

death, so reckless now hadst thou become. But it remained for Him, to whom every knee shall yet bow, to be brought before thee as His judge, to be tried as a prisoner, charged with crimes worthy of death, to show the depth of debasement to which thou hadst now sunk, and how that conscience of thine was not blunted, but "seared (branded) as with a hot iron."

Yet what is Herod but an outstanding specimen of what it is to *trifle with conscience*? When first defiled, the ground lost may be recovered by speedy repentance and watchfulness for the future. Failing this, the downward tendency begins and goes rapidly on; and, unchecked, it hastens to recklessness, till one is ready to say, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing."

But the object of this paper was not to teach this lesson, though it does it very strikingly. It was to show, by a test of authenticity the most unexceptionable, that the Gospels, just as they lie before us even in minute details, bear the stamp of their own authenticity.

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DUHM'S ISAIAH AND THE NEW COMMENTARY TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Hand-Kommentar zum Alten Testament in Verbindung mit anderen Fachgelehrten herausgegeben von B. W. Nowack, o. Prof. der Theol. in Strassburg. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1892.—*Das Buch Jesaia*, übersetzt u. erklärt von D. Bernh. Duhm, o. Prof. der Theol. in Basel.

This is the beginning of another of those series of handbooks on the Bible, which are intended to bring, not only special students, but the public who are interested in their subject, abreast of the latest movements of exegetical science. The prospectus contains the usual reasons for the appearance of such a work—the progress of Comparative Religion, the recent discoveries in the East, the revolution within the interpretation of the Old Testament itself,

and the great increase of research into special points of the text and the exegesis of separate books. It expresses the need for a work, which, while doing justice to the innumerable details of its subject, will not deal with them with such prolixity as to confuse the scope and main results of the whole. It proposes to supply this need in a readable and attractive form, one of the characteristics of which shall be the use of such different types in the printing of the translation of the text of the Old Testament, that the reader can observe at a glance the different sources of the latter and their respective dates.

The authors already engaged for the work are, Baethgen for the Psalms, Giesebrecht for Jeremiah, Budde for Job, the editor himself for the Minor Prophets, and Kittel for Kings.

As regards the technical part of their undertaking, the editor and publishers are to be congratulated on the proof this first volume gives of almost complete success. It is as clear and pleasant to read as any commentary can be—458 broad pages of fine paper, with good-sized Roman type. The only fault is that in the Introduction, in citations from the Bible the figures for chapters and the figures for verses are set too close, and differ too little for their difference to catch the eye at a glance. One needs to look twice or thrice at a citation to be sure of it. But this can be easily repaired. A more serious mistake is the absence of a table explaining the various types employed. As it is these are often confusing.

I do not think that this first volume gives evidence of so exact a fulfilment of the rest of the programme. It is indeed a work of great ability and freshness, full of relevant facts well arranged and expressed, and distinguished by an ingenuity and boldness of theory which render it a most original work. But precisely such qualities make doubtful its right to a place in a series, whose first design is to bring readers abreast of the main positions of Old Testament science. For Dr. Duhm carries us far beyond these, and by a series of daring excursions into a period as late as the first century contradicts not only the conclusions of most recent critics concerning the dates of the post-Exilic portions of the Book of Isaiah, but the generally received opinions as to the close of the whole Prophetic Canon. As I have not space to discuss the bulk of the Commentary, I will mention in a sentence or two Duhm's opinions on other points, and confine my criticism to his proposal to assign so many chapters to the second century and the completion of the book to the end of the first.

Like most critics, Dr. Duhm admits a large number of authentic prophecies of Isaiah, though he finds in them frequent insertions of a later date. In chapters i.-xi. all is genuine except the titles, some clauses and passages in i.-ix., among these iv. 2-5; v. 15, 16, 30; vii. 1, 8b, 15, 18a, 21-25; viii. 19, and the famous verse 23; long passages in x., including the description of the invaders' march. His reasons for rejecting these are mostly subjective—they are not “jesaianisch,”—or are based upon supposed changes in the metre; and Hebrew metre, alas! is also at present the prey of the subjectivity of critics. In xiii.-xxiii. the only “oracles” allowed to be genuine are xiv. 24-27; xvii. 1-6, 9-14; xviii. 1-6; xx., xxii. except 9b-11a and 19-24. With exceptions, chapters xxviii.-xxxii. are allowed. In xxxvi.-xxxix. not even the challenge to Assyria is authentic. In xl.-lxvi. three writers are distinguished: the so-called Deutero-Isaiah, of the date of the Exile, whom by one of his many suggestive but inconclusive reasons Duhm assigns to Lebanon or Northern Phœnicia (see on xlix. 12); a younger post-Exilic author of the passages on the Servant of Jehovah; and a Trito-Isaiah, whom Duhm considers to be the author of the bulk of lvi.-lxvi. The conclusions as to xl.-lxvi. are much less revolutionary than those on i.-xxxix. With regard to such of the arguments on the latter as are not presently to be criticised, I can only report that many of them are precarious, and so opposed to the consensus of most critics, that they are decidedly out of place in a series which is designed, not to give scope to the theories of individuals, but to represent the main results of O. T. criticism as a whole.

I turn now to the original feature of Duhm's book, which is certain to attract a great deal of attention—the argument that the Book of Isaiah suffered large additions and alterations up to the close of the second century before Christ, and did not receive its present form before 90 or 80 B.C.

In order to prove this novel and startling theory, Duhm has to do three things. He has *first* to overthrow the general opinion of critics that the Canon of the Prophets was fixed by 200 B.C. He has, *second*, to show that the form of this particular Book of Isaiah was not settled in the third and second centuries. And he has, *third*, to prove that the style and the matter of the disputed chapters suit the special dates to which he assigns them in these centuries. I propose to inquire whether he has succeeded in any or all of these.

I. The Canon of the Prophets is generally assumed by O. T.

critics to have been fixed by 200 B.C. because of the following facts. From then onwards there is the recognition in Israel that prophecy has ceased; in 180 the son of Sirach gives clear evidence that he had the prophetic books before him in the same order as we have;¹ fifty years later his grandson speaks of his grandfather having "the law, the prophets, and the other books" before him; and it is impossible to account for the exclusion of Daniel from the Canon of the prophets on any other ground than that the Canon was closed long before Daniel was written in 165 B.C. Now to these facts Duhm has nothing definite to oppose. He says, indeed, that it is an arbitrary assertion, that Daniel's exclusion from the prophetic Canon was due to the close of the Canon before Daniel was written; but one of the two reasons which he himself suggests for the exclusion is Daniel's apocalyptic character, the very feature, as we shall presently see, on which he argues for the admission, at this same date, into the Canon of certain chapters of Isaiah! He throws some doubt, too, on the authenticity of the passage in Ecclesiasticus, but does not persist in it, as indeed he could not after Nöldeke's defence of the passage. His own account, too, of the formation of the Prophetic Canon is very vague and problematical. He supposes that the *prophetæ priores* were originally attached to the Torah; that they were separated from the latter at the time of its translation into Greek, that is, towards the middle of the third century; that they were then attached to the prophets proper; that because they had a "fast frame" this led to the prophets proper also receiving a "fast frame." But all this is only "wahrscheinlich" and "nicht beweisbar"; as to when the process concluded "darüber wissen wir gar nichts." It does not, therefore, surprise us that Duhm next throws up his opposition to the fixing of the Canon about 200—he now asks,—Granting that this Canon was fixed in 200, what is there to hinder us from allowing that subsequent additions were made to it? Only the very great improbability—so great as to be final to common sense—that when a body of sacred writings was fixed there could be room in it for additions so large and alterations so fundamental as Duhm's theory implies. And again, the question meets us, If the Prophetic Canon was so loose a bond as to admit of the addition of more than a fifth of Isaiah, and the collection and re-arrangement of the whole book, why was a book of the size of Daniel left out of it?

¹ Ecclesiasticus xlviii. and xlix.

II. The next part of Duhm's case is a number of alleged signs, that the form and text of Isaiah itself was still undetermined in the third and second centuries. The first of these is that the chronicler in 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 22 (= Ezra i. 1-3) quotes the prediction of Deutero-Isaiah, that Cyrus would build the temple again, as a word of Jeremiah. The chronicler does no such thing. All that he says is that the word of the Lord by Jeremiah—which may be any of Jeremiah's predictions of the close of the captivity—was fulfilled by the raising up of Cyrus. Again, Duhm says that the chronicler knew the section, Isaiah xxxvi.-xxxix.,¹ but refers to it as a part, not of a "Book of Isaiah," but of a "Book of Kings." Yet all that the chronicler says is that there is a vision of Isaiah in the Book of Kings—a statement which is true, but does not contradict the existence at that time as now of the same vision in the Book of Isaiah. Duhm, however, not only confidently affirms the absence of these chapters from the Book of Isaiah in the time of the Chronicler, but goes on to argue that in consequence chapters i.-xxxv. were not in their present form! Was ever so large a conclusion obtained so gratuitously? Again, granting (though, as we have seen, with some demur) that the passage in Ecclesiasticus² about Isaiah is genuine, he seeks to limit its evidence to this, that only chapters xxxvi.-lxvi. were known to the son of Sirach as Isaiah's. But he forgets that he has just told us that the hand which put xxxvi.-xxxix. into the Book of Isaiah was also that which collected i.-xxxv., and that therefore, on his own theory, if the son of Sirach regarded the former chapters as genuine, he regarded also the latter as such. But again, in the name of common sense, how could the son of Sirach have regarded xl.-lxvi. as the work of Isaiah unless they had been already so long attached to the prophet's genuine oracles that they were also appealed to as his.

We must, therefore, hold Dr. Duhm to have failed in producing any external evidence for his opinion that the substance and form of the Book of Isaiah were materially different in the second century from what they are to-day.

III. But has he any internal evidence to offer? Do the chapters of Isaiah bear any evidence, in style or historical reference, of the late dates to which he assigns them. Let us take the chapters he places in the second century. They are xxxiii., which he assigns

¹ 2 Chron. xxxii. 32.

² xlvi. 23 ff.

to 162 B.C.; xix. 16-24, to 150 B.C.; xxix. 15-24, xxx. 18-25, to "the time of the Maccabees"; xxiv.-xxvii., to 128 B.C.; xxxiv., xxxv., to before John Hyrkanus; and xv. 1-9a, xvi. 7-11, to the reign of John Hyrkanus. The chief evidence which Duhm proposes for these dates is the apocalyptic character of the chapters; they are of the same stuff and temper as the Sibylline books, Daniel, Enoch, etc. Their style differs altogether from Isaiah's; it is stilted and artificial. Their language recalls that of the latest Psalms. Their historical reflection is that of the days of the Maccabees, with the destruction of Jerusalem and wars with the Syrians and Parthians, and more peaceful relations with Egypt. It is impossible, in the limits of a single review, to examine Duhm's arguments in detail. I content myself with stating their deficiencies, and the main objections to the line they take. Duhm deserves praise for the ingenuity and force with which he plies them; but neither do they make out a complete case for his thesis, nor are they always natural, nor even consistent. Take the last point *first*. In one page Duhm gives the apocalyptic character of the Book of Daniel as a reason for its exclusion from the Canon of the Prophets; on the next he gives the apocalyptic character of a part of this Canon, viz. some of the chapters of Isaiah, as a reason for the opinion that they are insertions dating from this age. Surely every reason of style and matter that prevailed against Daniel's admission to the Canon, must have been valid against the admission of xxiv.-xxvii. to the Book of Isaiah. *Secondly*, there is an altogether arbitrary distinction drawn between some "apocalyptic" passages in the Book of Isaiah, which Duhm leaves to him, and others which, against the opinion of the best critics, he takes from him. This is especially the case with chapters xxix.-xxxii. And the efforts to find traces of "apocalypse" pass all bounds when they are directed upon the phrase וְיִשְׁרָאֵל in the opening title of the Book. When Duhm insists that this title refers to the whole Book, that it was therefore the work of the final collector, and that it betrays his view of prophecy as purely apocalyptic, he makes two statements which can be contradicted. The final editor, who had chapters xiii., xiv., xxiii., xxiv., xxxiv., xxxv. before him, could not have entitled the Book a vision "on Jerusalem and Judah" alone. And וְיִשְׁרָאֵל was not a monopoly of the second century. *Thirdly*, in point of style and language, while Duhm has some things to exhibit, say in xxiv.-xxvii., which harmonise with his theory, he overlooks how much evidence there is

on the other side. For instance, he has distinctly exaggerated the difference between the style of chapter xxxiii. and that of Isaiah's admitted prophecies. There are many phrases in xxxiii. characteristically Isaiah's (see Cheyne and Ewald *in loco*). It is, indeed, utterly in contradiction to the catholic programme of this series, that the reader should not be put in possession of the strong evidence for the authenticity of xxxiii., and of the fact that so large a majority of the best critics support it. *Fourthly*, there are few historical allusions in the disputed chapters; but Duhm's theory lays upon him the necessity of altering these. Thus in xix. 15-24 the combination Egypt, Asshur, Israel, which evidently reflects Isaiah's own day, is altered to Egypt, Syria, Israel, in order to suit the second century. It is an old emendation of Hitzig's, but has nothing to support it, and has been rejected by almost every scholar. Only Duhm's theory forces him to make it. *Fifthly*, other passages are strained, in order to suit the historical circumstances of the second century, or have meanings thrust upon them. Thus in xxxiii. the enemy "can only be the army of the Seleucids." In xix. 20 *they, i.e. the Egyptians, shall cry unto Jehovah because of oppressors, and He shall send them a deliverer and advocate, and he shall save them*; in this general statement Duhm confidently sees an account of the Jewish mercenaries employed by Ptolemy Philometor and his consort Cleopatra. In ver. 25 the text ברנו is taken as a substitute for ברנה (LXX.), and dated from Roman times when objection might have been taken to the idea that the earth was comprised of Egypt, Syria, and Israel! Truly, we may say, Duhm has proved to us, at least for himself, the statement of his preface: "Das Commentarschreiben hat eben viel vom pig puzzle."

Duhm has made a very bold, original, and well-equipped adventure. But he has not made out his case, for he has neither disproved the opinion that the Canon of the Prophets was closed in 200, nor proved that the Book of Isaiah was different in the second century from what it is now, nor adduced any final or even probable evidence that any of its chapters have features which require so late a date. On the contrary, the necessity which he labours under to fetch from so far, and to strain his reasoning, create a prejudice against it. It is a great essay he has given us, but the place for it was scarcely a series of handbooks in O. T. science.

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