

[The Origin and History of the Bible]

Lecture VI: Finding the Book of Instruction in the Temple

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1. A. [Historical Background to Finding the Book of Instruction]

We are coming to one of the most interesting and influential single events in the story of the Bible. We also arrive at a point where dates are fairly definite. The date which marks the starting point of the lecture tonight is 621 B.C. when the book of instruction was found in the Temple, while the Temple was undergoing repairs.

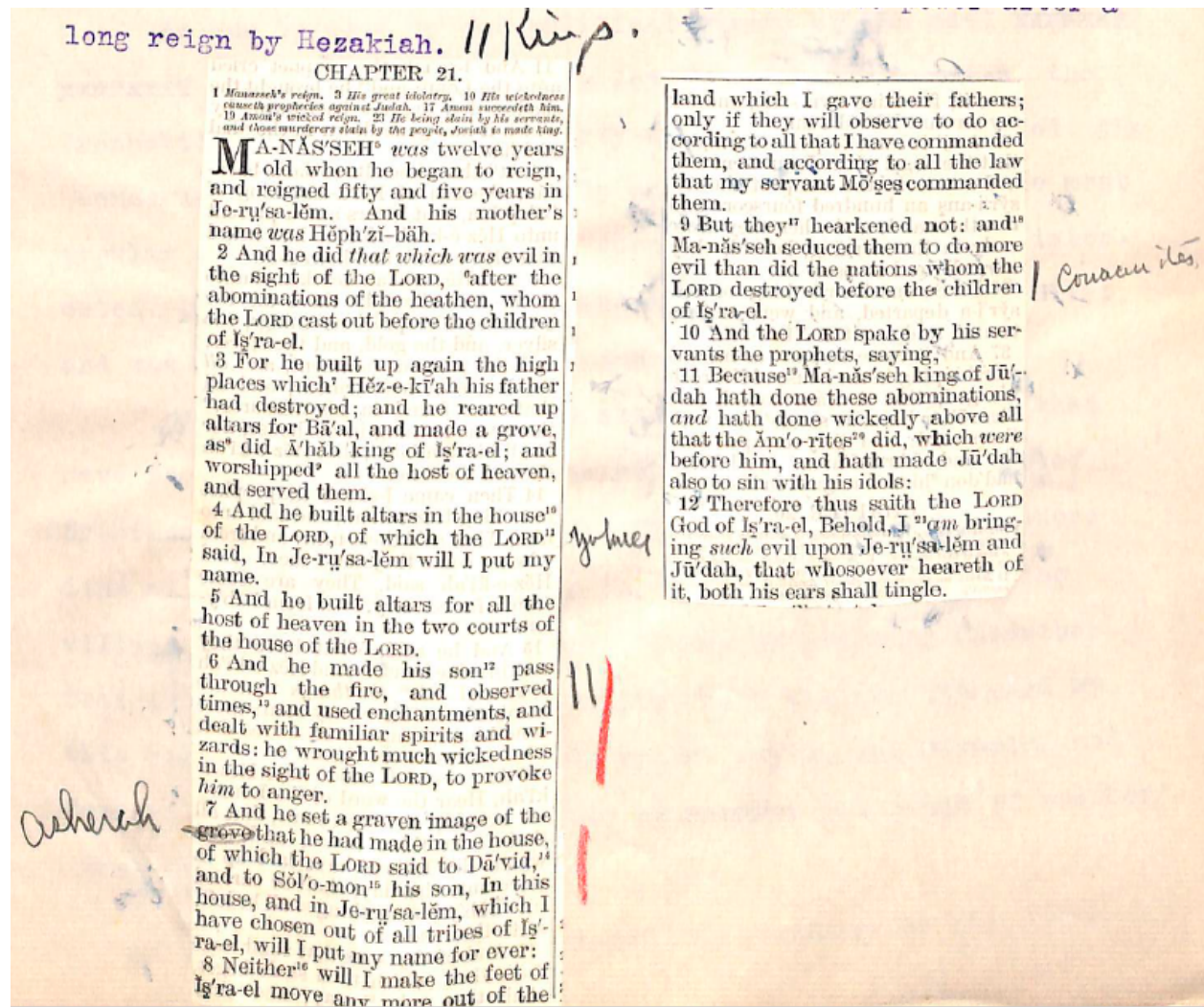
But to see fully the significance of this event we must go back to gather up a few stray threads left loose from last Sunday's lecture. First, it is necessary to recall that beginning about 750 B.C. Amos began his prophecies against Israel, in which he prophesied the punishment of Israel because of her transgressions against Yahweh, the God to Israel. Amos brought a new conception into the idea of God—God as a God of justice, and with moral standards. Following him came Hosea telling of the great love of Yahweh for Israel. Then came Isaiah of Judah, and Micah, all belonging to a period from 750 to 597 [B.C.E.]. Isaiah was a great statesman, but a prophet rather than a time-server. We saw how the Assyrians invaded Judah and Israel, and how King Hezekiah inaugurated certain religious and social reforms under the impetus of the Prophetic Party, whose spokesman was Isaiah. All this means that the Prophetic Party were in control during the reign of Hezekiah, and accomplished much in the way of bringing the religious and social practices up to the standard of the Prophetic Party.

But Manasseh,<sup>1</sup> [reigned] 692-642, who followed Hezekiah as King was a reactionist, or rather was in the hands of a reactionary party and restored many of the evils which Hezekiah had abolished. It is conjectured that Manasseh was made a tool of by a party in the Harem of his father Hezekiah who were incensed because he had abolished the altars of their Gods during his reign and were especially incensed because of the very strong

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<sup>1</sup> Manasseh (c.709 [B.C.E.]-c.643) oldest of the sons of Hezekiah. Davis' dates on his reign differ slightly from more recent dates, which have him reigning as co-regent from 697-687 B.C.E. and as sole ruler from 687-643 B.C.E.

utterances of the prophets against the women of the times. The passages in 2 Kings, Chapter 21 describes what the Priestly Party regarded as the action and significance of Manasseh's reign. It means that the conservative, tradition loving, party that wished things to remain as they were had swung back into power after a long reign by Hezekiah.



In 639 [B.C.E.] Josiah became King as a result of some sort of political intrigue. Amon, the son of Manasseh was slain by his nobles after a reign of two years. In as much as 2 Kings 21:21 says that Amon "walked in all the way his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served," it is held that the nobles who brought about this intrigue were of the Prophetic Party. That is not clear. It may have been simply a boiling over of a Harem jealousy. The matter is obscure. But Josiah was only a lad of eighteen when he came to the throne in 639 [B.C.E.] The tide of events was giving the Prophetic Party standing. The

Assyrian armies were no longer bothering the Palestinians for the Assyrians had passed the zenith of their power.

As can be seen by the political events of the past fifty years preceding Josiah, the two parties, the Prophetic Party and the Baal Party, were about evenly divided. The conservative Party most strongly entrenched, and given the most popular support, especially the support of those directly interested. But the Prophetic Party was the more vigorous, and alert, and was the educating factor in the community.

Just at this time there happened an event that gave the Prophetic Party a tremendous power. A vast hoard of Scythians from the North came tearing down across the shoreline of Palestine on the way to Egypt, ruthlessly destroying villages, men, women and children. Jeremiah probably describes this in Chapter 4:3 to 10:30. While Judah was not attacked by this hoard, it was frightened in proper style, and Jeremiah and Zephaniah made use of the events as the basis of another prophetic onslaught.

Jeremiah has received his call to prophecy in 626 [B.C.E.], just about the time of the Scythian invasion.

Already his terrible prophecies, warning the people of the dread evil from the North:

Flee for safety, ye children of Benjamin, out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and raise up a signal on Beth-haccerrem; for evil looketh forth from the north, and a great destruction. Jer. 6:1

It does not take much imagination for us today to see what terrors might be stirred up in the people by such utterances. Already the effect was appearing. Repairs were being made on the Temple to show some kind of love for Yahweh. That is always the easiest way to sooth the conscience. Some prophet denounces the sins of the times, and the ruler repairs the temple.

times and the ruler repairs the temple.

11 Kings.

CHAPTER 22.

1 Josiah's good reign. 3 He taketh care for the repair of the temple. 8 Hilkiah having found a book of the law, Josiah sendeth to Huldah to inquire of the Lord. 15 Huldah prophesieth the destruction of Jerusalem, but respites thereof in Josiah's time.

**J**O-SĪ'AH<sup>1</sup> was eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned thirty and one years in Je-ru'sa-lēm. And his mother's name was Jēd'i-dāh, the daughter of Ād-a-ī'ah of 'Bōs'cath.

2 And he did *that which was right* in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of Dā'vid his father, and turned not <sup>a</sup>aside to the right hand or to the left.

3 And it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of king Jo-sī'ah, *that* the king sent Shā'phan the son of Āz-a-lī'ah, the son of Me-shūl'lam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,

4 Go up to Hil-kī'ah the high priest, that he may sum the <sup>a</sup>silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the <sup>a</sup>keepers of the <sup>a</sup>door have gathered of the people:

5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which *is* in the

CHAPTER 34.

1 Josiah's good reign. 2 He destroyeth idolatry. 3 He taketh order for the repair of the temple. 14 Hilkiah having found a book of the law, Josiah sendeth to Huldah to inquire of the Lord. 23 Huldah prophesieth the destruction of Jerusalem, but respites thereof in Josiah's time. 29 Josiah, causing it to be read in a solemn assembly, reneweth the covenant with God.

**J**O-SĪ'AH<sup>1</sup> was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Je-ru'sa-lēm one and thirty years.

2 And he did *that which was right* in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of Dā'vid his father, and declined<sup>2</sup> *neither* to the right hand nor to the left.

3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet <sup>a</sup>young, he began to seek after the God of Dā'vid his father: and in the twelfth year he began to<sup>4</sup> purge Jū'dah and Je-ru'sa-lēm from the high<sup>5</sup> places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

4 And they brake down the altars of Bā'al-īm in his presence: and the <sup>a</sup>images that *were* on high above them he cut down: and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of <sup>a</sup>them, and strowed *it* upon the <sup>a</sup>graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.

5 And he burnt<sup>7</sup> the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Jū'dah and Je-ru'sa-lēm.

6 And *so did he* in the cities of Ma-nās'seh, and Ē'phra-īm, and Sīm'e-on, even unto Nāph'ta-lī, with their <sup>a</sup>mattocks round about.

7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into<sup>d</sup> pow-

II Kings

II Chronicles

house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone, to repair the house.

7 Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.

8 And Hil-k'i'ah the high priest said unto Shā'phan the scribe, I have found<sup>2</sup> the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hil-k'i'ah gave the book to Shā'phan, and he read it.

9 And Shā'phan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10 And Shā'phan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hil-k'i'ah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shā'phan<sup>1</sup> read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

12 And the king commanded Hil-k'i'ah the priest, and A-h'i'kam the son of Shā'phan, and Āch'bōr the son of Mī-chā'iah, and Shā'phan the scribe, and Ās-a-h'i'ah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go ye, inquire<sup>14</sup> of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Jū'dah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great<sup>15</sup> is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our<sup>16</sup> fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do<sup>17</sup> according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hil-k'i'ah the priest, and A-h'i'kam, and Āch'bōr, and Shā'phan, and Ās-a-h'i'ah, went unto Hāldah the prophetess, the wife of Shāl'hum the son of Tīk'vah, the son of Hār'has, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Je-ru'sa-lēm in the college;) and they communed with her.

15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and

upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall be kindled against the king who shall stand upon the altar, and shall have his hands soiled thereon. And he shall be like to the king of Judah, who shall be cut off and brought to the king word.

18 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall be kindled against the king who shall stand upon the altar, and shall have his hands soiled thereon. And he shall be like to the king of Judah, who shall be cut off and brought to the king word.

der,\* and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Is'ra-el, he returned to Je-ru'sa-lēm.

8 Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he sent Shā'phan the son of Ās-a-h'i'ah, and Mā-a-sē'iah the governor of the city, and Jō'ah the son of Jō'a-hāz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.

9 And when they came to Hil-k'i'ah the high priest, they delivered<sup>1</sup> the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Lē'vites that kept the doors had gathered of

the hand of Ma-nās'seh and E'phra'im, and of all the remnant of Is'ra-el, and of all Jū'dah and Bēn'ja-min, and they returned to Je-ru'sa-lēm.

10 And they put it in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the LORD, to repair and amend the house:

11 Even to the artificers and builders gave they it, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to floor the houses which the kings of Jū'dah had destroyed.

12 And the men did the work faithfully: and the overseers of them were Jā'hāth and Ō-ba-d'iah, the Lē'vites, of the sons of Mēr'a-rī; and Zēch-a-r'iah and Me-shū'l'am, of the sons of the Kō'hath-ites, to set it forward; and other<sup>1</sup> of the Lē'vites, all that could skill of instruments of music.

13 Also they were over the bearers<sup>1</sup> of burdens, and were overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service; and<sup>1</sup> of the Lē'vites there were scribes, and officers, and porters.

14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hil-k'i'ah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Mō'ses.

15 And Hil-k'i'ah answered and said to Shā'phan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hil-k'i'ah delivered the book to Shā'phan.

16 And Shā'phan carried<sup>1</sup> the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed<sup>1</sup> to thy servants, they do it.

17 And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.

18 Then Shā'phan the scribe told the king, saying, Hil-k'i'ah the priest hath given me a book. And Shā'phan read it before the king.

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard<sup>13</sup> the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.

20 And the king commanded Hil-k'i'ah, and A-h'i'kam the son of Shā'phan, and Āb'dōn the son of Mī'cah,

12

13

<sup>2</sup> Note that the Bible clipping from 2 Kings 22 is folded up at the bottom. Unfolded in includes all of 2 Kings 22:6-20.

11 Chron 34.

and Shā'phan the scribe, and Ās-a-  
r'ah a servant of the king's, saying,

21 Go, inquire<sup>1</sup> of the LORD for me,  
and for them that are left<sup>2</sup> in Is'ra-el,  
and in Jū'dah, concerning the words  
of the book that is found: for great<sup>3</sup>  
is the wrath of the LORD that is  
poured out upon us, because our fa-  
thers have not kept the word of the  
LORD, to do after all that is written  
in this book.

22 And Hil-kī'ah, and *they* that the  
king *had appointed*, went to Hūl'dah  
the prophetess, the wife of Shū'l'um  
the son of Tik'vath, the son of Hās'-  
rah, keeper of the wardrobe;<sup>4</sup> (now  
she dwelt in Je-ru'sa-lēm in the col-  
lege;) and they spake to her to that  
effect.

23 And she answered them, Thus  
saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, Tell  
ye the man that sent you to me,

24 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I<sup>5</sup>  
will bring evil upon this place, and  
upon the inhabitants thereof, *even*  
all the curses that are written in the  
book which they have read before  
the king of Jū'dah;

25 Because they have forsaken me,  
and have burned incense unto other  
gods, that they might provoke me  
to anger with all the works of their  
hands; therefore my wrath shall be  
poured out upon this place, and  
shall not be quenched.

26 And as for the king of Jū'dah,  
who sent you to inquire of the LORD,  
so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith  
the LORD God of Is'ra-el, *concerning*  
the words which thou hast heard;

27 Because thine heart <sup>6</sup>was tender,  
and thou didst <sup>7</sup>humble thyself be-  
fore God, when thou heardest his  
words against this place, and against  
the inhabitants thereof, and hum-  
bledst thyself before me, and didst  
rend thy clothes, and weep before  
me; I have even heard *thee*<sup>8</sup> also,  
saith the LORD.

28 Behold, I will gather thee to thy  
fathers, and thou shalt be gathered  
to thy grave in peace, neither<sup>9</sup> shall  
thine eyes see all the evil that I will  
bring upon this place, and upon the  
inhabitants of the same. So they  
brought the king word again.

29 Then<sup>10</sup> the king sent and gathered  
together all the elders of Jū'dah and  
Je-ru'sa-lēm.

30 And the king went up into the

house of the LORD, and all the men  
of Jū'dah, and the inhabitants of  
Je-ru'sa-lēm, and the priests, and  
the Lē'vites, and all the people,  
<sup>11</sup>great and small; and he read in  
their ears all the words of the book  
of the covenant that was found in the  
house of the LORD.

31 And the king stood<sup>12</sup> in his place,  
and made a covenant<sup>13</sup> before the  
LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to  
keep his commandments, and his  
testimonies,<sup>14</sup> and his statutes, with  
all his heart, and with all his soul,  
to <sup>15</sup>perform the words of the covan-  
tant which are written in this book.

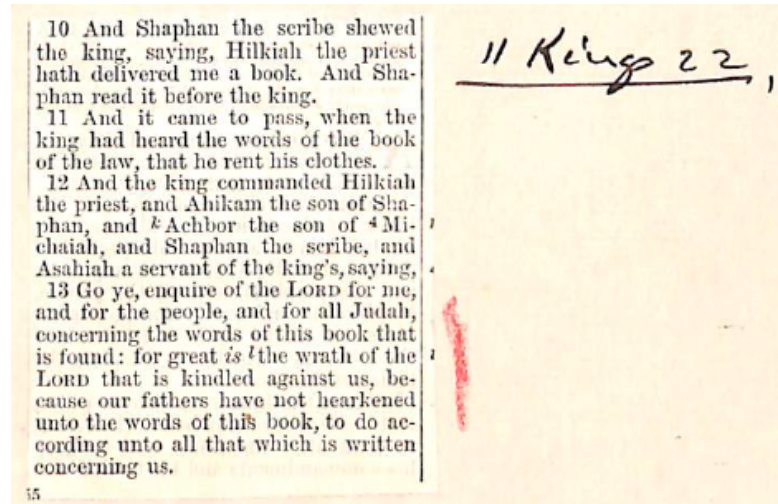
32 And he caused all that were pre-  
sent<sup>16</sup> in Je-ru'sa-lēm and Bēn'ja-mīn  
to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants  
of Je-ru'sa-lēm did according to the  
covenant of God, the God of their  
fathers.

33 And Jo-sī'ah took away all the  
abominations<sup>17</sup> out of all the countries  
that *pertained* to the children of Is'ra-  
el, and made all that were present  
in Is'ra-el to serve, *even to serve the*  
LORD their God. *And all his days*<sup>18</sup>  
they departed not from *following*  
the LORD, the God of their fathers.

2 Chronicles 34 says that after the close of a very vigorous reform in Judah under the direction of Josiah, Shaphan, the scribe, was sent by Josiah the King to Hilkiah and High Priest in the Temple to get an accounting of the funds and pay off the workmen who have been engaged in the repair of the Temple.

After these business matters are attended to, Hilkiyah, the High Priest, tells Shaphan that while the repairs were being made, he had discovered the book of the law in the House of Yahweh.

Hilkiyah gave the book to Scribe Shaphan who read it and in turn told Josiah about it and read the book to Josiah.



As the account indicates, the King was deeply stirred, and entered into a solemn covenant to obey the injunctions of the law. Thus, the Prophetic Party, after a hundred years of struggle, came into power.

2 Kings 23: And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of Yahweh, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people both great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of Yahweh. And the King stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Yahweh, to talk after Yahweh, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book: and all the people stood to the covenant. 2 Kings 23:1-3

## 2. B. [Reforms that Followed Finding the Book of Instruction]

Thus, we have the Biblical account of the great reforms of King Josiah. Following the reading of this document, the Book of the

Covenant, Josiah initiates a general religious reform. Now the reforms that he brings about indicate the nature of the evils that the Prophetic Party had been fighting against. These evils which the Priestly Party defended, and which the majority of the people defended up to the time of Josiah's reign and reformation, throw a great deal of light upon the religious and social customs of Israel and Judah.

The most important reforms considered in the order of the narrative in 2 Kings are as follows.

First. All the vessels for the Baal and for all the Hosts of Heaven, the sun, the moon and the heavens, and the planets, were to be brought out from the Temple and burned and the ashes scattered on the graves of the common people.

Second. The Asherah were destroyed. These were posts, which from time immemorial had stood beside the alter of Yahweh in all the temples of Judah and Israel. They are believed to have been survivals of the days of tree worship, or phallic worship.

Third., 23:7. "And he brake down the houses of the sodomites that were in the house of Yahweh, where the women wove hangings for the Asherah."<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew word is Kadesh, and Kadeshah, and refers, not to ordinary immorality, but to "immorality practiced in the worship of a deity, and in the immediate precincts of a temple."<sup>4</sup>

Asa, King of Judah (918-877) tried to exterminate this practice (1 Kings 15:12-13) but it persisted even up to the time of Josiah. Whether this practice was a natural part of religious system of Israel is not known. It has been related to Babylonian origin as part of the worship of Ishtar. Based upon 1 Kings 15:18 it has been held that the Asherah is connected with the custom of Religious Prostitution and that it was a wide-spread and deep-rooted custom up to the time of Josiah and later.

The Deuteronomic Law (Deuteronomy 23:18-19) banishes and prohibits such practices.

Fourth. 2 Kings 23:10: "And he defiled Tophet which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech."

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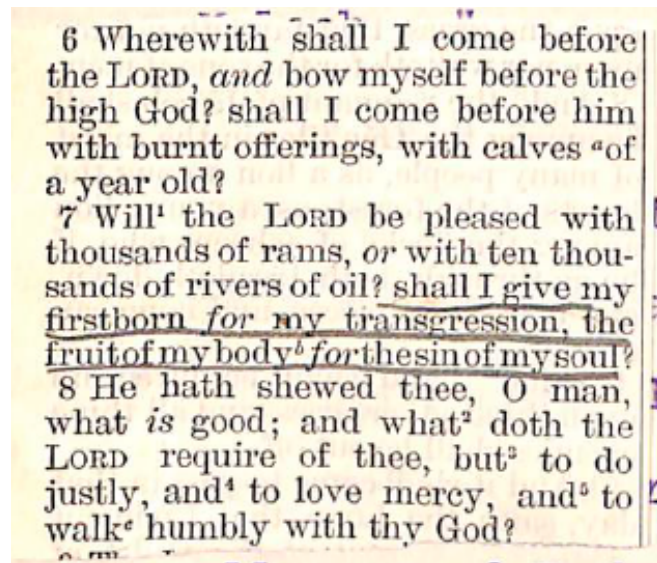
<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings 23:7.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot find the source for this quote.



This means that Josiah put an end to the practice of sacrificing the first-born child to Molech. 2 Chronicles 28:3 says that King Ahaz sacrificed his children in the fire in the Valley Hinnom, also 2 Chronicles 28:6 credits Manasseh with the same ceremony. Jeremiah 7:31-32, "And they have built the high places of Tophet which is in the Valley of Hinnom to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded not, neither came it into my mind."

[Here taped over some of the text Davis inserted a Bible clipping from Micah 6:6:8:]



Such were the religious practices which the reformation of Josiah accomplished, in or about the year 623 B.C. It has a general bearing upon the entire history of Hebrew history. If the children of Israel has accepted these laws forbidding such practices on Mount Sinai, possibly a thousand years before, why should it be necessary to drive them out at this time?

Either the alleged ancient commandments had not been heeded at all by Israel, or just at this time in the history of Israel the people realizing that such religious practices—sacrificing the first-born children, and sexual immorality in the name of religion, and worshiping Gods other than Yahweh, and worshiping the sun, moon and other heavenly bodies—were not compatible with justice and mercy.

### 3. C. [What book was found in the Temple?]

The next question for consideration is this: What has become of this remarkable book that was found in the Temple during the reign of Josiah, a book which brought about a virtual revolution in [the] religious practice of Israel in the year 623 [B.C.E.]?

It is called "the Book of the Law." Does it refer to the Torah, or Pentateuch? It certainly cannot refer to that, for from either point of view this would be impossible. If the Pentateuch was written by Moses, as was once claimed, it is inconceivable that the Jewish people should know so little about it as to have its discovery in the Temple cause such a commotion. On the other hand, it could not be the Torah for, as the account reads, a lot of business was transacted on the day that it was found. Then Shaphan read to himself, and then he read it to Josiah—all in the same day. It would take not far from 36 hours of steady fast reading to read the Pentateuch once. Then Josiah read to the people all at one standing.

But in view of the nature of the reformation caused by the book, and the references to it in the book of historical books, it has become the accepted explanation that the book found in the Temple is preserved as a part of Deuteronomy. Chapters 5 to 11 probably, 12 to 26, and chapter 28 of the present book of Deuteronomy probably are the book of the Law found in the Temple by Hilkiah. Some scholars include simply chapters 12 to 19 and 26 and 28.

This core of Deuteronomy may be described as a book of instruction; it contains statutes and ordinances. It can be read in a short time; it is written in the style of a personal appeal; it contains repeated threats of judgement and ends with a frightful denunciation of Yahweh's curse upon those who disobey. Smith's history of Israel 264.<sup>5</sup>

There have been many conjectures as to how the book might have happened to be in the Temple. Some have held, and not without reason, that it was simply a trick. The Prophetic Party wrote the book and put it there. Other have held that Hilkiah, a friend of the prophet Jeremiah, was a party to the trick. Others have held that it was the work of some very devout scribe, who

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<sup>5</sup> Henry Preserved Smith (1847-1927) American biblical scholar. This reference is to his book, *Old Testament History*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911, p. 264. Davis is not quoting Smith, but presenting Smith's analysis on page 264.

wrote it and left [it] there, and that the finding of it was perfectly honest. That it was not an old book is indicated by the fact that both Josiah, Hilkiah and Shaphan read it without difficulty. Probably the truth will never be known, and one guess is as good as another. But the point to be noted is this, that at this time Judah becomes a people of a religion. They have a Bible. Here in Deuteronomy Chapters 12 to 19, 26 and 28 we have the first Book of Religious Instruction in Jewish History.

Professor Smith sums up the significance of this whole movement in a very able passage:

It was not the old Baal worship alone that wearied the souls of these faithful men. Survivals in the time of Ezekiel show that the primitive totemism was found even in the Temple. The partisans of Egypt had introduced the pantheon of that country. The Assyrian gods introduced by Ahaz may have been banished by Hezekiah, but they had returned in full force under Manasseh. Jeremiah describes the whole population engaged in a festival to the Queen of Heaven—probably the Babylonian Ishtar—whose consort or paramour, Tammuz, was bewailed by the women even in the Temple courts down to the last days of Jerusalem. The sun worship indicated by the horses and chariots already noticed is also described by Ezekiel. We cannot wonder that men who had absorbed Hosea's idea of Israel's exclusive relation to Yahweh, should be both indignant and sick at heart. If Yahweh was Israel's husband, who had cared for her in the past, who had led her through the wilderness, who had given her the land of Canaan, filling her heart with food and gladness—if at the same time He was a jealous God, not tolerating rivals or partners—then it was plain that Israel (now represented by Judah) was in a perilous position. The Deuteronomist, or his successor, who formulated the faith of these men gave Judaism, Christianity, and Islam their common basis: "Yahweh thy God, is one; and thou shalt love Yahweh thy God, with all thy mind, and with all thy being, and with all thy strength. [Smith closes the paragraph with this footnote:] Deuteronomy 6:4ff, cf. 10:12-15.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, this Deuteronomist movement is a movement of practical monotheism. Other nations may have their Gods, but

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<sup>6</sup> Henry Preserved Smith, *Old Testament History*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911, pp. 269-270.

Israel has her Yahweh, and him alone will the children of Israel love, worship and honor.

#### 4. D. [The downfall of Judah]

[At this point in the manuscript Davis inserts a page of important dates, all dates B.C.E.:]

722	Fall of Samaria
639	Josiah
626	Call of Jeremiah
621	Discovery of the Book in the Temple
607	Nineveh destroyed
597	1 <sup>st</sup> dept. of Jews
586	Jerusalem destroyed
549-38	Cyrus of Persia
538	Cyrus captures Babylon
516	2 <sup>nd</sup> Temple dedicated
444	Return from exile

The fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. had marked the end of Israel among the nations of the Earth. She has become immortal, not because of any great achievement in political or commercial affairs, but she had become great largely because she produced Amos and Hosea, and indirectly through them the collection of myths, legends and laws found in the J document of the Pentateuch.

In the year 623 [B.C.E.] Josiah, under the impulse of the prophetic movement brought about the great religious reforms of his reign of which we have been speaking. The reader now wonders if, after all these centuries, Judah, the remnant of Israel, is to be true and loyal to the God, "Yahweh." Josiah was able to accomplish such results as he did both in his religious reformation, and in his extension of the boundary of his kingdom, because the Assyrian Empire was on the wane. Its vitality had already gone, but its successor had not come to claim the booty. Josiah enjoyed twenty years of peaceful rule before the coming Babylonians met the passing Assyrians in the downfall of the great Nineveh in 606 or 7 B.C.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Nineveh was the ancient Assyrian city of Upper Mesopotamia. It was the largest city in the world for approximately 50 years until 612 B.C.E. when it was sacked.

But just before this, an ambitious Pharaoh of Egypt, Necho, set out to secure a portion of the crumbling Assyrian Empire. He and his tremendous army passed through Esdraelon over which Josiah claimed sovereignty. Josiah refused to let Necho pass and set out with his small army and casting himself upon his god, Yahweh, with whom he and his people had just made the great Deuteronomic covenant, engaged Necho in battle. Not only were his forces defeated, but the king was slain, and thus ended the great reforms of Josiah [in] 607 [B.C.E.]. The people who had rebelled and accepted only with sullen acquiescence the drastic reforms of their King Josiah, looked upon his death as a vindication of their position and a demonstration of the error and wickedness of the Prophetic Party. The result was that all the old popular religious institutions that Josiah had brushed aside, were brought back, and there followed, as always happens in a reaction, a period of political errors and religious crimes that were the contemporary events if not the first causes of Judah's final downfall. In 597 came the downfall and first deportation of the Judahites to Babylon. Zedekiah was left as king, ruling as a vassal to Babylon. He instigated a revolt, and Babylon responded by sacking the city of Jerusalem, burning, destroying the Temple, and taking the people to Babylon.

Thus ended the career of the Hebrew people as a political unit in 586 [B.C.E.]. The record of these tragic days in the life of these people is left in the later prophecies of Jeremiah, and in the Book of Lamentations, which, though in error, has been ascribed to Jeremiah, and caused him to be called the weeping prophet.

#### 5. E. Jeremiah

Of these tragic days the prophet Jeremiah was the witness. Burning with a real passion for his people, his race and dominated by ethical and religious standards far beyond his times he became a leading figure of Judah, and an immortal of history. He was called to his task of prophesying in 626 [B.C.E.], five years before the reformation of Josiah, and continued until after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 [B.C.E.].

He came of a priestly family, and his own family were among those hit hard by the reforms of Josiah, and his welcome at the place of his home was that cordial that his townsmen sought his life because he dared to preach Josiah's Covenant.

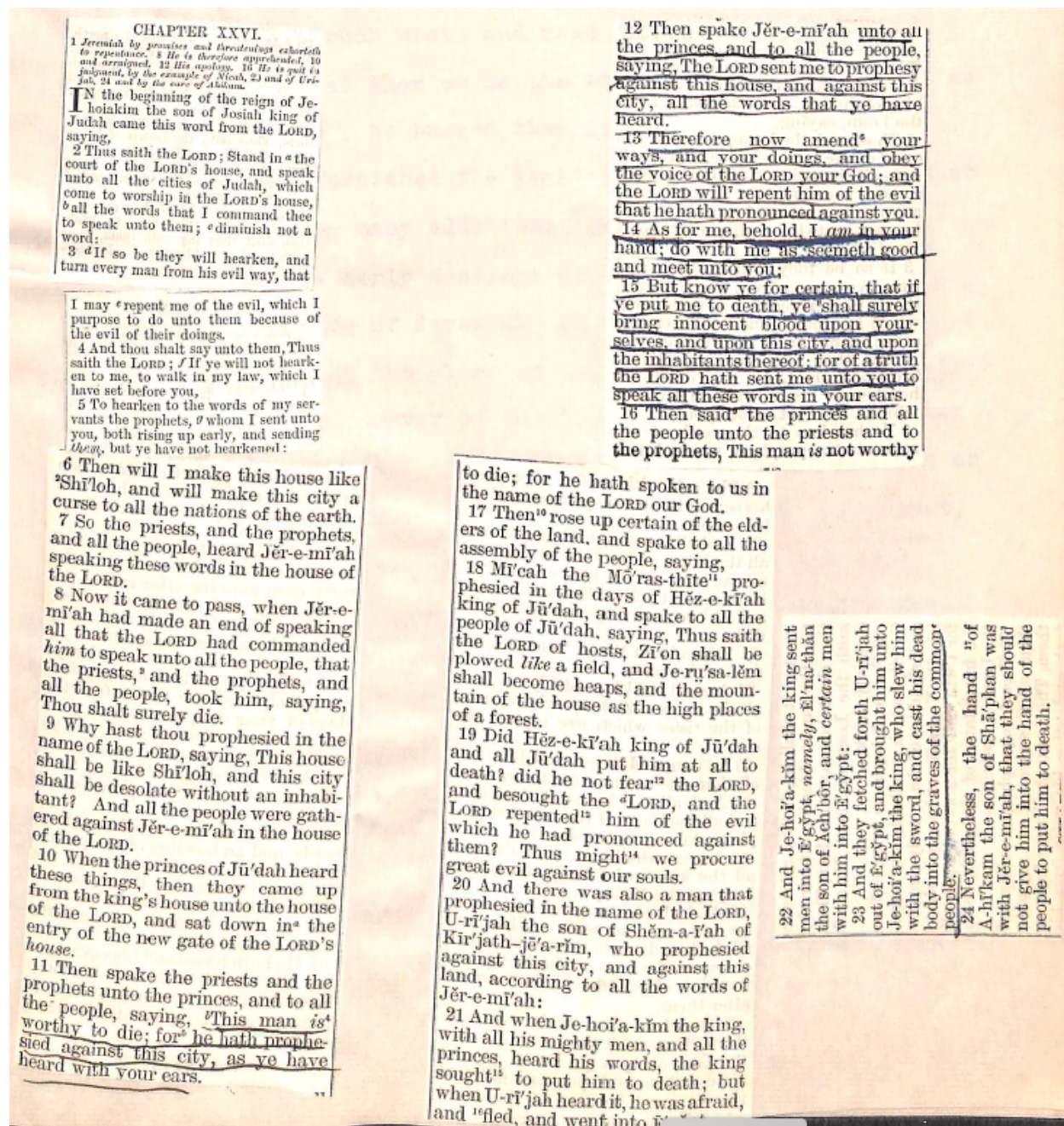
He soon saw that the reforms of Josiah were simply the cleaning the outside of the cup, and legislative reform always is. Following these events he witnessed the death of King Josiah, saw Judah come under the Babylonian yoke; saw Jerusalem twice taken by armies, and the Temple burned, and the walls of the city razed to the ground.

Of the Book of Jeremiah, Chapters 46-51 and 52 were later additions, variously placed and arranged in various versions. Chapter 52 is purely historical, belonging to Chronicles. Chapter 36 ([an] account of making the book) and chapters 37 to 44, chapters 28, 29, 32, 34 and 35 are in part biographical, including prophecies which Jeremiah doubtless uttered, but did not write down as is the case in the first 25 chapters.

The nature and the fearlessness of Jeremiah's prophecy is well illustrated in Chapter 7:1-15, where he stands in the gateway to the Temple and tells the people that their Temple worship is of no avail.

11 THE word that came to Jēr-e-mī-ah from the LORD, saying,  
2 Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Jū'dah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.  
3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el, Amend<sup>29</sup> your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.  
4 Trust ye not<sup>30</sup> in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.  
5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;  
6 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place,<sup>31</sup> neither walk after other gods to your hurt:  
7 Then<sup>32</sup> will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that<sup>33</sup> I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.  
8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.  
9 Will<sup>34</sup> ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Bā'al, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;  
10 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?  
11 Is this house, which<sup>35</sup> is called by my name, become a den<sup>36</sup> of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even<sup>37</sup> I have seen it, saith the LORD.  
12 But go ye now unto my place<sup>38</sup> which was in Shī'loh,<sup>39</sup> where I set my name at the first, and see what<sup>40</sup> I did to it for the wickedness of my people Is'ra-el.  
13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking,<sup>41</sup> but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not,<sup>42</sup>  
14 Therefore<sup>43</sup> will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shī'loh.  
15 And I will<sup>44</sup> cast you out of my sight, as I have<sup>45</sup> cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.

In chapter 26 we get a measure of the sort of man that Jeremiah was, and the message that he spake. This is an historical chapter, possibly by Baruch, which relates to the prophecy given in chapter 7 just read. The people and the princes are incensed, greatly incensed at what Jeremiah has been saying about their beloved city of Jerusalem. All the people were gathered in the Temple of the city:



One more point to be referred to in Jeremiah. In chapter 36 we have a very good description of the origin, purpose and setting of a prophetic book. It may be that it refers simply to a few chapters in the first part of Jeremiah. But here is the story in brief. Jeremiah was anxious that the king should know of what he was saying to Judah, so he wrote down his prophecies, or rather Baruch wrote them from the mouth of Jeremiah and made them into a book. Baruch wrote and read the prophecies in the Temple, and then passed them on to the king. He read them, and as fast as he read them, he burned them in the heater which warmed his room or furnished the light for reading. Jeremiah then re-wrote them, making many additions. This second writing we doubtless have in the early sections of Jeremiah.

With the passing of Jeremiah, and the deportation of the remnants of Israel, the glory of the Israelites ceases. Their defeat was the means however of bringing in the thought of man, the conception, the moral principle for which Jeremiah stands as the logical impersonation, that there are standards of conduct, both personal and national, that are more important, and more real than life itself. It was a supreme moment in Israel's history, far greater than when David was made king, that moment when Jeremiah stood before the people in the Temple, and said to them,

But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in your eyes.

Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth Yahweh has sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.<sup>8</sup>

#### 6. F. [Ezekiel]

Already you have had a glimpse of the exile in the references of last Sunday night to the so-called Second Isaiah. In that lecture I pointed out how the idea of Israel as the suffering servant of Yahweh developed during the exile. Israel was still the chosen nation of Yahweh, but she must do her work in silent suffering, despised and rejected of men. As you see this idea was like unto the idea of Jeremiah, "even though you kill me, yet I bear witness to the truth."

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<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah 26:14-15.



One of the great figures of the exile was the prophet, Ezekiel. He was taken from Jerusalem with the first contingent of exiles in 597 [B.C.E.]. [He] was among the leaders of the Religious Party. When the exiles first landed in Babylon they were reassured as to the future. The fact that Yahweh had not permitted Jerusalem and the Temple to be destroyed, combined with their class contempt for the sort of people left in Jerusalem, made them cling tenaciously to the belief that they would be returned to Jerusalem. During this period Ezekiel was continually trying to combat this delusion.

But after the sacking and destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. Ezekiel began to prophecy the return and rebuilding of the Temple. He saw that the end of Israel as a political nation had come, at least for the present, but Israel as the purified, and glorified witness to Yahweh, expressed in terms of priestly beauty, and a beautiful new Jerusalem, with a new Temple, and a purified ritual was the vision that he had before him. In all of his prophecies there is more of the mechanical day-dreaming longing, than there is that spirit that we saw in Jeremiah. Another light is thrown upon Ezekiel by the fact, as it seems that the Book of Ezekiel was edited and arranged by the author himself. He belongs to the priestly school. The description, the measurements of the Temple, and the city, and the ritual in the latter chapters of his book indicate his point of view. It was that of the Priestly rule. In his elaborate ritual he foreshadows the development of the exiles in their return, and the building of the second Temple. Using the now plastic material of the exiles he molded them into a people to whom the worship of foreign gods and the observance of primitive customs was abhorrent; to whom indeed the letter of the law, as outlined by the priest Ezekiel, was as the voice of Yahweh. The old free, adventurous spirit of the prophet had given way to the chaste, disciplined obedience to the priestly cult.

It was Ezekiel's task to accomplish this and prepare the way for the return from the exile, and the establishment of the second Temple.