

multiplied thy abominations above hers, and hast made her and her daughters appear righteous, through the excess of abominations thou hast committed. 52 Bear, then, thy shame, thou who hast condemned thy sisters,¹ though thine own greater sins, which made thee an abomination, make them seem righteous in comparison! Blush, and bear thy shame, because, by thy greater sins, thou hast made thy sisters, with all their guilt, appear righteous!

Since, thus, Samaria and Sodom were comparatively less guilty than Jerusalem, there is still hope even for them—that is, for the heathen, of whom they are made the representatives. Jerusalem will be restored, but her return to favour will follow that of the nations she has been wont to despise. In this also she must be utterly humbled.

53 And I will bring back again² their banished ones to their homes—the banished ones of Sodom and her daughters, and the banished ones of Samaria and her daughters—and then I will bring back again thy banished ones also, in the midst of them—54 that thou mayest bear thine own disgrace, and be ashamed for all that thou hast done, by the consolation thou givest them when they see thee also punished for thy sins, and find themselves restored through thy means. 55 Thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, will return to their former position, and Samaria and her daughters will return to theirs, and thou and thy daughters will return to theirs. 56 Yet thy sister Sodom's name was not heard in thy mouth in the day of thy pride, before thine own wickedness was made known, 57 (and thou didst despise her) as, at the time of the Syrian oppression, thou thyself wast the reproach of the daughters of Syria, and of all the nations round, who despised thee on every side—the daughters of the Philistines doing so especially.³

¹ Eichhorn translates this difficult clause—"Bear thou the shame which thou thoughtest well deserved by thy sisters," and thinks it is an allusion to the carrying off the inhabitants of Samaria and of the east of the Jordan by Tiglath Pileser.

² Ezek. xvi. 53-57.

³ This is Smend's idea of the meaning of this passage. Ewald refers it to the then present position of Judah. But though the