

Die Entstehung der Weisheit Salomos
Friedrich Focke
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Dr. Focke in this monograph takes his stand with the writers who in recent years have revived the theory of the composite character of the *Sapientia Salomonis*. The unity of the work had been denied as early as the middle of the seventeenth century by Houbigant, and towards the close of the following century by Eichhorn, afterwards also by Bretschneider, Bertholdt, and Engelbrecht not to speak of the fantastic view of Nachtigal, who regarded Wisdom as a mosaic to whose composition no less than seventy-nine wise men, divided into two assemblies, each of which had held three sessions, had contributed. These earlier denials of the unity of the book seemed to have been permanently disposed of by the commentary of Grimm which appeared in 1860, and under whose influence the later discussions of Deane, Farrar, Bois and Siegfried felt warranted in setting aside every idea of compositeness without further refutation. Since the beginning of the present century, however, the question has been reopened and there are indications that the tide is setting the other way. Lincke in 1903, Weber in 1904, Kohler in 1906, Gartner in 1912, though widely differing as to the component parts, all agreed in the verdict that the book is composite. Focke is of the same opinion, only he finds himself unable to support the arguments advanced and the concrete conclusions reached by these recent writers, and comes forward with a new division, based on a new method of analysis. While both the earlier and the later dissectors thought to discover the principal seam at the beginning of Chap. 11 or 12 or 13, Focke locates it between Chapters 5 and 6. He argues at length that the insertion of the treatise on idolatry contained in Chapters 13-15 is so carefully led up to in the immediately preceding and so naturally linked with to the immediately following context, that all doubt of the original unity of authorship is here excluded. Wendland and Geffcken have shown that there existed a fixed scheme for the apologetic and polemic treatment of idolatry on the part of Jewish writers, the identical outlines of which can be pointed out in Philo, Josephus, the *Oracula Sibyllina* and *Sapientia*, so that on this score also no ground whatever exists for assigning the treatise on idolatry to a separate author. The writer has in this section simply followed a traditional model which furnished him not merely with the form but practically also with the substance of his digressions. The insertion of the treatise on idolatry at this particular point was caused by the emergence of the principle repeatedly stated in the closing verses of Chapter 12 and carefully taken up again in the opening words of Chapter 16, that the object of sin is made by God the instrument of punishment of the sinner, for the illustration of which the fate of the Egyptian idolaters was particularly adapted. But the same idea of retaliation already appears in Chapter 11:15, and proves the coherence of what lies between this verse and Chapter 13. Apart from this the unity of Chapter 11:5ff. with the entire sequel of the book is established by the consistent method of contrasting with a calamity inflicted upon the Egyptians a blessing bestowed upon the Israelites. This method called by the rhetoricians *συγκρισις* is first introduced in 11:5 and afterwards applied till the end of the book. And inasmuch as Chapter 6 ff. are obviously continuous with the sequel, Focke considers the literary unity of everything following Chapter 5:24 demonstrated.

The problem of the book lies according to him in the relation of Chapters 1-5 to the remainder of the book. On the one hand the linguistic phenomena are to such a degree identical that the author of the later chapters must have had a hand in writing the introductory part. On the other hand the doctrinal contents and the historical situation are so different in the two sections that they cannot

possibly have the same provenience. And side by side with the fundamental sameness a measure of linguistic peculiarity also appears in the first five chapters. Focke thinks that justice can be best done to these divergent features by assuming that Chapters 1-5 are of Palestinian origin, were originally written in Hebrew, had reference to the persecution of the Pharisees by the aristocratic Sadducean party during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus 102-75 B.C. The Alexandrian writer translated this treatise into Greek and prefixed it to his own discourse written with reference to the persecution of the Jews in Egypt by Ptolemy VIII Lathyrus, about the year 88 B.C. In this way both the linguistic and the doctrinal differences are believed to become reconcilable with the plain signs of a uniform redaction of the whole.

We must confess that this part of the author's argument appears less convincing to us than the preceding one. None of his reasons for finding a different author in the first five chapters carries conclusive weight. It is true the figure of wisdom is not equally in prominence in these chapters as in the later section, Chapters 7-9. Neither, however, is it actually absent, and after Chapter 9 it again goes into relative abeyance, although this part of the book is assigned by Focke to the same writer who composed the panegyric on wisdom of 7-9. That a different conception of God is found in each of the two parts, we cannot admit in the sense that the two aspects, that of the mercy and that of the justice of God, could not have coexisted in the same mind and colored in succession two parts of the same discourse. Two stages in development of the conception of God at any rate can hardly be represented here, since, as stated above, the author places the two documents united in Wisdom in the closest contiguity as to their origin. The ethical and the national element in the divine character, the former of which Focke finds in Chapters 1-5, the latter in the sequel, could also lodge together and find successive expression in the same work, the more so since it is not excluded that the various parts of the treatise may have been written at different times and under the influence of different moods. The motivation of the mercy of God from His omnipotence seems to have been a characteristic feature of the later Judaism but its prominence in the second part and absence from the first part cannot prove anything, since this is clearly connected with the emphasis on the divine mercy in the later and the emphasis on the divine justice in the earlier chapters. The main weight is thrown by the author on the eschatological difference: the outlook of the pious in the first part of the book is towards the future recompense after the resurrection, whilst in the second part everything is staked on the immortality of the soul. This could have force only if the first section had on the author's own view been composed at a time when the intermediate state was to the mind of Palestinian Judaism a blank, and the idea of the relatively blessed state of the souls of the pious previously to the resurrection unknown in that quarter. But the contemporary apocalyptic literature of that date proves the opposite. And there is nothing to show that the writer of Chapters 1-5 ignored or denied the pre-resurrection blessedness, no more than it can be proven that the writer of the following chapters was opposed to the resurrection-hope. The whole difference is a relative one of emphasis, and Focke himself is compelled to admit that the resurrection itself is not explicitly referred to in Chapters 1-5. But the whole contention that the atmosphere of the two sections is so different as to postulate difference of origin is weakened by Focke's own assumption of a sufficient degree of likeness in the two situations to make the earlier one adaptable to the later one in the view of the Alexandrian writer. If such great doctrinal divergence existed, how did the second writer come to overlook this or to put up with it? If his mind was sufficiently eclectic for this, we can scarcely doubt that it may have lodged the alleged divergencies from the beginning within itself.

To the linguistic argument in favor of difference of authorship, we suppose the writer himself allows only secondary weight. Its force also is broken by the admission that the second writer has through his translation of the first document left his literary stamp upon this. This renders it *a priori* difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate difference of origin from the language. Of course if it could be proven that a Hebrew or Aramaic original shines through, the case would be different. Focke actually attempts to make this plausible in a few instances. In none of these the evidence is clear enough to amount to linguistic demonstration. It is far less illuminating than the phenomena to which Wellhausen has called attention as evidencing the Aramaic background of the Synoptics.

As to the historical situation to which *Wisdom* addresses itself, we do not think the author has succeeded in definitely overthrowing the traditional view, according to which the enmity and persecution reflected in the first five chapters, as well as that of the later section, arose from the Egyptian authorities. Focke thinks this impossible for Chapters 1-5, because, in part at least, as he correctly observes, the enmity and persecution are from Jews against Jews, and moreover moved on lines apparently identical with the party-lines drawn between Sadducees and Pharisees. Both features, however, can be explained, on the common view. Especially if the date of the writing be put at the time of Caligula and during the troubles caused by this emperor's provocation of the religious sensibilities of the Jews, there is reason to believe that the writer was confronted not merely with pagan enemies but also with apostate paganized Hebrews, who joined in the persecution of their own race. That the difference between the parties coincides more or less with that between Pharisees and Sadducees, need not cause wonder, for to a considerable extent the Sadducaic position approximated that of paganism.

Attention should be called to two special conclusions of the author which are interesting from a theological point of view. Focke combats the almost commonly-accepted view that *Wisdom* marks an earlier stage in the development of that Alexandrian Hebrew-Greek religious philosophy of which Philo is supposed to be the consummate representative. A philosopher the author of *Wisdom* was in no sense. The Hellenistic-coloring and the few philosophical phrases that have entered into his work he derived not from the study of the schools but from the common atmosphere of culture in which he lived. As to Philo he cannot have back of him such a continuous development as nowadays is frequently assumed, because in that case his isolation at the time and subsequently becomes unintelligible.

The second point relates to the alleged influence of *Wisdom* on Paul. The author devotes considerable space to a close examination of the evidence adduced in support of such dependence by Graf and others. His conclusion is that in no case can direct dependence be demonstrated. The cases most frequently adduced appear to be largely cases of common borrowing from the Greek Bible and show, as e.g. the handling of the figure of the potter, side by side with the unavoidable similarities, such differences of application, as positively to exclude the thought of Paul having borrowed from *Wisdom*.