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2. We turn now to the second child. This child stands as a type of the Pharisees who may not have meant all they said, but did mean some of it, while some of them meant all of it. So we may fairly take this child as a type of those who profess at first to be Christ's, but whose practice falls miserably short of their profession.

There is, first, the class of professors, pure and simple. Mere profession suffices; at all events, they rarely get far beyond such. It is a common enough type. What does it mean, and what is the cure for it? It means that the promise has never really gripped the personality, that emotion has been touched, but not will—and therein lies the danger of appeals from the pulpit to the emotions and the cause of the instability of much revival work. The work has been man's, not God's. They say that once a man converted under the preaching of Mr. John Wesley was soon afterwards found sodden by drink. 'A fine convert of yours, Mr. Wesley,' said one to him. 'You speak true, sir,' said Mr. Wesley, 'that is none of God's making.'

Then, there is the class of those who really start and never reach the vines. The roots of their faith have struck right through the shifting sands of emotion, and obtained some hold on the will beneath, but it is not a deep one. There is Mr. Pliable, who stands the jeers of Mr. Obstinate—and a man who can stand sneers must have something in him—and sets gaily out with Christian

towards the Celestial City, dreaming of the glories that await him, and in an altogether heavenly frame of mind until he meets with the Slough of Despond. That is enough for Pliable. 'If we have such ill-speed,' he says, 'at our first setting out, what may we not expect between this and our journey's end? May I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave country alone for me.'

We can imagine this second son really starting for his work, but as he climbed the precipitous hillside, where the vines were clinging, and as the sun slowly mounted the Eastern sky to his blazing noonday, the resolution gets weaker and weaker until he sits in the shade to rest, and falls asleep. He meant his 'I go, sir,' and he really started; but he 'went not.'

Now make no mistake, it is hard work God calls us to; hard work under hot, unpleasant conditions. He does not say, 'Go talk,' 'Go pray,' 'Go dream.' But we have always this to remember. The Father has called us 'Child,' 'Bairmie,' and the Father has sent us into His own vineyard: 'Child, go work to-day in My vineyard.' The weeds may be there, and the soil may be hard and stony, and the sun may beat pitilessly down upon us, and often it will seem that the more we try the less we accomplish; yet still it is 'My vineyard': 'Child, go work to-day in My vineyard.'¹

¹ W. P. Workman, *Kingswood Sermons*, 44.

The Israel Stele of Merenptah.

BY THE REVEREND J. W. JACK, M.A., GLENFARG, PERTHSHIRE.

THIS Pharaoh, who began to reign over Egypt about 1225 B.C., not only fought the Libyans and pirates of the coast lands, who tried to establish themselves in the Delta, but seems to have carried out, or at least organized a campaign in Palestine. He refers to his numerous victories in an inscription on the back of a fine large granite stele, over ten feet high, which had originally been set up by Amenhetep III of the previous dynasty to commemorate his buildings. The date of the inscription is not later than the fifth year of Merenptah's reign (*i.e.* about 1220 B.C.). Israel is mentioned in this

inscription, though for the first and only time in Egyptian history, so far as existing discoveries have gone. In the latter part of the text, the following sentences occur in the order here given:

'Wasted is Tehenu, Kheta is pacified, Pекanan is captured with every evil circumstance, Askalon is carried captive, Gezer is taken, Yenoam is brought to nought, Israel is destroyed, its seed is not, Syria has become as the widows of Egypt, all the lands together are at peace.'

Tehenu is Libya, Kheta is the Hittite land, Pekanan is 'the Canaan,' Askalon and Gezer are the two well-known Biblical cities in South Palestine, while Yenoam has been identified by some scholars with Yanuh, near Tyre, and by others with Janum or Janin (Jos 15⁵⁹), a town in the mountains of Hebron. The determinative sign for 'land' accompanies the names, except in the case of Israel ('Ysiraal'), where that for 'men' occurs, denoting a people, not a country.

The importance of the inscription lies in the fact that Israel is here mentioned for the first time as being outside Egypt, and evidently in Palestine, as an organized and settled community. This has been a serious difficulty to the upholders of the later-date theory of the Exodus, for it is clear that, if the Israelites left Egypt, as these scholars state, in Merenptah's own reign, and wandered in the desert for forty years or more, they could not have been settled in Palestine by the fifth year of his reign. The inscription, indeed, makes the later-date theory practically impossible. There is no reason to doubt the testimony of the stele that Egyptian forces had been in conflict with the Israelites somewhere in Palestine.

The expression 'Israel is destroyed, its seed is not' cannot be taken as representing Merenptah's own version of the Exodus. Strange to say, when the discovery of the stele was made, there were a few who regarded it in this light, considering the flight of the Israelites into the waterless desert to be equivalent, in Merenptah's mind, to their destruction. Deeper reflection, however, led them to see the improbability of this view. The mere fact that Israel is mentioned in the midst of Palestinian cities and localities, thus forming one element in the same group with them, is proof that the expression has to do with Israel in Palestine. Nor can it be taken as referring retrospectively to the repressive measures of Pharaoh in Egypt prior to the Exodus, though several scholars took this view at the time of the discovery. Such an interpretation overlooks the fact that the edicts ordering the slaying of the male children must have been nearly a century old at the time of Israel's departure from Egypt. Not only so, but for a long time they must have been practically inoperative, otherwise there could not have been a younger generation existing at the time of the Exodus, as there certainly was, nor any large body of people at all to form the Israelite nation. Whichever way we look at the

phrase 'Israel is destroyed,' the obvious implication is that the people so named were already living in Palestine at the beginning of this Pharaoh's reign.

It is said by some that the name 'Israel,' being accompanied by the determinative denoting a people, not a country, must be taken as meaning a non-territorial or 'roaming' Israel, *i.e.* it must refer to the time when the Israelites were still 'wandering' in the wilderness. This is the view adopted by those who place the Exodus a few years prior to the date of the stele. There is no ground, however, for this. The determinative undoubtedly represents a people, but why 'roaming'? This is adding an idea not contained in the text. All that the determinative implies is that the Israelites could not as yet be described by any territorial name, as the Libyans could be, who were known to dwell in Tehenu, or the Canaanites who inhabited Canaan, or the Hittites who were in Kheta; consequently the determinative for 'people' was the only one that could be rightly used of them. This fact, moreover, accords with the history of the Israelites for some time after their entry into Palestine. Their conquest of the land was a very gradual process, in spite of the Deuteronomic and Priestly redactors of the Joshua narrative. For the first one or two centuries they were compelled to settle down on sufferance among the Canaanites. It was not until they had strengthened their hold by racial vigour and increase of families that they eventually gained the superiority. For many ages there was no 'Israel-land' or other territorial name connected with them to which the determinative signifying 'land' could be applied; thus the only correct determinative that could be employed was the one denoting 'people.'

Most of the later-date theorists apply the text to Israelite tribes in Canaan who had never descended into Egypt with Jacob, or to a portion who had left Egypt when the great famine was over, or at the time of the Hyksos departure, or at all events before the Biblical Exodus. According to Professor Burney, for instance, only the Joseph tribes (Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin) were settled in Egypt and were led by Joshua across Jordan, while other Israelite tribes continued in Palestine without a break. The Zilpah tribes (Gad, Asher) and Bilhah tribes (Dan, Naphtali), with Reuben, Zebulun, Issachar, and a nucleus of Judah, were

in Palestine all along, while Simcon and Levi were in the desert to the west of Edom. Professor Petrie and others do not take such an extreme view, though they hold it probable that some parties of Israelites at least remained in Palestine during most, if not all, of the time that the others 'sojourned' in Egypt. How much truth there may be in these views it is impossible to say. Any proofs that we have for them are not at least convincing. One supposed proof is the fact that, in the lists of Syrian places captured by Seti I and Rameses I, the immediate predecessors of Merenptah, we find a district called '*Asaru*', corresponding, it is said, to the hinterland of Southern Phœnicia, which is exactly the position assigned in the Old Testament to the Israelite tribe of Asher after the Exodus. Hence the later-date scholars assure us that the tribe of Asher must have been in Canaan all along, since it was there before their date for the Exodus! The identity of '*Asaru*', however, with Asher of the Biblical records must be regarded as most uncertain. The word '*Asaru*' is believed to be a transliteration, not from Hebrew, but from some non-Semitic language; and the geographical location is also a matter of dispute owing to the town-lists of the Pharaohs not being in strict geographical order. Even though the identity of the two names were placed beyond doubt, it would afford little encouragement to the later-date theorists. While it might be regarded from their point of view as proving the existence of the Asher tribe in Canaan prior to the Exodus—though it should be remembered that, after all, the existence of the Asher tribe in Canaan does not explain the word 'Israel' on the stele—it would supply a far stronger confirmation of the early-date theory. For if the Israelites entered Canaan about 1390 B.C., as the early-date scholars hold (according to the Tell el-Amarna Tablets), there was nothing to hinder the tribe of Asher being found in its assigned district by the time of Merenptah, nearly 200 years later. It is exactly what the Biblical account would lead us to expect.

A second proof brought forward is the occurrence of two town-names which are supposed to read Jacob-el (*Y-ḥ-b-ʾā-ra*) and Joseph-el (*Y-š-p-ʾā-ra*) respectively, in the long list of Southern Syrian places inscribed on the pylons of the temple at Karnak, during the reign of Thothmes III, about 1480 B.C. It is inferred from this that Israelite tribes existed in Canaan at that time. But here,

again, the interpretation of the names, especially of the latter one, is recognized as very doubtful. Besides, they are the names of places, not tribes; and if the reading be correct, it would only prove that some Semitics, probably descendants of Abraham, had left their names on places in Palestine in early times, perhaps even before the Israelites went down into Egypt. The name Jacob, especially, must have been well known in the Semitic world in those early ages. Among the names of autonomous Hyksos chieftains, inscribed on Egyptian scarabs, there is one which appears to read 'Jacob-el.' It is possible that this chieftain may have been called after the patriarch, whose name may have been in high favour at the Egyptian court, but—what is just as likely—he may have had no connection with him. Indeed, there is now evidence that the name 'Jacob' is much older than the date at which the patriarch must have lived. Dr. Pinches has discovered the personal name *Ya-ḥub-ilu* on contract tablets of the time of the Babylonian king Sin-muballit, the predecessor of Hammurabi, as early as about 2150 B.C.,¹ and the contracted or hypocoristic form *Ya-ḥubu* (exactly like 'Jacob') also occurs. We have thus monumental evidence that the names Jacob and Joseph were well known, perhaps common, in the Semitic world before even the days of Abraham. Looking at the matter from this wide point of view, it is exceedingly doubtful if the place-names Jacob-el and Joseph-el in Southern Syria, assuming the reading of them to be correct, prove the existence of what may be called Israelite tribes in that district in the reign of Thothmes III. It is admitted by all scholars, Professor Burney included, that the Joseph tribe can hardly have been in Canaan at this time; and as for Jacob-el, all that may safely be concluded from it is that some Semitic chieftain named Jacob, probably the Biblical patriarch, had implanted his name on a place in Palestine, or that some of his descendants had done so. But whether the place was inhabited by tribes who could be described as Israelites, we have no means of determining.

At the same time, apart from these considerations, we think that there can be little doubt that there were numerous Israelites in Canaan all along, who never migrated to Egypt. Whether Burney's theory be correct that only the Joseph tribes sojourned there, is a matter of dispute, on which little or no direct evidence is available. But

¹ Similarly *Yaḥub-ilu* also occurs at the same age.

judging from what usually happens in such cases, some Israelite families must undoubtedly have remained in Palestine (especially in parts where the famine was not so severe) during the residence of the others in Egypt, and it is quite likely that small detachments from the main body may have left Egypt from time to time, and settled and multiplied at Hebron, round the tombs of the patriarchs, or elsewhere. We know at least that parties of Israelites made raids from Goshen into Palestine during the sojourn (1 Ch 7^{21, 22}), and if the road were open for such raiders, it must have been used frequently by peaceful Israelites who wished to return to their ancestral domains. Inter-course certainly went on between the Israelites in Goshen and Palestine (cf. Gn 50^{4ff.}), and there was nothing to hinder any who desired to return after the famine was over. The fact that all the family heritages were well known at the time of the Conquest seems to confirm these views, for if no Israelite families had remained in Canaan, and there had been no coming and going for over four centuries, the location of these sites would have faded from memory. It seems probable, therefore, that there were Israelites in Canaan, in stray detachments at least, during the time the others were in Egypt.

But, while this is no doubt true, it affords no ground for the view that the term 'Israel' on Merenptah's stele refers to these people. Even though we assume the position of Burney, and hold that many of the tribes remained in Canaan, this gives no satisfactory explanation of the statement on the stele. For the tribes of Asher, Gad, Dan, and Naphtali, who were among those that remained according to his theory, were not regarded as of true Israelite stock. They were descended from sons of handmaids, not full wives, and as they were not purely Israelite by race, they were considered, even long after the Exodus, as holding an inferior position, without full tribal rights or claim to a full position in Israel. Their full entrance into the Israelite community was not won until long afterwards. This explains the words of Jacob about Dan (Gn 49¹⁶). It accounts also for the failure of Asher, Gad, and Dan to answer Deborah's call to arms (Jg 5¹⁷), and their evident separation from the rest of Israel at that time. No doubt the Naphtali tribe also would have withheld its support, if its geographical position had not made its adherence necessary. The names, too, of Asher, Gad,

and Dan imply that these tribes were not at first pure Yahweh worshippers, but adhered to pagan forms of cultus. 'Asher' is known to have been a form of the moon-god, 'Gad' was the god of Fortune (Is 65¹¹), and 'Dan' was a title of the sun-god. Viewing the matter in this light, we can easily see that Merenptah's statement 'Israel is destroyed' cannot refer to these tribes, who could not have been known under the true name of Israel. Would the Pharaoh or his scribe apply the name 'Israel' to some concubine tribes who were known not to be purely Israelite by race?

The fact is, that the statement on the stele cannot possibly refer to any mere section of Israel, or to stray detachments. From the wording of it, it is clear that it refers to the main body—the 'Israel people,' as a whole. One cannot imagine Pharaoh applying to a mere portion, or to some scattered fragments in Canaan, the particular name which represented the entire confederacy. The statement can only be explained on the supposition that Israel as a settled and organized whole was located in Palestine at the time.

There is another way of looking at the matter. If the Exodus had not yet taken place, as the upholders of the later-date theory assert, the main body of Israelites must still have been in Goshen. These people were known to the Egyptians as 'Israel.' As a part of the wide Hebrew race, descended from Eber, they were spoken of as 'Ibhri or Hebrews, and foreigners generally referred to them as such, but in other connexions and among themselves, the name 'Israel' was used. 'Who is Jahweh?' said Pharaoh, 'that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?' (Ex 5²). 'Let us flee from Israel,' the Egyptians said, 'for Yahweh fighteth for them' (Ex 14²⁶). 'There was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead' (Ex 9⁷). These and many similar references may be to some extent a reading back of the name into the period of the sojourn, but it cannot be denied that the tribes which dwelt in Egypt were well known in the land under the name 'Israel.' Is it not very strange, therefore, that the Pharaoh should set up a stele in Egypt with the statement 'Israel is destroyed,' meaning a people in Canaan, while at this very time the only people known throughout Egypt as 'Israel' was still dwelling secure and untouched in Goshen? Who would the Egyptian readers of the stele (for, after all, it was meant for them) understand by the term? Acquainted as they were

with only one 'Israel,' the people who had dwelt for several centuries in their own midst, they must have regarded Merenptah's statement as inexplicable and even absurd, while the numerous Israelites who looked at it must have been amazed at its evident misrepresentation or falsity. The state-

ment can only be satisfactorily explained on the assumption that the Exodus had already taken place, and that the people known to the Egyptians as Israel was now settled in Canaan and coming into prominence as an organized confederacy.

Contributions and Comments.

New Babylonian Light upon the Old Testament.

MR. GADD'S publication of new light from Babylonia touching the fall of Assyria will be still fresh in the minds of readers of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, and the object of this brief paragraph is to draw attention to the importance for Old Testament students of some new texts just published by his colleague at the British Museum, Mr. Sidney Smith. The latter's *Babylonian Historical Texts* (Methuen, 1924) contains plates, transliteration, translation, and discussion of the tablets in question. Of these the first provides new details concerning Esarhaddon's Egyptian campaigns, among them a reference to an Assyrian defeat in 675 B.C., which, it is conjectured, may be the one classical authors ascribed to the reign of Sennacherib, and the original source of the story of the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian army.

There is much to be said in favour of this view, which is of the greatest interest for the narrative in 2 Kings 18. Next, a Persian verse account of Nabonidus, seemingly a piece of hostile propaganda, suggests that the unfortunate Babylonian king was, contrary to the usual view, unpopular with the priesthood. Mr. Sidney Smith gives reasons for conjecturing that Nabonidus was probably of Syrian origin, and for the novel and noteworthy suggestion that Nebuchadnezzar in the Book of Daniel is really 'a reflection' of Nabonidus.

Yet another valuable discovery adds to our knowledge of the campaigns of Nabonidus in 553-552 B.C. We are told how he went through Amurru (*i.e.* the west country) to Tema—apparently after conducting a siege in Adummu (Edom). This Tema or Teima is identified with the well-

known site in North Arabia; and since it is known that Nabonidus held court there for a few years, it is easy to understand why a famous Aramaic inscription from Teima, independently ascribed to this period, bears various marks of Assyrian or, rather, Babylonian influence (G. A. Cooke, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, p. 196 ff.). Not to enlarge upon these texts, it will be seen that they show that Palestine in the middle of the sixth century B.C. was in no quiescent state. There was no tame submission to the Babylonian overlordship; there was a Babylonian court established at the very important caravan centre of Teima, and the proximity of the famous antiquarian king might well have been not without some influence upon his friends and supporters in Palestine itself. There are other points of interest in Mr. Smith's texts, but enough has been said to indicate their value for Old Testament problems.

It may be added that in the recent excavations at Ur it was found that Nebuchadnezzar's temple appeared to have received an interesting innovation (C. L. Woolley, *The Antiquaries' Journal*, 1923, p. 327). In place of a 'crowded complex of buildings' there had been made 'an open temple suitable for and therefore presumably intended for public worship. . . . Irresistibly, we are reminded of the biblical legend of the "Three Children."' That Nebuchadnezzar should make a golden image was nothing new, the trouble was that he ordered everybody to fall down and worship at the sound of the music. In other words, 'the public was to attend and participate in the service.' 'Such an innovation,' writes Mr. Woolley, 'and the legend must have had some historical background to give it probability, is precisely what we should deduce from the archaeological evidence—