

THE INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY

/ A CRITICAL AND
EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY
ON
THE BOOKS OF KINGS /

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of their honest effort to make sense out of nonsense, and to correct what appeared objectionable. The former objective will have comparatively small gains; the latter will afford a study in the interpretation attempted by the version in question, and this has an interest in itself, minor though that interest be.⁹

IV. THE SOURCES OF THE BOOK

§12. COMPARISON WITH CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL WRITING

The Hebrew history, extending from the migrations of the Bnê-Israel down into the Persian age, as contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, is the longest consecutive literary series that we possess from the ancient Near Orient. For long it was unique, the external history being eked out by Greek travellers like Herodotus and by the remains, in second-hand condition, of such native annalists as Sanchuniathon, Manetho, and Berossos.¹ The archæological unveiling of that ancient field has reversed the process of comparison; the Hebrew records of the politically petty people of Israel can now be interpreted and commented upon in the light of an unbroken series of documents covering millennia. And so to the matter-of-fact historian those fresh original documents far transcend in interest and importance the narrow scope of the Hebrew history.

It is only in the minimum that the Hebrew chronicles run

⁹ The writer refers with strong sympathy to J. Reider's study, 'The Present State of Textual Criticism of the O.T.,' *HUCA* 7 (1930), 285 ff., and H. S. Nyberg, 'Das textkritische Problem des A.T. am Hoseabuche demonstriert,' *ZAW* 1934, 24 ff., and his 'Studien zum Hoseabuche,' *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift*, 1935, pt. 6, with the conclusion, "Zurück zum masoretischen Texte um ihn zu studieren und zu interpretieren!"

¹ For such local archives in early days may be compared the *memorabilia* of Edom in Gen. 36, especially the succession of nine kings "before there reigned a king over the Bnê-Israel" (vv. 31ff.). For the early spread of writing in Transjordan, cf. Jud. 8¹⁴, and for the subject at large see J. W. Flight, ch. 4 of E. Grant's *Haverford Symposium*. For the authenticity and antiquity of Sanchuniathon's *Phœnician History* see Eissfeldt's *Ras Schamra u. Sanchuniathon* (as of the seventh century), and Albright, *SAC* 242 ff. ('seventh or sixth century').

§12. CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL WRITING

pari passu with those of the great Empires. Annalists drawn directly or indirectly from official records are found from David's reign and on, but they play a small part and are a side-issue in comparison with the corresponding annals galore in the new discoveries, which abundantly illustrate the praxis. But the unique development of Hebrew history in its passage from the purely archival form, the direct transcription of the past records of their people, into the Historical Story. This may extend all the way to the narrative of contemporaries, like the David-Solomon (2 Sam. 16-1 Ki. 2), to such midrash as appears in the Bible. But in this unique development the annalistic process has been developed into History. A new factor has been introduced, the subjective one of the eye and mind of the historian. Critics may naturally suspect sources of the Prophetic, Deuteronomic, Priestly, but all real history is the result of digestion by the historian, one-sided as the digestion must be; this is true of Thucydides, Livy, Gibbon, and so through the list of great historians. The criticism should exercise is of the kind generally applied to the sources of Herodotus; the monuments seen with his eye, stories he had heard with his ears, through interpreters, are entirely unknown to us, and the historical verisimilitude of his reports is being vindicated in contradiction of the earlier sceptical attitude upon him as a gullible traveller.² The Hebrew history has suffered in its treatment by critics too much from the bias, formerly orthodox, now quite radical. Even the book the cycles of stories of the Sons of the Priests, the Temple sources, the Deuteronomic editing, are all that they remain of immense historical importance; for a people thinks of itself, its origins and its future, and to make history, quite as much as the current fact.

² In bk. i, 8 he sums up for the dynasty of the Heraclids, Gyges of Lydia, the contemporary of Ashurbanipal, 22 years covering 505 years, i.e., ca. 22 years per reign; this average closely to that of the Judæan dynasty. For the Tyrian Hiram I and on, for 11 reigns (one of 8 months, terminated by the death of Hiram), Josephus reports, as from the Ephesian Menander, an average of 16 years. I.e., in both cases the figures are based on exact sources.

the Prophets and Priests who saved Israel's heritage for the future, and it was through them that the remains of the ancient secular chronicles were preserved.³

The recognition of the unique character of Hebrew history has been largely due in our days to the secular historian. From the field of historiography the eminent authority, J. T. Shotwell may be quoted: ⁴ "No higher tribute could be paid to the historical worth of the Old Testament than the statement that, when considered upon the profane basis of human authorship, it still remains one of the greatest products in the history of History, a record of national tradition . . . which yet retains the undying charm of genuine art and the universal appeal to human interest"; although, he adds, "not . . . a remarkable performance viewed from the standpoint of modern history." But criticism may be expressed of another statement by the same writer (p. 7, n. 6): "The achievement of the Hebrew historians was primarily in the field of art. Although sections of the early records of the Jews are the finest narratives we possess from so early a period—far earlier than any similar product in Greece⁵—the principles of criticism which determined the text were not what we call scientific. They were not sufficiently objective." However, comparison of modern historical writing in the way of criticism of history some three millennia older is hardly to the point. And there is no reason to put such a story as that of David-Solomon, or that of Jehu's destruction of the Omrid dynasty, to name the most brilliant political narratives, in the category of art as opposed to the historical. There is no consciousness of art, no self-expression in judgment upon the history, in the way of moralizing or of setting forth of theodicy (as in Herodotus, equally with the Prophets); if the composer was affected by the tragedy, of which he was a contemporary,

³ How much of such local lore of the Oriental lands has been preserved by the alien and inquisitive Herodotus! Those ancient peoples never rendered it into literature, or, if they did, there was no interested tradition to preserve it. For an admirable discussion of comparison with that quarter see H. T. Fowler, 'Herodotus and the Early Hebrew Historians,' *JBL* 49 (1930), 207 ff.

⁴ *Introduction to the History of History*, 80; cf. H. E. Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing*, ch. I.

⁵ Hecataeus, ca. 550 B.C., is accounted as the first Greek historian.

he leaves it to the reader to discover it for himself.⁶ Indeed such history writing, as in many cases in the Historical Books, falls properly into the class of Historical Story and is *historia* in the Latin sense of the word; see Shotwell, p. 229, where he cites Servius, the commentator on Virgil (on *Aen.*, i, 373), defining *historia* as contemporary narrative, while *annales* are records of the past. Reference is also to be made to Meyer for his brilliant section on 'Novellen und Erzählungen mit novellistischer Technik,' in his *JN* 189 ff., in which class he places the story of David and Bathsheba as the most eminent. But 'Novelle' may not be immediately rendered into English, nor is that story mere historical romance by any means.

There is almost nothing to compare with this development of Hebrew history from the records of the great Empires, with possibly one exception. For Egypt, of comparative importance are the poetic descriptions of the campaigns and glories of Thutmose III, Ramses II (on the battle at Kadesh), Merenptah.⁷ Apart from such extravagant rhetorical eulogies (cf. Deborah's Song in contrast!), Egypt gives us only the short 'Novelle,' at the best autobiographies like the stories of Sinuhe and Wen-amon.

With all the wealth of Babylonian-Assyrian remains we find hardly more than dynastic lists, notable events dated by royal years, citation of omens, and annals of reigns extravagantly written up.⁸ The only exception would be the genuine royal autobiography that we possess from Ashurbanipal. Citation may be made of Weber in his discussion of the historical inscriptions: ⁹ "(Die bab.-ass.

⁶ Cf. citations of Olmstead in introduction to Comm. on I. 1-2 below.

⁷ Erman, *Lit. of the Anc. Egyptians*, 254 ff.; these were doubtless contemporary productions, as is known from one of them (p. 266). A scribe of Thutmose records how he "followed" the king, "beheld his victories," "recorded the victories," "putting them into writing, according to the facts" (Breasted, *HE* 312 f.). But "the priceless rolls have perished."

⁸ For the earlier material see Güterbock, 'Die historische Tradition u. ihre literarische Gestaltung bei Babyloniern u. Hethitern bis 1200.'

⁹ *Die Literatur der Babylonier u. Assyrier*, ch. 15 at length, in particular, p. 199.

Geschichtsschreibung) hat sogar zusammenfassende Geschichtswerke aus den Urkunden der Vergangenheit kompiliert, freilich nur in der trockensten Form der Tatsachenregistrierung, die ohne Rücksicht auf innere Zusammenhänge, ohne das Wesentliche gegenüber dem Gleichgültigen hervorzuheben, Zahl an Zahl, Kriegszug an Kriegszug, Herrscher an Herrscher reiht." He continues with the statement that we have nothing in that literature of the like of Hebrew history, although he appeals to the late Berossos for such a possibility. The result did not advance beyond the stage of court annals, was indeed "ein durchaus höfisches Produkt," as Meissner remarks.¹⁰ Over against this characteristic is that of the spirit of the Hebrew historians, always sitting in judgment upon royalty, most often 'anti-courtly,' from the story of Nathan the prophet down to that of Huldah the prophetess. The one feature similar in the non-Israelite field is the recognition of Fate.

Only in one quarter, and that of the non-Semitic Hittites, may a parallel be found. Güterbock, Teil 2 of his monograph cited above, expresses this judgment (p. 94): "(Die hethitische Geschichtsschreibung) hat im Neuen Reich eine Form gefunden, die nicht nur innerhalb der hethitischen, sondern in der ganz vorderasiatischen Geschichtsschreibung den höchsten Rang einnimmt: die der Annalen." With this statement may be compared that of his predecessor, A. Götze:¹¹ "Viel bedeutsamer ist es, dass bei den Hethitern zum ersten Male in der Weltgeschichte ein literarisches Genos von hoher Bedeutung in Erscheinung tritt: der literarische Bericht. Er sprengt den Rahmen trockener Annalistik. . . . Der hethitische historische Bericht versteht es in einer Weise, die erst in den Geschichtsberichten der Israeliten wieder erreicht wird, Ereignisse unter einheitlichen Gesichtspunkten rückschauend zusammenzufassen, Situationen eindrucksvoll

¹⁰ *Bab. u. Ass.*, 2, 367. For Meissner's judgment of the Babylonian and Assyrian chronicles see *ib.*, ch. 20. For collections of these chronicles, including the early king-lists of Ur, Isin, Babylon, etc., see Schrader, *KB* 2, 273 ff., vol. 3, 2d half, 143 ff.; Rogers, *CP* 199 ff.; Gressmann, *ATB* 1, 331 ff. The Bible student should acquaint himself with these precedents and parallels for Israelite historiography.

¹¹ *Hethiter, Churriter u. Assyrier* (Oslo, 1936), 72 ff.

darzustellen"; and finally, in translation: "The Hittite narrative does not serve the heroization and glorification of the king, it serves the presentation of deed and fate, is accordingly absolutely free of the mythical, is history."¹²

On the quality of Hebrew historiography may be cited opinions from unbiassed authorities. Moore in his essay on 'Die Eigenart der hebräischen Geschichtsschreibung,' p. 73, remarks, after reference to the edifying aims of the writers: "So schwer wir nun die Mangel der tendenziösen Geschichtsschreibung von dieser Seite empfinden, so müssen wir andererseits anerkennen, dass in derselben der Ansatz zu einer philosophischen Geschichtsbetrachtung liegt. Die Geschichte ist nicht eine zufällige Zeitreihe von Geschehnissen, sondern eine sittliche Ordnung, die nicht allein Israel, sondern die Weltmächte, welche Gott als Werkzeuge der Strafe oder der Rettung gebraucht, in sich schliesst; die korrelativen Ideen der Einheit Gottes und der Einheit der Geschichte ergeben sich aus der sittlichen Auffassung der Geschichte." And again (p. 66) he observes: "So haben tatsächlich nur zwei Völker unabhängig von einander eine historische Literatur erzeugt, die Israeliten nämlich und einige Jahrhunderte nachher die Griechen." Similarly and contemporaneously Meyer in his essay on 'Individuality,' in his *Kleine Schriften*, remarks (p. 22): "From the point of view from which we contemplate history, the Israelite people takes by far the highest rank among the nations of the East. . . . In Israel political and social conditions combined to produce the first great action by individuality in the world" (*i.e.*, the prophets, etc.). There may be cited Eissfeldt's similar statement (p. 157 of the article just cited): "Zunächst bleibt trotz all der reichen Nachrichten [of Greece and Rome, the Orient] für weite Strecken der zwölf letzten vorchristlichen Jahrhunderte das A.T. immer noch die wichtigste Geschichtsquelle." And Schmidt observes (*op. cit.*, p. 30) upon the prophet Amos:

¹² For recent literary treatment of Hebrew historiography, with bibliographies, are to be noted Hempel, *Die altheb. Literatur*, 81 ff., 94 ff., and Eissf., *Eint.*, §5. Particular studies of the genius of this literature are to be found in H. Schmidt, *Die Geschichtsschreibung im A.T.*; H. T. Fowler, *History of the Literature of Ancient Israel*, cc. 6, 14; B. P. Church, *The Israel Saga, e.g.*, ch. 9; Eissf., 'Altertumskunde u. das A.T.'

"Mit einem Schlage hat sich der enge Rahmen der Hof- und Stadtgeschichte zur Weltgeschichte erweitert." The true diagnosis of this unique characteristic of Hebrew historiography has been given by Lindblom in his essay, 'Zur Frage der Eigenart der alttest. Religion,' pp. 134, 135: "Durch die Erfassung Jahwes als eines Gottes der Geschichte wurde sein Wesen als persönlicher Wille so beherrschend bestimmt, dass seine Gebundenheit an die Natur grundsätzlich überwunden wurde"; and, "Gott ist einer, ein Gott nicht nur der Schöpfung, sondern vor allem der Geschichte. . . ." These statements bear witness to the too little observed theologoumenon that the God of the Bible is the God of History. Israel, with its faith in its one God, who became for its theology the sole God of the universe, possessed a sense of the unity of history in its beginnings, of a divine operation in history, and more and more of a divine objective of all history. There are preserved but shattered fragments of the annals of the ancient great Empires, which never advanced to the creation of history, but Israel, petty and provincial as it was, a pawn of those Empires, preserved its historical philosophy, more simply its faith and its hope, and survived. By omens good and ill it learned that it and equally the world, in whose fate it was participant, were under the one Providence, and so history became intelligible.

§13. THE CHRONICLES

a. The Royal Secretariat. Archives of Royal Personalia

In David's court there were a Scribe and a Recorder (2 Sam. 8¹⁶ⁿ, 20²³ⁿ), and the same two officials appear in the list of Solomon's cabinet, along with other officials of doubtless lettered attainments, one 'Over-the-Year,' and a 'Priest, Royal Friend,' not to speak of the intruded reference to 'Sadok and Abiathar, Priests.' See Comm., I. 4^{2f}. The Scribe was primarily the king's Secretary; but for his importance as the king's intimate counsellor may be compared the modern political development of the latter title. The Recorder also appears along with the Scribe on responsible duties (e.g., II. 18^{18. 37}, 2 Ch. 34⁸). So the Hebrew word,

mazkîr, may best be rendered; he kept the royal 'book of records' (*sēper haz-zîkrônôt*, Est. 6¹—cf. the divine 'Book of Remembrance,' Mal. 3¹⁶). It was his duty to keep the current records of the reign in the technically termed 'Book of the Days' (*sēper hay-yāmim*), i.e., 'diaries,' EVV 'chronicles.'¹ The royal business as well as pride required the keeping of such official journals.

By a process paralleling the development of letters in the great Empires these journals came to be extracted for their historical interest in continuous chronicles in the two Hebrew kingdoms, 'the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah,' 'of Israel' (I. 14^{10. 20}, etc.). With the development of *imperium* the royal dynasty became interested in history, and corresponding credit must be given to individual scribes who found a fertile field for their historical interest. In what form these royal chronicles were when they came into the hands of the editors of Kings we do not know; the original records of the North must have been destroyed or looted in the Assyrian conquest; like disaster must have befallen Jerusalem in its last days. By the interest of diligent scribes and for interested patrons copies must have been made in abbreviated editions, and put in circulation; it was such a copy that preserved the Northern Chronicles for the Judæan editors of Kings, brought by refugees, or obtained by Josiah's literary men in his assumption of dominion over the North. Such interest in historical letters was but the continuation of the rich literature still extant in Judges and Samuel.

Our Book of Kings drew upon official chronicles contemporaneously constructed. Earlier examples are found for the rise of the monarchy in Sam. : I. 13¹ (Saul); II. 2¹⁰ (Ishbosheth); 5^{4. 5} (David). For Solomon's reign is cited 'the Book of the Acts of Solomon' (I. 11⁴¹), which has drawn *in extenso* from official documents, as the following sub-section will show. Beginning with Rehoboam and Jeroboam there are fixed formulas for the beginning and end of each reign. The formula for the South includes the following items: the introductory synchronism with the Northern regnal datum,

¹ Cf. the Hellenistic *ἡμερίδες*; Arrian refers (*Hist. Alex.*, vii, 25, 1) to the *ἡμέρ. βασιλικοί* (var. *βασιλικαί*) of Alexander—exactly the Hebrew phrase.

age of king, length of reign, name of his mother; the final formula: the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah cited as the authority and for further reference, the burial of the king, name of his successor. There are variations, some due to original or scribal lapses, some to political vicissitudes. The synchronisms begin as between Abijam and Jeroboam (I. 15¹). Reference to the Chronicles is omitted only in the cases of Ahaziah and the usurping queen-mother Athaliah, and of the deposed and exiled Jehoahaz and Sedekiah. The age of the king is omitted for Abijam, Asa, Jehoiakim. The reign is stated to have been 'in Jerusalem,' following Oriental royal parlance. The mother's name is omitted in the case of Ahaz; for Josiah and his successors the local origin of the Judæan lady who became queen is given along with the naming of her father. The most frequent expression for the death and burial of the king is: "he slept with his fathers, and he was buried [or, they buried him] with his fathers"; or one or the other of the phrases alone is used. The first phrase is omitted in some cases of violent death, e.g., Amon, Josiah. All the kings are said to have been buried in David's City (in Azariah's case plus 'in his sepulchre with his fathers,' II. 9²⁸), except Hezekiah, for whom no burial-place is reported (was his possible burial in his wicked son's tomb deliberately ignored?), Manasseh and Amon, who were buried in 'the garden of Uzza,' Josiah, who was buried 'in his own sepulchre.'

For the North, like formulas are given, but with fewer particulars. Reference to the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel is omitted only in the cases of Jehoram, Jehu's victim, and the exiled Hoshea. The synchronism is given in every case, except two, when the accompanying history made it unnecessary (Jeroboam I, Jehu). Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri for his first six years, reigned 'in Tirsah,' Omri for his later years and his successors 'in Samaria.' The king 'slept with his fathers,' except in cases of violent death or divine judgment (Elah, Zimri, Ahaziah, Joram, Sechariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea). Jehoahaz, Jehoash were buried 'in Samaria'; Jeroboam II "slept with his fathers, the kings of Israel." Expression of this item is thus careful, not wilful. Cf. Driver, *Int.*, 186, Burney, pp. ix seq. (with full data), Skinner, p. 12.

b. Further Archival Materials

Before passing to the direct citation at length of original archives preserved in the Acts of Solomon and the Chronicles of Judah and of Israel, notice may be taken of indirect references to such material made in connexion with the final formula for the respective reign. These are indeed often particulars for which the historian would wish that the editors had given more detail.

There is citation from both series of Chronicles of the constant war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam (I. 14^{19, 30}), although the preceding story tells that a man of God had forbidden Rehoboam to fight with his 'brethren' (12²¹, a prophetic sop to the national pride!). Reference is made to the Chronicles for Jehoash's "might and how he warred with Ahaziah king of Judah" (II. 14¹⁵), the source of the story given above of Jehoash's triumph over Jerusalem. There are frequent references to "the might" of a king and "how he warred" without further detail in the history: for Asa (I. 15²³), Omri (16²⁷—his vigorous reign was indeed ignored by the editors!), Jehoshaphat (22⁴¹), Jehu (II. 10³⁴—another monarch ignored), Jehoahaz (13⁸, cf. v. 5). More particular is the citation of Jeroboam II's "might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus and Hamath for Israel"—an otherwise unknown item in Syrian history (14²⁸, cf. v. 25). The longest postscript of such items appears for Jehoshaphat's reign: the removal of the sodomites, politics of Edom, shipping on the Red Sea (I. 22⁴⁷⁻⁵⁰). There are references of archaeological interest, now approved by actual discovery: for Asa, concerning "the cities he built" (I. 15²³); for Ahab, "the ivory house that he built, and all the cities that he built" (22³⁹); for Hezekiah, "how he made the pool and the conduit, and brought water into the city" (II. 20²⁰). For the history of Zimri's conspiracy it is remarked that "the treason he wrought" was recorded in the Chronicles (I. 16²⁰), and there is similar citation for Shallum's conspiracy (II. 15¹⁵). Very personal is the item connected with the final formula for Asa, that "in his old age he was diseased in his feet" (I. 15²³), as also that for Azariah-Uzziah, that he "was a leper until the day of his death," a condition involving the regency of

his son Jotham (II. 15^b). The citation for Manasseh's "sin that he sinned" (II. 21¹⁷) doubtless refers to his royal records of the innovations in the Temple. Cf. a similar annalistic record, I. 11⁷: "Then Solomon built a high-place for Chemosh."

Notice is next to be taken of direct citation of archival materials.² There are cases of items asyndetically listed, e.g.: "He finished the House" (I. 9²⁰); "Jehoshaphat made Tarshish ships," etc. (22¹⁰); "Came Pul king of Assyria," etc. (II. 15¹⁹); most often the conjunction was used, e.g., "And Moab rebelled against Israel," etc. (II. 1³). There are the exact datings by the year, thirteen such through II. 23. The most notable of these is the first one, with the dates by year and month for the inception and conclusion of the building of the Temple (I. 6^{37, 38-71} is secondary). The next example is I. 14²⁵, "In the 5th year of king Rehoboam came Shishak king of Egypt," etc. (*n.b.* the latter's name and title, not the customary 'Pharaoh'). With II. 24 begins a long series of exact datings by year, month and day. Here the writer is certainly well-nigh contemporary to the story.

The original dating was often replaced with 'then,' some thirteen times; e.g., I. 9²⁴, "Then (with correction of *ḏ*, see Note) Pharaoh's daughter came up from David's City to her house. Then he built the Millo." The adverb has no reference to the context in such cases. Parallel time-expressions are: 'in that day' (I. 8⁶⁴), 'in those days' (e.g., II. 10³²—three cases), 'in his days' (e.g., I. 16³⁴—five cases), 'in those days' (e.g., II. 10³²—three cases), 'in his days' (e.g., I. 16³⁴—five cases), 'at that time' (e.g., II. 16⁶—seven cases); these forms are paralleled in the Akkadian annals: 'at that time,' 'in these days,' 'in his day.' Such time-expressions accordingly are not primarily editorial, expressive of indefiniteness or ignorance, but of archival origin. Also there are six cases of the introduction of such an item with asyndetic *hi*, 'he' (e.g., II. 14⁷—the Heb. pronoun is used only for emphasis); the usage presents in the third person the repeated 'I' in the Moabite Mesha's record of his buildings. Again certain grammatical laxities may be explained: e.g., the frequent

² See for detail the writer's article, 'Archival Data in the Book of Kings.'

cases of alignment of historical perfects with Waw (four perfects so aligned, II. 18⁴). Some of the items are quite lapidary in form, as in records of royal building (e.g., I. 9¹⁵⁻¹⁷, with expanded text), with which are to be compared similar brief records in the inscriptions of Mesha and the Syrian kings Zakar and Bar-Rkb.

The above summary accounts for isolated items of primitive origin. A mass of more extensive material is preserved for Solomon's reign, a documentary wealth corresponding to his glory, for which the *débacle* that followed offers nothing similar. There are to be cited: the list of his court officials (I. 4³⁻⁶), and that of his administrative lieutenants over the land (4⁷⁻¹⁹); the memorandum of the daily provision for the palace (5²²), and that of his chariotry (vv. 6-8); from the story of the negotiations and agreement with Hiram (ch. 5), at least the exact specifications in vv. 24, 25, 27ⁿ; the list of his royal buildings and account of their construction and furnishing (7¹⁻¹³); the later diplomatic arrangements with Hiram, most honestly recorded (9¹⁰⁻¹⁴); the list of the cities he built (vv. 15-18); a series of detached items (vv. 23-28, cf. 10¹¹); another accumulation of such items with inserted matter (10^{14-22, 26-39}). I. 11¹⁴⁻²⁵, concerning the 'adversaries' whom "YHWH raised up against Solomon," the Edomite Hadad and the Syrian Reson, contains most authentic material, in particular the biographical notice of Hadad's fortunes in Egypt and the brief history of the *condottiere* Reson.³ For the documents bearing on the Temple and the brass work (6, 7¹³ⁿ) see *c* below.

From the Chronicles of the Kingdoms we possess the following extended narratives of archival flavour. I. 15¹⁶⁻²² tells of the war between Asa of Judah and Baasha of Israel, and the interference of Tabrimmon, king of Aram, whose aid was purchased by valuables stripped from the Temple. The histories of the usurpers Baasha and Zimri (15^{27, 28, 16^{9, 10, 15-18}},

³ Stade, in *SBOT*, groups vv. 11-13 as introduction to the anecdote; but that passage is solely introductory to the subsequent history of Jeroboam. The editor has cleverly aligned together the three 'adversaries.' This word of YHWH is not 'prophetic' in style; the Moabite Mesha similarly speak of 'Chemosh being angry with his people.' Cf. the recognition of the divine *sibbāh*, the 'turn' of fate, that brought about the division of the kingdom (I. 12¹⁵).

cf. v.²⁰) are authentically itemized. For the distinguished Omri, who gave his name to his land for the Assyrian historians, there are preserved merely the exact details of his rise to power and of his building of Samaria (16²¹⁻²⁴). Not much more appears for Ahab (16^{31, 32}—written up editorially; v.^{24a}, a casual item; 22³⁹); original details were replaced by the Prophetic Story. For Jehoshaphat there are summed up the relations with Edom and the Red Sea traffic (22⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰). II. 8²⁰⁻²² contains precise archival notes on the relations with Edom 'in the days of Jehoram of Judah' and the revolt of Libnah. 10^{32, 33} is an objective account of Hazael's diminution of Jehu's realm. With the reign of Jehoash we have the first long archival history for Judah: his restoration of the Temple and its finances, his capitulation to Hazael, and the conspiracy against him, with the assassins named (12⁵⁻²²—cf. the conspiracy against Amaziah, 14¹⁹, and the details of Sennacherib's assassination, 19³⁷, for which see the Assyrian annals). For the reign of Jehoahaz b. Jehu original elements appear in 13^{3, 5, 7}. For his son Jehoash's reign there are notes of prime value for the Syro-Palestinian history (13^{24, 25}), and for the same king a precise account of his triumph over Amaziah of Judah (14⁸⁻¹⁴—for Jehoash's proud challenge, cf. I. 20¹¹), as also of Amaziah's assassination by conspirators (vv.^{19, 20}), along with the postscript item, "He built Elath and restored it to Judah" (v.²²). For Jeroboam II's reign there are but two original items, reporting his success against Aram (14^{25a, 26}). For the long reign of Azariah-Uzziah we have, outside of the customary formula and editing, only the two statements, that "YHWH smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and he dwelt in a house apart" (although "he did what was right in YHWH's eyes"—a similar stroke also befalling another righteous king, Asa, I. 15²³), and that his son acted as regent (15⁵). The exact original details of the *finale* of Jeroboam's dynasty and of his *faintant* successors may only be listed: 15^{10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 25, 29, 30}, 17³⁻⁶, 18⁹⁻¹¹; the survival of these precious details is remarkable. Contemporary are the extensive details of the alliance of Ahaz with the Assyrian Tiglath-pileser against the combination of Pekah of Israel and Reson of Aram (16⁵⁻⁹), and the accompanying story of Ahaz's duplication of

a Damascene altar for the Temple along with other innovations (vv.¹⁰⁻¹⁸—all told without comment, and involving the priest Uriah). For the long history of Hezekiah (cc. 18-20) there are a few annalistic items: 18^{4, 8} (each introduced with 'He'); vv.¹³⁻¹⁶ (quite distinct with its curt form of the history of the surrender as over against the following long story); 19^{36, 37} (the return home of Sennacherib, his assassination by two sons, the succession of Esarhaddon). For Josiah's end there is a brief objective statement: "In his days Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates, and king Josiah went against him. And he (Necho) slew him at Megiddo. And his servants carried him dead in a chariot, and brought him to Jerusalem" (23^{29, 30}). For Josiah's successors we have doubtless contemporary memoranda with exact details.⁴ There need merely to be listed these items of annalistic origin: for Jehoahaz, 23³⁸⁻³⁹; Jehoikim, 24^{1-2a} (v.⁵ has the last reference to the 'Chronicles'); Jehoichin, vv.⁷⁻¹⁷. For Sedekiah there survives an exemplary contemporary record, 24^{20b-25²¹}, with vv.¹⁵⁻¹⁷ alone an intrusion. The postscript, 25²²⁻³⁰, contains similar contemporary material.⁵

c. Temple Archives

The plan of the Temple and the accounts of its furnishing and its dedication (I. 6, 7, 8^{1-13, 62-64}), when reduced to simpler form, have been assigned by Kittel and others to a Temple source. Driver notes with approval (*Int.*, 189) similar assignments of narratives concerning the Temple (II. 11⁴ⁿ, 12⁴ⁿ, 16¹⁰ⁿ, 22³ⁿ), and so, e.g., Kent more extensively (see

⁴ See note 1 of the writer's art. cited above, noting the record in Jer. 52²⁸⁻³⁰, which details the three deportations of the Jews and the figures for the victims involved, and remarking: "An exactly similar document describing the fall of a little state, preserved in the archives of a Hurrite family of about 1400 B.C., is presented by Chiera and Speiser in their 'Selected Kirkuk Documents,' *JAO* 1927, no. 20, pp. 57 ff. See Speiser's admirable interpretation and his recognition of the correspondence with the records of the fall of the Jewish state."

⁵ Only brief notice may be made of the preservation in the book of Chronicles of like archival material, taken from sources similar to, even identical with, those of Kings. This fact is coming to be recognized, e.g., by Begrich, *Chronologie*, 208 f., Eissf., *Einl.*, 602, Albr., *SAC* 208.

his critical analysis, pp. xiv *seq.*). But the construction of the Temple was wholly a royal undertaking; there is not a trace of priestly composition in these narratives, even in the account of the dedication, in which Solomon was the officiant. The Temple plan may practically be the architect's specifications; note the doubtless contemporary postscript with the exact datings for the construction (6²⁷. 38)—of later origin 6¹ and 8¹. At the most the document may have been deposited in the temple. The story of the uprising against Athaliah in II. 11 has no specific priestly tinge; that in 12^{5a}. contains reproach of the priests' mismanagement of the sacred funds, and similarly 16^{10a}. is not complimentary to the priestly jurisdiction. Likewise in the story of the reformation of the Temple in II. 22, 23 king Josiah is the reformer, the priests are his servants; 'the high priest Hilkiah' (22⁴) could not interpret the Book of the Law which was found, and recourse was had to a prophetess (22¹⁴). This absence of priestly literary sources is very notable in comparison with such origins in other ancient literatures. However, the temple, as the literary centre, may well have been the natural depository of such archives.

§14. THE HISTORICAL STORY

a. Political Narratives

This section concerns materials other than the purely annalistic. Its most extensive object is the Prophetic Story, to be treated in the next sub-section. But there are narratives quite distinct from those of that quarter.

The first two chapters of the book are the conclusion of the Davidic Court History, extending from 2 Sam. 16. For its characterization see Comm., introduction to I. 1, 2. As so often happens in literary history, this early creation is the most classical; for its length and dramatic presentation it has no equal in the Historical Books. But it belongs to a literary *genre* that was early developed in Israel; for its extent comparison may be made with the story of Joseph.

One political story appears in the account of the negotiations with Hiram of Tyre (I. 5^{15a}). It has been built upon authentic details: Hiram's congratulations upon Solomon's accession, the memorandum on the transportation of the logs,

and the exact items quoted at length from early sources in vv. 25. 27-32. Two stories are presented illustrating Solomon's wisdom, that of his dream at Gibeon with the ensuing judgment between the two harlots (3^{1a}.) and that of the Queen of Sheba's visit (10¹⁻¹³). The story of the second oracle at Gibeon (9¹⁻⁹), in which the primitive element of the 'dream' is omitted, is sample of late moralizing judgment; *cf.* a similar brief intrusion in the story of the building of the Temple (6¹¹⁻¹³).

In the Judæan history there are the following stories of early origin, historically authentic. The history of the revolt of the North under Solomon's former lieutenant Jeroboam in its original substance (I. 11^{26-28. 31}, 12¹⁻⁵) tells the political truth, that the revolt of the North was due to Solomon's heavy imposts, and that the schism came by divine fate (12^{4. 15}). The dramatic story of the uprising against the usurping foreigner Athaliah (II. 11) has all the earmarks of contemporary history, and without intrusion of a prophet. Parallel in character is the story of Josiah's reformation (II. 22, 23), when critically reduced to a simpler form. It is to be observed that these stories are the reflection of stirring events; also that, unlike the history of the North, they do not hail from schools of the Prophets. Only with Hezekiah's history do we have a long story of the kind, but this involving the canonical prophet Isaiah (II. 18-20=Is. 36-39), an early hagiographon indeed, but one including authentic details. The South was sterile in such literature in comparison with the riches of the North, but politics there was far less stirring; we find the same proportion in the narratives of Judges.

b. The Stories of the Prophets

For the North the political history was embalmed in lengthy narratives proceeding from the schools of the Sons of the Prophets. Here there is revival of the literary art that had flourished for the history of the Judges (*e.g.*, the story of Deborah and Sisera, ch. 4; of Gideon and his son Abimelek, cc. 6-9; of Jephthah, cc. 11, 12). The word 'school' is used of purpose. The Prophetic Guilds, preceding the advent of the canonical Prophets, who dissociated themselves from their predecessors (*cf.* Am. 7¹⁴, Mic. 3^{5a}, Dt. 18^{20a}, etc.),

developed as so often in the history of the rise of enthusiastic religious bodies their own letters. The assemblages of these enthusiasts included exhortation and instruction, and among their members were found scribes who were inspired to write the history of the stirring times in which their leaders were so actively engaged.¹

The longest example of this literary development appears in the Elijah cycle (I. 17-19, 21, II. 2). There follows that of

¹ See Comm. on II. 4²² for the existence of a *yeshiva*, 'session,' i.e., school, in those guilds. For the literary beginnings in the Church, cf. Luke's reference to the 'many' who had 'undertaken' a history of the Gospel, while back of our Gospels lie documents difficult of critical precision, with subsequent generations producing a welter of apocryphal Gospels. In Islam there were probably written 'traditions' (*hadīf*), going back to Muhammad's day; see I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, 2 (1890), 1 ff., e.g., p. 9.

These pre-canonical Prophets and their guilds appear currently in the Histories of Israel and the Histories of its Religion; but they take a minor place in comparison with 'the Writing Prophets' of the canon. An admirable statement on the character of these stories is given by Kittel, *GV* 2, 186. He holds that about 800 B.C. there arose a *Profeten-geschichte*, the centre of which was Elijah with his contest against the Baal-cult. The composer of the history belonged without doubt to the Nebi'im of his day, and his composition gives room for the suggestion that in those guilds the art of popular historical composition was cultivated. However this 'suggestion' might be made more positive. Kittel also notes (p. 339, n. 2) the Greek *χρησμολόγος*, 'purveyor of oracle-stories,' as distinguished from the *χρησμοτής*, 'prophet.' *Per contra*, Stade, pref. to *SBOT*, holds that in their present form these stories are all post-exilic, "although the material in the Elijah and Elisha cycles 'may be pre-Exilic'"; but such literary scepticism is most unfounded. Of value is Gunkel's small volume, *Elias, Yahwe u. Baal* (1906), with many notes referring to similar religious phenomena in other religions. He recognizes (pp. 4 ff.) that in the Elijah stories both Saga and History are involved, and it is the historian's business to distinguish the two, although there remains a field for independent literary criticism. For a recent and comprehensive study see O. Plöger, *Die Prophetengeschichten der Samuel- u. Königsbücher* (1937), and for those early prophets at large, R. Kraetzschmar, *Prophet u. Seher im alten Israel* (1901); G. Hölscher, *Zum Ursprung des israelit. Prophetismus*, BWAT 13 (1913), 88 ff., and *Die Propheten* (1914); H. Junker, *Prophet u. Seher in Israel* (1928); A. Jepsen, *Nabi: soziologische Studien zur alt. Lit.* (1934). For earlier treatments see, *inter al.*, A. Kuenen, *Religion of Israel* (1874), 1, ch. 3; W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel* (1882), Lect. 2. For the comparative phenomena, J. G. Frazer's *Folk-Lore in the O.T.* will be referred to *ad locos*.

Elisha, entwined in the former, beginning at I. 19¹⁹ and continuing to II. 9, plus an apocryphal postscript, 13¹⁴⁻²¹. Elijah is a most mysterious figure, coming out of the unknown and even so disappearing; he figures only in dramatic events, of which the scene on Mount Carmel is the most vivid (I. 18). Elisha is a secondary figure, as is his history; but his personal life is presented, and he is the head of a community of the Sons of the Prophets. The most striking story in this cycle is that of Jehu's revolt (II. 9, 10), a brilliant political narrative, in which Elisha appears only in the preface as inceptor of the uprising. Within this complex are inserted, with historical justification, two brilliant stories, connected with otherwise unknown prophets: the history of the rout of Ben-Hadad at Aphek (I. 20), in which figures an unnamed 'prophet' or 'man of God,' along with 'sons of the prophets' (vv. 13, 28, 35); and (ch. 22) the dramatic scene of the contest of the lone prophet Micaiah (cf. 19¹⁰) with four hundred prophets and their named spokesman Sedekiah, the story being introductory to the ensuing vivid battle scene in which Ahab lost his life. Thus we possess a continuous series of Prophetic documents, broken only by annalistic items, extending from I. 17 to II. 10.

The remaining Prophetic Stories of the North are midrash in the current sense of the word, of dubious historical value. Such is the story of Ahijah the Shilonite and his oracle to Jeroboam (I. 11²⁹⁻³⁰, cf. 12¹⁵). Ch. 13 is a similar midrash, with its echo in II. 23^{17, 18}. The prophet Jehu ben Hanani is said to have uttered an oracle against the house of Baasha (I. 16^{1-4, 7, 12}). The Chronicler alleges a large number, some sixteen, of such Prophetic sources for the history of the kings (see Curtis, *Chron.*, 21). He twice uses the word 'midrash': 'the m. of the prophet Iddo' (II. 13²²), and 'the m. of the book of kings' (24²⁷).²

² The word 'midrash' is used above after the Chronicler's precedent. It was evidently an early technical literary term, which has variously concerned translators. The Grr. and V translate with 'book'; S reproduces with the corresponding *midrāshā*. Of the modern trs. GV has 'Historia,' followed by AV with 'story'; FV 'Mémoires'; RVV JV 'commentary'; Moff. and Chic. B. 'Midrash.' The word is to be explained from the semantic development of the same root ('to seek after, look up') in Arabic *darasa*, 'to read.' And there is the interesting parallel development of the Koranic verb *talā* (root *llw*), 'to follow'

§15. THE COMPILATION¹

For historical subject-matter the book falls into three divisions. (1) I. 1, 2 is a continuation of the story of David in Samuel; on this section comment is made in Comm., *ad loc.* (2) I. 3-11 gives the history of Solomon, for which 'the Book of the Acts of Solomon' is cited. The title is indefinite. It may refer to a strictly annalistic document, from which

after, 'coming to mean 'to read, recite.' In addition is to be remarked the Semitic background of Jesus' utterance, "Search the Scriptures" (Jn. 5³⁹, cf. 7³⁹), the original of which verb was *drš*, i.e., "Read the Scriptures." There may be compared the Latin 'legere,' 'to pick up, read,' cf. German 'lesen.' The word 'legend' indeed is etymologically something 'to be read,' and quite corresponds with 'midrash' and mediæval 'story,' as GV and AV excellently translate the word, which means a written historical story. The Old Norse word 'saga' has often been used for translation, cf. Mrs. Church's *The Israel Saga*, although that word rather referred to heroic events. On the subject of such oral tradition in the background of the O.T. see at large the recent works of Gandz and Lods, and the extensive pertinent section in the encyclopædic work of the Chadwicks, *The Growth of Literature* (these all cited in the Bibliography). This last treatment in a note on p. 642, defining 'saga' in opposition to 'legend' is to the point as for the modern use of the latter word: "A saga, at least in the early stages of its life, need not of necessity contain any unhistorical element, apart from the form (the conversations, etc.) in which it is presented." But their judgment of Biblical story suffers from maintaining a now out-moded view of earlier Higher Criticism, as when it is stated (p. 684) that the story of David "carries the history of Israel back to c. 1000 B.C., perhaps three centuries before the general use of writing for literary purposes." The authors appear to be primarily authorities in Norse legends. On the other side stands Albright's treatment of the subject in his volume, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, in his section on 'Oral and Written Transmission of History,' pp. 33 ff., encyclopædic in brief compass with its analogies from other such origins of literary composition.

¹ Reference may only categorically be made to the Commentaries (including Burney's *Hebrew Text*, the Int.), Introductions, Dictionary articles, Histories of the Literature, cited in the Bibliography. There are to be noted in addition Benz., *Jahvist u. Elohist in den Königsbüchern* (an essay at pursuing those sources in Ki.) and Hölscher's study in the Gunkel-*Eucharisterion*. Of unique value is the vivid polychrome presentation of the sources in Stade-Haupt, *SBOT*; cf. also the critical presentations in Kittel's and Skinner's Commentaries and Kent's *SOT*. With regard to Benz.'s thesis there is to be observed Eissf.'s caution (*Eint.*, 150) that there is no clue for unravelling the possible threads continuing the sources of the Pentateuch.

the editor has drawn such materials; but it is to be noted that the only dates given are those for the building of the temple and palace, while even the forty years of reign assigned appears to be an invented figure, like that for David's reign. Or it was a compilatory work, of what extent we may only guess. One metrical fragment appears in the citation of 'the Book of Jashar' (8^{12.13}). Kuenen regards the original work as wholly pre-Deuteronomic. The literary brilliance of the earlier Historical Story disappeared promptly under the magnificent Solomon. (3) There ensues the bulk of the book, the history of the Divided Kingdoms, I. 12-II. 17, continued with that of the surviving Judah, cc. 18-25.

An exemplary formal editing appears for the history of the Divided Kingdoms—notable, as despite the national schism, for the sense of the lasting community of the two halves of Israel. This feature is succinctly expressed by Driver (p. 189): "In the arrangement of the two series of kings a definite principle is followed by the compiler. When the narrative of a reign (in either series) has once been begun, it is continued to its close—even the contemporary incidents of a prophet's career, which stand in no immediate relation to public events, being included in it; when it is ended, the reign or reigns of the other series, which are synchronized with it, are dealt with; the reign overlapping it at the end having been completed, the compiler resumes his narrative of the first series with the reign next following, and so on."²

As authority for his data in each reign the editor refers to 'the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah,' and *ditto* 'of the Kings of Israel.' In the latter case Joram and Hoshea are omitted in such listing, in the former Ahaziah, Athaliah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, Sedekiah—in most cases for good reason. The extent and character of these two chronicles constitute a problem. Their minimum basis would be comparable with the Babylonian chronicles, which listed the

² Assemblage of these data is given by Kuenen, pp. 64 f., and most fully by Burney, pp. ix *seq.* For the vexed question of the originality of the synchronisms, see §16 below. For the history of the end of Judah exact dates are given, some of them in terms of Babylonian chronology. For these there was practically contemporary information that could be registered *memoriter*.

important events in a reign. The summary expression at the end of almost every reign, 'and all that he did,' or 'and all his might,' appears to make the chronicle in question a purely state document. Such annalistic records must have had their literary expansion, but the extent of this further development may only be judged from individual cases. These appear especially in the later Judæan history, as in the stories of the reform of Jehoash (II. 12), the intrusion of heathenish worship under Ahaz (II. 16), the temple-restoration and reformation under Josiah (II. 22, 23). But the great bulk of the Northern history, I. 12-II. 17, is literary story, prophetic and otherwise; for its characteristics see Burney, pp. 207 ff. It is most reasonable to suppose that the latter material came to be incorporated with the official chronicle material in Judah under the reign of Josiah. This literary interest was reflection of the revival under that king, who bravely attempted the unification of All-Israel. We have to suppose an exodus of Northern literati to Jerusalem, bringing their manuscripts with them, and contributing to the cultural renaissance of the more sterile South. There such a literary expansion appears in the one Judæan prophet-story, that of Isaiah, with the inclusion of a poetic masterpiece (II. 19, 20). The phenomenon would be a small parallel to the flight of Greek scholars to the West to escape the Turkish invasions. And the revival, equally national and religious, under Josiah has its parallel in the Reformation period in Northern Europe. This politically temporary revival had its permanent spiritual results, in religion with the Deuteronomic reform which laid the basis for later Judaism (the religion of a Book, a tradition followed by the Church), and in letters with the accumulation of ancient literary remains which produced a National History, of which Kings was the climax.

The Book is a history written with a religious theory and a practical aim. It has for subject not mere History, but the lessons of History. There is honest self-judgment in this product of Hebrew historiography. The schism of Israel from the God-ordained Davidic kingdom was due to Solomon's sins, the fall of the North to its continued defiance of the True Religion, and again the ruin of Judah to the inescapable fate deserved by Manasseh's sin. The remarkable note is that,

when all was lost, some one found the history of that tragic period worth recording as a lesson of God's discipline of his people. The spirit of the editor is fully Deuteronomic.³ With II. 25²²ⁿ regarded as a postscript, the editor was a contemporary of Jeremiah, and, in his youth at least, of the publication of the Book found in the temple.

The book underwent its later minor revisions, as the variations in Heb. MSS and the early VSS show. But extensive interpolations are few, if any. The midrash in II. 23¹⁵ⁿ may be a case in point. The Old Greek presents an apocryphal supplement to I. 12, of doubtless Hebrew and ancient origin. But there is, apart from minute alterations, and constant contaminations of text from Ch., no patent influence from the later schools (Levitical, Priestly) which edited the Torah. A reconstruction from that point of view produced a parallel but fortunately distinct volume, that of Chronicles, while our book remained practically untouched.

§16. THE CHRONOLOGY

Recent Literature

The classical essay at Biblical chronology is that of Eusebius in his *Chronica*. For the Biblical renaissance may be noted L. Cappel's *Chronologia Sacra*, published in the London Polyglot, vol. 1, and again in Walton's *Biblicus Apparatus*. The following gives a list of recent literature bearing on the subject, with omission of reference to the pertinent Commentaries.

- ALBRIGHT, W. F.: The Seal of Eliakim and the Latest Pre-exilic History of Judah, *JBL* 1932, 77 ff.
- A Votive Stele Erected by Ben-hadad I of Damascus to the God Melcarth, *BASOR* 87 (1942), 23-9.
- A Third Revision of the Early Chronology of Western Asia, *BASOR* 88 (1942), 28-35.

³ Dr., *Int.*, 200 ff., and Burn., pp. xii seq., give full lists of phrases characteristic of the compiler of KI., and their affinities with Dt. and Jer. Most recently Pfeiffer has made the statement (*Int.*, 377) that "the date of the original edition can be fixed without misgivings between Josiah's reforms in 621, based on the finding of Deuteronomy, and the destruction of Jerusalem in 586."