NOTES ON ISAIAH

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ISAIAH 13, 14

These two chapters which open the volume of Isaiah on the Nations, chaps. 13-23, are headed "Oracle of Babylon which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw." They are confessedly somewhat composite. For the present form of the prophecy that title is probably correct, but by pretty general consent the Taunt Song on the Destruction of Babylon, 14:3-21, is a thing by itself. Eliminating for a moment this taunt song and studying the prophecy without it, I think we shall find it true of the remainder that it is not properly an oracle of Babylon. Chapter 13 is an oracle of the Day of Yahaweh, of which the destruction of Babylon is but a part; although the culminating part. The real outcome of this day of Yahaweh is the deliverance of the captives of Israel and the punishment of the Assyrian great power. An analysis of the prophecy shows this plainly, as I think.

Isaiah 13:2-5, Yahaweh musters the host of His consecrated ones to ruin all the earth. It is the summons of Yahaweh to His mighty men to gather from the uttermost parts of the heavens to do His will, to be His tools to ruin all the earth.

Vv. 6-8 pictures the dismay and agony of the world in face of the woe that is to be! "Howl, for the day of Yahaweh is about to come"; and all the world is filled with consternation.

Vv. 9-22 is the Day of Yahaweh, itself.

V. 9 the day of desolation of the world.

V. 10 the day when the heavenly bodies cease their functions.

Vv. 11-12 the world is punished for its wickedness, and the proud and haughty are brought low, and mortals are made scarcer than fine gold.

V. 13 the heavens and earth tremble and quake.

Vv. 14-16 The frightened sojourners seek to return to their lands, apparently those who are sojourners of their own free

will, the foreigners that dwell in a great center like Babylon for their mercantile gain and profit. Now in the hour of calamity they would fain flee each to his people, but instead they perish miserably with their wives and children.

Vv. 17-18 this is the work of the barbarous Median invaders.

Vv. 19-22 Babylon is destroyed and made an utter waste.

All of this section 13:2-22 is poetry. Then follow a couple of verses, 14:1-2b, which are partly poetry and partly prose, prophesying the restoration of the captives of Jacob and Israel, who shall be brought back from their captivity by the peoples that now hold them captive; and they in their turn shall make slaves of these captors. Then, omitting the Taunt Song, follow vv. 24-25, the great work of destruction accomplished, Yahaweh swears the destruction of Assyria itself in His holy mountain.

Vv. 26-27 the conclusion. With the final destruction of the destroyers the plan of Yahaweh is fulfilled in this great world catastrophe which He has purposed.

The prophecy is one connected whole, and it attaches itself directly and obviously to events of Isaiah's own time. To understand this and to grasp Isaiah's references and the reason why the destruction of Babylon plays such an enormous part in the Day of Yahaweh, as he conceives it, one must consider the history of the period. The Israelites began to come in contact with Assyria in the time of Ahab, when Ahab was allied with Damascus against Shalmaneser II. At that time Assyria was an aggressive great power undertaking the conquest of the West. Then followed a period of almost a hundred years during which Assyria was quiet and the West remained undisturbed. During this period Assyrian power continually decreased, until the usurpation of the throne by King Tiglath Pileser in 745 B. C. With him a new era of Assyrian aggression commences and of a consequent close contact of both Israel and Judah with the Assyrian great power. Tiglath Pileser's new plans and methods for the conquest of the whole world kept all the lands on Israel's horizon from this time on in turmoil until the destruction of Nineveh almost one and a half centuries later. Both Israel and Judah took part in these struggles and under King Uzziah Judah appears to have been one of the leading states in the alliances against the Assyrian great power. The aggressions of that power brought it continually closer to Israel and Judah, and early in his

career as a prophet, when Ahaz refused to coöperate with the allies, Isaiah was brought face to face with the Assyrian program. The pacifist policy of Ahaz and others of his ilk played into the hands of Assyria, resulting in the fall of Damascus and Israel. The capture of Samaria and the deportation of their fellows of Israel made a profound impression on the Judeans and especially on Isaiah, both because of their kinship, religious and political, and because it meant their own impending doom. Accordingly Hezekiah reversed the policy of his predecessor and began to cast about for alliances to enable him to resist the Assyrian great power. It is with his reign that Judah finally became intimately and directly involved in the world war against Assyria. Tiglath Pileser had been succeeded by Shalmaneser IV, under whom the siege of Samaria began, and he by a new usurper, Sargon, under whom that city was taken and its inhabitants deported. He pressed his conquests to the borders of Egypt, and under him Judah was several times threatened, if not invaded. With the accession of his son, Sennacherib, in 704 B. C., the whole Assyrian world seemed to rise at once in rebellion against its tyrant and his reign is one of continuous warfare, with horrible devastation in all parts of the world, in which Judah was involved, but which centered especially about Babylon.

Babylon was at that time the religious and cultural center of the world. It possessed a prestige something like that of Rome in the Middle Ages. Mighty monarch and great conqueror as Tiglath Pileser was, he had found it expedient to take the hands of Marduk and be invested with the crown of Babylon in 730 B. C. The only way in which he could put an end to the perpetual disturbances which centered in Babylon, caused especially by Merodach-Baladan and his Chaldeans, was to satisfy the claims of Babylon to special recognition in accepting kingship by investiture from the high priest of Marduk. He could not afford to allow the great religious center, whose possession gave prestige and power, to fall into the hands of the Chaldeans or any others. His kingship of Assyria rested on the might of his arms. His kingship in Babylon must rest outwardly and apparently at least on something different. But because it was a religious center, whose influence was of the greatest value, as a wise statesman Tiglath Pileser took the hands of Marduk and

became king of Babylon. Sargon varied this policy slightly, becoming *shakkanak*, or viceroy, instead of king. The effect was, however, very much the same. It made him the ruler of Babylon, officially recognized as such by the priesthood of that city. Sennacherib reversed this policy. He did not recognize the priesthood of, or seek coronation from Marduk, but proclaimed himself king of Babylon without even visiting it, by his own authority degrading Babylon to an equality with all the provinces of Assyria. Babylonian records do not regard him as king from 704-702 B. C. They report Babylon for those years as without a king. The Assyrian records, on the other hand, regard Sennacherib a king of Babylon from 704 onward. Merodach-Baladan, the Chaldean, took advantage of the opportunity afforded by the natural discontent of Babylon and the consequent disloyalty of all the Babylonian regions and set himself up as king in Babylon, using his position as such to organize a rebellion against Sennacherib extending to the Mediterranean coast, and having likewise the support of the independent Egyptian great power. It was the prestige of the Babylonian leader which induced all the west land, including Hezekiah king of Judah, to throw off the Assyrian yoke.

Sennacherib acted promptly, and at once struck at Babylon as the *fons et origo mali* in his first campaign of 702. He drove Merodach-Baladan out of Babylon and set up Bel-ibni, a Babylonian, as a subject king in his stead. His own account of his treatment of the invaded countries shows us why the years that followed were in very truth a destruction of the world. He ravaged mercilessly; he carried off in his first campaign over 200,000 captives, men, women and children, besides numberless flocks and herds and a vast booty of gold, silver and the like, and destroyed unnumbered towns and villages. Among others who suffered in this expedition were the Medians. On occasion of any disturbance in the Assyrian empire the Medes were apt to invade the neighboring territory. They were barbarians and the Assyrian borderland often suffered very severely from their cruel raids, which were followed by reprisals, as in this case.

Having brought Babylon to subjection, in 701 B. C. Sennacherib conducted his famous expedition to the west. The account which he has given us of the desolation of Judah, the way in which its cities were destroyed, its territory ravaged, the immense

number of captives that were carried out of the land, together with flocks and herds and other booty, shows us that it was not only Babylon that was devastated in such fashion. That was a part of Sennacherib's policy of frightfulness and terribleness. The disaster which befell him in the West naturally weakened his position in the East, and in 700 B. C. he was obliged to conduct another campaign in Babylonia. Merodach-Baladan had returned. Bel-ibni, the puppet king, had been driven out, and the whole country again asserted its independence of the man who refused to recognize the necessity of receiving the crown from the hands of Marduk. Again Sennacherib drove Merodach-Baladan out of Babylon, and this time set up in his stead his own son, Ashur-Nadin-Shum, as king in Babylon. In 699 B. C. we find him in the northwest, conducting campaigns in Cilicia, Cappadocia and the neighboring regions, similar to those which he had conducted in Babylonia and in Judea. These were followed by other campaigns in various directions. In 694 B. C. we find him again in the South. The Chaldeans had transferred themselves to Elam, but in Elam they had found new support against Assyria. Elam had taken Babylon, captured Ashur-Nadin-Shum and set up in his place Nergal-Ushezib as king of Babylon. The account of the campaigns during the two following years is very confused, but this is clear, that in 692 B. C. Sennacherib was defeated and driven out of Babylonia. Three years later, in 689, he returned again, however, and this time he not only conquered but utterly destroyed Babylon.

Rogers in his History of Assyria, vol. II, gives this account of what he did, which fairly estimates the character of his act:

"Thereupon ensued one of the wildest scenes of human folly in all history. The city was treated exactly as the Assyrian kings had been accustomed to treat insignificant villages which had joined in rebellion. It was plundered, its inhabitants driven from their homes or deported, its walls broken down. The torch was then applied, and over the plain rolled the smoke consuming temples and palaces, the fruit of centuries of high civilization. All that the art of man had up to that time devised of beauty and of glory, of majesty and massiveness, lay in one great smoldering ruin. Over this the waves of the Euphrates were diverted that the site of antiquity's greatest city might be turned into a pestilential swamp. Marduk, the great god of the city, was carried away and set up in the city of Asshur, that no future settlers might be able to secure the protection of the deity who had raised the city to eminence.

"It was undoubtedly the hope and belief of Sennacherib that he had

finally settled the Babylonian question, which had so long burdened him and former kings of Assyria. There would now, in his opinion, be no further trouble about the crowning of kings in Babylon and the taking of the hands of Marduk, for the city was a swamp and Marduk an exile. There would be no more glorification of the city at the expense of Nineveh, which was now, by a process of elimination, assuredly the chief city of western Asia. But in all this Sennacherib reasoned not as a wise man. He had indeed blotted out the city, but the site hallowed by custom and venerated for centuries remained. He had slain or driven into exile its citizens, but in the hearts of the survivors there burned still the old patriotism, the old pride of citizenship in a world city. He had humbled the Babylonians indeed, but what of the Chaldeans who had already produced a Merodach-Baladan and might produce another like him, who would seek revenge for the punishment of his race and its allies in Babylonia? From a purely commercial point of view the destruction had been great folly. The plundering of the great city before its burning had undoubtedly produced immense treasure to carry away into Assyria, but there would have been a great annual income of tribute, which was now cut off; and a vast loss by the fire, which blotted out warehouses and extensive stores as well as temples and palaces. This historic crime would later be avenged in full measure. In any estimation of the character of the Assyrian people the destruction of Babylon must be set down by the side of the raids and the murders of Asshurnazirpal. It is a sad episode in human history which gave over to savages in thought and in action the leadership of the Semitic race, and took it away from the Hebrews and Arameans and the culture-loving Babylonians.''

With what consternation and horror Sennacherib's treatment of great and holy Babylon filled the whole world, including his own subjects and his own family, is shown by the action of Esarhaddon when he came to the throne nine years later, in 680 B. C. I quote again from Rogers' history:

''Esarhaddon was smitten with a great love for the ancient land with all its honored customs. His whole life shows plainly how deeply he was influenced by the glory of Babylon's past, and how eager he was to see undone the ruin which his father had wrought. As soon as the news of his father's death reached his ears he caused himself to be proclaimed as *shakkanak* of Babylon. In this he was going back to the goodly example of his grandfather Sargon. Sennacherib had ceased altogether to wear a Babylonian title. Babylonia was to him not a separated land united with his own, but a subject territory inhabited by slaves whom he despised. Esarhaddon did not even take the name of king, which in Babylonian eyes would have been unlawful without taking the hands of Marduk, now exiled to Assyria.

''In the very first year of his reign (680) Esarhaddon gave clear indications of his reversal of his father's policy. Babylon had been destroyed; he would rebuild it. No Assyrian king before him had ever set himself

so great a task. He did not live to see it brought to the final and glorious consummation which he had planned, but he did see and rejoice in a large part of the work. With much religious solemnity, with the anointing of oil and the pouring out of wine, was the foundation laying begun. From the swamps which Sennacherib had wantonly made slowly began to rise the renewed temple of Esagila, the temple of the great gods, while around it and the newly growing city the king erected from the foundations upward the great walls of Imgur-Bel and Nimitti-Bel. All these, as the king boasts, were enlarged and beautified beyond that which they had been in their former glory. Slowly through the reign along with the wars which must now be told went on these works of peace and utility, to find their entire completion in the reign of Esarhaddon's like-minded son."

Our prophecy, Isaiah 13, bears testimony to the effect of the destruction of Babylon upon the world at large, corroborating what we have ascertained from the Assyrian records. That destruction seemed to Isaiah, as to the men of his time, to be the very culmination of Yahaweh's visitation of the world, in which the Assyrians were His tools. Nothing was such an evidence of His wrath and His judgment upon the nations as this.

Incidentally I may say that the reference to the Medes in verses 17, 18 of Chapter 13 confirms the view here presented of the date of this prophecy. Gray in his Commentary on Isaiah says that this reference would fit equally either a later period, when Babylon was captured by Cyrus, or an earlier Assyrian period. He does not by the way refer this chapter to the date of the destruction of Babylon by Sennacherib in 689 B. C., and indeed one might suppose from his commentary that he was utterly unaware of this most startling and remarkable event, the only complete destruction of Babylon of which there is any record. The reference to the Medes in verses 17 and 18 does in fact fit perfectly the period of Sennacherib's reign, and it does not at all fit the later period of Cyrus's capture of Babylon. It is true that in the Greek historians two nations, Medes and Persians, are sadly confounded, and we so find them in the Book of Daniel, but both the Medes and Persians of Cyrus's time were civilized nations; the Medes, as represented in verses 17-18, are uncivilized hordes, the hordes of the Ummân Manda, whose conduct is precisely like that of the Scythians described in Jeremiah and Zephaniah:

"Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it.

"Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare the children."

The Medes first appear in history about the middle of the ninth century. Assyrian records have a great deal to say about them from the time of Tiglath Pileser onward. They are invaders of a wild and savage description who harry the border. Again and again Assyrian kings go into their land to punish them. This is the general relation of Medians and Assyrians up to and through the time of Sennacherib. Sargon, it is true, attempted to prevent these border raids by settling people from conquered territory in parts of their land, following the policy which commenced with Tiglath Pileser. So when he conquered Samaria, in 721 B. C., he deported some of the Israelites to Media, and similarly he transported Medes to Hamath. It should be noted that both by the deportation of Israelites to Media, and the importation of Medes to Hamath Judah in Isaiah's time was brought into a personal relation with the Medes which makes peculiarly apt his introduction of the Medes in this prophecy.

The prophecy contained in the thirteenth Chapter of Isaiah, together with the verses which I have indicated in Chapter 14, constitutes one consistent and natural whole. Isaiah was, as is evident from other passages in his writings, deeply impressed by the deportation of Israelites and the capture of Samaria in 721 B. C.; he looked to a restoration of the deported Israelites, and in his picture of the day of Yahaweh he sees Jacob and Israel brought back from their captivity in Assyria and Media to their own country. The unparalleled destruction and desolation of the world in Sennacherib's wars, culminating in the ruin and desecration of Babylon, with the removal of Marduk himself to Nineveh, was the judgment of Yahaweh upon the world by the hand of the Assyrian, which of course was bound to result in good to the chosen people, bringing back from the distant lands of the Khabur and Media the deported captives of Jacob and ending finally in the destruction of the hated Assyrians themselves in the holy mountain by a catastrophe vastly greater than that which befell them there in 701 B. C., and which itself so profoundly impressed the imagination of the prophet.

So much seems to me clear. With regard to the uncertain taunt song I find myself somewhat less certain. The song itself

(14:3-21) says nothing of Babylon, and is indeed not appropriate to Babylon. It appears to be rather a triumphal taunting ode on the fall of Assyria and of the city of Nineveh in 606 B. C. To this was prefixed the prose introduction, and also the prose conclusion added, in which Babylon is mentioned. The prose conclusion (vv. 22-23) attaches itself very well, however, to the account of the destruction of Babylon contained in Chap. 13:19-22 and may be part of the original prophecy. The prose introduction to the Taunt Song (14:3, 4a) belongs to the post-exilic period, and is, I should suppose, a part of the later editing of the prophecy. I am inclined to suppose that in some way verses 22-23, which were part of or a comment on 13:19-22, were removed from their original place, probably in its editing in the post-exilic period. When the Jews were rejoicing over their deliverance from Babylon, it was very natural to ascribe the whole prophecy to the capture of that city by Cyrus, in spite of the fact that Babylon was not then destroyed, and so to prefix to the Taunt Song, after the account of the return of the captives of Jacob and Israel (not the Jews be it noticed, but Jacob and Israel, who were what Isaiah was concerned with), these words:

"And it shall come to pass in the day that Yahaweh shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this parable against the King of Babylon, and say."

To sum up: The original prophecy was delivered under the influence of the destruction of Babylon by Sennacherib. This is contained in the thirteenth chapter with vv. 1, 2, 22-27 of Chap. 14. The Taunt Song (14:4b-21) dates from the end of the seventh century, after the destruction of Nineveh in 606 B. C. In editing these writings in the post-exilic period this was inserted in Isaiah's prophecy immediately after the announcement of the return of the Israelite captives from Assyria and Media, with an introduction (vv. 3, 4a applying it and with it the whole prophecy to the period after the exile, turning the capture of Babylon into its destruction, and making a prophecy of the day of Yahaweh into an oracle of Babel.

ISAIAH 24-27

If one notes the editorial work in the prophecies of Isaiah it will be observed that what we may call the First Book of Isaiah,

Chaps. 1-12, concludes with a psalm. Chapter 12 is that psalm, and from its phraseology I should suppose that it was not composed for its present use, but adapted from some psalm or hymn then in use, for its type is the same as that of the psalms in the Psalter. This ending of a prophecy with a psalm is analogous to the use of hymns in Deutero-Isaiah. In the first two parts of that collection of prophecies the sections end with hymns, which are constituent parts of the prophecy, that is, are written for the occasion. They are symptomatic of the literary and religious condition of that period, a period of liturgical development, when psalmody and hymnody were coming to the front. In editing the propheeies of Isaiah the editors seem to have been influenced by this same liturgical movement. So we have the first book of Isaiah closing with a hymn, adapted from some collection of psalms.

Chapters 24-27, which close the second book, are a prophecy, almost an apocalypse, of the Day of Yahaweh, divided up by hymns. The use of hymns here is more extensive even than in Deutero-Isaiah. Indeed the hymns might seem to be the main feature, into which the prophecy is interwoven. To this extent this prophecy is parallel to chapters 13 and 14, that it is an apocalyptic prophecy of the Day of Yahaweh; but here again I think that we are dealing with no imaginative thesis, but that the writer of that apocalypse wrote under the impression of a tremendous world movement, viz. the overthrow of the Persian kingdom by Alexander the Great. And it would be very strange indeed if that great world movement did not make itself evident somewhere in the Bible. There was no event comparable with it, not even the destruction of Babylon by Sennacherib, which was the motive of chaps. 13 and 14, as the event which most profoundly influenced the then existing world.

With the establishment of the Persian dominion under Cyrus a new era may be said to have commenced in Hither Asia. The period of devastation, of barbaric invaders and invasions came to an end with the creation of the Persian empire. A permanent empire was established with provinces ruled over by governors, with post-roads, and an attempt at uniform or fairly uniform laws. Persia was an empire in a new sense. Moreover, it was vastly greater than anything that preceded, covering practically the whole known world, from the borders of India and the center of Asia to the Mediterranean Sea, and from Egypt to Russia,

the Black Sea and the Bosphorus. Even Greece, while not subject, was under the influence of Persia, and the internal policy and relations of its different states were controlled by the great king. There was a sense of finality and permanence about the Persian empire which there had not been about any empire preceding. It was an immense advance in civilization. Then came Alexander's apparently mad attack on this great and permanent empire and his invasion of Asia Minor with an insignificant seeming little army; he, the king of a petty state, undertaking to overthrow the great monarch of the world. The Persian empire fell before him like a house of cards. This was a world event of the most startling and amazing character and at the same time of the most profound and far reaching significance, which the interpreters of God in history could not possibly ignore. It was one, moreover, which directly affected the Jews and which appeared to be full of promise for them, so that tradition tells of the peaceful and friendly attitude of Jerusalem toward Alexander. He seemed to have come as a deliverer. Now Hebrew prophecy gives us in its contents the history of the world. The prophets undertake to interpret the history of the world from the standpoint of God's plan, and the part of Israel in that plan. It would be a most strange thing if among all the Hebrew prophecies which have come down to us there were no reference to this the greatest of world events. I think it and its meaning from the prophetic standpoint are set forth in chapters 24-27. I do not propose here to go into the analysis of those chapters to endeavor to prove my point, but merely to present this suggestion in connection with my former discussion of chapters 13 and 14.

In the Psalms I think we shall in general find very little of historical reference. That method of treating the Psalter which has sought to make out of it a text book of history is based on a false theory. The Psalms are to be connected with liturgical needs and uses rather than with historical events. On the other hand, I do not think that the correct interpretation of any prophecy has been found until its historical setting has been determined, and that in fact one can almost write Hebrew history from the Hebrew prophecies.[1]

[1] Gray in the *International Critical Commentary* analyzes these chapters thus:

Isaiah 11:1-8

After many years I have lately returned to the study of the book of Isaiah, and in doing so I find myself revising not a few of my earlier critical judgments of individual passages by comparison with the broader views of Hebrew literature resulting from my intervening endeavor to reconstruct from that literature a history of the religion of Israel. The more carefully I study from this point of view the early chapters of Isaiah, the more I find myself reverting to a relatively conservative position.

Chapters 1-12 seem to me vivid with references to the events of 734-32, 721, 715, and above all of 701. Historically Assyria is the great world power, the interpretation of whose activities dominates the thought of the author, and to try to transfer those references to a post-exilic period is simply *Jerahmeelization*. Similarly the Messianic conception of those chapters is in general

Prophecy 24: 1-12 The Lord will visit the world in terrible judgment.
Prophecy 24: 13-16 A few of God's people are saved, and from their scattered places praise God.
Prophecy 24: 17 A speaker complains of the treacherous wickedness of which Israel is afraid.
Prophecy 24: 18-20 The answer is a prophecy of the calamity that shall befall the inhabitants of the world, and make earth itself to shake and quake.
Prophecy 24: 21-23 In that day of judgment the Lord shall punish the mighty in earth and heaven, and reign in Zion.
Psalmody 25: 1-5 A song of praise because of the triumphant might of the Lord, exerted in behalf of the poor and oppressed.
Prophecy 6-8 He will hold a coronation feast in Zion, and destroy death forever.
Psalmody 9-12 A song of exultation because of His salvation, exhibited in destruction on Moab.
Psalmody 26: 1-19 A psalm of triumph because the Lord bringeth down the lofty, and utterly destroyeth those who do not believe in Him (1-14); but the faithful dead shall rise again to life (15-19).
Prophecy 26: 20–27: 1 His people are to wait in hiding until that day comes when the Lord shall come out of His place to punish the wicked, and the monsters of ill.
Psalmody 27: 2-6 The song of the delightful vineyard where Jacob shall take root and blossom.
Psalmody 7-11 A psalm of expiation, forgiveness of Jacob, destruction of the wicked.
Prophecy 12, 13 In that day He will gather His people from all lands into His holy mount.

the simplest and most obvious, the conception of a David who shall restore a kingdom greater and more glorious than that of David, a form of the Messianic hope which is early not late.[2] All of which is à propos to Gray's treatment of Isaiah 11:1-8 in his volume in the *International Critical Commentary*.

Gray separates this passage from its surroundings as a poem predicting "the restoration of the Jewish monarchy in the person of a king sprung from the family of Jesse." By translating "there *shall* come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a scion from his roots *shall* bear fruit," he convinces himself that "the revival, and not the fall of the tree is the subject of the prediction. The fall of the tree belongs to the past; the stump is an existing fact familiar to the poet and his audience. Thus this verse presupposes a period when no Davidic king was reigning. The necessary inference is that the poem was written sometime after 586 B. C."

Now there can be no doubt that the passage which precedes belongs to the Assyrian period, the vivid description of the swift advance of the Assyrians to Nob, followed by the prophecy against the mighty. So also I should think that there can be no serious doubt of the similar date and reference of the immediately succeeding section, which refers to the scattering of Jews and Israelites, especially through deportation by the Assyrians, and promises a restoration from Assyrian captivity similar to the ancient deliverance from Egypt. The intervening poem is general and idealistic in character, and contains nothing of the nature of an historical reference, except only the stock or, to use Gray's translation, "the stump of Jesse." This reference, I think, Gray quite misinterprets, and he also gives a false impression of the whole passage by his future translation of it. The passage commences with a verb in the perfect with waw (ויצא), gradually changing later and somewhat indefinitely to the imperfect. Such a passage may, linguistically and grammatically, belong to the past, present or future. The prophet is envisaging a picture which transcends time, which presents great verities basing on the past and present, finding fulfilment in the future. He beholds them now as what has been, now as

[2] Somewhat egotistically I must refer in support of this statement to the chapter on the Messianic Hope in my "Religion of the Hebrews."

going on, now as what shall be. Roughly speaking we shall generally represent the idea of incomplete action in such passages better in English by the use of the present than of the future, but a judicious use of all three tenses, past, present and future, is at times necessary in order properly to present the changing moods and viewpoint of the writer; and it must be remembered always that into whatever future realms he soars the prophet bases his vision primarily on facts or conceptions of the past and present. This Gray implicitly recognizes in his attribution of the poem to the short-lived expectation in Zerubbabel springing up from the stump of Jesse's stock cut down in the captivity. He would have translated better: "And there hath gone forth a shoot from Jesse's stump, and a scion from his root hath borne fruit; and there hath rested on him the spirit of Yahaweh, the spirit of counsel and valor, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahaweh (and hath inspired him with the fear of Yahaweh), so that he judgeth not by the sight of his eyes, nor decideth by the hearing of his ears. And he hath judged the poor according to righteousness, and hath decided with equity for the lowly of the land, and hath smitten the ruthless with the rod of his mouth (and with the breath of his lips he slayeth the wicked); and righteousness hath been the girdle of his waist and truthfulness the girdle of his loins."

Now this describes, idealized to be sure, a Davidic prince who has actually arisen from the stump of Jesse, and in whom Gray beholds Zerubbabel as the prophet conceived him. Then he passes on into what is clearly not merely an idealized present, but a vision of the future, as is also indicated by the tenses, of the new Eden which shall result from the reign of such a Davidic prince.

It is true that Zerubbabel may be said to have sprung from a stump of Jesse, a remnant of the destruction of David, and it is true that the post-exilic prophets did for a very brief period look to him as a possible redeemer. But there is another shoot of the stump of Jesse of Isaiah's own time whose righteousness, valor and wisdom the book of Kings describes and lauds, and whom, from the undoubted records and writings of that time, it is evident that Isaiah regarded with both reverence and hope, namely Hezekiah. And there was behind Isaiah and Hezekiah

a cutting down of the Davidic tree and the springing of a shoot from Jesse's stump, more striking and more resembling a miraculous interposition of Yahaweh, dwelling in His holy temple at Jerusalem, than the survival and revival of that stock after the Exile, namely the destruction of the seed royal by Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and the rescue of Joash by his aunt Jehosheba, wife of the high priest of Yahaweh, Jehoiada, his concealment in the Temple for six years, and his enthronement and the murder of Athaliah by the Temple guard. That of necessity made a most profound impression, giving to the Davidic dynasty a miraculous stamp as peculiarly under the guard of Yahaweh, and therefore an indestructible stock bound to survive and spring up again even though the tree might be cut to the ground. This played a great part in the development of the hope of the Davidic Messiah, as I have tried to show in the chapter on the Messianic Hope in my *Religion of the Hebrews*, to which I have already once referred, and would naturally figure in Messianic prophecy of the Davidic type in the century following the wonderful event itself. Especially was this likely to be the case at a time when Hezekiah, owing to his valor and his pursuit of a course of defiance of the Assyrians approved by the prophet, had almost lost his kingdom and brought the Davidic dynasty to an end. Yahaweh's miraculous interference to save Hezekiah naturally brought to the front of men's minds Yahaweh's peculiar relation to the house of David as exhibited in the revival of the stump of Jesse a century before. Hence that event plays a part in Isaiah's prophecies.

This interpretation of the reference brings this poem into an intelligible connection with its surrounding passages, making of the passage 10:28–11:16 one connected whole.

Gray and some of those whom he follows may object that in spite of all this the passage must be late, because it is a prophecy of joy and restoration. Whence arose this obsession that the early prophets were prophets of woe, and that the predictions of joy and deliverance, and a kingdom of peace and blessedness were written in later, in the post-exilic period when the prophecies were re-edited, I do not know. Certain it is that even Amos, the prophet of denunciation, testifies by his denunciation of the then prevailing expectation of the Day of Yahaweh that the prevalent prophecy of the time regard-

ing that Day was of the same general nature as the apparently old prophecy quoted in Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 of the Mountain of Yahaweh, if indeed it were not that prophecy itself which plagued Amos, as seems not all unlikely.

As this first book of Isaiah now stands, practically every prophecy of denunciation and punishment ends with a prophecy of deliverance. I do not think that this is due merely to later reëditing. It is too persistent, and permeates the whole book too completely, and is, I believe, a part of the original scheme, representing Isaiah himself, who was naturally a prophet of triumph and victory, and hence of gladness.

The Scheme of Isaiah

In the critical analysis of recent years we have, I think, been so concerned with the recovery of sources and the separation of phrases that we have overlooked the evidences of a scheme of composition embodied in the present text, in the case of some at least of the biblical books, which may throw light on the growth and composition of those books. Some of these schemes are marked by a peculiar use of numbers, either for mnemonic or mystical reasons. Favorite numbers are 7, 5 and 3. So Genesis is divided into two parts of 7 and 5 chapters each by a repeated caption. Ecclesiastes has seven sections similarly marked; and in the New Testament Matthew is also divided by the similar use of a catchword or phrase into seven sections. Isaiah 1-35 is divided into three books, 1-12, 13-28, 28-35, each of which ends in psalmody, very much as the five books of psalms end with a doxology. These psalms are later than the prophecies and are the most conspicuous features of their editing in the liturgical ritual movement in the post-exilic period. In the case of the first and third books the liturgical element is a simple psalm (chaps. 12 and 35), in the case of the second book an apocalypse shot through with psalms, as already pointed out (chaps. 24-27). These psalmodies are later than the books, and indeed represent a finality, the binding or covering in of the prophecies that lie behind in definite books, like the books of the Pentateuch, and the books of the Psalter. Each of these books in Isaiah has a character of its own. The first is a collection of prophecies by and statements about Isaiah, not homo-

geneous, but collected out of several sources, which are joined together rather than edited. Practically the whole material is Isaianic, either from him or from his contemporaries or immediate followers, with very little revision or editing by later hands. The first part deals more with the internal conditions of Judah; the latter part fairly throbs with the emotion and the vastness of the Assyrian struggle, but ends in the midst of that struggle.

Book II is, with the exception of the denunciation of Shebna, a fairly homogeneous collection of prophecies, burdens or oracles on the nations. There are seven larger burdens, with a few shorter ones and one narration dealing with the outer world and the somewhat incongruous denunciation of Shebna in chap. 22. This book was more thoroughly edited in the post-exilic period than the preceding, but is, nevertheless, almost entirely Isaianic.

The third book is somewhat different in character. In the first book there are five woes on Judah. The third book is primarily a collection of five woes in the form of fairly elaborated literary constructions, one dealing with Samaria, one with Jerusalem, designated as Ariel, which is to be besieged by the Assyrians as David once besieged it, but to be delivered by the interference of David's God; two woes on those that rely on Egypt, and on Egypt on which they rely; and a woe on Assyria. Except the first, which apparently belongs to 721 B. C., they all date from 701, and all deal with the Assyrian struggle. Here we have apparently as the original Isaianic work a booklet of 5 woes, in which was inserted later the incongruous prophecy against female luxury in chap. 32. The whole was later much edited and added to, and contains a large amount of post-exilic material, but the core and the scheme of the Book of the Five Woes are Isaianic.