

THE DATE OF EZEKIEL 45 1-8a AND 47 13-48 35

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IN a paper read before this society and published in *JBL* vol. XXXIV (1915) I discussed Ezekiel 40—48, reaching the conclusion that these chapters are the work of two principal authors, or possibly more, and belonged to the Greek period, with a suggestion of the possibility of the Maccabean period for the first part. The present discussion of the date of 45 1-8a and 47 13—48 35 is intended as a supplement to that earlier paper.

45 1-8, although separated from 47 13—48 35, deals with the same thought, the distribution of the land of Palestine among the twelve tribes, a thought not elsewhere treated in chs. 40—48. This distribution of the land contains various striking features. The territory of the priests, the Levites and the prince is of fixed extent and located in the approximate center of the land, surrounding the sanctuary. There is no occupation of the land east of the Jordan; it is not even mentioned. The land not occupied by the city of Jerusalem, the sanctuary, the priests, the Levites and the prince is divided among the tribes, twelve aside from Levi, each of these having a strip of territory extending from the east to the west of Palestine, its dimensions not being stated. The order of arrangement of the tribes differs in several particulars from that of the original possession of Palestine. Neither does it correspond to the actual possession at any Old Testament period, the only variation from the original order recorded in the historical books being that Dan removed from a

position in the south to the extreme north. It is the variant order of the tribes here given which seems especially strange. No nearer approach to a reason for this has been given, so far as I am aware, than that suggested by A. B. Davidson in the Cambridge Bible: "It is perhaps accidental that the children of Leah and Rachel occupy the centre, while the sons of the handmaids are placed at the extremities", surely hardly an adequate reason.

It seems to me that such a changed division of the land must have had some basis in the historical background of the writer, not simply a background which would allow it, as at the return from the exile, but which would indicate some of the definite changes. I wish to suggest a background which seems to me to fulfil these conditions.

The first evident fact concerning the changed distribution of the tribes is that those east of the Jordan are accommodated in the region west of the Jordan. Another fact is not less striking, that Issachar and Zebulun, which had occupied the general region known as Galilee, are changed to a position in the south of the land.

During the time of Judas Maccabeus, somewhat after the rededication of the temple in 165, expeditions headed by Judas and others went to the region east of the Jordan and to Galilee to rescue the Jews who were being attacked by their Gentile neighbors, those regions having at that time a predominance of Gentile inhabitants. Both expeditions resulted in delivering the Jews, but in both cases the situation was regarded as so dangerous that the Jews were collected and carried back to Judea, thus giving up those districts as Jewish territory. This historical situation is sufficient to account for the abandonment in these chapters of Ezekiel of the territory east of the Jordan and of Galilee, the abandonment of the latter being left to be implied by the transfer of the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun from their former location in Galilee to the south of the land.

But how could room be secured for these tribes? That came somewhat later. In the year 129, under John Hyrcanus, Edom or Idumea, occupying the south of Palestine and with which war had previously been waged by the Maccabeans, was fully

conquered and made to submit to circumcision, thus becoming, in a formal sense at least, incorporated with the Jews. In the preceding year, 130, John Hyrcanus fought with the Samaritans and defeated them, capturing the city of Shechem and destroying the temple on Mount Gerizim. This act might readily have been regarded as destroying the separate identity, especially the religious identity, of the Samaritans and incorporating them with the Jews.

It is after 129, then, that we find the further element in the background needed for these chapters of Ezekiel.

The time of John Hyrcanus was one of the most prosperous, perhaps the most prosperous, in the Maccabean period. He was probably the first to put his name on his coins, he ruled over an extensive territory, and his reign after 129 was largely peaceful. The writer of the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, in this time, evidently considered John Hyrcanus to be the Messiah, even though he was of the tribe of Levi. Whether he attempted any new division of the land is not known. There is, however, a record in Josephus, *Ant.*, xiii, 10, 2, that he colonized some Idumeans in Samaria. Quite possibly he settled Jews, it might be some of those brought in by Judas, in Idumea and Samaria. Or it may be that the scheme presented in these chapters of Ezekiel is purely ideal. If ideal, however, it has a basis in the historical situation, the essence of the plan being that the tribes withdrawn from eastern Palestine and Galilee are to be settled in Idumea and Samaria. The half tribe of Manasseh from the east is of course united with the half in western Palestine. Reuben is put in the territory of Samaria. This is the most prominent position given to any of the tribes that are brought in, and may be due to the traditional prominence of Reuben as the tribe descended from the firstborn of Jacob. South of Simeon, in the conquered territory of Idumea, are put the other tribes, Issachar, Zebulon and Gad, their arrangement apparently not being governed by any definite principle.

It should also be noted that Dan, most naturally, remains in the territory it had won in the extreme north of Palestine. Judah and Benjamin are transposed. The reason for this is purely conjectural, a natural reason suggested by the circum-

stances, however, is that Judah, being actually the principal part of the nation, is put on the north of the temple as a defence in the direction of the great enemy, Syria. The grouping of the priests, Levites, and prince around the temple is an obvious outgrowth of their religious importance.

47 22-23 is not without its bearing upon the matter. There it is provided that sojourners in Israel shall have an inheritance like the Jews, the inheritance being in whatever tribe the sojourner resides. This provision means, under the circumstances here considered, that the Idumeans and Samaritans shall not be dispossessed by the Jews but shall have an inheritance with them in their territory.

The description of the city in 48 30-35 gives the names of the twelve tribes to the twelve gates of the city, three on each side, Levi being included and Joseph taking the place of Ephraim and Manasseh. It can hardly be without significance that the gates toward the north and south, the only directions which faced toward the territory of the tribes, bear the names of three tribes of the north and the south respectively, according to the arrangement of the tribes here given.

A few suggestions further may be added, in connection with what has already been said. If the chapters here discussed belong to the Maccabean period, that is probably true of the rest of chs. 40—48. There seems no reason to doubt the conclusion reached in my earlier paper, however, that at least two authors are to be recognized in chs. 40—48. 40 1—43 17, in large measure a description of the temple with detailed measurements, is probably to be put shortly before the cleansing and restoration of the temple under Judas, in 165. There are resemblances in phraseology in several places in 40—48 to the work of Ezekiel. It seems probable to me now that these should be regarded as the deliberate work of the authors, rather than as editorial features, and hence that these chapters should be called pseudepigraphal, since pseudepigraphy was very common in the Maccabean period.

In my earlier paper I considered 43 18—48 35 to be largely the work of one author, 44 1-4 46 19-24 and 47 1-12, however, being regarded as partly or entirely from the hand of a later

editor. I am now particularly impressed with the unity of 45 1-8a, 16-17, 21-25 46 1-12, 16-18 47 13-48 35. In all these portions the prince is prominent, and he is not mentioned elsewhere in 40-48 except in 44 3, which seems to be editorial. The remainder of the material in 43 18-48 35 is for the most part general Levitical legislation, in the style of P, and probably from a distinct author; this gives three principal authors in 40-48, the author in the case of the Levitical material being rather a compiler.

The figure of the prince in the chapters mentioned fits the Maccabean period as no other. In 141 an assembly of the people made Simon high priest, captain and governor, this honor being hereditary. Simon and his successors, therefore, it is well known, were the heads of the nation both politically and religiously as was never the case before. In the regulations concerning the prince in these chapters he is thought of largely as the religious leader, that is, as the high priest. In Lev. 6 19-23 (Heb. 12-16), the duty of offering the daily sacrifice was placed on the high priest. In the later Jewish custom he did not always offer the sacrifice but he defrayed the cost of it, as testified by Josephus, *Ant.* III, 10, 7. In Ez. 45 17 and elsewhere it is the duty of the prince to provide all the offerings. Surely he can be no one but the high priest. Yet he is distinguished from the priests in that he has his territory apart from theirs, and this territory he can give to his sons as he pleases, 45 7-8a 46 16-18 48 21-22. This indicates political importance and answers completely to the position of Simon and his successors.

The Maccabean age was continually testifying that it had no prophet. In what sense was this? The book of Daniel surely belonged to this period. What is meant apparently is an independent prophet. The prophets of that time get their message from an expansion and application of the earlier writings. The writer of Daniel gets his message from a study of the "books", Dan. 9 2. There and in the following verses Daniel is represented as speaking. He starts with Jeremiah's prediction of a duration for the captivity of 70 years and, evidently regarding that as not yet fulfilled, interprets the 70 years as seventy weeks of years. The writer of these chapters in Ezekiel concerning the

distribution of the land obtained the starting point for his message in a similar way. In 47 14 Yahweh is quoted as saying: "And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another; for I swear to give it unto your fathers; and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance". The writer evidently considers this promise not yet adequately fulfilled, and his scheme indicates how it is to be fulfilled under the circumstances in which he lived.