

II. The Period after the Fall of Samaria.

The difficulties of this later period are few and rather easily soluble, thanks to the long reigns of the kings of Judah, the more abundant Assyrian data, and the absence of co-reigns.

We are told that Hezekiah reigned 29 years (II Kings 18:1,2; II Ch.29:1); then Manasseh reigned 55 years (II K.21:1, II Ch. 33:1); then Amon for 2 years (I K.21:19; II Ch.33:21); and Josiah for 31 years (II K.22:1; II Ch.34:1), being killed by Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo in 609. (II K.23:29 with Barton op.cit. p.477). The total of these years is 117 years, and from 726 to 609 is 117 years, so the data check quite well.¹ Other data can be fitted in easily. Hezekiah despaired of his life in 712 because 15 years were added to him (II K.20:6 and Isa.38:5). Sennacherib reigned over Assyria from 705 to 681 and invaded Palestine shutting up Hezekiah like a "caged bird" in 701.² A real difficulty arises over II K.18:13 || Isa.36:1, which says that Sennacherib king of Assyria came against Hezekiah in his 14th year, i.e. 712. Various explanations have been proposed. Naturally the older commentaries written before the Assyrian data were discovered made no mention of the difficulty.³ Nögelbach in the Lange commentary (pp. 9 and 373-374) argues strongly that Isaiah chapters 36-39 are not chronologically arranged, nor are the parallel chapters in Kings. He wishes to make the 14 years of Isa.36:1 be 14 years after Hezekiah's recovery or 700 B.C., which would resolve the difficulty. Aside from the chronology, he adds quite plausibly the reason that the treasuries are full at Merodach-baladam's embassy, that the promised deliverance from Assyria is still future, that Hezekiah's recovery

1. Mach in the I.S.B.E. loc.cit. puts an interregnum of a year or two after Amon's assassination, but makes the reigns of the several kings end and begin the same year.

2. Barton, op.cit., pp. 470-471.

3. Thus Delitzsch 1st and 4th ed., Alexander, Calvin, etc.