Nachman Krochmal

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CHAPTER 4

BIBLICAL STUDIES

The onset of historical thought and scholarship touched on virtually all aspects of traditional self-understanding, but perhaps none more than on the place of the Bible within traditional culture. From the time of Hobbes and Spinoza, through the works of Voltaire and Reimarus, the Bible emerged as a document that must be understood as all other human documents are: as a product of a time, place and point of view. In the century or so that separated Spinoza from Mendelssohn, however, this point of view gained little currency within the Jewish community, and certainly cannot be said to have exercised influence on the development of Jewish culture. Indeed, while Mendelssohn was certainly aware of these new trends, he himself seems to have been, for the most part, unaffected by them; he states unequivocally in the introduction to his Netivot ha-Shalom (the Biur), "And behold, Moses our teacher, may he rest in peace, wrote the entire Torah from 'In the beginning' to 'before all Israel' (the last verse in
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Deuteronomy), including the last eight verses from ‘And Moses died’ to the end . . .’ Further, “we, the entire community of Israel believe that just as Moses, our teacher, may he rest in peace, wrote the Torah, that is how we now possess it, no changes have occurred to it from then until now, nor has it undergone the processes that profane books undergo” in which changes occur (Mendelssohn, Biur, vol. 1, pp. vii–viii; emphasis added).

During the eighteenth century, biblical scholarship was pursued and its attendant problems were confronted primarily by Protestants in Germany, with some important contributions from French Catholics, lapsed and otherwise. While this century may be said to have planted the seeds of the revolution that was to follow, the issues of Pentateuchal authorship, the understanding of prophecy and miracle, and the authorship of the other biblical books were dealt with by individuals here and there, but did not lead to a profound revolution in historical understanding until later. At the end of the century, certainly, far more biblical scholars affirmed the traditionally ascribed Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch than would have denied it.

However, already by the last two decades of the eighteenth century major changes were becoming evident. More and more Christian Bible scholars and historians were overtaken by the passion for critical research. A new vision of the emergence of the Bible came to dominate in scholarly circles. Of particular relevance to our discussion is the proliferation of the view that the eighth-century B.C.E. prophet Isaiah could not have authored the second part of the book bearing his name, beginning with chapter 40. This had been noted by
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others earlier, but now received its most complete expression in the work of J. G. Eichhorn (1752–1827), to which we shall refer in greater detail below. The book of Qohelet (Ecclesiastes), traditionally ascribed to Solomon, was now seen as a post-exilic, pseudepigraphic work. Many Psalms, traditionally ascribed to David, were now seen as having been authored by many different people from many different time periods, perhaps as late as after the Babylonian exile (586 B.C.E.). These shifts were based on the conviction that prophecy could not be understood as anything more than human poetic inspiration; it could, therefore, have no predictive value. Thus all references to historically later occurrences must be the product of writers living either at the time of or later than the event. The traditional view that imagined that prophetic figures could foresee events yet to occur was no longer tenable.

From the time of Mendelssohn onward this area of research began to make greater inroads into the Jewish scholarly community. While few Jews dared engage in critical research on the Pentateuch—the document was simply too central to Jewish life and law, and a critical stance required more distance than most Jews could muster—Jewish scholars did allow themselves greater freedom with the other books of the Bible. In particular, in 1810, Mendelssohn’s disciple Yehudah Leib Ben-Ze’ev published his Mavo el Migra’e Qodesh (Introduction to Holy Scriptures), modeled after Eichhorn’s Einleitung. Here he argues for the composite nature of Isaiah, among other critical observations. Leopold Zunz (1794–1886), in his Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden, historisch entwickelt, published in 1832, advanced daring new theses regarding the books of Chronicles, and the Psalter, the former based
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partially on researches of his teacher W. M. L. de Wette (1780–1849). Isaac Samuel Reggio (1784–1855) and Shlomo Yehudah Rapoport (1790–1867) also advanced critical theses regarding Isaiah and Psalms. While one cannot say that unanimity had emerged among Jewish scholars regarding these books, as we shall see, certainly many Jewish scholars engaged primarily or occasionally in biblical research were endorsing the conclusions, particularly regarding Isaiah, that were becoming commonplace among gentile scholars. Among these Jewish scholars, perhaps none is identified with biblical criticism more than Nachman Krochmal.⁸

The truth, though, is that Krochmal can scarcely be considered a Bible critic, if by that term we mean someone firmly committed to uncovering the truth behind the emergence of the various biblical books. For Krochmal's program is overtly historiographical and apologetic—not critical, per se. We must note that he presents his biblical studies, which are gathered in chapter 11 of the Guide, as mere notes to and amplifications of the historical presentation of chapters 8 through 10. He thus tells us that these studies must be seen in terms of the larger historiographical program of those chapters. We will recall that the central purpose of the historical chapters was to prove the vitality of the Jewish revival after the Babylonian exile. The purpose of the eleventh chapter of the Guide is to provide the basis for using various biblical books as historical sources for the Second Temple period. Krochmal makes this particularly clear concerning the book of Qohelet, which, as we shall see, he dates to the Persian period, prior to the Greek conquests. He writes that seeing this book as the product of this time provides us with a unique historical
source for a period for which we have virtually no other sources, and it "casts light and knowledge on the exalted state of our nation during these generations that have been forgotten as if they never were" (Guide, p. 149). Similarly, in this chapter Krochmal provides the basis for using the second part of Isaiah as a historical source to demonstrate the spiritual revival of Judaism in the earlier part of the period.

That Krochmal wishes to support the claims of the previous chapters of the Guide may be seen from the fact that only those books that he can date to the Second Commonwealth period are included in his discussion of the Bible. Thus, the Pentateuch, which Krochmal considers Mosaic, is not discussed. Similarly, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings—treasure troves all, for the committed critic—are not mentioned. Most of the books that were always considered products of the exile, or its aftermath, such as Ezekiel, are left uncriticized. Finally, there is the book of Joel, whose Second Commonwealth provenance is affirmed by Krochmal, but it is not analyzed because he feels that such an analysis is not "necessary to achieve the desired goal" (Guide, p. 132). It is clear, then, that Krochmal's agenda demands studies of those books, and only those books, that can advance his historiographical agenda—something that books dating from the First Temple period obviously cannot do.

Krochmal has cleverly recognized that there is much in the biblical-critical program of the early nineteenth century that stands at odds with many of the prevailing views regarding Jewish history that saw a precipitous decline in Jewish creativity with the exile. If the results of critical research suggest that the Bible came together over a much longer period than was previously assumed, the historical claims grounded in
earlier assumptions must fall. By focusing on these books, and accentuating their post-exilic provenance, Krochmal obtains important ammunition in his fight against the alleged fossilization of Judaism.⁹

Krochmal's desire to use the claims of biblical scholarship to buttress the standing of Jewish tradition, clever though it was, confronted an obstacle that, as time went on, ultimately proved insurmountable. Traditional Jews simply had a much greater existential stake in the received traditions concerning the Bible. Most traditional Jews were horrified by the claims of modern biblical scholarship, not merely those that pertained to the Pentateuch, but those that dealt with the other books as well. The problem here was twofold: one, the claims advanced by scholars stood at odds with the view of the emergence of the Bible put forth by the rabbis in various places (most prominently in BT Baba Batra 14b–15a). A significant portion of traditional exegesis was based on the assumption that one can locate the book and its author in a time and place—such assumptions being based in turn on the "traditions" reported in rabbinic documents.¹⁰ If it now emerges that the rabbis did not have a sound idea of the origins of these books, if the rabbis can be led astray by a forger of the likes of the author of Qohelet, then the moorings of Jewish exegesis are shaken.

Although written in a slightly different, yet related, context, the words of Mendelssohn are instructive:

For the Christian translators—given that they do not possess the traditions of our sages, may their memory be for a blessing, and they do not heed the dictates of the Masorah—do not accept vocalizations and punctuations that we possess; therefore, they make the words of Torah as a breached wall, each will ascend it according
to his strength and will do with it what he wishes. They add and delete and change the Torah of God, not only the vocalizations and punctuation, but also, sometimes, letters and words (for what is there to restrain them?) according their whims and abilities. Sometimes they will not read in the Torah what is written there, but rather whatever occurs to them. I do not look down on these scholars for this, for what forces them to pay heed to a tradition they did not receive from their fathers, or to a Masorah that was not given to them by people they consider reliable? They do not accept the obligation to observe and perform all that is written in the Torah, but rather, treat it as a work of history, to know what happened in antiquity, and to discern the ways of providence and the supernal supervision manifest in each generation; for this purpose there is no damage in sometimes changing a few details, through the addition or deletion of letters and words, as they do with prominent profane books. . . . If this is acceptable for gentile scholars and their students, for us, the House of Israel, it is not; for us this Torah is an inheritance, but only to serve the already-mentioned [historical] purpose, but also to know the commandments which our God has commanded us, to learn and teach, observe and perform, for it is our life and the length of our days. And so that our lives should not hang by the hair of logic and the thread of discernment alone, our sages, may their memory be for a blessing, ordained for us the Masorah, and defined the boundaries of the Torah and its commandments, so that we should not stumble as the blind in darkness. Therefore, we may not budge from the path that has been paved . . . (Biur, vol. 1, pp. xxv–xxvi; emphasis added)

While Mendelssohn is discussing the application of profane textual techniques to the text of the Torah, the absolute centrality of the rabbinic tradition he demands carries over to his understanding of the other books of the Bible as well. It is
reasonable that gentile scholars should engage in this enterprise; their religious orientation is not shaken by the exercise of textual criticism. Similarly, so many Jews thought, with historical criticism; it is fine for gentiles, but not an acceptable practice for Jews. I should add that the view that biblical scholarship not grounded in rabbinic tradition is somehow only a gentile enterprise is not unique to Mendelssohn; many Jews were of the opinion that to engage in this discipline was somehow a betrayal of one’s heritage.

The second difficulty Krochmal confronted was most forcefully stated by the Lutheran biblical scholar, Franz Delitzsch (1813–1890). The application of the tools of criticism to the Bible presupposes that it is not different as a document from any other piece of literature from antiquity. That is, it presupposes that there cannot be prophecy as understood in the traditional sense, as a direct and often predictive communication from God, but only poetry. For example, the claim that the eighth-century prophet Isaiah could not have written the second half of “his” book is grounded in the assumption that he could have foreseen neither the traumas of exile in such detail nor the emergence of the Persian Empire two centuries later. All ostensibly predictive statements automatically arouse critical scrutiny and explanation. Thus, attachment to historical, or, higher criticism meant a denial of the ancient traditions on which a Jew’s religious orientation was founded, and also required a denial of the divine origins of the text.

It is these two problems that bring us to Krochmal’s second agenda. His biblical studies, in addition to arguing for the continuity of Jewish faith, represent an attempt to shield the tradition from any of the potentially deleterious effects of
modern biblical criticism, so that its influence on Jewish self-understanding in the modern period would be wholly positive. This comes clearly into focus if we separate Krochmal's original contribution to his discussion from that which was already established elsewhere. When this is done, we see there is little original criticism in the Guide; most of the fundamental claims pertaining to the Bible advanced there had already been stated by other scholars, and Krochmal explicitly relies on them. What is original to Krochmal is his insistence on the inevitability of religious esotericism. This allows him to argue that the rabbis were already fully aware of many of the discoveries of modern Bible scholarship. They chose to conceal this knowledge as it did not serve to bolster faith in the canonical texts during their times.

After affirming some rather daring theses concerning the Psalms, for example, Krochmal writes that the esoteric tradition already encompassed this knowledge; this esoteric tradition must now be revealed because modern biblical theories may come to the attention of Jews, particularly young ones, who may accept them “without delving into the matter, and combine truth with falsehood. They will then hastily publish strange and uncritical histories; all this because they see that things are not as they originally thought, and that the sages of their people did not know it [modern theories] or were not willing to accept what was true or thought to be true” (Guide, 158). In Krochmal’s view, Judaism could not survive the impression that the rabbis could not read the Bible correctly. Disabusing his readers of the impression that the rabbis were unsophisticated students of the Bible—with all the negative results this impression would bring—was the primary goal of
Krochmal's biblical studies. For not even the historiographical benefits of critical conclusions would be acceptable at the cost of commitment to the rabbinic tradition.

Thus, here again Krochmal presents his arguments in an exegetical mode, using the classical texts dealing with the emergence of the Bible as his point of departure. The very implausibility of much of his argumentation is perhaps the best indicator of the existential urgency he attached to resolving the problems presented by modern Bible criticism.

The Book of Isaiah

"Hezekiah and his collaborators wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Qohelet"; so declares a *baraita* found in the Babylonian Talmud. The reference is, presumably, to Hezekiah, king of Judah from 727 to 689 B.C.E. As the medieval commentator Rashi (1040–1105) explains, the prophet Isaiah could not write "his" book himself because his life ended violently and prematurely, and prophets set about writing their books only at the close of their natural lives. The issue is somewhat more problematic, as the Tosafists (ad loc.) point out, since, according to the same tradition that serves as the basis of Rashi's comments, Isaiah was killed by Manasseh, Hezekiah's son, after Hezekiah's death. That is, Hezekiah died before Isaiah; thus, the inclusion of "and his collaborators." In any event, what emerges unmistakably from the passage is that according to the most prominent rabbinic tradition regarding the authorship of biblical books, the entire book of Isaiah was authored by one person, or group of persons, living in close proximity to the eighth-century prophet.
Isaiah ben Amoz. This tradition would seem to have been firmly established; for this reason, when confronting the obvious differences between the first thirty-nine chapters and the remainder of the book, a range of traditional commentators explained them as rooted in different intentions. The first part of the book was intended for the contemporary audience and addressed the issues of the day, whereas the second part offered consolations for the destruction and exile that were yet more than a century away.\(^\text{18}\) The fact that there were stylistic and linguistic differences between the parts, and that the second part referred to specific events, such as the rise of Cyrus, were not, apparently, considered problematic.

In Spinoza's *A Theologico-Political Treatise*, we begin to find doubts expressed about the authenticity of the prophetic books and the traditions pertaining thereto.\(^\text{19}\) He argues that an examination of the prophetic books will indicate that "the prophecies therein contained have been compiled from other books, and are not always set down in the order in which they were spoken or written by the prophets . . ." (*Treatise*, p. 147). In dealing directly with the book of Isaiah, he argues that it is composed of material from various sources, but does not invoke the distinctions between the two parts as evidence.

Approximately a century later, under the influence of Robert Lowth's *De sacra poesi hebraeorum*, scholars began to think of prophets as artists and poets rather than as seers; as such, they addressed the issues of their own day, using the data available to them, and not some future time.\(^\text{20}\) Thus, the second part of Isaiah could not be understood as consolations, provided for a calamity that was yet to occur; rather, if the background envisioned by these prophecies was the Babylo-
nian exile and its aftermath, then the prophecies must date from this time (sixth century B.C.E.) and not from the eighth century. For our purposes, the most important statement to this effect is to be found in the work of Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, which Krochmal at times paraphrased.

It is obvious, then, that the Jewish tradition and modern biblical scholarship had conflicting views regarding the origins of the book of Isaiah. If the critics were right, then rabbinic interpretation—and Church traditions—which saw predictions of future consolation and restoration in the latter half of Isaiah, is grounded on false assumptions, and such flawed exegesis must be rejected. Krochmal, far more interested in resolving this problem than in presenting original theories regarding Isaiah, attempts to show that the rabbis shared the assumptions of the critics.

Krochmal's study of the prophecies of the second Isaiah is presented as a note to the earlier discussion in the historical chapters of the Babylonian exile and the Persian conquest. It was during this time that a prophet arose offering comfort, and from these prophecies one can observe the "higher intellectual level of this diaspora" (*Guide*, p. 53). Since, however, affirming the existence of a second Isaiah conflicts with the tradition as generally understood, which ascribed the entire book to one prophet, it is necessary for Krochmal to explain his claim, and show how the tradition remains undamaged, and ultimately enhanced.

Regarding the reality of a second Isaiah Krochmal preferred to rely on the proofs of "recent scholars" whose ideas on the subject are already well known through all the "books of
introduction,” and “do not require repeating” (Guide, p. 114). In all likelihood, Krochmal is referring to Eichhorn’s Einleitung, to which he refers on another occasion (Guide, p. 156), and to Yehudah Leib Ben-Ze’ev’s Mavo el Miqra’e Qodesh, both of which argue for a second Isaiah. The proofs adduced by them involve an analysis and comparison of the historical setting, the language and introductory phrases of the first thirty-nine chapters of the book and its remainder. While finding their arguments convincing, Krochmal adds another, based on the conviction that prophecy, as traditionally understood, remains a viable concept in modern times. He argues that while the eighth-century prophet Isaiah could have prophesied regarding general aspects of the sixth century, he could not have predicted particular events such as the kingship of Cyrus. Such a thing is not impossible theoretically, for given the divine origins of the prophetic message nothing is impossible. Rather, such an occurrence is ruled out by the function of prophecy, for such prophecies would have been totally meaningless to the generation that heard them, and surely God would not send a messenger to deliver an incomprehensible message.

Krochmal has thus established to his satisfaction that the second part of Isaiah dates from the early Persian period, and is a product of the exile; he is therefore justified in using these prophecies as an illustration of the spiritual level attained by the diaspora community during this time. What remains for him to do in this note is to show that the tradition can withstand the acceptance of this new discovery. The strategy he employs is to demonstrate that this information is in fact not new at all; he proposes that the esoteric tradition incor-
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porated hints to indicate to the initiated that not all prophecies included in the book of Isaiah were actually uttered by the eighth-century prophet. The exoteric traditions, intended to minister to the needs of the masses, reveal no such awareness, as the rabbis wished to keep this information from them. However, it is now critical, Krochmal argues, that this esoteric tradition be revealed, since, in modern times, the existence of a second prophet, whose works are included within the last twenty-seven chapters of the book of Isaiah, was a generally known and accepted proposition. Maintaining the hidden nature of this “tradition” would lead to the unacceptable result that people would think that the rabbis were unsophisticated Bible scholars (Guide, pp. 143–44).

Krochmal’s first proof that the ancients knew of the lateness of the second half of Isaiah is that the baraita in BT Baba Batra (14b), discussing the order of the biblical books, states that the order of the prophetic works is “Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve”; the order runs contrary to the traditional chronology, and indeed is reversed (Isaiah first) in the Masoretic texts of the Hebrew Bible. Krochmal wants to deduce from this chronological deviation that the rabbis placed Isaiah after Ezekiel because they knew that the last part of the book was late, and considered this fact, rather than the greater antiquity of the first part, decisive.

The other proof Krochmal advances is somewhat less clear. He refers to the passage in Wayiqra Rabbah (6:6) that states that two verses in the first part of Isaiah (8:19–20) were actually stated by another prophet (Be’ari), but were inserted into Isaiah because these two verses comprise the only prophecy of Be’ari, and were not sufficient for a separate book. This
"proof" seems to be intended in a more general way to show that the rabbis knew that the title of a book did not mean that everything in the work derived from that prophet, for they knew that two verses in Isaiah were from a different prophet. Therefore, while the rabbis do not indicate here that they knew of a different prophet whose work comprises the latter portions of the book of Isaiah, the fact that they did not consider the book's title as decisive regarding the provenance of all of its contents makes the first proof's contention more likely.²⁸

Krochmal goes on to demonstrate that at least one of the medievals, Abraham Ibn Ezra, and perhaps others as well, also knew of a second Isaiah. While Ibn Ezra nowhere states that the second portion of the book is much later than the first, it is, believes Krochmal, implicit in a number of comments that he has made to various verses. In all, Krochmal cites more than a dozen comments that he believes provide hints that Ibn Ezra did not consider Isaiah one complete book.²⁹

It is clear that Krochmal went to great lengths to show that modern conclusions regarding Isaiah are compatible with traditional sensibilities. For, certainly as regards the ancients, Krochmal's arguments are quite forced, and not entirely transparent. Yet, it is precisely this fact that indicates the importance of this reconciliation. Implicit throughout his presentation is Krochmal's firm conviction that the ancient rabbis were the equals of modern biblical scholars, and thus there is nothing that modern scholarship can uncover that either was not known to the rabbis, or, as we have yet to see, could not be readily assimilated by them (and, therefore, by open-
minded adherents of their tradition). Thus, their messianic reading of the latter part of Isaiah was developed with full awareness of the later provenance of this material, and is not grounded in ignorance. In any event, for Krochmal, there can be no superiority attributed to the moderns save for mode of expression, which results from the greater freedom that derives from historical changes.

Ultimately, then, from the study of the book of Isaiah we can see the contours of Krochmal's program. He wished to guide those perplexed by the regnant philosophy of history, by showing that this philosophy did not properly take account of Jewish history, without, at the same time, creating more problems. He directs his argument to the traditionalist, aspiring "maskil" whom Krochmal wished to educate and whose adherence to tradition he wished to strengthen. 30

Here again we find the same apologetic tendencies at work as elsewhere in the Guide. Krochmal recognized the basic conflict of modern and traditional culture as each was understood at the time, and sought to dissolve that conflict, in this case by showing that the intellectual boundaries of the tradition were far wider than previously assumed. He does this by appealing to the esoteric tradition, which provides the means of stretching the borders of the acceptable without abandoning the authority of the rabbinic tradition. His conclusion is that the tradition could not be damaged by modern discoveries regarding Isaiah because they were not really modern at all. In this way, the integrity of the tradition is left largely intact, while the freedom to search for the truth is also affirmed.
As we saw above, the baraita in BT Baba Batra attributes the book of Qohelet (Ecclesiastes) to Hezekiah and his collaborators. However, based on other rabbinic traditions, this passage has generally been understood to mean that while Hezekiah and his collaborators gave the book its written form, the content originated with the wisdom of King Solomon in the tenth century B.C.E. Indeed, the book itself appears to attribute its authorship to Solomon, as the author identifies himself as Qohelet, the son of David, king of Jerusalem, and this has been understood as Solomon, as he was the son of David to carry the title “king.”

However, modern scholars, again led by Eichhorn, refute the notion that this book could have originated with Solomon, or, for that matter, in the time of Hezekiah. The arguments advanced by Eichhorn include the fact that the language of the book includes many Aramaisms, as well as apparent borrowings of Persian and Greek usages. This betrays a time in which these linguistic cultures had already had extensive contacts with the Jews—that is, a period after the exile. Further, even the Hebrew of the book betrays a tiredness and clumsiness indicative of a language grown old. Further, the subject matter and quality of thought and expression are quite different from what is known from the earlier period. It is, then, quite clear that the book of Qohelet derives from a period long after the Babylonian exile.

Again here, the confrontation between the tradition and modern scholarship is clear. In the longest, and probably most significant, of the studies in the eleventh chapter of his Guide,
Krochmal begins by endorsing Eichhorn's conclusions, at times practically verbatim. At the same time he once again attempts to reconcile these conclusions with the tradition as he understands it. Acknowledging that his views regarding Qohelet are not as easily reconciled with the traditional approach as were the views expressed in other studies, since here he is opposing an explicit rabbinic affirmation, he nevertheless tries very hard to achieve this reconciliation, and, where this is impossible, to show that he has done nothing that can in any way be construed as damaging the tradition.

The reconciliation offered here follows the pattern established in the Isaiah material and need not, therefore, detain us long. First, he argues that dating the book to the Persian period means that it can be used as a unique historical source for a period for which we have virtually no other, and it "casts light and knowledge on the exalted state of our nation during these generations which have been forgotten as if they never were" (Guide, p. 149). Thus, once again the findings of biblical criticism can be appropriated to prove the vitality of the Jewish revival, and the continuity of Jewish religious speculation—what would appear to be, in Krochmal's estimation, the single most important issue perplexing modern Jews.

At the same time, Krochmal explicitly states that he believes that research into the origins of this book cannot do any damage, even if the conclusions appear to contradict what the rabbis said, so long as the conclusions are established beyond any doubt (Guide, p. 140). For if we moderns can discern the lateness of the book we must then suspect that the rabbis were also aware of this fact, and indeed, Krochmal undertakes an
examination of rabbinic sources to divine what it is that the rabbis must have really thought.

Krochmal marshals three arguments designed to show the rabbis knew that Qohelet was not Solomonic. The first revolves around the statement in the same baraita that we have seen before that Qohelet, together with Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Isaiah, was written by Hezekiah and his colleagues. This implies that the rabbis considered the contents to be Solomonic but not the actual written form, which was established by Hezekiah and his colleagues. Thus, we see that the rabbis did not attribute the composition of this book to Solomon, but, at most, he was viewed as the originator of the thoughts contained therein. Now it is impossible that the words of Solomon (d. 920 B.C.E.) could have survived all those generations in oral form until Hezekiah (late eighth century) finally wrote them down. Presumably, the rabbis also realized this, and thus it seems that Krochmal wants to say that the rabbis did not regard this as part of the Solomonic corpus at all. In implausibly attributing the book to Hezekiah, the rabbis were furtively indicating that they knew full well that Qohelet was not of Solomonic origins. As to why they would have chosen this particular attribution when they knew that the book was in fact far later than Hezekiah, we must accept on faith that they had their reasons in concealing from the masses the truth regarding Qohelet.

The second rabbinic passage that Krochmal considers in this connection is one from Qohelet Rabbah (1:12), in which the rabbis interpret the corresponding verse to mean that the book was written by Solomon after he had abdicated his throne. Yet, all the references to Solomon's career agree that he reigned until his death, and thus this view could hardly
have been the accepted rabbinic opinion on the subject. Rather, the author(s) of this enigmatic remark are indicating their awareness that this book is not the product of a real and reigning king, such as Solomon, but must rather have been produced by some other figure.

The third allusion that Krochmal finds in rabbinic literature is the well-known dispute recorded in the Mishnah (Yadayim 3:5) regarding whether Qohelet renders the hands unclean. This case is regarded as one of the leniencies of the House of Shammasi, while the House of Hillel offered the stricter opinion that it does render the hands unclean. The issue here is whether or not Qohelet is to be seen as holy and canonical or not. It is apparent that the House of Shammasi considered the book to be simply the wisdom of Solomon, and not an inspired text. It is particularly significant for Krochmal that it was the Shammaites who held this opinion, for he regarded them as the far more conservative force (Guide, p. 143). The implication here is that the Shammaites, in rejecting the canonicity of Qohelet, are undauntedly maintaining a line of tradition, while the Hillelites accept the canonicity of the book, and abandon the tradition, because of the demands of the times or for some other motive. Thus, as far as the canonization of the book is concerned, the position of the House of Shammasi is correct. That stand is further supported by the claim attributed to Rabbi Yosi (second-century tanna) in the same passage of the Mishnah that there was no dispute at all regarding whether Qohelet renders the hands unclean; it does not, and is therefore not to be considered a canonical text, but is rather to be considered “merely” the wisdom of Solomon.

For Krochmal the issue cannot stop here. For all that he
has proven at this point is that there were those who did not regard the book as canonical, and that they were, in his opinion, maintaining an age-old tradition. What he would like to prove, however, is that the rabbis knew that Qohelet is not the product of Solomon, and thus he adds another step. Acknowledging that all the positions discussed were openly in accord with the traditional notion that Solomon authored this book, he continues, “But if this is truly the opinion of the Sages, and they did not conceal something esoteric in this [claim that Qohelet does not render the hands unclean because it is only the wisdom of Solomon], one cannot resolve the difficulty of their words against wisdom when it is explicitly stated that it derives from God . . .” (Guide, p. 143). What Krochmal is here arguing is that wisdom, and specifically Solomon's wisdom, is acknowledged to be a gift from God, and therefore the rabbis could not have denigrated Qohelet for being simply a product of Solomon's mind, for this would, in fact, confer upon it sufficient status to be worthy of canonization. Thus, this is not the rabbis' real opinion on the subject, but merely the esoteric one. They must have had something else in mind when they denied this book canonical status, and that was, presumably, the fact that this book is not Solomonic at all, but rather the product of a much later time.

In any event, the Hillelites carried the day and the canonization of the book was accepted; this fact—the acceptance of a less than “orthodox” text as canonical—created many of the problems that traditional scholarship was to face, for later scholars had no choice but to interpret this canonized book in some manner that was compatible with the true faith. This apparently means that they had no choice but to attribute it
to Solomon so that its readers would realize that this work was the product of one of Israel's heroes, indeed, its supposedly wisest man. For this reason, even among the moderns the attempt was made to maintain the Solomonic authorship of this book. 37

Nevertheless, however necessary the attribution of the book to Solomon may once have been, the exoteric traditions must be abandoned, for they do not do justice to the book, and do not allow for an interpretation that will convey its true message. We must rather have recourse to the esoteric tradition, which was aware of the true provenance of the book. Further, Krochmal makes clear that he regards it as absolutely imperative that the contents of this esoteric tradition be revealed if traditional sensibilities are to find their orientation in the modern world. For,

just as in earlier generations the danger was to reveal the concealed, so and even more in our generation the danger is to conceal that which has already been revealed by others, which is a vain task, and in no way helpful. What would truly be helpful is that we continue to search and investigate, while seeking the true God who will not abandon those who seek him, for they shall be guarded forever. We are delighted, how great is our lot, for the word of God and the true Torah are with us, and it (the Torah) need not fear scholarly investigation from any perspective. (Guide, pp. 143–44)

Thus, Krochmal's eloquent plea for scholarly investigation is accompanied by the claim that it will help the tradition face the challenges posed by modern scholarship, and remain undamaged. Abandoning scholarly research, on the other hand, will result in a tradition that appears stubborn and indeed
foolish, for it insists on that which others have effectively disproven.

Krochmal is much less confident here than previously that his specific conclusions regarding the rabbis are correct. He claims though that they seem correct, and in any event it is necessary that something be said on this subject. However, other scholars should not regard the matter as closed, but should rather continue to study and seek the truth regarding this book. It seems that Krochmal’s lack of confidence is grounded in the fact that the (exoteric) tradition attributing authorship to Solomon is so firm. In the case of Isaiah, for example, it was the silence of the exoteric tradition that was problematic, not the fact that it explicitly affirmed one Isaiah. With Qohelet, however, Krochmal is not simply adding something about which the tradition has been silent, but rather is denying that which has been explicitly affirmed by the tradition. He is further suggesting that the rabbis, at least some of them, knew that the tradition was incorrect, but chose to allow this deceptive tradition to stand.

We can see that his claims regarding Qohelet are, from one perspective, bolder than are those regarding Isaiah, or other books that he has studied, while on the other hand, he makes clear that he does not have a strong stake in his specific conclusions, but is rather adopting them for they seem correct, and more important, they seem the only way that the tradition can be left relatively unscathed by the work of Eichhorn and others.

2. Psalms. Krochmal’s study of some of the Psalms differs from the pattern somewhat in that some of his conclusions
were the subject of much scholarly controversy in his own
day, although some of them are to be found already in the
work of the German scholar Hitzig, as well as in Zunz and
Rapoport.39 His pattern of apologetic does hold up here,
however. Krochmal seeks support for his attributions in rab-
binic sources. The purpose again is to support the image of
the rabbis as the equals of the moderns in biblical scholarship,
and the integrity of the biblical tradition itself.

The main critical thrust of Krochmal's presentation is his
claim that a number of Psalms are products of the second
century B.C.E. These late Psalms revolve around the persecu-
tions under Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabean victory.
Specifically, Psalms 44, 74, 79 and 83 were written during
the persecutions.40 This judgment is based on the content of
these Psalms; Psalm 44, for example, describes the mass
slaughter of the people of Israel. "Prior to this time [i.e., that
of Epiphanes] we do not find that many Israelites were killed
because of their faith."41 It thus seems likely that this Psalm
was written "at the beginning of the persecution in the year
85 was sung after an important victory that took place, in all
likelihood, in the time of Jonathan, the son of Mattathias.42
Psalm 132 was first sung, according to Krochmal, in the time
of Judah Maccabee, after his conquest of the Temple. Psalms
149 and 150 (which Krochmal considered one) were first sung
in the time of Simon, after total liberation of the land from
foreign forces. These two Psalms, together with some of the
other "Hallelujah" Psalms that precede them, make up what
Krochmal calls the Greek Hallel (song of praise), which is
modeled after the Egyptian Hallel (Psalms 113–18).43

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Here again, Krochmal is concerned lest he be judged as damaging the tradition, and thus justifies his enterprise once more:

... that in truthful studies, done with a pure heart, such as this and thousands of others, there is not the slightest concern of danger or loss to the faith. On the contrary! It is to the credit of Israel and exalts the Torah of their fathers. . . . [W]hat danger can there be if it turns out: that even in the twilight of our kingdom, and in the passing of the shadows of our success, the holy songs and the exalted pietists who were tested and found worthy did not cease; that the spirit rested upon them as they poured out their hearts in supplication and gratitude before their king and their God for whom they were killed throughout the long and arduous war, and it became known that they composed some of the hymns which were *openly* attributed until now to their predecessors? (Ibid., p. 157, emphasis in original)

Thus, once again, the reality of late biblical books can serve to indicate the continued vitality of the Jewish spirit, even as the nation was entering a period of overall material and cultural decline.

As we would expect, Krochmal goes on to argue that he is certain that the lateness of the Psalms was known to the sages, for even in their exoteric teachings the Psalms are attributed to ten elders, rather than David alone, although in other "aggadic" teachings the book is attributed almost entirely to David.44 If there are traces of this knowledge even in their exoteric teachings, it stands to reason that this fact was transmitted with greater precision in their esoteric teachings which were reserved for certain students, but which now must be revealed for all to see.
3. The Problem of Pseudepigraphy. In Krochmal's study of Qohelet and Psalms, there is little departure from the pattern found in his treatment of Isaiah. Regarding these books, however, there emerged yet another problem, that of pseudepigraphy. By showing that the author of Qohelet was not Solomon, modern scholars essentially argued that the book was a pseudepigraphon. That is, the book claims to have been written by a man named Qohelet, who was the son of David, and who was the king of Jerusalem. Not only do we not know of any son of David name Qohelet, but we now know that the book could not have been written in the time of David, or any of his sons. This is problematic from a perspective such as Krochmal's because his times were far less tolerant of pseudepigrapha than are our own (which is not to say that they do not cause religious problems today).

Pseudepigrapha were regarded as total frauds, written by people of low moral stature, who intended merely to aggrandize their own works on the basis of false pretenses. Thus, it was assumed that the author of Qohelet was attempting to take advantage of Solomon's renown, by associating his own creation with this great king from the Israelite past. This, at the time, was a serious charge, and could not help but lead to questions regarding the appropriateness of this book in the Bible, and of the insight and rectitude of a tradition that would confer such status on a forgery. Those perplexed by this problem would have found a guide in Krochmal's work.

Krochmal argues that the author of Qohelet could not possibly have intended to take advantage of Solomon's renown, for, as Eichhorn already pointed out, he has done a very poor job of disguising himself; further, if it were the
author's intention to identify himself as Solomon, he would have used that name rather than "Qohelet," a name which has no necessary connection with Solomon at all. Further still, it is difficult for "us, the house of Israel," to believe that the men of the Great Assembly, whose superior intelligence "we" affirm, did not recognize its correct provenance; thus, if they, who were close in time to the formation of the book, believed it was an attempt to deceive its readers, they would never have considered it for acceptance as Scripture. Therefore, we cannot regard the book as pseudepigraphic, but must rather attempt to understand its origins differently.

Krochmal argues that while in Hebrew it is quite acceptable to have a masculine proper noun inflected in the feminine form (as is Qohelet—we could thus assume that Qohelet is a simple proper noun), the fact that this name is sometimes accompanied by a definite article (e.g., 12:8) indicates that in fact it is a title which has been used as a proper noun. This proper noun, having been formed from a title, would indicate a certain station or position. After considering two alternatives, Krochmal seems to settle on the claim that the name indicates that this person was the head of, or a member of a convention of scholars, deriving the name from qahal, meaning "assembly" (Guide, p. 146). This supposition is supported by the fact that the Greek Jews called this book "Ecclesiastes," that is, one of the members of the "ecclesia." This title may even indicate that the author was actually a member of the Great Assembly.

As to why the author referred to himself as the son of David when he lived so much later, this simply means that he was a descendant of David, and does not involve any attempt at deception. Descent from David would not have been a diffi-
cult fact to establish, for the author of the book would have lived a mere four or five generations after Zerubabbel, whose line of descendants was easily traceable. In fact, Krochmal claims, descendants of David were commonly known in this period, and indeed referred to themselves as the “son of David,” as, in fact, the Mishnah, whose language was similar to their own, often did (Guide, p. 146).

The title “king of Jerusalem” is, at first glance, somewhat more difficult to explain, but, Krochmal claims, if one carefully examines what the author says of himself and his greatness, it becomes less problematic. For the author of Qohelet does not brag of the homage and tributes paid him by his subjects and by other nations, as would be fitting for someone such as Solomon. Rather, he takes pride in his wealth, his flocks, and his actions, such as building houses and planting gardens. Now, at no time in Jewish history, including that of Solomon, were such things only the province of kings. Thus, we can understand the title referring to someone who was one of the rich nobles who lived at the end of the Persian period, who are mentioned numerous times in Nehemiah. The use of the word “king” is not problematic for we know that “in those lands and those times every noble and possessor of large amounts of property and slaves was sometimes called ‘king.’”

There is, then, no pseudepigraphic intent in the title whatsoever. The author of the book of Qohelet was a “nobleman, of the seed of David, who was the head of a group of scholars who studied and debated together; and this group may well have been a branch of the Great Assembly which flourished at that time” (Guide, p. 148).

A similar problem presented itself with regard to the late Psalms. The problem with the claim that these Psalms are
from the Hasmonean era is that five of them carry superscriptions; two are ascribed to the sons of Korah (who would have lived one or two generations after Moses), and three are ascribed to Asaph, who according to Chronicles 6:24ff, was a contemporary of David, a Levite serving in the Tabernacle. If they are, in fact, Hasmonean, these superscriptions would appear to be unfounded, and, thus, pseudepigraphic. Krochmal claims, however, that the composers of these Psalms must have been Levites, "for we know, independently, that all Torah and spiritual virtuosity resided only in the priests and Levites"; therefore, here, as with the "son of David" attached to Qohelet, the superscriptions can be understood as referring to the family lines of the particular Levites who composed these songs. The genealogies of the priests and Levites were well known and guarded, and it was common for them to call themselves after their ancestors (Guide, p. 155). There is, thus, no attempt at deceit inherent in these superscriptions.

This assumption serves Krochmal as a stepping-stone for his next claim:

And hear now, pleasant reader, our further conjecture. That is, given that what occurred to Judah and his brothers and the rest of the pietist leaders was very similar to what happened to David, may he rest in peace—both he and they were persecuted by the nations and the wicked within Israel; he and they hid and concealed themselves in the wilderness and in caves; he and they were betrayed by those who loved them and were denounced by their brethren even more than they were oppressed by their enemies in battle—it is possible, indeed likely, that some of the pietists sang some of their hymns, pouring out their hearts, in the same manner as David, when a particular event [from David's life] resembled that which occurred to them at that time.
And with this [assumption] we have opened the door to solving a great difficulty that accompanies the superscriptions “of David,” which are found at the beginning of certain Psalms whose content render it most unlikely that they were actually the work of David. And the commentators have exhausted themselves [trying to explain these psalms], until most of the Gentile philologists and critics have derided the superscriptions and considered them worthless; while others truly considered these Psalms as ancient as the superscriptions indicated. But [if we date them] from the time that we are discussing, the content of the Psalms is sweetened for us, and they are readily understood; further the superscriptions are also quite justified in the manner we have presented. (Ibid.)

Thus, even the ascription of a Psalm to David does not preclude its having been written much later by the Hasmonean Levites and priests, since the ascription should be understood as the identification of a later age with the life of the great king. Having resolved this problem, Krochmal feels free to add four more Psalms to his list of Hasmonae sacred songs: Psalms 59, 60, 69 and 144, all ascribed to David, are identified as Hasmonae based on the perceived correspondence between their content and the events of this period. Again here, critical conclusions are confirmed while pseud-epigraphic intent is denied.

Krochmal’s argument here is, it need hardly be said, totally unconvincing. In particular, Krochmal’s claim regarding the phrase “king in Jerusalem,” dubious in its own right, becomes altogether unacceptable in light of Qohelet 1:12, which reads “I Qohelet was king over Israel in Jerusalem.” Now certainly this verse does not mean to imply that the speaker was a nobleman exercising control over a limited domain within Jerusalem. Similarly, Jews of the second century were
certainly able to distinguish between their own time and circumstances and eight centuries earlier. Rather, Krochmal's attempt to resolve the problem is, on the one hand, essentially an act of desperation, one brought about by his traditionalism and his concomitant commitment to modern scholarship. His treatment of this problem is perhaps the best indication yet of the mentality at work.

On the other hand, Krochmal has touched on a legitimate area of scholarly inquiry in trying to discern the mentality that produces works we call pseudepigraphic. Indeed, many scholars since his time have attempted to resolve the problem. This attempt is not unique to Krochmal, nor, certainly, is it unique to Jewish scholarship. As recently as 1971, the president of the Society of Biblical Literature, Bruce M. Metzger, an evangelical Christian, addressed the Society on the subject "Literary Forgeries and Canonical Pseudepigrapha." He stated:

It must be acknowledged that the inspiration of the Scriptures is consistent with any kind of form of literary composition that was in keeping with the character and habits of the speaker or writer. . . . If, indeed, an entire book should appear to have been composed in order to present vividly the thoughts and feelings of an important person, there would not seem to be in this circumstance any reason to say that it could not be divinely inspired. . . . In short, since the use of the literary form of pseudepigraphy need not be regarded as necessarily involving fraudulent intent, it cannot be argued that the character of inspiration excludes the possibility of pseudepigraphy among the canonical writings.\(^52\)

Metzger's solution to the problem is to remove it altogether from the realm of moral judgment, and to treat pseudepigraphy as just another literary form used by biblical writers. As
we have seen, this rather tolerant view of the practice was not in vogue a century and a half ago. It was therefore necessary for Krochmal to resort to his desperate reconstruction in order to deflect the devastating claim that the Bible contained forgeries, and that these forgeries were good enough to fool the ancients responsible for canonizing the book, but are not good enough to fool us today.

Krochmal has shown to his satisfaction that the book of Qohelet is a product of the late Persian period, and that it is not pseudepigraphic. Similarly, the book of Psalms came together over a much longer period of time, and again, there is no pseudepigraphic intent discernible in the collection. Further, these facts may well be consistent with the esoteric tradition; and even if they are not, the tradition is not significantly damaged by their exposure. Indeed, the tradition would be more adversely affected if Jews failed to take account of this new information. Again here, I believe that the Tendenz is clear and beyond dispute. Nachman Krochmal is to be seen as an apologist for the Jewish tradition; one who refuses to take refuge in a fideistic approach, and one who insists on that which his intellect affirms. He is able to proceed by claiming that there are subterranean elements within the tradition whose revelation would have been inappropriate at an earlier time, but is absolutely necessary in his own time. What motivates him throughout is his sense that Jews have been abandoning, or are in danger of abandoning, their tradition out of ignorance and an overly narrow view. A proper understanding of the tradition will show it to be completely compatible with what is accepted in modern scholarship. Thus, the apparent conflict between traditional and modern ways of looking at the Bible is dissolved.
This position is grounded, I believe, in the theory of history presented in the previous chapter. The fact that in the period of the Great Assembly Jewish spiritual history reached its summit makes it quite impossible for us to be more discerning readers of Scripture than were the members of that Assembly. In matters of the spirit, what becomes known to us must have been known to them; therefore, if compelling evidence emerges concerning the origins of a particular biblical book that appears to differ from the traditional view, we must return to the traditional sources and seek out what esoteric knowledge is hidden within them, it being assumed a priori that the knowledge is there. To do otherwise would be to accept the judgment of modern philosophers of history regarding the inferiority of the Oriental—in this case, Jewish—mind, with all the repercussions such acceptance would bring.\(^{53}\)

Reviewing Krochmal’s biblical studies a number of patterns emerge. The first, and perhaps most critical, is that there is very little original material in the *Guide*; in most cases Krochmal readily admits this fact. What this indicates is that the *Guide* is to be seen primarily as a reactive work, rather than as an attempt to present original research. Modern biblical scholarship had, by Krochmal’s time, produced a new understanding of the Bible and its emergence, which, according to Krochmal, Judaism could not ignore; the consequences of such a course of action would have been disastrous. Thus, Krochmal’s studies can be seen as an attempt to place the conclusions of modern scholarship into a context compatible with the enlightened, but traditional, perspective.

Second, Krochmal’s acceptance of the conclusions of mod-
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ern scholarship was by no means reluctant, for, in his mind, Judaism had much to gain—and little, if anything, to lose—by incorporating them. This is so because modern scholarship assumes a much longer period for the emergence of the Bible than was previously acknowledged; this, in turn, supports the central contention of Krochmal's historical survey, which was that Jewish creativity and vitality, while experiencing lulls, never exited from the stage of world history. The literary creations of the Second Temple period are ample proof that Judaism rebounded from its nadir, reached at the time of the Babylonian exile; this is particularly evident in the consolations of the second Isaiah and the hymns of triumph and despair characteristic of the Psalms from the Hasmonean period. In addition, the later books of the Bible can serve as historical sources for periods and places about which there is otherwise very little known; this is particularly so with regard to Daniel and Qohelet. Finally, by discerning the times and places of the various books, modern scholarship has provided certain information regarding the canonization process, which, according to Krochmal, displays the greatness of spirit and intellect of the men of the Great Assembly.

The third pattern that emerges from Krochmal's biblical studies is reflected in the notion that all, or almost all, of the conclusions of modern scholarship are not to be considered new or challenging to the rabbinic tradition. For, despite the rabbis' insistence that, say, the book of Qohelet was written by Solomon, there are sufficient indications that they in fact knew otherwise, just as modern scholars did. At times the "indications" that Krochmal claims to have found are quite far-fetched; one would not, under ordinary circumstances, be
inclined to interpret these phrases as Krochmal does. Yet, it is precisely this fact that illuminates how important it was to
the author to establish that the rabbis really did know the
Bible critically. Indeed, I believe that the passages Krochmal
cites are not to be seen as the basis for his claims; they are
rather designed to support—and perhaps convince others of
—what he considered necessarily true a priori. For Krochmal,
the rabbis studied the Bible more intensely than anyone, and
were no less intelligent and discerning than anyone else. It is
therefore inconceivable to him that the rabbis would not have
known what seems obvious to modern scholars. Further,
Krochmal sincerely believed in the esoteric tradition, and, in
fact, argues that such a tradition is necessary, since the leaders
had to accommodate their teachings, particularly in matters
of faith, to the uneducated masses (Guide, p. 242). Thus,
given the rabbis’ knowledge of the Bible, and the “fact” of an
esoteric tradition, extensive proof that the rabbis knew the
Bible critically is not necessary, for it can all be readily
presumed. The passages that Krochmal cites should be seen
primarily as supporting this claim, not establishing it. In any
event, it is clear that advancing this claim is one of the
primary goals of Krochmal’s biblical studies, for it shows that
modern scholarship does not challenge the tradition when
properly understood. Therefore, overall, there is much to be
gained by pursuing critical Bible study, and little to be lost.

The patterns that have been described help to confirm the
emerging portrait of Krochmal and his Guide. He is to be
seen as one who is fiercely loyal to his tradition, but is
convinced that an unsophisticated understanding of that tra-
dition would lead to its demise, given the advent of critical
philosophy and historiography. His biblical studies are an attempt to enhance that tradition by helping to reaffirm its continuous world-historical significance, while at the same time demonstrating that the findings of modern scholarship are already known to, or, at least, are compatible with the Jewish intellectual tradition. This is, in fact, the overarching theme of the entire Guide.\textsuperscript{55}

NOTES


2. I do not mean to mitigate the revolutionary character of Mendelssohn's project, nor do I mean to deny the influence of contemporary scholarship (particularly that of Lowth) on Mendelssohn's work. I simply mean to suggest that the \textit{historical} criticism of the Bible is not to be found in Mendelssohn's \textit{Biur} (reprint, Jerusalem: Makor, 1974). See Alexander Altmann, \textit{Moses Mendelssohn} (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1973), pp. 368–420 and 486.


4. This is not to suggest that all who affirmed Mosaic authorship followed traditional teaching regarding how Moses "authored" the Pentateuch. Starting with Jean Astruc the theory developed that Moses used earlier sources to put together the Pentateuch, thus explaining some of the problems identified by Hobbes, Spinoza and many others. In a sense, Moses was seen more as an editor than a writer; still, the entire Pentateuch was viewed as having come forth with the imprimatur of Moses, even in the third edition of Eichhorn's \textit{Einleitung} (on which see below).
5. Indeed, Hitzi g argued that the entire second half of the book dates from the post-exilic period.

6. This centrality may be illustrated by the mishnah in Sanhedrin (10:1) that states that among those denied a portion in the world to come are those who deny the divine origin of the Pentateuch. Further, at Sifre Numbers 112, we find the view that even one who says that Moses wrote something on his own, rather than on the basis of a communication from the Holy One, fits the category of one who despises the word of the Lord (Numbers 15:31), a capital crime. (On this, see the discussion of Meir Ish-Shalom in Beit Talmud, vol. 1, pp. 234–39.) Clearly, the rabbis considered the tradition that Moses wrote the entire Pentateuch with divine direction as absolutely central to the Judaism they were fashioning. Similarly, the eighth principle of Maimonides’ famous thirteen insists on this view and its centrality within Jewish life. For a recent reaffirmation of this position and its legal ramifications, see Moses Feinstein, Iggerot Moshe, “Yoreh De’ah,” vol. 3, nos. 114–15.

7. It seems to me that the need for critical distance helps explain why the field of biblical studies was dominated by Protestants, primarily Lutherans, and not Catholics and Jews. The traditions that Protestant biblical critics challenged were not their own, but were rather the bequest of the Roman Church or the synagogue. (That the issue was the integrity of church or synagogue traditions and not necessarily the text itself was well understood by Voltaire, who writes, “It is not said in the Pentateuch that Moses was its author: it would therefore have been permissible to attribute it to another man to whom the divine spirit might have dictated it, if the Church had not decided that the book is by Moses” [Philosophical Dictionary, p. 401]. Voltaire’s sarcasm notwithstanding, there is much insight here.) For this reason, Luther and Calvin could make claims in the sixteenth century that Jews found difficult to accept in the nineteenth. On this, see Krauss, Geschichte, pp. 16–18. See also J. C. O’Neill, “The Study of the New Testament,” in Ninian Smart et al., eds., Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), vol. 3, pp. 143–78, esp. 143–47, for a discussion of how the buffer of church and synagogue fertilized Protestant inquiry into the New Testament. Nevertheless, there were Jews who did deal critically with the Pentateuch, among them Isaak Marcus Jost, who was a devotee of
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the so-called "fragmentary hypothesis," particularly for Genesis; see his "Anhang zum Zehnten Buch" in his Geschichte der Israeliten, (Berlin: 1821) vol. 3, pp. 121–32; and Lazarus Bendavid, in his "Über geschriebenes und mündliches Gesetz" in ZWJ, pp. 472–500.


9. In truth, Krochmal’s discussion leaves much of the biblical-critical program untouched, as many critics argue that the post-exilic books were of far lesser quality than the pre-exilic books. This view was to become crucial in the dating of biblical books.

10. See, e.g., the arguments of Isaac Abravanel regarding the relationship between Kings and Jeremiah and the difficulties that pertain thereto in his introduction to his commentary on the Prophets. In general, Abravanel’s two introductions to the Prophets (former and latter) are fascinating documents, in that he displays bold independence in places, denying that Joshua could have written the book that carries his name, or that Samuel could have written the entire book that carries his, while at the same time attempting to defend the larger contours of the rabbinic understanding of the emergence and ordering of the Bible. As Richard Simon pointed out, had Abravanel applied the same standards and techniques to the Pentateuch, he would certainly have had to deny Mosaic authorship. See Simon, Histoire critique du vieux testament. (Rotterdam: 1684), p. 45.


12. One will find elements of this even in Luzzatto, who castigates Krochmal for his reliance on Eichhorn rather than the rabbis. See also the opening paragraph of Yehoshua Heshel Schorr’s “letter” dealing with biblical criticism in idem, ed. He-Halutz, (reprint, Jerusalem: Makor 1972) vol. 1, pp. 97–98, in which Schorr responds to an unnamed writer who had written him a letter in which he apparently castigated Krochmal, together with Reggio and Luzzatto, for not resisting this gentile criticism in order to rescue the precious treasure, the Bible, from them. See also Zvi Hirsh Chajes’s Imre Binah, in Kol Sifrei MHRZ Chajes, (Jerusalem: 1958) p. 872b

14. This claim of esotericism, in addition to its use by Jewish philosophers in the Middle Ages, is defended by Krochmal on practical grounds in his discussion of rabbinic texts (see text below), and is also necessitated by Krochmal’s epistemological views in which, of necessity, religious ideas are expressed representationally, cloaking the speculative content of the idea. For Krochmal, this apparently applies to historical claims as well as philosophical ones. There is no other way to explain his sense that one can, indeed should, make claims that are not literally true, such as that David wrote Psalm 137. This claim, prudently but inaccurately advanced by the tradition, carries with it some other lesson which is of value, and the rabbis were correct in cultivating it then; its continued cultivation in the modern period would, however, be counterproductive due to changed circumstance.

15. In addition to the examples that will be brought below, Krochmal’s exegetical technique may be seen in his discussion of the biblical books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel and Zechariah. His critical conclusions are in all cases presented as an explanation of a *baraita* (an ancient rabbinic source), as though hidden within the *baraita* are all the critical findings of modern research. For further information regarding the specifics of Krochmal’s argument as it pertains to these books, see my dissertation, “Rabbinic Judaism,” pp. 117–33.

16. “Tosafists” are medieval Franco-German commentators on the Talmud, who flourished during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Many of their comments are included in virtually all printed editions of the Talmud.

17. On the basis of this consideration, Schorr advanced one of his boldest—and most absurd—claims; he argued that the Hezekiah referred to must be the Hezekiah, or the son of Hezekiah, referred to in the Mishnah (Shabbat 1:4), who lived, presumably, in the time of Hillel and Shammai (see Schorr, *He-Halutz*, vol. 1, pp. 98–99).
18. See the comments of Rashi and Kimhi on the first verse of chapter 40.

19. In this Spinoza was preceded by a number of scholars, among them Thomas Hobbes; indeed, already Luther had raised the question. Nevertheless, Spinoza’s place in the history of Bible criticism is secure, since it was he who established it as a “science”; in particular, Spinoza’s text was no doubt the most significant one as far as the origins of Jewish criticism are concerned.


21. It is at this point that the interests of traditional Jews and Christians converge, albeit for different reasons. Jews understood the prophecies of Isaiah in terms of the eighth and sixth centuries B.C.E., although affirming the eighth-century origins of all of the material. Christians, too, affirm the eighth-century origins of the material but see much of it—and certainly what was important—as referring to the birth and ministry of Jesus. Thus, both took umbrage at the claim that the materials must date from the time they address, and only address the time from which they date. Recognizing this convergence of interest, Franz Delitzsch recommended the commentaries of the Jewish exegetes Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865) and Meir Leibush Malbim (1809–1879) to his audience, stating that each is an important exemplum of commentary rooted in the correct appreciation of prophecy. See Delitzsch, Biblischer Commentar, p. 29.

22. It is very important to note that Krochmal takes for granted that his readership will be familiar with the claims from these “introductions,” or, at least, that it will have ready access to them. This supports the argument that Krochmal is engaged in apologetic reconciliation of the traditional and modern biblical study, and that he is not interested in actually schooling his readership in the fine points of biblical criticism. His readers will already know that some people claim that the latter part of Isaiah derives from a different prophet; it is his intention to give sanction to such views, while also resolving the attendant difficulties.

he states that the scholars refer to the rabbinic statement regarding the order of the prophets (cited in the text below). Ben Ze'ev does not merely argue for the existence of a second Isaiah; he divides the last twenty-seven chapters of the book into three discrete sections. Krochmal does not deal with this question at all. This is in keeping with the portrait of Krochmal presented here; given that scholarly opinion at this point was far from unequivocal, there was no reason to deal with the issue. Krochmal's main goal is achieved simply by positing the post-exilic origins of this part of the book, and the less deviation from the tradition, the better.

24. It will be recalled that in chapter 2 we saw Krochmal defending the possibility of prophecy on philosophical grounds. He argued there that what the ancients described as "prophecy" should be understood as a representational expression of the corresponding Idee: the divine acting on the natural impulse to communicate in order to achieve self-consciousness. For this reason, we must take Krochmal seriously when he affirms the possibility of prophecy but constrains it by logical considerations. His presentation is no denial of the reality of divine communication, which can include general facts about the future; therefore, Dimon, Klausner and others are incorrect in reading into Krochmal a more critical position than he actually presents. See, in particular, M. Dimon, "Rimze Bikoret ha-Torah b'Sifro shel Ranak," Tarbiz, 18 (1947) who argues that Krochmal harbored doubts about the Mosaic origins of the Pentateuch. While it would not be at all surprising if Krochmal felt, together with many other Jewish scholars, that an occasional passage or two was a later interpolation, he nevertheless insists that the Torah is to be seen as a Mosaic document, and I can see no references, cryptic or otherwise, to suggest differently. See also Avraham Greenbaum, "Bikoret ha-Miqra b'Mishnat Ranak: Iyyunim," in Avraham Greenbaum and Alfred L. Ivry, eds., Hagat u-Maaseh: Sefer Zikaron l'Shim' on Rawidowicz (Haifa: Haifa University Press, 5743), pp. 101-5.

25. There is some proximity between this position and that enunciated by Eichhorn (Einleitung, pp. 90-91). However, the difference between the two regarding the nature of prophecy, and the reason that specific arguments are impossible, is striking. For Eichhorn, prophecy is to be considered as poetry, and while it is possible for a poet to imagine himself in another place and time, he cannot achieve a
literary creation that does not betray his own time. Further, the images in such a vision must be general, not specific. In the case of the second Isaiah, however, "das Exilium und die dasselbe begleitenden Umstände sind bis in die tiefste Einzelheit herab verfolgt, und in so zufälligen, oft unbeträchtlichen Zügen nach einer historischen — nicht dichterischen — Wahrheit dargestellt, die sich erst erreichen lässt, wenn man das Elend, das man zu schildern hat, nicht erst ahnet, sondern schon fühlt" (p. 90–91). Krochmal clearly wished to avoid the notion that he is denying the essence of prophecy; certainly God could provide an eighth-century B.C.E. prophet with specific images of the sixth century, although one would be hard pressed to explain for what purpose. (Krochmal's version of this argument has been restated in a recent discussion of some of these issues by a Christian scholar, David G. Meade, in his Pseudonymity and Canon [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987], p. 31, n. 51.) In any event, Krochmal states that the "self-proclaimed pious" should not think that he is denying the traditional notion of prophecy. Luzzatto thought that this was a reference to him, and responded sharply. See his Meḥkerei ha-Yahadut, vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 30–48.

26. See the interesting remarks of Abravanel at the beginning of his introduction to the latter prophets.

27. Guide, p. 114. This argument had already been advanced by Ben-Ze’ev, Mavo, p. 27a. Luzzatto strongly condemn this "counterfeit" proof, arguing that the author of the baraita must have used a standard of arrangement other than chronology (Luzzatto, Meḥkerei, pp. 34–35). The BT is also perplexed by the divergence form chronological sequence and answers as it deems appropriate.

28. Luzzatto is particularly vociferous in claiming that this passage, if anything, proves the opposite of Krochmal's claim, for it shows that if there were sufficient materials a prophet's legacy would not be attached to another's, but would rather warrant a separate book. Thus, according to authoritative rabbinic thinking, one prophet's work will not be intermingled with another's unless there were insufficient material to warrant its own book. The rabbis, therefore, clearly would not have considered the possibility that the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah were the work of a different prophet. See Luzzatto, pp. 35–36. I do not deal with the issue of whether this rabbinic passage, or any rabbinic passage, can provide evidence for the claims
advanced here, because this issue is irrelevant, since for Krochmal and Luzzatto there can be no doubt that it can.

29. Krochmal's speculations regarding Ibn Ezra were known to Franz Delitzsch, who cited Krochmal's work on this point; see Delitzsch, *Biblischer Commentar*, p. 24n. I should also point out that Delitzsch was obviously not impressed with Krochmal's argument that the ancient rabbis already knew there were two Isaiahs. Indeed, one of his arguments against the proposition that there were two or more Isaiahs is that "(d)ie synagogale, später die kirchliche Wissenschaft hat, abgesehen von spurlos vorübergegangenen Grillen Einzelner, bis in vorige Jahrh. hinein überall vorausgesetzt, dass die kanonischen Bücher des A.T. den h. Geist zu dem Einen *auctor primarius* und übrigens diejenigen Männer zu Verfassern haben, unter deren Namen sie überliefert sind" (p. 24).

30. There are those, such as Luzzatto, who maintain that Krochmal's appropriation of rabbinic materials is directed apologetically at the ultra-Orthodox, by whom he did not wish to be considered a heretic. Yet Krochmal would have to have been remarkably naive to believe that the ultra-Orthodox would forgive him for accepting Eichhorn rather than the traditional explanation, no matter how many hints he could find in the rabbinic literature; this is particularly true when one considers the troubles he endured at the hands of the Hasidic community of Galicia (see Rawidowicz, "Introduction", pp. 41ff.). Further, thinking that Krochmal addresses the Orthodox misses the point of Krochmal's work; he is not interested in addressing those forces he considered anti-intellectual, and, in any event, he knew that they would not be impressed by his appeal to esotericism grounded in modern epistemology. Rather, he addresses those Jews who were impressed by the claims of modern scholarship, thinking that he can reinterpret Judaism in accord with modern thought. In his attempt to address the needs of the Galician maskilim, he is similar to Meir Leibush Malbim, who also sought to address the maskilim on their terms, in this case grammar and philology. Clearly, we find in Krochmal a much greater sense of the needs of his intended readership, as he is much more open to the demands of modern scholarship, whereas the work of Malbim quickly became the possession of that part of the Jewish world that would not permit the intermingling of critical research techniques and Holy Scripture.
31. See Tosefta Yadayim 2:14, Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah 1:12, the Targum to Kohelet 1:1, inter alia.


33. Krochmal argues that this is not to say that the rabbis did not regard Proverbs and Song of Songs as being Solomonic. For, with these two it is far more credible that the proverbs and songs were part of the consciousness of the people and they could thus survive in oral form through many generations. Furthermore, Krochmal claims that it is clear that these books are composites; therefore, the Solomonic elements, being less than the entire books, could easily have been passed down from generation to generation, while others would imitate these literary forms. They were appended to the Solomonic compositions and made into one book in the time of Hezekiah. This is clearly not the case with Qohelet, which is undoubtedly the work of a single author (Guide, p. 142). This last claim, too, follows Eichhorn, Einleitung, pp. 267ff. Krochmal's attempt to limit the thrust of his remarks to those areas established by Bible critics again indicates that we do not have disinterested Bible criticism in Krochmal, but rather an attempt to mitigate the degree of confrontation between traditional and modern scholarship—a confrontation that traditional scholarship was destined to lose if its latent sophistication was not made manifest.

34. This explanation is offered in accordance with the Tosefta, Yadayim 2:14, ed. Zuckermandel, p. 673, and BT Megillah 7a.

35. This claim is no doubt based on the story found in 1 Kings 3:5-14, specifically verse twelve, which states that God endowed Solomon with a wise and discerning heart, the likes of which no human ever had or will have.

36. Luzzatto in particular agonized over the acceptance of this work into the canon; see his "Divre Qohelet" in Ozar Nehmad vol. 3 (1860), pp. 17ff. and vol. 4, pp. 47ff.; see also Heinrich Graetz's "Das Buch Kohelet, seine Entstehungszeit und sein Charakter," in MGWJ, vol. 18 (1869), pp. 481-507.

37. Guide, p. 143. Among this group Krochmal mentions only Moses Mendelssohn. Ben Ze'ev, the latter's disciple, also affirms the Solomonic authorship of Qohelet, attempting to refute some of the claims of Eichhorn. See Ben Ze'ev, pp. 93b-95a. Indeed, long after Krochmal's death there remained those maskilim who attempted to maintain this rabbinic tradition and explicitly took issue with Krochmal's
discussion. See Binyamin Ze'ev Weiler, "Al Sefer Qohelet," in Ozar ha-Sifrut (1888), pp. 95–103.

38. Guide, p. 149. Krochmal here quotes a verse, Psalms 119:26. This verse has a long history in Judaism as being a sanction for occasionally breaking the tradition in order to serve the Lord. See, e.g., the Mishnah, Berakhot 9:5 and the corresponding section of the BT, 63a. See also the traditional commentaries on this mishnah, and BT Yoma 69a, Gittin 60a and Temurah 14b. Maimonides, in the introduction to his Guide, acknowledges that he is revealing things that have been concealed, and cites this verse to justify his breaking from previous tradition. See Maimonides, Guide of the Perplexed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 16. Obviously, Krochmal is here saying that even if his attempts at reconciling traditional and modern scholarship should prove unsuccessful, and he is thus violating the tradition in making his assertions regarding Qohelet, he is justified because the times demand it, and he may therefore “break Thy law.” If, however a better solution than his can be offered, he is certainly prepared to accept it. Again here, the profile of a traditionalist struggling to appropriate modern culture and remain a committed Jew becomes clear.


40. Zunz, in his Vorträge also argues that Psalms 74, 79 and 83 date from the encounter of the Jews with the Syrians, while Psalm 44 he considers as originating “im Exil.” See Zunz, p. 16, notes “e” and “f.” Cf. de Wette, p. 385.

41. Guide, p. 153. Krochmal bases the claim that they were killed because of their faith on verse 23 of this Psalm.


43. That is, Psalms 146–50 = Greek Hallel. The name Egyptian Hallel for Psalms 113–18 is found in the BT, B’rakhot 56a, and seems to be based on the position, accepted in BT P’sahim 117a that these
Psalmse were recited by Moses and the Israelites upon their miraculous rescue at the Red Sea.

44. The distinction between exoteric and aggadic here is Krochmal’s and demands some comment. The exoteric tradition to which Krochmal refers is found in the baraita in Baba Batra. As we have seen, such traditions can be expected to allude to hidden truths. This is the case, for example, with the baraita’s listing of Isaiah after Jeremiah and Ezekiel. “Aggadic” here seems to be a derisive term; this is understandable in light of Krochmal’s attitude to some portions of the aggadah, and his claim that many of them originate outside rabbinic circles, and find their way into the sacred texts of Judaism without rabbinic sanction. On this, see below chapter 6. Thus, aggadic teachings here may well refer to matters that one can safely ignore altogether; this is not the case with the exoteric traditions. In the exoteric tradition under discussion here, the fact that the rabbis attribute the Psalms to ten elders and David is seen as indicating that the rabbis recognized the composite nature of the book of Psalms. I should point out, however, that the ten elders to whom the baraita attributes this book all lived prior to David’s time, and David is depicted as having anthologized their work. Thus, one would have to try very hard to find an allusion to Hasmonean Psalms in this baraita.

45. Of course, such a problem was present with the latter part of Isaiah as well, as it appears that a second prophet passed his work off as that of the “first Isaiah”; Krochmal did not seem to be aware of the problem. Perhaps he felt the identification was simply an error, or perhaps he would have conceptualized it along the lines of Meade in *Pseudonymity and Canon*, and seen it as an issue of pseudonymity rather than pseudepigraphy, the former carrying with it no moral question-ability.

46. Thus, Eichhorn can write: “Es scheint also, dass ein Schriftsteller aus den spätern Zeiten des Hebräischen Alterthums diese philosophischen Betrachtungen unter Salomo’s Namen niedergeschrieben habe, um seinen Weisheitssprüchen mehr Ansehen, Eingang und Gewicht durch einen berühmten und allgemein verehrten Namen aus dem goldnen Zeitalter des Hebräischen Staats zu verschaffen.” Elsewhere, he explicitly states that this was an effort at fraud (Täuschung). *Einleitung*, vol. 5, pp. 261–62, 263, 266. While it is true that Eichhorn perhaps mitigated the harshness of this judgment with his question, “Und
warum hätte der Verfasser dieses Kleid nicht sollen wählen dürfen, da sich doch offenbar mehrere Schriftsteller des A.T. poetische Dichtungen erlauben?" (p. 263), it still seems to me that Eichhorn felt that the author was a man of questionable moral stature. De Wette refers to the supposed Solomonic authorship of the book as a "gar nicht verdeckte fiction" in *Lehrbuch*, p. 406. For Voltaire, the issue was not so much one of moral turpitude, but rather of the stupidity of the author in not being able to carry out his deception. He writes:

Critics have trouble persuading themselves that the book is by Solomon. It is not natural for him to say: "Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child!" The Jews hadn't yet had such kings. It is not natural for him to say; "I observe the face of the king." It is much more likely that the author wished to have it that Solomon was the speaker, and yet, by that mental lapse of which all Jewish works are full, he often forgot in the body of the work that a king was supposed to be speaking. (*Philosophical Dictionary*, p. 459)

(Regarding the first verse Voltaire cited, 10:16, see Graetz, "Das Buch Kohelet," p. 499.) Krochmal was obviously aware of the Eichhorn passages, and probably knew what Voltaire had written as well; yet he somewhat disingenuously states that he does not know what the "Christian scholars" have to say on this issue, but imagines that they would say we have here an attempt on the part of a later writer to "disguise himself in the wrap of Solomon who was renowned as a wise" king (p. 145). Krochmal may well have wanted to downplay this position lest he succeed in inadvertently convincing his readers that the book of Qohelet did indeed originate in these morally questionable circumstances.

47. Again, Voltaire: "What remains surprising is that this impiou s work should have been consecrated among the canonical books. If we had to establish the canon of the Bible today, we certainly wouldn't include Ecclesiastes" (op. cit.).

48. *Guide*, p. 146. Krochmal makes clear that he is referring to the main part of the Assembly and not its remnants, for this book was written prior to the infiltration of Greek influence into Jewish society. (See next chapter for an explanation.) This is important for him because the period of the main assembly was a "golden age," in which the Assembly was inspired by the holy spirit, and was not subject to the tribulations that political upheavals caused in the time of the remnants of the Assembly. There is thus no possibility of error on the
part of the Assembly in accepting Qohelet into the canon. The contradiction between this claim and his third proof that the rabbis knew the correct provenance of Qohelet is clear, and stands without need of further comment.


50. *Guide*, p. 147. Krochmal provides a number of prooftexts to buttress this assertion.


52. Bruce M. Metzger, “Literary Forgeries and Canonical Perspectives,” cited in Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986), p. 110. I cite this work because of Metzger’s standing in both the scholarly and religious communities. In fact, there have been dozens of attempts at resolving this “problem,” many of them reviewed in Meade, pp. 4–12; the remainder of Meade’s book represents yet another attempt at resolving the problem. It is interesting to note that, for the most part, recent attempts to deal with the issue derive from scholars of Protestant background.

53. Students of biblical scholarship may well be interested in Krochmal’s conclusions regarding other books and issues. His work deals with Daniel, Esther, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and Zechariah. As my interest here is in drawing an intellectual portrait of him, I do not intend to deal with this further, other than to say that the patterns discussed obtain throughout. The interested student may consult my dissertation, chapter 4, for the details.

I do wish to mention one issue, though, since it relates to Qohelet and to the question of pseudepigraphy, and that concerns the closing verses of the book. Already Voltaire realized that the closing verses of this text must be the product of a different hand: “The whole work is by a materialist, at once sensual and disgusted. A few edifying words about God were inserted into the last verse, it would seem, only to diminish the scandal that such a book might have caused” (*Philosophical Dictionary*, p. 459). Krochmal argues that these verses (12:9–14)
were in fact added by those responsible for closing the canon, not for
the purpose of making the book canonically acceptable (as indeed
Luzzatto argued, referring to a different set of verses); this is based
primarily on 12:12 which warns against the making of too many
books. This represented a fitting close to the canon as a whole; their
addition is thus not intentionally pseudepigraphic. They are rather an
appendix. This argument was accepted by Graetz, and brought to
the attention of the larger reading public by virtue of its endorsement in
his German book *Qohelet*, (Berlin: 1871), p. 47. Ewald rejected this
view out of hand in his review of Graetz (*Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen*,
[1871], Stück 11, pp. 428–29; I am grateful to Prof. Ismar Schorsch
for directing me to this reference), stating that it is achieved “durch
die beliebten Willkürlichkeiten.” Recently, Brevard Childs has briefly
dealt with the issue, again dismissing Krochmal’s claim. (See his
*Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* [Philadelphia: Fortress,
1979], p. 586.)

54. This is particularly clear with regard to the late Psalms, where
Krochmal simply states that he is certain that they knew about them,
but hid this knowledge. It would be inconceivable to him that they
would not know such a thing. Again here, it is clear that we cannot
think of Krochmal in strictly historicist terms, as it is inconceivable
to him that the rabbis were simply the products of a different age and
a different mentality. Such a concession would have justified all the
trends he was combating.

55. A similar *Tendenz* is at work in the biblical studies of Graetz, who, in
fact, extends the so-called “biblical period” until the time of Herod,
during whose reign the book of *Qohelet* was supposedly compiled.
Heinrich Ewald understood well—if not sympathetically—what the
issue was:

> Denn weiter hängt damit die Frage über die Pharisäer zusammen: diese
müssen untadelig sein, weil sie im N.T. nicht so gelten; und nicht die
erhabenen Urzeiten des Volkes Israel noch auch die Zeiten der leuchtenden
dichten Schar seiner unsterblichen Propheten, sondern nur die letzten Zeiten
welche unmittelbar zum Talmud hinführten müssen die herrlichsten und von
allen Vorzügen strahlendsten sein. Also müssen in diesen letzten Zeiten auch
erst durchgängig die schönsten Bücher geschrieben sein, und es ist nicht
wahr, was man meint, dass das Hohelied in das zehnte Jahrhundert vor Chr.
gehöre: es muss in die Pharisäischen Zeiten herabgerückt werden, auch damit

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die Pharisaer in Bausch und Bogen als die vortrefflichsten aller Menschen gerühmt werden können. (From his review of Graetz's Schir ha-Schirim in the Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen [1872], Stück 1, p. 27; again, I am grateful to Prof. Schorsch for directing me to this source.)

The existential capital invested by people like Krochmal and Graetz in this historiographical structure was substantial, and must be understood if we are to appreciate the issues animating Jewish biblical and Talmudic histories produced in the nineteenth century.