# THE HOME OF DEUTERO-ISAIAH

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The prevailing view among Bible critics[1] is that the Second Isaiah lived in Babylon among the exiles. Indeed he is often called "the Great Prophet of the Exile," an epithet that scarcely does justice to the value of the influence of Ezekiel, who certainly was a great prophet and an exile. Several critics who have accepted Kosters' theory of the Restoration no longer admit the separate existence of a Trito-Isaiah, or rather have ascribed to the Trito-Isaiah the work of the Second as well.

This paper being limited in scope the writer will not discuss Kosters' theory or its later forms; he will accept as a sound hypothesis that Deutero-Isaiah (Is. 40-55) had a separate existence. He will, for the same reason, leave the Songs of the Servant out of this discussion; the internal evidence does not warrant any conclusion as to the place of composition of these lyrics.

The population of Judah and Jerusalem circa 600 B. C. must have been at least 250,000. Some 70,000 were carried over to Babylon.[2] Several thousand were killed or migrated to Egypt. If we allow that 100,000 Jews were thus disposed of, we shall have to admit that at least 50,000 of them remained in the home land.[3] Although they did not attempt to rebuild Jerusalem,

[1] There have been notable exceptions. Duhm has held that Deutero-Isaiah lived in Phoenicia, Marti that he sojourned in Egypt. Among modern English-speaking critics, with the exception of the followers of Kosters, Dr. Cobb is, so far as we know, the only one who has written against the view commonly accepted. Cf. *JBL.*, 1908, p. 48 ff. His point of view differed from ours in that he considered Is. 40-66 to be one whole; our enquiry started from the more common critical position and, pursued independently of Dr. Cobb, reached a similar conclusion. We need not add that everybody admits now that Is. 56-66 is the work of a writer living in Palestine.

[2] G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, II, 267, 269.

[3] In Germany, one fourth of the population survived the Thirty Years War. Even after the invasions of the kings of Assyria, more terrible by far than Nebuchadrezzar, destruction was never complete and the Assyrian rulers tell us in their annals of repeated ca[illegible] region.

they were strong enough to hold the villages. Otherwise the Edomites, the Samaritans, and the motley people still called the Philistines would have overrun the country. If the returned exiles, who had little military strength, were able to find and to hold such a large section of the home land, we can only account for this by the fact that ravenous neighbors had been kept away by the "poor of the land"[4] who had taken charge of it. If the few hundreds who returned with Sheshbazzar had not found in Palestine a large settlement of Jews, they would not have been able alone to hold firmly the territory[5] described in Neh. 11:25-36. Indeed we find no traces of a conflict between the returned exiles and foreign occupants and so we must admit that the central part of the land had, to some extent, been kept free from invaders by the Jews of Palestine. Who can tell what would have become of the small band of Jewish patriots if the Edomites, for instance, had occupied Jerusalem as they did seize Hebron.

The fact that the number of Jews who remained in the home land exceeded that of the returned exiles would also explain some of the difficulties encountered by Nehemiah, when he tried to enforce Deuteronomistic reforms. These Jews were for the most part peasants. Discouraged by national reverses, deprived of their natural leaders, they had relapsed into pre-reformation practices (Is. 41:27-29). Indeed they were little better than their northern neighbors, the Samaritans, and allowed the latter to worship with them on occasions. And so when Nehemiah and Ezra tried to re-organize Israel, the Palestinian Jews were often a dead weight because of their inertia and lack of sympathy with Deuteronomistic ideals. They must have resented the overbearing conceit of the returned exiles;[6] they certainly had difficulties with them about questions of property. The country was indeed thinly populated but good arable land was scarce, and no doubt the returned exiles claimed a good deal of it on the strength of ancient deeds. The Jews of Palestine did not follow the

[4] Jer. 39:10. But poor does not mean 'meek' and these fellahin, conscious of their number, felt that they were quite able to take care of themselves and of Judea. Ez. 33:24; cf. 11:15.

[5] This list has perhaps been inflated. Cf. Batten, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 273.

[6] The latter had been told clearly that they were the hope of Israel. Jer. 24:1-10; Ez. 11:16-21; 33:25-29.

returned exiles in their Messianic dreams.[7] History was written later by some who were not their friends, namely the Deuteronomists and writers of the school of P. But even when the worst will have been said,[8] everyone must admit that the Palestinian Jews at least occupied to some extent the land of Israel; we think that they did even more. Out of this retrograde and unenlightened community, had risen at the beginning of the exile the writers of elegies now contained in the book of Lamentations. Towards the close of the exile, another unknown poet and prophet arose and gave to his people the series of messages found in Is. 40-55. The text of Is. 41:27a has suffered beyond recovery, but the second part of the verse is clear, "I will give to Jerusalem one that telleth good tidings." This Jerusalem is the ruined but still 'holy city,' where the uncircumcised and the unclean shall no more enter (Is. 52:1). Indeed she is told to "shake herself from the dust, to arise and sit down" (Is. 52:2), a metaphor that cannot apply to the Jewish settlement on the Euphrates. We claim that "he who telleth glad tidings" (Is. 41:27) is the prophet himself.

If Deutero-Isaiah had lived in Babylonia, we should expect a writer of his value to show his familiarity with Babylonian religious customs. Indeed he refers to Bel (the common name for Marduk at the time) and Nebo (Is. 46:1) but everybody in Palestine was familiar with these names. A prophet living in Babylonia would certainly have referred to the Moon-God Sin, for he would have known that Nabunaid slighted Marduk, cut down his endowments and compelled him to do homage to Sin;[9] the priests of Marduk, and probably those of Nebo as well, bore Nabunaid no good will; they paid him in kind and, if the fall of Nabunaid was followed by any ecclesiastical re-arrangement, it was probably a blow to the worship of Sin, and certainly a temporary exaltation of Marduk, and not of Jahveh, who was for the Babylonians an obscure Amorite God. There are in

[7] The men referred to in Zech. 6:12 are not natives of Palestine but returned exiles.

[8] The עם הארץ in Ezra 4:4 were taken usually as 'the Palestinian Jews'; but Dr. Batten has shown (*Ezra-Neh.*, p. 157) that we must read here the plural, following the Greek text in Esdras.

[9] Cyrus Cylinder, 5 Rawl. 7, 35. Transl. in Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, 381, 383.

the second Isaiah two or three allusions to diviners (Is. 44:25; 47:12-13; cf. also 47:9c), but they are very vague, quite different from the short but vivid description of Ezekiel (Ez. 21:21). The astrologers and diviners of Babylon were known all over the world, as were also its merchants (Is. 47:15), and other features of a big city. Allusions to the rivers of Babylon (Is. 44:27; 45:1), its treasures (45:3), its trees and canals (44:4; 50:2) are not remarkable instances of couleur locale. Deutero-Isaiah was endowed with many literary gifts but he was evidently not a travelled man and could not describe as well as Isaiah (Is. 18:1-2) or Ezekiel (Ez. 27) a locality that was beyond his ken.[10]

It has been said that Deutero-Isaiah must have lived in Babylon because he is quite familiar with the use of incense and fragrant cane in public worship (Is. 43:23, 24), but these had been used in Israel before the exile.[11] We find in Is. 45:7 a clear statement of Jahveh's uniqueness:

> I am he who forms Light and creates Darkness,
> Who produces welfare and (creates) calamity.

Since the days of Saadya one or two commentators[12] have seen in this verse a statement aimed at Persian dualism. If this were true, it would be an argument for making Deutero-Isaiah and of his hearers neighbors of Persia, for Palestinians were not aware of the tenets of the religion of Zoroaster. But we know that, in the Persian religion even as late as the days of Darius, the conception of Ahura-Mazda was not different from the doctrine of Jahveh found in Is. 45:7.[13] As for the dualism

[10] The picture in Is. 41:18 is not that of a Babylonian landscape; that of 44:4 is vague but like the former applies to Palestine. Critics who think that both passages are descriptions of Babylonia pay a poor compliment to Deutero-Isaiah's powers of description. We claim that he described well what he knew.

[11] For the use of incense cf. 1 King 7:48; Jer. 19:13; 33:4; cf. 2 King 23:12; Jer. 32:29; Zeph. 1:5; and the altar of incense found at Taanak, Vincent, *Canaan*, 180. Cf. also Gen. 37:25; 43:11. For the use of the fragrant cane Jer. 6:20. Aromatic herbs were burned at funerals (at least in cases of plague) by the Hebrews (Amos 6:20) as among the Babylonians, where the smoke of incense drove away the evil spirits.

[12] A. Kohut, *ZDMG.*, XXX, 716 f.

[13] Cf. Yasna 44:5; J. H. Moulton, Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, IV, 993; *Early Zoroastrianism*, 220, 291.

of the Magians, if we can reconstruct it, it was as unfamiliar to the Jews of Babylonia as to the less cultured Palestinian community. Indeed Is. 45:7 would be more probably aimed at another myth, namely that of the fight between the Sun-God, whose weapon was the flood of light (the *abubu*), against the hordes of Chaos (Tiamat). This myth was familiar to Deutero-Isaiah as to most Semites. He alludes to it very clearly (Is. 51:9) in a poetical interpretation of the Exodus, saying to Jahveh:

> "Art not thou he who hewed Rahab in pieces
> And thrust through the dragon."

Long before the days of Isaiah, it had become an integral part of the Hebrew tradition that in ancient days Jahveh himself had fought against Chaos a more than titanic conflict. In order to explain an allusion to this belief, a personal contact of Deutero-Isaiah with Babylonian rhapsods is not at all necessary.

In Isaiah 50:11 there is an obscure reference to a rite of fire-walking:[14]

> Behold, all ye that kindle a fire,
> And surround yourselves with firebrands,
> Go through the blaze of your fire,
> And the firebrands that ye have kindled.

We know of no such rite in Babylon; the Shurpu and Maḳlu rituals and even the Babylonian practice referred to in Epistle of Jeremy 43, are altogether different. But we know of fire-walk rites among Asia Minor tribes[15] and the desert nomads.[16]

[14] On these rites cf. Lang, *Modern Mythology*, 1897, p. 148-175; *Magic and Religion*, 1901, p. 270-294; W. Mannhardt, *Wald und Feldkulte*,[2] 1904, 565; Frazer, *Golden Bough*, 3d ed., II, 327-329; V. 114 ff., 168; XI, 1-20; E. W. Hopkins, *ERE.*, VI, 30, 31; Tuchmann, in *Mélusine*, VIII, p. 160; Crooke, *The Popular Folklore and Religion of N. India*, II, p. 315; Gaidoz, *Etudes de mythologie gauloise*, 1886, p. 27-28; P. Lowell, *Occult Japan* (1894), pp. 47-62.

[15] Cf. Strabo, XII, 2, 7, quoted by Frazer, *GB.*,[3] X, p. 14.

[16] This is not a mere supposition. There are few traces of fire-worship among the Arabs. Jauhari refers to the fire alhula, the sacred fire of the tribe. Cf. W. R. Smith, *Kinship and Marriage*,[2] 1903, p. 58 n. To this day the Arabs do not blow a candle with their mouth. Cf. similar taboos in Frazer, *GB.*,[3] II, 240-241; VIII, 254; X, 133. The case given by Frazer, III, 136, is different. Among the Arabs of North Africa there

There is no other reference to this rite in the Old Testament,[17] for the worship of Melek could not be described in such terms. Whatever its nature is, the allusion to the rite of fire-walking does not help us in our search for the home of Deutero-Isaiah except in so far as it points to the exclusion of Babylon.

The idols spoken of by the prophets are either of metal or of wood. In a description of the latter (Is. 44:13-16) it seems that the carpenter did not have to go very far to find a suitable tree, even a cedar tree (Is. 44:14). It was not so in Babylonia; lumber was scarce and cedars had to be brought from Amanus and the Lebanon. Palm-tree wood was abundant but cannot be curved. Indeed most statues of the gods were of imported stone when made for the temples, or of clay, when for popular use. Only portable statues of the gods would have been made of wood. In the present stage of archaeological research we can say no more,[18] but on the whole, it seems clear that the prophet's description applies to images of the gods more likely to be found outside of Babylonia. It is true that the author of the Epistle of Jeremy inveighs at length against wooden images overlaid with silver and gold as being specifically Babylonian (Jeremy 4, 8-10, 20, 30, 39, 45, 50, 55, 57, 58, 71). But the place of composition of the Epistle of Jeremy was probably not Babylon but Egypt. It is, moreover, a late document; the work of a prosaic writer who has found his theme in Deutero-Isaiah (Is.

are fire-walk rites called *'Anṣara* (عنصرة). Cf. E. Doutte, *Marrakech*, 377-381; *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 1903, p. 565-574; Westermarck, *Folklore*, XVI (1905), p. 28-47; Destaing, *Revue africaine*, 1906, 362-363; Desparmet, *Arabe dialectal*, 2d part, p. 133. The practice was known in Egypt (Destaing, *op. cit.*, p. 364) and in Syria. Cf. Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, VI, Anonymous Pilgrim, p. 14-15; VII, Felix Fabri, I, 191. Makrizi (*Khitat*, II, 474) witnesses to its existence among the Jews. Moslem writers knew that the practice was pre-Islamic and thought that it was borrowed from the 'people of the Book.' Probably so, but the 'people of the Book' had simply preserved a popular practice.

[17] In Ez. 28:14 the prince of Tyre is described as walking through the "stones of fire." These are either flashing precious stones (aban isati, in Assyrian) or the constellations surrounding the mythical North.

[18] Evidently wooden statues decayed more easily than others. The only wooden sculpture from Assyria-Babylonia is a small lion now in the Louvre. *Cf.* Handcock, *Mesopotamian Archaeology*, 1912, p. 236. There is a reference to a statue of cedar covered with bronze plate in a Sumerian inscription of An-am. *Cf.* Clay, *Yale Babylonian Collection*, p. 47.

44:9-19) and in the unknown authors of Jeremiah 10:1-16 (Jer. 10:3-5) and of the first part of Psalm 115 (Ps. 115:4).

More important is the fact that the Second Isaiah mentions almost wholly trees that do not thrive in Babylonia, cedar, oleander, myrtle, pine-tree, elm, box-tree (Is. 41:19; 55:13), cypress, oak, fir-tree (Is. 44:14), but are found frequently in Palestine, while he never refers to the palm-tree, the tree par excellence of the Lower Euphrates. The only trees named by him that are found in both countries are, so far as I know, the acacia (Is. 41:19) and the poplar (*'arabah*) (Is. 44:4).

Deutero-Isaiah knows that the Chaldeans were good sailors (Is. 43:14). This was common knowledge. How could we otherwise account for the fact that the Sumerian ma-lah was adopted as a term to designate a sailor in Assyrian, in Syriac, in Hebrew, and in Arabic?

The Second Isaiah considers himself as being in the center of the earth (Is. 48:5: cf. 49:12 and probably 43:14), namely Jerusalem. Three times he declares that Cyrus comes from the East,[19] and once that he comes from the North (Is. 41:25). A Babylonian would usually have described Persia as being North; he would scarcely have called it east, most certainly not a far country as Deutero-Isaiah does (Is. 46:11). If on the contrary the writer was living in Palestine he would consider Persia as being geographically in the East, but since Jahveh was living above Jerusalem (Is. 43:14), Cyrus would eventually come to the holy city from the North and thus the prophet was quite logical when he said:

> "I have raised up one from the North, and he is come,
> From the rising of the sun, even one that called upon my Name" (Is. 41:25a).

We should not expect an inhabitant of Babylon to refer so often to the "isles," meaning evidently Cyprus and other islands of the Great Sea (Is. 41:1, 5; 51:5); still less to call Mesopotamia, Ur and Harran, the end of the earth, as Deutero-Isaiah does.[20]

[19] Is. 41:2, 25; 46:4. The exilic author of Jer. 51:48 who lived in Babylon says that her enemies come from the North.

[20] Is. 41:9, whether it refers to Abraham in the past or to Israel then. Cf. Is. 5:26 for a similar statement by a writer who certainly lived in Judea.

Some have supposed that "here" (פֹּה) in the difficult verse Is. 52:5 refers to Babylonia, but the context is against this interpretation. Not only does the prophet speak in verse 11 from the point of view of one outside of Babylon ('Come out from *thence*') but in this very verse 5, the Lord speaks of the people as 'taken away'; the only place from where they might have been taken away is of course the home-land above which Jahveh still abides and to which he will *bring* the spiritually blind (Is. 52:16). The only countries referred to in the Second Isaiah are all around Palestine, namely, Lebanon (Is. 40:16), Sela (Is. 42:11), Kedar, Egypt, Ethiopia, Seba (Is. 42:3; cf. 45:14). The reference to Kedar and Sela is particularly interesting. The man in the street of Babylon would not have thought of these small countries, but they were very near to Palestine; indeed Sela was now possessed by Arabs, akin to the people of Kedar, enemies of Edom, and therefore, ipso facto allies of Israel.

The enemies of Israel seem to be dwelling in hills and mountains,[21] indeed mountains and forests are referred to frequently (Is. 44:23; 54:10; 55:12), more than we should expect from a Babylonian. There are frequent references to the sea, which would rather favor a Judean, for he could see it from his mountains, while it is beyond the horizon of a Babylonian. Deutero-Isaiah is very much concerned with the lack of water,[22] a condition familiar to the Palestinians, but not to the exiles living in well-irrigated Babylonia.

> The poor and needy seek water . . . there is none;
> Their tongue is parched with thirst (Is. 41:17).

Judging from conditions he knew, he seems to have supposed that water was scarce like milk and wine in Babylon and had to be bought with money (Is. 55:1). No doubt it was so, but at a very cheap rate. He depends upon abundant rains and even melted snow (Is. 55:10) to cause fertility. He says in the name of God:

[21] Is. 41:15. This applies to the Edomites, but not to the Babylonians. Indeed the deliverers of Israel, Medes and Persians, came from the mountains.

[22] Is. 41:17. Not referring to the wilderness, but to the land where the writer dwells.

I will open rivers on the bare heights,
And springs in the midst of the valleys;
I will make of the wilderness a marsh,
And of the dry land watercourses (Is. 41:18).

This is clearly not a picture of a Babylonian landscape, but rather of Syrian lands. Marshes were already too many in Babylonia and an increase of them would have been no blessing. While in Babylonia agriculture depends on the well-regulated inundations of the Tigris and Euphrates, Deutero-Isaiah, being a Palestinian, expects God to pour water from heaven (Is. 44:3).

On the one hand Deutero-Isaiah has hazy political notions when he talks of the Golah; he seems to consider that the exiles were downtrodden slaves, prisoners in a dark dungeon (Is. 42:7). He wants them to escape from Babylon (Is. 48:20; 52:11), trusting in the Lord who can build up for them in the desert a miraculous highway, level and straight, commodious, well shaded and garnished with wells (Is. 48:21; cf. 43:19-20; 49:9, 10). He is very bitter against Babylon perhaps because he does not know her well.[23] On the other hand, the author is very familiar with conditions in Palestine; the people are few and insecure:

"They are all of them snared in holes,
And hidden in prisons."[24]

No doubt this would not have been true in Babylon where peace and prosperity reigned; the description is here of villagers who scarcely dare to leave their retreats because their land was raided by hostile bands,[25] so that often their bread was failing.[26]

[23] Is. 47-48:14. The author of Jeremiah 50-51 is also bitter against Babylon, but he is a nationalist, a disciple of the D School, and lacks the breadth of soul of Deutero-Isaiah. Ezekiel has nothing to say against Babylon.

[24] Is. 42:22. Cf. 42:7; 49:9, and the use of עני ואביון (Is. 41:17).

[25] If we must take the people described here as being the exiles, the description is so inaccurate, that the writer cannot have been an eye-witness, and this point remains an argument for making him a Palestinian Jew.

[26] Is. 51:14. One can scarcely apply this to Babylon, a land of plenty where even slaves were well treated. Is. 58:10—admittedly written in Palestine—is parallel to Is. 51:14.

The oppressors of Israel are many, worthy of the name of robbers (42:24); they blaspheme the name of Jahveh (Is. 52:5), an imprudent feat of rashness that a Babylonian would not have indulged in but that would come quite naturally to an Edomite, a "profane" son of Esau. The prophet in his hatred of the Edomites and their allies restrains even to these small tribes the epithet of destroyers of Jerusalem and declares to her that henceforth, "thy destroyers shall go forth of thee" before the coming of her children flocking back to Jerusalem (Is. 49:17). A Babylonian Jew could not say that the Chaldeans would go forth of the Golah, but a Palestinian Jew would yearn for the day when the Edomites would evacuate Hebron and the Negeb, and when the Jewish community would enlarge the place of her tent (Is. 54:2, 3). The exiles were mostly city people and a prophet speaking to them would scarcely mention the ruined little towns of Judea, but to one living in a Palestinian village the situation was heartrending.[27] The comparison of the Lord's rule to that of a good shepherd (Is. 40:11) would be quite natural to one living in a country where, owing to the scarcity of population, most of the land had been turned to pasture lands (Is. 7:21-25) and not in Babylonia where the tilling of the ground and the cultivation of palm-trees was far more important than the breeding of cattle.

The Second Isaiah is not aware of Ezekiel's teaching[28] or in sympathy with the spirit of Deuteronomy that fashioned however the mind of the exiles. He ignores priestly ideals or Messianic dreams, being thus like the Palestinian Jews. He does not show any traces of apocalyptic tendencies, so evident in Ezekiel 38-39, which played such an important part in the formation of religious ideals among the returned exiles.

A certain similarity between the language of Cyrus' Inscription and that of Deutero-Isaiah was shown by Kittel in *ZAW*, 1898, 149-162, and the argument was developed and extended to Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions by Sellin (Der Knecht

[27] The waste places mentioned in Is. 51:3 are perhaps the city of Jerusalem itself. Cf. Is. 52:9. Is. 44:26 shows that, as we might expect, many cities of Judah were in ruins.

[28] Is. 55:3-4 (cf. 42:6; 49:8) is inspired by Jer. 23:5-6 rather than by Ez. 34:23. Is. 54:11-12 is totally different from the description of the ideal city in Ez. 40-48.

Gottes, 131-134) in defense of his thesis that the Ebed-Jahveh was Jehoiachin. As we leave the Songs of the Servant out of this discussion, we need not dwell here on Sellin's argument. More appropriate is the comparison made by Jeremias[29] between Is. 40:13; 55:8-9, and that famous text 4 Rawl.² 60* 34-38. The similarity is striking and yet the context is quite different; the attitude of the Babylonian religion is decidedly on a lower plane. Moreover, the study of Comparative Religion has taught us that similarity of form is not incompatible with originality of thought. It is said that the use of the words 'take hold of the hand' (Is. 41:13; 45:1) shows the influence of the Babylonian language[30] where the expression *kata ṣabatu* is well known. This is a rather misleading statement. The expression, take hold *of the right hand* (Is. 41:13; 45:1), is not specifically Akkadian, and the expression *kata ṣabatu* can only be equated as far as form goes to החזיק ביד found twice in Deutero-Isaiah (42:6; 51:18); but the similarity is only superficial; in both passages, the meaning of החזיה ביד not only differs from *kata ṣabatu*, to help, but it is similar to the use of החזיק ביד in pre-exilic writers, where Babylonian influence is out of the question (Gen. 19:16 (J) *bis;* 21:18 (E); Ju. 16:26 (J); Jer. 31:32; cf. Hos. 11:3). The expression "call by name" (קרא בשם) is rare in Hebrew [Is. 43:1; 45:3; Ex. 31:2; 35:30 (additions to P)] and it is not Babylonian.[31]

The term "my shepherd" (Is. 44:28) is indeed applied to Assyrian and Babylonian kings,[32] but the image equally found in pre-exilic Hebrew writings (2 Sam. 5:2; Jer. 3:15; 23:1-8; Mic. 5:3; Nah. 3:18). As for the use of an uncommon word for cup (קְבַעַת) (Is. 51:17, 22); it does not prove a Babylonian influence. The root is well known in all Semitic languages.[33]

[29] Jeremias, *Altes Testament in Lichte des Alten Orient,*² 571; English edition, II, 273. Cf. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels,* 167.

[30] Kittel, *ZAW.,* 1898, 160; Whitehouse, *Isaiah,* II, 34, 71.

[31] Kittel, *op. cit.,* 150-160, erroneously compares it to *zakaru šuma,* which is a different idiom, found very frequently in pre-exilic Hebrew as קרא שם.

[32] Kittel, p. 160, n. Kittel prefers, however, to read רֵעִי my beloved, but this is quite impossible. First, because the text is good. Secondly, because the term רֵעַ implies some degree of equality.

[33] Vollers, *ZA.,* IX, 185.

and the Arabic form of the word (*ḳub'at*) is in fact nearer than the Assyrian to the Hebrew. One may lay, moreover, as a general principle that it is pretty nearly impossible to ascribe with certainty Babylonian origin to purely Semitic words. We know too little of ancient Aramaic to speak dogmatically in the matter of Semitic Babylonian lexicography and to apply our results to Hebrew with any degree of certainty.

One might say that it is hard to conceive that out of a poor community of fellahin and shepherds such a great prophet as Deutero-Isaiah arose. The answer is that, in the East, literature has often flourished among nomads and shepherds. Amos was a shepherd and perhaps the author of Job was a nomad. The authors of Lamentations belonged to the "poorest of the land" left by Nebuchadrezzar in Palestine. Moreover, some of the Jews of Egypt might have returned to Judea before the end of the Babylonian hegemony, and even a down-trodden community can in half a century develop itself. Indeed, it is rather remarkable that, as late as the Second century, some learned Jews ascribed the words of Deutero-Isaiah to Jeremiah. Cf. 2 Chron. 36:21. May we infer from this statement that the Second Isaiah had really been a disciple of Jeremiah (although not a hearer of the prophet)? The book of Jeremiah was edited by Deuteronomists, the descendants of his persecutors, churchmen who for the first time in history canonized a great heretic. But the real disciples of Jeremiah—if he had any—would probably have been in Palestine or in the Egyptian Diaspora. Whether this view is correct or not, no one can tell with certainty, and yet one may well say that, while from the Golah rose a group of reformers (Deuteronomistic scribes, Ezekiel, Nehemiah, Ezra), from the hitherto slighted Western Jews arose idealists (Second Isaiah, author of Ruth, author of Jonah). The latter are in the true sense of the term descendants of Jeremiah by a kind of spiritual, if not actual succession. The prophecies of the Second Isaiah may have been added to those of the first because there was a vague recollection that he also had lived in Palestine.