

which was arranged for use in winter (compare Amos 3 : 15). *Fire on the hearth.* See Light from the East, under "Winterhouse."

V. 23. *Three or four leaves;* literally, "folding doors." Columns is perhaps the best translation. *He (the king) cut it with the penknife;* literally, "the scribe's knife," used for sharpening the reed pens used in those days. *All the roll was consumed;* so scornful was the king, so determined to get rid of the words that troubled his conscience.

Vs. 24-26. *Yet they were not afraid.. garments.* Contrast the conduct of Josiah, the king's father, 2 Chron. 34 : 19-21; or even Ahab, 1 Kgs. 21 : 27. *Nevertheless Elnathan, etc.. had made intercession.* These were some of the princes. Elnathan had been among those who had pursued the prophet Urijah into Egypt and brought him back to be slain by Jehoiakim, ch. 26 : 22. By this time he had changed his mind, as he was now altogether on the side of Jeremiah. *But he would not hear.* Through the influences of the princes God would have drawn the king back from his wickedness. All the heavier therefore his guilt. *Commanded.. to take Baruch.. and Jeremiah;* as if destroying or persecuting God's messengers could make their message any the less true—a common mistake of tyrants. *The Lord hid them;* where we do not know, nor by what means, but God has always a place of safety for His servants.

## II. Prophecies Re-Written, 27-29.

Vs. 27-29. *The word of the Lord.. to Jeremiah.* God's servant was not to be hidden by Him and then to be forgotten (compare the prophet Elijah, 1 Kgs., ch. 17). *Take thee again another roll, etc.* Jeremiah's enforced seclusion was to be used for the writing of a new and more extended roll. "The first result of this enforced seclusion reminds us of Martin Luther's Bible work in Wartburg.. as in the case of Tyndale's New Testament, a new and improved edition issued, as it were, from the flames." (Cheyne.) Compare Paul's letters from the Roman prison, and John Bunyan's work in Bedford jail. *The king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) shall.. come, etc.* The king of Babylon had already come and made Judah tributary to

him (2 Kgs. 24 : 1), but he would come again a few years later, when at the end of Zedekiah's reign the city was to be sacked, and the land laid desolate, 2 Kgs. 25 : 1-10.

## III. Prophecies Fulfilled, 30-32.

V. 30. *Thus saith the Lord;* the Lord whose warnings through the prophet the king had despised, and whose wrath he must now feel. *He shall have none to sit upon the throne;* regarded as a great calamity. He was, it is true, succeeded by Jehoiachin, his son, but after a reign of only three months Jerusalem was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, and he was carried away to Babylon, 2 Kgs. 24 : 8-12. *His dead body shall be cast out.* (Compare ch. 22 : 19); not only death, but death with dishonor. 2 Chron. 36 : 6 says that Nebuchadnezzar put Jehoiakim in chains to take him to Babylon. "Most probably, therefore, he died soon after he had been thrown into chains, either of pestilence or of a broken heart, and his body was dragged away without any marks of respect. Nothing is even said of his being buried." (Cook.)

Vs. 31, 32. *Jerusalem.. Judah.* The people, since they have shared in the king's sin, must share also in the punishment (compare ch. 19 : 15; 35 : 17). *They hearkened not;* notwithstanding all the means God had taken to warn them (see Prov. 29 : 1). *Then took Jeremiah another roll;* patiently obedient to his Lord's command. *Added besides.. many like words.* The king was not the gainer, but the loser by his attempt to destroy God's word. He only brought on himself the heavier condemnation.

## Light from the East

WINTERHOUSE—The ninth month corresponds to our December. The cold weather sets in then, and continues through January and February. The deep valleys will be green with flourishing grass and grain, but on the mountains round Jerusalem there will be much cold rain, sleet, hail, and even snow. The houses there are built for the summer, and even yet one suffers much from the cold. There is usually no means of heating a room, except a brazier, or chafing dish full of charcoal, such as sat before the king.