

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

This chapter begins with representing, in a beautiful parable, the tender care of God for his people, and their unworthy returns for his goodness, Isaiah 5:1-7. The parable or allegory is then dropped; and the prophet, in plain terms, reproves and threatens them for their wickedness; particularly for their covetousness, Isaiah 5:8-10; intemperance, Isaiah 5:11; and inattention to the warnings of Providence, Isaiah 5:12. Then follows an enumeration of judgments as the necessary consequence. Captivity and famine appear with all their horrors, Isaiah 5:13. Hades, or the grave, like a ravenous monster, opens wide its jaws, and swallows down its myriads, Isaiah 5:14. Distress lays hold on all ranks, Isaiah 5:15; and God is glorified in the execution of his judgments, Isaiah 5:16; till the whole place is left desolate, a place for the flocks to range in, Isaiah 5:17. The prophet then pauses; and again resumes his subject, reproving them for several other sins, and threatening them with woes and vengeance, Isaiah 5:18-24; after which he sums up the whole of his awful denunciation in a very lofty and spirited epiphonema or conclusion. The God of armies, having hitherto corrected to no purpose, is represented with inimitable majesty, as only giving a hist, and a swarm of nations hasten to his standard, Isaiah 5:25-27. Upon a guilty race, unpitied by heaven or by earth, they execute their commission; and leave the land desolate and dark, without one ray of comfort to cheer the horrid gloom, Isaiah 5:28-30.

This chapter likewise stands single and alone, unconnected with the preceding or following. The subject of it is nearly the same with that of the first chapter. It is a general reproof of the Jews for their wickedness; but it exceeds that chapter in force, in severity, in variety, and elegance; and it adds a more express declaration of vengeance by the Babylonian invasion.

Verse 1

Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved "Let me sing now a song," etc. - A MS., respectable for its antiquity, adds the word שִׁיר (shir), a song, after נָא (na); which gives so elegant a turn to the sentence by the repetition of it in the next member, and by distinguishing the members so exactly in the style and manner in the Hebrew poetical composition, that I am much inclined to think it genuine.

A song of my beloved אֶשְׂרָא song of loves אֶשְׂרָא - שִׁיר שִׁירָתִי (dodey), for שִׁיר שִׁירָתִי (dodim): status constructus pro absoluto, as the grammarians say, as Micah 6:16; Lamentations 3:14, Lamentations 3:66, so Archbishop Secker. Or rather, in all these and the like cases, a mistake of the transcribers, by not observing a small stroke, which in many MSS., is made to supply the שִׁיר (mem), of the plural, thus, שִׁיר שִׁירָתִי (dodi). שִׁיר שִׁירָתִי שִׁירָתִי שִׁירָתִי (shirath dodim) is the same with שִׁיר שִׁירָתִי שִׁירָתִי שִׁירָתִי שִׁירָתִי (shir yedidoth), Psalm 45:1. In this way of understanding it we avoid the great impropriety of making the author of the song, and the person to whom it is addressed, to be the same.

In a very fruitful hill - On a high and fruitful hill - Hebrew בֵּקֶרֶן בֶּן שָׁמֵן (bekeren ben shamen), son of a horn the son of oil. The expression is highly descriptive and poetical. He calls the land of Israel a horn, because it is higher than all lands; as the horn is higher than the whole body; and the son of oil, because it is said to be a land flowing with milk and honey. - Kimchi on the place. The parts of animals are, by an easy metaphor, applied to parts of the earth, both in common and poetical language. A promontory is called a cape or head; the Turks call it a nose. Dorsum immane mari summo; Virgil, a back, or ridge of rocks: -

â€œHanc latus angustum jam se cogentis in arctum
Hesperiae tenuem producit in aequora linguam,
Adriacas flexis claudit quae cornibus undas.â€•

Lucan, 2:612, of Brundisium, i.e., Ῥῆϊμῖ½ἰ,Ἰμῖφῖἶἶ½ , which, in the ancient language of that country, signifies stagâ€™s head, says Strabo. A horn is a proper and obvious image for a mountain or mountainous country. Solinus, cap. viii., says, âœœItaliæ, ubi longius processerit, in cornua duo scindi;âœ• that is, the high ridge of the Alps, which runs through the whole length of it, divides at last into two ridges, one going through Calabria, the other through the country of the Brutii. âœœCornwall is called by the inhabitants in the British tongue Kernaw, as lessening by degrees like a horn, running out into promontories like so many horns. For the Britons call a horn corn, in the plural kern.âœ• - Camden. âœœAnd Sammes is of opinion, that the country had this name originally from the Phœnicians, who traded hither for tin; (keren), in their language, being a horn.âœ• - Gibson. Here the precise idea seems to be that of a high mountain standing by itself; âœœvertex montis, aut pars montis ad aliis divisa;âœ• which signification, says I. H. Michaelis, Bibl. Hallens., Not. in loc., the word has in Arabic. Judea was in general a mountainous country, whence Moses sometimes calls it The Mountain, âœœThou shalt plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance;âœ• Exodus 15:17. âœœI pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land beyond Jordan; that goodly mountain, and Lebanon;âœ• Deuteronomy 3:25. And in a political and

religious view it was detached and separated from all the nations round it. Whoever has considered the descriptions given of Mount Tabor, (see Reland, Palaestin.; Eugene Roger, Terre Sainte, p. 64), and the views of it which are to be seen in books of travels, (Maundrell, p. 114; Egmont and Heyman, vol. ii., p. 25; Thevenot, vol. i., p. 429), its regular conic form rising singly in a plain to a great height, from a base small in proportion, and its beauty and fertility to the very top, will have a good idea of *“a horn the son of oil;”* and will perhaps be induced to think that the prophet took his image from that mountain.

Verse 2

And gathered out the stones *“And he cleared it from the stones”* - This was agreeable to the husbandry: *“Saxa, summa parte terrae, et vites et arbores laeduct; ima parte refrigerant;”* Columell. de arb. 3: *“Saxosum facile est expedire lectione lapidum;”* Id. 2:2. *“Lapides, qui supersunt, [al. insuper sunt], hieme rigent, aestate fervescent; idcirco satis, arbustis, et vitibus nocent;”* Pallad. 1:6. A piece of ground thus cleared of the stones Persius, in his hard way of metaphor, calls *“exossatus ager,”* an unboned field; Sat. 6:52.

The choicest vine *“Sorek”* - Many of the ancient interpreters, the Septuagint, Aquila, and Theod., have retained this word as a proper name; I think very rightly. Sorek was a valley lying between Ascalon and Gaza, and running far up eastward in the tribe of Judah. Both Ascalon and Gaza were anciently famous for wine; the former is mentioned as such by Alexander Trallianus; the latter by several authors, quoted by Reland, Palaest., p. 589 and 986. And it seems that the upper part of the valley of Sorek, and that of Eshcol, where the spies gathered the single cluster of grapes, which they were obliged to bear between two upon a staff, being both near to Hebron were in the same neighborhood, and that all this part of the country abounded with rich vineyards. Compare Numbers 13:22, Numbers 13:23; Judges 16:3, Judges 16:4. P. Nau supposes Eshcol and Sorek to be only different names for the same valley. Voyage Nouveau de la Terre Sainte, lib. iv., chap. 18. See likewise De Lisle’s posthumous map of the Holy Land. Paris, 1763. See Bochart, Hieroz. ii., Colossians 725. Thevenot, i, p. 406. Michaelis (note on Judges 16:4 (note), German translation) thinks it probable, from some circumstances of the history there given, that Sorek was in the tribe of Judah, not in the country of the Philistines.

The vine of Sorek was known to the Israelites, being mentioned by Moses, Genesis 49:11, before their coming out of Egypt. Egypt was not a wine country. *“Throughout this country there are no wines;”* Sandys, p. 101. At least in very ancient times they had none. Herodotus, 2:77, says it had no vines and therefore used an artificial wine made of barley. That is not strictly true, for the vines of Egypt are spoken of in Scripture, Psalm 78:47; Psalm 105:33; and see Genesis 40:11, by which it should seem that they drank only the fresh juice pressed from the grape, which was called *“ לֵיִלְיָאֵל ”*; Herodot., 2:37. But they had no large vineyards, nor was the country proper for them, being little more than one large plain, annually overflowed by the Nile. The Mareotic in later times is, I think, the only celebrated Egyptian wine which we meet with in history. The vine was formerly, as Hasselquist tells us it is now, *“cultivated in Egypt for the sake of eating the grapes, not for wine, which is brought from Candia,”* etc. *“They were supplied with wine from Greece, and likewise from Phoenicia,”* Herodot., 3:6. The vine and the wine of Sorek therefore, which lay near at hand for importation into Egypt, must in all probability have been well known to the Israelites, when they sojourned there. There is something remarkable in the manner in which Moses, Genesis 49:11, makes mention of it, which, for want of considering this matter, has not been attended to; it is in Jacob’s prophecy of the future prosperity of the tribe of Judah: -

*“Binding his foal to the vine,
And his ass’s colt to his own sorek;
He washeth his raiment in wine,
And his cloak in the blood of grapes.”*

I take the liberty of rendering *“ סֹרֶק ”* (sorekah), for *“ סֹרֶקוֹ ”* (soreko), his (sorek), as the Masoretes do by pointing *“ סֹרֶקָה ”* (iroh), for *“ סֹרֶקוֹ ”* (iro), his foal. *“ סֹרֶק ”* (ir), might naturally enough appear in the feminine form; but it is not at all probable that *“ סֹרֶק ”* (sorek) ever should. By naming particularly the vine of Sorek, and as the vine belonging to Judah, the prophecy intimates the very part of the country which was to fall to the lot of that tribe. Sir John Chardin says, *“that at Casbin, a city of Persia, they turn their cattle into the vineyards after the vintage, to browse on the vines.”* He speaks also of vines in that country so large that he could hardly compass the trunks of them with his arms. Voyages, tom. iii., p. 12, 12mo. This shows that the ass might be securely bound to the vine, and without danger of damaging the tree by browsing on it.

And built a tower in the midst of it - Our Savior, who has taken the general idea of one of his parables, Matthew 21:33; Mark 12:1, from this of Isaiah, has likewise inserted this circumstance of building a tower; which is generally explained by commentators as designed for the keeper of the vineyard to watch and defend the fruits. But for this purpose it was usual to make a little temporary hut, (Isaiah 1:8), which might serve for the short

season while the fruit was ripening, and which was removed afterwards. The tower therefore should rather mean a building of a more permanent nature and use; the farm, as we may call it, of the vineyard, containing all the offices and implements, and the whole apparatus necessary for the culture of the vineyard, and the making of the wine. To which image in the allegory, the situation the manner of building, the use, and the whole service of the temple, exactly answered. And so the Chaldee paraphrast very rightly expounds it: Et statui eos (Israelitas) ut plantam vineae selectae et aedificavi Sanctuarium meum in medio illorum. "And I have appointed the Israelites as a plant of a chosen vine, and I have built my sanctuary in the midst of them." So also Hieron. in loc. Aedificavit quoque turrin in medio ejus; templum videlicet in media civitate. "He built also a tower in the midst of it, viz., his own temple in the midst of the city." That they have still such towers or buildings for use or pleasure, in their gardens in the East, see Harmer's Observations, 2 p. 241.

And also made a wine-press therein. And hewed out a lake therein - This image also our Savior has preserved in his parable. תְּמַלֵּךְ (yekeb); the Septuagint render it here ἰσθμὸς ὁ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ κυρίου, and in four other places ἰσθμὸς ὁ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ κυρίου, Isaiah 16:10; Joel 3:13; Haggai 2:17; Zechariah 14:10, I think more properly; and this latter word St. Mark uses. It means not the wine-press itself, or calcatorium, which is called תְּמַלֵּךְ (gath), or תְּמַלֵּךְ (purah); but what the Romans called lacus, the lake; the large open place or vessel, which by a conduit or spout received the must from the wine-press. In very hot countries it was perhaps necessary, or at least very convenient, to have the lake under ground, or in a cave hewed out of the side of the rock, for coolness, that the heat might not cause too great a fermentation, and sour the must. Vini confectio instituitur in cella, vel intimae domus camera quadam a ventorum ingressu remota. Kempfer, of Shiras wine. Amaen. Exot. p. 376. For the wind, to which that country is subject, would injure the wine. The wine-presses in Persia, says Sir John Chardin, are formed by making hollow places in the ground, lined with masonry work. Harmer's Observations, i., p. 392. See a print of one in Kempfer, p. 377.

Nonnus describes at large Bacchus hollowing the inside of a rock, and hewing out a place for the wine-press, or rather the lake: -

[illegible]

He pierced the rock; and with the sharpened tool
 Of steel well-tempered scoop'd its inmost depth:
 Then smooth'd the front, and form'd the dark recess
 In just dimensions for the foaming lake.

And he looked â€œAnd he expectedâ€• - Jeremiah, Jeremiah 2:21, uses the same image, and applies it to the same purpose, in an elegant paraphrase of this part of Isaiahâ€™s parable, in his flowing and plaintive manner: - â€œBut I planted thee a sorek, a scion perfectly genuine: How then art thou changed, and become to me the degenerate shoots of the strange vine!â€•

Wild grapes –poisonous berries– - x'x©x™x• (beushim), not merely useless, unprofitable grapes, such as wild grapes; but grapes offensive to the smell, noxious, poisonous. By the force and intent of the allegory, to good grapes ought to be opposed fruit of a dangerous and pernicious quality; as, in the explication of it, to judgment is opposed tyranny, and to righteousness, oppression. x'x¥Ÿ (gephen), the vine, is a common name or genus, including several species under it; and Moses, to distinguish the true vine, or that from which wine is made, from the rest. calls it, Numbers 6:4, x'x¥Ÿ x''x™x™xŸ (gephen haiyayin), the wine-vine. Some of the other sorts were of a poisonous quality, as appears from the story related among the miraculous acts of Elisha, 2 Kings 4:39-41. –And one went out into the field to gather potherbs; and he found a Seld vine, and he gathered from it wild fruit, his lapful; and he went and shred them into the pot of pottage, for they knew them not. And they poured it out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out and said, There is death in the pot, O man of God; and they could not eat of it. And he said, Bring meal, (leg. x\$—x• (kechu), nine MSS., one edition), and he threw it into the pot. And he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was nothing hurtful in the pot.–

From some such sorts of poisonous fruits of the grape kind Moses has taken these strong and highly poetical images, with which he has set forth the future corruption and extreme degeneracy of the Israelites, in an allegory which has a near relation, both in its subject and imagery, to this of Isaiah: Deuteronomy 32:32, Deuteronomy 32:33.

Their vine is from the vine of Sodom,
 And from the fields of Gomorrah:
 Their grapes are grapes of gall;
 Their clusters are bitter:

Their wine is the poison of dragons,
And the cruel venom of aspicks.

I am inclined to believe, says Hasselquist, that the prophet here, Isaiah 5:2-4, means the hoary nightshade, solanum incanum; because it is common in Egypt, Palestine, and the East; and the Arabian name agrees well with it. The Arabs call it (anab el dib), i.e., wolf grapes. The *beushim*, says Rab. Chai., is a well known species of the vine, and the worst of all sorts. The prophet could not have found a plant more opposite to the vine than this; for it grows much in the vineyards, and is very pernicious to them; wherefore they root it out: it likewise resembles a vine by its shrubby stalk; Travels, p. 289. See also Michaelis Questions aux Voyageurs Danois, No. 64.

Verse 3

Inhabitants - *yoshebey*, in the plural number; three MSS., (two ancient), and so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate.

Verse 6

There shall come up briers and thorns The thorn shall spring up in it - One MS. has *beshamir*. The true reading seems to be *bo shamir*, which is confirmed by the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 7

And he looked for judgment - The paronomasia, or play on the words, in this place, is very remarkable; (*mishpat*), (*mishpach*), (*tsedakah*), (*tseakah*). There are many examples of it in the other prophets, but Isaiah seems peculiarly fond of it. See Isaiah 13:6, Isaiah 24:17, Isaiah 32:7, Isaiah 28:1, Isaiah 57:6, Isaiah 61:3, Isaiah 65:11, Isaiah 65:12. Rabbi David Kimchi has noticed the paronomasia here: he expected *mishpat*, judgment, but behold *mishpach*, oppression; he expected *tsedakah*, righteousness, but behold *tseakah*, a cry. The rabbins esteem it a great beauty; their term for it is *tsachoth haltashon*, elegance of language.

Oppression - *tyranny* - *mishpach*, from *shaphach*, servum fecit, Arab. Houbigant: *shiphchah* is *serva*, a handmaid or female slave. *mispach*, eighteen MSS.

Verse 8

Wo unto them that - lay field to field You who lay field unto field - Read *takribu*, in the second person; to answer to the verb following. So Vulgate.

Verse 9

In mine ears. To mine ear - The sentence in the Hebrew text seems to be imperfect in this place; as likewise in Isaiah 22:14 (note), where the very same sense seems to be required as here. See the note there; and compare 1 Samuel 9:15 (note). In this place the Septuagint supply the word *ἰσχυρῶς*, and the Syriac *eshtama*, auditus est Jehovah in auribus meis, i.e., *x'xex* (niglah), as in Isaiah 22:14.

Many houses - This has reference to what was said in the preceding verse: In vain are ye so intent upon joining house to house, and field to field; your houses shall be left uninhabited, and your fields shall become desolate and barren; so that a vineyard of ten acres shall produce but one bath (not eight gallons) of wine, and the husbandman shall reap but a tenth part of the seed which he has sown. Kimchi says this means such an extent of vineyard as would require ten yoke of oxen to plough in one day.

Verse 11

Wo unto them that rise up early - There is a likeness between this and the following passage of the prophet Amos, Amos 6:3-6, who probably wrote before Isaiah. If the latter be the copier, he seems hardly to have equalled the elegance of the original: -

Ye that put far away the evil day
And affect the seat of violence;
Who lie upon beds of ivory,
And stretch yourselves upon your couches;
And eat the lambs from the flock,
And calves from the midst of the stall;
Who chant to the sound of the viol,
And like David invent for yourselves instruments of music;
Who quaff wine in large bowls,

And are anointed with the choicest ointments:
But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.â€

Kimchi says, â€they consider not the heavens nor their hosts: they pray not the morning nor the evening prayer unto the Lord.â€

Follow strong drink - Theodoret and Chrysostom on this place, both Syrians, and unexceptionable witnesses in what belongs to their own country, inform us that שׁיכר (shechar) (ἰψίθυμῶν in the Greek of both Testaments, rendered by us by the general term strong drink) meant properly palm wine, or date wine, which was and is still much in use in the Eastern countries. Judea was famous for the abundance and excellence of its palm trees; and consequently had plenty of this wine. â€Fiunt (vina) et e pomis; primumque e palmis, quo Parthi et Indutur, et oriens totus: maturarum modio in aquae congiis tribus macerato expressoque.â€ Plin. lib. 14:19. â€Ab his cariotae [palmae] maxime celebrantur; et cibo quidem, sed et succo, uberrimae. Ex quibus praecipua vina orienti; iniqua capiti, unde porno nomen.â€ Id. 13:9. ἰψίθυμῶν, signifies stupefaction: and in Hebrew likewise the wine has its name from its remarkably inebriating quality.

Verse 13

And their honorable men â€And the noblesâ€ - These verses have likewise a reference to the two preceding. They that indulged in feasting and drinking shall perish with hunger and thirst; and Hades shall indulge his appetite as much as they had done, and devour them all. The image is strong and expressive in the highest degree. Habakkuk 2:5, uses the same image with great force: - the ambitious and avaricious conqueror.

â€Enlarge his appetite like Hades;
And he is like Death, and will never be satisfied,â€

But, in Isaiah, Hades is introduced to much greater advantage, in person; and placed before our eyes in the form of a ravenous monster, opening wide his immeasurable jaws, and swallowing them all together: â€Therefore Shoel hath dilated her soul, she hath opened her mouth beyond limit.â€ Destruction expects more than a common meal, when God visits Jerusalem for her iniquities. This seems to refer to the ruin brought on the Jews by the Romans. Our blessed Lord repeats this parable, and applies it to this very transaction, Matthew 21:33.

Verse 17

The lambs â€And the kidsâ€ - שׁיכר (gerim), â€strangers.â€ The Septuagint read, more agreeably to the design of the prophet, שׁיכר (carim), ἰψίθυμῶν, â€the lambs.â€ שׁיכר (gedayim), â€the kids,â€ Dr. Durell; nearer to the present reading: and so Archbishop Secker. The meaning is, their luxurious habitations shall be so entirely destroyed as to become a pasture for flocks.

After their manner â€Without restraintâ€ - שׁיכר (kedobram), secundum duetum eorum; i.e. suo ipsorum ductu; as their own will shall lead them.

Verse 18

With a cart-rope â€As a long cableâ€ - The Septuagint, Aquila, Sym., and Theod., for שׁיכר (bechabley), read שׁיכר (kechahley), ἰψίθυμῶν, or ἰψίθυμῶν; and the Septuagint, instead of שׁיכר (shau), read some other word signifying long; ἰψίθυμῶν, ἰψίθυμῶν; and so likewise the Syriac, שׁיכר (arecha). Houbigant conjectures that the word which the Septuagint had in their copies was שׁיכר (sarua), which is used Leviticus 21:18, Leviticus 22:23, for something in an animal body superfluous, lengthened beyond its natural measure. And he explains it of sin added to sin, and one sin drawing on another, till the whole comes to an enormous length and magnitude; compared to the work of a rope-maker still increasing and lengthening his rope, with the continued addition of new materials. â€Eos propheta similes facit homini restiario, qui funem torquet, cannabe addita et contorta, eadem iterans, donec funem in longum duxerit, neque eum liceat protrahi longius.â€ â€An evil inclination,â€ says Kimchi on this place, from the ancient rabbins, â€is at the beginning like a fine hair-string, but at the finishing like a thick cart-rope.â€ By a long progression in iniquity, and a continued accumulation of sin, men arrive at length to the highest degree of wickedness; bidding open defiance to God, and scoffing at his threatened judgments, as it is finely expressed in the next verse. The Chaldee paraphrast explains it in the same manner, of wickedness increasing from small beginnings, till it arrives to a great magnitude. - L.

I believe neither the rabbins nor Bishop Lowth have hit on the true meaning of this place, the prophet seems to refer to idol sacrifices. The victims they offered were splendidly decked out for the sacrifice. Their horns and hoofs were often gilded, and their heads dressed out with fillets and garlands. The cords of vanity may refer to the silken strings by which they were led to the altar, some of which were unusually thick. The offering for iniquity was adorned with fillets and garlands; the sin-offering with silken cords, like unto cart-ropes. Pride, in

their acts of humiliation, had the upper hand.

Verse 19

Let the counsel of the Holy One - Tryphiodorus has an expression something like this: -

- $\hat{\mu} \in \hat{\mu}^1 \hat{I}^1 \hat{I}_2, \hat{I} \hat{I} \dots \hat{I}_2 \hat{I}_2 \dots \hat{I} \hat{I}.$

Tryph. II Excid. 239.

Because the counsel of Jupiter was come.

â€œThis expression, $\text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I}$, is, I believe, something uncommon; but it is exactly paralleled and explained by a passage in Isaiah, Isaiah 5:19. The Septuagint has expressed it in the very same words with Tryphiodorus: $\text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I}$ $\frac{1}{4} \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I}$, $\frac{1}{4} \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I}$, $\frac{1}{4} \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I} \dots \text{I}$.â€ - Merrick's note, ad loc.

Verse 22

Mighty to drink wine - They show not, says Kimchi, **their strength in combating their enemies, but in drunkenness and debauchery.**

Verse 23

The righteous - $x|x^{\text{TM}}x\text{\$}$ (tsaddik), singular, Sept. Vulg., and two editions.

Verse 24

The flame – The tongue of fire – – The flame, because it is in the shape of a tongue; and so it is called metaphorically. – Sal. ben Melec. The metaphor is so exceedingly obvious, as well as beautiful, that one may wonder that it has not been more frequently used. Virgil very elegantly intimates, rather than expresses, the image; –

Ecce levis summo de vertice visus Iuli

Fundere lumen apex; tactuque innoxia molli

Lambere flamma comas, et circum tempora pasci.

Aen. 2:682.

â€œStrange to relate! from young lulusâ€™ head

A lambent flame arose, which gently spread

Around his brows, and on his temples fed.â€•

And more boldly of Aetna darting out flames from its top: -

Interdumque atram prorumpit ad aethera nubem,

Turbine fumantem piceo, et candente favilla:

Attollitque globos flammarum, et sidera lambit.

Aen. 3:574.

â€œBy turns a pitchy cloud she rolls on high,

By turns hot embers from her entrails fly,

And flakes of mountain flames, that lick the sky.â€•

The disparped tongues, as it were of fire, Acts 2:3, which appeared at the descent of the Holy Spirit, on the apostles, give the same idea; that is, of flames shooting diversely into pyramidal forms, or points, like tongues. It may be farther observed that the prophet in this place has given the metaphor its full force, in applying it to the action of fire in eating up and devouring whatever comes in its way, like a ravenous animal whose tongue is principally employed in taking in his food or prey; which image Moses has strongly exhibited in an expressive comparison: "And Moab said to the elders of Midian Now shall this collection of people lick up all that are around about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field," Numbers 22:4. See also 1 Kings 18:38.

Their root shall be as rottenness - x̣x̣žx̣š (cammak), like (mak); whence probably our word muck, dung, was derived.

Verse 25

The hills did tremble & the mountains trembled - Probably referring to the great earthquakes in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, in or not long before the time of the prophet himself, recorded as a remarkable era in the title of the prophecies of Amos., Amos 1:1, and by Zechariah, Zechariah 14:5.

Verse 26

He will - hiss - He will hiss - The metaphor is taken from the practice of those that keep bees, who draw them out of their hives into the fields, and lead them back again, ἵψι...ἵψι ἵψι, by a hiss or a whistle. - Cyril, on this place; and to the same purpose Theodoret, ib. In Isaiah 7:18, the metaphor is more

