ARE THERE ANY MACCABAEAN PSALMS?

Moses Buttenwieser
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati

On the question of Maccabaean Psalms there has been a wide divergence of opinion, some critics going so far as to claim that fully half the Psalter is Maccabaean, while others find only four or five Maccabaean Psalms, and a few, even, none at all.

Strange to say, the question has been thought to hinge absolutely on the date of the conclusion of the Canon, the close of the various collections that make up the Psalter, and the date and final redaction of Chronicles—points which are all of deep interest to the Biblical scholar, but which are comparatively irrelevant to our question. It seems to me, the one really important point in the discussion of this question, the only one that has a distinct bearing on it, has been lost sight of, and that is the passing of Hebrew as a spoken language, in post-exilic times, and its supplantation by Aramaic.

The dying out of Hebrew is so frequently ignored in the historical surveys of those times, or mentioned only cursorily, as if it were a fact of little consequence, that I feel justified here in drawing attention to it as an event of extraordinary importance, one which must be carefully borne in mind, not only in deciding whether certain Psalms are Maccabaean, but in determining the date of many other post-exilic products. The fact that the importance of this event has been overlooked, has interfered seriously with our understanding of post-exilic Jewish history from the last decades of the Persian down to the Maccabaean period.

The real problem connected with the prevailing belief in Maccabaean Psalms is not, as Gesenius a century ago formulated it, whether the close or final redaction of the various collections making up the Psalter, and the conclusion of the Old Testament canon, in general, can be placed as late as the Maccabaean period,[1] but whether a Maccabaean date for any of the Psalms is reconcilable with the fact that as early as the beginning of

[1] See *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*, Ergänzungsblätter, Halle, 1816, No. 81.

the third century B. C. the Hebrew language had entered on a stage of rapid decadence, which ended in its dying out altogether as a spoken tongue.

I

When did Hebrew cease to be a spoken language? Can it be ascertained when Aramaic took the place of Hebrew as the language of the people? I believe this can be ascertained, or deduced, with a certain degree of positiveness, from the linguistic character of two sources, the Hebrew original of "The Wisdom of Ben Sira" and the Book of Daniel.

The linguistic character of Ben Sira is somewhat of a puzzle at first. The language is apparently choice, but somehow the effect is missing. One is conscious of a certain disturbing element, which interferes with one's aesthetic enjoyment. A closer examination shows what the trouble is. Everyone grants that for literary effectiveness elegant diction alone is not sufficient. There must be a fitness of the language used to the thought expressed. And it is just this quality that is lacking in the writings of Jesus ben Sira. There is no vital relation of form to thought. There could not be in writings which, like his, not merely show no originality, but which abound in phrases and sentences taken piecemeal from other writers and strung together, often regardless of the context. As Schechter and Taylor have pointed out, Ben Sira exploited the Biblical writers to an almost incredible extent.[2] Taylor's remark is to the point: "The words which he (Ben Sira) uses are not all his own, his book being more or less a tissue of old classical phrases like a modern school-composition in a dead language."[3]

If other editors and critics have failed to see this, and have even claimed that "the language of Ben Sira is classical," and that his "style stands throughout on an altogether higher level than that e. g., of Chronicles and Ecclesiastes,"[4] it can only be

[2] Cf. the list of quotations given in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, edited by Schechter and C. Taylor (Cambridge, 1899), pp. 13-28.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. vii.

[4] A. E. Cowley and Ad. Neubauer, *The Original Hebrew of a Portion of Ecclesiasticus (XXXIX. 15-XLIX. 11)* (Oxford, 1899), p. xiii; cf. also N. Peters, *Hebräischer Text des Buches Ecclesiasticus* (Freiburg, i.B. 1902), p. 85*; R. Smend, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach* (Berlin, 1906), p. xliii.

that they were misled by the favorable impression produced, at first glance, by the large amount of Biblical phraseology in the book.

As a matter of fact, Ben Sira's style, or I should rather say, his writing of Hebrew, is exceedingly faulty. In the first place, his grammar is poor, but I should like to pass over this point for the present. Apart from the grammatical errors, the wrong use of words, showing a misunderstanding on the part of the writer, may be pointed out, also the still more frequent occurrence of improper combinations of words and phrases, especially Biblical phrases.

A few examples will suffice to illustrate the two latter points. I should say that numerous examples might be taken from any part of the book; but I have purposely chosen them, in the main, from the two hymns, 33:1-13a, 36:16b-22c and 51:1-12e,[5]-(16),[5] since it has been maintained that these might well have a place in the Psalter:[6]

הניף ידו על "to brandish one's hand" or "shake one's fist at" is confused (33:3) with הניף יד "to wave the hand," while in another passage (47:4c) it is incorrectly used with the meaning "he reached out his hand for."

בין is wrongly used (16:23) with the meaning "to reason" or "to think." Note also the phrase תיסד שריש (3:9), which does not express anything.

נגד "in the presence of," is wrongly used (37:5 and again 51:2) with the meaning "against the attack of."

To give one other example of the wrong use of prepositions באמונתו ובענותו בחר בו, 45:4: בְּ with the meaning "out of" can be used only when denoting the motive from which the subject acts.

A very poetic phrase used in the Psalms is שערי מות, "the gates of death"; Jon. 2:3 there occurs, on the other hand, the equally effective מבטן שאול שועתי "from the innermost part of Sheol I cry for help." Ben Sira fuses the two into משערי שאול שועתי, "from the gates of Sheol I cry for help" (51:9), which is clearly absurd.

[5] According to the numbering in Smend's text-edition.

[6] Cf. Th. Nöldeke, "Bemerkungen zum hebräischen Ben Sira," in *ZAW.*, XX (1900), 92.

Another such combination—they are most numerous—is גבור ישעי, "the hero of my help" (51:10). The stumbling block for Ben Sira in this case was, no doubt, Zeph. 3:17, יי אלהיך בקרבך גבור יושיע, "The Lord thy God is in thy midst who helps like a hero." This accusative of comparison Ben Sira did not understand.

שפלת מארץ תדברי of מארץ, Is. 29:4, "thou shalt speak humbly from the ground," which, as the parallelism shows, is equivalent to מעפר, "out of the dust," he joins to the familiar phrase הרים קול (51:9), which invariably means "to shout."

One other example is extremely interesting, חצי לשון מרמה, "the arrows of a deceitful tongue" (51:6). This no doubt is to be traced to Ps. 120:3f., where the question, "What gives thee and what bestows on thee לשון רמיה a deceitful tongue?" is answered by חצי גבור שנונים, "Sharpened arrows of a warrior."

We may now consider the question of Ben Sira's own Hebrew, when he does not copy Biblical writers. A careful analysis of his book bears out what has already been observed by Schechter, that his language proper is the Neo-Hebraic idiom as met with later in the Mishnah and the kindred Rabbinic literature.[7] To mention some of the linguistic characteristics which prove this, as well as the charge that his Hebrew is exceedingly faulty:

Ben Sira has no longer any feeling for the use of the tenses, and accordingly, as in Neo-Hebraic and in the later Aramaic dialects, he, to a great extent, substitutes for them the participle with the personal pronoun.

He very often omits the pronominal suffix in cases where the substantive requires it, e. g. הכאף ראש, 4:7, instead of ראשך; בכר רוח, 7:11, instead of רוחו; הניף יד על, 33:3, instead of ידך; העיר אף וישפך חמה, ib. v. 8, instead of אפך and עצת לבב הבין; חכיתך, 37:13, instead of ע' לבך. Some of these cases are probably Grecisms, as e. g. במאמר ובמעשה 3:8, the corresponding Greek phrase of which is ἐν λόγῳ καὶ ἐν ἔργῳ.

He does not distinguish between the predicate use of a noun and its use as subject, but in both these cases he frequently construes the noun without the article; cf. e. g. ראש כל מעשה

[7] See *op. cit.*, p. 13.

דבר 37:16; ומושלת בם כליל לשון, *ib.* v. 18; מכנו מועד תואר שמים והדר כוכב, *ib.* v. 9. (The last two examples show another mistake which is common with Ben Sira, that of using the singular of substantives for the plural; a particularly striking instance of this is ירבה אוהב, 6:4.) On the other hand, in 43:27, הוא הכל, he uses the article with the predicate-noun.

In cases of participial clauses used attributively, he often omits the article where Hebrew grammar demands it; cf. e. g. רחם על עם נקרא בשמך, 36:17; הלא דון כניע אל מות רע כנפיש נהפך לצר, 37:2. In the last example there is another mistake, the omission of the pronoun of relation. Ben Sira does not seem to have had any idea of this grammatical point.

Perhaps in no way does Ben Sira betray his deficient knowledge of Hebrew more than through his ungrammatical construing of substantives with their governing verbs or nouns, and his use of the wrong preposition. Such constructions are by no means isolated, they occur with great frequency, cf. e. g. על גנב נברא הבשת,[8] 5:14c; פן הוא נוכח פניו ילך, 8:15; תסֵיב את נחלתך 9:6—the required indirect object is lacking; אשר פי שנים רישו 18:32, instead of ברישו or פי שנים הבין, 36:20; הן עדות למראש מעשיך רעה תשיג 12:5, 37:13, with the meaning "give heed to," and צפה 51:7, with the meaning "look out for," are incorrectly construed with the accusative.

One other telling point, which has already been noted by Nöldeke, must be mentioned here; contrary, not only to Hebrew, but to common Semitic usage, Ben Sira construes an objective suffix of the second person with the verbal form of the same person.[9]

The inferiority of Ben Sira's writings, whether considered from the point of view of language or of literature, cannot be ascribed to any lack of ability as a writer, for, as we know from his grandson's prologue to the Greek translation of his book, Ben Sira was esteemed by his age as a man of great literary fame and attainments; if notwithstanding this, he did not suc-

[8] The stumbling block for Ben Sira was very likely Is. 4:5, וברא יהוה על כל כבון הר ציון ועל מקראה ענן וגו׳.

[9] See Nöldeke's article mentioned above, p. 87, where four such examples are cited.

ceed in writing idiomatic, and grammatically correct, Hebrew, there can be only one explanation, namely, that, at the time when he wrote, between 190-170 B. C., Hebrew had ceased to be a spoken language and was used for book purposes only.

This conclusion is fully borne out by a consideration of the peculiar make-up of the Book of Daniel. The problem of the Book of Daniel is its bilingualism—a feature which is the more puzzling, as without any apparent reason, the Hebrew breaks off in the middle of the sentence, and the continuation follows without interruption in Aramaic. ארמית of 2:4, most Biblical critics rightly hold, is not object of וידברו, but, as in the self-evident parallel case, Ezr. 4:7, was primarily an interlinear gloss, which was put in to indicate the beginning of Aramaic, but which subsequently got into the text itself.[10] Hardly less perplexing is it when we find the Aramaic break off, in its turn, at the end of chap. 7, and the Hebrew begin again with chap. 8, for, inasmuch as chap. 8 expatiates on the most essential parts of chap. 7, the two chapters are logically inseparable. It is because of this circumstance that the solution of the problem offered by Marti cannot be accepted. Marti rightly concludes that originally the book was written in Aramaic throughout, but he thinks that the beginning, i. e., chap. 1-2:4a, and the close of the book, *viz.*, chaps. 8-12, were later translated into Hebrew in order to make its acceptance into the Canon possible.[11] In such a case, however, it might reasonably be assumed that either the whole book would have been translated into Hebrew, or at least the transition from Hebrew into Aramaic, and *vice versa*, would not have been made so abrupt as we find it at present.

The explanation, to my mind, is to be seen in another direction. With the exception of the prayer, 9:4-19, which was evidently taken over by the author of Daniel from the established liturgy, of which it had long been a part, the Book of Daniel originally was written in Aramaic. An analysis of the linguistic character of its Hebrew parts reveals the fact that, in syntactical structure and in the use of certain word-forms, these parts are so closely modelled after Aramaic, that they must, unquestionably, be a translation from an Aramaic original by one who did

[10] This was pointed out as early as 1860 by Oppert, *Éléments de la grammaire Assyrienne.*

[11] See K. Marti, *Das Buch Daniel*, 1901, p. ix f.

not know how to write Hebrew proper. From this, and from the further fact that the Book of Daniel, unlike the Wisdom of Ben Sira, was not written for the learned, or for such as were sufficiently educated to have a book-knowledge of Hebrew,[12] but, like all apocalypses, was intended for the masses, it may be definitely concluded that the language spoken at the time by the people must have been Aramaic. As the object of the Book of Daniel was to fill the hearts of the people with faith and fortitude, to encourage them to steadfastness by pointing out that the gloom and bitter trials of the present were but preliminary to the bliss awaiting them in the future, it would have failed of its purpose had it not been written in Aramaic.[13] It was translated into Hebrew, either at the time it was written, or possibly a few years later, when the Maccabaean victories had added to its prestige. When later the inclusion of the Book of Daniel into the Canon was decided upon, there existed, no doubt, several copies of the Aramaic original, which, we may assume, had been sent broadcast among the people, while of the Hebrew translation only certain parts still existed, *viz.*, the first sheet, which contained chap. 1 and chap. 2 down to v. 4a, and the last sheets, containing chaps. 8-12. Had a complete Hebrew copy existed at that time, the Book of Daniel would have been embodied into the Canon entirely in Hebrew, for Hebrew, and not Aramaic, was the language of Sacred Literature; as it was, the parts missing in Hebrew had to be taken from the Aramaic original.[14]

[12] Cf. the Prologue to the Greek translation of The Wisdom of Ben Sira.

[13] Similarly the apocalypse 1 Enoch VI-XXXVI, which antedates the Book of Daniel by but a few years, was originally written in Aramaic.—For the date and original language of 1 Enoch VI-XXXVI see R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, Oxford, 1912, pp. lii, lvii ff., and 1.

[14] Charles C. Torrey, "Notes on the Aramaic Part of Daniel" (in *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. XV, July, 1909), pp. 241-251, in explanation of the peculiar alternation of Hebrew and Aramaic, advances the view that the Book of Daniel consists of two distinct works: chaps. 1-6, the "Story of Daniel," written between 245 and 225 B. C., and chaps. 7-12, the "Visions of Daniel," written in the Maccabaean period. He argues that chaps. 1-6 were originally written entirely in Aramaic and were attached to chaps. 7-12 by their Maccabaean author, who "wished to write his Visions in Hebrew, for reasons which are sufficiently obvious"; but in order to give the two parts "the appearance of a unity," the Maccabaean author "made a dove-tail joint . . . He wrote the

Thus, it seems to me, the Book of Daniel furnishes conclusive proof that at the time of the Maccabees Aramaic was the spoken language of the Jewish people, and explains, not only why idiomatic Hebrew could no longer be written in those days, but also why an original production in Hebrew like Ben Sira's should contain so many grammatical blunders.

Is the prevailing belief in Maccabaean Psalms compatible with this fact? The extreme views that declare half, or more, of the Psalms to be of Maccabaean or post-Maccabaean origin may, I think, be ignored.[15] As to the more moderate views, according to which a considerably smaller number would come in question (the number, with the different critics, varies from four to twenty-six), it is not necessary for our purpose to enter into a discussion of the conflicting opinions regarding any one Psalm. Rather this purpose will best be served by taking together all those Psalms which by one or the other group of scholars are held to be Maccabaean, and dealing with them collectively. These Psalms are: 2, 20, 21, 30, 33, 44, 60, 61, 63, 74, 79, 80, 83, 102, 110, 115-118, 135-138, 145-150.[16] (Psalms 108 and 101 have

first of his Visions, chap. 7, in Aramaic." And as "the dove-tailing process had need of another step in order to be absolutely finished, he translated into Hebrew the introductory part of the older narrative."

In regard to this rather artificial theory it may be remarked (1) that von Gall, *Die Einheitlichkeit des Buches Daniel* (1895), showed conclusively that the Book of Daniel forms a uniform whole; (2) Torrey considers the contradiction between the date of the final vision, chaps. 10-12, "*in the third year of Cyrus* king of Persia," and 1: 21, "ויהי רנ׳אל *to the first year of King Cyrus,*" an especially strong point in support of his view of the composite character of the Book of Daniel. But this contradiction is more apparent than real, for in the first place, in 10: 1 the LXX read Ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ τῷ πρώτῳ Κύρου, and in the second place, in 1: 21, as H. Ewald, *Die Dichter des Alten Bundes*, III (1868), *ad loc.*, had already pointed out, the text in all probability is incomplete—a conclusion which is the more legitimate as it does away with the unlikely meaning of ויהי, "he continued" or "*er erlebte*"; (3) the decisive point is that in chaps. 8-12 it is quite as evident as in 1-2: 4a that the Hebrew is modelled after Aramaic; (4) as to Torrey's view that "the Maccabaean author wished to write his Visions in Hebrew," it may be noted that 1 Enoch 6-36, which, as already remarked, antedates the Book of Daniel by about ten years, points to the very opposite conclusion.

[15] Among recent exegetes, this extreme view is taken by B. Duhm, *Die Psalmen* (1899), pp. xii, xx-xxii.

[16] Cf. among others F. Giesebrecht, "Über die Abfassungszeit der Psalmen," in *ZAW.*, I (1881), pp. 304 ff., 325 f.; W. Robertson Smith,

also occasionally been included, but these two must be eliminated; the former for the reason that its two parts, vv. 2-6 and vv. 7-14, are word for word identical with 57:8-12 and 60:7-14 respectively, and the latter, because there is absolutely nothing in its contents to justify its inclusion.)

Of the Psalms I have enumerated, Psalms 30, 116-118, 137, 138,[17] and probably also 33, are of such literary perfection that they must have been produced while Hebrew literature was still at its height; while others, like Psalms 2, 20, 21, 60, 61, 63, 102, 115, 146, and 147, show such a freshness and finish of style that it is obvious that they must have been written before any decadence of language had become manifest. A third group, finally, comprising Psalms 44, 69, 74, 79, 83, 135 and 136, 145 148-150, and also the fragmentary Psalm 110, though clearly showing a decided decline in literary skill, are all without exception written in faultless, idiomatic Hebrew. The language shows no trace of the decomposition which is so markedly in evidence in Ecclesiastes, written in the second part of the third century B. C. From the point of view of language, therefore, it is excluded that even any of this third group of Psalms could be a product of the Maccabaean period. To be convinced of this, one has but to compare those of them which, from a literary point of view, are most inferior, with the two hymns of Ben Sira to which reference has been made, or with Ben Sira's panegyric, chaps. 44-50, of the heroes of old. Such a comparison will show that the difference in style and language could not be more radical.[18]

The Old Testament in the Jewish Church (1892), pp. 207-211; T. K. Cheyne, *The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter* (1895), pp. 89-100, 195, 198-201, 455-458; F. Baethgen, *Die Psalmen* (1897), pp. xxiv-xxix, also the discussions of the various Psalms enumerated on p. xxix.

[17] There can be no doubt that Psalm 138 belongs to this group; it is so genuinely pious in spirit and so wonderfully simple in expression that it must be considered a model Psalm.

[18] Occasionally one hears the view expressed that, even though Hebrew had died out as a spoken language, there might have been writers who succeeded in writing idiomatic Hebrew. In support of such a view Judah ha-Levi's poems are usually referred to as an example of classical Hebrew as late as the twelfth century A. D. A closer examination, however, of Judah ha-Levi's poems reveals the fact that, in syntactical structure and word-order, they no more approximate Biblical Hebrew than mediaeval Latin resembles classical Latin. Judah ha-Levi's Hebrew was uncon-

This conclusion receives additional weight from Ben Sira 51: (1)-(16). Verses (1)-(15) of this piece are in structure and contents parallel to Ps. 136, but are so palpably inferior to the latter, that it can hardly be doubted that this is the primary product, and Ben Sira 51: (1)-(15) an imitation. As to the concluding verse (16), this verse is word for word identical with Ps. 148: 14, but, whereas in the Ben Sira passage the verse is very crudely joined to its context, in Ps. 148, verse 14 is not only a logical continuation of the verses which precede it, but is a necessary part of the whole; it is in fact the key to the Psalm. The inference cannot be evaded that Ben Sira 51: (16) is a quotation from Ps. 148: 14, and with this we have a direct proof of the pre-Maccabaean origin of at least this particular Psalm.

II

But the question will be asked, how are the contents of the three groups of Psalms enumerated above to be reconciled with the conclusion of their pre-Maccabaean origin? Is not the historical background of many of them, that is, the struggle described in some, and the victory celebrated in others, clearly to be identified with the Maccabaean crisis and its ultimate issue? I may, for convenience's sake, introduce the discussion of this side of the question with the summary statement that the conditions alluded to are described in such general terms that, as far as they are concerned, the Psalms in question might have been written at almost any time during the two centuries from the closing decades of the Persian down to the Maccabaean period.[19]

sciously determined by the structure of his mother tongue, just as the Latin of any mediaeval writer was influenced by the language peculiar to his native country. Language, it must be remembered, being organic, is capable of growth and development only so long as it is part and parcel of the life and soul of a people. It would be as impossible to revive it artificially as it would be to breathe life into a dead body.

[19] In this connection it is significant that the upholders of the theory of Maccabaean psalms show no unanimity as to which psalms may be classed as Maccabaean. T. K. Cheyne's position on this question well illustrates the general uncertainty. In *The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter* he is quite convinced of the Maccabaean date of at least twenty-seven Psalms, including Ps. 44, 74, 79, and 83, whose Maccabaean origin is widely thought to be well substantiated, but in his *Introduction to Isaiah*,

The one exception is Ps. 74, which contains a definite picture of contemporary conditions; but for the identification of this picture it is not necessary to turn to the Maccabaean conflict. In fact, strictly speaking, the expression, משאות נצח, "perpetual ruins," said in v. 3 of Zion, would hardly be applicable to the Maccabaean conditions, when one considers that the devastation wrought by Antiochus Epiphanes and his generals in the Temple-precinct lasted only five years at the most; nor would the statement, שלחו אש במקדשך, "they have burned down thy sanctuary" (v. 7), accord with the actual amount of damage suffered by the Temple, as we know it from I Macc. 4:38; II Macc. 1:8; 8:33: both sources state expressly that only the gates of the Temple were burned. The clue to the historical background of this Psalm, as we shall see later, is rather to be found in certain events of pre-Maccabaean times.[20]

It is important to note in this connection that also in the case of Ps. 83, which is very definite in one particular, that of specifying the nations attacking Israel, there are difficulties in the way of identifying the occurrences referred to in the psalm with the Maccabaean struggles. The clue to the situation described is commonly held to be found in the wars against the neighboring nations carried on by Judas Maccabaeus and Simon in 165-163 B. C. (after the rededication of the Temple), as related in I Macc. 5. But, it must be pointed out, the nations enumerated in Ps. 83 tally but partially with those mentioned in I Macc. 5; and further, if the psalm were of Maccabaean origin, Asshur, i. e., Syria, instead of being referred to as having joined and aided the attacking nations, would undoubtedly have been spoken of as leading or as being aided by them. Theodoret of Mopsuestia's explanation, accepted by various modern critics, that Samaria is meant by Asshur, is untenable for the reason that, aside from the fact that it is nowhere called Asshur, Samaria at that time was not hostile to the Jews (I Macc. 5:66, *Marisa* is to be read instead of *Samaria*[21]). Theodoret's explana-

pp. 360 ff., he recedes from this view, and agrees with W. Robertson Smith that Ps. 74 and 79 are really a product of the time of Artaxerxes Ochus, while in regard to Ps. 44 he admits the possibility of such a date.

[20] See below, p. 245.

[21] Cf. E. Schürer, *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, 3d ed., vol. I, p. 212, n. 7; and *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments, übersetzt von E. Kautzsch*, vol. I, p. 49, n. 1.

tion rather evades the issue, as does also that of Hitzig and Duhm, that inasmuch as the Syrians had at the time only a comparatively small army on the Judaean borders, they participated only indirectly in the wars by inciting the small neighboring nations against the Jews.[22] However, these two differences are secondary in importance to the fact that the wars in which Judas Maccabaeus and Simon were engaged from 165-163 B. C. were all waged on the soil of the neighboring nations, and that although undertaken for the protection of the Jews living among these nations, they were aimed at the consolidation and expansion of Jewish power, while in Ps. 83, as v. 13 shows, אשר אמרו נירשה לנו את נאות אלהים, "They that say let us take in possession the fields of God," i. e., the Holy Land, the neighboring nations, united against the Jews, have attacked them in their own country for the distinct purpose of gaining possession of it. This radical difference between the Judaean situation of the years 165-163 B. C. and that reflected in Ps. 83 precludes the Maccabaean origin of the latter. The similarity in language between I Macc. 5:2, "They resolved to destroy those of the tribe of Jacob that were in their midst," and Ps. 83:3-4, "They take crafty counsel against thy people . . . They say, come let us destroy them, so that they cease to be a people," is to be explained by the fact that the Maccabaean writer made use of the phraseology of the psalm. If, notwithstanding these facts, the view prevails that there is substantial proof of the Maccabaean origin of Ps. 44, 74, 79, and 83, it is to be attributed to a fundamental error in the customary presentation of post-exilic Jewish history.

Owing to the dearth of direct historical information concerning the two centuries preceding the Maccabaean period, we have been accustomed, in dealing with post-exilic Jewish history, to make the serious mistake of identifying the conflict that ensued between Hellenism, or to put it more accurately, between the policy and ambitions of the Seleucidae, and Judaism with the wars waged by the Maccabees for their religious liberty, whereas, in reality, these latter constitute but one, and that the closing, act of a struggle which had been extended over a century and

[22] *Cf.* F. Hitzig, *Kommentar zu den Psalmen, ad loc.* and B. Duhm, *Die Psalmen, ad loc.*

a half, from the death of Alexander the Great down to the Maccabaean age. And this is not stating the matter fully. For the oppression actually began during the last half-century of the Persian period, and the rule of Alexander but marks a time of respite for the Jews.

As to the condition of the Jews under Artaxerxes Ochus (358-337 B. C.), whatever we have of direct information has come down through such late writers as Josephus and Eusebius.[23] Of the two records preserved in Josephus, one is the naive story (*Ant.* XI. 7, 1) about the desecration of the Temple by Bagoas[24] (because the High-priest John had slain his own brother Jesus in the Temple) and the seven years' tribute imposed by the satrap on the people as a punishment for the High-priest's crime. This story, it is safe to conclude, rests on misinformation both in regard to the cause of the trouble and in regard to the limit and severity of the punishment inflicted; for the brief record in Eusebius, *Chronicon*, ed. Schöne, II, 112f., and in Syncellus, ed. Dindorf, I, 486, and Orosius, III, 7, both of whom quote Eusebius, justifies the inference that the Jews took part in the revolt of Syria, Phoenicia, and Cyprus against Persia in the years 351-348 B. C., and that, as punishment, many of them were led away captive to Hyrcania by Artaxerxes Ochus. That the record of Eusebius and his successors is of greater historical value than the embellished account in Josephus there can be no doubt. Instead of being an objective report, the account in Josephus comments on the wickedness of the crime committed by John, and represents the penalty imposed by Bagoas as punishment inflicted by God. Note especially the indignation which Bagoas is supposed to have manifested because it was in the Temple that the crime was committed; also his query when the people tried to prevent him from entering the Temple: "Am I not purer than the body of him who was slain in the Temple?" Because of these features the story in Josephus is to be considered, not as the report of a different event, but as the

[23] The perplexing report in Solinus, *collect.* XXXV. 4, about the conquest of Jericho was formerly included in the records about Artaxerxes Ochus. This report, however, as Th. Reinach points out, refers probably to occurrences at the time of Ardashir I, the founder of the Sassanian empire (see *Semitic Studies in Memory of Alex. Kohut*, 1897, pp. 457-462).

[24] In Josephus he is called Bagoses.

legendary account of the same occurrences that are recorded by Eusebius and his successors.[25]

But while there is scarcity of direct information, indirect light is shed on the conditions of those times by the records of the following period, foremost among which are the legends clustering around Alexander the Great.

The oldest records of the Alexander legend are found in Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* VII. 7, 4 and *Ant.* XI. 8, 4f. The former consists of a fragmentary reference to the apocalyptic notion that Alexander shut up the nations of Gog and Magog behind iron gates; the latter contains the well-known story about Alexander's alleged visit to Jerusalem. The story is in substance as follows:

When Alexander, after conquering Gaza, was on his march to Jerusalem to conquer it, the people of Jerusalem, with the High-priest Jaddua in his priestly robes at their head, went out to meet him in order to offer peaceful submission. Alexander seeing the festive procession from a distance, ran ahead of his army and prostrated himself before Jaddua in worship of the God to whom Jaddua ministered. To his generals, who expressed their astonishment at his action, Alexander declared that when at Dios in Macedonia he had been deliberating how he might conquer Asia, this very priest had appeared to him in a dream, promising to conduct his armies and give him dominion over Persia. And now that he beholds this man in the flesh, he feels assured that he is under divine guidance, and that he shall succeed in defeating Darius and in conquering the empire of the Persians. Having spoken these words, Alexander proceeded with the High-priest and the people to Jerusalem, where he sacrificed in person unto Jahveh in His Temple. On being shown in the Book of Daniel, where it was declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, Alexander took this revelation as referring to himself, and well pleased,

[25] Since writing this article, I find that the view that Josephus shows himself "ill-informed" in the above record has already been expressed by W. Robertson Smith. "The whole Bagoas-story," he remarks, "looks like a pragmatical invention, designed partly to soften the catastrophe of the Jews, and partly to explain it by the sin of the High-priest." (See *op. cit.*, p. 438.)

dismissed the people.[26] The following day he gave the Jews full religious liberty and also granted their petition that they might be exempt from taxes every seventh year.

This story, it has rightly been concluded, is only an excerpt from a more elaborate apocryphal work about Alexander, elements of which reappear some centuries later in Pseudo-Callisthenes and in various offshoots of this work, as also in several apocalyptic writings.[27] Proof of this is to be seen in the fact that the story of Alexander's dream of future world-dominion and of his visit to the Temple at Jerusalem, though not found in Pseudo-Callisthenes, reoccurs in a later offshoot of this work, namely, in the Himjaritic version of the Alexander legend by Ibn-Hisham.[28] The story of the dream as told in Ibn-Hisham is, however, at such variance with that in Josephus that it cannot possibly have been derived from the latter, and there is no other conclusion possible than that both stories go back to one common source. This conclusion is borne out also by the version of Alexander's visit to the Temple at Jerusalem as found in two apocalyptic products, *viz.*, in the so-called "Syriac Alexander-legend," and in a poetic product closely related to this, "The Alexander Homily of Jacob of Sarug" dating from 514 or 515 A. D.[29]

[26] The form in which this incident is told here is of later origin; from later versions it can be shown that it must have read quite differently in the original legend.

[27] See F. Kampers, *Alexander der Grosse und die Idee des Weltimperiums in Prophetie und Sage*, Freiburg, i. B. 1901, pp. 51 ff.; and also Alfred v. Gutschmid, *Gesammelte Kleine Schriften*, vol. IV, p. 350.

[28] The Himjaritic text of this Alexander legend has been published by Lidzbarski in "Zeitschrift für Assyriologie," vol. VIII, pp. 278-311; and *ib.* p. 272, and also in vol. VII, p. 107, he discusses briefly Ibn-Hisham's story of the dreams (in Ibn-Hisham's story Alexander dreams on successive nights). These dreams are treated at still further length by I. Friedlaender, *Die Chadirlegende und der Alexanderroman* (Leipzig, 1913), pp. 194 ff.

[29] The "Syriac Alexander legend" is found in all the MSS. of the Syriac version of Pseudo-Callisthenes, to which it is appended. It has been published and translated into English by E. A. W. Budge in *The History of Alexander the Great, being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes . . . with an English Translation and Notes* (Cambridge, 1889), pp. 255-275 (text), pp. 144-158 (translation), where also a translation of "The Alexander Homily of Jacob of Sarug" is given, pp. 163-200; the Syriac

These later offshoots of the legends which were at one time current among the Jews about Alexander interest us for our purpose only in so far as they show that Alexander the Great must have possessed for the Jews of his day and of subsequent times a fascination similar to that which Cyrus had for Deutero-Isaiah. He is not only claimed to have confessed Jahveh, but, like Cyrus, he is proclaimed the God-sent Messiah, or more accurately, the precursor of the Messiah. This apotheosis of Alexander can, to my mind, be explained only by the supposition that the closing period of the Persian reign must have been for the Jews a time of great suffering, and that Alexander's world-rule brought them for a brief space enjoyment of liberty.

This supposition is borne out by a contemporary source consisting of only a few verses, *viz.*, Is. 14:29-32[30]—a sort of *vaticinium post eventum,* in which the apotheosis of Alexander by the Jews for the first time makes its appearance. The oracle was evidently written some time after the conquest of Gaza by Alexander, for this event is referred to in v. 31[31] in a way that shows that it has already occurred.

The Philistines, namely Gaza, had sent messengers to the Jews to ask that they join in the opposition to Alexander, but had met with a refusal. The answer as expressed by our document reads: כי יהוה יסד ציון ובה יחסו עניי עמו, "Jahveh has founded Zion, and there the afflicted of His people find refuge"; to which may be added the parallel thought from the preceding part: ורעו בכורי דלים ואביונים לבטח ירבצו "The first-born of the poor shall pasture, the needy lie down in security." The expressions, אביונים and עניי עמו, "the needy" and "the afflicted of His people," are not used with the religious connotation they sometimes have, but as the phrase, בכורי דלים, "the first-born of the poor," that is, the poorest, the most miserable, shows, are to be understood in a literal sense. Our source then

text of the Homily has been published by Knös, *Chrestomathia Syriaca,* pp. 66-107. On the date of this apocalypse and its relation to the Legend cf. Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans* (Wien, 1890), p. 30 f.

[30] As to the alleged date of the oracle (v. 28), cf. M. Buttenwieser, *The Prophets of Israel* (1914), p. 276 f.

[31] Between כי כיצפון עשן בא and ואין בודד במועדיו some statement must have dropped out, for the suffix of במועדיו lacks its antecedent.

describes the situation of the Jews at that time as most pitiable—their condition, no doubt, was the result of the cruel rule of Artaxerxes Ochus. Yet our author is convinced that the change for the better has arrived, and what gives him this assurance is the fact that מישרש נחש יצא צפע ופריו שרף מעופף "Out of the root of the serpent has issued a basilisk, a flying dragon is its fruit."

The hero referred to in these enigmatic words is none other than Alexander the Great. To take the second part of the verse first, "a flying—or a winged—dragon is its fruit" finds its explanation in the historical fact that, at the time of the conquest of Egypt, Alexander was declared to be the son of Jupiter-Amon by the priests of the god, and that in this same period Jupiter-Amon and his son Horus are directly represented by the winged dragon.[32] Thus in the story in Pseudo-Callisthenes, I, 6f., 10, about Amon's intercourse with Olympias, the mother of Alexander, the god appears, mainly, in the form of the dragon. It should be added that this identification of Alexander with the solar deity not only forms a prominent feature in the later legends, but receives due emphasis even in the works of the contemporary writers.[33]

[32] The winged dragon has always been the foremost attribute of Amon-Re and his son Horus; cf. A. Erman, *Die Ägyptische Religion*, pp. 11 and 13, and also p. 246.

[33] In this respect may be compared the description, Diodor I, 15, 6-8; 17-20, 5, of Dionysos-Alexander's victorious conquest and rule of the universe which Diodor took from another old source and put in among his excerpts from Hecataeus of Abdera: The incomparable hero, the ancient writer declares, is everywhere acknowledged as god and especially after his death is shown the highest honors (cf. P. Wendland, *Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur*, 1907, p. 69, note 3; and Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie des Klassischen Altertums*, vol. V, p. 1039 f. and also p. 674). Even more conclusive are the resolutions passed in 324 B. C. by the Athenians that Alexander be worshipped as Dionysos (Dinarch. I, 94, Hyper. I fragm. VIII, Diogen. Laert. VI, 63), and the fact recorded by Arrian, VII, 23, 2, that in 323 deputations from Greece arrived in Babylon to worship Alexander as god (cf. J. Kaerst, *Geschichte des Hellenistischen Zeitalters*, 1901, I, pp. 389 ff.; Kampers, *op. cit.*, p. 129, note 3, and Pauly-Wissowa, *ib.*, p. 1040). The worship of Alexander as Dionysos explains, to my mind, why in Pseudo-Callisthenes, I, 6 f., one of the changing forms in which the god Amon appears and holds intercourse with Olympias is that of Dionysos (this feature is common to all the versions). Similarly Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans*, p. 3, points out the

The first part of the verse, "Out of the root of the serpent has issued a basilisk," is but another expression of the belief of that age in Alexander's divinity. Proof of this I find in Pseudo-Callisthenes, where, after the story just referred to, of Alexander's divine descent from Jupiter-Amon,[34] it is related (I: 11) that some time prior to Alexander's birth an egg was laid by a bird in the lap of Philip, and this egg, dropping to the ground, broke open; whereupon a serpent crept out, encircled the egg, and then died before it could creep back into the egg. The serpent that came out of the egg was interpreted by the magician to represent Alexander who, after conquering the universe, should die before he could get back to his native country.[35] At the bottom of this oracle is the primitive notion

fact that the tale in Pseudo-Callisthenes, *ib.* and 10, of Amon's appearing in the form of the dragon and holding intercourse with Olympias is found in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* and *Justin*, XI, 11, 3; XII, 16, 2, and concludes from this that the tale must have been circulated during the lifetime of Alexander, probably at the monarch's own request.

[34] The feature that Amon's intercourse with Olympias was a deception wrought by the magic art of Nectanebus—a feature of which there is no trace in the older sources—is in all probability an invention of Pseudo-Callisthenes, and may be ascribed to this author's tendency to rationalize.

[35] This is the version of the story in Text A of Müller's edition of the Greek Pseudo-Callisthenes (*Pseudo-Callisthenes* primum edidit Carolus Müller, Paris, 1846) according to three Paris MSS., which represent three different versions of the work, A, B, C. The story as told in Version B, on which, because of its superior text-condition, Müller's edition is principally based, and as told also in the Syriac Version (edited by Budge, *op. cit.*) and in the Armenian version, varies in but one point from that of A. According to these versions the serpent seeks to creep back into the egg, but dies as soon as it puts its head inside the shell.—The Armenian version has been made accessible to those who do not know Armenian by Raabe's retranslation into Greek: R. Raabe, ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ. *Die Armenische Übersetzung der Sagenhaften Alexander-Biographie* (*Pseudo-Callisthenes*) . . . Leipzig, 1896.

In view of the importance of the story of this portent for the interpretation of Is. 14: 29, I shall quote it in full according to B of Müller's text-edition: *Μετὰ δὲ ἡμέρας τινὰς καθεζομένου τοῦ Φιλίππου ἔν τινι τῶν βασιλικῶν συμφύτων τόπων, ὀρνέων διαφόρων πλήθη ἐνέμοντο ἐπὶ τῷ τόπῳ, καὶ αἰφνιδίως ὄρνις ἀλλομένη εἰς τὸν κόλπον Φιλίππου τοῦ βασιλέως ἔτεκεν ὠόν. Καὶ ἀποκυλισθὲν ἐκ τοῦ κόλπου αὐτοῦ πεσὸν εἰς τὴν γῆν ἀπερράγη, ἀφ' οὗ ἐξέπεσε μικρὸν δρακόντιον, ὅπερ πολλάκις κυκλεῦσαν ἔξω τοῦ ὠοῦ, πάλιν ἐζήτει εἰσελθεῖν ὅθεν ἐξῆλθεν. Καὶ βαλὼν ἔσω τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐτελεύτησεν. Ταραχθεὶς δὲ Φίλιππος μετεστείλατο τινὰ σημειολύτην καὶ ὑφηγήσατο αὐτῷ τὸ γεγονός. Ὁ δὲ σημειολύτης εἶπεν ἐμπνευσθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ. "Βασιλεῦ, ἔσται σοι υἱός, ὃς περιελεύσεται τὸν ὅλον κόσμον πάντας τῇ ἰδίᾳ δυνάμει ὑποτάσσων,*

held by the Greeks that their national heroes, just as the chthonic gods and local heroes, manifested themselves in the form of the serpent. There is frequent reference to this notion in Greek writers, but it will suffice to quote from Plutarch, Cleom. 39: *οἱ παλαιοὶ μάλιστα τῶν ζώων τὸν δράκοντα τοῖς ἥρωσι συνῳκείωσαν* ("The ancients associate the serpent above all other animals with their heroes").[36] As a matter of fact, this notion, it will now be seen, is expressly referred to in the interpretation of the portent of the egg and the serpent by the words, *ὁ γὰρ δράκων βασιλικὸν ζῶόν ἐστι* of the Greek version and by ܡܛܠ ܕܚܘܝܐ ܚܝܘܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ of the Syriac version. The first part of our verse, Is. 14:29, is then clear: "The root of the serpent" is the egg that dropped from the lap of Philip, that is to say, in its last analysis, Philip himself; and the basilisk, the more formidable serpent that issued therefrom, is Alexander. The parallel second part of the verse tallies with this exactly: "its fruit" (the fruit of the root of the serpent) "is the winged dragon," Alexander deified.

The light thus shed by the Alexander legend, on the one hand, and Is. 14:29-32, on the other, on the condition of the Jews, both during the last period of the Persian rule and during the reign of Alexander, justifies us in concluding that what Josephus, *contra Apion.* I, 191 and 193, quotes from Hecataeus of Abdera (a contemporary of Alexander the Great) is genuine, that is, as regards the oppression which the Jews endured from the Persian kings and satraps and from their immediate Palestinian neighbors, and as regards the deportation of the Jews by the Persians.[37] The

ὑποστρέφων δὲ εἰς τὰ ἴδια ὀλιγοχρόνιος τελευτήσει. ὁ γὰρ δράκων βασιλικὸν ζῶόν ἐστι· τὸ δὲ ᾠὸν παραπλήσιον τῷ κόσμῳ, ὅθεν ὁ δράκων ἐξῆλθεν. Κυκλεύσας οὖν τὸν κόσμον καὶ βουλόμενος ὅθεν ἐξῆλθεν εἰσελθεῖν οὐκ ἔφθασεν, ἀλλ' ἐτελεύτησεν."

[36] For other references to this notion see Erwin Rohde, *Psyche,* I, pp. 196 (where also the above quotation from Plutarch is given), 242, note 3, 244, note 4, and also 254, note 2.

[37] This applies also in all probability to what Josephus, *ib.* II, 43, quotes from Hecataeus of Abdera about the privileges granted to the Jews by Alexander. It may be in place to remark that the view of H. Willrich (*Juden und Griechen,* 1895, pp. 20 ff., and *Judaica,* 1900, pp. 86 ff.) and of others that the entire excerpts in Josephus, *contra Apion.* I, 184-204, II, 43-47, are from Pseudo-Hecataeus is opposed by such distinguished Hellenistic scholars as Elter (*De Gnomologiorum Graecorum Historia atque Origine,* IX, Bonn, 1895, pp. 247 ff.), Mendelssohn (*Aristeae quae fertur ad*

Persian kings referred to by Hecataeus are no doubt Artaxerxes Ochus, whose oppression of the Jews we have already discussed, and his immediate predecessor Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-358 B. C.). This latter monarch waged war against Egypt during his entire reign, and when Egypt in 368-358 B. C. was joined in her revolt by the whole of Western Asia, inclusive of Syria, we know that Palestine was the scene of bloody battles.

The inference from all this is that, of the Psalms usually held to be Maccabaean, those speaking of religious persecution and tyrannous rule might just as well have been written, Ps. 74 included, during the time of Artaxerxes Ochus, whose rule was characterized, as we know from his reign of terror in Egypt, by extreme religious intolerance, while those Psalms which sound a note of triumph might easily be a product of the time of Alexander, the outstanding features of whose rule were religious tolerance and regard for the individualities of nations.

As to Ps. 74, W. Robertson Smith[38] and T. K. Cheyne[39] have pointed out that the references in this Psalm might well apply

Philocratem epistulae initium, Dorpat, 1897), and especially by Wendland (in his review of Willrich's *Judaica* in "Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift," XX, 1900, pp. 1199 ff.).

It should further be remarked that the treatises of Willrich referred to suffer from a grave methodical mistake. Willrich proceeds from the view that neither the excerpts from Hecataeus nor the Alexander and the Bagoas stories of Josephus are of any historical value whatever for the pre-Maccabaean times. He looks upon them as mere fabrications of Maccabaean and post-Maccabaean writers for the purpose of glorifying Judaism in the eyes of the non-Jewish world. The extent to which he is biased in his historical judgment by this erroneous view-point may best be seen from the fact that he considers the story of Alexander's visit to the Temple at Jerusalem as directly modelled after Agrippa's visit to Judaea (in 15 B. C.) as described in Josephus *Ant.* XVI, 2, 1-4 and Philo, *Legat. ad Caium*, § 37 (see *Juden und Griechen*, pp. 9-13). Willrich overlooks the fact that the central feature of the Alexander story in Josephus is Alexander's dream of future world-dominion—a feature which could not possibly be explained if the story were modelled after the account of Agrippa's visit to Judaea. This feature stamps the story as part and parcel of the Alexander legend, which, as we have seen, was already in the process of formation during the lifetime of Alexander the Great. There would be no other conclusion possible, even if we had not Is. 14: 29 32 to show that the Jews shared in common with their times the belief in Alexander's exalted position.

[38] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., vol. XX, p. 31; *op. cit.*, p. 207 f. and 438 f.

[39] *Introduction to Isaiah*, pp. 360 ff.

to events of the reign of Artaxerxes Ochus, for the deportation of the people in great numbers, carried out by this monarch, was probably preceded by the capture of Jerusalem and a complete or partial destruction of the Temple. In support of this conclusion Cheyne points to another probable product of this period, Isaiah 63:7-64:11, which likewise speaks of the burning of the Temple and the conversion of Jerusalem and all the country into ruins: "Thy holy cities have become a wilderness, Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our sanctuary, our glorious house, where our fathers praised thee, has been burned down by fire, and all our pleasant places have been turned into ruins" (64:9-10; cf. Ps. 74:3 and 7).[40] Note particularly 63:18, "Thy holy people possessed it but a little while, our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary" (מקדשך is to be construed with ירשו as well as with בוססו). This verse, to my mind, while furnishing conclusive proof that Is. 63:7-64:11 cannot be an exilic product, but must have been written after the Temple had been rebuilt, shows just as convincingly that the piece cannot have been written as late as the Maccabaean times. Had it been written in Maccabaean times, the statement that the people possessed the sanctuary *"but a little while"* (מצער) would not have been possible.[41]

As far as Ps. 83 is concerned, or any one of the psalms in question other than Ps. 74, it is impossible to arrive at an exact date because of the two circumstances expatiated on above, the lack of definiteness in the historical references of these psalms, and the lack of direct historical information about the conditions of the Jews in the fourth and third centuries B. C. Contrary, however, to the view expressed by Baethgen[42] and others

[40] שרפו of Ps. 74:8 is dubious textually as may be seen from *καταπαύσωμεν* of the Greek. Since נ׳נם of Sa is either to be considered as ellipsis for נכחיד נ׳נם, or in accordance with נובר אנון of Syr. is to be emended נכחידם (cf. Ps. 83:5), שרפו is perhaps, in accordance with the reading of the Greek, to be emended נשבית: to the meaning that we would thus get for Sb, "Let us abolish all the feasts of God in the land," Lam. 2:6 may be compared.

[41] Is. 63:18 refutes Duhm's interpretation of 64:10 (*Das Buch Jesaia*, 1902) that the author had in mind the stately former Temple destroyed by the Babylonians. Duhm's emendation of 63:18 a, לכה צרינו רשעים קדשך is the more arbitrary as the construction of this half verse is borne out by the variant reading *τοῦ ὄρους* of 𝔊 for נם of the Hebrew text.

[42] *Die Psalmen*, p. 254.

with reference to Ps. 83 that "such a general attack of the neighboring nations on Israel as that related in I Macc. 5 never occurred in any previous period," it is to be pointed out that what Hecataeus of Abdera actually reports about the enmity the Jews suffered from their neighbors during the Persian period, and what we are justified in inferring from his account, as to the control obtained in the country by these neighbors, who even "built themselves temples and altars," permits the conclusion that such a joint attack of the neighboring nations on Israel as that referred to in Ps. 83 might well have occurred during the latter part of the Persian rule.[43]

To recapitulate—examination of the source-material at our disposal furnishes ample proof that during the closing period of the Persian rule the Jews were reduced to an extremely critical condition, but that under the liberal policy of Alexander the Great they had reason to hope that a new era of political freedom had at last dawned for them.

[43] See Jos. *contr. Apion.* I, 191 and 193. Hecataeus' statement (§ 193) that the people who had come into the country built themselves temples and altars, for demolishing which the Jews were fined by the satraps, implies, as indicated above, that these resident strangers must have had a direct share in the politico-social control of the country, else they could not have erected temples and altars in the land, nor would the Persian satraps have punished the Jews for destroying them. This assumption of such a state of affairs for the latter part of the Persian rule is confirmed by another source, *viz.*, the Book of Job, the most probable date of which is the first quarter of the fourth century B. C. Job 15: 19 is a direct statement to the effect that at the time the book was written strangers lived in the country, and evidently in no mean numbers, for Eliphaz implies by vv. 17-19 that their influence is responsible for Job's heresy as betrayed by his challenge of the traditional belief in retributive justice: "To them (the fathers) exclusively the land was given, strangers did not reside among them."

There is then considerable evidence in Biblical sources to support the picture which we get from the records of Hecataeus and from that in Eusebius and his successors about the situation of the Jews during the latter part of the Persian reign. There is nothing to substantiate the web of arguments with which Willrich seeks to prove that neither the records ascribed to Hecataeus nor the account in Eusebius and his successors can be considered authentic, but are, both, outright fabrications. Willrich proceeds from the erroneous presumption that the Persian kings, without exception, practiced religious tolerance, and that the Jews, ever since the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, enjoyed, more than any other people, the favor of the Persian monarchs (see *Juden und Griechen*, p. 21 f. and *Judaica*, pp. 35 ff. and 91 ff.).

However, the freedom and untrammelled development which the Jews enjoyed under Alexander came to an end, as I stated a while ago, with this monarch's death, and this brings me back to my other statement that the wars of the Maccabaean period were but the closing act in a struggle which lasted through a century and a half. In 320 B. C., Palestine, Southern as well as Northern, was occupied by the armies of Ptolemy I, and in the struggle which ensued a few years later between Ptolemy and Antigonus it was the center of war for a decade or longer. To what extent the Jews were affected by this struggle may be seen from the fact that after the battle of Gaza (312 B. C.), in which the forces of Antigonus were defeated, Jerusalem was captured and razed by Ptolemy, and great numbers of the people, including the High Priest, were deported to Egypt.[44] Here again we find conditions which might well serve as historical background for Psalm 74.

Nor in the century and a quarter following the battle at Ipsus (301 B. C.) did the condition of the Jews undergo any material change. In the conflict that was carried on during this period between the Ptolemies and Seleucidae for supremacy over the Orient, Palestine was again and again the scene of devastating wars; and scanty as it is, the information which we have of these times is sufficient to show that each of these wars brought untold suffering to the Jews. We need not enter, however, into a review of the scattered references to the condition of the Jews contained in the fragmentary records of the contemporary Greek and Syriac historians, particularly as we have a much more

[44] This event is well attested. There is a record of it in Jos. *Ant.* XII, I, on the authority of Agatharchides of Cnidus, and another in Jos. *contr. Apion.* I, § 186, and in *The Letter of Aristeas*, §§ 12 f. and 35 taken from Hecataeus of Abdera. From the latter record we learn that the capture of Jerusalem and the subsequent deportation of the people occurred after the battle at Gaza, concurrently with the conquest of the other principal cities of Coele-Syria. The genuineness of the excerpts from Hecataeus in the Letter of Aristeas and in Jos. *contr. Apion.* is rightly upheld by Wendland; and as to the discrepancy between Josephus and the Letter of Aristeas, he points out that in the report of the latter of the forcible deportation of the Jews we have the true account, and that Josephus purposely altered his source in order to paint matters in more pleasing colors (see P. Wendland, "Der Aristeasbrief" in *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments übersetzt und herausgegeben von E. Kautzsch*, 1900, vol. II, pp. 1 f. and 6, note *a*).

illuminating fact on which to rest our case. The one event that tells the history of these troublous times more eloquently than could the most detailed records is the passing of Hebrew as a spoken language. This momentous event came to pass, as we have seen, in the course of the century and a half elapsing between the death of Alexander and the early part of the second century B. C. The conditions that brought it about were probably very like those which prevailed in England under Norman rule. The Jews must have lost their social as well as their political independence, and the Syrians constituted the ruling classes and upper strata of society, holding not only all the official positions, but monopolizing all the trade and commerce. The persistence of these conditions for upwards of a century and a half caused Hebrew finally to give way altogether to Aramaic.[45]

The half-century of the Babylonian exile, it will be remembered, had no deteriorating effect whatever on the Hebrew language. During and after the exile Hebrew literature flourished as usual. Moreover, in the period immediately preceding the two centuries in which Jewish history lapses into silence, some of the ripest works of Hebrew were produced, as, for instance, the Book of Job. It was the persistence, it is worth while to repeat, the persistence for generation after generation, of the untoward social and political conditions which became the lot of the Jews after Alexander's death, that finally led to the passing of Hebrew as the language of the people. The main point for our purpose is that by the time of the Maccabees Hebrew had given way to Aramaic, and in the light of this fact it is to be questioned whether there are any Psalms dating later than the middle of the third century B. C.

[45] In this connection it may be in place to call attention to an erroneous view of the Hellenization of Syria, still frequently met with, though refuted by Nöldeke more than thirty years ago. This is the view put forward by Mommsen (in *Römische Geschichte*, vol. V) that among the cultured classes of Syria, Aramaic gave way altogether to Greek. In his article, "Mommsen's Darstellung der römischen Herrschaft und römischen Politik im Orient" (in *ZDMG.*, XXXIX, p. 333 f.), Nöldeke shows conclusively, not only that Aramaic continued to be cultivated as a literary language throughout Syria down to the third century A. D., but that all through these pagan centuries it was the living language of the people, and that it was this living Aramaic tongue which, in the period of the Roman empire, appeared once more as the official language, even beyond the confines of Syria.