foreground no more. The expression שָׁמְעוּ אֵימִים, in its connection with נִחְמוּ עִמִּי, points at once to the diversity in character of the second section, which commences here.

Part II

Isaiah 49

First Prophecy

Self-Attestation of the Servant of Jehovah. The Despondency of Zion Reproved

Isaiah 49:1–3. The very same person who was introduced by Jehovah in Isa. 42:1ff. here speaks for himself, commencing thus in vv. 1–3: “Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye nations afar off: Jehovah hath called me from the womb; from my mother’s lap hath He remembered my name. And He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid me, and made me into a polished shaft; in His quiver hath He concealed me. And He said to me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, thou in whom I glorify myself.” Although the speaker is called Israel in v. 3b, he must not be regarded as either a collective person representing all Israel, or as the collective personality of the kernel of Israel, which answered to its true idea. It is not the former, because in v. 5 he is expressly distinguished from the nation itself, which is the immediate object of his special work as restorer and (according to v. 8 and Isa. 42:6) covenant-mediator also; not the latter, because the nation, whose restoration he effects, according to v. 5, was not something distinct from the collective personality of the “servant of Jehovah” in a national sense, but rather the entire body of the “servants of Jehovah” or remnant of Israel (see, for example, Isa. 65:8–16). Moreover, it cannot be either of these, because what he affirms of himself is expressed in such terms of individuality, that they cannot be understood as employed in a collective sense at all, more especially where he speaks of his mother’s womb. In every other case in which

Israel is spoken of in this way, we find only “from the womb” (*mibbeten*, Isa. 44:2, 24; 46:3, along with *minnī-racham*; also Isa. 48:8), without the addition of אִמָּא (mother), which is quite unsuitable to the collective body of the nation (except in such allegorical connections as Isa. 51:1, 2, and Ezek. 16:3). Is it then possibly the prophet, who is here speaking of himself and refers in v. 1*b* to his own mother (compare אִמָּא in Jer. 15:10; 20:14, 17)? This is very improbable, if only because the prophet, who is the medium of the word of God in these prophecies, has never placed himself in the foreground before. In Isa. 40:6 he merely speaks of himself indirectly; in Isa. 44:26, even if he refer to himself at all (which we greatly doubt), it is only objectively; and in Isa. 48:16, the other person, into whose words the words of Jehovah pass, cannot be the prophet, for the simple reason that the transition of the words of Jehovah into those of His messenger is essentially different in this instance from the otherwise frequent interchange of the words of Jehovah and those of His prophet, and also because the messenger of Jehovah speaks of himself there, after the “former things” have come to pass, as the mediator (either in word or deed) of the “new things” which were never heard of before, but are to be expected now; whereas the author of these addresses was also the prophet of the “former things,” and therefore the messenger referred to rises up within the course of sacred history predicted by the author of these prophecies. Moreover, what the speaker in this case (Isa. 49:1, 2) says of himself is so unique, so glorious, that it reaches far beyond the vocation and performance of any single prophet, or, in fact, of any individual man subject to the limitations of human life and human strength.

There is nothing else left, therefore, than to suppose that the idea implied in the expression “servant of Jehovah” is condensed in this instance, as in Isa. 42:1*ff.*, into that of a single person. When it is expanded to its widest circumference, the “servant of Jehovah” is all Israel; when it only covers its smaller and inner

circle, it is the true people of Jehovah contained within the entire nation, like the kernel in the shell (see the definition of this at Isa. 51:7; 65:10; Ps. 24:6; 73:15); but here it goes back to its very centre. The “servant of Jehovah,” in this central sense, is the heart of Israel. From this heart of Israel the stream of salvation flows out, first of all through the veins of the people of God, and thence through the veins of the nations generally. Just as Cyrus is the world-power in person, as made subservient to the people of God, so the servant of Jehovah, who is speaking here, is Israel in person, as promoting the glorification of Jehovah in all Israel, and in all the world of nations: in other words, it is He in whom the true nature of Israel is concentrated like a sun, in whom the history of Israel is coiled up as into a knot for a further and final development, in whom Israel’s world-wide calling to be the Saviour of mankind, including Israel itself, is fully carried out; the very same who took up the word of Jehovah in Isa. 48:16*b*, in the full consciousness of His fellowship with Him, declaring Himself to be His messenger who had now appeared. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that throughout these prophecies the breaking forth of salvation, not for Israel only, but for all mankind, is regarded as bound up with the termination of the captivity; and from this its basis, the restoration of the people who were then in exile, it is never separated. This fact is of great importance in relation to the question of authorship, and favours the conclusion that they emanated from a prophet who lived before the captivity, and not in the midst of it. Just as in Isa. 7 Isaiah sees the son of the virgin grow up in the time of the Assyrian oppressions, and then sees his kingdom rising up on the ruins of the Assyrian (cf., p. 147); so does he here behold the servant of Jehovah rising up in the second half of the captivity, as if born in exile, in the midst of the punishment borne by his people, to effect the restoration of Israel. At the present time, when he begins to speak, coming forward without any further introduction, and speaking in his own name (a unique instance of dramatic style, which goes beyond even Ps. 2),

he has already left behind him the commencement of his work, which was directed towards the salvation of mankind. His appeal is addressed to the “isles,” which had been frequently mentioned already when the evangelization of the heathen was spoken of (Isa. 42:4, 10, 12; cf., Isa. 24:15), and to the “nations from afar,” i.e., the distant nations (as in Isa. 5:26; compare, on the other hand, Jer. 23:23). They are to hear what he says, not merely what he says in the words that follow, but what he says generally. What follows is rather a vindication of his right to demand a hearing and obedience, then the discourse itself, which is to be received with the obedience of faith; at the same time, the two are most intimately connected. Jehovah has called him *ab utero*, has thought of his name from the bowels of his mother (יְמִינֵי as in Ps. 71:6), i.e., even before he was born; ever since his conception has Jehovah assigned to him his calling, viz., his saving calling. We call to mind here Jer. 1:5, Luke 1:41, Gal. 1:15, but above all the name Immanuel, which is given by anticipation to the Coming One in Isa. 7:14, and the name Jesus, which God appointed through the mouth of angels, when the human life of Him who was to bear that name was still ripening in the womb of the Virgin (Matt. 1:20–23). It is worthy of notice, however, that the great Coming One, though he is described in the Old Testament as one who is to be looked for “from the seed of David,” is also spoken of as “born of a woman,” whenever his entrance into the world is directly referred to. In the Protevangelium he is called, though not in an individual sense, “the seed of the woman;” Isaiah, in the time of Ahaz, mentions “the virgin” as his mother; Micah (Mic. 5:2) speaks of his יולדה; even the typical psalms, as in Ps. 22:10, 11, give prominence to the mother. And is not this a sign that prophecy is a work of the Spirit, who searches out the deep things of the counsel of God?

In v. 2 the speaker says still further, that Jehovah has made his mouth *kcherebh chaddâh* (like a sharp sword), namely, that he may

overcome everything that resists him as if with a sharp sword, and sever asunder things that are bound up together in a pernicious bond (Isa. 11:4; Rev. 1:16; Heb. 4:12); also that He has made him into *chêts bârûr* (not βέλως ἐκλεκτόν, LXX, but, as in Jer. 51:11, cleaned, polished, sharpened, pointed), namely, to pierce the hearts (Ps. 45:6), and inflict upon them the most wholesome wounds; and again, that Jehovah has hidden him under the shadow of His almighty hand, and kept him concealed in the quiver of His loving counsel, just girt as men keep their swords and arrows in sheaths and quivers ready for the time when they want to use them, in order that in the fulness of time He might draw out this His sword, and put this His arrow to the bow. The question whether the allusion here is to the time preceding the foreknown period of his coming, or whether it is to eternity that the words refer, does not present any great dilemma; at the same time, the prophecy in this instance only traces back the being of the person, who now appears, to the remotest point of his historical coming. V. 3 describes, without any figure, what Jehovah has made him. He has said to him (cf., Ps. 2:7b): Thou art my servant; thou art Israel, in whom (*in quo*, as in Isa. 44:23) I glorify myself. Schenkel’s exposition is grammatically impossible: “(It is) in Israel that I will glorify myself through thee.” The servant himself is called Israel. We call to mind here the expression in Matt. 16:18, “Thou art Peter;” and the use of the name “Israel,” as the individuation of a generic name, reminds us of the fact that the kings of a nation are sometimes called by the name of the nation itself (e.g., Asshur, Isa. 10:5ff.). But Israel was from the very first the God-given name of an individual. Just as the name Israel was first of all given to a man, and then after that to a nation, so the name which sprang from a personal root has also a personal crown. The servant of Jehovah is Israel in person, inasmuch as the purpose of mercy, upon the basis of which and for the accomplishment of which Jehovah made Jacob the father of the twelve-tribed nation, is brought by him into full and final realization.

We have already seen that Israel, as an entire nation, formed the basis of the idea contained in the term “servant of Jehovah;” Israel, regarded as a people faithful to its calling, the centre; and the personal servant of Jehovah its apex. In the present instance, where he is called distinctly “Israel,” the fact is clearly expressed, that the servant of Jehovah in these prophecies is regarded as the kernel of the kernel of Israel, as Israel’s inmost centre, as Israel’s highest head. He it is in whom (i.e., on whom and through whom) Jehovah glorifies Himself, inasmuch as He carried out through him the counsels of His love, which are the self-glorification of His holy love, its glory and its triumph.

Isaiah 49:4. In the next verse the speaker meets the words of divine calling and promise with a complaint, which immediately silences itself, however. V. 4. *“And I, I said, I have wearied myself in vain, and thrown away my strength for nothing and to no purpose; yet my right is with Jehovah, and my reward with my God.”* The Vav with which the verse opens introduces the apparent discrepancy between the calling he had received, and the apparent failure of his work. וְכֵן, however, denotes the conclusion which might be drawn from this, that there was neither reality nor truth in his call. The relation between the clauses is exactly the same as that in Ps. 31:23 and Jonah 2:5 (where we find וְכֵן, which is more rarely used in this adversative sense); compare also Ps. 30:7 (but I said), and the psalm of Hezekiah in Isa. 38:10 with the antithesis in Ps. 38:15. In the midst of his activity no fruit was to be seen, and the thought came upon him, that it was a failure; but this disturbance of his rejoicing in his calling was soon quieted in the confident assurance that his *mishpât* (i.e., his good right in opposition to all contradiction and resistance) and his “work” (i.e., the result and fruit of the work, which is apparently in vain) are with Jehovah, and laid up with Him until the time when He will vindicate His servant’s right, and crown his labour with success. We must not allow ourselves to be led astray by such

parallels as Isa. 40:10; 62:11. The words are not spoken in a collective capacity any more than in the former part of the verse; the lamentation of Israel as a people, in Isa. 40:27, is expressed very differently.

Isaiah 49:5, 6. The expression “and now” (וְעַתָּה), which follows, evidently indicates a fresh turn in the official life of the person speaking here. At the same time, it is evident that it is the failure of his labours within his own people, which has forced out the lamentation in v. 4a. For his reason for addressing his summons in Isa. 49:1 to the world of nations, is that Jehovah has not guaranteed to him, the undaunted one, success to his labours among his own people, but has assigned him a mission extending far beyond and reaching to all mankind. Vv. 5, 6. *“And now, saith Jehovah, that formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring back Jacob to Him, and that Israel may be gathered together to Him; and I am honoured in the eyes of Jehovah, and my God has become my strength. He saith, It is only a small thing that thou becomest my servant, to set up the tribes of Jacob, and to bring back the preserved of Israel. I have set thee for the light of the Gentiles, to become my salvation to the end of the earth.”* Both *shōbhēbh* and *hāshībh* unite within themselves the meanings *reducere* (Jer. 50:19) and *restituere*. On אָל = אֵל generally, see at Isa. 9:2; 63:9. Jerome is wrong in his rendering, *et Israel qui non congregabitur* (what could a prophecy of the rejection of the Jews do here?); so also is Hitzig’s rendering, “since Israel is not swept away;” and Hofmann’s, “Israel, which is not swept away.” In the present instance, where the restoration of Israel is the event referred to, אָסַף must signify “the gathering together of Israel,” as in Isa. 11:12. אֵל (parallel אֱלֹהִים) points to Jehovah as the author of the gathering, and as the object of it also. The transition from the infinitive of design to the finite verb of desire, is the same as in Isa. 13:9; 14:25. The attributive clause, added to the name Jehovah, expresses the lofty mission of the servant of God with regard to Israel. The

parenthesis, "I have honour in the eyes of Jehovah, and my God has become my strength, i.e., has become mighty in me, the apparently weak one," looks beyond to the still loftier mission, by which the former lofty one is far surpassed. On account of this parenthetically inserted praise of Jehovah, the אָמַר is resumed in וַיֹּאמֶר. Instead of נִקְלָה הַיּוֹתֵדָה (compare 1 Kings 16:31), i.e., it is a small thing that thou shouldst be, we have it here, as in Ezek. 8:17, with a comparative *min*, which must not, however, be logically pressed: "It is smaller than that," i.e., it is too small a thing that thou shouldst be. The *ntsirē* (*Keri*, *ntsūrē*) of Israel are those who have been preserved in exile (Ezek. 6:12); in other cases, we find שְׂאָרִית, שְׂאָר, or פְּלִטָה. Not only is the restoration of the remnant of Israel the work of the servant of Jehovah; but Jehovah has appointed him for something higher than this. He has given or set him for the light of the heathen ("a light to lighten the Gentiles," Luke 2:32), to become His salvation to the end of the earth (LXX: τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἔως ἐσχατοῦ τῆς γῆς). Those who regard Israel as a nation as speaking here (e.g., Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, etc.) go right away from this, which is the most natural sense of the words, and explain them as meaning, "that my salvation may be, reach, or penetrate to the end of the earth." But inasmuch as the servant of Jehovah is the light of the world, he is through that very fact the salvation of the world; and he is both of these through Jehovah, whose counsels of יְשׁוּעָה are brought by him into historical realization and visible manifestation.

Isaiah 49:7. The words of the servant of God, in which he enforces his claim upon the nations, are now lost in words of Jehovah to him, which are no longer reported by him, but are appended as an independent address. His present condition is one of the deepest humiliation. V. 7. "Thus saith Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, His Holy One, to him of contemptible soul, to the abhorrence of the people, to the servant of tyrants: kings shall see and arise; princes, and prostrate themselves for

the sake of Jehovah, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, that He hath chosen thee." As *bâzōh* with a changeable *kamtez* (cf., *châmōts*, Isa. 1:17) has, if not exactly a passive force, yet something very like a passive circumstantial meaning, בְּזוּה־נַפְשׁ must mean the man who is contemptible as regards his soul, i.e., held in contempt, or, as Hofmann explains it, whom men do not think worthy to live (though he follows Ewald, and takes *bzōh* as an infinitive treated as a substantive). Accordingly מְהַעֵב is also to be taken personally. The meaning *abhorring* is unsuitable; but מְהַעֵב is also used in a causative sense, to cause to abhor, i.e., to make a thing an abomination (Ezek. 16:25), or to excite abhorrence: hence, "to him who excites the people's abhorrence," which is the same, so far as the sense is concerned, as "to the object of their abhorrence." But even as a participial substantive מְהַעֵב would literally mean the thing exciting abhorrence, i.e., the abhorrence, just as *mkhasseh* in Isa. 23:18 signifies the thing covering, i.e., the covering. All these participial substantives of the *piel* indicate the thing, place, or instrument accomplishing that which the *piel* affirms. We need not raise the question whether *gōi* refers to Israel or to the heathen. It signifies the mass of men, the people, like *'ām* in Ps. 62:9, and in those passages in which it is used by our prophet for the human race generally. The *mōshlīm*, of whom the person here addressed is the servant or enslaved one, are obviously heathen tyrants. What is here affirmed of the "one servant of Jehovah" was no doubt also applicable to the nation generally, and more especially to that portion of the nation which was true to its calling and confession. He in whom Israel's relation of servant to Jehovah was fully realized, did indeed spring out of His own nation, when it was under the oppression of the powers of this world; and all the shame and persecution which those who remained faithful among His people had to endure from the heathen oppressors, and also from the ungodly among their own countrymen (see, for example, Isa. 66:5), discharge their force like a

ISAIAH	Page 381
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

violent storm upon Him as an individual. When, therefore, we find the sufferings of the people and the glory of which they became partakers described in other passages in just the same terms, we must not infer from this that “servant of Jehovah” is a collective epithet in the passage before us. The person addressed here is the Restorer of Israel, the Light of the Gentiles, the Salvation of Jehovah for all mankind. When kings and princes shall behold Him who was once brought so low, delivered from His humiliation, and exalted to the glorious height of the work to which He has been called, they will rise up with reverence from their thrones, and prostrate themselves upon the ground in worship for the sake of Jehovah, as before Him who (רַפָּאָה emphatic, *utpote qui*) is faithful, showing Himself sincere in His promises, and for the sake of the Holy One of Israel, in that, as is now made manifest, “He hath chosen thee.” The *fut. consec.* particularizes the general motive assigned, and carries it still further.

Isaiah 49:8, 9a. The next two verses describe (though only with reference to Israel, the immediate circle) what is the glory of the vocation to which Jehovah, in accordance with His promise, exalts His chosen One. Vv. 8, 9a. “Thus saith Jehovah, In a time of favour have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee: and I form thee, and set thee for a covenant of the people, to raise up the land, to apportion again desolate inheritances, saying to prisoners, Go ye out: to those who are in darkness, Come ye to the light.” Jehovah heard His servant, and came to his help when he prayed to Him out of the condition of bondage to the world, which he shared with his people. He did it at the time for the active display of His good pleasure, and for the realizing of salvation, which had been foreseen by Him, and had now arrived. The futures which follow are to be taken as such. The fact that Jehovah makes His servant “a covenant of the people,” i.e., the personal bond which unites Israel and its God in a new fellowship (see Isa. 42:6), is the fruit of his being heard and helped. The infinitives with *Lamed* affirm in what way the new covenant

relation will be made manifest. The land that has fallen into decay rises into prosperity again, and the desolate possessions return to their former owners. This manifestation of the covenant grace, that has been restored to the nation again, is effected through the medium of the servant of Jehovah. The rendering of the LXX is quite correct: τοῦ καταστῆσαι τὴν γῆν καὶ κληρονομῆσαι κληρονομίας ἐρήμους λέγοντα.

רַפָּאָה is a *dicendo* governed by both infinitives.

The prisoners in the darkness of the prison and of affliction are the exiles (Isa. 42:22). The mighty word of the servant of Jehovah brings to them the light of liberty, in connection with which (as has been already more than once observed) the fact should be noticed, that the redemption is viewed in connection with the termination of the captivity, and, in accordance with the peculiar character of the Old Testament, is regarded as possessing a national character, and therefore is purely external.

Isaiah 49:9–12. The person of the servant of Jehovah now falls into the background again, and the prophecy proceeds with a description of the return of the redeemed. Vv. 9b–12. “They shall feed by the ways, and there is pasture for them upon all field-hills. They shall not hunger nor thirst, and the mirage and sun shall not blind them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, and guide them by bubbling water-springs. And I make all my mountains ways, and my roads are exalted. Behold these, they come from afar; and, behold, these from the north and from the sea; and these from the land of the Sinese.”

The people returning home are represented as a flock. By the roads that they take to their homes, they are able to obtain sufficient pasture, without being obliged to go a long way round in order to find a sufficient supply; and even upon bare sandy hills (Isa. 41:18) there is pasture found for them. Nothing is wanting; even the *shârâbh* (see Isa. 35:7, p. 350) and the sun do not hurt them, the former by deceiving and leading astray, the latter by wearying them with its oppressive heat: for He whose compassion has been excited by their long pining misery (Isa. 41:17–20) is leading them,

ISAIAH	Page 382
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

and bringing them along in comfort by bubbling springs of real and refreshing water (לַיְנִיָּהּ, as Petrarch once says of shepherds, *Move la schiêra sua soavemente*). Jehovah also makes all the mountains into roads for those who are returning home, and the paths of the desert are lifted up, as it were, into well-made roads (*yrumûn*, Ges. § 47, Anm. 4). They are called *my mountains* and *my highways* (differently from Isa. 14:25), because they are His creation; and therefore He is also able to change them, and now really does change them for the good of His people, who are returning to the land of their forefathers out of every quarter of the globe. Although in Ps. 107:3 *yâm* (the sea) appears to stand for the south, as referring to the southern part of the Mediterranean, which washes the coast of Egypt, there is no ground at all in the present instance for regarding it as employed in any other than its usual sense, namely the *west*; *mêrâchôq* (from far) is therefore either the south (cf., Isa. 43:6) or the east, according to the interpretation that we give to *'erets Sînîm*, as signifying a land to the east or to the south.

The Phœnician *Sinim* (Ges. 10:17), the inhabitants of a fortified town in the neighbourhood of Area, which has now disappeared, but which was seen not only by Jerome, but also by Mariono Sanuto (*de castro Arachas ad dimidiam leucam est oppidum Sin*), cannot be thought of, for the simple reason that this Sin was too near, and was situated to the west of Babylon and to the north of Jerusalem; whilst Sin (= Pelusium) in Egypt, to which Ewald refers, did not give its name to either a tribe or a land. Arias Montanus was among the first to suggest that the *Sinim* are the Sinese (Chinese); and since the question has been so thoroughly discussed by Gesenius (in his *Commentary* and *Thesaurus*), most of the commentators, and also such Orientalists as Langles (in his *Recherches asiatiques*), Movers (in his *Phœnicians*), Lassen (in his *Indische Alterthumskunde*, i. 856–7), have decided in favour of this opinion. The objection brought against the supposition, that the name of the

Chinese was known to the nations of the west at so early a period as this, viz., that this could not have been the case till after the reign of the emperor *Shi-hoang-ti*, of the dynasty of *Thsin*, who restored the empire that had been broken up into seven smaller kingdoms (in the year 247 B.C.), and through whose celebrated reign the name of his dynasty came to be employed in the western nations as the name of China generally, is met by Lassen with the simple fact that the name occurs at a much earlier period than this, and in many different forms, as the name of smaller states into which the empire was broken up after the reign of *Wu-wang* (1122–1115 B.C.). “The name Θῖναι (Strabo), Σῖναι (Ptol.), Τζῖντζα (Kosmas), says the Sinologist Neumann, did not obtain currency for the first time from the founder of the great dynasty of *Tsin*; but long before this, *Tsin* was the name of a feudal kingdom of some importance in *Shen-si*, one of the western provinces of the Sinese land, and *Fei-tse*, the first feudal king of *Tsin*, began to reign as early as 897 B.C.” It is quite possible, therefore, that the prophet, whether he were Isaiah or any other, may have heard of the land of the Sinese in the far east, and this is all that we need assume; not that Sinese merchants visited the market of the world on the Euphrates (Movers and Lassen), but only that information concerning the strange people who were so wealthy in rare productions, had reached the remote parts of the East through the medium of commerce, possibly from Ophir, and through the Phœnicians. But Egli replies: “The seer on the streams of Babel certainly could not have described any exiles as returning home from China, if he had not known that some of his countrymen were pining there in misery, and I most positively affirm that this was not the case.” What is here assumed—namely, that there must have been a Chinese *diaspora* in the prophet’s own time—is overthrown by what has been already observed in Isa. 11:11; and we may also see that it is to purely by accident that the land of the Sinese is given as the farthest point to the east, from my communications concerning the Jews of China in the *History of*

the Post-biblical Poetry of the Jews (1836, pp. 58–62, cf., p. 21). I have not yet seen Sionnet's work, which has appeared since, viz., *Essai sur les Juifs de la Chine et sur l'influence, qu'ils ont eue sur la littérature de ce vaste empire, avant l'ère chrétienne*; but I have read the *Mission of Enquiry to the Jews in China* in the *Jewish Intelligence*, May 1851, where a fac-simile of their *thorah* is given. The immigration took place from Persia (cf., *'Elâm*, Isa. 11:11), at the latest, under the *Han* dynasty (205 B.C.-220 A.D.), and certainly before the Christian era.

Isaiah 49:13. In this return of the exiles from every quarter of the globe to their fatherland, and for this mighty work of God on behalf of His church, which has been scattered in all directions, the whole creation is to praise Him. V. 13. *"Sing, O heavens; and shout, O earth; and break out into singing, O mountains! for Jehovah hath comforted His people, and He hath compassion upon His afflicted ones."* The phrase פָּצַח רִנָּה, like פָּצַח וְרָנַן (which occurs in Ps. 98:4 as well as in Isaiah), is peculiarly Isaiah's (Isa. 14:7, and several times in Isa. 40–66). "The afflicted ones" (*'āniyyīm*) is the usual Old Testament name for the *ecclesia militans*. The future alternates with the perfect: the act of consolation takes place once for all, but the compassion lasts for ever. Here again the glorious liberty of the children of God appears as the focus from which the whole world is glorified. The joy of the Israel of God becomes the joy of heaven and earth. With the summons to this joy the first half of the prophecy closes; for the word תִּאֲמַר, which follows, shows clearly enough that the prophecy has merely reached a resting-point here, since this word is unsuitable for commencing a fresh prophecy.

Isaiah 49:14–16. The prophet, looking back at the period of suffering from the standpoint of the deliverance, exclaims from the midst of this train of thought: V. 14. *"Zion said, Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me."* The period of suffering which forces out this lamentation still continues. What follows, therefore, applies to the church of the present, i.e., of the captivity. Vv. 15, 16. *"Does a woman*

forget her sucking child, so as not to have compassion upon the child of her womb? Even though mothers should forget, I will not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls stand continually before me." In reply to the complaining church, which knows that her home is in Zion-Jerusalem, and which has been kept so long away from her home, Jehovah sets forth His love, which is as inalienable as a mother's love, yea, far greater than even maternal love. On עוֹל, see p. 90; the *min* in *mērachēm* is equivalent to ὄστε μή, as in Isa. 23:1; 24:10; 33:15, etc. מָג, so far as the actual sense is concerned, is equivalent to נָס־כִּי (Ewald, § § 362, b): "granted that such (mothers) should forget, i.e., disown, their love." The picture of Zion (not merely the name, as v. 16b clearly shows) is drawn in the inside of Jehovah's hands, just as men are accustomed to burn or puncture ornamental figures and mementoes upon the hand, the arm, and the forehead, and to colour the punctures with alhenna or indigo (see Tafel, xii., in vol. ii. pp. 33–35 of Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*). There is the figure of Zion, unapproachable to every creature, as close to Him as He is to Himself, and facing Him amidst all the emotions of His divine life. There has He the walls of Zion constantly before Him (on *neged*, see at Isa. 1:15; 24:23); and even if for a time they are broken down here below, with Him they have an eternal ideal existence, which must be realized again and again in an increasingly glorious form.

Isaiah 49:17, 18. It is this fact of a renewed glorification which presents itself afresh to the prophet's mind. Vv. 17, 18. *"Thy children make haste, thy destroyers and masters draw out from thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all these assemble themselves together, and come to thee. As truly as I live, saith Jehovah, thou wilt put them all on like jewellery, and gird them round thee like a bride."* The pointing adopted by the LXX, Targ., Jer. and Saad., is בְּנִיָּהּ. The antithesis favours this reading; but בְּנִיָּהּ suits vv. 18, 19 better; and the thought that Zion's

children come and restore her fallen walls, follows of itself from the very antithesis: her children come; and those who destroyed their maternal home, and made it a desolate ruin, have to depart from both city and land. Zion is to lift up her eyes, that have been cast down till now, yea, to lift them up round about; for on all sides those whom she thought she had lost are coming in dense crowds לָ (cf., לָ = יָ with לָ, Isa. 49:5), to her, i.e., henceforth to belong to her again. Jehovah pledges His life (*chai 'ānī*, ζῶν ἐγώ, Ewald, § 329, a) that a time of glory is coming for Zion and her children. כִּי in the affirmative sense, springing out of the confirmative after an affirming oath, equivalent to לָ elsewhere (e.g., Isa. 5:9). The population which Zion recovers once more, will be to her like the ornaments which a woman puts on, like the ornamental girdle (Isa. 3:20) which a bride fastens round her wedding dress.

Isaiah 49:19, 20. Thus will Zion shine forth once more with the multitude of her children as with a festal adorning. Vv. 19, 20. *“For thy ruins and thy waste places and thy land full of ruin,— yea, now thou wilt be too narrow for the inhabitants, and thy devourers are far away. Thy children, that were formerly taken from thee, shall say in thine ears, The space is too narrow for me; give way for me, that I may have room.”* The word “for” (*kī*) introduces the explanatory reason for the figures just employed of jewellery and a bridal girdle. Instead of the three subjects, “thy ruins,” etc., the comprehensive “thou” is employed permutatively, and the sentence commenced afresh. כִּי is repeated emphatically in כִּי עַתָּה (for now, or yea now); this has essentially the same meaning as in the apodosis of hypothetical protasis (e.g., Gen. 31:42; 43:10), except that the sense is more decidedly affirmative than in the present instance, where one sees it spring out of the confirmative. Zion, that has been hitherto desolate, now becomes too small to hold her inhabitants; and her devourers are far away, i.e., those who took forcible possession of the land and cities, and made them untenable.

דָּוָה is to be understood in accordance with Ps. 42:6, and דָּוָה in accordance with Ps. 54:2 (see at Isa. 5:9). It will even come to this, that the children of which Zion was formerly robbed will call to one another, so that she becomes a witness with her ears to that which they have so clearly seen: the space is too narrow, give way (*gshâh*, from *nâgash*, to advance, then to move generally, also to move in an opposite direction, i.e., to fall back, as in Gen. 19:9) for me, that I may be able to settle down.

Isaiah 49:21. The words that sound in the ears of Zion are now followed by the thought of astonishment and surprise, that rises up in her heart. V. 21. *“And thou wilt say in thy heart, Who hath borne me these, seeing I was robbed of children, and barren, banished, and thrust away; and these, who hath brought them up? Behold, I was left alone; these, where were they?”* She sees herself suddenly surrounded by a great multitude of children, and yet she was robbed of children, and *galmūdâh* (lit. hard, stony, Arab. *'galmad*, *'galmûd*, e.g., *es-sachr el 'galmûd*, the hardest stone, mostly as a substantive, stone or rock, from *gâlam*, from which comes the Syriac *glomo*, stony ground, related to *châlam*, whence *challâmîsh*, gravel, root *gal*, *gam*, to press together, or heap up in a lump or mass), i.e., one who seemed utterly incapacitated for bearing children any more. She therefore asks, Who hath borne me these (not, who hath begotten, and which is an absurd question)? She cannot believe that they are the children of her body, and her children's children. As a tree, whose foliage is all faded away, is called *nôbheleth* itself in Isa. 1:30, so she calls herself *gôlâh vsûrâh*, *extorris et remota* (*sûr* = *mûsâr*, like *sûg* in Prov. 14:14 = *nâsôg* or *mussâg*), because her children have been carried away into exile. In the second question, the thought has dawned upon her mind, that those by whom she finds herself surrounded are her own children; but as she was left alone, whilst they went forth, as she thought to die in a foreign land, she cannot comprehend where they have been hitherto concealed, or where they have grown up into so numerous a people.

ISAIAH	Page 385
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

Isaiah 49:22. The prophecy now takes a step backward in the domain of the future, and describes the manner in which the children of Zion get back to their home. V. 22. *“Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I lift up my hand to nations, and set up my standard to peoples: and they bring thy sons in their bosom; and thy daughters, upon shoulders are they carried.”* The setting up of a standard (Isa. 5:26; 11:12; 18:3, cf., 62:10) is a favourite figure with Isaiah, as well as swaying the hand. Jehovah gives a sign to the heathen nations with His hand, and points out to them the mark that they are to keep in view, with a signal pole which is set up. They understand it, and carry out His instructions, and bring Zion’s sons and daughters thither, and that as a foster-father (*’ōmēn*) carries an infant in the bosom of his dress (*chōtsen*, as in Neh. 5:13; Arabic as in Ps. 129:7, *hidn*, from *hadana*, to embrace, to press tenderly to one’s self; vid., Num. 11:12), or upon his arms, so that it reclines upon his shoulder (*’al-kāthēph*; cf., *’al-tsad*, Isa. 60:4; 66:12).

Isaiah 49:23. Such affectionate treatment does the church receive, which is assembling once more upon its native soil, whilst kings and their consorts hasten to serve the re-assembled community. V. 23. *“And kings become thy foster-fathers, and their princesses they nurses: they bow down their face to thee to the earth, and they lick the dust of thy feet; and thou learnest that I am Jehovah, He whose hoping ones are not put to shame.”* As foster-fathers devote all their strength and care to those entrusted to them, and nurses nourish children from the very marrow of their own life, so will kings become the shelterers of Zion, and princesses the sustainers of her growth. All that is true in the regal headship of the church will be realized, and all that is false in regal territorialism will condemn itself: *“vultu in terram demisso adorabunt te et pulverem pedum tuorum lingent”* (Jerome). They do homage to the church, and kiss the ground upon which she stands and walks. According to Isa. 45:14, this adoration belongs to the God who is present in the church, and points the church itself away from all thought of her own merits to Jehovah,

the God of salvation, *cui qui confidunt non pudefient* (יִדְעֵתָּ with an auxiliary *pathach*, like יִגְעֵתָּ in Isa. 47:15; Ges. § 65, 2; אָשֶׁר with the first person made into a relative as in Isa. 41:8; Ges. § 123, 1, Anm. 1). Observe, however, that the state will not be swallowed up by the church,—a thing which never will occur, and is never meant to occur; but by the state becoming serviceable to the church, there is realized a prelude of the perfected kingdom of God, in which the dualism of the state and the church is entirely abolished.

Isaiah 49:24–26. There follows now a sceptical question prompted by weakness of faith; and the divine reply. The question, v. 24: *“Can the booty indeed be wrested from a giant, or will the captive host of the righteous escape?”* The question is logically one, and only divided rhetorically into two (Ges. § 153, 2). The giant, or gigantically strong one, is the Chaldean. Knobel, in opposition to Hitzig, who supposes the Persian to be referred to, points very properly to Isa. 51:12, 13, and 52:5. He is mistaken, however, in thinking that we must read עָרִיץ שְׂבִי in v. 24b, as Ewald does after the Syriac and Jerome, on account of the parallelism. The exiles are called *shbhī tsaddīq*, not, however, as captives wrested from the righteous (the congregation of the righteous), as Meier thinks, taking *tsaddīq* as the *gen. obj.*; still less as captives carried off by the righteous one, i.e., the Chaldean, for the Chaldean, even regarded as the accomplisher of the righteous judgment of God, is not *tsaddīq*, but “wicked” (Hab. 1:13); but merely as a host of captives consisting of righteous men (Hitzig). The divine answer, vv. 25, 26: *“Yea, thus saith Jehovah, Even the captive hosts of a giant are wrested from him, and the booty of a tyrant escapes: and I will make war upon him that warreth with thee, and I will bring salvation to thy children. And I feed them that pain thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as if with new wine; and all flesh sees that I Jehovah am thy Saviour, and that thy Redeemer is the Mighty One of Jacob.”* We might take the *kī* in v. 25a as a simple affirmative, but it is really

to be taken as preceded by a tacit intermediate thought. Rosenmüller's explanation is the correct one: "that which is hardly credible shall take place, for thus hath Jehovah said." He has also given the true interpretation of *gam*: "although this really seems incredible, yet I will give it effect." Ewald, on the contrary, has quite missed the sense of vv. 24, 25, which he gives as follows: "The booty in men which a hero has taken in war, may indeed be taken from him again; but Jehovah will never let the booty that He takes from the Chaldean (viz., Israel) be wrested from Him again." This is inadmissible, for the simple reason that it presupposes the emendation ערין ערין; and this 'ârîts is quite unsuitable, partly because it would be Jehovah to whom the case supposed referred, and still more, because the correspondence in character between v. 24 and v. 14 is thereby destroyed. The *gibbôr* and 'ârîts is called גִּבּוֹר in v. 25b, with direct reference to Zion. This is a noun formed from the future, like *Jareb* in Hos. 5:13 and 10:6, —a name chosen as the distinctive epithet of the Asiatic emperor (probably a name signifying "king Fighting-cock"). The self-laceration threatened against the Chaldean empire recals to mind Isa. 9:19, 20, and Zech. 11:9, and has as revolting a sound as Num. 23:24 and Zech. 9:15, —passages which Daumer and Ghillany understand in the cannibal sense which they appear to have, whereas what they understand literally is merely a hyperbolical figure. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the Old Testament church was a nation, and that the spirit of revelation in the Old Testament assumed the national form, which it afterwards shattered to pieces. Knobel points to the revolt of the Hyrcanians and several satraps, who fought on the side of Cyrus against their former rulers (*Cyrop.* iv. 2, 6, v. 1–3). All this will be subservient to that salvation and redemption, which form the historical aim of Jehovah and the irresistible work of the Mighty One of Jacob. The name of God which we meet with here, viz., the Mighty One of Jacob, only occurs again in Isa. 1:24, and shows who is the author of the prophecy which is concluded

here. The first half set forth, in the servant of Jehovah, the mediator of Israel's restoration and of the conversion of the heathen, and closed with an appeal to the heaven and the earth to rejoice with the ransomed church. The second half (vv. 14–26) rebukes the despondency of Zion, which fancies itself forgotten of Jehovah, by pointing to Jehovah's more than maternal love, and the superabundant blessing to be expected from Him. It also rebukes the doubts of Zion as to the possibility of such a redemption, by pointing to the faithfulness and omnipotence of the God of Israel, who will cause the exiles to be wrested from the Chaldean, and their tormentors to devour one another. The following chapter commences a fresh train of ideas.

Isaiah 50

Second Prophecy

Israel's Self-Rejection; And the Stedfastness of the Servant of Jehovah

Isaiah 50:1. The words are no longer addressed to Zion, but to her children. V. 1. *"Thus saith Jehovah, Where is your mother's bill of divorce, with which I put her away? Or where is one of my creditors, to whom I sold you? Behold, for your iniquities are ye sold, and for your transgressions is your mother put away."* It was not He who had broken off the relation in which He stood to Zion; for the mother of Israel, whom Jehovah had betrothed to Himself, had no bill of divorce to show, with which Jehovah had put her away and thus renounced for ever the possibility of receiving her again (according to Deut. 24:1–4), provided she should in the meantime have married another. Moreover, He had not yielded to outward constraint, and therefore given her up to a foreign power; for where was there one of His creditors (there is not any one) to whom He would have been obliged to relinquish His sons, because unable to pay His debts, and in this way to discharge them?—a harsh demand, which was frequently made by unfelling creditors of insolvent debtors (Ex. 21:7; 2 Kings 4:1; Matt. 18:25). On

nōsheh, a creditor, see at Isa. 24:2. Their present condition was indeed that of being sold and put away; but this was not the effect of despotic caprice, or the result of compulsion on the part of Jehovah. It was Israel itself that had broken off the relation in which it stood to Jehovah; they had been sold through their own faults, and “for your transgressions is your mother put away.” Instead of *וּבְכַשְׁעֵיָהּ* we have *וּבְכַשְׁעֵיכֶם*. This may be because the church, although on the one hand standing higher and being older than her children (i.e., her members at any particular time), is yet, on the other hand, orally affected by those to whom she has given birth, who have been trained by her, and recognised by her as her own.

Isaiah 50:2, 3. The radical sin, however, which has lasted from the time of the captivity down to the present time, is disobedience to the word of God. This sin brought upon Zion and her children the judgment of banishment, and it was this which made it last so long. Vv. 2, 3. *“Why did I come, and there was no one there? Why did I call, and there was no one who answered? Is my hand too short to redeem? or is there no strength in me to deliver? Behold, through my threatening I dry up the sea; turn streams into a plain: their fish rot, because there is no water, and die for thirst. I clothe the heavens in mourning, and make sackcloth their covering.”* Jehovah has come, and with what? It follows, from the fact of His bidding them consider, that His hand is not too short to set Israel loose and at liberty, that He is not so powerless as to be unable to draw it out; that He is the Almighty, who by His mere threatening word (Ps. 106:9; 104:7) can dry up the sea, and turn streams into a hard and barren soil, so that the fishes putrefy for want of water (Ex. 7:18, etc.), and die from thirst (*thâmōth* a voluntative used as an indicative, as in Isa. 12:1, and very frequently in poetical composition); who can clothe the heavens in mourning, and make sackcloth their (dull, dark) covering (for the expression itself, compare Isa. 37:1, 2); who therefore, *fiat applicatio*, can annihilate the girdle of waters behind which

Babylon fancies herself concealed (see Isa. 42:15; 44:27), and cover the empire, which is now enslaving and torturing Israel, with a sunless and starless night of destruction (Isa. 13:10). It follows from all this, that He has come with a gospel of deliverance from sin and punishment; but Israel has given no answer, has not received this message of salvation with faith, since faith is assent to the word of God. And in whom did Jehovah come? Knobel and most of the commentators reply, “in His prophets.” This answer is not wrong, but it does not suffice to show the connection between what follows and what goes before. For there it is one person who speaks; and who is that, but the servant of Jehovah, who is introduced in these prophecies with dramatic directness, as speaking in his own name? Jehovah has come to His people in His servant. We know who was the servant of Jehovah in the historical fulfilment. It was He whom even the New Testament Scriptures describe as τὸν παῖδα τοῦ κυρίου, especially in the Acts (Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30). It was not indeed during the Babylonian captivity that the servant of Jehovah appeared in Israel with the gospel of redemption; but, as we shall never be tired of repeating, this is the human element in these prophecies, that they regard the appearance of the “servant of Jehovah,” the Saviour of Israel and the heathen, as connected with the captivity: the punishment of Israel terminating, according to the law of the perspective foreshortening of prophetic vision, with the termination of the captivity,—a connection which we regard as one of the strongest confirmations of the composition of these addresses before the captivity, as well as of Isaiah’s authorship. But this ἀνθρώπινον does not destroy the θεῖον in them, inasmuch as the time at which Jesus appeared was not only similar to that of the Babylonian captivity, but stood in a causal connection with it, since the Roman empire was the continuation of the Babylonian, and the moral state of the people under the iron arm of the Roman rule resembled that of the Babylonian exiles (Ezek. 2:6, 7). At the same time, whatever our opinion

on this point may be, it is perfectly certain that it is to the servant of Jehovah, who was seen by the prophet in connection with the Babylonian captivity, that the words “wherefore did I come” refer.

Isaiah 50:4. He in whom Jehovah came to His nation, and proclaimed to it, in the midst of its self-induced misery, the way and work of salvation, is He who speaks in v. 4: “*The Lord Jehovah hath given me a disciple’s tongue, that I may know how to set up the wearied with words: He wakeneth every morning; wakeneth mine ear to attend in disciple’s manner.*” The word *limmūdīm*, which is used in the middle of the verse, and which is the older word for the later *talmidīm*, μαθηταί, as in Isa. 8:16; 54:13, is repeated at the close of the verse, according to the figure of palindromy, which is such a favourite figure in both parts of the book of Isaiah; and the train of thought, “He wakeneth morning by morning, wakeneth mine ear,” recalls to mind the parallelism with reservation which is very common in the Psalms, and more especially the custom of a “triolet-like” spinning out of the thoughts, from which the songs of “degrees” (or ascending steps, *shīr hamma’ālōth*) have obtained their name. The servant of Jehovah affords us a deep insight here into His hidden life. The prophets received special revelations from God, for the most part in the night, either in dreams or else in visions, which were shown them in a waking condition, but yet in the more susceptible state of nocturnal quiet and rest. Here, however, the servant of Jehovah receives the divine revelations neither in dreams nor visions of the night; but every morning (*babbōqer babbōqer* as in Isa. 28:19), i.e., when his sleep is over, Jehovah comes to him, awakens his ear, by making a sign to him to listen, and then takes him as it were into the school after the manner of a pupil, and teaches him what and how he is to preach. Nothing indicates a tongue befitting the disciples of God, so much as the gift of administering consolation; and such a gift is possessed by the speaker here. “To help with words him that is exhausted” (with suffering

and self-torture): עוֹת, Arab. *gât*, *med. Vav*, related to עוֹשׂ, עוֹשׂ, signifies to spring to a person with words to help, Aq. ὑποστηρίσαι, Jer. *sustentare*. The Arabic *gât*, *med. Je*, to rain upon or water (Ewald, Umbreit, etc.), cannot possibly be thought of, since this has no support in the Hebrew; still less, however, can we take עוֹת as a denom. from עָת, upon which Luther has founded his rendering, “to speak to the weary in due season” (also Eng. ver.). עֲבָרָה is an accusative of more precise definition, like אֲשֶׁר in v. 1 (cf., Isa. 42:25; 43:23). Jerome has given the correct rendering: “that I may know how to sustain him that is weary with a word.”

Isaiah 50:5, 6. His calling is to save, not to destroy; and for this calling he has Jehovah as a teacher, and to Him he has submitted himself in docile susceptibility and immovable obedience. V. 5. “*The Lord Jehovah hath opened mine ear; and I, I was not rebellious, and did not turn back.*” He put him into a position inwardly to discern His will, that he might become the mediator of divine revelation; and he did not set himself against this calling (*mârâh*, according to its radical meaning *stringere*, to make one’s self rigid against any one, ἀντιτείνειν), and did not draw back from obeying the call, which, as he well knew, would not bring him earthly honour and gain, but rather shame and ill-treatment. Ever since he had taken the path of his calling, he had not drawn timidly back from the sufferings with which it was connected, but had rather cheerfully taken them upon him. V. 6. “*I offered my back to smiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*” He offered his back to such as smote it, his cheeks to such as plucked out the hair of his beard (*mârat* as in Neh. 13:25). He did not hide his face, to cover it up from actual insults, or from being spit upon (on *klimmōth* with *rōq*, smiting on the cheek, κολαφίζειν, strokes with rods, ραπίζειν, blows upon the head, τύπτειν εἰς τὴν κεφαλὴν with ἐμπύειν, compare Matt. 26:67; 27:30, John 18:22). The way of his calling leads through a shameful

condition of humiliation. What was typified in Job (see Job 30:10; 17:6), and prefigured typically and prophetically in the Psalms of David (see Ps. 22:7; 69:8), finds in him its perfect antitypical fulfilment.

Isaiah 50:7. But no shame makes him faint-hearted; he trusts in Him who hath called him, and looks to the end. V. 7. *“But the Lord Jehovah will help me; therefore have I not suffered myself to be overcome by mockery: therefore did I make my face like the flint, and knew that I should not be put to shame.”* The ו introduces the thought with which his soul was filled amidst all his sufferings. In לֹא נִכְלַמְתִּי he affirms, that he did not suffer himself to be inwardly overcome and overpowered by *klimmâh*. The consciousness of his high calling remained undisturbed; he was never ashamed of that, nor did he turn away from it. The two עַל-כֵּן stand side by side upon the same line. He made his face *kachallâmîsh* (from *châlam*, related to *gâlam* in Isa. 49:21, with the substantive termination *îsh*: see *Jeshurun*, p. 229), i.e., he made it as unfelling as a flint-stone to the attacks of his foes (cf., Ezek. 3:8, 9). The LXX renders this ἕθηκα τὸ πρόσωπον μου ὡς στερεὰν πέτραν; but ἐστήριξα τὸ πρός., which is the rendering given to פָּנֵי שִׁים in Jer.

21:10, would have been just the proper rendering here (see Luke 9:51). In “holy hardness of endurance,” as Stier says, he turned his face to his antagonists, without being subdued or frightened away, and was well assured that He whose cause he represented would never leave him in the lurch.

Isaiah 50:8, 9. In the midst of his continued sufferings he was still certain of victory, feeling himself exalted above every human accusation, and knowing that Jehovah would acknowledge him; whereas his opponents were on the way to that destruction, the germ of which they already carried with them. Vv. 8, 9. *“He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me?! We will draw near together! Who is my adversary in judgment?! Let him draw near to me! Behold, the Lord Jehovah will help me; who is he that could condemn me?! Behold, they all shall*

fall to pieces like a garment; the moth shall eat them up.” הַצְדִּיק and הַרְשִׁיעַ are forensic antitheses: the former signifies to set one forth, both practically and judicially, as righteous (2 Sam. 15:4; Ps. 82:3); the latter as guilty, רָשָׁע (Deut. 25:1; Ps. 109:7). נַעֲמָדָה, which has lost the principal tone on account of the following יְהוָה (יְהוָה), has *munach* instead of *metheg* in the antepenultimate. *Ba’al mishpâtî* means, “he who has a judicial cause of lawsuit against me,” just as in Roman law the *dominus litis* is distinguished from the *procurator*, i.e., from the person who represents him in court (syn. *ba’al dbhârîm*, Ex. 24:14, and *’îsh rîbhî* in Job 31:35; compare Isa. 41:11). מִי-הוּא are connected, and form an emphatic τίς, Rom. 8:34 (Ewald § 325, a). “All of them” (*kullâm*): this refers to all who are hostile to him. They fall to pieces like a worn-out garment, and fall a prey to the moth which they already carry within them:—a figure which we meet with again in Isa. 51:8 (cf., Job 13:28, Hos. 5:12), and one which, although apparently insignificant, is yet really a terrible one, inasmuch as it points to a power of destruction working imperceptibly and slowly, but yet effecting the destruction of the object selected with all the greater certainty.

Isaiah 50:10, 11. Thus far we have the words of the servant. The prophecy opened with words of Jehovah (vv. 1–3), and with such words it closes, as we may see from the expression, “this shall ye have at my hand,” in v. 11b. The first word of Jehovah is addressed to those who fear Him, and hearken to the voice of His servant. V. 10. *“Who among you is fearing Jehovah, hearkening to the voice of His servant? He that walketh in darkness, and without a ray of light, let him trust in the name of Jehovah, and stay himself upon his God.”* The question is asked for the purpose of showing to any one who could reply, “I am one, or wish to be such an one,” what his duty and his privileges are. In the midst of the apparent hopelessness of his situation (*châshêkhîm* the accusative of the object, and plural to *châshêkhâh*, Isa. 8:22), and of his consequent despondency of mind, he is to

trust in the name of Jehovah, that firmest and surest of all grounds of trust, and to stay himself upon his God, who cannot forsake or deceive him. He is to *believe* (Isa. 7:9; 28:16; Hab. 2:4) in God and the word of salvation, for *בטח* and *נשען* are terms applied to that *fiducia fidei* which is the essence of faith. The second word of Jehovah is addressed to the despisers of His word, of which His servant is the bearer. V. 11. "Behold, all ye that kindle fire, that equip yourselves with burning darts, away into the glow of your fire, and into the burning darts that ye have kindled! This comes to you from my hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." The fire is not the fire of divine wrath (Jer. 17:4), but the fire of wickedness (*rish'âh*, Isa. 9:17), more especially that hellish fire with which an evil tongue is set on fire (Jas. 3:6); for the *zîqôth* (equivalent to *ziqqôth*, from *zêq* = *zinq*, from *zânaq*, to spring, to let fly, Syr. to shoot or hurl), i.e., shots, and indeed burning arrows (Ps. 7:14), are figurative, and stand for the blasphemies and anathemas which they cast at the servant of Jehovah. It is quite unnecessary to read *מֵאֵרֵי* instead of *מֵאֲזֵרֵי*, as Hitzig, Ewald, and Knobel propose, or even, contrary to all usage of speech, *מֵאֲזֵרֵי*. The former is the more pictorial: they gird burning darts, *accingunt malleolos*, i.e., they equip or arm themselves with them for the purpose of attack (Isa. 45:5). But the destruction which they prepare for the servant of Jehovah becomes their own. They themselves have to go into the midst of the burning fire and the burning darts, that they have set on fire. The hand of Jehovah suddenly inverts the position; the fire of wrath becomes the fire of divine judgment, and this fire becomes their bed of torment. The LXX has it correctly, ἐν λύπῃ κοιμηθήσεσθε. The *Lamed* indicates the situation (Ewald, § 217, *d*). *תִּשְׁכַּבְוּ* with the tone upon the last syllable gives a dictatorial conclusion. It has a terrible sound, but still more terrible (apart from the future state) is the historical fulfilment that presents itself to the eye.

Isaiah 51

Third Prophecy

The Bursting Forth of Salvation, and Turning Away of the Cup of Wrath

Isaiah 51:1-3. The prophetic address now turns again from the despisers of the word, whom it has threatened with the torment of fire, to those who long for salvation. Vv. 1-3. "Hearken to me, ye that are in pursuit of righteousness, ye that seek Jehovah. Look up to the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hollow of the pit whence ye are dug. Look up to Abraham your forefather, and to Sara who bare you, that he was one when I called him, and blessed him, and multiplied him. For Jehovah hath comforted Zion, comforted all her ruins, and turned her desert like Eden, and her steppe as into the garden of God; joy and gladness are found in her, thanksgiving and sounding music." The prophecy is addressed to those who are striving after the right kind of life and seeking Jehovah, and not turning from Him to make earthly things and themselves the object of their pursuit; for such only are in a condition by faith to regard that as possible, and in spirit to behold that as real, which seems impossible to human understanding, because the very opposite is lying before the eye of the senses. Abraham and Sarah they are mentally to set before them, for they are types of the salvation to be anticipated now. Abraham is the rock whence the stones were hewn, of which the house of Jacob is composed; and Sarah with her maternal womb the hollow of the pit out of which Israel was brought to the light, just as peat is dug out of a pit, or copper out of a mine. The marriage of Abraham and Sarah was for a long time unfruitful; it was, as it were, out of hard stone that God raised up children to Himself in Abraham and Sarah. The rise of Israel was a miracle of divine power and grace. In antithesis to the masculine *tsûr*, *bôr* is made into a feminine through *maqgebheth*, which is chosen with reference to *nqêbhâh*. *תִּצְבְּתֶם* we must supply *אֲשֶׁר ... מִמֶּנּוּ*, and to *נִקְרְתֶם* ...

מִתְקַנָּה. V. 2a informs them who the rock and the hollow of the pit are, viz., Abraham your forefather, and Sarah *tchōlelkhem*, who bare you with all the pains of childbirth: “you,” for the birth of Isaac, the son of promise, was the birth of the nation. The point to be specially looked at in relation to Abraham (in comparison with whom Sarah falls into the background) is given in the words *quod unum vocavi eum* (that he was one when I called him). The perfect קָרָאתִיו relates the single call of divine grace, which removed Abraham from the midst of idolaters into the fellowship of Jehovah. The futures that follow (with *Vav cop.*) point out the blessing and multiplication that were connected with it (Gen. 12:1, 2). He is called one (*'echād* as in Ezek. 33:24, Mal. 2:15), because he was one at the time of his call, and yet through the might of the divine blessing became the root of the whole genealogical tree of Israel, and of a great multitude of people that branched off from it. This is what those who are now longing for salvation are to remember, strengthening themselves by means of the olden time in their faith in the future which so greatly resembles it. The corresponding blessing is expressed in preterites (*nicham, vayyâsem*), inasmuch as to the eye of faith and in prophetic vision the future has the reality of a present and the certainty of a completed fact. Zion, the mother of Israel (Isa. 50:1), the counterpart of Sarah, the ancestress of the nation,—Zion, which is now mourning so bitterly, because she is lying waste and in ruins,—is comforted by Jehovah. The comforting word of promise (Isa. 40:1) becomes, in her case, the comforting fact of fulfilment (Isa. 49:13). Jehovah makes her waste like Eden (LXX ὡς παράδεισον), like a garden, as glorious as if it had been directly planted by Himself (Gen. 13:10; Num. 24:6). And this paradise is not without human occupants; but when you enter it you find joy and gladness therein, and hear thanksgiving at the wondrous change that has taken place, as well as the voice of melody (*zimirâh* as in Amos 5:23). The pleasant land is therefore full of men

in the midst of festal enjoyment and activity. As Sarah gave birth to Isaac after a long period of barrenness, so Zion, a second Sarah, will be surrounded by a joyous multitude of children after a long period of desolation.

Isaiah 51:4, 5. But the great work of the future extends far beyond the restoration of Israel, which becomes the source of salvation to all the world. Vv. 4, 5. “Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my congregation! for instruction will go forth from me, and I make a place for my right, to be a light of the nations. My righteousness is near, my salvation is drawn out, and my arms will judge nations: the hoping of the islands looks to me, and for mine arm is their waiting.” It is Israel which is here summoned to hearken to the promise introduced with *kî*.

לְאֹמְרֵי is only used here of Israel, like אֹמְרֵי in Zeph. 2:9; and the LXX (καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς) have quite misunderstood it. An address to the heathen would be quite out of harmony with the character of the whole prophecy, which is carried out quite consistently throughout. עַמִּי and לְאֹמְרֵי, therefore, are not plurals, as the Syriac supposes, although it cannot be disputed that it is a rare thing to meet with the plural form apocopated thus, after the form of the talmudic Aramaean (see, for example, p. 357; and see also at Ps. 45:9). What Isa. 42:1ff. describes as the calling of the servant of Jehovah, viz., to carry out justice among the nations, and to plant it on the earth, appears here as the act of Jehovah; but, as a comparison of מִאֲתֵרִי with מִצִּיּוֹן (Isa. 2:3) clearly shows, as the act of the God who is present in Israel, and works from Israel outwards. Out of Israel sprang the Saviour; out of Israel the apostleship; and when God shall have mercy upon Israel again, it will become to the whole world of nations “life from the dead.” The *thorâh* referred to here is that of Sion, as distinguished from that of Sinai, the gospel of redemption, and *mishpât* the new order of life in which Israel and the nations are united. Jehovah makes for this a place of rest, a firm standing-place, from which its light to lighten

ISAIAH	Page 392
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

the nations streams forth in all directions. הַרְגִיעַ as in Jer. 31:2; 50:34, from רָגַע, in the sense of the Arabic *raj'*, to return, to procure return, entrance, and rest; a different word from רָגַע in Isa. 51:15, which signifies the very opposite, viz., to disturb, literally to throw into trembling. קָדַק and יָשַׁע, which occur in v. 5a, are synonyms throughout these prophecies. The meaning of the former is determined by the character of the *thorah*, which gives "the knowledge of salvation" (Luke 1:77), and with that "the righteousness of God" (Rom. 1:17; cf., Isa. 53:11). This righteousness is now upon the point of being revealed; this salvation has started on the way towards the fullest realization. The great mass of the nations fall under the judgment which the arms of Jehovah inflict, as they cast down to the ground on the right hand and on the left. When it is stated of the islands, therefore, that they hope for Jehovah, and wait for His arm, the reference is evidently to the remnant of the heathen nations, which outlives the judgment, and not only desires salvation, and is susceptible of it, but which actually receives salvation (compare the view given in John 11:52, which agrees with that of Isaiah, and which, in fact, is the biblical view generally, e.g., Joel 3:5). To these the saving arm (the singular only was suitable here; cf., Ps. 16:11) now brings that salvation, towards which their longing was more or less consciously directed, and which satisfied their inmost need. Observe in v. 5 the majestic and self-conscious movement of the rhythm, with the effective tone of *yyachêlûn*.

Isaiah 51:6. The people of God are now summoned to turn their eyes upwards and downwards: the old world above their heads and under their feet is destined to destruction. V. 6. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens will pass away like smoke, and the earth fall to pieces like a garment, and its inhabitants die out like a nonentity; and my salvation will last for ever, and my righteousness does not go to ruin." The reason for the summons follows with *kî*. The

heavens will be resolved into atoms, like smoke: *nimlâchû* from *mâlach*, related to *mârach*, root *mal*, from which comes *mâlal* (see at Job 14:2), to rub to pieces, to crumble to pieces, or mangle; Aquila, ἠλοήθησαν, from ἄλοᾶν, to thresh. As *mlâchîm* signifies rags, the figure of a garment that has fallen to pieces, which was then quite ready to hand (Isa. 50:9), presented itself from the natural association of ideas. כְּמִוֶּכֶךְ, however, cannot mean "in like manner" (LXX, Targ., Jerome); for if we keep to the figure of a garment falling to pieces, the figure is a very insipid one; and if we refer it to the fate of the earth generally, the thought which it offers is a very tame one. The older expositors were not even acquainted with what is now the favourite explanation, viz., "as gnats perish" (Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, Knobel, Stier, etc.); since the singular of *kinnîm* is no more *kên* than the singular of כְּבִיצִים is כְּבִיץ. The gnat (viz., a species of stinging gnat, probably the diminutive but yet very troublesome species which is called *akol uskut*, "eat and be silent," in Egyptian) is called *kinnâh*, as the talmudic usage shows, where the singular, which does not happen to be met with in the Old Testament, is found in the case of *kinnîm* as well as in that of *bêtsîm*. We must explain the word in the same manner as in 2 Sam. 23:5, Num. 13:33, Job 9:35. In all these passages *kên* merely signifies "so" (*ita, sic*); but just as in the classical languages, these words often derive their meaning from the gesture with which they are accompanied (e.g., in Terence's *Eunuch: Cape hoc flabellum et ventulum sic facito*). This is probably Rückert's opinion, when he adopts the rendering: and its inhabitants "like so" (*so wie so*) do they die. But "like so" is here equivalent to "like nothing." That the heavens and the earth do not perish without rising again in a renewed form, is a thought which may naturally be supplied, and which is distinctly expressed in v. 16, Isa. 65:17; 66:22. Righteousness (*tsdâqâh*) and salvation (*yshû'âh*) are the heavenly powers, which acquire dominion through the overthrow of the ancient world, and become the foundations of

the new (2 Pet. 3:13). That the *tsdâqâh* will endure for ever, and the *yshū'âh* will not be broken (*yêchath*, as in Isa. 7:8, *confringetur*, whereas in v. 7 the meaning is *consternemini*), is a prospect that opens after the restoration of the new world, and which indirectly applies to men who survive the catastrophe, having become partakers of righteousness and salvation. For righteousness and salvation require beings in whom to exert their power.

Isaiah 51:7, 8. Upon this magnificent promise of the final triumph of the counsel of God, an exhortation is founded to the persecuted church, not to be afraid of men. Vv. 7, 8. *"Hearken unto me, ye that know about righteousness, thou people with my law in the heart; fear ye not the reproach of mortals, and be ye not alarmed at their revilings. For the moth will devour them like a garment, and the worm devour them like woollen cloth; and my righteousness will stand for ever, and my salvation to distant generations."* The idea of the "servant of Jehovah," in its middle sense, viz., as denoting the true Israel, is most clearly set forth in the address here. They that pursue after righteousness, and seek Jehovah (Isa. 51:1), that is to say, the servants of Jehovah (Isa. 65:8, 9), are embraced in the unity of a "people," as in Isa. 65:10 (cf., Isa. 10:24), i.e., of the true people of God in the people of His choice, and therefore of the kernel in the heart of the whole mass,—an integral intermediate link in the organism of the general idea, which Hävernîck and, to a certain extent, Hofmann eliminate from it, but not without thereby destroying the typical mirror in which the prophet beholds the passion of the One. The words are addressed to those who know from their own experience what righteousness is as a gift of grace, and as conduct in harmony with the plan of salvation, i.e., to the nation, which bears in its heart the law of God as the standard and impulse of its life, the church which not only has it as a letter outside itself, but as a vital power within (cf., Ps. 40:9). None of these need to be afraid of men. Their despisers and blasphemers are men (*'ênôsh*; cf., v. 12, Ps. 9:20; 10:18), whose pretended omnipotence,

exaltation, and indestructibility, are an unnatural self-convicted lie. The double figure in v. 8, which forms a play upon words that cannot well be reproduced, affirms that the smallest exertion of strength is quite sufficient to annihilate their sham greatness and sham power; and that long before they are actually destroyed, they carry the constantly increasing germ of it within themselves. The *sâs*, says a Jewish proverb, is brother to the *'âsh*. The latter (from *'âshêsh*, *collabi*, Arab. *'aththa*, trans. *corrodere*) signifies a moth; the former (like the Arabic *sûs*, *sûse*, Gr. σῆς) a moth, and also a weevil, *curculio*. The relative terms in Greek are σῆς (Armen. *tzetz*) and κίς. But whilst the persecutors of the church succumb to these powers of destruction, the righteousness and salvation of God, which are even now the confidence and hope of His church, and the full and manifest realization of which it will hereafter enjoy, stand for ever, and from "generation to generation," *ldôr dôrîm*, i.e., to an age which embraces endless ages within itself.

Isaiah 51:9–11. But just as such an exhortation as this followed very naturally from the grand promises with which they prophecy commenced, so does a longing for the promised salvation spring out of this exhortation, together with the assurance of its eventual realization. Vv. 9–11. *"Awake, awake, clothe thyself in might, O arm of Jehovah; awake, as in the days of ancient time, the ages of the olden world! Was it not thou that didst split Rahab in pieces, and pierced the dragon? Was it not thou that didst dry up the sea, the waters of the great billow; that didst turn the depths of the sea into a way for redeemed to pass through? Ad the emancipated of Jehovah will return, and come to Zion with shouting, and everlasting joy upon their head: they grasp at gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing flee away."* The paradisaical restoration of Zion, the new world of righteousness and salvation, is a work of the arm of Jehovah, i.e., of the manifestation of His might. His arm is now in a sleeping state. It is not lifeless, indeed, but motionless. Therefore the church calls out to it three times, "Awake" (*'ûrî*: to avoid monotony, the *milra* and *milel*

tones are interchanged, as in Judg. 5:12). It is to arise and put on strength out of the fulness of omnipotence (*lâbhēsh* as in Ps. 93:1; cf., λαμβάνειν δύναμιν Rev. 11:17, and δύσσο ἀλκίην, arm thyself with strength, in *Il.* 19:36; 9:231). The arm of Jehovah is able to accomplish what the prophecy affirms and the church hopes for; since it has already miraculously redeemed Israel once. *Rahab* is Egypt represented as a monster of the waters (see Isa. 30:7), and *tannīn* is the same (cf., 27:1), but with particular reference to Pharaoh (Ezek. 29:3). אַתָּה־הוּא, *tu illud*, is equivalent to “thou, yea thou” (see at Isa. 37:16). The Red Sea is described as the “waters of the great deep” (*thōm rabbâh*), because the great storehouse of waters that lie below the solid ground were partially manifested there (see *Genesis*, p. 259). הַשְּׂמָה has double *pashta*; it is therefore *milel*, and therefore the third pr. = אֲשֶׁר שְׂמָה (Ges. § 109, Anf.). Ch. 35:10 is repeated in v. 11, being attached to גְּאוּלַיִם of the previous verse, just as it is there. Instead of וְיִשְׁגֹּן נָסוּ, which we find here, we have there וְיִשְׁגֹּן וְנָסוּ; in everything else the two passages are word for word the same. Hitzig, Ewald, and Knobel suppose that v. 11 was not written by the author of these addresses, but was interpolated by some one else. But in Isa. 65:25 we meet with just the same kind of repetition from Isa. 1–39; and in the first part we find, at any rate, repetitions in the form of refrains and others of a smaller kind (like Isa. 19:15, cf., Isa. 9:13). And v. 11 forms a conclusion here, just as it does in Isa. 35:10. An argument is founded upon the olden time with reference to the things to be expected now; the look into the future is cleared and strengthened by the look into the past. And thus will the emancipated of Jehovah return, being liberated from the present calamity as they were delivered from the Egyptian then. The first half of this prophecy is here brought to a close. It concludes with expressions of longing and of hope, the echo of promises that had gone before.

Isaiah 51:12–15. In the second half the promise commences again, but with more distinct reference to the oppression of the exiles and the sufferings of Jerusalem. Jehovah Himself begins to speak now, setting His seal upon what is longed and hoped for. Vv. 12–15. “*I, I am your comforter: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a mortal who will die, and of a son of man who is made a blade of grass; that thou shouldst forget Jehovah thy Creator, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth; that thou shouldst be afraid continually all the day of the fury of the tormentor, as he aims to destroy? and where is the fury of the tormentor left? He that is bowed down is quickly set loose, and does not die to the grave, and his bread does not fail him; as truly as I Jehovah am thy God, who frighteneth up the sea, so that its waves roar: Jehovah of hosts is His name.*” הוּא after אֲנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי is an emphatic repetition, and therefore a strengthening of the subject (αὐτὸς ἐγὼ), as above, in v. 10, in אַתָּה־הוּא. From this major, that Jehovah is the comforter of His church, and by means of a minor, that whoever has Him for a comforter has no need to fear, the conclusion is drawn that the church has no cause to fear. Consequently we cannot adopt Knobel’s explanation, “How small thou art, that thou art afraid.” The meaning is rather, “Is it really the case with thee (i.e., art thou then so small, so forsaken), that thou hast any need to fear” (fut. consec., according to Ges. § 129, 1; cf., *ki*, Ex. 3:11, Judg. 9:28)? The attributive sentence *tâmūth* (who will die) brings out the meaning involved in the epithet applied to man, viz., *’ēnōsh* (compare in the Persian myth *Gayomard*, from the old Persian *gaya meretan*, mortal life); הַצִּיר = הַצִּיר (Ps. 37:2; 90:5; 103:15; compare above, Isa. 40:6–8) is an equation instead of a comparison. In v. 12^b the address is thrown into a feminine form, in v. 13^a into a masculine one; Zion being the object in the former, and (what is the same thing) Israel in the latter: that thou forgettest thy Creator, who is also the almighty Maker of the universe, and soarest about in constant endless alarm at the wrath of the tormentor, whilst he

is aiming to destroy (*pichad, contremiscere*, as in Prov. 28:14; *ka'asher* as in Ps. 66:7, Num. 27:14, lit., according as; *kōnēn*, viz., his arrows, or even his bow, as in Ps. 11:2; 7:13, cf., 21:13). We must not translate this *quasi disposuisset*, which is opposed to the actual fact, although syntactically possible (Job 10:19; Zech. 10:6). The question with which the fear is met, "And where is the fury of the tormentor?" looks into the future: "There is not a trace of him to be seen, he is utterly swept away." If *hammētsīq* signifies the Chaldean, v. 14, in which the warning passes into a promise, just as in the first half the promise passed into a warning, is not to be understood as referring to oppression by their own countrymen, who were more heathenish than Israelitish in their disposition, as Knobel supposes; but *tsō'eh* (from *tsâ'âh*, to stoop or bend) is an individualizing description of the exiles, who were in captivity in Babylon, and some of them actually in prison (see Isa. 42:7, 22). Those who were lying there in fetters, and were therefore obliged to bend, hastened to be loosed, i.e., would speedily be set at liberty (the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus may be referred to here); they would not die and fall into the pit (*constr. praegnans*), nor would their bread fail; that is to say, if we regard the two clauses as the dissection of one thought (which is not necessary, however, though Hitzig supports it), "he will not die of starvation." The pledge of this is to be found in the all-sufficiency of Jehovah, who throws the sea into a state of trembling (even by a threatening word, *gârâh*; גַּרְגַּז is the construct of the participle, with the tone upon the last syllable, as in Lev. 11:7, Ps. 94:9: see Bär's *Psalter*, p. 132, from *râga'*, *tremefacere*), so that its waves roar (cf., Jer. 31:35, and the original passage in Job 26:12).

Isaiah 51:16. The promise, as the pledge of which Jehovah has staked His absolute power, to which everything must yield, now rises up to an eschatological height, from the historical point at which it began. V. 16. "And I put my words into thy mouth, and in the shadow of my hand have I covered thee, to plant heavens, and

to found an earth, and to say to Zion, Thou art my people." It is a lofty calling, a glorious future, for the preparation and introduction of which Israel, although fallen as low as v. 7 describes, has been equipped and kept in the shadow of unapproachable omnipotence. Jehovah has put His words into the mouth of this Israel—His words, the force and certainty of which are measured by His all-determining absoluteness. And what is the exalted calling which it is to subserve through the medium of these words, and for which it is preserved, without previously, or indeed at any time, passing away? We must not render it, "that thou mayest plant," etc., with which the conclusion does not harmonize, viz., "that thou mayest say," etc.; for it is not Israel who says this to Israel, but Jehovah says it to Israel. The planter, founder, speaker, is therefore Jehovah. It is God's own work, to which Israel is merely instrumentally subservient, by means of the words of God place din its mouth, viz., the new creation of the world, and the restoration of Israel to favour; both of them, the former as well as the latter, *regalia* of God. The reference is to the last times. The Targum explains it thus: "to restore the people of whom it is said, They will be as numerous as the stars of heaven; and to perfect the church, of which it is said, They will be as numerous as the dust of the earth." Knobel understands by this a completion of the theocracy, and a new arrangement of the condition of the world; Ewald, a new spiritual creation, of which the liberation of Israel is the first corner-stone. But the prophecy speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, in something more than a figurative sense, as a new creation of God (Isa. 65:17). Jehovah intends to create a new world of righteousness and salvation, and practically to acknowledge Zion as His people. The preparation for this great and all-renewing work of the future is aided by the true Israel, which is now enslaved by the heathen, and disowned and persecuted by its own countrymen. A future of salvation, embracing Israel and the heaven and the earth, is implied in the words placed by Jehovah in the mouth of His church, which was faithful to its calling.

These words in their mouth are the seed-corns of a new world in the midst of the old. The fact that the very same thing is said here of the true spiritual Israel, as in Isa. 49:2 of the one servant of Jehovah, may be explained in the same manner as when the apostles apply to themselves, in Acts 13:47, a word of God relating to the one Servant of Jehovah, by saying, "So hath the Lord commanded us." The One is, in fact, one with this Israel; He is this Israel in its highest potency; He towers above it, but only as the head rises above the members of the body, with which it forms a living whole. There is no necessity, therefore, to assume, as Hengstenberg and Philippi do, that v. 13 contains an address from the One who then stood before the mind of the prophet. "There is no proof," as Vitranga affirms, "of any change in the object in this passage, nor any solid reason for assuming it." The circumference of the idea is always the same. Here, however, it merely takes the direction towards the centre, and penetrates its smaller inner circle, but does not go back to the centre itself.

Isaiah 51:17–23. Just as we found above, that the exclamation "awake" (*'ūrī*), which the church addresses to the arm of Jehovah, grew out of the preceding great promises; so here there grows out of the same another "awake" (*hith'ōrri*), which the prophet addresses to Jerusalem in the name of his God, and the reason for which is given in the form of new promises. Vv. 17–23. "Wake thyself up, wake thyself up, stand up, O Jerusalem, thou that hast drunk out of the hand of Jehovah the goblet of His fury: the goblet cup of reeling hast thou drunk, sipped out. There was none who guided her of all the children that she had brought forth; and none who took her by the hand of all the children that she had brought up. There were two things that happened to thee; who should console thee? Devastation, and ruin, and famine, and the sword: how should I comfort thee? Thy children were benighted, lay at the corners of all the streets like a snared antelope: as those who were full of the fury of Jehovah, the rebuke of thy God. Therefore hearken to this, O wretched and drunken, but not with wine: Thus saith thy Lord,

Jehovah, and thy God that defendeth His people, Behold, I take out of thine hand the goblet of reeling, the goblet cup of my fury: thou shalt not continue to drink it any more. And I put it into the hand of thy tormentors; who said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over; and thou madest thy back like the ground, and like a public way for those who go over it." In v. 17, Jerusalem is regarded as a woman lying on the ground in the sleep of faintness and stupefaction. She has been obliged to drink, for her punishment, the goblet filled with the fury of the wrath of God, the goblet which throws those who drink it into unconscious reeling; and this goblet, which is called *qubba'ath kōs* (κύπελλον ποτηρίου, a genitive construction, though appositional in sense), for the purpose of giving greater prominence to its swelling sides, she has not only had to drink, but to drain quite clean (cf., Ps. 75:9, and more especially Ezek. 23:32–34). Observe the plaintive falling of the tone in *shâthîth mâtsîth*. In this state of unconscious stupefaction was Jerusalem lying, without any help on the part of her children; there was not one who came to guide the stupefied one, or took her by the hand to lift her up. The consciousness of the punishment that their sins had deserved, and the greatness of the sufferings that the punishment had brought, pressed so heavily upon all the members of the congregation, that not one of them showed the requisite cheerfulness and strength to rise up on her behalf, so as to make her fate at any rate tolerable to her, and ward off the worst calamities. What elegiac music we have here in the deep cadences: *mikkol-bânîm yâlâdâh, mikkol-bânîm giddêlâh!* So terrible was her calamity, that no one ventured to break the silence of the terror, or give expression to their sympathy. Even the prophet, humanly speaking, is obliged to exclaim, "How (*mî*, literally as who, as in Amos 7:2, 5) should I comfort thee!" He knew of no equal or greater calamity, to which he could point Jerusalem, according to the principle which experience confirms, *solamen miseris socios habuisse malorum*. This is the real explanation, according to Lam. 2:13, though we must not therefore take *mî* as an accusative =

bmī, as Hitzig does. The whole of the group is in the tone of the Lamentations of Jeremiah. There were two kinds of things (i.e., two kinds of evils: *mishpâchōth*, as in Jer. 15:3) that had happened to her (קָרָה = קָרָה, with which it is used interchangeably even in the Pentateuch),—namely, the devastation and ruin of their city and their land, famine and the sword to her children, their inhabitants.

In v. 20 this is depicted with special reference to the famine. Her children were veiled (*ullaph, deliquium pati*, lit., *obvelari*), and lay in a state of unconsciousness like corpses at the corner of every street, where this horrible spectacle presented itself on every hand. They lay *ktho' mikhmâr* (rendered strangely and with very bad taste in the LXX, viz., like a half-cooked turnip; but given correctly by Jerome, *sicut oryx*, as in the LXX at Deut. 14:5, *illaqueatus*), i.e., like a netted antelope (see at Job 39:9), i.e., one that has been taken in a hunter's net and lies there exhausted, after having almost strangled itself by ineffectual attempts to release itself. The appositional הַמְלֵאִים וְגוֹ, which refers to בְּגִיד, gives as a *quippe qui* the reason for all this suffering. It is the punishment decreed by God, which has pierced their very heart, and got them completely in its power. This clause assigning the reason, shows that the expression "thy children" (*bânayikh*) is not to be taken here in the same manner as in Lam. 2:11, 12; 4:3, 4, viz., as referring to children in distinction from adults; the subject is a general one, as in Isa. 5:25. With *lâkhên* (therefore, v. 21) the address turns from the picture of sufferings to the promise, in the view of which the cry was uttered, in v. 17, to awake and arise. Therefore, viz., because she had endured the full measure of God's wrath, she is to hear what His mercy, that has now begun to move, purposes to do. The connecting form *shkhurath* stands here, according to Ges. § 116, 1, notwithstanding the (epexegetical) *Vav* which comes between. We may see from Isa. 29:9 how thoroughly this "drunk, but not with wine," is in Isaiah's own style (from this distinction between a higher and lower sphere of related facts, compare Isa.

47:14; 48:10). The intensive plural *'ădônīm* is only applied to human lords in other places in the book of Isaiah; but in this passage, in which Jerusalem is described as a woman, it is used once of Jehovah. *Yârībh 'ammō* is an attributive clause, signifying "who conducts the cause of His people," i.e., their advocate or defender. He takes the goblet of reeling and wrath, which Jerusalem has emptied, for ever out of her hand, and forces it newly filled upon her tormentors. There is no ground whatever for reading מוֹנֵד (from יָנָה, to throw down, related to יָנָה, whence comes יָנָה, a precipitate or sediment) in the place of מוֹנֵד (*pret. hi. of יָנָה, (laborare, dolere)*), that favourite word of the Lamentations of Jeremiah (Lam. 1:5, 12; 3:32, cf., 1:4), the tone of which we recognise here throughout, as Lowth, Ewald, and Umbreit propose after the Targum דְּהוּוּ מוֹנֵד לִי. The words attributed to the enemies, *shchī vna'ăbhorâh* (from *shâchâh*, the *kal* of which only occurs here), are to be understood figuratively, as in Ps. 129:3. Jerusalem has been obliged to let her children be degraded into the defenceless objects of despotic tyranny and caprice, both at home in their own conquered country, and abroad in exile. But the relation is reversed now. Jerusalem is delivered, after having been punished, and the instruments of her punishment are given up to the punishment which their pride deserved.

Isaiah 52

Fourth Prophecy—Ch. 52:1–12

Jerusalem Exchanges Servitude for Dominion, and Imprisonment for Liberty

Isaiah 52:1, 2. The same call, which was addressed in Isa. 51:9 to the arm of Jehovah that was then represented as sleeping, is here addressed to Jerusalem, which is represented as a sleeping woman. Vv. 1, 2. "Awake, awake; clothe thyself in thy might, O Zion; clothe thyself in thy state dresses, O Jerusalem, thou holy city: for henceforth there will no more enter into thee one uncircumcised and unclean! Shake thyself

from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the chains of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion!" Jerusalem is lying upon the ground stupefied with the wrath of God, and exhausted with grief; but this shameful prostration and degradation will now come to an end. She is to rise up and put on her might, which has long been broken down, and apparently has altogether disappeared, but which can and must be constantly renewed, because it rests upon the foundation of an inviolable promise. She is to wake up and recover her ancient power, and put on her state robes, i.e., her priestly and royal ornaments, which belong to her as a "royal city," i.e., as the city of Jehovah had His anointed one. For henceforth she will be what she was always intended to be, and that without any further desecration. Heathen, uncircumcised, and those who were unclean in heart and flesh (Ezek. 44:9), had entered her by force, and desecrated her: heathen, who had no right to enter the congregation of Jehovah as they were (Lam. 1:10). But she should no longer be defiled, not to say conquered, by such invaders as these (Joel 4:17; Nahum 2:1b; compare v. 7 with Nahum 2:1a). On the construction *non perget intrabit = intrare*, see Ges. § 142, 3, c. In v. 2 the idea of the city falls into the background, and that of the nation takes its place. שְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם does not mean "captive people of Jerusalem," however, as Hitzig supposes, for this would require שְׁבֵיָהּ in accordance with the personification, as in v. 2b. The rendering supported by the LXX is the true one, "Sit down, O Jerusalem;" and this is also the way in which it is accentuated. The exhortation is the counterpart of Isa. 47:1. Jerusalem is sitting upon the ground as a prisoner, having no seat to sit upon; but this is only that she may be the more highly exalted;—whereas the daughter of Babylon is seated as a queen upon a throne, but only to be the more deeply degraded. The former is now to shake herself free from the dust, and to rise up and sit down (viz., upon a throne, Targum). The captive daughter of Zion (*shbhiyyâh*, αἰχμάλωτος, Ex. 12:29, an adjective

written first for the sake of emphasis, as in Isa. 10:30; 53:11) is to undo for herself (*sibi laxare* according to p. 62, note, like *hithnachēl*, Isa. 14:2, *sibi possidendo capere*) the chains of her neck (the *chethib* הַתְּפֹתָהּ, they loosen themselves, is opposed to the beautiful parallelism); for she who was mourning in her humiliation is to be restored to honour once more, and she who was so shamefully laden with fetters to liberty.

Isaiah 52:3–6. The reason for the address is now given in a well-sustained promise. Vv. 3–6. "For thus saith Jehovah, Ye have been sold for nothing, and ye shall not be redeemed with silver. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, My people went down to Egypt in the beginning to dwell there as guests; and Asshur has oppressed it for nothing. And now, what have I to do here? saith Jehovah: for my people are taken away for nothing; their oppressors shriek, saith Jehovah, and my name is continually blasphemed all the day. Therefore my people shall learn my name; therefore, in that day, that I am He who saith, There am I." Ye have been sold (this is the meaning of v. 3); but this selling is merely a giving over to a foreign power, without the slightest advantage accusing to Him who had no other object in view than to cause them to atone for their sins (Isa. 50:1), and without any other people taking their place, and serving Him in their stead as an equivalent for the loss He sustained. And there would be no need of silver to purchase the favour of Him who had given them up, since a manifestation of divine power would be all that would be required (Isa. 45:13). For whether Jehovah show Himself to Israel as the Righteous One or as the Gracious One, as a Judge or as a Redeemer, He always acts as the Absolute One, exalted above all earthly affairs, having no need to receive anything, but able to give everything. He receives no recompense, and gives none. Whether punishing or redeeming, He always guards His people's honour, proving Himself in the one case to be all-sufficient, and in the other almighty, but acting in both cases freely from Himself.

In the train of thought in vv. 4–6 the reason is given for the general statement in v. 3. Israel went down to Egypt, the country of the Nile valley, with the innocent intention of sojourning, i.e., living as a guest (*gūr*) there in a foreign land; and yet (as we may supply from the next clause, according to the law of a self-completing parallelism) there it fell into the bondage of the Pharaohs, who, whilst they did not fear Jehovah, but rather despised Him, were merely the blind instruments of His will. Asshur then oppressed it *bphes*, i.e., not “at last” (*ultimo tempore*, as Hävernick renders it), but (as אפס is the synonym of נא in Isa. 40:17; 41:2) “for nothing,” i.e., without having acquired any right to it, but rather serving in its unrighteousness simply as the blind instrument of the righteousness of Jehovah, who through the instrumentality of Asshur put an end first of all to the kingdom of Israel, and then to the kingdom of Judah. The two references to the Egyptian and Assyrian oppressions are expressed in as brief terms as possible. But with the words “now therefore” the prophecy passes on in a much more copious strain to the present oppression in Babylon. Jehovah inquires, *Quid mihi hic* (What have I to do here)? Hitzig supposes *pōh* (here) to refer to heaven, in the sense of, “What pressing occupation have I here, that all this can take place without my interfering?” But such a question as this would be far more appropriate to the Zeus of the Greek comedy than to the Jehovah of prophecy. Knobel, who takes *pōh* as referring to the captivity, in accordance with the context, gives a ridiculous turn to the question, viz., “What do I get here in Babylonia, from the fact that my people are carried off for nothing? Only loss.” He observes himself that there is a certain wit in the question. But it would be silly rather than witty, if, after Jehovah had just stated that He had given up His people for nothing, the prophet represented Him as preparing to redeem it by asking, “What have I gained by it?” The question can have no other meaning, according to Isa. 22:16, than “What have I to do here?” Jehovah is thought of

as present with His people (cf., Gen. 46:4), and means to inquire whether He shall continue this penal condition of exile any longer (Targum, Rashi, Rosenmüller, Ewald, Stier, etc.). The question implies an intention to redeem Israel, and the reason for this intention is introduced with *kī*. Israel is taken away (*ablatus*), viz., from its own native home, *chinnām*, i.e., without the Chaldeans having any human claim upon them whatever. The words מְשָׁלוּ יְהִלְלוּ (משלו) are not to be rendered, “its singers lament,” as Reutschi and Rosenmüller maintain, since the singers of Israel are called *mshōrīm*; nor “its (Israel’s) princes lament,” as Vitringa and Hitzig supposed, since the people of the captivity, although they had still their national *sārīm*, had no other *mōshlīm* than the Chaldean oppressors (Isa. 49:7; 14:5). It is the intolerable tyranny of the oppressors of His people, that Jehovah assigns in this sentence as the reason for His interposition, which cannot any longer be deferred. It is true that we do meet with *hēlīl* (of which we have the future here without any syncope of the first syllable) in other passages in the sense of *ululare*, as a cry of pain; but just as הָרִיעַ, רָנַן, רָזַח signify a yelling utterance of either joy or pain, so *hēlīl* may also be applied to the harsh shrieking of the capricious tyrants, like Lucan’s *laetis ululare triumphis*, and the Syriac *ailēl*, which is used to denote a war-cry and other noises as well. In connection with this proud and haughty bluster, there is also the practice of making Jehovah’s name the butt of their incessant blasphemy: מְנַאֵץ is a *part. hithpoel* with an assimilated ת and a pausal *ā* for *ē*, although it might also be a passive *hithpoal* (for the *ō* in the middle syllable, compare מְנַאֵץ, Mal. 1:7; מְבַהֵל, Esth. 8:14). In v. 6 there follows the closing sentence of the whole train of thought: therefore His people are to get to learn His name, i.e., the self-manifestation of its God, who is so despised by the heathen; therefore *lākhēn* repeated with emphasis, like כָּטַל in Isa. 59:18, and possibly *min* in Ps. 45:9) in that day, the day of redemption, (supply “it shall get to

ISAIAH	Page 400
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

learn”) that “I am he who saith, Here am I,” i.e., that He who has promised redemption is now present as the True and Omnipotent One to carry it into effect.

Isaiah 52:7. The first two turns in the prophecy (vv. 1–2, 3–6) close here. The third turn (vv. 7–10) exults at the salvation which is being carried into effect. The prophet sees in spirit, how the tidings of the redemption, to which the fall of Babylon, which is equivalent to the dismissal of the prisoners, gives the finishing stroke, are carried over the mountains of Judah to Jerusalem. V. 7. “*How lovely upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publish peace, that bring tidings of good, that publish salvation, that say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth royally!*” The words are addressed to Jerusalem, consequently the mountains are those of the Holy Land, and especially those to the north of Jerusalem: *mbhassēr* is collective (as in the primary passage, Nahum 2:1; cf., 41:27, Ps. 68:12), “whoever brings the glad tidings to Jerusalem.” The exclamation “how lovely” does not refer to the lovely sound of their footsteps, but to the lovely appearance presented by their feet, which spring over the mountains with all the swiftness of gazelles (Song of Sol. 2:17; 8:14). Their feet look as if they had wings, because they are the messengers of good tidings of joy. The joyful tidings that are left indefinite in *mbhassēr*, are afterwards more particularly described as a proclamation of *peace, good, salvation*, and also as containing the announcement “thy God reigneth,” i.e., has risen to a right royal sway, or seized upon the government (קָלַף in an inchoative historical sense, as in the theocratic psalms which commence with the same watchword, or like ἐβασίλευσε in Rev. 19:6, cf., 11:17). Up to this time, when His people were in bondage, He appeared to have lost His dominion (Isa. 63:19); but now He has ascended the throne as a Redeemer with greater glory than ever before (Isa. 24:23). The gospel of the swift-footed messengers, therefore, is the gospel of the kingdom of God that is at hand; and the

application which the apostle makes of this passage of Isaiah in Rom. 10:15, is justified by the fact that the prophet saw the final and universal redemption as though in combination with the close of the captivity.

Isaiah 52:8. How will the prophets rejoice, when they see bodily before them what they have already seen from afar! V. 8. “*Hark, thy watchers! They lift up the voice together; they rejoice: for they see eye to eye, how Jehovah bringeth Zion home.*” קוּל followed by a genitive formed an interjectional clause, and had almost become an interjection itself (see Gen. 4:10). The prophets are here called *tsōphīm*, spies, as persons who looked into the distance as if from a watch-tower (*specula*, Isa. 21:6, Hab. 2:1) just as in Isa. 56:10. It is assumed that the people of the captivity would still have prophets among them: in fact, the very first word in these prophecies (Isa. 40:1) is addressed to them. They who saw the redemption from afar, and comforted the church therewith (different from *mbhassēr*, the evangelist of the fulfilment), lift up their voice together with rejoicing; for they see Jehovah bringing back Zion, as closely as one man is to another when he looks directly into his eyes (Num. 14:14). קַ is the same as in the construction קַ רָאָה; and שׁוּב has the transitive meaning *reducere, restituere* (as in Ps. 14:7; 126:1, etc.), which is placed beyond all doubt by שׁוּבֶנּוּ in Ps. 85:5.

Isaiah 52:9. Zion is restored, inasmuch as Jehovah turns away her misery, brings back her exiles, and causes the holy city to rise again from her ruins. V. 9. “*Break out into exultation, sing together, ye ruins of Jerusalem: for Jehovah hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem.*” Because the word of consolation has become an act of consolation, i.e., of redemption, the ruins of Jerusalem are to break out into jubilant shouting as they rise again from the ground.

Isaiah 52:10. Jehovah has wrought out salvation through judgment in the sight of all the world. V. 10. “*Jehovah hath made bare His holy arm before the eyes of all nations, and all*

the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God.” As a warrior is accustomed to make bare his right arm up to the shoulder, that he may fight without encumbrance (*exsertare humeros nudamque lacesere pugnan*, as Statius says in *Theb.* i. 413), so has Jehovah made bare His holy arm, that arm in which holiness dwells, which shines with holiness, and which acts in holiness, that arm which has been hitherto concealed and therefore has appeared to be powerless, and that in the sight of the whole world of nations; so that all the ends of the earth come to see the reality of the work, which this arm has already accomplished by showing itself in its unveiled glory—in other words, “the salvation of our God.”

Isaiah 52:11, 12. This salvation in its immediate manifestation is the liberation of the exiles; and on the ground of what the prophet sees in spirit, he exclaims to them (as in Isa. 48:20), in vv. 11, 12: “*Go ye forth, go ye forth, go out from thence, lay hold of no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her, cleanse yourselves, ye that bear the vessels of Jehovah. For ye shall not go out in confusion, and ye shall not go forth in flight: for Jehovah goeth before you, and the God of Israel is your rear-guard.*” When they go out from thence, i.e., from Babylon, they are not to touch anything unclean, i.e., they are not to enrich themselves with the property of their now subjugated oppressors, as was the case at the exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12:36). It is to be a holy procession, at which they are to appear morally as well as corporeally unstained. But those who bear the vessels of Jehovah, i.e., the vessels of the temple, are not only not to defile themselves, but are to purify themselves (*hibbârū* with the tone upon the last syllable, a regular imperative *niphal* of *bârar*). This is an indirect prophecy, and was fulfilled in the fact that Cyrus directed the golden and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought to Babylon, to be restored to the returning exiles as their rightful property (Ezra 1:7–11). It would thus be possible for them to put themselves into the right attitude for their departure, since it would not take place in precipitous haste (*bchippâzon*), as the

departure from Egypt did (Deut. 16:3, cf., Ex. 12:39), nor like a flight, but they would go forth under the guidance of Jehovah. מַסְפָּסִים (with the *ē* changed into the original *ī*) does not mean, “He bringeth you, the scattered ones, together;” but according to Num. 10:25, Josh. 6:9, 13, “He closes your procession,”—He not only goes before you to lead you, but also behind you, to protect you (as in Ex. 14:19). For the *m’assēph*, or the rear-guard of an army, is its keystone, and has to preserve the compactness of the whole.

The division of the chapters generally coincides with the several prophetic addresses. But here it needs emendation. Most of the commentators are agreed that the words “Behold my servant,” etc. (*hinnēh yaskīl ‘abhdī*) commence a new section, like *hēn ‘abhdī* (behold my servant) in Isa. 42:1.

Fifth Prophecy—Ch. 52:13–53

Golgotha and Sheblimini, or the Exaltation of the Servant of Jehovah out of Deep Degradation

Isaiah 52:13–53:12. Victor F. Oehler has recently attempted to establish an opinion, to which no one had given expression before, viz., that the transition from the collective idea of the servant of God to the “Servant of God” as an individual takes place in v. 14, where Israel is addressed in the first clause, and the Messiah referred to in the second. But our view is a totally different one. In every case, thus far, in which another than Jehovah has spoken, it has been the one “Servant of Jehovah” who was the centre of the circle, the heart and head of the body of Israel. And after having heard him speaking himself in Isa. 50:4–9; 49:1–6; 48:16*b*, and Jehovah speaking concerning him in Isa. 50:10, 11; 39:7–9; 42:1–7, it does not come upon us at all unexpectedly, that Jehovah begins to speak of him again here. Nor does it surprise us, that the prophet should pass in so abrupt a manner, from the exaltation of the church to the exaltation of the servant of Jehovah. If we look back, we find that he has not omitted anything, that could preclude the possibility of our

confounding this servant of Jehovah with Israel itself. For although Israel itself, in its relation to Jehovah, is spoken of frequently enough as “my servant” and “his servant;” yet the passage before us is preceded by the same representation of Israel the community as a female, which has been sustained from Isa. 51:17 onwards; and although in Isa. 51:1–16 the national idea of the “servant of Jehovah” is expressed in the most definite manner possible (more especially in Isa. 51:7), the name employed is not that which the personal “Servant,” whom no one can possibly mistake in Isa. 50:4–9, already bears in Isa. 50:10. It is this personal Servant who is spoken of here. It is his portrait that is here filled out and completed, and that as a side-piece to the liberation and restoration of Zion-Jerusalem as depicted just before. It is the servant of Jehovah who conducts His people through suffering to glory. It is in his heart, as we now most clearly discern, that the changing of Jehovah’s wrath into love takes place. He suffers with his people, suffers for them, suffers in their stead; because he has not brought the suffering upon himself, like the great mass of the people, through sin, but has voluntarily submitted to it as the guiltless and righteous one, in order that he might entirely remove it, even to its roots, i.e., the guilt and the sin which occasioned it, by his own sacrifice of himself. Thus is Israel’s glory concentrated in him like a sun. The glory of Israel has his glory for a focus. He is the seed-corn, which is buried in the earth, to bring forth much fruit; and this “much fruit” is the glory of Israel and the salvation of the nations.

“Christian scholars,” says Abravanel, “interpret this prophecy as referring to that man who was crucified in Jerusalem about the end of the second temple, and who, according to their view, was the Son of God, who became man in the womb of the Virgin. But Jonathan ben Uziel explains it as relating to the Messiah who has yet to come; and this is the opinion of the ancients in many of their Midrashim.” So that even the synagogue could not help acknowledging that the passage of the Messiah through death to glory is predicted here. And

what interest could we have in understanding by the “servant of Jehovah,” in this section, the nation of Israel generally, as many Rabbis, both circumcised and uncircumcised, have done; whereas he is that One Israelite in whom Jehovah has effected the redemption of both Israel and the heathen, even through the medium of Israel itself? Or what interest could we have in persuading ourselves that Jeremiah, or some unknown martyr-prophet, is intended, as Grotius, Bunsen, and Ewald suppose; whereas it is rather the great unknown and misinterpreted One, whom Jewish and Judaizing exegesis still continues to misinterpret in its exposition of the figure before us, just as His contemporaries misinterpreted Him when He actually appeared among them. How many are there whose eyes have been opened when reading this “golden *passional* of the Old Testament evangelist,” as Polycarp the Lysian calls it! In how many an Israelite has it melted the crust of his heart! It looks as if it had been written beneath the cross upon Golgotha, and was illuminated by the heavenly brightness of the full *שב לימיני*. It is the unravelling of Ps. 22 and Ps. 110. It forms the outer centre of this wonderful book of consolation (Isa. 40–66), and is the most central, the deepest, and the loftiest thing that the Old Testament prophecy, outstripping itself, has ever achieved.

And yet it does not belie its Old Testament origin. For the prophet sees the advent of “the servant of Jehovah,” and His rejection by His own people, bound up as it were with the duration of the captivity. It is at the close of the captivity that he beholds the exaltation of the Servant of Jehovah, who has died and been buried, and yet lives for ever; and with His exaltation the inward and outward return of Israel, and the restoration of Jerusalem in its renewed and final glory; and with this restoration of the people of God, the conversion of the nations and the salvation of mankind.

Isaiah 52:13. In this sense there follows here, immediately after the cry. “Go ye out from Babylon,” an index pointing from the suffering

of the Servant to His reward in glory. Ch. 52:13. *“Behold, my servant will act wisely; he will come forth, and arise, and be very high.”* Even apart from Isa. 42:1, *hinnēh* (*hēn*) is a favourite commencement with Isaiah; and this very first verse contains, according to Isaiah’s custom, a brief, condensed explanation of the theme. The exaltation of the Servant of Jehovah is the theme of the prophecy which follows. In v. 13*a* the way is shown, by which He reaches His greatness; in v. 13*b* the increasing greatness itself. *הִשְׁכִּיל* by itself means simply to gain, prove, or act with intelligence (LXX *σοφίαι*); and then, since intelligent action, as a rule, is also effective, it is used as synonymous with *הִצְלִיחַ*, *הַכְשִׁיר*, to act with result, i.e., so as to be successful. Hence it is only by way of sequence that the idea of “prosperously” is connected with that of “prudently” (e.g., Josh. 1:8; Jer. 10:21). The word is never applied to such prosperity as a man enjoys without any effort of his own, but only to such as he attains by successful action, i.e., by such action as is appropriate to the desired and desirable result. In Jer. 23:2, where *hiskil* is one feature in the picture of the dominion exercised by the Messiah, the idea of intelligent action is quite sufficient, without any further subordinate meaning. But here, where the exaltation is derived from *ישכיל* as the immediate consequence, without any intervening *על־כֵּן*, there is naturally associated with the idea of wise action, i.e., of action suited to the great object of his call, that of effective execution or abundant success, which has as its natural sequel an ever-increasing exaltation. Rosenmüller observes, in v. 13*b*, “There is no need to discuss, or even to inquire, what precise difference there is in the meaning of the separate words;” but this is a very superficial remark. If we consider that *rūm* signifies not only to be high, but to rise up (Prov. 11:11) and become exalted, and also to become manifest as exalted (Ps. 21:14), and that *נָשָׂא*, according to the immediate and original reflective meaning of the *niphal*, signifies to raise one’s self,

whereas *gābhah* expresses merely the condition, without the subordinate idea of activity, we obtain this chain of thought: he will rise up, he will raise himself still higher, he will stand on high. The three verbs (of which the two perfects are defined by the previous future) consequently denote the commencement, the continuation, and the result or climax of the exaltation; and Stier is not wrong in recalling to mind the three principal steps of the *exaltatio* in the historical fulfilment, viz., the resurrection, the ascension, and the sitting down at the right hand of God. The addition of the word *מָאֵד* shows very clearly that *וַיִּגְבֶּה* is intended to be taken as the final result: the servant of Jehovah, rising from stage to stage, reaches at last an immeasurable height, that towers above everything besides (comp. *ὑπερύψωσε* in Phil. 2:9, with *ὑψωθείς* in Acts 2:33, and for the nature of the *ὑπερύψωσε*, Eph. 1:20–23).

Isaiah 52:14, 15. The prophecy concerning him passes now into an address to him, as in Isa. 49:8 (cf., v. 7), which sinks again immediately into an objective tone. Vv. 14, 15. *“Just as many were astonished at thee: so disfigured, his appearance was not human, and his form not like that of the children of men: so will he make many nations to tremble; kings will shut their mouth at him: for they see what has not been told them, and discover what they have not heard.”* Both Oehler and Hahn suppose that the first clause is addressed to Israel, and that it is here pointed away from its own degradation, which excited such astonishment, to the depth of suffering endured by the One man. Hahn’s principal reason, which Oehler adopts, is the sudden leap that we should otherwise have to assume from the second person to the third,—an example of “negligence” which we can hardly impute to the prophet. But a single glance at Isa. 42:20 and 1:29 is sufficient to show how little force there is in this principal argument. We should no doubt expect *עֲלִיכֶם* or *עָלֶיךָ* after what has gone before, if the nation were addressed; but it is difficult to see what

ISAIAH	Page 404
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

end a comparison between the sufferings of the nation and those of the One man, which merely places the sufferings of the two in an external relation to one another, could be intended to answer; whilst the second *kēn* (so), which evidently introduces an antithesis, is altogether unexplained. The words are certainly addressed to the servant of Jehovah; and the meaning of the *sicut* (just as) in v. 14, and of the *sic* (so) which introduces the principal sentence in v. 15, is, that just as His degradation was the deepest degradation possible, so His glorification would be of the loftiest kind. The height of the exaltation is held up as presenting a perfect contrast to the depth of the degradation. The words, "so distorted was his face, more than that of a man," form, as has been almost unanimously admitted since the time of Vitranga, a parenthesis, containing the reason for the astonishment excited by the servant of Jehovah. Stier is wrong in supposing that this first "so" (*kēn*) refers to *ka'āsher* (just as), in the sense of "If men were astonished at thee, there was ground for the astonishment." V. 15 would not stand out as an antithesis, if we adopted this explanation; moreover, the thought that the fact corresponded to the impression which men received, is a very tame and unnecessary one; and the change of persons in sentences related to one another in this manner is intolerably harsh; whereas, with our view of the relation in which the sentences stand to one another, the parenthesis prepares the way for the sudden change from a direct address to a declaration. Hitherto many had been astonished at the servant of Jehovah: *shāmēm*, to be desolate or waste, to be thrown by anything into a desolate or benumbed condition, to be startled, confused, as it were petrified, by paralyzing astonishment (Lev. 26:32; Ezek. 26:16). To such a degree (*kēn, adeo*) was his appearance *mishchath mē'ish*, and his form *mibbnē 'ādām* (sc., *mishchath*). We might take *mishchath* as the construct of *mishchâth*, as Hitzig does, since this connecting form is sometimes used (e.g., 33:6) even without any genitive relation; but it may also be the absolute, syncopated from $\text{מִשְׁחָתָהּ} = \text{מִשְׁחָתָהּ}$

(Hävernick and Stier), like *moshchath* in Mal. 1:14, or, what we prefer, after the form *mirmas* (Isa. 10:6), with the original *ā*, without the usual lengthening (Ewald, § 160, c, Anm. 4). His appearance and his form were altogether distortion (stronger than *moshchâth*, distorted), away from men, out beyond men, i.e., a distortion that destroys all likeness to a man; *'ish* does not signify man as distinguished from woman here, but a human being generally. The antithesis follows in v. 15: viz., the state of glory in which this form of wretchedness has passed away. As a parallel to the "many" in v. 14, we have here "many nations," indicating the excess of the glory by the greater fulness of the expression; and as a parallel to "were astonished at thee," "he shall make to tremble" (*yazzeh*), in other words, the effect which He produces by what He does to the effect produced by what He suffers. The *hiphil hizzâh* generally means to spirt or sprinkle (*adspergere*), and is applied to the sprinkling of the blood with the finger, more especially upon the capporeth and altar of incense on the day of atonement (differing in this respect from *zâraq*, the swinging of the blood out of a bowl), also to the sprinkling of the water of purification upon a leper with the bunch of hyssop (Lev. 14:7), and of the ashes of the red heifer upon those defiled through touching a corpse (Num. 19:18); in fact, generally, to sprinkling for the purpose of expiation and sanctification. And Vitranga, Hengstenberg, and others, accordingly follow the Syriac and Vulgate in adopting the rendering *adsperget* (he will sprinkle). They have the usage of the language in their favour; and this explanation also commends itself from a reference to נָגַף in Isa. 53:4, and נָגַף in Isa. 53:8 (words which are generally used of leprosy, and on account of which the suffering Messiah is called in *b. Sanhedrin* 98b by an emblematical name adopted from the old synagogue, "the leper of Rabbi's school"), since it yields the significant antithesis, that he who was himself regarded as unclean, even as a second Job, would sprinkle and sanctify whole nations, and thus abolish the wall of partition

between Israel and the heathen, and gather together into one holy church with Israel those who had hitherto been pronounced “unclean” (Isa. 52:1). But, on the other hand, this explanation has so far the usage of the language against it, that *hizzâh* is never construed with the accusative of the person or thing sprinkled (like *adspergere aliquam re aliquem*; since *’eth* in Lev. 4:6, 17 is a preposition like *’al*, *’el* elsewhere); moreover, there would be something very abrupt in this sudden representation of the servant as a priest. Such explanations as “he will scatter asunder” (*disperget*, Targum, etc.), or “he will spill” (sc., their blood), are altogether out of the question; such thoughts as these would be quite out of place in a spiritual picture of salvation and glory, painted upon the dark ground we have here. The verb *nâzâh* signified primarily to *leap* or *spring*; hence *hizzâh*, with the causative meaning to *sprinkle*. The *kal* combines the intransitive and transitive meanings of the word “spirt,” and is used in the former sense in Isa. 63:3, to signify the springing up or sprouting up of any liquid scattered about in drops. The Arabic *nazâ* (see Ges. *Thes.*) shows that this verb may also be applied to the springing or leaping of living beings, caused by excess of emotion. And accordingly we follow the majority of the commentators in adopting the rendering *exsilire faciet*. The fact that whole nations are the object, and not merely individuals, proves nothing to the contrary, as Hab. 3:6 clearly shows. The reference is to their leaping up in amazement (LXX θαυμάσονται); and the verb denotes less an external than an internal movement. They will tremble with astonishment within themselves (cf., *pâchădû vrâgzû* in Jer. 33:9), being electrified, as it were, by the surprising change that has taken place in the servant of Jehovah. The reason why kings “shut their mouths at him” is expressly stated, viz., what was never related they see, and what was never heard of they perceive; i.e., it was something going far beyond all that had ever been reported to them outside the world of nations, or come to their knowledge within it. Hitzig’s explanation, that they do not trust

themselves to begin to speak before him or along with him, gives too feeble a sense, and would lead us rather to expect לִפְנֵי than עִלָּיו.

The shutting of the mouth is the involuntary effect of the overpowering impression, or the manifestation of their extreme amazement at one so suddenly brought out of the depths, and lifted up to so great a height. The strongest emotion is that which remains shut up within ourselves, because, from its very intensity, it throws the whole nature into a suffering state, and drowns all reflection in emotion (cf., *yachârîsh* in Zeph. 3:17). The parallel in Isa. 49:7 is not opposed to this; the speechless astonishment, at what is unheard and inconceivable, changes into adoring homage, as soon as they have become to some extent familiar with it. The first turn in the prophecy closes here: The servant of Jehovah, whose inhuman sufferings excite such astonishment, is exalted on high; so that from utter amazement the nations tremble, and their kings are struck dumb.

Isaiah 53

Isaiah 53:1–3. But, says the second turn in Isa. 53:1–3, the man of sorrows was despised among us, and the prophecy as to his future was not believed. We hear the first lamentation (the question is, From whose mouth does it come?) in v. 1: “Who hath believed our preaching; and the arm of Jehovah, over whom has it been revealed?” “I was formerly mistaken,” says Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1, 159, 160), “as to the connection between Isa. 53:1 and Isa. 52:13–15, and thought that the Gentiles were the speakers in the former, simply because it was to them that the latter referred. But I see now that I was in error. It is affirmed of the heathen, that they have never heard before the things which they now see with their eyes. Consequently it cannot be they who exclaim, or in whose name the inquiry is made, Who hath believed our preaching?” Moreover, it cannot be they, both because the redemption itself and the exaltation of the Mediator of the redemption are made known to

them from the midst of Israel as already accomplished facts, and also because according to Isa. 52:15 (cf., Isa. 49:7; 42:4; 51:5) they hear the things unheard of before, with amazement which passes into reverent awe, as the satisfaction of their own desires, in other words, with the glad obedience of faith. And we may also add, that the expression in Isa. 53:8, “for the transgression of my people,” would be quite out of place in the mouths of Gentiles, and that, as a general rule, words attributed to Gentiles ought to be expressly introduced as theirs. Whenever we find a “we” introduced abruptly in the midst of a prophecy, it is always Israel that speaks, including the prophet himself (Isa. 42:24; 64:5; 16:6; 24:16, etc.). Hofmann therefore very properly rejects the view advocated by many, from Calvin down to Stier and Oehler, who suppose that it is the prophet himself who is speaking here in connection with the other heralds of salvation; “for,” as he says, “how does all the rest which is expressed in the 1st pers. plural tally with such a supposition?” If it is really Israel, which confesses in vv. 2ff. how blind it has been to the calling of the servant of Jehovah, which was formerly hidden in humiliation but is now manifested in glory; the mournful inquiry in v. 1 must also proceed from the mouth of Israel. The references to this passage in John 12:37, 38, and Rom. 10:16, do not compel us to assign v. 1 to the prophet and his comrades in office. It is Israel that speaks even in v. 1. The nation, which acknowledges with penitence how shamefully it has mistaken its own Saviour, laments that it has put no faith in the tidings of the lofty and glorious calling of the servant of God. We need not assume, therefore, that there is any change of subject in v. 2; and (what is still more decisive) it is necessary that we should not, if we would keep up any close connection between Isa. 53:1 and Isa. 52:15. The heathen receive with faith tidings of things which had never been heard of before; whereas Israel has to lament that it put no faith in the tidings which it had heard long, long before, not only with reference to the person and work of the servant of God, but with regard to his lowly

origin and glorious end. שְׂמוּעָה (a noun after the form יְשׁוּעָה, לְשׁוּעָה, a different form from that of נִדְלָה, which is derived from the adjective נָדָה) signifies the hearsay (ἀκοή), i.e., the tidings, more especially the prophetic announcement in Isa. 28:9; and שְׂמֵעָתָנוּ, according to the primary subjective force of the suffix, is equivalent to שְׂמוּעָה אֲשֶׁר שְׂמַעְנוּ (cf., Jer. 49:14), i.e., the hearsay which we have heard. There were some, indeed, who did not refuse to believe the tidings which Israel heard: ἀλλ’ οὐ πάντες ὑπήκουσαν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ (Rom. 10:16); the number of the believers was vanishingly small, when compared with the unbelieving mass of the nation. And it is the latter, or rather its remnant which had eventually come to its senses, that here inquires, Who hath believed *our* preaching, i.e., the preaching that was common among us? The substance of the preaching, which had not been believed, was the exaltation of the servant of God from a state of deep degradation. This is a work performed by the “arm of Jehovah,” namely, His holy arm that has been made bare, and that now effects the salvation of His people, and of the nations generally, according to His own counsel (Isa. 52:10; 51:5). This arm works down from on high, exalted far above all created things; men have it above them, and it is made manifest to those who recognise it in what is passing around them. Who, asks Israel, has had any faith in the coming exaltation of the servant of God? who has recognised the omnipotence of Jehovah, which has set itself to effect his exaltation? All that follows is the confession of the Israel of the last times, to which this question is the introduction. We must not overlook the fact that this golden “passional” is also one of the greatest prophecies of the future conversion of the nation, which has rejected the servant of God, and allowed the Gentiles to be the first to recognise him. At last, though very late, it will feel remorse. And when this shall once take place, then and not till then will this chapter—which, to use an old epithet, will ever

be *carnificina Rabbiorum*—receive its complete historical fulfilment.

Isaiah 53:2. The confession, which follows, grows out of the great lamentation depicted by Zechariah in Zech. 12:11ff. V. 2. “*And he sprang up like a layer-shoot before Him, and like a root-sprout out of dry ground: he had no form, and no beauty; and we looked, and there was no look, such that we could have found pleasure in him.*” V. 2, as a sequel to v. 1b, looks back to the past, and describes how the arm of Jehovah manifested itself in the servant’s course of life from the very beginning, though imperceptibly at first, and unobserved by those who merely noticed the outside. The suffix of לִפְנֵי cannot refer to the subject of the interrogative sentence, as Hahn and Hofmann suppose, for the answer to the *quis* there is *nemo*; it relates to Jehovah, by which it is immediately preceded. Before Jehovah, namely, so that He, whose counsel thus began to be fulfilled, fixed His eye upon him with watchfulness and protecting care, he grew up כִּיּוֹנֵק, like the suckling, i.e., (in a horticultural sense) the tender twig which sucks up its nourishment from the root and stem (not as Hitzig supposes, according to Ezek. 31:16, from the moisture in the soil); for the tender twig upon a tree, or trunk, or stalk, is called יִנְקָה (for which we have יִנְקָה here): vid., Ezek. 17:22, the twig of a cedar; Ps. 80:12 (11), of a vine; Job 8:16, of a liana. It is thought of here as a layer, as in Ezek. 17:22; and, indeed, as the second figure shows when taken in connection with Isa. 11:1, as having been laid down after the proud cedar of the Davidic monarchy from which it sprang had been felled; for elsewhere it is compared to a shoot which springs from the root left in the ground after the tree has been felled. Both figures depict the lowly and unattractive character of the small though vigorous beginning. The expression “out of dry ground,” which belongs to both figures, brings out, in addition, the miserable character of the external circumstances in the midst of which the birth and growth of the servant had taken

place. The “dry ground” is the existing state of the enslaved and degraded nation; i.e., he was subject to all the conditions inseparable from a nation that had been given up to the power of the world, and was not only enduring all the consequent misery, but was in utter ignorance as to its cause; in a word, the dry ground is the corrupt character of the age. In what follows, the majority of the commentators have departed from the accents, and adopted the rendering, “he had no form and no beauty, that we should look at Him” (should have looked at Him), viz., with fixed looks that loved to dwell upon Him. This rendering was adopted by Symmachus and Vitranga (ἵνα εἰδῶμεν αὐτόν; *ut ipsum respiceremus*). But Luther, Stier, and others, very properly adhere to the existing punctuation; since the other would lead us to expect בּוֹנֵרָאָה instead of וּנְרָאָהוּ, and the close reciprocal relation of וּנְרָאָהוּ וְלֹא־מְרָאָה, which resembles a play upon the words, is entirely expunged. The meaning therefore is, “We saw Him, and there was nothing in His appearance to make us desire Him, or feel attracted by Him.” The literal rendering of the Hebrew, with its lively method of transferring you into the precise situation, is *ut concupisceremus eum (delectaremur eo)*; whereas, in our oriental style, we should rather have written *ut concupivissemus*, using the pluperfect instead of the imperfect, or the tense of the associated past. Even in this sense וּנְרָאָהוּ is very far from being unmeaning: He dwelt in Israel, so that they had Him bodily before their eyes, but in His outward appearance there was nothing to attract or delight the senses.

Isaiah 53:3. On the contrary, the impression produced by His appearance was rather repulsive, and, to those who measured the great and noble by a merely worldly standard, contemptible. V. 3. “*He was despised and forsaken by men; a man of griefs, and well acquainted with disease; and like one from whom men hide their face: despised, and we esteemed Him not.*” All these different features are predicates of the *erat* that is latent in *non species ei neque decor* and *non adspectus*.

Nibhzeh is introduced again palindromically at the close in Isaiah's peculiar style; consequently Martini's conjecture נִבְּזָהוּ לֹא וְגו' is to be rejected. This *nibhzeh* (cf., *bâzōh*, Isa. 49:7) is the keynote of the description which looks back in this plaintive tone. The predicate *chādal 'ishīm* is misunderstood by nearly all the commentators, inasmuch as they take אִישִׁים as synonymous with בני־אדם, whereas it is rather used in the sense of בני־איש (lords), as distinguished from *bnē 'ādām*, or people generally (see Isa. 2:9, 11, 17). The only other passages in which it occurs are Prov. 8:4 and Ps. 141:4; and in both instances it signifies persons of rank. Hence Cocceius explains it thus: "wanting in men, i.e., having no respectable men with Him, to support Him with their authority." It might also be understood as meaning the ending one among men, i.e., the one who takes the last place (S. ἐλάχιστος, Jer. *novissimus*); but in this case He Himself would be described as אִישׁ, whereas it is absolutely affirmed that He had not the appearance or distinction of such an one. But the rendering *deficiens* (wanting) is quite correct; compare Job 19:14, "my kinsfolk have failed" (*defecerunt, chādālū, cognati mei*). The Arabic *chadhalahu* or *chadhala 'anhu* (also points to the true meaning; and from this we have the derivatives *chādhil*, refusing assistance, leaving without help; and *machdhûl*, helpless, forsaken (see Lane's *Arabic Lexicon*). In Hebrew, *chādal* has not only the transitive meaning to discontinue or leave off a thing, but the intransitive, to cease or be in want, so that *chādal 'ishīm* may mean one in want of men of rank, i.e., finding no sympathy from such men. The chief men of His nation who towered above the multitude, the great men of this world, withdrew their hands from Him, drew back from Him: He had none of the men of any distinction at His side. Moreover, He was אִישׁ מְכַאֲבוֹת, a man of sorrow of heart in all its forms, i.e., a man whose chief distinction was, that His life was one of constant painful endurance. And He was also יְדֻנֵּעַ חֲלִי, that is to say, not one known through

His sickness (according to Deut. 1:13, 15), which is hardly sufficient to express the genitive construction; nor an acquaintance of disease (S. γνωστός νόσῳ, *familiaris morbo*), which would be expressed by מְיֻדָּע or מְיֻדָּע; but *scitus morbi*, i.e., one who was placed in a state to make the acquaintance of disease. The deponent passive יְדֻנֵּעַ, acquainted (like *bātuāch, confisus; zākhūr*, mindful; *peritus*, pervaded, experienced), is supported by מְיֻדָּע = מְיֻדָּעָה; Gr. τί μαθών. The meaning is not, that He had by nature a sickly body, falling out of one disease into another; but that the wrath instigated by sin, and the zeal of self-sacrifice (Ps. 69:10), burnt like the fire of a fever in His soul and body, so that even if He had not died a violent death, He would have succumbed to the force of the powers of destruction that were innate in humanity in consequence of sin, and of His own self-consuming conflict with them. Moreover, He was *kmastēr pânīm mimmennū*. This cannot mean, "like one hiding his face from us," as Hengstenberg supposes (with an allusion to Lev. 13:45); or, what is comparatively better, "like one causing the hiding of the face from him:" for although the feminine of the participle is written מְסַתְּרָה, and in the plural מְסַתְּרִים for מְסַתְּרִים is quite possible, we never meet with *mastēr* for *mastīr*, like *hastēr* for *hastīr* in the infinitive (Isa. 29:15, cf., Deut. 26:12). Hence *mastēr* must be a noun (of the form *marbēts, marbēq, mashchēth*); and the words mean either "like the hiding of the face on our part," or like one who met with this from us, or (what is more natural) like the hiding of the face before his presence (according to Isa. 8:17; 50:6; 54:8; 59:2, and many other passages), i.e., like one whose repulsive face it is impossible to endure, so that men turn away their face or cover it with their dress (compare Isa. 50:6 with Job 30:10). And lastly, all the predicates are summed up in the expressive word *nibhzeh*: He was despised, and we did not think Him dear and worthy, but rather "esteemed Him not," or rather did not estimate Him at all, or as Luther expresses it, "estimated Him at nothing"

(*châshabh*, to reckon, value, esteem, as in Isa. 13:17; 33:8, Mal. 3:16).

The second turn closes here. The preaching concerning His calling and His future was not believed; but the Man of sorrows was greatly despised among us.

Isaiah 53:4. Those who formerly mistook and despised the Servant of Jehovah on account of His miserable condition, now confess that His sufferings were altogether of a different character from what they had supposed. V. 4. “*Verily He hath borne our diseases and our pains: He hath laden them upon Himself; but we regarded Him as one stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*” It might appear doubtful whether כָּבַד (the fuller form of כָּבַד) is affirmative here, as in Isa. 40:7; 45:15, or adversative, as in Isa. 49:4. The latter meaning grows out of the former, inasmuch as it is the opposite which is strongly affirmed. We have rendered it affirmatively (Jer. *vere*), not adversatively (*verum, ut vero*), because v. 4 itself consists of two antithetical halves,—a relation which is expressed in the independent pronouns אָנֹכִי and אַתָּה, that answer to one another. The penitents contrast themselves and their false notion with Him and His real achievement. In Matthew (Matt. 8:17) the words are rendered freely and faithfully thus: αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἔλαβε καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν. Even the fact that the relief which Jesus afforded to all kinds of bodily diseases is regarded as a fulfilment of what is here affirmed of the Servant of Jehovah, is an exegetical index worth noticing. In 4a it is not really sin that is spoken of, but the evil which is consequent upon human sin, although not always the direct consequence of the sins of individuals (John 9:3). But in the fact that He was concerned to relieve this evil in all its forms, whenever it came in His way in the exercise of His calling, the relief implied as a consequence in v. 4a was brought distinctly into view, though not the bearing and lading that are primarily noticed here. Matthew has very aptly rendered נָשָׂא by ἔλαβε, and סָבַל by ἐβάστασε. For whilst סָבַל denotes the toilsome

bearing of a burden that has been taken up, נָשָׂא combines in itself the ideas of *tollere* and *ferre*. When construed with the accusative of the sin, it signifies to take the debt of sin upon one’s self, and carry it as one’s own, i.e., to look at it and feel it as one’s own (e.g., Lev. 5:1, 17), or more frequently to bear the punishment occasioned by sin, i.e., to make expiation for it (Lev. 17:16; 20:19, 20; 24:15), and in any case in which the person bearing it is not himself the guilty person, to bear sin in a mediatorial capacity, for the purpose of making expiation for it (Lev. 10:17). The LXX render this נָשָׂא both in the Pentateuch and Ezekiel λαβεῖν ἀμαρτίαν, once ἀναφέρειν; and it is evident that both of these are to be understood in the sense of an expiatory bearing, and not merely of taking away, as has been recently maintained in opposition to the *satisfactio vicaria*, as we may see clearly enough from Ezek. 4:4–8, where the נָשָׂא is represented by the prophet in a symbolical action.

But in the case before us, where it is not the sins, but “our diseases” (נִגְזָלִים is a defective plural, as the singular would be written נִגְזָל) and “our pains” that are the object, this mediatorial sense remains essentially the same. The meaning is not merely that the Servant of God entered into the fellowship of our sufferings, but that He took upon Himself the sufferings which we had to bear and deserved to bear, and therefore not only took them away (as Matt. 8:17 might make it appear), but bore them in His own person, that He might deliver us from them. But when one person takes upon himself suffering which another would have had to bear, and therefore not only endures it with him, but in his stead, this is called *substitution* or representation,—an idea which, however unintelligible to the understanding, belongs to the actual substance of the common consciousness of man, and the realities of the divine government of the world as brought within the range of our experience, and one which has continued even down to the present time to have much greater vigour in the Jewish

nation, where it has found its true expression in sacrifice and the kindred institutions, than in any other, at least so far as its nationality has not been entirely annulled. Here again it is Israel, which, having been at length better instructed, and now bearing witness against itself, laments its former blindness to the mediatorial vicarious character of the deep agonies, both of soul and body, that were endured by the great Sufferer. They looked upon them as the punishment of His own sins, and indeed—inasmuch as, like the friends of Job, they measured the sin of the Sufferer by the sufferings that He endured—of peculiarly great sins. They saw in Him נגנז, “one stricken,” i.e., afflicted with a hateful, shocking disease (Gen. 12:17; 1 Sam. 6:9),—such, for example, as leprosy, which was called נגזת קט' עץ. (2 Kings 15:5, A. ἀφήμενον, S. ἐν ἀφῆ ὄντα = *leprosum*, Th. μεμαστιγωμένον, cf., μάστιγες, Mark 3:10, scourges, i.e., bad attacks); also נגזת אלהים, “one smitten of God” (from *nâkhâh*, root נגז, נג; see *Comm. on Job*, at 30:8), and נגזתו, bowed down (by God), i.e., afflicted with sufferings. The name Jehovah would have been out of place here, where the evident intention is to point to the all-determining divine power generally, whose vengeance appeared to have fallen upon this particular sufferer. The construction *mukkêh 'Elôhîm* signifies, like the Arabic *muqâtal rabbuh*, one who has been defeated in conflict with God his Lord (see *Comm. on Job*, at 15:28); and *'Elôhîm* has the syntactic position between the two adjectives, which it necessarily must have in order to be logically connected with them both.

Isaiah 53:5. In v. 5, ונהו, as contrasted with ונגזתו, continues the true state of the case as contrasted with their false judgment. V. 5. “Whereas He was pierced for our sins, bruised for our iniquities: the punishment was laid upon Him for our peace; and through His stripes we were healed.” The question is, whether v. 5a describes what He was during His life, or what He was in His death. The words decide in

favour of the latter. For although *châlâl* is applied to a person mortally wounded but not yet dead (Jer. 51:52; Ps. 69:27), and *châlal* to a heart wounded to death (Ps. 109:22); the pure passives used here, which denote a calamity inflicted by violence from without, more especially *mchôlâl*, which is not the participle *polal* of *chîl* (made to twist one’s self with pain), but the participle *poal* of *châlal* (pierced, *transfossus*, the passive of *mchôlêl*, Isa. 51:9), and the substantive clauses, which express a fact that has become complete in all its circumstances, can hardly be understood in any other way than as denoting, that “the servant of God” floated before the mind of the speaker in all the sufferings of death, just as was the case with Zechariah in Zech. 12:10. There were no stronger expressions to be found in the language, to denote a violent and painful death. As *min*, with the passive, does not answer to the Greek ὑπό, but to ἀπό, the meaning is not that it was our sins and iniquities that had pierced Him through like swords, and crushed Him like heavy burdens, but that He was pierced and crushed on account of our sins and iniquities. It was not His own sins and iniquities, but *ours*, which He had taken upon Himself, that He might make atonement for them in our stead, that were the cause of His having to suffer so cruel and painful a death.

The ultimate cause is not mentioned; but מוסר מלוי which follows points to it. His suffering was a *mūsâr*, which is an indirect affirmation that it was God who had inflicted it upon Him, for who else could the *yôsêr* (*myassêr*) be? We have rendered *mūsâr* “punishment;” and there was no other word in the language for this idea; for though נקם and נקד (to which Hofmann refers) have indeed the idea of punishment associated with them, the former signifies ἐκδίκησις, the latter ἐπίσκεισις, whereas *mūsâr* not only denotes παιδεία, as the chastisement of love (Prov. 3:11), but also as the infliction of punishment (= τιμωρία κόλασις, Prov. 7:22, Jer. 30:14), just as David, when he prayed that God might not

punish him in His anger and hot displeasure (Ps. 6:2), could not find a more suitable expression for punishment, regarded as the execution of judgment, than יָסַר (הוֹכִיחַ). The word itself, which follows the form of *mūsād* (Isa. 28:16), signifies primarily being chastised (from *yâsar* = *vâsar*, *constringere*, *coercere*), and included from the very outset the idea of practical chastisement, which then passed over into that of admonition in words, of warning by example, and of chastity as a moral quality. In the case before us, in which the reference is to a sufferer, and to a *mūsâr* resting upon him, this can only mean actual chastisement. If the expression had been מוֹסֵרָנוּ עָלָיו, it would merely mean that God had caused Him, who had taken upon Himself our sins and iniquities and thus made Himself representatively or vicariously guilty, to endure the chastisement which those sins deserved. but it is מוֹסֵר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ. The connection of the words is the same as that of תּוֹכַחַת חַיִּים in Prov. 15:31. As the latter signifies “reproof leading to life,” so the former signifies “the chastisement which leads to our peace.” It is true that the suffix belongs to the one idea, that that has grown up through this combination of the words, like *brīth shlōmī*, “my peace-covenant” (Isa. 54:10); but what else could our “peace-chastisement” be, than the chastisement that brings us peace, or puts us into a state of salvation? This is the idea involved in Stier’s rendering, “restoring chastisement,” and Hofmann’s, “the chastisement wholesome for us.” The difference in the exposition simply lies in the view entertained of the *mūsâr*, in which neither of these commentators will allow that there is any idea of a visitation of justice here. But according to our interpretation, the genitive שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ, which defines the *mūsâr* so far as its object and results are concerned, clearly shows that this manifestation of the justice of God, this satisfaction procured by His holiness, had His love for its foundation and end. It was our peace, or, what is more in accordance with the full idea of the word, our general well-being,

our blessedness, which these sufferings arrived at and secured (the synonyms of *shâlôm* are *tōbh* and *yshū’âh*, Isa. 52:7). In what follows, “and by His stripes (*chābhūrâh* = *chabbūrâh*, Isa. 1:6) we have been healed,” *shâlôm* is defined as a condition of salvation brought about by healing. “*Venustissimum* ὀξύμωρον,” exclaims Vitringa here. He means the same as Jerome when he says, *suo vulnere vulnera nostra curavit*. The stripes and weals that were inflicted upon Him have made us sound and well (the LXX keeps the collective singular, and renders it very aptly τῶ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ; cf., 1 Pet. 2:24). We were sick unto death because of our sins; but He, the sinless one, took upon Himself a suffering unto death, which was, as it were, the concentration and essence of the woes that we had deserved; and this voluntary endurance, this submission to the justice of the Holy One, in accordance with the counsels of divine love, became the source of our healing.

Isaiah 53:6. Thus does the whole body of the restored Israel confess with penitence, that it has so long mistaken Him whom Jehovah, as is now distinctly affirmed, had made a curse for their good, when they had gone astray to their own ruin. V. 6. “*All we like sheep went astray; we had turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.*” It is the state of exile, upon which the penitent Israel is here looking back; but exile as being, in the prophet’s view, the final state of punishment before the final deliverance. Israel in its exile resembled a scattered flock without a shepherd; it had lost the way of Jehovah (Isa. 63:17), and every one had turned to his own way, in utter selfishness and estrangement from God (Isa. 56:11). But whereas Israel thus heaped up guilt upon guilt, the Servant of Jehovah was He upon whom Jehovah Himself caused the punishment of their guilt to fall, that He might make atonement for it through His own suffering. Many of the more modern expositors endeavour to set aside the *paena vicaria* here, by giving to הִפְגִּיעַ a meaning which it never has. Thus Stier renders it, “Jehovah caused the iniquity of all to strike or break

upon Him.” Others, again, give a meaning to the statement which is directly at variance with the words themselves. Thus Hahn renders it: Jehovah took the guilt of the whole into His service, causing Him to die a violent death through their crime. Hofmann very properly rejects both explanations, and holds fast to the fact that אָ עָלַם הָ , regarded as a causative of עָלַם אָ , signifies “to cause anything to strike or fall upon a person,” which is the rendering adopted by Symmachus: κύριος καταντήσαι ἐποίησεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὴν ἀνομίαν πάντων ἡμῶν. “Just as the blood of a murdered man comes upon the murderer, when the bloody deed committed comes back upon him in the form of blood-guiltiness inflicting vengeance; so does sin come upon, overtake (Ps. 40:13), or meet with the sinner. It went forth from him as his own act; it returns with destructive effect, as a fact by which he is condemned. But in this case God does not suffer those who have sinned to be overtaken by the sin they have committed; but it falls upon His servant, the righteous One.” These are Hofmann’s words. But if the sin turns back upon the sinner in the shape of punishment, why should the sin of all men, which the Servant of God has taken upon Himself as His own, overtake Him in the form of an evil, which, even if it be a punishment, is not punishment inflicted upon Him? For this is just the characteristic of Hofmann’s doctrine of the atonement, that it altogether eliminates from the atoning work the reconciliation of the purposes of love with the demands of righteousness. Now it is indeed perfectly true, that the Servant of God cannot become the object of punishment, either as a servant of God or as an atoning Saviour; for as servant of God He is the beloved of God, and as atoning Saviour He undertakes a work which is well pleasing to God, and ordained in God’s eternal counsel. So that the wrath which pours out upon Him is not meant for Him as the righteous One who voluntarily offers up Himself but indirectly it relates to Him, so far as He has vicariously identified Himself with sinners, who are deserving of wrath. How could He have made

expiation for sin, if He had simply subjected Himself to its cosmical effects, and not directly subjected Himself to that wrath which is the invariable divine correlative of human sin? And what other reason could there be for God’s not rescuing Him from this the bitterest cup of death, than the ethical impossibility of acknowledging the atonement as really made, without having left the representative of the guilty, who had presented Himself to Him as though guilty Himself, to taste of the punishment which they had deserved? It is true that vicarious expiation and *paena vicaria* are not coincident ideas. The punishment is but one element in the expiation, and it derives a peculiar character from the fact that one innocent person voluntarily submits to it in His own person. It does not stand in a thoroughly external relation of identity to that deserved by the many who are guilty; but the latter cannot be set aside without the atoning individual enduring an intensive equivalent to it, and that in such a manner, that this endurance is no less a self-cancelling of wrath on the part of God, than an absorption of wrath on the part of the Mediator; and in this central point of the atoning work, the voluntarily forgiving love of God and the voluntarily self-sacrificing love of the Mediator meet together, like hands stretched out grasp one another from the midst of a dark cloud. Hermann Schultz also maintains that the suffering, which was the consequence of sin and therefore punishment to the guilty, is borne by the Redeemer as suffering, without being punishment. But in this way the true mystery is wiped out of the heart of the atoning work; and this explanation is also at variance with the expression “the chastisement of our peace” in v. 5b, and the equally distinct statement in v. 6b, “He hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” It was the sin of all Israel, as the palindromically repeated *kullânû* emphatically declares, which pressed upon Him with such force when His atoning work was about to be decided. but וְיָ is used to denote not only the transgression itself, but also the guilt incurred thereby, and the punishment to which it gives rise. All this great

multitude of sins, and mass of guilt, and weight of punishment, came upon the Servant of Jehovah according to the appointment of the God of salvation, who is gracious in holiness. The third turn ends here. It was our sins that He bore, and for our salvation that God caused Him to suffer on our account.

Isaiah 53:7. The fourth turn describes how He suffered and died and was buried. V. 7. *“He was ill treated; whilst He suffered willingly, and opened not His mouth, like the sheep that is led to the slaughter-bench, and like a lamb that is dumb before its shearers, and opened not His mouth.”* The third pers. *niphal* stands first in a passive sense: He has been hard pressed (1 Sam. 13:6): He is driven, or hunted (1 Sam. 14:24), treated tyrannically and unsparingly; in a word, plagued (*vexatus*; compare the *niphal* in a reciprocal sense in Isa. 3:5, and according to the reading נגש in Isa. 29:13 in a reflective sense, to torment one’s self). Hitzig renders the next clause, “and although tormented, He opened not His mouth.” But although an explanatory subordinate clause may precede the principal clause which it more fully explains, not example can be found of such a clause with (a retrospective) וְהוּא explaining what follows; for in Job 2:8 the circumstantial clause, “sitting down among the ashes,” belongs to the principal fact which stands before. And so here, where נִעְנֶה (from which comes the participle נִעְנֶה, usually met with in circumstantial clauses) has not a passive, but a reflective meaning, as in Ex. 10:3: “He was ill treated, whilst He bowed Himself (=suffered voluntarily), and opened not His mouth” (the regular leap from the participle to the finite). The voluntary endurance is then explained by the simile “like a sheep that is led to the slaughter” (an attributive clause, like Jer. 11:19); and the submissive quiet bearing, by the simile “like a lamb that is dumb before its shearers.” The commentators regard נִאֲלָמָה as a participle; but this would have the tone upon the last syllable (see Isa. 1:21, 26, Nah. 3:11; cf., *Comm. on Job*, at 20:27, note). The tone shows it

to be the pausal form for נִאֲלָמָה, and so we have rendered it; and, indeed, as the interchange of the perfect with the future in the attributive clause must be intentional, not *quae obmutescit*, but *obmutuit*. The following words, וְלֹא יִפְתָּח פִּי, do not form part of the simile, which would require *tiphtach*, for nothing but absolute necessity would warrant us in assuming that it points back beyond שָׁהוּ לְרַחֵל, as Rashi and others suppose. The palindromical repetition also favours the unity of the subject with that of the previous יִפְתָּח and the correctness of the delicate accentuation, with which the rendering in the LXX and Acts 8:32 coincides. All the references in the New Testament to the Lamb of God (with which the corresponding allusions to the passover are interwoven) spring from this passage in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 53:8. The description of the closing portion of the life of the Servant of Jehovah is continued in v. 8. *“He has been taken away from prison and from judgment; and of His generation who considered: ‘He was snatched away out of the land of the living; for the wickedness of my people punishment fell upon Him?’”* The principal emphasis is not laid upon the fact that He was *taken away* from suffering, but that it was out of the midst of suffering that He was carried off. The idea that is most prominent in *luqqâch* (with *â* in half pause) is not that of being translated (as in the accounts of Enoch and Elijah), but of being snatched or hurried away (*abreptus est*, Isa. 52:5, Ezek. 33:4, etc.). The parallel is *abscissus* (cf., *nikhrath*, Jer. 11:19) *a terra viventium*, for which נִגְזַר by itself is supposed to be used in the sense of carried away (i.e., out of the sphere of the living into that of the dead, Lam. 3:54; cf., Ezek. 37:11, “It is all over with us”). עָצָר (from עָצַר, *compescere*) is a violent constraint; here, as in Ps. 107:39, it signifies a persecuting treatment which restrains by outward force, such as that of prison or bonds; and *mishpât* refers to the judicial proceedings, in which He was put upon His trial, accused and convicted as worthy of death,—in other words, to His unjust judgment.

The *min* might indeed be understood, as in v. 5a, not as referring to the persons who swept Him away (= ὑπὸ), but, as in Ps 107:39, as relating to the ground and cause of the sweeping away. But the local sense, which is the one most naturally suggested by *luqqach* (e.g., Isa. 49:24), is to be preferred: hostile oppression and judicial persecution were the circumstances out of which He was carried away by death. With regard to what follows, we must in any case adhere to the ordinary usage, according to which *dōr* (= Arab. *daur*, *dahr*, a revolution or period of time) signifies an age, or the men living in a particular age; also, in an ethical sense, the entire body of those who are connected together by similarity of disposition (see, for example, Ps. 14:5); or again (= Arab. *dâr*) a dwelling, as in Isa. 38:12, and possibly also (of the grave) in Ps. 49:20. Such meanings as length of life (Luther and Grotius), course of life (Vitranga), or fate (Hitzig), it is impossible to sustain. Hence the Sept. rendering, τὴν γενεάν αὐτοῦ τίς διηγήσεται, which Jerome also adopts, can only mean, so far as the usage of the language is concerned, "who can declare the number of His generation" (i.e., of those inspired by His spirit, or filled with His life); but in this connection such a thought would be premature. Moreover, the generation intended would be called זְרֵעוֹ rather than דְּוֵרוֹ, as springing from Him.

Still less can we adopt the meaning "dwelling," as Knobel does, who explains the passage thus: "who considers how little the grave becomes Him, which He has received as His dwelling-place." The words do not admit of this explanation. Hofmann formerly explained the passage as meaning, "No one takes His dwelling-place into his mind or mouth, so as even to think of it, or inquire what had become of Him;" but in His *Schriftbeweis* he has decided in favour of the meaning, His contemporaries, or the men of His generation. It is only with this rendering that we obtain a thought at all suitable to the picture of suffering given here, or to the words which follow (compare Jer. 2:31, O ye men of this generation). וְאֵת־דְּוֵרוֹ in

that case is not the object to וְשֹׁחֵתָהּ, the real object to which is rather the clause introduced by כִּי, but an adverbial accusative, which may serve to give emphatic prominence to the subject, as we may see from Isa. 57:12, Ezek. 17:21, Neh. 9:34 (Ges § 117, Anm.); for אֶת cannot be a preposition, since *inter aequales ejus* would not be expressed in Hebrew by אֶת־דְּוֵרוֹ, but by בְּדְוֵרוֹ. The *pilel sōchēäch* with *b* signifies in Ps. 143:5 a thoughtful consideration or deliberation, in a word, *meditationem alicujus rei* (compare the *kal* with the accusative, Ps. 145:5). The following *kī* is an explanatory *quod*: with regard to His contemporaries, who considered that, etc. The words introduced with *kī* are spoken, as it were, out of the heart of His contemporaries, who ought to have considered, but did not. We may see from עָמִי that it is intended to introduce a direct address; and again, if we leave *kī* untranslated, like ὅτι *recitativum* (see, for example, Josh. 2:24; compare *di*, Dan. 2:25), we can understand why the address, which has been carried on thus far in such general terms, assumes all at once an individual form. It cannot be denied, indeed, that we obtain a suitable object for the missing consideration, if we adopt this rendering: "He was torn away (3rd *praet.*) out of the land of the living, through (*min* denoting the mediating cause) the wicked conduct of my people (in bringing Him to death), to their own punishment; i.e., none of the men of His age (like *mī* in v. 1, no one = only a very few) discerned what had befallen them on account of their sin, in ridding themselves of Him by a violent death." Hofmann and V. F. Oehler both adopt this explanation, saying, "Can the prophet have had the person of the *Ecce Homo* before his eye, without intimating that his people called down judgment upon themselves, by laying violent hands upon the Servant of God?" We cannot, however, decide in favour of this explanation; since the impression produced by this מִפֶּשַׁע עָמִי נִגַע לְמוֹ is, that it is intended to be taken as a rectification of וְאֵת־דְּוֵרוֹ

ISAIAH	Page 415
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

נגוע in v. 4b, to which it stands in a reciprocal relation. This reciprocal relation is brought out more fully, if we regard the force of the *min* as still continued (*ob plagam quae illis debebatur*, Seb. Schmid, Kleinert, etc.); though not in the sense of “through the stroke proceeding from them, my people” (Hahn), which would be opposed to the general usage of נגוע; or taking למו נגע as a relative clause, *populi mei quibus plaga debebatur* (Hengstenberg, Hävernich). But the most natural course is to take *lāmō* as referring to the Servant of God, more especially as our prophet uses *lāmō* pathetically for *lō*, as Isa. 54:15 unquestionably shows (notwithstanding the remonstrance of Stier, who renders the passage, “He was all plague, or smiting, for them”). נגע always signifies suffering as a calamity proceeding from Go (e.g., Ex. 11:1, Ps. 39:11, and in every other passage in which it does not occur in the special sense of leprosy, which also points back, however, to the generic idea of a plague divinely sent); hence Jerome renders it, “for the sin of my people have I smitten Him.” The text does not read so; but the smiter is really Jehovah. Men looked upon His Servant as a נגוע; and so He really was, but not in the sense of which men regarded Him as such. Yet, even if they had been mistaken concerning His during His lifetime; now that He no longer dwelt among the living, they ought to see, as they looked back upon His actions and His sufferings, that it was not for His own wickedness, but for that of Israel, viz., to make atonement for it, that such a visitation from God had fallen upon Him (ל as in Isa. 24:16 and Isa. 26:16, where the sentence is in the same logical subordination to the previous one as it is here, where Dachselt gives this interpretation, which is logically quite correct: *propter praevaricationem populi mei plaga ei contingente*).

Isaiah 53:9. After this description in v. 7 of the patience with which He suffered, and in v. 8 of the manner in which He died, there follows a retrospective glance at His burial. V. 9. “And

they assigned Him His grave with sinners, and with a rich man in His martyrdom, because He had done no wrong, and there was no deceit in His mouth.” The subject to ויתן (assigned) is not Jehovah, although this would not be impossible, since נגע has Jehovah as the latent subject; but it would be irreconcilable with v. 10, where Jehovah is introduced as the subject with antithetical prominence. It would be better to assume that “my people” is the subject; but as this would make it appear as if the statement introduced in v. 8b with *kī* (for) were continued here, we seem compelled to refer it to *dōrō* (His generation), which occurs in the principal clause. No objection could be offered to our regarding “His own generation” as the subject; but *dōrō* is somewhat too far removed for this; and if the prophet had had the contemporaries of the sufferer in his mind, he would most likely have used a plural verb (*vayyittnū*). Some, therefore, supply a personal subject of the most general kind to *yittēn* (which occurs even with a neuter subject, like the German *es gibt*, Fr. *il y a*, Eng. “there is;” cf., Prov. 13:10): “they (*on*) gave;” and looking at the history of the fulfilment, we confess that this is the rendering we prefer. In fact, without the commentary supplied by the fulfilment, it would be impossible to understand v. 9a at all. The earlier translators did great violence to the text, and yet failed to bring out any admissible thought. And the explanation which is most generally adopted now, viz., that עשיר is the synonymous parallel to רשעים (as even Luther rendered it, “and died like a rich man,” with the marginal gloss, “a rich man who sets all his heart upon riches, i.e., a wicked man”), is also untenable; for even granting that *’āshīr* could be proved by examples to be sometimes used as synonymous with רשע, as עני and אביון are as synonyms of צדיק, this would be just the passage in which it would be least possible to sustain any such use of the word; since he who finds his grave with rich men, whether with the godly or the ungodly, would thereby have received a decent, and even honourable burial.

This is so thoroughly sustained by experience, as to need no confirmation from such passages as Job 21:32. Hitzig has very good ground, therefore, for opposing this “synonymous” explanation; but when he adopts the rendering *lapsator*, after the Arabic *tûr*, this is quite as much in opposition to Arabic usage (according to which this word merely signifies a person who falls into error, and makes a mistake in speaking), as it is to the Hebrew. Ewald changes עשיר into עשיק (a word which has no existence); and Böttcher alters it into עשי רע, which is comparatively the best suggestion of all. Hofmann connects the two words עשיר במותו, “men who have become rich through the murders that they have treacherously caused” (though without being able to adduce any proof that *môth* is ever applied to the death which one person inflicts upon another). At any rate, all these attempts spring from the indisputable assumption, that to be rich is not in itself a sin which deserves a dishonourable burial, to say nothing of its receiving one.

If, therefore, רשעים and עשיר are not kindred ideas, they must be antithetical; but it is no easier to establish a purely ethical antithesis than an ethical coincidence. If, however, we take the word רשעים as suggesting the idea of persons found guilty, or criminals (an explanation which the juridical context of the passage well sustains; see at Isa. 50:9), we get a contrast which our own usage of speech also draws between a rich man who is living in the enjoyment of his own possessions, and a delinquent who has become impoverished to the utmost, through hatred, condemnation, ruin. And if we reflect that the Jewish rulers would have given to Jesus the same dishonourable burial as to the two thieves, but that the Roman authorities handed over the body to Joseph the Arimathæan, a “rich man” (Matt. 27:57), who placed it in the sepulchre in his own garden, we see an agreement at once between the gospel history and the prophetic words, which could only be the work of the God of both the prophecy and its fulfilment,

inasmuch as no suspicion could possibly arise of there having been any human design of bringing the former into conformity with the latter. But if it be objected, that according to the parallel the *’âshîr* must be regarded as dead, quite as much as the *rshâ’im*, we admit the force of this objection, and should explain it in this way: “They assigned Him His grave with criminals, and after He had actually died a martyr’s death, with a rich man;” i.e., He was to have lain where the bodies of criminals lie, but He was really laid in a grave that was intended for the corpse of a rich man. The rendering adopted by Vitranga and others, “and He was with a rich man in his death,” is open to this objection, that such a clause, to be quite free from ambiguity, would require ואת-עשיר הוא במותו. Hengstenberg and Stier very properly refer both ויתן and קברו, which must be repeated in thought, to the second clause as well as the first. The rendering *tumulum ejus* must be rejected, since *bâmâh* never has this meaning; and במתו, which is the pointing sustained by three *Codd.*, would not be *mausolea*, but a lofty burial-hill, after the fashion of the *Hünengräber* (certain “giants’ graves,” or barrows, in Holstein and Saxony). מותו is a *plur. exaggerativus* here, as in Ezek. 28:10 (compare *mmôthê* in Ezek. 28:8 and Jer. 16:4); it is applied to a violent death, the very pain of which makes it like dying again and again. The first clause states with whom they at first assigned Him His grave; the second with whom it was assigned Him, after He had really died a painful death. “Of course,” as F. Philippi observes, “this was not a thorough compensation for the ignominy of having died the death of a criminal; but the honourable burial, granted to one who had been ignominiously put to death, showed that there must be something very remarkable about Him. It was the beginning of the glorification which commenced with His death.” If we have correctly interpreted the second clause, there can be no doubt in our minds, since we cannot shake the word of God like a kaleidoscope, and multiply the *sensus complex*,

as Stier does, that עַל לֹא (= על-אֲשֶׁר לֹא) does not mean “notwithstanding that not,” as in Job 16:17, but “because not,” like על-בְּלִי in Gen. 31:20. The reason why the Servant of God received such honourable treatment immediately after His ignominious martyrdom, was to be found in His freedom from sin, in the fact that He had done no wrong, and there was no deceit in His mouth (LXX and 1 Pet. 2:22, where the clause is correctly rendered οὐδὲ εὐρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ). His actions were invariably prompted by pure love, and His speech consisted of unclouded sincerity and truth.

Isaiah 53:10. The last turn in the prophecy, which commences here, carries out v. 6b still further, and opens up the background of His fate. The gracious counsel of God for our salvation was accomplished thus. V. 10. “*And it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, to afflict Him with disease; if His soul would pay a trespass-offering, He should see posterity, should live long days, and the purpose of Jehovah should prosper through His hand.*” הִחֲלִי cannot possibly be equivalent to הִחֲלִי, as Hitzig supposes. An article appended to a noun never obliterates the fundamental character of its form (not even in הִאָּרַךְ). Nor does Böttcher’s suggestion, that we should read הִחֲלִי as an accusative of more precise definition, commend itself; for what would the article do in that case? It is the *hiphil* of חָלָה, like the Syriac *agli* from *glo*; or rather, as even in Syriac this אַגְלִי is equivalent to אַגְלִיא, of חָלָה, 2 Chron. 16:12 (cf., תַּחֲלוּאִים), like הִחֲלִי in 2 Kings 13:6 and Jer. 32:35, from אָחַז. אָחַז is placed under דָּכָא (= דָּכָא with *Dag. dirimens*) in Gesenius’ Lexicon; but this substantive is a needless fiction. דָּכָא is an inf. *piel*: *conterere eum* (Jerome), not καθαρίσαι αὐτόν (LXX from דָּכָה = דָּכָה). According to Mic. 6:13 (הִחֲלִיתִי הַבּוֹתֶךָ), I hurt to smite thee, i.e., I smite thee with a painful blow), אָחַז הִחֲלִי are apparently connected, in the sense of “And it pleased

Jehovah to bruise Him painfully.” But both logically and syntactically this would require the opposite construction, viz., הַחֲלִי דָּכָא. אָחַז must therefore be an infinitive, depending upon אָחַז, according to Job 33:32 (= εὐδόκησε; the LXX thoughtlessly renders it βούλεται). The infinitive construction is then changed into the finite; for even הַחֲלִי is subordinate to אָחַז, as in Hos. 5:11 (cf., Isa. 42:21; Ges. § 142, 3); “he would, made ill,” being equivalent to “he would make ill,” i.e., he would plunge into distress. There is no necessity to repeat דָּכָא after הַחֲלִי, in the sense of “he caused sore evil therewith,” viz., with the דָּכָא. It was *men* who inflicted upon the Servant of God such crushing suffering, such deep sorrow; but the supreme *causa efficiens* in the whole was *God*, who made the sin of men subservient to His pleasure, His will, and predetermined counsel. The suffering of His Servant was to be to Him the way to glory, and this way of His through suffering to glory was to lead to the establishment of a church of the redeemed, which would spring from Him; in other words, it would become the commencement of that fulfilment of the divine plan of salvation which He, the ever-living, ever-working One, would carry out to completion. We give up the idea that אָחַז is to be taken as addressed by Jehovah to “His Servant.” The person acting is the Servant, and it is to Jehovah that the action refers. But Hofmann’s present view, viz., that *tâsim* is addressed to the people, is still less admissible. It is the people who are speaking here; and although the confession of the penitent Israel runs on from v. 11 (where the confessing retrospective view of the past becomes prospective and prophetic glance at the future) in a direct prophetic tone, and v. 10 might form the transition to this; yet, if the people were addressed in this word *tâsim*, it would be absolutely necessary that it should be distinctly mentioned in this connection. And is it really Israel which makes the soul of the Servant an *’ashâm*, and not rather the Servant Himself? No doubt it is true, that if nothing further were

stated here than that “the people made the life of the Servant of God an *’âshâm*, inasmuch as it treated Him just as if it had a pricking in its conscience so long as it suffered Him to live,” — which is a natural sequel in Hofmann’s case to his false assumption, that the passion described in Isa. 53 was merely the culminating point in the sufferings which the Servant was called to endure *as a prophet*, whereas the prophet falls into the background here behind the sacrifice and the priest,—we should no doubt have one scriptural testimony less to support the *satisfactio vicaria*.

But if we adopt the following rendering, which is the simplest, and the one least open to exception: if His soul offered (placed, i.e., should have placed; cf., Job 14:14, *si mortuus fuerit*) an *’âshâm*,—it is evident that *’âshâm* has here a sacrificial meaning, and indeed a very definite one, inasmuch as the *’âshâm* (the trespass-offering) was a sacrifice, the character of which was very sharply defined. It is self-evident, however, that the *’âshâm* paid by the soul of the Servant must consist in the sacrifice of itself, since He pays it by submitting to a violent death; and a sacrifice presented by the *nephesh* (the soul, the life, the very self) must be not only one which proceeds from itself, but one which consists in itself. If, then, we would understand the point of view in which the self-sacrifice of the Servant of God is placed when it is called an *’âshâm*, we must notice very clearly the characteristic distinction between this kind of sacrifice and every other. Many of the ritual distinctions, however, may be indicated superficially, inasmuch as they have no bearing upon the present subject, where we have to do with an antitypical and personal sacrifice, and not with a typical and animal one. The *’âshâm* was a *sanctissimum*, like that of the sin-offering (Lev. 6:10, 17, and 14:13), and according to Lev. 7:7 there was “one law” for them both. This similarity in the treatment was restricted simply to the fact, that the fat portions of the trespass-offering, as well as of the sin-offering, were placed upon the altar, and that the remainder, as in the case of those sin-offerings the blood of which was not taken into the

interior of the holy place, was assigned to the priests and to the male members of the priestly families (see Lev. 6:22; 7:6). There were the following points of contrast, however, between these two kinds of sacrifice: (1.) The material of the *sin-offerings* varied considerably, consisting sometimes of a bullock, sometimes of a pair of doves, and even of meal without oil or incense; whereas the *trespass-offering* always consisted of a ram, or at any rate of a male sheep. (2.) The choice of the victim, and the course adopted with its blood, was regulated in the case of the *sin-offering* according to the condition of the offerer; but in the case of the *trespass-offering* they were neither of them affected by this in the slightest degree. (3.) *Sin-offerings* were presented by the congregation, and upon holy days, whereas *trespass-offerings* were only presented by individuals, and never upon holy days. (4.) In connection with the *trespass-offering* there was none of the smearing of the blood (*nthînâh*) or of the sprinkling of the blood (*hazzâ’âh*) connected with the *sin-offering*, and the pouring out of the blood at the foot of the altar (*shphîkhâh*) is never mentioned. The ritual for the blood consisted purely in the swinging out of the blood (*zrîqâh*), as in the case of the whole offering and of the peace-offerings. There is only one instance in which the blood of the trespass-offering is ordered to be smeared, viz., upon certain portions of the body of the leper (Lev. 14:14), for which the blood of the sin-offering that was to be applied exclusively to the altar could not be used. And in general we find that, in the case of the trespass-offering, instead of the altar-ritual, concerning which the law is very brief (Lev. 7:1–7), other acts that are altogether peculiar to it are brought prominently into the foreground (Lev. 5:14ff.; Num. 5:5–8). These are all to be accounted for from the fact that a trespass-offering was to be presented by the man who had unintentionally laid hands upon anything holy, e.g., the tithes or first-fruits, or who had broken any commandment of God “in ignorance” (if indeed this is to be taken as the meaning of the expression “and wist it not” in Lev. 5:17–19); also by the man who had in any way defrauded

his neighbour (which was regarded as unfaithfulness towards Jehovah), provided he anticipated it by a voluntary confession,—this included the violation of another's conjugal rights in the case of a bondmaid (Lev. 19:20–22); also by a leper or a Nazarite defiled by contact with a corpse, at the time of their purification, because their uncleanness involved the neglect and interruption of the duties of worship which they were bound to observe. Wherever a material restitution was possible, it was to be made with the addition of a fifth; and in the one case mentioned in Lev. 19:20–22, the trespass-offerings was admissible even after a judicial punishment had been inflicted. But in every case the guilty person had to present the animal of the trespass-offering “according to thy valuation, O priest, in silver shekels,” i.e., according to the priests' taxation, and in holy coin. Such was the prominence given to the person of the priest in the ritual of the trespass-offering. In the sin-offering the priest is always the representative of the offerer; but in the trespass-offering he is generally the representative of God. The trespass-offering was a restitution or compensation made to God in the person of the priest, a payment or penance which made amends for the wrong done, a *satisfactio* in a disciplinary sense. And this is implied in the name; for just as תשובה denotes first the sin, then the punishment of the sin and the expiation of the sin, and hence the sacrifice which cancels the sin; so *'ashâm* signifies first the guilt or debt, then the compensation or penance, and hence (cf., Lev. 5:15) the sacrifice which discharges the debt or guilt, and sets the man free.

Every species of sacrifice had its own primary idea. The fundamental idea of the *'olâh* (burnt-offering) was *oblatio*, or the offering of worship; that of the *shlâmîm* (peace-offerings), *conciliatio*, or the knitting of fellowship that of the *minchâh* (meat-offering), *donatio*, or sanctifying consecration; that of the *chattâ'th* (sin-offering), *expiatio*, or atonement; that of the *'ashâm* (trespass-offering), *mulcta*

(*satisfactio*), or a compensatory payment. The self-sacrifice of the Servant of Jehovah may be presented under all these points of view. It is the complete antitype, the truth, the object, and the end of all the sacrifices. So far as it is the antitype of the “whole offering,” the central point in its antitypical character is to be found in the offering of His entire personality (προσφορὰ τοῦ σώματος, Heb. 10:10) to God for a sweet smelling savour (Eph. 5:2); so far as it is the antitype of the sin-offering, in the shedding of His blood (Heb. 9:13, 14), the “blood of sprinkling” (Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2); so far as it is the antitype of the *shlâmîm*, and especially of the passover, in the sacramental participation in His one self-sacrifice, which He grants to us in His courts, thus applying to us His own redeeming work, and confirming our fellowship of peace with God (Heb. 13:10; 1 Cor. 5:7), since the *shlâmîm* derive their name from *shâlôm*, *pax, communitio*; so far as it is the antitype of the trespass-offering, in the equivalent rendered to the justice of God for the sacrileges of our sins. The idea of compensatory payment, which Hofmann extends to the whole sacrifice, understanding by *kipper* the covering of the guilt in the sense of a debt (*debitum*), is peculiar to the *'ashâm*; and at the same time an idea, which Hofmann cannot find in the sacrifices, is expressed here in the most specific manner, viz., that of *satisfaction* demanded by the justice of God, and of *paena* outweighing the guilt contracted (cf., *nirtsâh*, Isa. 40:2); in other words, the idea of *satisfactio vicaria* in the sense of Anselm is brought out most distinctly here, where the soul of the Servant of God is said to present such an atoning sacrifice for the whole, that is to say, where He offers Himself as such a sacrifice by laying down the life so highly valued by God (Isa. 42:1; 49:5). As the verb most suitable to the idea of the *'ashâm* the writer selects the verb *sîm*, which is generally used to denote the giving of a pledge (Job 17:3), and is therefore the most suitable word for every kind of *satisfactio* that represents a direct *olutio*. The apodosis to “if His soul shall have paid the penalty (*paenam* or *mulctam*)” are expressed in the future, and therefore state

ISAIAH	Page 420
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

what would take place when the former should have been done. He should see posterity (vid., Gen. 50:23; Job 42:16), i.e., should become possessed of a large family of descendants stretching far and wide. The reference here is to the new "seed of Israel," the people redeemed by Him, the church of the redeemed out of Israel and all nations, of which He would lay the foundation. Again, He should live long days, as He says in Rev. 1:18, "I was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Thirdly, the pleasure of Jehovah should prosper "in His hand," i.e., through the service of His mediation, or (according to the primary meaning of *tsâlach*) should go on advancing incessantly, and pressing on to the final goal. His self-sacrifice, therefore, merely lays the foundation for a progressively self-realizing "pleasure of the Lord," i.e., (cf., Isa. 44:28) for the realization of the purpose of God according to His determinate counsel, the fuller description of which we had in Isa. 42 and 49, where it was stated that He should be the mediator of a new covenant, and the restorer of Israel, the light of the Gentiles and salvation of Jehovah even to the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 53:11. This great work of salvation lies as the great object of His calling in the hand of the deceased and yet eternally living One, and goes on victoriously through His mediation. He now reaps the fruit of His self-sacrifice in a continuous priestly course. V. 11. "*Because of the travail of His soul, He will see, and be refreshed; through His knowledge will He procure justice, my righteous servant, for the many, and will take their iniquities upon Himself.*" The prophecy now leaves the standpoint of Israel's retrospective acknowledgment of the long rejected Servant of God, and becomes once more the prophetic organ of God Himself, who acknowledges the servant as His own. The *min* of מֵעֵמֶל might be used here in its primary local signification, "far away from the trouble" (as in Job 21:9, for example); or the temporal meaning which is derived from the local would be also admissible, viz., "from the time of the trouble,"

i.e., immediately after it (as in Ps. 73:20); but the causal sense is the most natural, viz., on account of, in consequence of (as in Ex. 2:23), which not only separates locally and links together temporarily, but brings into intimate connection. The meaning therefore is, "In consequence of the trouble of His soul (i.e., trouble experienced not only in His body, but into the inmost recesses of His soul), He will see, satisfy Himself." Hitzig supplies בָּטוֹב (Jer. 29:32); Knobel connects בְּדַעְתּוֹ, in opposition to the accents (like A. S. Th. ἐμπλησθήσεται ἐν τῇ γνώσει αὐτοῦ), thus: "He looks at His prudent work, and has full satisfaction therewith." But there is nothing to supply, and no necessity to alter the existing punctuation. The second verb receives its colouring from the first; the expression "He will see, will satisfy Himself," being equivalent to "He will enjoy a satisfying or pleasing sight" (cf., Ps. 17:15), which will consist, as v. 10*b* clearly shows, in the successful progress of the divine work of salvation, of which He is the Mediator. בְּדַעְתּוֹ belongs to יִצְדִּיק as the medium of setting right (cf., Prov. 11:9). This is connected with לְ in the sense of "procure justice," like לְ רָפָא (Isa. 6:10); לְ הַגִּיתָ in Isa. 14:3; 28:12 (cf., Dan. 11:33, לְ הַבִּין, to procure intelligence; Gen. 45:7, לְ הַחֲיֶה, to prolong life,—a usage which leads on to the Aramaean combination of the dative with the accusative, e.g., Job 37:18, compare 5:2). *Tsaddîq* 'abhdî do not stand to one another in the relation of a proper name and a noun in apposition, as Hofmann thinks, nor is this expression to be interpreted according to הַמִּלֵּךְ הַדָּוִד (Ges. § 113); but "a righteous man, my servant," with the emphatic prominence given to the attribute (cf., Isa. 10:30; 23:12, Ps. 89:51), is equivalent to "my righteous servant." But does בְּדַעְתּוֹ mean *per cognitionem sui*, or *per cognitionem suam*? The former gives a sense which is both doctrinally satisfying and practically correct: the Righteous One makes others partakers of righteousness, through

their knowledge of Him, His person, and His work, and (as the biblical דָּעַת , which has reference not only to the understanding, but to personal experience also, clearly signifies) through their entrance into living fellowship with Him. Nearly all the commentators, who understand by the servant of God the Divine Redeemer, give the preference to this explanation (e.g., Vtringa, Hengstenberg, and Stier). But the meaning preferred is not always the correct one. The subjective rendering of the suffix (cf., Prov. 22:17) is favoured by Mal. 2:7, where it is said that “the priest’s lips should keep *da’ath* (knowledge);” by Dan. 12:3, where faithful teachers are called *matsdīqē hârabbīm* (they that turn many to righteousness); and by Isa. 11:2, according to which “the spirit of knowledge” (*rūäch da’ath*) is one of the seven spirits that descend upon the sprout of Jesse; so that “knowledge” (*da’ath*) is represented as equally the qualification for the priestly, the prophetic, and the regal calling. It is a very unseemly remark, therefore, on the part of a modern commentator, when he speaks of the subjective knowledge of the Servant as “halting weakly behind in the picture, after His sacrificial death has already been described.” We need only recal to mind the words of the Lord in Matt. 11:27, which are not only recorded both by the synoptists and by John, but supported by testimony outside the Gospels also: “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” Let us remember also, that the Servant of Jehovah, whose priestly mediatorial work is unfolded before us here in Isa. 53, upon the ground of which He rises to more than regal glory (Isa. 52:15, compare 53:12), is no other than He to whom His God has given the tongue of the learned, “to know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary, i.e., to raise up the weary and heavy laden” (Isa. 50:4). He knows God, with whom He stands in loving fellowship; He knows the counsels of His love and the will of His grace, in the fulfilment of which His own life ascends, after having gone down into death and come forth from death; and by virtue of this

knowledge, which rests upon His own truest and most direct experience, He, the righteous One, will help “the many,” i.e., the great mass (*hârabbīm* as in Dan. 9:27; 11:33, 39; 12:3; cf., Ex. 23:2, where *rabbīm* is used in the same sense without the article), hence all His own nation, and beyond that, all mankind (so far as they were susceptible of salvation; = τοῖς πολλοῖς, Rom. 5:19, cf., πολλῶν, Matt. 26:28), to a right state of life and conduct, and one that should be well-pleasing to God. The primary reference is to the righteousness of faith, which is the consequence of justification on the ground of His atoning work, when this is believably appropriated; but the expression also includes that righteousness of life, which springs by an inward necessity out of those sanctifying powers, that are bound up with the atoning work which we have made our own (see Dan. 9:24). The ancients recognised this connection between the *justitia fidei et vitae* better than many of the moderns, who look askance at the Romish *justitia infusa*, and therewith boast of advancing knowledge. Because our righteousness has its roots in the forgiveness of sins, as an absolutely unmerited gift of grace without works, the prophecy returns once more from the justifying work of the Servant of God to His sin-expunging work as the basis of all righteousness: “He shall bear their iniquities.” This *yisbōl* (He shall bear), which stands along with futures, and therefore, being also future itself, refers to something to be done after the completion of the work to which He is called in this life (with which Hofmann connects it), denotes the continued operation of His *sbhâlâm* (v. 4), through His own active mediation. His continued lading of our trespasses upon Himself is merely the constant presence and presentation of His atonement, which has been offered once for all. The dead yet living One, because of His one self-sacrifice, is an eternal Priest, who now lives to distribute the blessings that He has acquired.

Isaiah 53:12. The last reward of His thus working after this life for the salvation of sinners, and also of His work in this life upon which the former is founded, is victorious

dominion. V. 12. "Therefore I give Him a portion among the great, and with strong ones will He divide spoil; because He has poured out His soul into death: and He let Himself be reckoned among transgressors; whilst He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The promise takes its stand between humiliation and exaltation, and rests partly upon the working of the exalted One, and partly upon the doing and suffering of One who was so ready to sacrifice Himself. Luther follows the LXX and Vulgate, and adopts the rendering, "Therefore will I give Him a great multitude for booty;" and Hävernick, Stier, and others adopt essentially the same rendering, "Therefore will I apportion to Him the many." But, as Job 39:17 clearly shows, this clause can only mean, "Therefore will I give Him a portion in the many." If, however, *chillēq b'* means to have a portion in anything, and not to give the thing itself as a portion, it is evident that *hârabbîm* here are not the many, but the great; and this is favoured by the parallel clause. The ideas of greatness and force, both in multitude and might, are bound up together in *rabh* and *'âtsûm* (see Isa. 8:7), and the context only can decide which rendering is to be adopted when these ideas are separated from one another. What is meant by "giving a portion *bârabbîm*," is clearly seen from such passages as Isa. 52:15; 49:7, according to which the great ones of the earth will be brought to do homage to Him, or at all events to submit to Him. The second clause is rendered by Luther, "and He shall have the strong for a prey." This is at any rate better than the rendering of the LXX and Vulgate, "*et fortium dividet spolia*." But Prov. 16:19 shows that *חַסְדֵּי* is a preposition. Strong ones surround Him, and fight along with Him. The reference here is to the people of which it is said in Ps. 110:3, "They people are thorough devotion in the day of Thy power;" and this people, which goes with Him to battle, and joins with Him in the conquest of the hostile powers of the world (Rev. 19:14), also participates in the enjoyment of the spoils of His victory. With this victorious sway is He rewarded, because He has poured out His soul unto death, having not only

exposed His life to death, but "poured out" (*he'êrâh*, to strip or empty, or pour clean out, even to the very last remnant) His life-blood into death (*lammâveth* like the *Lamed* in Ps. 22:16), and also because He has suffered Himself to be reckoned with transgressors, i.e., numbered among them (*niph. tolerativum*), namely, in the judgment of His countrymen, and in the unjust judgment (*mishpât*) by which He was delivered up to death as a wicked apostate and transgressor of the law. With *וְהוּא* there is attached to *וְאֶת-פְּשָׁעֵים נִמְנָה* (He was numbered with the transgressors), if not in a subordinate connection (like *וְהוּא* in v. 5; compare Isa. 10:7), the following antithesis: He submitted cheerfully to the death of a sinner, and yet He was no sinner, but "bare the sin of many (cf., Heb. 9:28), and made intercession for the transgressors." Many adopt the rendering, "and He takes away the sin of many, and intervenes on behalf of the transgressors." But in this connection the preterite *נִשָּׂא* can only relate to something antecedent to the foregoing future, so that *יִפְגֹּעַ* denotes a connected past; and thus have the LXX and Vulg. correctly rendered it. Just as *כִּי הִפְגִּיעַ בּוֹ* in v. 6b signifies to cause to fall upon a person, so in Jer. 15:11 it signifies to make one approach another (in supplication). Here, however, as in Isa. 59:16, the *hiphil* is not a causative, but has the intensive force of the *kal*, viz., to press forward with entreaty, hence to intercede (with a *Lâmed* of the person on whose behalf it occurs). According to the *cons. temporum*, the reference is not to the intercession (ἔντευξις) of the glorified One, but to that of the suffering One, on behalf of His foes. Every word stands here as if written beneath the cross on Golgotha. And this is the case with the clause before us, which was fulfilled (though not exclusively) in the prayer of the crucified Saviour: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). "The prophetic view," says Oehler, who agrees with us in the general opinion that the idea of the Servant of Jehovah has three distinct stages, "ascends in these discourses step by step, as it

were, from the one broad space covered by the foundation-walls of a cathedral up to the very summit with its giddy height, on which the cross is planted; and the nearer it reaches the summit, the more conspicuous do the outlines of the cross itself become, until at last, when the summit is reached, it rests in peace, having attained what it desired when it set its foot upon the first steps of the temple tower." There is something very striking in this figure. Here, in the very centre of this book of consolation, we find the idea of the Servant of Jehovah at the very summit of its ascent. It has reached the goal. The Messianic idea, which was hidden in the general idea of the nation regarded as "the servant of Jehovah," has gradually risen up in the most magnificent metamorphosis from the depths in which it was thus concealed. And this fusion has generated what was hitherto altogether strange to the figure of the Messiah, viz., the *unio mystica capitis et corporis*. Hitherto Israel has appeared simply as the nation governed by the Messiah, the army which He conducted into battle, the commonwealth ordered by Him. But now, in the person of the Servant of Jehovah, we see Israel itself in personal self-manifestation: the idea of Israel is fully realized, and the true nature of Israel shines forth in all its brilliancy. Israel is the body, and He the head, towering above it. Another element, with which we found the Messianic idea enriched even before Isa. 53, was the *munus triplex*. As early as Isa. 7-12 the figure of the Messiah stood forth as the figure of a King; but the Prophet like unto Moses, promised in Deut. 18:15, was still wanting. But, according to Isa. 42, 49, 50, the servant of Jehovah is first a prophet, and as the proclaimer of a new law, and the mediator of a new covenant, really a second Moses; at the close of the work appointed Him, however, He receives the homage of kings, whilst, as Isa. 53 clearly shows, that self-sacrifice lies between, on the ground of which He rules above as Priest after the order of Melchizedek,—in other words, a Priest and also a King. From this point onward there are added to the Messianic idea the further elements of the *status duplex* and the

satisfactio vicaria. David was indeed the type of the twofold state of his antitype, inasmuch as it was through suffering that he reached the throne; but where have we found, in all the direct Messianic prophecies anterior to this, the suffering path of the *Ecce Homo* even to the grave? But the Servant of Jehovah goes through shame to glory, and through death to life. He conquers when He falls; He rules after being enslaved; He lives after He has died; He completes His work after He Himself has been apparently cut off. His glory streams upon the dark ground of the deepest humiliation, to set forth which the dark colours were supplied by the pictures of suffering contained in the Psalms and in the book of Job. And these sufferings of His are not merely the sufferings of a confessor or a martyr, like those of the *ecclesia pressa*, but a vicarious atoning suffering, a sacrifice for sin. To this the chapter before us returns again and again, being never tired of repeating it. "*Spiritus Sanctus*," says Brentius, "*non delectatur inani βαπτολογία, et tamen quum in hoc cap. videatur βαπτολόγος και ταυτολόγος esse, dubium non est, quin tractet rem cognitu maxime necessariam.*" The banner of the cross is here set up. The curtain of the most holy is lifted higher and higher. The blood of the typical sacrifice, which has been hitherto dumb, begins to speak. Faith, which penetrates to the true meaning of the prophecy, hopes on not only for the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but also for the Lamb of God, which beareth the sin of the world. And in prophecy itself we see the after-effect of this gigantic advance. Zechariah no longer prophesies of the Messiah merely as a king (Zech. 5:13); He not only rules upon His throne, but is also a priest upon His throne: sovereignty and priesthood go hand in hand, being peacefully united in Him. And in Zech. 12:13 the same prophet predicts in Him the good Divine Shepherd, whom His people pierce, though not without thereby fulfilling the counsel of God, and whom they afterwards long for with bitter lamentation and weeping. The penitential and believing confession which would then be made by Israel is prophetically

depicted by Isaiah's pen—"mourning in bitter sorrow the lateness of its love."

Isaiah 54

Sixth Prophecy

The Glory of Jerusalem, the Church of the Servants of Jehovah

Isaiah 54:1. After the "Servant of God" has expiated the sin of His people by the sacrifice of Himself, and Israel has acknowledged its fault in connection with the rejected One, and entered into the possession and enjoyment of the salvation procured by Him, the glory of the church, which has thus become a partaker of salvation through repentance and faith, is quite ready to burst forth. Hence the prophet can now exclaim, v. 1: "*Exult, O barren one, thou that didst not bear; break forth into exulting, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for there are more children of the solitary one than children of the married wife, saith Jehovah.*" The words are addressed to Jerusalem, which was a counterpart of Sarah in her barrenness at first, and her fruitfulness afterwards (Isa. 41:1-3). She is not תֵּלֵד לֹא עֲקָרָה (Job 24:21), but עֲקָרָה לֹא יֵלְדָה (Judg. 13:2); not indeed that she had never had any children, but during her captivity and exile she had been robbed of her children, and as a holy city had given birth to no more (Isa. 49:21). She was *shōmēmâh*, rendered *solitary* (2 Sam. 13:20; the allusion is to her depopulation as a city), whereas formerly she was בְּעוֹלָה, i.e., enjoyed the fellowship of Jehovah her husband (*ba'al*). But this condition would not last (for Jehovah had not given her a divorce): she was therefore to exult and shout, since the number of children which she would now have, as one desolate and solitary, would be greater than the number of those which she had as a married wife.

Isaiah 54:2. With this prospect before her, even her dwelling-place would need enlarging. V. 2. "*Enlarge the space of thy tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of thy habitations; forbid not! lengthen thy cords, and fasten thy plugs.*"

She is to widen out the space inside her tent, and they (יֵט has no definite subject, which is often the case where some subordinate servant is to be thought of) are to spread out far and wide the coverings of the framework of her dwelling, which is called *mishknōth* (in the plural) on account of its roominess and magnificence: she is not to forbid it, thinking in her weakness of faith, "It is good enough as it is; it would be too large." The cords which hold up the walls, she is to lengthen; and the plugs, to which the cords are fastened, she is to ram fast into the earth: the former because the tent (i.e., the holy city, Jer. 31:38-40, and the dwelling-place of the church generally, Isa. 26:15) has to receive a large number of inhabitants; the latter because it will not be broken up so soon again (Isa. 33:20).

Isaiah 54:3. The reason why the tent is to be so large and strong is given in v. 3: "*For thou wilt break forth on the right and on the left; and thy seed will take possession of nations, and they will people desolate cities.*" "On the right and on the left" is equivalent to "on the south and north" (Ps. 89:13, the speaker being supposed to have his face turned towards the east: compare the Sanscrit *apân*, situated at the back, i.e., towards the west). We must supply both west and east, since the promises contained in such passages as Gen. 15:18-21 remained unfulfilled even in the age of David and Solomon. Jerusalem will now spread out, and break through all her former bounds (*pârats* is used in the same sense in Gen. 28:14); and her seed (i.e., the seed acquired by the Servant of Jehovah, the dead yet eternally living One, the σπέρμα, whose σπέρμα He Himself is) will take possession of nations (*yârash, yârēsh, capessere, occupare*; more especially κληρονομεῖν, syn. *nâchal*); and *they* (i.e., the children born to her) will people desolate cities (*hōshībh*, the causative of *yâshabh*, to be inhabited, Isa. 14:20). Thus will the promise be fulfilled, that "the meek shall inherit the earth,"—a promise not confined to the Preacher on the mount, but found also in Ps. 37:9-11, and uttered by our own prophet in Isa. 60:21; 65:9.

Isaiah 54:4. The encouraging promise is continued in v. 4: *“Fear not, for thou wilt not be put to shame; and bid defiance to reproach, for thou wilt not blush: no, thou wilt forget the shame of thy youth, and wilt no more remember the reproach of thy widowhood.”* Now that redemption was before the door, Israel was not to fear any more, or to be overcome (as the *niphāl nikhlam* implies) by a felling of the shame consequent upon her state of punishment, or so to behave herself as to leave no room for hope. For a state of things was about to commence, in which she would have no need to be ashamed (on *bōsh* and *chāphēr* or *hechpīr*, see p. 70 note), but which, on the contrary (כִּי, *imo*, as in Isa. 10:7; 55:9), would be so glorious that she would forget the shame of her youth, i.e., of the Egyptian bondage, in which the national community of Israel was still but like a virgin (*‘almāh*), who entered into a betrothal when redeemed by Jehovah, and became His youthful wife through a covenant of love (*ehe = brīth*) when the law was given at Sinai (Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 16:60); so glorious indeed, that she would never again remember the shame of her widowhood, i.e., of the Babylonian captivity, in which she, the wife whom Jehovah had taken to Himself, was like a widow whose husband had died.

Isaiah 54:5. It was no real widowhood, however, but only an apparent one (Jer. 51:5), for the husband of Jerusalem was living still, V. 5. *“For thy husband is thy Creator; Jehovah of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; God of the whole earth is He called.”* The plurals בְּעֲלִידָה and עֲשִׂידָה (see at Isa. 22:11) are to be explained from the plural *‘Elōhīm*, which is connected with plural attributes in Josh. 24:19, 1 Sam. 17:26, Ps. 58:12 (compare מְרִימֵי in Isa. 10:15), and with plural predicates in Gen. 20:13; 35:7, and 2 Sam. 7:23. By such expressions as these, which represent all the plurality of the divine nature as inherent in the One, the religion of revelation, both Israelitish and Christian, exhibits itself as embodying all that is true in polytheism. He who has entered into the

relation of husband to Jerusalem (בְּעֲלִידָה, not בְּעֲלִיָּה, Isa. 1:3) is the very same through whom she first came into existence, the God whose bidding the heavenly hosts obey; and the Redeemer of Jerusalem, the Holy One of Israel, is called the God of the whole earth, and therefore has both the power and the means to help her, as prompted by the relation of love which exists between them.

Isaiah 54:6. And this relation He now renews. V. 6. *“For Jehovah calleth thee as a wife forsaken and burdened with sorrow, and as a wife of youth, when once she is despised, saith thy God.”* The verb קָרָא, which is the one commonly used in these prophecies to denote the call of grace, on the ground of the election of grace, is used here to signify the call into that relation, which did indeed exist before, but had apparently been dissolved. קָרָא is used here out of pause (cf., Isa. 60:9); it stands, however, quite irregularly for the form in *ēkh*, which is the one commonly employed (Judg. 4:20; Ezek. 27:26). *“And as a wife:”* וְכַאֲשֶׁת is equivalent to וְכַאֲשֶׁת.

The hypothetical כִּי תִמְאֵס belongs to the figure. Jehovah calls His church back to Himself, as a husband takes back the wife he loved in his youth, even though he may once have been angry with her. It is with intention that the word נִמְאָסָה is not used. The future (imperfect) indicates what partially happens, but does not become an accomplished or completed fact: He is displeased with her, but He has not cherished aversion or hatred towards her.

Isaiah 54:7, 8. Thus does Jehovah’s displeasure towards Jerusalem pass quickly away; and all the more intense is the manifestation of love which follows His merely momentary anger. Vv. 7, 8. *“For a small moment have I forsaken thee, and with great mercy will I gather thee. In an effusion of anger I hid my face from thee for a moment, and with everlasting grace I have compassion upon thee, saith Jehovah thy Redeemer.”* *“For a small moment”* carries us to the time of the captivity, which was a small moment in comparison with the duration of the

tender and merciful love, with which Jehovah once more received the church into His fellowship in the person of its members. רָגַע in v. 8a is not an adverb, meaning momentarily, as in Isa. 47:9, but an accusative of duration, signifying a single moment long. *Ketseph* signifies wrath regarded as an outburst (*fragor*), like the violence of a storm or a clap of thunder; *shetseph*, which rhymes with it, is explained by A. Schultens, after the Arabic, as signifying *durum et asperum esse*: and hence the rendering adopted by Hitzig, “in hard harshness.” But this yields no antithesis to “everlasting kindness,” which requires that *shetseph* should be rendered in some way that expresses the idea of something transitory or of short duration. The earlier translators felt this, when like the LXX for example, they adopted the rendering ἐν θυμῷ μακρῷ, and others of a similar kind; and Ibn *Labrât*, in his writing against Menahem b. *Zerûk*, who gives *chôrî*, burning heat, as a gloss to *shetseph*, explains it by קָעַט (as Kimchi and others did afterwards). But, as Jakob Tam correctly observes, “this makes the sense purely tautological.” In all probability, *shâtsaph* is a form allied to *shâtap*, as *nâshabh* (Isa. 40:7) is to *nâshaph* (Isa. 40:24), and *qâmat* (Job 16:8) to *qâmats*, which stand in the same relation to one another, so far as the sense is concerned, as bubbling over to flowing over: so that the proper rendering would not be “in the overflowing of glowing heat,” as Umbreit thinks, which would require קָעַט קָצַר (Prov. 27:4), but in the gushing up of displeasure, the overflowing of indignation (Meier). The *ketseph* is only a *shetseph*, a vanishing moment (Jer. *in momento indignationis*), when compared with the true feeling of Jehovah towards Jerusalem, which is *chesed ’ôlâm*, everlasting kindness.

Isaiah 54:9. The ground of this “everlasting kindness” is given in v. 9: “For it is now as at the waters of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah should not overflow the earth any more; so have I sworn not to be wroth with thee, and not to threaten thee.” The commencement of this verse has been a fluctuating one from the

earliest times. The Sept. reading is כְּיָמֵי; that of the Targ., S., Jerome, Syriac, and Saad., בְּיָמֵי; and even the Codd. read sometimes בְּיָמֵי, sometimes כְּיָמֵי (compare Matt. 24:37, ὥσπερ αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ Νῶε οὕτως κ.τ.λ.,—a passage which appears to derive its shape from the one before us, with the reading כְּיָמֵי, and which is expounded in Luke 17:26). If we read כְּיָמֵי, the word זֵאת must refer to the present, as the turning-point between wrath and mercy; but if we read בְּיָמֵי, זֵאת denotes the pouring out of wrath in connection with the captivity. Both readings are admissible; and as even the Septuagint, with its ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος (from the water), gives an indirect support to the reading כְּיָמֵי as one word, this may probably merit the preference, as the one best sustained. אֲשֶׁר is *ubi, quum*, as in Num. 20:13, Ps. 95:9, etc., although it might also be taken as the correlate of the *kên* which follows, as in Jer. 33:22 (cf., 48:8); and in accordance with the accents, we prefer the former. The present turning-point resembles, in Jehovah’s esteem, the days of Noah,—those days in which He swore that a flood should not any more come upon the earth (*min* as in Isa. 5:6 and many other passages): for so does He now confirm with an oath His fixed purpose that no such judgment of wrath as that which has just been endured shall ever fall upon Jerusalem again (נָגַד denotes threatening with a judicial word, which passes at once into effect, as in Isa. 51:20). Hendewerk has the following quibbling remark here: “What the comparison with the flood is worth, we may gather from the alter history, which shows how soon the new Jerusalem and the renovated state succumbed to the judicial wrath of God again.” To this we reply: (1.) That the prophecy refers to the converted Israel of the last days, whose Jerusalem will never be destroyed again. These last days appear to the prophet, according to the general character of all prophecy, as though linked on to the close of the captivity. For throughout all prophecy,

ISAIAH	Page 427
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

along with the far-sightedness imparted by the Spirit, there was also a short-sightedness which the Spirit did not remove; that is to say, the directly divine element of *insight* into the future was associated with a human element of *hope*, which was nevertheless also indirectly divine, inasmuch as it subserved the divine plan of salvation; and this hope brought, as it were, the far distant future into the closest proximity with the troubled present. If, then, we keep this in mind, we shall see that it was quite in order for the prophet to behold the final future on the very edge of the present, and not to see the long and undulating way between. (2.) The Israel which has been plunged by the Romans into the present exile of a thousand years is that part of the nation (Rom. 11:25), which has thrust away the eternal mercy and the unchangeable covenant of peace; but this rejection has simply postponed, and not prevented, the full realization of the salvation promised to Israel as a people. The *covenant* still exists, primarily indeed as an offer on the part of Jehovah, so that it rests with Israel whether it shall continued one-sided or not; but all that is wanted on the part of Israel is faith, to enable it to exchange the shifting soil of its present exile for the rocky foundation of that covenant of peace which has encircled the ages since the captivity (see Hag. 2:9), as the covenant with Noah encircled those after the flood with the covenant sign of the rainbow in the cloud.

Isaiah 54:10. *“For the mountains may depart, and the hills may shake; my grace will not depart from thee, and my covenant of peace will not shake, saith Jehovah who hath compassion on thee.”* Jehovah’s grace and covenant of peace (cf., Num. 25:12) stand as firm as the mountains of God (Ps. 36:7), without departing from Jerusalem (מִיְרוּשָׁלַיִם instead of the usual מִיְרוּשָׁלַיִם) and without shaking; and they will be fulfilled. This fulfilment will not take place either by force or by enchantment; but the church which is to be glorified must pass through sufferings, until it has attained the form which answers to the glory promised to it on oath. And this will also

take place; for the old Jerusalem will come forth as a new one out of the furnace of affliction.

Isaiah 54:11, 12. *“O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, not comforted, behold, I lay thy stones in stibium, and lay thy foundations with sapphires; and make thy minarets of ruby, and thy gates into carbuncles, and all thy boundary into jewels.”* At the present time the church, of which Jerusalem is the metropolis, is sunk in misery, driven with tempest like chaff of the threshing-floor (Hos. 13:3), without comfort; because till now it has waited in vain for any act of consolation on the part of God, and has been scorned rather than comforted by man (סִטְרָה is a *part. kal*, not *pual*; and נִחְמָה 3rd pers. *praet.*

like נִיטְרָה, Isa. 62:12, and רִחְמָה, Hos. 1:6; 2:3). But this will be altered; Jerusalem will rise again from the dust, like a glorious building of God. Jerome makes the following apt remark on v. 11b: *“in stibio, i.e., in the likeness of an elegant woman, who paints her eyes with stibium; referring to the beauty of the city.”* Pūkh is eye-black (*kohl*, cf., *kāchal*, Ezek. 23:40), i.e., a sooty compound, the chief component of which was powdered antimony, or else manganese or lead, and with which oriental women coloured their eyebrows, and more particularly the eyelids both above and below the eyes, that the beauty of the latter might be all the more conspicuous (2 Kings 9:30). The classic φῦκος, *fucus*, has a meaning foreign to the Hebrew word, viz., that of rouge for the cheeks. If, then, *stibium* (antimony), or any blackening collyrium generally, served the purpose of mortar in the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the stones of its walls (not its foundation-stones, אֲבָנֵי יְסוּד, which is the reading adopted by Ewald, but, on the contrary, the visible stones of its towering walls) would look like the eyes of a woman shining forth from the black framework of their painted lids, i.e., they would stand out in splendour from their dark ground. The *Beth* in *bassappīrīm* indicates the means employed. Sapphires serve as foundation-stones, for the foundation of Jerusalem stands as immoveably firm as the

covenant of God. The sapphire blue is the colour of the heaven, of revelation, and of the covenant. The *shmâshôth*, however, i.e., the minarets which stand out like rays of the sun, and also the gates, have a red appearance. Red is the colour of blood, and hence of life and of imperishableness; also the colour of fire and of lightning, and hence of wrath and victory. Jehovah makes the minarets of “ruby.” The Sept. and Jerome adopt the rendering *iaspidem* (a jasper); at any rate, כִּדְכָד (which is the proper way of writing the word: Ewald, § 48, c) is a red sparkling jewel (from *kidkēd*; cf., *kīdōd*, *scintilla*). The arches of the gates He forms of אֲבִנֵי אֶקְדָּח, stones of fiery splendour (from *qâdach*, to burn: hence *qaddachath*, πυρετός), that is to say, or carbuncle stones (from *carbunculus*, a small red-hot coal), like ruby, garnet, etc. Jerome has adopted the false rendering *lapides sculptos*, after Symm. λίθοι γλυφῆς (from קדח = קדד, *findere?*). The accusative of the predicate כדכד is interchanged with אֲבִנֵי אֶקְדָּח, and then with אֲבִנֵי חֲפָץ, to denote the *materia ex qua*. The whole territory (precinct) of Jerusalem is turned by Jehovah into precious stones, that is to say, it appears to be paved with such stones, just as in Tobit 13:17 the streets are said to be “paved with beryl, and carbuncle, and stones of Ophir,” i.e., to be covered with a mosaic formed of precious stones. It is upon the passage before us that Tobit 13:16, 17, and Rev. 21:18–21, are founded. The motley colours of the precious stones, with which the new Jerusalem is adorned, are something more than a mere childish fancy. Whence, then, do the precious stones derive their charm? The ultimate ground of this charm is the fact, that in universal nature everything presses to the light, and that in the mineral world the jewels represent the highest stage of this ascending process. It is the self-unfolding process of the divine glory itself, which is reflected typologically in the several gradations of the manifold play of colours and the transparency of the precious stones. For this reason, the high priest wore a breastplate

with twelve precious stones, upon which were the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; and for this same reason, the author of the Apocalypse carries out into detail in Isa. 21 the picture of the new Jerusalem, which is here sketched by the prophet of the Old Testament (without distinguishing time from eternity), adding crystals and pearls to the precious stones which he there mentions one by one. How can all this be explained, except on the ground that even the mineral world reflects the glory of those eternal lights from which God is called the “Father of lights,” or except on the assumption that the saints in light will one day be able to translate these stony types into the words of God, out of which they have their being?

Isaiah 54:13. The outward glory of the city is only the manifestation, which strikes the senses, of the spiritual glory of the church dwelling therein. V. 13. “*And all thy children will be the learned of Jehovah; and great the peace of thy children.*” We translate both halves of the verse as substantive clauses, although they might be accusatives of both the object and predicate, dependent upon שְׂמֵחֵי ה' לְמוֹדֵי ה' are disciples of Jehovah, but, as in Isa. 50:4, with the subordinate idea of both docility and learning. The children of Jerusalem will need no instruction from man, but carry within them the teaching of heaven, as those who are “taught of God” (διδασκτοὶ Θεοῦ, John 6:45; θεοδιδασκτοὶ, 1 Thess. 4:9). Essentially the same promise is given in Joel 3:1, 2, and Jer. 31:34; and represented in 1 John 2:20 (“Ye have the anointing of the Holy One, and know all things”) as already fulfilled. In the place of the former inward and outward distress, there has no entered *shâlôm*, perfect inward and outward peace, complete salvation, and blessedness as its result. רַב is an adjective, for this form cannot be shown to have existed as a syncopated third pers. *praet.*, like חַי, חַי (= חַיִּי). The verse closes palindromically.

Isaiah 54:14, 15. In perfect keeping with this grace through righteousness, Jerusalem will then stand firm and impregnable. Vv. 14, 15. “*Through righteousness wilt thou be fortified: be*

far from anxiety, for thou hast nothing to fear; and from terror, for it will not come near thee. Behold, men crowd together in crowds; my will is not there. Who crowd together against thee?— he shall fall by thee.” Both the thought and action of Jerusalem will be righteousness then, and it will thereby acquire strength; תְּכוֹנְנִי is a pausal future *hithpalel*, with the ת of the reflective opening syllable assimilated (Ges. § 53, 2, b). With this reciprocal influence of its moral character and imparted glory, it can, and is to keep far away from all thought of oppression and terror; for, through divine grace and a corresponding divine nature, it has nothing to fear. הֵן (v. 15a), when pointing to any transaction as possible (as, for example, in Job 12:14; 23:8), acquires almost the significance of a conditional particle (Ewald, § 103, g). The equally hypothetical parallel clause is clothed in the form of an interrogative. For the verb *gūr*, the meaning “to gather together” (related to אָגַר), more especially to join together with hostile intention (cf., συναγερσθαι, Rev. 19:19; 20:8), is sustained by Ps. 56:7; 59:4; and with גָּרָה, *laccessere*, it has nothing to do (Hitzig and Ewald). אָתָּה has the force of *contra te*, as in the case of verbs of combat. The first apodosis is this: “but it takes place entirely away from me,” i.e., without and against my will; מֵאֹתִי = מֵאֲתִי (as in Isa. 59:21), and אֹתָם = אֲתָם, are no sure signs of a later usage; for this alternation of the two forms of אָת is met with as early as Josh. 14:12. The second apodosis is, “he will fall upon (or against) thee,” or, as we should say, “founder,” or “be wrecked.” It is far more likely that this is the meaning of the words, than that they mean “he will fall to thy lot” (נָפַל עֲלַי, like נָפַל לְ elsewhere, to fall to a person); for the context here is a totally different one from Isa. 45:14, and we look for nothing more than a declaration of the utter failure and ruin of the undertaking.

Isaiah 54:16, 17. Jerusalem will be thus invincible, because Jehovah, the Almighty One,

is its protector. Vv. 16, 17. “Behold, I have created the smith who bloweth the coal-fire, and brings to the light a weapon according to his trade; and I have created the destroyer to destroy. Every weapon formed against thee has no success, and every tongue that cometh before the judgment with thee thou wilt condemn. This the inheritance of the servants of Jehovah; and their righteousness from me, saith Jehovah.” If Jehovah has created the armourer, who forges a weapon לְמַעַשְׂהוֹ (i.e., according to his trade, or according to the thing he has to finish, whether an arrow, or a sword, or a spear; not “for his own use,” as Kimchi supposes), to be used in the hostile army against Jerusalem, He has also created a destroyer (לְהַרְבֵּל) to destroy. The very same creative might, to which the origin of the weapon is to be traced as its primary cause, has opposed to it beforehand a defender of Jerusalem. And as every hostile weapon fails, Jerusalem, in the consciousness of its divine right, will convict every accusing tongue as guilty and deserving of utter condemnation (עַתְּהָרְשִׁיעַ as in Isa. 50:9, cf., 1 Sam. 14:47, where it denotes the punishment of the guilty). The epiphonem in v. 17b, with the retrospective וְזָאת and the words “saith the Lord,” which confirm the certainty of the fulfilment, forms an unmistakeable close to the prophecy. This is the position in which Jehovah has placed His servants as heirs of the future salvation; and this the righteousness which they have received as His gift, and which makes them strong within and victorious without. The individual idea of the church, which we find elsewhere personified as “the servant of Jehovah,” equivalent to “the people in whose heart is my law” (Isa. 51:7), or “my people that have sought me” (Isa. 65:10), is here expanded into “the servants of Jehovah” (as in Isa. 65:8, 9; compare Isa. 59:21 with Isa. 51:16). But totally different colours are employed in Isa. 52:13-Isa. 53 to depict the exaltation of the one “Servant of Jehovah,” from those used here to paint the glory of the church of the “servants of Jehovah,”—a proof that the ideas do not cover one another. That which is the reward of

suffering in the case of the former, is the experience of divine mercy in that of the latter: it becomes a partaker of the salvation purchased by the other. The one "Servant of Jehovah" is the heart of the church, in which the crisis which bursts forth into life is passing; the righteousness of the "servants of Jehovah" is the fruit of the sufferings of this one "Servant of Jehovah," who is Himself **צדיק** and **מצדיק**. He is the Mediator of all the salvation of the church. He is not only its "head," but its "fulness" (**πλήρωμα**) also.

Isaiah 55

Seventh Prophecy

Come and Take the Sure Salvation of Jehovah

Isaiah 55:1, 2. All things are ready; the guests are invited; and nothing is required of them except to come. Vv. 1, 2. *"Alas, all ye thirsty ones, come ye to the water; and ye that have no silver, come ye, buy, and eat! Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without payment! Wherefore do ye weigh silver for that which is not bread, and the result of your labour for that which satisfieth not? O hearken ye to me, and eat the good, and let your soul delight itself in fat."* Hitzig and Knobel understand by water, wine, and milk, the rich material blessings which awaited the exiles on their return to their fatherland, whereas they were now paying tribute and performing service in Babylon without receiving anything in return. But the prophet was acquainted with something higher than either natural water (Isa. 54:3, cf., 41:17) or natural wine (Isa. 25:6). He knew of an eating and drinking which reached beyond the mere material enjoyment (Isa. 65:13); and the expression **טוב ה'**, whilst it includes material blessings (Jer. 31:12), is not exhausted by them (Isa. 63:7, cf., Ps. 27:13), just as **ההתענג** in Isa. 58:14 (cf., Ps. 37:4, 11) does not denote a feeling or worldly, but of spiritual joy. Water, wine, and milk, as the fact that water is placed first clearly shows, are not the produce of the Holy Land, but figurative representations of

spiritual revival, recreation, and nourishment (cf., 1 Pet. 2:2, "the sincere milk of the word"). The whole appeal is framed accordingly. When Jehovah summons the thirsty ones of His people to come to the water, the summons must have reference to something more than the water to which a shepherd leads his flock. And as buying without money or any other medium of exchange is an idea which neutralizes itself in the sphere of natural objects, wine and ilk are here blessings and gifts of divine grace, which are obtained by grace (**χάριτι**, *gratis*), their reception being dependent upon nothing but a sense of need, and a readiness to accept the blessings offered. Again, the use of the verb **שָׁבַרוּ**, which is confined in other passages to the purchase of cereals, is a sufficient proof that the reference is not to natural objects, but to such objects as could properly be compared to cereals. The bread and other provisions, which Israel obtained in its present state of punishment, are called "not bread," and "not serving to satisfy," because that which truly satisfies the soul comes from above, and being of no earthly nature, is to be obtained by those who are the most destitute of earthly supplies. Can any Christian reader fail to recal, when reading the invitation in v. 1, the words of the parable in Matt. 22:4, "All things are now ready?" And does not v. 2 equally suggest the words of Paul in Rom. 11:6, "If by grace, then is it no more of works?" Even the exclamation *hoi* (alas! see Isa. 18:1), with which the passage commences, expresses deep sorrow on account of the unsatisfied thirst, and the toilsome labour which affords nothing but seeming satisfaction. The way to true satisfaction is indicated in the words, "Hearken unto me:" it is the way of the obedience of faith. In this way alone can the satisfaction of the soul be obtained.

Isaiah 55:3-5. And in this way it is possible to obtain not only the satisfaction of absolute need, but a superabundant enjoyment, and an overflowing fulfilment of the promise. Vv. 3-5. *"Incline your ear, and come to me: hear, and let your soul revive; and I will make an everlasting*

covenant with you, the true mercies of David. Behold, I have set him as a witness for nations, a prince and commander of nations. Behold, thou wilt call a mass of people that thou knowest not; and a mass of people that knoweth thee not will hasten to thee, for the sake of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, that He hath made thee glorious." The expression "make a covenant" (*kâraṯh brîṯh*) is not always applied to a superior in relation to an inferior (compare, on the contrary, Ezra 10:3); but here the double-sided idea implied in *pactio* is confined to one side alone, in the sense of a spontaneous *sponsio* having all the force of a covenant (Isa. 61:8; compare 2 Chron. 7:18, where *kâraṯh* by itself signifies "to promise with the force of a covenant"), and also of the offer of a covenant or anticipated conclusion of a covenant, as in Ezek. 34:25, and in the case before us, where "the true mercies of David" are attached to the idea of offering or granting involved in the expression, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you," as a more precise definition of the object. All that is required on the part of Israel is hearing, and coming, and taking: let it do this, and it will be pervaded by new life; and Jehovah will meet with with an everlasting covenant, viz., the unchangeable mercies of David. Our interpretation of this must be dependent chiefly upon whether v. 4 is regarded as looking back to the history of David, or looking forward to something future. In the latter case we are either to understand by "David" the second David (according to Hos. 3:5, Jer. 30:9, Ezek. 34:24), so that the allusion is to the mercies granted in the Messiah, and according to ch.9:7, enduring "from henceforth even for ever;" or else David is the son of Jesse, and "the mercies of David" are the mercies bestowed upon him, which are called "the true mercies" as mercies promised and running into the future (Ps. 89:50; 2 Chron. 6:42), in which case v. 4 explains what David will become in the person of his antitype the second David. The directly Messianic application of the name "David" is to be objected to, on the ground that the Messiah is never so called without further remark;

whilst the following objections may be adduced to the indirectly Messianic interpretation of v. 4 (David in the Messiah): (1.) The change of the tense in vv. 4, 5, which requires that we should assume that v. 4 points backwards into the past, and v. 5 forwards into the future: (2.) That the choice of the expression in vv. 4, 5 is designed to represent what Israel has to look for in the future as going beyond what was historically realized in David; for in v. 5 the mass of the heathen world, which has hitherto stood out of all relation to Israel, answers to the *לְאֻמִּים*: (3.) That the juxtaposition of the Messiah and Israel would be altogether without parallel in these prophecies (Isa. 40–66), and contrary to their peculiar character; for the earlier stereotype idea of the Messiah is here resolved into the idea of the "servant of Jehovah," from which it returns again to its primary use, i.e., from the national basis to the individual, by means of the ascending variations through which this expression passes, and thus reaches a more comprehensive, spiritual, and glorified form. The personal "servant of Jehovah" is undoubtedly no other than the "Son of David" of the earlier prophecy; but the premises, from which we arrive at this conclusion in connection with our prophet, are not that the "servant of Jehovah" is of the seed of David and the final personal realization of the promise of a future king, but that he is of the nation of Israel, and the final personal realization of the idea of Israel, both in its inward nature, and in its calling in relation to the whole world of nations. Consequently vv. 4 and 5 stand to one another in the relation of type and antitype, and the "mercies of David" are called "the true mercies" (Probably with an allusion to 2 Sam. 7:16; cf., Ps. 89:29, 30), as being inviolable,—mercies which had both been realized in the case of David himself, and would be realized still further, inasmuch as they must endure for an everlasting future, and therefore be further and further fulfilled, until they have reached that lofty height, on the summit of which they will remain unchangeable for ever. It is of David the son of Jesse that Jehovah says in v. 4, "I have

given him for a witness to peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples." So far as the sense is concerned, מְצִיָּה is as much a construct as נָגִיד.

In the application to David of the term עֵד, which never means anything but *testis*, witness, in these prophecies, we may clearly see the bent of the prophet's mind towards what is spiritual. David had subdued nations by the force of arms, but his true and loftiest greatness consisted in the fact that he was a witness of the nations,—a witness by the victorious power of his word, the conquering might of his Psalms, the attractive force of his typical life. What he expresses so frequently in the Psalms as a resolution and a vow, viz., that he will proclaim the name of Jehovah among the nations (Ps. 18:50; 57:10), he has really fulfilled: he has not only overcome them by bloody warfare, but by the might of his testimony, more especially as "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23:1). What David himself was able to say in Ps. 18:43, "People that I did not know served me," will be fulfilled to a still wider extent in the experience of Israel. Having been presented with the promised "inviolable mercies of David," it will effect a spiritual conquest over the heathen world, even over that portion which has hitherto stood in no reciprocal relation to it, and gain possession of it for itself for the sake of Jehovah, whom it has for its God, and to the Holy One of Israel (לְ of the object, in relation to which, or at the instigation of which, anything is done), because He hath glorified it (His people: פְּאֲרָד is not a pausal form for פְּאֲרָד, cf., Isa. 54:6, but for פְּאֲרָד, פְּאֲרָד, hence = פְּאֲרָד, cf., עֵנָד, Isa. 30:19); so that joining themselves to Israel is the same as joining themselves to God and to the church of the God of revelation (cf., Isa. 60:9, where v. 5b is repeated almost word for word).

Isaiah 55:6, 7. So gracious is the offer which Jehovah now makes to His people, so great are the promises that He makes to it, viz., the regal glory of David, and the government of the world by virtue of the religion of Jehovah. Hence the exhortation is addressed to it in vv. 6 and 7:

"Seek ye Jehovah while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return to Jehovah, and He will have compassion upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." They are to seek to press into the fellowship of Jehovah (*dârash* with the radical meaning *terere*, to acquire experimental knowledge or confidential acquaintance with anything) now that He is to be found (Isa. 65:1, compare the parallelism of words and things in Jer. 29:14), and to call upon Him, viz., for a share in that superabundant grace, now that He is near, i.e., now that He approaches Israel, and offers it. In the admonition to repentance introduced in v. 7, both sides of the μετανοια find expression, viz., turning away from sinful self-will, and turning to the God of salvation. The apodosis with its promises commences with וַיִּרְחַמֵּהוּ—then will He have compassion upon such a man; and consequently כִּי־יִרְבֶּה לְסִלּוֹתָהּ (with כִּי because the fragmentary sentence וְאֵלֹהֵינוּ did not admit of the continuation with ו) has not a general, but an individual meaning (vid., Ps. 130:4, 7), and is to be translated as a future (for the expression, compare Isa. 26:17).

Isaiah 55:8, 9. The appeal, to leave their own way and their own thoughts, and yield themselves to God the Redeemer, and to His word, is now urged on the ground of the heaven-wide difference between the ways and thoughts of this God and the despairing thoughts of men (Isa. 40:27; 49:24), and their aimless labyrinthine ways. Vv. 8, 9. *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah: no, heaven is high above the earth; so high are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts."* The *kî* (*imo*) introduces the undeniable statement of a fact patent to the senses, for the purpose of clearly setting forth, by way of comparison, the relation in which the ways and thoughts of God stand to those of man. There is no necessity to supply כִּי־אֶשְׁרָר after כִּי, as Hitzig and Knobel do. It is simply omitted, as in Isa.

62:5 and Jer. 3:20, or like קָ in Prov. 26:11, etc. On what side the heaven-wide elevation is to be seen, is shown in what follows. They are not so fickle, so unreliable, or so powerless.

Isaiah 55:10, 11. This is set forth under a figure drawn from the rain and the snow. Vv. 10, 11. *“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, till it has moistened the earth, and fertilized it, and made it green, and offered seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will my word be which goeth forth out of my mouth: it will not return to me fruitless, till it has accomplished that which I willed, and prosperously carried out that for which I sent it.”* The rain and snow come down from the sky, and return not thither till they have ... The perfects after אֵם בִּי are all to be understood as such (Ewald, § 356, a). Rain and snow return as vapour to the sky, but not without having first of all accomplished the purpose of their descent. And so with the word of Jehovah, which goeth forth out of His mouth (אֵם, not אֵץ, Isa. 45:23, because it is thought of as still going on in the preaching of the prophet): it will not return without having effected its object, i.e., without having accomplished what was Jehovah’s counsel, or “good pleasure”—without having attained the end for which it was sent by Jehovah (constr. as in 2 Sam. 11:22, 1 Kings 14:6). The word is represented in other places as the messenger of God (Isa. 9:8; Ps. 107:20; 147:15ff.). The personification presupposes that it is not a mere sound or letter. As it goeth forth out of the mouth of God it acquires shape, and in this shape is hidden a divine life, because of its divine origin; and so it runs, with life from God, endowed with divine power, supplied with divine commissions, like a swift messenger through nature and the world of man, there to melt the ice, as it were, and here to heal and to save; and does not return from its course till it has given effect to the will of the sender. This return of the word to God also presupposes its divine nature. The will of God, which becomes concrete and audible in the word, is the utterance of His nature, and is resolved into

that nature again as soon as it is fulfilled. The figures chosen are rich in analogies. As snow and rain are the mediating causes of growth, and therefore the enjoyment of what is reaped; so is the soil of the human heart softened, refreshed, and rendered productive or prolific by the word out of the mouth of Jehovah; and this word furnishes the prophet, who resembles the sower, with the seed which he scatters, and brings with it bread which feeds the souls: for every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God is bread (Deut. 8:3).

Isaiah 55:12, 13. The true point of comparison, however, is the energy with which the word is realized. Assuredly and irresistibly will the word of redemption be fulfilled. Vv. 12, 13. *“For ye will go out with joy, and be led forth in peace: the mountains and the hills will break out before you into shouting, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn will cypresses shoot up, and instead of the fleabane will myrtles shoot up: and it will be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting memorial that will not be swept away.”* “With joy,” i.e., without the hurry of fear (Isa. 52:12); “in peace,” i.e., without having to fight their way through or flee. The idea of the sufferer falls back in הִבֵּל behind that of a festal procession (Ps. 45:15, 16). In applying the term *kaph* (hand) to the trees, the prophet had in his mind their *kippōth*, or branches. The psalmist in Ps. 98:8 transfers the figure created by our prophet to the waves of the streams. *Na’ātsūts* (from *nā’ats*, to sting) is probably no particular kind of thorn, such, for example, as the fuller’s thistle, but, as in Isa. 7:19, briars and thorns generally. On *sirpad*, see Ges. *Thes.*; we have followed the rendering, κόρυζα, of the LXX. That this transformation of the vegetation of the desert is not to be taken literally, any more than in Isa. 41:17–20, is evident from the shouting of the mountains, and the clapping of hands on the part of the trees. On the other hand, however, the prophet says something more than that Israel will return home with such feelings of joy as will cause everything to appear transformed. Such promises as those which we find here and in

Isa. 41:19 and 35:1, 2, and such exhortations as those which we find in Isa. 44:23; 49:13, and 52:9, arise from the consciousness, which was common to both prophets and apostles, that the whole creation will one day share in the liberty and glory of the children of God (Rom. 8:21). This thought is dressed up sometimes in one for, and sometimes in another. The psalmists after the captivity borrowed the colours in which they painted it from our prophet (see at Ps. 96 and 98). וְהָיָה is construed as a neuter (cf., בְּרֵאשִׁית, Isa. 45:8), referring to this festal transformation of the outer world on the festive return of the redeemed. אֹרֹת is treated in the attributive clause as a masculine, as if it came from אֹרֹת, to make an incision, to crimp, as we have already indicated on p. 138; but the Arabic *âyat*, shows that it comes from אָוָה, to point out, and is contracted from *âwâyat*, and therefore was originally a feminine.

Isaiah 56

Eighth Prophecy—Ch. 56:1–8

Sabbatical Admonitions, and Consolation for Proselytes and Eunuchs

Isaiah 56:1, 2. The note of admonition struck in the foregoing prophecy is continued here, the sabbatical duties being enforced with especial emphasis as part of the general righteousness of life. Vv. 1, 2. *“Thus saith Jehovah, Keep ye right, and do righteousness: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to reveal itself. Blessed is the mortal that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth fast hold thereon; who keepeth the Sabbath, that he doth not desecrate it, and keepeth his hand from doing any kind of evil.”* Jehovah and Israel have both an objective standard in the covenant relation into which they have entered: מִשְׁפָּט (right) is practice answering to this; יְשׁוּעָה (salvation) the performance promised by God; צְדָקָה (righteousness) on both sides such personal activity as is in accordance with the covenant

relation, or what is the same thing, with the purpose and plan of salvation. The nearer the full realization on the part of Jehovah of what He has promised, the more faithful ought Israel to be in everything to which it is bound by its relation to Jehovah. זֹאת (this) points, as in Ps. 7:4, to what follows; and so also does בָּהּ, which points back to זֹאת. Instead of שְׂמֹר or לְשֹׂמֵר we have here שָׁמַר, the זֹאת being described personally instead of objectively. שְׁבֻתָּה is used as a masculine in vv. 2 and 6 (cf., Isa. 58:13), although the word is not formed after the same manner as קִטְלָה, but is rather contracted from שְׁבֻתָּה (a festive time, possibly with עֵת = עֵדָת understood), and therefore was originally a feminine; and it is so personified in the language employed in the worship of the synagogue. The prophet here thinks of שְׁבֻתָּה as יוֹם הַשְּׁבֻתָּה, and gives it the gender of יוֹם.

Isaiah 56:3–5. The אַחֲרֵי (blessed) of v. 2 is now extended to those who might imagine that they had no right to console themselves with the promises which it contained. V. 3. *“And let not the foreigner, who hath not joined himself to Jehovah, speak thus: Assuredly Jehovah will cut me off from His people; and let not the eunuch say, I am only a dry tree.”* As גִּלְוָה is not pointed as a participle (גִּלְוָה), but as a 3rd pers. pres., the ה of הַגִּלְוָה is equivalent to אֲשֶׁר, as in Josh. 10:24, Gen. 18:21; 21:3; 46:27, 1 Kings 11:9 (Ges. § 109). By the eunuchs we are to understand those of Israelitish descent, as the attributive clause is not repeated in their case. Heathen, who professed the religion of Jehovah, and had attached themselves to Israel, might be afraid lest, when Israel should be restored to its native land, according to the promise, as a holy and glorious community with a thoroughly priestly character, Jehovah would no longer tolerate them, i.e., would forbid their receiving full citizenship. יְבִדֵי־לִנִי has the connecting vowel *á*, as in Gen. 19:19; 29:32, instead of the usual *ē*. And the Israelitish eunuchs, who had been

mutilated against their will, that they might serve at heathen courts or in the houses of foreign lords, and therefore had not been unfaithful to Jehovah, might be afraid lest, as unfruitful trees, they should be pronounced unworthy of standing in the congregation of Jehovah. There was more ground for the anxiety of the latter than for that of the former. For the law in Deut. 23:4–7 merely prohibits Ammonites and Moabites for all time to come from reception into the congregation, on account of their unbrotherly conduct towards the Israelites as they came out of Egypt, whilst that in Deut. 23:8, 9 prohibits the reception of Edomites and Egyptians to the third generation; so that there was no prohibition as to other allies—such, for example, as the Babylonians. On the other hand, the law in Deut. 23:2 expressly declares, as an expression of the horror of God at any such mutilation of nature, and for the purpose of precluding it, that no kind of emasculated person is to enter the congregation of Jehovah. But prophecy breaks through these limits of the law. Vv. 4, 5. *“For thus saith Jehovah to the circumcised, Those who keep my Sabbaths, and decide for that in which I take pleasure, and take fast hold of my covenant; I give to them in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters: I give such a man an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”* The second condition after the sanctification of the Sabbath has reference to the regulation of life according to the revealed will of God; the third to fidelity with regard to the covenant of circumcision. דָּ also means a side, and hence a place (Deut. 23:13); but in the passage before us, where דָּ וְשֵׁם form a closely connected pair of words, to which מִבְּנֵי וּמִבְּנוֹת is appended, it signifies the memorial, equivalent to מִצְּבָתָה (2 Sam. 18; 18; 1 Sam. 15:12), as an index lifted up on high (Ezek. 21:24), which strikes the eye and arrests attention, pointing like a signpost to the person upon whom it is placed, like *monumentum a monendo*. They are assured that they will not be excluded from close fellowship with the church

(“in my house and within my walls”), and also promised, as a superabundant compensation for the want of posterity, long life in the memory of future ages, by whom their long tried attachment to Jehovah and His people in circumstances of great temptation will not be forgotten.

Isaiah 56:6, 7. The fears of proselytes from among the heathen are also removed. Vv. 6, 7. *“And the foreigners, who have joined themselves to Jehovah, to serve Him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be His servants, whoever keepeth the Sabbath from desecrating it, and those who hold fast to my covenant, I bring them to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their whole-offerings and their slain-offerings are well-pleasing upon mine altar: for my house, a house of prayer shall it be called for all nations.”* The proselytes, who have attached themselves to Jehovah (עֲלִיהֶ), the God of Israel, with the pure intention of serving Him with love, are not to be left behind in the strange land. Jehovah will bring them along with His people to the holy mountain, upon which His temple rises once more; there will He cause them to rejoice, and all that they place upon His altar will find a most gracious acceptance. It is impossible that the prophet should be thinking here of the worship of the future without sacrifice, although in Isa. 53 he predicts the self-sacrifice of the “Servant of Jehovah,” which puts an end to all animals sacrifices. But here the temple is called “the house of prayer,” from the prayer which is the soul of all worship. It will be called a house of prayer for all nations; and therefore its nature will correspond to its name. This ultimate intention is already indicated in Solomon’s dedicatory prayer (1 Kings 8:41–43); but our prophet was the first to give it this definite universal expression. Throughout this passage the spirit of the law is striving to liberate itself from its bondage. Nor is there anything to surprise us in the breaking down of the party wall, built up so absolutely between the eunuchs on the one hand and the congregation on the other, or the one partially erected between the heathen and the

congregation of Israel; as we may see from Isa. 56:21, where it is affirmed that Jehovah will even take priests and Levites out of the midst of the heathen whom Israel will bring back with it into its own land.

Isaiah 56:8. The expression “*saying of the Lord*” (*N’um Jehovah*), which is so solemn an expression in itself, and which stands here at the head of the following declaration, is a proof that it contains not only something great, but something which needs a solemn confirmation because of its strangeness. Not only is there no ground for supposing that Gentiles who love Jehovah will be excluded from the congregation; but it is really Jehovah’s intention to gather some out of the heathen, and add them to the assembled *diaspora* of Israel. V. 8. “*Word of the Lord, Jehovah: gathering the outcasts of Israel, I will also gather beyond itself to its gathered ones.*” We only find נאם ה’ at the commencement of the sentence, in this passage and Zech. 12:1. The double name of God, *Adonai Jehovah*, also indicates something great. עָלֵי (to it) refers to Israel, and לְנִקְבְּצָיוּ is an explanatory permutative, equivalent to עַל-נִקְבְּצָיוּ; or else עַל denotes the fact that the gathering will exceed the limits of Israel (cf., Gen. 48:22), and לְ the addition that will be made to the gathered ones of Israel. The meaning in either case remains the same. Jehovah here declares what Jesus says in John 10:16: “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd:” “Jehovah one, and His name one,” as it is expressed in Zech. 14:9. Such as the views and hopes that have grown up out of the chastisement inflicted by their captivity. God has made it a preparatory school for New Testament times. It has been made subservient to the bursting of the fetters of the law, the liberation of the spirit of the law, and the establishment of friendship between Israel and the Gentile world as called to one common salvation.

Ninth Prophecy—Ch. 56:9–57:21

Neglect of Duty by the Leaders of Israel; And Errors of the People

Isaiah 56:9. It is a question whether Isa. 56:9 forms the commencement of a fresh prophecy, or merely the second half of the prophecy contained in Isa. 56:1–8. We decide, for our part, in favour of the former. If Isa. 56:9ff. formed an antithetical second half to the promising first half in Isa. 56:1–8, we should expect to find the prophets and leaders of Israel, whose licentiousness and want of principle are here so severely condemned, threatened with destruction in the heathen land, whilst true proselytes and even eunuchs were brought to the holy mountain. But we meet with this antithesis for the first time in Isa. 57:13, where we evidently find ourselves in the midst of another prophetic address. And where can that address commence, if not at Isa. 56:9, from which point onwards we have that hard, dull, sharp, and concise language of strong indignation (see p. 385), which recalls to mind psalms written “in a thundering style” (*Psalter*, i. 80) and the reproachful addresses of Jeremiah, and which passes again in Isa. 57:11ff. into the lofty crystalline language peculiar to our prophet’s “book of consolation?” The new prophetic address commences, like Isa. 55:1, with a summons. V. 9. “*All ye beasts of the field, come near! To devour, all ye beasts in the forest!*” According to the accentuation before us (לֹא-בָל mercha, בַּל-חֵיתוּ tiphchah), the beasts of the field are summoned to devour the beasts in the forest. This accentuation, however, is false, and must be exchanged for another which is supported by some MSS, viz., בֵּיעַר Beth raphatum. It is true that even with these accents we might still adhere to the view favoured by Jewish commentators, viz., that the beasts of the field are to be devoured by the beasts of the forest, if this view yielded any admissible sense (compare, for example, that supported by Meyer, “Ye enemies, devour the scattered ones of my congregation”), and had

not against it the synonymous parallelism of חִיתוֹ שָׂדֵי and חִיתוֹ בִּיעָר (Isa. 43:20; Ps. 104:11, 20; cf., Gen. 3:14). But there remains another view, according to which כַּל־חִיתוֹ בִּיעָר is a second vocative answering to כַּל־חִיתוֹ שָׂדֵי.

According to the Targum, what is to be devoured is the great body of heathen kings attacking Jerusalem; according to Jerome, Cyril, Stier, etc., the pasture and food provided by the grace of God. But what follows teaches us something different from this. Israel has prophets and shepherds, who are blind to every coming danger, and therefore fail to give warning of its approach, because they are sunken in selfishness and debauchery. It resembles a flock with a keeper, and therefore an easy prey (Ezek. 34:5); and the meaning of the appeal, which is certainly addressed to the nations of the world, the enemies of the people of God, is this: "Ye have only to draw near; ye can feed undisturbed, and devour as much as ye please." This is the explanation adopted by most of the more modern commentators. In Jer. 12:9, which is founded upon this ("Assemble all ye beasts of the field, bring them hither to devour"), it is also Jerusalem which is assigned as food to the heathen. The parallel in v. 9 is both synonymous and progressive. The writer seeks for rare forms, because he is about to depict a rare inversion of the proper state of things. חִיתוֹ (with the first syllable loosely closed) is the antiquated form of connection, which was admissible even with בִּיעָר following (cf., Isa. 5:11; 9:1, 2; 2 Sam. 1:21). On אֶתְיִי (= אֶתּוֹ), see at Isa. 21:12 (cf., v. 14).

Isaiah 56:10, 11. The prophet now proceeds with צָפוּ (צַפִּי): the suffix refers to Israel, which was also the object to לֹא־כָל. Vv. 10, 11. "His watchmen are blind: they (are) all ignorant, they (are) all dumb dogs that cannot bark; raving, lying down, loving to slumber. And the dogs are mightily greedy, they know no satiety; and such are shepherds! They know no understanding; they have all turned to their own ways, every one for his own gain throughout his border." The

"watchmen" are the prophets here, as everywhere else (Isa. 52:8, cf., Isa. 21:6, Hab. 2:1; Jer. 6:17; Ezek. 3:17). The prophet is like a watchman (*tsōpheh*) stationed upon his watch-tower (*specula*), whose duty it is, when he sees the sword come upon the land, to blow the *shōphâr*, and warn the people (Ezek. 33:1-9). But just as Jeremiah speaks of bad prophets among the captives (Jer. 29:1-32), and the book of Ezekiel is full of reproaches at the existing neglect of the office of watchman and shepherd; so does the prophet here complain that the watchmen of the nation are blind, in direct opposition to both their title and their calling; they are all without either knowledge or the capacity for knowledge (vid., Isa. 44:9; 45:20). They ought to resemble watchful sheep-dogs (Job 30:1), which bark when the flock is threatened; but they are dumb, and cannot bark (*nâbhach*, root *nab*), and leave the flock to all its danger. Instead of being "seers" (*chōzîm*), they are ravers (*hōzîm*; cf., Isa. 19:18, where we have a play upon הַהָרָס in הַחֶרֶס). הִזְיָהּ, from הִזָּה, to rave in sickness, *n. act. hadhajan* (which Kimchi compares to *parlare in sōnno*); hence the Targum נִימִים, LXX ἐνστυμιαζόμενοι A φανταζόμενοι, ὁραματισταί, Jer. *videntes vana*. The predicates which follow are attached to the leading word *hōzîm* (raving), if not precisely as adjectives, yet as more minutely descriptive. Instead of watching, praying, wrestling, to render themselves susceptible of visions of divine revelations for the good of their people, and to keep themselves in readiness to receive them, they are idle, loving comfortable ease, talkers in their sleep. And the dogs, viz., those prophets who resemble the worst of them (see at Isa. 40:8, p. 394), are עֵי נֶפֶשׁ, of violent, unrestrained soul, insatiable. Their soul lives and moves in the lowest parts of their nature; it is nothing but selfish avarice, self-indulgent greediness, violent restlessness of passion, that revolves perpetually around itself. With the words "and these are shepherds," the range of the prophet's vision is extended to the leaders of the nation generally; for when the prophet adds as an exclamation, "And such (*hi = tales*)

are shepherds!" he applies the glaring contrast between calling and conduct to the holders of both offices, that of teacher and that of ruler alike. For, apart from the accents, it would be quite at variance with the general use of the personal pronoun הַמָּה, to apply it to any other persons than those just described (viz., in any such sense as this: "And those, who ought to be shepherds, do not know"). Nor is it admissible to commence an adversative minor clause with הַמָּה, as Knobel does, "whereas they are shepherds;" for, since the principal clause has הַכְּלָבִים (dogs) as the subject, this would introduce a heterogeneous mixture of the two figures, shepherds' dogs and shepherds. We therefore take רָעִים וְהַמָּה as an independent clause: "And it is upon men of such a kind, that the duty of watching and tending the nation devolves!" These רָעִים (for which the Targum reads רָעִים) are then still further described: they know not to understand, i.e., they are without spiritual capacity to pass an intelligible judgment (compare the opposite combination of the two verbs in Isa. 32:4); instead of caring for the general good, they have all turned to their own way (*Idarkâm*), i.e., to their own selfish interests, every one bent upon his own advantage (בָּצַעַע from בָּצַעַע, *abscindere*, as we say, *seinen Schnitt zu machen*, to reap an advantage, lit., to make an incision). מִמְקָצָהוּ, from his utmost extremity (i.e., from that of his own station, including all its members), in other words, "throughout the length and breadth of his own circle;" *qâtseh*, the end, being regarded not as the terminal point, but as the circumference (as in Gen. 19:4; 47:21, and Jer. 51:31).

Isaiah 56:12. An office-bearer of the kind described is now introduced *per mimesin* as speaking. V. 12. "Come here, I will fetch wine, and let us drink meth; and to-morrow shall be like to-day, great, excessively abundant." He gives a banquet, and promises the guests that the revelry shall be as great to-morrow as to-day, or rather much more glorious. יוֹם מָחָר is the day of to-morrow, τὸ ἐπαύριον, for *mâchâr* is

always without an article; hence *et fiet uti hic (dies) dies crastinus*, viz., *magnus supra modum valde*. יִתָּר, or יִתָּר (as it is to be pointed here according to Kimchi, *Michlol* 167*b*, and *Wörterbuch*), signifies superabundance; it is used here adverbially in the sense of extraordinarily, beyond all bounds (differing therefore from יוֹתָר, "more," or "singularly," in the book of Ecclesiastes).

Isaiah 57

Isaiah 57:1, 2. Whilst watchmen and shepherds, prophets and rulers, without troubling themselves about the flock which they have to watch and feed, are thus indulging their own selfish desires, and living in debauchery, the righteous man is saved by early death from the judgment, which cannot fail to come with such corruption as this. Ch. 57:1, 2. "The righteous perisheth, and no man taketh it to heart; and pious men are swept away, without any one considering that the righteous is swept away from misfortune. He entereth into peace: they rest upon their beds, whoever has walked straight before him." With "the righteous" the prophet introduces, in glaring contrast to this luxurious living on the part of the leading men of the nation, the standing figure used to denote the fate of its best men. With this prevailing demoralization and worldliness, the righteous succumbs to the violence of both external and internal sufferings. אָבַד, he dies before his time (Eccles. 7:15); from the midst of the men of his generation he is carried away from this world (Ps. 12:2; Mic. 7:2), and no one lays it to heart, viz., the divine accusation and threat involved in this early death. Men of piety (*chesed*, the love of God and man) are swept away, without there being any one to understand or consider that (*kî* unfolds the object to be considered and laid to heart, viz., what is involved in this carrying away when regarded as a providential event) the righteous is swept away "from the evil," i.e., that he may be saved from the approaching punishment (compare 2 Kings 22:20). For the prevailing corruption calls for

punishment from God; and what is first of all to be expected is severe judgment, through which the coming salvation will force its way. In v. 2 it is intimated that the righteous man and the pious do not lose the blessings of this salvation because they lose this life: for whereas, according to the prophet's watchword, there is no peace to the wicked, it is true, on the other hand, of the departing righteous man, that "he enters into peace" (*shâlôm*, *acc. loci s. status*; Ges. 118, 1); "they rest upon their beds," viz., the bottom of the grave, which has become their *mishkâbh* (Job 17:13; 21:26), "however has walked in that which lay straight before him," i.e., the one straight plain path which he had set before him (נָכַח *acc. obj.* as in Isa. 33:15; 50:10, Ewald, § 172, *b*, from נָכַח, that which lies straight before a person; whereas נָכַח with נָכַחוּ, signifying probably fixedness, steadiness of look, related to Arab. *nkħ*, to pierce, נָכַח, *percutere*, is used as a preposition: compare Prov. 4:25, לְנֶכַח, straight or exactly before him). The grave, when compared with the restlessness of this life, is therefore "peace." He who has died in faith rests in God, to whom he has committed himself and entrusted his future. We have here the glimmering light of the New Testament consolation, that the death of the righteous is better than life in this world, because it is the entrance into peace.

Isaiah 57:3, 4. The reproachful language of the prophet is now directed against the mass of the nation, who have occasioned the "evil" from which the righteous is swept away, i.e., the generation that is hostile to the servants of Jehovah, and by whom those sins of idolatry are still so shamelessly carried on, which first led to the captivity. Vv. 3, 4. "And ye, draw nearer hither, children of the sorceress, seed of the adulterer, and of her that committed whoredom! Over whom do ye make yourselves merry? Over whom do ye open the mouth wide, and put the tongue out long? Are ye not the brook of apostasy, seed of lying?" They are to draw nearer hither (*hēnnâh* as in Gen. 15:16), to the place where God is speaking through His

prophet, to have themselves painted, and to hear their sentence. Just as elsewhere the moral character of a man is frequently indicated by the mention of his father (2 Kings 6:32), or his mother (1 Sam. 20:30), or both parents (Job 30:8), so here the generation of the captivity, so far as it continued to practise the idolatry by which its ancestors had brought upon themselves the Chaldean catastrophe, is called *first* עֲנַנָּה בְּנֵי עֲנַנָּה (or more correctly עֲנַנָּה), sons of the sorceress (possibly the maker of clouds or storm, Isa. 2:6, p. 78: Jer. *auguratricis*), one who made heathen and superstitious customs her means of livelihood, viz., the community as it existed before the captivity, which really deserved no better name, on account of the crying contradiction between its calling and its conduct; and *secondly*, with regard to both the male and female members of the community, זָרַע מְנַאֲף וְתוֹזְנָה, *semen adulteri et fornicariae* (Jer.), though Stier, Hahn, and others adopt the rendering *semen adulterum et quod (qui) scortaris*. A better rendering than this would be, "Seed of an adulterer, and one who committest adultery thyself," viz., (what would be indicated with this explanation by the *fut. consec.*) in consequence of this descent from an adulterer. But as זָרַע (seed, posterity), wherever it is more minutely defined, is connected with a genitive, and not with an adjective, the presumption is that מְנַאֲף וְתוֹזְנָה denotes the father and mother. וְתוֹזְנָה is an attributive clause regarded as a genitive (Ges. § 123, 3, Anm. 1), and more closely connected with מְנַאֲף than if it was written וְתוֹזְנָה = תוֹזְנָה, Isa. 1:21): Seed of an adulterer, and consequently (Ewald, § 351, *b*), or similarly, of one who gave herself up to whoredom. Idolatry, prostitution, and magic are most closely allied. The prophet now asks, "Over whom do ye find your pleasure? For whom are your common contemptuous actions intended?" הֵהָעֵינֵי is only used here, and denotes the feeling which finds pleasure in the sufferings of another. The objects of this malicious contemptuous pleasure (Ps. 22:8ff.,

35:21) are the servants of Jehovah; and the question, as in Isa. 37:23, is one of amazement at their impudence, since the men over whom they make merry are really deserving of esteem, whereas they themselves are the refuse of Israel: Are ye not a brook of apostasy, seed of lying? As apostasy and lying, when regarded as parents, can only produce something resembling themselves; the character of those from whom they are descended is here imputed to the men themselves, even more clearly than before. The genitives of origin are also genitives of attribute. Instead of יְלִדֵי (e.g., Isa. 2:6) we have here יְלִדֵי before *makkeph*, with the shortening of *a* into *i*.

Isaiah 57:5, 6. The participles which follow in the next verse are in apposition to אָתָּם, and confirm the predicates already applied to them. They soon give place, however, to independent sentences. Vv. 5, 6. *“Ye that inflame yourselves by the terebinths, under every green tree, ye slayers of children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks. By the smooth ones of the brook was thy portion; they, they were thy lot: thou also pouredst out libations to them, thou laidst meat-offerings upon them. Shall I be contented with this?”* The people of the captivity are addressed, and the idolatry handed down to them from their ancestors depicted. The prophet looks back from the standpoint of the captivity, and takes his colours from the time in which he himself lived, possibly from the commencement of Manasseh’s reign, when the heathenism that had for a long time been suppressed burst forth again in all its force, and the measure of iniquity became full. The *part. niphāl* הִנְחַמִּים is formed like נָחַן in Jer. 22:23, if the latter signifies *miserandum esse*. The primary form is נָחַם, which is doubled like נָנַח from נָנַח in Job 20:28, and from which נָחַם is formed by the resolution of the latent reduplication. Stier derives it from נָחַם; but even if formed from this, נָחַם would still have to be explained from נָחַם, after the form נִצַּח. *’Elīm* signifies either gods or terebinths

(see p. 70, note 2). But although it might certainly mean idols, according to Ex. 15:11, Dan. 11:36 (LXX, Targ., and Jerome), it is never used directly in this sense, and Isaiah always uses the word as the name of a tree (Isa. 1:29; 61:3). The terebinths are introduced here, exactly as in Isa. 1:29, as an object of idolatrous lust: “who inflame themselves with the terebinths;” תְּרֵבִינִים denotes the object with which the lust is excited and inflamed. The terebinth (*’elâh*) held the chief place in tree-worship (hence אֵלִים, lit., oak-trees, together with אֵלִים, is the name of one of the Phoenician gods), possibly as being the tree sacred to Astarte; just as the *Samura Acacia* among the heathen Arabs was the tree sacred to the goddess *’Uzza*. The following expression, “under every green tree,” is simply a permutative of the words “with the terebinths” in the sense of “with the terebinths, yea, under every green tree” (a standing expression from Deut. 12:2 downwards),—one tree being regarded as the abode and favourite of this deity, and another of that, and all alluring you to your carnal worship.

From the tree-worship with its orgies, which was so widely spread in antiquity generally, the prophet passes to the leading Canaanitish abomination, viz., human sacrifices, which had been adopted by the Israelites (along with שְׁחָטִי we find the false reading שְׁחָטִי, which is interpreted as signifying self-abuse). Judging from the locality named, “under the clefts of the rocks,” the reference is not to the slaying of children sacrificed to Moloch in the valley of Hinnom, but to those offered to Baal upon his *bâmôth* or high places (Jer. 19:5; Ezek. 16:20, 21; Hos. 13:2; Ps. 106:37, 38). As we learn from the *chronique scandaleuse* many things connected with the religious history of Israel, which cannot be found in its historical books, there is nothing to surprise us in the stone-worship condemned in v. 6. The *dagesh* of חֶלֶקִי is in any case *dagesh dirimens*. The singular is wither חֶלֶק after the form חֶלְקִי (cf., עֶצְבִי, Isa. 58:3), or חֶלֶק after the form יְלִדֵי. But חֶלֶק,

smoothness, never occurs; and the explanation, “in the smoothnesses, i.e., the smooth places of the valley, is thy portion,” has this also against it, that it does not do justice to the connection חֶלֶק בְּ, in which the preposition is not used in a local sense, and that it leaves the emphatic הֵם quite unexplained. The latter does not point to places, but to objects of worship for which they had exchanged Jehovah, of whom the true Israelite could say ה' חֶלְקִי ה', Ps. 119:57, etc., or אֲתָהּ תוֹמִיד גּוֹרְלִי Josh. 22:25, and חֶלֶק לִי בְּה' (Thou art He that maintaineth my lot), Ps. 16:5. The prophet had such expressions as these in his mind, and possibly also the primary meaning of גּוֹרֵל = κληρος, which may be gathered from the rare Arabic word 'garal, gravel, stones worn smooth by rolling, when he said, “In the smooth ones of the valley is thy portion; they, they are thy lot.” In the Arabic also, *achlaq* (equivalent to *châlâq*, smooth, which forms here a play upon the word with חֶלֶק, *châlâq*) is a favourite word for stones and rocks. חֶלְקֵי־נַחַל, however, according to 1 Sam. 17:40 (where the intensive form חֶלְקֵי, like שְׂבוּל, is used), are stones which the stream in the valley has washed smooth with time, and rounded into a pleasing shape. The mode of the worship, the pouring out of libations, and the laying of meat-offerings upon them, confirm this view. In Carthage such stones were called *abbadires* (= אבן, אדיר); and among the ancient Arabs, the *asnâm* or idols consisted for the most part of rude blocks of stone of this description. Herodotus (Isa. 3:8) speaks of seven stones which the Arabs anointed, calling upon the god Orotal. Suidas (s.v. Θεῶν ἄρκης) states that the idol of Ares in Petra was a black square stone; and the black stone of the Ka'aba was, according to a very inconvenient tradition for the Mohammedans, an idol of Saturn (*zuhal*). Stone-worship of this kind had been practised by the Israelites before the captivity, and their heathenish practices had been transmitted to the exiles in Babylon. The meaning of the question, Shall I comfort myself concerning

such things?—i.e., Shall I be contented with them (חֶלְקֵי־נַחַל *niphâl*, not *hithpael*)?—is, that it was impossible that descendants who so resembled their fathers should remain unpunished.

Isaiah 57:7, 8. The prophet now proceeds with perfects, like שָׁפַכְתָּ and הִטְלִיתָ (addressed to the national community generally, the congregation regarded as a woman). The description is mostly retrospective. Vv. 7, 8. “Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set up thy bed; thou also ascendedst thither to offer slain offerings. And behind the door and the post thou didst place thy reminder: for thou uncoveredst away from me, and ascendedst; thou madest thy bed broad, and didst stipulate for thyself what they had to do: thou lovedst their lying with thee; thou sawest their manhood.” The lovers that she sought for herself are the gods of the heathen. Upon lofty mountains, where they are generally worshipped, did she set up her bed, and did all that was needed to win their favour. The *zikkârôn*, i.e., the declaration that Jehovah is the only God, which the Israelites were to write upon the posts of their houses, and upon the entrances (Deut. 6:9; 11:20), for a constant reminder, she had put behind the door and post, that she might not be reminded, to her shame, of her unfaithfulness. That this explanation, which most of the commentators adopt, is the true one, is proved by the expression מֵאֵתִי which follows, and according to which זָכְרוּנִי is something inconvenient, which might and was intended to remind them of Jehovah. מֵאֵתִי, away, far from me, as in Jer.

3:1, and like מִתְחַתִּי, which is still more frequently used. It is unnecessary to take *gillith* with עָרְוֹתֶךָ understood (Ezek. 23:18) as equivalent to “thou makest thyself naked,” or with reference to the clothes = ἀναστρέεις. מִשְׁכַּבְּךָ is the common object of all three verbs, even of וַתַּעֲלֵי (with double *metheg*), after Gen. 49:4. On וַתִּבְרַת for וַתִּבְרַתִּי (cf., Jer. 3:5), see Ewald, § 191, b. The explanation “thou didst bind,” or “thou

didst choose (some) of them to thyself," is contrary to the general usage, according to which לָבַח signifies *spondere* (2 Chron. 7:18), and בָּרַת עִם *pacisci* (1 Sam. 22:8), in both cases with בָּרַת to be supplied, so that מִן (בָּרַת) would mean *stipulari ab aliquo*, i.e., to obtain from a person a solemn promise, with all the force of a covenant. What she stipulated from them was, either the wages of adultery, or the satisfaction of her wanton lust. What follows agrees with this; for it is there distinctly stated, that the lovers to whom she offered herself gratified her lust abundantly: *adamasti concutibum eorum* (*mishkâbh, cubile*, e.g., Prov. 7:17, and *concupitus*, e.g., Ezra 23:17), *manum conspexisit*. The Targum and Jewish commentators adopt this explanation, *loco quem delegisti*, or (*postquam*) *locum delegisti*. This also is apparently the meaning of the accents, and most of the more modern commentators have adopted it, taking טָ in the sense of place or side. But this yields only a very lame and unmeaning thought. Doederlein conjectured that טָ was employed here in the sense of *ἰθύφαλλος*; and this is the explanation adopted by Hitzig, Ewald, and others. The Arabic furnishes several analogies to this obscene use of the word; and by the side of Ezek. 16:26 and 23:20, where the same thing is affirmed in even plainer language, there is nothing to astonish in the passage before us. The meaning is, that after the church of Jehovah had turned away from its God to the world and its pleasures, it took more and more delight in the pleasures afforded it by idolatry, and indulged its tastes to the full.

Isaiah 57:9, 10. In the closest reciprocal connection with this God-forgetting, adulterous craving for the favour of heathen gods, stood their coquetting with the heathen power of the world. Vv. 9, 10. "*And thou wentest to the king with oil, and didst measure copiously thy spices, and didst send thy messengers to a great distance, and didst deeply abase thyself, even to Hades. Thou didst become weary of the greatness of thy way; yet thou saidst not, It is unattainable:*

thou obtainedst the revival of thy strength: therefore thou wast not pained." The first thing to be noticed here, is one that has been overlooked by nearly all the modern commentators, viz., that we have here a historical retrospect before us. And secondly, a single glance at v. 11 is sufficient to show that the words refer to a servile coquetry from the fear of man, and therefore to a wicked craving for the favour of man; so that "the king," is not Baal, or any heathen god whatever (according to Isa. 8:21 and Zeph. 1:5), but the Asiatic ruler of the world. Ahaz sent messengers, as we read in 2 Kings 16:7ff., to Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria, to say to Him, "I am thy servant and thy son." And Ahaz took the silver and gold that were in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the palace, and sent a bribe to the king of Assyria. And again, at vv. 10ff., Ahaz went to Damascus to meet the king of Assyria, and there he saw an altar, and sent a model of it to Jerusalem, and had one like it put in the place of the altar of burnt-offering. Such acts as these are here described in the figure of Israel travelling with oil to the king, and taking a quantity of choice spices with it to gain his favour, and also sending messengers, and not only bowing itself to the earth, but even stooping to Hades, that is to say, standing as it were on its head in its excessive servility, for the purpose of obtaining allies. It seems most natural to take בְּשֶׁמֶן as equivalent to מְשֻׁהָה: *בשמן*: thou wentest in oil (dripping with pomade), and didst apply to thyself many spices; but *Beth* after verbs of going signifies to go with anything, to take it with one and bring it, so that the oil and spices are thought of here as presents, which she took with her as sensual stimulants, with a view to the amorous pleasures she was seeking (Ezek. 23:41, cf., Hos. 12:2). הִשְׁפִּיל signifies to go deep down in Jer. 13:18; the meaning here is, to bow very low, or to degrade one's self. By "the greatness or breadth of the way" (a similar expression to that in Josh. 9:13), all the great sacrifices are intended which it cost her to purchase the favour of the heathen ruler. Although they were

a great trouble to her, yet she did not say וְאֵין עֲשׂוּיָהּ, “it is hopeless;” the *niphal* of עָשָׂה signifies in 1 Sam. 27:1, to betake one’s self to a thing with despair of its success. The participle in Job 6:26 means a despairing person; it also occurs in a neuter sense in Jer. 2:26; 18:12, viz., given up, i.e., absolutely in vain. She did not give up hope, although the offerings nearly exhausted her strength; on the contrary, she gained חַיֵּית יָד, “life of her arm,” i.e., (according to the use of חַיָּה in the sense of reviving, and הֵחִיָּה, to bring to life again) new life in her arm, in other words, “the renewing of her strength” (*recentem vigorem virium suarum*). Thus, without noticing the sighs and groans forced from her by the excessive toil and fatigue, but stirring herself up again and again, she pursued the plan of strengthening her alliances with the heathen. Ezekiel’s picture of Aholah and Aholibah is like a commentary on vv. 3–10 (see Ezek. 23).

Isaiah 57:11a. From fear of man, Israel, and still more Judah, had given up the fear of Jehovah. V. 11a. “*And of whom hast thou been afraid, and (whom) didst thou fear, that thou becamest a liar, and didst not continue mindful of me, and didst not take it to heart?*” It was of men—only mortal men, with no real power (Isa. 51:12)—that Israel was so needlessly afraid, that it resorted to lies and treachery to Jehovah (*kī, ut*, an interrogative sentence, as in 2 Sam. 7:18, Ps. 8:5): purchasing the favour of man out of the fear of man, and throwing itself into the arms of false tutelary deities, it banished Jehovah its true shelter out of its memory, and did not take it to heart, viz., the sinfulness of such infidelity, and the eventful consequences by which it was punished (compare Isa. 47:7 and 42:25).

Isaiah 57:11b. With v. 11b the reproaches are addressed to the present. The treachery of Israel had been severely punished in the catastrophe of which the captivity was the result, but without effecting any improvement. The great mass of the people were as forgetful of God as ever, and would not be led to repentance by the long-suffering of God, which

had hitherto spared them from other well-merited punishments. V. 11b. “*Am I not silent, and that for a long time, whereas thou wast not afraid of me?*” A comparison with Isa. 42:14 will show that the prophecy returns here to its ordinary style. The LXX and Jerome render the passage as if the reading were מְעַלֵּם (viz., עֲיִנִי = παρορῶν, *quasi non videns*), and this is the reading which Lowth adopts. We may see from this, that the original text had a defective וּמְעַלֵּם, which was intended, however, to be read וּמְעַלֵּם. The prophet applies the term *’olām* (see Isa. 42:14) to the captivity, which had already lasted a long time—a time of divine silence: the silence of His help so far as the servants of Jehovah were concerned, but the silence of His wrath as to the great mass of the people.

Isaiah 57:12, 13. But this silence would not last for ever. Vv. 12, 13. “*I, I will proclaim thy righteousness; and thy works, they will not profit thee. When thou criest, let thy heaps of idols save thee: but a wind carries them all away; a breath takes them off; and whoever putteth trust in me will inherit the land, and take possession of my holy mountain.*” According to the context, צְדִקְתֶּךָ cannot be a synonym of יְשׁוּעָה here. It is neither salvation nor the way of salvation that is intended; nor is this even included, as Stier supposes. But the simple reference is to what Israel in its blindness regarded as righteousness; whereas, if it had known itself, it would have seen that it was the most glaring opposite. This lying-righteousness of Israel would be brought to a judicial exposure by Jehovah. וְאֵת־מַעֲשֵׂיֶיךָ is not a second accusative to אֲגִיד, for in that case we should have אֵת־צְדִקְתֶּךָ וּמַעֲשֵׂיֶיךָ; but it commences a second sentence, as the accents really indicate. When Jehovah begins thus to speak and act, the impotence of the false gods which His people have made for themselves will soon be exposed; and “as for thy works (i.e., thine idols, Isa. 41:29, cf., Isa. 1:31), they will do thee no good” (Isa. 44:9, 10, compare Jer. 23:33; for the question מִה־מֶשֶׂה, here an empathic elevation of the subject,

compare Isa. 53:8, וְאֶת־דֹּרוֹ, Ewald, § 277, p. 683). This determines the meaning of קְבוּצָיִךְ, which Knobel supposes to refer to the large army of the Babylonians, with which the apostates among the exiles had formed an offensive and defensive alliance. But the term is really applied to the heaps (*qibbûts, collectio*, not an adjective of the form *limmūd*) of different idols, with which Israel had furnished itself even in its captivity (compare *qibbâtsâh* in Mic. 1:17). It was in vain for them to turn to these pantheons of theirs; a single *rūäch* would carry them all away, a *hebhel* would sweep them off, for they themselves were nothing but *hebhel* and *rūäch* (Isa. 41:29). The proper punctuation here is לְקַח־הֶבֶל; the first syllable of יקח, which is attached to a word with a disjunctive accent, has a so-called heavy *Gaya*, the second a euphonic *Gaya*, according to rules which are too little discussed in our grammars. When Knobel supports his explanation of קְבוּצָיִךְ on the ground that the idols in v. 13a and the worshippers of Jehovah in v. 13b do not form a fitting antithesis, the simple reply is, that the contrast lies between the idols, which cannot save, and Jehovah, who not only saves those who trust in Him, but sends them prosperity according to His promises. With the promise, "Whoso trusts in me will inherit the land," this prophecy reaches the thought with which the previous prophecy (Isa. 51:7, 8) closed; and possibly what is here affirmed of קְבוּצָיִךְ forms an intentional antithesis to the promise there, עוֹד אֶקְבֹּץ עָלֶיךָ לְקַבְּצֵי: when Jehovah gathers His faithful ones from the dispersion, and gathers others to them (from among the heathen), then will the plunder which the faithless have gathered together be all scattered to the winds. And whilst the latter stand forsaken by their powerless works, the former will be established in the peaceful inheritance of the promised land.

The first half of the prophecy closes here. It is full of reproach, and closes with a brief word of promise, which is merely the obverse of the

threat. The second half follows an opposite course. Jehovah will redeem His people, provided it has been truly humbled by the sufferings appointed, for He has seen into what errors it has fallen since He has withdrawn His mercy from it. "But the wicked," etc. The whole closes here with words of threatening, which are the obverse of the promise. V. 13b forms the transition from the first half to the second.

Isaiah 57:14. The promise is now followed by a appeal to make ready the way which the redeemed people have to take. V. 14. "And He saith, Heap up, heap up, prepare a way, take away every obstruction from the way of my people." This is the very same appeal which occurs once in all three books of these prophecies (Isa. 40:3, 4; 57:14; 62:10). The subject of the verb (*'amar*) is not Jehovah; but the prophet intentionally leaves it obscure, as in Isa. 40:3, 6 (cf., 26:2). It is a heavenly cry; and the crier is not to be more precisely named.

Isaiah 57:15. The primary ground for this voice being heard at all is, that the Holy One is also the Merciful One, and not only has a manifestation of glory on high, but also a manifestation of grace below. V. 15. "For thus saith the high and lofty One, the eternally dwelling One, He whose name is Holy One; I dwell on high and in the holy place, and with the contrite one and him that is of a humbled spirit, to revive the spirit of humbled ones, and to revive the heart of contrite ones." He inflicts punishment in His wrath; but to those who suffer themselves to be urged thereby to repentance and the desire for salvation, He is most inwardly and most effectually near with His grace. For the heaven of heavens is not too great for Him, and a human heart is not too small for Him to dwell in. And He who dwells upon cherubim, and among the praises of seraphim, does not scorn to dwell among the sighs of a poor human soul. He is called *râm* (high), as being high and exalted in Himself; גָּשָׁא (the lofty One), as towering above all besides; and שֶׁכֵּן עַד. This does not mean the dweller in eternity, which is a thought quite outside the biblical range of ideas; but, since עַד stands to

שכן not in an objective, but in an attributive or adverbial relation (Ps. 45:7, cf., Prov. 1:33), and שכן, as opposed to being violently wrested from the ordinary sphere of life and work (cf., Ps. 16:9; 102:29), denotes a continuing life, a life having its root in itself, שכן עד must mean the eternally (= לעד) dwelling One, i.e., He whose life lasts for ever and is always the same. He is also called *qâdôsh*, as One who is absolutely pure and good, separated from all the uncleanness and imperfection by which creatures are characterized. This is not to be rendered *sanctum nomen ejus*, but *sanctus*; this name is the *facit* of His revelation of Himself in the history of salvation, which is accomplished in love and wrath, grace and judgment. This God inhabits *mârôm vqâdôsh*, the height and the Holy Place (accusatives of the object, like *mârôm* in Isa. 33:5, and *mrômîm* in Isa. 33:16), both together being equivalent to φῶς ἀπρόσιτον (1 Tim. 6:16), since *qâdôsh* (neuter, as in Ps. 46:5; 65:5) answers to φῶς, and *mârôm* to ἀπρόσιτον. But He also dwells with (אָ as in Lev. 16:16) the crushed and lowly of spirit. To these He is most intimately near, and that for a salutary and gracious purpose, namely “to revive ...” הִחַיָה and חַיָה always signify either to keep that which is living alive, or to restore to life that which is dead. The spirit is the seat of pride and humility, the heart the seat of all feeling of joy and sorrow; we have therefore *spiritum humilium* and *cor contritorum*. The selfish egotism which repentance breaks has its root in the heart; and the self-consciousness, from whose false elevation repentance brings down, has its seat in the spirit (*Psychol.* p. 199).

Isaiah 57:16. The compassion, by virtue of which God has His abode and His work of grace in the spirit and heart of the penitent, is founded in that free anticipating love which called man and his self-conscious spirit-soul into being at the first. V. 16. “For I do not contend for ever, and I am not angry for ever: for the spirit would pine away before me, and the souls of men which I have created.” The early translators (LXX, Syr., Jer., possibly also the

Targum) give to יַעֲטֶה the meaning *egredietur*, which certainly cannot be established. And so also does Stier, so far as the thought is concerned, when he adopts the rendering, “A spirit from me will cover over, and breath of life will I make;” and so Hahn, “When the spirit pines away before me, I create breath in abundance.” But in both cases the writer would at any rate have used the *perf. consec.* וַיַּעֲטֶה, and the last clause of the verse has not the syntactic form of an apodosis. The rendering given above is the only one that is unassailable both grammatically and in fact. כִּי introduces the reason for the self-limitation of the divine wrath, just as in Ps. 78:38, 39 (cf., Ps. 103:14): if God should put no restraint upon His wrath, the consequence would be the entire destruction of human life, which was His creative work at first. The verb יַעֲטֶה, from its primary meaning to bend round (*Comm. on Job*, at 23:9), has sometimes the transitive meaning to cover, and sometimes the meaning to wrap one’s self round, i.e., to become faint or weak (compare יַעֲטֶה, fainted away, Lam. 2:19; and הִתְעַטֶה in Ps. 142:4, which is applied to the spirit, like the *kal* here). מִלְפָּנָי is equivalent to “in consequence of the wrath proceeding from me.” נְשַׁמּוֹת (a plural only met with here) signifies, according to the fixed usage of the Old Testament (Isa. 2:22; 42:5), the souls of men, the origin of which is described as a *creation* in the attributive clause (with an emphatic אֲנִי), just as in Jer. 38:16 (cf., Zech. 12:1). Whether the accents are intended to take אֲנִי עֲשִׂיתִי in this attributive sense or not, cannot be decided from the *tiphchah* attached to וּנְשַׁמּוֹת. The prophet, who refers to the flood in other passages also (e.g., Isa. 54:9), had probably in his mind the promise given after the flood, according to which God would not make the existing and inherited moral depravity an occasion for utterly destroying the human race.

Isaiah 57:17, 18. This general law of His action is most especially the law of His conduct

ISAIAH	Page 446
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

towards Israel, in which such grievous effects of its well-deserved punishment are apparent, and effects so different from those intended, that the compassion of God feels impelled to put an end to the punishment for the good of all that are susceptible of salvation. Vv. 17, 18. "And because of the iniquity of its selfishness, I was wroth, and smote it; hiding myself, and being angry: then it went on, turning away in the way of its own heart. I have seen its ways, and will heal it; and will lead it, and afford consolations to it, and to its mourning ones." The fundamental and chief sin of Israel is here called *בְּצַע*, lit., a cut of slice (= gain, Isa. 56:11); then, like *πλεονεξία*, which is "idolatry" according to Col. 3:5, or like *φιλαργυρία*, which is "the root of all evil" according to 1 Tim. 6:10, greedy desire for worldly possession, self-seeking, or worldliness generally. The future *וְאֶתְּהוּ*, standing as it does by the side of the perfect here, indicates that which is also past; and *וְאֶתְּקַצֵּר* stands in the place of a second gerund: *abscondendo* (viz., *pânai*, my face, Isa. 54:8) *et stomachando*. When Jehovah had thus wrathfully hidden His gracious countenance from Israel, and withdrawn His gracious presence out of the midst of Israel (Hos. 5:6, *חָלַץ מֵהֶם*), it went away from Him (*שׁוֹבָב* with *שׁוֹבָב*, like *עוֹלֵל* with *עוֹלֵל*), going its own ways like the world of nations that had been left to themselves. But Jehovah had not seen these wanderings without pity. The futures which follow are promising, not by virtue of any syntactic necessity, but by virtue of an inward necessity. He will heal His wounded (Isa. 1:4–6) and languishing people, and lead in the right way those that are going astray, and afford them consolation as a recompense for their long sufferings (*נְחֻמִּים* is derived from the *piel* *נָחַם*, and not, as in Hos. 11:8, from the *hiphal* *hinnâchēm*, in the sense of "feelings of sympathy"), especially (*Vav epexeget.*; Ges. § 155, 1) its mourning ones (Isa. 61:2, 3; 66:10), i.e., those who punishment has brought to repentance, and rendered desirous of salvation.

Isaiah 57:19–21. But when the redemption comes, it will divide Israel into two halves, with very different prospects. Vv. 19–21. "Creating fruit of the lips; Jehovah saith, 'Peace, peace to those that are far off, and to those that are near; and I heal it.' But the wicked are like the sea that is cast up for it cannot rest, and its waters cast out slime and mud. There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked." The words of God in v. 19 are introduced with an interpolated "inquit Jehova" (cf., Isa. 45:24, and the ellipsis in Isa. 41:27); and what Jehovah effects by speaking thus is placed first in a determining participial clause: "Creating fruit (*נוֹב, נוֹב, נוֹב = נוב*) of the lips," *καρπὸν χερίλων* (LXX, Heb. 13:15), i.e., not of His own lips, to which *בּוֹרָא* would be inapplicable, but the offering of praise and thanksgiving springing from human lips (for the figure, see *Psychol.* p. 214, trans.; and on the root *נוב*, to press upon forward, *Gen.* p. 635): "Jehovah saith *shâlôm, shâlôm*," i.e., lasting and perfect peace (as in Isa. 26:3), "be the portion of those of my people who are scattered far and near" (Isa. 43:5–7; 49:12; compare the application to heathen and Jews in Eph. 2:17); "and I heal it" (viz., the nation, which, although scattered, is like one person in the sight of God). But the wicked, who persist in the alienation from God inherited from the fathers, are incapable of the peace which God brings to His people: they are like the sea in its tossed and stormy state (*נִגְרָשׁ* pausal third pers. as an attributive clause). As this cannot rest, and as its waters cast out slime and mud, so has their natural state become one of perpetual disturbance, leading to the uninterrupted production of unclean and ungodly thoughts, words, and works. Thus, then, there is no peace for them, saith my God. With these words, which have even a more pathetic sound here than in Isa. 48:22, the prophet seals the second book of his prophecies. The "wicked" referred to are not the heathen outside Israel, but the heathen, i.e., those estranged from God, within Israel itself.

ISAIAH	Page 447
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

The transition from the first to the second half of this closing prophecy is formed by וְאָמַר in Isa. 57:14. In the second half, from Isa. 57:11*b*, we find the accustomed style of our prophet; but in Isa. 56:9–57:11*a* the style is so thoroughly different, that Ewald maintains that the prophet has here inserted in his book a fragment from some earlier writer of the time of Manasseh. But we regard this as very improbable. It is not required by what is stated concerning the prophets and shepherds, for the book of Ezekiel clearly shows that the prophets and shepherds of the captivity were thus debased. Still less does what is stated concerning the early death of the righteous require it; for the fundamental idea of the suffering servant of Jehovah, which is peculiar to the second book, is shadowed forth therein. Nor by what is affirmed as to the idolatrous conduct of the people; for in the very centre (v. 4) the great mass of the people are reproached for their contemptuous treatment of the servants of Jehovah. Nor does the language itself force us to any such conjecture, for Isa. 53 also differs from the style met with elsewhere; and yet (although Ewald regards it as an earlier, borrowed fragment) it must be written by the author of the whole, since its grandest idea finds its fullest expression there. At the same time, we may assume that the prophet described the idolatry of the people under the influences of earlier models. If he had been a prophet of the captives after the time of Isaiah, he would have rested his prophecies on Jeremiah and Ezekiel. For just as Isa. 51:18ff. has the ring of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, so does Isa. 57:3ff. resemble in many respects the earlier reproaches of Jeremiah (compare Jer. 5:7–9, 29; 9:8, with the expression, “Should I rest satisfied with this?”); also Isa. 2:25 (וְנֹאֵשׁ), 2:20; 3:6, 13 (“upon lofty mountains and under green trees”); also the night scene in Ezek. 23.

Part III

Isaiah 58

First Prophecy

The False Worship and the True, with the Promises Belonging to the Latter

Isaiah 58:1, 2. As the last prophecy of the second book contained all the three elements of prophetic addresses—reproach, threat, and promise,—so this, the first prophecy of the third book, cannot open in any other way than with a rehearsal of one of these. The prophet receives the commission to appear as the preacher of condemnation; and whilst Jehovah is giving the reason for this commission, the preaching itself commences. Vv. 1, 2. “*Cry with full throat, hold not back; lift up thy voice like a bugle, and proclaim to my people their apostasy, and to the house of Jacob their sins. And they seek me day by day, and desire to learn my ways, like a nation which has done righteousness, and has not forsaken the right of their God: they ask of me judgments of righteousness; they desire the drawing near of Elohim.*” As the second prophecy of the first part takes as its basis a text from Micah (Mic. 2:1–4), so have we here in v. 1*b* the echo of Mic. 3:8. Not only with lisping lips (1 Sam. 1:13), but with the throat (Ps. 115:7; 149:6); that is to say, with all the strength of the voice, lifting up the voice like the *shōphâr* (not a trumpet, which is called הַצִּפּוֹרֶה, nor in fact any metallic instrument, but a bugle or signal horn, like that blown on new year’s day: see at Ps. 81:4), i.e., in a shrill shouting tone. With a loud voice that must be heard, with the most unsparing publicity, the prophet is to point out to the people their deep moral wounds, which they may indeed hide from themselves with hypocritical *opus operatum*, but cannot conceal from the all-seeing God. The וְאֹתֵי יוֹם does not stand for an explanatory particle, but for an adversative one: “their apostasy ... their sins; and yet (although they are to be punished for these) they approach Jehovah every day” (יוֹם יוֹם with *mahpach* under

the first **וַי**, and *pasek* after it, as is the general rule between two like-sounding words), “that He would now speedily interpose.” They also desire to know the ways which He intends to take for their deliverance, and by which He desires to lead them. This reminds us of the occurrence between Ezekiel and the elders of Gola (Ezek. 20:1ff.; compare also Ezek. 33:30ff.). As if they had been a people whose rectitude of action and fidelity to the commands of God warranted them in expecting nothing but what was good in the future, they ask God (viz., in prayer and by inquiring of the prophet) for *mishptē tsedeq*, “righteous manifestations of judgment” i.e., such as will save them and destroy their foes, and desire *qirbath ‘Elōhīm*, the coming of God, i.e., His saving *parousia*. The energetic futures, with the tone upon the last syllable, answer to their self-righteous presumption; and **וַיִּהְיוּ** is repeated, according to Isaiah’s most favourite oratorical figure (see p. 387), at the close of the verse.

Isaiah 58:3, 4. There follow now the words of the work-righteous themselves, who hold up their fasting before the eyes of God, and complain that He takes no notice of it. And how could He?! Vv. 3, 4. “*Wherefore do we fast and Thou seest not, afflict our soul and Thou regardest not?*” *Behold, on the day of your fasting ye carry on your business, and ye oppress all your labourers. Behold, ye fast with strife and quarrelling, and with smiting with the fist maliciously closed: ye do not fast now to make your voice audible on high.*” By the side of **צוּם** (root **צמ**, to press, tie up, constrain) we have here the older expression found in the Pentateuch, **עָנָה נַפְשׁוֹ**, to do violence to the natural life. In addition to the fasting on the day of atonement (the tenth of the seventh month Tizri), the only fast prescribed by the law, other fasts were observed according to Zech. 7:3; 8:19, viz., fasts to commemorate the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem (10th Tebeth), its capture (17th Tammuz), its destruction (9th Abib), and the murder of Gedaliah (3rd Tizri). The exiles boast of this

fasting here; but it is a heartless, dead work, and therefore worthless in the sight of God. There is the most glaring contrast between the object of the fast and their conduct on the fast-day: for they carry on their work-day occupation; they are then, more than at any other time, true taskmasters to their work-people (lest the service of the master should suffer from the service of God); and because when fasting they are doubly irritable and ill-tempered, this leads to quarrelling and strife, and even to striking with angry fist (**בְּאַגְרֵי**, from **אָרַף**, to collect together, make into a ball, clench). Hence in their present state the true purpose of fasting is quite unknown to them, viz., to enable them to draw near with importunate prayer to God, who is enthroned on high (Isa. 57:15). The only difficulty here is the phrase **מִצָּאָה הִפְּיָן**. In the face of v. 13, this cannot have any other meaning than to stretch one’s hand after occupation, to carry on business, to occupy one’s self with it,—**הִפְּיָן** combining the three meanings, application or affairs, striving, and trade or occupation. **מִצָּאָה**, however, maintains its primary meaning, to lay hold of or grasp (cf., Isa. 10:14; Targ. **אַתּוֹן תְּבַעֵין צְרִיכוֹן**, ye seek your livelihood). This is sustained by what follows, whether we derive **עַצְבֵיכֶם** (cf., **חֲלָקֵי**, Isa. 57:6) from **עָצַב** (*et omnes labores vestros graves rigide exigitis*), **נָגַשׁ** (from which we have here **תִּגְנֹשׁוּ** for **תִּגְנֹשׁוּ**, Deut. 15:3) being construed as in 2 Kings 23:35 with the accusative of what is peremptorily demanded; or (what we certainly prefer) from **עָצַב**; or better still from **עָצַב** (like **עָמַל**): *omnes operarios vestros adigitis (urgetis)*, **נָגַשׁ** being construed with the accusative of the person oppressed, as in Deut. 15:2, where it is applied to the oppression of a debtor. Here, however, the reference is not to those who owe money, but to those who owe labour, or to obligations to labour; and **עָצַב** does not signify a debtor (an idea quite foreign to this verbal root), but a labourer, one who eats the bread of

sorrows, or of hard toil (Ps. 127:2). The prophet paints throughout from the life; and we cannot be persuaded by Stier's false zeal for Isaiah's authorship to give up the opinion, that we have here a figure drawn from the life of the exiles in Babylon.

Isaiah 58:5-7. Whilst the people on the fast-day are carrying on their worldly, selfish, everyday business, the fasting is perverted from a means of divine worship and absorption in the spiritual character of the day to the most thoroughly selfish purposes: it is supposed to be of some worth and to merit some reward. This work-holy delusion, behind which self-righteousness and unrighteousness were concealed, is met thus by Jehovah through His prophet: Vv. 5-7. *"Can such things as these pass for a fast that I have pleasure in, as a day for a man to afflict his soul? To bow down his head like a bulrush, and spread sackcloth and ashes under him—dost thou call this a fast and an acceptable day for Jehovah? Is not this a fast that I have pleasure in: To loose coils of wickedness, to untie the bands of the yoke, and for sending away the oppressed as free, and that ye break every kind of yoke? Is it not this, to break thy bread to the hungry, and to take the poor and houseless to thy home; when thou seest a naked man that thou clothest him, and dost not deny thyself before thine own flesh?"* The true worship, which consists in works of merciful love to one's brethren, and its great promises are here placed in contrast with the false worship just described. **הִכָּזֶה** points backwards: is such a fast as this a fast after Jehovah's mind, a day on which it can be said in truth that a man afflicts his soul (Lev. 16:29)? The **ה** of **הִלְכֵי** is resumed in **הִלְזֶה**; the second **ל** is the object to **תִּקְרָא** expressed as a dative. The first **ל** answers to our preposition "to" with the infinitive, which stands here at the beginning like a *casus absol.* (to hang down; for which the *inf. absol.* **הִכָּפוּן** might also be used), and as in most other cases passes over into the finite (*et quod saccum et cinerem substernit, viz., sibi*: Ges. § 132, Anm. 2). To hang down the head and sit in

sackcloth and ashes—this does not in itself deserve the name of fasting and of a day of gracious reception (Isa. 56:7; 61:2) on the part of Jehovah (**לִיהוָה** for a subjective genitive).

Vv. 6 and 7 affirm that the fasting which is pleasant to Jehovah consists in something very different from this, namely, in releasing the oppressed, and in kindness to the helpless; not in abstinence from eating as such, but in sympathetic acts of that self-denying love, which gives up bread or any other possession for the sake of doing good to the needy. There is a bitter irony in these words, just as when the ancients said, "not eating is a natural fast, but abstaining from sin is a spiritual fast." During the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans a general emancipation of the slaves of Israelitish descent (who were to be set free, according to the law, every three years) was resolved upon and carried out; but as soon as the Chaldeans were gone, the masters fetched their liberated slaves back into servitude again (Jer. 34:8-22). And as v. 6 shows, they carried the same selfish and despotic disposition with them into captivity. The **הָ** which points forwards is expanded into infin. absolutes, which are carried on quite regularly in the finite tense. **Mōtâh**, which is repeated palindromically, signifies in both cases a yoke, lit., *vectis*, the cross wood which formed the most important part of the yoke, and which was fastened to the animal's head, and so connected with the plough by means of a cord or strap (Sir. 30:35; 33:27). It is to this that **אֶגְדֹּת**, knots, refers. We cannot connect it with *mutteh*, a state of perverted right (Ezek. 9:9), as Hitzig does. **רָצוּצִים** are persons unjustly and forcibly oppressed even with cruelty; **רָצִץ** is a stronger synonym to **עָשָׂק** (e.g., Amos 4:1). In v. 7 we have the same spirit of general humanity as in Job 31:13-23, Ezek. 18:7, 8 (compare what James describes in James 1:27 as "pure religion and undefiled"). **פָּרַם (פָּרַשׁ) לָחֵם** is the usual phrase for **κλᾶν (κλάζειν) ἄρτον**. **מְרוּדִים** is the adjective to **עָנִיִּים**, and apparently therefore

must be derived from מְרֹד: miserable men who have shown themselves refractory towards despotic rulers. But the participle *mârūd* cannot be found elsewhere; and the recommendation to receive political fugitives has a modern look. The parallels in Lam. 1:7 and 3:19 are conclusive evidence, that the word is intended as a derivative of רוּד, to wander about, and it is so rendered in the LXX, Targ., and Jerome (*vagos*). But מְרֹד, pl. מְרוּדִים, is no adjective; and there is nothing to recommend the opinion, that by “wanderers” we are to understand Israelitish men. Ewald supposes that מְרוּדִים may be taken as a *part. hoph.* מְרוּדִים, hunted away, like הַמְמוּתִים in 2 Kings 11:2 (*keri* הַמְמוּתִים); but it cannot be shown that the language allowed of this shifting of a vowel-sound. We prefer to assume that מְרוּדִים (persecuted) is regarded as *part. pass.*, even if only *per metaplasmum*, from מְרֹד, a secondary form of רוּד (cf., מְכַס, מְלַץ, מְצַח, *makuna*). V. 7b is still the virtual subject to אֲבָחֶרְהוּ. The apodosis to the hypothetical כִּי commences with a *perf. consec.*, which then passes into the pausal future תִּתְעַלֵּם. In מִבְּשָׂרְךָ (from thine own flesh) it is presupposed that all men form one united whole as being of the same flesh and blood, and that they form one family, owing to one another mutual love.

Isaiah 58:8, 9a. The prophet now proceeds to point out the reward of divine grace, which would follow such a fast as this, consisting of self-renouncing, self-sacrificing love; and in the midst of the promise he once more reminds of the fact, that this love is the condition of the promise. This divides the promises into two. The middle promise is linked on to the first; the morning dawn giving promise of the “perfect day” (Prov. 4:18). The first series of promises we have in vv. 8, 9a. “Then will thy light break forth as the morning dawn, and thy healing will sprout up speedily, and thy righteousness will go before thee, the glory of Jehovah will follow thee.

Then wilt thou call and Jehovah will answer; thou wilt beseech, and He will say, Here am I!”
 The love of God is called “light” in contrast with His wrath; and a quiet cheerful life in God’s love is so called, in contrast with a wild troubled life spent in God’s wrath. This life in God’s love has its dawn and its noon-day. When it is night both within and around a man, and he suffers himself to be awakened by the love of God to a reciprocity of love; then does the love of God, like the rising sun, open for itself a way through the man’s dark night and overcome the darkness of wrath, but so gradually that the sky within is at first only streaked as it were with the red of the morning dawn, the herald of the sun. A second figure of a promising character follows. The man is sick unto death; but when the love of God stimulates him to reciprocal love, he is filled with new vigour, and his recovery springs up suddenly; he feels within him a new life working through with energetic force like a miraculous springing up of verdure from the earth, or of growing and flowering plants. The only other passages in which אָרוּכָה occurs are in the books of Jeremiah, Chronicles, and Nehemiah. It signifies recovery (LXX here, τὰ ἰάματα σου ταχὺ ἀνατελεῖ, an old mistake for ἰμάτια, *vestimenta*), and hence general prosperity (2 Chron. 24:13). It always occurs with the predicate עֲלֶהָ (causative הֵעֵלָה, cf., Targ. Ps. 147:3, אָרַכָּה, another reading אָרוּכָה), *oritur* (for which we have here poetically *germinat*) *alicui sanitas*; hence Gesenius and others have inferred, that the word originally meant the binding up of a wound, bandage (*impontiru alicui fascia*). But the primary word is אָרַךְ = אָרַךְ, to set to rights, to restore or put into the right condition (e.g., *b. Sabbath 33b*, “he cured his wounded flesh”), connected with אָרַיַךְ, Arab. *ârak*, *accommodatus*; so that אָרוּכָה, after the form מְלוּכָה, Arab. (though rarely) *arika*, signifies properly, setting to rights, i.e., restoration.
 The third promise is: “thy righteousness will go before thee, the glory of Jehovah will gather

thee, or keep thee together,” i.e., be thy rear-guard (LXX περιστελαῖ σε, enclose thee with its protection; אָסָּ as in אָסָּמָּ, Isa. 52:12). The figure is a significant one: the first of the mercies of God is δικαιοῦν, and the last δοξάζειν. When Israel is diligent in the performance of works of compassionate love, it is like an army on the march or a travelling caravan, for which righteousness clear and shows the way as being the most appropriate gift of God, and whose rear is closed by the glory of God, which so conducts it to its goal that not one is left behind. The fourth promise assures them of the immediate hearing of prayer, of every appeal to God, every cry for help.

Isaiah 58:9-12. But before the prophet brings his promises up to their culminating point, he once more lays down the condition upon which they rest. Vv. 9b -12. *“If thou put away from the midst of thee the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and speaking of evil, and offerest up thy gluttony to the hungry, and satisfiest the soul that is bowed down: thy light will stream out in the darkness, and thy darkness become like the brightness of noon-day. And Jehovah will guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in droughts, and refresh thy bones; and thou wilt become like a well-watered garden, and like a fountain, whose waters never deceive. And thy people will build ruins of the olden time, foundations of earlier generations wilt thou erect; and men will call thee repairers of breaches, restorers of habitable streets.”* מוֹטָּ, a yoke, is here equivalent to yoking or oppression, as in v. 6a, where it stands by the side of אָסָּמָּ (only met with here, for אָסָּמָּ, Ges. § 65, 1, a), the stretching out of the finger, signifies a scornful pointing with the fingers (Prov. 6:13, δακτυλοδεικτεῖν) at humbler men, and especially at such as are godly (Isa. 57:4). אָסָּמָּ, the utterance of things which are wicked in themselves and injurious to one’s neighbour, hence sinful conversation in general. The early commentators looked for more under אָסָּמָּ, than is really meant (and so does even Stier: “they soul, thy heart, all thy sympathetic

feelings,” etc.). The name of the soul, which is regarded here as greedily longing (Isa. 56:11), is used in Deut. 24:6 for that which nourishes it, and here for that which it longs for; the longing itself (*appetitus*) for the object of the longing (*Psychol.* p. 204). We may see this very clearly from the choice of the verb אָסָּמָּ (a voluntative in a conditional clause, Ges. § 128, 2), which, starting from the primary meaning *educere* (related to אָסָּמָּ, Arabic *anfaqa*, to give out, distribute, *nafaqa*, distribution, especially of alms), signifies both to work out, acquire, carry off (Prov. 3:13; 8:35, etc.), and also to take out, deliver, offer, *expromere* (as in this instance and Ps. 140:9; 144:13). The soul “bowed down” is bowed down in this instance through abstinence. The apodoses commence with the *perf. cons.* אָסָּמָּ. אָסָּמָּ is the darkness caused by the utter absence of light (Arab. *afalat esh-shemsu*, “the sun has become invisible”); see at Job 10:22. This, as the substantive clause affirms, is like the noon-day, which is called אָסָּמָּ, because at that point the daylight of both the forenoon and afternoon, the rising and setting light, is divided as it were into two by the climax which it has attained. A new promise points to the fat, that such a man may enjoy without intermission the mild and safe guidance of divine grace, for which אָסָּמָּ (אָסָּמָּ, syn. אָסָּמָּ) is the word commonly employed; and another to the communication of the most copious supply of strength. The ἄπαξ γεγενηται does not state with what God will satisfy the soul, as Hahn supposes (after Jerome, “*splendoribus*”), but according to אָסָּמָּ (Ps. 68:7) and such promises as Isa. 43:20; 48:21; 49:10, the kind of satisfaction and the circumstances under which it occurs, viz., in extreme droughts (Targ. “years of drought”). In the place of the *perf. cons.* we have then the future, which facilitates the elevation of the object: “and thy bones will He make strong,” אָסָּמָּ, for which Hupfeld would read אָסָּמָּ, “will He rejuvenate.” אָסָּמָּ is a denom. of אָסָּמָּ, *expeditus*; it may, however, be directly derived

from a verb קָלַץ, presupposed by קָלִיצִים, not, however, in the meaning “to be fat” (LXX παυνθήσεται, and so also Kimchi), but “to be strong,” lit., to be loose or ready for action; and *b. Jebamoth* 102*b* has the very suitable gloss זרווי גרמי (making the bones strong). This idea of invigorating is then unfolded in two different figures, of which that of a well-watered garden sets forth the abundance received, that of a spring the abundance possessed. Natural objects are promised, but as a gift of grace; for this is the difference between the two testaments, that in the Old Testament the natural is ever striving to reach the spiritual, whereas in the New Testament the spiritual lifts up the natural to its own level. The Old Testament is ever striving to give inwardness to what was outward; in the New Testament this object is attained, and the further object now is to make the outward conformed to the inward, the natural life to the spiritual.

The last promise (whether the seventh or eighth, depends upon whether we include the growing of the morning light into the light of noon, or not) takes its form from the pining of the exiles for their home: “and thy people (בְּנֵי מִצְרָיִם) build” (Ewald, § 295, c); and Böttcher would read בָּנֵנוּ מִמֶּךָ; but מִן with a passive, although more admissible in Hebrew than in Arabic, is very rarely met with, and then more frequently in the sense of ἀπό than in that of ὑπό, and בָּנֵנוּ followed by a plural of the thing would be more exact than customary. Moreover, there is no force in the objection that בָּנֵנוּ with the active can only signify “some of thee,” since it is equivalent to אֲשֶׁר מִמֶּךָ, those who sprang from thee and belong to thee by kindred descent. The members born to the congregation in exile will begin, as soon as they return to their home, to build up again the ruins of olden time, the foundations of earlier generations, i.e., houses and cities of which only the foundations are left (Isa. 61:4); therefore Israel restored to its fatherland receives the honourable title of “builder of breaches,” “restorer of streets (i.e.,

of places much frequented once) לְיִשְׁבֵּתָהּ” (for inhabiting), i.e., so that, although so desolate now (Isa. 33:8), they become habitable and populous once more.

Isaiah 58:13, 14. The third part of the prophecy now adds to the duties of human love the duty of keeping the Sabbath, together with equally great promises; i.e., it adds the duties of the first table to those of the second, for the service of works is sanctified by the service of worship. Vv. 13, 14. *“If thou hold back thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy business on my holy day, and callest the Sabbath a delight, the holy of Jehovah, reverer, and honourest it, not doing thine own ways, not pursuing thy business and speaking words: then wilt thou have delight in Jehovah, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the land, and make thee enjoy the inheritance of Jacob thy forefather, for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.”* The duty of keeping the Sabbath is also enforced by Jeremiah (Jer. 17:19ff.) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 20:12ff., 22:8, 26), and the neglect of this duty severely condemned. Ch. 56 has already shown the importance attached to it by our prophet. The Sabbath, above all other institutions appointed by the law, was the true means of uniting and sustaining Israel as a religious community, more especially in exile, where a great part of the worship necessarily fell into abeyance on account of its intimate connection with Jerusalem and the holy land; but whilst it was a Mosaic institution so far as its legal appointments were concerned, it rested, in a way which reached even beyond the rite of circumcision, upon a basis much older than that of the law, being a ceremonial copy of the Sabbath of creation, which was the divine rest established by God as the true object of all motion; for God entered into Himself again after He had created the world out of Himself, that all created things might enter into Him. In order that this, the great end set before all creation, and especially before mankind, viz., entrance into the rest of God, might be secured, the keeping of the Sabbath prescribed by the law was a divine method of education, which

ISAIAH	Page 453
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

put an end every week to the ordinary avocations of the people, with their secular influence and their tendency to fix the mind on outward things, and was designed by the strict prohibition of all work to force them to enter into themselves and occupy their minds with God and His word. The prophet does not hedge round this commandment to keep the Sabbath with any new precepts, but merely demands for its observance full truth answering to the spirit of the letter. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath" is equivalent to, if thou do not tread upon its holy ground with a foot occupied with its everyday work.

מַעֲשֵׂוֹת which follows is not elliptical (= מַעֲשֵׂוֹת answering to מַשְׁבֵּת, an unnecessary and mistaken assumption), but an explanatory permutative of the object "thy foot:" "turn away thy foot," viz., from attending to thy business (a defective plural) on my holy day. Again, if thou call (i.e., from inward contemplation and esteem) the Sabbath a pleasure (*'ōneg*, because it leads thee to God, and not a burden because it leads thee away from thine everyday life; cf., Amos 8:5) and the holy one of Jehovah (on this masculine personification of the Sabbath, see Isa. 56:2), "*mkhubbâd*," honoured = honourable, *honorandus* (see p. 278), and if thou truly honourest him, whom Jehovah has invested with the splendour of His own glory (Gen. 2:3: "and sanctified it"), "not" (מֵן = ὅσταν μὴ) "to perform thy ways" (the ordinary ways which relate to self-preservation, not to God), "not to attend to thine own business" (see at v. 3) "and make words," viz., words of vain useless character and needless multitude (רִבְרִיבֵי as in Hos. 10:4, denoting unspiritual gossip and boasting); then, just as the Sabbath is thy pleasure, so wilt thou have thy pleasure in Jehovah, i.e., enjoy His delightful fellowship (תִּתְעַנֵּג עִלַּיָּהּ, a promise as in Job 22:26), and He will reward thee for thy renunciation of earthly advantages with a victorious reign, with an unapproachable possession of the high places of the land—i.e., chiefly, though not exclusively, of the promised land, which shall then be

restored to thee,—and with the free and undisputed usufruct of the inheritance promised to thy forefather Jacob (Ps. 105:10, 11; Deut. 32:13 and 33:29);—this will be thy glorious reward, for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. Thus does Isaiah confirm the predictions of Isa. 1:20 and 40:25 (compare Isa. 24:3 and the passages quoted at p. 278).

Isaiah 59

Second Prophecy

The Existing Wall of Partition Broken Down at Last

Isaiah 59:1, 2. This second prophetic address continues the reproachful theme of the first. In the previous prophecy we found the virtues which are well-pleasing to God, and to which He promises redemption as a reward of grace, set in contrast with those false means, upon which the people rested their claim to redemption. In the prophecy before us the sins which retard redemption are still more directly exposed. Vv. 1, 2. "*Behold, Jehovah's hand is not too short to help, nor His ear too heavy to hear; but your iniquities have become a party-wall between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.*" The reason why redemption is delayed, is not that the power of Jehovah has not been sufficient for it (cf., Isa. 50:2), or that He has not been aware of their desire for it, but that their iniquities (עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם with the second syllable defective) have become dividers (מִבְדֵּלִים, defective), have grown into a party-wall between them and their God, and their sins (cf., Jer. 5:25) have hidden *pânîm* from them. As the "hand" (*yâd*) in Isa. 28:2 is the *absolute* hand; so here the "face" (*pânîm*) is that face which sees everything, which is everywhere present, whether uncovered or concealed; which diffuses light when it unveils itself, and leaves darkness when it is veiled; the sight of which is blessedness, and not to see which is damnation. This absolute countenance is never to be seen in this life without a veil; but the rejection and

abuse of grace make this veil a perfectly impenetrable covering. And Israel had forfeited in this way the light and sight of this countenance of God, and had raised a party-wall between itself and Him, and that *מְשֻׁמוֹעַ*, so that He did not hear, i.e., so that their prayer did not reach Him (Lam. 3:44) or bring down an answer from Him.

Isaiah 59:3. The sins of Israel are sins in words and deeds. V. 3. *“For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips speak lies, your tongue murmurs wickedness.”* The verb *לָאָץ*, to spot (see Isa. 63:3), is a later softening down of *לָעַץ* (e.g., 2 Sam. 1:21); and in the place of the niphal *לָאָץ* (Zeph. 3:1), we have here, as in Lam. 4:14, the double passive form *לָאָץ*, compounded of niphal and pual. The post-biblical *nithpaël*, compounded of the *niphal* and the *hithpaël*, is a mixed form of the same kind, though we also meet with it in a few biblical passages (Deut. 21:8; Prov. 27:15; Ezek. 23:48). The verb *hâgâh* (LXX *μελετᾷ*) combines the two meanings of “thought” (meditation or reflection), and of a light low “expression,” half inward half outward.

Isaiah 59:4–6. The description now passes over to the social and judicial life. Lying and oppression universally prevail. Vv. 4–6. *“No one speaks with justice, and no one pleads with faithfulness; men trust in vanity, and speak with deception; they conceive trouble, and bring forth ruin. They hatch basilisks’ eggs, and weave spiders’ webs. He that eateth of their eggs must die; and if one is trodden upon, it splits into an adder. Their webs do not suffice for clothing, and men cannot cover themselves with their works: their works are works of ruin, and the practice of injustice is in their hands.”* As *קָרָא* is generally used in these prophetic addresses in the sense of *κηρύσσειν*, and the judicial meaning, *citare*, in *just vocare, litem intendere*, cannot be sustained, we must adopt this explanation, “no one gives public evidence with justice” (LXX *οὐδεὶς λαλεῖ δίκαια*). *צָדֵק* is firm adherence to the rule of right and truth; *אֲמוּנָה* a conscientious reliance

which awakens trust; *מְשֻׁפָּט* (in a reciprocal sense, as in Isa. 43:26; 66:16) signifies the commencement and pursuit of a law-suit with any one. The abstract infinitives which follow in v. 4*b* express the general characteristics of the social life of that time, after the manner of the historical infinitive in Latin (cf., Isa. 21:5; Ges. § 131, 4, *b*). Men trust in *tōhū*, that which is perfectly destitute of truth, and speak *שֹׁאָר*, what is morally corrupt and worthless. The double figure *הָרוּ עִמָּל וְהוֹלִיד אֹן* is taken from Job 15:35 (cf., Ps. 7:15). *הָרוּ* (compare the *poel* in v. 13) is only another form for *הָרָה* (Ges. § 131, 4, *b*); and *הוֹלִיד* (the western or Palestinian reading here), or *הוֹלִיד* (the oriental or Babylonian reading), is the usual form of the *inf. abs. hiph.* (Ges. § 53, Anm. 2). What they carry about with them and set in operation is compared in v. 5*a* to basilisks’ eggs (*צִפְעוֹנוֹת*, *serpens regulus*, as in Isa. 11:8) and spiders’ webs (*עֲבָבִישׁ*, as in Job 8:14, from *עֲבָב*, possibly in the sense of squatter, sitter still, with the substantive ending *ish*; see Jeshurun, p. 228). They hatch basilisks’ eggs (*בָּקַע* like *בָּקַע*, Isa. 34:15, a perfect, denoting that which has hitherto always taken place and therefore is a customary thing); and they spin spiders’ webs (*אָרְגוּ* possibly related to *ἀράχ-νη*; the future denoting that which goes on occurring). The point of comparison in the first figure is the injurious nature of all they do, whether men rely upon it, in which case “he that eateth of their eggs dieth,” or whether they are bold or imprudent enough to try and frustrate their plans and performances, when that (the egg) which is crushed or trodden upon splits into an adder, i.e., sends out an adder, which snaps at the heel of the disturber of its rest. *זוּר* as in Job 39:15, here the *part. pass. fem.* like *סוֹרָה* (Isa. 49:21), with *וֹ*- instead of *וֹ*-, like *לָנָה*, the original *ǎ* of the feminine (*zûrǎth*) having returned from its lengthening into *ā* to the weaker lengthening into *ě*. The point of comparison in the second figure is the

worthlessness and deceptive character of their works. What they spin and make does not serve for a covering to any man (יְהַכְסֶה with the most general subject: Ges. § 137, 3), but has simply the appearance of usefulness; their works are מְעַשֵׂי־אָוֶן (with *metheg*, not *munach*, under the *Mem*), evil works, and their acts are all directed to the injury of their neighbour, in his right and his possession.

Isaiah 59:7. This evil doing of theirs rises even to hatred, the very opposite of that love which is well-pleasing to God. V. 7. *“Their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of wickedness; wasting and destruction are in their paths.”* Paul has interwoven this passage into his description of the universal corruption of morals, in Rom. 3:15–17. The comparison of life to a road, and of a man’s conduct to walking, is very common in proverbial sayings. The prophet has here taken from them both his simile and his expressions. We may see from v. 7a, that during the captivity the true believers were persecuted even to death by their countrymen, who had forgotten God. The verbs יְרוּצוּ and יִמְהָרוּ (the proper reading, with *metheg*, not *munach*, under the ׀) depict the pleasure taken in wickedness, when the conscience is thoroughly lulled to sleep.

Isaiah 59:8. Their whole nature is broken up into discord. V. 8. *“The way of peace they know not, and there is no right in their roads: they make their paths crooked: every one who treads upon them knows no peace.”* With דְּרֹךְ, the way upon which a man goes, the prophet uses interchangeably (here and in v. 7) מִסְלָה, a high-road thrown up with an embankment; מַעְגָּל (with the plural in *îm* and *ôth*), a carriage-road; and נְתִיבָה, a footpath formed by the constant passing to and fro of travellers. Peaceable conduct, springing from a love of peace, and aiming at producing peace, is altogether strange to them; no such thing is to be met with in their path as the recognition of practice of right: they make their paths for themselves (לָהֶם, *dat.*

eticus), i.e., most diligently, twisting about; and whoever treads upon them (*bâh*, neuter, as in Isa. 27:4), forfeits all enjoyment of either inward or outward peace. *Shâlôm* is repeated significantly, in Isaiah’s peculiar style, at the end of the verse. The first strophe of the prophecy closes here: it was from no want of power or willingness on the part of God, that He had not come to the help of His people; the fault lay in their own sins.

Isaiah 59:9–11. In the second strophe the prophet includes himself when speaking of the people. They now mourn over that state of exhaustion into which they have been brought through the perpetual straining and disappointment of expectation, and confess those sins on account of which the righteousness and salvation of Jehovah have been withheld. The prophet is speaking communicatively here; for even the better portion of the nation was involved in the guilt and consequences of the corruption which prevailed among the exiles, inasmuch as a nation forms an organized whole, and the delay of redemption really affected them. Vv. 9–11. *“Therefore right remains far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us; we hope for light, and behold darkness; for brightness—we walk in thick darkness. We grope along the wall like the blind, and like eyeless men we grope: we stumble in the light of noon-day as in the darkness, and among the living like the dead. We roar all like bears, and moan deeply like doves: we hope for right, and it cometh not; for salvation—it remaineth far off from us.”* At the end of this group of verses, again, the thought with which it sets out is palindromically repeated. The perfect רָחַקָה denotes a state of things reaching from the past into the present; the future תִּשְׁיָגוּ a state of things continuing unchangeable in the present. By *mishpât* we understand a solution of existing inequalities or incongruities through the judicial interposition of God; by *tsdâqâh* the manifestation of justice, which bestows upon Israel grace as its right in accordance with the plan of salvation after the long continuance of punishment, and pours out

merited punishment upon the instruments employed in punishing Israel. The prophet's standpoint, whether a real or an ideal one, is the last decade of the captivity. At that time, about the period of the Lydian war, when Cyrus was making one prosperous stroke after another, and yet waited so long before he turned his arms against Babylon, it may easily be supposed that hope and despondency alternated incessantly in the minds of the exiles. The dark future, which the prophet penetrated in the light of the Spirit, was indeed broken up by rays of hope, but it did not amount to light, i.e., to a perfect lighting up (*ngōhōth*, an intensified plural of *ngōhâh*, like *nkhōchōth* in Isa. 26:10, pl. of *nkhōchâh* in v. 14); on the contrary, darkness was still the prevailing state, and in the deep thick darkness (*‘āphēlōth*) the exiles pined away, without the promised release being effected for them by the oppressor of the nations. "We grope," they here complain, "like blind men by a wall, in which there is no opening, and like eyeless men we grope." גָּשַׁשׁ (only used here) is a synonym of the older מִשַּׁשׁ (Deut. 28:29); נָגַשְׁשָׁה (with the elision of the reduplication, which it is hardly possible to render audible, and which comes up again in the pausal נָגַשְׁשָׁה) has the *âh* of force, here of the impulse to self-preservation, which leads them to grope for an outlet in this ἀπορία; and אֵין עֵינַיִם is not quite synonymous with עִוְרִים, for there is such a thing as blindness with apparently sound eyes (cf., Isa. 43:8); and there is also a real absence of eyes, on account of either a natural malformation, or the actual loss of the eyes through either external injury or disease.

In the lamentation which follows, "we stumble in the light of noon-day (צֶהְרֵי־יָמִים, *meridies* = *mesidies*, the culminating point at which the eastern light is separated from the western) as if it were darkness, and בָּאֲשֻׁמְנִים, as if we were dead men," we may infer from the parallelism that since בָּאֲשֻׁמְנִים must express some antithesis to כְּמִתִּים, it cannot mean either *in*

caliginosis (Jer., Luther, etc.), or "in the graves" (Targ., D. Kimchi, etc.), or "in desolate places" (J. Kimchi). Moreover, there is no such word in Hebrew as אֲשֻׁמָּה, to be dark, although the lexicographers give a Syriac word אֲשֻׁמְנָה, thick darkness (possibly related to Arab. *‘atamat*, which does not mean the dark night, but late in the night); and the verb *shâmên*, to be fat, is never applied to "fat, i.e., thick darkness," as Knobel assumes, whilst the form of the word with *ṯ c. dagesh* precludes the meaning a solitary place or desert (from אֲשֻׁמָּה = אֲשֻׁמָּה). The form in question points rather to the verbal stem אֲשֻׁמַּן, which yields a fitting antithesis to כְּמִתִּים, whether we explain it as meaning "in luxuriant fields," or "among the fat ones, i.e., those who glory in their abundant health." We prefer the latter, since the word *mishmannîm* (Dan. 11:24; cf., Gen. 27:28) had already been coined to express the other idea; and as a rule, words formed with אֲ *prosth.* point rather to an attributive than to a substantive idea. אֲשֻׁמְנָה is a more emphatic form of אֲשֻׁמָּה (Judg. 3:29); and אֲשֻׁמְנִים indicates indirectly the very same thing which is directly expressed by מִשְׁמְנִים in Isa. 10:16. Such explanations as "*in opimis rebus*" (Stier, etc.), or "in fatness of body, i.e., fulness of life" (Böttcher), are neither so suitable to the form of the word, nor do they answer to the circumstances referred to here, where all the people in exile are speaking. The true meaning therefore is, "we stumble (reel about) among fat ones, or those who lead a merry life," as if we were dead. "And what," as Doederlein observes, "can be imagined more gloomy and sad, than to be wandering about like shades, while others are fat and flourishing?" The growling and moaning in v. 11 are expressions of impatience and pain produced by longing. The people now fall into a state of impatience, and roar like bears (*hâmâh* like *fremere*), as when, for example, a bear scents a flock, and prowls about it (*vespertinus circumgemit ursus ovile*: Hor. *Ep.* xvi. 51); and now again they give

ISAIAH	Page 457
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

themselves up to melancholy, and moan in a low and mournful tone like the doves, *quarum blanditias verbaque murmur habet* (Ovid). הָגָה, like *murmurare*, expresses less depth of tone or *raucitas* than הִמְקָה. All their looking for righteousness and salvation turns out again and again to be nothing but self-deception, when the time for their coming seems close at hand.

Isaiah 59:12, 13. The people have already indicated by עַל-כֵּן in v. 9 that this benighted, hopeless state is the consequence of their prevailing sins; they now come back to this, and strike the note of penitence (*viddui*), which is easily recognised by the recurring rhymes *ānu* and *ēnu*. The prophet makes the confession (as in Jer. 14:19, 20, cf., 3:21ff.), standing at the head of the people as the leader of their prayer (*ba'al tphilhâh*): Vv. 12, 13. "For our transgressions are many before Thee, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are known to us, and our evil deeds well known: apostasy and denial of Jehovah, and turning back from following our God, oppressive and false speaking, receiving and giving out from the heart words of falsehood." The people acknowledge the multitude and magnitude of their apostate deeds, which are the object of the omniscience of God, and their sins which bear witness against them (עָנְתָהּ the predicate of a neuter plural; Ges. § 146, 3). The second כִּי resumes the first: "our apostate deeds are with us (אִתָּנוּ as in Job 12:3; cf., עִמָּנוּ, Job 15:9), i.e., we are conscious of them; and our misdeeds, we know them" (יָדַעְנוּ for יָדַעְנוּ, as in Gen. 41:23, cf., 6, and with יָדַעְנוּ, as is always the case with verbs ל"ע before י, and with a suffix; Ewald, § § 60). The sins are now enumerated in v. 13 in abstract infinitive forms. At the head stands apostasy in thought and deed, which is expressed as a threefold sin. בְּרָה (of Jehovah) belongs to both the "apostasy" (treachery; e.g., Isa. 1:2) and the "denial" (Jer. 5:12). נָסוּג is an inf. abs. (different from Ps. 80:19). Then follow sins against the neighbour: viz., such speaking as leads to oppression, and

consists of *sârâh*, that which deviates from or is opposed to the law and truth (Deut. 19:16); also the conception (*concipere*) of lying words, and the utterance of them from the heart in which they are conceived (Matt. 15:18; 12:35). הִרָו and הִגָּו are the only *poel* infinitives which occur in the Old Testament, just as שִׁוְשִׁית (Isa. 10:13) is the only example of a *poel perfect* of a verb ל"ה. The *poel* is suitable throughout this passage, because the action expressed affects others, and is intended to do them harm. According to Ewald, the *poel* indicates the object or tendency: it is the conjugation employed to denote seeking, attacking, or laying hold of; e.g., לִוְשֵׁן, *lingua petere*, i.e., to calumniate; עִוְוֵן, *oculo petere*, i.e., to envy.

Isaiah 59:14, 15a. The confession of personal sins is followed by that of the sinful state of society. Vv. 14, 15a. "And right is forced back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth has fallen in the market-place, and honesty finds no admission. And truth became missing, and he who avoids evil is outlawed." In connection with *mishpât* and *tsdâqâh* here, we have not to think of the manifestation of divine judgment and justice which is prevented from being realized; but the people are here continuing the confession of their own moral depravity. Right has been forced back from the place which it ought to occupy (*hissig* is the word applied in the law to the removal of boundaries), and righteousness has to look from afar off at the unjust habits of the people, without being able to interpose. And why are right and righteousness—that united pair so pleasing to God and beneficial to man—thrust out of the nation, and why do they stand without? Because there is no truth or uprightness in the nation. Truth wanders about, and stands no longer in the midst of the nation; but upon the open street, the broad market-place, where justice is administered, and where she ought above all to stand upright and be preserved upright, she has stumbled and fallen down (cf., Isa. 3:8); and honesty (*nkhôchâh*), which goes straight forward, would gladly enter the limits

of the forum, but she cannot: people and judges alike form a barrier which keeps her back. The consequence of this is indicated in v. 15a: truth in its manifold practical forms has become a missing thing; and whoever avoids the existing voice is *mishtōlēl* (*part. hithpoel*, not *hithpoal*), one who is obliged to let himself be plundered and stripped (Ps. 76:6), to be made a *shōlāl* (Mic. 1:8), Arab. *maslûb*, with a passive turn given to the reflective meaning, as in *שָׁחַח*, to cause one's self to be spied out = to disguise one's self, and as in the so-called *niphal tolerativum* (Ewald, § 133, b, 2).

Isaiah 59:15-18. The third strophe of the prophecy commences at v. 15b or v. 16. It begins with threatening, and closes with promises; for the true nature of God is love, and every manifestation of wrath is merely one phase in its development. In consideration of the fact that this corrupt state of things furnishes no prospect of self-improvement, Jehovah has already equipped Himself for judicial interposition. Vv. 15b -18. *“And Jehovah saw it, and it was displeasing in His eyes, that there was no right. And He saw that there was not a man anywhere, and was astonished that there was nowhere an intercessor: then His arm brought Him help, and His righteousness became His stay. And He put on righteousness as a coat of mail, and the helmet of salvation upon His head; and put on garments of vengeance as armour, and clothed Himself in zeal as in a cloak. According to the deeds, accordingly He will repay: burning wrath to His adversaries, punishment to His foes; the islands He will repay with chastisement.”* The prophet's language has now toilsomely worked its way through the underwood of keen reproach, of dark descriptions of character, and of mournful confession which has brought up the apostasy of the great mass in all the blacker colours before his mind, from the fact that the confession proceeds from those who are ready for salvation. And now, having come to the description of the approaching judgment, out of whose furnace the church of the future is to spring, it rises again like a palm-tree that has

been violently hurled to the ground, and shakes its head as if restored to itself in the transforming ether of the future. Jehovah saw, and it excited His displeasure (“it was evil in His eyes,” an antiquated phrase from the Pentateuch, e.g., Gen. 38:10) to see that right (which He loves, Isa. 61:8; Ps. 37:28) had vanished from the life of His nation. He saw that there was no man there, no man possessing either the disposition or the power to stem this corruption (*שָׁחַח* as in Jer. 5:1, cf., 1 Sam. 4:9, 1 Kings 2:2, and the old Jewish saying, “Where there is no man, I strive to be a man”). He was astonished (the sight of such total depravity exciting in Him the highest degree of compassion and displeasure) that there was no *מְבַרְכֵי*, i.e., no one to step in between God and the people, and by his intercession to press this disastrous condition of the people upon the attention of God (see Isa. 53:12); no one to form a wall against the coming ruin, and cover the rent with his body; no one to appease the wrath, like Aaron (Num. 17:12, 13) or Phinehas (Num. 25:7).

What the *fut. consec.* affirms from *וְהוֹשִׁיעַ* onwards, is not something to come, but something past, as distinguished from the coming events announced from v. 18 onwards. Because the nation was so utterly and deeply corrupt, Jehovah had quipped Himself for judicial interposition. The equipment was already completed; only the taking of vengeance remained to be effected. Jehovah saw no man at His side who was either able or willing to help Him to His right in opposition to the prevailing abominations, or to support His cause. Then His own arm became His help, and His righteousness His support (cf., Isa. 63:5); so that He did not desist from the judgment to which He felt Himself impelled, until He had procured the fullest satisfaction for the honour of His holiness (Isa. 5:16). The armour which Jehovah puts on is now described. According to the scriptural view, Jehovah is never unclothed; but the free radiation of His own nature shapes itself into a garment of light. Light is the robe He wears (Ps. 104:2). When the prophet

describes this garment of light as changed into a suit of armour, this must be understood in the same sense as when the apostle in Eph. 6 speaks of a Christian's panoply. Just as there the separate pieces of armour represent the manifold self-manifestations of the inward spiritual life so here the pieces of Jehovah's armour stand for the manifold self-manifestations of His holy nature, which consists of a mixture of wrath and love. He does not arm Himself from any outward armoury; but the armoury is His infinite wrath and His infinite love, and the might in which He manifests Himself in such and such a way to His creatures is His infinite will. He puts on righteousness as a coat of mail (שָׂרֵיז) in half pause, as in 1 Kings 22:34 in full pause, for שָׂרֵיז, *ō* passing into the broader *ā*, as is generally the case in יְהַבֵּשׁ, יְהַפֵּץ; also in Gen. 43:14, שְׂכָלְתִי; 49:3, עָז; 49:27, יִטְרֶף, so that His appearance on every side is righteousness; and on His head He sets the helmet of salvation: for the ultimate object for which He goes into the conflict is the redemption of the oppressed, salvation as the fruit of the victory gained by righteousness. and over the coat of mail He draws on clothes of vengeance as a tabard (LXX περιβόλαιον), and wraps Himself in zeal as in a war-cloak. The inexorable justice of God is compared to an impenetrable brazen coat of mail; His joyful salvation, to a helmet which glitters from afar; His vengeance, with its manifold inflictions of punishment, to the clothes worn above the coat of mail; and His wrathful zeal (קִנְאָה from קָנָא, to be deep red) with the fiery-looking chlamys. No weapon is mentioned, neither the sword nor bow; for His own arm procures Him help, and this alone. But what will Jehovah do, when He has armed Himself thus with justice and salvation, vengeance and zeal? As v. 18 affirms, He will carry out a severe and general retributive judgment. גָּמֹל and גְּמֹלָה signify accomplishment of (on *gāmal*, see at Isa. 3:9) ἀρῆμα μέσσον; גְּמֹלוֹת, which may signify, according to the context, either manifestations of love or manifestations of wrath, and either retribution

as looked at from the side of God, or forfeiture as regarded from the side of man, has the latter meaning here, viz., the works of men and the double-sided *gmūl*, i.e., repayment, and that in the infliction of punishment. כְּעֵל, as if, as on account of, signifies, according to its Semitic use, in the measure (ךָ) of that which is fitting (עַל); cf., Isa. 63:7, *uti par est propter*. It is repeated with emphasis (like לִכְן in Isa. 52:6); the second stands without *rectum*, as the correlate of the first. By the adversaries and enemies, we naturally understand, after what goes before, the rebellious Israelites. The prophet does not mention these, however, but "the islands," that is to say, the heathen world. He hides the special judgment upon Israel in the general judgment upon the nations. The very same fate falls upon Israel, the salt of the world which has lost its savour, as upon the whole of the ungodly world. The purified church will have its place in the midst of a world out of which the crying injustice has been swept away.

Isaiah 59:19, 20. The prophet now proceeds to depict the יְשׁוּעָה, the symbol of which is the helmet upon Jehovah's head. Vv. 19, 20. "And they will fear the name of Jehovah from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun: for He will come like a stream dammed up, which a tempest of Jehovah drives away. And a Redeemer comes for Zion, and for those who turn from apostasy in Jacob, saith Jehovah." Instead of וַיִּרְאוּ, Knobel would strike out the *metheg*, and read וַיִּרְאוּ, "and they will see;" but "seeing the name of Jehovah" (the usual expression is "seeing His glory") is a phrase that cannot be met with, though it is certainly a passable one; and the relation in which v. 19b stands to 19a does not recommend the alteration, since v. 19b attributes that general fear of the name of Jehovah (cf., Deut. 28:58) and of His glory (see the parallel overlooked by Knobel, Ps. 102:16), which follows the manifestation of judgment on the part of Jehovah, to the manner in which this manifestation occurs. Moreover, the true

Masoretic reading in this passage is not וִירָאוּ (as in Mic. 7:17), but וִירָאוּ (see Norzi). The two מָן in מִמֶּעֶרֶב (with the indispensable *metheg* before the *chateph*, and a second to ensure clearness of pronunciation) and וּמִמֶּזְרַח־שָׁמֶשׁ (also with the so-called strong *metheg*) indicate the *terminus a quo*. From all quarters of the globe will fear of the name and of the glory of Jehovah become naturalized among the nations of the world. For when God has withdrawn His name and His glory from the world's history, as during the Babylonian captivity (and also at the present time), the return of both is all the more intense and extraordinary; and this is represented here in a figure which recalls Isa. 30:27, 28; 10:22, 23 (cf., Ezek. 43:2). The accentuation, which gives *pashta* כְּנָהָר, does indeed appear to make צָר the subject, either in the sense of oppressor or adversary, as in Lam. 4:12, or in that of oppression, as in Isa. 25:4; 26:16; 30:20. The former is quite out of the question, since no such transition to a human instrument of the retributive judgment could well take place after the חֲמָה לְצַרְיוֹ in v. 18. In support of the latter, it would be possible to quote Isa. 48:18 and 66:12, since צָר is the antithesis to *shâlôm*. But according to such parallels as Isa. 30:27, 28, it is incomparably more natural to take Jehovah (His name, His glory) as the subject. Moreover, בּוֹ, which must in any case refer to כְּנָהָר, is opposed to the idea that צָר is the subject, to which בּוֹ would have the most natural claim to be referred,—an explanation indeed which Stier and Hahn have really tried, taking נוֹסֵסָה as in Ps. 60:4, and rendering it “The Spirit of Jehovah holds up a banner against him, viz., the enemy.” If, however, Jehovah is the subject to יָבֵא כְּנָהָר צָר, must be taken together (like כְּמַיִם ... מְכַסִּים, Isa. 11:9; רִוְחַד טוֹבָה, Ps. 143:10; Ges. § 111, 2, b), either in the sense of “a hemming stream,” one causing as it were a state of siege (from *tsūr*, Isa. 21:2; 29:3), or, better still, according to the adjective use of the noun צָר

(here with *tzakeph*, צָר from צָרָר) in Isa. 28:20, Job 41:7, 2 Kings 6:1, a closely confined stream, to whose waters the banks form a compressing dam, which it bursts through when agitated by a tempest, carrying everything away with it. Accordingly, the explanation we adopt is this: Jehovah will come like the stream, a stream hemmed in, which a wind of Jehovah, i.e., (like “the mountains of God,” “cedars of God,” “garden of Jehovah,” Isa. 51:3, cf., Num. 24:6) a strong tempestuous wind, sweeps away (נִסְסָהּ בּוֹ, *nōssa-b-bô*, with the tone drawn back and *dagesh forte conj.* in the monosyllable, the *pilel* of *nūs* with *Beth*: to hunt into, to press upon and put to flight),—a figure which also indicates that the Spirit of Jehovah is the driving force in this His judicially gracious revelation of Himself. Then, when the name of Jehovah makes itself legible once more as with letters of fire, when His glory comes like a sea of fire within the horizon of the world's history, all the world from west to east, from east to west, will begin to fear Him. But the true object of the love, which bursts forth through this revelation of wrath, is His church, which includes not only those who have retained their faith, but all who have been truly converted to Him. And He comes (יָבֵא a continuation of יָבֵא) for Zion a Redeemer, i.e., as a Redeemer (a closer definition of the predicate), and for those who turn away from apostasy (שָׁבִי פִשְׁעֵי, compare Isa. 1:27, and for the genitive connection Mic. 2:8, שׁוֹבֵי מִלְחָמָה, those who have turned away from the war). The *Vav* here does not signify “and indeed,” as in Isa. 57:18, but “more especially.” He comes as a Redeemer for Zion, i.e., His church which has remained true, including those who turn again to Jehovah from their previous apostasy. In Rom. 11:26 the apostle quotes this word of God, which is sealed with “Thus saith Jehovah,” as a proof of the final restoration of all Israel; for יהוה (according to the Apocalypse, ὁ ὤν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος) is to him the God who moves on through the Old Testament towards the goal of His incarnation,

ISAIAH	Page 461
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

and through the New Testament towards that of His *parousia* in Christ, which will bring the world's history to a close. But this final close does not take place without its having become apparent at the same time that God "has concluded all in unbelief. that He may have compassion upon all" (Rom. 11:32).

Isaiah 59:21. Jehovah, having thus come as a Redeemer to His people, who have hitherto been lying under the curse, makes an everlasting covenant with them. V. 21. "And I, this is my covenant with them, saith Jehovah: My Spirit which is upon thee, and my word which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, and out of the mouth of thy seed, and out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith Jehovah, from henceforth and for ever." In the words, "And I, this is my covenant with them," we have a renewal of the words of God to Abram in Gen. 17:4, "As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee." Instead of **בְּרִית** we have in the same sense **בְּרִית** (not **בְּרִית**, as in Isa. 54:15); we find this very frequently in Jeremiah. The following prophecy is addressed to Israel, the "servant of Jehovah," which has been hitherto partially faithful and partially unfaithful, but which has now returned to fidelity, viz., the "remnant of Israel," which has been rescued through the medium of a general judgment upon the nations, and to which the great body of all who fear God from east to west attach themselves. This church of the new covenant has the Spirit of God over it, for it comes down upon it from above; and the comforting saving words of God are not only the blessed treasure of its heart, but the confession of its mouth which spreads salvation all around. The words intended are those which prove, according to Isa. 51:16, the seeds of the new heaven and the new earth. The church of the last days, endowed with the Spirit of God, and never again forsaking its calling, carries them as the evangelist of God in her apostolic mouth. The subject of the following prophecy is the new Jerusalem, the glorious centre of this holy church.

Isaiah 60

Third Prophecy

The Glory of the Jerusalem of the Last Days

Isaiah 60:1. It is still night. The inward and outward condition of the church is night; and if it is night followed by a morning, it is so only for those who "against hope believe in hope." The reality which strikes the senses is the night of sin, of punishment, of suffering, and of mourning,—a long night of nearly seventy years. In this night, the prophet, according to the command of God, has been prophesying of the coming light. In his inward penetration of the substance of his own preaching, he has come close to the time when faith is to be turned to sight. And now in the strength of God, who has made him the mouthpiece of His own creative fiat, he exclaims to the church, v. 1: "Arise, grow light; for thy light cometh, and the glory of Jehovah riseth upon thee." The appeal so addressed to Zion-Jerusalem, which is regarded (as in Isa. 49:18; 50:1; 52:1, 2; 54:1) as a woman, and indeed as the mother of Israel. Here, however, it is regarded as the church redeemed from banishment, and settled once more in the holy city and the holy land, the church of salvation, which is now about to become the church of glory. Zion lies prostrate on the ground, smitten down by the judgment of God, brought down to the ground by inward prostration, and partly overcome by the sleep of self-security. She now hears the cry, "Arise" (*qūmī*). This is not a mere admonition, but a word of power which puts new life into her limbs, so that she is able to rise from the ground, on which she has lain, as it were, under the ban. The night, which has brought her to the ground mourning, and faint, and intoxicated with sleep, is now at an end. The mighty word *qūmī*, "arise," is supplemented by a second word: *ōrī*. What creative force there is in these two trochees, *qūmī ōrī*, which hold on, as it were, till what they express is accomplished; and what force of consolation in the two *iambi*, *ki-bhâ ōrēkh*, which affix, as it were, to the acts of Zion the seal of the divine act, and add to the

ἄρσις (or elevation) its θέσις (or foundation)! Zion is to become light; it is to, because it can. But it cannot of itself, for in itself it has no light, because it has so absolutely given itself up to sin; but there is a light which will communicate itself to her, viz., the light which radiates from the holy nature of God Himself. And this light is salvation, because the Holy One loves Zion: it is also glory, because it not only dispels the darkness, but sets itself, all glorious as it is, in the place of the darkness. *Zârach* is the word commonly applied to the rising of the sun (Mal. 3:20). The sun of suns is Jehovah (Ps. 84:12), the God who is coming (Isa. 59:20).

Isaiah 60:2, 3. It is now all darkness over mankind; but Zion is the east, in which this sun of suns will rise. V. 2. *“For, behold, the darkness covereth the earth, and deep darkness the nations; and Jehovah riseth over thee, and His glory becomes visible over thee.”* The night which settles upon the world of nations is not to be understood as meaning a night of ignorance and enmity against God. This prophecy no doubt stands in progressive connection with the previous one; but, according to Isa. 59:19, the manifestation of judgment, through which Zion is redeemed, brings even the heathen from west to east, i.e., those who survive the judgment, to the fear of Jehovah. The idea is rather the following: After the judgments of God have passed, darkness in its greatest depth still covers the earth, and a night of clouds the nations. It is still night as on the first day, but a night which is to give place to light. Where, then, will the sun rise, by which this darkness is to be lighted up? The answer is, “Over Zion, the redeemed church of Israel.” But whilst darkness still covers the nations, it is getting light in the Holy Land, for a sun is rising over Zion, viz., Jehovah in His unveiled glory. The consequence of this is, that Zion itself becomes thoroughly light, and that not for itself only, but for all mankind. When Jehovah has transformed Zion into the likeness of His own glory, Zion transforms all nations into the likeness of her own. V. 3. *“And nations walk to thy light, and kings to the shining of thy rays.”* Zion exerts such an attractive force, that

nations move towards her light (לְהִלָּךְ as in הִלָּךְ וְלִבְיָתוֹ and other similar expressions), and kings to the splendour of her rays, to share in them for themselves, and enjoy them with her. All earthly might and majesty station themselves in the light of the divine glory, which is reflected by the church.

Isaiah 60:4. Zion is now exhorted, as in Isa. 49:18, to lift up her eyes, and turn them in all directions; for she is the object sought by an approaching multitude. V. 4. *“Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: they all crowd together, they come to thee: thy sons come from afar, and thy daughters are carried hither upon arms.”* The multitude that are crowding together and coming near are the *diaspora* of her sons and daughters that have been scattered far away (Isa. 11:12), and whom the heathen that are now drawing near to her bring with them, conducting them and carrying them, so that they cling “to the side” (Isa. 66:12) of those who are carrying them upon their arms and shoulders (Isa. 49:22). תִּאֲמַנָּה is softened from תִּאֲמַנָּה, the pausal form for תִּאֲמַנָּה (compare the softening in Ruth 1:13), from אָמַן, to keep, fasten, support; whence אֲמָנָה, אֲמָנָה, a foster-father, a nurse who has a child in safe keeping.

Isaiah 60:5. When this takes place, Zion will be seized with the greatest delight, mingled with some trembling. V. 5. *“Then wilt thou see and shine, and thine heart will tremble and expand; for the abundance of the sea will be turned to thee, the wealth of the nations cometh to thee.”* It is a disputed question whether the proper reading is תִּירָאִי, תִּרְאִי, or תִּירָאִי—all three point to יָרָא—or תִּרְאִי, from רָאָה. The last is favoured by the LXX, Targ., Syr., Jerome, Saad., and all the earlier Jewish commentators except AE, and is also the Masoretic reading; for the *Masora finalis* (f. 1, col. 6) observes that this תִּירָאִי is the only instance of such a form from רָאָה (differing therefore from תִּירָאִי in Zeph. 3:15, where we also find the readings תִּירָאִי and תִּרְאִי); and there

is a note in the margin of the Masora, לִית חֹטֵף, to the effect that this תְּרָאִי is the only one with *chateph*, i.e., *Sheva*. Moreover, תְּרָאִי (thou shalt see) is the more natural reading, according to Isa. 66:14 and Zech. 10:7; more especially as יָרָא is not a suitable word to use (like *pâchad* and *râgaz* in Jer. 33:9) in the sense of trembling for joy (compare, on the contrary, יָרַע, Isa. 15:4, and רָהַר in Isa. 44:8). The true rendering therefore is, "Then wilt thou see and shine," i.e., when thou seest this thou wilt thine, thy face will light up with joy; *nâhar* as in Ps. 34:6. Luther render it, "Then wilt thou see thy desire, and break out," viz., into shouting; Jerome, on the contrary, has, "Thou wilt overflow, i.e., thou wilt be inundated with waters coming suddenly like rivers."

The impression produced by this revolution is so overpowering, that Zion's heart trembles; yet at the same time it is so elevating, that the straitened heart expands (וְרָחַב), a figure quite unknown to the classical languages, although they have *angor* and *angustia*; the LXX renders it καὶ ἐκαστήσθη, after the reading וְרָחַב in Chayug, and Isaac Nathan in his *Concordance*, entitled (מֵאִיר נֹחַב): for *hāmōn yām*, i.e., everything of value that is possessed by islands and coast lands (*hāmōn*, groaning, a groaning multitude, more especially of possessions, Ps. 37:16, etc.), is brought to her; and *chēl gōyim*, the property, i.e., (looking at the plural of the predicate which follows; cf., Hag. 2:7) the riches (gold, silver, etc., Zech. 14:14) of the heathen, are brought into her, that she may dispose of them to the glory of her God.

Isaiah 60:6, 7. The nations engaged in commerce, and those possessing cattle, vie with one another in enriching the church. Vv. 6, 7. "A swarm of camels will cover thee, the foals of Midian and Ephah: they come all together from Saba; they bring gold and incense, and they joyfully make known the praises of Jehovah. All the flocks, of Kedar gather together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth will serve thee: they will come up with acceptance upon mine altar, and I

will adorn the house of my adorning." The trading nations bring their wares to the church. The tribe of *Midian*, which sprang from Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:2), and of which Ephah (Targ. *Hōlād*, the Hutheilites?) formed one of the several branches (Gen. 25:4), had its seat on the eastern coast of the Elanitic Gulf, which is still indicated by the town of *Madyan*, situated, according to the geographers of Arabia, five days' journey to the south of Aila. These come in such long and numerous caravans, that all the country round Jerusalem swarms with camels. שְׂפָעֵת as in Job 22:11; and יָרָאִי (parallel to גְּמָלִים) from בֶּקָר = Arabic *bakr* or *bikr*, a young male camel, or generally a camel's foal (up to the age of not more than nine years; see Lane's *Lexicon*, i. 240). All of these, both Midianites and Ephaeans, come out of Sheba, which Strabo (xvi. 4, 10) describes as "the highly blessed land of the Sabaeans, in which myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon grow." There, viz., in Yemen, where spices, jewels, and gold abound, they have purchased gold and frankincense, and these valuable gifts they now bring to Jerusalem, not as unwilling tribute, but with the joyful proclamation of the glorious deeds and attributes of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

And not only do the trading nations come, but the nomad tribes also: viz., *Kedar*, the Kedarenes, with their bows (Isa. 21:17), who lived in the desert, between Babylonia and Syria, in הַצְּרִים (Isa. 42:11), i.e., fixed settlements; and *Nebaitoh*, also in Ishmaelitic tribe (according to the incontrovertible account of Gen. 25:13), a nomad tribe, which was still of no note even in the time of the kings of Israel, but which rose into a highly cultivated nation in the centuries just before Christ, and had a kingdom extending from the Elanitic Gulf to the land on the east of the Jordan, and across Belka as far as Hauran; for the monuments reach from Egypt to Babylonia, though Arabia Petraea is the place where they chiefly abound. The Kedarenes drive their collected flocks to Jerusalem, and the rams (אִילִי, *arietes*, not

principes) of the Nabataeans, being brought by them, are at the service of the church (יִשְׂרָתוּנָדְ a verbal form with a toneless contracted suffix, as in Isa. 47:10), and ascend על־רִצּוֹן, according to good pleasure = acceptably (with the על used to form adverbs, Ewald, § 217, i; cf., *Irâtsōn* in Isa. 66:7), the altar of Jehovah (*âlâh* with the local object in the accusative, as in Ge. 49:4, Num. 13:17). The meaning is, that Jehovah will graciously accept the sacrifices which the church offers from the gifts of the Nabataeans (and Kedarenes) upon His altar. It would be quite wrong to follow Antistes Hess and Baumgarten, and draw the conclusion from such prophecies as these, that animal sacrifices will be revived again. The sacrifice of animals has been abolished once for all by the self-sacrifice of the "Servant of Jehovah;" and by the spiritual revolution which Christianity, i.e., the Messianic religion, as produced, so far as the consciousness of modern times is concerned, even in Israel itself, it is once for all condemned (see Holdheim's *Schrift über das Ceremonial-gesetz im Messiasreich*, 1845). The prophet, indeed, cannot describe even what belongs to the New Testament in any other than Old Testament colours, because he is still within the Old Testament limits. But from the standpoint of the New Testament fulfilment, that which was merely educational and preparatory, and of which there will be no revival, is naturally transformed into the truly essential purpose at which the former aimed; so that all that was real in the prophecy remains unaffected and pure, after the dedication of what was merely the unessential medium employed to depict it. The very same Paul who preaches Christ as the end of the law, predicts the conversion of Israel as the topstone of the gracious counsels of God as they unfold themselves in the history of salvation, and describes the restoration of Israel as "the riches of the Gentiles;" and the very same John who wrote the Gospel was also the apocalypticist, by whom the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles was seen in vision as still maintained even in the New Jerusalem. It must therefore be possible

(though we cannot form any clear idea of the manner in which it will be carried out), that the Israel of the future may have a very prominent position in the perfect church, and be, as it were, the central leader of its worship, though without the restoration of the party-wall of particularism and ceremonial shadows, which the blood of the crucified One has entirely washed away. The house of God in Jerusalem, as the prophet has already stated in Isa. 56:7, will be a house of prayer (*bēth tphillâh*) for all nations. Here Jehovah calls the house built in His honour, and filled with His gracious presence, "the house of my glory." He will make its inward glory like the outward, by adorning it with the gifts presented by the converted Gentile world.

Isaiah 60:8, 9. From the mainland, over which caravans and flocks are coming, the prophet now turns his eyes to the sea. Vv. 8, 9. "Who are these who fly hither as a cloud, and like the doves to their windows? Yea, the islands wait for me; and the ships of Tarshish come first, to bring thy children from far, their silver and gold with them, to the name of thy God, and to the holy One of Israel, because He hath ornamented thee." Upon the sea there appear first of all enigmatical shapes, driving along as swiftly as if they were light clouds flying before the wind (Isa. 19:1; 54:22), or like doves flying to their dovecots (*celeris cavis se turribus abdunt*, as Ovid says), i.e., to the round towers with their numerous pigeon-holes, which are provided for their shelter. The question is addressed to Zion, and the answer may easily be anticipated,—namely, that this swarm of swiftly flying figures are hurrying to a house which they long to reach, as much as pigeons do to reach their pigeon-house. The *kî* which follows is explanatory: this hurrying presents itself to thine eyes, because the isles wait for me. The reason for all this haste is to be found in the faith of those who are hurrying on. The Old Testament generally speaks of faith as hope (לִּקְוָה as in Isa. 51:5; 42:4); not that faith is the same as hope, but it is the support of hope, just as hope is the comfort of faith. In the Old

Testament, when the true salvation existed only in promise, this epithet, for which there were many synonyms in the language, was the most appropriate one. The faith of the distant lands of the west is now beginning to work. The object of all this activity is expressed in the word לְהִבְיֵא. The things thus flying along like clouds and doves are ships; with the Tartessus ships, which come from the farthest extremity of the European insular quarter of the globe, at their head בְּרֵאשֵׁנָה with *munach* instead of *metheg*, in the same sense as in Num. 10:14; LXX ἐν πρώτοις; Jerome, *in principio*, in the foremost rank), i.e., acting as the leaders of the fleet which is sailing to Zion and bringing Zion's children from afar, and along with them the gold and silver of the owners of the vessels themselves, to the name (לְשֵׁם, to the name, dative, not equivalent to לְמַעַן; LXX δὲ, as in Isa. 55:5) of thy God, whom they adore, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He hath ornamented thee, and thereby inspired them with reverence and love to thee (פִּאֲרָדָה for פִּאֲרָדָה, as in Isa. 54:6, where it even stands out of pause).

Isaiah 60:10–12. The first turn (vv. 1–3) described the glorification of Zion through the rising of the glory of Jehovah; the second (vv. 4–9) her glorification through the recovery of her scattered children, and the gifts of the Gentiles who bring them home; and now the third depicts her glorification through the service of the nations, especially of her former persecutors, and generally through the service of all that is great and glorious in the world of nature and the world of men. Not only do the converted heathen offer their possessions to the church on Zion, but they offer up themselves and their kings to pay her homage and render service to her. Vv. 10–12. “*And sons of strangers build thy walls, and their kings serve thee: for in my wrath I have smitten thee, and in my favour I have had mercy upon thee. And thy gates remain open continually day and night, they shall not be shut, to bring in to thee the possessions of the nations and their kings in*

triumph. For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve thee will perish, and the nations be certainly laid waste.” The walls of Zion (חֻמֹּתֶיךָ doubly defective) rise up from their ruins through the willing co-operation of converted foreigners (Isa. 56:6, 7), and foreign kings place themselves at the service of Zion (Isa. 49:23); the help rendered by the edicts of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes Longimanus being only a prelude to events stretching on to the end of time, though indeed, in the view of the prophet himself, the period immediately succeeding the captivity really would be the end of time. Of the two perfects in v. 10*b*, הִבְיֵא points to the more remote past; רָחַמְתִּיךָ to the nearer past, stretching forward into the present (cf., Isa. 54:8). On *pittēäch*, *patescere*, *hiscere*, see Isa. 48:8, where it is applied to the ear, as in Song of Sol. 7:13 to a bud. The first clause of v. 11*a* closes with וְלֵילָה; *tiphchah* divides more strongly than *tebir*, which is subordinate to it. At the same time, “day and night” may be connected with “shall not be shut,” as in Rev. 21:25, 26. The gates of Zion may always be left open, for there is no more fear of a hostile attack; and they must be left open *ad importandum*, that men may bring in the possession of the heathen through them (a thing which goes on uninterruptedly), וּמְלִכֵיהֶם וְהוֹגִים. The last words are rendered by Knobel, “and their kings are leaders (of the procession);” but *nâhüg* would be a strange substantive, having nothing to support it but the obscure יְקוּשׁ from יְקוּשׁ, for אָחַז in Cant. 3:8 does not mean a support, but *amplexus* (Ewald, § 149, *d*). The rendering “and their kings escorted,” i.e., attended by an escort, commends itself more than this; but in the passage quoted in support of this use of *nâhag*, viz., Nah. 2:8, it is used as a synonym of *hâgâh*, signifying *gemere*. It is better to follow the LXX and Jerome, and render it, “and their kings brought,” viz., according to Isa. 20:4, 1 Sam. 30:2, as prisoners (Targ. *zqîqîn*, i.e., *bziqqîm*, in fetters),—brought, however, not by their several nations who are tired of their

ISAIAH	Page 466
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

government and deliver them up (as Hitzig supposes), but by the church, by which they have been irresistibly bound in fetters, i.e., inwardly conquered (compare Isa. 45:14 with Ps. 149:8), and thus suffer themselves to be brought in a triumphal procession to the holy city as the captives of the church and her God. V. 12 is connected with this *nhūgīm*; for the state of every nation and kingdom is henceforth to be determined by its subjection to the church of the God of sacred history (עֲבָד, δουλεύειν, in distinction from *shērēth*, διακονεῖν θεραπεύειν), and by its entrance into this church—the very same thought which Zechariah carries out in Isa. 14:16ff. Instead of כִּי בִי־הִגְוִי, כִּי is more properly pointed according to certain MSS with *munach* (without *makkeph*); the article before *haggōyīm* is remonstrative, and the inf. intens. *chârōbh* makes the thing threatened unquestionable.

Isaiah 60:13. From the thought that everything great in the world of man is to be made to serve the Holy One and His church, the prophet passes to what is great in the world of nature. V. 13. *“The glory of Lebanon will come to thee, cypresses, plane-trees and Sherbin-trees all together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and to make the place of my feet glorious.”* The splendid cedars, which are the glory of Lebanon, and in fact the finest trees of all kinds, will be brought to Zion, not as trunks felled to be used as building materials, but dug up with their roots, to ornament the holy place of the temple (Jer. 17:12), and also to this end, that Jehovah may glorify the “holy place of His feet,” i.e., the place where He, who towers above the heaven of all heavens, has as it were to place His feet. The temple is frequently called His footstool (*hădôm raglâiv*), with especial reference to the ark of the covenant (Ps. 99:5; 132:7; Lam. 2:1; 1 Chron. 28:2) as being the central point of the earthly presence of God (cf., Isa. 66:1). The trees, that is to say, which tower in regal glory above all the rest of the vegetable world, are to adorn the environs of the temple, so that avenues of cedars and plane-trees lead into it; a proof that there is no more fear of any

further falling away to idolatry. On the names of the trees, see Isa. 41:19. Three kinds are mentioned here; we found seven there. The words בְּרוּשׁ תְּדַהֵר וְתֵאשׂוּר יַחְדוֹ are repeated *verbatim* from Isa. 41:19 (on these repetitions of himself, see p. 489).

Isaiah 60:14. The prophecy now returns to the world of man. V. 14. *“The children also of thy tormentors come bending unto thee, and all thy despisers stretch themselves at the soles of thy feet, and call thee ‘City of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’ ”* The persecutors of the church both in work and word are now no more (Isa. 26:14), and their children fell themselves disarmed. They are seized with shame and repentance, when they see the church which was formerly tormented and despised so highly exalted. They come *shchōäch* (an inf. noun of the form טָחוֹךְ, Lam. 5:13; used here as an accusative of more precise definition, just as nouns of this kind are frequently connected directly with the verb תָּהַךְ, Ewald, § 279, c), literally a bow or stoop, equivalent to bowing or stooping (the opposite to *rômâh* in Micah 2:3), and stretch themselves “at the soles of thy feet,” i.e., clinging to thee as imploringly and obsequiously as if they would lay themselves down under thy very feet, and were not worthy to lie anywhere but there (as in Isa. 49:23); and whereas formerly they called thee by nicknames, they now give thee the honourable name of “City of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel,” not “Sanctuary of Israel,” as Meier supposes, since *qdōsh Israel* is always a name of Jehovah in the book of Isaiah. It is a genitive construction like Bethlehem of Judah, Gibeah of Saul, and others.

Isaiah 60:15, 16. The fourth turn (vv. 15–18) describes the glorification of Zion through the growth and stability of its community both without and within. A glorious change takes place in the church, not only in itself, but also in the judgment of the nations. Vv. 15, 16. *“Whereas thou wast forsaken, and hated, and no one walked through thee, I make thee now into eternal splendour, a rapture from generation to generation. And thou suckest the milk of nations,*

and the breast of kings thou wilt suck, and learn that I Jehovah am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." Of the two ideas of a church (the mother of Israel) and a city (Metropolis) involved in the term Zion, the former prevails in v. 15, the latter in v. 16. For although עֲזוּבָה and שְׁנוּאָה are equally applicable to a city and a church (Isa. 54:6, 11), the expression "no one walked through thee" applies only to the desolate city as she lay in ruins (see Isa. 34:10). The fusion of the two ideas in v. 15 is similar to Isa. 49:21. Jerusalem will now become thoroughly a splendour, and in fact an eternal splendour, a rapture of successive generations so long as the history of this world continues. The nations and their kings give up their own vital energy to the church, just as a mother or nurse gives the milk of her breasts to a child; and the church has thereby rich food for a prosperous growth, and a constant supply of fresh material for grateful joy. We cannot for a moment think of enriching by means of conquest, as Hitzig does; the sucking is that of a child, not of a vampyre. We should expect *mlâkhôth* (Isa. 49:23) instead of *mlâkhîm* (kings); but by שָׂד (as in Isa. 56:11 for שְׂדֵי) the natural character of what is promised is intentionally spiritualized. The figure proves itself to be only a figure, and requires an ideal interpretation. The church sees in all this the gracious superintendence of her God; she learns from experience that Jehovah is her Saviour, that He is her Redeemer, He the Mighty One of Jacob, who has conquered for her, and now causes her to triumph (כִּי אֶגִּי with *munach yethib*, as in Isa. 49:26b, which passage is repeated almost *verbatim* here, and Isa. 61:8).

Isaiah 60:17, 18. The outward and inward beauty of the new Jerusalem is now depicted by the materials of her structure, and the powers which prevail within her. Vv. 17, 18. "For copper I bring gold, and for iron I bring silver, and for wood copper, and for stones iron, and make peace thy magistracy, and righteousness thy bailiffs. Injustice is no more seen in thy land, wasting and destruction in thy borders; and thou

callest salvation thy walls, and renown thy gates." Wood and stone are not used at all in the building of the new Jerusalem. Just as in the time of Solomon silver was counted as nothing (1 Kings 10:21) and had only the value of stones (1 Kings 10:27), so here Jehovah gives her gold instead of copper, silver instead of iron; whilst copper and iron are so despised with this superabundance of the precious metals, that they take the place of such building materials as wood and stones. Thus the city will be a massive one, and not even all of stone, but entirely built of metal, and indestructible not only by the elements, but by all kinds of foes. The allegorical continuation of the prophecy shows very clearly that the prophet does not mean his words to be taken literally. The LXX, Saad., and others, are wrong in adopting the rendering, "I make thy magistracy peace," etc.; since *shâlôm* and *tsdâqâh* are not accusatives of either the predicate or the object, but such personifications as we are accustomed to in Isaiah (vid., Isa. 32:16, 17; 59:14; cf., Isa. 45:8). Jehovah makes peace its *pquddâh*, i.e., its "oversership" (like *gbhûrâh*, heroship, in Isa. 3:25, and *'ezrâh*, helpership, in Isa. 31:2), or magistracy; and righteousness its bailiffs. The plural נְשִׂיךְ is no disproof of the personification; the meaning is, that *tsdâqâh* (righteousness) is to Jerusalem what the whole body of civil officers together are: that is to say, righteousness is a substitute for the police force in every form. Under such magistracy and such police, nothing is ever heard within the land, of which Jerusalem is the capital, of either *châmâs*, i.e., a rude and unjust attack of the stronger upon the weaker, or of *shôd*, i.e., conquest and devastation, and *shebher*, i.e., dashing to pieces, or breaking in two. It has walls (v. 10); but in truth "salvation," the salvation of its God, is regarded as its impregnable fortifications. It has gates (v. 11) but *thillâh*, the renown that commands respect, with which Jehovah has invested it, is really better than any gate, whether for ornament or protection.

Isaiah 60:19, 20. The fifth turn celebrates the glorifying of Jerusalem, through the shining of

Jehovah as its everlasting light and through the form of its ever-growing membership, which is so well-pleasing to God. The prophecy returns to the thought with which it set out, and by which the whole is regulated, viz., that Jerusalem will be light. This leading thought is now unfolded in the most majestic manner, and opened up in all its eschatological depth. Vv. 19, 20. *“The sun will be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness will the moon shine upon thee: Jehovah will be to thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun will no more go down, and thy moon will not be withdrawn; for Jehovah will be to thee an everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning will be fulfilled.”* Although, in the prophet’s view, the Jerusalem of the period of glory in this world and the Jerusalem of the eternal glory beyond flow into one another; the meaning of this prophecy is not that the sun and moon will no longer exist. Even of the Jerusalem which is not to be built by Israel with the help of converted heathen, but which comes down from heaven to earth, the seer in Rev. 21:23 merely says, that the city needs neither the shining of the sun nor of the moon (as the Targum renders the passage before us, “thou wilt not need the shining of the sun by day”), for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, i.e., God Himself is instead of a sun to her, and the Lamb instead of a moon. Consequently we do not agree with Stier, who infers from this passage that “there is a final new creation approaching, when there will be no more turning round into the shadow (Jas. 1:17), when the whole planetary system, including the earth, will be changed, and when the earth itself will become a sun, yea, will become even more than that, in the direct and primary light which streams down upon it from God Himself.” We rather agree with Hofmann, that “there will still be both sun and moon, but the Holy Place will be illuminated without interruption by the manifestation of the presence of God, which outshines all besides.” The prophet has here found the most complete expression, for that which has already been hinted at in such prophecies in Isa. 4:5; 30:26; 24:23. As the city

receives its light neither from the sun nor from the moon, this implies, what Rev. 21:25 distinctly affirms, that there will be no more night there. The prophet intentionally avoids a *לְאֹר לְאֹר* parallel to *לְאֹר יוֹמָם*. We must not render the second clause in v. 19, “and it will not become light to thee with the shining of the moon,” for *הָאֵר* never means to get light; nor “and as for the shining of the moon, it does not give the light,” as Hitzig and Knobel propose, for *וְלִנְגָה* is used alone, and not *הִירָח הַיְנֻגָה* as the antithesis to *לְאֹר יוֹמָם*, in the sense of “to light up the night” (compare *נָגַה* as applied to the shining of the moon in Isa. 13:10, and *נָגַה* to the glittering of the stars in Joel 2:10), and even the use of *הַלֵּילָה* is avoided. The true rendering is either, “and for lighting, the moon will not shine upon thee” (Stier, Hahn, etc.); or, what is more in accordance with the accentuation, which would have given *וְלִנְגָה תִפְחָה* and not *תִּשְׁאֶפֶה גָדוֹל*, if it had been intended to indicate the object, “and as for the lighting” (*לְ* as in Isa. 32:1b). The glory of Jehovah, which soars above Jerusalem, and has come down into her, is henceforth her sun and her moon,—a sun that never sets, a moon *לֹא יֵאָסֵף* which is not taken in towards morning, like a lamp that has been hung out at night (compare *נִגְאָסֵף*, Isa. 16:10, withdrawn, disappeared). The triumph of light over darkness, which is the object of the world’s history, is concentrated in the new Jerusalem. How this is to be understood, is explained in the closing clause of v. 20. The sum of the days of mourning allotted to the church is complete. The darkness of the corruption of sin and state of punishment is overcome, and the church is nothing but holy blessed joy without change or disturbance; for it walks no longer in sidereal light, but in the eternally unchangeable light of Jehovah, which with its peaceful gentleness and perfect purity illumines within as well as without. The seer of the Apocalypse also mentions the Lamb. The Lamb is also known to our prophet; for the “Servant of

Jehovah” is the Lamb. But the light of transfiguration, in which he sees this exalted Lamb, is not great enough to admit of its being combined with the light of the Divine Nature itself.

Isaiah 60:21. The next verse shows how deep was his consciousness of the close connection between darkness, wrath, and sin. V. 21. *“And thy people, they are all righteous; they possess the land for ever, a sprout of my plantations, a work of my hands for glorification.”* The church of the new Jerusalem consists of none but righteous ones, who have been cleansed from guilt, and keep themselves henceforth pure from sinning, and therefore possess the land of promise for ever, without having to fear repeated destruction and banishment: a “sprout” (*nētser* as in Isa. 11:1; 14:19; Arab. *nadr*, the green branch) “of my plantations” (*chethib*, erroneously *chethib* or *chethib*), i.e., of my creative acts of grace (cf., Isa. 5:7), a “work of my hands” (cf., Isa. 19:25), “to glorify me,” i.e., in which I possess that in which I glory (*להתפאר* as in Isa. 61:3).

Isaiah 60:22a. The life of this church, which is newly created, new-born, through judgment and grace, gradually expands from the most unassuming centre in ever widening circles until it has attained the broadest dimensions. V. 22a. *“The smallest one will become thousands, and the meanest one a powerful nation.”* “The small and mean one,” or, as the idea is a relative one, “the smallest and meanest one” (Ges. § 119, 2), is either a childless one, or one blessed with very few children. At the same time, the reference is not exclusively to growth through the blessing of children, but also to growth through the extension of fellowship. We have a similar expression in Mic. 4:7 (cf., 5:1), where *’elep* is employed, just as it is here, in the sense of *לְאַלְפֵי*, “to thousands (or chiliads).”

Isaiah 60:23b. The whole of the prophetic address is now sealed with this declaration: V. 22b. *“I Jehovah, will hasten it in His time.”* The neuter *הֵנָּה*- (as in Isa. 43:13; 46:11) refers to everything that has been predicted from v. 1

downwards. Jehovah will fulfil it rapidly, when the point of time (*καῖρός*) which He has fixed for it shall have arrived. As this point of time is known to Him only, the predicted glory will burst all at once with startling suddenness upon the eyes of those who have waited believingly for Him.

This chapter forms a connected and self-contained whole, as we may see very clearly from the address to Zion-Jerusalem, which is sustained throughout. If we compare together such passages as Isa. 51:17–23 (“Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem”), Isa. 52:1, 2 (“Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion”), and Isa. 54 (“Sing, O barren”), which are all closely related so far as their contents are concerned, we shall find that these addresses to Zion form an ascending series, Isa. 60 being the summit to which they rise, and that the whole is a complete counterpart to the address to the daughter of Babylon in Isa. 47.

Isaiah 61

Fourth Prophecy

The Glory of the Office Committed to the Servant of Jehovah

Isaiah 61:1–3. The words of Jehovah Himself pass over here into the words of another, whom He has appointed as the Mediator of His gracious counsel. Vv. 1–3. *“The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is over me, because Jehovah hath anointed me, to bring glad tidings to sufferers, hath sent me to bind up broken-hearted ones, to proclaim liberty to those led captive, and emancipation to the fettered; to proclaim a year of grace from Jehovah, and a day of vengeance from our God; to comfort all that mourn; to put upon the mourners of Zion, to give them a head-dress for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, a wrapper of renown for an expiring spirit, that they may be called terebinths of righteousness, a planting of Jehovah for glorification.”* Who is the person speaking here? The Targum introduces the passage with *אֲמַר נְבִיאָא*. Nearly all the modern commentators support this view. Even the closing remarks to Drechsler (iii. 381)

ISAIAH	Page 470
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

express the opinion, that the prophet who exhibited to the church the summit of its glory in Isa. 60, an evangelist of the rising from on high, an apocalyptist who sketches the painting which the New Testament apocalyptist is to carry out in detail, is here looking up to Jehovah with a grateful eye, and praising Him with joyful heart for his exalted commission. But this view, when looked at more closely, cannot possibly be sustained. It is open to the following objections: (1.) The prophet never speaks of himself as a prophet at any such length as this; on the contrary, with the exception of the closing words of Isa. 57:21, "saith my God," he has always most studiously let his own person fall back into the shade. (2.) Wherever any other than Jehovah is represented as speaking, and as referring to his own calling, or his experience in connection with that calling, as in Isa. 49:1ff., 50:4ff., it is the very same "servant of Jehovah" of whom and to whom Jehovah speaks in Isa. 42:1ff., 52:13–53, and therefore not the prophet himself, but He who had been appointed to be the Mediator of a new covenant, the light of the Gentiles, the salvation of Jehovah for the whole world, and who would reach this glorious height, to which He had been called, through self-abasement even to death. (3.) All that the person speaking here says of himself is to be found in the picture of the unequalled "Servant of Jehovah," who is highly exalted above the prophet. He is endowed with the Spirit of Jehovah (Isa. 42:1); Jehovah has sent Him, and with Him His Spirit (Isa. 48:16b); He has a tongue taught of God, to help the exhausted with words (Isa. 50:4); He spares and rescues those who are almost despairing and destroyed, the bruised reed and expiring wick (Isa. 42:7). "To open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house:" this is what He has chiefly to do for His people, both in word and deed (Isa. 42:7; 49:9). (4.) We can hardly expect that, after the prophet has described the Servant of Jehovah, of whom He prophesied, as coming forward to speak with such dramatic directness as in Isa. 49:1ff., 50:4ff. (and even Isa. 48:16b), he will

now proceed to put himself in the foreground, and ascribe to himself those very same official attributes which he has already set forth as characteristic features in his portrait of the predicted One. For these reasons we have no doubt that we have here the words of the Servant of Jehovah. The glory of Jerusalem is depicted in Isa. 60 in the direct words of Jehovah Himself, which are well sustained throughout. And now, just as in Isa. 48:16b, though still more elaborately, we have by their side the words of His servant, who is the mediator of this glory, and who above all others is the pioneer thereof in his evangelical predictions. Just as Jehovah says of him in Isa. 42:1, "I have put my Spirit upon him;" so here he says of himself, "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon me." And when he continues to explain this still further by saying, "because" (וְעַל מִןּוֹתָא, intention, purpose; here equivalent to וְעַל מִןּוֹתָא) "Jehovah hath anointed me" (*mâshach* 'ôthî, more emphatic than *mshâchănî*), notwithstanding the fact that *mâshach* is used here in the sense of prophetic and not regal anointing (1 Kings 19:16), we may find in the choice of this particular word a hint at the fact, that the Servant of Jehovah and the Messiah are one and the same person. So also the account given in Luke 4:16–22—viz. that when Jesus was in the synagogue at Nazareth, after reading the opening words of this address, He closed the book with these words, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears"—cannot be interpreted more simply in any other way, than on the supposition that Jesus here declares Himself to be the predicted and divinely anointed Servant of Jehovah, who brings the gospel of redemption to His people. Moreover, though it is not decisive in favour of our explanation, yet this explanation is favoured by the fact that the speaker not only appears as the herald of the new and great gifts of God, but also as the dispenser of them ("*non praecotantum, sed et dispensator,*" Vitringa). The combination of the names of God ('Adonai *Yehovâh*) is the same as in Isa. 50:4–9. On *bissēr*, εὐαγγελίζειν (-εσθαι), see p. 395. He comes to

put a bandage on the hearts' wounds of those who are broken-hearted: **לְחַבֵּשׁ** (חַבֵּשׁ) as in Ezek. 34:4, Ps. 147:3; cf., **לְרַפֵּא** (רַפֵּא), p. 130; **לְהַצְדִּיק**, p. 520. **קָרָא דְרוּר** is the phrase used in the law for the proclamation of the freedom brought by the year of jubilee, which occurred every fiftieth year after seven sabbatical periods, and was called *shnath haddrōr* (Ezek. 46:17); *dror* from *dārar*, a verbal stem, denoting the straight, swift flight of a swallow (see at Ps. 84:4), and free motion in general, such as that of a flash of lightning, a liberal self-diffusion, like that of a superabundant fulness. *Pqach-qōāch* is written like two words (see at Isa. 2:20). The Targum translates it as if *pqach* were an imperative: "Come to the light," probably meaning undo the bands. But *qōāch* is not a Hebrew word; for the *qīchōth* of the Mishna (the loops through which the strings of a purse are drawn, for the purpose of lacing it up) cannot be adduced as a comparison. Parchon, AE, and A, take *pqachqōāch* as one word (of the form **פָּתַחְרוּר**, **פָּתַחְרוּר**), in the sense of throwing open, viz., the prison. But as *pāqach* is never used like *pāthach* (Isa. 14:17; 51:14), to signify the opening of a room, but is always applied to the opening of the eyes (Isa. 35:5; 42:7, etc.), except in Isa. 42:20, where it is used for the opening of the ears, we adhere to the strict usage of the language, if we understand by *pqachqōāch* the opening up of the eyes (as contrasted with the dense darkness of the prison); and this is how it has been taken even by the LXX, who have rendered it **καὶ τυφολοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν**, as if the reading had been **וְלַעֲיֹרִים** (Ps. 146:8). Again, he is sent to promise with a loud proclamation a year of good pleasure (*rātsōn*: syn. *yshū'āh*) and a day of vengeance, which Jehovah has appointed; a promise which assigns the length of a year for the thorough accomplishment of the work of grace, and only the length of a day for the work of vengeance. The vengeance applies to those who hold the people of God in fetters, and oppress them; the grace to all those whom the infliction of punishment has inwardly humbled, though

they have been strongly agitated by its long continuance (Isa. 57:15). The *'ābhēlīm*, whom the Servant of Jehovah has to comfort, are the "mourners of Zion," those who take to heart the fall of Zion. In v. 3, **לְשׂוּם ... לְתַת**, he corrects himself, because what he brings is not merely a diadem, to which the word *sūm* (to set) would apply, but an abundant supply of manifold gifts, to which only a general word like *nāthan* (to give) is appropriate. Instead of **אֶפְרָר**, the ashes of mourning or repentance laid upon the head, he brings **פְּאָר**, a diadem to adorn the head (a transposition even so far as the letters are concerned, and therefore the counterpart of **אֶפְרָר**); the "oil of joy" (from Ps. 45:8; compare also **מְשַׁחְהוּ** there with **אֶתִּי** here) instead of mourning; "a wrapper (cloak) of renown" instead of a faint and almost extinguished spirit. The oil with which they henceforth anoint themselves is to be joy or gladness, and renown the cloak in which they wrap themselves (a genitive connection, as in Isa. 59:17). And whence is all this? The gifts of God, though represented in outward figures, are really spiritual, and take effect within, rejuvenating and sanctifying the inward man; they are the sap and strength, the marrow and impulse of a new life. The church thereby becomes "terebinths of righteousness" (**אֵילֵי**: Targ., Symm., Jer., render this, strong ones, mighty ones; Syr. *dechre*, rams; but though both of these are possible, so far as the letters are concerned, they are unsuitable here), i.e., possessors of righteousness, produced by God and acceptable with God, having all the firmness and fulness of terebinths, with their strong trunks, their luxuriant verdure, and their perennial foliage,—a planting of Jehovah, to the end that He may get glory out of it (a repetition of Isa. 60:21).

Isaiah 61:4–6. Even in v. 3b with **וְקָרָא לְהֵם** a perfect was introduced in the place of the infinitives of the object, and affirmed what was to be accomplished through the mediation of the Servant of Jehovah. The second turn in the

address, which follows in vv. 4–9, continues the use of such perfects, which afterwards pass into futures. But the whole is still governed by the commencement in v. 1. The Servant of Jehovah celebrates the glorious office committed to him, and expounds the substance of the gospel given him to proclaim. It points to the restoration of the promised land, and to the elevation of Israel, after its purification in the furnace of judgment, to great honour and dignity in the midst of the world of nations. Vv. 4–6. *“And they will build up wastes of the olden time, raise up desolations of the forefathers, and renew desolate cities, desolations of former generations. And strangers stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners become your ploughmen and vinedressers. But ye will be called priests of Jehovah; Servants of our God, will men say to you: ye will eat the riches of the nations, and pride yourselves in their glory.”* The desolations and wastes of *’ôlâm* and *dôr vâdôr*, i.e., of ages remote and near (Isa. 58:12), are not confined to what had lain in ruins during the seventy years of the captivity. The land will be so thickly populated, that the former places of abode will not suffice (Isa. 49:19, 20); so that places must be referred to which are lying waste beyond the present bounds of the promised land (Isa. 54:3), and which will be rebuilt, raised up, and renewed by those who return from exile, and indeed by the latest generations (Isa. 58:12, *אֲנִי*; cf., Isa. 60:14). *Chôrebh*, in the sense of desolation, is a word belonging to the alter period of the language (Zeph., Jer., and Ezek.). The rebuilding naturally suggests the thought of assistance on the part of the heathen (Isa. 60:10). But the prophet expresses the fact that they will enter into the service of Israel (v. 5), in a new and different form. They “stand there” (viz., at their posts ready for service, *’al-mishmartâm*, 2 Chron. 7:6), “and feed your flocks” (*אֲנִי singular etantum*, cf., Gen. 30:43), and foreigners are your ploughmen and vinedressers. Israel is now, in the midst of the heathen who have entered into the congregation of Jehovah and become the people of God (ch 19:25), what the Aaronites formerly

were in the midst of Israel itself. It stands upon the height of its primary destination to be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6). They are called “priests of Jehovah,” and the heathen call them “servants of our God;” for even the heathen speak with believing reverence of the God, to whom Israel renders priestly service, as “our God.” This reads as if the restored Israelites were to stand in the same relation to the converted heathen as the clergy to the laity; but it is evident, from Isa. 66:21, that the prophet has no such hierarchical separation as this in his mind. All that we can safely infer from his prophecy is, that the nationality of Israel will not be swallowed up by the entrance of the heathen into the community of the God of revelation. The people created by Jehovah, to serve as the vehicle of the promise of salvation and the instrument in preparing the way for salvation, will also render Him special service, even after that salvation has been really effected. At the same time, we cannot take the attitude, which is here assigned to the people of sacred history after it has become the teacher of the nations, viz., as the leader of its worship also, and shape it into any clear and definite form that shall be reconcilable with the New Testament spirit of liberty and the abolition of all national party-walls. The Old Testament prophet utters New Testament prophecies in an Old Testament form. Even when he continues to say, “Ye will eat the riches of the Gentiles, and pride yourselves in their glory,” i.e., be proud of the glorious things which have passed from their possession into yours, this is merely colouring intended to strike the eye, which admits of explanation on the ground that he saw the future in the mirror of the present, as a complete inversion of the relation in which the two had stood before. The figures present themselves to him in the form of contrasts. The New Testament apostle, on the other hand, says in Rom. 11:12 that the conversion of all Israel to Christ will be “the riches of the Gentiles.” But if even then the Gentile church should act according to the words of the same apostle in Rom. 15:27, and show her gratitude to the people whose spiritual debtor she is, by

ISAIAH	Page 473
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

ministering to them in carnal things, all that the prophet has promised here will be amply fulfilled. We cannot adopt the explanation proposed by Hitzig, Stier, etc., “and changing with them, ye enter into their glory” (*hithyammēr* from *yâmar* = *mūr*, *Hiph.*: *hēmīr*, Jer. 2:11; lit., to exchange with one another, to enter into one another’s places); for *yâmar* = *’âmar* (cf., *yâchad* = *’âchad*; *yâsham* = *’âsham*; *yâlahph* = *’âlahph*), to press upwards, to rise up (related to *tâmar*, see at Isa. 17:9; *sâmar*, Symm. ὀρθοτριχεῖν, possibly also *’âmar* with the *hithpael hith’ammēr*, LXX καταδυναστεύειν), yields a much simpler and more appropriate meaning. From this verb we have *hith’ammēr* in Ps. 94:4, “to lift one’s self up (proudly),” and here *hithyammēr*; and it is in this way that the word has been explained by Jerome (*superbietis*), and possibly by the LXX (θαυμασθήσεσθε, in the sense of *spectabiles eritis*), by the Targum, and the Syriac, as well as by most of the ancient and modern expositors.

Isaiah 61:7–9. The shame of banishment will then be changed into an excess of joy, and honourable distinction. Vv. 7–9. “*Instead of shame ye will have double, and (instead) of insult they rejoice at their portion: thus in their land they will possess double; everlasting joy will they have. For I Jehovah love right, hate robbery in wickedness; and give them their reward in faithfulness, and conclude an everlasting covenant with them. And their family will be known among the nations, and their offspring in the midst of the nations: all who see them will recognise them, for they are a family that Jehovah hath blessed.*” The enigmatical first half of v. 7 is explained in v. 2, where *mishneh* is shown to consist of double possession in the land of their inheritance, which has not only been restored to them, but extended far beyond the borders of their former possession; and *yârōnnū chelqām* (cf., Isa. 64:14) denotes excessive rejoicing in the ground and soil belonging to them (according to the appointment of Jehovah): *chelqām* as in Mic. 2:4; and *mishneh* as equivalent not to *מִשְׁנֵה כְּבוֹד*, but to *מִשְׁנֵה יְרֵשָׁה*. Taking this to be the relation

between v. 7*b* and 7*a*, the meaning of *lâkhēn* is not, “therefore, because they have hitherto suffered shame and reproach;” but what is promised in v. 7*a* is unfolded according to its practical results, the effects consequent upon its fulfilment being placed in the foreground (cf., p. 292); so that there is less to astonish us in the elliptically brief form of v. 7*a* which needed explanation. The transition from the form of address to that of declaration is the same as in Isa. 1:29; 31:6; 52:14, 15. וְכִלְמָה is a concise expression for וְתַחַת כְּלֵמָה, just as וְתִהְיֶה לְתִי in Isa. 48:9 is for וְלִמְעַן תִּהְיֶה לְתִי. *Chelqām* is either the accusative of the object, according to the construction of רִגְוֹן, which occurs in Ps. 51:16; or what I prefer, looking at חֶמֶךָ in Isa. 42:25, and וְזִבְחֶיךָ in Isa. 43:23, an adverbial accusative = בְּחֶלְקֶם. The LXX, Jerome, and Saad. render the clause, in opposition to the accents, “instead of your double shame and reproach;” but in that case the principal words of the clause would read וְתִרְגְּנוּ הַחֶלְקֶם. The explanation adopted by the Targum, Saad., and Jerome, “shame on the part of those who rejoice in their portion,” is absolutely impossible. The great majority of the modern commentators adopt essentially the same explanation of v. 7*a* as we have done, and even A. E. Kimchi does the same. Hahn’s modification, “instead of your shame is the double their portion, and (instead) of the insult this, that they will rejoice,” forces a meaning upon the syntax which is absolutely impossible. The reason for the gracious recompense for the wrong endured is given in v. 8, “Jehovah loves the right,” which the enemies of Israel have so shamefully abused. “He hates גְּזֵל בְּעוֹלָה, i.e., not *rapinam in holocausto* (as Jerome, Talmud *b. Succa* 30*a*, Luther, and others render it; Eng. ver. “robbery for burnt-offering”),—for what object would there be in mentioning sacrifices here, seeing that only heathen sacrifices could be intended, and there would be something worse than *gâzēl* to condemn in them?—but *robbery*, or, strictly speaking, “something robbed in or with knavery” (LXX, Targ., Syr.,

Saad.), which calls to mind at once the cruel robbery or spoiling that Israel had sustained from the Chaldeans, its *bōzzīm* (Isa. 42:24),—a robbery which passed all bounds. עוֹלָה is softened from עוֹלָה (from עוֹל, עוֹל), like עֲלֵתָה in Job 5:16, and עוֹלָה in Ps. 58:3 and 64:7; though it is doubtful whether the punctuation assumes the latter, as the Targum does, and not rather the meaning *holocaustum* supported by the Talmud. For the very reason, therefore, that Israel had been so grievously ill-treated by the instruments of punishment employed by Jehovah, He would give those who had been ill-treated their due reward, after He had made the evil, which He had not approved, subservient to His own salutary purposes. פְּעֻלָּה is the reward of work in Lev. 19:13, of hardship in Ezek. 29:20; here it is the reward of suffering. This reward He would give בְּאַמְתָּה, exactly as He had promised, without the slightest deduction. The posterity of those who have been ill-treated and insulted will be honourably known (נודע as in Prov. 31:23) in the world of nations, and men will need only to catch sight of them to recognise them (by prominent marks of blessing), for they are a family blessed of God. כִּי, not *quod* (because), although it might have this meaning, but *nam* (for), as in Gen. 27:23, since *hikkīr* includes the meaning *agnoscere* (to recognise).

Isaiah 61:10, 11. This is the joyful calling of the Servant of Jehovah to be the messenger of such promises of God to His people. Vv. 10, 11. *“Joyfully I rejoice in Jehovah; my soul shall be joyful in my God, that He hath given me garments of salvation to put on, hath wrapped me in the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom who wears the turban like a priest, and as a bride who puts on her jewellery. For like the land which brings forth its sprouts, and as a garde which causes the things sown in it to sprout up; so the Lord Jehovah bringeth righteousness to sprouting, and renown before all nations.”* The Targum precedes this last turn with “Thus saith Jerusalem.” But as vv. 4–9 are a development of

the glorious prospects, the realization of which has to be effected through the instrumentality of the person speaking in vv. 1–3 both in word and deed, the speaker here is certainly the same as there. Nor is it even the fact that he is here supposed to commence speaking again; but he is simply continuing his address by expressing at the close, as he did at the beginning, the relation in which he stands in his own person to the approaching elevation of His people. Exalted joy, which impels him to exult, is what he experiences in Jehovah his God (אָדֵנִי denoting the ground and orbit of his experience): for the future, which so abounds in grace, and which he has to proclaim as a prophet and as the evangelist of Israel, and of which he has to lay the foundation as the mediator of Israel, and in which he is destined to participate as being himself an Israelite, consists entirely of salvation and righteousness; so that he, the bearer and messenger of the divine counsels of grace, appears to himself as one to whom Jehovah has given clothes of salvation to put on, and whom He has wrapped in the robe of righteousness. *Tsdâqâh* (righteousness), looked at from the evangelical side of the idea which it expresses, is here the parallel word to *yshū'âh* (salvation). The figurative representation of both by different articles of dress is similar to Isa. 59:17: *yâ'at*, which only occurs here, is synonymous with *'âtâh*, from which comes *ma'âteh*, a wrapper or cloak (v. 3). He appears to himself, as he stands there hoping such things for his people, and preaching such things to his people, to resemble a bridegroom, who makes his turban in priestly style, i.e., who winds it round his head after the fashion of the priestly *migbâ'ôth* (Ex. 29:9), which are called פְּאַרְיִים in Ex. 39:28 (cf., Ezek. 54:18). Rashi and others think of the *mitsnepheth* of the high priest, which was of purple-blue; but יכהן does not imply anything beyond the *migbâ'âh*, a tall mitra, which was formed by twisting a long linen band round the head so as to make it stand up in a point. כִּהֵן is by no means equivalent to *kōnēn*, or *hēkhîn*, as Hitzig and Hahn suppose, since the verb *kâhan*

ISAIAH	Page 475
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

= *kūn* only survives in *kōhēn*. *Kīhēn* is a denom., and signifies to act or play the priest; it is construed here with the accusative פָּאָרַר, which is either the accusative of more precise definition (“who play the priest in a turban;” A. ὡς νόμιον ἱερατευόμενον στεφάνῳ), or what would answer better to the parallel member, “who makes the turban like a priest.” As often as he receives the word of promise into his heart and takes it into his mouth, it is to him like the turban of a bridegroom, or like the jewellery which a bride puts on (*ta’deh, kal*, as in Hos. 2:15). For the substance of the promise is nothing but salvation and renown, which Jehovah causes to sprout up before all nations, just as the earth causes its vegetation to sprout, or a garden its seed (ךָ as a preposition in both instances, *instar* followed by attributive clauses; see Isa. 8:23). The word in the mouth of the servant of Jehovah is the seed, out of which great things are developed before all the world. The ground and soil (*’erets*) of this development is mankind; the enclosed garden therein (*gannâh*) is the church; and the great things themselves are *tsdâqâh*, as the true inward nature of His church, and *thillâh* as its outward manifestation. The force which causes the seed to germinate is Jehovah; but the bearer of the seed is the servant of Jehovah, and the ground of his festive rejoicing is the fact that he is able to scatter the seed of so gracious and glorious a future.

Isaiah 62

Fifth Prophecy

The Gradual Extension of the Glory of Jerusalem

Isaiah 62:1–3. Nearly all the more recent commentators regard the prophet himself as speaking here. Having given himself up to praying to Jehovah and preaching to the people, he will not rest or hold his peace till the salvation, which has begun to be realized, has been brought fully out to the light of day. It is, however, really Jehovah who commences thus: Vv. 1–3. “For Zion’s sake I shall not be silent, and

for Jerusalem’s sake I shall not rest, till her righteousness breaks forth like morning brightness, and her salvation like a blazing torch. And nations will see they righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and men will call thee by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah will determine. And thou wilt be an adorning coronet in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the lap of thy God.” It is evident that Jehovah is the speaker here, both from v. 6 and also from the expression used; for *châshâh* is the word commonly employed in such utterances of Jehovah concerning Himself, to denote His leaving things in their existing state without interposing (Isa. 65:6; 57:11; 64:11). Moreover, the arguments which may be adduced to prove that the author of Isa. 40–66 is not the speaker in Isa. 61, also prove that it is not he who is continuing to speak of himself in Isa. 62. Jehovah, having now begun to speak and move on behalf of Zion, will “for Zion’s sake,” i.e., just because it is Zion, His own church, neither be silent nor give Himself rest, till He has gloriously executed His work of grace. Zion is now in the shade, but the time will come when her righteousness will go forth as *nōgah*, the light which bursts through the night (Isa. 60:19; 59:9; here the morning sunlight, Prov. 4:18; compare *shachar*, the morning red, Isa. 58:8); or till her salvation is like a torch which blazes. יַבְעֵר belongs to כְּלָפִיד (*mercha*) in the form of an attributive clause = בַּעֵר, although it might also be assumed that יַבְעֵר stands by attraction for תַּבְעֵר (cf., Isa. 2:11; Ewald, § 317, c). The verb בָּעַר, which is generally applied to wrath (e.g., Isa. 30:27), is here used in connection with salvation, which has wrath towards the enemies of Zion as its obverse side: Zion’s *tsedeq* (righteousness) shall become like the morning sunlight, before which even the last twilight has vanished; and Zion’s *yshū’âh* is like a nightly torch, which sets fire to its own material, and everything that comes near it. The force of the conjunction עַד (until) does not extend beyond v. 1. From v. 2 onwards, the condition of things in the object indicated by עַד

is more fully described. The eyes of the nations will be directed to the righteousness of Zion, the impress of which is now their common property; the eyes of all kings to her glory, with which the glory of none of them, nor even of all together, can possibly compare. And because this state of Zion is a new one, which has never existed before, her old name is not sufficient to indicate her nature. She is called by a new name; and who could determine this new name? He who makes the church righteous and glorious, He, and He alone, is able to utter a name answering to her new nature, just as it was He who called Abram *Abraham*, and Jacob *Israel*. The mouth of Jehovah will determine it (נָקַב, to pierce, to mark, to designate in a signal and distinguishing manner, *nuncupare*; cf., Amos 6:1, Num. 1:17). It is only in imagery that prophecy here sees what Zion will be in the future: she will be “a crown of glory,” “a diadem,” or rather a tiara (*tsnīph*; *Chethib tsnūph = mitsnepheth*, the head-dress of the high priest, Ex. 28:4, Zech. 3:5; and that of the king, Ezek. 21:31) “of regal dignity,” in the hand of her God (for want of a synonym of “hand,” we have adopted the rendering “in the lap” the second time that it occurs). Meier renders בְּיַד יְהוָה (בְּכַרְךָ) *Jovae sub praesidio*, as though it did not form part of the figure. But it is a main feature in the figure, that Jehovah holds the crown in His hand. Zion is not the ancient crown which the Eternal wears upon His head, but the crown wrought out in time, which He holds in His hand, because He is seen in Zion by all creation. The whole history of salvation is the history of the taking of the kingdom, and the perfecting of the kingdom by Jehovah; in other words, the history of the working out of this crown.

Isaiah 62:4, 5. Zion will be once more the beloved of God, and her home the bride of her children. Vv. 4, 5. “Men will no more call thee ‘Forsaken one;’ and thy land they will no more call ‘Desert:’ but men will name thee ‘My delight in her;’ and thy home ‘Married one:’ for Jehovah hath delight in thee, and thy land is married. For the young man marrieth the maiden, thy children

will marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth in the bride, thy God will rejoice in thee.” The prophecy mentions new names, which will now take the place of the old ones; but these names indicate what Zion appears to be, not her true nature which is brought to the light. In the explanatory clause נָקַב stands at the head, because the name of Zion is given first in distinction from the name of her land. Zion has hitherto been called *’āzūbhâh*, forsaken by Jehovah, who formerly loved her; but she now receives instead the name of *chephtsî-bhâh* (really the name of a woman, viz., the wife of Hezekiah, and mother of Manasseh, 2 Kings 21:1), for she is now the object of true affection on the part of Jehovah. With the rejoicing of a bridegroom in his bride (the accusative is used here in the same sense as in שָׂמַח שְׂמֵחָה גְדֻלָּה; Ges. § 138, 1) will her God rejoice in her, turning to her again with a love as strong and deep as the first love of a bridal pair. And the land of Zion’s abode, the fatherland of her children, was hitherto called *shmâmâh*; it was turned into a desert by the heathen, and the connection that existed between it and the children of the land was severed; but now it shall be called *b’ulâh*, for it will be newly married. A young man marries a virgin, thy children will marry *thee*: the figure and the fact are placed side by side in the form of an emblematical proverb, the particle of comparison being omitted (see Herzog’s *Cyclopaedia*, xiv. 696, and Ges. § 155, 2, *h*). The church in its relation to Jehovah is a weak but beloved woman, which has Him for its Lord and Husband (Isa. 54:5); but in relation to her home she is the totality of those who are lords or possessors (*ba’ālê*, 2 Sam. 6:2) of the land, and who call the land their own as it were by right of marriage. Out of the loving relation in which the church stands to its God, there flows its relation of authority over every earthly thing of which it stands in need. In some MSS there is a break here.

Isaiah 62:6, 7. Watchmen stationed upon the walls of Zion (says the third strophe) do not forsake Jehovah till He has fulfilled all His

promise. Vv. 6, 7. "Upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, have I stationed watchmen; all the day and all the night continually they are not silent. O ye who remember Jehovah, leave yourselves no rest! And give Him no rest, till He raise up, and till He set Jerusalem for a praise in the earth." As the phrase *hiphqīd* 'al signifies to make a person an overseer (president) over anything, it seems as though we ought to render the sentence before us, "I have set watchmen over thy walls." But *hiphqīd* by itself may also mean "to appoint" (2 Kings 25:23), and therefore פָּרַחְוִי־לְךָ may indicate the place of appointment (LXX ἐπὶ τῶν τευχέων σου, upon thy walls: Ἱερουσαλήμ κατέστησα φύλακας). Those who are stationed upon the walls are no doubt keepers of the walls; not, however, as persons whose exclusive duty it is to keep the walls, but as those who have committed to them the guarding of the city both within and without (Song of Sol. 5:7). The appointment of such watchmen presupposes the existence of the city, which is thus to be watched from the walls. It is therefore inadmissible to think of the walls of Jerusalem as still lying in ruins, as the majority of commentators have done, and to understand by the watchmen pious Israelites, who pray for their restoration, or (according to *b. Menachoth* 87a; cf., Zech. 1:12) angelic intercessors. The walls intended are those of the city, which, though once destroyed, is actually imperishable (Isa. 49:16) and has now been raised up again. And who else could the watchmen stationed upon the walls really be, but prophets who are called *tsōphīm* (e.g., Isa. 52:8), and whose calling, according to Ezek. 33, is that of watchmen? And if prophets are meant, who else can the person appointing them be but Jehovah Himself? The idea that the author of these prophecies is speaking of himself, as having appointed the *shōmrīm*, must therefore be rejected. Jehovah gives to the restored Jerusalem faithful prophets, whom He stations upon the walls of the city, that they may see far and wide, and be heard afar off. And from those walls does their warning cry on behalf of the holy city committed to their care ascent day and night to Jehovah, and their testimony go

round about to the world. For after Jerusalem has been restored and re-peopled, the further end to be attained is this, that Jehovah should build up the newly founded city within (*cōnēn* the consequence of *bânâh*, Num. 21:27, and 'ûsâh, Isa. 45:18, Deut. 32:6; cf., Isa. 54:14, and Ps. 87:5), and help it to attain the central post of honour in relation to those without, which He has destined for it. Such prophets of the times succeeding the captivity (*nbhī'īm 'achārōnīm*; cf., Zech. 1:4) were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Haggai stands upon the walls of Jerusalem, and proclaims the glory of the second temple as surpassing that of the first. Zechariah points from Joshua and Zerubbabel onwards to the sprout of Jehovah, who is priest and prince in one person, and builds the true temple of God. Malachi predicts the coming of the Lord to His temple, and the rising of the Sun of righteousness. Under the eyes of these prophets the city of God rose up again, and they stand upon its pinnacles, and look thence into the glorious future that awaits it, and hasten its approach through the word of their testimony. Such prophets, who carry the good of their people day and night upon their anxious praying hearts, does Jehovah give to the Jerusalem after the captivity, which is one in the prophet's view with the Jerusalem of the last days; and in so lively a manner does the prophet here call them up before his own mind, that he exclaims to them, "Ye who remind Jehovah, to finish gloriously the gracious work which He has begun," give yourselves to rest (*dōmi* from *dâmâh* = *dâmam*, to grow dumb, i.e., to cease speaking or working, in distinction from *châshâh*, to be silent, i.e., not to speak or work), and allow Him no rest till He puts Jerusalem in the right state, and so glorifies it, that it shall be recognised and extolled as glorious over all the earth. Prophecy here sees the final glory of the church as one that gradually unfolds itself, and that not without human instrumentality. The prophets of the last times, with their zeal in prayer, and in the exercise of their calling as witnesses, form a striking contrast to the blind, dumb, indolent,

sleepy hirelings of the prophet's own time (Isa. 56:10).

Isaiah 62:8, 9. The following strophe expresses one side of the divine promise, on which the hope of that lofty and universally acknowledged glory of Jerusalem, for whose completion the watchers upon its walls so ceaselessly exert themselves, is founded. Vv. 8, 9. *"Jehovah hath sworn by His right hand, and by His powerful arm, Surely I no more give thy corn for food to thine enemies; and foreigners will to drink thy must, for which thou hast laboured hard. No, they that gather it in shall eat it, and praise Jehovah; and they that store it, shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary."* The church will no more succumb to the tyranny of a worldly power. Peace undisturbed, and unrestricted freedom, reign there. With praise to Jehovah are the fruits of the land enjoyed by those who raised and reaped them. יָגַעְתָּ (with an auxiliary *pathach*, as in Isa. 47:12, 15) is applied to the cultivation of the soil, and includes the service of the heathen who are incorporated in Israel (Isa. 61:5); whilst אָסַף (whence מְאַסְפִּי with ס *raphatum*) or אָסַף (*poel*, whence the reading מְאַסְפִּי, cf., Ps. 101:5, *mloshnī*; 109:10, *v-dorshū*, for which in some codd. and editions we find מְאַסְפִּי, an intermediate form between *piel* and *poel*; see at Ps. 62:4) and קָבַץ stand in the same relation to one another as *condere* (*horreo*) and *colligere* (cf., Isa. 11:12). The expression *bchatsrōth qodshī*, in the courts of my sanctuary, cannot imply that the produce of the harvest will never be consumed anywhere else than there (which is inconceivable), but only that their enjoyment of the harvest-produce will be consecrated by festal meals of worship, with an allusion to the legal regulation that two-tenths (*ma'āsēr shēnī*) should be eaten in a holy place (*liphnē Jehovah*) by the original possessor and his family, with the addition of the Levites and the poor (Deut. 14:22–27; see Saalschütz, *Mosaïches Recht*, cap. 42). Such thoughts, as that all Israel will then be a priestly nation, or that all Jerusalem will be holy, are not implied in this promise. All that it affirms is,

that the enjoyment of the harvest-blessing will continue henceforth undisturbed, and be accompanied with the grateful worship of the giver, and therefore, because sanctified by thanksgiving, will become an act of worship in itself. This is what Jehovah has sworn "by His right hand," which He only lifts up with truth, and "by His powerful arm," which carries out what it promises without the possibility of resistance. The Talmud (*b. Nazir 3b*) understand by זְרוּעַ עֵזוֹ the left arm, after Dan. 12:7; but the ו of זְרוּעַ is epexegetical.

Isaiah 62:10–12. The concluding strophe goes back to the standpoint of the captivity. Vv. 10–12. *"Go forth, go forth through the gates, clear the way of the people. Cast up, cast up the road, clear it of stones; lift up a banner above the nations! Behold, Jehovah hath caused tidings to sound to the end of the earth. Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him. And men will call them the holy people, the redeemed of Jehovah; and men will call thee, Striven after, A city that will not be forsaken."* We cannot adopt the rendering proposed by Gesenius, "Go ye into the gates," whether of Jerusalem or of the temple, since the reading would then be בָּאוּ (Gen. 23:10) or בְּשַׁעְרֵי (Jer. 7:2). For although עָבַר בְּ may under certain circumstances be applied to entrance into a city (Judg. 9:26), yet it generally denotes either passing through a land (Isa. 8:21; 34:10; Gen. 41:46; Lev. 26:6, etc.), or through a nation (2 Sam. 20:14), or through a certain place (Isa. 10:28); so that the phrase עָבַר בְּשַׁעַר, which does not occur anywhere else (for in Mic. 2:13, which refers, however, to the exodus of the people out of the gates of the cities of the captivity, וְיַעֲבְרוּ וְיַעֲבֹר do not belong together), must refer to passing through the gate; and the cry עָבְרוּ means just the same as צְאוּ מִבְּבֶל ("Go ye forth from Babylon") in Isa. 48:20; 52:11.

The call to go out of Babylon forms the conclusion of the prophecy here, just as it does in Isa. 48:20, 21; 52:11, 12. It is addressed to the exiles; but who are they to whom the command is given, "Throw up a way,"—a summons repeatedly found in all the three books of these prophecies (Isa. 40:3; 57:14)? They cannot be the heathen, for this is contradicted by the conclusion of the charge, "Lift ye up a banner above the nations;" nor can we adopt what seems to us a useless fancy on the part of Stier, viz., that v. 10 is addressed to the watchmen on the walls of Zion. We have no hesitation, therefore, in concluding that they are the very same persons who are to march through the gates of Babylon. The vanguard (or pioneers) of those who are coming out are here summoned to open the way by which the people are to march, to throw up the road (viz., by casting up an embankment, *hamsillâh*, as in Isa. 11:16; 49:11; *maslûl*, Isa. 35:8), to clear it of stones (*siqqêl*, as in Isa. 5:2; cf., Hos. 9:12, *shikkêl mē'âdâm*), and lift up a banner above the nations (one rising so high as to be visible far and wide), that the *diaspora* of all places may join those who are returning home with the friendly help of the nations (Isa. 11:12; 49:22). For Jehovah hath caused tidings to be heard to the end of the earth, i.e., as we may see from what follows, the tidings of their liberation; in other words, looking at the historical fulfilment, the proclamation of Cyrus, which he caused to be issued throughout his empire at the instigation of Jehovah (Ezra 1:1). Hitzig regards *וְהִשְׁמִיעַ* as expressing what had actually occurred at the time when the prophet uttered his predictions; and in reality the standpoint of the prophets was so far a variable one, that the fulfilment of what was predicted did draw nearer and nearer to it *ἐν πνεύματι* (p. 380). But as *hinnêh* throughout the book of Isaiah (p. 278), even when followed by a perfect (p. 306), invariably points to something future, all that can be said is, that the divine announcement of the time of redemption, as having now arrived, stands out before the soul of the prophet with all the certainty of a historical fact. The conclusion which Knobel

draws from the expression "to the end of the earth," as to the Babylonian standpoint of the prophet, is a false one. In his opinion, "the end of the earth" in such passages as Ps. 72:8, Zech. 9:10 (*'aphsê-'ârets*), and Isa. 24:16 (*knaph hâ'ârets*), signifies the western extremity of the *orbis orientalis*, that is to say, the region of the Mediterranean, more especially Palestine; whereas it was rather a term applied to the remotest lands which bounded the geographical horizon (compare Isa. 42:10; 48:20, with Ps. 2:8; 22:28, and other passages). The words that follow ("Say ye," etc.) might be taken as a command issued on the ground of the divine *hishmî'â'* ("the Lord hath proclaimed"); but *hishmî'â'* itself is a word that needs to be supplemented, so that what follows is the divine proclamation: Men everywhere, i.e., as far as the earth or the dispersion of Israel extends, are to say to the daughter of Zion—that is to say, to the church which has its home in Zion, but is now in foreign lands—that "its salvation cometh," i.e., that Jehovah, its Saviour, is coming to bestow a rich reward upon His church, which has passed through sever punishment, but has been so salutarily refined. Those to whom the words "Say ye," etc., are addressed, are not only the prophets of Israel, but all the mourners of Zion, who become *mbhassrîm*, just because they respond to this appeal (compare the meaning of this "Say ye to the daughter of Zion" with Zech. 9:9 in Matt. 21:5). The whole of the next clause, "Behold, His reward," etc., is a repetition of the prophet's own words in Isa. 40:10. It is a question whether the words "and they shall call thee," etc., contain the gospel which is to be proclaimed according to the will of Jehovah to the end of the earth (see Isa. 48:20), or whether they are a continuation of the prophecy which commences with "Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed." The latter is the more probable, as the address here passes again into an objective promise. The realization of the gospel, which Jehovah causes to be preached, leads men to call those who are now still in exile "the holy people," "the redeemed" (lit. ransomed, Isa. 51:10; like *pdüyê* in Isa. 35:10). "And thee"—

thus does the prophecy close by returning to a direct address to Zion-Jerusalem—"thee will men call *drūshâh*," sought assiduously, i.e., one whose welfare men, and still more Jehovah, are zealously concerned to promote (compare the opposite in Jer. 30:17),—"a city that will not be forsaken," i.e., in which men gladly settle, and which will never be without inhabitants again (the antithesis to *'ăzūbhâh* in Isa. 60:15), possibly also in the sense that the gracious presence of God will never be withdrawn from it again (the antithesis to *'ăzūbhâh* in v. 4). עֲזָבָה is the third pers. pr., like *nuchâmâh* in Isa. 54:11: the perfect as expressing the abstract present (Ges. § 126, 3).

The following prophecy anticipates the question, how Israel can possibly rejoice in the recovered possession of its inheritance, if it is still to be surrounded by such malicious neighbours as the Edomites.

Isaiah 63

Sixth Prophecy

Judgment Upon Edom, and Upon the Whole World that is Hostile to the Church

Isaiah 63:1–6. Just as the Ammonites had been characterized by a thirst for extending their territory as well as by cruelty, and the Moabites by boasting and a slanderous disposition, so were the Edomites, although the brother-nation to Israel, characterised from time immemorial by fierce, implacable, bloodthirsty hatred towards Israel, upon which they fell in the most ruthless and malicious manner, whenever it was surrounded by danger or had suffered defeat. The knavish way in which they acted in the time of Joram, when Jerusalem was surprised and plundered by Philistines and Arabians (2 Chron. 21:16, 17), has been depicted by Obadiah. A large part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were then taken prisoners, and sold by the conquerors, some to the Phoenicians and some to the Greeks (Obad. 20; Joel 4:1–8); to the latter through the medium of the Edomites, who were in possession of the port and commercial city of

Elath on the Elanitic Gulf (Amos 1:6). Under the rule of the very same Joram the Edomites had made themselves independent of the house of David (2 Kings 8:20; 2 Chron. 21:10), and a great massacre took place among the Judaeans settled in Idumaea; an act of wickedness for which Joel threatens them with the judgment of God (Isa. 4:19), and which was regarded as not yet expiated even in the time of Uzziah, notwithstanding the fact that Amaziah had chastised them (2 Kings 14:7), and Uzziah had wrested Elath from them (2 Kings 14:22). "*Thus saith Jehovah,*" was the prophecy of Amos (Amos. 1:11, 12) in the first half of Uzziah's reign, "*for three transgressions of Edom, ad for four, I will not take it back, because he pursued his brother with the sword, and stifled his compassion, so that his anger tears in pieces for ever, and he keeps his fierce wrath eternally: And I let fire loose upon Teman, and it devours the palaces of Bozrah.*" So also at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and the carrying away of the people, Edom took the side of the Chaldeans, rejoiced over Israel's defeat, and flattered itself that it should eventually rule over the territory that had hitherto belonged to Israel. They availed themselves of this opportunity to slake their thirst for revenge upon Israel, placing themselves at the service of its enemies, delivering up fugitive Judaeans or else massacring them, and really obtaining possession of the southern portion of Judaea, viz., Hebron (1 Macc. 5:65; cf., Josephus, Wars of the Jews, iv. 9, 7). With a retrospective glance at these, the latest manifestations of eternal enmity, Edom is threatened with divine vengeance by Jeremiah in the prophecy contained in Jer. 49:7–22, which is taken for the most part from Obadiah; also in the Lamentations (Lam. 4:21, 22), as well as by Ezekiel (Ezek. 25:12–14, and especially 35), and by the author of Ps. 137, which looks back upon the time of the captivity. Edom is not always an emblematical name for the imperial power of the world: this is evident enough from Ps. 137, from Isa. 21, and also from Isa. 34 in connection with Isa. 13, where the judgment upon Edom is represented as a different one from the

ISAIAH	Page 481
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

judgment upon Babylon. Babylon and Edom are always to be taken literally, so far as the primary meaning of the prophecy is concerned; but they are also representative, Babylon standing for the violent and tyrannical world-power, and Edom for the world as cherishing hostility and manifesting hostility to Israel as Israel, i.e., as the people of God. Babylon had no other interest, so far as Israel was concerned, than to subjugate it like other kingdoms, and destroy every possibility of its ever rising again. But Edom, which dwelt in Israel's immediate neighbourhood, and sprang from the same ancestral house, hated Israel with hereditary mortal hatred, although it knew the God of Israel better than Babylon ever did, because it knew that Israel had deprived it of its birthright, viz., the chieftainship. If Israel should have such a people as this, and such neighbouring nations generally round about it, after it had been delivered from the tyranny of the mistress of the world, its peace would still be incessantly threatened. Not only must Babylon fall, but Edom also must be trodden down, before Israel could be redeemed, or be regarded as perfectly redeemed. The prophecy against Edom which follows here is therefore a well-chosen side-piece to the prophecy against Babel in Isa. 47, at the point of time to which the prophet has been transported.

Isaiah 63:1. This is the smallest of all the twenty-seven prophecies. In its dramatic style it resembles Ps. 24; in its visionary and emblematical character it resembles the tetralogy in Isa. 21–22:14. The attention of the seer is attracted by a strange and lofty form coming from Edom, or more strictly from Bozrah; not the place in Auranitis or Hauran (Jer. 48:24) which is memorable in church history, but the place in Edomitis or Gebal, between Petra and the Dead Sea, which still exists as a village in ruins under the diminutive name of *el-Busaire*. V. 1. “*Who is this that cometh from Edom, in deep red clothes from Bozrah? This, glorious in his apparel, bending to and fro in the fulness of his strength?*” The verb *châmats* means to be sharp or bitter; but here, where it can only refer to colour, it means to be

glaring, and as the Syriac shows, in which it is generally applied to blushing from shame or reverential awe, to be a staring red (ὀξύωος). The question, what is it that makes the clothes of this new-comer so strikingly red? is answered afterwards. But apart from the colour, they are splendid in their general arrangement and character. The person seen approaching is קָדוֹר בְּלִבוֹשׁוֹ (cf., Arab. *hdr* and *hdr*, to rush up, to shoot up luxuriantly, *ahdar* used for a swollen body), and possibly through the medium of *hâdâr* (which may signify primarily a swelling, or pad, ὄγκος, and secondarily pomp or splendour), “to honour or adorn;” so that *hâdûr* signifies adorned, grand (as in Gen. 24:65; Targ. II LXX ὀπαῖος), splendid. The verb *tsâ’âh*, to bend or stoop, we have already met with in Isa. 51:14. Here it is used to denote a gesture of proud self-consciousness, partly with or without the idea of the proud bending back of the head (or bending forward to listen), and partly with that of swaying to and fro, i.e., the walk of a proud man swinging to and fro upon the hips. The latter is the sense in which we understand *tsô’eh* here, viz., as a syn. of the Arabic *mutamâil*, to bend proudly from one side to the other (Vitringa: *se huc illuc motitans*). The person seen here produces the impression of great and abundant strength; and his walk indicates the corresponding pride of self-consciousness.

Isaiah 63:1b. “Who is this?” asks the seer of a third person. But the answer comes from the person himself, though only seen in the distance, and therefore with a voice that could be heard afar off. V. 1b. “*I am he that speaketh in righteousness, mighty to aid.*” Hitzig, Knobel, and others, take righteousness as the object of the speaking; and this is grammatically possible (קָ = περί, e.g., Deut. 6:7). But our prophet uses בצדק in Isa. 42:6; 45:13, and בצדקה in an adverbial sense: “strictly according to the rule of truth (more especially that of the counsel of mercy or plan of salvation) and right.” The person approaching says that he is great in word and deed (Jer. 32:19). He speaks in

righteousness; in the zeal of his holiness threatening judgment to the oppressors, and promising salvation to the oppressed; and what he threatens and promises, he carries out with mighty power. He is great (רַב, not רָב; S. ὑπερμαχῶν, Jer. *propugnator*) to aid the oppressed against their oppressors. This alone might lead us to surmise, that it is God from whose mouth of righteousness (Isa. 45:23) the consolation of redemption proceeds, and whose holy omnipotent arm (Isa. 52:10; 59:16) carries out the act of redemption.

Isaiah 63:2. The seer surmises this also, and now inquires still further, whence the strange red colour of his apparel, which does not look like the purple of a king's talar or the scarlet of a chlamys. V. 2. "Whence the red on thine apparel, and thy clothes like those of a wine-presser?" מַדּוּעַ inquires the reason and cause; לְמַה, in its primary sense, the object or purpose. The seer asks, "Why is there red ('*âdôm*, neuter, like *rabh* in v. 7) to thine apparel?" The *Lamed*, which might be omitted (wherefore is thy garment red?), implies that the red was not its original colour, but something added (cf., Jer. 30:12, and *lâmō* in Isa. 26:16; 53:8). This comes out still more distinctly in the second half of the question: "and (why are) thy clothes like those of one who treads (wine) in the wine-press" (*bgath* with a pausal *á* not lengthened, like *baz* in Isa. 8:1), i.e., saturated and stained as if with the juice of purple grapes?

Isaiah 63:3-6. The person replies: Vv. 3-6. "I have trodden the wine-trough alone, and of the nations no one was with me: and I trode them in my wrath, and trampled them down in my fury; and their life-sap spirted upon my clothes, and all my raiment was stained. For a day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption was come. And I looked round, and there was no helper; and I wondered there was no supporter: then mine own arm helped me; and my fury, it became my support. And I trode down nations in my wrath, and made them drunk in my fury, and made their life-blood run down to the earth." He had indeed trodden the wine-press (*pûrâh* = *gath*, or, if distinct from this, the pressing-

trough as distinguished from the pressing-house or pressing-place; according to Fürst, something hollowed out; but according to the traditional interpretation from *pûr* = *pârar*, to crush, press, both different from *yeqebh*: see at Isa. 5:2), and he alone; so that the juice of the grapes had saturated and coloured his clothes, and his only. When he adds, that of the nations no one was with him, it follows that the press which he trode was so great, that he might have needed the assistance of whole nations. And when he continues thus: And I trod them in my wrath, etc., the enigma is at once explained. It was to the nations themselves that the knife was applied. They were cut off like grapes and put into the wine-press (Joel 4:13); and this heroic figure, of which there was no longer any doubt that it was Jehovah Himself, had trodden them down in the impulse and strength of His wrath. The red upon the clothes was the life-blood of the nations, which had spirted upon them, and with which, as He trode this wine-press, He had soiled all His garments. *Nětsach*, according to the more recently accepted derivation from *nâtsach*, signifies, according to the traditional idea, which is favoured by Lam. 3:18, *vigor*, the vital strength and life-blood, regarded as the sap of life. נָי (compare the historical tense נָי in 2 Kings 9:33) is the future used as an imperfect, and it spirted, from *nâzâh* (see at Isa. 52:15). נָגַלְתִּי (from נָגַל = נָעַל, Isa. 59:3) is the perfect *hiphil* with an Aramaean inflexion (compare the same Aramaism in Ps. 76:6, 2 Chron. 20:35; and הִלְאֲנִי, which is half like it, in Job 16:7); the Hebrew form would be הִגַּלְתִּי. AE and A regard the form as a mixture of the perfect and future, but this is a mistake. This work of wrath had been executed by Jehovah, because He had in His heart a day of vengeance, which could not be delayed, and because the year (see at Isa. 61:2) of His promised redemption had arrived. נָגַלְתִּי (this is the proper reading, not נָגַלְתִּי, as some codd. have it; and this was the reading which Rashi had before him in his comm. on Lam. 1:6) is the plural of the passive participle used as an

abstract noun (compare *vivi, vitales*, or rather *viva, vitalia = vita*). And He only had accomplished this work of wrath. V. 5 is the expansion of *לְבַדִּי*, and almost a verbal repetition of Isa. 59:16. The meaning is, that no one joined Him with conscious free-will, to render help to the God of judgment and salvation in His purposes. The church that was devoted to Him was itself the object of the redemption, and the great mass of those who were estranged from Him the object of the judgment. Thus He found Himself alone, neither human co-operation nor the natural course of events helping the accomplishment of His purposes. And consequently He renounced all human help, and broke through the steady course of development by a marvellous act of His own. He trode down nations in His wrath, and intoxicated them in His fury, and caused their life-blood to flow down to the ground. The Targum adopts the rendering "*et triturabo eos*," as if the reading were *וְאַשְׁבְּרֵם*, which we find in Sonc. 1488, and certain other editions, as well as in some codd. Many agree with Cappellus in preferring this reading; and in itself it is not inadmissible (see Lam. 1:15). But the LXX and all the other ancient versions, the Masora (which distinguishes *וְאַשְׁבְּרֵם* with *ך*, as only met with once, from *וְאַשְׁבְּרֵם* with *ב* in Deut. 9:17), and the great majority of the MSS, support the traditional reading. There is nothing surprising in the transition to the figure of the cup of wrath, which is a very common one with Isaiah. Moreover, all that is intended is, that Jehovah caused the nations to feel the full force of this His fury, by trampling them down in His fury. Even in this short and highly poetical passage we see a desire to emblemize, just as in the emblematic cycle of prophetic night-visions in Isa. 21-22:14. For not only is the name of Edom made covertly into an emblem of its future fate, *אֱדוֹם* becoming *אֶדְוֹם* upon the apparel of Jehovah the avenger, when the blood of the people, stained with blood-guiltiness towards the people of God, is spirted out, but the name of Bozrah also; for *bâtsar* means to cut off bunches

of grapes (*vindemiare*), and *botsrâh* becomes *bâtsîr*, i.e., a vintage, which Jehovah treads in His wrath, when He punishes the Edomitish nation as well as all the rest of the nations, which in their hostility towards Him and His people have taken pleasure in the carrying away of Israel and the destruction of Jerusalem, and have lent their assistance in accomplishing them. Knobel supposes that the judgment referred to is the defeat which Cyrus inflicted upon the nations under Croesus and their allies; but it can neither be shown that this defeat affected the Edomites, nor can we understand why Jehovah should appear as if coming from Edom-Bozrah, after inflicting this judgment, to which Isa. 41:2ff. refers. Knobel himself also observes, that Edom was still an independent kingdom, and hostile to the Persians (Diod. xv. 2) not only under the reign of Cambyses (Herod. iii. 5ff.), but even later than that (Diod. xiii. 46). But at the time of Malachi, who lived under Artaxerxes Longimanus, if not under his successor Darius Nothus, a judgment of devastation was inflicted upon Edom (Mal. 1:3-5), from which it never recovered. The Chaldeans, as Caspari has shown (*Obad.* p. 142), cannot have executed it, since the Edomites appear throughout as their accomplices, and as still maintaining their independence even under the first Persian kings; nor can any historical support be found to the conjecture, that it occurred in the wars between the Persians and the Egyptians (Hitzig and Köhler, *Mal.* p. 35). What the prophet's eye really saw was fulfilled in the time of the Maccabaeans, when Judas inflicted a total defeat upon them, John Hyrcanus compelled them to become Jews, and Alexander Jannai completed their subjection; and in the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, when Simon of Gerasa avenged their cruel conduct in Jerusalem in combination with the Zelots, by ruthlessly turning their well-cultivated land into a horrible desert, just as it would have been left by a swarm of locusts (Jos. Wars of the Jews, iv. 9, 7).
The New Testament counterpart of this passage in Isaiah is the destruction of Antichrist and his

army (Rev. 19:11ff.). He who effects this destruction is called the Faithful and True, the Logos of God; and the seer beholds Him sitting upon a white horse, with eyes of flaming fire, and many diadems upon His head, wearing a blood-stained garment, like the person seen by the prophet here. The vision of John is evidently formed upon the basis of that of Isaiah; for when it is said of the Logos that He rules the nations with a staff of iron, this points to Ps. 2; and when it is still further said that He treads the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God, this points back to Isa. 63. The reference throughout is not to the first coming of the Lord, when He laid the foundation of His kingdom by suffering and dying, but to His final coming, when He will bring His regal sway to a victorious issue. Nevertheless Isa. 63:1–6 has always been a favourite passage for reading in Passion week. It is no doubt true that the Christian cannot read this prophecy without thinking of the Saviour streaming with blood, who trode the wine-press of wrath for us without the help of angels and men, i.e., who conquered wrath for us. But the prophecy does not relate to this. The blood upon the garment of the divine Hero is not His own, but that of His enemies; and His treading of the wine-press is not the conquest of wrath, but the manifestation of wrath. This section can only be properly used as a lesson for Passion week so far as this, that Jehovah, who here appears to the Old Testament seer, was certainly He who became man in His Christ, in the historical fulfilment of His purposes; and behind the first advent to bring salvation there stood with warning form the final coming to judgment, which will take vengeance upon that Edom, to whom the red lentil-judgment of worldly lust and power was dearer than the red life-blood of that loving Servant of Jehovah who offered Himself for the sin of the whole world.

There follows now in Isa. 63:7–64:11 a prayer commencing with the thanksgiving as it looks back to the past, and closing with a prayer for help as it turns to the present. Hitzig and Knobel connect this closely with Isa. 63:1–6, assuming that through the great event which

had occurred, viz., the overthrow of Edom, and of the nations hostile to the people of God as such, by which the exiles were brought one step nearer to freedom, the prophet was led to praise Jehovah for all His previous goodness to Israel. There is nothing, however, to indicate this connection, which is in itself a very loose one. The prayer which follows is chiefly an entreaty, and an entreaty appended to Isa. 63:1–6, but without any retrospective allusion to it: it is rather a prayer in general for the realization of the redemption already promised. Ewald is right in regarding Isa. 63:7–66 as an appendix to this whole book of consolation, since the traces of the same prophet are unmistakeable; but the whole style of the description is obviously different, and the historical circumstances must have been still further developed in the meantime.

The three prophecies which follow are the *finale* of the whole. The announcement of the prophet, which has reached its highest point in the majestic vision in Isa. 63:1–6, is now drawing to an end. It is standing close upon the threshold of all that has been promised, and nothing remains but the fulfilment of the promise, which he has held up like a jewel on every side. And now, just as in the finale of a poetical composition, all the melodies and movements that have been struck before are gathered up into one effective close; and first of all, as in Hab. 3, into a prayer, which forms, as it were, the lyrical echo of the preaching that has gone before.

The Three Closing Prophecies

First Closing Prophecy—Ch. 63:7–64

Thanksgiving, Confession, and Supplication of the Church of the Captivity

Isaiah 63:7, 8. The prophet, as the leader of the prayers of the church, here passes into the expanded style of the *tephillah*. V. 7. *“I will celebrate the mercies of Jehovah, the praises of Jehovah, as is seemly for all that Jehovah hath shown us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which He hath shown them*

according to His pity, and the riches of His mercies." The speaker is the prophet, in the name of the church, or, what is the same thing, the church in which the prophet includes himself. The prayer commences with thanksgiving, according to the fundamental rule in Ps. 50:23. The church brings to its own remembrance, as the subject of praise in the presence of God, all the words and deeds by which Jehovah has displayed His mercy and secured glory to Himself. חֲסִדֵי (this is the correct pointing, with ד protected by *gaya*; cf., כְּדָבָר in Isa. 54:12) are the many thoughts of mercy and acts of mercy into which the grace of God, i.e., His one purpose of grace and His one work of grace, had been divided. They are just so many *thillōth*, self-glorifications of God, and impulses to His glorification. On כָּעֵל, as is seemly, see at Isa. 59:18. There is no reason for assuming that וְרַב־טוֹב is equivalent to וְכָעֵל רַב־טוֹב, as Hitzig and Knobel do. רַב־טוֹב commences the second object to אֲזַכִּיר, in which what follows is unfolded as a parallel to the first. *Rabh*, the much, is a neuter formed into a substantive, as in Ps. 145:7; *rōbh*, plurality or multiplicity, is an infinitive used as a substantive. *Tūbh* is God's benignant goodness; *rachāmīm*, His deepest sympathizing tenderness; *chesed* (root חס, used of violent emotion; cf., Syr. *chāsad*, *chāsam*, *aemulari*; Arab. *hss*, to be tender, full of compassion), grace which condescends to and comes to meet a sinful creature. After this introit, the prayer itself commences with a retrospective glance at the time of the giving of law, when the relation of a child, in which Israel stood to Jehovah, was solemnly proclaimed and legally regulated. V. 8. "He said, They are my people, children who will not lie; and He became their Saviour." אֵל is used here in its primary affirmative sense. יִשְׁקָרוּ is the future of hope. When He made them His people, His children, He expected from them a grateful return of His covenant grace in covenant fidelity; and whenever they needed help from above, He became their Saviour

(*mōshīā'*). We can recognise the ring of Ex. 15:2 here, just as in Isa. 12:2. *Mōshīā'* is a favourite word in Isa. 40–66 (compare, however, Isa. 19:20 also).

Isaiah 63:9. The next verse commemorates the way in which He proved Himself a Saviour in heart and action. V. 9. "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His face brought them salvation. In His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and lifted them up, and bare them all the days of the olden time." This is one of the fifteen passages in which the *chethib* has אֵל, the *keri* לוֹ. It is only with difficulty that we can obtain any meaning from the *chethib*: "in all the affliction which He brought upon them He did not afflict, viz., according to their desert" (Targ., Jer., Rashi); or better still, as *tsâr* must in this case be derived from *tsūr*, and *tsâr* is only met with in an intransitive sense, "In all their distress there was no distress" (Saad.), with which J. D. Michaelis compares 2 Cor. 4:8, "troubled on every side, yet not distressed." The oxymoron is perceptible enough, but the לָהֶם (לֹא צָר), which is indispensable to this expression, is wanting. Even with the explanation, "In all their affliction He was not an enemy, viz., Jehovah, to them" (Döderlein), or "No man persecuted them without the angel immediately," etc. (Cocceius and Rosenmüller), we miss לָהֶם or אֵלָהֶם. There are other still more twisted and jejune attempts to explain the passage with אֵל, which are not worth the space they occupy. Even in the older translators did not know how to deal with the אֵל in the text. The Sept. takes *tsâr* as equivalent to *tsîr*, a messenger, and renders the passage according to its own peculiar interpunctuation: οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἔσωσεν αὐτούς (neither a messenger nor an angel, but His face, i.e., He Himself helped them: Ex. 33:14, 15; 2 Sam. 17:11). Everything forces to the conclusion that the *keri* לוֹ is to be preferred. The Masora actually does reckon this as one of the fifteen passages in which לוֹ is to be read for אֵל. Jerome was also acquainted with this

explanation. He says: "Where we have rendered it, 'In all their affliction He was not afflicted,' which is expressed in Hebrew by [SMCAPS]LO[/SMCAPS], the adverb of negation, we might read [SMCAPS]IPSE[/SMCAPS]; so that the sense would be, 'In all their affliction He, i.e., God, was afflicted.'" If we take the sentence in this way, "In all oppression there was oppression to Him," it yields a forcible thought in perfect accordance with the Scripture (compare e.g., Judg. 10:16), an expression in harmony with the usage of the language (compare *tsar-li*, 2 Sam. 1:26), and a construction suited to the contents (יִשְׁ = *ipsi*). There is nothing to surprise us in the fact that God should be said to feel the sufferings of His people as His own sufferings; for the question whether God can feel pain is answered by the Scriptures in the affirmative. He can as surely as everything originates in Him, with the exception of sin, which is a free act and only originates in Him so far as the possibility is concerned, but not in its actuality. Just as a man can feel pain, and yet in his personality keep himself superior to it, so God feels pain without His own happiness being thereby destroyed. And so did He suffer with His people; their affliction was reflected in His own life in Himself, and shared Him inwardly. But because He, the all-knowing, all-feeling One, is also the almighty will, He sent the angel of His face, and brought them salvation. "The angel of His face," says Knobel, "is the pillar of cloud and fire, in which Jehovah was present with His people in the march through the desert, with His protection, instruction, and guidance, the helpful presence of God in the pillar of cloud and fire." But where do we ever read of this, that it brought Israel salvation in the pressure of great dangers? Only on one occasion (Ex. 14:19, 20) does it cover the Israelites from their pursuers; but in that very instance a distinction is expressly made between the angel of God and the pillar of cloud.

Consequently the cloud and the angel were two distinct media of the manifestation of the presence of God. They differed in two respects.

The cloud was a material medium—the evil, the sign, and the site of the revealed presence of God. The angel, on the other hand, was a personal medium, a ministering spirit (λειτουργικὸν πνεῦμα), in which the name of Jehovah was indwelling for the purpose of His own self-attestation in connection with the historical preparation for the coming of salvation (Ex. 23:21). He was the mediator of the preparatory work of God in both word and deed under the Old Testament, and the manifestation of that redeeming might and grace which realized in Israel the covenant promises given to Abraham (Gen. 15). A second distinction consisted in the fact that the cloud was a mode of divine manifestation which was always visible; whereas, although the angel of God did sometimes appear in human shape both in the time of the patriarchs and also in that of Joshua (Josh. 5:13ff.), it never appeared in such a form during the history of the exodus, and therefore is only to be regarded as a mode of divine revelation which was chiefly discernible in its effects, and belonged to the sphere of invisibility: so that in any case, if we search in the history of the people that was brought out of Egypt for the fulfilment of such promises as Ex. 23:20–23, we are forced to the conclusion that the cloud was the medium of the settled presence of God in His angel in the midst of Israel, although it is never so expressed in the *thorah*. This mediatorial angel is called "the angel of His face," as being the representative of God, for "the face of God" is His self-revealing presence (even though only revealed to the mental eye); and consequently the presence of God, which led Israel to Canaan, is called directly "His face" in Deut. 4:37, apart from the angelic mediation to be understood; and "my face" in Ex. 33:14, 15, by the side of "my angel" in Ex. 32:34, and the angel in Ex. 33:2, appears as something incomparably higher than the presence of God through the mediation of that one angel, whose personality is completely hidden by his mediatorial instrumentality. The genitive פָּנָיו, therefore, is not to be taken objectively in the sense of "the angel who sees His face," but as explanatory,

“the angel who is His face, or in whom His face is manifested.” The הוּא which follows does not point back to the angel, but to Jehovah, who reveals Himself thus. But although the angel is regarded as a distinct being from Jehovah, it is also regarded as one that is completely hidden before Him, whose name is in him. He redeemed them by virtue of His love and of His *chemlâh*, i.e., of His forgiving gentleness (Arabic, with the letters transposed, *chilm*; compare, however, *chamûl*, gentle-hearted), and lifted them up, and carried them (נָשָׂא) the consequence of נָטַל, which is similar in sense, and more Aramaean; cf., *tollere* root *tal*, and *ferre* root *bhar*, perf. *tuli*) all the days of the olden time.

The prayer passes now quite into the tone of Ps. 78 and 106, and begins to describe how, in spite of Jehovah's grace, Israel fell again and again away from Jehovah, and yet was always rescued again by virtue of His grace. For it is impossible that it should leap at once in וְהִקְרָה to the people who caused the captivity, and וַיִּזְכֹּר have for its subject the penitential church of the exiles which was longing for redemption (Ewald). The train of thought is rather this: From the proofs of grace which the Israel of the olden time had experienced, the prophet passes to that disobedience to Jehovah into which it fell, to that punishment of Jehovah which it thereby brought upon itself, and to that longing for the renewal of the old Mosaic period of redemption, which seized it in the midst of its state of punishment. But instead of saying that Jehovah did not leave this longing unsatisfied, and responded to the penitence of Israel with ever fresh help, the prophet passes at once from the desire of the old Israel for redemption, to the prayer of the existing Israel for redemption, suppressing the intermediate thought, that Israel was even now in such a state of punishment and longing.

Isaiah 63:10. Israel's ingratitude. V. 10. "But they resisted and vexed His Holy Spirit: then He turned to be their enemy; He made war upon them." Not only has וַיַּעֲצֹבוּ (to cause cutting pain)

אֶת־רוּחַ קְדֻשׁוֹ as its object, but מָרוּ has the same (on the primary meaning, see at Isa. 3:8). In other cases, the object of *mrôth* (*hamrôth*) is Jehovah, or His word, His promise, His providence, hence Jehovah himself in the revelations of His nature in word and deed; here it is the spirit of holiness, which is distinguished from Him as a personal existence. For just as the angel who is His face, i.e., the representation of His nature, is designated as a person both by His name and also by the redeeming activity ascribed to Him; so also is the Spirit of holiness, by the fact that He can be grieved, and therefore can feel grief (compare Eph. 4:30, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God"). Hence Jehovah, and the angel of His face, and the Spirit of His holiness, are distinguished as three persons, but so that the two latter derive their existence from the first, which is the absolute ground of the Deity, and of everything that is divine. Now, if we consider that the angel of Jehovah was indeed an angel, but that he was the angelic anticipation of the appearance of God the Mediator "in the flesh," and served to foreshadow Him "who, as the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), as "the reflection of His glory and the stamp of His nature" (Heb. 1:3), is not merely a temporary medium of self-manifestation, but the perfect personal self-manifestation of the divine *pânîm*, we have here an unmistakable indication of the mystery of the triune nature of God the One, which was revealed in history in the New Testament work of redemption. The subject to וַיִּהְיֶה is Jehovah, whose Holy Spirit they troubled. He who proved Himself to be their Father (cf., Deut. 32:6), became, through the reaction of His holiness, the very reverse of what He wished to be. He turned to be their enemy; הוּא, He, the most fearful of all foes, made war against them. This is the way in which we explain v. 10b, although with this explanation it would have to be accentuated differently, viz., וַיִּהְיֶה *mahpach*, נִלְחַם־בָּם *pashta*, לָאוֹיֵב *zakeph*, הוּא *tiphchah*, הוּא *silluk*. The accentuation as we find it takes הוּא

נלחם־בם as an attributive clause: “to an enemy, who made war against them.”

Isaiah 63:11–14. Israel being brought to a right mind in the midst of this state of punishment, longed for the better past to return. Vv. 11–14. “*Then His people remembered the days of the olden time, of Moses: Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is He who put the spirit of His holiness in the midst of them; who caused the arm of His majesty to go at the right of Moses; who split the waters before them, to make Himself an everlasting name: who caused them to pass through abysses of the deep, like the horse upon the plain, without their stumbling? Like the cattle which goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of Jehovah brought them to rest: thus hast Thou led Thy people, to make Thyself a majestic name.*” According to the accentuation before us, v. 11a should be rendered thus: “Then He (viz., Jehovah) remembered the days of the olden time, the Moses of His people” (LXX, Targ., Syr., Jerome). But apart from the strange expression “the Moses of His people,” which might perhaps be regarded as possible, because the proper name *mōsheh* might suggest the thought of its real meaning in Hebrew, viz., *extrahens = liberator*, but which the Syriac rejects by introducing the reading *’abhdō* (Moses, His servant), we have only to look at the questions of evidently human longing which follow, to see that Jehovah cannot be the subject to *נִיזְכָּר* (remembered), by which these reminiscences are introduced. It is the people which begins its inquiries with *אֵיךָ*, just as in Jer. 2:6 (cf., Isa. 51:9, 10), and recalls “the days of olden time,” according to the admonition in Deut. 32:7. Consequently, in spite of the accents, such Jewish commentators as Saad. and Rashi regard “his people” (*’ammō*) as the subject; whereas others, such as AE, Kimchi, and Abrahanel, take account of the accents, and make the people the suppressed subject of the verb “remembered,” by rendering it thus, “Then it remembered the days of olden time, (the days) of Moses (and) His people,” or in some similar way. But with all modifications the

rendering is forced and lame. The best way of keeping to the accents is that suggested by Stier, “Then men (indef. *man*, the French *on*) remembered the days of old, the Moses of His people.”

But why did the prophet not say *נִיזְכָּרוּ*, as the proper sequel to v. 10? We prefer to adopt the following rendering and accentuation: Then remembered (*zakeph gadol*) the days-of-old (*mercha*) of Moses (*tiphchah*) His people. The object stands before the subject, as for example in 2 Kings 5:13 (compare the inversions in Isa. 8:22 *extr.*, 22:2 *init.*); and *mosheh* is a genitive governing the composite “days of old” (for this form of the construct state, compare Isa. 28:1 and Ruth 2:1). The retrospect commences with “Where is He who led them up?” etc. The suffix of *הַמַּעֲלֵם* (for *הַמַּעֲלָם*, like *רִדָם* in Ps. 68:28, and therefore with the verbal force predominant) refers to the ancestors; and although the word is determined by the suffix, it has the article as equivalent to a demonstrative pronoun (*ille qui sursum duxit, eduxit eos*). “The shepherd of his flock” is added as a more precise definition, not dependent upon *vayyizkōr*, as even the accents prove. *אֵת* is rendered emphatic by *yethib*, since here it signifies *unâ cum*. The Targum takes it in the sense of *instar pastoris gregis sui*; but though *עִם* is sometimes used in this way, *אֵת* never is. Both the LXX and Targum read *רִעָה*; Jerome, on the other hand, adopts the reading *רַעִי*, and this is the Masoretic reading, for the Masora in Gen. 47:3 reckons four *רִעָה*, without including the present passage. Kimchi and Abrahanel also support this reading, and Norzi very properly gives it the preference. The shepherds of the flock of Jehovah are Moses and Aaron, together with Miriam (Ps. 77:21; Mic. 6:4). With these (i.e., in their company or under their guidance) Jehovah led His people up out of Egypt through the Red Sea. With the reading *רַעִי*, the question whether *bqirbō* refers to Moses or Israel falls to the ground. Into the heart of His people (Neh. 9:20) Jehovah put the spirit of His holiness: it was present in the

midst of Israel, inasmuch as Moses, Aaron, Miriam, the Seventy, and the prophets in the camp possessed it, and inasmuch as Joshua inherited it as the successor of Moses, and all the people might become possessed of it. The majestic might of Jehovah, which manifested itself majestically, is called the “arm of His majesty;” an anthropomorphism to which the expression “who caused it to march at the right hand of Moses” compels us to give an interpretation worthy of God. Stier will not allow that זרע תפארתו is to be taken as the object, and exclaims, “What a marvellous figure of speech, an arm walking at a person’s right hand!” But the arm which is visible in its deeds belongs to the God who is invisible in His own nature; and the meaning is, that the active power of Moses was not left to itself, but he overwhelming omnipotence of God went by its side, and endowed it with superhuman strength. It was by virtue of this that the elevated staff and extended hand of Moses divided the Red Sea (Ex. 14:16). בוקע has *mahpach* attached to the ב, and therefore the tone drawn back upon the penultimate, and *metheg* with the *tsere*, that it may not be slipped over in the pronunciation. The clause לטעות וגו’ affirms that the absolute purpose of God is in Himself. But He is holy love, and whilst willing for Himself, He wills at the same time the salvation of His creatures. He makes to Himself an “everlasting name,” by glorifying Himself in such memorable miracles of redemption, as that performed in the deliverance of His people out of Egypt. According to the general order of the passage, v. 13 apparently refers to the passage through the Jordan; but the psalmist, in Ps. 106:9 (cf., 77:17), understood it as referring to the passage through the Red Sea. The prayer dwells upon this chief miracle, of which the other was only an after-play. “As the horse gallops over the plain,” so did they pass through the depths of the sea לא יכשלו (a circumstantial minor clause), i.e., without stumbling. Then follows another beautiful figure: “like the beast that goeth down into the valley,” not “as the

beast goeth down into the valley,” the Spirit of Jehovah brought it (Israel) to rest, viz., to the *mnūchâh* of the Canaan flowing with milk and honey (Deut. 12:9; Ps. 95:11), where it rested and was refreshed after the long and wearisome march through the sandy desert, like a flock that had descended from the bare mountains to the brooks and meadows of the valley. The Spirit of God is represented as the leader here (as in Ps. 143:10), viz., through the medium of those who stood, enlightened and instigated by Him, at the head of the wandering people. The following כן is no more a correlate of the foregoing particle of comparison than in Isa. 52:14. It is a recapitulation, and refers to the whole description as far back as v. 9, passing with נהגה into the direct tone of prayer.

Isaiah 63:15. The way is prepared for the petitions for redemption which follow, outwardly by the change in v. 14*b*, from a mere description to a direct address, and inwardly by the thought, that Israel is at the present time in such a condition, as to cause it to look back with longing eyes to the time of the Mosaic redemption. V. 15. “*Look from heaven and see, from the habitation of Thy holiness and majesty! Where is Thy zeal and Thy display of might? The pressure of Thy bowels and Thy compassions are restrained towards me.*” On the relation between הביט, to look up, to open the eyes, and ראה, to fix the eye upon a thing, see p. 421. It is very rarely that we meet with the words in the reverse order, ראה והביט (vid., Hab. 1:5; Lam. 1:11). In the second clause of v. 15*a*, instead of *misshâmayim* (from heaven), we have “from the dwelling-place (*mizzbhul*) of Thy holiness and majesty.” The all-holy and all-glorious One, who once revealed Himself so gloriously in the history of Israel, has now withdrawn into His own heaven, where He is only revealed to the spirits. The object of the looking and seeing, as apparent from what follows, is the present helpless condition of the people in their sufferings, to which there does not seem likely to be any end. There are no traces now of the *kin’âh* (zeal) with which Jehovah used to strive

on behalf of His people, and against their oppressors (Isa. 26:11), or of the former displays of His *gbhūrâh* (וגְבוּרָתָךְ, as it is correctly written in Ven. 1521, is a defective plural). In v. 15*b* we have not a continued question (“the sounding of Thy bowels and Thy mercies, which are restrained towards me?”), as Hitzig and Knobel suppose. The words *’elai hith’appâqū* have not the appearance of an attributive clause, either according to the new strong thought expressed, or according to the order of the words (with אֱלֵי written first). On *streptus viscerum*, as the effect and sign of deep sympathy, see at Isa. 16:11. רַחֲמִים and מַעֲיָם, or rather מַעֲיָם (from מַעָה, of the form רַעָה) both signify primarily *σπλάγχνα*, strictly speaking the soft inward parts of the body; the latter from the root מע, to be pulpy or soft, the former from the root רח, to be slack, loose, or soft. הַמֶּזֶן, as the plural of the predicate shows, does not govern רַחֲמֶיךָ also. It is presupposed that the love of Jehovah urges Him towards His people, to relieve their misery; but His compassion and sympathy apparently put constraint upon themselves (*hith’appēq* as in Isa. 42:14, lit., *se superare*, from *’âphaq*, root פק), to abstain from working on behalf of Israel.

Isaiah 63:16. The prayer for help, and the lamentation over its absence, are now justified in v. 16: “*For Thou art our Father; for Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel knoweth us not. Thou, O Jehovah, art our Father; our Redeemer is from olden time Thy name.*” Jehovah is Israel’s Father (Deut. 32:6). His creative might, and the gracious counsels of His love, have called it into being: אָבִינוּ has not yet the deep and unrestricted sense of the New Testament “Our Father.” The second *kī* introduces the reason for this confession that Jehovah was Israel’s Father, and could therefore look for paternal care and help from Him alone. Even the dearest and most honourable men, the forefathers of the nation, could not help it. Abraham and Jacob-Israel had been taken away from this world, and were unable to interfere on their

own account in the history of their people. יָדַע and הִבִּיר suggest the idea of participating notice and regard, as in Deut. 33:9 and Ruth 2:10, 19. יִבְרִינוּ has the vowel *â* (pausal for *a*, Isa. 56:3) in the place of *ē*, to rhyme with יָדַעְנוּ (see Ges. § 60, Anm. 2). In the concluding clause, according to the accents, גְּאֻלָּנוּ מְעוֹלָם are connected together; but the more correct accentuation is גְּאֻלָּנוּ *tiphchah*, מעוֹלָם *mercha*, and we have rendered it so. From the very earliest time the acts of Jehovah towards Israel had been such that Israel could call Him גְּאֻלָּנוּ.

Isaiah 63:17. But the in the existing state of things there was a contrast which put their faith to a severe test. V. 17. “*O Jehovah, why leadest Thou us astray from Thy ways, hardenest our heart, so as not to fear Thee? Return for Thy servants’ sake, the tribes of Thine inheritance.*” When men have scornfully and obstinately rejected the grace of God, God withdraws it from them judicially, gives them up to their wanderings, and makes their heart incapable of faith (*hiqshîäch*, which only occurs again in Job 39:16, is here equivalent to *hiqshâh* in Ps. 95:8, Deut. 2:30). The history of Israel from Isa. 6 onwards has been the history of such a gradual judgment of hardening, and such a curse, eating deeper and deeper, and spreading its influence wider and wider round. The great mass are lost, but not without the possibility of deliverance for the better part of the nation, which now appeals to the mercy of God, and sighs for deliverance from this ban. Two reasons are assigned for this petition for the return of the gracious presence of God: first, that there are still “servants of Jehovah” to be found, as this prayer itself actually proves; and secondly, that the divine election of grace cannot perish.

Isaiah 63:18, 19 (Isa. 64:1). But the existing condition of Israel looks like a withdrawal of this grace; and it is impossible that these contrasts should cease, unless Jehovah comes down from heaven as the deliverer of His people. Vv. 8, 19 (Isa. 64:1). “*For a little time Thy holy people was in possession. Our*

adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary. We have become such as He who is from everlasting has not ruled over, upon whom Thy name was not called. O that Thou wouldst rend the heaven, come down, the mountains would shake before thy countenance." It is very natural to try whether *yârshû* may not have *tsârênû* for its subject (cf., Jer. 49:2); but all the attempts made to explain the words on this supposition, show that *lammits'âr* is at variance with the idea that *yârshû* refers to the foes. Compare, for example, Jerome's rendering "*quasi nihilum* (i.e., *ad nihil et absque allo labore*) *possederunt populum sanctum tuum;*" that of Cocceius, "*propemodum ad haereditatem;*" and that of Stier, "for a little they possess entirely Thy holy nation." *Mits'âr* is the harsher form for *miz'âr*, which the prophet uses in Isa. 10:25; 16:14; 29:17 for a contemptibly small space of time; and as *ḥ* is commonly used to denote the time to which, towards which, within which, and through which, anything occurs (cf., 2 Chron. 11:17; 29:17; Ewald, § 217, *d*), *lammits'âr* may signify for a (lit. the well-known) short time (*per breve tempus*; like εἰς ἐπὶ κατ' ἐνιαυτόν, a year long). If *miqdâsh* could mean the holy land, as Hitzig and others suppose, *miqdâshekhâ* might be the common object of both sentences (Ewald, § 351, p. 838). But *miqdash Jehovah* (the sanctuary of Jehovah) is the place of His abode and worship; and "taking possession of the temple" is hardly an admissible expression. On the other hand, *yârash há'ârets*, to take possession of the (holy) land, is so common a phrase (e.g., Isa. 60:21; 65:9; Ps. 44:4), that with the words "Thy holy people possessed for a little (time)" we naturally supply the holy land as the object. The order of the words in the two clauses is chiasmic. The two strikingly different subjects touch one another as the two inner members. Of the perfects, the first expresses the more remote past, the second the nearer past, as in Isa. 60:10*b*. The two clauses of the verse rhyme,—the holiest thing in the possession of the people, which was holy according to the choice and calling of Jehovah, being brought into the greatest prominence; *bōsēs* = πατεῖν, Luke 21:24, Rev. 11:2. Hahn's

objection, that the time between the conquest of the land and the Chaldean catastrophe could not be called *mits'âr* (a little while), may be answered, from the fact that a time which is long in itself shrinks up when looked back upon or recalled, and that as an actual fact from the time of David and Solomon, when Israel really rejoiced in the possession of the land, the coming catastrophe began to be foreboded by many significant preludes.

The lamentation in v. 19 proceeds from the same feeling which caused the better portion of the past to vanish before the long continuance of the mournful present (compare the reverse at p. 527). Hitzig renders *הָיִינוּ* "we were;" Hahn, "we shall be;" but here, where the speaker is not looking back, as in Isa. 26:17, at a state of things which has come to an end, but rather at one which is still going on, it signifies "we have become." The passage is rendered correctly in S.: ἐγενήθημεν (or better, γεγόναμεν) ὡς ἅπ' αἰῶνος ὧν οὐκ ἐξουσίασας οὐδὲ ἐπικλήθη τὸ ὄνομά σου αὐτοῖς. The virtual predicate to *hâyînû* commences with *mē'ôlâm*: "we have become such (or like such persons) as," etc.; which would be fully expressed by *בְּעַם אֲשֶׁר*, or merely *בְּעַשְׂרָה*, or without *אֲשֶׁר*, and simply by transposing the words, *וְגו' בְּלֹא מְשֻׁלָּתָ וְגו'* (cf., Obad. 16): compare the virtual subject *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* in Isa. 48:14, and the virtual object *יְקָרָא בְּשֵׁמִי* in Isa. 41:25 (Ewald, § 333, *b*). Every form of "as if" is intentionally omitted. The relation in which Jehovah placed Himself to Israel, viz., as its King, and as to His own people called by His name, appears not only as though it had been dissolved, but as though it had never existed at all. The existing state of Israel is a complete practical denial of any such relation. Deeper tones than these no lamentation could possibly utter, and hence the immediate utterance of the sigh which goes up to heaven: "O that Thou wouldst rend heaven!" It is extremely awkward to begin a fresh chapter with *בְּקִדְוָה* ("as when the melting fire burneth"); at the same time, the Masoretic division of the verses is unassailable.

For v. 19b (Isa. 64:1) could not be attached to Isa. 64:1, 2, since this verse would be immensely overlaid; moreover, this sigh really belongs to v. 19a (Isa. 63:19), and ascends out of the depth of the lamentation uttered there. On *utinam discideris = discinderes*, see at Isa. 48:18. The wish presupposes that the gracious presence of God had been withdrawn from Israel, and that Israel felt itself to be separated from the world beyond by a thick party-wall, resembling an impenetrable black cloud. The closing member of the optative clause is generally rendered (*utinam*) *a facie tua montes diffluerent* (e.g., Rosenmüller after the LXX τακίθονται), or more correctly, *defluerent* (Jerome), as *nâzal* means to flow down, not to melt. The meaning therefore would be, "O that they might flow down, as it were to the ground melting in the fire" (Hitzig). The form *nâzollu* cannot be directly derived from *nâzal*, if taken in this sense; for it is a pure fancy that *nâzöllū* may be a modification of the pausal נָזַל with *ō* for *ā*, and the so-called *dagesh affectuosum*). Stier invents a verb *med. o.* נָזַל. The more probable supposition is, that it is a *niphal* formed from *zâlâl = nâzal* (Ewald, § § 193, c). But *zâlâl* signifies to hang down slack, to sway to and fro (hence *zôlêl*, lightly esteemed, and *zalzallîm*, Isa. 18:5, pliable branches), like *zûl* in Isa. 46:6, to shake, to pour down; and *nâzöllū*, if derived from this, yields the appropriate sense *concuterentur* (compare the Arabic *zalzala*, which is commonly applied to an earthquake). The nearest *niphal* form would be נָזַל (or resolved, נָזַל, Judg. 5:5); but instead of the *a* of the second syllable, the *niphal* of the verbs ע"ע has sometimes *o*, like the verb ע"ו (e.g., נָגַל, Isa. 34:4; Ges. § 67, Anm. 5).

Isaiah 64

Isaiah 64:1, 2 (2, 3). The similes which follow cannot be attached to this *nâzöllū*, however we may explain it. Yet Isa. 64:1 (2) does not form a new and independent sentence; but we must in thought repeat the word upon which the

principal emphasis rests in Isa. 63:19b (Isa. 64:1). Ch. 64:3:1, 2 (2, 3). "*Wouldst come down as fire kindles brushwood, fire causes water to boil; to make known Thy name to Thine adversaries, that the heathen may tremble before Thy face! When Thou doest terrible things which we hoped not for; wouldst come down, (and) mountains shake before Thy countenance!*" The older expositors gave themselves a great deal of trouble in the attempt to trace *hâmâsim* to *mâsas*, to melt. But since Louis de Dieu and Albert Schultens have followed Saadia and *Abulwâlid* in citing the Arabic *hms*, to crack, to mutter, to mumble, etc., and *hšm*, to break in pieces, *confringere*, from which comes *hashim*, broken, dry wood, it is generally admitted that *hâmâsim* is from *hemes* (lit. crackling, rattling, Arab. *hams*), and signifies "dry twigs," *arida sarmenta*. The second simile might be rendered, "as water bubbles up in the fire;" and in that case *mayim* would be treated as a feminine (according to the rule in Ges. § 146, 3), in support of which Job 14:19 may be adduced as an unquestionable example (although in other cases it is masculine), and שָׂשׁ = שָׂשׁ would be used in a local sense, like *lehâbhâh*, into flames, in Isa. 5:24. But it is much more natural to take שָׂשׁ, which is just as often a feminine as מים is a masculine, as the subject of תִּבְעָה, and to give to the verb בָּעָה, which is originally intransitive, judging from the Arabic *bgâ*, to swell, the Chald. בוּע, to spring up (compare אֲבַעְבְּעוֹת, blisters, pustules), the Syr. בָּגָא, to bubble up, etc., the transitive meaning to cause to boil or bubble up, rather than the intransitive to boil (comp. Isa. 30:13, גִּבְעָה, swollen = bent forwards, as it were *protumidus*). Jehovah is to come down with the same irresistible force which fire exerts upon brushwood or water, when it sets the former in flames and makes the latter boil; in order that by such a display of might He may make His name known (viz., the name thus judicially revealing itself, hence "in fire," Isa. 30:27; 66:15) to His adversaries, and that nations (viz., those that are idolaters) may

tremble before Him (מִפְּנֵי: cf., Ps. 68:2, 3). The infinitive clause denoting the purpose, like that indicating the comparison, passes into the finite (cf., Isa. 10:2; 13:9; 14:25). Modern commentators for the most part now regard the optative *lū'* (O that) as extending to v. 2 also; and, in fact, although this continued influence of *lū'* appears to overstep the bounds of the possible, we are forced to resort to this extremity. V. 2 cannot contain a historical retrospect: the word "formerly" would be introduced if it did, and the order of the words would be a different one. Again, we cannot assume that יִרְדָּתָּ מִפְּנֵי הַרִים נִזְלוּ contains an expression of confidence, or that the prefects indicate certainty. Neither the context, the foregoing בְּעִשׂוֹתָי נִרְאֹת (why not עֲשֵׂה?), nor the parenthetical assertion לֹא נִקְוָה, permits of this. On the other hand, בְּעִשׂוֹתָי וְגו' connects itself very appropriately with the purposes indicated in v. 1 (2): "may tremble when Thou doest terrible things, which we, i.e., such as we, do not look for," i.e., which surpass our expectations. And now nothing remains but to recognise the resumption of Isa. 63:19 (Isa. 64:1) in the clause "The mountains shake at Thy presence," in which case Isa. 63:19b -64:2 (Isa. 64:1-3) forms a grand period rounded off palindromically after Isaiah's peculiar style.

Isaiah 64:3 (4). The following clause gives the reason for this; ו being very frequently the logical equivalent for *kī* (e.g., Isa. 3:7 and 38:15). The justification of this wish, which is forced from them by the existing misery, is found in the incomparable acts of Jehovah for the good of His own people, which are to be seen in a long series of historical events. V. 3 (4). "For from olden time men have not heard, nor perceived, nor hath an eye seen, a God beside Thee, who acted on behalf of him that waiteth for Him." No ear, no eye has ever been able to perceive the existence of a God who acted like Jehovah, i.e., really interposed on behalf of those who set their hopes upon Him. This is the explanation adopted by Knobel; but he wrongly

supplies יִרְאֵה to עֲשֵׂה, whereas עֲשֵׂה is used here in the same pregnant sense as in Ps. 22:32; 37:5; 52:11 (cf., *gâmar* in Ps. 57:3; 138:8). It has been objected to this explanation, that הִיאֵין is never connected with the accusative of the person, and that God can neither be heard nor seen. But what is terrible in relation to שָׁמַע in Job 42:5 cannot be untenable in relation to הִיאֵין. Hearing and seeing God are here equivalent to recognising His existence through the perception of His works. The explanation favoured by Rosenmüller and Stier, viz., "And from olden time men have not heard it, nor perceived with ears, no eye has seen it, O God, beside Thee, what (this God) doth to him that waiteth for Him," is open to still graver objections. The thought is the same as in Ps. 31:20, and when so explained it corresponds more exactly to the free quotation in 1 Cor. 2:9, which with our explanation there is no necessity to trace back to either Isa. 42:15, 16, or a lost book, as Origen imagined (see Tischendorf's ed. vii. of the N.T. on this passage). This which no ear has heard, no eye seen, is not God Himself, but He who acts for His people, and justifies their waiting for Him (cf., Hofmann, *Die h. Schrift Neuen Testaments*, ii. 2, 51). Another proof that Paul had no other passage than this in his mind, is the fact that the same quotation is met with in Clement's *Epistle to the Corinthians* (ch. 34), where, instead of "those that love Him," we have "those that wait for Him," a literal rendering of לְמַחְכְּהוֹ-לוֹ. The quotation by Paul therefore by no means leads us to take *Elohim* as a vocative or יִעֲשֵׂה וְגו' as the object, although it must not be concealed that this view of the passage and its reference to the fulness of glory in the eternal life is an old rabbinical one, as Rashi expressly affirms, when he appeals to R. Jose (Joseph Kara) as bondsman for the other (see *b. Sanhedrin* 99a). Hahn has justly objected to this traditional explanation, which regards *Elohim* as a vocative, that the thought, that God alone has heard and perceived and seen with His eye what He intends to do to His people, is

unsuitable in itself, and at variance with the context, and that if יעשה וגו' was intended as the object, אשר (את) would certainly be inserted.

And to this we may add, that we cannot find the words *Elohim zûlâthkhâ* (God beside Thee) preceded by a negation anywhere in Isa. 40–66 without receiving at once the impression, that they affirm the sole deity of Jehovah (comp. Isa. 45:5, 21). The meaning therefore is, “No other God beside Jehovah has ever been heard or seen, who acted for (*ageret pro*) those who waited for Him.” *Mchakkêh* is the construct, according to Ges. § 116, 1; and *ya'ăsêh* has *tsere* here, according to Kimchi (*Michlol* 125*b*) and other testimonies, just as we meet with תעשה four times (in Gen. 26:29; Josh. 7:9; 2 Sam. 13:12; Jer. 40:16) and ונעשה once (Josh. 9:24), mostly with a disjunctive accent, and not without the influence of a whole or half pause, the form with *tsere* being regarded as more emphatic than that with *seghol*.

Isaiah 64:4a. (5*a*). After the long period governed by לוֹא has thus been followed by the retrospect in v. 3 (4), it is absolutely impossible that v. 4*a* (5*a*) should be intended as an optative, in the sense of “O that thou wouldst receive him that,” etc., as Stier and others propose. The retrospect is still continued thus, v. 4*a* (5*a*): “Thou didst meet him that rejoiceth to work righteousness, when they remembered Thee in Thy ways.” שֶׁשׁ וְעָשָׂה צְדָקָה is one in whom joy and right action are paired, and is therefore equivalent to שֶׁשׁ לַעֲשׂוֹת. At the same time, it may possibly be more correct to take צְדָקָה as the object of both verses, as Hofmann does in the sense of “those who let what is right be their joy, and their action also;” for though שׂוֹשׂ (שִׂישׂ) cannot be directly construed with the accusative of the object, as we have already observed at Isa. 8:6 and 35:1, it may be indirectly, as in this passage and Isa. 65:18. On *pâga*, “to come to meet,” in the sense of “coming to the help of,” see at Isa. 47:3; it is here significantly interchanged with בְּדַרְכֵיךָ of

the minor clause *bidrâkhekhâ yizkrûkhâ*, “those who remember Thee in Thy ways” (for the syntax, compare Isa. 1:5 and 26:16): “When such as love and do right, walking in Thy ways, remembered Thee (i.e., thanked Thee for grace received, and longed for fresh grace), Thou camest again and again to meet them as a friend.”

Isaiah 64:4b. (5*b*). But Israel appeared to have been given up without hope to the wrath of this very God. V. 4*b* (5*b*). “Behold, Thou, Thou art enraged, and we stood as sinners there; already have we been long in this state, and shall we be saved?” Instead of *hên 'attâh* (the antithesis of now and formerly), the passage proceeds with *hên 'attâh*. There was no necessity for *'attâh* with *qâtsaphtâ*; so that it is used with special emphasis: “Behold, Thou, a God who so faithfully accepts His own people, hast broken out in wrath” (see p. 527). The following word וְנִחַטְטָא cannot mean “and we have sinned,” but is a *fut. consec.*, and therefore must mean at least, “then we have sinned” (the sin inferred from the punishment). It is more correct, however, to take it, as in Gen. 43:9, in the sense of, “Then we stand as sinners, as guilty persons:” the punishment has exhibited Israel before the world, and before itself, as what it really is (consequently the *fut. consec.* does not express the logical inference, but the practical consequence). As וְנִחַטְטָא has *tsakeph*, and therefore the accents at any rate preclude Shelling’s rendering, “and we have wandered in those ways from the very earliest times,” we must take the next two clauses as independent, if indeed בָּהֵם is to be understood as referring to בְּדַרְכֵיךָ. Stier only goes halfway towards this when he renders it, “And indeed in them (the ways of God, we sinned) from of old, and should we be helped?” This is forced, and yet not in accordance with the accents. Rosenmüller and Hahn quite satisfy this demand when they render it, “*Tamen in viis tuis aeternitas ut salvemur;*” but *'ôlâm, aiôn*, in this sense of *aiônios*, is not scriptural. The rendering adopted by Besser, Grotius, and Starck is a

ISAIAH	Page 495
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

better one: “(Si vero) in illis (viis tuis) perpetuo (mansissemus), tunc servati fuerimus” (if we had continued in Thy ways, then we should have been preserved). But there is no succession of tenses here, which could warrant us in taking וְנִשְׁעַ as a paulo-post future; and Hofmann’s view is syntactically more correct, “In them (i.e., the ways of Jehovah) eternally, we shall find salvation, after the time is passed in which He has been angry and we have sinned” (or rather, been shown to be guilty). But we question the connection between בהם and דרכיך in any form. In our view the prayer suddenly takes a new turn from hēn (behold) onwards, just as it did with lū’ (O that) in Isa. 64:1; and דרכיך in v. 5a stands at the head of a subordinate clause. Hence בהם must refer back to קצפת ונחטא (“in Thine anger and in our sins,” Schegg). There is no necessity, however, to search for nouns to which to refer בָּהֶם. It is rather to be taken as neuter, signifying “therein” (Ezek. 33:18, cf., Ps. 90:10), like עֲלֵיהֶם, thereupon = thereby (Isa. 38:16), בָּהֶן therein (Isa. 37:16), מִהֶם thereout (Isa. 30:6), therefrom (Isa. 44:15). The idea suggested by such expressions as these is no doubt that of plurality (here a plurality of manifestations of wrath and of sins), but one which vanishes into the neuter idea of totality. Now we do justice both to the clause without a verb, which, being a logical copula, admits simply of a present *sumus*; and also to *’olām*, which is the accusative of duration, when we explain the sentence as meaning, “In this state we are and have been for a long time.” *’Olām* is used in other instances in these prophecies to denote the long continuance of the state of punishment (see Isa. 42:14; 57:11), since it appeared to the exiles as an eternity (a whole aeon), and what lay beyond it as but a little while (*mits’âr*, Isa. 63:18). The following word וְנִשְׁעַ needs no correction. There is no necessity to change it into וְנִתַּע, as Ewald proposes, after the LXX καὶ ἐπλανήθημεν (“and we fell into wandering”), or what would correspond still more closely to the LXX (cf., Isa. 46:8, פשעים,

LXX πεπλανήμενοι), but is less appropriate here, into וְנִפְשַׁע (“and we fell into apostasy”), the reading supported by Lowth and others. If it were necessary to alter the text at all, we might simply transpose the letters, and read וְנִשְׁעַ, “and cried for help.” But if we take it as a question, “And shall we experience salvation—find help?” there is nothing grammatically inadmissible in this (compare Isa. 28:28), and psychologically it is commended by the state of mind depicted in Isa. 40:27; 59:10–12. Moreover, what follows attaches itself quite naturally to this.

Isaiah 64:5 (6). The people who ask the question in v. 5 do not regard themselves as worthy of redemption, as their self-righteousness has been so thoroughly put to shame. V. 5 (6). “We all became like the unclean thing, and all our virtues like a garment soiled with blood; and we all faded away together like the leaves; and our iniquities, like the storm they carried us away.” The whole nation is like one whom the law pronounces unclean, like a leper, who has to cry “*tâmē’, tâmē’*” as he goes along, that men may get out of his way (Lev. 13:45). Doing right in all its manifold forms (*tsdâqôth*, like Isa. 33:15, used elsewhere of the manifestations of divine righteousness), which once made Israel well-pleasing to God (Isa. 1:21), has disappeared and become like a garment stained with menstuous discharge (cf., Ezek. 36:17); (LSS ὡς ῥάκος ἀποκαθημένης = *dâvâ*, Isa. 30:22; *niddâh*, Lam. 1:17; *tmē’âh*, Lev. 15:33). *’Iddîm* (used thus in the plural in the Talmud also) signifies the monthly period (*menstrua*). In the third figure, that of fading falling foliage, the form *vannâbhel* is not *kal* (= *vannibbōl* or *vannibbal*; Ewald, § 232, b), which would be an impossibility according to the laws of inflexion; still less is it *niphâl* = *vanninnâbhel* (which Kimchi suggests as an alternative); but certainly a *hiphil*. It is not, however, from *nâbhēl* = *vannabbel*, “with the reduplication dropped to express the idea of something gradual,” as Böttcher proposes (a new and arbitrary explanation in the place of one founded upon the simple laws of inflexion), but

either from *bâlal* (compare the remarks on *blil* in Isa. 30:24, which hardly signifies “ripe barley” however), after the form וַיִּגְלַל (from גָּלַל) וַיִּסְדֹּד (from סָכַד), or from *bûl*, after the form וַיִּקָּם, etc. In any case, therefore, it is a metaplastic formation, whether from *bâlal* or *bûl* = *nâbhêl*, like וַיִּשֶׁר (in 1 Chron. 20:3, after the form וַיִּסֶר, from שָׁרַר = שֹׁרַר, or after the form וַיִּרַע, from שָׁרַר = נָשַׁר (compare the rabbinical explanation of the name of the month *Bul* from the falling of the leaves, in Buxtorf, *Lex. talm.* col. 271). The *hiphil* הִבִּיל or הִבִּיל is to be compared to הִאֲדִים, to stream out red (= to be red); הִאֲרִיד, to make an extension (= to be long); הִשְׁרִישׁ, to strike root (= to root), etc., and signifies literally to produce a fading (= to fade away). In the fourth figure, עֲוֹנוֹנוּ (as it is also written in v. 6 according to correct codices) is a defective plural (as in Jer. 14:7, Ezek. 28:18, Dan. 9:13) for the more usual עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ (Isa. 59:12). עֹן is the usual term applied to sin regarded as guilt, which produces punishment of itself. The people were robbed by their sins of all vital strength and energy, like dry leaves, which the guilt and punishment springing from sin carried off as a very easy prey.

Isaiah 64:6 (7). Universal forgetfulness of God was the consequence of this self-instigated departure from God. V. 6 (7). “*And there was no one who called upon Thy name, who aroused himself to lay firm hold of Thee: for Thou hadst hidden Thy face from us, and didst melt us into the hand of our transgressions.*” There was no one (see Isa. 59:16) who had risen up in prayer and intercession out of this deep fall, or had shaken himself out of the sleep of security and lethargy of insensibility, to lay firm hold of Jehovah, i.e., not to let Him go till He blessed him and his people again. The curse of God pressed every one down; God had withdrawn His grace from them, and given them up to the consequences of their sins. The form וַתִּמְוַגְּנוּ is not softened from the *pilel* וַתִּמְוַגְּנוּ, but is a *kal*

like וַיִּכְוַנוּ in Job 31:15 (which see), מוּג being used in a transitive sense, as *kûn* is there (cf., *shûbh*, Isa. 52:8; *mûsh*, Zech. 3:9). The LXX, Targ., and Syr. render it *et tradidisti nos*; but we cannot conclude from this with any certainty that they read וַתִּמְוַגְּנוּ, which Knobel follows Ewald in correcting into the incorrect form וַתִּמְוַגְּנוּ. The prophet himself had the expression *miggên byad* (Gen. 14:20, cf., Job 8:4) in his mind, in the sense of *liquefecisti nos in manum*, equivalent to *liquefecisti et tradidisti* (παρέδωκας, Rom. 1:28), from which it is evident that בַּיַּד is not a mere δία (LXX), but the “hand” of the transgressions is their destructive and damning power.

Isaiah 64:7, 8 (8, 9). This was the case when the measure of Israel’s sins had become full. They were carried into exile, where they sank deeper and deeper. The great mass of the people proved themselves to be really *massa perdita*, and perished among the heathen. But there were some, though a vanishingly small number, who humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God, and, when redemption could not be far off, wrestled in such prayers as these, that the nation might share it in its entirety, and if possible not one be left behind. With וַעֲתָה the existing state of sin and punishment is placed among the things of the past, and the petition presented that the present moment of prayer may have all the significance of a turning-point in their history. Vv. 7, 8 (8, 9). “*And now, O Jehovah, Thou art our Father: we are the clay, and Thou our Maker; and we are all the work of Thy hand. Be not extremely angry, O Jehovah, and remember not the transgression for ever! Behold, consider, we beseech Thee, we are all Thy people.*” The state of things must change at last; for Israel is an image made by Jehovah; yea, more than this, Jehovah is the begetter of Israel, and loves Israel not merely as a sculptor, but as a father (compare Isa. 45:9, 10, and the unquestionable passage of Isaiah in Isa. 29:16). Let Him then not be angry עַד־מְאֹד, “to the utmost measure” (cf., Ps. 119:8), or if we paraphrase it according

to the radical meaning of מֵאֵד, “till the weight becomes intolerable.” Let Him not keep in mind the guilt for ever, to punish it; but, in consideration of the fact that Israel is the nation of His choice, let mercy take the place of justice. הִנֵּה strengthens the petition in its own way (see Gen. 30:34), just as אֵד does; and הִבִּיט signifies here, as elsewhere, to fix the eye upon anything. The object, in this instance, is the existing fact expressed in “we are all Thy people.” Hitzig is correct in regarding the repetition of “all of us” in this prayer as significant. The object throughout is to entreat that the whole nation may participate in the inheritance of the coming salvation, in order that the exodus from Babylonia may resemble the exodus from Egypt.

Isaiah 64:9–11. The re-erection of the ruins of the promised land requires the zeal of every one, and this state of ruin must not continue. It calls out the love and faithfulness of Jehovah. Vv. 9–11. *“The cities of Thy holiness have become a pasture-ground; Zion has become a pasture-ground, Jerusalem a desert. The house of our holiness and of our adorning, where our fathers praised Thee, is given up to the fire, and everything that was our delight given up to devastation. Wilt Thou restrain Thyself in spite of this, O Jehovah, be silent, and leave us to suffer the utmost?”* Jerusalem by itself could not possibly be called “cities” (*‘ârē*), say with reference to the upper and lower cities (Vitringa). It is merely mentioned by name as the most prominent of the many cities which were all “holy cities,” inasmuch as the whole of Canaan was the land of Jehovah (Isa. 14:25), and His holy territory (Ps. 78:54). The word *midbâr* (pasture-land, heath, different from *tsiyyâh*, the pastureless desert, Isa. 35:1) is repeated, for the purpose of showing that the same fate had fallen upon Zion-Jerusalem as upon the rest of the cities of the land. The climax of the terrible calamity was the fact, that the temple had also fallen a prey to the burning of the fire (compare for the fact, Jer. 52:13). The people call it “house of our holiness and of our glory.” Jehovah’s *qōdesh* and *tiph’ereth* have, as

it were, transplanted heaven to earth in the temple (compare Isa. 63:15 with Isa. 60:7); and this earthly dwelling-place of God is Israel’s possession, and therefore Israel’s *qōdesh* and *tiph’ereth*. The relative clause describes what sublime historical reminiscences are attached to the temple: אֲשֶׁר is equivalent to אֲשֶׁר שָׁם, as in Gen. 39:20, Num. 20:13 (compare Ps. 84:4), Deut. 8:15, etc. הַלְלֵהָ has *chateph-pathach*, into which, as a rule, the vocal *sheva* under the first of two similar letters is changed.

Machāmaddēnū (our delights) may possibly include favourite places, ornamental buildings, and pleasure grounds; but the parallel leads us rather to think primarily of things associated with the worship of God, in which the people found a holy delight. כֵּל, contrary to the usual custom, is here followed by the singular of the predicate, as in Prov. 16:2, Ezek. 31:15 (cf., Gen. 9:29). Will Jehovah still put restraint upon Himself, and cause His merciful love to keep silence, עַל-זֵאת, with such a state of things as this, or notwithstanding this state of things (Job 10:7)? On הִתְאַפֵּק, see Isa. 63:15; 42:14. The suffering would indeed increase עַד-מְאֹד (to the utmost), if it caused the destruction of Israel, or should not be followed at last by Israel’s restoration. Jehovah’s compassion cannot any longer thus forcibly restrain itself; it must break forth, like Joseph’s tears in the recognition scene (Gen. 45:1).

Isaiah 65

Second Closing Prophecy

Jehovah’s Answer to the Church’s Prayer

Isaiah 65:1, 2. After the people have poured out their heart before Jehovah, He announces what they may expect from Him. But instead of commencing with a promise, as we might anticipate after the foregoing prayer, He begins with reproach and threatening; for although the penitential portion of the community had included the whole nation in their prayer, it was destruction, and not deliverance, which

awaited one portion of the nation, and that portion was the greater one. The great mass were in that state of "sin unto death" which defies all intercession (1 John 5:16), because they had so scornfully and obstinately resisted the grace which had been so long and so incessantly offered to them. Vv. 1, 2. *"I was discernible to those who did not inquire, discoverable by those who did not seek me. I said, 'Here am I, here am I,' to a nation where my name was not called. I spread out my hands all the day to a refractory people, who walked in the way that was not good, after their own thoughts."* The LXX (A) render v. 1a, "I was found by those who did not seek me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for me" (B reverses the order); and in Rom. 10:20, 21, Paul refers v. 1 to the Gentiles, and v. 2 to Israel. The former, to whom He has hitherto been strange, enter into fellowship with Him; whilst the latter, to whom He has constantly offered Himself, thrust Him away, and lose His fellowship. Luther accordingly adopts this rendering: "I shall be sought by those who did not ask for me, I shall be found by those who did not seek me. And to the heathen who did not call upon my name, I say, Here am I, here am I." Zwingli, again, observes on v. 1, "This is an irresistible testimony to the adoption of the Gentiles." Calvin also follows the apostle's exposition, and observes, that "Paul argues boldly for the calling of the Gentiles on the ground of this passage, and says that Isaiah dared to proclaim and assert that the Gentiles had been called by God, because he announced a greater thing, and announced it more clearly than the reason of those times would bear." Of all the Jewish expositors, where is only one, viz., Gecatilia, who refers v. 1 to the Gentiles; and of all the Christian expositors of modern times, there is only one, viz., Hendewerk, who interprets it in this way, without having been influenced by the quotation made by Paul. Hofman, however, and Stier, feel obliged to follow the apostle's exposition, and endeavour to vindicate it. But we have no sympathy with any such untenable efforts to save the apostle's honour. In Rom. 9:25, 26, he also quotes Hos.

2:25 and 2:1 in support of the calling of the Gentiles; whereas he could not have failed to know, that it is the restoration of Israel to favour which is alluded to there. He merely appeals to Hos. 2 in support of the New Testament fact of the calling of the Gentiles, so far as it is in these words of the Old Testament prophet that the fact is most adequately expressed. And according to 1 Pet. 2:10, Peter received the same impression from Hosea's words.

But with the passage before us it is very different. The apostle shows, by the way in which he applies the Scripture, how he depended in this instance upon the Septuagint translation, which was in his own hands and those of his readers also, and by which the allusion to the Gentiles is naturally suggested, even if not actually demanded. And we may also assume that the apostle himself understood the Hebrew text, with which he, the pupil of Rabban Gamaliel, was of course well acquainted, in the same sense, viz., as relating to the calling of the Gentiles, without being therefore legally bound to adopt the same interpretation. The interchange of גִּי (cf., Isa. 55:5) and עַם; the attribute קָרָא בְּשֵׁמִי לֵא, which applies to heathen, and heathen only; the possibility of interpreting Isa. 65:1, 2, in harmony with the context both before and after, if v. 1 be taken as referring to the Gentiles, on the supposition that Jehovah is here contrasting His success with the Gentiles and His failure with Israel: all these certainly throw weight into the scale. Nevertheless they are not decisive, if we look at the Hebrew alone, apart altogether from the LXX. For *nidrashtī* does not mean "I have become manifest;" but, regarded as the so-called *niphal tolerativum* (according to Ezek. 14:3; 20:3, 31; 36:37), "I permitted myself to be explored or found out;" and consequently נִמְצָאתִי, according to Isa. 55:6, "I let myself be found." And so explained, v. 1 stands in a parallel relation to Isa. 55:6: Jehovah was searchable, was discoverable (cf., Zeph. 1:6) to those who asked no questions, and did not seek

Him (אֱלֹהִים = אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם, Ges. § 123, 3), i.e., He displayed to Israel the fulness of His nature and the possibility of His fellowship, although they did not bestir themselves or trouble themselves in the least about Him,—a view which is confirmed by the fact that v. 1*b* merely refers to offers made to them, and not to results of any kind. Israel, however, is called גּוֹי לֹא-קָרָא בְשֵׁם יְהוָה, not as a nation that was not called by Jehovah's name (which would be expressed by נִקְרָא, Isa. 43:7; cf., מְקָרָא, κλητός μου, Isa. 48:12), but as a nation where (supply 'āsher) Jehovah's name was not invoked (LXX “who called not upon my name”), and therefore as a thoroughly heathenish nation; for which reason we have *gōi* (LXX ἔθνος) here, and not 'am (LXX λαός). Israel was estranged from Him, just like the heathen; but He still turned towards them with infinite patience, and (as is added in v. 2) with ever open arms of love. He spread out His hands (as a man does to draw another towards him to embrace him) all the day (i.e., continually, cf., Isa. 28:24) towards an obstinate people, who walked in the way that was not good (cf., Ps. 36:5, Prov. 16:29; here with the article, which could not be repeated with the adjective, because of the אֱלֹהִים), behind their own thoughts. That which led them, and which they followed, was not the will of God, but selfish views and purposes, according to their won hearts' lusts; and yet Jehovah did not let them alone, but they were the constant thought and object of His love, which was ever seeking, alluring, and longing for their salvation.

Isaiah 65:3–5. But through this obstinate and unyielding rejection of His love they have excited wrath, which, though long and patiently suppressed, now bursts forth with irresistible violence. Vv. 3–5. *“The people that continually provoketh me by defying me to my face, sacrificing in the gardens, and burning incense upon the tiles; who sit in the graves, and spend the night in closed places; to eat the flesh of swine, and broken pieces of abominations is in their dishes; who say, Stop! come not too near me; for I am holy to thee: they are a smoke in my*

nose, a fire blazing continually.” אֱלֹהִים (these) in v. 5*b* is retrospective, summing up the subject as described in vv. 3–5*a*, and what follows in v. 5*b* contains the predicate. The heathenish practices of the exiles are here depicted, and in v. 7 they are expressly distinguished from those of their fathers. Hence there is something so peculiar in the description, that we look in vain for parallels among those connected with the idolatry of the Israelites before the time of the captivity. There is only one point of resemblance, viz., the allusion to gardens as places of worship, which only occurs in the book of Isaiah, and in which our passage, together with Isa. 57:5 and 66:17, strikingly coincides with Isa. 1:29. “Upon my face” (*al-pānāi*) is equivalent to “freely and openly, without being ashamed of me, or fearing me;” cf., Job 1:11; 6:28; 21:31. “Burning incense upon the bricks” carries us to Babylonia, the true home of the *cocti lateres* (*laterculi*). The *thorah* only mentions *lbhēnīm* in connection with Babylonian and Egyptian buildings. The only altars that it allows are altars of earth thrown up, or of unhewn stones and wooden beams with a brazen covering. “They who sit in the graves,” according to Vitringa, are they who sacrifice to the dead. He refers to the Greek and Roman *inferiae* and *februationes*, or expiations for the dead, as probably originating in the East. Sacrifices for the dead were offered, in fact, not only in India and Persia, but also in Hither Asia among the Ssabians, and therefore probably in ancient Mesopotamia and Babylonia. But were they offered in the graves themselves, as we must assume from בְּקִבְרֵיהֶם (not על-קבריהם)?

Nothing at all is known of this, and Böttcher (*de inferis*, § 234) is correct in rendering it “among (*inter*) the graves,” and supposing the object to be to hold intercourse there with the dead and with demons. The next point, viz., passing the night in closed places (i.e., places not accessible to every one: *ntsūrīm, custodita = clausa*, like *n'īmīm, amaena*), may refer to the mysteries celebrated in natural caves and artificial crypts (on the mysteries of the Ssabians, see Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier u. der Ssabismus*, ii.

332ff.). But the LXX and Syriac render it ἐν τοῖς σπηλαίοις κοιμῶνται δι' ἐνόπνια, evidently understanding it to refer to the so-called *incubare*, ἐγκοιμᾶσθαι; and so Jerome explains it. "In the temples of idols," he says, "where they were accustomed to lie upon the skins of the victims stretched upon the ground, to gather future events from their dreams." The expression *ubhanntsūrīm* points not so much to open temples, as to inaccessible caves or subterraneous places. G. Rawlinson (*Monarchies*, ii. 269) mentions the discovery of "clay idols in holes below the pavement of palaces." From the next charge, "who eat there the flesh of the swine," we may infer that the Babylonians offered swine in sacrifice, if not as a common thing, yet like the Egyptians and other heathen, and ate their flesh ("the flesh taken from the sacrifice," 2 Macc. 6:21); whereas among the later Ssabians (Harranians) the swine was not regarded as either edible or fit for sacrifice.

On the synecdochical character of the sentence פְּרָק פְּגָלִים כְּלִיָּהִם, see at Isa. 5:12a, cf., Jer. 24:2. Knobel's explanation, "pieces" (but it is not וּפְרָקִי) "of abominations are their vessels, i.e., those of their ἱεροσκοπία," is a needless innovation. פְּגוּל signifies a stench, putrefaction (Ezek. 4:14, *bsar piggūl*), then in a concrete sense anything corrupt or inedible, a thing to be abhorred according to the laws of food or the law generally (syn. פְּסוּל, פְּסוּל); and when connected with פְּרָק (*chethib*), which bears the same relation to מֶרֶק as crumbs or pieces (from פְּרָק, to crumble) to broth (from מֶרֶק, to rub off or scald off), it means a decoction, or broth made either of such kinds of flesh or such parts of the body as were forbidden by the law. The context also points to such heathen sacrifices and sacrificial meals as were altogether at variance with the Mosaic law. For the five following words proceed from the mouths of persons who fancy that they have derived a high degree of sanctity either from the mysteries, or from their participation in rites of

peculiar sacredness, so that to every one who abstains from such rites, or does not enter so deeply into them as they do themselves, they call out their "*odi profanum vulgus et arceo*." קָרַב אֶלְיָי, keep near to thyself, i.e., stay where you are, like the Arabic *idhab ileika*, go away to thyself, for take thyself off. אֶל-תִּגְשְׁבֵי (according to some MSS with *mercha tifchah*), do not push against me (equivalent to גָּשְׁתָּהּ אֵלַי or גָּשְׁתָּהּ לִי, get away, make room; Gen. 19:9, Isa. 49:20), for *qdashtikhâ*, I am holy to thee, i.e., unapproachable. The verbal suffix is used for the dative, as in Isa. 44:21 (Ges. § 121, 4), for it never occurred to any of the Jewish expositors (all of whom give *sanctus prae te* as a gloss) that the *Kal qâdash* was used in a transitive sense, like *châzaq* in Jer. 20:7, as Luther, Calvin, and even Hitzig suppose. Nor is the exclamation the well-meant warning against the communication of a burdensome *qdusshâh*, which had to be removed by washing before a man could proceed to the duties of every-day life (such, for example, as the *qdusshâh* of the man who had touched the flesh of a sin-offering, or been sprinkled with the blood of a sin-offering; Lev. 6:20, cf., Ezek. 44:19; 46:20). It is rather a proud demand to respect the *sacro-sanctus*, and not to draw down the chastisement of the gods by the want of reverential awe. After this elaborate picture, the men who are so degenerate receive their fitting predicate. They are fuel for the wrath of God, which manifests itself, as it were, in smoking breath. This does not now need for the first time to seize upon them; but they are already in the midst of the fire of wrath, and are burning there in inextinguishable flame.

Isaiah 65:6, 7. The justice of God will not rest till it has procured for itself the fullest satisfaction. Vv. 6, 7. "Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence without having recompensed, and I will recompense into their bosom. Your offences, and the offences of your fathers together, saith Jehovah, that they have burned incense upon the mountains, and insulted me upon the hills, and I measure their reward

ISAIAH	Page 501
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

first of all into their bosom.” Vitranga has been misled by such passages as Isa. 10:1, Job 13:26, Jer. 22:30, in which *kâthabh* (*kittēbh*) is used to signify a written decree, and understands by *khthūbhâh* the sentence pronounced by God; but the reference really is to their idolatrous conduct and contemptuous defiance of the laws of God. This is ever before Him, written in indelible characters, waiting for the day of vengeance; for, according to the figurative language of Scripture, there are heavenly books, in which the good and evil works of men are entered. And this agrees with what follows: “I will not be silent, without having first repaid,” etc. The accentuation very properly places the tone upon the penultimate of the first *shillamtī* as being a pure perfect, and upon the last syllable of the second as a *perf. consec.* כִּי אֶם preceded by a future and followed by a perfect signifies, “but if (without having) first,” etc. (Isa. 55:10; Gen. 32:27; Lev. 22:6; Ruth 3:18; cf., Judg. 15:7). The original train of thought was, “I will not keep silence, for I shall first of all keep silence when,” etc. Instead of *’al chēqâm*, “Upon their bosom,” we might have *’el chēqâm*, into their bosom, as in Jer. 32:18, Ps. 79:12. In v. 7 the *keri* really has *’el* instead of *’al*, whilst in v. 9 the *chethib* is *’al* without any *keri* (for the figure itself, compare Luke 6:38, “into your bosom”). The thing to be repaid follows in v. 7a; it is not governed, however, by *shillamtī*, as the form of the address clearly shows, but by *’āshallēm* understood, which may easily be supplied. Whether *’āsher* is to be taken in the sense of *qui* or *quod* (that), it is hardly possible to decide; but the construction of the sentence favours the latter. Sacrificing “upon mountains and hills” (and, what is omitted, here, “under every green tree”) is the well-known standing phrase used to describe the idolatry of the times preceding the captivity (cf., Isa. 57:7; Hos. 4:13; Ezek. 6:13). וְיָדָתִי points back to *vshillamtī* in v. 6b, after the object has been more precisely defined. Most of the modern expositors take כִּי אֶם רִאשֹׁנָה together, in the sense of “their former wages,” i.e., the recompense previously deserved by their fathers. But in this case the

concluding clause would only affirm, by the side of v. 7a, that the sins of the fathers would be visited upon them. Moreover, this explanation has not only the accents against it, but also the parallel in Jer. 16:18 (see Hitzig), which evidently stands in a reciprocal relation to the passage before us. Consequently *ri’shônâh* must be an adverb, and the meaning evidently is, that the first thing which Jehovah had to do by virtue of His holiness was to punish the sins of the apostate Israelites; and He would so punish them that inasmuch as the sins of the children were merely the continuation of the fathers’ sins, the punishment would be measured out according to the desert of both together.

Isaiah 65:8, 9. As the word *ri’shônâh* (first of all) has clearly intimated that the work of the future will not all consist in the execution of penal justice, there is no abruptness in the transition from threatening to promises. Vv. 8, 9. “Thus saith Jehovah, As when the must is found in the cluster, men say, Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing within it, so will I do for the sake of my servants, that I may not destroy the whole. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and an heir of my mountains out of Judah, and my chosen ones shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.” Of the two co-ordinate clauses of the protasis (v. 8a), the first contains the necessary condition of the second. *Hattîrōsh* (must, or the juice of the grapes, from *yârash*, possibly primarily nothing more than receipt, or the produce of labour) and *bâ’eshkōl* have both of them the article generally found in comparisons (Ges. § 109, Anm. 1); וְאָמַר signifies, as in Isa. 45:24, “men say,” with the most general and indefinite subject. As men to not destroy a juicy cluster of grapes, because they would thereby destroy the blessing of God which it contains; so will Jehovah for His servants’ sake not utterly destroy Israel, but preserve those who are the clusters in the vineyard (Isa. 3:14; 5:1–7) or upon the vine (Ps. 80:9ff.) of Israel. He will not destroy *hakkōl*, the whole without exception; that is to say, keeping to the figure, not “the juice with the skin and stalk,” as Knobel and Hahn explain it, but “the

particular clusters in which juice is contained, along with the degenerate neglected vineyard or vine, which bears for the most part only sour grapes (Isa. 5:4) or tendrils without fruit (cf., Isa. 18:5). The servants of Jehovah, who resemble these clusters, remain preserved. Jehovah brings out, causes to go forth, calls to the light of day (אִשְׁרָאֵל as in Isa. 54:16; here, however, it is by means of sifting: Ezek. 20:34ff.), out of Jacob and Judah, i.e., the people of the two captivities (see Isa. 56:3), a seed, a family, that takes possession of His mountains, i.e., His holy mountain-land (Isa. 14:25, cf., Ps. 121:1, and *har qodshî*, which is used in the same sense in Isa. 11:9; 65:25). As “my mountain” is equivalent in sense to the “land of Israel,” for which Ezekiel is fond of saying “the mountains of Israel” (e.g., Ezek. 6:2, 3), the promise proceeds still further to say, “and my chosen ones will take possession thereof” (viz., of the land, Isa. 60:21, cf., 8:21).

Isaiah 65:10. From west to east, i.e., in its whole extent, the land then presents the aspect of prosperous peace. V. 10. “*And the plain of Sharon becomes a meadow for flocks, and the valley of Achor a resting-place for oxen, for my people that asketh for me.*” *Hasshârôn* (Sharon) is the plain of rich pasture-land which stretches along the coast of the Mediterranean from Yafo to the neighbourhood of Carmel. *’Emeq ’Akhôr* is a valley which became renowned through the stoning of Achan, in a range of hills running through the plain of Jericho (see Keil on Josh. 7:24ff.). From the one to the other will the wealth in flocks extend, and in the one as well as in the other will that peace prevail which is now enjoyed by the people of Jehovah, who inquired for Him in the time of suffering, and therefore bear this name in truth. The idyllic picture of peace is thoroughly characteristic of Isaiah: see, for example, Isa. 32:20; and for *rēbhets* with *nāveh*, compare Isa. 35:7.

Isaiah 65:11, 12. The prophecy now turns again to those already indicated and threatened in vv. 1–7. Vv. 11, 12. “*And ye, who are enemies to Jehovah, O ye that are unmindful of my holy mountain, who prepare a table for Gad, and fill*

up mixed drink for the goddess of destiny,—I have destined you to the sword, and ye will all bow down to the slaughter, because I have called and ye have not replied, I have spoken and ye have not heard; and ye did evil in mine eyes, and ye chose that which I did not like.” It may be taken for granted as a thing generally admitted, that v. 11*b* refers to two deities, and to the *lectisternia* (meals of the gods, cf., Jer. 7:18; 51:44) held in their honour. שְׁלֶחֶן עֵרֶךְ is the other side of the *lectum sternere*, i.e., the spreading of the cushions upon which the images of the gods were placed during such meals of the gods as these. In the passage before us, at any rate, the *lectus* answering to the *shulchân* (like the *sella* used in the case of the goddesses) is to be taken as a couch for eating, not for sleeping on. In the second clause, therefore, וְהִמְמַלְאִים לְמִנֵּי מְמַסָּךְ (which is falsely accentuated in our editions with *tifchah mercha silluk*, instead of *mercha tifchah silluk*), מְמַלֵּא מְמַסָּךְ signifies to fill with mixed drink, i.e., with wine mixed with spices, probably oil of spikenard. מְמַלֵּא may be connected not only with the accusative of the vessel filled, but also with that of the thing with which it is filled (e.g., Ex. 28:17). Both names have the article, like הַבְּעֵל. הַגָּד is perfectly clear; if used as an appellative, it would mean “good fortune.” The word has this meaning in all the three leading Semitic dialects, and it also occurs in this sense in Gen. 30:11, where the *chethib* is to be read גָּדָה (LXX ἐν τύχη). The Aramaean definitive is גָּדָה (not אָגָדָה), as the Arabic *’gadd* evidently shows. The primary word is דָּגַד (Arab. *’gadda*), to cut off, to apportion; so that Arab. *jaddun*, like the synonymous *haddun*, signifies that which is appointed, more especially the good fortune appointed. There can be no doubt, therefore, that *Gad*, the god of good fortune, more especially if the name of the place *Baal-Gad* is to be explained in the same way as *Baal-hammân*, is Baal (Bel) as the god of good fortune. Gecatilia (Mose ha-Cohen) observes, that this is

ISAI AH	Page 503
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

the deified planet Jupiter. This star is called by the Arabs "the greater luck" as being the star of good fortune; and in all probability it is also the *rabb-el-bacht* (lord of good fortune) worshipped by the Ssabians (Chwolsohn, ii. 30, 32). It is true that it is only from the passage before us that we learn that it was worshipped by the Babylonians; for although H. Rawlinson once thought that he had found the names *Gad* and *Menni* in certain Babylonian inscriptions (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, xii. p. 478), the Babylonian Pantheon in G. Rawlinson's *Monarchies* contains neither of these names. With this want of corroborative testimony, the fact is worthy of notice, that a Rabbi named 'Ulla, who sprang from Babylon, explains the דרגש of the *Mishna* by ערסא דגא (a sofa dedicated to the god of prosperity, and often left unused) (*b. Nedarim* 56a; cf., *Sanhedrin* 20a).

But if *Gad* is Jupiter, nothing is more probable than that *Meni* is Venus; for the planet Venus is also regarded as a star of prosperity, and is called by the Arabs "the lesser luck." The name *Meni* in itself, indeed, does not necessarily point to a female deity; for *mni* from *mânâh*, if taken as a passive participial noun (like בְּרִיָּה בְּרִיָּה, a creature), signifies "that which is apportioned;" or if taken as a modification of the primary form *many*, like גְּדִי, טְלִי, צְבִי, and many others, allotment, destination, fate. We have synonyms in the Arabic *mana-n* and *meniye*, and the Persian *bacht* (adopted into the Arabic), which signify the general fate, and from which *bago-bacht* is distinguished as signifying that which is exceptionally allotted by the gods. The existence of a deity of this name *mni* is also probably confirmed by the occurrence of the personal name עבדמני on certain Aramaeo-Persian coins of the Achaemenides, with which Fürst associates the personal name *Achiman* (see his *Lex.*), combining מן with Μήν, and מני with Μήνη, as Movers (*Phönizier*, i. 650) and Knobel have also done. מן and מני would then be Semitic forms of these Indo-Germanic names of deities; for Μήν is *Deus Lunus*, the worship of

which in Carrae (*Charran*) is mentioned by Spartian in ch. vi. of the Life of Caracalla, whilst Strabo (xii. 3, 31, 32) speaks of it as being worshipped in Pontus, Phrygia, and other places; and Μήνη is *Dea Luna* (cf., Γενεΐτη Μάνη in Plut. *quaest. rom.* 52, *Genita Mana* in Plin. *h. n.* 29, 4, and *Dea Mena* in Augustine, *Civ.* 4, 11), which was worshipped, according to Diodorus (iii. 56) and Nonnus (*Dionys.* v. 70 ss.), in Phoenicia and Africa. The rendering of the LXX may be quoted in favour of the identity of the latter with מני (ἐτοιμάζοντες τῷ δαιμονίῳ (another reading δαίμονι) τράπεζαν καὶ πληροῦντες τῇ τύχῃ κέρασμα), especially if we compare with this what Macrobius says in *Saturn.* i. 19, viz., that "according to the Egyptians there are four of the gods which preside over the birth of men, Δαίμων Τύχη Ἐρωσὶς Ἀνάγκη. Of these *Daimōn* is the sun, the author of spirit, of warmth, and of light. *Tychē* is the moon, as the goddess through whom all bodies below the moon grow and disappear, and whose ever changing course accompanies the multiform changes of this mortal life." In perfect harmony with this is the following passage of Vettius Valens, the astrologer of Antioch, which has been brought to light by Selden in his *Syntagma de Diis Syris*: Κλήροι τῆς τύχης καὶ τοῦ δαίμονος σημαίνουσιν (viz., by the signs of nativity) ἥλιον τε καὶ σελήνην. Rosenmüller very properly traces back the Sept. rendering to this Egyptian view, according to which *Gad* is the sun-god, and *Mni* the lunar goddess as the power of fate. Now it is quite true that the passage before us refers to Babylonian deities, and not to Egyptian; at the same time there might be some relation between the two views, just as in other instances ancient Babylonia and Egypt coincide. But there are many objections that may be offered to the combination of מני (*Meni*) and Μήνη: (1) The Babylonian moon-deity was either called *Sîn*, as among the ancient Shemites generally, or else by other names connected with יָרַח (יָרַח) and *châmar*. (2) The moon is called *mâs* is Sanscrit, Zendic *mâo*, Neo-Pers. *mâh* (*mah*); but in the Arian languages we meet

with no such names as could be traced to a root *mân* as the expansion of *mâ* (to measure), like μήν μήνη), Goth. *mena*; for the ancient proper names which Movers cites, viz., Ἀριαμένης Ἄρταμένης, etc., are traceable rather to the Arian *manas* = μένος, *mens*, with which *Minerva* (*Menerva*, endowed with mind) is connected. (3) If *mni* were the Semitic form of the name for the moon, we should expect a closer reciprocal relation in the meanings of the words. We therefore subscribe to the view propounded by Gesenius, who adopts the pairing of Jupiter and Venus common among the Arabs, as the two heavenly bodies that preside over the fortunes of men; and understands by *Mni* Venus, and by *Gad* Jupiter. There is nothing at variance with this in the fact that *Ashtoreth* (*Ishtar*, with *Ashêrâh*) is the name of Venus (the morning star), as we have shown at Isa. 14:12. *Mni* is her special name as the bestower of good fortune and the distributor of fate generally; probably identical with *Manât*, one of the three leading deities of the prae-Islamitish Arabs. The address proceeds with *umânîthî* (and I have measured), which forms an apodosis and contains a play upon the name of *Meni*, v. 11 being as it were a protasis indicating the principal reason of their approaching fate. Because they sued for the favour of the two gods of fortune (the Arabs call them *es-sa'dâni*, "the two fortunes") and put Jehovah into the shade, Jehovah would assign them to the sword, and they would all have to bow down (עֲבֹרָה as in Isa. 10:4). Another reason is now assigned for this, the address thus completing the circle, viz., because when I called ye did not reply, when I spake ye did not hear (this is expressed in the same paratactic manner as in Isa. 5:4; 12:1; 50:2), and ye have done, etc.: an explanatory clause, consisting of four members, which is repeated almost word for word in Isa. 66:4 (cf., 56:4).

Isaiah 65:13–16. On the ground of the sin thus referred to again, the proclamation of punishment is renewed, and the different fates awaiting the servants of Jehovah and those by whom He is despised are here announced in

five distinct *theses* and *antitheses*. Vv. 13–16. "Therefore thus saith the Lord, Jehovah: Behold my servants will eat, but ye will hunger; behold my servants will drink, but ye will thirst; behold my servants will rejoice, but ye will be put to shame; behold my servants will exult for delight of heart, but ye will cry for anguish of heart, and ye will lament for brokenness of spirit. And ye will leave your name for a curse to my chosen ones, and the Lord, Jehovah, will slay thee; but His servants He will call by another name, to that whoever blesseth himself in the land will bless himself by the God of truthfulness, and whoever sweareth in the land will swear by the God of truthfulness, because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they have vanished from mine eyes." The name *Adonai* is connected with the name *Jehovah* for the purpose of affirming that the God of salvation and judgment has the power to carry His promises and threats into execution. Starving, confounded by the salvation they had rejected (תָּבֵשׁ as in Isa.

66:5), crying and wailing (תִּלְלִי, *fut. hiph.* as in Isa. 15:2, with a double preformative; Ges. § 70, 2 Anm.) for sorrow of heart and crushing of spirit (*shebher*, rendered very well by the LXX συντριβή, as in Isa. 61:1, συντριμμένους), the rebellious ones are left behind in the land of captivity, whilst the servants of Jehovah enjoy the richest blessings from God in the land of promise (Isa. 62:8, 9). The former, perishing in the land of captivity, leave their name to the latter as *shbhū'âh*, i.e., to serve as a formula by which to swear, or rather to execrate or curse (Num. 5:21), so that men will say, "Jehovah slay thee, as He slew them." This, at any rate, is the meaning of the threat; but the words וְהִמְתִּידָהּ וְגו' cannot contain the actual formula, not even if we drop the *Vav*, as Knobel proposes, and change לְבַחֲרֵי into לְבַחֲרֵי; for, in the first place, although in the doxologies a Hebrew was in the habit of saying "*brūkh shmō*" (bless his name) instead of *yhī shmō bâruk* (his name be blessed), he never went so far as the Arab with his *Allâhu tabâraka*, but said rather יִתְבַּרַךְ. Still less could he make use of the perfect

(indicative) in such sentences as “may he slay thee,” instead of the future (voluntative) נִמְתָּד, unless the perfect shared the optative force of the previous future by virtue of the *consecutio temporum*. And secondly, the indispensable בָּקָהּ or בְּאֵלֶּהָ would be wanting (see Jer. 29:22, cf., Gen. 48:20). We may therefore assume, that the prophet has before his mind the words of this imprecatory formula, though he does not really express them, and that he deduces from it the continuation of the threat. And this explains his passing from the plural to the singular. Their name will become an execration; but Jehovah will call His servants by another name (cf., Isa. 62:2), so that henceforth it will be the God of the faithfully fulfilled promise whose name men take into their mouth when they either desire a blessing or wish to give assurance of the truth (*hithbārēkh b*, to bless one’s self with any one, or with the name of any one; Ewald, § 133, Anm. 1). No other name of any god is now heard in the land, except this gloriously attested name; for the former troubles, which included the mixed condition of Israel in exile and the persecution of the worshippers of Jehovah by the despisers of Jehovah, are now forgotten, so that they no longer disturb the enjoyment of the present, and are even hidden from the eyes of God, so that all thought of ever renewing them is utterly remote from His mind. This is the connection between v. 16 and vv. 13–15. אֲשֶׁר does not mean *eo quod* here, as in Gen. 31:49 for example, but *ita ut*, as in Gen. 13:16. What follows is the result of the separation accomplished and the promise fulfilled. For the same reason God is called *Elohē ‘āmēn*, “the God of Amen,” i.e., the God who turns what He promises into Yea and Amen (2 Cor. 1:20). The epithet derived from the confirmatory Amen, which is thus applied to Jehovah, is similar to the expression in Rev. 3:14, where Jesus is called “the Amen, the faithful and true witness.” The explanatory *kī* (for) is emphatically repeated in וְכִי, as in Gen. 33:11 and 1 Sam. 19:4 (compare Job 38:20). The inhabitants of the land stand in a close and

undisturbed relation to the God who has proved Himself to be true to His promises; for all the former evils that followed from the sin have entirely passed away.

Isaiah 65:17–19. The fact that they have thus passed away is now still further explained; the prophet heaping up one *kī* (for) upon another, as in Isa. 9:3–5. Vv. 17–19. “For behold I create a new heaven and a new earth; and men will not remember the first, nor do they come to any one’s mind. No, be ye joyful and exult for ever at that which I create: for behold I turn Jerusalem into exulting, and her people into joy. And I shall exult over Jerusalem, and be joyous over my people, and the voice of weeping and screaming will be heard in her no more.” The promise here reaches its culminating point, which had already been seen from afar in Isa. 51:16. Jehovah creates a new heaven and a new earth, which bind so fast with their glory, and which so thoroughly satisfy all desires, that there is no thought of the former ones, and no one wishes them back again. Most of the commentators, from Jerome to Hahn, suppose the *ri’shōnōth* in v. 16 to refer to the former sorrowful times. Calvin says, “The statement of the prophet, that there will be no remembrance of former things, is supposed by some to refer to the heaven and the earth, as if he meant, that henceforth neither the fame nor even the name of either would any more be heard; but I prefer to refer them to the former times.” But the correctness of the former explanation is shown by the parallel in Jer. 3:16, which stands in by no means an accidental relation to this passage, and where it is stated that in the future there will be no ark of the covenant, “neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it,” inasmuch as all Jerusalem will be the throne of Jehovah, and not merely the capporeth with its symbolical cherubim. This promise is also a glorious one; but Jeremiah and all the other prophets fall short of the eagle-flight of Isaiah, of whom the same may be said as of John, “*volat avis sine meta*.” Luther (like Zwingli and Stier) adopts the correct rendering, “that men shall no more remember the former ones (i.e., the old heaven and old earth), nor take it to heart.” But

’âlâh ‘*al-lēbh* signifies to come into the mind, not “to take to heart,” and is applied to a thing, the thought of which “ascends” within us, and with which we are inwardly occupied. There is no necessity to take the futures in v. 17*b* as commands (Hitzig); for כִּי אֶם־שִׁשׁוּ (כִּי with *muach*, as in Ven. 1521, after the Masora to Num. 35:33) fits on quite naturally, even if we take them as simple predictions. Instead of such a possible, though not actual, calling back and wishing back, those who survive the new times are called upon rather to rejoice for ever in that which Jehovah is actually creating, and will have created then. אֲשֶׁר, if not regarded as the accusative-object, is certainly regarded as the object of causality, “in consideration of that which” (cf., Isa. 31:6, Gen. 3:17, Judg. 8:15), equivalent to, “on account of that which” (see at Isa. 64:4; 35:1). The imperatives *sīsū* *vgilū* are not words of admonition so much as words of command, and *kī* gives the reason in this sense: Jehovah makes Jerusalem *gîlâh* and her people *mâsôs* (accusative of the predicate, or according to the terminology adopted in Becker’s syntax, the “factitive object,” Ges. § 139, 2), by making joy its perpetual state, its appointed condition of life both inwardly and outwardly. Nor is it joy on the part of the church only, but on the part of its God as well (see the primary passages in Deut. 30:9). When the church thus rejoices in God, and God in the church, so that the light of the two commingle, and each is reflected in the other; then will no sobbing of weeping ones, no sound of lamentation, be heard any more in Jerusalem (see the opposite side as expressed in Isa. 51:3*b*).

Isaiah 65:20. There will be a different measure then, and a much greater one, for measuring the period of life and grace. V. 20. “*And there shall no more come thence a suckling of a few days, and an old man who has not lived out all his days; for the youth in it will die as one a hundred years old, and the sinner be smitten with the curse as one a hundred years old.*” Our editions of the text commence v. 20 with לֹא־יִהְיֶה, but according to the Masora (see *Mas. finalis*, p. 23,

col. 7), which reckons five לֹא־יִהְיֶה at the commencement of verses, and includes our verse among them, it must read לֹא־יִהְיֶה, as it is also rendered by the LXX and Targum. The meaning and connection are not affected by this various reading. Henceforth there will not spring from Jerusalem (or, what *hâyâh* really means, “come into existence;” “*thence*,” *misshâm*, not “from that time,” but locally, as in Hos. 2:17 and elsewhere, cf., Isa. 58:12) a suckling (see p. 90) of days, i.e., one who has only reached the age of a few days (*yâmîm* as in Gen. 24:55, etc.), nor an old man who has not filled his days, i.e., has not attained to what is regarded as a rule as the full measure of human life. He who dies as a youth, or is regarded as having died young, will not die before the hundredth year of his life; and the sinner (אִתְּחַוֶּטֶא with *seghol*, as in Eccl. 8:12; 9:18; Ges. § 75, Anm. 21) upon whom the curse of God falls, and who is overwhelmed by the punishment, will not be swept away before the hundredth year of his life. We cannot maintain with Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, 567), that it is only in appearance that less is here affirmed than in Isa. 25:8. The reference there is to the ultimate destruction of the power of death; here it is merely to the limitation of its power.

Isaiah 65:21–23. In the place of the threatened curses of the law in Lev. 26:16 (cf., Deut. 28:30), the very opposite will now receive their fullest realization. Vv. 21–23. “*And they will build houses and inhabit them, and plant vineyards and enjoy the fruit thereof. They will not build and another inhabit, nor plant and another enjoy; for like the days of trees are the days of my people, ad my chosen ones will consume the work of their hands. They will not weary themselves in vain, nor bring forth for sudden disaster; for they are a family of the blessed of Jehovah, and their offspring are left to them.*” They themselves will enjoy what they have worked for, without some one else stepping in, whether a countryman by violence or inheritance, or a foreigner by plunder or conquest (Isa. 62:8), to take possession of that which they have built and

ISAIAH	Page 507
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

planted (read יָצַו without *dagesh*); for the duration of their life will be as great as that of trees (i.e., of oaks, terebinths, and cedars, which live for centuries), and thus they will be able thoroughly to enjoy in their own person what their hands have made. *Billâh* does not mean merely to use and enjoy, but to use up and consume. Work and generation will be blessed then, and there will be no more disappointed hopes. They will not weary themselves (יָעִיִּב with a preformative ׳ without that of the root) for failure, not get children *labbehâlâh*, i.e., for some calamity to fall suddenly upon them and carry them away (Lev. 26:16, cf., Ps. 78:33). The primary idea of *bâhal* is either acting, permitting, or bearing, with the characteristic of being let loose, of suddenness, of overthrow, or of throwing into confusion. The LXX renders it $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\nu$, probably according to the Egypto-Jewish usage, in which *behâlâh* may have signified cursing, like *bahle*, *buhle* in the Arabic (see the Appendices). The two clauses of the explanation which follows stand in a reciprocal relation to the two clauses of the previous promise. They are a family of the blessed of God, upon whose labour the blessing of God rests, and their offspring are with them, without being lost to them by premature death. This is the true meaning, as in Job 21:8, and not "their offspring with them," i.e., in like manner, as Hitzig supposes.

Isaiah 65:24. All prayer will be heard then. V. 24. "And it will come to pass: before they call, I will answer; they are still speaking, and I already hear." The will of the church of the new Jerusalem will be so perfectly the will of Jehovah also, that He will hear the slightest emotion of prayer in the heart, the half-uttered prayer, and will at once fulfil it (cf., Isa. 30:19).

Isaiah 65:25. And all around will peace and harmony prevail, even in the animal world itself. V. 25. "Wolf and lamb then feed together, and the lion eats chopped straw like the ox, and the serpent—dust is its bread. They will neither do harm nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah." We have frequently observed within Isa. 40–66 (last of all at Isa. 65:12, cf.,

66:4), how the prophet repeats entire passages from the earlier portion of his prophecies almost word for word. Here he repeats Isa. 11:6–9 with a compendious abridgment. V. 25*b* refers to the animals just as it does there. But whilst this custom of self-repetition favours the unity of authorship, וְיָדָהּ for וְיָדָהּ = *unâ*, which only occurs elsewhere in Ezra and Ecclesiastes (answering to the Chaldee בְּיָדָהּ), might be adduced as evidence of the opposite. The only thing that is new in the picture as here reproduced, is what is said of the serpent. This will no longer watch for human life, but will content itself with the food assigned it in Gen. 3:14. It still continues to wriggle in the dust, but without doing injury to man. The words affirm nothing more than this, although Stier's method of exposition gets more out, or rather puts more in. The assertion of those who regard the prophet speaking here as one later than Isaiah, viz., that v. 25 is only attached quite loosely to what precedes, is unjust and untrue. The description of the new age closes here, as in Isa. 11, with the peace of the world of nature, which stands throughout Isa. 40–66 in the closest reciprocal relation to man, just as it did in Isa. 1–39. If we follow Hahn, and change the animals into men by simply allegorizing, we just throw our exposition back to a standpoint that has been long passed by. But to what part of the history of salvation are we to look for a place for the fulfilment of such prophecies as these of the state of peace prevailing in nature around the church, except in the millennium? A prophet was certainly no fanatic, so that we could say, these are beautiful dreams. And if, what is certainly true, his prophecies are not intended to be interpreted according to the letter, but according to the spirit of the letter; the letter is the sheath of the spirit, as Luther calls it, and we must not give out as the spirit of the letter what is nothing more than a *quid-pro-quo* of the letter. The prophet here promises a new age, in which the patriarchal measure of human life will return, in which death will no more break off the life that is just beginning to bloom, and in which the war of man with the

animal world will be exchanged for peace without danger. And when is all this to occur? Certainly not in the blessed life beyond the grave, to which it would be both absurd and impossible to refer these promises, since they presuppose a continued mixture of sinners with the righteous, and merely a limitation of the power of death, not its utter destruction. But when then? This question ought to be answered by the anti-millenarians. They throw back the interpretation of prophecy to a stage, in which commentators were in the habit of lowering the concrete substance of the prophecies into mere doctrinal *loci communes*. They take refuge behind the enigmatical character of the Apocalypse, without acknowledging that what the Apocalypse predicts under the definite form of the millennium is the substance of all prophecy, and that no interpretation of prophecy on sound principles is any longer possible from the standpoint of an orthodox antichiliasm, inasmuch as the antichiliasmists twist the word in the mouths of the prophets, and through their perversion of Scripture shake the foundation of all doctrines, every one of which rests upon the simple interpretation of the words of revelation. But one objection may be made to the supposition, that the prophet is here depicting the state of things in the millennium; viz., that this description is preceded by an account of the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. The prophet appears, therefore, to refer to that Jerusalem, which is represented in the Apocalypse as coming down from heaven to earth after the transformation of the globe. But to this it may be replied, that the Old Testament prophet was not yet able to distinguish from one another the things which the author of the Apocalypse separates into distinct periods. From the Old Testament point of view generally, nothing was known of a state of blessedness beyond the grave. Hades lay beyond this present life; and nothing was known of a heaven in which men were blessed. Around the throne of God in heaven there were angels and not men. And, indeed, until the risen Saviour ascended to heaven, heaven itself was not open to men, and therefore there was no

heavenly Jerusalem whose descent to earth could be anticipated then. Consequently in the prophecies of the Old Testament the eschatological idea of the new Cosmos does unquestionably coincide with the millennium. It is only in the New Testament that the new creation intervenes as a party-wall between this life and the life beyond; whereas the Old Testament prophecy brings down the new creation itself into the present life, and knows nothing of any Jerusalem of the blessed life to come, as distinct from the new Jerusalem of the millennium. We shall meet with a still further illustration in Isa. 66 of this Old Testament custom of reducing the things of the life to come within the limits of this present world.

Isaiah 66

Third Closing Prophecy

Exclusion of Scorners from the Coming Salvation

Isaiah 66:1-4. Although the note on which this prophecy opens is a different one from any that has yet been struck, there are many points in which it coincides with the preceding prophecy. For not only is Isa. 65:12 repeated here in v. 4, but the sharp line of demarcation drawn in Isa. 65, between the servants of Jehovah and the worldly majority of the nation with reference to the approaching return to the Holy Land, is continued here. As the idea of their return is associated immediately with that of the erection of a new temple, there is nothing at all to surprise us, after what we have read in Isa. 65:8ff., in the fact that Jehovah expresses His abhorrence at the thought of having a temple built by the Israel of the captivity, as the majority then were, and does so in such words as those which follow in vv. 1-4: *“Thus saith Jehovah: The heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool. What kind of house is it that ye would build me, and what kind of place for my rest? My hand hath made all these things; then all these things arose, saith Jehovah; and at such persons do I look, at the miserable and broken-hearted, and him that trembleth at my word. He that slaughtereth the ox is the slayer of a man;*

he that sacrificeth the sheep is a strangler of dogs; he that offereth a meat-offering, it is swine's blood; he that causeth incense to rise up in smoke, blesseth idols. As they have chosen their ways, and their soul cheriseth pleasure in their abominations; so will I choose their ill-treatments, and bring their terrors upon them, because I called and no one replied, I spake and they did not hear, and they did evil in mine eyes, and chose that in which I took no pleasure."

Hitzig is of opinion that the author has broken off here, and proceeds quite unexpectedly to denounce the intention to build a temple for Jehovah. Those who wish to build he imagines to be those who have made up their minds to stay behind in Chaldea, and who, whilst their brethren who have returned to their native land are preparing to build a temple there, want to have one of their own, just as the Jews in Egypt built one for themselves in Leontopolis (see pp. 235-238). Without some such supposition as this, Hitzig thinks it altogether impossible to discover the thread which connects the different verses together. This view is at any rate better than that of Umbreit, who imagines that the prophet places us here "on the loftiest spiritual height of the Christian development." "In the new Jerusalem," he says, "there will be no temple seen, nor any sacrifice; Jehovah forbids these in the strongest terms, regarding them as equivalent to mortal sins." But the prophet, if this were his meaning, would involve himself in self-contradiction, inasmuch as, according to Isa. 56 and 60, there will be a temple in the new Jerusalem with perpetual sacrifice, which this prophecy also presupposes in vv. 20ff. (cf., v. 6); and secondly, he would contradict other prophets, such as Ezekiel and Zechariah, and the spirit of the Old Testament generally, in which the statement, that whoever slaughters a sacrificial animal in the new Jerusalem will be as bad as a murderer, has no parallel, and is in fact absolutely impossible. According to Hitzig's view, on the other hand, v. 3a affirms, that the worship which they would be bound to perform in their projected temple would be an abomination to Jehovah, however thoroughly it might be made

to conform to the Mosaic ritual. But there is nothing in the text to sustain the idea, that there is any intention here to condemn the building of a temple to Jehovah in Chaldaea, nor is such an explanation by any means necessary to make the text clear. The condemnation on the part of Jehovah has reference to the temple, which the returning exiles intend to build in Jerusalem. The prophecy is addressed to the entire body now ready to return, and says to the whole without exception, that Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, does not stand in need of any house erected by human hands, and then proceeds to separate the penitent from those that are at enmity against God, rejects in the most scornful manner all offerings in the form of worship on the part of the latter, and threatens them with divine retribution, having dropped in vv. 3b-4 the form of address to the entire body. Just as in the Psalm of Asaph (Ps. 50) Jehovah refuses animal and other material offerings as such, because the whole of the animal world, the earth and the fulness thereof, are His possession, so here He addresses this question to the entire body of the exiles: What kind of house is there that ye could build, that would be worthy of me, and what kind of place that would be worthy of being assigned to me as a resting-place? On *mâqôm mnûchâthî, locus qui sit requies mea* (apposition instead of genitive connection), see p. 322. He needs no temple; for heaven is His throne, and the earth His footstool. He is the Being who filleth all, the Creator, and therefore the possessor, of the universe; and if men think to do Him a service by building Him a temple, and forget His infinite majesty in their concern for their own contemptible fabric, He wants no temple at all. "All these" refer, as if pointing with the finger, to the world of visible objects that surround us. וַיִּהְיֶה (from הָיָה, *existere, fieri*) is used in the same sense as the וַיִּהְיֶה which followed the creative יָהִי. In this His exaltation He is not concerned about a temple; but His gracious look is fixed upon the man who is as follows (*zeh* pointing forwards as in Isa. 58:6), viz., upon the mourner, the man

of broken heart, who is filled with reverential awe at the word of His revelation.

We may see from Ps. 51:9 what the link of connection is between vv. 2 and 3. So far as the mass of the exiles were concerned, who had not been humbled by their sufferings, and whom the preaching of the prophet could not bring to reflection, He did not want any temple or sacrifice from them. The sacrificial acts, to which such detestable predicates are here applied, are such as end with the merely external act, whilst the inward feelings of the person presenting the sacrifice are altogether opposed to the idea of both the animal sacrifice and the meat-offering, more especially to that desire for salvation which was symbolized in all the sacrifices; in other words, they are sacrificial acts regarded as νεκρὰ ἔργα, the lifeless works of men spiritually dead. The articles of *hasshōr* and *hasseh* are used as generic with reference to sacrificial animals. The slaughter of an ox was like the slaying (*makkēh* construct with *tzere*) of a man (for the association of ideas, see Gen. 49:6); the sacrifice (*zōbhēäch* like *shāchat* is sometimes applied to slaughtering for the purpose of eating; here, however, it refers to an animal prepared for Jehovah) of a sheep like the strangling of a dog, that unclean animal (for the association of ideas, see Job 30:1); the offerer up (*m'ōlēh*) of a meat-offering (like one who offered up) swine's blood, i.e., as if he was offering up the blood of this most unclean animal upon the altar; he who offered incense as an *'azkârâh* (see at Isa. 1:13a) like one who blessed *'âven*, i.e., godlessness, used here as in 1 Sam. 15:23, and also in Hosea in the change of the name of Bethel into *Beth 'Aven*, for idolatry, or rather in a concrete sense for the worthless idols themselves, all of which, according to Isa. 41:29, are nothing but *'âven*. Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Hitzig, Stier, and even Jerome, have all correctly rendered it in this way, "as if he blessed an idol" (*quasi qui benedicat idolo*); and Vitringa, "*cultum exhibens vano numini*" (offering worship to a vain god). Such explanations as that of Luther, on the other hand, viz., "as if he praised that which was wrong," are opposed to

the antithesis, and also to the presumption of a concrete object to מברך (blessing); whilst that of Knobel, "praising vainly" (*'âven* being taken as an *acc. adv.*), yields too tame an antithesis, and is at variance with the usage of the language. In this condemnation of the ritual acts of worship, the closing prophecy of the book of Isaiah coincides with the first (Isa. 1:11–15). But that it is not sacrifices in themselves that are rejected, but the sacrifices of those whose hearts are divided between Jehovah and idols, and who refuse to offer to Him the sacrifice that is dearest to Him (Ps. 51:19, cf., 50:23), is evident from the correlative double-sentence that follows in vv. 3b and 4, which is divided into two masoretic verses, as the only means of securing symmetry. *Gam ... gam*, which means in other cases, "both ... and also," or in negative sentences "neither ... nor," means here, as in Jer. 51:12, "as assuredly the one as the other," in other words, "as ... so." They have chosen their own ways, which are far away from those of Jehovah, and their soul has taken pleasure, not in the worship of Jehovah, but in all kinds of heathen abominations (*shiqqûtsēhem*, as in many other places, after Deut. 29:16); therefore Jehovah wants no temple built by them or with their co-operation, nor any restoration of sacrificial worship at their hands. But according to the law of retribution, He chooses *tha'âlûlēhem*, *vexationes eorum* (LXX τὰ ἐμπαίγματα αὐτῶν: see at Isa. 3:4), with the suffix of the object: fates that will use them ill, and brings their terrors upon them, i.e., such a condition of life as will inspire them with terror (*mgûrôth*, as in Ps. 34:5).

Isaiah 66:5. From the heathenish majority, with their ungodly hearts, the prophet now turns to the minority, consisting of those who tremble with reverential awe when they hear the word of God. They are called to hear how Jehovah will accept them in defiance of their persecutors. V. 5. "Hear ye the word of Jehovah, ye that tremble at His word: your brethren that hate you, that thrust you from them for my name's sake, say, 'Let Jehovah get honour, that

we may see your joy: they will be put to shame." They that hate them are their own brethren, and (what makes the sin still greater) the name of Jehovah is the reason why they are hated by them. According to the accents, indeed (מְנַדִּיכֶם *rebia*, שְׂמִי *pashta*), the meaning would be, "your brethren say ... 'for my name's sake (i.e., for me = out of goodness and love to us) will Jehovah glorify Himself,'—then we shall see your joy, but—they will be put to shame." Rashi and other Jewish expositors interpret it in this or some similar way; but Rosenmüller, Stier, and Hahn are the only modern Christian expositors, who have done so, following the precedent of earlier commentators, who regarded the accents as binding. Luther, however, very properly disregarded them. If לְמַעַן שְׂמִי be taken in connection with יְכַבֵּד, it gives only a forced sense, which disturbs the relation of all the clauses; whereas this is preserved in all respects in the most natural and connected manner if we combine לְמַעַן חַמִּי with שְׂנֵאִיכֶם מְנַדִּיכֶם, as we must do, according to such parallels as Matt. 24:9. נִדָּה from נָד, to scare away or thrust away (Amos 6:3, with the object in the dative), corresponds to ἀφορίζειν in Luke 6:22 (compare John 16:22, "to put out of the synagogue"). The practice of excommunication, or putting under the ban (*niddūi*), reaches beyond the period of the Herodians (see *Eduyoth* v. 6), at any rate as far back as the times succeeding the captivity; but in the passage before us it is quite sufficient to understand *niddâh* in the sense of a defamatory renunciation of fellowship. To the accentuators this לְמַעַן שְׂמִי מְנַדִּיכֶם appeared quite unintelligible. They never considered that it had a confessional sense here, which certainly does not occur anywhere else: viz., "for my name's sake, which ye confess in word and deed." With unbelieving scorn they say to those who confess Jehovah, and believe in the word of the true redemption: Let Jehovah glorify Himself (lit. let Him be, i.e., show Himself, glorious = *yikkâbhēd*, cf., Job 14:21), that we may

thoroughly satisfy ourselves with looking at your joy. They regard their hope as deceptive, and the word of the prophet as fanaticism. These are they, who, when permission to return is suddenly given, will desire to accompany them, but will be disappointed, because they did not rejoice in faith before, and because, although they do now rejoice in that which is self-evident, they do this in a wrong way.

Isaiah 66:6. The city and temple, to which they desire to go, are nothing more, so far as they are concerned, than the places from which just judgment will issue. V. 6. "*Sound of tumult from the city! Sound from the Temple! Sound of Jehovah, who repays His enemies with punishment.*" All three קוֹל, to the second of which שְׂאוֹן must be supplied in thought, are in the form of interjectional exclamations (as in Isa. 52:8). In the third, however, we have omitted the note of admiration, because here the interjectional clause approximates very nearly to a substantive clause ("it is the sound of Jehovah"), as the person shouting announces here who is the originator and cause of the noise which was so enigmatical at first. The city and temple are indeed still lying in ruins as the prophet is speaking; but even in this state they both preserve the holiness conferred upon them. They are the places where Jehovah will take up His abode once more; and even now, at the point at which promise and fulfilment coincide, they are in the very process of rising again. A loud noise (like the tumult of war) proceeds from it. It is Jehovah, He who is enthroned in Zion and rules from thence (Isa. 31:9), who makes Himself heard in this loud noise (compare Joel 4:16 with the derivative passage in Amos 1:2); it is He who awards punishment or reckons retribution to His foes. In other cases גְּמוּלָה (הַשִּׁיב) generally means to repay that which has been worked out (what has been deserved; e.g., Ps. 137:8, compare Isa. 3:11); but in Isa. 59:18 *gmûl* was the parallel word to *chēmâh*, and therefore, as in Isa. 35:4, it did not apply to the works of men, but to the retribution of the judge, just as in Jer. 51:6, where it is used quite as absolutely. We have

therefore rendered it “punishment;” “merited punishment” would express both sides of this double-sided word. By “His enemies,” according to the context, we are to understand primarily the mass of the exiles, who were so estranged from God, and yet withal so full of demands and expectations.

Isaiah 66:7–9. All of these fall victims to the judgment; and yet Zion is not left either childless or without population. Vv. 7–9. “*Before she travailed she brought forth; before pains came upon her, she was delivered of a boy. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen anything like it? Are men delivered of a land in one day? or is a nation begotten at once? For Zion hath travailed, yea, hath brought forth her children. Should I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith Jehovah: or should I, who cause to bring forth, shut it? saith thy God.*” Before Zion travaileth, before any labour pains come upon her (*chēbbhel* with *tzere*), she has already given birth, or brought with ease into the world a male child (*himlīt* like *millēt*, in Isa. 34:15, to cause to glide out). This boy, of whom she is delivered with such marvellous rapidity, is a whole land full of men, an entire nation. The seer exclaims with amazement, like Zion herself in Isa. 49:21, “who hath heard such a thing, or seen anything like it? is a land brought to the birth (*hāyūchal* followed by *’erets* for *hāthūchal*, as in Gen. 13:6, Isa. 9:18; Ges. § 147), i.e., the population of a whole land (as in Judg. 18:30), and that in one day, or a nation born all at once (*yivvālēd*, with *munach* attached to the *kametz*, and *metheg* to the *tzere*)? This unheard-of event has taken place now, for Zion has travailed, yea, has also brought forth her children,”—not one child, but her children, a whole people that calls her mother. “For” (*kī*) presupposes the suppressed thought, that this unexampled event has now occurred: *yāldāh* follows *chālāh* with *gam*, because *chīl* signifies strictly *parturire*; *yālad*, *parere*. Zion, the mother, is no other than the woman of the sun in Rev. 12; but the child born of her there is the shepherd of the nations, who proceeds from her at the end of the days, whereas here it is the new Israel of the last days; for the church, which is saved

through all her tribulations, is both the mother of the Lord, by whom Babel is overthrown, and the mother of that Israel which inherits the promises, that the unbelieving mass have failed to obtain. V. 9 follows with an emphatic confirmation of the things promised. Jehovah inquires: “Should I create the delivery (cause the child to break through the matrix) and not the birth (both *hiphil*, causative), so that although the child makes an effort to pass the opening of the womb, it never comes to the light of day? Or should I be one to bring it to the birth, and then to have closed, viz., the womb, so that the word of bringing forth should remain ineffectual, when all that is required is the last effort to bring to the light the fruit of the womb?” From the expression “thy God,” we see that the questions are addressed to Zion, whose faith they are intended to strengthen. According to Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1, 149, 150), the future יאמר affirms what Jehovah will say, when the time for bringing forth arrives, and the perfect אמר what He is saying now: “Should I who create the bringing forth have shut up?” And He comforts the now barren daughter Zion (Isa. 54:1) with the assurance, that her barrenness is not meant to continue for ever. “The prediction,” says Hofmann, “which is contained in יאמר ה’, of the ultimate issue of the fate of Zion, is so far connected with the consolation administered for the time present, that she who is barren now is exhorted to anticipate the time when the former promise shall be fulfilled.” But this change in the standpoint is artificial, and contrary to the general use of the expression יאמר ה’ elsewhere (see at Isa. 40:1). Moreover, the meaning of the two clauses, which constitute here as elsewhere a disjunctive double question in form more than in sense, really runs into one. The first member affirms that Jehovah will complete the bringing to the birth; the second, that He will not ultimately frustrate what He has almost brought to completion: *an ego sum is qui parere faciat et (uterum) occluserim (occludam)*? There is no other difference between יאמר and אמר,

than that the former signifies the word of God which is sounding at the present moment, the latter the word that has been uttered and is resounding still. The prophetic announcement of our prophet has advanced so far, that the promised future is before the door. The church of the future is already like the fruit of the body ripe for the birth, and about to separate itself from the womb of Zion, which has been barren until now. The God by whom everything has been already so far prepared, will suddenly cause Zion to become a mother;—a boy, viz., a whole people after Jehovah's own heart, will suddenly lie in her lap, and this new-born Israel, not the corrupt mass, will build a temple for Jehovah.

Isaiah 66:10, 11. In the anticipation of such a future, those who inwardly participate in the present sufferings of Zion are to rejoice beforehand in the change of all their suffering into glory. Vv. 10, 11. *“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and exult over her, all ye that love her; be ye delightfully glad with her, all ye that mourn over her, that he may suck and be satisfied with the breast of her consolations, that ye may sip and delight yourselves in the abundance of her glory.”* Those who love Jerusalem (the abode of the church, and the church itself), who mourn over her (*hith'abbēl*, inwardly mourn, 1 Sam. 15:35, prove and show themselves to be mourners and go into mourning, *b. Moēd katan 20b*, the word generally used in prose, whereas אָבַל, to be thrown into mourning, to mourn, only occurs in the higher style; compare אָבַל צִיּוֹן, Isa. 57:18; 61:2, 3; 60:20), these are even now to rejoice in spirit with Jerusalem and exult on her account (*bâh*), and share her ecstatic delight with her (*'ittâh*), in order that when that in which they now rejoice in spirit shall be fulfilled, they may suck and be satisfied, etc. Jerusalem is regarded as a mother, and the rich actual consolation, which she receives (Isa. 51:3), as the milk that enters her breasts (*shōd* as in Isa. 60:16), and from which she now supplies her children with plentiful nourishment. יִי, which is parallel to דָּו (not יִי, a reading which none of the ancients adopted),

signifies a moving, shaking abundance, which oscillates to and fro like a great mass of water, from אָבַל, to move by fits and starts, for *pellere movere* is the radical meaning common in such combinations of letters as אָבַל, אָבַל, אָבַל, Ps. 42:5, to which Bernstein and Knobel have correctly traced the word; whereas the meaning *emicans fluxus* (Schröder), or *radians copia* (Kocher), to pour out in the form of rays, has nothing to sustain it in the usage of the language.

Isaiah 66:12. The reason is now given, why the church of the future promises such abundant enjoyment to those who have suffered with her. V. 12. *“For thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I guide peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like an overflowing stream, that ye may suck; ye shall be borne upon arms, and fondled upon knees.”* Jehovah guides or turns (Gen. 39:21) peace to Jerusalem, the greatest of all inward blessings, and at the same time the most glorious of all the outward blessings, that are in the possession of the Gentile world (*kâbhōd* as in Isa. 56:6), both of them in the richest superabundance (“like a river,” as in Isa. 48:18), so that (*perf. cons.*) “ye may be able to suck yourselves full according to your heart's desire” (Isa. 60:16). The figure of the new maternity of Zion, and of her children as *quasimodogeniti*, is still preserved. The members of the church can then revel in peace and wealth, like a child at its mother's breasts. The world is now altogether in the possession of the church, because the church is altogether God's. The allusion to the heathen leads on to the thought, which was already expressed in a similar manner in Isa. 49:22 and 60:4: “on the side (arm or shoulder) will ye be carried, and fondled (עָשְׂשָׁן, *pulpal* of the *pilpel* עָשְׂשָׁן, Isa. 11:8) upon the knees,” viz., by the heathen, who will vie with one another in the effort to show you tenderness and care (Isa. 49:23).

Isaiah 66:13. The prophet now looks upon the members of the church as having grown up, as it were, from childhood to maturity: they suck like a child, and are comforted like a grown-up son. V. 13. *“Like a man whom his mother*

comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Hitzig says that *'ish* is not well chosen; but how easily could the prophet have written *bēn* (son), as in Isa. 49:15! He writes *'ish*, however, not indeed in the unmeaning sense in which the LXX has taken it, viz., ὡς εἶ τινα μῆτηρ παρακαλέσει, but looking upon the people, whom he had previously thought of as children, as standing before him as one man. Israel is now like a man who has escaped from bondage and returned home from a foreign land, full of mournful recollections, the echoing sounds of which entirely disappear in the maternal arms of divine love there in Jerusalem, the beloved home, which was the home of its thoughts even in the strange land.

Isaiah 66:14. Wherever they look, joy now meets their eye. V. 14. *"And ye will see, and your heart will be joyful, and your bones will flourish like young herbage; and thus does the hand of Jehovah make itself known in His servants, and fiercely does He treat His enemies."* They will see, and their heart will rejoice, i.e., (cf., Isa. 53:11; 60:5) they will enjoy a heart-cheering prospect, and revive again with such smiling scenery all around. The body is like a tree The bones are its branches. These will move and extend themselves in the fulness of rejuvenated strength (compare Isa. 58:11, *et ossa tua expedita faciet*); and thus will the hand of Jehovah practically become known (*vnōd'âh, perf. cons.*) in His servants,—that hand under whose gracious touch all vernal life awakens, whether in body or in mind. And thus is it with the surviving remnant of Israel, whereas Jehovah is fiercely angry with His foes. The first אֵל is used in a prepositional sense, as in Ps. 67:2, viz., "in His servants, so that they come to be acquainted with it"; the second in an accusative sense, for *zâ'am* is either connected with עַל, or as in Zech. 1:12, Mal. 1:4, with the accusative of the object. It is quite contrary to the usage of the language to take both אֵל according to the phrase (רעה) מובה (את) עשה מובה (את) עשה.

Isaiah 66:15. The prophecy now takes a new turn with the thought expressed in the words,

"and fiercely does He treat His enemies." The judgment of wrath, which prepares the way for the redemption and ensures its continuance, is described more minutely in v. 15: *"For behold Jehovah, in the fire will He come, and His chariots are like the whirlwind, to pay out His wrath in burning heat, and His threatening passeth into flames of fire."* Jehovah comes *bâ'ēsh*, in *igne* (Jerome; the LXX, on the contrary, render it arbitrarily ὡς πῦρ, *kâ'ēsh*), since it is the fiery side of His glory, in which He appears, and fire pours from Him, which is primarily the intense excitement of the powers of destruction within God Himself (Isa. 10:17; 30:27; Ps. 18:9), and in these is transformed into cosmical powers of destruction (Isa. 29:6; 30:30; Ps. 18:13). He is compared to a warrior, driving along upon war-chariots resembling stormy wind, which force everything out of their way, and crush to pieces whatever comes under their wheels. The plural מַרְכָּבָתָיו (His chariots) is probably not merely amplifying, but a strict plural; for Jehovah, the One, can manifest Himself in love or wrath in different places at the same time. The very same substantive clause וּבְסוּפָה מַרְכָּבָתָיו occurs in Jer. 4:13, where it is not used of Jehovah, however, but of the Chaldeans. Observe also that Jeremiah there proceeds immediately with a derivative passage from Hab. 1:8. In the following clause denoting the object, לְהַשִּׁיב אָפוֹ, בְּהַקְהָה אָפוֹ, we must not adopt the rendering, "to breathe out His wrath in burning heat" (Hitzig), for *hēshībh* may mean *respirare*, but not *exspirare* (if this were the meaning, it would be better to read לְהַשִּׁיב from נָשַׁב, as Lowth does); nor "*ut iram suam furore sedet*" (Meier), for even in Job 9:13, Ps. 78:38, הַשִּׁיב אָפוֹ does not mean to still or cool His wrath, but to turn it away or take it back; not even "to direct His wrath in burning heat" (Ges., Kn.), for in this sense *hēshībh* would be connected with an object with ל, אֵל (Job 15:13), עַל (Isa. 1:25). It has rather the meaning *reddere* in the sense of *retribuere* (Arab. *athâba*, syn. *shillēm*), and "to pay back, or pay out, His wrath" is equivalent to

hēshībh nāqām (Deut. 32:41, 43), Hence בחמה בַּפּוֹ does not stand in a permutative relation instead of a genitive one (viz., *in fervore, irā suā = irae suae*), but is an adverbial definition, just as in Isa. 42:25. That the payment of the wrath deserved takes place in burning heat, and His rebuke (*g'ārâh*) in flames of fire, are thoughts that answer to one another.

Isaiah 66:16. Jehovah appears with these warlike terrors because He is coming for a great judgment. V. 16. *“For in the midst of fire Jehovah holds judgment, and in the midst of His sword with all flesh; and great will be the multitude of those pierced through by Jehovah.”* The fire, which is here introduced as the medium of judgment, points to destructive occurrences of nature, and the sword to destructive occurrences of history. At the same time all the emphasis is laid here, as in Isa. 34:5, 6 (cf., Isa. 27:1), upon the direct action of Jehovah Himself. The parallelism in v. 16a is progressive. *Nishpat 'ēth*, “to go into judgment with a person,” as in Ezek. 38:22 (cf., עַם in Isa. 3:14, Joel 4:2, 2 Chron. 22:8; μετά, Luke 11:31, 32). We find a resemblance to v. 16b in Zeph. 2:12, and this is not the only resemblance to our prophecy in that strongly reproductive prophet.

Isaiah 66:17. The judgment predicted here is a judgment upon nations, and falls not only upon the heathen, but upon the great mass of Israel, who have fallen away from their election of grace and become like the heathen. V. 17. *“They that consecrate themselves and purify themselves for the gardens behind one in the midst, who eat swine’s flesh and abomination and the field-mouse—they will come to an end together, saith Jehovah.”* The persons are first of all described; and then follows the judgment pronounced, as the predicate of the sentence. They subject themselves to the heathen rites of lustration, and that with truly bigoted thoroughness, as is clearly implied by the combination of the two synonyms *hammithqaddshīm* and *hammittahārīm* (*hithpael* with an assimilated *tav*), which, like the Arabic *qadusa* and *tahura*, are both

traceable to the radical idea ἀφορίζεω. The אָחַר of אָחַר-הַגְּנוֹת is to be understood as relating to the object or behoof: their intention being directed to the gardens as places of worship (Isa. 1:29; 65:3), *ad sacra in lucis obeunda*, as Shelling correctly explains. In the *chethib* אַחַר אֶחָד בְּתוֹךְ, the אָחַר (for which we may also read אַחַר, the form of connection, although the two *pathachs* of the text belong to the *keri*) is in all probability the hierophant, who leads the people in the performances of the rites of religious worship and as he is represented as standing in the midst (בְּתוֹךְ) of the worshipping crowd that surrounds him, *'achar* (behind, after) cannot be understood locally, as if they formed his train or tail, but temporally or in the way of imitation. He who stands in their midst performs the ceremonies before them, and they follow him, i.e., perform them *after* him. This explanation leaves nothing to be desired. The *keri*, *'achath*, is based upon the assumption that *'achad* must refer to the idol, and substitutes therefore the feminine, no doubt with an allusion to *'āshērâh*, so that *battâvekh* (in the midst) is to be taken as referring not to the midst of the worshipping congregation, but to the midst of the gardens. This would be quite as suitable; for even if it were not expressly stated, we should have to assume that the sacred tree of Astarte, or her statue, occupied the post of honour in the midst of the garden, and *'achar* would correspond to the phrase in the Pentateuch, זָנָה אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרִים. But the foregoing expression, *sanctificantes et mundantes se* (consecrating and purifying), does not favour this sense of the word *'achar* (why not ל = לְכַבֹּד?), nor do we see why the name of the goddess should be suppressed, or why she should be simply hinted at in the word אֶחָד (one). אָחַר (אַחַד) has its sufficient explanation in the antithesis between the one choir-leader and the many followers; but if we take *'achath* as referring to the goddess, we can find no intelligible reason or object.

Some again have taken both 'achad and 'achath to be the proper name of the idol. Ever since the time of Scaliger and Groitus, 'achad has been associated with the Phoenician Ἀδωδος βασιλεὺς θεῶν mentioned by Sanchuniathon in Euseb. *praep. ev.* 1, 10, 21, or with the Assyrian sun-god Adad, of whom Macrobius says (*Saturn.* 1, 23), *Ejus nominis interpretatio significat unus*; but we should expect the name of a Babylonian god here, and not of a Phoenician or Assyrian (Syrian) deity. Moreover, Macrobius' combination of the Syrian Hadad with 'achad was a mere fancy, arising from an imperfect knowledge of the language. Clericus' combination of 'achath with Hecate, who certainly appears to have been worshipped by the Harranians as a monster, though not under this name, and not in gardens (which would not have suited her character), is also untenable. Now as 'achath cannot be explained as a proper name, and the form of the statement does not favour the idea that 'achar 'achath or 'achar 'achad refers to an idol, we adopt the reading 'achad, and understand it to refer to the hierophant or mystagogue. Jerome follows the *keri*, and renders it *post unam intrinsecus*. The reading *post januam* is an ancient correction, which is not worth tracing to the Aramaean interpretation of 'achar 'achad, "behind a closed door," and merely rests upon some rectification of the unintelligible *post unam*. The Targum renders it, "one division after another," and omits *battâvekh*. The LXX, on the other hand, omits 'achar 'achad, reads *ūbhattâvekh*, and renders it καὶ ἐν τοῖς προθύροις (in the inner court). Symmachus and Theodoret follow the Targum and Syriac, and render it ὀπίσω ἀλλήλων, and then pointing the next word בְּתוֹךְ (which Schelling and Böttcher approve), render the rest ἐν μέσῳ ἐσθιόντων τὸ κρέας τὸ χοιρεῖον (in the midst of those who eat, etc.). But אֲכָלִי commences the further description of those who were indicated first of all by their zealous adoption of heathen customs. Whilst, on the one hand, they readily adopt the heathen ritual; they set themselves on the other hand, in the most daring way, altogether above the law of

Jehovah, by eating swine's flesh (Isa. 65:4) and reptiles (*sheqets*, abomination, used for disgusting animals, such as lizards, snails, etc., Lev. 7:21; 11:11), and more especially the mouse (Lev. 11:29), or according to Jerome and Zwingli the dormouse (*glis esculentus*), which the Talmud also mentions under the name עֲכָבְרָא דְבֵרָא (wild mouse) as a dainty bit with epicures, and which was fattened, as is well known, by the Romans in their *gliraria*. However inward and spiritual may be the interpretation given to the law in these prophecies, yet, as we see here, the whole of it, even the laws of food, were regarded as inviolable. So long as God Himself had not taken away the hedges set about His church, every wilful attempt to break through them was a sin, which brought down His wrath and indignation. **Isaiah 66:18.** The prophecy now marks out clearly the way which the history of Israel will take. It is the same as that set forth by Paul, the prophetic apostle, in Rom. 9–11 as the winding but memorable path by which the compassion of God will reach its all-embracing end. A universal judgment is the turning-point. V. 18. "And I, their works and their thoughts—it comes to pass that all nations and tongues are gathered together, that they come and see my glory." This verse commences in any case with a harsh ellipsis. Hofmann, who regards v. 17 as referring not to idolatrous Israelites, but to the idolatrous world outside Israel, tries to meet the difficulty by adopting this rendering: "And I, saith Jehovah, when their thoughts and actions succeed in bringing together all nations and tongues (to march against Jerusalem), they come and see my glory (i.e., the alarming manifestation of my power)." But what is the meaning of the opening וְאֲנִי (and I), which cannot possibly strengthen the distant כְּבוֹדִי, as we should be obliged to assume? Or what rule of syntax would warrant our taking מֵעֲשִׂיהֶם מֵרָחֹק as a participial clause in opposition to the accents? Again, it is impossible that וְאֲנִי should mean "et contra

me;” or מעשיהם ומחשבתיהם, “in spite of their works and thoughts,” as Hahn supposes, which leaves ואנכי quite unexplained; not to mention other impossibilities which Ewald, Knobel, and others have persuaded themselves to adopt. If we wanted to get rid of the ellipsis, the explanation adopted by Hitzig would recommend itself the most strongly, viz., “and as for me, their works and thoughts have come, i.e., have become manifest (ἤκασι, Susanna, v. 52), so that I shall gather together.” But this separation of בָּאָה לְקַבֵּץ (it is going to gather together) is improbable: moreover, according to the accents, the first clause reaches as far as ומחשבתיהם (with the twin-accent *zakeph-munach* instead of *zakeph* and *metheg*); whereupon the second clause commences with באה, which could not have any other disjunctive accent than *zakeph gadol* according to the well-defined rules (see, for example, Num. 13:27). But if we admit the elliptical character of the expression, we have not to supply יִדְעֵתִי (I know), as the Targ., Syr., Saad., Ges., and others do, but, what answers much better to the strength of the emotion which explains the ellipsis, אֶפְקֹד (I will punish). The ellipsis is similar in character to that of the “*Quos ego*” of Virgil (Aen. i. 139), and comes under the rhetorical figure *aposiopesis*: “and I, their works and thoughts (I shall now how to punish).” The thoughts are placed after the works, because the reference is more especially to their plans against Jerusalem, that work of theirs, which has still to be carried out, and which Jehovah turns into a judgment upon them. The passage might have been continued with *kī mishpātī* (for my judgment), like the derivative passage in Zeph. 3:8; but the emotional hurry of the address is still preserved: בָּאָה (properly accented as a participle) is equivalent to (בָּא) הָעֵת בָּאָה in Jer. 51:33, Ezek. 7:7, 12 (cf. הַבָּאִים, Isa. 27:6). At the same time there is no necessity to supply anything, since באה by itself may also be taken in a neuter sense, and signify

venturum (futurum) est (Ezek. 39:8). The expression “peoples and tongues” (as in the genealogy of the nations in Gen. 10) is not tautological, since, although the distinctions of tongues and nationalities coincided at first, yet in the course of history they diverged from one another in many ways. All nations and all communities of men speaking the same language does Jehovah bring together (including the apostates of Israel, cf., Zech. 14:14): these will come, viz., as Joel describes it in Joel 4:9ff., impelled by enmity towards Jerusalem, but not without the direction of Jehovah, who makes even what is evil subservient to His plans, and will see His glory,—not the glory manifest in grace (Ewald, Umbreit, Stier, Hahn), but His majestic manifestation of judgment, by which they, viz., those who have been encoiled by sinful conduct, are completely overthrown.

Isaiah 66:19, 20. But a remnant escapes; and this remnant is employed by Jehovah to promote the conversion of the Gentile world and the restoration of Israel. Vv. 19, 20. “*And I set a sign upon them, and send away those that have escaped from them to the Gentiles to Tarshish, Phûl, and Lûd, to the stretchers of the bow, Tûbal and Javan—the distant islands that have not heard my fame and have not seen my glory, and they will proclaim my glory among the Gentiles. And they will bring your brethren out of all heathen nations, a sacrifice for Jehovah, upon horses and upon chariots, and upon litters and upon mules and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain, to Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring the meat-offering in a clear vessel to the house of Jehovah.*” The majority of commentators understand *vsamtī bâhem ‘ōth* (and I set a sign upon them) as signifying, according to Ex. 10:2, that Jehovah will perform such a miraculous sign upon the assembled nations as He formerly performed upon Egypt (Hofmann), and one which will outweigh the ten Egyptian *‘ōthōth* and complete the destruction commenced by them. Hitzig supposes the *‘ōth* to refer directly to the horrible wonder connected with the battle, in which Jehovah fights against them with fire and

sword (compare the parallels so far as the substance is concerned in Joel 4:14–16, Zeph. 3:8, Ezek. 38:18ff., Zech. 14:12ff.). But since, according to the foregoing threat, the expression “they shall see my glory” signifies that they will be brought to experience the judicial revelation of the glory of Jehovah, if *vsamtī bâhem ‘ôth* (and I set a sign upon them) were to be understood in this judicial sense, it would be more appropriate for it to precede than to follow. Moreover, this *vsamtī bâhem ‘ôth* would be a very colourless description of what takes place in connection with the assembled army of nations. It is like a frame without a picture; and consequently Ewald and Umbreit are right in maintaining that what follows directly after is to be taken as the picture for this framework. The *‘ôth* (or sign) consists in the unexpected and, with this universal slaughter, the surprising fact, that a remnant is still spared, and survives this judicial revelation of glory. This marvellous rescue of individuals out of the mass is made subservient in the midst of judgment to the divine plan of salvation. Those who have escaped are to bring to the far distant heathen world the tidings of Jehovah, the God who has been manifested in judgment and grace, tidings founded upon their own experience. It is evident from this, that notwithstanding the expression “all nations and tongues,” the nations that crowd together against Jerusalem and are overthrown in the attempt, are not to be understood as embracing all nations without exception, since the prophet is able to mention the names of many nations which were beyond the circle of these great events, and had been hitherto quite unaffected by the positive historical revelation, which was concentrated in Israel. By *Tarshish* Knobel understands the nation of the Tyrsenes, Tuscans, or Etruscans; but there is far greater propriety in looking for Tarshish, as the opposite point to ‘Ophir, in the extreme west, where the name of the Spanish colony *Tartessus* resembles it in sound. In the middle ages *Tunis* was combined with this. Instead of פּוֹל וְלוֹד we should probably read with the LXX פּוֹט וְלוֹד, as in Ezek. 27:10;

30:5. Stier decides in favour of this, whilst Hitzig and Ewald regard פּוֹל as another form of פּוֹט. The epithet מְשַׁכֵּי קֶשֶׁת (drawers of the bow) is admirably adapted to the inhabitants of *Pūt*, since this people of the early Egyptian *Phet* (*Phaiat*) is represented ideographically upon the monuments by nine bows. According to Josephus, Ant. i. 6, 2, a river of Mauritania was called *Phout*, and the adjoining country *Phoute*; and this is confirmed by other testimonies. As *Lud* is by no means to be understood as referring to the Lydians of Asia Minor here, if only because they could not well be included among the nations of the farthest historico-geographical horizon in a book which traces prophetically the victorious career of Cyrus, but signifies rather the undoubtedly African tribe, the לוֹד which Ezekiel mentions in Ezek. 30:5 among the nations under Egyptian rule, and in Isa. 27:10 among the auxiliaries of the Tyrians, and which Jeremiah notices in Jer. 46:9 along with *Put* as armed with bows; *Put* and *Lud* form a fitting pair in this relation also, whereas *Pul* is never met with again. The Targum renders it by פּוֹלָאִי, i.e., (according to Bochart) inhabitants of Φυλαί, a Nile island of Upper Egypt, which Strabo (xvii. 1, 49) calls “a common abode of Ethiopians and Egyptians” (see Parthey’s work, *De Philis insula*); and this is at any rate better than Knobel’s supposition, that either Apulia (which was certainly called *Pul* by the Jews of the middle ages) or Lower Italy is intended here. *Tubal* stands for the Tibarenes on the south-east coast of the Black Sea, the neighbours of the Moschi (מֹשְׁכִי), with whom they are frequently associated by Ezekiel (Isa. 27:13; 38:2, 3; 39:1); according to Josephus (Ant. i. 6, 1), the (Caucasian) Iberians. *Javan* is a name given to the Greeks, from the aboriginal tribe of the Ἰάονες. The eye is now directed towards the west: the “isles afar off” are the islands standing out of the great western sea (the Mediterranean), and the coastlands that project into it. To all these nations, which have hitherto known nothing of the God of revelation, either through the hearing of the

word or through their own experience, Jehovah sends those who have escaped; and they make known His glory there, that glory the judicial manifestation of which they have just seen for themselves.

The prophet is speaking here of the ultimate *completion* of the conversion of the Gentiles; for elsewhere this appeared to him as the work of the Servant of Jehovah, for which Cyrus the oppressor of the nations prepared the soil. His standpoint here resembles that of the apostle in Rom. 11:25, who describes the conversion of the heathen world and the rescue of all Israel as facts belonging to the future; although at the time when he wrote this, the evangelization of the heathen foretold by our prophet in Isa. 42:1ff. was already progressing most rapidly. A direct judicial act of God Himself will ultimately determine the entrance of the *Pleroma* of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, and this entrance of the fulness of the Gentiles will then lead to the recovery of the *diaspora* of Israel, since the heathen, when won by the testimony borne to Jehovah by those who have been saved, "bring your brethren out of all nations." On the means employed to carry this into effect, including *kirkârôth*, a species of camels (female camels), which derives its name from its rapid swaying motion, see the Lexicons. The words are addressed, as in v. 5, to the exiles of Babylonia. The prophet presupposes that his countrymen are dispersed among all nations to the farthest extremity of the geographical horizon. In fact, the commerce of the Israelites, which had extended as far as India and Spain ever since the time of Solomon, the sale of Jewish prisoners as slaves to Phoenicians, Edomites, and Greeks in the time of king Joram (Obad. 20; Joel 4:6; Amos 1:6), the Assyrian captivities, the free emigrations,—for example, of those who stayed behind in the land after the destruction of Jerusalem and then went down to Egypt,—had already scattered the Israelites over the whole of the known world (see at Isa. 49:12). Umbreit is of opinion that the prophet calls all the nations who had turned to Jehovah "brethren of Israel," and represents them as marching in the most motley grouping to the

holy city. In that case those who were brought upon horses, chariots, etc., would be proselytes; but who would bring them? This explanation is opposed not only to numerous parallels in Isaiah, such as Isa. 60:4, but also to the abridgment of the passage in Zeph. 3:10: "From the other side of the rivers of Ethiopia (taken from Isa. 18) will they offer my worshippers, the daughters of my dispersed ones, to me for a holy offering." It is the *diaspora* of Israel to which the significant name "my worshippers, the daughters of my dispersed ones," is there applied. The figure hinted at in *minchâthî* (my holy offering) is given more elaborately here in the book of Isaiah, viz., "as the children of Israel are accustomed (*fut.* as in Isa. 6:2) to offer the meat-offering" (i.e., that which was to be placed upon the altar as such, viz., wheaten flour, incense, oil, the grains of the first-fruits of wheat, etc.) "in a pure vessel to the house of Jehovah," not in the house of Jehovah, for the point of comparison is not the presentation in the temple, but the bringing to the temple. The *minchah* is the *diaspora* of Israel, and the heathen who have become vessels of honour correspond to the clean vessels.

Isaiah 66:21. The latter, having been incorporated into the priestly congregation of Jehovah (Isa. 61:6), are not even excluded from the priestly and Levitical service of the sanctuary. V. 21. "And I will also add some of them to the priests, to the Levites, saith Jehovah." Hitzig and Knobel suppose *mêhem* to refer to the Israelites thus brought home. But in this case something would be promised, which needed no promise at all, since the right of the native *cohen* and Levites to take part in the priesthood and temple service was by no means neutralized by their sojourn in a foreign land. And even if the meaning were that Jehovah would take those who were brought home for priests and Levites, without regard to their Aaronic or priestly descent, or (as Jewish commentators explain it) without regard to the apostasy, of which through weakness they had made themselves guilty among the heathen; this ought to be expressly stated. But as there is nothing said about any such disregard of

priestly descent or apostasy, and what is here promised must be something extraordinary, and not self-evident, *mēhem* must refer to the converted heathen, by whom the Israelites had been brought home. Many Jewish commentators even are unable to throw off the impression thus made by the expression *mēhem* (of them); but they attempt to get rid of the apparent discrepancy between this statement and the Mosaic law, by understanding by the Gentiles those who had been originally Israelites of Levitical and Aaronic descent, and whom Jehovah would single out again. David Friedländer and David Ottensosser interpret it quite correctly thus: "*Mēhem*, i.e., of those heathen who bring them home, will He take for priests and Levites, for all will be saints of Jehovah; and therefore He has just compared them to a clean vessel, and the Israelites offered by their hand to a *minchâh*." The majority of commentators do not even ask the question, in what sense the prophet uses *lakkōhānīm lalvayyim* (to the priests, to the Levites) with the article. Joseph Kimchi, however, explains it thus: "לְצוּרֵךְ הַכֹּהֲנִים, to the service of the priests, the Levites, so that they (the converted heathen) take the place of the Gibeonites (cf., Zech. 14:21b), and therefore of the former Cananaean *nthīnīm*" (see Köhler, *Nach-exil. Proph.* iii. p. 39). But so interpreted, the substance of the promise falls behind the expectation aroused by *וְגַם מֵהֶם*. Hofmann has adopted a more correct explanation, viz.: "God rewards them for this offering, by taking priests to Himself out of the number of the offering priests, who are added as such to the Levitical priests." Apart, however, from the fact that *לְלוֹיִם לְכֹהֲנִים* cannot well signify "for Levitical priests" according to the Deuteronomic *הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְלוִיִם*, since this would require *לְכֹהֲנִים הַלְלוִיִם* (inasmuch as such permutative and more precisely defining expressions as Gen. 19:9, Josh. 8:24 cannot be brought into comparison); the idea "in addition to the priests, to the Levites," is really implied in the expression (cf., Isa. 56:8), as they would say *לְקַח לְאִשָּׁה* and not

לְקַח לְנָשִׁים, and would only use *לְקַח לְנָשִׁים* in the sense of adding to those already there. The article presupposes the existence of priests, Levites (asyndeton, as in Isa. 38:14; 41:29; 66:5), to whom Jehovah adds some taken from the heathen. When the heathen shall be converted, and Israel brought back, the temple service will demand a more numerous priesthood and Levitehood than ever before; and Jehovah will then increase the number of those already existing, not only from the *מִבְּאֵיִם*, but from the *מִבְּיָאִים* also. The very same spirit, which broke through all the restraints of the law in Isa. 56, is to be seen at work here as well. Those who suppose *mēhem* to refer to the Israelites are wrong in saying that there is no other way, in which the connection with v. 22 can be made intelligible. Friedländer had a certain feeling of what was right, when he took v. 21 to be a parenthesis and connected v. 22 with v. 20. There is no necessity for any parenthesis, however. The reason which follows, relates to the whole of the previous promise, including v. 21; the election of Israel, as Hofmann observes, being equally confirmed by the fact that the heathen exert themselves to bring back the *diaspora* of Israel to their sacred home, and also by the fact that the highest reward granted to them is, that some of them are permitted to take part in the priestly and Levitical service of the sanctuary.

Isaiah 66:22. "*For as the new heaven and the new earth, which I am about to make, continue before me, saith Jehovah, so will your family and your name continue.*" The great mass of the world of nations and of Israel also perish; but the seed and name of Israel, i.e., Israel as a people with the same ancestors and an independent name, continues for ever, like the new heaven and the new earth; and because the calling of Israel towards the world of nations is now fulfilled and everything has become new, the former fencing off of Israel from other nations comes to an end, and the qualification for priesthood and Levitical office in the temple of God is no longer merely natural descent, but inward nobility. The new heaven and the new

earth, God's approaching creation (*quae facturus sum*), continue eternally before Him (*lphânai* as in Isa. 49:16), for the old ones pass away because they do not please God; but these are pleasing to Him, and are eternally like His love, whose work and image they are. The prophet here thinks of the church of the future as being upon a new earth and under a new heaven. But he cannot conceive of the eternal in the form of eternity; all that he can do is to conceive of it as the endless continuance of the history of time.

Isaiah 66:23. "And it will come to pass: from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh will come, to worship before me, saith Jehovah." New moons and Sabbaths will still be celebrated therefore; and the difference is simply this, that just as all Israel once assembled in Jerusalem at the three great feasts, all flesh now journey to Jerusalem every new moon and every Sabbath. **דַּי** (construct **דַּי**) signifies that which suffices, then that which is plentiful (see Isa. 40:16), that which is due or fitting, so that **מְדַי הַדָּשׁ (שְׁבַת)** (with a temporal, not an explanatory *min*, as Gesenius supposes) signifies "from the time when, or as often as what is befitting to the new moon (or Sabbath) occurs" (cf., 28:19). If **בְּשַׁבַּת** be added, **בְּ** is that of exchange: as often as new moon (Sabbath) for new moon (Sabbath) is befitting, i.e., ought to occur: 1 Sam. 7:16; Zech. 14:16 (cf., 1 Sam. 1:7, 1 Kings 5:25, 1 Chron. 27:1: "year by year," "month by month"). When we find **בְּשַׁבַּתוֹ** as we do here, the meaning is, "as often as it has to occur on one new moon (or Sabbath) after the other," i.e., in the periodical succession of one after another. At the same time it might be interpreted in accordance with 1 Kings 8:59, **דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ**, which does not mean the obligation of one day after the other, but rather "of a day on the fitting day" (cf., Num. 28:10, 14), although the meaning of change and not of a series might be sustained in the passage before us by the suffixless mode of expression which occurs in connection with it.

Isaiah 66:24. They who go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem every new moon and Sabbath, see there with their own eyes the terrible punishment of the rebellious. V. 24. "And they go out and look at the corpses of the men that have rebelled against me, for their worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched, and they become an abomination to all flesh." They perfects are *perf. cons.* regulated by the foregoing **יֵצְאוּ יְבוֹא** (accented with *pashta* in our editions, but more correctly with *munach*) refers to their going out of the holy city. The prophet had predicted in v. 18, that in the last times the whole multitude of the enemies of Jerusalem would be crowded together against it, in the hope of getting possession of it. This accounts for the fact that the neighbourhood of Jerusalem becomes such a scene of divine judgment. **רָאָה בְּ** always denotes a fixed, lingering look directed to any object; here it is connected with the grateful feeling of satisfaction at the righteous acts of God and their own gracious deliverance. **דְּרָאוֹן**, which only occurs again in Dan. 12:2, is the strongest word for "abomination." It is very difficult to imagine the picture which floated before the prophet's mind. How is it possible that all flesh, i.e., all men of all nations, should find room in Jerusalem and the temple? Even if the city and temple should be enlarged, as Ezekiel and Zechariah predict, the thing itself still remains inconceivable. And again, how can corpses be eaten by worms at the same time as they are being burned, or how can they be the endless prey of worms and fire without disappearing altogether from the sight of man? It is perfectly obvious, that the thing itself, as here described, must appear monstrous and inconceivable, however we may suppose it to be realized. The prophet, by the very mode of description adopted by him, precludes the possibility of our conceiving of the thing here set forth as realized in any material form in this present state. He is speaking of the future state, but in figures drawn from the present world. The object of his prediction is no other than the new Jerusalem of the world to come, and the eternal torment

ISAIAH	Page 522
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

of the damned; but the way in which he pictures it, forces us to translate it out of the figures drawn from this life into the realities of the life to come; as has already been done in the apocryphal books of Judith (Judith 16:17) and Wisdom (Wis. 7:17), as well as in the New Testament, e.g., Mark 9:43ff., with evident reference to this passage. This is just the distinction between the Old Testament and the New, that the Old Testament brings down the life to come to the level of this life, whilst the New Testament lifts up this life to the level of the life to come; that the Old Testament depicts both this life and the life to come as an endless extension of this life, whilst the New Testament depicts it as a continuous line in two halves, the last point in this finite state being the first point of the infinite state beyond; that the Old Testament preserves the continuity of this life and the life to come by transferring the outer side, the form, the appearance of this life to the life to come, the New Testament by making the inner side, the nature, the reality of the life to come, the *δυνάμεις μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*, immanent in this life. The new Jerusalem of our prophet has indeed a new heaven above it and a new earth under it, but it is only the old Jerusalem of earth lifted up to its highest glory and happiness; whereas the new Jerusalem of the Apocalypse comes down from heaven, and is therefore of heavenly nature. In the former dwells the Israel that has been brought back from captivity; in the latter, the risen church of those who are written in the book of life. And whilst our prophet transfers the place in which the rebellious are judged to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem itself; in the Apocalypse, the lake of fire in which the life of the ungodly is consumed, and the abode of God with men, are for ever separated. The Hinnom-valley outside Jerusalem has become *Gehenna*, and this is no longer within the precincts of the new Jerusalem, because there is no need of any such example to the righteous who are for ever perfect.

In the lessons prepared for the synagogue v. 23 is repeated after v. 24, on account of the terrible character of the latter, "so as to close with

words of consolation." But the prophet, who has sealed the first two sections of these prophetic orations with the words, "there is no peace to the wicked," intentionally closes the third section with this terrible picture of their want of peace. The promises have gradually soared into the clear light of the eternal glory, to the new creation in eternity; and the threatenings have sunk down to the depth of eternal torment, which is the eternal foil of the eternal light. More than this we could not expect from our prophet. His threefold book is now concluded. It consists of twenty-seven orations. The central one of the whole, i.e., the fourteenth, is Isa. 52:13–53; so that the cross forms the centre of this prophetic trilogy. *Per crucem ad lucem* is its watchword. The self-sacrifice of the Servant of Jehovah lays the foundation for a new Israel, a new human race, a new heaven and a new earth.

Appendix

Page 43—In the commentary on the second half of Isa. 40–66, I have referred here and there to the expositions of J. Heinemann (Berlin 1842) and Isaiah Hochstädter (Carlsruhe 1827), both written in Hebrew,—the former well worthy of notice for criticism of the text, the latter provided with a German translation. For the psalm of Hezekiah (Isa. 38) Professor Sam. David Luzzatto of Padua lent me his exposition in manuscript. Since then this great and noble-minded man has departed this life (on the 29th Sept. 1865). His commentary on Isaiah, so far as it has been printed, is full of information and of new and stirring explanations, written in plain, lucid, rabbinical language. It would be a great misfortune for the second half of this valuable work to remain unprinted. I well remember the assistance which the deceased afforded me in my earlier studies of the history of the post-biblical Jewish poetry (1836), and the affection which he displayed when I renewed my former acquaintance with him on the occasion of his publishing his Isaiah; so that I lament his loss on my own account as well as in the interests of science. "Why have you allowed twenty-five

ISAI AH	Page 523
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

years to pass," he wrote to me on the 22nd Feb. 1863, "without telling me that you remembered me? Is it because we form different opinions of the עלמה and the ילד לננו of Isaiah? Are you a sincere Christian? Then you are a hundred times dearer to me than so many Israelitish scholars, the partizans of Spinoza, with whom our age swarms." These words indicate very clearly the standpoint taken in his writings. Of the commentaries written in English, I am acquainted not only with *Lowth*, but with the thoroughly practical commentary of *Henderson* (1857), and that of *Joseph Addison Alexander*, Prov. in Princeton (1847, etc.), which is very much read as an exegetical repertorium in England also. But I had neither of them in my possession.

Pages 46f.—What I have said here on Isa. 1:1 as the heading to the whole book, or at any rate to Isa. 1–39, has been said in part by Photios also in his *Amphilochia*, which Sophocles the M.D. has published complete from a MS of Mount Athos (Athens 1858, 4).

Page 132, on Ch. 6:13—Hofmann in his *Schriftbeweis* (ii. 2, 541) maintains with Knobel, that מצֶבֶת cannot be shown to have any other meaning than "plant." It is never met with in this sense, which it might have (after נָצַב = נָצַב), though it is in the sense of *statua* and *cippus*, which, when applied to a tree deprived of its crown, can only mean *stipes* or *truncus*.—We take this opportunity of referring to a few other passages of his work:—Ch. 8:22. "And the deep darkness is scared away: *mnuddâch* with the accusative of the object used with the passive." But this is only possible with the finite verb, not with the passive participle. Ch. 9:2. "By the fact that Thou hast made the people many, Thou hast not made the joy great; but now they rejoice before Thee (who hast appeared)." It is impossible that הרבית and הגדלת, when thus surrounded with perfects relating to the history of the future, should itself relate to the historical past.—Ch. 18. "It is Israel in its dispersion which is referred to here as a people carried away and spoiled, but which from that

time forward is an object of reverential awe,—a people that men have cut in pieces and trampled under foot, whose land streams have rent in pieces." But does not this explanation founder on נורא מן־הוא והלאה? In the midst of attributes which point to ill-treatment, can this passage be meant to describe the position which Israel is henceforth to hold as one commanding respect (see our exposition)?—Ch. 19:28. "Egypt the land of cities will be reduced to five cities by the judgment that falls upon it." But how can the words affirm that there will be only five cities in all, when there is nothing said about desolation in the judgment predicted before?—Ch. 21:1–10. "What the watchman on the watch-tower see is not the hostile army marching against Babel, but the march of the people of God returning home from Babel." Consequently *tsemed pârâshîm* does not mean pairs of horsemen, but carriages full of men and drawn by horses. But we can see what *tsemed pârâshîm* is from 2 Kings 9:25 (*rôkhhîm tsmâdîm*), and from the combination of *rekhebh* and *pârâshîm* (chariots and horsemen) in Isa. 22:7; 31:1. And the rendering "carriages" will never do for Isa. 21:7, 9. Carriages with camels harnessed to them would be something unparalleled; and *rekhebh gâmâl* (cf., 1 Sam. 30:17) by the side of *tsemed pârâshîm* has a warlike sound.

Page 180f., on Ch. 10:28–32—Professor Schegg travelled by this very route to Jerusalem (cf., p. 560, Anm. 2): From *Gifneh* he went direct to *Tayibeh* (which he imagined to be the ancient *Ai*), and then southwards through *Muchmas*, *Geba*, *Hizmeh*, *Anata*, and *el-Isawiye* to Jerusalem.

Page 342—*No* (*Nō* 'Amōn in Nahum 3:8) is the Egyptian *nu-Amun* = Διόσπολις (*nu* the spelling of the hieroglyphic of the plan of the city, with which the name of the goddess *Nu. t = Rhea* is also written). The ordinary spelling of the name of this city corresponds to the Greek Ἀμμωνόπολις.

Page 342, on Ch. 33:23—(Compare Grashof, *Ueber das Schiff bei Homer und Hesiod*, Gymnasial-programm 1834, p. 23ff.). The

μεσόδμη (= μεσοδόμη) is the cross plank which connects the two sides of the ship. A piece is cut out of this on the side towards the rudder, in which the mast is supported, being also let into a hole in the boards of the keel (ἰστοπέδη) and there held fast. The mast is also prevented from falling backwards by ropes or stays carried forward to the bows (πρότονοι). On landing, the mast is laid back into a hollow place in the bottom of the ship (ἰστοδόκη). If the stays are not drawn tight, the mast may easily fall backwards, and so slip not only out of the μεσόδμη but out of the ἰστοπέδη also. This is the meaning of the words בְּלִי־חֵיקוֹ בְּחֵיקוֹ בְּחֵיקוֹ. It would be better to understand *kēn* as referring to the ἰστοπέδη than to the μεσόδμη. The latter has no "hole," but only a notch, i.e., a semicircular piece cut out, and serves as a support to the mast; the former, on the contrary, has the mast inserted into it, and serves as a *kēn*, i.e., a *basis, theca, loculamentum*. Vitranga observes (though without knowing the difference between μεσόδμη and ἰστοπέδη): "*Oportet accedere funes, qui thecam firment, h. e. qui malum sustinentes thecae succurrant, qui quod theca sola per se praestare nequit absque funibus cum ea veluti concurrentes efficiant.*"

Page 348, on Ch. 34:16—This transition from words of Jehovah concerning Himself to words relating to Him, may also be removed by adopting the following rendering: "For my mouth, it has commanded it, and its (my mouth's) breath, it has brought it together" (*rūchō = rūäch pī*, Ps. 30:6, Job 15:30).

Page 367—I am wrong in describing it here as improbable that the land would have to be left uncultivated during the year 713–12 in consequence of the invasion that had taken place, even after the departure of the Assyrians. *Wetzstein* has referred me to his Appendix on the Monastery of Job (see *Comm. on Job*, Appendix), where he has shown that the fallow-land (*wāgiha*) of a community, which is sown in the autumn of 1865 and reaped in the summer of 1866, must have been broken up, i.e., ploughed for the first time, in the winter of 1864–65. "If this breaking up of the fallow (*el-*

Bûr) were obliged to be omitted in the winter of 1864–65, because of the enemy being in the land, whether from the necessity for hiding the oxen in some place of security, or from the fact that they had been taken from the peasants and consumed by the foe, it would be impossible to sow in the autumn of 1865 and reap a harvest in the summer of 1866. And if the enemy did not withdraw till the harvest of 1865, only the few who had had their ploughing oxen left by the war would find it possible to break up the fallow. *But neither the one nor the other could sow*, if the enemy's occupation of the land had prevented them from ploughing in the winter of 1864–65. If men were to sow in the newly broken fallow, they would reap no harvest, and the seed would only be lost. It is only in the volcanic and therefore fertile region of *Haurân* (Bashan) that the sowing of the newly broken fallow (*es-sikak*) yields a harvest, and there it is only when the winter brings a large amount of rain; so that even in *Haurân* nothing but necessity leads any one to sow upon the *sikak*. In western Palestine, even in the most fruitful portions of it (round Samaria and Nazareth), the farmer is obliged to plough three times before he can sow; and a really good farmer follows up the breaking up of the fallow (*sikak*) in the winter, the second ploughing (*thânia*) in the spring, and the third ploughing (*tethlith*) in the summer, with a fourth (*terbîa*) in the latter part of the summer. Consequently no sowing could take place in the autumn of 713, if the enemy had been in the land in the autumn of 714, in consequence of his having hindered the farmer from the *sikak* in the winter of 714–3, and from the *thânia* and *tethlith* in the spring and summer of 713. There is no necessity, therefore, to assume that a second invasion took place, which prevented the sowing in the autumn of 713."

Page 374, on 2 Kings 20:9—Even אֶל־נֶחֱם is syntactically admissible in the sense of *iveritne*; see Gen. 21:7, Ps. 11:3, Job 12:9.

Page 460—ἀμεινχιακά in *Plut.*, read *Porph.*, viz., in the letter of *Porphyrios* to the Egyptian *Anebo* in *Euseb. praep.* iii. 4, *init.*: τὰς τε εἰς τοὺς

ISAIAH	Page 525
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch	a Grace Notes study

δεκανοὺς τομὰς καὶ τοὺς ὄροσκόπους καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους κραταιοὺς ἡγεμόνας ὧν καὶ ὀνόματα ἐν τοῖς ἀλμενιακοῖς φέρεται; compare Jamblichos, *de Mysteriis*, viii. 4: τὰ τε ἐν τοῖς σαλμεσχινακοῖς μέρος τι βραχύτατον περιέχει τῶν Ἑρμαϊκῶν διατάξεων. This reading σαλμεσχινακοῖς has been adopted by Parthey after two codices and the text in Salmasius, *de annis clim.* 605. But ἀλμενιακοῖς is favoured by the form *Almanach* (Hebr. אַלמנאך, see Steinschneider, *Catal. Codd. Lugduno-Batav.* p. 370), in which the word was afterwards adopted as the name of an astrological handbook or year-book. In Arabic the word appears to me to be equivalent to *'l-mnâch*, the *encampment* (of the stars); but to all appearance it was originally an Egyptian word, and possibly the Coptic *monk* (old Egyptian *mench*), a form or thing formed, is hidden beneath it.

Page 547, on Ch. 57:10, שָׁנָה—*Fleischer* says: “Just as in Arabic *'ml* and *rj'* the meaning of hope springs out of the idea of stretching and drawing out, so do Arabic *ayisa* and *ya'isa* (*spem deposuit, desperavit*) signify literally to draw in, to compress; hence the old Arabic *ya'asun* = *sillun*, consumption, *phthisis*. And the other old Arabic word *waysun*, lit., squeezing,

res angustae = *fakr wa-faka*, want, need, and penury, or in a concrete sense the need, or thing needed, is also related to this.”

Page 619, on Ch. 65:11—Μήνη appears in μηναγύρτης = μητραγύρτης as the name of Cybele, the mother of the gods. In Egyptian, *Menhi* is a form of Isis in the city of *Hat-uer*. The Ithyphallic *Min*, the cognomen of Amon, which is often written in an abbreviated form with the spelling *men* (Copt. *MHIN*, *signum*), is further removed.

Page 623, on Ch. 65:23—לְבַהֵלֶּה. *Fleischer* says: “בַּהֵל and Arabic *bahala* are so far connected, that the stem לה, like בהל, signifies primarily to *let loose*, or *let go*. This passes over partly into outward overtaking or overturning, and partly into internal surprise and bewildering, and partly also (in Arabic) into setting free on the one hand, and outlawing on the other (compare the Azazel-goat of the day of atonement, which was sent away into the wilderness); hence it is used as an equivalent for Arabic *la'ana* (*execrare*).”