

## Prophets 13

context, and if you look at the context you'll find that he is not talking about anything that suggests a lion-like character but he is talking about a time of burning, a time of confusion, a time of misery, of heaviness and of sorrow and as he talks that way about it, the expression "the hearth of God" seems to fit much better as an interpretation of Ariel than "the lion of God". He says then, "Here is the hearth of God." Well, the hearth is the place where there is burning, the place where there is ashes, a place which you don't want to put your hand into or step into, but at the same time it is a place that has a purpose, something you are interested in; not just something that is deserted and forgotten and cast out. "Woe to Ariel, the city where David dwells." Well, the Ariel, the hearth of God — you don't immediately think of suffering and misery, you think of sacrifices being killed and burned. That fits with the hearth, doesn't it? The place where the temple is, the place where you burn the sacrifices. "Let them kill sacrifices." Well, that's wonderful. Here's God's hearth. Here's the place where the sacrifices are and the sweet savor goes up to God. Don't you expect God's blessing then upon it? "Yet I will distress the hearth of God, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel, and I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee, and thou shalt be brought down, and speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit out of the ground, and they speech shall whisper out of the dust." The hearth of God, the place where God performs His chemical works, the place where He causes His combustion for a purpose, the place where He does things that have a meaning in His economy that may be rather disagreeable to pass through but they are definitely under God's control. Here they are brought into this condition of misery where they're speaking in a low tone, barely able to stagger, they hardly can express themselves, it seems as if everything is hopeless.