

Treatise on the symbolism of Biblical prophecy (Section 1)

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Ms 2.1

† see the next page < insertion from f 1v > A wound or sore, if not of a single person but of a people or kingdome signifies a stroke or plague by war famin or pestilence, but chiefly by war. ffor smiting a people or nation is the ordinary scripture phrase for smiting them with the sword: & the proper effect of smiting is a wound: which if it be not bound up & soon healed grows putred, ulcerate, very painful & sometimes incurable. To bind up & heale is to restore a kingdom. Whence if after smiting it be not soon restored & healed, its desolation will be fitly represented a putred & painful sore. So then by a wound, if described great but not of a putred or ulcerate kind we are to understand only a violent & sudden smiting by a prevailing enemy ; but if not bound up, if ulcerate, noisome or painful, a durable & tedious as well as vexatious desolation; & if incurable, a final desolation or at least a very durable one. And thus we shall find these phrases used by the Prophets. Despise not - - - sword. Iob 5.18, 19, 20 < text from f 1r resumes > Thus in Iob 5.18, 19, 20. Depise not the chastisement of the Almighty. ffor he maketh sore and bindeth up, he woundeth & his hands make whole. He shal deliver thee {in} six troubles yea in seaven shall no evil touch thee. In famin he shall redeem thee from death & in war from the power of the sword. Again in 2 Chron 6.28. 29 Solomon in dedicating the Temple prays thus for Israel. If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew locusts or caterpillers; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land: whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness there be: Then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore & his own grief & shall spread forth his hands in this house: Then hear thou from heaven &c. In the Lamentations chap 3.12 the Prophet Jeremy introduces Ierusalem thus bewailing her captivity in Babylon: He (God) hath made me desolate he hath bent his bow & set me as a mark for the arrow, he hath caused the arrow of his quiver to enter into my reines. So in Ier. 10.18, 19. Thus saith the Lord. Behold I will sling out the inhabitants <2r> of the Land at this once & I will disress them that they may find it so. Wo is me for my hurt, my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is a grief & I must bear it. My tabernacle is spoiled &c. Thus also Isaiah chap. 1.5, 6, 7 described the desolation of Iudah, They have provoked the holy one of Israel unto anger. They are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more & more. The whole head is sick & the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises & putrifying sores : they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. And then {illeg} describing what was this stricking for their revoltings, what that sickness of the head & heart, those grievous wounds bruises & sores from the foot to head made by that striking which had not been bound up not anointed, he adds in the next words Your countrey is desolate your cities burnt with fire: your land strangers devour in your presence & it is desolate as overthrown by strangers. In like manner Moses in Deuter. 28.35 prophetically describes the long captivity & dispersion of the Iews into all Nations by a botch that cannot be healed from the sole of the foot to the top of the head. So again in Ier 30.11, &c {illeg} Though I make a full end of all nations whether I have scattered thee yet will I not make a full end of thee but I will correct thee in measure & will not leave thee altogether unpunished. ffor thus saith the Lord thy bruise is uncurable & thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause <3r> that thou mayst be bound up.

Thou hast no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten thee. They seek thee not. ffor I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy; with the chastisement of a cruel one for the multitude of thine iniquity because thye sins were increased. Why criest thou for thine affliction? Thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity. Because thy sins were increased I have done these things unto thee. Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured, & all thine adversaries every one of them shall go into captivity & they that spoile thee shall be a spoile & all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. ffor I will restore health unto thee & heal thee of thy wounds saith the Lord because they called thee an outcast, saying This is Zion whom no man seeketh after. Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring again the captivity of Iacobs tents & Thus also in Isa 30.26 this return from captivity is called the day that the Lord bindeth up the ^[1] breach of his people & healeth the stroke of their wound ffor which expressions the Targum Jonathan hath, In die qua reducet Deus captivitatem populi sui & infirmitatem plagæ ejus sanabit. And to the same purpose it is that the Prophet Nahum, chap. 3.19, describing the siege & final desolation of Nineveh by the sword concludes in these words There is no healing of thy bruise: thy wound is grievous: All that hear the bruit of thee shall clap their hands over thee. Thus full is the consent of the Prophets in their use of this phrase. <4r> So in the Apocalyps chap 16. in the fift Vial, at whose pouring out, the kingdom of the Beast became full of darkness, that is ^[2] obscured by a cloud of invading enemies {illeg}: its said that they of this kingdome blasphemed God because of their pains and of their sores. And so in the first Vial the grievous & noysome sore which fell on the worshippers of the beast (if we will keep to the use of the phrase) must signify a grievous & tedious plague of warr falling on that kingdom.. But the wound of the Beast with a sword, being not described a putred ulcerated noisome or painful sore but a wound healed again, as if it were healed whilst a green wound, will properly signify only a sudden & remarkable smitting that kingdom & conquering it (for the wound was deadly) & the restitution of it soon after to its former state, without any vexatious & tedious harassing & wasting the conquered subjects in the middle time.

Pain of a nation signifies the same thing with a sore as you may see in the passages quoted in the last paragraph, & in these. Why is my pain perpetual & my wound incurable which refuseth to be healed? Ier 15.18: which words are of Ierusalem lamenting her long captivity & dispersion. Again, Babylon is suddenly fallen & destroyed. Howl for her take Balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon but shee is not healed. Ier 51.8. ‡ < insertion from f 3v > ‡ There shall be no more prince in the land of Ægypt - I will make Pathros desolate - I will pour out my fury upon Sin the strength of Ægypt. Sin shall have great pain, & No shall be rent asunder & Noph shall have distresses dayly. The young men of Aven and of Philbeseth shall fall by the sword. Ezek 30.16 < text from f 4r resumes > So in the Apocalyps c 16.10 They gnawed their tongues for pain, & blasphemed the God of heaven because of <5r> their pains & their sores. And Apoc 21.4 Neither shall there be any more pain that is no more war upon the saints no more persecution. To which purpose are also the expressions there that there shall be no more sorrow nor crying & Apoc 7.17 God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes, like that of Isaiah cap 25.8. He will swallow up death in victory & the Lord God will wipe away teares from of all faces & the rebuke of his people will he take from off all the earth. To which place the two former in Apoc 7 & 21 seem to referr.

And because pain and dolour is used to signify the labouring of a Nation under an enemy, & God used to deliver up his people into the hands of their enemies for Idolatry, hence it is that among the Hebrews the words קצב {illeg} labor molestia, dolor - צידים dolores, מפלצה horror, & אימים terrores, were used as ordinary names for Idols, as you may see in Ier 22.28. Psal 106.36. Isa 45.16. 1 King. 15.30 Ier 50.38 & other places.

But to express the pain & misery of hostile desolations the greater, it is often represented by the pains of a woman in travail. And some times this pain is put to express the terrour & consternation at the evil approaching. Behold a people cometh from the North countrey - we have heard the fame thereof, our hands wax feeble anguish hath taken hold of us & pain as of a woman in travail. Go not forth into the field nor walk by the way for the sword of the enemy & fear is on every side. Ier 6.22, 24, 25. To the <6r> same purpose see Isa 13.8. Ier 48.41. & 49.22 & 50.43. But here we are to conceive the dread of the evil approaching to beare analogy with the feare & fainting of a woman at her pains approaching {illeg}, & the evil it self with the real pain. ‡ < insertion from f 5v > ‡ And because the Church of God is frequently compared to a woman therefore is this figure used chiefly to express the affliction of the Church under her enemies. Thus our Saviour in Mat 24.8, 9 & Mark 13.9 describing the future persecutions of the Church calls them ὀδύνας. So Isaiah ch 66.7 speaking of the Iewish church saith, Before she travailed she brought forth, before her pain came she was delivered of a Man child: which the Chalde Paraphrast thus interprets Antequam veniat ei tribulatio redempta erit, antequam veniat ei tremor sicut dolores parturientis revelabitur Rex ejus. Ieremiah also in ch

30.6, 7 interprets this figure plainly: We have heard a voice of trembling of fear & not of peace Ask ye now, saith he & see whether a man doth travail wiith child. Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in travail, & all faces are turned into paleness? Alas for that day is great so that none is like it. It is even the time of Jacobs trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. - And strangers shall he more serve themselves of him. So in Micah ch. 4.10. Why dost - - - < text from f 6r resumes > Thus in Micah 4.10. Why dost thou cry out aloud? Is there no king in thee? Is thy counsellor perished? ffor pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail. Be in pain and labour to bring forth O daughter of Zion like a woman in travail: for now thou shalt go forth out of the city, & thou shalt dwell in the feild, & thou shalt go even to Babylon. There shalt thou be delivered. There the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. To the same purpose see Isa 26.17 & Ier 22.23. And so in the Apocalyps, the Church being represented by a woman whose seed kept the commandments of God & have the testimony of Iesus Christ:, to signify her being under a great persecution she is described crying & in pain to be delivered. ffor that this pain & crying signifies a persecution & that a very violent one is further exprest by her being cloathed with the sun the most hot & fiery of all things, & by the Dragon's standing before her & drawing the third part of the starrs of heaven with his taile & casting them to the earth: that is by her being agitated with vehement †^[3] war for so fire always signifies; & by the Dragons being her adversary, & with his †^[4] army dragging & casting down the †^[5] saints of heaven. Whence upon the <7r> ensuing victory over the Dragon tis added that they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb & by the word of their testimony - & loved not their lives unto the death.

And as pain in travail signifies labouring under a persecuting enemy, so delivery signifies redemption from the hand of the enemy, the pains then ceasing, & the new born child signifies the new kingdome brought forth upon her delivery: as you may see in the places last cited Labour to bring forth o daughter of Zion like a woman in travail - - - Thou shalt go even to Babylon. There shalt thou be delivered: there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. Ier 22.23. Here after ye pangs of desolation & captivity, her delivery at Babylon is expresly called redemption from the hand of the enemy, & what was that but the redemption wrought by Cyrus conquering the proud enemy & setting the miserable Iews at liberty? And what was the Infant the daughter of Zion brought forth but the new born body politick of the Iews led back from Babylon under Zerubbabel? So again in Isa. 26.17 speaking of the long captivity & final redemption of Israel: Thou hast removed [the nation] far unto all the ends of the earth. Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastning was upon them. Like as a woman in child that draweth neare the time of her delivery is in pain & cryeth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight, o Lord. We have been with child, We have been <8r> in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind. we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth neither have the inhabitants or the world fallen. Thy dead men shall live - - - Come my people - - hide thy self as it were for a little moment till the indignation be overpast. ffor behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth. &c All which with what follows in the next chapter is as much as to say, that the dispersed Iews were with child of a new polity & laboured long as a women in travel, by the fall of their enemies to work themselves deliverance & bring it forth, but brought forth nothing: but at length when the indignation was over God should overthrow their enemies & restore Israel. But in Isa 66.7 the Prophet is much more plain. Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake [i.e. the Gentiles which dispersed & long hated you & were converted to Christianity] said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy & they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendeth recompence to his enemies. Before she travailed shee brought forth, before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child. Who hath heard such things? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a Nation be born at once? ffor as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth & not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth & shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoyce ye with Ierusalem & be glad with her all ye that love her: rejoyce for <9r> joy with her all ye that mourn for her, that ye may suck & be satisfied with the brest of her consolations: that ye may milk out & be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For this saith the Lord, I will extend peace to her like a river & the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shal ye suck &c. Here the Woman is Zion or the church first labouring under affliction, then rejoycing after deliverance & her Man-child is the nation brought forth by her delieverance those who first mourned for her & then rejoyced with her, all the sons of the church first in affliction then in prosperity. The women & her child are one & the same people represented by a woman as they are the church of God & by a Manchild as they are a nation or kingdom new born by victory over their enemies, & differ only in their rulers & authority, the one having spiritual rulers in things spiritual the other

civil Rulers in things civil. And in like manner in the Apocalyps by the Man-child of which the woman in travel was delivered is to be understood not a single person but a Kingdom brought forth by the Church at her delivery from persecution & consisting of the same persons with the woman, but under different Governours & a different government. A woman & her child are things of the same kind & therefore as the one here represents a multitude so should the other: this a body politick & chiefly the rulers thereof most properly signified by a male, as that a body ecclesiastick usually signified by a female.

There are yet other aggravations of affliction as to call it **Bitterness**. The Egyptians made the lives of the Children of Israel bitter with hard bondage Exod. 1.14. We are in bitter captivity Esther. 14.8. They shall be devoured with - burning heat & with bitter destruction - the sword without & terror <10r> within Deut 32.24. The affliction of Israel [i.e. under their enemies] was very bitter 2 Kings 14.26. The ways of Zion do mourn - all her gates are desolate, her Priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, & she is in bitterness Her adversaries are the chief &c Lament 1.4. Shall the sword devour for ever? Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? 2 Sam. 2.26 † < insertion from f 9v > † Strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it: the City of confusion is broken down Isa 24.9. < text from f 10r resumes > And to aggravate this bitterness in the expressions of Gall & Wormwood are sometimes used. So Jeremy lamenting Ierusalems captivity, saith: He hath compassed me with Gall & travel. - He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. - And I said my strength & my hope is perished from the Lord, remembering mine affliction, the wormwood & the Gall. Lament. 3.5, 15, 19. Her end is bitter as wormwood Prov. 5.4 They have walked after Baalim - therefore thus saith the Lord - I will feed this people with wormwood & give them water of Gall to drink. Ier 9.15 See also Ier 23.15, & 8.14. & Deut 29.18. & 32.32. And so in the Apocalyps the great star burning as it were a lamp, (that is consuming by war,) is called wormwood & the waters on which it falls (that is the people) are said to become Wormwood to express their bitter affliction by those wars, & many men are said to dye of the bitterness of those waters, to express the dissolution of one or more bodies politick of men by those wars. Apoc 8.11.

[1] † {vicinus}

[2] † see ffig

[3] †

[4] †

[5] †
