

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE PROPHETS.

V.

JEREMIAH XI. 9-17.

The present Generation has returned to the sins of their Forefathers, and the Prophet therefore re-affirms against them the Sentence of Judgement.*

⁹ And Yahweh said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁰ They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they are gone after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. ¹¹ Therefore thus saith Yahweh, Behold, I bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and they shall cry unto me, but I will not hearken unto them. ¹² And the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble.† ¹³ For according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to the shameful thing,‡ (even) altars to burn incense unto Baal.§

* Viz. after the reformation (2 Kings 23), following the discovery of the 'Book of the Law' (i.e. the discourses of Deuteronomy) in Josiah's eighteenth year, B.C. 621 (2 Kings 22).

† Heb. *evil* (i.e. *misfortune*, as vv. 11, 17, 2. 27, 28, Am. 3. 6, and elsewhere).

‡ Heb. *shame*; cf. 3. 24.

§ LXX have only, *have ye set up altars to burn incense unto Baal.*

*Yahweh will accept no Intercession on behalf of His People ;
and hypocritical Service will not avail to avert the Doom.*

¹⁴ And thou, pray thou not for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they call unto me in the time of* their trouble.† ¹⁵ What hath my beloved‡ (to do) in mine house, (seeing) she bringeth evil devices to pass?§ Will vows and holy flesh remove thine evil from off thee? || then mightest thou rejoice! ¶ ¹⁶ A spreading olive tree, fair with goodly fruit, had Yahweh called thy name: (but) at the noise of a great roaring** he hath kindled fire upon it, and its branches are marred.†† ¹⁷ For Yahweh of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have loved to do,‡‡ to vex me by offering incense unto Baal.

JEREMIAH XI. 18-XII. 6.

*Jeremiah's Discovery of a Plot formed against his Life by the
Men of his native Place, Anathoth ; and the Judgement
pronounced by him upon them in consequence.*

¹⁸ And Yahweh caused me to know, and I knew it: then thou shewedst me their doings. ¹⁹ But I was like a tame;§§

* So LXX Targ. Pesh. (one letter different). The Heb. text has *on behalf of*.

† Cf. 7. 16.

‡ I.e. Judah: cf. 12. 7.

§ The Heb. as in Ps. 37. 7.

|| So with slight changes, following LXX. The Heb. text cannot be intelligibly translated.

¶ Or, following LXX, *Or shalt thou escape by these?*

** I.e. as the tempest rose.

†† Yahweh had likened thee to a flourishing olive-tree (for the figure, cf. Ps. 52. 8, Hos. 14. 6): but a great storm has now arisen, the olive-tree has been struck by lightning, and its beauty is sadly marred.

‡‡ Heb. *done for themselves*.

§§ Lit. *familiar* (Ps. 55. 13, 'companion'); and so innocent, unsuspecting (LXX ἀκακος).

lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I knew not that against me had they devised devices, (saying,) 'Let us destroy the tree with its sap,* and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.' ²⁰ But, O Yahweh of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart,† let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause. ²¹ therefore thus saith Yahweh concerning the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, 'Thou shalt not prophesy in Yahweh's name, that thou die not by our hand': ²² therefore thus saith Yahweh of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: ‡ the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall be consumed § by famine: ²³ and there shall be no remnant unto them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, (even) the year of their visitation.

Jeremiah is surprised at the Prosperity enjoyed by the Wicked; and demands upon the Conspirators summary Vengeance.

XII. ¹ 'Righteous art thou, O Yahweh, when I complain unto || thee; yet will I reason the case with thee: ¶ Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore

* So omitting one letter (cf. the cognate adjective, 'full of sap,' Ezek. 17. 24, 20. 47 [R.V. 'green']). The Heb. text has *bread*. The 'tree with its sap' is fig. for a person in the full strength and vigour of life.

† Jeremiah appeals to Yahweh, who can test the inmost feelings and purposes both of himself and of his foes, and knows therefore on which side the right lies. The 'reins' (i.e. the kidneys) were regarded by the Hebrews as the seat of *feeling* (cf. Prov. 23. 16; Ps. 16. 7, 73. 21; Job 19. 27), as the heart was with them the seat of the *understanding* (cf. ch. 5. 21): hence when it is said of Yahweh that He 'tries' (i.e. tests or examines), or 'sees,' the 'reins and hearts,' the meaning is that He is cognizant of man's emotions and affections as well as of his purposes and thoughts. Cf. 17. 10, 20. 12; Ps. 7. 9, 26. 2; also Jer. 12. 2.

‡ Heb. *visit upon them*.

§ So LXX (two letters transposed): cf. 14. 15, 44. 12. The Heb. text has *die* (as in the preceding clause: the variation, however, is more expressive.

¶ Or *contend with*. Cf. on 2. 9, 29 (pp. 330 f., 332).

¶ See on 4. 12 (p. 45).

are all they at ease that deal faithlessly? ² Thou plantest them, yea, they take root; they spread,* yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins. † ³ But thou, O Yahweh, knowest me; thou seest me, and triest mine heart toward thee: pull them away like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare ‡ them for the day of killing. ⁴ How long shall the land mourn, and the herb of the whole country wither? for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, beast and bird are swept away; because they say, "He will not see our latter end." §

His Impatience is rebuked: he may have in the Future still greater Trials to endure.

⁵ 'If thou hast run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how wilt thou vie with horses? and though in a land of peace thou art secure, yet how wilt thou do in the pride of Jordan? || ⁶ For even thy brethren and the house of thy father, even they have dealt faithlessly with thee; even they have cried aloud after thee: believe them not, though they speak fair words unto thee.'

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

XI. 15. I.e.: אִז תִּעֲלֵי אִז תִּעֲלֵי רַעְתֵּךְ אִז תִּעֲלֵי מִעֲלֹךְ יַעֲבֹרוּ קִרְשׁ יַעֲבֹרוּ מִעֲלֹךְ רַעְתֵּךְ אִז תִּעֲלֵי
Or, following LXX (*ἡ ἐν τοῖς διαφύξῃ*); for the last five words : אִז בְּאַיֶּה תִּחְלָעֵי אִז תִּעֲלֵי. This yields a better sense than the Mass. text אִז תִּעֲלֵי; but the deviation from the Heb. is rather considerable. At the beginning of the words quoted עֲשָׂתָה מוֹמָת comes in abruptly, and a

* Hos. 14. 6.

† I.e. far from their affections and desires. See the note on 11. 20.

‡ Heb. *sanctify*,—as though they were victims for sacrifice.

§ I.e. the prophet will not see his predictions fulfilled: we shall survive him, and even, it may be implied, put him out of the way.

|| I.e. the luxuriant growth of bushes and thick vegetation fringing the banks of the Jordan. See especially Jer. 49. 19=50. 44, and Zech. 11. 3, which shew that this 'pride of Jordan' was infested by lions, and consequently dangerous to enter.

causal particle, such as כִּי or אֲשֶׁר is desiderated before it. The restoration of the following words, *Can vows . . . from off thee?* which are the most important part of the sentence, is however quite satisfactory. מוֹזְמָה does not mean *lewdness*; it is זִמָּה, not מוֹזְמָה, which has this meaning (13. 27, Jud. 20. 6 *al.*). The Aram. form of the pron. suffix in רַעַתְתָּ כִּי is not probable in Jeremiah: it occurs otherwise only in late Psalms (103. 3-5, 116. 7, 19, 135. 9), and, apparently dialectically, in 2 Kings 4. 2, 3, 7, also Cant. 2. 13 (G.-K. § 91e, l). R.V. (= A.V.) is no real translation of the existing Hebrew text.

16. *spreading*. A spreading or luxuriant tree is no doubt commonly a 'green' one; but רַעַנָּן is not a term expressive of colour. LXX represent it by words such as *leafy, thick*. See Delitzsch's note on Ps. 37. 35; and cf. mine on Deut. 12. 2.

17. *have loved to do*. See, for the idiom (the reflexive ל, throwing back the action upon the subject), *Lex.* p. 515b^h.

XII. 3. וְבָהִינֵת. The perf. with waw consec., according to G.-K. § 112 m; so Ez. 29. 7 (where presents would be better than past tenses in the English).

5. *the pride of Jordan*. A.V. 'the *swelling* of Jordan' (cf. Josh. 3. 15); for מַגְלֵי מַיִם in connexion with *water*, see Job 38. 11, and cf. מַגְלֵי מַיִם Ps. 46. 4, מַגְלֵי מַיִם Ps. 89. 10, and מַגְלֵי מַיִם (the verb) in Ez. 47. 5 (properly *to rise up*, Job 8. 11): elsewhere in Heb. both the verb and the derivatives are used nearly always in the fig. senses of *majesty*, or *pride*. Ewald, both here and Jer. 49. 19=50. 44, Zech. 11. 3, took it as A.V.; but the terms in which it is mentioned in these three passages (as 'spoiled,' and to all appearance, also, as the abode of lions) seem to make this sense hardly possible. It is a pity that it has been adopted in the recently published R.V. with marg. references (both here and on Josh. 3. 15). The view adopted in the note above is that of modern commentators generally.

S. R. DRIVER.