

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE PROPHETS.

X.

JEREMIAH XXV.

Chap. XXV. Jeremiah, in accordance with the view to which he was led by the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, b.c. 605 (see the introduction to ch. 46), that the Chaldeans were destined to become the rulers of Western Asia, declares here, first that Judah and the surrounding nations (*vv.* 1-14), and afterwards that the then known world generally (*vv.* 15-38) will be subject to them for seventy years.

How the People had refused to listen to the Warnings of the Prophets.

XXV. ¹ The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth⁷ year of Jehoiakim,* the son of Josiah, king of Judah (the same was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon); ² the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: ³ From the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day, now three and twenty years,† the word of Yahweh hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. ⁴ And Yahweh hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them,—though ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear,—⁵ saying, ‘Return, I pray you, every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that Yahweh hath given unto you and to your fathers, from of old and even for evermore: ‡ ⁶ and go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and vex me not with the work of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.’ ⁷ But ye hearkened not unto me, saith Yahweh, that ye might vex me with the work of your hands to your own hurt.§

* B.C. 604.

† I.e. from B.C. 626 to 604.

‡ Cf. 7. 7.

§ Cf. 7. 6 *end.*

Judah, therefore, not less than the neighbouring Countries, will be laid waste by the Chaldeans, and be subject to them for seventy Years.

⁸ Therefore thus saith Yahweh of hosts : Because ye have not heard my words, ⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith Yahweh, *and (I will send) unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant,* and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about ; and I will utterly destroy them,† and make them an appalment and an hissing, and perpetual wastes.‡ ¹⁰ And I will take § from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones,|| and the light of the lamp. ¹¹ And this whole land shall be a waste, and an appalment ; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

[¹² And ¶ it shall come to pass, when seventy years are

* This clause is omitted in LXX, perhaps rightly ; the ellipsis in the Heb. of ' I will send ' being unusual and awkward.

† Heb. *I will ban* (or *devote*) *them*. Cf. Deut. 2. 34, 3. 6, 7. 2, 20. 17, 1 Sam. 15. 3, 8, etc. The LXX have, *I will waste them* (one letter different [see the same variant in Isa. 11. 15, Heb. and LXX, cf. R.V.m.]); cf. Isa. 60. 12.

‡ The LXX have, *and a perpetual reproach* (חרבת for חרפת) : cf. 29. 18, § Heb. *I will cause to perish*.

|| Which is heard daily in an eastern village, and is a sign of the presence of life in it (cf. Rev. 18. 22). The hand-mill (which is what is here meant) consists of two circular stones, eighteen inches or two feet in diameter, the lower one being fixed on the ground, while the upper one is turned round by a woman—or often (cf. Matt. 24. 41) by two women—kneeling or sitting beside it. See Robinson, *B.R.*, i. 485 ; Thomson, *L. and B.*, Southern Pal. p. 107 (in the one vol. ed. p. 526 f.) ; or Whitehouse, *Primer of Hebrew Antiquities*, p. 70 f.

¶ *Vv.* 12-14, or, in any case, *vv.* 13-14, cannot have formed part of the original prophecy of Jeremiah delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, but must have been added when the book of Jeremiah was completed, and stood substantially in its present form. For (1) *v.* 15 f. (notice ' For ') give the reason, not for *vv.* 12-14 (the punishment, after seventy years, of Babylon), but for *v.* 11 (the subjugation of Judah and surrounding nations to Babylon) ; and (2) the terms of *v.* 13 presuppose the completion of Jeremiah's book, and in particular the inclusion in it of the prophecy

accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith Yahweh, for their iniquity,* and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it desolate for ever.†
¹³ And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. ¹⁴ For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them,‡ even of them: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their hands.]

Jeremiah (in a Vision) gives the Cup of Yahweh's Fury to the Nations to drink. §

¹⁵ For thus said Yahweh, the God of Israel, unto me: Take the cup of the wine (of) this fury from my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. ¹⁶ And they shall drink, and reel to and fro, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. ¹⁷ And I took the cup from Yahweh's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom Yahweh had sent me: ¹⁸ (to

against Babylon in 50. 1-51. 58, which, in all probability, is not by Jeremiah at all, and, even if it is, was certainly not incorporated in the book of his prophecies till long after b.c. 604 (the short prophecy against Babylon in 51. 59-64 is assigned by its title to the fourth year of Zedekiah, b.c. 593). V. 12 is based most probably upon 29. 10, and (at the end) upon 51. 26, 62: v. 13 refers expressly to the prophecies against the nations contained in chaps. 46-51, and esp. to chaps. 50-51; v. 14 is based upon 27. 7b, and 50. 29, 51. 24. Cf. Davidson, *D.B.*, ii. p. 574.

* Heb. *visit upon the king, etc., their iniquity.*

† Heb. *perpetual desolations* (the same expression as in 51. 26, 62).

‡ I.e. employ them as slaves or servants (so chap. 27. 7). Lit. *work or labour by* (means of) *them*: in Exod. 1. 14 paraphrased by 'make them serve'; in Lev. 25. 46 by 'take bondmen of them,' and in Jer. 22. 13 by 'use the services of . . .'

§ The intoxication which this cup is represented as producing is a figure for the bewilderment and helplessness produced upon a nation by an overwhelming calamity; in the present case (v. 16b) by the sword of the Chaldeans. Cf. the same figure in 48. 26; Isa. 51. 17, 21-23; Ps. 60, 3.

wit,) Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, (and) the princes thereof, to make them a waste, an appalment, an hissing, and a curse ; * ¹⁹ Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people ; ²⁰ and all the mixed people, † and all the kings of the land of Uz, ‡ and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod ; § ²¹ Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon ; ²² and all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the coastland which is beyond the sea ; || ²³ Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, ¶ and all them that have the corners (of their hair) clipped ; ** ²⁴ and all the kings of Arāb, †† and all the kings of the mixed people ††

* So LXX. The Heb. text adds, *as it is this day*, words which, describing, as they do, the agreement of the prediction with the fulfilment, could not have formed part of the prophecy of Jehoiakim's fourth year, but must have been added at some period after b.c. 586, during the exile.

† I.e., probably, the mixed foreign population, settled in Egypt for trade or other purposes. Cf. the same expression in Ezek. 30. 5, and (of foreigners settled in Babylon) in Jer. 50. 37; see also the note on chap. 46. 16.

‡ The name of an Aramæan tribe settled probably somewhere on the east or north-east of Edom: cf. Lam. 4. 21; Job 1. 1; and see also Gen. 10. 23, 22. 21, 36. 28.

§ I.e., probably, such as survived after the long siege—according to Herodotus (ii. 159), of twenty-nine years—which Ashdod had recently sustained at the hands of the Egyptian king, Psammetichus (b.c. 666-610).

|| I.e. Phœnician colonies on the coasts of the Mediterranean sea.

¶ Three tribes of north Arabia,—the name Tēma (Isa. 21. 14; Job 6. 19) being preserved in the modern *Teimā*, a place about 250 miles south-east of Edom; Dēdān (Gen. 10. 7; Ezek. 27. 20, 38. 13) being a tribe in the same neighbourhood (cf. Isa. 21. 13), and Buz being a tribe closely allied to 'Uz' (see Gen. 22. 21; cf. 'Elihu the *Buzite*,' Job 32. 2).

** See on 9. 26.

†† Another tribe (or group of tribes) somewhere in north Arabia: cf. Isa. 21. 13. The name, it is probable, means properly *steppe* (עֲרָבָה) *duellers*; in course of time it came to be limited to a particular tribe, or group of tribes, dwelling in the steppes of north Arabia; then, after Old Testament times, it was gradually extended so as to denote the whole of what we now know as 'Arabia.' But in the Old Testament the rend. 'Arabia' suggests far more than what is really meant. See further Nöldeke's art. 'Arabia' in the *Enc. Bibl.*

‡‡ Another local 'mixed population,' whose home was the wilderness,—

that dwell in the wilderness ; ²⁵ and all the kings of Zimri,* and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes ; ²⁶ and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms † that are upon the face of the earth : § and the king of Sheshach ‡ shall drink after them. § ²⁷ And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel : Drink ye and be drunken and spue, and fall and rise no more, because of the sword which I am sending among you. ²⁸ And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from thine hand to drink, that thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith Yahweh of hosts : Ye shall surely drink. ²⁹ For, lo, with the city over which my name hath been called || do I begin by doing evil, and should *ye* be utterly unpunished ? Ye shall not be unpunished : for a sword am I calling upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Yahweh of hosts.

A figurative and hyperbolic Description of what Yahweh will accomplish in the World by the Agency of the Chaldeans.

³⁰ And thou, prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them : Yahweh shall roar ¶ from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation ; he shall mightily roar against his homestead ; ** with a shout †† shall

unless, indeed, as many commentators suppose, the words 'and all the kings of the mixed people' are a faulty repetition of the preceding clause (in the unpointed Heb. text 'mixed people' is identical with 'Arāb').

* A tribe not mentioned elsewhere.

† So LXX. The Heb. text adds *of the earth*, both tautologically, and also so as to produce at the same time an ungrammatical construction.

‡ I.e. *Babel* (Babylon), written in the cypher called *Atbash*, the last letter of the Heb. alphabet (*T*) being put for the first (*A*), the last but one (*SH*) for the second (*B*), and so on. Cf. 51. 1, 41.

§ This clause is not expressed by the LXX.

¶ In token of ownership, cf. on 7. 10.

¶¶ Viz. like a lion, cf. Am. 1. 2.

** Fig. for Judah, cf. 10. 25, 23. 3.

†† Or, *a huzzah*. The word (Heb. *hēdād*) is specially used of the joyous shouts with which the vintagers trod the juice out of the grapes in the

he answer, as they that tread (the grapes), against all the inhabitants of the earth. ³¹ The din * (of battle) is come even to the end of the earth; for Yahweh hath a controversy|with the nations, he contendeth in judgement with all flesh; as for the wicked, he hath given them to the sword, saith Yahweh. ³² Thus saith Yahweh of hosts, Behold, evil goeth forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be stirred up from the uttermost corners of the earth.† ³³ And the slain of Yahweh shall be in that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be bewailed, neither gathered, nor buried, they shall be for dung upon the face of the ground.

Let Kings and Nobles wail over the Doom that is about to fall upon them.

³⁴ Howl, ye shepherds, ‡ and cry; and sprinkle you (with ashes), ye noble ones of the flock: for your days to be slaughtered are accomplished; and ye shall be dashed in pieces § and fall like a precious vessel.|| ³⁵ And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, ¶ and none shall escape of

winepress (see Isa. 16. 10; Jer. 48. 33). Here it is used of the war-shout (cf. Jer. 51. 14, where the Heb. word is the same) with which, by a bold anthropomorphism, Jeremiah pictures Yahweh as treading down the nations of the earth.

* Or, *crash*.

† Varied from 6. 22, with the one substitution of 'tempest' for 'nation.'

‡ Fig. of rulers, as 2. 8, 10. 21, etc. The 'noble ones of the flock' are here fig. of the principal and wealthiest men of the nations ruled by the 'shepherds.'

§ So Pesh. (cf. 13. 14). Or, *and I will dash you in pieces* might be read. The Heb. text has a peculiar form, which is very doubtfully rendered, *I will scatter you*.

|| The expression 'be dashed in pieces,' and the comparison to a broken vessel, are not in keeping with the figure of the sheep; and it is a question whether we should not read for the whole of this clause, with LXX, *and ye shall fall like choice lambs* (with omission of וּנְפֹצְתִים 'and ye shall be dashed in pieces,' as a faulty anticipation of וּנְפֹלְתִים 'and ye shall fall,' and with כְּכִרִי for כְּכִרִי).

¶ Heb. *refuge shall perish from the shepherds*,—an idiomatic expression found also in Am. 2. 14; Job 11. 20; Ps. 142. 4 (Heb. 5).

the noble of the flock. ³⁶ Hark! a cry of the shepherds, and the howling of the noble of the flock! for Yahweh is laying waste their pasture. ³⁷ And the peaceful meadows shall be brought to silence because of the fierce anger of Yahweh. ³⁸ He hath forsaken his covert, as a lion: for their land is become an appalment,* because of the oppressing sword,† and because of his fierce anger.

NOTES.

XXV. 15. (*of*) *this fury*. For the construction (apposition), see G.-K. § 131 c, k; and cf. Ps. 60. 5, 1 Kings 22. 27.

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* Or, *a desolation*. The meaning is, Judah being now a desolation, Yahweh is obliged to leave it, just as a lion has to leave its lair when it has been destroyed. The past tenses are, of course, 'prophetic' pasts.

† So LXX. Targ. (one letter changed). See 46. 16, 50. 16. The Heb. text is not translatable (notice the *italics* in R.V.).