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CONTEMPORANEOUS HISTORY: JOSIAH TO EZRA.

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PERIOD I. DECLINE AND FALL OF ASSYRIA.

1. *The last great king of Assyria.*—When Josiah came to the throne (639 B. C.), there were still thirteen years of life left to Asshurbanipal, king of Assyria (668–626 B. C.). We know a great deal about this famous ruler, the Sardanapalus of Persian and Grecian legend, of his wars, his public works, his patronage of Babylonian learning, his vast literary and scientific collections. Of the history of his later years (after 642 B. C.) we know little or nothing. It is certain, however, that his empire was vastly abridged and shorn of its splendor before his death, and that thereafter it rapidly collapsed till it was annihilated with the destruction of the capital, Nineveh, in 607 B. C.

2. *Causes of the catastrophe.*—The ruin of Assyria came from four causes: (1) It was built up and maintained by force alone and was, therefore, without moral or internal cohesiveness. (2) Its central and western portions were ravaged by northern barbarians, especially Scythians, for longer or shorter periods, during more than twenty years, beginning about 635 B. C. These devastations fell wholly within the reign of Josiah, but they touched lightly upon his territory, since it was the rich and fertile plains that the invaders mostly traversed. (3) Insurrec-

THE LITERARY PRODUCTIONS OF ISRAEL FROM JOSIAH TO EZRA.

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THE writer of the present paper has been requested "to state briefly and in a positive way," within the limits of 3,000 or 3,500 words, his own conclusions as to what the Israelitish writers produced in the period from Josiah to Ezra. Josiah began to reign about 639 B. C. Ezra was commissioned by Artaxerxes to visit Jerusalem in 459 or 458 B. C., and took an active part in the affairs of the Jewish colony in 446 B. C. He may easily have lived forty or even forty-five years longer. During this period of more than two centuries, notable contributions in both Hebrew and Aramaic were made to the historical, prophetic, poetical, and philosophical literature of the Hebrews. All schools of criticism recognize that the great prophetic books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel were products of this period. Lamentations, although anonymous in Hebrew, is commonly attributed to Jeremiah, the first four chapters at least, if not the fifth. Nahum belongs to the beginning of the period, perhaps falls within it. There is no serious disposition on the part of students of Scripture to doubt that Habakkuk and Zephaniah were written during the earlier of these years also. Haggai prophesied a few years after the return of the Jews from exile, and consequently falls within the period. Zechariah was the colaborer of Haggai, and his visions, his symbolical crowning of the high priest, and his answer to the deputation from Bethel—in other words, the first eight chapters of the book which bears his name—are universally recognized as genuine. As to Malachi, there is no occasion to date this little book later than Ezra's time. Of the books commonly called historical, but known under different classifications in the Hebrew

canon, not one after Samuel was written before the exile, although both the writer of Kings and the chronicler draw from pre-exilic sources. Of the books commonly classed as poetical there is every reason to believe, judging from the linguistic phenomena and from the character of the compositions themselves, that Ecclesiastes and the introduction to the proverbs of Solomon, constituting the first nine chapters of the book of Proverbs, were not written before this period. They may safely be regarded as productions of its close.

The work of the historian of Hebrew literature is comparatively easy up to this point. He has not faced great difficulty as yet, he has scarcely heard the sound of debate, he knows not what issues are at stake. Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah have been handed down by the custodians of the Scriptures as productions of an earlier period of Hebrew literature; and Daniel, Chronicles, and the latter part of Zechariah as productions of this period. The great question for the historian of Hebrew literature regards the proposed inclusion of Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and the latter part of Isaiah among the productions of this period, and the proposed exclusion of Daniel, Chronicles, and the latter part of Zechariah. The question of the date of the Pentateuch has already been discussed on broad lines and received as full treatment as the space allotted to the writer in the *BIBLICAL WORLD* for June, 1896, permitted; and it need not be discussed now.

The question regarding Zechariah and Chronicles is not involved in the pentateuchal problems. With regard to the debated section of Zechariah, the historical and literary marks indicate the time and pen of Zechariah himself. In the first burden, chaps. 9-11, the house of the Lord was standing (9:15; 11:13). Solomon's temple was standing down to the exile; and the new temple, built after the return, was in use after the year 516 B. C. The reference in 10:10, 11 has been cited that Egypt and Assyria were great powers at the time that this prophecy was delivered. But it was delivered after Israel had been carried captive (10:6), hence after the capture of Samaria, but before the fall of Nineveh, about 606 B. C. But a prophet

after the exile, as well as a prophet of an earlier date, could foretell that the Israelites would be restored from the lands to which they had been carried, namely, from Egypt and Assyria; and although Assyria had succumbed to a later world-empire, he could still say that the *pride* of Assyria, the power by which the Israelites were still kept in captivity, should be brought down; or Assyria may be used of a geographical region, including Babylonia, and refer to the people of Mesopotamia, just as the term is employed by Ezra (6:22), although the region was then under the government of Persia. Accordingly, the first burden may have been delivered before the fall of Nineveh, while Assyria was still a power, or else after the exile, when Assyria had given place to other empires, and since the temple is standing, after the sixth year of Darius, king of Persia. Another datum which contributes to the solution of this question is obtained from the statement that God will break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel (11:14). The brotherhood existed until the reign of Rehoboam, when it was broken by the refusal of the northern tribes to render further allegiance to the throne of David. It might also be said to be broken when Samaria fell, and the northern tribes were scattered. The brotherhood existed once more after the Babylonian exile. This burden was pronounced after the fall of Samaria and the captivity of Ephraim (10:6). It properly dates from the time after the exile, when the current conception was that Ephraim and Judah were reunited in the brotherhood. In point of fact, they were reunited: many members of the ten tribes had joined themselves to Judah; and the existing nation was universally regarded as the representative of the twelve tribes, and in Ezra's day, accordingly, twelve goats were offered as a sin offering at the dedication of the temple, and a second sin offering of twelve bullocks was made for all Israel (Ezr. 6:17; 8:35; cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 2:36; Acts 4:36; 26:7; Phil. 3:5). The prophet, proclaiming the oracle during the latter period, frequently uses the old terms Judah and Ephraim. So did many people living after the exile. Zechariah himself in the first eight chapters employs addresses, the "house of Judah and

house of Israel" (8:13). It is to this post-exilic period, accordingly, that the references to the brotherhood of Judah and Ephraim point.

There is a further and all-important mark. It is declared that God will raise up Judah against the distant sons of Javan, or the Greeks. It will be observed that the Greeks are chosen for two reasons: (1) Because the prophet describes the conflict of the church with the most distant nations of the world. Javan and the isles were at this time within the geographical horizon of the Hebrews, and they were used as types of the remotest heathen nations. (2) The novel feature here is that Javan looms up as the great heathen world-power. The earliest date when the coming power of Greece became evident to observers in the Persian empire was during the years from 500 to 479 B. C., and the coming greatness of Greece as the successful antagonist of Persia was already evident. Greece had successfully checked the advance of Persian arms; the Grecian cities of Asia Minor were in open revolt against their Persian lords during the years 500 to 495 B. C.; the Persians were defeated at Marathon in 490, and, after their victory at Thermopylæ, were crushingly defeated by the Greeks at Salamis, 480, Platæa and Mycale, 479. Zechariah, there is reason to believe on considerable and varied evidence, was a young man, say twenty or twenty-five, when he exhorted Zerubbabel to the work of rebuilding the temple; and, consequently, these stirring events, which revealed the unsuspected greatness of Greece and opened the prospect that it would successfully intermeddle in oriental affairs, occurred during the years which were Zechariah's prime of life. The second burden, chaps. 12-14, is also shown by its contents to belong to the post-exilic period. The writer refers to the terrors of the people when the earthquake in the days of Uzziah occurred. He refers to it as an event living vividly in the consciousness of the people. It was vivid to them either because of recent occurrence or because it had made a lasting impression on their minds. It certainly had made this lasting impression. It is treated as an epoch by the people of the generation in which it occurred (Am. 1:1), and in the first century of the Christian era it was still remembered as a

solemn and striking event (Josephus, *Antiq.*, ix : 10, 4). There is another historical mark in this second burden, the reference to the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon (12 : 11). The only natural reference here is to the mortal wounding of Josiah at Megiddo, when he went out against Pharaoh-Necho. His death was mourned by the singing men and singing women, and a lamentation was composed by the prophet Jeremiah (2 Chron. 35 : 25). Accordingly, the second burden was delivered not earlier than the eve of the exile. Not only do the historical references in the two burdens point to late times, but the literary characteristics of these burdens proclaim them to have proceeded from the same source as the first eight chapters. This is strenuously denied by certain critics. It is urged that a difference of style is discernible between the burdens and the visions. This is true, but it is a cardinal doctrine of literary criticism that the style of an author differs at various periods of his literary career and when he essays different forms of literature. Zechariah's style naturally underwent change during a period of thirty or forty years, and differed when he depicted visions and symbolical actions from the style in which he set forth solemn warnings. Still, in the parable or the symbolic representation of the good shepherd (chap. 11) there are traces of the same literary hand as that which portrayed the visions and the crowning of the high priest. And more subtle marks of the same hand are seen in the unique usage of certain words and expressions which characterize the first eight chapters in common with the last six. A few of these are the Qal of *yashab* in a passive sense (2 : 8; 9 : 5; 12 : 6), *me'ober umishshab* (7 : 14; 9 : 8), *'ehad* for the indefinite article (5 : 7; 12 : 7), *'al-yamin w'al-s'mo'l* (4 : 11; 12 : 6), *'adamah* (2 : 16; 9 : 16; 13 : 5). The employment of the same word in different senses is also a characteristic both of the section which is acknowledged to be genuine and of the section which is disputed.

These are the main reasons which convince the writer of the unity of the book of Zechariah, and that the mature life of the author was passed between the years 520 and 479 B. C.

The principal historical argument for regarding Chronicles as

a later production than the time of *Ezra* is found in the genealogies. It is asserted that the line of David, which is carried down to Zerubbabel, continues until it mentions the sixth generation after the return (1 Chron., chap. 3). If such is the fact, it scarcely comports with a theory that the book was composed before the death of *Ezra*; but an examination of the genealogies collected in the book shows that there is not the shadow of proof for the assertion that the families enumerated in 3 : 21, latter part, were descendants of Hananiah, son of Zerubbabel. Their descent, and that of Shecaniah, whose posterity is given at considerable length (vss. 21-24), are not indicated. The phenomenon of unattached families is of common occurrence in these genealogies, and, when the text is not at fault, indicates that the family thus loosely catalogued belonged to the clan or tribe with which it is registered, though its connection is not traced. The four families enumerated in vs. 21 belonged to the lineage of David and were collateral with the royal line which descended through Hananiah, son of Zerubbabel. The position of *Chronicles* in the last section of the Hebrew canon is also urged as a proof of its late date. But the place of a book in the Hebrew canon was determined primarily by its authorship. It was not written by a prophet, and therefore it is not given a place among the prophets. It was probably written by a priest, and therefore it was put with the miscellaneous group of writings called the *Hagiographa*. Still other indications point to the time of *Ezra* as the date when *Chronicles* was compiled. The amount contributed toward the erection of the temple is stated in Persian money, not in Greek (1 Chron. 29 : 7, R. V., darics), which indicates that the Greek empire had not supplanted the Persian when the work was composed. The designation of the temple as the *birah*, the castle or palace (1 Chron. 29 : 1, 19), indicates a time not later than *Nehemiah*; for after his time the *birah* denoted, not the temple, but a structure erected by him (Neh. 2 : 8 ; 7 : 2, both R. V.), which came to be distinguished from the temple and all other buildings as the castle. This date of *Chronicles*, however, if admitted, directly and indirectly proves several events, including the return of the Jews under *Zerubba-*

bel, to be facts of history. This result is clearly discerned, and it is an unwelcome result in some quarters, for it is incompatible with unsubstantiated theories that have been adopted. But that incompatibility, instead of being an argument against assigning this date to Chronicles, simply raises the question again whether biblical criticism shall be subjective. Shall the phenomena be manipulated, set aside, and adjusted to support a private theory? Shall the demonstration that, by pruning according to a prescribed method, a document may be shaped to correspond to that theory, be regarded as a proof that establishes the theory? We are face to face with one of the weak points of modern biblical criticism.

A different case is presented by Deutero-Isaiah and Daniel. They are not linked to pentateuchal questions; they are not involved in the development of the ritual; no theory of history need constrain the critic. The arguments for dating portions of Isaiah, notably the last twenty-seven chapters, in this period are three. It is urged that the language is late and the style is peculiar; that the allusions to the condition of Jews and Gentiles reveal the time of the exile, and that the statements concerning the condition of the people agree with the historical facts, but those which relate to the future have fallen short of fulfilment: To these arguments the answer, which must unfortunately be stated summarily, is rendered: (1) There has not been shown a single word of known late date, nor a single foreign element, which there is any reason to believe was not current in Jerusalem in the days of Isaiah. Every word, phrase, and form is found in earlier Hebrew literature, or may be explained by the history of the times. As to the style being peculiar, change of style is consistent with unity of authorship. The literary activity of Isaiah was continued through at least forty years, and perhaps sixty. And is the style so peculiar, after all? Those who deny the Isaianic authorship find it incumbent upon them to explain the similarity of style. Augusti accounts for the ascription of these chapters to Isaiah, in the first instance, by the fact that "they were composed so entirely in the spirit and manner of Isaiah." Gesenius and De Wette

ascribe the similarity of style to imitation or the work of a conforming hand. Umbreit calls the unknown author of the chapters in dispute, "Isaiah risen again," as from the dead. (2) To the argument that the allusions which are made in these chapters to the condition of Jews and Gentiles reveal the time of the exile, it is replied: (a) Isaiah lived with the Babylonian exile in prospect; and in his prophecies he transports himself to the scenes of the exile, represents the people as already in captivity, the land desolate, the temple burned, and foretells the release of the captive Jews. The prophets frequently transport themselves thus to the future and describe what they are predicting as already passed; for instance, although Zebulon and Naphthali had been ravaged and their inhabitants carried into captivity, the acknowledged Isaiah says of them: "The people that walked in darkness *have* seen a great light" (9:2). (b) The explicit references to Babylon, the exile, and the restoration are few. Many of the expressions which are commonly cited as alluding to the exile or the anticipated return to Palestine have no such meaning, but refer, for example, to the return of the people to Jehovah, or are vague and general, without specific application. (c) The acknowledged Isaiah and his contemporary prophets were already living in anticipation of the Babylonian exile. There is scarcely an event connected with the exile to which the author refers but was known to the Israelites in the time of Isaiah. The prophets of the time predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (Am. 2:5; Mic. 3:12; Isa. 3:8; 6:11), the desolation of the land of Judah (Hos. 8:14; Am. 9:11-14; Isa. 3:25, 26; 6:11, 12; 32:13), the captivity of the people of Judah (Isa. 11:12; cf. Mic. 1:14-16). This captivity was to be in Babylon (Mic. 4:10; Isa. 11:11; 39:6, 7). There should be a return from exile (Joel 3:1; Isa. 11:11), and Jerusalem and the temple should be rebuilt (Mic. 4:2; although the destruction of Jerusalem had been foretold, 3:12; cf. Joel 3:16, 17, 20). (d) The spiritual condition of the people, as exhibited in these chapters, is that of the time of Isaiah; idolatry under every green tree (57:5 and 1:29; 2 Kings 16:4); and among the oaks (57:5 and

1:29; Hos. 4:13); and in gardens (65:3; 66:17, and 1:29); the slaying of children in the valleys (57:5, and 2 Chron. 28:3; 33:6; 2 Kings 23:10); ascending a high mountain to offer sacrifice (57:7, and 2 Chron. 28:4; Hos. 4:13); hypocrisy (58:2-4 and 29:13); sabbath breaking (58:13, and Am. 8:5; Jer. 17:19-27); bloodshed and violence (59:3, 7 and 1:15; Mic. 7:2); falsehood, injustice, and oppression (59:3, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 5:7, 23; 10:1, 2; Mic. 2:1, 2; 7:3); neglect of the temple worship (43:23, 24, and 2 Chron. 28:24; 29:27; 2 Kings 15:4; 2 Chron. 27:2; 2 Kings 15:35; 2 Chron. 33:10). Burning incense upon bricks (65:3) was appropriate to a worship derived from either Egypt, Assyria, or Babylonia, and was practiced in Jerusalem before the exile (2 Kings 23:12; Jer. 19:13). Swine's flesh was offered and eaten (65:4) by the Egyptians (Herodotus, II, 47, 48), and commonly enough by the Babylonians. (3) To the argument that the statements concerning the condition of the people agree with the historical facts, whereas those which relate to the future have fallen far short of fulfilment, it is replied that the assertion applies with equal force to the acknowledged writings of the prophet *Isaiah*. He foretold the destruction of the cities, the utter desolation of the land, and the removal of the inhabitants far hence (6:11, 12). This was fulfilled to the letter. But he prophesied, also, the flocking of the Gentiles to the standard of Jesse's son, the return of the captive people of God from all parts of the world, the drying up of rivers which were obstacles in the course of the march, a highway from Assyria for the remnant of the people, the wolf dwelling in peace with the lamb (11:6-8, 10-12, 15, 16). These are the same predictions as those which, in the latter portion of the book, are pointed to as the extravagant utterances of an enthusiast and as having fallen short of fulfilment. Thus the acknowledged *Isaiah*, living two centuries before the fall of Babylon and the hopes which that event is supposed to have awakened, wrote in precisely the same manner as the author of the last section.

There is one allusion in this last section, however, which does not reflect the common expectations and customs of the times

of Isaiah. Cyrus the conqueror, saying of Jerusalem, "She shall be built," and to the temple, "Thy foundation shall be laid," is mentioned; but he did not appear in history until almost two centuries after Isaiah. But of this presently. First let us turn to the book of Daniel.

The essential integrity of the book of Daniel is not questioned; it was written by one man. But it is denied that the author was Daniel. The date is assigned to the year 168 or 167 B. C., and the object of writing the book is declared to have been to support the faith of the Jews under the dreadful persecution then raging under Antiochus Epiphanes. The chief arguments against the genuineness of the book are: (1) Daniel is not mentioned among the worthies of the son of



DANIEL

Michelangelo

Sirach in the book of Ecclesiasticus, about 200 B. C. (chap. 49), although he mentions Ezekiel, Nehemiah, and the minor prophets. (2) The writer's use of Greek words, which indicate that he lived in the Grecian period. (3) Historical inaccuracies, which show that he was not an eyewitness of the events which he describes, but lived at a remote period from them. (4) The prophecies give details of history until the death of Antiochus Epiphanes only.

These arguments are answered as follows: (1) The son of Sirach neglects to mention Daniel, it is true; but he also fails to mention Ezra and other notable men, like Gideon, Samson, and

Jehoshaphat. (2) The Greek words are confined to the names of musical instruments, and are all found in one verse (3:5) and its repetition. The Greek origin of at least two of these names is freely granted: *p'sant'rin* for the Greek *psalterion*, and *sumpon'ya'* for *symphonia*. But does this fact militate against the composition of the book by Daniel in Babylon about 530 B. C.? By no means; for *a*) instruments such as those described are known to have been in use in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys in Daniel's day. *b*) Captives from distant lands were employed to play on their own instruments of music; of the captive Jews the songs of Zion and the music of the harp were demanded (Ps. 137:1-3); and contemporary documents in cuneiform character abundantly show that not only captive Jews, but musicians from other subject peoples, were required to render similar service. Assyrian kings from Sargon, 722 B. C., onward, not to speak of earlier monarchs, had led off prisoners and received tribute from Cyprus, Ionia, Lydia, and Cilicia, which were Greek lands. Nebuchadnezzar warred against the cities on the Mediterranean. It would be in accordance with custom for these conquerors to introduce Greek instruments and Greek-speaking musicians to their court. *c*) Finally, the language of the passage in question is not Babylonian and not Chaldee, but Aramaic. The Aramæans had for centuries been in contact with the West. Their language was the international language of diplomacy and trade, and they were the intermediaries of commerce between the East and the West. Their language acquired an admixture of foreign words from these sources. The writer of the book of Daniel is using Aramaic, and doubtless employs the names which were current among the Aramæans for instruments of this kind. It is for those who base an argument on these words against the genuineness of the book of Daniel to show that they were not current Aramaic before the sixth century B. C. (3) The asserted historical inaccuracies are not statements which are disproved by history, but only statements which have seemed difficult to harmonize with the meager accounts of secular historians. No contradiction between Daniel's record and established history has been proven; the

asserted historical inaccuracies have, moreover, been steadily diminishing before the increasing knowledge of the times of Cyrus. The existence of king Belshazzar was formerly scouted; but now the records contemporary with the capture of Babylon have made him a well-known historical character; explain why



ASSYRIAN MUSICIANS

he raised Daniel to the third place of power in the kingdom instead of the second, for his father and he already held the two higher places of authority; and have made clear why he and not Nabonidus is mentioned as king at Babylon on the night of the capture of the city, for Nabonidus was absent at the time. They do not yet clear up the reference to Darius the Mede receiving the kingdom, but they show that the appointment of a regent for Babylonia by Cyrus was in accord with his policy. That the queen is represented as calling Belshazzar a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar was regarded as proof positive that the words were put into her mouth by a late writer, for the contemporaries of the queen would not have spoken of Belshazzar as descended from Nebuchadnezzar. The Greek historians have shown that he did not, as it was supposed. Now, however, an inscription of Belshazzar's father has come to light in which he calls himself "the mighty descendant of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar" (*Babylonian and Oriental Record*, September, 1896). In view of the revelations of the cuneiform inscriptions, it is bold to assert that there are historical inaccuracies in the book of Daniel. (4) The prophecies do, indeed, give historical details until the death of Antiochus Epiphanes (chap. 8), but are the prophecies not definite for the times after Antiochus? The fourth kingdom described in chaps. 2 and 7 can be none other

than the Roman empire, for the attempt to divide the second kingdom—the Medo-Persian—into two is a demonstrable failure. The fourth kingdom is, therefore, the Roman empire, which succeeded to universal empire at a time subsequent to Antiochus, and in its later development is accurately described in the book of Daniel.

The ultimate ground upon which objection to the genuineness of Isaiah and Daniel rests is not found in the literary features not historical references of these books. But Isaiah (44:28 and 45:1) claims to foretell Cyrus by name. Cyrus appeared in history almost two centuries after Isaiah. The book of Daniel outlines, in the form of prophecy, the course of history so far as it is related to the kingdom of God, down through the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes and on into the Roman period. It relates also the miraculous intervention of God to save Daniel, the prophet, from the mouth of the lions, and three more of his servants from the flames of the fiery furnace. If these books are genuine, predictive prophecy in the kingdom of God is a fact of history, and another eyewitness exists to testify to the reality of heavenly miracle. Predictive prophecy and the miracle have been the stones of stumbling in these books. The offense can only be removed by denying the genuineness. If it were not for these features of the books of Daniel and Isaiah, their genuineness would not be so widely questioned. If miracles and prophecy are impossible or unhistorical, the books of Daniel and Isaiah are not genuine throughout. If miracle and prophecy are possible and attested by history, no valid reason has yet been advanced against the genuineness of these books. If genuine—and the writer of this article believes that the evidence indicates them to be so—then the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah are not, and the book of Daniel is, a production of the period intervening between Josiah and Ezra.