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THE DATE OF THE PSALMS

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The question of the date of the Psalter or of individual psalms in the collection has for long been a most vexing one. Confusion has been the result of many discussions of this problem. It is not our aim to settle the matter dogmatically for all time, but we shall present the respective views with their support and our own conclusions on the subject. It is generally admitted that on the whole the Psalms have very little to identify them with any special event or occasion. Critical treatments of the date and authorship of the Psalms have been chiefly concerned with the two great questions, one as to the presence of Davidic psalms and the other as to the inclusion in the collection of Maccabean psalms. Views have been propounded that run the entire gamut of the period just indicated. T. H. Robinson points out that on the one hand we have the traditional dates derived from the titles found at the head of many of the psalms; on the other hand, there are those, like Cheyne and Duhm, who attribute many psalms to a late period. Now the view is shifting so that we find men like Gressmann and Mowinckel placing the Psalms in the pre-exilic period, howbeit for different reasons.¹ There are now those who are prepared to say that there may be a good deal more pre-exilic material in the Psalter than the past generation was willing to concede. H. H. Rowley notes, "That many of the actual psalms were written in pre-exilic days is much more widely agreed today than it would have been a generation ago. Nevertheless, it is still generally believed that the majority of our psalms come from the post-exilic age, and the compilation of

¹ "The God of the Psalmists," in D. C. Simpson (ed.): *The Psalmists*, p. 23.

the Psalter is certainly to be placed in that age. Few scholars today would assign large numbers of psalms to the Maccabean age in the way that was common at the beginning of the century."²

What has been responsible for the change in viewpoint as to the date of the Psalter? Unquestionably the light that archaeology has afforded us on the subject has been the deciding factor. Breasted shows how the hymns of Egypt were a thousand years earlier than those of the Hebrews. He adduces proof to reveal that not only was psalmody possible at such an early date in the history of the world, but that it actually existed in great abundance. Montgomery notes that, since we cannot deny that a monotheism was possible in the fourteenth century B.C. in Egypt (following Breasted), then we have little ground to question the early existence of the Hebrew Psalms. Contrary to Wellhausen's former dictum that "it is not a question whether there be any post-Exilic Psalms, but, rather, whether the Psalms contain any poems written before the Exile,"³ there are now scholars who claim there is no limit backwards for this type of literature.⁴ Gunkel and Mowinckel, whose views we shall consider in detail later, agree in dating the Psalms as far back into monarchical times as possible. For them the royal psalms are royal liturgies after the analogy of the Babylonian and Egyptian, which we find in abundance. Bittenwieser, who has written a veritable tome on the Psalms, concludes that the Psalms manifest a progressive development from the time of Joshua, the date of the oldest psalm, down to the middle of the third century B.C., at which time the entire collection, in his opinion, was completed. He finds the Psalms valuable for information concerning the political history of Israel from early pre-exilic times to 300 B.C.⁵ S. R. Driver notes that Hebrew poetry, as with that of so many other nations, was probably the

² *The Re-Discovery of the Old Testament* (Phila., 1946), p. 178.

³ J. Wellhausen, *The Book of Psalms*, p. 163.

⁴ J. A. Montgomery, "Recent Developments in the Study of the Psalter," *Anglican Theological Review*, Vol. VI, July, 1934.

⁵ J. Bittenwieser, *The Psalms* (Chicago, 1938), p. vii.

earliest form of literary expression. He points to such passages as Genesis 49; Numbers 21:17f., 27-30; Judges 5; and others. Barton believes that the position of scholars like Cheyne, Duhm, and Haupt, who held that all psalms which referred to kings were speaking of Persian, Hellenistic, or Hasmonean kings, is in error. There are other criteria to be used, which imply a pre-exilic date instead. Oesterley has given us certain general principles upon which we can proceed in the matter of dating the Psalms. The contents of a psalm give no certain clue to the date. The religious character of a psalm, it is held, often helps to place it in a period in which it may have been written, whether it be the Mosaic, pre-prophetic, prophetic, exilic, post-exilic, Persian, Greek, or the period of later Judaism. But if in other portions of the Old Testament there are similar modes of thought to those found in the Psalter, and these thought patterns be assigned to pre-exilic times, then there is no presumptive reason to deny a like date to many of the psalms, except the psalm itself give incontrovertible evidence otherwise. Indications of the period to which certain psalms may belong are these: (1) the pre-exilic period-mention of the king, references to the northern kingdom, references to the Lord as King, and "individual" psalms; (2) exilic period-reference to the Dispersion (but not always), the mention of the hatred of Edom (see Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35), affinity with prophetic teaching (perhaps), and dirge-psalms; (3) post-exilic-those containing expressions of personal devotion to God, the problem of the suffering of the righteous, psalms of a universalistic tone, Wisdom psalms, acrostics, those having a reference to atheism (Greek period). Not all, to be sure, will be found to agree with these criteria of Oesterley, but many proceed upon these lines of judgment.⁶

Peters and Welch approach the problem from the angle of liturgy. The former sees by a comparison with Egyptian and Assyro-Babylonian hymns that the Hebrew hymnody

⁶ W. O. E. Oesterley, *A Fresh Approach to the Psalms*, pp. 37, 55-57.

must be very ancient. Because of the lasting character of ritual and liturgy, this oldest element in religion should be found persisting among the Hebrews as with other peoples. There is abundant proof of the existence in pre-exilic times of a Temple psalmody for the ritual. This must surely have been preserved so that it could be utilized when the ancient Temple was restored, the ancient writings collected, and the Temple service reinstated. In general, Peters finds that the collections in the Psalter must be treated as entities, the first three books being earlier than the last books.⁷ Welch takes the same position as just outlined for Peters; that is, since hymns for rituals are old among other peoples, it at least allows the possibility for Hebrew psalmody in relation to Hebrew ritual in the Temple.

After these general observations on the whole theme of Psalter dating, we do well to look more closely at the various phases of this important problem. Bittenwieser sees a large portion of the Psalter as pre-exilic, so we consider his views first as to pre-exilic psalms. His position is in direct contrast to the inclination of the German critics to see the main portion of the Psalms as late post-exilic. W. C. Graham feels that Bittenwieser has counteracted many of the extravagancies of a criticism that has "run to seed." Among pre-exilic psalms he treats a portion of Psalm 68, part of Psalm 65, Psalm 81, parts of 60 and 57 (called "two genuine Psalms of David"), 45, 20, 21, 48, 76, 78 (the last three inspired by the deliverance of Jerusalem from the invasion of Sennacherib), 29, 104, part of 19, 8, 51, 50, 15, and 24. At the other extreme is Cheyne, who finds only Psalm 18 to be pre-exilic. S. R. Driver posits a mediate, though not satisfactory, position on this question. He holds, "It must be owned that these criteria [which he has been employing to date the Psalms] are less definite than might be desired, and that when applied by different hands they do not lead always to identical results. Nevertheless some conclusions may be fairly drawn from them. It may be affirmed, for instance, with

⁷ J. P. Peters, *The Psalms as Liturgies*, pp. 15-17, 55.

tolerable confidence that very few of the Psalms are earlier than the seventh century B.C.”⁸

How is the difference between the view of Battenwieser and, say, Cheyne to be explained? What reasons have brought about a change? Scholars now realize that there must have been many psalms of the early period of the monarchy. There was the Temple with its elaborate services in existence for three hundred years before the exile. It is not reasonable to suppose that hymns and songs of praise were lacking in the worship of the Israelites during that long stretch of years, or even that only a scant handful of them has been preserved. The Temple worship insistently demands the concomitant element of praise. To say that all but a few of the Psalms belong to the Second Temple somehow does not fit the requirements of the case. Oesterley says it is “unthinkable.” There are indications of singing with musical accompaniment as an act of worship in pre-exilic times. Amos speaks of “the noise of thy songs,” “the melody of thy viols,” and “instruments of music like David.”⁹ Isaiah makes mention of the song and the pipe.¹⁰ Since certain compositions in the Old Testament belong at the latest to the time of the monarchy, there is at least the possibility of some psalms fitting into the same period. There is the Song of Deborah in Judges 5:1-31, which Moore considers the oldest piece of Hebrew literature extant, and which may be compared with Psalm 68:7 and 8 (Hebrew, 8, 9); the lament of David over Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1:19-27) is another instance; certain ones occur in the prophetic books (Isaiah 6:3; Zephaniah 3:14, 15). These manifest the same type of literary composition as many of the psalms in the Psalter. Oesterley treats Psalm 17 as pre-exilic, especially in view of 2 Samuel 22:2-51 (particularly verses 43-50; Hebrew, 44-51); Psalm 68:27 (Hebrew, 28); and Psalm 89. This last has definite evidences of the period of the monarchy—the mention of the

⁸ S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 384.

⁹ Amos 5:23; 6:5.

¹⁰ Isaiah 30:29.

covenant with David, the throne, the anointing oil, the seed of David, and the crown of God's king. Some modern commentators try to explain away the force of these passages quite ingeniously, but why must all the psalms belong to a late date? We can hardly be asked to believe that when the Temple was rebuilt and the worship of the sanctuary was reorganized that all the earlier psalms of the past days had been forgotten. All the royal psalms (2, 20, 21, 28, 61, 63, 72, 110) and even Psalm 132 are adjudged by Oesterley as pre-exilic.¹¹ The reason the last is placed in pre-exilic times is his denial that only in post-exilic times did worshippers go up to the mountain of Zion. Compare Isaiah 30:29.

Mowinckel comes to the belief in pre-exilic psalms from an altogether different and new angle. He notes, as do many others, that there is an antagonism in the Psalms between the righteous and their enemies. He presents much Babylonian material to support this contention, and feels that the psalms of this character are very early. Somehow the arguments of Mowinckel do not impress us here, for surely he sees magical elements where others would never have suspected them. The same passages and portions could well be explained upon the supposition that the enmity between two such groups arose from either religious or social causes.

O. T. Allis, in the *Princeton Theological Review*, adduces the same three arguments for pre-exilic psalms as have already been set forth: the antiquity of hymnody witnessed by the Babylonian and Egyptian parallels long before the Hebrew monarchy, the Temple worship with its requirements of praise, and the presence of ritual which also demands it. Gressmann stresses this last feature repeatedly. There could hardly be, says he, religious festivals, sacrificial worship, and rites, either public or private, without accompaniment by psalms. His conclusion is that psalmody is as ancient as the religion of Israel, indeed older than Moses. Interesting is his view on the presence of psalms that mention the king. He holds that "all the psalms in which the king is mentioned are

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 37, 38, 46, 47.

important evidences of the pre-exilic date of Psalmody. The attempts made to date the royal psalms in the Maccabean period have been in vain. I am convinced that there are no Maccabean psalms whatsoever in the Davidic Psalter: it had been completed long before the middle of the second century B.C. Moreover the nearest parallels to the phrases of the royal psalms are to be found in the worlds of ancient Egypt and ancient Babylonia, not in the phraseology of the Court of the Hellenistic age, and the differences between the phraseology and style of these different ages are very great."¹² Welch, too, feels that there are pre-exilic psalms but, briefly stated, his reason is drawn from the prophetic tone and outlook of the Psalms which, he thinks, must have been composed at a time when the influence and work of the prophets were at their strongest and when the prophets were denouncing mere formal worship without the proper heart attitude toward God. Thus, we have tried to show how various scholars dealing with the problem from different angles have come to the conclusion that in the Psalter we must look for some pre-exilic elements. The point of interest, too, is that the trend was begun and carried on upon the basis of the findings of archaeological materials that dealt with similar phenomena in other related lands at an even earlier period in the history of the world.

If there is the definite possibility, even probability, of pre-exilic psalms, is there any chance that the Psalter may contain Davidic psalms? It is well known that the traditional opinion that prevailed until the eighteenth century ascribed the Psalter to Davidic authorship. When the destructive higher criticism arose, this tenet was questioned and rejected by all liberal critics. In the beginning only the psalms with the name of David in their titles were assigned to him. Later this position was also abandoned when critical opinion decided that few, if any, of the psalms, were written by David. The majority of the psalms were placed in post-

¹² H. Gressmann, "The Development of Hebrew Psalmody," in D. C. Simpson (ed.): *op. cit.*, p. 15.

exilic times.¹³ W. T. Davison at the beginning of this century took the ground that it could not be proved definitely that David wrote any psalms whatsoever. The probability was that he had written many, not all of which had been lost. Some of those extant and ascribed to him are not inappropriate to him. If Psalm 18 be attributed to his authorship, then it is probable that others should be also. The number of these can be ascertained only by attention to contents, style, allusions, and the like, but the opinion of critics differs widely.¹⁴ Leslie argues for the high antiquity of Hebrew psalmody, but decides that Davidic authorship of any of the psalms can scarcely be maintained with absolute confidence. Thus, Leslie and Davison express grave doubts as to Davidic authorship of any of the Psalter, but they do not definitely state that he did not write any of the psalms.

Certain authorities find no Davidic psalms in the Psalter. Such are S. R. Driver, R. Pfeiffer, T. H. Robinson, and J. M. Powis Smith. Driver contends that in the psalms ascribed to David there are an intense religious devotion and deep spiritual insight, together with a well developed mode of thinking on theological questions, which are beyond what could be expected of David or his age in Hebrew history. His conclusion is that the majority of so-called Davidic psalms are not properly his. The supposed connection of David with the sanctuary services could hardly account for his composition of more than a very few of the psalms attributed to him by the titles in the Psalter.¹⁵ In his work on the Introduction to the Old Testament Pfeiffer takes much the same ground as Driver. He claims that none of the Psalms could be Davidic because of language, style, and religious ideas which are inappropriate for his time.¹⁶ T. H. Robinson, while positing that scholars are becoming more reconciled to the concept of much more pre-exilic material in the Psalter than

¹³ C. A. and E. G. Briggs, *The Book of Psalms*, Vol. I, pp. lvi, lvii.

¹⁴ W. T. Davidson, "The Psalms," *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. IV, p. 151.

¹⁵ S. R. Driver, *op. cit.*, pp. 377-379.

¹⁶ P. 627.

was the consensus of opinion in the generation just past, feels that we may never reestablish Davidic authorship for any number of the Psalms.¹⁷ Smith argues, with reference to the seventy-three psalms assigned to David, that, if we do place these hymns in David's time, we are forced to the alternative that the Hebrews saw practically no religious development in their national history; that their religious concepts were completely matured in all essential features in David's era, in the tenth century B.C. This he finds, working on the basis of the evolutionary principle in the religion of Israel, in direct contrast to all that has been conceived thus far concerning the history of Hebrew life, thought, and religion. He points out that all the great prophets and their work came after the age of David.¹⁸ In essence, then, the view of these scholars is that none of the Psalms can be Davidic, because he lived too early in the development of the Hebrew religion for the type of language, style, and religious concepts that abound in the psalms attributed to him. But the position that certain psalms are Davidic is not without its adherents among scholars of our day. O.T. Allis, after discussing the parallels from Egypt and Babylonia, says, "For we are not arguing that psalmody must have been an ancient institution in Israel because this was the case in Babylonia and Egypt, but merely that the facts which have come to light; regarding the great antiquity of the religious lyrics of Babylon and Egypt strongly support the claim of the Old Testament itself that psalmody developed early in Israel and that the time of David and not the post-exilian period was its golden age."¹⁹ With this position we are in agreement. Oesterley and Peters come to the conclusion that there are Davidic psalms from an entirely different standpoint. The former authority points out that there is no adequate reason to deny actual authorship to David of a number of the Psalms, even if not in the very form that we have

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹⁸ J. M. P. Smith, *The Psalms*, p. 243.

¹⁹ O. T. Allis, "The Bearing of Archaeology upon the Higher Criticism of the Psalms," *The Princeton Theological Review*, Vol. XV, 1917, p. 317.

it now, because the persistent tradition that he was a writer of psalms must have arisen from some historical basis. He goes even farther to say that any denial of Davidic authorship to any of the Psalms, to maintain that the idea was a later innovation entirely, is a betrayal of a lack of appreciation of Semitic modes of thought.²⁰ Peters finds fault with some for dating the Psalms by their very latest elements, as though there were not a period of some hundreds of years in which the Psalms were being composed and compiled. For him the tradition that David created Hebrew psalmody means that during his time liturgy and ritual, which had existed long before the period of David, took on a fixed form. Thus he accepts the belief as indicating the commencement of the Psalter, whereas its completion is to be sought for centuries later. He points out also that the Septuagint embodies the Davidic tradition, assigning to David many psalms which are not so designated in the Hebrew text. In his further discussion of David's relation to Hebrew psalmody he states that David's connection with Hebrew psalmody is very much like his relationship to the government of Israel. Just as it was he that established the Hebrew monarchy on a new and settled basis, so he was the director of Hebrew worship. Peters continues, "David was the real organizer both of the Kingdom and of the Church, and as the organizer of the latter the father of a new liturgical hymnody on the ancient lines. To what extent he himself was the actual author of Psalms it is impossible today to determine but in a very real sense he was the author of Hebrew Psalmody, the founder of the Psalmody of the Hebrew church, which yet had its roots in a greater antiquity. That is the real meaning of the tradition of the Davidic authorship of the Psalms, and in seeking to date the Psalter we may very properly follow that tradition in saying that David was its founder."²¹ To be sure, neither Allis, nor Oesterley, nor Peters (nor the present writer for that matter) undertakes to identify the

²⁰ W. O. E. Oesterley, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

²¹ J. P. Peters, *op. cit.*, p. 26; see also pp. 9, 11.

number of Davidic psalms in the collection, but they surely feel, and rightly so, that there are such present in our Psalter. Peters concludes with the thought that when David organized the Israelitish kingdom and inaugurated the Hebrew worship in Jerusalem, there was a body of liturgical material connected with the sacrifices and the Ark, and that Sirach's statement as to David's composition of psalms, his organization of the worship at Jerusalem, his beautification of the feasts, his ordering of the solemn occasions, and appointment of singers to sing Psalms at the sacrifices, is a fair one.²²

We know of no scholar who denies that there are post-exilic psalms in the Psalter, but there is much division of opinion on the particular period in which certain psalms, or according to some the entire collection, should be placed. To indicate that some of the psalms are post-exilic is so general that it leaves us in doubt as to whether the time of the restoration is meant, or the Greek, the Persian, or the Maccabean age is in mind. Barton gives us a general word when he declares that the Psalter was collected after the exile.²³ We doubt if any will be found in disagreement with this position. But post-exilic times cover a few centuries, and authorities have labored to date the Psalms more definitely within this broad area of reckoning. Their efforts have resulted in a general change along certain lines, but we do not mean to imply that all subscribe to every conclusion, as we shall presently see. For the sake of clarity and to facilitate the discussion we shall treat of the Persian and Greek period first, and then at a future time deal with a consideration of the Maccabean age as a larger question. Cheyne gives as his opinion that the Korahite, the Asaphite, and the Davidic psalms in all probability belong to the Greek period. In speaking of Psalm 68, once thought to be the most difficult in the entire collection, he decides that it was composed either at the close of the exile or at the time of one of the

²² *Ibid.*, p. 51; cf. *Ecclus.* 47:8-11.

²³ "The Present State of Old Testament Studies," in E. Grant (ed.), *The Haverford Symposium on Archaeology and the Bible*, p. 68.

dynastic wars between the Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucidae in Syria for the control of the land of Palestine, more specifically in the sixth century (before the defeat of Croesus at Sardis in 529 B.C.) or the third (between 220 and 217 or 203 and 198 B.C.). The Persian age, in which there was no native ruler of the dynasty of David, is said by him to be the time of Psalm 89 with its many references to the covenant of David. Psalm 72 is assigned to Darius who, says Cheyne, was well worthy of such an eulogy, but he gives the alternative as Ptolemy Philadelphus.²⁴ It is apparent, then, that there is quite a good deal of latitude in dating psalms in the Persian and Greek periods. Oesterley asks the question as to whether there are psalms of the Persian period (538 B.C. to 331 B.C.). What evidence we have shows the age to have been one of peace for the Jews, and with the rebuilt temple there must have been the composition of new sacred songs. He does not specify which psalms belong to this period. As to psalms of the Greek period (300 B.C. and forward) we know, although there is no direct evidence, that the Jews lived in peace and were influenced by the Greek spirit. He holds that the general trend of the age argues for the composition of some of the psalms in the fourth century B.C.²⁵ Peters, in dealing with the psalms of Books IV and V of the Psalter, which are found in liturgical or ritual settings as in the Babylonian psalmody where the liturgies as a rule consist of some ten psalms, finds that these psalms belong to a time when the center of national life was the Temple and not the kingdom. They do not depict a time when enemies are surrounding them and destruction may be imminent, but they portray rather a hope of deliverance from the designs of unfriendly neighbors. In this they put us in mind of the great religious revival under Haggai and Zechariah at the time of the restoration of the Temple. Therefore, he thinks, they are to be dated in the earlier days of the restoration shortly after the rebuilding of the Temple about 500 B.C.

²⁴ T. R. Cheyne, *The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter*, pp. 112, 116, 144.

²⁵ W. O. E. Oesterley, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

He proceeds even farther by dating the liturgy known as the Hallel (Psalms 111-118) to the time after Ezra's initial efforts among his people, after 380 B.C. As for the Pilgrim Psalter (Psalms 120-134), he takes the *terminus ad quem* be set by the citations in Chronicles of Psalms 130 and 132, not later than. about 350 B.C., while the *terminus a quo* could be a century earlier for individual psalms. After the completion of the Book of Chronicles and before the writing of Ecclesiasticus the Psalter is claimed to have been concluded by adding Psalms 135-150.²⁶

Pfeiffer's views on the Psalter are particularly interesting in view of the comparatively recent date of his book and its thorough treatment of the individual books of the Old Testament. During the period 400-250 B.C., the guilds of Temple singers were organized, he tells us, and the major portion of our Psalter should be assigned to this time. He presumes that most of the Psalms were written during the period of the collecting of the Psalter (the two limits being 400 and 100 B.C.). With him the real question resolves itself into the query as to whether there are any psalms of a pre-exilic character, and not whether it embodies Maccabean psalms of the second century, because the Psalms reveal to him the thought, faith, and worship of post-exilic Judaism. He admits, as he must, that during the two most important centuries in the forming of the Psalms (400 to 200) the history of the Jews is a "total blank" with the exception of their rebellion against King Artaxerxes III Ochus in 353. At that time Jericho was laid waste and a number of Jews were deported. This renders difficult the dating with any degree of accuracy of any Old Testament writings which may be assigned by scholars to this period, especially the Psalms. Pfeiffer takes note of the fact that some able scholars question such late dating of the Psalms as to place them in general after 400 B.C., and singles out Gunkel particularly. The latter finds the latest date for the Psalms at 200 B.C., but its flourishing period about 750 until 500 B.C., when decline set

²⁶ J. P. Peters, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-360, 413, 463, 144.

in. One of the chief arguments of Gunkel for his early dating is the mention of a king. He takes Psalm 89 to be written in the Northern Kingdom before 721 B.C. (judging by verses 12 and 18, Hebrew, 13 and 19). Pfeiffer sees no mention of a king of North Israel but a reminiscence of Job and parts of Isaiah. Royal psalms that Gunkel calls pre-exilic are 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 132, 144:1-11. Apart from Psalm 45 Pfeiffer considers none of these as pre-exilic. On the whole, he favors the late dating of the Psalter after the view of B. Duhm, who dates all the royal psalms in the time of the Hasmonean rulers, rather than the time indications of Gunkel. He denies that a reference to a king is an absolute criterion for placing a psalm in the period of the monarchy, and since there is no objective evidence for assigning a psalm to a time before 586 B.C., he has favored the position given above, 400 to 100 B.C. He accepts the conclusion of Driver that very few psalms are before the seventh century B.C. The only psalms that he places before the exile, we speak of Pfeiffer, are Psalm 24:7-10 (a hymn in celebration of the entrance of the Ark into the Temple in Jerusalem from Shiloh) and Psalm 45 (a poem used at a royal wedding). Psalms 19:1-6 (Hebrew, 1-7) and 104 are early, but hardly pre-exilic.²⁷ Our chief objection to the views of Pfeiffer is that he takes a position in complete contrast to much of the findings of archaeology already touched upon, and yet does not sufficiently treat of the objections to his view. It seems to us that his standpoint is not much different from that of Cheyne and Duhm about the turn of the century, a position which most scholars have felt compelled to abandon by dint of the new evidence from archaeological sources. This is well stated by Sellin: "It is known how striking, in many instances, is the relationship of the Babylonian songs to those of the Bible; and this without detriment to the difference in their deepest religious kernel. There surely must exist some genetic connection. However, for Wellhausen, these parallels do not at all exist. He takes into account only the possi-

²⁷ R. H. Pfeiffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 624, 629, 630, 631.

bility of further intra-Israelitish development, and comes to a conclusion . . . that, on the whole, we do not possess in the Hebrew canon a psalm dating from pre-exilic times. It is most gratifying to be able to state that, in opposition to this view, an unusually strong reaction has set in. While, about the beginning of the new century, it had become almost a dogma that the Psalter (of David) was a post-exilic book—against which assumption Koenig, myself, and a few others protested in vain—a pronounced change of opinion has taken place during the last two decades. This we owe partly to Gunkel and partly to the Norwegian, Mowinckel.”²⁸ J. M. Powis Smith does not dwell at length on the date of the Psalter, but thinks it is most profitable to consider the book as the hymn book of the Second Temple. He cites Daniel 8:11 and 1 Chronicles 9:2-34 among other passages in the Psalms to show that they were used in the worship of the Temple.²⁹ Our own considered opinion in the matter of post-exilic Psalms is that there are such, not quite so many in number as some would posit, and that the datings of Pfeiffer, for instance, are far too late. If similar compositions be found thousands of years earlier among other nations, we cannot on general principles deny such to the Hebrews.

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²⁸ E. Sellin, *Archaeology versus Wellhausenism*, p. 256.

²⁹ J. M. P. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

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Thanks to Carolyn Gibney for help with proofing.