

## A Suggestion regarding Isaiah's Immanuel.

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I. The results of the exegesis of Isa. vii. 14, 15 may be summarized as follows :

1. Matt. i. 23 cannot be regarded as determining the sense of the passage, but is just such a free adaptation of Old Testament language, without reference to its connection and historical meaning, as we find frequently in the New Testament, and especially often in Matthew. It is sufficient to refer to Matthew's use in ii. 15 of a part of Hos. xi. 1, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt." Matthew's "that it might be fulfilled" will no longer lead any interpreter to suppose that Hosea wrote of the coming Messiah what he so expressly writes of the history of Israel.

2. The sign need not, on account of verse 11, be a miracle.

3. **עַלְמָה** is not necessarily a virgin, and is probably not such in this case, since the sign consists not in the birth, but in the name and fortunes of the boy. On the other hand, the mother of Shear-jashub could hardly be so called.

4. The article would naturally specify some particular known woman, but may be generic, meaning any woman.

5. The eating butter and honey is not an indication of rich fare, but of a wasted land, in which the products of agriculture have been destroyed, and only those of pasture and wilderness are left. That is, verse 15 is to be interpreted by verses 21, 22 *b*-25, not by verse 22 *a*.

6. The child is to be born within a year, whether the woman is already pregnant or is about to become so.

7. The knowing to refuse the evil and choose the good probably indicates the age of two or three years (*cf.* Deut. i. 39, and see Isa. viii. 4). Yet some (*e.g.* Dillmann, who cites Ewald and Delitzsch) interpret it of the age of free moral self-determination, *i.e.* ten to twenty years; and among these a still smaller minority give to **לִדְעוֹתוֹ** a telic force (*e.g.* Budde, Kuenen).

8. Against the identification of Immanuel with the Messiah serious objections are commonly felt. True, the expectation that he would be born within a year is not a valid ground for rejecting such a reference. But, admitting that Isaiah might have expected the Messiah in the immediate future, the objections remain that nothing is said of this child's Davidic descent, nor of his destination to be the deliverer and ruler of his people. His name and his fortunes constitute the sign, and there would be no occasion to ascribe more importance to his *person* than to the significantly named sons of Hosea or Isaiah, if it were not for viii. 8. But as vii. 15, compared with verses 21 ff., indicates that his sufferings are simply typical of the sufferings of Judah, so viii. 8 does not necessarily carry us beyond a typical or representative figure, and certainly does not justify us in assuming that he is the nation's Messianic king. It would be a strange Messiah who, coming at a national crisis, should do nothing, but only share his people's fortunes, and by the name his mother gave him passively testify to a truth.

To make of Immanuel the Messiah, he must be identified with the child of ix. 5, 6 [6, 7]. But this child is born to rule; all his names are kingly names; he is a magnificent doer, and neither in name nor in function has any likeness to the child Immanuel. The identification of the two would be very difficult even if the sections were known to be continuous, but this is, on other grounds, very doubtful (see Duhm, Stade, Hackmann). The identification can certainly not be assumed as a determining presupposition in the exegesis of the Immanuel passage, but must depend upon the result of such exegesis.

9. It is, however, maintained, I believe, by all who reject the definite personal Messianic interpretation of the passage, that the name Immanuel contains the Messianic hope in the wider sense. In the words of Professor Kirkpatrick (*Doctrine of the Prophets*), though "the sign given to Ahaz is not a direct prophecy of the Messiah," yet the child is "the pledge for his generation of the truth expressed in his name." That the name expresses Isaiah's faith in the peculiar relation of God to Judah and his consequent belief in a coming deliverance for Judah, is the common element in all the various interpretations of the passage with which I am acquainted, and is, in my judgment, their common error. But let me call attention, first, to various forms in which the common presupposition appears.

II. Isaiah, let it be assumed, first appears before Ahaz with a message of encouragement. Syria and Ephraim are not to be feared;

they are soon to be broken in pieces (vii. 3-9). When Ahaz proves unbelieving (verses 10-12), Isaiah still repeats the promise. The land whose two kings you fear will soon be forsaken (verse 16); but he adds a threat, Judah itself will also be devastated by the Assyrian army (verses 17, 18 ff.); and then, when the promise and the threat have been repeated with still greater definiteness (viii. 1-4 and viii. 5-8), the name Immanuel is again introduced (verse 8b) to show that beyond judgment there is a still larger final hope (verses 9, 10). Here are three elements, an immediate deliverance, a following judgment, and a final deliverance, all of which, or some of which, one may seek to find in the sign of vii. 14, 15.

1. A union of the three elements may be found in the sign; the immediate deliverance from Syria and Ephraim, in the naming of the child by its mother; Judah's calamity at the hand of Assyria, in the privations of his infancy or youth; and the ultimate hope, in the fact that even in calamity he continues to bear the name of deliverance, which must prove a fitting name in the end.

So Dillmann<sup>1</sup>: "'God with us' the mother will name the child as an expression, not of what will happen, but of what has happened. . . . But the same Immanuel at whose birth the help of God against the confederates will have been experienced will later have to suffer under the desolation of the land." So far Dillmann calls it a two-sided prediction, in its first part (verse 14, the name) establishing what is promised in verses 4-9, and what the sign of verse 11 was to have guaranteed; and in its second half (verse 15, the fortunes of the boy) assuring the punishment of Ahaz's house for his unbelief. Verse 14 is then interpreted in verse 16, and verse 15 in verses 17 and 18 ff. But to this Dillmann adds the third element. Immanuel, "if not the future Messiah himself, is at least the beginning and representative of the new generation out of which finally one should take the throne."

This is also, with slight variations, Giesebrecht's interpretation:

"His name is the sign that when he is born men will feel relieved of the oppression of Syria and Northern Israel. Their power will be

<sup>1</sup> In what follows I refer by the authors' names to these books: Dillmann, *Der Prophet Jesaja*, 1890; Giesebrecht, "Die Immanuelweissagung," *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1888, pp. 217-264; Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, 4te Aufl., 1889; Smend, *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, 1893; Kuenen, *Historisch-Kritische Einleitung*, 2ter Theil, Leipzig, 1892; Stade, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*; Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 1892; Hackmann, *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaja*, 1893; Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895. Of course, a complete survey of critical opinion is not attempted.

destroyed before the boy reaches the age of understanding." Then, at about ten years of age, he will live in a land desolated by Assyria and Egypt. Yet Isaiah holds to his conviction that Jahveh is with his people, and afterwards, in the time of Sennacherib's invasion, to which Giesebrecht refers viii. 9, 10, he alludes again to the name upon which the Messianic hope depends.

Similarly Schultz :

"A young woman — any one you please — [but Schultz prefers to think of Isaiah's own wife] who is now expecting the birth of a son, will, when she bears him, call his name Immanuel, as a sign that the present danger is no longer pressing ; and then during the lifetime of this child the people will experience what his lot in life exemplifies," *i.e.* deprivation. But, further : "In the name of this child they have the assurance that, beyond all this suffering, there awaits Israel an eternal future of salvation."

The objection to this interpretation is that it is too involved, and that it swings back and forth uncertainly between promise and threat. A sign struck out in a moment, and in such a moment, must, one would think, mean something definite, must at least be unmistakably a sign either of good or of evil. And such the two following interpretations attempt, though not quite consistently, to make it.

2. The second and third elements may be found in the sign, and the first excluded. There will be in it, then, no reference to deliverance from Syria and Ephraim, but the sign will refer primarily to the judgment upon Judah, the fortunes of the boy rather than his name being emphasized, and the element of hope still recognized in the name will be referred to the more remote future.

That the tone of threatening should prevail over that of promise in the response of Isaiah to Ahaz's unbelief would be expected from the nature of the case. The promise of verses 4-9 was strictly conditional, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established," verse 9*b*. The indignation of verse 13 is unmistakable ; the first word of verse 14, לֹא־יִנְיָ, has a threatening sound (cf. Dillmann), and the following discourse is almost wholly a denunciation of judgment (vii. 17-25 ; viii. 5-18). This is recognized by Dillmann, who says that not the name Immanuel, but the eating butter and honey, is the chief thing in the sign ; and by Giesebrecht, the chief contention of whose essay is that the outlook is so dark that the words of triumphant hope in viii. 9, 10 (with 8*c*) cannot possibly belong in this connection. The repetition of the name Immanuel he cannot admit, though in its first utterance he still finds hope. The prophet "sees

nothing but black clouds in the horizon. Israel and Judah are equally a *massa perditionis*, devoted by Jahveh to inevitable destruction." In view of these, in my judgment obviously just, observations it becomes a question whether the sign could be even in part a sign of hope and not rather one consistently of judgment.

Smend thinks that at all events the view that the naming of the child signified the deliverance of Judah from its present danger is improbable. Verse 16 affirms that the overthrow of the confederated powers would take place, not at the birth of the child, so that the mother could celebrate it in the name, but in the child's early infancy. The view of Dillmann and the others, that at the child's birth the two nations depart from Judea and then later meet their fall, Smend does not find suggested, and thinks that "the two events are hardly to be separated from each other." To have named the child with reference to the rescue from Syria-Ephraim, he says, would be to have triumphed too early. Smend, then, denies that verse 16 is the interpretation of the name Immanuel, and thinks the child was so named "because in his whole life it is seen that God is with Judah"; not indeed as Ahaz and the present generation wish; upon them misfortune is to come; but through misfortune the coming generation gains a higher blessing. The better future of Judah will be gained only through the destruction of the present culture and a wholly new beginning.

But it is surely straining to put this true prophetic thought—learned by Hosea from his experience in recovering his wife—into the name Immanuel, especially as Smend rejects a possible support for his view in the telic rendering of *לְדָוִד* in verse 15.

Smend's refusal to interpret Immanuel by verse 16 suggests Budde's excision of verse 16, and so of all reference to Syria and Ephraim in Isaiah's reply to Ahaz. This makes the sign still more consistently one of evil. Budde's discussion<sup>2</sup> I have not seen, but Kuenen adopts his view, and from him I take my statement of it. The desolation of Judah, presupposed in verse 15*a* and further described in verses 17 ff., is the theme of this discourse. Of this the boy Immanuel, in his fortunes, is the sign, and the reference to Syria and Ephraim is an interruption. It could easily have been inserted by one who wondered that, from verse 10 on, these nations were wholly lost out of sight.

Of the name Immanuel Kuenen says nothing, but it appears that

<sup>2</sup> In *Études archéologiques — dédiées à M. le Dr. C. Leemans*.

its significance is suggested in verse 15*b*, to which Kuenen gives the telic force. The child "grows up in a wasted land unfit for agriculture, and in a life full of privation he is fashioned into a man after Jahveh's heart."

Contrary to Dillmann, then, the mother will name her child, not with reference to what has happened, but to what will happen. Following the indications of the circumstances and connection, these writers see that the sign must be one primarily of doom, but, bound by the presupposition that the name expresses Isaiah's faith, they introduce into it a vague and remote element of hope, so remote and vague that we may be sure it would not have been understood by the king, and this makes us rightly doubtful whether it was meant by Isaiah. Admitting that the name is a name of hope, the interpretation of Budde and Kuenen does not do it justice.

3. The second element, the reference to Judah's judgment, may be omitted, and the first made the chief contents of the sign. Not the ill fortunes but the name of the boy will then constitute the sign, and it will be wholly a sign of hope. This is the view of Duhm and Hackmann, and now of Cheyne. The verse omitted by Budde and Kuenen (verse 16) is made by them the interpretation of the sign, and verses 15, 17 are omitted as glosses.

Duhm says, "This sign must in the main have the same aim that the refused one would have, namely, to confirm the truth of what the prophet had said of the present foes and the failure of their plans." Soon a woman, giving birth, will cry out, "God with us," and this will be the name of her son; for the power of Syria and Ephraim will already have been rendered harmless by Assyria; and before the child is two or three years old the confederate kingdoms will be wholly destroyed. Verses 18-25 Duhm removes from this connection. They are a collection of Isaianic remnants on the judgment imminent over Judah.<sup>8</sup> Hackmann, omitting verse 17, refers verses 18-25 to Israel, not to Judah, making them an elaboration of verse 16, and is therefore able to keep them in this connection, though he agrees with Duhm that in the sign and its interpretation there is nothing but hope, no reference to Judah's judgment at the hand of Assyria.

<sup>8</sup> This is, in the main, after Stade (i. p. 594, and N. 1), who omits verses 15 and 17 ff., and says the discourse should end with the promise of a sign guaranteeing what has already been said in verses 4-9. There, however, Stade finds not only promise, but warning, inferring from verse 9*b*, and from the presence of Shear-jashub, that in place of verse 8*b* Isaiah must have announced the evil consequences of the king's plan of appeal to Assyria.

Cheyne agrees that the sign is one of encouragement only. Immanuel, or any similar name expressing deliverance, shall be the name which mothers before long will give their babes, the name commonly borne by children of the coming generation. Cheyne also omits verse 15, and though inclined, against Hackmann, to let verses 17(?), 18-25 stand as aimed against Judah, yet would separate them from the Immanuel sign, and suggests that the embassy of Ahaz to the Assyrian king may have intervened and changed the prophet's tone, which up to verse 16 is friendly to Ahaz.

So to Hackmann Isaiah's message to Ahaz is throughout one of encouragement. "Fear not" (vii. 4) is its keynote. The underlying thought is that Jahveh is unconditionally on Judah's side in this conflict against Syria and Israel. To be sure, the change comes soon, and Isaiah turns against Judah; for the significance of viii. 5 ff. is unmistakable. It is agreed that Isaiah pronounces judgment against Judah soon after the promise with which chapter vii. opens, but the peculiarity of these three scholars is that they pass by the evident crisis in the narrative, in vii. 11, 12, the testing and failure of Ahaz, and assuming that Isaiah's message is unaffected by that decisive rejection of his word, they must assume another crisis, unrecorded, either, with Cheyne, between verses 16 and 18, or, with Hackmann, between viii. 4 and viii. 5, to account for Isaiah's change from promise to threat.

But surely the crisis can be no other than the one so vividly described. It is impossible that after adding to his promise its condition, "If ye will not believe surely ye shall not be established" (vii. 9b), Isaiah should be unmoved by the king's refusal to believe, and should confirm by a sign the very same promise that would have rewarded his faith. Surely a change in Isaiah's message would be, not as Hackmann says, a product of momentary excitement, but a necessary consequence; for his message was entirely conditioned upon the mind and conduct of the people in the person of their king. I think it can be only the charm of the name Immanuel that has led these critics to find a sign of promise where beyond all question a sign of judgment was to be expected.

Duhm, indeed, recognizes the necessity of judgment upon Ahaz, and suggests that he will afterwards meet children bearing such names as Immanuel, and this will be to him "not merely a reminder of today's prediction, but also of his unbelief. 'God with us' means at the same time 'God against me.'" But future feelings of regret are a weak substitute to provide in the place of what stands in the text,

the prediction of the desolation of Judah, and the fall of the royal house.

Now it is a striking fact that when this prediction against Judah recurs, this time unmistakably, the name Immanuel also appears again (viii. 5-8). According to Duhm and Hackmann it could not be more out of place, and they therefore strike it out. Cheyne also thinks that Immanuel as a name of promise does not cohere with a prediction of woe, but he saves it by connecting it with verses 9-10, with which it does cohere, and translates, "and his [God's] outstretched wings shall fill the breadth of the land. For with us is God," etc.<sup>4</sup>

This, then, is the result of our review of current interpretations :

The sign of vii. 14 seems to contain two opposite elements, promise in the name, threat in the fortunes, of the boy. The efforts to unite the two elements do not succeed in producing a natural connection, and yet the efforts to separate them, or press one at the expense of the other, do not do justice to the name on the one side or to the fortunes on the other, and are supported only by violence to the text. The outstanding fact is that both in vii. 14 and in viii. 8 the name Immanuel appears, not, as we should expect, in connection with a hope, but in connection with the announcement of judgment. This suggests that the presupposition of all these interpretations, namely, that 'God with us' expresses Isaiah's own faith, is a mistake.

III. I suggest, therefore, that the name Immanuel expresses not the prophet's faith, but the false faith, the ungrounded confidence, of the king and the people. It is a name which a Jewish woman soon to give birth might naturally give to her son, but which the experiences of such a son even in his earliest infancy would contradict. The sign consists, then, not in the name nor in the lot of the boy, but in the relation of the two, in the contradiction of the name by the lot. With this understanding of it, the name forms a fitting climax to the announcement of judgment in viii. 8: The Assyrian shall overflow Judah, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O thou that callest thyself 'God with us.' This interpretation makes the sign simply and consistently a sign of evil, such as the occasion demands (verse 11 after 9b), such as the tone of the prophet's words in introducing it (verses 13, 14a), and the discourse introduced by it (verses 15 ff.)

<sup>4</sup> Comp. Giesebrecht (p. 235), who follows Bredenkamp and the LXX. [?] in connecting the  $\text{לֵךְ עִמָּנוּ}$  of verse 8 with verse 9.

lead us to expect. It, I think, evidently removes the difficulties which the previous discussion has set forth.

In further support of this interpretation I would present the consideration which first suggested it ; namely, its harmony with the usual prophetic standpoint.

It is becoming more and more evident that the greater prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah, are not to be regarded as the authors, but rather as the critics of the national or so-called Messianic hope. Their characteristic message is one of judgment, which involved the denial of a strong pre-existing national consciousness and confidence. Of the presence and strength of this confident expectation of good for Israel from its God Amos is a witness. The people were already expecting and desiring the 'Day of Jahveh,' which as a matter of course was to be a day of light and good fortune for Israel. The new word of Amos was, that the day of Jahveh would be for them darkness and destruction, unless they turned from sin to righteousness. False confidence, resting on the idea that Jahveh's relation to Israel was a natural and necessary one, whose sign and seal was the cultus, characterized the popular religion. The prophets who knew that Jahveh was primarily a moral being declared that his relation to Israel was morally conditioned, and that in the present moral state of the people, his mind toward it must be one of disfavor. "Seek good," says Amos, "and not evil, that ye may live ; and so Jahveh, the God of hosts, shall be with you, *as ye say*" (v. 14). "Jahveh is with us" was, therefore, already a popular expression of religious faith. Amos denies it of Israel as a nation. 'God is with those who hate the evil and love the good' is his watchword.

Hosea gives to his children names emphatically denying the popular religious faith : Lo-ruhamah, "for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel" ; Lo-ammi, "for ye are not my people, and I will not be your god." These names were to be changed only after Israel through exile had learned repentance and faithfulness.

Micah, Isaiah's contemporary, quotes and denies similar expressions of faith current among the religious leaders in the southern kingdom. "Is not Jahveh in the midst of us?" say the judges, priests, and prophets of Judah, "no evil shall come upon us." "Therefore," replied the prophet, "Zion shall for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps" (iii. 11, 12).

Jeremiah has all his life the one task of lifting up his voice against the prophets of the popular hope, who "heal the hurt of my people lightly, saying, Peace, peace ; when there is no peace" (vi. 14 ; viii.

11. See also, *e.g.*, iv. 10 ; v. 12 ; xiv. 13-15 ; xxiii. 17). The popular faith, 'Jahveh is with us,' had in his day taken a new form, in which it was destined to survive for generations: "The law of Jahveh is with us." This also Jeremiah denies. "The false pen of the scribes hath wrought falsely"; "they have rejected the word of Jahveh" (viii. 8, 9).

If then Isaiah replied to Ahaz's unbelief, 'God is with us' and your enemies will therefore be overthrown, he would stand alone among the greater prophets.

In and after the exile, when the announcement of judgment had been fulfilled, when the heart of the people was humbled and their confidence had given place to despair, the time would come for the renewal of the word of confidence and hope. But during the pre-exilic period it was the task of the prophet to deny the 'God with us' which was the fundamental axiom of Israelitish religion. Not 'God is with us,' but, according to Amos, God is with those who do his righteousness; or, according to Hosea, God is with those who are faithful to his love; and surely, according to Isaiah, God is with those who fear and trust him, who wait for him and bow in humility before his holiness.

But against the view that 'God with us' expressed the faith of Ahaz rather than that of Isaiah, two objections may be urged:

1. That Ahaz and Judah were at this crisis not over-confident, but stricken with fear, while Isaiah brought a message of encouragement.

2. That Isaiah at a later similar crisis, the invasion of Sennacherib in 701, held to the inviolable security of Jerusalem, and so to an unconditional 'God with us' for Judah.

1. The consideration of the first objection involves some review of the historical situation and of chapters vii. and viii. in their connection. Syria and North Israel have felt compelled to forget their old hatred and form an alliance against the great common foe, Assyria. Only by a union of all the peoples of Syria could resistance to Assyria be undertaken with the slightest hope of success. It appears that Judah refused to join this confederacy, and Rezin and Pekah determined to compel it to do so, and to put upon its throne a vassal king of their own, the son of Tabeel.<sup>5</sup> Ahaz prepares to resist this direct assault upon his throne, and determines to appeal to the power which formed the other side in the larger controversy, Assyria (with Isa. vii. compare 2 Kings xv. 37 ; xvi. 5-9).

<sup>5</sup> Otherwise Stade (i. 589), who thinks Judah was the aggressor.

Isaiah's view of the situation cannot be doubtful. Amos and Hosea had announced the approaching fall of the northern kingdom at the hand of Assyria. Isaiah had himself taken up and repeated their prediction. The outcome of the larger conflict between confederated Syria and Assyria was therefore predetermined. These new efforts of Israel to maintain itself by foreign alliances and by war were only new evidence of that vain and godless reliance upon foreigners for the healing of its wound, that foolish and fatal mixing itself among the peoples in which Hosea had seen the characteristic folly and sin of Ephraim. So that when Isaiah tells Ahaz that Syria and Ephraim are not to be feared and are about to fall, this prediction is not based upon the inviolable security of Judah, but upon Israel's sin and the doom pronounced upon it by God.

Further, it is quite evident that Isaiah's ulterior aim is not to encourage Ahaz by the promise of success in the war he is undertaking, but to persuade him to give up his war and politics and leave the outcome with God. The fate of Ephraim is not uncertain, not conditioned upon the conduct of Ahaz. It is destined in any case to a speedy end. The immediate danger to Judah is nothing, but Judah is itself being tested. If it follows, as it is now planning to do, in the steps of Israel, and tries to maintain itself by taking an active part in the history of the world, it will for the same sin meet the same fate that is about to befall Israel ; not indeed at Israel's hand, but at the hand of Jahveh through his agent for Israel's chastening, Assyria itself. "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." What Ahaz is called upon to believe is not Judah's unconditional security, but Israel's inevitable fate, with all that this involved. If he believed in the prophetic word against Israel, he would not do what Israel did, play at politics and war, and he would fear, not an outward foe, but the God who judges righteously. Would Judah learn the lesson of Israel's fall, or would the transgressions of Israel be found also in the daughter of Zion (Mic. i. 13) ? That was the life and death question of religion in Isaiah's time, and that was the question now at stake. To fear Israel, after the prophet's announcement of its speedy fall, meant not to fear Jahveh ; and Isaiah's purpose is not so much to take away the fear that moved the heart of king and people as to deepen it and change its direction. This becomes altogether evident in chapter viii., where the prophet is commanded not to share the people's fear, but to make Jahveh his fear and his dread. That Judah was in danger, Isaiah knew well, but it was in danger not at the hand

of Ephraim and Syria, but at the hand of its God. Jahveh himself was the stone of stumbling and the rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, on which many should fall and be broken. Ahaz feared, but he did not fear the real danger, or he would not have been preparing for the siege and planning to call upon Assyria for help. His refusal to assent to Isaiah's requirement is made ostensibly on religious grounds, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jahveh." To demand a sign would be to distrust God. It was not irreligion that prompted his refusal, but a false religion, the popular false religion which the prophets were ever combating, self-confidence masking itself under the guise of confidence in God. Pride, self-sufficiency, and consequent insensibility to the need of God, is to Isaiah the great sin. Pride, rather than anxiety and distrust, is the opposite and denial of faith (ii. 11, 17; vi. 9, 10, etc.). A time of danger and fear was the prophet's opportunity. He would try to bring the king's mind by means of the outer fear, and through the denial of it to the true inner fear. But no. He continued to fear Ephraim and Syria, and by his preparations for war he proved that he did not fear Jahveh. Ephraim and Syria were against him, but he had no presentiment of the truth to which Isaiah sought his assent, that Jahveh was against him and against Judah, unless its heart were bowed in fear and trust to him. 'God with us' was, therefore, not Isaiah's conviction, but the underlying assumption of Ahaz from which Isaiah sought in vain to win him. It was Judah's false faith for itself, as the event would speedily prove. This is the significance of the sign.

The sign would gain in force if we pointed אֱלֹהֵינוּ, and read with the Greek versions (LXX., Aq., Theod., Sym.), "and *thou* shalt call its name, God with us." The *almah* would then be the wife, or one of the wives, of Ahaz. If the name expresses the faith of Ahaz, it is altogether fitting that he should give it to his son. I cannot help finding a confirmation of the view advanced, in the fact that אֱלֹהֵינוּ is thus given a natural reference to a definite person, which the king would perfectly understand. It remains, indeed, true that the false faith of Ahaz was that of Judah, and that the name was a natural one for any Jewish parent, except a prophet, to choose.

If the sign consists in the contradiction of the boy's name by his fortunes, verses 17 ff. are its natural explanation, and the question may arise whether verse 16 (or 16*b*) is, as Budde holds, an interruption. My impression is that it need not be so regarded, for the fall of Ephraim, as we have seen, was not conditioned upon the response of Ahaz to Isaiah's appeal. It remains certain, but the prophet

regards it not now as the deliverance of Judah, but as the precursor and pledge of Judah's like fate.

The 8th chapter confirms the view that 'God with us' expressed the mind of the king and of the people, not of Isaiah, in this crisis. To his own son Isaiah gives a name which reflects his own feelings. It is not 'God with us,' but *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*, 'Spoil speedeth, prey hasteth.' This is primarily indeed a sign of the overthrow and captivity of Damascus and Samaria (verse 4) ; but it is not a name of joy and triumph on Judah's part. It is and remains a threatening name, and might well, in Isaiah's mind, have been given with reference to both the houses of Israel, which in the following verses he classes together.

I venture, indeed, to doubt whether the spoiling and wasting of vii. 16 and viii. 4 were what Ahaz and Judah desired for their foes. They desired the failure of the alliance, because in the midst of a united Syria little Judah could hardly have maintained its independent significance ; but so it could not in a Syria completely subjugated by Assyria. The allied kingdoms did not, on their part, desire the overthrow of Judah, and their utter ruin, on the other hand, could hardly have seemed less ominous to Ahaz than to Isaiah. The name, 'Spoil speedeth, prey hasteth,' the alarming cry of ravaging war, would perhaps express Judah's own feelings when it saw Damascus and Samaria carried away before the king of Assyria.

The force of the repetition of the word Immanuel at the end of viii. 5-8 I have already noted. I think I may say that the view here advocated is the only one that makes the introduction of the name in this place fully intelligible, and that on this view it is a peculiarly forcible ending of the prediction of Judah's overthrow. On the other hand, the addition of the word by a later scribe is wholly without motive, for the scribe shared the popular view of Immanuel as a word of safety and deliverance.<sup>6</sup> Nor if the word ever stood in the — to the Jewish mind — natural connection with verses 9, 10, would any one have put it in its present strange position (against Giesebrecht, Cheyne). If, however, the word stood here, the addition by a later scribe of verses 9, 10 is natural and to be expected. The name, from the scribe's standpoint, would greatly need interpretation, its presence here being a riddle ; and verses 9, 10 give the popular, accepted interpretation. That they are an interpretation is quite evident.

<sup>6</sup> Duhm appeals in a despairing way to "something related to the woes of the Messiah."

They are addressed, not to Judah nor to the immediate foes, but to the nations, and announce, not Judah's approaching judgment, but its invincible security. They represent Judah as saying to the nations almost exactly what Isaiah is here concerned to say to Judah, 'Your war and your political intrigue will prove vain, for God is against you.' And one might be tempted to think that Isaiah actually addressed such taunting words to Judah and that the scribe turned them against the heathen, if it were not, fortunately, the habit of Jewish scribes to add good words to evil rather than alter evil words into good. Isaiah's feelings and expectations at this crisis the verses certainly do not express, but rather — essentially, though not in form — those of the king and the people.<sup>7</sup>

In verses 11-15 the prophet's message finds further powerful expression. God with a strong hand instructs him not to walk in the way of this people, nor to fear what they fear, but to fear him who, they think, is for them, but who is against them, their fear and their dread, the rock on which not only Israel but Judah shall stumble and fall and be broken, the snare in which even the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be snared and taken.

Only for the little circle of his disciples, the party of those who waited upon the Lord, of which we see here the beginning, only for this remnant did the prophet cherish a hope (viii. 16-18). To them in his faith, and, as it proved, in reality, the future belonged.

I conclude that in this crisis 'God with us,' in spite of the fear of Ahaz, expressed his belief for Judah rather than Isaiah's.

<sup>7</sup> Stade (*Z.A.T.W.*, 1884, p. 260, n. 1) rejects the verses as interrupting the connection, and assigns them to a post-exilic scribe, because "the older prophecy never speaks of an attack of indefinite peoples." The address to "all ye of far countries" belongs to the eschatology of the "reproductive prophecy," or apocalypse.

Giesebrecht regards the address to the peoples as here out of place, since Pekah and Rezin cannot be meant, and with reference to Assyria the tone of triumph is impossible after verses 7, 8, where, moreover, Jahveh himself leads the Assyrians, and his purposes, not their vain plans against Judah, are in mind. Further, in verse 17, which expresses Isaiah's hope, his tone is not one of triumph, but of submissive trust. Yet the words are by Isaiah, with reference to the invasion of Sennacherib, when the prophet had changed his view of the future; and he may himself have added such consolatory sayings to his earlier predictions to break their severity. So xvii. 12-14 after xvii. 1-11.

Hackmann (p. 69, n. 1) follows Stade; Cheyne, hesitatingly, and, in view of his exclusion of the element of hope from chapters xxviii.-xxxi., unaccountably sides with Giesebrecht.

Duhm still leaves the verses in their place as parallel in thought to vii. 5 ff.; but he omits "For with us is God."

2. Does not Isaiah's belief in the inviolability of Zion in the later crisis of 701 prove that in distinction from the other prophets he held to an unconditional 'God with us' for Judah? In other words, is not viii. 9, 10 proved by Isaiah's later conduct to be an expression of a characteristic belief of this prophet?

The question of Isaiah's conduct at that later crisis I do not feel at present prepared to discuss. It should receive a thorough reconsideration in view of the criticism of Duhm, and especially that of Hackmann and Cheyne, which makes the prophet even then quite consistently a prophet of judgment. The theory of Zion's inviolability would in that case be, during the prophetic period, only the naïve popular faith which the prophets contradict, and only after the exile, with reference to the second temple, would it receive official recognition in Judaism; not indeed in the old crass form, but idealized; resting on past historical deliverances, and shedding a glory upon them, but looking forward to fulfilment in that glorious deliverance of Jerusalem from a final assault of heathen which was, from Ezekiel on, a fixed element in Jewish eschatology (Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.; cf. e.g. Zech. xii., xiv.; Joel iv. [iii]; Isa. lxvi.; Hag. ii. 22 ff.; Ps. xlvi., xlvii., xlviii., ii., cx.; the Jewish Apocalypses, and Rev. xx. 8, 9).

But while waiting for a satisfactory history of Sennacherib's invasion and Jerusalem's escape, and of the influence of this event on the Jewish religion, and of Isaiah's part in it, — matters of vital interest to the student of Old Testament religion, — I offer a few tentative remarks which bear on the question now before us.

1) The crisis of 701 cannot be used as a simple parallel to that of 735. It is quite possible that Isaiah's message was one of judgment in the earlier case and of hope in the later (so e.g. Budde and Giesebrecht).

2) Even if the usual view of the later crisis be correct, yet an unconditional 'God with us' would not express the prophet's attitude towards it. Much of chapters xxviii.—xxxi. is in any case of threatening import. The condition of faith in Jahveh is insisted upon in xxviii. 16, xxx. 15, as in vii. 9, and here as there in contrast to the prevailing policy of war and foreign alliance. The woes of the prophet against Judah upon the success of the Egyptian party are as severe as any he ever uttered (xxviii. 14 ff.; xxix. 1–6; xxx. 1–16).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> And it is by no means certain that we must omit xxxii. 9–20 because it cannot "be brought into harmony with the conviction of Isaiah that Jahveh will not let Judah be conquered" (Stade, *Z.A.T.W.*, iv. p. 260), or refer it to the earliest

It is indeed certain that Isaiah, either at that time or somewhat earlier, announced the fall of Assyria at the hand of Jahveh — not, indeed, for its violence against Judah, but for its pride (x. 5–15; xiv. 24–27). But this judgment was to be executed only “when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem” (x. 12). It would appear that here, as in the earlier danger, Judah’s fate depended, not upon that of its foe, but upon its own attitude toward God.

3) The idea that Isaiah at this point differed essentially from the other great pre-exilic prophets, and agreed with the popular view, seems in itself improbable and lacks evidence. Amos and Hosea seem to have regarded the fate of Judah as simply involved in that of Israel (Amos. vi. 1, 11; Hos. v. 5, 10, 12, 14; vi. 4, 10, 11; viii. 14; x. 11; xii. 12, 3<sup>9</sup>). Micah knows indeed of those in Judah who say, “Is not Jahveh in the midst of us? no evil shall come upon us.” But it is the heads of Jerusalem who judge for reward, its priests who teach for hire, and its prophets who divine for money that say such things. Was Isaiah among these? It was Micah’s task emphatically to deny the current idea that there was a difference between Jerusalem and Samaria. Their sin and their judgment are one (e.g. i. 1, 5, 9, 13; iii. 10; and cf. i. 6 with iii. 12).

Jeremiah’s task is the same, and it has become a harder one in the interval. Events seem to have verified the popular faith. But Jeremiah stands firm. The popular phrases, “The temple of Jahveh, the temple of Jahveh, the temple of Jahveh are these,” he declares are lying words (vii. 4). To the men who, after breaking all the commandments in the decalogue, “come and stand before me in this house which is called by my name and say, We are delivered,” Jeremiah, like Micah, announces that Judah will share the fate of Ephraim, and that its city and temple will fall (vii. 9–15). For this prediction, this denial of the chief article of Judah’s popular faith, this blasphemy and treason, Jeremiah was put on trial for his life, as Christ was for similar words about the second temple, and after him Stephen. In the trial (Jer. xxvi.) it is no doubt worthy of note that Jeremiah’s friends appeal to the example of Micah, but not to the greater prophet Isaiah. Yet, on the other hand, his adversaries do not cite Isaiah as one would think they must. And it is surely inconceivable

time of Isaiah (Duhm). Here the utter wasting of Jerusalem and Judea precedes the time of peace.

<sup>9</sup> Hos. i. 7 must be omitted. It belongs, with Isa. viii. 9, 10, to Judaism. So Wellhausen, Stade, Kuenen, and others.

that he was the author or the promoter of that popular faith in the unconditional safety of Jerusalem against which Micah and Jeremiah had chiefly to contend, and which was the direct cause of Judah's fall.

When, even after the first deportation of Judahites, the prophet Hananiah persisted in words of hope: "The yoke of the king of Babylon will be broken;" "in two full years" the exiles and the plundered treasures will return; Jeremiah confidently appeals to history and declares: "The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied against many countries and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known that Jahveh hath truly sent him" (xxviii. 8, 9). The presumption is against the prophet that prophesies peace. History gives no precedent for such prophecy. Only the event, not their inner self-evidence, could confirm such words. Could this be said if the greatest prophet before Jeremiah had been a prophet of safety for Zion and Jerusalem?

The opening chapters of Isaiah certainly reveal a man as emphatically on the side of the prophetic in distinction from the popular, priestly religion as Amos or Hosea, as Micah or Jeremiah; and his call (ch. vi.) was certainly not to be a prophet of peace.

4) The clear analogies to such passages in Isaiah as viii. 9, 10; xii.; xxxiii., etc., are found in post-exilic literature. Only the destruction of the city and temple and the exile of the people could convince them of their mistake in supposing that, whatever their deeds and desert, Jahveh was certainly with them. Now, 'God with us' could be only a hope. Ezekiel, who beheld the glory of Jahveh leave Jerusalem before its fall (xi. 22, 23), saw also, in vision, its future return to abide forever (xliii. 1 ff.); and gave to the new city which he described the name 'Jahveh is there' (xlviii. 35). This final word of Ezekiel's prophecy became the ruling faith of Judah after the return. "Judah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation . . . for Jahveh dwelleth in Zion" (Joel iv. [iii.] 20, 21).

The book of Psalms gives abundant expression to this faith. Psalm xlvi., with its theme, "Jahveh of hosts is with us, therefore will not we fear," is a perfect commentary on Isaiah viii. 9, 10, and a reading of Pss. xlvi.-xlviii. and of such undoubtedly late sections in Isa. as xxv., xxvi., and lxvi., will give one a sense of the characteristic tone of post-exilic piety which will enable him to put, *e.g.*, Isa. xii. and xxxiii. in their proper place.

For this appropriation to itself of the faith expressed in the phrase 'God is with us' by post-exilic Judaism it may indeed fairly be said that Isaiah prepares the way. The kernel of Judaism is rightly found in the circle of his disciples (viii. 16-18). They formed in fact, and no doubt in his intention, the beginning of that Remnant in whose survival after Judah's judgment he from the first believed, as the name of Shear-jashub testifies.<sup>10</sup> For them, no doubt, 'God with us' expressed Isaiah's own hope and faith. But a reference to the Remnant in vii. 14 would be wholly inappropriate, and in viii. 8 it is quite impossible. It is the Judah that Assyria is to overrun and waste, not the surviving fragment, for whom the child stands. The place of the Remnant in Isaiah's mind at this crisis is indicated by viii. 8 "to the neck" (yet cf. xxx. 28); viii. 15 "many"; viii. 16-18; xvii. 4-6.

I conclude: we have clear evidence of two uses of such phrases as 'God is with us.'

1. In the pre-exilic period, as expressing the popular religion, criticised and denied by the prophets (e.g. Am. v. 14; Mic. iii. 11; Jer. viii. 8).

2. In the post-exilic period, as expressing the "church-consciousness" of Judaism (Ps. xlvi., xlvi., etc.). The age of Isaiah suggests that vii. 14, viii. 8 are to be interpreted in the former sense, and this, I believe, is confirmed by its naturalness and fitness in the connection. On the other hand viii. 9, 10 belongs clearly in the second class of passages.

<sup>10</sup> Hackmann's theory that this meant originally, Judah shall survive when Israel falls; and only after viii. 5-8 came to mean, the prophetic kernel in Judah shall survive its fall, I cannot regard as in any degree probable. Even Hackmann is obliged to assume for ii. 6-19 (-21?) a period when Isaiah had not yet made the distinction between Israel and Judah, as well as to put the threats against Judah in iii. and v. later than vii. Hackmann's interpretation of the Remnant is connected with his view that Isaiah's message to Ahaz was safety for Judah, doom for Israel. On our understanding of that message the presence of the boy whose name was to Ahaz and Judah far more a threat than a promise, is altogether natural.