

The Promulgation of Deuteronomy.

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IN these days in which biblical scholars are moved to take widely divergent positions, it is seldom that we come upon one of the great men of Israel concerning whom there is such unanimity of opinion as there is in the case of Josiah, King of Judah. Men of all schools of Old Testament thought point to the age of Josiah as epochal. In Josiah, we are told, Judah had its best, if not its greatest, king. Later ages had not to idealize him: he was great, and did more than all others in Israel to turn the tide in favor of pure monotheism. Though men fell after his death into their old idolatrous ways, his influence became most potent in the late pre-exilic time and in exilic days; so that his star was the star of the new state which rose upon the ruins of the old, when the divine word was heard: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; let the walls of Zion once more be built." In Josiah, then, we are given to understand, the Jews had their Luther, who found in the newly discovered law-book his theses which he boldly published, and who, in his iconoclastic zeal, cleansed the land of all traces of the then Scarlet Woman and her wiles. One by one, many of the supposedly great men of the Hebrews have vanished, or have stepped down from their lofty pedestals, as critical students have brought to light the facts that reveal the slow and continuous way in which the life and thought of the people developed; but Josiah has stood through all controversy one of the most marvellous and inexplicable personages among all the kings of Judah. With singular unanimity radical critics and conservative scholars have spoken of his work, accepting in so doing what may eventually prove to have been as much an idealization as Hebrew literature gives us in its Abraham, its Moses, its David, or its Solomon.

The story of what has commonly been known as the reformation of Josiah is found in 2 Ki. 22³-23²⁷. The designation is not inappropriate. I prefer, however, to speak of the narrative as the story of

the promulgation of Deuteronomy. My warrant for so doing is found in the fact that the reformation which is pictured, or described, is said to have been caused by the finding and the making known the contents of a law-book, which is now very generally understood to have been Deuteronomy. In my critical study of the text, it will be necessary for me to notice what is deleted as late, what is left after the work of redactors and glossators is rejected, and what, furthermore, is the character of the simple story when shorn of all these additions. This will but prepare the way for a careful examination of the text as a whole in the effort to set forth the conclusions which I have reached in my own study of the problems of the Deuteronomic literature.

It is noteworthy that a considerable part of the present text is considered the work of other hands than those which are thought to have given us the original story. Two-thirds of the text, some thirty-two out of forty-seven verses, are supposed to have been inserted by redactors and glossators. In examining these portions which modern critical scholars delete, I am not concerned to distinguish, save in a few instances, between the supposed work of early, and that of later, editors. It is enough that these parts are all mentioned, with but a few remarks concerning some of them and their relation to the primitive narrative which remains after they have been cut away. Whether the rejected portions be considered pre-exilic or post-exilic redactions is a matter of no special concern to us at this point, if indeed it be anywhere in this study.

The first questions which must be faced are, how much is left, and what is the nature of the fragments out of which we are supposed to be able to reconstruct the original story. We encounter at once a minor gloss, in 22^{5b} and ⁶, a passage which has to do with the mention of the passing of the money to the overseers of the work upon the house of Yahweh that it might be paid to the masons, carpenters, and other workmen.¹ So, too, the term "high priest," or at least the qualifying adjective, which is used of Hilkiah in v.⁸, and presumably in certain other passages, is regarded as a minor gloss of a day con-

¹ I am specially indebted to Pres. W. R. Harper for the last word concerning the deleted passages. See *The Biblical World*, Feb., 1902, Vol. xix., No. 2, p. 133. With his statements the reader should compare Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. ii., p. 870, and Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (1897), pp. 185-203. In noting the deleted passages, I follow Dr. Harper's statements quite closely. I have not thought it wise to call attention to the deletions of some scholars.

siderably subsequent to the time of Josiah. The next portion which critical students delete is a large and important passage, 22¹⁴⁻²⁰, the story of the interview of Hilkiah and others with a prophetess, Huldah. According to vs.^{12 and 13}, these men were ordered by the king to go and inquire of Yahweh concerning the book found in the temple. Instead of passing on to remark that they went to the temple, the narrative speaks of their turning aside to inquire of a prophetess living in Jerusalem, as though the temple were too abominable a place for men to visit on such a holy mission. This particular narrative is assigned to a post-exilic redactor. It must be admitted that it bears indisputable marks of a late date in its thought and language. The words put in the mouth of Huldah are significant. Instead of revealing a way whereby a people supposedly innocent up to this time of the contents of the newly discovered law-book may by repentance and reformation escape punishment, the inquirers are at once and remorselessly told that Yahweh is to bring evil upon the place, even all the evils written in the book. This is a late retrospect in the general style of the Deuteronomists. The words appear to have been written long subsequent to the fall of Jerusalem by one who thought of its destruction as a punishment inflicted because of the infidelity of the fathers to the law. The exception which is made in the case of Josiah, vs.^{18ff.}, seems unfair, for presumably he was not less guilty than his subjects in this matter; besides, the validity of the statement in which he is assured of a peaceful death is open to question. According to a part of the narrative of his life which appears to be authentic, he was not gathered to his fathers in peace, but died a violent death at Megiddo. Is this a part of the effort to disguise facts and idealize the man? Would it not have been revolting to the writer of the story of the promulgation of Deuteronomy, or even of such a redactional insertion, if it be an insertion, to speak of Josiah's death in other way than is here done? The mention of the actual facts in the brief chronicles of the kings of Judah might not be set aside, they were too well known and too sacred withal; but an encouraging and reassuring word might be put into the mouth of Huldah. We shall have occasion later to refer to this passage, which I am loath to abscond from the original story. We here note the fact, which specially interests us at this point, that critical scholars in deleting this and other parts of the eighteen verses of chapter 22, which give us the introduction to the story, delete nearly nine and one-half verses.

Passing to the next chapter, which gives us the story of the reforma-

tion, we notice that vs.^{2, 4b, and 5} are thought to be late glosses and editorial notes. We are told in v.³ that the king stood by the pillar and covenanted with Yahweh to walk after him and to keep his laws with all his heart, to perform, indeed, all the words of the covenant written in the book. The writer gives us to understand that the whole people, as though urged by one mighty impulse, entered into the covenant. The latter part of v.⁴ informs us that the king carried the ashes of the burnt images and vessels of Baal unto Bethel, a most improbable proceeding, so improbable and so manifestly out of agreement with the context that it is hardly conceivable that the original story, though it may have been much larger than critical scholars have thought it, could have contained the statement. V.⁵ mentions the destruction of the priests whom the kings of Judah had put in charge of the high places about Jerusalem, and the destruction also of those who sacrificed to Baal and to the sun, moon, the parts of the zodiac, and the stars of heaven. The probabilities are somewhat against this as a part of the story in its earliest form; but we need not here discuss the verse.

The statement of v.^{7b} is rejected where, in connection with the mention of the destruction of the houses of devoted males referred to in the first part of the verse, we are told that they were where women wove curtains, or canopies, for Astarte.

Chapter 23^{8ff.}, which speaks of the reformation as it spread over Judah, is regarded as the work of a post-exilic redactor. It includes all Judah within the scope of the reformation. According to this narrative the priests of the high places were spared to become temple servants. Elsewhere in the story of Josiah's reformation nothing is said of the sparing of such priests; though we know it was quite in harmony with Deuteronomic thought that the priests of the high places, the Levites as they seem to have been called, should be transferred to the priesthood of the central sanctuary.² The mention of the destruction of the bronze horses and the chariots of the sun, v.¹¹, and the statements concerning the altars of Ahaz and Manasseh, v.¹², have little in favor of a pre-exilic date. We are not surprised to find that the critics delete them.

In vs.^{13 and 14}, which are thought to be included in the pre-exilic redactor's work, we are told that the king defiled the high places near Jerusalem which Solomon had built to Astarte, Chemosh, and

² Here, however, the priests spared became subordinate officials. This suggests that the passage under consideration was later than the age of the Deuteronomists.

Milcom ; and that he removed all traces of the idolatrous worship and defiled the holy places with the bones of men. These verses certainly appear very much like an afterthought on the part of some Deuteronomist who felt that the story was incomplete without a word concerning the cleansing of the environs of Jerusalem. Having at hand a passage in which earlier Deuteronomists charged Solomon, justly or unjustly (probably he was capable of almost anything in the way of infidelity to his God) with the introduction of certain forms of foreign worship, he added to the story of the reformation of Josiah the statement that all these abominations were removed by Israel's one great iconoclast.

The next supposed redactional addition is longer, vs.¹⁶⁻²⁰, of which a part, vs.^{19, 20}, should, perhaps, be considered separately. Here we have an interesting little narrative relating what purports to be an incident in the reformation which Josiah is said to have carried into the north country. As he was cleansing Bethel, we are told, he espied certain sepulchres in a hillside near by, and sent and had the bones disinterred and burned upon the altar, thus polluting it, and thus unconsciously fulfilling the word of the man of God who three centuries before foretold what he was to do. Coming upon a certain superscription, as the work was progressing, he inquired about it only to find that it marked the tomb of this same man of God. He therefore spared his remains, and, sparing them, allowed those of the prophet of Samaria, buried with him, to escape defilement. What has been considered a late gloss goes on to say that the king similarly removed the houses of the high places which were scattered about Samaria, whereby the kings of Israel had angered Yahweh ; and that he slew all the priests of these high places and defiled them, *i.e.* the sacred hilltops, with human bones which he burned upon their altars. These verses, it must be confessed, can hardly be harmonized with v.¹⁵, which asserts that Josiah cleansed Bethel, burning the high place, tearing down the altar, and reducing all to ashes. Under the guise of an expansion of the narrative, we are told that sepulchres were opened and the bones found therein were brought forth and burned upon this same altar to defile it. The inconsistency is such as to render the passage irreconcilable with v.¹⁵, and such also as to lead to the very reasonable supposition that it was added to the earlier and simpler story. It appears, moreover, to have been an afterthought to conceive of the reformation as extending throughout all the cities of Samaria (v.^{19, 20}). Probably the graveyard episode, vs.¹⁶⁻¹⁸, did not come from the same hand as

the Samaria passage, vs.¹⁹⁻²⁰. Verses¹⁶⁻¹⁸ are in some way curiously linked with the story which appears in 1 Ki. 13^{1-22a}; as vs.¹⁹⁻²⁰ are with 1 Ki. 13^{22b}. Probably the writer of the earlier story in 1 Ki. 13 inserted¹⁶⁻¹⁸; and it may be that a glossator of that story, whose work appears in v.^{22b}, inserted the gloss in 2 Ki. 23¹²⁻²⁰. Enough, however, for our present purpose, to note that the whole of the passage under consideration is, for reasons which seem conclusive, deleted.

Few textual students would think to defend vs.²¹⁻²³ as a part of the original story, so awkwardly do they fit into the narrative. They have to do with a passover Josiah is said to have ordered and observed. Verse²², "Surely there was not such a passover as this made from the days of the judges who judged Israel, and all the days of the kings of Israel and Judah," must have been written long subsequent to the fall of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. We need not linger over v.²⁴, which has been rejected largely on the ground that it is pronouncedly Deuteronomic. Little can indeed be said in its favor; most of it is given to the telling of a story told already. "Neither after him arose there any like him" (v.^{23b}) is retrospective. It is deleted despite the fact that it appears to be an integral part of what immediately precedes. Verse²⁰ is deleted; while²⁷, which is rejected, speaks of the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem in a way so thoroughly characteristic of the late time that we do not wonder at its deletion.

Twenty-one and a half of the twenty-seven verses of the story of the reformation in the opinion of critical scholars are thus late. That most of these bear marks of a time considerably subsequent to Josiah, I have noted; that a few are manifestly insertions I have frankly admitted. Whether some of the indications of a late date thus brought to light, necessarily prove the passages containing them to be glosses or editorial redactions, or whether they must be retained and the conclusion reached that the original was late, may be discussed farther on. Here we are primarily interested in examining the deleted passages, and in noting the fact that they embrace a large part of the text.

We now pass on to an examination of the story as it is left, shorn of its characteristic Deuteronomic features. Assuming that all parts of the text we are examining, which have been regarded with suspicion, are amplifications of the original story, we inquire, whether we have left a consistent narrative, and what in any event is the nature of that narrative.

As a part of the original story, we are supposed to have left a passage (22^{3, 4, 5a and 7}) which relates that Shaphan, the scribe, was sent by Josiah to the house of Yahweh to pour out the money contributed for the repairs of the house and to see that it was given to the overseers of the work. The statement is included that no account was kept with those who thus received or handled the money because they were trustworthy men. The mention of the discovery of the law-book (v.⁸), the story of the taking of it to the king, together with the statement of the effect which the reading of it produced and the consequent action of the king, who sent Hilkiah and certain of his court attendants to inquire of Yahweh (vs.⁹⁻¹³), follow in the introductory part of the narrative. In the story of the reformation, we have a short passage (23¹⁻²) which declares that the king sent and gathered the elders of Judah and Jerusalem and went with them and all the people of the different ranks and classes to the house of Yahweh, where he read to them all the words of the book of the covenant. In v.^{4a} we are told that the king ordered Hilkiah, the priest, and the priests of the second rank and the attendants to bring out of the temple all the vessels and furniture used in the worship of Baal and Astarte and burn them without the city by the Kidron. Verse⁶ adds that he brought out the image of Astarte and burned it at the side of Kidron ; and, reducing it to ashes, cast the ashes upon the graves of the people. So in v.⁷ we are told that he destroyed the houses of the devoted males that were by the house of Yahweh. The story which we have left then goes on to mention briefly the cleansing of Bethel. Here the high place of Jeroboam and the altar, together with the images, were broken down and burned. Verse^{25a}, which eulogizes Josiah as a pious king, is retained. Verse²⁶ is deleted by but few, though it evidently has in mind the troublous years which followed Josiah's reign.

This is supposedly the original story. At all events it is all that is left by our critical scholars. Whether the central piece of the quilt was reduced in size before it became a large patchwork, they do not determine. It certainly is not without difficulties. It begins with a fragmentary and apparently incidental, though unexplainable, allusion to the repair of the temple. Its abruptness puzzles us. In its simplest form, but much more in its unmutilated form, the opening paragraph bears the marks of being an excerpt from the story of the repair of the temple by Jehoash, 2 Ki. 12⁵⁻¹⁷. This reference to the repair of the temple is incidental to the mention of the bringing forward of the newly discovered law-book as Shaphan was superintending

the disbursement of the money given for repairs. This introductory fragment is followed by a brief and incredible story of the effect which the reading of the law-book had upon the king to whom Shaphan is said to have taken it. The first important lacuna comes between the statement concerning the sending of Hilkiyah and others to inquire of Yahweh and that which mentions the calling of the people together to listen to the reading of the book. Manifestly, if we retain vs.¹² and ¹³, we must assume that the original story contained something between this and 23¹. It is difficult to conceive of anything at this point more in harmony with the general tenor of the narrative.

It should be remarked, to go on with the supposedly original story, that it is extremely improbable that the simple narrative had nothing to say of a reform movement in Judah. Conceivably such a story might have reported the reform as carried north to Bethel without saying anything of Samaria; but that Judah should have been overlooked is extremely improbable. A critical examination, though it be not searchingly minute, thus reveals inconsistencies in the simple story which the critics leave us. Questions concerning them are, however, lost to sight when the more radical question is raised: "What is the character of the story?" The fact should be recognized, for it is a fact, that the story which remains, though shorn of much that is strangely characteristic of the Deuteronomists and sadly mutilated, is still a Deuteronomic story, as much so as anything we have in the Old Testament. Leaving aside for the time the question whether we have the narrative of an actual reformation, we must perforce admit that the incidents of the simple story are strangely characteristic of the Deuteronomists. Why is the fact brought to our attention that the temple was being repaired? Surely not merely in order that the finding of the law-book may be mentioned; for that might have been less awkwardly stated. It appears to be for the reason that the writer wished his readers to know that the temple was mysteriously got ready for the centralized worship. This at least is certain, the mention of its repair must have been peculiarly gratifying to those who afterward read the story of the promulgation of Deuteronomy sympathetically, as they reflected that Josiah himself before the existence of the law-book was known began to prepare the way for its proposed centralization of worship.

But what, it may be asked, of the mention of the finding of the law-book and the effect which the reading of it had upon the king? Could anything be more manifestly Deuteronomic? Must not the

story have brought tears of joy to these pious monotheists whenever they read it? Then, too, the part played by Josiah in inquiring of Yahweh and in preparing the hearts of the people must ever through the centuries have stirred them deeply. We should reflect that Moses is not more truly the orator in Deuteronomy than Josiah is the actor in the story of the promulgation of Deuteronomy. The former is fictitiously introduced, and must have been known to many as so introduced; but here is a king playing earnestly and heroically his part as a most ardent Deuteronomist. The purging of Jerusalem and Bethel, how gratifying the story must have been to them! Sword and fire and putrefying bones and unclean ashes and refuse were freely used. Nothing could have been more gratifying than was this first and only great slaughter of the enemies of the Deuteronomic reform movement.

Our next question has to do with the language. This, it must be admitted, is not so strongly Deuteronomic as is that of the deleted portions, as indeed we could not expect it to be, for with what has seemed to us in many instances a ruthless hand critical scholars have cut out what they have taken to be Deuteronomic. Still the question whether the language of the story as it is left is actually un-Deuteronomic, or is simply wanting in those phrases which are considered indisputable, is a pertinent one. Only an exhaustive examination can enable us to decide this point. If it be found that most of the words and phrases are such as we find in the simpler narrative portions of Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic redactions of the historical books, if only an occasional word or phrase foreign to such writings appear, then we have ground for a strong presumption in favor of considering the story Deuteronomic, though we may not be forced to regard it as necessarily from the same hand as that which gave us certain of the supposed redactions. On the other hand, if we find that a considerable proportion of the words and phrases are foreign to the well-accredited Deuteronomic literature, we have ground for a contrary conclusion.

"And it came to pass in the eighteenth year" (2 Ki. 22³) is not foreign to Deuteronomy, little use as there was for it. We find a similar clause in Deut. 1³. There is no mention of a scribe in Deuteronomy, though the verbal root occurs. The scribe is mentioned in passages which I take to be Deuteronomic. "The house of Yahweh" is found in Deut. 23¹⁸⁽¹⁹⁾. The occasions for its use must necessarily have been few. A circumlocution served better the purposes of the writer: "Unto the place which Yahweh your God

shall choose out of all the tribes to put his name there." See Deut. 12², etc. The Deuteronomic redactors use frequently the simpler phrase. (Verse 4), "The priest," but not "the high priest," is known to Deuteronomy. The verb rendered "to pay fully" (תָּמַם), though it occurs, is not used in this unusual sense. There was no occasion for the term, "keepers of the threshold," *i.e.* temple attendants. Yet it is found in a passage which I suppose to be Deuteronomic. See 2 Ki. 12⁸⁽¹⁰⁾. "The doers of the work" (v.^{5a}), common as are the separate words in Deuteronomy, is as a phrase foreign thereto. Yet this also is found in redactions. "Overseers" (מִפְקָדִים) belongs with the foregoing phrase. "No account was kept" (חָשַׁב) (v.⁷) is used in Deuteronomy and by the redactors. "Because they were trustworthy men," or "because they dealt faithfully," is found in 2 Ki. 12¹⁵⁽¹⁰⁾, in a story that we shall have to consider Deuteronomic. "The book of the law" (v.⁸) should be compared with kindred phrases in Deuteronomy. See 23^{38. 31} 29³⁰⁽¹⁹⁾, etc. The identical phrase occurs frequently in the redactions. "Brought back word" (v.⁹) is found in Deut. 1^{22. 25}. "To pour out" (נָתַךְ) is foreign to Deuteronomy. "To read aloud" (קָרָא) (v.¹⁰) occurs in Deut. 17¹⁰, etc. "He rent his garments" (v.¹¹) reveals a custom which the Deuteronomists shared with their people; though they seem to have been almost exceptional in their expressions of emotion. "The king commanded" (v.¹²): the verb is one of the most common in Deuteronomy and in all redactions. "Inquire of Yahweh" (v.¹³) is not foreign to Deuteronomy. See 4²⁹ and the redactors. "The words of this book" should be compared with a common Deuteronomic equivalent, "the words of this law," in 17¹⁹, etc. "The wrath of Yahweh" is most characteristic; but the verb "is kindled" (יָצַת) is unknown to these men; albeit they have frequent occasion for an equivalent verb which is stronger. "Our fathers hearkened not" is a favorite phrase with the Deuteronomists (see Jud. 2²⁹, etc.). "To do according to all that is written" is so manifestly Deuteronomic that it is needless to dwell upon it. "All the elders of Judah and Jerusalem" (23¹) should be compared with the frequent references to the elders in Deuteronomy. There is nothing foreign to Deuteronomy in "all the men" (כָּל-אִישׁ) and "all the inhabitants" (כָּל-יֹשְׁבֵי) (v.²), nor is there in "the priests and the prophets"; for, though mentioned separately, both priests and prophet are frequently referred to. So, too, is "all the people" (כָּל-הָעָם) common in Deuteronomy, though "the people" (הָעָם) as a designation is more generally used. With "from small unto

great" should be compared a similar phrase in Deut. 1¹⁷. "And he read aloud in their ears" occurs in Deut. 31¹¹, while a kindred phrase is found in 5¹ 31^{28, 30}. "All the words of the book of the covenant" is not foreign to Deuteronomy; though the book is generally called "the book of this law." Much is said in Deuteronomy of a covenant and of "the words of this law" or "covenant." (Verse 4), "And the priests of the second rank" has nothing to correspond to it in Deuteronomy. It is found in 2 Ki. 25¹⁸. Though "temple" (היכל) is not found in Deuteronomy it does appear in the writings of the Deuteronomists; whether as a late insertion, or as a part of the original text of these writers, I am unprepared to say. "The Astarte" (האשרה) (v. 6), probably an image of the goddess, finds frequent mention by the law-book, and among the redactors. "To burn" (שרף), "to beat small" or "reduce to ashes" (דקקן), and "dust" or "ashes" (עפר) are common. "And he broke down" (נתק) (v. 7) gives us one of the most characteristic verbs of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomists. "The devoted males" (קדשים) are scarcely known outside of the said writings (see Deut. 23¹⁷⁽¹⁸⁾ 1 Ki. 14²⁴, etc.). "The altar which was in Bethel" (v. 13) appears frequently. This particular altar seems to have been specially abhorred by all Deuteronomists. Quite as pronounced was their hostility to Bethel itself and its high place. Of "the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin," it should be remarked that the Deuteronomists deserve the credit of discovering Jeroboam the sinner. The older writers appear to have regarded with complacency his calf-worship. We may almost say "who caused Israel to sin" is as a phrase purely Deuteronomic (see Deut. 24⁴ 1 Ki. 14¹⁶, etc.). Several other words are found in this verse that we have already noted as characteristic of these writings. Indeed, it should be remarked that most of the words and phrases which we have mentioned throughout this study occur again and again. But one conclusion is possible, therefore, under the circumstances: that we have here a Deuteronomic story. We have become so familiar with the sonorous clauses of the more hortatory parts of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic redactors that we have quite overlooked the fact that there was a Deuteronomic style which appears in their simpler narratives, a style not utterly unlike that of the old chronicles, yet differing sufficiently therefrom to be distinguishable.

The conclusion to which we are forced by a study of the language is thus seen to be in harmony with the one which we reached in our inquiry as to the nature of the narrative: it is purely Deuteronomic.

Once, however, let this be admitted, and it is seen how unwise are those critics who delete the larger part of the text as the work of late editors. The original may presumably have received some important additions as well as minor glosses; but the fact that a passage is strongly Deuteronomic is not *per se* enough to warrant its deletion. With most of these deleted passages restored we may pass on to the question of the credibility of the narrative. There remains, however, a comparison that should be made between this narrative as found in 2 Kings and that in 2 Chronicles. Late as the latter must necessarily be considered, an examination of it may throw some light upon our perplexing problems.

We pass, therefore, to a consideration of the parallel account of 2 Chron. 34³-35¹⁹. As the later narrative of the two, and as the one which reveals, after the manner of the Chronicles, the disposition of the priestly writers to treat in a free and easy way, with their peculiar bias, the historical material of their past, but slight dependence is placed upon it by critical scholars. That this narrative of the promulgation of Deuteronomy in Chronicles is widely divergent from that in Kings must be admitted. It is utterly impossible to harmonize the two accounts. Both in the order of the leading incidents of the supposed reformation and in the details concerning it there are wide divergencies, most of which are irreconcilable. The only way out of the dilemma which has thus far been found, that has met with favor on the part of critical scholars, has been to cast discredit upon the narrative as it appears in 2 Chronicles. While I sympathize with those who look with suspicion upon the work of the priestly writers of Israel, I wish at this point to carefully compare the later with the earlier story. In doing this I need only to dwell upon the more important divergencies; minor differences may, for the most part, be ignored, for these are always to be expected.

The writers of 2 Chronicles in their narrative of the reformation, so far as it had to do with Judah and Jerusalem, tell us that Josiah made way with the priests of the idolatrous shrines and burned their bones upon the altars, as he did later, according to the same authority, with those of all Israel (34⁵⁻⁶); while, according to the earlier narrative, the priests of the high places of Judah and Jerusalem were spared (2 Ki. 23⁹), and those of Samaria only were sacrificed or slain (2 Ki. 23³⁰). We are told in the later narrative that Josiah carried his reform, not only into Ephraim and Manasseh, but also into Simeon and Naphtali (34⁶). Did the writers locate Simeon in the north because they knew no better than to place there a tribe

that long before their time had been absorbed by Judah? Naphtali appears to have become, as we find was the case in New Testament times, a name for all Galilee. The writers of 2 Chronicles think the whole land must have been purged. In giving their conception of the extent of the reformation, they name all parts of the land as it was known to them. All this is in glaring contradiction to the earlier story, where Josiah is said to have gone only into Samaria when upon his iconoclastic pilgrimage; though to the Deuteronomists the term "Samaria" may have seemed to embrace, we must admit, well-nigh all the land not covered by the term "Judah" (2 Ki. 23¹⁹). What is especially noteworthy is the fictitious nature of the narrative in 2 Chronicles. May not that of 2 Kings also be fictitious?

The mention of the Levites and Kohathites in connection with the fragment concerning the repair of the temple (34¹²), as well as the mention of the Levites in the statements concerning the passover (35^{3, 8 ff.}), is an anachronism of which there is no trace in the earlier narrative. Indeed, the whole story of Josiah's observance of the passover in 2 Chronicles is burdened with marks of a time when the passover was elaborately celebrated, or when it was easy to conceive of it as having once been so observed. The mention of 37,600 lambs and 3,800 bullocks as slain is but one of the significant touches of the late writers. Yet even here the tendency of the narrators to highly color a story which appears to have been in its original form fictitious is not without its feeble counterpart in 2 Kings, as we see from 23²². Still, as we have had occasion to remark, the passover passage may be an interpolation in the earlier narrative.

In dwelling upon the more conspicuous divergencies between the two accounts of the promulgation of the law-book, we should not fail to notice that the priestly narrators seem to have felt the full force of certain inconsistencies of the earlier narrative. That narrative represented Josiah as having been religiously inactive until the eighteenth year of his reign, at which time, owing to the discovery of the book of the law, he suddenly and energetically inaugurated his great reformation. The late narrators as well as the earlier tell us — indeed, the later here quote the earlier — that Josiah did that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh (2 Chron. 34²; cf. 2 Ki. 22²), but they are not content to stop here. They therefore add: "In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of David"; *i.e.* in his sixteenth year, shortly after puberty, when the heart is peculiarly susceptible to religious sentiment, Josiah began to manifest great interest in the worship of Yahweh, and then took

personally a decided stand in religious matters. The writers of this later narrative reveal still further their dissatisfaction with the earlier narrative by putting the reformation in the twelfth year of his reign, and thus putting it prior to his renovation of the temple. When he was twenty years old, after he had reigned twelve years according to this narrative, Josiah purged Jerusalem and Judah and all Israel (34³⁻⁷). That these writers should have turned about the parts of the narrative of the reformation and rearranged them as they did, must reveal their dissatisfaction with, if not, indeed, their incredulous attitude toward, the earlier narrative. Their dissatisfaction and incredulity appear farther on when they come to tell the story of the repair of the temple. We have seen that the narrative of 2 Ki. 22³⁻⁸ at this point is fragmentary; and that as such it seems to be largely put together of pieces of the earlier Jehoash story. The narrative of 2 Chronicles is just here without some of the inconsistencies which we find in 2 Kings. According to the writers of 2 Chronicles, in the eighteenth year of his reign, six years after he had begun his work of purgation, Josiah sent prominent men of his court to the temple to repair it. Under their direction the Levites gathered, or received, money which was put in the hands of the overseers of the work. This is less abrupt and fragmentary than is the story in 2 Kings. So, too, as regards the finding of the law-book. It is related in the later narrative that, when the men brought out the money, Hilkiah found therewith the book of the law. In the earlier narrative the fact is mentioned that Hilkiah, as he gives the book to Shaphan, abruptly tells him he has found the book of the law; but there is not the least suggestion of how he came upon it.

From this point the later narrative moves on for a considerable space much as the earlier. Shaphan takes the book back with him to the king; and, after rendering an account of his doings at the temple, tells him that Hilkiah has given him a book. This he proceeds to read before the king, who, being profoundly moved thereby, sends him and certain of his servants to inquire of Yahweh. The story of the interview with Huldah and her oracle are reproduced with tolerable fidelity to the narrative in 2 Kings, which does not at this point seem to have aroused either the critical or ecclesiastical antagonism of the writer of 2 Chronicles. The king having received Huldah's oracle immediately summons an assembly of the people, including the priests and the Levites, and reads in their ears the book, causing them to understand its significance. He then, we are told, removed from Jerusalem and Judah and Israel the abominations,

and made all to serve Yahweh their God. This narrative of 2 Chronicles is at this point inconsistent with itself, for the land had already, according to this story, been purged of its idolatry before the temple was repaired. What, however, we are interested to notice is the fact, which is patent enough, that the writers of this later narrative of the promulgation of Deuteronomy appear to have felt the inconsistencies of the earlier, and to have set themselves as best they could to remove them. Up to this point they meet with considerable success, for they tell a smoother and better story; but here their narrative breaks down. This is not surprising, for they had set themselves to work over an impossible story, one palpably fictitious.

We need linger over 2 Chronicles only to notice that the account of Josiah's passover comes in much more naturally in the later than in the earlier narrative. Instead of brief statements awkwardly thrust in, it is given with an ecclesiastic's fulness of detail at the close of the story of the reformation.

Despite the fact that the narrative in 2 Chronicles breaks down at a critical point, we shall have to conclude that it is not in its main features more improbable than that in 2 Kings. It fails most assuredly to create in our minds the impression that its story of Josiah's reformation was the story of an actual event in the life of Israel; but so also, we must confess, does the earlier story. If the narrative in 2 Ki. 22³-23²⁷ was, as we must conclude, the invention of the Deuteronomists at a time considerably subsequent to the exile, then may not that in 2 Chronicles 34³-35¹⁹, in the very fact that the writers try to remove the inconsistencies of the earlier narrative, reveal the improbability of the story even in its simplest form? I find that it does.

Concluding then, as we must, that this story of the promulgation of Deuteronomy is Deuteronomic, and that, consequently, it must be accepted as a late fiction of men who wished to give credence and authority to this law-book with its purer morals and its more pronounced recognition of Yahweh as the God of Israel, I cannot fail to recall certain things which have an important bearing upon this conclusion.³ One fact which we must recognize is that the knowledge of Josiah and his reign in the post-exilic time was necessarily meagre. Of him, as of many other kings of Judah, little could have been known. It is likely that there was little of interest about the man or

³ For the date of literary prophecy in Israel, and, as involved therein, the date of the priestly law, see "Is the Book of Amos Post-exilic?" in *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, a paper by Edward Day and W. H. Chapin.

his reign, aside from his tragic death. The Assyrian empire was breaking up. Peoples which had once felt the might of the Assyrian arm and had yielded reluctantly to her despotism were reasserting themselves. Pharaoh Necho finally laid fear aside and marched with his forces northeast, thinking to get Syria and Palestine into his power, and perchance to secure some of the spoil of Nineveh. The king of a petty kingdom like Judah could hope to achieve little; though he might be able for the time to ignore his overlord. It is probable that Josiah did not dare to do even this. His death at Megiddo very likely came through his endeavor as a loyal vassal of the king of Assyria to intercept the Egyptian forces. The improbability of his carrying a drastic reform movement out of his own domain into Samaria, even had he ventured to rule at home with so bloody a hand, grows in part out of the fact that he was under the suzerainty of the king of Assyria. If at a later day he went against Pharaoh Necho because his loyalty to his suzerain seemed to demand it, much more would he have refrained from carrying his iconoclastic zeal into a region over which he had no authority.

That the Deuteronomists wished to see the idolatrous and vicious practices of their time summarily treated is unquestionable. Their law-book and their editorial redactions of the old chronicles witness to this fact. They proclaimed their codes with frightful curses and threats. As no promise of temporal prosperity was too alluring to toss to the doers of their law, so no warning was too severe to hurl at the violators of that law. All that they made Moses say should come upon the disobedient they pictured Josiah as doing to the supposedly delinquent men of his time. We can easily see how the Deuteronomists worked to inaugurate and further their reform. At some time during the three centuries which followed the fall of Jerusalem the more pious Jews, the Zionists of their day, who straggled back to Jerusalem by twos and threes and by dozens and scores, rather than by thousands, began as ardent Deuteronomists to better things at home. They wrote Deuteronomy and promulgated it; and they redacted the historical books. Then it was, apparently to give credence to their law-book and to advance their reform movement, that they seized upon Josiah, who had fallen at Megiddo, as a Jewish patriot, and, idealizing him, invented and circulated this story of his promulgation of Deuteronomy and of a reformation of which he was the pious instrument. To make their story appear brighter and to idealize their great iconoclast more effectively they arbitrarily pictured the reign of Manasseh as dark and forbidding.

Just what was the moral and social condition of the people of Josiah's day they probably did not know; it was their own age they knew that they sought to reform. But was the post-exilic Israel as bad as they picture it? If we admit with Dr. Torrey that the story of Ezra and the promulgation of the priestly law is a priestly fiction;⁴ if with him we put the so-called Deutero-Isaiah in the latter part of the fourth century;⁵ if with others we think of Ezekiel as Maccabean, — we have two centuries or more of Jewish life unaccounted for. That there is room enough for the Deuteronomists is evident; that there was work enough of their peculiar kind is also evident.

The law-book which was said to be the immediate occasion of the reformation has been so long recognized as Deuteronomy by advanced students that I have not thought it worth while to discuss the question. I cannot, however, forbear mentioning a difficulty that scholars have had to face growing out of the fact that much of Deuteronomy is now known to have been written at a time considerably subsequent to Josiah's day. The book as we have it is manifestly post-exilic, though much of it, more especially the legal codes, are older. The most plausible way out of the perplexity has seemed to be the theory that a portion only of the book was promulgated in Josiah's time. That such a hypothesis is precarious must be admitted, especially if it appears that the very portions of Deuteronomy which the Josiah story presuppose are late. The conclusion which I have reached, aided and encouraged by more brilliant students of the text than I can ever hope to become, happily escapes the above-mentioned perplexity, though it is not without difficulties of its own owing to our fragmentary and necessarily imperfect knowledge of the centuries immediately following the fall of Jerusalem in 597 B.C.

⁴ *The Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah*, Dr. C. C. Torrey.

⁵ See paper read before The Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, soon to be published.