
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

By Abraham, we are told, the Hebrew narrator *means* the moon. Well now, let any one read Gn 11^{26}–25^{6} and then say whether it is the moon that is in view. How admirably the narrative has succeeded in *concealing* its purpose! For surely the writer concealed the aim attributed to him when he illustrated the number of Abraham's posterity by *comparing* them with the stars (15^{5} and 22^{17}). Is it possible that he could so have forgotten the rôle he was playing? And he must have tripped in the same way when he made Jacob dream of a ladder which reached *from earth* to heaven (28^{12}). For the moon-god the ladder should have taken the opposite direction. Finally, with reference to Joseph, Winckler (*Gesch. Isr.* ii. [1900] 62 f.) remarks: 'If one of the sons of the moon comes into the hands of the sun-god, he becomes forfeit to the latter. Each time Joseph detains one. When he gets the youngest into his hands, the matter is at an end.' Yes, it would have been at an end if the history of Joseph had been written on the lines of Winckler's mythological prescription. But, as that history reads in the O.T., *the matter is not at an end* when Benjamin arrives, but Joseph now sends for his father, and causes 'the moon' to settle in the land of Goshen, etc.

The narratives of Genesis, then, give no occasion for the theories concerning the patriarchs which have been advanced by the friends of mythology.

Recent Biblical and Oriental Archaeology.

By A. H. Sayce, D.D., Professor of Assyriology, Oxford.

In a sumptuous volume,[1] worthy of the scholar to whose memory it is devoted, the scattered contributions of Sir P. Le Page Renouf to Egyptological science have been collected and published by Professor Maspero and Mr. Rylands. No better editors could have been found than the most learned and accomplished of living Egyptologists and the indefatigable secretary of the Society of Biblical Archæology. Renouf was a scholar who, in these days of superabundant literary activity, wrote comparatively little, but what he once wrote never needed to be written again. The general public know him chiefly as a Hibbert lecturer, and, in his latter days, as keeper of the Oriental Department in the British Museum. It is, however, by his contributions to our knowledge of the ancient Egyptian language that he will be longest remembered in the world of science. The Book of the Dead was the special object of his studies, and here he had no rivals. He was printing a new and revised translation of it when death overtook him. Fortunately, the greater part of the text and commentary was already in type, and the manuscript of the remainder was in a sufficiently complete state to allow Professor Naville to edit it for the Society of Biblical Archæology.

Renouf was a good classical scholar, though a change of religion prevented him from taking his degree at Oxford. He had enthusiastically taken up the study of Comparative Philology at a time when it was a new pursuit, and, like many others of us, passed under the spell of Max Müller's mythological views. It was just this which gave his Egyptological work so much value; he was no narrow specialist, whose horizon was bounded by the little department of knowledge in which alone he was interested. He could look beyond the point of view of the mere Egyptologist, and bring the knowledge and experience acquired in other fields to his own favourite study.

One of his earliest literary productions, which is republished in the present volume, was an answer to Sir G. C. Lewis's famous assertion that a lost language could not be deciphered and read. The answer was complete and final, and time has proved that it was so. But it is a good thing that it should be reproduced in a form which will enable the general public to 'mark, learn, and inwardly digest' it. It points an object-lesson which is much needed to-day. The arguments of

[1] *The Life-Work of Sir Peter Le Page Renouf.* First Series, Egyptological and Philological Essays. Vol. I. Edited by G. Maspero and W. H. Rylands. Paris: Leroux, 1902.

the critic seemed unanswerable—at all events from the critical point of view, perhaps also from the point of view of common sense. He seemed to have sound reason in asking how it was possible to decipher inscriptions, the language and script of which had alike been forgotten, and to which, in the case of the cuneiform monuments, there was no bilingual clue. Surely scepticism was justified, if ever, in rejecting the results claimed to have been obtained by a few daring spirits whose Oriental scholarship was not above suspicion. Ten years after the publication of Sir G. C. Lewis's work, Nöldeke could still refuse credit to the 'discoveries' which the Assyriologists asserted they had made.

In his article, Renouf confined himself to Egyptian, and the examination and refutation of his opponent's arguments is a masterly piece of work. It settles the whole question once and for ever. It shows how the decipherment of the inscriptions has proceeded upon strictly scientific lines, and, like all other branches of modern science, must stand or fall with the inductive method. Only those could doubt it who were blinded by prejudice or hopelessly incapable of understanding what induction means.

The two articles on the system of Champollion which precede the reply to Sir G. C. Lewis, like most of the smaller articles in the volume, appeal mainly to Egyptologists. They are further examples of Renouf's logical clear-headedness and acquaintance with his subject, and will be read with profit by those who wish to know what is the real history of the decipherment of the Egyptian inscriptions, and why Champollion alone succeeded in unravelling their mysteries.

The later articles in the volume are of importance to the student of the Egyptian texts, who will learn from them that not infrequently the latest 'discoveries' in Egyptian philology have been forestalled by Renouf. But the English scholar did not think it necessary either to advertise himself every time he made out the meaning of a word, or to disguise the word itself under a transliteration which is neither sightly nor pronounceable.

Mr. King's new work[1] appeals as much to the theologian as it does to the Assyriologist. Indeed even that nondescript personage, the ordinary reader, ought to take an interest in it, at all events if he is acquainted with the Old Testament, or is interested in the early history of human thought. Since the publication of Mr. George Smith's *Chaldean Account of Genesis*, no such important work has appeared on the subject of which it treats. It not only adds largely to our knowledge of the Babylonian 'Epic of the Creation,' it also sets the relation of the latter to the first chapter of Genesis in a new light.

Mr. King has succeeded in filling up a considerable part of the missing portions of the Epic, partly with the help of 'Neo-Babylonian' tablets, partly by identifying a number of fragments from Nineveh in the British Museum, whose connexion with it had not been previously suspected. The result is the discovery that the original poem consisted of about one thousand lines, and, above all, that it was divided into seven tablets or books. That some relationship must exist between this division of the Epic and the seven days of Genesis is clear, more especially when we bear in mind the parallel pointed out by Mr. King 'between the Seventh Day on which Elohim rested from all His work and the Seventh Tablet which records the hymns of praise sung by the gods to Marduk after his work of creation was ended.' I believe there is an allusion to the latter in Job 38^{7}.

Among the more important facts resulting from Mr. King's discoveries is that the creation of light had nothing to do with the beginning of the great war between the older powers of chaos and the younger gods of law and order. It is true, that as reference is made to 'day' and 'night' at the very outset of the poem, light must have been conceived of as existing before the appointment of the heavenly bodies in their respective places, just as it is in the biblical account. But the war of the universe was begun, not by Tiamât, the dragon of chaos, but by Apsu, the primeval deep, whose wrath was aroused by the disturbance of his sleep, and whose plot against the gods, hatched in company with Mammu and Tiamât, was discovered by Ea. Here we have plainly a version of the story in which Ea, as creator, had not yet been displaced by Merodach of Babylon, and in which the 'deep' wherein his abode was afterwards fixed, was not yet transformed into Tiamât. The Epic of the Creation is really a combination of

[1] *The Seven Tables of Creation; or, The Babylonian and Assyrian Legends concerning the Creation of the World and of Mankind.* By L. W. King. Two Vols. London: Luzac & Co., 1902.

cosmological legends of different origin, which have been amalgamated together in honour of Merodach.

Another still more important fact which we learn from the recovery of the opening lines of the Sixth Tablet is that the culminating act of the Chaldean story was the creation of man. We further learn that Berossos was strictly correct in ascribing the origin of the living element in man to the blood of Bel-Merodach himself, and that therefore Professor Hommel's ingenious conjecture that we must substitute Adapa for Bel is no longer necessary. 'My blood will I take,' says Merodach, 'and bone will I fashion: I will make man that man may [exist?]: I will create man, who shall inhabit [the earth].' The Assyrian word for 'bone' is *itstsimtum*, and, as Mr. King notices, it cannot be an accident that in Gn 2^{23} woman is called the *'etsem* or 'bone' of man.

Mr. King has spared no pains to make his book as complete as possible. An introduction, which contains everything that can be said about the tablets and their contents, is followed by a transliteration and translation of the texts. Then come transliterations and translations of other texts, which either relate to the creation or have been supposed to do so, as well as appendices on the Assyrian commentaries upon the Epic, the larger of which implies a Sumerian version of the last tablet, on some additional fragments of the poem, on the references to it in the astrological tablets, and on a long and interesting metrical prayer to the goddess Istar. There are full indices and glossary at the end of the volume, while the second volume contains the cuneiform originals copied with Mr. King's customary care.

The reviewer can find little upon which to exercise his critical craft. Lenormant's correction of the Thalath of Berossos into Thavath is, however, more probable than Robertson Smith's Thamte. It was not Zimmern, but myself, who first pointed out that a portion of the so-called Cuthæan legend of the Creation is preserved in a text published by Scheil (*Proc. S.B.A.* xx. pp. 187–189), and Zimmern is mistaken in thinking that it is not a Creation-legend at all. I have shown in my Gifford Lectures[1] that it really represents the cosmology of Nippur. On the other hand, Mr. King is certainly not right in believing that the inscription he quotes on pp. 197–200 has anything to do with the Creation. As I suggested years ago, in my Hibbert Lectures (p. 166), where I translated a portion of it, it must relate to the mythical foundation of the city of Assur. The words *rupustu sa tia*[*mat*], on which Mr. King relies, can only mean 'the breadth of the sea.' I gather from his transcription of the text that several characters have been lost since my copy of it was made.

[1] *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia.* T. & T. Clark, 1902.

The excavations that are being carried on by Mr. Macalister for the Palestine Exploration Fund on the site of Gezer, have already had such important results, that all those who take any interest in the ancient history of Canaan, should see that they are not interrupted from lack of funds. Professor Petrie laid the foundations of the archæology of Palestine at Lachish; Mr. Macalister is completing the work at Gezer. The burial-caves he has found there, with their two layers of dead belonging to the neolithic and bronze ages, are likely to settle a good many questions as soon as the examination of the remains discovered in them is finished. Meanwhile, the Tel itself is revealing the past history of Canaan in a very remarkable way. Two of the mounds of which it is composed have been explored, the eastern and the central, the second of which turns out to have been the site of the original settlement on the spot. The settlers were neolithic troglodytes, whose tools were of stone and bone. They were followed by other neolithic settlers, whose state of culture was a little more advanced and who occupied the eastern as well as the central mound. To them belonged the flint implements and rude pottery met with here and there in Palestine. The third settlement was that of a different people, who were acquainted with bronze; their pottery is identical with that of the earlier settlement at Lachish, and we may see in them the Amorites before their contact with Egypt, but subsequent to the Babylonian conquests of Sargon of Akkad and Naram-Sin and the introduction of bronze into the west. Then comes a fourth settlement, the age of which can be fixed. We are still in the bronze age, but the Amorites are already at the height of their civilization, surrounding their cities with lofty walls and erecting temples of huge monoliths, one of which Mr. Macalister has found. In it he has also found an Egyptian stela of the Middle Empire recording the name of a certain Maatinef, as well as scarabs of the twelfth and

thirteenth dynasties. The period, therefore, to which the settlement goes back, will be roughly 2500–2000 B.C., before the Hyksos invasion of Egypt. At last a chronological starting-point for the archæology of Canaan has thus been discovered, and we can form some idea of the age to which the Amorite occupation of the country must reach back.

The fifth settlement is that of a population which used not only bronze but also iron. We may accordingly assign it to the period which lasted from the time of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty down to the reign of Solomon. It is distinguished by what has been called the 'lamp and bowl' pottery, and is the last settlement in the eastern mound. In the central mound, however, two more periods are represented. The first is that which is characterized by the jar-handles inscribed with Phœnician letters which belong to the age of the Jewish kings, while the second brings us down to the Persian epoch. Among other objects it has yielded is an inscription mentioning the Egyptian king Nef-aa-rut I. (339 B.C.). Naturally, iron takes the place of bronze in both these latter periods.

The Tel el-Amarna correspondence was carried on in the age of the fifth settlement, and we may therefore expect that cuneiform tablets will be discovered among its remains, probably in the western mound. This, too, must have been the settlement which witnessed the Israelitish invasion of Canaan, and perhaps the delivery of the city by the Pharaoh to Solomon. Here, at Gezer, consequently, if anywhere, we should find the answer to the question: When and how was the Phœnician alphabet brought to Israel?

The Great Convocation.

By the late Rev. W. A. Gray, Elgin.

'But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.'—Heb. xii. 22, 23.

In this great passage (and in all Scripture there is scarcely a greater or a grander) the intention of the writer is to strengthen and to stimulate the Hebrew Christians, who were under special temptations to apostatize. Many of these Christians had to fight their battle and maintain their testimony all alone, deprived of human sympathy and deprived of human aid. It was a new and a trying experience, taxing to their perseverance and testing to their faith, and, as I say, the apostle takes account of it while he writes. Already in this chapter, he had directed them to one great ground of support. He had directed them to Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. He had reminded them of His cruel contradiction. He had reminded them of His bitter cross. And he had incited them to courage in their own trials by the thought of the greater severity of His. And now in the verses before us, he passes to another ground of support, passes from the idea of a past example to the idea of a present society. And he unveils for these Hebrew Christians—all so lonely as they thought themselves—the great and goodly fellowship they belonged to. What though an infidel world might scoff? They had the presence and assistance of a multitude who were not of this world, with whom their hearts and their aims were one. Greater were they that were for them than all they that were against them. No one believer, amidst all the scattered elect, need find himself solitary. However remote his post, however desolate his lot, he was encircled with a countless host, who sought what he sought, felt what he felt, loved what he loved. A thought, a prayer, a silent withdrawal within himself, and he was one on the instant with the throngs that surrounded him, included in their shining ranks, sharing in their sacred privileges. Consider then