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Recent Biblical Archaeology.

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Ur of the Chaldees.

EVER since the decipherment of the Assyrian inscriptions made it clear that the biblical Kasdim and the classical Chaldæi were of different origin, various attempts have been made to explain the Hebrew name, but thus far with little success. The classical name presented no difficulty; the Chaldæans are the Kaldâ of the monuments, who inhabited the marshes at the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates. It was not until Merodach-baladan possessed himself of Babylon that they came to form an important element in the Babylonian population and eventually to become synonymous with it; before that period they were but one of the many West Semitic tribes, like the Puqudu or Pekod, who were settled on the fringe of the Babylonian kingdom. Winckler and Delattre have supposed that Nebuchadrezzar II. belonged to them; it may be so, but at present there is no proof that such was the case.

But while the name of the Chaldæans recurs in the inscriptions, that of the Kasdim is unknown to them. And it is first met with in Scripture, not as a title of Babylonia, much less of the district inhabited by the Kaldâ, but as an epithet of the city of Ur, which stood on the west side of the Euphrates, outside the limits of Babylonia proper. The fact has been first pointed out by Professor Hommel with his customary acumen.

The epithet is thus applied, in the Book of Genesis, not to the alluvial plain of Babylonia,—the land of Eden of the monuments and of the second chapter of Genesis,—but to the region west of the Euphrates, the native home of the Bedâwin and West Semitic tribes. The Bedâwin were known to both Babylonians and Egyptians as the 'Sutu, or 'children of Sheth' (Nu 24¹⁷)

These West Semitic tribes, in so far as they occupied Mesopotamia and Northern Arabia, are the Aramæans of later history. We must, however, remember that the Aramæans are not necessarily those who spoke Aramaic dialects. As a matter of fact, these latter dialects originated in the contact of Arabic with that West Semitic language which may be called Canaanitish or even Hebrew, at a much later date than the time when the Assyrians and their neighbours first spoke of the Aramû or Aramæans. 'Aramæan' is a tribal or territorial term, not a linguistic one, and as such it is used in the O.T. (e.g. Dt 26⁶).

Now the western bank of the Euphrates on which Ur was situated lay within the territory not only of the 'Sutu or Bedâwin, but also of the Aramæans. Ur, indeed, was closely connected with Harran, the leading city of Mesopotamia. The two cities were the seats of the worship of the moon-god, around whose sanctuaries they had grown up. And it is therefore significant that according to Gn 22²², Chesed was the son of Nahor of Harran,

the brother of Uz and Hazo, and the uncle of Aram and Laban. In other words, he was an Aramæan of Mesopotamia.

In the Kasdim or descendants of Chesed we must therefore see, not the Babylonians, but those West Semitic tribes whose home was on the western side of the Euphrates and whose form of Semitic speech extended from Canaan to Southern Arabia. In a former article I have proposed to call the dialects they used Hebraic, and perhaps the same term might be extended to them in a racial sense. At all events it is important to remember that they occupied South-Eastern Arabia as well as the lowlands to the north-east of Babylonia, and that the Assyrians were of the same blood, though they had adopted the Babylonian language.

Under the dynasty to which Khammurabi or Amraphel belonged the West Semites conquered Babylonia, or at any rate imposed upon it a line of kings. Hebraic proper names occur plentifully in the contracts of the period; at a later date most of them disappear. It is only in the time of Khammurabi's dynasty that we find names like Jacob-el, Joseph-el or Joel (Yahum-ilu). This therefore must have been the time when the Kasdim crossed the Euphrates and established themselves in Babylonia; in the age of Abraham Ur was still Ur of the Kasdim in contradistinction to the other great cities of Babylonia which were purely Babylonian; but the Kasdim had already planted themselves in the Babylonian plain, and it was not long before they gave a name to it among their West Semitic neighbours. Not long after Abraham's migration Khammurabi united Babylonia under a single Kasdim sovereign and made Babylon for the first time the capital of the country. Just as Merodach-baladan's possession of Babylon in later days caused 'Chaldæan' and 'Babylonian' to become synonymous, so the rise of Khammurabi's empire made Kasdim and Babylonian synonymous among the Semites of the West.

It is noteworthy that in the tenth chapter of Genesis Babylonia is not mentioned among the sons of Shem. Hitherto it has been supposed that it is meant by Arphaxad, in spite of the fact that in 11¹² Arphaxad is the ancestor, not of the Babylonians, but of the Western Semites. M. de Morgan's discoveries at Susa have now put a new complexion on the matter. They have shown that Elam, the son of Shem, is not the non-Semitic

district of Anzan, but the district of which Susa was the capital, and which was a province of Semitic Babylonia. Before the age of Khammurabi, in fact, it was as purely Semitic as Assyria; it was only after that period that it passed into the hands of a non-Semitic power. Western Semites or 'Sutu were settled in the lowland parts of it, and proper names make it clear that the kingdom of Khana, which lay to the north of it, was West Semitic also. The sons of Shem, accordingly, represented the Western Semites, and hence it is that Samu, or Sumu, the biblical Shem, was the ancestral god of the dynasty to which Khammurabi belonged. Its first king called himself Samu-abi 'Shem is my father.' The Book of Genesis turns out to be strictly accurate in its ethnology: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Nod (so I read instead of Lud), and Aram all formed one family, and traced their decent from Shem. To the same family, moreover, belonged the tribes of Hadramaut and South-Eastern Arabia.

There was a good reason for not including Babylonia in the same family. Its primitive population and culture were alike non-Semitic. The Babylonian language and civilization of a later day were due to the superposition of West Semitic upon Sumerian elements, and the Babylonian language—which we generally term Assyrian—remained, like modern English, a mixed language to the last. The fact is witnessed not only by the vocabulary, which is full of Semitized Sumerian words, but also by the grammar with its two tenses expressive of time, and above all by the phonology which has suffered from the inability of the Sumerians to pronounce the distinctive sounds of Semitic speech, even more than Egyptian Arabic has suffered in the mouths of a Coptic population. The *ghain* and *'ain*, the *ʃa*, *ʒa*, and *ha* are all gone; even the *tsaddé* and *qôph* have been confounded with *zain* and *kaph* or *gimel*. Even if all remains of Sumerian literature had perished, Semitic Babylonian would have obliged the scientific philologist to postulate the existence of a Sumerian language.

I have assumed that Arphaxad is a representative of the Western Semites. It has long since been recognized that the name is a compound of Chesed, and of all the attempts that have been made to explain the first element in it that of Schrader, which connects it with the Arabic *arfah*, Eth. *arfet*, 'a wall' or 'rampart,' is the most plausible.

I believe that I can now give Schrader's etymology its needed confirmation. In the recently published *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum*, xii. pl. 11, ll. 21 ff. *kar*, 'a wall' or 'rampart,' is explained by *arpu*, *narrupu*, and *irrupu*. Whatever may be the meaning of the last two forms, *arpu* has nothing to do with *arâbu*, 'to destroy,' and is, I believe, the *arpha* of Arphaxad. The latter name, consequently, will signify 'the wall of Chesed.' It will thus be parallel to Kar-Duniyas, 'the wall of the god Duniyas'—perhaps a Kassite form of Dungi,—which denoted Babylonia, and Kar-Kassi, 'the wall of the Kassi,' the name given in later days to the mountainous country to the north-west of Elam. Kar-Duniyas, it may be added, is probably the Median Wall of Xenophon (see my article in the *Proc. S.B.A.*, February 1897, p. 75). Like the Shur, or 'Wall' of Egypt, which defended the eastern frontier of Egypt from the Bedâwin of Asia (Gn 25¹⁸), it protected the settled inhabitants of the country from the incursions of the nomad 'Sutu. Remains of a similar wall still exist on the eastern bank of the Nile; they are now rapidly disappearing, but when I first visited Egypt considerable portions of it were still to be found. The fellahin called it Hêt el-'Agûza, 'the wall of the old woman,' and its construction was ascribed to the mythical queen Dilûqa.

As I have pointed out in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* (June 1896, p. 172), the name of Kasda or Chesed is found in the cuneiform inscriptions, where it is applied both to a city and to a district. Its situation is given us in *W.A.I.* iii. 66, *Rev.* 16-35, where Um Kasda-KI, 'the mother of the land of Chesed,' is included among the deities of the 'Sutu. It lay, therefore, on the western side of the Euphrates, precisely where Ur was built. The name may be

connected with the word *kasdû*, which is stated in a tablet (81. 2-4, 287) to be the equivalent of *irzîtu*, 'earth,' and *qaggaru*, 'ground.' At all events, *kasdû* is not a purely Babylonian word.

Paran and Hagar's Well.

The winter before last I copied at Karnak certain geographical cartouches in the famous inscription of Shishak, which the excavations of M. Legrain had for the first time exposed to view. Among them M. Legrain pointed out to me the name of I-u-r-d-n, or Jordan. The last five in the list are Sh-l-d-d, R-p-ḥa, L-b-u-n, 'Â-n-p-r-n, and H-a-m. The last name is evidently the Hum of the list of Thothmes III., where it is the last name but one. R-p-ḥa is Raphia, the modern boundary between Egypt and Palestine.

The name, however, which is of most interest is 'Â-n-p-r-n. This is evidently 'Ën-Paran, 'the spring of Paran,' and the list shows that it could not have been far from Raphia. Now it will be remembered that Ishmael is said to have grown up 'in the wilderness of Paran' (Gn 21²¹), which is presumably the same as 'the wilderness of Beer-sheba' (v.¹⁴), as it was there that Hagar found the spring which saved her son's life (v.¹⁹). It has usually been assumed that the wilderness of Paran was confined to the district immediately westward of Mount Seir, since 'Mount Paran' was synonymous with 'Mount Seir' (Dt 33², Hab 3⁸), but Shishak's list shows that the name applied to the whole stretch of country as far as the Mediterranean. Indeed, it is more than possible that 'the spring of Paran' is the 'well of water' discovered by Hagar. Lebun is probably the Laban of Dt 1¹, which is associated with Paran. Laban has been identified with the Libnah of Nu 33²⁰, but this is not probable.