



beginningOf Fair Zion's guilt;Israel's transgressionsCan be traced to you!

1:14 Truly, you must give a farewell giftTo Moresheth-gath.The houses of Achzib arehThe houses of Achzib are Emendation yields "Fair Achzib is." To the kings of IsraelLike a spring that fails.

1:15 A dispossessor will I bring to youWho dwell in Mareshah;At Adullam the gloryOf Israel shall set.

1:16 Shear off your hair and make yourself baldmake yourself bald A common rite of mourning; cf. Jer. 7.29. For the children you once delighted in;Make yourself as bald as a vulture,For they have been banished from you.

2:1 Ah, those who plan iniquityAnd design evil on their beds;When morning dawns, they do it,For they have the power.

2:2 They covet fields, and seize them;Houses, and take them away.They defraud men of their homes,And people of their land.

2:3 Assuredly, thus said GOD: I am planning such a misfortune against this clan that you will not be able to free your necks from it. You will not be able to walk erect; it will be such a time of disaster.

2:4 In that day,One shall recite a poem about you,And utter a bitter lament,And shall say:"My people's portion changes hands;How it slips away from me!Our field is allotted to a rebel.arebel Emendation yields "ravager." We are utterly ravaged."bMy people's portion ... ravaged Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

2:5 Truly, none of youShall cast a lot cordccast a lot cord On a piece of land, thus acquiring title to it; cf. Josh. 18.6 and Ps. 16.6. In the assembly of GOD!

2:6 "Stop preaching!" they preach."That's no way to preach;Shame shall not overtake [us].

2:7 Is the House of Jacob condemned?dShame ... condemned Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Is GOD's patience short?Has such been the practice?"To be sure, My words are friendlyTo those who walk in rectitude;

2:8 But an enemy arises againstean enemy arises against Meaning of Heb. uncertain; emendation yields "you arise as enemies against." My people.You strip the mantle with the cloakfwith the cloak Meaning of Heb. uncertain; emendation yields "off peaceful folk." Off such as pass unsuspecting,Who are turned away from war.gWho are turned away from war Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

2:9 You drive the women of My people awayFrom their pleasant homes;You deprive their infantsOf My glory forever.

2:10 Up and depart!This is no resting placeBecause of [your] defilement.Terrible destruction shall befall.hBecause of ... befall Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

2:11 If someone were to go about utteringWindy, baseless falsehoods:"I'll preach to you in favor of wine and liquor"—That would be a preacher [acceptable] to this people.

2:12 iThis verse and the next may offer another example of the "acceptable" preaching mentioned in v. 11. I will assemble Jacob, all of you;I will bring together the remnant of Israel;I will make them all like sheep of Bozrah,jof Bozrah Emendation yields "in a fold [Arabic sirah]." Like a flock inside

its penken Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—They will be noisy with people.

2:13 One who makes a breachGoes before them;They enlarge it to a gateAnd leave by it.Their king marches before them, GOD at their head.

3:1 I said:Listen, you rulers of Jacob,You chiefs of the House of Israel!For you ought to know what is right,

3:2 aSyntax of this verse and the next uncertain. But you hate good and love evil.

3:3 You have devoured My people's flesh;You have flayed the skin off them,And after tearing their skins off them,And their flesh off their bones,bAnd after tearing their skins off them, / And their flesh off their bones Moved down from v. 2 for clarity. And breaking their bones to bits,You have cut it up as intocas into Meaning of Heb. uncertain; Septuagint and Syriac read "like flesh in." a pot,Like meat in a cauldron.

3:4 Someday they shall cry out to GOD,But they will not be answered;At that time the divine face will be hidden,In accordance with the wrongs they have done.

3:5 Thus said GOD to the prophetsWho lead My people astray,Who cry "Peace!"When they have something to chew,But launch a war on thoseWho fail to fill their mouths:

3:6 Assuredly,It shall be night for youSo that you cannot prophesy,And it shall be dark for youSo that you cannot divine;The sun shall set on the prophets,And the day shall be darkened for them.

3:7 The seers shall be shamedAnd the diviners confounded;They shall cover their upper lips,dcover their upper lips As a sign of mourning; cf. Ezek. 24.17, 22; Lev. 13.45. Because no response comes from God.

3:8 But I,I am filled with strength by the spirit of GOD,And with judgment and courage,To declare to Jacob his transgressionsAnd to Israel his sin.

3:9 Hear this, you rulers of the House of Jacob,You chiefs of the House of Israel,Who detest justiceAnd make crooked all that is straight,

3:10 Who build Zion with crime,Jerusalem with iniquity!

3:11 Her rulers judge for gifts,Her priests give rulings for a fee,And her prophets divine for pay;Yet they rely upon GOD, saying, " GOD is in our midst;No calamity shall overtake us."

3:12 Assuredly, because of youZion shall be plowed as a field,Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruinsAnd the Temple Mount a shrine in the woods.

4:1 aCf. Isa. 2.2–4. In the days to come,The Mount of GOD's House shall standFirm above the mountains;And it shall tower above the hills.The peoples shall gaze on it with joy,

4:2 And the many nations shall go and shall say:"Come,Let us go up to the Mount of GOD,To the House of the God of Jacob;That we may be instructed in God's ways,And that we may walk in godly paths."For instruction shall come forthbinstruction shall come forth I.e., oracles will be obtainable. from Zion,The word of GOD from Jerusalem.

4:3 Thus [God] will judge among the many peoples,And arbitrate for the multitude of nations,However distant;And they shall beat their swords into plowsharescplowshares More exactly, the iron points with which wooden plows were tipped. And their spears into pruning hooks.Nation shall not take upSword

against nation; They shall never again know know Cf. Judg. 3.2. war;

4:4 But every family shall sit Under its own vine and fig tree With no one to disturb them. For it was GOD of Hosts who spoke.

4:5 Though all the peoples walk Each in the names of its gods, We will walk In the name of the ETERNAL our God Forever and ever.

4:6 In that day—declares GOD—I will assemble the lame [sheep] And will gather the outcast And those I have treated harshly;

4:7 And I will turn the lame into a remnant And the expelled expelled Meaning of Heb. uncertain; emendation yields “weaklings”; cf. Ezek. 34.4. into a populous nation. And GOD will reign over them on Mount Zion Now and for evermore.

4:8 And you, O Migdal-eder, fMigdal-eder Apparently near Bethlehem; see Gen. 35.19–21. Outpost of Fair Zion, It shall come to you: gOutpost of Fair Zion, / It shall come to you Meaning of Heb. uncertain. The former monarchy shall return—The kingship of Fair Jerusalem. hFair Jerusalem Emendation yields “the House of Israel”; cf. 5.1–2.

4:9 Now why do you utter such cries? Is there no king in you, Have your advisors perished, That you have been seized by writhing Like a woman in travail?

4:10 Writhe and scream, iscream Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Fair Zion, Like a woman in travail! For now you must leave the city And dwell in the country—And you will reach Babylon. There you shall be saved, There GOD will redeem you From the hands of your foes.

4:11 Indeed, many nations Have assembled against you Who think, “Let our eye Obscenely gaze jObscenely gaze Meaning of Heb. uncertain. on Zion.”

4:12 But they do not know GOD’s design, They do not divine the intent: They have been gathered Like cut grain to the threshing floor.

4:13 Up and thresh, Fair Zion! For I will give you horns of iron And provide you with hoofs of bronze, And you will crush the many peoples. You k You Heb. -ti serves here as the ending of the second-person singular feminine; cf. Judg. 5.7 and note; Jer. 2.20; etc. will devote their riches to GOD, Their wealth to the Sovereign of all the earth.

4:14 Now you gash yourself in grief. lin grief Meaning of Heb. uncertain. They have laid siege to us; They strike the ruler of Israel On the cheek with a staff.

5:1 And you, O Bethlehem of Ephrath, aEphrath The clan to which the Bethlehemites belonged; see 1 Sam. 17.12; Ruth 1.2; 4.11. Least among the clans of Judah, From you one shall come forth To rule Israel for Me—One whose origin is from of old, From ancient times.

5:2 b Meaning of verse uncertain. Truly, [God] will leave them [helpless] Until she who is to bear has borne; chas borne I.e., has given birth to a ruler, shepherd (v. 3), to deliver Israel from the Assyrians (vv. 4–5). Then the rest of his kindred Shall return to the children of Israel.

5:3 He shall stand and shepherd By the might of GOD, By the power of the name Of the ETERNAL his God, And they shall dwell [secure]. For lo, he shall wax great To the ends of the earth;

5:4 And that shall afford safety. Should Assyria invade our land And tread upon our fortresses, dfortresses Septuagint and Syriac read “soil”; cf. v. 5. We will set up over that nation that nation Heb. “it.” seven shepherds, Eight princes of other nations, fother nations Lit. “human beings.”

5:5 Who will shepherd Assyria's land with swords, The land of Nimrod in its gates. In its gates Emendation yields "with drawn blades"; cf. Ps. 37.14; 55.22. Thus he will deliver [us] From Assyria, should it invade our land, And should it trample our country.

5:6 The remnant of Jacob shall be, In the midst of the many peoples, Like dew from GOD, Like droplets on grass—Which do not look to anybody Nor place their hope in mortals.

5:7 The remnant of Jacob Shall be among the nations, In the midst of the many peoples, Like a lion among beasts of the wild, Like a fierce lion among flocks of sheep, Which tramples wherever it goes And rends, with none to deliver.

5:8 Your hand shall prevail over your foes, And all your enemies shall be cut down!

5:9 In that day—declares GOD—I will destroy the horses in your midst And wreck your chariots.

5:10 I will destroy the cities of your land And demolish all your fortresses.

5:11 I will destroy the sorcery you practice, And you shall have no more soothsayers.

5:12 I will destroy your idols And the sacred pillars in your midst; And no more shall you bow down To the work of your hands.

5:13 I will tear down the sacred posts sacred posts Used in worship of the goddess Asherah. in your midst And destroy your cities. icities Emendation yields "idols."

5:14 In anger and wrath Will I wreak retribution On the nations nations Emendation yields "arrogant." that have not obeyed.

6:1 Hear what GOD is saying: Come, present [My] case before the mountains, And let the hills hear you pleading.

6:2 Hear, you mountains, GOD's case— You firm You firm Emendation yields "Give ear, you." foundations of the earth! For GOD has a case against this covenanted people—A suit against Israel.

6:3 "My people! What wrong have I done you? What hardship have I caused you? Testify against Me.

6:4 In fact, I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage, And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

6:5 "My people, Remember what Balak king of Moab Plotted against you, And how Balaam son of Beor Responded to him. [Recall your passage] From Shittim to Gilgal b From Shittim to Gilgal I.e., the crossing of the Jordan; see Josh. 3.1, 14–4.19.—And you will recognize GOD's gracious acts."

6:6 With what shall I approach GOD, Do homage to God on high? Shall I approach with burnt offerings, With calves a year old?

6:7 Would GOD be pleased with thousands of rams, With myriads of streams of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, The fruit of my body for my sins?

6:8 "You have been told, O mortal, what is good, And what GOD requires of you: Only to do justice And to love goodness, And to walk modestly with your God; to walk modestly with your God Or "it is prudent to serve your God."

6:9 Then will your name achieve wisdom." d Then will your name achieve wisdom Emendation yields "And it is worthwhile to revere God's name." Hark! GOD

Summons the city: the city Apparently the capital of either the northern or southern kingdom. Hear, O scepter; For who can direct her

6:10 but you? Hear ... but you? Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Will I overlook, govern Taking 'ish as from nashah "to forget"; cf. Deut. 32.18. in houses of the wicked, The granaries of wickedness And the accursed short ephah? short ephah Cf. Amos 8.4–5.

6:11 Shall they they Heb. "I"; change of vocalization yields "Will I acquit them." be acquitted despite wicked balances And a bag of fraudulent weights?—

6:12 This verse would read well after "city" in v. 9. Whose wealthy are full of lawlessness, And whose inhabitants speak treachery, With tongues of deceit in their mouths.

6:13 I, in turn, have beaten you sore, Have stunned [you] for your sins:

6:14 You have been eating without getting your fill, And there is a gnawing at your vitals; You have been conceiving without bearing young, And there is a gnawing ... bearing young Meaning of Heb. uncertain. And what you bore I would deliver to the sword.

6:15 You have been sowing, but have nothing to reap; You have trod olives, but have no oil for rubbing, And grapes grapes Lit. "new wine." but have no wine to drink.

6:16 Yet you have kept you have kept Heb. "is kept." the laws of Omri, And all the practices of the House of Ahab, And have followed what they devised. Therefore I will make you an object of horror And the city's the city's Heb. "her"; cf. v. 9. inhabitants an object of hissing; hissing See note at Jer. 18.16. And you shall bear the mockery of peoples, peoples Heb. "My people."

7:1 Woe is me! The speaker is feminine (cf. 'Elohayikh, v. 10), probably Samaria personified; cf. note at 6.16. I am become like leavings of a fig harvest, Like gleanings when the vintage is over, There is not a cluster to eat, Not a ripe fig I could desire.

7:2 The pious are vanished from the land, None upright are left among its people; All lie in wait to commit crimes, One traps the other in a net.

7:3 Meaning of verse uncertain. They are eager to do evil: The magistrate makes demands, And the judge [judges] for a fee; The rich one makes a crooked plea, And they grant it.

7:4 The best of them is like a prickly shrub; The [most] upright, worse than a barrier of thorns. On the day you waited for, On the day you waited for Meaning of Heb. uncertain. your doom has come—Now their confusion shall come to pass.

7:5 Trust no friend, Rely on no intimate; Be guarded in speech With her who lies in your bosom.

7:6 For son spurns father, Daughter rises up against mother, Daughter-in-law against mother-in-law—A man's own household Are his enemies.

7:7 Yet I will look to GOD, I will wait for the God who saves me, My God will hear me.

7:8 Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy! denemy Heb. feminine, apparently referring to Damascus. Though I have fallen, I rise again; Though I sit in darkness, GOD is my light.

7:9 I must bear GOD's anger—Against whom I have sinned,Until my cause is championedAnd my claim upheld.I will be brought out into the light;I will enjoy divine vindication.

7:10 When my enemyenemy See note at v. 8. sees it,She shall be covered with shame,She who taunts me with “Where is this God of yours, the ETERNAL One ?”My eyes shall behold her [downfall];Lo, she shall be for tramplingLike mud in the streets.

7:11 A day for mending your wallswalls To keep out trampers (end of preceding verse); cf. Isa. 5.5; Ps. 80.13–14.—That is a far-off day.

7:12 This is rather a day when to you[Trampers] will come streamingFrom Assyria and the towns of Egypt—From [every land from] Egypt to the Euphrates,From sea to sea and from mountain to mountain—

7:13 And youryour Heb. “the.” land shall become a desolation—Because of those who dwell in it—As the fruit of their misdeeds.

7:14 Oh, shepherd Your people with Your staff,Your very own flock.May they who dwell isolatedIn a woodland surrounded by farmlandhIn a woodland surrounded by farmland I.e., the land west of the Jordan, which is represented as far less fertile than adjacent regions. GrazeiGraze Emendation yields “possess.”

Bashan and GileadAs in olden days.

7:15 I will show himjI will show him Emendation yields “Show us.” wondrous deedsAs in the days when You sallied forth from the land of Egypt.

7:16 Let nations behold and be ashamedDespite all their might;Let them put hand to mouth;Let their ears be deafened!

7:17 Let them lick dust like snakes,Like crawling things on the ground!Let them come trembling out of their strongholdsLet them come trembling out of their strongholds Meaning of Heb. uncertain. To the ETERNAL our God;Let them fear and dread You!

7:18 Who is a God like You,Forgiving iniquityAnd remitting transgression—Not staying angry foreverToward the remnant of Your own people,Because You!Your... You Heb. 3rd person. love graciousness!

7:19 [God] will take us back in love,QuashingmQuashing Or, perhaps, “Forgiving,” as in Akkadian kabasu. our iniquities.You will hurl all ourour Heb. “their.” sinsInto the depths of the sea.

7:20 You will keep faith with Jacob,Loyalty to Abraham,As You promised on oath to our fathersIn days gone by.