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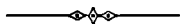
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Behold the Prophet. The Father speaks. "This is My beloved Son; hear Him." With reverence we cry, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!" Behold the Priest. "If any man hath sinned, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Behold the King—"the Priest upon the throne." See in Him the final triumph of redeemed humanity. In His kingdom every subject shall be a brother, a priest and a king unto God. Evangelical religion can never die so long as it honours the Holy Ghost in His word, and exalts the God-man in His offices of Prophet, Priest and King. The crucified and glorified Saviour is still a living and active agent in the affairs of time. For Him God "made the ages." He watches with intensest interest the fortunes of His Church. Let us, then, with St. Paul commit to Him the deposit—the deposit which the great Apostle committed to Timothy, *i.e.*, the Gospel in its integrity, which on the one hand belongs to us, the commissioned officers of Christ, to keep and guard from error and abuse, but which on the other none can keep and preserve but He who first revealed it—the Incarnate Son—the crucified, risen, and now glorified Head of the Church. "He upholdeth all things by the word of His power."

J. W. BARDSLEY.



### ART. III.—THE ORIGIN OF GENESIS I. TO IX.

#### PART I.

THE knowledge which we now have that the Book of Genesis is essentially a compilation; that it is, to a large extent, composed of documents, some of which are older, by several centuries, than the time of Moses, so far from shaking, increases, if possible, our belief in its Divine origin. Just as the fact that the Bible is a library of books, written by a great variety of authors over a period of some two thousand years, increases our admiration for it as the One Book of God, so should the discovery of a similar state of things with regard to the Pentateuch have the same effect upon us. The same may be said of the Book of Psalms, and, to some extent, of St. Luke's Gospel also. Nor need we wonder if some other prophet, when transcribing the Pentateuch centuries after the age of Moses, added somewhat to it. "The statement, for instance, in Gen. xxxv. 31, that 'these are the kings that reigned in Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel,' shows that it could not have been

incorporated into the Book of Genesis until after the rise of the Israelitish monarchy."<sup>1</sup>

Not many years ago critics were led to disbelieve in the possibility of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch by the conviction of the modernness of the application of writing to literature in the true sense of the word. They thought that literature, as such, had no existence before the age of Solon, or even of the Persian wars. It therefore became impossible to conceive of a Samuel, or still less of a Moses, sitting down to compose a history, or a code of laws. It was known that the Hebrews used a form of the Phœnician alphabet, and that no inscription in that alphabet had been found which went back even to so early a date as the time of Solomon. The angular shape of the letters also indicated that they were used only for inscription on stone, metal, or wood; the invention of letters composed of curves, for writing on parchment or papyrus, was supposed to have been of a still later date.

This theory was first shaken, we believe, by the discovery of a Jewish inscription, probably of the reign of Ahab or Hezekiah, the letters of which, though engraved on stone, nevertheless have round, instead of square, angles. Thus the oldest Hebrew inscription yet discovered indicates the employment of alphabetic writing for literary, and not for monumental, purposes in the age of the kings.

Other discoveries made later on have scattered this theory to the winds, and proved that the opposite of the statement of the critics is the case. We refer the reader to "The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments" of Professor Sayce, page 39, for the wonderful account of the literature of the Sabeans and the Mæans of Yemen and Hadhramaut. The professor states that, "in days which, if Dr. Glaser is right, were contemporaneous with the Exodus of Israel, Ma'in was a cultured and prosperous realm, the mart and centre of the spice merchants of the East, whose kings founded settlements on the frontiers of Edom, and whose people practised the art of alphabetic writing."

A new light has also been cast on the history of the Phœnician alphabet by the discovery of the written monuments of these ancient kingdoms of Saba and Ma'in. That alphabet can no longer be regarded as the mother-alphabet, but becomes the daughter of an older one. Philologists had long asserted that all the Semitic languages once possessed certain sounds which were subsequently lost in the dialects of Canaan, and accordingly have no symbols to represent them in the Phœnician alphabet. The symbols which represent these

<sup>1</sup> "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," by Professor A. W. Sayce.

sounds have now been found in the written monuments of Saba and Ma'in. Again, every Phœnician letter had a name—the name of the first meaning "ox," the second "house," the third "camel," the fourth "door," and so on. Our word alphabet is a combination of the first two letters in a Greek dress. In most instances the names bear little or no resemblance to the earliest forms yet discovered of the Phœnician letters. "No amount of ingenuity, for instance, has been able to find any plausible resemblance between the earliest forms of the letters *k* or *n*, and the meaning of their names—*kaph*, 'the palm of the hand,' and *nun*, 'a fish.' But when we turn to the symbols as they appear on the monuments of Ma'in, the riddle is frequently solved, and we begin to understand why the inhabitants of Palestine gave the names they did to the letters they had borrowed from the merchants of Arabia."

But a still later discovery has carried back the history of Oriental civilization and literature to an age older even than that of the realms of Saba and Ma'in. This "discovery, made in Egypt in 1887, has revolutionized all our conceptions of ancient Oriental life and history, and has proved that the populations of Western Asia in the age of Moses were as highly cultured and literary as the populations of Western Europe in the age of the Renaissance." It has also enabled us to trace the origin of the oldest documents contained in the Book of Genesis to the land in which they had their birth, and, with a great degree of probability, to their author. This discovery was that of the cuneiform tablets of Tel-el-Amarna, by Dr. Flinders Petrie.

Tel-el-Amarna is situated on the eastern bank of the Nile, about midway between the towns of Minieh and Assiout. Amenophis IV., the last Pharaoh of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, being, on his mother's side, the grandson of a king of the country called Naharana by the Egyptians, and Aram-Naharaim in the Old Testament, was not only half an Asiatic by blood, but half an Asiatic also in religion. Amenophis forsook the worship of the gods of Egypt—in part, at least—and paid special homage to Aten, "the solar disc," the supreme Baal of the Semitic peoples of Asia, and changed his own name to Khu-n-Aten, "the glory of the solar disc." On his endeavouring to force the new creed on his unwilling subjects, the powerful hierarchy of Thebes proved too strong even for the Pharaoh, so he left the capital of his fathers, and built himself a new capital at the spot where Tel-el-Amarna now stands.

"On his departure from Thebes, Khu-n-Aten carried with him the official correspondence received by his father and

himself. It consisted of letters from the kings of Babylonia and Assyria, of Mesopotamia, Kappadokia, and Northern Syria, as well as from the Egyptian governors and protected princes in Palestine and the adjoining countries. It is this correspondence which has been discovered at Tel-el-Amarna, and its contents are of the most unexpected character."

The language of almost all the letters is Babylonian, and they are all written on clay in the cuneiform characters of Babylon. In two or three instances only does the writer use his own language, but even then the same characters are used. Strangest of all, not once is the Egyptian language or script employed. "The fact is at once startling and novel. It proves that in the century before the Exodus the Babylonian language was the common medium of literary intercourse throughout the civilized East, from the banks of the Nile to those of the Tigris and Euphrates; and that the complicated syllabary of Babylonia was taught and learned throughout the whole extent of Western Asia.

"It was difficult enough for the foreigner to learn the language, but far more difficult to master the cuneiform system of writing, which, as we have seen, the writers use even when they write in their own tongue. The cuneiform syllabary contains nearly five hundred different characters, each of which has at least two different phonetic values; in addition to which, each character may be used ideographically to denote an object or an idea. But this is not all. The cuneiform script was invented by the primitive population of Chaldea, who spoke, not a Semitic, but an agglutinative language, and, in passing to the Semitic Babylonians, not only did the pre-Semitic words, denoted by the single characters, become phonetic values, but words denoted by two or more characters became compound ideographs—the characters in combination representing a Semitic word, the syllables of which had no relation whatever to the phonetic values of the separate characters which composed it. It thus became necessary for the learner, not only to commit to memory the actual syllabary, but also the hundreds of compound ideographs which existed by the side of it. When we further remember that the cuneiform characters are not pictorial, and that their shape, therefore, unlike the Egyptian hieroglyphics, offers nothing to assist the memory, we shall begin to understand what a labour it must have been to learn them, and, consequently, to what a wide extension of knowledge and literary activity the letters of Tel-el-Amarna testify."

A considerable portion of the tablets of Tel-el-Amarna were sent from Palestine and Phœnicia. Canaan was, in fact, a centre of the correspondence which was going on with the

Egyptian court in the reign of Khu-n-Aten. Letters are dated from Lachish, Jerusalem, Gaza of the Philistines, Gaza near Shechem, Megiddo, and Bashan. There are others from the cities of Phœnicia, Gebal, Zemar, Tyre, and Sidon.

What a light does this throw on the meaning of several names of places which we find in the Old Testament. As, for instance, Kirjath-Sephar, "the city of books"; Kirjath-sannah, "the city of instruction"; Debir, "the oracle"; Nebo, "the Prophet," or "the speaker," etc.

But, above all, the tablets of Tel-el-Amarna reveal to us an almost perfect harmony existing between the history of the earliest Oriental civilization and literature and the earliest documents contained in the Book of Genesis. And this harmony becomes more manifest when we add to them the accounts of the beginnings of all things which are found in the cuneiform tablets of Babylon and Assyria. First of all, both accounts agree in tracing the origin of the civilization and literature of Canaan to Babylon. In Gen. xi. we read that the descendants of Noah journeyed eastward, and found a plain in the land of Shinar (or Babylonia), and dwelt there. And, later on, God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and brought him into the land of Canaan, and gave it to him and to his seed after him for a possession.

"Ur," says Professor Sayce, "or Uru, 'the city,' of the cuneiform texts, is now represented by the mounds of Mugheir, on the banks of the Euphrates," to the south of Babylon. "While Ur was a city of the Babylonians, Haran, where Terah died, lay far away in the north, in Mesopotamia. But it had been connected from a remote epoch with Babylonia, and its temple was dedicated to the Babylonian Moon-god, like the temple of Ur. Between Ur and Haran there was a natural connection, and a native of Ur would have found himself more at home in Haran than in any other city in the world." So much for the land in which we are to look for the origin of the earliest documents of the Bible.

The two systems of cult and culture, then, which had such an influence for good and evil upon Palestine had both of them the same land as their birthplace. Accordingly, the cuneiform tablets of Babylonia and Assyria contain just such a resemblance to the opening chapters of the Bible as we should expect to find in them. In both we find accounts of the Creation, the Sabbath, and the Flood. And in all three there are so many points of resemblance as to indicate that they must have had a common origin. The resemblances and differences between the Biblical and Babylonian accounts of the Creation are alike striking.

## 1. THE CREATION.

The very first words of the Biblical account "contain a negation of hero-worship, star-worship, animal-worship, and every other form of idolatry. They still more emphatically deny atheism and materialism, and point upwards from nature to its spiritual Creator, the Omnipotent, the Eternal, the Self-existing, the All-pervading, the Almighty" (Sir W. Dawson). Of such a Being the Babylonian account knows nothing. The idea of creation of matter is far from the thoughts of the author or authors of it. Matter, according to it, was eternal, and existed untold ages before the gods many came into existence. In our sense of the word "God," there was no God :

At the time when nothing which was called heaven existed above,  
And when nothing below had received the name of earth,  
Apsu (the abyss), the Ocean, who was their father,  
The Chaos of the deep (*Tiamat*) was she who bore them all.

When the gods were not created, not one as yet ;  
When they had neither been called by their names,  
Nor had their destinies been assigned to them by fate ;  
Then were the (great) gods created,  
Lakhum and Lakhumu issued forth first,  
Until the time they grew up and waxed old. Then Anshar and  
Kishar were produced after them.  
Days were added to days, and years were heaped on years,  
And Inlil and Ea were born in their turn,  
For Anshar and Kishar had given them birth.

The above are the first ten verses of an Assyrian epic of the Creation, which combines in a poetic form the cosmological doctrines of the chief Assyrian and Babylonian schools. As a great part of the tablets, or stone-books, on which they were written were broken, only a part of the whole is decipherable. Professor Sayce gives us a translation of 192 verses, of which the above are the first ten. They answer to the following first lines of our Bible :

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.  
And the earth was waste and void ;  
And darkness was upon the face of the deep (*tehom*).  
And God said, Let there be light ;  
And there was light.

The resemblances between them are striking. The first word of Genesis is *bereshith*, "in the beginning"; the Assyrian poem tells us that the watery deep was the *ristu* ("the beginning") of the heavens and the earth. The Hebrew *tehom* (or "deep") is the Assyrian *Ti(h)amat*.

But the differences between them are more striking than the points of resemblance. In the Hebrew poem the one supreme God is all and in all. It not only opens by ascribing creation

to Him alone, but in the thirty-one verses of the first chapter His name occurs thirty-two times. Not only in the first act, but through all the stages of creating, making, forming, and peopling the universe He is the sole agent, without partner, helper, or counsellor.

In the Assyrian there are gods many, but there is no GOD, and the gods that are were created apparently by the powers of Nature. The Hebrew *tēhōm*, or "deep," and the darkness that enshrouded it, were the creatures of the Creator. The Assyrian or Babylonian *Tiamat* was a mythological being—in fact, the *first* of the gods. "Where the Assyrian or Babylonian poet saw the action of deified forces of nature, the Hebrew writer sees only the will of the one supreme God."

There are many other points, both in these ten lines and in the rest of the Assyrian epic, deserving of notice, but we will only mention a few of them.

We take the following from Professor Maspero's "Dawn of Civilization," edited by Professor Sayce. After relating how each of the above gods duplicated himself, and took to wife the spouse whom he had deduced from himself; and how other divinities sprang from these fruitful pairs—first, the three gods who respectively presided over the moon, the sun, and the air; next, the lords of the planets, Ninib, Merodach, Nergal, the warrior goddess Ishtar, and Nebo; then the whole army of lesser deities, who submitted to Anu as their supreme master—the Professor goes on to narrate how "Tiamat, finding her domain becoming more and more restricted, desired to raise battalion against battalion, and set herself to create unceasingly; but her offspring, made in her own image, were like the phantoms men see in dreams—bulls with human heads, horses with the snouts of dogs, dogs whose bodies sprang from fish-like tails, etc. Tiamat furnished them with terrible weapons, placed them under the command of her husband Kingu, and set out to war against the gods."

Then we have a picture of the terror and helplessness of the gods, until Merodach alone has courage to enter the lists against Tiamat. Anshar sends his son Anu; but Anu is afraid. He sends Ea; but Ea, like Anu, grows pale with fear, and dares not attack her. Merodach, the son of Anu, alone believes himself strong enough to conquer her. Merodach equips himself carefully for the struggle. His bow and quiver full of arrows, his spear and thunderbolt, his body filled with devouring flame, and the other weapons of war, remind us of the armour which David rejected on the one side, and of the spear and shield, etc., with which Goliath met the shepherd-boy on the other.

Merodach passes through the serried ranks of Tiamat's



monstrous offspring, and penetrates as far as Tiamat. They draw near to one another; they fling themselves into the combat; they meet one another in the struggle. When Tiamat opens her mouth to swallow Merodach, he thrusts the hurricane into it; it fills her paunch, her breast swells, her maw is split. Merodach thrusts his lance into her paunch, bursts open her breast, binds the monster, and slays her.

Let us contrast with this the parallel account in the Hebrew narrative :

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters,  
 And let it divide the waters from the waters. And it was so.  
 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together  
 into one place,  
 And let the dry land appear. And it was so.

Note, on the one side, the feebleness and terror of the other gods, and the terrible struggle by which Merodach, the wisest of the gods, gained the victory; and on the other, the entire absence of all apparent effort, and the glorious energy of the calm fiat of Omnipotence, through the twice-repeated "And God said." "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

ROBERT BRUCE, D.D.

*(To be continued.)*



#### ART. IV.—THE JUNIOR CLERGY AND DIOCESAN PATRONAGE.

THE difficulty of getting Bills for the reform of our Church's organization passed by the House of Commons is a thing which was abundantly manifested two years ago in reference to the Criminous Clerks Bill, and we must always expect more or less of the same discreditable action on the part of the extreme political Dissenters, as to whose ideas of decency and morality the less said the better. The duty, however, remains with us to keep "pegging away" at practical reforms in our Church system. And we now desire to call attention to one practical reform which does not as yet seem to have been suggested by any of our lay or clerical friends. We refer to the need of some readjustment of the official episcopal patronage. The inequalities in this respect in regard to different dioceses do not seem to have struck men's minds, and yet such inequalities exist between our dioceses in the most marked and utterly unjustifiable degree. In fact, it almost seems to be the rule in the Church of England that where work is hardest promotion should be slowest—a very undesirable state of affairs, as all must admit. In all dioceses the