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THE LITERATURE
OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT

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THE LITERATURE

OF

THE OLD TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE early Christians received the Sacred Books of the Jews as inspired Scripture containing a divine revelation and clothed with divine authority, and till well on in the first century of the Christian era the name Scriptures was applied exclusively to these books. In time, as they came to attach the same authority to the Epistles and Gospels, and to call them, too, Scriptures (2 Pet. iii. 16), they distinguished the Christian writings as the Scriptures of the new dispensation, or, as they called it, the "new covenant," from the Scriptures of the "old covenant" (2 Cor. iii. 6, 14), the Bible of the Jews. The Greek word for covenant (*diathēkē*) was rendered in the early Latin translation by *testamentum*, and the two bodies of Scripture themselves were called the Old Testament and the New Testament respectively.

The Scriptures of the Jews were written in Hebrew, the older language of the people; but a few chapters in Ezra and Daniel are in Aramaic, which gradually replaced Hebrew as the vernac-

ular of Palestine from the fifth century B. C. The Sacred Books comprised the Law, that is, the Five Books of Moses; the Prophets, under which name are included the older historical books (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) as well as what we call the Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve, i. e. Minor Prophets); a third group, of less homogeneous character, had no more distinctive name than the "Scriptures"; it included Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. The Minor Prophets counted as one book; and the division of Samuel, Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles each into two books was made later, and perhaps only in Christian copies of the Bible. There are, consequently, according to the Jewish enumeration twenty-four books in the Bible, while in the English Old Testament, by subdivision, we count the same books as thirty-nine.

The order of the books in the Pentateuch and "Former Prophets" (Joshua–Kings), is fixed by the historical sequence, and therefore constant; among the "Latter Prophets" Jeremiah was sometimes put first, immediately following the end of Kings, with which it was so closely connected. In the third group there was no such obvious principle of arrangement, and consequently there were different opinions about the proper order; that which is given above follows the oldest deliverance on the subject, and puts them in what the rabbis doubtless supposed to be a chronological series. So long as the books were written on

separate rolls of papyrus, the question of order was theoretical rather than practical; and even when manuscripts were written in codex form (on folded leaves stitched together like our books), no uniformity was attained.

At the beginning of the Christian era, lessons from the Law were regularly read in the synagogues on the sabbath (the Pentateuch being so divided that it was read through consecutively once in three years), and a second lesson was chosen from the Prophets. The title of these books to be regarded as Sacred Scripture was thus established by long-standing liturgical use, and was, indeed, beyond question. Nor was there any question about the inspiration of most of the books in the third group, the "Scriptures." There was a controversy, however, over Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs; some teachers of the strictest school denied that either of them was inspired, while others accepted only one of them. The question was voted on in a council of rabbis held at Jamnia about the beginning of the second century of our era, and the majority decided for the inspiration of both books. There were also, even down to the third century, Jewish scholars who did not acknowledge Esther as Sacred Scripture. On the other hand, some were inclined to include among the Sacred Books the Proverbs of Ben Sira, which stand in the English Bible among the Apocrypha under the title Ecclesiasticus.

It is thus evident that, while there was agreement in general, there was, down to the second century A. D., no authoritative list of the "Scrip-

tures," and that about some of the books there were conflicting opinions among the learned of the most orthodox stamp. An interesting confirmation of this is the fact that in the first half of that century it was thought necessary to make a formal deliverance that the "Gospel and other writings of the heretics" are not Sacred Scripture. There are other indications that in that generation Jewish Christianity had a dangerous attraction for some even in rabbinical circles, and there was evidently ground for apprehension that the inspiration which the Christians claimed for the Scriptures of the New Covenant might impose upon well-meaning but uninstructed Jews. In the same connection it was decided, further, that Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) was not Holy Scripture, and that no books written from his time on (about 200 B. C.) were inspired, in accordance with the theory, found also in Josephus, that inspiration ceased in the age of Ezra and Nehemiah.

By such decisions, recognizing the inspiration of books that had been challenged and excluding others for which inspiration had been claimed, the canon of the Scriptures, that is, the authoritative list of Sacred Books, was defined. The oldest catalogue we have, containing the titles of all the books, dates probably from the latter part of the second century, and is not concerned with the point of canonicity — which it takes for granted — but with the proper order of the Prophets and the Scriptures.

The Jews had for centuries been widely distributed through the lands that had been included

in the kingdoms of Alexander's successors. Strabo, writing about the beginning of the Christian era, says, "This people has already made its way into every city, and it would be hard to find a place in the habitable world which has not admitted this race and been dominated by it." A century earlier a Jewish poet had boasted that every land and every sea was full of them. There were large numbers in Babylonia and the neighboring provinces of the Parthian empire, and still more in the countries around the eastern end of the Mediterranean, in Syria and Asia Minor, in Egypt and Cyrene. In Alexandria the Jews had a whole quarter of the city to themselves, and Philo estimates their numbers in Egypt in his time (ca. 40 A. D.) at a million.

In cities like Alexandria, where Greek was the common speech of a population recruited from many races, the Jews soon exchanged their mother tongue for the cosmopolitan language. The ancient Hebrew of their Sacred Books was unintelligible, not only to the masses, but even to most of the educated, who had learned in the schools of Greek rhetoricians and philosophers rather than at the feet of the rabbis. If the knowledge of the holy Law by which the distinctive Jewish life was regulated was not to be lost altogether, the Scriptures must be translated into Greek. The Pentateuch was doubtless translated first — legend attributes the initiative to King Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–246 B. C.); then other books, by different hands and at different times and places. To some of the books, as to Daniel

and Esther, additions were made in the translation which were not accepted by the Palestinian Jews.

Besides the books which were finally included in the Jewish canon, there were various others, written in Hebrew or Aramaic after the pattern of the several forms of Biblical literature. History, for example, is represented by 1 Maccabees, relating the struggle of the Jews in Palestine for religious liberty and national independence in the second century B. C.; the Proverbs of Solomon have a counterpart in the Proverbs of Ben Sira, already mentioned; the Psalter, in the so-called Psalms of Solomon; the story of Judith may be compared with Esther; the visions of Daniel have their parallel in popular apocalypses bearing the names of Enoch, Noah, Ezra, Baruch, and other ancient worthies. These writings were sooner or later translated into Greek, and some of them attained a wide circulation. The Greek-speaking Jews, also, produced a religious literature, in part imitating the familiar Biblical forms, as in the Wisdom of Solomon and 2 Maccabees, in part cast in Greek molds, as when prophecy disguised itself in Sibylline Oracles, or the supremacy of reason over the emotions was made the subject of a discourse after the pattern of a Stoic diatribe (4 Maccabees).

The influence of Greek culture on many of these writers was not confined to language and literary form; they lived in an atmosphere of Greek thought — the popular philosophy, in which Platonic and Stoic elements were fused or confused

— and a few had a more academic acquaintance with the Greek thinkers. But, under all this, they were Jews to the core, devoted to the religion of their fathers, of the superiority of which they were the more convinced by the spectacle of heathenism about them: Judaism was the only true religion, its Scriptures the one divine revelation. The Law and the Prophets had the same precedence as in the Palestinian synagogue. Of the other Scriptures there was no authoritative and exclusive list, and among books read solely for private edification it is not likely that a very sharp line was drawn; but, on the whole, the practice of the Greek-speaking Jews does not seem to have been materially different from that of their countrymen in Palestine.

Outside of Palestine, Christianity was spread by Greek-speaking Jews who had embraced the new Messianic faith, and their converts in the fields of their missionary labors, both Jews and Gentiles, spoke Greek, either as their mother tongue or as the language of common intercourse. The church therefore took over the Jewish Scriptures in the existing translations: the Christian Old Testament was from the beginning the Greek Bible, not the Hebrew. They received also from the Greek-speaking Jews the belief in the divine inspiration of the translators, by virtue of which the same infallible authority attached to the version of the Seventy which belonged to the Hebrew original. In their desire to possess every word of God, they gathered up the religious books which they found in the hands of the Jews, without in-

quiring curiously whether the Jews included them in the narrower category of Sacred Scriptures or not; and they discovered no reason in the books themselves why Esther, for example, should be inspired and Judith not; or why Ecclesiastes, with its skepticism about the destiny of the soul, should be divinely revealed, and the Wisdom of Solomon, with its eloquent defense of immortality, a purely human production; or, again, why the Proverbs of Solomon were Scripture, and the Proverbs of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) nothing but profane wisdom.

Controversies in the second century made the Christian apologists aware that the Jews did not acknowledge the authority of some of the books from which their opponents adduced proof-texts, and this practical concern, rather than purely learned interest, led to the drawing up of lists of books which were accepted by the Jews as Sacred Scripture. The oldest of these lists which has come down to us was made by Melito, Bishop of Sardes, about 170 A. D.; it contains the books of the Jewish canon enumerated above (p. 8), with the noteworthy exception of Esther, about which, as we have seen, Jewish opinion was divided. Christian catalogues of the Jewish Old Testament long show an uncertainty about the right of this book to a place in the canon.

Meanwhile the church had, in its worship and in religious instruction, established a use and tradition of its own. The Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach was appropriated for the moral instruction of youth and of converts, as is shown by the

title it bears in the Greek Bible, Ecclesiasticus, that is, "The Church Book," and other writings not included in the Jewish canon were highly esteemed in the church. About 240 A. D., Julius Africanus, Bishop of Emmaus in Palestine, addressed a critical letter to Origen on the story of Susanna and the Elders in the Book of Daniel. This story, he said, was not found in the Hebrew Daniel, and was not acknowledged by the Jews. He proved by internal evidence that it was not translated from the Hebrew, the language in which the Scriptures of the Old Testament were inspired, but originally composed in Greek, and he raised various historical objections to the tale: it ought not, therefore, to be quoted as Sacred Scripture. In his answer, Origen, the greatest Biblical scholar of his age, argued that if the story of Susanna was to be set aside on the ground that it was not accepted by the Jews, other books, such as Judith and Tobit, would have to be rejected also. He appeals to the prescriptive usage of the church itself, which had always used these books and read them with edification. This immemorial tradition was authority enough for Christians; there was no reason why the church should prune its Bible to please the Jews or adapt itself to their opinions about what was and what was not inspired Scripture; he reminds his correspondent of the law, "Thou shalt not remove the ancient landmarks which those before thee have set."

This way of looking at the matter, as might be expected, prevailed in the church. Lists of the books of the Jewish Bible were handed down, and

scholars were well aware that the Christian Old Testament contained several books not received by the Jews. By the more critical of the Greek Fathers these books are not cited with the same authority for the establishment of doctrine as the books of the Hebrew Bible. Thus, Athanasius, at the end of a list of the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (365 A. D.), adds: "There are, besides these, other books, not, indeed, included in the canon, but prescribed by the Fathers to be read by those who come to the church and wish to be taught the doctrine of religion, namely, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, and the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." But this learned reserve had no effect on the liturgical or practical use of the church. The question of the inspiration and authority of the supernumerary books of the Old Testament was not decided by any council speaking in the name of the catholic church; nor was it ever thus determined exactly what these supernumerary books were, though several local synods made lists of them.

The Latin Church received its Bible from the Greeks, and the Latin translations of the Old Testament made from the Greek included, as a matter of course, the books which the church accepted and the synagogue rejected. About the beginning of the fifth century, Jerome undertook a new Latin translation direct from the Hebrew. He lived for many years at Bethlehem, and had learned Hebrew from Jewish teachers, whose assistance he employed also in the work of trans-

lation. In some of the prefaces to this translation (which was published in parts), and in other places in his writings, Jerome gives a catalogue of the books of the Hebrew Bible, corresponding to the contents of our English Old Testament, and expressly excludes all others from the class of canonical Scriptures: "Whatever is not included in this list is to be classed as apocrypha. Therefore Wisdom (commonly entitled 'of Solomon'), and the Book of Jesus son of Sirach, and Judith and Tobit . . . are not in the canon." The word "apocrypha," literally "secret, or esoteric, writings," had been used generally for the books of heretical sects, or suspected of being such, and, more broadly, of writings which the church repudiated as not only uninspired but harmful, the reading of which it often forbade. It was, therefore, a very radical word that Jerome uttered when he applied this name to books which the church had always regarded as godly and edifying.

Jerome himself did not consistently maintain the position which would make the Jewish Bible the canon of the Christian church. At the request of certain bishops he translated Judith and Tobit, noting in the prefaces that the Jews exclude these books from the canon and put them among the apocrypha, but significantly adding in the one case that he thinks it better to oppose the judgment of the Pharisees and obey the commands of the bishops, in the other pleading not only the demand of a bishop but the fact that the Nicene Council had included Judith among the

Sacred Books.[1] In another preface he describes Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon as books which the church reads "for the edification of the people, not for proving the doctrines of the church" — a definition which accords with the attitude of many of the Greek Fathers. Jerome thus halts between two opinions: in relegating to the apocrypha everything that is not in the Hebrew Bible he speaks as a critic; in recognizing the books found in the Christian Old Testament, but not in the Hebrew, as useful and edifying, though of inferior authority for doctrinal purposes, he, like Origen, takes the ground of the practical churchman. The mediating position is more clearly defined by Rufinus, who, after giving a catalogue of the books of the Hebrew Bible, adds: "There are other books, which older authors called not 'canonical' but 'ecclesiastical,' such as the Wisdom of Solomon, and the so-called Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, named by the Latins Ecclesiasticus; to the same class belong Tobit, Judith and the Books of the Maccabees."

The great influence of Augustine was thrown wholly on the side of ecclesiastical tradition; he even remonstrated with Jerome for translating the Old Testament from the Hebrew and thus disturbing the minds of the faithful, instead of revising the Old Latin version after the Greek. In his treatise on Christian Doctrine (ii. 8; written in 397 A. D.) he includes among the canonical

[1] The Nicene Council made no formal deliverance on the subject of the canon, and upon what Jerome's appeal to its authority rests is unknown.

books of the Old Testament Judith, Tobit, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus, and the Wisdom of Solomon; African provincial synods at Hippo (393 A. D.) and Carthage (397 A. D.) pronounced themselves in the same sense.

The Syriac-speaking churches, whose Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew, originally recognized those books only which were found in the Jewish Bible; it appears, indeed, that the earliest Syriac version did not extend to Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, but did include Sirach. Under the influence of the Greek Church, those branches of the Syrian Church which remained in communion with it gradually added to their Bible translations of the other books from the Greek; but the Nestorians, in whose schools Biblical criticism moved more freely than in the Catholic Church, continued to reject them, or to accord them, together with several of the books commonly reckoned canonical (Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Job, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom), only qualified authority.

Throughout the Middle Ages learned authors repeated the conflicting utterances of the Fathers concerning the canon, without being disturbed by their inconsistency; in practice, the Old Testament comprised all the books that were usually found in copies of the Greek or Latin Bible, without regard to the fine distinctions of "canonical" and "ecclesiastical." The immemorial usage of the church had more weight than the opinions of scholars. With this con-

curred the fact that from the fourth century on the Bible was copied in collective codices, on folded sheets of parchment or vellum like our books, not in separate rolls, and thus the canon of the Old Testament became, not a mere list of Sacred Books, but a physical unity, in which the books of the Jewish Bible were intermingled with those which the Jews did not accept.

The question assumed a new significance at the Reformation. In rejecting the authority of ecclesiastical tradition and the prescriptive usage of the church and making the Scriptures the only rule of faith and practice, the Reformers were under the necessity of deciding what books were inspired Scripture, containing the Word of God revealed to men, clothed with divine authority, demanding unqualified faith, and a means of grace to believers. Obviously they could not logically acknowledge books whose place in the Bible had no other warrant than that the church had accepted them from very early times; nothing short of the authority of the New Testament itself would suffice, and they found in the New Testament no quotations from these books. To the Jews, St. Paul said, were committed the oracles of God; it was the Jewish Scriptures to which Jesus and the Apostles appealed.

Naturally, therefore, Luther reverted to the position of Jerome: the books found in the Hebrew Bible, and those only, were the Scriptures of the Old Testament; whatever was more than these was to be reckoned among the apocrypha.

Consistently, in his translation of the Bible, Luther separated the books of this class from the books of the Jewish canon among which in the Latin Bible they were scattered, and brought them together in a group by themselves. In the first complete printed edition of his translation (1534), these books (Judith, Wisdom, Tobit, Sirach, Baruch, 1 and 2 Maccabees, the Greek additions to Esther and Daniel, the Prayer of Manasseh) stand between the Old Testament and the New, with the title (after Jerome) "*Apocrypha;* that is, books that are not equally esteemed with the Holy Scripture, but nevertheless are profitable and good to read." The other Protestant versions, on the Continent and in England, followed this example.

The attitude of Luther toward the Old Testament Apocrypha was maintained by the Lutheran Churches, whose Confessions do not, however, attempt a more exact definition of the value and authority of the Apocrypha. The earlier Reformed (Calvinistic) Confessions take substantially the same ground: the Ecclesiastical Books, or Apocrypha, are useful, especially for moral instruction, but they have not the same authority as the canonical books, and doctrines may not be deduced from them alone. The Articles of the Church of England (1563; English translation, 1571) agree on this point with the other Reformed Confessions: after enumerating the canonical books "of whose authority there was never any doubt in the Church," the Sixth Article continues: "And the other books

(as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life, and instruction of manners; but yet it doth not apply them to establish any doctrine." A list of such books follows, comprising those commonly printed in the English Bible under the title Apocrypha.

A more radical position was represented by the Synod of Dort (1618) and by the Westminster Assembly (1643). The latter declares: "The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the church of God, nor to be otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings."

In opposition to the Protestant limitation of the canon of the Old Testament to the books of the Hebrew Bible, the Roman Church defined its attitude more sharply. In the Fourth Session of the Council of Trent (1546) it framed a "Decree concerning the Canonical Scripture," in which the books set apart by the Protestants as Apocrypha are included with the rest. The complete contents of the Old Testament in the Catholic Bible as thus defined are as follows: The Five Books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four Books of Kings [Samuel, Kings], two Books of Chronicles, 1 and 2 Esdras [Ezra, Nehemiah], Tobit, Judith, Esther, Job, the Psalter of David, containing one hundred and fifty Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaiah, Jere-

miah with Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Twelve Minor Prophets, two Books of Maccabees, namely, the First and Second. . . . "If any man does not accept as sacred and canonical these books, entire, with all their parts, as they have customarily been read in the Catholic Church and are contained in the ancient common Latin edition . . . let him be anathema!"

This decree not only affirms that all the books in question are Holy and Canonical Scripture, but seems to put them all in one class, and deliberately to exclude the ancient distinction between the books of the Jewish Bible and the Ecclesiastical Books. Many of the Fathers had, however, made such a distinction, and Catholic scholars, even after Trent, thought it permissible to class the Ecclesiastical Books (which Protestants call the Apocrypha) as "deuterocanonic," meaning not thereby to imply that they are inferior in authority or infallibility or dignity — for both classes owe their excellence to the same Holy Spirit — but that they had attained recognition in the church at a later time than the others. Individuals have sometimes gone farther, and acknowledged a difference in authority: the deuterocanonic books are useful for edification, but not for the proof of doctrines — a position substantially the same as that of the Greek Fathers and of moderate Protestants; but this is plainly against the sense of the decree of Trent.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A NATIONAL LITERATURE

For the religious apprehension of Jews and Christians the Old Testament is a body of Sacred Scriptures, containing the Word of God as revealed to the chosen people. The revelation was made "at sundry times and in divers manners" through many centuries, that is to say, it has a historical character, an adaptation to the needs or accommodation to the capacities of men, and, from the Christian point of view, makes a progressive disclosure of the divine purpose and plan of salvation. To understand this economy of revelation, or this pedagogic of religion, it is necessary to distinguish the times, and to determine the nature, authorship, and age of the several books or parts of books. The critical questions which lie at the threshold of every historical inquiry arise, therefore, in the study of the Old Testament, and much learning and acumen have been expended upon them, especially in modern times, by scholars of all shades of theological opinion. That there should be wide divergence in their conclusions on many points is not surprising, in view of the difficulty of many of the questions and the insufficiency of

the data available for a solution; the same thing is true in other ancient literatures.

A more radical difference exists in the Old Testament, however, because, for many scholars, Catholic and Protestant, the deliverances of the church, or the consent of tradition, or the testimony of the New Testament, or the concurrence of all these, outweighs, in such a matter as the unity and Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the internal evidence of the books themselves, and makes it their task to show that the evidence which seems to contradict this attribution is, when properly interpreted, compatible with it; while others hold that no external authority and no theory of inspiration can be allowed to countervail the cumulative weight of internal evidence.

Apart from its religious value and authority for the synagogue and the church, the Old Testament contains the remains of a national literature which richly rewards study for its own sake. While its masterpieces may be read with pleasure and profit without regard to the age and circumstances in which they were written, they will be better appreciated as well as better understood in the light of their own times and in their place in the literature as a whole. In this literature are also the sources for the political history of the Hebrew people and for the history of its civilization and religion. The critical ordering and appraisal of these sources is fundamental to any solid historical construction and, indeed, to any historical understanding of the Old Testament.

In the present volume the results of this critical inquiry are concisely set forth, with primary reference to the history of the literature and the development of religion, rather than to the sources for the political history, a complete investigation of which would require a somewhat different method. The questions are approached in the same way in which we should deal with similar questions in any other literature; critical problems, whether in sacred texts or profane, can be solved only by the application of the established methods of historical criticism.

All that survives of Hebrew literature prior to the age of Alexander is preserved in the Jewish Bible. It is not until the beginning of the third century B. C. that we come upon books written by Jews in Hebrew or in Greek which are not included in the canon. It is, doubtless, only a small part of a rich and varied literature that has thus been rescued across the centuries; much the larger part of what was written in the days of the national kingdoms, for example, must have perished in the catastrophes which befell Israel in the eighth century and Judah in the beginning of the sixth. What was saved was preserved for its intrinsic religious value or its association with great names of religious leaders and teachers, not out of a merely literary or patriotic interest. Nor were these losses confined to the older literature. Of the history of Judah under the Persian kings, for example, there must once have been completer records than the dubious scraps we have in Ezra. Of secular

poetry, which there is every reason to think flourished no less than hymnody, we should have had no specimens, had not an anthology of love songs somehow got the name of Solomon, and by a mystical interpretation been converted to religion. The remains of this literature are scattered unequally over a period of a thousand years or more. The youngest writings in the canon date from the second century B. C. (Daniel, Maccabean Psalms), being later than Sirach, and contemporary with some of the Visions of Enoch. All that is preserved of the earliest writings has been transmitted to us by later authors, who incorporated in their works longer or shorter passages extracted from their predecessors.

The books of the Old Testament differ widely in matter and form — history and story; legislation, civil and ritual, moral and ceremonial; prophecy and apocalypse; lyric, didactic, and dramatic poetry. The literary quality of the best in all these kinds is very high. The Song of Deborah (Judg. 5), notwithstanding the imperfect state of the text, is one of the greatest of triumphal odes; parts of Job attain the height of the sublime; some of the Psalms are worthy of a foremost place among religious lyrics; many oracles of the prophets are as noteworthy for the perfection of the expression as for the elevation of the thought; the laws are often formulated with admirable precision; in the art of narration the older historians are unsurpassed in ancient literature. These qualities appear even more

conspicuous in comparison with the remains of Egyptian or of Babylonian and Assyrian writings. It is only among the Greeks that we find anything to match the finest productions of the Hebrew genius. It need hardly be said that the Old Testament is not all on this high level of excellence — what literature is? But, taken as a whole, the level is surprisingly high, and even in the decadence classical models are sometimes imitated with no small degree of success.

CHAPTER III

THE PENTATEUCH

THE Old Testament begins with a comprehensive historical work, reaching from the creation of the world to the fall of the kingdom of Judah (586 B. C.), which in the Hebrew Bible is divided into nine books (Genesis–Kings). The Jews made a greater division at the end of the fifth book (Deuteronomy) and treated the first five books (the Pentateuch) as a unit, with a character and name of its own, the Law. The names of the several books in our Bibles are derived from the Greek version, and indicate in a general way the subject of the book, or, more exactly, the subject with which it begins: Genesis, the creation of the world: Exodus, the escape from Egypt; Leviticus, the priests' book; Numbers, the census of the tribes; Deuteronomy, the second legislation, or the recapitulation of the law.

The three middle books of the Pentateuch (Exodus–Numbers) are more closely connected with one another than with the preceding and following books (Genesis, Deuteronomy); in fact, they form a whole which is only for convenience in handling divided into parts. In these books narrative and legislation are somewhat unequally represented. Exod. 1–19 is almost all narrative, as are also

c. 24, and cc. 32–34; the story is picked up again in Num. 10, what lies between is wholly legislative; in Num. 10–27, 28–36, narrative and laws alternate, the latter predominating. It is evident that from the author's point of view the narrative was primarily a historical setting for the Mosaic legislation.

Deuteronomy begins with a brief retrospect (Deut. 1–3) of the movements of the Israelites from the time they left the Mount of God till they arrived in the Plains of Moab, the lifetime of a whole generation. There, as they are about to cross the Jordan to possess the Land of Promise, Moses delivers to them the law which they shall observe in the land, and with many exhortations and warnings urges them to be faithful to their religion with its distinctive worship and morals. Thus Deuteronomy also presents itself essentially as legislation.

The history of the Israelite tribes opens with the account of the oppression in Egypt, the introduction to the story of deliverance. Its antecedents are found in the Book of Genesis, the migration of Jacob and his sons from Palestine to Egypt several generations earlier in a time of famine; and this in turn is but the last chapter in the patriarchal story which begins with the migration of Abraham from Syria or Babylonia to Palestine. Gen. 1–11 tells of creation and the first men; the great flood; the dispersion of the peoples, with a genealogical table showing the affinities of the several races and another tracing the descent of Abraham in

direct line from Shem the son of Noah. But even in Genesis the interest in the law manifests itself in various ways, such as the sanction of the sabbath, the prohibition of blood, and the introduction of circumcision.

In regarding the whole Pentateuch as Law, or, to express it more accurately, as a revelation of the principles and observances of religion, the Jews were, therefore, doing no violence to the character and spirit of these books; and in ascribing them to Moses they were only extending to the whole the authorship which is asserted in particular of many of the laws, and especially of the impressive exhortations in Deuteronomy which form the climactic close of his work as a legislator.

It was early observed, however, that there are numerous expressions in the Pentateuch which assume the settlement of Israel in Canaan and look back to the age of Moses as to a somewhat remote past: Gen. xxxvi. 31, for example, implies the existence of the Israelite monarchy. In the seventeenth century such anachronisms were bandied about a good deal, but, inasmuch as they were all brief clauses which might well be notes or glosses by scribes, they proved nothing about the age of the main text. The controversy sharpened the eyes of the critics, and many more conclusive facts were brought to light, which proved that the Pentateuch was not the product of one author nor of one age, and that, whatever part Moses may be conceived to have had in it, much must be ascribed to later writers. Spinoza,

for example, thought that Ezra was the author, or, more exactly, the compiler and editor, of the Pentateuch as we have it; while Richard Simon preferred the hypothesis of a succession of inspired scribes who from age to age revised the work of their predecessors and brought it up to date.

The outcome of this criticism was that the Pentateuch is in some sense a composite work, and in its present form much later than Moses. No methodical attempt had been made, however, to distinguish its different strata, or to discover the sources from which it was compiled. This was first undertaken by an eminent French physician, Jean Astruc, who in 1753 published the results of his investigations under the modest title "Conjectures concerning the Original Memoirs which it appears that Moses used in compiling the Book of Genesis." Astruc's analysis was suggested by peculiar phenomena in the use of the divine names in Genesis, and he was led to the hypothesis that Moses had for the primeval and patriarchal history two principal sources, one of which employed consistently the proper name Jehovah, the other the appellative Elohim (God). The two narratives were in large part parallel, and when they were united in one continuous narrative, repetitions, contradictions, and chronological difficulties were created which disappear when the sources are separated and recombined in their original sequence.

This is not the place for a history of criticism: it must suffice to say that, as the result of the labors of many scholars in the last century and a

half upon the problem of the sources and composition of the Pentateuch, historians are now generally agreed that four main sources are to be recognized, of which three run, in varying proportion, from Genesis to Numbers and reappear in Joshua, while the fourth is found in Deuteronomy and Joshua only.

CHAPTER IV

CHARACTER OF THE SOURCES: GENESIS

Of the four main sources of the Pentateuch and Joshua, two are easily recognizable, and may be distinguished with certainty in almost any combination. The Book of Deuteronomy, though itself a composite work, constitutes a whole, with a characteristic religious point of view and marked peculiarities of language and style. The strand akin to it in Joshua is not always so easy to discriminate from additions and editorial retouchings in one of the other sources; but since these are of approximately the same age, the difficulty is, from the historian's point of view, not of very serious moment.

The second source, more closely interwoven in the narrative of Genesis – Numbers, and Joshua, has also such strongly marked peculiarities, not only in religious ideas and in phraseology and style, but in its whole conception and treatment of the history, that it stands out in salient contrast to any surroundings in which it may occur. Its interest is concentrated on the origin of the sacred institutions of Israel, especially on the priesthood, the worship, and the distinctive religious customs of the people, for

which reason it is commonly called the "priestly" history and law.

The two remaining sources resemble each other much more closely in religious conceptions, in language, and in their representation of the history, so that, where their closely parallel narratives are intimately interwoven to make one continuous and harmonious story, it is often impossible to unravel them. As far as Exod. iii. 14 one of them employs the name Elohim for God, while the other uses Jehovah from the beginning (see Gen. iv. 26), and this difference frequently serves as a first clue; but editors and copyists have so often, purposely or thoughtlessly, interchanged the names of God that it is by no means a decisive criterion. From Exod. 3 on, this criterion fails altogether. Closer acquaintance with the two sources discovers, under all their similarity, individual peculiarities by which they can ordinarily be recognized. Frequently, also, the connection of the story itself, references or allusions to incidents already recounted and preparation for events subsequently to be narrated, serve to identify passages with one or the other.

For the sake of brevity, it is customary to designate these sources by symbols: J (Jahvist), the source in which God is from the beginning called Jehovah (more exactly, Jahveh); E (Elohist), the closely cognate source in which Elohim (God) is consistently used throughout Genesis; D, Deuteronomy and the kindred narrative in Joshua; P (Priestly), the source in which the

interest in the religious institutions predominates. This author also uses Elohim exclusively in Genesis, and down to Exod. vi. 2 ff.

The two sources, J and E, both narrate the story of the patriarchs at some length. J begins with the migration of Abraham from Harran (Gen. 12); the corresponding introduction of Abraham in E is not preserved, and the first passage that can with confidence be attributed to that source is Gen. 20. From that point through Genesis and down to Exod. 24, J and E furnished the author of the Pentateuch most of his narrative. The contents of both were evidently drawn from the same common stock of legend, and they tell in large part the same stories in variant forms, with differences of incident or of localization. Sometimes one is ampler and more detailed, sometimes the other. The author of Genesis in such cases often chose the fuller version, enriching it here and there from the other; in other places the two are combined in more equal measure into one continuous narrative; or, again, as in parts of the story of Joseph, extracts from the two alternate in large blocks.

J and E are, as has been said above, much alike in language and style, yet each has distinguishing peculiarities of expression. These of necessity disappear in a translation, especially in a translation which, like the Authorized Version, raises everything to one stately level of noble English prose. Even in translation, however, a difference in the story-teller's art and

manner may be discerned. For J the reader will find good examples in Gen. 18–19; 24; 38; 39; and 43–44 (which are nearly solid extracts from that source); with the latter chapters, from the story of Joseph, should be compared Gen. 40–42, chiefly from E. Gen. 22 is also from E. From the literary point of view, J is the better narrator; he tells his story directly, swiftly, with almost epic breadth, and with just that measure of detail which gives the note of reality, never overloading the story with circumstance. Nor is it only the external action which he causes thus vividly to pass before us; with the dramatic instinct of the true story-teller he makes us spectators of the inner play of feeling and motive.

The religious element in the stories of J is pervasive. The forefathers are favorites of God, who directs their ways, and protects and blesses them in all their doings. He appears to them in human form, and converses with them as a man with his friends; reflection has not yet found such too human behavior unbecoming in God. Gen. 18 is a striking instance of this familiarity in the deity: Jehovah with two companions comes to Abraham's tent, eats of the meal the patriarch's hospitality provides, predicts that Sarah shall bear a son before the year is out — a prospect which moves the old woman listening behind the door to incredulous merriment — and as he departs announces that he is going down to Sodom to see whether they are as bad there as has been reported to him. A still more drastic

example is the "man" who wrestles with Jacob, and finding himself no match for the brawny patriarch, disables him by a foul, putting his hip out of joint, and finally, to get loose, unmasks as a god, owns Jacob the winner, and names him "Israel," the man who held his own against a god (Gen. xxxii. 24 ff.). Or, again, as Moses is on the way to Egypt by God's command to deliver his people, Jehovah encounters him where he halts for the night, and tries to kill him, desisting only when Zipporah bans him by smearing her imperiled husband with the bloody foreskin of her son (Exod. iv. 24 ff.).

Such extremely human representations belong to the ancient legends which are incorporated in the history; the author's own conception of God, if we may judge him by passages like Exod. xxxiii. 12–23; xxxiv. 6–9, was much less crude; but it is significant that such traits were allowed to remain with so little change.

The legends also attribute to God a partiality for the patriarchs which lets him protect and prosper them in transactions such as are repugnant not only to the most rudimentary morality but to savage manliness, as in Gen. 12 and 26, variants of the story how one of the forefathers exposed his wife's honor rather than risk his own neck. Less striking, but no less instructive, is Jacob, who gains the birthright by overreaching his brother and the blessing of the first-born by deceiving his father, and in the end outwits the wily Laban at his own devices and grows rich at his expense. It would be a mistake to

take such stories as reflecting the morality of the author's time: they were the traditions of another age and another order of things. But again it is significant that they are narrated in J without any visible attempt to mitigate their offensive features. Other authors, as we shall see, toned down these features or eliminated them.

The second of the authors in the patriarchal history (E) is but little inferior to J as a narrator, and in translation the difference is even less noticeable than in the original. Where they can be directly compared, however, E is slightly less vivid and picturesque. A certain learned, or antiquarian, interest is also apparent. E notes, for instance, that Laban, who as a Syrian naturally spoke Aramaic, called the boundary cairn Jegar Sahaduta, while Jacob named it in good Hebrew Gal 'Ed (a popular etymology of Gilead), and that the ancestors of the Israelites in their old homes beyond the Euphrates were heathen. He is particularly well informed in things Egyptian; he knows, for example, the Egyptian names of the chief personages in the story of Joseph. It is in accord with this tendency that he introduces the name Jehovah only after the call of Moses (Exod. iii. 14 ff.), and for the patriarchal period employs only the appellative, God.

The conception of deity is less naïve than in J: God never appears in tangible bodiliness like a man, but reveals himself in visions or dreams, or makes known his will by a voice out of the unseen. Things objectionable to morals or taste are frequently softened down. In J, for example,

Joseph's brothers, at Judah's instance, sell him to the Ishmaelites; in E Reuben persuades them to put Joseph into a dry well, intending to save him from them and restore him to his father; while he is absent, Midianites steal Joseph out of the well and carry him off to Egypt. Compare also Gen. 20 (E) with c. 12 (J), noting how in the former the author takes pains to make clear that no harm came to Sarah, and that Abraham is a prophet whose intercession is effectual with God. On the other hand, the interventions of God in E often show a disposition to magnify the miracle and to give it a magical character. Thus at the crossing of the Red Sea, in J the waters are driven back by a strong wind, leaving the shallow basin dry; in E the miracle is wrought by Moses with his wand (like the plagues), and this representation is followed by P, in which the waters stand in walls on either hand while the people march between.

If the author of E was acquainted with J, as it would be natural to assume, he certainly does not copy him; of literary dependence in a strict sense there is no sign. The two appear, rather, to be parallel narratives, drawing on a common stock of tradition, which had already acquired by repetition, whether oral or written, a comparatively fixed form. This common stock included traditions of different groups of tribes and of holy places in different parts of the land. As might be supposed, the tribes seated in central Palestine, with their kinsmen east of the Jordan, which constituted the strength of the

kingdom of Israel, make the largest contribution; Judah with its allied clans in the south comes second.

In the treatment of the common tradition in J and E, respectively, local or national interests appear, from which it is generally inferred that E was written in the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and J in the Southern (Judah). The question of the age of these writings can be more profitably considered at a later stage of our inquiry.

The patriarchal history which begins with the migration of Abraham, Gen. 12, is preceded by what may be called the primeval history of mankind, Gen. 1–11. In these chapters E is not represented, and it seems probable that the Israelite historian began his book with Abraham. The primeval history as we read it, therefore, is derived in part from J, in part from P. From J come Gen. ii. 4^b–iv. 25; vi. 1–8; a part of the composite story of the Flood (vii. 1–5, 7–10, 12, 17^b, 22–23; viii. 6–12, 13^b, 20–22); the sons of Noah, ix. 18–27, and part of the table of nations (x. 8–19, 21, 24–30); the Tower of Babel (xi. 1–9). These pieces do not form a literary unity, and they give evidence, as we should expect, of diverse origin. There are some among them which imply a continuous development of civilization, unbroken by the catastrophe of the Deluge, and Noah himself was originally an agricultural figure, the first vine-dresser and maker of wine, not the navigator of the ark. The tradition which ascribes the invention of the arts of primitive civilization to descendants of Cain

(Gen. iv. 17–24) is obviously of different origin from the story of Cain and Abel. Closer inspection shows that the narrative of J in Gen. 1–11 is composed of two strands, each having a consistency and continuity of its own, and similar phenomena appear in subsequent parts of the history from Genesis to Samuel.

If these various elements are alike designated by the symbol J, it is because they exhibit the peculiarities of conception and expression which characterize that work. The God who walks for pleasure in his garden in the cool of the day, misses his gardeners, and finding that they have eaten the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge, drives them out of the garden for fear they might also put out their hands to the tree whose fruit gives immortality, or who comes down to see the tower the Babylonian heaven-stormers are building, and apprehending more presumptuous attempts from their success, breaks up their concert by the ingenious device of making them talk different languages, is plainly imagined in quite the same way as the God who visits Abraham on his way to Sodom or wrestles with Jacob or tries to kill Moses on the road to Egypt. Even more primitive is the fragment, Gen. vi. 1–4, telling how deities, captivated by the charms of mortal women, begot with them a mythical race of giants.

The Deluge has long been known to be a Babylonian myth, which now forms an episode in a poem celebrating the exploits of a hero named Gilgamesh. But, though preserving even such

details of the Babylonian original as the sending out of the birds, the Hebrew author has impressed upon it the stamp of his own religion, effacing its polytheistic features, and making the Flood a just judgment on universal sinfulness; while for the Babylonian hero he substituted a figure of Palestinian legend, and shows his inland bringing-up by converting the ship into an enormous box. It has frequently been assumed or asserted that others of these myths of the early world, particularly the Garden in Eden and the Tower of Babel, are also of Babylonian origin, but no parallels to them have as yet been discovered, nor does internal evidence point that way.

The scenery in the Garden in Eden is naïve enough, but the problem of the myth is one which has exercised the minds of men through all time: Why is man mortal? or, as it is usually put in myths, How did man fail of immortality? Two other persistent questions are here joined with it, Why has man to work so hard for a living? and Why must women bear children with pangs and peril? The answer evinces a reflection of which we often think primitive philosophy incapable: man aspired to a knowledge that God jealously kept to himself — he would not respect his limitations.

The third chief narrative source in the Pentateuch, commonly called the Priestly History (P), is of a different character from those which we have been examining. A more descriptive title for it would be, Origins of the Religious In-

stitutions of Israel. In the view of the author, these institutions were successively ordained by God at certain epochs in the history of mankind and in connection with certain historical events; these events he narrates as the occasion or ground of the institution, which the subsequent observance recalls and commemorates. These institutions were not all first revealed to Israel and prescribed for it; on the contrary, the author has a theory of a progressive revelation of God's will, beginning with the first man and woman, and amplified from age to age by the addition to its contents of fresh ordinances, while at the same time its extension gradually narrows, until, in the Mosaic Law, it is addressed to the chosen people of Israel alone. The place of each new institution is therefore fixed not only in a chronological system but in the genealogical scheme of races and nations. The genealogies which connect one epoch of revelation with the following one are thus not the bare bones of history, stripped of its flesh and blood, but serve a distinct and characteristic purpose.

The Origins begin with the creation of the world (Gen. i.–ii. 4), and a comparison of this account with that of J in 2–3 well illustrates the difference between the two sources. The God of P is not one who fashions man and beast out of clay and breathes with his own lips into the work of his hands the breath of life; he stands above and apart from the world, and creates all things by fiat: "Let there be light, and there was light" — so in sublime simplicity the formula runs. The

creative acts are six natural days: "Evening came and morning came, a first day." "And he rested (kept sabbath) on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all his creative work." The ordinance of the sabbath thus has its origin and sanction in the creation itself, and this is alleged in the Decalogue (Exod. xx. 11) as the motive for man's sabbath-keeping.

The Flood gives occasion to the blessing of Noah and his sons, in which for the first time animal food is permitted, — like many of the ancients, P made the first men vegetarians, — and with this license is coupled a prohibition of flesh with blood in it and the sentence of God upon murder, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." These commandments, given to Noah, are binding on all mankind, his descendants. The genealogies of the antediluvians connect the creation with the Flood and serve also the chronology; genealogies of the descendants of Noah's sons follow, the chronology attaching to the line of Shem down to Terah, the father of Abraham.

Abraham's migration to Canaan and the birth of Ishmael are briefly told, and then, at large, the covenant with Abraham, the promise of a son by Sarah, and the institution of circumcision, which is an ordinance for all the Abrahamic peoples, the Arab descendants of Ishmael as well as the Israelites and Edomites sprung from Isaac,

and for their slaves, home-born or foreign. The only other incident in Abraham's life of which P gives a fuller account is the purchase from the sons of Heth of the cave of Macpelah, the burial-place of the patriarchs; meager notices of marriages and deaths, and tedious pedigrees take the place of the vivid stories of J and E. The contrast is most striking in the case of Joseph, about whom we have from P only a few verses. Doubtless this is in part due to the fact that the author of the Pentateuch preferred the richer narrative of his other sources, but what is preserved of P shows clearly enough that his history of Joseph, even when complete, was brief and dry.

The diction and style of P are very unlike that of J and E; a favorable example of his manner is Gen. 17. Even in a translation, which necessarily obliterates much, some of the author's peculiarities can be observed, foremost among them a certain stiffness and a laborious circumstantiality, which will be felt if Gen. xvi. 1–2, 4–8, 11–14 (J) or xvi. 8–21 (E) be compared with c. 17 (P). In Gen. 1, thanks to the subject, this dry simplicity gives an impression of sublimity; but, in general, narration is not the author's best gift. On the other hand, the conception of God, as we have seen in Gen. 1, is more elevated than in either of the other sources; and in the little P tells of the patriarchs their deportment is unimpeachable.

CHAPTER V

EXODUS, LEVITICUS, NUMBERS

In the early chapters of Exodus the narrative is chiefly a combination of J and E; the first considerable extract from P is Exod. vi. 2–vii. 13, recalling the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and announcing its approaching fulfillment, adding, as the signature of the new epoch of the history now opening, the revelation of the name God, Jehovah (Jahveh), which none of the patriarchs had known.

In the story of the plagues all three sources are interwoven; a distinctive feature of P is that Aaron with his wand, under Moses' direction, brings the plagues to pass. The announcement of the last plague is the occasion for P to introduce the ordinance of the Passover. The houses of the Israelites are to be marked by the blood of the victim on the door-posts and lintel: when Jehovah passes through the land, smiting dead all the first-born of the Egyptians, he will "skip" the houses so protected — thus the name of the feast is explained (Exod. xii. 1–13). To this is annexed a law for the observance of the feast of Unleavened Bread, which in Palestine immediately followed the Passover (xii. 14–20). With the institution of the Passover is connected also a

change in the calendar: henceforth the month of the vernal full moon (March–April) is to be the first of the year. It was so in the ecclesiastical calendar of later times, but the civil New Year was, and still is, in the Autumn.

All the strands of the triple narrative lead to a holy mountain in the desert (Sinai in P and probably in J; Horeb in E and D), the Mount of God, represented in all as the ancient seat of Jehovah. It was on this mountain that God appeared to Moses and bade him return to Egypt to deliver Israel: when he had brought the people out of Egypt, they should worship at this mountain. Thither, therefore, Moses directs their way after crossing the Red Sea. In all the sources God's presence is manifested by cloud and fire upon the mountain, and Moses goes to the summit to meet God (Exod. 19, J, E; xxiv. 15^{b}–18^{a}, P). These imposing preparations portend a revelation of no common moment; and the whole situation bids us expect the organic law of the religion of Jehovah, the things which he requires of his worshipers.

We find, in fact, in each of the three sources at this point larger or smaller groups of laws purporting to be delivered to Moses at the holy mountain, and containing what may be regarded as fundamental institutions. These bodies of law are, however, very different; the problem of their relation to one another and to the narratives is extremely difficult, and the parallel account of the legislation at Horeb in Deut. 5 adds another element to the complication. If the reader will

attentively compare Exod. 20; 21–23; 24; Deut. 5; ix. 8–x. 5; and Exod. 34, he will get some impression of the nature of the difficulties. According to Deut. v. 22, the Decalogue (Deut. v. 6–21; Exod. xx. 1–17, with noteworthy variants) was the law written on the two tables of stone by the hand of God which Moses dashed down and shattered when he saw the people wantoning around the golden calf (Exod. xxxii. 19). God proposes to reproduce the law on two new tablets (xxxiv. 1), but the Decalogue (xxxiv. 28) written on these tablets (xxxiv. 14–26) is wholly different from that of Exod. 20, being not a compend of moral law, but prescriptions for the festivals and ritual rules, whereas Deut. ix. 8–x. 5 says in so many words that it was the Decalogue of v. 6–21 which was restored.

It is impossible to discuss these problems here. It must suffice to say that they arise in part from the attempt to harmonize radically different representations of what the fundamental law given at Sinai (or Horeb) was, in part from the tendency of later times to ascribe to the original Mosaic legislation the whole body of actual law regarded as having a religious sanction. To the latter cause we may without hesitation attribute, for example, the introduction of the fragmentary remains of a Palestinian civil code in Exod. 21–22, to which other remnants of diverse origin have been attached, as well as the great mass of ritual and ceremonial laws which are thrust into the framework of P.

The fundamental law of J, the basis of the orig-

inal compact between Jehovah and Israel, is preserved in Exod. xxxiv. 1–5, 10[a], 14–28 (with some manifest amplifications in vss. 15, 16, 24). When this was combined with the story of the golden calf and the broken tables (E), it was necessary to take it as a *renewal* of the law, and this was accomplished by very slight additions in vss. 1 and 4 ("like unto the first," "that were on the first tables, which thou brakest").

What the Horeb constitution in E originally was, is less confidently to be determined. In the form in which E was read by the authors of Deut. 5 and of ix. 8–x. 5 (end of the seventh century or later), it was the Decalogue *only* (Deut. v. 22 f.); but it is not certain that this was the oldest representation. There are other evidences that E was revised and enlarged in the seventh century by an author who was influenced by the prophets, particularly by Hosea; and the story of the golden calf (with which the Decalogue narrative is closely connected), a condemnation in advance of the Israelite worship of Jehovah in the image of a bull, may have been introduced in this edition, as the repudiation of the sacrifice of children to Jehovah in the story of Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 22) probably was.

In P the case is clearer. According to his theory all the ordinances of worship were revealed at Sinai. Legitimate sacrifice presupposes one legitimate temple and altar, a legitimate priesthood, and a minutely prescribed ritual. In J and E the patriarchs set up altars and offer sacrifice in many places; it is an obvious interest of the authors, or

of the local legends of holy places which they follow, to trace the origin of the altars, sacred stones, holy trees and wells, at Shechem or Bethel, Hebron or Beersheba, to one of the forefathers. In P, on the contrary, the patriarchs never offer sacrifice. Until the tabernacle was erected and God's presence filled it, until Aaron was consecrated as priest, until the technique of the various species of offering had been revealed by God and exemplified by Moses or Aaron, no sacrifice could be anything but impious, like the worship of heathen.

Accordingly, the first thing God does when Moses goes up into the mount is to give him plans and specifications for a sacred tent — a portable temple — with all its furniture, an altar for sacrifice in the court before it, the vestments of the priests, and the apparatus of the high-priestly oracle, and to reveal in detail the ritual for the consecration of priests (Exod. 25–30). The making of the tabernacle and all the other things necessary for the complete cultus is described in Exod. 35–40; the consecration of the priests and the inaugural sacrifices by Aaron in Lev. 8–9; Lev. x. 1–7 is closely connected with cc. 8–9, and its sequel (combined with other matter) is found in c. 16, the ritual of atonement. Leviticus 8–9 is a good specimen of the author's method. In the form of a description of the sacrifices of consecration and the inaugural sacrifices of Aaron, he gives a paradigm for every variety of offering.

Here was obviously a natural place to introduce laws prescribing the ritual of these species of

sacrifice and the circumstances which demand them, and accordingly we find in Lev. 1–7 a collection of such laws, some of them (e. g. Lev. 1 and 3) unquestionably old both in substance and formulation, with slight adaptation to their surrounding (e. g. "the sons of Aaron," i. 5, etc.), or with supplements to meet new economic and social conditions, such as the burnt offering of doves (Lev. i. 14–17, cf. vs. 2); others are younger or have been more extensively enlarged and amended. The chapters thus represent a growth in actual custom and corresponding rule. In c. 4 we may observe an example of another kind of legal growth, namely, the systematic development of principles or ideas. The scale of sin-offerings, graduated by the social station of the sinner — the high priest, the whole people, the prince, a common citizen — is consistently thought out in conformity with a theory. Observe that the prince is assigned a modest place next the bottom, below the religious community corporately, while the priest takes his at the top. We can say with full confidence that this elaborate ritual is not the booking of usage, but is a product of sacerdotal theory; and, further, that so long as kings reigned, the most high-church ecclesiastic is not likely to have arrogated so much to himself, or, at least, to have proclaimed his ambitions. Only in days when, under foreign governors, the high priest was really the greatest man in the community is such a table of precedence conceivable. Whether even then this law was actually put in operation, may be an open question.

The position of the sacrificial laws, Lev. 1–7, explains itself, as has been said. In many other cases, however, we see no reason why a subject is brought in where it is. Thus, Lev. 11–15, on various forms of uncleanness and the prescribed purifications, to which x. 10 f. seems to be a fragmentary introduction, have no obvious association with anything in the context, though they are introduced appropriately enough before the general purification of the Day of Atonement, c. 16. The laws, which read like the chapters of an exactly formulated code of purity, have been expanded by the addition of new paragraphs (e. g. Lev. xiv. 21–32, 33–53), and in some cases changes in the ritual may be recognized; compare, for example, Lev. xiv. 1–8 with vss. 10–20.

Chapters 17–26 form a distinct body of law, having certain marked peculiarities of its own, notably the frequent recurrence of the motive of "holiness" — that is, the avoidance of things and actions tabooed by the religion of Israel — often coupled with the appeal to God's holiness, as in xix. 2, "Ye shall be holy, for I, Jehovah your God, am holy," or simply asserting his authority, "I am Jehovah." On the other hand, much in the laws of this Holiness Book (H), as it now stands, has close affinity to the mass of ritual and ceremonial laws in Leviticus and Numbers. The hypothesis which seems best to explain the phenomena is that an independent collection of laws (or rather the remains of such a collection), characterized by the motive of holiness, has been expanded and edited in the spirit and manner of the

priestly legislation, while some laws which were originally included in this collection have been transposed to other contexts.

The Holiness Book closed with an earnest exhortation and warning to observe all these laws, promising the blessing of God on obedience and depicting in strong colors the calamities with which he will punish defection (Lev. 26). The position and prophetic tenor of this chapter resemble Deut. 28, and the book in its original form is apparently the product of the same age with Deuteronomy.

The Origins (P) described in Exod. 28 f. and Lev. 8 f. the choice of Aaron and his sons to be priests and their installation in the sacred office. The inferior order of the ministry of the sanctuary, the levites, is not as yet instituted. This is done in Numbers, and indeed with a certain redundancy, for Num. 3 and 4 independently deal with the subject, and c. 18 takes it up afresh without any allusion to a previous appointment. Much stress is laid on the exclusive prerogative of Aaron and his sons in the service of the altar and the ministry "within the veil"; no Levite, much less a layman, may presume to these sacred functions on pain of death. The injunctions are fortified by instances; the stories of Korah and his troop and of Dathan and Abiram, which make a tangled skein in Num. 16, show what a dire fate befalls those who contest the prerogative of the legitimate priesthood or usurp its functions. The levites are given to Aaron and his sons as temple slaves for the menial work of the sanctuary, in

place of the first-born Israelites of all tribes who would naturally be dedicated to God, i. e. to the temple. Yet, as ministers of religion, they are supported by a general tithe of the products of the soil imposed on all the people.

The laws in Numbers present the same variety as in Leviticus. There are old laws with modifications and enlargements, and many others which by various signs betray a more recent origin. Num. 28–36 belong as a whole to the latter class; cc. 28 f. exemplify that growth of the law by the formulation of sacerdotal ideals or desiderata which has been noted in the case of Lev. 4. It is to be observed that the narrative of P has reached in Num. xxvii. 12–23 the end of Moses' career; nothing is in place after it but the ascent of Mt. Abarim and Moses' death (Deut. 34). Num. 28–36 thus stand even formally in the place of an appendix.

The narrative of P (Origin of the Religious Institutions) and the great mass of ritual and ceremonial laws in the three middle books of the Pentateuch are often called collectively the Priests' Code. The name naturally suggests to the English reader an orderly body of law, compiled, revised, and promulgated by some authority; and, in fact, many critics — except for the orderliness, which nobody has ventured to affirm, and with allowance for later additions — regard the Priests' Code as such a law book, compiled and edited by priestly scribes in Babylonia, brought to Judæa by Ezra, with the authority of the Persian king, to reform the many disorders

that existed there, and ratified and put in force in 444 B. C. by the magnates and the people of the Jews. (See Ezra 7; Neh. 8–10, and below, pp. 127 ff.) Internal evidence of such an origin and destination is, however, sought in vain in the laws; the things that Ezra and Nehemiah were most zealous about, especially the veto on mixed marriages, do not stand out in the so-called Priests' Code as they do in other parts of the law, while about a reform of the cultus in Jerusalem in conformity with a new ritual introduced from Babylonia, the story of Ezra's doings is significantly silent.

The phenomena we have observed in Exodus–Numbers suggest the hypothesis, rather, that various old laws, dealing chiefly with sacrifice and with the rules of clean and unclean — the two principal subjects of priestly regulation — were inserted at suitable points in the Origins of the Religious Institutions (P); these received amendments and supplements both before and after their incorporation; other more independent developments, whether representing actual custom or sacerdotal aspirations, found place among or beside them; and thus the whole Priestly stratum grew by a process of accretion through many generations into its present inorganic magnitude. It is antecedently probable that this process went on in Palestine, where the ritual laws were a practical concern, rather than in the schools of Babylonia; and only strong evidence to the contrary could overcome this presumption.

CHAPTER VI

DEUTERONOMY

DEUTERONOMY purports to contain the laws under which Israel is to live in the land of Canaan. It deals with the conditions of an agricultural people, settled in towns and villages, in the presence of a native population to the contamination of whose religion and morals the Israelites are exposed. This legislation was revealed to Moses at Horeb (Deut. v. 28–33), but, inasmuch as it was not to go into effect until Israel was established in the possession of Canaan, being in fact wholly inapplicable to nomadic conditions — a consideration of which P, in its code of worship, is oblivious — it was not promulgated till the moment when the people, encamped opposite Jericho, was on the point of invading Palestine. Then the aged Moses, about to lay down his office and his life, delivers to the people, in national assembly, the law by which they are in future to be governed, and adds his most urgent injunctions and solemn warnings to be faithful to their religion and the law of their God.

The book is thus almost wholly in the form of address, and the hortatory note is insistent. As an introduction, Moses briefly recalls the history of the wanderings, from Horeb on, impressing at

every turn the lessons of their experience (Deut. 1–3); the material is taken chiefly from E's narrative, which it was intended to supersede in an independent Book of Deuteronomy. There follows a hortatory discourse (iv. 1–40), closely akin to cc. 29–30. The last acts and the death of Moses are narrated in confused fashion in c. 31; xxxii. 48–52; 34. The Song of Moses (c. 32), and the Blessing of Moses (c. 33), are apparently independent compositions which have been given an appropriate place at the end of the book. The core of Deuteronomy is cc. 5–11; 12–26; 28. Speaking generally, the first part (cc. 5–11) expounds the fundamental principles of religion, while the second (cc. 12–26) contains special laws, and, as a fitting and effective conclusion of the whole, c. 28 sets forth the blessings which God will bestow on Israel if it keeps his commandments and the curses it will incur by unfaithfulness and disobedience. The special laws, particularly in Deut. 22 ff., are similar in character to those in Exod. 21–23 and in Lev. 17–25, and doubtless embody in the main ancient custom; but beside them are provisions of a singularly Utopian kind, such as those on the conduct of war in c. 20 and the septennial canceling of all debts (xv. 1–11).

The conception of religion which dominates the whole book, but is most conspicuous in cc. 5–11, is the highest in the Old Testament. There is but one God, supreme in might and majesty, constant in purpose, faithful to his word, just but compassionate; he is not to be imaged or imagined in the likeness of anything in heaven or on earth;

idolatry, divination, and sorcery are strictly forbidden. The essence of religion is love (Deut. vi. 4), the love of God to his people and their responsive love to him is the ruling motive in worship and conduct. In the relations of men to their fellows, whether countrymen or strangers, and to the brute creation, humanity and charity are the prime virtues; the Utopian features of the laws are such only because they push the ideal of humanity too hard for unideal human nature.

What is most characteristic in the Deuteronomic legislation, the thing on which it dwells with insistent iteration, is that Jehovah will be worshiped only at one place, to be chosen by himself in the territory of one of the tribes. There all sacrifices must be offered, all festivals celebrated. At the head of the special laws this fundamental article is repeatedly laid down (Deut. xii. 13–19 — seemingly the oldest formulation — xii. 2–7, 8–12, 20–27), and it recurs in connection with the laws concerning the disposition of God's share in man's increase (tithes, firstlings, etc.) and the annual festivals (Passover, Tabernacles).

This was an innovation which dislocated the whole system of religious observances, and the Deuteronomic legislation had to provide for the direct and indirect consequences of so radical a change. By ancient custom the religious dues were rendered and sacrifices offered at the village altars ("high places"), and there also the festivals were kept which marked the seasons of the husbandman's year; beside the altar, with a simple religious rite, domestic animals were

slaughtered whenever hospitality or a family festival gave occasion. If a man visited a more renowned sanctuary at a distance from his home, he did it of his own accord and in his own time and way. The feasts at the village altars, at which custom prescribed open hospitality, were a godsend to the poor of the community, many of whom would else seldom have tasted flesh or eaten their fill. The Deuteronomic law licenses the slaughter of animals at home without any religious rite, and introduces a plan of charity tithes to replace the hospitality of the altar. Its concern for the levites (that is, the priests of the local sanctuaries), who by the new arrangement were left without a livelihood, is also to be noted.

The motives for this radical change in immemorial religious custom are characteristic. In the first place, the "high places" had been seats of Canaanite worship before they were taken possession of by the Israelites, and not only did the stigma of aboriginal heathenism cling to them, but, in fact, many heathenish doings were perpetuated at them — drunken debauches and consecrated prostitution. But, further, their existence seemed to be incompatible with strict monotheism: the many gods were worshiped in many places; the *one* God seemed to have as corollary *one* place of worship. As a matter of experience, the localizing of Jehovah at numerous sanctuaries — Dan, Bethel, Gilgal, Beersheba — with their distinctive traditions and local peculiarities of ritual, doubtless did result, for the apprehension of the common man, in making a

local Jehovah, as happens to the Virgin and the Saints in Catholic countries. For the Deuteronomist this was only another kind of polytheism: "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah, our God, is *one* Jehovah!"

Deuteronomy is, therefore, the programme of a reform. Fortunately, we know how this programme was put in execution; the history of it is written in 2 Kgs. 22–23. In the course of some repairs in the temple in Jerusalem, a law book turned up, the reading of which threw King Josiah and his advisers into consternation. After taking counsel of a prophetess, an assembly was convoked, and the book publicly ratified by the notables and the people as the law of the realm. Thereupon the king proceeded to put the code in force. He not only cleaned house in the temple in Jerusalem, where a miscellany of foreign gods and cults was installed, but he destroyed and desecrated all the "high places," that is, the immemorial seats of the worship of Jehovah in the towns and villages of his kingdom, pulling the altars to pieces, smashing the stone pillars, hewing down the sacred poles, and forcibly carrying off the priests (levites) to Jerusalem, where he assigned them a living from the income of the temple, but — in his zeal going beyond the law of Deut. xviii. 6–8 — excluded them from sacrificial functions.

It was seen long ago by some of the Church Fathers that the law book which Hilkiah found and Josiah enforced can have been no other than Deuteronomy. The historian of the kingdoms,

writing after the reforms of Josiah and the following reaction and believing that the prohibition of worship at the high places had been binding since the building of Solomon's temple, is at pains to say that none of the kings from Solomon to Josiah, not even those to whom otherwise he gives the best mark for piety, had paid any attention to this law, with the sole exception of a brief attempt by Hezekiah. We can go further, and say that none of the older historians and none of the prophets of the ninth and eighth centuries show any acquaintance with such a prohibition. If the prophets assail the worship at the high places, as Hosea does, it is on the ground that it is heathenish and immoral, not that it is illegitimate; if Hosea condemns the pilgrimages to Gilgal and Beersheba, it is not implied that it would be better to go to Jerusalem; nor, indeed, is any condemnation of the worship at the high places more drastic than Isaiah's of the cultus in Jerusalem. Before the latter part of the seventh century there is no thought that Jehovah has such an exclusive preference for Solomon's temple.

All the other evidence in Deuteronomy points to the same age. Its conception of God and of religion is derived from the prophets of the eighth century. The influence of Hosea is particularly plain: that the essence of religion is love is Hosea's idea, if there is such a thing as originality in religion. The language and style of Deuteronomy are of the seventh century, in its excellences and in its defects; Jeremiah and

the author of Kings have the closest resemblance to it in its rhetorical manner and in its peculiar pathos.

On these grounds, since the latter part of the eighteenth century, an increasing number of scholars have held that the book was written in the second half of the seventh century for the purpose of bringing about a revolution such as actually followed its well-timed discovery; and this is now the opinion of almost all who admit that the common principles of historical criticism are applicable to Biblical literature.

Deuteronomy is not all of one piece, as has already been pointed out. Many older laws were taken up into it at the beginning or introduced subsequently; considerable additions were made to it after Josiah's time, and even after the fall of Judah, for in several passages that catastrophe and the dispersion of the people are an accomplished fact, an existing situation. It is only the reform programme and what hangs together with it that can be definitely dated.

CHAPTER VII

AGE OF THE SOURCES. COMPOSITION OF THE PENTATEUCH

DEUTERONOMY is a fixed point, by reference to which the age of other strata in the Pentateuch may be determined, at least relatively. Thus in P the patriarchs never offer sacrifice at the ancient holy places of Canaan, and the notion that legitimate sacrifice can be made only on one altar is so fundamental an article of religion that the first thing at Sinai is the construction of the tabernacle to be transported from one station to another in the desert. The inference is plain that P was written at a time when the principle of the unity of the sanctuary for which Deuteronomy contends with the zeal of innovation was no longer disputed, at least in the author's surroundings, so that he has no need to enjoin it, and can, indeed, ignore the fact that there ever had been other sanctuaries of Jehovah. Such a state of things never existed while the kingdom stood; it was only in the Persian period, when Judæa was reduced to a circle of a few miles about Jerusalem, that the conditions implied in P arose. Only in that age, through political circumstances, did the high priests attain the preëminence to which P gives the sanction of divine right; and P itself not

obscurely witnesses that these towering pretensions did not go unchallenged (see especially Num. 16). With this all the other evidence concurs: the supramundane conception of God and the avoidance of everything that seems to bring the deity into too close contact with earthly things or tempts the imagination to figure him too humanly speak of the progress of theological reflection. The language is plainly in decadence: apart from words which seem to be new, and occasionally foreign, the sentence is losing its flexibility, or authors are losing their mastery of it; it is only necessary to compare even the best passages in P (such as Gen. 23) with examples of really classical Hebrew prose (say, in 2 Sam. 11 ff., or the stories of Elijah in Kings), on the one hand, and with the writing of the Chronicler (third century B. C.), on the other, to see that P is nearer to the latter than to the former.

The age of the laws now set in the framework of the Origins is a distinct question, or rather, as will be understood from what has been said above, it is a separate question for every law, and often for successive paragraphs of the same law. And behind the question of the age of the law in its present formulation is frequently the remoter problem of the age of the institution or custom. Various criteria are available in the history of the kingdoms, in the prophets, in other collections of laws, and in Ezekiel's programme for the New Jerusalem (Ezek. 40 ff.). It must be enough here to say that the older laws in P go back, substantially in their present shape,

to the days of the kingdom, and in many cases represent a prescriptive usage which is of remote antiquity; while the latest additions to P were made at a time so recent that they had not found entry into the copies from which the earliest Greek version was made in the third century B. C.

J and E are both older than Deuteronomy. In Genesis, as has already been noted, they recite the foundation legends of Shechem, Bethel, Hebron, Beersheba, and other of the holy places of Canaan, telling how the patriarchs built the altars, set up the sacred stones, planted the sacred trees, dug the holy wells, and offered sacrifice to their own God at these spots, by this origin legitimating as Israelite sanctuaries what were, at the time of the conquest and long after, Canaanite "high places." Similarly, in Joshua, Gilgal, and Shiloh are Israelite foundations. These were all, in the time of the kingdoms, holy places of great repute, frequented by pilgrims from distant quarters; but there were others, of less ancient pretensions, which attained equal celebrity. Dan, for instance, which came into the hands of the Israelites in the time of the Judges, claimed a priesthood descended from Moses, and became proverbial for the tenacity with which the good old traditions of Israel were preserved there.

The narratives in Judges, Samuel, and Kings show that every town and village had its own holy place, with an altar and a sacred stone, and sometimes a hall for feasts (e. g. 1 Sam. ix. 22), and that temporary altars were built whenever

and wherever there was reason. This practice is presumed in an ancient fragment of a law, Exod. xx. 24–26, which prescribes that all offerings must be made at an altar, which may be a mound of earth or a heap of field-stones (not hewn stone), and promises that at every place where God has given signs of his presence he will come to the sacrifice and bless the offerer. This rule, which probably originally stood in the context of J, expressly sanctions the local altars and sacrifices which are so abhorrent to the deuteronomic reformers of the seventh century.

On the other hand, the strong interest in the origins of the holy places of Canaan indicates that when J and E were written these high places were Israelite sanctuaries, which had as such their sacred legends; indeed, a considerable part of the patriarchal stories is ultimately derived from these legends of local sanctuaries, which form a cycle, harmonized and connected by a migration motive. That both J and E were written long after the settlement of the Israelites in Palestine is proved even more conclusively by the fact that the obligatory religious observances are those of an agricultural people. Thus in Exod. 34, in what was probably according to J the organic law of the religion of Jehovah, and is indisputably the oldest collection of religious laws in the Pentateuch, three festivals are ordained, at which every male is bound to "see the face of Jehovah," that is, to appear at the high place with his offering — he is warned not to try to "see Jehovah" without something in

his hands — namely, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks,[1] and the Feast of Ingathering in the end of the year. The first of these, as we know, came at the beginning of the barley harvest, at the second the first fruits of the wheat harvest were presented, the third celebrated the close of the vintage and the olive-pressing. The firstlings of the flock and herd, if we may infer from the order of the prescriptions, were to be offered at the feast of Unleavened Bread in the Spring. The sabbath is to be kept as a day of abstention from agricultural labor, "even in plowing-time and harvest thou shalt rest." The occupations of a nomad go on one day like another; the care of the flocks cannot be suspended for sabbath-keeping.

It is difficult to reconstruct the narratives of the exodus and the wanderings in the desert in J and E as they originally were. Extensive transpositions seem to have been made at some stage in the transmission, by which parallel relations of the same occurrence are separated and appear as distinct events. There were evidently considerable differences in the traditional accounts which the earliest authors found current. The holy mountain is in E named Horeb, in J (probably) as in P, Sinai; Moses' father-in-law in the one is Jethro, in the other Hobab. In J there are some traces of a tradition, perhaps the oldest of all, in which there was no mention of

[1] The older name, Harvest Feast, is preserved in the parallel, Exod. xxiii. 16.

Sinai; the Israelites made their way straight from the Red Sea to Kadesh.

A comparison of J and E with the history of the times of Saul and David in Samuel and with the stories of Elijah and Elisha in Kings would lead us to ascribe them both to the classic age of Hebrew prose of which those narratives are specimens. On the other hand, in J and the older stratum of E there is no influence of the prophetic movement of the eighth century which left so deep a mark on religion and literature. On these grounds J may be probably ascribed to the ninth century, and E, which is somewhat younger, to the first half of the eighth. Both used older sources, and both were revised and enlarged by later hands; we have had more than one occasion to refer to an edition of E which reflects the teaching of the prophets, particularly of Hosea.

These two histories — the one, as we have seen, Judæan, the other Israelite — ran so nearly parallel and contained so much matter in common that an attempt to combine them in one continuous narrative was natural. The task was accomplished with considerable skill by a Judæan historian in the seventh century, who probably introduced variants or supplementary matter from other sources. The author's own hand is most certainly recognized in the multiplied and emphasized warnings against all sorts of heathenism and in a fine tone of religious reflection on the history and its lessons, in which the influence of the prophets is plainly visible, but the peculiar theories of the seventh century

historians do not appear. Whether this history (JE) extended beyond the Book of Joshua, and if so where it ended, are questions which must be reserved for later consideration.

It is the general opinion that the next stage in the growth of the Hexateuch (Genesis – Joshua) was the inclusion in a new edition of JE of the Book of Deuteronomy in the form and dimensions which it had attained in the generation after the fall of Judah; and, perhaps in connection with this, the history of the conquest in Joshua as narrated in JE was recast and much enlarged by an author who was full of the ideas and phrases of Deuteronomy.

At a considerably later time, perhaps in the fifth century B. C., or even in the fourth, the Origins of the Religious Institutions, a product of the Persian period, with the mass of laws that had been incorporated in it (see above, p. 56), was united with JED, thus bringing together into one volume all that was preserved about the history down to the conquest of Canaan and all the various institutions and collections of laws which were attributed to Moses. The author of this comprehensive work, as was most natural, took P, with its sharply marked divisions and outstanding epochs, as his basis, and introduced in each period the parts of JE which seemed to him to belong there. Where P had a parallel narrative, as in the story of the Flood, he wove the strands together with more or less ingenuity, omitting, in ordinary cases, only the most palpable doublets. It is possible that the

same author first incorporated in P a large part of the so-called priestly laws; it is more certain that, besides the harmonistic changes necessary in combining his sources, he made numerous additions; but there is usually no way of distinguishing his hand from that of earlier or of still later editors.

This hypothesis, which, for all its seeming complexity, is doubtless a great simplification of the actual literary history, is accepted by the majority of Old Testament scholars — with many variations in particulars, it need hardly be said. It is commended to the historian, not merely by the fact that it explains the confusion and contradiction which reign in the Pentateuch and offers a solution of its literary problems, but that, when the sources are distinguished and reconstructed and their age and relations determined, they become historical sources of great value for the times in which they were respectively written, confirming, supplementing, or interpreting the evidence of the historical books and the prophets, and contributing important material of various kinds to our knowledge of civilization in ancient Israel and of its religious development.

CHAPTER VIII

JOSHUA

In all the sources of the Pentateuch the possession of Canaan is the goal toward which the whole history moves, from the call of Abraham to the last exhortations of Moses in the plains of Moab, and they must all have narrated, however briefly, the occupation of the country. The history of the conquest and division of Canaan is the subject of the Book of Joshua. The author has evidently derived his material from diverse sources, and it is reasonable to expect to find among them the continuation of the chief sources of the Pentateuch. This expectation is verified; it is not difficult to recognize in some places the sequel of the preceding narratives, and other passages which on internal grounds may confidently be ascribed to one or the other of them. But the attempt to analyze the book discovers at once the fact that the problem is different from that in Genesis to Numbers. The author of the Pentateuch had two chief narrative sources, a history compiled probably in the first half of the seventh century and in any case pre-Deuteronomic, which from its two principal strands is commonly designated by the symbol JE, and the history of the religious institutions (P), prob-

ably of the fifth century. The author of Joshua had for his sources, besides the continuation of P, a history of the conquest by a writer belonging to what is not inaptly called the deuteronomist school of historians, whose thought and style are molded by those of Deuteronomy. In cc. 1–12 the author of Joshua follows this source almost exclusively, only here and there introducing a passage from the post-exilic narrative (e. g. Jos. v. 10–12); in cc. 13–24, on the other hand, the allotment of the tribal territories and the assignment of cities in these territories to the levites and the priests, are chiefly from the later work. Inasmuch as the style of the deuteronomist and of the priestly writers is characteristically different, the rough analysis is here comparatively easy, nor is it ordinarily difficult to recognize the brief passages which are incorporated from the older sources; but, as in the Pentateuch, the discrimination of the original contents of the priestly source from subsequent expansions and from the hand of the author of Joshua himself is frequently very uncertain. Here also additions were made by editors at a still later time, some of which are not found in the Greek version.

A different and much more difficult problem is presented by Jos. 1–12, the problem, namely, of the sources of the deuteronomist history. The duplication of the narrative is very plain in the story of Jericho (Jos. 6). One account told how the Israelites marched around the city once each day for seven days in ominous silence; on the seventh day, at Joshua's command, they broke

out in the war-cry, and rushing upon the city from every side, took it by storm, and put every living thing in it to the sword, sparing only Rahab the harlot and her household. In the parallel narrative a religious procession, the priests bearing the ark in the midst, compassed the city seven times; on the last circuit the priests blew a fanfare on their ram's horns, at which the walls fell flat to the ground, and the Israelites, after bringing Rahab to a place of safety, burnt the city with fire. Editors or scribes who were particularly edified by the horn-blowing start it prematurely in vs. 8 f., 13, and have tried to improve on the story in other places. The second version shows the same inclination to glorify the divine interventions by giving them a magical form which has been remarked in E's account of the deliverance at the Red Sea, while the simpler story of the unexpected assault — to which there is a close parallel in a Roman hand-book of military stratagems — resembles in its naturalness J's account of the crossing of the sea.

Both sources tell of the rescue of Rahab, and thus presuppose some such story as we find in Jos. 2, where, again, duplication is evident. The interdict on the spoils of Jericho (vi. 17, J), is the antecedent to the story of Achan, whose appropriation of a part of the spoil is the cause of the repulse at Ai (c. 7), and thus the clues can be followed backward and forward. The chief source in c. 8 (the taking of Ai) and c. 9 (ruse of the Gibeonites) also is J, with which the parallel account of E is combined; additions by later

hands are recognizable, the most remarkable being viii. 30–35 (cf. Deut. xxvii. 1–8, 12). In the history of the two campaigns by which the allied kings of the south and of the north respectively were annihilated (Jos. 10 and 11) both sources appear. A considerable part of these chapters, however, is the work of the deuteronomist author, especially the summary of the conquests, cc. x. 28–43; xi. 10–23. Chapter 12, which for completeness goes over the conquests east of the Jordan also, is dependent on Deut. 3; Jos. xiii. 2–6 (the territories remaining to be conquered) is of the same sort and probably by the same hand.

It seems, therefore, that both J and E related the crossing of the Jordan, the taking of Jericho, and the operations against Ai, and, further, the wars with the confederate kings. In these narratives Israel, from its standing camp at Gilgal, invades the country as one great army under the command of Joshua; the deuteronomist author represents them as exterminating the native population root and branch, "they left not a soul alive." There are, however, scattered here and there through the text, fragments of a very different story (xiii. 13; xv. 13–19, 63; xvii. 11–13, 14–18; xix. 47), most of which are also found continuously in Judg. 1. According to this account, the Israelite tribes invaded the country separately or in small groups; their success varied in different regions, but everywhere the walled cities remained in the possession of their old inhabitants; in some quarters the Israelites

became subject to the Canaanites, in others they in time reduced them to subjection. This account may not embody a historical tradition — it could perfectly well have arisen by inference from the actual situation at the beginning of the kingdom — but it is at least in a broad sense historical. The case illustrates in an instructive way the fact that the oldest literary sources of the history which we can recover had themselves diverse and sometimes contradictory sources in tradition.

In the Pentateuch it is well established that J and E had been combined by a historian of the prophetic period (JE), though there is evidence that the separate works continued to circulate. In Joshua, also, it is probable that the deuteronomist historian used the composite JE, and that the harmonizing of these sources and some of the religious improvement which runs along with it is the work of his predecessor who combined the two sources. It seems that P also had E independently, and it is certain that later editors of the deuteronomist school added their contributions.

The allotment of the tribal territories, the designation of asylum cities, and the setting apart of cities for the levites and priests, comes chiefly, as was said above, from a priestly source. How much of it was in the older history of P (Book of Origins) is doubtful. One, at least, of the earlier narratives told of the division of the land by lot, and P, who followed this representation, may have connected with it some sort of domesday book;

but it was probably not so detailed as that which we now read.

The assignment of forty-eight cities to the priests and levites, including the most important places in the country, is an extravagance even for the sacerdotal imagination, comparable to Ezekiel's partition of the land in parallel strips. It is the counterpart of Num. xxxv. 1–8, in a late supplement to the priestly laws, and directly contradicts the older principle (Num. xviii. 21–24) that neither priests nor levites shall have any landed property. Thus in Joshua, as in the Pentateuch, the priestly element is neither of one sort nor of one age; and again the evidence of the Greek version shows that additions and changes continued to be made in the text till the neighborhood of 200 B. C.

There is no evidence that the author of our Book of Joshua was the same as the author of the present Pentateuch; various indications point rather to the contrary. Nor can the author of the deuteronomist history of the conquest be certainly identified with any one of the hands engaged in the compilation and enlargement of the Book of Deuteronomy; all that can be affirmed is that he was of the same spirit, and that literary dependence upon Deuteronomy, and sometimes on younger parts of it, is visible in many places in Joshua.

The Book of Joshua closes with a farewell address by Joshua to the tribes of Israel assembled at Shechem, in which, after a brief résumé of God's dealing with their fathers from the calling

of Abraham, the exodus, and their own more recent experiences down to the present, he exhorts them to put away the gods which their fathers served "beyond the river" (in Mesopotamia), and worship Jehovah alone. Thereupon the people solemnly pledge themselves to serve him only and hearken to his words (Jos. 24). There is no question that this discourse is derived from E; a counterpart to it from the hand of the author of the deuteronomist Joshua stands in c. 23, and corresponds to the address of Moses in Deut. xxxi. 1–8. The sequel of Jos. xxiv. 28 is found in Judg. ii. 6–9. The restoration at a late time, of the old fragment Judg. i. 1–36, and the division of the books at this point, led to the repetition of the verses in Jos. xxiv. 29 ff. The importance of this fact is the proof it gives that E narrated the history of the generations following the death of Joshua as an apostasy from the religion of Jehovah such as the dying leader had warned the people against (Jos. xxiv. 19), and thus determined the treatment of the whole period which we now find in the Book of Judges. The last injunctions of Joshua in the deuteronomist history (Jos. xxiii. 14–16) exhibits the same conception of the subsequent history; in Judg. ii. 11–iii. 6, both E and the deuteronomist author are represented.

CHAPTER IX

JUDGES

THE Book of Judges falls into three parts, namely, (1) Judg. i. 1–ii. 5, which intrudes, as has already been observed, between the close of Joshua and its immediate sequel in Judges ii. 6 ff; (2) Judg. ii. 6–xvi. 31, stories of a succession of champions and deliverers of Israel in the centuries preceding the establishment of the kingdom; (3) Judg. 17–18; 19–21, two additional stories laid in the time of the Judges. In the Christian Bibles the story of Ruth, which also is said to have occurred in the days of the Judges, follows.

The introduction, Judg. ii. 6–iii. 6, gives a summary of the whole period: as soon as Joshua and his generation had passed away, the Israelites fell away from the religion of Jehovah, and worshiped the gods of Canaan; indignant at this defection, he allowed them to be overrun and subdued by their enemies; when in their distress they turned to their own God for help, he raised them up champions who delivered them; but their amendment was brief, they presently relapsed into heathenism; and so it went on from bad to worse. In correspondence with this general scheme each epoch in the history is opened in

some such way as this: The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of Jehovah; he delivered them into the power of such and such a tyrant or nation; when they cried unto him, he raised up so and so as a deliverer. Thereupon follows the story of the deliverance (see iii. 7–11; iii. 12–15; iv. 1 ff.). Sometimes, as in vi. 1–10, x. 6–18, these preambles are expanded, but the purport remains the same.

Another feature of the book is the systematic chronology, in which the frequency of the numbers twenty, forty, and eighty (forty years being in the Old Testament equivalent to a generation) at once strikes the attention; see iii. 11, 30; iv. 3; v. 31; viii. 28; xiii. 1; xv. 20 (xvi. 31). In several other instances the figures vary a little on either side of twenty (eighteen, twenty-two, etc.). The duration of the oppression is given in the introduction of the story; the period of peace and prosperity which succeeded the deliverance, at the end; see, e. g., iv. 3; v. 31. In the same way the life of Moses is divided into three parts of forty years each; Eli judged Israel forty years; David and Solomon each reigned forty years. It can hardly be doubted that this chronology is artificial, and that the key to it is found in 1 Kgs. vi. 1, which reckons four hundred and eighty years (i. e. twelve generations) from the exodus to the building of Solomon's temple; but the actual figures in Judges and Samuel do not foot up to this sum, and there are some gaps in the series, namely, the years of Joshua after the conquest, the rule of Samuel, and that of Saul. The sym-

metry of the scheme has been broken by intrusions or accidental omissions in the later history of the book.

The author of the part of the Book of Judges we are now considering (ii. 6–xvi. 31) sees in the history of these centuries a series of "oppressions" by the native kings or by neighboring peoples which the Israelites brought upon themselves by neglecting their own God and worshiping the deities of the Canaanites, the Baals and Astartes. He is concerned to impress upon his readers the moral that unfaithfulness to the national religion has national calamity for its unvarying consequence: God withdraws his protection and gives the people over defenseless to its foes, who invade, despoil, and subjugate it. This is making history illustrate and enforce the prophetic teaching of Hosea in the eighth century and Jeremiah in the seventh: all the calamities that befell the two kingdoms and the ruin which impended over them were the consequence of their defection from the religion of Jehovah and lapse into heathenism, or, as they express it, the worship of the Baals; and is the example to the reiterated warnings in the parting addresses of Moses in Deuteronomy (see Deut. 28; 29–30).

About the oppressions the author of Judges had clearly no information independent of what he extracted from the stories of the deliverances in his sources. In accordance with his theory of national sin and national disaster he converted what are in the stories themselves local

conflicts, involving particular tribes or regions, into oppressions and deliverances of all Israel; where the story tells of raids by the Midianites, for example, the introduction gives them the Amalekites and the Eastern Bedouins for allies, and extends the devastation these wrought across the whole country to the neighborhood of Gaza. The exaggeration of the evils and the emphasizing of the moral, as in other cases, invited later editors to amplifications in the same spirit. Of the heroes who delivered Israel from its oppressors the author made a succession of dictators ("judges"), who differed from the kings after them chiefly in that their office was not hereditary, and to most of them he gives in his chronology a long reign.

The setting of the history is thus unmistakably a product of the so-called deuteronomist school of the sixth century which we have already recognized in Joshua, and shall learn more of in Kings. The stories themselves have, however, not been recast or extensively retouched by deuteronomist hands; only at the beginning and the end, where they had to be fitted into the frame, are such retouches common.

The author's source was a collection of stories of struggles in different parts of the land, both east and west of the Jordan, with the older settled populations or with invaders, and the exploits of the leaders and champions of the Israelite tribes in these struggles. It included Ehud's assassination of the king of Moab, the defeat of Sisera and the Canaanite kings of the

great Plain by Barak and Deborah, the rout and pursuit of the Midianite invaders by Gideon, and Jephthah's victory over the Ammonites in Gilead. The history of Abimelech's kingdom of Shechem — sequel to the story of Gideon — which is not accompanied by the author's moralizing comments, and the stories of Samson, which have no more than a chronological introduction and close, evidently belong to the same cycle of heroic legends; as do also the stories of Micah's idol and the migration of the Danites (cc. 17–18), and the older form of the story of the levite and his concubine and the sanguinary vengeance on Benjamin in cc. 19–21. The two last-named stories were not comprised in the deuteronomist Judges, whose doctrine they could not well be made to exemplify. On the other hand, we shall see that this work included Eli and Samuel among the judges, and came to its natural conclusion with the establishment of the kingdom, as it began with the death of Joshua.

In several of the stories we recognize not merely such additions and improvements as are commonly made to popular tales in the retelling, but evidences of the combination of two versions of the same exploit or accounts of other doings of the same hero. This is particularly plain in the story of Gideon, where in Judg. vii. 24 f. (vs. 23 is a harmonistic note), viii. 1–3, the business of the chiefs of Midian is effectually finished, while in viii. 4 ff. it is all still to be done. The phenomenon is entirely similar to those which

we have had repeated occasion to observe in the Pentateuch and Joshua and is to be explained in the same way. The two versions of the story had been united before the time of the author of the deuteronomist Judges, for in the joints of the narrative no trace of his peculiar motives or style occur.

The stories recount the exploits of local or tribal heroes, and doubtless represent the traditions of the regions or tribes concerned; with the union of the tribes under the kingdom, however, these traditions became the common property of the nation, and more than one writer made collections of them. As in the patriarchal legends, two strands may be distinguished, which have such affinities with the Judæan and the Israelite histories in the Hexateuch respectively that they are naturally regarded as the continuations of J and E. To J may be probably attributed the story of Ehud (disregarding the introduction and conclusion), say Judg. iii. 16–28; in the story of Gideon, viii. 4–60 (with small exceptions), and a part of cc. 6–7; part of the history of Abimelech; and the adventures of Samson. A good specimen of the other narrator is the beginning of the story of Abimelech, with the fable of Jotham, Judg. ix. 1–25.

Here, again, additions have been made at various stages of the transmission: to the sources independently, by the author who first combined them, by the deuteronomist author, and in some places by editors at a much later time. These hands cannot always be certainly discriminated,

but the main outlines of the literary history are clear enough. A peculiar problem is presented by the so-called Minor Judges, of whom nothing is told but the length of their rule and the sultanly size of their families (Judg. x. 1–5; xii. 8–15). They seem to be brought in only for the sake of the chronology, the difficulties of which they do not diminish.

It has already been remarked that, except the curt notices that, the Israelites having again offended their God, he gave them into the power of the Philistines for forty years, and that Samson judged Israel for twenty years, the stories of Samson have no such introduction and conclusion as those which precede. The statement about the duration of Samson's judgeship occurs both at the end of Judg. 15, and at the end of c. 16, and it has been inferred from this that whoever put this formal close in xv. 20 left out the adventure with Delilah and Samson's tragic end (c. 16).

The stories of Micah and the migration of the Danites (Judg. 17–18) and of the levite and his concubine and the decimation of Benjamin (cc. 19–21) were not included in the deuteronomist book; but there is no reason to doubt that they are of the same age as the other stories in Judges, nor that they were found in one or more of the literary collections of these stories. In cc. 17–18 the character of the narrative in the main suggests the same source with the stories of Samson (J), but there are some duplications and inconsistencies which may be regarded as

fragments of a closely parallel account of not greatly inferior age. In cc. 19–21, again, the original story seems to be from J (with perhaps traces of another version in c. 19), but in the following account of the vengeance taken by all Israel on the Benjamites, the older narrative has been united with a second, which in its point of view, its language, and its unimaginable exaggerations, is evidently akin to parts of the Books of Chronicles, or to the youngest additions to the Pentateuch such as the vengeance on the Midianites (Num. 31), and doubtless belongs to the most recent stratum of the Old Testament.

Judges i. 1–ii. 5, as has been pointed out above, is foreign to the connection in which it stands, and can only have been introduced there by a late compiler or editor. It is a remnant of the most historical, and presumably the oldest, account of the establishment of the tribes in western Palestine. That, in completer form, it had originally a place in the Judæan history (J) is unquestioned, and in that work it may have been closely followed by stories of exploits such as those of Ehud, Barak, Gideon. Inasmuch as it contradicted the theory of the complete conquest and extermination of the Canaanites, it was left out of the works which described the conquest in that way, but scraps of it were subsequently introduced in Joshua, and finally the whole restored in its present position. It is easily seen that the recurring apostasies into Canaanite heathenism, as well as such stories as those of Deborah and Barak and of Abimelech,

assume that the Canaanites had not been killed off to the last man, but, on the contrary, were very much alive; and, in fact, the authors of Judg. ii. 20–iii. 4 feel the necessity of explaining why God had allowed these heathen to survive.

The historical value of the stories in Judges is very great. However large the element of legendary embellishment may be in them, they give us a picture of the social and religious conditions in the period preceding the founding of the kingdom which has an altogether different reality from the narratives of the exodus and the wanderings.

The trustworthiness of this picture is confirmed by one contemporary monument of prime significance, the triumphal ode in Judg. 5, commonly called the Song of Deborah, celebrating the victory of the Israelite tribes over Sisera and his hosts and the death of the fleeing king by the hand of a Bedouin woman in whose tent he sought refuge. The text in the middle of the poem has suffered greatly, but the beginning and end are better preserved, and display not only a developed poetic art but poetic inspiration of the highest kind. To the historian it has an even greater interest for the light which it throws on the times: the independence of the tribes on both sides of the Jordan, the subjection of those along the Great Plain to the Canaanite kings with their walled cities and their formidable chariotry, the summons to the struggle in the name of religion and the varying response, the victory of Jehovah over his foes. It

should not be overlooked that Judah is ignored; it was not counted among the tribes of Israel.

The moralizing improvement of the history in the Book of Judges is not carried beyond the story of Jephthah, but neither at that point nor after the stories of Samson is there anything to indicate that the author is done. The introduction in Judg. ii. 11–iii. 6, a passage in which both the deuteronomist historian and a predecessor in the same way of thinking have had a hand, seems to require a correspondingly solemn conclusion, and the example of Deuteronomy and Joshua suggests that this would take the form of a hortatory address such as Moses and Joshua deliver as their testament to the people. Exactly such a discourse is found in 1 Sam. 12, where the aged Samuel, on the point of laying down his office as judge, reminds the people's conscience of the chief crises of the times of the judges in terms reminiscent of the introduction to the Book of Judges and to the several oppressions, upbraids them for their sin in desiring a king, and closes with admonitions for the future. Here Samuel appears as a judge, the last in the succession; as a judge he is represented also in 1 Sam. 7, where he delivers his people from the Philistines in the great victory at Ebenezer through the efficacy of his sacrifice and prayers — a Gideon or a Jephthah went about the business in a more secular fashion! Eli also is said to have judged Israel forty years. At some stage in the history of the sources of Judges and Samuel, therefore, Eli and Samuel were enu-

merated among the judges, and the close of the period was marked by the address of Samuel which we now read in 1 Sam. 12. The contents and form of this address have their parallels in the writings of the sixth century or the latter part of the seventh, and to that time it is doubtless to be ascribed.

CHAPTER X

SAMUEL

A DIFFERENT division is adopted in the present books of Judges and Samuel, in which the stories of Eli and of Samuel are not made the close of the period of the judges but the prelude to the history of the kingdom. The Greek Bible divides this history into four books of the Kingdoms, or rather of the Reigns of the Kings; the Hebrew, into two, Samuel and Kings; the modern translations employ the latter names but adopt the subdivisions of the Greek, thus making two books of Samuel and two of Kings. First Samuel shows how the conquest and occupation of central Palestine by the Philistines led to the establishment of a national kingdom under Saul, a Benjamite; narrates the rise of his rival, the Judæan David, and the feud between them, down to the disastrous battle with the Philistines at Mt. Gilboa in which Saul and his gallant sons fell. Second Samuel is the history of David's reign and the tragedy of his house, the conclusion of which, the intrigue which raised Solomon to the throne and the death of the aged king, is treated as the prelude to Solomon's reign and carried over into 1 Kings; one recension of the Greek Bible, however, joins these chapters (1

Kgs. 1–2) to the preceding book. The two Books of Kings recount the reign of Solomon; the division of the kingdom after his death into two, on the old line, Israel and Judah; the parallel history of the two kingdoms to the end of Israel in 721 B. C.; and the rest of the history of Judah to its fall in 586.

In the account of how Saul became king there are two contradictory representations. One of these, which agrees with 1 Sam. 12 in treating the desire of the people for a king as the wanton repudiation of Jehovah their king and of Samuel their divinely appointed judge, is contained in cc. 8; x. 17–27; 12. The other, according to which God, seeing the distress the people was in because of the Philistines, of his own motion resolves to give them a king to deliver them from their oppressors, is in 1 Sam. ix. 1–x. 16; 11. In c. 9 Samuel appears as a seer with a neighborhood reputation of being able to tell where people's stray asses have gone, not as the prophet and judge, the first man of his time.

These strands can be followed in both directions beyond the chapters named: 1 Sam. xiii. 1–xiv. 46 belongs to the second, which we may call the national version of the matter; c. 15 attaches itself to the other, say theocratic, representation, though it is of a somewhat different texture. On the other side, vii. 3–17 plainly goes with c. 8; while iv. 1[b]–vii. 2 are akin to the national version, showing how grievous the situation was and how urgent the need of a king. Chapters 1–3 have a twofold motive; they tell

of the wonderful childhood of a great man, and they explain the disasters of Eli's house. The latter has reference to cc. 4–6; the former, a favorite theme of popular tales, is an appropriate introduction to Samuel the prophet.

Of the two accounts of the origin of the kingdom, it takes no great critical discernment to see that what we have called the national version is the older and more historical; the other, which condemns the monarchy as a kind of apostasy, takes the standpoint of Hosea. The picture of the monarch in 1 Sam. 12 is drawn from sorry experience.

Even in the older narrative not all is of one piece. Chapter 9, in which Saul is a young man in his father's house, does not tally with c. 14, where he has a grown-up son. The author of this narrative made it up from traditions of diverse origin, some of them more strictly historical, others embellished with legendary traits. In its main features, however, it gives us a trustworthy account of the establishment of the kingdom. In c. 13, the breach with Samuel, vs. 7^{b}–15^{a} (with x. 8 which prepares for it), are not part of the original narrative; c. 15 gives another account of the origin of this breach, which was evidently a standing feature of tradition. In the remaining chapters of 1 Samuel the central interest is the relations of David to Saul. Here also there are not only two main literary sources but evidence of variant traditions underlying the oldest narrative, and of the additions by later editors, sometimes of their

conception, sometimes taken from old and good sources.

It is impossible here to pursue the analysis of the sources further. It must suffice to say that the further on we go, the more the older and better of the histories predominates. In 2 Samuel almost the whole is from this source (c. 7 is a notable exception, in the spirit and manner of the seventh century). Abridgment and transposition have brought matters into disorder at some points; but 2 Sam. 9–20 is a well-preserved piece of continuous narrative, of which 1 Kgs. 1–2 is the sequel. 2 Sam. xxi. 1–14 and c. 24 are from the same source, but must originally have stood at an earlier point in the history; their present position is best explained by supposing that they were once omitted — which their contents make very natural — and subsequently restored from a completer copy, not in their proper connection but in an appendix. Chapter xxiii. 8–39 is a very ancient roster of David's "valiant men," the companions of his days as an outlawed freebooter on the Philistine border; xxi. 15–22 is of the same character. Two poems attributed to David are also included in this appendix, c. 22, which, with many variants, is found also in the Psalter (Ps. 18), and xxiii. 1–7.

The history of Saul and David gave little invitation to a moralizing improvement such as we have found in Judges and shall find again in Kings. Whatever faults those heroes had, a propensity to the worship of heathen gods could not be laid to them. The national uprising against the Phil-

istines was, in fact, a revival of religion. If in times of peace men sought the blessing of the gods of the soil (the Baals) upon their tillage, in war their only reliance was on Jehovah, the god of Israel. Nor was the worship of Jehovah at the village sanctuaries (high places) or upon altars erected for the nonce, illegitimate, even in deuteronomic theory, till God had taken up his sole abode in Solomon's temple. Accordingly there is, after 1 Sam. 12, once the close of a history of the judges, small trace of the motives or phrases of the seventh-century school of historians; and only in a few passages can the hand of post-exilic editors be suspected. For the rest we have in our hands a product of the oldest Hebrew historiography.

From a literary point of view the older source in the history of David is unsurpassed. It has in perfection all the qualities that distinguish the best Hebrew prose such as are conspicuous in the Judæan author of the patriarchal stories in Genesis. In the art of narrative Herodotus himself could do no better.

Its historical value is also very high. The account of David's later years in 2 Sam. 9–20; 2 Kgs. 1–2 bears all the marks of contemporary origin. It comes from one who not only knew the large political events of the reign, but was intimately informed about the life of the court, and the scandals, crimes, and intrigues in the king's household which clouded the end of his glorious career. These things are narrated with an objectivity and impartiality which cannot fail to impress the reader. The author has a high admira-

tion for David, but this does not lead him to gloze over his faults or even his grave sins, nor to disguise the weakness of his rule in his own house which was the cause of so much unhappiness. His development of this domestic tragedy is, indeed, truly dramatic, and the discrimination of the characters — say of Absalom and Adonijah — shows fine insight. He tells without comment how only the distrust of some of the Philistine chiefs kept David, as a vassal of Achish of Gath, from fighting upon the Philistine side against Saul in the fatal battle of Mt. Gilboa. So, too, he is loyally minded to Solomon, but he does not conceal the strings of the harem-intrigue by which the doting old King David was brought to declare for his succession, or to pass over the ominous beginning of Solomon's "new course," with the execution of Adonijah, the deposition of the priest Abiathar, and the murder, at altar where he had sought asylum, of Joab, to whom more than any other the house of Jesse owed the throne. The official pretexts are duly recorded, but the facts speak for themselves. In 1 Kgs. ii. 5 f. the death of Joab is enjoined in David's testament; opinions differ whether these verses are from the same source with ii. 12 ff., or are by the late seventh-century writer to whom vs. 1–4 are ascribed by all. Without idealizing David, we may at least allow ourselves the conjecture that, if his last words decided the death of his old companion in arms and most loyal servant, Nathan or Bathsheba was at his dying ear.

The crisis in the history of the Israelite tribes

which the Philistine invasion created; the long struggle with these foes, very different from their conflicts with their petty neighbors; the emergence in this struggle of a national consciousness at once political and religious; the union of the tribes in a national kingdom; the conquest of independence; the following wars of expansion and the foundation of a short-lived Israelite empire — these were achievements to stir the soul of a people and be celebrated in song and story. The leaders, too, in these memorable doings were such heroes as ancient history loves to have in the middle of its stage — Saul with his chivalric son Jonathan; David with Joab, Abner, and the rest of his gallant band.

The making of great history has often given a first impulse to the writing of history, and we may well believe that it was so in Israel, and that the beginning of Hebrew historical literature, in the proper sense of the word, was made with Saul and David. Around such figures the popular imagination always weaves a more or less translucent tissue of legend, and particularly about their youth before they come out on the stage of history, or the manner of their first appearance. It is a mistake to suppose that such embellishment of the person or the deeds of a hero arises only at a distance and takes generations to grow. It might more truly be said that if a man has not sufficiently impressed the imagination of his contemporaries to set them to spontaneous romancing about him, it is little likely that after times will take more interest in him. The pres-

ence of legendary traits in the stories of Saul and David does not prove that these stories are remote from their times.

When a beginning has been made in historical literature with the recent past, it is soon seen that the roots of the present lie farther back, a vague apprehension of the truth that history is continuous. In Israel the new sense of unity also gave a common interest to traditions and legends that had hitherto been local or tribal affairs. The solidarity of the nation projected itself into the past; it was conceived that Israel, before it was broken up by the settlement in Canaan, had been one great people divided into so and so many tribes.

The historians gathered up tribal tales such as the exploits of the judges (that is, in the original sense, deliverers, or defenders), the sacred legends of holy places, the traditions of a wonderful escape from the Egyptians, a visit to the Mount of God and an agreement to worship the god of the place as their god, of another sanctuary in the desert at Kadesh, conflicts with the Bedouins, and attempts to force an entry into Canaan — in short, all the diverse material which is preserved in the older narratives in Exodus and Numbers—and combined them as best they could into a continuous history of the people of Israel.

The continuity is, however, only a narrative continuity; historically there are great gaps in it, or, more exactly, the traditions cluster about only a few points, such as the exodus and the invasion of Palestine, and these are embellished

with a wealth of legendary and mythical circumstance beneath which the facts are effectually hidden. The nature of this material may be judged from the fact that between Joshua and Eli there are only the episodes of the judges, strung on a chronological string, generalized as experiences of all Israel, and put under a theological judgment — invaluable as pictures of civilization, but as a history of a couple of centuries (the chronology says four) evidently insufficient. On the other side of the exodus are, according to the genealogies, three or four generations (the chronology again makes it four hundred years) of total ignorance; beyond that lies the patriarchal story, the realm of pure legend.

Out of such materials Judæan authors in the tenth and following centuries constructed the history of their people from the remotest antiquity, and, as commonly happens with the first precipitation of national traditions, preformed all subsequent representations.

This earliest book of history is commonly designated in the Pentateuch and Joshua by the symbol J. It is disputed whether the oldest history of the founding of the kingdom in Samuel should be regarded as a continuation of J. If it were meant thereby to affirm unity of authorship of this strand from Genesis to Samuel, that would be saying much more that the facts warrant; but there is through the whole so noteworthy a congruity of conception and sameness of excellence in style that it is not inappropriate to use for it the one symbol J in the sense of the oldest Judæan history.

CHAPTER XI

KINGS

DAVID took Jerusalem, which till then had been a Jebusite stronghold, and made it the capital of his kingdom; but he reigned, after as before, in patriarchal fashion, making, so far as appears, few changes in the old institutions. Solomon reorganized the monarchy after the common pattern of Oriental despotisms, dividing the country into provinces for purposes of taxation, without regard to the autonomy of the tribes and their liberties. He built a great palace in the citadel, and, within the same enclosure, a temple, which, as the royal sanctuary, was also in a sense national. Like other Eastern rulers, he caused his doings to be recorded in the annals of the kingdom, and doubtless the priests of the temple kept their own chronicles. From this time, therefore, sources of a new kind make their appearance in the history, contemporary records drawn from the royal and priestly annals. The extracts from these sources in the Books of Kings, like those of the Assyrian kings, or the Phœnician annals of which fragments (through Menander) are preserved by Josephus, were brief and bald records of doings or happenings, not biographical or historical narratives. But brief and bald as they

were, they furnished a groundwork of fact; and, since they set down at the accession of each king the length of his predecessor's reign, they gave also the data for a continuous chronology.

It is not to be supposed that the historical literature whose brilliant beginnings we have seen ceased in the first century of the kingdom or that the writers occupied themselves solely with the remoter past. The memorable deeds of great men will not have gone uncelebrated. The narrative, however, which is the chief source for the times of Saul and David, breaks off abruptly in 1 Kgs. 2. The Books of Kings are of a wholly different fabric. For one thing, while the two Books of Samuel cover little more than the span of one long lifetime, Kings, in about the same space, comprises the history of close on to four centuries. But there is a still greater difference, as we shall see, in the way in which history is treated.

The grand divisions of the Books of Kings are these: 1 Kgs. ii. 12–xi. 43 is occupied with the reign of Solomon; the division of the kingdom after his death is narrated in xii. 1–24; the parallel history of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the fall of Samaria in 721 B. C. runs to 2 Kgs. xviii. 12; the history of Judah from that date to its own fall in 586 fills the rest of the book.

The age of the book is easily determined: it tells of the two sieges of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (597 and 586 B. C.); the destruction of the temple and palace and the razing of the city

walls, the assassination of Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had made governor over the devastated land; and the flight of the Jews from the king's vengeance to Egypt. The last event mentioned is the liberation of King Jehoiachin by Evil-Merodach (Amil-Marduk) in 561 B. C. It is of course possible that this detached notice (2 Kgs. xxv. 27–30) was added by a later hand; but there is no reason to include the story of Gedaliah in this suspicion. The book in its present form cannot, therefore, be earlier than, say, about 580 B. C. In some places in the body of the book, also, the fall of Judah is spoken of as an accomplished fact, e. g. 2 Kgs. xvii. 19 f. (in conflict with vss. 18 and 21 ff.). Such passages are, however, not very numerous, and they commonly sit loose in their context, like the verses just cited, as if they were thrust into the narrative by an editor. The bulk of the work, on the contrary, seems to suppose the existence of the kingdom. It is, therefore, the general opinion that the book was written before the fall of Jerusalem, and that a continuator added the account of the catastrophe and the events immediately subsequent to it.

The older Kings, from beginning to end, is dominated by the conception and permeated by the phraseology of Deuteronomy and of the prophet Jeremiah, and must therefore be placed between 621 B. C. (the date of the introduction of the deuteronomic law) and the beginning of the last act of the history, that is to say, probably shortly before the year 600 B. C.

It is not enough to say that Kings was written under the influence of Deuteronomy; it was written, we might rather say, as a commentary on the deuteronomic doctrine that falling away from the national religion is punished by national disaster. In this point of view it resembles Judges; but while in Judges it is the lapse into Canaanite heathenism, the worship of the Baals and Astartes, which draws upon Israel invasion and subjugation, in Kings not only foreign religions but the worship at the high places, that is, the worship of Jehovah at his oldest and holiest sanctuaries, provokes the wrath of God; for since the dedication of Solomon's temple Jehovah had made it his exclusive abode and all other places of worship were illegitimate. We have seen that down to Josiah's reform this worship prevailed unchallenged in both kingdoms. In the author's view, generation after generation, under bad kings and good, had thus sinned against the organic law of religion, and all judgments had failed to work amendment. In Israel idolatry made the case worse; the "golden calves," that is, the small images of Jehovah in the form of a bull, which Jeroboam had set up at Bethel and Dan were worshiped under all his successors. These sins had in the end brought ruin on Israel, and they were bringing it on Judah. Manasseh had done even worse than Jeroboam; strange gods from near and far were installed in the temple itself, and under its walls men sacrificed their children to "the King" (Moloch). Josiah's reforms had no lasting results;

the reaction under his successors restored the high places, and heathen cults flourished again. The doom was imminent; would Judah learn the lesson of history before it was too late? Some one has said that history is philosophy teaching by example; for the author of Kings history was prophecy teaching by example.

It was the lesson of the history that the author was after, and this ruling motive determined his selection of material as well as the treatment of it. It explains why he hardly tells anything about some of the greatest kings and the most glorious periods of the history, which did not afford illustrations of his thesis, while he dwells on things of much less historical importance.

The characteristic interests of the author and his highly characteristic style sharply distinguish his own writing from the sources which he incorporates. These sources, as will be supposed, were of different kinds and of various worth; they were naturally not the same in all parts of the long period he covers, and he has not always dealt with them in the same way. Part of his material comes, directly or indirectly, from the annals of the kings, to which the reader is regularly referred for further information (see, e. g., 1 Kgs. xiv. 19, 29), or from temple records; part of it from more properly literary sources. Sometimes it has all the marks of trustworthy tradition originating close to the event; again, it is embroidered with legendary traits; a smaller part is edifying fiction. In some cases, as in the stories of Elijah and Elisha, a special source is

recognizable, but in the main the attempt to trace the literary channels through which the matter reached the author is fruitless.

In the history of Solomon's reign the central place is taken by a description of the palace and temple he erected (1 Kgs. 6–7), for which c. 5 is a preparation, and c. 8, the dedication of the temple, the sequel. The interesting account of the provincial organization and system of taxation in c. 4 is evidently from an authoritative source; the cession of cities in Galilee to Hiram, the list of cities fortified, the (mutilated) account of the revolt of Edom, the rise of the kingdom of Damascus, and the (mutilated) history of the revolt of Jeroboam, the prelude to the separation of Israel and Judah, are also of good authority.

By the side of these are stories celebrating the magnificence and wisdom of Solomon, the beginnings of the exuberant Solomonic legend. The judgment of Solomon in the case of the two harlots and of the visit of the Queen of Sheba are examples of the popular tale, and relatively old. The dedication of the temple has been much expanded by the author of the Book of Kings; 1 Kgs. viii. 14–66 are wholly his composition; ix. 1–9 is an appendix to c. 8. In viii. 1–12 an older account of the dedication has been improved by various hands. Comparison with the Greek translation shows that this process went on to very late times; the latest additions are akin to the priestly stratum in the Pentateuch. Chapter xi. 1–13 also is by the author of the Book

of Kings, built about a few words from his source in vs. 7; vss. 29–40 are of the same sort.

1 Kgs. 12–2 Kgs. 17 contains the parallel history of Israel and Judah. The method of the author is to follow the reign of a king, say of Israel, to its end and then go back to take up the king of Judah who came to the throne during this reign, follow him to his death, and return to pick up the Israelite history again in the same way. The result is, thus, interlocking histories, rather than a parallel history. The length of each reign is given, probably ultimately from the annals, with a computed synchronism which is at some points demonstrably in error. With the introduction of each king a comprehensive judgment by the standard of the deuteronomic law is pronounced upon his reign. Thus, "In the eighteenth year of the king Jeroboam the son of Nebat [king of Israel], began Abijah to reign over Judah. Three years reigned he in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins of his father which he had done before him," etc. "In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Abijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned twenty and four years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin." These judgments are so stereotyped that they are pronounced even on kings who reigned but a short time — Zimri, for instance, who lasted only seven days. In the

case of godly kings of Judah, even of such as are credited with commendable zeal against the worships that Deuteronomy denounces as Canaanitish heathenism, the reproach of leaving the worship of Jehovah at the "high places" unmolested is not spared them; see, e. g., 1 Kgs. xv. 1–14; xxii. 43.

The conflict between the tribes to whom the name Israel by historical right belonged, headed by Ephraim, intent on reclaiming the ancient liberties which Solomon had curtailed and securing adequate guarantees for them, and Rehoboam, obstinate to maintain the despotism which his father had established and the supremacy of Judah, ended in the Israelite tribes refusing to acknowledge the succession and setting up a kingdom of their own with Jeroboam son of Nebat as king. These critical events are narrated in the source, 1 Kgs. xii. 1–20, with noteworthy impartiality; a comparison with the treatment of the matter by the author of the Book of Kings himself in xi. 29–39; xii. 21–24, is instructive. The account of Jeroboam's religious foundations and innovations in c. xii. 26–33 (with which xiii. 33^{b} belongs) is probably based on an old Israelite source (the temples Jeroboam built, etc.), on which the author of the book has put his own construction and made his own comments. 1 Kgs. 13 is a specimen of the edifying stories — religious fiction — which were added to the historical books at a very late time and are especially numerous in Chronicles; the reference to it in 2 Kgs. xxiii. 17 f. is an inter-

polation in a context itself post-exilic. The story of the visit of Jeroboam's wife to the prophet Ahijah (1 Kgs. xiv. 1–18) is in the manner of the author, but seems to have an older basis. The fluid state of the text at a very late time is again shown by the fact that in some recensions of the Greek version the story is not found in this place, but, together with other matter about Jeroboam (in part variant parallel to 1 Kgs. xi. 26 ff., 40), in a long passage which stands in c. 12 between vss. 24 and 25.

The invasion of Shishak, king of Egypt (1 Kgs. xiv. 25–28), is introduced by the author with a catalogue of the deuteronomic transgressions which provoked God to punish the kingdom in this way; the similarity to the introduction to the oppressions in Judges is apparent. So in the following chapters: the author's facts probably come from annalistic sources which can in places be recognized, but the religious interpretation of the events, which he sometimes gives in his own quality as historian, sometimes puts into the mouth of a prophet (e. g. xvi. 1–7, cf. xiv. 1–18), is from the point of view of the deuteronomist school.

Another characteristic of the author's method is illustrated by his treatment of the reign of Omri (1 Kgs. xvi. 23–28). Omri was the founder of the greatest dynasty of the northern kingdom, and was one of its greatest kings. From an inscription of the Moabite king Mesha, we learn that Omri subjugated the lands east of the Jordan (see also 2 Kgs. i. 1; iii. 4 ff.), and it is

probable that his conquests were pushed to the northeast into Syria; the Assyrian kings long after his death call Israel the "house of Omri." But the long and brilliantly successful reign of a king who in religion followed in the footsteps of the kings of Israel before him, "golden calves" and all, obviously could not be made to exemplify the doctrine that such sins are regularly visited by condign judgment in national disaster. Consequently, all that our author records of Omri, beyond the revolutions which paved for him the way to the throne (1 Kgs. xvi. 16–18), is contained in one verse, 1 Kgs. xvi. 24 — he built a capital on a new site, Samaria!

In the following reign, however, Israel had troubles enough; the conquests east of the Jordan were lost, and the long chapter of Syrian wars began. This was material more to the author's purpose, and he makes good use of it. Here also, in addition to the annals and whatever other sources were at his hand for the preceding period, he had a new and peculiarly grateful source in the stories of Elijah and Elisha. To the fact that these prophets were outstanding figures in some of the crises of the Syrian wars we owe it that so much of the history of that struggle is preserved; for what the author has extracted from the annals is as meager as elsewhere.

From such "lives and times" of the prophets is derived much the greater part of 1 Kgs. 17–2 Kgs. 10, with 2 Kgs. xiii. 14–21. Whether the author of Kings found these all in one collection, or whether the lives of Elijah and Elisha came

into his hands separately, is not a question of any great consequence. It is clear that the stories themselves are not all of the same origin or age, though they are probably not very wide apart, and the presence of a legendary element, as has been remarked above, is not of itself proof of remoteness in time.

The stories of Elijah (1 Kgs. 17–19; 21; 2 Kgs. 1; ii. 1–18) are among the most striking in the Old Testament; the supernatural in them seems the natural setting for a figure of such heroic mold, and is a stronger testimony than any record of fact could be to the impression of the superman on the imagination of ordinary mortals. Through the vesture of legend, we too have the impression of a something titanic in the man who dared solitary to stand for his God against king, priests, prophets, and people, and, worse than all, the vengeful fury of a woman! We can see, also, that his conflict against the prophets of Baal makes an era in the history of religion in Israel. "If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him," he thunders at the people on Mt. Carmel. It was not the first assertion of the jealousy of Jehovah and the exclusiveness of the true religion; but the issue had never before been so dramatically joined. The intolerant monotheism of Judaism had found its war cry.

1 Kgs. 17–19, Elijah at Sarepta, on Carmel, and at Horeb, belong together; the beginning, which must in some way have brought Elijah upon the stage, is not preserved; 1 Kgs. 21

(Naboth's vineyard) may very well be from the same source; in the end of the chapter (vs. 20[b]–26) the author of the Book of Kings has the word, and in the other chapters there are slight traces of the same hand. With these small exceptions the stories are old, and probably received their present literary form in the ninth century, certainly before the prophetic movement of the eighth. 2 Kgs. i. 2–17 is a legend of a different kind and presumably considerably younger. 2 Kgs. ii. 1–18, on the other hand, is akin to the older stories in 1 Kgs. 17–19, 21; it forms the connecting link with Elisha.

Among the stories of Elijah stand other episodes of the Syrian wars in which prophets figure, 1 Kgs. 20; xxii. 1–38. The second of these, Micaiah ben Imlah before Ahab and Jehoshaphat, is of peculiar interest. They are apparently of the same age with their surrounding. In both a few verses are from later editors. To the same cycle probably belong 2 Kgs. iii. 4–27, the campaign against Moab, as well as 2 Kgs. ix. 1–x. 27, Jehu's revolt instigated by Elisha, the murder of King Ahaziah and of the queen mother, Jezebel, the massacre of the princes of the house of Omri and the extirpation of the worship of Baal.

Beside these are a group of stories about Elisha, chiefly celebrating him as a wonder-worker, and bringing him into connection with the "sons of the prophets," who seem to have formed a kind of dervish order. The collector or editor has accumulated them all in one reign,

probably against their original intention. Scattered through the narratives drawn from the lives of the prophets are brief notices from the annals and the usual deuteronomist appraisals by the author of Kings.

The attempt of Jehu to exterminate the dynasty of Omri, involving the slaughter of the Judæan princes, had the unintended result of enabling the queen mother, Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, to seize the throne. The revolution, planned by the chief priest of Jerusalem, which overthrew the usurper and brought the true heir, the seven-year-old Joash, to his own, is told in 2 Kgs. xi. 1–20; a somewhat minute account of the restoration of the temple in his reign follows in c. xii. 4–16, both from a good Judæan source, perhaps ultimately a temple chronicle. The author of Kings has his usual formulas, including the tolerated high places, in c. xii. 1–3. The extract from the annals at the end of the chapter, the straits into which Hazael of Syria brought Joash, and his death by a treasonable conspiracy, which might be thought to prove that piety is not always crowned with prosperity, is anticipated by the author of Kings in 2 Kgs. xii. 3 — Joash's piety lasted only as long as he was in the leading strings of the priest Jehoiada.

In the following reigns the material derived from narrative sources is more scanty; a noteworthy passage of this kind is the account, evidently from an Israelite writer, of the chastisement Jehoash of Israel inflicted on the presumptuous Amaziah of Judah (2 Kgs. xiv. 8–14).

The contemporary reigns of Jeroboam II of Israel and Azariah, or Uzziah, of Judah, lasting half a century, a period of great prosperity in both kingdoms, are dispatched with extreme brevity, and are followed by the swiftly successive conspiracies and revolutions in which the northern kingdom declined to its fall. The story of treason and bloodshed is suspended to tell of the reign of Ahaz in Judah (2 Kgs. 16) from a source chiefly interested in the temple, and then the last act of Israel's tragedy opens. To the brief account of the fall of Samaria in 2 Kgs. xvii. 1–6, is appended the moral of the whole history, vss. 7–41. This homiletic improvement of the catastrophe was an inviting task, and besides the author of Kings, the exilian continuator and perhaps still later editors contributed to draw it out and emphasize it.

From this point the historian has only Judah to deal with, The reign of Hezekiah is narrated at some length in 2 Kgs. 18–20. A considerable part of these chapters (xviii. 13–xx. 19) is found also in the Book of Isaiah (Isa. 36–39), with variations which are of much interest for the history of the text. The psalm, Isa. xxxviii. 9–20, for instance, is not found in Kings; 2 Kgs. xviii. 14–16 is not in Isaiah, and minor differences occur in almost every verse. The introduction to the reign of Hezekiah by the author of Kings is somewhat longer than usual, and attributes to him not only the destruction of the serpent idol in the temple which Moses was believed to have made (cf. Num. xxi. 8 f.), and of other apparatus

of heathenism, but the removal of the high places, making him thus anticipate the reforms of Josiah a century later (2 Kgs. xviii. 4). This probably exaggerates Hezekiah's good works, but for the bronze serpent to which sacrificial worship had been paid from time immemorial, as well as for vs. 7 f. (Hezekiah's rebellion), which is the antecedent of vs. 13 ff., he may have had the authority of the annals.

From the annals probably come also 2 Kgs. xviii. 13–16, with their brief record of the penalty Hezekiah paid for his revolt. Of this we have also Sennacherib's account in his inscriptions, where he tells how he took the cities of Judah and shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage," and gives the figures of the heavy indemnity he imposed upon him. There follow two longer accounts of Sennacherib's operations, 2 Kgs. xviii. 17–xix. 8 and xix. 9–37, which are commonly regarded as parallel and somewhat discrepant relations of the same campaign, but by some are thought to refer to two different occasions, at an interval of ten years or more. 2 Kgs. xx. 1–11 (cf. Isa. 38) is perhaps from a life of Isaiah, who is the chief figure in it; vs. 12–19 (Isa. 39), the embassy of the chronic Babylonian rebel, Merodach Baladan, presumably to undermine Hezekiah's shaky loyalty to his Assyrian lord, seems to belong at an earlier point in the story; in it also Isaiah is the central person. In the closing paragraph the author of Kings has preserved an interesting annalistic notice of an aqueduct and reservoir which Hezekiah con-

structed, not improbably the Siloam tunnel and the reservoir it feeds.

Of the fifty-five years' reign of Manasseh, and the two years of his son Amon, a half-century of peace and prosperity in which the country recuperated from the disasters Hezekiah had brought upon it, nothing is told. Instead we have a long catalogue of Manasseh's religious obliquities, which includes all the crimes most abhorrent to the seventh-century prophets and laws, and the proclamation of God "by his servants the prophets" that these sins sealed the doom of Judah. This prediction is made from the standpoint of the accomplished fact, and indeed most of the chapter seems to be by the exilian continuator of Kings or a still later writer.

With the reforms of Josiah (621 B. C.; 2 Kgs. 22–23) we arrive at events which, if not within the personal knowledge of the author of Kings, were known to his older contemporaries. This does not, of course, exclude the use of written records or narratives, and, in fact, there seem to be traces of such in the chapters. More certain it is that the continuator of the book made some changes in the account; the oracle of Huldah, for example, seems to have been revised in the light of the event.

To this continuator, as has already been said, the history of the two sieges of Jerusalem, the deportations, and the misfortunes of those who were left in the land are to be attributed. In several places in earlier parts of the history we have had occasion to observe that additions and

changes continued to be made by the editors or scribes — and every scribe who copied a book in those days wielded an editor's pen when he chose — until a time close to the age of the Greek translation, that is, the third century B. C.

The age in which the Pentateuch and the several Historical Books (Joshua–Kings), the product of the long and obscure process which we have attempted to outline in the preceding chapters, were adjusted and connected so as to make a continuous history from the creation to the fall of the Judæan state, can be fixed only by the fact that the author of Chronicles (about 300 B. C. or somewhat later; see below) seems to have read these books in the order and, so far as his use of them permits a judgment, substantially with the contents of our present Old Testament. This arrangement, or edition, if we choose to call it so, as has been shown, did not put an end to additions and alterations, though they gradually became less frequent and less important in the following centuries. A standard and stable Hebrew text was established only in the second century after the Christian era.

CHAPTER XII

CHRONICLES

By the side of this comprehensive history stands another which is in part parallel, in part supplementary, to it, Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah. It differs from the former in being the work of one author, whose characteristic conceptions, interests, and manner make it easy to distinguish his writing from the sources he incorporates. His peculiarities are the better known because there is so much of his own in the books — not far from half the matter contained in them.

The succession of the high priests is brought down to Jaddua, who was contemporary with Alexander the Great, and lists of heads of priestly and levitical families are given in Neh. 12 for the reign of Darius (Codomannus), the last Persian king. The book can, therefore, not be put much, if any, before 300 B. C., and more probably it was written in the following century.

The history begins with the death of Saul and the election of David as king by all Israel at Hebron (1 Chron. 10–11). The preceding chapters are filled with genealogies, beginning with Adam. Twenty-six verses bring us to Abraham, and the second chapter opens with the sons of Israel, while the third is a list of the sons of David

and of his successors on the throne to the fall of the kingdom, with the descendants of the last king through several generations. These genealogies, to which historical notices of different kinds are frequently attached, are in part compiled from various places in the Pentateuch and Historical Books, in part more freely reproduced from such passages; but a large remainder has no parallel in the older work. The author, here as elsewhere, evidently attaches great importance to these lists, in particular to those which enabled the families of his own time, clerical and lay, or the inhabitants of towns and villages, to trace their pedigree back to remote times.

It is not without reason that the historical narrative sets in with David, and that the first event of his reign recorded is the taking of Jerusalem; for Jerusalem is from first to last the center of the author's interest. He writes the history of Judah alone, touching upon the kingdom of Israel only in its relation to Judah. The desire to magnify and glorify the kingdom of Judah in its great days, especially under David and Solomon, to represent it as the most powerful, wealthy, and magnificent among the nations, not only of its time but of any time, frequently expresses itself in enormous exaggerations. David could raise a native army of a million and a half, almost as many as, according to Herodotus — who certainly does not underestimate the numbers — Xerxes mustered from the whole Persian empire for the invasion of Greece; he laid away, "out of his poverty," to build the temple, a hundred

thousand talents of gold and a million talents of silver — say five times the public debt of the United States in 1910; at the dedication of the temple Solomon sacrificed 22,000 bullocks and 120,000 sheep and goats; and so on. It is evident that the author has raised the figures out of the grasp of his own imagination.

From the same motive, if it is possible to avoid it, he tells nothing to discredit the kings whom he thus extols. David's sin in taking a census is necessarily related, because the sequel of it was the choice of a site for the future temple, but, characteristically, not God but Satan tempted him to number the people; otherwise none of the misdeeds and misfortunes which are set down so impartially in 2 Samuel is so much as alluded to by the Chronicler; David is in his pages the model king. Solomon fares as well; nothing is said of the perverting influence of his foreign wives nor the temples he erected to their gods. Indeed, his piety is such that he will not allow Pharaoh's daughter, apparently the only foreign wife the Chronicler gives him, to live in the city of David, for the neighborhood of the ark is holy. Solomon's press-gangs were one of the greatest grievances of the tribes; the author of Chronicles takes pains to aver that Solomon raised his corvée from the remnants of the Hittites and other heathen; no Israelites were put to such work. In Kings we read that Solomon ceded twenty towns in Galilee to Hiram, king of Tyre, in payment for materials and services in the building of the temple; to the Chronicler such a transaction is unimaginable,

and he amends it by making Hiram give the towns to Solomon.

All this is, however, incidental to the main purpose of the book to exalt Jerusalem as the religious capital, its temple as the place which God has chosen for his abode, its liturgy as the correct form of worship, its priests and levites as the only ministry of valid orders and unimpeachable succession. It is not solely the pride of the churchman which prompts him to dwell on these things. The assertion is so emphasized and reiterated that we can hardly mistake in inferring a controversial animus, especially when we recall that at the time of writing there was a rival temple on Mt. Gerizim near Shechem, at one of the most venerable holy places in the land.

This temple is said by Josephus to have been erected in the time of Alexander the Great, in avowed rivalry to the temple in Jerusalem. The high priests of the Samaritan temple were a branch of the Jewish high-priestly line, its ritual was the same, the Pentateuch was the Law in Shechem as well as in Jerusalem. If the Jews maintained that Jerusalem was the only place in the land where sacrifice might lawfully be made to God, the Samaritans made the same exclusive claim for their temple: Shechem, not Jerusalem, was the place (unnamed in Deuteronomy) which God had chosen out of all the tribes to put his name there. At Shechem was held the first great religious assembly of Israel after the invasion of Canaan; there, on Gerizim, the first altar of Jehovah was erected

by his express command (see Deut. xi. 26–29; Jos. viii. 30–35; Jos. 24; especially Deut. xxvii. 4, where "Ebal" in the Jewish Bible is an antisamaritan substitute for the original "Gerizim"). The rivalry of Shechem was thus a serious menace, and so the Jerusalem Jews treated it.

In their eyes the people of the old territory of Ephraim were descendants of the assorted heathen whom the Assyrian kings had colonized in the cities of Samaria after transplanting to the eastern provinces of the empire the old Israelite population of the region (see 2 Kgs. 17 — a very late passage — noting especially vs. 34, "unto this day"). On the other hand, Jerusalem and the region about it, after lying waste for seventy years, had been repeopled under Cyrus by Jews of pure race returning from the exile in Babylonia, who rebuilt the temple and restored the worship as prescribed in the law. They were surrounded by the "peoples of the land," who were regarded as descendants of the ancient heathen of Canaan with whom intermarriage was forbidden in the law. This is the Chronicler's representation: the returned exiles are the only genuine stock, their priesthood the only legitimate sons of Aaron, the rest of the ministry, down to the temple slaves, was authenticated by recorded pedigrees (see Ezra ii. 59–63), and the elaborate liturgy of his own time the same in all particulars which had been used in the temple from its foundation.

The author has an exaggerated interest in this liturgy, and especially in the part taken in

it by the minor orders of the clergy, levites, musicians, singers, door-keepers, and the rest. The levites are provided for in the Pentateuch, but the orchestra and choruses, according to the Chronicler, were organized by David (1 Chron. 23–26), who thus provided for the proper execution of his Psalms. When a great religious function is described, the music invariably comes in for a prominent notice (e. g. 2 Chron. v. 12 f.).

We have seen that the historians of the seventh and following centuries, the so-called deuteronomist school, wrote or interpreted the history to exemplify the doctrine that defection from the national religion is surely punished by national calamities. The Chronicler's doctrine of retribution is at once harder and more individual. He also turns it about: unusual suffering is proof of sin. Thus, Asa was, according to Kings, a conspicuously good king, but in his old age he had the gout. The Chronicler, by the mouth of a prophet, explains why: he relied on the king of Syria to help him against Israel, instead of relying on the Lord. The king clapped the prophet into prison for meddling with affairs of state, and so added another affront to God. He was impenitent, however, for though the gout was very bad, "yet sought he not unto the Lord, but to the physicians." Uzziah, another godly king, was in his later years afflicted with leprosy, a disease which was regarded as peculiarly the stroke of God. The Chronicler gives the reason: the king presumed to burn

incense on the altar in spite of the protest of the priest, and was smitten with leprosy on the spot.

There is no reason to impugn the author's good faith in such emendations of his sources. He thought he knew the laws of history, and if in the particular instance the record did not correspond, it must be defective. But whatever apology may be made for his good intentions, it need hardly be said that the unsupported testimony of a doctrinaire historian who deals so sovereignly with the facts is of no weight.

The Chronicler names a considerable number of books as authorities for different periods of the history; the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel (or Israel and Judah) and the Book of the Kings of Israel are repeatedly cited for things not related in our Book of Kings. For more information about Joash the reader is referred to the "Midrash of the Book of Kings," and for Abijah to the "Midrash of the Prophet Iddo," titles that in later times, at least, would designate an edifying exposition in which full license was given to the imagination to embroider the theme with picturesque inventions. The favorite references, however, are to writings bearing the names of prophets — Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, Iddo, Shemaiah, Jehu son of Hanani. The title History of Samuel the Seer, of Nathan the Prophet, and so on, may mean either *about* Samuel or *by* Samuel. Very likely the author entertained the theory which subsuquently prevailed among the Jews that in each age the prophets wrote down the events

of their own time, in which many of them had a conspicuous part.

The question is of no other interest; for an examination of the extracts from his sources which the Chronicler has incorporated or condensed shows that (with small possible exceptions to be considered hereafter) his material was all taken from our Book of Kings. This enables us to confront his history of Judah with his sources and acquaint ourselves with his habitual way of dealing with them, an investigation not only instructive for his method, but of the greatest importance when we come to the Chronicler's history of the Persian period, where, for the most part, his sources are not independently preserved.

In the first place it will be noticed that he has selected from the history in Samuel and Kings the parts which particularly interested him for their own sake, such as the description of religious ceremonies, or could be used as a text for the doctrines he had most at heart, and has therefore passed over a very large part of the content of his source. Precisely so, the author of Kings, two centuries earlier, had dealt with his sources, though with a different interest. What the Chronicler chose to include he generally copied out without much change; the present variations in the text are chiefly due to divergent transmission. (Compare, for illustration, 1 Chron. x. 1–xi. 47 with 1 Sam. 31 and 2 Sam. xxiii. 8–39, or 1 Chron. xvii. 1–xx. 8 with 2 Sam. 7, 8, 10 and 12.) Often he introduces in these

extracts, or appends to them, notes of his own, which would in almost all cases be certainly recognizable on internal evidence even if we had not the text of Kings before us. In a few places he condenses or abridges the narrative of Kings, as in 2 Chron. xxxii. 1–23 compared with 2 Kgs. xviii. 13–xix. 37.

Of alterations, or, from the author's own point of view, corrections, of the older history several examples have been given above. One more, of a striking character, may be cited, viz. 2 Chron. xxii. 10–xxiii. 21 compared with 2 Kgs. 11. The Carian mercenaries of the guard in the sacred precincts of the temple (2 Kgs. xi. 4) were a plain profanation, of which the pious chief priest could not have been guilty. The Chronicler accordingly rewrites the story, substituting the levites (note 2 Chron. xxiii. 6) for the obnoxious heathen. Finally, he sometimes freely expands on his text, as in the building of Solomon's temple (2 Chron. 2–3).

In view of the Chronicler's multiplied references to authorities, it has frequently been assumed that his immediate source was not the Books of Samuel and Kings, but a work of a "midrashic" character — that is, euphemistically, a work with more concern for edification than for historical verity — written not long before his time from the same point of view and with the same salient interests, which the Chronicler in all simplicity took for authentic history. This ghost source eludes, however, all attempts to catch it actually walking. It may perfectly well be that the Chron-

icler did not invent everything in the book which is plainly invention, but if not, we can only apply the famous contribution of an undergraduate to Homeric criticism, "the Iliad was not written by Homer, but by another man of the same name."

There remain a few short notices, not derived from the Pentateuch or Historical Books, whose contents and form suggest that they are scraps which the Chronicler picked up from some other source, e. g. the migration of the Simeonites, 2 Chron. iv. 24–43 (in the main). But these passages are so few, and generally of so little historical importance, that the question need here not be pursued farther.

CHAPTER XIII

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

THE books which in our Bible bear the names Ezra and Nehemiah (in the Jewish Bible, one book, Ezra) are the immediate continuation of Chronicles, by the same author. When they were divided, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22–23, the necessary sequel of vss. 20–21 was repeated at the beginning of Ezra (Ezra i. 1–3). The reason for the division is plain: down to the end of the exile the work was no more than an epitome of the Pentateuch and Historical Books; but from the time of Cyrus to Alexander it was the only history the Jews possessed. This part was therefore separated from what went before as the book of post-exilic history, and named "Ezra" after the figure most prominent in the earlier half of it, on the same principle that the history of the founding of the kingdom was named Samuel. The subdivision into two books of Ezra as in the Greek Bible, or as we name them Ezra and Nehemiah, is apparently due to Christian hands.

This part of the Chronicler's work begins, as has been said, with an edict of Cyrus permitting the Jews in Babylonia to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. There follows

a list (given again in Neh. 7) of the families who availed themselves of this permission, shortly after 538 B. C. The restoration of the temple is begun, then stopped by the machinations of their enemies under Xerxes (486–465 B. C.) and Artaxerxes (465–424 B. C.), but happily completed (by the same Zerubbabel and Joshua who began it) in the sixth year of Darius (Nothus, 424–405 B. C.). "After these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes," Ezra came up from Babylonia, armed with large powers by an edict of the king, to order things according to the law of his God in the province "beyond the river" (Euphrates, Ezra 7 f.). He found things enough that needed reform; particularly the frequent intermarriages of all classes, including the clergy, with the "peoples of the land," and succeeded in inducing the Jews, in a great act of penitence, to divorce these "foreign women" (cc. 9–10).

At this point the History of Nehemiah sets in abruptly in the form of personal memoirs. Nehemiah, a favorite cup-bearer of the Persian king Artaxerxes, hearing that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and the gates burned, asks permission to go thither and repair the damaged fortifications, and is sent with a commission as royal governor of the district. In spite of dangerous opposition from jealous neighbors in Samaria and elsewhere, by the utmost endeavors he accomplishes the rebuilding of the walls in a very brief space (Neh. 1–6). In all this there is not so much as a mention of Ezra, who is supposed to have been now thirteen

years in Jerusalem, but in Neh. 8 he suddenly appears on the scene with his law-book. The law is read, and the people solemnly covenant by sign and seal to observe it; Nehemiah's name stands at the head of the list of signers, but otherwise he is entirely ignored (Neh. 8–10). Lists of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of other settlements, a catalogue of the priests and levites who came up under Cyrus, and a description of the dedication of the walls, in which the singers shine, fill Neh. 11–12. That the Chronicler is the author is palpable. Finally, in c. 13, Nehemiah, who had returned to court, reappears, and finds a sad state of things; a foreigner, and an Ammonite at that, lodged by the high priest in a chamber of the temple, flagrant violations of the sabbath by market men, and the old grievance of mixed marriages in full gait. Even the high priest's family was not pure: one of its scions was son-in-law to Nehemiah's arch-enemy, Sanballat of Samaria. Naturally Nehemiah expelled him.

It has been necessary to give this somewhat detailed synopsis of the books to make intelligible the problems they present. On this point it is further to be observed that the book is not all written in Hebrew: Ezra iv. 8–vi. 18; vii. 12–26, containing chiefly correspondence with the Persian court and documents issuing from it, are in Aramaic, the official language of the western provinces of the empire. Moreover, the oldest Greek translation of the Chronicler's history, part of which is preserved in the Bible of the

church as 1 Esdras, differs both in matter and order from the Jewish standard text and the later Greek version; it contains, for example, the famous exhibition of wits by the three Jewish youths at the court of Darius (1 Esdr. 3 f.), as a result of which Zerubbabel obtains from Darius permission to go up to Jerusalem. In 1 Esdras the reading of the law (Neh. 8) immediately follows the act of penitence for the strange wives (Ezra 10).

A large part of Ezra-Nehemiah exhibits the Chronicler's familiar motives and manner; in other places he has incorporated extracts from the sources, with or without annotations of his own. Of these sources the only ones which have been independently preserved are the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, from which the author takes, however, no more than the facts that at the instance of these prophets Zerubbabel and Joshua began to rebuild the temple in the second year of Darius (Ezra v. 1 f.); the completion of the work by the same hands, which according to the Chronicler took place in the sixth year of Darius and was celebrated in a great dedication ceremony, is in Zech. iv. 9 still prediction. Another source which stands out distinctly is the Memoirs of Nehemiah, of which Neh. 1–6 (except c. 3) is a solid piece. There is, moreover, a series of documents: Ezra 1, the edict of Cyrus; Ezra iv. 7–vi. 12, complaints to the court of the Jews' building operations, and answers of the kings Artaxerxes and Darius respectively; Ezra vii. 11–26, commission of Artaxerxes to Ezra. A

diplomatic appearance is given to these by the fact that — except the edict of Cyrus — they are all couched in the official Aramaic; and, inasmuch as in cc. iv. 7–vi. 18 the connecting links of narrative are also in Aramaic, the presumption is that this material was taken bodily from an Aramaic book in which the letters and rescripts were already embodied.

Finally, a distinct source is commonly assumed for the history of Ezra. This is chiefly told of Ezra in the third person; but in some parts for a considerable space together Ezra speaks in the first person (I or we), and it is accordingly thought by most scholars that the Chronicler had in his hands Memoirs of Ezra as well as of Nehemiah, which in part he incorporated intact (e. g. Ezra 8 f.), in part recast into the form of a narrative about Ezra (as in Ezra 10; Neh. 8 f.). It is evident that the story of Ezra, whatever its origin, is badly dislocated: the chapters which now stand in Neh. 8–10 have no business there, and, as has been noticed above, in 1 Esdras the reading of the law immediately follows Ezra 10. On the other hand, there is a gap at the end of Ezra 8; chapter 9 cannot well be its original sequel. And, lastly, Neh. 9 f. does not seem naturally to follow c. 8. The most probable restoration of the order is Ezra 8; Neh. vii. 70–73; 8; Ezra 9–10; Neh. 9–10. This arrangement gives a continuous and consistent story, and the numerous dates fall into sequence. Incidentally another connection is thus restored, Neh. 11 follows vii. 5^{a}. The list (Neh. vii. 5^{b}–60) of the exiles who

returned with Zerubbabel and his company (= Ezra 2) is obviously not what is required here. The dismemberment of the story of Ezra is not to be attributed to the Chronicler, but to misadventures of copying such as are not infrequent in ancient manuscripts.

The extract from the Memoirs of Nehemiah breaks off with Neh. 6; though perhaps in vii. 1–4; xi. 1–3 the Chronicler has utilized in his own way some further sentences. In Neh. xii. 27–43, the procession at the dedication of the walls is described, ostensibly by Nehemiah, in the first person, and the passage has on this ground been taken for an extract from the Memoirs. It is, however, an unmistakable piece of the Chronicler's own composition. In c. 13, also, Nehemiah, in the first person, gives an account of his reforming enterprises on a second visit to Jerusalem. An unaltered extract from the Memoirs, however, the chapter cannot well be; the Chronicler's vein crops out in too many places.

It does not belong to our present task to discuss the historical value of these sources; but it may not be amiss to say that the authority of the Memoirs of Nehemiah alone is unimpeached. The question is of peculiar interest in the case of the supposed Memoirs of Ezra, because Neh. 8 has been generally understood by recent critics to be the account of the formal introduction of a new, or newly codified, law, the Priests' Code or the Pentateuch, which Ezra brought up from Babylonia.

CHAPTER XIV

STORY BOOKS: ESTHER, RUTH, JONAH

BESIDES the older and younger historical books we have been considering, the Jewish Bible contains some examples of what we should call the short story, and the church has preserved others. The canonical books of this class are Esther, Ruth, and Jonah; among the apocrypha are Judith and Tobit; others, such as 3 Maccabees, are found in manuscripts of the Greek and Latin Bibles, or in Oriental translations, but did not attain official recognition of any of the great churches. These stories, which, as might be expected, differ widely in literary quality as well as in subject and motive, are doubtless only the rare survivors of a larger literature of this kind, but they suffice to give us a notion of the popular reading of the Jews in the last centuries before the Christian era. It would be more exact, perhaps, to say the popular story-telling, for probably the written books were chiefly used by the story-tellers, who reproduced their contents orally and freely, just as the Moslem story-tellers to-day recite stories from the Arabian Nights or the Antar romance. Some of them, however, like Esther, attached themselves to popular festivals, and were recited or read as part of the celebration.

Esther

Esther is the story of a beautiful Jewess of Susa whom Xerxes raises from the ranks of his concubines to be his queen, and who uses her influence over him to save her people from a general massacre which the grand vizier has prepared for them by way of avenging an affront from one of the race. The plot is developed with noteworthy art. The deposition of Vashti, which, so far as the main matter goes, is necessary only to make room for Esther, under the author's hand becomes a brilliant first act. The embroilment of Mordecai and Haman is skillfully managed; the stiff-necked Jew refuses homage to the proud vizier, who schemes a generous revenge. Esther ventures her life for her people by intruding into the audience chamber, but the *dénouement* is artfully retarded — instead of a pathetic plea for the imperiled Jews, an invitation for the king and his prime minister to a *petit dîner* in the queen's apartments! At the banquet the king offers Esther her wish, but again the issue is postponed. Haman, in his elation at such signal marks of queenly favor, builds a gallows for Mordecai seventy-five feet high — and next day has to parade the streets of the capital at the bridle of the hated Jew's horse proclaiming him the object of the king's special honor!

The scene in the banqueting hall when Esther at last makes her petition is highly dramatic. She makes it a plea for her own life, "for we are sold,

I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish." The king, who has no inkling that she is a Jewess, and is incensed at the thought of such a plot against his queen, angrily asks, "Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" The climax so skillfully prepared comes in the stunning words, "This wicked Haman here!" Thenceforth the action marches swiftly: the king bursts out of the room to collect himself by a turn in the garden; the fallen vizier sinks a suppliant on the queen's couch, where the king, returning, finds him; the sinister eunuch standing by describes the fine new gallows Haman has at home, ready for Mordecai, and on his own gallows, in poetic justice, Haman is hanged, fifty cubits high! Mordecai succeeds to the seal of state, and conceives the counter-stroke by which, instead of the heathen massacring the Jews, the Jews slaughter the heathen. An annual festival celebrates the joyful issue.

For the full account of Mordecai's greatness the reader is referred to the royal annals of Media and Persia, where it will be found, he says, recorded along with the mighty deeds of Xerxes, including his subjugation of the Greeks. Despite this authority, it should be unnecessary to say that the Book of Esther is a work of fiction. Whether it is pure invention, or whether some of the incidents are borrowed from fact, is an idle question, because a wholly unanswerable one. If the local color, which is laid on pretty thick, is good, as some modern archæologists aver, it would not be strange that a Jewish novelist who

wrote not so long after the passing of Persia should prove as well acquainted with it as a modern archæologist.

Some recent interpreters find in the story a mythical background: Esther is Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love; Mordecai, "Marduk's man," was originally Marduk himself, the great god of Babylon; the name of Haman sounds something like one way of pronouncing the name of an Elamite god in the epic of Gilgamesh. The triumph of Mordecai and Esther over Haman would thus be an echo of ancient strife between the gods of Babylonia and Elam. It will be obvious, however, to the mythologically unsophisticated understanding, that if these very problematical combinations are right, the author of the Book of Esther was quite innocent of them, and therefore that for the interpretation of the story he tells they are wholly irrelevant.

The Book of Esther, it was long ago observed, is singular among the books of the Bible in that there is no mention of God in it. It is Jewish with a sanguinary loyalty to race, but of Judaism as religion there is not a trace; it is in fact somewhat obtrusive by its absence. When Mordecai warns Esther that if she fails her people in its hour of need, deliverance will come "from another place," the word God is ostentatiously avoided; before her great adventure she fasts three days, but there is no suggestion of prayer; in the celebrations of rescue and the annual commemoration of it there is feasting and gladness, but no thanksgiving to God. It is no wonder that

orthodox rabbis doubted the inspiration of so conspicuously secular a romance, nor that the Greek translators made good the religious deficiencies of the book by putting pious prayers into the mouth of Mordecai and Esther at the appropriate junctures.

The age of the book cannot be very closely determined; it is pretty certainly not older than the third century B. C., more likely from the second. A note at the end of the Greek version says that this translation was brought from Jerusalem to Egypt in the year which corresponds to 114 B. C. The earliest mention of the festival of Purim is in 2 Macc. xv. 36, where it is called Mordecai Day.

Ruth

The story of Ruth is laid in the time of the judges, for which reason it was placed in the Greek Bible and in modern versions between Judges and Samuel. It tells of a young Moabitess, the childless widow of a Judæan from Bethlehem, who accompanies her widowed mother-in-law back to Bethlehem, embracing her religion. Ruth goes out to glean after the reapers and by chance comes to the fields of Boaz, a kinsman of her husband, who shows her kindness. By Naomi's contrivance, she reveals to him who she is under circumstances that appeal to his chivalry, and, after a nearer of kin has waived his right, Boaz takes the widow with the land, and they live happy ever after. Their son Obed is David's

grandfather. The legal proceedings in the last chapter are different from anything we otherwise know of Israelite custom, but our ignorance is no warrant for assuming that the usage there described is fictitious.

If the story of Esther is told with dramatic power, that of Ruth is told with idyllic grace. The pathos of the moment in which Naomi bids her daughters-in-law return to their mothers' homes and Ruth refuses to part from her is unforced. The picture of the gleaners in the fields; the delicacy with which the night at the threshing-floor is treated; the scene at the city gate, where the waiver and redemption are witnessed and the shoe given in attestation; the blessing of the townsmen on the union — all have the charm of simple and unaffected narrative.

The question what the book was written for has received diverse answers. It has been thought that the author meant to protest against the narrowness of those who condemned all marriages with foreigners and put the Moabites under a special ban, by showing that David himself had Moabite blood in his veins; others see the point of the book in the commendation of the marriage of childless widows, not by brothers-in-law only, as the levirate law required, but by remoter kinsmen. Others have conjectured otherwise. In this state of the case it is safe to say that if the author had an ulterior motive, he concealed it more successfully than is common to story-tellers who write with a purpose.

There are no very definite signs in the book of

the age in which it was written. The author is familiar with the Hebrew literature of the good period, and writes a better imitation of it than some. It is precisely this imitative character which stands in the way of putting the book in the days of the kingdom. But where, in the centuries of the Persian or Greek dominion it belongs, it is impossible to say.

Jonah

The third of the short stories, Jonah, is not found, like Esther and Ruth, in the Jewish Bible in the miscellaneous collection of "Scriptures" and in the Christian Bible among the Historical Books, but in the prophetic canon, as one of the Minor Prophets. The reason doubtless is that it is not only a story about a prophet and his mission, but was thought to be written by himself.

The tale is too familiar to have to be retold at length. The Israelite prophet, Jonah the son of Amittai, is commissioned by God to go to Nineveh and announce its impending destruction; to escape this unwelcome errand he embarks on a Phœnician ship bound for Spain, at the other end of the world; a tempest threatens to engulf the ship; the seamen cast lots to discover against whom the gods are so angry; the lot falls on Jonah, and he is cast into the sea, which thereupon becomes calm; Jonah is swallowed by a monstrous fish, which after three days sets him ashore safe and sound. He goes

to Nineveh and delivers his message; the people repent of their sins, and God repents of his purpose to destroy them, whereat the prophet is very indignant and upbraids God with his softheartedness: he expected this from the beginning and therefore tried to flee to Tarshish. By his own grief for the death of the plant "which sprang up in a night and perished in a night" the prophet is taught the lesson of the divine compassion: "How should I not have compassion on this great city, Nineveh, in which are more than a hundred and twenty thousand human beings which do not know their right hand from their left, not to speak of cattle?" With this rebuke the book ends.

These closing words leave no room for question about the purpose of the book. In the person of Jonah, the rebuke is addressed to the Jews, to whom God's long-suffering with the heathen was a stumbling-block. The greater prophetic books, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, all contain a long array of oracles against foreign nations, predicting their total and remediless destruction, some of them very precise as to time and agent (see, for example, Isa. 13 f., against Babylon). The fulfillment of these prophecies, the final breaking of the power of the heathen world, must come before the golden age of Israel could dawn. Yet the generations came and went and the heathen still ruled the earth! Then, too, the Jews doubtless felt that they, as the people of God, had an exclusive claim on his affections, as he asserted exclusive claims to theirs. The author

of Jonah not only extends to mankind God's word in Ezekiel, "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord God, and not rather that he should return from his way and live?" but he asserts the all-embracing compassion of God. The one God is the creator of the heathen as well as of Israel, his merciful providence is over all his works.

The higher spirit of Judaism here reproves the lower, narrow, exclusive, and intolerant spirit, which could unfortunately allege so much warrant for itself from the law and the prophets. Therein the author had many and noble successors, not only among the sages, with their cosmopolitan wisdom, but in the circles of the law.

It is not the fault of the author that modern readers and interpreters have had their attention diverted from the moral of the book to the fable in which it is conveyed; he could not have imagined the pseudo-historical frame of mind to which the question whether it all happened thus and so was of such absorbing importance that it might almost be said that the sea-monster swallowed the commentators as well as the prophet. For one of the difficulties of the book he is not responsible: the psalm (Jonah ii. 2–9) which Jonah sings in the fish's belly was put in his mouth by a later editor; vs. 10 is the immediate sequel of vs. 1. The poem was evidently not composed for the place; it is a hymn of thanksgiving, not a prayer for deliverance; but the (figurative) references to the depths of the abyss seemed appropriate to Jonah's situation.

The hero of the story is a historical character, of whom, to be sure, we know only that he came from a place named Gath-hepher, and predicted the reconquest of lost Israelite territories which Jeroboam II achieved (2 Kgs. xiv. 25). It has been conjectured that the author of our book may have heard in some way that he went on a mission to Nineveh; but if he had, that would not make the book any more historical.

Jonah, like Ruth and Esther, belongs to the later period of Hebrew literature; it is more likely that it was written after the time of Alexander than before, but greater definiteness is not justified.

CHAPTER XV

THE PROPHETS

In the old story of Saul and Samuel (1 Sam. 9 f.) Samuel is named "the seer," that is, a man endowed with what we call second sight, and a note by an editor explains that what in his time was called a prophet used to be called a seer. Samuel was, indeed, in the apprehension of later times a prophet, but the story itself makes a clear distinction between the two. The band of prophets whom Saul meets coming down from the high place, working up by music an enthusiasm, or possession, which makes them beside themselves, raving in the prophetic fury (raving and prophesying, in such connections, is the same word in Hebrew), an enthusiasm which Saul catches, to the surprise and scandal of his townsmen, are evidently something quite different from the village seer; they must have been outwardly very much like modern Moslem dervishes.

In the ninth century, the century of the Syrian wars, these gregarious prophets appear in many places; especially in the stories of Elisha they are organized societies of devotees, living by themselves in colonies of huts or cells under a superior — again very much like a dervish order —

and sometimes turning their religious zeal into political channels, as when they incite Jehu to the revolt which overthrew the house of Omri.

Beside them are others who also bear the name prophet, but stand apart from the order, and often in opposition to it. Such a figure is Micaiah son of Imlah, confronting the four hundred prophets whom Ahab got together, and declaring their unanimity of inspiration to be the work of a lying spirit sent from God to lure the king to his doom (1 Kgs. 22). Such a figure, above all, as we have already seen, is Elijah, who, solitary, champions Jehovah's right to the undivided allegiance of Israel, or thunders the doom of the dynasty at the authors of Naboth's judicial murder. It is in such men as these, rather than in the common herd of prophets by profession, that the ethical prophets of the eighth century have their forerunners.

The moral conception of God had its roots far down in the religion of Israel, as may be seen in the older (certainly preprophetic) strata in Samuel, and better still in the patriarchal legends, which received their present form in the same age; but after the establishment of the kingdom it was crossed by the national idea. It was not till the eighth century that the men came who thought through what the moral idea of God involves and had the courage to proclaim its consequences, fatal though they might be to both state and church. These prophets, beginning with Amos, not only preached a new doctrine, they employed a new method. The message

which they spoke to the heedless, incredulous, or hostile ears of their contemporaries, they also recorded, whether in the hope to reach through the written page a larger audience, or to perpetuate their words to generations following. Thus there begins a prophetic literature which is one of the most characteristic features of the Old Testament. Four prophets of the second half of the eighth century have given their names to such prophetic books, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. Then, in the latter part of the seventh century and the beginning of the sixth, follow the little books of Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habbakuk, and the great one of Jeremiah, whose younger contemporary in Babylonia is Ezekiel. Haggai and Zechariah were instrumental in the rebuilding of the temple in the reign of Darius I. In the discussion of these books we shall not attempt a chronological disposition, but follow the order of the English Bible.

CHAPTER XVI

ISAIAH

THE first of the prophetic books bears the name of Isaiah, a Judæan prophet, who dates his call "in the year that king Uzziah died," a year which cannot be fixed with certainty, but was at all events not very long before 734 B. C., and whose latest dated utterances are from the time of Sennacherib's invasion in the year 701. His prophecies thus range over a period of not far from forty years. He witnessed the humbling of Israel by Tiglath-Pileser in 734, the fall of Samaria in 721, the Assyrian campaigns in the west in 720 and 711, and the condign punishment Sennacherib inflicted on Judah in 701; and all these events (of which we have historical knowledge from both Assyrian and Jewish sources) are reflected in his prophecies.

The book contains, however, much besides the prophecies of Isaiah in the different periods of his long career. It has already been noted that Isa. 36–39 are found also, with some variations, in 2 Kgs. 18–20, where they are an integral part of the narrative. That this extract from Kings was copied into the Book of Isaiah is explained by the fact that the prophet is a prominent figure in the story. It does not stand in

immediate connection with the prophecies of Isaiah during the campaign of Sennacherib in cc. 28–33, from which it is separated by several oracles of different character and date; and the natural presumption is that this historical appendix was added at the end of a roll, just as Jer. 52, also an extract from Kings (2 Kgs. xxiv. 18–xxv. 21), is appended at the end of the roll of Jeremiah.

In the present Book of Isaiah, cc. 36–39 are followed by another prophetic book of considerable length (Isa. 40–66), which has no title, and in which, from first to last, no prophet's name appears. The theme which is announced in the first verses of this book and runs through a large part of it is the approaching deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, their return to their own land, and the restoration of Zion.

In Isa. 1–35 certain larger divisions are at once apparent: cc. 1–12, a collection of prophecies, chiefly, as appears from dates and other indications, from the earlier years of Isaiah's ministry; cc. 13–23, a collection of oracles, mainly against foreign nations; cc. 24–27, previsions of a great judgment, in a peculiarly mysterious tone; cc. 28–33, chiefly from the time of Sennacherib, followed by c. 34, in which God's fury is poured out on Edom, and c. 35, a prophecy of restoration akin to cc. 40 ff. It is thus evident that the present book is made up from several older collections of prophecies gathered by different hands; the peculiar titles in cc. 13–23, for instance, are most probably to be

attributed to the editor of an independent book of prophecies against the heathen.

The same phenomenon appears on a smaller scale in Isa. 1–12. That these chapters, at one stage in the history of the collections, formed a roll by themselves is probable from the fact that they begin with a grand overture (c. 1), in which the leading motives of Isaiah's prophecy are heard, and close (c. 12) with a psalm of praise for the messianic deliverance which is the subject of c. 11. But the order of the prophecies is not chronological: the inaugural vision and Isaiah's call to be a prophet stands, not at the beginning, as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but in c. 6 (dated in the year of King Uzziah's death), while the chapters that precede it (cc. 2 f.; 5), with what was once an initial title (ii. 1), may confidently be assigned, on internal grounds, to the reigns of Uzziah's successors. Chapters 7 and 8 (dated under Ahaz) seem to have originally followed close on c. 6, as they do now. Whatever may be the reason for this singular arrangement, it seems evident that the compiler had several smaller groups or loose leaves of oracles, which he put together for better preservation, rather, perhaps, by affinity of subject than in order of time.

This must have taken place at a comparatively late time, for not only does his roll begin with a prophecy (Isa. i. 2–9) which vividly depicts the devastation of Judah and the isolation of Jerusalem by Sennacherib in 701 (perhaps the latest oracle of Isaiah preserved in the book),

but it contains passages (e. g. xi. 11–16) which bear all the marks of a time several centuries after Isaiah's death; the psalm in c. 12 is perhaps later still. Another indication that the collection was made at a date remote from the age of the prophet is the fragmentary character of several of the oracles in cc. 2–5. The refrain verses here afford a certain clue; they show that prophecies originally composed with much art in balanced strophes with closing refrains came into the compiler's hands mutilated and dislocated. Thus, v. 25 has the refrain of ix. 8–21; x. 4, while x. 1–3 is a "woe" which has strayed away from v. 18 ff., and the refrain ii. 9, 11, 17 recurs in v. 15.

Fragmentary as many of these prophecies are, enough remains to show that Isaiah had poetical genius as well as unequaled mastery of the peculiar literary form of the Hebrew oracle. The parable of the vineyard (Isa. v. 1–7), or the picture of the swift, resistless advance of the Assyrian (v. 26–30), or the description of devastated Judah (i. 2–8), or the oracle against Samaria (ix. 8–21), in the Authorized English Version, illustrate in different ways the art with which Isaiah handles this traditional form.

The earlier prophecies of Isaiah, whether directed against Israel and its allies or against Judah, are unsparing in their condemnation of the political and social evils of the time, and predict the imminent and irremediable ruin of both nations. This is revealed to Isaiah in the vision which made him a prophet, in terms so drastic that the closing words were piously erased by

some late editor (so in the Greek Bible), and a meaningless phrase put in their place in the curtailed sentence by a still later hand (our Hebrew text). With this the tenor of his utterances in cc. ii. 5–iii. 26; v. 1–30; ix. 8–x. 4, wholly agrees. These unrelieved forebodings of doom led in later times not only to excisions such as we have noted in vi. 13, but to interpolations; hopeful pendants were attached to the prophet's gloomy pictures, sometimes written for the purpose — a particularly instructive example is iv. 2–6, after iii. 16–iv. 1 — sometimes borrowed from other prophetic contexts. To the latter class belongs the famous messianic oracle, ix. 1–7, which is very imperfectly connected (by changes in viii. 22) with the preceding climactic denunciation of doom, the end of which is missing. If Isa. ix. 1–7 is a prophecy by Isaiah, it can only belong to his latest years.

One other feature of Isaiah's message must be signalized. His God indignantly rejects the sacrifices and all the pompous worship which are offered him in his temple in Jerusalem (Isa. i. 10–17). Men think they can thus gain the favor of God and persuade him to overlook or condone their sins against their fellows! Such worship is an insult to God. So Amos a few years before had condemned the worship at Bethel (Amos v. 21–25). So their successors repeat in no uncertain terms (see Mic. vi. 6–8; Jer. 7, especially vss. 21–23). It is the fundamental doctrine of prophecy: the will of God is wholly moral. For worship he cares nothing at all; for justice, fair-

ness, and goodness between man and man he cares everything. Such a God is capable of destroying the nation for the wrongs men do their fellow man; he is not capable of being bribed by offerings, or flattered with psalms, or wheedled with prayers. He will listen to no intercession (Jer. xv. 1 ff., after c. 14); nothing but complete reformation and reparation will he call repentance — and there comes a pass where repentance is impossible.

The book of prophecies against the heathen (Isa. 13–23) begins with two remarkable chapters (xiii. 1–xiv. 23) declaring the imminent destruction of Babylon by the Medes, whom the prophet sees already in motion against the doomed city, and exulting over the descent of the king of Babylon to hell, greeted by the taunts of the mighty of the earth who were before him there. The two prophecies are connected by a prediction of the deliverance of captive Israel, which will be restored to its own land and rule over its oppressors (xiv. 1–4[a]). The situation is not that of Isaiah's time, in which Babylon was a province of the Assyrian empire, and when, under Merodach Baladan, it for a while reasserted its independence, seems to have sought an alliance with Hezekiah against their common oppressor, Assyria (Isa. 39 = 2 Kgs. xx. 12 ff.). The Medes had been in league with the Babylonians against Assyria until its fall in 606 B. C.; it was not until the time of Cyrus that the Medes became a menace to Babylonia, and only after Cyrus's conquest of Lydia (546 B. C.) that the turn of Babylon was

visibly come. On the other hand, the sack and ruin of Babylon, pictured with vengeful satisfaction in Isa. 13, did not come to pass at that time. The Persian armies, after a decisive battle in northern Babylonia, entered the city in the Autumn of 538 without resistance. Babylonian inscriptions acclaim Cyrus as a deliverer, and Babylon became one of the capitals of his great empire. On these grounds the prophecy is generally thought to fall between 546 and 538 B. C.

It is immediately followed by a short oracle (Isa. xiv. 24–27) against the Assyrians, quite in the tone of the prophecies of Isaiah in the time of Sennacherib (701 B. C.), and by an enigmatical warning to the inhabitants of the Philistine cities, said in the title to have come "in the year that King Ahaz died." Another prophecy concerned with the inhabitants of these cities, bearing Isaiah's name and definitely dated (711 B. C.), is Isa. 20. Chapter 17, entitled "The Burden of Damascus," is in fact chiefly against the kingdom of Israel, and falls in line with prophecies of Isaiah in the time of the alliance of the two kingdoms against Judah (ca. 736 B. C.); compare Isa. 7. In Isa. xxii. 15–25 is a prophecy of Isaiah singular in the fact that it is launched at an individual, the majordomo of King Hezekiah.

Besides these, the collection contains oracles against Moab (Isa. 15 f.), Nubia (c. 18), Egypt (c. 19), another vision of the fall of Babylon before the armies of Elam and Media (xxi. 1–10), but in a different spirit from cc. 13–14, the Arabs (xxi. 11 f., 13–17), Tyre (c. 23), and one with the

mysterious (editorial) title "Burden of the Valley of Vision" (xxii. 1–14). The last-named, in the form of a vision, depicts a crisis in the history of Jerusalem, and condemns the frivolous behavior of its inhabitants on the eve of a siege or, as some think, during the respite given by a temporary raising of a siege. It was probably uttered by Isaiah at an early stage in Hezekiah's revolt against Sennacherib (704 or 703 B. C.), before the actual appearance of the Assyrian army. The oracle against Tyre (Isa. xxiii. 1–14 — what follows is a later supplement) seems more appropriate to the thirteen years' siege by Nebuchadnezzar than to the operations of Shalmanezer or of Sennacherib in Isaiah's days.

Thus Isa. 13–23, like cc. 1–12, contains prophecies of Isaiah from both the earliest and the latest period of his activity, intermingled with others having a totally different historical horizon and dating from a much later time, and to both additions have been made by editors or scribes. A very interesting example of the latter phenomenon is Isa. xix. 18 ff. The passage is, in all probability, from the time of the Greek kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, the name of the city in the Greek Bible, "City of Righteousness," referring to Leontopolis, where a Jewish temple was erected about 170 B. C., with high priests of the legitimate line exiled from Jerusalem. "City of Destruction" (*heres*) in the Hebrew text is a hostile perversion, possibly by way of another reading "City of the Sun" (*ḥeres*).

Each of the three large prophetic books has

such a group of oracles about gentile nations, Isa. 13–23; Jer. 46–51; Ezek. 25–32. They are in part leveled at the immediate neighbors of Judah, in part against the great powers, Babylon and Egypt. Many of them are in such general terms — or, if they refer to specific events and situations, our knowledge of the history is so incomplete — that it is peculiarly difficult to fix their age. It was also a kind of prophecy which peculiarly invited imitation. Under the foreign yoke the Jews wore for so many centuries, it must often have been a relief of soul to repeat what God was going to do to the heathen; the spirit of the author of Jonah was not for everybody. Moreover, if there is any place in the Old Testament where it would be easier than another for oracles of the "false prophets" to slip in and be preserved, it is in these collections; about the doom of the enemies of Israel they were as orthodox and as emphatic as the best. It is not strange, therefore, that there should be more than usual uncertainty about the origin of these anathemas on the gentiles.

Isaiah 24–27 contains a series of prophecies of judgment to come which differ from others in the book in having no particular address. The vision seems to widen to a judgment of the world, in which the earth itself reels and sinks under the weight of men's sin, and the celestial powers (the heavenly bodies, which are the tutelary deities of the heathen) and the kings of the earth are cast into the pit and shut up in prison, while the Lord of Hosts reigns gloriously in Zion. In another

passage God, with his great sword, punishes the leviathan, the swift and winding serpent, and slays the great dragon in the sea. The mythological eschatology of Judaism made much of such imagery, which is itself doubtless of mythical ancestry.

The diction and style of these chapters alone would suffice to acquit Isaiah of responsibility for them; anything more unlike his writing could not be imagined. The author, whosoever he was, riots in plays on words, many of them, as is the fate of laborious punsters, forced or far-fetched. As to the age of the chapters, aside from the language, prophecy is here plainly making the transition to apocalypse with those visionary revelations of the last judgment in which Jewish invention was so fertile. This of itself points to a late time in the post-exilic period. The historical allusions which have been scented out in the chapters are too uncertain to reckon with; only, as in c. 19, the way in which Egypt and Assyria (or Syria) are conjoined seems plainly to point to the divisions of Alexander's empire.

In chapters 28–33 are brought together a number of oracles of Isaiah from the years of Hezekiah's revolt and Sennacherib's punitive expedition. These oracles are generally brief and pointed; they agree in form and spirit with his prophecies in cc. 1–12 quite as closely as the writing of an aging man ordinarily resembles that of his youth. In xxviii. 1–4, indeed, an early prophecy against Samaria, is made to serve as text for a counterpart addressed to Jerusalem.

Mingled with these are a series of passages

which foretell the destruction of the foe and the miraculous escape of Judah from imminent ruin, or, taking higher flight, picture the golden age to come. To the former class belong, for example, xxx. 27–33; xxxi. 4–9; to the latter, xxix. 18–24; xxx. 18–26; xxxii. 1–8, 16–20; while c. 33 partakes of both characters. That Isaiah predicted the deliverance of Jerusalem in the last extremity is reported also in Kings, and need not be questioned (see also Isa. x. 5–14; xiv. 24–27). Most of the prophecies of the golden age are, however, alien to their context, and the unmediated transition from the unsparing predictions of judgment to these messianic idyls makes them suspicious. It is not to be believed that the prophet thus took the sting out of his most pungent oracles, but the position of the passages in question can have no other intention. If, then, these are utterances of Isaiah at all, they cannot have been spoken in their present connection. Some of them, at least, are much more likely by other hands. This is true most evidently of c. 33, which was probably once the end of this little book of prophecies from the time of Sennacherib (Isa. 28–33).

Isaiah 34 is a prophecy against all the nations, which at once concentrates itself upon Edom, and is remarkable for its rancor, in which, as in other respects, it resembles cc. 13 f. The supernatural features of the judgment remind us also of Isa. 27: it is too little that the people is annihilated, its very land is turned into an uninhabitable waste, and, as by some prodigious volcanic convulsion, its dust becomes brimstone and its

soil burning pitch. This is the Lord's vengeance for the wrong of Zion. The cause of this unusual passion is known from other prophets (see Obad. vss. 10–12; Ezek. xxv. 12–14; c. 35): in the life and death struggle against Nebuchadnezzar, the Edomites, Judah's next neighbors and near kin, had been on the side of the Babylonians, and were the chief gainers by the ruin of Judah, occupying permanently the whole south of the country to a line north of Hebron, making good in this way the part of their own old territory which had been taken by the Nabatæans. The injury was lasting and the hatred durable, but the flaming passion of Isa. 34 would incline us to think that it was written while the grief was still fresh. The pendant to this, Isa. 35, a prophecy of the return of the dispersion and restoration of Zion, is quite in the manner of Isa. 40 ff., and not improbably by the same author.

Of Isa. 36–39 (2 Kgs. 18–20) account has already been given (see above, pp. 112 f.).

There remains the anonymous prophetic book, Isa. 40–66, which not only has no title, but in which — in striking contrast to the frequency with which Isaiah's name occurs in the earlier chapters of the book — no prophet's name appears.

It begins with the announcement that the Jews have now been sufficiently punished for their sins; their guilt has been expiated by suffering. The hour of national restoration is at hand. God has already called the deliverer, who will bring low the pride of Babylon and set free

captive Israel; by his edict Jerusalem shall be rebuilt and the temple restored. The Jews, not only from Babylonia but from the wide and distant lands of their dispersion, shall flock back to their own country, the cities of Judah shall be repeopled, and Zion shall be too strait for its inhabitants. The deliverer is Cyrus (Isa. xliv. 28; xlv. 1), who is called God's friend, his anointed one (messiah); the victories he has already gained have been won in the might of Jehovah, who, all unknown to him, girds him for the battle, and will go before him to new conquests.

The prophet's prediction was met with incredulity; the power of Babylon seemed invincible, the resurrection of the dead nation impossible. Impossible, maybe, to men, but not to the Almighty God, the creator of heaven and earth, the sovereign ruler of the nations! As surely as the words of former prophets have come true, so signally shall these foretellings be fulfilled. For history is the unfolding of God's plan from the beginning, which he reveals by chapters to his servants the prophets.

That this prophecy was delivered by Isaiah of Jerusalem, a century before the fall of Judah and a century and a half before the time of Cyrus, would never have entered anybody's head had these chapters not been appended to a roll which bore at its beginning the name of Isaiah and contained many oracles of the eighth-century prophet. But this physical fact, which may be due to no intention more profound than a desire to economize writing material, cannot count

against the conclusive internal evidence; background and foreground in Isa. 40 ff. are not merely totally different from those of the prophecies of Isaiah and his contemporaries, they are alike inconceivable in his age. Nor is the fact that the Jews in New Testament times, including the New Testament writers, quoted these chapters as Isaiah and believed him the author of them, prove anything except that such was the opinion of the Jews in that age.

The historical situation in Isa. 40 ff. would of itself be conclusive against Isaiah's authorship; but it is not the only proof of the contrary. The author of these chapters has not inappropriately been called the theologian among the prophets. His idea of God is conspicuously more advanced than that of the prophets of the eighth century; it lies in the same line with the monotheism of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, but lies beyond them. And it is characteristic that, in contrast to the older prophets, this one reasons about it. He argues the omnipotence of God in history from his omnipotence in creation, and makes large use of the evidence from the fulfillment of prophecy to prove that Jehovah is the only God; he can predict because he foreordains and brings to pass. With him begins the polemic, not against the worship of heathen gods, but against their existence. What the heathen bow down to are naught but helpless, senseless idols, the work of their own hands. He is fond of inviting his readers to an image-maker's shop to see how a god is made (see, e. g., Isa. xliv. 9–20).

Such are the impotent gods that the Babylonians expect to save them out of the hands of the creator of the world!

The style of Isa. 40 ff. is not less decisive. Translation necessarily in large measure effaces the differences, but even in translation a comparison of two passages on similar themes such as Isa. x. 5–19 and Isa. 47 may perhaps give some impression of them. The style of Isaiah and his contemporaries — Amos, Hosea, Micah — is concise and pregnant, the sentences are short and have often an oracular ring. The author of Isa. 40 ff. writes with a freer pen in flowing periods; he develops his thought and his figures more at large; if he is obscure, it is seldom from compression. Here again, Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, the whole literature of the seventh century, is an intermediate stage. The later author is a poet, as Isaiah is, but with other themes and in other forms; compare, e. g., Isa. 5 with Isa. xlii. 1–9. In short, each has a highly characteristic style, and the two are totally different.

The historical situation, as it has been defined above, appears most distinctly in Isa. 40–55. In the following chapters two passages were long ago seen not to correspond to that situation, viz. lvi. 9–lvii. 13 and c. 65 (especially vss. 1–16), in which the vehement attack on idolatrous and abominable rites practiced by Jews under the prophet's eyes was thought to indicate a pre-exilic origin. It was a serious error, however, to conceive that the so-called exile cured all the

Jews once and for all of every inclination to heathenism; the history of the Seleucid period sufficiently proves the contrary. There is nothing in the chapters inconsistent with the view, now generally entertained, that these flaming denunciations were delivered in Palestine in the Persian or the Greek period; and there is no warrant for assuming that they were specifically addressed to the half-heathen population of the old territory of Israel, still less to the so-called Samaritan sect, that is, the worshipers at the rival temple on Gerizim.

Other chapters (Isa. lvii. 14–21; 60; 61 f.) resemble in spirit and manner the prophecies in Isa. 40–55, but are more probably by later writers under the influence of those prophecies than by their author. Their optimism contrasts with the depressed tone of lviii. 1–lix. 15^{a}, in which the sense of sin is borne in on the community by the delay in the coming of the good times. In lix. 15^{b}–21, and lxiii. 1–6 God's fury is poured out on foreign nations, in the latter specifically on Edom; lxiii. 7–lxiv. 12 is a cry for God's intervention in dire distress (see lxiii. 18; lxiv. 10 f., devastation of Judah, burning of the temple); c. 66 contains diverse elements, consolation to Jerusalem of the school of Isa. 40–55, and censures of abominable rites (lxvi. 3 f., 17 ff.).

Isaiah 56–66 is, therefore, generally regarded as an appendix to the book of consolation, cc. 40–55, containing very diverse elements.

It would be nothing strange if alien prophecies

and editorial expansions were found in Isa. 40–55 also, and displacements are probably in more than one passage. The question of authorship is of peculiar interest in the case of three prophecies which have for their subject the mission and suffering of the "Servant of Jehovah," Isa. xlii. 1–9; xlix. 1–13; lii. 13–liii. 12, which are thought by some to be taken wholly or in part from an older prophet, by others to be later insertions. The reasons for ascribing the "Servant" passages to a different author do not seem decisive.

The Book of Isaiah is thus a great collection of prophecies of various ages, from the middle of the eighth century B. C. down perhaps to the third, with some minor additions of even later date.

CHAPTER XVII

JEREMIAH

JEREMIAH dates his call to the arduous mission of prophet in the thirteenth year of King Josiah (626 B. C.), and he lived till after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C., so that, like his predecessor Isaiah a century earlier, his career spans a period of about forty years in a time of great events. Only five years after he began to prophesy, Josiah reformed religion in Judah on the new model of the law-book discovered by Hilkiah (Deuteronomy; see above, pp. 61 f.). Jeremiah, scion of a priestly family native in Anathoth, a few miles north of Jerusalem, which very likely traced its descent from Abiathar, David's priest, whom Solomon deposed in favor of Zadok, was therefore one of those priests of the high places who were hit hardest by the suppression of the local sanctuaries. That his townsmen of Anathoth sought his life (Jer. xi. 18 ff.) has been attributed to their indignation that Jeremiah should dare to preach Josiah's "covenant" to them (see Jer. xi. 1–17). Whatever hopes he may have entertained at first, Jeremiah was not long in seeing that the reform had cleaned only the outside of the cup and the platter, while men fortified their consciences behind the

"covenant" against an investigation of the inside. In 608 B. C. Josiah fell in battle at Megiddo against the Egyptian king Necho. After a brief vassalage to Egypt, Judah came under the Babylonian yoke. Jeremiah saw all this; saw, too, Jerusalem twice taken by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar (597, 586 B. C.), the temple burned and the walls razed; and was at last forced to accompany the refugees to Egypt after the murder of Gedaliah.

Early in the reign of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah delivered himself of a fulminant oracle in the gate of the temple (Jer. vii. 1–15, cf. c. 26), in which he declared that the Jews' faith in the temple as the palladium of the city was a delusion; unless they altogether amended their ways, God would make the temple a ruin like the ancient sanctuary at Shiloh. Priests, prophets, and people clamored with one voice for the blasphemer's death, but he hurled back at them a reiteration of his warning. The intervention of some of the magnates saved his life; but another prophet who lacked such influential protection was extradited from Egypt and put to death.

Under these circumstances Jeremiah took another way of reaching the public (see Jer. 36). He dictated to Baruch the prophecies which he had uttered from the beginning of his mission to that time, and sent Baruch to read the roll in the temple at the fast in the ninth month in the fifth year of Jehoiakim (603 B. C.). Some of the nobles had Baruch give them a private

reading, and then carried the book to the king, first giving Baruch the friendly advice to put himself and Jeremiah out of harm's way. The king, as he read the roll, cut off the pages, and burned them on the brazier in his chamber. Jeremiah thereupon dictated to the faithful Baruch another roll containing all the prophecies that were in the first, "and there were added besides unto them many like words." We may be sure that the second edition would have been even less agreeable reading to Jehoiakim than the first. One of the additional words is indeed preserved in Jer. xxxvi. 29–31. The chapter is of peculiar interest, because it is an account — the only one in the Old Testament — of the origin of a prophetic book. We see the prophet reproducing, doubtless from memory, the content of oracles uttered in the course of the preceding twenty years or more, and enlarging the collection for a second edition. It is a fair conjecture that this second roll furnished to our Book of Jeremiah most, if not all, the prophecies prior to the fifth year of Jehoiakim; but it is certain that the roll itself is not incorporated as such in the present book. There are also several prophecies from later years of Jehoiakim, and many from the reign of the last king, Zedekiah, especially from the time of his revolt and the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

A distinctive feature of the Book of Jeremiah is the presence of passages of considerable extent derived from a biographical source. From this comes the account of the making and reading

of the collected volume of prophecies in the fourth and fifth years of Jehoiakim of which we have already spoken (Jer. 36), and particularly the narrative of Jeremiah's fortunes during the last siege of Jerusalem and afterward, including the flight to Egypt and his experiences with the refugees there, covering thus three or four years beginning with 588 (Jer. 37–44). To the same source it is natural to ascribe c. 26, relating to the circumstances and consequences of the prophecy delivered in the temple at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign (c. 7); c. 28 (collision with the "false prophet" Hananiah, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah); c. 29 (letter to the Jews in Babylonia, about the same time); and parts of cc. 32, 34, and 35.

There is good reason to believe that the author of this biography was Baruch, who not only stood in intimate relations with Jeremiah before the fall of Jerusalem, but accompanied him to Egypt (Jer. xliii. 6). It is consequently a historical source of the best possible kind. For the first half of Jeremiah's career this source fails us; and, as we have seen, it is continuous only from the last years of Zedekiah. It is possible that Baruch's association with Jeremiah began in the time of Jehoiakim, and his narrative may have commenced there.

Unfortunately this life of Jeremiah has not been preserved complete or intact. The prophecies contained in it led later compilers to introduce other oracles which seemed appropriate to the context, and to supplement the

words of Jeremiah by edifying compositions of their own. Their aim, it must constantly be borne in mind, was not to produce a critical edition of the prophecies of Jeremiah, but to make a book effective to impress the truths and motives of religion on their own contemporaries, and with changing times and situations to keep the book, so to speak, up to date. If the words of an old prophet suggested to them a good moral, they wrote it out for him, without dreaming that they were doing either him or morality a wrong, or thinking how much trouble they were making for future historical students. It is exactly the same procedure and the same motive which meets us in innumerable places in the Pentateuch and Historical Books. To stigmatize such interpolations as literary fraud is absurd.

These additions are often recognizable by their prosaic preachiness or by their composite imitativeness. By their nature they invited others, enlarging or improving on them. How long and largely this growth went on will be seen when we come to consider the relation of the Greek Jeremiah to the Hebrew.

Of one kind of prediction the Jews of later centuries could not have enough, the prophecies of deliverance from the foreign yoke and the better time to follow. They not only cherished the hopeful words of former prophets and wrote variations on their themes, but gave expression to their faith and their ideals in their own way. That they often took their inspiration

from Isa. 40 ff. is natural. In Jeremiah such promises of a happier future are accumulated in cc. 30–33, which contain, with some oracles of Jeremiah, pieces of various authorship and age, some of them such pendants to gloomy pictures as we have found numerous in Isaiah (e. g. Jer. xxx. 1 ff. to vss. 12–15), others more independent compositions.

These stand interspersed among the extracts from Baruch's life of Jeremiah. In the first half of the book (Jer. 1–25) there is no such history for a framework. It will be observed here that the prophet commonly introduces his message in personal form, "The word of Jehovah came to me, saying," or "Then Jehovah said to me," or the like. Sometimes an oracle begins, as in c. 18, "The words which came to Jeremiah," as a kind of title, while in the sequel the prophet speaks in the first person. Dates are infrequent in this part of the book, and if a chronological order was observed in Baruch's roll, it has been broken up in the present arrangement. Internal evidence does not always suffice to fix the age of the utterances, the less because some of the early oracles have obviously been adapted to a later situation. This is peculiarly evident in cc. 1–6. In these chapters are several prophecies from the years when the wild horsemen from the Scythian steppes were overrunning western Asia and striking terror into the stoutest hearts by their barbarous appearance and fierce manners. Jeremiah saw in them the scourge of God (see e. g. Jer. iv. 5–8, 27–31), the day of doom was come! It was, indeed,

such a vision of doom that first met his gaze, when God made him a prophet (Jer. i. 13 ff.). But in the present shape of these chapters the enemy out of the north which menaces ruin is not the wild Scythian hordes, but the serried armies of Babylon. It is not at all improbable that this change of horizon was made by Jeremiah himself, when at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign the Scythian flood had run off, and, by the overthrow of Nineveh and Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of Pharaoh Necho on the Euphrates, the new Babylonian empire had become the impending fate of Syria and Palestine.

Among the prophecies of Jeremiah in this part of the book also are introduced pieces, larger or smaller, which are the product of later generations; two conspicuous examples are Jer. ix. 23–24; x. 1–16 (x. 17 is the immediate continuation of ix. 22), and xvii. 19–27.

Jeremiah's experience in the pursuit of his calling was a hard one. His Cassandra forebodings gained him the enmity of all, and hostility grew to bitter hatred as the dire fulfillment stared them in the face. His countrymen in Anathoth plotted his death; the prophecy in the temple all but cost him his life, and was an end, for the time at least, of public appearances; the coming of his collected oracles into Jehoiakim's hands drove him and the scribe into hiding. During the last siege, he first was kept in arrest in a private house, then cast into an empty cistern, where he would have perished but for the friendliness of a negro eunuch; then confined in the

court of the guard till the taking of the city; released by the Babylonians, his counsel to the refugees not to flee to Egypt was badly received, and he was constrained to accompany them. In Egypt, again denouncing and predicting ill, he disappears; Jewish legend says, killed by his exasperated countrymen.

But these outward perils and pains were not all he had to bear for being a prophet. In anguish of soul he suffered twice the tragedy of his people, in foresight and in fact—suffered as only a man of sensitive spirit and unflinching will can suffer. That needs no commentary; but there is another element we do not so easily conceive: Jeremiah believed that the word of God he had to utter was not merely a prediction, but the effectual cause of the ruin of Judah (see Jer. i. 9 f.).

It is not strange that the task God had laid on him seemed too heavy to be borne. He feels himself a man of contention to the whole earth. He remonstrates, he reproaches God for having misled him, he resolves never again to speak in the name of the Lord; but there is within him as it were a burning fire shut up in his bones, he cannot hold in (Jer. xx. 7–18; see also xv. 10 f., 15–18; xii. 1–6). These "confessions," as they have been called, are of the greatest interest; they are a revelation of the prophet's soul such as has no counterpart in the Old Testament, and, with Baruch's simple story, bring him as a man nearer to us than any of the other prophets.

In the Hebrew (and therefore in the English)

Bible, the last chapters of the book (Jer. 46–51) contain a collection of prophecies against foreign nations, to which is appended (c. 52) an extract from the Book of Kings (2 Kgs. xxiv. 18–xxv. 21), describing the taking of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army in 586 B. C. In the Greek Bible the oracles against the foreign nations come in between Jer. xxv. 13 and vs. 15, but in an altogether different order. They evidently formed a little book by themselves, which in one recension of the Book of Jeremiah were appended to the volume of his prophecies, in another were inserted in the middle of it as the corresponding collections of foreign oracles are placed in Ezek. 25–32 and Isa. 13–23. The question of the original place and disposition of these prophecies is of importance only for the relation of the two forms of the book to each other, and need not be pursued here.

It is very doubtful whether Jeremiah had any hand whatever in these chapters. The prolix prophecy against Babylon (Jer. 50–51) is a purely literary exercise, for which contributions have been levied right and left, and was written at a time when Babylon had long ceased to be of historical importance. Others of the prophecies borrow from earlier prophets generously. An examination, by the aid of the marginal references in the Revised Version (Oxford and Cambridge edition, 1898), of the appropriations and reminiscences will give a profitable notion of this literary imitation of prophecy.

The different order of the prophecies is not the only, nor the most important, difference between

the Hebrew and the Greek Jeremiah. Besides a great number of variant readings of the ordinary kind, the oldest Greek version is much shorter than the Hebrew; it has been reckoned that in the neighborhood of 2700 words in the latter have nothing corresponding to them in the translation. Some part of this may be due to abridgment by the translators, to which the repetitions in parts of Jeremiah — chiefly secondary parts — invited; but when all allowance is made for this, it remains that the Hebrew copies from which the translation was made had a much briefer text than the Palestinian Hebrew in our hands, and it is probable that the greater part of this difference, which is chiefly in comparative verbosity, is due to padding with stock phrases and turns of thought in the Palestinian text. In some instances oracles or tags to oracles which on other grounds are recognized as late additions to our text had not got into that of the Greek translators.

CHAPTER XVIII

EZEKIEL

EZEKIEL was one of the priests of Jerusalem who was carried off to Babylonia with King Jehoiachin in the deportation of 597 B. C. Those who were thus deported were the upper classes, including, of course, the royal family and the court and the aristocracy of the priesthood, and skilled artisans, particularly the smiths (armorers). Having thus removed the natural leaders of the rebellious people, Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah, an uncle of Jehoiachin, king in his stead and gave Judah another trial. The eight or ten thousand Jews with their families who were removed to Babylonia were colonized at different points; Ezekiel repeatedly mentions the river Chebar, that is, probably, the grand canal in the vicinity of Nippur. The patricians in exile thought very poorly of the new lords who had stepped into their shoes in Jerusalem, and they flattered themselves that events would soon take such a turn that they would return to Judæa and to power. They had prophets and diviners among them who encouraged them in this expectation. When Zedekiah revolted and the Babylonian armies a second time besieged Jerusalem, their faith in the inviolability of Zion, confirmed, rather than

shaken, by the outcome of things in 597 B. C., when Jehoiachin surrendered and the holy city took no harm, made them refuse hearing to Ezekiel's prediction of ruin; they may even have dreamed that Nebuchadnezzar would find out his mistake and restore to Judah its legitimate rulers, chastened by experience, and pack Zedekiah and his advisers into exile in their place.

Against this vain and superstitious optimism Ezekiel had to contend until the disastrous issue made a rude end of all their dreams and threw the exiles into the depths of hopelessness: Bel had triumphed over Jehovah, and it was all over with the nation. Thenceforth Ezekiel's task was to save them from despair by the assurance that God still had a purpose to fulfill with them, and that, in his own time, when they had been thoroughly purged from their old sins and filled with a new spirit, he would restore them to their own land and bring to life again the dead nation.

These two periods of the prophet's mission sharply divide the Book of Ezekiel. To the day when the word came to him that the Babylonian armies had invested Jerusalem (Ezek. 24) he combats delusion; from the arrival of the tidings of the fall of the city (xxxiii. 21 ff.) he combats despair. The first part is all menace, the second is full of promise. Numerous dated oracles serve as landmarks, especially in the first part.

Between the two, in the two years of suspense, when about his own people the prophet is dumb, is placed the group of prophecies against foreign nations (cc. 25–32), beginning with oracles against

the neighbors of Judah who held true to Nebuchadnezzar in this crisis and had their reward at Judah's cost — Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines. These are followed by long predictions of the ruin of Tyre, over whose calamity the prophet exults more loudly than the grievance of Jerusalem (Ezek. xxvi. 2) seems to justify. Nebuchadnezzar did in fact besiege Tyre for thirteen years (585–572 B. C.), and doubtless inflicted upon it great losses; but the island city, with its command of the sea, he could not take. Ezekiel himself, in a remarkable passage which is perhaps his latest word in the book, admits that his predictions of the capture of Tyre (xxvi. 7–14) had not been fulfilled — Nebuchadnezzar had had to raise the long and ineffectual siege — but he promises that Jehovah will reward him for these fruitless labors in the Lord's service by giving him Egypt instead (xxix. 17–21). The animosity against Egypt which finds expression in the predictions of the Babylonian subjugation of that country is more easily explained. Egypt had been the evil genius of Judah, instigating rebellion against the Babylonian suzerainty, and promising armed aid which always failed in the decisive hour; it was meet that it should taste the cup of humiliation itself. In c. 32 the descent of Egypt to the hell of fallen nations is vividly depicted; a similar picture of the descent of the Babylonian king in Isa. 14 has already been noted. Not improbably Babylonian notions of the nether world may have influenced the imagery of both, as a myth of paradise seems to have suggested the

imagery of Tyre in Eden (xxviii. 12 ff.). Outside this group is an oracle against Edom (c. 35), and the great prophecy of the irruption of Gog and his hordes and their fate (cc. 38 f.).

A conspicuous feature of the Book of Ezekiel are the extended visions and the elaborated symbolical actions. In the inaugural vision (Ezek. i.–iii. 15), for instance, God appears, a veritable *deus ex machina*, on a high seat in a curious motor car made up of animated wheels and winged monsters. In a later vision (c. 10) he sees God leave the doomed temple in Jerusalem and mount this cherubim car, in which he is whirled away through the air to the east; and in the great vision of the new temple in the golden age God returns to his abode in the same conveyance (c. 43). Striking examples of symbolical actions may be found in Ezek. 4, and in xii. 1–20. They are of such an extraordinary character as to raise the question whether they were really enacted before the eyes of the people or only described in discourse.

Ezekiel's visions are sometimes ecstatic states, in which he is instantaneously translated from place to place. At the end of the inaugural vision, "the spirit" lifted him up and took him away, setting him down in amazement among the colonists at Tell-Abib. In viii. 1 ff., as he sat in his own house in the midst of a company of the elders of Judah, the spirit, which is described as a strange luminous creature, took him up by the hair of his head and wafted him "in the visions of God" to Jerusalem, where his conductor showed him all the idolatrous cults

and the abominable mysteries that were practiced in the temple under the very eyes of "the glory of the God of Israel" (c. 8); after seeing God take his flight from the desecrated sanctuary, the prophet is translated by the spirit to Chaldæa again. Another such vision in ecstasy is the famous scene in the valley of dry bones (Ezek. 37). In such cases it is impossible to say how much is actually the experience of the visionary, how much literary form.

In the great vision of the restoration, cc. 40–48, which also is introduced as an ecstasy with the translation of the prophet to Palestine, we may be pretty sure that the element of conscious composition predominates. The chapters contain a programme for the coming age when all the twelve tribes, gathered together from exile and dispersion, shall reoccupy the holy land, with a new, geometrical division of the territory, with a new plan for the city of Jerusalem, a new constitution for the state, a new temple after the old model, a reorganized ministry of religion, and a reformed worship. The ruling idea which runs through all is to make impossible those sins against the holiness of God, his land, his house, his people, which had been the cause of former ruin.

The Book of Ezekiel seems to have been arranged and published by the author, and though some derangements and repetitions may be observed, it has not been much meddled with by later editors, and, to whatever reason it may be attributed, exhibits none of the phenomena

of compilation and amplification which we have found in Isaiah and Jeremiah. The Hebrew text, however, has suffered more than most books in transmission, and has reached us in an unusually corrupt state. The author has a style of his own, which can rise to eloquence (as in the oracles against Tyre), but is generally pedestrian and sometimes clumsy. He has plenty of imagination, not always regulated by taste or restrained by decency. His drastic figures of the unfaithfulness of Israel and Judah are often unfit to translate.

CHAPTER XIX

DANIEL

In the Hebrew Bible the Book of Daniel stands, not as in our Bible among the Prophets, after Ezekiel, but among the miscellaneous books in the third division, the "Scriptures." Various reasons have been suggested for this, but by far the most probable is that at the time when Daniel became current, in the second century B. C., the Prophets were already a definite group of writings with a traditional use in the readings of the Synagogue, to which a new book could not well be added.

The Book of Daniel consists of two parts, stories about Daniel and his three comrades (cc. 1–6), and visions of Daniel (cc. 7–12); in the latter Daniel reports his visions in the first person as Ezekiel habitually does, and it was only natural that he should be taken for the author of the book.

According to the introduction to the first story, Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were Jewish youths of high birth who were carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the first deportation

(which is erroneously dated in the third year of Jehoiakim). One story (Dan. 1) tells how these youths contrived to avoid all danger of eating unclean food, and how God blessed them in body and mind for their scrupulousness in observance of the dietary laws; another (c. 3), how the three were saved from Nebuchadnezzar's overheated furnace, into which they were thrown for refusing to worship the idol; a third (c. 6), how Daniel was cast into the lion's den for praying to his God despite the edict of Darius. These miraculous deliverances constrain the heathen kings publicly to acknowledge that the God of the Jews is the greatest of gods. The same acknowledgment is drawn from Nebuchadnezzar when Daniel recalls his forgotten dream and interprets it, after all the diviners of Babylon had failed (c. 2); he alone is able to decipher and explain for Belshazzar the handwriting on the wall (c. 5). The stories of Nebuchadnezzar's madness (c. 2) and of Belshazzar's feast (c. 5) teach also how God punishes kings who in their pride of power exalt themselves before him, or in their arrogance profane his holy things.

All of them thus magnify the God of the Jews as in power and wisdom above all other gods, and two of the most striking of them have for their theme the deliverance from mortal peril of men who stood faithful to their religion against the king's commandment. These obvious motives, as we shall presently see, have a bearing on the age of the stories.

In the second part of the book are four visions, or revelations, which stand in chronological order (according to the author's chronology): c. 7 in the first year of Belshazzar; c. 8 in his third year; c. 9 in the first year of "Darius son of Xerxes, of the race of the Medes," — not properly a vision, but a revelation by Gabriel; and cc. 10–12 in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia. By the side of these must be put Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Dan. ii. 28–45 (second year of Nebuchadnezzar), which, in its four-empire scheme, corresponds to Daniel's vision in c. 7. The interpretations which Daniel gives to Nebuchadnezzar or the angel gives to Daniel, though sometimes surrounded with an impressive air of mystery, give all the necessary clues to the understanding of the visions, and obscure allusions are often made plain by a more explicit parallel.

Under fantastic and varied imagery, they unroll the history of the empires which succeed one another in the dominion of the world, from the Babylonian (Dan. 2 and 7), or the Medo-Persian (c. 8), or Persian (cc. 10–12) — that is from the assumed standpoint of Daniel — through the dominion of Alexander and the kingdoms into which his empire was broken up, ending always with the reign of Antiochus IV (175–164 B. C.). The goal in them all is the destruction of the heathen power and the establishment of the eternal kingdom of the holy people of the Most High, otherwise, the Jews.

The simplest form of this scheme is Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Dan. 2. The image with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay, stands for four empires in a scale of deterioration, like the four ages of Hesiod, beginning with the Babylonian, represented by Nebuchadnezzar himself. This is followed by an inferior kingdom, and that by a third universal empire; the destructive strength of the fourth is figured by iron which shatters all that it smites; the feet and toes signify a divided kingdom, in part strong as iron, in part brittle as pottery. The stone which smote the image on the feet and broke them to pieces, whereupon the whole image collapsed into dust and was whirled away by the wind, while the stone grew to a great mountain and filled all the earth, is the kingdom which the God of heaven shall establish in those days, "which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and annihilate all those empires, and it shall stand forever."

The image thus represents the rule of the heathen as one world-empire, the dominion being exercised successively by four kingdoms and by the divisions of the fourth; in the destruction of these last the heathen world-empire is forever annihilated, and the eternal kingdom of God subdues and rules the whole earth. What is said about the second and third kingdoms is too general to identify them; the iron strength and

destructiveness of the fourth, and its divisions with their mingled strength and weakness, naturally suggest Alexander and his successors, and this impression is strengthened by the one specific trait in the whole picture: the vain effort to make iron and wet clay combine signifies, we are told, an equally futile attempt to bind the divided kingdoms together by intermarriages (Dan. ii. 43). We know from the historians that attempts to ally the kingdoms of the Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Syria by dynastic marriages were repeatedly made in vain, and the author of Daniel himself, in c. 11, refers to these alliances and their disastrous failure in plain terms.

The vision of Daniel in c. 7 brings in the four empires under the symbol of four monstrous beasts. The fourth, more terrible and more destructive than the others, has ten horns ("out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise," vs. 24); another horn, "with the eyes of a man and a boastful mouth," arises which roots out three of the ten. Daniel sees how he makes war on the "holy men" (i. e. the Jews) and prevails over them (vs. 21); the interpreting angel describes in more detail the crimes of the last king: he will utter speeches against the Highest, and wear out the holy men of the Most High, and try to change (religious) seasons and law (religion). God's people will be delivered into his power till the expiration of three and a half years (cf. xii. 7). Then the proud king and his kingdom will be annihilated

and the universal and eternal empire of the Jews established.

Still more definite is the description of the doings of the "little horn" which springs up on the head of the great he-goat in the vision of c. 8. Here the interpreter becomes explicit: the he-goat is by name the Macedonian empire. The little horn is a king who shall arise in the latter time of the divided kingdoms of Alexander's successors. This king magnifies himself against the chief of the heavenly host, casts down his sanctuary, takes away his daily burnt-offerings, and destroys the holy people; and is then himself suddenly "broken without hand." In the further explanation given to Daniel in ix. 26 ff., the cessation of the daily sacrifice is to last half a week (of years), i. e. three and a half years; the profanation of the sanctuary and suppression of the sacrifices and the persecution of the Jews occur again in xi. 31 ff. (cf. xii. 5–12). In connection with this we hear of setting up of a "desolating (or appalling) abomination," in the temple. The common use of "abomination" (loathsome thing) for idols or other objects of heathen worship leaves no doubt that some such object is meant here: the king not only stopped the worship of the God of the Jews in his own temple, but established in its place a heathen cult. It is, indeed, not improbable that the words translated "appalling abomination" are an intentional distortion of the proper name of the heathen god Baal Shamaim, i. e. Jupiter.

The definiteness of all this proves that the author is not creating an imaginary monster in whom all the sins of the heathen rulers against the God of Heaven and his people are accumulated, but describing a historical figure. Nor is there the smallest room for question whose portrait he is painting: every feature of it belongs to Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (Manifest God, the title means, which Antiochian wits perverted to Epimanes, Manifest Madman), who in 168 B. C. took possession of the temple in Jerusalem, suppressed the worship of its God, erected an altar of Jupiter on the great altar of burnt offering, and inaugurated heathen sacrifices. Not only that, but he forbade circumcision, the observance of the sabbath, and the possession of copies of the scriptures, and commanded that Jews should certify their abjuration of their own religion by sacrificing to his gods. Those who ignored or defied his decrees were persecuted; many of them put to death. This attempt to extirpate the Jewish religion and forcibly heathenize the people provoked a revolt led by Judas Maccabæus and his brothers, who three years later recovered the temple, purged it, and restored the sacrifices.

If there could be any doubt about the identification, it would be removed by Dan. 11, which, as was recognized by Porphyry in the third century of our era, contains a minute history of the relations of the Ptolemies and Seleucids, their intermarriages and their wars, with in-

creasing detail, down to the Egyptian campaigns of Antiochus Epiphanes — mentioning, for instance, the rebuff he received from the Roman envoy (Popillius Laenas) and in the sequel of this his desecration of the temple in Jerusalem and persecution of the law-abiding Jews — and there the history ends.

All this is supposed to be revealed to Daniel in the days of Nebuchadnezzar and under later Babylonian and Median kings down to the first year of Cyrus, that is, according to the historical chronology, about three hundred and seventy-five years before the event. Such visionary panoramas form a recognized genus of Jewish literature, and they are regularly unrolled to some man of God in the remote or remotest past. In the second and first centuries before our era a great variety of such visions was attributed to Enoch, others to Noah; revelations to Seth the son of Adam were once popular, and Adam himself had some. Another class, like Daniel, bore the names of men of the exile; Baruch is the putative father of several such revelations; one of the most notable of the kind is the apocalypse of Ezra which stands in the Apocrypha in our Bible as Second Esdras.

The age of such apocalypses is determined, not by the date assigned to the imaginary seer, but by the actual standpoint of the author as disclosed in the visions. In Daniel the historical panorama is unrolled every time to the reign of Antiochus IV, and there stops. The writer had witnessed the desecration of the temple and the

persecution of the Jews for their religion, he had seen the first small successes of the Maccabees, but the recovery of the temple and the restoration of sacrifice had not yet occurred. The death of Antiochus is circumstantially predicted, but in a place and manner very remote from the reality (Dan. xi. 45). The visions of Daniel fall, therefore, between December 168 B. C., the date of the desecration of the temple, and December 165, the restoration. The motives of the stories also (see above, p. 178 f.) are most appropriate to the situation under Antiochus. It is possible that they are adaptations of older tales, but there is no reason to think that they are of high antiquity. The Greek Bible has three additional stories about Daniel (Susanna and the Elders, Bel, and the Dragon) which stand in our Bibles among the Apocrypha.

One peculiarity of the Book of Daniel remains for brief mention. Like Ezra, it is in two languages: Dan. i. 1–ii. 4 is in Hebrew, from ii. 4 *b* to the end of c. 7 in Aramaic, and from the beginning of c. 8 the rest is in Hebrew again. The Aramaic begins appropriately where the Chaldæans (diviners) are introduced speaking in what the author evidently conceives to be the language of the country; the text does not, however, revert to Hebrew when this conference is over, but holds on, not only through all the rest of the stories, but through the first vision (c. 7). A motive for just this distribution of the two tongues is not discoverable; in the chapter of accidents are various possibilities which

offset one another. As in Ezra — though there are some differences between the two books — the Aramaic is of a kind which was vernacular in Palestine in the last centuries before our era.

CHAPTER XX

MINOR PROPHETS

THE Minor Prophets — so called not in depreciation, but because their books are smaller than those of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel — form in the Jewish Bible one book, in which are brought together oracles in the name of various prophets from the eighth century B. C. (Amos, Hosea) to the fifth (Haggai, Zechariah), and one anonymous book (Malachi). As in the collections which bear in their titles the names of Isaiah and Jeremiah, so in the collection of the Twelve, prophecies have been attributed, by error or conjecture or accident, to prophets to whom they do not belong, and additions and alterations have been made by compilers or editors. The extent of this alien matter differs in different books; Hosea, for example, seems to contain little of it, while in Micah it is considerable.

Hosea

In our Bibles, in which the Minor Prophets stand and are counted individually, the first is Hosea. This position, which it has also in the Hebrew Bible, may have been given the

book, partly on account of its age, partly on account of its length; but it might also claim it by reason of its worth, for Hosea is one of the greatest of the prophets, not in Minor company alone, but in the canon. No other contributed so much, through his own words and through his great successors, Jeremiah and the Deuteronomists, to deepen and spiritualize the conception of religion.

Hosea was an Israelite who began to prophesy to his countrymen in the reign of Jeroboam II, probably about 750 B. C., and after Jeroboam's death witnessed at least the beginning of that procession of assassinations and revolutions through which the kingdom hurried to meet its fate; but it does not appear from his book that he lived to see the invasion of Tiglath-Pileser and the loss of Gilead and Galilee in 734 B. C. in which his own predictions of impending doom had so signal a verification. Their complete fulfillment came in 721, when Sargon made an end forever of the kingdom of Israel, and deported many of the people of Samaria to remote quarters of his empire.

The Book of Hosea opens with chapters out of the prophet's experience with his unfaithful wife, in which he sees a counterpart and symbol of God's experience with Israel. The discovery of this significance in the tragedy of his life is what made him a prophet. He saw then that it was for this he had been led to marry a woman who turned out a gross adulteress. When he drove her from his house, when later he bought

her out of the servitude into which she had sunk, and by seclusion and a discipline at once firm and kind tried to win her back by love to virtue, that, too, was an apologue of God's dealing with his people (see especially Hos. i. 2–9; iii. 1–5). He is the first, apparently, to use the metaphor adultery, or fornication, for religious defection. The oracle, ii. 2–23, translates it into its historical terms and discloses Hosea's construction of the religious history of Israel. The root of Israel's apostasy was the belief that the gods of the soil of Canaan, the baals, gave the corn and the wine and the oil which in reality its own God, Jehovah, bestowed. Therefore he will take away all these, which she deems the gift of the baals, the wages of her prostitution, and will lead the people into the desert of exile. But he will be with them there to comfort and encourage, and Israel will return to its first love as in the early days when it was alone with God in the desert of the exodus. Then the old relation will be restored, never to be broken, and the gifts in the new betrothal are uprightness and justice and charity and kindness of heart and faithfulness and the knowledge of God (Hosea's word for religion). That will be the golden age! (See Hos. ii. 18–23.)

When the Jew says his *Shema* or the Christian his Great Commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might," it is Hosea's great thought he is repeating. Hosea interprets God's dealing with his people by his faith in

God's inextinguishable love. Outraged love may smite harder than offended righteousness, but its blows are remedial, not retributive or expiatory; its aim not to satisfy justice, but to recover the erring. The exile, which for Amos is the final vindication of God's righteousness in the death of the sinful nation, is for Hosea a chastisement which leads to repentance and restoration. He is therefore the author of that ideal of a golden age of godliness and uprightness and happiness, beyond the impending judgment or the present oppression, which is one of the leading motives of the so-called messianic prophecy.

The rest of the book (cc. 4–14) consists of a collection of oracles, without titles, and often without obvious boundaries. They contain an appalling picture of the sins of the nation as a whole and of all classes of society; kings and princes, priests and prophets and people — all are corrupt. The theme of the whole may be read in Hos. iv. 1 f: "There is no truth, nor charity, nor knowledge of God (religion) in the land; naught but swearing and breaking faith and murder and theft and adultery." Therefore ruin yawns before the nation. Yet God will not destroy utterly; all the pathos of the divine love finds words in such passages as xi. 8 ff., "How can I give thee up, Ephraim?" or xiv. 1 ff., "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God."

This book of a prophet of the northern kingdom has come down to us through Judæan hands; the title, with its list of Judæan kings (exactly

the same as in the title of Isaiah), is doubtless due to a Jewish editor, and we are not surprised to find in the text itself Jewish touches, such as the words "and David their king" in iii. 5, or i. 11, but these are not numerous nor important. The text of Hosea is, however, unusually corrupt. The prophet's style is very difficult, and scribes did as they commonly do with a difficult text, they made mechanical mistakes because they did not understand and false emendations because they thought they understood what they did not.

Joel

Joel was probably put between Hosea and Amos because the editors of the Book of the Twelve thought that he was one of the earlier prophets, and, chiefly because of its position, this opinion has been general until recent times. In the book itself there are neither names nor identifiable historical allusions by which its age can be determined. The whole situation, however, is that of the so-called post-exilic times.

The occasion of the prophecy with which the book begins was a portentous plague of locusts, whose invasion and ravages are described in Joel 1–2 in highly poetical imagery. Locusts and drought together have so devastated the land that both men and beasts are perishing, and — the last touch of the extremity — the obligatory daily offerings in the temple have been cut off. The prophet calls to fasting and supplication;

perhaps God may be entreated to have mercy on them (ii. 12–17). God had pity on his people; the following oracle (ii. 18–27) promises relief and everlasting prosperity. The visitation seems to the prophet an omen of the dread "Day of the Lord." He sees the nations gather beneath the walls of Jerusalem (in the valley with the ominous name, Jehoshaphat, "Jehovah judges") for the last onset, to be annihilated by the intervention of God. Then the golden age will be ushered in.

The heads of the people are priests and elders; of king and princes there is no word. The Judah and Jerusalem which the prophet addresses are the religious community which assembles in the temple; people and congregation are the same thing. This one observation takes Joel out of the company of Amos and Hosea and puts him by the side of Malachi. All the other features of the book confirm this date. Assyrians or Babylonians, without whom no picture of the Day of the Lord in the pre-exilic prophets would be complete, are not here; Israel has disappeared.

The author has read much prophetic literature; reminiscences in thought and phrase meet us at every turn. The heathen in the Valley of Jehoshaphat are Ezekiel's hordes of Gog (Ezek. 38 f.); the fountain that flows from the house of the Lord is a modest counterpart of the river that sweetens the Dead Sea (Ezek. 47). The thumbprints of editorial hands have been thought to betray themselves in several places, and some students would give a larger range to this ob-

servation. The additions, if such they are, are not far remote in time from the original book, and reflect the same religious conceptions.

Amos

A dramatic scene in Amos vii. 10–17 describes the appearance of Amos at Bethel on a high festival, with his presages of swift and utter ruin for Israel (cf. vii. 1–9). That his hearers greeted the message with incredulity can well be believed, for under Jeroboam II Israel was at the very culmination of its power and prosperity. The chief priest of Bethel was not minded to let such speech pass in his diocese; as scornfully as Creon dismisses the prophet Teiresias in the Antigone, he bids Amos be gone: "O Seer, be off, flee to the land of Judah; make thy living there, and there do thy prophesying. But prophesy no more at Bethel, for it is a royal temple and a residence city." Spurning the contemptuous insinuation, Amos answers: "No prophet am I, and no member of the prophetic order, but a herdsman am I and a ripener of sycamore figs. Jehovah took me from following the flock, and bade me, Go prophesy against my people Israel." Incidentally we see in how low esteem the professional prophet stood, that the priest should make a taunt of the name and the prophet indignantly repel it.

The priest followed up his warning by a report to the king, and we may safely conclude that Amos prophesied no more at Bethel. Perhaps

it was the rude end of his mission that prompted him to collect his oracles into a book, the earliest example of such a collection, as a witness to his own generation and to that which should see the fulfillment.

The title, this part of which may well be original, describes Amos as a shepherd from Tekoa, in the wilderness of Judah. Beyond the brief scene at Bethel nothing more is told of him in the book or out of it. But the book is his monument.

It is one of the easiest of the prophetic books to understand and one of the best preserved. Chapters 1 and 2 contain a series of brief oracles, on the same plan, against the neighbors of Israel, the Syrians of Damascus, the Philistines, Phœnicians, Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, Judæans, leading up to a longer indictment of Israel and denunciation of God's judgment upon it. This is followed by prophecies against Israel (cc. 3–6), which seem to be formally divided into three parts by the introductory formula, "Hear this word" (iii. 1; iv. 1; v. 1), but by subject would naturally fall into a larger number of oracles. Chapter 7 begins with three visions, the delivery of which at Bethel may have provoked Amaziah's interference (vii. 10–17); c. 8 again opens with a vision, in which the basket of summer fruit (*ḳaiṣ*) is to the prophet a symbol of the coming end (*ḳēṣ*) of Israel; in c. 9 Amos sees the Lord standing beside the altar and pronouncing the word of destruction and inescapable doom (ix. 1–8[a]), from which an awk-

ward transition (ix. 8b–10) carries us to a prediction of the restoration of David's kingdom and the prosperity of the golden age.

The doom which Amos sees impending over Israel is visited upon it in retribution for the wrongs which men inflict upon their fellows, the oppression of the poor by the rich, the small man by the great; the injustice, often in the forms of law, by which men are deprived of property and liberty; the luxury, aping foreign modes, which is not only corrupting in itself, but is the chief motive of injustice and oppression and fraud. The very prosperity of the nation was its ruin.

With all this, Israel is very religious; it acknowledges the success in war and the profit of commerce as the gift of the national God and evidence of his favor, and does not grudge him his share even of ill-gotten gains. Amos's God has a conscience — that was a new idea about gods! — and abhors such religion; he hates their festivals, refuses their sacrifices, spurns their hymns of praise. "But let justice roll down like floods, and right like an unfailing stream." That is the only worship he owns.

The standard of right is not one thing in Israel and another among the heathen: Amos summons the Philistines and the Egyptians to behold with amazement and horror the doings in Samaria. In the oracles with which the book opens, he pronounces the judgment of God on the peoples neighbor to Israel, not solely because they have wronged Israel, as in so many of the

prophecies against the nations, but because they have violated the principles of humanity. It is the first assertion in the Old Testament that there is such a thing as an international morality. Amos is the first in the succession of ethical prophets, the author, so far as we know, of a new idea of religion. It is deeply significant that he and Hosea are contemporaries; hardly more than ten years can lie between Amos's appearance at Bethel and the earliest of Hosea's prophecies against the house of Jehu. The God of Amos is the apotheosis of right, the conscience of the world that can neither be corrupted nor sophisticated; the God of Hosea was born in the heart of a man whose love the grossest wrong could not quench. Retribution is the divinity of the one, redemption of the other.

Amos's conception was the first to take hold; the earlier prophecies of Isaiah against Judah are wholly in that mood. Hosea had to wait a century before his greater thought found a fruitful soil in Jeremiah and the Deuteronomists.

The predictions of judgment in Amos are so sweeping and ultimate that later readers found the message incomplete. Especially the last oracle (ix. 1 ff.) was an ill-omened close. Consequently, a messianic pendant was attached to it (ix. 11–15) by a Judæan editor, and an imperfect juncture made by the introduction of vs. 8^b (which flatly contradicts the first half verse) and 9^b (no grain shall fall to the ground) perhaps displacing some words of the original.

It seems that some imitative pieces have been

inserted also in c. 1; the prophecy against Judah in ii. 4 f. with its deuteronomic sins, falls out of the scheme and is generally recognized as editorial. Slight retouches elsewhere (e. g. iv. 13; v. 8 f.; ix. 6) need not detain us. In general the book has suffered little from the improvers, and the text is in relatively good preservation.

Obadiah

The single chapter of Obadiah, the shortest of the Old Testament books, is a prophecy against the Edomites, toward whom, as we have repeatedly seen, the Jews cherished an implacable animosity from the time of the fall of Jerusalem. Obadiah vss. 1–9 has close parallels in Jer. xlix. 7–22 (cf. Obad. vss. 1–4 with Jer. xlix. 14–16; Obad. vs. 5 f., Jer. xlix. 9 f.; Obad. vs. 8, Jer. xlix. 7). The question which is the borrower has been differently answered. Obadiah vss. 15–21, in which Edom gets its judgment in the Day of the Lord on the nations is probably later than vss. 1–14, but the whole is post-exilic.

Jonah

The Book of Jonah has already been discussed along with the stories of Esther and Ruth.

Micah

The prediction of Micah, the Morashtite, that Zion should be plowed as a field and Jerusalem be a heap of ruins and the temple hill become

like forest shrines (Mic. iii. 2), is quoted under his name in Jer. xxvi. 18 — the only example of such a prophetic quotation in the Old Testament. The author, a resident of Moresheth-Gath in the Judæan Lowland, is said in the title to have prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, which is the editor's way of saying that he was a younger contemporary of Isaiah. The reign of Hezekiah is attested by the tradition in Jeremiah. It is probable that only cc. 1–3 (with perhaps some dubious possibilities in the following chapters) can be attributed to Micah.

The book opens with an oracle against Samaria (Mic. i. 2–8). Samaria fell in 721 B. C., while the sequel (vs. 9 ff.) portrays the imminent peril of Judah, presumably in the time of Sennacherib (701 B. C.). The case seems to be similar to Isa. xxviii. 1 ff.: the fate of Samaria, though it is already fact, is represented prophetically for a closer parallel to the following. Verses 10–16 are little more than a string of ominous puns on the names of towns in the author's Lowland, which in translation lose what little point they have. The second chapter gives the cause of the woe much as in Amos or Isaiah, but perhaps with local emphasis on the wrongs the capitalists of the great city inflict on the peasant proprietors. His forebodings and censures are not well received, men bid him stop his preaching, it is a different sort of prophet they like (ii. 6–11). "If a man, walking in wind and falsehood, should lie, 'I will preach to thee of wine and

drink,' he will be the preacher for this people." Micah has more to say, but not better, about the demagogue prophets in the following oracle (iii. 5–7). The predictions of disaster in ii. 1–11 have their point blunted in vs. 12 f. in the way the editors of the prophetic books so often do it.

Chapter 3 returns to condemnation, which turns at last on the heads of the rulers "who build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity," and ends with the prediction of the total destruction of the city which has already been quoted.

Then the unexpected follows, in the prophecy that Jerusalem shall become the religious center of the earth, to which all nations flow, and the law of God the universal arbiter in an age of universal peace (Mic. iv. 1–5). Verses 1–3 are found also, in no more suitable context, in Isa. ii. 2–4. They belong to neither Isaiah nor Micah. For the rest, Mic. 4–5 and cc. 6–7 contain a number of pieces of diverse age and origin. Chapters iv. 6–v. 1 are as a whole of good omen, yet after the promise of restoration in iv. 8, Jerusalem is suddenly in desperate straits; exile awaits its people, and only beyond the exile (the words "thou shalt come even unto Babylon" may be a gloss, but the meaning is not essentially changed) redemption waits (iv. 9 f.). In iv. 11–13, again, many nations gather against Zion, but it crushes them like sheaves on the threshing floor. There follows (v. 2–9, 10–15) a messianic prophecy, in which an allusion to Isa. vii. 14 appears.

No less strangely assorted are the oracles in

Mic. 6–7, of which there are four: vi. 1–8 vi. 9–16; vii. 1–6; vii. 7–20. The first of these contains the quintessence of the prophetic conception of religion: God does not demand holocausts and costly offerings in expiation of sin; nor the supreme expiation which the prophets and the laws of the seventh century so often reject and condemn: "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man. What is good and what doth God require of thee, but to do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with thy God?"

Trenchant condemnations of the sins of the times fill vi. 9–16 and vii. 1–6, the former of which, at least, is pre-exilic; while the book closes in the situation and spirit of Isa. 40 ff. Thus the Book of Micah, like that of his contemporary Isaiah, has been a depository for prophecies differing in age by several centuries. Perhaps the book once stood at the end of a roll, and was therefore the natural place to add stray and nameless pieces, as happened later to the Book of Zechariah at the end of the volume of the Minor Prophets.

Nahum

In the three larger prophetic books we have found groups of oracles against foreign nations, some relatively old, many late and literary variations on given motives — it was evidently a grateful theme. In Nahum we have a whole book occupied with the impending fall of Nine-

veh and the Assyrian empire, which had so long and so brutally tyrannized over all western Asia. Now its hour has struck, and the prophet triumphs over the fate of the old lion, who "rent in pieces to satisfy his whelps and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his dens with prey and his lairs with ravin." His imagination revels in the terrors of the onslaught, the horrors of the sack, which he depicts with unsurpassed vividness and great poetic power. It is the judgment of the Lord, long deferred, but sure and final (Nah. 1).

In Nah. iii. 8–10 the fate of the Egyptian Thebes is adduced as an historic example: all her power could not save her, and it shall fare no better with Nineveh. The reference is probably to the capture of Thebes by Assurbanipal in 661 B. C. Nineveh itself fell about 606 B. C. under an attack of enemies from the north (Medes or Scythians), and was destroyed never to be restored. With it the Assyrians disappear from history. The prophecy of Nahum was probably delivered shortly before this event, though a date twenty years earlier, when, according to Herodotus, Nineveh barely escaped from a similar onset by Cyaxares, is not strictly impossible.

It is thought by many scholars that the first chapter (with which ii. 2 must go) is a later composition, a poem, much deranged, originally in acrostic form.

Habakkuk

The Book of Habakkuk predicts that Jehovah is about to raise up the fierce Chaldæan nation,

which marches through the breadth of the earth to occupy habitations not belonging to it, which scoffs at kings and has dynasts in derision, laughing at all fortresses, against which it casts up a mound and takes them (Hab. i. 5–11). Such a prophecy would be timely in the last years of the seventh century: the Chaldæan, or New Babylonian, kingdom dates its independence from 625, and is hardly likely to have attracted much attention in the West before the fall of Nineveh in 606 B. C. and the defeat of Pharaoh Necho on the Euphrates in 605 B. C.

The prophecy, which does not specifically threaten Judah, intrudes between i. 4 and i. 12 ff., where the plaint of vss. 2–4 is continued, so that vss. 5–11 are at least misplaced. This complaint is of the oppression of "the righteous" (Judah) by "the wicked" (heathen, i. 13–17). From his watch tower the prophet sees a vision of a distant time, which he is bidden record, and of whose ultimate fulfillment he is assured (ii. 1–3). What follows is a series of invectives which the nations he has gathered under his robber rule shall heap upon the fallen oppressor, "the man who was greedy as hell, insatiable as death."

The date of the prophecy depends on the identification of this tyrant of the nations. If it is Babylon, the oracle must be considered later than i. 5–11, which greets the rise of the Babylonian power to execute God's judgment on the word. An ingenius solution of the difficulty has been proposed, viz., to transfer i. 5–11 from c. 1 to a place after ii. 4, and see in it the contents of the

vision spoken of in ii. 3: the Babylonians would then be the ministers of God's avenging justice on the Assyrian robbers of the world, and the whole might have been uttered about 615 B. C. All parts of these chapters abound in reminiscences of the eighth-century prophets; the resemblances to Jeremiah may be explained by the contemporaneousness of the authors.

Habakkuk 3, entitled "A Prayer by Habakkuk the Prophet," with a musical direction following, as in the Psalms, is in fact a psalm, and the presence of the musical directions, implying liturgical use, suggests that it once stood in a hymn book like the Psalter. It is a fine ode, by an author well read in the classic literature of his nation. The theophany (iii. 2 ff.) is indebted to Exod. xxxiii. 2 ff. and Judg. v. 4 ff. God comes in all his awfulness, marching through the earth in indignation, threshing the nations in anger, going out to war for the deliverance of his people, the deliverance of his anointed (sc. nation; a late use of the epithet). The occasion of the ode, if it had any other than a literary reason for being, is indiscoverable, and of its age no more can confidently be said than that it belongs with the Psalms of the Persian period. It is imitated in Ps. 77. The title ascribing it to Habakkuk the prophet is of no greater authority than the ascription Pss. 146–148 in the Greek Bible to Haggai and Zechariah.

Zephaniah

The pedigree of Zephaniah is carried back to his great-great-grandfather, Hezekiah. As such

genealogical proper names have seldom more than three terms, it has been conjectured that the particular reason for adducing two extra generations here was that the prophet boasted royal blood — Hezekiah was the king of that name. The thing is possible, though the generations are somewhat rapid; the parallel royal line counts four. It would be a romantic touch if the prophet was a great-grand-nephew of Manasseh, and a second cousin of Josiah, of the manners and morals of whose courts he has so bad an opinion.

The title says that he prophesied in the reign of Josiah, and with this the tenor of a large part of the book agrees. Like the earliest prophecies of Jeremiah (Jer. 1–6), Zephaniah's Day of the Lord is inspired by the irruption of the Scythian hordes which threatened to engulf the civilized nations of western Asia in a common ruin, as the Mongol and Turkish hordes, pouring out of the same cradle of the commissioned races, the scourges of God, did successively in later ages. For Judah it is the day of reckoning for the sins which made the reign of Manasseh a by-word with prophets and historians, and which went on unrestrained through the short years of his successor and the minority of Josiah down to the reforms of his eighteenth year. Nowhere is the state of things in that three quarters of a century more clearly exposed than in the first oracle of Zephaniah.

The second chapter holds out the possibility that repentance may still save Judah; the wave of invasion has taken, as we know from historical

sources it did, the way by the coast, bringing calamity on the Philistine cities. It surged on to the very frontier of Egypt, where it was stayed, more likely by the payment of a great indemnity than by force of arms, and rolled back whence it came. Zephaniah sees the storm break over Assyria, and predicts the total destruction of the proud city of Nineveh which had so long said in her heart, "I, and none beside me." Several verses in this chapter are suspected of being later amplifications, viz. ii. 7[a] (Judah profits by the ruin of the Philistine plain; vs. 7[b] connects directly with vs. 6), and especially the oracles against Moab and Ammon, which accuse them of their enmity to Judah in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, a generation after Zephaniah.

The first oracle in Zeph. 3 is incomplete; the original conclusion, a sentence of doom upon Judah, the only imaginable sequel to vss. 1–7, is supplanted by the inconsequent pouring out of God's fury on the nations, whereupon the heathen are converted, the dispersion returns, and, purified and chastened, the remnant of Judah enjoys a modest golden age (iii. 8–13). The book closes in a more jubilant salutation of the good time coming (iii. 14–20).

Thus in Zephaniah, as in so many other prophetic books, all turns out well in the end; but as in most of the others, the happy endings are an afterthought of later generations for whom the judgment was in the past but the golden age not yet come.

Haggai

Haggai dates his first revelation to the very day of the month — a new fashion which he and his contemporary Zechariah have — the first day of the sixth month (of the Jewish calendar) in the second year of Darius (Hystaspis), that is, 520 B. C. He has the word of the Lord for Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and Joshua, the chief priest, that it is high time to rebuild the temple; the lean years they have been having are due to God's displeasure that he is thus neglected. The civil and religious heads of the community stir up the people and the work begins; again the exact date is given.

Three other oracles follow, all in the same year. The first of these (ii. 1–9) encourages Zerubbabel and the people to more zeal by the prediction that the great crisis of history is at hand: yet a little while and the Lord will shake the heavens and the earth; he will shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations shall flow to his temple (cf. Isa. lx. 9 ff.), and God will fill the house with his glory. The third (ii. 20–23), to Zerubbabel, foretells the overthrow and destruction of the kingdoms of the nations; and, in prudently veiled phrase — since such great expectations might have ill consequences if they reached Persian ears — the restoration of Zerubbabel to the throne of his fathers, fulfilling the messianic predictions of earlier prophets. The intervening oracle (ii. 10–19) is another spur to zeal in rebuilding the temple.

The immediate restoration of Jewish nationality which Haggai and Zechariah so confidently foretold was not merely the expression of a general faith or the result of studies in their predecessors. For in reality God was shaking the nations; in particular the Persian empire, newly made master of the world, was shaken to its foundations by the usurpation of the pretended Smerdis, the death of Cambyses, the conspiracy of the nobles against Smerdis, and the elevation of Darius to the throne. In the years when the Jewish prophets were making their predictions, Darius was confronted by formidable rebellions in every quarter of the empire except the west. It might well appear to Haggai that the armies of the nations were falling every one by the sword of his fellow.

In the end Darius put down all opposition and welded the empire together more strongly than ever; the brief dream of Jewish independence under a Davidic prince and the brighter vision of the golden age faded.

Zechariah

Zechariah's first oracle is dated in the month after that in which Haggai's first was delivered. It is a brief exhortation to his countrymen to repent, and not neglect the warnings of the prophets as their fathers had done, to their sorrow when the predicted judgments overtook them (Zech. i. 1–6). Then follow, in i. 7–vi. 15, under the common date (second year of Darius, 11th month, 24th day), a series of eight visions, the meaning

of which is interpreted to the prophet by an angel. They symbolize the shattering of the power of the nations; the rebuilding of the temple and city, and the golden age to follow; the removal of the sin of Judah; the recognition of the Messiah (Zerubbabel); the harmony of prince and priest.

At the end of this group of visions is a bit of history of high interest. A crown was made of gold and silver brought by some representatives of the Babylonian Jews, and set by the prophet on the head of Zerubbabel, who was saluted as "the Scion," i.e. the Messiah (Jer. xxiii. 5), with the prediction that he should rebuild the temple, assume majesty, and sit and rule upon his throne. The coronation, it need hardly be said, was in the secrecy of a private house, and is to be regarded as a symbolical act; the Babylonian envoys kept the crown as a memento. But its significance is unmistakable.

The prediction was not fulfilled. Whatever became of Zerubbabel — he disappears with this scene — he never wore a real crown nor sat upon the throne of his fathers. This has led to more than one change in the text, which, however, as in many other cases, were not sufficiently thorough-going to pass unnoticed. First, the crown is once made plural, "crowns," as though the intention was to crown both the prince and the priest; when it comes to the coronation, however, only Joshua, the high priest, receives the honor (vi. 11). But vss. 12, 13^a, which are left untouched, can refer only to Zerubbabel. Verse 13^b originally read, "and [Joshua] shall be priest

at his right hand (so the Greek Bible, instead of "on his throne"), and there shall be harmony between the two." In vs. 14 there is only one crown.

In Zech. 7 the question is asked of the prophet by some pilgrims from Bethel, whether, now that the temple was rebuilding, they should continue to keep the fast for the burning of the temple in the fifth month; his response, that what God wants of them is not fasting but justice, charity, compassion, that none should oppress his neighbor nor devise evil against him, is quite in the spirit of the earlier prophets to whom he appeals.

He goes on, in c. 8, to picture the coming golden age, when the fasts shall all be turned into cheerful feasts, a prophecy which is one of the finest of its kind in the Old Testament and a fitting crown to the book.

The prophecies of Zechariah (cc. 1–8) are definitely dated; they spring out of a definite historical and religious situation which is everywhere apparent and consistent. Not so the chapters which follow (cc. 9–14). The titles (ix. 1; xii. 1) have a different form ("Burdens"), the situations which give their background to the oracles are wholly unlike that which stands out so clearly in Haggai and Zechariah; the character of the prophecies, with their affected obscurity, easily penetrable, doubtless, to contemporaries, but impenetrable to us who have not the historical key, and their apocalyptic eschatology, are in strong contrast to the manner

of Zechariah; the evidence of diction confirms that of situation and content.

It has therefore long been recognized that none of these prophecies can be by the author of Zech. 1–8: they are anonymous oracles which have been appended at the close of his book or of the Book of the Minor Prophets. They are not all by the same author: cc. 12–14 contain two pictures (xii. 1–xiii. 6; xiv. 1–21) of the final onset of the heathen on Jerusalem, their destruction, and the golden age of pious prosperity that ensues, variations of Ezekiel's original in the great prophecy of Gog (Ezek. 38–39) which gave the scheme for all subsequent revelations on the last times. A notable difference between the two pictures is that in Zech. 12 the heathen are destroyed by the clans of Judah, who deliver Jerusalem; while in c. 14 Jerusalem is taken by the heathen and subjected to all the horrors of a sack, half of its inhabitants being carried into slavery, before Jehovah himself, descending on the Mount of Olives, fights against the nations, and cleaves the mount itself in twain.

In cc. xii. 1–xiii. 6 concrete features of the author's time are probably discernible, in the fact, for instance, that Judah (that is, the inhabitants of the other towns and the country) besieges Jerusalem in company with the neighboring heathen peoples, and in the striking animosity displayed toward the prophets, who are in the same condemnation with the idols and arouse much intenser feeling (xiii. 2–6). Our ignorance of the internal history of the Jewish community

for two or three centuries is, however, so complete that these allusions furnish us no clue.

In Zech. 9–11 also there are two sections, viz. ix. 1–xi. 3, and xi. 4–17 + xiii. 7–9. The age of these can be fixed with greater confidence by the external historical situation. The heathen power the overthrow of which ushers in the golden age is named, in ix. 13, the Greeks. Egypt and Syria ("Assyria"), that is, the kingdoms of the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, shall be brought low (x. 11). "The land of Hadrach," to which the first oracle is directed, is in all probability the region of Antioch, the Seleucid capital. The bad "shepherds" of cc. 11; xiii. 7–9, who are over the flock of God, are very good likenesses of the Jewish high priests of the Greek time, though it is impossible to identify the concrete historical persons and events of c. 11. Taking all together, we shall not go amiss in ascribing these to the early part of the third century B. C. — say between the year 200, when Judæa came under Seleucid rule, and the religious persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabæan revolt, to neither of which is there any allusion in the chapters. Chapters 12–14 may perhaps be put in the century before.

Malachi

A third appendix to the Book of Zechariah is the anonymous book which we call Malachi. The earliest title, "The Burden of the Word of the Lord against Israel," is word for word the

same as that in Zech. xii. 1 (cf. ix. 1), and doubtless was prefixed by the same editor. Subsequently, perhaps to give the book an independent status and thus round out the number of the Minor Prophets to twelve, the words "by 'My Messenger'" (Heb. *malaki*; iii. 1 f.) were added. Jewish tradition in later times identified this messenger with Ezra. In the versions the word was naturally taken for a proper name.

The book consists of two parts, Mal. i. 2–ii. 9, which from i. 6 on is addressed to the priests, and ii. 10–iv. 3, to the people at large. The priests treat the worship in the temple with professional disrespect, under which lurks an equally professional skepticism. Any kind of blemished or diseased victim is good enough — the prophet invites them to make such a scurvy gift to the governor! The perpetual routine of sacred services they find tiresome. They are no less negligent in their other great function as the religious teachers and guides of the people. The *Tora*, that is, the revealed will of God, is committed to them, and they, degenerate successors of the faithful priests in the good old times, have not only themselves abandoned the right way, but have caused many to fall by their false instructions. They have earned the contempt in which men hold them. The curse of God is on them.

One of the most notable words in the Bible stands in this indignant denunciation (Mal. i. 11 f.). Jehovah's own priests in his own temple treat his worship with contempt; he refuses their

offerings: "For from the rising of the sun to the setting, my name is great among the nations, and in every place pure sacrifices are burnt to my name among the nations, saith Jehovah of Hosts; but *ye* profane it by thinking that the table of Jehovah may be polluted and his food despised." That the sacrifices of the heathen may be "pure" sacrifices, though not according to the Mosaic rite, because all true worship is the worship of the true God, is a conception quite unparalleled in the Old Testament. The author's polemic against the priests of Jerusalem has doubtless made him say more than he would have stood by as a dogmatic statement; more, indeed, than any church has ever been ready to acknowledge, but it was fitting that it should be said, for it is the final consequence of the ethical conception of religion of which the Hebrew prophets from Amos on are the exponents.

Of the remaining oracles, one (Mal. iii. 6–12) urges to the honest consecration of the tithes (dues to the temple); another (ii. 10–16), as commonly interpreted, condemns the marriages with heathen women which so disturbed the soul of Nehemiah and Ezra, and especially the divorce of native wives to take foreign ones; but the language should perhaps rather be taken as figurative for foreign worship. The two remaining prophecies (ii. 17–iii. 5; iii. 13–iv. 3) are addressed to such as thought that God did not trouble himself about men's affairs: the long threatened day of doom gave no sign of coming, nor was the promised reward of serving God

bestowed. The prophet declares that the Day will come, sudden and terrible, and the ungodly will get their deserts. The last verses (iv. 4–6) are not improbably an addition by an editorial hand.

CHAPTER XXI

PSALMS. LAMENTATIONS

THE Book of Psalms counts one hundred and fifty hymns, and this evidently by design, for the Greek Version, which sometimes unites in one what are two psalms in the Hebrew and divides one Hebrew psalm into two, comes out with the same number. It is divided into five books, as is indicated in the Revised English Version, viz. Book I, Pss. 1–41; Book II, Pss. 42–72; Book III, Pss. 73–89; Book IV, Pss. 90–106; Book V, Pss. 107–150, each book ending with a liturgical doxology. The rabbis were probably right in the opinion that this fivefold division was made in imitation of the five books of the Pentateuch, but in some cases, as we shall see, the limits correspond to those of older separate books.

The Psalter has not inaptly been called the hymn book of the second temple. We learn from Jewish tradition that certain psalms were used in the liturgy of the Herodian temple on certain days or at certain seasons, and to many of them musical or liturgical directions are prefixed and interludes are noted ("Selah"), from which, apart from tradition, such a use would be inferred. It is evident from the familiarity

with the Psalms which is shown in the New Testament and in contemporary Jewish writings, both Greek and Hebrew, that, like our hymn books, the Psalter was largely used for private devotion and edification.

The poems contained in the Psalter are from different ages and authors, and of widely diverse religious worth and poetical excellence. Some of them are unsurpassed in the religious literature of the world; others are the tedious production of authors who, like so many hymnists of all climes, were neither born nor made poets. Thanks to the translators, such pieces are a great deal better, so far as expression goes, in the Authorized English Version or in Luther's than the original.

A modern hymn book is seldom, if ever, a fresh compilation from the sources; it is habitually made up from collections already in use, with the addition, perhaps, of the editor's gleanings from the sources, or of recent poems. The names of the collections thus used may be given, and the names of the authors — often taken along without verification. Editors of hymn books have also generally allowed themselves great liberties with the text of hymns, altering them to suit their own taste or the religious and theological idiosyncrasies of their sect; abridging, transposing, expanding, without scruple; and only in very modern times has a tardily awakened literary conscience constrained them to give notice of such changes. In this way mediæval Catholic poets are made to sing good Protestant

songs, or Calvinists and Methodists to drop their shibboleths and express themselves in a manner acceptable to Unitarians. The familiar hymn,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise,"

has been adapted to Buddhist use as,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing my holy Buddha's praise,
The glories of my teacher great, the triumphs of his grace,"

with similar changes throughout, and if we did not know the Christian hymn, we might take the author for a good Shin-shu Buddhist, though an indifferent poet.

The editors of the Psalter proceeded in the same way, and the older collections on which they worked can in part be recognized. It is observed that Books II and III of the Psalter (Pss. 42–89), or, more exactly, Pss. 42–83, must once have formed a collection by themselves, whose editor was averse to the use of the proper name Jehovah, and accordingly altered the text of the hymns where this name occurred by substituting the appellative God (Elohim), giving rise to such strange expressions as "O God, my God." Thus Ps. 53 is the same with Ps. 14, but wherever Jehovah stands in Ps. 14, "God" takes its place in Ps. 53; Ps. 70 is merely an extract from Ps. 40 (vss. 13–17) with the same change. In the latter, however, copyists, influenced by the parallel passage, have restored "Jehovah" in one (Greek) or two (Hebrew) places, as they have done in other of these psalms.

This occurrence of the same hymn in two parts of the Psalter, of which another instance is Ps. 108 (made up of parts of two psalms in the elohistic book, lvii. 7–11, and lx. 5–12), is itself presumptive evidence that these parts once existed separately. At the time when the musical directions were prefixed to the psalms, the last two books (Pss. 90–150) seem not to have been included in the temple hymn book; for these directions, scattered through Pss. 1–89, are lacking from that point on, notwithstanding the fact that a larger proportion of the psalms in Pss. 90–150 were manifestly composed for public worship than in Pss. 1–89.

The titles of Psalms give the names of other collections from which individual psalms were taken. Thus twelve psalms, Pss. 42, 44–49, 84, 85, 87, 88, are hymns or songs of the Korahites, and eleven, Pss. 50, 73–83, of Asaph, who were according to the Chronicler — a good authority on the worship of his time — families, or hereditary guilds, of temple musicians, and seem, in this capacity, to have had special hymn books containing psalms which they sang, and which may also have been composed by members of the guild. The fact that the Korahite and Asaphite psalms are not scattered through the present Psalter, but appear in groups, and only in the elohistic hymn book (Pss. 42–89), confirms this view. When they were incorporated in the collection, the source was indicated by prefixing the name of the guild book to the individual psalms.

Another group of fifteen psalms (Pss. 120–134) bear in their titles, "The Song of the Ascents," a phrase which, by the irregularity of its form, shows that it was transferred mechanically from the title of the collection ("The Songs of the Ascents") to the individual poems. The ancient interpretation makes the "ascents" the fifteen steps, or ascending platforms, on which the levitical orchestra stood at the festival of the water-drawing on the evening after the first day of Tabernacles (hence the Authorized Version, Song of Degrees, i. e. Steps). We need not discuss the question; that these psalms constitute a liturgical unit selected for a specific ceremony is plain.

A considerable number of psalms have loosely prefixed to them the words Hallelu Jah (Praise ye Jah), which in the Hebrew text are frequently found at the end, having been erroneously carried back from the beginning of a following psalm. When this displacement (which is later than the Greek translation) is corrected, the Hallelujah psalms are 105–107, 111–118, 135, 136, 146–150. Here also a liturgical collection is naturally inferred. Jewish tradition informs us about the use of the "Hallel" (Pss. 113–118) and the "Great Hallel" (Ps. 136) at the festivals, and the name Hallel is also sometimes given to Pss. 146–148. Both the Hallels and the Songs of Degrees, it will be observed, are in the last of the three parts of the Psalter (Pss. 90–150).

Of greater interest is the large collection of psalms which bear individually the name of

David. This name is found in the titles of all the psalms in Book I (Pss. 1–41), except Pss. 1 and 2, 10 (properly a part of 9, as in the Greek Bible), and 33 (in the Greek Bible Davidic); further, in Book II, two groups, Pss. 51–65, 68–70, and thereafter, scattering, Pss. 86, 101, 103, 108–110, 122, 124, 131, 133, 138–145 — 73 psalms in all, or almost half the Psalter. Manuscripts of the Greek Bible add a varying number of others, and other versions do the same.

In the light of the phenomena we have already observed, we may confidently infer that there was once a collection of religious lyrics bearing some such title as "Hymns of David." So long as this book had a separate existence, the name would naturally not be repeated at the head of the individual poems in it; such repetition became necessary, however, when psalms from this book were taken up into a larger hymn book containing not only psalms from the Korahite and Asaphite collections but many anonymous hymns; just as the name of Charles Wesley would be attached to one of his hymns only when it was taken out of his own volume and included in a composite hymn book. By good fortune we have the colophon of this Davidic Psalter in Ps. lxxii. 20, in the words of a scribe: "The Prayers (an older name for Psalms) of David son of Jesse are finished," that is, the roll containing them is copied to the end — a very common Oriental form of colophon. Curiously enough, the hymn to which this note is annexed is said in its title to be by Solomon, to whom Ps. 127 (one of the Songs

of Degrees) is similarly attributed. In both cases the ground of the ascription is plain: the editor thought that Ps. cxxvii. 1 referred to the building of the temple, while the prayer for wisdom with which Ps. 72 begins suggested to him Solomon's dream, 1 Kgs. 3.

From this Davidic hymn book came what is now the first book of the Psalter entire, except Ps. 1 and probably 2; further the groups in Book II (51–65, 68–70, with 72), which probably stood immediately after Ps. 41. For it will be noted that the second (elohistic) part of the present Psalter (Pss. 42–89) is made up of Korahite, Asaphite, and Davidic psalms, and that in their present position the Davidic psalms, say Pss. 51–72, are thrust into the otherwise solid group of Asaphite hymns Pss. 50 . . . 73–83. Further, the transposition of the Davidic psalms to the beginning of the book would bring the hymns of the guilds together. The elohistic recension does not extend consistently beyond Ps. 83; and Pss. 84–89 (Korahite) may therefore be regarded as a supplementary extract from the guild book.

The titles of several of the Davidic psalms specify the occasion and circumstances in which the poem was composed; these historical notes are especially numerous in the group Pss. 51–72 (see Pss. 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63), but occur also in the First Book (Pss. 3, 7, 18, 34), and in Ps. 142 (cf. Ps. 57). The incidents referred to are, with one exception, all narrated in the Books of Samuel. There is no reason to imagine that the

editor had any tradition about the origin of these particular poems, much less authentic information on the subject. Precisely as in the ascription of Pss. 72 and 127 to Solomon, he combined what he took to be allusions to a historical situation in the poems with the history as he read it. Psalm 51, for example, is a confession of deep sinfulness, and seems to specify blood-guilt (vs. 14). When had David reason to express himself in this manner? Clearly after his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. It is a very familiar procedure. Modern commentators have made many similar guesses, but nobody attaches any authority to them.

Whether the scattered Davidic psalms in the last part of the Psalter (Pss. 90–150) are a gleaning from the Davidic hymn book of poems which had not been included by previous editors or come from some other source is uncertain; the latter is the more probable hypothesis.

The Psalter, in the form in which we have it, is one of the latest books in the Old Testament, for it contains poems in which the religious persecution of Antiochus IV and the Maccabæan struggle are clearly reflected, and very likely events still further down in the second century B. C. This was shown by an acute critic at the beginning of the fifth century A. D., and in the Reformation century John Calvin rightly referred Pss. 44 and 74 to the Maccabæan times, and admitted the same possibility for Ps. 79. All these are from the Korahite and Asaphite collections included in the elohistic hymn book, which it-

self is not the youngest of the sources of our Psalter.

Numerous other Psalms are, with greater or less probability, assigned to the same age; thus, Ps. 149, where the saints, with the high praises of God in their mouths and a two-edged sword in their hands, execute judgment on the heathen, is singularly apt to the Maccabæan victories. Psalm 110 ("Davidic") most naturally is understood as one of the Asmonæan princes, since in them alone priesthood and royalty were united.

There are, however, other and more conclusive criteria than references to historical events or persons. The religious situation in the Jewish community reflected in very many of the psalms is that of the Persian and Greek period, not that of the days of the kingdom. The strife of parties or of classes, on one side the righteous, the pious, the poor, for whom the psalmists speak, on the other, the wicked, the ungodly, the rich and the great; here those whose delight is in the law of God (religion), there those who contemn it and pursue evil ways regardless of its precepts and prohibitions, is a new condition, not in the behavior of the wicked, but in the self-consciousness of the pious, who feel themselves a distinct class and are evidently crystallizing into a party or a sect.

The religious conceptions and the conception of religion are drawn chiefly from Jeremiah and the Deuteronomists, and from Isaiah 40 ff., but on the subjective side of religion, piety, the best of the Psalms represent a more advanced stage than the prophets of the seventh and sixth cen-

turies. The hopes of the future of God's people and of the world run with the prophets of the Persian period and the contemporary anonymous and editorial additions to the older prophetic books. That the long rehearsals of the ancient history, like Pss. 78, 105, 106, or eulogies of the law such as Ps. 119, or litanies of the fashion of Ps. 136, belong to a stage in the history of the liturgy such as rouses the enthusiasm of the Chronicler is also apparent. The evidence of language tends the same way. Fine hymns were written even at a late time; but on a large part of the psalms the decadence has set its mark.

Such is the impression the Psalter makes as a whole, and it indicates that not only is the existing collection late, but that most of the hymns in it were comparatively modern when they were brought together. This is what would be expected in a hymn book, which for devotional even more than for liturgical use, needs to express and nurture the type of piety prevalent in its own time and circle. Protestant hymn books fifty years ago, outside the Anglican communion, had hardly any hymns in them more than a couple of hundred years old, except versified translations of the Psalms, modernized and Christianized in the operation.

It would be going much beyond the evidence to say there were no psalms in the Psalter that were composed in the days of the kingdom; there may be a considerable number. But the proof that any particular psalm came from that period is difficult and seldom very convincing. This is

true even of the psalms which speak of the king; for, aside from the impossibility of deciding in some instances whether a reigning king is meant or the king of the good time coming (Messiah), a foreign king may sometimes be in mind (Ps. 45 is so interpreted by many), or an Asmonæan king.

Lamentations

The fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. is the subject of five poems of considerable length which together make the Book of Lamentations. The mistaken opinion that the prophet Jeremiah was the author caused this book to be put immediately after Jeremiah in the Christian Bible, with an introduction explicitly attributing the poems, or the first of them, to the prophet. In the Hebrew Bible the book stands among the miscellaneous Scriptures. The first four poems are in the Hebrew elegiac meter, the verse used for dirges, the characteristic of which is that each line is divided by a cæsura into unequal parts, oftenest in the ratio of three to two, as in Amos v. 1.

> Fállen no móre to ríse | is Ísrael's dáughter!
> Próstrate to éarth she líes, | nó one to líft her.

In Lamentations 1–4 this is combined with an alphabetic acrostic. In cc. 1 and 2 the poem consists of twenty-two tiercets, the first line of each beginning with a letter of the alphabet in order; c. 4, of as many couplets; while in c. 3 each line of the tiercet begins with the proper letter. Chapter 5 is neither alphabetic nor in elegiac meter.

The alphabetic artifice is not uncommon with Hebrew poets, the most elaborate example being Ps. 119, where in stanzas of seven verses each line of the stanza begins with A, B, G, D, and so on.

The five Lamentations differ considerably in character and poetic merit. Chapters 2 and 4 are distinctly superior to the rest, and describe the agony of Jerusalem in vivid and moving images; peculiarly direct and poignant is c. 5; while c. 3 has more the character of a psalm.

The poems are not all by the same author. Those which seem to stand nearest to the catastrophe (cc. 2 and 4 at least) were probably written no very long time after it; the others perhaps in the following generation. There is nothing in them that would lead us to think of Jeremiah as the author. Perhaps the statement of the Chronicler that Jeremiah made a dirge for King Josiah which was written among the Lamentations and recited in later times by the professional singers of dirges may imply that he ascribed one of the poems to the prophet. At any rate, it became "tradition," and has chiefly contributed to get Jeremiah the injurious reputation of the weeping prophet.

CHAPTER XXII

PROVERBS

THE Book of Proverbs bears the title "The Proverbs of Solomon son of David, King of Israel." Other titles scattered through the book prove that it is made up of several collections of proverbs which once circulated independently. Thus Prov. 10 begins, "The Proverbs of Solomon"; xxii. 17–21 is an introduction inviting the reader to give attention to "Sayings of Sages," and dwelling on the profit of so doing; xxiv. 23, "These also are by the Sages"; xxv. 1, "These also are Proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah edited"; xxx. 1, "The Sayings of Agur son of Jakeh"; xxxi. 1, "The sayings of Lemuel King of Massa (?), which his mother taught him"; finally, xxxi. 10–31 is an anonymous alphabetic poem in praise of the good housewife.

The inference of diverse origin drawn from these titles is confirmed by diversity of character and form, and by the repetition of proverbs in the different sections, especially in Prov. x. 1–xxii. 16 and cc. 25–29; on the other hand, the similarity of all parts of the book in thought and expression indicates that there is among them no wide difference in time. The theme of the

book is "wisdom," by which is meant primarily a practical wisdom in the conduct of individual life under the social, political, and economic conditions of the time. The end is a prosperous and happy life, and the motive is enlightened self-interest. Experience shows that morality conduces to prosperity and happiness, and immoral and unsocial actions to the opposite. To inculcate this truth and to apply it is the aim of the wise, who make this knowledge the foundation of virtue and of well-being.

Their instruction is not given in the form of a philosophical ethic, with a discussion of the nature of the highest good and of the principles and motives of conduct, but in sententious maxims, or aphorisms, sometimes grouped upon a central theme, often without any thread of connection. Religion is affirmed by the most reflective of these authors to be the first principle of wisdom (Prov. i. 7; ix. 10; cf. xv. 33), but there is no appeal to a divine law or to the conscience of the individual; the maxims are based on observation and experience. The opposite of wisdom is folly; it is an unintelligent selfishness which ignores the consequences of its course, and sooner or later involves itself in loss or ruin. For ruin is the end of persistent folly as happiness is the fruit of wisdom. This is the order of the world; God's ordering, no doubt, but working itself out by natural law. Wise men and fools are two permanent classes of men, divided by as hard a line as in the Stoic ethics is drawn between the virtuous man and the rest of mankind. The au-

thors know no degrees of wisdom; they recognize different kinds of folly, but no difference in fools.

The pictures of society they draw are chiefly of city life, with its temptations and vices, and they closely resemble those which Jesus the son of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) paints about 200 B. C. Monotheism is taken for granted; among the many follies the sages condemn, the folly of polytheism and idolatry does not appear. The national particularism of the Jewish religion is nowhere in evidence; the cultus is hardly referred to, except to say that the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, or that justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

These features are doubtless due in part to the distinctive tendencies of the moralists, but they also reflect the times. We find them in Job, in Sirach, and in Ecclesiastes, other products of Jewish "Wisdom" which date from the later Persian or Greek period; and we have every reason to believe that this peculiar development, of which we have no trace earlier, was characteristic of that age. With this the evidence of language accords.

Of the several parts of the book, Prov. x. 1–xxii. 16 seem to be the oldest, and may be from the Persian period; the following chapters are later. So also is Prov. 1–9, which may well have been written under Ptolemaic rule (say 320–200 B. C.), when the Jews enjoyed times of peace and prosperity. The latter author treats his topics more sustainedly, though without logical disposition or connection, in a warm and

friendly tone such as an experienced elder might use toward a youth. The style is easy and flowing, and sometimes rises to poetic inspiration. The personifications of wisdom and folly in c. 9 give a good example of his manner. A more philosophical mind is recognized in c. 8, with its personification of the divine wisdom, first of God's creations, the skilled artificer who was by his side at the making of the world, rejoicing in God's habitable earth and the sons of men who people it. Here the author comes near the conceptions of the Greek "Wisdom of Solomon," and prepares the way for the theological hypostases of Wisdom and the divine Reason and Word (Logos).

Even among the aphorisms of the older collections, there are few that have the stamp of true popular proverbs, the wisdom of the generations finding the pregnant phrase in the mouth of the people; they are, what indeed they profess to be, maxims of the sages, fashioned with conscious art for a didactic end. And these sages seem to have been, like the Greek sophists, professional teachers of the youth of the well-to-do classes.

That the bulk of this wisdom, when compilation of it came to be made, should have been labeled Solomonic, is explained by Solomon's fame for wisdom, which is the subject of numerous anecdotes in the historical books (see 1 Kgs. iii. 4–15, with the examples, ibid. vs. 16–28; 1 Kgs. x. 1–14, etc.), coupled with the explicit statement that he "spake three thousand prov-

erbs," not to mention his songs and his expeditions into natural history (1 Kgs. iv. 29–34). In later times Solomon's fame for wisdom was not that of an ethical philosopher but of an adept in magic. It is almost a pity to take away from Solomon the urgent warnings against women in which the Proverbs abound; they have in his mouth such a mordant irony.

CHAPTER XXIII

JOB

THE Book of Job is the greatest work of Hebrew literature that has come down to us, and one of the great poetical works of the world's literature. In the form of a colloquy between Job and his friends, in which at last God intervenes, it discusses the gravest problem of theodicy, How can the suffering of a good man be reconciled with the moral government of God?

In a prose introduction the reader is apprised of the true cause of Job's sufferings, of which the parties to the colloquy are, of course, ignorant: they are a trial of his uprightness, more specifically, of his disinterested virtue. In this "prologue in heaven," Satan insists that Job's exemplary virtue is no wonder, since God rewards him so well for it, and God, who has full faith in the patriarch, gives Satan permission to test him. In an hour all his wealth is swept away and his children perish, but Job bows submissive to God's will. Then he himself is smitten with a loathsome and distressful ailment which was regarded as in a peculiar sense the stroke of God, his wife bids him "bless" God (a euphemism for "curse") and die; but he rebukes her: "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and

shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." His three friends come to bemoan him and to comfort him, but the sight of his misery makes them dumb; they sit down with him in silence for seven days. So far the prologue.

On this scene the poem opens: Job's long suppressed grief breaks out in bitter words; he curses the day of his birth, he envies the dead who are at rest. The eldest of the three friends answers him, and so the colloquy begins. The structure of the poem is symmetrical. Each friend speaks in turn and to each Job replies. The cycle is thrice repeated (cc. 4–14; 15–21; 22–26), but, at least in the present text, the third round is incomplete — Zophar has no speech. The friends being apparently convinced that it is useless to argue with him, Job soliloquizes (cc. 27–31), contrasting his former prosperity with his present adversity, and again protesting his good conscience before God and men.

Now a new disputant comes on the scene, whose name does not appear among the dramatis personæ, the youthful Elihu; a short prose introduction tells us who he is, and why he intrudes. He is incensed at them all; at Job for justifying himself at God's expense, at the friends for not having found arguments to put him down. For his part, he is so full of words that he cannot hold in. He delivers himself, accordingly, of four speeches (cc. 32 f.; 34; 35; 36), to which Job vouchsafes no reply.

Suddenly God, whom Job had alternately

challenged and implored to appear, answers him out of the whirlwind (cc. 38–41); with Job's confession of his presumption in speaking of things he understood not (xlii. 1–6), the poem ends.

In the prose epilogue God condemns the three friends, whom he pardons at Job's prayer; and the trial over, God, in poetical justice, restores Job to a prosperity greater than the first.

In the argument, the three friends and Elihu maintain throughout the view of divine retribution which was plainly the orthodoxy of the author's time: God rewards piety and virtue with prosperity and requites sin with adversity. This law is grounded in the righteousness of God; it is inconceivable that he should act otherwise. Consequently, if a man is overwhelmed by calamity, as Job is, the only explanation their religion can allow is that he is a great sinner; any other interpretation would impugn the justice of God or bring into question the existence of a divine providence. They recognize, indeed, that in sending suffering God may design through chastisement or by way of warning to bring the sinner to repentance and amendment; they admit that suffering may be a trial of man's faith. They present the matter to Job thus, especially in their earlier speeches; but the character of Job's replies convinces them that neither of these is his case, and they come at last to outspoken accusation.

Job denies their insinuations and their charges. He has done nothing to deserve such a fate; if

they insist on calling this God's justice, he will say straight in God's face that he is an almighty tyrant, who unjustly destroys an innocent man. If God slay him for it, he will not belie his conscious rectitude.

The argument goes round and round, takes this or that turn, grows hotter as it proceeds, but does not get beyond this deadlock. The author's motive so far is clear: he means to controvert the dogma that all suffering, or at least extraordinary suffering, is retributive, and to show in the instance of Job how this doctrine may drive a godly man to the denial of God's justice altogether. With remarkable psychological insight, however, he makes Job not only cling to the belief that God is more just than his dealings with him show, but makes this faith grow in even steps with his passionate charges of injustice. He appeals from the injustice of God to the just God who some day will have to justify him.

The author meant to refute the doctrine that God's providence is exhaustively explained by distributive justice. Had he his own solution of the problem of theodicy to put in the place of that cruel dogma? Job, we have seen, finds no solution. In the speeches of Jehovah, where dramatic fitness would lead us to look for the author's solution if he had one, there is no refutation of Job's charges, no response to his pleadings. The speeches are splendid, but the gist of them is that God's ways are inscrutable. If man cannot comprehend God's operations in

nature, what folly, what presumption, to pretend to fathom his dealings in providence! In that Job acquiesces for the soul of man. Let his sufferings be a mystery, he can submit and trust; call them punitive, and he revolts against the injustice. That is the end to which the author would bring his readers. Some one has said that there is nothing about which men are usually so sure as about the character of God, and nothing they are so ready to do as to interpret his dealings by his character — especially his dealings with others. Such were Job's friends. And from this point of view we have no difficulty in understanding, what has stumbled some critics, how they, with their zeal for God's character — that is, for their orthodox conception of it — come off in the epilogue with so smart a rebuke, while Job, whose words seemed to them sheer blasphemy, is praised for saying what was right about God.

The theme of the Book of Job is one which exercised the greatest of the Greek tragic poets, and it is treated with an Æschylean grandeur; in conception and execution it declares the genius of its author. It has not come into our hands altogether as it left his, and certain parts of the poem are generally recognized as additions by other pens.

The most considerable of these are the speeches of Elihu (cc. 32–36). It has already been noted that Elihu's name is not in the prologue, he comes in with a bit of a prologue of his own (xxxii. 1–5); and when the three friends are rebuked

in the epilogue, he, who surely deserved the same condemnation, is ignored. All his speeches, provocative enough, draw no reply from Job. When, at the end of Elihu's discourse, God answers out of the whirlwind (xxxviii. 1 ff.), "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge," it is to Job he addresses himself, not Elihu; and the appearance of God is naturally taken as the response to Job's challenge in xxxi. 35, "O that I had one to hear me," etc., just before Elihu breaks in. All these signs indicate that Elihu is an intruder. This inference is borne out by the arguments so pretentiously announced. They are in the main variations on the themes in the preceding speeches of the friends, with a certain evident predilection for the idea that suffering is a warning. It would seem that another poet thought, as he makes Elihu boast, that he could improve on the arguments of the friends. The unbiased reader, without depreciating the poetical merit of the speeches, will be likely to differ with him.

The eulogy of the divine wisdom (Job 28) is a very fine poem, in the vein of Prov. 8, of which it is probably not independent, but it is, to say the least, inappropriate in the mouth of Job at this point in the debate. The description of ancient mining is particularly noteworthy. In the speeches of God, the long descriptions of the hippopotamus and the crocodile (xl. 15–xli. 34) are not without reason suspected of being purple patches, and in putting them in some damage has been done to the margins. It has

been questioned whether the prose prologue and epilogue really belong with the poem; but it would not be intelligible without them.

In Ezek. xiv. 14, 20 the name of Job occurs with Noah and Daniel as exemplary righteous men, who, if they were alive, could nevertheless not save the wicked city of Jerusalem from its doom; but whether the story Ezekiel knew about Job had any resemblance to the prologue of our book, no one can tell. It may very well be that there was a prose book of Job (in which, possibly, the friends played the opposite rôle from that given them in the poem), and that the poet took from it the incidents and setting that he needed; but about that also nothing can be known.

The age of the book is determined chiefly by the problem with which it deals. The doctrine of individual retribution is the application to the individual of the prophetic teaching about God's dealing with the nation; it appears in a peculiarly crude and hard form in Ezekiel at the moment of the break up of the nation. It was furthered by the teaching of the sages, as in Proverbs, about the connection between prosperity and happiness and virtue. Experience contradicted the dogma, and so the problem of theodicy arose — arose in a peculiarly difficult form, because all that befell a man was attributed to the immediate act of God, who was not relieved of any part of his responsibility by talk of second causes and natural laws, and because the sphere of retribution was limited to this life, with no relief in the possible compensations of another.

This is the problem of Job, and of itself suffices to put the book in what is called the post-exilic age. It belongs to the literature of Jewish Wisdom, with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. The latter book, one of the latest certainly in the Old Testament, is much concerned with the same conflict of dogma with experience, though in a very different spirit. Job may be a work of the fifth century B. C., or perhaps of the fourth. The language would incline us to the earlier date.

CHAPTER XXIV

ECCLESIASTES. SONG OF SONGS

Two singular books remain, about the inspiration of both of which the straitest sect of the Pharisees in the first century of our era had grave difficulties, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. Both are attributed to Solomon, the Song by title, Ecclesiastes by implication in the book itself, and doubtless the supposed authorship had much to do with finally securing the two books a place in the Jewish Bible.

Ecclesiastes

The title of Ecclesiastes runs, "The words of Koheleth the son of David, king in Jerusalem," under which pseudonym no one but Solomon can be meant; see also Eccl. i. 12, and especially ii. 1–11. In the body of the book, Koheleth is regularly used as a proper name; it is apparently coined for the nonce. Like many pseudonyms in other literatures, it is probably a mystification, piquant to the author's contemporaries but impenetrable to us. That it means "Preacher" — an ancient guess — is highly improbable; but even if the meaning were transparent, there is no more reason for translating a fictitious proper name than a real one.

The theme of this symphony of pessimism is stridently announced in the first notes of the overture: "Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities! Everything is vanity." The world and its happenings, man and his strivings, pleasure, pain, wisdom, folly, good and evil — all is utterly empty; existence has no meaning and no worth. All is chance and change, in which things endlessly go round and round, but plan, purpose, progress is nowhere to be seen. And as all have one lot, even this senseless and inconstant fortune, so death sooner or later overtakes all alike and ends the strange play without plot we call human life.

Of a divine providence directed to any end or by any principle, of a justice above which requites men according to their deeds, long years and happiness to the wise and good, adversity and premature death to the wicked and foolish, Koheleth, looking on the world of things as they are with searching eyes, discovers no sign. Of another world and an immortal soul, with which some of his contemporaries consoled themselves, he, keeping his thinking within the bounds of experience, knows nothing. Man dies as the beast dies, the same vital breath is in them both, all are of dust and turn to dust again; nor has man any advantage over the beast, they all have the same end (iii. 19–21; ix. 4–6). There is consolation in this thought, when the misery of the world weighs too heavy on the heart. The dead are better off than the living, but happier still it would be never to be

born to see the evils that are under the sun (iv. 2 f.).

When we look the facts squarely in the face, the only counsel of wisdom is to make the most of what capricious fortune gives us in its friendly moods, to enjoy the pleasures life offers while we can, with abandon, but without excess. For the "too much" is always evil, even too much wisdom and virtue! "Be not over righteous nor put on too much wisdom, why shouldest thou ruin thyself? Be not over wicked, and do not be a fool; why shouldest thou die before thy time?" (vii. 16 f.).

The author's religion makes God somehow the cause of what happens under the sun, the evil and the good. In one place he seems to express the belief that all that God does is fine and opportune, if man could only understand it; but God has denied man the intelligence to penetrate the secret of his ways. So there is nothing better for man to do than to be merry, and have a good time while he is alive!

It is easy to imagine what scandal all this gave to pious souls, and it was very natural that orthodox editors should try to neutralize Koheleth's skepticism and his epicurean counsels by notes in an opposite sense. A modern editor would have put his protests into footnotes, as for example to Gibbon's famous chapters on the spread of Christianity; an ancient editor, having no footnotes, put his incontinently into the text.

To these editorial improvements belong the last verses (Eccl. xii. 13 f.), with its conclusion,

"Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the business of every man; for God will bring every deed into the judgment on all secrets, whether it be good or bad." The judgment after death is evidently meant. The warning against many books and much reading in xii. 12 is also a gloss, while xii. 9–11 appears to be written by an earlier editor of the book, commending it to reading and study. In the body of the book, also, several verses are obviously introduced to give an orthodox twist to the author's very heterodox utterances.

That Ecclesiastes belongs to the latest stratum of Hebrew Biblical literature is evident from both its matter and its style; but there is nothing in it by which its age can be exactly fixed.

Song of Songs

A verse already quoted (1 Kgs. iv. 32) tells that, besides three thousand proverbs, Solomon composed a thousand and five songs. We shall probably not err in assuming that this verse was in the mind of the editor who prefixed the title "The Song of Songs (that is, the very best of songs), by Solomon." There is nothing in the book to indicate that Solomon was the author or that the poet meant his productions to be attributed to him.

The one theme of the book, running through many variations, is the love of man and woman, passionate and sensuous. In the second century of our era its songs were warbled at banquets

or wedding feasts, a profane abuse on which a scandalized rabbi denounced damnation. In the first century it was, in spite of Solomon's name, no Holy Scripture for the straitest sect, and was not finally admitted to the canon, we may be pretty sure, until an allegorical sense had been discovered in it, or rather, imposed on it: it sang, under the figure of wedded love, of the relation of the Lord to Israel. The Fathers took over all the allegory, only making the lover Christ, the beloved the Church (as still in the running titles of the Authorized Version), or the soul. The mediæval church saw in the bride the Virgin Mary. The allegorical interpretation was a necessary corollary of the dogmatic assumption that the canon of inspired scripture could contain nothing but books of religious instruction and edification. Allegorical love poetry — usually the love of God and the soul — is not uncommon in mystical sects or circles of various creeds; and the ultraspiritual poets often revel in an ultrasensual imagery of passion and fruition; but nothing in the Song of Songs suggests such an origin, nor have we knowledge of a Jewish mysticism of this erotic type in the centuries from which it must come.

The literary criticism of the last century chiefly spent itself in endeavors to discover in the book a lyric drama with a moral tendency, on some such theme as the triumph of pure love over lust. Great ingenuity was expended in dividing the text into regular acts and scenes and assigning the speeches to the leading actors and the chorus.

In its simplest form there were but two actors, the virtuous village maiden and the harem-jaded Solomon; a more plausible scheme gave the girl a rustic lover, which added much to the piquancy of the scenes with Solomon, and to the *dénouement*, in which the king, foiled by the maiden's constancy, confesses virtue triumphant, and sends her back to her shepherd swain. More recent supporters of the dramatic hypothesis have modified this scheme in a way to remove some of its plainest difficulties, but have complicated it in proportion.

Other interpreters take the book for a collection of love songs, or, more specifically, of wedding songs, such as are sung to-day at village weddings in Syria and Palestine. A certain dramatic quality in the songs, and their relation to successive stages of the festivities, would give the appearance of a progressive action which has been urged for the dramatic theory. The Syrian peasant to-day, in the region of Damascus, is for his bride-week in song and salutation a king or prince; a sledge on the village threshing-floor is his throne, and the bride is queen. Through the week the royal pair are honored by the villagers with songs and dances. If in the Hebrew songs the bridegroom-king is sometimes called Solomon, it is because Solomon was the richest and most splendid of kings. This view of the nature of the book is simpler and more probable. The several poems are not distinguished by titles, and there is room for difference of opinion about the divisions; but this is a small difficulty compared

with the partition into rôles in the supposed play.

The songs are fine examples of popular poetry, with traditional subjects, forms, and imagery. Nothing requires us to suppose that they are the production of one poet; we may think of them rather as an anthology of love songs, not necessarily all composed for wedding festivities, but all appropriate for use on such occasions.

The language of the songs proves that they belong to a very late period in Hebrew literature, though the type is doubtless old enough. Such popular poetry has no motive for preserving or imitating archaism, as hymn writers do, but modernizes itself from generation to generation. The wedding songs of old Israel may have been like enough to these in character, but they were in another speech.

It was a fortunate misunderstanding that has preserved them; but the accidental preservation of these few pages emphasizes the loss of almost every other vestige of Hebrew secular poetry.

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