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JEREMIAH'S USE OF IMAGERY

DRAWN

FROM NATURAL HISTORY

As Found In His Prophecies

Uttered

In The Reign Of Josiah

by
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1932

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
The Degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology
in
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York City
April 1936

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I. Nature of the Present Study

"Jeremiah is personally the most interesting to us of all the prophets, because, unlike the others he shows us the inmost recesses of his mind."¹ As a boy who lived in the country he doubtless had abundant opportunities of roaming through the fields and coming in contact with nature. As one reads the book one quickly realizes that he had learned the habits of the birds and animals, and had come to know their important characteristics. The trees and their fruits were equally understood as well as the grains and the method of harvesting.

Since the towns of Palestine were relatively small, the people had somewhat of an understanding and appreciation of the natural wonders about them. The inhabitants of Jerusalem may not have been aware of their knowledge, but with the hills, valleys, grain fields, vineyards, trees, birds and animals constantly in their vision, a degree of intelligence about natural history was unconsciously acquired.

God chose Jeremiah to proclaim His message to the people of Judah. By what better means could he make

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1. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. xxv

known God's message, than by using the works of God's hand? The natural history about Jerusalem lent itself admirably and we see Jeremiah drawing concrete examples from all phases of nature, to illustrate abstract ideas.

The purpose of this thesis is to determine what contribution the natural history makes, to the prophet's message. Thus it will be necessary to determine next, what may be included in the term "natural history".

Natural history may be defined in a number of ways. It may be very narrow to include only the science of zoology and it may be wide enough to include astronomy and all natural objects upon this earth. Webster's New International Dictionary defines natural history as,

"Formerly, the study, description, and classification of animals, plants, minerals, and other natural objects, thus including the modern sciences of zoology, botany, mineralogy, etc., in so far as they existed at that time; ---now commonly restricted to a study of these subjects in a more or less unsystematic way."¹

Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary gives a slightly different viewpoint when it says that natural history is

"that form of history, in the widest sense, whose facts or events are those of nature as distinguished from man . . . It is often held to embrace all the natural and physical sciences, but in a narrower sense it includes only zoology, botany, mineralogy, and geology, and as sometimes used, zoology alone."²

In the New International Encyclopaedia we find a defin-

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1. Webster's New International Dictionary, p. 1631
2. Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary, p. 1653

ition which seems to show the steps of development into the present conception.

"It was applied at first to the study of all natural objects, including minerals, rocks, and all living beings. The study of external nature and of the phenomena or laws governing the movements of natural bodies was formerly opposed to metaphysics, history, literature, etc. After a while astronomy and chemistry were eliminated from natural history . . . At present natural history is confined to the study of organic nature, or biology . . ."¹

Still another definition discloses, to us, the sciences which were dropped during the process of development.

Chambers's Encyclopaedia says that natural history,

"in its widest and oldest sense, includes all the concrete sciences, but psychology and sociology have been separated off at the one end of the series, physics and chemistry and all their branches at the other, so that natural history becomes synonymous with the science of living things. Most frequently, however, it simply means zoology, especially in so far as that is concerned with the life and habits of animals."²

A simple and clear definition is given in the People's Cyclopedia.

"Natural history, in the widest sense, and as used by the ancients, that branch of knowledge which included all natural science, and had the Cosmos for its subject. In more recent times its range was limited to zoology; now again, its bounds are extended, and it may be defined as the science which deals with the earth's crust and its productions."³

Natural history as it is to be understood in this thesis, is to include, those forms of life contained in the modern sciences of zoology and botany, and the in-

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1. The New International Encyclopaedia, Vol. XVI, p. 618
2. Chambers's Encyclopaedia, Vol. VII, p. 407
3. People's Cyclopedia, Vol. III

animate objects which are included in physiography and chemistry.

II. Importance of the Study

The importance of the natural history in Jeremiah is seen at the outset when we read such utterances as the following which are hard to forget. "For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."¹ "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and though in a land of peace thou are secure, yet how wilt thou do in the pride (swelling -- marg.) of the Jordan?"² "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed (taught -- marg.) to do evil."³

Jeremiah draws lessons from such ordinary objects as trees, clouds, wells, rocks, deserts, and fruits; from such animals as sheep, lions, leopards, dogs, camels, and horses; and from birds such as the dove, the stork, the eagle, and the partridge. The movements of the birds and animals are used to point out Judah's actions, and those of her enemies. The trees and plants

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1. 2:13

2. 12:5

3. 13:23

likewise furnish ideas which show the spiritual condition of Jehovah's children. Jeremiah uses these objects to stamp great truths into the minds of the people. Take away the natural history and you have taken away much from the message of the book.

III. Limitation

The study of natural history in the book of Jeremiah brings to the student a vast amount of material.¹ To make a study of all the material would involve a greater amount of time than is necessary for a study of this type. In view of the amount of available material and the time required for a study of the material, it has seemed advisable to limit the study to the prophecies uttered in the reign of Josiah.

The question is now raised as to the chapters which are to be considered as being uttered during the reign of Josiah.

Chapter one tells of Jeremiah's call in 626 B.C. and God's promise of assistance. It clearly mentions² that the call came in the 13th year of Josiah's reign, and can therefore be considered as the first of Jeremiah's words.

Chapters two and three are considered as a unit,

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1. See Appendix A

2. v. 2

for they disclose the background of the period. For about five years after Jeremiah's call, he probably traveled over the country and saw how shallow the reformation really was. This possibility is brought out when he says, "And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith Jehovah".¹ At the end of this five year period,² the law was found, the temple was repaired, the Passover was ordered kept, and a new reformation was started. Jeremiah no doubt went to Jerusalem to attend the Passover and to begin his work as a prophet. The Passover cleansing is reflected when he reminds them that all their cleansing would not remove their sins in God's sight.³

Chapters four, five, and six are grouped together as the "enemy" chapters. Sometime between the year of 634 and 621, the Sythians came from the north and went down to Egypt. The memory of that invasion was clear in the minds of the people. Jeremiah effectively used this event to announce a coming destruction, which was to be more complete. Using this figure of the enemy, Jeremiah continued by pointing out the enemy within the confines of Judah and how it too would destroy. Jeremiah's emphasis was not that it was the Sythians or Chaldeans who would bring destruction, but that judgment was at hand.

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1. 3:10

2. 621 B.C.

3. 2:22

Early in the career of every great man, comes a period of facing grave dangers and problems. Chapters eleven and twelve are grouped in this respect. Jeremiah's life is threatened, and he wonders at the prosperity of the wicked. The two chapters could thus be fitted into Josiah's reign after 621, for at that time a new reformation began and Jeremiah's life would have been more liable to danger.

IV. Method of Procedure

Jeremiah's use of natural history will be studied with reference to the person or event which he wishes to portray. The study divides itself into the following chapters:

- (1) The Portrayal of Jehovah.
- (2) The Imagery used for the Prophet, his Work, and his Problems.
- (3) The Approaching Enemy.
- (4) The Faithlessness of Israel.
- (5) Apostate Judah.

V. Value of the Present Study

The great value derived from this study, is the possibility of using nature, as illustrative material, for sermons or talks, or in the class room. Jesus used much nature to make his point clear. We can see by this

study of Jeremiah, how to use the natural history about us in making our point of view clearly seen.

CHAPTER I
THE PORTRAYAL OF JEHOVAH

CHAPTER I
THE PORTRAYAL OF JEHOVAH

It is the purpose of this chapter to determine how the nature of God is disclosed through Jeremiah's use of natural history. Jehovah is portrayed to us through the things He does. These acts, as recorded during the reign of Josiah, may be grouped as those of a creator, and as those of a father.

I. As a Creator

Jeremiah clearly states God's power¹ in the act of creation, when Jehovah says,

". . . will ye not tremble at my presence, who have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it? and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it."²

Jehovah who made the sea and set its bounds, has set in operation the laws of nature.¹ By these laws, the waves are kept in their place; the sea is not allowed to pass over its bounds, the sand.³ Although made up of fine shifting particles, the sand is sufficient to stop the

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1. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. 49
2. 5:22
3. Yet the people "overpass" their bounds (5:28) -- a striking further development of the same image.

tons of water. Should not the people fear such a God, whom even the sea obeys?

II. As a Father

The acts of a father for his children are based on love. As a study of the acts of Jehovah continues, it is well to keep in mind that they are motivated by love, but expressed along various lines.

A. IN HIS ACTS OF PROVIDENCE

Now that Israel has forsaken Him, Jehovah reminds them of His care when He conducted them out of Egypt.¹ In more detail he says,

"Neither said they, Where is Jehovah that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that none passed through, and where no man dwell?"²

Apparently they had forgotten their rescue from Egypt or esteemed it lightly.³

Jehovah led them through the wilderness, but Streane claims,⁴ that the original means that it is not a wilderness as we usually conceive it to be, viz., a wasted, wild and uncultivated region, but one which may have

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1. 11:4,7

2. 2:6

3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, Lange's Comm., Jeremiah, p. 31

4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 12,13

abundant pasturage yet is not occupied by settled inhabitants.

The land of deserts and pits was between Mt. Sinai and Palestine.¹ These deserts were really barren wastes² and the pits were large cracks or holes into which the traveler and his beast might fall. These pits had to be avoided, and Jehovah reminded the people that it was by His hand that their fathers were able to avoid them.

"Through a land of drought and of the shadow of death," may be changed slightly, by the marginal reference, to read, "through a land of drought and of deep darkness." The "deep darkness" or "shadow of death" is used metaphorically.³ As in the dark, men wander about because they are unable to see, so in the desert they could have wandered about bewildered. It may also represent the gloom that a traveler feels when passing through a desert, with the knowledge of only a few necessities of life about him.² However the darkness might have been real. It could have referred to the dimness in the chasms between the great precipices.¹

In the light of these terrors Jehovah asks them, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? or a land of thick darkness?"⁴ Streane continues to uphold the idea that

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1. A. R. Fausset, Commentary on Jeremiah, p. 4
2. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 12, 13
3. A. S. Peake, New Century Bible, Jeremiah, p. 90
4. 2:31

"wilderness" is not an absolutely barren ground, but one with vegetation, although not inhabited.¹ However there would be no point to a contrast between a land of vegetation and "a land of thick darkness". As a result, the conception of wilderness, as a desert, "a barren land, where no bodily nourishment or necessities are found,"² will be accepted. Have I been a desert to you? On the contrary, I have supplied your needs in the wilderness and also here in Canaan.

B. IN HIS ACTS OF BENEFICENCE

Jehovah reminded the people of Judah of His goodness to their fathers in promising them a land flowing with milk and honey.³ "And I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof."⁴ I brought you to Carmel, a garden-land, in contrast to the land of deserts.⁵ Naegelsbach clearly draws the contrast between Canaan and the wilderness when he says,

"Carmel, in this reference, is contrasted with the desert, as a mountain with a plain, as a fertile cultivated land of forests, vineyards, gardens, and fields, with the desert sand, as a place of springs with the land of drought."⁶

However, Israel had disobeyed the original command of

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1. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 23
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 40
3. 11:5, cf. Ex. 3:8,19; 13:5 and Num. 13:27
4. 2:7
5. v. 6
6. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 31

"Obey my voice",¹ and Jehovah reminded Judah of His goodness and what she soon was to leave behind, viz., "A land flowing with milk and honey."

In addition to giving them "the land flowing with milk and honey", the garden land of Carmel, Jehovah was ever watchful and provided the rains to keep it fresh. In their idolatrous worship, they forgot Jehovah and we hear Him say,

"Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear Jehovah our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in its season; that preserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest."²

Jehovah had just shown His power in nature³ but now calls upon them to use their powers of reflection⁴ to see how He uses His power for their good.

The rain was a symbol of blessing⁵ and the fruitfulness of the year depended on the two rainy seasons. The "former" rain fell from the middle of October to the first of December, while the "latter" came before the harvest, i.e., during March and April.⁶ The "former" was necessary for the growth and development of the crops,⁴ while the "latter" was needed for ripening.⁶

Jehovah was bringing to Judah's mind that in His

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1. 11:4
2. 5:24
3. Ante, p. 14
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 49,50
5. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 74
6. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 19

goodness, He caused the rain to fall for six weeks for the development of the crops, and that in the spring it fell for approximately two months when needed for the ripening of the grain. Not only did He bring the rain, but by His benevolent nature, no rain fell in Palestine during the seven weeks of harvesting,¹ thus causing no interruptions in the gathering of the grain.² In spite of Jehovah's goodness, Judah forsook Him and served other gods.

One of the outstanding passages of the reign of Josiah is,

"Be astonished . . . at this, and be horribly afraid . . . for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."³

In addition to practising the sin of idolatry as her neighbors, Israel renounced Jehovah "the fountain of living waters". They had at hand

"a reservoir in which living waters are stored up, pure, cool, perennial, and plentiful. And they leave this living water, drawn from streams and fountains,

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1. The seven weeks of harvesting time was from the Feast of the Passover to the Feast of Weeks (Peake, p. 134), corresponding to the Christian period from Easter to Whitsuntide (Naegelsbach, p. 74). At the Passover Feast, the priest waved a sheaf of the first fruits before the Lord and at the Feast of Weeks, bread of the first fruits was offered (Lev. 23:10,17). At the former, a sheaf of barley was waved and at the latter, bread made from wheat, the two harvests being different in time (Streane, p. 49,50).
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 19
3. 2:12,13

which they can have without labour, without money or price, and with great toil and expense hew out cisterns in the rock and store water in them."¹

It is entirely possible that this utterance came on a hot summer afternoon when throats were dry and parched. Anyone who has labored under a hot summer sun can appreciate this figure, as no doubt the people of Jerusalem did. It had an added significance to them, for Jerusalem had only one natural fountain.² Jehovah had that which Israel needed, but she gave up her only natural spring for cisterns. This figure will be treated more extensively under, Israel's wickedness, as exemplified in idolatry.

In passing from Jehovah's goodness in the past we take a forward look and hear Him say, "Return . . . and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."³ At that moment, Jeremiah pointed to the hills where many shepherds had their flocks. All his listeners knew the care and tenderness with which a shepherd watched his sheep.

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 92
2. The waters came from the Upper Springs of Gihon which break out underground in the Kidron Valley. It was carried by an underground conduit, 1760 feet in length to a pool, now known as the "Fountain of the Virgin" on the west side of the City of David. The conduit was constructed by Hezekiah on the approach of the Assyrian army (2 K. 20:20; 2 Ch. 32:30). "This fount is the only natural spring of water at Jerusalem, and is the chief source of supply of pure water at the present day." James Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II, p. 62.
3. 3:15

Jehovah would do likewise for Israel; He would give them kings, whose function would be that of teachers.¹

Judah is warned of her destruction. She is repeatedly told that destruction was coming, but out of the loving heart of Jehovah comes the promise that He would care for her: bring her back and restore her to her old position. "How I will put thee among the children and give thee a pleasant land . . ."² It is an expression of the deepest desire of Jehovah to provide for their every need.

C. IN HIS ACTS OF MERCY

Jehovah is pictured as a physician, healing the sores of His patients. "Return ye backsliding children, I will heal your backslidings."³ He promised forgiveness⁴ from His heart of mercy. Naegelsbach⁵ points out that "heal" is used with the plural and thus implies that Jehovah's mercy is so great that He will both pardon the single acts and remove the root of evil, if they will but return.

Judah would not listen, but stubbornly went her own way. Jehovah announced that destruction would come, that He would "pluck them up", but "after I have plucked them up, I will return and have compassion on them, and will

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 110
2. 3:19
3. 3:22
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 12
5. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 56

bring them again . . . every man to his land."¹ His heart of mercy would finally rule His actions, and He would restore His people to their own land.

D. IN HIS ACTS OF JUSTICE

1. The Thoroughness of His Investigation

A human judge can base his decisions only on outward appearances of the cases. Jeremiah realized this, and also realized the completeness of Jehovah's investigation when he said, "But, O Jehovah of hosts, who judgest righteously, who triest the heart and the mind . . ."² "who triest the reins and the mind (marg. -- R.V.)", "who triest the reins and the heart (A.V.)".

The "reins" or kidneys are regarded by the Hebrews of being the organ of feeling, while the heart is considered to be the organ of intellect.³ Thus Jehovah goes into the innermost recesses of man's makeup in His search for the truth. He discovers man's aims, and his hidden malice. It is interesting to note that Jeremiah is the first of the prophets to describe Jehovah as one who searches the inner man.³

Jeremiah is commanded to go to Jerusalem and see if he could find one righteous man, one "that seeketh

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1. 12:15
2. 11:20, cf. 12:2,3
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 183

truth".¹ Jeremiah answers, "O Jehovah, do not thine eyes look upon truth (faithfulness -- marg.)?"² They had thought to please Jehovah by outward appearances, which would satisfy the human judge, but the eye of Jehovah had looked within. There was revealed their true nature.

2. The Severity of His Judgments

"Wherefore thus saith Jehovah, . . . behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them."³ Also Jehovah says, ". . . lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn so that none can quench it . . ."⁴ Because Judah would not believe the word of Jeremiah, his word was empowered "with the highest energy of a real active force".⁵ The devouring violence of Jehovah's judgment is shown here.⁶

In contrast to Jehovah's goodness in providing the "latter" rain and the "former" rain,⁷ we see the harshness of His justice. "Therefore the showers have been withholden and there hath been no latter rain . . ."⁸ The

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1. 5:1
2. 5:3
3. 5:14
4. 4:4
5. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 72
6. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 18
7. Ante, p. 18
8. 3:3

rain, so essential to the maturing of the grain during March and April had been withheld. Jehovah, although longsuffering with His children, was severe in his judgment upon them. Yet Judah refused to perceive, confess, and repent of her sins.

Not only will the crops fail, but, "The whole land shall be a desolation; yet will I not make a full end."¹ The overthrow is not the ordinary type which sooner or later befalls all kingdoms, but is "utter destruction", says Fausset.²

On the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Jehovah decreed a seige. The city would be surrounded. The men would be killed by the sword in battle, but the children would die from famine.³ The very necessity of life, -- food -- would be withheld from them. How more severe could God's judgment be?

As a final glimpse of God's severe judgment we look to Judah's neighbors. Jeremiah uses a simple act of a farmer to show the harshness with which He will execute His judgment.

"Behold, I will pluck them up from off their land, and will pluck up the house of Judah from among them . . . But if they will not hear, then will I pluck up that nation, plucking up and destroying it, saith Jehovah."⁴

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1. 4:27
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 15
3. 11:22
4. 12:14,17

As weeds are plucked up by the farmer in his field, so will Jehovah pluck up Judah and her neighbors. The first reference is considered to be Judah's removal into captivity, and the second, her removal from captivity.¹

In each case the idea of "pluck" shows the force necessary to remove her.²

To give another picture of the completeness of the destruction, Jeremiah says,

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was waste and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved to and fro. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful field was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of his fierce anger."³

Peake says of this passage, that it is

"one of the finest, most powerful descriptions in the prophetic literature. In vision the prophet casts his glance over the earth and sky. He looks and looks again, but there is nothing to reassure him, only what fills him with alarm and anguish."⁴

It seems that Jeremiah could not take in the chaotic picture at one glance. He says, "I beheld", and then gives the general description of the earth and heavens. The earth was in a chaotic condition.⁵ It had wasted away and was of little value, due to the sin that was

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1. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. 101
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 45
3. 4:23-26
4. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 123
5. The Hebrew words are the same as those of Gen. 1:2; John Calvin, Commentary on Jeremiah, Vol. I, p. 236

in it.¹ Likewise the heavens were affected by the sins of mankind, and the sun and moon, and even the stars withheld their light.

As the horror of that first glimpse passed away, Jeremiah recalled to mind the picture of the earth as it had been. "The mountains! Ah, they are permanent! Surely they are standing in all their majesty!" he says. Slowly he removes his hands from before his face, but God's judgment affects even the mountains. They are trembling, moving to and fro, like trees before a mighty wind. That which he thought was firm and stable was loosed by the severe judgment of God.

Jeremiah then looked about him for some sign of life, but what he saw, was solitude, for he alone remained, of all mankind. His love for the birds asserted itself. He looked, but alas, he saw no birds flying through the air. They too had disappeared, at the sweep of God's arm.

He looked again, hoping for a glimpse of something in its former beauty, but, "lo, the fruitful field (Carmel -- marg.) was a wilderness." His hope, for seeing trees and flowers and shrubs, was shattered. He saw a wilderness, a barren wasteland, instead of the productive land of Palestine. Jeremiah started with a general picture of the universe, and narrowed it to particular

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., p. 237

objects. First were the mountains, then man and animals, and finally his glance was centered on plants and shrubs.

3. The Nearness of Execution

When God called Jeremiah, he proceeded to show him the nearness of destruction. He said, "Jeremiah, what seest thou? and I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said Jehovah unto me, Thou has well seen: for I watch over my word to perform it."¹ According to the marginal reading of the R.V., there is a play on words between "almond-tree" and "watch". What the cock is to domestic animals, the almond tree is to botanical life, for it is the first to awaken in the spring.²

God was awake, and was watchful of what was going on in Judah -- as the almond tree, in the spring. Naegelsbach adds,

"That he will not sleepily delay, but will be fresh and watchful to his own by speedily fulfilling the word spoken by the mouth of his prophet, -- this is what God says to the fearful, hesitating Jeremiah for his comfort, and encouragement."²

Streane³ holds that this vision is "an emblem of wakefulness and activity" rather than that of "vengeance" as held by some. Fausset⁴ also states the meaning of

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1. 1:11,12
2. G. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 22
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 6
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 2

the vision when he says, that it is the "symbol of God's early execution of its purpose".

III. A Summary of the Chapter

We see the power of God in His creation of the sea and the sand. The latter was made as the boundary of the former. He also made the laws which govern the sea. Unlike the sea, the people disobeyed the laws which He had decreed.

We are shown God as a father, (1) in His care over His children as He led them out of the land of Egypt, through the wilderness, through a desert land in which were pits, and through a land where the drought had taken the vegetation. (2) By bringing them into Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, and giving the former and latter rains, Jeremiah reveals God's goodness to Israel, as a father to his children. In addition to what He does for them we see Him pictured as a "fountain of living waters", always able to supply their needs. (3) In His fatherly care over Israel, God is pictured as a physician who in His mercy will heal the sores of His people, i.e., forgive them of their sins. (4) Jehovah, the father, becomes judge and we are shown His justice. The thoroughness of His investigation is revealed by the fact that His eye searches the kidneys and heart, i.e., the feeling and intellect of man. With respect to his severeness

as a judge, Jehovah's words become fire and consume the people, He withholds the rains, and the land becomes desolate, the children die by famine, and the nation is "plucked" as a weed. In addition, Jeremiah pictures to us a chaos in which the heavens are disturbed, and all life on the earth is destroyed. As a symbol of early execution of judgment, Jeremiah uses the almond-tree, which is the first to awaken in the spring and put forth its leaves. As the almond-tree is awake early in its season, so is Jehovah awake and watchful to bring to pass the words of His prophet.

CHAPTER II
THE IMAGERY USED FOR THE PROPHET, HIS WORK,
AND HIS PROBLEMS

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Great men are remembered by the things they do, and the way in which they do them. Each has certain outstanding abilities and each has a particular work to do. Jeremiah was called by Jehovah to be a prophet to Judah. He tells us little of himself or his abilities, by means of natural history, but the imagery used is sufficient to disclose the nature of his work, his fitness for it, and the problems he faced.

I. The Nature of His Work

At the occasion of his call, Jehovah revealed to Jeremiah the type of work he was to do. "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up . . . and to plant."¹ This imagery from the agricultural life, clearly shows us the destructive and the constructive sides of his mission to the nation. His work was to announce destruction to Judah and to all who did not serve Jehovah. This seemed to be the important phase of his work and consisted in rebuking and threaten-

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1. 1:10

ing.¹ Along with the threats came an occasional utterance, in which hope for a better and more hopeful state of Israel, was heard. Naegelsbach, in speaking of the two phases of Jeremiah's work, viz., destructive and constructive, says, "The first he does by prophesying the Divine judgment, the second by the promise of Divine mercy and grace."²

From the agricultural life Jeremiah turned to the trade of metal workers in his description of the work he had to do. By a metaphor from metallurgy, we hear Jehovah say, "I have made thee a trier and a fortress among my people; that thou mayest know and try their way."³ The marginal reading for "trier" is "tower", and the same Hebrew word is translated with the idea of a fortified city in 1:18. Peake⁴ states that it is not the function of a fortress to test the conduct of a people, and that since the following verses show Jeremiah's function as an assayer, the translation "trier" instead of "tower", will be accepted. Jeremiah, the assayer, was to try the people, the ore, to determine their value, if any. Fausset⁵ gives us more light on this metaphor when he points out the original root meanings. He says

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1. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. 5
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, Lange's Comm. on Jeremiah, p. 18
3. 6:27
4. A. S. Peake, New Century Bible, Jeremiah, p. 144
5. A. R. Fausset, Commentary on Jeremiah, p. 24

that the English word "trier" or "tower" comes from a Hebrew root "to try metals". Besides, the word "forness" comes from an Arabic root "keen-sighted"; or a Hebrew root "cutting". Jeremiah was to be the "keen-sighted" assayer, whose work was "to try metals", "cutting" out the good and the bad. How more picturesquely could Jeremiah show himself than as the familiar metal worker bending over a pot of molten metal?

II. His Fitness for the Work

His ability to proclaim God's message forcefully, was acknowledged by the men of Anathoth, when they said, "Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered."¹ This figurative picture is a proverbial method of expressing the destruction of a cause and its effect, together.² Jeremiah is the tree and his teaching is the fruit. The men wished to destroy the man and his messages, viz., those which threatened destruction to the nation. Not only was the live tree to be destroyed, but every precaution was to be taken, that the seed from its fruit would not germinate and grow.³

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1. 11:19

2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 42

3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 96

We shall turn now from the general realm of Jeremiah's fitness, to more particular qualities of his personality.

A. A NATURAL TRAIT

In his home town of Anathoth, Jeremiah little surmised the plottings of his fellowmen. "But", says he, "I was like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter: and I knew not that they had devised devices against me."¹ He was as a lamb of not more than a year old, such as the Jews had in their houses as a pet for their children. He might have considered himself as the sacrificial lamb, the lamb dedicated to be an offering to God.² As the pet lamb of the family followed the master, not suspicious of harm, so did Jeremiah trust the men of Anathoth. With such a trust as this, how much more, could he trust Jehovah who authorized him to be a prophet, and who gave him strength to perform the duties!

B. GOD-GIVEN ABILITIES

1. Eloquence

When Jeremiah received the call to become a prophet, he began to make excuses, but Jehovah finally

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1. 11:19

2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 182

prevailed, and we read, "Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth . . ." ¹ At a later time we hear Jehovah reminding Jeremiah that His words are in his mouth. ² In the act of putting forth His hand and touching Jeremiah's mouth, ~~was the conferring of~~ ^{the} necessary ability of eloquence. It was a symbolical act which implied that God would give him utterance, notwithstanding his inability to speak. ³ Naegelsbach clearly sets forth its meaning when he says,

"We call this act symbolical in so far as the touching of the lips and the words spoken were the visible and audible manifestation of a still deeper spiritual transaction. The Lord cannot literally have put His words in the prophet's mouth: He can only have given him the charism of which the words were the necessary result . . . From the following verse moreover we perceive that the prophet was prepared not only for speaking, but for acting, or, that his words were to be at the same time deeds, real exhibitions of power." ⁴

Let us now turn to the result of this symbolical act and observe Jeremiah's eloquence as portrayed by natural history. We no longer find Jeremiah as a person who would deliver an address in a cool, unemotional manner. Instead, he puts vim and vigor into his message.

"My anguish, my anguish! I am pained at my very heart (the walls of my heart -- marg.); my heart is disquieted in me; I cannot hold my peace; because

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1. 1:9
2. 5:14
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 1
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 19

thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war."¹

The A.V. reads, "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me," etc.

Jeremiah describes in a dramatic way, the physical sensation accompanying the perception of immediate danger. Since the bowels are the seat of the emotions,² we find Jeremiah expressing in a vivid picture his feelings. The pangs seem to be so great that he says, "I cannot be silent".

Fausset brings the picture to a focal point when he points out the climax in the opening exclamations.³ Under the stress of anguish Jeremiah cries out, "My bowels, my bowels!" He suddenly feels his wildly throbbing heart pounding against its walls and adds, "The walls of my heart! My pericardium", and in a final spirited cry exclaim, "Even my heart palpitates". Such animated oratory portrays to the reader a vivid picture of his feelings, and we see the result of God touching his mouth.

2. Strength

At the close of Chapter 1: Jehovah repeats the

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1. 4:19
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 122
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 15

general meaning of v. 4-10 and Jeremiah is assured, in antithesis to the offensive equipment of v. 9,10, a defensive position equally as strong.

"Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at them, lest I dismay thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a fortified city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to deliver thee."¹

The metaphor "gird up thy loins" was from the flowing robes of the East which had to be lifted up, in order not to inconvenience one when in active work.² This act completed, implied readiness for effort, and energy in action.³ Jeremiah was now ready for his task.

In reality Jehovah said, "Gird up thy loins and do thy part: and I will do mine to protect thee."⁴ Jehovah then revealed to him that He had made him "an iron pillar, and a brazen wall". By these figures of speech, "The prophet is assured that for the difficult offensive commission which is given him, he will receive a sufficient defensive equipment."⁴ He was fortified by divine strength against all attacks which might occur during his life.⁵

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1. 1:17-19
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 2,3
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 9
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 20
5. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 9

III. The Difficulties to Overcome

Jeremiah complained to Jehovah of his troubles and the ever present problem, of the prosperous wicked. To this Jehovah answered,

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and though in a land of peace thou art secure, yet how wilt thou do in the pride (swelling -- marg.) of the Jordan."¹

The footmen in this passage refer to the men of Anathoth and the horses, the men of Jerusalem.² If the men of Anathoth weary thee with their attacks, how do you expect to be able to withstand the men in Jerusalem when you get there? Jeremiah is to prepare himself for worse things to come; for up until this time he was in comparative safety.³ Quite different is the harm inflicted by the riders of horses and the horses themselves!

The figure of the swelling of Jordan is not clear. There are two possible interpretations. The first is that the figure refers to the overflowing of the river's banks. This took place in the harvest time and even earlier (April and May) and filled the valley called the Ghor.² Naegelsbach claims that little is known of the inundations of the Jordan as to their extent or danger,⁴

and so the

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1. 12:5
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 44
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 98,99
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 133

and so the second interpretation seems more likely, viz., that "the pride of Jordan" referred to the jungle on the banks of the Jordan which was infested with lions.¹ You think you are in danger out in the open country? What will you do when you get into the wooded haunts of wild beasts? You think you are in danger now? You haven't seen anything yet!

IV. A Summary of the Chapter

The type of work Jeremiah was to do is figuratively portrayed by three pictures. Jeremiah is shown as a farmer, pulling weeds and planting grain, and as an assayer testing metals. The plucking, symbolizes destruction and the planting, a constructive or restorative phase. As an assayer, Jeremiah was to test the people and see if there was any good in them. His words were to be fire, and if any precious metal was there, it would be left after the burning.

Jeremiah's fitness was seen by the men of Anathoth who called him a fruitful tree. His messages were of such a nature that they could sprout up and cause more damage. Thus they wished to destroy not only the tree but its fruit.

Jeremiah was likened, in his trustfulness, to a

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 187; cf. 49:19; 50:44; and Zech. 11:3.

lamb following its master, who eventually would lead it to the slaughter. How valuable this trait was when once centered on Jehovah who gave him authority and strength to do his work as a prophet.

By the figurative touching of Jeremiah's mouth by Jehovah, he was given eloquence in place of a child's uneloquent prattling. To show the change in Jeremiah after this bestowal of eloquence, we hear him expound the physical sensations taking place in his body, viz., his bowels and heart. His language is no longer cool and unemotional but vivid and alive with meaning.

In antithesis to the offensive equipment of eloquence, Jehovah makes his defensive position secure by making him an iron pillar and brazen walls. He was thus fortified by divine strength against any attack from without.

When Jeremiah is wearied by problems, Jehovah chides him by asking how he expects to contend against horses, when he is unable to contend with their riders. Again, if he thinks he is not secure up on the plains, what will he do when he gets down along the Jordan in the jungles with the wild beasts? This latter picture shows danger in its clearest form.

CHAPTER III
THE APPROACHING ENEMY

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The destructive phase of Jeremiah's work was to rebuke Judah for her sins and to announce God's judgment upon her. Jehovah would no longer defer punishment; He was soon to send destruction upon the land of Canaan. To bring this about, Jehovah used the neighboring nations and Chaldea is the one we have pictured to us.

Jeremiah used as much imagery as possible, to portray to us the character of the enemy; and he draws more images from natural history, than from any other source. Let us now see how he used natural history in his picture.

I. Description

Jeremiah makes the enemy real when he gives us a compact description of them, using several figures of speech.

"At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, A hot wind from the bare heights in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to winnow, nor to cleanse; a full wind from these shall come for me: now will I also utter judgments against them. Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as the whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles."¹

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1. 4:11-13

The imagery is taken from the realm of the air. Jeremiah used the scorching desert wind to picture the destructive quality of the enemy. The "hot wind" referred to

"a wind from the east, such as is prevalent in that country, accompanied by a cloudless sky. As it comes down from the hills and across the barren wastes it withers up all vegetation, besides producing the utmost discomfort. 'The air becomes loaded with fine dust, which it whirls in rainless clouds hither and thither at its own wild will . . . The eyes inflame, the lips blister and the moisture of the body evaporates, under the ceaseless application of this persecuting wind'."¹

It would not be a favorable wind like those from the west or north which brought the refreshing rains, but one from the east, heated by the oven-like desert. As the wind came from the east, so would the army come from Babylon in the east; and as the wind left a desolate path, so would the Assyrian army, in its march over Palestine.

The picture continues. Not only will the wind be hot and scorching, but it will be "a full wind". It was to be a stronger wind than was customary. As the hot wind denoted quality, so this wind denoted quantity.² The full wind was such as to approach the storm type, for Jeremiah says that the wind was "not to winnow, nor to cleanse." The marginal reading shows clearer the true relationship: ". . . not to winnow, nor to cleanse; a wind to strong for this . . ." It was to come with such

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1. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. 38
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, Lange's Comm. on Jeremiah, p. 63

force as to blow away both chaff and grain. It was to be even stronger than those which fanned the corn.¹ A twentieth century example is the destructive type which has so recently swept across our western United States. This full wind carried with it the top soil, leaving large barren wastes. Judah too, would become a barren land.

The imagery from the air continues and we see the enemy as a cloud. Clouds of sand and dust came with the hot winds of the desert¹ and now the total impression of the hostile mass is compared to the threatening storm clouds of sand.² In passing from the general to the particular, the chariots are likened to the speed and force of a whirlwind which comes upon one suddenly, and with almost no warning. To increase the speed of the whirlwind, Jeremiah used the eagle, noted for its swiftness of flight. The war horses were powerful enough to draw the chariots over the ground, with a speed comparable to that of the eagle soaring overhead.

The figure of speech changes, and we find Jeremiah drawing upon the wild beasts of the Jordan jungles, to disclose the characteristics of the Babylonians.

"Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them,
a wolf of the evenings shall destroy them, a leopard

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1. A. R. Fausset, Commentary on Jeremiah, p. 14
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 63

shall watch against their cities; every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces . . ."¹

Judah has just been pictured as an ox that had broken its bonds and was wandering at large.² Jeremiah now pictures the ox being preyed upon by the strongest, most ravenous, and swiftest of the beasts.³ The Babylonian army was to have the characteristics of all three of them.

Lions were plentiful in the Holy Land, for the Jordan jungles were full of all sorts of wild animals. The people knew the danger, but it was not so great as to keep them from going to their fields nearby.⁴

"The wolf of the evenings (deserts -- marg.)" adds the second characteristic to the picture of the enemy. There seems to be some dispute, however, as to whether the reading of the text, or that of the margin, is correct. The "wolf of the deserts", seems to be nearer correct, for Jeremiah said that the lion came "out of the forest", and it is quite likely that he intended the parallelism with "of the desert". Either reading makes little difference for we read, that the wolf's destructive disposition is surpassed by no other beast.

"Its appetite for slaughter is never satisfied. What it cannot devour, it mangles; and when it breaks into a sheepfold it never leaves off killing as long as

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1. 5:6
2. 5:5
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 17
4. Scripture Natural History, p. 26

there is any thing alive."¹

Since leopards "lie in wait for their prey, and in pursuit are remarkably swift,"² we are shown the Babylonian army as a leopard, which "lurks till the unsuspecting victim comes within its spring",³ and then rushes out to attack it.

Again we find Jeremiah using the king of beasts to convey his message to the people of Jerusalem.

"A lion is gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations; he is on his way, he is gone forth from his place, to make thy land desolate, that thy cities be laid waste, without inhabitant."⁴

The lion had already started, he had left his lair in the thicket and was on his way, but he was not the ordinary kind which destroyed individuals. This lion was one which would destroy a whole nation.⁵

"Thicket" correctly expressed the meaning of a lion's hide-out. It is "a tangled wood, where trees cross and entwine with each other."⁶ Thicket likewise conveys the proper picture of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, for Calvin⁶ shows that it was difficult for the Chaldean army to come from Babylon to Palestine.

On another occasion Jeremiah said, ". . . are the

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1. Scripture Natural History, p. 29
2. Ibid, p. 28
3. A. S. Peake, New Century Bible, Jeremiah, p. 128
4. 4:7
5. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 36
6. John Calvin, Commentary on Jeremiah, Vol. I, p. 210

birds of prey against her (Judah) round about? go ye, assemble them to devour."¹ Jehovah had just called Judah a lion and a speckled bird.² Some would translate "bird" as "hyena" but Streane says,

"This does not supply so good a figure, which rather is that of birds, assembling round one of their own kind, and maltreating it, because its plumage attracts their attention as unusual."³

Calvin's paraphrase of this figure is very striking.

Jehovah is quoted as saying,

"As then your wickedness is such that ye are to me lions and wild birds, take your course; but I will yet check this your barbarous and untameable ferocity; for I have under my command all the birds of the air and all the wild beasts of the field; let them then come together to this one bird, and to this one beast. Ye are but one bird; ye are indeed terrible at the first view, for ye are worse than all the hawks; but ye are only one bird, and around you shall come all birds, which shall make war on you. Ye are as one lion in a forest . . . but all the savage beasts of the wood shall come together against you, and shall come together to devour you."⁴

Jeremiah moves into a third realm of natural history to describe the character of the enemy. He says, "They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea . . ."⁵ Any one who has stood within a short distance of the ocean on a starless night during a storm, can appreciate this simile. The pounding of the waves and the accompanying roar gives

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1. 12:9b
2. 12:8,9a
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 100
4. John Calvin, op. cit., p. 141, Vol. II
5. 6:23

one the impression of power and puts a feeling of fear into the bravest heart. Calvin contrasts the voice of the enemy and that of God, when he says that Israel had had many teachers (prophets) and would not listen; but "ye shall hereafter hear other teachers; they will not warn you, nor give you council, nor be satisfied with reproofs, and threatenings, but they will come like a tempest on the sea . . ."1 -- and they will destroy you.

II. Proximity

Jeremiah warns the people, saying, "Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy, and terror, are on every side."² So near will the enemy be that the fields and byways outside of Jerusalem will be unsafe.³ In reality, Jeremiah was commanding the people of Jerusalem to stay within the city and not to expose themselves to the army.⁴

Again we hear him say, ". . . watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah. As keepers of a field are they against her round about . . ."5 The field refers probably to the open country about Jerusalem⁶ rather than enclosed plots of

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 351
2. 6:25
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 144
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 23
5. 4:16,17
6. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 122

ground as we have them today.¹ The metaphor comes from those who watch a field to frighten away beasts,² but Naegelsbach draws a distinction when he says,

"The business of watchmen, keepers of a field, is usually to protect from robbery and violence. But the prophet has such keepers in mind who do not remove their gaze from him to whom it is directed, as, ex. gr., those who beset a fox, a weasel or a polecat, so that the animal may either perish in his hole or be killed when he comes out."³

As these watchers built huts and stayed by their flocks, so would the Chaldean army camp by Jerusalem; and as these watchers starved a skunk in its hole, so would the inhabitants of Jerusalem be starved.

III. Work

In short, the work of the enemy was to capture Jerusalem, destroy it, and lay waste the land of Judah. We shall see the methods used by the Babylonians, the completeness of their work, and the result of the destruction as portrayed in the figurative language of natural history.

A. METHOD

We hear Jeremiah say of the enemy, "Shepherds with

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1. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 40 (From Speaker's Comm.)
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 15
3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 64

their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place."¹

These shepherds are the hostile leaders² and their armies are the sheep which will graze on Israel. The word "comely", used in connection with Israel in the previous verse, is frequently translated "meadow",³ which shows that the sheep and their shepherds will consume whatever is within their reach. The usual conception of a shepherd is that of a peaceful sort of person but Naegelsbach says, "The enemies are compared with shepherds, who break in with flocks and ruthlessly depasture and tread down."⁴

Jeremiah says of the shepherds, that they will feed every one in his own place. Calvin, commenting on this verse says, that Jerusalem would be so completely in the hands of the enemy that there would be no conflict between the leaders as there is sometimes in crowded pasture lands between shepherds. This further implies that the people would have no strength and that they would have no help from outside.⁵

From the imagery of a shepherd Jeremiah turns to that of a husbandman. "They shall thoroughly glean the

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1. 6:3 (cf. 12:10)
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 21
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 138
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 80
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 317

remnant of Israel as a vine: turn again thy hand as a grape-gatherer into the baskets."¹ It is the custom in Palestine to allow the poor to follow the reapers and let them appropriate whatever was left behind. Assyria had gathered up the ten tribes almost a century before, and now the gleaner followed. Chaldea corresponding to the poor, was to gather up what remained, viz., Judah.²

"Turn again thy hand as a grape-gather into the baskets", is the same as "again and again bring freshly-gathered handfuls".³ This referred specifically to the repeated carrying away of captives to Babylon.³ The people of Palestine knew full well, the fervor with which the gleaners worked and the figure was clear in showing them the way in which Babylon would act.

B. COMPLETENESS

The enemy ~~are~~^{is} pictured as young lions who have already destroyed. ". . . they have made his land waste: his cities are burned up, without inhabitant."⁴ At another instance we hear Jeremiah say, "Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is laid waste . . ."⁵ The figure of lions, breaks down when Jere-

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1. 6:9
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 325
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 22
4. 2:15
5. 4:20

miah says that they made the land waste, and destroyed it. Calvin¹ points out that what he had before said in figurative language, he now explains plainly, that the land was desolate. The reference to destruction seems to refer to what actually happened after the captivity of the ten tribes, viz., frequent Assyrian invasions.^{2,3}

From one metaphor Jeremiah passes to another and we read, "The children also of Memphis and Tahpanhes have broken (fed on -- marg.) the crown of thy head."⁴ Peake does not like either the reading of the text or the margin because he claims that they are too strong.

"It is simplest to transpose two consonants and substitute 'make bare' . . . We do not know, it is true, that the verb bore this sense, but it seems to be sufficiently attested by the fact that the word for 'razor' is derived from it."⁵

Baldness was considered a reproach, as shown by the incident in the life of Elisha,⁵ or a shaven head was a sign of mourning.⁶ Neither reproach nor mourning were a state to be sought.

Naegelsbach⁷ claims that this reference points to something in the future, rather than something in the past, as the English text would have us believe. The

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 97
2. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 17
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 18
4. 2:16
5. 2 Kings 2:23
6. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 18
7. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 35

opposite view is taken by Cowles, who says,

"I render it, 'The children of Noph and Tahpanhes have pastured down the crown of thy head,' -- Memphis and Daphne, distinguished cities of Egypt, are here put for Egypt herself. Jehoiakin made a league with Egypt, . . . but he was subjected to severe and shameful taxation . . . Such a process of shaving, taxation and consequent disgrace, our passage forcibly describes."¹

We pass on to another picture of desolation in which Jeremiah reveals to us the plundering by the Chaldeans.

"And they shall eat up thy harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat; they shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds; they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees; they shall beat down thy fortified cities, therein thou trustest, with the sword."²

All the necessities of life will be devoured by the enemy, so complete will be their work of destruction.

Calvin's interpretation is sufficient. He says,

"All that thou gatherest shall become a prey to thine enemies; for by harvest and bread he means every kind of provision . . . He further mentions herds and flocks; and then he adds the vine and the fig tree; as though he said, nothing would be safe among the Jews, for their enemies would plunder everything . . ."³

A more general picture of the completeness of the work of the enemy is found in,

"Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard . . . they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness . . . the whole land is made desolate . . . Destroyers are come upon all the bare heights in the wilderness; for the sword of Jehovah devoureth from the one end of the land even to the other end of the land: no flesh hath peace."⁴

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1. Henry Cowles, Commentary on Jeremiah, p. 31
2. 5:17
3. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 288
4. 12:10-12

This figure of the destructive shepherds is taken from the wandering herds whose shepherds often destroy the work of the husbandmen. "They have broken ruthlessly through the fence, and have trampled upon the carefully tilled soil and well-tended produce within."¹ Since the destruction of vineyards was more of a blow to agriculture than the destruction of cornfields,² the completeness and seriousness of the enemy's attack is pictured. Calvin claims that not only will the army as a whole, destroy the land, but each man will do his part as an individual.³

The level inhabited parts of Judah would be the first, to be attacked by the enemy. They would be destroyed by the army with very little trouble, but the destroying shepherds would continue and finally go to "the bare heights in the wilderness." The high lands of pasturage between Judah and Chaldea⁴ would likewise feel the tramp of the enemy feet.

C. RESULTS

As the enemy marches through the land, destroying everything of value, Jeremiah tells us what will be happening to the leaders of Judah. ". . . the heart of

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1. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 100
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 89
3. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 143
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 44

the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder."¹ The Jews had relied heavily on the power of the king and his princes, for many generations. Although not as strong as it once was, it was sufficient to protect them.² The people honored the priestly line for its wisdom, yet Jeremiah claimed that their wisdom would be of no value.

The heart is the seat of the intelligence and could be translated "mind",² and in some instances "courage".³ So extensive would be the destruction, that the intellect of the leaders would be paralyzed,⁴ "the wisdom of the most leading men will be utterly at a loss to devise means of relief."⁵

IV. A Summary of the Chapter

Jeremiah describes the destructive ability of the enemy as a "hot wind", which would scorch everything in its path. Then he adds that a "full wind" was coming, one which was not for winnowing the grain, but a more complete one which would blow away the grain. So fast would the enemy approach that it was likened to storm

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1. 4:9
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 211
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 120
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 37
5. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 14

clouds. In particularizing he says that their chariots were as a whirlwind in their speed and suddenness, with the horses being swifter than eagles. The strength, ravenous nature, and speed of the Babylonian army is portrayed by a lion, a wolf, and a leopard. On another occasion Babylon's army is said to consist of birds of prey and beasts of the field, that are coming to devour Jehovah's speckled bird, His lion, viz., Judah. The army would come upon the people with such a noise that Jeremiah says it was like the pounding of the sea on the beach.

So near would the enemy be that the people were told to stay in Jerusalem. Danger lurked outside the walls in their fields of corn. As watchers who camp by a vineyard to keep robbers away, so would the Chaldean army settle at Jerusalem and watch her as a prize possession.

As shepherds overrun the vineyards, so will the enemy overrun Judah. Their method of working will be to tread down the crops and consume whatever they find. In their eagerness to plunder Judah, they were described as gleaners who toil and labor as fast as possible, to obtain all they could. In a general statement we read that the land is laid waste. More particularly is pointed out that the army would eat the harvests, the flocks, and the fruit of the vines and trees. The fertile land of Carmel is to become a desolate wilderness. Not only the

level plains, but the bare heights will feel the army's destroying march. A figurative reference to the completeness of destruction is shown in the picture of Judah's head being made bald. The final result of this devastation will be the paralyzing of the hearts of the leaders. Their intellect would fail them when they would need to devise means of relief.

CHAPTER IV
THE FAITHLESSNESS OF ISRAEL

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In disclosing to Judah a picture of her future, it became necessary for Jeremiah to show the people what had occurred in the hearts of the people of Israel as a whole. They had forsaken Jehovah their God and served heathen gods, with the result that the northern kingdom of ten tribes were taken into captivity.

It will be the purpose of this chapter to reveal the character of Israel as a whole, by means of Jeremiah's use of natural history. In addition, the northern kingdom of ten tribes will be described briefly by means of a few references.

I. Israel -- The Twelve Tribes

A. POSITIVE QUALITIES

1. Love for Jehovah

Israel's love for Jehovah in the past is brought to their attention when He says,

"I remember for (concerning -- marg.) thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."¹

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1. 2:2

Commentators disagree as to whether this refers to Jehovah's love for Israel, or Israel's love for Jehovah. I shall accept the latter view, based largely on the reasons given by Streane,¹

(1) as being the more natural sense of the words themselves, (2) in that the 'kindness' and 'love' spoken of, evidently refer to the past, while God's attitude of grace towards Israel is the same still that it has ever been, (3) in that even in past time Israel as a rule followed God.

The editor of Calvin's Commentary, John Owen, accepts this view and in a footnote substantiates it by pointing out Jeremiah's object in referring to Egypt.

"The object here is to set forth the difference between the people when brought out of Egypt, and following God's guidance in the wilderness, and their conduct at the time of Jeremiah. They were indeed very far from being what they ought to have been in the first instance, but their deportment in Jeremiah's age was incomparably worse."²

A further description of "the wilderness" and "land that was not sown" is found in v. 6.³ The uninhabited land of deserts and pits, and the land of drought and darkness reminded the people how their fathers had relied on Jehovah and because of His care for them, they had pledged their love and allegiance to Him. The very word "wilderness" called to memory the fidelity and love of their fathers for Jehovah, while on the way into Canaan, in contrast to their unfaithfulness in Jeremiah's time.

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1. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. 11
2. John Calvin, Commentary on Jeremiah, Vol. I, p. 71
3. Ante, p. 15

2. Relationship to Jehovah

Another glimpse into the past, in the following verse, shows us the permanent relationship existing between Jehovah and Israel. Jeremiah says, "Israel was holiness unto Jehovah, the first fruits of his increase."¹ As the first fruits of the produce of the land were devoted to God,² so was Israel devoted to Him, the representative nation among all the nations.³

In the figure of the first fruits, Israel becomes that which is set apart from ordinary uses, and consecrated to God.⁴ This act of consecration was a yearly custom and now since Josiah's reform, it carried more weight than before. In the eyes of the people,

"Israel is related to the Gentiles, as the first fruits sanctified unto the Lord are to the multitude of common wild fruits, and as profane lips were forbidden to eat the former, so will guilt be upon those who touch the sacred first-fruits in the field of humanity."⁵

After the first fruits had been waved by the priests before God, the people harvested the crops. To continue this figure, Calvin⁶ points out that after Israel became the first fruits, God took unto himself other nations, "which for many ages were deemed profane."

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1. 2:3a
2. Ex. 23:19; Num. 18:12,13
3. A. R. Fausset, Commentary on Jeremiah, p. 4
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 11
5. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, Lange's Comm., Jeremiah, p. 28
6. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 73

3. Evaluation by Jehovah

Another picture from the agricultural life of Palestine, is that of Israel being God's vineyard. Jehovah says, "Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard . . ." ¹ Since vineyards were found in all parts of Palestine, Jeremiah's figure instantly stamped itself on the minds of his listeners. Many probably remembered of some wandering shepherds having destroyed their own vineyards.

Laura Wild² tells us that the season of wine-making is one of joy and happiness, which extends from July through September. Whole families live in the vineyards and one hears much singing and shouting. It is possible that at the close of the season, a great feast is held, and that a day is set apart for even greater rejoicing. When Jehovah said that His vineyard had been destroyed and, in the next verse, that it mourned, the people realized that their important crop would be taken away, and that in place of singing and happiness, there would be mourning and weeping.

B. NEGATIVE QUALITIES

1. Hostility

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1. 12:10a (cf. ante, p. 49,50)
2. Laura Wild, Geographic Influences in Old Testament Masterpieces, p. 158

Jehovah says, "My heritage is become unto me as a lion in the forest: she hath uttered her voice against me; therefore I have hated her."¹ It is the same as though He had said,

"Israel behaves towards me as a lion which roars against a man, so that he withdraws from the place where he hears it; so I withdraw from my people, once beloved, but now an object of abhorrence because of their rebellious cries against me."²

The roar of a lion in the jungle, sends shudders through the bodies of the natives. So fierce is the sound that the first impulse is to get away immediately. The hostility of the people towards Jehovah is the basis for this simile,³ and as a result, Jehovah withdraws and leaves Israel to the solitude which she has made for herself.

Jeremiah's use of a lion here is quite a contrast to Israel being a field, a meadow,⁴ or a vineyard.⁵ Instead of being something which He can enjoy and which is profitable to Him, Israel has become that which causes abhorrence.

2. Estrangement

The picture of Israel continues with, "Is my

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1. 12:8
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 44
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 99,100
4. 6:2,3
5. 12:10

heritage unto me as a speckled bird of prey?"¹ As Israel had been compared to a lion,² now she is compared to a speckled bird. It is though Jehovah had said,

"I had chosen this people for myself, that they might be my friends, as birds which are want to be gathered into their own cages . . . but now they are like speckled birds; that is, like wild birds, or birds of the wood."³

The Hebrew "speckled" comes from a root, meaning "to colour" and thus signifies the blending together of paganism and the Mosaic ritual.⁴ Israel had rebelled to the extent that she had acquired the characteristics of the pagan nations round about. She was no longer the domestic bird which she had once been, but a wild bird, a bird of the forest.

3. Skepticism

A skeptical, almost atheistic note is sounded in Israel's words,

". . . It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine: and the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them."⁵

The prophets had warned the people of the disaster which was coming in the future. The enemy would come, destroy-

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1. 12:9a
2. 12:8
3. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 139
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 44
5. 5:12,13

ing and plundering. However in an almost sneering manner the people answered,

. . . "He will never do it;
No evil shall come upon us,
We shall see neither sword nor famine.

The prophets are only wind
The word is not in them:
So be it done unto them."¹

They claimed that what the prophets said, were their own inventions and that they were only "windbags",² or "empty, uninspired, foretellers of disaster".³ Orelli sheds a bit of light on it when he paraphrases it, "The prophets become wind, they disappear with their message, they prove themselves worthless."⁴

4. Obstinacy

The obstinacy of Israel is revealed in one passage when Jehovah says, "Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked everyone in the stubbornness of their evil heart . . ." ⁵ They had heard and understood, but refused to obey God's word. If they had not heard distinctly, they could have inclined their ear, as one hard of hearing. They heard, and they understood, but the real cause was deep. It centered in

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1. John E. McFadyen, Jere. in Modern Speech, p. 32
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 72
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 130
4. C. Von Orelli, The Prophecies of Jere., p. 58
5. 11:8a; cf. 3:17

their hearts, the seat of the intellect. Their disobedience was not due to false understanding, but stubbornness in the face of correct knowledge.

This word "stubbornness" is found eight times in Jeremiah,¹ each time being used with "heart", and five of these times with "evil heart". John Owen,² in an editorial footnote says, that the Septuagint renders it in different ways; the Vulgate, "wickedness"; the Targum, "thought or imagination"; and the Syriac and Arabic like the Septuagint, "appetites, lusts, will". He continues,

"Now to 'do the hardness of the heart', is no suitable expression; nor is 'imagination' or 'stubbornness' anything better. It can be derived from no verb which means to think or to imagine, or which has any connection with depravity or wickedness, or with appetites or lusts . . . The literal meaning of the noun then is, in the plural number, predominances, domineerings, arbitraments; and may be rendered determinations, resolutions, predominant influences or inclinations."²

As a result the verse may read, "They walked every one in the predominate inclinations of their evil heart." Their reasoning determined their actions, not that which they heard.

5. Indifference

So unconcerned were the Israelites that they

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1. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 30
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 187

went their own way, worshipping foreign gods and eventually were trod under foot, as a vineyard overrun by shepherds. The reason, says Jeremiah, is ". . . because no man layeth it to heart".¹

Their careless indifference resulted from their reckless conduct and led to their downfall. None of them by prayer and repentance had sought to dispel God's wrath.² The northern kingdom had already fallen; Judah's turn was near.

6. Wickedness

a. Idolatry

The prominent passage of Jeremiah which illustrates the idolatrous practice of Israel is,

"Be astonished . . . at this, and be horribly afraid . . . For my people have committed two evils: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."³

There are two contrasts here; first, that of Jehovah and idols, and second, that of free gifts and those obtained by toil and money. The people had gone back on Jehovah who was a reservoir in which cool water was stored, and had by their own labor dug cisterns in the ground for storing rain water.

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1. 12:11b
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 44
3. 2:12,13

Although Palestine was especially rich in springs, Jerusalem had only one natural fountain.¹ When Jeremiah told them that they had forsaken their one fountain, they realized the contrast between their idols and Jehovah. Calvin says of this substitution,

"When one leaves a living fountain and seeks a cistern, it is proof of great folly; for cisterns are dry except water comes elsewhere; but a fountain has its own spring; and further, where there is a vein perpetually flowing, and a perennial stream of waters, the water is more salubrious and much better. The waters which rain brings into cisterns are never so wholesome as those which flow from their own native vein; and when the very receptacles of water are full of chinks, what must they be but empty?"²

It was a wrong move for the people to forsake Jehovah, a fountain of living water, and dig for themselves cisterns. Their condition became worse, when, in the hour of need, the cisterns were discovered to be broken ones in which no water would stay. Their idols were of no help to them when they needed them.

An interesting distinction between the two words, both translated "cisterns", is noted by John Owen in a footnote.² He claims that the first is a feminine noun and means "pits", while the second is a masculine noun and means "wells" or "pools". As a result the verse will read, ". . . and hewed them out pits, broken wells or pools, that can hold no water." The people dug pits

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1. J. Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II, p. 62
cf. footnote, ante, p. 20
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 93

and in time they cracked and are called broken cisterns.

When Israel discovered that the cisterns were broken, she looked to another source for her water supply. Continuing the figure of water, we hear Jehovah say,

"And now what hast thou to do in the way to Egypt, to drink the waters of the Shihor (Nile -- marg.)? or what hast thou to do in the way to Assyria, to drink the waters of the River (Euphrates -- marg.)"?¹

To quote Peake, will be sufficient to show the effects of their idolatry.

"Israel had forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewn out cisterns, which nevertheless leak so that they are left only with the muddy dregs. Accordingly they turn to the Nile and the Euphrates. The point is not so much that they leave Yahweh for the idols of Egypt and Assyria as that they fly to these powers for political help . . . While the primary stress in the passage is on political relationships, it should be remembered that in antiquity these often involved mutual recognition of deities."²

The idolatrous worship of Israel is mentioned again by Jeremiah when he says, "And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that the land was polluted, and she committed adultery with stones and with stocks."³ By stones and stocks are meant the idols of stone and wood which had been substituted in place of Jehovah. The figure of adultery is used to show the unfaithfulness of Israel to her husband Jehovah.

b. Results

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1. 2:18
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 94
3. 3:9

(1) Poverty

The worship of foreign gods is blamed for the loss of earthly goods. "But the shameful thing hath devoured the labor of our fathers from our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters."¹ Most commentators agree that this is a direct reference to the cattle offered as sacrifices to "the shameful thing", i.e., Baal.² Although God demanded sacrifices, "there could be no real similarity between such offerings and those which were exacted by a god like Baal."³ Other commentators claim that the "devouring" refers also to such temporal misfortunes as result from an estrangement from the true God, so that one may say, "We have been ruined as a nation by our wickedness and idolatry."³

(2) Penitence

In contrast to their wickedness is a penitent attitude of the people.

"A voice is heard upon the bare heights, the weeping and supplications of the children of Israel; because they have perverted their way, they have forgotten Jehovah their God."⁴

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1. 3:24
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 114
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 33
4. 3:21

The scene of their idolatry becomes the scene of their weeping. It is not in the land of exile,¹ but right at home, even before they are taken as captives. They cast aside all trust in the high places which were at one time their strong-hold, and at those same places make a public lamentation. Calvin² points out that there is no true penitence here. Only weeping is heard, and that does not imply prayers of faith from the heart. We see the penitence, merely as lamentations arising from their misery and wretchedness.

Not only was this penitence incomplete, but we see that they had sought help from the wrong source.

"Truly in vain is the help that is looked for from the hills, the tumult (noisy throng -- marg.) on the mountains: truly in Jehovah our God is the salvation of Israel."³

The multitude of gods, worshipped on the mountains, were of no avail. The marginal reading "noisy throng" suggests the orgies which accompany idol worship. "The wild ecstatic religion practised in the popular nature worship could bring no real satisfaction and peace."⁴

II. Israel -- The Ten Tribes

A. DESCRIBED

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 113
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 192
3. 3:23
4. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 114

Rhetorical questions are used to a good advantage by Jeremiah when he says, "Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? why is he become a prey?"¹ The first two questions were meant to have a negative answer, for Israel had not become a prey because of a servile condition.²

The question arises as to whether Judah is meant here, or Israel, the ten tribes. Streane³ takes the latter view as does Eichorn⁴ but Fausset⁴ claims that Judah is meant because of the direct reference to her in vs. 16, 18, and 36. However according to the English text Jehovah addresses Judah as "thou" in these verses, but the questions of v. 14 are in the third person. Likewise in v. 15 the third person is used, and the past tense of the verb is implied by Streane,³ Peake,⁵ and Calvin.⁶

The lion had roared over the ten tribes; Assyria had come and destroyed the cities. Judah was now the prey, for Babylon roared after her. Soon she would be taken as her sister.

B. NEGATIVE QUALITIES

1. Carelessness

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1. 2:14
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 114
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 17
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 5
5. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 93
6. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 97

Jeremiah had watched the farmers at work, and perhaps himself had tilled the soil. Out of such experience we hear him say,

"They have sown wheat, and have reaped thorns; they have put themselves to pain, and profit nothing: and ye shall be ashamed of your fruits, because of the fierce anger of Jehovah."¹

Naegelsbach² claims that this verse refers to a material harvest; Fausset,³ that it is a description of destruction; other commentators understand it to mean that the prophets have sown wheat on God's field;⁴ while Calvin⁴ and Streane⁵ take it as being metaphorical of the people.

In most passages of Scripture, thorns and thistles are used in a generic rather than a specific sense,⁶ which adds to the argument for a metaphorical interpretation. Wheat is one of the staple foods of Palestine, and is harvested late in the spring. Thorns and thistles are found in the pasture lands, and almost all varieties are eaten by goats, asses, and camels, in spite of the fact that they are covered with prickles.⁷

As the farmer carelessly sows his wheat in soil where there are thorns, so did the ten tribes sow their hopes in Egypt.⁸ Instead of safety and security, they

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1. 12:13
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 135
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 44,45
4. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 146
5. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 101
6. J. D. Davis, Dictionary of the Bible, p. 738
7. J. Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. IV, p. 751
8. 2 Kings 17:4

were taken to Assyria as captives, thus completing the figure, for we read that thistles and thorns represent "desolation mingled with causes of poignant pain."¹

"Consider what Ephraim has done", said Jeremiah. "He sowed wheat, expecting to reap for himself a harvest of edible grain, but look at his harvest -- a crop of thorns and thistles, fit only for the mouths of cattle. Beware of your planting, for you may also be ashamed of the results of your labor."

2. Wickedness

Jehovah speaks of Judah and the northern kingdom as women, who have entered into the marriage covenant with Him. That relationship implied a fidelity on the part of both the husband and wife, but we hear Jehovah say,

" . . . Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot."²

Also, Jehovah says, "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou . . . hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree . . ."³

The wickedness is shown in the figurative language of an unfaithful wife, who has left her husband for

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1. Cy. of B.G., B., N.H., & G.K., Vol. X, p. 770
2. 3:6
3. 3:13

others. So great was her wickedness that Jeremiah pictures it being extended to the mountain tops and under every green tree. The ten tribes had placed their idols on the tops of the mountains and under the trees, as though there was a greater degree of holiness on mountains and under the shade of trees.¹ Calvin says,

"When therefore the Israelites turned away to other gods, they became like a woman, who leaves her husband and prostitutes herself to any she can find. It is indeed a most common thing for those who forsake the true worship of God to seek for themselves various errors from all quarters, and to abandon themselves unreservedly to all kinds of superstitions."²

III. A Summary of the Chapter

Among the few good qualities, Israel's love for Jehovah in the past is brought to the memory of the people, by a reminder of the wilderness experience. While they were without food Jehovah supplied them and they in return pledged Him their love and followed at His call. Israel had a favored position among the nations for she became Jehovah's first fruits. As the first fruits were waved at the harvest by the priests and set apart as holy, so was Israel consecrated unto God and set apart for a special service. She is also pictured to us as Jehovah's vineyard, His productive land, in which there

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 165
2. Ibid, p. 176

is much singing and shouting. However she has been trodden under foot, and there is mourning instead of happiness.

One of the traits of Israel which were not so pleasing to Jehovah, consisted in her hostility towards Him. As the lion roared against a man so did Israel "roar" against Jehovah. She was called Jehovah's heritage, but she became as a lion in the forest. Israel was once as a friendly domesticated bird but she withdrew from Jehovah and by her association with foreign idols, became estranged as a wild bird of the forest. A skeptical attitude is portrayed by a statement of the people, to the effect, that the prophets would become wind, and that a famine would never reach their land. An obstinate nature is shown by their following the stubbornness of their hearts. They were able to see with their eyes and hear with their ears, yet they refused and followed the dictates of their hearts. The heart is also used to point out their indifference, in that no man was interested enough in the conditions to take it to heart, i.e., ponder over it.

Their wickedness is exemplified in idolatry and is implied by the references to stocks and stones, i.e., the idols of wood and stone which they served. More forceful is the picture of the people, forsaking a fountain of living water, viz., God; and building for themselves cisterns which were political alliances with their neighbors and the acceptance of their neighbor's gods.

When they needed their help the most, the neighbors were unable to supply the demand. Likewise, when they called on their neighbor's gods, there was no reply. The result of their idolatrous practices was a loss of cattle and even children, which it was necessary to sacrifice to Baal. A false penitence also resulted, and from the bare heights and mountains are heard the wail of Israel's people. It was merely a wail, and did not come from the heart. In addition, they were seeking their help from the wrong places, for the hills and mountains had nothing to offer. Only Jehovah could heal their hearts.

The northern kingdom is described as a prey, that is sought in the forests by the wild beasts. So careless had the people become that he likened them to a farmer who sowed his wheat but reaped a crop of thorns and thistles. Finally the northern kingdom is pictured as the wife of Jehovah who has deserted Him and in her wickedness has gone upon every high mountain and committed adultery, i.e., served other gods.

CHAPTER V
APOSTATE JUDAH

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We are now ready for a study of Judah, the nation to which Jeremiah was sent. The northern kingdom had been taken into captivity almost a century before, but this people had not taken warning from the example of the ten tribes. Judah continued in sin, so Jehovah sent prophets; but she continued further on the path leading to destruction.

Jehovah's longsuffering was to end soon, and Judah would be sent into captivity. As a last warning Jeremiah was sent to show the people their sinful condition, and the devastation of their land which was to come to pass. The purpose of this chapter is to give a picture of Judah as she was before God's wrath descended upon her.

I. Her Original Position

Although Judah was in a state of sin, Jehovah did not condemn her entirely. He showed her what she was in His sight originally and the possibility of becoming that again if she would repent of her evil and return to Him.

A. HIGHLY ESTEEMED

To express Jehovah's estimation of Judah, Jeremiah

looks about him for a suitable metaphor. On the hillsides he notes the vineyard, and as the mouthpiece of Jehovah, says, ". . . I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate branches of a foreign vine unto me?"¹ Calvin² informs us that vines are considered more valuable and preferable to pasture lands or cultivated fields. This information discloses the value God placed on Judah rather than calling her a pasture or a field.

God is not to be blamed for Judah's condition, for He had started her correctly by planting her a "right seed". It was His expectation that she produce fruit acceptable to Him. However she degenerated, as a grapevine can, and became a wild vine producing sour or bitter fruit.³

B. WELL PRESERVED

Although a meadow is of less value than a vineyard, Jeremiah does not discredit Jehovah's high evaluation of Judah, by the following verse. He is pointing out a different characteristic of Judah by using the figure of a meadow in,

"The comely and delicate one, the daughter of Zion,

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1. 2:21
2. John Calvin, Comm. on Jeremiah, Vol. I, p. 111,112
3. Ibid, p. 113

will I cut off. Shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place."¹

The word "comely" in this passage is usually understood as "meadow".² This figure is made even stronger when we hear Jeremiah give the general picture of destruction as resulting from the exploits of wandering shepherds. Naegelsbach points out that in contrast to Judah's later condition of being overrun by shepherds, Jeremiah could not have portrayed the position of Judah any better than by a well preserved and well tended meadow.³

C. SUPERIOR QUALITY

Again Jeremiah uses the botanical realm to express Judah's usefulness to Jehovah. As the vineyard and meadow express a characteristic, so does the olive tree when he says,

"Jehovah called thy name, A green olive-tree, fair with goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken. For Jehovah of hosts, who planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee . . ."⁴

Peake quotes from Cheyne who says, "the word gives a picture in itself. We seem to see a flourishing, sappy tree, with abundance of pliant, gracefully moving, per-

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1. 6:2,3
2. A. S. Peake, New Century Bible, Jeremiah, p. 138
3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, Lange's Comm., Jeremiah, p. 79
4. 11:16,17a

ennially green branches."¹ Jeremiah recognized Judah's quality in comparison to the other nations, and as Jehovah's mouthpiece acknowledges her superior quality by calling her an olive tree.

Fausset² claims that the olive tree was chosen here to represent the adoption of Judah by the free grace of God, as its oil is the image of richness. Although fair, and of goodly fruit, Jehovah can kindle a fire and burn the branches. Her beauty and grace was obtained from Jehovah and she retained it only at His will.³

D. FRUITFUL

In referring to the prosperity of the wicked people, Jeremiah uses the figure of the tree and says, "Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit . . ." ⁴ This passage, no doubt, points back to 11:16,17 when Judah was called a green olive tree.

Jehovah had planted them as a tree, and thus made them secure. They accepted His care and provision and took root, as a young tree transplanted. They had "continued happiness", as Calvin⁵ points out. Not only did

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 181
2. A. R. Fausset, Commentary on Jeremiah, p. 41
3. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 104,105
4. 12:2
5. Ibid, p. 123

they adapt themselves to their new environment and remain happy, but they grew and produced fruit. This production of fruit can mean nothing else but their offspring. Not only were they prosperous to the end of their lives, but they produced offspring, and these continued enjoying "the same wealth, dignity, and power, with their dead fathers".¹

II. Her Present Character and Activities

A. HER CHARACTER

1. Rebellious

As previously noted,² Jehovah's power in creation is shown by Jeremiah in,

"Fear ye not me? saith Jehovah: will ye not tremble at my presence, who have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it? and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it."³

This instance has another meaning, when we realize that the sea is a symbol for the world, and its waves the troubles of the nations.⁴ Peake says of this figure, "The mutiny of the sea against God has its counterpart in Judah's rebellion and Judah also will soon feel the curb of God's iron hand."⁵ We then think of Judah as the

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 124
2. Ante, p. 14
3. 5:22
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 74
5. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 133,134

sea, rebelling against its boundaries, the ordinances of Jehovah.

2. Bold

A glance at a person's face discloses the trait of boldness. We find Jeremiah saying, ". . . thou hadst a harlot's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed."¹ Did the people of Israel blush when they did that which Jehovah told them not to do? No, they were not ashamed. As the harlot boldly faces the world with her forehead uncovered, so did Israel parade herself before Jehovah and the nations. Naegelsbach says,

"With the boldness of a harlot who not only does not confess that she has done wickedly, but does it besides as though she had a claim to the recognition of her services, -----with such boldness does Israel speak in a confident and affectionate tone to the Lord, and even ventures on a gentle reproach for undeserved severity."²

3. Restless

No doubt one day while Jeremiah stood in the market place of Jerusalem, there came a dromedary loaded with produce. As it passed by, Jeremiah said, concerning Judah, ". . . thou art a swift dromedary (young camel -- marg.) traversing her ways."³

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1. 3:3b
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 47
3. 2:23b

Calvin points out¹ that the nature of camels are is such as to make them unaware of what goes on about them. The word "traversing" according to Fausset means, "unfolding; making its ways complicated by wandering hither and thither . . ."2; while Peake expresses its meaning by the word "interlacing".³ He continues,

"Judah is like a young she-camel at mating time, stung by passion, restlessly crossing and recrossing her tracks in her desire, uncontrollable with her insatiable lust."⁴

Streane gives us its literal meaning as "entangling, running quickly hither and thither in the eagerness of her passion, crossing and recrossing her own course".⁵ Judah is like a she-camel at mating time. She wanders about, crossing and recrossing her path, unaware that Jehovah's wrath is about to fall on her. All that is on her mind, is the worship of foreign idols. They alone seem to satisfy her.

4. Fierce

Jehovah is heard to say to the people, ". . . your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion."⁶ A visit to a zoo or circus will reveal to the

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 117
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 7
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 96
4. Ibid, p. 34,35
5. A. W. Streane, Cambridge Bible, Jeremiah, p. 22
6. 2:30b

casual observer, that the whole bodily formation of a lion indicates his ferocious and blood-thirsty habits.¹ We discover their habits at a safe distance, protected by bars. The people of Palestine obtained their information by first hand contact, for during the period of the kings, lions were numerous.²

Streane³ claims that this killing of the prophets could refer to those whom Manasseh killed⁴ including Isaiah;⁵ or to those slain by Jezebel.⁶ Since Jezebel was queen in the northern kingdom almost three centuries before, this passage could hardly refer to her acts. The conduct of Manasseh and that of the Israelites against Jehovah and His house could very well be likened to a lion in his ferocity against his prey. As the lion jumped on its prey and tore it to pieces, so did the people do to Jehovah's prophets.

5. Destructible

We can easily imagine a beast of burden moving slowly along a narrow street in Jerusalem, loaded with

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1. Scripture Natural History, p. 24
2. Ibid, p. 25
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 23
4. 2 Kings 21:16
5. "Doubtful Jewish tradition affirms that Isaiah was martyred by Manasseh, having been sawn asunder, and some supposed that Heb. 11:37 alludes to the manner of his death." -- J. A. Davis, Dictionary of the Bible
6. 1 Kings 18:4,13

wood. Such an incident could prompt Jeremiah to speak the words of Jehovah, ". . . I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them."¹ Jehovah's olive tree is no longer alive, and fruitful, but dead and easily combustible. Such energy and power would be in the words of Jeremiah that the people would know that he was the executioner of God's vengeance. It was not to be the trying fire of the assayer, but a destroying fire which consumes and devours. The people were not stones which could not be touched by fire, but wood which was easily destroyed.

6. Prosperous

Jeremiah, in his discourse on the wicked men, says, "They are waxed fat, they shine . . ."² Fat is used figuratively in the Bible "to denote the richest and best of good things for the use of man, both temporal and spiritual . . ."³ Thus we see that fatness was a mark of prosperity. They were not ordinary prosperous people, but the very prosperous for their fatness made them slick and shiny like a fattened animal.

7. Proud

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1. 5:14b

2. 5:28a

3. Cy. of B.G., B., N.H. & G.K., Vol. VII, p. 205

Jeremiah ridicules the people in order that their pride and haughtiness be cast down.¹ He says,

"And thou, when thou art made desolate, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with scarlet, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou enlargest thine eyes with paint, in vain dost thou make thyself fair; thy lovers despise thee, they seek thy life."²

Jeremiah had in view the attempts of Israel to procure assistance by coquetting with foreign nations.³ It was the custom of Oriental women, to

"paint their eyes with stibium, or antimony, to make them look full and sparkling, the black margin causing the white of the eyes to appear the brighter by contrast."⁴

Jehovah had entered into the marriage contract with the people and they had violated it. They were as an adulterous woman who had left her husband and for the purpose of enticement, dressed herself elegantly, put on golden ornaments and painted her face. The Jewish people were doing everything in their power to secure the aid of Egypt against Babylon, but it was all in vain, for "thy lovers despise thee, they seek thy life".

8. Debased

Another figure of speech comes from the science

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 246
2. 4:30
3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 66,67
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 16; cf. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 43, who quotes from "Modern Egyptians".

of minerology when we read, "They are all grievous revolters, going about with slanders; they are brass and iron: they all of them deal corruptly".¹ Jeremiah, the assayer, had tried the people in the previous verse, but no precious metal was found.² Brass (copper) and iron, being the baser and harder metals, express figuratively "the debased and obdurate character of the Jews".³ Some render it, "brass mixed with iron", meaning that the noble and vulgar were mixed together, so that there was a common consent.⁴ Lowth claims that the impudence of the people resembled brass, and their obstinance, iron.⁴

9. Shameless

The lack of shame by the people of Jerusalem is shown by, ". . . they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock: they have refused to return."⁵

Not only did the people refuse the correction which Jehovah gave them, but they were brazen and unconcerned outwardly. "They were wholly without shame; for they had cast everything like reason, and made no difference between right and wrong, between honesty and baseness."⁶

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1. 6:28
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 87
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 24
4. John Calvin, op. cit., vol. I, p. 357
5. 5:3
6. Ibid, p. 260,261

To express their appearance in a modern way, one would say, that they were "poker faced", not expressing outwardly their inner feelings.

10. Stupid

Jeremiah reproves the people for their stupidity¹ when he says, "Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding (heart -- marg.); that have eyes, and see not; that have ears, and hear not."²

The Hebrew's use of heart for the seat of intelligence has been noted before. In this instance we find that they did not have common sense, and in addition, Jeremiah says that the people had eyes and ears but did not use them.

Naegelsbach³ claims that the apostasy of the people is explained by their spiritual blindness and dullness, in spite of the wonderful displays of God's powers. Jehovah alone, can give spiritual insight, and when a people refuse, He sends blindness and deafness instead.⁴

Calvin claims that this figure of speech is taken from their idols of wood and stone which have ears and eyes, but do not hear or see. He says,

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 293
2. 5:21
3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 74
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 19

"Jeremiah . . . indirectly condemns the Jews here for having become so stupid in their superstitions as to be like dead idols: for there is in an idol some likeness to men; it has various members but no understanding. So also he says, the Jews had eyes and ears and the external form of men; but they were at the same time no less stupid than if they were stones or blocks of wood."¹

At another time Jeremiah said, ". . . behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken . . ." ²

Their ears were closed against the precepts of God, by the foreskin of carnality,³ thus making them inaccessible to the message from Jehovah.⁴ The people had not hallowed nor dedicated their ears to God's service, but continued using them for profane things.⁵

Circumcision to the Jew was a visible sign of a covenant relation with Jehovah. They boasted of the relationship and became satisfied with the sign only. The means was emphasized, but the end disregarded.⁶ For that reason Jeremiah used this figure for the people. An uncircumcised heart meant one that was rebellious, while an uncircumcised ear was one that rejected true doctrine.⁶ Their inner ear needed its covering removed in order that they might hear the message of Jeremiah.⁴

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 294
2. 6:10 -- "Uncircumcised ear" used only here and in Acts. 7:51
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 22
4. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 140
5. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 55
6. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 328

11. Deceitful

Jeremiah turns to the fowler for his figure of speech for deceit. He says,

"For among my people are found wicked men: they watch, as fowlers lie in wait; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxed rich."¹

Just as "bird catchers hide behind the extended nets till the birds have gone in, so as then to draw them tight", so do the wicked people of Judah attack the poor and honest.² The way in which they obtained their wealth was like the fowlers catching their birds.

12. Useless

Jeremiah turns to the metal worker for a figure for uselessness. He says,

"The bellows blow (are burned -- marg.) fiercely; the lead is consumed of the fire: in vain do they go on refining; for the wicked are not plucked away. Refuse silver shall men call them, because Jehovah hath rejected them."³

Before quicksilver was known, lead was mixed with the alloy which had to be purified. The mixture was melted, and air was forced onto it by means of the bellows. The lead was thus oxidized and formed a flux which carried away the impurities. If we remember the passage,

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1. 5:26,27
2. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 50
3. 6:29,30

". . . I will make my words in thy mouth fire . . ."1, we can understand this picture easily. Jeremiah's mouth becomes the bellows, which kindles the fire,² but his words are of no avail. The impurities in the lives of the people were not carried away by his warnings.

In considering the marginal reading, we have a different viewpoint. So hot is the testing fire, that the bellows seem to be burning. The fire in this case is the affliction laid upon the people in the past, present, and future.³ The silver ore is exposed to the fire, to determine its value, but the impurities are not burned out. The afflictions have done nothing to purge out the idolatrous worship, and Judah is now "refuse, impure silver, which, as unfit for noble uses, the Lord rejects".³ A play on words is used and adds to the emphasis of the picture. We read, "Refuse silver . . . because Jehovah hath refused them",⁴ and "Reprobate silver . . . Jehovah has reprobated them."³

B. HER ACTIVITIES

1. Characterized as:

a. Unrestrained

Oxen and asses were a common sight in

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1. 5:14
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 358
3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 87
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 61

Palestine, but we hear Jeremiah say, "They were as fed horses roaming at large; every one neighed after his neighbor's wife."¹ The Hebrew word "sus"² for horse, means "a chariot horse", but more frequently "a riding horse", and especially "a war horse".³ Herein lies the key to Jeremiah's words, for we read that oxen and asses were used for agricultural purposes, while horses were used only in military campaigns against their neighbors.⁴ The people were as a herd of war horses, that roamed about on good pasture lands, and became fat and slick because of their inactivity. They were not restrained by daily work, but were free to do as they pleased.

This figure continues and refers to the spiritual adultery of the people. It was a direct reference to their idolatrous practices,⁵ rather than to actual adultery as thought by some commentators. Their seeking foreign gods, "was like the impetuous instinct of an animal, uncontrolled by any reason, persuasion, or remonstrance."⁵ They were as fed-stallions⁶ wandering about, inflamed with lust.⁷ This degrading comparison is made to show with what zest they sought after foreign gods.

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1. 5:8
2. Young's Concordance, p. 492
3. J. Hastings, A Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II, p. 417
4. Cy. of B.G., N.H. & G.K., Vol. VII, p. 291
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 272
6. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 129
7. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 18

b. Intense

In contrast to a domesticated beast of burden, Jeremiah calls Judah a wild ass. He says,

"A wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind in her desire; in her occasion who can turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her."¹

"Accustomed to the wilderness" is thought to mean shy, wild and unconfined,² due probably to the scarcity of other animals and humans. Yet one who has hunted wild asses will tell you that "accustomed to the wilderness" can mean that they are acquainted with the rocky ground where escape from enemies is comparatively easy,³ or that they have knowledge of grazing land and water holes.

Wild asses are known for their speed, sight, and ability to scent enemies.⁴ Jeremiah used this latter ability to portray the people of Judah. Just as the she-ass, when in the period of heat, sniffs the air to ascertain where she can find a male⁵ so does Judah "sniff" in one direction and then in another, for every occasion which offers sin.

Calvin points out⁶ that there is no choice made by wild beasts, no show of judgment nor exercise of modera-

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1. 2:24
2. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 38
3. Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 148, No. 2, Aug. '31, p. 150
4. Cf. Scrip. Nat. Hist., p. 41,42 and At. Mon., Aug. '31
5. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 7
6. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 117

tion. When the month for mating occurs, the female is driven by passion, and when free to wander about, continues to search for satisfaction although completely fatigued. Who could stop Judah in her mad rush for foreign gods? She shows no judgment, and in her desire for idols continues from one nation to another, as having been possessed by the wildness and passion of a beast.

The figure continues, but commentators disagree as to the exact interpretation. "Her month" is interpreted by Calvin, to be the time of parturition of the young.¹ During early pregnancy the females are as fleet of foot as ever, but as the embryo develops, the added weight lessens their speed, and when heavy with young the animal is quite easily caught. It is as though Jehovah said to Judah,

"As the wild ass is weighed down with her burden when the time of parturition approaches, so I will cause you at length to feel the burden of your iniquities, which will be by its weight intolerable; and though your perverseness is untameable, yet my hand will be sufficient to restrain you; for I shall break you down, so ye will not bend nor obey my instructions."¹

This interpretation follows through very well, if Jeremiah wished to emphasize Judah's final submission to Jehovah the hunter. However, the introduction of this new element would be out of place, for the context shows that Jeremiah is pointing out Judah's actions in the past and present, with the command to stop.

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 119,120

The interpretation that "her month" refers to "the season of the year when her sexual impulse is strongest"¹ will be accepted as the proper interpretation, in view of the context. As the she-ass in "her month", "puts herself in the way of males, so that they have no difficulty in finding her",¹ so does Judah, in her idolatrous passion, run after her lovers, the false gods.² The foreign gods did not need to go out of their way; Judah, in her desire sought them.

In referring to the wild ass, Jeremiah used a wild animal which was plentiful in Palestine. Even in the time of Herod they were numerous, for Josephus tells us that Herod killed forty in one day.³ The people of Jerusalem knew their speed, sight, and ability to scent the enemy. Since these senses were even keener during the mating season, the people should have hung their heads in shame, at being likened to this beast.

The passionate running of animals has been the figure⁴ but now it is the people themselves that are the subject. Their intense activity is expressed by, "Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst".⁵

"Like a shameless wanton she (Judah) races after

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1. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 7
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 97
3. Scripture Natural History, p. 42
4. 2:23b,24
5. 2:25a

her lovers till her shoes fall from her feet and her throat is parched by thirst."¹ This passage does not refer to the captivity to be averted if true repentance follows,² but the present activity of the people in their search for foreign gods. It is as though Jehovah had said, "Do not pursue thy shameless quest in recklessness and heat",² or "Do not run the shoes off your feet",³ or "do not run so violently in pursuing lovers as to wear out thy shoes: do not 'thirst' so incontinently after sexual intercourse",⁴ for John Owen says, in a footnote,

"They are here exhorted not to travel for aid to foreign lands, so as to wear out their shoes and thus become barefooted. This was said in contempt, in order to pour ridicule on their folly in seeking foreign aid."⁵

This mad running brought them nothing but wounded feet and dry throats⁶ yet they refused to heed the warning.

2. Exemplified in:

a. Rebellion

From the pastoral life Jeremiah uses the common beast of burden to show the rebellious nature of His people. Jehovah is heard to say, "For of old time I have (thou hast -- marg.) broken thy yoke, and burst

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 35
2. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 22
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 97
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 7
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 122
6. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 38

thy bonds; and thou saidst, I will not serve (transgress -- another reading). "1 Some commentators claim that the reading of the text should be retained, in the first instance, rather than the margin. That would cause God to be the one to break the yoke of servitude. It is true that He did release them from Egyptian bondage, but He would not release them from serving Him. The reading, "I will not serve", will be retained rather than the marginal "I will not transgress", in that it fits the picture of an ox breaking a yoke.

Since the yoke is frequently used in the Bible to designate servitude or bondage,² Israel is compared to cattle because she refused the discipline and guidance of Jehovah. Thou hast broken my laws, which I laid on thee", is what Jehovah told her.

Again Jeremiah says, ". . . But these with one accord have broken the yoke, and burst the bonds."³ "These" are the great men, the men of position, rather than the common people with whom Jeremiah had been associated.⁴ He was informing them, "how shameful it was, that prophets, priests, and rulers, who occupied the first places in the state, had become so unbridled in their vices."⁵ He

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1. 2:20a
2. Cy. of B.G., B., N.H., & G.K., Vol. X, p. 797
3. 5:5b
4. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 127
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 265

had expected them to know the ways of Jehovah, but they had not the yoke of the law, nor the bonds of obedience, for as the bonds were used to fasten the yoke on the neck of the beast, so was obedience used to make the law secure in the lives of the people.¹

b. Incomplete Repentance

A half hearted repentance during Josiah's reign is recorded by Jeremiah when Jehovah says, ". . . Judah hath not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly . . ." ² It was incomplete, by the fact that the people at the death of Josiah relapsed into idolatry,³ for Judah had merely put on a resemblance of a reformation, i.e., the surface was affected and not the core.⁴

In contrast to this incomplete repentance, is Jehovah's command for a true and complete repentance.

"Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. . ." ⁵

No better exposition of the figure of fallow ground is given than by Peake. He says,

"The ground, which has lain so long untilled, must be broken up. The hard unresponsive disposition must

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1. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 46
2. 3:10
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 10
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 28
5. 4:3b,4a

bear the discipline of plough and harrow, and be thoroughly prepared to receive the good seed. But that is not enough, for the soil is encumbered with evil growths, and unless these are cleared away, they will choke the seed and prevent it from ripening and bearing fruit. The people must break with their past, remain no longer unaccustomed to goodness, and give the new seed the most ample opportunity of unhindered growth."¹

Circumcision was necessary to enter into the covenant relationship with Jehovah. It was an outward ordinance, being done on the body. Jeremiah demanded an inward circumcision, a dedicating of the heart, i.e., a dedication of the intellect. "If the men of Judah thus make for themselves a new heart, all may yet be well. If not, judgment must be executed."²

c. Wickedness

In denoting the wickedness of the people, Jeremiah turns to botany and uses one of the troublesome weeds for his figure of speech. He says to the men of Jerusalem, ". . . Break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns . . ." ³ The thorns are used to indicate the evil growths in the hearts of the people. ⁴ The reforms of Josiah failed on this very point, for their hearts were not cleared of the evil growths. As the outgrowths of the soil are weeds, so the natural outgrowths of the

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1. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 116,117
2. Ibid, p. 117
3. 4:3b
4. Ibid, p. 116

human heart are evil. The point of this figure is clearly expressed by Streane. He says,

" . . as the farmer is careful to clear the soil of weeds, before sowing his seeds, so do you use care in the work of repentance. No hasty or scanty sowing in this case will bear fruit that I can accept. It must be done thoughtfully and with sustained diligence in order to prove effectual."¹

The people were not only like a hard, uncultivated field which had lain for years, but in addition, their vices were so deeply rooted that they were compared to the thorns which send their roots deep into the soil.² The plough of outward repentance did not go deep enough, they needed to pull up their sins by the roots.

(1) Quality

The well is again used by Jeremiah and this time, to portray to the people the quality of their wicked acts. He says,

"As a well casteth forth (keepeth fresh -- marg.) its waters, so she casteth forth (keepeth fresh -- marg.) her wickedness; violence and destruction is heard in her; before me continually is sickness and wounds."³

As to the Hebrew word for "well", commentators disagree. Some claim that it means a cistern in which water is stored, while others claim it to be a natural flowing fountain. Fausset does not believe that it means "cis-

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1. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 34,35
2. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 203
3. 6:7

tern" but claims that it is a dug well, from which water springs, rather than a natural fountain which casts out water.¹ The choice of "fountain" or "cistern" determines the interpretation of the figure. Peake says,

"The well is self-fed, where as the cistern has its water stored within it from without. The point of the former metaphor would be that sin is a product of man's own nature, the latter figure implies that wickedness is an alien element, but is welcomed and kept fresh in man's own heart."²

In the case of Judah, the interpretation of the latter figure seems to fit best, for her wickedness was obtained from her neighbors, in that she accepted their idols and worshipped them.

Naegelsbach³ gives two reasons for rejecting "cistern" in favor of "well" or "fountain".

- (1) The connection in this instance is opposed to it.
- (2) Although the root used with it means "to dig", the only word derived from it refers to a fountain, and thus in a figurative sense, "a dug fountain".

Streane⁴ likewise brings out these two points, but when we remember that the outstanding sin of Judah was idolatry, and that it came, not from within Judah herself, but from without, we can readily see that there is a connection when the word "cistern" is accepted. In the next instance, the root used means "to dig", and since the general classification of "waterholes" is on the basis of

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1. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 21
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 139
3. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 80
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 54

their being natural or dug, we can decide in favor of "cistern".

"Fountain" is accepted by Calvin, and well expresses the picture of quantity. He says,

" . . . when men cease not, and heap vices on vices, it then appears that they swell with wickedness, and even burst with it, as they cannot repress it: they are like a fountain, which ever bubbles up, and cannot contain its own waters . . . the Jews had so given up themselves to their vices, that they were ever contriving some new way of doing evil, as waters never cease to stream forth from the fountain."¹

Peake² accepts the word "cistern", claiming that the wickedness of Jerusalem does not spring from within herself but comes from outside. He adds further, that she cherishes her sin of idolatry and "keeps it cool" within herself as a cistern keeps the water cool. This method of cooling water and keeping it for months at a time was used by the Jewish people,³ and this interpretation could have meant much to them.

(2) Extent

In using the figure of adultery, Jeremiah says, ". . . upon every high hill and under every green tree thou didst bow thyself, playing the harlot";⁴ also ". . . see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 322
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 139
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 54
4. 2:20

done . . ."1; and "Lift up thine eyes unto the bare heights, and see; where hast thou not been lain with?"2

In the first passage Jeremiah merely extends his arm toward the hills, the scene of their idolatrous worship of the Baalim,³ to the places especially sacred to the worship of nature.⁴ Calvin claims⁵ that the Israelites thought that they were nearer heaven, when on the tops of the hills, and that they had a more familiar communion with Him when concealed under the shady trees.

In the next instance Jeremiah becomes more definite and cites the particular rather than the general. He points to the valley of Hinnom,⁶ also called Topheth, which was south of Jerusalem.⁷ It is interesting to note the contrast. Usually the Israelites went to the high places, viz., the hill tops, but here Jeremiah refers to a specific valley,⁴ which probably came into vogue during the reign of Manasseh.⁸

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1. 2:23
2. 3:2a
3. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 6; A. S. Peake, p. 95
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 38
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 110, 111
6. The name "Hinnom" is the proper name for the valley and "Topheth" was later substituted to designate what occurred there. The Hebrew word seems to mean "fire-place" and correctly designates the killing and burning of human sacrifices. The modern word "Gehenna" to designate "hell", came from Hinnom, the original name of the valley. -- A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 155
7. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 7
8. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 155

The "bare heights" referred to, are also the scenes of their spiritual adulteries.¹ They were the high mountains which were without trees.

In a more general way we hear Jeremiah say, ". . . thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness";² and also, "And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that the land was polluted, and she committed adultery with stones and with stocks."³ What Jeremiah meant was, "that so far as the land extends, so far also whoredom with idols, as a heaven-crying sin, defiles the land".⁴ Calvin explains the meaning of pollution by,

"The land we know, was in itself pure, and could contract no pollution from the vices of men; but that the impiety of men might be exhibited the more detestable, the land is said to have been contaminated by them."⁵

(3) Source

The source of their wickedness seems to be in their hearts. We hear Jeremiah say, "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved."⁶ "Heart" is used here in contrast to mere surface reform.⁷ Josiah's reform was surface only, and

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1. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 9
2. 3:2b
3. 3:9
4. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 49
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 168
6. 4:14a
7. A. R. Streane, op. cit., p. 39

there remained as much inner wickedness as before.

Again we read, "Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness; for (surely -- marg.) it is bitter, for (surely -- marg.) it reacheth unto thy heart."¹ The consequences of their wickedness were such that even their hearts felt them. In addition to the wickedness already in their hearts, we hear Jeremiah say, ". . . this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart . . ."²

Another instance of the seat of their wickedness is, ". . . thou art near in their mouth, and far from their heart".³ Outwardly the people were religious, but within was that which could be called sin.

An indirect, but more effective way of showing the source of their wickedness is in the phrase "fruit of their thoughts".⁴ Streane says, "Here things are traced further towards their source."⁵ Since the heart is the seat of the intelligence, the fruits of the thought come from it, whether good or bad. Calvin also emphasizes the inner source of wickedness as resulting from thought processes. He says,

". . . they concocted their wickedness within, so that they did not offend God through levity or ignorance.

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1. 4:18
2. 5:23a
3. 12:2b
4. 6:19
5. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 58

By 'thoughts', then, he means that daily meditation on evil, to which the Jews had habituated themselves."¹

(4) Exemplified in:

(a) Idolatry

Jeremiah refers to the worship of idols when he says,

"who say to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face; but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us."²

By stock and stone, idols made of wood and stone are intended, which probably mean the Asherah or wooden pole and the obelisk or stone pillar.³ The parenthood here mentioned does not refer to ancestral worship, but to relationship of the deity to the worshipper.³ In times of trouble one is often brought to his senses. Streane says, "Their idols are but fair-weather friends. When a crisis comes, they will recognize this, and appeal for help to Him whom they have rejected."⁴

(b) Murder

Jeremiah accused the people with ". . . your own sword hath devoured your prophets,

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 345
2. 2:27
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 97
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 22

like a destroying lion."¹ This killing of the prophets probably refers to the killing of the prophets during the reign of Manasseh, which included Isaiah and Zechariah.² So cruel were they in their treatment that they were as lions in the forest, pouncing on their prey and devouring it.

We read, "Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the innocent poor . . ."³ Not only were the people guilty of idolatry, but they were guilty of shedding blood. Even on their skirts, figuratively speaking, was found the blood of innocent people. It was not the blood of a particular group, such as the prophets, but of men in a general sense.⁴ Naegelsbach supposes that Jeremiah pointed to their garments when he made the statement. Thus by indicating the blood on their garments, the Jews were plainly told that their crimes were not hid, that they carried the blood with them.⁶

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1. 2:30b
2. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 23; Ante, p. 86
3. 2:34a -- A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 100 gives the meaning of the Hebrew text, as follows, but admits that a good deal has been read into it. "I have found your garments stained with the blood of the innocent poor: you did not find them breaking into houses, in which case you might justifiably have killed them (Ex. 22:2), but you slew them on account of their opposition to all these heathenish practices of yours."
4. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 24
5. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 41
6. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 142

(c) Objectionable Offerings

We hear Jehovah say,

"To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba, and the sweet cane (calamus -- marg.) from a far country? your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me."¹

The sweet cane mentioned here, is not that which we know as sugar-cane, but a reed used in the manufacture of incense.² It grew in the Lower Euphrates and Upper Nile valleys, sometimes to a height of fifteen to twenty feet.³ The frankincense in this instance was the resin of an Indian tree (*Boswellia serrata*) obtained by splitting the bark,⁴ and was imported by way of Arabia.⁵ The burning of this incense was "strange fire" to Jehovah.⁶

The point here is that the outward services and rituals were not acceptable to God without the inner obedience of heart and life.⁷ Ceremonies were useless if the heart was cold. It was as though Jehovah had said, "Your sweet cane is not sweet to me".⁷ Calvin charges that the Jews had offered their sacrifices and

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1. 6:20
2. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 143
3. J. Hastings, A Dictionary of the Bib., Vol. IV, p. 213
4. Ibid, Vol. II, p. 65
5. Cf. Isaiah 60:6
6. Correct incense was composed of frankincense and other aromatic gums, and seasoned with salt (Ex. 30: 34,35) or sweet, i.e., not seasoned (Ex. 25:6; Lev. 16:12). All incense not so made was strange fire, and could not be offered (Ex. 30:9; cf. 'strange fire' Lev. 10:1). J. Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II, p. 65.
7. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 23

observed their legal rites punctually but they had been rejected.¹ He gives the meaning to be,

"----that God never required sacrifices for their own sake, but for another end; and also, that all external rites are of themselves mere trumperies and mockeries, nay, a profanation of God's name; so that they could not pacify him, but, on the contrary, provoke his wrath."²

(5) Results

(a) Degeneration

We note the change taking place in the people as a result of their wickedness when we read, ". . . I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate branches of a foreign vine unto me?"³ Peake points out⁴ that Jehovah is not to blame for the degeneration, for He had started Israel on the right path, but she had degenerated by her own acts. "The noble vine" here is the "Sorek" vine, which is the "choice vine" spoken of by Jacob in the blessing of his sons (Gen. 49:11).⁵ It was the vine whose grapes were to be used for the Passover wine.⁶ This gives importance to the vine and causes it to be called the "noble vine".

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 346
2. Ibid, p. 348
3. 2:21
4. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 95
5. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 20
6. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, op. cit., p. 39

Since the vine is considered the most valuable of property¹ God tells them of their value in His sight. Yet by their wickedness they had degenerated into a wild grape vine, producing only sour grapes. Since it brought forth nothing useful, Jehovah rightly calls it "a foreign vine".

(b) Despair

The men of Judah expected to turn to Egypt for help when the Babylonians attacked them. Jeremiah warned them that they would be ashamed of Egypt as they were ashamed of Assyria, and adds,

"From thence also shalt thou go forth, with thy hands upon thy head: for Jehovah hath rejected those in whom thou trusteth, and thou shalt not prosper with them."²

Peake³ claims that the hands on the head is a sign of deep shame and distress, while Fausset says⁴ that it means mourning. Calvin explains it thus:

"By this gesture he means extreme despair; for women did either strike or extend their arms when any great calamity happened, as we see it done in the present day . . . Jeremiah then mentions this gesture as an evidence of extreme despair; as though he had said, 'The treaty which fills the Jews with so much confidence shall be so far from being advantageous to them, that it will, on the contrary, bring on them utter ruin and disgrace'."⁵

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1. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 112
2. 2:37
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 101
4. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 8
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 149,150

The picture of a woman is used again and we see the anguish of the daughter of Zion expressed when she "gaspeth for breath", and "spreadeth her hands",¹ and her "hands wax feeble".² The figure of a woman in travail is often used in Scripture. Adulterous Judah is already in agony, she has stretched out her hands in supplication and sinks exhausted.³

Calvin expressed it aptly,

"I think the prophet expresses the posture of a woman in grief; for she usually smites her hands together, as it were divides them by putting the fingers between one another . . . his object is to shew, that God's vengeance would be so dreadful, that the Jews would lament, not in an ordinary measure, but like women, when in the extreme pain of labour."⁴

(c) Destruction

Jerusalem has already been likened to a vine.⁵ Now Jeremiah says, "Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her branches; for they are not Jehovah's."⁶ The prophet is probably thinking of a walled vineyard when he foretells of them getting up upon the walls. It is not to be a complete destruction, for the main stem of the vine is to remain, but the branches, or rather "ten-

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1. 4:31
2. 6:24
3. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 44
4. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 250
5. 2:21
6. 5:10

drills"¹, i.e., the chief men, were to be removed.

Streane expresses it thus,

"Observe that it is the tendrils only, not the vine itself, that must be removed. The degenerate members of the nation, whose connexion with the central stalk has virtually ceased, and who no longer draw sap from the root, are to be pruned away by adversity."²

In the realm of botany, a tendril is a short spiral shoot, which attaches to, or winds itself around, another body, in order to support the vine of which it is a part. In the case of Judah, the chief men and princes, who held Judah to her neighbors and who were the direct cause of bringing foreign idols into the land, were to be cut away. What she needed, was new tendrils, new princes and leaders, who would take their hold on Jehovah and make Him their support. For a period of seventy years, the vine lay on the ground, useless and bearing no fruit. At the end of that time, the nation was restored and such tendrils as Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah held to Jehovah and started the vine on a new growth.

Another method of destruction is by fire. Jeremiah says, "Jehovah called thy name, A green olive-tree, fair with goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken."³ This figure is clearly that of thunder and

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1. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 18
2. A. W. Streane, op. cit., p. 47
3. 11:16

lightning. The enemy has~~e~~ been described as clouds, whose voice is like the roar of the sea. The tree is struck by lightning, a fire is kindled, and the branches are broken, at one and the same time.¹ The tumult really refers to the tramping of the Babylonian army. With the rapidity of lightning and a crash of thunder, Jerusalem would be captured and taken. How well this figure was carried out, when the breach was made in the wall, and the army suddenly entered!

Another picture of destruction is given when Jeremiah says, ". . . for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, the beasts are consumed, and the birds . . ."² Peake says, ". . . this verse speaks of the calamity of the land . . . but such a calamity affects the wicked as well as the righteous."³ It also affects the animals, for they are seen to perish. No beasts are left in the thickets of Palestine, no birds are seen flying through the air nor are they heard, singing their songs.

(d) Departure

At the approach of the enemy, the people of Jerusalem flee because of fear. Jeremiah describes it thus: "Every city fleeth for the noise of

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1. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 41
2. 12:4b
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 186

the horsemen and bowmen; they go into the thickets, and climb up upon rocks . . ."1 Fausset points out² that the country people had already forsaken their fields and had come to the walled city, Jerusalem. They had left God's rocks and thickets for man's walled city. The danger then becomes so great, that they leave the city and flee into the countryside.

The Hebrew word for "thicket" really means "clouds" but that sense is impossible here.³ Local dialects came to use it as Jeremiah did, in this instance, in referring to the forests. The use here is for the purpose of designating a place of darkness.⁴ The people fled to a place of darkness where there would be less chance of discovery. Calvin⁵ claims that these forests were on the tops of the mountains, at a distance from Jerusalem, and thus doubly hard to reach by the Babylonians.

Not only did they flee to the thickets where it was dark, but they also fled to the rocks, which were a place of refuge for the people during Jewish History.⁶ Their instinct seemed to lead them on, for without realizing it, they were turning back to Jehovah for help when beset by their enemies. They were turning back to Jehovah's thick-

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1. 4:29a
2. A. R. Fausset, op. cit., p. 16
3. A. S. Peake, op. cit., p. 124
4. J. Hastings, A Dictionary of the Bib., Vol. II, p. 54
5. John Calvin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 245
6. Cf. Judges 6:2; I Sam. 13:6; Isaiah 2:19,21

ets and rocks, and had ceased to rely on their neighbors and the works of their own hands.

III. A Summary of the Chapter

Judah, in God's sight, was highly esteemed since He calls her a noble vine rather than any other bit of vegetation. Yet she had degenerated and was producing wild rather than normal fruit. Like a meadow she is well preserved, but will be destroyed as a meadow is overrun by wandering shepherds. We see Judah as a green olive tree. She is fruitful and apparently in a healthy state. But thunder and lightning will soon do their work. Judah has been like a tree that had been planted, which took root, grew and produced fruit. She had been planted in Canaan, she had established herself, and was producing fruit.

These original good characteristics did not continue. We find Judah rebelling against Jehovah as the waves of the sea against the shore. With the boldness of an harlot, she paraded herself before Jehovah. So restless does the nation become that she is compared to a female camel at mating time. As the camel wanders hither and yon in search of a mate, so does Judah become restless in her passion for foreign gods. So fierce do her actions become, that she is likened to a lion which jumps on its prey and devours it. So easily destructible was

the nation that Jehovah likens her to wood. As wood is consumed by the fire, so was Judah to be destroyed by God's hand. So prosperous had she become that she is said to be waxed fat and shine like a slick, fat animal. Jeremiah ridicules the pride of the people by claiming that they painted their eyes and bedecked their garments with gold in vain. Instead of getting help from foreign nations by their coquetry, their neighbors sought to kill them. The debased condition of Judah is pointed out by a direct statement that the people were brass and iron. They were not the precious metal which was of great value but a common metal of no extra worth. In spite of their condition, the people refused to be ashamed. They made their faces harder than a rock. So stupid had they become that their ears heard and their eyes saw, yet they did not understand God's word. Their ears were uncircumcised, in that they could not hear that which God spoke to them. In their dealings with their fellowmen, the people had become as deceitful as a fowler who snares birds in a cage. Their entire character had become such that Jeremiah told them that they were as useless as silver ore which could not be refined and the metal extracted.

Judah's activities are characterized as being unrestrained, and she is compared to a herd of horses wandering at large. As the horses had no work to do, so Judah wandered about free to do as she pleased. So

intense were her wanderings that she becomes a wild ass on the mountains. As a wild ass sniffed the air in search of a mate, so did Judah sniff after that which was sin. The figure changes and Jehovah accuses the people directly. He warns them not to chase after foreign gods until their throats are parched and their shoes drop off their feet.

Judah's activity consisted in rebellion, and Jeremiah tells the people that they are like an ox which had rebelled and refused to serve. They had not the yoke of the law, nor the bonds of obedience to hold them. At one time the people repented but it was incomplete, for it was not with a whole heart. Jehovah commands them to repent completely by breaking up the fallow ground, i.e., their unresponsive disposition, and by circumcising their hearts to Jehovah. Their wickedness was as thorns. It had remained in their hearts as roots in the ground.

Their wickedness was such as to be compared to water kept in a cistern. Their sin had come from without, and was kept cool in the underground cisterns. So far did the wickedness of the people extend that Jeremiah points to the hills and mountains to express its extent. Even a particular valley is mentioned which was the scene of the sacrifices. In fact the whole land is said to be polluted by their acts. These acts of wickedness were said to originate in their hearts. Outwardly, at times, they seemed religious but "the fruits of their thoughts"

were within and their hearts were contaminated.

Their wicked acts consisted, mainly, in idolatrous worship. They bowed down to wood and stone, and put their confidence in images. Not only were they guilty of serving idols, but they had committed murder. As a lion destroys its prey, so their swords had killed the prophets in times past. Jeremiah pointed to their garments and said that the blood of the innocent poor was visible there. Although they worshipped foreign idols, they still brought sacrifices to Jehovah. These outward acts of bringing sweet cane and frankincense were not enough. The ceremonies were repulsive to Jehovah since their hearts were not in tune to His will.

The result of their wickedness was a degeneration from the "Sorek" vine to that of a wild grape vine. They were no longer sweet and useful to Jehovah, but were a sour or bitter possession. In their search for aid, the people would go to Egypt, but they would turn away in despair, their hands on their heads. As a woman in child-birth gasps for breath, spreads her hands in supplication and then sinks exhausted, so would Judah do in attempting aid from Egypt. Since she could get no aid from her neighbors, Judah, the vine, would be destroyed. It was not to be a complete destruction, for only the branches were to be taken. The tendrils were to be destroyed, but the main stem was to be left standing. Another picture of destruction was Judah, the green olive tree, struck by

lightning. The Babylonian army suddenly broke into Jerusalem and like the roll of thunder, marched over the city. So great would be the destruction of the land that even the animals and birds would be consumed. With the advance of the army, the people fled from Jerusalem. They had forsaken Jehovah for their walled city. Now they forsake the works of their own hands and rushed for Jehovah's rocks and thickets.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the contribution of natural history to Jeremiah's message. He drew illustrations from the various sciences, often carrying the figures of speech further, and making a complete picture. As determined previously, natural history includes the sciences of zoology, botany, physiography and chemistry. In concluding this study, the figures of speech drawn from each science will be gathered together, to show the contribution of each science to Jeremiah's message.

I. Zoology

Jeremiah gave pictures of the destruction, resulting from the invasion of the enemy and Jehowah's severe judgment. So severe was His judgment that the birds of the heavens fled;¹ and so devastating was the invasion of the Babylonian army that the beasts and the birds were consumed.² In continuing his use of the birds, Jeremiah pictured Israel as a speckled bird of prey³ around whom had gathered the birds of prey, her enemies. So swift were the horses of the invading army that they were

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1. 4:25

2. 12:4

3. 12:9

compared to eagles,¹ the only bird specifically named. In illustrating the deceit in the people of Judah, Jeremiah claimed that they were as the fowlers who cunningly set traps for birds, and whose houses were full of their catch.²

Out on the hills in plain view of the city were the shepherds and their flocks. Often in the Bible we find the people considered as sheep. Jeremiah used this figure by having Jehovah promise them shepherds.³ Among the shepherds and their flocks on the hills were wandering shepherds who broke into fields and let their flocks destroy. Jeremiah pointed out that the leaders of the enemy were shepherds who would break down the walls of Jerusalem and let their flocks, the army, destroy the city,⁴ as other shepherds with their flocks had done already.⁵ As keepers of a field would gather about the den of a fox or polecat to starve it to death, or kill it when it came out,⁶ so would the Babylonian army surround Jerusalem to starve or kill the inhabitants. The people realized their estrangement from Jehovah and pointed out that their flocks and herds had been greatly reduced by their sacrifices to Baal,⁷ but Jeremiah promised them that what was left of their flocks would be eaten by the enemy.⁸ To picture his trust in the men of his

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1. 4:13
4. 6:3
7. 3:24

2. 5:26,27
5. 12:10
8. 5:17

3. 3:15
6. 4:17

home town, Jeremiah said that he had been like a gentle lamb, the family pet,¹ yet they had tried to kill him.

Among the domestic animals we also find that Jeremiah used the horse. The men of Jerusalem were as herds of horses, used only in war, which were free to roam about in their lusts,² seeking foreign idols. Jeremiah complained to Jehovah at his hardships but Jehovah rebuked him. He reminded him that he had a hard time keeping up with the horsemen in Anathoth and then asked him how he expected to contend with the horses in Jerusalem?³ He had been comparatively safe in the open country, but what would he do in the swelling of Jordan, where the forests were infested with lions? The common beast of labor were the oxen. Although usually steady workers, they sometimes rebelled. Jeremiah claimed that Judah rebelled like an ox,⁴ and refused to serve⁵ Jehovah any longer. On one occasion Jeremiah noted a dromedary pass by, and declared that the people were as a she-camel at mating time.⁶ As the camel rushed from place to place in search of a mate, so did the people of Judah rush hither and thither looking for foreign gods. So intense was their rushing that he called them wild-asses,⁷ who were so accustomed to their surroundings that they would seek out their mates with the keenest of sight, and

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1. 11:19
4. 2:20
7. 2:24

2. 5:8
5. 5:5

3. 12:5
6. 2:23

hearing, and at topmost speed.

In addition to the wild ass, Jeremiah used other wild beasts. Most noteworthy is that of the lion. Although at one time gentle and meek, and willing to obey Jehovah's commands, Israel became estranged as a lion in the forest roaring at any man who came near.¹ As the lion mercilessly jumped on its prey and killed it savagely, so did the people of Judah kill the prophets whom Jehovah had sent them.² The enemy was pictured as a lion which had already left its thicket³ to get its prey, as lions had done to Ephraim.⁴ In one grand picture, Jeremiah described the enemy as being a lion, a wolf, and a leopard combined.⁵ They had the strength of a lion, the ravenous nature of a wolf, and the swiftness of a leopard.

In the field of zoology is to be found listed, "Hominiidae" (man),⁶ and so the parts of the human body used by Jeremiah will be noted in this section. He used the figure "no flesh hath peace"⁷ to portray the completeness of the work of the enemy. Yet Jehovah promised the people to heal them⁸ of their sores, if they would only return to Him. Part of their wickedness consisted in murder, and Jeremiah pointed to the blood of the innocent poor on

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| 1. 12:8 | 2. 2:30 | 3. 4:7 |
| 4. 2:15 | 5. 5:6 | |
| 6. R. W. Hegner, College Zoology, p. 588 | | |
| 7. 12:12 | 8. 3:22 | |

their garments¹ which designated that their sins were not hid. Their dealings with their fellowmen were of such a nature as to make them fat.² They became prosperous through their deceit.

Various organs and appendages of the body are used to symbolize acts and characteristics of the people. Jeremiah was told by Jehovah to gird up his loins,³ i.e., he was to strengthen himself for his work. The bowels⁴ designate the seat of emotion, and the heart, the seat of the intellect.⁵ Thus Jeremiah's emotions were raised and his intellect quickened as he realized what was in the future for Judah. The people of Bible times thought that the seat of feeling was in the kidneys, and so Jeremiah pictured Jehovah as searching the hearts and kidneys (reins), i.e., the understanding and feelings, of the people.⁶

Despair was pictured by Jeremiah by hands being on the head,⁷ being spread out,⁸ and being feeble.⁹ Not all hands were feeble, for Jehovah ordered the hand of the enemy to do its work.¹⁰ Eloquence was conveyed by the hand of Jehovah when He touched the mouth of Jeremiah.¹¹ This eloquence consisted in power for Jehovah said later that His words would become as fire in Jere-

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| 1. 2:34 | 2. 5:28 | 3. 1:17 |
| 4. 4:18 A.V. | 5. 4:19 | 6. 11:20 |
| 7. 2:37 | 8. 4:31 | 9. 6:24 |
| 10. 6:9 | 11. 1:9 | |

miah's mouth.¹ Quite in contrast to Jeremiah's mouth is that of the people. Jehovah was near in their mouth, but far from their heart.² There was much lip service but no heart praise arising from within. Their hearts had been dedicated to the service of foreign idols.

So intense was their search for new idols, that Jehovah warned them to be careful. Their shoes would soon wear out, and their feet would be unshod.³ In addition, after much running, their throats would be dry,³ as always occurs in a hot country like Palestine. A harlot's forehead⁴ portrayed to Jeremiah the picture of the boldness of the people. However, that head had been brought down to shame, for the crown had been shaved off.⁵ The ears were uncircumcised,⁶ the people did not incline them as a deaf person,⁷ for they could not hear.⁸ Although they painted their eyes,⁹ symbolical of coquetry, it was of no avail, for Judah's lovers, the foreign nations, despised her. The people attempted to use their eyes to get aid, but their eyes were blind, they could not see the events taking place about them which pointed to certain destruction. Without eyes that could see, and ears that could hear, they were helpless, for they had no heart, i.e., they had no understanding.⁸ In contrast to the eyes of the people that could not see, were the

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1. 5:14
4. 3:3
7. 11:8

2. 12:2
5. 2:16
8. 5:21

3. 2:25
6. 6:10
9. 4:30

eyes of Jehovah which looked only on truth.¹

In the figurative language of Jeremiah we find that he used the heart, more than any other organ of the body. Already in this section it has been noted that the heart is the seat of the intellect. Jeremiah's heart had been disturbed,² and the heart of the people had been tried by Jehovah,³ although He was far from their hearts.⁴ In addition we find that the heart is the source of wickedness,⁵ and revolts and rebels⁶ because of its fruits.⁷ Although there was lip service, the people did not say in their hearts⁸ that which they spoke with their lips, for they walked in the stubbornness of their evil hearts.⁹ When destruction finally overtook them, the hearts of the king and princes perished,¹⁰ i.e., their knowledge of economics was of no use. So indifferent did the people become that Jehovah said that "no man layeth it to heart".¹¹ "Wash thy heart from wickedness",¹² said Jehovah, "and take away the foreskins (carnality)",¹³ yet Judah did not return with a whole heart but feignedly.¹⁴ In spite of the actions of the people, based on the reasonings of their wicked hearts, Jehovah said, "Return . . . and I will give you shepherds according to my heart,"¹⁵ which was one full of love.

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| 1. 5:3 | 2. 4:19 | 3. 11:20 |
| 4. 12:2 | 5. 4:18 | 6. 5:23 |
| 7. 6:19 | 8. 5:24 | 9. 11:8 |
| 10. 4:9 | 11. 12:11 | 12. 4:14 |
| 13. 4:4 | 14. 3:10 | 15. 3:14,15 |

II. Botany

The agricultural life of Palestine is used extensively by Jeremiah to illustrate his messages to his listeners. Their hard and unresponsive dispositions were as fallow ground which had not been disciplined by plough and harrow.¹ As fallow ground is full of thorns, so were their hearts full of wickedness. Jeremiah's work consisted in plucking up and planting.² The plucking up of the weeds was the rebuking and threatening which he uttered in his messages. The planting consisted in occasional words which gave courage and hope to the people. Jehovah is pictured as one who plants seeds. Israel had been planted in Canaan. She had taken root, she had grown, and had produced fruit.³ He had planted her, using the right seed to produce a noble vine, but the nation had degenerated and had become branches of a foreign vine.⁴ Their surrounding neighbors had been the causes, and these Jehovah warned, would be plucked up, along with the degenerated vine.⁵

Jehovah considered Israel to be of superior value. Thus he called Judah a vineyard,⁶ but she was finally overrun and destroyed by wandering shepherds. The enemies of Israel had eaten the harvest, the vines, and the fig trees,⁷ thus producing the famine of which Jehovah

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1. 4:3
4. 2:21
7. 5:17

2. 1:10
5. 12:14,15,17

3. 12:2
6. 12:10

had warned them.¹ The people had doubted that a famine would come,² for always before, Jehovah had preserved the weeks just before the harvest, for the ripening of the grain.³ At the time of harvesting, the first fruits were always set apart, i.e., consecrated to Jehovah's service. Israel was Jehovah's first fruits;⁴ she had been set apart for a special service. After the first fruits were offered, the harvest began. Judah was reminded of Ephraim's harvest. He had sowed wheat but had reaped thorns;⁵ he had put his hopes on Egypt, but had been taken to Assyria as a captive. At this utterance, Judah was told that she too would be ashamed of her fruits because of her careless sowing.

A familiar scene to the people at harvesting time was the cleansing of the grain. The hot east winds blew, the people poured the grain from one container to another, the chaff was blown away. Jehovah announced that a hot wind was coming from the east, but added that it was not to winnow nor to cleanse.⁶ It was to be too strong for that; it was to be a whirlwind that would destroy the grain.

Judah was told that she was a green meadow,⁷ but Jehovah's fruitful field soon became a wilderness.⁸ The people were warned not to go out into the surrounding

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1. 11:22
4. 2:3
7. 6:2,3

2. 5:12
5. 12:13
8. 4:26

3. 5:24
6. 4:11

fields for the enemy was there already.¹ The enemy, usually pictured as a wild beast, was said to have just come out of the thicket,² and forest.³ However, Judah the lion, who was acquainted with the forest⁴ would be no match for this enemy.

Jehovah called Judah a vine.⁵ The command was given to destroy the vine,⁶ but not completely. Only the tendrils were to be cut off. The chief men and princes who held Judah to her neighbors and who were the direct cause of bringing foreign idols into the land, were to be cut away. Judah was also said to be a green olive-tree⁷ loaded with fruit, and beautiful to look upon. Yet the One who called her name "a green olive-tree", was the One who destroyed the tree. The wood of the tree represents the people of the nation⁸ and together with their idols of wood⁹ they were burned by Jehovah's fire.

The children of Israel had been brought by Jehovah to eat of the fruits of the land,¹⁰ but under every green tree¹¹ they had set up idols, playing the harlot. In their regular temple worship they displeased Jehovah by bringing frankincense and sweet cane as offerings¹² which were not sweet to Him. At the appearance of the enemy, the people fled from the city, the product of

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| 1. 6:25 | 2. 4:7 | 3. 5:6 |
| 4. 12:8 | 5. 6:9 | 6. 5:10 |
| 7. 11:16 | 8. 5:14 | 9. 2:27 |
| 10. 2:7 | 11. 2:20; 3:6,13 | 12. 6:20 |

their own hands, and sought for safety in the thickets,¹ which Jehovah had made with His hands. These same men saw the ability of Jeremiah to perform the work which Jehovah gave him to do. They called him a tree² and since his messages were so forceful, they were likened to the fruit containing the seeds which would germinate and grow. To assure Jeremiah of His watchfulness over him, Jehovah caused him to see a vision of an almond tree rod.³ As the almond tree was the first to awaken in the spring, so was Jehovah already awake, watching over His words, to bring them to pass.

III. Physiography

The surface of the earth contributes to Jeremiah's figures of speech, by his reference to the mountains, wildernesses, rivers, deserts, wells, etc. "Wilderness" or slight variations was used more than any other word to designate the condition of the land. "Wilderness" brought to remembrance the land of deserts and pits, and the land of drough which the Israelites passed through after leaving Egypt.⁴ It was in the same wilderness, in a land that was not sown,⁵ that the people pledged their love to Jehovah and followed Him. From such a land as that, Jehovah brought them, and placed them in a plenti-

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1. 4:29
4. 2:6

2. 11:19
5. 2:2

3. 1:11

ful land,¹ i.e., Canaan. They looked around about them to the hills and mountains, and thinking that they would be nearer Jehovah, set up idols on these bare heights,² the high mountains,³ and the high hills.⁴ In contrast to their idolatrous practices which took place on the hills and mountains, is the accusation of sacrifices being offered in the valley of Hinnon.⁵ This worship of foreign gods resulted in a warning by Jehovah that the land would become a desolation.⁶ The people did not heed the warning, and the wickedness became so extensive that Jehovah declared the whole land to be polluted.⁷

Jehovah punished Judah by sending enemies from the bare heights in the wilderness⁸ from the east; the wolf of the deserts⁹ came to satisfy his ravenous nature. Even the bare heights in the wilderness between Judah and Chaldea felt the tramp of the army.¹⁰ The result of the enemy invasion was that the heavens had no light, the mountains trembled and the hills moved to and fro;¹¹ and the land of peace¹² became a wilderness,¹³ a desolate wilderness,¹⁴ and a wasted land.¹⁵

"Have I been a wilderness unto Israel?"¹⁶ asked Jehovah, "No, but she has been like a wild ass of the

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| 1. 2:7 | 2. 3:2 | 3. 3:6 |
| 4. 2:20 | 5. 2:23 | 6. 4:27 |
| 7. 3:2,9 | 8. 4:11 | 9. 5:6 |
| 10. 12:12 | 11. 4:23,24 | 12. 12:5 |
| 13. 4:26 | 14. 12:10 | 15. 2:15; 4:20 |
| 16. 2:31 | | |

wilderness to me".¹ Jehovah then encouraged the children of Israel to repent, and promised them a pleasant land,² but from the scenes of her idolatrous practices, the bare heights, we hear them weeping,³ and acknowledging that they sought in vain from the mountains and hills for help.⁴

Jeremiah had already compared them to the waves of the sea which rebelled against the sands of the shore.⁵ As God was in control of those waves, so would He be in control of His people who rebelled against His laws. Again the sea is used, but to describe the noise of the enemy as waves roaring on the beach.⁶

The enemy is further pictured as a hot wind⁷ that really is a full wind.⁸ As the hot winds from the east rolled up clouds, so did the enemy seem⁹ as their army swept upon Jerusalem. Like a flash of lightning the army struck the city¹⁰ and marched through it like the roll of thunder,¹⁰ their chariots destroying like a whirlwind.⁹

Jehovah had sent rain,¹¹ a symbol of blessing, but He withheld the showers and the latter rain¹² because the people would not repent. Their faces were harder than a rock.¹³ Their faces had become as hard as the idols of stone¹⁴ which they worshipped. At the approach of the

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| 1. 2:24 | 2. 3:19 | 3. 3:21 |
| 4. 3:23 | 5. 5:22 | 6. 6:23 |
| 7. 4:11 | 8. 4:12 | 9. 4:13 |
| 10. 11:16 | 11. 5:24 | 12. 3:3 |
| 13. 5:3 | 14. 2:27 | |

enemy these flint-faced people fled to the rocks for safety,¹ although they had sniffed the wind as a wild-ass² and declared that the prophets and their messages would pass on as the wind.³

The outstanding figure of this section is that of the fountain in contrast to the cistern. Jehovah told the people that they had forsaken Him the fountain of living water, which always bubbled over with a cool refreshing drink; and dug for themselves cisterns which had stagnant water, that had to be drawn out with effort.⁴ Not only did they dig the cisterns, but when they went to these cisterns, their neighbor's gods, the cisterns had cracked, and the water had run out. Their neighbor's gods were unable to help them when they needed it. The figure continued by Jehovah chiding them for going to the Shihor (the Nile) and the River (the Euphrates)⁵ to obtain water. Another use of water is in the quality of the sins of the people. As the cisterns kept cool the water that was placed in them, so did the people keep fresh the sins within their hearts.⁶

IV. Chemistry

In an agricultural country such as Palestine, very little would be known of the science of chemistry.

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| 1. 4:29 | 2. 2:24 | 3. 5:13 |
| 4. 2:13 | 5. 2:18 | 6. 6:7 |

Apparently the only knowledge the people had was of a few metals, and the melting of the ore. They knew the strength of brass and iron and so when Jehovah told Jeremiah that He would make him an iron pillar and brazen walls,¹ he realized that he was well fortified against any attacks. Although the people were called brass and iron,² they were of no particular form, as was Jeremiah. They were the baser metals, and not gold and silver which was of superior value. Their pride rose to the occasion and they bedecked themselves with ornaments of gold³ but to no avail. Their lovers despised them.

Jeremiah is pictured to us as an assayer⁴ whose occupation was to try the ore and ascertain its worth. The words in his mouth were the fire⁵ that was blown by the bellows onto the ore. The bellows blew fiercely; the fire burned hot; the lead, the oxidizing agent, was burned up, i.e., every attempt was made to smelt the ore; but the refining was in vain. The wickedness remained in the hearts of the people, and as ore unfit for use, Jehovah called them "refuse silver"⁶ which was even less valuable than brass and iron.

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1. 1:18
4. 6:27

2. 6:28
5. 5:14

3. 4:30
6. 6:30

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

EXPRESSIONS DEALING WITH NATURAL HISTORY

IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

<u>Chapter 1</u>			
5. belly		right seed	17. evil heart
womb		degenerate	18. land
9. hand		branches	19. land
mouth		foreign vine	21. bare heights
10. to pluck up	22. lye	soap	22. heal
to plant	23. valley	dromedary	23. hills
11. almond tree	24. wild ass	wilderness	mountains
16. burned incense		wind	24. flocks
hands	25. foot		herds
17. loins	throat		
18. iron pillar	27. stock		<u>Chapter 4</u>
brazen walls	stone		3. fallow ground
land	back		sow
	face		thorns
<u>Chapter 2</u>	30. lion		4. foreskins of
2. ears	31. wilderness		heart
wilderness	land of dark-		fire
land not sown	ness		burn
3. first	34. blood		7. lion
6. land of Egypt	37. hands on head		thicket
wilderness			desolate land
land of deserts			9. heart
land of drought			11. hot wind
7. plentiful land	<u>Chapter 3</u>		bare heights
fruit	1. land polluted		wilderness
defiled land	2. eyes		not to winnow
12. heavens	bare heights		nor to cleanse
13. living waters	wilderness		12. a full wind
broken cisterns	polluted land		13. clouds
no water	3. showers		whirlwind
14. a prey	latter rain		horses
15. young lions	forehead		eagles
wasted land	6. high mountain		14. heart
16. crown of head	green tree		15. hills
18. waters of Shihor	9. land polluted		17. keepers of
waters of River	stones		a field
20. yoke (oxen)	stocks		18. heart
high hill	10. whole heart		19. heart
green tree	13. green tree		20. whole land
21. planted	15. shepherds		23. earth
noble vine	heart		heavens
			24. mountains

hills
 25. birds
 26. fruitful field
 wilderness
 27. whole land
 28. earth mourns
 heavens black
 29. thickets
 rocks
 30. gold
 eyes
 31. gaspeth for
 breath
 spreadeth her
 hands

Chapter 5

3. eyes
 faces
 rock
 5. yoke (oxen)
 6. lion
 forest
 wolf
 leopard
 8. horses
 10. branches
 12. famine
 13. wind
 14. mouth
 fire
 wood
 17. harvest
 bread
 flocks
 herds
 vines
 fig-trees
 21. eyes
 ears
 22. sand
 sea
 waves
 23. heart
 24. heart
 rain
 season
 harvest
 26. fowlers
 27. birds
 28. fat

Chapter 6

3. shepherds
 flocks
 6. trees
 mound
 7. well
 waters
 wounds
 8. land not inhab-
 ited
 9. glean
 vine
 hand
 grapegatherer
 10. ear
 12. fields
 hand
 14. healed the hurt
 16. old paths
 19. fruit of their
 thoughts
 20. frankincense
 sweetcane
 23. sea
 horses
 24. hands
 25. field
 way
 27. trier
 28. brass
 iron
 29. lead
 fire
 30. refuse silver

Chapter 7

6. blood
 7. land
 9. burn incense
 11. den
 eyes
 15. seed
 18. wood
 fire
 heaven
 drink-offerings
 19. faces
 20. poured out
 beasts
 trees
 field
 fruit

ground
 burn
 21. flesh
 22. land of Egypt
 24. ear
 evil heart
 25. land of Egypt
 26. ear
 stiff neck
 28. mouth
 29. hair
 bare heights
 31. valley
 fire
 heart
 32. valley
 33. dead bodies
 food
 birds
 beasts
 34. land

Chapter 8

1. bones
 2. sun
 moon
 host of
 heaven
 dung
 face of the
 earth
 6. horse
 7. stork
 turtle-dove
 swallow
 crane
 10. fields
 11. heal the hurt
 13. grapes
 vines
 figs
 fig-tree
 leaf
 14. water of gall
 15. healing
 16. snorting
 horses
 neighing
 land
 devoured
 17. serpents
 adders

- 18. heart
- 19. land
- 20. harvest
summer
- 21. hurt
- 22. balm
healing

Chapter 9

- 1. head
waters
eyes
fountain
- 2. wilderness
- 3. tongue
- 5. tongues
- 7. melt
try
- 8. tongue
mouth
heart
- 10. mountains
pastures
wilderness
burned
cattle
birds
beasts
- 11. jackals
- 12. mouth
land
burned
wilderness
- 14. heart
- 15. wormwood
water of gall
- 16. scatter
- 18. eyes
eyelids
waters
- 19. land
- 20. ear
mouth
- 22. bodies
dung
field
harvest-man
gather
- 25. circumcised
- 26. hair
wilderness
heart

Chapter 10

- 2. heaven
- 3. tree
forest
hands
- 4. silver
gold
nails
- 5. palm-tree
- 8. stock
- 9. silver
gold
hands
- 10. earth
- 11. heavens
earth
- 12. earth
heavens
- 13. waters
heavens
vapors
earth
lightnings
rain
wind
- 14. goldsmith
molten image
breath
- 19. hurt
wound
- 21. shepherds
flocks
- 22. desolation
jackals
- 25. pour out
pasture

Chapter 11

- 4. land of Egypt
iron furnace
- 5. land
milk
honey
- 7. land of Egypt
- 8. ear
heart
- 12. incense
- 13. incense
- 15. flesh
- 16. green olive-tree
fruit
fire

- branches
- 17. planted
incense
- 19. lamb
tree
fruit
land
- 20. heart
- 21. hand
- 22. famine

Chapter 12

- 2. planted
taken root
grow
fruit
mouth
heart
- 3. heart
sheep
- 4. land
herbs
beasts
birds
- 5. horses
land of peace
Jordan
- 7. hand
- 8. lion
forest
- 9. speckled bird
birds of prey
beasts
field
- 10. shepherds
vineyard
wilderness
- 11. land
heart
- 12. bare heights
wilderness
land
flesh
- 13. sown wheat
reaped thorns
pain
fruits
- 14. pluck up
- 15. pluck up
land
- 17. pluck up

Chapter 13

1. loins
water
2. loins
4. loins
Euphrates
rock
5. Euphrates
6. Euphrates
7. Euphrates
10. heart
11. loins
12. wine
13. land
15. ear
16. feet
mountains
17. eye
flock
20. eyes
flock
21. head
22. heart
heels
23. skin
leopard
24. scatter
stubble
wind
wilderness
26. face
27. hills
fields

Chapter 14

1. drought
2. ground
3. waters
cisterns
heads
4. ground
rain
land
head
5. hind
field
grass
6. wild asses
bare heights
pant for air
jackals
eyes

8. herbage
land
10. feet
12. famine
pestilence
13. famine
14. heart
15. famine
land
16. famine
pour
17. eyes
wound
18. field
famine
land
19. healing
22. rain
heavens
showers

Chapter 15

1. cast out
2. famine
3. dogs
birds
beasts
6. hand
7. winnowed them
land
8. sand
sea
9. sun
10. earth
12. iron
brass
14. land
fire
16. heart
17. hand
18. pain
wound
healed
brook
waters
19. mouth
20. brazen wall
21. hand

Chapter 16

3. land
4. dung

- face
ground
famine
bodies
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| 11. partridge | 4. burned incense | fire |
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| 13. earth | 5. burn | |
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| 14. heal | 7. hand | blood |
| 16. shepherd | bodies | 4. horses |
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| neck | hiss | wilderness |
| 25. horses | plagues | 7. cedars |
| 26. land of Ben- | 9. flesh | fire |
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| hill country | 15. neck | 15. cedar |
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| 27. fire | 4. eyes | blood |
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| | 5. hand | 20. Lebanon |
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| 6. clay | bones | nest |
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| 14. snow | | 27. land |
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17. hand
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22. sea
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26. face
28. hand
30. roar
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31. flesh
32. tempest
33. dung
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34. shepherds
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21. heart
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| 33. fruitful field | winds | ostriches |
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