

ISAIAH ON THE FATE OF HIS PEOPLE AND THEIR CAPITAL

HINCKLEY G. MITCHELL
TUFTS COLLEGE

A serious difficulty in the way of an attempt to learn what Isaiah thought about the future of his people, or any other subject, arises from the freedom with which his prophecies have been treated by the compilers and editors to whom the collection in the first thirty-nine chapters of the book that bears his name owes its present form and content.

In the first place, it is evident that there are many parts of this collection, sometimes, as in the case of 12, 24-27, and 34 f., whole chapters, that cannot be attributed to Isaiah, but must be regarded as the writings of men of other minds who lived long after his career was finished; and it is equally evident, from such examples as 1: 2 ff. and 9: 7/8 ff., that the genuine prophecies are not arranged in the order in which they were originally uttered. These facts must be taken into account and the genuine prophecies, if possible, identified and studied in their chronological relations; for only so can one learn what the prophet really taught and whether, in the course of his long and eventful career, his mind underwent any change or development on the subject in question.

It is generally agreed that the earliest of Isaiah's prophecies are found in chs. 2-4, or, to be more specific, in 2: 6-19, 21; 3: 1a, 2-9, 12-17, 24 (except the last clause); 4: 1 (Duhm adds 32: 9-14). This section has two notable peculiarities. In the first place, it has a title of its own, which, though not original, as appears from the order of the names "Judah" and "Jerusalem," agrees with 3: 1, 8, and is therefore doubtless correct in describing the prophecies it covers as spoken "concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

The second fact to be especially noted is that the contents of this section so clearly betray the influence of Amos, that their author may fairly be called a disciple of that great prophet.

This influence is seen in the forms in which Isaiah clothes his ideas: for example, the multiplication of particulars in 2:6-8, 12-16; 3:2 f., 24a, and the employment of the refrain, of which specimens have been preserved in 2:11, 17, and 19, 21. See Am. 2:6-8; 3:3-6; and 4:6-11. A degree of dependence on his predecessor is also shown in the subjects that Isaiah discusses; when, for example, he condemns luxury (2:7), oppression of the poor (3:14 f.), and the immodesty of the women of his time (3:16 f., 24a). See Am. 6:3-6; 5:10-12; 4:1-3.

A young man, new to his calling, who was so evidently influenced in the direction of his thought and in his forms of expression by another, would naturally, at first, adopt the tone and the convictions of the master. Now, Amos was stern by nature, and, although he sometimes had recourse to exhortation, showing that he did not deny the possibility of a different outcome, he was thoroughly convinced that the fate of the Northern Kingdom was sealed: and he repeatedly expressed himself to this effect. Isaiah, therefore, in these earliest prophecies, is similarly severe and pessimistic: in other words, he views the situation in Judah with Amos' eyes and sometimes seems to predict the country's complete and inevitable destruction. There are two or three clear cases of this kind. Thus, in 2:6 he declares that Yahweh has "cast off his people," and in 3:8 that "Jerusalem shall totter and Judah fall"; and there is nothing in either case to relieve the severity of these fateful utterances.

The prophecies thus far considered have been referred to the first period of Isaiah's career, but no definite date has been suggested. If, as many maintain, ch. 6 is a description of Isaiah's original call, and that occurred in "the year that Uzziah died," these chapters cannot be earlier than 735 B. C., since this was the last year of Uzziah's long reign. Nor can they be many months later, since they contain no reference to the expedition of Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria against Judah in 734 B. C.

To the same period, whatever be its length, must be referred ch. 5, except vs. 15 f. and 30, together with 9:7/8-20/21 and 10:1-3. Here, also, there is evidence of the influence of Amos, especially in the refrain in 9:7/8-20/21 and the mutilated conclusion to this passage, now 5:25-30. See Am. 4:6-11. Finally,

¹ See also 32:14.

the tone is here as stern as in the preceding chapters, but the prophet arraigns Israel as well as Judah and condemns them both with impartial severity. Thus, in the application of the parable of the vineyard, he says:

“The vineyard of Yahweh of Hosts
 is the house of Israel,
 And the men of Judah
 the planting of his delight;
 And he looked for redress,
 and behold,—distress!
 For restraint,
 and behold,—complaint!”

To Judah he devotes 10: 1-3, which may, originally, have immediately followed the parable, and 5: 8-15, 18-24, where he threatens them with a “devastation that cometh from afar” (10: 3), the depopulation of their country (5: 13, 17), and, apparently, swift and complete extinction. See 5: 24.

The fate of Israel is described as the last resort of their long-suffering God, who, having failed to bring them to submission, now prepares to deliver them to the great power to which Amos consigned them, and from which, Isaiah says (5: 29), “there is no deliverer.”

The two groups of prophecies thus far examined have furnished material for a pretty clear idea of their author. He was evidently a young man of excellent gifts, an ardent admirer of Amos, and a courageous exponent of the reforms which his great predecessor had preached in Israel; but thus far he had not shown much independence or originality. From this time onward he is different; his outlook wider, his vision clearer, his ideas more timely and individual. Why? Not because he was appreciably older; for the change became apparent in 734 B. C.; and not because he was so deeply affected by the crisis of that year, for there is evidence that the change had already been wrought when the crisis occurred. This being the case, the question naturally arises whether, after all, ch. 6 is not properly placed, being an account, not of the prophet's original call, if he can be said to have had any previous experience deserving the name, but of a revelation for which he was prepared by his

earlier work, and by which he was prepared for his part in the successive crises through which he was destined to pass.

The terms of the vision as described seem to confirm this opinion of its date. The promptness with which the prophet confesses his own unworthiness and the unworthiness of his people to approach the Holy One of Israel is what one would expect of the author of 5:8 ff. It is also safe to say that the man to whom this vision was vouchsafed was acquainted with failure and discouragement, and needed to be assured that the fruitlessness of his efforts was not his fault and convinced that it was his duty to persevere, even if those he was endeavoring to save from the consequences of their own folly and wickedness persisted in ignoring his message.

The compiler who gave ch. 6 its present place evidently meant that it should serve as an introduction to the six following. If, as has been suggested, there are reasons for believing that it marks the entrance of the prophet upon a second stage in his career, one cannot but be interested to know what it has to say on the subject of this discussion. Isaiah, it will be remembered, represents himself as asking (v. 11) how long he must pursue the course commanded, and Yahweh as replying, "Until cities, ruined, are without an inhabitant, and houses without men, and the soil is left a desert." In the last two verses this is explained as meaning the total removal of the people and the utter devastation of their country; except "a holy seed," left like the stump of a tree that has been felled. There are those who deny the genuineness of both of these verses entire. The last clause of v. 13, which is wanting in the Greek Version, is certainly a gloss; but it has its importance, since it registers the opinion that the prophet, even if he believed that the Hebrews of his day were destined to lose their place among the nations, did not mean to say that the purpose of Yahweh in his dealings with them would thus be defeated; an opinion shared by no less an authority than Duhm and confirmed by various passages in the next two chapters and other prophecies of the early years of the reign of Ahaz.

In discussing this period one must distinguish Isaiah's attitude toward Judah from that toward the kingdom of Israel. For the latter the prophet has nothing, apparently, but condem-

nation. Thus, in 17:4-6, 9, a passage incorrectly translated in the English Version, which probably slightly antedates the hostile demonstration by Pekah and Rezin, he threatens that Israel's cities will be deserted (v. 9) and its population all but exterminated. See vs. 5 f. A little later, when Ahaz is trembling in anticipation of an attack, he predicts that both Israel and Syria, within a brief period, will be devastated and their wealth, as, of course, their inhabitants, be deported to Assyria. See 7:16; 8:4.

There is no sign of sympathy or abatement with reference to these two countries, but, when one turns to the case of Judah, one notes a difference. It appears at once in the account of the interview, when Isaiah went to Ahaz to protest against an appeal to Tiglath-pileser for help against his enemies.

In the first place, the prophet is instructed to offer the king and his people relief and security, if they will abandon their present policy; for, of course, the oracular message, "Except ye confide, ye shall not abide," (v. 9), implies that, if they trust in Yahweh, he will protect them. This message, however, is not so significant as the fact that Isaiah was commanded (v. 3) to take with him on his errand a son whose name was Shear-yashubh. This name, which is capable of at least two interpretations, but doubtless, as the author of 10:21 believed, refers to a change of attitude toward Yahweh, shows that Isaiah, in spite of the severity which he felt authorized to use in his public deliverances, cherished the conviction, not only that his God was prepared to protect and deliver on certain conditions, but that, by some at least to whom they were offered, these conditions would be fulfilled. It also, because the child who bore it must have been some months old, indicates that the prophet had been of this opinion for some time, probably ever since the enlargement of his conception of the purpose of Yahweh by the vision vouchsafed him.

The late reference to Shear-yashubh in 10:21 has already been cited. There is a less apparent, but genuine, one in 8:18, where Isaiah speaks of himself and his children as "signs and tokens in Israel." These signs and tokens, he says, are "from Yahweh," but he does not, in so many words, say for whom they are intended. The preceding context, however, supplies the

omission, for from vs. 16 f. it is clear that he is thinking of his disciples and that he expects them, or some of them, to survive the dark days during which the face of Yahweh will be hidden from the house of Jacob, without doubt as a part of the loyal remnant.

There is no other passage to be cited in this connection, but perhaps it ought to be noted that from 7:21, 25 it appears that the prophet did not expect the invasion of v. 20 utterly to depopulate Judah. See also 8:8, where the threatened flood is described as reaching only "to the neck," although it fills "the breadth" of the land.

There can be little doubt that, at the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, Isaiah believed that, however severely Yahweh might punish his people for their sins, some would remain, or, through chastisement become, loyal, and that they and their religion would be preserved. There is little to indicate how he felt thereafter for some years, but what there is seems to warrant the opinion that he stood firmly in his hitherto conviction and confidently expected to see his predictions fulfilled. It is clear from 28:1-4 that he never changed his mind about the fate of Israel. In the same chapter he pays his respects to the priests and prophets of Judah, who, when he went to them with his message, mocked him for his pains, because, as they said, they had a pact with death and an agreement with Sheol; by which they meant that, since their king was a vassal of the king of Assyria, who may at the time have been besieging Samaria, they had nothing to fear from that quarter. The prophet warns them that they are deceiving themselves, that the power which they have made their refuge will one day become their enemy and crush them, as it is already crushing their neighbors (vs. 18, 22), unless they transfer their faith from men to their God (v. 16); adding a parable to prevent them from thinking that they had escaped the penalty for their unbelief because there had been some delay in its execution. See vs. 23-29.

The Assyrians took Samaria in 722 B. C. In 720 Sargon completed the subjugation of the kingdom of Israel. This event must have stirred Isaiah profoundly. One can hardly believe that he failed to draw from it serious lessons for Judah; but there are no such prophecies, unless they are to be found in the

first chapter, parts of which, in fact, there are reasons for referring to the date given. In the first place, at the beginning of the chapter (v. 2) the prophet is so evidently influenced by Hosea (7:13; 11:1) that one is pretty safe in thinking that, in v. 3, the name "Israel" is used in its broader sense, as in the divine title "the Holy One of Israel." See v. 4; also 8:14, 18. This being admitted, vs. 5-9 become a description of the great waste left behind by the army of Sargon compared with the little kingdom of which Jerusalem ("Zion") was the center. It is only by adopting such an interpretation that one can understand the comparison of Jerusalem with "a booth in a vineyard," etc., and the representation of the temple as resounding with the tramp of worshipers and their thronging sacrifices; since it would clearly have been impossible to provide so many animals, if the surrounding country had been overrun, or if it were still occupied by enemies. See, also, v. 20, from which it appears that the day of retribution was still future. This is the situation in vs. 2-20. In vs. 21-26 (or 28) there is a repetition of the arraignment and an almost eager tone in the threat of retribution; but the threat becomes a promise the climax of which is reached in the words,

"Then will I restore thy judges as at first,
and thy counsellors as at the beginning;
"Thereafter shalt thou be called the righteous city,
a faithful town."

Here is a distinct and important advance upon 8:16 f.; for, whereas in the earlier days the prophet saw in the remnant a little band of timid disciples, he is now so bold as to describe it as an organized community. Or should one say, as does Duhn, that this passage may represent Isaiah's mind when he gave the name "Shear-yashubh" to his boy, and think of 8:16 f. as denoting the disappointment he felt at his failure to win Ahaz to what he believed to be the divine program?

One of the striking features of the prophecies of Isaiah is the frequency of the appearance of the Assyrians. In this respect they remind one of those of Amos; also in the fact that they represent these foreigners as the conscious or unconscious agents of Yahweh. From the first Isaiah has only reverence for the power and righteousness displayed by Yahweh in employing

them, and only admiration for the promptness and thoroughness with which they execute his will. A good illustration of his attitude is found in 5:26-29, where he describes them, in their perfect order and equipment, sweeping on their irresistibly destructive mission. In this case it is not so strange that the prophet should betray sympathy with the conquerors, since it is Israel that is threatened; but it is the same in the reign of Ahaz, when Judah is their destination. So great, to his mind, is the guilt of his people that, for the time being, the demands of justice drown the plea of patriotism. See 7:20; 8:7 f. There is, at first, no change, when, after years of silence, he emerges from retirement to try to save his people from the consequences of the reckless fanaticism of Hezekiah and the party that support him. The prophet warns them that they are inviting the invasion of their country and the investment of their capital (29:1-4a); that Egypt cannot be trusted to help them in an extremity (30:1-5); and that, even with the help of that country, they will be no match for the invader, but the helper and the helped will go down together. See 30:17; 31:3. Here, probably, belongs 10:27b-32, a passage which, like 5:26-29, describes the movements of an Assyrian army, but this time an imaginary advance on Jerusalem which brings it within sight of the city. Isaiah does not, in this vision, tell his people what will be the result of the threatened assault, but there can be no doubt that he expected it to be disastrous to the defenders, unless they capitulated. So much, also, can be inferred from the passages cited from chs. 29-31. The same prospect is more clearly presented in 22:1-8a, 12-14ba, where he rebukes the "jubilant town" for its ill-timed festivities and pictures the defeat of its armies and an assault the thought of which should clothe its inhabitants in sackcloth and wring from them, not shouts of laughter, but tears and lamentation.

The passages in which Isaiah refers even remotely to the Assyrians are discussed by Professor Beer of Heidelberg in a paper entitled "Zur Zukunftserwartung Jesajas," published in the volume of *Studien zur semitischen Philologie und Religionsgeschichte* commemorating Wellhausen's seventieth birthday. Those that are favorable he places under the heading "Die Pro-Assurstücke." When he has considered them, before taking

account of any of a different character, he declares that "Isaiah from beginning to end threatened with the Assyrian, and there is therefore absolutely nowhere in the preaching of the prophet a place for anti-Assyrian oracles." Then, under the heading "Die Anti-Assurstücke," he proceeds to dispose of unfavorable data and thus maintain his previously formed opinion.

The passages which he considers worthy of mention in this connection are the following: 5:30; 8:9 f.; 9:3; 10:5-34; 14:24-27; 17:12-14; 18:5; 28:5 f.; 29:5, 7 f.; 30:28-33; 31:4b-9; 33; 37:22 ff., 33 ff. These he divides into three classes, the first containing 37:22 ff., 33 ff.; the second 5:30; 8:9 f.; 14:24-27; 17:12-14; 29:5, 7 f.; 30:27-33; 31:4b-9; and the third 9:3; 10:5-34; 18:5; 28:5 f.; 33.

Beer finds 37:22 ff., 33 ff., *oracula ex eventu*, and most modern scholars would endorse this opinion, not, however, because they do not agree with genuine utterance of an earlier date, but because, as is shown by language and content, chs. 36 f. consist of two distinct variations on 2 Kgs. 18:14-16 which agree neither with it nor with each other, and 37:22-32 and 33-36 are duplicate sections in the later of these two narratives. They need not, therefore, be further considered in this connection.

Among the passages in the second class, also, there are some that may be neglected: 5:30, because it is an immetrical and unnecessary addition to a passage which has already reached its climax; 8:9 f., because, though apparently written for the place it occupies, it has an apocalyptic tone and misinterprets the preceding context; and 29:5, 7 f., for similar reasons. There remain 14:24-27; 17:12-14; 30:27-33; 31:4b-9, the consideration of which will be postponed for the present.

From the third class may be omitted 28:5 f., which is clearly an interpolation, and ch. 33, on whose genuineness there has been increasing skepticism since Ewald.

If, now, there be deducted from the last two classes the passages to which exceptions have been taken, there will remain 9:3; 10:5-34; 14:24-27; 17:12-14; 18:5; 30:27-33; 31:4b-9. Of all these 10:5-34 is most important. Beer, also, is of this opinion. In fact, he goes so far as to say that, if this passage can be shown to be genuine, it will have to be admitted that Isaiah predicted the overthrow of Assyria, not only here,

but in parallel passages from the various periods during which he lived and labored. He therefore devotes more space to this passage than to any other in an attempt to show that it is not from the pen of Isaiah. He divides it into three sections. Of the first, vs. 5-19, he says that the prophet cannot have written it, because he cannot have condemned the Assyrians: (1) for destroying "nations not a few," since he himself foretold the subjugation by him of several; or (2) for declaring Jerusalem no better than Kalno, etc., since he himself had expected the conquest of Judah and the destruction or deportation of its inhabitants; or (3) for claiming the entire credit for the spoliation of the world, since Egypt was not added to the Assyrian empire until 670 B. C.

This argument has some interesting features. In the first place, it takes for granted the unity of the passage in question, although the best critical authorities, for metrical and other reasons, agree in maintaining that vs. 10-12, except possibly v. 11 (Marti), and 15-19 cannot have been written by the same hand as the rest of it. Secondly, it is rather remarkable that the points enumerated should be used as Beer uses them, since Marti, from whose commentary (p. 104) they were borrowed, finds nothing in them to disprove the genuineness of vs. 5-7, 8b, 9, 11, 13 f., although they may not all belong in this connection. Finally, it should be noted that Marti and others refer the ungenine parts of this section to the Syrian period, while Beer concludes that the whole is "a prophecy of the fall of the historic Assyria, not, however, of the days of Isaiah, but about a hundred years later"; that is, of the days of Nahum and Zephaniah. But would a contemporary of these prophets be as familiar as the author of vs. 13 f. evidently was with the Assyria of the end of the eighth century and its boastful ruler?

In 10:20-27 and 28-34 Beer finds products of a much later period, namely, the Syrian. In the case of the latter he falls into the same careless method followed in discussing the first section, basing his conclusion on vs. 33 f., in spite of the perfectly obvious fact that these verses are by a different hand from 28-32, that, therefore, the original utterance may have been Isaiah's (Cheyne), and that, whoever was its author, it belongs with the passages favorable, and not to those unfavorable, to Assyria.

The faultiness of the method followed by Professor Beer renders his conclusion unreliable. It will therefore be necessary to examine more carefully 10:5 ff. and then give some attention to the thus far neglected passages (9:3; 14:24-27; 17:12-14; 18:5; 30:27-33; 31:4b-9), all of which, except 18:5, he refers to the Syrian period.

First, however, it will be well to make a preliminary test of Beer's statement that "from beginning to end" Isaiah "threatened with the Assyrian," and that, therefore, there is "absolutely no place for anti-Assyrian oracles." In support of this position he cites 1:5 and 22:14 from prophecies which Cheyne, also, places last in his chronological arrangement. The date of 1:2-9 has already been discussed and reasons given for referring this and other parts of the same chapter to an earlier date, namely, one about 720 B. C.

The date of the passage to which 22:14 belongs is considerably later, but not so late as the withdrawal of the Assyrians from Jerusalem, since it is unreasonable to suppose that the Jews, whose country had already been ravaged by the enemy, could have celebrated the event "by slaying oxen and killing sheep." It is much more probable that the festivities which offended the prophet were occasioned by news that an understanding with Egypt had been reached, or that an Egyptian army was already on the way to check the advance of Sennacherib. Then there were oxen and sheep to slay, and that was the time when such a threat as "This iniquity shall not be forgiven you till ye die" was most natural and impressive.

If, however, the dates given to these two passages are correct, or approximately so, Beer's statement must be modified to read, not "from beginning to end," but from the beginning of his prophetic career until Sennacherib appeared in Palestine, Isaiah continued to threaten his people with punishment through the agency of the Assyrians; for thus far there is no evidence to show what he thought or taught on the subject after this date.

It is conceivable that he finally changed his attitude toward the invaders. Various reasons for such a change can be imagined: a keener realization of the mercy and faithfulness of Yahweh; the discovery of traces of repentance and amendment among his people; a nearer acquaintance with the spirit and practices of their enemies. There is evidence of such a change

for the last of these reasons in 10:5 ff., where there have been preserved parts of a prophecy which, from its tone and content, is believed by the best authorities to have been uttered by Isaiah during the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib. The verses generally accepted as genuine are 5-9 and 13 f., to which Marti is inclined to add 11 and Box 15. The tone of these verses is distinctly hostile. The first begins with the "Woe" which introduces each of the curses of 5:8 ff. The reason for Yahweh's anger is given in detail, but there is no corresponding conclusion, for 16-19 are clearly by another hand. There must once have been one in the same form and style. It is required by the whole tone of the extant fragments, and it must have threatened the Assyrians with some kind of evil. In other words, in this mutilated prophecy is clear proof that Isaiah, when he came to see the Assyrians at close range, changed his mind with reference to them and represented Yahweh as sharing his disapprobation.

The attitude of the prophet being thus made evident, it is not necessary to seek the missing conclusion, but there have been attempts in this direction, resulting in more or less attractive conjectures. Staerk thinks it has been preserved in vs. 33 f., others in 14:24-27, or strictly, 24b-25a, 26 f.; but the former of these passages is of doubtful genuineness, and, of the latter, perhaps the most that can be said is that it "belongs to the period of Sennacherib, when Isaiah had recognized that the Assyrians attacked all peoples only from lust for pillage and destruction." So Duhm. In this case he makes Yahweh declare (v. 25a),

"I will break the Assyrian in my land,
and on my highlands will I tread him under foot."

Beer interprets the name Assyrian in this instance as in Zech. 10:10, where it is a conventional substitute for "Syrian," giving as a reason, that it alternates with "all the nations." But the phrase "all the nations" (v. 26) is not here used in the apocalyptic sense, that is, of the gentiles assembled against Jerusalem to be destroyed by Yahweh. It is in parallelism with "all the earth." Verse 26, therefore, says simply, that the wisdom which dictates the overthrow of Assyria is the same which is exercised in the general direction of the world, and the power

("hand") exerted the same which is displayed in the constant control of its inhabitants: which is the application of what Isaiah put into the mouths of the seraphs of the heavenly court, "The whole earth is full of his glory." See 6:3.

The point just made at first sight seems to tell against 17:12-14, for there the "many nations" appear to be moving against Jerusalem; but perhaps, as Duhm suggests, the phrase should here be interpreted as a reference to the various nationalities represented in the Assyrian army, since in v. 14 they are described as they that "despoil" and "rob" the prophet's people, and such, on the king's own testimony, were the soldiers of Sennacherib.

It seems probable that, as Marti maintains, 18:5 belongs with 17:1-11, a genuine prophecy concerning Syria and Israel. If so, it has no bearing on the point now under consideration.

The case of 30:27-33 is a difficult one. Duhm defends its genuineness, but Cheyne, Hackmann, and Marti all think otherwise, and the apocalyptic character of the passage, especially the phrase "the name of Yahweh" (v. 27) and the description of the Topheth "prepared of old" (v. 33), certainly favor their opinion. See Jer. 7:32; Is. 66:24.

In 31:4b-9 the critics mentioned above agree in finding Isaiah material, Duhm in vs. 4 f. and 9 and the rest in v. 4. On the figure, see 5:29. The meaning of v. 4 is not readily determined. In the first place, the preposition in the phrase rendered "upon Mount Zion" in the Revised Version may, as the margin intimates, be translated "against," and it is so translated in all the other passages in which it follows the verb here used. See Nu. 31:7; Is. 29:7 f.; Zeh. 14:12. This interpretation is in harmony with v. 3, but it is forbidden by v. 5, whence it appears that Yahweh is not a foe, but the protector, of Jerusalem. The way out of this confusion is to suppose that, as the "for" which introduces v. 4 would indicate, this verse is of the same date as 1-3, and that v. 5 is an editorial addition giving to v. 4 a turn which the original author did not intend. But, if v. 4 is hostile to Judah, it is a pro-Assyrian passage, and, if it is of the same date as 1-3, it is earlier than the actual appearance of Sennacherib in Palestine; therefore it cannot be used to show that Isaiah did not change his attitude toward the Assyrians after their arrival.

The editor of the book of Isaiah, in giving to 9:1/2-6/7 the place it now occupies apparently meant to convey the idea that the good time promised would succeed the gloomy period foretold as the result of the unbelief of Ahaz. This is a mistake, for, when 9:1/2 ff. was written, whatever its date, a gloomy period had already intervened; but, so far as is known, the Jews were not thus afflicted in the reign of Ahaz. Hence Duhm, who defends the genuineness of the passage, refers it to "the last of the time of Isaiah," which, if the prophet, as tradition teaches, lived to see Manasseh king, but suffered martyrdom at his hands, was just after 686 B. C. If, however, it is genuine, a more likely date for it would be just before the birth of Manasseh. At that time the Jews, without doubt, as a penalty for the revolt into which Hezekiah had led them, were "walking in darkness," but there must have been those among them who, in spite of the darkness, were hoping for better things, even deliverance from their oppressors and restoration as a nation to honor and prosperity; and Isaiah may well have been one of their number.² If the prophecy is ungenueine, it cannot, of course, be cited in support of 10:5 ff.; but neither can it be made to offset the positive evidential value of that passage.

It would be interesting, and perhaps profitable, to pursue this discussion so far as to inquire whether the confidence of the opponents of Jeremiah in the inviolability of Jerusalem (Je. 7:4, 12-15) was not based on the later prophecies of Isaiah; but it is a difficult question and it will be best for the present to leave it unanswered.

² The fact that Manasseh proved to be utterly unworthy of the high titles given to the ideal King is not a valid objection to this interpretation.