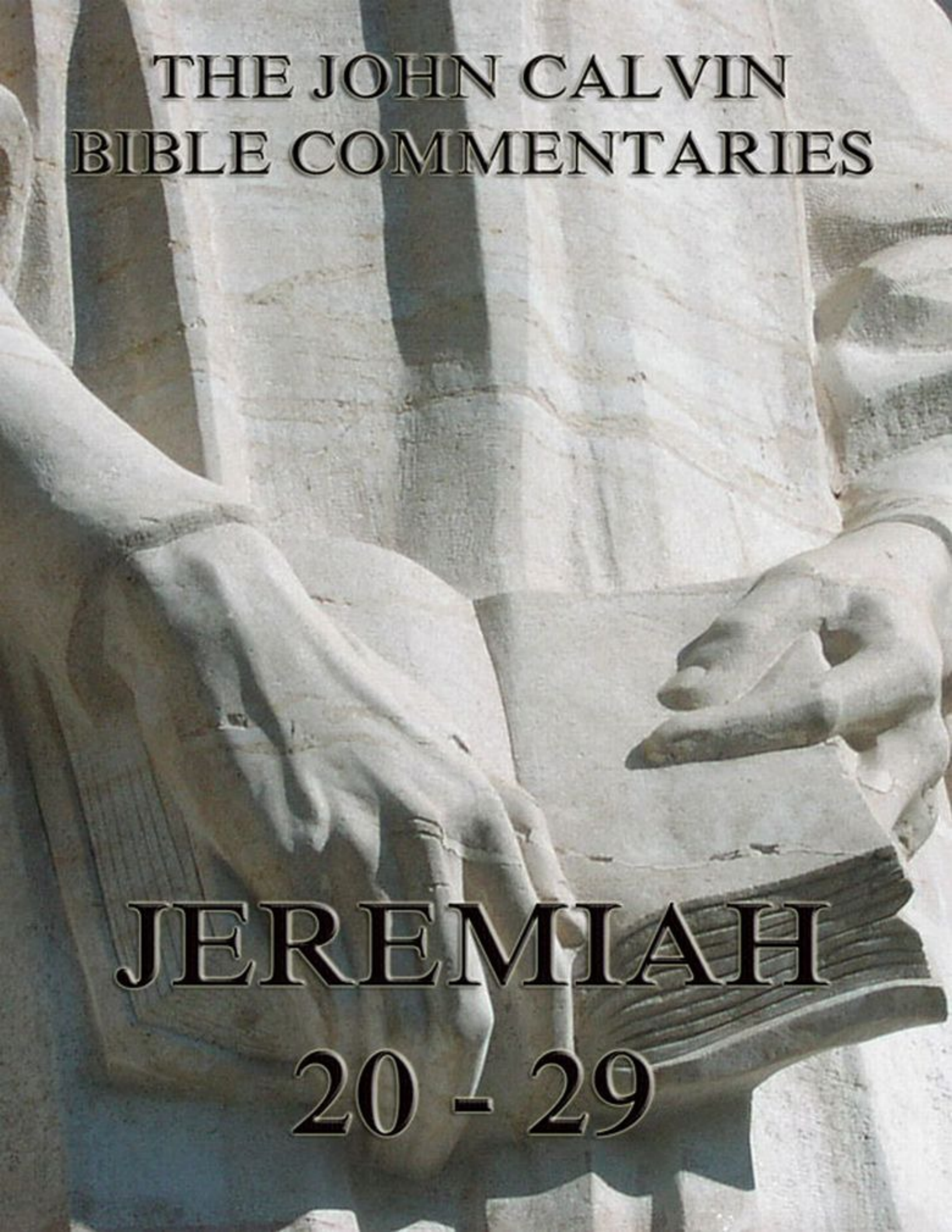

THE JOHN CALVIN BIBLE COMMENTARIES

JEREMIAH 20 - 29

Commentaries On Jeremiah 20- 29

John Calvin

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John Calvin – A Biography

By William Barry

This man, undoubtedly the greatest of Protestant divines, and perhaps, after St. Augustine, the most perseveringly followed by his disciples of any Western writer on theology, was born at Noyon in Picardy, France, 10 July, 1509, and died at Geneva, 27 May, 1564.

A generation divided him from Luther, whom he never met. By birth, education, and temper these two protagonists of the reforming movement were strongly contrasted. Luther was a Saxon peasant, his father a miner; Calvin sprang from the French middle-class, and his father, an attorney, had purchased the freedom of the City of Noyon, where he practised civil and canon law. Luther entered the Order of Augustinian Hermits, took a monk's vows, was made a priest and incurred much odium by marrying a nun. Calvin never was ordained in the Catholic Church; his training was chiefly in law and the humanities; he took no vows. Luther's eloquence made him popular by its force, humour, rudeness, and vulgar style. Calvin spoke to the learned at all times, even when preaching before multitudes. His manner is classical; he reasons on system; he has little humour; instead of striking with a cudgel he uses the weapons of a deadly logic and persuades by a teacher's authority, not by a demagogue's calling of names. He writes French as well as Luther writes German, and like him has been reckoned a pioneer in the modern development of his native tongue. Lastly, if we term the doctor of Wittenberg a mystic, we may sum up Calvin as a scholastic; he gives

articulate expression to the principles which Luther had stormily thrown out upon the world in his vehement pamphleteering; and the "Institutes" as they were left by their author have remained ever since the standard of orthodox Protestant belief in all the Churches known as "Reformed." His French disciples called their sect "the religion"; such it has proved to be outside the Roman world.

The family name, spelt in many ways, was Cauvin latinized according to the custom of the age as Calvinus. For some unknown reason the Reformer is commonly called Maître Jean C. His mother, Jeanne Le Franc, born in the Diocese of Cambrai, is mentioned as "beautiful and devout"; she took her little son to various shrines and brought him up a good Catholic. On the father's side, his ancestors were seafaring men. His grandfather settled at Pont l'Evêque near Paris, and had two sons who became locksmiths; the third was Gerard, who turned procurator at Noyon, and there his four sons and two daughters saw the light. He lived in the Place au Blé (Cornmarket). Noyon, a bishop's see, had long been a fief of the powerful old family of Hangest, who treated it as their personal property. But an everlasting quarrel, in which the city took part, went on between the bishop and the chapter. Charles de Hangest, nephew of the too well-known Georges d'Amboise, Archbishop of Rouen, surrendered the bishopric in 1525 to his own nephew John, becoming his vicar-general. John kept up the battle with his canons until the Parliament of Paris intervened, upon

which he went to Rome, and at last died in Paris in 1577. This prelate had Protestant kinsfolk; he is charged with having fostered heresy which in those years was beginning to raise its head among the French. Clerical dissensions, at all events, allowed the new doctrines a promising field; and the Calvins were more or less infected by them before 1530.

Gerard's four sons were made clerics and held benefices at a tender age. The Reformer was given one when a boy of twelve, he became Curé of Saint-Martin de Marteville in the Vermandois in 1527, and of Pont l'Eveque in 1529. Three of the boys attended the local Collège des Capettes, and there John proved himself an apt scholar. But his people were intimate with greater folk, the de Montmor, a branch of the line of Hangest, which led to his accompanying some of their children to Paris in 1523, when his mother was probably dead and his father had married again. The latter died in 1531, under excommunication from the chapter for not sending in his accounts. The old man's illness, not his lack of honesty, was, we are told, the cause. Yet his son Charles, nettled by the censure, drew towards the Protestant doctrines. He was accused in 1534 of denying the Catholic dogma of the Eucharist, and died out of the Church in 1536; his body was publicly gibbeted as that of a recusant.

Meanwhile, young John was going through his own trials at the University of Paris, the dean or syndic of which, Noel Bédier, had stood up against Erasmus

and bore hard upon Le Fèvre d'Etaples (Stapulensis), celebrated for his translation of the Bible into French. Calvin, a "martinet", or oppidan, in the Collèege de la Marche, made this man's acquaintance (he was from Picardy) and may have glanced into his Latin commentary on St. Paul, dated 1512, which Doumergue considers the first Protestant book emanating from a French pen. Another influence tending the same way was that of Corderius, Calvin's tutor, to whom he dedicated afterwards his annotation of I Thessalonians, remarking, "if there be any good thing in what I have published, I owe it to you". Corderius had an excellent Latin style, his life was austere, and his "Colloquies" earned him enduring fame. But he fell under suspicion of heresy, and by Calvin's aid took refuge in Geneva, where he died September 1564. A third herald of the "New Learning" was George Cop, physician to Francis I, in whose house Calvin found a welcome and gave ear to the religious discussions which Cop favoured. And a fourth was Pierre-Robert d'Olivet of Noyon, who also translated the Scriptures, our youthful man of letters, his nephew, writing (in 1535) a Latin preface to the Old Testament and a French one — his first appearance as a native author — to the New Testament.

By 1527, when no more than eighteen, Calvin's educatlon was complete in its main lines. He had learned to be a humanist and a reformer. The "sudden conversion" to a spiritual life in 1529, of which he speaks, must not be taken quite literally.

He had never been an ardent Catholic; but the stories told at one time of his ill-regulated conduct have no foundation; and by a very natural process he went over to the side on which his family were taking their stand. In 1528 he inscribed himself at Orléans as a law student, made friends with Francis Daniel, and then went for a year to Bourges, where he began preaching in private. Margaret d'Angoulême, sister of Francis I, and Duchess of Berry, was living there with many heterodox Germans about her.

He is found again at Paris in 1531. Wolmar had taught him Greek at Bourges; from Vatable he learned Hebrew; and he entertained some relations with the erudite Budaeus. About this date he printed a commentary on Seneca's "De Clementiâ". It was merely an exercise in scholarship, having no political significance. Francis I was, indeed, handling Protestants severely, and Calvin, now Doctor of Law at Orléans, composed, so the story runs, an oration on Christian philosophy which Nicholas Cop delivered on All Saints' Day, 1532, both writer and speaker having to take instant flight from pursuit by the royal inquisitors. This legend has been rejected by modern critics. Calvin spent some time, however, with Canon du Tillet at Angoulême under a feigned designation. In May, 1534, he went to Noyon, gave up his benefice, and, it is said, was imprisoned. But he got away to Nerac in Bearn, the residence of the Duchess Margaret, and there again encountered Le Fèvre, whose French Bible had been condemned by

the Sorbonne to the flames. His next visit to Paris fell out during a violent campaign of the Lutherans against the Mass, which brought on reprisals, Etienne de la Forge and others were burnt in the Place de Grève; and Calvin accompanied by du Tillet, escaped — though not without adventures — to Metz and Strasburg. In the latter city Bucer reigned supreme. The leading reformers dictated laws from the pulpit to their adherents, and this journey proved a decisive one for the French humanist, who, though by nature timid and shy, committed himself to a war on paper with his own sovereign. The famous letter to Francis I is dated 23 August, 1535. It served as a prologue to the "Institutes", of which the first edition came out in March, 1536, not in French but in Latin. Calvin's apology for lecturing the king was, that placards denouncing the Protestants as rebels had been posted up all over the realm. Francis I did not read these pages, but if he had done so he would have discovered in them a plea, not for toleration, which the Reformer utterly scorned, but for doing away with Catholicism in favour of the new gospel. There could be only one true Church, said the young theologian, therefore kings ought to make an utter end of popery. (For an account of the "Institutes" see) The second edition belongs to 1539, the first French translation to 1541; the final Latin, as revised by its author, is of 1559; but that in common use, dated 1560, has additions by his disciples. "It was more God's work than mine", said Calvin, who took for his motto *"Omnia ad Dei gloriam"*, and in allusion to the change he had undergone in 1529

assumed for his device a hand stretched out from a burning heart.

A much disputed chapter in Calvin's biography is the visit which he was long thought to have paid at Ferraro to the Protestant Duchess Renée, daughter of Louis XII. Many stories clustered about his journey, now given up by the best-informed writers. All we know for certain is that the Reformer, after settling his family affairs and bringing over two of his brothers and sisters to the views he had adopted undertook, in consequence of the war between Charles V and Francis I, to reach Bale by way of Geneva, in July, 1536. At Geneva the Swiss preacher Fare, then looking for help in his propaganda, besought him with such vehemence to stay and teach theology that, as Calvin himself relates, he was terrified into submission. We are not accustomed to fancy the austere prophet so easily frightened. But as a student and recluse new to public responsibilities, he may well have hesitated before plunging into the troubled waters of Geneva, then at their stormiest period. No portrait of him belonging to this time is extant. Later he is represented as of middle height, with bent shoulders, piercing eyes, and a large forehead; his hair was of an auburn tinge. Study and fasting occasioned the severe headaches from which he suffered continually. In private life he was cheerful but sensitive, not to say overbearing, his friends treated him with delicate consideration. His habits were simple; he cared nothing for wealth, and he never allowed himself a

holiday. His correspondence, of which 4271 letters remain, turns chiefly on doctrinal subjects. Yet his strong, reserved character told on all with whom he came in contact; Geneva submitted to his theocratic rule, and the Reformed Churches accepted his teaching as though it were infallible.

Such was the stranger whom Farel recommended to his fellow Protestants, "this Frenchman", chosen to lecture on the Bible in a city divided against itself. Geneva had about 15,000 inhabitants. Its bishop had long been its prince limited, however, by popular privileges. The vidomne, or mayor, was the Count of Savoy, and to his family the bishopric seemed a property which, from 1450, they bestowed on their younger children. John of Savoy, illegitimate son of the previous bishop, sold his rights to the duke, who was head of the clan, and died in 1519 at Pignerol. Jean de la Baume, last of its ecclesiastical princes, abandoned the city, which received Protestant teachers from Berne in 1519 and from Fribourg in 1526. In 1527 the arms of Savoy were torn down; in 1530 the Catholic party underwent defeat, and Geneva became independent. It had two councils, but the final verdict on public measures rested with the people. These appointed Farel, a convert of Le Fevre, as their preacher in 1534. A discussion between the two Churches from 30 May to 24 June, 1535 ended in victory for the Protestants. The altars were desecrated, the sacred images broken, the Mass done away with. Bernese troops entered and "the Gospel" was accepted, 21 May, 1536. This

implied persecution of Catholics by the councils which acted both as Church and State. Priests were thrown into prison; citizens were fined for not attending sermons. At Zürich, Basle, and Berne the same laws were established. Toleration did not enter into the ideas of the time.

But though Calvin had not introduced this legislation, it was mainly by his influence that in January, 1537 the "articles" were voted which insisted on communion four times a year, set spies on delinquents, established a moral censorship, and punished the unruly with excommunication. There was to be a children's catechism, which he drew up; it ranks among his best writings. The city now broke into "jurants" and "nonjurors" for many would not swear to the "articles"; indeed, they never were completely accepted. Questions had arisen with Berne touching points that Calvin judged to be indifferent. He made a figure in the debates at Lausanne defending the freedom of Geneva. But disorders ensued at home, where recusancy was yet rife; in 1538 the council exiled Farel, Calvin, and the blind evangelist, Couraud. The Reformer went to Strasburg, became the guest of Capito and Bucer, and in 1539 was explaining the New Testament to French refugees at fifty two florins a year. Cardinal Sadolet had addressed an open letter to the Genevans, which their exile now answered. Sadolet urged that schism was a crime; Calvin replied that the Roman Church was corrupt. He gained applause by his keen debating powers at Hagenau, Worms,

and Ratisbon. But he complains of his poverty and ill-health, which did not prevent him from marrying at this time Idelette de Bure, the widow of an Anabaptist whom he had converted. Nothing more is known of this lady, except that she brought him a son who died almost at birth in 1542, and that her own death took place in 1549.

After some negotiation Ami Perrin, commissioner for Geneva, persuaded Calvin to return. He did so, not very willingly, on 13 September, 1541. His entry was modest enough. The church constitution now recognized "pastors, doctors, elders, deacons" but supreme power was given to the magistrate. Ministers had the spiritual weapon of God's word; the consistory never, as such, wielded the secular arm Preachers, led by Calvin, and the councils, instigated by his opponents, came frequently into collision. Yet the ordinances of 1541 were maintained; the clergy, assisted by lay elders, governed despotically and in detail the actions of every citizen. A presbyterian Sparta might be seen at Geneva; it set an example to later Puritans, who did all in their power to imitate its discipline. The pattern held up was that of the Old Testament, although Christians were supposed to enjoy Gospel liberty. In November, 1552, the Council declared that Calvin's "Institutes" were a "holy doctrine which no man might speak against." Thus the State issued dogmatic decrees, the force of which had been anticipated earlier, as when Jacques Gouet was imprisoned on charges of impiety in June, 1547, and

after severe torture was beheaded in July. Some of the accusations brought against the unhappy young man were frivolous, others doubtful. What share, if any, Calvin took in this judgment is not easy to ascertain. The execution of however must be laid at his door; it has given greater offence by far than the banishment of Castellio or the penalties inflicted on Bolsec — moderate men opposed to extreme views in discipline and doctrine, who fell under suspicion as reactionary. The Reformer did not shrink from his self-appointed task. Within five years fifty-eight sentences of death and seventy-six of exile, besides numerous committals of the most eminent citizens to prison, took place in Geneva. The iron yoke could not be shaken off. In 1555, under Ami Perrin, a sort of revolt was attempted. No blood was shed, but Perrin lost the day, and Calvin's theocracy triumphed.

"I am more deeply scandalized", wrote Gibbon "at the single execution of Servetus than at the hecatombs which have blazed in the autos-da-fé of Spain and Portugal". He ascribes the enmity of Calvin to personal malice and perhaps envy. The facts of the case are pretty well ascertained. Born in 1511, perhaps at Tudela, Michael Served y Reves studied at Toulouse and was present in Bologna at the coronation of Charles V. He travelled in Germany and brought out in 1531 at Hagenau his treatise "De Trinitatis Erroribus", a strong Unitarian work which made much commotion among the more orthodox Reformers. He met Calvin and disputed with him at Paris in 1534, became corrector of the press at

Lyons; gave attention to medicine, discovered the lesser circulation of the blood, and entered into a fatal correspondence with the dictator of Geneva touching a new volume "Christianismi Restitutio," which he intended to publish. In 1546 the exchange of letters ceased. The Reformer called Servetus arrogant (he had dared to criticize the "Institutes" in marginal glosses), and uttered the significant menace, "If he comes here and I have any authority, I will never let him leave the place alive." The "Restitutio" appeared in 1553. Calvin at once had its author delated to the Dominican inquisitor Ory at Lyons, sending on to him the man's letters of 1545-46 and these glosses. Hereupon the Spaniard was imprisoned at Vienne, but he escaped by friendly connivance, and was burnt there only in effigy. Some extraordinary fascination drew him to Geneva, from which he intended to pass the Alps. He arrived on 13 August, 1553. The next day Calvin, who had remarked him at the sermon, got his critic arrested, the preacher's own secretary coming forward to accuse him. Calvin drew up forty articles of charge under three heads, concerning the nature of God, infant baptism, and the attack which Servetus had ventured on his own teaching. The council hesitated before taking a deadly decision, but the dictator, reinforced by Farel, drove them on. In prison the culprit suffered much and loudly complained. The Bernese and other Swiss voted for some indefinite penalty. But to Calvin his power in Geneva seemed lost, while the stigma of heresy; as he insisted, would cling to all Protestants if this innovator were

not put to death. "Let the world see" Bullinger counselled him, "that Geneva wills the glory of Christ."

Accordingly, sentence was pronounced 26 October, 1553, of burning at the stake. "Tomorrow he dies," wrote Calvin to Farel. When the deed was done, the Reformer alleged that he had been anxious to mitigate the punishment, but of this fact no record appears in the documents. He disputed with Servetus on the day of execution and saw the end. A defence and apology next year received the adhesion of the Genevan ministers. Melanchthon, who had taken deep umbrage at the blasphemies of the Spanish Unitarian, strongly approved in well-known words. But a group that included Castellio published at Basle in 1554 a pamphlet with the title, "Should heretics be persecuted?" It is considered the first plea for toleration in modern times. Beza replied by an argument for the affirmative, couched in violent terms; and Calvin, whose favorite disciple he was, translated it into French in 1559. The dialogue, "Vaticanus", written against the "Pope of Geneva" by Castellio, did not get into print until 1612. Freedom of opinion, as Gibbon remarks, "was the consequence rather than the design of the Reformation."

Another victim to his fiery zeal was Gentile, one of an Italian sect in Geneva, which also numbered among its adherents Alciati and Gribaldo. As more or less Unitarian in their views, they were required to

sign a confession drawn up by Calvin in 1558. Gentile subscribed it reluctantly, but in the upshot he was condemned and imprisoned as a perjurer. He escaped only to be twice incarcerated at Berne, where in 1566, he was beheaded. Calvin's impassioned polemic against these Italians betrays fear of the Socinianism which was to lay waste his vineyard. Politically he leaned on the French refugees, now abounding in the city, and more than equal in energy — if not in numbers — to the older native factions. Opposition died out. His continual preaching, represented by 2300 sermons extant in the manuscripts and a vast correspondence, gave to the Reformer an influence without example in his closing years. He wrote to Edward VI, helped in revising the Book of Common Prayer, and intervened between the rival English parties abroad during the Marian period. In the Huguenot troubles he sided with the more moderate. His censure of the conspiracy of Amboise in 1560 does him honour. One great literary institution founded by him, the College, afterwards the University, of Geneva, flourished exceedingly. The students were mostly French. When Beza was rector it had nearly 1500 students of various grades.

Geneva now sent out pastors to the French congregations and was looked upon as the Protestant Rome. Through Knox, "the Scottish champion of the Swiss Reformation", who had been preacher to the exiles in that city, his native land accepted the discipline of the Presbytery and the

doctrine of predestination as expounded in Calvin's "Institutes". The Puritans in England were also descendants of the French theologian. His dislike of theatres, dancing and the amenities of society was fully shared by them. The town on Lake Leman was described as without crime and destitute of amusements. Calvin declaimed against the "Libertines", but there is no evidence that any such people had a footing inside its walls The cold, hard, but upright disposition characteristic of the Reformed Churches, less genial than that derived from Luther, is due entirely to their founder himself. Its essence is a concentrated pride, a love of disputation, a scorn of opponents. The only art that it tolerates is music, and that not instrumental. It will have no Christian feasts in its calendar, and it is austere to the verge of Manichaean hatred of the body. When dogma fails the Calvinist, he becomes, as in the instance of Carlyle, almost a pure Stoic. "At Geneva, as for a time in Scotland," says J. A. Froude, "moral sins were treated as crimes to be punished by the magistrate." The Bible was a code of law, administered by the clergy. Down to his dying day Calvin preached and taught. By no means an aged man, he was worn out in these frequent controversies. On 25 April, 1564, he made his will, leaving 225 French crowns, of which he bequeathed ten to his college, ten to the poor, and the remainder to his nephews and nieces. His last letter was addressed to Farel. He was buried without pomp, in a spot which is not now ascertainable. In the year 1900 a monument of expiation was erected to

Servetus in the Place Champel. Geneva has long since ceased to be the head of Calvinism. It is a rallying point for Free Thought, Socialist propaganda, and Nihilist conspiracies. But in history it stands out as the Sparta of the Reformed churches, and Calvin is its Lycurgus.

COMMENTARIES ON JEREMIAH 20-29

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

volume third

The derangement as to the order of the chapters first occurs in this Volume. It is commonly thought that chapters 21, 24, and 27, were delivered in the time of Zedekiah; while chapters 20, 22, 23, 25, and 26, contain Prophecies delivered in the previous reign of Jehoiakim. The early Versions and the *Targum* retain the same order with the *Hebrew,* only there are derangements of another kind both in the *Septuagint* and the *Arabic,* which commence at verse 14 of chapter 25, and continue to the end of chapter 51: It hence appears that the disorder had taken place early, before the Versions were made.

There are a few particulars to which the Editor wishes to draw the attention of Literary Readers, some of which have been already noticed in the Notes appended to previous Volumes, though not perhaps so fully specified as to attract

attention; and there is one subject which belongs especially to this Volume.

The first thing is in reference to a Hebrew idiom; and that with regard to the pronoun relative rça, who, which, whom. There is a peculiarity as to the use of this which has been overlooked, as far as the writer knows, by Grammarians. It precedes in Hebrew, as in other languages, the verb by which it is governed; but when it is not governed in a transitive sense, a personal pronoun follows the verb with a preposition prefixed to it, as, for instance, in Jeremiah 1:2,

> "To whom the word of the Lord came;"

which is literally, "Whom the word of the Lord came to him." "To him" and "whom" are the same. It is an idiom, and the same exists in *Welsh,* which in many of its peculiarities corresponds exactly with the Hebrew. This passage, and others of a similar kind, are literally the same in that language, "Yr hwn y daeth gair yr Arglwydd atto;" and the last word, "atto," the preposition being prefixed to the pronoun, and made, as it were, one word, corresponds exactly with the Hebrew.

We have, in Jeremiah 7:10, these words —

> "Which (God's house) is called by my Name," literally, "which my Name is called on it;"

which means, *"on* which my Name is called." The following are similar examples: —

> "Unto whom they offer incense" literally, "whom they offer incense to them," (Jeremiah 11:12;)

> “Against whom I have pronounced;” literally, “whom I have pronounced against them,” (Jeremiah 18:8;)
>
> “Upon whose roofs they have burned incense;” literally, “which they have burned incense on their *roofs,*” (Jeremiah 19:13.)

In all these instances the *Welsh* is literally the *Hebrew.* The last example is rather remarkable, but the *Welsh* is exactly the same, “y rhai yr arogldarthasant ar eu pennau.” The verb, also, is similar, derived from the noun which means incense, “they have incensed;” but the verb in *English* is not so used. There is hardly a noun or a verb in *Hebrew* which the *Welsh* cannot literally express — a peculiarity which neither *Latin* nor *Greek* possesses, and perhaps no modern language. See also Genesis 44:5, 10, 16; 48:15; Deuteronomy 11:24; Deuteronomy 12:2; Isaiah 31:4; Jeremiah 14:15; Jeremiah 17:19; Amos 9:12; Jonah 4:10, 11. fE1A

But it must be especially observed, as the point will be hereafter referred to, that when the relative pronoun is governed by the verb in a transitive sense, without a preposition, there is then no personal pronoun added after the verb, either affixed to it or separately. This seems to be an invariable rule, —

> “The land that I have given for an inheritance; ytljnh rça” (Jeremiah 3:18.)
>
> “In the land that I gave; yttn rça” (Jeremiah 7:7.)
>
> “My law which I set before them; µhynpl yttn rça” (Jeremiah 9:13.)

See also Psalm 78:69; 86: 9; 105:5; Jeremiah 7:23; 9:16; 11:10; 13:4; 15:4; 16:13; Ezekiel 18:27; Daniel 9:10.

The SECOND point is connected with THE STYLE OF THE HEBREW PROPHETS.

1. THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARRANGE THEIR IDEAS. — They frequently mention, first, the effect, then the cause — first, the last act, then the previous act or acts — first, the deed or action, then the motive or what led to the deed — first, the later event, then the former — first, what is most evident and visible, then what is less ostensible and hidden. In all these instances, the order is the reverse of what is commonly found in other writers.

“My people is foolish,” the effect; “they have not known me,” the cause. (Jeremiah 4:22.) “Before me continually is grief,” the effect; “and wounds,” the cause. (Jeremiah 6:7.) “I sent them not,” the last act; “neither have I commanded them,” the preceding; “neither spake to them,” the first. (Jeremiah 14:14.) “With an outstretched hand and a strong arm,” the deed or action; “even in anger and in fury, and in great wrath,” what led to the deed. (Jeremiah 21:5.) “The truth to Jacob,” the later event; “and the mercy to Abraham,” the former event. (Micah 7:20.) “Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?” the visible act; “hath thy soul loathed Zion?” the hidden reason. (Jeremiah 14:19.)

Similar instances are found in the New Testament. What is palpable and evident is stated first, then what leads to it, or the source from which it comes; as when St. Paul mentions “rioting” first, and then “drunkenness,” which leads to it; and “strife” first, and then “envying,” from which it proceeds. (Romans 13:13.) In a like manner he puts “joy,” the higher and the most manifest feeling, before “peace,”

which is the source of it. (Romans 15:13) In Ephesians 6:23, the Apostle mentions “peace, love, and faith;” the right order is reversed — the most evident thing is first referred to. There are many passages which can be satisfactorily explained on no other principle.

2. THE ORDER IN WHICH SUBJECTS ARE OFTEN TREATED. — When two things are referred to, the last mentioned is first spoken of, and then the first. This is what is very commonly done. Pollution and going after Baalim are laid to the charge of Israel in Jeremiah 2:23. To prove the last it is added,

> “See thy way in the valley;”

and to bring connection as to the first, God says,

> “Know what thou hast done.”

In Jeremiah 4:28, we have these words,

> “I have spoken it, I have purposed it.”

The next sentence applies to the last,

> “and I will not repent,”

and the following to what he had spoken,

> “Neither will I turn back from it.”

Neighbor and brother are mentioned in Jeremiah 9:4; the order is reversed in the latter clause of the verse. Pashur and the people of Judah are addressed in Jeremiah 20:4;

the doom of Judah is described in the following verse, and in the sixth the doom of Pashur. God speaks of

> "The way of life and of the way of death,"

in Jeremiah 21:8; in the next verse, such as would meet with death are first referred to, and then those to whom life would be granted. In Deuteronomy 27:11-26, and Deuteronomy 28:1-6, "blessing" and "curse" are mentioned, and then the "curse" is first described, and afterwards the "blessing." This mode of treating subjects is indeed so common that it would be useless to multiply examples; and there are not a few instances of the same kind in the New Testament. fE2B

The THIRD subject is THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PASSAGE IN THIS VOLUME, IN CONNECTION WITH ANOTHER, WHICH WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT. — The two passages are Jeremiah 23:6, and 33:16. The doctrine involved is important; but our business is to ascertain the real meaning according to the current diction of the language. These passages are not rendered alike in our Version, nor in the same sense; and yet it is evident from the context that the meaning of both passages must be the same, though the words are in some measure different. However we may differ from *Blayney,* he yet seems to have been at least so far right, as he renders them both in the same sense. His versions are the following: —

> "And this is the Name by which Jehovah shall call him, Our Righteousness." (Jeremiah 23:6.)

> "And this is he whom Jehovah shall call, Our Righteousness." (Jeremiah 23:16.)

In a Note on the last verse, it is said, “This is the strict grammatical translation of the words of the text.” There is no doubt but that it may be so rendered; and here is an instance of what has been already observed as to the relative rça. It has often after the verb a personal pronoun with a preposition prefixed: and as the verb arq, whenever it means to name, has the preposition l after it, so it has here. The relative and the pronoun in this case always refer to the same thing or person. Since this is the idiom of the language, it becomes evident that hl in this verse, is a masculine according to Chaldee dialect, as *Blayney* regards it, or a misprint for wl according to three MSS.; for rça, with which it is connected, has, hz, “this” for its antecedent; and “this” is clearly the “king” mentioned in the previous verse.

The matter then is so far clear as to construction of this part of the verse; but whether “Jehovah” is the nominative to the verb is another question; and this we shall presently consider.

The words in the other passage, Jeremiah 23:6, are somewhat different. The word “Name” is in it; but it has no personal pronoun with a l prefixed, which is ever the case when arq means to name, and when the word “name” is omitted. See Genesis 21:31; Genesis 35:18; 1 Samuel 23:28; 1 Chronicles 11:7; Jeremiah 30:17. But when “name” is connected with the verb in this sense, the preposition l is not found. See Genesis 11:9; 29:35; 1 Chronicles 4:9. This accounts for the absence of the pronoun with a l prefixed coming after the verb in this passage, which is found in the other in which the word “name” is omitted. The rça then here refers to the “name,” and stands as it were in its place; and the literal rendering, if we adopt *Blayney’s* arrangement of the words, would be as follows, —

And this *is* His Name, which Jehovah shall call it,
Our Righteousness.

Now there is a grammatical objection to this rendering; for rça, as before mentioned, when governed by a verb in the objective *case,* is never followed by a personal pronoun after the verb, either postfixed or separately. But here the w in warqy is made a pronoun, wholly contrary to the usage of the language in such a case as the present. The other passage may admit of *Blayney's* construction; but his version here is, as I conceive, inadmissible, being ungrammatical; the verb is in the plural number and not in the singular, with an affixed pronoun, therefore Jehovah cannot be its nominative case.

It may then be asked, how is the passage to be translated? Let the reader bear in mind, that when the word "Name — µç," is connected with arq, there is no preposition used; and as rça here has "Name" as its antecedent, it is not necessary to have a pronoun with a prefixed l after the verb; but this is necessary in the other passage, for the word "name" is not given. Here we see a perfect consistency in the two passages, though differently worded. Then the true version of this passage I conceive to be the following, —

"And this is His Name, which they shall call,
Jehovah our Righteousness."

But in our language it might be rendered, "by which they shall call *him"* The pronoun "they" refers to Judah and Israel, at the beginning of the verse. As then "Jehovah" cannot be here the nominative case to "call," there is no grammatical necessity to make it so in the other passage, though there is nothing contrary to the usage of the

language in such a construction. The other passage may be rendered literally thus, —

> "And this is *He*, whom it shall be called on Him,
> Jehovah our Righteousness."

The words in the idiom of our language may be thus correctly expressed, "who shall be called." But however awkward and even unintelligible the literal rendering may be in English, yet it is in *Welsh* both expressive and elegant. The phrase is word for word the same, and thoroughly idiomatic, —

> "Ac eve *yw'r* hwn y gelwir arno, Jehova ein cyviawnder." fE3A

We shall now refer to the early versions and the Targum.

In the *Septuagint,* the passage in Jeremiah 23:6, is rendered substantially according to what is done by *Blayney;* he indeed defends himself by appealing to that version. As to the passage in Jeremiah 33:16, it is wanting in the *Septuagint;* as supplied in the *Complutensian* Edition, it is evidently a version of the *Vulgate,* as is the case in other instances; and as given by *Theodoret,* it is as follows, —

> "This is He who shall be called (oJ klhqh>setai)
> The Lord our Righteousness."

The *Vulgate* version is the same in both places, —

> "And this is the Name which they shall call him,
> Our righteous Lord."

The *Syriac* version is the same in both places, —

> "And this is the Name by which they shall call Him,
> The Lord our Righteousness."

The *Arabic* version is the same with the preceding, only "righteousness" is not translated; it is "The Lord Josedek." It is wanting like the *Septuagint* as to the second passage.

The paraphrase of the *Targum* is substantially the same as to both places, —

> "And this is the Name by which they shall call Him,
> Done shall be righteousness for us from the presence
> of the Lord in his days."

It appears then from all the Early Versions, except the *Septuagint* as to the first passage, and from the *Targum,* that "Jehovah" is not connected with the verb to call, but with "righteousness;" and this, as we have seen, comports with what the usage of the language requires. There can therefore be no reasonable doubt as to the real meaning of these two passages.

As to the peculiar idioms of the Hebrew language, the *Septuagint* version of Jeremiah and of the minor prophets, is by no means so satisfactory as the *Vulgate* and the *Syriac* versions. This is what the Editor can testify after a minute examination.

J.O.
Thrussington, September, 1852

CHAPTER 20

JEREMIAH 20:1-2

1. Now Pashur the son of Immer the priest, who *was* also chief governor in the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. **1**. Et audivit Phassur filius Immer sacerdos et ipse praefeetus erat (dux) in Templo (in aede) Jehovae, Jeremiam vaticinantem (prophetantem) hos sermones:

2. Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the Lord. **2**. Et percussit Phassur Jeremiam Prophetam, et posuit eum in cippum *(vel,* in carcerem; *sed mihi magis placet nomen carceris)* qui erat in porta Benjamin superiore, quae spectabat ad aedem Jehovae.

Jeremiah relates here what sort of reward he had received for his prophecy, — that he had been smitten and cast into prison, not by the king or by his courtiers, but by a priest who had the care of the Temple. It was a grievous and bitter trial when God’s servant found that he was thus cruelly treated by one of the sacred order, who was of the same tribe, and his colleague; for the priests who were then in office had not been without right appointed, for God had chosen them. As, then, their authority was founded on the Law and on God’s inviolable decree, Jeremiah might

well have been much terrified; for this thought might have occurred to him, — “What can be the purpose of God? for he has set priests of the tribe of Levi over his Temple and over his whole people. Why, then, does he not rule them by his Spirit? Why does he not render them fit for their office?

Why does he suffer his Temple, and the sacred office which he so highly commends to us in his Law, to be thus profaned? or why, at least, does he not stretch forth his hand to defend me, who am also a priest, and sincerely engaged in my calling?” For we know that God commands in his Law, as a proof that the priests had supreme power, that whosoever disobeyed them should be put to death.

> (Deuteronomy 17:12.) “Since, then, it was God’s will to endue the priests with so much authority and power, why therefore did he not guide them by his grace, that they might faithfully execute the office committed to them?”

Nor was Jeremiah alone moved and shaken by this trial, but all who then truly worshipped God. Small, indeed, was the number of the godly; but there was surely no one who was not astonished at such a spectacle as this.

Pashur was not the chief priest, though he was of the first order of priests; and it is probable that Immer, his father, was the high priest, and that he was his vicar, acting in his stead as the ruler of the Temple. [fE1] However this may have been, he was no doubt superior, not only to the Levites, but also to the other priests of his order. Now this person, being of the same order and family, rose up against Jeremiah, and not only condemned in words a fellow-priest, but treated him outrageously, for he smote the Prophet. This was unworthy of his station, and contrary to the rights