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AZARIAH OF JUDAH

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De mortuis nil nisi bonum is a venerable saying and one whose sportsman-like advice we should not lightly disregard. But we are also told by a keen observer of life that

The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones.

Having said which, I hope I have prepared my readers for some plain speaking. Plain speaking, I believe, is urgently needed today in the realm of Old Testament study, for nowhere else do bad logic and pseudoscience receive such respectful attention. And I shall make haste to add that the loose thinking which receives this attention is, for the most part, that of scholars in my own field of Assyriology.

If there ever lived a man who could take a fragment of the fabric of history, a simple fragment, whose every strand was clearly traceable, and muss it beyond recognition, tangling and snarling every last strand, that man was the late Professor Hugo Winckler, of Berlin. This is a hard statement, but I believe that it is a true one. To be sure, most of the children of Winckler's fertile brain were still born, but others came through safely and made quite a stir in the scholastic world. *Musri*, the lusty rival of Cheyne's *Jerachmeel*, was finally strangled and buried by Eduard Meyer. The *Altorientalische Weltanschauung* evidently was possessed of as many lives as the favorite

household pet, but the final heroic efforts of Weidner and a few other of Winckler's disciples to revive it seem to be unavailing. However, there remain a number of smaller children which should be consigned to oblivion at the earliest possible moment, and among these is Azariah of the North Syrian "Judah" (*Jaudi* or *Ya'di*).

In the early days of Assyriology, there came to light a badly damaged fragment of the *Annals* of Tiglath-pileser III (K. 6205), containing references to an Azariah of Yaudi, or Azariah, the Yaudean (*Iaudai*). And naturally enough, scholars assumed that they had found in an Assyrian document the record of some of the activities of Azariah of Judah not dwelt upon in the Old Testament. So George Smith, Eberhard Schrader, Rogers, and others. And then there appeared Winckler's *Altorientalische Forschungen* (Vol. I), with a first study entitled "Das Syrische Land Jaudi und der angebliche Azarja von Juda." As was to be expected, when Winckler was through with his *Vermutungen* (he called them *Forschungen*), Azariah of Judah had disappeared and his place was taken by Azariah of Yaudi, supposedly a small state in Northern Syria, known from references in the Aramaic documents from that region. Although an occasional doubt was voiced, the conclusion was gradually accepted by the majority of scholars dealing with the history of the lands concerned. For example, Rogers, in explaining his change of opinion, said:

The name Azariah corresponds exactly with the name of Azariah, King of Judah (II Kings 15:1, 2) and the name "Ja'udi," "Yaudi," corresponds well with Judah. It was therefore quite natural, that, as they were contemporaneous, the King Azariah of these inscriptions should be accepted as the Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah; so Schrader argued, and so scholars agreed, as I also did myself in former editions of this work (II 119 ff.). It is now clear that this was incorrect. The land here referred to is a district of Sam'al (Zenjirli) of which Panammu was king, whose inscription, found at Zenjirli, repeatedly invokes the gods of Ja'udi. The credit of perceiving these facts belongs in the first instance to Winckler.¹

Eduard Meyer, who punctured so many of Winckler's bubbles, also succumbed,² and Olmstead, in his new *History of Assyria*, suggests that this Azariah of Ya'di was the unnamed murderer of Bar-sur, grandfather of Bar-rekub.³

¹ *History of Babylonia and Assyria*, II, 280 n.

² *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, pp. 247 f.

³ P. 186.

Now I have never felt easy about a Syrian Azariah, comtemporeous with Azariah of Judah. Two Azariahs, two Judahs. If correct, truly a most remarkable coincidence. Recently I was compelled to face this matter squarely, when going over the Tiglath-pileser texts in the British Museum preparatory to their appearance in my forthcoming *Ancient Records of Assyria*, and I reached the conclusion that there is absolutely nothing to Winckler's theory. This conclusion is based: (1) upon a study of the Assyrian text of Tiglath-pileser's *Annals*, (2) the name *Iaudi* and the gentilic *Iaudai*, and (3) the history of the period as it may be reconstructed from the Old Testament, Aramaic, and Assyrian records.

1. *The "Annals" of Tiglath-pileser III.*—The damaged tablet, referred to above, is our only source for the section of Tiglath-pileser's *Annals* beginning with line 103 (following Rost's numbering). It reads:

- 103) *ina me-ti-iḫ girri-ia ma-an-da-at-tu ša šarrâni^{pl}*
 104) [*^mA-zu-ri*]-*ia-a-u ^lIa-u-da-ai kîma*
 105) [*^mA-zu¹-ri-ia-u ^lIa-u-di*
 106) [*ana*] *la ni-bi ana šamê(e) ša-ḫu-u šur-[ba-ta ina iršitim]*
 107) [*ina(?)¹ ênâ^{du} ki-i ša ul-tu šamê(e)*]
 108) [*i-na¹ mit-ḫu-uš zu-ki šépâ^{du} pil-[ši]*]
 109) [*ummanâti^{col} Aššur gab-ša-te iš-mu-ma ip-laḫ lib-[ba-šu-nu]*

 110) *ab-bul ak-kur [ina girri ašrup]*
 111) [*a-na ^mA-zu-ri-ia¹-a-u e-ki-mu ú-dan-ni-nu-šu-^fma¹*]
 112) *'sal(rak?)¹ kîma ^wgup-ni*
 113) *šum-ru-ša-at*
 114) *id-lit-ma ša-ka-at*
 115) *ti šit-ku-nu-ma mu-ša-^fšu¹*
 116) [*u*]-*ša-bil-ma ka-*
 117) *tuklâte^{pl}-šu ú-ra-kis a-na*
 118) *ú-ša-az-bil-šu-nu-ti-^fma¹*
 119) *' ri¹-šu rabâti^{pl} kîma kar-[pat]*
 120) *rak-be*
- 103) in the course of my campaign, the tribute of the kings
 104) ^fAzuriau¹, the Judean, like
 105) ^fAzuriau,¹ the land of Judah
 106) without number, reaching aloft to heaven, ^fexceedingly great on earth].

¹ The traces point to a reading *zu*, or possibly, *iz*. In l. 131 the name is written *Az-ri-ia-a-u*.

- 107) with eyes, as from heaven
 108) by attack(s) of charging infantry, by mines
 109) the onset of Assur's dense masses of troops they heard and
 their heart was afraid
 110) I destroyed, I devastated, [with fire I burned]
 111) who had gone over¹ to Azuriau and had supported [lit.,
 strengthened] him
 112) like stumps
 113) was exceedingly difficult
 114) was barred and was high
 115) were placed, and his egress
 116) I had [them] bring(?)
 117) . . . [with earthworks] I surrounded his garrisoned towns (and
 against
 118) I caused them to carry and
 119) his mighty [I smashed] like pots
 120) messengers

At this point the text of our fragment comes to an end. The *Annals* are continued, with probably only a few lines missing, by another fragment, also badly broken. There is mention of tribute imposed upon the conquered cities, possibly also of tribute from Azariah,² whose name is mentioned. Then are listed the "19 districts of Hamath, together with the cities of their environs, on the shore of the sea of the setting sun, who had gone over to Azariah,³ in revolt and contempt [of Assyria]." These were made a province of the empire under an Assyrian governor. This takes us through line 133 of the *Annals*. The following lines, to 150, give the details of Tiglath-pileser's organization of the new province, particularly as to the distribution of the colonists brought in to take the place of the deported population. Finally, there come the names of those whose tribute the Assyrian took back with him to his capital—Kutashpi, of Kummuhi; Rezin, of Damascus; Menahem, of Samaria; Hiram, of Tyre; Sibitti-bi'li, of Byblos; Urikki, of Cilicia (Kue); Pisisis, of Carchemish; Eni-ilu, of Hamath; Panammu, of Sam'al; Tarhulara, of Gamgum; Sulumal, of Milid; and Dadi-ilu, of [Kaska].

¹ See below, n. 3.

² Which, however, I regard as unlikely.

³ Or, "Which had been seized for Azariah." There are two verbs: *akāmu(ekēmu)*, the one known best in the expression *akām girria*, "the advance of my march"; the other, which is more common, means "to seize."

The Assyrian scribes, like the Hebrew and Arab writers, made the freest use of what their predecessors had put into writing. Professor Olmstead has called particular attention to the boldness with which Assurbanipal's scribes manufactured campaigns for the annals of their lord by "lifting" and embellishing the words of Esarhaddon's narratives. Indeed, it looks as if most of Assurbanipal's campaigning had been done with scissors and paste-pot. But he was by no means the first Oriental monarch who was surrounded by obsequious scribes who knew how to write history which would please their vainglorious lord. This sort of thing can be traced right back to the beginnings of written history. And no scribe thought it improper to lighten his labors or to make them acceptable by using the successful "writeups" of former scribes. I have called attention elsewhere to the fact that lists of conquered countries and cities are apt to appear almost unchanged in the records of successive rulers.¹

Let us look at Tiglath-pileser's narrative a little more closely, beginning with line 108, where we have a description of operations "by attacks of charging infantry, by mines . . ." (. . . *ina mithuṣ zuki šêpâ^{du} pilši* . . .). These phrases occur in one other and better-known passage of Assyrian history, namely, the third campaign of Sennacherib. Here we read: "By mounting ramps [or bridges] and bringing up siege engines, by attacks of charging infantry, by mines, tunnels and breaches, I besieged, I took [those cities]." In Assyrian this reads: *ina šukbus aramme u kitrub šupî mithuṣ zuk šêpâ^{du} pilši niksi u kalbannâte alme akšud*. Sennacherib is telling of his attacks upon the strongholds of Judah, the "46 strong walled cities of Hezekiah the Judean and the small cities of their environs."

Are we to regard this as the third coincidence? Two Judahs, two Azariahs, and Sennacherib describing his attack upon the Palestinian Judah in the same words Tiglath-pileser used to describe an attack upon the Syrian Judah? Surely, this is too much to believe! But this is not all. Note that Tiglath-pileser is attacking defenses "without number, rising to heaven" (l. 106), and that from these defenses the defenders looked down "with eyes as from heaven" (l. 107). This description fits Judah of Palestine perfectly. It does not fit the Zenzirli-

¹ *AJSL*, XL, 288.

Sam'al region.¹ Sennacherib's scribes, when looking around for fitting words to clothe the account of their lord's campaign against the Judean cities, found and used the record of Tiglath-pileser's attack upon the same region some thirty years before. We learn from the Chronicler that

Uzziah [Azariah] built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them. And he built towers in the wilderness, and hewed out many cisterns, for he had much cattle.²

2. *The name "Iaudi" and the gentilic "Iaudai."*—When we turn to the name of the supposed Syrian Judah, as written in the cuneiform and the Aramaic, Winckler's position becomes still more precarious.

In the Aramaic inscriptions from Zenjirli, there are a number of references to a land "Ya'di." Of course, the actual pronunciation of the name cannot be determined from the Aramaic writing "𐤎𐤁". Winckler's theory made it *Jaudi*, this pronunciation being based on the supposed identity of "𐤎𐤁" and *Iaudi* of the cuneiform. Later Winckler, Rogers, and others wrote it *Ja'udi* or *Ya'udi*, probably in view of the 𐤎 in the Aramaic name. Is this identification justified? I believe that it is not.

Iaudi, written syllabically, *Ia-u-di*, is the cuneiform rendering of the Hebrew יהודה, Judah, while *Iaudai* (*Ia-u-da-ai*) is the regular Assyrian gentilic corresponding to the Hebrew יהודים. Tiglath-pileser received the tribute of (Jeho)ahaz of Judah.³ Sargon warred against Philistia, Judah, Edom, etc. The name is written *Ia-u-di*. And in Sennacherib's inscriptions both the noun and the gentilic occur a number of times. There is no doubt, therefore, as to the form which "Judah" and "Judean" took in the cuneiform. "Certainly," say the defenders of Winckler's hypothesis, "*Iaudi* is the cuneiform rendering of the name Judah, whether the Judah is in Palestine or Syria." But they have overlooked a very important fact, namely, the Aramaic writing of the name of the supposed Syrian Judah. Is it not passing strange that the Aramean scribes of Tiglath-pileser's day could not spell the name of their own country correctly? "𐤎𐤁" is not the Aramaic rendering of Hebrew יהודה, and there is nothing in the form "𐤎𐤁"

¹ I shall rest my case on the pictures published in Olmstead's *History of Assyria*. Figs. 72, 85–87.

² II Cron. 26:9 f.

³ *Ia-u-ḫa-zi* *Ia-u-da-ai*, Nimrud Inscription, IIR, 67, 61.

which would warrant our believing that it renders a name at all similar to יהוֹדָה, The substitution of נ for ה would not be inconceivable, though extremely unlikely, but if the נ had a long ū after it, this should appear in the writing. Certainly the Aramean scribes of the fifth century wrote this long ū regularly, and also wrote יהוֹדָה with a ה (יהוד, יהודי, יהודיא).¹ Note that the Zenjirli inscriptions regularly write Assyria, *Aššur*, אשור, and Panammu, פנמו.

But even if the Aramean scribes of Sam'al were rendering a corrupt pronunciation of the name Judah, יהוֹדָה, or to put it another way, assuming that the Syrian pronunciation of the name was *Ya'udi* (and the final ū should be long)² instead of *Yehudah*, the Winckler hypothesis would still have rough sailing, for the Western נ, weak ע, and weak ה are almost invariably rendered in the cuneiform by the so-called breathing-sign ('). On the other hand, the ה of Western words is not so rendered. Taking examples from the Assyrian period, we find Moab (מוֹאָב) *Ma'ba*; Hazael (חַזְזַל), *Haza'ilu*; Pharaoh (פַּרְעֹה), *Pir'u*; Sabean (סַבְּאִי), *Saba'ai*; Israelite (יִשְׂרָאֵלִי) *Sir'ilai*; Baal (בַּעַל), *Ba'li* (-*rasi*); but Jehu (יְהוּ), *Ia-u-a*; Jeho (יְהוֹ) of proper compound names, by *ia-u*, as in *Ha-za-ki-a-u*, *Ia-u-bi-di*, *Ia-u-ḥa-zi*. In Hosea we have both ה and ע, which are rendered the usual way, *A-u-si-'a*. And finally, Panammu of Sam'al (שַׁנְמוֹ), of these same Zenjirli inscriptions, is mentioned by Tiglath-pileser, *Annals*, line 152, where the name and the gentilic adjective appear as *mPa-na-am-mu-u 'Sa-am-'la-ai*. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that, if the Assyrian scribe had had before him the Aramaic form יְהוּדִי, he would have rendered it *Ia-'di-(i)*, not *Ia-u-di*. In a word, יְהוּדִי is not a good Aramaic writing of יהוֹדָה and *Ia-u-di* is not a probable rendering of יְהוּדִי. But יהוֹדָה is regularly rendered in the cuneiform by *Ia-u-di*.³

¹ Cf. Index to Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*

² The final ו, clearly indicating a long vowel or diphthong, is also ignored by the defenders of a Syrian Judah. I do not, however, press this point, since the Assyrian rendering of final vowels is notoriously irregular.

³ The third, Arabian, Judah, which Olmstead (*History of Assyria*, p. 378) has discovered in the inscription of Esarhaddon, A, Col. III, 40, is a city, *Ia-di'*, whose Western name would be יְהוּדַע, יְהוּדַע, or יְהוּדַע.

Much has been made by scholars of the name of Yaubidi (variant, Ilubidi) mentioned by Sargon. It has been assumed that this name is clear evidence of Yahweh (Yahu) worship in Northern Syria. But here again the context has been overlooked, for Sargon makes it clear that this man, a "camp-follower" and a "Hittite," was a usurper on the throne in Hamath. "Hittite" probably has the significance of "Syrian" here, as so often in the Assyrian historical inscriptions. Is it not altogether possible that this man, like Uriah the Hittite, belonged to Judah?

3. *The reign of Azariah of Judah.*—Before examining in detail the events of the reign of Azariah of Judah as recorded in the writings of the Old Testament, it may be well to summarize and examine the contents of the contemporaneous Aramaic and Assyrian documents which have been drawn into the discussion.

The Aramaic documents are three in number.¹ The first is an inscription upon a colossal statue of Hadad "found in 1890 at Gerjin, half an hour NE. of Zenjirli." The statue was set up by Panammu, son of QRL, king of Ya'dî ("𐤒𐤍"), in gratitude for favors bestowed by Hadad and the other gods, and in the hope of eternal felicity. The second is an inscription on the statue which Bar-rekub set up as a memorial for his father, Panammu, son of Bar-sur. This statue was found at Zenjirli. From the inscription we learn of a conspiracy in which Bar-sur and seventy of his kinsmen were slain. Panammu, thereupon, appealed to the king of Assyria, "and he made him king over his father's house." Panammu ran "at the wheel of his lord Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria," in his campaigns, and died "in the camp" at Damascus. From here his body was returned by the Assyrian king after he had been bewailed by his kinsfolk as well as by the whole camp of his lord, Tiglath-pileser. The last, a building inscription, also found at Zenjirli, is from the palace built by Bar-rekub, "son of Panammu, king of Sam'al, servant of Tiglath-pileser, lord of the four parts of the earth." He also ran at the wheel of his lord, the king of Assyria.²

The first problem presented by these three inscriptions is that of the relationship of the two Panammus. From the fact that Panammu, son of QRL, is mentioned in the second inscription, it is clear that he was a predecessor of Panammu, son of Bar-sur. Possibly he was the father of Bar-sur, possibly he belonged to a collateral line. We have no means of deciding.

What is the connection between Ya'dî and Sam'al? Panammu, son of QRL, was king of Ya'dî. It is usually assumed that we should restore "king of Ya'dî" after the name of Panammu, son of Bar-sur, in the second of our inscriptions. But this is not demanded by anything in the inscription. As we have seen, Bar-rekub, in the second of

¹ The Kalamu Inscription (see Torrey, *JAOS*, XXXV, 364 f.), from Zenjirli, in which Ya'dî is also mentioned, is older than these.

² See Cooke, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, Nos. 61 f.

his inscriptions (our third) calls himself "son of Panammu, king of Sam'al." And later in the inscription he speaks of his fathers, "the kings of Sam'al." It has been suggested that we are dealing with neighboring countries, but it seems to me that the simplest solution of the problem is the assumption that Ya'di is the name of the country, and Sam'al the name of the city. And we are not without evidence, for the second inscription in one, and possibly two, places speaks of the **ארק יאדי**, the "land of Ya'di." Sam'al, on the other hand, is written with the determinative for city in Tiglath-pileser's inscriptions. The change from "king of Ya'di [the land]" to "king of Sam'al [the city]" may have been the result of Assyrian influence, or dictated by Assyrian policy. Tiglath-pileser received tribute from "Panammu of Sam'al," not from Panammu of Ya'di.¹

Another point should be noted before we leave these texts, namely, the datable events mentioned in them. I refer to the death of Panammu in the camp at Damascus. Tiglath-pileser was before Damascus in 733 B.C. In 732 the city fell. Panammu of Sam'al paid tribute to Assyria as early as 739, according to Tiglath-pileser. According to Bar-rekub, his son, Panammu, "ran at the wheel" of his lord, Tiglath-pileser.

With the aid of the annotated "Eponym List" we are able to arrange Tiglath-pileser's activities in chronological order.

745, Tiglath-pileser on the throne. Against "Mesopotamia," *birit nâri*.

744, against Namri.

743-741, against Arpad.²

740, against Arpad.

739, against Ulluba.

738, against Gullani [probably Calno, of Isa. 10:9, Calneh, of Amos 6:2].

737-735, against Media and Armenia.

¹ It so happens that in the earliest Assyrian reference to Sam'al the name is written with the land, not the city, determinative. But this is certainly one of the hundreds of cases where the Assyrian scribe has been careless. In the Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser III, Col. I, 42, we hear of the Assyrian king's advance against the city of Lutibu, a stronghold of Haianu, the Sam'alean (written *ma Sa-am-'la-ai*, that is, with the determinative for "land"). In Col. II, 24, Shalmaneser tells of receiving tribute from Haianu, "son" of Gabbari. From the Kalamu Inscription mentioned above (p. 224, n. 1), we know that Gabbar ruled over Ya'di; also that he was not the father, but merely the ancestor of Haianu (Hayyâ, in the Aramaic). Haianu, "son" of Gabbari, is parallel to Jehu, "son" of Omri, in the Obelisk of Shalmaneser. Here again, I believe, we have evidence that Ya'di and Sam'al cannot be regarded as neighboring states, but are variant names of the same state.

² Cf. II Kings 19:13, etc.

- 734, against Pilista [Philistia].
 733, against Damascus.
 732, against Damascus.
 731, against Sapia.
 730, in the country.
 729-728, the king took the hand of Bêl.
 727, Shalmaneser on the throne.

Bearing in mind that the identification of the Ya'dî (יָדִי) of the Zenjirli inscriptions with the *Iaudi* of the cuneiform records is to be rejected on philological grounds, it remains to be seen whether the historical events recorded in these Aramaic and Assyrian documents, when studied in connection with the Old Testament writings, really call for a North Syrian Judah, having a king, Azariah, contemporaneous with Azariah of the Palestinian Judah. We have already shown that the internal evidence of Tiglath-pileser's *Annals* is against this hypothesis. Since Azariah (*Azriau*) of Judah (*Iaudai*) is mentioned only in the Hebrew and Assyrian records, and not in the Aramaic, our problem resolves itself into the task of discovering whether the events recounted in Tiglath-pileser's *Annals*, where *Azriau* the "*Iaudian*" plays the part of leader in an anti-Assyrian coalition, can be fitted into the events of the reign of Azariah of Judah, recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles, without resorting to Winckler's hypothesis.

The events of the reign of Azariah of Judah, like all historical events, had their roots in the past. And that past may be described briefly, but I believe accurately, as an age-long rivalry between petty neighboring states which had little in common but jealousy of one another. So we have Israel forced to unite with Judah, under strong leadership, against a common foe—the Philistines, but soon raising the cry "to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David." Or Ahab of Israel, fighting side by side with Hadad-ezer of Damascus, and the kings of other Syrian states, against Shalmaneser, at Karkar, 854 B.C. But soon thereafter Jehoshaphat of Judah is aiding Ahab against Damascus at Ramoth-gilead. The strange bed-fellows are continually changing. In the period we are discussing the local rivalry was often three cornered—between Israel, Judah, and Syria (Damascus)—with the two weaker states fighting the strongest. Between the bouts, the allies kept in trim by fighting one another. And so we find Amaziah of Judah sending messengers to Jehoash,

grandson of Jehu, of Israel, saying: "Come, let us look one another in the face."¹ The challenger "was put to the worse," the wall of Jerusalem was broken down "from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits," and much treasure and hostages went to Samaria.² Soon after these events, Jeroboam (II) came to the throne in Samaria—in the fifteenth year of Amaziah of Judah, thus reigning during the latter half of Amaziah's reign of twenty-nine years.

The reign of Jeroboam (II) receives short notice in the Old Testament writings. But two episodes are recorded from a reign of "forty and one years." "He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath³ unto the sea of the Arabah,"⁴ and, among "the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did," there is mention, in the common rendering, of "how he recovered Damascus and Hamath, *which had belonged to Judah, for Israel.*"⁵ This latter passage has caused much trouble to translators and commentators. According to Benzinger in the "Commentary on Kings" in the *Kurzer Handkommentar* (p. 166), the phrase **וְאֲשֶׁר הָשִׁיב אֶת־דָּמָשְׁקִים וְאֶת־חַמָּת לְיְהוּדָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל** is "sinnlos and der Text völlig verderbt, auch LXX giebt kein Anleitung zur Verbesserung." The translation "wie er den [einstigen] jüdischen Anteil an H. und D. an Israel zurückbrachte (Kamphausen bei Kautzsch)" is rejected because it conflicts with the statement in verse 25: "wo ausdrücklich von Zurückgewinnung des israelitischen Gebiets die Rede ist. Auch ist ein jüdischer Besitz im Gebiet von Hamath sehr fraglich" (Winckler, *Altorient. Forschungen*, I, 1 ff.). We have come back to Winckler. We cannot have Judah mixed up in the affairs of Hamath and Damascus, and when we find Tiglath-pileser telling of the Syrian states going over to, and evidently fighting under the leadership of, Azariah of Judah, we must assume that he is talking about a Syrian Judah and another Azariah. And so we have gone round the circle.

I wonder whether this difficult passage in Kings might not be translated quite literally as follows: "And how he let Hamath and Damascus return to Judah *against* [to the disadvantage of] Israel." I admit there is some difficulty as to my translation of the **בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל**. The preposition **בְּ** has this meaning in other combinations. At any

¹ II Kings 14:8.

² II Kings 14:12 f.

³ No matter what the meaning of I Kings 8:65 may be, it seems to me that the "entrance of Hamath" must have been close to Hamath.

⁴ II Kings 14:25.

⁵ II Kings 14:28.

rate, it does no more violence to Hebrew grammar than do the other translations proposed, and, I believe, it gets us somewhere. For, I take it, the passage means that Jeroboam, who had once been successful in extending his sway over the surrounding states, lost whatever hold he had upon Syria, and lost it to the advantage of Judah. The whole difficulty has been caused by the assumption that the passage is in part a repetition of verse 25, where we are told of the restoration of the "border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the sea of the Arabah." But forty-one years is a long reign, and many an advantage gained in the flush of youth has been lost in later years. But have we any evidence that the proposed translation is probable? I believe that we have it in the *Annals* of Tiglath-pileser—if we forget all about Winckler's hypothesis. And the Old Testament also bears us out.

In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem.¹

A long reign for such troublous times. Azariah came to the throne some thirteen years before the death of Jeroboam. On the death of Jeroboam, Zechariah, son of Jeroboam, reigned six months. Shallum, who conspired against Zechariah, reigned one month, when Menahem, son of Gadi, came into power. It looks as if things had not been going well in the last years of Jeroboam. In the days of Menahem, whose reign is given as lasting ten years, "there came against the land Pul the king of Assyria; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand."² Menahem is mentioned by Tiglath-pileser among those paying tribute in 738 B.C. "In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria."³ The Assyrian account of these events is not preserved in our fragmentary *Annals* of Tiglath-pileser, but is found in an inscription published in IIIR, 10, Number 2. This inscription was evidently a record of the events of the year 734, "against Pilista [Philistia]." It was written after Pekah (*Pakaha*) had been succeeded by Hoshea (*Ausi'a*), as we know from

¹ II Kings 15:1 f.

² II Kings 15:17 f.

³ II Kings 15:29.

lines 17 f. In spite of II Kings 17:1, the date of Hoshea's revolt must be placed in 734 or 733 B.C.

In 732, after Tiglath-pileser had taken Damascus, Ahaz of Judah, who had sent tribute previous to the fall of that city, presented himself before his lord in Damascus.¹ From the Assyrian side we hear of this in the Nimrud Tablet of Tiglath-pileser (IIR, 67), which summarizes the Assyrian king's achievements from the beginning of his reign to the seventeenth year of the same (l. 5 of the Obverse). The name Ahaz appears in its fuller form *Iauḥazi*, that is, Jehoahaz.² The passage where the Western tribute-paying vassals are enumerated is badly damaged, which probably accounts for our missing the name of Hoshea, or whoever was king of Israel at the time.

I shall make no attempt here to harmonize the chronology of the Old Testament with that of the Assyrian records, but shall content myself by pointing out that most of the difficulties disappear if we assume that practically all of Jotham's reign of sixteen years fell within the lifetime of Azariah, his father. "And Jehovah smote the king Azariah, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a separate house. And Jotham the king's son was over the household, judging the people of the land."³ Azariah came to the throne when he was sixteen years of age and reigned fifty-two years. Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned sixteen years. A little arithmetic will show that these figures fit in well with the suggestion that Jotham's reign was a coregency. And if, finally, we assume that Menahem's payment of tribute to Tiglath-pileser in 738 B.C. falls well toward the end of his reign, when he needed the hand of the Assyrian "to confirm the kingdom in his hand," and also in the closing years of Azariah's reign, our chronological difficulties become almost negligible.

We are now in a position to resume our discussion of Azariah's reign. I have already called attention to the Chronicler's account of the fortification of Jerusalem by Azariah (Uzziah). Let us take up his story once more.

Moreover Uzziah had an army of fighting men, that went out to war by bands. . . . The whole number of the heads of fathers' houses, even the

¹ II Kings 16:7 f.

² Cf. Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, II Kings 13:1.

³ II Kings 15:5.

mighty men of valor, was two thousand and six hundred. And under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. And Uzziah prepared for them, even for all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and coats of mail, and bows, and stones for slinging. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by skilful men, to be on the towers and upon the battlements, wherewith to shoot arrows and great stones.¹

Making due allowance for the patriotic exaggeration of the Chronicler with regard to the numbers of Azariah's fighting men, we have here the record of the one thing that could have brought Azariah recognition as leader against Assyria, namely, a well-organized standing army, with a strongly fortified base. The objection will be raised that the Chronicler does not mention any overlordship over Syria, that according to him, Azariah (Uzziah)'s campaigns were against the Philistines—Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod; against the Arabians and Ammonites.² To which I should reply that the accounts in Kings and Chronicles are quite obviously and admittedly selective. We have no Old Testament information, for example, of the presence of Ahab at the battle of Karkar in 854 B.C. And yet it would seem, in view of the fact that Shalmaneser made little progress against the Syrian allies, as if there had been room for a little boasting on the part of Ahab's historian. It is possible, also, that the Chronicler had the story and that it has dropped out of our text.

But have we any evidence that the Chronicler's statements with reference to Uzziah's army and its achievements are trustworthy? Critical scholars are accustomed to doubt many of his statements. I believe that we have very good evidence, but that it is evidence of the indirect kind. Much of our historical evidence is indirect. Isaiah's visions fall "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." Let us hear what he has to say.

Moreover, Jehovah said, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and Jehovah will lay bare their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, and the cauls, and the crescents; the pendants, and the brace-

¹ II Chron. 26:11 f.

² II Chron. 26:6 f.

lets, and the mufflers; the headtires, and the ankle chains, and the sashes, and the perfume boxes, and the amulets; the rings and the nose jewels, the festival robes, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the satchels, the hand-mirrors, and the fine linen, and the turbans, and the veils.¹

Could the daughters of Zion have disported themselves in the manner described in the days of Ahaz and Hezekiah, when the wealth of Judah was going to Assyria as tribute? Does not this picture fit better into a long and prosperous reign such as we are attributing to Azariah? The same prosperity is reflected in Isa. 2:7: "And their land is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots."²

"Nothing succeeds like success." The very long reign of Azariah and the fairly long reign of Ahaz, in Judah, stand in striking contrast to the succession of rebellions and usurpations in Israel. The explanation, in part at least, is to be found in Judah's ability to hold the Assyrian conqueror in check. Israel, on the other hand, was overrun and plundered, and few dynasties have ever survived such disasters.

What happened between Tiglath-pileser and Azariah? Can we make any plausible conjectures? I believe that the Tiglath-pileser *Annals*, fragmentary as they are, allow us to do so. The course of events may have run somewhat as follows:

Tiglath-pileser, as soon as Arpad, the first obstacle to his westward march had been overcome—or, possibly even before that city had fallen (740 B.C.), made a swift advance through Syria and Palestine and attacked the leader of the Western allies in his fortified base, Jerusalem. The missing portions of the account may have told of shutting up Azariah in Jerusalem, "like a caged bird" (see Sennacherib). In line 119 we read that "his [Azariah's] great . . . [were smashed] like pots."³ Perhaps, like Sennacherib a generation later, Tiglath-pileser was compelled to content himself with destroying the Judean villages (the strong-walled cities!). Perhaps, like Hezekiah, Azariah in the end bought off the Assyrian. This, however, I think

¹ Isa. 3:16 f.

² Possibly the last year of Uzziah's reign saw the beginning of Isaiah's prophecy. Cf. chap. 6.

³ Did the text contain a variant of the well-known phrase, *kīma ḥaṣḥatti udaḥḥiḥ?*

unlikely. One thing is clear, that so far as Northern Syria was concerned, Azariah was eliminated. The rush on the part of the allies to come to terms with the invader proves this. Damascus and the other Syrian states had merely been foul-weather friends of Azariah, as the events of the reign of Ahaz show.

As for Azariah of Ya'udi in Northern Syria: *requiescat in pace*.