

and make him a sign and a proverb, and cut him off from the midst of My people; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.

9 As to the prophet who lets himself be persuaded,<sup>1</sup> and speaks a Word for his own ends as if from Me; I, Jehovah, who know the heart, will not hinder him that he should not be persuaded.<sup>2</sup> And I will stretch out My hand against him, and destroy him from the midst of My people Israel. 10 They will each bear the punishment of his iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be the same as that of him who has inquired of Me through him; 11 that the House of Israel may no more go astray from Me, or pollute themselves any more by all the misdeeds of such offenders, but be My people, and I their God, saith the Lord Jehovah!

The affairs of Jerusalem seem to have been almost as well known among the exiles as in Judea. In spite of all warnings, the Egyptian party was gradually forcing the weak Zedekiah into a league with the Pharaoh, which involved the breach of his solemn oath "by God," to be a true vassal of the Chaldean king. Such faithlessness, Ezekiel felt, was certain to bring down the severest punishments on the land. Like all the ancient Hebrews, he firmly believed in temporal rewards for godliness, and penalties for sin. It was, however, a difficulty with many, that he should have predicted the escape of some of the idolatrous people of Jerusalem from the judgments impending on their fellows. He therefore shows them that, while the fear of God preserves alive the worthy, as seen in the cases of Noah, Daniel, and Job, the land that sins must suffer. Nor is the fact that some of the ungodly of Jerusalem would be spared, any contradiction to this, for they are preserved only to vindicate God's righteousness, by letting the heathen see their vileness, and thus recognise the justice of the Divine judgments inflicted on their city. The Word of Jehovah, says he, came again to me, saying:—

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xiv. 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> Eichhorn.