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A Typical Instance of Exaggeration in the Modern Literary Criticism of the Pentateuch.

If the reasons advanced for the composite authorship of the Pentateuch are summarized, it will be evident that they may be reduced, as Driver (*Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 8) admits, to these two "phenomena" allegedly betraying distinct documents or sources: "1) The same event is doubly recorded; 2) the language, and frequently the representation as well, varies in different sections."

The linguistic argument has been characterized by investigations such as those of the late Robert Dick Wilson, and its weaknesses have been admitted by recognized liberal leaders, for example, by Kuenen (*Hexateuch*, p. 268): "The extant Israelitish literature is too limited in extent to enable us to determine the age of any work with certainty from mere considerations of language and style." But the other argument, that of alleged doublets, may be regarded as the strongest contention offered in support of the various theories for plural authorship. Yet the inconsistency and the arbitrary procedure which is sometimes involved in the assumption of such doublets are so striking that an analysis of one of these typical "modifications of an original tradition" will be illustrative of the unscholarly and irreverent methods employed.

A case in point is furnished by two episodes in the life of Hagar. The one record is in Gen. 16, where Sarah punishes her Egyptian slave woman because of her arrogance and where Hagar becomes a fugitive in the Wilderness of Shur, only to be found by the Angel of the Lord, who directs her to return to Sarah. In this chapter the Angel announces the name of her son, soon to be born, and because of the theophany Hagar appropriately names the well of water. The alleged duplicate of this narrative is found in Gen. 21, 12-21. Here Abraham, at God's direction, drives Hagar and her grown son away because of Ishmael's misconduct. The Angel of God addresses them in the wilderness of Beersheba when their water supply is exhausted; a voice from heaven consoles Hagar, who with Ishmael makes her abode in the Wilderness of Paran.

Of these two episodes Skinner (*International Critical Commentary*, Genesis, p. 324) says baldly: "These two narratives are variations of a common legendary theme." Similarly Driver (p. 15) ascribes the narrative in 16 to J and that in 21 to E. Again Procksch (*Die Genesis*, in Sellin's *Kommentar zum Alten Testament*, pp. 106. 298) operates on the same basis in his analytical presentation of the sources. And this opinion is quite the accepted estimate of other critical writers.

The evidence for the claim that we have here the same narrative in two varied forms is offered by Skinner, who insists that this "is

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obvious from the identity of the leading motives they embody"; and as these motives he lists the following:—

1) "The significance of the name 'Ishmael.'" But we search in vain even for a hidden reference to the name of Ishmael in 21. Skinner finds this in 21, 17, where the Angel tells Hagar: "Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad." But it is an unwarranted assumption to find in this **יִשְׁמָעֵל** any indication of "E's account of the origin of the name 'Ishmael'"; for when a symbolical name is bestowed in the Old Testament, the context pauses to apprise us of this fact. And since chap. 21 tacitly assumes the name of Ishmael (who is now a grown lad), says nothing of the bestowal of any name, offers no clue to the name Ishmael (for the **יִשְׁמָעֵל** could more appropriately here give rise to the name **שָׁמַע־עַל** "Shama'el"; and it would be difficult to reproduce in Hebrew the sense of the verse without taking recourse to the verb **שָׁמַעַ**), it becomes nothing less than a palpable misrepresentation of the facts involved to assert that chaps. 16 and 21 both have as their leading motive the explanation of the term *Ishmael* when chap. 21 has no mention of this name nor any semblance of explanation.

2) The second leading motive in both narratives is said to be "the mode of life characteristic of Ishmael's descendants." But neither in chap. 16 nor in chap. 21 is there any detailed statement in regard to Ishmael's posterity. Surely the two passages to which Skinner appeals, 16, 12 and 21, 20, contain no such reference to Ishmael's progeny. Even the awkward recourse that might be had to the personification theory, according to which Ishmael would not be pictured *per se*, but as an eponym of the Ishmaelite clans, could not, in spite of its arbitrary artificiality, save the situation. For even then chap. 16 would tell us only that the Ishmaelites were wild, self-existent, independent Bedouins, while chap. 21 would simply say that they were bowmen.

What the two chapters actually state is this: Ishmael, by prophecy, is to be "a wild man; his hand will be against every man and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren," 16, 12; by historical fact, that the lad Ishmael, growing up, became an archer, 21, 20.

3) The third leading motive which is found in both stories is "their" (Ishmael's descendants) "relation to Israel." But here even Skinner offers no illustrative passage. We have just pointed out that neither chapter says anything (beyond the broad statement in 16, 10 that Hagar's posterity will be great and innumerable) about Ishmael's descendants. It requires but cursory reading of the chapters to complete the demonstration that neither story even alludes to a relation of the Ishmaelites to the Israelites. Isaac has not yet appeared on the scene of chap. 16 and in chap. 21 the mere genealogical in-

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ference to the effect that Abraham is the father of both Ishmael and Isaac; but that the bondwoman Hagar is the mother of the first and Sarah the mother of the second is sufficient to indicate the racial affinities of the two subsequent peoples.

4) Finally, the fourth leading motive which allegedly demonstrates that both chapters have been taken from the same, common, legendary theme is "the sacredness of a certain well, consecrated by a theophany." Chap. 16, 7 records a theophany in the appearance of the Angel of the Lord, and it makes reference to the very prominent well called Be-er-la-hai-roi. But chap. 21 not only has no theophany (the Angel of God speaks from heaven, v. 17), but also no notable emphasis upon the well of water, which serves only incidentally to fill the water-skin.

In spite of the inconsistency of the facts involved with these claims for "the identity of the leading motives," Skinner summarizes: "Each tale is an *exhaustive*" (our italics) "expression of these motives." It would doubtless be a task of supreme difficulty to find in modern scientific literature a misrepresentation parallel in principle and detail to the fictitious claim that in chaps. 16 and 21 there is "an exhaustive expression" of these common motives, — these non-existent motives created to bolster up a theory of whose faulty premises they are the most convincing proofs.

But not only is there no semblance of any cogent reason for the assumption of duplicate narratives; there is also a very definite array of considerations which demonstrate that the two chapters in question present two complete, separate events. Instead of emphasizing alleged similarities, even the casual reader will be conscious of the fundamental differences in the presentation of the two narratives. In chap. 16 Ishmael is not yet born, while in chap. 21 he is a grown lad. In the former chapter, Hagar is in the wilderness on the way to Shur, while in the latter she is in the Wilderness of Beersheba. In the earlier record Hagar's arrogance is featured, but in the latter the mockery of Ishmael is primarily responsible for the expulsion. Combine with this the long list of differences in detail: In 16 Sarah acts, in 21 Abraham acts, directed by God; in 16 Hagar is a fugitive, in 21 she is driven away; in 16 she apparently leaves empty-handed, in 21 Abraham gives her provisions; in 16 the conversation with the Angel is largely corrective, in 21 it is comforting; in both, the water incident, the attitude of Hagar, and the sequel are fundamentally different. All this must lead any unbiased investigator to the conclusion that the two records are quite distinct, but each quite appropriate in its surroundings.

But disregarding these considerations and attempting to produce evidence for two distinct editions of one basic story, critics have presented several incongruities allegedly found in the twenty-

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first chapter, which, it is claimed, definitely show that the story is out of place and out of harmony with the facts and clearly betrays signs of composite origin. Thus the incorrect rendition of the LXX in 16, 9 is accepted: *παίζοντα μετὰ Ισαάκ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς*. But the translation "Sarah saw the son of Hagar . . . playing with Isaac, her own son" is contrary to the Massoretic text; it is based on a tendential amplification of the LXX; it is directly contradicted by Gal. 4, 29; and it is repudiated by the context.

Similarly it is claimed that Ishmael was fourteen years old when Isaac was born and that in chap. 21 he is pictured as a child in arms. This is also based upon the mistranslation of the LXX in 21, 14, which offers *καὶ ἐπέθηκεν ἐπὶ τὸν ὄνον*, "and she put the child upon her shoulder." But even critical writers have recognized that the Hebrew phrase *עַל שֵׁכֶם* is parenthetic, referring only to the bread and the water-skin. Besides, the context removes the possibility of a child on the shoulder, because in v. 18 Hagar is directed to lift up the boy and take his hand.

Finally, objection is raised to the two statements in vv. 16. 17. In v. 16 Hagar, unable to behold the death of her son, "lift up *her* voice and wept." In v. 17 we read: "And God heard the voice of *the lad*." These two statements, it is asserted with all seriousness, betray evidence of diversity of authors. But for the repudiation of such supercriticism no higher appeal than that to a direct visualization of the scene is required; for what would be more natural and inevitable than that the suffering lad — as well as his mother — wept and moaned?

With these and other minor claims for diversified authorship swept aside, the fact remains that we are confronted in both cases with episodes that must have been very frequent in Abraham's world. To the student of human nature who can feel the pulse of the ancient Orient in the situation indicated in these chapters it is a matter of antecedent probability that the conflicts narrated would occur in such polygamous relations. So common was the situation indicated in chap. 16, that of the secondary wife's, or concubine's, arrogating rights to herself, that the contemporaneous Code of Hammurabi made special provision for this eventuality in the enactment of a detailed law, No. 146, which legislates for the degradation of the secondary wife. And the circumstances which led to the expulsion of Hagar in chap. 21 (difficulties involved in the relation of children of a free mother to those of a slave mother) are so obvious in the complex affairs of a household like that of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar that again the Code of Hammurabi in detailed legislation (170 and 171) offers the legal basis upon which this relation was to be established.

Now, laws are not framed for scholastic casuistry. Even in our

days, when legislative mills grind out statute upon statute, these multitudinous enactments do not deal with merely hypothetical figments of legal imagination, but are framed to cover recurrent actualities. How much more must we conclude that the Code of Hammurabi, the great *codex iuris* which formed the basic jurisprudential principle for the vast Babylonian Empire and which at the most contained (including the obliterated portions) only 282 laws, would not devote even one of these statutes to legal casuistry! The mere fact that the Code of Hammurabi makes provision for a slave concubine's rebelling and endeavoring to secure equality with the chief wife is ample assurance of the frequency and repetition of such occurrences. And it is thus directly concordant with the statements of Scripture and the evidence of archeology to assume that the flight of Hagar in chap. 16 and her expulsion in chap. 21, far from being "doublets" and therefore evidence of separate authorship, are faithful records of two tragedies, each separate, each distinctly appropriate in its place.

WALTER A. MAIER.

Studies in Hosea 1—3.

Chapter 3.

V. 1: "Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love flagons of wine."

The first question to be decided is, Is the woman of v. 1 Gomer or some other woman? Many varying opinions have been expressed, the text has been changed, passages have been stricken, in an effort to find the answer to this question. Steuernagel's suggestion in support of the identity of the woman in chap. 3 with Gomer, namely, that originally chaps. 1 and 3 formed an uninterrupted narrative and were later separated by ignorant compilers or editors, is altogether unwarranted and serves to show to what extremes commentators have gone in their efforts to solve this vexing question. Sellin advances two reasons for the identity of the woman. First, no name is given in chap. 3; therefore only Gomer can be meant. This does not sound very convincing. Secondly, the analogy of chap. 2, 4—25. This latter reason is brought out in Speaker's *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, p. 426, thus: "The antitype which the symbol is designed to shadow forth shows this woman to be Gomer. For if Hosea were now commanded to seek another than Gomer, it would suggest the thought that Jehovah was about to take another wife instead of Israel." This argument proves, in my opinion beyond doubt, the identity of the women mentioned in chaps. 1 and 3. A third reason is given in